



# Keeping Democracy at Bay: Hong Kong and the Challenge of Chinese Political Reform

*By Suzanne Pepper*

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## **Keeping Democracy at Bay: Hong Kong and the Challenge of Chinese Political Reform** By Suzanne Pepper

This thoroughly researched study provides an invaluable account of Hong Kong's political evolution from its founding as a British colony to the present. Exploring the interplay between colonial, capitalist, communist, and democratic forces in shaping Hong Kong's political institutions and culture, Suzanne Pepper offers a fresh perspective on the territory's development and a gripping account of the transition from British to Chinese rule.

The author carries her narrative forward through the lives of significant figures, capturing the personalities and issues central to understanding Hong Kong's political history. Bringing a balanced view to her often contentious subject, she places Hong Kong's current partisan debates between democrats and their opponents within the context of China's ongoing search for a viable political form. The book considers Beijing's increasing intervention in local affairs and focuses on the challenge for Hong Kong's democratic reformers in an environment where ultimate political power resides with the communist-led mainland government and its appointees.

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#### Review

This book is a commendable effort which not only offers insight into the critical issues surrounding Hong Kong's political history but also appeals to the imagination by allowing the reader to get as close as possible to voices of the past. As such, it would be a useful point of reference for scholars of Chinese history, politics and international affairs. (*The China Journal*)

Fascinating. (*China Review*)

It certainly is refreshing to see a book which goes against common wisdom on this subject. It is, as a whole, notable for its very thorough criticism of the British authorities. . . . Pepper's book provides a necessary overview of a very important question in modern Chinese history. (*China Quarterly*)

#### About the Author

**Suzanne Pepper** is an American writer and long-time Hong Kong resident. She is the author, among other works, of *Civil War in China: The Political Struggle, 1945–1949, Second Edition* (Rowman & Littlefield). For regular updates on Hong Kong politics see the author's blog at <http://chinaelectionsblog.net/hkfocus>

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