



Media and Suicidal Behaviour

for SOCI0067 Crime and the Media
SOCI8011 Media and Crime

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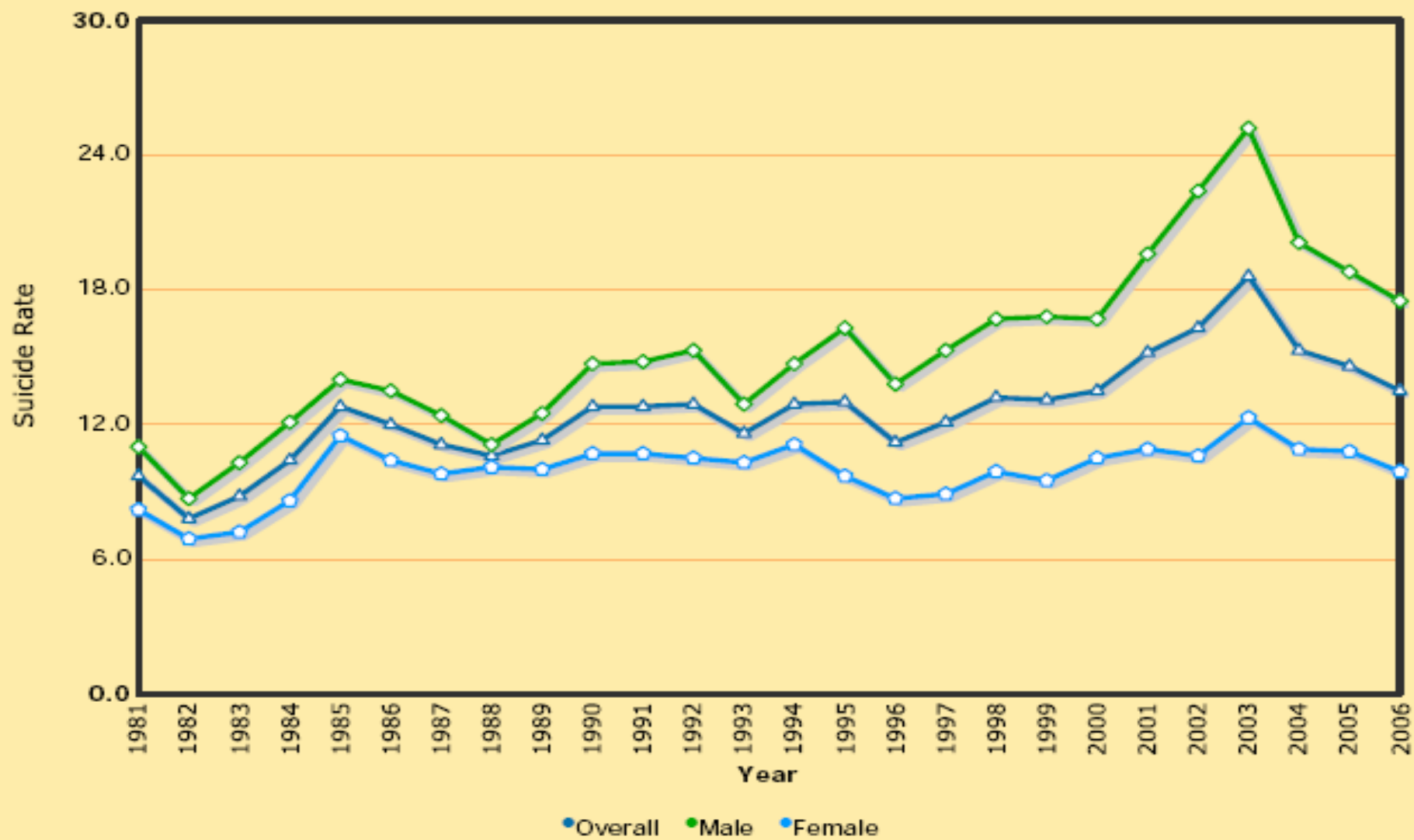
Synopsis

- Suicide in Hong Kong
- Suicide & the Media: conceptual frameworks and theories
- Media reporting in Hong Kong
- Case study: Celebrity suicide and news reporting

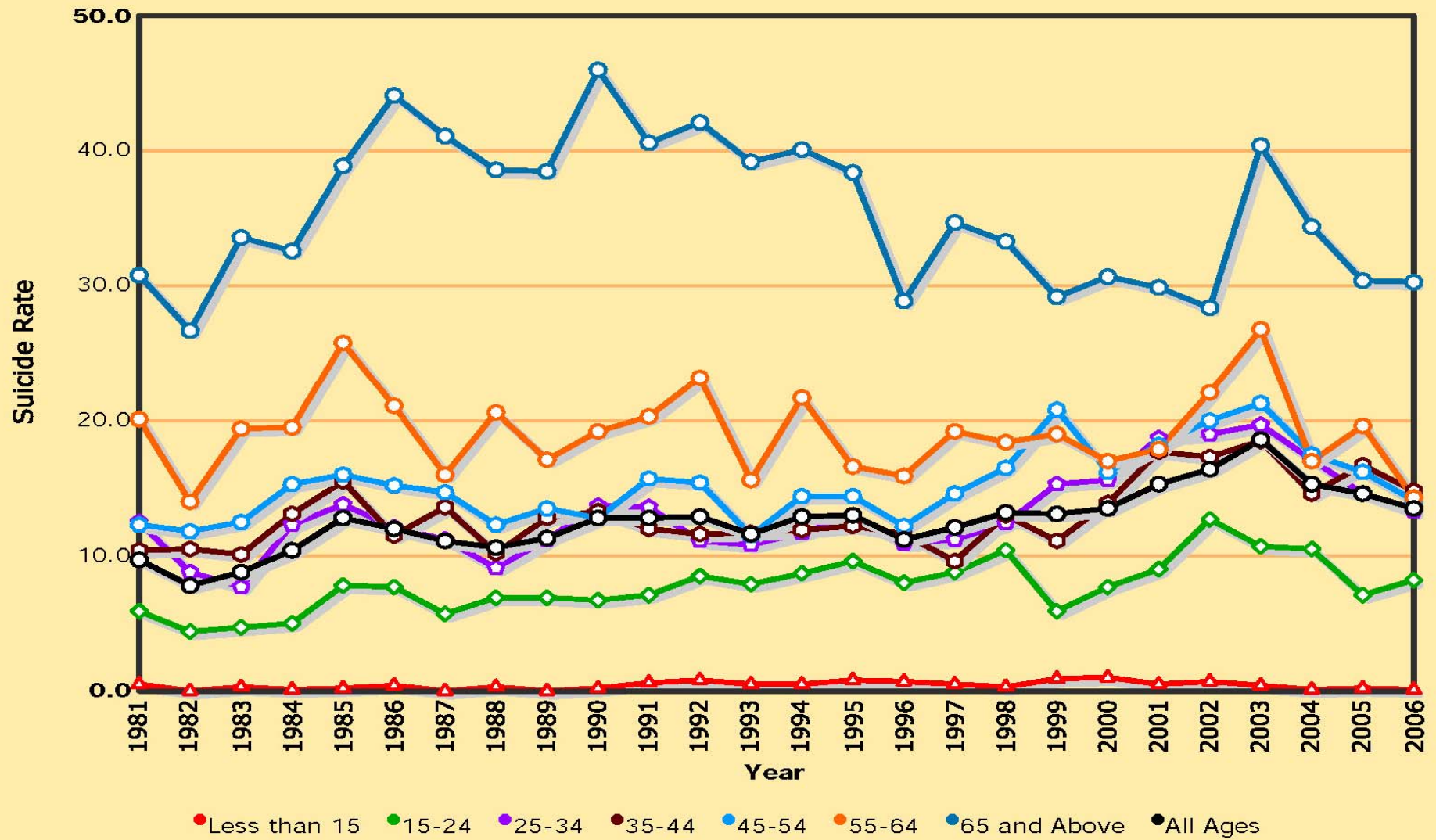
Suicide, Crime and the Media

- The act of suicide was decriminalized in Hong Kong
- But, the acts of homicide-suicide and assisting suicide (e.g. suicide pacts or through media??) are criminal
- Please read
 - OFFENCES AGAINST THE PERSON ORDINANCE - SECT 33A/33B (<http://www.hklii.org>) for details

Suicide rates by gender in HK 1981-2006



Suicide rates by age group in HK 1981-2006



Homicide-Suicide in Hong Kong

- 231 died in 98 episodes, from 1989 to 2005
- The majority of offenders: male (68.7%) and aged 30-49 (62.6%).
- Spouses (46.5%) and children (47.5%) were predominantly the victims.
- The common killing methods: chopping with weapons (33.3%) and charcoal burning (22.2%).
- Four major “classes”: dispute, conflicts in a relationship, altruistic, and mental illness.

Yip PS, Wong PW, Cheung YT, Chan KS, Beh SL., (2009) An empirical study of characteristics and types of homicide-suicides in Hong Kong, 1989-2005., *J Affect Disord.* 2009 Jan;112(1-3):184-92

Warning

You may be disturbed by the following slide
contained scenes of suicide death.

You may choose to close your eyes or leave
this room for a while.

蘋果日報 2007年10月15日 星期一 第五九九九號

副刊 \$30萬 由你決定 每天 \$1.5

照顧患癌夫 遺書「有壓力」 釀三死

掙仔女落街 母跳樓

【本報訊】天水圍發生的一宗慘劇，一個照顧癌症病人的新移民家庭，丈夫患上鼻咽癌，妻子因照顧丈夫而患上憂鬱症，最終導致三死。這宗慘劇在社區引起了廣泛關注，也引發了對癌症患者家庭支持系統的討論。

據悉，這名男子在患病後，妻子因長期照顧而身心俱疲，最終在壓力下選擇了極端的道路。這起事件再次提醒社會，癌症患者及其家屬需要更多的社會支持和心理輔導。

網上市開鋒刀刺無主管
會慶紅任十七大秘書長
昂坪燒香團獲三萬津貼
吉其快本面攻入伊拉克
97區

報明 2007-10-15 星期一

小童狗仔 反轉荷李活
哈囉嚟嘩果 遭客追打非禮

www.mingpao.com

夫患癌 天水圍婦人獨力難支失常

母綁子女擲落街跳樓

【本報訊】天水圍發生的一宗慘劇，一名婦女因丈夫患癌，獨力支撐家庭，最終在壓力下綁住子女擲落街後跳樓。這起事件引起了社會對癌症患者家庭困境的關注。

據悉，這名婦女在丈夫患病後，獨自承擔了所有的經濟和精神壓力，最終在無法承受的情況下，做出了極端的舉動。這起事件再次提醒社會，癌症患者及其家屬需要更多的社會支持和心理輔導。

三屍案伏屍現場
穿紅衣生 遺棄糞物惡力
警檢獲槍 各事偵查
街坊聞 3巨響 以為放鞭炮
小孫生煎飽有禮
鄰裝掛壽星兒女
姊妹操行優異 校長心痛

Media and Suicidal Behaviour

“...There is an onus on media professionals to exercise caution in reporting suicide, and to balance imperatives like the public’s ‘right to know’ against the risk of causing harm.”

Preventing Suicide: A Resource for Media Professionals,
World Health Organization

“Journalists should recognize that gathering and reporting information may cause harm or discomfort. Pursuit of the news is not a license for arrogance.”

Minimize Harm, Code of Ethics,
Society of Professional Journalists

Media and Suicidal Behaviour

“No fact is better established in science than that suicide is often committed from imitation. A single paragraph may suggest suicide to 20 persons.”

- Brigham, 1845

“In short, certain as the contagion of suicide is from individual to individual, imitation never seems to propagate it so as to affect the social suicide-rate. ”

- Durkheim, 1897

The Sorrows of Young Werther



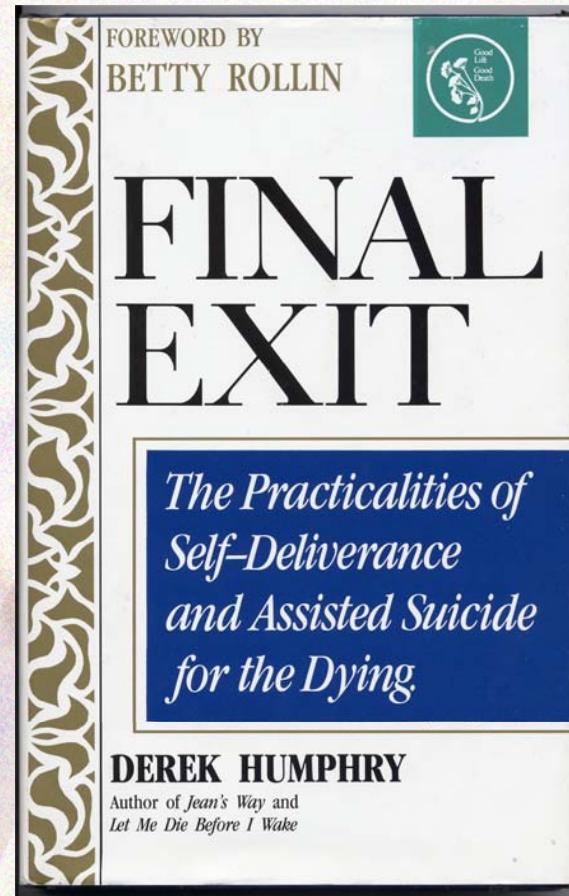
J.W. v Goethe
Published 1774



Suicide instructions

Books

e.g. *Final Exit*



Media Influence on Suicidal Behaviour

- Extensive studies on the influence of media portrayal on subsequent suicide rate (Bollen & Phillips, 1982; Durkheim, 1897; Hawton et al., 2000; Hawton et al., 1999; Phillips, 1974; Schmidtke & Häfner, 1988; Stack, 2003; Stack & Gundlach, 1992; Wasserman, 1984; Yip et al., 2006);
- Positive association supported by meta-analyses (Stack, 2000, 2005);
- Some suggest to be “causality” (Hawton & Williams, 2005; Pirkis & Blood, 2001);

Factors contributing to suicide are complex

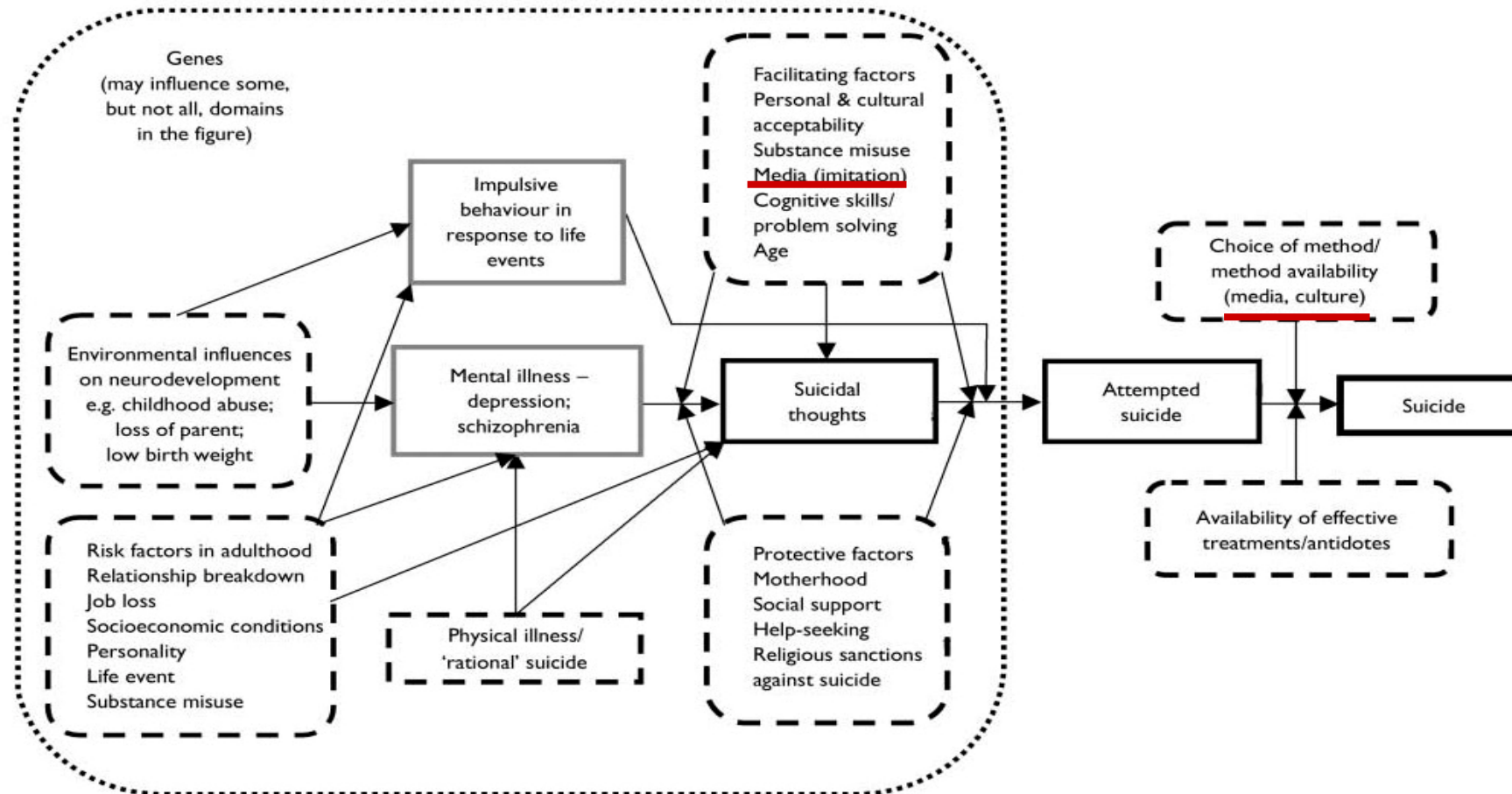


Fig. 1 Life course influences on suicide.

Gunnell, D., & Lewis, G. (2005). Studying suicide from the life course perspective: implications for prevention. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 187, 206-208.

Social Theory of Imitative Suicide

■ Durkheim (1897)

- a process of automatic reproduction of other people's behavior.
- it might exist among few individuals or in small geographical circumstances, these suicides would have happened otherwise in the absence of contagion and thus could not consequently be reflected in the overall suicide statistics

■ Tarde (1888)

- contrasted his view sharply with Durkheim's notion of "sociologism,"
- psychological aspects of human behavior is also one of the basic and essential focuses of sociological inquiry

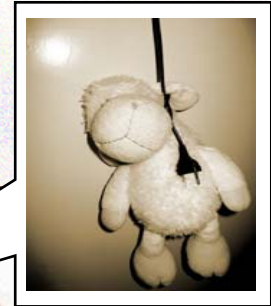
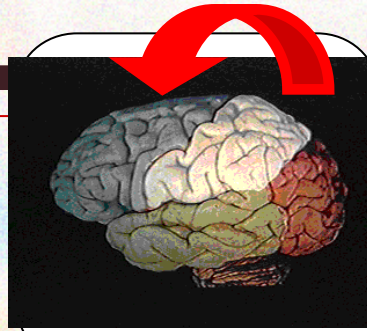
Social Theory of Imitative Suicide

■ Stack (1987)

- Imitation is largely an exercise of inferior copying superior, say famous people of good fame, celebrities or leaders;
- Front-page suicide stories, which represents a power of public opinion, would trigger suicides in the real world;
- The upper class or elite are more apt to be imitated;
- Front-page stories about suicides of elite would have greater impact on imitative suicides
- Theory of differential identification

Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory in Communication

- Attention
- Retention
- Motivation/De-motivation
- Production



Attention seeking?
Problem Solving?
= Pain relieving?
Painful experience?

Fu, Chan & Yip (2009) Testing a Theoretical Model Based on Social Cognitive Theory for Media Influences on Suicidal Ideation: Results from a Panel Study. *Media Psychology*. V12(1)

Media Reporting of Suicide in Hong Kong

The background of the slide features a blurred, multi-colored crowd of people. Overlaid on this is a large, semi-transparent graphic of two stylized human figures, one slightly behind the other, rendered in a light grey or beige tone. The overall aesthetic is soft and somewhat ethereal.

Warning

You may be disturbed by the following slide
contained scenes of suicide death.

You may choose to close your eyes or leave
this room for a while.

失業城大生
自殺命危



【本報訊】一名失業大學生，因生活所迫，在九龍大馬路一間酒店內，企圖從高處跳下自殺。幸經消防員及時發現，並將其救起。目前該生仍在醫院接受治療，情況危殆。

據悉，該名學生姓李，年約二十歲，現年失業。他在接受訪問時表示，由於生活所迫，感到絕望，才萌生自殺念頭。消防員在接到報警後，迅速趕到現場，將他從高處救下。目前，他仍在醫院接受治療，情況危殆。



危站

「你哋好唔好，我跳下去喇！」令消防員都不敢妄動。

墮氣墊旁頭爆折

其間，在場警員地過事主妻子提供資料，得知他復修正在美國讀書的女兒，於是接長途電話聯絡到黃的女兒，並將資料提供給進行游說的消防員，希望可因此說服事主打消念頭。

墮下

■墮了一小時，事主終於肯鬆手，消防員隨即將其救下。



翻動

■事主在中層墊斗直墮24層地上。



伏屍

■最後消防員不遺餘力，將事主救起。

不堪事業連番受挫
危站簷篷喝止救援

經紀24樓躍下

【本報訊】想當年曾為木材公司老闆，如今生意失敗要做鐘錶經紀，他嫌不堪事業受挫折，以致壯志消沉，昨在屯門怡樂花園住家舉出窗外危立，妻兒勸止無效報警求助。警方及消防員到場展開戒備及游說，惟一小時後，懷疑事主發現樓上有消防員準備繩降行動，一時情緒激動從24樓一躍而下，跌在氣墊旁邊地上，當場慘死。事主妻子驚聞丈夫跳樓，傷心絕絕；負責營救的消防員亦顯得非常難過。

負責營救的消防員亦顯得非常難過。記者：吳國威 周鴻照



「飛將軍」不敢妄動

昨日上午11時半，一家三口在家中看電視，其間黃突然在全無先兆下衝出客廳的窗門外，危站在下一層的冷氣機直石屎牆上，妻兒大驚忙加勸止，但事主不為所動並將窗門關上，不肯聽兒女的說話，妻子於是報警求助。



未能及時營救

「我哋全隊人交個心去營救」



消防員心聲

「黃太，你先生(丈夫)走咗喇……」屯門地處消防局高級消防隊長何家萬，強忍著傷感，向剛剛在他面前跳樓身亡事主的妻子哀告這噩耗。這聲來的喪夫之痛，令黃太無法接受，即時歇斯底里的痛哭起來，在旁兒子擁抱著母親不斷安慰。

有更大嘅氣墊，但廠家已經係唔現有最好器材去盡力去做。」他又說：「事情發生之後，我哋全 team 人好開心，好難過，事實上我哋全隊人已經交出咗個心去做營救。」他又嘆氣：「希望人可以珍惜生命！」

收隊離場黯然神傷

昨日事發後，消防員收隊離場時，各隊員都有點黯然神傷，其中一名有份在樓上戒備的消防員，對記者追問，只傷感地回應：「好唔開心，唔想講嘢。」隊長何家萬事後稱，有隊員心裏難過，他作為隊長會鼓勵同事繼續努力，並會在下班後與他們討論事件，以釋放情緒。

另一方面，衝失丈夫的女事主因為一時無法接受事實，情緒失控，事後由兒子陪同送院檢查，其後幸無大礙。



危坐

■魚檔少東爬上招牌頂危坐對峙。



街坊冷語：你少東跳

【本報訊】一名魚檔少東，昨午危坐四十呎高的招牌頂，警方及消防員所阻無法移進行入路，只好對面街坊突然大叫：「你邊敢跳落嚟及後後院證實不治，警方懷疑事主死者姓葉(五十歲)，與家人居唐樓一單位；他的家人在附近街開設士多。消息稱，葉患有精神病，最近他一位胞姊遇上麻煩，葉亦搶救消防鋪竹籬。

昨午四時許，事主疑精神病發作的巨大招牌頂危坐，距離地面約十層樓高。警方及消防員到場，消防又打

屯門地處消防局高級消防隊長何家萬(左)勸黃游說事主，他事後表示十分難過。

本報記者

Reporting of Suicide News in Hong Kong

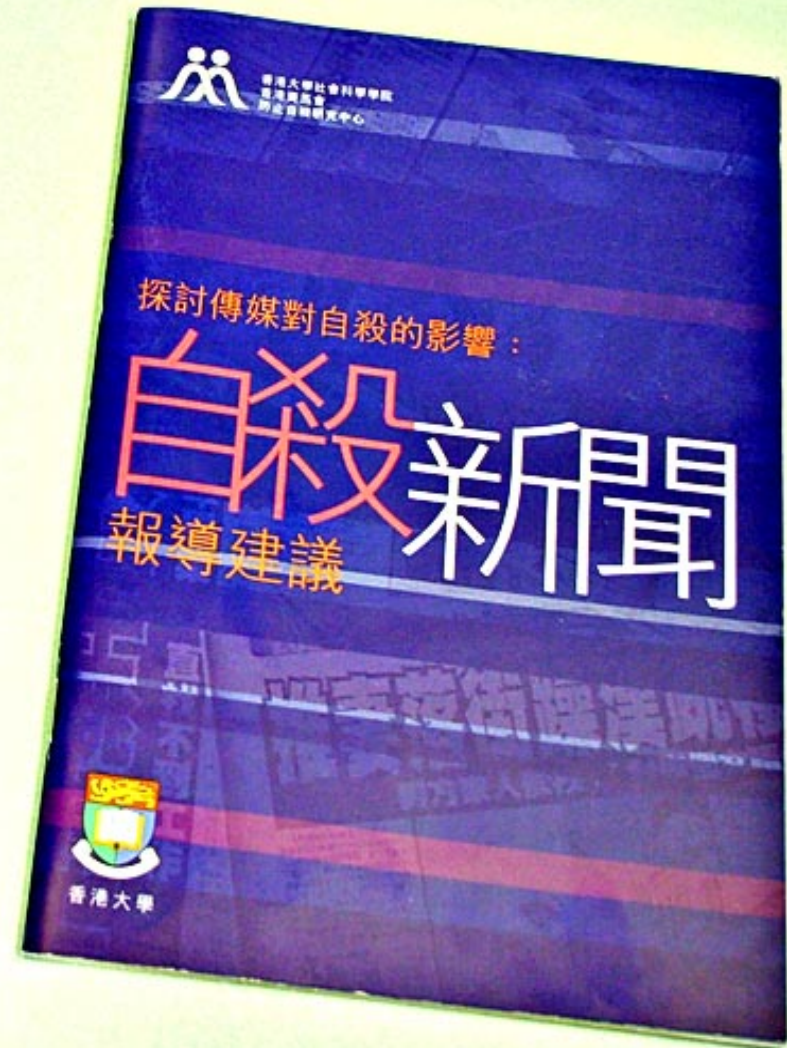
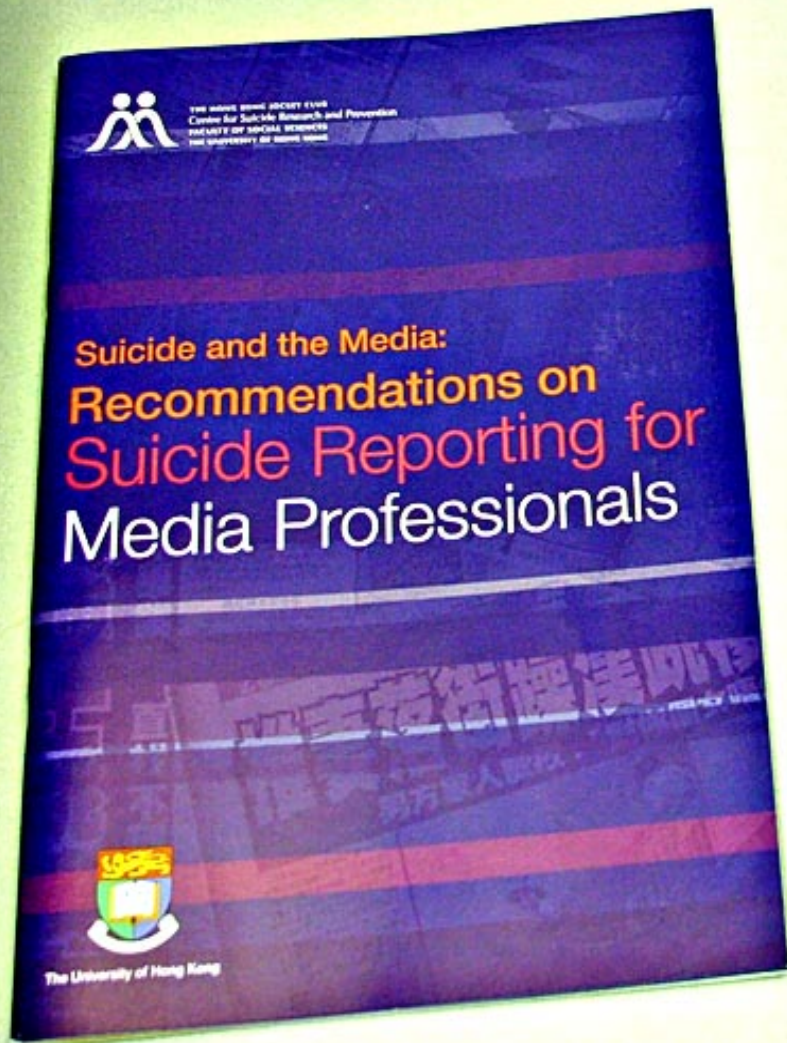
- Hong Kong's suicide reporting has been found to be noncompliant with the WHO recommendations or international best practices (Au et al., 2004)
- For examples:
 - 47% of suicide deaths in Hong Kong were found to have newspaper coverage in 2000 (Au et al., 2004), compared to only 1% in Australian newspapers (Pirkis et al., 2007)
 - While the WHO (2000) suggests not to publish photographs, 87.5% of the Hong Kong newspapers contain pictorial presentation (Au et al., 2004), compared to 14% in Australia (Pirkis et al., 2002) and 8% in Switzerland (Michel et al., 2000)

Fu, K. W., & Yip, P. S. (2008). Changes in reporting of suicide news after the promotion of the WHO media recommendations. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, 38(5), 631-636.

Media misrepresentation

- Over-reporting of younger age suicides and under-reporting of elderly suicides
- Across Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Guangzhou

	Hong Kong 2006	
	Suicides	Newspaper
Under15	2(0.2%)	10(2.2%)
15 to 24	64(6.4%)	64(14.2%)
25 to 39	259(26.1%)	141(31.3%)
40 to 59	373(37.6%)	141(31.3%)
> 60	295(29.7%)	95(21.1%)



Journalism and Media Studies Centre

HKJC Centre for Suicide Research & Prevention

WHO's Preventing Suicide: A Resource for Media Professionals

http://www.who.int/mental_health/resources/suicide/en/index.html

- Take the opportunity to educate the public about suicide
 - Avoid language which sensationalises or normalises suicide, or presents it as a solution to problems
 - Avoid prominent placement and undue repetition of stories about suicide
 - Avoid explicit description of the method used in a completed or attempted suicide
 - Avoid providing detailed information about the site of a completed or attempted suicide
 - Word headlines carefully
 - Exercise caution in using photographs or video footage
 - Take particular care in reporting celebrity suicides
 - Show due consideration for people bereaved by suicide
 - Provide information about where to seek help
 - Recognise that media professionals themselves may be affected by stories about suicide
-

Comparison of the suicide stories before (1/1/2004 to 8/11/2004) and after (9/11/2004 to 30/6/2006) the Program, Both completed & attempted suicide stories

	Before the campaign	After the campaign	χ^2 or t- test (p- value)
Total number of suicide news	2110	3630	na
Average no. of suicide news per day	6.7	6.1	na
Front-page placement	1.9%	1.8%	0.394
Accompanying with photograph(s)	92.0%	90.7%	<0.05
Accompanying with graphical presentation(s)	3.3%	3.3%	0.480
Mentioning suicide method in the headline	89.5%	90.4%	0.166
Mentioning problem encountered in the headline	65.9%	59.6%	<0.000
Containing positive message(s)	4.9%	4.9%	0.526
Number of Chinese characters (mean)	375	386	0.137

Findings

(Fu & Yip, 2008)

- Certain reporting styles were marginally changed in accordance with the WHO recommendations; namely, lessened use of pictorial presentation and headline mentioning the problem encountered by the victim
- But there was no significant change in the other reporting items.
- Most of the changes attributed to the tabloid-style newspapers (Apple Daily, The Sun & Oriental Daily).

Celebrity Suicide

The background of the slide is a blurred, multi-colored image of a crowd of people. Overlaid on the right side of the crowd is a large, semi-transparent graphic of two stylized human figures, one slightly behind the other, rendered in a light grey or beige tone. The overall aesthetic is soft and artistic.

The Effect of Celebrity Suicides

- Evidence shows a surge in the suicide rate or suicide attempt follows the incidents of
 - Celebrity death or suicides (Cheng, Hawton, Chen et al., 2007; Cheng, Hawton, Lee, & Chen, 2007; Hawton et al., 2000; Tousignant, Mishara, Caillaud, Fortin, & St Laurent, 2005; Yip & Fu, 2006)
 - Publicized news stories of celebrity suicides (Phillips, 1974; Stack, 1987; Wasserman, 1984)
- Higher increases following the suicides of entertainers (Stack, 1987; Wasserman, 1984)
- Age, gender or method-specific increases (Cheng, Hawton, Lee et al., 2007; Fu & Yip, 2007; Yip & Fu, 2006)

Celebrity Suicide in Hong Kong

- The Death of Leslie Cheung



Celebrity Suicide – Leslie Cheung

- Hong Kong's famous pop star Mr. Leslie Cheung, had suffered from depression, died by jumping from a height on 1 April 2003.
- Extensive media coverage of his death.
 - 1243 news articles (2nd to 9th April 2003), compared to 12 news articles in the preceding week (25th March to 1st April)

Pop star Leslie Cheung dies in fall from Central hotel



Tommy Lewis and Niki Law

Pop star, actor and director Leslie Cheung Kwok-wing plunged to his death from the Mandarin Oriental hotel in Central in an apparent suicide last night.

Cheung, 46 – star of the hit 1993 movie *Farewell My Concubine* – fell from the 24th floor window of the hotel and was found lying in Connaught Road at 6.41pm.

He was rushed to the Queen Mary Hospital where he was certified dead on arrival.

Police found a suicide note, his driver's licence, two credit cards, a car key and a few thousand dollars on his body.

Police refused to disclose the contents of the note but said his death was believed to be due to emotional problems.

As news of Cheung's death emerged, young women fans arrived and laid bouquets and cards near the spot where his body was found.

Cheung, who was gay and lived with his banker lover in Kadoorie Avenue, Ho Man Tin, shot to fame when he was runner-up in ATV's Asian Music Contest in 1976.

Friends and colleagues last night expressed shock and sadness over the star's death.

"I know that he had complained of feeling sick a while ago. But after going to the doctor his condition improved," said Kelvin Wong, general manager of the Chinese music division of Universal Music.

"Everything is in a state of chaos now. There were no signs that he was emotionally disturbed."

Mr Wong said that in the past few months, Cheung had been composing and recording songs for his new CD, which was to be released later this year.

Stephen Chan Chi-wan, assistant general manager of TVB, said that the station would call a meeting this morning to arrange for programmes commemorating the star's life to be aired.

Cheung was nominated best actor for *Inner Senses* at the Hong Kong Film Awards due to take place on Sunday.

■ Life and times – C4

唐先生 張國榮

【死亡】 張國榮 1956-2003

事業感情失



張國榮生前自縊身亡，其自殺原因成謎。

一代巨星張國榮日前自縊身亡，享年四十六歲。有別于選擇跳去，一直予人為強人。而他一起十八年的伴侶陳慧嫻亦在張國榮自縊後，首度在張國榮的靈柩前失聲痛哭。三度獲頒金獎，並遠在張國榮因患胃腸癌而心受挫去，去年十一月一。

特稿

張國榮自縊身亡 堪與專家：男生女相多波折

張國榮日前在中國傳媒陣亡身亡，結束其四十六年的短暫生命。有傳聞張國榮的自縊身亡，並非如外界所傳的「自縊身亡」，而是因患胃腸癌而心受挫去，去年十一月一。

遺書：我一 生行做壞事……



張國榮

遺書內容大意
Depression
教授，吃一半年
唐先生，多謝
壞事，為何這

1956-2003

Advertisement for a service, possibly related to the deceased, with text like "遺書內容大意" and "Depression".

【稍感安慰】 張國榮 1956-2003



唐生四處奔波 張家八號舉殯

張國榮的一生定劃上休止符。最後心是第五堂先生，他於去年於佛香樓自縊身亡。他的死，是香港娛樂圈的一場噩夢。在張國榮自縊身亡後，他的家人、朋友、同事、影迷、傳媒、政府、社會各界，都紛紛向他致敬。他的死，是香港娛樂圈的一場噩夢。在張國榮自縊身亡後，他的家人、朋友、同事、影迷、傳媒、政府、社會各界，都紛紛向他致敬。

家人請教風水師

香港殯儀館地下大堂接待處告示板，其中一欄昨日貼出張國榮的「生」(安)「葬」(八日)，但下午及晚上又貼上「生」(安)「葬」(十七日)，貼在無人注目，有消息稱，張國榮的家人，請教風水師，決定於下周二為張國榮舉殯。

學者籲情緒低落者求醫

【本報訊】張國榮這顆閃亮的明星，令不少港人傷心哀痛，有學者指出，張國榮的自縊身亡，令不少港人傷心哀痛，有學者指出，張國榮的自縊身亡，令不少港人傷心哀痛，有學者指出，張國榮的自縊身亡，令不少港人傷心哀痛。

唐先生眼泛淚光

昨(四)日下午，張國榮的靈柩抵達香港殯儀館地下大堂，張國榮的家人、朋友、同事、影迷、傳媒、政府、社會各界，都紛紛向他致敬。他的死，是香港娛樂圈的一場噩夢。在張國榮自縊身亡後，他的家人、朋友、同事、影迷、傳媒、政府、社會各界，都紛紛向他致敬。

七續代否認傳言

昨日記者向張國榮的七續代查詢，就「張國榮自縊身亡」的傳言，張國榮的七續代表示，張國榮的自縊身亡，令不少港人傷心哀痛，有學者指出，張國榮的自縊身亡，令不少港人傷心哀痛。

【稍感安慰】 張國榮 1956-2003



唐生四處奔波 張家八號舉殯

張國榮的一生定劃上休止符。最後心是第五堂先生，他於去年於佛香樓自縊身亡。他的死，是香港娛樂圈的一場噩夢。在張國榮自縊身亡後，他的家人、朋友、同事、影迷、傳媒、政府、社會各界，都紛紛向他致敬。他的死，是香港娛樂圈的一場噩夢。在張國榮自縊身亡後，他的家人、朋友、同事、影迷、傳媒、政府、社會各界，都紛紛向他致敬。

家人請教風水師

香港殯儀館地下大堂接待處告示板，其中一欄昨日貼出張國榮的「生」(安)「葬」(八日)，但下午及晚上又貼上「生」(安)「葬」(十七日)，貼在無人注目，有消息稱，張國榮的家人，請教風水師，決定於下周二為張國榮舉殯。

學者籲情緒低落者求醫

【本報訊】張國榮這顆閃亮的明星，令不少港人傷心哀痛，有學者指出，張國榮的自縊身亡，令不少港人傷心哀痛，有學者指出，張國榮的自縊身亡，令不少港人傷心哀痛。

唐先生眼泛淚光

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張國榮面容無損



張國榮逝世專版索引

AZ 維持形象 AB 嗚呼
A3 死亡疑團 AB 嗚呼
A8 張國榮思

辛亥日出殯中吉

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Findings (Yip et al, 2006)

- An unusual, relatively short lived, rise in suicide cases in April 2003 in males, aged 25–39, who committed suicide by jumping from a height following the suicide death of Leslie Cheung;
- Info from suicide notes and investigation files suggests that celebrity suicide could have a longer-term impact on some people;
- Modeling effect based on the characteristics of the model (male and aged 25-39) and the actual suicide method (jumping);

Information from suicide notes and death investigation files

- 13 cases in 2003 in which the death of Cheung was mentioned in either a suicide note (5 cases) or records of the police investigation (8 cases). In one case there was mention in both sources.
- The cases occurred between April and October 2003.
- Among these 13 cases, nine were male and six of these were aged 25–39 years.
- Four individuals expressed their suicidal intentions implicitly or explicitly by mentioning their desire either “to accompany Cheung” or “to follow his way to exit” (Cases 6, 10, 11 and 12). The remaining three individuals included people with life problems (Cases 8 and 9) and general distress (Case 13).

Info. from suicide notes and investigation files

Case no.	Month	M/F	Age	Suicide method	Explanations in suicide notes	Explanations in case notes
1	Apr	M	25–39	CO poisoning		“Have you heard that Cheung jumped off a building?” and “Yes, even a celebrity like Cheung can choose to die.” he said.
2	Apr	M	25–39	Jumping		“Cheung is so rich and has reputation and social status. But still he chooses to die.” he said.
3	Apr	M	40–59	Jumping		“A rich man like Cheung chooses to die when he is depressed, so a poor man like me can’t live any longer.” he said.
4	Apr	F	40–59	CO poisoning	“A rich man like Cheung is so unhappy and chooses to die.”	
5	Apr	M	40–59	CO poisoning	“A rich and depressed man like Cheung commits suicide. Why not a poor and depressed person like me?”	He was unhappy over his idol’s death. He said he was depressed like Cheung and felt so uncomfortable and painful.
6	May	F	40–59	Hanging	“I think life is so meaningless and Cheung’s act is so brave. Perhaps it is the way of my final exit ”	
7	Jun	F	40–59	CO poisoning		She was discharged from hospital and was disturbed by SARS and Cheung’s suicide. She said even a rich man like Cheung chose to die.
8	Jun	M	25–39	Hanging		The deceased mentioned the death of Cheung in his letter.
9	Jul	M	40–59	CO poisoning		The deceased had kept some newspaper clippings about Cheung’s suicide.
10	Sep	M	40–59	Jumping	“I’ll go to another world. Cheung, I will be there.”	
11	Sep	M	25–39	Jumping		He had mentioned that he would choose the same way as Cheung.
12	Oct	M	25–39	Hanging	“Good bye, everyone. I am going to accompany Cheung. Don’t be unhappy for me.”	
13	Oct	F	25–39	CO poisoning		She was Cheung’s fan. From the beginning of April she was sleepless and crying for no apparent reason.

Source: Yip et al (2006)

Long-term impact on suicidal ideation (Fu & Yip, 2007)

- Face-to-face household survey between 1 December 2003 and 4 July 2004
- Participants – 2,016 people aged between 20 and 59
- Response rate = 62%
- Self-report booklet for sensitive questions
- Lasted for about 45 min to an hour
- Conducted in Cantonese.



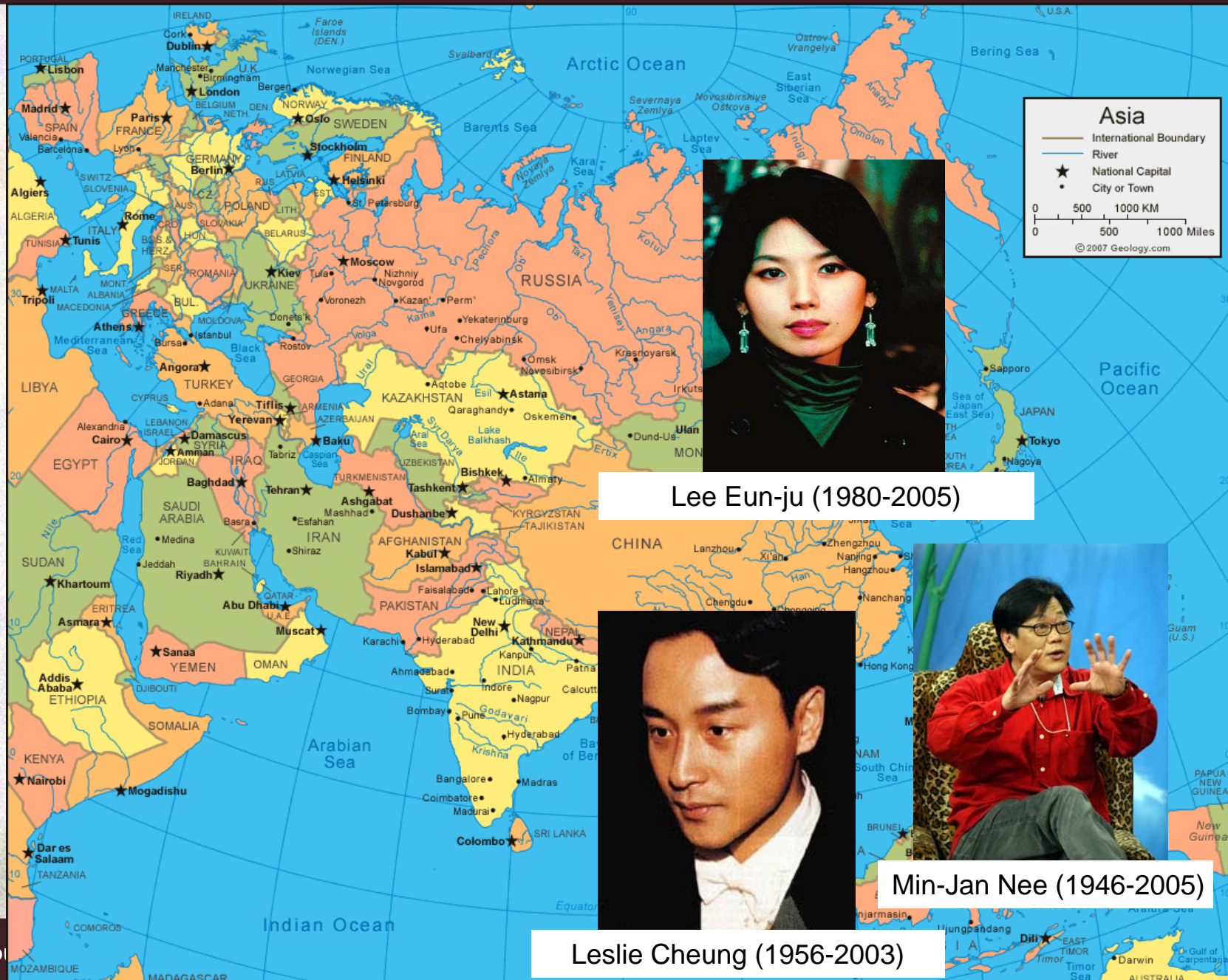
Findings

- Longer effective period of celebrity effect;
- Impact of celebrity suicide was associated **INDEPENDENTLY** with people's suicidal ideation, while controlling for some known risk factors for suicide;
- Having depressive symptom, less reason for life and high irrational belief moderated the impact of celebrity suicide on suicidal ideation;
- Positive thinking after celebrity suicide was a strong predictor of non-suicidal. Less impulsivity and having health problem were significant associated factors for positive thinking.

What we want to do in this study

- To examine the impacts of suicides of entertainment celebrities in Asia by
 - analyzing official raw data using a common methodology, indicators, and covariates, and then
 - estimating the combined risk for suicides across incidents through the application of meta-analysis.

Suicide deaths of three Asian entertainment celebrities



Time series plots for suicides in Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea

(The incidents of celebrity suicides of the respective regions are indicated with a vertical dashed line)

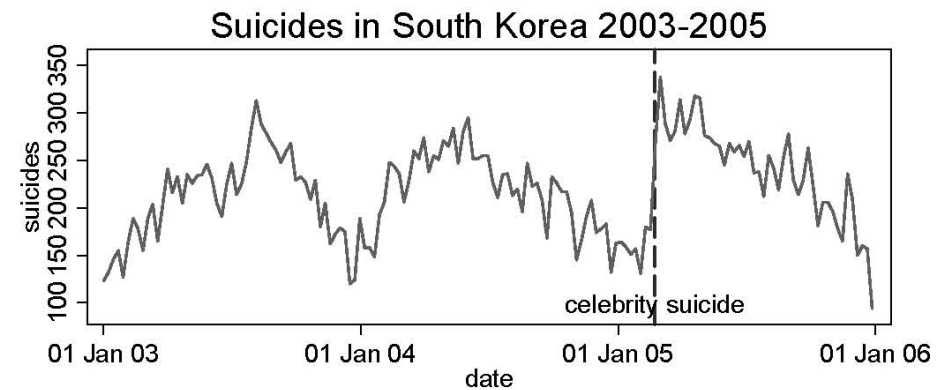
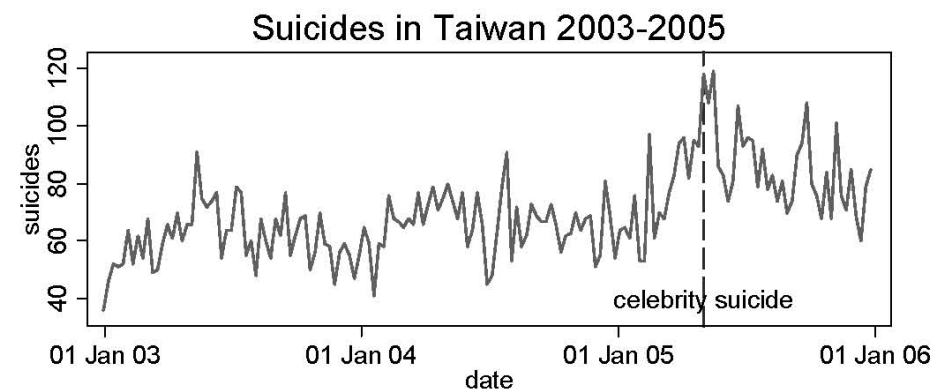
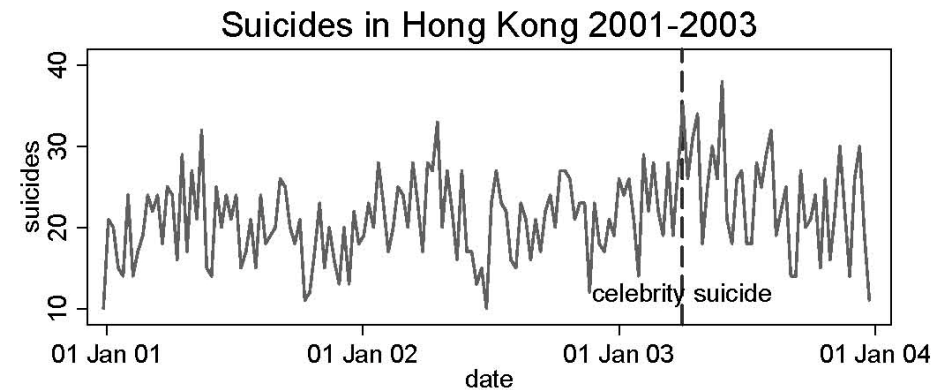


Fig. 1: Time series plots of Suicides in Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea

Results - Increases in suicides in weekly and medium term

- 43% (95% CI: 23%, 66%) increase in risk for suicides in the first week after the incidents, which is consistent across incidents;
- 29% (95% CI: 12%, 50%) increase in suicidal risk in the second week and 25% (95% CI: 8%, 45%) in the third week;
- No longer statistically significant in the fourth, fifth, and sixth week;
- A 14% (95% CI: 8%, 21%) rise in risk was seen and sustained for the following 18 weeks.

Results - Increases in suicides in weekly and medium term (Cont'd)

- All specific analyses demonstrate statistically significant increases in risk for suicide in the first, second, and third week;
- Age-method and age-gender-method specific analyses further show elevations in the fourth week;
- Method-specific and gender-method specific analyses indicate increases throughout the period of 24 weeks after

Findings

- Combined risks for suicide after incidents of celebrity suicide are quantified;
- Specific increases among groups, i.e. same gender or same method, are confirmed, and it strongly suggests the influence of celebrity suicide is likely to be an imitation;
- First three weeks increase in suicides;
- Medium term increase for at least 24 weeks after

Implications

- A scientific generalization of results across three Asian countries and strongly suggests an increasing risk for suicide in the community after celebrity suicide;
- Important information for the public health policy makers to assess the elevated risk for suicide associated with excessive media coverage of celebrity suicide;
- Targeted on preventing same-gender and same-method suicides;
- The first three weeks seems to be crucial time period for such intervention;
- Journalists should be well informed about the potential risk of reporting celebrity suicide and minimize the risk.



THANK YOU