

In June 1992 Chris Patten went to Hong Kong as the last British governor, to try to prepare it not (as other British colonies over the decades) for independence, but for handing back in 1997 to the Chinese, from whom most of its territory had been leased 99 years previously. Over the next five years he kept this diary, which describes in detail how Hong Kong was run as a British colony and what happened as the handover approached. The book gives unprecedented insights into negotiating with the Chinese, about how the institutions of democracy in Hong Kong were (belatedly) strengthened and how Patten sought to ensure that a strong degree of self-government would continue after 1997.