

MORE THAN 1000 WORDS: A STUDY OF
VISUAL MEANING AND PERSUASION

By

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ABSTRACT

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My study compared photographic news coverage of the Occupy Wall Street protests from two competing New York City tabloid newspapers on opposite sides of the political spectrum, the New York Post and the Daily News. The purpose of the study was to determine if each newspaper's political orientation affected the photographs that were selected and presented to the public and if the chosen photographs could persuade individuals to support or reject the rally. The principles of social proof were applied to determine if a pattern existed in the selection of photographs (content analysis) and the persuasive effects the photographs had on individuals participating in the study (experiment). Results from the content analysis indicated that the pattern of selection was slanted toward the political orientation of both media outlets. Results from the experiment showed limits to how far people could be persuaded. Results for the experiment also indicate that having dependents influenced an individual's decisions across both experimental conditions.

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To Mom and Dad – for their never ending encouragement

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

As more print media outlets transition to the Internet their influence and ability to disseminate news has dramatically increased. Before the Internet, print media outlets were limited by location and physical space in how much news they could report to the public. However, the internet offers print media outlets virtually unlimited amounts of room to report news, allowing them the ability to provide more information for the issues they want the public, both inside and outside their traditional coverage area, to see and, possibly, support. This allows media outlets to have more influence over public opinion. One area where the Internet has allowed print media outlets to add more content is visual coverage, specifically still photographs. Historically, photographs have served an important role in the media and society. Photographs are used to enhance a media outlet's coverage of the world (Zelizer, 2010) and they have been used to create social reform (Cookman, 2009). Some classic examples include, Jacob Riis, who photographed poverty, sweatshops and uninhabitable housing in New York City in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; Lewis Hine, who photographed children working in coal mines and textile mills in the early 20th century; and Dorothea Lange, who photographed people affected by the Great Depression (Cookman, 2009).

The capacity for media outlets to utilize more photographs in its coverage is crucial for society and researchers to understand because media outlets are known to select photographs with the intention of disseminating their values and beliefs (Croteau et al., 2012), as photographs are known to help media outlets spread their political and social agendas (Flusser, 1983). Therefore, the more photographs a media outlet can present on its website the greater influence it can have over the public on a particular social issue. The effect of showcasing a multitude of media photographs can be beneficial to society because it may encourage individuals to be more informed and ultimately lead to more people participating in public life (Schudson, 2011) because photographs are able to present the idealized and edited version of events, which encourage individuals to desire what is being idealized (Richins, 1995). When an individual looks at a photograph for even a fraction of a second it has been shown that the photograph's influence can be powerful enough to convey to the viewer attributes of competence, trustworthiness or likability (Garrett et al., 2013; Bar et al., 2006; Hall et al., 2009). This desire generated by photographs may be able to persuade people to change their attitudes and behaviors toward what they are seeing, ultimately encouraging or discouraging them from supporting a certain issue or participating in a particular event. Depending on one's point of view, this can be a good or a bad thing. However, ideally media outlets are objective in their reporting and not trying to persuade the public to behave in a manner they deem appropriate.

Unfortunately, there are a limited number of studies that quantitatively address the effectiveness of media photographs to persuade the public. My study is an initial foray into a much larger research program that, over time, will seek to understand the persuasive power of media photographs. This study investigates whether or not a media outlet's selection of photographs for public consumption has an effect on viewers' attitudes and behaviors about an issue or event being photographed. Specifically, I seek to understand if a pattern of selection existed in the photographic coverage of the Occupy Wall Street rallies by two competing and politically opposite New York City based tabloid media outlets, the New York Post (conservative) and the Daily News (liberal). The study seeks to answer whether or not photographs were selected and presented to influence the public to adopt certain behaviors based on the political agendas of both media outlets. It then focuses on whether or not the selected photographs can actually change an individual's attitude or behavior towards a specific issue. This study applies the principles of social proof to both media outlets' photographic coverage of the protest as a means of understanding and determining if there is a pattern to the types of photographs selected and presented to the public because this theory can best explain how both media outlets are attempting to persuade the public through photographs.

Hypotheses

The first hypothesis the study seeks to answer is:

Hypothesis 1: The politically liberal Daily News will bias a greater percentage of its photographic coverage in support of the Occupy Wall Street rallies, while the politically conservative New York Post will bias a greater percentage of its photographic coverage against the Occupy Wall Street rallies.

This hypothesis predicts that a pattern of photographic selection, based on political ideology, existed. The principles of social proof and the definitions derived from the theory are used as a means to identify this pattern of selection and give meaning to its potential to influence the public.

This study then examines whether or not the variables associated with social proof can be extended to photographs in order to persuade the public to behave in the manner suggested by the photographs selected by the media outlets and to determine the extent of the persuasion. In short, will the persuasion be minimal or will it encourage or discourage someone to march in the rally? Understanding the persuasive strength of media photographs has significant implications for society and researchers, as it enables us to better understand the reasoning behind what is shown to us in the media and how it can affect our judgment and ultimately our future. For this part of the study, I seek to answer the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 2: Subjects exposed to photographs from the politically liberal Daily News will report to be more likely to speak positively of the rally to a member of their immediate family and subjects exposed to photographs from the politically conservative New York Post will report to be less likely to speak positively of the rally to a member of their immediate family.

Hypothesis 3: Subjects exposed to photographs from the politically liberal Daily News will report to be more likely to speak positively of the rally to someone they know and subjects exposed to photographs from the politically conservative New York Post will report to be less likely to speak positively of the rally to someone they know.

Hypothesis 4: Subjects exposed to photographs from the politically liberal Daily News will report to be more likely to speak positively of the rally to a stranger and subjects exposed to photographs from the politically conservative New York Post will report to be less likely to speak positively of the rally to a stranger.

Hypothesis 5: Subjects exposed to photographs from the politically liberal Daily News will report to be more likely to display a sign or bumper sticker supporting the rally and subjects exposed to photographs from the politically conservative New York Post will report to be less likely to display a sign or bumper sticker supporting the rally.

Hypothesis 6: Subjects exposed to photographs from the politically liberal Daily News will report to be more likely to volunteer behind the scenes to support the rally and subjects exposed to photographs from the politically conservative New York Post will report to be less likely to volunteer behind the scenes to support the rally

Hypothesis 7: Subjects exposed to photographs from the politically liberal Daily News will report to be more likely to donate money to support the rally and subjects exposed to photographs from the politically conservative New York Post will report to be less likely to donate money to support the rally

Hypothesis 8: Subjects exposed to photographs from the politically liberal Daily News will report to be more likely to march in the rally and subjects exposed to photographs from the politically conservative New York Post will report to be less likely to march in the rally

The purpose of these hypotheses is to measure the extent to which people can be persuaded after viewing media photographs and to contribute a workable scale for use and comparison by other researchers. Additionally, this study and these hypotheses can establish another process by which to quantitatively study the effects of media photographs as they pertain to a media outlet's coverage of a social movement, offer a more comprehensive process on how to quantify media photographs and offer another theory to utilize as a way to detect patterns in media coverage, particularly as they pertain to photographs. This study also takes into account some of the potential confounding effects that can result from the multitude of photographic properties as derived from art and visual theories, as many of these properties have not been addressed in previous studies of media photographs. The information derived from this study also provides practical and meaningful assistance for issue advocates and public relations practitioners to craft efficient and persuasive visual campaigns allowing them to influence large swaths of the population. Finally, my study seeks to identify any moderating factors that could affect the results of this and future studies.

CHAPTER 2

Theoretical Background

Media Bias

If a news organization adheres to its idealized norms then news coverage of conflict should be fair and impartial (Fico et. al., 2004; Day, 1991; Rivers et. al, 1980) because there is an assumption that objectivity is where the truth lies (Williams, 2010). If this is true, then the selection of photographs by all media outlets covering the same story should show both points of view equally, thus giving no reason to conduct this study. However, evidence reveals that to be far from the truth. Past research has shown that there is both a liberal media bias (Morris 2007; Bozell 2004; Goldberg 2002; Kohn 2003) and conservative media bias (Morris 2007; Alterman 2003; Bagdikian 2004; Brock 2004; Scheuer 2001). The general definition of media bias is when coverage of an event contains a preponderance of statements favorable to one side over another (D'Alessio & Allen, 2000). For political issues, on which this study is based, media bias is news coverage that favors one political opinion over another and does not provide equal treatment (Entman, 2007). Other researchers define media bias as disseminating information that favors one side of a dispute or interpretation of events over another (Williams, 2010; Street, 2001). One reason media bias is observed may be due to higher-level institutional influences putting pressure on what should be presented (Fico & Cote, 2002) and some studies show that media bias reflects the media organization's editorial stance (Druckman and

Parkin, 2005; Page, 1996; Rowse 1957). Kahn & Kenney (2002) state that the political beliefs of a media outlet are clearly articulated in its opinion pages and their study of more than 60 senatorial campaigns during three different election years found that the media outlet's coverage was slanted to favor the candidates it supported on its editorial pages. Scharl & Weichselbraun (2008) also found that a media outlet's editorial position influenced its coverage of a candidate and Iyengar & Hahn (2009) found that there is a tendency of media outlets to select and present news based on the audiences anticipated political agreement, which generally follows the media outlet's political stance. Druckman and Parkin (2005) demonstrated that a media organization's bias is distinguished by whom they endorsed during a national presidential election.

While previous research focused primarily on text-based reporting, some studies found that photographic coverage follows the same biased patterns. Barrett and Barrington (2005) analyzed how seven media outlets in the greater Milwaukee, WI area photographically portrayed political candidates during an election. Their study concluded that candidates who were endorsed by a newspaper enjoyed more favorable photographs in that newspaper than their opponents enjoyed. The study detected a pattern of photographic selection whereby all newspapers were selecting and presenting more favorable photographs of the candidate that matched their political ideals while presenting less favorable photographs of the candidates that did not adhere to their political agenda. The reasons for this pattern were not determined. However, Barrett and Barrington (2005) were able to connect the political orientation of a

newspaper to the selection of photographs they presented, a significant contribution to media bias research. As previous research clearly suggests that a newspaper will bias its selection of photographs based on its editorial stance, it is feasible that the New York Post and the Daily News acted in the same manner when covering the Occupy Wall Street rallies. My study will seek to determine if there is statistical evidence to suggest that this may have been the case.

Photographic Properties and Their Persuasive Effects

When viewing photographs, it is easy to assume that we are seeing an accurate depiction of the events recorded, after all, “pictures never lie,” or so the saying goes. Visual theorist Dondis (1973) claimed that believability is the one quality photographs have that other visual arts do not, making it a more potent medium and able to influence how people think. This believability is attributed to the fact that a photographer must be present where the action is taking place (Arnheim, 1974), meaning a photograph cannot possibly be taken without a camera and, in most cases, a photographer being present at the scene. This gives the photograph instant credibility among viewers because it is the most technically dependable means of representing visual reality (Dondis, 1973).

What is important to ascertain is whether photographs are more than the simple recording of a moment in time. Images are created with the specific intention to express ideas and have the unique ability to suggest to the viewer how he or she should live his or her life (Helmets, 2006), not simply to record events. Photographs also help viewers construct unique identities (Strauss,

2003) and create a belief among viewers that they are participating, or at least witnessing, the events being portrayed in the photograph (Graber, 1996). These observations led to many varying opinions as to what type of persuasive properties are contained in photographs and therefore needs to be accounted for in an effort to fully understand the power certain photographic properties can have over changing the attitudes and behaviors of individuals who view media photographs.

Barthes (1981) was one of the first to study the persuasive power of photographs and what they represent. He suggested that the secret to interpreting a photograph could be found in visual semiotics. Visual semiotics is an examination of meaning in a photograph through signs and cultural codes (Williams, 2010), which can be represented by either an object or concept (Moriarty, 2005; Hoopes, 1991; Eco, 1986). In short visual semiotics is a series of visual hints that help us derive meanings from what is presented in the photographs (Arnheim, 1974). These hints can be abstract or symbolic (Helmers, 2006) and they can have both explicit and implied meaning (Barrett, 2006). These meanings can be derived from specific graphic properties that will enable the viewer to accurately and fully analyze a photograph. A skilled photographer can use visual semiotics (photographic properties) to make a specific point without being obvious. Furthermore, a photo editor can forward a media outlet's stance on an issue by selecting photographs that contain cues supporting the appropriate opinion for viewers to follow.

Many researchers believe that the main persuasive properties within a photograph are movement, center of interest, rule of thirds, balance, spatiality, light and color, context, and perspective (Williams & Newton, 2007; Helmers, 2006; Dondis, 1973; Arnheim, 1971). These properties provide the viewer with a specific kind of experience (Arnheim, 1974) and offer a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of a photograph, which can give us insight as to why media outlets select certain photographs for public consumption over others.

The property of movement delivers a sense of direction in the photograph directing our eyes toward a certain area in an effort to convey a specific meaning or feeling (Williams and Newton, 2007). Movement has great importance to the final effect and meaning of the photograph (Dondis, 1973) because it has the ability to pull the viewer into the photograph and take them on a journey through the photograph, whether in a straight, diagonal or roundabout trip (Gupta, 2012). Thus, a skilled photographer can create a photograph that directs attention toward a specific area or cause the viewer to follow a sequence to that area, thereby forcing the viewer to focus on specific content. An effective photograph that features this property can instruct a viewer where his or her eyes should go as an aid in helping the viewer to focus on specific elements of the photograph. This is a shortcut through a snapshot of reality because it forces the viewer to look only at specific elements of the picture and can be a very powerful and persuasive tool because direction instructs the viewer to disregard everything else in the photograph except those elements along the directed path. At the

same time, a photo editor, who understands how photographic properties work, can select a photograph with properties that help him or her make a statement and focus the public on the elements that best match the stance of the media outlet, which makes movement a potentially powerful persuasive property.

Another photographic property, center of interest, clearly highlights on what the viewers should focus. Center of interest is defined as the key subject in the photograph that attracts our eye (Williams and Newton, 2007). According to Arnheim (1971) every finite visual pattern has a center of gravity, or center of interest, around which the entire photograph is structured. Much like the physical world, center of interest is what holds everything in the photograph in place and is the main subject matter our eyes focus on when looking at a photograph.

Center of interest is a very effective tool because it forces the viewer to focus on a specific object, which can have a dramatic effect on those chosen for persuasion because the viewer is “forced” to focus on subjects in the photograph to which they, hopefully, relate. Research suggests that if viewers can be made to focus on the behavior of subjects who match their own circumstances, then they can be persuaded to act in the same manner as the subjects in the photograph because informing people what similar others are doing will lead to high rates of cooperation (Parks et al., 2001) and individuals will follow the norms that most closely match their circumstances (Goldstein et al., 2008). Therefore, the selection of photographs containing compelling objects with which viewers easily identify could be a useful persuasive property for a media outlet looking to make a specific point.

Many times, the main subjects are not the center of attention, yet they are easy to spot due to the technique of the rule of thirds. In photography the rule of thirds means dividing the photograph into a tic-tac-toe board and the four intersecting points are the primary points of visual interest. Typically the most important visual elements are strategically positioned along these lines because it creates interest and balance within the photograph (Gupta, 2012). The rule of thirds is also effective in that it allows the main subject to be off center, yet our eyes and mind still interpret it as the subject; the result being that a photographer can “sneak” in the true subject of interest on an unsuspecting viewer, forcing them to focus on that subject and potentially be persuaded by the subject’s actions.

While awareness of which subjects to focus on is important, how subjects are presented may also have a significant impact on how the photograph is interpreted. Balance is one such property of presentation that can have a persuasive impact. Williams and Newton (2007) defined balance as showing symmetry and regularity of the main subject in the photograph. We have a need for balance (Dondis, 1973) and prefer to look at subjects that are balanced (i.e. standing with two feet on the ground and arms at sides) and become uneasy when subjects are off-balance (Williams and Newton, 2007). Photographs where the main subject is off-balance can be interesting, but can leave a void causing the viewer to dislike what is being shown and leaving them feeling empty (Gupta, 2012). Therefore, if one wants to shed a negative light on subjects in a photograph, showing them off balance should cause this effect because it gives

the impression that the composition is invalid (Arnheim, 1971). When a subject is off balance it creates a state of alarm in their facial expression and can unconsciously influence the viewer's judgment of the photograph (Dondis, 1973). Presenting an unbalanced subject can cause the viewer to feel uneasy about the events depicted in the photograph and ultimately persuade the viewer not to support the subject's cause because the viewer associates it with the uncomfortable feeling – an effective strategy for persuasion if the goal is to dissuade someone from participating in the activity being shown. However, with balance, it is important to take into account the context of the photograph and to what type of audience it is being shown. In other words, while some photographs are meant to make some feel uneasy and therefore discourage participation in an activity, that same photograph, shown to a different audience may have a completely opposite meaning. Thus, in order to understand the consequences of this property in terms of media bias, it is important to remember the audience for which the photograph is most likely intended.

Light and Color is another photographic property that can both set the emotional mood of the photograph and create a sense of drama. High contrast light and dark shadows create a sense of drama and low contrast light creates a sense of peaceful feelings (Williams and Newton, 2007). Colors have symbolic meaning where blue typically means loyalty, green represents renewal, orange is enthusiasm, purple means royalty and black stands for death, mourning and mystery (Helmets, 2006). Therefore, if a photograph is dominated by a specific color it can direct the viewer toward its intended meaning and the type of contrast

can convey a sense of peace or drama, which, for my study, could influence whether or not a viewer participates in a rally depending on whether they desire peace or conflict.

The property of context is defined by Worth and Gross (1981) as the identification of certain signs that are specific to the community upon which the photograph is focused. Context may include various historical cues, which may play a significant role in the interpretation of a photograph (Moriarty, 2005) and in understanding the circumstances around the situation the photograph is depicting (Williams and Newton, 2007). Knowing these signs is vital to the persuasive process because viewers who recognize and share the same culture or background as the subjects in the photograph will relate better and share a sense of community with the subjects. To this point, analysis of these properties should be taken with an element of caution because adequate quantitative studies have not been done, thus limiting the ability to statistically analyze with any accuracy how these photographic properties affect an individual's response.

However, a property that has been quantitatively studied, spatiality, or the distance effect, is a unique visual aspect with subtle persuasive elements and effects. Spatiality is the distance from which we view subjects in the photograph. It causes individuals to develop attitudes based on the arrangement of elements: the more room (i.e. white space) in the photograph, the more positive the attitude, and the less room (i.e. more cramped space) in the photograph, the less positive the attitude (Williams and Newton, 2007).

Artz et al.'s (1994) quantitative study of the distance effect showed that viewers tend to prefer a longer shot because it facilitates thoughtful processing of what the photograph is about, whereas a close-up arouses a more primal response that inhibits analysis of the photograph, causing viewers to develop a less positive attitude toward what is presented. The results of this study also revealed that viewers who consider themselves more solitary prefer distant photographs because of a preference to keep people at bay and viewers who consider themselves to be more social prefer the close-up because of the more intimate nature of the photograph. Messaris (1998) stated that the distance effect heightened the intensity of involvement between the photograph and viewer by offering the illusion of participating in the events portrayed in the photograph. However, what makes distance effective depends on the audience. While most viewers prefer longer distances, the persuader must understand the specifics of his or her target audience (whether or not they tend to be more social or solitary) in order to achieve the desired effect. Thus the distance effect has been shown to be a powerful tool for persuasion.

Another important property, which has also been quantitatively studied, is perspective, or how we view the subjects based on camera angle, such as looking straight at, up at or down on the subject. Williams and Newton (2007) suggest that photographs with a low angle (looking up at the subject) are interpreted more positively by the viewer and those with a high angle (looking down at the subject) are interpreted more negatively by the viewer. As Helmers (2006) noted in regards to the low angle point of view, monuments were

constructed so when people look up at them we revere the monument.

Researchers have conducted quantitative studies on camera angle and their results have confirmed that when a subject is photographed from a low angle the attitude toward the subject is positive, while for those photographed from a high angle the attitude toward subject matter is more negative, and at eye level the viewer's opinions toward the subject were neutral (Meyers-Levy and Peracchio, 1992; Kraft, 1987; Mandell and Shaw, 1973; Tiemens, 1970). Therefore, a photo editor that understands the effect perspective plays can select photographs to compel the attitudes of its audience in the direction it desires. As a result, taking perspective and distance effect into account can lead to a deeper understanding of how a photograph can affect an individual's judgment, opinion and behavior and how others might be able to manipulate these properties to persuade an audience.

Dual Coding Theory

Adding to the persuasive effects of photographic properties, dual coding theory (Paivio, 1971) offers another explanation of how photographs can persuade. As one of the first theories to emphasize visual imagery (Paivio, 1991) dual coding theory suggests that there are links between verbal and visual memory paths and that one can activate the other (Kulhavy et al., 1993). The theory suggests that photographs have the unique ability to assist in the mental recall of a specific issue, meaning, that when a photograph is accompanied by a written explanation individuals, when they recall the issue, will remember the

photograph that accompanied the text and this image will always be what the individual remembers when he or she thinks about the issue. Researchers using dual coding theory confirmed that people are able to recall events more easily when photographs are involved because visual stimuli create image information processing in our memories (Kim & Lennon, 2008). This is particularly true in courtroom settings where jurors are able to recall the images used as evidence and as a result have a better grasp of the evidence (Feigenson, 2010; Mayer, 2001; Dunn, 2000). Images have also been found to help the recall of text (Kulhavy et al., 1993) and Coleman and Wasike (2004) found that dual coding theory helps to explain why visual information assists people in making better judgments about societal problems presented to them. This means that when someone seeks to persuade a group of people, combining a powerful image with text will cause the audience to remember and associate the image with the issue.

This association is most powerful when dealing with media photographs. Graber (1990) found that individuals were better able to remember media images without text than text without media images and that there were three types of visuals that were most memorable: close-up photographs of celebrities, such as world leaders, religious figures and athletes; close-up photographs of unknown people in exotic settings, such as a jungle or rugged environment; and close-up photographs of unfamiliar people who became familiar because of their opinions expressed. However, Graber (1990) found that people did not remember images that put the story into context, such as a photograph of a building where the story is taking place; instead, she found that more compelling and intimate

photographs were most memorable. In regards to a social movement, Graber also concluded that people did not remember distance shots of neither friendly nor unfriendly crowd actions. The lesson of Graber's study is that people would rather feel a part of the photograph and what is presented. Therefore, close-ups seem ideal for media outlets to select and present to the public if they want viewers to remember the event presented.

Dual coding theory is also very useful in explaining why emotional images result in greater recall of an event and lead to involvement in that event. Newhagen and Reeves (1992) found that an emotional image, especially one related to a just or humanitarian cause, leads to emotional arousal thereby causing the image to be ingrained in our memories and compels the viewer to support the cause associated with the image. Emotionally arousing images make recall easier and allow the individual to make a personal association with what is presented in the photograph (Sontag, 2003). One reason for this is that memories created by emotionally arousing images lead to emotional involvement with the subjects in the pictures (Weiser, 1988). Zillmann et al. (1999) found that Paivio's dual coding theory explained the "dominance of images in the perception of phenomena," meaning that over time the true nature of the event will be replaced by how the photograph portrayed it. Therefore, if a media photograph represented a positive event in a negative light the viewer will always recall that event as negative and vice versa. Dual coding theory therefore suggests that an emotional photograph can have the power to both temporarily and permanently encourage or dissuade someone from participating in an event.

Photographs have been proven to be able to stimulate careful message processing (Coleman & Wasike, 2004; Nabi, 2002). It is apparent, as explained by dual coding theory, that images have a persuasive power that stimulates a covert processing within the individual that will ultimately lead him or her to act in the manner suggested in the photograph. Since people are better able to recall images, when asked to recall an event the individual will recall the image associated with that event and, ultimately, it will be the recalled image that continues to persuade the individual on how to perceive the issue, thus guiding his or her actions.

Social Proof

Variables derived from the principle of social proof may offer researchers the opportunity to determine if there is a pattern to photographic selection. In this study, social proof was applied to the New York Post's and the New York Daily News' coverage of the Occupy Wall Street rallies and the photographs both media outlets selected to determine if the photographs matched the papers' political leanings. Additionally, social proof was applied to determine if the selected photographs were chosen to influence whether or not the public supported and/or participated in the movement.

The theory of social proof can be traced to Gustave Le Bon and his groundbreaking 1896 book, *The Crowd*. This book was the first recognized attempt to explain the potential influence a crowd of people could have over the actions of others – regardless of wealth, education, gender, and other

socioeconomic factors. Le Bon (1896) observed that crowds share a collective mind, which in turn can make an individual feel, think and act quite differently than they would under normal circumstances, suggesting that man is willing to give up his individuality in order to be a part of something larger. It was this important observation, that man is willing to give up what makes him unique in an effort to “fit in” with the crowd, that sparked other scholars to investigate further as to why this is the case.

Expanding on LeBon’s research, Trotter (1916) explained that man’s willingness to join a crowd is due to his gregarious nature and desire to seek out likeminded people and social situations because of a fear of isolation. As a result of man’s natural fear, people are more responsive to the crowd and its overtures to join which can stimulate and influence man’s behavior among a group of people (Trotter, 1916), supporting Le Bon’s (1896) observations that crowds operate with a singular goal and a singular mind and tend to accept or reject ideas and opinions as one mind. The crowd can attract and encourage a variety of behaviors, across a wide range of individuals regardless of gender, race or socioeconomic status, granting it tremendous power. The power of the crowd can bequeath to the individual energy, courage and endurance to act for what the crowd views as just and appropriate behavior. As a result of this euphoria, man is subject to the passions of the crowd and all its potential virtues and evils (Trotter, 1916). These passions are not solely the auspices of the crowd, but also hail from the media and its calls for action to cure certain societal ills (Trotter, 1916). Thus, Trotter was the first to suggest that the media plays a role

in the creation of the crowd, recognizing its power to quickly and efficiently spread information to the masses.

Bernays (1928) agreed with Le Bon and Trotter's conclusions that the crowd's mind acts solely as its members suggest and, as such, the crowd may not necessarily consider all the consequences of its actions. Yet, Bernays understood that crowds are not always negative and could serve a positive purpose for society. He observed that inactivity cannot cause social change and was the first to suggest that crowds can be created in an effort to draw attention to a specific societal ill in an effort to compel politicians or community leaders to fix it. This idea was groundbreaking because, while Le Bon and Trotter saw crowds in a negative light (man behaving like animals), Bernays understood the possibility of using crowds as a tool for persuasion, thus opening the door to a new stream of research where scholars began to consider whether or not crowds can be used to encourage or discourage support for a social issue.

This new line of research began with Sherif (1936) who proved that when confronted with a problem the group compromises, finds middle ground and, most importantly, agrees that the compromise is correct, supporting LeBon, Trotter and Bernays' assertions that the group is of one mind. Asch's (1956) study on conformity found that when an outsider enters into an established group setting where the group has already formed an opinion, the individual changes his or her opinion to match the group's opinion even when he or she knows the group is categorically wrong. The individual will do so because of the discomfort he or she feels from disagreeing with the group (Asch, 1956) because, as Trotter

(1916) astutely observed, the cure for isolation is to agree with the group.

Therefore, if man is a gregarious animal, then the threat of isolation should compel him or her to comply with the crowd and its actions.

However, free choice still plays a role in the decision making process, as Bandura (1965) demonstrated with his famous Bobo doll experiment. The study showed that if the viewer observes crowd members being punished for their actions then the observer would most likely shy away from participation and reject the notion of mimicking the group's actions. Bandura concluded that people would mimic the actions of those they observe as long as they do not see any consequences to the actions. The idea of consequences explains why crowds and their activities either persist or die. If there are no consequences the crowd will most likely continue to attract more participants and to thrive. However, once negative consequences are observed, the crowd will be unable to attract any more followers resulting in a cessation of their activities. Therefore, in regards to my study, if a media outlet wants to convince an individual to participate or support a crowd's activities, then it is prudent to forward a photograph sans any sign of consequences to the group's activities. Conversely, if a media outlet wants to discourage participation, then it is sensible to present photographs of various individuals from the crowd being punished for their activities.

Milgram et al. (1969) sought to determine whether there was a positive correlation between the size of a crowd and its power to persuade others to participate. Their well-known experiment involved a group of people standing on

a street corner looking up at a window in order to determine if this would cause passer-bys to stop and also look up at the window. The results indicated that the larger the initial group the greater the number of outside participants. In other words, size matters when it comes to the persuasive power of crowds. Milgram et al. (1969) also found that in order for the crowd to be effective it must exhibit some sort of observable action that can be imitated as this results in participation with the group's activities. The above research demonstrates that people tend to look to each other for "guidance" on how they should behave in a social situation – creating the new term social proof.

Shearman and Yoo (2007) stated that social proof is predominantly derived from and based on Festinger's (1954) social comparison theory, which states that people's actions are influenced by the opinions of others. Specifically, Festinger sought to understand the basis by which people evaluate their opinions and why. He believed that there is a drive among humans to evaluate their opinions by comparing them to others in an effort to know if their opinions are "correct." This comparison among unfamiliar individuals has a direct effect on a person's behavior, defines what is the correct opinion and gives stability to that opinion (Festinger, 1954). In an earlier experiment cited by Festinger (1954), Festinger et al. (1952) convened a group of people and had each individual write down their opinion of a topic on a piece of paper. They were then given their piece of paper back with a tabulation of how closely their opinions matched those in the group. Those who had different opinions than the group were less attracted to the group than those who had opinions that were similar to the group.

This experiment showed that people tend to want to be with others who share similar beliefs and are therefore willing to cluster together with people who are similar. While man may be, as Trotter (1916) suggested, a gregarious animal, according to Festinger et al.'s (1952) experiment people gravitate to individuals who share their same opinions and beliefs. This is what Ashforth and Mael (1989) termed "social identification," whereby individuals perceive a type of belonging to a certain group and define themselves by that belonging. This may be due to the fact that people tend to classify themselves among many different social groups, such as classmates, gender, and religion (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Historically, this type of group identification was viewed by researchers as the individual believing he or she is personally experiencing the successes and failures of the group (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Foote, 1951; Tolman, 1943), which suggests that photographs can be selected to attract a specific group of people to act in the manner suggested in the photographs.

Richins (1995) suggested that there are two types of information that can be gleaned from social comparison, where the first is determining if the behavior is correct or normal. For example, children use social comparison when developing their humor by observing what other children think is funny and then adjusting their dialogue in response. The second type of comparison, according to Richins (1995), is comparing abilities or circumstances to the observer's relative standing, meaning, that by comparing oneself to another, the individual can determine if they are smarter or better off than the other. This happens predominantly among adults, such as when one neighbor determines another is

better off because that neighbor's car is more expensive. The information obtained by social comparison ultimately leads to positive, negative or neutral self-ratings relative to what the person rated as the standards necessary for comparison (Richins, 1995; Pettigrew, 1967). Up to this point research suggested that it is necessary for the viewer to be physically present in order for the guidance to have a meaningful effect as viewing the actions of others is proof that the behavior is correct. However, more current research has shown that being physically present is not necessary for social proof to be effective.

Cialdini (2009) defines social proof as informing a person of a group's attitudes and activities regarding a specific situation, which in turn will cause the individual to adopt the group's beliefs and actions. In essence, social proof is being informed by other people, either visually or via text, of what is proper behavior. Past research indicates that witnessing the acts of other people can compel the witness to participate with the group (Nolan et al., 2008; Terry & Hogg, 2001; Turner, 1991). This is particularly true if the group being mimicked cannot see you (Gallup et al., 2012). One example of social proof is cheering at a sporting event: when a few people begin to perform a specific cheer or chant others will join in. Another example of social proof is the tip jar, whereby people put money in a tip jar primed by the bartender because they believe others have already tipped (Cialdini, 2009). Social proof can be seen in advertising, specifically when ads assert that thousands have bought a product and viewers then buy the product based on this information resulting in the product becoming a best seller (Cialdini, 2009). In other words, social proof encourages and

confirms that particular behaviors are correct because others are doing it. While our parents warned us that “just because everyone else is doing it doesn’t make it right,” according to principle of social proof, it does. This enhances the power of social proof because when combined with the properties of crowd behavior, we are not only encouraged to participate, we are encouraged to believe that participating in the activity of the crowd is correct. Additionally, research indicates that the persuasive effect of social proof is permanent (Cialdini, 2009; Bandura et al., 1967).

However, the most recent and relevant findings from scholars suggests that direct observation or being physically present is not necessary for social proof to have an effect, but rather communicating via the written word about the behaviors and activities of others can persuade message recipients to mimic the actions and adopt the ideals and behavior of the group (Nolan et al., 2008; Parks et al., 2001; Von Borgstede et al., 1999). Nolan et al. (2008) conducted a successful experiment whereby he was able to convince a substantial amount of people in a California community to conserve more energy by leaving a note on the front door of their home stating that many others were conserving energy and therefore they should, too. Goldstein et al. (2008) found that written communications describing how others behave can have an immediate impact on changing behavior. The Goldstein et al. (2008) experiment successfully persuaded a substantial amount of hotel customers to reuse their bath towels by placing placards in the bathrooms informing the occupants that everyone who used the room before them reused their towels. The placard read:

75-percent of the guests who stayed in this room (#xxx) participated in our new resource savings program by using their towels more than once. You can join your fellow guests in this program to help save the environment by reusing your towels during your stay (Goldstein et al., 2008).

The research from Nolan et al. (2008) and Goldstein et al. (2008) demonstrates the power and flexibility of social proof, whereby behavior is encouraged not only via eyewitness accounts, but also through the written word. It also shows how trusting people are of information presented to them. Not once, in either experiment, did any of the subjects seek to confirm the validity of the claims presented to them. Therefore, since these experiments suggest that people are willing to blindly accept claims presented to them, I can expect subjects in my experiment to accept the behaviors suggested in the photographs at face value. The beauty of the findings from Nolan et al. (2008) and Goldstein et al. (2008) is that the results seem to transcend various social and socioeconomic factors, quantitatively supporting the observations made by LeBon in the 19th Century. As Rao, Greve & Davis (2001) observed, individuals are willing to trust fully that the opinions and actions of the crowd are correct and, therefore, are willing to act in the same manner, even though they do not know anyone in the crowd.

Cialdini (2007) noted by referring to his 2003 study that social proof can extend to visuals and that the visuals were particularly powerful at discouraging improper behavior. In his 2003 study Cialdini used images to discourage visitors from stealing wood from Arizona's petrified forests. He created and used two

signs, one with a photo of three people stealing wood from the forest and the second of one person stealing from the forest. Both signs urged visitors not to take the wood. The sign with only one person stealing was more successful because even though both signs beg visitors not to participate in theft, the first sign shows a group of people stealing, thereby implying group support in the activity, while the second sign shows only one person stealing wood, thus implying a lack of group support in the activity. Ultimately, what we learn from this study is that even though people will read that an activity is discouraged, they will still look to the number of others participating in the activity as a guide for their own behavior, meaning visuals matter.

Social proof has also been used to study securities analysts on Wall Street. A study by Rao, Greve, & Davis (2001) shows that analysts who see their peers investing in a certain financial product leads the analysts to overestimate a company's future profitability, thus causing them to invest and ultimately be disappointed in the investment, leading to abandonment. Social proof, according to Rao, Greve & Davis (2001) is most effective when individuals are uncertain of the type of action or opinions they need to make and they then look to the crowd to observe its actions in order to determine what is appropriate. This means that people are willing to place a significant amount of trust in the opinions and actions of the crowd (strangers) to which they are looking for guidance on their own behaviors (Rao, Greve, & Davis 2001). Finally, Shearman and Yoo's (2007) experiment to determine whether people are more compliant with donating money if they know the amount others like them are donating, between \$3.00

and \$5.00, but are also given the option of donating a smaller amount also seen to be legitimate, found a greater rate of compliance. This was explained as the combination of social proof with a legitimizing activity leads to a higher rate of compliance than social proof on its own (Shearman & Yoo, 2007). This means that people need to know not just that everyone is participating in the activity, but also that the activity everyone is participating in is legitimate. Extrapolating this to my study, if the activity is regarded as legitimate, then I expect a greater rate of compliance among respondents to participate in the rallies being presented to them in the photographs.

Christensen et al. (2004) found that the more people identified with a group the more positive emotions they experienced when conforming than when violating the group's norms and ideals. Essentially, this suggests that photographs containing group activities can be targeted to specific types of individuals and those individuals who identify with the group not only will conform, but will also feel good about their decision. Upon seeing the behavior of the groups within the photographs, it may be possible to predict that certain types of people will conform to the types of behavior presented in the photographs because conforming makes them feel good. At the same time, researchers also suggest that showcasing the "out-group" is important for an individual to categorize him or herself as a group member and for the group's identity to become significant and persuasive (Christensen et al, 2004; Turner et al., 1987). This explains why it is necessary for media outlets to show some photographs that are not in line with their ideals. By presenting such

photographs, they are trying to build and strengthen the group's identity among current and potential members.

As such, current research suggests that social proof can be extended to photographs because individuals who view a photograph should feel a need to belong to the group and become more involved (Goodwin et al. 2004; Hoffer 1951). This can be explained by the photograph's power to affect attention, perception, memory, reasoning, and decision-making (Zhou 2005; Cacioppo & Gardner 1999), as well as an individual's interpretation of media messages (Zhou 2005; Steinfatt & Roberts 1983), which can, in turn, persuade the individual to become or not become involved in the activities shown in the photograph. Finally, this type of persuasion can go completely undetected by the message receivers (Nolan et al., 2008), making photographs an ideal medium to use if a persuader wants to influence a large swath of people because photographs can create instant emotion and reaction by showcasing the group's activity.

Therefore, if one cannot stage a physical event, then the next best thing is to use photographs selected to produce the desired public response because, as Zelizer (2010) argues, photographs suggest slices of action that people need to complete. "Visual media is highly complicit in the process of social reorganization" (Harriman and Lucaites 2007) and, as a result, social proof's influence can be extended to photographs because much like when we physically experience an event, "pictures arouse viewers' interest and attention to a greater extent because they give the viewer a sense of participating in an event or, at least, witnessing it personally" (Graber, 1996). Additionally, a visual image

allows viewers to believe they are experiencing what is happening in the photographs (Harriman and Lucaites, 2002). This is particularly true with news photographs as they “do not just represent authenticity, they also communicate actuality” (Brosius et. al., 1996), meaning the viewer believes that the photographs are an accurate description of the events making it easier for them to believe he or she is experiencing the event.

Social Proof to Encourage Support and Behavior

Cialdini (2007) asserted that social proof is based on descriptive social norms, meaning that if a lot of people are observed doing something then the observer will assume that it is probably a wise thing to do. Latane and Darley’s (1970) explanation of social proof states that people will most likely look to others for guidance on how they should behave and Sherif (1936) offers, “there is a tendency to converge toward a common norm and to experience the situation as regulated and ordered by this norm. The group must be right.” In other words, people look to each other for how they should behave in certain circumstances. In the case of a protest, one can argue that if an observer sees a large group of people participating then he or she will conclude that since a group of people is partaking in this type of behavior then it must be the right thing to do. One can also conclude that to the observer, the larger the group the greater the “proof” that the behavior is correct. Therefore, if someone wants to influence people about the proper way to behave, all they need to do is gather a large group of people and organize them to behave in the desired way.

Past research suggests that knowing the attitude of an individual, which in a photograph can be done by showing a sign or other text in a photograph, can influence participation. Zitek and Hebl (2007) found that the opinion of a single individual can influence another's attitudes and Poteat and Spanierman's (2010) research supports that attitudes held by individuals may reflect the attitudes of their peers and the norms of the group in which they belong, and that they will follow the norms of the group. Stangor et. al. (2001) found that changes in opinion were stronger when people were exposed to information about the opinions of the in-group rather than the out-group allowing for a stronger bond with supporters who viewed the photographs. Therefore, the photographs presented by a media outlet can have a powerful effect because "information about the behavior of similar others can influence the choices of participants in a social dilemma" (Parks et al., 2001). Finally, as social comparison theory and social proof suggest, photographs that contain celebrities have the power to convince others to participate in a protest because "it is through social comparison with referent others that people validate the correctness of their opinions and decisions" (Cialdini et. al., 1999; Festinger, 1954).

Social Proof to Discourage Support and Behavior

However, just as social proof can be used to encourage participation, it can also be used to discourage participation with the group. Social influence is a major determinant of intervention (Latane and Darley, 1970) and researchers have suggested that social proof is a moral evaluation that influences an

audience's decision to comply, even when those to whom they are looking for guidance are not their friends or relatives, but strangers, making the expectations of the group and the actions they approve or disapprove of quite impactful (Cialdini, 2007; Larimer & Neighbors, 2003; Van Empelen, Schaalma, Kok, & Jansen, 2001). One reason for this is that threatening images have a strong influence over the public's perception of risk (Gibson, 2003) and, as a result, these risky images cause others to ponder the personal risk participating may incur, especially if they identify with that social group (Gibson and Zillmann, 2000). In this case, it seems that people are following certain cues based on the definitions and principles of social proof. Therefore, in terms of this study, it seems that if photographs contain some of the properties detailed above, as explained by social proof, they may be selected with the purpose of encouraging or discouraging support and, as a result, these photographs can cause or deter participation in the crowd's activities.

Social Judgment Theory and the Elaboration Likelihood Model

Traditional persuasion theories can explain social proof's power and how it works. Social judgment theory (Sherif & Hovland, 1961) explains why social proof can change people's opinions and also offers an explanation as to how opinions that changed, as a result of exposure to variables associated with social proof, should be measured. The theory suggests people place their varying opinions about an issue on a personal continuum, which contains a latitude of acceptance (between neutral and acceptance) and a latitude of rejection

(between neutral and rejection). According to the tenets of social judgment theory when a person encounters a persuasive message and it lands within his or her latitude of acceptance the persuasive message will succeed in its goal; however, if it falls within the latitude of rejection then the message will fail (Sherif & Hovland, 1961). Therefore, in regards to this study, if the photographs are biased then the opinions of those viewing the photographs should move in the direction of the bias. Findings from Zillman et al.'s 1999 study support this notion as well. They demonstrated that perception of an issue is high when the photographs presented strongly support one side of an issue over another. The study also found that images exert a strong influence on judgment and support the idea that assessments of an issue by those viewing the photograph were biased in the direction suggested by the photographs (Zillman et al., 1999). Based on social judgment theory, those opinions should move closer to the side of the continuum of the opinion suggested in the photograph. Over time and through additional exposure the photographs will eventually lead the individual to become more involved and ultimately permanently alter his or her behavior. However, a problem arises if content is put into context because one cannot expect large movement along the continuum because the prior knowledge of the issue will bias the individual's judgment (Sherif & Hovland, 1961). Therefore, as Sherif & Hovland (1961) suggested, in order to determine if the variables had any persuasive effect it would be prudent to create an experimental design that does not include any identifying information. This will establish a baseline of how far

an individual's mental and physical involvement can be measured after exposure to a series of one-sided photographs.

The elaboration likelihood model offers further explanation as to why people will immediately follow the lead of perfect strangers, especially when they have no prior knowledge of the issue at hand and why small shifts along a continuum are possible. The elaboration likelihood model (Petty and Cacioppo, 1981) suggests that persuasion can be faster and more likely as long as the persuader knows which route to take. The model suggests that there are two routes to persuasion, the central route, which, similar to social judgment theory, is when the message receiver carefully considers and examines the message presented to him or her and the peripheral route, which is when the message receiver is affected by other external factors, which is using a "mental shortcut" to make a decision (O'Keefe, 2008). Researchers have found that people tend to follow the peripheral route (Kahneman et al., 1982; Todd & Gegerenzer, 2007; Cialdini, 2009) because it is not possible to invest time analyzing every message with which they come into contact (Petty, 1995). Other researchers found that people prefer to follow the peripheral route out of a need to act as "lazy organisms" (Petty, 1995; McGuire, 1969) or "cognitive misers" (Petty, 1995; Taylor, 1981). Persuasion via the peripheral route is based on various factors, such as, if the messenger is perceived as an expert (Cialdini, 2009), physical attractiveness of the messenger (Cialdini, 2009; Olson & Marshuetz, 2005), the messenger's clothing (Cialdini, 2009; Suedfeld, Bochner, & Matas, 1971), and if the message receiver believes they share something in common with the

messenger (Cialdini, 2009; Burger et al., 2004). Thus, persuasion via the peripheral route is the result of certain “persuasion cues,” which are elements in the message or setting that can produce an attitude change without much thought on the part of the message receiver (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981).

Both the central and peripheral routes have advantages and disadvantages for persuaders. The advantage for the central route is that if the audience is convinced they tend to be permanently persuaded to the views of the persuader and the disadvantage is that the message receiver will not have an immediate response to the message, instead they will examine it to its fullest before making a decision (Petty and Cacioppo, 1981). The advantage of the peripheral route is that people will tend to make their decisions quickly and no time will be wasted in getting the desired population to act in the manner which the persuader desires and the disadvantage is that the persuasion will not be permanent and will require a constant renewal of the message to that audience (Petty and Cacioppo, 1981). Therefore, as long as permanent persuasion is not the goal, it seems the most efficient strategy for persuaders to employ is the peripheral route because its effectiveness is based on source credibility, social proof and emotional appeals, whereas the effectiveness of the central route is dependent upon the more rigorous standard of evidence and argument quality.

Media images seem to be an ideal and useful tool to quickly suggest proper behavior. Images are snap shots of life and are the closest representation of reality we can get without actually being there (Dondis, 1973). As a result, photographs have a unique capacity to arouse viewers' interest and

attention (Graber, 1996) and they possess the ability to suggest slices of action in which people need to partake (Zelizer, 2010). Thus, since images encourage individuals to quickly process information the immediate reactions from the viewers indicate that photographs are peripheral signs (Garrett et al, 2013; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). It does not hurt that media images also represent authenticity and communicate actuality (Brosius et al., 1996) as well as possess one quality unattainable by other visual arts, the characteristic of believability (Dondis, 1973). Based on the principles of the elaboration likelihood model, having this aura of believability means images are a fantastic persuasive tool because people innately believe that photographs are representative of reality and, therefore, they possess the same persuasive powers as reality because people are willing to act on what they see in a photograph.

This is particularly true when the images are threatening. Rogers (1975) stated that people who encounter a fearful message assess the probability of negative impact that not acting will have on their lives and they will take action in order to protect themselves and prevent the problem from becoming reality. As Soames Job (1988) offered, fear is most effective if the messenger suggests a behavior or solution that reduces the fear, because fear is an unpleasant state caused by a threat (Ruiter et al., 2001) meaning any suggestion to reduce it would be welcome by the receiver. As a result, fear has the unique ability to arouse and direct behavior toward a particular activity and it may be particularly useful for individual and community interventions (Floyd et al., 2000).

When it comes to using pictures as a persuasive tool to deter someone from participating in an activity, research suggests that in order to have the desired effect photographs should convey fear. Threatening images are capable of having a strong influence on how the public perceives the risk presented to them (Gibson, 2003). In fact, victim images were found to generate higher risk assessment among people in their own social group, causing them to consider the consequences and ultimately leading many not to participate in the event (Gibson & Zillmann, 2000). Therefore, the elaboration likelihood model can offer a reasonable explanation as to why viewers of a media photograph either obey the suggestions of the group or reject their overtures based on fear. As suggested by the elaboration likelihood model's peripheral route, when people encounter a persuasive message they will base their decisions on various factors associated with the photograph, which in my study are crowds and threatening/fearful images. Generally, people base their decisions on natural instinct and fear is a natural instinct. If someone is scared of being harmed for participating in the action being presented, then he or she will obey his or her natural instinct and not want to participate. In other words, when fear is perceived the individual will make the decision immediately rather than taking the time to consider all the pros and cons associated with the decision or whether there is a real threat of danger. In my opinion, the elaboration likelihood model offers a reasonable explanation as to why social proof has an immediate and persuasive impact, because crowd behavior preys on people's natural instincts. Therefore, a successful persuasive photograph will force an individual to rely on

his or her natural instinct to want to participate with the crowd. It is plausible that the variables of social proof are able to activate that natural instinct.

Applying the elaboration likelihood model and social judgment theory to my study offers further explanation as to why media images could persuade a large population to participate or not participate in a rally. The elaboration likelihood model explains the immediate response to both positive and negative messages and to the myriad variables designed to create this response. At the same time, the elaboration likelihood model offers an idea of what to expect. However, the theory is limited and cannot help me predict the degree of impact photographs will have; therefore, I need to rely on other theories known to be more elucidatory in nature, such as social judgment theory, to explain the effect of specific phenomena associated with my study and to what extent people are persuaded after initial exposure to media photographs.

Identifying Visual Properties of Social Proof

The principle of Social Proof states that when faced with ambiguous situations people tend to look to others for guidance on the correct way to behave in such situations and offers an explanation as to whether or not we can be persuaded to participate in a particular social action - in this case, a social movement. The principles of social proof can also be applied to study photographic content to determine whether or not a particular media outlet is taking sides and advocating for a specific cause. If positive or negative principles of social proof are included in a series of photographs, then we should be able,

based on statistical analysis, to determine if the photographs were selected to convey a specific point of view. However, in order to understand why social proof works, especially when those looking for guidance have only strangers to rely on, we must look to Petty and Cacioppo's (1981) peripheral route to persuasion which states that people tend to make quick decisions based on natural instinct, which in the case of social proof is mimic the crowd's behavior, which is our natural response. This explains why social proof can be extended to photographs published by news outlets because photographs enable individuals to view snapshots of crowd behavior. If the situation is ambiguous to the viewer then he or she will rely on his or her natural instinct and make a decision based on that instinct, which in the case of social proof is to follow the lead of others.

The principles of social proof found in photographs that positively persuade individuals to participate in social movements include, crowds, celebrities and opinions of likeminded individuals. To identify crowds in a photograph one must take into account how a camera lens can be used to create a "crowd" effect. For example, a close-up photograph of a small gathering of people can create the illusion of a large gathering of people by implication of what isn't seen in the image. McPhail and Wohlstein (1983) noted that two or more persons in a public place are defined as a gathering, which provides the circumstances where collective behavior can occur, and Beaford et al. (2000) noted that media outlets help with the recruitment of protesters when they present images of people participating in a movement. Showing people throughout the photograph's frame can create a crowd effect and convince the

viewer that a group of people is participating in the movement's activities. Taking this and the definitions of social proof previously mentioned in this paper into account, we can conclude that choosing to publish photographs of crowds of people participating in a rally is an indication of support from the media outlet because such photographs can encourage others to support or participate in the movement being portrayed.

Another principle of social proof that can be portrayed through photographs and can indicate support for social movements are celebrities participating in the social movement. Showcasing photographs of celebrities participating and supporting the social movement indicates to the viewer that because these very important people have taken time out of their busy schedules to attend the rally then the viewer should as well. Also, celebrity photographs imbue the rally with greater importance by virtue of the rally's ability to attract the celebrity power.

Knowing the opinions of the people in the photographs is another principle of social proof whereby the media outlet's opinion of the movement can be gleaned. Any photograph that contains words of support for the movement is an indication of support. Zitek and Hebl (2007) explain, "The opinion of a single individual can influence another's prejudiced related attitudes." Stangor et al. (2001) found that changes in opinion were stronger among people exposed to information about the opinions of the in-group rather than out-group members, which allowed for a stronger bond with supporters who viewed the photographs. Stangor et al.'s finding is particularly important because it suggests that the

opinions must be from likeminded people. Therefore, the opinions must be taken in context as to what may be encouraging to one of group of people, may be insulting to and anger another group.

The principles of social proof can also be found in photographs that are selected to dissuade participation in a social movement. The principles utilized to dissuade individuals from supporting or participating in a social movement includes threats to freedom and pictures that elicit an angry response from the viewer. Photographs that contain threats to the viewer's freedom typically showcase, when covering a social movement, a police presence, as a police presence during a protest symbolizes a threat from the local government that it will maintain law and order. As Axelrod (1986) argued, when large groups of people participate in a coordinated activity without some authority policing the behavior, they tend to believe that the activity is normal; but when there is a police presence, people tend to believe that this is an attempt to discourage the behavior. Kritzer (1977) concluded that outbreaks of violence at rallies could be traced back to police interacting with protesters (McPhail & Wohlstein, 1983). Therefore, selecting photographs that contain a police or governmental presence, particularly photographs showing officers arresting protesters, is equivalent to a rejection of the movement because viewers can infer that the protesters need to be watched because their activities are unlawful or that the actions of the protesters could be potentially dangerous and harmful.

Another principle of social proof that can be very impactful when applied to a photograph is anger, which is a type of emotional response. Emotional

response, according to Cho et al. (2003), is an immediate response from viewers to a specific characteristic of a stimulus, such as anger. Anger, is defined by Newhagen (1998) as negative attitudes, which are stimulated by high levels of anxiety, which can sometimes be the result of a territorial violation. Territorial violation can emit strong emotions from viewers especially when looking at media pictures from a social movement because many times the pictures show protesters vandalizing property and creating an eyesore. Also, territorial violation indicates that protesters are living on private property without consent of the owner, which was the case with the Occupy Wall Street movement. The limitation of anger is the assumption that viewers of the media photographs share the same values as those of the media outlet publishing the photographs. This means that coders must view the photographs from the same perspective of the media outlet and its assumed clientele because not doing so will take away meaning from the photographs. While some photographs may be approved by one set of people, another may find those same photographs inherently detestable. Therefore, coders must put themselves in the same position as a likely reader of the publication because in doing so, they understand the perspective of the reader as well as the perspective the media outlet is writing from. Photographs containing these principles are, in my opinion, indicative of a media outlet's support or rejection for the movement being depicted. Keep in mind, the definitions of these principles as outlined in this paper are limited to the photographic coverage of social movements and extending these definitions to something other than a social movement may yield different results.

CHAPTER 3

Methods

Content Analysis

A content analysis of the entire population of photographs pertaining to the Occupy Wall Street rallies listed on the websites of both the Daily News and the New York Post was conducted to determine if there was a pattern to the types of photographs selected by both media outlets covering the same event. The purpose of the content analysis was to determine if a pattern of selection can be detected by employing the principles of social proof to media photographs selected by media outlets during their coverage of a social movement. The use of the principles and definitions relating to social proof can potentially provide researchers with another tool to detect more accurately if a media outlet's photographic coverage of a social movement is biased. Content analysis was the most appropriate method available to determine if a pattern of selection existed because it allowed me to go back through the entire population of photographs on both media outlet's websites in order to conduct a comprehensive and objective examination. This procedure also allowed me to confirm statistically if a pattern of selection existed.

The specific content analyzed was a population of 391 photographs posted on both media outlet's websites (145 from the New York Daily News and 246 from the New York Post) of the Occupy Wall Street Protests. The photographs date from the initial occupation of Zuccotti Park on September 17,

2011 until November 15, 2011 when the occupier's were removed from the park, effectively eliminating the rally's most significant symbol. My reliance on this purposive sample is supported by Druckman and Parkin (2005) who determined that the most effective and efficient way to investigate and measure trends in media coverage of specific events is to compare two similar media outlets in the same market and hold the coverage and market constant so as to determine if any coverage differences between the two outlets reflect relative editorial slant. Since the epicenter of the Occupy Wall Street Protests was undoubtedly in New York City, it was logical that the most appropriate media outlets to compare were the two most similar print newspapers in the New York City market, the tabloids the Daily News and the New York Post.

Therefore, if the principles of social proof can be used to detect whether or not a media outlet's political orientation affects its photographic coverage of a protest, then, based on the research covered earlier in this paper, the photographic coverage that supports the Occupy Wall Street protests should show more photographs of crowds of protesters supporting the movements, celebrities supporting the movement and protesters holding or showing words of support for the movement in an effort to influence likeminded individuals. Alternatively, the photographic coverage rejecting the movement should be predominantly images of potential risk for participation, anger inducing images and images that suggest immoral behavior in an effort to deter support.

Variable Definitions

The independent variable, political orientation of a media outlet, was determined by which political party the Daily News and the New York Post endorsed during the majority of presidential election cycles between 1992 and 2008, a total of five election years. In 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004, and 2008 the New York Post endorsed the Republican presidential candidate and in 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2008 the New York Daily News endorsed the Democratic presidential candidate, with 2004 being the lone exception when the New York Daily News endorsed the Republican presidential candidate (www.thefreelibrary.com 2003; www.presidency.ucsb.edu 2008).

The dependent variable is support or rejection of the Occupy Wall Street protests. To indicate support the majority of the photographs contain crowds supporting the movement by expressing their opinions through writing on paper, cardboard and other objects. To indicate rejection of the political movement the majority of the photographs feature risks and threats to personal freedom as a result of participating in the movement because it does not conform to social norms. These norms describe both appropriate and inappropriate behavior (Ehrhart & Naumann, 2004; Cialdini & Trost, 1998) and norms can be changed by “inducing rewards and sanctions for correct and incorrect behavior” (Ehrhart & Naumann, 2004).

One example of conveying incorrect behavior is to show photographs of protesters being arrested, which implies severe sanctions for behaving in an unlawful, and therefore socially incorrect, manner. The reward for socially

conforming behavior is to show no police oversight. Photographs that lack a police presence signify that protesters are abiding by society's norms because their actions are recognized as being lawful and therefore accepted. Another indication of rejection is photographs that create anger toward the protesters in the photographs. As Newhagen (1998) states, selecting images that create anger may be done to further polarize the existing opinions of the media outlet's followers towards the movement. Therefore, by selecting these types of photographs the media outlet may be attempting to inhibit their followers from identifying with the protesters.

The main limitation of this design is that it cannot predict the effect photographs will have on the population, nor can it measure the effect the potential bias had on whether or not the population supported or rejected the Occupy Wall Street Movement. The limitation is that content analysis can only offer unbiased insight into whether or not the photographs shown by both media outlets suggest a pattern, it cannot determine if the selection of photographs was done purposefully. To accomplish that task qualitative studies, such as interviews with photo editors, need to be conducted. A final limitation is that content analysis cannot explain if the selection of photographs can persuade the population to accept the media outlet's viewpoint. While interviewing photo editors allows for a deeper understanding into the reasoning behind their selection of photographs, content analysis provides for a stricter, more objective examination into what was presented.

Data Collection

The content analyzed for this study was all of the photographs of the Occupy Wall Street protests posted on the websites of both the Daily News and the New York Post from September 17, 2011 through November 15, 2011 - the day the protesters first occupied Zuccotti Park in New York City to the day they were removed from Zuccotti Park, ending the occupation. Screen shots were taken of each photograph and given a unique file name. Each population was saved in its entirety on a separate memory stick, allowing for easy access and identification for future studies.

Measurement

The independent variable was measured on a nominal scale, as the only question that needed to be determined was which political party the New York Daily News and the New York Post endorsed during the 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004, and 2008 presidential elections. Additionally, the dependent variable was measured on a nominal scale as the study only sought to measure support or rejection of the Occupy Wall Street protests.

Coders were trained by using photographs of the Occupy Wall Street protests from other media sources. Each coder was given a clearly defined coding sheet, requiring they indicate whether or not the photograph supported or rejected the Occupy Wall Street protests.

Reliability and Validity

A coder reliability test was conducted on the entire population of 391 photographs, which consisted of 145 photographs for the New York Daily News and 246 photographs for the New York Post. Both percentage of agreement and Scott's pi tests correcting for chance agreement were used. The percentage agreement score was 92%. The Scott's pi score was .82.

The major assumption of this study was that the proportion of photographs offered by both the New York Daily News and the New York Post would reflect the bias of their political orientations rather than the reality of the Occupy Wall Street protests. While it is possible that every single photograph selected and shown is an accurate description of how the events took place, this most likely is not the case. According to Braden Goyette's Occupy Wall Street article in the November 17, 2011 edition of the Daily News, only 200-300 people slept in Zuccotti Park each night. Many of the photographs suggest large crowds of protesters much larger than 200-300 people, but Goyette's article suggests this was not an accurate portrayal of events since the main population of protestors, the 200-300 who slept in Zuccotti Park, was smaller than many people believed. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that any photograph suggesting crowds substantially larger than 200-300 protesters were inaccurately portraying events.

Another verifiable indicator of real events is the average number of arrests during the 60-days of the Occupy Wall Street Protests. According to the same November 17, 2011 New York Daily News article, there were 1300 arrests from September 17, 2012 through November 15, 2012, of which more than half (700),

took place on September 30, 2011 (www.huffingtonpost.com, 2011). Also, according to www.occupyarrests.com (2012), during the time period examined there were only eight days when arrests happened in New York City. This suggests that the high number of photographs showing police activity and arrests was not an accurate depiction of everyday events during the protests. Therefore, there is a strong indication that the proportional number of photographs that both supported and rejected the Occupy Wall Street protests were significantly skewed to the political orientation of both media outlets and that the reporting by both the Daily News and the New York Post was not reflective of reality.

Experiment

The second phase of this study, after determining if a pattern of selection of media photographs existed, was to understand how these selected photographs may have affected the public's willingness to either support or reject the rally, as presented by the New York Post and the Daily News, and the extent of that support or rejection. Photographs for the experiment came exclusively from those used in the content analysis. The purpose of this experiment was to understand the persuasive effects these photographs exhibit and the extent to which people were persuaded. As a result, I conducted an experiment using a random selection of photographs from the same population used in the content analysis in an effort to determine if they have any effect in increasing or decreasing the public's attitude or involvement in the rally. Understanding whether there is an effect and the power of that effect can open up an entirely

new stream of communications research by offering researchers another explanation as to the possible manipulative power of media photographs and whether the principles of social proof can be transferred via media photographs.

Variable Definitions

If the principles of Social Proof can be transmitted through media photographs then viewing photographs of large groups of protesters, celebrities supporting the rallies or protesters expressing their opinions and beliefs through signage will cause respondents to participate, on some level, in the rally's cause. Conversely, photographs that showcase threats to participation, such as police arresting or punishing protesters, will, as stated by Gibson (2003), influence viewers assessment that participation in the rallies is a risky proposition and, therefore, cause them to reject the notion of participating on any level in the rally's cause. This is supported by Rogers' (1975) protection motivation theory, which suggests that if an individual sees a potentially harmful event he or she will determine whether or not to participate based on the probability that participation in the event will lead them to experience the same fate.

Design

To understand the persuasive effects of the photographs posted by both the New York Post and the Daily News on their websites, I conducted an experiment because it allowed for a more accurate assessment of the effects these photographs can have on unsuspecting viewers. The photographs used in

the experiment were culled from the population the coders agreed upon in the content analysis. To minimize known potential persuasive effects from each picture's photographic properties, I took into account only those properties proven quantitatively by past researchers as having persuasive effects – perspective and distance effect. However, past research on distance effect did not define adequately how to identify properties associated with distance effects (a close up, long range, or medium view photograph); therefore, I was unable to account for this and was able only to account for the properties of perspective.

A content analysis to identify the perspectives in each photograph from both the New York Post and the Daily News populations was performed¹. Once identified the photographs were separated into high, neutral and low angle piles. Additionally, a content analysis was conducted to find photographs that contained identifying information about Occupy Wall Street, as photographs containing this information could potentially bias the subject's responses if he or she had any pre-existing opinion about Occupy Wall Street². All photographs that contained identifying information were removed from the population. The remaining photographs were then randomly selected using an online

¹ Coders were asked to identify photographs containing high, low and neutral angles, where a high angle photograph is when the camera angle looks down on the subject, a low angle is when the camera angle looks up at the subject and a neutral angle is when the camera angle looks straight at the subject. The definitions of perspective were derived from Meyers-Levy and Peracchio, 1992; Kraft, 1987; Mandell and Shaw, 1973; Tiemens, 1970.

² Coders were asked to identify photographs that contained information that would reveal to respondents which rally the photographs depicted. Therefore any photograph that contained information containing the name of the rally or a known and identifying slogan was defined as identifying information and thus was removed from the population of photographs used for the experiment.

randomization program from stattrek.com. In total 60 photographs were used for the experiment, 30 from the New York Post and 30 from the Daily News. Both conditions contained 10 photographs from the high angle perspective, 11 from the neutral angle perspective and 9 from the low angle perspective³. In an effort to achieve a balancing effect and eliminate bias, photographs from varying perspectives were selected equally.

The experiment included 404 subjects who were divided into two conditions of 202 each. The conditions were those looking at photographs from the Daily News and those looking at photographs from the New York Post. The number of subjects exceeds the appropriate size to meet the necessary requirements for a 95-percent confidence level and a margin of error of + or – 5% of 384 (Dillman et al., 2009)⁴. The design was post-test only because the sample was large enough to be an accurate reflection of the effect the stimulus has on the population studied. Also, since I sought to understand the effects the photographs have a pre-test was unnecessary because this could have biased the population. The post-test-only design also allowed for an easy comparison of the effects each sample of photographs had on the subjects (i.e. more subjects looking at the Daily News photographs want to support Occupy Wall Street than subjects looking at the New York Post photographs).

³ An unequal distribution was necessary because there was a low number of low angle photographs. In an effort to remain unbiased the neutral angle was awarded the extra photograph.

⁴ The experimental population exceeded 384 participants because the online program allowed only 200 or more for each condition. A possible computer glitch allowed 202 to participate in each condition before closing the conditions.

The experiment was administered online, through an external link via Cint⁵, an online administrator of surveys, in an effort to mimic the conditions under which subjects would have viewed the photographs, on their own electronic devices in the comfort of their homes or offices. The types of devices used by individual subjects was accounted for by asking respondents what electronic devices they used and a regression analysis was conducted to determine if this had any effect. The experiment featured questions about how much support subjects are willing to give to the rally and if they were willing to participate in the rally⁶. The questions measured verbal support by asking respondents how likely they were to speak to a family member, someone they know or a stranger in support of the rally. Physical support was measured by asking respondents how likely they were to support the rally with a bumper sticker, volunteering behind the scenes, donating money and marching.

The rationale behind my questions is that I want to create a scale that measures both verbal and physical support based on requests that people may or may not consider intrusive on comfort levels and in their daily lives. Of the verbal activities, speaking to a family member is typically an easy request because the potential embarrassment that may result is minimal. Speaking to someone you know, such as a friend, neighbor or coworker, is the second least invasive behavior and the second least likely to cause harm because the people

⁵ Subjects from across the United States of America voluntarily sign up to be on a list. They receive Emails about their interest to participate. Subjects can choose which surveys to participate in and are compensated \$1.00 for every ten minutes by Cint.

⁶ See Appendices B and C for survey questions

you are talking to are more accepting of your opinions. Speaking to a stranger is the most difficult of the vocal activities because a person does not know how a stranger will react and the response from the stranger can be potentially harmful. Of the physical requests, supporting a rally with a sign or bumper sticker is the least difficult and invasive because it requires the least effort, allows for a certain degree of anonymity and does not result in many harmful repercussions. The second least invasive behavior is volunteering behind the scenes because it allows the individual to participate without it being known, while donating money to the rally is more intrusive because it requires a financial commitment. Still, with the donation request, the subject has the option to remain anonymous. Marching is the most invasive request because it requires the individual to make the greatest sacrifice, his or her anonymity. By participating in the rally, the individual can be seen, which can result in verbal or physical attacks and, in some cases, loss of employment, economic viability and personal freedom. Ideally, once the means are analyzed the resulting scale from these questions of the strength of requests should be the same in both conditions. Questions were rated on a five point Likert scale and were measured at 1=highly agree, 2=agree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=disagree, and 5=highly disagree. The experimental survey also included various questions that addressed potential confounds in the experiment.

Reliability and Validity

Percentage agreement for perspective was 96-percent with a Scott's Pi of .92 and percentage agreement for identifying information was 97-percent with a Scott's Pi of .98. Acceptable coder reliability for two coders requires a Scott's Pi score of .8 or greater (Riffe, Lace & Fico 2005). All subjects were randomly assigned to each experimental condition, accounting for most confounds, and photographs were randomized for each subject in both conditions. Thousands of subjects throughout the United States voluntarily sign up with Cint to participate in online surveys. When Cint receives a survey they send a query out to its entire population. The first 400 subjects who responded to the query were then randomly assigned to each condition. This means that everyone in Cint's database technically has an equal chance to participate. Enhancing reliability was the random display of photographs in each condition for each subject, further alleviating any potential biasing effects the order of the photographs may have had.

The experiment attempted to identify various confounds that threatened both internal and external validity. Identified threats to internal validity were angle of photograph, identifying information of Occupy Wall Street within the photograph and distance effects. Identified threats to external validity included electronic devices used to view photographs and various socio-economic factors. The following explains each confound and how I dealt with their potential threats:

- Angle of photograph: Researchers who studied the effects of camera angle on a viewer's judgment (Meyers-Levy and Peracchio,

1992; Kraft, 1987; Mandell and Shaw, 1973; Tiemens, 1970) found that the angle from which a photograph is taken, also known as perspective, can affect a person's opinion about the subject presented in the photograph. Specifically, they found that looking at an item from a low angle, looking up from the ground, led viewers to interpret the subject matter in a more positive light and, conversely, when the camera angle was high, looking down toward the ground, viewers judged the subject matter more negatively. When an item was photographed at eye level judgments toward the subject matter were neutral. To mitigate this potential confound in my study, I conducted a content analysis to determine which photographs were high, low and neutral and then I balanced these photographs by showing an equal number of high, low and neutral perspective photographs across conditions.

- Electronic Device Used To View Photographs: In Arnheim's (1971) book *Art and Visual Perception*, he demonstrates how a viewer's perspective of a photograph can change when it is tilted up or down and anywhere in between (see diagram below).

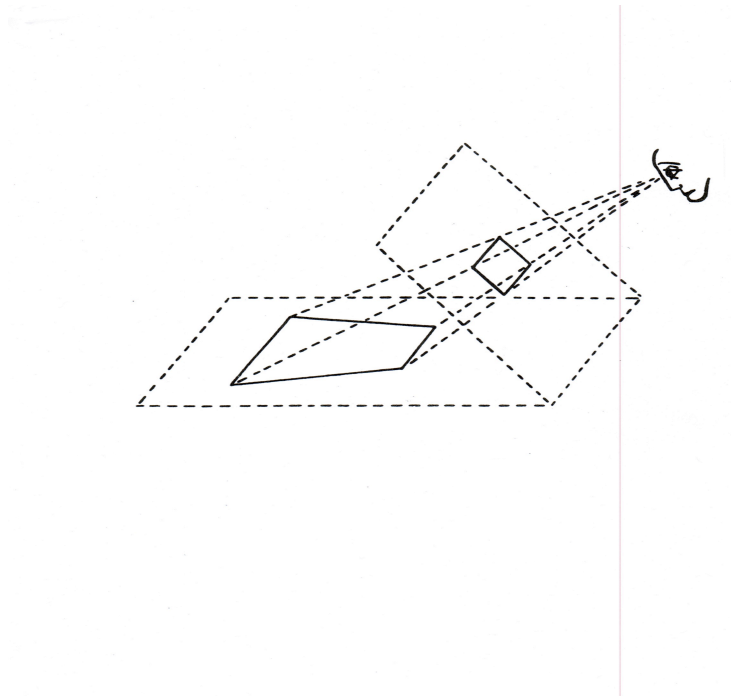


Figure 1: Arnheim Figure (Arnheim, 1971)

While Arnheim's diagram was not specifically drawn to explain visual effects on various electronic devices it does suggest a very interesting and potentially damaging confound that threatened my study's internal validity. Because the experiment was administered to subjects offsite through an email link and subjects used their own electronic devices (i.e. desktop computers, laptop computers, tablets and/or smart-phones) to take the survey, there was no way to control how subjects viewed the photographs on the various types of electronic devices (i.e. sitting at a desktop computer, sitting on a couch with a laptop or lying in bed with a tablet). It is likely that subjects viewed the photographs at different angles that may have altered how they perceived the image and possibly affected their interpretation of it. To account for this potential confound, I

asked respondents what type of electronic device he or she used, then I conducted a regression analysis to determine if this had any effect on the responses. Results from the regression analysis in both the Daily News and the New York Post conditions showed that the use of different electronic devices did not have any influence on the decisions made by the subjects.

- Social factors (socioeconomic status, race and gender): A sample that is not representative of the general population (i.e. all rich white men or all minorities or all people over 60, etc...) is always possible, even when a sample is randomly selected. This can affect external validity since data collected from a homogeneous sample cannot be generalized. To solve this potential confound I asked specific demographic questions, such as age, gender, race, income, and education. These questions allowed me to judge whether or not the sample was representative of the general population.
- Distance perspective of subjects: Artz et al. (1994) found that distance perspective of subjects in a photograph (i.e. close up or long shot) had an effect on whether or not viewers liked the subject matter in the photograph. They found that respondents liked the subject matter more in photographs with a distance scene than a close up scene, which created a more negative response. Once again, photograph selection has great potential to bias

respondents; however, the researchers did not adequately define how to identify a close up, long range, or medium view photograph and, unfortunately, I was unable to account for this confound. As a result, it is conceivable that the subjects' responses may have been affected.

- Identifying information in photographs: Any information in a photograph that identifies what the protest is about could bias the treatment's effect on the respondents' judgment because once the respondent is made aware of an issue they make their judgments based on the treatment and on their previous opinion of the issue (Sherif and Hovland, 1961). Since the purpose of the experiment was to determine whether or not the effects of social proof could be extended through photographs it was clear that any identifying information about the rally could bias respondents. To avoid this problem, I conducted a content analysis looking for identifying information of the Occupy Wall Street rallies. All photos that contained identifying information were removed from the population of photographs for the experiment.

While the confounds specifically address the respondents' attitudes toward the subjects presented in the photographs, it is reasonable to conclude based on Fishbein & Ajzen's (1975) theory of reasoned action that addressing potential problems with attitudes will also address behavior. The theory of reasoned action is the likelihood that one's attitude to perform a certain behavior

will lead to the individual actually performing that behavior. A meta-analysis conducted by Sheppard, Hartwick and Warshaw (1988) found that there was strong evidence that attitudes can predict behavior, particularly when there are activities that involve an explicit choice, such as to participate or not participate in a rally. The Sheppard, Hartwick and Warshaw (1988) study concluded that the more concrete and focused the choice is for the individual, the greater the likelihood that their attitude will predict their behavior. Essentially, clarity of choices is the key. O'Keefe (2002) offered that there are two factors involved in predicting if a person's attitude will lead to behavior change. The first factor is whether someone important wants another person to perform a behavior, and the second factor is the individual's own evaluation of the behavior and what he or she believes other people think he or she should do. The second factor specifically addresses social proof because social proof speaks to an individual participating in an activity because others are doing it. In short, people will participate in the behavior not only because they evaluate it as a reasonable action, but also because observing the participation of others leads them to believe that others want them to participate as well. Also, if the individual believes that everyone else shares the same attitude, it is easier to believe that they share the same behaviors. Therefore, accounting for problems with attitudes should be enough to account for potential problems with behavior.

Analysis

Hypotheses were analyzed by comparing responses from the Daily News and the New York Post conditions on whether or not subjects exposed to photographs from each condition were more or less likely to tell a family member to support the rally, to tell someone he or she knows to support the rally, to tell a stranger to support the rally, to display a sign or bumper sticker supporting the rally, to support the rally by volunteering behind the scenes, to support the rally by donating to it, and to march in the rally. Hypotheses were analyzed with a t-test because I wanted to determine if there were any statistically significant differences between average responses from the Daily News and the New York Post conditions to determine if the photographs that contained the principles of social proof had any persuasive effects on the respondents. A regression analysis was also conducted for hypotheses to hold constant the effects from the following variables, fear of police, respect for the police, opinion of the police, prior participation in a rally, fear of crowds, political orientation, political involvement, type of electronic device used during the experiment, marital status, income, dependents, education, Daily News, and gender. Holding these variables constant allowed me to generate a more accurate analysis of these hypotheses. As such, the results from the regression analysis determined whether or not hypotheses two through eight were supported.

Limitations

The goal of this study was to determine whether or not the persuasive effects of social proof could be extended through media photographs in order to encourage or discourage people to behave in the manner suggested by the photographs. However, to do this in the most accurate fashion possible, the study needed to take into account all of the photographic properties that could have an effect on how people interpret a photograph. Since only two properties, perspective and distance, have been quantitatively tested, performing quantitative tests before accounting for them in this study was unrealistic. As a result, I investigated only the confounding effects perspective had as past quantitative studies suggest that the angle from which a photograph is taken seems to have a strong persuasive effect on whether or not a person will be persuaded by the photograph.

Another limitation of this study is that since it is an initial investigation into whether or not social proof can be extended to photographs, both sets of photographs were not placed into context, as doing so may have biased those who have existing opinions about the Occupy Wall Street rallies. Since these opinions might have interfered in determining if subjects were persuaded by the variables of interest it was necessary for the initial study to remove all photographs with identifying information and keep context out of the equation. This allowed for the creation of a baseline from which future studies can be compared.

CHAPTER 4

Results

The purpose of this study was to investigate if there was a difference in the photographic coverage of the Occupy Wall Street rallies between two competing, yet politically opposite New York City tabloid newspapers. Since media outlets are supposed to be objective in their news coverage, it stood to reason that if both newspapers were covering the same event, the photographs shown to the public would have been similar. Variables derived from the definition of social proof were applied to the photographs from both the Daily News and the New York Post in an effort to detect any similarities and differences. Statistical measures to detect differences in photographic selection between the Daily News and the New York Post (H1) were a Chi-square test of association as this test helped me understand if the pattern of selection was a result of chance or due to other reasons and Cramer's V, which tested the strength of association. Hypotheses two through eight were analyzed with a t-test because I wanted to determine if there were any statistically significant differences between average responses from the Daily News and the New York Post conditions to determine if the photographs that contained the principles of social proof had any persuasive effects on the respondents. Responses for the T-test were coded 1= very likely, 2 = likely, 3 = neither likely nor unlikely, 4 = unlikely, and 5 = very unlikely. However, only so much can be inferred from a t-test. In a perfect world, randomization of subjects should account for most

imbalances and confounds, but in reality that is not always the case. Therefore, a regression analysis was also conducted for hypotheses two through eight to hold constant the effects from the following variables, fear of police, respect for the police, opinion of the police, prior participation in a rally, fear of crowds, political orientation, political involvement, type of electronic device used during the experiment, marital status, income, dependents, education, Daily News, and gender. Holding these variables constant will enable me to generate a more accurate analysis of these hypotheses (two through eight). As such, the results from the regression analysis determined whether or not hypotheses two through eight were supported.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: The politically liberal Daily News will bias a greater percentage of its photographic coverage in support of the Occupy Wall Street protests, while the politically conservative New York Post will bias a greater percentage of its photographic coverage against the Occupy Wall Street protests.

The first hypothesis predicts that the Daily News will select a greater percentage of photographs to support the Occupy Wall Street rallies, while the New York Post will select a greater percentage of photographs against the Occupy Wall Street rallies. The results in Table 1 indicate that, based on the definitions of social proof, 58% of photographs selected by the Daily News

supported the protests and 42% rejected the protests. Results from the New York Post indicate that 18% of the photographs selected supported the Occupy Wall Street protests and 82% rejected the protests⁷. A 2x2 Chi-square test of association was conducted to test the statistical significance of this relationship. The Chi-square score was 62.3 (1, N=361) and $p < .001$ with a Cramer's V score of .42 indicating that the relationship was significant and the strength of association was very strong. The results indicate that there was a significant difference in the types of photographs selected by both media outlets that covered the same event. The photographs selected by the Daily News were supportive of Occupy Wall Street and the photographs selected by the New York Post selected were unsupportive of Occupy Wall Street, meaning hypothesis one is supported. Most importantly, the results show that the differences were not a result of chance and that these photographs were most likely selected to convey a specific point of view.

⁷ Photographs disagreed upon by coders were removed from final analysis because the amount disagreed upon, 30-photographs, was low.

Table 1: Indicating media bias in photographic coverage of the Occupy Wall Street protests based on political orientation of the media outlet

	Daily News Politically Liberal	New York Post Politically Conservative
Support Occupy Wall Street	58%	18%
Reject Occupy Wall Street	42%	82%
	(N=136)	(N=225)

$\chi^2 (1) = 62.3, P < .001, \text{Cramer's } V = .42$

Hypothesis 2: Subjects exposed to photographs from the politically liberal Daily News will report to be more likely to speak positively of the rally to a member of their immediate family and subjects exposed to photographs from the politically conservative New York Post will report to be less likely to speak positively of the rally to a member of their immediate family.

Hypothesis two predicts that respondents exposed to photographs from the Daily News will be more likely than subjects exposed to pictures from the New York Post condition to speak positively of the rally to a member of their immediate family. Results from the T-test (Table 2) show that the differences in the means from the New York Daily News ($M = 2.87, SD = 1.385$) and the New York Post ($M = 3.19, SD = 1.251$) conditions were statistically significant ($p < .01$),

indicating that a significant amount of respondents were willing to speak positively of the rally to a family member after viewing the Daily News photographs, thus taking the first step in supporting the rally even when they did not know what the rally was about. The results from the T-test suggest, without holding any variable constant, that photographs, which contain the principles of social proof, can persuade individuals to speak positively of the rally to a member of their immediate family, even when the individual does not know what the rally is about. The regression analysis (Table 2A), which held multiple variables constant, also showed strong statistical support ($p < .01$) for this hypothesis, meaning hypothesis two is supported.

Table 2: Correlated t-test for respondents who would speak positively of the rally to a family member

Variable	Mean	SD	t value	df	Significance
Daily News*	2.87	1.385			
New York Post*	3.19	1.251	2.585	197	$P < .01$

*Responses were coded 1=Very Likely, 2=Likely, 3=Neither Likely nor Unlikely, 4=Unlikely, 5= Very Unlikely

Table 2A: Summary of regression analyses predicting the likelihood of people to speak positively of the rally to a family member

	B	SE	β
Daily News	-.325	.120	-.124 [^]
Respect for police	-.103	.076	-.078
Positive opinion of police	.014	.073	.012
Participation in rally	.413	.155	.137 [^]
Crowd fear	-.013	.064	-.010
Conservative	-.388	.056	-.329 [#]
High political involvement	.134	.066	.099 [*]
Electronic devices	.026	.078	.015
Married	-.215	.131	-.081
Income	.119	.081	.072
Dependents	-.249	.058	-.207 [#]
Education	.080	.047	.087
Fear of police	.174	.060	.147 [^]
Male	.025	.126	.009
R ²		.261	
F		9.215 [#]	

Note: * p <.05., ^ p<.01, # p<.001

Hypothesis 3: Subjects exposed to photographs from the politically liberal Daily News will report to be more likely to speak positively of the rally to someone they know and subjects exposed to photographs from the politically conservative New York Post will report to be less likely to speak positively of the rally to someone they know.

Hypothesis three predicts that respondents exposed to photographs from the Daily News will be more likely than subjects exposed to pictures from the New York Post condition to speak positively of the rally to someone they know. Results (Table 3) from the T-test showed no statistically significant relationship between the average responses between the Daily News ($M = 3.05$, $SD = 1.360$) and the New York Post ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 1.234$). However, results from the regression analysis (Table 3A) tell a different story. When holding all the independent variables constant the results are statistically significant ($p < .001$). Since the T-test does not take the influences of other variables into account, it becomes necessary to further investigate the influences other variable may play and hold them constant. As such, the results of the regression analysis delivers a more accurate analysis, with the more accurate result being that hypothesis three is supported, meaning that pictures that contain the principles of social proof can persuade individuals to speak positively of a rally they know nothing about to someone they know.

Table 3: Correlated t-test for respondents who would speak positively of the rally to someone they know

Variable	Mean	SD	t value	df	Significance
Daily News*	3.05	1.360			
New York Post*	3.21	1.234	1.282	194	P>.05

*Responses were coded 1=Very Likely, 2=Likely, 3=Neither Likely nor Unlikely, 4=Unlikely, 5=Very Unlikely

Table 3A: Summary of regression analyses predicting the likelihood of people to speak positively of the rally to someone they know

	B	SE	β
Daily News	-.672	.112	-.259#
Respect for police	-.108	.071	-.082
Positive opinion of police	-.027	.068	-.022
Participation in rally	.452	.144	.150^
Crowd fear	-.028	.059	-.022
Conservative	-.295	.053	-.251#
High political involvement	.200	.062	.149#
Electronic devices	.084	.073	.050
Married	-.258	.122	-.098*
Income	.170	.075	.103
Dependents	-.224	.055	-.187#
Education	.060	.043	.066
Fear of police	.277	.056	.234#
Male	.102	.118	.038
R ²		.349	
F		14.028#	

Note: * p <.05., ^ p<.01, # p<.001

Hypothesis 4: Subjects exposed to photographs from the politically liberal Daily News will report to be more likely to speak positively of the rally to a stranger and subjects exposed to photographs from the politically conservative New York Post will report to be less likely to speak positively of the rally to a stranger.

Hypothesis four predicts respondents exposed to photographs from the Daily News will be more likely than subjects exposed to pictures from the New York Post condition to speak positively of the rally to a stranger, while a greater percentage of subjects exposed to photographs from the New York Post will not speak positively of the rally to a stranger. Results (Table 4) from the T-test showed that the difference between the average responses from subjects who viewed the Daily News condition ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 1.345$) and the New York Post condition ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 1.196$) was not statistically significant, meaning that when influencing variables were not accounted for, photographs that contain the principles of social proof did not persuade subjects to want to speak positively of the rally to a stranger. However, as results of the regression analysis indicate (Table 4A), when influencing variables are held constant the results are statistically significant ($p < .001$). Therefore, when holding all variables constant, people will be persuaded by photographs that contain the principles of social proof to speak positively of a rally to a stranger, even when they do not know what the rally is about, meaning hypothesis four is supported.

Table 4: Correlated t-test for respondents who would speak positively of the rally to a stranger

Variable	Mean	SD	t value	df	Significance
Daily News*	3.19	1.345			
New York Post*	3.40	1.196	1.657	190	P>.05

*Responses were coded 1=Very Likely, 2=Likely, 3=Neither Likely nor Unlikely, 4=Unlikely, 5=Very Unlikely

Table 4A: Summary of regression analyses predicting the likelihood of people to speak positively of the rally to a stranger

	B	SE	β
Daily News	-.247	.113	-.098#
Respect for police	-.137	.071	-.108
Positive opinion of police	-.030	.068	-.026
Participation in rally	.305	.146	.105*
Crowd fear	-.074	.060	-.060
Conservative	-.345	.053	-.303#
High political involvement	.186	.063	.143^
Electronic devices	.038	.073	.024
Married	-.310	.124	-.122^
Income	.142	.076	.089
Dependents	-.208	.056	-.179#
Education	.053	.044	.060
Fear of police	.241	.056	.212#
Male	.081	.119	.031
R ²		.307	
F		11.329#	

Note: * p <.05., ^ p<.01, # p<.001

Hypothesis 5: Subjects exposed to photographs from the politically liberal Daily News will report to be more likely to display a sign or bumper sticker supporting the rally and subjects exposed to photographs from the politically conservative New York Post will report to be less likely to display a sign or bumper sticker supporting the rally.

Hypothesis five predicts respondents exposed to photographs from the Daily News will be more likely than subjects exposed to pictures from the New York Post condition to display a sign or bumper sticker supporting the rally. Results (Table 5) found that the difference between the average responses from subjects who viewed the Daily News condition ($M = 3.51$, $SD = 1.341$) and New York Post condition ($M = 3.69$, $SD = 1.193$) was not statistically significant meaning there was no difference in the strength of photographs to compel subjects to offer a minimal amount of physical support to support the rally. Additionally, the regression analysis (Table 5A) does not show any statistical significance ($p > .05$); therefore, it cannot be concluded, even when holding all variables constant, that photographs containing the principles of social proof had any persuasive power to convince subjects to display a sign or bumper sticker to support the rally. Hypothesis 5 is not supported.

Table 5: Correlated t-test for respondents who would display a sign or bumper sticker supporting the rally

Variable	Mean	SD	t value	df	Significance
Daily News*	3.51	1.341			
New York Post*	3.69	1.193	1.474	199	P>.05

*Responses were coded 1=Very Likely, 2=Likely, 3=Neither Likely nor Unlikely, 4=Unlikely, 5=Very Unlikely

Table 5A: Summary of regression analyses predicting the likelihood of people to display a sign or bumper sticker supporting the rally

	B	SE	β
Daily News	-.197	.105	-.079
Respect for police	-.195	.066	-.154^
Positive opinion of police	.027	.064	.023
Participation in rally	.522	.136	.181#
Crowd fear	-.012	.056	-.010
Conservative	-.277	.049	-.246#
High political involvement	.247	.058	.191#
Electronic devices	.003	.068	.002
Married	-.343	.114	-.135^
Income	.200	.071	.127^
Dependents	-.209	.051	-.182#
Education	.089	.041	.102*
Fear of police	.306	.053	.270#
Male	.071	.110	.028
R ²		.374	
F		15.731#	

Note: * p <.05., ^ p<.01, # p<.001

Hypothesis 6: Subjects exposed to photographs from the politically liberal Daily News will report to be more likely to volunteer behind the scenes to support the rally and subjects exposed to photographs from the politically conservative New York Post will report to be less likely to volunteer behind the scenes to support the rally.

Hypothesis six predicts respondents exposed to photographs from the Daily News will be more likely than subjects exposed to those from the New York Post condition to volunteer behind the scenes to support the rally. Results (Table 6) found that the difference between the average responses from subjects who viewed the Daily News condition ($M = 3.75$, $SD = 1.242$) and the New York Post condition ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 1.143$) was not statistically significant, meaning there was no difference in the strength of photographs to compel subjects to dedicate their own time as a volunteer to support the rally. Also, the regression analysis (Table 6A) does not show any statistical significance ($p > .05$) and supports the results of the T-test. Therefore, it cannot be concluded, even when holding all variables constant, that photographs containing the principles of social proof had any persuasive power to convince subjects to volunteer behind the scenes to support the rally and hypothesis 6 is not supported.

It is important to note that hypothesis 6 is the first request that requires subjects to dedicate time rather than speech to support the rally. That there was no significant difference between the experimental conditions to support any

evidence that one type of photograph was more persuasive than another at persuading an individual to dedicate time to the cause being presented is notable because the level of effort and interaction required is more intense than that required in hypotheses two through five and warrants further investigation

Table 6: Correlated t-test for respondents who would volunteer behind the scenes to support the rally

Variable	Mean	SD	t value	df	Significance
Daily News*	3.75	1.242			
New York Post*	3.84	1.143	.744	198	P>.05

*Responses were coded 1=Very Likely, 2=Likely, 3=Neither Likely nor Unlikely, 4=Unlikely, 5=Very Unlikely

Table 6A: Summary of regression analyses predicting the likelihood of people to volunteer behind the scenes to support the rally

	B	SE	β
Daily News	-.127	.100	-.054
Respect for police	-.123	.063	-.103*
Positive opinion of police	-.058	.061	-.054
Participation in rally	.259	.130	.096*
Crowd fear	-.119	.053	-.105*
Conservative	-.279	.047	-.263#
High political involvement	.285	.055	.235#
Electronic devices	.103	.065	.068
Married	-.394	.109	-.165#
Income	.163	.068	.109
Dependents	-.265	.049	-.246#
Education	-.008	.039	-.010
Fear of police	.209	.050	.197#
Male	.108	.105	.045
R^2		.357	
F		14.491#	

Note: * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .01$, # $p < .001$

Hypothesis 7: Subjects exposed to photographs from the politically liberal Daily News will report to be more likely to donate money to support the rally and subjects exposed to photographs from the politically conservative New York Post will report to be less likely to donate money to support the rally.

Hypothesis seven predicts respondents exposed to photographs from the Daily News will be more likely than subjects exposed to pictures from the New York Post condition to donate money to support the rally. Results (Table 7) found that the difference between the average responses from subjects who viewed the Daily News condition ($M = 3.85$, $SD = 1.133$) and the New York Post condition ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 1.109$) was not statistically significant meaning there was no difference in the strength of photographs to compel subjects to give money to the rally. The regression analysis (Table 7A) also does not show any statistical significance ($p > .05$) when holding all variables constant and supports the results of the T-test. Hypothesis seven cannot be supported because there is not statistically significant support that photographs containing the principles of social proof had any persuasive power to convince subjects to donate money to the rally.

Table 7: Correlated t-test for respondents who would donate money to support the rally

Variable	Mean	SD	t value	df	Significance
Daily News*	3.85	1.133			
New York Post*	3.94	1.109	.804	196	P>.05

*Responses were coded 1=Very Likely, 2=Likely, 3=Neither Likely nor Unlikely, 4=Unlikely, 5=Very Unlikely

Table 7A: Summary of regression analyses predicting the likelihood of people to donate money to support the rally

	B	SE	β
Daily News	-.142	.100	-.065
Respect for police	-.126	.064	-.112*
Positive opinion of police	-.005	.061	-.005
Participation in rally	.060	.130	.023
Crowd fear	-.010	.053	-.009
Conservative	-.305	.047	-.306#
High political involvement	.244	.055	.214#
Electronic devices	.063	.065	.044
Married	-.192	.110	-.085
Income	.054	.068	.038
Dependents	-.212	.049	-.208#
Education	.027	.039	.035
Fear of police	.194	.050	.194#
Male	.056	.106	.025
R ²		.273	
F		9.780#	

Note: * p <.05., ^ p<.01, # p<.001

Hypothesis 8: Subjects exposed to photographs from the politically liberal Daily News will report to be more likely to march in the rally and subjects exposed to photographs from the politically conservative New York Post will report to be less likely to march in the rally.

Hypothesis eight predicts respondents exposed to photographs from the Daily News will be more likely than subjects exposed to pictures from the New York Post condition to march in the rally. Results from the T-test (Table 8) found that the difference between the average responses from subjects who viewed the Daily News condition ($M = 4.02$, $SD = 1.187$) and the New York Post condition ($M = 4.06$, $SD = 1.122$) was not statistically significant indicating that there was no difference in the strength of photographs from either experimental condition to compel subjects to dedicate their own time as a volunteer to support the rally. The regression analysis (Table 8A) also does not show any statistical significance ($p > .05$) and supports the results of the T-test. Therefore, even when holding all variables constant, photographs containing the principles of social proof did not have any statistically significant proof to support hypothesis eight which predicted that photographs containing the principles of social proof contained enough persuasive power on their own to convince subjects to march in the rally and hypothesis 8 is not supported.

Table 8: Correlated t-test for respondents who would march in the rally

Variable	Mean	SD	t value	df	Significance
Daily News*	4.02	1.187			
New York Post*	4.06	1.122	.383	198	P>.05

*Responses were coded 1=Very Likely, 2=Likely, 3=Neither Likely nor Unlikely, 4=Unlikely, 5=Very Unlikely

Table 8A: Summary of regression analyses predicting the likelihood of people to march in the rally

	B	SE	β
Daily News	-.077	.101	-.034
Respect for police	-.115	.064	-.099
High opinion of police	.001	.061	.001
Participation in rally	.217	.131	.082
Crowd fear	-.116	.054	-.105*
Conservative	-.289	.048	-.279#
High political involvement	.324	.056	.274#
Electronic devices	.066	.066	.045
Married	-.273	.110	-.118^
Income	.108	.068	.074
Dependents	-.195	.049	-.186#
Education	.046	.039	.057
Fear of police	.185	.051	.178#
Male	.067	.106	.029
R ²		.311	
F		11.804#	

Note: * p <.05., ^ p<.01, # p<.001

Summary of Hypotheses

The means of the variables investigated showed a distinct direction to which variables respondents were likely to adhere (Tables 9 and 10). In fact, the direction of variables were identical in both conditions suggesting a scale of willingness to perform specific activities to support or reject a social movement after exposure to a series of photographs. As such, this study offers researchers a scale from which they can work and compare for experiments concerning visuals as well as other experiments concerning social proof and participation in a social movement.

Table 9: Means and standard deviations of all variables after exposure to Daily News photographs

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Speak positively of rally to a family member	2.87	1.385	200
Speak positively of rally to someone you know	3.05	1.360	199
Speak positively of rally to a stranger	3.19	1.345	198
Display a sign or bumper sticker supporting the rally	3.51	1.341	201
Volunteer behind the scenes to support rally	3.75	1.242	199
Donate to rally	3.85	1.133	200
March in rally	4.02	1.187	201

*Responses were coded 1=Very Likely, 2=Likely, 3=Neither Likely nor Unlikely, 4=Unlikely, 5=Very Unlikely

Table 10: Means and standard deviations of all variables after exposure to New York Post photographs

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Speaking positively of rally to a family member	3.19	1.251	200
Speak positively of rally to someone you know	3.21	1.234	198
Speak positively of rally to a stranger	3.40	1.196	195
Display a sign or bumper sticker supporting rally	3.69	1.193	201
Volunteer behind the scenes to support rally	3.84	1.143	202
Donate to rally	3.94	1.109	199
March in rally	4.06	1.122	200

*Responses were coded 1=Very Likely, 2=Likely, 3=Neither Likely nor Unlikely, 4=Unlikely, 5=Very Unlikely

Hypothesis one showed that when the principles of social proof were applied to the population of photographs from both the New York Daily News and the New York Post a pattern of selection differences was able to be detected, suggesting that the principles of social proof can be useful in detecting

differences in photographic coverage of a social movement. This finding has implications for researchers and future studies as it may now be possible to detect bias in the selection of photographs of past, present and future social movements. Still, this was only one study and others are needed in order to determine how useful this theory can be in detecting differences in photographic coverage. However, based on the results from this study it seems likely that social proof can be a useful tool for researchers to use to begin the process of detecting photographic coverage differences of social movements, giving potential insight into how social movements are covered and the positions of the media outlets covering these movements.

Hypotheses two through eight investigate the persuasive impacts these photographs can have on the public. The results from hypotheses two through four suggest that media photographs that contain principles of social proof can also have an influence on how people behave. When influencing variables are taken into account my study concludes that people will be persuaded to provide various levels of verbal support for the social movement to their family, someone they know and even to strangers. Even more striking is that those who view photographs that contain the principles of social proof are willing to provide this type of support even when the photographs contain no identifying information to indicate what they are supporting, suggesting that photographs that contain the principles of social proof can be particularly persuasive, especially when the requests are for verbal support.

The results from hypotheses five through eight suggest that any physical request, no matter how large or small, is simply too much for a photograph with no identifying information that contains the principles of social proof to overcome. When holding all influencing variables constant the results were particularly clear that respondents were reluctant to participate in the social movement. This demonstrates the limits of the power that a photograph with the principles of social proof can have. When the cost was low (verbal support) people were willing to support the movement suggested by the photographs that contained the principles of social proof. However, when the request became larger and more intrusive (physical or monetary support), respondents were unwilling to participate. The results were particularly striking when examining the difference in means where the greater the request the less of a difference in the means, proving which requests were considered to be large and small.

However, that the photographs in this experiment were not put into any context and, therefore, the subjects did not know what the social movement concerned, may have affected their willingness to support the rally at the more intrusive level. The lack of context was purposeful so as not to bias the subjects, but since the photographs were not put into any context it was not reasonable to expect them to have any dramatic effect. The fact that the photographs containing the principles of social proof were able to persuade at all under these conditions is, in my opinion, an interesting finding. One future study to further understand the power of photographs containing social proof should be to identify the social movement and see if individuals will be either more willing or

less willing to participate based on their own preconceived opinions of the movement. Other studies can explore past social movements and determine if photographs selected for public consumption were slanted to one point of view over another and if this selection bias is cross cultural. Finally, it would be interesting to explore if photographs that contain the principles of social proof can be persuasive throughout different cultures and what the differences and similarities of the results may be. In short, there are many potential studies that can be conducted based off of this study. Future studies will eventually determine whether social proof is, on its own, an effective theory when examining the persuasive effects of photographs or if it needs to be combined with other theories to create a new one that can better explain these effects.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

The results of my two-pronged study yielded statistical support on four of the eight hypotheses proposed. The content analysis indicated that there is a high probability that social proof can be used to detect a pattern of selection in a media outlet's photographic coverage of a social movement. This is a significant finding as now researchers from a variety of disciplines can look to this study and apply the principles of social proof to more accurately study and determine if the photographic media coverage of past and future rallies is in fact slanted to the political agendas of the reporting media outlet. This enables researchers to better understand the political climates in which rallies and social movements take place and which media outlets support or reject the movements.

Additionally, researchers can now quantitatively measure the significance of support or rejection. From a practical standpoint, this finding can help media and photo editors who are looking for a more balanced news approach to be more cognizant of the types of images they select for public consumption. Additionally, media outlets that are not seeking balance, but are instead compelled to forward a specific political and social agenda, can now do so with an understanding of which types of photographs most reflect the viewpoint or stance they support.

In the case of this study it is clear that, based on statistical results, the photographs selected by photo editors from both the Daily News and the New York Post were selected to present a specific viewpoint. Schudson's (2011)

claim that news tends to emphasize conflict is not wholly accurate because if that was the case then the photographs selected and shown by the Daily News should have been similar to those selected and presented by the New York Post, which emphasized conflict between police and crowds. However, the majority of the photographs selected and emphasized by the Daily News were of crowds and not of conflict. It may be possible that the conflict photographs were selected because conflict attracts consumers; however, if these photographs were selected solely to attract more readers, then both outlets should have had similar results because neither would ignore an opportunity to make more money. The difference in photographs selected by each media outlet indicates that this was not the case. Therefore, the only plausible explanation is that both media outlet's political orientations dictated which photographs were selected. Unfortunately, the main limitation of my content analysis was that I did not know the actual reason behind why these photographs were selected for public consumption. While it is possible to approach photo editors from both newspapers to ask this question it is likely that either they will not remember or they may not be completely forthcoming with their reasoning. Therefore, the only supportable conclusion I can draw from the content analysis is that social proof can be used to identify patterns of photographic selection of media coverage of a social movement.

The results from the experiment indicate that there is a greater likelihood that people exposed to photographs emphasizing the positive aspects of social proof are more willing to support a rally than those exposed to photographs that

emphasize the negative aspects of social proof – up to a point. The study indicates that this tends to be true when the requested activity is not intrusive. The results indicate that measures such as telling a family member, friend or stranger about a rally are not seen as intrusive activities. However, the more intrusive the activity, such as displaying a sign or bumper sticker, volunteering behind the scenes, donating money to the cause and marching, the less likely there will be any significant difference between the two populations of photographs. The directions of the means from both experimental conditions support this⁸ as the means indicate that the requests that require more personal involvement, the greater the likelihood that people will reject those requests. This can mean that the initial request may be unrealistic and too much to ask particularly after only 30 photographs. Asking someone to march in a rally after seeing 30 photographs may be akin to asking someone you just met at a party for a ride to the airport to catch an early flight – too much too soon.

Also, as suggested by Milgram et al.'s (1969) experiment not everyone stops and fully participates with the crowd. The Milgram et al. (1969) experiment showed that when people do not understand the situation partial participation is more likely, which in the case of the experiment was glancing in the same direction as the group, but not stopping to fully participate. The results of my experiment indicate a similar response, people were not likely to participate fully when the issue was unknown, but they were willing to participate partially. The lesson from this is that if people do not know what a rally is about it is difficult to

⁸ See tables 9 and 10

become attached to the cause and therefore easy to reject overtures of requests for greater involvement.

This suggests that there were design flaws in my experiment. It is possible my experiment required a more defined scale of measurement, such as a seven or even ten point Likert Scale, which may have enhanced the understanding of the extent to which respondents were willing to participate. Another design flaw was that a content analysis should have been conducted to identify which photographs contained crowds, police, signs that encourage, signs that anger, tents, and celebrities, and then I should have selected a proportional number photographs for the experiment. It is also possible that the number of photographs were not sufficient and that more photographs were necessary to achieve the desired effect because as Sherif & Hovland's (1961) social judgment theory suggests, the more people are exposed to the same message over time, the more willing they are to move their opinions in the direction of the persuader. Anthony Downs' (1972) Issue Attention Cycle helps explain why this is the case. Downs' Issue Attention Cycle identifies five stages of an issue in the public sphere:

- Pre-problem – only experts are alarmed about a particular social issue
- Alarmed Discovery and Euphoric Enthusiasm – the public becomes aware and alarmed about a particular problem and feels the immediate need to do something to solve it

- Realizing the Cost of Significant Progress – a realization that the cost of solving the problem may be extremely high and possibly unattainable
- Gradual Decline of Intense Public Interest – upon understanding the cost of solving the problem the public becomes either discouraged or bored
- Post Problem – the problem moves from the center of attention into a state of limbo.

Downs (1972) suggested that the alarmed discovery and euphoric enthusiasm stage is the optimum time for change because it is at this stage that the public is fully engaged, aware, and willing either to advocate or renounce the message. Below is a model of my interpretation of how Anthony Downs' Issue Attention Cycle operates in the public sphere:

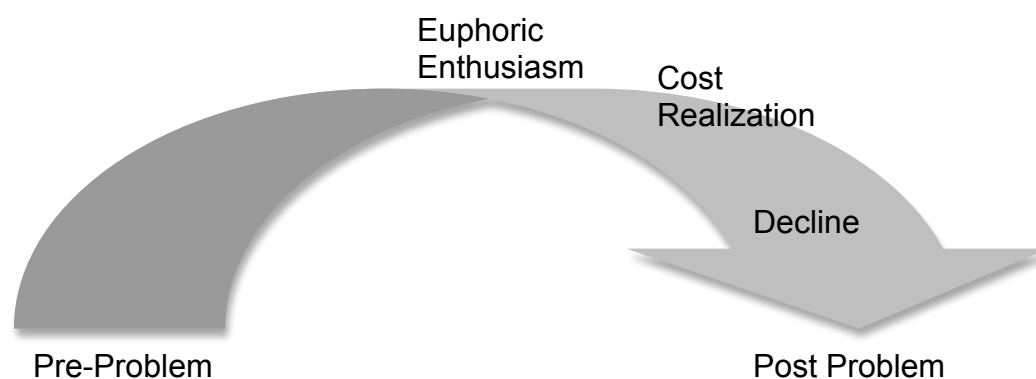


Figure 2: Model of the Issue Attention Cycle

The Issue Attention Cycle attempts to predict how issues are dealt with in American culture and, ultimately, it attempts to guide issue advocates on where in the cycle an issue needs to be in order to achieve the desired results. As my model points out, the optimum period for message strength is at the euphoric enthusiastic stage because the public's continued exposure to a message keeps them engaged (without questioning what they are engaged in) and thus demanding resolution to the problem. However, it is only when exposure to the message begins to wane that the public begins to question the costs and debate whether or not advocating for the issue is worth their continued effort, and as my model suggests, once that happens message strength declines and the issue will not be resolved fully. To accomplish attitude change via the peripheral route, Petty and Cacioppo (1981) suggested that the message must remain in the public view. Thus, it seems that continued engagement is a necessary

component for change. In regards to my experiment, the lack of continuous encouragement can explain why individuals were not persuaded to march; therefore, an experimental design that features continued encouragement may be necessary to compel individuals to ultimately decide to march in the rally.

Regression analysis revealed a variety of variables that positively and negatively affected the behavior of subjects in both conditions. However, the most illuminating variable that were consistently significant across both conditions were conservative and dependents. Both variables had negative influences on the decisions made by subjects in each condition. In both conditions, for conservative subjects leaned toward conservative and, of 404 respondents, 403 reported having at least one dependent. The lean toward conservative political orientation explains the subject's lack of willingness to acquiesce as the requests became more intrusive. It can logically be assumed that people who are conservative in nature would generally prefer things to remain within the status quo. This seems particularly certain in social movements when subjects do not know the nature of the rally. It is possible that if the subjects knew that the rally was an Occupy Wall Street protest the results may have differed. In regards to dependents, it is reasonable to expect people who know that others depend upon them to be apprehensive about participating in any event that is intrusive and possibly a threat to their freedom, even when the threat is not implied. In light of this, it seems reasonable that dependents would have a negative influence on the responses regarding involvement;

therefore, the results could have been significantly different if more participants were childless.

Conclusion

The results suggest that if the request does not require much effort than photographs that show support for a rally are more likely to persuade someone to acquiesce to the request than photographs that reject a rally. However, upon first exposure to photographs and without knowing what the movement is about, the moment a request for physical or monetary involvement is requested the results indicate a much greater likelihood that no one will want to participate; therefore, another study that reveals to respondents the name and purpose of the movement is necessary to determine if this is true.

However, the results are encouraging for the Daily News as it seems that people can be persuaded to become involved in a rally. As social judgment theory suggests, continued exposure will ultimately lead to opinions moving along the continuum to the position advocated by the persuader, but further studies are needed in order to determine how much exposure is necessary. The results also suggest that social proof can be extended through photographs. Supporting this claim is what respondents remembered about the photographs as the tables below show. The means to questions of what respondents remembered (Daily News: celebrities, crowds and signs; New York Post: tents, police and signs) show that these variables were highly remembered after the experiment and suggest that these variables were memorable and, therefore,

effective. While many of the other properties were not taken into account, it seems reasonable to assume that since respondents tended to remember all of the variables that define social proof then these variables must have had some effect.

Table 11: Means and standard deviations for the likelihood of people to remember celebrities, crowds and signs after exposure to the Daily News photographs

	Mean	SD	N
Celebrities	1.95	1.031	200
Crowds	1.65	.914	199
Signs	1.71	.872	200

*Responses were coded 1=very likely, 2=likely, 3=neither likely nor unlikely, 4=unlikely, 5=very unlikely

Table 12: Means and standard deviations for the likelihood of people to remember police, tents and signs after exposure to the New York Post photographs

	Mean	SD	N
Police	1.60	.877	198
Tents	2.75	1.186	198
Signs	1.68	.807	200

*Responses were coded 1=very likely, 2=likely, 3=neither likely or unlikely, 4=unlikely, 5=very unlikely

This experiment was a first step in a much larger and more comprehensive research program and my goal was to provide a comparison for future research and expansion on the study of photographs. Future studies must be conducted on each photographic property to determine the effect of their persuasive powers. Subsequent studies will then need to incorporate the photographic properties that were quantitatively analyzed as a means to understanding whether or not they have an effect, on their own and/or in some combination with other properties, ultimately leading researchers to an understanding of whether or not variables defined by social proof have the predicted effects. At this point it is unclear if social proof has any long-term value on its own. It is possible that it may need to be combined with another theory or be the impetus to create an entirely new theory to understand the persuasive powers of media photographs.

APPENDICES

Appendix A
Content Analysis Protocol

Historically, print media outlets used the power of still photographs to add another layer of complexity to a story it was covering. As Barbie Zelizer (2010) stated, journalists rely on “photographic realism to enhance their coverage of the real world.” However, the Internet has given print media outlets greater reach and more physical space to influence public opinion and as a result many of the photographs presented by media outlets on their websites may have been chosen by an editor specifically to present a certain bias and affect public opinion toward a social issue.

The research presented in this study compares photographic news coverage of the Occupy Wall Street Protests from two competing New York City tabloid newspapers on opposite sides of the political spectrum, the New York Post (conservative) and the New York Daily News (liberal). The study applies the principles of social proof to determine if photographic coverage of the protest by both media outlets can be used to show their support or rejection of the political movement.

This study is significant because it is the first to employ the principles of social proof to photographic coverage of a protest as a means of determining a pattern in the selection of photographs. Applying the principles of social proof to photographs can potentially provide researchers with another tool to detect a pattern of photographic selection in its coverage.

Context

Past theory suggests that the principles of social proof encourage people to participate in a common cause because if they see everyone else doing it and they identify with the group and its ideals then they will also believe that participation in the cause is the correct thing to do. Cialdini (2007) defined social proof as, a lot of people doing something leads an observer to assume that it is a wise thing to do. Latane and Darley (1970) found that people will most likely look to others for guidance on how they should behave and Sherif (1936) offered, "There is a tendency to converge toward a common norm and to experience the situation as regulated and ordered by this norm. The group must be right." Parks et al. (2001) stated that informing people that similar others were highly cooperative leads to high rates of cooperation by the participants. Goldstein et al. (2008) found that individuals will follow the lead of people they can relate to. Also, knowing the attitudes of the group will influence participation because, as Poteat and Spanierman (2010) stated, attitudes held by individuals may reflect the attitudes of their peers and the norms of the group in which they belong and they will follow the norms of the group.

Past studies also suggest that social proof can be used to discourage participation in what a social group is doing based on the perceived morality of the group. Latane and Darley (1970) found that social influence is a major determinant of intervention and other research supports that individuals will evaluate the moral behavior of others even when the people they are evaluating are perfect strangers, thus the expectations regarding what most others

approve/disapprove can have a great effect (Cialdini, 2007; Larimer & Neighbors, 2003; Van Empelen, Schaalma, Kok, & Jansen, 2001).

Researchers have found that images of violence or potential violence against a social group can be a deciding factor as to whether or not a person decides to participate in a group event. Gibson (2003), stated, "Threatening images in news reports are capable of exerting a disproportionately strong influence on public perceptions of risk" and Gibson and Zillmann (2000) found that victim images generate higher risk assessment among those in their own social group.

Therefore, if a majority of photographs presented by a media outlet of a social movement depict risk, anger or a perceived immorality then there is a possibility that those photographs were specifically chosen to discourage participation in the movement.

The independent variable of this study is political orientation of the New York Daily News and the New York Post, which is defined as the party endorsed by the media outlet more than half the time in every general presidential election since 1992. The independent variable is measured on a nominal scale, as the study seeks to measure whether the political party of the candidate endorsed was Republican or Democrat.

The dependent variable is photographic coverage in favor of the Occupy Wall Street Movement and photographic coverage against the Occupy Wall Street Movement and is defined as a majority of photographs showing support for the movement or a majority of photographs showing rejection of the political movement. To indicate support of the political movement the majority of the

photographs are of crowds or protesters and/or photographs that contain words of encouragement and support for the movement. To indicate rejection of the political movement, the majority of the photographs feature a risk to participation (such as the possibility of arrest), a territorial violation or a disagreement with the opinions of the people being photographed among the media outlet's customers and community of followers.

Collection Procedures

This study examines the entire population of photographs of the Occupy Wall Street protests posted on the websites of both the New York Post and the New York Daily News. The population content of the study consists of the 391 photographs posted on Twitter (145 from the New York Daily News and 246 from the New York Post) of the Occupy Wall Street Protests from September 17, 2011, the date the occupation of Zuccotti Park began, until November 15, 2011, the date the occupiers were removed from Zuccotti Park. The units of analysis are the entire population of photos posted on the websites of both the New York Daily News and the New York Post during this time period. The study also measures which presidential candidate each outlet endorsed in the general elections from 1992 until 2012 and determines the media outlet's political orientation based on which candidate and therefore which political party they endorsed more than half of the time during that time period.

The goal of the study is to determine whether or not the political orientation of the media outlet led to either support or rejection of the Occupy

Wall Street Protests. Druckman and Parkin (2005) determined that the most effective and efficient way to measure this type of media bias is to compare two similar media outlets in the same market and hold the coverage and market constant so as to conclude if any coverage differences between the two papers reflect relative editorial slant. Since the epicenter of the Occupy Wall Street Protests were undoubtedly in New York City, it is logical that the most effective way to determine if the orientation led to biased photographic coverage is to compare similar media outlets with opposite political orientations in the New York City market.

Processing Procedures

Photographs were stored as screen shots just as they appeared on the websites of both the New York Daily News and the New York Post. Each photograph was saved on a memory stick in two separate groups entitled, New York Daily News Occupy Wall Street Photos and New York Post Occupy Wall Street Photos. Each photograph was saved on an external hard drive and labeled with its own unique number and identifier until all photographs were assigned an identification number, allowing for any disagreement to be easily traced.

Definitions

The independent variable, the political orientation of the New York Daily News and the New York Post, is defined as the party endorsed by the media outlet more than half the time in every general presidential election from 1992

until 2012. The optimum outcome is if each media outlet consistently supported either the Republican or Democratic parties. The media outlet that supports the Republican Party will reject the Occupy Wall Street protests and the media outlet that supports the Democratic Party will support the Occupy Wall Street protests.

The dependent variable, support for Occupy Wall Street or rejection of Occupy Wall Street, is any photograph that suggests support or rejection of the Occupy Wall Street protests based on the principles of Social Proof. The following types of photographs indicate support of the Occupy Wall Street protests:

Crowds:

- Any photograph of a crowd. A crowd of is a photograph where more than one person fills up the entire frame of a photograph. If people, or parts of live people (i.e. body parts) stretch across the entire frame of a photograph in either the foreground or background then this is indicative of a crowd.

McPhail & Wohlstein (1983) noted that two or more persons in a public place is defined as a gathering, which provides the circumstances where collective behavior can occur. As Beaford et al. (2000) noted media outlets help with the recruitment of protesters when they present images of people participating in a movement. Thus showing photographs of crowds of people participating in rally, which can aid in attracting others to participate, is an indication of support.

Celebrities:

- Any photograph of a celebrity in the population of protests (sans photographs that include police officers or police vehicles – see below Threatening Visuals)

This indicates support of a movement because, “It is through social comparison with referent others that people validate the correctness of their opinions and decisions” (Cialdini et. al. 1999; Festinger, 1954).

Encouraging Words:

- Any photograph that includes words of support for the movement written on paper, poster-board, cardboard, dollar bills, body parts, and/or pastry.

According to Sherif (1936), there is a tendency to experience things in relation to some frame of reference. Zitek and Hebl (2007) explain, “The opinion of a single individual can influence another’s prejudiced related attitudes.” Stangor et al. (2001) found that changes in opinion were stronger among people exposed to information about the opinions of the in-group rather than out-group members, which allowed for a stronger bond with supporters who viewed the photographs.

The following types of photographs indicate rejection of the Occupy Wall Street protests:

Threatening Visuals:

- Any photograph, including crowds and celebrity photographs, that contains a physical part of a police officer (such as arms, legs, feet, hands, head, etc.), and/or any type of police vehicle (such as a car, van, motorcycle, bicycle, etc.) that is in the frame of the photograph.

Having a police officer in a photograph suggests the threat of arrest and risk of participation. Generally speaking, a police presence during a protest symbolizes a threat from the local government that it will maintain law and order. As Axelrod (1986) argued, when large groups of people participate in a coordinated activity without some authority policing the behavior, they tend to believe that the activity is normal, but when there is police presence, people tend to believe that this is an attempt to discourage the behavior. Kritzer (1977) concluded that outbreaks of violence at rallies can be traced back to police interacting with protesters (McPhail & Wohlstein, 1983). Therefore, forwarding photographs of a protest that contain a police officer acting in any official capacity, particularly arresting protesters or standing guard near public property, is equivalent to a rejection of the movement because it infers that the protesters need to be watched because their activities are unlawful and could be potentially dangerous and harmful.

Anger.

According to Newhagen (1998) negative attitudes can be attributed to anger, which is stimulated by high levels of anxiety and is usually the result of a territorial violation. Therefore, if a majority of photographs presented by a media outlet of a social movement depict territorial violation, or something that stimulates high levels of anxiety or anger toward the movement, then there is a possibility that those photographs were purposely selected to discourage members of the media outlet's in-group (e.g. supporters and/or followers) from participating in the movement. The following types of photographs demonstrate anger, territorial violation and high levels of anxiety among in-group members:

- Any photograph of garbage left by protesters or the cleanup of garbage by a public servant
- Any photograph of destruction of property
- Any photograph showing long-term overnight settlement in an area that does not belong to the protesters
- Any photograph showing typical behaviors a person would exhibit while settling down in an area they call "home"
- Any photograph showing the type of tools used by a person to make their living conditions more manageable
- Any photograph showing protesters living or evidence that they are living in an area that does not belong to them
- Any photograph of protesters holding signs written on paper, poster-board, cardboard, dollar bills, body parts, and/or pastry

containing words and phrases that followers of the media outlet (i.e. those with the same political orientation as the media outlet) would interpret negatively based on their core beliefs, opinions or values. In this case, the signs are seen as negative, thus angering the media outlet's followers and encouraging them to reject the movement.

Coders were selected based on their knowledge of Occupy Wall Street as well as their knowledge of the American political system. This knowledge enabled the coder to look for certain cultural cues that someone not as familiar with American society might miss. Also, for practical reasons, coders were selected based on eyesight and whether or not they have difficulty seeing small items on a computer screen. Additionally, coders were selected based on whether or not they are colorblind. Those who have difficulty seeing small items or are colorblind were not retained as a coder for this study. Coders were trained by using other photographs from another media source that covered the Occupy Wall Street protests. The photographs were similar to the ones they would typically see and therefore allowed them to practice and perfect the necessary identification skills required for this study.

Each coder was given a clearly defined coding sheet. The sheet required them to indicate whether or not the photograph supported Occupy Wall Street or rejected Occupy Wall Street. If the photograph was unbiased, then the photograph was not counted within the population being studied. The coder then circled their answer next to the identifying number of the photograph. Each

coder worked at his or her own pace with five-minute breaks enforced every hour. Content was coded after 10:00 A.M. during the daytime to ensure that coders were alert and awake.

Appendix B

New York Post Experimental Condition

Dear Sir or Madam:

Below is a survey examining photographs in the media. Thank you for your time and efforts.

Sincerely,

Michael B. Friedman

Informed Consent:

Researchers in Michigan State University's Communication and Advertising and Public Relations departments are conducting a study to gain a better understanding of the effects of media photographs. You must be at least 18 years old to participate in this study. Your responses will be confidential and used for research purposes only.

In this study you will be asked to respond to some survey items regarding your political orientation, race, gender, past participation in political movements, response to photographs of people participating in a political movement. You will also be asked to provide some demographic information including political views, race, income, and education level. Your participation will last approximately 20 minutes.

This request requires us to emphasize that no personal risk or harm is anticipated as a result of your participation beyond the risks you encounter in your daily life. There are no immediate personal benefits to be gained from this study; however your participation will likely be instrumental in helping others. This research is voluntary. You can refuse to participate. You do not have to respond to any questions that make you uncomfortable. As previously mentioned your responses will be confidential. If you agree to participate, you may do so by continuing to the next page of the questionnaire. The researchers will be allowed to keep your anonymous responses for up to three years. Your privacy will be protected to the fullest extent allowable by law.

You have the right to contact the investigators if you have any objections to or concerns with any aspect of this study. The contact information is as follows: Michael B. Friedman (517-432-2365/ fried137@msu.edu), Department of Advertising and Public Relations, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824.

If you have questions or concerns about your role and rights as a research participant, would like to obtain information or offer input, or would like to register a complaint about this study, you may contact, anonymously if you wish, Michigan State University's Human Research Protection Program at 517-355-2180, Fax 517-432-4503, or e-mail irb@msu.edu or regular mail at 207 Olds Hall, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824.

Continue

Decline

SURVEY

Below are 30 media photographs from various rallies. Please look at each photograph and then answer the questions that follow by putting an “X” in the box that best reflects your answer.



Figure 3: 30 figures randomly selected from the New York Post's coverage of the Occupy Wall Street protests (for interpretation of the references to color in this and all other figures, the reader is referred to the electronic version of this dissertation).^{9 10}

⁹ Disclaimer: Labeling of the photographs was done to comply with Michigan State University's dissertation formatting requirements. It was not part of the experiment.

¹⁰ Photographs came directly from the New York Post's website. As a result some photographs may appear to be out of focus and imperfect.

Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Corporate Criminal)

Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)

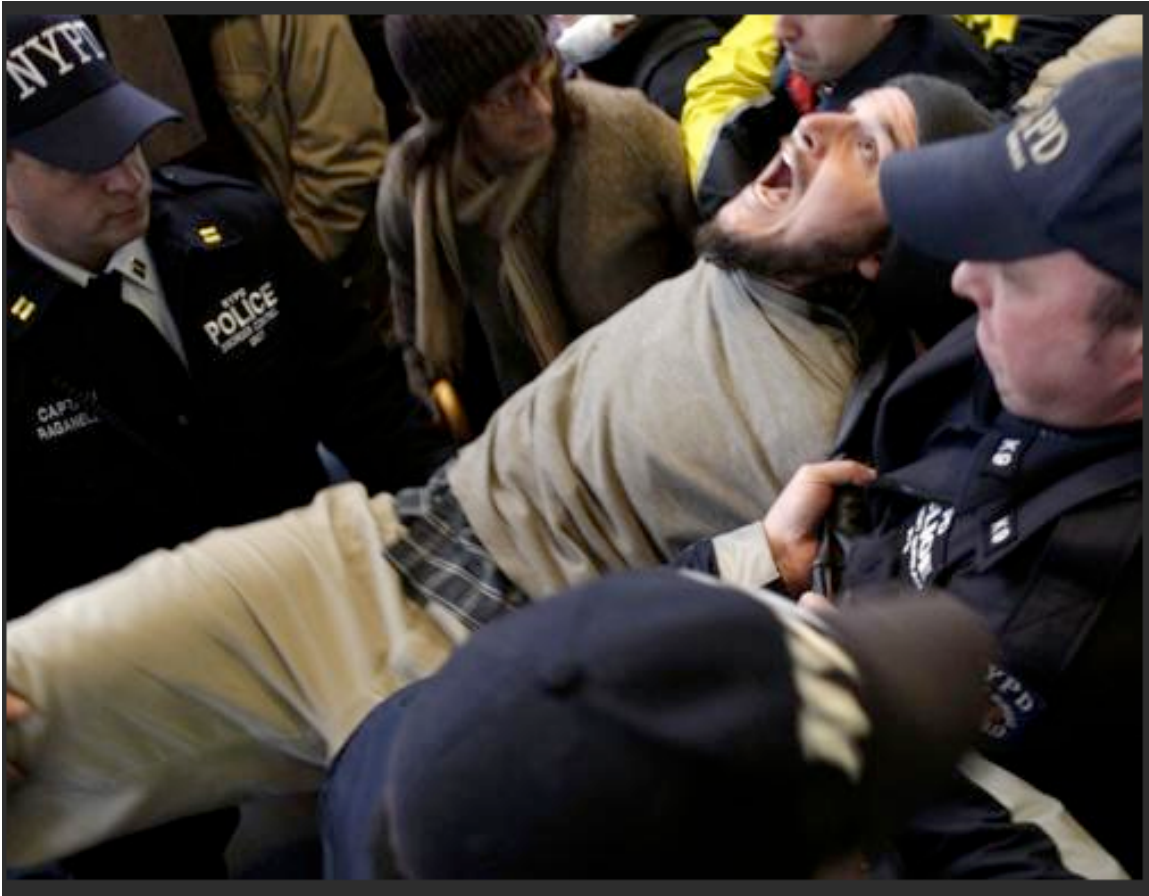


Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)



Figure 3 (cont'd)

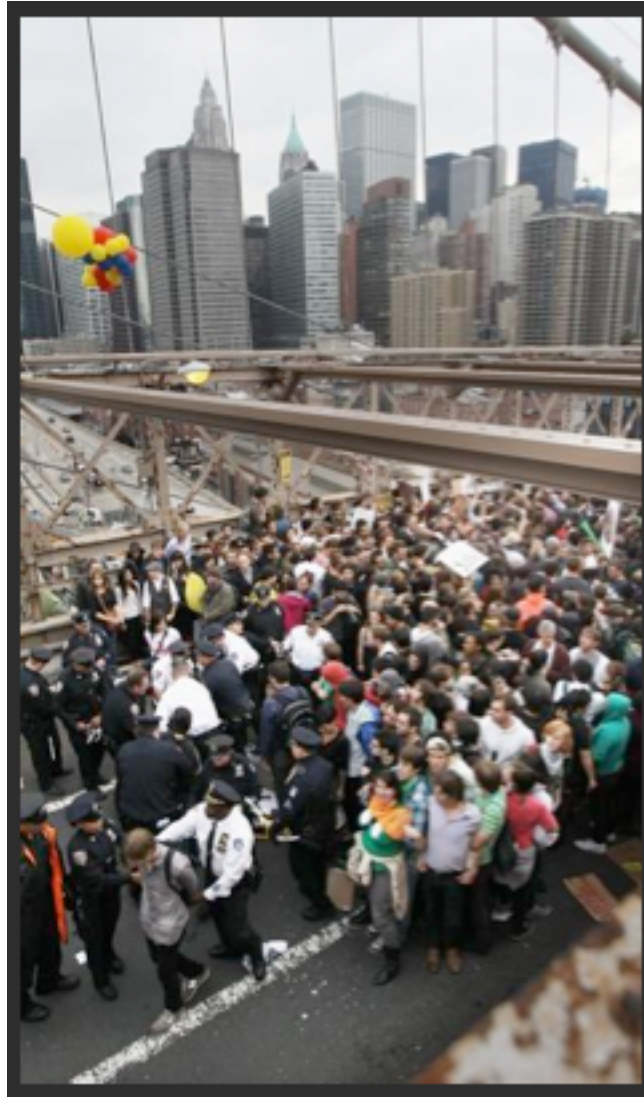


Figure 3 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Where is the Change We Voted For?)

Figure 3 (cont'd)



SURVEY SECTION

Please answer the following questions by putting an “X” in the box that best reflects your answer.

Figure 4 **How likely or unlikely are you to display a sign or bumper sticker supporting this rally?**

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely

2. How likely or unlikely are you to speak positively about this rally to a stranger?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely

3. How likely or unlikely are you to speak positively about this rally to someone you know?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely

4. How likely or unlikely are you to speak positively about this rally to someone in your immediate family?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely

5. How likely or unlikely are you to donate money to support this rally?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely

6. How likely or unlikely are you to volunteer behind the scenes to support this rally?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely

7. How likely or unlikely are you to march in this rally?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely

8. How afraid or unafraid are you of the police?

- ☐ Very afraid
- ☐ Afraid
- ☐ Neither afraid or unafraid
- ☐ Unafraid
- ☐ Very unafraid

9. How likely or unlikely are you to respect the power of the police?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely

10. How positive or negative is your opinion of the Police?

- ☐ Very Positive
- ☐ Positive
- ☐ Neither positive or negative
- ☐ Negative
- ☐ Very Negative

11. Have you ever participated in a rally?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

12. Are you afraid or unafraid of crowds?

- ☐ Very afraid
- ☐ Afraid
- ☐ Neither afraid or unafraid
- ☐ Unafraid
- ☐ Very unafraid

13. What is your political orientation?

- ☐ Very Conservative
- ☐ Conservative
- ☐ No strong political orientation
- ☐ Liberal
- ☐ Very Liberal

14. Describe the level of your political involvement

- ☐ Very involved
- ☐ Involved
- ☐ Neither involved or uninvolved
- ☐ Uninvolved
- ☐ Very uninvolved

15. What electronic device did you use to view these photographs?

- ☐ Desktop Computer
- ☐ Laptop Computer
- ☐ Ipad or tablet
- ☐ Smartphone

16. Please describe your marital status:

- ☐ Married
- ☐ Single

IF “MARRIED” ON 16

16A. Within what range does your annual household income fall? (IF MARRIED)

- ☐ \$0 - \$17,850
- ☐ \$17,851 - \$72,500
- ☐ \$72,501 - \$146,400
- ☐ \$146,401 - \$223,050
- ☐ \$223,051 - \$398,350
- ☐ \$398,051 - \$450,000
- ☐ \$450,001+

IF “SINGLE” ON 16

16B. Within what range does your annual individual income fall? (IF SINGLE)

- ☐ \$0 – \$8,925
- ☐ \$8,926 – \$36,250
- ☐ \$36,251 – \$87,850
- ☐ \$87,851 – \$183,250
- ☐ \$183,251 – \$398,350
- ☐ \$398,351 - \$400,000
- ☐ \$400,001+

17. Please state the number of dependents you have:

- ☐ 0
- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4+

18. What is your highest degree earned?

- ☐ No degree
- ☐ High School Degree
- ☐ Some College
- ☐ Associate's Degree
- ☐ Bachelor's Degree
- ☐ Masters Degree or Higher

19. How likely or unlikely do you remember seeing police in the photographs you just saw?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely

20. How likely or unlikely do you remember seeing tents in the photographs you just saw?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely

21. How likely or unlikely do you remember seeing signs that people held in the photographs you just saw?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely

22. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Thank you for your participation. We are very grateful for the time you took to complete this survey. Your completed survey will enable us to better understand the power and effects of media photographs.

Appendix C

Daily News Experimental Condition

Dear Sir or Madam:

Below is a survey examining photographs in the media. Thank you for your time and efforts.

Sincerely,

Michael B. Friedman

Informed Consent:

Researchers in Michigan State University's Communication and Advertising and Public Relations departments are conducting a study to gain a better understanding of the effects of media photographs. You must be at least 18 years old to participate in this study. Your responses will be confidential and used for research purposes only.

In this study you will be asked to respond to some survey items regarding your political orientation, race, gender, past participation in political movements, response to photographs of people participating in a political movement. You will also be asked to provide some demographic information including political views, race, income, and education level. Your participation will last approximately 20 minutes.

This request requires us to emphasize that no personal risk or harm is anticipated as a result of your participation beyond the risks you encounter in your daily life. There are no immediate personal benefits to be gained from this study; however your participation will likely be instrumental in helping others. This research is voluntary. You can refuse to participate. You do not have to respond to any questions that make you uncomfortable. As previously mentioned your responses will be confidential. If you agree to participate, you may do so by continuing to the next page of the questionnaire. The researchers will be allowed to keep your anonymous responses for up to three years. Your privacy will be protected to the fullest extent allowable by law.

You have the right to contact the investigators if you have any objections to or concerns with any aspect of this study. The contact information is as follows: Michael B. Friedman (517-432-2365/ fried137@msu.edu), Department of Advertising and Public Relations, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824.

If you have questions or concerns about your role and rights as a research participant, would like to obtain information or offer input, or would like to register a complaint about this study, you may contact, anonymously if you wish, Michigan State University's Human Research Protection Program at 517-355-2180, Fax 517-432-4503, or e-mail irb@msu.edu or regular mail at 207 Olds Hall, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824.

Continue

Decline

SURVEY

Below are 30 media photographs from various rallies. Please look at each photograph and then answer the questions that follow by putting an “X” in the box that best reflects your answer.



Figure 4: 30 figures randomly selected from the Daily News'
coverage of the Occupy Wall Street protests^{11 12}

¹¹ Disclaimer: Labeling of the photographs was done to comply with Michigan State University's dissertation formatting requirements. It was not part of the experiment.

¹² Photographs came directly from the Daily News' website. As a result some photographs may appear to be out of focus and imperfect. Text that is blurred or difficult to read may have been done purposely by the photographer

Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Every Verizon Job a Union Job)

Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



[illegible]

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a spiral-bound notebook. The notebook is open to a page with a handwritten note in blue ink that reads "Please Keep up The Protest! We Need You!". The note is written on a piece of paper that is slightly crumpled and has a red decorative border at the bottom. The person holding the notebook is wearing a light blue shirt. In the background, a white box is visible, and another person's hand is resting on a dark surface.

Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Koch the Cause of a Doomed Generation)

Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: End the War Feed the Poor)

Figure 4 (cont'd)



Figure 4 (cont'd)



SURVEY SECTION

Please answer the following questions by putting an “X” in the box that best reflects your answer.

1. How likely or unlikely are you to display a sign or bumper sticker supporting this rally?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely

2. How likely or unlikely are you to speak positively about this rally to a stranger?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely

3. How likely or unlikely are you to speak positively about this rally to someone you know?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely

4. How likely or unlikely are you to speak positively about this rally to someone in your immediate family?

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- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
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5. How likely or unlikely are you to donate money to support this rally?

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- ☐ Very unlikely

6. How likely or unlikely are you to volunteer behind the scenes to support this rally?

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- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely

7. How likely or unlikely are you to march in this rally?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely

8. How afraid or unafraid are you of the police?

- ☐ Very afraid
- ☐ Afraid
- ☐ Neither afraid or unafraid
- ☐ Unafraid
- ☐ Very unafraid

9. How likely or unlikely are you to respect the power of the police?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely

☐ Very unlikely

10. How positive or negative is your opinion of the Police?

- ☐ Very Positive
- ☐ Positive
- ☐ Neither positive or negative
- ☐ Negative
- ☐ Very Negative

11. Have you ever participated in a rally?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

12. Are you afraid or unafraid of crowds?

- ☐ Very afraid
- ☐ Afraid
- ☐ Neither afraid or unafraid
- ☐ Unafraid
- ☐ Very unafraid

13. What is your political orientation?

- ☐ Very Conservative
- ☐ Conservative
- ☐ No strong political orientation
- ☐ Liberal
- ☐ Very Liberal

14. Describe the level of your political involvement:

- ☐ Very involved
- ☐ Involved
- ☐ Neither involved or uninvolved
- ☐ Uninvolved
- ☐ Very uninvolved

15. What electronic device did you use to view these photographs?

- ☐ Desktop Computer
- ☐ Laptop Computer
- ☐ Ipad or tablet
- ☐ Smartphone

16. Please describe your marital status:

- ☐ Married
- ☐ Single

IF "MARRIED" ON 16

16A. Within what range does your annual household income fall? (IF MARRIED)

- ☐ \$0 - \$17,850
- ☐ \$17,851 - \$72,500
- ☐ \$72,501 - \$146,400
- ☐ \$146,401 - \$223,050
- ☐ \$223,051 - \$398,350
- ☐ \$398,051 - \$450,000
- ☐ \$450,001+

IF "SINGLE" ON 16

16B. Within what range does your annual individual income fall? (IF SINGLE)

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- ☐ \$87,851 – \$183,250
- ☐ \$183,251 – \$398,350
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17. Please state the number of dependents you have:

- ☐ 0
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- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4+

18. What is your highest degree earned?

- ☐ No degree
- ☐ High School Degree
- ☐ Some College
- ☐ Associate's Degree
- ☐ Bachelor's Degree
- ☐ Masters Degree or Higher

19. How likely or unlikely do you remember seeing celebrities in the photographs you just saw?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely

20. How likely or unlikely do you remember seeing crowds of people in the photographs you just saw?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely

21. How likely or unlikely do you remember seeing signs that people held in the photographs you just saw?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neither likely or unlikely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely

22. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Thank you for your participation. We are very grateful for the time you took to complete this survey. Your completed survey will enable us to better understand the power and effects of media photographs.

Appendix D
New York Post Photographs



Figure 5: 246 photographs of the New York Post's
coverage of the Occupy Wall Street protests¹³

¹³ Photographs came directly from the New York Post's website. As a result some photographs may appear to be out of focus and imperfect

Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



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Figure 5 (cont'd)



(There is no relevant text in this photograph)

Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)

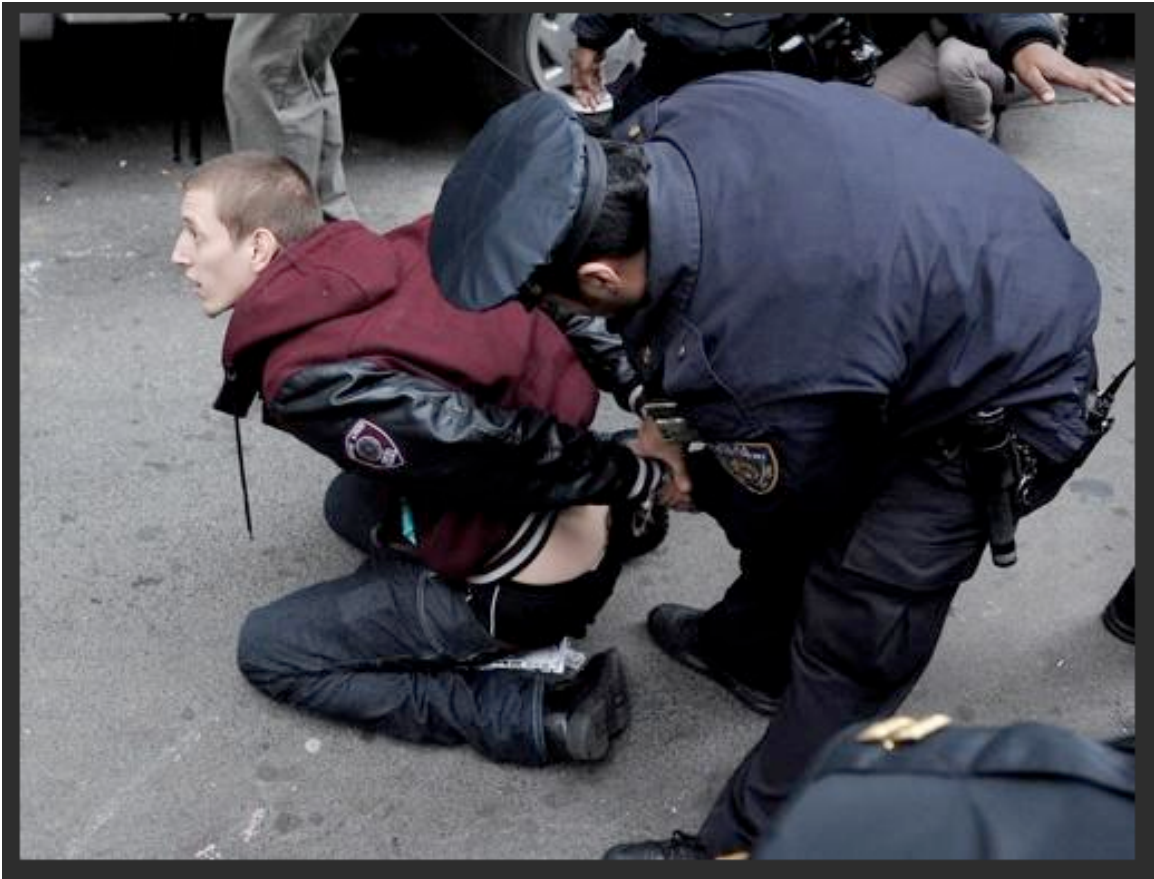


Figure 5 (cont'd)



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Figure 5 (cont'd)



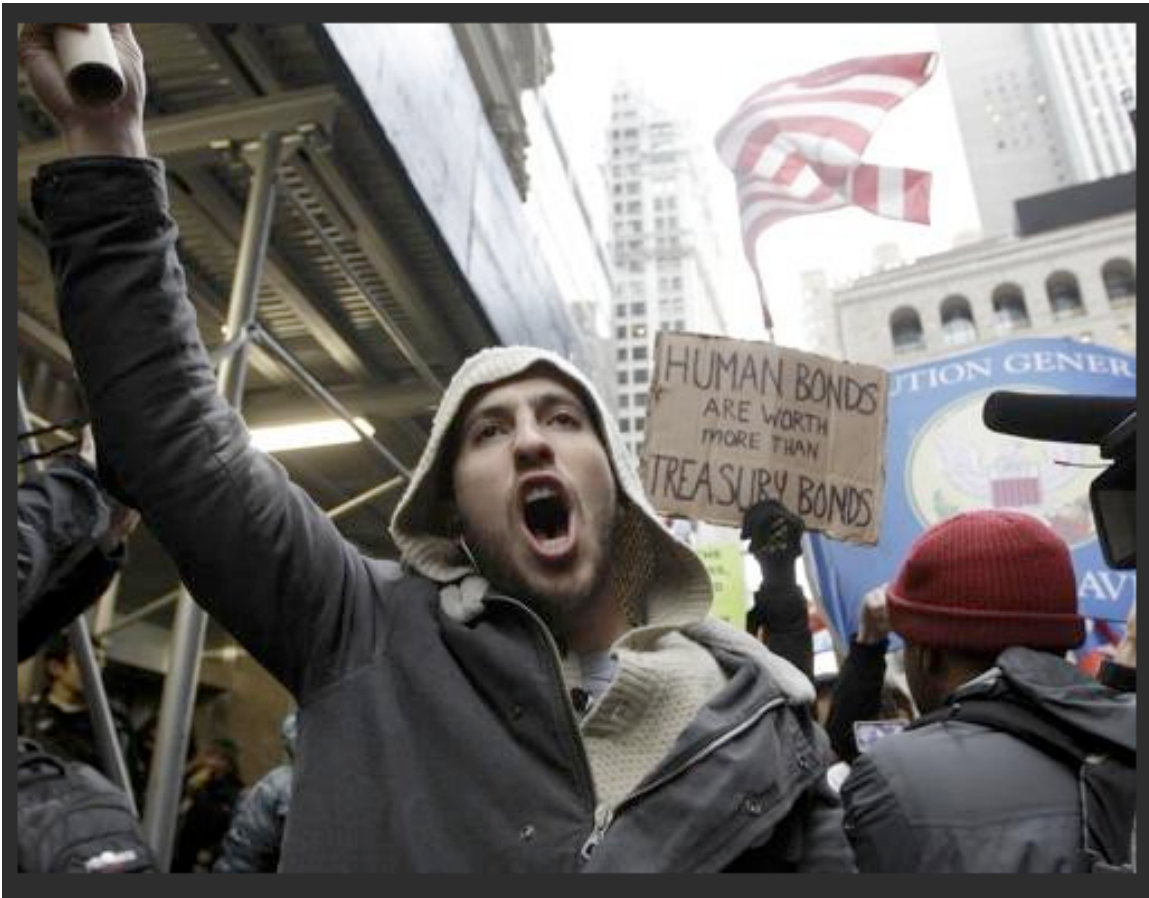
Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Human Bonds Are Worth More Than Treasury Bonds)

Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)

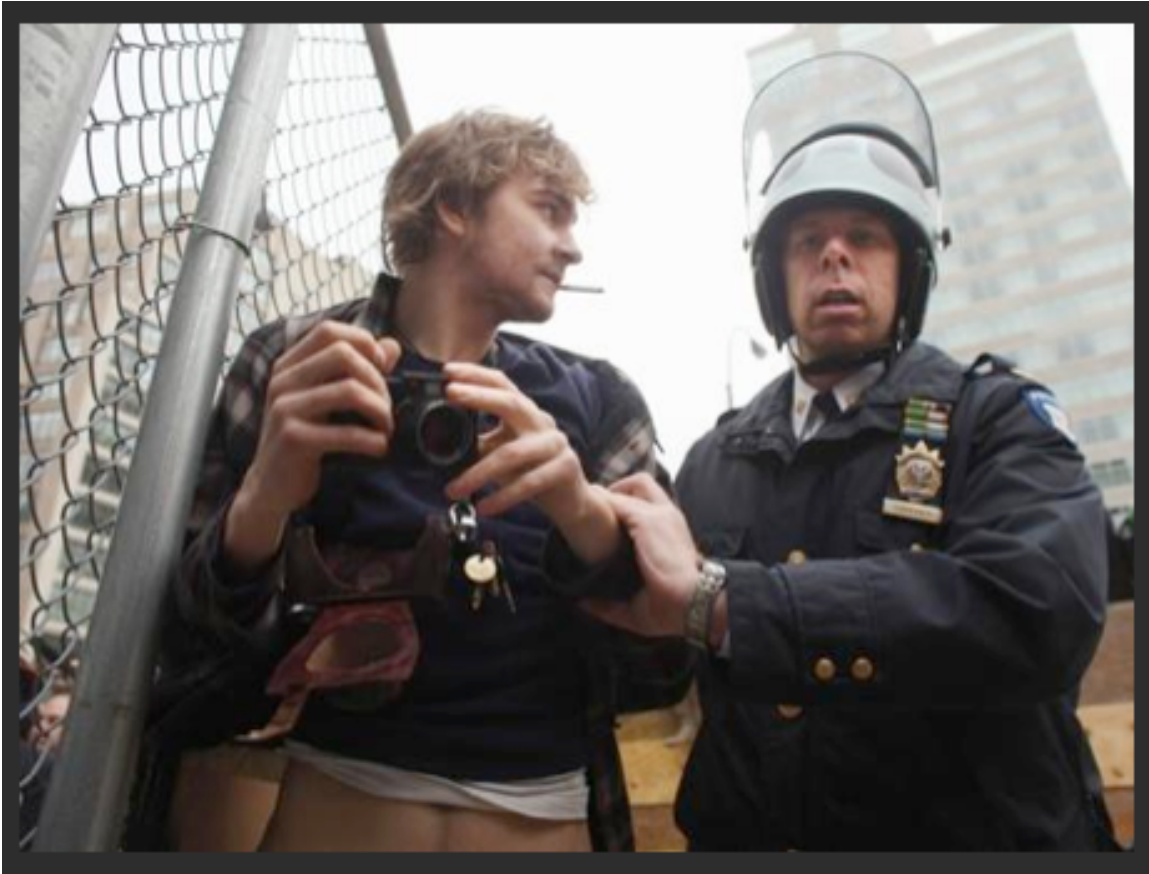


Figure 5 (cont'd)



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Figure 5 (cont'd)



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Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)

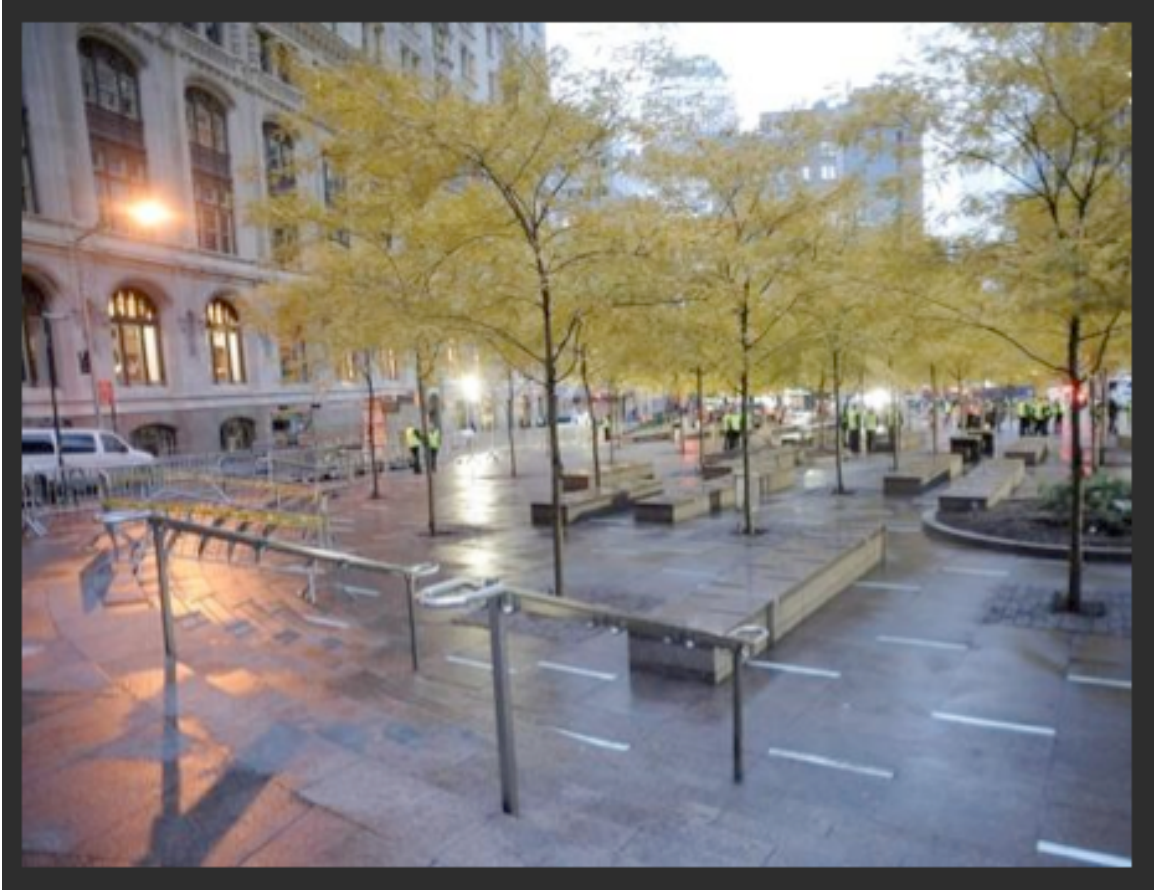


Figure 5 (cont'd)



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Figure 5 (cont'd)

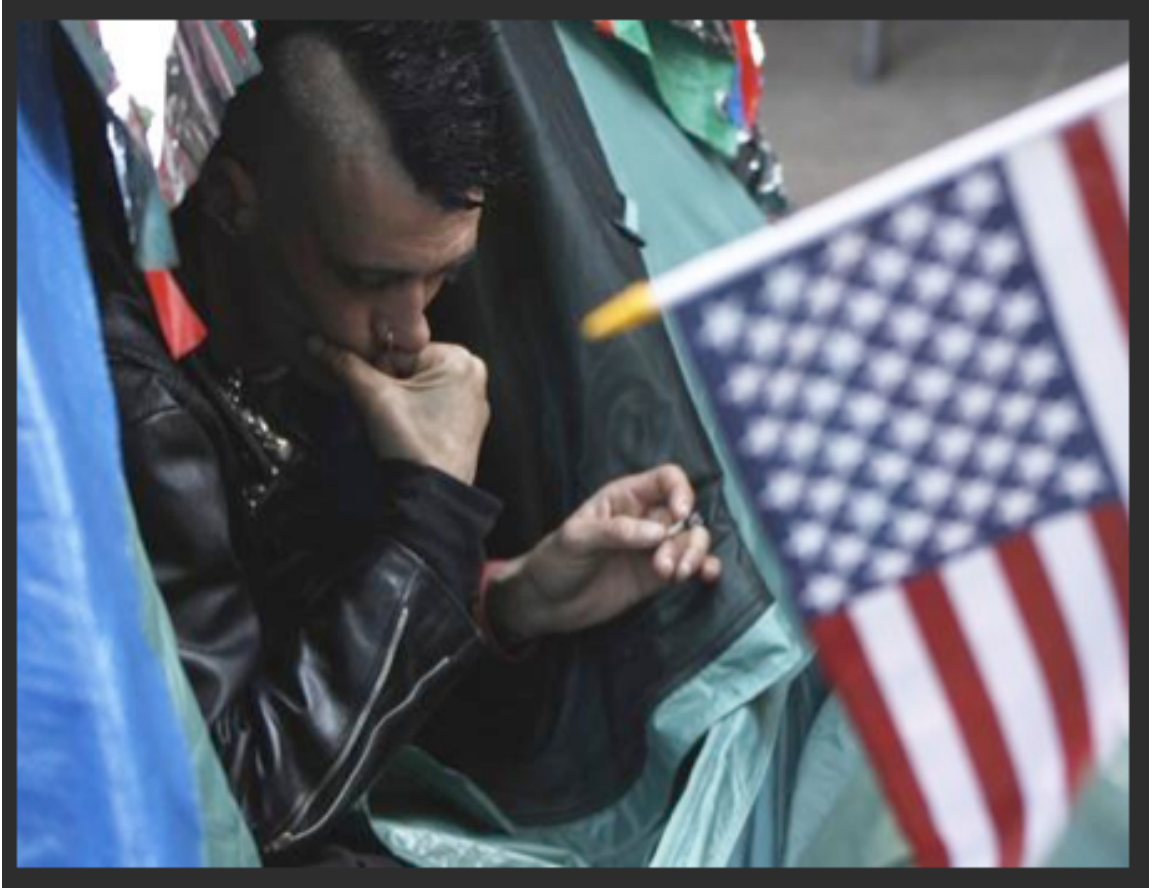


Figure 5 (cont'd)



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Figure 5 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Arrest Wall \$t Bank\$ter\$)

Figure 5 (cont'd)



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Figure 5 (cont'd)



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Figure 5 (cont'd)



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Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Wall Street and the Pentagon Enemies of Humanity)

Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



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Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



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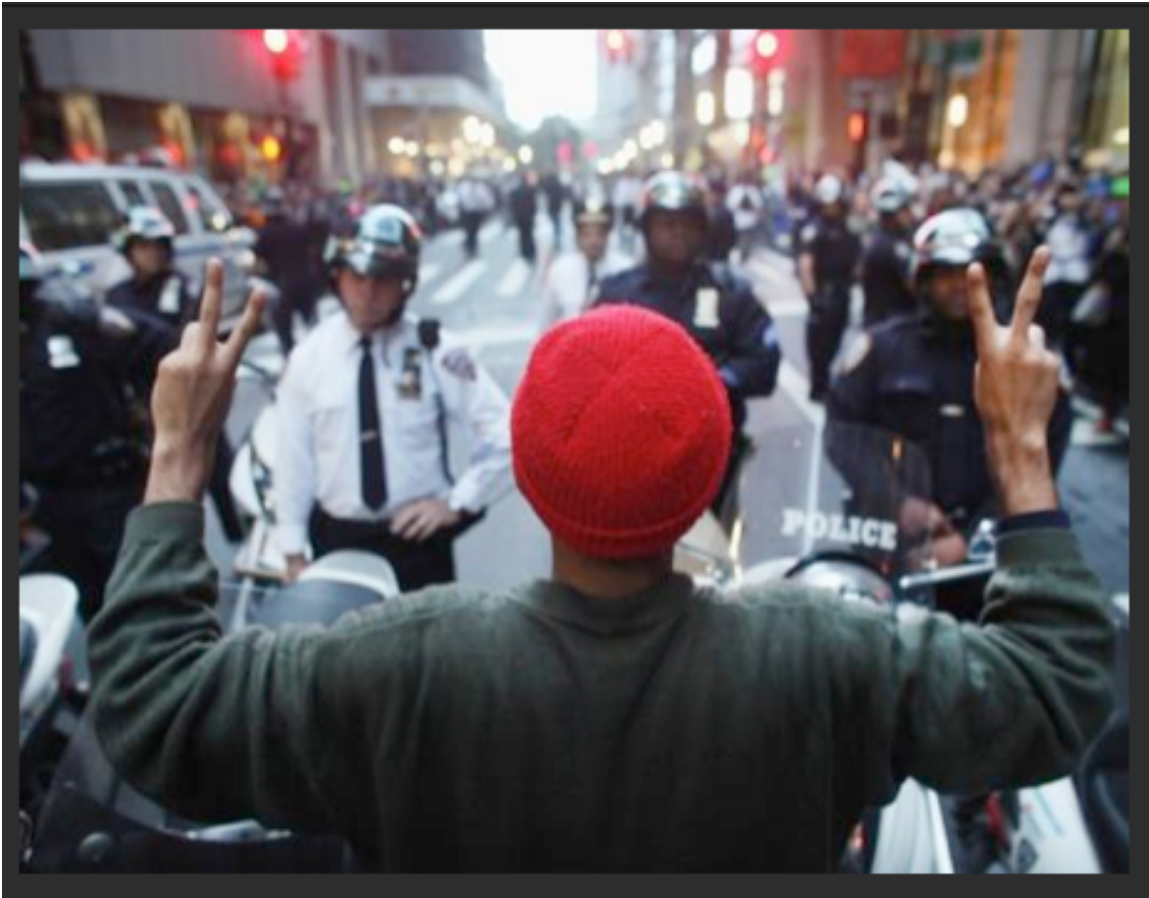


Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)

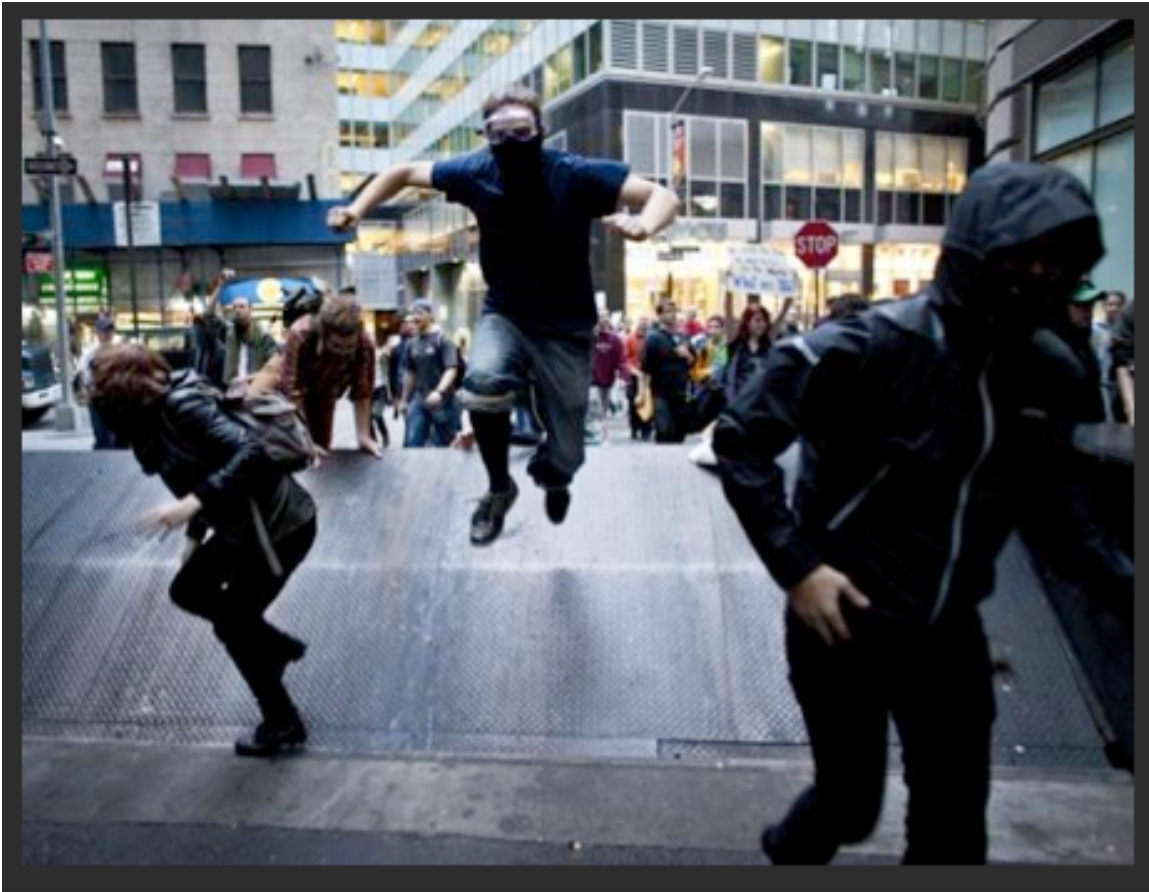


Figure 5 (cont'd)



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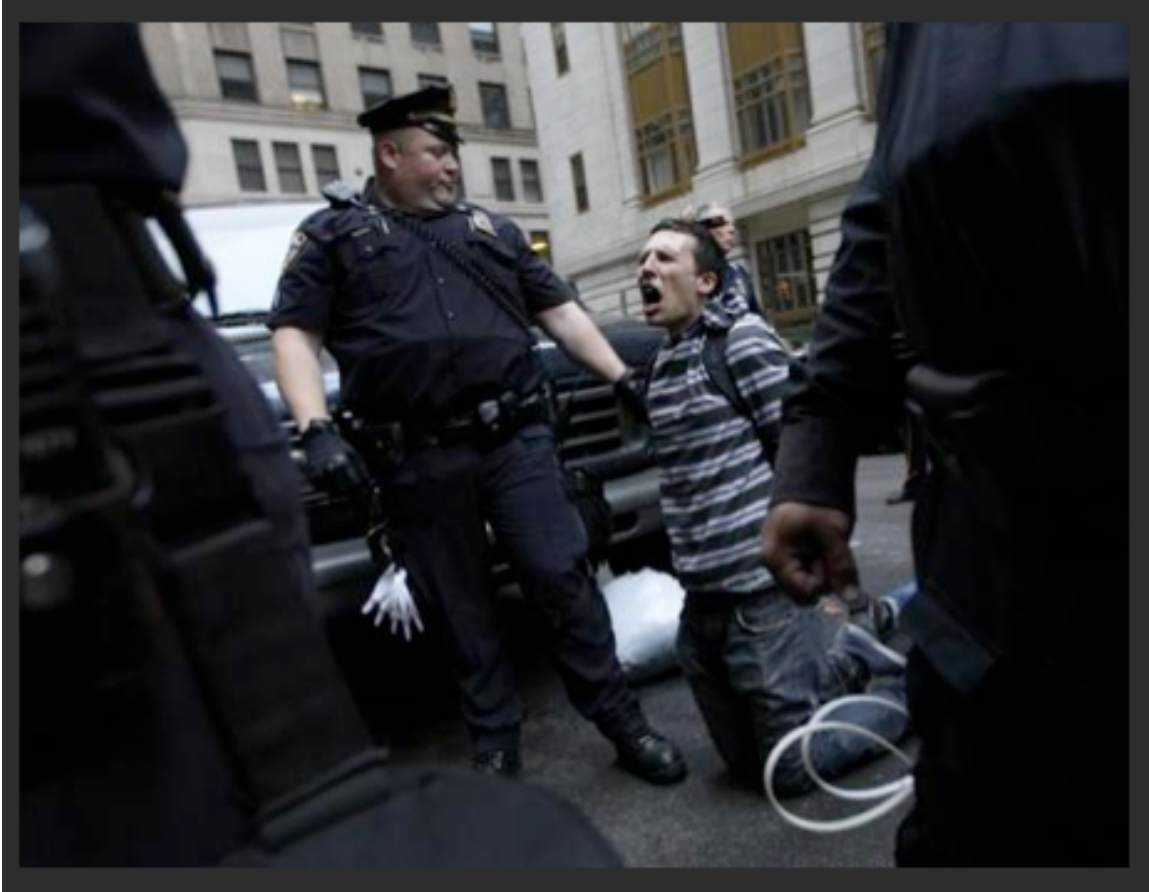


Figure 5 (cont'd)

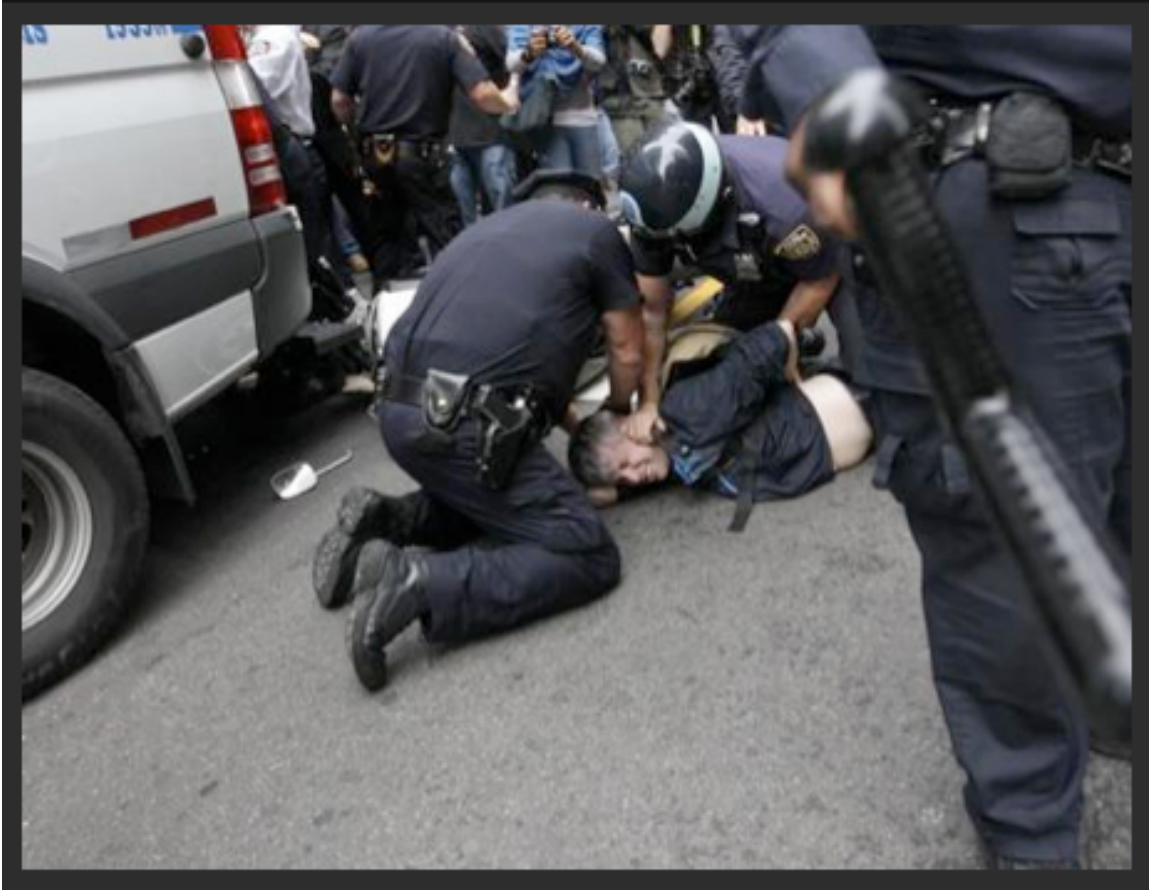


Figure 5 (cont'd)



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Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Wall St. Wins)

Figure 5 (cont'd)

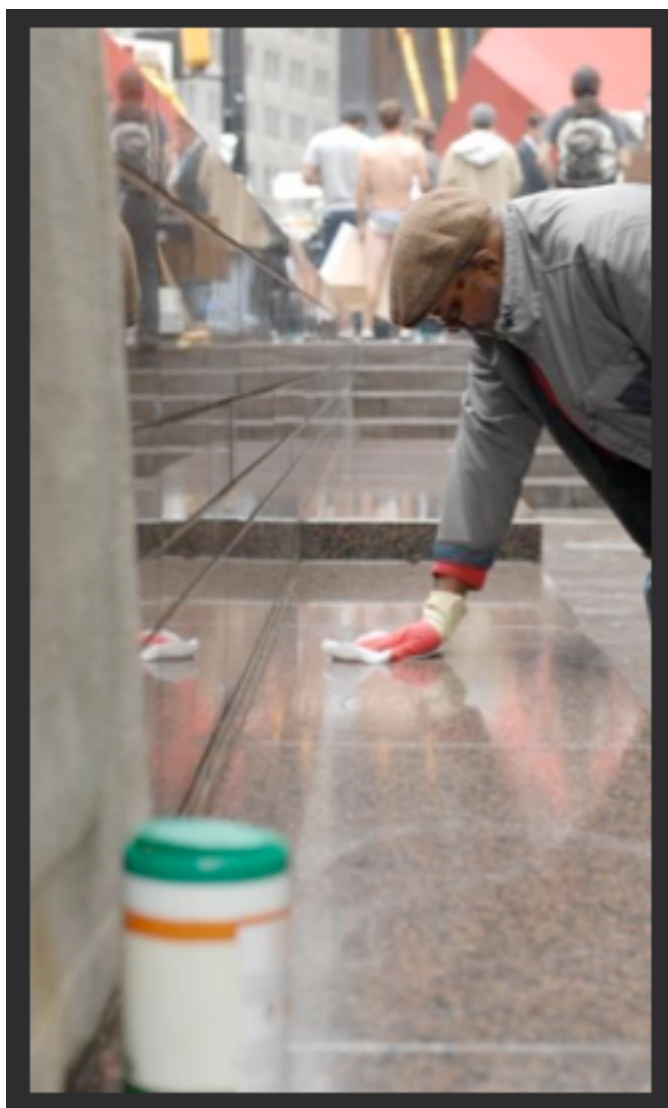


Figure 5 (cont'd)



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Figure 5 (cont'd)

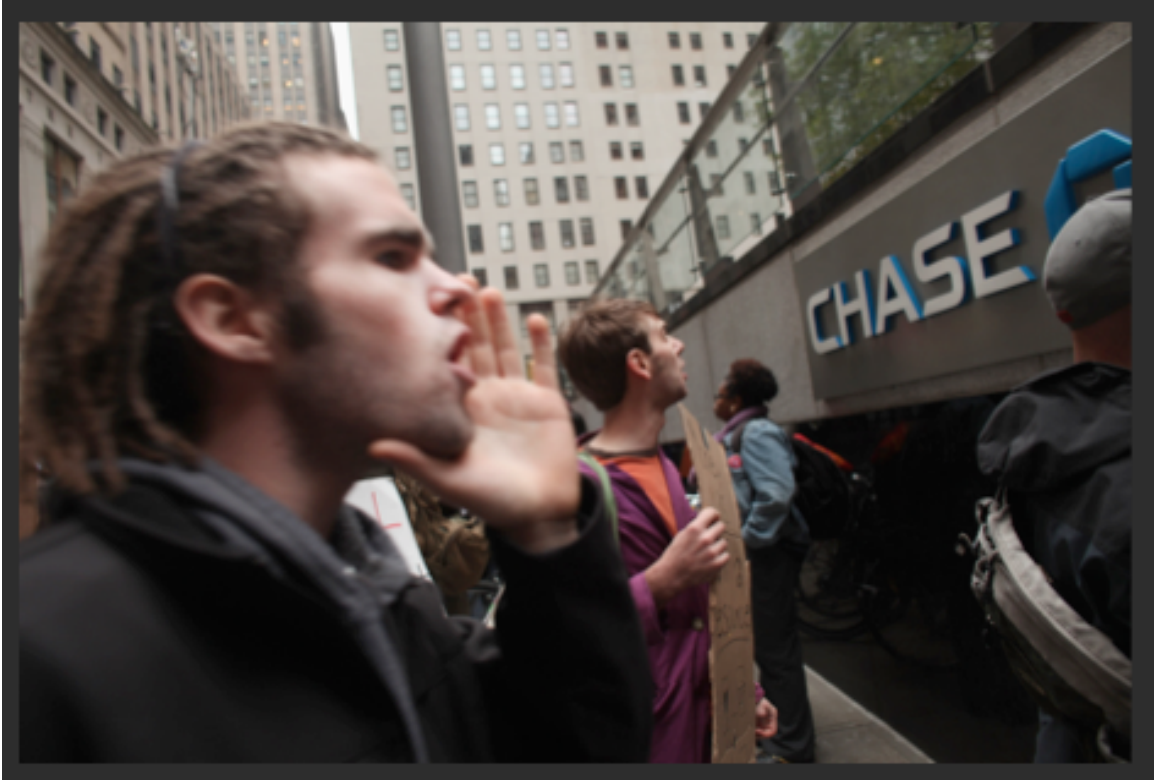


Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: People Not Profit and the System Works for Them)

Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Greedy Wall Street Stop Stealing My Bone)

Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Up Against the Wall Street)

Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: We Want Jobs)

Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: We're Not Disorganized America Just Has Too Many Issues)

Figure 5 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Where is the Change We Voted For?!)

Figure 5 (cont'd)

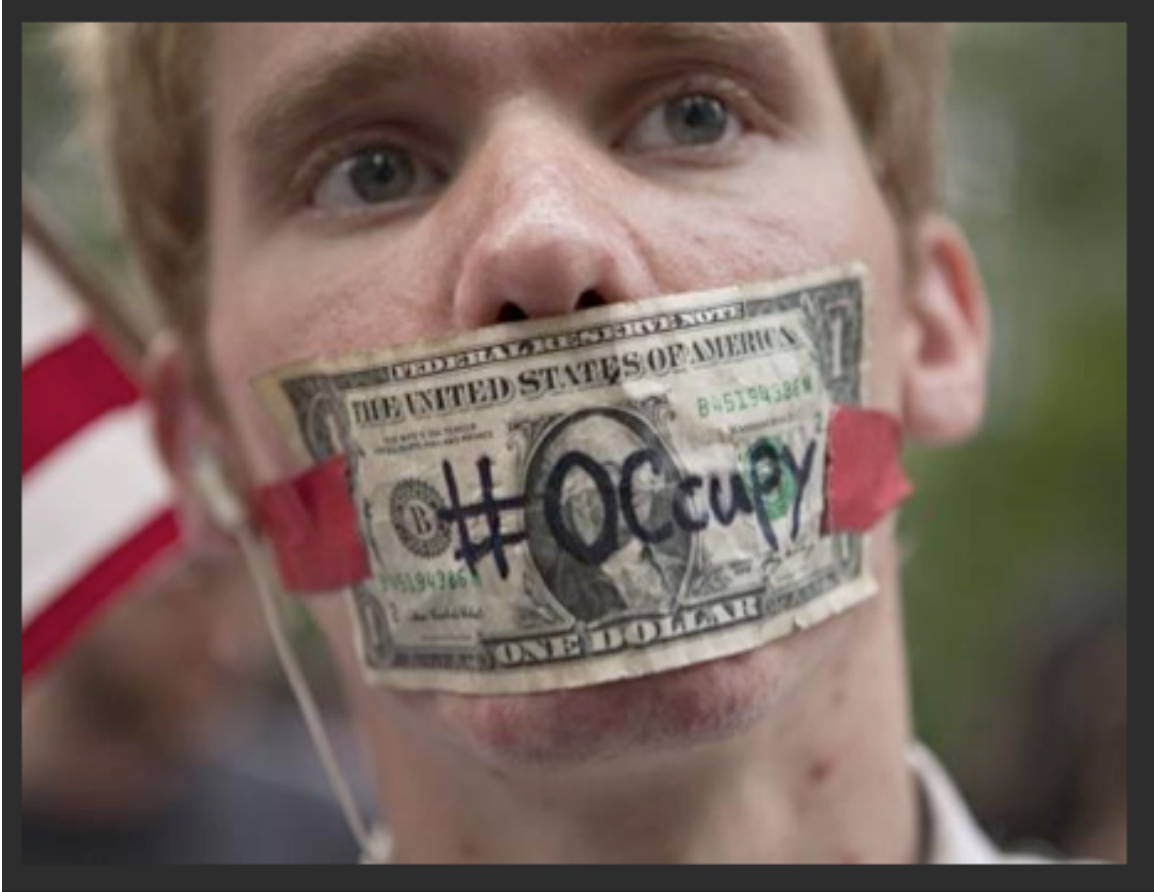


Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)

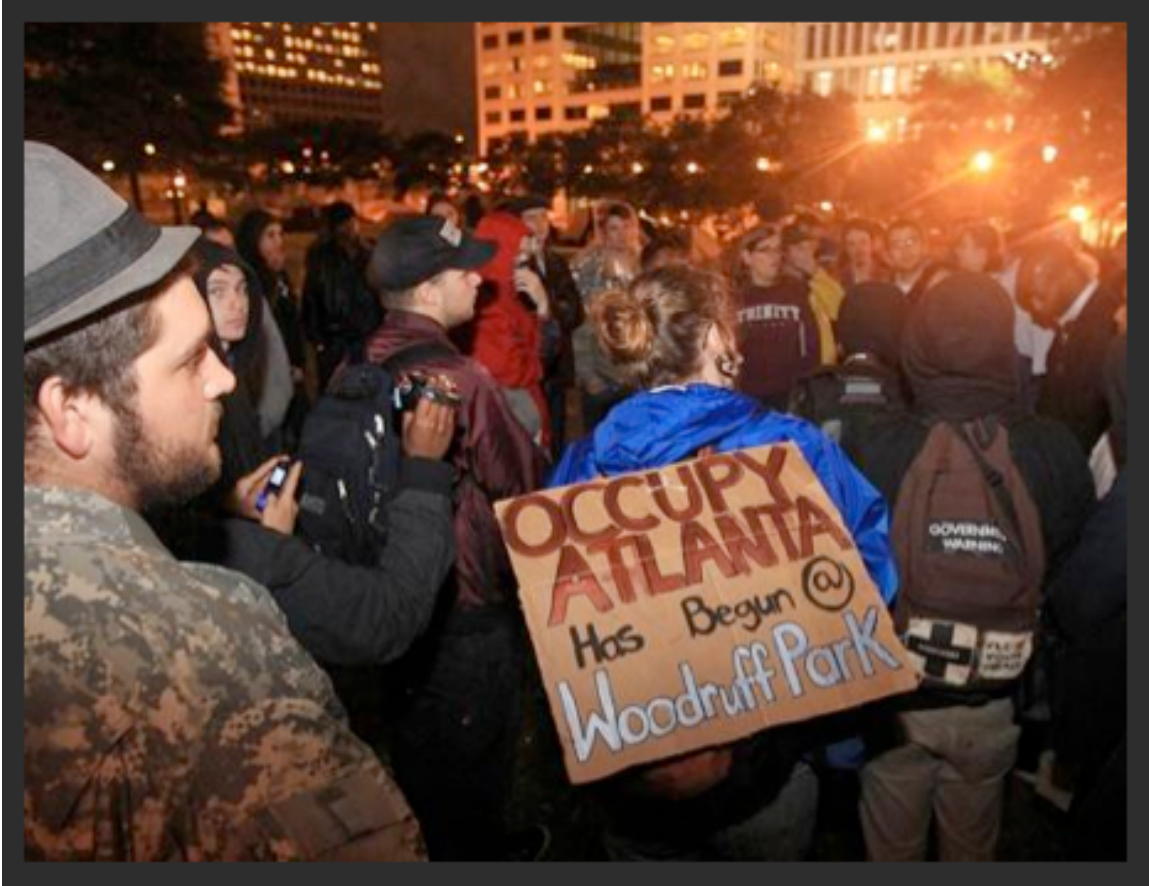


Figure 5 (cont'd)

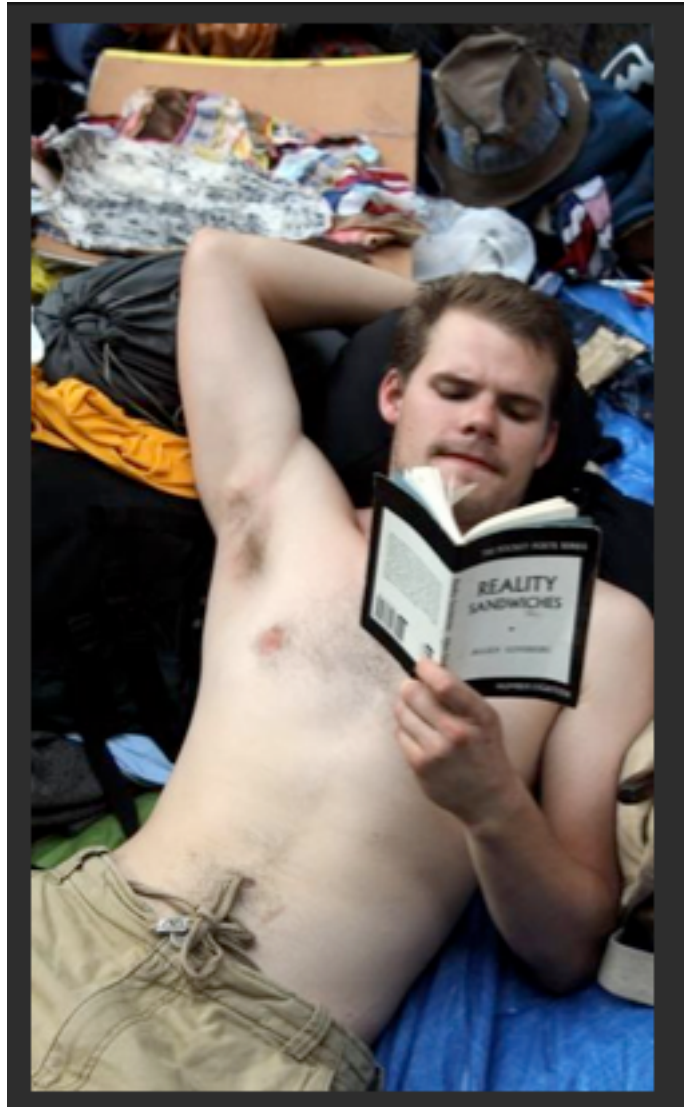


Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)

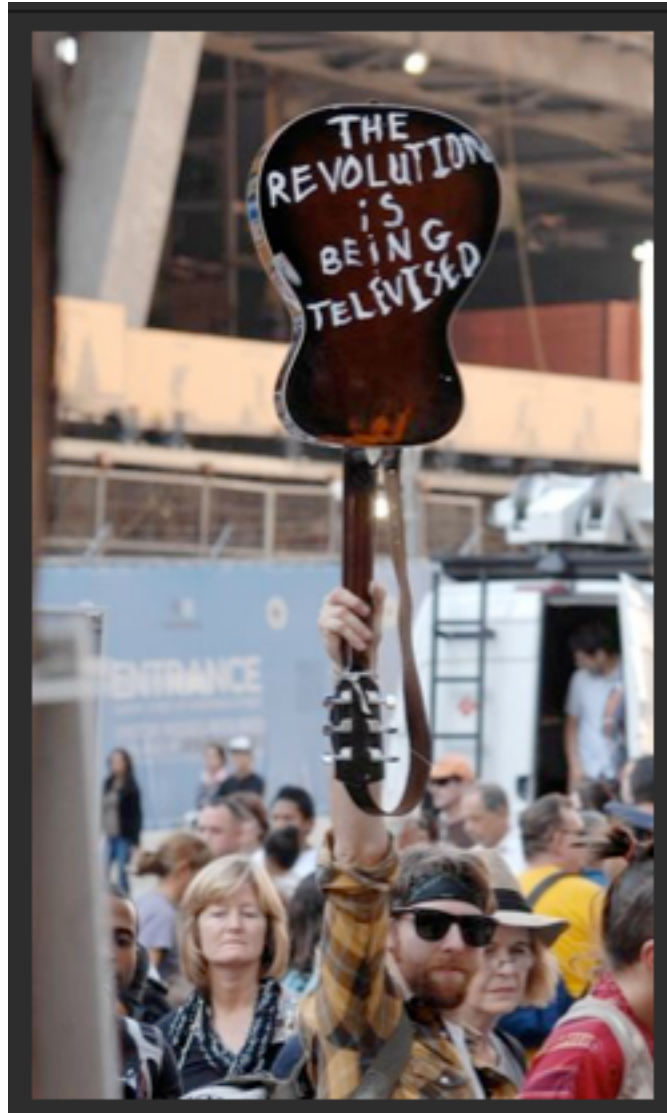


Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



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Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)

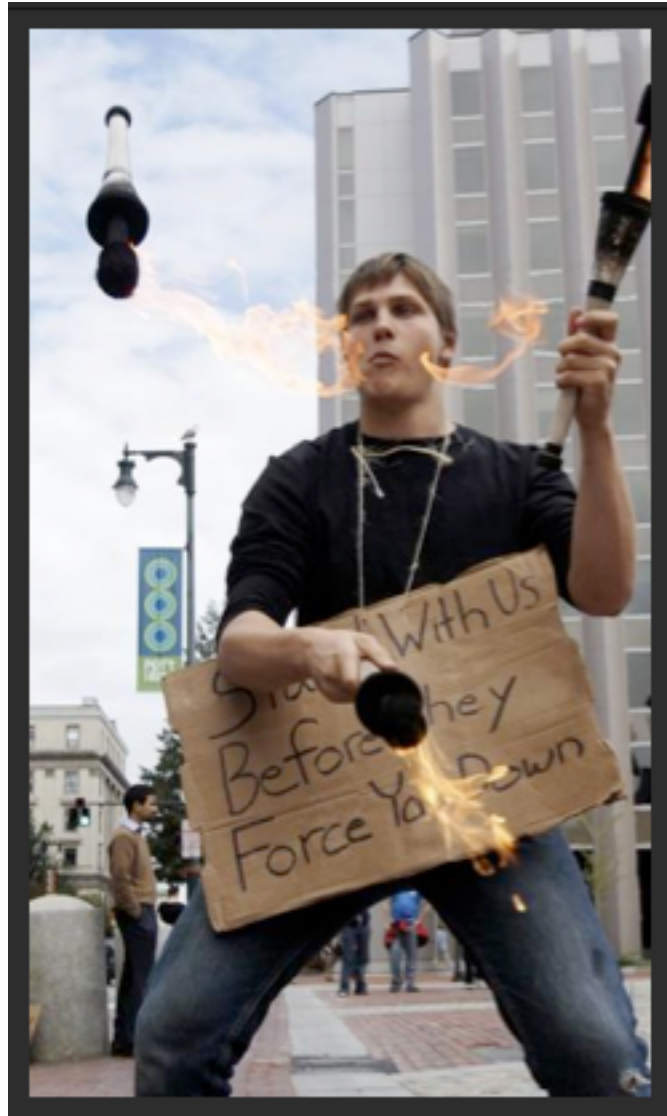


Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)

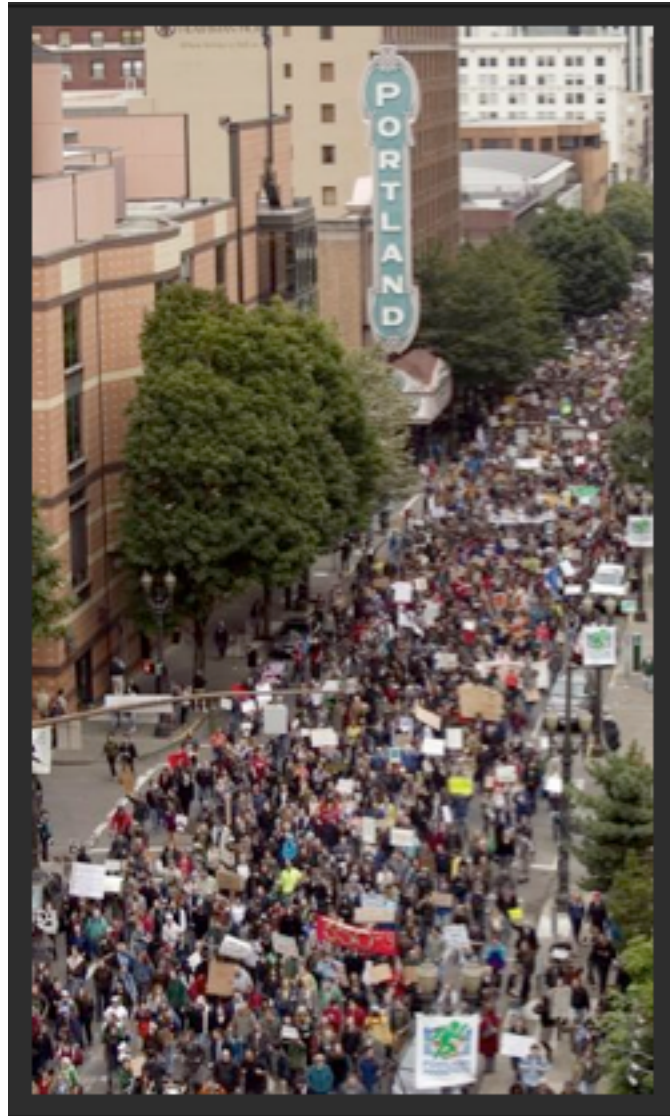


Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Refund California Make Banks Pay!)

Figure 5 (cont'd)

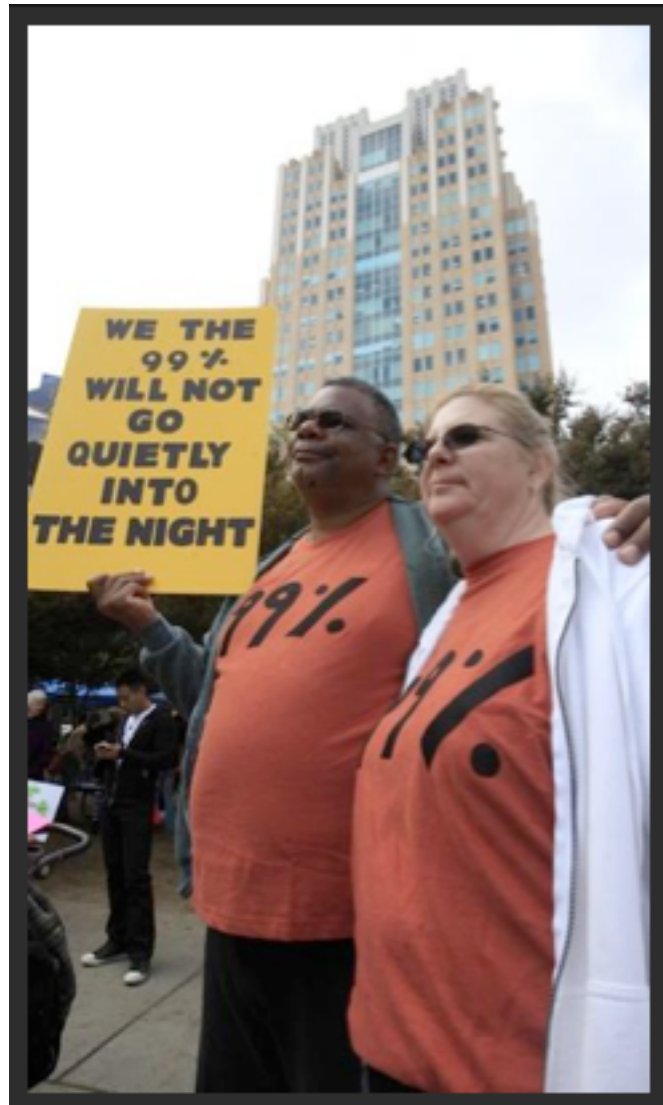


Figure 5 (cont'd)



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Figure 5 (cont'd)

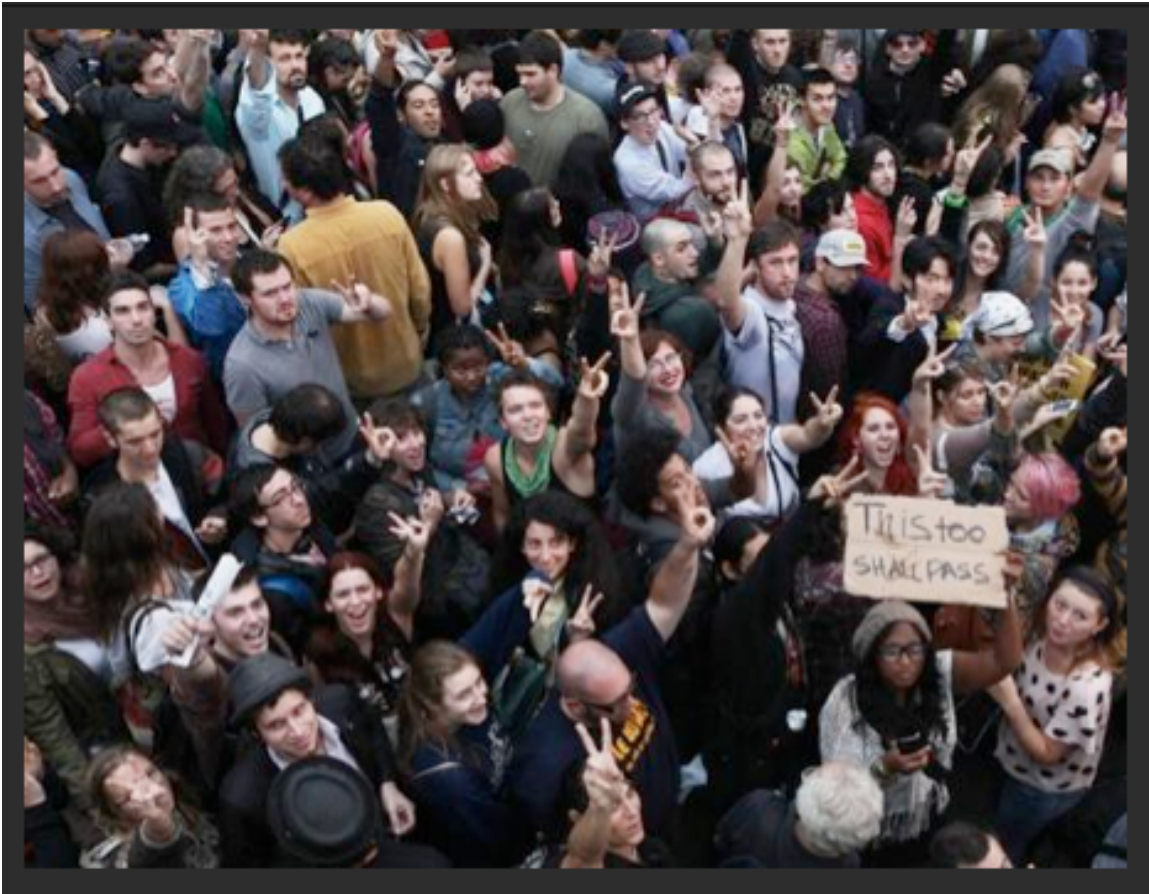


Figure 5 (cont'd)

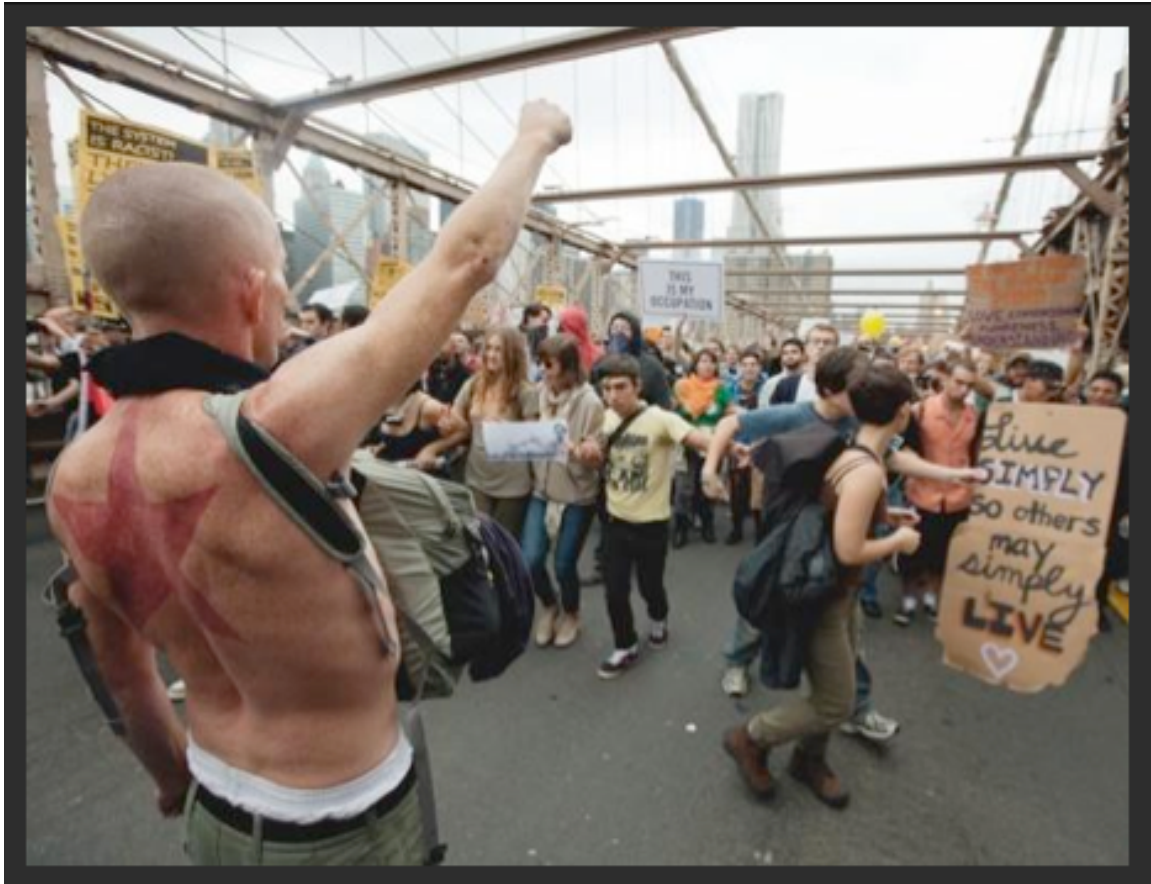


Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)

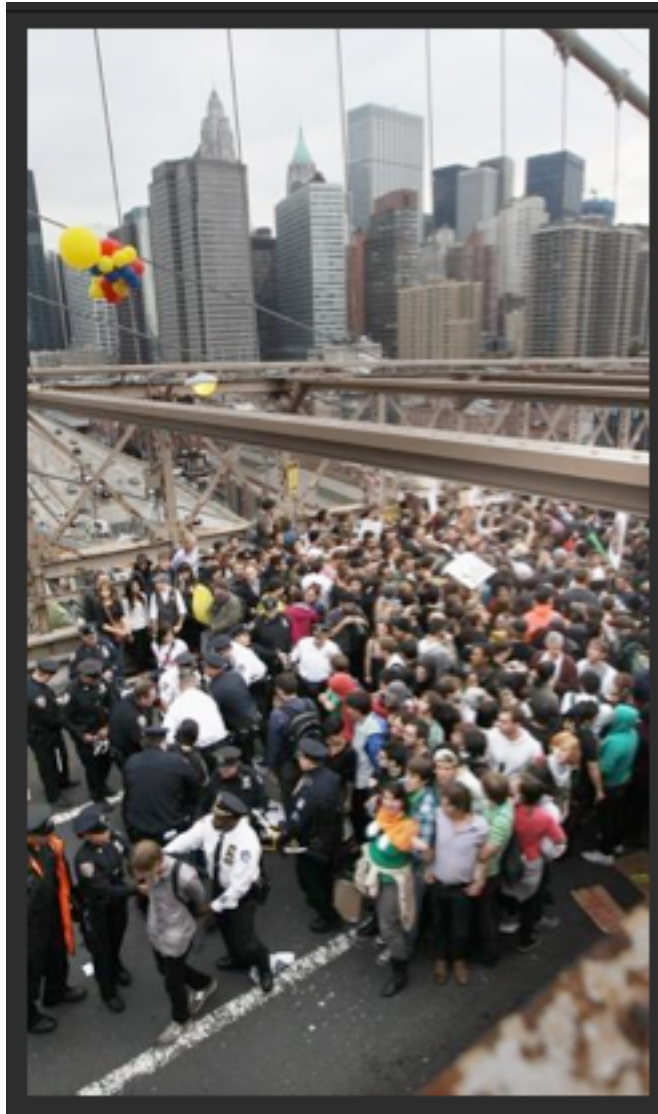


Figure 5 (cont'd)

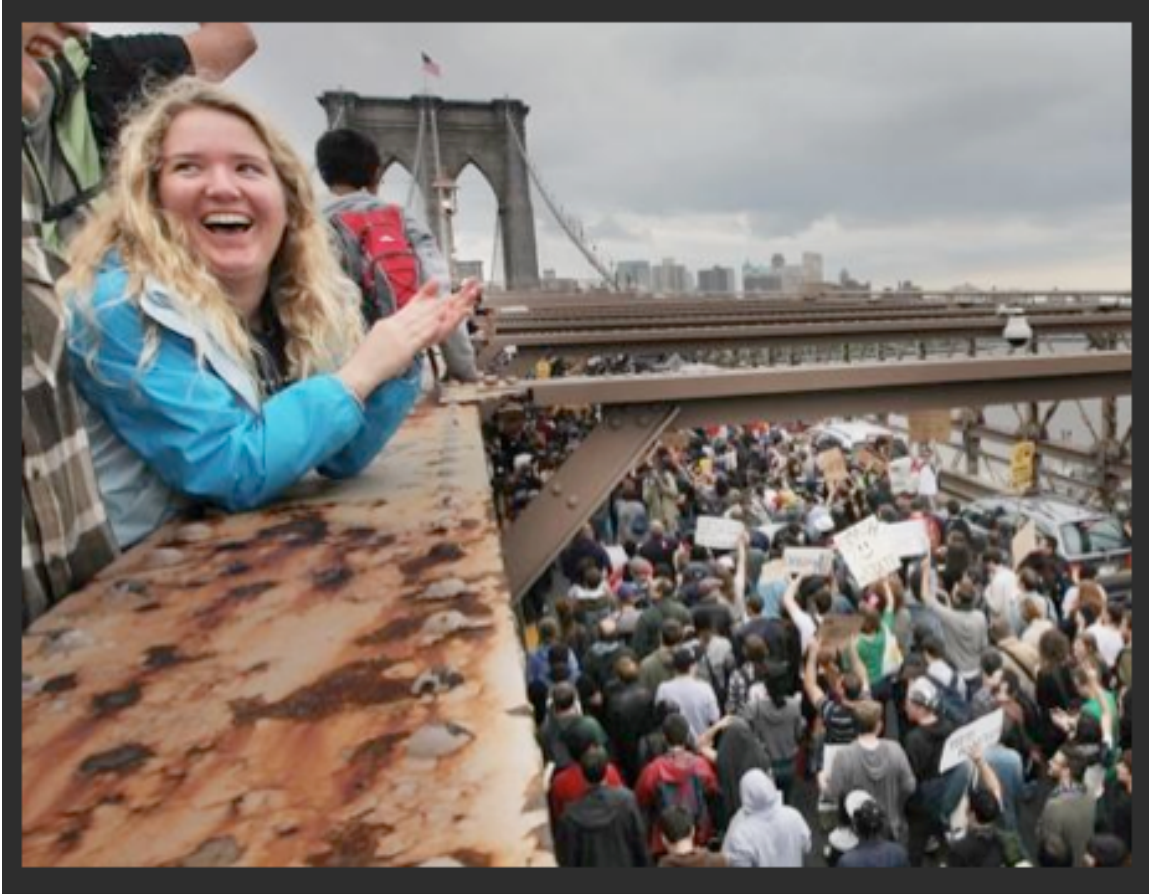


Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)

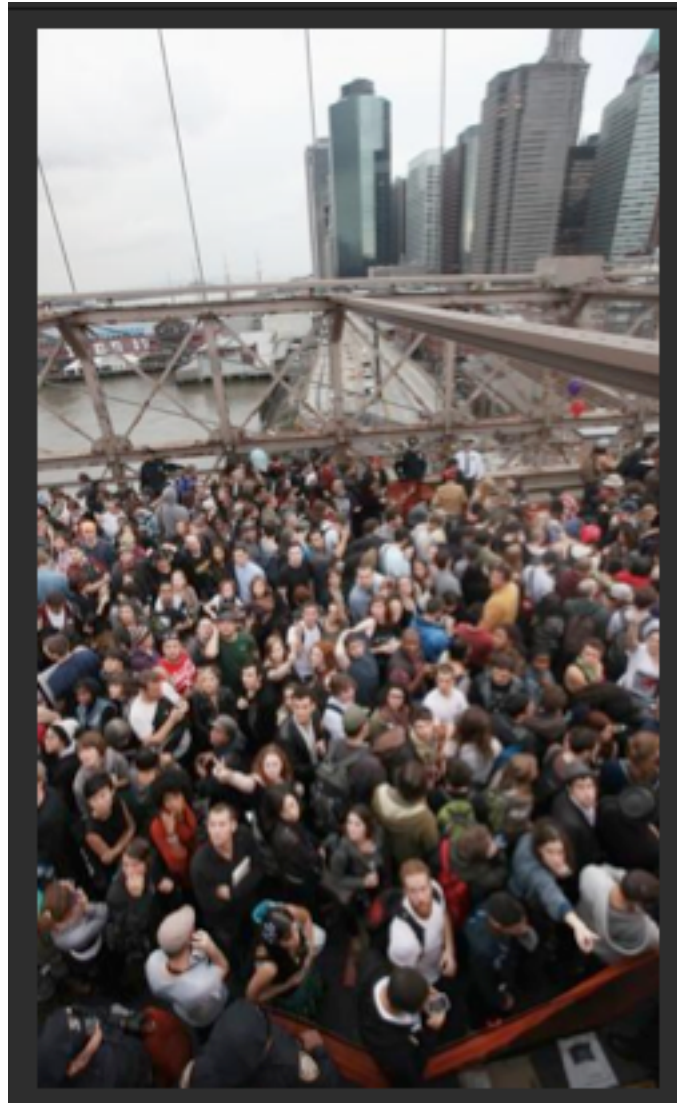


Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)

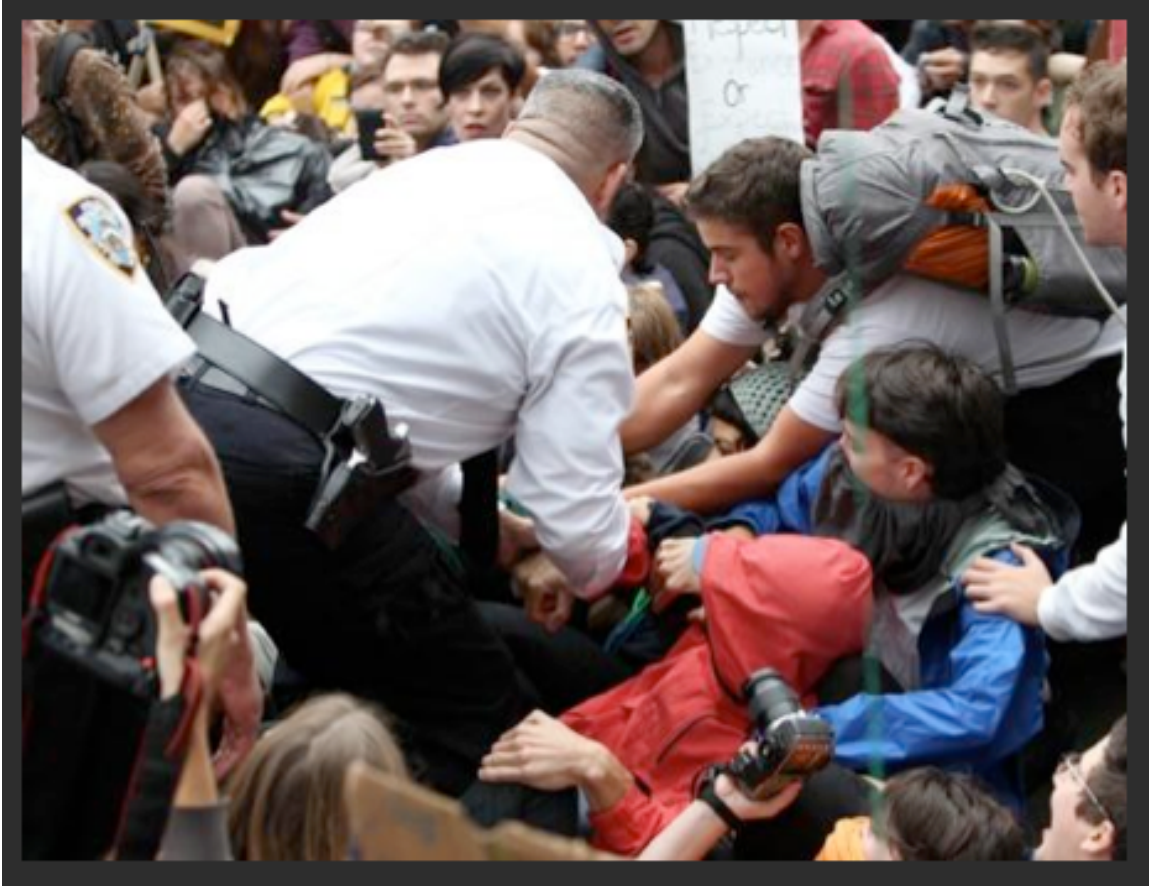


Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Occupy Wall St.)

Figure 5 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Corporate Criminal)

Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Relevant Text: Looking for Wall St Job!!! Qualifications: Ruined Millions of Lives Drove Up National Debt Took Bailouts Ignored Regulations Desired Salary \$50-100 Million Please! Hey A Girls Gotta Live!)

Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)

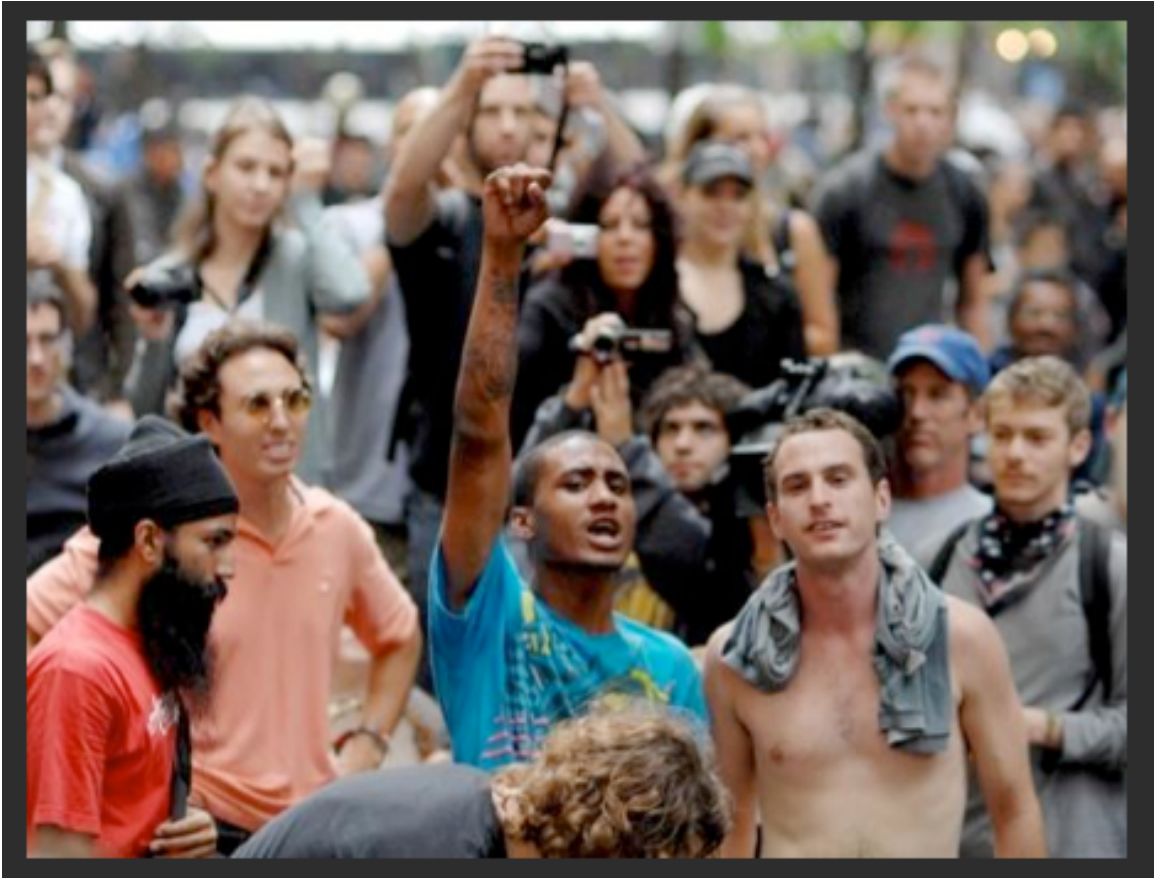


Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



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Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Figure 5 (cont'd)



Appendix E

Daily News Photographs



Figure 6: 145 photographs of the Daily News' coverage of the Occupy Wall Street protests¹⁴

¹⁴ Photographs came directly from the Daily News' website. As a result some photographs may appear to be out of focus and imperfect

Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Koch the Cause of A Doomed Generation)

Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Verigreedy Wireless Destroying Middle-Class Jobs! CWA)

Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: There's No Such Thing As Defeat in Non-Violence; If the Left Wing & Right Wing are Broken How Can the Bird Ever Fly)

Figure 6 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: This Is A Civil Non-Violent Law Abiding Revolt Against Greed Not Against the NYPD)

Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



A large group of people, many in wheelchairs, protesting on a city street. They are holding signs that read "STOP THE CUTS TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES", "TAX G.E.", "WALL of STUFF in BOSTON", and "IT'S NOT A FREE MARKET". The protesters are diverse in age and appearance, and the background shows a city street with trees and buildings.

475

Figure 6 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: US Congress Extend the Benefit for the 99'ers)

Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Happy Birthday OWS 1 Month)

Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



(There is no relevant text in this photograph)

Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: You Are the 99%)

Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Why I Occupy)

Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text : Money Talks 99% Walks)

Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Money Talks 99% Walks)

Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Occupied Los Angeles Unincorporated)

Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: 99% One Percent Occupy Wall Street)

Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



A large crowd of people is gathered for a protest. In the foreground, a man with a white beard and a cap holds up a sign that reads "WALL ST. \$\$\$ The LOVE of Money is The ROOT of ALL Evil" Jesus". To his left, another sign says "FOUR TO THE PEOPLE WE ARE UNIFIED". The crowd is diverse in age and appearance, and the atmosphere appears to be one of active participation in the demonstration.

Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



(There is no relevant text in this photograph)

Figure 6 (cont'd)

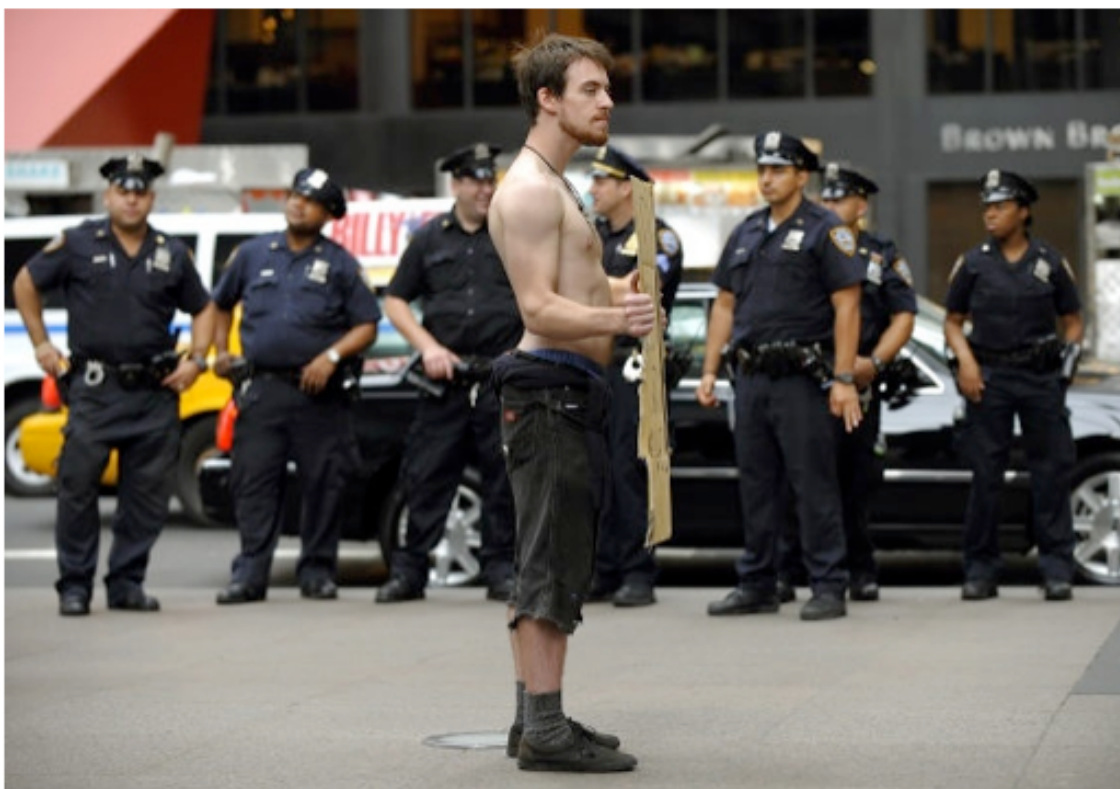


Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



(There is no relevant text in this photograph)

Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



(Relevant Text: Just Because We Can't See It Doesn't Mean It Not Happenin)

Figure 6 (cont'd)



(There is no relevant text in this photograph)

Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



(There is no relevant text in this photograph)

Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



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Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



Figure 6 (cont'd)



REFERENCES

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