

University of Windsor

Scholarship at UWindor

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Theses, Dissertations, and Major Papers

2008

Myth of Dreams

Ka Leung (Tony) Lau
University of Windsor

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/etd>

Recommended Citation

Lau, Ka Leung (Tony), "Myth of Dreams" (2008). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. 2811.
<https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/etd/2811>

This online database contains the full-text of PhD dissertations and Masters' theses of University of Windsor students from 1954 forward. These documents are made available for personal study and research purposes only, in accordance with the Canadian Copyright Act and the Creative Commons license—CC BY-NC-ND (Attribution, Non-Commercial, No Derivative Works). Under this license, works must always be attributed to the copyright holder (original author), cannot be used for any commercial purposes, and may not be altered. Any other use would require the permission of the copyright holder. Students may inquire about withdrawing their dissertation and/or thesis from this database. For additional inquiries, please contact the repository administrator via email (scholarship@uwindsor.ca) or by telephone at 519-253-3000ext. 3208.

MYTH OF DREAMS

by
Ka Leung (Tony) Lau

**A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
through Communication Studies and Social Justice
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts at the
University of Windsor**

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

2008

© 2008 Ka Leung Lau (Tony)



Library and
Archives Canada

Published Heritage
Branch

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Bibliothèque et
Archives Canada

Direction du
Patrimoine de l'édition

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-42296-0
Our file Notre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-42296-0

NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.


Canada

Author's Declaration of Originality

I hereby certify that I am the sole author of this thesis and that no part of this thesis has been published or submitted for publication.

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, my thesis does not infringe upon anyone's copyright nor violate any proprietary rights and that any ideas, techniques, quotations, or any other material from the work of other people included in my thesis, published or otherwise, are fully acknowledged in accordance with the standard referencing practices. Furthermore, to the extent that I have included copyrighted material that surpasses the bounds of fair dealing within the meaning of the Canada Copyright Act, I certify that I have obtained a written permission from the copyright owner(s) to include such material(s) in my thesis and have included copies of such copyright clearances to my appendix.

I declare that this is a true copy of my thesis, including any final revisions, as approved by my thesis committee and the Graduate Studies office, and that this thesis has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other University or Institution.

Abstract:

The documentary film is entitled *Myth of Dreams*. The film confronts the issue of Chinese Mainland immigration into Hong Kong. The film looks at several viewpoints, including government agencies, activists and Mainland immigrants in Hong Kong. Chinese immigrants are often overlooked simply because they are Chinese as are all Hong Kong citizens excluding cultural identifiers which lead to discriminative practices. The film investigates the cultural biases and social exclusion these immigrants face at the policy and social level.

Dedication:

This film is dedicated to the immigrant struggle in Hong Kong. This is dedicated to the people who labor under backbreaking conditions just to keep society running, all the separated families, all the heartache and pain, and all the people who left their homelands in search of a better life and found the exact opposite. Also to my supportive parents and family who have give nothing but support and love: Thank you for believing me, and my dreams. Finally, this film is dedicated to my father who was an immigrant to Hong Kong and an immigrant to Canada. He showed me what struggling and hard work could achieve and inspired me to make this film.

Acknowledgements:

I would like to acknowledge all those who contributed to the documentary: Phoebe Zhang, Sacha Nastili, Jeremy Rivard, Lauren Piche, Secretary Dawn Stallard and Sharron Wazny and Department of Communication. Special Thanks to Dr. Scatamburlo-D'annibale, Dr. Viridi, Dr. Goldman and Dr. Cecil Houston, who helped me with their leadership and their knowledge. I would also like to acknowledge and say a very special thank you to my thesis committee Professor Susan Gold/Smith and Dr. Richard Lewis, whose knowledge and expertise put me on the right path numerous times. Lastly, I thank with my all, and say how greatly I appreciate my production thesis supervisor Professor Sung Min Bae, who has guided me thru every step with his wisdom and passion.

Table of Contents

Author's Declaration of Originality	iii
Abstract	iv
Dedication	v
Acknowledgements	vi
Artist Statement/Reasoning	1
Film Statement/Hypothesis	2
Methodology	4
Hong Kong's Development through Mainland Chinese Immigration	12
Interview Questions:	16
• Interview Questions for Immigrant Subjects	17
• Sample Questions for the race relations unit	18
• Questions to Immigration Organization Unit	19
• Emily Lau (Hong Kong Legislative Councilor) Questions	20
Documentary Analysis	21
Subjects	23
Film Development	24
Limitations and Conclusion	25
Budget:	
• Pre-Production	27
• Production	27
• Post-Production	28
Equipment List	29
References	30
Vita Auctoris	32

Artist Statement/Reasoning:

During the nineties, Hong Kong saw an exodus of its citizens leaving for foreign nations as a result of the island's unstable political situation due to the expiry of Britain's control and China's anticipated imminent reprisal. My family, who emigrated from Hong Kong in 1991, was part of this demographic looking for political and economic stability in a foreign nation.

I was a young child when I landed in Canada, and as a child everything looked new and elegant. However, for my parents the experience differed drastically. Not being able to communicate due to language barriers, lack of transportation (as initially they were not able to drive) and other various issues, increasingly contributed to a form of culture shock, which left them feeling helpless. To go from being successful and self-sufficient in every aspect of life to an almost handicapped feeling of dependency in a short span of time was a traumatic experience.

Coming from the other side of the world, my parents expected a new start at life and attempted to immerse themselves in Canada's new culture. However, events did not unfold as expected. My father could not adapt to Canada's new culture, which stripped him of his independence. After all, he left Hong Kong a successful businessman where he was accustomed to financial freedom allowing him the luxury of being able to do what he pleased. However, in Canada, he was deprived of necessities like being able to drive. Therefore, after a short period of time he decided to return to Hong Kong. Now, this does not mean that there was weakness in my father's character; I find it important to state that he swam for six days to Hong Kong as a refugee in the 1950's, in order to escape the Chinese revolution. He simply did not see a future in Canada and found it too

difficult to give up what he had worked so hard to build from the ground up in Hong Kong.

My mother and I remained in Canada, with my mother traveling back and forth between Canada and Hong Kong. During this period many immigrants from Hong Kong fell victim to this situation, and the term “astronaut” emerged to describe people who spent more time flying than on the ground. While the term “astronaut” could have been associated with a form of privilege, for many transient immigrants of the time, “astronaut” signified the painful testimony of an eighteen-hour flight and the accompanying emotional breakdowns’ of men and women who missed their families dearly.

With my history explained, I believe I must stress that my mother and father now live together in Hong Kong, and plan never to come back to Canada because of their painful memories of what Canada signifies.

As a communication and social justice student, I am interested in creating a short documentary film thesis that will present an exploration of the Hong Kong experience with an emphasis on the struggles’ of a lower income immigrant. The documentary film explores the reason and rationale behind why “mainland” Chinese migrate to Hong Kong. The visual analysis exposes the paradox of immigration and how immigration itself contributes to societal factors such as alienation and class structure.

Film Statement/Hypothesis:

My documentary film is titled “Myth of Dreams”. The documentary is an exploration of the struggles of Hong Kong’s lower income immigrants. The

documentary explores the reason and rationale for why Mainland Chinese immigrate to Hong Kong. The documentary is audibly driven by personal immigrant narratives as they describe their reasons for leaving their homeland. Once in Hong Kong, how do these new inhabitants make a living? Do they have goals and ambitions of achieving a better socioeconomic status? Were they driven out of their homelands? Or, did they decide to come to Hong Kong in pursuit of better way of living? Or, was it to chase a dream? Regardless of the rationale for immigration, every person has a story. But my family history in Hong Kong is not unlike the stories of the Mainland Chinese immigrants of today. Therefore, the film is a personal account of how I see immigrant and class issues affecting Hong Kong today. As a child who left his homeland and whose family faced numerous difficult struggles, I believe it is important to put the immigrant's experience and feelings into my film. As a social justice issue, exposing the tribulations Mainland Chinese immigrants face allows for cross-culture collective dialogue among immigrant groups. I believe that this documentary will show the social and personal complexities Mainland Chinese immigrants face in Hong Kong. The personal testimonies allow these immigrants to voice the tribulations they face while pursuing their dream of "their castle in the sky".

The documentary is approximately 15 minutes in length and encompasses a range of my knowledge as production and theory student. Research has been garnered through various journals that deal with the immigration issues combined with interviews to enhance the subject matter of the film. I also shot through the camera's "eye", which acts as a third person viewpoint in order to better present my interviewee's working conditions and experience. This short documentary has been shot in SD video format.

Methodology:

As a documentary film showing the different perspectives between class, government and the reality of immigrants, a structured methodological approach to interviewing will not adequately allow me to get the information I need. I have opted for an unstructured interviewing methodology with an open-ended question approach because it does not force my interviewees “into a priori categorization” (Fontana & Frey, 1994, pg.706). Thus, “unstructured interviewing,” allows for informal interviewing in the field. The researcher is given the opportunity to show up on location and find the interviewee of his/her choice. This research approach allows for anybody to become a “valuable source of information” (Fontana & Frey, 1994, pg.706). Informants (interviewees) may not be completely visible depending on how sensitive your topic may be, so friends and strangers may be able to point you in the right direction or offer you information of a person or situation that will strengthen your film/research. Fontana & Frey show the benefits of this freestyle methodology in the following example:

“In Fontana’s research on the poor elderly, the researcher had no fixed setting at all; he simply wandered from bench to bench in the park where the old folks were sitting, talking to any disheveled old person who talk back.”

(Fontana & Frey, 1994, pg.706)

It is imperative for us to remember that when we are “conducting an investigative interview, you are interviewing witnesses. Everybody is a witness, even the people who did it” (MacKinnon, 1996, pg.17). Thus, for documentary filmmaking, unstructured interviewing is the best way for capturing the “truth”.

Even though this approach may seem frenzied, academic rigour demands that there must be some structure and hence the unstructured interview becomes a methodology of

organized chaos. The unstructured interview adheres to the following steps: *Accessing the setting, Understanding the language and the culture of the respondents, Deciding How to present oneself, Locating an informant, Gaining trust, Establishing rapport and collecting empirical material* (Fontana & Frey, 1994, pg.707).

These steps will be briefly described and have been taken from the Fontana & Frey article "*The Interview: From Neutral Stance to Political Involvement reading* (Fontana & Frey, 1994, Pg.707-708). I have also included a "framing the question" section to my methodology, due to its prevalence in most documentary film texts used for this paper.

Accessing the Setting: This step revolves around getting into the setting you would like to study, the saying "when in Rome, do as the Romans do" would apply here. Fontana and Frey explain that if you want to study nude beaches, you may have to go nude. If you want to study poverty in Mexican American neighborhoods, you have to be prepared to go into those neighborhoods.

The shooting location is also crucial when establishing your credibility. Firstly "you want to find a location where the interviewee feels comfortable" (Rosenthal, 2007, pg.179). You also have to understand and know how to read your subject because the "most apparent location is not always the best" (Rosenthal, 2007, pg.179). The examples given by Rosenthal displays this concept impeccably:

"You have to be a bit careful because the most obvious may not always be the best. The father of five who is unemployed might be ashamed of his home and feel more comfortable talking to you in the park. The businesswoman may feel awkward talking to you in the office, where she knows people will tease her afterward, and may prefer the comfort of her home"

(Rosenthal, 2007, pg.179)

Secondly, the background for your interview is critical in framing your story. For this

portion of the film you will be asking yourself a handful of questions: “Will the background add to the mood and drama of the story? Will the interviewee feel at ease in this location? What is the possibility of having people around to interfere and distract? And is there any danger of the background being so strong that it distracts from the interview?” (Rosenthal, 2007, pg.179)

As I prepared for “Myth of Dreams” my interview with fruit packer was a challenge. My crew and I traveled to the fruit market at night multiple time in order to learn the area and the backstreets. We visited the resting areas and multiple stores to get a good understanding of the environment. Night time was critical for fruit packers because this is when produce is usually delivered. Understanding the hardships of the location and the job itself would enable a successful completion of the upcoming steps.

Understanding the language and the culture of the respondents: When an interviewer attempts to enter into the setting, they must understand the cultural practices of their proposed group and their language. Much can be lost in translations and interpreters so one must be careful not to completely rely on this manner for garnering information. The researcher must be prepared to understand such cultural practices as body languages and customs. This will enable better access to information.

In my work I encountered problems in this step, during the pre-production phase of my documentary as I began to search for potential interviewees. The problem was that many mainland Chinese speak mainly mandarin. As a Hong Kong native, by native tongue was Cantonese which is different. Furthermore my crew was multi-cultural and English was the language which acted as the common denominator. As a result I had to find an trustworthy interpreter who would be able to act as an “informant” (discussed in

the following section) and would be able to actively communicate the information in order to prevent miscommunication. Furthermore, Hong Kong's culture though influenced by the British is still very Chinese influenced. As a result, prior to leaving I conducted a "Hong Kong Cultural" session which would explain how what to do and what not to do in Hong Kong so we would not risk offending anyone.

Deciding How to Present One's self: Depending on your topic of research, one must be careful when deciding how to present oneself to his study group. Gaining trust, which will be discussed later, is established at this point in time. It is easier to speak freely when you feel that the person is coming from the same place as you. Hence, you wouldn't want to walk into an interview group of petty criminals with a suit and tie because it would skew your results. The differences in class and what you represent would put up barriers immediately. This is a stage, which demands quite a bit of research. You want to know as much as you possibly can about your environment and your subjects. Essentially, you want to know "who the people are, where they come from, their likes, their dislikes, political attitude, and biases" (Rosenthal, 2007, pg. 178). This helps gain trust and establish rapport (which will be discussed later in this section).

In "Myth of Dreams" production I featured a wide variety of interviews with subjects from different backgrounds and classes so how I presented myself in order to gain their trust was pivotal. In one instance I interviewed an illegal worker who happened to be a friend of a relative. In this specific situation I introduced myself as a documentary film maker who was making a documentary on immigration in order to bring awareness to issues which afflict mainland Chinese immigrants. Based on this approach, she agreed to let me film her testimony on the condition that her face would

not be shown.

In another situation I needed to secure permission to film in the Hong Kong Immigration Museum. This museum is operated by the Hong Kong Government, and is not usually open to the general public. The footage was critical for my documentary so I contacted the spokesperson for the museum to discuss filming inside. I was initially refused entry because they were very cautious when it came to Hong Kong's public image and did not want to risk Hong Kong's immigration history and policies to be portrayed in a negative light. In order to gain their trust, I explained to them that I was a student creating a documentary on immigration to Hong Kong. It would simply be for school use. Based on this approach they allowed me inside to film.

This step is very important because if you approach your contact wrong you may not have a second opportunity to convince them and film. This is where "trust" is first established and as we will see, without trust you cannot have a worthwhile interview.

Locating an Informant: The previous step enables this step to occur. If you can gain the trust of an "informant", the informant can then facilitate your introduction into the group/community you will be studying. The informant becomes the gatekeeper into understanding the cultural/language/class issues of your research group. Your informant will also help you understand and uncover cultural practices, which your untrained and unaccustomed eye might have missed.

Locating an informant for "Myth of Dream" was critical to the film's success. The informant in my case was the interpreter for my film as discussed prior. The informant was able to get my crew and I into communities I may not have been able to enter on my own. For example, the fruit market was in a location controlled by the organized crime group

called the triads. This is an area where cameras are not suppose to be. However the informant was able to bring us in without any incident and allowed us to research and become with the area and its workers which later enabled a powerful interview. Without the informant I would not have been able to interview Mr. Lee within his environment. Being in his environment is what allowed him to feel comfortable and deliver strong testimony to the hardships he faced as an immigrant.

Gaining Trust: “Trust comes about when both parties see one another as legitimate agents of knowledge and perception” (Stewart, 2006, pg. 343). The previous steps all lead to the interviewer gaining the trust of his informants and their community. Without this all research is lost. Thus, one must be careful not to do anything to offend his research group.

Gaining trust is by far the most important step. Without trust the researcher/filmmaker would not get accurate information or even the interview itself in some cases. An example of losing trust came at the beginning of my shooting in Hong Kong. I had been given a contact for an illegal immigrant who was working as a waitress. I was told her personal story was very sad and moving and had planned to make her my primary research subject. However during my introduction, miscommunication occurred as she spoke mandarin and I spoke Cantonese. This miscommunication led to her thinking I was with a TV network crew looking for immigration cases which would later be used for immigration authorities. Naturally she refused the interview and all contact attempts. This was an important lesson for me and after this incident I used an interpreter for all other interviews.

Establishing Rapport: “Rapport is the process of establishing and sustaining a

relationship between the interviewer and interviewee by creating feelings of goodwill and trust” (Cash Jr. Stewart, 2006, pg.69). Similar to the other steps the researcher must create a rapport with his/her respondents without crossing the line of complete lack of objectivity (by for example, becoming a “spokesperson” for the cause). This can compromise your “academic” research.

Looking back at the end of my filming process I see the benefits of establishing rapport with my interviewees. Especially with regards to immigration, trust and rapport was very important. Without trust and rapport I would not have secured the successful interviews with the fruit packer and the illegal message therapist which would have compromised my overall documentary film.

Collecting Empirical Material: Essentially this is the process of recording everything. Keep everything because your never know what may be interesting or not.

For the documentary maker, our empirical material is our footage. “Myth of Dreams” had 15 hours worth of footage. I watched the rushes and determined what could be used and what would simply not work. The remaining footage was then used to create the message and overall documentary film.

Framing Questions: It is recommended that filmmakers avoid closed-ended questions because it “reeks of manipulation” (Rabiger, 2004, pg.339). This is because the interviewee is forced into an acting role rather than a being role (Rabiger, 2004, pg.339) which is similar to the “clockwork orange” concept. Examples of a closed-ended question are described as yes and no answers. For example, a question like “Do you like President Bush?” would be considered a closed-ended question.

Thus it is recommended that interviewers use open-ended questions to encourage

the interviewee to open up. “An open questions is one that is neutral and encourages a free reply” (Rabiger, 2004, pg.339). An example of this would be “How do you feel about President Bush’s presidency thus far?”

When interviewing, it is “acceptable and ethical to signify your interest in an exact area, as this gives encouraging guidance” (Rabiger, 2004, pg.339). However, this must not be mistaken with leading a question that will in turn “shape the answers you want” (Rabiger, 2004, pg.339).

Overall, I believe “The Informal Interview” methodology was successful with my film. All the aforementioned steps were utilized in my film production and allowed me to learn how to approach and garner trust from potential subjects. Because my film content is on immigration and featured illegal immigrants, establishing trust and rapport using all the steps was pertinent to the success of the film. The lesson learned with the informant also allowed me to understand the importance of comfort for subjects. Without this subject it would be impossible for the cameras to have accurately caught their plight and emotional testimony. To create neutrality, I had to figure out a way to build a rapport with government ministers and right wing informants who supported the immigration policies and Hong Kong’s immigration ideology. These steps helped me set up a “solid foundation” for my film production which ultimately led to a successful documentary.

I have positioned my documentary thesis within the realm of this new knowledge revolution. Informal interviews have given me the opportunity to give a voice to those who most need it. This methodology has given them the chance, to tell their story, in their words. In a rigidly class based society like Hong Kong, these types of opportunities are extremely limited. Just like any controversial approach, there are strengths and

limitations based on the methodology being contested by the powers that be, and the approach being too broad. However, for Myth of Dream, I believe that there is no other better way, to tell their story.

Hong Kong's Development through Mainland Chinese immigration:

The first major exodus from China came during the Communist revolution. In 1898, Britain had already acquired Hong Kong from China in a 99-year lease, which stemmed from the Opium wars (Endacott, 1964, pg.11-12).

The influx of capitalist pursuits, new skills and overall labor brought by Chinese refugees played a key point in Hong Kong's industrial development in the early 1950's. This immigration boom allowed Hong Kong to recover from World War II and successfully become a manufacturing and industrial economy. Research in immigration shows:

Migration from the Mainland peaked in the postwar years and provided the much-needed labor for the rapid industrialization that took place subsequently. The number of manufacturing establishments increased from just 961 to more than 10,000 between 1947 and 1967 representing an eleven-fold increase. Demand for labor, particularly in the manufacturing sector, increased steadily during this period. The total number of people employed in the manufacturing sector increased from 60,200 to 755,000 between 1949 and 1971, which also represented an eleven-fold rise. This provided a great number of job opportunities for immigrants who had a higher concentration in the manufacturing sector compared to the native born.
(Chiu & Choi, 2005, pg.208-209)

The seventies and the eighties saw continued change as the British continued to subsidize education and make infrastructural changes. While Hong Kong had immigration policies established, the British recognized the need for labor and hence turned a blind eye for immigrants fueling the industrial work force. Law and Lee state:

Although the natural increase rate was quite high between 1950 and 1970, there was still a serious shortage of unskilled labor because of rapid labor-intensive industrialization. Though the state indeed policed the Chinese border to reduce illegal immigration, the government exercised discretion in allowing these illegal immigrants to register and stay in Hong Kong whether they had been apprehended by the police or not.

(Law & Lee, 2006, pg.220)

British Hong Kong continued to develop in sharp contrast to China. The separation between Mainland China and Hong Kong was apparent through education, infrastructural changes and most importantly through capitalists venture, which positioned Hong Kong as a financial power in the East. Business analysts characterize the country's history as follows: "Historically, at least since the Second World War, the special administrative region (SAR) has been a highly successful economic powerhouse with an attractive business environment" (Peterson & Roberts, 2003, pg.13).

However, the opportunities for immigrants would eventually dwindle just as quickly as it had arrived. In the mid-1980's Hong Kong economy started a long process of industrial restructuring, with an increasing number of factories relocated to Mainland China. The number of people employed in the manufacturing sector plummeted from its peak at 942,000 in 1986 to 367,000 in 1995, representing a 60 percent decrease (Chiu & Choi, 2005, pg.209).

Another factor I would like to briefly address with regards to Hong Kong's development is their cultural industry. China rejected all Western ways of life, especially cultural. Hong Kong, being a British Colony developed culturally, similar to other members of the commonwealth meaning, that globalization also meant cultural globalization dominated by the U.S. More specifically:

Exported media tend to highlight the themes of political freedom

and consumerism. Because media are owned and operated by profit-making companies, it should not be surprising that the cornucopia of images converges in the promotion of the benefits of a consumer society, which becomes the key as American companies look to foreign markets. (Croteau & Hoynes, 2003, pg.189)

Naturally this cultural juxtaposition would create tensions, especially when trying to understand each other. The ideologies presented in global media would translate to Hong Kong looking at China as culturally backward, thus extending the stigma onto its immigrants.

Britain handed back Hong Kong to China in 1997 amidst much uncertainty. Many Hong Kong citizens immigrated to Canada, the U.S. and England fearing imminent communist control when China would acquire Hong Kong. My father once again fled and this sequence of events is what brought me to Canada.

Hong Kong's development has positioned it as a land of opportunity in the east. Hong Kong's amenities, GDP and infrastructure are factors which position Hong Kong as a developed nation. This naturally brings about the want to immigrate and the pursuit of a better life.

A comprehensive look at Hong Kong immigration characterizes the immigrants experience as one of overall social exclusion. Immigration researchers Law and Lee discuss contemporary immigration in terms of economic globalization.

Economic globalization has triggered intense rivalry among cities in terms of becoming the commanding and coordinating nodes of the global economy, these global cities are undergoing economic restructuring that creates what commentators call "dual cities" or "divided cities", in which social, political, and economic polarization are very serious.

(Law & Lee, 2006, pg.218)

Within this modern context we see the underpinning of the contradictory contemporary immigrant ideology. The pursuit of a better life in a foreign country, which may have yielded success (and stories of success) when cities and nations were developing industrially, has changed as the majority of these nations moved towards post-industry economies. While the “first world” continues to advance, many immigrants from “developing countries” are still characterized by their labor. Law and Lee discuss the initial factors behind social exclusion through this inequitable framework.

Accompanying economic globalization are the massive waves of migration of people, skilled and unskilled labor, professionals, and others, from economically backward places to these cities. However, not all migrants are considered valuable for the “importing” countries, depending on the economic strategies the countries are employing. Under global restructuring, low-skilled migrants are often considered as a burden to the host society and as competitors of the local working class people. All these precipitate the social exclusion of these migrants.

(Law & Lee, 2006, pg.218)

Labor-based immigrants between the fifties and seventies were accepted and encouraged as the country grew through industrialization. However, as Hong Kong’s economic strategy changed, the approach and treatment of immigrants concurrently changed.

With regards to income, Hong Kong’s move towards a post-industrial economy has drastically increased the “gap between rich and poor further exasperated the relationship between citizens and immigrants” (Law & Lee, 2006, pg.223). Statistics reflect this continuing trend in Hong Kong. According to the Law & Lee article:

The 2001 Population Census shows a wider gulf between rich and poor. The percentage of poor families – those earning less than HK\$6,000 a month – rose from 10.8% in 1996 to 12.5 in 2001, while only 24.9% of household made more than HK\$30,000 a month in 1996, rising to 29% in 2001. Meanwhile, families in the middle range

of incomes fell from 64.4% in 1996 to 58.6% in 2001. New immigrant families constitute a major proportion of Hong Kong's impoverished underclass.

(Law & Lee, 2006, pg.30)

Employment is also a crucial element in immigrant marginalization. Securing employment is even more problematic. With the manufacturing sector continuing to shrink and the other low paying jobs fluctuating, immigrants simply do not have the opportunity to provide for themselves. Worse yet, immigrant workers have experienced mistreatment by other workers, receive lower wages and sometimes experience absolute job rejection simply because they are immigrants (Chiu & Choi, 2005, pg.216).

The retail and service industries which consequently absorbed much of the industrial lay-offs, experienced its own crisis at the end of the 90's and the early 2000's. Unfortunately, "many low-income workers were laid off because many retail and service industries in Hong Kong could not compete with the service business in the nearby cities of the Mainland, in terms of labor costs, land prices, prices of goods and services" (Lau, 2003, pg.199).

Interview Questions:

The following are the questions used while interviewing my subjects. Because of my methodology and its unstructured format, each interview was dictated by location, comfort and the experience of my interviewee thus making the questions a rough guideline. My film is about their experience so the following questions helped more so to guide our conversation as compare to limit it.

Interview Questions for Immigrant Subjects

1. How long have you been living here?
2. Where are you from?
3. What type of job are you working right now, Do you like your Job?
4. What were your previous jobs in your homeland?
5. Why did you leave your homeland?
6. Why did you choose Hong Kong?
7. What does Hong Kong have that your home does not?
8. What does your homeland offer that Hong Kong does not?
9. Does Hong Kong provide more freedom? If, so what freedoms?
10. Would you then consider Hong Kong a home or a workplace?
11. Have you adapted to the local culture? If so, how?
12. Do you feel accepted by local or Native Hong Kong citizens?
13. Were there any resources to help you? Which ones?
14. The Hong Kong Government has various departments, to help immigrants. You find this helpful?
15. What do you want to get out of Hong Kong?
16. Hong Kong government claims that immigration is the way of the future. What do you think about that?

Sample Questions for the Race Relations Unit

1. Why is this type of service necessary in Hong Kong?
2. When was this unit established?
3. How successful has it been?
4. How often do you receive complaints?
5. Who benefits most from this program?
6. What type of complaints do you receive most often? Could you explain some specific cases that have occurred?
7. What ethnic background files the most complaints?
8. Of the complaints that you receive, How many are valid and brought to justice?
9. What is the formal process for making a complaint?
10. What type of resolutions can a plaintiff expect from your service?
11. How can you protect the people who complain about their employer?
12. What campaigns or education do you provide for racial and cultural sensitivity?
13. What improvements would you make to the program and what resources would you need to make them?

Questions to Immigration Organization Unit

1. What countries of origin do most of the migrants you help come from?
2. What do you find are the reasons for their coming to Hong Kong? How do you see them perceived by the Hong Kong government? How do the Hong Kong people perceive them?
3. What tempts an outsider to come to Hong Kong? What are the push and pull factors? What incentives do they have to be in this country?
4. From our research, we have found that those who immigrate to Hong Kong have reciprocating effect on the economy and culture of the country. Do you agree? And where do you stand on the contributions of immigrants to Hong Kong?
5. Given your experience, how do immigrants feel that they function and engage in Hong Kong society?
6. How do you feel about the notion that some Hong Kong citizens may view immigrants as a debt rather than an instrument for the progression of Hong Kong society?
7. What infrastructural measures has Hong Kong taken in order to prepare itself for a high volume of immigrants?

Emily Lau (Hong Kong Legislative Councilor) Questions

“Hong Kong people have often been described as being money-oriented. However, politicians like me who uphold liberty and democracy command wide support in elections. Hong Kong is my good friend. Today, my friend needs help.”

1. This quote was taken from your personal profile on your website. What strikes me as interesting is the last line of the quote which reads, “*Hong Kong is my good friend. Today, my friend needs help.*” Could you elaborate on what kind of help Hong Kong is in need of.
2. What tempts an outsider to come to Hong Kong? What push and pull factors? What incentives do they have to be here in the country?
3. From my research, I had found that those who immigrate to Hong Kong have reciprocating effect on the economy and culture of the country. Do you agree? And where do you stand on the contributions of Immigrants in Hong Kong?
4. Given your experience, how do immigrants feel that they function and engage in Hong Kong society?
5. There are various barriers that immigrants such as Mainland Chinese have to face such as language and conforming to new standards of living upon their arrival in Hong Kong. Are there any governmental programs or organizations that protect the immigrants coming to Hong Kong?
6. How do you feel that some Hong Kong citizens view immigrants as a debt rather than an instrument for the progression of Hong Kong society?
7. What if any are the stereotypes associated with immigrants in Hong Kong? (i.e. Welfare recipient, taking underpaid jobs, milking the system.)
8. What measures has Hong Kong prepared both physically and economically to accept the high volume of immigration that it faces?

Documentary Analysis:

The research documentary titled “Myth of Dreams” investigates the immigration experience Mainland Chinese immigrants face when coming to Hong Kong. For many in Asia, Hong Kong is viewed by many immigrants as the Land of Opportunity and freedom. During Britain’s lease over Hong Kong, the country developed primarily due to various exodus waves from Chinese immigrants. When British control ended in 1997, the Chinese Government changed the immigration policy for mainland Chinese, and allowed 150 mainlanders daily into Hong Kong. Hong Kong had one of the lowest birth rates according to a lecture I attended by Professor Nelson Chow titled ‘Hong Kong Census Population Movement Lecture’. Mainland Immigrants were responsible for approximately 80% of the population growth each year according in the lecture. This growth has created a complex and problematic relationship between Hong Kong citizens and Chinese immigrants which has led to the stereotyping of Mainland Chinese as Low skilled workers who compete with locals for “their” jobs and who are only here to take advantage of Hong Kong welfare system.

I interviewed a wide majority of individuals and immigration organizations. Based on my research, the immigrant misconception surrounding achieving success in a developing country seemed correct. I encountered many forms of discrimination and hardships faced by Mainland Immigrants might faces. To further explain I will break down my subjects into three groups: Women, Immigrant Organizations and Older immigrants who have been here for decades.

The first group is comprised of female mainland immigrants who have come to Hong Kong to join their husbands and unite their family. Based on my research, they

appear to be the group most discriminated against. They are usually housewives or enter the workplace in lowest skilled positions (like maids, restaurant servants, retailers etc.). Their lack of cultural know-how in Hong Kong frequently lead to this group (and by extension all mainland Chinese) being identified and discriminated against based on their accent and their cultural ignorance of Hong Kong. Unfortunately, this leads to their mistreatment by “native” Hong Kong citizens.

The second group I interviewed was immigrant organizations which addressed immigrant issues. I interviewed four groups in total, some of them government subsidized and some which were privatized. I interviewed in order to better ascertain the issues facing these immigrants and what answers and aids may be available. The results were unfortunate. It appeared that the mainland Chinese were not even considered within the context of discrimination simply because the government would not accept the fact that they were able to be discriminated against. The government stance was simply “They are Chinese and we are Chinese. They look just like us, so they cannot possibly face any form of racial discrimination.” This attitude completely ignored the cultural biases which were leading to the group’s societal marginalization. “In the reality, the discrimination mainlanders sometimes faced were even harsher than the ethnic immigrant minorities in Hong Kong” said Ms. Fermi Wong, an executive director at immigrant support organization called “Unison”. Organizations have offered many solutions and support but the fundamental problem holding back these organizations’ success is again cultural biases where discussion of your family and personal issues is regarded as taboo. This is tragic because stories of immigrant families committing suicide are becoming increasingly normal.

My third and final group, is the group my father was apart of: the earlier immigrant wave which helped establish Hong Kong as a developed country. Based on my father's advice who told me as an immigrant you have to work extra hard to show the others you have the ability to do things the same or better. During the filming of "Myth of Dream" I came across many older Chinese immigrants who escaped Communist China in the 50's and up until present, had the same ideology and work ethic. Unfortunately, not all immigrants from this era were successful and paid the appropriate dividends for their work. During the filming I had came across many elder Chinese immigrants who worked their whole life in Hong Kong, and in their own eyes, failed to achieve the "dream" of a better life. Many wanted to return to China, but knew it was far too late as their roots were already planted in Hong Kong, making their day-to-day experience tragic.

I believe my short documentary film showed the realities of immigration in Hong Kong. I set out to show the issues mainland Chinese immigrants face in Hong Kong as well as their motivations for coming. The film title "Myth of Dreams" is an accurate summation of many immigrants' experiences. The myth surrounding a dream of a better life in a "developed country" is just that... a dream. It is not guaranteed and the myth of success, stability, comfort and a better life is in no way, shape or form accurate.

Subjects:

I interviewed eight subjects for my documentary. According to my research this is an appropriate number for an approximately 15 to 17 minutes documentary. My subjects were between 20 – 70 years of age, which allowed for a varying range of experience.

The young immigrants were able to highlight reasons for coming and his/her optimism in arriving in the “land of opportunity”. The older immigrant who has worked in Hong Kong for years lent his experience in the inequities he/she faced as a labourer.

I also interviewed members of the “Immigration Organization Unit”. This is an organization set up by the government to deal with immigration issues. Issues range from complaints and abuse to disputes. The Immigration Organization Unit subject group add to the complexity of the immigrant experience and immigrant tribulations.

Interviewee searches have been done through the Internet, email and phone contacts. The Internet specifically covered background information and government organizations that are more structured. Most of the immigrants were found on site in Hong Kong through various immigration support units.

Film Development:

Myths of Dreams is driven by personal stories of immigration from all class perspectives. The film details the hardships lower income migrants face when attempting to merge and co-exist in Hong Kong society. Issues of social and economic discrimination are explored extensively. The documentary features interviews from a number of government organizations which gives the documentary a background regarding specific difficulties immigrants face as well as what policy measures Hong Kong has taken in order to help its new inhabitants.

The visual essay part of this film gives the audience a different perspective of Hong Kong. The fancy rich identity as seen on television will be replaced by a feeling of isolation, which is meant to metaphorically represent the immigrant’s experience. The

metaphors are important, as the visual essay will give me the freedom to explain cinematographically in lieu of text and/or interviews.

Limitations and Conclusion:

The interview in my eyes was a success. However, if I could do it again I would have made the documentary much longer. Unfortunately, as a graduate student there are limitations with regards to what one can. A longer documentary would have led to a stronger stories and a more in-depth analysis. A prolonged stay would also have allowed for more trust which could have led to endless possibilities. However, a longer stay also would have led to a significantly higher budget which was not an option for me.

As I recounted my personal story of how my father came to Canada and left after facing many of the same feelings current immigrants face in Hong Kong, I am reminded of another story. When my father left Mainland China in the late forties he was only a young teenager. The quest and desperation for a better life gave him the strength to sneak out of China under the punishment of death, and swim for 4 days in shark infested waters until he reached Hong Kong, where he struggled for decades, eventually becoming a successful businessman. With both stories of struggle as part of my own personal history I believe in the immigrants dream and their hope for a better life. Stories like my father's are what make the immigrant experience so potentially tragic.

Through interviews, testimony and a creative visual essay, I hope to expose the hardships current Mainland Chinese immigrants face in Hong Kong society. This film and my research will hopefully help to educate regarding their marginalization. Many Mainlanders are excluded from discourse surrounding discrimination simply because

they fall in the category of being Chinese, similar to Hong Kong natives. However, this excludes the obvious cultural identifiers that lead the discrimination of Chinese immigrants.

I want to bring awareness to native Hong Kong citizens to know how hard Mainland immigrants fight are; just to live in what they hoped would be a better home. After all, especially for Hong Kong citizens, their recent ancestors were all at one point, Mainland Chinese immigrants. It would seem that Hong Kong natives have forgotten their own immigration history.

Budget:

Hong Kong Pre-Production Budget
Approx 7.2 HKD = 1
CDN

Transportation	Number of Person	Cost	
Fight from Detroit to Hong Kong Feb 13th 2007 to Feb 20th 2007	1	\$1,534	CDN
Taxi from Windsor to Detroit Airport Feb 13th 2007		\$80	CDN
Taxi from Detroit Airport to Windsor Feb 20th 2007		\$60	USD
Local Traveling Cost		Cost	
MTR (Subway) Feb 14th to Feb 20th 2007		\$400	HKD
Food Feb 13th to Feb 20th 2007	Approx	\$3,000	HKD
Production Material Cost	Quantity	Cost	
Panasonic DV Tape with Shipping	5	\$25	CDN
SD Card for Digital Camera	2	\$50	CDN

Hong Kong Production Budget

Transportation	Number of Person	Cost		Total Cost	
Flight from Detroit to Hong Kong Duration: 10 March 30 th to April 8 th Days	4	\$1,534	CDN	\$6,136	CDN
Taxi from Windsor to Detroit Airport March 30 th 2008				\$80	CDN

Transportation

Taxi from Detroit Airport to Windsor
April 8th 2008 \$60 USD

Hotel
2 Room Service Apartment 10 Days \$26,000 HKD

Local Traveling Cost	Cost	Number of Person	Total Cost	
MTR (Subway) for 10 Days	\$500	4	\$2000	HKD
Emergency Budget	\$3,000		\$3,000	HKD
Food for 10 Days	\$120/Day	4	\$4800	HKD
Emergency Insurances	\$65	4	\$260	CDN

Production Material Cost	Quantity	Cost	
Panasonic DV Tape with Shipping	25	\$140	CDN
Kodak 250D Film stock	5	\$175	CDN



Post-Production	Total Cost	
Editor Duration: 10 Days Edit on Avid Express Pro	\$600	CDN
Food	Approx \$250	CDN

Equipment List:

Hong Kong Documentary Equipment List

Brand	Item	Model	# of Items
K-3	16mm	K3	1
K-3	Stop Motion tools (Shuttle release control)		
K-3	Zoom lens	Zoom	1
	200m prime lens	200m	1
Bolex	RX-5 (super 16mm) (no Motor)	RX-5	1
Bolex	Parts: Rewinder	Rewinder	1
Kodak	16mm Film	250D Colour	5 to 7
Lens Box	135mm, 8mm, 35mm, 55mm	Lens	3 or 4
Lens Filter	ND Filter	Filter	2
Panasonic	Video Camera	DVX100B	1
Panasonic	60 min Mini DV Tape	AY-DVM63PQ	25
Panasonic	Lithium-Ion Battery		3
Panasonic	Batteries Charger		1
Century	Matte Box Set	DVX100 Set	1
Porta Brace	Rain Protector	DVX100 Set	1
Tiffen	Filter	Yellow	2
Sennheiser	416 Shotgun Mic	NKH-416	1
universal	Shockmount (Handgrip)		1
Rycote	Softie		1
XLR Cable	XLR (Blue & Red)		2
Sony	Noise-Cancelling Stereo Headphones	45	1
Swarovski	Lens Cleaning Kit		2
Giottos	Air Blower	Big Size	1
Camera parts	get all lens adaptor (Pentax, Nikon)		2
Camera Plate	Depends on the Tripod + Cam. Screws		1
Sekonic	Instant Light Meter, Spot Meter (Min)		1
Kodak	250D Colour 16mm Film	16mm Film	6
Lowel	X-ray Bag for Film		
Tape	Exposure tape (red)	tape	1
Tape	Camera tape (black)	tape	4
Manfrotto	Camera Tripods	Tripods	1

References:

Bernard, Sheila Curran., Documentary storytelling for film and videomakers Burlington, MA : Focal Press, c2004.

Endacott, G. B. Government and people in Hong Kong, 1841-1962, a constitutional history. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, c1964.

Strega, Susan., "The view from the poststructural margins: Epistemology and Methodology Reconsidered" Research as resistance : critical, indigenous and anti-oppressive approaches Ed. Brown, Leslie, Strega, Susan Toronto : Canadian Scholars' Press, 2005. 199-235

Chiu, Stephen W.K., Choi, Susanne Y.P., and Ting, Kwok-fai "Getting ahead in the capitalist paradise." migration from China and socioeconomic attainment in colonial Hong Kong International Migration Review 39.1 Center for Migration Studies of New York, c2005. Pg. 203-227.

Cooper, Afua., The hanging of Angelique : the untold story of Canadian slavery and the burning of old Montreal. Toronto : HarperCollins, 2006.

Croteau, David and Hoynes, William Media Society: industries, images, and audiences. California: Pine Forge Press. c2003.

Fontana, Andrea & Frey, James H., "The Interview: From Neutral Stance to Political Involvement" Handbook of qualitative research Ed. Denzin, Norman K., Lincoln, Yvonna S. Thousand Oaks, Calif. : Sage Publications, c1994. 695-727

Lau, Joseph. "Accessibility of low-income workers in Hong Kong" Cities 20.3, c2003, pg.197-204.

Law, Kam-ye and Lee, Kim-ming "Citizenship, economy and social exclusion of mainland Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong", Journal of Contemporary Asia, 36:2, c2006 pg. 217-242.

MacKinnon, Gordon P., Investigative interviewing. Mississauga, Ont. : Old Village Press, 1996.

Mills, C. Wright, The sociological imagination. New York: Oxford University Press, 1959

Peterson, David and Roberts Elfed Vaughan; "The Hong Kong Business environment since 1997" Hong Kong in transition: one country, two systems. London Eds. Robert Ash, Peter Ferdinand, Brian Hook and Robin Porter; New York : Routledge Curzon : Centre for the Study of Globalization and Regionalization, c2003.

Rabiger, Michael., Directing the documentary Amsterdam ; Boston : Focal Press, c2004.

Rosenthal, Alan., Writing, directing, and producing documentary films and videos
Carbondale : Southern Illinois University Press, 2007.

Sauper, Hubert., Darwin's nightmare Toronto : Capri Releasing : Maple Pictures, c2005.

Stewart, Charles J., Interviewing : principles and practices. Boston : McGraw Hill,
c2006.

Vita Auctoris

Ka Leung (Tony) Lau was born in Hong Kong. Mr. Lau has excelled in education and has attained two BA undergraduate degrees and an M.A. from the University of Windsor. Mr. Lau has been accepted into the York MFA film program to pursue his career in filmmaking and teaching.