Media and Movement:
Is Democracy Now what Democracy Looks Like?

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A thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

University of Washington

2006

Program Authorized to Offer Degree:
Communication, Department of

University of Washington
Graduate School

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Abstract

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Independent media in the United States has experienced a renaissance in the last 10 years (Dichter, 2004). The daily radio program Democracy Now is in some ways symbolic of the growing popularity of this genre. Fueled by movements like media reform, global justice and anti-war, as well as broad displeasure with corporate media consolidation (McChesney, 2004), Democracy Now has grown its distribution to over 400 public and community media outlets around the country. In this study, Democracy Now is placed in a typology of independent media, and is used as a model for proposing changes in the application of sourcing, news agenda setting and indexing theories to a class of independent media that display a *centralized* organizational structure and an *institutional* content focus. Through an analysis of social movement websites, I have found that by pegging their news agenda to political and economic elites, and then indexing the range of debate to critical journalists and social movement actors, Democracy Now may provide a 'symbolic resource' (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991; Melucci, 1996) that facilitates the formation and maintenance of traditional, government focused North American social movements (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001).

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Independent Media and Social Movements

Independent media has always played a significant role in the creation and maintenance of social movements. Media produced by movement organizations or constituents has been a large part of building and sustaining movements as early as the French Revolution (Tarrow, 1998), the abolitionist movement (Streitmatter, 2001) and the International Workers of the World (McIntyre, 1989). Movement actors have published their own ideas about social issues as a way to popularize particular understandings of issues and events and in connecting dispersed adherents (O'Donnell, 2001; Streitmatter, 1995). In some cases, such as the abolitionist movement, this has been the primary vehicle for identifying and advancing the existence of a social movement at all (Streitmatter, 2001). As Downing (1984) points out, "[i]f radical media did not pre-date and post-date these upheavals, established political molds would be cracked but rarely. *These are the wild dandelions which split open the sidewalk, the embers which refuse to die*" (p. 357, emphasis added).

Unfortunately independent media have been largely overlooked in both activist and academic approaches to the media-movement relationship. For their part, scholars have focused their attention on the conventional media, highlighting their antagonistic treatment of social movement actors (Beck, 1998; Campbell et al., 2004; Gitlin, 1980; Hertog & McLeod, 1995; McAdam, 1996; McLeod & Detenber, 1999; Smith et al., 2001; Watkins, 2001), and the efforts of movement actors to fit within journalistic routines by making significant compromises in terms of rhetorical and action framing choices (Levin, 2002; Meyer, 1995) through emphasizing charismatic leadership (McAdam, 1996) and

professionalizing movement organizations (Costain & Fraizer, 2000; Gamson &

Wolfsfeld, 1993; Kolb, 2004).

This emphasis may be a reflection of the traditional focus on institutional actors in

social movement research. For years, sociologists have used methods developed within

'resource mobilization' theory (McCarthy & Zald, 1977) and 'political opportunities

structure' (Tilly, 1978) to understand and predict the rise and fall of movement

populations and the relative success of campaigns and actions. In its most extreme form

this approach focuses exclusively on governments and government actors as targets and

determinants of movement success. In their definition of 'contentious politics', McAdam,

Tarrow & Tilly (2001) require that "at least one government is a claimant, an object of

claims, or a party to the claims" (p. 5).[1] Here, social movements are seen as responding to

government actions – and with their central aim focused on influencing some measure of

governmental reform, their 'success' then rides on their ability to have their grievances

answered by government actors – all within a context where opportunities and constraints

are largely defined by the national government within the confines of which a movement

is thought to exist.

Other approaches to social movement research have emerged that value the

actions and transformations of participants as significant in and of themselves.

McAdam's (1982) theory of 'cognitive liberation' conceives of social movements as a

process through which movement actors attach 'subjective meanings' to their situations,

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[1] McAdam, Tarrow & Tilly (2001) use the term 'contentious politics' as an umbrella term that includes "social movements, revolutions, strike waves, nationalism, democratization, and more…both contained and transgressive" (p. 4).

creating for themselves an environment in which action is deemed necessary and feasible. "Thus, by forcing a change in the symbolic content of member/challenger relations, shifting political conditions supply a crucial impetus to the process of cognitive liberation" (McAdam, 1982, p. 49). Scholars like Melucci (1996) and Eyerman and Jamison (1991) focus their analysis of social movements on the symbolic, asserting that, "it is precisely in [this] creation, articulation, [and] formulation of new thoughts and ideas – new knowledge – that a social movement defines itself in society" (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, p. 55). This focus on the contestation of 'codes' (Melucci, 1996) moves the site of social movement activity away from institutional reform, and into the realm of culture and meaning.

Media outlets are of crucial importance when we look at the role of the symbolic in the creation of social movements – namely, they are spaces where the identification and expression of conflicting conceptions of reality are expressed. Edelman (1988) describes the construction of issues, or "problems," as "reinforcements of ideologies…[that] signify who are virtuous and useful and who are dangerous or inadequate, which actions will be rewarded and which penalized. They constitute people as subjects with particular kinds of aspirations, self-concepts, and fears, and they create beliefs about the relative importance of events and objects" – in other words "they define the contours of the social world" (p. 12-13).

Independent media as a whole serve as a collection of spaces within which a wide range of movement participants co-construct a typology of movement issues, define a constituent body, and provide solutions and tactical choices. Analyzing independent

media as a single entity, however, is potentially misleading, for media venues are as diverse in organizational form and ideological focus as the very movements that they speak from and for (Atton, 2002; Downing, 1984; Downing et al., 2000; Rodriguez, 2001). In developing theories on the role and practices of independent media, it is instead useful to construct measures along which different outlets might be characterized, and upon which generalizations can be made about media outlets that share the same characteristics.

In a follow-up to their first article (Bimber, Flanagin, & Stohl, 2005), Flanagin, Stohl, & Bimber (2006) characterize collective action as moving information from the 'personal' to the 'public' through communication media, and understand this process as being influenced along two continuums. First, they conceptualize 'modes of interaction' as ranging from the 'personal' (where interaction with known others is focused on sustaining relationships) to the 'impersonal' (where participation in collective action does not involve personal interaction, and is characterized more by atomized individual action for a common cause) (p. 33-35). The second distinction they make is in the 'mode of engagement' that structures participation in collective action. Engagement is characterized as ranging from 'entrepreneurial' (in which "participants have a high degree of autonomy and may design collective action in ways that are not sanctioned or controlled by a central authority") to 'institutional' (in which "individuals are embedded in a larger system that defines and controls opportunities for engagement") depending on the organizational structure in a given context (p. 37).

In order to characterize different kinds of independent media outlets, I have built off of Flanagin, Stohl, & Bimber's (2006) 'modes of interaction' and 'modes of engagement, to construct two foundational variables along which independent media vary: *organizational form* and *content focus* (see Figure 1).

	Organization	
	Centralized production	Decentralized production
Institutional focus	(CI) Nation, Progressive	(DI) Slashdot.org, Kuro5hin.org
Movement focus	(CM) Yes!, Left Turn	(DM) Indymedia.org

Figure 1. Typology of Independent Media

Organizational Form

The first variable deals with the organizational structure of a media outlet: How does the show get run? Traditional media models are organized in a *centralized* manner, and actions by participating staff or volunteers is based on strong interpersonal interactions around content and editorial decisions. In this respect, outlets maintain fairly centralized production norms, with centralized editorial control and packaged distribution (such as a magazine or radio program). Independent media outlets have typically mirrored many of these organizational norms, either out of a lack of imagination, or because of the logistical restraints that accompany distribution mediums like newspapers, magazines and broadcast programming.

Radical social movements have often found ideological reasons for constructing more *decentralized* organizational forms, and developments in communication technologies have facilitated a wide array of decentralized media models. Such outlets likely use some combination of automated editorial controls to either gather or filter information, and editorial decisions are often made by readers or contributing authors. Examples of media venues like this might be Slashdot.org or Kuro5hin.org which both use 'open publishing' software and peer rating systems to submit content and make collective editorial decisions.

Content Focus

The second variable attempts to characterize the overall content focus of a given media outlet: What sets the news agenda, and whose voices are heard? Traditional social movement literature has looked at social movements as organized interest groups that engage in advocacy towards governmental reform (McAdam et al., 2001; McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Tilly, 1978). Likewise, collective action theory has assumed traditional institutional models of organization that limit our understanding of more 'entrepreneurial' forms of activity (Flanagin et al., 2006). Just as approaches to movement building vary depending on their context and ideological perspective, independent media assume a range of content focus in their role as vehicles for the expression of symbolic resistance. On one end of the spectrum, media outlets with a decidedly *institutional* content focus generally peg their news agenda to the actions of big business or government – and in the most extreme cases – rarely cover social movements, unless their actions are attached to the actions of political and economic elites. Longstanding independent news outlets like

the Nation magazine, or the Progressive clearly tend towards an institutional content focus.

On the other hand, there exist examples of independent media that are focused more on counter-institutional activity: the creation of autonomous structures for social organization (Bookchin, 1995; Toft, 2000). Rather than focus on critiquing the actions of political or economic elites, such media are more interested in documenting the ways that *movement* actors are engaging in organizing and creating alternative models for food production, health care, or social networking. Some examples of more movement-focused media are magazines like Yes! and Left Turn. While both of these example are structured around a more traditional centralized organizational structure, outlets like Clamor (a quarterly magazine that practices a decentralized, autonomous editorial model within a traditional distribution format) and Indymedia (a network of hundreds of 'open publishing' websites that take advantage of digital tools to enable decentralized content production and distribution) tend towards a more decentralized organizational approach.

When we organize independent media along these two axes some basic questions arise about the relationship between different movement actors and media types. Given the general lack of scholarly research on independent media outlets, however, we cannot at this point make general claims about either the journalistic norms that inform editorial decisions, or the relationships that such content decisions have with the movements that they participate in. I have chosen a prominent case study as a starting point in developing this typology further. One program that has had a significant impact on several movements in the Unites States during the past 10 years is the daily radio program

Democracy Now. Started in 1996 by veteran journalists Amy Goodman, and Juan

Gonzales as "the only daily election show in public broadcasting" (DemocracyNow.org,

a), Democracy Now claims to be the "largest public media collaboration in the U.S.,"

broadcasting daily on over 400 community radio and public access television stations

across North America (DemocracyNow.org, b). Many of these affiliate stations brought

Democracy Now into their schedule only after prolonged organizing efforts by local

residents, something actively facilitated by several full time Democracy Now organizers.

Arguably the "flagship program" for Pacifica Radio,[2] Democracy Now has positioned

itself as the "flagship program" of the anti-war and media democracy movement,

providing a widely accessible resource for information critical of the war and a

significant legitimating force for progressive political protest. The program's main host,

Amy Goodman, has developed as a strong 'cult of personality,' working tirelessly as both

broadcast journalist and advocate, and speaking at numerous movement-focused

conferences and events every year (Ratner, 2005).

By placing Democracy Now within a typology of independent media we are able

to closely examine the way that media outlets displaying a similar *organizational form*

and *content focus* enact a particular set of journalistic norms, and how those editorial

choices are mirrored in the symbolic actions of other social movement actors. Such an in-

depth case study allows us to further develop a theoretical understanding of the media-

movement relationship beyond conventional outlets. Before we can make generalizations

about other media outlets, however, we need to first characterize Democracy Now along

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[2] See Eliasoph (1988) and Downing (1984) for more on Pacifica.

the two continuum' that I outlined above. In terms of *organizational form*, Democracy

Now clearly tends towards centralization, with a unified editorial voice that is displayed

five times a week in a professionally produced hour-long program. In order to determine

where the program falls in terms of *content focus* I have drawn on the work of a number

of communication scholars in the field of mass communication research in establishing

measures for placing Democracy Now in the institutional-movement content continuum.

Sourcing, Agenda Setting and Indexing in the News Media

Communication scholars have tried for years to identify the key mechanisms that structure what goes into the news by studying the news-making routines of major American news outlets (Gans, 1979; Tuchman, 1978). I have chosen to use three approaches that have gained prominence in communication studies in order to characterize Democracy Now: sourcing, news agenda setting, and indexing.

Sourcing

Hall (1978) has argued that the news media play a central role in the maintenance of ideological ascendancy by privileging elite sources. By consistently citing 'powerful' sources in the routine of constructing the news, the news media afford them the ability to dictate the 'primary' interpretation of events. This collection of powerful sources then "'commands the field' and sets the terms of reference within which all further coverage of debate takes place" (Hall et al., 1978, p. 58). More recent research has shown a consistent bias towards elite sources (Goss, 2001; Hallin, Manoff & Weddle, 1993; Lasorsa & Reese, 1990; Livingston & Bennett, 2003; Rendall & Broughel, 2003; Smith, 1993), and a limited amount of space afforded to those less powerful in society, such as minorities (Domke et al., 2003) and women (Zoch & Turk, 1998).

News Agenda Setting

Research into influences on media news agendas has found some evidence that the executive branch is particularly influential in shaping the timing and prominence of issues and stories – particularly when related to foreign policy – with administration officials more likely to be cited as first sources in coverage of these issues (Althaus et al.,

1996). Weaver, McCombs & Shaw (2004) have claimed that "the single most influential news source in the United States is the president" (p. 269), and they cite several studies of the influence of presidential speeches on news agendas to support this claim (Holian, 2000; McCombs, Gilbert, & Eyal, 1982).

Indexing

Indexing, first introduced by Bennett (1990), has attempted to synthesize a number of theoretical explanations for the prominence of elite voices in the news media. His hypothesis is that "(m)ass media news professionals, from the boardroom to the beat, tend to "index" the range of voices and viewpoints in both news and editorials according to the range of views expressed in mainstream government debate about a given topic" (p. 106). Non-elite voices are included when those voices express opinions already emerging in official circles" and those expressed by "members of institutional power blocs likely to influence the outcome of a situation" (p. 106-107). Views that fall "outside the official range of debate" (p. 107), when they are included, typically receive negative coverage. Hallin (1987) describes the underlying dynamics influencing journalistic decisions on the range of debate in terms of the *sphere of legitimate controversy* (See also Wolfsfeld, 2004). The *sphere of legitimate controversy* builds on Gramsci's (1971) use of hegemony theory[3] to delineate that which is acceptable for journalists to present in the media: any frame that contradicts the foundational principles of hegemony theory (i.e.,

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[3] Gramsci (1971) describes hegemony as the establishment of political order through the production and diffusion of meanings and values.

our nation only does good in the world, capitalist democracy is inherently good, political leaders mean well, etc.) is therefore unlikely to be echoed in the corporate media.

Recent research has supported aspects of the indexing hypothesis, while problematizing the situational context that surrounds coverage of an issue. Noting that in situations where consensus is in disarray within political circles, and when the "conflicting possibilities" (Tuchman, 1978) – or conflict and drama (Cook, 1996) – that guide journalistic narratives are not available, Althaus (2003; Althaus et al., 1996) has found that journalists are more likely to stray from the standard news-making routine where indexing plays out. In such instances journalists are freer to construct their own narratives, allowing non-elite sources and dissenting views greater access in order to provide for balance or drama in a story.

Applying Sourcing, Agenda Setting and Indexing to Independent Media

Academic research into journalistic norms has sought to "explain the behavior of 'leading' press organizations (i.e., the prestige national papers, wire services, television networks, and the "big three" news magazines) that set professional press standards and influence the daily news agenda" (Bennett, 1990, p. 106). A focus on "leading press organizations" like the New York Times has been justified by citing their influential role in shaping the daily news agenda in other conventional media outlets (Anonymous, 1999; Edelman, 1988). Although there is reason to believe that "leading press organizations" do influence the daily news agendas of independent media outlets in a variety of ways, their relationship differs enough to warrant a distinct analytical approach.

The existing approaches to research into journalistic norms have uncovered a pattern of behavior among journalists that reflects a particular conception of power: one that looks to the institutionalized power structures of national government and free market capital to play a decisive, if not exclusionary, role in making key decisions on public matters (Carragee & Roefs, 2004). In comparison, the relationship that progressive social movements have to power is often based around fundamental principles of popular grassroots political participation. This is evident in many of the organizing models used as well as the types of issues and proposed solutions found in many of these movements (Polletta, 2002). Given the close relationship between many independent media outlets and progressive social movements one may conclude that the editorial decisions of such outlets may reflect these bottom-up conceptions of power, particularly in instances where their organizational structure mimics these trends (Atton, 2003; Pickard, 2006a, 2006b).

If that were the case, journalists would peg their news agenda to the actions of social

movement actors and groups rather than prominent decision-making elites, and privilege

social movement actors as sources in defining the range of debate. Although this may be

the case with some independent media outlets, there is significant variation in

organizational form and issue focus. In assessing the relevance of these theories to

independent media, it then becomes necessary to measure the relative placement of an

outlet along the institutional – movement continuum.

> RQ 1: Is the news agenda at Democracy Now pegged more to the actions of
>
> social movement actors or political and economic elites?

Given the origins of Democracy Now as a national election program, and its

heavy coverage of the United States actions in Iraq, it is likely that the program acts

largely as a watchdog on big business and government, rather than a movement focused

medium.

> Hypothesis 1: The news agenda at Democracy Now is pegged more to the actions
>
> of political and economic elites than to those of social movement actors.

In this respect, Democracy Now may in some ways mirror the kinds of

journalistic practices commonly observed in analysis of elite journalistic behavior.

Further, Bennett (1990) and Hall's (1978) analysis of conventional media outlets would

predict that pegging the news agenda to the actions of political and economic elites would

result in a privileging of elite sources that then 'set the terms of reference' – or the range

of debate - on an issue. Outside of the conventional media, there is reason to believe that

this is not the case.

RQ 2: Does Democracy Now index the range of debate they present to the

opinions of social movement actors or decision-making elites?

Here, given that the program is clearly rooted in a collection of North American

social movements, journalistic norms employed by Democracy Now are likely to reflect a

critical perspective, connecting government action with oppositional elites and social

movement actors.

Hypothesis 2: Democracy Now indexes the range of debate they present on the

program to the opinions of both dissenting decision-making elites *and*

progressive social movement actors.

Determining the standard journalistic practices employed on Democracy Now

would help to expand our understanding of news norms from theories focused

exclusively on the elite press to constructs that look at differences between types of news

organizations. While pegging the news agenda to the actions of political and economic

elites, I am predicting that Democracy Now indexes the range of debate in their coverage

to the information and views expressed by social movement actors as well as political and

economic elites. This kind of coverage would seem to encourage social movement

activity, while channeling it into engagement with elite institutional targets. On the other

hand, independent media outlets that peg their news agenda to the actions of social

movement actors more than elites are placing an emphasis on the kind of counter-

institutional activity epitomized by the World Social Fora (Fisher & Ponniah, 2003) and

the Independent Media Center movement (Coyer, 2005; Kidd, 2003). In this way,

independent media can be seen as popularizing divergent organizational forms in

movement building through the definition of issues and the identification of acceptable modes of engagement.

Independent Media and Social Movements

Views on the varied roles of different independent media outlets in social

movements often focus on their ability to empower disempowered groups (Kidd, Barker-

Plummer, & Rodriguez, 2005), or to popularize particular issue frames (Strodthoff,

Hawkins, & Schoenfeld, 1985). Rodriguez (2001) highlights the power of language and

information in peoples lives, claiming that "alternative media spin transformative

processes that alter people's senses of self, their subjective positionings, and therefore

their access to power" (p. 18).

Contesting the dominant account of the world has always been a political act, but

the importance of symbolic action in the creation and maintenance of social movements

has only become more important in the information rich environment that we now

occupy. In his seminal work *Challenging Codes* Melucci (1996) argues that "the

emerging power is increasingly based…on the production and circulation of information"

(p. 176). He goes on to claim that the shift towards information "render it open to

multiple interpretations and into something that is never under full control" (p.176), "in a

world where information becomes the central resource and where individuals and groups

are offered the possibility of themselves constructing their identities instead of remaining

simply recipients assigned them from the outside" (p. 203).

As the importance of information flow increases, new avenues for resistance are

opening up, and activists are quick to take advantage of them through the use of social

technologies (Bennett, 2003; Surman & Reilly, 2003). Grassroots activism is increasingly

being supplemented by online organizing forums like websites and list-serves. Although

there is a significant difference between online and offline organizing, there is reason to

believe that online representations are relatively accurate portrayals of an individual or

organizations ideological positions, particularly in countries where access to the Internet

is more common.

In addition to merely amplifying offline activities, the Internet has enabled some

significant changes in information flow that can serve to influence offline activities as

well (Kahn & Kellner, 2004). The relative accessibility of online information distribution

has opened up a space for voices that previously had little access to a mass medium. The

recent explosion of blogs is one example that illustrates this greater ability for ordinary

citizens to contribute to the construction of an issue, or the redefinition of actions or

events that have consequences beyond the digital realm (Rogers, 2005).

A close examination of the way that independent media content is used by social

movement actors in the online environment would lend insight into how information is

being used to construct informational 'codes' and present different interpretations of

issues and events in the contested process of 'meaning construction.' Specifically, how is

the information and perspectives presented by Democracy Now used by different social

movement actors in the online environment?

RQ 3: What differences do we find between the sources and issues cited in

Democracy Now and the use of those sources and issues in citations of the

program's content by social movement actors in the online environment?

Given the general focus that Democracy Now has had in providing a critical voice

on issues related to the peace (or anti-war) movement, it is likely that social movement

actors will cite content that relates to peace and human rights more heavily than other issue areas. In terms of the citation of sources appearing on democracy now, it is likely that social movement actors will be cited over political and economic elites.

Hypothesis 3: Citations of Democracy Now content by social movement actors on the web will emphasize social movement actors and stories related to peace and human rights over other sources and issues.

Choices in the kind of content that social movement actors cite in the online environment points to the role that they see Democracy Now playing in the symbolic construction of resistance and in the facilitation of 'cognitive liberation' within a movement. A better understanding of that role would increase our knowledge of how this genre of independent media participates in various social movements, and the many roles they both try to play, and are perceived as playing, in the online environment.

Methods

      This study is comprised of three distinct content analyses. First, the first source and story introduction on every program in 2005 was collected and coded. This data set establishes the most important editorial decisions for the day – namely, the most prominent issues and actors on the Democracy Now news agenda. Second, a sample of 20% of those lead stories was collected and the full transcripts were content analyzed. This second data set provides us with a picture of how Democracy Now establishes the range of debate on an issue. Third, an Internet search engine was used to collect citations of Democracy Now program content on social movement websites in the online environment, and the citation text was analyzed. This last data set establishes a corpus from which to compare content use by other social movement actors on the web to that which Democracy Now makes available through their broadcast program, and its distribution via the internet in audio, video and text.

First Sources and Lead Story Intros

      In asking about editorial opinions, communication scholars have often looked at front-page newspaper articles as an indication of the editorial agenda of a particular newspaper or class of news organizations (Althaus, Edy, & Phalen, 2001). The broadcast equivalent to an above the fold front-page newspaper article is the lead story for the day. Following the program's theme reel, Democracy Now can be broken into 3 distinct sections common to many radio news magazines: intros, headlines, and stories. The intro's come on directly after the theme reel, and they introduce the stories for the day with about 30-60 seconds each. Intros consist of tape of a source making a statement (an

actuality), followed by the anchor, who frames the story in about 3 sentences comprising

the editorial broadcast equivalent to a newspaper story title. The news headlines come on

right after the intros and are 5 minutes long. They run through the events of the day and

are taken from a collection of elite and independent press organizations. The bulk of the

program then consists of a series of 1-4 stories that range in length from a few minutes to

a full 50 minutes.

For this research project I had access to the full digital video and text archive via

the democracynow.org program archive (democracynow.org/browsebydate.pl). From this

video archive I coded the very first source and story to appear on the program (first

intro). This was chosen as a representation of the most significant editorial decisions on

the program – namely, what is the most important story for the day, and what is the most

important person to show speaking on that story.

Sources were coded for the presence or absence of a set of source attributes,

including source type (*social movement actor, non-critical elite, critical elite, non-

critical journalist,* and *critical journalist*).[4] Given the multiple identities that the sources

assumed many of these attributes were not mutually exclusive: a single source might be

both a journalist and a social movement actor, or a former elite that is now writing a book

about her/his political views, qualifying him or her as both an elite as well as a journalist.

This kind of coding strategy resulted in a mean number of source types per source of 1.2

(s:0.5). All of the texts were coded by the author, and inter-coder reliability was done by

randomly selecting 10% of the texts (n:26) that were then coded by a second coder.

[4] See appendix A for a definition of the source types.

Krippendorff's alpha was calculated for source type and averaged 81.9%, with a range of 51.4%-100%.

Story intros were then coded for the presence or absence of information that would be of concern to a range of issue movements (*peace, race, human rights, non-US social issues, US social issues, environmental, women's,* and *global justice*).[5] Again, this scheme resulted in multiple issue codes per story intro, with a mean number of issues per first story intro of 1.5 (s:0.7). Krippendorff's alpha for movement issues averaged 62.3% with a range of 0%-78.3%.[6]

Finally, the stories were coded for the narrative framing presented by the host in order to determine the entity or individual that was acting (*social movement actors, political and economic elites, journalists*, and *other*), who was being acted upon (*social movement actors, political and economic elites, journalists*, and *other*), and the type of action that was taking place (*institutional* or *non-institutional*). Unlike the measures for source type and movement issue, these measures were mutually exclusive. Krippendorff's alpha was used to calculate inter-coder reliability for narrative framing resulting in 66.1% for actor, 52.4% for acted upon, and 75.7% for type of action.

Lead stories

Once I had identified and coded all of the lead stories on Democracy Now during 2005, I randomly selected a sample of 20% (n:53) from the full sample of lead story intros (n:260) and collected the written transcripts of the associated full lead stories for

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[5] See appendix B for a definition of the movement issue areas.
[6] *Environmental issues* did not appear in the sample, and was coded as present only once by the reliability coder, resulting in a Krippendorff's alpha of 0%. The next lowest reliability scores were 65.3% (*race, global justice* and *women's issues*).

further content analysis. A 20% sample was determined to be a large enough sample from which to make generalizations about the full year of programming, without resulting in significant coder fatigue. Similar to the first source and story intro's, the full lead stories were coded for source type and movement issues, resulting in a mean number of source types per text of 2.4 (s:1.1), and a mean number of movement issues pre text of 2.8 (s:1.3). Inter-coder reliability was done by randomly selecting 20% (n:11) of the sample (n:53) that was coded by a second coder. Reliability was calculated using Krippendorff's alpha, with all source types resulting in 100% agreement, except for *critical elites* which had an agreement of 80%. All movement issues resulted in 100% agreement, except for *human rights* which had a reliability score of 47.9%.

In addition, the number of sources and words were also coded according to their relative position as aligned with the Bush administration and big business (*establishment*), no clear position one way or the other (*neutral*), or as expressing views or presenting information that was critical of the Bush administration or big business (*critical*). Reliability was calculated using Pearson's correlation (r), which resulted in 96.8% (*establishment*), 99.3% (*neutral*), and 96.9% (*critical*) for the number of sources and 99.6% (*establishment*), 85.2% (*neutral*), and 99.8% (*critical*) for number of words. Texts were further coded as to the majority number of sources per position, and the majority number of words per position for each text (*establishment*, *neutral*, *critical* and *even*). Reliability was calculated using Krippendorff's alpha with 100% agreement for the position with the majority of sources as well as words per story.

These first two samples were used to characterize the sourcing, news agenda setting, and indexing practices on Democracy Now, and place it along the establishment – movement content continuum. The final sample was used to characterize Democracy Now among other movement actors in the online environment.

Web citations

In order to understand how social movement actors were using DN content on the web, I collected a set of web-texts that used Democracy Now content in constructing their sites. In doing this, I searched within the portion of the World Wide Web 'media space' (December, 1996) that uses the http protocol and has been cataloged by the www.google.com search engine, and captured specific 'media instances' within that space.

December (1996) defines a 'media space' as "the set of all servers of a particular type that may provide information in one or more protocols, the corresponding clients that are capable of accessing these servers, and the associated content available for access on these servers" (p. 12). Most use of the Internet is limited to servers that use the http protocol, the majority of which are found through search engines or links from other sites. The ephemeral nature of the internet is well documented in the literature, and several scholars call for the archiving of web texts to insure a temporal consistency for analysis (McMillan, 2000; Schneider & Foot, 2005; Van Selm & Jankowski, 2004; Weare & Lin, 2000). For this reason, I captured particular 'media instances' – defined by December (1996) as "a media object at a particular time" (p. 15) – using the Adobe Acrobat 6.0 software package.

In identifying the web texts for this study, I subscribed to a Google News Alert with the exact phrases "Democracy Now" and "Amy Goodman" (the host of the program) between 1/25/06 and 4/13/06 (11 weeks). This allowed me to identify citations of the program content in the online environment. By choosing a sample period for web citations that was independent from my sample of the broadcast content, I have provided a resilient comparison that illustrates continuity over time. The news search function was used in order to narrow the search from the general search function – which returned 10,300,000 and 1,670,000 search results for these search terms respectively - to recent posts that cited Democracy Now content. The Google News Alerts function was checked against the Google News search page (news.google.com) with the same search strings, and it did not result in any additional valid search results during the five-day period in which the validity test was run. Weare & Lin (2000, p. 279) call for the use of combined search engines in collecting web texts. For this reason, Google News was further checked against the news search function on the combined search engines www.metacrawler.com and www.webcrawler.com. These search engines did produce 1-2 additional results per day, but these searches suffered from a lack of specificity, and it was determined that using these engines, while providing a more inclusive corpus, would result in significant coder fatigue during the process of data collection. Google.com has been used in several academic research projects, and is by far the worlds most extensive, searchable, and publicly accessible database of URLs (Jarboe, 2005). In her study of online collective action, Earl (Forthcoming) used Google.com in collecting her sample, citing that it

"identifies new sites by traversing links from already identified sites," representing "the best approximation of a population of *reachable* websites" (p. 8, italics original).

Once a method of identifying the sample was established, non-valid search results were removed from the sample (i.e., results that did not reference the program or its host, such as "democracy now seems viable for Indonesia"). In all, a total of 208 'media instances' were identified during the 11 week sample period and archived daily using Adobe Acrobat 6.0. They were then divided into three categories: texts that cited content from a Democracy Now program (n:120), texts that used Democracy Now as an example of an attribute or phenomenon (i.e., "advocacy journalism," or "independent media") (n: 46), and texts that mentioned a speaking event or editorial that Amy Goodman had attended or written (n:42). The 120 texts that cited Democracy Now content were used to establish the corpus for this study and content analyzed. These 'media instances' were coded for an overlapping set of variables to the previous two coding schemes (source types and movement issues), with a mean number of source types per text of 1.3 (s:0.9), and a mean number of movement issues per text of 2.0 (s:1.2). The texts were also coded as to the type of website (*general news site,* or *social movement site*)[7]. Inter-coder reliability was done by selecting a random sample of 10% (n:12) of the texts that were then coded by a second coder. Krippendorff's alpha for source types averaged 70.4%,

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[7] Websites were coded as social movement sites if they advocated a particular position or set of political positions versus the presentation of a diversity of views without any discernable political agenda or mission.

with a range of 0%-100%, movement issues averaged 63.6%, with a range of 0%-100%[8],

and type of website was 100%.

Of those pages analyzed, 86.7% (n:104) were sites that were considered social

movement sites, and 13.3% (n:16) were considered general news sites. Due to my

research focus on social movement actors, general news sites were removed from the

sample, leaving an n of 104 texts.

Of the remaining social movement sites, roughly one third were sites that

provided avenues for taking political action beyond publishing material (i.e., open

publishing). These opportunities consisted of online action platforms for writing to

congressional representatives (workingforchange.com), or calendars of offline events,

like political protest and direct action (indybay.org). My sample, then, consisted of 43

unique social movement sites, a majority of which were progressive social movement

news sites (like dissidentvoice.org or alternet.org), and about 1/3rd of which had a specific

issue focus such as anti-war (uruknet.info), media monitoring (newsbusters.org) or labor

(workersliberty.org). The websites to appear in my sample most often were uruknet.info

(18 texts), indybay.org (16 texts), and alternet.org (10 texts). The remainder contributed

1-5 texts each to the sample.

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[8] Reliability was 0% for variables that did not appear in the sample at all (*environmental issues*), or for variables that were coded as present by the second coder only (*non-critical journalist*, and *women's issues*).

Findings

Influencing the News Agenda on Democracy Now

RQ 1: Is the news agenda at Democracy Now pegged more to the actions of

social movement actors or political and economic elites?

Democracy Now is first and foremost a program that is concerned with critiquing

government actors and actions. For this reason elites and government actions drove the

news agenda, appearing as the first source on 41.2% (n:107) of all programs in 2005 –

more than any other source type.

Table 1. Source Types that Appeared First on the Program

Sources	n: 260	Percent
Political & Economic Elites	107	41.2
Journalists	81	31.2
Social Movement Actors	71	27.3
Total	259	99.7

Note: Source types are not mutually exclusive categories, and were coded as present or absent in the texts.

Political and economic elites also comprised 67.7% (n:176) of those acting, and

61.9% (n:161) of those being acted upon in first story intro frames. For instance, on

February 18th the first source on the program was George W. Bush, and the story

narrative was framed as "George Bush" (elite actor) "nominates" (institutional type of

action) "John Negroponte for Director of National Intelligence" (elite acted upon).

Table 2. First Story Intro Narrative: Who Acts on Whom?

Actor Type	Actor		Acted Upon	
	n:260	Percent	n:260	Percent
Political & Economic Elites	176	67.7	161	61.9
SM Actors	51	19.6	29	11.2
Other	26	10.0	37	14.2
Journalist	7	2.7	33	12.7
Total	260	100	260	100

Table 3. First Story Intro Narrative: Types of Actions

Type of Action	n:260	Percent
Institutional	180	69.2
Non-Institutional	80	30.8
Total	260	100

In comparison, Social movement actors comprised 19.6% (n:51) of principle actors in story narrative frames and appeared as first sources in 27.3% (n:71) of first stories – a significantly larger portion than can be found in most corporate media coverage, but still indicative of a secondary position in relation to the identified focus on political and economic elites.

While government actors were often the focus of the story narrative, and political and economic elites were used frequently as first sources on the program, there was a only a slight bias towards sources with a perspective that was not critical of the Bush administration and big business. Of those elites appearing first on the program (n:107), 60.7% (n:65) presented non-critical views, and 39.3% (n:42) of elite sources presented opinions that were critical of the Bush administration or big business.

The bias towards non-critical sources changes, however, when we look at journalistic sources. Democracy Now consistently highlights the work of other journalists – within conventional media as well as the independent press – in providing information that is critical of the bush administration and big business. I found that journalists who presented information or analysis that was critical of the Bush administration or big business appeared first on the program in 93.8% (n:76) of the cases where a journalist was the first source (n:81), and that political and economic elites were the primary actors in 59.3% of the stories where journalists were present (n:48).

These findings clearly suggest that the news agenda at Democracy Now is pegged more to the actions of political and economic elites than social movement actors, thus providing evidence that the first hypothesis is correct. This places Democracy Now firmly within the category of an independent media outlet whose content focus is driven by elite actions more than social movement actors. Such a focus reflects the traditional social movement agenda, as exemplified by McAdam, Tarrow & Tilly (2001), with a central focus on government in defining the problem, and as the primary target for action.

Indexing the Range of Debate on Democracy Now

Now that we have established the driving force setting the news agenda on the program, we can shift our attention to the way that Democracy Now pegs the range of debate presented on the program to sources.

RQ 2   Does Democracy Now index the range of debate they present to the
            opinions of social movement actors or decision-making elites?

Research into the journalistic norms of the conventional media make very clear

predictions about the role of elite sources in defining the range of debate. Hall's (1978)

sourcing theory suggests that, given the status of sources in the news media, elite news

sources will be allowed to 'command the field' of debate "within which all further

coverage of debate takes place" (Hall et al., 1978, p. 58). Further research has shown that

the President, and by extension the executive branch, not only exerts a significant

influence on the news agenda (Althaus et al., 1996; Holian, 2000; McCombs et al., 1982;

Weaver, McCombs, & Shaw, 2004), but that it also has a significant influence on the

range of the debate (R. Entman & Page, 1994), particularly in the area of foreign policy

and national defense (Bennett, 1995). Given these claims, the range of debate presented

in conventional media outlets is likely to be pegged to the range of debate presented by

political and economic elites, with a decided bias towards the executive branch.

This is not the case with Democracy Now, however. Goodman frequently

references information that has been left out of the conventional media, and the program

is largely conceived as a counter-voice to the prevailing journalistic representations of the

day's events (Goodman & Goodman, 2004). In this respect, Democracy Now attempts to

provide a counterbalance to the institutional bias of most conventional media coverage by

highlighting information and analysis that is critical of the Bush administration and big

business. This becomes evident when we look at the percentage of total sources and total

words spoken in the full text of lead stories depending on their position in relation to the

Bush administration and big business. Here I found that sources that presented a critical

perspective made up 65% (n:158) of total sources, and 83.8% (n:141,343) of total words

in the sample.

Table 4. Prominence of Critical Sources Based on Total Source and Word Count
Across Lead Stories

Position	Total Sources*				Total Words**			
	n	Percent	Mean	St Dev	n	Percent	Mean	St Dev
Critical	158	65.0	3.0	3.1	141343	83.8	2666.9	1640.2
Establishment	52	21.4	1.0	1.6	19676	11.7	371.3	604.4
Neutral	33	13.6	0.6	2.3	7587	4.5	143.2	550.8
Total	243	100.0	4.6	6.3	168606	100.0	3181.3	1694.1

* All sources present in the full text of the lead story were coded as to their position in relation to
the Bush administration and big business, and then the total number of sources per position was
counted over the entire sample.
** The total number of words spoken by each source was counted and then the total number of
words attributed to sources based on their overall position in relation to the Bush administration
and big business was counted over the entire sample.

When we look at the number of lead stories in our sample with a majority of

sources and words attributed to sources critical of the Bush administration and big

business this bias towards dissenting views is even more extreme, with 83% (n:44)

containing a majority of critical sources, and 92.5% (n:49) containing a majority of words

attributed to critical sources.

Table 5. Prominence of Critical Lead Stories by Source and Word Count

Position	More Sources*		More Words**	
	n:53	Percent	n:53	Percent
Critical	44	83.0	49	92.5
Establishment	3	5.7	2	3.8
Neutral	1	1.9	2	3.8
Even	5	9.4	0	0.0
Total	53	100	53	100

* All sources present in the full text of the each lead story were coded as to their position in
relation to the Bush administration and big business, and then the total number of sources per
position was counted to establish the position with the majority of sources for each story.
** The total number of words spoken by each source were counted and then the total number of
words attributed to sources based on their overall position in relation to the Bush administration
and big business was counted to establish the position with the majority of words for each story.

These findings indicate that despite the role of political and economic elites in setting the news agenda, and the partial reliance on non-critical elites as first sources on the program, the bulk of the analysis on Democracy Now is provided by critical sources.

In order to identify the types of sources that are most frequently used to represent the range of debate on the issues at hand, I identified the two sources with the most words in each story with an establishment and a critical position. First, I found that there were not any sources presenting a perspective aligned with the Bush administration and big business (*establishment sources*) in 50.9% (n:27) of the stories in the sample. Among those lead stories that did have a source with an establishment position, sources identified as political or economic elites were afforded the greatest number of words in 85.2% (n:23) of lead stories.

Table 6. Indexing the Range of Debate: Establishment Sources with the Most Words per Lead Story by Type

Source Type	n:53	Percent
Elite	23	85.2
SMA	2	7.4
Journalist	2	7.4
Total	27	100

Note: Source types are not mutually exclusive categories, and were coded as present or absent in the texts.

In comparison, sources with a critical position were present in all of the stories in the sample, with sources identified as individual social movement actors and critical journalists afforded the largest number of words in 52.8% (n:28) of lead stories each. Even though elites drove the topical agenda, and appeared more frequently as the first source on the program, they did not restrict the range of debate. Instead, social movement

actors and critical journalists were used in order to widen the range of debate beyond that

presented by elite sources, and thus beyond that typically presented by elite media outlets

(Bennett, 1990; Callaghan & Schnell, 2001; Entman, 2004; Hall, 1978; Hallin, 1987).

Table 7. Indexing the Range of Debate: Critical Sources with the Most Words per
Lead Story by Type

Source Type	n:53	Percent
SMA	28	52.8
Critical Journalist	28	52.8
Critical Elite	10	18.9
Total	66	124.5

Note: Source types are not mutually exclusive categories, and were coded as present or absent in
the texts.

The heavy reliance on critical journalistic sources can be understood in terms of

the host's conception of the role of journalists, and her involvement in the media

democracy movement. Critical journalistic sources are often treated as social movement

actors on the program, making political statements in the form of representations of

reality that critique the existing institutions. Critical journalists are presented by

Goodman as examples of what journalism is supposed to be, and are used by the host to

help construct a counter narrative to the dominant view presented on the front pages and

lead stories of the elite press. Here Democracy Now provides a symbolic resource for

progressive social movements in their efforts to contest the dominant representation of

reality through political action.

This analysis provides supporting evidence for my second hypothesis:

Democracy Now indexes the *range of debate* they present on the program
to the opinions of both dissenting decision-making elites and progressive
social movement actors.

These findings suggest that, while Democracy Now pegs their news agenda to the actions of political and economic elites, they privilege critical sources – particularly social movement actors and critical journalists – in defining the range of debate. This is clearly a conscious approach to movement building: one that defines the claims of movement actors based on the actions of political and economic elites, and bases the success of such movements on their ability to achieve some level of institutional reform. By consistently shaping their programming based on this approach, Democracy Now is encouraging the development of traditional, state centered, movement models rather than models that are based on the construction of counter institutions in "the creation, articulation, [and] formulation of new thoughts and ideas" (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, p. 55).

Democracy Now in the Online Environment

Now that I have established a pattern of news selection and identified the relative use of source types in defining the range of debate, I can move my analysis to a comparison of Democracy Now content with its use by other social movement actors in the online environment. In addition to the over 400 terrestrial TV and radio broadcast outlets that air the program, the democracynow.org website brings in an average of 50,000 visits a day (Ratner, 2005). Exactly how Democracy Now content is used by

social movement actors on the web can lend insight into the role that similar media

outlets play in North American social movements.

> RQ 3: What differences do we find between the issues and sources cited in
>
> Democracy Now and the use of those issues and sources in citations of the
>
> program's content by social movement actors in the online environment?

By comparing the prevalence of sources and issues in both intros and lead stories

to their citations in web texts, I found that there are only small differences between what

the program *does* and what social movement sites *use* from the program, thus rejecting

the third hypothesis. I found that citations of Democracy Now content by social

movement actors in the online environment closely resembled the source type and

movement issue coverage found on the broadcast program. This is surprising, given the

diversity of those web sites that cited the program content. Our sample of web texts

included independent media outlets with both centralized (coastalpost.com,

politicalaffairs.net, emagazine.com) and more decentralized (bellaciao.org)

organizational structures, and represented a significant range between movement

(indybay.org) and more institutional (csmonitor.com, uruknet.info) content focus.

Table 8. Comparing the Presence of Source Types on Democracy Now with Online Citations of the Program's Content

Sources Types	Intros*		Lead Stories*		Web Texts**	
	n: 260	Percent	n:53	Percent	n:104	Percent
Critical Journalists	76	29.2	38	71.7	56	53.8
Social Movement Actors	71	27.3	36	67.9	37	35.6
Non-Critical Elites	65	25.0	27	50.9	20	19.2
Critical Elites	42	16.2	23	43.4	20	19.2
Non-Critical Journalists	5	1.9	4	7.5	6	5.8
Total	259	99.6	128	241.5	139	133.7

* Intros and Lead Stories were broadcast between 1/1/05 and 12/31/05.

** Web texts that cited Democracy Now content were collected between 1/25/06 and 4/13/06. Note: Source types are not mutually exclusive categories, and were coded as present or absent in the texts.
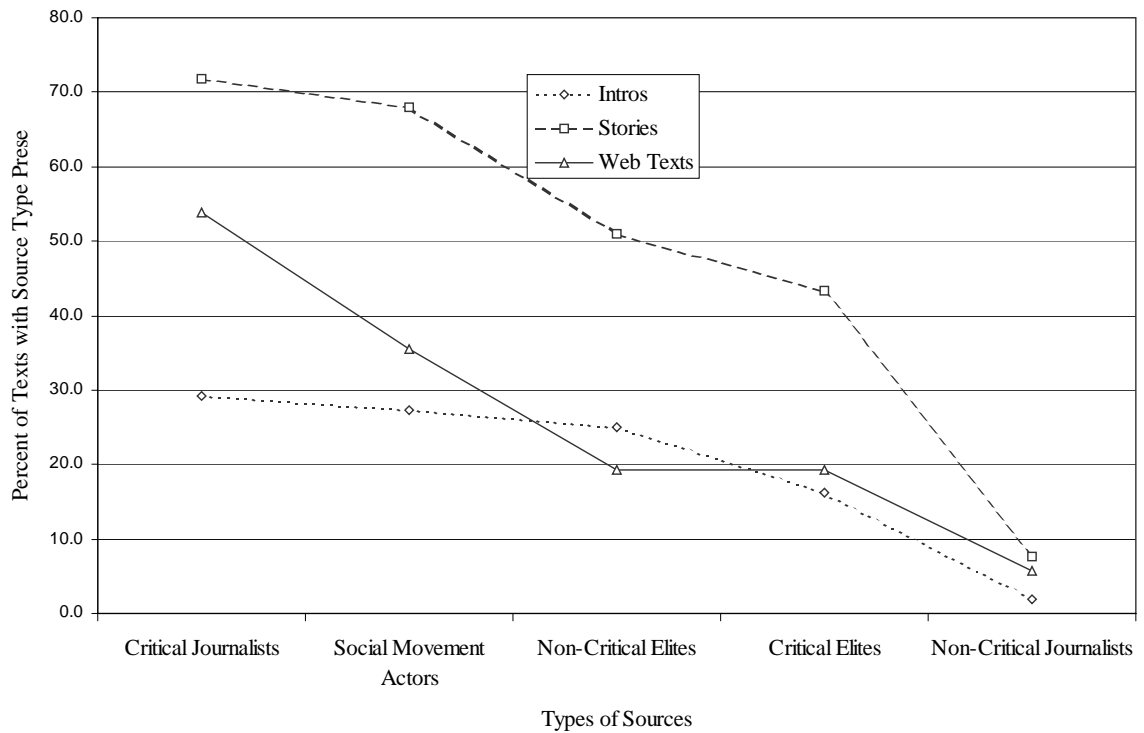

Figure 2. A Visual Comparison of the Presence of Source Types on Democracy Now with Online Citations of the Program's Content

The only substantial difference in this comparison is in the relatively lower use of non-critical elites, and the slightly higher rate of use of critical journalists by social movement actors on the web. The changes in the use of non-critical elites and critical journalists, however, is less significant when we take into account the way that they are used on Democracy Now – that is, non-critical elites are used primarily as illustrative of problems in the institutions that they represent, something that is then addressed by social movement actors and critical journalists for the bulk of the story. It is not surprising then that the sources that other movement actors found most compelling on Democracy Now were those that actually received the greatest prominence in the course of the program.

Table 9. Comparing the Presence of Movement Issues on Democracy Now with Online Citations of the Program's Content

Movements Issues	Intros*		Lead Stories*		Web Texts**	
	n: 260	Percent	N:53	Percent	n:104	Percent
Peace	126	48.5	41	77.4	69	66.3
Social Issues	103	39.6	26	49.1	53	51.0
Human Rights	39	15.0	26	49.1	39	37.5
Race	39	15.0	17	32.1	22	21.2
Non-US Social Issues	42	16.2	15	28.3	11	10.6
Women's	11	4.2	10	18.9	7	6.7
Global Justice	13	5.0	6	11.3	5	4.8
Environmental	8	3.1	6	11.3	4	3.8
Total	381	146.6	147	277.4	210	201.9

* Intros and Lead Stories were broadcast between 1/1/05 and 12/31/05.

** Web texts that cited Democracy Now content were collected between 1/25/06 and 4/13/06.
  Note: Movement issues are not mutually exclusive categories, and were coded as present or absent in the texts.
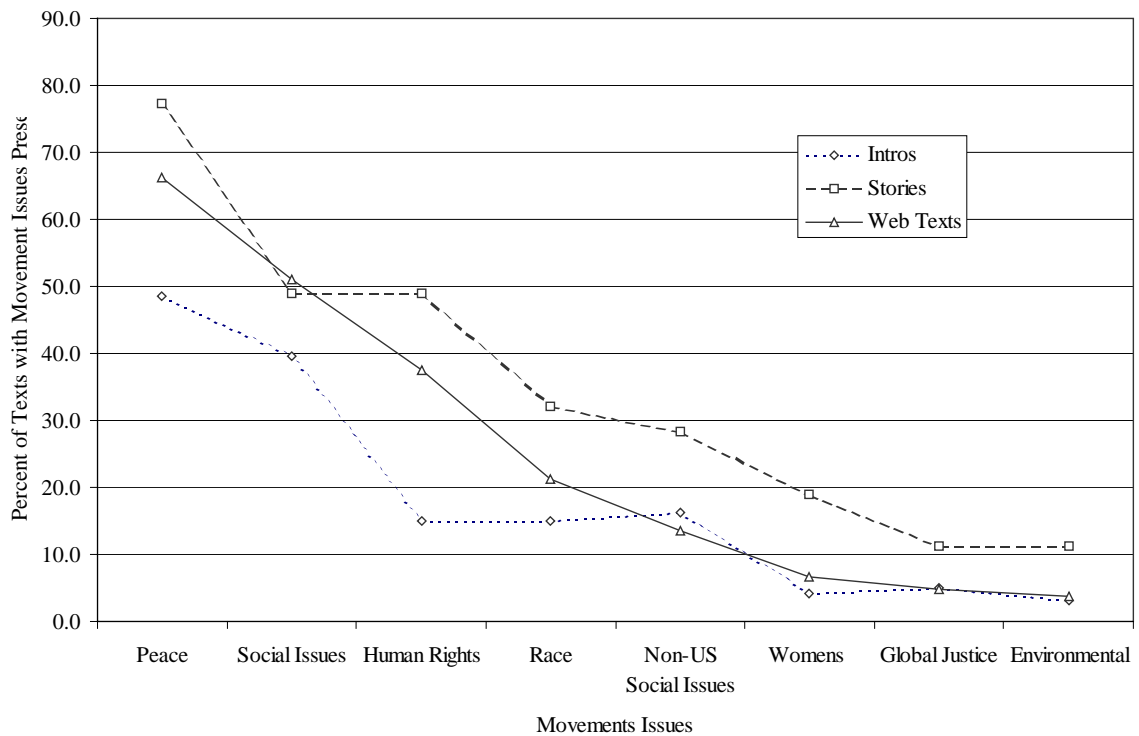
Figure 3. A Visual Comparison of the Presence of Movement Issues on Democracy Now with Online Citations of the Program's Content

When we compare the frequency of movement issue mentions in cited

Democracy Now content we again find a pattern of content citation that closely

resembles what is found in both lead story intros and full text.

Democracy Now's role in North American social movements is most pronounced

in the peace (or anti-war) movement. Goodman often references this with the program's

tagline "the war and peace report," and while just under half of the lead story intros are

focused on peace related issues (48.5%), stories in other issue areas are often related to

peace in the course of the full story (77.4%). We can also see this same dynamic at work

when we look at the presence of human rights issues in intros (15%) compared to full

stories (49.1%). While driving a significant amount of the news agenda, Democracy

Now's focus on peace and human right is couched within a broad political agenda that is

in part a product of the recent 'anti-globalization' or 'anti-capitalist' movement (Rucht,

2003). While, only a small portion of the program's content deals with issues of free

trade, neoliberalism or third world debt (characterized here under the term *global justice*),

the umbrella style organizing models that have arisen during the past 10-15 years have

included a rainbow of 'single issue movements' under collective actions and political

demands – something that has influenced the ways that movement actors frame issues

and events (Chesters & Welsh, 2004). Democracy Now approaches this multitude of

issues with a unifying theme: political process. The most consistent theme throughout the

many issue areas covered on Democracy Now is the close critical eye that is focused on

the established republican political process – how it functions, who within it can be

trusted, and how it can be made to work better for those who are systematically left out.

We can see this at work in the heavy use of elites as first sources on the program,

followed by the critical analysis provided by social movement actors and critical

journalists.

Social movement actors have responded by indexing their citations of the

program's content closely to the issues covered and sources used, rather than highlighting

particular issue areas or source types above others. Even within websites that focused

entirely on a particular issue area, such as anti-war (uruknet.info) or environmentalism

(emagazine.com), content from Democracy Now that dealt with other issues was cited,

such as the increasingly dangerous situation for gay men in Iraq (uruknet.info), or the

degradation of support for investigative journalism by the corporate media for stories like the emerging avian flu pandemic (emagazine.com).

Democracy Now has developed an approach to constructing issues that highlights the institutional process of political reforms that is a central to many traditional North American social movements (McAdam et al., 2001). As we have seen in the citation patterns of the program's content on the web, social movement actors are not making significant changes to the ways that Democracy Now constructs the "relative importance of events and objects" (Edelman, 1988, p. 13). This can only be seen as a reinforcement of the perceived value of this approach in contemporary North American social movements. While there is clearly a growing vanguard of counter institutional political action in the current array of social movement activity (Fisher & Ponniah, 2003; Kidd, 2003), there is also a continued adherence to social movement models that build relationships with established power holders in the hopes that such action will result in desirable political reform. Democracy Now has shown that far from being 'outdated', independent media outlets that display a *centralized* organizational form, and tend towards an *institutional* content focus, can still exert a significant amount of influence in the development of social movements. In fact, it may be among those social movement actors that are less inclined towards radical action (for either ideological or pragmatic reasons) that this class of independent media is most influential. The ability of these outlets to highlight the actions and voices of social movement actors in the context of a news agenda that is driven by elites can at best serve a bridging function, "define[ing] the contours of the social world" (Edelman, 1988, p. 12-13) as one that is created by the

participatory political action of ordinary people, and not solely by political and economic

elites.

Conclusions

The application of sourcing, agenda setting and indexing theories to Democracy Now has provided evidence that, when applied to *centralized* independent media outlets with an *institutional* focus, there are significant differences in journalistic norms. In the case of Democracy Now, these norms came to closely resemble a traditional movement model.

First, Democracy Now displayed a clear emphasis on political and economic elites as actors in lead story intro narratives, but tended to privilege voices critical of the Bush administration and big business as first sources on the program. The relative focus of Democracy Now on political and economic elites in the construction of their story narratives, and in their choice of source types appearing first on the program, points to an institutional perspective in the formulation and inscription of social movements – something that is reminiscent of the traditional approach taken by social movement scholars (McAdam, Tarrow & Tilly, 2001; McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Tilly, 1978). By giving less weight to non-elite sources and actions in driving the news agenda, Democracy Now is advocating a conception of political change as something that responds to government actions – and with their central aim focused on influencing some measure of governmental reform, the 'success' of a movement rides on its ability to have its grievances answered by government actors.

Second, While Democracy Now consistently cited powerful sources in the routine construction of the news, elite sources did not 'command the field' as would be expected among the elite press (Hall, 1978). Indexing theory predicts that the range of debate

presented on an issue is pegged to the range of debate among powerful elites (Bennett,

1990). When the number of words per source was used as a measure of the most

influential sources in the story, the range of debate typically was pegged to non-critical

elites on one side (when an establishment voice was present at all), and social movement

actors and critical journalists on the other, with critical elites present as the most

prominent critical source type in only 18.9% of lead stories. Goodman has often stated

that the role of the media is to hold elites accountable and to go 'where the silence is'

(Goodman & Goodman, 2004; Ratner, 2005). In this way, Democracy Now provides a

space for social movement actors and journalists that are critical of the bush

administration and big business to have their voices heard.

These findings indicate that, when applied to independent media outlets, the

relationship that the outlet has with social movements, and thus its ideological position in

relation to the organization of power (Carragee & Roefs, 2004), may be a significant

factor in predicting the enactment of journalistic norms, and editorial decisions.

In my analysis of how Democracy Now content was used by social movement

actors in the online environment I found that their representations of political action were

used in relatively the same proportions. While Democracy Now is most explicitly tied to

the peace (or anti-war) movement, the developments of the last 10-15 years of movement

politics have influenced the ways that the program frames movement issues. Instead of

selecting issue and source content that applied only to their specific issue focus,

movement actor websites mirrored the multiple issue mentions in ways similar to that

exemplified by Democracy Now. Given that the frequency of issue and source type

mentions among citations of Democracy Now content was closely pegged to that of the broadcast program, I have concluded that independent media outlets that display a *centralized* organizational structure, and tend towards an *institutional* content focus, may play a significant role in developing traditional social movements by connecting the voices of critical journalists and social movement actors to more politically conservative movement participants through the critique of institutional structures and actors.

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Appendix A: Source Types

Sources were coded for the presence or absence of the following traits:

1. Social movement actor.

This category of source type was defined as someone who spoke as a representative of a Social Movement Organization (SMO), professional organizer, activist, concerned citizen, community leader, or union member. This included sources who were publicizing information about torture or war, etc., that was done for political reasons (speaking publicly, filing a lawsuit, etc – writing a book or article about it would be coded as a critical journalist). SMOs were defined as any organized group that is unaffiliated with a government institution or commercial business. This includes think tanks, NGOs, and student-based groups, but does not include university-funded institutes or centers. Difficult examples include "poll observers," "public policy and legal action group," "American Psychological Association" or "human rights lawyer."

2. Political or Economic Elite.

This category of source type was defined as someone who was speaking as a current or former elected official, in or outside of the United States, a current or former military official or employee, or an economic elite (CEO, Chairmen, Board member, spokesperson for or public relations officer for a Corporation). This can be determined by the use of their status as a credibility building justification for their argument/information/position. Choose this category only if the source is *not* presenting information or views that are critical of the Bush administration or big business.

3. Dissenting Elite.

This category of source type was defined as someone who was speaking as a political or economic elite that is clearly presenting information or views that are critical of the Bush administration or big business.

4. Journalist.

This category of source type was defined as someone who was speaking as a professional journalist, or independent journalist. Professional journalists are journalists that make a living working for for-profit media outlets like daily papers, commercial radio and television and for profit news sites like yahoo.com. This also includes newswire reporters like AP, or Reuters. Independent journalists include community radio journalists, volunteer journalists, activist journalists, IMC journalists, bloggers, progressive press journalists (i.e. Mother Jones, Z-Magazine, etc.) or free paper journalists. This also includes independent writers or authors, professors, videographers or film-makers, as well as authors of op-ed pieces in for-profit papers. Choose this option if the journalist is *not* presenting information or views that are critical of the Bush administration or big business.

5. Critical Journalist.

This category of source type was defined as someone who was speaking as a professional journalist, or independent journalist that is clearly presenting information or views that are critical of the Bush administration or big business

Appendix B: Issue Movement Areas

Texts were coded for the presence or absence of the following set of Issue

Movement Areas. This was both articulated (a position or statement that references a

particular social movement) and inferred (a position that closely aligns with or against

one or more social movement issues):

1. Peace.

Texts were coded as including the presence of this issue movement area if it

contained discussion of issues of concern to those who are opposed to a war or wars.

This includes stories pertaining to the invasion and occupation of Iraq or Afghanistan

(including Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo), as well as general references to the "war on

terror" and threats about the invasion of other countries.

2. Anti-Racism.

Texts were coded as including the presence of this issue movement area if it

contained discussion of issues of concern to those who would oppose racism, racial

profiling, racial discrimination, or economic or environmental racism. This includes

death penalty issues only if explicitly tied to race, and includes issues related to race and

immigrants in the military, as well as references to slavery or the "media justice"

movement.

3. Human Rights.

Texts were coded as including the presence of this issue movement area if it

contained discussion of issues of concern to those who would oppose human rights

abuses (torture, infant mortalities, disease, genocide, death penalty, attacking journalists,

etc), or that express a declaration of human rights for a group or groups (universal health care, the right to food and housing, the right to free expression, etc.). This did not include a "humanitarian crisis," unless there was a condemnation of an actor that played a role in causing it or is being held responsible for it.

4. Non-US Social Issues

Texts were coded as including the presence of this issue movement area if it contained discussion of issues of concern to those who would oppose poverty, aids, or hunger, cultural issues or political elections, democracy or civil unrest in any nation outside of the US. This also includes proactive aid and development programs and groups, as well as elections in Iraq.

5. Social Issues (US).

Texts were coded as including the presence of this issue movement area if it contained discussion of issues of concern to those who work on social issues in the US. This included labor, class, media consolidation, government and corporate propaganda, independent media, cultural preservation, gender rights (GBLT), freedom of religion/separation of church-state, democracy and voting rights (National issues within the US), and critique of government actions like disaster preparedness.

6. Environmental.

Texts were coded as including the presence of this issue movement area if it contained discussion of issues of concern to those who oppose logging, pollution, environmental degradation, ANWAR, global warming, etc., or that espoused a positive ecological solution like ecology, recycling, green energy, etc.

7. Global Justice.

Texts were coded as including the presence of this issue movement area if it contained discussion of issues of concern to those who oppose global free-trade and development, sweat shop labor conditions, privatization (including the privatization of war), that espouse a positive solution such as corporate responsibility, fair-trade, or global governance, or that use key words such as "anti-globalization," "global justice," "anti-capitalist," or engage in global NGO actions, etc.

8. Women's Rights.

Texts were coded as including the presence of this issue movement area if it contained discussion of issues of concern to those who are concerned with women's rights, abortion rights, sexual harassment, representation, rape, voting rights for women, education rights for women, etc.