

# The Gender Representation and Bodily Negotiation in Taiwan's Occupy Congress Movement

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## Abstract

During the Occupy Congress (aka 'Sunflower Movement') in Taiwan 2014, thousands of citizens, mostly young people and students, joined to besiege the government houses from the streets and sit night and day for public speeches, discussions, displays, artwork making, and so on. According to the statistics, gender equality in terms of protesters' composition was satisfactory. However, the traditional mass media's representation of protesters still focused on producing and enhancing gender stereotypes. Thus this paper, through conducting a content analysis and semiotic/discourse analysis of Taiwanese newspapers, would firstly demonstrate: 'To what degree was the mass media's gendered framing efficient in affecting the bodily practice and inter/actions of the protesters? If media framing was not all-powerful, how did the protesters resist and reproduce meanings in the process?' Moreover, in regard to the extensive use of new technologies and social media during the movement, through the interviews this paper would further elaborate the second question: 'How, with the help of new media, did the protesters challenge and negotiate with the mass media's gendered/bodily framing?' Finally, this paper would discuss and try to conclude a duality – both possibilities and limitations – of applying social media in the recent social movement of Taiwan, especially in terms of the complicated bodily experiences of the young protesters.

## I. INTRODUCTION

On the night of 18 March 2014, hundreds of young Taiwanese demonstrators climbed over fences and stormed the Legislative Yuan (the Congress of Taiwan) to protest against the illegally passed Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement (CSSTA) with China. A day before the protest, the ruling party *Kuomintang* (Chinese Nationalist Party, or KMT) brutally cut short the review of CSSTA and passed the pact directly to the plenary session for its second reading. KMT's unconstitutional act was regarded as a betrayal of democratic principles and immediately led to wider and stronger protests. This seemed a sign for the already crushed public trust. For Taiwan's young generation, CSSTA was more than an economic rearrangement that could severely damage local industries and cause serious youth unemployment problems. It also served as a tool for China to gain more control over Taiwan. In other words, this issue has subtly implied a tough political choice between Taiwan's independence and unification with China. Besides the political dilemma, CSSTA involved much more complicated socio-cultural concerns valued by young Taiwanese, for instance, human rights, freedom of speech, social equality and lifestyles.

The unprecedented act of occupying Congress was the largest student–youth movement and ‘civil disobedience’ activity in modern Taiwan's history. It lasted for 24 days (March 18–April 10, 2014). Thousands of citizens, mostly students and young people, whose average age was 28 years according to statistics (Chen, 2014), joined to besiege the Congress House from the streets and sit night and day for public speeches, discussions, displays, artwork-making, etc. Notably, the percentage of female participation in the movement was slightly over fifty per cent (ibid). Gender equality in terms of participants' composition was satisfactory. However, the mass media's representation of female protesters still focused on producing and enhancing gender stereotypes.

Being a researcher and also a participant during the movement, I started to wonder, ‘How would the protesters, especially the female participants, react to such a gendered framing and representation? What were the bodily experiences of protesters in a movement framed by traditional media in a gender-biased way?’ The first set of research questions came to my mind: ‘To what degree was the traditional media's gendered framing efficient in affecting the bodies, actions, interactions and desires of the protesters? If media framing was not all-powerful, how did the protesters resist and reproduce meaning in the process?’ To answer these questions, I had to first discover in what gendered ways traditional media had represented the protesters. By conducting a content, semiotic and discourse analysis on the media, I first illustrate how the newspapers enhanced the movement's gender bias.

However, this is not the end of the story. The extensive use of new media technology and the formation of multiple public spheres through social media were important aspects that were worth paying attention to. In fact, I found three particular incidents/phenomena of bodily dissent practised through new media that were very intriguing and worth investigating. Thus, the second research question was formed: ‘How, with the help of new media, did the protesters challenge traditional media's gendered framing?’ The second research question follows the first question but focuses more on the practices through Internet and concerns the dynamic relation between the social media and mass media, while the first set of research questions

concentrates on bodily experiences in the practices of dissent and negotiation.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Feminist researchers have a long tradition to concern about how women are portrayed in news texts. An abundance of work has been carried out by using (mostly quantitative) content analysis, and proved that the gendered stereotypes reinforce people's sexist prejudices<sup>1)</sup>. Almost all the research findings tell the similar problems: women are underrepresented in the texts and their images tend to be pretty, young, passive, indecisive, submissive, dependent, and so on (Gallagher, 1981, 1992; van Zoonen, 1994, p. 17). However, on the other hand, more and more feminists query the fixed effectiveness of the 'stereotyping' since they find the gender images or discourses in news texts are oft-contested and fluidly contradictory (e.g. Beetham, 1996; Weedon, 1997). The latter approach, as Carter, Branston and Allan point out (1998, p. 6), initiates a 'conceptual shift to rethink the attendant issues of representation in terms of the ideological gendering of news as an androcentric form of discourse.'

For example, a large amount of masculinized narratives, as Lana Rakow and Kimberlie Kranich (1991) argue, still dominate the logic of news production and simultaneously make the females who appear in the texts function not as speaking or active subjects but as passive or decorative 'signs', even though 'their function as sign is unique' (p. 13). The meanings of the sign 'woman' depend on visually and linguistically categorizing people, seem to reflect the so-called 'biological differences' but in fact to shape a hierarchical structure of difference (ibid. pp. 19-20). Stereotypes, as standardized mental pictures, are not only 'images in themselves but radicalized expressions of a common social practice of identifying and categorizing events, experiences, objects or persons.' (van Zoonen, 1994, p. 30) In other words, stereotypes are actually based on and sustained by a deeper and wider discursive formation and thus usually have their counterparts in the social life world to support or even legitimize the stereotypes.

The tradition and reconsideration of studying 'stereotype' lead this project in the beginning. On the one hand, by adopting a quantitative content analysis I try to clarify the fact that women are underrepresented and distorted to a certain extent in mass media's coverage while compared to the over 50 percent of the participants which they constitute in the movement. On the other hand, I apply semiotic and discourse analysis to further elaborate the symbolic meanings in terms of gendered ideology carried by those news texts. All the methods are discussed in the next section.

Furthermore, in order to associate the gender issues with the social movements and their representation in media, merely studying 'stereotype' would be not sufficient and thus this project includes more ideas and discussion about studying 'frame' of news making. Fundamentally, Ervin Goffman's frame analysis (1974, 1976) significantly inspires many media researchers' studies of thematic and ideological news

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1) Please refer to the works of Allen, Rush and Kaufman, 1996; Barr, 1977; Lang, 1978; Luebke, 1989; Steenland, 1995; Stratford, 1987, and so on.

structures<sup>2)</sup>. News is not merely reported but created through specific framing. That means the news media's role is to construct reality through 'interpretive packages' (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989), rather than just showing or reflecting something that already exists (Fishman, 1980; Gitlin, 1980; Tuchman, 1978). The purpose of such framing is to manufacture readers' consent (Herman and Chomsky, 1988).

In general, media frames can be defined as a series of selections, emphases (or saliences) and exclusions (Entman, 1993, p. 52; Gitlin, 1980, p. 7), by which 'symbol-handlers routinely organized discourse, whether verbal or visual' (Gitlin, *ibid.*). This is certainly a value-added process, but most news media seem to disguise it trickily as a professional procedure with a 'value-free', objective and fair attitude. According to Gamson and Modigliani's (1989), there is always a 'media package' that includes a central organizing idea (the frame) and a lot of 'condensing symbols'; the journalists (namely the 'symbol-handlers' in Gitlin's term) follow five 'framing devices' when they make the news: metaphors, exemplars, catchphrases, depictions and visual images.

Todd Gitlin's (1980) *The Whole World is Watching* is one of the first and most influential books to elaborate how news framing works in the 'making and unmaking' of social movements. He analyses how the *New York Times* and the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) covered the U.S. student movement in the 1960s: He categorizes their texts into six oft-employed frames: trivialization, polarization, emphasis on internal dissension, marginalization, disparagement by numbers (under-counting) and disparagement of the movement's effectiveness (pp. 22–28). In general, these framing patterns, except the last two, can also be found in the first and second most circulated newspapers in Taiwan—*Apple Daily* (蘋果日報) and *Liberty Times* (自由時報). This is because the newspapers have other, commercial concerns: The more influential the movement becomes, the bigger the conflicts get; thus, the newspaper sells better, or the newspaper may hold an obvious political position, e.g. *Liberty Times* is noted for its pro-Taiwan independence stand.

Besides, news framing is not a one-way and one-time thing, conducted only by the media, but refers also to how various social ideologies contest each other and then join forces for some consensus (Entman, 2004; Nisbet and Hume, 2007). The actors (not only as media audiences) might produce a counter-framing or 'adversarial frame', according to Gamson (1992), and thus make the process of framing dialectical. In this sense, a social movement is not only passively framed by the news media as Gitlin argues but it also actively creates some 'collective action frames' in response (Benford and Snow, 2000). Three 'adversarial components', as Gamson (1992) induces, often appear in the collective action frames: injustice, agency and identity. Injustice summons up people's moral indignation to fight against the establishment. Agency indicates that any problem could be solved if only we would act together. Finally, identity distinguishes the interests, values and beliefs of the protesters from the ignorant mass. The process of identifying is also a unified process that creates the dichotomy 'us versus them'.

Adversarial framing looks like a counter to news framing, but in actual situations the two are interwoven.

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2) In *Frame Analysis*, Goffman (1974) claims that social events and occurrences, as well as people's feelings and thoughts, turn into meaningful experiences only if they connect with an interpretative cognitive framework.



On the one hand, since the roots and routes of news framing have various directions, they contest each other by creating different relations (hostile or favourable) to collective action frames. On the other hand, to respond to news framing or to create an adversarial framing, a social movement must either adjust itself to media frames (as Gitlin argues) or consolidate its identification. Some 'shared beliefs' might be paradoxically reconfirmed or reconstructed in such an interweaving process. For example, during Taiwan's Occupy Congress, the somehow friendly relationship between *Apple Daily* and the movement required that the protesters act in moderation, obey orders based on 'rationality' and always have consensus on the next decision. Thus, 'non-violence', 'rational' and 'unified' become unchallengeable, foundational assumptions.

This might cause the social movement a perhaps unexpected problem: Being too solidified and coherent to take care of members' heterogeneities. For instance, those who suggest strategic radicalism or lie in diverse structures of feeling (e.g. those of different classes, generations, ethnicities, genders, sexualities) in the same camp might be ignored or excluded even though the movement claims to be all inclusive. This problem reminds us of the debate about the theme of the public sphere.

The Occupy Congress consequently resembled Jurgen Habermas's (1989) ideal model of the bourgeois public sphere — all participants should be 'impartial' and rationally deliberate on the common good to build a consensus. However, this becomes a 'homogenization' process that conceals the interests of different social groups with an overly unifying consensus (Young, 1997, p. 346). The problems that Nancy Fraser (1997) criticizes in Habermas's normative model of the public sphere have been quite evident in the occupy movement—the interests and needs of women and those of different sexualities were hidden and neglected. To the advantages of these participants, firstly, Fraser favours a different model—*subaltern counter-publics*, as 'parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter-discourses, which in turn permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs' (Fraser, 1997, p. 81). Secondly, Fraser contests the definition of public and private interests, believing that the existence of common good cannot be presumed in advance (since it is an outcome of deliberation). The idea of counter-publics provides a larger, more nuanced picture of the whole occupy movement, considering that online participation has become a crucial part of current social movements. Moreover, the features of the Internet, for instance, making more information available to and from a greater number of people (Kellner, 2005) and enabling 'many-to-many discussion and deliberation' (Coleman and Gotze, 2001, p. 71), invite us to think of multiple, competing, online public spheres. Combining these concepts, I conducted three case studies to illustrate how new media have facilitated formation of subaltern counter-publics in the occupy movement and how the online counter-publics promote interests, previously regarded as private, into common concerns.

Finally, the questions around 'body' are gradually central to both social theory and feminist research. Compared with men's bodies, the women's bodies, to a large extent, are far more restrictively and repressively governed by the socio-cultural framing. The patriarchal frames tend to emphasize the association of women's behaviour with their feminine bodies, appearances and disposition rather than their 'rational' thought. As Goffman argues (1974, pp. 196–7), 'men often treat women as faulted actors with

respect to “normal” capacity for various forms of physical exertion’. He claims that such a relation of inequality is working by the positioning of the body even ‘into the gentlest, most loving moments without apparently causing strain’ (Goffman, 1976, p.9). But in my case studies, the real situation is more complicated and the power/body relations seem to be more dynamically dialectic. Although feminist studies usually worry about the power of gender framing that shapes women’s self-presentation and regulate their bodily practices, besides the conformity of gendered bodies, they acknowledge the autonomy that ‘women have some agency in making choices about their bodies.’ (Anleu, 2006, p. 359).

I consider that the ‘lived body’, conceptualized by Tori Moi (2001) and developed by Iris Young (2005), is a unified and useful idea to combine the agency/subjectivity and social/power structure. It emphasizes ‘body-in-situation’ (Young, 2005, p. 16). Many works of cyberfeminism have also tried to prove the alternative bodily praxis on-line. If the Internet provides a new arena in which people can express themselves easier and even form a collective action, it has potential to empower women with a (cyber) space in which their bodily practice is no longer constrained by the existing relationship of inequality (Shilling, 2005, pp.191–2). These writings also inspire me to make further discussion about the alternative actions of bodily dissent under the gendered representation of mass media framing.

### III. METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

In *Feminist Methods in Social Research*, on the basis of multiple applications of various methods, Shulamit Reinharz (1992) provides an inductive definition of feminist methodology. A majority of the themes that she identifies in the book’s conclusion (Reinharz, 1992, p. 240) have guided my project as follows:

1. I intend for my research to be cross-disciplinary in nature.
2. Alongside the connection with feminist theory, I intend the social movement and policy making to benefit from my work.
3. This project challenges the myth that all women are generally alike in terms of their thinking and behaviour and thus it makes an effort to illustrate the diversity and heterogeneity among the female participants in the movement.
4. In contrast to the ‘objectivity’ oft-emphasized in the positivist research, the attitude of ‘starting with one’s own experience’ (Reinharz, 1992, p. 259) encourages me to involve myself, as one of the participants in the movement, for my research. Simultaneously, I also focus on the strong connections and deep interactions between the researcher (myself) and the informants (the individuals being studied).

Several methods are used in this project to answer the research questions and achieve the aforementioned ideas that include: content analysis and semiotic and discourse analyses of the newspaper texts and participant observations and in-depth interviews.

## **Content Analysis**

Content analysis was originally developed to interpret written and spoken texts by counting the number of narrative or rhetorical messages or the occurrences of particular topics. In addition, visual images, such as photographs, have been included in the counting procedure (Lutz and Collins, 1993). Such analysis is usually regarded as a quantitative method for studies regarding the news agenda, framing and representation, but it can also 'be used to support studies of a more "qualitative" nature' (Stokes, 2003, p. 56). In other words, although content analysis and qualitative methods are simultaneously employed in this project, they 'are not mutually exclusive' (Rose, 2007, p. 60). For example, in the content analysis of approximately 600 photographs by Catherine Lutz and Jane Collins used in *National Geographic*, they challenge the positivist methodology and do not worry that their work is reflexive, not 'objective' enough and not led by social theory and critical perspectives. They also argue that there are four overarching themes in the magazine's representation of third world people: exotic, idealised, naturalised and sexualised. However, all the themes do not directly appear in their list of coding categories. Instead, 'they were reached by amalgamating some of those codes on the basis of the theoretical and empirical literature their study was drawing on' (Rose, 2007, p. 71).

Lutz and Collins' content analysis coincides with the guidelines for the feminist methodology that I outline in the beginning of this section. After much consideration, I decided to choose *Apple Daily* for the content analysis because of its relevant photographs during the occupy movement. According to an authoritative survey (Shih Hsin University [SHU], 2013), *Apple Daily* is presently the most popular and 'trustiest' newspaper in Taiwan. Moreover, it maintains a tabloid-style format that highlights the importance of photography-led and sensation-orientated stories and has a significant influence on the visual construction of news in contemporary Taiwanese society. A total of 507 photographs from *Apple Daily* are used in this project.

## **Semiotic and Discourse Analyses**

Numerous researchers suggest that content analysis not only provides reliable data in a quantitative manner but it also extends its effect when used in conjunction with more interpretive methods such as semiotic and discourse analyses (Beharrell, 1993; Curran, 2000; Stokes, 2003). By combining neo-Marxism with semiology, Judith Williamson's (1978) classic semiotics reveal the ideological representations in advertising that not only reflect class relations and but also legitimate social inequalities in terms of gender. Semiotic researchers, Bryson (1991) and Rose (2007), claim that the constructions of social differences of class, gender, race or able-bodiedness are mainly articulated through miscellaneous images.

First, this project conducts basic work to determine the signifier of/signified from images and their denotation/connotation (Barthes, 1977), which is inspired by Gillian Dyer (1982, pp. 96-104) who points out that most advertising photographs depend on 'signs of human'. Second, it employs a checklist for analyzing what signs of humans might symbolize. Third, it samples dozens of photographs from the above-mentioned 507 pieces in *Apple Daily* to create a discussion about their ideological meanings (in terms of

gender) and to further categorize them on the basis of the following: (1) Representation of bodies: shape, hair and dressing; (2) Representation of manner: facial expression and pose; (3) Representation of activity: body movement and positional communication and (4) Representation of objects: props and settings.

Moreover, because Barthes (1977: pp. 38–41) utilizes ‘anchorage’ to express the significant effect of the text-with-the-image (e.g. news headline, lead or caption), to further explore the intertextuality or in this case, the meanings between the images and texts, I also add discourse analysis to this project.

On the one hand, visibility, as a type of discourse based on a specific power and its discipline, highlights particular aspects and makes other things ‘unseeable’ at the same time. As a result, ‘subjects will be produced and act within that field of vision’ (Rose, 2007, p. 143). Laura Mulvey’s (1989) classical argument of ‘woman as image, man the bearer of the look’ illustrates how masculinity (for men) and femininity (for women) are constructed by Hollywood’s visibility. This idea requires that I should be aware of the ‘discursive formation’ (Foucault, 1972, p. 38) of gendered ideology while dealing with the analysis of the photographs.

On the other hand, discourse analysis, which is centrally concerned with article style, wording and rhetoric, based on a specific ‘syntactic structure...’ includes ‘clear social and ideological implications’ (Dijk, 1993, p. 116). For example, oft-used words, such as ‘pretty girl’ or ‘hottie’ in *Apple Daily*, instead of ‘(female) student’ or ‘(female) protester’, can be interpreted as the gendered ideological position of the editors about female demonstrators, while simultaneously sexualizing or discrediting them for the readers. As Teun van Dijk concludes in his study of the *Daily Mail*, the use of such words also shows ‘a cultural dimension of news language: the everyday, popular style of tabloids’ (Ibid.).

Although the discursive formation includes specific structures, it does not necessarily mean that the structures have a coherent logic to them. As Foucault (1979) claims, power is everywhere — not just imposed from the top (dominant group) down to the bottom (oppressed group) — and thus, discourse is everywhere as well. In addition, the miscellaneous discourses contest with/against one another, which indicate two additional points regarding discourse analysis: the contradictions and complexities internal to discourse, and reading into what is not said or seen (Jones, 1989; Rose, 2007, pp. 164–5). Therefore, this project focuses on the paradoxical elements of *Apple Daily*’s textual framing as well as the other side of new media to further investigate alternative communication.

### **In-depth and Active Interview**

Along with analysing news photographs and texts using the aforementioned methods, I conducted interviews with 21 participants during and after the Occupy Congress. The interviews reveal not only how the participants read and respond to the news presentation of their images and the movement’s events, but also how they appropriate the multimedia texts, recreate alternative perspectives and simultaneously engage in some vivacious actions for re-gendering the power relationship framed by mass media.

I also apply the ‘big-net approach’ for my participant observation of the movement’s events (with as many relevant people as possible) as well as its coverage on the Internet to ensure ‘a wide-angle view of

events before the microscopic study of specific interactions begins' (Fetterman, 1998, pp. 32–3). When the project proceeds, my focus gradually narrows to a specific group of people after which the selection of informants is based on judgmental/theoretical sampling. Two groups of people are chosen as the research objects: eight 'key actors' (in Fetterman's words) and thirteen ordinary informants. Although the key actors are fewer in number, their relationship with the researcher is closer. There are five females (codes F01–05) and three males (codes M06–08) and except F01 and M08 (31 and 35 years old, respectively), all of the six key actors are in the same generation (20–29 years of age). In addition, they provide me with detailed up-to-date information and sufficient knowledge about miscellaneous subtopics as well as generous personal descriptions. Even though their feelings and thoughts might be too personal to entirely represent the 'group', these key actors provide a significant amount of suggestions and an integrated picture of specific events, such as the three events discussed in Section 4.

As Ann Gray claims (2003, p. 95), 'work developed by feminist researchers has challenged the strict codes and modes of interviewing for its masculinist bias with its belief in objectivity and denial of the emotionality of research'. Thus, in the beginning, I conducted the interviews according to the basic principles of the in-depth interview process, but eventually, I adopted the notion of 'active interview' instead. On the basis of the concerns about reflexivity, Holstein and Gubrium (1997) pose this methodological idea that focuses on an interviewee as an active producer of meanings rather than a passive respondent. As a result, the interview becomes 'a concerted project for producing meaning' (p. 121). Ideally speaking, through the interview process, the interviewer and interviewee may essentially reconstruct their subjectivities.

It is truly gratifying to have such a rewarding research experience. As I delved deeper into my informants' complicated desires or life histories, many of them remarked that they had neither talked about such matters with anyone nor seriously thought about them in the past. This finding was also similar to my own reactions. Moreover, I believe that the feminist theories and methodologies facilitate our trust and sharing. Therefore, my conversations with the informants worked to reproduce a framework and several concepts through which they could easily elaborate on their experiences and express their emotions and feelings.

## IV. ANALYSIS

### 4.1 Encoding the Protester's Images in *Apple Daily*

The content analysis of the photographs from *Apple Daily* begins by selecting images of the movement's participants during the movement (19 March to 11 April 2014), of which there are 507 photographs in total. On the basis of the different photo sizes, I first classify them into four groups: extra-large (approx. a half page), large (approx. a quarter page), medium (between a quarter and an eighth of a page) and small (smaller than an eighth of a page). Then, on the basis of their compositions numbers and gender (in appearance), I categorize all of the pictures into six types: (1) 1 or 2 male(s) in a portrait; (2) 1 or 2 female(s) in a portrait; (3) 2 or 3 mixed persons (by gender) in a portrait; (4) mostly males in a group

photo; (5) mostly females in a group photo and (6) mixed persons in a group photo.

However, it might be insufficient and even biased to distinguish a person's sex/gender by merely viewing his/her appearances in the photos. In the beginning of the categorization, I was concerned about such a feminist methodological issue. In fact, during the movement, I also met many participants who were lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) and those who were rather unisex in appearance of which several became my informants. Although I attempted to look for any in-between, ambiguous or uncertain sexual images of people among the photographs, I was unsuccessful. Obviously and intentionally, *Apple Daily* excluded any LGBT participant's images from their coverage during the movement and made the stereotypical gendered representation in their photographs. Consequently, the readers would take for granted that someone in the picture was just 'male' or 'female' as seen in his/her (gendered) appearance. Thus, I will discuss how gender ideology was embedded in the photographs through further semiotic and discourse analysis.

The numbers of the pictures with different sizes and various compositions are counted in Table 1. More than 60% of the photos are portrait style (one to three persons in a single picture) and nearly 40% are group photos (either a small group or a huge crowd). In general, the frequency that males appear in the pictures is obviously higher than the females. For example, 198 photographs (39.1% of the total pictures) are close-ups of men and 62 (12.2% of the total) focus on the mostly male groups. Comparatively 98 photographs are of females and only four focus on female groups. In addition, the images of male leaders or participants often dominate the front page or lead the headlines and 30 portraits of male leaders, for example, were shown in an extra or large size during the movement. On average, at least one male leader would 'hugely' appear in the everyday news of *Apple Daily*.

**Table 1. The compositions of *Apple Daily*'s photos of the protesters**

Photo Type Photo Size	1 or 2 Male(s) in Portrait	Male Group Photo	1 or 2 Female(s) in Portrait	Female Group Photo	2-3 Mixed Portrait	Mixed Group Photo	Total
Extra	4	2	0	0	0	10	16
Large	26	13	7	0	1	42	89
Medium	70	31	38	2	9	45	195
Small	98	16	53	2	12	26	207
Total	198	62	98	4	22	123	507
Percentage	39.1%	12.2%	19.3%	0.8%	4.3%	24.3%	100%

To elaborate how *Apple Daily* represents the images of male and female participants, respectively, by their photographs, I create two coding sheets to count the frequencies according to picture size, the people's ages, body shapes, hair, dress and body movement as well as their facial expressions. Table 2 presents the findings of the 198 male portraits (1 or 2 male(s) in a photo) as follows:

- (1) The majority of the males in the portraits are young looking, in relatively ‘good’ shape (thin or ‘brawny’ ) and they have short hair and wear loose or sporty clothing.
- (2) Nearly 80% of the males in the portraits are performing a specific action, whereas the rest are simply sitting or standing.
- (3) The photographs prefer showing males who are angered or irritated compared to other facial expressions such as smiles, laughter and sadness.

**Table 2. The represented images of male portraits in *Apple Daily***

Male Images		Photo Size	Extra	Large	Medium	Small	Total	Percentage
Age	Young-looking		3	22	59	81	165	83.3%
	Middle age and above		1	3	9	11	24	12.1%
	Unrecognisable		0	1	2	6	9	4.6%
Body Shape	Thin-looking		1	13	25	35	74	37.4%
	Fat-looking		0	3	13	19	35	17.7%
	Brawny		2	8	20	23	53	26.7%
	Unrecognisable		1	2	12	21	36	18.2%
Hair	Long hair		0	2	8	14	24	12.1%
	Short hair		4	22	52	67	145	73.2%
	Unrecognisable		0	2	10	17	29	14.7%
Dressing	Figure-flattering or Shape highlighted		1	7	20	25	53	26.8%
	Loose or sporty		3	19	50	73	145	73.2%
Body Movement	In motion		4	24	52	78	158	79.8%
	Motionless		0	2	18	20	40	20.2%
Facial Expression	Smiling or laughing		1	3	18	33	55	27.8%
	Angry		2	14	26	32	74	37.4%
	Sad or weeping		0	1	7	2	10	5%
	Dazed or pondering		1	6	11	22	40	20.2%
	Expressionless		0	2	8	9	19	9.6%

Comparatively, Table 3 presents the findings of the 98 female portraits (1 or 2 female(s) in a photo) as follows:

- (1) The range of age selection for picturing females is narrower than that of males. Only 3.1% of the female portraits include those who appear middle-aged compared with 91.8% for younger-looking females.
- (2) Approximately 95% of the portraits include slim or thin-looking females.
- (3) Females with long hair (81.6%) and those with figure-flattering or shape-highlighting wardrobe (54.1%) frequently appear. For example, Figure 1 presents a portrait of a female protester; the

**Table 3. The represented images of female portraits in *Apple Daily***

Female Images		Photo Size	Large	Medium	Small	Total	Percentage
Age	Young-looking		6	35	49	90	91.8%
	Middle age and above		1	1	1	3	3.1%
	Unrecognisable		0	2	3	5	5.1%
Body Shape	Thin-looking		7	36	50	93	94.9%
	Fat-looking		0	0	0	0	0
	Brawny		0	1	1	2	2%
	Unrecognisable		0	1	2	3	3.1%
Hair	Long hair		6	37	37	80	81.6%
	Short hair		1	1	10	12	12.3%
	Unrecognisable		0	0	6	6	6.1%
Dressing	Figure-flattering or Shape highlighted		5	22	26	53	54.1%
	Loose or sporty		2	16	27	45	45.9%
Body Movement	In motion		3	14	9	26	26.5%
	Motionless		4	24	44	72	73.5%
Facial Expression	Smiling or laughing		2	13	26	41	41.8%
	Angry		0	3	1	4	4.1%
	Sad or weeping		3	6	11	20	20.4%
	Dazed or pondering		1	4	9	14	14.3%
	Expressionless		1	12	6	19	19.4%

reporter profiles her with the following introduction: ‘She wears beautiful long hair and has big eyes... she fights against the police through her sexy-looking appearance’ (Ho, 2014, p. 1). In addition, Figure 2 shows another female supporter who is attempting to climb across the window of the Congress chamber. The photographer intentionally adopts an angle that focuses on the female’s hips and thighs.

- (4) The females in the portraits are rarely seen in active motions. In fact, 73.5% are seen in motionless states.
- (5) Contrary to the aforementioned statistics of male facial expressions, the female portraits show rather diverse results. The portraits include close-ups of females smiling or weeping with limited pictures that portray anger (e.g. Figures 3, 4 and 5).

According to these aforementioned statistics and examples, we can see that the visual composition of *Apple Daily* has a tendency towards gendered stereotypes and sexist displays. The juvenation (Hartley, 1998), feminization and sexualization (Holland, 1998) as well as the passiveness of the female images are significant to a certain extent in news representation.





**Figure 1: Portrait of Lai in the chamber**  
Source: P.1, *Apply Daily*, 20 March 2014



**Figure 2: Ili climbs across the window**  
Source: P.3, *Apply Daily*, 20 March 2014



**Figure 3: A female has her lunch in sit-in**  
Source: P.1, *Apply Daily*, 26 March 2014



**Figure 4: A female participant weeps**  
Source: P.8, *Apply Daily*, 25 March 2014



**Figure 5: Several female participants are weeping or at a loss**  
Source: P.1, *Apply Daily*, 8 April 2014

Compared with the female images shown in *Apple Daily*, the male participants are represented in a completely different manner. In the large-sized male portraits, which are generally used on the front pages with the headlines, the photographer often captures typical actions such standing out in the crowd, speaking vehemently with a microphone and brandishing his fist. During the occupy movement, the microphone is not only a vital object for public communications, but it is a core symbol associated with power and belief in such demonstrations. However, among all of the photos, there are only two middle-sized portraits that show a female brandishing her fist and several photos that include females speaking with a microphone. Such media representation is not true for the actual situation. In my participant observation, dozens of females stood up to make public speeches during the sit-in and thousands of female participants were brandishing their fists (with angry expressions) during the rally.

On p. 2 of *Apple Daily*'s 31 March 2014 edition (Figure 6), the leader, Feifan Lin (in a large portrait) is shown giving a speech alongside a row of men standing on the stage and raising their fists. This was the record-breaking moment in which 500,000 protesters gathered in front of the Presidential House. At that time, I saw thousands of female participants show their opinions through various banners and props as well as with different expressions and poses. However, *Apple Daily* only represented the female participants' images in two photos: (1) one just below Lin's portrait (Figure 6) that shows two females crying with the caption, 'Female participants are touched by Lin's speech and weeping'; and (2) one on the front page that shows a female holding a sunflower with a caption, 'Tender strength from a beautiful girl' (Figure 7).

Many pictures also include close-ups of the male leaders and use captions to directly symbolize their meanings. Several examples are seen in the following figures: the glasses that Lin wears and the book that



Figure 6: Lin and female participants  
Source: P.2, *Apply Daily*, 31 March 2014



Figure 7: Participant with a sunflower  
Source: P.1, *Apply Daily*, 31 March 2014



**Figure 8: Lin and Chen, the leaders of the Occupy Congress**  
Source: P. 1, *Apply Daily*, 3 April 2014



**Figure 9: Chen in conflict with the police**  
Source: P. 3, *Apply Daily*, 20 March 2014



**Figure 10: An oft-seen image of Lin**  
Source: P. 7, *Apply Daily*, 26 March 2014

Weiting Chen holds represent their intelligence and studious (Figure 8); the Chinese slogan on Chen's T-shirt '自己的國家自己救' (which means, 'Saving my Country by Myself') is known by many throughout the country (Figure 9); and the military-style coat that Lin wears (referred to as the 'suit of justice' by the media) becomes a best-selling commodity (Figure 10).

Besides the two leaders, the males in the photos present several typical images as follows:

- (1) The men safeguard the occupy movement and sit-in activities from police action or gangster penetration. For example, the pictures often portray a 'masculine' picket line (Figure 11) .
- (2) The men protect the female participants from harm. For example, Figure 12 shows a volunteer motorcycle riders waiting to escort the female participants. Figure 13 shows a male comforting his girlfriend as a serious conflict occurs outside of the house.





**Figure 11: Part of the picket line outside the Congress Chamber**  
**Source: P.4, *Apply Daily*, 1 April 2014**



**Figure 12: Volunteer escort for female participants**  
**Source: P.3, *Apply Daily*, 27 March 2014**



**Figure 13: A couple protesters in the Congress Chamber**  
**Source: P.8, *Apply Daily*, 28 March 2014**

- (3) Males resist the police and bravely sacrifice their bodies for the movement. The pictures show the bloody scene without reservation (Figures 14, 15 and 16). Comparatively, the female participants in the scene are portrayed as scared or crying (Figure 17) even though many of them fought valiantly against the police to help their male comrades, as seen during my participant observation at that time.



**Figure 14: A male student tries to resist the police's attack**  
**Source: P.6, *Apply Daily*, 29 March 2014**



**Figure 15 (Left) 16 (Right) : The bleeding men in the police's expelling action**  
**Source: P.1, *Apply Daily*, 25 March 2014**



**Figure 17: A female protester gets crying in front of the police**  
**Source: P.2, *Apply Daily*, 25 March 2014**

Nevertheless, as discussed in Section 2, the contradictions and complexities internal to the discourse should be further noticed, especially since there are some paradoxical elements of *Apple Daily*'s textual framing. Although a gendered stereotype obviously exists in the male and female portraits, other types of photographs might represent alternative meanings. According to Table 1, the number of mixed group photos amounted to 123 (24.3% of the total) and many of them are panorama photos for the sit-in crowd or wide-angle photos for the occupiers of the Congress chamber (Figure 18). From such large photos, the readers can easily recognise that the ratio of males to females is approximately 50%, which represents an equality-like division of labour. In fact, many female participants were seen in the picket line photos, which is unlike the aforementioned masculine composition of male portraits or group photos.

In other words, if we regard the portraits and their close-ups as a reproductive mechanism of gendered ideology, a significant amount of mixed group photos seem to convey more liberated messages. For example, in Figure 19, a large-sized picture on the front page of *Apple Daily* on 11 April 2014 shows the occupiers leaving at the end of the movement. Upon closer examination, readers can see that there are three female lawyers walking ahead the group and several people (both male and female) are wearing 'rainbow' armbands for LGBT rights. Although the news editor does not focus on these details in the photo, many readers (including the majority of my informants) can eventually ascertain these aspects.



**Figure 18: A part of occupiers in the Congress chamber**  
Source: P.1, *Apply Daily*, 22 March 2014



**Figure 19: The protesters end their occupation and leave the Congress chamber**  
Source: P.1, *Apply Daily*, 11 April 2014

#### 4.2 Case Study 1: Dispute over *News Tornado*

On 4 April, *News Tornado*, a political talk show broadcasted on the *CTi News* channel had caused public outrage due to its comments about two scenes in the occupy movement. The host (Ligan Dai) and guest (Huagan Peng) of the show presented some pictures of male and female protesters sleeping together on the site of the Occupy Congress. Then, they zoomed in on a couple hugging one another under a quilt (Figure 20) after which Peng commented that these young people were obviously doing something ‘inappropriate’ in public and their parents should be worried since this is the way that young people of today participate in public affairs.

Next, Peng displayed another picture of two young female protesters and excitedly described that they wore ‘sexually-provocative’ shirts and pants, which made them look ‘super sexy’. At the same time, Peng moved his hands over the photograph of one female protester and made gestures to imply that he was about to unbutton her shirt (Figure 21). This gesture was followed by the comment: ‘People would never go to nightclubs if they knew that there were so many hotties in the Occupy’.



Figure 20: Peng commented that the boy's hand was unsettling  
Source: Cti News, 4 April, 2014



Figure 21: Peng moved his hands on the photo while commenting  
Source: Cti News, 4 April, 2014



Soon after the broadcast, the video went viral on *Facebook* and many people were outraged by Peng's comments. The Awakening Foundation claimed that they had received nearly 100 messages on their *Facebook* page overnight from mostly females. Online protests were organized and shared through social media, thus mobilizing young people to file online complaints to the National Communications Commission (NCC) in which they asked the NCC to take disciplinary action against *News Tornado*. At one point, the NCC website even crashed due to the high volume of protesters.

In general, people were upset since they believed that the show's intention was to conduct a 'pornification' of the occupy movement by using the photos to purposely compare the movement to a nightclub and objectify the female participants. As a result, NGOs, such as the Awakening Foundation, began focusing on the female protesters' case. They held press conferences to protest *News Tornado* and argued that what Peng did to the two female protesters was sexual harassment and sexual discrimination, which neglected women's subjective positions in social movements and infringed upon their bodily autonomy (Awakening Foundation, 2014). The statement made by the Awakening Foundation was quickly read by nearly 80,000 people on *Facebook*. They also accompanied one of the female protesters to sue the *CTi News* channel, the host and Peng.

However, there were others on the Internet who commented differently regarding the controversial episode. Unlike the NGOs' statements, *Coolloud*, an online independent media, focused more attention on the public comment of 'pornification'. They argued that people should have supported 'public sex' and felt comfortable with sexual activities and sexual desires in the occupy movement, and that the real problem of *News Tornado* was in the way that the host and the guest represented the images (Wang, 2014). *Coolloud* believed that equating expression of sexual desires with sexual discrimination is problematic, since it risks the interpretation of 'sex' in the hands of talk show commentators and existing social norms.

As described earlier, social media (especially *Facebook* in this case) has provided an important space in which citizens can organize events, post comments, write and share articles to confront traditional media. Online counter-publics were thus formed. The counter-discourses produced in the online counter publics not only challenge the top-down discourse made by traditional media, but they also challenge one another. For instance, the comments of *Coolloud* seem to conflict with the statement made by the Awakening Foundation. While the latter focuses on female autonomy and their subjective position and thus, accuse *News Tornado* for trampling on the rights of female protesters; the former believes that rather than blaming *News Tornado*, the mentality of linking sexual activities and expressions of sexual desire to obscenity was the core of the problem. Although the Awakening Foundation and *Coolloud* might seem to be in opposing positions, they were, in fact, complementary and indispensable to one another. According to Leisbet van Zoonen (1994) in regard to a social movement:

It has the double edge of being an interest group lobbying and struggling for social and legal changes beneficial to women and of challenging cultural preoccupations and routines concerning femininity and gender. Undeniably, both struggles are political and inform each other, nevertheless, they are of a different kind resulting in different interactions with the media and different



requirements of media performance. (p. 152)

Although young people purposely used social media as a tool against traditional media, there were no significant differences in regard to the manners of their discussions. In fact, the majority of the comments criticizing *News Tornado* on social media was still subjected to the framework set by traditional media. For example, reporting on sexual activity or simply implying that it occurred was an efficient and powerful approach that actually damaged the legitimacy of the movement. Since most of the protesters still hold on to the binary opposition of public and private. Also since sexual desires are thought of as personal interests, which are believed to have the power of corroding public good, *News Tornado* was aware of the importance for a large-scale social movement to stay 'public' in all aspects. Thus, the boundary between public and private was an efficient weapon used against the occupy movement.

The sexual activities and desires were constrained as a price for the movement to stay 'public', however, there were still some opportunities for the protesters to develop and practice their desires through articulating their daily consumption of reading materials such as manga and romance novels with news on mass media. The next case presents how young people (especially females) actively created and followed their own desires during the movement as well as shows how social media also played an important part in this desire creating/spreading process.

#### 4.3 Case Study 2: BL Imagination of *Fan-Ting Romance* (帆廷恋)

Feifan Lin (林飛帆) and Weiting Chen (陳為廷) were the two most well-known male leaders of the Occupy Congress. However, not only did they have leading roles in the demonstration, but they were also protagonists in *Fan-Ting Romance*, a Boys' Love (BL) text created by many female protesters. (mostly females) who admired them.

In Japan, BL is a subgenre of *Shojo* manga or fictional media texts that describe male-male romances and their sexual relationships. BL texts are usually created by and aimed at *Fujoshi* (a name given to females who love BL). Although *Fujoshi* are mostly heterosexual, there are bisexual ones as well (Chang, 2007). Some homosexual and bisexual male audiences are also attracted to BL. The element of 'fantasy' is of utmost important in the BL reading experience (Chang, 2013) and such texts are specifically created for females' desires (Figure 22). In fact, *Fujoshi* celebrate pleasures from the homoerotic stories, and they avoid the uncomfortable experiences of being gazed at by males, as in heterosexual stories (Ibid.).

The two male leaders of the Occupy Congress, Lin and Chen, are heterosexual and both have girlfriends, which has been reported by mass media during the movement. Lin and Chen were both represented as heterosexual male idols during the occupy who were masculine, smart and strong, yet gentle. However, their personalities portrayed by mass media were completely different and complementary to one another. For example, Lin was the calm and smart guy, whereas Chen was the impulsive and forward one. Similar to most BL texts, the male characters are usually formed into a couple by the *Fujoshi*. In this case, the *Fan-Ting Romance* was based on fantasy, but the materials were provided by mass media. In other words, the *Fujoshi* began creating the *Fan-Ting Romance* by appropriating texts and photos from traditional media.



**Figure 22: Feifan Lin (left) and Weiting Chen (right)**  
**Source: <https://zh-tw.facebook.com/MissUndine>**



**Figure 23: The images of Lin and Chen were appropriated from the traditional media**  
**Source: <http://ppt.cc/sKBH>**

Initially, the texts were simply parodies of the photos on newspapers (Figure 23). Later on, the *Fujoshi* began developing romances based on their personalities described by mass media. The texts of *Fan-Ting Romance* are constantly intertextualized with news texts and other BL texts. Some *Fujoshi* wrote short novels or drew comics (Figure 24) on their own blogs, while others created the texts collectively, all of

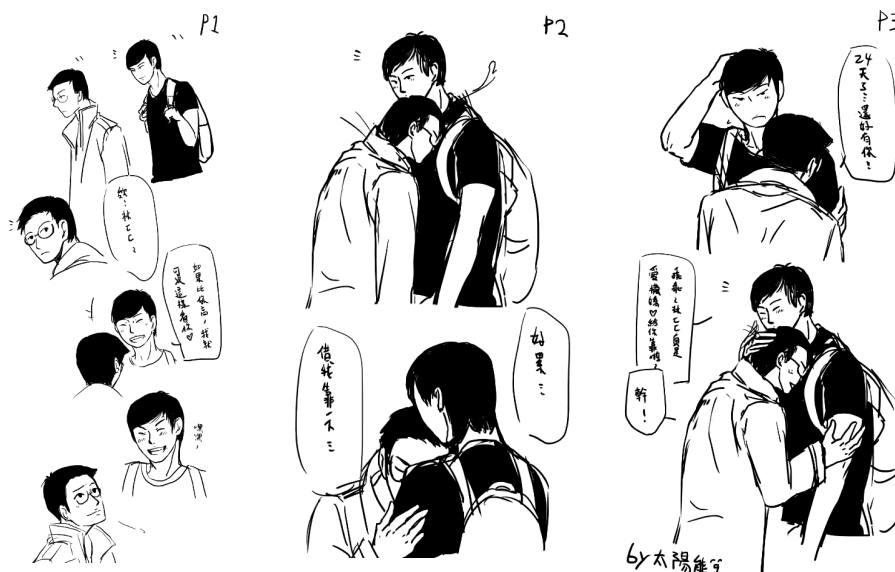


Figure 24: Comics of 'Fan-Ting romance'

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/FFXCWT/posts/467376393396738>

which were widely circulated online through social media such as *Facebook* and other *Fujoshi* networks.

In the history of (Taiwanese) social movements, it was unprecedented that the fictional love story between two male leaders could be so popular. The *Facebook* fan page titled, 'Indefinitely Supporting the *Fan-Ting Romance*' was created on 13 April and quickly has received more than 5,000 'likes'. As Informant F01 stated, 'My male boss knew about it, my father joked about it, but they didn't participate in the protest'. It would not be a surprise to know that the majority of the participants in the movement have heard of or read some part of the *Fan-Ting Romance* on their own social media accounts. In this regard, the personal desires and fantasies of females are no longer private. As they increasingly place their 'private interests' online and share them through social media, the strict boundary between the private and public sphere is no longer maintained. This echoes Nancy Fraser's (1997) idea that common concerns can only be the outcomes of discussions or contests rather than self-evident facts. Moreover, according to Kosut (2012, p. 431), the public/private dichotomy was challenged 'through its inherent changing of many dichotomous relations between production and consumption...and is making it possible for people to create new identities for themselves that expand our notions of gender dichotomy'.

As previously shown in 4.1, the media representations of the Occupy Congress were gender biased. The leaders captured in the photos were mostly male, their body movements and gestures were masculine and active, and they were frequently shown with their fists in the air. Conversely, the female participants were frequently represented as good-looking, soft, gentle and rather passive figures in comparison with their male counterparts. The visual narratives of the movement from mass media seem to fit in the analytical framework of Mulvey's analysis of cinema (Mulvey, 1989, p. 19): 'In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active male and passive female. The determining

male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure, which is styled accordingly'. However, Mulvey's argument is not without criticism. The implications of BL texts prompt one to ask if females can actively see and if there are other ways of seeing?

Thus many feminists have theorized a dominant but not omnipotent visuality. Kaja Silverman (1992) argues that 'since the Gaze looks at everyone, men as well as women are turned into spectacles through it ...neither women nor men can attain visual mastery through [the Gaze]'. Such a formulation breaks the binary opposition of 'women as image, men as the bearer of look' to suggest that 'man may be image too and that both men and women may look, but neither and never all-powerfully'. Silverman's idea seems to be effective in the *Fan-Ting Romance* case. Even though the representations of protesters by traditional media were in a gendered approach, they were turned into spectacles and none of them (regardless of gender) attained full visual mastery. The Gaze allows many more ways of seeing to become possible, including oppositional and negotiated reading. Extensively appropriated from mass media texts, the *Fan-Ting Romance* texts were, in a sense, products of negotiated reading. As Silverman (1992, p. 2) notes, it makes it possible for what she refers to as 'an ethics of the field of vision'. In other words, people could 'idealize, and, so, to identify with bodies we would otherwise repudiate'. Moreover, by transforming the represented (by media) 'real persons' of Lin and Chen into protagonists of the BL texts, it is also a process of idealization in which the removal of certain unwanted characteristics (as described by the media) enhances the desirability of the two leaders. As Informant F03 stressed, 'I am more interested in the fictional Lin Feifan and Chen Weiting in the BL texts than the actual persons'.

For the *Fujoshi* who read or create the texts of the *Fan-Ting Romance*, the absence of female characters in the texts is simultaneously an active refusal to place females in sexually objective positions (Chizuko, 1998) and a rejection of mainstream female aesthetic standards. Informant F02 mentioned that 'the female protagonists in heterosexual romances were all beauties or they will eventually become one. I find the setting annoying since they imply that only beauties could find happiness'. In other words, the absence of female protagonists allows the *Fujoshi* to enjoy reading the BL texts without feeling sexualized or objectified.

In addition, the *Fujoshi* desire an equal relationship between the protagonists in BL texts, which is the same for the readers and creators of the *Fan-Ting Romance*. The created relationship between Lin and Chen in the *Fan-Ting Romance* referred to their complementary characteristics described by mass media. Moreover, Chang (2007, p. 5) believes that 'BL enables the audience to imagine a "world of fairness", in which lovers interact with each other without anyone of them being socially, professionally or economically superior or inferior to the other'. In other words, BL readers enjoy not only the fantasy of sexual pleasures, but also the equal relationship, which is difficult to achieve real-life situations. In regard to what was enjoyable in the *Fan-Ting Romance*, Informant F02 stated that it was 'the interaction between Lin and Chen, because they valued and cherished each other as much'. However, the readers of the *Fan-Ting*

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3) She emphasized that she was not a *Fujoshi*, but the *Fan-Ting Romance* caught her attention and she found herself enjoying it.

*Romance* also knew that it might be a fantasy after all, as Informant F04<sup>3)</sup> points out:

‘I’m sure there was a strong sense of competition between Lin and Chen, I’m not naïve, but I’d rather think of them as the way they were portrayed in the *Fan-Ting Romance*. Otherwise I could feel too disappointed with the real problems I encountered during the occupy movement’.

The uncomfortable experience of Informant F04 was similar to that of Informant F01. As Informant F01 mentioned,

‘I once met someone in the movement who tried to tag me as a fan of Lin and Chen because I quite liked the *Fan-Ting Romance*. This made me angry because the tag implies that I participate in the movement simply because I was charmed by the two male leaders rather than I have brain’.

The perfectly equal relationship between the male protagonists in the *Fan-Ting Romance* is desirable since the reality fails to fulfil the desires of equal gender relations in the movement. In a sense, by projecting fantasies onto the fictional male protagonists, it provides a so-called getaway for some female protesters desiring a more equal status in the movement.

Finally, although the personal desires of the protesters seemed to be repressed in the movement, they still existed and prospered through new media. The high visibility of the *Fan-Ting Romance* on *Facebook* enabled the ‘personal’ desires and fantasies to become ‘public’ issues that were discussed, shared and even collectively created.

#### 4.4 Case Study 3: Dissent of *Intestine Flower Forum*

The Occupy Congress lasted for nearly a month during which the young protesters were under tremendous stress, both physically and mentally. Toward the end of the movement, the ‘Large Intestine Flower Forum’<sup>4)</sup> emerged in which all of the participants were encouraged to use profanities to express their dissatisfaction. It quickly became an important outlet for the participants to release their repressed emotions and frustrations toward the government, society and even the movement itself.

The majority of the protesters in the occupy movement were from the younger generation and were used to obtaining information online, as mentioned in Section 1. Conversely, the middle-aged and the elders were accustomed to receiving news through newspapers and television news channels. Thus, it would not be surprising these tools of traditional media were still extremely influential, and they were powerful in mediating and framing the thoughts of the middle-aged and older generations. In fact, such a radical occupy act had shocked many conservatives, most of whom were in middle-aged or older. In addition, a type of ‘violence-phobia’ mentality emerged, which was intensified by mass media. As a result, almost all of the

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4) The Chinese word for ‘large intestine (大腸)’ resembles the word for ‘sun (太陽)’. Thus, the forum’s naming of ‘large intestine flower (大腸花)’ was a parody of the ‘sunflower (太陽花)’ movement named by mass media.

television news channels and newspapers referred to the movement as a 'peaceful demonstration/occupation'. To earn more public support, the protesters had no choice but to constantly emphasize that the demonstration was non-violent and the participants were all 'well-mannered'. Moreover, a 24-hour live streaming system and the 4G WiMAX network was set up by the protesters (both inside the Congress chamber and outside on the surrounding streets) to avoid unfriendly editing by mass media. However, ironically, this enabled mass media and 'the public' to monitor their actions 24 hours a day and seven days a week.

Furthermore, there was an atmosphere of strict self-discipline among the field of protesters for fear that any 'inappropriate' behaviour or speech caught by traditional media could be used to damage the legitimacy of the movement. The live streaming systems, the smart-phone cameras, and the 3G/4G WiFi bandwidth had strengthened the regime of punishment from mass media of which the protesters struggled against. Consequently, the protesters had the pressure to act 'properly' all of the time, and groups of picketers even created a designated walking route to check if there were any radical speeches or excessive bodily expressions occurring. Protesters who attempted to walk outside of the routes or express their opinions in a rather emotional manner would receive either harsh verbal corrections or they were thrown out. In other words, the movement began to monitor and discipline itself from the inside.

This process was achieved through a certain visibility that Foucault demonstrates by discussing about 'Panopticon'. It could be argued that both new media and traditional media had turned the field of Occupy Congress into a panopticon through continuous monitoring. The major effect of the Panopticon, as Foucault (1977, p. 210) notes, is 'to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power'. The visibility inside the Panopticon where 'one subject is seen without ever seeing, and the other sees without ever being seen' (Rose, 2007, p. 174) is called 'surveillance' by Foucault. In addition, to produce social order, surveillance is an efficient way, and through its operation, 'visibility is a trap' (Foucault, 1977, p. 200).

As time went by, more and more protesters were becoming upset about the self-discipline atmosphere in the movement. As a result, a male Internet celebrity called 'Yindi Emperor'<sup>5)</sup> set up a mini-stage (with two microphones, a desk and webcasting equipment) and initiated the Intestine Flower Forum, which was held at midnight. During this forum, any one could step on stage to express his/her angry feelings and opinions towards anything in relation to the occupation movement. Most importantly, there were no restrictions on their comments and the use of profanities was encouraged. Yindi Emperor prohibited traditional media from recording the forum unless they planned to broadcast the entire forum without editing. This is to prevent any unfriendly editing by traditional media. People could view the live broadcast of the forum on Yindi Emperor's *YouTube* account or through *Apple Daily's* online version<sup>6)</sup>. Although some of the banned media did not abide by the rule, protesters in the forum were determined to continue the forum anyway. As Informant M08 stated, 'Where else can we go (let out our feelings)? We shouldn't

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5) 'Yindi' in Chinese is synonymous with 'indie (rock)' and 'clitoris'.

6) The online version of *Apple Daily* did broadcast the entire forum from the start to the end.



**Figure 25: The most famous participant in the forum, known as ‘Taiwan independence machine gun’**  
**Source: <https://www.youtube.com/user/indietaiwan/videos>**

care what the media writes about us, they were already hopeless anyway’.

The Intestine Flower Forum was held for four nights from 7 April to 10 April. It was an unprecedented forum in Taiwan’s public sphere since it was, in a sense, a ‘swearing show’. For example, the majority of the foul language, such as ‘fuck your mother/grandmother/teacher’ and ‘stinky/old penis’ were all related to the ‘fuck’ and ‘penis’. The angrier the tone and bodily expression were onstage; the more excited the audiences became (Figure 25). Both the participants and the audiences loved the forum since it brought a fresh and free experience, which was in contrast to the atmosphere in the occupy movement. It was also an important space for protesters to release their frustrations, anger and any emotions that they could not express in other public spaces of the movement. The commonly used foul language may have initially suggested a strong sense of gender discrimination, but the language was used to fight against the patriarchal expectations and morals that young people (especially students who were thought as ‘kids’) should not swear. In addition, those who spoke in the forum not only included males, but females, gays, lesbians and transsexuals. Taking the context of the strong self-disciplined atmosphere and the repressed bodies in the movement into consideration, the profanity became the strongest resistance to the morals of the conservatives and the power of media surveillance. Apart from simply venting their frustrations verbally, there were LGBT people calling for gender equality and sexual liberation by making certain statements or kissing on stage. A well-known feminist professor Yun Fan also talked about the politics of using foul language. She argued that female protesters saying ‘fuck your mother/grandmother’ were meaningful since they were forbidden to curse in the patriarchal society, but male protesters should say ‘fuck your father/grandfather’ instead, as a way to pay tribute to LGBT movements and intergenerational romance.

Professor Fan’s remark on profanity reminded participants that even though the swearing used in the forum was aimed to transgress the framework of a ‘peaceful and well-mannered protest’ set by mass media, it was still based on gender/sexual discrimination. The Intestine Flower Forum has no doubt



liberated some repressed bodies, feelings and desires to a certain degree. However, the ways of expressing such frustrations were not as liberal as they seemed. In fact, the length of time for each speaker depended on the audiences' responses and if one was not fluent enough in swearing or he/she was too repetitive, then they were booed by the audience and forced to step down from the stage. Informant M07 recalled of his own experience, 'Whoever on stage has got to swear, this is what the audiences expected, or the atmosphere would be dull'.

Although individuals of different gender identities and sexualities spoke on stage, heterosexual males were still the majority. In Taiwanese society, females are taught not to swear, but such a standard was more lenient for males. In fact, for males, using profanities in everyday life was a way of showing their masculinity and the tone, facial expressions and body language must be regarded as 'masculine'. Most heterosexual men are familiar with the bodily expressions of swearing, and as a result, they felt more relaxed during the Intestine Flower Forum. However, there were more female protesters who felt uncomfortable about the forum than the males. They even felt stressed imagining themselves on stage. As Informant F05 states,

'It would be really awkward if I couldn't swear fluently, I'm not used to curse especially in front of people I'm not familiar with, and it also troubles me that where to put my hands in that situation'.

For Merleau-Ponty, motility is located in intentionality and 'the possibilities that are opened up in the world depend on the mode and limits of the bodily "I can"' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 137, 148; as quoted in Young, 2005, p. 36). Feminine bodily existence, however, is an 'inhibited intentionality', which often 'withholds its full bodily commitment to that end in a self-imposed "I cannot"' (Young, 2005, p. 36). In other words, female bodies are disciplined to be unfamiliar with the body language of swearing. It is not merely a lack of practice, but also 'a specific positive style of feminine body comportment and movement ...the girl learn actively to hamper her movement' (Ibid, p. 43). As Foucault (1977) points out, it is the soul that prisons the body. In other words, practices of the body produce the thoughts and concepts on the body, and the body is thus imprisoned by it. He also reminds us that a subject of self-observation and internal inspection is already a captive of thoughts, and the replica of social norms. The same situation occurs for males. Known as a masculine activity, swearing is an important way for males to release their emotions while simultaneously maintaining their masculinity. As Informant M06 states about his own experience,

'Simply expressing emotions without using curse words would be regarded as "sissy" by males, and it can make the situation pretty awkward. Unless we are all drunk, people might stop pretending they are strong'.

The need to constantly perform masculinity when interacting with males echoes Judith Butler's (1990) notion on gender: it is always an active process (a verb rather than a noun), a performativity. Without acts



of gender there would be no gender at all. Males are anxious about their gender identity, which is more fluid than they thought. They also need to be conscious of their bodily expressions to avoid the awkward moment of not being masculine enough to be men.

The aforementioned discussion illustrates the significance of the Intestine Flower Forum in transgressing the morals of the occupy movement set by traditional media, and in liberating the repressed desires and bodies of the protesters. However, it was still not a complete liberation of their bodies. During the forum, the female protesters did not feel as relaxed as their male counterparts and even though the latter group felt more at ease, their expressions were still confined in certain masculine ways.

## V. CONCLUSION

As analysed in Section 4.1, the gender framing and representation of the mainstream media like *Apple Daily* have reinforced and reproduced gender bias and stereotypes in the Occupy Congress and might have caused an unequal gender re-socialization in the movement itself and in the public. This seems to echo the concept of mediatization, which argues that the discourses and processes of political communication and the society in which the communication takes place were all shaped and framed by the media (Lilleker, 2006). This concept offers a rather pessimistic view about political manipulation. However, as analyzed in Section 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4, spaces were still mediated by new media for participants' bodily dissent from and negotiation with traditional media's gendered framing.

Applying Fraser's idea in the context of a 'rational, unifying' movement, new media (especially Facebook and YouTube, in these cases) has enabled online counter-publics to exist and thrive. These counter-publics concern the participants' bodily experiences, such as debating bodily autonomy and different practices of gender and sexual equality (as analysed in 4.2), female protestors' negotiated readings and desires (4.3) and liberation of docile bodies in the self-disciplined movement (4.4). Through online counter-publics, the issues could not only penetrate the movement's unifying goal and be discussed by the people but also challenge the mainstream gendered framing enhanced by mass media.

However, this is not to say that the emergence of new media promises a bright future. In fact, the power of traditional mass media's agenda-setting still influences how people look at, discuss and even resist traditional media's gender framing. For example, as mentioned in Section 4.1, linking sexual desires and activities with the binary opposition of public good and private interest proved an efficient attack on the movement's legitimacy. This strategy was used by *News Tornado*, and most people consequently regarded it as a 'pornification' of the movement, which is still confined to the discursive framework set by *News Tornado*. Meanwhile, traditional mass media started adopting new media technologies; electronic and mobile versions were developed. The boundary between traditional media and new media was thus vanishing. Young people used new media as their main information channels, but the news materials for spreading and sharing might have originated from traditional mass media's online news versions. The concept of mediation is potent in discussing this intertwined situation since it pays more attention to the open-ended, dialectical movement of meanings across the thresholds of representation and experience

(Couldry, 2008) and provides more nuanced understandings of the reciprocal relations between new media and traditional media, technologies interface and people's bodies.

To summarize, the possibilities and limitations of gender practices of bodily dissent and negotiation lie not only in the existing patriarchal structure of society, but also in the entanglement of dynamically interrelated new social media and traditional mass media. New technologies empower people, but are simultaneously re-structured by the society. The three case studies previously mentioned show the possibilities in the limitations, as well as the limitations in the possibilities.

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