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The Lingnan Commentary 嶺南評論 : A
Quarterly Review of Economic, Business and
Social Issues by Lingnan University

Hong Kong Institute of Business Studies 香港商
學研究所

11-2003

The Lingnan Commentary - November 2003 (No. 8)

Hong Kong Institute of Business Studies, Lingnan University

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Recommended Citation

Hong Kong Institute of Business Studies, Lingnan University (2003). The Lingnan commentary: A quarterly review of economic, business and social issues = 嶺南評論, No. 8. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Institute of Business Studies, Lingnan University. Retrieved from <http://commons.ln.edu.hk/lnc/7/>

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「二十一世紀香港新一代的成長」專輯

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Editorial

How We Have Failed Our New Generation!

Astronaut Yang Li-wei on his visit to Hong Kong once gave three salutes to a large group of young students. He explained: "I salute you because both the Hong Kong of tomorrow and the China of tomorrow will belong to you."

How true this is. Hong Kong will in time be in the hands of our presently young generation. Yet we are hearing laments about how disappointing our younger generation has become: their poor language skills, their lack of confidence, their lack of a goal in life, their addiction to computer games, their careless sex, their disrespect for teachers, their lack of reverence for their seniors, their lawlessness, their proneness to vandalism...

How unfair these laments are if they are meant to be a criticism of the new generation! And how irresponsible are those of us, who have actually contributed to the plight and weaknesses of our younger generation, to put all the blame on the future masters of Hong Kong!

Of course our young men and women, and boys and girls, must learn to take responsibility of their own lives, and must learn to grow out of the difficulties which they are currently facing. They must not blame others for their ills because this will not change the picture. But similarly we adults must not blame our youngsters. We must also see what can be done to make good all the wrongs that we have done.

It is true that language skills are declining. It is true that self-confidence is waning. It is true that many of our young people have lost directions and do not know what to do or what to strive for. It is true that there is much to be desired of the manners of many of our youngsters and of their attitudes.

Yet it was adults, particularly policy makers, who had dictated that our younger generations learn English using the "communicative approach." It was the education authorities that had deprived them of the opportunity to learn the basic rules of grammar. Under the banner of "education reform" bureaucrats

decided that drilling was bad, and went about discouraging or even depriving them of the opportunity of doing sufficient drilling for them to write grammatical English. If they never had the opportunity to learn correct grammar in schools, how can we blame them for their poor English and their lack of confidence?

Education “experts” advised that students were also not supposed to recite any text, and that students should be taught in the mother tongue--unless they could prove themselves adequate for being taught in English. However, after our young students have already formed a habit of thinking and reading and writing in Chinese, fully having the “Chinese mindset” entrenched, at the senior high school level the education authorities allowed schools to switch the language of instruction to English. You can guess the consequences because at senior high school, academic standards are much higher so being able to understand teachers’ explanations is far more important than in the primary school or in kindergarten.

It was the “education experts” who had control over policy that had decided that students should be classified into five bands and be assigned secondary schools accordingly. Having thus imposed great pressures on our kids to drill, they then put the blame on examinations as if examinations were the source of all the pressures. They then invented the “academic aptitude test” intending to alleviate the pressures. Expectedly, this did not work, because the diagnosis was wrong in the first place. Under the banding system, it was not surprising that kids would

drill desperately to prepare for the aptitude test, and ignored training in reading, writing, and arithmetic.

After years of muddling through, the education authorities recently decided that three bands would be better than five and that continuous assessment based on school results, rather than public examinations, should form the basis for classification.

Do they understand the effects of what they are doing? As far as I can see, after all these years they have not really learnt. Our younger generations have become the guinea pigs for their bold but heartless and thoughtless experiments.

While we adults had poorly failed our younger generations, our younger generations remain the hope of Hong Kong. In the Conference organized by the Lingnan Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences, the HK Federation of Youth Groups, and Hong Kong Polytechnic University’s Centre for Social Policy Studies, we have seen samples of very bright minds among our young. We can see that they dream big dreams, and are assertive and 100% human like all young people anywhere. In the face of their energy and active search for a dream, those of us who had done them a disservice must really wake up and do a good review of what we have done.

To put it simply, we must not keep building pressure cookers and leave them inside to cook, and then blame them for being cooked alive!

What Can the Government Do To Help Young People

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摘要

外界對傳媒、教師、社工和商界如何為下一代創造一個良好的生長環境爭論不休。然而常常忽視作為社會基礎的家庭的角色。本文指出，現行的有關法律加劇家庭分化。政府應通過改善法律、稅制、社會福利和教育體制來維護家庭的完整。

In recent years, there have been a lot of discussions focusing on the development of young people in Hong Kong. Most people have been deeply concerned about the ability of young people to compete in the era of globalized economy and about youth unemployment problems.

The government has worked with business sector and NGOs to provide short-term jobs to alleviate the problem of youth unemployment. This effort should be appreciated.

Unfortunately, too much attention has been focused on the language abilities, global outlook and attitude of young people in workplaces, the declining moral standards of teenagers, such as indicated by their susceptibility to drug abuses and selling pirated entertainment products. The building block of the society—the family, has been largely neglected.

The education system and the quality of education are also in a mess. But I would like to discuss the breakdown of the family first, because this has certainly a big impact on the development of young people.

The sorry state of families

Consider what is happening to our families. Everyday newspapers carry stories of family violence, murders of family members, and increasing divorce cases and abortion cases of teenage girls. What has gone wrong?

Individualistic behaviour, nurtured by the onset of information technology and a corrupt media, people think, could be the reason for the increasing family problems.

The economic reform of China since 1978 while attracting foreign investments, has led to a surge in extra-martial affairs because of the need for a spouse to work on the mainland away from home. Divorce cases are now at an all time high.

The financial pressure is high particularly for mothers when fathers abandon their families for other women. The society will end up footing the bill of caring for the family as it applies for CSSA and other assistance.

Some women, who are not qualified for CSSA, may have to work longer or go back to work to make a living. Could young people learn to be good

citizens when their parents fail to set a good example?
Absolutely Not!

Some youth may be fortunate enough to have teachers, relatives and friends from their churches as the role models. But others may end up becoming triad members. They commit crimes and abuse drugs. Help, if it ever comes, is often too late.

What can the government do?

What can the government do to help our young people to enjoy a happy home?

It is acknowledged that we have already had youth commission to make recommendations on youth development. It has however focused on vocational and occupational training, rather than integrated youth development.

It is vital for families to be involved to equip youth for the challenge in adult lives. It is sad that the suggestion for a complete family policy went unheeded.

Divorce education should be implemented and made compulsory so that a divorced couple and to-be stepparents can better manage physical, property and emotional issues. All children should also be assigned to a social worker to monitor their psychological, mental, emotional and physical development till 18.

Can the government assist families financially?

As a starter, the government can offer an annual tax credit to a couple so as to reward their effort in sustaining the relationship.

For childbearing families, it is attractive to offer a further tax credit on them when the child reaches a certain age in order to encourage parents to invest more on the next generation. It is unreasonable for the government not to offer proportional tax credit after the third child.

CSSA should be amended to reduce the stipend for applicants whose marriages end up in dissolution. Also a time limit for the payout may give them an incentive to plan for post-divorce living

School vouchers for the next generation

One way to help the new generations to escape from the vicious circle of poverty-low education-poverty is to introduce a system of school vouchers, with the amount based on the income of an individual family. Such vouchers should be distributed to allow parents to “buy” their favourite education for their children. Education is an investment for long term returns. While our middle-class and upper class families can opt for another system when one fails them, shouldn't our poor families also have that choice? To argue that parents may not know how to choose is quite unfair.

I believe through competition and genuine choices, school performance will improve. Parents from all walks of life will be more committed to improving schools. Students will have more talents discovered. Teachers and NGOs that run schools

need to think more over course improvement and attract students. All parents should be allowed to “shop” for the best education. Such a measure reduces segregation as well. We can even encourage for-profit making companies to invest in education for expanding choices on parents.

The society has already suffered too much from the collapse of families. Social spending to help single families has skyrocketed. We have mixed values on the next generations. We are not working hard to preserve marriages, but are destroying them. The new generations will only be psychologically and mentally inferior if they are brought up in such dysfunctional families. If they have life-long problems like drug abuse and violence more resources will have to be committed to deal with them.

It is hoped that family law, tax reform, marriage planning, family education and social security can all be upgraded so our new generation will grow up in healthy and happy homes.

家庭與父母對培養青少年之責任 「讓兒童在無暴力的家庭中成長」

雷張慎佳

防止虐待兒童會

Abstract

The family is under increasing stress in Hong Kong today under the pressures of a declining economy and pressures of rapid changes. The new generation has been exposed to threats of violence both within the family and without, and they are

paying a price in terms of poorer health, emotional stability, intellectual development, and academic performance.

These have become challenges for the government and the entire community. They must work together to establish new direction, new strategies and to allocate adequate resources to help our new generation.

二十一世紀是一個國際化、資訊科技發展迅速、實踐民主人權信念的世紀。國際間互相影響、彼此牽制，意圖達成更多的共識。而在合作和協調方面作出相應的努力。以往，許多被認為是其他國家的問題，例如：戰爭、傳染病、貧困、互聯網罪行、兒童色情物品、性旅遊等，對市民不但不再陌生，而且變得與市民息息相關、刻不容緩，必須作出適當對策。

資訊科技發展迅速，加速了資訊的傳遞，拉近了人與人之間的距離。使我們每一天迅速地知道世界各地的大事，也第一時間把香港的現況和關注帶上國際大舞台。因應資訊科技發展而受影響的結構性及人際關係方面的問題，實在不容忽視。

在一片渴求自由民主的呼聲中，家長式管理和霸權主義受到莫大挑戰。實踐民主、尊重人權是更多市民的訴求，而廿一世紀亦步入一個群眾參與的局面。群眾熱切的參與，竟然一度改變重大的決策。七月一日香港和平的大遊行和反對維港填海的行動是最明顯的例子。

在過去半個世紀，香港一方面經歷戰後的穩定繁榮，另一方面在殖民主義孕育下享受自由卻欠民主意識，並帶著只有現在和無根無國的心態。

剛進入廿一世紀面對回歸祖國後各種各類的大小轉變，在處理一國兩制和社會定位方面經歷了莫大的壓力。又要同時應付由經濟危機、財赤、失業、貧富懸殊加劇而引發的困擾。再加上社會警覺性不足、醫療體系在制度和溝通上出現問題、在應付突如其來的沙士病毒出現束手無策的情況。整個社會就像一個長時間被困的怒漢，從惶恐不安到充滿怨氣暴戾，終於在忍無可忍的情況下，用最大的努力，意圖掙脫壓在背上的枷鎖。

在成人忙於應付這許多挑戰的同期，香港家庭的凝聚力倒退 200%。首當其衝影響青少年生命的方向、意義和價值，自我形象的成人，包括父母、親人、師長和團體包括：家庭、學校、宗教或社會團體、傳媒都在結構、關係和意識形態方面經歷著前所未有的衝擊。

單親家庭、離婚後重建的家庭、破碎的家庭都有驟升危機。核心主流家庭面對的壓力層出不窮。在二零零三年的香港竟有高達卅多萬的貧困家庭。其中最少有三萬名生活在貧窮線以下，居住在面積平均少過二十二平方呎破舊的住所。最多甚至四十一人共用一廁一廚房。（東方日報二零零三年十月八日）

婚外情的個案，一九九五至二零零二年尋求明愛熱線輔導的約有 168,259 宗。虐兒及性侵犯的個案亦不斷被舉報，防止虐待兒童會在一九九五至二零零二年的熱線共有 5,080 宗。向專業團體求助的家庭暴力案件，二零零二年就有三千多宗，每天達八宗。自殺率為卅年前有統計以來最高，二零零二年有一千一百多人自殺，平均每天三人。（東方日報二零零三年九月廿二日）二零零一年兇殺案六十六案，比前一年增加 53% 以上，其中四十宗涉及家庭糾紛，九名十二歲以下兒童慘死。

廿一世紀香港的新一代就在這樣的家庭狀況和社會氣氛下成長。受影響的青少年包括：耳聞目睹、直接參與、間接知悉、當時見証、事後理解父母親友以攻擊及強逼性的行為對待摯親的，又何止統計數字所涵蓋的！

難怪許多青少年在知識基礎、領導才能、審美意識、道德行為意向及解決問題的能力方面，發展指標平均分最低。而最顯著在指標中有下降跡象的是情緒穩定、對社會進步及美好生活的訴求方面。（香港青年發展議會：青年發展指標研究報告 1999/6-2001/8 全人——在德、智、體、群、美五育方面發展評估與研究）

受家庭暴力及紛爭影響的孩子有行為外在化的影響，變得有暴力傾向、惹事生非或甚至希望殺死父親，因為他欺凌自己摯愛的人。這些孩子內在的行為深受影響，常感害怕、恐懼不安、忿怒無助、抑鬱。在身體、健康、智力及學術方面也一蹶不振。社會發展方面亦變得操控性、角色

混淆，戀愛及婚姻暴力亦容易出現。這些青少年有時由於成人把他們的問題簡單化或正常化而不敢或不肯求助。

和任何一個年代成長的青少年一樣，香港的青少年有著自己的獨特性，希望被尊重，共同的需要：被愛和接納及不同的訴求。無奈他們四週的成人常因忙於處理彼此間的紛爭、壓力以及內心矛盾，往往在新一代摸索前路時無暇諄諄善誘，及時指點迷津或以身作則，教導非暴力排難解紛，適當處理壓力，應付問題的方法。

一直以來政府在「過期」的福利白皮書及特首施政報告中認定養兒育女是父母的基本責任，而香港的政策旨在「支援」及「鞏固家庭」，並對不幸無助的「施以援手」。如果，以上提到的家庭凝聚力倒退，社會問題層出不窮，確實反映現時香港家庭現狀的危機。香港必須馬上檢討在過往「支援」、「鞏固家庭」、「施以援手」的方向、方法和投以的資源方面的不足，尋求具體和更有效的方法，有系統、有策略地協助父母扮演有效的角色。在預防與治療，法治與人權並重的情況下，正規化、普及化及加快公民教育的步伐，使兒童、青少年、家長、成人掌握積極溝通方法，作明智決策，處理忿怒、紛爭。並著重感受及情緒，平衡關係處理，認識自己，發揮優質全人教育。

只有在方向鮮明，整個社會參與，當權者公平、公正、公義的領導下，家庭才獲得支援和鞏固。廿一世紀的新一代才能在愛與關懷，和平的

心境下，強化應付挑戰的能力，擁有國際視野，承擔對家庭社會的責任！

專題報告：

「二十一世紀香港新一代的成長」研討會

A Report on the Conference “Growing Up in Hong Kong in the 21st Century”

This conference, held from July 5 to July 7 2003 on the Lingnan campus, was jointly organized by the Lingnan Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences, the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, and the Centre for Social Policy Studies of the HK Polytechnic University, with assistance from RTHK and the Youth Outreach. The conference addressed key issues relating to the plight and the development of the new generation. Special sessions focus on the media, the family, the education system, and the role of social workers, against the backdrop of a declining economy and social distress.

是次研討會於 2003 年 7 月 5 日至 7 日在嶺南大學舉行。主辦機構有嶺南大學人文及社會科學研究所、香港青年協會青年研究中心、香港理工大學應用社會科學系社會政策研究中心；協辦機構有香港電台和協青社。大會就以下幾個主題展開討論。一、香港新一代的成長環境；二、家庭與青少年的關係；三、媒體與青少年的關係，及四、教育與青少年的關係。

第一個主題，探討香港新一代的成長的社會環境因素。由於出生率下降，青少年的生活環境相對改善，長期習慣了豐富的物質生活，吃苦耐

勞的能力下降。我們的教育制度和內容須適應年青一代生長環境的變化為他們健康成長製造條件。從政治的角度，講者都提到“七一”大遊行，“七一”激發了青少年參與討論社會大事的興趣。所以要鼓勵年輕人在這些方面的思考，並讓他們意識到自身的價值。

討論中，一些校長和老師都提出學校如何可以設計出更好適應青少年需求的一些課程和活動；甚至一些非正式的途徑，比如通過講故事的方式，對青少年的發展都有重大作用。

第二個主題是關於家庭和父母在青少年問題中的角色，及怎樣為他們創造一個適合的環境。統計數字顯示家庭暴力越來越多，從心理學、社會學的角度，這將影響青少年的成長，影響他們的價值觀，並把暴力傾向傳到下一代。責任不但在家庭，更在於社會。會上家長和青少年代表用自身的經驗說明這一點，也印証了家長和子女的溝通實在非常重要。

香港社會中青少年長期都住在家裏，在他們獨立之前，家庭如何培養他們同時聽他們的聲音是一個極須重視的問題。

至於第三個主題，“媒體與青少年”方面，嶺南大學中文系的黃淑嫻博士透過小說的方面闡述分析四十年代以來青年人隨時代變遷成長的歷程。香港電台的王璐德女士通過劇集的製作過程來表現年青人的成長。香港理工大學李偉儀女士分析了媒體是怎樣向青少年灌輸性別意識的。從她們的分析可以看出在媒體的不停進攻

下，讀者觀眾中的年青人或家長需有正確應付的方法。

青年工作者和家長都要把握流行文化的脈搏，並清楚青少年關心的時勢議題。避免脫節的現象，首先是要和青少年多溝通，其次對傳媒的報導不做一刀切，尊重青少年選擇和求知的信念，並給青年人一個發言的機會。

第四個主題，牽涉到教育與青少年的人生觀、價值觀、和潛能發揮的關係。也是最多人關心的事。嶺南大學公共政策研究中心主任何灤生教授指出，教育政策影響青少年的價值觀。一個尊重個人發展的制度會培養青少年成為有自信、自愛、關心他人、對社會有責任心、和快樂的人。相反，一個扭曲人性的制度會造成相反的結果。目前政策下，升中學生的最低組別往往被視作『蘿底橙組別』，制度強調人與人之間的衝突，不但製造失敗者，也為年青人製造不必要的壓力。

所以，許多中、小學老師校長，許多教育工作者的經驗都指出，設計一個好的教育制度，要從青少年的基本需求出發，靈活變通，才會有利他們的成長，也有利政策的執行。

The Lingnan Commentary is jointly published by the Hong Kong Institute of Business Studies, the Centre for Asian Pacific Studies and the Centre for Public Policy Studies of Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, Lingnan University, four times each year. Views expressed in **The Lingnan Commentary** are those of the authors only and may not represent Lingnan University's. **The Lingnan Commentary** is edited by Prof. HO Lok Sang with support from David Ji of IHSS.

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