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Spectacle and Distortion: The Anti-Globalization Movement on Television News

Raphi Rechitsky

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By Raphi Rechitsky

Southern Illinois University-Carbondale

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> Objectivity in journalism is an illusion, a hollow word, yet it becomes so real to its perpetrators, who have been poisoned with the lie from the first day of journalism school, that they end up not only believing in it, but letting it form the whole foundation of their profession.
>
> - Mumia Abu Jamal
> "Death Blossoms: Reflections From a Prisoner of Conscience"

> A little broken glass in the streets of Seattle has transformed the World Trade Organization into a popular icon for the unregulated globalization that tramples human values on every continent, among rich and poor alike.
>
> - William Greider
> "The Battle Beyond Seattle"

> 60 Minutes is going to do what we always thought they were going to do—which is sensationalize property destruction. And I think that's a good thing. We want youth all over America to think this is quite the sensational way to act.
>
> - Anti-globalization activist while awaiting the airing of a *60 Mintues* exclusive on WTO
> "Breaking the Spell"

Introduction: *Media Complicity and the Emergence of the U.S. Movement.*

By the time the anti-corporate globalization movement—also referred to as the global justice movement—burst onto the public screen at the 1999 Seattle WTO ministerial, confrontational countermovements to globalization had already emerged around the "developing" world and even in Europe. Riots amidst clouds of tear gas on the site of negotiations of free trade agreements and the meetings of transnational financial institutions were commonplace. With its emergence, the anti-globalization movement was treated as an isolated phenomenon with no international history. Introducing an interview clip with an expert prior to the Seattle demonstrations, a reporter stated, "rarely has the exchange of goods between countries inspired such passion" (CNN November 28, 1999).

Partly since major U.S. media outlets failed to thematically cover global resistance to *corporate colonization*, the emergent anti-globalization movement in the U.S. has been trivialized, decontextualized, and even constructed as a social problem by its media. At

the same time, the movement has accomplished some impressive attention-grabs due to its perceived novelty. Using a qualitative content analysis, this research looks at television news coverage of four major anti-globalization street protests in the U.S. in Seattle, Washington D.C., New York, and Miami across a four year period from 1999 to 2003.[1] In this study, the historical pattern that unfolds shows that there is a positive relationship between disruptive and contentious tactics--civil disobedience, direct action, and symbolic property destruction--and the quantity and even quality of coverage on major television news networks.

Theory

My analysis comes from a social constructionist paradigm, critically examining mass-media framing of movement activity. Yet a recent upsurge in case studies on media treatment of oppositional movements necessitates a review of increasingly disparate literatures. A large portion of classic scholarship that sees news as the social construction of reality (Gamson et. al. 1992, Best 1990, Altheide and Snow 1991, Ericson et al. 1991, Fowler 1991) has paid particular attention to specific news media strategies as a discrediting of opposition movements such as undercounting crowds, trivializing and depoliticizing participants, polarizing coalitions within the movement, and generally speaking, constructing the movements' illegitimacy (Gitlin 1980, Tuchman 1978, Parenti 1986, Small 1994, Mulcahy 1995). Recent research has focused on broader angles, or discourses, that run rampant throughout opposition movements' coverage. Whereas in the

[1] This paper is the author's senior thesis for his B.A. in sociology at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. It was presented at the annual meetings of the Midwest Sociological Society (MSS) and accompanied by a video presentation of some of the raw data. Correspondence at raphe27@juno.com

past studies were grounded in sociological theory, much of this new scholarship is coming predominantly from critical media studies perspectives. They focus on the major media's leanings toward emphases of law and order, and of legitimacy and the public sphere with qualitative case studies (DeLuca and Peeples 2002, Wahl-Jorgensen 2003, Todd 2003). The old school sees specific frames autonomously and directly related to corporate media hegemony, while the new primarily postmodernist approach tries to identify intermediary "discourses" that correlate with the "media attention cycles" (McCarthy, McPhail, and Smith 1996: 481) waves of issue-specific coverage that movements rely on for broad publicity. Both literatures are still moderately integrated, especially in emphasizing selection bias toward particular social movement activities, while leaving out others (Oliver and Maney 2000, McCarthy et al. 1996).

Hegemony: From Gramsci to CNN

My general theoretical presuppositions come from a sociological conflict paradigm. Instead of using purely materialist Marxism, I apply Gramsci's (1971) theory of hegemony. Hegemony is in essence a dominant condition that reflects oppressive deeply-rooted ways of thinking, those we often take for granted. Gramsci theorized that instead of using physical coercion, the bourgeoisie have plenty of resources that can be used as propaganda to divide and misinform publics through channels of mediated or direct communication. His enduring legacy encourages us to expand our thinking about ideology in the media.

Concentrated media ownership in the U.S. arguably represents the largest component of mediated hegemony in today's technocratic world. Business and state elites "manufacture consent" to their agenda through media conglomerates that have

increasingly more control over the exchange of information (Herman and Chomsky 1988). Mediating and reframing the subjects of their coverage, today's hegemonic media socially construct the nature of reality and define social problems (Gamson et. al 1992, Schneider 1985). In turn, this system of media ownership distorts and limits a diverse public discourse conducive to democracy (McChesney 1999).

These powerful interests intersect with those of powerful neoliberal interest groups. Therefore, I view contemporary corporate mass-media content as socialization tools that relay news information to the public with a bias towards their free trade partners: transnational business institutions such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF/WB)—whose policies are the subject of anti-corporate globalization critiques. In order to reach higher profits in the global economy, like other types of powerful corporations, media conglomerates rely on the help of such institutions to deregulate restrictions against media monopolies at home and abroad. It would be difficult to second guess that owners of CNN and FOX need the help of the WTO and transnational loan sharks to monopolize media outlets in the "developing" world. In turn, corporate media coverage favors these institutions by discrediting movements that mobilize against the power of theirs and allied transnational capital.

This does not imply that journalists are puppets who abide by every pull of the thread. Instead, these coinciding interests clue us in to a broader structural understanding into the roots of media hegemony. Altheide and Snow (1991) explain this position: "We do not mean to imply that there are not talented men and women who are committed to covering events; we only contend that the organization and formats of media—especially

television—dominate and essentially define all other journalistic practices" (76). Instead of what would normatively be socially relevant information exchange, entertainment becomes the main function of news in capitalist market economies (16-18). Drama and sensationalism are the selling points. With the format of television magnifying this approach to media communication, journalism, especially the increasingly dominant television news format, become the measuring sticks to all other formal communication processes. Consequently, public opinion of oppositional movements can be negatively affected. My choice of format of nationally televised nightly news reflects this theory.

Three Levels of Analysis: Framing, Organizational Structure, and Political Opportunity.

It's not news; movements that substantially challenge the status quo get smeared in the major press. From abolitionist to labor to black power to today's anti-globalization, oppositional movements have always been delegitimized by the status quo's media. Yet, media depictions of social movements were not given much scholarly attention until the late 1970's.

By 1980, Todd Gitlin wrote "The Whole World is Watching." A pioneering comprehensive study of media framing of social movements, it looked at the press's treatment of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the anti-Vietnam War movement between 1965 and 1969. Gitlin found that early media treatment of SDS (1) *trivialized* the participants' demeanor and presentation, (2) *polarized* the movement by framing it as politically extreme, (3) magnified *internal dissention*, and (4) *marginalized* activists as "deviant or unrepresentative" of broader civil society (27). Later, a more radicalized SDS was predominantly smeared with (1) "emphasis on the presence of communists," (2) a focus on "violence in demonstrations," and (3) "reliance on

statements by government officials and other authorities" (28). While exposure gave SDS a widely-known public face, it had serious consequences not only for the organizations image, but also for its internal organizational crisis, forcing it to alter its participatory organizational structure to accommodate to the narrow format of "spokesmanship" that eventually led to SDS's collapse.

Not much has changed in four decades of media "progress." The anti-globalization movement has faced all of the depictions Gitlin outlined in one way or another. Yet, there is new *political opportunity structure* (McAdam 1982: 40-45). The anti-globalization movement is less likely to face media portrayals that emphasize the presence of communists than did oppositional movements of the majority of the 20th century. Sensationalizing the presence of communists is not nearly as useful of a smearing tactic as it was prior to the end of the Cold War and a recession in the red scare (Rojecki 1999). In addition, the internet provides media tools that allow activists to communicate and bypass certain dimensions of the outreach function of corporate media. Communication through more structurally decentralized forms of media such as the Independent Media Centers, coming to life at the Seattle anti-WTO protests, has since become a critical form of independent news outside of the shell of corporate media.

But since 9/11 there are also new restraints on the political opportunity structure. Yesterday's red scare is today's terror scare. The mass-media has been changed by pressure from federal state officials, sensationalizing fear, sanctioning journalists, and framing nearly any act of political dissidence as terrorism (Altheide 2004). A new media attention cycle geared towards villainizing dissent may especially be detrimental to the quality of images of the anti-globalization movement. At the same time, it may garner the

movement a larger quantity of attention by dramatizing direct action strategies as terrorism.

Theories of political opportunity provide only limited explanations of movement activity. A more knowledgeable assessment of media organizations is necessary to review media hegemony in social movement coverage. Before Gitlin published his book, Tuchman (1978) had already written on the hegemony of the mass media with a bias toward "the establishment", and how it fails to cover issues and movements outside of its "news net" because of pre-established organizational processes. She shows that news is an "artful accomplishment attuned to specific understanding of social reality. Those understandings, constituted in specific work processes and practices legitimate the status quo" (216). One of those central organizational processes that threatened the women's liberation movement's "feminist process" and caused internal movement tension, as in SDS, is the mass media reliance on spokespeople. Due to a hegemonic "craft consciousness," reporters rely on the contact of a "leader," instead of interviewing a diversity of activists that would be representative of movements. "Publishing the views of a quasi-legitimated leader undermines the radicals' attempt to remain leaderless," Tuchman notes (140). This places rank and file participants in social movements in subordinate roles in the news media, assimilating movements into vertical organizational structures that the mass media adopts.

There is much continuity in the way the news media depict oppositional movements. Yet, the media do not function in a vacuum. They are more likely to react to drama than to be issue-informative. Events of crime, law, and order constitute more than half of all major newspaper and television coverage (Ericson et. al 1991: 341). Research

on movements in the media have emphasized how the mass media guide public attention towards discourses of public order. Especially in television, "dramatic gestures, marches, sit-ins, demonstrations, confrontations, strikes and riots are newsworthy and visual" (Paletz and Entman 1981). Oppositional movements whose grievances would be normally shut out, can get grab attention by organizing civil disruptions, thus attracting waves of media attention.

Research on Media Depictions of the Anti-Globalization Movement

In the legacy of law and order discourses, recent case studies on media depictions of the anti-globalization movement have come up with similar results. In a study of the coverage of 2001 May Day demonstrations in Britain, Karin Wahl-Jorgensen (2003) found that 59% of mutually exclusive newspaper discourses focused on discourses of law and order, or "discourses preoccupied with the consequences of the protests for the security of citizens and institutions" (134). Ann Marie Todd (2003) inspected major news media coverage protests opposed to the elite agenda of the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles in 2000. She found that media sensationalism, "most notably televised coverage of the convention protests, is symbolized in the image of protester as radical and irrational, even dangerous, effectively subdued by dominating government force" (106). DeLuca and Peeples (2002) determined that the "uncivil disobedience" disruptions of the Seattle protests is an effective tool for attracting media attention, and are the reason behind the high exposure of surrounding major newspaper and television coverage.

Besides emphasizing law and order, Wahl Jorgensen (2003) notes that the news stories she inspected have a strong emphasis on seemingly obscure references to the

economy. Such peculiar discourse quantified the costs of lost consumption due to street protests, completely depoliticizing the events. In essence, "they reduce citizens to consumers, who want to go about their daily lives without any inconvenience, and have no need to know about political events" (138). Discourses of law and order and of the economy also threaten a villainization of the protester as an outside agitator.

Public Sphere, Public Screen, and Movements' Media Strategy

But what would an ideal or normative form of effective discourse look like? Jurgen Habermas's (1996) notion of a *public sphere* can be seen as an intermediary connector between the state and civil society. It is a group of private persons who come together to form rational public opinion. Existing within the bounds of the public sphere constitutes legitimacy. An alternate media depiction outside of this realm constitutes an inherent illegitimacy of a discussion on a certain topic. Today's hyper-mediation and reframing of public issues away from collective rational interests appealing to individualized emotions puts the media-distorted and degenerated public sphere in jeopardy: "Rational-critical debate had a tendency to be replaced by consumption, and the web of public communication unraveled into acts of individuated reception, however uniform in mode" ([Habermas 1989: 163] quoted in De Luca and Peeples 2002). This transformation of the public sphere from logical dialogue to the consumption of entertainment legitimizes and delegitimizes identities of various groups.

However, our constantly reframed and remediated understanding of the world can not be comprehended through a purely rational public sphere. Our immediate reality is shaped by the drama-based criteria of the distorted *public screen* of a media concentrated in the hands of corporate elites (DeLuca and Peeples 2002). For oppositional movements,

the query is poignant. Is a media strategy that focuses on harnessing corporate media coverage of social movement claims futile? True, communicative relationships that would normatively work in an ideal public sphere do not function in any remote process in an undemocratic news media. Oppositional movements are primarily distorted and demonized. But are these grounds for completely removing a movement from an audience of millions of mobilizable viewers? Not necessarily. Our understanding of this disturbing reality can be seen with uncritical acceptance or skepticism. Acknowledging the incredible restraints on conveying a message through a hostile news media does not necessitate a complete withdrawal from a corporate media strategy --a strategy some groups in the anti-globalization movement have adopted. Instead, a critical understanding of the mechanisms of movement coverage can garner oppositional movements effective subversive media strategies.

A critical understanding of corporate media with respect to social movements has to identify holes in its hegemony. While there are plenty of restraints, there are also opportunities to attract coverage. First and foremost, it is beneficial for activists to develop a complex media strategy with knowledge of the corporate media industry (Ryan 1991). Second, and the empirical focus of this study, is to understand how to enable the entertainment function of the capitalist media in your favor. Visual, dramatic, and new images compel the narrow profit-seeking interests of the corporate media to compete for the most eye-catching news story. For those looking to voice their concern on the public screen it becomes favorable to stage image events. As early Green Peace activist Paul Watson saw it, "The more dramatic you can make it, the more controversial it is, the more publicity you will get" (quoted in DeLuca and Peeples 2002: 136). While exposure then

becomes dependent on drama, movement messages are able to sneak past the corporate media filter due to their novelty.

Methods

Having discussed a mix of substantive and theoretical issues relevant to media and the anti-globalization movement, I will now outline my research methods. I am looking at the treatment of large anti-globalization street protests in the U.S by nightly telecasts of four television news conglomerates. I employed a theoretical quota sample for depth and reliability across the movement's history between 1999 and 2003. I chose four clusters of coverage of mobilizations around the meetings of the following transnational financial institutions' meetings: (1) The World Trade Organization (WTO) summit in Seattle in November of 1999, (2) the International Monetary Fund and World Bank (IMF/WB) biannual meeting in Washington DC in April of 2000, (3) the World Economic Forum (WEF) conference in New York City in February of 2002, and (4) the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) signing in Miami in November of 2003.

I inspected coverage on CBS, CNN, ABC, and NBC within a range of three days before and after each of the four clusters of demonstrations. The news stories in their entirety were obtained through the Vanderbilt News Archive.[2] I then performed a *qualitative content analysis* (Altheide 1996) on all of the 48 stories that contained any mention of public opposition to the abovementioned occasions. I set up reflexive protocols that were twice refined. Sifting through the four dozen protocols, I identified

[2] Funding was provided by the Undergraduate Creative Research and Activity Grant through the Office of Research and Development at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

major discourses that dominated the news coverage.

Data Analysis

While there were many strands of media logic, I found five major discourses in my data: (1) *law and order*, (2) *economy*, (3) *public sphere*, (4) *outside agitation* (5) and *recognition*. I did not consider any of these to be mutually exclusive since multiple strains of each discourse often showed up in one news story. This heterogeneity can be attributed to the summative nature of news formats—especially television coverage—which favor breadth over depth (Altheide and Snow 1991). I also found that there were no significant differences in discourse across major television news networks (ABC, CNN, NBC, and CBS).

DISCOURSES OF LAW AND ORDER

It is not news that the U.S. media over-relies on crime, law, and order (Ericson et al. 1991) News reports emphasized the policing of street protests, the peacefulness of some demonstrators and the "unruliness" of others. Blame for disruptions was placed on protesters and not police riots, brutality, or misconduct.

Polarization of Protest Strategies

While reports usually noted that most protests were "peaceful," the focus on disruptions to law and order such as confrontations with police and direct action preceded all other reports. On the second day of demonstrations in Seattle when protesters began their attempted to shut down the WTO summit, all four news networks jumped on the opportunity to cover the conflict (ABC, CBS, CNN, NBC November 30, 1999). All of the reports began with confrontations between protesters and police. One reporter introduced the day's events with the statement "Chaos in the streets of Seattle" followed by audio of

police shock grenades exploding as protesters scrambled and footage of clouds of teargas and brutal arrests (NBC November 30, 1999). The same clip of protesters kicking down a Starbucks window showed up during the introductory segment of nearly half of all reports covering the events in Seattle, Washington D.C., New York, and Miami. Video of arrests, police "clearing" sit-ins, firing rubber bullets and tear gas canisters, and clubbing marchers introduced all reports that included any kind of policing. A story introducing a day of protests in Washington D.C. began with audio of loud chanting, dramatic close-ups of masked demonstrators, and others meeting swinging clubs as they tried to run past a police blockade (ABC April 16, 2000). Even though the report quickly went on to change direction and state that an overwhelming majority of protests were "peaceful," the placement of confrontation at the beginning of the report is significant. The priority to dramatize civil disobedience and direct action exemplifies the American news media's sensationalist entertainment value.

In order to contrast protest strategies, these news stories went on to show festive rallies and marches. Reporters polarized protest strategies with segues that distanced confrontational protests from those where police presence was absent. "Those [confrontational] demonstrations got the attention of the police, they were not in the majority," began one report (CBS April 16, 2000). It then proceeded to show a leisurely rally with smiling protesters tanning in the park. Street protest strategies were dichotomized into legitimate and illegitimate forms. Marches and rallies were framed as legitimate, while direct action—nonviolent or more militant—was framed as illegitimate "violence." The result is the social construction of a fragmented movement. As one ABC reporter put it, this is a "tale of two protests" (CBS April 16, 2000).

Legitimizing Repression

With the movement's strategies polarized, reports gave legitimacy to militarized policing of protests. Police repression was rhetorically excused by reporters and interviews with police authorities using vague examples of past occurrences or an unspecified future threat of disruptive protests. Such reports tended to show the made-classic clip of the breaking Seattle Starbucks window and went on to excuse the militarization of a city and brutal policing strategies.

A set of reports preceding protests against the IMF and World Bank legitimized a police take-over of a protester convergence center by relying on police sources (CNN April 15, 2000; ABC, CBS, CNN, NBC April 16 2000). The D.C. police department used the formality of fire code violations to dissolve planning for protests. Ignoring this obvious warrant-less violation of the right to assemble, the media used pictures of seized puppets and materials to be used in civil disobedience to depoliticize the authorities' maneuver. Relying on police sources and memories of Seattle disruptions, these news stories showed pipes to be used in lockdowns carried away by officers. This was followed by interviews with D.C. police Chief Charles Ramsey who claimed this as evidence that the protests would turn violent. One reporter made fun of the police misconduct, declaring that "Ramsey liberated the puppets," referring to the large street theatre puppets assembled at the convergence center. Assuming that puppets and lockdown boxes are used for "violence", the media played right along with the police narrative. A similar media logic legitimized repression in Miami, unquestioningly showing supposedly confiscated props for demonstrations (CNN November 20, 2003).

Reports before demonstrations served as a 'prelude to chaos,' drilling at police

preparation for possible "violence." News stories before the Seattle disruptions emphasized possible security breaches and police preparations (ABC, CBS, CNN, NBC November 29, 1999), including the thousands of officers that would be on patrol. To heighten the hysteria, a news story went on to explain: "The authorities are giving it the same priority as an Olympics or a papal visit. Security preparations include 400 federal emergency personnel and two to three thousand doses of medicine to prevent any chemical or biological attack." Immediately following that statement, a Seattle official was shown at a press conference saying, "we would like to stress that we are not aware of any kind of potential for that kind of attack, but we are prepared" (NBC November 29, 1999). This is evidence that even before 9/11 that the media were drowning out protests with the now-classic terror alert. While the police militarize and overspend on security, the media beats the drum of terror threats to draw attention away from protest agendas.

News reports framed the police as having "professional" and "non-provocational attitudes". Instead of showing incidents of police brutality from Seattle demonstrations just six months earlier, a CBS news report covering the D.C. demonstrations showed an instance of "negotiation" between police and protesters, as a cornered marchers was attempting to disperse. It even went on to say "protesters want the police to overreact" as it displayed video of an officer clubbing a demonstrator. The report concluded with footage of a massive police training, with officers loudly grunting as they practiced their baton jabs (CBS April 16, 2000). A report covering the New York demonstrations also showed video of vigorous police training after covering the history of "such protests" (CNN February 3, 2002). Another report preceding the anti-WEF demonstrations featured a lengthy clip of chit-chatting officers standing on a New York street corner with a close-

up of a tazer in the officer's hand (CBS January 31, 2002). By first showing clips of disruptions in anti-globalization protests, news stories attempted to construct legitimacy of police repression.

DISCOURSES OF THE ECONOMY

Reports predominantly focused on the economic costs of the inconvenience of the street protests. The overwhelming economic focus remained on the costs of property damage to unidentified businesses and the inconvenience of pedestrian and auto traffic jams to workers and especially consumers. Instead of anti-globalization struggle, consumption was seen as a "commonality" in civil society. As Phillip Elliot argues, "those commonalities are exaggerated which revolve around the consumption and pursuit of pleasure" (quoted in Ryan 1991: 44). As in cases of other mass demonstrations (Wahl-Jorgensen 2003), discourses of the economy mostly came in the days following protests.

Property Before People

The symbolic property destruction to transnational business chains in Seattle was emphasized as unbearable public costs of "out-of-control" protests. Footage of spray painted, boarded up, and broken windows were a prelude to discourses of the economy. Others showed protesters kicking in Starbucks storefront windows, lighting trash cans on fire to block streets, and taking down Niketown signs. Reports surrounding the D.C., New York, and Miami protests featured stores boarded up even though no property damage was reported. These graphic images were depicted as random and thuggish, caused by thoughtless rampage. And as noted, they were constantly heralded as "violence." Most of all, however, it failed to detail that the damage was primarily done to a handful of large corporations strongly allied with the WTO (*Breaking the Spell* 2001). Standing in front of

an unidentified boarded-up storefront, one business manager explained:

> REPORTER: "Holiday shoppers faced bleak prospects for buying gifts downtown. Merchants claim Tuesday's rampage cost 7 million dollars, not counting lost sales.
> STORE MANAGER: They've done all the damage on our walls and on our windows. It has completely shut us down" (CNN December 2, 1999).

Discourses of property damage as economic costs were substantial, yet they were not the majority. It would take a bigger threat to capitalist economics to make the news: restrictions to mass-consumption.

Civil Unrest vs. Shopping: Consumption as Business as Usual

The most widely emphasized economy discourse was the restriction to downtown shopping. Order was emphasized through consumption, blurring the lines between law and order and economy discourses. For starters, an in-studio reporter introducing one report declared, "after a week of protests, the city is back to normal; which would be lattes, salmon and software" (CNN December 4, 1999). In another news story, a reporter commented, "Seattle is a city under siege today. National guard troops patrol the streets. Shops and stores are boarded up. In the emerald city, the holidays are on hold" (CBS December 1, 1999). Civil unrest was constructed as disrupting the highest order of American capitalist society: Christmas shopping.

Another report excerpted a downtown business owner: "Christmas has been stolen from us. We want Christmas back." This interview was followed by a reporter's note that "turmoil" cost the city 10 to 20 million in lost revenue. After once more showing shots of protesters breaking the made-famous Starbucks window and smoky teargas canisters hurled back and forth between cops and protesters, the report receded back into discussion of holiday consumption:

> REPORTER: "Shoppers didn't just come to buy, but to bring the city joy"

> INTERVIEWEE: [woman with reindeer antlers wrapping presents in mall]: "I hope I can bring a few smiles to the city--
> REPORTER: [interrupting interviewee]: "And you need that right now don't you"
> INTERVIEWEE: Yes we do. (ABC December 3, 1999).

In this way, the spirit of holiday shopping is portrayed as a healing mechanism to the disease of disruptive street protests. One report blatantly excerpted a portion of an interview with a Seattle city council person who was "roughed-up" by police during demonstrations. "Let's shake some hands, spend some money, and have some fun" (NBC December 4,1999). The solution actively constructed to the social problem of civil unrest is consumption, reducing local residents to apolitical bystanders whose primary interest is shopping.

Constructing Public Economic Interest Against Dissidents' Agenda

Furthermore, reports claimed that protesters' agenda is against public interests. This public interest was identified as export-oriented economic growth. Not only were demonstrations framed as disruptive, but their very political stance was portrayed as out of sync with local and national economic interests. In one obvious instance of such discourse, a series of reports on ABC concluded with a long story that pinned the export economy interests of Seattle against that of the protesters. It showed visuals of Seattle's ports and factories along with interviews with many Seattle-based businesspeople, arguing in favor of free trade. The report concluded that "locals are on the side of the WTO, not the protesters" (ABC December 1, 1999). As such, interests of the protest-host city and even national interests were framed as contrary to the global justice agenda of the demonstrators.

DISCOURSES OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE

In today's mediated technocratic world, the public sphere (Habermas 1996) is

packaged and relayed through the public screen (DeLuca and Peeples 2002). The public screen is a magnified look at certain portions of the public sphere. Therefore certain public sphere discourse is dismissed, while other parts are magnified. This magnification portrays static frames through homogenous identities rather than dynamic heterogenous actors. As such, discourses of the public sphere on the public screen of television news included multiple dimensions that translated into the legitimacy or illegitimacy of the very identity of specific aggregates – not just their actions. On one level, business and state elites who were meeting behind closed doors were seen as legitimate political actors while protesters, on the street were seen as having illegitimate political identities. All dimensions of this discourse constructed legitimate and illegitimate identities.

Trivializing, homogenizing, and "hippyfying" protester identity.

Identity construction carries high risks. For Habermas (1996), a public sphere is where individuals come together to form rational public opinion. Since it is composed of various opinions and views, a public sphere does not have a static identity. Media constructions of anti-globalization views and actions were molded into a homogenous entity. As opposed to displaying active dissidence as part of a normative heterogenous public sphere, news stories constructed a collective identity of the protester type. In other words, protesters were portrayed as embodying an identity rather than constructed as an activity laypeople take part in. Such discourse constructed demonstrators as professional dissenters who are highly trained. One prelude to a protest noted, "[participants] will be practiced protesters, having attended demonstrator boot camps where getting arrested is expected." Introducing another report, one journalist declared, "don't tell *these* [reporter's vocal emphasis] people that expanded world trade is good for the global economy" (NBC

November 28, 1999). Such discourse identifies protesters as static identities instead of ordinary citizens who often decide to participate in political life through public protest.

Discourse that focused on the protesters' identity often relied on the reference frame of opposition movements of the 1960's. Reports often focused on many older anti-globalization protesters that "have been there all along" (ABC November 30, 1999). In addition, news stories directly implied that most participants in anti-globalization protests are the sons and daughters of protesters of the last generation. One report trivialized animal rights and environmental agendas of today with respect to the more compelling issues such as civil rights and the Vietnam war of the 1960's. It went on to show shots of black officers, noting that it is a "police force their [protester's] parents had a role in integrating" (ABC April 16, 2000). Reporting on a civil disobedience training camp, a reporter declared, "Ruckus is a group of 20-somethings whose parents would have looked and acted similar in the 60's" (CBS April 14, 2000). While such comparative discourses may have provided a master frame for progressive movements, they trivialized certain issues of anti-globalization protesters, and diminished a plethora of differences across generations and very distinct social movements. Rarely did reports describe in such detail the various labor and environmental coalitions that made up the dissidents. Constructing protesters as just another generation of hippies was a bold theme throughout news reports that described protester's identities. This framing strategy was yet another way to discredit the movement.

Officialdom vs. the Commons: Political Legitimacy Constructions

While constructing a trivial protester type was one form of pushing dissidents out of the public sphere, the most recurring dimension of public sphere discourses is the

contrast of the legitimacy of civic participation in existing transnational financial institutions to the illegitimacy of dissent outside formal institutions. Finance ministers and CEOs taking part in elite meetings that are the subject of protest are constructed as legitimate political-economic actors, while dissidents to their policies on the street are portrayed as illegitimate, or, at best, symbolic forms of political life.

In constructing grievances as confused and illegitimate political actors, one reporter said, "protesters outside are not united by a single issue. But they are all against their perceived adversary: the people inside the hotel" (ABC February 2, 2002). This frame was very literally implied in multiple segues from the legitimized public sphere of officialdom to the marginal sphere of street protests. This is yet another instance of a negative focus on movement diversity, a close cousin of the media's constant emphasis on internal dissension in movements (Gitlin 1980).

Preceding the Seattle demonstrations, a report managed to include this public sphere metaphor in both the introductory and concluding comments. After finishing a segment on the WTO's goals for the Seattle summit, the in-studio reporter segues, "as trade negotiators try to agree inside the talks, thousands of protesters are expected to air their grievances outside." The reporter covering the protests on the street ended with: "Protesters may not become the core discussion inside the halls. But they plan to lead the discussion outside" (CNN, November 28th). While these were real dichotomies, in the literal sense, they served as a metaphor to divide legitimate and illegitimate political participation. Combined with trivializations of protesters, the constant contrast of "inside" versus "outside" actively legitimized the elites' meetings as the official public sphere and delegitimized the political participation of the street protests (for

"inside/outside" public sphere metaphors see Todd 2003).

Polarizing Protester Identities: Thoughtless Hooligans and Passive Cheerleaders

On top of constructed trivialization and political illegitimacy, anti-globalization protests suffered portrayals that divided movement participants, pushing many out of public sphere legitimacy. Those who disrupted the meeting were seen as hooligans and apolitical rioters. Reports framed those who took direct action to disrupt meetings as illegitimate, carrying with them no serious grievances. One reporter used this segue between two stories: "and it is true that some of those people in the streets of Seattle are determined to get attention by any means. But there are others truly disenchanted with the way things are going and with something significant to say" (ABC November 30, 1999). Another news story used reports from liberal protest groups to dichotomize the movement: "Police leaders have met for weeks with the organizers of nonviolent protesters who warned them that troublemakers were on the way." Note that "troublemakers" are those who caused any disruptions to the meetings, regardless of whether their strategy was nonviolent or more militant. In perpetuating this theme, one report contrasted graphic footage of a group attempting to run past a police checkpoint with a "hippyfied" clip of a mellow protester slowly meandering down the street. The outset of the story showed a running group of direct-action-oriented demonstrators trying to push through a police barricade with a chain link fence as police clubbed the protesters. The reporter commented that this was a day "that police wanted to avoid." Soon after, the reporter segued that most of the demonstrations were not confrontational, and were "street parties rather than angry protests," while showing a group of protesters dancing in the street. The punch line came with a quick clip that followed. Asking an exhausted-

looking protester walking down the street "where are you going now," the respondent sung out "revolution" (ABC April 16, 2000). In the framing of this report, those who participate in "street parties" can not be understood to be involved in direct action. In this way, such news story divided protester identities into those that participated in direct action and those who were mere passive supporters.

The contrast between criminal identities and passive cheerleaders served to delegitimize civil disobedience and direct action tactics. Consider the combination of themes in the following news story. After a law and order discourse detailing police preparations and the classic Starbucks window-breaking clip, the report showed serene footage of a prayer by the Falungong movement that opposes China's entrance into the WTO due to human rights abuses. At this point, the reporter segued, "so far, demonstrations have been lawful and orderly. But it's not all peace, love, and understanding from the protesters." What follows next is an excerpted clip of an interview with an organizer from Anti-Capitalist Convergence (ACC).

> REPORTER: "Is it time to break the law in New York?"
> INTERVIEWEE: "Well, [pause] yes it is-- (NBC January 31, 2002).

By taking him out of context and cutting off the interviewee's probably detailed answer, the report ensured a sharp contrast between those protesters that break the law, tacking ACC radicals to those who broke windows in Seattle, and those that passively display their grievances exhibited by the preceding Falungong public prayer. While such polarizations sometimes displayed diversity of movement coalitions, such polarization primarily served as a mechanism to construct the anti-globalization movement as consisting of fringe groups; silly and ineffective but legitimate dissenters contrasted to mindless thugs—illegitimate protesters.

The Anarchist Rampage: Stereotypes and Marginalization

When looking for a group on which to place all blame for property destruction and confrontations with police, the media found their "bogyman" in anarchists. Nonviolent protesters were framed as defending property from the "anarchist rampage" (NBC December 2, 1999). There was a clear lack of explanation of anarchists' ideology and purpose in anti-globalization protests. Because of this, they were depoliticized and framed as the purely "criminal element" (CBS December 3, 1999) that infiltrates anti-globalization protests and drowns out their message.

Reports referred to anarchists as being "self-styled anarchists" or "self-described anarchists." This is peculiar simply because we don't usually hear reporters referring to other groups as self-described democrats or self-described socialists. Such references imply that no rational individual would self-identify as an anarchist: "it would be ludicrous to be against rules and governments" is the reasoning (this semantic misunderstanding will be further explained in the discussion section). Simply from the rhetoric used by reporters, it becomes easy to see that they have no clue of the serious stance of this aggregate. Referring to anarchist organizations, one reporter noted that "organized anarchy" is a contradiction in terms (ABC December 2, 1999). From this uninformed or misinformed starting point, it becomes easy to completely marginalize anarchists.

Stemming from this misunderstanding, anarchists were framed as part of a pseudo-cult movement. Once the teargas clouds cleared in Seattle, the media grabbed onto the idea that all anarchists came from Eugene Oregon. Relying on police sources, it showed footage of youth jumping on cars during a Carnival Against Capitalism held in

Eugene in the summer of 1999 (CNN December 2, 1999; NBC December 2 1999). One report went on to show an interview with John Zerzan, an old anarchist writer, who appeared on cable access television pondering the overthrow of global capitalism. Framed in a small television screen--to put distance between the news network and the segment--the report noted that the man was the Eugene group's leader, and that authorities have not charged him with damages in Seattle (NBC December 2, 1999). In an attempt to find the "leader" of this perceived cult, the media went to great lengths to construct the responsible adult for brainwashing the youth who confronted police and broke corporate storefront windows in Seattle.

Even as late as 2003, four years after the 'battle in Seattle', journalists were descriptions of anarchist participation in the anti-globalization movement remained very trivial. Anarchists are mystified to the point of redundancy. This vague snickering exchange between an in-studio (R1) and an on-scene (R2) reporter illustrates this complacency.

R1: "I understand where the unions are in this. But what do the anarchists [reporter's vocal emphasis] want or don't want?"
R2: "Well, its really hard to pinpoint...What they don't want is free trade blocks set up for many many reasons. But primarily because it will hurt workers worldwide. They hate the idea of capitalism too. [reporter's pause] Its hard to pin them down, Aaron."
R3: "Thank you, stay safe for the next couple of days" (CNN November 20, 2003).

Even when there seems to be some inquiry into anarchism, the cloudy explanations given by R2 reflects a nearly identical one-liner she uttered referring to the general anti-globalization agenda just one minute prior in the report. When considered along with discreditation used against anarchists in law and order discourses, continued mystification recalls the anti-anarchist, anti-immigrant hysteria of the early 20th century.

Professional Dissenters and Movement Spokespersons versus Rank and File Protesters.

Individual dissenters high on the hierarchy of credibility were much more likely to be given credible context and commentary within a news story than rank and file protesters or members of radical groups.

Experts such as economist Mike Weisbrot and the president of the AFL-CIO were given multiple in-studio interviews. Han Shahn, the spokesperson for such dissenting elites were able to make succinct claims in line with the master frames of the anti-globalization movement. Protesters on the street were mostly interviewed on the strategies of the movement, not the reasons behind them. Besides a few instances, the personalized experiences of American workers, many of whom lost their jobs due to corporate globalization, were completely absent from the array of aired interviews. The professionalization of claimsmaking in the media swallowed the range of rank and file protester claims that are relevant to the everyday experiences and sympathies of the average American viewer.

Moreover, increasing use of elite dissension constructed as the claimsmaking of the anti-globalization movement pushed rank and file voices outside of the public sphere. During the anti-WEF demonstrations in NY, U2 singer Bono and multi-billionaire Bill Gates stole the show from inside the conference halls. They spoke about the need for corporations and transnational financial institutions to provide healthcare in 3rd world countries (NBC February 2, 2002; CNN February 3, 2002; NBC February 3, 2002). However, these were diluted claims by economic elites that depersonalized such social problems albeit a few images from the African AIDS epidemic. While thousands of demonstrators gathered on the streets, with more radical messages such as the U.S.

withdraw from the WTO and the immediate dropping of third world debt, Bono and Gates received most of the attention of the media as dissenters to the corporate globalization agenda. Consequently, the media downplayed the class-based issues of corporate globalization in favor of elite dissention by a few rich white men.

DISCOURSES OF OUTSIDE AGITATION

Discourses of outside agitation portrayed protesters as invaders who have come to cause disruptions in the lives of the locals. Reports emphasized that protesters are from areas outside of the city that is hosting demonstrations. Moreover, they framed locals as not only opposed to the agenda of the demonstrators, but unwelcoming of the voicing of dissent to the elites' agenda in their city.

Reports pitted protesters against local commuters. An NBC report (November 30, 1999) showed footage of a demonstrator, dressed in a scary-looking costume symbolizing WTO policy, giving flyers to commuters who were stuck in a traffic jam amongst protests.

> REPORTER: "...For workers and consumers: a nightmare." [Footage of street theatre and leafleting in midst of a traffic jam]
> INTERVIEWEE: I want to be out of the middle of this. I'm scared to death. I just want to get to work. I just want my kids out of the car. I don't want to be in the middle of this.

This dramatized selection clearly defines the villains and the victims. Placing inconvenienced women and children into the picture constructs a social problem of street protests. Identifying inconvenienced locals personifies the victimhood of impartial laypeople. In effect, this socially constructs the perception that your average Jane and Joe have no stake in the globalization debate, and reinforces the homogenous role of *the protester*.

To make this selection bias even more explicit, interviews with locals

where the protests occurred covered predominantly the views of downtown shoppers and businesspeople. Many of these were interwoven with discourses of the economy and the inconvenience of large street protests to business interests. "Christmas has been stolen from us," said a disgruntled salesman, "we want Christmas back." Wrapping holiday presents following the end of the Seattle demonstrations, one local interviewee explains, "we want to show we have more spirit than riot in us" (ABC December 3, 1999). Focusing exclusively on locals who denounce the disruptions caused by the protests, the news media constructed a picture of protesters as invaders. While reports attempted to cover such working and middle class locals, they ended up interviewing predominantly business people rushing through downtown.

Discourses of outside agitation were emphasized by interviews exclusively with hostile locals in downtown business areas of the host city. After the Seattle demonstrations, interviews with locals focused on business owners whose stores sustained property damage during the protests. Instead of identifying those locals who took part in demonstrations, interviewed businesspeople stressed that the protesters "had no respect for property" (CNN December 3, 1999). In D.C., the media reported that the sole intention of the protesters was to "paralyze the city" (NBC April 15, 2000), "make Washington look like a war zone," and "shut down the city by any means necessary" (NBC April 17, 2000). Multiple reports on the New York demonstration featured the same clip of a middle-aged white man ripping-up a flyer that was given to him about the demonstrations (CBS January 31, 2003; NBC February 2, 2002). The only interviewee that was identified as a

local was an older white woman in a fur coat declaring that the protesters were "immature and bizarre" (NBC February 2, 2002). This material was used to say that "New Yorkers don't want any more trouble" with respect to the recent terrorist attacks (CBS January 31, 2003). To substantiate discourses of outside agitation, reporters selected such interviewees from downtown business districts of the city. Given the demographics of those interviewees—older white business owners--it is doubtful they represented the public opinion of locals in the protest-host cities.

It seemed as if none of the protesters were locals, and that the "anarchist horde" descended on cities to which they had no allegiance. Selection bias in the identification of local interviewees was used to substantiate discourses of outside agitation. Headlines such as "Miami Under Siege" (CNN November 20, 2003) served to emphasize the perceived invasion of massive anti-globalization protests.

DISCOURSES OF RECOGNITION

Unlike the first four, *discourses of recognition* covered the grievances of the protesters and framed them as fairly legitimate. Instead of briefly stating that there was dissent on "labor and environmental concerns" to the elites' agenda, these strains in reports gave favorable and in-depth coverage to issues and conditions that were the subject of protest. Discounting reporter's one-liners, discourses of recognition contained three dimensions: (1) exclusive news stories, (2) expert interviews, and (3) rank and file interviews. While the latter two were mutually exclusive and distinctive from each other, they were mostly parts of exclusive stories.

Exclusives

The thickest discourses of recognition were exclusives on the negative effects of corporate globalization. All of these reports occurred right after protests in Seattle shut down the city. One report centered on jobs. It bridged the social problem of sweatshop labor with the social problem of the loss of quality and high-paying jobs in the U.S. (NBC November 30, 1999). What was most peculiar about such reports is that they integrated footage of confrontational protests with footage of sweatshop labor and closing American factories. Showing clips of protesters blocking a limousine transporting a delegate to the WTO meetings and then a shot of young Chinese women operating sowing machines in a dark factory, "This is what the shouting is all about," explained one reporter in a voiceover (NBC November 30, 1999). Such segments drew a clear and direct relationship between personalized social problems at home and abroad with the resulting protests.

Experts vs. Street Protesters

I conceptually divided less detailed discourses of recognition into those that acknowledged the grievances of rank and file protesters and those that relied on experts to explain the complex web of grievances that were the subject of protests. Expert interviews compared to rank and file interviews were quite distinct. The contrast between expert dissenting elites high on the hierarchy of credibility were shown in visually privileged contexts of fancifully-lighted and professional-looking in-studio interviews. Plain-clothed rank and file interviews were mostly depicted in the context of noisy crowds and sometimes scrambling demonstrators fleeing from riot police. This gave experts a professional privilege on top of their previously-established social status. At the same time, rank and file interviews seemed to have a much broader appeal. Such

discourses of recognition were valuable in that they constructed the social problem of corporate globalization as relevant to the average viewer while legitimizing the diverse coalitions in the movement.

More than being a simple conceptual distinction, these two categories seemed to compete for air-time. Experts were used when there was no footage of drama and confrontation to integrate with enthused street protesters. Rank and file interviews seemed to trump expert interviews on days when the media sensationally covered dramatic street protests. In other words, when protests were not spectacular enough, television news resorted to airing interviews with various dissenting elites--which were most likely stock footage and plugs used to fill gaps in reports.

Interestingly, recognition discourses that featured expert interviews were primarily covered before disruptions occurred within each protest cluster. University of Washington professor Philip Bereano was interviewed the day before major disruptions in Seattle. He said, "The WTO is a an anti-democratic organization. Closed to small numbers of people. And most citizens are barred from any information" (CBS, November 29 1999). President of the AFL-CIO John Sweeney's interview also preceded the day of confrontational protests, citing the exportation of American jobs to cheap overseas labor as a central concern of American labor unions (CBS November 29, 1999). While expert interviews were predominantly used as background to protests, a minority after confrontational protests were utilized to 'professionalize' the dissent on the streets. A reporter segued to one expert's comments, "...and the protest is not just coming from the street." Next, Mike Weisbrot, a progressive economist and independent reporter, confirmed the hegemonic control the IMF asserts over indebted countries in an in-studio interview the

day after the large day of direct action in Washington (ABC April 17, 2000). The above instances show a large breadth of expert commentary. Yet, expert discourses of recognition mostly cited undemocratic and exclusive processes of transnational financial institutions without addressing the core economic problems of corporate colonization brought up by interviews with street protesters.

When protests became more confrontational and spectacular, the nature of recognition discourses changed as well. "We are just everyday people tired of the exploitation of multinational corporations," said one woman in a lengthy report on the breadth of dissenting views following dramatic footage in a precluding report of shattering storefront windows (NBC November 30, 1999). Following a report on hundreds of arrests of the day, another secondary report featured a plethora of rank and file interviews at a vigil. Like many such reports, it positively highlighted the diversity of protests, dispelling the 'hippyfication' myth of negative public sphere discourses. One union member cited that this is a serious coalition, defensively stating, "these are not hippies," and that he has never seen such a large diverse coalition between youth and labor. (NBC December 1, 1999). Most intriguing was the placement of rank and file interviews within each mass-protest coverage cluster: they appeared in conjunction with spectacular protests and dramatic footage of the use of contentious tactics. I will return to this intriguing relationship in more detail in the discussion section.

Discussion

I have shown that the major television news media discuss the anti-globalization movement in five distinct but overlapping ways. Discourses of law and order polarize movement strategies and legitimize police repression. Economy discourses predominantly

divert attention to the perceived negative economic impacts of street protests. On a broader level, discourses of the public sphere polarize the identities within the protest aggregate and also between corporate globalization elites and street protesters. At the same time, discourses of outside agitation smear protesters as unwanted invaders of cities that are hosting the meetings of transnational financial institutions. Nevertheless, discourses of recognition of the dissenters peek through this refracted spectacle with internally competing commentary between rank and file and expert dissenters. I now want to discuss the context of these discourses within the movement's history in the media.

From Seattle to Miami: A Sociohistorical look at the Anti-Globalization Movement on TV

Before embarking on a deeper discussion of the scholarly and movement repercussions of anti-globalization movement coverage, we must first take a broader look at the history of the movement in the U.S., and other such media-visible protests around the world.

When the anti-globalization movement burst onto the television news screen in Seattle there was lots of drama to sensationalize: Rainforest Action Network activists scaling construction cranes and skyscrapers with eye-catching banner drops; tens of thousands of unionists taking a stand against the loss of quality jobs, pay, and benefits brought on by the exportation of American jobs; black bloc anarchists crashing corporate storefront windows; street theatre with hundreds of protesters dressed like endangered sea turtles; and a plethora of solidarity demonstrations across the world. While the protests made the news because of the spectacle they created, it spurred much coverage and recognition for the emerging U.S. anti-globalization movement.

At first, coverage was slim for the movement. News covered the agenda of the

WTO with impersonalized power-point graphics and interviews with devout pro-corporate globalization economic and U.S. state elites who trivialized the protesters. While there were a few rank and file interviews and mentioning of expected protests in Seattle and worldwide, not much attention was paid to the movement and its agenda. It would take a spectacle of major proportions to catch the eye of the WTO-allied corporate media.

By November 30th, 1999, as the meetings were supposed to be getting under way, the protests gained full strength. Civil unrest--crashing storefront windows, massive street blockades via sit-ins, and teargas clouds--pushed the WTO Seattle story to the top of news hours. While the "violence" was vilified, the 'peaceful' protesters were given recognition through interviews and in-depth exclusives (also see DeLuca and Peeples 2002). Limited but significant coverage of police repression of the following day aided in giving protesters more chances to appear on the public screen for days to come. While media drilled at criminality, stereotyping anarchists, the picture painted was that of a police force repressing a grassroots movement made up of everyday people against very powerful economic forces.

Less than a half a year later, it was evident the movement was riding a media wave. Sprinkled with anxiety of another disrupted meeting of economic elites, the media jumped on the opportunity to cover the IMF/WB biannual meetings in Washington DC. Cheering on an illegal police raid of a protest convergence center, the news media took every opportunity to create a state of fear of "anarchy" in the streets of the capitol by relying on police disinformation of confiscated lockboxes and magazines on how to make Molotov cocktails. Yet, in the process, they gave much coverage and attention to the

movement. Having drummed up a state of pending civil unrest, the media gave much coverage to the following days of protests. Despite a lack of the magnitude of direct action that occurred in Seattle, the media once again polarized those awful "hooligans" confronting police while recognizing anti-corporate globalization issues of other rank-and file protesters congregating in a park across town. The lesser, yet still very significant, coverage in DC piggybacked on the threat of a repeat Seattle-like disruptions.

While I did not inspect mass protests at the Democratic and Republican national party conventions of the fall of 2001 due to the scope of this study, I will venture to say that coverage of those heavily attended events, with tens of thousands of protesters, probably reflected similar law and order discourses, and hinged on sensationalizing direct action and further potential civil unrest. As Todd (2003) notes in her analysis of the Democratic National Convention (DNC) coverage, "the media spectacle created through various media channels, most notably televised coverage of the convention protests, is symbolized in the image of protester as radical and irrational, even dangerous..." (106). In such a painting of the 'bad guy,' "the exaggerated reports of protesters make the actual demonstrations seem tame by comparison," recognizing the claims of the tame and civil 'good guy' (101). Again the media memory of the newsworthy civil unrest of Seattle grabs media attention to cover any possible threat of such a repeat. But in demonizing the media-refracted "violent" protester, reports were forced to cover the protests' anti-globalization issues contrasted to the corporate-sponsored DNC events. As Todd puts it, "the administrative [media] strategy succeeded in presenting an image of a stable situation under police control and authority, but failed in consideration of the grander plan of activists to attract national media coverage" (106).

After a few more biannual IMF/WB meetings in DC, many U.S. anti-corporate globalization advocates traveled to Quebec in the summer of 2001 to protest negotiations of an extension of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The pulling down of a two-story-tall fence blocking demonstrators from the meetings served as a symbol of the breaking down of corporate-globalization barriers to protect the elites. It was probably given some limited coverage in the U.S. media, due to the extra-national scope of this event, knowing the U.S. media's lack of focus on global events.

The summer of 2001 featured the most active anti-globalization protest to date in the world. With the G8 meeting in Genoa, Italy, nearly a million protested and nearly crashed the elites' party, battling with police to within only a few blocks of the conference sight. An inspection of U.S. media coverage of this event would probably yield a higher quantity of coverage than the anti-NAFTA protests in Canada due to the spectacle of police confrontations. Yet, the remote location of Genoa, by U.S. media standards, doubtfully led to a connection with the U.S. wing of the anti-globalization movement in the media.

The protests to the WTO meetings in November of 2001 saw absolutely no coverage in the U.S. major television evening news coverage (DeLuca and Peeples 2002: 140). This was due to the choice by the WTO to locate the summit in the remote monarchy of Quatar in the Middle East. With limited traveling ability since September 11th and the absence of direct action, coverage of protests was nearly eliminated in all major U.S. media news outlets (DeLuca and Peeples: 140-141).

Yet the impacts of 9/11 on the movement and on its media coverage would not be fully realized until the World Economic Forum conference in New York City in 2002.

Coverage depicted a victimized by 9/11 but ready police force. News stories pounded the idea that "New Yorkers were not in any mood for more trouble", essentially equating protests with Islamic fundamentalist terrorism. Given the small number of protesters that attended due to fears of post-9/11 repression, I originally did not expect the 7 nightly television news stories that aired regarding the demonstrations. The media hype about Seattle-like "domestic terrorism" spurred significant coverage relative to the actual size of the protest. If any significant direct action or civil disobedience campaigns had occurred in New York, coverage would have at least doubled in the wake of a new security-paranoid media attention cycle.

Miami was a completely different animal. With the advent of military-style policing with embedded reporters, coverage dropped to only 4 news stories on the four major networks over a 4 day period. Yet news stories focused more on protests and their policing than in any of the other three clusters of coverage I inspected. While protests against the CAFTA negotiations in 2003 were very broadly planned, they were not nearly as well attended as Seattle, with less than ten thousand protesting (although they surpassed the few thousand in New York). Partly to the ludicrous tens of millions of dollars spent on policing, there was very limited use of direct action, resulting in low media attention.

Looking at the history of the anti-globalization movement, a relationship between the depicted "violence" of direct action and the totality of coverage emerges. Where contentious protest tactics are utilized, there is more coverage—and at times, even better quality coverage that recognizes protester claims. The use of contentious tactics relatively moderates the claims of other participants. Furthermore, the hype created by the Seattle

event and the threat of such disruptions aid the anti-globalization movement in achieving coverage of mass protests *a priori*. While a closer examination of movement coverage outside the U.S. is needed, the tendency of the American media to avoid covering and connecting anti-globalization struggles abroad constructs a very limited and isolated picture of the U.S. wing of the movement.

Police Brutality, Misinformation and Media Complicity

Reliance on police disinformation has resulted in a lack of coverage of police brutality at major demonstrations. Granted, later reports of the Seattle protests showed some disturbing footage of the police harassing a few demonstrators. Yet the widespread occurrence of severe street beatings and treatment of jailed protesters, as well as the unnecessary use of tazers, teargas, and pepper spray is undocumented in the television news coverage in the D.C., New York, and Miami cases (for an independent media report on severe police brutality at the anti-CAFTA protests, see The Miami Model 2004).

Yet, a handful of news stories after major Seattle protests did emphasize police misconduct. Interestingly, recognition occurred when protesters were framed as victims of police brutality. Once footage of police beatings were shown, and narratives of misconduct were told by protesters in interviews, movement issues also jumped into the spotlight. Here, a similar misnomer occurred as in the case of relating less contentious tactics to a decline in coverage. Contrary to such media claims, when police brutality was covered, anti-globalization issues received coverage they otherwise would not have received at all. The drama of police violence drew the attention of the media.

"Violence," Contentious Tactics, and Media Framing.

Of course, the corporate media vilified property destruction as a form of direct

action. Evident in footage of winding marches in the background of crashing windows, a variety of tactics was used in the same protest events. Regardless, reports polarized nonviolent and more militant strategies. As noted, property destruction and civil unrest, especially if occurring during the day's coverage, was covered before any mild forms of protests were shown. Reports rarely showed a united movement, segueing from the "violence" of some to the peacefulness of most.

Yet, "violence" was framed very vaguely. In most cases it did not directly refer to property destruction of corporate storefront windows. Was this physical violence used by protesters against other people? Was this violence committed by police against protesters? Clearly, these were not the pictures painted in the news. Based on concurring video clips, a reporter's claim that violence occurred meant that there was simply civil unrest. For instance, take the following clip:

> REPORTER: "For a while the most radical demonstrators, who do not shy away from violence, were the center of attention."
> VIDEO: Footage of teargas engulfing a street full of protesters (ABC November 30, 1999).

There was little attempt to clarify the blanket uses of the word "violence." This made it easy to polarize meandering demonstrations that did not get the attention of police batons and tazers against those that took a stand at shutting down the meetings of powerful transnational institutions.

The construction of polarization of violent and nonviolent strategies that follow may intuitively seem to have negative implications for movement coverage. How could a movement be seen as legitimate to a thoroughly socialized American public if it relies on the destruction of private property--a sacred capitalist institution? Is not a cognitive separation between the legitimacy of order and the illegitimacy of civil unrest necessary

for the former to get broader acceptance? These are valid concerns and should be central to achieving positive coverage for oppositionist movements. However it is important to note that this is an instance of marginalization (Gitlin 1980), a classic media strategy that divides movements into confused and divided factions.

To a viewer who only sees only a fraction of these news stories, it may seem that divisions between protest groups portrayed in news stories were between "violent" and nonviolent, separating those that broke windows from those that participated in nonconfrontational civil disobedience and obedient rallies. But a closer inspection of media constructions reveals that the division between the "good" and the "bad" protester was between those that attracted the attention of the police versus those who did not. Preceding the major day of action in Seattle, the media was already quick to point the finger at anyone who was subject to arrest, regardless to the protest tactics they employed. Showing footage of a compliant arrestee followed by some folks dancing in the street, a journalist declared:

> "While the demonstrators have vowed this will be a week of nonviolent protest, the Seattle police have already made some arrests. Some of the more militant protest groups have vowed that they will shut down the World Trade Organization summit" (NBC November 28, 1999)

The media logic is that disrupting a summit can only be achieved with violent tactics. The arrests of the "militants" who attempt to do so are legitimized. Even prior to any occurrence of "violence" in U.S. anti-globalization demonstrations, the media were quick to equate any disruptive tactics that tried to shut down the WTO with illegitimate violence that was against the interests of the national economy. The result is that even nonviolent civil disobedience and direct action tactics are marginalized, not just those that may condone property destruction. Any direct action is automatically illegitimate in the

eyes of the media.

Empirical Media Implications for the Uses of Contentious Tactics

I have noted that law and order discourses of "violence" marginalize radical movement groups, and even work to delegitimize the movement as a whole. The "violence" of symbolic property destruction may well have worked against a positive image of the movement. But would protesters' grievances that protesters brought to the demonstrations be addressed if it was not for the contentious tactics sensationalized by the media? Inspecting a wide range of news formats, DeLuca and Peeples (2002) confirm the results I saw in the first two clusters I inspected, "when violence broke out in Seattle, coverage escalated. When dramatic violence did not occur in DC, coverage disappeared" (140-141). On and after the day of disruptive protest in Seattle, total television news coverage went up 26%, while the story's placement in the newscast bettered to first or second as opposed to third, fourth, or fifth in the previous days' coverage (139). The artificial divisions between the good and bad protesters had paradoxically played into the hands of the dissenters. The good guys get the attention … good cop bad cop.

Moreover, I found a higher occurrence of recognition discourses after media reports of "violence" and disruptions. When contentious tactics were used sparingly and repressed in the case of the New York and Miami, recognition discourses within every coverage cluster were either absent or framed as elite dissent on issues that had little effect on the broader public through interviews with experts. This can either be an extension of the De Luca and Peeples (2002) thesis, or a media effect of the post-9/11 media world. In addition, the day after the most disruptive day of protests in the D.C. coverage cluster, reports featured in-studio experts replacing protester interviews on the

street.

Most importantly, and in line with DeLuca's and Peeples' (2002) theory, overall coverage declined dramatically in the New York and Miami cases. The Seattle coverage had 24 stories, D.C. had 13, New York had 7, while Miami had only 4. The absence of spectacle and "violence" gave the drama-dependent television news media little to report on. In New York, coverage was restricted to diluted discussion on world health policy by the rich, Bill Gates and U2 singer Bono, inside the hotel hosting the World Economic Forum. Coverage in Miami was altogether absent in discussing in any detail the social problem of corporate globalization. The decrease in the volume of coverage caused the disappearance of recognition discourses.

Drowning Out Recognition?: Constructions of the Effects of Contentious Tactics

Seeing that spectacle increases coverage of recognition shows that commentary on its debilitating effects on recognition of movement issues is unfounded. When reports of contentious tactics appeared in coverage, reporters constantly commented that the "violence" nulls the protesters attempts to address the social problem of corporate globalization. After the Seattle stint, referring to police brutality and property destruction, a reporter noted in his concluding comments, "this was a week when extremism drowned out debate." Such dialogue was representative of interpretive frameworks set up by reporters, guiding the viewer to misunderstand the relationship between contentious tactics and publicity of debate (ABC December 3, 1999).

Furthermore, noting the positive relationship between coverage and disruptive protest strategy, it becomes peculiar that some protesters denounced contentious tactics in interviews. While some of such divisive commentary came from experts protecting their

status from association with contentious tactics, many rank and file protesters constructed a divided movement. Most protesters blamed indiscriminate blanket arrests in Seattle on protesters who broke corporate storefront windows and not on the incompetence of the police. In DC street protester interviewees separated themselves from confrontational tactics of some blocs of demonstrators, with one demonstrator declaring, "I don't think they represent what the majority of us are here for" (ABC April 16, 2000). Throwing away their chance to comment on globalization issues in an attempt to construct the movement in a positive light, such protester-interviewees ironically aided in the marginalization of the disruptive strategy that allowed for their appearance in the major media to begin with. The media value of anti-globalization activists shunning each others' strategies needs to also be integrated with the costs of internal movement divisions this may cause. While the media probably guided these interviewees with leading questions to discredit their own movement (Ryan 1991), the protester's complicity in these divisive discourses is undeniable.

Underlying Distortions

The disruptions of Seattle spurred a media attention cycle that has closely followed anti-globalization protests of all sizes and the meetings of powerful transnational business institutions. Media coverage of the other three major protests that I inspected constantly drilled at the threat of a repeat of Seattle-style disruptions. The danger of a media strategy based only on image events is substantial. If coverage fails to tie in disruptive episodes of anti-globalization protests to the thematic issues the movement is addressing, blame by viewers for social unrest will be placed on the protesters instead of policies of transnational financial institutions (Iyengar 1996). While

the value of issue-based coverage aimed at middle-America that is ridden with images of smashed Starbucks windows may be questionable, the totality of airtime that the movement and its grievances have gained because of the confrontational tactics of some of its participants is undeniable. Nevertheless, the picture of the anti-globalization movement that the television news media perpetuated is full of distortion.

Even though the anti-globalization movement has grabbed many headlines, the themes I found throughout my data also show that the vast majority of television news coverage aims to discredit the movement. As Gitlin (1980) found with respect to the anti-Vietnam War movement, there is a strong emphasis on polarizing and trivializing the agenda of anti-globalization coalitions. Issue based groups are portrayed as having "little in common except their contempt" for targeted institutions. Environmental and labor issues are framed as unrelated.

Radicals are also villainized and often depoliticized. Anarchists are shown as nihilist 'rebels without a cause' who opportunistically descend upon elites' meetings to indiscriminately wreck chaos. With heavy reliance on police information, anarchist groups are portrayed as a shadowy "criminal element" that infiltrates mass protests without any consideration for their agenda.

Direct action, whether nonviolent or more militant, is depicted as merely an inconvenience to business as usual. Blame for social unrest is placed on protesters rather than on political and environmental conditions that are the subject of protest. While mass protests have achieved a "beat" (Tuchman 1978) and perhaps wrangled hold of a media attention cycle, this attribution of blame at the individual rather than the political level, denotes that the anti-globalization movement in the U.S. has yet to achieve thematic—as

opposed to episodic—coverage in the television news media (Iyengar 1996).

I originally hypothesized that the two clusters of coverage after September 11th 2001 would be ripe with discourses of threats of terrorism. I was correct. Terrorism is a condition socially constructed by today's mass media, and "the line between activist and terrorist is deliberately blurred" (Klein 2002: xxvi). In the post 9/11 "terrorist world," journalism is structurally restricted from covering dissent in a positive manner (Altheide 2004: 301-302). The blanket glorification of police above all else, warranted by social constructions of authorities' heroism at the time of 9/11, has created a media climate that relies too heavily on police sources—going even as far as embedded reporters in the case of Miami. Reports surrounding the New York cluster were full of reminders of 9/11 and recurring stock footage of property destruction from Seattle. Declaring that "New Yorkers don't want any more trouble" with respect to the recent terrorist attacks is not far from declaring protesters terrorists.

Implications

With the decrease in the quantity of coverage since 9/11, some reports have declared the death of the anti-globalization movement in the U.S. In part, this may have to do with the new "terror alert" attention cycle and militarized policing strategies may have scared some to-be protesters off the streets. The Seattle coverage had 24 stories, D.C. had 13, New York had 7, Miami had only 4. However, this lack of coverage can not explain why thousands still descend on the meetings between powerful business and state elites. Even some major media is constructing an alternate picture of the supposedly diminishing movement. Seeing only a few hundred protesters at the Spring 2005 WB/IMF meetings, a BBC report explained that much of the anti-globalization movement

has moved to organizing at the grassroots level (Davis 2005). Also, could it simply be that the Seattle demonstrations attracted a larger crowd and more media attention? There were more than 100,000 protesters in Seattle (1). As Tom Brokaw said in one of his television news commentaries, the Seattle round of the WTO talks was supposed to be the big P.R. extravaganza during Clinton's last months as president (NBC December 1, 1999). Seattle witnessed the largest conference of elites in the U.S. to date devoted to the expansion of so-called "free trade." Yet, even though the high-profile Seattle WTO meetings may have originally caught the attention of mobilizable dissenters, it is still important to ask if the anti-globalization movement is on the decline? Or is this a self-fulfilling prophecy perpetuated by the media? Or may this media claim be simply irresponsible disinformation. Obtaining crowd counts independent of corporate media outlets and police sources at mass demonstrations, as well as measuring movement activity at the community and policy levels may be a good way to evaluate some of these supposed changes.

A smaller crowd size, a less well-attended protest than Seattle, can not explain the reason behind the decrease in coverage. McCarthy, McPhail, and Smith (1996) found that major television news coverage, unlike newspapers, does not depend on crowd size. Comparatively analyzing over 3000 demonstrations in Washington DC in 1982 and 1991, they found that crowd size disappeared as a statistically significant variable in determining whether a report will be aired on nightly television news. Television news relies more on image and the persistence of drama rather than the size of the crowd. If the same historical trend in coverage has continued since 1991, the smaller number of protesters in D.C., New York, and Miami compared to Seattle, can not explain the steady

decline in coverage. Instead, a lack of image events and conflict may account for the decline.

For activists, the implications may seem paradoxical. As usual, they must walk the tightrope of knowledgeable and responsible media relations in order to gain quality coverage (Ryan 1991), while at the same time create a spectacle that would get them on the public screen in the context of a reluctant-to-cover media environment. But given the positive relationship shown in this paper between the uses of contentious tactics and the quantity and recognition in media exposure, the latter may be worth more than the former, especially in the context of the hostile-by-default post-9/11 media environment. Creating a spectacle with an acceptance of a diversity of tactics has shown by coverage of the anti-globalization movement to be an advantageous way to spur visibility for a cause.

In the world of academia, proponents of a purely rational public sphere may claim that the anti-globalization movement has failed. Scholars may argue that the radical nature of this movement lacks formal requests and concessions from the powers that be. The lack of focus and strict framing of issues may have no policy implications. Yet, even such scholars understand the power of spectacle in the mass media. Gitlin (2001) argues that "extensive, sometimes respectful (though sometimes alarmist) media treatment of the Seattle; Washington D.C.; and other demonstrations against business-centered globalization contributed to policy debates within the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the G8 governments" (174). Indeed, "global citizen action has helped to change--or at least restrain--the practices of large institutions ranging from the World Bank, IMF, and WTO to multinational corporations" (Gaventa 2001: 278).

Traditional forms of presentations of research on television news depictions also

come into question. I ran into much difficulty translating the format of television onto paper. The interwoven visual and audio data are very difficult to translate into print, especially since various stock footage, live footage, reporters' commentaries, and interviews cut through the format of television news. Any future research should consider the limitations of presenting social phenomenon mediated through television or film through the written word. Instead, such research should include multimedia presentations when communicating results.

Immediate policy implications at home and in the "developing" world are central to the transnational movement against corporate globalization movement. In the same breath, the most important implication to consider with respect to a U.S. public uninformed of globalization issues are the repercussions of distorted depictions or the lack of coverage of the critical issues that the anti-globalization movement brings to light. Transnational financial institutions such as the WTO, the World Bank, and the IMF make decisions that dictate life throughout the world; from whether or where we work, to whether or what we eat, to whether our kids will have clean water to drink a generation from now (McMichael 2004). Since the impact of these institutions' policies is a topic that is rarely discussed in other spheres, media coverage of the anti-globalization movement is critical for a broad awareness that puts the spotlight on the tools of transnational corporations and their loan sharks.

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