Umbrella Movement - a Photo Diary

By Kennedy Wong
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Dear friend,

Today is the third year commemoration of Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong. On September 28th, 2014, I was a social work student at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. I participated in the student strike and the Umbrella Movement. I still remember the first smell of tear gas, the fear of shooting and the panic of the crowd.

This is an album that consists of photographs and some excerpts of my diary. As a photography beginner, I tried to document some sceneries that did not commonly report by media. And I hope the photos and my words, in a perspective of a student participant, would bring readers to another angle of the movement.

Nowadays, Hong Kong people are still living under fears. In these years, we have bookstore owners and workers who sold anti-communist China books to Mainland Chinese people that were kidnapped by the police of Chinese government in Hong Kong territories. We have a fear of free speech in public, as speaking of the political reform in public could ruin one’s career or even threaten the life of one’s family. We have a fear of free assembly and protest, as we have 16 activists or student leader, such as Joshua Wong, are in jail, and more and more similar court cases are pending.

I hope you will like the photographs and support our fight of democratization in Hong Kong.

Kennedy
September 28th, 2017
Day 01
Class Boycott
September 22th, 2014

「點解我要罷課？」
其實我是被社區的民生處境，尤其看見基層市民的無奈而被感召的。

今日罷課活動之後，在社工系內有debriefing教授在我那組提到：
「民主不能解決所有問題，它只是公民社會的一部分。
我們應該思考罷課以後，佔中以後，如何塑造一個公民社會。」
對我而言，自由、人權、尊重、信任、利他精神這些民主以外的素質和精神，
甚至信仰精神，應該是爭取普選之外，這個星期值得深入的問題。
罷課的日子，讓我反思，挑戰我們自己。當我們要求社會改變的同時，
我們應該先要求自己改變。

"Why do I have to join the class boycott?"
By the time I was in the street community, I had seen the struggle of lower class in the society. Their life touched me, so I chose to join the class boycott.

After the boycott assembly, we have a debriefing session in the social work department.
A Professor mentioned, "Democracy cannot solve all the social problem, it merely just a portion of civil society. After joining the boycott, or even the upcoming occupying movement, we have to think of how to build up a civil society.
In my perspective, besides fighting for democracy, freedom, human rights, respect, trust, and altruism are something that we should also think of in this period.

The student strike gave us a space to reflect and challenge ourselves. When we are asking society to become more liberal, we must have to tune our mind as liberal first.
Bear the Historical mission,
Get back the future of our city
Consolidation. Discussion. Action
People in the Chinese University of Hong Kong
Walk together on the road of political reform.

Steer our own destiny

Hand over our future to totalitarian
equates to buying your own coffin
在這個社會上，
沒有一個單獨的方案能夠說服所有人。
而係一個諸人的年代，每個人都講不同的故事。

在香港這個context下，有民主1.0、民主2.0、
還有不同的說法
在今日仍然未民主1.0的年代，
所以政治慢慢會變成公民討論的妥協，
而要達到這種共識的妥協之前，還需要很長的磨合和信任。

塑造公民社會的包容性是重要過爭取民主

Day 02
Class Boycott
September 23th, 2014

In a society, there is no grand theory that could fit all the people.
As diversity exists, different people are living in their own way,
they have their own story.

In the context of Hong Kong, we have different proposals for political reform,
namely the democracy 1.0, democracy 2.0 and even some progressive proposals.
As we are still not yet having the democracy 1.0 (the first stage of democracy) in our electoral system,
we might have to find a way out to accommodate the diversity of pro-democrats.
It takes time and trust to build up a proposal with consensus.

Building up a civil society with inclusiveness,
is more important than fighting for the democracy.
There are different kinds of lectures in the Tammar Park. I participated in some classes such as feminism, social media studies, social movement studies, manga studies etc. Lecturers taught a self-chosen topic that they are interested in. Also, students engaged in class actively. I can tell that this phenomenon is not common in Hong Kong education.

No reason to vote for a rotten orange

Protect Endangered Species, HK People
It was the third day of the class boycott; I stayed in Tammar park to attend the civil lecture. We had a professor talking about "emotional mobilization" in a social movement. He said, "Nowadays, we usually use a lot of negative discourses in our protest culture." On the other hand, we are also challenged by pro-government haters in a similar way. But we have to think of one question, is it impossible to have positive emotions/feelings in our protest culture?

A visual artist, Mr. Wong, proposed a way out in another lecture. He said, "we could use humor to express our sadness, anger or other negative feelings. Moreover, art is always a way to reflect the reality." Maybe we still have a lot of struggles in our life, no matter we are students who struggle in the spoonfeeding educational system with a lot of exams, or we are social workers who work very stressful under our current system, or we are an employee of a business firm who struggles in low income and expensive housing cost.

Positive energy is scarce in our community. But we, as a Hong Konger, can support each other by sharing our hardship together in a peaceful way. If we have to build up a civil society, a public space for imagination and creativity is essential.
Umbrella Movement - A photo album
Kennedy Wong

Fight for Democracy

Medical Students
Come out

Save our Hong Kong by ourselves
Hug our freedom in rainstorm

Register for community action

Strike today
Occupying Central on the 1st of October

Build our farm
Hong Kong will resurrect
Today, Professor Baig shared her thoughts of the participation of ethnic minorities in democratization and community. She said, “If there is only an Equality of outcome, without an equality of process. It is not a genuine equality.”

If the democratic system is only ‘by the majority,’ problem exists. Democracy should include most of the ideology, values, and orientations in the society. If we barred the people by race, class, orientation, age, values, and beliefs in our discussion of democratic reform, we are not working out the civic values of democracy, nor the values of human rights, freedom, and equity, etc.

If the human right is only concerning individual right, this is merely a bubble. The society is still oppressing the minorities. In another word, to actualize human right, we should build up mutual respects and equal opportunities in our community.

Hence, democracy, human right, freedom, and equity are all correlated. None of these are neglectable.
Disobedience
no compromising

I am a teacher,
I care Student Strike

Temporary student library

Protest at night

Temporary directions
for public civic lectures

Student Prefects
Day 05-06
Class Boycott and occupying public square
September 26-27th, 2014

12个小时前我在这个地方听课、和平集会，
12 hours ago, I was here attending a lecture, a peaceful assembly.
聽著教授學者痛心疾首，一些教授团队被政府邀请研究退休保障，
A professor shared that a research team was hired by the government to write up a policy proposal of
為香港做了許多研究，因為研究结果不利商家和政府，全部被政府无視。
at the end, the proposal does not favor the business owner and government, and thus, was entirely
民生政策一拖再拖，多個研究提議無效，
abandoned by the government.
老人民生寸步不進，溫和的學者最後唯有走上街頭。
We could see that in recent years, promised welfare policies were delayed, social policy researches
12個小時後，在這裡，手無寸鐵的學生被防暴警察包圍，
12 hours later, Joshua Wong and some student leaders led the crowd to break in a ‘locked and
被推撞，拉開雨傘直噴胡椒噴霧。這一刻，我覺得好心痛。
guarded’ public square. Some of them successfully climbed over the gate and reached the public
這一刻，我覺得好心痛。
square, some did not. Then Unarmed students in public square and outside the square were sur-
警寕，請你們不要強行搶去學生的雨傘，然後直接把你的胡椒噴霧射向他們的眼睛。
rounded by riot police. They were pushed, beaten up, pulled off their umbrella (their shield) and
這個劑量的胡椒噴霧足以傷害主要器官，請你們停止以此方式清理示威者。他們已經熬
sprayed by pepper spray directly on their faces. The concentration of pepper spray could damage
過一晚，對於被警察圍堵，學生們也沒有作出任何暴力抵抗。
their main organ. And the police are using unnecessary forces to clear up the crowd.
現場已有多位朋友中招，你們的行為令人相當痛心。
Student had been surrounded by police for a whole night without violent resistances. There were a
警察，請你們不要強行搶去學生的雨傘，然後直接把你的胡椒噴霧射向他們的眼睛。
lot of my friends who got sprayed. It is a heartbreaking scene.
Rushing to building up road block to resist the police car diving into the crowd

Students used umbrellas to shield their face upon the pepper spray by riot police. So the media termed 'Umbrella movement'.

Under the banner of celebrating the 65th anniversary of China

Student leaders, like Joshua Wong, were surrounded by the police after some of them successfully broke into a 'locked and guarded' public square.

The police asked students to leave. But they insisted to stay and protect those student leaders in public square.
Day 07
Umbrella movement
September 28th, 2014

Police Warning:
Disperse.
Or we Fire
Tear Smoke was thrown to the crowd. People were running away immediately. At the same time, on the other side, more tear smoke was thrown to the direction of people who were running away, such as MTR station (underground train station).

Tear gas was thrown to areas with escaped people, for example, a public park, where food truck, elderly and other people were there.

Temporary first aid stations were set up by medical and nursing students.

People formed lines to transfer materials such as face mask, water, napkins to the frontline. Also, a clear walkway was set up for people who are injured.
On the frontline,
people wrapped themselves by food wraps,
weared goggles and face mask.
The pro-government media still reported the
crowd as ‘violent’ and ‘dangerous’

People were unarmed and vulnerable on the
frontline, as a way to demonstrate the
violence of the police.

People started to resist the police by setting up the barriers

they even build up a complex road block to resist the police truck to drive in
Day 08 - onwards

The community

Umbrella movement
September 29th onwards, 2014

After a series of conflict and protest, the government stopped their action to clear up the crowd. People were occupying roads and sidewalks. They built up a community in there.
People were bringing their pet to the community, living with different people.

The Umbrella Man statue

This wall should not be built to bar the enemy but for the children to stay inside

Cheerful words were written on some cards and tighted to the wall by yellow ribbons

people started to use their creativity and build art statue with words on memo pads

Newspapers were posted on a big board. People share the news together.
Volunteers collected garbages, clean them and sort them out.

Prayer Center for religious group
I ask for True democracy
因為你們都在我們才有希望
香港人 加油

We still have hope, because you are here.
Cheer up! Hong Konger.