Protest in Action: An examination of the production, media representation, and reflexivity of protest group communications strategies and protest tactics

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This thesis is submitted to Cardiff University in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

This thesis analyses the media coverage and dominant institution responses to the media and protest tactics employed by three different protest groups. The three case studies examine the interactions between protest groups, their political targets, and the mainstream media. It pays particular attention to each group's media and protest tactics, and how their messages transition from protest action into media coverage and political debates. The three different protest groups comprise of a Cardiff community campaign to save a pub called Save the Vulcan, the environmental direct action group Plane Stupid and their protests against airport expansion, and the mass protests of G20Meltdown against the G20 summit held in London in April 2009. This thesis analyses the media coverage of each group using the concept of political opportunity structures to ascertain the influence of the political and media context on protest groups and their actions.

Interviews with activists involved in all three protest groups, and ethnography conducted from within one of the groups, namely, the Save the Vulcan campaign revealed differing attitudes towards the choice of media and protest tactics. All three groups were aware of their portrayal in media coverage, and actively geared their tactics towards attracting media attention. The research analysed protester communications on the internet and leaflets to explore how they represented their issues. A content analysis of British newspaper articles examined the impact of each group's media and protest tactics on press coverage. Official documents from the dominant institutions of the police and centralised political institutions were examined to ascertain the debates surrounding the issues.

On the basis of these empirical findings and discussion this thesis argues for a revision of the theorisation of political opportunity structures. This grants increased recognition of media coverage and the importance of protest group aims and goals in the assessment of their success and failure to communicate their messages. Finally, the thesis argues that political and media opportunities do influence the success and failure of protest groups, but it is the effective use of media and protest tactics that puts protest groups into a position to succeed or fail.

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Section 1: Introduction, Literature Review, and Methodology

Chapter 1 – Introduction

On July 12th 2009 it was reported in the *South Wales Echo* that the Vulcan Hotel, a Cardiff pub, had been saved from demolition for three years. My personal involvement in the Save the Vulcan campaign was as part of the core organising committee that consisted of five dedicated activists. I aided the group in setting up fundraising events, planning protests, crafting the groups messaging, and assisting in the media strategy. Some of the members of the group had political insider status within mainstream political parties and this influenced the choice of media and protest tactics. Being part of the group afforded me access to the decision-making processes behind the choice of media and protest tactics, and also the impact that these tactics had on the reaction of the media and dominant institutions. The dominant institutions mentioned in this thesis relates to the police and centralised political institutions. This kind of insider access provided greater insight into the agency of protest groups and allowed a greater understanding of protest action than just examining media coverage. It was the impact of the political and media context on the success and failure of the campaign that interested me the most, because it guided the course of the campaign and was constantly changing. It became clear that the adaptability of the group to the changing situations was fundamental to the campaign's continuing success and high media profile. This thesis presents an examination of the creation of messages behind a campaign, protest group aims and goals, and the decisions behind the media and protest tactics used by different protest groups. It also looks specifically at the influences of the political and media context on the relative success and failure of protest groups to be covered and contextualised in the mainstream media, and debated in dominant institutions.

In order to gain a broader understanding of the influence of these factors on protest groups three different groups were analysed and case studied. The groups chosen protested on different issues, used a variety of protest and media tactics, and reside within different media and political contexts. The groups selected included the aforementioned Save the Vulcan campaign, Plane Stupid, and G20Meltdown. Plane Stupid is an environmental direct action group protesting against the expansion of the aviation industry and Britain's airports, and linked these issues to climate change. They used symbolic direct action to attract media coverage and publicise their messages, and aimed to prompt debate around airport expansion, but they were not concerned with political and media acceptance. The third and final group was G20Meltdown who held a mass demonstration against the Group of 20 summit (G20) in London on the 1st April 2009. G20Meltdown were an umbrella network of up to 60 groups, and primarily

protested about climate change, war, land borders/homelessness, and financial crimes. They were less orientated towards actively courting the media compared to the other two groups, and only used one protest event to highlight their messages.

The different modes of communication employed by each group, and the reactions of the media and dominant institutions towards them provides an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the processes that shape collective action. To theoretically contextualise the influences on collective action is to consider political opportunities. The definition of political opportunities ties the relative success and failure of protest groups to political, institutional, and environmental variables that shape collective action (Eisinger 1973; Gamson and Meyer 1996; Meyer 1993; Meyer and Minkoff 2004; Sireau 2009). The theory of political opportunities is very structural, and is the basis of the first of three arguments at the centre of the thesis. The first key argument of the thesis is that the role of the media in political opportunities has not been granted sufficient theoretical prominence, because today, invariably, the media is the focal point and site of political debate. It is also the media's role in contentious politics to signal to dominant institutions what issues should be given increased salience. The public/media agenda can often become the political agenda. More than this, the established theory of political opportunity structures does not cede enough importance to the aims and goals of protest groups themselves. The assumption made in political opportunity research is that groups strive for political acceptance, but this is not necessarily true for all groups. This research therefore seeks to amend the theory of political opportunities to make it more applicable to a wider range of groups.

A focus on the messaging and mode of communication used by protest groups is more in line with Diani's political message approach towards political opportunities. He argues that successful protest group messaging occurs within many different media and political contexts (1996:1067). Investigating the messages of protest groups is to examine the collective action frames contained in protester communications. These represent a protest group's interpretation of an issue that is unfiltered by the mainstream media. The function of collective action frames in this context is to diagnose and define an issue as an issue, highlight the issues, and suggest potential solutions to a grievance (Gamson 2003; Sireau 2009; Smith et al. 2001; Wolfsfeld 2003; Snow and Benford 1992; Entman 1993). To bring these issues to public attention protest groups utilise a number of different protest and media tactics (McAdam and Su 2002; Lipsky 1968; Eisinger 1973).

The choice of protest tactics used by a group can have a major impact on the content and amount of media coverage. It has been argued by several academics that the more spectacular the protest tactics used, the greater the publicity a group will receive, but consequently the press will critically depoliticise the protest and empty out the context to why a group is protesting (Rosie and Gorringe 2009a; Thomas 2008; Wykes 2000; Gitlin 1980; DeLuca 1999; Wahl-Jorgensen 2003). The second key argument in this study is directly concerned with protest group messages and the representation of the protesters themselves, their aims and goals, and how they decide on their messages and media and protest tactics. There is a lot of research on the media coverage of collective action but a lot less on why that particular type of action took place. Looking specifically at the decision-making process of protest groups allows a greater insight into the mechanisms behind the staging of a particular protest event. It gives greater context and helps to explain the reactions of the media and dominant institutions.

The final argument takes the two points already outlined and relates them directly to the comparative success and failure of protest groups and the publicising of their messages. The joining together of political and media contexts and a protest group's aims adds to existing theories of what constitutes successful protest action. The focus of these ideas suggests that protest groups want routine political access and influence (Amenta et al. 1992; Gamson 1990; Meyer 2004). In reality the aims and goals of protest groups are more complicated than attempting to gain mainstream acceptance, and it is for this reason that the aims and goals of protest groups should be included in the analysis of collective action. This approach goes further than just examining the results of protest in media coverage and provides a more complete understanding of what influences the success and failure of protest groups. The three elements of a protest group's aims and goals, media coverage, and dominant institution reactions can be joined together to create the overarching research question presented below:

> *How do the objectives and decision-making processes behind a protest group's media and protest tactics impact on a group's media and political opportunities?*

1.1 Structure and Approach to the Research

The thesis is presented in nine chapters. Following this introductory chapter are two literature review chapters. The research questions (RQs) at the centre of the thesis are highlighted in the literature review chapters at relevant points in the discussion, exploration, and engagement of academic debates. Chapter 2 situates collective action

into a contemporary political context and explores the definition of social movements. It details the influences and variables that affect collective action by first assessing the applicability of the theory of political opportunities, and argues for a more prominent position for media opportunities within its theorisation. The media's importance is because it is the site of definitional struggle around contentious politics and an arena for the competing claims of political and social actors. The different types of framing, be it media or protester, that occur around an issue helps to define the dominant perception of an issue, and how it should be solved. The focus of chapter 2 is mainly on the creation of the underlying messages of a protest campaign and how these messages function in a wider political and media context. It is these contexts that shape the reception of the messages by dominant institutions and the media, and provides issues with their dominant definition. This only tells part of the story because protest groups have a role in publicising their perceptions of an issue through the use of different media and protest tactics.

Chapter 3 takes the ideas behind message creation and propagation and focuses more on the physical act of protest, and the varying political and media responses to different types of tactic. This is to argue that the conscious decisions of protest groups towards particular media and protester strategies allows groups more of an input into how they are represented. The issues at the centre of a campaign, I argue, are related to the choice of media and protest tactics, and the aims and goals of selected actions. It reviews the concepts behind the institutionally focused insider and outsider strategies, the affects each of these has on political influence, and the specific reactions of dominant institutions to collective action. An exploration of spectacular protests and symbolic images follows, and the role of the media in the reporting of the spectacle is based on its perceived drama. The majority of academic research shows that there is a depoliticising affect of spectacular protest, and that protest can become personalised where activists come to represent a campaign. The chapter moves on to argue that political acceptance is not the goal of every protest group and examines the protest and media tactics of radical protest groups. These groups use more confrontational protest tactics such as symbolic direct action, disruptive protest, and violence. The rationale behind the use of each of these protest tactics is considered, and the reaction of the media and dominant institutions to these protest tactics is explored. The six research questions developed in the literature review are as follows:

> RQ1. How do protest groups create, identify, and exploit political and media opportunities?
> RQ2. How does a protest group frame their media and political opportunities, messages, goals, and protest actions?

RQ3. What decisions and negotiations go into the choice of communications strategies and protest tactics?
RQ4. How does the media frame protest groups in response to their messages, goals and protest actions?
RQ5. What is the response of dominant institutions to a protest group's communications strategies and protest tactics?
RQ6. How are media coverage and the response of protest targets fed back into a protest group's choice of communications strategies and protest tactics?

In chapter 4 the research aims and objectives are explicitly stated and an appropriate methodology is outlined. The rationale for choosing each group is detailed as well as the sampling periods for each group. The methods chosen combine a mixture of quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection and analysis, and these are based on a range of different materials. The reasons for using each of the methods is detailed and defended, and the choice to use a combination of content analysis, framing, interviews, and ethnography is related to specific research questions. The methodological approach to the thesis was constructed in this way to achieve a more detailed view of protest action, and to be able to properly judge the influence of media and political opportunities on protest groups.

The analysis and presentation of findings and discussion delivered across four chapters. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 treats each protest groups as a standalone case study. Chapter 8 then compares and contrasts the three protest groups to examine the influence of media and political opportunities on the relative success and failure of each group. All of these chapters are structured around the six principal RQs which originate from the literature review discussion, guiding the thesis and informing its methodology.

Chapter 5 centres on the Save the Vulcan group and its campaign to protect a Victorian era pub from demolition. First, it looks at the political and media context surrounding the group at the time of their inception, and argues that favourable conditions existed at the time a campaign begins. The shaping of the Vulcan campaign's messaging is explored in relation to where the message appears and documents how the messages were tailored to target particular audiences for maximum effect. The pre-existing media and political opportunities available to the group are shown to have had a major influence on their media and protest tactics. The political insider status of a couple of members of the group and their tactical aim was to not alienate supporters. It meant that the Vulcan group chose to use a non-confrontational approach to the media and protest tactics. This measured approach was reflected in the media coverage, and the press treated the Save the Vulcan campaign positively, and contextualised the messages of the group on a regular basis.

Equally, the political reactions to the Vulcan campaign demonstrated passive and active support for the group, and because it attained a high profile a certain amount of politicians used the campaign for their own publicity. Finally, the reaction of the press and dominant institutions was factored back into the protest and media tactics of the group, and they stayed non-confrontational and showed the importance of maintaining control over their message to avoid misinterpretation.

Chapter 6 examines the environmental direct action group Plane Stupid and their use of the spectacle to draw media attention towards the issues. They would time their actions to coincide with other political events in order to maximise the media and political impact of their actions. The specific protest tactics that Plane Stupid utilised were more confrontational than the majority of groups campaigning against airport expansion, and set Plane Stupid apart. Added to this, their symbolic direct actions acted as a message carrier by drawing the media in and once attention is obtained activists would reveal their messages. The performing of spectacular tactics, it is found, requires careful planning and preparation and is related to the goals and aims of a protest action. The exploration of the decision and negotiations that went into each tactic reveals that nothing was ever carried out without considering the risks, and a media centric strategy for publicising Plane Stupid's messages is revealed. The media representation of Plane Stupid is detailed, and two different protest actions are case studied to examine the impact that diverse protest and media tactics have on media coverage. The response of dominant institutions exposes the political opportunities connected to direct action, and the repressive reactions of dominant institutions towards direct action. The adaptation of their protest and media tactics to external events is an example of exploiting potential publicity, and the continued use of direct action is based on the ends justifying the means. It is argued that the tactics are justified because of the seriousness of the issue to activists.

Chapter 7 centres on the mass demonstrations against the G20 summit which was held in London in April 2009. It analyses G20Meltdown against the media and political opportunity offered by an international summit. The messages at the heart of G20Meltdown placed capitalism as the overarching issue of the demonstration. The promotion of their messages was found to be linked to the protest tactics, and consistently emphasised in protester communications. The attitude of G20Meltdown towards the media is explored and shows that they operated an open media strategy. This allowed any activist to be a spokesperson, and their protest tactics aimed to be more than just a march from A to B giving the demonstration a direct action edge. It is argued in the analysis of G20Meltdown's media coverage that the reporting followed

some of the press patterns found at previous international summit protests. This is where a demonstration is characterised by an anticipation of violence, and the situating of a protest into the context of historically disruptive demonstrations, and a focus on the police operation. The reaction of dominant institutions and, in particular, the police was repressive, and it is argued that protester communications and messages had a large influence on the police intelligence and the police tactics. Finally, the reaction of G20Meltdown to the media and dominant institutions is shown to have been dominated by a response to the police operation and the death of Ian Tomlinson. This indicates the fluidity of media and political opportunities, and the reflexivity of protest groups to external events.

Chapter 8 compares and contrasts each of the three groups and their media and protest tactics in terms of the six guiding RQs of the thesis. This is to further explain the conditions that affect protest groups in publicising their message and achieving their goals. This chapter argues that political and media opportunities should be viewed on an issue by issue basis, to fully understand the media and political context guiding a campaign. The success and failure of framing the issues by each respective group is linked to the media strategies and attitude of protest groups to image and message control. This success and failure however is based on the goals and aims of each group. The choice of what media and protest tactics a protest group uses is considered as a 'cost-benefit analysis'. Where the decision to act is based upon calculating what can realistically be achieved using one protest tactic over another. The careful planning and outcomes of protest is reflected in subsequent media coverage of each group. The lasting images of the campaigns are analysed to fully appreciate the impact of media and protest tactics on the messages and portrayal of each protest group. The final two sections of chapter 8 explore the variety of reactions to protest groups by dominant institutions, and the tactical response of the groups to these reactions is equally varied.

The final chapter of the thesis, chapter 9, reiterates the overarching RQ which is orientated around the goals and decisions behind collective action, and the influence these choices and tactics have on media and political opportunities. The knowledge gained from the analysis of protest groups is used to revise the theory of political opportunities, and position the media into a more prominent and influential variable in political opportunities. It then highlights and grants increased importance of a campaign's goal and messages to the representation of protest groups and this gives activists more agency over their own representation. Finally, the conclusion combines these two points and produces a revised perspective of the relative success and failure of protest groups.

Chapter 2 - The Meaning of the Message: Its Generation and Construction

Introduction

Protest groups in contemporary society are involved in highlighting and championing causes that are politically contentious. These contentious issues take many different forms ranging from identity politics, to cultural, social, economic or political issues. Essentially, these issues encapsulate everything from gay rights to 'not in my backyard' campaigns. Klandermans talks about grievances as originating from the "structural conflict of interests" that exist throughout society (1986:19). This is where political contention exists in the interactions between protest groups, their protest targets, and the mainstream media. These interactions are affected by a variety of different environmental variables, and it is these variables that guide the success and failure of protest groups to achieve their goals. It is this dimension of political contention that is of particular interest to this study, because the aims and goals of a protest group are fundamental to their media and protest tactics.

The external influences on protest groups guide success or failure of campaigns, and is theorised here as 'political opportunity structures'. Success, in this case, is related to a protest group's aims and goals in relation to their media and protest tactics, and the reactions of the media and dominant institutions. Dominant institutions are taken to include the police, and centralised political institutions from city council to parliamentary level. Political opportunity puts a protest group's action into a specific political context and creates an added variable that shapes a group's potential for success and failure. In addition, this thesis aims to raise the importance of media opportunities, because the media is where the majority of the defining of issues takes place. It is through the use of protest and media strategies that create and exploit media and political opportunities, and includes the influence of differing levels of resources, issues, media strategies, and protest tactics have on the reactions of the mainstream media and dominant institutions which require further study.

This chapter focuses on the scholarly debates surrounding: 1) political opportunities, resource mobilisation, and the signalling model and their effect on a protest group's goals, and media and protest tactics; 2) the claims making role of protest groups when attempting to gain media access, and 3) the political contest model, collective action framing and media framing. The examination of these debates allows the construction

of a conceptual framework that will reinforce the questions at the heart of this thesis. These RQs are centred on the creation, identification, and exploitation of political opportunities by protest groups. It follows that political opportunity structures provide a backdrop to a group's media and protest tactics. However, these cannot be considered in isolation. The emphasis is placed on a protest group's frames and messages, and the importance of the media in publicising these messages. The main point is that media and political opportunity shape the success and failure of a protest group to reach their goals. Chapter 3 of the thesis moves towards a focus on specific media and protest tactics, and the influence the relationship between protest groups and their protest targets has on media and protest tactics. Chapter 3 will discuss the media representation of social protest in more detail to demonstrate the impact of different types of protest tactics on the framing of issues and protest action.

2.1 Social Movements and Political Opportunities

In this section the political context of contentious politics is situated within arguments around political opportunity and the variables that guide the success and failure of protest groups. First, social movements and what constitutes protest action is defined. Then the argument behind the theories of political opportunities, resource mobilisation, and the signalling model are considered to fully explore the environmental variables which influence the success and failure of protest groups. The reason for taking this line of argument is to emphasise that protest does not take place in isolation. The political context and its contribution to political opportunity are taken into account. Political opportunities are defined in this thesis as "the institutional and political factors that shape social movement options" (Meyer 1993:455). The 'options' referred to corresponds with the communication strategies, protest tactics, and relationship between protest groups and their protest targets. The theory of political opportunities is extended in this thesis to raise the influence of the media. The argument presented is that media opportunities and the representation of protest action have as much of an influence on the success and failure of protest groups as political opportunities. Before entering into these arguments the definition of social movements and collective action are detailed, and this will illustrate what protest groups are and what they are engaged in.

The definitions of what constitutes a social movement revolve around a number of common themes, and by combining the definitions of Diani (Quoted in Wright 2004), Van Aelst and Walgrave (2004), and Tarrow (1998) social movements are defined as:

1) A network of individuals, groups and/or organisations.
2) Condensing around a common purpose and shared identity.
3) To challenge and interact with their targets, using conventional and unconventional actions.
4) In order to achieve specific movement goals. (Diani quoted in Wright 2004:77-78; Van Aelst and Walgrave 2004: 100; Tarrow 1998:4)

In addition to these characteristics Anderson defines the more radical groups, or new social movements as "grassroots activism outside of formal political structures; informal, relatively unstructured, network forms of organisation" with "an emphasis upon direct action and identity and lifestyle politics" (2000:94). These definitions are not an attempt to impose a monolithic view of social movements, because there are different groups campaigning on a variety of issues and they utilise a range of protest tactics. The following definition of protest activity is provided by Lipsky:

> …protest activity is defined as a mode of political action oriented toward objection to one or more policies or conditions, characterized by showmanship or display of an unconventional nature (1968:1145)

Adding to Lipsky's definition, Eisinger talks about protest in terms of 'collective manifestations', which attempt to provide "'relatively powerless people' with bargaining leverage in the political process" (1973:13). These 'relatively powerless people' refers to those "lacking in conventional political resources" (Lipsky 1968:1144). What Lipsky and Eisinger propose puts constraints on collective action by ignoring groups who do not actively seek political and media acceptance. The judgement of success that is based on gaining conventional political resources ignores a large number of protest groups, and, more importantly, the aims and goals of protest groups. The focus of success and failure should be shifted towards a protest group's aims and goals, and this increases the importance of the relationship between 'structure' and 'agency' (Meyer 2004:125; Meyer and Minkoff 2004:1463). The structure part refers to the political context that protest groups work within (Meyer 2004:128). Agency on the other hand is "the wisdom, creativity, and outcomes of activists' choices", or more simply the media and protest tactics used by a group (ibid:128). The investigation of protest groups from this viewpoint increases the importance of considering the aims and goal of collective action, and how a protest group's objectives are reflected in the assessment of success and failure.

2.1.1 Political Opportunity Structures

This section will detail the influence of political opportunities on protest groups and their protest and media strategies. The argument is that a number of different variables need to be considered in the investigation of protest groups. This section will also raise the importance of the media and media opportunities and their influence on protest groups. The term 'political opportunity' was first used by Eisinger to describe the relationship between environmental variables and the link between "context and the patterns of political behaviour" (1973:11). The identification of the structures that influence collective action requires careful consideration of the variables detailed in the following three points:

1) The general openness of the political system needs to be differentiated from the specific openness of the political system on an issue by issues basis.
2) Political opportunity is divided between the stable structural elements of the political system, and the volatile nature of collective action and contentious politics.
3) These two points need to be assessed when considering the outcome of political opportunities. (Meyer and Minkoff:1458; Sireau 2009:99; Gamson and Meyer 1996:277; Meyer 1993:455)

These viewpoints present a very structural and institutional view of political opportunity that is dependent upon traditional political structures. They also underplay the influence of arguably the most important variable of all, the media. Behr and Iyengar argue that changes in the media agenda influence the public agenda (1985:38). The issues that make it onto the media agenda increases the probability of thematic coverage (2001:1412). Thematic media coverage means the issues and reasons for protest action are contextualised and detailed. This increases the prominence of the media's role in influencing the size of political opportunity which allows protest groups more diverse avenues for targeting their collective actions. The three points presented above are too narrow because not all groups fit conveniently into a structural model of political opportunity. The fundamental point to be made here is that the exploitation and creation of political and media opportunities is based on the aims and goals of the protest group and should be treated as such.

The theory of political opportunity shows that opportunities are not set or consistent; they are fluid and ever changing. This led Sireau to describe political opportunities as a "dynamic approach that takes into account changes and actions by social and political actors" (2009:100). The idea that a political opportunity is more than just open or closed takes into consideration the nature of the political environment and accounts for

"both consistent and variable influences across outcomes" (Meyer and Minkoff 2004:1484). It is important to note that the approaches towards examining political opportunities take different forms. Diani uses a political message approach that adds to the theory of political opportunity structures by arguing that successful messaging can take place at times of political stability or volatility:

> … challengers' mobilizing messages may be effective in any political structure, albeit in different guises, and that their impact need not be restricted to the effervescent, unsettled periods on which most analysts of collective action usually focus. (1996:1067; See also Gamson and Meyer 1996:280)

Therefore, the focus of analysis should be issue specific opportunities that take into account the media and political context at the time a protest action occurs. The recognition of media and political opportunity, in this respect, moves the spotlight away from the creation of opportunities and focuses more on the decisions made by protest groups to act at any given time. This is what Gamson and Meyer talk of as "an unrecognized opportunity is no opportunity at all" (ibid:283).

The choice by protest groups of how and when to act on opportunities can further define the outcomes of collective action and media coverage. The effective timing of protest actions, for instance, to correspond with other high profile events, or capitalising on pre-existing public attitudes means activists can manufacture their own political opportunities. A creative use of communications strategies and protest tactics can be used to enter the media and open political opportunities. Protest groups who are effective in getting their message publicised can create instability in the political system, and prompts members of dominant institutions into taking a position on an issue. This opens up the political opportunity further, because it prompts cleavages between institutional arguments providing a space for protest groups to promote their view of the world. Taking the ideas of political opportunity and the gaps in research around the media's role in political opportunity leads to the formulation of the first RQ:

> RQ1. How do protest groups create, identify, and exploit political and media opportunities?

It follows that the application of media and political opportunities to protest group media and protest tactics is dependent upon what protest action is attempting to accomplish. Protest actions in this case are being used as a political resource.

The theory of political opportunities is not without its detractors, and is subject to three interconnected criticisms: 1) The theory is too all encompassing and includes too many variables; 2) political opportunities suggest causality with respect to the mobilisation of protest groups; 3) political opportunities are assumed to pre-exist. This section will take each of these points in-turn and present the arguments for and against political opportunities. The first is in reference to the perceived all encompassing nature of political opportunities that Goodwin and Jasper describe as a "theoretical Rorschach blot" (1999:36). This is where any variable is seen as a potential political opportunity. The main emphasis of this criticism is recognised by the proponents of political opportunities, as Gamson and Meyer suggest:

> The concept of political opportunity structure is in trouble, in danger of becoming a sponge that soaks up virtually every aspect of the social movement environment […] Used to explain so much, it may ultimately explain nothing at all. (1996:275)

The basis of Goodwin and Jasper's argument is connected to criticism number two, and the use of political opportunities to explain the emergence of social movements. This is where X (political opportunities) will result in Y (social movement mobilisation). This scenario is described by Goodwin and Jasper as an inadequate viewpoint, because it is "not very illuminating when X includes, as it were, everything under the sun" (1999:31). This problem with political opportunities stems from a self prescribed 'definitional dilemma' that rests within the definitions of big and small political opportunity. Too broad a definition and you get the problem of any variable being relevant; too narrow and the opposite is true variables are missed and the analysis is insufficient (ibid:31). This point is countered by Meyer who talks of political opportunities inability to cause protest, and political opportunities should instead be seen as a guide for the "prospects for activist challengers" (1993:455). This is the size of the political opportunity at the time of collective action and is related to the relative success and failure of protest groups.

The final point of criticism is the perception that political opportunities should pre-exist. Goodwin and Jasper point out that "the term 'opportunity' implies a pre-existing desire waiting for a chance at fulfilment", and that changing institutional, cultural and strategic actors have a part to play (1999:37). To counter this argument Gamson and Meyer state that "opportunities open the way for political action, but movements also make opportunities" (1996:276). Protest groups are not wholly reliant on the existence of political opportunities to achieve their aims and goals. Again, this is another point

where the media should be given more prominence, for example the objective of some groups is to use media and protest tactics to gain media coverage, and by extension open political opportunities. The media and political opportunities that are created aids protest groups in meeting their protest objectives. Political and media opportunities is a helpful platform from which to examine a protest groups use and adaptation of media and protest tactics, but identifying the variables and influences on protest groups is dependent on a group's protest aims and goals. The implication is that media and political opportunities are incorporated into a protest group's media and protest tactics. This relates specifically to the choice of using an insider/institutional or an outsider/extra-institutional strategy. These two strategies will be explored in more detail in section 3.1.

2.1.2 The Signalling Model and Resource Mobilisation

To complement the theory of political opportunities this section critically explores Lohmann's signalling model, and McCarthy and Zald's theory of resource mobilisation. This is to further argue the prominent role protest tactics and the media play in communicating contentious politics, and a protest group's effective use of resources when publicising their messages. The signalling model is centred on the revealing of private concerns by the public through collective action, and this is interpreted by dominant institutions based on the size and frequency of protest action (Lohmann 1993:322), or to use a different term the intensity of protest. The main argument of this model is that the bigger the protest the stronger the signal for dominant institutions to act on an issue. Lohmann also contends that there is a threshold that protest action needs to cross in order to be a 'cue' for political decision makers to take notice (Meyer 1993:322). This threshold is not just about the size of collective action it also includes small scale actions over a longer time period. These small scale actions, for instance, a series of direct actions may have a greater impact, and provide a bigger signal to dominant institutions than a mass demonstration (ibid:328). What can be taken from the signalling model is that different protest and media tactics influence the effectiveness of protest groups to highlight an issue.

The signalling model holds a relatively simplistic view of the interactions between protest groups, their protest targets, and media coverage. The media coverage of a protest can act as the signal to protest targets to take action, because the media agenda potentially influences the political agenda. The media's representation of a protest group could conceivably provide a protest target with a negative or positive indication as to whether or not action should be taken on an issue. It is the media and

political opportunities within which collective action occurs, which provide the mechanisms to judge the relative success and failure of protest groups to signal their grievances. The other element to be added to this is the theory of resource mobilisation that relates to the amount of resources available to a protest group. This theory is similar to political opportunities in that it examines the "structural conditions that facilitate the expression of grievances" (McCarthy and Zald 1973:1). The 'expression of grievances' occurs primarily through the mainstream media and the use of media and protest tactics, and means that the media is a protest resource. This is an important part of resource mobilisation, because the tactical repertoires employed by protest groups is seen to affect their growth and decline (McCarthy and Zald 1977:1213). This is what Meyer refers to as a "shift in the research focus from *why* movements emerge to *how*" (2004:127, emphasis in original).

The emergence of groups within resource mobilisation theory is placed into an institutional model based on organisational resources. For instance, the professional skills of a group, the amount of monetary backing they have, and potential to expand. The emphasis is on societal support and the constraints on social movements to create resources and organise protest actions (McCarthy and Zald 1977:1213, 1216). The types of resources mentioned here are not explicitly relevant to all groups, and is a point Eisinger makes by stating that political opportunities are more beneficial than organisation resources:

> The manner in which individuals and groups in the political system behave, then, is not simply a function of the resources they command but of the openings, weak spots, barriers, and resources of the political system itself. (1973:12)

These organisational resources are not fundamentally necessary for a protest group to succeed and highlights the need to emphasise media opportunities, because a lack of resources can be overcome through the use of protest tactics to gain media attention. There is a similar gap in the arguments of resource mobilisation when compared to political opportunities in that the theory is difficult to apply to more radical and decentralised protest groups. The overwhelming focus of resource mobilisation on attracting resources neglects the aims and goals of protest groups by assuming this is what all groups want. McCarthy and Zald argue that "resources must be controlled or mobilized before action is possible" and that "organizational survival" is the primary goal of protest groups (1977:1221, 1226). This ignores the gradual creation, evolution, and disappearance of protest groups over time, and the connections between existing protest groups and the past. What Wall mentions as "protesters rarely start from

scratch" (1999:42). It is for this reason that resource mobilisation should be addressed on a group by group basis because it provides the protest context behind collective action. This is because the resources required by one group may not be required by another, for example, the number of people required on a mass demonstration is far greater than a symbolic direct action to occupy an airports runway.

2.1.3 Defining Success and Failure

The definition of success has been discussed briefly in previous sections of the literature review as issue and protest group specific and is based on the aims and goals of protest groups. How this fits into the definition of 'success' in academic debates is through the assimilation of the different definitions of successful action, and Table 2.1.1 shows the three main interpretations of success. Meyer (2004) takes the predictive elements to success, and the variables that shape a group's achievements i.e. political opportunities. Amenta et al (1992) and Gamson's (1990) focus is comparatively more on the outcomes of collective action, for instance changes in political policy.

Meyer's (2004:126) five factors and the probability and actuality of success	**Gamson (1990:36) perceptions of achievement**	**Amenta et al's (1992:323) 3 levels of success**
Mobilising support.	By historians.	Lowest level – Recognised and acknowledged by targets.
Advancing particular claims rather than others.	By the challenging group.	Middle level – some goals become policy. Obtain the ability to influence public and policymakers.
Cultivating some alliances rather than others.	By the antagonist (the protest group's target).	Highest level – routine access to power. Assimilated into the political system.
Employing particular political strategies and tactics rather than others.	The challenging group's level of satisfaction with its achievement at the end of the challenge.	
Effecting mainstream institutional politics and policy.		

Table 2.1.1 Different interpretations of success in relation to collective action

All three are concerned with the influence of political context on the level of success, and Meyer argues that success is a two part process based on the reaction of protest

groups to political opportunities (2004:140). Using this argument the adaptation of a protest group's tactics becomes increasingly important, because maintaining open media and political opportunities requires the tailoring of media and protest tactics to the prevailing media and political context. A complete solution is not necessarily a classification of success, instead it is more helpful to think of success as "a set of outcomes", where outcomes are the "perception or degree of achievement" (Gamson 1990:28, 36). The three levels, like the theories of political opportunities and resource mobilisation are not applicable to all groups. Political acceptance is at odds with some protest group's aims and goals. The perception of success ought to reflect the aims and goals of protest groups and what they intended their protest actions to achieve. We should also add media coverage to these three interpretations of success. Although, media coverage alone might not change policy it should be seen as a type of success that increases the prominence of an issue.

2.2 Media Framing, Collective Action Frames, and Political Contest

The previous section of the literature review was primarily focused on the political and media context that exists and acts as a backdrop for collective action. This section looks at the defining of issues by the media and protest groups through the use of the concept of framing and debates around media access. The simplest definition of a frame is the defining of an issue from a particular perspective. The affects of media frames on protest group messages are numerous, because messages can be changed, challenged, incorporated, co-opted, depoliticised, ridiculed, and manipulated by the press. The competition between frames is argued as the interaction between protest groups and the mainstream media that manifests itself in the reporting of issues and protest action. The media in this respect represents an arena for debate, and an interface between political actors and the public. The media specifically plays the role of 'validator' of competing frames by influencing "whose views need to be taken seriously" (Gamson and Meyer 1996:290). This makes the media the perfect target for opening up political opportunity, but media access is not a level playing field, as Gamson argues it is "not the flat, orderly and well-marked field in a soccer stadium but one full of hills and valleys, sinkholes, promontories, and impenetrable jungles" (2003:para 43). The media context is constantly changing and just like political opportunities media opportunities can be exploited and created by protest groups.

2.2.1 Media and Protester Framing

The importance framing is the representation of protest group messages by the media, and the impact of protest and media tactics on the framing of issues. The concept of framing in a media context is the "selection and salience" of one issue over another in a news story (Entman 1993:52). These selection processes act as a 'thought organiser', and the consequence of media framing provides one perspective on an issue, in other words:

> Like a picture frame, it puts a border around something, distinguishing it from what is around it. A frame spotlights certain events and their underlying causes and consequences, and directs our attention away from others. (Gamson 2003:para 21)

This picture frame is not a neutral entity, because it provides attention to one interpretation of an issue or as Entman says frames instil an "imprint of power" on a text (1993:55). The framing of issues occurs on three levels: 1) diagnosing causes; 2) making moral judgements; and 3) suggesting solutions (ibid:52). Media frames originate from the ideological viewpoint of the media outlet, and are relatively inconsistent across media outlets. That is not to say that a dominant master frame does not exist. It is just that these overriding frames are not monolithic or impenetrable, and discrepancies in the definitions of issues offer an opportunity for protest groups to highlight their own frames. The interaction of competing frames occurs within the "dominant perception of political context" that constitutes the master frame within which protest groups create and propagate their ideas (Diani 1996:1057). However, Gamson and Meyer criticise the idea of collective action frames for denying protest groups the ability to challenge and change the master frame through protest activity (1996:283). They classify protest groups as "agents of their own history" (ibid:285). This relates to the internal negotiations and decisions taken by protest groups over which messages to promote and what a protest group's interpretation of a message is. The investigation of protest frames leads to the second RQ:

> RQ2. How does a protest group frame their media and political opportunities, messages, goals, and protest actions?

These protest frames are termed 'collective action frames' by Snow and Benford, and they represent a protest group's ability to combine their collective experiences and viewpoints together in a "relatively unified and meaningful fashion" (1992:137-138). These frames exist in the absence of political opportunities within the groups

themselves, but they do require media and political opportunities to be publicised beyond the confines of a protest group. The frames promoted by protest groups are often an attempt at defining an issue, but these frames are competing with the frames publicised by other social actors, such as the media and dominant institutions (Smith et al. 2001:1400). This is where framing is attempting to dictate what and how people think about issues, and it points towards a preferred solution to the problem (ibid:1400). Sireau argues that collective action frames operate on the following three levels:

1) Macro – The overarching statement or goal of a protest group.
2) Meso – The adaptation of collective action frames over time to suit protest events.
3) Micro – The internal communications within a protest group and the audience reception of collective action frames. (Sireau 2009:135)

The three levels above are useful in analysing collective action frames because they bring protest tactics, timing, and the internal decision making process of protest groups into perspective. This allows a more detailed view of collective action frames and looks beyond the overarching message. The message itself can be placed into one of four levels:

1) Outline of the overarching issue that needs to be addressed
2) Describes causalities relating to an issue
3) Attempts to attribute blame for an issue
4) A direct chain of causality to who should be blamed for an issue (Sireau 2009:137)

These levels will be evident in a protest group's communications, and in media coverage should a group be using the media to publicise their messages. The final point to be made about collective action frames relates specifically to a group's framing of success. This is the expectation that a protest group will be successful in their actions, but is based on their aims and goals. The framing of expectations can mobilise people to a cause, change the perception of a political opportunity, and provide individuals with the belief that their actions will make a tangible difference (Sireau 2009:158-159; Gamson and Meyer 1996:286; Klandermans 1986:20, 28). The generation of these expectations is achieved through the use of 'systematic optimistic bias' which overestimates the size and existence of political opportunity (Gamson and Meyer 1996:286). The core of collective action frames tend to overstate the size of political opportunity, because if a protest group is not optimistic the issue may be perceived as a 'lost cause' (ibid:285). In addition to this, Gamson and Meyer talk about optimistic bias, and explain it using the optimist/pessimist glass analogy: "It is not a

matter of seeing the glass as half-full rather than half-empty but seeing it as half-full when it is often 90 percent empty" (ibid:286). These expectations will be evident in the messages of protest groups, but expectations change over time, and are influenced by media and political opportunities, the frequency of media coverage, and the media and protest tactics of a protest group.

2.2.2 Media Prominence and Political Saliency of an Issue and Protest Groups

Following on from media and protest framing this section examines the media prominence and political saliency of protest group messages, and argues that this is where the media becomes increasingly important to protest groups. This is because the media acts as a message carrier for protest groups. The media is able to define what issues should be taken seriously and addressed. The prominence of an issue is affected by the amount of media coverage, the media's explanation of the issues, media and political opportunities, and the influence of a group's media and protest tactics. The gaining of media prominence accomplishes three things: 1) media coverage from one outlet may signal to other media producers that a protest group has the perceived authority to provide credible information on a particular issue (Bennett 1990:106); 2) there is not a monolithic media with a homogeneous audience there are different media outlets targeting different audiences, and consequently there will be varying interpretations of collective action and protest group messages from outlet to outlet (Gamson and Meyer 1996:287). Finally, and most rarely; 3) the media reproduce and promotes a protest group's messages without question (ibid:287). The gaining of media prominence by a protest group arguably increases the potential for greater media opportunities as Gamson states "being visible and quoted defines for other journalists and a broader public who really matters" (2003:para 58). If dominant institutions are brought into, and included in, this argument changes media prominence into political saliency.

Saliency, in this context, is taken to mean the importance of an issue, and how urgently the issue needs addressing. This is the influence the media agenda has on the political agenda, and the protest groups who gain media prominence can potentially succeed in making "'socially invisible' issues politically salient" (Lohmann 1993:329). The amount of news coverage and the influence of the political agenda on protest groups cannot be analysed in isolation. Other environment conditions to consider include the political context at the time of collective action, the issue specific factors that have an impact on media coverage, and a protest group's media influence (Behr and Iyengar 1985:53; Meyer and Minkoff 2004:1461). What is fundamental to pressure politics is that protest

groups who influence the political and media agenda have little control over how an issue is treated. This is not to say that this is a measure of success and failure because as McAdam and Su argue too much attention is paid to policy change in assessing the impact of protest action. They state that this view is "ignoring the fact that agenda setting is both a significant achievement in its own right *and* a prerequisite for policy change" (2002:707, emphasis in original). Put simply, if a protest group makes it into a newspaper this is similar to delivering thousands of informational leaflets, and media coverage may not cause policy change but it is the first step in achieving a group's goals.

To measure the prominence of protest groups in media coverage is to look at Bennett's indexing theory which argues that the mainstream media "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" (1990:106). The basis of the idea is that debate surrounding issues should 'open up' in the media when there is significant dominant institutional dissensus around an issue (ibid:106). This is demonstrated in McLeod and Detenber's research into the television coverage of social protest which found that "the media are more likely to be critical when there is elite conflict within the power structure" (1999:5). If dominant institutional voices speak out against a particular policy or issue then this aspect of the story will be covered in the media (Bennett 1990:113). On the other hand, if there is consensus against a protest group's definition of an issue there will be little or no debate around the solution to an issue (ibid:106).

The complementary theory to indexing is Becker's 'hierarchy of credibility' that refers to "any system of ranked groups, participants take it as given that members of the highest group have the right to define the way things really are" (1967:241). The application of the hierarchy in political situations is to consider political standing what Gamson and Meyer argue is something protest groups "must often struggle to establish it and may require extra institutional collective action to do so" (1996:288). This statement ignores the aims and goals of protest groups, and those who do not with for mainstream political acceptance. Although, when dominant institutions recognise the concerns and criticisms of protest groups increases an issues saliency in the media (Meyer 1993:473). There is a gap in these two theories that relates to collective action and the use of protest and media tactics to increase the prominence of an issue. In publicising their issues protest groups are generating frames that are "actively engaged in the production and maintenance of meaning for constituents, antagonists and bystanders or observers" (Snow and Benford 1992:136). What these protester frames can achieve

is the increased visibility and prominence of an issue in the media. Entman argues that this prominence makes "a piece of information more noticeable, meaningful or memorable to audiences" (1993:53). Furthermore, collective action frames acknowledge the existence of political opportunity but ignore the "contest over the relative opportunity for institutional versus extra institutional actions" (Gamson and Meyer 1996:285). The tactical choices of protest groups are influenced by the issues under protest, the messages chosen, and who the message is intended for.

The conceptualising of tactical choices requires several aspects of protest action to be taken into account and involves "attention to timing, the choice of tactics from within repertoires, the psychology of expectations and surprise, and source of credibility and trust" (Goodwin and Jasper 1999:40), as well as potential media coverage. This leads to the third RQ that is specifically interested in why one tactic or message is chosen over another:

> RQ3. What decisions and negotiations go into the choice of communications strategies and protest tactics?

The success and failure of protest frames requires the tracing of messages through protester communications and into media coverage, but success and failure is dependent on the aims and goals of a protest group's messaging. The inherent danger of a protest groups attempts to enter the mainstream media is that it is difficult for a group to maintain control over their messages. The basis of this danger is found in Wolfsfeld's description of the relationship between the media and protest groups:

> The relative power of either side – a given news medium and a given antagonist – is determined by the value of its services divided by its need for those offered by the other. (2003:84)

Power in this quote refers to "relative dependence" (ibid:84), or more simply who needs who. This equation is decidedly weighted towards the media, because they are not obliged to cover a protest group. Therefore, a protest group's need for media coverage exposes them to a greater risk of exploitation, and the pressure to conform to the requirements of the media. Protest groups can do this by actively considering how their issues fit into what Smith et al called "ongoing media cycles and new production routines" (2001:1401). If the protester frame and the media frame correlate to any extent then it will mean that media opportunities for further press coverage are open. The application of the power equation to the creation of protest group messages is

dependent on who the message is intended for. The targeting of messages can move a message "'up' (to major decision makers) and 'out' (to the public)" (Wolfsfeld 2003:87). Sireau details the different ways for a group to communicate to a variety of audiences:

> … media centres require a different approach based on simple messages and sound-bites; interacting with the public requires more concrete and everyday symbols; interacting with political parties requires framing messages in more ideological language. (2009:87)

This is particularly evident in terms of "how a message or 'signal' is transformed or 'amplified' by the media" (Kitzinger 1999:62). The garnering of media coverage is about more than just publicising a group's existence; it is using the media as a platform for highlighting issues. The media in this respect is a political resource for protest groups, and the barriers to media access can be assailed by media and protest tactics. The media coverage of protest groups relates to the notion of newsworthiness which requires a protest group to be reliable, verifiable, and what Lipsky argues is the premium journalists place on accuracy (1968:1151-1152). On the other hand, Danielian and Page say that media access is often a consequence of organisational resources, i.e. size of membership, monetary funds, and a group's structure (1994; see also McCarthy and Zald 1973, 1977). The consequence of requiring newsworthiness is that protest groups have had to professionalise their media strategies, and "learn the rules" of the mainstream media (McNair 2003:163).

A group's media and political impact is argued by McCarthy and Zald to be dependent on a group's "skill at manipulating images of relevance and support through the communication media" (1973:20; 1977:1215; see also Diani 1996). This creates protest entrepreneurs who in deciding to act see or create media and political opportunities and exploit them using media and protest tactics (Meyer 1993:454; Wall 1999:97). However, depending on the media is a precarious balancing act for protest groups. The choice of media tactics takes into consideration the aims and goals of protest groups that influence the quality and quantity of media attention. The media's role in this relates to a group's ability to maintain control over the underlying message of a campaign. The existence of favourable political and media opportunities, for instance, arguably has a positive bearing on the amount of control a group has over its messages. This requires a protest group to develop and maintain a level of newsworthiness to keep the media interest. The exploration of activist framing allows an insight into the generation of protest frames, and the expectations of success from an activist perspective.

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter has illustrated that political and media opportunities have a major influence on the success and failure of protest groups, and a group's ability to make their framing of an issue the dominant frame. The political opportunities refer to the variables that guide the relative success and failure of protest action. The other important element emphasised here are the effects of media coverage on the political agenda. The successful gaining of media coverage means a protest group increased the probability that an issue defined from their perspective. Political and media opportunities should not be seen as set and constant across different issues. Instead they should be viewed on an issue by issue basis, because the media and political context at the time of collective action changes depending on the issue. These issue specific opportunities emphasise the political and media context at the time of the collective action. It follows that the recognition, creation, and exploitation of media and political opportunities by protest groups is an important element in determining the possible outcomes of collective action. It is at this point that RQ1 can help to fill the gaps in knowledge over how protest groups recognise, create, and exploit media and political opportunities. The aim of this is to increase the importance of the goals of protest groups and take them into account when considering the success and failure of a protest group.

This is especially evident where groups do not seek institutional approval, and increases the importance of identifying the aims and goals of protest. What follows is a detailing of the relationship between protest groups, their protest targets, and the political and media prominence of an issue. The prominence of an issue influences the trajectory of a protest group, and related to their ability to successfully frame an issue. However, protest groups are in competition with other vested interests who also attempt to make their definition of an issue the dominant definition. The interaction between these different definitions occurs primarily through the mass media, and the media's interpretation of issues and protest action occurs through framing. The protest groups' use of framing is of particular interest to RQ2, and the construction of protest messages around an issue or issues. The media and protester frames are not stable and consistent across time or media outlets, and are influenced by media and political opportunities. These opportunities are further affected by a protest group's choice of media strategy and protest tactics and are the basis for RQ3. The decisions behind the type of media and protest tactics used, the timing of an action, and the aims and goals of a protest group is an important determinant in judging the success and failure of protest groups. The next chapter will demonstrate how the choice of media and protest

tactics creates and exploit media and political opportunities. The chapter will also detail the media representation of, and dominant institutional response to, different forms of collective action.

Chapter 3 – Tactical Repertoires: Their Affects on the Message and Reporting of Protest

Introduction

This chapter will examine the media and protest tactics which are used by protest groups to promote their messages and mobilise resources. The response of the media to these tactical approaches is argued to have a positive and negative effect on political debates around an issue, and that the media is often attracted to protest because of its potential for conflict and drama. This chapter will examine the debates surrounding the use of different protest strategies, and the repercussions of the choice of tactics have on the reactions of the media and dominant institutions. The main argument is that the choice of media and protest tactic is dependent on the decisions and issues of a protest group, and that media and political opportunities are a factor in a protest group's decision to act.

The first set of media and protest tactics to be examined will begin with insider and outsider strategies. The insider strategy is an attempt by a protest group to obtain access to the inside of the political structure, and gain the ability to influence protest targets from the inside. The insider strategy places constraints on a group in terms of how antagonistic their media and protest tactics can be, because maintaining an insider status involves preserving a positive relationship with the protest target. Outsider strategies on the other hand, focus more on the use of spectacular events to gain media coverage and influence public perception of an issue. Pressure, in this case, is coming from outside of political structures, but the argument being made is that a mixture of insider and outsider strategies has the greatest potential for the promotion of messages and the achievement of protest group aims and goals. After this I will look specifically at the use of spectacular protest and examine the use of symbolic direct action, disruptive protest, and symbolic violence to discuss the positive and negative effect these protest tactics have on media and political opportunities.

3.1 Insider and Outsider Strategies

The basis of insider and outsider strategies is the perception of protest groups by dominant institutions and the media. This section uses the terms credibility and legitimacy to describe the perception of protest groups by dominant institutions and the media. This not only refers to the protest group itself but the credibility and legitimacy of a group's media and protest tactics and the issue under protest. This section will

demonstrate that this is a precarious aspect of protest politics because credibility and legitimacy influences a protest group's ability to define issues successfully, and potentially hinders media access. The problem protest groups have is they often "fall outside the perimeter of conventional politics, they need to establish and maintain a sense of legitimacy for their issues and participants" (Rojecki 2002:159).

The legitimacy of protest groups, in this context, is based upon their relationship with political decision-makers. In a predominantly centralised power structure it is reasonable to argue that successful political influence often requires access to the inside of political power structures. Therefore, insider status requires the creation of powerful allies and the generation of resources required to influence political decisions. The problem with targeting centralised power structures is it often requires centralised resources (Eisinger 1973:18). The centralised resources mentioned extend to more than monetary resources because powerful political allies also enhances a protest group's political credibility (ibid:18). The attempts at insider access are heavily dependent on the aims, structure, and participants of a group and the protest and media tactics they use to achieve those goals.

This presents a strategic dilemma for protest groups and increases the importance of investigating the aims and goals of protest groups, because the relationship between the tactics used and the choice of protest targets influences the outcomes of collective action (McAdam and Su 2002:717). These choices come from a protest group's consideration of the potential outcomes of one course of protest action over another, which is based upon a cost-benefit analysis of tactics based on what protest groups feel they can realistically achieve. This view represents a much more dynamic view of political opportunity structures, because it recognises the influence of protest action on political opportunities. In other words, the choice of communications strategies and protest tactics "appear more or less desirable, and those choices, in turn, affect the location of political space, and its relative openness inside and outside political institutions" (Gamson and Meyer 1996:278-279). The internal negotiations and decisions taken by protest groups is an important constituent of media and political opportunities.

To illustrate this point Sireau's research into the 2005 Make Poverty History campaign shows that there were internal conflicts over whether or not to use an insider or outsider strategy. The arguments occurred between veteran activists who wanted to directly criticise protest targets, and preferred more antagonistic protest tactics such as

mass demonstration (2009:89). This is compared to the insiders who wished for direct communication with protest targets, and present a softer message to fully exploit the political opportunity open to them (ibid:89). The tensions that exist around the choice of tactic are useful in defining insider and outsider strategies. The media and protest tactics of outsiders is more antagonistic towards centralised political power, and is independent of institutional influence. There are restrictions on outsiders in terms of the outcomes they can expect to achieve by not being close to political decision-makers (Sireau 2009:90; see also Grant 2001:343), and outsider strategies are far more dependent upon the mainstream media and the internet to appeal directly to the public (ibid:90). This opinion of outsider strategies is making an assumption that this closeness with political decision-makers is what outsider groups are aiming to achieve. It provides a further opportunity to investigate the aims and goals of protest groups to address this assumption of what outsiders are attempting to achieve.

In comparison, an insider strategy changes a protest group's approach to the media, and dilutes their protest objectives (Manning 2001:145). This is not to say that insider strategies ignore the media, on the contrary, insider status potentially changes the perception of the media and dominant institutions towards a protest group. However, insider status does place tactical constraints on a group in terms of how antagonistic their messages and protest tactics towards their protest target. The use of tactics that are too aggressive and the insider might lose their privileged access, and insider access arguably diminishes the autonomy and independence of a group (Goodwin and Jasper 1999:38; see also Kriesi et al. 1992). This is what Meyer argues as "institutionalising dissent" (2004:130). The gaining of insider status is just one example of exploiting political opportunity, but this type of opportunity only remains open as long as the issue maintains a high profile.

This is where media coverage and media opportunities come back into the argument. Thrall links the frequency of news coverage to the organisational resources of a group, and talks about the 'news capability' of protest group (2006:410). This capability is taken to mean the capacity of a group to generate media coverage, but as Gamson and Meyer argue the "media emphasis on spectacle privileges extra-institutional action" (1996:290). In other words, to gain media attention protest groups need to use stunts and protest events. The opportunities presented by this course of action is only viable for as long as media attention is attracted and held (Gamson and Meyer 1996:288; Thrall 2006:407). This is a key problem with the outsider approach, because linking media opportunities explicitly to political opportunity means that once media attention begins to wane media and political opportunities begin to close. The importance of

media coverage to protest group actions cannot be underestimated, and it is the media coverage that collective action generates which is at the core of RQ4:

> RQ4. How does the media frame protest groups in response to their messages, goals, and protest actions?

The important point to be made when analysing the media coverage of protest groups is it should not be assumed that the aim of media and protest tactics is just about gaining media attention, or political acceptance. This raises ideas around how to judge the success and failure of protest groups. If Gamson's argument that "a demonstration with no media coverage at all is a non-event" (2003:para 68) was followed then a vast array of protest groups would be deemed failures for not generating media coverage. However, the aims of some groups are not necessarily geared towards garnering media attention which means Gamson's argument does not hold true, but these goals should be taken into account when analysing protest groups.

It is also important to note that media attention alone does not equal success, as demonstrated by Rosie and Gorringe's study of the 2005 Group of 8 (G8) summit protests (2009a:36). Their research criticised Make Poverty History's idea of 'success' termed 'opportunities to see' which assumed that any media coverage mentioning the campaign was positive (ibid:36). This created a conflict in media coverage that "illuminates a dynamic between protest 'event' and campaign 'causes' in media accounts", and meant that "debates over quality are marginalized", or creates the assumption that bad news is good news (ibid:36-37). The split in opinion over what constitutes success offers an important opportunity to place an increased focus on the goals of a protest group, and the aims of specific protests to better understand the success and failure of protest groups.

3.1.1 Dominant Institutional Reaction to Collective Action

The reaction of dominant institutions to protest action relates directly to the opening and closing of political opportunities. This section will detail the range of responses towards collective action by dominant institutions. This will demonstrate how these reactions influence political opportunities, for example, when a protest target reacts positively to a protest group it potentially increases the expectations of success and encourages others to join a group (Meyer 2004:141; Wall 1999:131). The different ways protest targets respond to protest groups is through facilitation or repression, political concessions, and co-optation, or a combination of any and all.

Facilitation and repression are seen to alter the cost of collective action. The facilitation of protest lowers the cost of collective action, and repression raises the cost of collective action (Wall 1999:125). Concessions are arguably a measure of successful protest action that stems from public support but result in protest targets offering "symbolic or material rewards" (Lipsky 1968:1146-1147). The use of concessions by dominant institutions, Amenta et al, argue is to avoid providing a complete solution to an issue, but still appear to be acting on an issue (1992:329). The final type of reaction is the co-optation of a campaign by dominant institutions. This is the recognition of a protest group and the issues, but instead of addressing an issue a protest group's messages and claims are appropriated to garner public sympathy (Meyer 1993:457, 474; Lipsky 1968:1157). This is the use of a protest group's success by dominant institutions to push their own messages, and creates a political bandwagon. The type of response by protest targets leads directly to RQ5 and an examination protest outcomes in terms of political debates, discussions, and reactions to an issue:

> RQ5. What is the response of dominant institutions to a protest group's communications strategies and protest tactics?

The preceding discussion has talked of insider and outsider as mutually exclusive strategies, but this view implies a narrow view of protest groups. These strategies can be combined to fully exploit media and political opportunities, but the choice of tactic means protest groups have to consider a number of different variables before deciding which protest and media tactics to use. This approach is fundamentally based on a protest group's aims and goals, and is a cost-benefit analysis of what a protest group can realistically achieve with the resources available to them.

3.1.2 The Spectacle, Image Politics, and Media Coverage

The following section of the thesis will focus on outsider strategies and how they are reported in the press, and explore the influence of collective action on media and political opportunities. It looks explicitly at media-centric protest tactics to investigate the key arguments around the use of spectacular stunts, and the media focus on controversy and conflict rather than the issues under protest. The spectacle is also seen to result in a negative portrayal of protest and protesters (Gitlin, 1980; DeLuca 1999; Wahl-Jorgensen 2003). The argument put forward takes these debates around the reporting of spectacular protest and re-emphasises the need to recognise the decision to act and the aims and goals of protest action. To illustrate this point a protest

group's use of stunts and image events recognises and exploits news values, and what Gamson and Mayer argue is the primary news values of protest is the images and spectacle it creates:

> Spectacle means drama and confrontation, emotional events with people who have fire in the belly, who are extravagant and unpredictable. This puts a high premium on novelty, on costume, and on confrontation. Violent action in particular has the most of these media valued elements. Fire in the belly is fine, but fire on the ground photographs is better. Burning buildings and burning tires make better television than peaceful vigils and orderly marches. (Gamson and Meyer 1996:288)

This media interest in spectacle appeals to the visual aspect of news reporting. In keeping with this argument Eisinger proposes that protest is inherently "disruptive in nature" (1973:13), whereas Lipsky talks of protest being "characterised by showmanship or display of an unconventional nature" (1968:1145). The ever present danger of relying on media coverage raises one of Gamson's four dilemmas. The validation dilemma becomes apparent in the "danger that mere coverage becomes an end in itself rather than a means to gaining standing and greater prominence for one's preferred frame" (2003:para 69). The fundamental element of the validation dilemma is that "the media spotlight validates the movement as an important player" (Gamson and Meyer 1996:285), and has a part to play in protest goals. The adaptability of protest tactics and adaptability to political and media opportunities means varying tactics and protest targets to do what Smith et al call "create what appear to be new hooks" for the media to engage with (2001:1402). This puts a protest group's preferred frame into competition with the news values of the mainstream media, and what Gamson states as the "commercial media emphasise entertainment values relative to journalistic values, media strategies may try to satisfy these entertainment needs" (2003:para 69). The spectacle feeds the media's need for entertainment and provides dramatic images to accompany reports.

There is a common theme throughout the research of protest which argues that the more spectacular a protest tactic the greater the probability that protesters are politicised in a delegitimizing way (Rosie and Gorringe 2009a; Wykes 2000; Thomas 2008). This helps bring back the theory of media framing into the argument, because the framing of protest occurs in one of two ways. The media coverage is either episodic or thematic, but these two frames are not mutually exclusive. Iyengar defines episodic framing as taking the form of "a case study or event-orientated report" where public issues are spoken about in terms of "concrete instances" (1991:14). Conversely, thematic news frames allow issues to gain a "more general or abstract context" and

explains the “general outcomes or conditions” (ibid:14) around an issue. The theme/episode dynamic was also used by Smith et al in their research which stated that protest groups seek “*thematic* media attention to some broad social concern by generating an *episode* or event that may be newsworthy” (2001:1404, emphasis in original). They saw the relationship as episodic reporting leading to thematic coverage, for example a spectacular tactic will initially be reported as episodic, but thematic coverage will increase over time.

This relates directly to the messages put forward by protest groups and demonstrates the effect protest and media tactics has on the reporting of protest groups. The tailoring of messages in a media focused protest strategy aims to open up media and political opportunities by emphasising the urgent need to tackle an issue:

> Appeal to both the mass media and the general public at the same time, movement organizers must find ways to link these chronic problems with some more concrete, tangible event or focus. In other words, they must try to repackage what they see as an ongoing, systemic problem (e.g., poverty, racism) into an "acute" issue that demands urgent attention on a crowded social agenda. (Smith et al. 2001: 1408)

Relating this point to specific tactics demonstrates how the novel becomes incorporated into protest events or choosing the “spectacular over the mundane” (Rosie and Gorringe 2009a:37). The intrinsic use of the theatrical causes protesters to become actors on the media stage. This leads to an increasing need for activists to stay in character or risk losing media interest. Gitlin argues that this is one of the main problems of spectacular tactics, because collective action becomes personalised and activists become “celebrated radicals become radical celebrities; four-star attractions in the carnival of distracting and entertaining international symbols” (1980:162). These distractions separate a protest group from their motives and political objectives. Moreover, the continued use of the spectacle creates a “cultivated notoriety” (Manning 2001:145). A continued use of stunts, in this respect, becomes expected by the media, and a group is characterised by past events thereby dulling the intended aims of protest. This raises the importance of the conscious decisions protest groups make with regards to the spectacle and image politics, and what spectacular stunts set out to achieve. This is because media coverage is not necessarily the main goal of protest.

3.1.3 Using High Profile Personalities as a Tactic

The next tactic under consideration is the use of celebrities and politicians to raise the media profile of a campaign. The effects of celebrities and politicians involvement in a campaign on media coverage will be shown to cause issues and protest groups to be personalised. The high profile of celebrities and politicians can create a distraction to the issues under protest, and that the presence of a celebrity or politician does aid in publicising a campaign, but it does not necessarily result in a 'pied piper' effect. Nevertheless, the main argument put forward is that the choice of contacting, gaining, and exploiting celebrity and politician support is the decision of a protest group, and is an acceptance of the inherent risks involved. This section then takes the use of high profile personalities and moves the focus onto individual protesters who become the personification of a group. This explicitly relates the media strategy chosen by a group, and the potential outcomes of whether or not spokespeople are used.

The use of celebrities is an attempt to take advantage of the media profile of a celebrity and aids in the publicising of the issues (Gitlin 1980:148-149). A celebrity's relationship with protest groups is argued, somewhat cynically, as a way for celebrity's to increase their socially conscious profile and enhance their celebrity (Pompper 2003:149-150). It is exploiting a celebrity's media appeal through association. McCarthy and Zald talk about a relationship that is similar to celebrity endorsements in advertising (1977:1231). The resulting media coverage of the tactical use of celebrity is heavily dependent on the profile of the celebrity, and the advantage of their use to a protest group is celebrity involvement is rarely questioned by the media (Lester 2006). The use of celebrity opens media opportunities by increasing the newsworthiness of a protest group, and this produces the type of coverage that frames a group as possessing a clear message and sizeable campaign (ibid:917). The negative aspect of celebrity is that their fame can garner all of the media focus, and places the celebrity personality above the issues (Pompper 2003:160). As a result, the choice of celebrity can be more important than the message. If the media has any reason to politically deconstruct and criticise a chosen celebrity they cease to be an effective political symbol, and instead become a legitimate political target (Lester 2006:917).

A comparable situation lies in alliances with politicians. Murray et al's research into the coverage of dissent around the 2003 Iraq War found that the use of politicians has a similar impact on protest and media coverage as celebrities and their fame (2008). The media's attention was dependent upon the relative power of the person who spoke, and the greater their influence over policy the more high profile they would appear

(ibid:21). The advantage of this type of strategy is it opens both media and political opportunities. Politicians by their very nature are already on the political inside and open avenues that protest groups can exploit. The disadvantages of this tactic is similar to the use of the spectacle and relates to political dislocation, because the "higher profile the celebrity, the more news coverage a campaign wins – but the more the underlying causes of the campaign are obscured" (Rosie and Gorringe 2009a:37). This causes politics to become trivialised, and the image matters more than policy and superficiality overtakes rational political argument (Street 2001:185; Sireau 2009:177). When protest groups gain a higher profile may lead to celebrities and politicians allying themselves with a campaign. This co-optation can happen without the protest group being approached first, and the extent of co-optation could potentially affect a protest group's control over their messaging.

The embodiment of a campaign by celebrities or politicians reflects the occasions when protesters become celebrities, and when this happens activists become the personification of a campaign. To illustrate this point during the mid-nineties road protests in Britain when an activist named 'Swampy' was involved in protesting against the expansion of Manchester Airport in 1997 (Wykes 2000:73). He became a by-word for environmental direct action and over the course of his protest the media frame shifted from one of protest to one focused on the lifestyles of young activists. The focus on activists' private lives disconnected the protest from the issues which "dislocated the debate from the public to the private" (ibid:85). This point highlights the decision protest groups make with regards to their media tactics, and the choice of whether or not to use spokespeople and professional media techniques, such as, press releases, set messages, and sound bites.

This demonstrates the danger inherent in not possessing clearly defined leadership or spokespeople, because the media will effectively target someone to provide a face for a campaign (Anderson 2003:128). The perils of having someone chosen as a figurehead by the media are an ever present danger. In what McCurdy argues is the "power of media selected 'leaders' becomes disproportionate, abused or both" (2010:51). One example of non-hierarchical organising is the loose coalition that protested on the streets of Seattle in 1999 against the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The size and lack of figureheads within the coalition may have deflected potential media criticism by providing no central figure as a target, and with no singular ideology and a lack of visible leaders Rojecki observed that a "multi-headed protest hydra" was created (2002:162). This meant that the groups present could not be painted as a monolithic threat. This section has presented the tactical dilemma in using

one media tactic over another, and the potential influence these choices have on media and political opportunities.

3.2 The Media Strategies and Protest Tactics of Direct Action Groups

This section of the literature review examines the protest groups who are antagonistic to dominant institutions and possess a distrust of the mainstream media, but are not necessarily averse to using the media for attention. This focus on more radical groups is to address the theoretical gaps in political opportunity and the assumptions made about the value of media coverage. This line of argument is taken to reinforce the prominence of the aims of protest groups should have on the interpretation of a protest group's success and failure. The different attitudes of radical groups towards the mainstream media, Rucht argues, are a response to a lack of media coverage called the Quadruple A:

1) Abstention – Following successive negative experiences at trying to influence the media a movement withdraws from making any further attempts.
2) Attack – An explicit critique and protest action against the mainstream media.
3) Adaptation – Acceptance or the exploitation of the mass media and its rules and criteria that govern the ability to provide positive coverage.
4) Alternatives – The creation of an independent media, from leaflets and zines, to websites and online forums. In order to compensate for a lack of media coverage and correct the distortions portrayed by the press. (2004:36-37)

The combination of two of the above can lead to the following types of action; 1) abstention and alternatives leads to inward action; 2) attack and adaptation is purely outward; 3) adaptation and alternatives occurs only with adequate resources; and finally 4) abstention and attack occurs when little or no resources are present (ibid:37). This leads to the choice protest groups have to make with regards to their media strategies, and is something that generates considerable debate within social movements. To illustrate this point, an umbrella network of various protest groups called Dissent! who protested against the G8 summit in Scotland in 2005. Dissent! took its origins and inspiration from the antinuclear movement, and later the environmental direct action movement from the late 1960s to the 1990s, the British anti-roads movement of the early 1990s, and Global Day of Action Against Capitalism in London's financial district in June 1999 (McCurdy 2010:46; Trocchi 2005:63).

The work of McCurdy examined the attitude of activists in the Dissent! network towards the use of the media as a strategy for publicity, and challenges the idea that a binary argument exists within activist circles between pro and anti-media activists (2010:43). McCurdy found that activists were both either media averse and hostile towards the media, or saw the press as a necessary evil. There appeared to be a third more pragmatic view of the mainstream media that is based on three main beliefs:

> First, media are viewed as sites of social struggle. Second, the 2005 G8 Summit as a media event provided a political opportunity. And, third, alternative media have a complimentary role to mainstream media in articulating protest. (McCurdy 2010:44)

The second part of these three beliefs is particularly important because it demonstrates recognition of political opportunity, and the use of protest tactics is to fully exploit this opportunity. International summits also offer substantial media opportunities for protest groups because a large global media presence is often present to cover a summit. However, McCurdy argues that engaging with the mainstream media is not a universally accepted tactic, but is more of a 'strategic necessity' at a time of "political opportunity afforded by a highly mediated event" (ibid:44). It is not about whether or not a protest group should or should not use the media; it is that activists using the media have the opportunity to get their voices heard.

The media strategy of Dissent! is detailed in a collection of essays called *Shut Them Down!* (Harvie et al. 2005). A number of contributors to the book took issue with the media tactics of Dissent! because in the absence of a clear media strategy the only people speaking for Dissent! were the police and the media (Trocchi 2005:71). This is backed by McCurdy's research where anti-media attitudes are found to be counterproductive, and that withdrawal from the press does not stop media coverage instead it allows for the police and media to speak for protest groups (2010:53). This highlights the need for some kind of communications strategy and the danger of abstention from the press, but it takes a concerted effort to enter the media and can yield results and press coverage. There were activists within Dissent! who wished for a more open relationship with the press and formed the Counterspin Collective. Their aims were to provide a measured and targeted critique of the G8, and to rebut press criticism of the protests (Counterspin Collective 2005:322). The Counterspin Collective were relatively successful, for instance they managed to publish an article in the *Guardian* in February of 2005 entitled "The First Embedded Protest: Live 8 and G8 Are Attempts to Hijack Justice Campaigns" (Summer and Jones 2005). The types of protest and media tactics groups such as Dissent! use has a distinct part to play in the

frequency of media coverage and the extent to which a protest group's actions are contextualised.

3.2.1 Symbolic Direct Action and Disruptive Protest

The final protest tactics to be examined are the use of symbolic direct action, disruptive, and violent protest. The argument presented is that these spectacular tactics gain media coverage through the conflict and dramatic imagery the tactics create. Moreover, the choice of protest groups to use direct action and disruptive protest is explained as groups wanting to provoke a response from their protest targets. It does not matter if this reaction is positive or negative because direct action forces issues into the open and prompts people to take a position on an issue. The purpose of direct action is detailed in the work of Doherty et al who argue that direct action is used because it has "a direct effect on the company or the state", and this is regardless of gaining media coverage (2003:676). This highlights that the media is not at the centre of every group's tactics, but gaining media coverage does make it possible for the public to be aware of a campaign and potentially gains support for a group (ibid:673). The main attributes of the tactic are described as having a "carnivalesque emphasis on symbol, theatre, and humour" (ibid:676). The issues behind direct action are more radical than mainstream party politics, and for this reason the media reporting of protest does not necessarily allow for the articulation of these ideas, because "radical ideas require more space than events" (ibid:675-676).

The tactic of direct action can be utilised across a sequence of protests that occur over a longer period of time as Lohmann argues "a small number of political actions may have a large impact on public opinion" (1993:328). A sequence of actions in terms of media opportunities offers the potential to garner media coverage over a longer period, and activists have the opportunity to create a narrative based on the issues. The onus is on a direct action group to create media space for themselves and their arguments. Direct action in this sense provides a different interpretation of success and failure compared to less radical groups, because what direct action seeks to do is "expose what are seen as injustices" (ibid:673-674). The more confrontational aspect of direct action McAdam and Su describe as 'disruptive' and identify four distinct features of this type of protest:

1) The use of violent tactics by demonstrators.
2) The use of violence by law enforcement personnel.
3) Property damage as a result of the protest.

4) Injuries resulting from protest. (McAdam and Su 2002:701)

They go further to mention that disruptive protest sits on a fine line between threatening a political target and persuading a political target (ibid:702). Tactics like direct action and disruptive protest have potentially very high costs to the individual taking part, and arguably comprise of cost-benefit calculations by protest groups. The position of a tactic on the high and low cost scale is a conscious part of the decision making behind what protest tactic to use (McCarthy and Zald 1977:1218; Klandermans 1986:19; Kriesi et al. 1992:225; Wall 1999:125). The use of direct action is to 'maximise the benefits' of protest by reducing the relative costs of action and, more importantly, increase the moral or financial costs of the protest target (Wall 1999:41). The benefit of direct action is greatest in relation to media opportunities where the spectacular nature of the tactic plays directly into news values, and has the ability to garner a lot of press coverage. However, the framing of direct action in the press has a tendency to focus on the drama but often ignores the underlying issues, and the media coverage of direct action will now be addressed.

3.2.2 Media Coverage of Symbolic Direct Action and Disruptive Protest

The media coverage of collective action is an important element in the wider context of media and political opportunities. This section looks specifically at the media coverage of symbolic direct action and disruptive protest to illustrate the various media reactions to these tactics. The examination of media coverage is described by Rosie and Gorringe as a media context which is "essential to a full understanding of any given protest" (2009b:2.9). The media context and the framing of collective action creates a number of different issues, and contributing factors such as referencing the past, and a concentration on the new and novel. To illustrate this point, Rosie and Gorringe's article written following the 2009 G20 protests in London posited that protest groups involved in the creation of protest were ignored in favour of more, as they call it, "extreme" elements (ibid:3.9). They describe the media coverage as attempting to contextualise a mass demonstration by locating it within historical references, but the references selected focus are events that were characterised by violence (ibid:3.9). Secondly, Doherty et al point to anti-roads tunnel protests at Fairmile, Devon in 1997 that were reported extensively and given context, but when the same tactic was used elsewhere it did not create anywhere near the same amount of impact (2003:675). This demonstrates the success and failure of utilising the same tactics, or a variety of tactics to achieve media coverage. This is dependent upon the media context at the time of collective action.

A large part of protest group's attempts to break through media conventions are a result of media tactics that have evolved following a group's previous experience of media coverage. The consistent exploitation of media and political opportunities requires the adaption of media and protest tactics to changing situations. This variation in protest tactics led Wall to compare protest action to a 'performance' where "activism, even in its most serious form, is a method of performance that must be developed and improvised" (1999:96). The sixth and final RQ is developed from the arguments around the tactical adaptability of protest groups, the impact of media coverage, and the opening and closing of political opportunities on media and protest tactics:

> RQ6. How are media coverage and the response of protest targets fed back into a protest group's choice of communications strategies and protest tactics?

The final part of this section examines the use and media coverage of symbolic property damage and violence to fully appreciate the range of protest tactics available. The term violence in this instance is defined as "deliberate physical injury to property or persons" (Gamson 1990:74). This is where the dividing line between the costs of collective action and the benefits of political protest lie as Eisinger argues violent protesters "have essentially thrown cost considerations to the winds" (1973:13). Taking this differentiation further Kriesi et al describe five broad forms of protest action that increase in their radical and violent nature:

1) Direct democratic events (such as a vote)
2) Demonstrative events (such as petitions and demonstrations)
3) Confrontational events (such as blockades and occupations)
4) Events of light violence (such as violent demonstrations and limited damage to objects)
5) Heavy violence (bombings, arson and violence against persons). (Kriesi et al. 1992:228)

The impact of the appearance of violence at a protest has a severe impact on the nature of media coverage, and the response of dominant institutions to collective action. The media coverage in the days and months before a mass demonstration has a particularly telling impact on the media's perception of a protest after it occurs. This is what Rosie and Gorringe state as "anticipatory coverage is, if anything more important than how an event itself is reported" (2009b:2.9). The extent to which an anticipation of violence and disruption becomes a dominant theme of media reporting decreases the attention on an issue, and moves the focus onto the protesters. Atkinson's examination of Mayday protests in London in 2001 showed that the stories accompanying the protests failed to raise questions about demonstrators' civil liberties, and instead

focused mainly on a fear of violence and security (2001:147-148). In comparison, Wahl-Jorgensen examined the dominant themes surrounding the same Mayday protest and found that they fell into three distinct categories:

1) Law and order – Protesters as a problem of policing.
2) Economy – The negative impact of protest on the national economy.
3) Spectacle – Focus on the irrational and spectacular aspects of Global Justice activism. (2003:131)

What she also found was that some reporting went against these representations, and the media expressed both a sympathy and a recognition of the protest and its arguments (ibid:131). Furthermore, it was discovered that there was an over emphasis on the systemic belittling, ridicule, depoliticising, and a preoccupation with the consequences of protest (ibid:142). The issues at the protest became divorced because the spectacle attracted the majority of media attention, but when conflict happens on a protest it generates coverage. The perpetrators of violence and the descriptions of their acts are often framed as deviant, and unrepresentative of the wider public. The protesters' way of life and personal values are seen as detached from the status quo and pose a threat to societal norms, and as a consequence a protest group's politics are perceived as illegitimate by dominant institutions (Gitlin 1980:152).

When an act of violence occurs during a demonstration this act becomes the dominant framing of protest. The use of violence Gamson sees is a sign of "frustration, desperation, and weakness" (1990:81). If these frustrations lead to violence then the reaction of the police and other dominant institution will mostly likely be repression, but this repression simply attracts more media attention towards a protest group (ibid:81). The result of such repression means that violence does not always result in negative media coverage. In their research of the violence at the WTO meeting in Seattle in 1999 DeLuca and Peeples found that rather than distracting from the issues, violence in Seattle gave a voice to the voiceless, and opened up a debate around WTO policy and the actions of police (2002). These types of tactics constituted the "necessary ingredients for compelling the whole world to watch" (ibid:130). The division of media attention did not succeed in "stealing the limelight of legitimate protest, the compelling images of violence and disruption increased the news hole and drew more attention to issues" (ibid:139-142). This demonstrates that violence in Seattle served a paradoxical role in the coverage of the protests.

Consequently, this shows that violence does not completely close off media opportunities. However, the use of symbolic violence does make it more difficult to open political opportunities and keep them open. It is unlikely that disruptive violence will lead to political and social change, but it does signal a clear sign that an issue exists. The affect an existing political opportunity on tactical choice is argued by Wall as creating a sense of political 'realism' that a group's goals can be achieved, but the absence of opportunity increases the attraction and internal support for direct action within protest groups (1999:120, 137). The tactical use of symbolic direct action, violence, and disruptive protest suggests that in the absence of political opportunity protest groups have less to lose, for instance mainstream political support. The use of an outsider strategy against a protest target is defined by how antagonistic and confrontational the tactics are. The choice of tactic considers the goals of a protest group, their protest aims on an action by action basis, their attitudes towards the political system, and whether or not they are seeking media and political acceptance. Therefore, the tactical choices made by protest groups are influenced by political and media opportunities, but the assessment of a group's success and failure should include the aims and goals of protest groups.

3.3 Conclusion

The argument developed in chapter 2 was that media and political opportunities provide the media and political context from which to view collective action, and the influence context has on the success and failure of protest groups to achieve their aims. The negotiations and decisions behind a protest group's tactical approach give a protest a tactical context. It follows that where protest action lies between direct democracy events and heavy violence has important ramifications for media and political opportunities. Chapter 3 took the tactical context and applied it to the choice of protest action taken by a group, and examined the impact of different media and protest tactics has on dominant institutional and media responses to protest action. The first tactics considered were the use of insider and outsider strategies. The successful attainment of political insider access was shown to increase the media and political opportunities available to a group. This occurs through the increased media perception that they are able to speak with authority on an issue. This strategy however, places tactical and messaging constraints on a protest group, and the extent to which a group can be critical of their protest targets and how confrontational their protest tactics can be.

The outsider approach in comparison enables protest groups to be more antagonistic towards their protest targets, and allows the use of protest tactics based on the spectacle. The use of symbolic direct action, disruptive protest, and symbolic violence has the ability to open media opportunities and generate a lot of media coverage. The disadvantages of the more confrontational protest tactics often causes the media to focus on the spectacular aspects of protest action, rather than providing context to issues or messages of protest. The media coverage of different protest tactics provides prominence and contextualisation of the issues under protest, but the value of this coverage to protest groups is based on a group's aims and goals. It is media coverage and the framing of protest action that creates RQ4 and the response of the media to different protest and media tactics.

In addition to the media's reaction to collective action there is a dominant institutional response to protest groups, and this reply ranges between facilitation or repression, political concessions, and co-optation. These reactions are the basis of RQ5 which questions how dominant institutions respond to a challenge by protest groups. The argument being that the reactions of the media and dominant institutions contributes to the level of media and political opportunities available to a protest group. If a protest group obtains favourable media coverage and political opportunities may open, and protest groups will be facilitated or offered concessions by their protest target. On the other hand, unfavourable media coverage and political opportunities may close leading to the repression of collective action. The success and failure of protest groups should be judged against a group's aims and goals. The outcome of collective action in terms of media and dominant institutional reactions potentially impacts on the future media and protest tactics used by a group, and this is the basis of RQ6. The adaptability and reflexivity of media and protest tactics demonstrates the interplay between protest groups, media and political opportunities, and the attempts by protest groups to achieve their goals. The communications strategies and protest tactics covered in this chapter reveals the need to investigate a range of tactical choices, and the reactions of the media and dominant institutions to collective action. This aids in further contextualising the success and failure of protest groups and the achievement of their stated goals.

Chapter 4 - Research Aims and Methodology

This chapter seeks to specify and outline the research aims and methodology with respect to the six underlying RQs of the thesis. These six questions will be taken in turn and a suitable methodology will be deployed to best answer each question. This chapter will be structured around the RQs and grouped into two sections based on the selected methods to be used. What has been covered in the two literature review chapters provides the foundations for the overarching aim of this thesis. This is to examine and theorise about the interactions between protest groups, their political targets, and the mainstream media. This thesis pays particular attention to the tactical repertoires and media strategies of three specific protest groups, and how their messages are transmitted through protest action and into mainstream media coverage and political debates. The fundamental argument advanced is that the relative success and failure of protest action is based on a group's goals, and lies in the extent to which issues and the reasons behind protest are explained in the mainstream media. This will also include the reaction of dominant institutions to a protest group's tactics, and the political debates surrounding the issues under protest. Furthermore, protest action is situated within a wider context of media and political opportunities, and it is these opportunities that influence the decision making, targeting, and type of media and protest tactics used by protest groups. How these different elements interact with each other and their influence on the relative success and failure of protest campaigns will be uncovered by the following six questions:

RQ1. How do protest groups create, identify, and exploit political and media opportunities?
RQ2. How does a protest group frame their media and political opportunities, messages, goals, and protest actions?
RQ3. What decisions and negotiations go into the choice of communications strategies and protest tactics?
RQ4. How does the media frame protest groups in response to their messages, goals, and protest actions?
RQ5. What is the response of dominant institutions to a protest group's communications strategies and protest tactics?
RQ6. How are media coverage and the response of protest targets fed back into a protest group's choice of communications strategies and protest tactics?

These six questions are focused on what Meyer and Minkoff refer to as the "interplay of opportunity, mobilization, and political influence" (2004:1485), and the relationship between protest groups their protest targets and the media. It is important to reiterate what is meant by political opportunities and political space: "the institutional and political factors that shape social movement options" (Meyer 1993:455). Political

opportunity is based on the structural and general openings for political change that is communicated by the political system (Gamson and Meyer 1996; Sireau 2009; Meyer 2004). The figure 4.1.1 below shows a simplified representation of how protest groups, the mainstream media, and political opportunities interact with each other. It demonstrates the positive and negative influence that these political actors have on each other. The mechanisms by which this happens relates to their respective outputs i.e. media coverage, a protest group's communications and protest tactics, the response of dominant institutions to collective action, and political consensus or dissensus.

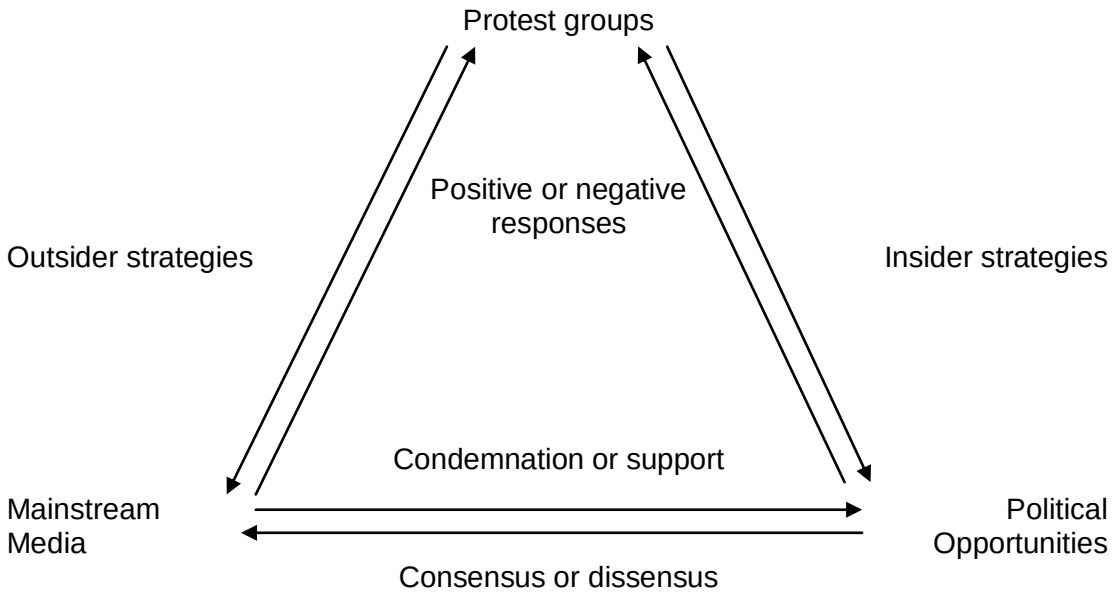


Figure 4.1.1 A simplified representation of the interactions between different political actors and protest groups

In order to investigate these interactions and mechanisms fully a wide range of materials from protest groups, the mainstream media, and dominant institutions is required. This will demonstrate how activists represent themselves and their issues, the media representation and interpretation of protest action, and the reactions of dominant institutions. This includes protest group communications both online and leaflets, newspaper coverage, and transcripts of debates and documents around the issue from within centres of political power i.e. local council, regional assembly and national parliaments. When relevant to the particular group under investigation documents from the police were also examined. These were collected and analysed using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. The protest groups chosen and the time periods to be examined are as follows:

Group Name	Save the Vulcan	Plane Stupid	G20 Meltdown
Structure and Location of Groups	Local campaign group based in Cardiff, and consisting of a central committee of 5 key members.	A national collection of groups operating under the Plane Stupid brand. Uses non-hierarchical decision making, and regional groups communicate with each other.	An umbrella organisation of approximately 65 national groups. Based in London, they used non-hierarchical decision making.
Group Aims	A locally focused, community campaign attempting to stop the demolition of a Victorian era public house.	A direct action approach, primarily campaigning against the expansion of Britain's airports, explicitly linking the growth in aviation to climate change.	Consisting of a mass march with a direct action element to it. Their main concerns were around war, climate chaos, financial crimes, land borders, and celebrating the 360th anniversary of the Diggers.
Reason for Selection	Gained a high media and political profile, garnering favourable local press, despite very little resources and a relatively non-confrontational approach.	Part of the ongoing direct action environmental movement in Britain. With a distinct media focus using direct action stunts to get their messages across whilst generating a lot of national press coverage.	Fits into the sequence of anti-capitalist summit protests around the world, which first gained international prominence at the WTO meeting in 1999 in Seattle, Washington.
Sample Time span	Sept '08 – May'10	Feb '08 – June '09	Jan '09 – June '09

Table 4.1.1 Background, aims and justification for studying each protest group

These three groups were chosen because they differ in terms of protest tactics and the issues they focused on. These inherent differences are expected to have an influence on each group's media and political opportunities. The sampling period for each group is centred on the time span covering when each group were most active. These time periods were determined by examining the frequency of media coverage through a Nexis search and the online presence of each group to ascertain when they were most active. The Save the Vulcan campaign and G20Meltdown time periods include the inception of each group. The sample for Plane Stupid was taken from one month before their high profile action on the roof of the Houses of Parliament, and finishes one month after a major government decision on airport expansion. The institutional documents were sampled during the same time periods and up to six months after to allow for the time taken to produce and publish these documents. The documents were

gathered using internet searches on parliamentary, London Assembly, Welsh Government, local council, and police websites for each group's name, issues, and documents relating to the protest groups around the time of collective actions.

Finally, to investigate each of the RQs empirically several different methods will be used. In the interest of validity and accuracy of results multiple forms of data analysis need to be considered for reasons of triangulation. This multi-method approach allows the subsequent data to be supported by other findings, which in-turn increases the validity of the research (Denscombe 2003:132). The different types of analysis used are content and framing analysis, interviews and ethnography. The next two sections of this chapter 4.1 and 4.2 will outline the methods and will group the RQs together in terms of how they will be investigated. RQs 2, 4, and 5 will be analysed using content analysis and an examination of media and collective action frames. The results of these RQs will help inform the next set of methods, which are semi-structured interviews with key figures and ethnography with one of the groups, and these methods will address RQs 1, 3, and 6.

4.1 Content and Framing Analysis

The methods that follow maintain the main aim of this thesis, which is an examination of the media and protest tactics of protest groups. How they manifest themselves in the local Welsh and British national print media, and the dominant institutional response to collective action. The reason behind analysing the print media is because it presents the best access point to debates that are in the public domain. It is argued that these debates reveal the "strategies of power or strategies for defining the rational and the commonsensical" (Wahl-Jorgensen 2003:133-134). Before demonstrating how each method relates to specific RQs the rationale behind the use of content analysis and media and collective action framing will be detailed in turn.

First, content analysis is a quantitative approach towards examining texts that helps to uncover the major story themes within a sample of articles (McCombs 2005:547). This type of analysis aims to provide an overall picture of story themes both systematically and consistently. Each text is subjected to the same set of investigative criteria, which ensures analytical consistency and reduces the amount of influence the researcher has over the results (Deacon et al. 1999:133). The advantage of using content analysis is its ability to reduce a vast amount of text into a manageable statistical format. The background research and the RQs aid in identifying what to code for before an analysis

takes place. The specific instances and occurrences of certain words or story themes are recorded (Berger 1998:23). This study designates each article as the overall unit of analysis. What is critical is that each theme or instance of what is looked for is clearly defined, and cannot be interpreted as a different category[1]. The creation of an extensive qualifying criteria aids in increasing the validity of the content analysis (Deacon et al. 1999:120-124). The coding sheet was piloted on a small sample of ten articles to ascertain its applicability for the chosen texts, and to hone the variables by adjusting for any omissions or removing redundant categories.

The specific texts were taken from a representative sample of newspapers that included tabloid, middle market and broadsheets spread across the spectrum of political ideologies. The newspaper reports for Plane Stupid and G20Meltdown came from British national newspapers. The media coverage of the Save the Vulcan group on the other hand was taken from newspapers in the South Wales region. The Vulcan campaign did gain British national newspaper coverage, but this was not in a sufficient frequency to be a representative sample. The online database Nexis was used to gather these news reports. This is supplemented by physical copies of newspapers to analyse the images that accompany news articles. A purposive sample of texts was gathered. This type of sampling includes texts on the basis of a set of specific characteristics, and those texts not meeting the criteria are eliminated (Wimmer and Dominick 2006:91-92). Table 4.2.2 shows the list of search terms used to collect the articles. The focus is on the names of each group, other terms related to each group, and the names of the most high profile members or personalities involved in each campaign:

Group Name	Save the Vulcan	Plane Stupid	G20 Meltdown
Other Terms	Vulcan w/30 pub, Vulcan w/30 protest, Vulcan Public House, The Vulcan	Heathrow w/30 protest, third runway	Meltdown, G20 w/30 Meltdown, G20 w/30 protest, meltdown w/20 protest
Names of Key People	Rachel Thomas, Graham Craig, David Wilton, Willie Downie, Liz Smart	Leila Deen, Tamsin Ormond, Olivia Chessell, Leo Murray, Graham Thompson, Richard George, Joss Garman	Tim Dalinian Jones, Chris Knight, Marina Pepper, Camilla Power, Mark Barrett
Number of Articles	126	207	97

Table 4.1.2 The Nexis search terms used in the gathering of newspaper articles

[1] A copy of the coding sheet and the coding guidelines can be found in Appendix 1 and 2.

The subject matter that is specifically being looked for is each groups' communications strategies and protest tactics. The focus on specifically named protest groups rather than general issues allows for the inclusion of a wider range of publications, and a targeting of these particular group's messages and protest tactics. However, content analysis can only show the overall picture of what appears in a sample of articles. It needs to be supplemented by a second method to gain a deeper understanding of what appears in the texts.

More specifically this can be achieved by examining the types of frames being deployed in the content of an article. A frame is described by McCombs as being the "attribute of the object under consideration because it defines the object" (2005:546). Furthermore, frames provide the talking points in media coverage that point towards the preferred interpretation of protest action (ibid:546). The utilisation of framing is not solely restricted to the media, because protest groups can strive to create their own master frames in order to propagate their view of the world and the issues under protest. Snow and Benford have referred to this process as a 'collective action frame' enabling a protest group to pull together collective experiences to unify the meaning of a campaign (1992:137-138). How these two methods will be utilised in relation to RQs 2, 4 and 5 will now be addressed. First, RQ2 below:

> RQ2. How do protest groups frame their opportunities, messages, goals, and protest actions?

This question relates directly to a protest group's framing of themselves and their issues. Where this framing occurs is in press releases, websites and quotes from sources in media coverage, and the collective action frame is contained in these communications. When used in this way a frame acts as a diagnostic and prognostic tool to define a social problem and how it should be solved. Entman states that the three functions of frames is to diagnose the cause of a problem, make judgements based upon this diagnosis, and suggested solutions (1993:52). To analyse this with respect to protest group communications requires the diagnostic and prognostic function of collective action frame to be broken down further. Sireau identified four levels that collective action frames operate on (2009:136-7):

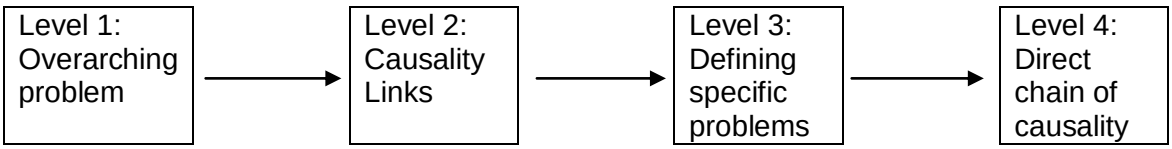


Figure 4.1.2 Diagnostic functions of the collective action frame

What can be interpreted from figure 4.2.1 is that frames get more complex from level to level. As the frame moves from level 1 to 4 more context around the underlying issues and associated problems are revealed. These collective action frames are an attempt to attribute blame for grievances, suggest solutions, frame opportunities and the expectations of success in order to mobilise resources (Sireau 2009:136-7, 162; Gamson and Meyer 1996:286). The framing of protest group messages crosses over into RQ4 and the media framing of protest. When an activist appears as a direct source in media coverage this potentially includes their framing of an issue. It is for this reason that the quotes of sources are included in the content analysis, and uncovers the sources who are explaining the issues in press articles.

> RQ4. How does the media frame protest groups in response to their messages, goals and protest actions?

The type of framing forming the basis of this question works in a slightly different way to collective action frames. Media framing works to present an event in a particular way through the selection of certain interpretations over others, and the increased saliency of some issues over others (Entman 1993:52; Gamson 2003:para 21). Media framing also performs the same diagnostic and prognostic function as collective action frames. When media framing is applied to protest groups collective action falls into one of two categories either thematic or episodic. The episodic treatment of a protest group is orientated around specific events that occur, while the thematic provides greater context to an issue and explains the reasons behind protest action (Iyengar 1991:14; Smith et al. 2001:1404). The comparison of collective action frames and media frames aids in differentiating how protest group messages have been altered or incorporated into media texts. The framing of protesters in relation to their protest tactics and messages gives an indication to the media's perception of events and the nature of the media opportunity available to a group. To fully capture the media frame specific subject categories were constructed, and each theme contained a number of sub-categories. A news report had the potential to feature many thematic elements, and for this reason more than one top level category could be recorded, but sub-categories were recorded only once. The table 4.1.3 shows the top level categories and the type of content that relates to them.

Category	Definition	Sub-Categories
Economy	The impact of protest on the economy.	Good economically, business concerns over protest, disruptions to commerce, cost of policing.
Law and order	Aspects of protest related to public order, policing and the legal process.	Details of the police operation, protester concerns over police tactics, protest causing disruption to the public, civil liberties, peaceful protest, arrests, court procedures, police/security concerns.
Spectacle of protest	The elements of protest that do not concern the issues.	Ridicule of protest, details of the logistical structure of protest, depoliticisation of protest, anticipation of violence, condemnation of protest, personalisation of protesters, historical protest evoked.
Recognition of campaign	The underlying issues of a protest are recognised and supported.	Support for a campaign, focus on the issues.
Celebrity	A celebrity gives their endorsement to a campaign.	Celebrity endorsement.
Brought into story	The protest group is brought into comment, or is mentioned in a seemingly unrelated story.	Brought into story.
Other	Any other category of story not listed above.	

Table 4.1.3 The categories of story recorded by the content analysis

The content analysis also recorded which issues were mentioned and how much context was given, the protest tactics present, the sources used in the creation of an article, and whether or not sources were directly named and quoted. The protest tactics evident are interpreted as anything that can be judged as collective protest, for instance "marches, sit-ins, demonstrations, pickets, protest meetings or rallies" (Eisinger 1973:16). This also includes blockades, occupations, petitions, mass protest, property damage and many other tactics[2]. Kriesi et al take this further and detail a five point scale of protest action with which to describe a protest tactic, as discussed in chapter 3:

1) Direct democratic events
2) Demonstrative events (such as petitions and demonstrations)
3) Confrontational events (such as blockades and occupations)

[2] A full list of protest tactics coded for in the texts can be found in Appendix 2.

4) Events of light violence (such as violence demonstrations and limited damage to objects)
5) Heavy violence (bombings, arson and violence against persons). (1992:228)

Recording instances of this nature will require careful definition as to avoid the researcher's personal opinions on the groups and their tactics to interfere with the analysis. Next, the sources used in news reports aid in providing context to what can often be very abstract issues. The sources used to construct a story will be considered on an issue by issue basis, and Bennett argues that the "range of social voices in the news is likely to vary widely from one issue area to another" (1990:106, 122). The framing is context sensitive and the different sentiments that are portrayed and how each speaker is introduced has a very important influence on the outcome of a story (Kitzinger 1999:59). Finally, each of these sources had their opinions towards protest groups and their communications strategies and protest tactics coded. This approach adapts Bennett's Indexing Model and applies it to the opinions expressed by sources in relation to protest groups, protest tactics, and the issues, and this is to illustrate the "*frequency, direction,* and source of all opinions voiced" (Bennett 1990:114, emphasis in original). The opinions to be recorded relate to a bias or ambivalence towards the issues, protest tactics, and the activists carrying out the actions. A positive opinion will be recorded when these are supported. A negative opinion is opposition or condemnation of these three elements, and neutrality is ambivalence towards a protest group, their issues, and protest tactics, and finally no opinion expressed on any of the above (ibid:115).

In addition to textual frames the physical copies of available articles were collected, and the images and captions used catalogued. There is interplay between language and imagery, which gives the story a visual impetuous and in doing so reinforces the media framing of events. It is a mediated interaction between people, cultures, histories and environments that remains central to most forms of media (Deacon et al. 2007:193). The interpretation of an image is open to the viewer, but an image caption anchors the meaning of the image and reduces the available interpretations of an image by pointing to a preferred definition (ibid:204). The image that appears most regularly and most prominently can come to signify an entire event and become iconic (ibid:204). The representation of an entire protest by one image is usually prompted by spectacular and theatrical protests (Perlmutter and Wagner 2004:94-95). This type of selection and reading of images provides a deeper understanding of media framing in the reporting of protest. The image represents the master frame of an event where "a picture must stand for one thousand words, but also replace one thousand other

pictures" (ibid:104). The interplay between text and image provides valuable insight into the dominant framing of protest events.

> RQ5. What is the response of dominant institutions to a protest group's communications strategies and protest tactics?

The response of dominant institutions can be inferred from the opinions of sources in media coverage. However, this question includes an analysis of debates in centres of power; be it local councils, regional assemblies or the national parliament. This refers specifically to the documents and transcripts in the public domain, which are used to ascertain the relative success and failure of protester frames to enter dominant institutional debate. This is indicated in the outcomes of protest action and is what Gamson defines as "new advantages", which are described as political movement towards addressing an issue (1990:28-29). These advantages can be broken down further into four different categories of acceptance. Where acceptance represents a change in stance by the polity from "hostility or indifference to a more positive relationship" (ibid:29). The following table shows the variety of responses:

		Acceptance	
		Full	**None**
New Advantages	**Many**	Full response	Pre-emption
	None	Co-optation	Collapse

Table 4.1.4 Outcome of Resolved Challenges (Gamson 1990:29)

These responses to collective action are an indication of a protest group's success and failure to prompt a protest target into a reaction. At the extreme ends of success and failure is full response and collapse. Full response means that an issue is addressed in the way a protest group want, and collapse is absolute failure and represents the implosion of a protest group. Co-optation is the acceptance of a group but a failure to meet its goals, for instance, solving a different problem but using the arguments of the protest group to do so. Finally, there is pre-emption where new advantages are granted without the need for any acceptance (ibid:29). However, there is cross over between each of these responses and neither is completely set. In addition to these four responses repression, concessions, and active intolerance should be included. Repression is the outright condemnation of a group, for example police surveillance, arrests, and denial of protest opportunities. Concessions indicate a partial response to the issues. Furthermore, Lipsky identifies six different responses of protest targets to collective action; 1) symbolic responses, 2) token material responses, 3) internal innovation to blunt a group's impetus, 4) appear constrained by their ability to meet

goals, 5) use resources to discredit challengers, 6) postpone political action on an issue (1968:1155). There is always the possibility that a combination of these outcomes is achieved. The measure of these outcomes is based on the relationship between protest groups, their protest targets, and the responses of dominant institutions.

The media coverage and reaction of dominant institutions to a protest group's tactics are related to the relative political and media opportunities of a protest group at any given time. This is measured by observing four particular variables in relation to political and media opportunities:

1) Increasing popular access to the political system,
2) divisions within the elite,
3) the availability of elite allies, and
4) diminishing state repression (Meyer 2004:132; see also McAdam 1996)

These variables centre on issue specific and general media and political opportunities. These two types of opportunity are said to occur within two specific models. The first is the structural model which refers to "variables that track formal changes in rules and policies affecting political access, as well as the changed practices that follow" (Meyer and Minkoff 2004:1467-1468). Second, is the signalling model which indicates moments of change in the political landscape, and is not to be confused with Lohmann's signalling model where protest activity signals a grievance to protest targets (1993). These changes can be used by protest groups and political decision makers to exploit and promote political change (ibid:1470). Table 4.1.5 shows how the theory of political opportunity can be applied, and demonstrates how RQs 2, 4 and 5 feed into the size of political and media opportunities. Protest action in the table refers to collective action during the time frame examined, the media attention it gets, and the prominence of the issues during a protest. Elite attention refers to the reaction of dominant institutions to protest action, and the debates around an issue. The final two elements in the table concern contested elections and the construction of political power. This is predicated on the timing of collective action in relation to the electoral cycle. The affect of contested elections on media and political opportunities is due to the prominence of an issue in the lead up to an election, and offers the possibility that an issue will become an electoral issue. The construction of power directs policy in certain directions depending on the politics of the governing political party or parties.

	Structural Model		Signalling Model	
	Issue-Specific	**General Political Opportunities**	**Issue-Specific**	**General Political Opportunities**
Protest Action	X		X	
Media attention			X	
Elite attention			X	
Construction of Power		X		X
Contested Elections		X		X

Table 4.1.5 Variables included in the structural and signalling models

To assess the political and media context at the time of collective action the media and political opportunities need to be examined, and the changes in opportunities can be tracked over time. These opportunities manifest themselves in what Behr and Iyengar refer to as the "activities of other actors" (1985:42). Therefore, an analysis of news coverage and the reaction of dominant institutions add detail to the prevailing media and political opportunities at the time of a protest group's campaign.

4.2 Interviews and Ethnography

The second set of questions to be assigned methods is RQs 1, 3, and 6. These concern how media and political opportunities influence the choice of media and protest tactics, and the tactical reactions of protest groups to changes in media and political opportunities. The exploitation of media and political opportunities creates what Gamson and Meyer argues as favourable conditions for success:

> If movement activists interpret political space in ways that emphasize opportunity rather than constraint, they may stimulate actions that change opportunity, making their opportunity frame a self-fulfilling prophecy. (1996:287)

The ability to capitalise on political opportunity underscores McCarthy and Zald's idea of social movements and protest groups as political issue entrepreneurs (1973, 1977). Grasping the chance to act not only requires good timing but also the recognition that opportunities exist or can be created. The RQs are interested in how protest groups utilise media and political opportunities and are as follows:

> RQ1. How do protest groups create, identify, and exploit political and media opportunities?
> RQ3. What decisions and negotiations go into the choice of communications strategies and protest tactics?

RQ6. How are media coverage and the response of protest targets fed back into a protest group's choice of communications strategies and protest tactics?

These questions relate specifically to three aspects of collective action. Which are: 1) the timing of protest action, 2) the choice of media and protest tactics, and 3) the adaptation of these strategies and tactics following the response of the media and dominant institutions. The decision to instigate a campaign and stage protest events is centred on media and political opportunity. There is also the question of how protest groups view their chances of success. The decision taken by protest groups and their perception of success influences their choice of communications strategies and protest tactics. Where the messaging and protest tactics lie on a scale of non-confrontational or antagonistic is based on a protest group's opinion of dominant institutions and their ability to necessitate change. Furthermore, the activists' views towards the media and using the press as a political resource have a bearing on a group's media strategies and protest tactics. Finally, once collective action is initiated how the subsequent responses of the media and political decision makers influences future protest actions. The response by groups to protest outcomes influences the opening or closing of media and political opportunities. It is for this reason that RQs 1, 3, and 6 are centred on key figure interviews, and the gathering of ethnographic data from one of the chosen groups.

Key figure interviews allow for the accumulation of a large amount of detailed qualitative data, which offers valuable insights into the opinions of key people towards collective action. The main disadvantage of interviews is that the resulting data is purely one person's opinion. The choice of interviewee was non-random, and the list of people to contact was devised from the names of the most prominent activists in media coverage. These interviews offer valuable insider information but they do not represent the attitudes of all the activists involved in a campaign. It is for this reason that interviews are only used to support underlying arguments rather than creating arguments. The construction of the questions asked is guided by the RQs. The interview technique best suited to key figure interviews is the semi-structured approach. This is where the topics raised in the interviews remain the same, but the order of the questioning, the time taken on each question, and the wording of the questions remains flexible. This allows interviewees the chance to fully express their opinion on a subject (Denscombe 2003:167). The underlying subject matter of each interview will remain consistent, but the words used, and the direction of questioning will differ from interview to interview (Wimmer and Dominick 2006:136). To complement

the semi-structured interviews an ethnography was carried out with one of the protest groups under investigation.

The method of ethnography, also known as participant observation, has four particular characteristics:

1) The researcher is plunged into the middle of the topic, and is going to the raw data rather than the other way around.
2) The topic is studied from the participants' point of view.
3) Involves spending a long time in the field.
4) Uses a variety of other research techniques. (Wimmer and Dominick 2006:141)

The Save the Vulcan campaign was chosen for this method because the key to ethnography is gaining access to participants. The other advantage of this choice is the participants are known to the researcher and a level of trust was already present. The group's locality also made it easier to attend meetings and actions. The emphasis of the ethnography was placed onto the participant element of participant observation, because full engagement and involvement in a group's activities provides a greater insight into the media and protest tactics. This approach deepens the trust between the researcher and members of the group which allowed for greater access to the decision-making process.

The results of these four research methods are contained in the following chapters 5 through 8. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 treat each protest group as a standalone case study. This will start with the Save the Vulcan campaign, moving onto Plane Stupid, and finish with G20Meltdown. A fourth chapter, chapter 8 will compare and contrast each group in relation to their protest tactics and media strategies and the influence of political and media opportunities upon them. The findings and discussion chapters will be constructed around the six RQs in the order in which they appear below:

RQ1. How do protest groups create, identify, and exploit political and media opportunities?
RQ2. How does a protest group frame their media and political opportunities, messages, goals, and protest actions?
RQ3. What decisions and negotiations go into the choice of communications strategies and protest tactics?
RQ4. How does the media frame protest groups in response to their messages, goals and protest actions?
RQ5. What is the response of dominant institutions to a protest group's communications strategies and protest tactics?

RQ6. How are media coverage and the response of protest targets fed back into a protest group's choice of communications strategies and protest tactics?

Further information surrounding each campaign will be provided in their respective findings and discussions chapter. This will give each group further context, and add a background to the issues each campaign focused on. It is how each of these groups' attempted to publicise their messages, and, by extension, achieve their protest goals, which will show the impacts of different types of protest action on media and political opportunities. In addition, these differences and commonalities will further aid in deconstructing and questioning the theory of political opportunities and move the mainstream media into a more central role in its construction. A high profile media campaign cannot be ignored or downplayed, because the media spotlight on a protest group can create political opportunities and force an issue into the open.

Section 2: Findings and Discussion

Chapter 5 – Save the Vulcan – How to Save Pubs and Influence People

The first group to be examined is the Save the Vulcan campaign. The Vulcan Hotel was built in 1853 and is located in the centre of Cardiff, Great Britain and was under threat from demolition. This chapter will address the Save the Vulcan campaign one RQ at a time to illustrate that substantial media and political opportunities were open for the group, and how they managed to fully exploit these opportunities. However, the media and protest tactics of the group were non-confrontational, and the decisions behind the tactics were influenced by the group's political insider status and the demographics of their supporters. The non-confrontational tactics and political opportunities led to a very sympathetic local media, and this fed back into the media and protest tactics and kept them relatively non-confrontational. The Save the Vulcan campaign was created following an interview on BBC Radio Wales with future Chairperson Rachel Thomas[3], and the subsequent involvement of Graham Craig who joined after hearing this interview. The committee that formed had a consistent core of five members. It was a Cardiff based campaign that centred its pressure on local politicians and publicising the campaign in the South Wales regional press.

5.1 The Political and Media Backdrop

This section will detail the protest targets of the group, and the media and political backdrop to the Vulcan campaign before the campaign began. This is to define the political and media context of the Save the Vulcan campaign, and its importance in answering RQ1 below:

> RQ1. How do protest groups create, identify, and exploit political and media opportunities?

First, the nature of the external threat to the Vulcan pub meant that the protest targets for the campaign were clear. The developer who owned the land the Vulcan resides on is described by Wilton as "clearly the big bad guy" (2010). But the campaign found that the developer was immune to negative publicity and difficult to contact directly. This meant that the campaign needed to develop a strategy that would influence the other stakeholders around the Vulcan issue who would not be ignored by the developer. This

[3] A lot of the information and reflections included in this chapter comes from interviews with the activists involved, the field notes from the ethnography, and personal emails between the committee members and to supporters via the Save the Vulcan email list.

included political representatives and the brewer, SA Brains who leased the pub from the developer.

The political backdrop to the campaign centres on the makeup of the parliamentary and Welsh Government constituency of Cardiff Central, and the council ward of Adamsdown. At the time of the campaign the Liberal Democrats held a monopoly over all of these electoral constituencies, and they controlled Cardiff Council in coalition with Plaid Cymru (Cardiff Council 2011a, 2011b). It should be noted that before the Save the Vulcan campaign was established there was a political awareness of the issue. This can be seen in transcripts from Cardiff Council debates that demonstrate a certain amount of cross party consensus on the issue. In the debate Labour Councillor Richard Cook asks the Liberal Democrat Councillor for the Vulcan's ward Nigel Howells why, under his party's administration the pub was put under threat. To which Councillor Howells answers:

> I'm against the sale of the Vulcan as much as anyone. In fact, we have been running a campaign […] to save the Vulcan (Quoted in Cardiff Council 2008a:23-24)

A similar exchange occurred in the following month where the Deputy Leader of the council and Plaid Cymru Councillor Neil McEvoy was asked if he supported the campaign he responds "my personal opinion then definitely I am 100% in favour of saving the Vulcan" (Quoted in Cardiff Council 2008b:35). This illustrates a pre-existing political opportunity that could be exploited to gain political support for the issue. To exemplify this further, at the time of the council debates Jenny Randerson, Assembly Member (AM) for Cardiff Central tabled a Statement of Opinion in the Welsh Assembly (National Assembly for Wales 2008). This Welsh Government version of a parliamentary Early Day Motion was signed by 21 AMs out of a total of 61, and covered all of the political parties in the Assembly. The motion clearly states that the Assembly "Opposes the proposed demolition of The Vulcan Hotel in Adamsdown, Cardiff and calls on the developers to re-consider their proposals with a view to saving this historic pub" (ibid).

The internal party political affiliation of the Save the Vulcan members was not part of the publicity but was used as a tool to gain access to politicians, and contributed to the group's political opportunities. One member was a political activist for Plaid Cymru who had a personal relationship with some Plaid Cymru AMs. The other had a more influential role within the Liberal Democrats working for Jenny Willott MP and

performing extensive campaigning work for the MP and local party. In practice this meant that Thomas had an influence over the MP's photo opportunities, and what issues the local party should focus on. They exploited their political influence as an insider to its fullest, and this insider access certainly did not hinder the group's progress. A second example of this insider influence is exemplified by presence of the AM, MP and Councillors at a public meeting set up by the Save the Vulcan campaign to gauge the level of support in the local community and the wider city (Miloudi 2009a:10; Anon 2009c:6). This first action helped open political opportunities and signalled to the group how much potential support they would receive from the public and politicians. These relationships had a very influential bearing on the media strategies and protest tactics of the group, as Craig states these connections "guided the way we campaigned" (2010).

The interest in the future of the Vulcan pub was present in media coverage before the campaign began. These reports occurred outside of the sample of this research it demonstrates the importance of the Vulcan's story to the local newspaper, and the potential media opportunity available to the group. The Vulcan is mentioned in a report from December 2005 about the businesses in danger of demolition because of a retail development in Cardiff city centre (Nifield 2005:4). The Vulcan's plight is also included in an editorial from July 2007 lamenting the loss of old fashion pubs (O'Connor 2007:20), and again in January 2008 in a story about the development of Cardiff entitled "Changing face of your city" (Nifield 2008:16). Even though there were only 5 articles between 2005 and the end of August 2008 this shows that the issue was present, however small, in the consciousness of the local newspaper.

Further to this, the first month's worth of newspaper articles from the sample illustrates the media platform from which the Vulcan campaign could exploit and build upon. In September 2008 there were 8 (6% of total) articles, including 5 letters to the editor (5%). These stories were concerned with issues surrounding Cardiff's heritage and Welsh pub closures, which were mentioned in 4 and 7 (3% and 6%) articles respectively. Also, 5 out of the 8 articles recognised Vulcan's situation as a serious issue. The prevailing media and political context around the Vulcan presented the campaign with a positive opportunity to capitalise on and exploit in trying to save the pub. The group's relationship with the local newspaper was a positive and a productive one. The Chair of the Vulcan group had previously run a successful campaign to save a different Cardiff pub (Anon 2008a:21). This meant that they had experience of running a campaign like this and had pre-existing contacts with the newspaper. The close relationship built-up between the group and the local press meant that there was

regular contact with each other. This helped in getting stories about the Vulcan published, and the local media's proximity to the issue meant there was a natural affinity to the story, as Craig observed that the "*Echo* ran pretty much every press release" (2010).

The emphasis was placed on creating press releases that were easily replicated, and thereby making a journalist's reporting of the issue as simple as possible. The group took a professional approach to the media tactics, and good communication was particularly important. The lack of resources behind the Vulcan meant that media training was not a consideration, and the group was reliant on the talents and enthusiasm of the activists involved. The group held a variety of events to keep the press interested, and create media opportunities. These events had two objectives, 1) to raise the profile of the campaign; 2) there was the need to increase the attraction of the Vulcan to visitors. This relationship is framed by Vulcan member Wilton as "they needed us and we needed them", but stresses the importance of the media as "an important vehicle for influence" (2010). This sentiment is echoed by Craig who refers to the press as a "mouthpiece" that is used to influence protest targets (2010). Subsequently, the Save the Vulcan group were able to raise the profile of the pub to a point where the media came to the campaign, for example BBC Radio 2's Jeremy Vine visited the Vulcan twice, and featured the issue in radio shows (BBC 2009a, 2009b). None of these media requests were refused; in fact they were actively exploited to keep the focus on the Vulcan and the issues in the mainstream media. The Vulcan campaign knew that there was a considerable media opportunity which was used to help open political opportunities.

5.2 Shaping the Message

The media and political opportunities presented to the group would influence their choice of media and protest tactics, and addresses RQ2:

> RQ2. How does a protest group frame their media and political opportunities, messages, goals, and protest actions?

In answer to this question, the basis of the Save the Vulcan campaign communications was to stress the urgency of the issue, and maintain a permanent public optimism concerning the saving of the Vulcan. These were the collective action frames of the group were communicated using various mediums, from online sources to quotes in

newspapers. The communications platforms were geared towards publicising the message as much as possible. The direct messages sent through emails, websites, and leaflets and were unfiltered by the press and represent Save the Vulcan's messages as the group intended. The fundamental key to the group's messages is found in their name to 'save the Vulcan'. The top level issue of saving the pub from demolition contains deeper, underlying issues and are explained by Thomas as "to keep the Vulcan open and trading where it is today" (2011). These issues were taken and presented in the group's messages, but as the examples below show how these messages were tailored for different audiences:

1) To the developer – The pub sits on a large plot of land you can build around it.
2) To elected representatives – the pub is important to the local community, and you should consider the rules around planning to protect buildings of this type.
3) To the public – "use it or lose it". (Thomas 2011)

What this demonstrates is that there was one message behind the campaign, but through the tailoring of messages the group could target different audiences. The transmission of the messages and the engagement with potential and existing supporters crossed technological boundaries.

5.2.1 Online Communication

The internet was the primary communications tool used by the Save the Vulcan campaign, because of its ability to reduce the physical resources required to communicate with a lot of people. Part of the group's online communications was through the use of an email list. The personal details of supporters were gathered through information provided on a written petition that would be used to lobby the National Assembly of Wales (National Assembly for Wales 2011). The written petition contained a field for people to enter their email address, and this allowed the group to create a sizable emailing list. The use of this list was twofold: 1) it was used to encourage participation and mobilise people into supporting the campaign; 2) the list was used to update people about the campaign. These messages were repeated in other online forms, such as, Facebook, Twitter, and the Save the Vulcan blog (Save the Vulcan 2012b, 2010h, 2012a). An example of the construction of the messages can be found in an email to the mailing list from the beginning of the campaign. The email contains a set of actions supporters could engage with, and these vary in the level of commitment they required. It meant that supporters could feel involved in the campaign

through the smallest of actions. The email from November 2008 contains five actions that people can do:

1) Write to the Heritage Minister[4]
2) Leaflets – An appeal for people to deliver leaflets
3) Write to the press
4) Sign a petition – Both online and paper copy
5) Invite friends to the Facebook group (Vulcan Emails 12th November 2008)[5]

The email offers an insight into where the Vulcan group placed media coverage. Under the heading 'write to the press' the email states "we have to ensure The Vulcan's name remains in the spotlight" (ibid). This indicated that if the Vulcan pub gained and maintained a high profile the campaign will, by extension, also command press attention. It was an attempt to make the pub famous and create a symbol for the campaign and issues surrounding it. In attempting to make the pub famous the publicity does not necessarily focus on the campaign, and Craig describes the strategy as "not even publicising the campaign, just publicising the pub" (2010). The pub was the focus and the campaign was there to highlight its plight, and this was the main goal of the Vulcan campaign's messages.

In comparison to the email list the Save the Vulcan blog was not necessarily used to just push the campaign's agenda. It functioned as an information repository for the campaign, which Craig described as a "library" containing "all the information we had in our heads" (ibid). In a similar function to the email list the blog was used as a mobilisation platform, and replicated the messages sent to supporters (Save the Vulcan 2009i). This meant that there was a consistency of messages across the Vulcan's publicity. The posts on the blog would point to the pub first, highlighting its importance, and placing at the forefront of the campaign. There was an emphasis on the political support behind the campaign, and any new advantages the group succeeded in getting. Finally, the issues were at the core of all communications and were reinforced through the simple act of repetition. One of the main sources of information for the blog posts were Save the Vulcan press releases, and mainstream news coverage by way of links and quotes (See Save the Vulcan 2009n; 2009q for examples). The taking of press release contents verbatim made the generation of blog contents easier. It meant that if a press release was not used by the press it could still be seen online.

[4] The responsibility for heritage in Wales lies with the devolved Welsh Government.
[5] Emails from activists in the Vulcan committee have been used with the permission of the authors but anonymised accordingly.

The blog post “Changing faces at the Vulcan” for example was reproduced from the press release of the same name (Save the Vulcan 2010a, 2010b). The blog’s messages emphasised the optimism that the campaign will succeed, and presses the urgency that success had to be achieved as soon as possible. The blog also used mainstream media coverage to help validate the group’s arguments. The website existed as a claims platform unfiltered by, and outside the mainstream media. The website also exploited and capitalised on the political support of Jenny Randerson AM, and got her to write a blog post in which she repeated the key messages of the campaign:

> The Vulcan is one of the few remaining genuine Cardiff pubs, and if it goes, we will lose a piece of history. Development can, and should take place around it, and this fight will continue. (2009)

This exemplifies the closeness of the campaign and the AM and the substantial political opportunity it presented. This opportunity allowed increased access and potential influence over key decision-makers. A detailed exploration of the group’s political relationships will be covered in sections 5.3 and 5.5.1 in case studies which examine the two SA Brains protests and the Petitions Committee process respectively.

The website represents a timeline of the progress of the group, and when political events occurred the website offered the opportunity to define these events from the campaign’s viewpoint. To illustrate this point, at the end of the National Assembly for Wales’ Petitions Committee process a report was published that made two recommendations (National Assembly for Wales 2010): 1) to introduce legislation to allow the protection of buildings for social and cultural reasons; 2) strengthen the powers of local authorities to aid in the protection of buildings (National Assembly for Wales 2010:9). The response of the campaign to the report was to re-emphasise the urgency of the issues and state “this is by no means the end” (Thomas quoted in Save the Vulcan 2010k). The Vulcan possessed a Twitter feed but it was mostly used as advertising for the website by linking to posts on the blog (See Save the Vulcan 2009d for example). This can similarly be applied to the Facebook group (Save the Vulcan 2012b). Craig ranked the usefulness of each of these online forms in terms of who they targeted. The blog was directed more at journalists because of the amount of information it contained; Facebook on the other hand was more useful in communicating with supporters and fellow campaigners (2010). A web presence offers a group the opportunity to rebut negativity in the press.

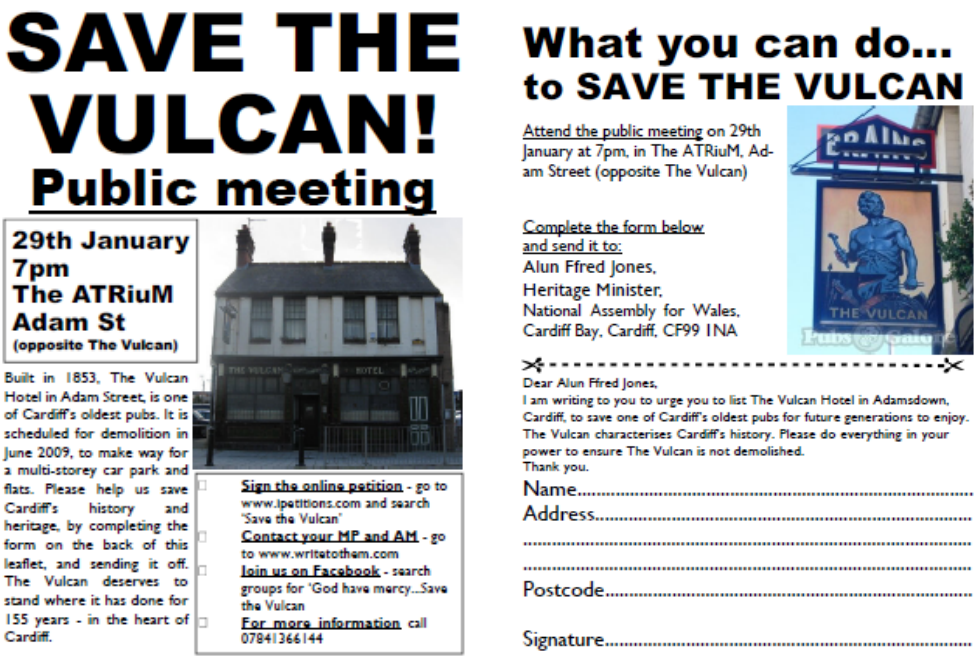
5.2.2 Online Innovations

The Save the Vulcan campaign also used Facebook and Google advertising to promote the issues and funnel people towards the Vulcan's Facebook page and website. The advantage of this type of advertising is it can be highly targeted. The Facebook adverts were demographically targeted at people over 18 who lived in the South Wales region (Wilton 2010). In comparison Google adverts target key search terms and websites. The Vulcan campaign targeted the name of the developer and Cardiff tourism related searches (Wilton 2009). When the name of developer was searched for in Google a Vulcan campaign advert would appear in the results. These adverts are placed contextually and geographically in related websites, and Wilton describes this as "a local context to articles read on a more global context" (2010). The disadvantage of this type of advertising is that it costs money, but spending limits can be set on how much. There are very strict rules around the text that Google and Facebook will accept, but this can be manipulated. The crafting of messages in this way creates an association between the issue and protest targets in a subtle, straightforward, and focused way.

5.2.3 Other Forms of Communication

The online presence of the Save the Vulcan campaign was only part of the group's communication activities. The leaflets were created and distributed on a semi-regular basis and follow the message conventions of the other forms of communication used by the group. It condenses a lot of the same information found on the website into two sides of A5. The leaflets advertised events, provided background information to the campaign, and a 'what you can do' section. The leaflet on the following page demonstrates all of these facets.

Front **Back**



SAVE THE VULCAN!

Public meeting

29th January
7pm
The ATRiuM
Adam St
(opposite The Vulcan)

Built in 1853, The Vulcan Hotel in Adam Street, is one of Cardiff's oldest pubs. It is scheduled for demolition in June 2009, to make way for a multi-storey car park and flats. Please help us save Cardiff's history and heritage, by completing the form on the back of this leaflet, and sending it off. The Vulcan deserves to stand where it has done for 155 years - in the heart of Cardiff.

Sign the online petition - go to www.ipetitions.com and search 'Save the Vulcan'
Contact your MP and AM - go to www.writetotham.com
Join us on Facebook - search groups for 'God have mercy...Save the Vulcan
For more information call 07841366144

What you can do... to SAVE THE VULCAN

Attend the public meeting on 29th January at 7pm, in The ATRiuM, Adam Street (opposite The Vulcan)

Complete the form below and send it to:
Alun Ffred Jones,
Heritage Minister,
National Assembly for Wales,
Cardiff Bay, Cardiff, CF99 1NA

Dear Alun Ffred Jones,
I am writing to you to urge you to list The Vulcan Hotel in Adamsdown, Cardiff, to save one of Cardiff's oldest pubs for future generations to enjoy. The Vulcan characterises Cardiff's history. Please do everything in your power to ensure The Vulcan is not demolished.
Thank you.

Name.....
Address.....
.....
.....
Postcode.....

Signature.....

Figure 5.2.1 An example of a Save the Vulcan campaign leaflet (Save the Vulcan 2009o)

The leaflets include images of the Vulcan building and its sign are used as symbols for the campaign. They are a visual representation of what is being fought for. The back includes a small action to pressurise the Heritage Minister in Wales. To complement the leaflets a newsletter was created to document the major events of the campaign, and included similar information to the leaflets. In addition, the newsletter includes a list of high profile supports that range from celebrities to politicians (see Figure 5.2.2). The newsletter tells the reader why the campaign should be supported. It frames the issues and solutions as common sense and not something to be opposed or ignored. The reverse of the newsletter has a special thank you reserved for the local newspapers for their support. This is an attempt at maintaining the group's positive relationship with the press and keep media opportunities open. There is also a list of high profile personalities who had lent their support to the campaign.

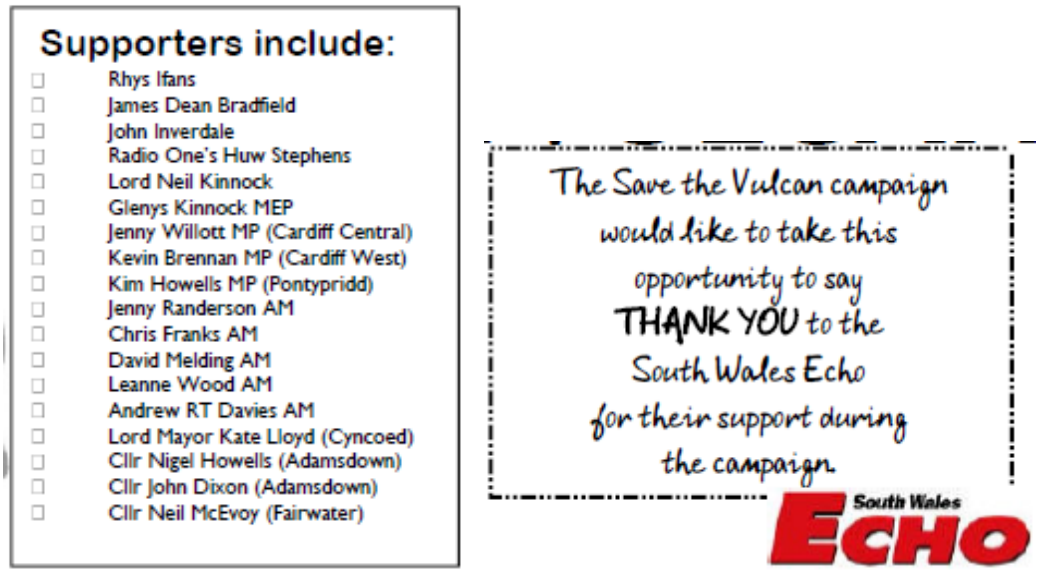


Figure 5.2.2 A list of supporters taken from a Save the Vulcan campaign newsletter (Save the Vulcan 2009p)

Taken together, these parts of the newsletter are an example of the sizable media and political opportunity the group worked within. These opportunities are publicised to attempt to garner more support, and in doing so increases the perception that the campaign will succeed, and give the impression of a campaign that is larger than it might be in reality.

5.2.4 Campaign Members in Media Coverage

This section closes with the Vulcan campaigners' framing of the issues in media coverage. The ability to speak on an issue and the quotes the media choose to print shows how sympathetic the press is towards an issue. The more positive the press is about an issue the more likely they are to allow activists to put their view of the issue across. Across the sample 32 (14% of total) members of specified protest groups appeared in the media coverage. Broken down further 31 of these were directly quoted, and all 32 are named, and 19 expressed a positive opinion about the issues. The Vulcan campaign members who appear in media coverage maintain the urgency of the issue, and emphasise the size of support. A quote from an article in December 2008 expresses this urgency but adds optimism that the campaign will succeed "We have six months to save The Vulcan and I am absolutely convinced we'll succeed" (Craig quoted in O'Connor 2008:8). A sense of optimism around the probability of success is paramount if a group is to succeed in their goals. The expression of public doubt would ultimately be self-defeating and discourage people from supporting a campaign. On the other hand, urgency is often complemented by the 'feeling' behind the campaign and the amount of support offered by the public, media, and politicians. In this next quote

Thomas makes a clear appeal to AMs. She emphasises the size of support and focuses on the electoral sensitivity of politicians by referring to supporters as 'voters':

> The Assembly cannot ignore over 3,000 voters. We're urging the Assembly to do everything within its power to preserve our heritage and leave the Vulcan open. (Quoted in Anon 2009f:3)

Referring back to Lipsky's reference publics the quote represents a distinct use of public support as a way to influence decision makers (1968). The group's framing of this public support was geared towards a language that politicians might be most susceptible too. Politicians accounted for 52 out of 233 sources (19% of total), 48 were directly quoted, and 41 were named, of the 11 not named 9 (4%) were anonymous governmental sources. With respect to the issues 23 sources (10%) spoke positively about the issue, which illustrates the level of support for the groups and the Vulcan's place on the political agenda. This political support for the campaign coupled with public backing, and a sympathetic media made for a large political and media opportunity. Opportunities of this scale allow a significant lowering of the amount of resources required for effective campaigning.

5.3 Making the Most of Opportunities

The ability of a protest group to create and exploit media and political opportunities is dependent upon the internal decisions and negotiations behind the choice of messaging, media and protest tactics. These decisions are influenced by protest group goals and are affected by the choice of protest target, the demographics of supporters, and the sensibilities of the activists involved. This section relates to RQ3 below, and will be unpacked using two case studies of the planning, and eventual abandonment of two Save the Vulcan protests.

> RQ3. What decisions and negotiations go into the choice of communications strategies and protest tactics?

The reasons behind their cancellation will be made clear, and placed into the context of political and media opportunities. The Save the Vulcan campaign's closeness to politicians and the decisions to protest provides an example of a political insider that still uses elements of an outsider strategy. It reveals a discontinuity between what the Save the Vulcan campaign had knowledge of, what the campaign told the press, and what the press knew.

5.3.1 Protest Case Studies

The first protest to be examined occurred across approximately fourteen days from beginning to end. The protest began at a Save the Vulcan meeting on 28th May 2009, and the cancellation occurred on 11th June 2009 (Vulcan Emails 28th May 2009; Cable 11th June 2009). Up until this point the Save the Vulcan campaign had been relatively non-confrontational holding only one protest outside the Welsh Government's Senedd building. This event was held to hand in the Save the Vulcan petition and featured politicians and campaigners and was more of a photo opportunity than a demonstration (O'Connor 2009:7). However, the landlord was informed that they had to vacate the Vulcan by the 25th June (McCarthy 2009e:2). The Vulcan was set to close towards the end of June and there was a sense within the group that something more confrontational needed to happen. A lack of information was coming from inside the decision-making process from either the brewer or Cardiff Council. The group decided to write a letter to the Leader and Deputy Leader of Cardiff Council giving them one week to respond with information. The motive behind the letter, along with this request, contained a threat of something tactically more confrontational and a draft to the rest of the group containing the following quote:

> If we have heard nothing by 5th June, we and our membership will take a more direct approach to lobbying those involved to save our Victorian pub. (Vulcan Emails 29th May 2009)

This statement in and of itself created discussion within the group with one member suggesting some alternative terminology and instead of "'more direct approach' I would suggest 'more 'direct action' approach'" (ibid). This was rejected, because it was acknowledged by other group members that the term 'direct action' has the potential to cause negative reactions from protest targets (ibid). The language was therefore kept relatively tempered to remain on the side of respectability. The following passage was posted to the website:

<u>Save the Vulcan - Day of Action</u>

> Date: 13 June 2009
> Time: 12:00 - 15:00
> Location: Vulcan, Cardiff
>
> It's time for action now.
>
> Please hold this date in your diary, and once we've confirmed details we'll send info. (Save the Vulcan 2009m)

The information about the Vulcan's imminent closure was published on the front page of the local newspaper (McCarthy 2009c:1):


THE FANS WHO BOUGHT NINIAN PARK TREASURES
PAGES 6-7
South Wales ECHO
Saturday, May 30, 2009 WalesOnline 55p
INSIDE: TWO GREAT OFFERS
■ Cut-price entry to last day of the Urdd
■ Money off surfing lessons for the family
PAGE 11 AND PLAY PULLOUT
Campaign to save historic pub doomed after landlord is given notice to quit
CLOSING TIME FOR VULCAN
THE historic Vulcan pub has been ordered to shut its doors by June 25.
Campaigners had hoped site owner Derek Rapport would extend the brewery's lease on the 19th-century pub and keep it open.
But Brian Stuart, who runs the Adamsdown alehouse with his wife Elizabeth, warned it would soon be last orders at the bar.
Yesterday the 71-year-old said: "Unless something happens then the last beers will be served.
"We have been expecting it for a year or more, that was the date from the start, but we thought there might be, say, another six months or another couple of months on top, but that never happened. I phoned up the brewery today and they said the 25th."
After that the building's future is in the hands of Mr Rapport.
The couple, who live above the pub, will move into a house they have bought in Victoria Park, Cardiff.
Save the Vulcan campaign chairman Rachel Thomas said: "We had hoped the developer would extend their lease to Brains.
"It seems to me, since we are in the middle of a recession, even if the developer shuts the pub he is not about to build on it next month.
"We had wanted the lease to be extended so we could carry on pushing the council and developer to come to a more satisfactory conclusion."
AM Jenny Randerson was told the news last night.
She said: "That's dreadful, that's a real bolt from the blue.
"I was so optimistic given the fact that the council were in discussions with the developer and the minister and because of the economic situation that we are in.
"I thought we could buy some time. I didn't think they would go through with this.
"It's disastrous."
Despite lobbying, Welsh heritage body Cadw has rejected attempts to list the popular drinking spot, a move that could prevent it from being bulldozed.
Discussions about changing the rules that qualify buildings for listing are to take place in the autumn.
■ Full story: Page 2
Barnaid Kelo Collier at the bar in the Vulcan, left:
The Marble Warehouse Tel: 01443-408548
GRANITE WORKTOPS
WOOD BURNING STOVES

Figure 5.3.1 A South Wales Echo report on the Vulcan (McCarthy 2009c:1)

At this point divisions began to appear in what the Save the Vulcan group were being told, what the campaign told the press, and the information revealed in press articles. These divisions show themselves in the campaign wanting a public announcement about the pub even though they were receiving private insider reassurances. Craig states that messages were coming from political insiders that would say "things are going on behind the scenes, don't risk it" (2010). The media were receiving no information and not getting answers to their enquiries, and an article from the newspaper on the 30th May ends with:

> No-one from Brains was available for comment.
>
> The offices of owner Mr Rapport were contacted but the *Echo* was informed that he was abroad on holiday until Monday. (McCarthy 2009e:2)

The same morning two downbeat press articles appeared the Save the Vulcan group were getting insider information that a deal was about to be struck between the council

and the developer (Vulcan Emails 30th May 2009). It is this sensitivity to bad public relations that the Save the Vulcan group wanted to exploit. The following day on June 1st against the backdrop of downbeat media coverage the Vulcan group was still receiving positive information from their insider contact "It looks like the Council is about to strike a deal with Rapport[6] and SD2[7], but once again, behind closed doors" (Vulcan Emails 1st June 2009). These details were being kept from campaigners, and the group were still intent on protest action if no information about the pub's future was made public:

> I think we should wait until Friday until we do anything (which is the deadline we gave them) then we'll make a decision about what to do. (Vulcan Emails 1st June 2009)

The day after, political progress and information about an impending deal manifested itself in a news article. The Leader of Cardiff Council, Rodney Berman is quoted as saying "We have had positive talks leaving us with the clear impression that the pub's lease can be extended" (Quoted in McCarthy 2009a:3). The Chairperson of the Save the Vulcan campaign in response to this change in political opportunities is positive about the news, but maintains the pressure on the brewer, and stresses the urgency for a decision to be made in writing "My only concern is that Brain's have served a notice for them to get out at the end of the month" (Quoted in ibid:3). A representative from Brains gives their opinion on the matter:

> Should we be able to agree terms with the other parties involved we will continue to lease the pub and would be happy to see the Brain's name remain above the door. (Quoted in McCarthy 2009a:3)

In private the campaign's reaction to Brain's quote was lukewarm "From what Brains told the *Echo* it looks like they want to hang on to the pub" (Vulcan Emails 2nd June 2009). With no written confirmation of a deal between the interested parties the plan to hold a protest on the 13th of June remained in place (Cable 8th June 2009).

The deadline arrived and with no information forthcoming the group decided to wait until 9am the next morning just in case something had been released to the press. The following email exchange between two members of the group makes clear it that the pause is temporary and the planning, mobilisation of supporters, and implementation of a protest should still happen:

[6] Derek Rapport is the name of the owner of the developer Marcol Asset Management.
[7] This is shorthand for St. David's 2 a major shopping development in the city.

> Email 1: I've heard nothing from the Council re The Vulcan. Therefore we need to plan our protest. .. I think we should give the Council the benefit of the doubt, and give them until 9am tomorrow morning. Then we'll go for it :)
>
> Email 2: Yup, let's see the *Echo* tomorrow go from there. (Vulcan Emails 5th June 2009)

The following day the press received and printed a reassuring quote from the leader of Cardiff Council on the front page (James 2009a:1). In reaction, the group held a meeting on the evening of the 8th to discuss the upcoming protest and what other tactics might be employed. Following the positive decisions over the future of the pub the group decided to continue with the protest opportunity and went ahead with their 'day of action'. The impact of changing political opportunities had an influence on the protest tactics employed. There was a feeling that the action could not be too confrontational in order to avoid annoying the major stakeholders and jeopardise the negotiations. The urgency of the issue meant that the campaigners felt compelled to do something to signal their grievance. The insider status of the Vulcan campaigner began to tell at this point and during the meeting on the 8th the Chairperson was phoned by an inside source who told them to keep supporters 'on the leash'. This comment suggests an attempt to control the group, and illustrates a disadvantage of insider strategies.

Once a new lease for the pub was agreed the *South Wales Echo* ran an article entitled "A New Lease of Life" (James 2009a:1). The article reflects the information the group had, and is exemplified by the quote from a Save the Vulcan campaign member in the report:

> I will only feel confident when I see a piece of paper with everyone's signatures on it. Lots of ideas and statements have been bounced around but we need something in writing. (Thomas quoted in James 2009a:1)

Despite this positive press there was still no conclusive written resolution. The media opportunities used by the group helped maintain pressure on the negotiations, but it did not necessarily speed up the decision-making process. The choice of protest target fed into the leaflets to be handed out on the day of the protest. The leaflet designed to publicise the protest can be found on the following page, and the type of language used in the leaflet was heavily considered by the group. When shown the leaflet one member commented that "It's not too angry" (Vulcan Emails 10th June 2009), and that protest planning and public language should continue so long as they are "softly, softly" (Vulcan Emails 11th June 2009).

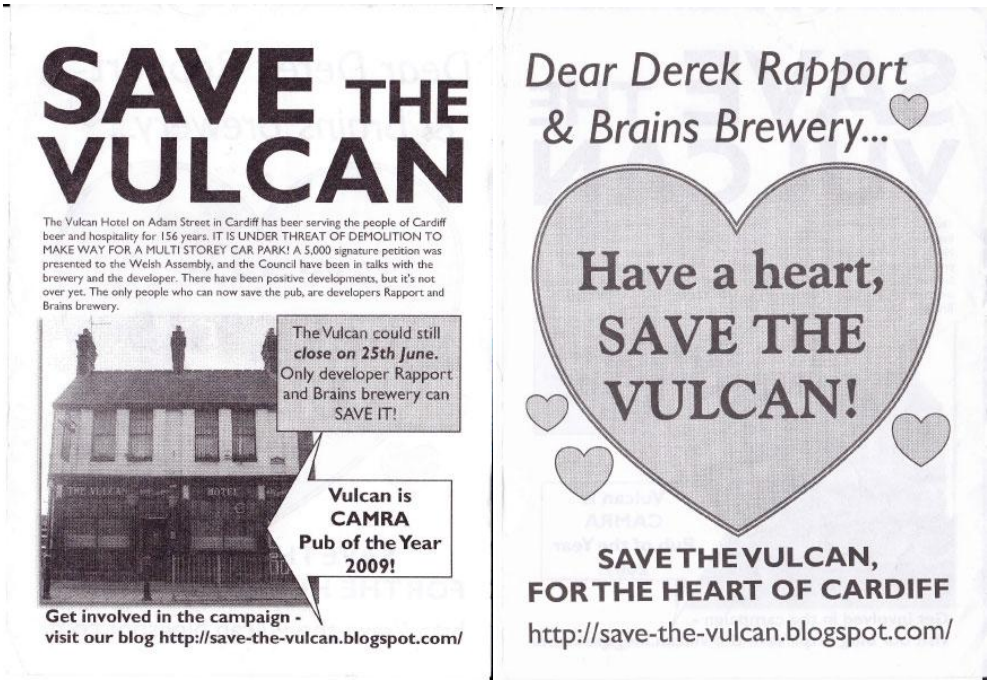


Figure 5.4.2 Another Save the Vulcan campaign leaflet (Save the Vulcan 2009f)

A day later the press ran an article proclaiming the pub had been saved for three years (McCarthy 2009d:3). This did not necessarily meet the aims of the campaign but they did achieve new advantages, and a temporary reprieve from demolition was a successful result. This announcement created problems with respect to the protest process, because mobilisation had been set in motion and the group needed to decide whether or not go ahead with their protest. One member commented:

> I think it might look a bit weird if there's a good story in the *Echo* tomorrow about an extended contract and we're handing out flyers on Saturday saying "The Vulcan's not safe" (Vulcan Emails 11th June 2009)

To which another campaigner responded “My gut feeling is that we cancel” (ibid). The implication being that any conflicting or mixed messages would damage the overall narrative of the campaign and cause confusion amongst supporters and the press.

To celebrate their success plans for a celebration were put into action, but this celebration would serve more than one purpose. The celebration was intended to be a message carrier, because if a large number of people attended it would “send a really powerful message” to the protest targets of the Vulcan campaign (ibid). The Vulcan group used everything as a potential opportunity and capitalised on any symbolism the campaign created. The influence the campaign had on decision makers and the media is illustrated in a letter written by the Leader of Cardiff Council to the *South Wales Echo* letters page. The letter openly praises the Save the Vulcan campaign:

> I would like to pay tribute to the members of the "Save the Vulcan" campaign group for the hard work they have put in and maintained over a period of many months promoting their cause. (Berman 2009:26)

The *South Wales Echo* is also thanked, and the combination of the Save the Vulcan campaigning actions and the media support garnered is cited as the reason a solution was achieved (ibid:26). The group's success is viewed here as "very much a victory for 'people power'" (ibid:26).

The processes found in the first SA Brains protest were repeated 11 months later when it was announced that the landlady of 18 years would be leaving the pub (McCarthy 2010b:18). The relevance of this second case study is it demonstrates the increased proficiency of the group to mobilise and carry out a protest action. It also shows that if media and political opportunities fade over time they can be re-opened by media and protest tactics, and reignite political and media relationships. The reaction of one of the members of the Vulcan campaign to the prospect of the pub closing exemplifies this process; they express the need to "rally the troops" (Vulcan Emails 14th March 2010). These 'troops' referred to political allies, the media, and previous supporters of the campaign. Unlike the previous protest the target of collective action was clear. In the group's view the land owner was unresponsive to public and media pressure, but the brewer was very sensitive towards bad publicity which made them an ideal target. The choice of target was driven by media opportunities, and the press was used as a platform for political pressure.

The success of the media and protest tactics employed in the first Brains protest fed into the tactics of the second protest, and the same methods as the previous planned demonstration were utilised. The Vulcan group's tactical approach demonstrates that the decisions of what action to take are based on success and failure of previous protests. The Vulcan's initial key messages emphasised that the pub would not be closing, and that it was an economically viable business. A letter was written to send to the stakeholders of the Vulcan, Land Securities who were the developer of St. David's 2 and SA Brains the brewer (Vulcan Emails 6th April 2010). The letter received no reply by the stated deadline and prompted one campaigner to comment "I think we need to act fast" (Vulcan Emails 30th April 2010). In response to this comment another member of the group agreed "it's time to raise the heat!" (ibid). The situation is described by Thomas as going "very, very quiet", and that in order to provoke a response a demonstration would have to be planned to draw attention to the issue (2011).

The proposed march was set to pass the gates of the brewery with the aim to "make our voices heard", and that the urgency of the issue would be framed as "the time to act was now" (Thomas 2011). There was also a boycott initiated against SA Brains products and advertised through Facebook[8] (Vulcan Emails 1st May 2010) in the build up to the demonstration. The reasoning behind this protest was that it is a "symbolic protest to show that Brains can't take the fantastic loyalty for granted", but was "part of the protest to bring pressure on them" (Vulcan Emails 4th May 2010). In a similar type of targeting of the reference publics by playing on the electoral sensitivities of politicians a boycott of a product or service targets the reference publics of a business. All forms of communication and resources were used to mobilise support, the website, Facebook and leaflets were geared towards encouraging people to participate in the protest (Save the Vulcan 2010c, 2010g, 2010f; Vulcan Emails 3rd May 2010).

The information contained in the messages set out the who, what, why, where, when and how of the campaign succinctly and clearly covering a lot of information in a small amount of words. The Chairperson of the Vulcan campaign stressed that clear messages about a protest are paramount to the planning and potential success of a protest action. The message is divided into two, and is directed at supporters and the press. The press and supporters need to know the who, what, why, where, when and how of an action, but the media also need to know about what time photo opportunities will occur (Thomas 2011). If the public and press are unsure about the exact details of what will happen on the day of the demonstration the action runs the danger of being disparate and incoherent. The focus of the messages needs to contain a level of clarity to be successfully communicated to the media and the public.

In contrast to the first Brains protest the relative inactivity of the group following the pubs reprieve the ability to create media opportunities had diminished. A letter to the editor was written on the 1st May, but this letter was never published. The press release for the protest details the demonstrations time, place, and date, but puts the focus solely on the brewer. It states "ONLY BRAINS CAN STOP THE VULCAN CLOSING IN 2010" (Save the Vulcan 2010d). The group was eventually contacted by the press because of Thomas' positive source/journalist relationship with journalists at the *South Wales Echo* meant that she "tended to be the first person that he'd go to if he found out anything" (2011). The initial movements towards protest action provoked Brains into a response. Their reaction was posted on the Vulcan blog in it the brewer is eager to

[8] The event has since been removed from Facebook.

express that they are doing everything they can. In an attempt to reassure the group and, by extension, the Vulcan campaign's supporters and Brains consumers they state:

> Please be assured that we are doing everything we possibly can to keep the Vulcan open […] Commercial contracts are by their nature confidential but as soon as we're able to release some detail we will. (Quoted in Save the Vulcan 2010e)

What happened after this development is very similar to the first SA Brains protest. Despite the positive communication from the target nothing had been confirmed in writing, and it is for this reason that the general consensus within the group was to continue with the demonstration. One member reacts to the latest development by saying "My feeling is that we continue to pressure Brains" (Vulcan Emails 4th May 2010). The tactical aptitude of the group was to adapt to changing situations, and in this case the aim of the tactics was to maintain pressure on the protest target without being overly confrontational. The perception being that maintaining an antagonistic stance toward protest targets following positive decisions being made would have a detrimental effect on the campaign.

The group were contacted by SA Brains' public relations department and the interpretation of the conversation was as follows:

> Brains are naturally VERY keen that we stop the boycott and the Demo […] Brains are very keen to keep the peace (Vulcan Emails 4th May 2010)

Following this conversation the justification of the protest action comes under increased scrutiny by the members of the group. The value of continuing the protest action was weighed against the consequences of holding an antagonistic stance for too long. The following day a press article entitled "Drinkers win reassurance on pub plans" was published, and included parts of the statement made to the group by SA Brains (McCarthy 2010a:15). This caused a cancellation of the protest and this decision was communicated to supporters using SA Brains' comments to provide a positive messaging. The reframing of someone else's comments towards a group's messages validates the aims of a protest, and generates an expectation of success. A press release was written and sent to the press on the 7th May informing them of the official cancellation of the protest (Save the Vulcan 2010i). The press release was printed on the 11th May and contained quotes from the campaign's Chair:

> We are obviously very happy. The pub is still under threat, but the immediate future seems safe. We planned this demonstration to say: 'We are very worried and we want you to do something. (Thomas quoted in McCarthy 2010a:15)

In a moment of seeming victory the same line of messaging continues and the quote makes the argument that the Vulcan still is not completely safe, and emphasises the size and breadth of support. The focus is on the importance of the issue and how much it resonated with different audiences. The achievement of this level of influence shows the profile the Save the Vulcan campaign managed to create, and how successful its exploitation of media and political opportunities had been. To be taken seriously by the press, politicians, and the group's protest targets is due to the success of the Vulcan campaign's protest actions and communications strategy. This illustrates that to be truly effective a protest group needs to adapt quickly to external events. These external influences affect the actions of the group in ways that cannot be predicted but need to be adapted to efficiently and quickly. It demonstrates that the Save the Vulcan campaign's tactics were not confrontational; there was no blockade of the Brains brewery or a permanent lock in at the Vulcan. In many ways it did not need to be, because the implicit threat of a mass protest and the brewer's fear of bad publicity caused enough pressure on SA Brains to act.

5.4 Press Representation of the Save the Vulcan Campaign

The press representation of the Save the Vulcan campaign demonstrates the receptiveness of the local media to the group's messages, and the recognition of the issues in the press. It shows that the protest tactics of the Vulcan group were effective in gaining media coverage. The portrayal of a protest group's messages, aims, and protest tactics is the basis of RQ4, which reads as follows:

> RQ4. How does the media frame protest groups in response to their messages, goals, and protest actions?

It is clear from the content analysis statistics that the press reaction to the Save the Vulcan campaign was positive. These show the overall thematic content of the news coverage. There were 126 articles gathered from the two Cardiff based newspapers *South Wales Echo* and the *Western Mail*. The articles were sampled between September 2008 and end of May 2010, and this sample encapsulates both of the major phases of the campaign. The majority of articles came from the *South Wales Echo*, 117 (93%) compared with just 9 (7%) from the *Western Mail*. Both of these newspapers are

owned by Trinity Mirror Ltd and are the only two local newspapers in the Cardiff area (Trinity Mirror plc 2011).

The highest frequency of articles occurred in March 2009 with 23 (18%) and corresponded with the submission of the Cadw application to try and get the Vulcan building listed, a Conservative Party plan to protect Britain's pubs, and a visit to the Vulcan by Ken Clarke MP (Williamson 2009:6). In terms of the types of articles produced the majority were straight journalistic pieces 53 (42%). Next and emphasising the support of the newspaper and receptive public opinion were letters to the editor appear 44 times (35%). Of these 44 letters 6 (14%) were written by members of the campaign's committee, 2 (5%) by councillors and one by an Assembly Member. The vast majority of letters were written by members of the public and demonstrates the ability of the Vulcan issue to 'generate a mailbag'. The Vulcan was a relatively non-political issue and was framed as a 'common sense' decision to save the pub. Keeping an issue non-party political was a conscious approach by the Save the Vulcan campaign. The argument against party affiliation is made by the Chairperson who saw party affiliation as politically damaging because "people are often put off by political parties" (Thomas 2011). Moreover, the expressed support for a political party means that in supporting a campaign the public may feel that they are tacitly supporting that political party or in the Chair's words "it just gets too complicated" (ibid).

The most regularly occurring category of story in newspaper articles was recognition of protest, which appeared 60 times (37%). This was divided into the two sub-categories of a focus on the issues and support for a campaign. There were 36 instances (22%) of a focus on the issues, which relates to the issues being explained at length. Similarly, support for a campaign occurred in articles 24 times (15%). It follows that when there is a specific focus on the issues behind a campaign the more likely that the press will support a campaign. This support is related to the amount of letters to the editor the paper published, because these letters often expressed support and recognition of the issues. The main issue mentioned in newspaper articles was pub closures occurring 101 times (53%), and this issue was the primary concern. However, the context given to the issues was mostly superficial and lacked further context. A total of 124 out of 190 mentions (65%) of issues were treated as an overarching problem and did not explain the underlying problems in detail. In just under a quarter of instances (45 or 24%) gave more explanation of why the Vulcan was under threat, and 9 (5%) gave a direct chain of causality which gives all of the specific details behind the issue. The following is an example of a direct chain of causality:

> In 2005, plans were submitted for the St David's 2 development which subsequently forced a Compulsory Purchase Order to be issued - SA Brain then sold up.
>
> A city developer has since applied to build a 20-storey mixed use development of flats, shops and restaurants and the clock is now ticking. (O'Connor 2008:8)

The quote gives the details required to understand the issue and why the Vulcan was under threat. The articles gathered expressed a positive opinion 28 times (22%). This is partly due to the large frequency of letters to the editor. Overall, only 2 negative articles (2%) appeared in the sample; both were op-eds and written by the same author (O'Neill 2009a:24). This is also reflected in how sources in articles express their opinion on the issues. There were 68 of 233 sources (29%) that were positive about the issues and only 3 (1%) were negative. The sources who were most positive about the campaign were politicians. If all the different types of politicians are added together 23 (19%) were positive about the issues. Second, members of specified protest groups spoke positively 19 times (8%), and their opinions therefore appeared relatively unfiltered. This provided a favourable media platform for the campaign to publicise its messages and create and exploit political opportunities. Aside from the issues the sources or the newspapers do not express a great deal of opinion about the protesters themselves or the tactics used.

5.4.1 Non-Confrontational Protest Tactics

The media coverage of the Vulcan's protest tactics demonstrates the affect of measured, non-confrontational tactics had on the reporting of the campaign, and the extent to which the group's goals were explained. The most regularly mentioned tactic was demonstrative, and these types of tactics were mentioned 54 out of 166 times (33%). None of the Vulcan's protest tactics went beyond the demonstrative level because the majority of supporters were over the age of 30 and a non-confrontational approach was favoured to avoid alienating supporters. The group needed to keep supporters onside, maintain political influence, and access amidst a complicated negotiation process. Of the 54 mentions of demonstrative protest 31 (19%) were talking specifically about the petition. A detailed examination of the submission of the Vulcan petition to the National Assembly for Wales' Petitions Committee and associated processes will be discussed in section 5.5.1. The number of signatories and mechanisms involved in the petitions process provided the press with a consistent and continuous narrative to anchor reports. The petition's process resulted in the creation of media opportunities because the meetings of the committee were a regular event, and there was a beginning, middle, and an end. The size of the campaign's support was

often repeated in news reports, and this validated the issue and suggested solutions put forward by the Save the Vulcan group, for example:

> More than 1,000 supporters have signed the petition including actor Rhys Ifans and BBC presenter John Inverdale. (Anon 2009g:7)

This quote links closely with the second most frequently mentioned tactic was the use of celebrities and appeared 20 times (12%). This is closely related to the amount of reports containing a celebrity theme in the press (22 times or 17%). The backing of celebrities, especially Welsh celebrities, or celebrities with a connection to Wales played a particularly salient part in news coverage. The link between the celebrity and the local area is of particular attraction to local newspapers because it provides a high profile personality to base the story on. This support was exploited and included in the group's press release, and it helped in making the pub famous. The instance of Welsh actor Rhys Ifans signing the petition was press released became included in the Save the Vulcan campaign's list of high profile supporters:

> Ifans joins a number of high profile people supporting the campaign, including John Inverdale, Huw Stephens, Glenys Kinnock MEP, Jenny Randerson AM, and Jenny Willott MP. (Save the Vulcan 2009l)

The local press published the press release using the same quote from the press release "I am delighted Rhys has decided to support us" it continues "He clearly recognises the historic and ongoing importance of this Victorian pub" (Thomas quoted in ibid, Miloudi 2009b:8). What the statistics and the example show is that the role of celebrities contributed to the profile of the group in the press, and the use of celebrities opens up media opportunities. The involvement of celebrities, however superficial, is clearly a tactic that can be used to create some quick publicity. It is worth noting that a large number of articles mentioned no type of protest at all (81 or 49%). This shows that the Vulcan campaign did not have to rely on stunts or other events to get into the press.

This can also be seen in the sources and pictures used in media coverage. A total of 52 out of 233 sources (18.5%) were politicians and included all of the different types of politicians added together. This included Liberal Democrat AMs 13 times (6%); this included the constituency AM Jenny Randerson who gave the Vulcan campaign her full support. Member of a specified protest group appear 32 times (14%) and were the highest singular source. The relationship between the Vulcan group and the local

newspaper had an enormous bearing on this number. The campaign's positive relationship with the press was, to quote Thomas, because the media "trusted the information I was giving them" (2011). Trust and credibility are important parts of gaining press coverage, and allows a protest group to comment with authority on an issue. The second most commonly used sources were the landlady and landlord (21 or 9%). They were the tenants of the Vulcan during the campaign and became minor figureheads. The landlady's image in particular accompanied several articles, and gave the campaign its human face (See McCarthy 2010b:18 for example). The group's central focus on the pub as a place for events and photo opportunities and openness with the media helped maintain a media narrative, and made the pub a prominent symbol of the campaign.

This point is exemplified by the additional images accompanying news stories which are heavily focused on the Vulcan pub as a building, and its sign. A simple image of the front of the building adorned many a newspaper article, and featured in all of the Vulcan's leaflets (Save the Vulcan 2009f, 2010f; Pitt 2009:8). The *South Wales Echo* went as far as incorporating the sign into a logo along with the newspaper's name, which were used alongside articles about the Vulcan (Appendix 4). When people were featured in photographs the Save the Vulcan committee were fairly high profile, but no one member gained a particularly prominent profile (See McCarthy 2009g:14 for example). A greater prominence was given to the politicians and celebrities who supported and attached themselves to the campaign. The celebrities appeared in newspaper images as press shots but not necessarily in the Vulcan itself (See Lewis 2008a:16 for example). Politicians on the other hand would feature in political photo opportunities that were taken in the Vulcan (See Williamson 2009:6 for example). This made the Vulcan campaign appear as much larger operation than a small committee of five people, and played into the generation of expectations and success.

The campaign effectively opened media and political opportunities for others to create their own publicity. The politicians and celebrities who associated themselves with campaigns are exploiting these opportunities to present a more positive and socially aware public image. The campaign members divided the support of celebrities and politicians into two categories, inactive or passive, and active support. Inactive meant completely ignoring the campaign; passive supporters agreed with the campaign's aims but engaged no further. Active supporters were those who spoke positively about the campaign, and actively campaigned on the Vulcan group's behalf. The campaign created a bandwagon which politicians and celebrities wanted to be associated with. It raised a question with one Vulcan member as to whether or not these high profile

personalities “really care about the Vulcan” (Wilton 2010). A further exploration of the active/inactive support of politicians will be discussed in section 5.6, and the tactical reactions of the group to press coverage and political attention. The wider context of political reactions will now be explored in order to demonstrate the amount of influence and support the Vulcan campaign gained.

5.5 Political Reaction to the Vulcan Campaign

The level of public support the Vulcan campaign gained from politicians was substantial, and it is these reactions to the group that shaped the amount of influence they had on dominant institutions. These responses are central to RQ5 detailed below:

> RQ5. What is the response of dominant institutions to a protest group’s communications strategies and protest tactics?

The exploration of this question raises the mainstream political activities of Save the Vulcan campaign members. One campaigner was a member of Plaid Cymru, and another was both a member of, and worked for the Liberal Democrat MP for Cardiff Central. Both of these political party affiliations offered insider access to these political parties. This provided the political opportunity to influence and pressure decision makers from the inside. This insider access had a substantial bearing on the amount of political support the group had, and Thomas admits that without this relationship the Vulcan campaign would not have been able to obtain the amount of information it did (2011). The examples of this include the blog post by Jenny Randerson AM, and a letter sent by Greg Mulholland MP (2009; Save the Vulcan 2009j). The previously mentioned Statement of Opinion is another example, which was covered by the press and occurred very early on in the Save the Vulcan campaign (National Assembly for Wales 2008; Lewis 2008b:18). The statement helped create a receptive political context for the duration of the campaign.

The group had a presence at the Plaid Cymru and Welsh Liberal Democrat conferences in 2009, and used their insider contacts to obtain stalls to publicise the campaign (Save the Vulcan 2009c). This took the campaign directly to politicians and allowed for photo opportunities and the gathering of signatories for the petition. The Cardiff Central constituency MP was particularly helpful to the group. Before the Welsh Liberal Democrat conference she steered Party Leader Nick Clegg MP towards the Vulcan pub for a photo opportunity (Save the Vulcan 2009c). The reach of the

campaign stretched further than political events in the local area. In April 2009 the chairperson was invited and went to an All Party Parliamentary Group workshop on 'How to save your local pub?' by Liberal Democrat MP Greg Mulholland, and raising the issue to UK wide importance (Save the Vulcan 2009k). The relationship of the Vulcan campaign with politicians meant the group had a considerable amount of political influence, and this contributed to the political opportunity available to the group.

5.5.1 Negative Political Reactions and Political Opportunity

What has been detailed so far are positive political reactions, but not all attempts at political pressure were well received. The Vulcan group's leaflet included a tear off strip to fill in and send to the Heritage Minister, Alun Ffred Jones AM:

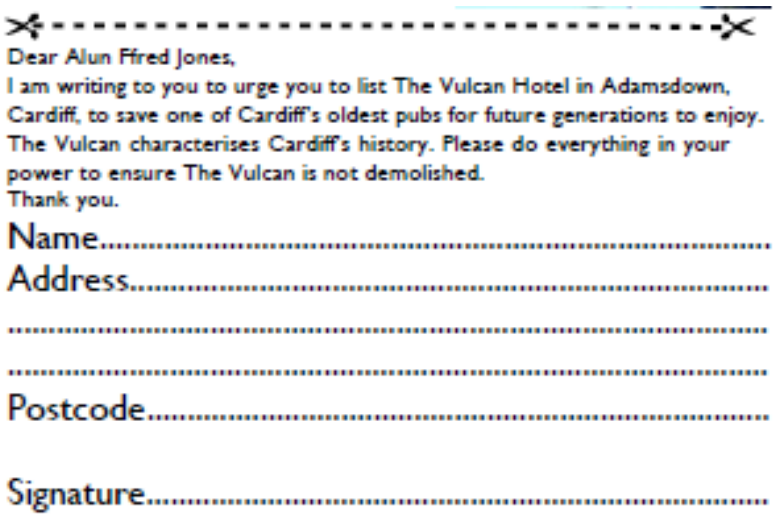

Dear Alun Ffred Jones,
I am writing to you to urge you to list The Vulcan Hotel in Adamsdown, Cardiff, to save one of Cardiff's oldest pubs for future generations to enjoy. The Vulcan characterises Cardiff's history. Please do everything in your power to ensure The Vulcan is not demolished.
Thank you.
Name.....
Address.....
.....
.....
Postcode.....
Signature.....

Figure 5.5.1 A tear off strip from a Save the Vulcan leaflet (Save the Vulcan 2009o)

The sheer amount postcards sent to the Minister prompted a written response that was addressed to the campaign's Chair and was published on the group's Facebook page (Save the Vulcan 2009b). The group focused on one part of the letter as that they saw as particularly negative, which reads as follows:

> As I have issued this response to you as campaign organiser, we will not respond further to individual postcards, I would ask that you disseminate this letter as you feel appropriate. (Jones quoted in Save the Vulcan 2009b)

In a direct response to this letter the chair of the campaign states "I am not in control of which members of the electorate are sending you postcards about The Vulcan" (Vulcan Emails 25th February 2009). Throughout the letter there are references to the

‘electorate’ and ‘voters’ which is using the reference public the Minister is most likely to respond to. The letter was also interpreted by the group as a refusal by the Heritage Minister refusing to respond to the public and was framed as such in the group’s press release (Save the Vulcan 2009g). The story ran in the press as a short news piece which states that the Minister had been “deluged with hundreds of postcards” (Anon 2009d). It prompted a debate between Vulcan members over the interpretation of the original letter and what the appropriate language should have been. The following quotes are from are taken from a sequence of emails about this issue:

> Vulcan 1: The thing is, that letter was a prime opportunity for AFJ[9] to say that he was immensely supportive of the campaign etc, and he could've suggested further actions etc. But he didn't!
> Vulcan 2: It was his first proper response to the campaign and it did read as 'not my problem'.
> Vulcan 3: Also, he doesn't actually say "stop sending me these postcards"; he's telling us that he will not be responding to any more of them.
> Vulcan 1: In fairness, the PR didn't claim that AFJ said 'stop sending postcards', just that he has refused to respond to anymore that arrive in his office. (Vulcan Emails 26th February 2009)

The Minister’s reaction did not alter the Vulcan’s media or protest tactics, because at this point in the campaign the group had a high media profile, and they were not reliant on the support of this particular politician. The political opportunity created by the Save the Vulcan campaign had drawn together a number of political allies from a range of political parties. The consequence of the potential loss of one AM would not have closed off the political opportunity. It also did not change how the Minister reacted to the group and Alun Ffred Jones still visited the Vulcan pub (Miloudi 2009b:8). Therefore, even he wanted to be seen as engaged in the campaign, and the pressure applied by the Vulcan campaign had provoked him into a public appearance in the pub.

5.5.2 Petitions Committee Case Study

To reaffirm the level of influence, insider status, and reaction of those in power to the Save the Vulcan campaign this next section will discuss the processes around the submission of the Vulcan petition to the National Assembly for Wales’ Petitions Committee. The committee is made up of four AMs one from each political party in the Welsh Assembly, Labour, Plaid Cymru, Conservative, and Liberal Democrat, and one of these AMs acts as the committee’s chair (National Assembly for Wales 2011). The petition was gathered through a standardised form, and its delivery to the National

[9] Shorthand for Alan Ffred Jones AM.

Assembly for Wales was through a protest event. The protest was advertised through leaflets, the email list, and the press (Vulcan Emails 9th February 2009; Anon 2009f). It was arranged as a media and political opportunity outside the Senedd, the press, AMs and public were invited to attend. The AM Jenny Randerson joined the group when they presented their evidence to the Petitions Committee. Her support for the campaign was unwavering. Before giving evidence to the committee the Vulcan campaigners researched the backgrounds of the Petitions Committee members to gauge their receptiveness to the issue, and attempt to second guess any questions. The political opportunity this represented is emphasised by three of the four committee members had endorsed Jenny Randerson's Statement of Opinion calling for the protection of the Vulcan pub (National Assembly for Wales 2008). Pushing this idea of a big political opportunity further the committee's questions were leaked the Save the Vulcan campaign from an inside source.

The Vulcan petition was debated a further six times during the sampling period, and news of the Vulcan's initial reprieve in June 2009 was created in the Petitions Committee by Liberal Democrat AM Mike German who responded "hurrah" (Quoted in National Assembly for Wales 2009a:28). The role of the Vulcan as a symbol persisted throughout the Petitions Committee process and a committee meeting was held in the Vulcan itself in May 2009. Holding a meeting in the Vulcan for no practical reason can be seen as a gesture by the committee to the significance of the issue. It validates the actions of the group and raises the profile and salience of the issues. The new advantages gained by taking the Petitions Committee route brought questions about heritage legislation into focus, and according to Thomas this "made it a big national issue" (2011). A year following the submission of the petition a report was produced entitled 'Save the Vulcan: Protection of historic buildings' (National Assembly for Wales 2010). The news articles in response to the release of the report contain quotes from the press release by Vulcan campaigner's, and are included along with quotes by the Petitions Committee Chair (Save the Vulcan 2010j; Anon 2010c:16; Lewis 2010:13). The report recognises the size of the support the Vulcan campaign had in the following passage:

> We believe that the 5,000 signatures that support this petition are testament to the fact that The Vulcan is an important building to the people of Cardiff (National Assembly for Wales 2010:14)

If thought about in terms of success and failure the questions raised about legislation were an unintentional new advantage, because the original aim of the Vulcan

campaign was to protect the pub from demolition. Moreover, the impact the campaign had on the committee and, by extension, the Welsh Government is summed up in a comment by one of the committee members during a meeting:

> One of the interesting things about this petition is that it has raised huge policy issues, which were slightly hidden before. (German quoted in National Assembly for Wales 2009b:18)

What this demonstrates is that the influence of the Vulcan's campaigning went beyond the original goal of saving the pub. It also pushed other issues onto the political agenda which would have further implications for devolved government policy. The knock on effect of the Vulcan campaign could be a change in the law which would not only save the Vulcan, but may protect other buildings under threat of similar demolition.

5.6 Save the Vulcan's Tactical Reactions to Press and Political Events

The last section of this chapter addresses RQ6 and the tactical adaptation and reflexivity of the Save the Vulcan campaign to press and political events. The question is as follows:

> RQ6. How are media coverage and the response of protest targets fed back into a protest group's choice of communications strategies and protest tactics?

What has been already demonstrated is the Save the Vulcan campaign received a warm and positive reception from both local newspapers and politicians. The advantage of this support was used by the Vulcan group to apply further pressure on their protest targets. The aim of the media tactic used in reaction to aforementioned incident with the Heritage Minister, and the letter sent to him was to provoke the Minister into a positive response to the campaign (Save the Vulcan 2009g). This type of pressure is mirrored in the group's close relationship with friendly politicians. Craig called it a "good relationship" but emphasises that maintaining these connections the group could not be too antagonistic for fear of "stirring up the honey pot" (2010).

The more high profile the Vulcan campaign became there was a perceptible increase in politicians allying themselves with the campaign, and as already detailed those politicians were either actively or passively supporting the campaign. A potentially damaging example of passive support was the Labour Party's prospective

parliamentary candidate for the constituency of Cardiff Central, Jenny Rathbone. In a constituency leaflet she claims the Vulcan campaign as a Labour campaign by stating “please support our campaign”, see figure 5.6.1 below:

Vulcan fate in hands of developer

Campaign continues to grow

The Save the Vulcan campaign started by Vulcan regular Bill Robinson in 2005 has grown and grown. Bill has been drinking at the Vulcan for over 20 years and is one of the many Adamsdown residents who don't want their favourite local knocked down.

The fate of the Vulcan Pub was over-looked when Cardiff Council approved the huge David's 2 development. Bill explains: "Nobody was listening to us when Cardiff Council sealed the Vulcan's fate in 2005; the Lib Dem controlled Council was too busy focussing on their new shops and offices in the town centre. Now everyone, even the Lib Dems, want to give a hand and it could be too late."

Over 5,000 people have now signed the petition to stop the 150 year old pub from being demolished, including actor Rhys Ifans and Neil and Glennis Kinnock.

Brains brewery sold the site to Derek Rapport, a major Cardiff property developer. He plans to replace the Vulcan with another multi-storey car park and much needed housing. As Cardiff Council gave outline planning permission in 2005, Derek Rapport could knock the Vulcan down any day; but he still has to get detailed planning permission for what goes onto the site. Detailed plans have been lodged with Cardiff Council since last year but they do not include saving the Vulcan. There is still time to get these plans changed.

Please support our campaign. WRITE to Derek Rapport at Ivor House, Bridge Street, Cardiff, CF10 2TH. Ask him to include the Vulcan with new housing and forget the multi-storey car park.

Figure 5.6.1 A copy of the Cardiff Mail article from a Labour Party leaflet (Labour Party 2009:3)

The leaflet asks for members of the public to send letters directly to the developer in complete contrast to the Save the Vulcan campaign’s tactics. In reference to Rathbone’s call for people to write letters the Chair Rachel Thomas described the potential damage she caused doing “more harm than good” (2011). This represented a conflict of messaging and Rathbone differed tactically from the Vulcan campaign. Political party affiliation was also not part of what the Save the Vulcan campaign stood for, because it was seen as negatively differentiating a campaign as representing a particular parties ideas or policies. The leaflet prompted an angry response from the group who threatened to contact their email list to clarify the situation and to detail inaccuracies and misinformation in the leaflet. They also demanded an apology from Rathbone. The group never received a reply, and a month later the Vulcan campaign

press released the incident to clarify the non-party political affiliation of the campaign stating:

> The Labour leaflet – 'The Cardiff Mail' - frames the Save the Vulcan campaign as a Labour campaign, and whilst local Labour activists have had ample opportunity to become involved in the campaign, they have chosen not to. (Save the Vulcan 2009h)

The *South Wales Echo* ran the news story under the heading "Save Vulcan campaign is 'hijacked by Labour'" (McCarthy 2009f:19). The article contains the one and only reference to the political allegiance of the Chairperson by describing them as working "for the Liberal Democrats" (ibid:19). This was the only time that any kind of party political affiliation was included in press coverage. The article quotes Rathbone in response to the Vulcan campaign in which she is defensive rather than conciliatory, and she argues that "We should all be united in trying to save the Vulcan but we seem to disagree on tactics" (Quoted in ibid:19). Rathbone's lack of direct involvement in the campaign meant that she did not have knowledge of the delicate negotiations that were taking place over the Vulcan's future. She is described by Wilton as "not on message" and he speculates that she had a separate agenda to the Vulcan campaign (2010).

There was the potential, however remote, that upon the request of Rathbone letters would have been written to the developer and could have jeopardised political negotiations and created negative outcomes. The publicising of the issue had two aims 1) Labour had misrepresented the campaign and the group wanted to clarify the situation; 2) it was an attempt to provoke Labour into a more active role. This is made clear in a statement by Thomas who says that no one would have ever been excluded from the campaign because of political affiliation "we'd have welcomed her with open arms if she'd have come to us and wanted to get involved more" (2011). If Labour support had been achieved the Save the Vulcan campaign would have gained public support from all of the major political parties in Wales. This co-optation of the Vulcan's campaign for political gain was a sign of their success in influencing politicians, because the issue was seen as important enough to be used to win votes. The significant danger to a group when this happens is a loss of control over the framing of the issue, the solutions, and the confusion that is produced by mixed messaging.

Following the campaigns rise to prominence in the local press and on the political agenda made the Vulcan's tactics with respect to gaining media coverage became easier. It was easier in the sense that more journalists would approach the group with

requests for information. The plight of the pub and the campaign to save it was always mentioned in this coverage (BBC 2009a, 2009b). This media attention helped to boost support for the campaign, and after Jeremy Vine's visit there was an increase in Twitter followers on the Save the Vulcan campaign's official feed (Save the Vulcan 2009e). The need for substantial monetary or personnel resources was significantly reduced because the group gained media and political prominence. The broader issue of British pubs closing meant that the Vulcan could be attached to, and brought into, a number of different stories. The Conservative Party in 2009, for instance, unveiled an initiative entitled 'Save the Great British Pub' (James 2009b:4). The issue was applicable and appealed to people beyond the local level. The Vulcan's success with the media is two-fold. Firstly, the Vulcan campaigners and the Chair especially had a good working relationship with journalists based on trust and reliability (Thomas 2011). The trust between the group and journalists went both ways, because the activists needed to know that the press would report on the group's activities positively (ibid). Second, Wilton makes a more basic news agenda argument when referring to the *South Wales Echo* he states that "they liked our stories, they liked our celebrities things like that, it helps sell their papers" (2010).

The Vulcan group's messaging and communications was tightly controlled, and micro managed down to the choice of which members of the group could speak to the press. Thomas stresses the need for message control in a warning to other protest groups. She states that activists need to be "very careful who you let speak to the press" (2011). This opinion is based on the need for campaigners to remain 'on message'. The reason being is the press will print a newsworthy quote regardless of whether or not it carries a group's intended message, as Thomas put it "if someone says something good the press are going to print it" (ibid). Furthermore, the Save the Vulcan group's communications endeavoured to integrate all of their messages across various platforms. The emails to the mailing list and leaflets pointed to the Facebook group, the Twitter feed had links to the blog, and the press would help in highlighting these platforms by mentioning them in media coverage. The consequence of the *South Wales Echo's* support meant that this information was published without criticism and demonstrates the media opportunities afforded to the campaign.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that the media coverage in the local press was predominantly positive. The *South Wales Echo* gave the campaign its full support through the range of

stories it ran, and endeavoured to explain and highlight the issues. The campaign members actively avoided becoming celebrities themselves and instead left it to high profile supporters, such as politicians and celebrities to be the focus of press attention. The newspapers were actively receptive of the campaign, and this media opportunity was aided by the appeal of a local issue to a local newspaper. This was helped by the positive relationship between campaigners and members of the press. They provided the press with a variety of stories and this meant the Vulcan campaign was able to stay 'fresh' by creating new angles through which the story could be told. This maintained press interest throughout the campaign even though not everything was covered in the media. The Save the Vulcan group's response to events and external factors was to press release everything to keep the profile of the Vulcan as high as possible. The group took a measured approach where the threat of more confrontational actions was enough to gain new advantages from political stakeholders. A more antagonistic and confrontational approach would have had the likely outcome of alienating political allies, changing the focus of media coverage, and isolating public support. This tactical approach is coupled with the ability to write a good press release, because if the copy is simple, concise, and straightforward the press release can easily be incorporated into a news story. After a while the Vulcan campaign's media strategy began to run itself. As the profile of the issue grew the media began to contact the group for updates and progress reports. The campaigners would endeavour to provide the press with this information and it would subsequently be used in a news reports.

Chapter 6 – Plane Stupid – Lights, Camera, Direct Action

The second group under investigation are the anti-aviation campaigners Plane Stupid who were heavily involved in carrying out direct action against the expansion of Britain's airports. This chapter will show that Plane Stupid possessed an awareness of what tactics would generate the most amount of media coverage, and the potential media responses to their direct action. The decision by Plane Stupid to use direct action is based on the activists' perception of the urgency of the issue, and the aim of the group was to generate debate not political acceptance. However, the dominant institutional response to direct action is one of repression, but this repression was used by Plane Stupid to create media coverage and ultimately protect activists. The group are structured around a collection of affinity groups carrying out actions under the Plane Stupid name. There is a Plane Stupid Scotland, Plane Stupid Manchester, Plane Stupid in the south east of Britain, and Plane Mad in Ireland (Plane Stupid 2012). Their most high profile protests were against airports in South East England, and the proposed expansion of Stansted and Heathrow Airports.

They were not the only group protesting against the expansion of Heathrow. A vast coalition of different groups were also involved from the local campaigners Heathrow Association for the Control of Aircraft Noise (HACAN ClearSkies), and No Third Runway Action Group (No TRAG); to more established charities and NGOs such as the National Trust and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) (Rodgers 2009). Plane Stupid represented the more radical end of the aviation campaigners and like the Save the Vulcan campaign was protesting on a fundamentally local issue. The difference between the two is Plane Stupid used protests which gained national media attention, and they connected their campaign to the wider national and global issue of climate change[10].

6.1 Media Awareness and the Timing of Collective Action

The actions against Heathrow were situated in the political context of local council opposition to the airport's expansion (Hounslow Council 2009). In addition, the Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties were opposed to the government's proposal for Heathrow (Caesar 2009:10). Against this backdrop Plane Stupid's protest and media tactics utilised an acute awareness of what attracts media attention, and

[10] Similar to the Save the Vulcan chapter some information and reflections included in this chapter comes from the interviews with the activists involved.

these tactics were aimed at creating and exploiting media and political opportunities. This relates to RQ1 below, and the interpretation of the media and political context by Plane Stupid and the influence of these contexts on their tactics:

> RQ1. How do protest groups create, identify, and exploit political and media opportunities?

In answer to RQ1 Plane Stupid were protest entrepreneurs timing their protest actions to correspond with other events, or using protest opportunities. The performance of direct action in conjunction with other events exploits media attention and intentionally links a protest action to a political narrative. In reference to the timing of protest actions Gifford states that the protests "all tie into a narrative that is directed at an audience" (2010). The events corresponding to Plane Stupid's actions were directly related to aviation expansion and climate change, and this demonstrates how Plane Stupid's protest targets were influenced by the political context within which they occur. Gifford mentions that actions were "designed according to key dates" and that the messages of an action were tailored to link the issues to external events (2010). This shows that Plane Stupid's direct action was carefully planned to fully exploit media opportunities, and connect together seemingly disparate events with a set of key messages.

The Plane Stupid press release from their occupation of the roof of the House of Commons in February 2008 exemplifies the media awareness of the activists. It demonstrates the need to fit a protest action into a meaningful, ongoing narrative. The press release seeks to fully explain the issue by tracing the causalities behind the decision to expand Heathrow Airport. The press release seeks to justify the use of direct action too and claims the tactics are non-violent:

> The rooftop occupation comes two days after Greenpeace protesters scaled an Airbus A320 which had just touched down at Heathrow from Manchester. (Plane Stupid 2008b)

The group's active courting of the press was not predicated on the need for positive coverage. Instead their opinion was the "more media attention the better, even bad press generates dialogue" (Kerr 2010). They talked about using the media as a protest resource suggesting that a "large part how you rate your success is how much noise you make in the media" (ibid). The goal of Plane Stupid's media strategy was more about highlighting the issues, and as long as the issue was in the public domain and being debated this was considered a success.

This was the role Plane Stupid saw themselves in, with the aim to “force the issue into the open” (Murray 2010). Their tactics were not just about opening up the issue it was about prompting political debate, and to create the media space for other opposing groups to speak on the issues. How Plane Stupid recognised and exploited media and political opportunities was through the tactical use of direct action and a well-crafted media strategy. Direct action for Plane Stupid was used as a message carrier; using spectacular events to draw the media in, and then when interviewed activists would highlight the issues (ibid).

The political opportunity around the issue of Heathrow was recognised by Murray as having a “strong policy rationale”, and direct action was the method that he believed would shift government policy on the third runway (ibid). Murray also talked about direct action as a catalyst that can “accelerate that process” of social and political change, where direct action is the reason that an issue is debated (ibid). Finally, he recognised that the issue of Heathrow was set to become an electoral issue (ibid). This meant that an appeal to potential voters through a high profile media campaign would pressurise the government via the threat of losing votes. Therefore, Plane Stupid was fully aware of the media and political context within which they had to work, and they used this knowledge to its fullest.

6.2 Plane Stupid the Brand

This next section will closely look at how Plane Stupid move from identifying, creating and exploiting media and political opportunities to the framing of these opportunities in their protest tactics and messages. This corresponds with RQ2 below, and is related to the rationale behind Plane Stupid’s use of direct action, and the place the messages had in their media and protest tactics:

> RQ2. How does a protest group frame their media and political opportunities, messages, goals, and protest actions?

In addition to direct action Plane Stupid also used what they termed ‘direct intervention’. Direct intervention differs from direct action because it results in a measurable impact and this guided Plane Stupid’s interpretation of success. The invading and shutting down of an airport runway will result in a reduction of carbon dioxide and other pollutants being released into the atmosphere, as Glass stated “you

can materially measure the success, or the impacts of your action" (2011). These tactics are part of the Plane Stupid brand.

The brand relates directly to how Plane Stupid presents itself to the public. In a posting on their website they recommend direct action to others, and acknowledge the preconceptions of direct action activists in the media:

> This can take many forms, although 99% of these forms are what is referred to in the national press as 'mindless vandalism'. So, by way of a summary, I would recommend mindless vandalism in 99% of cases. (Plane Stupid 2009b)

Tactically, direct action set Plane Stupid apart from the other groups protesting against aviation at the time. Plane Stupid were dedicated to direct action and they admit on their website that "We're not best placed to give advice on petitions, lobbying or legal challenges" (Plane Stupid 2012). This was echoed by Murray who points out that direct action is better at highlighting issues rather than providing solutions:

> Airport expansion is what we focused on because we weren't into proposing specific remedies, as a direct action group you are very good at point our problems but you are not credible in proposing policy solutions (2010)

The credibility mentioned is from the perspective of dominant institutions, because direct action is seen as an unnecessarily confrontational tactic by dominant institutions. The statements of Plane Stupid justify the tactics emphasising the peaceful nature of the tactics. Their statements often link the tactics to the issues, for example in a press release relating to the blockading of the runway at Stansted one activist argues direct action is used because Plane Stupid has to "stop climate change by whatever peaceful means we have left" (Plane Stupid 2008c). The important part of this quote is the use of the word 'peaceful'. This term is regularly used to emphasise and establish Plane Stupid as non-violent in communications. It is a much-repeated phrase in their communications and is linked explicitly to their protest actions, for example "our peaceful campaign" and "absolute and uncompromising commitment to peaceful protest" (Plane Stupid 2008e).

The justification of their use of direct action extends beyond their own public relations and can be seen in the quotes of activists in the press. Plane Stupid members attempt to separate their non-violent direct action from confrontational protests that explicitly use violence: "There is a huge difference between lawful, peaceful and violent protests.

[We] break the law but have never resorted to violence" (Murray quoted in Taylor 2009a:12). Direct action is being used as a tactical last resort, and something that is necessary to bring attention to the issues. Their tactics and statements not only stressed the tactics as peaceful, Plane Stupid focused on the urgency of the issues, framed the issue as generational, and an expressed optimism that the group would be successful.

The enforcing of the peaceful frame is linked to the underlying issues and the urgency of the issue is the reason why Plane Stupid resorted to such tactics. Their fundamental belief is that climate change should be tackled immediately. The following example of the use of urgency in Plane Stupid's messages can be seen in the banner and messages on clothing worn by activists at the Stansted protest. The banner read "CLIMATE EMERGENCY" and the t-shirts had "Please DO something" written on them (Plane Stupid 2008c). What can be extrapolated from these messages is the reinforcement of sense of urgency and draws a focus towards the age of people involved in the protests. This framing of the issue acts on two different levels, first it lays blame to previous generations, for example Plane Stupid's claim that our "*parents' generation has failed us"* (Kember quoted in ibid, emphasis in original). Second, it puts a youthful frame around the issue and suggests that it is the younger generation whose future is at risk. By extension, it is young people who have to solve the problem of climate change or live with the consequences. Exampled in the following press release quote "*We're here to say it cannot happen, and our generation won't let it happen"* (Glass quoted in Plane Stupid 2009e, emphasis in original).

The older generation is seen to have failed in preventing climate change, and the inaction of politicians is blamed. These sentiments are not restricted to the group's press releases, and when activists spoke in the press this is what they focused on. The following quote covers all of these elements. The quote opens with an acknowledgement of the illegality of the protest, and attempts to address the negative preconception of direct action. The urgency of the issues is highlighted, blame and solutions are detailed, and finally the tactics are justified:

> Being arrested is a terrifying prospect, but not nearly as terrifying as the threat of climate change. Our parents' generation has failed us and it's now down to young people to stop climate change by whatever peaceful means we have left. (Kember quoted in Gammell 2008:9)

The urgency in the message is coupled with a sense of optimism that Plane Stupid will achieve their goals. This type of messaging appears in a couple of different ways. The first emphasises the size of opposition to the expansion of Britain's airports. The size of the campaign expressed by Plane Stupid stretches beyond their affinity groups. In their communication they also talk about other stakeholders involved in the issues, and in relation to Heathrow Plane Stupid used these stakeholders to criticise their protest targets. For example "BAA has had more say than both local councils and respected scientific organizations, who oppose the planned expansions" (Plane Stupid 2009a). They are part of the wider environmental direct action movement and actions in other countries are regularly mentioned, and there is talk of "growing links between aviation campaigners in the different countries of Europe" (Plane Stupid 2009c).

These communicative elements of Plane Stupid's communications when taken by themselves do not necessarily present a coherent narrative, but taken together and the resolve of the protesters is clear. The repetition of these themes connects episodic protest events together to create a thematic narrative. The key to this narrative is a fundamental belief that Plane Stupid will be successful in achieving their protest goals. The size of the opposition, the tactics used, and an emphasis on youth all factor into this belief, and it explains the why, how and what Plane Stupid believe in. The quote below incorporates all of these aspects and demonstrates how these elements interact with each other:

> *We are as confident as ever that the runway won't be built. Their efforts won't start for years. Through direct action, people will retain the power to stop the runway long after Gordon Brown's brief moment of power expires. This decision is an insult to younger generations and we will respond to it as such.* (Deen quoted in Plane Stupid 2009d, emphasis in original)

These messages were carefully crafted and honed towards specific audiences, as Kerr stated sometimes one message would take "months and months" to produce (2010). The messages propagated were deliberately kept simple, Glass uses the example of the BAA HQ banner used at the House of Commons protest that exemplified this simplicity "a simple message but told of a much bigger collusion behind scenes" (2011). This is despite the complexities and debates surrounding climate science. The need to communicate the issues in uncomplicated language is central to being understood by both the press and public.

The underlying goals of Plane Stupid can be found on their website and consists of three simple overarching aims:

1. End to short haul flights and airport expansion
2. Stop aviation advertising
3. A just transition to sustainable jobs and transport (Plane Stupid 2012)

The attempt to form a narrative by Plane Stupid was in competition with the mainstream media's episodic treatment of direct action. A closer look at the Plane Stupid website reveals their views of the political process and government, their political opportunities, their protest targets, and Plane Stupid's specific framing of the issues. Finally the arguments that Plane Stupid made about aviation are not presented without accompanying evidence. Plane Stupid's blog posts often linked to mainstream newspapers, government committees, and other groups protesting on climate change (See Plane Stupid 2008h for example). These external sources are utilised to further support Plane Stupid's view of the issue, and the website represented Plane Stupid's unmediated voice. The success of a website, Murray argues, is dependent on the media profile of a group because "no one would have heard about us if they hadn't read about us in the paper" (2010). The information contained on the blog is not explicitly filtered by the press and allows Plane Stupid a platform that can be viewed by anyone.

To illustrate this point Plane Stupid expressed their views of government on their website, and this demonstrated that they held a highly sceptical view of mainstream politics. The government and aviation businesses were the protest targets of Plane Stupid and came under considerable criticism online. The ruling Labour Party are portrayed as ineffective and incompetent (Plane Stupid 2008a), and the contradictions in the government arguments are used as a political opportunity by Plane Stupid to put forward their arguments. The framing of the aviation industry is to directly link them to government decisions, and these descriptions provide a direct chain of causality for the issues. This is exemplified by the occupation of the roof of the House of Commons. Plane Stupid hung a banner from the Parliament building saying 'BAA HQ', and the activists threw paper aeroplanes made from documents obtained through a Freedom of Information request (Plane Stupid 2008b). These documents suggested that the airport operator BAA had helped write the government's consultation (Plane Stupid 2008b). The close relationship of the government and the aviation industry allowed opposition political parties to use the issue of Heathrow for political gain. In terms of Heathrow the presence of the Liberal Democrats and the Conservative Party calling for the third runway to be scrapped in the years before the 2010 general election produced a large political opportunity. The opposition of the major political parties legitimised Plane

Stupid's claims and supported the issues, but that is not to say political parties supported Plane Stupid in particular or their protest tactics.

6.3 Planning and Preparation is Everything

This following section is focused on RQ3 and details the planning, negotiations and decisions behind Plane Stupid's protest actions.

> RQ3. What decisions and negotiations go into the choice of communications strategies and protest tactics?

The argument that will be presented examines the rationale behind Plane Stupid's use of direct action that reveals their decision to act was based on a cost-benefit analysis. The activists' awareness of the effects of their direct actions on the press and public were an active consideration of the tactics, and the risks to the activists and the public were carefully calculated. The aim of Plane Stupid's tactics were centred on what a particular tactic and protest target can realistically achieve be it media coverage or stopping carbon emissions. This tactical rationale is detailed in a quote by Gifford who acknowledges the disruption direct action causes, but maintains that the tactics is required to highlight the issues:

> We don't break the law lightly […] We are aware that our disturbances cause people distress and we don't like doing that but we do need to get our message across. We have genuine concerns. (Quoted in Harris 2009:9)

The press reaction to direct action is recognised by Plane Stupid as simplifying the issues, as Kerr argues this is not necessarily the media's fault because "it's very difficult in 200 words to basically come up with a big theory on why it is these people are doing this" (2010). The group existed to not just highlight the issues, but to challenge preconceptions of direct action activists. Their role in media coverage was to 'reframe' the press' preconceptions by moving the stories into the direction of Plane Stupid's narrative. The process of reframing comes from carefully thought out protest actions and studiously crafted messages, and these tactical choices are based on what a protest can achieve with the resources available.

6.3.1 Protest as a Cost-Benefit Analysis

The decisions behind the use of direct action have a bearing on the choice of messages, protest target, and tactical repertoire used. This makes direct action appear a lot more systematic than opportunistic 'break and enter' stunt that is taken without further consideration. The idea that Plane Stupid's protest was based on a set of calculations or a cost-benefit analysis of protest, which means that the group assessed the potential results and consequences of different protest tactics and protest targets. The protest opportunities and potential for success is the impetus behind what causes an action happen, for instance when Plane Stupid occupied the runway at Stansted Airport they knew that the airport was set to close for maintenance. The considerations taken before acting Kerr mentions are "is it possible to do it, do you had the capacity to do it, and do you have the opportunity to do it" (2010). The preparation before a protest was an all-important part of Plane Stupid's direct action. There was meticulous planning behind the protests, and not just for the action itself but also for the potential media coverage of a protest.

The decision making structure of Plane Stupid was non-hierarchical and by consensus. They would start with an idea and from there Kerr describes a 'fluid' process whereby an idea is developed, evaluated, and acted upon (ibid). This evaluation is based upon a group's "capacity, your resources, what you've got to use at the time, how much money you've got, and what you are trying to say" (ibid). What follows is a research period into the logistics required to carry out direct action. In an interview in the *Guardian* Murray describes this process in detail:

> You do a risk analysis on any idea before embarking on anything […] We look through the laws, and the possible outcomes, and the cost-benefit. We do R&D all the time, and some ideas turn out not to be viable, or not likely to give enough bang for our buck. For example, the parliament action, in terms of coverage, would clearly have been worth a custodial (sentence). (Quoted in Aitkenhead 2008:31)

The timing of the protest is factored into the action in order to make the biggest amount of impact in terms of media attention and/or stopping carbon emissions. The action at the House of Commons was timed to coincide with the end of the government's consultation on the expansion of Heathrow Airport, and in Murray's opinion this was "a really key moment to draw everyone's attention to the hypocrisy of the consultation" (2010). What this quote alludes to is the messages at the centre of every action, and it is these messages that play an important role in the planning of collective action. This

led Kerr to argue that each action was tailored around the specific messages (2010), and it is the promotion of these messages that are geared towards mainstream media coverage.

6.3.2 Direct Action and the Role of the Media

The importance of the media in publicising the messages was an essential part of the planning of protest actions. This is highlighted in the following quote by Glass who states that "before we do an action we try to visualise what the front page of the newspaper will be" (2011). Consequently, managing the media was a major part of Plane Stupid's protest preparations. The basis of this approach is the media's ability to reach a much larger audience than a protest group, but as Kerr states the use of the media is a stark choice:

> We cannot put out hundreds of thousands of newspapers; we cannot make a broadcast and get millions of people to see it. It is the media that does that. We have to work with them or are forced to. (2010)

It was not just a matter of getting into the media. The promotion of a tightly controlled simple and consistent message when under journalistic scrutiny was crucial to getting the message across. In order to be fully prepared the members of Plane Stupid would rehearse media scenarios and practice answering hostile questions. The goal of this strategy was to bring the questioning back to the underlying issues under protest, as Gifford states "you expect to be able to bridge them [the press] back to what you want to talk about" (2010). This displays the professionalism used by Plane Stupid in their media strategy, and their use of media opportunities to publicise the debate and open political opportunities.

The media strategy of Plane Stupid was fashioned from the viewpoint that the media perpetuates negativity and actively stereotypes direct action activists. The members of the group were aware of the media treatment that environmental direct action has received in the past. The use of stereotypes in particular Gifford sees as the press' attempt to "put you in a box and then dismiss you" (2010). These preconceptions were actively considered in the choice of protest and media tactics, and Plane Stupid aim was to not adhere to activist stereotypes, and the attention to detail was to move beyond what Murray referred to as a "Swampy sort of persona" (2010). This is where direct action activists are seen as "hopelessly idealistic hippies, with very woolly messages", which marks them out as radically different to the general public (ibid).

Gifford suggests that to confront these preconceptions Plane Stupid would use “fresh faced, maybe even female” activists talk to the press (2010). Murray goes further to say that stereotypes can be challenged. This occurs through simple actions such as wearing a suit when appearing on in interviews. This is because appearing as a stereotype is a disadvantage to a group before the issues are even mentioned. The ability to understand and manipulate media conventions is a considerable advantage for a protest group to promote their messages. The spectacular nature of direct action draws the media in and is described by Murray in the following quote as a ‘Trojan horse’ for the group’s message:

> If you are clever and you understand how the game works then you can actually use spectacular actions as a kind of Trojan horse which you leave outside the gates of the big media corporations, and they are like ooh we like the look of that then they bring the horse in, then you jump out with your radical message (2010)

The close connection of Plane Stupid’s messages, direct actions, and protest targets meant that the group attempted to fully exploit their media opportunities. Their aim was to publicise the issues and create a public debate about airport expansion. The next section will show the effect of the media and protest tactics had on the media coverage of the group.

6.4 The Media Representation of Plane Stupid

The newspaper coverage of Plane Stupid’s protest actions and messages in relation to RQ4 below will now be detailed:

> RQ4. How does the media frame protest groups in response to their messages, goals and protest actions?

The high profile protest actions of Plane Stupid garnered the highest amounts of press coverage. The resultant coverage shows how themes of the spectacle of protest and law and order aspects of direct action were the press’ primary focus. These representations are not entirely dominant and the media opportunity created by direct action allowed for the publicising of Plane Stupid’s messages. The following table gives a statistical overview of the top story categories from Plane Stupid’s media coverage:

Top Level Story Categories	N	%
Law and Order	188	43.3
Spectacle of Protest	163	37.6
Brought into Story	51	11.8
Recognition of Protest	24	5.5
Celebrity	4	0.9
Economy	3	0.7
Other	1	0.2
Total	434	100

Table 6.4.1 Frequency table showing a statistical overview of top level story categories

The most common category of press story related to law and order, and this was a fairly wide-ranging category that included mentions of arrests, disruption to the general public, and the police and security concerns. The police/security concerns raised fears and the threat of protest that is akin to terrorism. A focus on law and order tends to move a protest from the realm of democratic expression and into an area of criminality. The law and order sub-categories were as follows:

Law and Order Sub-categories	N	%
Arrests	38	8.8
Disruption to the Public	34	7.8
Police/Security Concerns	33	7.6
Police Operation	29	6.7
Civil Liberties	20	4.6
Court Procedures	19	4.4
Protest Concerns Around Police Tactics	14	3.2
Peaceful Protest	1	0.2
Total	188	43.3

Table 6.4.2 Frequency table showing the breakdown of the Law and Order category of story

The table 6.4.3 shows the next highest frequency story themes[11] of the spectacle of protest. The table shows that the structure of protest was the most common sub-category of the spectacle of protest, and was recorded when the logistics of protest are detailed by the press. Second, is the personalisation of activists when protesters' backgrounds are discussed at length. Third, are references to historical protest this is where newspaper articles cite past protests in order to give collective action context.

[11] The category of story could be recorded more than once, and in conjunction with other categories. The sub-categories on the other hand were only recorded once per story.

Spectacle of Protest Sub-Categories	N	%
Structure of protest	76	17.5
Personalisation	32	7.4
Historical Protest Evoked	24	5.5
Condemnation of protest	12	2.8
Ridicule of protest	8	1.8
Depoliticisation of protest	8	1.8
Anticipation of Violence	3	0.7
Total	163	37.6

Table 6.4.3 Frequency table showing the breakdown of the Spectacle of Protest category of story

The general impression from the media coverage is that Plane Stupid's protest actions were reported episodically rather than thematically. A majority of stories 165 (80%) used episodic reporting treating each protest as a singular event, and not part of a sequence of events. This is compared to 42 articles (20%) that reported on Plane Stupid's actions thematically. That is not to say that 42 thematic articles (20%) is a negative outcome for Plane Stupid as it shows that their direct actions created a narrative that was evident in 1 in 5 articles.

The actions that provoked 10 or more articles (5%) are shown in table 6.4.3 below. Each action is accompanied by the amount of articles it generated, and the other events that were occurring at the time of the protest:

Date of Action	Type of Action	Number of Articles	Other events or actions during the month
27th February 2008	Occupation on the roof of the House of Commons.	42 or 20% of articles	Earlier in February Greenpeace climbed aboard a plane of a runway at Heathrow.
8th April 2008	Not protest tactic related. A corporate spy is exposed after attempting to infiltrate Plane Stupid.	11 or 5% of articles	Occupation on the roof of the Scottish Parliament.
22nd July 2008	Plane Stupid activist glues themselves to the Prime Minister.	10 or 5% of articles	The Transport Minister Ruth Kelly is targeted by activists using jet noise outside their house.
8th December 2008	Plane Stupid occupies and shuts down Stansted airport.	48 or 23% of articles	No other events relating to Plane Stupid occurred in this month.

3rd March 2009	Plane Stupid Scotland shut down Aberdeen airport.	31 or 15% of articles	Lord Mandelson is 'slimed' by Plane Stupid activist, 6th March 2009, Leila Deen arrested for sliming 9th March.
25th April 2009	No action by Plane Stupid but the police attempted to turn one activist into an informant.	22 or 11% of articles	The G20 protests and the death of Ian Tomlinson occurred.

Table 6.4.4 A table showing the major events across Plane Stupid's timeline

The first major action from the newspaper sample relates to Plane Stupid's occupation of the House of Commons. The concerns around the security of parliament were the main focus of press coverage. Police and security concerns were mentioned in 11 of the 42 articles (26%) written around the House of Commons protest. Direct action is disruptive in nature and prompts questions around the legality of protest and the security arrangements of sensitive locations. This security aspect then becomes the focus of press coverage. The *Daily Mirror* for example led with "shout it from the rooftops our security is a shambles" (Perry 2008:35). The article evokes past security breaches in the chamber of the House of Commons by the Countryside Alliance, Fathers4Justice, and Greenpeace (ibid:35). The security angle was something fully recognised by Plane Stupid. In a quote given to the *Guardian* from the roof of the House of Commons activist Richard George acknowledges security concerns by saying they had "exposed a huge security flaw" (Quoted in Milmo and Siddique 2008:4).

Alongside the security concerns another story category appeared prominently following the House of Commons protest. This would become a prominent part of the press' narrative around Plane Stupid from then on. The first concerns evoking historical protests, and/or protesters. This mainly related to the 1990s anti-roads activist 'Swampy' who gained a moderate level of celebrity following tunnelling under the roads around Manchester Airport in April 1997. According to Anderson, Swampy became a byword for environmental direct action (2003). There were 24 articles (12%) in total that evoked past protest, and in one example Plane Stupid are referred to as heirs to Swampy. The *Daily Mail* article on March 1st 2008 is headlined "MOVE OVER SWAMPY" (Knight 2008:65). In the article a division is made between Swampy and Plane Stupid that brings the personal backgrounds of activists into the story. This includes talk of how Plane Stupid breaks perceived stereotypes of environmental protesters, as well as a focus on the new and novel. In a passage from the already

mentioned *Daily Mail* article Plane Stupid are described as a 'new breed', and features long held stereotypes of environmental protesters to make its argument:

> … this new breed of protester is a world away from the likes of the infamous Swampy, and the usual raggle-taggle of jobless drop-outs that are so often associated with the eco-warrior cause. (Knight 2008:65)

The *Guardian* similarly reported on Plane Stupid's Commons protest as a "New wave protesters target airport expansion" who have learnt "lessons from Swampy" (Milmo and Bowcott 2008:13). There is one quote in the article that would become particularly telling for some members of Plane Stupid "A decade after Swampy defied Britain's road building programme and invented the eco-protester as national celebrity" (ibid:13). These articles link to the second story category that appears regularly in press reports and relates to the personalisation of activists. The activists' backgrounds were mentioned in 32 articles (15%) across the sample, and are exemplified by the strap line from the aforementioned article states "A Baronet's granddaughter, a philosophy graduate, and an MP's grandson. The oh-so smart backgrounds of this week's Commons invaders" (ibid:65). One member in particular, Tamsin Omond became something of a focal point in media coverage, and her background was highlighted because it was one of perceived privilege.

The first action Omond was involved in was the protest on the House of Commons, and Murray feared that the information surrounding Omond's background could be used against the group by the press (2010). These fears were not unfounded and Omond became a protester celebrity the *Sunday Times* called her an 'eco starlet', and the "pin-up of a radical new eco-movement" (Brinton 2008:18-20). The result of this attention is she gained a profile as big as Plane Stupid. The impact of this attention was that it damaged the underlying messages and provided a distraction to the issues. In addition, Murray mentions that Omond operated outside of Plane Stupid's "very tightly grafted communications strategy" (2010). The opening up of Omond's background led an increased press focus on the personalities and backgrounds of other members of Plane Stupid. The following quote is an example of how this featured in the press:

> Among them are Tamsin Omond, 23, granddaughter of a baronet, who shares an east London flat with another activist, Beth Stratford, 26, a Cambridge graduate. There is Olivia Chessell, a 20-year-old whose grandfather was a cabinet minister in the Wilson government, and Leo Murray, a grandson of Anthony Greenwood, the Labour peer. (Gourlay and Montague 2008:18)

The narrative of celebrity protesters is not so much about aviation and climate change it is a human interest story about the people involved in direct action. In several articles Omond was highlighted in the images used alongside news articles and was made a feature of in media coverage (Gray 2008:14; Hill 2008:17). In some circumstances Plane Stupid began to be referred to as upper class, or labelled 'upper crusties' (Gaunt 2008:35). The function of this label is to portray the activists as unrepresentative of the general public, and by extension their issues are viewed as outside of societal norms. It makes the criticism and dismissal of Plane Stupid's actions and concerns easier. In an example from the *Daily Mail* in December 2008 the supposed privileged upbringings of the activists is used to deconstruct Plane Stupid's argument. It states:

> Ironically, despite the wealthy backgrounds of leading members, one of the group's key complaints about the aviation industry is that 'cheap flights are for the privileged'. (Davies 2008:25)

This quote suggests that having a perceived privileged background invalidates the activists' arguments about aviation expansion. Plane Stupid's supposed upper class upbringings tainted them with the same criticisms involved in their claims. They have been included in the story in order to be discredited and excluded from the arguments. These accusations of class would later become a stereotype with which to discredit Plane Stupid. Therefore, the activist attempts at breaking stereotypes were only partially successful. In actively trying to contravene some of the long held stereotypes of direct action activists Plane Stupid inadvertently succeeded in creating new and alternative stereotypes. This was based on the perception of the activists as upper class, but the issue of climate change for Plane Stupid was not class dependent, and will impact everyone. In the end the media coverage of Plane Stupid was similar to that of Swampy. In as much as personality superseded the issues and was more of the focus of the press.

6.4.1 Different Protest Targets, Different Reporting

The following two examples of Plane Stupid's actions will show how different protest targets can result in varying media coverage. This relates to RQ4 in that it demonstrates the direct influence of protest tactics on media opportunities and media coverage, and how the choice of tactics corresponds to protest goals. The first example took place in March 2009 and concerns Plane Stupid activist Leila Deen throwing green custard over the then government Business Secretary, Lord Mandelson. This action coincided with a government launch of a summit about the low carbon economy

(Reynolds 2009:14). The media coverage of this action reflects the personal feelings of newspapers towards Mandelson, as demonstrated in the headlines used to report the protest:

1) *Daily Mail* – Lord Mandy Gets His Just Desserts! (Greenhill 2009:5)
2) *The Express* – The Slime Minister (Reynolds 2009:14)
3) *Daily Star* – I'm discustard with you Mandy (Wall 2009:9)
4) *Daily Mirror* – Lord C'stard (Roberts 2009:7)

This focus on Mandelson as a personality is reflected in the left/right divide in the political leaning of the newspapers that most covered this action. The 18 articles (9% of total) covering the action demonstrate a right wing bias of the coverage. This reflects the press' personal opinion of Peter Mandelson.

Left wing	Right Wing	Broadsheet	Tabloid
4	14	10	8

Table 6.4.5 A table showing the distribution of newspaper articles covering the action against Peter Mandelson

The main categories of story used to report the sliming of Mandelson were, by a slim majority, the structure of protest (9 articles or 50% of the coverage of the Mandelson action). The next highest frequency was the police operation (5 articles or 28%) and associated police/security concerns (2 times or 11%). The focal point of articles changes from stories referencing the action as a harmless prank, to concerns around ministerial security, and how someone could get close to a government minister. The assertion being made in the press is that a cabinet minister is also a terrorist target.

The article entitled "Lord C'stard" in the *Mirror* on 7th March follows this pattern by initially talking about the light heartedness of the protest with quotes taken from senior politicians:

> Lord Mandelson, after a quick change of clothes, laughed it off at first and said: "Thankfully it was organic." Even PM Gordon Brown joked: "If anybody doubted Peter Mandelson's willingness to take the green agenda on his shoulders we've seen it on our TV screens." (Roberts 2009:7)

This is soon followed by former Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott decrying the police for making no arrest at the scene, and suggests an alternative scenario of what might have happened "if it had been acid would she still be walking away?" (ibid:7).

The Times on the same day puts the focus squarely on the security arrangements of senior politicians in an article entitled “Security, what security?” (Brown and Hines 2009:3). In the article the danger of terrorism is highlighted and expresses surprise because Deen was not been arrested at the scene (ibid:3).

To further accentuate the security element of the story the police are used as a source 10 times (20% of the total coverage of the Mandelson action). Despite these prominent aspects to the story activists appeared a total of 9 times (18%); this includes 8 members of a specified protest group (16%) and 1 person from an NGO (2%). A lot of the quotes came directly from the perpetrator of the action Leila Deen. Her comments in the newspapers followed the construction of Plane Stupid’s dominant narrative. Deen defines her target, defends her actions, and brings her comments back to the issue under protest and stresses the urgency of the issue. To create an overall view of Deen’s comments a number of different articles need to be taken into account. Firstly, the most repeated comments by Deen are about Mandelson’s persona and are as follows “The only thing green about Peter Mandelson is the slime coursing through his veins” (Quoted in Roberts 2009:7; Bates and Owen 2009:3). In articles Deen is also allowed to explain the reasons behind her actions. In the first instance she says she wanted to stop Mandelson from gaining “political capital” out of a government’s summit on a low carbon future (Quoted in Wall 2009:9). She does so by highlighting the contradictions in the policy:

> He's been actively pushing a high-carbon future through the third runway. I didn't want to let him stand up and talk about that (Quoted in Bates and Owen 2009:3)

Deen is then able to speak further about the causality behind the issue of Heathrow Airport and the central motivation of Plane Stupid’s actions:

> … she had been motivated by reports that the minister had met lobbyists for the British Airports Authority, which wants a third runway at Heathrow, a few days before the government endorsed the plan. (Bates and Owen 2009:3)

She continues in another article by placing Mandelson at the centre of the issue and one of the main reasons the government decided to expand Heathrow Airport:

> We know that he is best buddies with BAA's top lobbyist, and reports suggest it was he who bullied Energy Secretary Ed Miliband into accepting a third runway. (Deen quoted in Roberts 2009:7)

She further deconstructs Mandelson's personality and presses home Plane Stupid's collective action frame that now is the time to act, and that the actions of Mandelson were "an insult to my generation. He is unelected and only represents business interests" (Quoted in ibid:17). Finally, she has to defend herself and her actions, and she also has to dispel some environmental activist stereotypes. In the *Daily Express* she argues that "I am no Yuppie eco-protester, nor am I a scrounger" (Quoted in Reynolds 2009:14). In defending her actions Deen was asked if she thought her actions were non-violent to which she responded "Yeah, absolutely" (Quoted in Bates and Owen 2009:3). To complement Deen's quotes and in keeping with the relatively positive response to the action are the images used alongside articles. These included an in action shot of the throwing of the custard and Mandelson covered in custard appears prominently (Roberts 2009:7; Bignall 2009:48). The other images are almost triumphant in nature and shows Deen smiling and holding the canister in a shot that appears to have been taken at a later date (Reynolds 2009:14; Wall 2009:9). The image caption in one of the articles goes as far as to describe Deen as a "green goddess" (Wall 2009:9).

Despite Deen's ability to comment on the issues she is personalised in several articles. These reports use Deen's mother as a source in stories. Her presence is qualified by describing her as "a former Greenpeace activist" (Greenhill 2009:5). Elsewhere Deen's mother is seen to be supportive of her daughter's actions:

> I'm proud she's got the courage of her convictions and she's prepared to take direct action for injustice. It's not easy, to know you run the risk of being arrested (Quoted in Bates and Owen 2009:3)

Protesters are the third most frequently used source in relation to this action, and are just behind politicians who were used 26 times (53% of the total sources used in articles about the Mandelson action) in articles about the action. This includes Lord Mandelson who was a source 10 times (20%) criticises the action as an "adolescent prank" (Quoted in Reynolds 2009:14). The Labour cabinet appears 5 times (10%) and included Prime Minister Gordon Brown. The comments made by other Labour MPs appear 8 times (16%) and was mainly the former cabinet minister John Prescott. As already mentioned Prescott's response to the event was critical of ministerial security. His quote is expanded in the *Daily Star* "We had better get a grip of this situation and, frankly, public people shouldn't be expected to be physically assaulted with such impunity" (Quoted in Wall 2009:9). Even though the spectacle and security of such a

protest was the centre of attention, it did not stop the issues being mentioned in newspaper articles. Airport expansion appears in 13 articles (72%) in March, while the link to climate change is brought up in 6 reports (33%).

The press coverage of the sliming of Lord Mandelson is comparable, in some ways, with the occupation of the runway at Stansted Airport. This took place on December 9th 2008 where Plane Stupid shut down the runway and severely disrupted the public. This is reflected in the headlines from the following day:

1) *Daily Star* – Plane Mean! (Wheatley 2008:4)
2) *The Independent* – Stansted brought to standstill by 'Plane Stupid' protesters (Taylor 2008:10)
3) *Daily Mail* – Three days of chaos after airport invasion (Levy and Kelly 2008a:9)
4) *Daily Mirror* – Could they stop air terrorists? (McGurran 2008:17)

Similar elements to the reporting of the sliming of Peter Mandelson are evident in the coverage of the Stansted Airport action. In the first example the protesters are described as selfish because of their actions (Wheatley 2008:4), and the second example mentions "middle class militants" with a particular focus on images of the more prominent members of the group (Taylor 2008:10). The final two examples centre on the disruption to the public and the security implications of activists shutting down an airport (Levy and Kelly 2008a:9; McGurran 2008:17). These themes are reflected in the statistics but it must be emphasised that shutting down Stansted Airport was Plane Stupid's biggest action in terms of media coverage. There were 38 articles in total (18% of total articles) in various newspapers, and unlike the sliming of Peter Mandelson there was an even spread across left and right leaning newspapers, but appeared far more in broadsheets than tabloids:

Left wing	Right Wing	Broadsheet	Tabloid
24	24	34	14

Table 6.4.6 A table showing the distribution of newspaper articles covering the action at Stansted Airport

The clear focus of the coverage was disruption to the public, and occurred in 24 of the 48 articles (50% of Stansted related articles). The context of the protest was shaped further by taking place in the month of December in the run up to Christmas. The *Daily Star* made this a theme with the headline "Protesters play Scrooge", and put the disruption to children prominently "HUNDREDS of kids on their way to see Father Christmas had their flights cancelled yesterday as protesters stormed Stansted Airport"

(Scott 2008:4). Other articles went with a more general description of the disruption, such as the *Daily Telegraph* who state that "Thousands of passengers stranded at Stansted after invasion by climate change protesters" (Gammell 2008:9). What this demonstrates is the action itself was at the forefront of press coverage.

The structure of the protest (16 times or 33%) was the next most common theme of reports, and is a very descriptive element of articles. The following example is taken from an article in the *Daily Mail* on the 9th December which details how activists carried out the action:

> Activists used bolt cutters to slice through perimeter fencing at 3.15am while the airport was closed for maintenance. They headed for a taxiway near the main runway, where more than 50 chained themselves to fencing. (Levy and Kelly 2008b:5; see also Levy and Kelly 2008a:9)

This information is taken from Plane Stupid's press release dated the 8th December it reads:

> Over fifty young protesters from the climate action group Plane Stupid have this morning shut down Stansted Airport by camping on the runway and surrounding themselves with fortified security fencing.
>
> The peaceful protest began at 3.15am this morning (Monday) whilst the runway was temporarily closed for maintenance work. (Plane Stupid 2008f)

In comparison to the press release the news reports drop the term 'peaceful'. The focal point of the media coverage stays on the structural aspects of the protest, such as the time it took place, the tools used, and how many protesters took part. This illustrates the professional approach Plane Stupid took towards their media strategy, because the press release was written in a similar style to the news reporting of direct action.

The interpretation of the action takes place within the confines of the theme of law and order. The coverage of Stansted Airport included arrests 15 times (31%), and police and security concerns occurred in 10 reports (21%). The disruption to the public was illustrated by images of stranded passengers in the airport itself (Scott 2008:4; Levy and Kelly 2008b:5). The opinions expressed in articles range from surprise and criticism, to a more militaristic language and a fear of terrorism. Taking the security issues as an example, *The Independent* states that the action would result in "a review of airport security" (Taylor 2008:10). However, the protesters are referred to as "militant" making them appear as an extreme minority (ibid:10). The *Mirror* raises the

issue of terrorism in their reporting, and they speculate about an alternative scenario where it was terrorists who invaded the airport:

> YESTERDAY'S Stansted protest exposed how easy it would be for terrorists to breach airport security and cause mass murder, experts warned last night. (McGurran 2008:17)

Linking direct action with terrorism is antithetical to the ideas behind Plane Stupid, who were dedicated to non-violent direct action (Plane Stupid 2012). The other elements of the story were similar to the coverage of the sliming of Peter Mandelson, for instance personalisation was relatively common appearing in 8 of the 48 articles (17%).

The age of the activists led to talk of a new, novel, youthful and larger movement than ever before. The sense of a 'new wave' of direct action environmentalists is coupled with an increasing use of militaristic terms to describe Plane Stupid. In the *Observer* Plane Stupid are talked about as "Britain's new army of young eco-warriors", and a "new vanguard of eco-warriors" that are "in their twenties, articulate, knowledgeable and techno aware" (McVeigh 2008:29). These characteristics and actions of Plane Stupid is what made them newsworthy. More importantly the age of the Stansted protesters was not an accident it was part of the considerations and aims of the protest. According to Glass "All the guys on the runway [Stansted], all 57 of them were under the age of 21. I wasn't allowed to be on it, not this time" (2011). Youth was part of the message and theme of the Stansted protest (Murray 2010), and the goal of the protest was to highlight intergenerational justice (Glass 2011).

The highlighting of activists' ages puts an emphasis on collective action as a reserve of the young. The youth angle plays into the stereotypes referenced in *The Guardian* who acknowledge how Plane Stupid have been talked about as "a collection of supposedly spoiled rich kids with more time than insight" (McVeigh 2008:29). The *Sunday Times* recognises the implications attached to a supposed 'new generation' of protesters as:

> … the fact that the changing demographic of protests has brought with it unprecedented organisation, funding and strategic thinking (Gourlay and Montague 2008:18)

This identifies the professionalism of Plane Stupid in the media and emphasises the activists' sense of purpose. The Stansted action was the most recognised and legitimised of Plane Stupid's protests in terms of a press focus on the issues occurring

in 9 of the 48 articles (19%). Although, 6 of the 9 articles appeared in the *Guardian* newspaper and the *Guardian* was the most receptive newspaper to Plane Stupid and their aims. Some of the issues under protest did appear frequently. The Stansted action prompted climate change to appear as an issue in 22 articles (46%), while airport expansion was mentioned 21 times (44%).

The sources used in the articles around Stansted paint a slightly different picture to the other protests. In stark comparison to Plane Stupid's other actions the biggest individual source used in newspaper stories about Stansted Airport was business people who appeared 27 times (23% of Stansted related sources). When examined closer this tended to be the airline Ryanair who used the event as an opportunity to criticise the airport owner BAA. The other business voices included BAA's rebuttal of Ryanair in which Ryanair is accused of being "ignorant" (Quoted in Bardon 2008:6), and condemn the action as "unlawful" and "unacceptable" (Quoted in Taylor 2008:10). The nature of the protest and the disruption it caused to the general public meant that bystanders at the airport accounted for 18 of the sources used (15%). The comments by the public were about the disruption they had experienced, and the security arrangements at the airport. The following is a good example of the criticism that was directed towards the police and BAA over the security situation at the airport:

> It's not Ryanair's fault but they have handled this very badly. But BAA have also behaved very, very poorly, their security has failed miserably, and the police have showed how ineffectual they are against people who are determined to do something. (Robertson quoted in Addley 2008:4)

When the activists were used as sources they were marginally more likely to be described as unaffiliated to a group, rather than members of a specified protest group. This occurred 18 times (15%), compared to 17 mentions (14%) of protesters being members of a specified protest group. The underlying issues remains the justification for the protest tactics, and one activist is quoted as saying that the disruption caused was "regrettable but necessary" (Reynolds quoted in Davies 2008:26). The reason given is that climate change is a bigger concern than a day of public disruption, and they argue that "we need to make everyone aware that this is a collective problem and if direct action is the only way left then we will do it" (ibid:26). Interestingly, politicians were used as sources 21 times (18%), and included 6 members of the government's cabinet (5%). The Environment Minister Ed Miliband who the day before the Stansted action had called for "popular mobilisation" to tackle climate change led one newspaper to quip "Perhaps the Plane Stupid action was not in the spirit of people power that Miliband has in mind" (Montgomery 2008:14).

The variations of Miliband's call were used to question whether or not the Stansted invasion was what the Environment Secretary had intended. The coincidence of the political opportunity signalled by Miliband somewhat validated Plane Stupid's actions in the media, which led the *Guardian* to comment "Well, he did ask" (Anon 2008b:34). The response of Ed Miliband to the action brings into focus the dominant institutional reaction to direct action. Taken from an interview piece in the *Guardian* a week after the Stansted action Miliband is asked "Does your support for 'popular mobilisation' on climate change mean you support the Plane Stupid protesters at Stansted last week?" (Westbury quoted in Anon 2008c:30). The reply places a dividing line between the perceptions of what he considers legitimate and illegitimate protest:

> It wasn't exactly what I had in mind. My general position is that given that there are a range of legitimate, and legal means open to people in our society, I support lawful, peaceful protest not illegal protest. (Miliband quoted in Anon 2008c:30)

The quote suggests that direct action is not required to change government policy and public opinion, because there are enough mainstream political opportunities that can be utilised. The idea of legitimate and illegitimate protest is demonstrated in an opinion poll by the *Sunday Times*. There is a considerable divide between supporting the issues and recognising the tactics used "8% of the public support the methods used by Plane Stupid protesters, although 40% said they did support their motives" (Gourlay and Montague 2008:18). What these statistics do is draw a line between the perceptions of what is and is not acceptable protest even if the aims of a group are supported. This section has demonstrated the reactions to direct action in media coverage in relation to media opportunities. The next section of this chapter will further address the dominant institutional responses to direct action.

6.5 Political and Police Responses to Direct Action

The dominant institutional reaction to Plane Stupid by centralised political institutions, businesses, and the police is the basis of RQ5:

> RQ5. What is the response of dominant institutions to a protest group's communications strategies and protest tactics?

First, it is worth reiterating the political context of the issues and who else was campaigning on the issues. Plane Stupid was not the only group campaigning against

the third runway there was a large and varied coalition protesting on the issue. The politics behind airport expansion was centred on the expansion of Heathrow Airport. In February 2009 the House of Commons produced a research paper about the expansion of Heathrow Airport, and quote the HACAN ClearSkies website which details the size of the political opposition against the third runway:

> Residents' campaign groups have been joined by 21 local authorities, national campaign groups such as Greenpeace, politicians from all the political parties (Quoted in House of Commons Library 2009:36)

The quote details the relative size of the political opportunity that had opened by the time the report was written. This substantial political opportunity for policy change meant that Plane Stupid had a receptive political context to work within.

6.5.1 Direct Action and Political Opportunity

The depth of opposition against the expansion of Heathrow meant that the size of the political opportunity was considerable, and varied. The attack on the decision to build a third runway was fought from a number of different directions, from local council opposition to Plane Stupid's direct action. The opposing groups utilised different protest tactics, and insider and outsider strategies. These strategies were not mutually exclusive, and political institutions were not completely adverse to unorthodox tactics. The meeting minutes from Hounslow Council details the potential political opportunity and possible protest tactics the council could use. One councillor talks of assessing the different avenues available to the council to determine the most effective protest tactics, or a cost-benefit analysis of different types of action:

> He suggested analysing the position of the Government, BAA and the unions at the airport to consider where they might feel detriment. (Hearn quoted in Hounslow Council 2008)

What follows is a discussion about possible tactics and talk of "community mobilisation" (ibid). Beyond this the councillor talks of an "unconventional campaign" beyond letter writing and petitions to include a more media focused approach:

> He was certainly not advocating illegal tactics, but there were strengths and talents to utilise in media and communications. (Hounslow Council 2008)

The size of the opposition is something that is also highlighted, and the broad coalition that existed increased the potential for the opposition to Heathrow to succeed. There is a similarity of messages between Hounslow Council and Plane Stupid, but the council adds the local issues of noise pollution and public health (Hounslow Council 2009). This is an example of the council using their own political opportunity that existed to push their political agenda. Part of Plane Stupid's actions was to give others protesting against the issues the confidence to oppose the third runway. As the direct action part of the opposition Plane Stupid pushed at the radical edges and opened up the political middle ground, and is part of Murray's argument around their tactical intentions: "it's about opening up space for other people to move into," and that this included groups who had not been campaigning on the issue in the past (2010). It was Plane Stupid's intention to give the issue a platform to be debated, and the specific use of direct action was to prompt people into taking a position on the arguments.

The parliamentary opposition to Heathrow was centred on political dissensus over the decision whether or not to expand the airport. The arguments about the future of Heathrow took place in the government cabinet, and the lack of a coherent government position considerably helped the alternative arguments around Heathrow to gain media prominence. The two major opposition parties were opposed to Heathrow's expansion, and the Conservative Party opposition was perhaps helpful beyond politics as it made the right wing newspapers more receptive to the issues. Murray argues that it is the actions of Plane Stupid that caused the other political parties to pay attention to the issue of Heathrow, and that he "realised that this was going to be an electoral issue" (2010). The opposition to Heathrow is borne out in the newspaper articles, and the following quote demonstrates how the opposition was portrayed:

> The Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats have both promised immediately to halt the construction of the third runway should they win the next general election. However, should Labour hang on, and the runway goes ahead, there are signs that the local Tory-led (and anti-runway) council will not go out of its way to stop residents fortifying their homes. (Caesar 2009:10)

The leader of the Conservative Party David Cameron went as far as attending a debate on the third runway prompting ire from former Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott who commented that "Cameron's plane daft" (Quoted in Bennett 2009:33). Such political points scoring masked the fact that Conservative opposition was probably the biggest aid in getting the decision to expand Heathrow overturned. This is acknowledged in the newspapers as "Conservatives remain resolute in their opposition to the third runway, they represent the best chance of finally quashing the plans"

(Ungoed-Thomas et al. 2009:12-13). The political context to the issue of Heathrow was particularly favourable towards Plane Stupid's goals, and their ability to exploit this particular time period to take their issues beyond airport expansion.

The increase in political opportunities meant more diverse and unexpected groups came out against the third runway. A coalition of business interests came out in opposition to the third runway citing "the government has failed to demonstrate the business case", and were "backing the concerns of the environmentalists" (Webb 2009:23). This unlikely correlation of groups led Shadow Conservative Transport Minister Theresa Villiers to comment on the mixture of opposition groups:

> The coalition against the third runway at Heathrow is now extremely broad. Bankers and executives from private equity firms like KKR are not exactly known for being dewy-eyed environmentalists and sharing similar causes with radical groups such as Plane Stupid. (Quoted in Webb 2009:23)

What these examples demonstrate is that the significant disunity in government helped Plane Stupid's messages, and created political opportunities for others. Furthermore, the groups supporting Heathrow expansion felt like they were not winning the arguments. A number of pro-Heathrow lobby groups existed and were described by the *Sunday Times* as including "senior Labour figures" with considerable insider access (Ungoed-Thomas 2008:10). They also had significant ties to the aviation industry, in particular, airport operator BAA (ibid). In theory these lobby groups had a greater political opportunity than Plane Stupid because of their monetary and political resources.

This did not help when the disagreements at the top of government caused the political opportunity to dissipate. The pro-aviation group FlyingMatters admitted in the *Sunday Times* that they were losing the arguments and the issue of Heathrow was being framed by opponents of airport expansion: "The terms of the debates on aviation were being set by those opposed to a growth in air transport" (Quoted in ibid:10). The arguments and messages of government were mixed and confused, but the steadfast nature of the 'anti' was consistent and growing in size. This meant that the opposition had the more coherent message. This was regardless of who was delivering the message, and it did not matter which part of the opposition the message came from, because the overriding issue remained a hostility to the third runway. The more unified a message appears on one side of the argument compared to another presents a stronger case for that argument.

6.5.2 Repressive Responses to Direct Action

The final part of this section in answer to RQ5 will detail the reactions of dominant institutions to Plane Stupid. These were reactions of attempted repression by corporations and the police, as demonstrated by two attempted infiltrations of the group. Firstly by a corporate spy, and second an attempt made by Strathclyde Police's to turn a Plane Stupid activist into an informant (Booth 2009:6; Omond 2008:10). Plane Stupid's tactical response to the infiltrations will be discussed in section 6.6, because they were used as a media opportunity to further enhance the prominence of the issues. The following table shows a statistical break down of how the two respective infiltrations were covered by the press:

	Corporate Infiltration (n)	% of Total Articles	Police Infiltration (n)	% of Total Articles
Number of Articles	11	5	19	9
Police/Security Operation	5	2	13	6
Protesters Concerns About Police/Security Tactics	6	3	6	3
Civil Liberties	0	0	19	9

Table 6.5.1 A table showing the distribution of news articles and sub-category themes from the two instances of attempted infiltration of Plane Stupid

The main focus of the coverage of these two incidents was the police/security operation in relation to protest, protester concerns about police/security tactics, and talk of civil liberties in conjunction with the Scottish police infiltration. The first attempted infiltration of Plane Stupid occurred in April 2008 by someone employed by a private security firm (Webster 2008:20). The implication being that the infiltrator was specifically paid to spy on Plane Stupid. Who paid for the spy was uncertain, and BAA sought to distance themselves from the situation and are quoted as saying "We are far more interested in engaging with the real environmental issues, not getting involved in James Bond-style tactics" (Quoted in Vidal and Milmo 2008:10).

The second attempt at infiltrating Plane Stupid was by people claiming to be from Strathclyde Police. An activist involved in Plane Stupid Scotland was approached and offered money for information about future protest actions, but Plane Stupid recorded the conversations with the suspected officers (Lewis and Vallee 2009:6). The timing of the press reports occurred against the backdrop of questions over police tactics following the death of Ian Tomlinson at the G20 protests in London (Dutta 2009:4). It meant that there was already a heavy media focus on the policing of protest and what

followed the police infiltration was a thorough examination of police tactics by both Scottish and British Governments. When the issue was mentioned in a debate about paid police informants Scotland's Cabinet Secretary for Justice argued that "Covert human intelligence sources are important in addressing crime and public disorder" (Quoted in The Scottish Parliament 2009:2). This pushes the argument that these types of police tactics are within the law, contrary to any civil liberties concerns, and are a necessary part of maintaining public order:

> We must continue to support our local authorities and police to make the appropriate judgment call and to balance the individual rights of the citizen with the broader rights of the community. (Quoted in The Scottish Parliament 2009)

There appears to be a fissure between institutional attitudes towards this type of policing at the level of government. On the one hand Plane Stupid are criticised for claiming the civil rights case while their direct actions are seen as "criminal acts" (Joint Committee on Human Rights 2009b:124), but the same document talks about overly broad definitions of "'terrorism', 'politically motivated extremism', and 'protest'" (ibid:90). There is also criticism of the police Forward Intelligence Team used to monitor activists, and recommends the facilitation of protest not "interference and preventative suppression" (ibid:90). The perspective of Plane Stupid towards this type of public order policing is argued to be political in nature, and accuses the police of no longer acting independently (2010). There is a gap in opinion about direct action in dominant institutions that is similar to the press view of direct action, and concerns the difference between what police and protesters view as legitimate protest, and the definitions they apply. The police understandably take a crime related view of direct action as exemplified by the comments of the Assistant Chief Constable of Strathclyde Police:

> Strathclyde Police, operating within a democratic society, has a duty to provide a safe environment where individuals can exercise their right to engage in lawful, peaceful protest, balanced against the safety and rights of the public to go about their business. (Hamilton quoted in Milne 2009:12)

The press, as already demonstrated, take a very mixed view on the type of protest tactic used. Finally, protesters' view their tactics as wholly necessary under the circumstances. The issues are used as a way to justify direct action, and there is an emphasis on non-violence. The repressive reaction to Plane Stupid is arguably a sign of their success. They became seen as a significant enough threat to the reputation of governments and corporations that people would attempt to stop Plane Stupid's actions.

6.6 Adapting Tactics to External Events

The direct action tactics of Plane Stupid were not the only reason they gained media coverage, because they used the media to create non-action related stories to exploit their media opportunities. The response of Plane Stupid to the reactions of dominant institutions and media coverage will be explored in this section in answer to RQ6:

> RQ6. How are media coverage and the response of protest targets fed back into a protest group's choice of communications strategies and protest tactics?

The press representation of Plane Stupid was focused on the new and the novel, and included the publishing of the personal backgrounds of Plane Stupid members. However, this was not a convention restricted to the mainstream media. Plane Stupid's press releases were written to function this way, and the co-optation of media conventions was used to the activist's advantage. To give an example the invasion of Aberdeen Airport is described as representing the "first in a new phase of direct action" (Plane Stupid 2008g). Its emphasis is on the idea that this action is the start of something bigger rather than an event or part of a sequence of events. The second example contains personal information about the activist who glued themselves to Prime Minister Gordon Brown: "Dan Glass, a 24 year old MSc student based in Scotland" (Plane Stupid 2008e). In providing personal information helps the press answer the fundamental question of who carried out the action and gives the protest a face.

6.6.1 Capitalising on External Events

One of the biggest challenges to a protest group is maintaining the attention of the press. Across the sample there were 39 articles (19%) that did not include a direct reference to any of Plane Stupid's protest actions. In these articles members of specific protest groups appeared 24 times (23%), while undefined protesters were used as a source 10 times (10%). Furthermore, business people appeared 19 times (18%) partly to rebut Plane Stupid, but also commenting on the economic case for expanding Heathrow Airport. These articles were very broad in content from Plane Stupid providing comments on a story about the introduction of showers on planes (Anon 2008d:2), and an article profiling environmental campaigner John Stewart (Moreton 2008:30). Plane Stupid's openness and high profile meant the press would use them to comment on stories in the press. They became seen as an authority on the issues and

by playing into the conventions of the press ensured that media opportunities were fully exploited.

The second part of this strategy was the use of their relationship with journalists to cultivate newspaper stories. This is highly dependent on the activists' relationship with the press. Without creating an air of trust and reliability journalists might be more reluctant to use activists as a source for news. The side stories created maintained publicity for the group, and kept the press focused on the campaign and the issues. This use of media opportunities was to ensure that the political opportunity remained open. The more an issue is debated in the press it is less likely that a government and other protest targets can ignore it.

To illustrate these points the events surrounding the corporate spy and Strathclyde Police informant were reacted to tactically in two very different ways. Firstly, the corporate spy story and the processes behind how it became public. In the interview with Murray he talks of Plane Stupid working closely with a journalist from *The Times*, and this close relationship was used to frame the spy story from Plane Stupid's viewpoint (2010). As Murray put it: "we felt that we were working with journalists in order to tell a story in the way that we wanted to" (ibid). The spy turned out to be incompetent and therefore the framing chosen for the story was humorous, and the spy's lack of ability was used to portray him as "a bit Austin Powers" (ibid). The humour is reflected in Plane Stupid's press release and in the media coverage itself. The story was framed by the group as a failed and bungling attempt at infiltrating the group. In the press release Omond is quoted as saying:

> *Their secret agent was more Austin Powers than James Bond though the question still remains, who paid the espionage agency* (Quoted in Plane Stupid 2008d, emphasis in original)

The press picked up on the idea of the bungling spy and used some of the sentiments included in the previous quote. The article produced in *The Times*, for example, uses part of the quote from the press release "Spy caught by anti-aviation group was 'more Austin Powers than 007'" (Webster 2008:20). The other newspaper articles led with the ineptitude of the attempted infiltration, such as *The Independent* who talk about it as "An early frontrunner for twit of the year" (Duff 2008:14). The images accompanying the articles were of the spy and were supplied by Plane Stupid in order to fully expose him (Omond 2008:10; Webster 2008:20). The story also allowed members of Plane Stupid to be the authors of articles and not just a source. In total they wrote 2 articles about

the attempt which appeared in the consistently Plane Stupid friendly *Guardian* (Thompson 2008:2), and unusually the *Mail on Sunday* (Omond 2008:10). Both of the articles focused on the processes Plane Stupid used to uncover the spy. They include ridicule of the spy involved and despite the seriousness of the situation humour is favoured. More importantly the aim of going public was a matter of activist self-preservation that is not reflected in the media coverage, and to deter anyone else from attempting to infiltrate the group, put more bluntly:

> … if you fuck with us we'll fuck with you basically, and there wasn't another attempt to infiltrate us, not from an industry espionage agent anyway. (Murray 2010)

The act of self preservation was part of the framing common to the story about the Strathclyde Police attempts to turn a Plane Stupid activist into an informant. The seriousness of the situation was not taken lightly by the members of Plane Stupid, and there was a very real sense of fear within the group and a reluctance to go public. Plane Stupid Scotland member Kerr states that he was "extremely nervous" about going public as he did not want to make enemies of the police (2010). Murray believed that the story would be a major news story and contacted a journalist at the *Guardian* and pitched the idea for an article (2010). What followed was the photographing and recording of conversations between Gifford and the police as Murray put it "we had everything that you need for a story" (ibid). The newsworthiness of the story was such that it was printed on the front page of *The Guardian* (Lewis 2009b:1). Kerr commented that using this event to create news coverage was "a real propaganda coup" (2010). Whereas Gifford talked about it as "pretty much all a media stunt", but argues that going public was used to keep the activists safe from further infiltration (2010). Finally, she mentions that going public achieved its goal because "the moment it went public it stopped completely. We felt completely safe" (ibid). The protection of activists was part of this media strategy and so was publicising the issues around public order policing. This exploitation of media opportunities achieved both of these aims, and demonstrates the success of Plane Stupid's media tactics.

The press reacted to Plane Stupid's framing of the story and reported it as a very serious matter, which had substantial civil liberties implications (Milne 2009:12; Hannah 2009:2; Cameron 2009:8). Gifford was also afforded the opportunity to write an op-ed entitled "Don't spy on us. We only protest peacefully" in the *Guardian*, which sets out the arguments against police surveillance (2009:29). It uses some of the common arguments already set out in this chapter. The main argument justifies the use of direct action and that direct action is a last resort because the democratic process is

perceived to have failed, and that climate change is urgent and requires immediate action. What this shows is that despite the circumstances around Plane Stupid's appearances in the press there is a constant and consistent attempt to keep publicising the same messages. Whether it is around the issue itself or the justification of the tactics, but these arguments are not mutually exclusive. They are connected and are both the reason for the tactics and a demand for positive reactions. The ability to effectively craft the framing of media stories demonstrates the sizeable media opportunity built by Plane Stupid. It is through their relationship with the press, and possession of compelling news stories that increased the probability that Plane Stupid would be covered as they intended.

6.6.2 Ends Justify the Means

This idea can be taken further because central issue at the heart of their campaign was the reason behind the use of direct action. It is the function of direct action to act as a form of public relations. Direct action opens up media opportunities within which the message can be delivered, and for the activists themselves the ends truly justify the means. Their actions were specifically designed to link the issues to a justification of the tactics, as Kerr argues "try and justify it by linking it in peoples' minds, try and get people to see why we did what we did" (2010). Their perception of climate change is the main motivation for Plane Stupid's actions and their attempts at prompting public debate. The quotes by activists in media coverage are articulate enough to make the case for direct action in a reasoned manner, and the efficacy of the tactic is shaped by a belief that all other avenues have failed.

There is no sense of doubt contained in the outward communications of activists that gives any indication that they think their actions will fail. This sheer determination behind the attempts at achieving the goals of the group is demonstrated in a press release that is responding to the government's decision to expand Heathrow. The quote from Deen stresses that this is not the end, merely a new beginning and that direct action is the only response that dominant institutions can expect:

> *We are as confident as ever that the runway won't be built. Their efforts won't start for years. Through direct action, people will retain the power to stop the runway long after Gordon Brown's brief moment of power expires.* (Quoted in Plane Stupid 2009d, emphasis in original)

Finally, the choice of protest tactics is at the core of everything Plane Stupid did. It was the mechanism by which Plane Stupid would gain media attention. The rationale behind the use of direct action was in performing a small crime a larger crime is being stopped, and this was part of Plane Stupid's defence in court. In Plane Stupid's case the larger crime is climate change. Plane Stupid would capitalise on court cases stemming from their actions to allow climate change science to be heard in a court of law. To quote one activist "The police take these things very seriously, as they should. I'm looking forward to the issues being heard in court" (Gifford quoted in Harris 2009:9). All of these things, media awareness, timing of tactics, and maintaining a narrative is all part of Plane Stupid's collective action frame. The fundamental function of Plane Stupid's direct action was to attract a lot of media coverage, and this of course was what their protest actions were designed to do. Direct action forces issues into the open and prompts people to take a position on an issue. To illustrate this point across the newspaper sample 38 of the 207 articles (18%) were comment pieces. However, Plane Stupid was not interested in offering political solutions to the issues beyond scrapping the policy of airport expansion. Plane Stupid were the most confrontational group protesting against airport expansion and were therefore pushing at the edges of the arguments. This opened political opportunities for more moderate groups to enter the debate and speak on the issue.

6.7 Conclusion

If Plane Stupid had not carried out their spectacles and stunts it is less likely that the issue of airport expansion would have been so widely covered. The incredible nature of a stunt like shutting down an airport goes far beyond the threshold for what actions will attract media attention. This is coupled with a media focused and professional approach to the press meant that Plane Stupid could exploit media attention and advance their messages. Moreover, the variety of stunts carried out by Plane Stupid kept the press interested, and the more incredible the action the more press coverage it would receive. Their protest tactics varied from events using a lot of activists, for instance shutting down airports and individual actions targeting politicians. Plane Stupid always maintained the same message throughout their campaign and brought disparate actions together under a main narrative. Direct action in this sense is acting as public relations and opening up the media space for messages to be transmitted. The strength of the message was only diluted when one of the activists deviated from the overall aims and carefully crafted media strategy of the group. It revealed a weakness at the heart of Plane Stupid and meant that they lost some control over their messaging. This exposed the members of Plane Stupid to increased scrutiny of their

backgrounds. This focus, in some cases, provided a distraction to the issues, but the perceived privilege of the protesters was also an attraction for newspapers.

Chapter 7 – G20Meltdown – More Than a March

The final group under investigation is G20Meltdown who demonstrated against the G20 summit in London in 2009. G20Meltdown's protests against the summit fits into a sequence of anti-globalisation demonstrations that gained international prominence at the WTO meeting in December 1999 in Seattle, Washington (DeLuca and Peeples 2002). G20Meltdown was an umbrella organisation for around sixty groups (G20Meltdown 2009z)[12]. In this respect G20Meltdown is similar to the Dissent! network that protested against the G8 in Scotland in 2005, but one of the biggest differences between G20Meltdown and Dissent! are their attitudes towards the media. According to McCurdy the Dissent! network actively avoided approaching the media and use of set messages (2010). G20Meltdown on the other hand was much more open to speaking to the press[13]. This chapter aims to show the influence of different attitudes towards the media will have on a group's media and protest tactics, and includes G20Meltdown's representation in media reports, and the reactions of dominant institutions.

7.1 International Summits as a Political and Media Opportunity

G20Meltdown's actions are situated within the political and media context of the 2009 G20 summit in London. International summits represent a large political and media opportunity because the G20 summit attracts a lot of media attention and is something G20Meltdown could exploit. How this context relates to RQ1 below and the existence, creation, and exploitation of media and political opportunities is to examine G20Meltdown's protest goals and the issues they were highlighting.

> RQ1. How do protest groups create, identify, and exploit political and media opportunities?

The G20 summit occurred in the aftermath of the global economic crisis and Britain's banking crisis in 2008, and followed a summer of political scandals over MPs' expenses (Curtice and Park 2010:131). The banking crisis was a large part of G20Meltdown's protest, and their goal was to explicitly highlight the issues surrounding capitalism.

[12] Please note that the website for G20Meltdown no longer exists. A cached version can be found on the Internet Archive WaybackMachine (G20Meltdown 2009j).

[13] As with the Save the Vulcan and Plane Stupid chapters some information and reflections included in this chapter come from the interviews with the activists involved.

The political and protest opportunity presented by the banking crisis and the G20 summit is detailed by Pepper[14]:

> G20 was the first opportunity for the movement to thrust forward, having learned not just from J18 but from G8 and Make Poverty History. With the crunch and the bail outs enough people could finally see the bleeding obvious: don't ask the problem for solutions. We are the solution. No apathy, no extremism and no wrist bands. (2009)

The sentiment displayed in the quote above is that G20Meltdown represented the alternative to capitalism, and a different view of how society should be organised. The quote also points to the Bank of England as the protest target because it represents the "belly of the beast" (Power 2010). Placed in the context of the banking crisis the Bank of England for Power was an "absolutely obvious target" (ibid). This is different to previous summit protests that sought to shutdown the summits themselves, and was partially logistic because the G20 summit was in a difficult location to access. The prominent issue of the banking crisis also meant that targeting the Bank of England was more logical. The targeting of banks and bankers were evident in G20Meltdown's media strategy and their perception of media opportunities. They argued that the press at that moment in time were expressing an anti-banker sentiment, and this correlated with the issues under protest. This presented G20Meltdown with a media opportunity for their messages, as Knight put it "The media moguls need to sell newspapers, which they were doing during those weeks by competing to denounce the crimes of the bankers. It would have been stupid to let that opportunity slip" (2010).

The other variable influencing the success and failure of G20Meltdown is the lack of competition for media and political opportunities. The lack of other protest groups present led Power to refer to G20Meltdown as "the only thing in town" (2010). In conjunction with G20Meltdown's actions Climate Camp were planning on targeting the European Climate Exchange. The issue of the banking system is also incorporated into Climate Camp's rationale for protesting stating that "nature doesn't do bailouts" (G20Meltdown 2009d). The only potential competition to G20Meltdown was a coalition of NGOs, trade unions and other campaign groups under the banner Put People First who staged a rally a week before the summit opened (Put People First 2009). Although, this did not directly compete with G20Meltdown's protests a week later. The political, media, and protest opportunities were arguably open for G20Meltdown, and the media and political context in which G20Meltdown performed their action was definitely recognised by the activists.

[14] The interview quotes from Marina Pepper are taken from *Shift Magazine* (Pepper 2009).

7.2 Storm the Banks and Other Aspirations

This section will explore G20Meltdown's use of online communication and shows how the various communication methods worked together to create a coherent narrative. The framing of G20Meltdown's messages in answer to RQ2 below took place through a mixture of mediums.

> RQ2. How does a protest group frame their media and political opportunities, messages, goals, and protest actions?

The majority of this communication appeared online through an official website[15], and on the social networks Twitter and Facebook. The relative open access of the internet represented an alternative media opportunity for G20Meltdown to reach the public, and this use of the internet falls into three main categories. How each item operated will be discussed individually:

1) Advertising and mobilisation for events
2) Detailing the tactics and targets of protest
3) The issues and impetus behind the protests

The first item on this list is the advertising and mobilisation for events, and this occurs in two different ways to encourage mobilisation and construct a narrative. First, the internet was used by G20Meltdown as an organisational tool to prepare for pre-G20 events, and encourage participation in the April 1st demonstration. The following tweet acts as information for people wanting to participate in the G20 protests: "Meltdown meets today. Check out website and Facebook for updates. The Black Horse group meets Ramparts, March 16th 8.00pm" (G20Meltdown 2009n). The pre-protest tweets were mostly orientated around preparation for the protests.

Second, in conjunction with encouraging participation there is the idea that anyone who engages in the demonstration will be part of something bigger, a larger narrative, and the optimism that G20Meltdown will succeed. The following quote is taken from the Facebook event for the 'G20 Meltdown Party 1st & 2nd April' that states "We can....STOP.....them? Yes we can..... STOP.....The city.....STOP.....April fools.....STOP.....Bank of England ....STOP...12.00noon" (G20Meltdown 2009g). A sense that change is possible was central to G20Meltdown's motivations, because any

[15] The original website g-20meltdown.org no longer exists so references point to archived pages.

negativity would be self defeating and would hinder a protest group in succeeding its goals. The various websites of G20Meltdown afforded them an unfiltered platform outside of the mainstream media. The website was a place where G20Meltdown could explain the issues fully and give their preferred framing of the potential solutions.

7.2.1 Four Horseman of the Apocalypse

The second and third elements of G20Meltdown's use of the internet are interconnected, because the protest tactics and targets are inextricably linked to the issues under protest. The connection between the issues and the existence of the group was even included in the 'Meltdown' part of their name. This particular word was chosen to represent the economic, ecological and political 'meltdowns' the group perceived were taking place. The march itself was structured around four feeder marches that would converge on the main target of the Bank of England. Each feeder march was headed by a large horse puppet[16], and these horses represented the four main issues G20Meltdown were protesting about. The horses and the issues they represented were as follows:

1) Red Horse – War
2) Black Horse – Homelessness, also cited as land enclosures/borders to "celebrate the 360th anniversary of the Diggers"
3) Silver Horse – Financial crimes
4) Green Horse – Climate change (G20Meltdown 2009i)

Despite the apparent diversity of these four issues under protest by G20Meltdown there was a distinct anti-capitalist edge. Capitalism was the underlying issue that provided the narrative connecting all four of the above issues. These four issues are used as an entry point to criticising capitalism: "people will come to understand it's all part of the same problem, capitalism" (Pepper 2009). The collective action framing of G20Meltdown was very consistent and was linked to everything they did. They would use Facebook to keep highlighting the messages, and the event for the G20Meltdown Party contained the tagline "Capitalism isn't in crisis, capitalism IS crisis!" (G20Meltdown 2009g). Tying the underlying issues to an overall system is an attempt to create a binding narrative to bring all of the contested issues together. The effects of capitalism are what Pepper saw as the major entry point to more complex arguments:

[16] The horses were large puppets made of withies (flexible branches) wrapped round with a certain kind of stretchy cloth (Knight 2010).

> Money issues are to anti-capitalism what the polar bear is to the climate change movement – not the point, but a way in. (2009)

If each issue has the same underlying cause this provides a common theme and cohesive symbol to more easily explain complex issues. What is also highlighted in the group's communications is their belief that there is currently no alternative to capitalism being offered by mainstream politics. The Facebook group states "We don't see any choice on offer except between bankers, bankers and more bankers, between capitalism, capitalism and more capitalism" (G20Meltdown 2009m). The lack of choice cited shapes the idea that G20Meltdown represented the alternative, and to promote this view an alternative G20 summit was planned to discuss solutions to the group's main issues (AltG20 2009). The summit's mission statement stresses the urgency of the issue, and the need for action to be taken immediately to fix perceived problems (G20Meltdown 2009b). Finally, Climate Camp was part of G20Meltdown but this association is not explicitly expressed in G20Meltdown's publications. The presence of Climate Camp was seen by Knight as a demonstration of strength in numbers (2010). This viewpoint reemphasises the idea that G20Meltdown was 'the only thing in town', but in being a big part of the G20 protests G20Meltdown gave others the confidence to protest.

G20Meltdown not only used online resources they produced leaflets to help publicise their issues and the protest. These leaflets follow the same conventions shown in their online communications. Examining the leaflets it is clear that the framing of the demonstration is to try and avoid the word 'protest', and the idea of a party or carnival is used instead. The incorporation of the 'carnival' is something that can be traced through historical British protests, for example, the protest against the G8 in Scotland in 2005 was called the Carnival for Full Enjoyment, and similarly the Carnival Against Capital held in London in 1999 (Molyneaux 2005:109, 111). The protest tactic of the carnival is an active choice of a protest group, and the rationale behind G20Meltdown's use of the carnival will be discussed in section 7.3.

The leaflets incorporate several different approaches to publicising an event by encapsulating everything from the jovial, party type sentiment to a much more confrontational message bordering on militaristic. These elements were also incorporated into G20Meltdown's press release before the April 1st G20 protests. Talk of revolution is tempered by an emphasis on peaceful protest:

> … head to the Bank of England for a 'Very English Revolution'.

> The ‘Revolution’ will take the form of an openly organized free assembly in public space outside the Bank of England, a peaceful and fun street party! (Barrett 2009)

The other noticeable characteristic of the leaflets is the use of irreverent language and imagery, along with militaristic language, and a veiled threat of confrontation. The first example is G20Meltdown money and demonstrates all of these characteristics. The humour is contained in protest’s name Financial Fools Day, and is coupled with doctored images of a jester and a clown. The text on the back contains themes of party, parade, carnival, and details the issues. The use of fake currency takes a capitalist symbol and twists it into G20Meltdown’s criticism of capitalism. Finally, it features a map of the march and the date of protest.

Figure 7.2.1 An example of G20Meltdown’s fake money (G20Meltdown 2009q)

Figure 7.2.2 An example of a G20Meltdown street party leaflet (G20Meltdown 2009l)

The second flyer pushes the party theme and features an image of the Bank of England and masked revellers. The following two leaflets are much more confrontational and aggressive in their language. The first contains a slogan that would become popular in newspapers “storm the banks” (See Fricker and Barry 2009 for example). The leaflet talks of a “fight back” and events are listed under the name “Spring Offensive”. It has more aggressive imagery incorporated into it, and a historical print image of a London riot is doctored with an image of the ‘Gherkin’ skyscraper in the City of London. The back of the leaflet features a picture of a hanging banker, and the hanging bankers theme is something that the press would pick up on. The press interpretation of protester communications will be discussed more in section 7.4 about the press coverage of G20Meltdown.

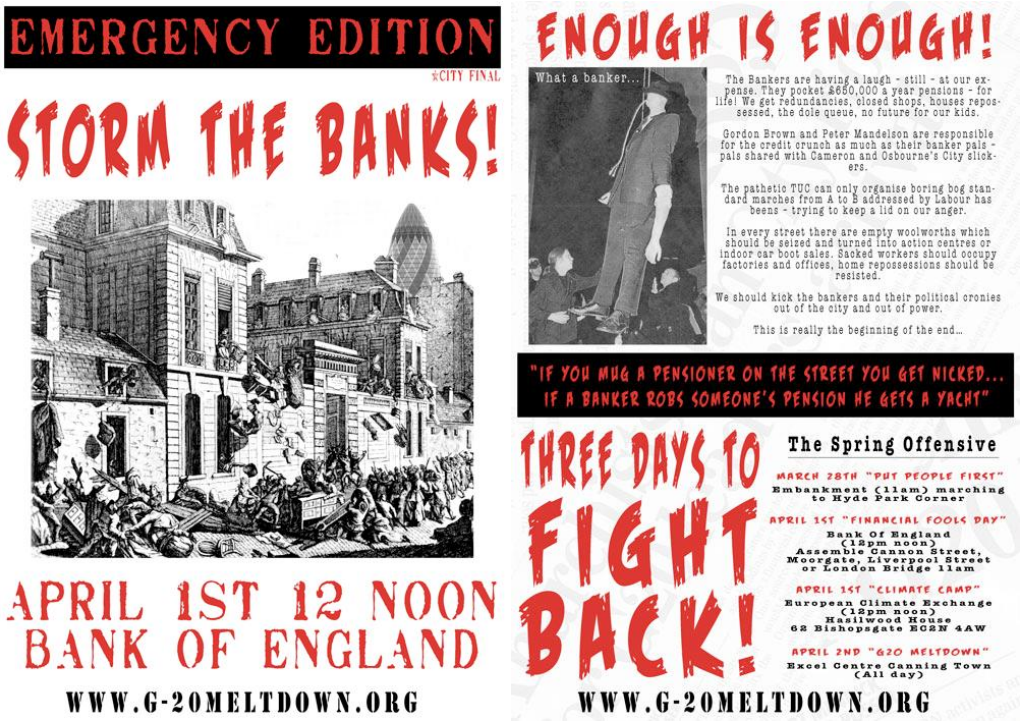


Figure 7.2.3 An example of a G20Meltdown storm the banks leaflet (G20Meltdown 2009t)

The final leaflet follows the same themes and features a foreboding image of the Bank of England with a horseman of the apocalypse in front of it. The back is all text and details what will happen on the day, but in keeping with militaristic language it describes the action against the Bank of England as “thousands of people will lay siege”. The details found in the leaflets represent G20Meltdown’s collective action frame and demonstrates what their protest aims were.

Figure 7.2.4 A second example of G20Meltdown's 'Mass Street Party' leaflets (G20Meltdown 2009f)

The importance of the words used to describe the action becomes increasingly important when it concerns the representation of the protesters and their actions. The activists preferred narrative was a peaceful protest with a confrontational edge. How these two narratives are portrayed in the press will demonstrate which narrative the media preferred and will be discussed in section 7.4. The decisions behind the use of these particular messages and protest tactics will now be detailed.

7.3 Everyone is a Spokesperson at the Carnival

The decisions behind G20Meldown's messages were dependent on their structure, and the influence of this is the basis of RQ3:

> RQ3. What decisions and negotiations go into the choice of communications strategies and protest tactics?

G20Meltdown were structured non-hierarchically and utilised consensus decision making. The processes behind their decisions is detailed by Knight who say that the group was "democratised and open, and the details of what we would do were worked out by consensus" (2010). G20Meltdown, as mentioned in section 7.1, were an umbrella network of approximately 60 groups, and two of the prominent groups were Government of the Dead and Climate Camp. However, there was tactical tension

between G20Meltdown and Climate Camp which was described as “tricky” by Power, because Climate Camp chose to represent themselves as separate from G20Meltdown (2010). The relationship between G20Meltdown and Climate Camp meant that there were two different media strategies that were instigated, and varies in its approach towards spokespeople and messages.

Climate Camp took a professional approach towards media relations by creating press teams, designating spokespeople, and creating key messages (Climate Camp for Action 2010:3-7). G20Meltdown on the other hand had a more fluid and perhaps democratic approach to their media strategy. This strategy was two-fold; first G20Meltdown did not actively court the media they believed the staging of the protests would be enough to attract the media to the group. The argument for this approach is the demonstration was set to be a big protest event, and consequently a media event and this exploited media opportunities by attracting the media to the group. To quote Power G20Meltdown “felt we were making the running” and the press would be “following our coat tails” (2010). The biggest difference between G20Meltdown and Climate Camp was G20Meltdown’s aim for everyone to be a spokesperson, and is the second part of the strategy. The reason for doing this is detailed by Power and is based on trusting other activists:

> Climate Camp tends to train its people to sound bite, we absolutely did not want to do that, we wanted to maintain a certain spontaneity, we really were trusting each other to speak from what we felt (2010)

This meant that G20Meltdown’s strategy was not as media centric, but activists remained open to speaking to journalists. This was the aim of G20Meltdown’s media strategy and is explained by Knight as journalists wanting something ‘real’ (2010). The influence of these media tactics on the resulting media coverage reflected this openness, but it created protest figureheads, and will be explored in detail in section 7.4. This attitude of doing things a little bit differently with respect to the media was also evident in the group’s protest tactics.

7.3.1 More Than Just a March

The protest tactics of G20Meltodown were based on their ideological principles as detailed by Power as “direct action” and “anarchistic” (2010). How this influenced the protest tactics was to create a demonstration that was more than just a march. It was based on the idea of a carnival which is a shared experience and is jovial in nature,

and as Pepper states the carnival is “So empowering, so powerful” (2009). She explains the tactics of the carnival as something which challenges societal norms:

> Carnival has the harlequin at its heart, who resists all authority in a topsy turvy world with the people taking the power, the fool being king for the day. Carnival releases us from the boundaries of the everyday norm. It is an excellent starting point. And the media loves it. If it can’t get a riot, it will settle for a carnival. God, anything to get us away from boring A-B marching on the one hand, and Molotov lobbing on the other. (2009)

The theatrical element of G20Meltdown was fed by the prominent group Government of the Dead who were said to be the “street theatre component of the event” (Knight 2010). As already detailed in section 7.2 the structure of the protests was based on four starting points marching to, and converging on the Bank of England. The advantage of the tactic was the marches and demonstration would blockade London’s financial district. In Knight’s opinion having a specific plan behind a demonstration of this type was “unusual”, and “quite ambitious” (2010). The key aim of the protest was to be more than just a march moving from A to B, and the messages were carried by each of the feeder marches that would converge on a prominent symbol of the underlying arguments against capitalism. How the media covered these media and protest tactics will now be entered into in more detail.

7.4 A Media McProtest

This section will explore the major themes found in the content analysis and discuss their importance. The media coverage of G20Meltdown was characterised by themes of law and order and spectacle of protest in answer to the following RQ:

> RQ4. How does the media frame protest groups in response to their messages, goals and protest actions?

This section will unpack the impact of the group’s media and protest tactics on media coverage starting with an overview of statistics from the content analysis. Unlike the Save the Vulcan and Plane Stupid campaigns the G20 protests were the only major action carried out by G20Meltdown. The G20 protests represent one large case study.

To give the media coverage context extra context a Metropolitan Police briefing was reported in the *Guardian* newspaper (Lewis 2009a:1). The briefing evoked past protests and suggests that 2009 would see violence on the scale of the Poll Tax riots,

and talks of activists coming out of retirement intent on causing disruption (ibid:1). The story mentions the prospect of a “summer of rage” and predicts that the G20 protests were the beginning of a series of protests (ibid:1). The article does not contain any rebuttals from the activists planning the G20 protests. The framing of the Metropolitan Police statement highlighted the negative potential of protest. The quotes offer an authoritative source the press could draw upon to frame the protests and provides a narrative template that would be regularly repeated in articles. The statistics reflect this framing, and the top-level of themes were recorded multiple times per article, but sub-categories only once. The G20Meltdown sample size was 97 articles, and the major themes are listed below from highest to lowest:

Top Level Story Categories	**N**	**%**
Spectacle of Protest	136	45.0
Law and Order	114	35.9
Economy	39	12.6
Recognition of Protest	11	3.6
Brought into Story	7	2.3
Celebrity	2	0.6
Total	309	100

Table 7.4.1 A table showing the overall categories of newspaper stories

What this table shows is that the spectacle of protest and the law and order were apparent in higher frequencies than any other category. These two categories represented 81% of the story themes. When examined by sub-category it becomes clear that the major talking points in the press were the act and potential effects of protest. The sub-categories that appeared in 15 articles or more (5% of total) are as follows:

Sub-Categories	**N**	**%**
Anticipation of Violence	53	17.2
Structure of Protest	37	12.0
Police Operation	35	11.3
Historical Protest Evoked	22	7.1
Cost of Policing	20	6.5
Disruptions for Commerce	19	6.1
Disruption to the Public	17	5.5
Protester Violence	15	4.9
Total (Including categories not listed)	309	100

Table 7.4.2 A table showing the top sub-categories in newspaper articles

This demonstrates that the initial Metropolitan Police briefing helped set the framing template for media coverage. It is not just a matter of cause and effect, and the following sections will demonstrate that G20Meltdown were successful in gaining

media coverage, and addresses the most prominent narrative points of media coverage: 1) fear and an anticipation of violence; 2) references to historical protests; and 3) a focus on disruption and violence. This will demonstrate that despite the dominate media frames of the spectacle of protest and an anticipation of violence these themes were not without nuance.

7.4.1 Sources and Issues

The high prominence of G20Meltdown activists are reflected in the statistics, and illustrate that G20Meltdown were successful in gaining media attention by not actively courting the press. The sources used to construct the newspaper coverage were as follows, and what is clear from the statistics is that protesters were the most regularly used source:

Source	Frequency (n)	% of total sources
Total protesters[17]	129	41
Total politicians[18]	51	16
Police	50	16
Total (Including sources not listed)	316	100

Table 7.4.3 A table showing the distribution of the top three highest frequencies of sources

The activists were used in the creation of the stories, but the quantity sources does not relate to quality of coverage and an explanation of protesters' aims and messages. How protester quotes and communications were used in the coverage of the G20 protests will be detailed throughout this section. The second and third most frequently used sources were police and politicians. The majority of police sources appeared 45 times (out of 50 or 90%) before the 5th April. This is where the police influence on the coverage is most evident, and is particularly important when considering anticipations of violence in press coverage, which features in section 7.4.2.

The amount of protesters found in the media coverage and the protest tactic of four issue themed horses had an impact and transferred itself into the press coverage of the issues. The table 7.4.4 shows the top five issues mentioned in the media coverage:

[17] This includes members of specified protest groups, unspecified protests, NGOs and protester leaflets/websites.
[18] This included Members of Parliament, the House of Lords, London Assembly members, councilors, and anonymous government sources.

Issue	Frequency (n)	% of total issues
Capitalism	48	21
Climate Change	39	17
Bankers	34	15
Global Financial Crisis	22	10
War	20	9
Total (Including issues not listed)	227	100

Table 7.4.4 A table showing the distribution of the top five issues mentioned in newspaper articles

What is clear from the table is that the issues attached to the four horses meant that three out of four issues were well represented. It should be noted that 21 of the 97 articles (22%) made no reference to any issues. Superficially this demonstrates that G20Meltdown's concerns resonated somewhat in the press, but the issues were very rarely explained in great detail. There were 187 mentions (82% of total) of an issue being described as an overarching problem, and in only 19 instances (8% of total) was an issue being explained in greater detail. A direct chain of causality was only given twice and related to issues of global capitalism and MPs' expenses. The issue of the banking system was at least given causality links in 5 of the 11 times (45%) it was mentioned, and illustrates the media context and press attention towards the banking crisis at that time. The sources and the issues were mentioned against the backdrop of the major thematic elements of the press coverage.

7.4.2 Anticipation of Violence

The most common sub-category of theme was the appearance of an anticipation of violence and the discussion of the probability of violence at a protest, or if violence has already happened predictions that more will occur. The prominence of the anticipation of violence frames a protest as extreme, distances a group from its messages, and distracts from a debate of the underlying issues of protest. In the newspaper sample 53 of the 97 articles (54%) included an anticipation of violence, and occurred mostly in the lead up to the G20 protests. This encapsulates the two weeks running up to the protests and the three days afterwards. The distribution of the anticipation of violence across newspapers was evenly spread, but when political leaning is taken into account there is a distinct division between newspapers. The right wing press featured an anticipation of violence in 35 stories (from a total of 57 or 61%). Left leaning publications only included anticipation of violence in 18 articles (from a total of 40 or 45%). To give an example of an anticipation of violence here is a headline from the *Mirror* that talks of a "COUNTDOWN TO CHAOS" in reference to the build up to the protests (Anon 2009a:5).

This anticipation of violence was exacerbated by the interpretations of comments made by members of the Metropolitan Police. In one police briefing Commander Bob Broadhurst, the head of the G20 summit police operation, used some of the themes found prominently in the media coverage of historic protest, protester planning, and the threat the G20 protests posed:

> We are seeing unprecedented planning among protest groups. Some of the groups of the late 90s are coming back to the fore and there is a coming together of anarchists, anti-globalisation groups and environmentalists. […] They have some very clever people and their intention on April 1 is to stop the City. (Quoted in O'Neill 2009c:3)

In reaction to this quote the newspapers would concentrate one word in particular. The term 'unprecedented' was part of multiple newspaper reports, and the following example from April 1st in the *Daily Telegraph* says that "The City was expected to be brought to a halt in 'unprecedented' protests" (Edwards and Gammell 2009:5). Elsewhere, *The Independent* on March 21st talked of the protest as an "'unprecedented challenge' to the police" (Hughes and Taylor 2009:2). This term resonated with press and helped hype the protests as more aggressive and larger than previous demonstrations.

The creation of an atmosphere of fear in the press was represented by the images used to accompany articles. They illustrate the preparations in the City of London before the G20 protest and depict the boarding up of shop fronts, the erection of barriers, and the police performing security checks in rivers and sewers (O'Neill 2009e:16-17; Penrose 2009:9). This preparation can be accounted for by the threat of terrorism to an international summit, but these images were used in conjunction with articles specifically about the protests. The protesters were not completely blameless in the creation of an anticipation of violence, and one event in particular reinforced the media's predictions of forthcoming violence. The property of banker Fred Goodwin was attacked and the group taking responsibility issue a statement saying "This is just the beginning" (Quoted in Whipple and Hamilton 2009:17). The statement increased anxiety towards potential violence with *The Sun* describing the statement as "A chilling footnote" (Walker 2009:4-5). The statements of protesters in the press and the media's use of G20Meltdown leaflets and online communications influenced the portrayal of the protests, and will be discussed in sections 7.4.3 and 7.4.4.

7.4.3 The Invisible Threat and the Visible Menace

The theme of the anticipation of violence with respect to the portrayal of the protests is based on the protest tactics and communications of a protest group. It creates an invisible/visible theme that views protesters as simultaneously an invisible threat, and a visible menace. The focus of this portrayal is to build the idea of an unseen threat that is planning to cause chaos and destruction, and outwardly is an aggressive faceless mass hell-bent on disruption (Rosie and Gorringe 2009a). This is a form of exclusion by inclusion where protesters are included in media coverage only to be discredited and delegitimized.

The invisible threat and visible menace manifests itself in two different ways. The first relates to 'undercover' stories that are focused on delegitimizing the organisation of the protests, and beliefs of the protesters. This is where the journalist attends 'secret' planning meetings. The visible menace is where a journalist takes part in the protests and in doing so portrays the protests as extreme and unrepresentative of public opinion. The following example builds the idea of an invisible threat, but contrasts this threat with the visible menace by describing secret meetings attended by the journalist and portrays the protesters as highly organised and deviant:

> During the secretive discussions in the shabby building, it soon emerged that this group was central to the violence and incitement which marred yesterday's protests […] At the first meeting, the leader of the bizarre group of misfits mostly white working class British men in their twenties revealed that he was taking orders from Chris Knight, a 66-year-old anthropology lecturer. (Martin 2009:10-11)

In complete contrast to this quote G20Meltdown's meetings were often advertised on their Twitter feed (G20Meltdown 2010), and Knight stated that journalists were somewhat welcome to attend meetings (2010). The structure of G20Meltdown was non-hierarchical and practiced consensus decision-making, and makes the idea of 'taking orders' appear somewhat suspect. The article opens with the journalist's experience of the demonstration and frames the activists involved as deviant and extreme: "PENNED in among a fearsome group of thugs outside the Bank of England, dressed head to toe in black, I was one of the mob" (Martin 2009:10-11). The delegitimizing terms used to describe the protesters as a "mob", "blank-faced disciples", and that groups had reformed following a period of inactivity due to "apathy and the numbing effect of smoking drugs" (ibid:10-11).

The second part of the invisible/visible framing relates to protesters' communications and how they are used by the press. The use of these pieces of communication highlights a disadvantage of the internet and leaflets as a media strategy, because statements written on these mediums can be taken and interpreted by journalists. These resources are taken out of their original context and the quotes that are made most prominent point towards the preferred media framing of a protest. This could either be an emphasis on the moderate voices or concentrating on confrontational statements. To illustrate this point, protester websites and leaflets were used as a direct source 25 times (8% of total) in media coverage. In some circumstances the press would attribute the quotes directly to online sources, but did not give the specific website, such as "One website urges demonstrators to 'express their rage' and promises 'a day of f***ing up the summit'" (O'Neill 2009g:5). The other stories that contained online sources would appear without attribution, but contain the same information that could be found on G20Meltdown's website and leaflets.

The press reproduced maps of the various protest routes, and these were taken from G20Meltdown's websites and leaflets. This included information about the protest to be incorporated into maps of 'flashpoints', protest event locations, and a guide to beating traffic disruption (Edwards and Gammell 2009:5; O'Neill 2009c:3; Taylor 2009b:6). This was part of the second most common sub-category found in press reports and was included in 37 articles (12% of total). The press produced timelines of protest, demographics of groups, and the number of demonstrators present. Essentially, it included anything related to the planning, construction, and the processes behind the protest tactics. The following quote from the *Guardian* is a good example of when the structure of protest was recorded:

> G20 Meltdown will see a coalition of anti-capitalist, anarchist and single-issue protest groups converge on the Bank of England. Four groups will walk to the Bank from separate tube stations. At 2pm, Stop the War Coalition is leading a separate march from the US embassy in Grosvenor Square to Trafalgar Square, to demand that Barack Obama pulls US troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan. (Lewis et al. 2009:6)

The reprinting of activists plans performed some of their media tactics for G20Meltdown by informing the public about the protests, and advertising the demonstrations to potential participants. This type of media coverage was received very well by Knight who describes the publicising of timings and routes as "they really did our job for us. No way could we have got that many people without that" (2010). The language found in the leaflets was also replicated especially the phrase 'storm the

banks'. *The Times*, for example, included text from both the leaflets and websites to comment that "violent sentiments" found on websites are encouraging protesters to "'Storm the Banks' and 'Bash a Banker'" (O'Neill 2009b:8). The most vociferous interpretation of the leaflets is found in the following quote from the *Express* "Fears of bloodshed at the demonstrations escalated yesterday as anarchists used murderous images to spread a message of hate" (Scott 2009:27). The protesters' communications in these examples have been used against the activists, as evidence for the increased fear of violence.

The other role of online sources relates to the media perception of G20Meltdown's promotional tactics. The group's use of social media was included in articles as part of anticipating violence to give the appearance of a highly organised mass demonstration with military levels of precision. In *The Times* it is suggested that social media will be used to evade the police "G20 activists hope Twitter tactics will keep them one step ahead of the police" (O'Neill 2009d:5). Similarly, the *Daily Mail* suggests that the use of online resources is "GOOGLE ANARCHISTS TARGETING THE CITY", and that social media is being used to provoke "mayhem" at the G20 protests (Wright 2009). The media's construction and prominence of the anticipation of violence creates an atmosphere of fear where all of the groups involved in a demonstration are judged within this frame. It sets a preconception of how the protest should be viewed before the event has happened and distracts from the issues. That is not to say that a protest group's media strategy is not partial responsibility in creating the anticipation of violence, because their publications and choice of words becomes part of the ongoing narrative. The press then uses these quotes and statements to reinforce their own dominant frame.

7.4.4 Ascribing Figureheads

This section will show one of the major disadvantages of the group's media strategy of not having designated spokespeople. When anyone is allowed to speak to the press there is the possibility that the media will select the most prominent activists to be figureheads of a campaign. In G20Meltdown there were two activists in particular who became the figureheads of the demonstration. One was due to their outward appearance and public statements, and the other was because of their personal background and openness. Chris Knight was a Professor at the University of East London, and the organiser of the Alternative G20 summit as well as a prominent organiser within G20Meltdown (2010). He was also part of Government of the Dead who used street theatre and humour to get its message across. He was profiled in the

press as a ‘ringleader’ of G20 protests and was featured heavily in photographs. Knight was regularly pictured dressed as a zombie banker, and accompanying image descriptions framing him as a ‘leader’ or ‘ringleader’ (Dixon 2009a:27; Hughes 2009:7). The appearance of Knight was coupled with his public statements and this made him more newsworthy.

Knight’s statements were often placed into the anticipation of violence media frame. Some examples include a threat that bankers would be seen “hanging from lampposts” (Quoted in Anon 2009b:7), and "If they want violence, they'll get it!" (Quoted in Hughes 2009:7). The statement that the press used to fit their anticipation of violence frame was Knight’s perceived threats towards the police, as the following quote from the *Daily Mail* illustrates:

> We intend to be peaceful but if they press their nuclear button, I'll press mine. It's called "mutually assured destruction”. (Quoted in Seamark 2009:13)

The positioning of quotes in this context gives an indication of the original intention of these statements and their tone in G20Meltdown’s media tactics. Knight’s public statements were meant with humour, and were part of the street theatre element of the protest tactics. In an interview with *The Guardian* Knight is asked about potential violence but answers in a conciliatory tone. There is an urge for peaceful protest, and the spectacle is part of the aspirations, protest tactics, and protest aims of G20Meltdown:

> He said he had set up the protest group with theatrical rather than violent aims. […] I'm doing everything possible to make sure that all the anger of the middle classes doesn't turn into violence. […] Of course we don't want violence. If there's a huge ruck, the press will photograph it, and our vision about a different planet will not get reported. (Quoted in Rogers 2009:18)

In comparison to Knight the other high profile activist was Marina Pepper who was also a prominent organiser within G20Meltdown, but she was singled out by the newspapers who concentrated on her past. According to the newspapers Pepper was a Page 3 girl in the early 1980s and apparently dated actor Daniel Craig. The images accompanying articles about Pepper feature images from her page 3 past, and pictures of her at the time of the protests (Campbell 2009:9; Delgado 2009). This information was used by many of the newspapers for example, Pepper is described as “DANIEL Craig's ex-girlfriend is one of the masterminds behind the G20 protests” (Campbell 2009:9). The *Mail on Sunday* introduces salacious details about her relationship and

frames Pepper as “A RINGLEADER of the G20 protests has boasted of seven-times-a-night sex sessions with 007 Daniel Craig” (Delgado 2009). The images and personal details sensationalise Pepper, and she is claimed to be a leader of G20Meltdown. The use of someone’s past in this way distracts from their politics, and helps to delegitimize protesters claims, and portrays them as outsiders.

These personal details were used to construct an image of protesters that delegitimizes an activist’s politics by highlighting potential contradictions in their personal lives. Where Knight is concerned the price of his house was used to frame him as tainted by the same capitalism that he protested against. The *Daily Star* explicitly includes his politics in its description of him as a “self-styled radical communist, who lives in a £1 million house” (Peppiatt 2009:9). Personal politics is an issue for the *Daily Express* where Pepper is described as being involved in “fringe politics”, and Knight’s past as a member of “Labour’s notorious Militant Tendency” is mentioned (Dixon 2009b:17). What these examples emphasise is the disadvantage of not having designated spokespeople. The very openness of G20Meltdown in speaking to the press presents the following question to activists ‘if you do not speak to the media, who will?’ Knight talks of the dangers of speaking to the media and recognises the media’s predisposition to create leaders and focus on certain themes:

> … the press always latch onto somebody and once they had latched onto me, Camilla, Mark and Marina the four of us it was like a feeding frenzy. (2010)

G20Meltdown was conscious of the media framing of protest, and the press’ focus on violence and the spectacle. This all feeds back into the protest tactics of G20Meltdown who put the street theatre and carnival at the centre of their demonstration. The use of gallows humour and costumes was to exploit media conventions, but the public statements and appearance of G20Meltdown activists became a distraction. These depictions were used against G20Meltdown to further construct a narrative of potential violence.

7.4.5 Evoking Historic Protests

The heightened sense of potential violence in the build up to the G20 protest was aided by situating the demonstrations into a historical context. This was a relatively common part of the press coverage where historical protests were evoked in 22 articles (23% of total). These references mainly focused on the protests against the WTO in Seattle in 1999, the G8 summit in Genoa in 2001, May Day protests in London in 2000, and the

Poll Tax riots in 1990. These protests were brought into stories and all share a common trait; they all ended in some kind of violence and public disorder. The *Daily Telegraph* for instance discusses Seattle by saying "It is a decade since the anti-capitalist movement exploded on to the streets of Seattle" (Pitcher 2009:24), and mentions the G8 protests in Genoa in 2001 as an "insurrection", and ends with the detail of a "protester was killed" (ibid:24). The inclusion of these protests is often accompanied by the names of the groups involved. This further enhances the violence theme when groups are talked about as 'coming out of retirement' for the G20 protests. The following quote is from a *Sunday Mirror* article entitled "Anarchy Back in the UK", and this includes both historic protests and the groups involved to enhance the storyline:

> ANARCHISTS from the 1990 Poll Tax riots are coming out of retirement to plot mayhem at this week's G20 summit, police warned last night.
>
> Notorious groups such as Class War, the Wombles and the Whitechapel Anarchist Group have secretly ganged up to plan how best to wreak carnage on London's streets.
>
> Rent-a-mob hooligans from the 2001 May Day riots as well as French anarchist group Anarcho-Autonomist - notorious for their black masks - are also thought be organising violence ahead of the April 2 gathering of world leaders. (Penrose 2009:9)

The mentioning of past groups creates the idea of 'usual suspects' on a protest, and not the new and novel. This is supported by the names of groups most frequently mentioned in the articles; anarchists in general occur 43 times (14% of the total groups mentioned), Class War and the Wombles appear 11 and 7 times respectively (4% and 2%). A use of past protest also brings with it a number of ingrained stereotypes, and the *Sunday Telegraph* frames the protesters as anti-everything:

> For the most part all the usual suspects will turn up, the same folks - usually young people and students - who turn up for any anti-authority gig, whatever the actual cause. (Bloom 2009:23)

This type of language takes away any sense of 'newness' and actively divorces anyone on the march from their politics especially if it was their first protest. These labels are used to criticise the protesters and their aims, and there is seemingly nothing a media strategy could do to counteract the negativity. In *The Sun* article "A rabble, confused" the protesters are described as "FOAMING at the mouth and smelling of stale cider" (Francis 2009:13). G20Meltown in particular are singled out as the 'poisonous element' at the protest and described using 'usual suspect' stereotypes:

> They are a rabble of lost expublic school kids and university drop outs, hollering meaningless slogans without direction. (Francis 2009:13)

The protesters' politics are dismissed as tainted by the same capitalism they oppose in a "contradictory message", and the *Sun* journalist on the march witnessed "one, 'anti-capitalist' campaigner was SELLING whistles for a pound a go" (ibid:13). The capital letters in the report represent disbelief at such a transaction, and in doing so questions the protesters' motives to demonstrate. The use of stereotypes also appeared in seemingly complementary articles, such as, the *Mirror* who frame the demonstration as representing popular opinion, but does so in derisory terms: "for once, this dreadlocked coalition we like to refer to as The Crusties, was speaking for many of us" (Reade 2009:8-9). The stereotypes mentioned are used to discredit the protesters, but the use of historic protest is the stereotyping of the entire demonstration.

What is interesting about the use of historic protest is that the G20 protests are reported as an event with a great deal of thematic context. However, the mentioning of prominent groups and protests from the past situates the G20 protests into a sequential narrative, but only from within a frame of predictions of violence and violent protests. The second part is talk of activists coming out of retirement to cause trouble, and again, evokes images of violent protest. The talk of past protests and protesters allows the press to use historical violence as a narrative anchor to put the G20 protests into some kind of context. The reporting is at least trying to contextualise the G20Meltdown protests to some extent.

7.4.6 The Police Operation and Violence

The second largest thematic story category was law and order[19] provided a competing frame to the protesters and a distraction to the issues. The media opportunity created by the mass demonstrations was competing with the newsworthiness of the police operation. Law and order was a major focus of the press coverage occurring 114 times (37% of total story categories). The most frequent sub-category of law and order was details of the police operation which occurred in 35 articles (36%). This related to the structural aspects of policing protest for instance talk of police numbers, and the planning of the security operation. The following example from the *Daily Express*

[19] Law and order stories included details of the police operation, disruption to the public, protester violence, police violence, peaceful protest, police/security concerns, arrests and court procedures.

quantifies the size and cost of the police operation as “The operation will involve 2,500 officers and cost £7million” respectively (Scott 2009:27).

The economic cost of policing the G20 summit and the protests was included in 20 articles (21%). The cost of the security operation was reported on in two different ways. Some articles made the cost of the police operation seem like it was solely for the protests, for instance the *Mirror* frames it as “£7.2 million police operation to combat the anarchists” (Anon 2009e:4). The other newspaper reports make a distinction between the cost of policing the G20 summit, and the policing the protests. *The Sun* outlines the total cost of the summit as £21 million, of which £7.2 million is included for policing (Case and Clench 2009:6-7). When the protest is perceived as the sole reason for the multi-million pound security operation it creates the appearance of a much bigger threat to public order than the demonstration might have been.

The days following the demonstration and the reporting of the protest tactics focused on the property damage and clashes with police that occurred. The blame for the disturbances is clearly placed on the protester where protester violence is mentioned in 15 articles (15%). This can be directly compared with instances of police violence that only occurs in 4 stories (4%). There is an important aside to the media coverage of violence, because peaceful protest is reported in 12 articles (12%). The coverage of peaceful protest can be seen as a counter-balance to the reporting of violence. A closer look at the images shows that mass violence and conflict were more newsworthy than reports of peaceful protest. The images that accompanied a *Guardian* article showed protesters smashing the windows of RBS, and activists are described as “violent demonstrators” (Barkham 2009:1). There is a police officer shown with their baton drawn; and protesters and police clashes (ibid:1). Similar images appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* and the caption of the images contradicts the depictions of violence by stating that a majority of demonstrators were peaceful (Edwards et al. 2009:6). The images show a shift in the reporting of the protests. It changes from a focus on individuals and figureheads of the protests to viewing the protests as one large mass of people with aggressive intent.

The event at the protests which led to a debate about police public order tactics was the death of Ian Tomlinson. The initial reports of Tomlinson’s death were small and framed the event as a result of the protests. It is also unclear from the reports whether or not Tomlinson’s was a bystander or a protester. The *Daily Telegraph* in an article titled “Protester dies after a day of violent clashes” places the death into the context of

protester violence against the police (Edwards et al. 2009:6). The *Daily Mail* reported the incident "Tragedy as mobs turn on police" and opens with the sentence "A PROTESTER died last night after anarchists tried to hijack demonstration" (Williams et al. 2009:6). Then on the 8th April the *Guardian* published images taken from a mobile phone video of the events that led to Tomlinson's death (Lewis 2009c:1). The images showed Tomlinson being struck and pushed by a member of the police.

This led to questions over police tactics and the use of containment/kettling where protesters are hemmed into an area by lines of police officers. This substantially changed the media and political opportunities of the protesters and issues around police tactics became a major issue of debate. The death of Tomlinson led to other accusations of police violence and, on April 15th *The Times* reported on footage of a policeman striking a woman (O'Neill 2009f:16); by the 19th April the *Independent on Sunday* contained a third allegation of "police brutality" (Dugan 2009:12). The death of Tomlinson increased the seriousness of the accusations and led to substantial debates in dominant institutions around police tactics, and these will be discussed in detail in section 7.5.

The issues and messages of G20Meltdown were essentially drowned out following the protest by media coverage of the actions of a small minority of protesters, and the death of Tomlinson. The tragic events led to a large drop off in articles captured in the newspaper sample, and there were only 12 (12%) articles between April 5th and June 6th. The death at the protest brought issues into the headlines that were not originally part of G20Meltdown's aims, but it was an issue that G20Meltdown took seriously because of their own experiences with the police. The reactions of G20Meltdown to the media coverage and dominant institutions will be discussed in section 7.6. The sequence of events in the lead up to G20 protests was framed predominantly with an anticipation of violence, a focus on the police operation, and the structural aspects of protest. The timing of the event influenced the size of the 'new hole' in the month long build up to the protest. This led the press to focus on the finer details of protest and side stories, and these were provided by police and protester communications.

7.5 The Police and Media Drive the Story

The death of Ian Tomlinson dictated the responses of dominant institutions to the protests, and in answer to RQ5 these reactions were dominated by official inquiries into the police operation:

RQ5. What is the response of dominant institutions to a protest group's communications strategies and protest tactics?

This section will examine the quality of the police intelligence, police communications with the protesters and the press, and who was to blame for creating an anticipation of violence the press or the police, and finally the political institutional view of the protests. This will show the influence protester communications had on the police operation, and that the dominant institutions blamed the anticipation of violence on media coverage. The death of Tomlinson and the other allegations of police violence dominated the institutional discussions, and there was far more discussion about the police tactics following the protests than before. The inquiries into public order tactics were held by the police in the form of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), and in parliament by the Joint Committee on Human Rights and the Home Affairs Committee.

7.5.1 Police Intelligence

The official documents detail the influence of police intelligence and communications had on the framing of protesters in media coverage, and demonstrates the competition that exists for media opportunities. The reports list concerns about both police communications and the media's role in relation to the anticipation of violence. The HMIC document "Adapting to Protest" states that protesters' websites were an important source of information for police intelligence (HMIC 2009:42). This is similar to the press coverage where protester aspirations were taken from activist sources, but this reliance on online materials meant that the intelligence the police had was limited. This illustrates the influence of a group's media strategy and messages on the potential responses of the police. The report states that intelligence revealed "unprecedented levels of communication between disparate protest groups" and "a large number of un-notified protests were expected" (ibid:42).

In connection to the press' anticipation of violence the document details the police's assessment of the amount of protesters intent on violence as "a small number of extremists" (ibid:42). The exact quantity of the 'small number' and what is meant by the term 'extremist' is not specified. The report mentions a "recurring theme" in the police intelligence that the protesters intended to "bring the city to a halt" (ibid:42). The type of language used can be directly traced back to protester leaflets and websites. The use of protester websites for police intelligence is reinforced by Metropolitan Police Commander Simon O'Brien who admits not knowing how big the protests would be,

and that the police had been “monitoring chatrooms, emails, and open sources of information” (Quoted in Metropolitan Police 2009). The implication of the use of protest websites by the police and press means the content of protesters’ online communications takes on increased importance. When the activists’ media strategy becomes withdrawal from the press the media and the police end up speaking for the protesters (Trocchi 2005). This has now shifted to the use of online sources in press stories and police intelligence, and means that the protesters own communications are being taken and interpreted beyond their original intention.

7.5.2 Police Public Order Tactics

The public order tactics used by police against the G20 protests was through the use of containment, or kettling, and is the process of cordoning off a protest into a confined space for an indeterminate length of time (ACPO 2010). The tactical response of the police to the G20 protests was not connected to G20Meltdown’s politics. It was a reaction to the perceived threat of G20Meltdown’s protest tactics and aspirations. According to ACPO containment conditions are placed on a protest if the police believe there is a threat of “Serious public disorder; serious damage to property; serious disruption to the life of the community; or the purpose of those organising it is the intimidation of others” (ibid:26). The final item in this list is particularly telling because protester communications talking about hanging a banker is a prompt for the police tactics. The use of statements like ‘storm the banks’ shaped the perception of protester intentions, and it is these intentions that police tactics depend upon. The ACPO guidelines for containment state that:

> A procession or assembly should be considered peaceful if its organisers or representatives have peaceful intentions (ACPO 2010:114)

There are more similarities between the media and police perceptions of protest, because the police also situate mass demonstrations into a historical context. This context affects the tactical decisions of the police, and the HMIC report put the G20 protests into the historical context of disruption at previous international summit protests (2009:38). The report includes a detailed timeline of previous summit protests from around the world noting the disorder, number of arrests, and structure of each respective protest (ibid:Annex G). The use of protester communications for police intelligence and the historical context given to a protest creates preconceptions of what will happen at a protest. The presupposition is that mass demonstrations against

international summits inevitably end in violence, and the police should be prepared for this eventuality.

The major communicative downfall of containment is the negative perceptions of public, protesters, and the media. It is seen as an overly confrontational and dramatic police tactic that inflames the situation. This is an issue highlighted in the report "Poor communication regarding the use of containment was an issue for police, protesters, the public and media" (ibid:52). From the perspective of public order policing the Home Affairs Select Committee report "Policing the G20 Protest" makes the argument that successful communication between protester and police is vital. The report points out that the structure of protest groups hinders police tactics. The police are unable to communicate with 'leaders' of protest groups making the dissemination of information very difficult. The report goes so far as to recommend that "protest groups put ideological concerns to one side" in order to aid in communication (Home Affairs Committee 2009:14). The aims and structure of many protest groups, such as G20Meltdown, are unlikely to communicate with the police because talking to the police is antithetical to their aims.

The other significant factor for protest groups in communicating their goals is the presence and treatment of journalists at a mass demonstration. During the G20 protests the relationship between journalists and police was seen to break down (Home Affairs Committee 2009:5). The significance of a media presence on a demonstration is explored in the Joint Committee on Human Rights report released before the G20 protests states the three purposes of the media at demonstrations (Joint Committee on Human Rights 2009a): 1) The media is a message carrier, particularly for the publicity of a protest groups issues and actions (ibid:54); 2) journalists are important independent observers of protest and therefore must be allowed access to protests (ibid:55); 3) journalists are seen as "the eyes and ears of the public", and keep the police accountable for their actions (ibid:56). The implications of a breakdown in the relationship between the police and journalists could be inaccurate reporting of major protest events or no coverage at all. If the latter situation arose not only would close off media opportunities the protesters' concerns would not be communicated to the wider public, and the police cannot be held accountable for their actions.

7.5.3 Blame for the Anticipation of Violence

The dominant institution response to the statements made by the police and the press were examined in detail to ascertain who was to blame for the anticipation of violence frame. The blame for creating this atmosphere was directed at both the media and the police. The document "Policing of the G20 Protests" cites a *Guardian* article that mentions police predictions that the April 1st protests would be "very violent" and that police were "up for it, and up to it" (Home Affairs Committee 2009:10). The document also quotes Liberal Democrat MP David Howarth who acted as a legal observer on the protests. His evidence to the Home Affairs Committee contains concerns for the "hyping up of the possibility of violence" (Quoted in ibid:10), and unease surrounding the language used by the media and the police as "raising the spectre of major violence" (Quoted in ibid:Ev13). The report goes on to state that the use of binary 'us and them' language by the police only served to "antagonise the most violent elements within the protesters" and these statements "become a self-fulfilling prophecy and they should be avoided in future" (ibid:11). Removing the agency of the protesters to frame their own protests in internet statements was seemingly taken by the media and the police and exaggerated to create a preferred frame. The media resources of the groups involved in the G20 protests were not enough to compete with the police or the preconceptions of the media.

To illustrate this point, Climate Camp submitted evidence to the Joint Committee on Human Rights raising concerns around police statements of impending violence (Joint Committee on Human Rights 2009b:15). This is especially apparent in the oft repeated phrases of 'unprecedented', and claims that The City would be closed down by the protests (ibid:15). The *Guardian* journalist Paul Lewis gave evidence that said the narrative of an anticipation of violence by police and the media is partly due to the public relations practices of the Metropolitan Police:

> … the Met has a really sophisticated press team, they know what they are doing and, when senior officers talk about protesters storming buildings and commandeering posts, they talk about an "unprecedented"—an interesting word which came up again, again and again, and all the senior officers were using that word—level of activity, and they talk about key figures from the 1990s involved in anarchist groups, which we all remember, returning to the fray. (Quoted in Joint Committee on Human Rights 2009b:Ev 4)

The assumption being made in the quote is that the Metropolitan Police were aware of what they were saying and the potential consequences of these statements (ibid:Ev4), and in this respect the police are complicit in the anticipation of violence. Additionally,

Lewis' written evidence to the same committee presented the protesters' view of police statements. The talk of protesters coming out of retirement, and the police and press use of protester slogans from leaflets and websites had provoked amusement amongst groups at how seriously they were being taken (Quoted in ibid:78). In Lewis' opinion the groups "did not appear to pose any serious threat" (Quoted in ibid:78). The criticism of police messages were put to the head of ACPO, Assistant Commissioner Allison when she gave evidence to the committee. She reiterates the discussion of "unprecedented" planning and actions as "aspirational", and that the police had attempted to talk down the prospect of violence in their briefings (Quoted in ibid:Ev 14). Parliamentary observers found that this was not necessarily the case and pointed the blame at both the press and the police:

> "media reports of imminent violence" […] "made clashes more likely" […] "aspects of the media strategy employed by the police prior to the demonstrations may have contributed to escalating expectations of violence." (Quoted in Home Affairs Committee 2009:Ev53)

The police messages were also mentioned in the House of Commons in a debate entitled 'Police Crowd Control' on 12 May 2009. The MP Shaid Malik criticises police statements arguing that they "stressed the risk of violence", but he qualifies the statement that there was talk of the facilitation of peaceful protest (Quoted in House of Commons 2010b). The latter side of this message did not make it into the press at a high enough frequency to balance the reports of violence.

Taking all the official reports together there were three contributing factors to the failures in police communication, and are as follows:

1) Concentration on 'big media'
2) Failure to rebut or counter inaccurate reporting
3) Withdrawal from the media

The first was raised by Jeremy Dear of the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) who suggests the police focused mainly on major media companies, and that press briefings for freelance journalists did not happen (Quoted in Home Affairs Committee 2009:6). The second point is raised by the HMIC who found that the police had failed to provide a significant enough rebuttal to negative reporting (HMIC 2009:33). The final of these three points is closely related to number two and concerns negative press coverage of the police. The lack of an effective rebuttal of negative reports in the HMIC's evidence showed the police withdrawing to a 'bunker' over the course of the

protests, and the press became more reliant on online sources for information (ibid:33). The press consider the police an authoritative source and even though the police do not tell the media what to write police statements are used in the framing of stories. When the police withdrew from the press it removed a major source of information, and opened media opportunities for speculation and alternative sources. By extension, the press coverage of the police operation became more negative after the images of the events around Tomlinson's death were published.

According to the HMIC report media criticism of police tactics caused "frustration" amongst police commanders (ibid:34). Even though there were apparent failings in police communication the Joint Committee on Human Rights still came to the conclusion that blame for the anticipation of violence rested with the media and not the police (Joint Committee on Human Rights 2009b:16). This conclusion is partly based upon the comments of Assistant Commissioner Allison who argues that police briefings are essentially neutral and only provide details of police intelligence:

> … our briefings were designed to say exactly what our intelligence was, and at no time did we try to hype this […] Sadly, the media took it in a particular way and started reporting it in a particular way. (Quoted in Joint Committee on Human Rights 2009b:Ev14)

It is the selective interpretation of the police briefings was used by the press to fit a particular news frame. That is not to say that the police were completely blameless because their intelligence was not wholly accurate, and was based mainly on online protester sources. This demonstrates the dangers of the internet and because of its open access allows the selective interpretations of protest communications.

7.5.4 Dominant Institutional View of the Policing

The final part of this section deals with the opinions of politicians towards the protests and police operation. These two subjects were included in debates in the House of Commons and House of Lords. Before the G20 summit protests the Lords were debating the issues around the summit on the 30th March 2009, and included discussion of City workers to dress down, the potential for violence, and the police operation. At one point in the debate Baroness Miller highlights the negative portrayal of protesters and calls it 'spin' on the younger generation arguing that:

> They are concerned about climate change and financial issues, but they have been called anarchists and it has been implied that they all will be violent, whereas they simply want to protest. (Quoted in House of Lords 2010)

The debates about the language used in relation to the protests focused on the words used to describe the police tactics, and the interchangeable terms of "kettling" and "containment" used to describe the police cordons (House of Commons 2010a). This is cited in a House of Commons debate as "Part of the problem" with regards to communication between protesters and the police (Dismore quoted in ibid). The communication between the police and protesters was seen as a major issue of contention around the police tactics, and this created a different type of political opportunity. The protest tactics of G20Meltdown inadvertently helped to prompt debates about police tactics and the media coverage of mass demonstrations.

The post-G20 reactions of the police and political institutions demonstrate that the press heightened the potential for violence, focused on the violence that occurred, and was unrepresentative of the protest as a whole. Furthermore, the press portrayed the violence as the actions of the majority not a minority of people, and treated the protest as a singular mass. The focus on the spectacle of violence and the dramatic images and words produced is seemingly more newsworthy than downplaying events and highlighting peaceful protest. The impact of the protesters own communications added to this sense of fear as their aspirations and goals were interpreted as being inherently violent.

7.6 G20Meltdown's Reaction to the Media, Political, and Police Responses to Protest

The reaction of G20Meltdown to media coverage, the police operation, and the death of Ian Tomlinson answers question RQ6:

> RQ6. How are media coverage and the response of protest targets fed back into a protest group's choice of communications strategies and protest tactics?

The reaction of G20Meltdown to the events of the G20 protests reveals that the group's goals were not necessarily about media coverage and political opportunities. There is a sense of empowerment for participants at an event with so many like-minded people to demonstrate their sense of grievance. The following quote from Pepper enhances this theme, and argues that the G20 protests were different to previous summit protests:

> This wasn't your average summit hopping event, it was a mass of people expressing their need for a better world who don't know yet quite how to express it. (2009)

In terms of media and protest tactics the reactions of G20Meltdown are found in the information gathered from interviews with activists, and the websites of G20Meltdown. These reactions show that the anticipation of violence in the press should be expected by groups of this type, and that the death of Ian Tomlinson was a big part of the arguments around police tactics.

7.6.1 Protester Reactions to Press Coverage

The media coverage of the protest featured themes of law and order, and the spectacle of protest but this did not tarnish the activists' assessment of the press coverage. They felt that given the circumstance the media treatment of G20Meltdown was fair. The group was aware of media preconceptions of mass demonstration and the themes that the press would focus on. The quotes from activists demonstrate how they viewed their political and media opportunities because they felt that there was pre-existing anger against the banking system in Britain. This is apparent in the following quote where the major theme of press coverage is recognised, but also that the issues under protest were being taken seriously:

> … the press were always going to run away on the violent theme, but I think we represented our intentions and the playfulness part of it fairly well, as well as representing that this was a deeply serious issue even though were trying to treat it quite playfully and that there were an awful lot of very, very angry people. (Power 2010)

The influence of protester communications is evident in this perspective, because the press took G20Meltdown's quotes and aspirations out of context to fit a violence driven theme. The intentions of G20Meltdown is stated by Knight who says there was "no intention what so ever to hurt anybody or hang anybody", but goes further to argue that the press took his statements out of context and removed the intended humour (2010). The following tweet emphasises how mixed the reaction to G20Meltdown's communications were to the press "One minute press are claiming it's gonna be a riot. Then they're on the phone moaning that peaceful revolutionary tea party is not enough" (G20Meltdown 2009p). The perception of the activists interviewed was what media coverage and group messaging given the circumstances was a success. This is taken

from the standpoint that the group's use of humour helped propagate the messages, and that they were fairly represented by the press:

> … that kind of strand of humour the message went out very nicely […] We did not feel that they mishandled us, we actually felt quite well represented by them. With certain exceptions. (Power 2010)

This viewpoint might not have been expected given the media coverage and themes of story that was found, but these opinions come from experienced activists with a long history of involvement in various protests. This situates the media coverage of G20Metldown into the protest context of international summit protests, and the media coverage the G20 protests provoked was expected by the protesters. Working within these constraints meant that any salience the messages gained was deemed a success, and the levels of participation in a demonstration are a clear signal of a major grievance.

7.6.2 Protesters Responses to the Police Operation

The immediate tactical response of G20Meltdown to events and media coverage in the run up to, day of, and aftermath of the G20 protests was through its social network pages. Twitter was used to give initial reactions whereas Facebook and the official G20Meltdown website were utilised to publicise and plan further protests. The following table contains tweets that represent G20Meltdown's immediate and tactical reactions to the police operations, and events on the day of the protests:

Time	**Tweet**
March 19th	
12:54 AM	Conspirators are everywhere....who tells the truth? Which is genuine warning? What scare tactics? Who are these armchair generals? (G20Meltdown 2009e)
March 26th	
12:36 PM	When asked about predictions of violence we say: "We would hope the police can keep their truncheons in their belts, but who knows? (G20Meltdown 2009y)
April 1st	
12:16 PM	We're at the Bank of England. All roads closed. (G20Meltdown 2009v)
3:23 PM	Teabags arrived. Kettle went on. Lovely few cuppas. Billy Bragg singing. Reggae music too. Rozzers now in riot gear: Totally wrong outfits (G20Meltdown 2009u)
3:48 PM	RBS and Bank of England stormed. That's what happens when you kettle people. Riot coppers edging closer. Gulp. (G20Meltdown 2009s)
3:51 PM	In all fairness. cops ARE behaving. Well why wouldn't they be? Did I miss something? G20 leaders take note: we've taken the power back (G20Meltdown 2009k)

3:52 PM	But the coppers ARE edging closer (G20Meltdown 2009c)
4:03 PM	Police horses arriving. And there's us, fresh out of carrots. We're going to put the tea things away. Just in case (G20Meltdown 2009r)
8:47 PM	We have taken the junction of Wormwood and Bishopsgate in solidarity with Climate Camp who are kettled in. Come on down (G20Meltdown 2009w)
April 2nd	
8:45 AM	What's the plan for today? We're feeling radicalised. Let's get up it on it and at 'em (G20Meltdown 2009x)
1:59 PM	100s have gathered outside the Old Exchange at the Bank of England. Come down and join us. Chants of shame on you to the police. Someone ... (G20Meltdown 2009a)
April 8th	
10:53 AM	Momentum gathers apace for silent demo: assemble Bethnal Green Police Station 11.30 Saturday. Events prior to Ian Tomlinson's death vex all (G20Meltdown 2009o)
April 11th	
9:08 AM	#G20 protesters join Ian Tomlinson's family and friends today for a procession and vigil. Media scrum likely. We appeal to police to behave. (G20Meltdown 2009h)

Table 7.6.1 A table showing select tweets from G20Meltdown's Twitter feed

What can be seen from the timeline is that G20Meltdown's responses to the police operation started before the protests began, and were based around reactions to police statements in the press. As the day of protests moved closer the Twitter feed discusses the anticipation of protest violence and directs accusations of potential violence towards the police. On the day of the protest the atmosphere at the Bank of England changes from jovial, to a foreboding of what might happen, and a causality of the disturbances that occurred during the protests. The blame for the disturbances is aimed at the police, and the police operation became an issue for the protesters. The instant comments on Twitter helped to communicate what was happening on the ground during a protest, but it also highlights the perception of the situation from the protesters' perspective. Following the death of Ian Tomlinson the issue of police tactics not only dominated the press coverage but also the communications of G20Meltdown. The immediate tactical reaction was to hold a number of different protests to mark the death of Tomlinson, and protest against police tactics.

The death of Tomlinson came to dominate G20Meltdown's messages and in the opinion of Power the death "just took over the whole message in a lot of ways and that was unavoidable" (2010). This one external event was so serious in nature that it took over protester, media coverage, and police's communications. This was also reflected in the media coverage and G20Meltdown recognised the change in tone of the media following Tomlinson's death. The reframing of the protests from an anticipation of violence and structure of protest into a focus on police tactics meant that more of the

press became sympathetic to the treatment of protesters. Both Power and Knight suggest that the press' view of the police tactics was in line with the opinions of the protesters about the police, and to quote Knight in reference to the media "they were representing what anybody who has been involved in direct action demonstrations for any length of time understands the way that the police treats such protesters" (2010). Power on the other hand states that criticism about police tactics came from more than just the receptive newspapers and suggests that tabloids were also critical of the police (2010). The group's framing of the police operation and the media framing are seen to be in line with each other.

In response to the police tactic of containment Pepper believes this can be built into the protest tactics and used to the protesters' advantage. The protest tactic of blockading, for instance, could be aided by being contained in a specific area to quote Pepper "If we're going to be kettled, let's get kettled in useful places" (2009). The very prospect of the police using containment for G20Meltdown was part of their tactics as Pepper argues "Let the police blockade the roads, much easier than us having to do it" (ibid). Fundamentally the police tactics are "disempowering" for activists, and could potentially deter future participation in protest actions (ibid). This is part of successful action from a protest viewpoint because it is fundamentally the mobilisation of participants in the future.

7.6.3 The Relationship Between Protesters and the Police

The attitude of protest groups towards the police is divided into those who communicate their protest plans with the police, and those who refuse to talk to the police. The police divided these two types of groups into 'notified' and 'un-notified' (HMIC 2009:99-101). The list of 'notified' groups who had informed the police of their demonstrations were Put People First who held a march on the 28th March, and Stop the War Coalition who marched on the 1st April (ibid:101). The 'un-notified' groups include the Four Horseman of the Apocalypse, the Alternative G20 Summit on the April 1st, as well as G20Meltdown's actions planned for the 2nd April (ibid:101). In Power's opinion notifying the police is not what they should do, and is not required because the members of the group are known to the police, and the police know that they are peaceful:

> They kind of know who we are and they have been with us on the street quite a lot of times. They know the score in terms of we are not mindless violent thugs

> or anything. They also know we are kind of good humoured and funny, and that we meant it as well. (2010)

The HMIC report also notes that police intelligence for the 'un-notified' protests came from activist websites and leaflets that are described as "open source materials" in the document (HMIC 2009:101). This illustrates once again the importance of how groups represent themselves and their protest aims online, because these sites are taken and interpreted by press and police. The difference in attitudes towards the police can be a fundamental part of a group's ideology. The aversion to communicating with the police may come from past experiences and the belief that protest does not need police permission. The police on the other hand believe a 'no surprises' approach to public order can only be achieved if protest groups communicate their intentions to the police. Although, a 'mutual distrust' exists between police and protesters and is described as follows:

> Mutual distrust was apparent and the police and protesters seemed to have different expectations of what the dialogue should be about and how it should proceed. (Joint Committee on Human Rights 2009b:8)

Distrust of the police is unlikely to dissipate because of the very nature of a group's confrontational protest tactics. For instance, if a group is planning on carrying out illegal direct action, or the police want to 'facilitate peaceful protest', but the police and protester definitions of 'peaceful protest' is at odds before protests begin.

7.7 Conclusion

The death of a bystander was the overriding theme in the aftermath of the G20 protests, and became its lasting memory. It also shaped the responses to the protest by dominant institutions. However, it was not just the death of Ian Tomlinson that drew attention to police tactics; there were other allegations of police violence prompting further debate around police tactics. The build up to the protests was completely different, because the media and police focus was on historical protests and interpretations of protester communications. The protest tactics, media context, and perception of the protester's aims created a dominant frame that was difficult for G20Meltdown to overcome. It led to contradictory reporting where activists were portrayed as both visible and invisible, and had violent intentions. More importantly, given the pre-framing of the protest G20Meltdown recognised that within this particular media context they were fairly represented. This demonstrates that the group's

perception of media and political opportunities, and what constitutes successful protest is dependent upon what protesters were trying to achieve.

Section 3: Comparison and Conclusion

Chapter 8 – Comparison – Similarities and Differences Between the Groups

The aim of this chapter is to detail the similarities and differences between each group in answer to the six RQs. This is to provide a lead into the final chapter, the conclusion, and the importance of the research to the wider academic field. Before taking each question in turn a brief summary of each protest group's tactics and issues of contention are as follows. The Save the Vulcan campaign wanted to protect something that pre-exists namely the Vulcan pub. They used non-confrontational protest tactics and a close relationship with the local media to achieve their protest goals. Plane Stupid aimed to connect aviation expansion with climate change. This occurred against a political backdrop of a governmental policy that had been decided, but not instigated. The group utilised non-violent direct action to create media opportunities and prompt people to take an opinion on the issues. The final group was G20Meltdown and their actions against the G20 summit in London. The group were attempting to exploit media and public attention on the banking crisis, and the MPs' expenses scandal. They used the issues of war, climate change, financial crimes and land borders, and these were all connected together by the overarching issue of capitalism. In doing so G20Meltdown was opposed to a pre-existing system of economics, and was using a mass demonstration with a direct action element to signal their grievance, and present alternatives to capitalism.

8.1 Issue by Issue Opportunities

What was been explored in chapters 5 to 7 demonstrated the varying levels of political and media opportunities available to each group and in relation to RQ1 below:

> RQ1. How do protest groups create, identify, and exploit political and media opportunities?

It is clear from the three case studies that political and media opportunities do not have to pre-exist for a protest group to gain prominence for themselves or their grievances. The protest actions of the groups helped raise the profile of the issues and prompted people to debate and form an opinion on the issues. That is the media, dominant institutions, and the public. The groups focused media attention on an issue and increased its visibility in the public domain and made the issues difficult to ignore. This section presents a summary of the positive and negative media representations, press and political support, and the possibility of a group achieving new advantages to aid

their political goals. The new advantages referred to here are the addressing of an issue by dominant institutions (Gamson 1990:28-29).

Taking each group individually, and starting with the Save the Vulcan campaign, they had a very receptive and supportive local news outlet. The local paper's support and regular articles helped in maintaining attention on the Vulcan pub across the lifespan of the campaign. The Vulcan group gained political insider status through the political relationships of key campaign members. This drew politicians to the issue and aided in increasing the Vulcan's profile in the local media. Their political insider status ensured an open political opportunity which was exploited to its fullest, and it stayed open for longer due to political and media attention. These combined factors meant that there was a distinct possibility that the Save the Vulcan campaign would realistically achieve its goals and save the Vulcan pub.

Plane Stupid on the other hand was able to use direct action and direct intervention to generate a lot of media coverage. The media's opinion about Plane Stupid was split between disagreeing with the protest tactics, and acknowledging the issues around aviation expansion. With respect to Heathrow Airport there was the political will to scrap the third runway. The two opposition parties were opposed to the third runway, and so were several members of the Labour cabinet. The disagreements between political decision makers offered a gap in the arguments for Plane Stupid to highlight discrepancies in the government's arguments and policies. Aside from Heathrow, the results of Plane Stupid's other campaigns have been mixed. The expansion of Stansted Airport was scrapped, but Aberdeen Airport is set to be expanded (Anon 2010a, 2010b). The aim of Plane Stupid's direct actions was to use a small crime to stop the larger crime of climate change. This was shown in the Climate 9 trial that followed the occupation of the runway at Aberdeen Airport (Climate 9 2011). It meant that debate about climate change would be heard in a court of law, and to quote Gifford this was a Scottish first because it was "the first time that climate science was heard in evidence in court, it was a really big stepping stone" (2010). This meant that the court appearances of activists were used as another arena for their arguments.

The third and final group G20Meltdown was situated in the protest context of historical international summit protests, and particularly protests that ended in violence. The press is traditionally hostile to G20Meltdown's style of mass demonstration and the reporting fell into the usual themes of fear and an anticipation of violence. The issues under protest lacked further context and were only discussed superficially. There is a

political reluctance to address the issues pressed by G20Meltdown particularly anti-capitalism. These two points taken together meant that the negativity towards the demonstration and the issues meant it was difficult for G20Meltdown to have the issues addressed. This interpretation of G20Meltdown only looks at half of the story. If the success and failure of G20Meltdown is viewed from the perspective of the activists involved the media and political opportunities afforded to the group left them feeling like they were fairly represented, and were able to get their messages across.

8.2 Protester Framing of the Issues

The collective action frames of each group relate to RQ2, and the construction of each groups' messages:

> RQ2. How does a protest group frame their media and political opportunities, messages, goals, and protest actions?

These include the issues at the centre of each campaign, the construction and membership of each group, and the choice of protest tactics used to promote these messages. Taking the first point about the issues under protest, and it is these issues that are fundamental to a group's presentation. This permeates everything a group does and is evident in the names of each group which relate directly to the issues i.e. Save the Vulcan, Plane Stupid and G20Meltdown. Although, for each of these names further knowledge is required to fully understand the issues involved. The naming of each group is very similar to other high profile campaigns, for instance Make Poverty History and Earth First! (Sireau 2009; Wall 1999). The naming of groups in this way helps to create a master frame, and makes their name a message carrier. It was the overall narrative of the messaging that was most important to each group, and the narrative was maintained in similar ways. The protest tactics of each group acted as a message carrier, and every action brought the focus back to the underlying issues.

The Save the Vulcan group were campaigning on a practically single issue basis, and on a distinctly local basis. The campaign did bring issues of city development, social and economic history, and the wider problem of pubs closing throughout Britain into their arguments. The overriding issue was the protection of the Vulcan building, and this provided an entry point into other issues. There were no other groups campaigning to save this particular pub thereby reducing the competition for resources and media attention, but the Vulcan campaign would have been in competition with other issues

and diverse protest groups. The Save the Vulcan group was the most authoritative group speaking on the issue of the Vulcan, because of its political connections and media standing it did not need to use confrontational protest tactics. The Brains protest case studied in section 5.3 demonstrated that the implicit threat of mass protest was enough to gain new advantages and influence stakeholders. The political support the Vulcan had influenced the protest tactics because more radical tactics might have alienated their supporters, and the campaigns moderate approach significantly played to its advantage.

Plane Stupid had a local and national focus and used their network of activists across Britain to work with local groups and communities to aid in campaigning against airport expansion. This tactic was mixed with direct action that helped build a high media presence, and fully exploited the media and political opportunity available to them. The group managed to connect local concerns to a national issue, and by extension the international issue of climate change. Plane Stupid's protest actions were used to open media opportunities to carry the message of their campaign, and their use of direct action was practically unique amongst the groups protesting against aviation expansion. In this respect Plane Stupid represented the point to a radical wedge and used direct action as leverage to open media opportunities and present more radical messages. They were able to open media opportunities for other groups by pushing at the radical edges of the debate the more moderate groups could present their arguments.

In comparison to Save the Vulcan and Plane Stupid campaigns, G20Meltdown concentrated on four issues connected to the international monetary system of capitalism. The structure of G20Meltown was as an umbrella network of different groups, and this meant that there was a lot of competition for media attention, and internal struggles over media strategy and group identity. The choice by Climate Camp to keep its protest identified as Climate Camp and not G20Meltdown made these two G20 protest actions look like separate protests. This is a major disadvantage of mass demonstration because when a variety of different groups are present they are all pushing their own message. This creates a lot of 'noise' around the issues, which in turn makes it difficult for the media to focus on a particular issue. Getting through the static produced by the sheer amount of messages around an event makes it difficult for any one group to get their arguments into the media. The level of control a protest group exerts over the messages has an important part to play in the saliency of the issues. This is dependent on a group's media strategy and for G20Meltdown theirs was to allow anyone to speak, and on any issue.

8.2.1 Image and Message Control

The exertion of control over the messaging has a lot to do with the protest tactics employed, and a group's attitude towards media strategies. This is where the biggest differences between the three groups studied appear. The Vulcan campaign utilised the most non-confrontational protest tactics they shared a similar attitude towards the media as Plane Stupid. Both groups believed that having a simple and consistent message was paramount to achieving their goals. They believed clarity of the messaging was central to getting the message across to the public and political decision makers. The control over the message factored into their approaches to the media, and the Vulcan group would only allow certain members to talk to the press. This meant that only members who were comfortable and experienced at talking to the media would speak to the press. The simple message of 'save the Vulcan' meant it was easier to maintain a constant narrative with respect to the issue. Plane Stupid on the other hand used direct action to carry the message using the spectacular nature of the tactic to attract media coverage. Then, once the press were covering Plane Stupid's actions activists would give interviews to the press and push the campaign's messages. In this instance direct action acts as a 'Trojan horse' for the messages, because the tactic attracts media coverage, and when they are interviewed by the media the activists emphasise the messages.

In comparison to Save the Vulcan and Plane Stupid's controlled approach to messaging and spokespeople, G20Meltdown took a different tactic. Their aim was to let everyone who spoke to the press to be their own spokesperson and is arguably a more democratic approach to messaging. There was no defined media strategy and there was no intention to create one. To quote Pepper a media strategy was secondary to G20Meltdown as they "did not take an attitude of we must sit down and sort out our media strategy" (2009). The fundamental basis of this type of strategy is the trust activists have for each other, and that the people involved in the process would know what to say when approached by the media. This does leave a group's messages lacking consistency, and with so many groups as part of the network these messages were in competition with each other. G20Meltdown's decision to do this was in contrast to Climate Camp who follow the Plane Stupid model of message control (Climate Camp for Action 2010). The Climate Camp's wish to maintain its individual identity instead of G20Meltdwon created competition over media attention, and there was not a consistent branding of the protest. When a group retains its identity on a mass demonstration it gives the impression of a slightly fragmented movement where different groups are not under one banner. The consequence of this fragmentation and

a lack of defined messages led to figureheads being attributed to G20Meltdown by the media, and these figureheads were the most open and charismatic activists who spoke to the press became figureheads.

8.3 Cost-Benefit Analysis of Protest

This section of the chapter concerns the core planning of protest groups and the choice of one media and protest tactic over another in answer to RQ3 below:

> RQ3. What decisions and negotiations go into the choice of communications strategies and protest tactics?

The arguments behind the protest targets and tactics utilised is based upon the potential positive outcomes of a protest tactic weighed against the possible negatives. These positives and negatives include media coverage, dangers to the public and activists, the reaction of dominant institutions, and the prospect of a custodial sentence. This equates to a cost-benefit analysis approach to protest, and demonstrates that the different protest tactics used are part of a groups aims, and influences the success and failure of a group. The three groups varied in the protest tactics they employed even though they shared some ideas with respect to media strategy. The Save the Vulcan campaign was the least confrontational of the three groups and did not resort to direct action. The one protest they did hold was constructed as a photo opportunity rather than an oppositional demonstration, and it was staged outside the National Assembly for Wales' Senedd building and attended by supporters and AMs. It was planned to coincide to the hand in of the Save the Vulcan petition to the National Assembly for Wales' petitions committee (O'Connor 2009:7).

The measured approach taken by the Vulcan campaign was due, in part, to the nature of the group's supporters. This included the wide range of people who used the pub, from students to older members of the community, and this kind of constituency would not have responded as well to more confrontational tactics. If the group had resorted to direct action this might have had a negative impact on the sympathies and size of support for the campaign. That is not to say that the Save the Vulcan group would not have been tactically more aggressive. What was shown in the two Brains protest case studies is that the only reasons these protests were cancelled was because the threat of protest exerted enough pressure to cause Brains to act. If the pub had come under imminent and serious threat of demolition the members of the Vulcan campaign could

have become more confrontational. The AM Jenny Randerson was quoted as saying "we'll chain ourselves to the pumps if we have to" (Quoted in McCarthy 2009e:2). This was possibly said in jest, but the fact remains that the Vulcan campaign could have become more confrontational if the group felt it was needed. This contrasts directly with the more confrontational and aggressive approaches of Plane Stupid and G20Meltdown.

The position of Plane Stupid in the collection of groups opposing aviation expansion, especially at Heathrow was that they were extraordinary in their tactical approach. They were one of the only groups protesting on this issue to carry out direct action, and their decision-making process was detailed by Murray:

> … first thing that we do is someone would suggest an idea and then we would bash it around. We did loads of R and D where we would come up with ideas for things and then discuss their viability and efficacy. (2010)

This shows that a number of different variables were taken into account before an action was carried out. Plane Stupid considered public safety, the safety of activists, the logistics of an action, the demographics of the activists involved, the possible criminal sentences for activists, and the potential media coverage stemming from direct action. The importance of these variables to the messages is detailed by Gifford who said "all of these things are taken into consideration when you are trying to convey a narrative" (2010). Murray puts the goal of protest actions more succinctly as "Do we get enough out of this for what it is going to cost us?" (2010). The significance and emphasis on media coverage by Plane Stupid is summarised by Glass as "Before we do an action we try to visualise what the front page of the newspaper will be" (2011). This media centric view was coupled with tactical timing and exemplifies Plane Stupid's protest entrepreneurialism. Their direct actions were often timed to coincide with other events, and these events were used as a protest opportunity, and often related directly to government policy and climate change.

The occupation of the roof of the House of Commons, for example, coincided with the end of the government's consultation into the expansion of Heathrow Airport, and at the same time as Prime Minister's questions (Plane Stupid 2008b). This can be described as planned opportunism. The effective use of timing by Plane Stupid was to exploit media attention and maximise the impact of protest. This is in keeping with cost-benefit analysis because Plane Stupid's actions were based on what they could achieve with the resources available to them. The aim of their direct actions was to manipulate the

conventions of the media by using an event based tactic to gain media attention, expose an issue, and prompt people to take a position on the issue. They attempted to build a thematic and salient narrative across their actions through the use of consistent messaging and tactics.

G20Meltdown were similar to Plane Stupid in that they were the radical edge to the G20 protests. The G20 protests attracted lots of different groups expressing varying concerns and in some ways the variety of groups distracted and competed with G20Meltdown. The largest of which was a coalition of trade unions and charities Put People First who held their demonstration on the 28th March before G20Meltdown's action on the 1st April, and they protested on similar issues such as jobs, social justice, and climate change (Put People First 2009). The day of G20Meltdown's protest Climate Camp demonstrated outside the European Climate Exchange in London, but Climate Camp maintained their individual identity and did not protest under the name G20Meltdown. The different identities of these various groups meant a division of resources and media attention. This is especially prevalent when comparing the two different coalitions, Put People First and G20Meltdown, who protested against the same target but on different days. This made the events surrounding the G20 protests appear more fragmented.

The aims and goals of G20Meltdown did not necessarily include a cost-benefit analysis. In G20Meltdown's opinion they were "the only thing in town", and this asserts that if G20Meltdown had not protested there would have been no oppositional protests to the G20 (Power 2010). The aim of G20Meltdown's protest tactics was an attempt to be tactically different to previous summit demonstrations. Their planned protest was to be 'more than just a march' which Pepper argued was to move G20Meltdown away from previous demonstrations to "get us away from boring A-B marching on the one hand, and Molotov lobbing on the other" (2009). This different approach to mass demonstration fed into the media strategy where the importance of media coverage was less of a consideration compared to the Save the Vulcan and Plane Stupid campaigns. G20Meltdown took a reactive attitude towards the media where the press would come to the group and report the protest action rather than G20Meltdown actively approaching the press to generate media coverage. This is what Power talks of as "the media riding our coattails" (2010).

The Save the Vulcan group and Plane Stupid were structured differently to G20Meltdown. They consisted of a small number of dedicated activists compared to

G20Meltdown's large network of groups. The relative size of a group impacts on the organisation of protest events, and this makes it exponentially more difficult to control the direction of a protest when the number of people involved increases. There is an important difference between the Save the Vulcan campaign, Plane Stupid, and G20Meltdown, which is based on circumstance and timing. The Save the Vulcan and Plane Stupid campaigns worked over a much longer period of time and could shift and adapt their protest targets and tactics over the course of their campaigns. G20Meltdown worked to a set deadline of the opening of the G20 summit. The timing of each groups' protest had an impact on the press coverage and the lasting images of each campaign in several different ways, and will now be detailed.

8.4 The Lasting Images of Each Campaign

The similarities and differences between the groups in terms of media coverage relate to RQ4 and can be seen in the imagery that came to represent each group.

> RQ4. How does the media frame protest groups in response to their messages, goals and protest actions?

The protest tactics employed by the protest groups had a major impact on how they were reported, and these tactics ranged from non-confrontational to very antagonistic tactics. The actions of the group become a press focus the more aggressive the tactics are perceived to be. It is evident that non-confrontational tactics result in a greater amount of detail being given to the issues. The use of direct action attracts a lot of media coverage, which focused on the protest tactics and the activists who carried it out. The protests are reported on episodically, and the issues take a secondary priority in media coverage.

This is the general impression but it does not tell the whole story. Taking each group in turn the Save the Vulcan campaign was symbolised in the press by the pub, its landlady, and the pub's sign which were the lasting images of the campaign (McCarthy 2009b:9; Lewis 2009d:11). The Vulcan campaign was helped in maintaining its media profile by its simple message and the group's good media and political relationships. This meant that the smallest of the three groups, with the fewest resources was successful in getting its message across. The importance this media coverage played in the campaign was emphasised by Wilton who stressed the value of positive press "we wouldn't have achieved what we did without the Echo" (2010). On the other hand,

a failure to manage the press will inevitably lead to negative coverage, and Wilton's argument places media relations into the context of press conventions:

> You have to accept that they are not there to represent you and that you have to work with them, to manage them and if you fail to do that you have to accept that some of the stories will be negative. (2010)

The significance of negative and positive media coverage is particularly important to how a protest group tactically reacts. These responses include rebutting negative coverage or capitalising on positive reporting and exploiting media opportunities. The lasting images of the Vulcan are in stark contrast to the more tactically confrontational groups Plane Stupid and G20Meltdown. The media coverage and imagery of Plane Stupid was typified by images of activists and their protest tactics (Knight 2008:65; Scott 2008:4). The media focus was on the agents of protest rather than the targets of protest. The targets of each action were implicitly linked to the underlying issues, and importantly the tactics maintained media interest no matter how thematic or episodic the press coverage. The group's innate media awareness and highly controlled messaging helped keep the issue of aviation expansion high on the media agenda and by extension the political agenda. Plane Stupid's campaign opened up media opportunities for other less radical groups to enter the debates and campaign on the issues.

The mainstream political opposition to the expansion of Heathrow was undoubtedly helpful in gaining press support for the issues. The protest tactics offered something different for the press to cover, because Plane Stupid was one of the only direct action groups working on this particular issue. There was a media fascination with spectacular actions and the activists who carried them out, and this was part of the reason why Plane Stupid used direct action. This tactic feeds the press convention of treating protests as isolated events, but Plane Stupid's media awareness meant that in interviews they would always bring media coverage back to the underlying narrative. In creating this narrative Plane Stupid and G20Meltdown shared a trait by using humour in their actions, and the use of humour can temper the press' perspective of a confrontational action. Kerr refers to Plane Stupid's actions in a more theatrical than protest context "not doing anything too militant, or too actiony, and make going down the route of street theatre and public theatre that kind of thing" (2010).

The term 'militant' was applied to G20Meltdown by the press, and their wish to be more confrontational than Put People First, and ensure the G20 protests were "not just

marching from A to B but converging on a target" (Knight 2010). This meant that G20Meltdown was reported in similar ways to Plane Stupid as in the people who featured most often in news reports were the 'faces' of the campaign. They were the people who were most open with the press and spoke to the media at a highest frequency. The language used by the more prominent members of G20Meltdown was meant as humorous, but they were taken seriously by the press. A point that is acknowledged by Knight, and he also criticised the media portrayal of him as a leader. He argues that there is a very unrealistic element to the evil mastermind frame when a disparity of groups is concerned:

> The idea that you can wave a magic stick and have an army behind you, as an anarchist it's just ludicrous that it would ever happen like that. The media did portray me as the evil mastermind of it all. (2010)

In addition, the media coverage after the protests was focused on the protests and not the issues following the protest. Scenes of violence, property damage, and clashes between protesters and police dominated the images in the press. The issues were a secondary concern as the spectacle of protest took priority in the coverage. This was compounded by the amount of groups present and the high number of issues under protest. This meant that there was competition for media attention and gave little for the press to focus on. This left the press referring to the protesters with catch all phrases such as 'anarchists' and 'anti-capitalist'. The press is traditionally hostile to this type of demonstration and uses historical disruptive protest to give a demonstration context. The pre-framing of demonstrations like the G20 protests is difficult for protest groups to overcome. One such example from *The Sun* is printed on the front page with two contrasting images with an image of violent protesters contrasted with an image of American President Barak Obama meeting the Queen accompanied by the headline "We are not all like them Mr President" (Pascoe-Watson 2009:1). This type of language separated the protesters from the general public and makes them appear threatening.

The choice to use direct action tactics by Plane Stupid and G20Meltdown were similar, but the nature of their protest actions was very different. Plane Stupid's actions used small groups of people while G20Meltdown used a demonstration of thousands. Equally, the actions of the protesters were a focal point of the press coverage. However, there is a major difference between these two groups, and it concerns the timing of the protest actions. Plane Stupid's actions were secretive by nature except for the occasions that a friendly journalist was taken on a protest. On the whole prior knowledge of Plane Stupid's actions was information that only the activists carrying out

the action knew. This form of direct action has the surprise element to it and does not give the media much time to react. In this respect it makes it easier for the protesters on an action to put across their views and publicise the issues. Plane Stupid gave the press something different to previous direct action groups, and the activists provided considerable fascination to the press. The activists attempted to dispel old stereotypes, but in doing so created new stereotypes for the press to label activists. These stereotypes distract from the issues and attempts to sidetrack the protester's concerns. On the other hand, the location of the G20 summit and, by extension, the date of the G20 protests was known long in advance. The protesters' communications were used to publicise events, but this information was subsequently reproduced by the media.

The long build up allowed press and police to create an atmosphere of fear, and placed the anticipation of violence at the forefront of reports. The media highlighted the statements of the police that warned of disruptive protests, and this was the dominant media frame until the circumstances around the death of Ian Tomlinson became clear. The police statements in the press were coupled with protester communications taken out of context and this made it easier for the press to emphasise an anticipation of violence. The length of time from the printing of the police statement in the *Guardian* before the protests took place meant there was a month with no protests taking place. The press reporting of the upcoming G20 protests needed information to report on, and as this research has shown this information was drawn from police and protester communications. This length of time before the protests was used in such a way by the press that mass disruption and talk of violence was the dominant framing of the G20 protests. The possibility of violence and the theatre of protest were more newsworthy than contextualising the issues behind the G20 protests. The diverse protest tactics used by these three protest groups shows the differing reactions of the press towards a range of protest tactics. The more confrontational a protest tactic appears the greater media attention it will garner, but the tactics became the focus not the issues.

8.5 The Dominant Institutional Reaction to the Protest Groups

The dominant institutional responses to each of the protest groups varies from campaign to campaign in relation to RQ5, and corresponds to the level of confrontation used in each group's protest tactics.

> RQ5. What is the response of dominant institutions to a protest group's communications strategies and protest tactics?

The response of dominant institutions towards each campaign is guided by the political and media opportunities of each group and their protest tactics. This includes the selection of protest targets and the media coverage they generated. The Save the Vulcan campaign was tactically non-confrontational and measured in its approach. This was complemented by their political insider status and support of the press meant that there was a near total acceptance of the issues promoted by Save the Vulcan campaign. The targeting of pressure towards politicians, the brewer, and by extension the media was because the owner of the Vulcan was immune to negative publicity and difficult to contact directly. The Vulcan group was reliant on pressurising the developer through their reference publics, and the developer's sensitivity towards politicians and the brewer were part of the protest tactics. The brewer was particularly sensitive to negative public relations and press reports, and this made them more of a viable target in terms of media and political opportunities. The Save the Vulcan campaign became a political bandwagon and fashionable for politicians and celebrities to support. This led to a number of celebrities allying themselves with the campaign. The attraction of the issue to celebrities led Thomas to question the motivations of high profile supporters:

> You have to ask questions about celebrities where does their support lie? Are they just trying to get a little bit in the press? Get their name in the newspaper or are they really supportive? (2011)

The reservations the group had over alliances with celebrities and politicians was allayed by the impact the support of high profile people had on helping make the pub famous. The Save the Vulcan campaign and produced new advantages through a combination of a measured tactical approach and the successful exploitation of media and political opportunities.

In comparison to the Save the Vulcan campaign, the dominant institutional reaction to Plane Stupid and G20Meltdown was a lot more varied. The political reactions towards Plane Stupid were mixed, because while their issues were recognised by some mainstream political parties their tactics were seen as undemocratic and overly confrontational. The irony is that the fundamental aim of Plane Stupid's direct actions was to prompt people to take a political position on airport expansion. The Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties came out in opposition to a third runway at Heathrow. The media did the same and took a position against the expansion of Heathrow Airport. The resistance of the two main opposition parties to government policy arguably showed how political and media opportunities feed off each other. The more media attention the issue receives the greater political salience it has, and in turn

signals to politicians that an issue is worth taking an opinion on. It exemplifies how gaps in the arguments around an issue at the highest levels of government are highlighted by effective protest and media tactics.

G20Meltdown experienced hostility from the press, and ambivalence from mainstream politics to their protests and messages. The images and anticipation of violence built in the press meant that it was extremely difficult for G20Meltdown to have their issues highlighted in detail. This was not necessarily the aim of their protest, because their goal was to offer alternatives to the current system of economics and governance. Moreover, in the interview with Knight he talked about violence at a protest as a sign of weakness:

> The more violence that there is the less successful we are because any kind of violence is proof that we don't have the kind of support which we've needed to have to do it in any kind of powerful way. (2010)

The weaknesses referred to in the quote create a metaphorical line radical protest can cross, and is signalled by violence. When a protest descends into clashes with the police and property damage the arguments behind a demonstration are lost, and the theme directs political and media attention away from the issues. In the case of G20Meltdown the press saw the violence that occurred as a prophecy fulfilled and validated their predictions of violence. Protesters are set apart from the rest of society, and the minority who caused disruption came to represent the entire protest. In addition, the police response to both Plane Stupid and G20Meltdown was repressive. That is either by the attempted infiltration of Plane Stupid or the kettling of G20Meltdown's demonstration. The press portrayal of G20Meltdown was equally repressive and included the protests in order to exclude them from the arguments. Politically contentious expressions of this nature are seen as entities that need to be stopped or undermined, and this perception is based on the proponents of direct action, or the preconception of mass demonstrations becoming inevitably violent.

8.6 Reacting to Dominant Institution and Media Responses

The media coverage of protest groups and the reactions of dominant institutions to media and protest tactics create a feedback loop that influences a protest group's future actions. The reactions of protest groups to dominant institutional responses is fundamental to answering RQ6, but this section will also assess what each group considered success and failure with respect to their media and protest tactics.

> RQ6. How are media coverage and the response of protest targets fed back into a protest group's choice of communications strategies and protest tactics?

First, the issue focus of each group should be taken into account as it had a direct influence on the messages, and the media coverage. The Save the Vulcan campaign had a very narrow focused on protecting the Vulcan building and was situated in a specific region of the country. Plane Stupid mixed the international issue of climate change with local campaigning around specific airports. Finally, G20Meltdown was primarily concerned with capitalism but protested on a wide range of issues. The narrower the scope of the issue the easier it is to keep a tight control on the message, and the discipline required to control the message is an active consideration of some protest groups. The members of the Save the Vulcan campaign recognised the potential advantages and pitfalls of using the press to promote the group's messages. In Wilton's opinion the media tends to over exaggerate stories regardless of whether or not a story is positive or negative:

> When you are on the front foot doing the stories, some of our stories were over stated, when we were doing the positive stuff and you have to accept that when the negative stuff comes that will also be over inflated. (2010)

This perception reinforces the need for protest groups to maintain control over their messages because the press tends to accentuate the positive and negative aspects of a story. It is difficult enough for a campaign group to just get its message into the media; achieving positive press is even more difficult. This sentiment is echoed by Thomas who mentions the impact of having people allying themselves to a campaign has on the messages. A political bandwagon and external contributors can be dangerous because the press likes good sound bites, as Thomas comments "I don't know how you stop that either because if someone says something good the press are going to print it" (2011). The potential for message interference is a constant danger of the successful exploitation of media opportunities.

The other advantages created by the Save the Vulcan campaign are much less measurable. The first concerns extended impact of the campaign on participation and motivation. Thomas saw the campaign as having an empowering effect over supporters of the Vulcan campaign. The group was able to raise the expectations of successful protest, and demonstrate to supporters that it is possible to create political

change. The signalling to supporters that protest can be successful Thomas says is an important side effect of protest:

> I don't think they had the knowledge that people can change things or stop things happening. I don't think they knew that you could have your say, that you could make a noise about it. (2011)

In this respect protest groups are more than just their media and protest tactics; they are educational in the sense that the Save the Vulcan campaign showed others what protest action could achieve. Despite the new advantages the Save the Vulcan campaign achieved there was a sense from Wilton that the political opportunity was not exploited enough. Talking about the rules surrounding listed buildings in Wales he argues that "there was a window to change the criteria and get it listed and I think we haven't exploited that window" (2010). Furthermore, Wilton sees this as a potential failure of the campaign to not take full advantage of the political opportunity open to the group "we regrettably missed something and we probably could have done more" (ibid). That is not to say that the campaign would not receive the same amount of support if the Vulcan campaign needed to mobilise again, as Craig says "there will still be enough people to do something about it or at least make a bit of noise about it" (2010).

The reflections of the activists in Plane Stupid towards the mainstream media and the use of direct action are heavily orientated around a reliance on the media and justifying the tactics. In the interview with Murray, for instance Plane Stupid as "heavily, heavily reliant" on the mainstream media, but explains this reliance as a matter of resources or lack thereof (2010). He states that "we had almost no money at all and there were only a few of us" (ibid). This underlines the importance of the press beyond publicising a group. Getting media coverage, as with the Save the Vulcan campaign makes a lack of resources less problematic. Obtaining publicity also gives the impression of a group that has far more resources than they might have in reality. In some senses the tactical decisions of Plane Stupid is a result of a lack of resources, but direct action is not something activists spontaneously decide to do without prior planning, and is part of the group's ethos and identity.

Plane Stupid's use of direct action and its expressed connection to the issues meant the justification for direct action is not just the ends justifying the means. Similarly, and in keeping with the creation of a narrative Murray described what 'ends' and 'means' meant to Plane Stupid:

> I believe the ends are as important as the means. I believe means are as important as ends, which is why direct action is so fundamental to keeping it peaceful and not harming or endangering anybody. (2010)

Moreover, Plane Stupid's use of direct action and media friendly approach is not something necessarily accepted by all environmental groups, as Gifford argued other groups in the environmental movement disapproved of stunts that do not physically stop carbon emissions (2010). The occupation of the roof of the House of Commons is an example of this. Kerr saw what Plane Stupid was as maintaining its unique selling point and by extension it appealed to the press because the group "set itself apart from what is seen as wishy washy environmentalists" (2010). The general impression gathered from the interviews is that Plane Stupid activists fundamentally believed in what they were doing and the expressed goal was to create political debate. It did not matter if the tone of the news coverage was negative or positive, as Gifford states "even bad press generates dialogue" (2010). This part of the group's strategy meant that their own popularity with the press was not a consideration. Gifford's opinion about popularity was "I don't expect to be liked for what we do", because it is more important "to come out having made a valid point" (ibid). The issues and arguments were more important than being popular and accepted.

The point about likability is expressed by Murray who says "running a direct action campaign is not a popularity contest" (2010). This comment was made in relation to Murray's opinion of Plane Stupid's media coverage. It followed a discussion of the influence Tamsin Omond had on the representation of Plane Stupid, and illustrates that by not adhering to a carefully planned media strategy distracts the press from the issues. It created a figurehead to represent Plane Stupid, and in Murray's opinion Omond's background became the frame with which "people understood our motivations" and had an impact on messages (ibid). She was a contributing factor in the 'posh protesters' narrative in the press and this opened up Plane Stupid to criticism, which Murray argues "was terribly helpful for people who had been thinking of ways to discredit us" (ibid). The effectiveness of Plane Stupid's media and protest tactics was heavily predicated upon all the activists within the group adhering to the strict consensus led control on the messaging.

In comparison, G20Meltdown demonstrate another approach to an open media strategy where every activist involved in a protest can speak to the press. The rationale behind their decision to be open with the media will now be detailed. According to

Knight a complete aversion to the media isolates a protest group in “a ghetto of complete apathy and inactivity” (2010). G20Meltdown did not actively put the media at the centre of their tactical approach unlike the Save the Vulcan and Plane Stupid campaigns. Their approach was to attract the press with the prospect of a mass demonstration and the media will come to G20Meltdown. To quote Power:

> … we did not take an attitude of we must sit down and sort out our media strategy […] we were expecting the media to follow our coat tails, and we didn’t stop and think that much about plotting media strategy (2010)

Their choice about spokespeople would also match this statement and equal their spontaneity. The overriding opinion being that the issues at the heart of a campaign are more important than a media strategy, and the more an issue is highlighted in the press the more the public will come around to a group’s thinking. The focus should then be placed on the “why and how” activists see the world and want to change it, and a more impulsive media strategy is successful in “keep them guessing” (Pepper 2009). Them in this case is the mainstream media, and G20Meltdown wanted to take a lack of leaders and use it to their own advantage by “pile in and tell the media if you want leaders I’m the leader, I’m the leader, we’re all doing it like the Spartacus thing” (Knight 2010). The activists within G20Meltdown took this approach because they felt that they trusted the abilities of other activists involved to speak to the media effectively. It is this discrepancy between media strategies and who speaks to the press that led Knight to comment on a perceived lack of coverage for Climate Camp who did use tight message control and spokespeople:

> The press wanted to hear real people speaking their minds so we made no attempt whatever to train up our comrades with look-a-like sound bites.
>
> Media training, you get little sound bites and of course what happened was the media ignored them. They weren’t interested. (2010)

This view of sound bites is not necessarily supported by the data. Moreover, the words in Knight’s media statements were turned into sound bites by the press, and the more outspoken activists of G20Meltdown were turned into spokespeople. The desire of G20Meltdown to be more democratic and freely spoken was countered by the press who created leaders and sound bites.

8.7 Conclusion

The similarities and differences between the protest groups demonstrate the influence that the issues had on the choice of media and protest tactics. The media and political opportunities afforded to each group were partially dependent on their goals, and their attitude towards the media and dominant institutions. If a group requires dominant institutions to implement change then attaining political insider status will aid in creating and opening political opportunities. Outside of dominant institutional arguments the consideration of political opportunities is less apparent for a protest group and is arguably less important. Here the signalling of a grievance is more a demonstration of strength and an appeal to the public. The protest tactics that stem from the issues are intended to bring attention to an issue and move the debate towards a protest group's arguments. The execution of these tactics differs depending on a group's attitude towards the media, and the cost-benefit of carrying out certain protest actions over others. The reaction of dominant institutions to these attempts at pressure ranges from acceptance, co-optation, repression, and ignorance depending upon the prevailing political opportunity at the time. This causes media and political opportunities to vary, and requires groups to be reactive in order to maintain media and political traction. It must not be forgotten that the choice of media and protest tactics is predicated upon a protest group's aims and goals. These are shaped and guided by political and media opportunities. The next chapter of the thesis situates the discussions into the wider academic debates and how they move the arguments around media and political opportunities forward.

Chapter 9 - Conclusion

The main aim of the thesis was to understand the choice to use different media and protest tactics by three specified protest groups, and the different outcomes that these choices provoke. To guide the analysis the theory of political opportunities was used to assess the relative success and failure of protest group's media strategies and protest tactics. This thesis identified a gap in the theory of political opportunities that related to the tactical choices of protest groups, and a lack of emphasis on the place of the mainstream media in political contest. The research also looked at what constitutes 'success' which previous research has seen as gaining positive media coverage and institutional political change. This is only true if the goals of a protest group are for positive media coverage and institutional political change. These points are based on the interactions between protest groups, dominant institutions and the media and, taken together, led to the overarching research question:

> *How do the objectives and decision-making processes behind a protest group's media and protest tactics impact on a group's media and political opportunities?*

This question was broken down into six research questions based around the planning, performance, reception, and reaction to protest groups and their media and protest tactics. Looking at protest group actions from their inception through to their media coverage and the institutional reactions they provoke allows a more in-depth view and interpretation of collective action beyond just the media coverage of protest. This fed into the comparative aspect of the thesis by directly contrasting the decision-making processes, and protest objectives of protest groups to show the differing impact that these two elements had on political and media opportunities. Comparing protest groups in this way allows the assessment of the media and political context a protest group works within and the changes in media and political contexts over time. The research can then ascertain the differences and similarities between why protest group A was treated differently to protest group B, and what this meant for a group's media and political tactics.

With this in mind this conclusion takes the theory of political opportunities and pushes it more in the direction of media opportunities, and unpacks these two ideas and relates them to the views of protest groups. This concluding chapter is split into three sections. The first takes the concept of political opportunities and relates it to the media strategies and messages of a protest group and emphasises the importance of media

opportunities to protest groups. The second section introduces the idea of the tactical choice of protest groups based on a cost-benefit analysis and protest opportunities, but makes it clear that the decision to act is based on protest objectives. Taken together these insights will demonstrate how political and media opportunities can provide context to protest action, and the third section shows how this analysis of protest groups can be applied to future research.

9.1 Forcing an Opportunity

The situating of collective action within a particular political context is reflected in the definition of political opportunities that states “the institutional and political factors that shape social movement options” (Meyer 1993:455). The focus of political opportunities on institutional politics diminishes the importance of two sets of social actors; the mainstream media and the agency of a protest group. The first of these is particularly important, because the media context a protest group works within is also the same media context as dominant institutions. Although, these two sets of actors possess different levels of resources with which to influence the arguments around an issue. The media agenda is significant not only because of its influence on the political and public agendas, but its ability to increase the prominence of issues (Behr and Iyengar 1985:38). This is where media opportunities are introduced, because if a group is able to highlight an issue in the press it will potentially move up the media agenda. Furthermore, if the issues under protest are already on the media agenda they are more likely to be reported on. The result of this correlation Smith et al argue would be an increase in the thematic reporting of protest action, and an explanation of underlying issues of collective action (2001:1412). In this respect the amount of constraints on a protest group should include both the political space for collective action that Gamson and Meyer spoke about (1996:277), and the media space and opportunity to create media coverage.

The three groups studied all used protest action and the media as a political resource, but the ways these groups operated went beyond the monetary and organisational aspects of McCarthy and Zald’s resource mobilisation (1973, 1977). None of the three groups investigated had significant monetary resources, and two of the groups were organised on a non-hierarchical and consensus decision-making basis. The third group consisted of a central committee of five dedicated activists, and it was their determination that drove the campaign forward. Resource mobilisation is correct in supposing that protest groups are attempting to encourage participation in a campaign

but not so much about generating money. This is in line with Wall's research about environmental direct action group Earth First! where resource mobilisation is not about monetary resources. It is more focused on increasing participation in a group, and lowering the resources required to act (1999:41). In addition, the use of the internet and social networks has significantly reduced monetary barriers to entry, and allows groups to talk to their supporters directly. This process occurs outside of the constraints of the mainstream media. The primary goal of these three groups is not about "organizational survival" (McCarthy and Zald 1977:1221, 1226), because they were more focused on highlighting and addressing the issues. When monetary and organisational resources are less of a concern for protest groups the protection and generation of these resources do not distract from the main focus of a campaign. This increases the importance of the issues at the centre of a campaign as they can influence the tactical decisions made by protest groups.

9.1.1 Media Strategies and the Messages of Protest

This section of the conclusion will look at the issues and the messages of the protest groups with respect to their individual media and protest tactics. This will show that media and political opportunities are about more than just recognising an opportunity. The three groups at the centre of this thesis used a variety of different protest tactics ranging from non-confrontational acts, such as, a petition to more confrontational acts of symbolic direct action. Their attitudes towards media relations and media coverage also ranged between close relationships and an attitude of openness but without actively courting the press. This led to a diverse creation and exploitation of media and political opportunities. It goes further than the theory of political opportunities which argues that political opportunities are based upon the structural and general openings communicated by the political system (Gamson and Meyer 1996; Sireau 2009; Meyer 2004). The Save the Vulcan campaign, as detailed in chapter 5, used its political insider influence to create political pressure. These political opportunities were actively pursued and created rather than communicated by the political system, and only pre-existed in as much as the activists had existing relationships with politicians. This use of political relationships was an active consideration of the group, and an emphasis was placed on gaining the active engagement rather than passive political support of a protest group.

In comparison chapters 6 and 7 showed groups with a direct action edge are not predisposed to wanting political acceptance. The use of symbolic direct action by Plane Stupid was geared towards generating media coverage and prompting public debate

around the issues. G20Meltdown were signalling their grievances around capitalism with a demonstration of numbers. It is difficult to demonstrate that political opportunities necessarily factored into what radical groups do, but it does provide a guide to the political context and how dominant institutions might respond. Where media opportunities and the media context fit into this relates to protest group messages and the contextualising of issues in media coverage.

The protest group's framing of issues in their messages can be seen to follow the theory of collective action frames where issues are defined, solutions suggested, blame is attributed for the cause (Sireau 2009; Snow and Benford 1992). The second of these points 'solutions suggested' was not a particularly large part of any of the group's messages. There was more of a common sense type of framing that occurred orientating the issues in such a way that they would be difficult to disagree with; be it saving a pub, saving the planet, or expressing displeasure at the misdeeds of bankers. This fed into the simplification of the messages, and this helped the messages resonate with the mainstream media. What this shows is that simple sentiments are effective in creating a news hook for the media and opens media opportunities for more complex messages. It is like Diani's argument that in order to successfully frame an issue it needs to be in line with the current media agenda, political agenda, and public opinion (1996:1056). This does not change the radical nature of the issues at the centre of the campaign; it simply alters how they are articulated. Plane Stupid connected airport expansion with climate change, and G20Meltdown's arguments against capitalism linked to the banking crisis. This shows the adaptive nature of protest groups to prevailing media and political contexts.

The recipient of these messages is prompted to take a position on the arguments, and by simplifying the messages this reduces the debate to an agreement or disagreement. It helps in removing the grey areas. The successful messaging and collective action framing plays on the expectations of participants and produces an overwhelming sense of 'optimistic bias' that builds on successful protest action and projects an image of a much larger campaign (Gamson and Meyer 1996: 286, 290; McCarthy and Zald 1973:13; Lohmann 1993:321). To make collective action framing more media orientated links to a group's attempts of control over the collective action frame, and related it to their media tactics. The media activities of the Save the Vulcan campaign and Plane Stupid demonstrated that maintaining a tight control on the overriding message lessens the amount of narrative distractions available to the press. These distractions include activists who do not follow the controlled media strategy, or in the case of G20Meltdown allowing every protester to be a spokesperson. This is not to

advocate or dismiss certain media strategies over others rather it reveals the affect of uncontrolled messages on the media coverage of protest groups. If a protest group aims to publicise its messages beyond the confines of the group the mainstream media is still currently the main resource for reaching the majority of the public. The presentation of a consistent collective action frame through the media requires a certain amount of control over the message. Even G20Meltdown with their open approach to messages and spokespeople constructed their websites and leaflets around a set of key messages.

9.2 Hierarchy of Incredibility

This section argues that the reaction of the media following collective action has an extensive impact on how protest groups are perceived, because it provides the narrative for how the public should view a protest action and its messages. The messages and media strategies of a group are just the start of the exploitation of media and political opportunities. The physical act of protest and the decisions and negotiations behind collective action adds a different dimension to political and media opportunities; because it demonstrates the influence protest groups have on their own representations. The three case studies used in this thesis explicitly or implicitly utilised the media as a protest resource. The protest tactics used by each group to enter the media can be placed on a hierarchy of incredibility that has an effect on the media and political context. This is based on the type of protest tactics used and the targets of collective action. The more audacious and spectacular an action is the higher the likelihood that it will be covered in the press, but it also increases the chance of a protest group being depoliticised (Rosie and Gorringe 2009a; Wykes 2000; Thomas 2008). However, the spectacles used by protest groups is in keeping with Gamson's argument that certain types of stunt fulfil the media's need for drama and entertainment (2003:para 69). Each of the groups studied understood the conventions of the press, and it played a large part in their perception of the media, and influenced their choice of protest tactics.

9.2.1 Making a Noise, and Making the News

The spectrum of protest tactics used by the protest groups investigated push towards a different way of assessing the media coverage of collective action. The supposition is that "the communications media set the limits of protest action" (Lipsky 1968:1151), but this is only partially correct. All three of the groups were aware of the possible press

that they would receive before any action was carried out, and aimed to exploit media conventions. It is true that non-confrontational protest tactics produce more thematic media coverage and that the bigger the protest spectacle the more press it receives but media reports treat the protest as episodic and with decreased context. Protest groups know this and create media strategies which manipulate the press into promoting their messages. Whether this is through close relationships with journalists, media training activists, or simply acknowledging the historical reporting of protest tactics and playing with protest stereotypes. It goes beyond Rucht's disempowering statement of "movements need the media, media does not need the movements" (2004:35), and moves more towards a symbiotic relationship between protest groups and the media. The protest groups provide events for the media to cover, and for the press it is an opportunity to sell newspapers.

Using protest tactics in this way correlates with Lohmann's signalling model where the size, intensity, and threshold of a protest tactic causes dominant intuitions and the press to pay attention to a protest group (1993). This theory also acknowledges the place that symbolic direct action might have on signalling an issue; where a series of acts by a small number of activists is potentially more effective than a mass demonstration (Lohmann 1993:328). What can be added to the signalling model is the explicit threat of protest is, in some instances, enough to signal that an issue should be taken seriously. This introduces non-confrontational collective action and a different context is which protest groups are usually viewed. The study of a community campaign creates a different perspective of the signalling model and by extension media and political opportunities because it exists in a different context to the national level. The proximity of the local press and politicians to a campaign is increased significantly, but it also narrows the context of the issues. The connection between a regional newspaper and a local issue can be seen as an appeal to readers in that area, as much as, it is the press expression of support.

The more confrontational tactic of symbolic direct action has been shown to create an overall narrative between protests and turns an episodic event into something that is part of an overriding message. On the other hand the use of mass demonstrations is not necessarily as effective in communicating a group's key messages; although it does make a symbolic statement of discontent. The continuous 'drip drip' of pressure provided by a series of direct actions makes a deeper political impact. The increase of this impact is through the manipulation of mainstream media conventions. The professionalised media relations used by Plane Stupid showed that controlled messages and media trained spokespeople meant the group's issues were more

contextualised in media coverage. That is not to say that a long running static protest would not achieve the same level of media penetration. The press attention would follow the event convention and focus more on the beginning of a demonstration, and subsequently when a protest ends. The signalling theory corresponds to the findings of this thesis, but signalling theory requires more complexity to allow it to increase its applicability to a wider range of groups. It is similar to political opportunities in that it is a structural view where dominant institutions are at the heart of contentious politics. There is also a lack of attention paid to the goals and conscious acts of protest groups from the inception of an action through to the action itself.

9.2.2 Cost-Benefit Analysis and Timing of Protest

The decision of a protest group to act it is argued is more than just a calculation of what generates media coverage, or an exploitation of political opportunities. There are protest opportunities which are the opportunity to protest against a particular target, or timing an action to correspond with other events. This includes implications for future participation and the exceptions of those involved of successful protest. This is the goal of a protest group to garner public support by choosing protest tactics that will not alienate peoples' sympathies, and that protest communications are based on an optimistic bias and a constant narrative of positivity. The issues at the centre of collective action provide the justification of the protest tactics. The point to be made is protest groups do not wilfully carry out actions without being aware of the possible outcomes of collective action. This adds to Gamson and Meyer's idea of '*relative* opportunity' as it allows protest groups more awareness over how they are portrayed in the media and what, if any, political acceptance they aim for (1996:283, emphasis in original). The protest tactics used by the groups studied covered a range of different tactics from non-confrontation to direct action.

The tactical repertoires not only varied between the groups but also within each group, and the choice of tactics used was part of a group's protest aims. The specific use of tactics that are geared towards attracting media attention Smith et al argue requires 'intensity' and the ability to create new 'news hooks' (2001:1402), because "media and attention cycle is notoriously short" (Rosie and Gorringe 2009b:5.7). The media coverage of protest groups Thomas argues plays a large part in a group's representation, and is included into protest tactics (2008:337). The media coverage of protest groups as already mentioned is more likely to thematically report on non-confrontational protest tactics rather than more spectacular and disruptive protests. The use of symbolic direct action is argued to be regularly reported as

decontextualised, depoliticised, and episodic (Iyengar 1991:14; Smith et al. 2001: 1404). This collection of viewpoints needs to be expanded because Plane Stupid used symbolic direct action to prompt debate, and to create media coverage. It was not a consideration of spectacle over debate it was an approach centred on using the spectacle to prompt debate. Gaining media coverage was part of the tactics, and is based on an underlying narrative that is centred on the issues. The difference in tactics and media coverage comes when a series of symbolic direct actions is used compared with a mass demonstration with a direct action edge to it.

This is where the importance of timing is increasingly evident because the fundamental grounding of political and media opportunities is that they take place at a specific time within a particular media and political context. It is these two important variables that shapes the direction of media and political opportunities, and emphasises the timing of protest to take advantage of, and exploit these contexts. The surprise element attached to symbolic direct action meant that the press were not able to create any pre-coverage to a protest event. With mass demonstration the date of the event is known well in advance which allows the press to build-up its own expectations of what will happen. In correlation with the work of Rosie and Gorringe around the 2005 G8 protests and the 2009 G20 protests both suffered from an anticipation of violence created by the press (2009a, 2009b). This is helped by the media context produced over a period of time before a protest it created a 'news hole' that was filled by historic references and interpretations of protester communications. The historical references in the press are an attempt to give a protest context, but this is mixed with a media attraction to the new and novel. The historical positioning of a protest included historical activists, and Swampy in particular, and his image as the stereotype of environmental direct action activists (Wykes 2000). This fits with Gitlin's argument that spectacular collective action becomes personalised, "celebrated radicals become radical celebrities; four-star attractions in the carnival of distracting and entertaining international symbols" (1980:162). The choice of the press is to use one set of historic anchors over another revealed the preferred framing of protest.

The stereotyping and personalisation in the press is only truly effective in depoliticising activists if protesters play into these preconceptions. The protest and media tactics employed by the groups studied actively considered how they personally would be perceived. The actions of Plane Stupid sought to actively challenge the preconceptions of direct action, and did so through their media and protest tactics that considered, for instance, what activists wore, and the demographics of protesters on an action. These choices were fundamentally tied to the underlying issue and the goals and message of

that specific protest. The protest's context and the decisions made before an action gives a more complete picture of collective action than just media coverage.

9.3 The Value of Studying Political and Media Opportunities

This final section will discuss the role of political opportunities and its effect on collective action, and considers an increased prominence for the media within political opportunities and the choice of tactics employed. It also addresses the differing concepts of successful protest, and relates all of these points back into the implications for protest tactics and goals. The approach taken by this thesis was to examine three specific protest groups who differed in issues under protest, and media and protest tactics. This allowed an insight into the political and media context at the time each of these groups were active, and why each group chose certain media and protest tactics over others. The increase in importance and prominence of the media adds to the definition of political opportunities. Defined as general and structural openings indicated by the political system (Gamson and Meyer 1996; Sireau 2009; Meyer 2004), the addition of media opportunities gives communicative power and agency back to protest groups. It also increases the theory's adaptability for more radical groups that do not seek the approval of mainstream dominant institutions. The media context is not only "essential to a full understanding of any given protest" as Rosie and Gorringe argue (2009b:2.9), but the media awareness of groups around the media context as it has a bearing on their actions. Therefore there are issue specific opportunities based upon the media and political context, and the opportunities for protest.

The mainstream media remains as the site for the majority of political debate to take place but its role in the reporting of protest groups is more than just a "validator" of activist concerns (Gamson and Meyer 1996:290). The media's role is as a platform for protest group messages and from the groups examined this was independent of whether or not the group's concerns were 'validated'. This is particularly salient for the two radical groups Plane Stupid and G20Meltdown. Plane Stupid sought to use symbolic direct action to cause a debate around airport expansion, and not to gain popularity or support for their tactics. Similarly, G20Meltdown's protest was to highlight the issues and not to put pressure on parliament to change its policies on the contrary, G20Meltdown was more likely to call for political revolution. The types of protest tactics used is reflected in the personal politics of the groups but it is not as simple as viewing radical politics as something completely outside of institutional politics. It is correct to say that "Radical ideas require more space than events" (Doherty et al. 2003:675), and

this space is created through the use of the spectacle. More about this in a moment. The promotion of radical ideas as shown in chapter 6 are aided by conflicting arguments at the heart of dominant institutions as proposed by McLeod and Detenber (1999:5). The conflicts and gaps in mainstream political arguments is extended when a number of different groups are working on an issue; the more radical groups are able to create media attention to an issue, and from here the non-confrontational groups are able to present their arguments. The political and media opportunities created and exploited by a protest group therefore have implications for other groups lobbying on the same issue.

The exploitation and creation of media and political opportunities are connected to the respective protest and media tactics of a group. The repertoires of protest are in keeping with Wall's statement that tactics are an evolutionary process (1999:42). Learning the lessons of previous groups, and the lessons learnt by members of a group gives protest tactics further context where nothing is decided by accident. This highlights the need for groups to focus on Rucht's third A, 'adaptation', and the adaptation of media and protest tactics to making the issues more prominent (2004:36-37). This thesis has argued that a protest groups adaptability of tactics is based on a cost-benefit analysis of what can be achieved using certain tactics. The apparent 'costs' of protest range from the potential media coverage to concerns around public safety, and these 'costs' are an active consideration in which protest tactics are used (McCarthy and Zald 1977:1218; Klandermans 1986:19; Kriesi et al. 1992:225; Wall 1999:125). In this respect protest groups are 'political entrepreneurs' assessing the multitude of different opportunities afforded to a group and exploit them effectively (Meyer 1993: 454; Wall 1999: 97; McCarthy and Zald 1973, 1977).

The media context in relation to gaining media coverage comes from a protest group's awareness of the routines of the mainstream media, and how protest tactics fit into these conventions (Smith et al. 2001:410; Thrall 2006:1402). It is still the case that spectacular protest actions or potential of dramatic collective action has the ability to generate a lot of media coverage, but it can result in the depoliticising of protesters (Rosie and Gorringe 2009a; Wykes 2000; Thomas 2008) and a negative portrayal of protesters (Gitlin, 1980; DeLuca 1999; Wahl-Jorgensen 2003). However, as this research has shown, this is not always the case and the influence of political and media opportunities affect the media coverage of protest. What became evident is the mere threat of protest is enough to create political pressure in some circumstances, and that media popularity, and insider political status are not the goal of every protest group's media and protest tactics. This takes the research of protest groups beyond the

interpretation of media coverage and examining activist goals and messages provides a detailed and accurate investigation of the actions and reactions to protest groups. Protest groups are not naive political actors who perform their actions without reason; they are actively involved in challenging a view of reality in order to bring attention towards a particular issue or issues. The factoring of protester goals into an analysis of the media coverage of collective action gives added facets to protest action, and different ideas around what is considered successful protest.

This thesis has taken the simplistic approach to judging success as the propagation of a group's messages, as Gamson states success is "an elusive idea" and should be based on the outcomes of protest (1990:28). In addition, the examination of success should be taken on a group by group basis, and needs to be related to the aims and goals of the particular protest group under investigation. This frees the idea of success from the institutionally particular viewpoints of Meyer and Amenta et al (2004:126; 1992:323), and puts success more in line with Gamson's opinion giving protest groups goals more prominence (1990:36). It is for this reason that the major outcome looked for in this research was how prominent the underlying message of a campaign was in the press, and to what extent the issues are contextualised, and by extension the amount of debate around the issues within dominant institutions. There are three other factors to consider in these outcomes that is based on activist goals, their media and protest tactics, and political and media opportunities.

The first is based on the goals of a protest group, and the aims of specific protests. The second takes the goals and aims of protest groups and examines their media and protest tactics, and positions them into a particular protest context. The protest context is a relationship between media and protest tactics and the outcomes of a protest group's chosen approach based on the goals and aims of a group and the historical outcomes of similar media and protest actions. This is perhaps the most complex part of judging success because media and protest tactics vary from group to group. This is why the third and final factor looks at the media and political opportunities available to a group and situates them within a media and political context influencing success and failure. What this means is media and political opportunities have a major influence on the success or failure of protest groups to publicise their messages. But it is the effective use of protest tactics and media strategies that exploits and creates these opportunities putting protest groups into a position to succeed or fail in the first place.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Coding Sheet

1. Article Number: ___

2. From Sample: ___

3. Type of Publication: ___

3a. Newspaper: ___, 3b. Institutional: ___, 3c. Protester: ___

4. Date of Publication: __/__/__, 5. Page No.: ___, 6. Author of Article: ___

7. Headline or Title: ____
_____ ____

8a. Image Description: ____
____

8b. Image Tagline: ____

9a. Category of Story: ___, 9b. Type of Story: ___

10. Protest Tactics Mentioned:

9b. Type of tactic used: ___	9c. Specific tactic evident: ___
9b. Type of tactic used: ___	9c. Specific tactic evident: ___
9b. Type of tactic used: ___	9c. Specific tactic evident: ___
9b. Type of tactic used: ___	9c. Specific tactic evident: ___
9b. Type of tactic used: ___	9c. Specific tactic evident: ___

11. The Issues:

10a. Issues Mentioned: ___	10b. Further context given: ___
10a. Issues Mentioned: ___	10b. Further context given: ___
10a. Issues Mentioned: ___	10b. Further context given: ___
10a. Issues Mentioned: ___	10b. Further context given: ___
10a. Issues Mentioned: ___	10b. Further context given: ___
10a. Issues Mentioned: ___	10b. Further context given: ___
10a. Issues Mentioned: ___	10b. Further context given: ___
10a. Issues Mentioned: ___	10b. Further context given: ___
10a. Issues Mentioned: ___	10b. Further context given: ___
10a. Issues Mentioned: ___	10b. Further context given: ___

12. Sources:

11a. Source: ___	11a. Source: ___	11a. Source: ___	11a. Source: ___
11b. Quoted: ___	11b. Quoted: ___	11b. Quoted: ___	11b. Quoted: ___
11c. Named: ___	11c. Named: ___	11c. Named: ___	11c. Named: ___
11d. Order: ___	11d. Order: ___	11d. Order: ___	11d. Order: ___
11e. Op Pro: ___	11e. Op Pro: ___	11e. Op Pro: ___	11e. Op Pro: ___
11f. Op Tac: ___	11f. Op Tac: ___	11f. Op Tac: ___	11f. Op Tac: ___
11g. Op Iss: ___	11g. Op Iss: ___	11g. Op Iss: ___	11g. Op Iss: ___

11a. Source: ___	11a. Source: ___	11a. Source: ___	11a. Source: ___
11b. Quoted: ___	11b. Quoted: ___	11b. Quoted: ___	11b. Quoted: ___
11c. Named: ___	11c. Named: ___	11c. Named: ___	11c. Named: ___
11d. Order: ___	11d. Order: ___	11d. Order: ___	11d. Order: ___
11e. Op Pro: ___	11e. Op Pro: ___	11e. Op Pro: ___	11e. Op Pro: ___
11f. Op Tac: ___	11f. Op Tac: ___	11f. Op Tac: ___	11f. Op Tac: ___
11g. Op Iss: ___	11g. Op Iss: ___	11g. Op Iss: ___	11g. Op Iss: ___

13. Protest Groups Mentioned:

Group: ___	Group: ___	Group: ___	Group: ___	Group: ___	Group: ___

14. Type of Article/Publication: Thematic: ___, Episodic: ___

15. Notes:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix 2 Coding Sheet Guidelines

1. Publication Code

Unique ID for each publication.

2. Publication Sample:

1. Save the Vulcan
2. Plane Stupid
3. G20 Meltdown

3a. Newspaper Publication

1. *The Guardian/Observer*
2. *Daily Express/Sunday Express*
3. *Daily Mail/Mail on Sunday*
4. *Daily Mirror/Sunday Mirror*
5. *The Times/Sunday Times*
6. *Daily Telegraph/Sunday Telegraph*
7. *Independent/Independent on Sunday*
8. *Daily Star/Star on Sunday*
9. *The Sun*
10. *South Wales Echo/Wales on Sunday*
11. *Western Mail*
99. N/A

3b. Type of Article

1. News article
2. Op-Ed
3. Voice of the Newspaper
4. News in Brief
5. Letter to the Editor

6. Business
7. Lifestyle
8. Supplement

4. Date of Publication

The date of publication.

5. Page Number

When available, this is the page where the article appears.

6. Author

1. Journalist
2. MP
3. Councillor
4. AM
5. Campaign member
6. Celebrity
7. Anonymous
8. Other

7. Headline or Title of Publication

8a. Image Description

A description of any images present.

8b. Image Tagline

Any words used to describe the image.

9a. Category of Story

1. Economy – Relates to the economic impacts of protest.
2. Law and order – Themes of the police operation and public order.
3. Spectacle – Talk of the spectacular elements of protest.
4. Recognition – Protest is recognised and the issues explained at length.
5. Celebrity – The presence of celebrities on a protest, or an expression of celebrity support.
6. Brought into Story – The group is used in a story that seemingly has little to do with their overall campaign.
7. Other – Any other theme not listed above.

9b. Type of Story

1. Good economically - The crowds turning up for the protest will be a boost to the economy.
2. Business concerns - The possible affects protest will have on businesses.
3. Disruption to commerce - Businesses having to close, and perceived disruption to normal trading.
4. Cost of policing – The cost of the police operation is detailed.
5. Police operation – The scale of the police presence, what equipment they have, tactics used.
6. Protester concerns around police tactics – What the protesters think about the police tactics before, during, and after the event.

7. Disruption to the public – The affect protest has on the everyday life of the local population.
8. Protester violence – Clashes with police, and/or destruction of property.
9. Police violence – The police are described as aggressors in a confrontation.
10. Civil liberties – How the protest is affected by the police and government stance with respect to the right to protest, freedom of movement, speech, and expression.
11. Peaceful protest – The protest occurs in an orderly and peaceful manner.
12. Arrests – Any arrests, or detainments that occur.
13. Court procedures – Any court proceedings that occur.
14. Police/security concerns – The police or security services express concern about the effects of protest.
15. Ridicule of protest – Protesters maligned as being against everything and made fun of.
16. Structure of protest – How the protest is made up in terms of demographics, timelines of the days protest, and how the protest will be carried out.
17. Depoliticisation of protest – The protest is devoid of political direction, maligned and anti-everything.
18. Anticipation of violence – The prospect of violence occurring.
19. Condemnation – The protest through its actions is condemned.
20. Personalisation – The activist's personal details are talked about.
21. History of Protest Evoked – Current protests are compared to historical protests.
22. Support for a campaign – Support for the aims and goals of the protest
23. Focus on the issues – The issues being protested is attributed to the protesters and agreed upon.
24. Celebrity endorsement – Any mention of celebrity involvement or support of a campaign.
25. Other – Any type of story not listed.

10a. Type of Protest Tactic Used

1. Direct democracy event – A vote that influences policy or law, and usually occurs during a meeting.
2. Demonstrative – Encapsulates events like creating a petition or demonstrating, and is a peaceful signifying of grievance.
3. Confrontational – A more direct approach that involves non-violent direct action such as blockades or occupations.
4. Light violence – Violence occurs during an event, such as injuries to persons or police, and includes light damage to property such as broken windows.
5. Heavy violence – Pre-meditated violence such as bombings or arson, or violence against specific persons.
6. Celebrity – The use of celebrity to publicise a campaign.
7. Other – Any other tactic not listed here.

10b. Specific Tactic Evident

1. Public meeting – A meeting to discuss the issues with the general public.
2. Demonstration – A gathering of people either in a march or outside of a location.
3. Written petition – A collection of names that support the issue in paper format.
4. Online petition – Same as above but online.
5. Occupation – The occupation of a building or place to prevent its designated use.
6. Blockade – The blocking of vehicles or people from getting to a certain location.
7. Fundraiser – An event to raise money for a campaign.
8. Flash mob – The gathering of a number of people in one place to perform a set act for a set period of time.
9. Subvertising – The spoofing or parodying of government or corporate advertising.
10. Property damage
11. Violence against police

12. Boycotts – The active boycott of a product or service.
13. Giving evidence to an dominant institutional committee
14. Freedom of Information requests – The submission of a freedom of information request about an issue.
15. Celebrity endorsement – An endorsement by a high profile figure.
16. Fixed to an object – the attachment of a protester to an object, building or person.
17. Publicity stunt – other
18. Listing – Attempts to have a building listed.
19. Vote/political debate – The campaign is involved in prompting a political vote or debate.
20. Protest general – The term 'protest' is used but the tactic is not specified.
21. Camp – The occupying of a space with a camp.
22. Arson – The act of setting something on fire.
23. Violence against specific persons – Protest action occurs against an individual rather than an institution or group of people.
24. Letter writing – The writing of letters to the press, elected representative, or other interested parties around an issue.
25. Any other tactic

11. The Issues

11a. Issues Mentioned

1. Capitalism – The markets of private capital.
2. Preservation of heritage – The preservation of historical buildings or places to continue their existence for future generations.
3. Climate change – The changing of the climate due to human activity.
4. War – Organised violent conflict between two sets of people.
5. Land enclosures and country borders – Against the enforcement of country borders.
6. Pub closures – The increasing rate of pub closures in the UK.
7. Noise pollution – Noise pollution produced by aircraft.
8. City development – The development of a city over, which puts older parts of a city under threat of demolition.
9. Banker's bonuses – Monetary reward during a time of economic downturn.
10. Global financial crisis – Mention of the economic downturn.
11. Financial crime – Illegal monetary based practices such as fraud.
12. Airport expansion – The expansion of airports adding to climate change.
13. Short haul flights – The polluting effects of short haul flights.
14. Sustainable jobs – Environmental jobs.
15. Sustainable transport – Green transport that either does not pollute, or is carbon neutral.
16. Listed buildings – The listing of buildings in order to protect their existence.
17. MPs' Expenses – The perceived abuse of the parliamentary expenses system.
18. Unemployment – Lack of jobs, and the shrinking of work forces.
19. Aviation advertising – The advertising of aviation in newspapers, television, radio and online.
20. Social justice – Individual equality and human rights for all.
21. Air pollution/CO2 emissions – Specific talk about carbon emissions and air pollution.
22. Policing of protest – Concerns expressed about the public order policing of protest.
21. Other – Anything else not listed here.
22. None mentioned

11b. Further Context Given

1. Overarching problem – A mention of the overriding problem.
2. Causality links – An attempt at implicating blame for an issue.

3. Defining specific problems – The consequent problems resulting from the overarching issue.
4. Direct chain of causality – A detailed account of the issue and a specific line of responsibility to who or what is responsible.
99. N/A

12. Sources

12a. Sources Used

1. Police
2. Celebrity
3. Cabinet MP
4. Other Labour MP
5. Conservative Shadow Minister
6. Other Conservative MP
7. Lib Dem Shadow Minister
8. Other Lib Dem MP
9. Other MP
10. Labour Councillor
11. Conservative Councillor
12. Lib Dem Councillor
13. Plaid Councillor
14. Other Councillor
15. London Mayor
16. Labour London AM
17. Conservative London AM
18. Lib Dem London AM
19. Other London AM
20. Labour Welsh Cabinet AM
21. Plaid Cymru Welsh Cabinet AM
22. Other Labour Welsh AM
23. Other Plaid Cymru Welsh AM
24. Conservative Welsh AM
25. Lib Dem Welsh AM
26. Other Welsh AM
27. Labour Lord
28. Conservative Lord
29. Lib Dem Lord
30. Crossbench Lord
31. Other Lord
32. Other politician
33. Member of specified protest group – The description of a protester includes a specific group.
34. Protester, general – a non-group attributed protester.
35. Bystander – A member of the public with no direct involvement in protest action.
36. NGO – Non Governmental Organisations.
37. Unspecified government employee – An unnamed employee, for instance, a spokesperson or special adviser in government.
38. Civil servant
39. Business person
40. Lawyer
41. Expert – Someone not belonging to any of the other groups that provide expert knowledge.
42. Cadw – The Welsh agency that assesses applications to list buildings.
43. CAMRA – The Campaign for Real Ale
44. Landlady/Landlord

45. MEP – Member of the European Parliament
46. Foreign governmental minister or representative
47. Anonymous government source
48. Protest leaflet/website
47. None mentioned
48. Other

12b. Quoted

Direct quotation of a source.

1. Yes
2. No

12c. Named

Is the source is directly or partially named?

1. Yes
2. No

12d. Order of appearance

The order the sources appear in.

1. First
2. Second
3. Third
4. Fourth
5. Fifth
6. Sixth
7. Seventh
8. Eighth

12e. Opinion Expressed Towards Protesters

1. Positive + – Supportive
2. Negative - – Oppositional or condemnation
3. Neutral / – Ambivalence
4. No opinion expressed

12f. Opinion Expressed Towards Tactics

1. Positive + – Supportive
2. Negative - – Oppositional or condemnation
3. Neutral / – Ambivalence
4. No opinion expressed

12g. Opinion Expressed Towards Issues

1. Positive + – Supportive
2. Negative - – Oppositional or condemnation
3. Neutral / – Ambivalence
4. No opinion expressed

13. Protest Groups Mentioned

1. G20Meltdown
2. Climate Camp
3. Plane Stupid
4. People and Planet
5. Government of the Dead
6. Stop the War Coalition
7. NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation
8. Wombles
9. Class War
10. Put People First Coalition
11. CND – Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
12. Anarchists General
13. Save the Vulcan Group
14. HACAN ClearSkies - Heathrow Association for the Control of Aircraft Noise
15. Greenpeace
16. Other Environmental Group
17. Faith group
18. Trade Union
19. CAMRA – The Campaign for Real Ale
19. Other

14. Type of Article or Publication

1. Thematic – greater context is given to the issue and there is an explanation of the reasons for social action
2. Episodic – only a specific event or occasion is reported

15. Notes

Items of interest that can be returned to at a later date.

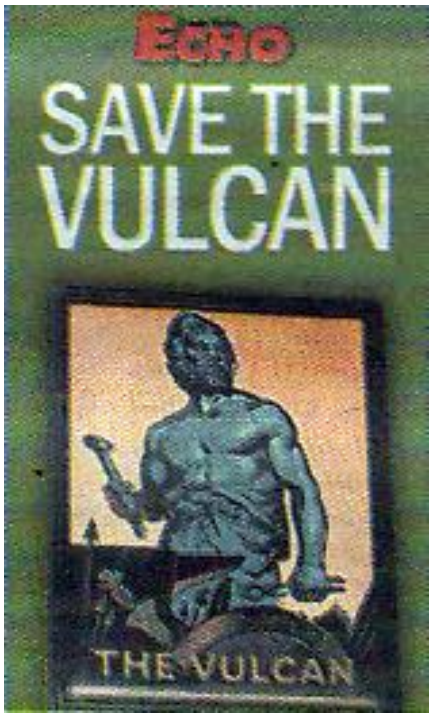
Appendix 3 List of Interviewees

Save the Vulcan	
Rachel Thomas	Chairperson and spokesperson of the Save the Vulcan campaign.
David Wilton	Treasurer and occasional spokesperson for the Vulcan group.
Graham Craig	Researcher and occasional spokesperson for the Vulcan group.

Plane Stupid	
Leo Murray	Former spokesperson for Plane Stupid, and involved in actions predominantly in the South East of Britain.
Jimmy Kerr	Member of Plane Stupid Scotland and involved in the action against Aberdeen Airport.
Matilda Gifford	Member of Plane Stupid Scotland and involved in the action against Aberdeen Airport.

G20Meltdown	
Chris Knight	Part of the group Government of the Dead and G20Meltdown. The organiser of the AltG20 summit, and was involved in the G20 protests.
Camilla Power	Part of the group Government of the Dead and G20Meltdown, and was involved in the G20 protests.

Appendix 4 *South Wales Echo* Save the Vulcan logo



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