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THE GREAT BEAR MEDIA BATTLE: HOW THE FOREST WAS FINALLY WON

by

Gemma Richardson

A Thesis Submitted to the
Faculty of Graduate Studies
through Communication Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts at the
University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario Canada

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the struggle for environmental protection in the Great Bear Rainforest in British Columbia and how this decade-long battle was covered in the media. It also seeks to add to the discussion on how social movements can utilize the power of the mass media. First, literature on social movements and the media is reviewed within the contextual framework of political economy, as well as literature on Greenpeace and its media tactics, a key actor in the forest battle. A critical discourse analysis was then carried out on a sample of articles from the *Globe and Mail* and the *Vancouver Sun* from 1995 to 2007 that explicitly used the term Great Bear Rainforest. The analysis revealed that the coverage matched the expectations set out by McLeod and Hertog's protest paradigm, in that the environmentalists were portrayed in marginalizing frames until an agreement was reached on the Great Bear Rainforest.

This thesis is dedicated to the loving memory of
Tavis Huffman (1979 – 2003)
who continues to inspire all
of us who were lucky
enough to have
had him in
our lives.

“The names of radicals are rarely etched in marble, but burn eternally
in the hearts of [people].” – Saul Alinsky

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INTRODUCTION

The key factor in social change is building up a critical mass of people in order to reach what Malcolm Gladwell (2000) terms “the tipping point” – the threshold or boiling point at which change occurs. While social movements start out as small groups of radical individuals challenging an aspect or several aspects of society, or even society as a whole, they must grow in numbers in order for the goals of the social movement to be recognized. Reaching a diverse range of people with social change messages – raising awareness and changing behaviour – is often a serious obstacle for social movements. The mass media should ideally provide forums through which social change messages could be disseminated and debated, however the corporate structure of mass media, and therefore the never ending quest for the increased profitability of media products, limits the possibilities for democratic, open forums. The mass media are also part of the status-quo in society and serve the function of social control mechanisms at times.

With this problem, social movements must find ways to alter the structure and nature of mass media in order to reach the public – clearly no simple task. As Robert McChesney (1999) suggests, all progressive social movements should include critiques of the mass media and participate in media reform initiatives. However, social movements must also move forward on their primary social issue by utilizing *existing* media. Some social movements have had little to no success in breaking through and having media cover their issue or movement fairly, while others have had relatively good success with reaching a large portion of the population with information and calls to action. This thesis seeks to add to the discussion on how social movements can effectively use the mainstream media to catalyze social change. This will be accomplished by analyzing the

media coverage of the environmental movement in Canada, in particular the efforts to protect the Great Bear Rainforest in British Columbia.

The efforts of environmentalists and aboriginal groups that were able to secure legal protection for the Great Bear Rainforest provide a unique example of an environmental victory in Canada where enough public support was mobilized to result in a change in public policy. As mass media are influential on the formation of public opinion and provide a means to transmit social change messages to the broader public, it is essential that social movements harness the power of the mass media and diminish the negative and problematic issues surrounding media coverage of protest groups as much as possible. By analyzing how the media covered the efforts to protect the Great Bear Rainforest, I hope to determine whether the media treated those involved as would be expected according to Douglas McLeod and James Hertog's protest paradigm, or if mass media were fair or even sympathetic to this particular cause.

After assessing whether or not the mainstream media helped to bolster public support for environmental protection in the Great Bear Rainforest, I delineate what can be learned from the successes and failures of the environmental coalition that was front and centre in the battle to protect this massive and unique ecosystem. I will explore the ways in which mass media were utilized by this social movement in order to win over public opinion regarding the protection of the Great Bear Rainforest. The media tactics utilized in this case can provide "lessons learned" and "best practices" for other social movements that must also harness the power of mass media in order to bring about progressive social change. I believe this research is significant because it sheds light on the media's biases in this particular case and identifies effective tactics that were used to counteract negative media biases, and to generate positive representations in order to inform the general

public about the issue and generate support for the implementation of new public policy. To my knowledge, there has not been an in-depth qualitative study of the media coverage surrounding the Great Bear Rainforest debate and it is my hope that this research can contribute to a greater understanding of one of the most significant environmental victories in Canadian history to date, as well as contribute further to the discussions on social movements and the media and effective media tactics for protest groups. As the general public seems to be tuning into just how dire the situation is with our fragile environment, I feel this research is also quite timely and can hopefully inform future environmental campaigns of effective use of the media and the possible pitfalls of media coverage that must be avoided.

I chose this topic as it interests me a great deal and I am particularly interested in the success of one of the main organizations involved in this effort, Greenpeace, to generate media coverage for environmental issues. As someone who self-identifies as an environmentalist, this research is not just relevant in an academic sense, but also in a broader social justice sense, as my main goal has been to contribute to furthering progressive social change within the environmental movement.

CHAPTER I: THE STRUGGLE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN THE GREAT BEAR RAINFOREST

(i) The Great Bear Rainforest

The values that abide in the river valleys of the raincoast cannot be measured in dollars and cents. They must be measured in clean water, in strong runs of wild salmon, in healthy wildlife populations, and in a healthy forest environment. Even in crass economic terms, a logging job that might last five years makes little sense when compared to the long-term benefits of saving one of the earth's rarest natural resources – temperate rainforest wilderness (McAllister & McAllister, 1997, p. 140).

The temperate rainforest is one of the earth's most diverse ecosystems, providing habitat to endangered and threatened species such as wild salmon, wolves, eagles, grizzly bears, black bears and rare white Kermode/spirit bears, and a multitude of flora and other fauna. With a biomass of 500 tons per acre, its biological productivity is unmatched and 40 per cent greater than tropical forests (McAllister & McAllister, 1997). While temperate rainforest once stretched from Alaska to California, it now covers less than one per cent of the earth's continents (Cha & Hammers, 2005). Canada is home to the planet's last large expanse of coastal temperate rainforest – now known as the Great Bear Rainforest of British Columbia. This ancient temperate rainforest of British Columbia is built on ecological foundations that took approximately 10,000 to 14,000 years to evolve, and is a unique combination of plants and animals that migrated there from ecosystems as old as 70 million years (McAllister & McAllister).

In 1990, it was Ian McAllister, photographer, conservationist, resident and expert on the region, who first dubbed it “The Great Bear Rainforest” when he created the Rainforest Conservation Society (Cha & Hammers, 2005). Referring to the aboriginal communities that live within this ecosystem, David Suzuki explains that, “this is one of the few places left on earth with fully functioning ecosystems and communities that have

lived in balance with nature since time immemorial” (David Suzuki Foundation, 2005, p.12). Extending from the Butte Inlet north to the British Columbia-Alaska border, the Great Bear Rainforest composes a land mass larger than Ireland (Smith & Sterritt, n.d.).

The value of this large expanse of land became a hotly debated topic in the late 1990s as environmentalists and aboriginal groups joined forces to fight for provincial protection against large logging corporations that were rapidly clear-cutting areas of the Great Bear Rainforest. While small tracts were set aside as parks, environmentalists and aboriginal groups argued these fragments were far too limited to sustain forest diversity and that British Columbia was presented with a unique opportunity to protect enough of one major ecosystem to guarantee the survival of all components (McAllister & McAllister, 1997). Some of the trees being logged were over fifteen centuries old, a clear indication that old growth forests would take centuries to heal from clear cutting. Perhaps the most famous resident of the forest and certainly one of the most elusive, the Kermode, or spirit, bear was particularly threatened by the logging. The Kermode bear is a rare genetic variant born in one out of ten black bear births in a particular corner of the rainforest. Found nowhere else in the world other than a particular section of the Great Bear Rainforest, Kermode bears are more rare than panda bears, with a total population of just a few hundred. Bears and wolves in the forest were under threat not just from habitat loss, but also from hunters and trappers who were gaining access to remote parts of the forest through logging roads (Cha & Hammers, 2005).

Overall, logging in old-growth forests, such as the Great Bear Rainforest, causes immeasurable damage to the biodiversity of the area and to the habitat of thousands of species. It also continues to impede on First Nations cultural values and ancestral land. By

1997, enough damage had already been done that there were even negative impacts on other commercial operations in the forest. As McAllister and McAllister note:

[The] removal of the forest cover in this steep, rain-washed country inevitably causes uncontrolled runoff to damage spawning beds [of wild salmon] and rearing waters. The indisputable fact is that after [decades] of clear-cutting, the once mighty Rivers Inlet sockeye [salmon] run fell from over three million fish to 65 thousand, and one of the planet's great salmon fisheries had to be closed to commercial harvesting. This folly reflects a fact of life that in B.C. the forest industry is king, and has the political clout to bulldoze its way over all other industries, even those of other big industries (1997, p.41).

Ian and Karen McAllister explain in their Sierra Club book on the Great Bear Rainforest (1997) that the provincial government and the forest industry admitted that irresponsible logging practices had caused unnecessary environmental damage in the past, but they claimed that in 1995 a new, responsible approach to logging brought all of that to an end with the Forest Practices Code. Implemented by then premier Mike Harcourt, McAllister and McAllister argue the Code was used to head off environmentalist-led boycotts of B.C. wood products in Europe and the U.S. However, an audit by the Sierra Legal Defense Fund found that clear-cutting was still taking place in 97 per cent of the approvals issued under the Forest Practices Code. The Sierra Legal Defense Fund also found that "operators logging around known fish streams were allowed to clear-cut to the water's edge 79 per cent of the time" (McAllister & McAllister, p.138). In 1997, the Forest Practices Code was rewritten by the provincial government, further weakening any positive environmental impact.

When the campaign to save the Great Bear Rainforest began in the mid-nineties, "forest industry spokesmen [sic] reacted as though it posed a mortal threat to the B.C. economy, warning of potential job losses in the many thousands. Premier Glen Clark pronounced the campaigners 'enemies of British Columbia'" (McAllister & McAllister,

p. 138). In 1997, McAllister and McAllister wrote that “our pleas to the provincial and federal governments and timber industry continue to fall on deaf ears. Not until more people make their voices heard will we see the kind of changes needed to protect one of the greatest natural wonders of the world” (postscript).

Almost a decade later, a groundbreaking agreement was finally reached on the Great Bear Rainforest. A coalition of environmental organizations worked in partnership with several coastal First Nations groups, logging companies and the province to reach the historic agreement. In 2006, the provincial government agreed to create 107 new protected areas by 2009, which will result in protecting two million hectares of the Great Bear Rainforest from all logging. The province also committed to fully implement ecosystem-based management by 2009, a new approach to resource planning that first looks at what is needed to be left in place for a healthy ecosystem and then looks at what can be taken out (Rainforest Solutions Project, n.d.). All parties agreed that ecosystem-based management would be fully implemented by March 31, 2009.¹

(ii) The Campaign

The four environmental organizations that joined together to form the Rainforest Solutions Project and push for this agreement were ForestEthics, Greenpeace, the Sierra Club of Canada (B.C. Chapter), and Rainforest Action Network. Together the organizations promoted forest conservation options and economic alternatives to logging (Rainforest Solutions Project, n.d.). ForestEthics, founded in 1994, was originally an organization that played a key role in helping to protect much of the Clayquot Sound

¹ See Smith & Sterritt, n.d. for a comprehensive overview of the campaign to protect much of the forest from logging, the principles of ecosystem-based management and the details of the agreement that was reached.

rainforest in British Columbia from logging. After the Clayquot Sound victory in 1996, the Clayquot Rainforest Coalition became ForestEthics with an expanded mission to seek protection for the entire coastal rainforest of British Columbia (Rainforest Solutions Project, n.d.). The Sierra Club of Canada is an independently operated affiliate of the Sierra Club of the United States, and was founded in 1969. Rainforest Action Network was founded in 1985 with the goals of protecting rainforests throughout the world and supporting the rights of communities that live in rainforests. This organization has focused especially on the home improvement retail industry to promote the protection of endangered forests and for the adoption of sustainable forestry practices. The last of the four organizations, Greenpeace, will be examined in closer detail in the next chapter as there is a pertinent body of literature surrounding the history and media tactics of this organization which provide helpful insights to this thesis research.

Years of conflict between environmental organizations and the forestry industry in B.C. saw numerous protests, blockades and a highly effective markets campaign that resulted in contract cancellations from major wood and paper buyers (Rainforest Solutions Project, n.d.). As the coalition explains on their web site, it all began in 1994 when Greenpeace was invited by the Nuxalk First Nation to visit the central coast of British Columbia to witness firsthand the destruction of the Great Bear Rainforest by logging companies. Following the widespread attention generated by the protests in 1993 over logging in Clayquot Sound on Vancouver Island, which included the largest act of civil resistance in Canadian history when approximately 900 people were arrested, environmental groups launched the campaign to protect the rainforests on the north and central coast of British Columbia in 1995, and again the fate of forests in British Columbia dominated the news.

Actions taken in British Columbia during the campaign included a blockade on Roderick Island in 1997 that placed a temporary halt on Western Forest Products clear-cutting and a joint blockade with the Nuxalk First Nation at Ista (Fog Creek) on King Island that stopped Interfor from logging for 21 days (Rainforest Solutions Project, n.d.). The protesters were not just Canadians, but included people from Belgium, Germany, the U.S. and other countries (Falconer, 2001), and many of them, both native and non-native protesters, were arrested. According to Tim Falconer (2001), it appeared the public and the media in B.C. were outraged by the blockades, however people in other countries that bought lumber from the province reacted positively to the blockade. Actions were also taken internationally, such as the blockade of a ship from docking in Germany carrying Canadian timber. The environmental coalition also had postcard writing campaigns, where thousands of residents and non-residents of the province sent messages to the government. Several scientific reports were released over the years showcasing the dire need for provincial protection in many areas of the forest. Greenpeace featured updates on the progress of the agreement in its magazine for members and urged them to continue sending letters to the premier of British Columbia, asking him to fully implement an agreement. Greenpeace even suggested throwing Great Bear Rainforest movie nights where they would provide a documentary on the forest and a tool kit to encourage members to take measures to push for an agreement.

Coinciding with the blockades and demonstrations taking place in British Columbia, the environmental groups targeted consumers of B.C.'s forest products in order to affect logging corporations where it would hurt most, their bottom line. After polling people in Canada and other countries, Greenpeace knew that consumers were concerned about the destruction of old-growth forests; however consumers were not the

ones who could make policy changes in the logging corporations or in government. Falconer explains “this meant targeting retailers, who were closest to the buying public, and getting them to send a message back to logging giants” (p.147).

Falconer (2001) details the markets campaign in his book *Gudflies and Watchdogs: From the Marginal to the Mainstream*. According to him, the environmental organizations of the coalition, along with Greenpeace offices around the world, urged companies to discontinue buying from forest companies that refused to change their practices. In the U.S., Greenpeace mailed out letters to 5,000 companies, including large retailers such as Xerox and Kinko’s. To ensure companies did not just stop buying wood from the Great Bear Rainforest and then buy it from another threatened area, Greenpeace asked companies to adopt a forest-product procurement policy that protected ancient forests and ensured responsible logging practices, such as standards set by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), an eco-certification system. Greenpeace worked with 27 corporations after the mail-out and ran a full-page ad in the *New York Times* thanking them. Soon after cancelled contracts killed deals worth millions of dollars (Falconer, 2001).

Falconer goes onto to explain that major furniture retailer Ikea was keen from the outset when they were approached in 1997 and two years later announced a plan to only buy wood that met the standards of the FSC. However, for some corporations the campaign was a tougher sell. San Francisco-based Rainforest Action Network began protesting at Home Depot stores in the U.S. and Canada but the store did not join the campaign. The protests continued and on just one day in the spring of 1999, protests took place at more than one hundred Home Depot outlets. Activists set up information pickets, put warning stickers on ancient forest products and some even took customers through the

aisles on a tour to point out products such as mahogany from the Amazon and western red cedar from B.C. In one suburban Toronto store, an activist in a grizzly-bear suit and armed with a megaphone hung from the store rafters above the checkout counter and when a customer walked by with a piece of wood, he would apparently say “Hey, that’s a piece of cedar. Did you know that companies like Interfor are destroying the Great Bear Rainforest?” In August of that year, Home Depot came onboard with the campaign. After Home Depot, six of the top ten do-it-yourself stores in the U.S. adopted a FSC certification or an equivalent. Whenever major companies agreed to negotiate with environmentalists, the markets campaign was slowed down to recognize the progress being made, but activities were quickly restarted when, for example, two companies dropped out of negotiations. Greenpeace refocused efforts on these two companies and resumed applying pressure through direct action (Falconer, 2001). In Europe, Greenpeace U.K. scored a major victory when it managed to convince Scott Paper to cancel a contract with major logging company MacMillan Bloedel.

According to Falconer, the markets campaign itself showed that “civil disobedience was still a very valid and important tactic” (2001, p.147). In total, more than 80 companies around the world, including Home Depot, Ikea, Staples and IBM, agreed to stop selling products that were made from B.C.’s endangered ancient forests (Rainforest Solutions Project, n.d.). This market pressure forced major coastal B.C. logging companies to sit down with environmentalists and aboriginal communities to negotiate. While negotiations took place with logging companies, the environmental coalition agreed to call off protests in the woods and the markets campaign, as they had done in negotiations with consumer product retailers, provided that the companies agreed to a moratorium on logging in large intact valleys and other key ecological areas (Rainforest

Solutions Project, n.d.). Yet despite the fact major corporations were at the negotiating table with the coalition, the government of British Columbia still would not budge (Falconer, 2001). It took many years of continued pressure tactics and negotiations with all involved parties before the historic agreement was finally reached in February of 2006. The environmental coalition continues to monitor the progress of the agreement to ensure that the provincial government implements all aspects of the agreement as they pledged to do so by 2009. It should be noted that the Rainforest Action Network was not a signatory to the final agreement, as well as the fact that several environmental organizations stated that they did not feel the agreement went far enough to protect the forest.

CHAPTER II: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, ENVIRONMENTALISM AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF MAINSTREAM MEDIA

(i) Social Movements

Social movements are necessary forces that bring about changes in the social practices of daily life and society as a whole. What distinguishes social movements from other forms of collective action, such as political parties or voluntary associations, is that mass mobilization and protest actions are their main sources of power (Scott, 1990). A further distinguishing factor pointed out by Alan Scott (1990) is that social movements are “chiefly concerned to defend or change society or the relative position of the group in society” (p.6). Alan defines a social movement as being a collective actor comprised of individuals who share common interests and in many respects, a common identity. Alan attributes the rise of new social movements to the failure of interest groups, and especially political parties, to respond to popular demands in the political system. He suggests social movements “appear in order to articulate concerns and issues which are excluded from mainstream political intermediation and interest negotiation. Thus new social movements are above all a political phenomena” (Scott, 1990, p.6). Scott blames the lack of transparency in negotiations that take place in what were supposedly democratic institutions for the rise of new forms of protest, linking elite negotiation to the limited range of debate in government and the media. Groups are forced to mobilize at the grassroots level knowing that normal channels to affect political decision-making are closed off (Scott, 1990).

John-Henry Harter (2001) contends that new social movements are the products of the breakup of the New Left at the end of the 1960s, which produced a multitude of single issue groups. According to Harter, some academics view the creation of these single issue

groups as an indication that old social action groups, often composed of workers and unions, were incapable of addressing the issues driving the peace movement, women's movement, environmental movement, student movement and gay liberation movement.

David Snow, Sarah Soule and Hanspeter Kriesi (2004) explain the difference between interest groups and social groups as mainly being a legitimacy issue. While interest groups are embedded in politics and regarded as legitimate, social movements are usually outside the political arena because they are not given the same degree of access and recognition among political authorities. Snow, Soule and Kriesi define social movements as "collectivities acting with some degree of organization and continuity outside of institutional or organizational channels for the purpose of challenging or defending extant authority, whether it is institutionally or culturally based, in the group, organization, society, culture, or world order of which they are a part" (2004, p.11).

In order for a social movement to effect change it must not only grow in size and participants, but also reach beyond the group and into the general public to inform and solicit support. However, as Michael Barker (2007) points out, a social movement's "eventual success in reforming the current world order is its ability to garner majority support, which is severely restricted by the mass media" (para. 44). The mass media are the primary means to transmit social change messages and bring awareness to the cause of a social movement, however Barker contends that the relationship between media and social movements is "fundamentally asymmetrical, which leaves social movements vulnerable to the media's beck and call" (2007, para. 38).

(ii) Social Movements and the Media

The media play an important role in determining which social movement messages are transmitted to the larger public. According to David Deacon (1999), media coverage provides a free source of publicity for social movements, as well as an opportunity to address a broad range of the public – the “unconverted” as well as the “converted.” By widening the reach of social movement organizations and their messages, media coverage can assist social movements in maintaining diversity and attracting new supporters. Along with these benefits, Deacon points out that media coverage “can also confer status on an organization and its work, and demonstrate its social value and political effectiveness” (1999, p.55). Radical writer and scholar Robert Jensen echoes these sentiments, adding that “as long as the majority of Americans get the majority of their information from these conventional mass media sources, it will be important for radicals to exploit the opportunities that exist to use these media to try to expand our movements and reach new people” (2001, p.3). According to Ivor Gaber and Alice Wynne Willson (2005), working with the media can help social movement organizations influence national and international conversations, intervene in negotiations, inspire action and change policy and practice. They argue that to truly influence decision-makers, social movements must engage with news outlets and seek to understand news values.

By understanding the political economy of mass media, I believe it might be possible for activists to find ways to overcome the barriers of concentrated and consolidated corporate media that stifle dissent. The political economy of mass media is a critical element in determining whom and what receives coverage. The vast majority of media outlets today are commercially owned, mainly by massive media conglomerates.

David Demers (1999) notes that corporate newspapers are usually owned by shareholders, which means those newspapers must be “constantly oriented to the bottom line to keep stockholders happy and investment flowing in” (p.379). W Lance Bennett (2007) expresses the same ideas on corporate ownership of mass media news organizations, pointing out that there is a tendency to seek the most convenient and attention-grabbing stories because of the profit pressures from mega-corporate owners. According to Bennett, this has resulted in serious reporting being replaced by cheap lifestyle features and the reliance on packaged information and news events from public relations managers and official spokespeople (2007).

Kevin Michael DeLuca describes the concentration of ownership as a danger to democracy, not only because monopoly reduces the diversity of voices in the marketplace of ideas, but also because voices opposed to the vested interests of media corporations and their clients are not likely to be heard in such a profit-driven climate (1999). McChesney (2004) suggests that the silencing of certain voices or issues described by DeLuca is often the result of self-censorship on the part of journalists, who are pushed to make content directed at demographics desired by media owners and large advertisers. McChesney cites the revealing survey carried out by the Pew Research Centre of three hundred journalists in 2000 that “found nearly half of them acknowledged sometimes consciously engaging in self-censorship to serve commercial interests” (McChesney, 2004, p.83). McChesney contends that, “the corporate news media have a vested interest in the corporate system. The largest media firms are members in good standing in the corporate community and are closely linked to it through business relations, shared investors, interlocking directors, and common political values” (2004, p.93).

In addition to the corporate consolidation of mass media affecting what receives coverage, there is a major external factor influencing news coverage. Mass media companies obtain the majority of their revenues from advertisers, not individual purchases of media products. Therefore, many communication scholars argue that the effects of an advertising-controlled industry have led to a further diminishment of media quality. McChesney and John Nichols (2002) contend that any content that may be offensive or critical of advertisers and their products can easily be omitted or censored to please them. When media outlets decide to air content that advertisers dislike, there are usually harsh consequences. Journalists and editors are often coerced into providing media content that does not offend any of their advertising partners because an advertiser can refuse to purchase advertising in media it deems as inappropriate or detrimental to its product sales. The control of advertisers over the media industry has even resulted in producers of media sometimes not even bothering to distribute their product among “undesirable” social groups, simply because advertisers only want to target certain sectors of the population – “ideal” consumers with disposable income. According to Mark Cooper (2005) “not only are the chain papers not delivering to certain social groups, but they are slanting the news they do print to please the readers advertisers want pleased” (p.123).

The diminished quality of journalism can also be attributed to the choices made by journalists about who they interview or how they shape the story. Sharron Beder (1997) uses statements from *Sierra* magazine’s Paul Rauber to illustrate how the ideal of objectivity or balance often skews the news in inaccurate ways. Rauber (1996, cited in Beder, 1997) points out that, for example, if there is a protest of hundreds, perhaps even thousands of people, to call for a factory to stop polluting and at the same time there is a

small counter-demonstration of half a dozen factory workers on company time, the evening news gives equal coverage to both sides. This gives a misleading impression to audiences. Rauber provides another example of how equal coverage is misleading and inappropriate with certain issues in the media:

Most reporters don't know about science, and are unable to distinguish legitimate scientific dispute from bogus posturing... fewer than a dozen scientists, many of them on the payroll of coal and energy companies, say not to worry. On the evening news, both sides get equal time... No matter how thoroughly their charges were debunked, however, the skeptics and the fossil-fuel industry got what they were after: a shadow of a doubt far larger than the facts warrant, and a ready-made excuse for timid legislators to stick with the status quo (Rauber 1996, cited in Beder, 1997, p.216).

Equal treatment in the media, or supposed objectivity, is often misleading and can paint an inaccurate debate between two sides that are nowhere near on equal footing. Jensen maintains that the concept of objectivity in journalism is really a practice that privileges the powerful and fails to challenge the underlying assumptions of society (2001). David Skinner, James Compton and Mike Gasher (2005), also point out that current standards journalists are supposed to abide by are restrictive. They argue that patterns of omission in the news are not simply the product of concentration of ownership or interference by the owners – they can also be traced to “the ways in which both news values and journalistic practices tend to foreclose on the range of perspectives included in the news” (2005, p.298).

There is also the issue of the way in which the mainstream media present stories, which can contribute to hegemonic control in society by disseminating a particular ideology that seeks to maintain the status quo. McChesney reminds us that we “are blindfolded by a media system that suits, first and foremost, those who benefit not by

reform but by the preservation of the status quo” (1999, p. 319). Charlotte Ryan (1991) adds to this, arguing that:

“today, the mass media, especially TV, are among the most important institutions maintaining, reinforcing, and reproducing existing inequalities in power. Since media controls the range of views to which audiences are exposed, media coverage can obscure – and can even reverse – public opinion toward repressive social policies. Mainstream media promote visions of society that endorse the status quo while silencing, marginalizing, and/or absorbing alternative and opposition voices” (p. 7).

Ryan explains that the media are able to do this by paying little attention to historical, economic or political developments within an issue, or the different effects of events on groups or classes of people. The media personalize issues and package fragments of issues into short, entertainment pieces and by removing stories from social context, Ryan charges that this allows power to operate with an invisible hand (1991). McChesney argues that crucial “political issues are barely covered by the corporate media, or else are warped to fit the confines of elite debate, stripping ordinary citizens of the tools they need to be informed, active participants in a democracy” (1999, p. 281). This is highly problematic as the media are an important battleground for political debate (McChesney, 1999). Echoing this sentiment, Robert Hackett and William Carroll (2006) argue that not only have media failed to actualize democratic values, but are themselves a significant threat to sustainable democracy. While Hackett and Carroll concede that there is an economic logic to media concentration, they contend there are profound political implications when media owners have disproportionate influence over what issues enter the public arena (2006). They also charge that media have failed in their “watch dog” function of corporate and state power. The result of this democratic deficit in media has resulted in what McChesney calls “a profound cynicism and materialism, both cancerous

for public life” (2004, p.166). Jensen also contributes to this critique in his 2001 publication, *Writing Dissent: Taking radical ideas from the margins to the mainstream*, stating that along with the push to sell as much of the media product as possible, through whatever means necessary, journalists are also affected by society’s assumptions about the world – that democracy and capitalism are compatible and that free markets exist and produce a fair distribution of goods and services. While these are core ideas that should be the subject of ongoing debate, they are in fact mainly off the table for debate (Jensen, 2001).

In *Compassion Fatigue: How the Media Sells Disease, War, Famine and Death*, Susan Moeller elaborates on the weakened role media play in democratic society. She contends that despite the importance of “hard” news such as international news events, business and the economy, domestic politics or the environment, “the media pander to the public’s interest in gossip and celebrity stories” (1999, p. 40). As entertainment-style news apparently generates more profits for media corporations, hard news is given less and less priority. She explains that “papers are laid out, newsmagazine covers are chosen, television news is packaged to make the most of emotional images and crisis” (1999, p.34). This in turn desensitizes the public to critical issues. Moeller describes this phenomenon as “compassion fatigue.” She details how the “four horsemen” – pestilence, famine, death and war – have taken over the practice of journalism, resulting in sensationalized, repetitive and generalized media outputs. It is a vicious circle though, as sensationalistic news coverage leads to compassion fatigue, which then generates even more sensationalistic coverage in order to peak the public’s attention. She contends that if “the public doesn’t know, or knowing can’t relate in some explicit way to an event or issue, then it’s off the radar. And that is the most devastating effect of compassion

fatigue: no attention, no interest, no story” (Moeller, 1999, p.12). This has direct and serious consequences for those engaged in social change organizations, as some tragic events that require international attention are pushed aside for a more photogenic tragedy or story. The public is constantly bombarded with tragedies, including all of their attendant formulaic, sensationalist and Americanized coverage, which make the public deaf to the constant stream of news stories and relief agencies (Moeller, 1999). This all ties back to the economic structure of corporate media and how the maximizing of profits takes precedence over thorough, investigative and insightful journalism.

When it comes to social movements, McLeod and Hertog suggest that a lack of mainstream media coverage effects groups’ recruitment and growth, as well as the willingness to speak out and group dynamics.

News coverage with social control messages that criticize a protest group is likely to sharpen distinctions between the group and society at large... Such coverage may scare away fence-sitters and potential converts to the group. But at the same time, media coverage that fuels conflict between protesters and society at large may strengthen the international solidarity of the protest (1999, p.324).

Due to the fact social movements are often viewed more as an agitating force than as newsworthy, the media rarely cover them, leaving social movements out of sight and out of the public mind (Stewart, Smith & Denton, 2007). Bennett (2007) describes this phenomena of whose voices and what messages get into the news as gate-keeping. Bennett explains that gate-keeping decisions are made in part by individual journalists, but mainly shaped by editors and executives in news organizations.

Activists must find ways to break through these barriers. Media criticism and reform is one obvious way of trying to change the actual structure of corporate media to allow for a greater diversity of voices. McChesney is a key proponent of this approach.

McChesney views the solution to the problem of media as being “a large, well-funded, structurally pluralistic, and diverse nonprofit and noncommercial media sector, as well as a more competitive and decentralized commercial sector” (2004, p.11). McChesney argues that due to the nature of media content, which is different from that of other commodities, subjecting the media to market forces is highly problematic. He does not see much hope in criticizing media owners and hoping they will improve journalism, but rather he argues that the nature of the system itself must be changed (2004). McChesney is clear that there are other alternatives to the existing media system:

In complete accord with the First Amendment, the government could craft policies favouring different forms of media ownership, such as nonprofit cooperatives or journalist-owned companies. Similarly, as some critics have argued, certain crucial media, such as monopoly daily newspapers, could have been established as nonprofit, municipally owned entities controlled by publicly elected boards of directors. Even more obviously, radio and television broadcasting could have been established as nonprofit sectors, similar to higher education, and structured as anything from state-supported noncommercial networks to local community stations based on listener and viewer contributions or a combination thereof (2004, p.226).

Activists have responded to the mainstream media’s lack of accurate coverage by, in some ways, going “underground” – keeping their media presence limited to radical media that allow a space for alternative ways of thinking and viewing the world. This can confine the movements to only speaking to the “converted” though and does not allow for a critical mass to form around various social justice issues. There is no doubt that radical media play a crucial role in progressive discourse and the formation or strengthening of activist organizations. It could also be argued that the Internet has also played a similar role, however, as with radical media, it is only those who seek out progressive ideas who come upon democratic forms of discourse, alternate ideologies, under-reported issues and those working for social change. The mass media provide a method of message

transmission that is unrivaled in terms of reach and sheer numbers. This fact has led some activist groups to cater to the mass media's formula to receive coverage. Jensen argues that "no matter how problematic the concepts of objectivity, neutrality, balance, and fairness, activists have to use them in trying to win space for stories and op/eds that put forth radical ideas" (2001, p.25).

Some activists have learned how to package and present their ideas in a manner that caters to the demands of journalists, who often must cover only a certain "type" of story – one that will generate more sales and profit for the media corporation. The adoption of media savvy techniques is both a positive and negative development within social change organizations. On the one hand, following a certain formula has meant receiving more news coverage. Yet on the other hand, the coverage that appeals to journalists is sensationalistic and based on events, not ideas. This can lead to a further disconnect between progressive voices and the general public, and possibly even diminish the ideas and goals of the organization in the eyes of many.

According to Deacon (1999), it has become increasingly essential for activists to carry out strategic actions and communication strategies, as well as effective political networking, as these tactics can compensate for limited financial resources and enable even smaller organizations to gain considerable media exposure. However, journalists criticize the inability of many charitable organizations to provide information efficiently and to package it in interesting ways (Deacon, 1999). Despite funding and program priorities at non-governmental organizations, meeting the deadlines of journalists is essential. If a journalist is willing to take a quote or information from an activist, it must be done according to their timelines or it simply will not receive coverage. Activists seeking media coverage must also keep in mind the professional standards that journalists

must supposedly adhere to, mainly the concept of “objectivity,” as previously mentioned. While this often means marginalizing progressive voices and giving a louder voice to the organizations and ideologies that are compatible with a capitalist corporate world view, journalists and editors can pull the objectivity card with activists and use it to justify why they cannot give further coverage to their issues.

Deacon found that journalists repeatedly emphasize two important criteria – topicality and generality – as to whether a non-profit organization receives coverage (1999). However David Cohen, Rosa de la Vega and Gabrielle Watson (2001) point out that this is quite problematic, as most social justice issues, by their nature, are complex and longstanding – neither new or fresh each day, nor easy to capture within a short, tidy article. They contend that the key is for advocates to “find ways to fit their stories into newsworthy frames without compromising their values or distorting the message” (p.109). In his study of U.K. media coverage of the nonprofit sector, Deacon (1999) found that charitable organizations were far more likely to receive coverage for their deeds rather than their thoughts and that overall there was a lack of interest in democratic discourse in the media about the actions, motives, opinions and functions of progressive organizations. This is very problematic for those wishing to catalyze social change, as their ideas and visions for the future are not given any voice in the mass media.

According to Ryan, activists must utilize the media to show the public that there is not just one way to look at a problem, to present alternatives and to mobilize support. However, Ryan concedes there is an inherent tension between activists and media: while the media are needed to challenge the status quo, the media, as currently structured, often end up only reinforcing the status quo (1991). There is a vicious cycle for activists hoping to obtain media coverage. Ryan explains that in order for a problem to be considered

newsworthy it needs public recognition, however the mainstream media are usually not the first to recognize a problem. So in order for the mainstream media to acknowledge a problem, a social movement must first mobilize a constituency and create a climate where the media will then grant it coverage (Ryan, 1991). She also argues that a second problem activists face with media coverage is that “mainstream media pander to news fads – each wants to cover what the other is covering. Mainstream media are fickle: hot issues rapidly become passé” (p. 32). In her insightful book on activism and the media, *Prime Time Activism*, Ryan asked a senior editor of a well-respected daily newspaper what he felt was the most common failing of grassroots organizations seeking press coverage. To this he responded, “they don’t know a news story when they see one. Organizers expect media to equate social importance with newsworthiness.” Rather, he warned, “acid rain, hazardous waste...they’re the kind of big bureaucratic stories that make people’s eyes glaze over. There’s no clear solution, no clear impact. They’re not sexy” (Ryan, 1991, p. 31). This is clearly problematic for activists seeking contextual and in-depth coverage when their issues do not neatly fall within the boundaries of newsworthiness for editors. For instance, Ryan explains that “news criteria favour events not issues, particularly events that involve government in some way” (p.43). This creates distortions in how social movements are covered, as coverage is always twisted to fit news criteria and is not based on what the movement might deem as most important or central to its identity and message (Ryan, 1991). Cohen, de la Vega and Watson reiterate that mass media are not driven by public service, but by profit. Stories that are deemed newsworthy and worth covering often focus on controversy and conflict. For the nonprofit sector this means that any coverage they are able to generate is more likely to “focus on personal responsibility rather than the root causes of a problem and the need for institutional solutions” (Cohen,

de la Vega and Watson, 2001, p.109). Due to the problems of media coverage identified by Ryan and others, social justice organizers face the possibility that the media's treatment of social problems may lead to *demobilization* rather than mobilization. Ryan suggests this can be the result when media "obscure the role of ordinary people as both makers and subjects of social change" by focusing only on leaders and famous faces within the social movement or organization (p.51). The media also obscure the role of institutions by emphasizing individuals, when institutions should be the real targets for those seeking social change (Ryan, 1991).

The protest paradigm

Due to the political economy of the mass media, those working for progressive social change are usually ignored or when they do receive scant coverage, it only further marginalizes them and leads to misconceptions among the general public. McLeod and Hertog (1999) argue that when a protest is covered, the coverage effects audience members' perceptions of those involved with the protest and even the utility of protest as a form of democratic expression. As Todd Gitlin (1977) points out (cited in McLeod & Hertog, 1999), the coverage of dissent is significant in defining which groups, voices and viewpoints are considered legitimate and which are not. This is extremely problematic for activists, as limited or negative media coverage fundamentally affects their ability to educate the public about issues and disseminate messages about positive social change.

There are often common characteristics of media coverage of dissent. McLeod and Hertog define the protest paradigm as "a routinized pattern or implicit template for the coverage of social protest. The protest paradigm is, at least in part, the product of the news production process" (1999, p. 311). McLeod and Hertog contend that there is also a control element to the mass media's coverage of activists. Social control messages in the

mass media can “take many forms, including story framing; reliance on official sources and official definitions; the invocation of public opinion; delegitimization, marginalization and demonization; and non-coverage” (1999, p.311).

Story framing

McLeod and Hertog define framing as the “application of a ‘narrative structure’ that journalists use to assemble facts, quotes, assertions and other information into a news story” (1999, p. 312). It is important how a story is framed because the frame can affect how the protest group is perceived by the audience. McLeod and Hertog assert that once a journalist has selected the frame for the story, efforts to seek information to fill in the story template occur rather than seeking a genuine understanding of the relevant viewpoints. Ryan (1991) describes framing as more than a process of just selecting events, but rather a process of creating events. Social movements must battle not just for media coverage, but also over whose interpretation and framing of reality will set the tone of the article (Ryan, 1991). Ryan maintains that when news editors and/or writers choose frames, they are implicitly speaking to and for definite audiences. Ryan also explains that recognizable social and cultural stereotypes of characters, such as evil villains, honourable victims, and noble heroes and heroines reinforce the underlying or implicit values of the mainstream media’s impressions of society (1991). In the same vein, cultural resonances are used to shape generally recognizable plots, such as the “rags to riches” or “power corrupts” story frames (Ryan, 1991, p. 79).

Gitlin’s often cited work, *The Whole World is Watching* (1980), provides one of the first in-depth studies of media and the framing of dissent. Gitlin studied the Vietnam antiwar movement and the U.S. media and found the media mainly focused on the spectacle of the protests and marginalized those involved. Once the story of peaceful

protests lost its novelty, it seemed the only way to generate media coverage was through conflict and violence that only a minority of the protesters engaged in. Gitlin identified frames within the media coverage and how these frames resulted in selective information being presented or emphasized. Gitlin defines frames as “principles of selection, emphasis, and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters” (1980, p.6). In further detail, Gitlin explains:

Media frames, largely unspoken and unacknowledged, organize the world both for journalists who report on it and, in some important degree, for us who rely on their reports. Media frames are persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse, whether verbal or visual. Frames enable journalists to process large amounts of information quickly and routinely: to recognize it as information, to assign it to cognitive categories, and to package it for efficient relay to their audiences. Thus for organizational reasons alone, frames are unavoidable, and journalism is organized to regulate their production” (1980, p.7).

Gitlin found in his study that the more closely the values and concerns of a social movement matched values and concerns of political and media elites, the more likely they would be incorporated into the prevailing news frames. Overall, one can conclude that frames are powerful tools that can help determine a movement’s fate (Gitlin, 1980).

Official sources

Journalists rely on official sources and definitions when producing a news item. McLeod and Hertog (1999) suggest the reasoning behind this is that official sources – which are usually government-related or industry-related officials of some sort – imply status and legitimacy to a news story. McLeod and Hertog go on to state that a reciprocal relationship develops between source and journalist - official sources become dependable and easy to locate sources of content for the journalist, while for the source it means media coverage of their opinions and ideology. McLeod and Hertog explain how official

sources provide sound bites, press conferences, news releases and public statements, all of which are easy-to-use content for journalists. This also means journalists do not have to do as much to validate information when they use official sources. In addition to this, “news from official sources is easier to defend on the grounds of objectivity — if a reporter gives too much attention to a protest group and its issues, the reporter might appear to be an advocate” (McLeod & Hertog, 1999, p.314).

Deacon asserts that when journalists need to get opinions and quotes from the nonprofit or progressive sector, there is clearly a preference for those organizations that have strong nationwide support or official links and recognition by the government (1999). This means that coverage of the nonprofit sector is usually relegated to organizations that deal “with issues of generality rather than minority interest, and of an unproblematic and non-contentious nature” (Deacon, 1999, p.63). There is also a strong linkage between economic power and media access. For the most part, organizations that deal with minority or contentious issues have very limited income sources, so only the well-resourced, widely-known and well-connected enjoy considerable and conspicuous advantages in media coverage. Therefore, journalists usually prioritize big charity over little charity and established voices over emerging voices (Deacon, 1999).

Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky provide further detail on how journalists use official sources in their often-cited book *Manufacturing Consent* (2002). In general, according to Herman and Chomsky, journalists may avoid critical sources not only because of their somewhat lesser availability and the larger amount of work required to establish credibility, but also because the official, primary sources that journalists often turn to might be offended and may even threaten to cut themselves off from the media as a source. They point out that it is also important to note the structural relationship

between media companies and their dependence on and ties with government. The broadcast industries (radio and television) require licenses from the government in order to operate, which potentially could subject these media industries to government control or harassment (Herman and Chomsky, 2002). They explain that “this technical legal dependency has been used as a club to discipline the media, and media policies that stray too often from an establishment orientation could activate this threat” (2002, p.13).

McChesney also comments on the use of official sources, arguing that to “avoid the controversy associated with determining what is a legitimate news story, professional journalism relies upon official sources as the basis for stories. This gives those in positions of power (and the public relations industry, which developed at the exact same time as professional journalism) considerable ability to influence what is covered in the news” (1999, p. 49). He points out that journalists know they cannot antagonize their sources or they might be cut off from all information (McChesney, 2004).

Invocation of public opinion

Journalists often seek to include a sense of how the public reacted to certain events or perceived specific issues. However, this is often done through misleading ways, such as sweeping generalizations, finding an interesting quote from a bystander who may not in any way represent the general public opinion, or public opinion polls that are not specifically conducted about protests (McLeod & Hertog, 1999). Media can also prominently display norm or legal violations of the protest group, which are perceived to be contrary to public opinion (McLeod & Hertog).

Delegitimization, marginalization and demonization

As many observers and social change agents are well aware, it is conflict or violent events that attract the most media coverage (McLeod & Hertog, 1999). However

receiving coverage for events that knowingly will generate interest in the media is not that simple. As McLeod and Hertog explain, the two characteristics that influence a social movement's media treatment are the degree to which they are perceived to be "extreme" (that is, challenging the status quo) and "militant" (in their tactics); whereby, the more extreme and militant a group, the more critical the media coverage (1999). Dissent is marginalized and only really ever acknowledged when it can be associated with violence or some sort of spectacle or stunt. The ideas that animate dissident movements are typically not given any coverage, and in the rare cases when serious issues are mentioned, it is done so in a stereotypical fashion where the diversity of the social movement or group is not acknowledged. It seems the ideology behind dissent is only mentioned to be ridiculed by the media for not accepting the status quo.

An excellent example of mainstream media coverage of dissent is provided by McLeod and Hertog (1999) in a study they conducted on anarchists. In sum, the mainstream media only covered the end of a three-day anarchist convention in 1992 in Minneapolis when some individuals engaged in property vandalism during a march through the downtown core. Despite the fact that the first two days of the convention involved many workshops and speeches that allowed anarchists to express ideas, these events were completely ignored by the mainstream media. As McLeod and Hertog note:

The dominant focus of mainstream news reports was on property damage and the disruption of traffic, indicating that what the media considered important was not the ideas of the anarchists, but rather their "deviant" actions. Ironically, the violence that occurs at protests may be prompted in part by frustration stemming from a system including the mass media that seems to lack interest in the causes and issues of the protest. This puts radical protest groups in a double bind. They must engage in dramatic activities, including violence and unusual demonstrations, to get the attention of the media. When groups do engage in these attention-getting activities,

however, media coverage tends to use them to delegitimize, marginalize and demonize the group (p.321).

Another significant example of the media's coverage of dissent, pointed out by Herman and Chomsky (2002), were the mass protests against the World Trade Organization in Seattle in 1999, as well the protests against the International Monetary Fund and World Bank in Washington in 2000. According to Herman and Chomsky, the media coverage of these protests was "derisive and hostile to the protesters and almost uniformly failed to deal with the substantive issues that drove the protests" (2002, xliii). Regardless of the fact that there were many informed protesters, the media did not seek them out and instead stereotyped anti-globalization activists as "ignorant troublemakers" (xliii). As Gitlin points out (cited in McLeod & Hertog, 1999), the coverage of dissent is significant in defining which groups, voices and viewpoints are considered legitimate and which are not. This is extremely problematic for activists, as limited or negative media coverage is fundamentally going to affect their ability to reach the public with their issues of concern or ideas for bringing about positive social change. Gitlin (1980) also points out that standard journalistic frames continue to marginalize more radical aspects within a movement and sets them against the more moderate aspects.

DeLuca (1999) notes that framing activists as disturbers of the established order shapes and limits the nature of public discourse. He points out that even activists who are the *victims* of terroristic activities (death threats, physical violence) are labeled terrorists, such as in the case of Earth First! activists Bari and Cherney who were victims of an attempted car bomb assassination, yet were themselves labeled terrorists in the headline "Earth First! terrorist blown up by own bomb" (Rowell 1996, cited in DeLuca, 1999, p. 89).

Non-coverage

In order to be successful, a social movement must be able to bring awareness of a particular issue to people outside the group and motivate them to act, usually on a relatively large scale. However, a social movement may find itself totally shut out of the media. Non-coverage is another form of social control that McLeod and Hertog highlight in the protest paradigm. Usually the size of the protest and whether or not the issue is on the agenda of an official institution dictates what protests do or do not receive coverage. McLeod and Hertog argue that groups that try to challenge official institutions will have trouble making their voice heard in the media and will have to resort to doing something dramatic to obtain media coverage. Ryan (1991), author of *Primetime Activism*, adds to this discussion by pointing out that “even if their efforts produce some news coverage, challengers may not have a significant impact unless the coverage is regular and recurring; an occasional mention of a challenger perspective is diffused by the dominant culture surrounding it” (p.218). Ryan goes on to explain that it is not usually pressures from the government or editors, but from journalists themselves to censor anything they might anticipate as being controversial. Not only will a controversial article be more difficult and time-consuming to write, but there is anxiety about possible repercussions. Ryan asserts that colleagues may offer little support, and a journalist’s reputation and career opportunities may suffer from moving forward with a controversial story. This presents many barriers to those working for progressive social change to inform and engage the public. As Hackett and Carroll (2006) contend, “movements are typically driven by felt grievances. But if media consumers do not know they are not getting certain kinds of information, they may not feel aggrieved” (p.202).

David Crouteau and William Hoynes point out that unfortunately, “social change of any sort always faces opposition from those who benefit from the existing arrangements” (2006, p.252). Corporate-owned media certainly are among those who benefit from the existing structure, and therefore, it is no surprise that ideas that are not compatible with their worldview are treated unfairly in the media. As Crouteau and Hoynes contend, “media activists face an increasingly powerful group of media conglomerates, which have friends in high places and a powerful resource – mass media visibility – to promote their political and economic interests. Those forces will prevail only if citizens fail to join in the effort for change” (2006, p.253). Activists need to further hone the ability to generate mass media coverage, continue to have an active presence within independent media, and engage in strategic communication tactics when required. As the past has shown us, “citizens demanding a more just situation can influence the course of history” (Crouteau and Hoynes, 2006, p.253). The environmental movement has had some unique problems in obtaining media coverage, as well as some definite successes in breaking through the political economy barriers and receiving an increasing amount of coverage.

(iii) Environmental Movements and the Media

In 1962, Rachel Carson sounded an alarm bell with her book *Silent Spring*, alerting the world to the damage humans were inflicting upon the world’s ecosystems, especially with poisonous chemicals and toxins. Carson was clear and direct with her warning:

As man [sic] proceeds toward his [sic] announced goal of the conquest of nature, he [sic] has written a depressing record of destruction, directed not only against the earth he inhabits but against

the life that shares it with him [sic]. The history of the recent centuries has its black passages – the slaughter of the buffalo on the western plains, the massacre of the shorebirds by the market gunners, the near-extirmination of the egrets for their plumage. Now, to these and others like them, we are adding a new chapter and a new kind of havoc – the direct killing of birds, mammals, fishes, and indeed practically every form of wildlife by chemical insecticides indiscriminately sprayed on the land (1962, p. 85).

Kirkpatrick Sale (1993) believes this was the spark that started the modern environmental movement and that from that moment forth the movement “has altered American consciousness and American behaviour, with consequences as profound as any movement since that against slavery in the nineteenth century” (p.8). Bob Wyss (2008) agrees with Sale’s sentiment, stating: “Rachel Caron’s *Silent Spring* was to the twentieth century what Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* was to the nineteenth century and Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* to the eighteenth century” (p.20).

McChesney and Nichols (2002) contend that it was U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson who brought environmental and conservation issues to the attention of the public, after his tireless efforts resulted in the first Earth Day in April 1970. As McChesney and Nichols explain:

Earth Day mushroomed into a national phenomenon drawing more than 20 million people to events across the country, earning blanket national and international media coverage, and turning the heads of every politician in the nation, including President Richard Nixon, who quickly signed a series of sweeping environmental protection measures (2002, p.119-120).

Even though environmental degradation was an issue many political and economic elites preferred to keep out of the public spotlight, McChesney and Nichols conclude that Nelson is an example of countless other activists who have proven “that it is possible to force an issue into the nation’s political discourse” (2002, p.120).

Decades later, the environmental movement is a powerful force in social, political and economic debates. Christopher Rootes believes the environmental movement has beaten the odds and has been able to remain vital without being completely co-opted and rendered toothless (2004). While the power of the environmental movement is mainly a countervailing power, Rootes contends this is power nonetheless, stating:

[n]o other movement so convincingly challenges the hubris of modern science, or uses scientific expertise so effectively. No movement makes a more convincing claim to being truly global in the scope of its concerns. And no existing movement makes a more convincing critique of the costs of capitalist industrialism to people and planet, or so persistently burns the candle of hope that there is a better way (2004, p.634).

The effects of the environmental movement have been widespread and continue to gain in scope. As an example of the evolution of environmental groups from being considered marginal and part of the “lunatic fringe” (Falconer, 2001, p.25), Rootes maintains that now in most industrialized countries the public are more inclined to trust what environmental movement organizations tell them about environmental issues than what they are told by corporations or even governments (Worcester 1999; Christie and Jarvis 2001, cited in Rootes, 2004). Many environmental organizations are now highly regarded for their expertise and resources and these organizations have become substantial forces themselves in international politics (Greene, 1997). Owen Greene points out that “delegations from organizations such as Greenpeace, World Wildlife Fund, or Friends of the Earth at international meetings were frequently larger and more expert than those of all but the largest states, and through their access to the media and expertise were able to shape international agendas” (1997, p.318).

According to Beder (1997), a decade ago surveys showed that a significant proportion of consumers in high-income countries made an effort to buy “green”

products. This trend appears to have become even more popular in recent years. According to Beder, these trends prompted a surge of advertisements claiming the environmental benefits of certain products and caring for the environment became a marketing strategy. “Green” marketing provided advertisers with a way of redirecting a willingness to spend less into a willingness to buy more “green” products (Beder, 1997). This has become a new obstacle for the environmental movement. As Ryan (1991) reminds us, once treated by the media as an earth-crunchy, anti-working-class, lunatic fringe, environmentalists must still battle for coverage but now compete “with corporate opponents who appear in the media wrapped in the mantle of environmentalism” (p. 52).

The environment has in many ways become a mainstream issue and is no longer considered marginal (Keenlyside, 1993), as evidenced by the scramble for corporations, even those with extremely poor track records in environmental protection, to project an aura of “green-friendly.” According to Humphrey Keenlyside, the more people taking an active interest in environmental issues in turn feeds back into the way the environment is covered in the media. Now that editors and journalists know that people are interested, there will be more media coverage (Keenlyside, 1993). However, journalists face three problems with articles on environmental issues, much in line with the issues pointed out for social movements in general. According to Keenlyside, environmental coverage is considered “not sexy,” in that journalists feel their editors will not find stories about the environment interesting. Secondly, environmental stories are usually too complicated, as “journalists do not necessarily like to have a three volume report which they have to read and interpret and digest and write a nice short piece” (Keenlyside, 1993, p. 9). Thirdly, environmental issues are not felt to be immediate enough – the issues, such as global warming, do not affect us here and now, but the effects will be felt in fifty years time

(Keenlyside, 1993). This conflicts with the key criteria, timeliness, in determining an issue's newsworthiness. Keenlyside also points out that the interests of the environment and business are painted as mutually exclusive in the media, however the situation is much more complicated than that and it is possible to have situations where the environment improves and a corporate sector business can also benefit (1993).

It is now common for newspapers to have an environmental beat reporter. In 1973 *Editor & Publisher* listed 95 newspaper reporters who identified themselves as specialists covering the environment (Detjen et al, 2000, cited in Wyss, 2008). The Society for Environmental Journalists currently claims on its web site a membership of 1,400 journalists and academics in North America and at least 26 other countries (SEJ, 2008). Along with mainstream media coverage of the environmental movement, there are hundreds of environmental journals, ranging from the Sierra Club's *Sierra* magazine with a circulation of 728,000 to the photocopied newsletters of small environmental groups in various locales (Ostertag, 2006). According to Bob Ostertag, the environmental press has had a major influence on the corporate press. While the coverage of environmental issues in the mainstream media is problematic due to the obvious bias and direct corporate influence that results in environmental issues usually being covered only when a crisis occurs, stories from the environmental press consistently migrate into the mainstream media (Ostertag, 2006), which allows for a clear and stronger environmental message to reach the general public.

Falconer (2001) argues that environmentalists use the greatest range of activist tactics, ranging from education to "eco-terrorism." There is not an agreement on what works best or what is acceptable, as there are countless organizations working under the umbrella of the environmental movement. While street protests and dramatic

demonstrations are preferred by the media, Falconer claims more activists are learning that less spectacular forms of conflict can be far more effective. This is apparent with the success of the letters to retailers in the market campaign against the B.C. forest industry, discussed in the previous chapter. Falconer cites one of the advantages of a market-based approach is that it hurts business, not government, and corporations are always quick to move when profits are at stake, while politicians “move slowly and only when they are in danger of losing their own supporter’s votes” (2001, p.150).

Unlike many other social movements, environmentalists must constantly battle to maintain their victories. As Ostertag points out, “slavery is not going to come back to the United States, and women’s right to vote will not be rescinded. But win a decision saving a local wetland from subdivision and sprawl, or a national wildlife refuge from oil drilling, and the developer will just come back in ten or twenty years when the deciding body has different members” (2006, p.186-187). This has made it almost inevitable for the environmental movement to be dominated by large, permanent institutions that are built up for a long haul (Ostertag, 2006). Greenpeace is an example of a large environmental organization but before it became the entity it is today, Greenpeace demonstrated that a small group of people with very little money could generate enough media attention to sell their message through their imagination and courage (Falconer, 2001). Now even the most reluctant media organizations are often forced to rely on activist groups, such as Greenpeace, for material (Falconer, 2001).

(iv) Greenpeace and the Politics of Spectacle

Greenpeace’s success can be traced to a few people who know how to play by the rules and who understand the limitations that people in the media have to deal with. Most environmental groups are so busy beating their chests in righteous indignation that they don’t take the

time to find out what makes the media tick. The media are a courtroom. You've got to prove your case. There is a stark justice at work (Hunter cited in Weyler, 2004, p.452).

The environmental movement has spawned thousands of international, national, local and issue-specific environmental groups and continues to grow. One of the key players since the movement's beginning has been Greenpeace. It is an internationally recognized, and some would argue well-respected, organization generating frequent media coverage for the publicity stunts it uses to draw attention to environmental issues. It is also regarded as a reputable source for comprehensive, scientific reports about environmental issues. The organization originally formed at the beginning of the 1970s to oppose American nuclear testing, but went on to become internationally renowned for its daring anti-whaling campaigns with the now familiar image of tiny rubber boats chasing down massive whaling ships in the middle of the ocean. Greenpeace, which was officially incorporated in 1972, has widened its scope over the years and is now a champion for most environmental issues, including climate change, marine life and ocean protection, nuclear disarmament, protecting ancient forests, genetically engineered food, elimination of toxic chemicals and other pollutants, and sustainable trade. The organization is now active in forty countries in the Americas, Europe, Asia and the Pacific and as of January 2007, the organization boasted 2.8 million members/donors, as well as millions more who take part in its campaigns as online or community activists (Greenpeace International, n.d.). According to Greenpeace, the organization exists in order to "expose environmental criminals and to challenge government and corporations when they fail to live up to their mandate to safeguard our environment and our future" (Greenpeace International, n.d.).

Greenpeace is an interesting entity, as the organization has taken a lead role in the general worldwide environmental movement, but is also a growing voice in the

transnational social justice movement. While the environmental impacts of human actions are usually front and centre in Greenpeace campaigns, the organization does approach social justice in a holistic manner, promoting fair trade and opposing war and other social injustices that all contribute to the earth's woes. According to Stephen Dale, "in the late 1980s Greenpeace started to factor issues such as globalized trade and North-South disparity into its environmental reasoning making it the first major environmental organization to do so" (1996, p.2). Greenpeace relies on a conscious constituency who act on behalf of environmental causes despite not usually being personally aggrieved (although certainly one could – and should – argue that many environmental and social justice problems have far-ranging effects that *do* affect us all). Robert Hunter, one of the founding members of Greenpeace, believed there was a massive public force in the middle-class suburbs that had yet to be harnessed. In 1969, he provided this illuminating quote to the *Vancouver Sun*:

Politicians, take note. There is a power out there in suburbia, so far harnessed only to charity drives, campaigns and PTAs which, if ever properly brought to bear on the great problems of the day, will have an impact so great the result of its being detonated (like the Amchitka A-bomb test) cannot be predicted (Hunter 1969, cited in Brown & May, 1989, p.7).

Greenpeace, as history has demonstrated, has successfully been able to tap into this force for support and membership.

The group has been able to generate media coverage since it first came into existence and has continued to perfect media strategies for more than three decades. However, with mainstream media being corporate entities, it is questionable whether the media can really give fair coverage to Greenpeace's work, especially if there are links between the corporation that owns the media outlet and the corporation being targeted.

Yet regardless of the many factors that dictate the frequency and content of media coverage, there is no denying that Greenpeace has risen to become one of the largest environmental organizations and has attained cultural iconic status throughout the world. Using Greenpeace as one of his case studies, Falconer states that “many activists – on the left and on the right – study Greenpeace’s campaigns and ability to take advantage of the media to sell its message” (2001, p.5). The Greenpeace strategy for media exposure can be mainly credited to one of the original Greenpeace members, Hunter, who was an avid student of Marshall McLuhan. Hunter was determined to change the world and he believed this could be done through what he termed “media mind-bombs” consciousness-changing images and sounds “to blast around the world in the guise of news” (Greenpeace International, n.d.). Another major reason Greenpeace was so familiar with formulas to attract media coverage was because several founding members were working journalists themselves. Hunter worked at *The Province* in B.C., starting out as a copy editor and then reporter, and finally becoming a columnist (Weyler, 2004). His column became one of the most popular features in the newspaper. However, due to the amount of attention Hunter drew to himself and Greenpeace’s activities, his colleagues apparently joked with him: “Hunter, are you reporting the news or making the news?” (Weyler, 2004, p.57).

While on expeditions, Hunter would file stories from onboard Greenpeace ships, along with CBC reporter Ben Metcalfe. Their stories would then be picked up by wire services and international news services (Weyler, 2004). However, there was often debate among Greenpeace activists on how press releases and articles should be composed. According to Weyler, Hunter argued against those who felt that the media should educate people. He argued that the media wanted action and were not interested in whale

statistics. He believed that if they provided the media with an action story, they could then try to squeeze in a paragraph about declining whale stocks. This led to him being criticized by fellow Greenpeaceers for pandering to sensationalism. However, Hunter remained firm on his approach to media coverage and believed he was just adhering to the rules, and unless they could re-train global media in time to save the whales, they should leave him to what he did best (Weyler, 2004).

Robert Keziere and Hunter, both original members who went on the first Greenpeace expedition attempting to stop a nuclear test, provide an illuminating quote about their strategies:

This was guerilla theatre, we thought. Sailing a little fishing boat up to the gate of man-made 20th Century Hell... Norman Mailer had once remarked: "In a bad time, the war to be fought is in the mass media." But first we needed a stage. And Greenpeace was that stage. In a hard-nosed, quite calculating way – exactly as revolutionaries should – we hammered out our propaganda broadsides, pumping them back through the newspapers, television, radio, the works... (1972, p.17).

This quote from 1972 indicates that Greenpeace immediately knew the media were where they had to play out their battles for ecological justice. Greenpeace is effective in getting its messages out because of this type of media savvy; they know what makes for good coverage, pictures and headlines and use what they are most infamous for – the daring demonstrations and protest stunts they carry out to bring attention, and hopefully action, on environmental issues. Additionally, Greenpeace takes the spotlight put on its stunts and shines it directly onto perpetrators. This was an intentional motive for the group from the beginning as it recognized the power of images.

DeLuca uses Greenpeace as a recurring example in his book *Image Politics* (1999). According to DeLuca, Greenpeace is a known master of the public spectacle

approach to generate media coverage and is arguably one of the first social change organizations whose primary form of expression is the staging of events for mass media dissemination. Since the beginnings of Greenpeace in 1971, the group has carried out thousands of image-based events to draw attention to environmental issues, including activists maneuvering rubber rafts between whales and whaling ships, chaining themselves to various structures such as oil platforms in the sea and whaling harpoons, leaving countless banners from daring and inconceivable places with simple yet strong messages, and even delivering a dead seal to the home of the British Prime Minister (DeLuca, 1999).

Daniel Boorstin (1971) pioneered the idea of pseudo-events in the media and suggests that no matter how planned, contrived or distorted, images are “more vivid, more attractive, more impressive, and more persuasive than reality itself” (1971, p.36). Stephen Duncombe has commented extensively on the use of spectacle in the media, the latest of his publications on this being *Dream: Re-imagining progressive politics in an age of fantasy* (2007). Duncombe argues that “people often prefer a simple, dramatic story to the complicated truth. Weaned on endless advertisements, sitcoms, and Hollywood movies, we’ve learned to find comfort in compelling narratives and change the channel when confronted with messy facts” (2007, p.7). In line with Boorstin’s original ideas about pseudo-events, Duncombe explains that spectacle is our way of making sense of the world and that truth and power belong to those who tell the better story (2007).

DeLuca points out that tactical Greenpeace events have resulted in numerous successful campaigns, such as the “banning of commercial whaling, harvesting of baby harp seals, and ocean dumping of nuclear wastes; the establishment of a moratorium in Antarctica on mineral and oil exploration and their extraction; the blocking of numerous

garbage and hazardous waste incinerators; the requirement of a turtle excluder device on shrimp nets; the banning of the disposal of plastics at sea by the United States; and much more” (1999, p.3). Along with these successful campaigns though have been vicious counter-responses, which also testify to the power of Greenpeace’s image events, such as French commandos boarding a Greenpeace vessel and severely beating a Greenpeace crew member; the French government’s commissioning of secret agents to blow up and sink Greenpeace flagship the Rainbow Warrior after becoming exasperated by the campaign against its nuclear testing in the South Pacific – an act of terrorism that resulted in the murder of Greenpeace member Fernando Pereira; the U.S. Navy ramming a Greenpeace ship that was trying to block a Trident submarine; and Greenpeace director of toxics research Pat Cosner’s house being burnt down by arsonists (DeLuca, 1999).

According to Dale (1996), Greenpeace has been able to compete on somewhat equal terms with its corporate enemies by operating much the same way they do. Greenpeace now has the media clout and logo recognition to be picked up in the international media alongside official sources and they are able to follow corporations around the world that try to dodge environmental laws or protest actions (Dale, 1996). Greenpeace publishes a vast amount of their own scientific reports and issue-specific literature to accompany the campaigns for which they are generating media coverage, all of which are professionally produced. While Greenpeace catapulted its way to international recognition through media-friendly stunts, it also has a strong core of communication professionals who deal strictly with the media and package their informational materials according to journalists’ needs in order to have a message accompany the daring stunts its activists carry out. This is an example of what Gamson (cited in McLeod & Hertog, 1999) refers to as a barter agreement with the media in order

to get media attention. In exchange for media attention, activists provide action-filled video and pictures to journalists. Greenpeace does not just rely on the spectacle of direct action itself to attract media coverage, but also caters to many of the media's needs. As Aaron Doyle (2003) explains:

Greenpeace's stunts are well planned and organized and are announced to the media in advance. They are timed to suit media deadlines and executed with precision by a small number of professional activists, rather than involving a large crowd of demonstrators. The stunts always involve visually striking, made-for-TV elements such as acts of physical daring, wearing of costumes, or unveiling a banner with a very brief message. They often involve calculated nonviolent law breaking, such as a sit-in or blockade, with the deliberate goal of prompting on-the-spot arrests to add television drama (p.119).

Greenpeace provides photographs and videos on their web site for use in the media and Doyle notes that press releases from Greenpeace even give information on how television outlets can access Greenpeace-produced video footage directly via satellite link-up.

One of the most prominent examples of the power Greenpeace can exert with the combination of media coverage and public support is the Brent Spar crisis. As outlined by Lynn Bennie (1998), the reaction to Shell dumping the remains of a decommissioned oil storage facility into the sea had a dramatic impact on business attitudes towards the environment. After the public outcry, Shell realized that it needed to find a way to work with Greenpeace rather than publicly opposing it, which transformed the bureaucratic corporation that had been slow to respond and unwilling to participate in open consultations. The dramatic occupation of the Brent Spar by Greenpeace activists brought visual footage into the mainstream media of activists being attacked with water cannons and helicopters of relief teams arriving. After reaching a massive audience with these images, protests and boycotts broke out across Europe in support of Greenpeace and against Shell, resulting in a loss of profit for the corporation. Eventually the corporate

giant bowed to public pressure and revised its plan to dispose the Brent Spar, opting instead to bring it to land and recycle it. The impact not just on Shell, but on the oil industry itself in Britain was clear – they now had to accept that Greenpeace could “be a serious threat to opportunities because” it played on “the public’s negative perceptions of industry” (Bennie 1998, p.407). The results of the Brent Spar incident highlights the protest formula Greenpeace has perfected and that by pushing the right media buttons, it was able to secure publicity and support for its cause (Bennie).²

The caution that some commentators express is that while social movements may improve their media visibility through a Greenpeace-style approach, they also end up making tactical concessions to obtain media coverage, rendering long-term objectives invisible to their audience (Barker, 2007). In a similar vein, any social movement that is successful in reforming dominant practices through garnering majority support must consider how “restricted they are by the mass media and whether the same media system that serves to naturalize and legitimize elite decision-making, can really encourage its antithesis, collective grassroots decision-making” (Barker, 2007). Another criticism of the media tactics used by Greenpeace comes from Doyle (2003), who claims that Greenpeace practices may be seen as inherently disempowering, as they deal with a constructed representation of the public, whereby the membership rate is more important than the actual members themselves or mobilizing diverse audiences. According to Doyle, Greenpeace’s media actions make the small bands of individual activists out to be heroic outlaws, presented as David standing up to Goliath, which caters to a passive television constituency (2003).

² There have been several articles analyzing the Brent Spar story from different angles, including an in-depth look at the controversy by Tsoukas (1999), which also provides a breakdown of the key issues at stake. Also see de Jong (2005).

Greenpeace often uses shock value to obtain media coverage, yet shocking media coverage is also blamed by Moeller (1999) for compassion fatigue and Crouteau and Hoynes (2006) for making citizens feel disenfranchised. A question that arises from this is whether Greenpeace's media tactics have helped contribute to public apathy and fatigue. Perhaps by using a sensationalistic media formula Greenpeace is undermining a more comprehensive and contextual understanding of the issues they are trying to highlight. Barker explains that by adopting tactics that focus on mobilizing short-term public support, some social movements obtain their desired media coverage, however, such "tactics, rely upon manipulating audiences by pushing emotional hot buttons, stimulating reactive responses from targets, but not necessarily well thought out responses that might lead on to long term commitments" (2007, para. 27).

In line with Barker's warnings of the downfalls of this approach to media coverage, DeLuca (1999) argues that the mass media's focus on spectacular events prevents regular coverage of serious environmental problems, such as ozone depletion or global warming. DeLuca also charges that the focus on spectacular, individual events decontextualizes them, which then further obscures the connection of events and issues to the underlying systemic practices that must be changed (1999). It is due to the media's emphasis on novelty that groups are forced to perform even more outrageous image events in order to get coverage (DeLuca, 1999). This is highly problematic, according to DeLuca, because the quest for media coverage can change the focus of a group from local organizing to simply the quest for airtime. Alison Carper is highly critical of the media's focus on spectacle and does not consider the use of marketing tools as producing "a creative new kind of journalism, but rather the newspaper equivalent of paint-by-numbers

art” (1997, p.48). She charges newspapers with failing to reflect the world’s most important events, thereby encouraging complacency on the part of readers (1997).

In sum, Greenpeace may appear to have a tried-and-true media strategy, but like other social movement organizations, it still faces an uphill battle with receiving media coverage that justifies and focuses on the *ends*, not just the *means*. Despite some of the downfalls of the type of mass media coverage Greenpeace generates, it seems that the successes of this approach outweigh the negative impacts. As demonstrated with the Great Bear Rainforest campaign, even with a sophisticated markets campaign, civil disobedience was still a very important tactic (Falconer, 2001). While it is clear that Greenpeace generates more media coverage than most other international social change organizations, this cannot be its measure of success alone. As Eric Draper asserts: “successful environmental organizing lies in uniting communities around commonly felt threats and translating the support into political power. The alternative is to let the folks stay happily planted on the couch, safe in the knowledge that the whales are being taken care of” (1987, p.9). It is essential that Greenpeace continue to translate “popular support into radical policy changes before it is placated with measures that mitigate, but do not stop, environmental destruction” (Draper, p.9). Mobilization to demand alternative environmental policies and/or changing behaviour contributing to environmental crises is the purpose of Greenpeace’s existence and without achieving this the organization would fail in its mandate and have no reason to exist. Nevertheless, how social movements go about setting the stage for mass informed dialogue is a matter of choice in tactics, of which all should be supported. It is better to have Greenpeace generating media coverage that some consider simplistic and sensational than no coverage at all. The popular support Greenpeace can stir up should go hand in hand with less visible tactics of activism in

order to set the stage for an informed dialogue that will catalyze progressive social changes. Greenpeace employed its well-known media tactics in the Great Bear Rainforest, including having activists chain themselves to trees that were about to be logged. A greater examination of the media coverage of activism surrounding the Great Bear Rainforest debate follows.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

(i) Critical Discourse Analysis

There is nothing that has been socially created that is incapable of being socially changed. These representations are misrepresentations which clearly contribute to sustaining unequal relations of power – they are ideological (Fairclough, 1995, p.134).

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) methodology fits in well with the protest paradigm and a political economy framework because CDA scholars “are interested in opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of discrimination and control as manifested in language, not only to reveal structures of domination but also to provoke changes in the way power is exercised in social relationships” (Martínez, 2007 p.26). CDA is a methodology many critical researchers utilize, especially in regards to written text and media outputs. It is a method that can be used along with other methodologies in social science research on cultural and social change, as well as a resource in struggles against domination and exploitation (Fairclough, 1995). Dolores Fernández Martínez argues that one of CDA’s most remarkable features is its theoretical and methodological heterogeneity (2007). She explains that from “a methodological view, the eclectic nature of CDA allows the researcher certain freedom in the formulation of new perspectives that help to translate the theoretical assumptions into instruments of analysis” (Martínez, 2007, p.127). Self-reflexivity is another unique element of CDA, as researchers are challenged to examine their own place in the social world and how they influence the research through their own values, beliefs, past, culture and characteristic traits.

There is a risk that CDA (or critical research in general) will be automatically viewed as illegitimate by those who are disparaging of approaching research with an explicit political position. This is not uncommon though for a qualitative research method

to be challenged by those who employ quantitative research methods and vice versa. CDA is a subjectivist approach and bound to be in contention with an objectivist approach. However, Bernard McKenna (2004) reminds us that if critical scholarship is to remain true to its central function, which is dealing with real world injustice, suffering and inequality, then it must not do so from the safe haven of increasingly abstract theory. With the information CDA exposes, critical scholars must take this new found knowledge and disseminate it as widely as possible not just within the academic world, but also in a broader social context so that systems of domination can be challenged.

For the purposes of my analysis of media coverage of the Great Bear Rainforest, I employ the CDA methodology as delineated by Thomas Huckin (n.d., "Critical discourse analysis"). He describes CDA as more of an approach towards a textual analysis than a step-by-step formula. CDA is context-sensitive and attempts to identify relevant contextual factors, including historical ones that contribute to the production and interpretation of a specific text (Huckin). According to Huckin, CDA assumes a social constructionist view of discourse, meaning that "CDA practitioners assume people's notions of reality are constructed largely through interaction with others, as mediated by the use of language and other semiotic systems. Thus, reality is not seen as immutable but as open to change – which raises the possibility of changing it for the better" (n.d., para. 6). A highly appealing aspect of CDA is that practitioners of this methodology usually try to make their work as clear as possible to a broad readership (Huckin). I believe this allows for academic research to be easily adapted for practical uses.

I followed Huckin's general strategy of approaching the text in two stages: first, as the typical reader in an uncritical manner and second, revisiting the text and looking at it critically. Huckin points out that one should keep the ordinary reader in mind while

critiquing the text, as this allows the analyst to focus on features that have the potential to mislead the uncritical reader. It is also important to think about who the typical reader would be and why. For the second step of my CDA, I critically reviewed the articles from my selected media sample and made determinations based on the categories Huckin suggests and defines:

Genre

Huckin defines genre as a text type that has a characteristic set of formal features serving a characteristic purpose. He suggests CDA analysts should begin by determining the genre of the text and observing how the text conforms to it. By identifying the genre, it can become apparent what information has been deliberately left out or slanted and why certain statements appear in the text. News reporting, for example, has a specific format that journalists follow.

Framing

Framing is how the content of a text is presented and what sort of perspective the writer takes. McLeod and Hertog (1999) outline several different types of story frames in the protest paradigm in the previous chapter, such as good vs. bad. Huckin notes that readers should be aware of the agent-patient relations in sentences, as many texts will describe things so that certain people “are consistently depicted as initiating actions (and thus exerting power), while others are depicted as being (often passive) recipients of those actions” (para. 22).

Foregrounding/backgrounding

A writer can emphasize certain concepts by giving them prominence in the text, while de-emphasizing others. Huckin points out that often genres will automatically bestow prominence on certain things by foregrounding them. He defines the ultimate

form of backgrounding as omission, when something is left completely out of the text. This prevents the reader from possibly scrutinizing that piece of information because it does not even enter into the reader's mind. Huckin points out that it is difficult to raise questions about something that is not even there. He explains that an added attraction for text producers to manipulate silence and omission is that it can create the illusion of non-commitment (2002). According to Huckin, "by not mentioning certain things about a topic, the producers of such silences do not have to take a stance on how they view them" (2002, p.366). Agents can also be omitted from the text, which the uncritical reader would not notice. Huckin finds that most agent-deletion occurs through the use of passive verbs and nominalization. He suggests two questions in order to determine what has been left out: What could the writers have said here and what information does the genre allow?

Presupposition

Writers can manipulate readers by using language in a way that takes certain ideas for granted, as if there were no alternative. Huckin explains that readers might be reluctant to question statements that the author appears to be taking for granted.

Register

A text can be written in various styles of discourse and writers can use discursive differences to manipulate readers. Register refers to the level of formality of the writing, as well as the degree of technicality and its subject field.

Insinuations

Comments that are suggestive are difficult for readers to challenge, as with presuppositions. However, insinuations usually have double meanings so if challenged the writer can claim innocence and say there was only one of the two meanings in mind.

Connotations

Huckin defines connotations as deriving from the frequent use of a word or phrase in a particular type of context. Labels often carry connotations, as well as particular metaphors and other figures of speech.

Modality

Modality refers to the tone of statements in regards to their degree of authority or certainty. Usually modality is carried by words and phrases such as *may*, *might*, *could*, *will*, *must*, *it seems to me*, *without a doubt*, and *it's possible that*. Through the use of modal verbs and phrases, Huckin points out that “some texts convey an air of heavy-handed authority while others, at the other extreme, convey a tone of deference” (para. 28).

Finally, a contextualized interpretation draws conclusions about tactics used by the writer and how the text might be slanted. As recommended by Huckin, the articles analyzed must also take into account the larger socio-cultural context surrounding the issue and a discussion of the media in influencing Canadian public opinion. Huckin also suggests questioning whether the article is typical of this type of coverage. If so, “then one has to ask further questions about the role of media in informing the public, the role of the media in democracies, the responsibility of the educational system in the face of such ideological manipulation, etc.” (Huckin, n.d., para. 49).

CHAPTER IV: MEDIA ANALYSIS CASE STUDY

(i) Parameters of Research

I conducted an analysis of media coverage from the *Globe and Mail* and the *Vancouver Sun* from January 1, 1995 to January 1, 2007 on the Great Bear Rainforest. Surprisingly, there were only roughly 75 articles throughout this entire time period that mentioned “Great Bear Rainforest.” It is this sample of articles that I analyzed for the purpose of my thesis research. The media often did not refer to the forest by this name, however opening up the search to include “rainforest” produced 525 search results and “forest” and “British Columbia” produced over 2,600 hits. In order to keep the sample feasible, I used the search term “Great Bear Rainforest” even though it did limit the amount of articles in my sample. I began the search on January 1, 1995, as this was the year the Great Bear Rainforest campaign was formally launched. I ended the search on January 1, 2007 because the official agreement was reached in early 2006 and I wanted to include media coverage in the months that followed the agreement. I analyzed the media coverage over this decade to see if those protesting the logging of the Great Bear Rainforest were treated in the media as would be expected according to McLeod and Hertog’s protest paradigm and to see if there was any evolution in the way the media covered the subject and those involved. I did this by analyzing the articles through Huckin’s CDA methodology in search of common themes and frames.

I chose the *Globe and Mail* because it is generally regarded as Canada’s national newspaper and I felt it was important to look at media coverage that was disseminated nationally on this issue. I also felt regional coverage was important to look at because the issue may have received more coverage in the local press or may have been presented from a different angle than the national coverage. I selected the *Vancouver Sun* to

analyze, as it is a large provincial newspaper and owned by a different media conglomerate. This paper is a broadsheet, not to be mistaken for the tabloid-size “Sun” newspapers in Ontario.

The *Globe and Mail* has been owned and operated by Bell Globemedia since 2001, which is a major media conglomerate in Canada (previously the newspaper was owned by Thomson Corporation from 1980 until it was sold in 2001). Bell Globemedia owns television stations, a major television network, radio stations, a variety of sports franchises and the Air Canada Centre in Toronto. According to the *Globe and Mail* (2008), the newspaper has been in print for 163 years and has a cumulative six-day readership total of just over 2,800,000. The *Globe and Mail* is therefore considered a highly regarded medium in Canada and one that policy-makers must no doubt pay attention.

The *Vancouver Sun* is owned by CanWest, another major Canadian media conglomerate. It is one of the two major daily newspapers issued in the province of British Columbia by CanWest, along with *The Province*, a tabloid. The *Vancouver Sun* has been in existence since 1912 and publishes daily except on Sundays. According to CanWest (2008), the *Vancouver Sun* has a cumulative six-day readership total of 805,600. It appears that the audience demographics of the *Vancouver Sun* are similar to that of the *Globe and Mail*, mainly appealing to men and women over 35 that are typically educated, urban and earn a higher-than-average income. CanWest has the second highest concentration of newspapers in the Western world, only behind Rupert Murdoch’s News Corporation (Regan Shade, 2005). According to Leslie Regan Shade, CanWest’s combined newspaper and TV reach is a potential 97.6 per cent of all English-speaking Canadians (2005). CanWest acquired the vast bulk of its newspapers when it purchased

135 newspapers, including the *National Post*, from Hollinger Inc. in 2000 for \$3.5 billion (Regan Shade, 2005). CanWest is well-known for infringing on the freedom of its editors and reporters to disclose news and opinions as they see fit. In 2001, CanWest announced that each of its daily newspapers would publish national editorials three times a week, regardless of whether the editors and local publishers of the dailies agreed with their positions. This policy was reinforced by the company's disciplining of employees who openly criticized any head office decisions (Regan Shade, 2005).

I examined hard news coverage, as well as columns and editorials for this analysis. My research into media coverage of protests and debate surrounding the Great Bear Rainforest does not deal with radio, television broadcasting or Internet sources, despite all three of these other mediums being important sources of environmental information. I limited myself to print articles that appeared within the selected time frame from the two selected media sources through the Factiva electronic database.

(ii) General Overview

There were a total of 76 articles in the *Globe and Mail* and *Vancouver Sun* from January 1, 1995 to January 1, 2007 that explicitly used the term "Great Bear Rainforest," according to the Factiva database. Using this search term limited the number of articles that were published regarding environmental protests against various logging operations in British Columbia, which likely would have been several hundred. However by using this search term, I was able to determine if and when these two newspapers had adopted the term and how it was used. There was, and is, no other specific name for the central and north coast forest of B.C., however there was a great reluctance on the part of the forestry industry to refer to this region as the Great Bear Rainforest because, as Rod

Mickleburgh explained in an 2001 *Globe and Mail* article. Great Bear Rainforest was “a term coined by environmentalists and hated by the forestry industry because of its effective emotive impact” (see Appendix I, April 5, p. A7). What became clear in this study was that these two mainstream media publications avoided using the term or qualified it as an environmentalist-dubbed moniker, just as the forestry industry wanted. However, it was increasingly difficult to avoid when referring to the region. Greenpeace forests expert Tzeporah Berman was quoted in the *Sun*'s rival provincial newspaper, *The Province*, in 1997 explaining that “before we started the campaign, people were calling it the mid-coast region, the provincial coast region, the rain coast wilderness. There were so many different monikers people had no idea exactly the area you were referring to” (quoted in Anderson, 1997, p. A11).

In the sample I analyzed, the term first appeared in the *Globe and Mail* on March 7, 1998, several years after the region had become known as the Great Bear Rainforest through environmental campaigns. Extremely telling was the fact that this term was never used in the *Vancouver Sun* until April 29, 2005 when there was official talk that an agreement was about to be reached between all stakeholders. Environmentalists had been using the term for over a decade at that point and the region was internationally known as the Great Bear Rainforest; yet this provincial newspaper refused to use the term. To put into context just how glaring of an omission this was, I conducted brief searches of major media in the United Kingdom and the United States and I found in the U.K., *The Guardian*, *The Evening Standard*, *The Mirror*, *The Independent* and *The Herald* had all

used the term from 1998 onwards, as did *The Wall Street Journal*, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* and *USA Today* in the United States.³

According to a quantitative study by David Rossiter (2004) of media coverage of forestry protests in British Columbia in the 1990s, the *Vancouver Sun* had 18 articles addressing anti-logging campaigns in B.C. in 1995, 22 in 1996 and 71 in 1997, although it must be noted that there have been various anti-logging campaigns in B.C. outside of the Great Bear Rainforest. By 1997, the *Sun* was running specially titled sections devoted to the “war in the woods” because it had become news of mass public interest (Rossiter). Rossiter determined the increase in public interest by the steady increase in the number of letters to the editor pertaining to the “war in the woods.” However, my study shows that despite the increase in coverage, none of the articles ever mentioned the term Great Bear Rainforest in the *Sun* until 2005 when an official agreement – that used the term – was in progress. This is quite a drastic omission.

While the *Globe and Mail* used the term from 1998 onwards, its use often involved briefly qualifying the term as “environmentalist-dubbed” (cf. Hume 2005, September 20; Stueck 2001, January 23 & 26; Stueck 2000, June 5, August 10 & October 16), “nicknamed” (Noss, Paquet & Moola 2005, October 15), “known increasingly by its romantic name” (Hume 2005, September 20), or “so-called” (Canadian Press 2005, April 29; VOX; “Cheer up Canada” 2000, August 9). The *Vancouver Sun* often used the term with these same disclaimers when it was finally used for the first time in 2005 (cf. Read 2006, August 31; Hamilton 2006, February 7; Hamilton 2005, April 29 & 30; Whiteley 2006, February 8). The *Sun* even went so far as to call it a “resource management area”

³ See: Brown 1998, March 30; Gruner 1998, March 10; “All in one’s day’s work” 1998, May 14, “Greenpeace campaigners protest” 1998, May 14; Ross 1998, September 14; Parkinson 1998, May 18, Genovali 1998, June 25; Meddis 1998, September 3.

(“They’re not out” 2006, February 13) that was later known as the Great Bear Rainforest and a “mid-coast timber supply area also known as the Great Bear Rainforest” (Hamilton 2006, March 31). Both newspapers often went to great lengths to show they did not accept this term *de facto* and that it had been dubbed the moniker by environmentalists. However, at times they were inconsistent, using the term first as an official name and then later in the article qualifying it as an environmentalist term. It would be extremely hard to refer to a B.C. “resource management area” and have any readers know to what they were referring, but these two newspapers clearly did not in any way want to offend the forestry industry by the use of the term Great Bear Rainforest.

A similar issue arose when journalists needed to refer to the rare white Kermode bear. Kermode bears are actually black bears, but in a particular area of the forest about one in ten are born with a genetic quirk that gives them a creamy-coloured or white coat. In aboriginal folklore they are referred to as spirit bears and many people caught onto this term. They were well-known as spirit bears but the media did not want to use terms like Great Bear Rainforest or spirit bear because they appeared to be environmentalist labels and conjured up sentimental emotions that the forestry industry did not appreciate. Thus while some journalists referred to them simply as spirit bears, most would at least put quotes around “spirit bear” or deem it “so-called” (Mason, 2006, September 26; Hume, 2006, September 21; Mickleburgh, 2000, July 29), “popularly known as” (Hume, 2006, September 4), “the romantic name adopted by environmentalists” (Pynn 2006, May 20), “named spirit bears during an international campaign by environmentalists to preserve the area” (Hume 2006, September 2) or clarify: “officially they are known as Kermode bears” (Hume, 2006, September 4). The spirit bear became an icon for environmentalists and a recognizable symbol throughout the world of the unique ecosystem that was threatened

by logging corporations in British Columbia – and this is exactly what the forestry industry did not want. In an amusing twist, however, the provincial government actually trademarked the name spirit bear and deemed it the official animal of the province in 2005.

Of the 76 articles that met my search criteria, 27 were from the *Vancouver Sun* and 49 were from the *Globe and Mail*. However after closer examination, several articles were removed from this sample, as they did not relate to the topic and only mentioned Great Bear Rainforest for reasons that had nothing to do with its protection or the anti-logging campaigns. These articles were for the most part travel-related and only mentioned the forest in passing, usually focusing on a specific travel lodge that happened to be located in the area. However, I kept travel articles in the sample that explicitly mentioned the protection of, or threat, to the area. By removing unrelated articles from the sample, it eliminated a number of the *Vancouver Sun* articles to be analyzed, as only 18 articles mentioned Great Bear Rainforest in more than just a passing travel reference. The total number of *Globe and Mail* articles came to 39, making the overall sample of articles 57 in total that were analyzed using CDA methodology. These 57 articles are listed in reverse chronological order in Appendix I and are referred to throughout this chapter.

The chart below shows the number of articles published since 1998 (when the first article appeared in the *Globe and Mail* using the term Great Bear Rainforest) by each newspaper that mentioned the rainforest in the context of conservation or the conflict between the various stakeholders.

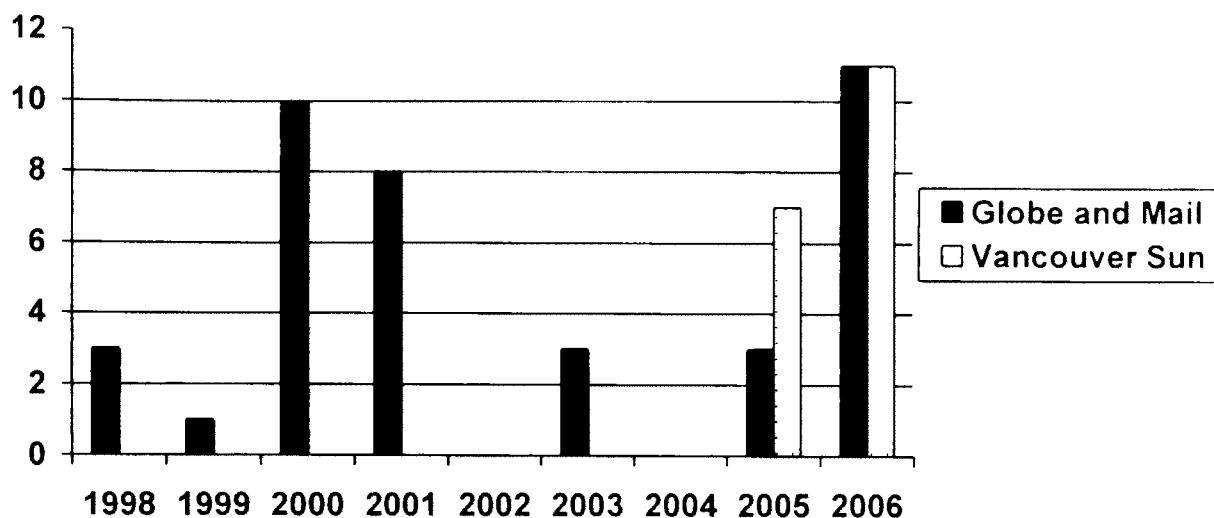


Fig. 1 – Number of articles published by the Globe and Mail and Vancouver Sun from 1998-2007 that included the term Great Bear Rainforest

The chart clearly illustrates that the *Vancouver Sun* only began using the term in 2005 when negotiations between environmentalists, logging companies, aboriginal communities and the provincial government had already been in progress for several years and a possible agreement was being laid out. Both newspapers published 11 articles in 2006 that mentioned the Great Bear Rainforest, the largest number of articles in one year, due to the agreement that was finally reached in February 2006 and hailed as one of the greatest environmental victories in Canada. The *Globe and Mail* had a spike in coverage mentioning the forest in 2000 and 2001 due to the success the markets campaign was having at the time in convincing large corporations to stop purchasing wood from the region, and the resulting backlash from industry and government. Mention of the forest by name resulted in very few articles in the remaining years, most likely because there was not a large-scale event, such as a company like Home Depot joining the campaign, and therefore, the issue dropped off the news radar.

(iii) Analysis of Media Coverage

The first step I took in analyzing the 57 articles that comprised my sample of media coverage was to read through them all as an ordinary reader, as Huckin suggests. To the ordinary, uncritical reader the post-2005 articles appear balanced, as there is usually a quote from industry and/or government and aboriginal communities and/or environmentalists. If direct quotes from a representative of one of the stakeholders were not used, they were usually at least mentioned, although this was not always the case for aboriginal groups. They were front and centre of a few stories, but more often they were only mentioned in passing or not at all. One thing that struck me after reflecting on the articles I read was that the ordinary reader would not have noticed that scientific facts were rarely ever brought into the articles. Apart from one article profiling wildlife biologist Wayne McCroy that made mention of the 11 scientific studies he had carried out documenting the rich biological diversity of the Great Bear Rainforest (Hume 2006, February 6), I did not recall reading scientific information about this ecosystem or how clear-cut logging practices were effecting the region. Even in the article on McCroy, it was only mentioned that he carried out the studies, not what he had found in the studies. There was one commentary piece from non-staff writers who opposed the agreement for not doing enough to protect the Great Bear Rainforest (Noss, Paquet & Moola 2005 October 15), but this also did not make use of scientific facts. This is an omission most readers would not notice, but it is significant because countless reports and studies have been released on the Great Bear Rainforest and it is fair to say that most present clear factual evidence as to the ecological importance of the area. These reports were often cited by environmentalists or commissioned by environmental organizations, perhaps the reason why they were not given any consideration by the mainstream media. The average

reader was left to assume that the logging industry and provincial government did not see any problem with continuing their practices, while the environmentalists believed, for some (unsupported) reason, that the area had worth beyond just its lumber value and, therefore, warranted protection. In earlier *Globe and Mail* coverage – which refers to all pre-2005 articles, other than the travel features – the idea that cutting the forests could harm anything of value was questioned. Wendy Stueck used quotations around “endangered” and “high conservation” in one of her articles and even used the term “what *they say* are endangered forests in the province [emphasis added]” (2000, October 26, p. B3). However, when Stueck wrote an entire piece on what a logging company executive *said* was conservation work being conducted by his corporation, Stueck did not use quotations or qualify any of his claims. A glorified press release was the end result and the comments and deeds of the logging corporation executive were treated as a fact: “Mr. Dumont is working with conservation groups on a number of fronts so that Western’s legal right to log is backed up by society’s good will, at home and abroad” (2000, October 16, p. B11). However the “conservation” work being described only consisted of trying to repair some of the damage that had already been done by logging in one particular area. Another factor is that Stueck referred to Western’s “legal right to log” as if they had free reign in the province and the Great Bear Rainforest was not an area controlled by the province, which grants licenses to loggers, or the ancestral lands of the many coastal native communities that still lived in the region.

It was interesting to note that the majority of the *Vancouver Sun* articles that mentioned the rainforest were business columns, and this trend was the same in the *Globe and Mail* until 2005 when suddenly the issues surrounding the forest were overwhelmingly treated as news in the national or provincial news sections of the paper.

As expected, when the forest was mentioned in business news stories or business columns, it was usually only in the context of how the campaign was affecting logging companies. However, in 2005 and 2006 in the *Globe and Mail* the stories mentioning the forest were framed as environmental stories or newsworthy in and of themselves, and the business focus was reduced to just one of several angles. It also should be noted that in 2001 there was a provincial election in British Columbia and several of the articles mentioning the forest were presented in the debate as a political policy issue that would ultimately affect the logging industry.

The articles in 2006 took on a more favourable tone to the protection of the region, as most parties involved had agreed to it. Only a few of the articles in 2005 and 2006 make mention of the remaining native communities and environmentalists who were opposed to the agreement for not protecting *enough* of the region or allowing for enough self-autonomy for aboriginal communities. Overall, the coverage in the *Globe and Mail* where the term Great Bear Rainforest was used was for the most part extremely negative towards environmentalists and the campaign to protect areas of the forest until roughly 2005. The later stories took more of a balanced approach and tried to treat both “sides” equally.

I assumed the average reader fit with the average demographics for the two newspapers, as being over 35, educated and most likely living in an urban region. However, I believe the average reader in British Columbia would be more likely to have a vested interest in the logging or resource-extraction industry in B.C., and therefore would be more likely to take a critical view of the environmentalists than the readers of the *Globe and Mail*. A more detailed summary of my findings follow, divided into the CDA categories of analysis identified by Huckin.

Genre and framing

In general, there were four genres of writing within this media sample: news reporting, news written by columnists, feature writing and editorial commentary writing. The basic news reporting consisted of a typical, straight-forward journalistic formula that was used in the national, provincial and business news sections of the newspapers. News written by columnists usually was in line with the typical journalistic format but took more editorial liberties than a regular reporter would, showing a more apparent bias. News columnists were featured in the national, provincial and business news sections as well. Feature writing mainly occurred in the travel sections of the newspapers, detailing a personal experience and then exploring the issues within that context. There were some news features in the *Globe and Mail* though that were not travel-related and discussed the battle over the Great Bear Rainforest in more depth. Finally, the editorial or commentary pieces in this sample only appeared in the *Vancouver Sun* and were either written as newspaper editorials or as commentary/argument pieces from outside sources. In the *Globe and Mail*, the earlier coverage mentioning the Great Bear Rainforest was mainly news reporting in the business section and usually the work of one journalist, Wendy Stueck, who took a very negative approach to presenting the environmental campaign, as is noted in this chapter. Later coverage (in 2005 and 2006) in the *Globe and Mail* was mainly news reporting from Mark Hume; however he was never identified as being an environmental journalist or a news reporter specifically for British Columbia, though it was apparent this was his focus. The main business columnists who mentioned the Great Bear Rainforest in the *Vancouver Sun* in 2005 and 2006 were Larry Pynn and Gordon Hamilton.

When the forest was mentioned in travel features, a very different tone was taken than in the articles mentioning the forest in the news, business or editorial sections. The travel features all painted a very romantic picture of a pristine, untouched region of the coast where everything was in seamless balance (c.f. Kramer 2006, August 1; O'Loughlin 2006, April 14). Travel features were more likely to present environmental concerns about the region without trying to include quotes from “the other side” of the logging industry. The travel features were also less likely to present quotes from typical official sources in both newspapers, allowing for small-time nature guides and eco-tour operators to be profiled instead. The use of the term Great Bear Rainforest was used without qualification in many of the travel features and overall in these features, the protection of the region was presented in a positive light, either for the sake of tourism or for the preservation of the ecosystem itself. This was in stark contrast to the articles in the rest of the newspaper that tried to appear neutral and balanced, often quoting several industry sources, along with politicians and a spokesperson from the environmental coalition organizations.

How the stories were framed was a main component of my critical discourse analysis of the 57 articles, as framing is a key aspect of CDA and McLeod and Hertog's protest paradigm. Huckin identifies the good vs. bad frame as being commonly used in news reporting and this was especially true for the travel features in both newspapers that took the reverse position that earlier *Globe* coverage took of the campaign – the travel articles usually pitted the sanctity of the Great Bear Rainforest (the good) against the greedy interests of the logging industries (the bad) (cf. Kramer, 2006, August 1). In some of the news features in earlier *Globe and Mail* coverage a good vs. bad frame was also used but with environmentalists as “the bad” and loggers and government in British

Columbia as “the good” (cf. McKenna 2000, January 22; Stueck 2000, August 9). Huckin also points out the use of agent-patient relations, where one party always appears to be “doing” something to the other. This frame was taken in earlier coverage of the *Globe and Mail* where the seemingly innocent loggers of British Columbia were having all sorts of hardships inflicted upon them by the supposedly European and American environmental campaigns that called for a boycott of wood harvested in the Great Bear Rainforest. For example, a 2001 *Globe* front page news story stated that “the campaign gave British Columbia a black eye internationally, and posed a financial threat to B.C. forest companies” (Lunman 2001 April 4, p. A1). Once this agent-patient relation was established as a frame, journalists would provide quotes in the articles from a variety of industry sources that had scathing comments towards the campaign, while environmentalists were excluded, paraphrased or quoted with mild comments that did little to counter or respond the accusations coming from the logging industry spokespeople (c.f. Howard, 1998, March 7). In a 1998 *Globe* article entitled “Greenpeace’s last stand,” columnist Peter Cook tries to discredit and demonize Greenpeace. Without ever quoting an actual person from Greenpeace, Cook makes the bold assertion that “Greenpeace rejects the idea of improvement or dialogue” (March 27, p. B2). He then goes on to quote an unnamed Greenpeace spokesperson as saying that “only Canada, Russia and Brazil have a chance to save the world’s ‘last frontier’ forests.” Yet Cook had no problem in naming Patrick Moore as a Greenpeace founder and quoting him saying that “Greenpeace was basically spreading lies around the world.” Cook for some reason was unable to obtain the name of a designated spokesperson for a major international environmental organization, yet was able to provide the colourful quote from Moore and label him a Greenpeace founder, without bothering to mention anywhere

in the article that Moore is actually a forestry products lobbyist and a famous adversary of Greenpeace, an organization he was only involved with during its early beginnings in the 1970s.

Foregrounding and backgrounding

The business impact of the environmental campaigns was often foregrounded in the articles throughout the years in both newspapers (cf. Hume 2006, February 6; Stueck 2001, May 14). Usually industry and political spokespeople were foregrounded with their comments on the agreement, while quotes from environmentalists would follow later in the article. A clear example is Larry Pynn's August 1, 2006 article, which quoted official sources – the Finance Minister, a senior bureaucrat, a lawyer and a mayor – and then eventually moved on to a biologist with an environmental group and finally Ian McAllister of the Rainforest Conservation Society. However, the article was about environmentalists' anger over the province trade marking the name "spirit bear," which was a term that government and industry had previously rejected. The title of the article even was "B.C. trademark of spirit bear name riles conservationists: Environmentalists outraged that government made move after years of resisting efforts to protect the animal's habitat." Yet despite environmentalists being the very focus of the article, they are not quoted or really even referred to other than in the headline and latter portion of the article. All the official government sources are quoted first.

Huckin identifies the ultimate form of backgrounding as omission. This clearly was the case with the *Vancouver Sun* and the absolute absence of the term Great Bear Rainforest until the deal was being finalized. Even though the label had become common, the *Vancouver Sun* clearly did not want to appear as if they were taking the environmentalist side of the debate by using a term that angered the forestry industry.

Often agents were deleted entirely, as was the case in much of the earlier coverage of the campaign by the *Globe and Mail* that failed to mention the many Canadian organizations that were front and centre in the market boycott campaign and protests, instead making it appear as if all these efforts were led by American and European groups that were out of touch with the reality on the ground. For example, in Barry McKenna's January 22, 2000 article, he emphasized the "London-based" Greenpeace, instead of just referring to the organization by name, as well as the "San-Francisco-based" Rainforest Action Network. Several other articles emphasized the European and American protest groups and did not give readers the impression that the battle to protect the forest was a Canadian-led initiative (cf. Cook 1998, March 27; Howard 1998, March 7).

The genre of the articles technically allowed for the reporters to give a voice to industry, government, aboriginal groups and environmentalists, as well as sub-divisions within these four groups. However the four groups were often painted as homogenous, when in fact there was a major split in the environmental movement between organizations that felt the agreement was a victory and others who felt it was largely insignificant and not nearly far-reaching enough, as well as many aboriginal communities who felt they should determine their own land-use agreements and not be lumped in with one across-the-board agreement. Without going into any depth on these divisions within the four major groups party to the agreement, complexity and context was missing from most of the reports. It then appeared that the agreement was simply a victory and that everyone was pleased, when in fact there were voices of dissent significant enough to warrant coverage.

Presupposition, register, insinuations, connotations and modality:

There were several underlying ideas taken for granted in the coverage I analyzed. The first was that logging corporations were legitimate entities that had a right to gain profit from communal natural resources. None of the articles ever mentioned the problem of the decimation of forests across the world for human consumption and how this trend needed to be altered so that conflicts over areas like the Great Bear Rainforest would not arise in the first place. There was no mention of the importance of recycling, reusing and replacing paper products, apart from one lifestyle feature in the *Globe and Mail* that mentioned the demand for “good wood” in Europe over wood products that came from endangered trees or forests (Burshtein 2000, August 12). The idea that massive logging corporations would have to scale down their activities, and profits, was never on the table for debate, along with the idea that logging old-growth forests was not a viable or useful endeavour anymore and should be stopped. The only time the idea that all old-growth forests have worth beyond the lumber contained within them and should not be logged at all was presented was in earlier *Globe and Mail* coverage where logging industry spokespeople insisted that this was the stance of all the environmentalists and basically that it was a radical, unthinkable notion that was not in any way realistic. A clear example of this is a *Globe* article by Barrie McKenna (2000, January 22) that stated: “Nor is certification alone likely to appease environmentalists. Even conservative environmental groups are rapidly migrating to [Rainforest Action Network’s] view that all the world’s primary or old-growth forests should be protected – not just pristine valleys.” The idea that old-growth forests should not be logged is assumed to be radical and impossible by McKenna, when in fact it is not.

The bigger issues of extinction and loss of habitat were not brought to the table, other than in reference to the spirit bear in a few articles, despite being long standing issues that deserved coverage in order to make campaigns like this fit into a larger context of environmental degradation at the hands of humankind. Only one in all of the 57 articles made mention that some large no-hunting areas would be established in the agreement (Hume 2007, February 7), which was surprising as the Great Bear Rainforest is home to Kermode bears, grizzly bears and unique packs of grey wolves that conservationists have been battling to have fully protected. Whether or not hunting is permitted is an issue of interest to many, yet it was only mentioned once in all of the articles that used the term Great Bear Rainforest during this selected time period. It was as if the issues relating to the inhabitants of the forest were of no importance to the media, or the assumed audience.

The register of the coverage was usually a formal, professional, journalistic tone that simplified language and concepts in order to appeal to a wide range of people. The coverage was rarely ever presented in technical terms, even though technical explanations should have been provided in relation to the ecological importance of the region. At times, however, the register changed to an informal tone to discuss the spirit bears living in the forest and the actions of the protesters. This served to delegitimize the campaign by discussing it in a juvenile or sarcastic tone. An article by Ross Howard in the *Globe* in 1998 included the sentence: "In London, media coverage of the Greenpeace campaign this week featured images of cuddly bears and majestic dark forests which Greenpeace say are on the verge of extinction due to Canada's rapacious forestry industry" (March 7, p. A7). This condescending way of describing the campaign borders on the absurd, as the grizzly bears of the Great Bear Rainforest have a reputation as anything but cuddly. In addition, while spirit bears may be stunning, I highly doubt anyone of sound mind would

contemplate “cuddling” with an 800-pound wild bear. The images used by Greenpeace campaigns were legitimate photographs that showed *actual* images of how the Great Bear Rainforest and its inhabitants looked. The tone taken by this journalist seeks to delegitimize the campaign by downplaying their use of images as if they were almost imaginary scenarios that had no basis in reality. Another clear example of an attempt to delegitimize environmentalists through the use of a sarcastic and patronizing register is Peter Cook’s 1998 business column in the *Globe*, which opened with the lead:

In the far-from-pristine cities of northern Europe that represent the last stronghold of eco-generous folks who will give to any cause that stirs them, Greenpeace has invented an enchanted land known as the Great Bear Rainforest that is about to be utterly despoiled by British Columbia’s forest industry (March 27, p. B2).

Cook accuses environmentalists of inventing this massive ecosystem that still somehow manages to attract thousands of visitors from all over the world each year and is of high interest to wildlife biologists. Cook also refers to Ian and Karen McAllister’s book, *The Great Bear Rainforest: Canada’s Forgotten Coast*, as a “picture book,” belittling the years of research and passion put into the book, the stunning photographs and the urgent warning that the McAllister’s showcase in this book.

As previously discussed, the coverage in both newspapers in 2005 and 2006 insinuated, and often outright stated, that the agreement reached was groundbreaking and a great achievement, even though there were environmental and aboriginal groups who certainly did not feel this way. In the earlier coverage, when not stated directly, there were suggestive comments about where the protests were coming from by including where the international offices for some environmental organizations were based (e.g. “the London-based Greenpeace” or “the San Francisco-based Rainforest Action Network” in McKenna 2000, January 22). These were misleading and were included to

purposely insinuate that the campaign was not Canadian-based and was the work of “outsiders” with their own agendas.

There was the strong connotation of a war between environmentalist and industry and many phrases and metaphors were used to make this connotation. Some of the metaphors or words used in the media coverage that denoted conflict between two or more sides were appropriate and common, such as “battle” and “under fire” (cf. Hume 2006, September 21), “a victory in the fight” (Hume 2006, February 7), “biggest battle” and “successfully attacked” (Whiteley 2006, February 8), “historic adversaries” (Noss, Paquet & Moola 2005, October 15), “landmark truce in their long-running war over the woods,” (Mickleburgh 2000, July 29), “B.C. lumber war” (Howard 1998, March 7), “bitter battle” (Howard 1998, March 18) and “attack deal” (Stueck 2000, August 10). However, some of the metaphors, words and phrases used to connote conflict were more graphic and went above and beyond a simple conflict to conjure up images of full out military warfare, such as “set down their arms,” “most antagonistic land-use battles ever,” “combatants” and “crusaders” (Mason 2006, September 26), “terms of surrender” and “region-wide war,” (“They’re not out” 2006, February 13), “like a scene from *Apocalypse Now*,” “invasion of 10,000 protesters” and “B.C.’s War in the Woods” (Whiteley 2006, February 8). Other words and phrases used in relation to the military warfare theme included: “battle-mode” and “scored two massive hits” (Hamilton 2006, February 7), “the gloves are off” (Stueck 2000, June 5), “assailed loggers” (Stueck 2000, August 10), “deployed forces” and “direct attack” (Howard 1998, March 18), “eco-warriors” and “ceasefire agreement” (MacKinnon 2003, July 26), “No. 1 target” (McKenna 2000, January 22), “major field of conflict” (Howard 1998, March 7), and “ecological battleground” (Mickleburgh 2000, July 29).

In terms of modality, the coverage took on a tone of certainty about the agreement being far-reaching and did not leave any question in the reader's mind about the significance of the agreement. In earlier *Globe* coverage there was clearly a tone of certainty about the detriment to the province of the campaign to protect the forest, as previous examples have illustrated.

(iv) Application of the Protest Paradigm

Overall, I found the coverage I analyzed was consistent with the protest paradigm as outlined by McLeod and Hertog. There was a significant evolution in the way the campaign was covered. The *Vancouver Sun* would not even use the term Great Bear Rainforest until 2005 when there was solid talk of an agreement between all parties. The *Globe and Mail's* coverage was sharply critical of the campaign until conservation concerns moved into the official realm and were addressed by business and government. Once industry and government became involved and began negotiating with environmentalists and native groups for an agreement, the *Globe* treated the issue more neutrally. Prior to that, it marginalized the efforts of environmentalists and belittled the campaigns. The coverage, especially the earlier coverage in the *Globe and Mail*, indicates that the general public could have easily been misled, especially about the nature of the environmentalists and their campaigns. The coverage established who had legitimate voices in the debate and usually only revolved around events. There was rarely any coverage that was of a thematic or issue-based nature.

Story framing

According to McLeod and Hertog (1999), once a news frame is chosen "news gathering efforts seek to find information to fill the story template rather than generating

deep understanding of relevant viewpoints” (p.312). They identify four main frames in news reporting: marginalizing frames, mixed frames, sympathetic frames and balanced frames. The earlier coverage in the *Globe and Mail* that mentioned the Great Bear Rainforest was presented in marginalizing frames. Reports were extremely negative towards the environmental campaign and several efforts were made to connect the campaign to Europeans or Americans who were not in touch with the “reality” of the situation in Canada. For example, one article referred to an “unaware European public” (Howard 1998, March 7, also cf. Cook 1998, March 27; McKenna 2000, January 22; Mickleburgh 2000, July 29; Gill 2001, March 31). Within marginalizing frames, McLeod and Hertog identify eight story types that tend to marginalize protesters: the violent crime story, the property crime story, the freak show, the “Romper Room,” the carnival, the riot, the storm watch and the moral decay frame. Several articles from the earlier coverage in the *Globe and Mail* fit the storm watch sub-frame that McLeod and Hertog (1999) define as a frame in which society is warned about the possible threats posed by protesters. Several articles from 1998 to 2000 in particular took a storm watch frame and presented to readers what would apparently happen to the British Columbian economy if environmentalists were to be victorious in protecting the forest, and even alluded to what might happen to Canadian sovereignty as a whole due to the “threat” of the protesters. For example, articles from Wendy Stueck included phrases such as “industry representatives worry that it could spell trouble down the road” and referred to the “domino effect” (2000, August 9) and a headline indicated a menacing threat stating “Greenpeace warns companies” (Howard 1998, March 7). These reports could have easily left readers with the impression that the fate of Canadian forests was at stake and that the campaign presented a great threat to society as a whole.

Within the mixed frame, McLeod and Hertog identify several sub-frames, including the showdown frame, the protest reaction, the dissection story, the psychoanalysis story, the association frame, the comparison frame and the trial story. In earlier coverage in the *Globe and Mail*, the association sub-frame was used, delineating linkages between the campaign and protest groups in Europe and the United States that bestowed a sense of deviance and illegitimacy on the campaign. The articles insinuated that clueless outsiders were behind the campaign to protect the forest and minimized the legitimacy of the campaign due to the involvement of foreign environmentalists, disregarding the fact that the campaign had been Canadian-born and led from the very beginning (cf. Cook 1998, March 27; McKenna 2000, January 22; Mickleburgh 2000, July 29; Howard 1998, March 7; Gill 2001, March 31).

The stories were usually framed around events, such as a company announcing it was joining the boycott or an agreement being formulated between various stakeholders. Doyle (2003) explains a content analysis he carried out of newspaper coverage of British Columbian environmental protests in the 1990s (Tindall & Doyle, 1999), which showed that when environmentalists were quoted in news coverage of protests they were usually talking about the protest itself. In only 33 per cent of their quoted statements did they actually touch on any aspect of the environmental questions that had triggered the protest. This demonstrates how problematic it is to frame stories entirely around events, as contextual elements are often excluded. In contrast, Doyle found that when environmentalists were quoted in stories that were not framed around protests, they were able to focus much more on the environmental issues themselves. It is important that environmental issues are treated in a thematic and issue-based frame otherwise the

spectacle of the protest or event is all that the media cover, which fundamentally affects how the general public views a campaign or issue.

The majority of the articles seemed to speak to the forest industry and those with jobs or vested interests at stake, especially in the business coverage. The conflict between environmental interests and industry interests was the aspect that received the most attention and a key story frame that was utilized by journalists.

Official sources

According to McLeod and Hertog, “when news coverage is dominated by officials, official viewpoints and definitions tend to predominate, lending support to the status quo and chastising would-be challengers” (1999, p.315). The tendency to rely on official sources even applied within the environmental movement in the media coverage I analyzed. Environmentalists, mainly from the four large environmental organizations that formed the environmental coalition, were treated as more legitimate sources than smaller local organizations. Environmentalists with Greenpeace, Sierra Club B.C. Chapter, Rainforest Action Network and ForestEthics were quoted or paraphrased 29 times in the articles I analyzed, versus a total of 17 articles for all other environmental groups or individuals combined. This is in line with the ideas put forth by Deacon (1999) regarding the non-profit sector being quoted in media coverage and how only organizations with official links with the government are consulted.

The sources that appeared repeatedly in articles were from four main groups: politicians, industry, environmentalists and aboriginal or local communities. The number environmental sources quoted or paraphrased (46 in total) were roughly the same as the number of industry sources (44 in total). The even amount of sources maintains the appearance of objectivity in the news reporting I analyzed, however my critical discourse

analysis has shown that when the context, frame and nature of each article is taken into consideration, the earlier coverage of the issue was skewed in favour of industry. Environmentalists were slightly more likely to be paraphrased than industry sources, with 10 paraphrases attributed to environmental sources versus seven industry sources. After industry and environmental sources, the next major group of people quoted was political figures with 28 individuals quoted or paraphrased. Statements made at public speeches by top political figures, such as the premier, were often used and politicians were paraphrased more than the other groups, with a total of 12 counted in my media sample. Aboriginal spokespeople accounted for just 15 individuals quoted or paraphrased, as well as four local mayors.

There definitely was a shift in how the *Globe and Mail* covered the issue as protection of certain areas of the forest became more of an official concern that logging companies and the provincial government were discussing and seeking solutions for. The *Vancouver Sun* only began using the name Great Bear Rainforest when it was adopted by government and industry in the negotiations for its conservation. Just as Gitlin (1980) found with his study of the coverage of Vietnam War protests, the more closely the values and concerns of the movement matched the concerns of political and media elite, the more likely they would be incorporated into prevailing news frames. The media analysis I conducted clearly indicates the same finding.

Invocation of public opinion

The media coverage did not include any opinion poll results or quotes from “bystanders” representing average citizens. However, sweeping generalizations were made, such as the idea that business interests and the province as a whole would be better off with less restrictions on the logging industry (cf. Hamilton 2006, March 31; Hume

2006, February 6; Stueck 2001, May 14; Lunman, 2001, April 19; McKenna 2000, January 22; Stueck 2000, June 5 & August 9; Stueck & Walton 2000 (October 26). The only type of coverage where this generalization did not apply was in the travel features, where ecotourism was often the focus of the article and restrictions on logging would benefit this industry. Another generalization made on behalf of the public in earlier coverage was that the European concerns over the fate of the Great Bear Rainforest were not shared in Canada. McLeod and Hertog point out that “social control messages that portray protesters as an isolated minority may induce fear of isolation that limits the growth of the group and discourages participation from existing members and potential sympathizers” (1999, p. 315). It certainly would appear to most readers that if they supported the protection of the forest, they were not among the general consensus of Canadians that the articles insinuated were opposed to the “foreign” campaign. Overall, the coverage characterized a social consensus against the protesters, which was a sweeping and inaccurate generalization.

Delegitimization, marginalization and demonization

As previously highlighted, there was a continuous qualification of the term Great Bear Rainforest as an environmentalist creation when it was used in an article, which contributed to the belief that this name was not legitimate even though there were very few ways to describe or label areas of the central and north coast rainforest of B.C. The coverage eventually indicated particular environmental groups were legitimate, while others were not. The three organizations in the environmental coalition that proceeded with negotiations – ForestEthics, Sierra Club of B.C. and Greenpeace – were given an official and legitimate status once an agreement was in progress with industry and government. However, Rainforest Action Network did not sign the agreement and

therefore was not part of the coalition that received official status from the media. Earlier coverage indicated that none of the environmental groups had much legitimacy, especially Greenpeace and Rainforest Action Network. Many industry source quotes tried to directly discredit these organizations and overall, the tone of the articles was not in their favour.

One tactic employed by some journalists was to delegitimize environmental activists as people who glamorized the forest and the spirit bear, along with Hollywood-types who knew little about the region. Coverage that portrayed the protesters in this light made the protection of the Great Bear Rainforest out to be nothing more than the latest cause-de-jour. Alexandra Gill wrote a scathing piece in the *Globe* in 2001 that blasted what she deemed a “slick marketing campaign produced by Greenpeace and front-lined by a growing entourage of celebrities” (March 31, p. R4). The article was entitled “When trees become stars: How a slick marketing campaign has made a swatch of B.C. forest a cause célèbre.” Gill clearly took an extremely negative tone with the campaign and included phrases and quotes such as: “‘I’d be surprised if Bono could even find the Great Bear Rainforest’ says Steve Crombie, spokesman for B.C. logging company Interfor. He notes that the jingly little moniker was actually coined by environmental groups and has never been officially listed on any map.” However it is not likely any map had ever made mention of this area anyway, as there was really no official name for the area, making this point irrelevant. It certainly was not listed on maps as “resource management area” as the forestry industry would have had us believe. Additionally, for a supposedly-imaginary title, even Gill herself could not avoid using it several times in the article. There simply was no better way to refer to the region.

The only quote from the “environmental bandwagon,” as Gill termed it, was from David Hocking, a communications director for the David Suzuki Foundation. However, Gill added her own interpretations to his actual quote in the article, belittling the comment he was making and directly applying a statement to him that was not a part of his quote. Gill wrote: “David Hocking says B.C.’s forests are an easy sell,” then quoting Hocking directly, the article continued: “Some environmental issues are pretty obscure. Global warming, for instance, is pretty esoteric. The devastation of the rainforest is something you can see. It’s just so obviously wrong.” However Gill added her personal slant to Hocking’s quote with her comment about the forest being an easy sell, which one can assume she took the liberty of inserting as it seems highly unlikely a professional communications director would say to a journalist and this additional statement was not included within the actual quotation marks of his comments. She again added her own statement onto the end of Hocking’s quote by remarking: “and let’s not forget those cute spirit bears.” Clearly Gill does not let Hocking speak to the issue in a fair manner and downplays the importance of the campaign simply on the basis that it is media-friendly. Overall, Gill’s article went to great lengths to delegitimize the environmentalists as opportunistic ideologues who had no real credibility in seeking to protect the forest and that they were doing so simply due to the fact it was an easier sell than other environmental issues, not to mention that an apparent bandwagon of celebrities were willing to show support.

The use of quotation marks to qualify particular terms frequently occurred in the media coverage I analyzed. As McLeod and Hertog point out:

A group seeking social change must establish itself as a legitimate voice in public discourse. Unfortunately, media coverage guided by the protest paradigm tends to question the legitimacy of radical protest

groups. For instance, Tuchman (1972) describes the “judicious use of quotation marks” by which reporters can call into question the legitimacy of a concept or group (1999, p.319).

There was certainly a judicious use of quotation marks in the coverage analyzed, but only for environmentalist-related terms. Even terms that appeared quite clear in their meaning and relatively neutral were put into quotation marks if these terms could in anyway frame the debate beyond logging industry interests. For instance “untouched or so-called old-growth forests” (Howard 1998, March 7) was put into quotation marks, yet what other terms could have been used to describe pristine forests that have been standing untouched for centuries? It is unclear as to how these terms had an environmental bias and therefore were put into quotations, but it must be noted that the logging industry did not favour these terms, and it therefore appears the media felt they needed to qualify each of these terms by using quotation marks around them.

Media coverage also at times marginalized those involved with the environmental movement as fringe elements of society or lumped environmentalists into 1970s hippie stereotypes with the use of cliché statements and images. This also was in line with the “Romper Room” and freak show sub-frames identified by McLeod and Hertog. An example of this is a statement in Ross Howard’s 1998 *Globe* news column that stated: “B.C. tree-huggers may have an image as sodden, hapless youths clinging to giant trees or chained to muddy logging trucks, but many of them are also technologically accomplished” (March 18, p. A2). A statement such as this conjures up images associated with typical tree-hugger type protests and conveys surprise that such activists could *also* be technologically adept, as if the two were mutually exclusive. Clearly this is an inaccurate assumption, as many of the protesters included communication and program specialists from various organizations, backgrounds and ages, and were hardly just a

bunch of “hapless” youth with few hard skills. Another example of this portrayal of environmentalists as out of touch protesting youth can be taken from a *Globe* news article by Hume (2005, April 19) where he used the phrase “a surprisingly pragmatic view for an environmentalist” to refer to the Conservation Voters of B.C. and how the founder of the group wanted to convince voters to vote strategically based on environmental issues not party allegiances. Again, here the journalist has conveyed the idea that an environmentalist is usually a one-size-fits-all type and that being environmentally-conscious *and* practical are usually mutually exclusive concepts.

As previously discussed, the concept that logging in all old-growth forests should stop was treated as an insult to Canada in general. Protecting old-growth forests was a belief framed to be that of an outsider perspective and was associated with radicals who obviously did not subscribe to the general principles of capitalism and understand the profit value of the logging industry. Again, Cook, a *Globe* columnist, contended in one of his articles that Greenpeace was only interested in this forest because it was a “proven direct mail money-raiser” (1998, March 27, p. B2). Accusing a non-profit environmental organization that has been a major leader in the environmental movement of creating money-making schemes is a serious accusation that Cook throws around without any evidence or support. This is extremely irresponsible journalism and would not be tolerated within the business or political sector. Yet it was used to demonize the environmentalists of Greenpeace.

Environmental organizations that were perceived to be extreme by industry and the media which appeared at times to be virtually all environmental organizations were demonized and cast as outsiders to mainstream society who were only motivated by political and financial agendas to campaign about the forest. The coverage often implied,

although never explicitly confirmed, that environmental groups were motivated by “radical” ideology, which was in turn outright ridiculed in the media. However, “radical” in this context appeared to be the idea that old growth forests should remain intact. This tactic of demonizing “radical” environmental ideology shifted when the three main environmental coalition groups signed onto the agreement and were just as proud of it as industry and government. This made the other environmental groups that did not feel it went far enough appear radical and unwilling to compromise. Members of the Rainforest Action Network were particularly demonized as being outsiders due to the fact they were based in San-Francisco and were demonized for having a far more “militant” ideology than other organizations, as the earlier example from McKenna (2000, January 22) illustrates. Organizations based outside of Canada were treated in a harsh manner in earlier coverage and demonized as foreigners with no role in the debate at all.

The Premier of B.C. at the time, Glen Clark, made notorious statements about the protesters, all of which were dutifully reprinted by the media. The full extent of the fear mongering and inaccurate statements of Clark was best showcased in an article published in rival provincial newspaper *The Province* in 1997:

Premier Glen Clark vows he'll do “whatever it takes” to counter Greenpeace’s international boycott of B.C. lumber. If the boycott works, said Clark, “expect a dramatic drop in the standard of living in this province. It’s clear what they want to do is shut down the entire forest industry. This goes right to the heart of whether or not there are going to be any jobs in B.C. in the next five years” (as quoted in Anderson, Luke and Hauka, 1997, p. A10).

With colourful comments such as these being made by a leading political figure, the media had more than ample opportunity to cast the environmentalists in a demonizing way and by doing so were maintaining the status quo and interests of the powerful.

Non-coverage

Until the Great Bear Rainforest was part of the agenda of official institutions, the coverage was very limited and only dramatic actions, usually involving business profit losses, allowed for the issue to be presented. The ongoing campaign to educate the public about the Great Bear Rainforest was not newsworthy enough on its own to warrant news coverage that used this name for the forest. This presented a serious obstacle to the campaign, as occasional mention of an ongoing issue is not enough to reach and influence the public with information. It is quite possible that in order to avoid “offending” those who work in the resource extraction industries in British Columbia, and the news sources in the industry and government, the *Vancouver Sun* avoided using the term Great Bear Rainforest until it was explicitly named as part of an official agreement.

By analyzing this media sample through critical discourse analysis, I was able to go beyond the surface appearance of objectivity and neutrality and identify several ways in which the media coverage on this issue was slanted towards logging business interests. Even if the media coverage was not always friendly towards them, environmentalists still had a powerful public outreach tool that they were able to utilize very well in this campaign – the power of images and associations.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

(i) Campaign outputs and media coverage

Unlike faceless environmental issues like climate change and chemical toxins, the campaign to protect the Great Bear Rainforest was accompanied by a plentiful supply of stunning photographs that could easily rival natural landscape photographs from all over the world. Rossiter (2004) notes how Greenpeace was able to provide instant visualizations of the impacts of industrial forestry in their publications by contrasting the colourful images of untouched watersheds and valleys against pictures of scattered, broken forest landscapes that had been clear-cut.⁴ While the media did not use explicit campaign material such as this, when photos accompanied articles on the Great Bear Rainforest they mainly featured the pristine scenery deep in the old-growth forest. The spirit bear was commonly part of this scenery in media images. Pictures similar to these were used heavily by environmental activists on pamphlets, brochures, reports and web site content. According to Rossiter, this is a portrayal of nature that resonates most clearly with urban populations (2004). While certain issues are naturally image-friendly and others have no visual associations, a lesson to be drawn for other organizations and social movements is that great efforts should be made to link a cause or issue to a particular image that resonates with the public. Scenic photos of the coastal rainforest prove that negative or graphic images of a social issue are not necessary if positively impactful images are available instead. A picture of a lone spirit bear surrounded by dense rainforest scenery was more media-friendly and positively associated with by the public for the protection of the forest than would images of dead animals that once lived there or

⁴ For a detailed analysis of the images used in Greenpeace's campaign materials against logging in the Great Bear Rainforest see: Rossiter, 2004.

wastelands where forests used to stand, to use extreme examples of negative imagery. Although the negative images of clear-cut forests were used by Greenpeace on some campaign material, they were always contrasted with pictures of the untouched regions of the forest. Without this image with positive associations, it is arguable that it would have been more difficult to show the connection to the public of what it was the social movement was seeking. Instead, they would have only been left with the image of the problem, which does not necessarily always translate to an image of the solution.

Greenpeace used their media-friendly tactics and approaches during the Great Bear Rainforest campaign to encourage more media coverage. Doyle (2003) mentions that during the forests campaign in the late 1990s, Greenpeace used a floatplane to fly out news footage from the remote forests and provided its own helicopter to ferry journalists in and out (cf. Anderson in *The Province*, 1997). This is a long-standing technique used by the organization which allows for the media to obtain coverage at little cost that otherwise they would not be able to access. Social movement organizations should always keep in mind that the easier they make it for the media to cover their issues and events, the more likely they will receive coverage and more importantly, the more likely they will have some degree of control over how they are presented in the media. While Greenpeace could not control the frames the media used and the negative connotations associated with those frames, the images from the Great Bear Rainforest that Greenpeace provided access to for journalists spoke volumes on their own and could not be framed or slanted by the media. By having press conferences and visual demonstrations with media spokespeople at hand, Greenpeace ensured they were at least easily accessible to media, providing more opportunities for coverage of the issues and viewpoints that they wanted to convey to the general public.

The coalition of environmentalists was able to generate news coverage with the report card they issued in 2005, stating where they felt the provincial government ranked in terms of environmental protection. This simple report created enough of an “event” for the news media to latch onto it as a news hook and publicize the details of the environmental report, which also gave voice to the issues for which the environmental coalition was trying to generate awareness. This is a tactic which should be noted by other social change organizations. A large and jargon-filled policy paper with few memorable quotes is less likely to be given coverage than a blunt, media-friendly report that gives the government an “F” or “D” for their efforts and explains why. This allows for scientific facts and explanations along with strategic communication tactics to be used in tandem for effective awareness-raising.

Just as Hunter argued back when Greenpeace was founded, the real battle to be waged was in the media. A *Vancouver Sun* editorial in 2006 (“They’re not out,” February 13) also acknowledged that the battle between environmentalists and logging interest was a media battle. The editorial declared that “the war of the woods on B.C.’s central coast was ultimately won by the best slogan. Once the resource management area became known around the world as the Great Bear Rainforest, the fight was essentially over” (p. A6). While this is a condensing comment that belittles the hard-fought, decade long campaign as merely just a catchy slogan, the labeling of something is another tactic to be noted. There is nothing stopping a social movement from relabeling something with a term or phrase they feel more fitting or appropriate. Resource management area clearly was a term preferred by logging business interests. Naming the forest as the Great Bear Rainforest was a far more memorable, specific and accurate label, whether or not it was coined by an environmentalist. Relabeling the terms of debate is a tactic that can be seen

in other social justice battles, such as the campaign for access to safe, legal abortion, where “pro-choice” activists have relabeled self-declared “pro-life” activists as “anti-choice.” Slogans, labels and words matter. When marketing a cause, having favourable discourse on one’s side can be very beneficial. The editorial in the *Sun* went on to contend that provincial and logging interests had “caved to the pressure tactics of environmentalists” but that through this ordeal the general public had been made aware of the “tremendous asset” of the Great Bear Rainforest and that the agreement was a “magnificent achievement” (“They’re not out” 2006, February 13, p.A6). These statements give the impression that the *Vancouver Sun* was officially declaring their renewed stance on the issue and the term Great Bear Rainforest. While naming the forest and having the name accepted might have seemed like a long shot to some, it eventually paid off and the world now officially recognizes the area as the Great Bear Rainforest. One cannot also help but note, much to the dismay of loggers, that there must by now be even official maps that include the name.

As with all items in the media, interest quickly fades when a “sexier” story comes along. In a *Globe* travel feature by freelance journalist J.B. MacKinnon (2003, July 26), he pointed out that by 2003 environmental concerns had slipped out of the news and were replaced by stories on SARS and orange alerts put out by the U.S. “War on Terror.” This is an unavoidable fact of the news process under the current structure of the mainstream media. While a social justice issue slips out of the spotlight, despite the best efforts of activists, they must remember that other battles outside of the media must also be waged and that these times of minimal news coverage provide ample opportunities.

It became apparent in business-focused articles that when government and industry did respond to the environmentalists’ successful campaign to damage the Great

Bear Rainforest lumber market, the response came only as a profit-based motivation through the realization that *not* logging in certain areas of the forest and engaging in ecosystem-based management practices were selling points to European markets. This was much in line with the results of the Brent Spar campaign in the U.K., where Shell eventually agreed to cancel its plans to dump the rig at sea, but the bigger issues of marine pollution and oil extraction were never brought into question by the oil industry or media. They acted only to protect their profit margins and utilized the controversy as an opportunity to rebrand themselves as environmentally-conscious. While parts of the Great Bear Rainforest are protected from clear-cutting forestry practices, this is simply viewed by industry as catering to the consumer demand for “good wood” and it does not bring the larger issue of resource extraction and waste into question or the public spotlight. This is where the great need for a contextual and comprehensive view of pressing social issues in the media is clear.

Direct action remained a cornerstone of the campaign, both in the forest and in the marketplace where activists were able to influence consumer purchases. Tried and true tactics like campaigners chaining themselves to logging equipment and staging local demonstrations (Lazare, 2006) can not be overlooked or dismissed despite the logging industry’s attempts to paint the campaign as being driven by European consumer and retail boycotts. The ground-level action of Canadian organizations is undeniable. However, Doyle (2003) blames direct actions stunts such as these as publicizing an organization itself and single issues rather than generating a holistic awareness among the public and policy makers. There is a continuing debate within Greenpeace about whether the organization’s media strategy has reached its own limits and if perhaps a new approach is needed for the kind of complex issues facing environmentalists today

This makes it apparent that a multi-pronged approach appears to be the most effective avenue for social movements aiming to obtain greater media coverage and effect change. If a corporation is involved, activists must always target their bottom line. It is the only motivating factor of change in corporations. It is highly doubtful that an agreement would have been reached if it were not for the market boycott campaign that saw retailers such as Ikea and Home Depot refuse to purchase materials from the Great Bear Rainforest or other old-growth forests. The effect on business will likely influence government policy and politicians will be more likely to act if both sides of a debate agree to sit down to negotiate. Politicians are very cautious of losing the faith and support of business leaders. Therefore, for activists to influence politicians, they must threaten some sort of economic impact, no matter how small, and make a politician feel voter confidence is dwindling. By targeting both the business and political sectors, activists can use these efforts to generate press coverage. It seems in the political realm plentiful media coverage is essential before action will be taken. Finally, direct local action builds a sense of community amongst activists, educates the public and always has the possibility of generating media coverage. It is through mobilization that an issue can be politicized and potentially lead to activists developing an effective campaign that targets a corporation's bottom line. Therefore, based on my literature review and media analysis study, I propose a three-pronged approach for social change organizations, each aspect of which brings greater opportunities for media coverage and most importantly, favourable coverage.

(1) Local mobilization, (2) direct action and (3) more specifically direct action that targets corporate bottom lines can turn the issue into a voter issue that politicians have no choice but to address. The more often a social movement can force their cause into an official

realm, such as business interests or key voting issues, the more media coverage it will generate and the more likely it will be integrated into society.

(ii) Summary

This case study indicates that while environmental concerns are becoming more and more of a mainstream issue, the environmental movement and the organizations and individuals engaged in this movement are often still marginalized in the media. The protest paradigm was applicable in this case study despite environmental concerns often being part of the official realm in policy discussions and increasingly in business practices (or at least the marketing of apparent business practices). When environmentalists are presented in the media as out of touch, idealistic, urban or foreign-types, it is easy to skew the opinion of the general public against them. It could easily appear to readers that the environmentalists in this campaign were just driven by unrealistic ideological goals without any regard to the economic factors driving the forestry industry. However the environmental coalition paid close attention to the economic problems loggers would face in the region and put forth ideas and plans on how to create a more sustainable economy for the coastal and aboriginal communities living in the Great Bear Rainforest. This was given little to no coverage in the media, therefore casting the environmentalists in a limited spotlight to the general public. In a democratic society the media are an essential factor to having an informed populace. Decisions on the future of natural resources and local communities should not be made without all the facts being presented and discussed in an open forum. By treating social movements as fringe and radical elements until finally these issues reach the official realm of policy discussions, the media are in fact slowing down any potential progress in society that

social movements aim to bring about. With such contentious and bitter divisions in the debate over the Great Bear Rainforest, the media ought to have fairly presented the viewpoints of a variety of stakeholders. This would have allowed for citizens to have a better and more contextual understanding of the conflict taking place over the Great Bear Rainforest and either through educating those responsible for public policy decisions or mobilizing the public in one way or another, an effective solution could have been reached much sooner. This case study is one of many that highlight the ways in which the mass media seek to preserve the status quo and marginalize “outsider” elements. Until a social movement can consider its respective issues part of the official realm, it will frequently battle this treatment in the media.

It is essential that the media and the public in general realize the inherent importance of protest groups in society. McLeod and Hertog remind us that:

[p]rotest groups raise important issues, provide feedback, encourage systemic criticism, stimulate reform, foster social change and contribute to the diversity of the marketplace of ideas. Yet, when protesters challenge the system, they often get a hostile response from authorities, the public and the mass media” (1999, p.309).

How protesters are viewed and treated by authorities, the public and the media are important indicators of democratic vitality (McLeod & Hertog, 1999). It is disconcerting that after decades of awareness-raising and changes in the way in which we view our environment, not to mention the incredible damage human society has inflicted upon it, conservation, protection and behaviour modification for the sake of the environment are still treated as contentious issues and mutually exclusive to business interests. Social movements must continue to push the media towards recognizing progressive change, and hopefully open up journalism to greater possibilities. Social movements can garner more media coverage through understanding and utilizing media formulas, but the media must

also be encouraged to move from the realm of maintaining the status quo to a progressive societal force, encouraging citizen engagement and education at all levels.

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APPENDIX A: LIST OF ARTICLES ANALYZED

In reverse chronological order:

Mason, G. (2006, September 26). B.C.'s Great Bear pact on shaky ground. *Globe and Mail*, p. A8.

Hume, M. (2006, September 21). Spirit bear not protected, advocates say; Deal to conserve rare animal's habitat doesn't go far enough. *Globe and Mail*, p. S3.

Hume, M. (2006, September 4). Guide bears witness to rainforest secret: On the north coast of British Columbia, special escort leads growing groups of visitors seeking rare white creature. *Globe and Mail*, p. A5.

Hume, M. (2006, September 2). Hartley Bay's ghost in the water; The B.C. community that rescued dozens from the sinking Queen of the North remains haunted by that night's 'omen.' *Globe and Mail*, p. A4.

Read, N. (2006, August 31). Rainforest deal fails to protect streams, group says: Land-use practices are yet to be determined, leaving watersheds vulnerable, conservationists claim. *Vancouver Sun*, p. B7.

Kramer, L. (2006, August 1). Grizzlies up close and personal. *Vancouver Sun*, p. D9

Milke, M. (2006, June 16). Why are we rolling out the carpet for Al Gore? *Globe and Mail*, p. A25.

Pynn, L. (2006, May 20). B.C. trademark on Spirit Bear name riles conservationists: Environmentalists outraged that government made the move after years of resisting efforts to protect the animal's habitat. *Vancouver Sun*, p. A2.

Reguly, E. (2006, April 28). A lost cause; Business still hasn't cleaned up its act so why aren't environmentalists doing something about it? *Globe and Mail*, p. 35.

Pynn, L. (2006, April 25). Great Bear conservancy allows roads and hydro. *Vancouver Sun*, p. A1.

"Rare spirit bear to be new provincial symbol; Legislation welcome but larger habitat needed for survival, conservationist says." (2006, April 5). *Globe and Mail*, p. S3.

Hamilton, G. (2006, March 31). Victoria opens mid-coast to log exports: Move is aimed at aiding region's first nations in developing logging. *Vancouver Sun*, p. H3

Mittelstaedt, M. (2006, March 2). Logging industry targeted; Environmentalists determined to save province's vast tract of boreal forest. *Globe and Mail*, p. A18.

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- "They're not out of the woods yet, but Great Bear is quite an achievement" [Editorial]. (2006, February 13). *Vancouver Sun*, p. A6.
- Whiteley, D. (2006, February 8). Land-use pact resulted from consensus. *Vancouver Sun*, p. D5.
- Hamilton, G. (2006, February 8). Vast area of new parks ends coastal controversy: 400 kilometres of coastline covered in deal. *Vancouver Sun*, p. D1.
- Hume, M. (2006, February 8). Years of tension end with 'unique' B.C. rain forest deal. *Globe and Mail*, p. A7.
- Hamilton, G. (2006, February 7). 'Great Bear' basks in peace: Ten-year rainforest battle ends today with a historic agreement, *Vancouver Sun*, p. B1.
- Hume, M. (2006, February 7). A victory in the fight to preserve B.C.'s rainforest: Government to announce plans to protect two million hectares of wildlife sanctuary. *Globe and Mail*, p. S1.
- Hume, M. (2006, February 6). After an endless hibernation; Great Bear deal is stirring. *Globe and Mail*, p. S1.
- Hamilton, G. (2006, February 4). Deal reached on Great Bear Rainforest. *Vancouver Sun*, p. A1.
- Sterritt, A. and Guujaaw. (2005, October 27). Best chance for coastal rainforest. *Vancouver Sun*, p.A23.
- Noss, R., Paquet, P. and Moola, F. (2005, October 15). Science gets shut out of rainforest negotiations. *Vancouver Sun*, p. C7.
- Pynn, L. (2005, September 20). Court action in tribal council's arsenal: Heiltsuk First Nation will fight any provincial decision to ignore offshore ban. *Vancouver Sun*, p. D5.
- Hume, M. (2005, September 20). Heiltsuk unveil plan for Great Bear; Central coast Indians envision protection of 8,000 square kilometers of rain forest. *Globe and Mail*, p. S1.
- Hamilton, G. (2005, September 9). German visitors here to check on 'eco-based' logging process: Progress slower than anticipated, but province still committed. *Vancouver Sun*, p. D10.

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- Hamilton, G. (2005, April 30). Forest policies lacking, expert says. *Vancouver Sun*, p. A4.
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- Hume, M. (2005, April 18). Environmentalist throws support strategically. *Globe and Mail*, p. S1.
- Gill, A. (2003, October 15). Spirit Bear banking on those warm fuzzies. *Globe and Mail*, p. R1.
- MacKinnon, J.B. (2003, July 26). Paradise lost? On June 25, the B.C. government granted this wild stretch of Canada's West Coast a temporary reprieve from logging. But the future remains uncertain. *Globe and Mail*, p. T1.
- Stueck, W. (2002, April 4). B.C. not implementing accord, groups say. *Globe and Mail*, p. A5.
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- O'Loughlin, C. (2001, April 14). Where the spirits roam; Diving, fishing and hiking tours will put you at the heart of Canada's newest nature sanctuary, home of the near-mythical Kermode bear. *Globe and Mail*, p. T5.
- Mickleburgh, R. (2001, April 5). Environmentalists relax B.C. boycotts; Historic forest accord hailed for settling conflict, protecting rare bear's habitat. *Globe and Mail*, p. A7.
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- Gill, A. (2001, March 31). When trees become stars; How a slick marketing campaign has made a swath of B.C. forest a cause célèbre. *Globe and Mail*, p. R4.
- Stueck, W. (2001, January 26). Money manager won't back Greenpeace in Interfor battle. *Globe and Mail*, p. B5.

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- Stueck, W. and Walton, D. (2000, October 26). Environmentalists target Alberta's logging sector; Urging U.S. firms to stop buying lumber from what they call endangered forests. *Globe and Mail*, p. B3.
- Stueck, W. (2000, October 16). B.C. logger embracing environmental projects. *Globe and Mail*, p. B11.
- McKenna, B. (2000, August 25). Another U.S. firm joins wood boycott; Pennsylvania chain latest to embrace movement; move deals embattled B.C. forest industry another blow. *Globe and Mail*, p. B2.
- Burshtein, K. (2000, August 12). Good wood: While tropical hardwoods have become a hot décor item, they also remain a hot-button issue for environmentalists. *Globe and Mail*, p. R15.
- Stueck, W. (2000, August 10). B.C. forestry accord assailed. Loggers, municipalities attack deal between four firms and environmental coalition. *Globe and Mail*, p. B7.
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- "VOX; Cheer up Canada, we're also gaining." (2000, August 9). *Globe and Mail*, p. B10.
- Mickleburgh, R. (2000, July 29). Accord reached to preserve B.C. rainforest: Environmentalists, logging companies agree to work together to save some areas. *Globe and Mail*, p. A8.
- Stueck, W. (2000, June 5). B.C.'s forestry dispute heats up. *Globe and Mail*, p. B1.
- McKenna, B. (2000, January 22). U.S. environmentalists swing axe at Canadian forest industry in an escalating publicity campaign, American groups opposed to old-growth logging have made Canada their No. 1 target. *Globe and Mail*, p. B1.
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- Cook, P. (1998, March 27). Greenpeace's last stand. *Globe and Mail*, p. B2.
- Howard, R. (1998, March 18). Back turns to bite in forest debate; Out in cyberspace, the West Coast's running war of words has started to get personal. *Globe and Mail*, p. A2.

Howard, R. (1998, March 7). B.C. lumber war spreads to Europe: Don't buy old-growth wood or face consumer boycotts, Greenpeace warns companies. *Globe and Mail*. p. A7.

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