MABEL CHEUNG YUEN-TING'S
An Autumn's Tale

Stacilee Ford

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Hong Kong University Press is honoured that Xu Bing, whose art explores the complex themes of language across cultures, has written the Press's name in his Square Word Calligraphy. This signals our commitment to cross-cultural thinking and the distinctive nature of our English-language books published in China.

"At first glance, Square Word Calligraphy appears to be nothing more unusual than Chinese characters, but in fact it is a new way of rendering English words in the format of a square so they resemble Chinese characters. Chinese viewers expect to be able to read Square Word Calligraphy but cannot. Western viewers, however are surprised to find they can read it. Delight erupts when meaning is unexpectedly revealed."

— Britta Erickson, *The Art of Xu Bing*

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Introduction
Mabel Cheung Yuen-ting and the Women of Hong Kong's Second Wave

Despite the fact that Mabel Cheung Yuen-ting is the first woman director to be recognized in this series, she and her peers have had a significant impact on the Hong Kong film industry. Scholars who have noted that the 1980s was a golden decade for Hong Kong film, also remind us that women's cultural production in Hong Kong accelerated in the last two decades of the 20th century. Directors such as Cheung rode a wave of increased profile and popularity.[1] One of three women to achieve acclaim in the New Wave/Second Wave cohort — along with Ann Hui and Clara Law — Mabel Chueng Yuen-ting's work speaks to multiple preoccupations in diaspora, while making a woman's story — through the character of Jenny (played by Cherie Chung) — the central focus. *An Autumn's Tale* is a piece of women's history (in terms of both its content and its production) and it is also an important example of how the Hong Kong film industry (particularly in the 1980s and 1990s) chronicled the diversity of women's experiences, changes in ideas about gender identities, class cleavages, and transpacific migration at century's

end. The film complements and is in conversation with other Hong Kong films about women in diaspora made during the same period such as Allen Fong's *Just Like Weather* (1986), Stanley Kwan's *Full Moon in New York* (1987), Ann Hui's *Song of the Exile* (1989), Clara Law's *Farewell China* (1990) and *A Floating Life* (1996), and Evans Chan's *Crossings* (1994).

Cheung, Hui, and Law do more than tell women's stories. They all make films that address multiple issues and historical shifts in gender, ethnic, and cultural identities. In some respects, several of their films could be considered a transnational extension of an Asian American cultural studies tradition; a late-20th century accompaniment to the 19th century "bachelor society" narratives of men who left Hong Kong and China to work and live in the United States during the Gold Rush period. Hong Kong's 1980s and 1990s cinematic migration melodramas like *An Autumn's Tale* also merit closer analysis for the counter narrative their representations offer in a particular historical moment. Recently, increased interest in Chinese women's autobiographical texts (particularly stories of women from the Chinese mainland during and after the Cultural Revolution) has extended a long-standing western proclivity to view Chinese women everywhere as tragic victims. Films like *An Autumn's Tale* offer a different perspective on the story of women coming of age. They are, arguably, cultural history texts that show women exercising a significant amount of agency through mobility, education, and acculturation to various environments. Gender and cultural identity are important, but by no means the defining factors in shaping women's lives.

Because this is the first study of a female director in the Hong Kong New Wave Cinema series, it is important to take a brief step back in order to assess the status of women in the Hong Kong film industry. How difficult is it for women to succeed? Cheung declares she feels "lucky to be a female director in Hong Kong," because, "in all of Asia, Hong Kong is the place which has the least prejudice

against women." All that really matters, she notes, is whether a director can bring a film in on time and under budget.[2] Actor and director Tsui Hark proudly declares that the presence of strong women behind and in front of the camera is one thing that makes Hong Kong different from Hollywood. "In Hong Kong, we are never 'threatened' by the females in our films and there is no bias in choosing which gender is doing the interesting things in the story."[3]

Yet while she stands firmly behind the declaration that being a woman is not a liability for a director, Cheung is pleased that several recent changes have taken place, particularly in terms of women in front of the camera. She is, she says, happy that "the depiction of women in Hong Kong movies has evolved from mere decoration for the set to characters with independent thinking."[4] Keep in mind, however, that despite the confident declarations of an increasingly level playing field, women are still significantly outnumbered in the industry and Cheung was one of only a select few women directors when *An Autumn's Tale* was released in 1987. Public utterances to the contrary, Cheung and other women in the industry have had to make their way in a particularly male-dominated space.

Cheung's background and education prepared her well for the type of border crossing that takes place in her films. Following her graduation from the University of Hong Kong, she studied drama and writing at the University of Bristol. She worked as a producer at Radio/Television Hong Kong (RTHK) between 1978 and 1980 before going to New York University where she studied filmmaking from 1980 to 1983.[5] This broad exposure to overseas film industries is typical of a cadre of Hong Kong filmmakers. Many spent a portion of their early careers working in television in Hong Kong as well as studying at film schools in the United States and/or in Britain. Several continue to move between Hong Kong and other large cities throughout the world. Labeled the "Second Wave," because they came after Hong Kong's New Wave directors, members of this cohort include Cheung, Law, Eddie Fong, Clara Law, Lawrence Ah

Mon, Stanley Kwan, Jacob Cheung, Evans Chan, Ching Siu-ting, and Wong Kar-wai. Many of these directors are known for "innovative artistic styles but also their new perspectives in approaching history and gender/sexuality issues."[6] While speaking of Stanley Kwan's films, Cui Shuqin's insight is applicable to Cheung and other Second-Wave directors. Cui notes that the "orientation of Kwan's cinema towards the feminine and its place in a moment of historical transition calls attention to the relatedness of Hong Kong, gender, and history." As such, his films "situate women as intrinsic to the development of new postmodern modes of speaking and writing."[7] Like Kwan, all of these directors feature strong, complex women in their films and they offer intricate plots, nuanced characterizations, and settings dealing with sexuality, gender bending, and the tension between cultural expectations and personal desires.

Cheung and her Second Wave peers stepped into the spotlight at a propitious time. As Law Kar and Frank Ben have written, "the years between 1983 and 1993 were, in fact, a glorious golden period with unprecedented achievement in quality, quantity, and market success."[8] Although there are a number of possible reasons for this creative burst of energy, Hong Kong's return to Chinese sovereignty provided one source of inspiration. Cheung and her second-wave peers belong to a generation that lived through the late-colonial era and the transition to Chinese sovereignty. Many Hong Kong film scholars have noted the importance of the period between the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration in 1984 and the transition to PRC control in 1997. Stephen Teo asserts that "the second half of the 80s was possibly the most interesting period of Hong Kong cinema," partly because of the preoccupation with 1997.[9]

Teo argues that Second Wave directors are different from their New Wave predecessors in that their stance towards 1997 is more introspective and less cynical.[10] This is certainly the case with *An*

Autumn's Tale which shines an almost fairy-tale-like light on relations between various sub-ethnic Chinese populations in New York, and suggests no hint of anxiety about the pending transition to PRC sovereignty in Hong Kong. The audience sees that Jenny is comfortable either in Hong Kong or in the U.S. but that her opportunities for self-determination seem to be more plentiful outside of Hong Kong. In fact, Jenny's cinematic adjustment to life in New York City is based to a significant extent on Cheung and Law's experiences as graduate students there in the 1980s. Because the film was made prior to the events of June 1989 in Beijing, when viewed today, *An Autumn's Tale* reflects a certain pre-Tiananmen Square optimism. It is, in some respects, a historical document offering an idealistic blueprint for transnational bonding among those who wish to claim a pan-Chinese ethnic identity.

Cheung is not the only Hong Kong director whose work reflects ties to actual autobiographical events. Comparing Cheung, Ann Hui and Clara Law, Gina Marchetti has pointed out that all three share common ground in their educational background, "choice of genres, thematic preoccupations, and aesthetic interests." All studied film in the United States or the United Kingdom (Cheung spent time in the U.K. as well.), worked at Radio/Television Hong Kong (RTHK) before becoming film directors, and are "comfortable with multilingual productions and subjects that cross national borders." Marchetti adds that all three have "a preoccupation with themes of exile, nomadism, migration, split/multiple/uncertain identities and intergenerational conflict ... Each has used her experiences living abroad as the basis for films on emigration from Hong Kong."[11] Another preoccupation evident in these films is the drive to define what it means to be a Hong Kong person. Like others belonging to a generation of Hong Kong youth who saw themselves as distinct from (and more westernized than) their Mainland cousins, it seems that Cheung and her cohort have the option of negotiating various identity dilemmas through their cinematic works.

Discussions of Hong Kong identity are, in these films, coupled to debates about gender and civil society in Hong Kong in the final years of the colonial period. The 1980s was a decade of consciousness raising and coalition building for a burgeoning women's movement in Hong Kong and many women's groups were formed or strengthened. As Eliza Lee notes, "Colonial resistance, reflection on one's Chinese identity, and the formation of a local Hong Kong identity were thus integral to the postcolonial subjectivity. In this sense, the rise of an indigenous women's movement in the 1980s was part of the post-coloniality."[12] The 1980s were not a time of profound legislative gain (significant change came in the 1990s when CEDAW — the Convention to Eliminate Discrimination Against Women — and the Sex Discrimination Ordinance were passed and the Equal Opportunities Commission formed). However, the period did see a certain feminist ferment, and Hong Kong films like *An Autumn's Tale* and others made in this period open a window revealing shifting attitudes about changes in women's lives, as well as in Hong Kong society more generally.

Because Cheung and other women who transited between Hong Kong and "the west" became comfortable in more than one environment, migration melodramas are, arguably, a forum for and an opportunity to enter the lively transnational conversation about women, migration, and success — personally and professionally. As feminist cultural studies scholars have noted, films do important "cultural work" as they explore the processes of embracing or eschewing social change. Cinema has been a particularly important cultural and historical text in Hong Kong. It offers a vehicle for discussing and pushing against the grain of Hong Kong's unique history as a British Colony under the influence of rather conservative and authoritarian ideas about women, their place in society, and gender identities emanating from colonial leaders and more local neo-Confucian, as well as capitalist, orthodoxies.

"Despite the emergence of a nascent, albeit vibrant, local feminist movement in the 1980s and 1990s," Lisa Fischler writes, "patriarchal aspects of local politics, such as conservative views of women's familial roles and responsibilities and of their presence in the public sphere, made up a substantial part of the institutions and practices limiting women activists' construction of a strong, public feminist agenda."[13]

An Autumn's Tale explores how women can follow new paths and seek self-fulfillment. In fact, many Hong Kong film melodramas released during this period reflect views similar to those noted by Fischler as well as a palatable ambivalence about women's push for equality. On one hand, women were encouraged to "uphold Asian values" (be filial, respect Confucian mores, and avoid conflict) and protect the family from the excesses of the free market in Hong Kong. Yet at the same time, women were also told it was vital that they pursue independence by gaining an education and seeking employment, thus supplementing family incomes and bolstering the Hong Kong economy. In the attention it pays to the woman in diaspora, *An Autumn's Tale* prepares women for the mixed signals they will receive in contemporary society — at home or abroad. It is one of many films about Hong Kong women "sorting themselves out" in various locations, but in this case, the setting is New York. Gina Marchetti, Elaine Ho, and Geetanjali Singh have noted the importance of looking at Hong Kong women's narratives of negotiation with modernity in order to understand shifting currents of gender, postcoloniality, culture, and socio-economic change.[14] They argue that Hong Kong women must forge identities in the face of multiple and conflicting demands linked to both western and Chinese cultural traditions. As the audience sees Jenny finding her way in New York, she models possible alternatives for young women envisioning their own paths to individuation amid external influences including familial and cultural expectations.

The negotiation continues today on both sides of the Pacific. Women who enjoy economic success and public notoriety can be perceived as a threat anywhere, but in Hong Kong society, for a woman to be seen as unfeminine or overbearing (despite the fact that she may be powerful and articulate) is to risk alienation from family, peers, and business associates. Harmony is prized above all and feminism (particularly in its American form) has a reputation in Hong Kong for being anything but harmonious.[15] Still, the impact of a women's movement that is global — not just western — in its reach, manifests itself in Hong Kong. Women who left and then returned to Hong Kong, like Cheung and her sister directors, made films that explored new paths for both women and men. As Siumi Maria Tam and others have shown, for women, "emigration from Hong Kong introduced an experience of 'empowering mobility' despite the stresses of leaving home."[16] In fact, Hong Kong women directors comment that they can and often do challenge gender orthodoxy in the city and in their profession. Yeeshan Chan notes that directors such as Mabel Cheung Yuen-ting and Sylvia Chang "appear to be gentle women," but "they can talk forcefully and humorously at work, using 'masculine' language." Noting that Ann Hui has declared that 'being 'unfeminine' is her advantage in the industry," Chan writes that, "a woman who can free herself from typical feminine characteristics can also free her male co-workers from giving her extra consideration by making them see her as an androgynous colleague."[17]

It is not clear how much of the film's success is due to its discussion of contemporary issues, particularly those linked to women and gender, nor is it possible to assess the impact of the film on women's lives. Still, *An Autumn's Tale* was a commercial success both at home and among diasporic audiences throughout the world. Although some critics point to the box office returns enjoyed by Cheung and others of the Second Wave cohort as evidence that their work is less experimental or artistic than the

New Wave, Second Wave films reached a wider, more global audience.[18] In addition to its popularity among fans in Hong Kong and abroad, *An Autumn's Tale* earned critical favor. Despite its modest budget, it received several honors including 1987 Hong Kong Film Awards for best picture, screenplay, and cinematography, and Chow Yun Fat won a Golden Horse Award for best actor. The most acclaimed of her films, *An Autumn's Tale*'s success came as a surprise to Cheung, her husband and screenwriter Alex Law, and many others. Part of the film's appeal was linked to the fact that Chow Yun Fat played the male lead character, Figgy (the literal translation in Cantonese is Boathead although Figgy is used in the English subtitling of the film). Released approximately one year after the premiere of his breakout film *A Better Tomorrow*, Chow had become an international star by the time *An Autumn's Tale* reached theatres. The diasporic romance was a dramatic departure from the John Woo heroic bloodshed film that most Hong Kong film fans associated with Chow. As such it is a rich text to analyze for its messages about culture and masculinity as well as femininity, both of which are the subject of discussion later in this study.

In addition to the popularity of Chow Yun Fat (and his co-star Cherie Chung, whose career took off in the 1980s), another reason for *An Autumn's Tale*'s success was its appeal to individuals within the Chinese Diaspora hungry for migration stories. As Peter Feng notes, "While Hollywood often traveled to Asia, only rarely did Hollywood films depict Asians who had ventured to America."[19] Audiences could relate to a movie that looked and felt like a Hollywood romance but also discussed (in a light-hearted manner) the complexities of life in the U.S. for recent arrivals from Hong Kong and elsewhere in Asia. Invoking both a Hollywood and a Hong Kong "Home," *An Autumn's Tale*, like several Hong Kong films, served a dual purpose. As scholars have noted, many Hong Kong filmmakers not only live and work in both places – the U.S.

and Hong Kong — they also have a well-established relationship with Hollywood on many levels.[20] In Hong Kong, as Esther Cheung and Chu Yiu-wai remind us, "Hollywood film is more like a model and partner than an 'other' to be resisted, deconstructed, and repelled. Hong Kong cinema indeed is part of Hollywood's hegemony."[21] As Law Kar and Frank Bren have shown in their studies of early Hong Kong cinema, links between the U.S. and Hong Kong are decades old. Actors, directors, and film companies have shared (or swiped) personnel, techniques, and scripts since the early 20th century.[22] However, these cross-cultural connections multiplied more dramatically once the "astronaut" population (individuals who flew back and forth between Hong Kong and second homes in cities throughout the world) began to grow in the 1970s and 1980s.[23]

An Autumn's Tale then, is a lighthearted point-of-entry into a more serious discussion of complex social and historical shifts. Despite the fact that it was both critically acclaimed and commercially successful, it is the type of film often overlooked in discussions of Hong Kong cultural production. Due to the popularity of the martial arts/action films that dominate public perceptions, the melodramas, when considered at all, are marginal in discussions of Hong Kong cinema. Yet they are rich texts for both historical and cultural analysis. The second of a trilogy of diaspora stories directed by Cheung, *An Autumn's Tale* is sandwiched between her first film *The Illegal Immigrant* (1985) (a thesis project at New York University) and *Eight Taels of Gold* (1989). All three were made on small budgets, relying on help from peers associated with independent film on both sides of the Pacific and each tells the story of what it means to be "foreign" in the United States. However, it is *An Autumn's Tale* that best captures key elements of both Hong Kong and Hollywood, as well as their respective histories and cinematic traditions.

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Conclusion:
An Autumn's Tale in 2007

Two decades after its release, *An Autumn's Tale* remains, in the minds of many, a Hong Kong cinema classic. In addition to recognizing its staying power and popularity with a multi-generational fan base, the film merits an even more prominent place in the discussion of the Hong Kong New Wave/Second Wave. *An Autumn's Tale* sheds light on a particular time (the late 1980s) and a particular historical phenomenon (the "brain drain") in an easy yet profound manner. In addition, the film is a rich text for engaging the topics explored in the previous chapters such as: Connections between Hong Kong film and transnational American studies; between Hong Kong and Hollywood films about/set in New York; and, between Hong Kong film and recent work in gender studies. The film also serves as a bridging text between Asian studies, Hong Kong cultural studies, Asian American studies, and transnational American studies.

There is another reason to take a fresh look at *An Autumn's Tale* two decades on. As I write this conclusion, Mabel Cheung

Yuen-ting's classic is making headlines in both the Chinese and English press. A daytime screening of the film, aired on a local Hong Kong television station in October of 2006, stirred up a bit of controversy. A parent, who was disturbed about the graphic language used in the film, lodged a complaint with Hong Kong's media watchdog, the Broadcasting Authority (BA). The BA declared that *An Autumn's Tale* contained "extremely offensive expressions" and they ruled to ban it from being aired on local television stations.[1]

The outcry from the public was immediate and near unanimous in its support for overturning the ban and allowing the film to be shown during prime time. Mabel Cheung Yuen-ting and Alex Law were both bewildered by the ruling. They continue to maintain, as they noted in both of my interviews with them, that one purpose of making *An Autumn's Tale* was to promote understanding between various individuals and diverse groups of people in a foreign place. The language is mild by any standard (particularly in comparison to what passes as acceptable language on most channels on a daily basis in Hong Kong). Additionally, there was a parental guidance warning posted before the film aired. Cheung says she understands that parents want to protect their children from danger but she thinks it would be best to "let children get in touch with all kinds of people."[2] The incident is a reminder of the strange morality that governs Hong Kong in its incarnation as a Special Administrative Region of the PRC. In a *South China Morning Post* editorial, Chris Yeung wrote, "The broadcasting watchdog's ruling has raised the question of whether government appointees have a grasp of what is acceptable to TV viewers. Is Hong Kong truly a modern, progressive world-class city?"[3] Yeung's comments are a fitting end to this study of *An Autumn's Tale* for it was anxiety about a loss of freedom that drove so many "Jennys" and "Figgys" away from Hong Kong in the 1980s. Those who are interested in the cycles of history, (as well as finding out what all of the fuss is about), might want to pick up a copy of *An Autumn's Tale* and make up their own minds.

Notes

Preface to *An Autumn's Tale*

1 Kwai-Cheung Lo, *Chinese Face/Off: The Transnational Popular Culture of Hong Kong* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 16.
2 Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 101.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1 Lisa Odham Stokes and Michael Hoover, *City on Fire: Hong Kong Cinema* (London: Verso, 1999), 28.
2 Stokes and Hoover, *City on Fire*, 106.
3 Stokes and Hoover, *City on Fire*, 28.
4 Ibid.
5 Stephen Teo, *Hong Kong Cinema: The Extra Dimensions* (London: British Film Institute Publishing, 1997), 188–189.

6 Esther M.K. Cheung and Chu Yiu-wai, *Between Home and World: A Reader in Hong Kong Cinema* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press and Centre of Asian Studies, 2004), 417.

7 Cui Shuqin, "Stanley Kwan's *Center Stage*: The (Im)Possible Engagement Between Feminism and Postmodernism," in *Between Home and World*, 487–488.

8 Law Kar and Frank Ben, *Hong Kong Cinema: A Cross-Cultural View* (Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2004), 293.

9 See Stephen Teo, *Hong Kong Cinema*, 160. The signing of the Joint Declaration in 1984 by Beijing and London fueled anxiety about Hong Kong's future and accelerated emigration, referred to as "the brain drain." Many of those who worked in the Hong Kong film industry were a part of this migration. Often, their experiences became material for diaspora films, as many of the New Wave/Second Wave directors were educated overseas.

10 Stephen Teo, *Hong Kong Cinema*.

11 Gina Marchetti, *From Tiananmen to Times Square: Transnational China and the Chinese Diaspora on Global Screens, 1989–1997* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006), 191.

12 Eliza W.Y. Lee, "Introduction," in Eliza W.Y. Lee, ed. *Gender and Change in Hong Kong: Globalization, Postcolonialism, and Chinese Patriarchy* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003), 13.

13 Lisa Fischler, "Women's Activism During Hong Kong's Political Transition," in Eliza W.Y. Lee, ed., *Gender and Change in Hong Kong*, 69.

14 Gina Marchetti, "The Gender of GenerAsian X in Clara Law's Migration Trilogy," in Murray Pomerance, ed., *Ladies and Gentlemen, Boys and Girls: Gender in Film at the End of the Twentieth Century* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001), 71–87; Geetanjali Singh, "(Other)Feminisms — (Other) Values," in *Hecate: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Women's Liberation*, vol. 29, no. 2, (2003), 6; and Elaine Yee Lin Ho, "Women on the Edges of Hong Kong Modernity: The Films of Ann Hui," in Mayfair Mei-Hui Yang, ed., *Spaces of Their Own: Women's Public Sphere in Transnational China* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

15 *The Status of Women and Girls in Hong Kong, 2006* (Hong Kong: The Women's Foundation, 2006).
16 Siumi Maria Tam, "Empowering Mobility: 'Astronaut' Women in Australia," in Eliza W.Y. Lee, ed., *Gender and Change in Hong Kong*, 198.
17 Yeeshan Chan, "Bringing Breasts into the Mainstream," in Laikwan Pang and Day Wong, eds., *Masculinities and Hong Kong Cinema* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2005), 187.
18 Jenny Kwok Wah Lau, "Besides Fists and Blood: Michael Hui and Cantonese Comedy," in Po Shek Fu and David Desser, eds., *The Cinema of Hong Kong: History, Arts, Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 160.
19 Peter X. Feng, *Screening Asian Americans* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 3.
20 Cheung and Chu, *Between Home and World*, 5. The authors note that, "Hong Kong tends to live in complicity with Hollywood as a 'marginal empire' — at least up to the mid-1990s before the decline of Hong Kong's film industry."
21 Cheung and Chu, *Between Home and World*, preface, xxiv.
22 See Law Kar and Frank Bren, *Hong Kong Cinema: A Cross-Cultural View* (Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2004).
23 "Astronaut" is the term used to refer to people of Chinese descent who transited back and forth between Hong Kong and other global cities during this period in order to secure second homes and passports prior to the resumption of Chinese sovereignty.

Chapter 2 *An Autumn's Tale* as Transnational American Studies

1 Staci Ford, "Hong Kong Film Goes to the U.S.," *Hong Kong Film, Hollywood and the New Global Cinema: No Film Is an Island* (London: Routledge, 2007).
2 See Gina Marchetti, "Buying American, Consuming Hong Kong: Cultural Commerce, Fantasies of Identity, and the Cinema," in Fu, Po Shek, and David Desser, eds., *The Cinema of Hong Kong: History, Arts, Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000),

Chapter 13; and Ester C.M. Yau, "Introduction: Hong Kong Cinema in a Borderless World," in Esther C.M. Yau, ed., *At Full Speed: Hong Kong Cinema in a Borderless World* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 2.

3 See Robert G. Lee, "Foreword," in Shilpa Dave, LeiLani Nishime, and Tasha G. Oren, eds., *East Main Street: Asian American Popular Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), xiv.

4 Shelley Fisher Fishkin, "Crossroads of Cultures: The Transnational Turn in American Studies," Presidential Address to the American Studies Association, November 12, 2004, *American Quarterly*, March 2005, Vol. 57, No. 1, 20.

5 Henry Yu, "How Tiger Woods Lost His Stripes: Post-Nationalist American Studies as a History of Race, Migration, and the Commodification of Culture," in John Carlos Rowe, ed., *Post-Nationalist American Studies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 224.

Chapter 4 *An Autumn's Tale*, Assimilation, and the American Dream

1 See Jennifer L. Hochschild, *Facing Up to the American Dream: Race, Class, and the State of the Nation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), preface.

2 See Aihwa Ong, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999).

3 The phrase "comforting narratives of liberal inclusion" is Victor Bascara's. Bascara is addressing the importance that Asian American texts play in helping to shed light on various forms of American imperialism. I would argue that Hong Kong films are, to a certain extent, both Asian American and Hong Kong cultural texts. As such, they help to unsettle myths and reveal imperialisms in both places. See Victor Bascara, *Model-Minority Imperialism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006, Introduction, xxv). The entire quotation reads, "These comforting narratives of liberal inclusion were predicated on the disappearance of the very U.S. imperialism that

emerged to manage Asian difference at the outset of the period of U.S. global hegemony that publisher Henry Luce, in early 1941, famously referred to as 'the American Century'."

4 Kwai-Cheung Lo, "Double Negations: Hong Kong Cultural Identity in Hollywood's Transnational Representations," in Cheung and Chu, *Between Home and World*, 67.

5 Ronald Takaki, *A Larger Memory: A History of Our Diversity with Voices* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1998), 27.

6 Robert G. Lee, "Foreword," *East Main Street*, xiv. Bascara expresses similar critiques of the notion of multiculturalism in *Model Minority Imperialism*.

7 Gary Okihiro, *Margins and Mainstreams: Asians in American History and Culture* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), 155.

8 Gary Okihiro, *Common Ground: Reimagining American History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 126–127.

9 Carla Blank, *Rediscovering America: The Making of Multicultural America, 1900–2000* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2003).

10 Yingchi Chu, *Hong Kong Cinema: Coloniser, Motherland and Self* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 105.

11 Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts*, preface.

12 Ibid.

13 Gina Marchetti, "Buying American, Consuming Hong Kong."

14 Chu, *Hong Kong Cinema*, xxi.

15 Chu, *Hong Kong Cinema*, 42.

16 Gary McDonogh and Cindy Wong, *Global Hong Kong* (New York: Routledge), 220.

17 Gina Marchetti, *From Tian'anmen to Times Square*, 6.

18 Interview with Mabel Cheung Yuen-ting and Alex Law, University of Hong Kong (HKU) Senior Common Room, 27 January 2007.

19 Although many scholars in Asian American and ethnic studies have addressed this subject, there is a succinct discussion of the origins and ongoing manifestation of model minority stereotypes (particularly as they connect to stereotypes of African Americans and Latinos) in Robert G. Lee's foreword to *East Main Street*.

20 Interview with Cheung and Law, HKU, 27 January 2007.

21 Stokes and Hoover, *City on Fire*, 153.

22 Julian Stringer, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora in Contemporary Hong Kong Cinema," in Darrell Y. Hamamoto and Sandra Liu, eds., *Countervisions: Asian American Film Criticism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), 303–304.
23 Stringer, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," 303.
24 Ibid.
25 Kwai-Cheung Lo, "Transnationalization of the Local in Hong Kong Cinema of the 1990s," in Esther C.M. Yau, ed., *At Full Speed: Hong Kong Cinema in a Borderless World* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 264.
26 Stringer, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," 306–307.
27 Interview with Cheung and Law, HKU, 26 June 2006. See Appendix.
28 Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts*, 6.
29 Gina Marchetti, "Buying American, Consuming Hong Kong," 308–309.
30 Comments made by an anonymous reader offered this interpretation of the film's ending – one that I agree with but cannot claim as my own originally.
31 Interview with Cheung and Law, HKU, 27 January 2007.
32 The "Here's Looking at You, Kid" moniker was applied to some of our earliest courses in American studies at the University of Hong Kong. Geetanjali Singh deserves credit for using the famous *Casablanca* line in this context, and for originating a course on Asian views of the U.S.
33 Interview with Cheung and Law, HKU, 27 January 2007.

Chapter 5 A Tale of Two Cities: New York in *An Autumn's Tale*

1 Yingchi Chu, *Hong Kong Cinema: Coloniser, Motherland and Self*. (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 106–107.
2 Interview with Mabel Cheung Yuen-ting and Alex Law, HKU Senior Common Room, 27 January 2007.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.

6 Kwai-Cheung Lo, *Chinese Face/Off*, 113–114.
7 Gina Marchetti, *From Tian'anmen to Times Square*, 175.
8 Interview with Cheung and Law, HKU, 26 June 2006.
9 Julian Stringer, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," 302.
10 Stringer, "Cultural Identity," 305.
11 Interview with Cheung and Law, HKU, 26 June 2006.
12 Interview with Cheung and Law, HKU, 27 January 2007.
13 Marchetti, *From Tian'anmen to Times Square*, 9.
14 Stringer, "Cultural Identity," 308.

Chapter 6 Reconfiguring Gender in Diaspora

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Chapter 7 Conclusion

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