

FRAMING PROTEST: THE GLOBE AND MAIL AND THE G8-G20
When protest becomes a riot story

by

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Abstract

In June 2010, the world's political and economic leaders arrived in Ontario for the first-ever joint G8-G20. The event presented a theatre for an array of protesters and social movements to attract media attention to a variety of social justice issues and concerns. The predominant narrative that emerged in the Canadian media however seemed to cloud the complexity, nuance and diversity of protesters and reduce the dominant narrative to a singular and simplistic riot story.

This study examines how *the Globe and Mail* framed its narrative surrounding protesters at the summit. To do this, it takes a sample of *the Globe's* coverage of protesters at the G8-G20 and assesses how the paper: sourced its articles, marginalized protesters, trivialized protesters and whether it provided alternative, dissenting viewpoints.

The aim of this research is to assess how Canada's foremost national paper of record situated itself within large-scale challenge to social, political and economic normative order in Canada. This paper also explores concepts such as hegemony in the news, media effects, and the changing media landscape.

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This thesis is dedicated to Zella Murray

1 Chapter: Introduction

In summer 2010, Huntsville and Toronto, Ontario hosted the G8-G20 summits. Between June 25 and 27, with the world's political and economic leaders concealed behind a six-kilometer, \$5 million fence, (Kirton M1) tens of thousands of social movement members¹, individual protesters² and onlookers converged on the streets of Toronto. Participants sought to use the G8-G20 as a forum to get national and international media coverage and to encourage a public conversation about a variety of Canadian and global social justice issues and Canada's role and objectives within the international diplomatic community.

The news frame that Canadians witnessed was not a conversation but instead a cacophony: burning police cars, broken windows and cops marching in riot gear. The Canadian audience saw, heard and read about confusing, turbulent clashes among social movements organizations, protesters, residents, police, onlookers and the media that covered the event -- which culminated in the arrest of more than 900 people -- Canada's largest-ever mass arrest (Gray A1). Throughout the summit weekend, it became increasingly difficult for Canadians to differentiate between the crass and destructive minority (which absorbed the bulk of the media's attention) and the reflexive, organized and communicative majority of protesters whose narrative got lost in the riot story.

¹ The G8-G20 in June 2010 hosted a complex, fluid and intersectional array of individuals, organizations and networks with varying commitments, interests and objectives. For the sake of consistency and clarity in this study the term *social movement organization* (a well-discussed term in its own right among social movement scholars) will be used to characterize *protest groups*. Mario Diani (1992) provides a "synthetic definition" of social movements that is suitable for the purposes of this paper: "A social movement is a network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity." (13)

² In instances where no discernable, relevant network or organizational structures applies, individual demonstrators will be called *protesters*.

This study takes a timely snap shot of how *the Globe and Mail* -- Canada's foremost national publication -- covered protest during the G8-G20 in Ontario. It looks at *the Globe's* use of language and its construction of coverage regarding social movements and protesters. In other words, this paper explores *the Globe's* protester frame. In the current journalistic environment -- which is clearly in technological, social, and economic transformation -- it's important to pause and assess how *the Globe* situates itself within large-scale, public disruption to local, national and global order.

The Globe was selected because it is Canada's largest national daily paper of record (second to only *the Toronto Star*, a paper with a larger circulation, but one that is primarily regional). Another motivating factor in selecting *the Globe* is its identity and marketability as an elite publication, and one that can legitimate public discourse³. With *the Globe* as my source, I searched Factiva for all articles including: "G8 or G20 and Protests or Protesters." I cross-referenced those findings (47 articles) with *the Globe's* G8-G20 summit hub website which provided an additional 15 articles for a total sample of 62 articles including news stories, editorials, columns, features, profiles, and analysis. My sample includes articles from June 24, 2010 to July 1, 2010.

The date parameters were selected to catch anticipatory stories filed on the two days before the summit, plus two days during the summit to collect breaking news reports, and four days of follow-up, analysis and editorial coverage throughout the following week.

I looked for:

³ According to Media-Corps, *the Globe and Mail's* international advertising representative, *the Globe* reaches more Canadians with: University educations, household incomes of more than \$125,000, personal incomes of more than \$100,000, senior management positions, and more professional positions than any other Canadian newspaper. http://media-corps.com/Media-Corps_print_globeandmail.html

1.) SOURCES: instances of primary reliance on attributed official sources such as politicians, business leaders, police leadership, or spokespeople (Gitlin 1980; Paletz, Entman 1981; Schudson 2003; Gans 2003);

2.) MARGINALIZATION OF PROTESTORS: descriptions, language and primary/dominant frames that emphasized violence and civic disruption (Gitlin 1980; Ashley, Olson 1998; Gans 2003; Boyle et al 2005; Boykoff 2006);

3.) TRIVIALIZATION OF PROTESTORS: coverage that showed disparagement by numbers, disparagement on the basis of identity, undermining tone, frivolous quotation marks (Gitlin 1980; Lee, Craig 2002; Ashley, Olson 1998); and

4.) DISSENTING FRAMES: that introduced first person accounts of the protests by social movement activists, or primary frames that contested official or hostile narratives about the protests or protesters.

I tallied those findings and then pulled relevant examples into my overall analysis of the coverage while acknowledging fundamental scholarship on media framing and social movement theory.

Research question: As Canada's national paper of record, how did *the Globe and Mail* explore themes and messages brought forth by SMOs, and protesters during the G8-G20?

Hypothesis: *The Globe*, throughout the G8-G20 adhered to a dominant discourse in favour of the status quo. *The Globe's* social, economic and cultural identity conforms to a particular hegemonic ideology -- pro-business, pro-civic stability and pro-status quo -- and the newspaper as an institution found itself at odds with protesters and their messaging resulting in a coverage of protest that emphasized violence and disruption to political, social and economic order.

1.1 Background: The G8-G20

Rambouillet, France played host to the first G7 in 1975⁴. Participants included France, Germany, the UK, the US, Japan and Italy. Canada was added for the 1976 summit in Puerto Rico, and representatives from the European Community attended in 1977. The annual meeting between the world's largest industrial economies was arranged to discuss issues including macroeconomics, international trade, development, east-west relations, terrorism, human rights, arms control, and energy resources. Russia first attended in 1994 and rounded out the G8 as a full member in 1998 at the summit in Birmingham.

After economic and financial crisis in the late 1990s, finance ministers from the G8 suggested that a secondary informal meeting be held among the G8's finance ministers, central bank managers, and representatives from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. At the suggestion of then-Canadian finance minister Paul Martin, the meetings were expanded to include representatives from emerging economies as a way to comprehensively deliberate and discuss global economic issues.

The G20 was first held informally in 1999, and consisted of the G8, plus the European Union and was joined by Argentina, South Africa, Mexico, Brazil, China, South Korea, India, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Australia. In 2008, George W. Bush invited the G20 heads of state to Washington DC for an official summit. The joint G8-G20 in Toronto and Huntsville marked the fourth episode, and it's been decided that the G20 will continue to meet annually, each fall. France will host in 2011, followed by a summit in Mexico in 2012⁵.

⁴ Information on G8 origins from University of Toronto's G8 Information Centre:
http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/what_is_g8.html

⁵ Information on G20 origins from University of Toronto's G20 Information Centre:
<http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/g20whatisit.html>

2 Chapter: Literature Review

2.1 Protest, freedom and democracy

Healthy, enduring, democratic communities rely on active exchanges of ideas, opinions and information (Dewey 1922; Freire 2005). In the Canadian context *the Globe and Mail* has the privilege of facilitating those exchanges. We must look at an institution like *the Globe* and ask whether it's providing Canadians with information that is needed to exercise freedom, hold leaders to account and nourish democracy. Our system of governance is constructed with democratic institutions but that framework is only a mechanism to secure the *idea* of democracy. Active -- even turbulent -- communication has to be the primary ingredient in the recipe for great, sustainable, democratic communities. Knowledge and wisdom cannot be created in a vacuum and grows best out of active interaction and exchange (Dewey 144). The press remains the prime facilitator.

Without criticism and without holding truth to power -- one of the fourth estate's ideal objectives -- freedom is fleeting. Individuals, communities, societies, and countries must reject the "fear of freedom," and seek humanization through accountability and responsibility (Freire 2005). "Liberation is...a childbirth, and a painful one (51). Freedom, as we enjoy it in Canada, requires reflection, solidarity, dialogue and vocal, visible action. The best venue for this action is our public spaces -- our streets. Toronto, during the G8-G20, presented an opportunity for comprehensive and far-ranging public dialogue pertaining to an array of social justice disorders at home and abroad.

2.2 Frame theory

The central focus in this study is how news gets framed (Tuchman 1978; Gitlin 1980; Ashley, Olson 1998; Entman 2003; Gans 2003). When journalists report a story there is a

series of decisions that must get made while reporting in the field and while crafting the news story back in the newsroom. What is the tone? Who gets a voice? What is the purpose? What gets emphasized? De-emphasized? What's the angle? The sum of all of those parts is the story's frame (Tuchman 5).

Who gets a voice in the story is one of the most important aspects of the news frame. When political or business leaders have something to say, the press usually listens attentively and reports it (Gans 52). Official or authoritative sources have the opportunity to set the news frame and to even influence what language gets used to tell a story (Entman 2003). Official press conferences, typically closed to the public, are the primary intersection for reporters and leaders (415). It's at these contained, arranged and structured events that most public policy narratives originate.

When the media relies on information and language provided by officials and leaders, news organizations participate in cultural strumming (Entman 2003). By "strumming" officials' talking points, the media can reproduce news frames posited from the top-down. This "cascading activation" sets in motion a cultural logic that permeates communities and spreads through popular discourse (418). Like a waterfall, discourse flows down to lower levels from higher ones. The water (discourse) mixes with other perspectives and then over time eventually finds its way back to the origins of the system creating a dominant frame. It is possible that the result is hegemonic social and cultural congruence, a level of acceptability for any given subject or news story.

Another ingredient in a news frame is the overall treatment of voices, characters and participants. The way that protesters during the G8-G20 were framed reminds of experiences by other challenges to the status quo. Studies of media framing have found de-legitimization

of protester messaging by using undermining quotation marks (Ashley, Olson 1998). Media coverage of protest movements or protest events has also been found to trivialize protesters on the basis of appearance and dress (Gitlin 1980; Ashley, Olson 1998).

Furthermore, newspaper coverage has been shown to emphasize internal dissension and undercount participants while contrasting protesters against other favoured counter-movements more congruent with the media outlet's economic, political and cultural sensibilities (Ashley, Olson 266, 268, 269; Gitlin 27; Lee, Craig 1992). It's important then to consider whether *the Globe* afforded G8-G20 protesters a straight face while covering social justice action for the Canadian public.

As much as a news frame is a sum of many parts (voices, words, tone) it's also a lens through which the world is viewed. Like a window frame, a news frame's quality depends on many variables (Tuchman 1978). Variables like size, vantage point, clarity, shape, can either reveal or blur a vision of the outside landscape (1). Part of understanding where those elements come from is recognizing that news is "first and foremost a social institution" (Tuchman 1978; Chomsky 1997; Gans 2003). The media's institutional construct depends a variety of different political and economic entities (corporate parent companies, advertisers and government) and they can impact how information gets framed. If one of these sections, or individuals within them, want to float an idea or a perspective through the media, they can. Ordinary citizens are rarely provided an opportunity to express their interests, feelings and impressions (Tuchman, 4).

The structure of the newsroom also plays a role in how dominant frames get established. News is increasingly a mass production built within an environment similar to that of a factory (Gans 49). In recent years the urgency within news production has

intensified. News organizations continue to produce daily iterations of the paper, but they must also update the web regularly while posting to various social media outlets. This perpetual news grind and continuous cycle limits a reporter's ability to comprehensively gather news. One of the side effects is that reporters increasingly rely on official sources and oversimplify narratives in order to keep the news flowing while holding the reader's precarious attention (Gans 49, 52, 61). The factory-esque construction of news may diminish the opportunity for covering stories about social movements and protest in a way that teases out complexity, reflexivity and nuance. Urgency begets simplicity and the simplest stories at the G8-G20 were burning cars, broken windows and violence on the streets.

When assessing the protester frame wrought by *the Globe and Mail* I drew from Gitlin's seminal frame analysis (1980). He found that *CBS and the New York Times*: 1) trivialized protesters (by making light of language, dress, age, style and goals, and by disparaging on the basis of numbers and effectiveness). 2) Marginalized protesters (by portraying demonstrators as deviant or unrepresentative, and by amplifying violence and communist imagery); and 3) relied disproportionately on official sources (government officials, police etc) to set the frame of the news story and to interpret the issues for the public (27).

2.3 Stereotypes

Stereotypes are a quick and easy way to establish a news frame. When building narratives and telling stories the media (and most individuals) resort to stereotypical or symbolic portrayals (Lippmann 1922; Gitlin 1980). People often communicate based on the images in their heads, rather than through substantive criticism, observations and engagement (Lippmann 77). When a reporter or publication is packaging a story, limited time and space

forces boiled-down versions of comments, events and observations resulting in easily digested baseline narratives (Gitlin 230). One of the elements of news frames that this study considers when assessing *the Globe and Mail's* coverage is its use of intellectual shorthand. How did the paper portray, describe and characterize protesters?

2.4 Ideology, hegemony and the news

The way we talk (or write) about things is the one of the drivers of ideology and hegemony (Lee, Craig 1992). Media frames enacted upon protesters can draw them either within the margins of public discourse or can push them to the fringes. The way that a protest event, a protest organization or a social movement gets framed can have lasting consequences on how those entities operate and deliver their messaging to the public (Gitlin, 1980). In the 1960s, hostile coverage of the Students for Democratic Society -- a multi-issue social movement organization that led the resistance to the Vietnam War -- pushed the organization to social and political margins.

The corporate media (*the New York Times* and *CBS*, in this case) were unable and/or unwilling to disrupt the hegemonic discourse constructed and maintained by U.S. political, economic and social elite -- of which those two organizations were a part. A convergence of factors including newsgathering routines (reliance on official sources), framing tendencies, and the inability of the SDS to handle increased attention and membership growth caused tensions within the organization regarding how to engage the public and express their mandate. Within a couple of years of first finding the spotlight, the SDS found itself increasingly radicalized and on the fringes of the public conversation about U.S. foreign policy, the war, and participatory democracy.

It's important to consider sociological studies of framing while acknowledging political and social power as a driving force for elite hegemonic discourse (Carragee, Roefs, 2006). Too often scholars wield notions of framing without thinking about the causes of those frames, relying heavily on assessments of the effects of media filters and outputs (216). To think about how the media situates itself within social, political and economic power it's worthwhile to draw scholars such as Tuchman (1978), Gitlin (1980), Gamson (1992), and Entman (1993) back into the fold of framing research because those scholars thought of framing as a fluid, reciprocal, and intersecting process. The media is not an insular thing. It's made up of individuals who are just as vulnerable to cultural, social and political influences as anybody else, and those individuals are making decisions in the newsroom.

To understand how any media organization works, it's important to understand its institutions (Chomsky 1997). Whether it's CBS, *the New York Times*, (or *the Globe and Mail*) -- those organizations' institutional structures lend themselves to upholding the political, economic and social status quo to the detriment of social change (3). Mostly, media organizations like *the Globe* are large, profitable, corporate entities, and many are linked to corporate conglomerates outside of the media industry. These institutions are by nature tyrannical -- if there is dissent in the lower levels of the structure, the only option for the dissenter is to exit the organization (2).

The Globe like other elite, media companies relies on readers who are typically affluent and politically, economically or socially mobilized. Business leaders, University experts, government spokespeople, and other media elites also typify the sorts of voices found in the paper. Reliance on those sorts of readers and sources foster echo chambers that construct adherence and conformity (4). When it comes to reporting, it's not that journalists are

prevented from doing their job properly or independently, it's that organizations resist individuals with divisive perspectives and they weed out individuals who refuse to conform to the approved status quo (4).

The outcome of institutional perpetuity and congruence is that major players in the media can actually preserve the legitimacy of political, economic and social systems (Paletz, Entman 1981). By failing to access alternative voices outside the institutional and structural power brokers, the media decrease the ability of ordinary citizens to exercise their own power, their own voices (6).

2.5 The global justice movement

What took place during the G8-G20 was clearly more complex and diverse than one group or a single SMO reacting and protesting to a single social justice issue. Much like what happened during the WTO meetings in Seattle in 1999⁶, the protests in Toronto had the flavour of a global justice movement (Boykoff 2006).

Many different antagonistic frames were put forth by *the New York Times*, *the Washington Post*, *the LA Times*, *the Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, *ABC*, *CBS*, *FOX*, *CNN*, and *NBC* during the 1999 WTO protests in Seattle (Boykoff 2006). Five different framing filters emerged from the media coverage of the Seattle protesters: the violence frame, the disruption frame, the freak frame, the ignorance frame and the amalgam of grievances frame⁷. That framework *of* framing provides a good point of reference when assessing how

⁶ Jules Boykoff (2006) found it worthwhile to consolidate the plethora of social justice concerns and activists during the media's portrayal of Seattle's "jamboree of teamsters, and turtle protectors" and "astonishing array of causes, costumes and voices" into the notion of the global justice movement.

⁷ Boykoff's framework combined with Gitlin's provided my study with the criteria to judge how *the Globe and Mail* framed protesters in Toronto.

the *Globe* framed its coverage of protests under similar circumstances more than a decade later in Toronto.

2.6 Social movement theory

Studying how the media handles social movements and activism requires an understanding of what social movements actually are. A framework of protest helps us look at the diverse protest agenda at the G8-G20 and problematizes monolithic characterizations and generalizations of protesters by the media. Social movements can be understood by carving out four major themes or features. They are:

- 1.) collective behaviour: loose in organizational structure yet collective in a common pursuit to create change or resist;
- 2.) resource mobilization: a set of beliefs or activities united in a way to disrupt the reward/distribution system in a given society;
- 3.) political process: a social movement or organization attuned to seizing political agency; and
- 4.) new social movements: mobilizations that articulate the structural impediments to healthy communities and societies (Diani 2000).

Understanding thematic characteristics of social movements can be complimented by exploring how individuals go from believing in something -- a cause, a movement -- to acting on behalf of those beliefs (Klandermans 1997). A movement must establish a collective action frame that includes common concerns, a sense of injustice, and action-oriented beliefs.

In a study of Dutch anti-nuclear protesters, it was found that for a movement to successfully mobilize, it had to recruit through networking, articulate a target, sustain interest, and remove obstacles (Klandermans 22). Of course, mobilizing a network or group

of activists is more complicated than that. The disincentives to protest can be powerful. A disapproving family, or concerns over lost wages (if the movement plans a strike), or the threat of arrest can reduce willingness to participate. Another challenge in mobilizing a network is how the media portrays protesters and members. Thinking about protesters and social movement organizations in terms of motivations, strategies and anticipated outcomes can help eliminate protester essentialism and stereotypes.

Often, the relationship between media and protesters seems to be a “dialogue of the deaf” (Gamson, Wolfsfeld 1993). Social movements traditionally rely on the press to disseminate their message while the reporter or news organization looks to protesters and movements to make news (115). Social movements need the mainstream media in order to gain recruits, achieve validation and increase the scope of the movement (116). In exchange, the reporters expect drama. It’s not a balanced reciprocity and social movements typically rely more on the mainstream media than vice versa. When the media does engage social movements or protest networks reporters find them complex and confusing (115).

2.7 The changing media landscape

Much of the literature since Gitlin (1980) has assessed the balance of power between social movements, protesters and the media. The power of the news media in recent years may be waning (Cottle 2008; Shirky 2008; Goldstein 2007; Castells 2007). SMOs and individual protesters or onlookers now have the ability to interact directly with the public via smart phones, and with blogs, Facebook, podcasts, YouTube and Twitter, bypassing traditional, commercial gatekeepers (Cottle 858). New opportunities within the realm of social movements and protest are arising for communication, story telling, mobilization and public interaction.

The Internet combined with new mobile devices and growing dissatisfaction with media gatekeepers can result in the public taking the responsibility for disseminating information into their own hands. Take, for instance, the case of the 2004 Ukrainian Orange Revolution (Goldstein 2007). During a presidential election citizens were growing frustrated with electoral fraud and with the Ukrainian media that were failing to provide critical and balanced election coverage due to government restrictions and censorship (2). Electoral activists turned to the Internet en masse as a way to bypass government restrictions on the press. Mobilized via social networking, personal websites and digital forums, protesters camped out in tent cities across the country throughout the election calling for electoral transparency and accountability.

The true value of online communication in Ukraine came to light when Viktor Yanukovych (the 2004 presidential hopeful who was handpicked by the previous president) was attending a rally. As he passed onlookers in the street, a protester flung an egg that burst against Yanukovych's chest. Feigning injury he retreated and his campaign team quickly announced via the press that he was hit and wounded by an attacker who threw a battery. Digital footage taken by a person attending the rally was soon uploaded onto the web. It proved otherwise. Presidential messaging was corrected not by the media, but by onlookers that captured the unfiltered truth⁸ (6). Protesters and onlookers in Toronto were able to cover the G8-G20 in a similar manner.

The service that *the Globe and Mail* provides is becoming less expensive, and more accessible to non-professionals (Shirky 2008). The Internet provides unlimited space for news, punditry, videos, images, forums, social networks and other publishing and

⁸ It's worth noting that Yanukovych ended up losing the 2004 election, but eventually ascended to the presidency in 2010.

mobilization tools. The question of “why publish this?” has shifted to “why not publish this?” (60) We’re living in a networked society, and one that is arranged by mass self-communication (Castells 2007). Before this information revolution, stories that didn’t make to, or through the media, didn’t make it to the public. The media gatekeepers may be losing their mandate. If a flung battery turns out to be an egg or if a Toronto police officer is badgeless and beating people indiscriminately, the public will see it regardless of whether an editor decides they ought to.

3 Chapter: Research Data

The study examines 62 *Globe* articles; 33 can be arranged as news stories, 14 as opinion/columns, 3 as *Globe* editorials, and 12 articles fell into a fourth general category in which I included features, analysis, profiles, and “Q and A-style” interviews⁹.

3.1 Sources

Of the 62 articles, nearly a third were framed by use of various official or authoritative sources including police leadership, members of the Integrated Security Unit, government officials, or members of business improvement associations and local business owners. In other words, the main thrust of the story was shaped or directed by the impressions, comments and opinions by authoritative stakeholders with a specific set of interests.

Table 3.1

Official, authoritative, business perspective as primary source/total number of articles	Percentage of articles with official/authoritative/business voice as primary source
20/62	32%

A story by Adrian Morrow published on June 27, the final day of summit, reported on the easing of security precautions by the Integrated Security Unit as the end of the summit approached, but cautioned that police forces retained the ability to extend their mandate into the following week if necessary. The first attributed quote went to Sergeant Tim Burrows, a

⁹*Writing and Reporting the News* (2008), a journalism instructional text, explains that news content usually includes facts, attribution, quotations, background and context, supplemented with accurate observations. Features would also include many or all of the above qualities but would also provide the writer more flexibility to exercise tone, colour, analysis and interpretation. Columns or editorials are opinions, prescriptions and impressions that are expressed by individual writers or the news organization’s editorial board. Taken together all portions of the newspaper contributes to overall discourse on a given subject.

spokesman for the ISU: “Our security plan runs from the 18th to the 28th, so [the plan] will remain in place until midnight Monday evening, . . . “If [police are] required to stay longer, we’ll make that decision then.”

Morrow continued in paraphrase: “He [Sergeant Burrows] said officers would remain on duty around the security perimeter, but if the situation was peaceful enough, they might start letting people into the secure perimeter early.” Morrow then provided Toronto City Councillor, Adam Vaughan, an opportunity to respond. “I think we’ll see the anxiety leave as the G20 does. . . .my understanding is that some of the barricades are coming down tonight.” Morrow went on to report that by Sunday afternoon Mr. Vaughan was able to pass into the security zone “via Queens Quay without being stopped by police.” In next graph Morrow touched on the councillor’s hope that the city would return to normal during the following week.

Morrow then turned to Janice Solomon, the director of the Entertainment District Business Improvement Area. Paraphrasing Solomon, Morrow wrote that local businesses would likely keep their own security precautions in place through Monday as they assessed whether it was safe to return to business as usual. Most editors expect to see tension in news reporting. It’s clear that Solomon’s contribution to the story is to assess the loss of business due to the G8-G20, but her assessment of blame is ambiguous, but seems to assign fault to the protesters.

Now we have to wait out tonight and wait out tomorrow and see what happens, she [Ms. Solomon] said Sunday evening. Businesses shuttered during the protests would likely try to re-open Monday. Ms. Solomon said none of the businesses in her area were vandalized by protesters, but they lost enormous amounts of business. On Saturday, the most violent day of protests, she said only a handful of restaurants and clubs remained open to serve the few patrons in the area. (web)

No voices from residents, protesters, or accused vandals were included. This story about an expanded police mandate could be framed in many different ways. It could explore obstructed mobility for residents by police, or concerns by protesters that their rights to freely assemble and demonstrate could be curtailed into the following week due to a handful of vandals. In this instance *the Globe* allowed a police officer, a politician and a business advocate to shape the story according to their own particular interests and mandates. It follows then that the story's news element is business-centric and appeals to the pre-protest status quo.

A second example by *Globe* reporter Siri Agrell illustrates a similar disruption to business frame posited by official sources. This story (published on June 28) begins with a local resident expressing shock over the level of vandalism and violence from throughout the summit weekend. Agrell then turns to Laura Schaefer of the Queen Street West Business Improvement Area. "I think as a country, Canada's so lucky to be a democracy and support peaceful protest. What we saw on Queen Street West yesterday was absolutely not peaceful...To see this destruction is beyond unfortunate."

At this point it would be useful to explore the notion of democratic rights and to hear from one of the many protesters who were on site exercising their freedom of speech in a "peaceful" manner. Agrell solely includes voices that construct a singular frame that emphasizes disruption, while also touching on the lack of effectiveness of the unnamed, monolithic protesters-as-vandals. Agrell continues:

At least eight stores sustained damage during Saturday's vandalism, and had begun filing insurance claims. The iconic Steve's Music marquee was melted from the heat of a police car that had been torched in front of the store. But with protests still underway in other locations around the city, the singed outline of burnt police vehicles was the only residue of events on Queen Street. Ms. Schaefer said city cleaning crews had quickly picked up broken glass and garbage. (A10)

After including a short quote from Councillor Adam Vaughan, Agrell includes comments by another member of the Downtown Business Improvement Association who said that about 40 member-businesses had damaged windows, but it was too early to say how much the cost of repairs would be.

The voices or sources within a story often set the parameters and initiate the context. The next two elements: marginalization of protesters and trivialization of protesters take a look specifically at the content and tone of *the Globe's* frames.

3.2 Marginalization of protesters

Of the total 62 articles, 27 (43.5 per cent) were framed in ways that marginalized protesters, primarily through emphasizing violence and civic disruption¹⁰.

Table 3.2

Marginalizing frames/total articles	Percentage of marginalizing frames
27/62	43.5%

Some, like this July 1 column by Christie Blatchford, provided Toronto Police Chief Bill Blair the opportunity to frame protesters collectively as deviant, immoral and disruptive¹¹. The event took place during the repatriation of Canadian soldier Sergeant Jimmy MacNeil (his body was being delivered to the coroner's office upon its return to Canada from Afghanistan on July 1, at the same time that protesters had gathered at a nearby location to protest police actions during the summit.) Blatchford writes:

¹⁰ To discern if *the Globe* was marginalizing protesters I drew from Gitlin (1980) and Boykoff (2006). Taken together their studies provide criteria to judge whether media frames are marginalizing protesters and social movement organizations. Thus my test for marginalization considers emphasis of violence, disruption to civic order, and vandalism.

¹¹ This example also illustrates how single sourcing of an authoritative voice can posit a presumptive, unchallenged frame.

At the time the cortège carrying Sgt. MacNeil's body was arriving at the coroner's office on Grosvenor Street, just two short blocks north of College Street, a group of about 30 demonstrators dressed in black moved out of a crowd of 2,000 who had massed in front of police headquarters on College. "The Black Bloc was here and they charged up the thing [laneway], as a matter of fact the repatriation was kind of interrupted," Chief Blair said. (A10)

Without reporting on whether or not these protesters were in fact, Black Bloc, what that meant, whether they were aware of the repatriation proceedings, Blatchford permits Chief Blair to define the intentions of the protesters, and to frame their activities as morally reprehensible and disruptive. Curiously, the column was not about protesters, nor the repatriation. It was actually an assessment of a controversial law that sought to give police the power to search or apprehend people who breached a five-meter buffer around the security fence. The column continues:

The Black Bloc group, he [Chief Blair] said, was "clearly evident in the centre" of that protest. "I'm looking down on it, my people are taking pictures of this thing. You can very clearly see the formation of this Black Bloc group in the centre." (A10)

Blatchford continues:

The backlash against the way police conducted themselves has been bizarre, with critics first accusing them of being too lenient, then too harsh, then of abusing their authority in arresting or detaining hundreds. Spectacular claims have emerged, among them lesbians alleging that they were segregated in the temporary detention centre and a female filmmaker from Montreal who says she was threatened with "gang rape" there. (A10)

Blatchford eventually gets Chief Blair to acknowledge concerns regarding the fence regulation, but Blatchford's dominant frame portrays a busy head-cop struggling against an immoral, reckless and "bizarre" angry mob. Chief Blair is provided a platform to justify particular police actions -- security and order at any cost.

In a departure from a typical news story, a "Q and A" between *the Globe's* Kelly

Grant, and Chief Blair, ran on June 29. The primary frame of the conversation was assessing why the police couldn't do more to prevent protester violence and destruction. Chief Blair's statements adhere to this frame, and also carved a second frame -- one that equates protest and public assembly to criminal behaviour.

We were trying to strike a balance, as we have to in law, between the lawful rights of citizens to protest ... now unfortunately they [protesters using the Black Bloc tactic] turned their criminal intent away from the summit and they turned it on the people of Toronto. They rampaged on Queen and up Yonge.... It took time to get the resources up there. We're looking very hard at ways in which we can respond to those types of tactics. (A1)

The conversation then turns to a scene that occurred at the intersection of Queen and Spadina. Grant asks Chief Blair how it came about that police contained so many people, and for so long. Chief Blair responds by seemingly arguing that once turbulence erupted among a select group of vandals, everyone on the street thereby forfeited their right to be present.

Chief Blair continues:

The police gave three very clear warnings, separated by time, asking people to disperse, asking people to leave the area, warning those curious to leave the area to allow us to deal effectively with those who had come to commit criminal acts. They declined. Some left, some didn't. So we had to contain that. (A1)

Chief Blair continues, neglecting (and is not asked) to qualify how it was determined who was acting criminally or how it was illegal ("a breach of peace") for people to gather in a public place regardless of whether they were "Black Bloc":

This was not a site where somebody casually walked up to catch a bus. It was clearly a large and dangerous demonstration. It was clearly a situation that we were asking people to avoid. We were asking people to disperse. They ignored that request. When they were warned that if they remained in the area they would be subject to the breach of the peace, I suppose for some of them their curiosity -- or perhaps their profession -- compelled them to stay. (A1)

Chief Blair reiterates the criminality frame:

There's no sanctuary from criminality. And what happened is after they rampaged along Queen and up Yonge Street, we watched them. We watched them as they went over to Queen's Park. We watched them as they changed into other clothes, and we watched them as they hid in the crowd among the people that had gathered at Queen's Park. We went in to apprehend them. (A1)

The excerpt is not included to question whether there were instances of criminality -- there certainly could have been. The point is to show how a frame can posit a singular impression. This particular one -- established by Toronto's chief of police -- equates large-scale public assembly to criminality. The frame persists without a contestation of the premise that simply being present on the streets of Toronto is a breach of peace. Furthermore it treats protesters as a violent monolith, shedding no light on motivations or messages of other peaceful protesters present.

At the heart of the issue of marginalizing coverage is the concept of intellectual shorthand and stereotyping (Lippmann 1922). In the top story from *the Globe's* G8-G20 web hub titled "Standoff ends in downtown Toronto," (reported by a team of four *Globe* journalists and sourced almost exclusively by members of the Integrated Security Unit) a group of detained protesters are described as:

Looking "*older than typical students*, seated on the ground outside a U of T residence, with clear plastic bags of evidence or belongings around them. One man *had a bushy grey beard*. Others appeared to be *university-aged women*. Another arrested man, with a *shaved head and green flipflops*, sat on the sidewalk in handcuffs as police milled about. The suspects were being loaded on a bus, to be taken to the detention centre at Eastern Avenue.¹² (Morrow et al web)

The descriptions continue:

¹² My emphasis.

One *bearded young man*, being led to the bus in handcuffs, shouted: "I'm innocent! I'm innocent!" Another *young man in a t-shirt and jeans* appeared distraught and near tears as he was loaded into the bus. Most *appeared to speak French* as a first language, and police confirmed some were from Montreal. They said they might have been staying in U of T dorms for the summer. (web)

The descriptions that reporters use convey particular meaning to the reader. What does describing a person as “a bearded young man” symbolize? What does emphasizing the use of French imply? The use of protester essentialism can act as a “backdoor” way to construct a frame that places protesters firmly outside of the margins of normative public opinion (Gitlin 118).

Nearly half of the articles in *the Globe* sample included references or frames that emphasized violence¹³, deviance and civic disruption. Many articles also relied on intellectual shorthand and stereotypes to construct meaning surrounding un-sourced protesters. In essence, the prominent narrative during the G8-G20 became a riot story, blocking a more comprehensive conversation about social justice and the expectations by citizens of their political leaders and diplomats.

3.3 Trivialization of protesters

About one-fifth of all the articles framed protesters in a way that made light of their activities, disparaged their effectiveness or focused on their appearance or dress in a condescending tone¹⁴ (Gitlin 1980; Boykoff 2006).

¹³ Civic disruption and vandalism in many cases were conflated with violence. This particular point, though not dealt with directly in this study, should provoke another separate discussion on how the media frames its discourse around protest and could ask the questions: when/why/does breaking a window constitute(s) an act of violence?

¹⁴ As with marginalizing frames, work by Gitlin (1980) and Boykoff (2006) provide the criteria by which articles were found to trivialize protesters or not.

Table 3.3

Trivializing frames/total articles	Percentage of trivializing frames
13/62	20.9%

This June 29 column by Marcus Gee establishes a disruption frame, but then trivializes un-sourced protesters on the basis of their inability to fulfill their apparent objectives.

Yes, a small band of so-called anarchists went on a brief rampage through the downtown, producing shocking scenes of mayhem. But the world did not come to an end. No one went to hospital, thank goodness. Broken windows were the worst of the property damage. When it was all over, the city picked itself up, dusted itself off and went on with its business. Sorry, Black Bloc, but we survived, disgusted by your scripted display of adolescent outrage but just fine in the end, thanks. (A14)

The following June 28 column by John Doyle is another example of trivialization based on protester descriptions and ineffectiveness. Interestingly, Doyle (an arts and culture columnist) casts two stones, one at protesters, but another at the mainstream media, which he aptly suggests is foolishly preoccupied with the spectacle of violence.

Without even seeing the footage we could all picture it -- kids in black hoodies and bandanas throwing stones, breaking windows and, probably, setting a police car on fire. That's precisely what it was, of course. See, the G20 is the Oscars of the protest-world. Tons of media attention, not much context. Photo-ops and fame. And television coverage of the G20 Summit and the protests in Toronto has been drearily predictable, and mostly as mindless as Oscars coverage. The protests -- representing nothing more than infantile, pay-attention-to-me-Mommy exhibitionism and destruction -- are photo-opportunities as much as the politicians' statements and handshakes, are photo-ops. Getting on television is pretty much the point of everything, and television loves live, violent action as it loves movie stars. (R1)

Doyle's frustration with the media's failure to provide thematic context is a noteworthy grievance. Despite his own concerns though he fails to disrupt his own marginalizing *and* trivializing frames: violence, disruption and disparagement of effectiveness, supplemented

with condescending tone. He also takes it one step further by suggesting a singular intention of protesters that “getting on television is pretty much the point of everything.”

Another column by Marcus Gee, this one on June 25, reflects one of Boykoff’s (2006) primary findings during his study of commercial media coverage and framing of the anti-WTO protests in Seattle in 1999. In that study Boykoff found:

Negative portrayals of movement diversity were seven times more common than positive representations. For instance...USA Today reported, “A bewildering spectrum of voices has converged on Seattle” in order to give trade “a black eye.” The authors later asserted, “Anti-WTO forces are united by a profound mistrust of globalization -- and almost nothing else. (220)

Boykoff’s “amalgam of grievances” frame was well represented in *the Globe’s* coverage, and most sharply in this instance when Marcus Gee disparages protesters for complaining about too many things at once.

Protests at international gatherings tend to be eclectic events -- many groups, many causes -- but Toronto’s G20 protests may set some kind of record for the variety of complaints being voiced at one time. Even before the weekend summit gets under way, we have seen marches and demonstrations for gender justice, queer rights and disability rights; environmental and climate justice; and indigenous sovereignty. Monday’s day of protest was a mouthful, calling for “migrant justice and an end to war and occupation, income equity and community control over resources.” (web)

Gee continues with the trivializing frame and then draws in stereotypical portrayals of the voiceless protesters:

Two young guys with long hair and marijuana-leaf kerchiefs wore T-shirts advertising Oshawa Cannabis Day. On the less festive side, a group of about a dozen men and women wore ninja black from head to toe, with hoods and masks to keep their identities private. Their shouted message was simple enough: “Fuck law and order.” It was all very colourful, but you have to wonder: with so many messages, does any one of them really stick? (web)

Despite his disparaging, condescending tone and his decision to emphasize marijuana activists as representative of the collective body of protesters and social movements, Gee asks a relevant question -- albeit one that remains unanswered -- do any of the issues really stick?

3.4 Dissenting frames

When looking at *the Globe's* total coverage (62 articles) it's clear that not all *Globe* coverage adhered to official frames that marginalized and/or trivialized protesters. In 15 per cent of the sample coverage, *the Globe* published unchallenged, dissenting frames including protester-friendly angles, explorations of excessive police force, coverage of curtailed civil rights and others.

Table 3.4

<i>Globe</i> frames that challenged or disrupted official, authoritative frames/total articles	Percentage of dissenting frames
9/62	14.5%

Consider the following excerpt from a first person essay written by Cinders McLeod, *the Globe's* design editor. In it McLeod recalls his own background as an activist in Britain during the 1980s and his sense that the G8-G20 protests would provide a good opportunity to introduce his young children to protest and participatory democracy:

I thought since the detention centre was local and far away from the G20 security zone, it would be a gentle introduction into the peaceful art of protest. I cared for the community, I cared for the people who were unjustly detained and I cared that my children cared too... There were young folk, folk my age, folk with dogs, folk with children on their shoulders, older folk and media... With no warning, there was a sudden penetration and retreat in the crowd. The police had moved in for a couple of arrests. I called Diarmid and Anya in closer... without warning, police officers stormed the peaceful crowd, swinging their sticks and throwing people to the ground. I saw

Anya being pushed by one of the group of police. I screamed out her name. They threw the young man next to her to the ground. Diarmid ran toward the skirmish just as a kind boy pulled Anya out of the policemen's path. She looked so thin and vulnerable and 14 in her short shorts beside the black, violent swarm. The front line of protesters sat down again, hands held in the air in peace signs, chanting, 'We are peaceful, how 'bout you.' (L8)

McLeod's experience culminates as he flees with his children down a nearby alley. While making their escape, McLeod was hit in the back with a rubber bullet -- a burst, he speculates, from the gun of a police officer.

McLeod's account represents an independent perspective, speaking to the issue of excessive force against protesters, and the diminishment of free speech. Its major premise though is supported by much of the scholarship on the media's pre-occupation with protest violence (regardless of the perpetrators) rather than investigating protest motivations and thematic grievances (Gitlin 1980; Boykoff 2006; Boyle et al 2006). While McLeod provides a captivating, albeit episodic, narrative about his family's day among the protests, it still loses traction on the reasons for protesting in the first place and descends into yet another Toronto riot story anchored to violence.

An overall assessment of *the Globe's* coverage would not be complete without acknowledging a good example of introducing complexity, nuance and motivations regarding protesters or social movements, and one that is divorced from the monolithic violence frame. An essay by Annahid Dashtgard published in *the Globe* on June 25 exemplifies that. Dashtgard's essay begins: "I am a protester. I believe in the power of mass groups of people gathering to stand up for an issue that would otherwise be invisible. I was there in Seattle in 1999 in the rise-up against the World Trade Organization, and in Quebec City for the protest against the Free Trade Area of the Americas in 2001."

Dashtgard, according to her article, became interested in protesting following unsatisfying political party work in Edmonton. While working within the Canadian democratic system, she routinely fielded calls from “single mothers unable to make welfare, students facing bankruptcy with ever-increasing tuition rates, recent immigrants with nowhere else to turn” and felt she unable to help them in a meaningful way. “As a young woman wanting to make the world a better place, I felt like I was drowning in a sea of pain.”

After meeting with a “seasoned union activist,” Dashtgard started arranging speakers, rallies and conferences to garner attention to various issues but quickly started asking “how much impact these mass protests were having on decisions being made?” Should she “just accept that inequity was the name of the global economic game and make peace with it?” There were enough people encouraging her to move beyond a “rebel” phase and accept the world for what it was. Yet she resisted. She recounts the positive and successful movements that she has been a part of in her life and she summarizes her perspective and her intentions thus:

I am a Torontonian. I live in this city that is to be host to the G20 this weekend. And I am planning to protest...I will put my body on the line to march against this inequitable system where 20 nations make decisions affecting the whole world. Yet this time, instead of being supported in my right to protest, I find myself explaining why I am legitimate...Media coverage has mostly focused on disruption to businesses and traffic. Police have been harassing my friends already while they have been passing out flyers, riding bikes or just lying down in the park. My head can't help but feel despair of ever reaching that world where decisions are truly democratic, where eradicating poverty is more important than furthering profit...Surrounded by fear and fences, hope and passion for an equitable and democratic world can yet be set free. (L6)

4 Chapter: Discussion

4.1 Findings

To return to the hypothesis of whether *the Globe and Mail* found itself at odds with the messaging of protesters and social movements during the G8-G20, to discern if this was the case four aspects were assessed: sources, marginalization tendencies, trivialization tendencies, and the publication of dissenting perspectives.

Firstly, when looking at how the articles about the protests were assembled it was found that 32 per cent of the sample coverage was framed by an authoritative source. This finding illuminates one of Herb Gans's (2003) findings: "Journalists respect their official sources, reporting what these sources tell them. They may be critical of what they are told and of the sources themselves, but the sources usually have the first say, thereby putting the others in a reactive and as such inferior position" (46).

That inferior position does not necessarily occur because of intentional de-emphasis of alternative voices (such as government critics, protesters or social movement participants) by journalists, but because of well-shaped relationships and networks among and between official newsmakers and news organizations and their reporters. In this regard, *the Globe and Mail* is no different than other Canadian commercial news organizations.

The structures of media institutions that journalists work within often shape the news as much as a reporter's own values and perspectives (Gans 45; Chomsky 3; Tuchman 4). Trying to make tight deadlines and provide credible reporting while working within corporate profit-seeking institutions can lead to dependence on official sources to establish the frames of news (Gans 49).

Voices in the news typically come from within institutions, organizations and structures that have channels built into them that streamline access for journalists who are working within demanding “mass production” circumstances (Gans 49). Spokespeople from law enforcement, government, and business mark a news story as legitimate in the eyes of news editors. These relationships are reciprocal; when the mayor of Toronto, or someone of that stature makes a statement, it’s most likely to be included in the story, and in some instances that information will provide the basis for an entire uncontested frame (49). Reporting the perspectives, opinions and ideas of officials or institutional stakeholders is easier and cheaper than spending hours in the field cultivating sources with unfamiliar participants, especially in a situation like the G8-G20 when news is breaking continuously and the appetite for information is high.

There is not a complete dearth of communication between reporters and protesters, but often, those relationships are laboured (Gamson, Wolfsfeld 1993; Rohlinger 2002). Social movements and protesters, like the ones present on Toronto’s streets in June, look to the mainstream media to get their message out. In turn, the media expect activists to produce compelling news. This usually comes in the form of making “trouble” (Gans 48). Turbulence makes for good TV and for attention-grabbing headlines, but the “dialogue of the deaf” between protesters and media usually fails to tease out nuanced objectives, motivations, and actual grievances directed at brokers of power by protesters (Gamson, Wolfsfeld 115). Reporters are often unfamiliar with protesters, and when the two parties come together to interact at a complicated and confusing venue like the G8-G20, there is often a breakdown in communication or none at all (115).

Social movements are diverse and complex. Some are fluid, loose, arrangements between individuals, and some are sophisticated networks with coherent public relations departments (Diani 2000; Rohlinger 2002; Cottle 2008). No matter the sort of organization, the movements and activists continue to depend on the mainstream media for mobilization, validation and scope enlargement (Gamson, Wolfsfeld 116). Many protesters lack the ability to communicate with the mainstream media and feel the pressures to attract attention by any means possible -- often relying on visually stimulating material favoured by mainstream media outlets (Gitlin 1980; Gamson, Wolfsfeld 1993; Boykoff 2006). When protesters do make into the core of a news story, it is no surprise that the confusing choreography between protesters and mainstream media lends itself to a frame dominated by violence and disruption -- it makes for simple, easy to report, captivating copy and footage.

The Globe and Mail's use of official, authoritative sources (more than 30 per cent of the time) raises a question beyond the scope of this study: are reporters from *the Globe* establishing these dominant frames and then matching official sources to the narrative, or are official sources afforded the opportunity by *the Globe* to construct the frame of a story?

The way *the Globe* sourced its coverage of the summit protests became a factor in its marginalization of protesters. The numbers show that in nearly half of the articles, protesters and the general protest narrative was pushed to the fringes and clouded by a monolithic riot and civic disruption frame. The primary tendencies within *the Globe* sample were; framing protesters as a violent and destructive bloc, emphasizing civic disruption as in opposition to a favoured business-as-usual perspective, failing to cover protesters as diverse, pluralistic entities, and by basing observations on stereotypes.

In the weeks and months following the summit weekend (beyond the date parameters of this study) a lot of news coverage was dedicated to exploring police brutality, civil rights and the ISU's approach to security. Many stories have come out about journalists who were detained among the protesters and bystanders throughout the weekend. Yet as the news broke during the summit from the streets of Toronto, the narrative was markedly different. This could be due, in part, to the comfort that the media has in reporting what the police disseminate. Typically, the relationship between police and reporters is a formalized exchange and the policeman as a source is rarely marginalized. "Crime stories sell papers, and reporters rely almost exclusively on police reports and official accounts to relay events to the public. This relationship, in the case of large-scale civil unrest, compromises journalistic integrity" (Paletz, Entman 1981, 111).

"When the power to define news is, in effect, turned over to the police, the media are serving to confirm the existing control mechanisms in society" (Gitlin 43). It's predictable then that when police are afforded the foremost opportunity to tell their story about a major social justice challenge to the status quo, that narrative will undoubtedly emphasize violence. (Paletz, Entman 111). In Toronto, when Chief Blair spoke of "criminals," and "violence" he was correct to think that his words could activate a "cultural strumming"¹⁵ that would make its way into headlines and stories and would help shape the overall G8-G20 narrative while the summit unfolded. Police rhetoric during the summit routinely conflated violence with vandalism and civic disruption (recall Chief Blair's criminality frame, page 22). Much of that information was reiterated by official sources from within the political and business

¹⁵ By "cultural strumming" Entman is not suggesting that the media indoctrinates a passive public. Rather the waterfall-like discourse arrives to public from above and then mixes within the "pool" of public opinion but then gets "pumped" back up into institutions and organizations by way of its parts, its individuals.

community resulting in a “cascading activation” of language that may have resulted in the construction of the dominant violence frame (Entman 2003, 415).

Reliance on posited stereotypes can reduce plurality and diversity among protesters down to a marginalized catch-all (Gitlin 1980). By reporting voiceless character descriptions like “the young bearded activist with torn jeans” or the “French speaking protesters” reporters paint the protesters and protests with a singular colour that maintains existing stereotypes about protesters and their intentions. It’s difficult to measure what these sorts of observations are meant to convey, yet focusing on age, language, facial hair, and dress can act to mark participants as either inside or outside normative hegemony. These characteristics may symbolize: “these people are young, un-kept, idealistic, and francophone (read: from elsewhere).” This frame can destabilize their messaging and it provides information to readers absent of context and meaning.

Stereotypes and intellectual shorthand starve readers of a more comprehensive understanding about the issues that social movements and protesters are seeking to highlight during something as significant as a global political, economic and social summit. Yes, the protester may be young, they may be idealistic, but what they have to say still has meaning and is an important contribution to social order at the local, national and global levels.

Out of the sample of articles, about one-fifth trivialized protesters and made light of protesters’ intentions, effectiveness and character. Predictably, most of these instances were found within the paper’s opinion columns where there is a greater mandate for colour and entertainment. When a reporter shares their impressions about social movements or protesters they often do so by contrasting what they see, against what they consider acceptable and legitimate (Gitlin 69).

This study did not find a tendency to use frivolous quotation marks, but it did find a reliance on superficial observations to create trivial, de-stabilizing frames. When Christie Blatchford comments (p.20) on “spectacular” and “bizarre” claims among detainees she’s enacting a frame that makes light of the participants’ testimonies. When Marcus Gee bases his impressions (p.25) of the G8-G20 protesters on a few guys with “marijuana-leaf kerchiefs” and people in “ninja suits,” he’s cheapening the overall meaning of why so many people were there doing what they felt was important and necessary. The next step then is to ask: where does this formulation of what is legitimate and what is normal come from?

4.2 Hegemony

The Globe and Mail newspaper is jointly owned by Woodbridge Company Ltd, the primary shareholder in Thomson Reuters, a publicly traded, international media giant, and BCE -- Canada’s largest telecommunications company also known as Bell¹⁶. Though it’s the typical business model for newspapers and media organizations to operate as for-profit, commercial enterprises, it is still worthwhile to think about how stories about protest and disruption to social, economic and political order get dealt with by a newspaper that is part of a hegemonic system that depends on political economic continuity. Social movement activism that seeks to disrupt pro-capitalist governance, and social, political and economic hegemony is at odds with many of the values of elite, commercial media (Gitlin 1980; Paletz, Entman 1981; Lee, Craig 1992; Chomsky 1997; Gans 2003). Protesters, by design, question that status quo and seek to disrupt it through collective action and mobilization (Klandermans 1997).

¹⁶ Information available at:
<http://www.newswire.ca/en/releases/archive/September2010/10/c8647.html>

It is too simple to think about why *the Globe* would handle protesters and social movements in such a way without thinking about the newspaper's position *within* existing systems of social, political and economic power. *The Globe and Mail* is a collection of individuals, organizations and institutions that are all, without exception, part of intersecting networks that change, become motivated, evolve and adapt in fluid, reciprocal and unpredictable ways.

There are particular institutional, commercial interests at stake in the news media, and many of those companies' relationships and networks are formed on that basis (Chomsky 1997; Tuchman 1978). Relationships are rarely equal and as Chomsky pointedly puts it: "It's not that reporters don't have the freedom to do their job properly or independently, it's that organizations don't hire dissenters or they weed out individuals who don't conform to the approved status quo" (4). When looking at the relationship between say, *the Globe and Mail*, its reporters, and any given reader of the daily iteration of the paper, the way that a story about protesters is framed will have an impact on how a reader relates to those protesters.

4.3 Media effects

What then are the effects of such coverage on public opinion? As just mentioned, theories that assume that the audience or readership passively swallows everything the media gives them are outdated and overly simplistic (Gitlin 1980; Gans 2003; Schudson 2003; Entman 2003; Carragee, Roefs 2004). Many scholars appear to be in agreement that the mainstream media interacts with society in a fluid, reciprocal fashion. Editors and reporters are *part* of a public. Schudson, in particular, finds that the mass media has little, in any, ability to tell the public how to think, though it can emphasize topics and amplify aspects of the public conversation. In other words, the mass media and its components like *the Globe*

and Mail can set the agenda of topics for Canadians, but it will not indoctrinate them (Schudson 29).

Studies of media effects must explore the demand (what the public is interested in hearing) as much as the supply (what the mainstream media is interested in showing) (Gans 2003). The media consists of individuals; they're members of communities and parts of dominant culture (71). The news can initiate topics, inform, legitimate, emphasize, and affirm previously held perspectives within mainstream culture, politics and society (71, 72). With that in mind it could be reasoned then that *the Globe and Mail* did not tell Canadians *what* to think about protesters at the G8-G20, but by establishing a dominant frame of "protest as civic disruption" it neglected to widen and contextualize the public discourse mandate regarding social movements and protests at the summit. *The Globe's* dominant frame may have constricted the protest-conversation agenda.

In 1980, Gitlin wrote that *The New York Times* set the standard for "pack journalism" (98). If the *New York Times* validated an event with its coverage, it wouldn't take long for affiliates, the wire service, or other news outlets hungry for stories, to republish or cover the same story and with similar frames. We must ask: in 2011 does *the Globe and Mail* set that same standard?

4.4 The end of the information gatekeeper?

The way we are communicating is changing (Castells 2007, 239). Before the rise of the Internet as a tool for mass communication, if a story (or a story angle) didn't make it into the media, it didn't make it to the public agenda (241). New opportunities for networked, or "many-to-many" communication has shifted the balance of power in the dissemination of information. The role that information gatekeepers like *the Globe* play is becoming less

important; the power of those institutions is deteriorating. To what extent though is not yet known.

What is clear is that information has become cheaper; journalism less professionalized (Shirky 58). Today's media ecology provides new political opportunities for organizations and individuals to get their message out beyond the structures of the mass media and its agenda-setting function (Cottle 2008; Shirky 2008). In Toronto, anyone on the street with a smart phone could record images and footage, and broadcast immediately via Twitter. Bloggers and tweeters stimulated information while it bypassed *the Globe and Mail*.

On June 27, police forces in Toronto converged on a group G8-G20 protesters and bystanders at the street corner of Queen and Spadina¹⁷. Over a short period, a peaceful, yet agitated group of people waited, penned on all sides by a wall of police. Tensions escalated when police broke the front line, seizing protesters, and pulling them away from confused family, friends and onlookers despite the seemingly peaceful nature of the situation. That footage wasn't shot by news cameras or reporters (a version was eventually posted on *the Globe's* website). It was captured by a participant, and uploaded on YouTube for the whole world to see. The footage is telling. It's raw; it's without police or government interpretation. It has no frame. It's clear that people are relying less on media to determine what they ought to, and what they will see, read or hear (Castells 2007; Cottle 2008; Shirky 2008).

¹⁷ Footage of the protest can be viewed on YouTube at:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aohGLp00MmU&playnext=1&list=PLCDDDB203E9E1CE271&index=11>.

5 Chapter: Final Thoughts

Healthy communities require active communication and exchange. In liberal democracies, our institutions are only sufficient to secure the idea of democracy (Dewey 1922, 144). Without public feedback, criticism and action democratic institutions will remain unchecked. The media has a role to facilitate that exchange.

Let's think back to Marcus Gee's assertion that the foremost protest messages tended to circulate around a "fuck law and order" paradigm, an interesting statement but one that misses the point -- that it's *the Globe's* role within Canadian society to get beyond that simple, episodic narrative. The G8-G20 in Toronto was a complex situation with a variety of different events, players and situations. Nearly half of *the Globe's* frames marginalized the messaging of protesters by clouding the social movement story with a darker, monolithic riot story. Preoccupied with violence and disruption, *the Globe* shares the responsibility in stimulating and creating that dominant frame. It set the *protesters at the G8-G20 agenda* as one preoccupied with violence and civic disruption. Apart from a few examples of dissenting accounts and explanations by protesters (see McLeod and Dashtgard p.26-28), *The Globe* did little to bypass official narratives of the protesters posited by government, police and business, and it failed to get beyond the riot story and explore protester's themes, motivations and objectives in a thematic way.

Presumably many protesters and social movement organizations arrived in Toronto hoping to share a more nuanced and coherent message with the public than the one that was delivered, and presumably too, much of the public found those issues worthy of attention. If *the Globe*, or any other elite, commercial news organization fails to report in a more robust, comprehensive way, the public will be quick to look to the growing list of alternative sources

for unfiltered information. This is not to say that covering turbulent protests thoughtfully and critically is easy. It's a challenge to be sure, but if it's not the role of a respected, national, commercial news organization like *the Globe* to use its resources to do it, then others may step in and fill the information gap.

This thesis solely takes the current temperature of one elite, commercial media outlet's coverage of one instance of social movement activism in a Canadian context. It acknowledges some of the foundational literature on frame and social movement theory and pulls it through a tract of *Globe and Mail* coverage of protesters during the G8-G20 in Toronto -- a worthy and timely case study for social justice activism and Canadian media attention. The summit provided an opportunity for the media to participate in conversations about global social justice and Canada's role in an increasingly globalized world, but also provided an opportunity to test mainstream media coverage of a mega-protest event in Canadians' back yard. Through discourse analysis, and quantified research, this research explored *the Globe's* sources, marginalization of protesters, trivialization of protesters and affordance of dissenting frames. The finding that stands out among the rest is that in nearly half of the sample coverage *the Globe* marginalized protesters by treating them as a violent, disruptive monolith and contrasted their story against a dominant frame that prioritized business-as-usual.

This research does not explore *the Globe's* coverage of G8-G20 news that did not reference protesters specifically. It may be the case that the *Globe* dedicated a tract of copy to issues pertaining to social justice, globalization, and Canada's role in international diplomacy. Those topics, though, did not turn up in articles pertaining to protest, so we can suspect that social movement activism and protest is not treated by *the Globe and Mail* as a

portal into conversations about global social inequality, as much as it considers it an avenue into a discussion about civic disruption.

Research like this usually opens the door to more questions than it answers. There are two particular issues that arose here that deserve more attention in the future. First, the issue of reporting on protest violence. In the Canadian context (and exemplified by *the Globe*) vandalism and violence tend to get used interchangeably. Breaking windows or damaging property is regularly described as violence, and interpreted as such by the public. Yet as part of a large-scale social, economic, and political uprising throughout other parts of the world today, the discourse of “violence” is getting routinely subverted into a discourse of “resistance,” “revolution,” and “freedom.” Are there, or will there be instances in a Canadian context where breaking a window or damaging a car is not just justified, but necessary in order to draw attention to the need for social, political and economic change?

Secondly, this paper criticizes the reporting of *the Globe and Mail* but does little to explore how covering protesters and social movements can be done better. What then, could best practises look like in a complex, turbulent situation like the G8-G20? How should reporters approach their story telling? If the predictable narrative told of protesters and protest events is a riot story, how can news organizations get beyond that?

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Appendix A: Summary of Findings

Framing elements	Percentage (of total sample)	Common examples
Official, authoritative sources as dominant voice	32%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Toronto Chief of Police -Police officers -Other members of the Integrated Security Unit -Representatives of the local business community -Business owners -Politicians or government officials
Marginalization of protesters	44%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Treating protesters as deviant other (violent and disruptive to civic order) -Reporting on protesters as a singular, monolithic entity -Using stereotypes to characterize protesters
Trivialization of protesters	21%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Emphasis of lack of effectiveness -Emphasis of physical characteristics and dress -Hostile editorial tone
Dissenting, alternative frames	14.5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -First person essays -Opinion editorials by a protester or member of social movement organization