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CEOT POOL: SEXUAL CULTURE ON UHK

Like America, Hong Kong has experienced drastic changes in gender and intimate relationships in recent decades. Labor force participation rates of women rank among the highest in the world, and an increasing number of young women enter college, giving women unprecedented autonomy over their own lives. At the same time, the face of intimate relationships has changed dramatically, the age of first marriages has risen and there have been landslide changes in youth's acceptance of premarital sex (Davis and Friedman, 2014:3; TFPAHK, 2001; 2006; 2011). Concomitantly, Hong Kongese youth increasingly date at younger ages, which means that they have a long period before marriage in which many explore intimate relationships (Ting, 2014:151).

In America, similar changes in gender and intimate relations coincided with a drastic change in youth sexual culture. On many US college campuses, hooking up has become a dominant form of intimate coupling. While many other regions in the world have experienced comparable structural changes in gender and intimate relations, little is known about the extent to which hooking up is embraced as a sexual arrangement of youth in other regions of the world, for instance in Hong Kong. In this chapter, I explore the dominant regime of youth sexuality on a campus in the city-state. I question if hooking up is part of their sexual repertoire.

Grand narratives of modernity sketch a seemingly uniform development of changes in intimate relationships throughout the world (Bauman, 2003; Giddens, 1992). Most of these narratives emphasize a decoupling of sex from committed relationships in modern times. Bauman (2003) speaks about fluid love, in which love relationships, and sex, have become transient, lasting until a slight shift in life-plans renders them obsolete. Giddens (1992) speaks of a 'transformation of intimacy', in which structural dependencies in intimate relationships have been dismantled, mainly through the achievements of feminism. He suggests that the rewards of emotional intimacy are the glue that hold couples together. Furthermore, he describes 'plastic sexuality' as the decoupling of sex from reproduction, marriage, and com-

mitted relationships. Sex in modernity, according to Giddens (1992), is undertaken for individual enjoyment and self-realization and is quintessential to individual identity projects for both men and women.

Some scholars postulate that these modern, grand narratives of changes in intimate life are applicable to East Asia. Lin (2008), for instance, argues that the contemporary usage of love hotels in Japan reveals a discourse on sexuality in which sex is associated with personal pleasure, autonomy, self-fulfillment and identity formation (Lin, 2008:33). Chu (2014) argues that the trend towards plastic sexuality has happened in modern day Hong Kong. In her writings on compensated dating -a relatively new sexual arrangement in the city-state comparable to sugar daddy-ism- she argues that Hong Kongese youth have normalized a script in which sex is detached from marriage and is non-monogamous, recreational and devoid of emotional intimacy (Chu, 2014)

Other authors, on the contrary, have criticized such grand narratives of changes in intimate life for its inherent ethnocentrism (Besnier, 2015; Gross, 2005; Jackson et al., 2008). Jackson et al. (2008), for instance, emphasize that East Asia has its own route into modernity, and we cannot take for granted that modernization will have the same consequences for intimacy and sex in East Asia (Jackson et al. 2008:17). Nonetheless, new sexual cultures have emerged in this region, and for urban East Asian women, modernity often means 'being sexy' and living a more 'sexually adventurous lifestyle' (Farrer, 2002; Jackson et al., 2008:8;). The question is whether this means that hooking up is a common practice among youth in Hong Kong, or if they prefer different sexual arrangements.

In this chapter, I investigate whether there is a hookup culture at a university campus in Hong Kong, or an equivalent in which the dominant form of intimate coupling is sex outside the context of a committed relationship. Because hookup culture in America is predominantly confined to the campus arena, I start my quest in Hong Kong in the college arena too. In this chapter, I qualitatively explore the sexual norms of University Hong Kong -this is a pseudonym-. I explore what sexual scripts are enacted by students and if they enact equivalents of hooking up. I further draw on insights from sex and gender studies that emphasize the practices through which sex and gender norms are continuously made and remade.

CASE AND METHODS

This is a qualitative, interview-based study of an intimate and sexual culture of a college campus in Hong Kong. UHK is a flagship education facility that offers a broad range of education programs. UHK offers campus residency to its students, although

housing supply is in short demand, and currently around 50% of the total student population resides on campus, which is approximately 8000 students. Interviews with students were conducted in the winter and early spring of 2015. In total, I interviewed forty-one heterosexual students (twenty men and twenty-one women). Eighteen male students were born and raised in Hong Kong, one man was born in mainland China, and another man of Chinese descent came from Indonesia. The latter two moved to the city-state upon entering college. Of the twenty-one women in my sample, seventeen were born in Hong Kong, three were born and raised in mainland China, and one in Japan. All four of the women from outside Hong Kong moved there recently for their studies. One of the mainland born women also did part of her studies in Japan. Another woman was born in Hong Kong but spent a considerable part of her childhood in America. Four men and six women identified as Christian, the others did not subscribe to a religion. The students ranged from freshmen to seniors and came from a variety of different disciplines (including natural sciences, humanities, arts and social sciences). Nine female students came from working-class families, ten from the middle class and two from the upper-middle class. Of the male students, eight came from the working class, eleven from the middle class and one from the upper-middle class. I made this classification on basis of their parents' educational attainments and professions. Three students were recruited through a sociology course on gender and sexuality in which I participated. I recruited the other thirty-eight students on campus. I approached students, explained my research project and asked if they wanted to contribute. When students reacted positively, I took their contact details and scheduled an appointment. All the interviews were conducted in English, and this resulted in a major selection bias, since the students who participated were confined to those who were confident with expressing themselves in this language.

The interviews were conducted on campus, in one of the many canteens, coffee shops or gardens on campus. Prior to each interview, I discussed the aims of this study and the topics that we would discuss. Students were asked to sign an informed consent form and were explicitly told that they should only answer if they felt comfortable talking about the subjects. I used a semi-structured interview technique around a number of topics. These were: parents' experiences of intimate relationships, college campus culture and the intimate doings of peers, the students' own experiences with sex and relationships and the students' outlook on the future concerning career, family and relationship goals. I chose this sequence purposefully to build rapport in the initial stages of the interview, by first talking about less intimate topics and later discussing the most personal experiences. The interviews were recorded and took between thirty and seventy minutes. All interviews were fully transcribed. Respondents' names have been anonymized.

HIGH SCHOOL SWEETHEARTS AND PARENTAL CONTROL

In recent decades, Hong Kong has seen drastic structural changes in its economy. In the initial stages of its economic development, Hong Kong had a large manufacturing base especially in relatively cheap consumer products. During the 1980s, much of this low-skilled factory work moved to China, leaving many low-skilled laborers in precarious economic conditions. At the same time, Hong Kong experienced an extraordinary growth in its service economy, predominantly creating two types of jobs: Humdrum and low paid service work at the bottom, and highly skilled and well paid white-collar jobs at the top. This economic transition, in combination with the underdeveloped social security system in Hong Kong, increased the importance of a college diploma for Hong Kongese youth. However, only a small fraction (about 22%)⁷ of secondary school students can enter tertiary education facilities, and access is granted on the basis of students' performance on the centrally organized entrance examination, the HKDSE. As a result, there is extreme pressure for youth to attain high scores on the HKDSE.

This specific political economic milieu of Hong Kong is enmeshed with long-standing discourses that greatly value educational achievements. In ancient China, scholarly achievements were an important means of social mobility; they opened up the route to high-standing administrative positions. In Confucianism, these scholarly achievements were linked to moral excellence. Two sets of ethics existed: those for lay-people and a higher standard for scholars. The standard for scholars comprised a more stringent and extensive ethical code, which, when followed, could raise one's moral standing in society (Hwang, 1999:175). This set of ideas resonates within conceptions of education in modern-day Hong Kong, giving extra weight to the importance of a good education. Furthermore, the Confucian concept of 'filial piety' entails an obligation of parents to provide their children with a good education, while it is the children's obligation to obey their parents and other authoritative figures, like educators (Ng et al., 2002:140). Both authorities often demanded Hong Kongese youth to focus on education and refrain from intimate relationships with significant others in adolescence, which a surprisingly large number of students obeyed. Some secondary schools had a policy to sanction intimate relations between students.

T: If the teacher would find out that you were dating, they would embarrass you in front of everyone.

JJS: Like what would they do?

T: Like, they were scolded in front of everyone.

JJS: *Really? Have you ever seen that happen?*

T: *Yeah, when the teacher found out that my classmates in high school were dating, they were changed of their seat. Like, we have certain seats for our own, and they were changed of the seat, and he [teacher] put this couple together [...]. Then, everybody knew that they were dating, everyone and every teacher. So, it's quite embarrassing, and we sat with girls and girls and boys with boys [...]. So, only they sat together as boy and girl, so it's quite embarrassing and then they broke up (Tamara, senior student).*

At some secondary schools, young lovers were not only scolded in front of peers, but their parents would also be informed, and students would receive an official demerit. However, not all schools had such strict measures to prevent intimate liaisons between students, since this was not mandatory policy in all secondary education facilities. There were also many schools that did not need to implement this policy since they were single-sex institutions. In addition to educators, parents also kept a close check on students' intimate behavior, policing and precluding the intimate affairs of their progeny.

N: *[...] And also, at that time, my parents found out I have a girlfriend, and that is forbidden in my family.*

JJS: *Oh really?*

N: *Yes, because in Chinese traditional families they don't expect their son or their daughter to fall in love in the secondary school because, as I have said, the most important mission in your secondary school life is study.*

JJS: *Abhhaa.*

N: *Yes, because you have to get into the university. This is very important in Chinese society, I think. Or, in my family it's very important. So, when they found out I have a girlfriend, they don't allow me to go on with this relationship, and they asked me to break it up. So, I did (Nigel, junior student).*

Parents were often unaware of the intimate relationship of their child, but regardless, many students broke up their affair when the HKSDE arrived. The pressure to study hard for the exams and to secure access to tertiary education were so high that many students decided to break up their intimate relationships without parental interference. Few students formed intimate relationships in high school. When students were accepted to one of the universities in Hong Kong, however, another life phase began, that of college life, in which the parental pressure to study hard waned and in which identity exploration took precedence. This partly meant forming intimate relationships with significant others.

CEOT POOL: THE SEXUAL REGIME ON UHK

College campuses often have a distinct culture, especially when they are residential. The presence of a large number of youth of similar ages, largely outside of the realm of parental control, seems to be the ideal conditions for a distinct identity to emerge. Within this arena of hundreds and at times thousands of watchful students, social control is often stark, and a high degree of conformity is enforced. Within this arena, sex and intimate relationships are often prime markers of distinction with the world outside campus. This rings true for most colleges in America and also seemed to resonate with college life at UHK.

R: It's very interesting. In the campus life in HK university, there are five things: Five things we should do in our orientation camp, at least five things. You have to skip one lesson, which means you don't attend a lesson.

JJS: Just once?

R: [...] At least once, and the second thing is to live in a [student] residence, to live in a home, to enjoy your life, and the third thing is doing part time...

JJS: Like, part-time jobs?

R: Yeah, and you have to be in a committee or in a club or society, right? This is—in Chinese we call [this] soeng zong —上(soeng5) 莊(zong1)-, and this is a thing that... So, you have to commit yourself to some sort of organization and certain groups of people, and the most important thing is [...] that you should have [a] relationship, and this is called ceot pool —出(ceot1) pool (Raymond, freshman student).

These 'five things' were the imperatives of UHK college culture, the experiences that nearly all freshmen students desired. Culture can be used as a symbolic resource to mark distinctions between groups. Among students of UHK these markers were mainly used to demarcate boundaries between themselves and their peers outside of the college arena, rather than to mark a distinction with the adult world. On the contrary, many of the experiences that students tried to collect on campus seemed to prepare them for the responsibilities of adult life after college. Playing truant was about autonomy and making seemingly independent decisions, although it was often done to conform to peer expectations. A campus residency was about autonomy and independence from the family. A part-time job was about acquiring work experiences and learning about financial independence. In student organizations, students acquired the skills of, amongst others, organizing, networking and cooperating. And, in *ceot*

pool – 出 (ceot1) *pool*-, students learned about intimacy, sex and committed relationships. To *ceot pool* literally means ‘to get out from the pool of people who are being single’, in which ‘pool’ is a metaphor for being single. It could be used as both a verb and a noun.

This is called ceot pool [...] this is like a metaphor. We are like fish in the pool, and our partners, our lover is the fisherman, and we have to wait. We have to be active and aggressive so we could make ourselves to get out of the pool, right? (Raymond, freshman student).

Ceot pool is a relatively short transitional period between friendship or acquaintance and a committed relationship. It has a rather uniform script with numerous gendered rituals of romance, among which are an overly romantic proposition and a time for contemplation. Concrete stories of students about their *ceot pool* experiences gave insight into this script. One female student, Nora, reported that her *ceot pool* happened at the well-known Ferris wheel in Central Hong Kong, which is comparable to the London Eye. Chris and Nora had met in a student organization half a year prior, where both worked and had become friends. At some point in the year, Chris developed a crush on Nora, which she was blatantly aware of, as were her friends, who constantly reminded her of his feelings. One day Nora, Chris and a group of mutual friends went to the Ferris wheel at Central Pier. When Nora entered the gondola, which had room for about ten people, only Chris joined. She had a slight suspicion that he was about to make some romantic gesture. On top of the ride, the gondola stopped for an instance.

N: [...] He picked out a mobile phone and then showed me a video. The video is about our photos and our story and some sentences, and then I, after watching it, I don't know how to answer because the last version is that 'will you be my girlfriend?' Or something. And then I, I just, I want to escape, but I can't and then I ask him: 'When did you make it?' To try to not directly answer his questions and talk about other subjects, other things. And then he answered me when he made the video and then [...] he picked out a paper, it is printed, some like, stupid idea, like a contract. There are some sentences here and [...] then he asked me to circle one, and there were only two choices.

JJS: So what were the two choices?

N: 'I am willing to be his girlfriend' and 'I am very willing to be his girlfriend' (laughing) (Nora, sophomore student).

In the script of *ceot pool*, young men were expected to instigate the romance and young women were supposed to resist at first and only accept after continuous persuasions. In all but one of the cases of *ceot pool*, the man proposed an intimate relationship to the woman, even though she might have been the one who made the first steps towards a more intimate connection. Young women were thus more constrained in forging intimate relations than boys.

Seldom did a young woman accept the proposal immediately, and most asked for time to think before giving her word. In many cases, this 'time for contemplation' seemed like a ritual, since these romantic propositions seldom came as a surprise. In most cases, both parties were aware of the romantic interests of the other because they had talked about it, or because friends had informed them. The 'time for contemplation' was a meaningful rite, signaling a well-informed and considered decision. It showed that she was 'serious' about the relationship, meaning she was aware of the roles and expectations of a romantic liaison, of the personality and idiosyncrasies of the young man, and most importantly, that she was primed towards a long-term relationship.

The conversations within the time for contemplation highlighted the expectations and meaning infused in the dominant sexual script. Nora, for instance, wanted to clarify a number of rumors about her suitor within the time for contemplation. She had heard that a young woman was living in Chris' room who was not officially his roommate, and she wanted to know what their relationship entailed. She was convinced that the young woman was 'just a friend' after Chris showed her a texting exchange with that girl in which she asked for advice on how to romantically connect to another young man. Nora also inquired about a photo she had seen on social media a few months before, in which Chris walked hand in hand with another young woman. Nora wanted to know who that young woman was and if they were romantically involved. The young woman was a former classmate of Chris, for whom he, at the time, had romantic feelings. These feelings, however, belonged to the past. On the Ferris wheel, Chris had said 'I love you' to the astonishment of Nora. She wanted to know what love was to Chris. According to her, love was a state of intimate connection to be reached after years and years of romance. Chris and she had 'good feelings' towards one another, but for her, love was the outcome of a long-term commitment in which a couple gradually progressed through layers of intimacy, experienced as a move towards greater spiritual proximity. Chris and Nora also discussed the appropriate amount of sexual activity within a romance. According to Nora, light sexual activity, such as petting and kissing, was okay at a certain point in the affair. Sexual intercourse, however, was only appropriate after marriage, with which Chris concurred. These conversations of Nora and Chris

emphasized the expectations of monogamy and a long-term commitment tied to the enacted script and foregrounded a psychic unity above a sexual connection in the relationship.

There was a high degree of conformity in expectations of sex and relationships among the university students in my research. Nearly all students were primed towards long-term committed relationships that could potentially evolve into marriage, and they univocally believed that most of their friends shared this orientation. 'I would say most of my friends are in long-term relationships, that is my friends from secondary school, I don't know many people that are dating short-term (Ike).'

Students were less univocal about the sexual activities within these affairs, reflecting the reservations of many students to talk about these matters, even with close friends. Some students thought that only light sexual activity happened within these affairs. Others believed that peers had intercourse, although only when they had been in a relationship for a long period of time

A lot of my friends think that it is okay to have sex with their boyfriends, but it should be a stable one, yeah. After dating for eight years, I think, and after that, they can go with their boyfriends and have sex with him, but not so fast (Do, sophomore student).

Reports about sexual experiences are always fraught with uncertainty because of the stigmatized nature of the subject. This was especially relevant in the context of prudish Hong Kong. Few students reported experiences with sexual intercourse, even within long-term, committed relationships. Of the twenty-one female interviewees, four reported experiences with sexual intercourse –ranging from two to five partners. Seven of the twenty male interviewees reported experience with sexual intercourse, with the number of sexual partners ranging from one to three. Light sexual activity such as kissing and petting was acceptable for nearly all students within the context of long-term, committed relationships, but many students found sexual intercourse only acceptable within marriage.

Interestingly, a number of students expressed that their preference for sex within marriage was driven by a fear of pregnancy.

JJS: You mentioned you had like three or four boyfriends before. Were these also sexual relationships?

I: Sexual relationships? Yes, but not sexual intercourse. Like, we kind of, I don't know, they are kind of afraid that I will get pregnant, or something, so we just, don't know what it's called in English, maybe dry sex or something? Just no sexual inter-course (Irene, sophomore student).

This narrative of sexual abstinence was common among students of UHK and raises questions of the extent of knowledge about contraception that was available to youth in Hong Kong, despite most students having had courses on sexual education.

Sexual opportunities are, in most societies, tied to the availability of private space. This is particularly pressing in Hong Kong, where many inhabitants live in cramped apartments. This naturally had an impact on the opportunities for sexual exploration among Hong Kongese youth. Love hotels were plentiful within the city, but were relatively expensive and shrouded in stigma, and none of the students said they visited these places. Campus residency, however, offered new sexual opportunities for students from Hong Kong. For the first time in their lives, students lived outside the direct control of the parental gaze, and this meant new opportunities for intimate exploration. Although campus residency rules explicitly forbade man-woman sleepovers, most students in committed relationships slept in their partners' rooms regularly. Nevertheless, even then, precautions were taken by, mainly female, students so that the intimate contact did not escalate into coitus.

E: It [sexual intercourse] won't happen for me, yeah.

JJS: Why not?

E: Because there are still roommates in the room, and I won't be with him when there's only two of us. Then I will escape, always (laughing). If there's only two of us in the dorm (Elza, sophomore student).

Within *ceot pool* and the committed relationships that followed, women were responsible for keeping sexual boundaries, and the consequences of crossing these lines were infinitely more severe for women than for men. Within the college arena in UHK, a tenacious double standard existed.

AN ORDERING OF SEXUAL SCRIPTS

Students at UHK were aware of other sexual scripts in the college arena besides *ceot pool*. Hookups, casual sex, one-night-stands, and short-term relationships were known to most students and occasionally enacted. However, one should not assume that the configuration of acts of these scripts, the meanings infused in them, the entwined vocabularies of motives and bodies of fantasies, translate into corresponding labels that European and American audiences are familiar with.

The different sexual scripts that students of UHK were familiar with had an

ordering. Long-term monogamous relationships were foregrounded and casual sex repudiated. Students of UHK used this continuum of long-term commitments versus casual sex to think about their own intimate doings and those of others. This ordering of sexual scripts could be used as a symbolic resource for constructing boundaries between themselves and others (Lamont and Molnár, 2002). Concomitantly, the ordering of sexual scripts could be used as a heuristic tool for reflecting on their own sexual practices and those of fellow students. For most students, casual sex was an abject and devalued practice that one should stay away from. In comparison with this sexual script their own intimate affairs seemed civil and righteous. A long-term monogamous relationship, on the other hand, was a desired script that, at least momentarily, lay out of reach for most students, and which posited their previous relationships as failed and unsuccessful.

Hooking up was a familiar term to some students, especially those that had been abroad, to America and Australia, or to those who had friends among the international students of UHK. However, only one student of the forty-one I interviewed claimed to have hooked up herself.

One was with an exchange student from Texas. I met him through my friend who is a full-time student here, [UHK] and she decided to bring him to the party in LKF [nightlife district], and then everybody was drinking, and we were flirting around, and then we went back to his dorm and we had sex (Sandy, freshman student).

Sandy was an outlier among the students I talked to, both in terms of sexual experiences and in terms of cultural background. Sandy came from an 'astronaut family', a household in which some of the individual members work and live in different countries (Skeldon, 1994:229) and lived parts of her childhood in the US. She was thus in many ways a cultural hybrid, familiar with American and Chinese culture and she had friends among the Hong Kong Chinese and international students.

Other students were not aware of the term but were aware of the practice, although they often lacked the specific vocabulary to denote this script and talked about it in terms of 'short-term relationships' or 'one-night-stands'. Nevertheless, students of UHK were aware of the idea that one could meet someone on an occasion –a stranger, acquaintance or friend- and have sex shortly after, for lust rather than from a longing for spiritual proximity, and that this could be devoid of claims to commitment.

T: [Hooking up is] not really common, but it happens. [...] I've heard some cases of them of my friends, but most of them come... Maybe they have been to

- America or have been studying [there] for a few years, studying elsewhere.*
- JJS: *I see, what did you hear?*
- T: *They talked about drinking and something happened casual, and kiss casual.*
- JJS: *What do you think of that?*
- T: *For me, I can't accept that (Tam, freshman student).*

Hooking up was nearly always the sexual practice of distant acquaintances or part of the sexual culture of other campuses; or, it was what people with other –mainly American and European- cultural backgrounds did. The hookup script was used by students of UHK as a symbolic resource to demarcate boundaries between them and other students.

At the same time, students used the hookup script to reflect on their own intimate practices and those of peers at UHK. In contrast to the abysmal sexual practice of hooking up, *ceot pool* and the committed relationships most Chinese students at UHK pursued, seemed responsible, civil and respectable. The ordering of sexual scripts was thus a resource students used to think about intimate relationships.

Although most students sought relationship experiences that were 'serious', in practice this was not always the case. The peer pressure to *ceot pool* was intense on UHK, and this often resulted in rushing into relationships. Some students found out that their affair was an ill match, that their personality was incompatible with their partner's, or that the two had very different interests. Other times, the relationship did not live up to the ideal of spiritual proximity that students sought. On many of these occasions, students broke up the affair, and these relatively short relationship experiences were construed as unsuccessful and 'childish'. Most Chinese students at UHK sought affairs that were 'serious', meaning that the relationships should be committed and long-term, just as the intimate relationships that most people in the adult world in Hong Kong pursued.

Students that had had a seemingly casual sexual relationship often construed these experiences in relation to the foregrounded sexual script of a long-term committed affair. Sophomore student Norton, for instance, had met a girl on campus in his freshmen year. She was about to leave on an exchange trip to a foreign country. In the week prior to her departure, Norton and she had a number of sexual escapades. This happened when the two of them were hanging out in his dorm room. In contrast to most hookups on US colleges, this was not fueled by alcohol. Norton felt viscerally embarrassed about the experience.

- N: *I have had some, did something, but we didn't have an official relationship.*
- JJS: *What happened?*

N: Just... Do we have to talk about this? [...] I don't want to go in details, but it is just been... I have had some. I mean, so, we knew each other, and we liked each other, and we did not love each other, and so, we were just dating, but that's not really that 'kind' of dating.

JJS: You mean a 'hook up'?

N: Hook up?

JJS: A hook up is like a casual sexual encounter.

N: Not casual, we have had physical contact but it's just a very short period of time (Norton, sophomore student).

Given the situation, Norton and his partner knew that their affair was going to be temporal. 'I think we both knew this relationship was going to be a short-term relationship, we never seriously talked about it.' And in contrast to the prioritized long-term relationships, his affair felt wrong and abject.

While in American constructions of manhood sexual conquest is a means of proving masculinity, for Norton, and other Chinese Hong Kongese students like him, this was not the case.

JJS: Do you discuss that [sexual escapade] with your friends?

N: Just with one, but I didn't tell all the stories.

JJS: Why not?

N: I think that's not accepted in Hong Kong. I feel guilty, but that may not be the case in western countries, but that's in Hong Kong.

JJS: So, why do you feel guilty?

N: I am not really guilty, just not feeling really good. I don't think that [casual sex] is something to prove me to be a guy that is very strong in getting girls. I think that's, how to say, I rather prefer a serious one than a casual one, but I don't know why (Norton, sophomore student).

Interestingly, Norton was familiar with a script of casual sex and with a particular discourse of masculinity in which sexual conquest is a means to prove manhood. He, however, distanced himself from this script and this discourse. In contrast to dominant masculinity of college men in America, sexual conquest was not a rhetoric to prove manhood for male students of UHK. In contemporary Hong Kong, traditional manhood ideals seem to persist. The *wen-wu* dyad of classic Chinese manhood either rejected sexual relations with women or acknowledged them within the context of commitment (Louie, 2002). While young men of Hong Kong are familiar with the sex as conquest discourse of masculinity, they do

not necessarily draw on this to make sense of their own sexual experiences, nor do they attempt to prove their manhood via sexual escapades. On the contrary, young Chinese men at UHK drew from a discourse that resonated with longstanding wen manhood ideals.

THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF *CEOT POOL*

Ceot pool had a prominent position within college campus culture on UHK and was institutionalized within a number of social arrangements on campus. O-camps -orientation camps- were such institutes in which students were socialized in campus culture, and in which students learned about *ceot pool* and were actively encouraged to participate in it. O-camps were organized at the start of the academic year by the different departments and colleges. These were run by senior students with the approval of university administrators and were partly funded by the university. These camps lasted a few days in which groups of students engaged in all sorts of teambuilding activities –for instance city hunts and escape rooms- under the auspices of a mentor, a senior student. For many freshmen, these camps were the first introduction to college campus culture, and, of course, *ceot pool*.

Many of the games that students played within O-camps were, for instance, tailored to create ‘embarrassing moments and intimacy’ (Oran). In one of these games, freshmen had to pass a toothpick from mouth to mouth while holding their hands folded behind their backs. Another game was a ‘water fight’ in which freshmen threw balloons filled with water to each other. In the steamy hot Hong Kong summers, where youth wore few clothes, these ‘water fights’ resulted in a spectacle of semi-nude bodies. The ‘night talks’ were the most eminent institutionalized structure of relationship formation within O-camps. Within these gatherings, which happened during the hot summer nights, mentors actively tried to facilitate romantic couplings among students.

We have a game called the ‘first impression’, and the boys and the girls are divided into two groups and the leaders will provide some questions. Like, have you ever been in a relationship with other girls or boys? Or, who is the most handsome boy? Or, who is the prettiest girl? And people in the different groups will be assigned a number like one, two, three, four or five, and the other group doesn’t know about the number. Like, for example, the question is: Which boy is the most handsome? And the girls will have a vote, but the boy doesn’t know who votes for him [...], but usually they will know who is voting for him or her because the leaders will just tell them to help them to ceot pool (Morten, sophomore student).

The group leaders actively tried to couple freshmen students by eliciting who found who attractive and matching those with mutual interests. These couplings were between freshmen and between freshmen and upperclassmen –the staff on O-camps. Part of the allure of being a ‘mentor’ on O-camps, especially for young men, was its reputation for facilitating intimate connections with female freshmen students. In O-camps, some male upperclassmen used their status as senior students and the naiveté of freshmen to *ceot pool*. I heard one story in which a senior female mentor formed a relationship with a male freshmen student in O-camp, but students stressed that this was an exception. On UHK, and also within Hong Kong, coupling with a younger person is normative for men but not for women.

The mentors also guided the conversation to prompt freshmen’s availability for intimate relationships.

And at night time we have a campfire [...]. We talk [to] each other and we have group leaders for each group. They are the senior students. They will lead the groups, and they will start the conversation and ask questions, [like what is] your status and whether you already have a boyfriend or girlfriend (Oran, senior student).

Within this setting, students reported on their experiences with romantic relationships and on their current relationship status. In student slang, A meant available and O was occupied, which was accompanied by a number that indicated how many intimate relationships a student had had. If one was not sure if the relationship with another person counted as a romantic affair, students described their status with C, meaning complicated.

Additionally, they discussed how much sexual contact they had had within these past relationships. Students reported on their sexual experiences on a scale from one to five, where one implied holding hands, two was hugging, three kissing, four petting and five intercourse. This institutionalized, public conversations about sex were exceptional and contrasted the status quo. Students seldom talked openly about their sexual experiences and only rarely confided with a close circle of good friends. But what these talks established seemed to fit with the conservative sexual culture of UHK. Research on sexual cultures on American campuses shows that students tremendously overestimate the amount of sexual activity of peers and that these overestimations normalize a culture of sexual promiscuity (Bogle, 2008:90; Kalish and Kimmel, 2011:147). Most freshmen students of UHK had no experiences with sex, a fraction had had some light sexual activity in adolescence, and experiences with intercourse were a rarity. The night talks corrected any overestimations that students might have had of the sexual experiences of peers, and it normalized a peer

culture where sex was notoriously absent. Night talks about sex in O-camp were thus overly conservative in what they conveyed.

None of the students believed that young men inflated their numbers. Young women, on the other hand, were not sure about the truthfulness of the reported sexual experiences of their female peers and suggested that there might be some underreporting.

JJS: Do you think they were telling the truth, or were they a little bit underestimating [it]?

T: Most boys are telling the truth, but girls I don't know (laughing) (Tam, freshman student).

It seems plausible that the young women at O-camp were telling the truth, since hardly any sexual activity was reported by young men, and surveys about sexual experiences among youth in Hong Kong indicate that a small fraction of adolescent boys and girls have had intercourse (TFPAHK, 2011:81). What Tam's remarks show, along with those of other female students, is the presence of a double standard on UHK. Keeping one's virginity until marriage is still highly valued for women in Hong Kong. While premarital sex had no, or little, negative reputational consequences for young men, this was different for young women. Sexual experiences could severely damage their reputations and consequently their standing on and outside of campus.

Besides in O-camps, *ceot pool* was institutionalized in other social arrangements on campus. Departments, colleges and even some student societies ran Secret Angel Programs over the course of a few weeks at the beginning of the academic year. These programs were designed for students to meet other students. Two roles existed within these programs, that of the master and that of the angel. An organizing committee, often of senior students, coupled the participants with one another. Every student played both the master and the angel role. While the angel knew who the master was, the angel stayed anonymous to the master during the course of the program.

An angel did all sort of niceties for the master. He or she would send small gifts to the master, for instance sweets or stationary. On rainy days, angels left umbrellas outside of the master's classroom, so he or she could walk over the extensive UHK campus in the pouring rain without getting wet. Angels sent attentive and flattering text messages to masters and provided support and care. Oran, for instance, organized hiking trips for the faculty during the period of the Secret Angel Program. These events attracted little interest of fellow students, however, a small group of

friends always joined these trips. One of them was Oran's secret angel, who mobilized her friends to join and support the activities he organized.

The true identity of the angels was revealed at the end of the program at a party hosted by the organizing committee. Most of the matches were between young men and young women, but this was not guaranteed, hence masters were never entirely sure of the angels' sex. While students emphasized that these programs were primarily about fostering friendships, they did have an undeniable romantic undertone. This was apparent in the Secret Angel Program that ran between the engineering and nursing faculties, two disciplines with unbalanced sex ratios. While romantic coupling might not be the stated aim of these programs, it was undeniably a match-making institution. Most students reported that the Secret Angel Program did not result in continued friendships or romances. For Oran, however, it was a prelude to a friendship and eventually a long-term intimate relationship, and at the time of the interview the two lovers had plans of marriage.

PEER CONTROL AND CONFORMITY OF GENDER AND SEX NORMS

Residential college campuses are often tightly integrated communities with strong peer control that demand a high degree of conformity from students. UHK was no exception, as the dominant sexual culture was rigorously maintained. This did not only occur through the institutes of relationship formation, but also resulted from peer control and peer policing of gender and sexual norms. Inappropriate gender behavior within the realm of courtship was policed by students by the invocation of certain abysmal symbolic identities. These 'abysmal specters' were cultural categories containing 'abject' gender practices within the realm courtship, incongruent with the dominant ideals of manhood and womanhood in *ceot pool* (Pascoe, 2007).

Social constructivist theorists of gender argue that gender constantly needs to be 'performed' within the interaction order to acquire its seemingly natural and coherent character. Gender is done as 'a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being' (Butler, 1990:43). Gender norms are constantly reinvigorated by actors within the interaction order. As Pascoe (2007) –drawing on Butler (1990)- argues, this endless invocation of gender norms is done by a continuous naming of an 'outsider', an abject category containing acts that fall outside the normative gender categories. By continuously naming the gendered outsider, actors 'do' gender. However, these 'abysmal specters' are also linked to gendered sexual norms.

Invoking the abysmal specter is thus not only about doing gender, it is also about continuously invigorating sexual norms. Like gender, these norms need to be made and remade continuously, and this is done by student of UHK through their labeling of abysmal specters.

One of these abysmal specters was the *gun jam* –觀 (gun1)音(jam1)- and the *gun jam bing* –觀 (gun1)音(jam1)兵(bing1)- category, which translate loosely to a goddess and the goddess soldiers. A *gun jam* in students' argot was an exceptionally beautiful young woman with many admirers –soldiers- who performed a gamut of tasks for her, for instance, taking her out for dinner, paying her bills, writing her academic assignments and buying her gifts. The relationship between *gun jam* and *gun jam bing* is inherently exploitative. *Gun jam bing* might think that all these acts of affection and care lead to a relationship with the *gun jam*, but this is never the case. The *gun jam* keeps her soldiers on a leash, always asking for additional favors without ever reciprocating them romantically.

It is this concept that the girl has this many guys around her, and there's no intimate interest. It's just that people are following her to do stuff for her. But yeah, it's very common in local schools. Because she is super pretty, and she has a lot of followers, and they will do things for her because she is very popular and she's well looked up too (Sandy, freshman student).

All students knew the category and used it to denote certain gendered intimate behavior that was incongruent with dominant ideals of womanhood on campus. Surprisingly, few students knew a *gun jam* first hand. She was often a distant specter that was prevalent on other campuses.

The typology of *gun jam* and *gun jam bing* could be used as flirtatious play. Students ironically called girls *gun jam*, or the more positive *neo san* –女(neoi5)神(san4) –*gun jam* without *gun jam bing*- to complement them on their looks. Young men used *gun jam bing* as a form of self-labeling, to playfully insinuate that they admired the young woman for her beauty. However, underneath this whimsical usage of the terms lay an underlying critique of a particular set of gender relations and sexual practices. No young woman, for instance, would use *gun jam* or *neo san* as a self-label. When I asked freshman student Sandy, who was obviously popular in the college dating scene, if peers called her a *gun jam* or *neo san*, she responded: 'No, I have admirers, but if I'm not interested I will just tell them.' The usage of the terms implied that courtship should never be exploitative, and female students should only flirt with men when they were 'seriously' interested in a committed relationship.

JJS: *So, is it a good or a bad thing to be a gun jam?*

M: *I think it's a bad thing, extremely bad.*

JJS: *Why?*

M: *Because the gun jam asks for service[s]. You have to help me do this thing, and [...] even [if] she has a boyfriend, she will ask for other boys to help her. It means she's not serious enough to have that relationship (Maria, freshman student).*

The symbolic specter of the *gun jam* and a *gun jam bing* and the way they were used was intrinsically a critique on young women's flirtatious play outside the context of a committed relationship. Such play was allowed in the relationship formation process but only if the young woman was 'serious', meaning that she was primed to form a long-term, monogamous dyad with a young man. Additionally, such play was allowed within the context of a committed, monogamous relationship. The continuous usage of the *gun jam* and *gun jam bing* categories therefore affirmed the long-term monogamous relationships as a dominant script on campus.

The *gun jam* category not only entailed a gendered critique on intimate practices that defied the dominant sexual script, it occasionally also criticized a particular femininity. This became apparent in my conversation with sophomore student Clint.

The gun jam in Hong Kong likes to pretend to be an ABC. This means American-born Chinese. They pretend to be American or Canadian in their tongue, and actually they are not because they think that it is more attractive to be an ABC or BBC. Usually their hair will be very long, and they wear a lot of makeup, and their dress is very sexy, having short pants and low-cut shirts. That is one of the symbols for the gun jam (Clint, freshman student).

The *gun jam* label at times seemed to coincide with the 'whore stigma' (Pheterson, 1996). 'Whore', in this case, is a label to denote a wide set of deviations from White middle-class ideals of womanhood, amongst which are sexual licentiousness, autonomy from men and immodesty in demeanor and attire (Pheterson, 1996:84). In contrast to the broad category of the 'whore', a *gun jam*, however, was commonly reserved to denote a specific type of inappropriate gender behavior, namely within the context of courtship between men and women. Students had a term for slut, *gei neoi* – 妓(gei6)女(neoi5) – meaning chicken and slang for prostitute. This term, however, was extremely vulgar, and students mentioned that it was seldom used to

denote fellow students. It was only used on rare occasions, when it explicitly referred to the sexual licentiousness of female students. The *gun jam* also bore close resemblance to the 'gold digger' construct, a common trope in the symbolic repertoire of American college students to denote exploitive behavior of women in intimate relationships. However, unlike the 'gold digger', the *gun jam* abstained from sex for material rewards but instead used her charm. At UHK this instrumental, materialistic femininity was devalued. Students thus utilized the *gun jam* concept primarily to denote inappropriate gender acts within *ceot pool*.

The *gun jam bing* typology, on the other hand, applied to inappropriate practices of men within their intimate interactions with women. While male students could playfully denote their own behavior with the *gun jam bing* construct, it was an abject identity when applied to others. The *gun jam bing* denoted a set of practices that was not viable for young men in the context of courtship, such as being overly accommodating, servicing and subjugated.

JJS: Is it bad to be a gun jam bing?

C: Yes, definitely.

JJS: Can you give an example of a gun jam bing?

C: Well Jacob is definitely a gun jam bing, as a gun jam bing. You have a lot of duties. If you just hang out with a gun jam, you need to pay for her dinner. If the gun jam wants to go shopping, you will need to pay the bill for her, and that is why they are called gun jam bing (Clint, freshman student).

The men and women touched by the specters of the *gun jam bing* and the *gun jam* felt the repercussions. Clint and Jacob, for instance, met each other on O-camp. While they initially got along well, Clint's stance towards Jacob changed after Jacob became accommodating and servicing towards a young woman. Jacob and his flirt became a source of mockery among his friends and this had social consequences.

C: Jacob [...] was playing with other groups, with some girl that is really outgoing and likes to flirt with other boys, and we do not like that girl. So, we just created another group with me and the other girls, but I think Jacob didn't recognize that we created a new group, but since then we didn't post any pictures or have chats in that group, and we talk about things about Jacob and the girl in our new group.

JJS: So what didn't you like about the girl?

C: Well, in Hong Kong we have a new term which is called the gun jam, which means that the girl is really beautiful and smart, but the personality of the girl

is a bit bad because she loves to flirt with boys but not being together with the boy. So, that gun jam will have a lot of boyfriends, and she will have a lot of male friends around her, and that we call a gun jam (Clint, freshman student).

Carrying the *gun jam* and *gun jam bing* labels could result in subtle forms of social exclusion. This was not radical exclusion, in that students withheld all contact with the stigmatized persons, but it meant that these defamed individuals were given cold shoulders, hampering their ability to forge friendships on campus.

Besides the *gun jam* and her *bing*, another prominent figure in the symbolic repertoire of college campus culture was the *gau gung* – 狗 (gau2) 公 (gung1) – literally meaning male dog and similar to the concept ‘player’ within American popular culture. A *gau gung* was a boy who aggressively and indiscriminately pursued a multitude of girls for intimate relationships, both successfully and fruitlessly.

There is a stereotype of gau gung, something [like] describing a boy as a dog [...] because some boys like to flirt [with] many girls, and then we describe them as a dog [...] because when a dog wants to have babies, they will also run to other dogs to have reproduction. [...] So, we will describe those boys as dogs because they are just chasing other girls all around and keep flirting with them (Elza, sophomore student).

Students used the term to denote a set of inappropriate acts by men in the intimate realm. Freshmen student Marion, for instance, triggered the interest of a fellow student on a college organized study trip to Thailand. During the trip, the young man became progressively closer to her and clearly signaled his interest. The unwanted attention continued after their return to Hong Kong. The young man kept sending messages, despite Marion ignoring his calls.

He called me eleven times, and... my sister answered one for me, and she lets me hear his voice and hear what he's saying. My sister said 'oh she's in the bathroom', and the boy is saying: 'Oh please, oh please talk to me, let me talk to you'. It's so disgusting for me because it's kind of annoying for me. I think that is not normal approach. Yeah, and this is the first time I meet this kind of guy who is so desperate. That is called gau gung in Chinese, like, that means the boy is so desperate and their actions are so fast. [...] He sent me a few voice messages [that] last for three minutes, and I don't even want to listen. I don't want to hear that voice, and then I give [my phone to] some friends to hear, to listen to that, and then my friends said: 'Oh, he's really gau gung' (Marion, freshman student).

The *gau gung* was an abject identity with which students denoted unacceptable sexual practices of men, such as an overly assertive, maybe at times even aggressive, pursuit of women, expressing a romantic interest shortly after meeting, and pursuing multiple women within a short time frame. The *gau gung* was a commentary on demoted intimate affairs on campus and affirmed dominant sexual norms. The usage of the term affirmed that intimate relationships should emerge within the context of a previously established friendship, in which the buildup towards a romance was cautious and slow. Within this script, a man should only express a romantic interest after thoroughly knowing and appreciating the woman's personality, and he should be primed towards a long-term commitment.

The *gau gung* category showed a vastly different college campus sexual culture from what is known from US counterparts. On US campuses, the 'player' is often, at least among young men, a high-status identity. On UHK a masculine status-enhancing dynamic of sexual conquest was largely absent, concomitant with conventional *wen-wu* ideals of manhood (Louie, 2002). When discussing the sexual double standard on UHK in relation to that of American college campus culture, one male student remarked the following:

For the guys, it's not the same [in Hong Kong]. I mean for the guy, I think people would think that you're a bad guy, that you have a lot of relationships. So, [he's] dangerous people! But for the girls it's the same as [in] the western countries (Norton, sophomore student).

Other male students were less explicit in their renunciation of players. Sophomore student Ike, for instance, mentioned that he respected players. The appreciation, in contrast to the American 'player', was not related to the sexual conquest of women itself, but to the good social skills that one needed in order to lure women into intimate and sexual affairs. 'I admire those players, because it is not easy to be a player. You have to be very charming (Ike).' According to Ike, there was a sexual double standard in college intimate and sexual culture on UHK. 'If girls are players, they are called sluts, or whore –*gei neoi* - and boys would just be playboys and the comments are less serious (Ike).' Non-monogamous sexuality was stigmatized for both young men and women on UHK, but the repercussions of such behavior were more serious for the latter than the former.

Gun jam, *gun jam bing* and *gau gung* were abject identities. These categories were not permanent identity markers, but were temporary labels that stuck to individuals who acted incongruently with dominant ideals of femininity and masculinity. These labels were symbolic tools to discipline gender inappropriate acts, especially within

the realm of intimate relationships. The *gun jam*, *gun jam bing* and *gau gung*, were symbolic entities with which students invoked and invigorated gender and sex norms. By drawing on these stereotypes, students continuously made and remade the ordering of sexual scripts on college campus, with casual sex at the debased bottom and a privileged long-term monogamous dyad at the top.

YOUTH SEXUALITY AS REBELLION?

The sexual mores of youth often contrast those of the adult world, and this contrast is one of the defining markers with which distinctions between youth and adulthood are made. At times, this distinct sexual code of youth is a form of rebellion against the adult norms, which are perceived as formal, rigid and conservative. Adults, on the other hand, often see these distinct sexual codes of youth as ‘dangerous’ and ‘immoral’. This perspective on youth sexuality is particularly dominant in America, where youth construe their sexual norms as ‘liberated’ in contrast to the rigid sexual norms of adulthood. Adults, on the other hand, ‘dramatize’ youth’s sexuality and construe it as ‘risky’, flawed by uncontrollable urges that are potentially detrimental for adolescents’ emotional and relational development (Schalet, 2011:17). Students of UHK also had a distinct sexual culture, but to what extent was *ceot pool* a rebellion against adult sexual norms?

Before the students entered university in Hong Kong, their parents almost univocally forbade them to form intimate relationships. Instead, parents believed their children should devote all their time and energy to academic achievements. This form of ‘family governmentality’ made sense in the specific cultural and political economic environment of Hong Kong, in which families were responsible for their own material survival and scholarly excellence was culturally valued. When students entered university, however, nearly all parents changed their perspective on the desirability of intimate relationships for their children, and they inflicted a relationship imperative on their children. Most parents saw university as a suitable environment for their children to find a marriage partner, since it was an environment with many ambitious and talented youth who would likely secure a prosperous future. When students reached their early twenties, most family members started to pressure them to form committed relationships. This was especially pronounced around the Chinese New Year. In this festival, married relatives gave envelopes with money –red envelopes– to their single family members and inquired about their relationship status, often whimsically urging them to find a significant other, for instance, by saying ‘better to give this to others and not receive anymore’ (Marion).

I: *I want to have a family and I want to have children, and I have family pressure, because in the Chinese New Year my relatives will say: 'Oh, you are going to retire? What are you going to do?' 'Are you going to play grandson?' And then I say: 'hahaha,' [sarcastically] because I am not in a relationship.*

JJS: *Really?*

I: *It is kind of teasing, but also giving pressure (Ike, sophomore student).*

Ceot pool was a distinct element of college campus culture on UHK, but it did not contrast the adult sexual norms. The sexual norms on campus corresponded to those of the adult world, and parents and senior family members hoped that students would *ceot pool*.

The surveillance of the sexuality of youth was part of the practices of 'family governmentality' in Hong Kong. This was also the case in later years, when youth were enrolled in university. The focus of the surveillance differed for young men and young women. Within Confucian traditions, the continuation of the family lineage is of utmost importance and is the responsibility of sons (Hwang, 1999; Kong, 2004). Thus, family pressure to form relationships was more pronounced for young men than for women. On the other hand, male students were free to choose their own partners, while some women reported that their parents interfered with their choice of dates. One female student, Rachel (23), for instance mentioned that her parents strongly disapproved of her previous date. The young man was not a university student and her parents deemed it likely that he would have a lower income than her in the future. Down dating was generally not acceptable for women, and many parents were particularly adamant about this. Men, on the other hand, had no such restrictions. Dating with fellow university students was preferred, but none of the male interviewees mentioned indictments against dating a young woman of lower social economic status.

While virginity until marriage was not a concern for men, it was for women, and some mothers at times inquired about their daughters' sexual experiences and asserted the importance of keeping one's virginity until marriage. Some mothers in Hong Kong thus surveilled their daughters' sexuality severely, as Jackson and Ho (2014) also found. Sandy's story indicated that this surveillance of sexuality continued even when virginity was no longer an option. Sandy told her mother about her hookup experience in her freshmen year. Her mother's response was surprisingly understanding, even though she had repeatedly told Sandy about the importance of keeping one's virginity. Her mother even shared a similar experience she had had in her youth. Nevertheless, in the weeks following the revelation, her mother kept a close check on Sandy's activities.

- S: After a few weeks, she was more cautious when I was going out and meeting people because she would think that I was just going ahead and do things.*
- JJS: What would she do?*
- S: She would just ask me: 'who are you going out with? Where are you going? How long?' She wanted to know all these details, 'Is it a girl or is this a guy?' (Sandy, freshman student).*

For Sandy, these inflictions of her mother felt like signs of distrust and moral condemnation. Sandy did, however, alter her perspective on sex and relationships. 'Now I know myself a bit more. You have to experience these things to know what you are looking for. I wouldn't do it casually anymore' (Sandy). Sandy realigned her convictions about sex and relationships with the sexual mores of her parents. In the end, her mother's surveillance accomplished its intent.

Students did not rebel against the sexual mores of their parents' generation, but they often critiqued the lack of emotional intimacy and spiritual closeness in their parents' relationships. Students framed the relationships of their parents as being 'cold', which contrasted their aspirations for their own relationships.

- I: They [parents] were introduced by their friends, [...] and then they went on a date, and I don't know exactly how many dates they went on- maybe like two or three. They didn't meet very much, and then they got married. [...]*
- JJS: 2 or 3 dates?*
- I: Yes, but it was very normal in that time, [...] you would just get married in a very short period. Like nowadays, we want to know each other and see if we are suitable for each other, blablabla (Irene, sophomore student).*

Not all students' parents got married in such a short period of time, but, like Irene, most students saw a dramatic change in the relationship ideals of theirs and the previous generation. Their parents often got together out of filial obligation, while they partnered out of a sincere appreciation of their partner's personality and out of an intensely felt and cherished emotional proximity. For students, this latter motive was the only viable one for forging intimate relationships and thus, in a way, it devalued the authenticity of their parents' relationships. While sexual norms of students of UHK largely overlapped with those of the previous generations, their aspirational ideals differed. The 'transformation of intimacy' was a youth rebellion in Hong Kong.

CONCLUSION

University Hong Kong had a distinct courtship regime called *ceot pool* that contrasted profoundly with the hook ups on American college campuses. *Ceot pool* was a relatively short time period in which two students moved from friendship or acquaintance towards a monogamous dyad. It had distinct courtship rituals in which the young man proposed a relationship and the young woman asked for a time for contemplation. Within this time, students talked about the expectations of the relationship, about the roles they wanted to play in each other's lives, about their ambition to morally and emotionally support each other, and about their desire for a deep spiritual connection. Sex was not a part of *ceot pool*. Sexual activity was only deemed appropriate within a committed relationship and only then when partners had been together for an extensive period of time. Within the committed relationship, a slow intensification of sexual activity coincided with a gradual buildup of emotional intimacy.

Sexual norms were rigorously maintained on UHK, partly through the institutionalized nature of *ceot pool* and partly through the high level of social control on campus. *Ceot pool* was entrenched within various social institutions on campus, such as Orientation camps and Secret Angel Programs, which rigidified the sexual regime. Furthermore, the UHK student body was a tightly integrated community, with thick and extensively entwined networks of students. As is often the case in such environments, social control was fierce, and this impacted sexual norms. The abject gender constructs of *gun jam*, *gun jam bing* and *gau gung* were invoked by students to police transgressions of sexual behavior and thus to instantiate dominant sexual mores.

While *ceot pool* was the regime of courtship on UHK, students were knowledgeable about other sexual scripts. These sexual scripts were part of the symbolic repertoire of students and were infused with moral values that positioned them in a hierarchical order. Hooking up was a known script on campus, but was debased and largely considered an ideational construct with which students reflected upon their own intimate doings. In comparison with the hookup script, their intimate relationships seemed successful and respectable. Grand narratives of modernity sketch a homogenization of sexuality and intimate relationships in the world. In these narratives, sex is increasingly decoupled from committed relationships. My research suggests that modernity in Hong Kong indeed meant that a script of casual sex was part of the symbolic repertoire, but this did not mean that it was an enacted practice. On the contrary, the hookup script on University Hong Kong was a symbolic resource with which students constructed boundaries between us and them,

between their sexual practices and those on American college campuses. Rather than a homogenization of sexuality in modernity, Hong Kong illustrates the opposite, as the globalization of sexual scripts increased the symbolic resources that students utilized to mark distinctions.

Seemingly similar changes in material, economic and juridical gender relations around the world do not necessarily result in similar changes in sex and intimate relationships, as grand narratives of modernity seem to suggest. In Hong Kong, just as in America, women have entered the labor force *en masse* and outnumber and outperform men in higher education. This enhanced the autonomy of women, however, has resulted in a slight, but not drastic relaxation of the restrictions on female sexuality. Within *ceot pool*, women were responsible for maintaining sexual boundaries, and the social consequences for breaking sexual norms were larger for women than for men. Despite the large inroads towards gender equality in Hong Kong, inequalities in norms regulating young men's and women's sexualities pertain.

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