OCCUPY WALL STREET- REBELS OR PATRIOTS:

A TEST OF FRAMING THEORY

by

Reshma Pudota

A Thesis Submitted in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Master of Science in Mass

Communication

Middle Tennessee State University

May 2013

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Jason Reineke, Chair

Dr. Jan Quarles

Dr. Ken Blake

I dedicate this research to my parents Vijay and Sundari. Without their support I would not be here.

Shyam, Thank you!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

Previous research indicates that the framing of public demonstrations, in terms of civil liberties or civic dangers, has an impact on public opinion regarding the demonstrators. However, this research has focused predominantly on extreme right-wing groups. Two experiments were conducted to test the effects of media coverage on attitudes towards the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement. The OWS movement was a social movement that started in New York, United States of America, to protest against social and economic inequality. The first experiment's design was post-test only with 3-conditions: a grassroots civic movement frame (GCM), a neutral (NT) frame, and a dangerous civic disorder frame (DCD). Initial analysis indicated unexpected results, but when data were refined to include only participants who passed a manipulation check, those in the GCM condition evaluated OWS most positively, followed by those in the NT condition, with those in the DCD condition evaluating OWS most negatively. Based on those results, a second experiment was conducted with revised stimuli and a pre-test/post-test design. Here, there was not a significant difference in post-test attitudes, but differences in attitude change were statistically significant, positive in the GCM condition, and negative in the DCD condition. Limitations and opportunities for future research are discussed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

When we look at a painting or a picture that has a frame that complements the piece of art, we seldom give credit to the frame that carries the picture. But an artist knows the importance of choosing the right frame, because it helps the audience look at the picture in the way they want it to be seen. If we use this same approach in the field of communication, we can say that journalists are also artists who choose the frame through which they want their audiences to see the big picture of the world that we live in (Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2009).

Journalists, often in a subconscious way, choose images and words that have the power to influence how audiences interpret and evaluate issues and policies. This is the simplest way of explaining framing as a media effect. Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2009 say:

> The simplicity of this analogy belies the complexity of the process of effects of framing in the news, however. Framing in the field of communication has been characterized by equal degrees of conceptual obliqueness and operational inconsistency (Scheufele & Tewsbury, 2007). Part of this vagueness at different levels stems from the fact that framing researchers have often approached the theory very inductively and examined framing as a phenomenon without careful explication of the theoretical premises and their operational implications. (,p. 17)

Scheufele (1999) in *Framing as a theory of media effects*, talks about some important concepts of framing and discusses unanswered questions that remained from previous research. He systematically answers questions on "how can framing be used to broaden our understanding of media effects? Is it possible to categorize framing research by key inputs,

processes, or outcomes? Finally, what are the theoretical and methodological implications for future effects?" (Scheufele, 1999, p. 104)

The present study was designed to examine the effects of issue framing on attitudes toward the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement. Prior research (Nelson, Clawson, & Oxley, 1997a) tested the effects of civil liberties versus public disorder framing in the context of an extremely right-leaning public demonstration by the infamous Ku Klux Klan (KKK). Even though the present study tests the effects of similar frames on a lesser known left-leaning demonstration using two experiments, the findings of the Nelson et al. (1997a) study adds a lot of value to it. Participants' indication that they had paid little attention to communication about OWS prior to the study serendipitously provided some suggestions regarding information acquisition and agenda-setting as well. Because the participants had little prior exposure to communication about OWS, we expected our participants to be predictably influenced by framing of the movement in the stimuli they were exposed to. These expectations were predominantly confirmed, but not without exception.

Literature Review

Scheufele (1999), looks at previous research done on framing and suggests that some of the previous literature done in this field is vague and asserts that because of this vague conceptualization "the term *framing* has been used repeatedly to label similar but distinctly different approaches." (Scheufele, 1999, p. 103) There have been some studies that have operationalized framing in combination with other concepts such as agenda setting or priming (for e.g. Iyengar & Kinder, 1987).

McCombs, Shaw, and Weaver (1997) went on to suggest that framing, along with being related to agenda-setting and priming, is in fact an extension of agenda-setting which they called "second-level agenda-setting." In this conceptualization, the salience of characteristics of media coverage affects the interpretation of news stories by the audience (McCombs, Shaw & Weaver, 1997). Chong and Druckman (2007) talk about this important concept regarding framing and priming and say:

> When a mass communication places attention on an issue, we expect that issue will receive greater weight via changes in its accessibility and applicability. If this is correct, then framing effects and what communication scholars have called priming effects share common processes and the two terms can be used interchangeably. (p. 115)

Tewksbury and Scheufele (2009) talk about how news frames can exert a substantial influence on individual's behaviors, beliefs and attitudes. They go on to say that there are "three different processes and effects that bear at least passing resemblance to framing effects and, very likely, occur in parallel to framing." They are information effects, persuasion effects and agenda setting effects.

Scheufele (1999) takes on these grey areas in the present literature in an attempt to draw clear lines between framing and other media effects within the field of political communication. Scheufele (1999) divides the research into three parts. In the first part of the research he differentiates framing from other closely related concepts in mass media research and outlines its theoretical premises. In the second part of the paper he developed a "typology of framing research that classifies the applications of framing in media effects research along two dimensions: media versus audience frames, on the one hand, and

frames as independent versus dependent variables, on the other, (p. 104). In the third part,

he developed a process model of framing that addressed deficits of previous studies and

suggests guidelines for future research in framing in the area of mass media effects.

Framing: Mass Media and Audiences

The study of mass communication has been characterized by significant paradigm

shifts over the past few decades. McQuail (1994) divides the history of research in this area

into four stages. The first stage was from the turn of the 20th century to the late 1930s, and

it was mainly focused on strategic propaganda during the First World War. It led to an

increasing fear of the influence of media messages on audience attitudes. The second stage,

which lasted for about 30 years, revised the paradigm of strong media effects. The third

stage that started in the 1970s was dominated by the search for new strong media effects.

The fourth stage, which started off in the early 1980s (that we are currently a part of) is

characterized by "social constructivism,"(p. 105) which is characterized by treating the

learning experience as a social experience where people come together to actively create

knowledge, as opposed to creating it passively (Derry, 1999).

Benford and Snow (2000) analyze research done on the framing processes in

relation to social movements, and they say that framing processes have come to be

regarded, alongside resource mobilization and political opportunity processes, as a central

dynamic in understanding the character and course of social movements (Benford & Snow,

2000). Previous research done by Snow and Benford (1992) emphasized the importance of

master frames and collective action frames for studying cycles of protest as these master

frames can influence people's motivation to support these social movements and to form a

consensus. Master frames are generic frames whereas specific collective action frames are

derivative in nature. "Master frames can be construed as functioning in a manner analogous to linguistic codes in that they provide a grammar that punctuates and syntactically connects patterns or happenings in the world" (Snow & Benford, 1992, p. 138). They give the example of framing social security as a part of a larger ownership society and say that it could be thought of as a collective action frame that connects to the master frame of individualism.

Snow and Bedford (1992) go on to say that "once a movement's collective action frame has become established as the master frame, efforts to extend its ideational scope may encounter resistance from its progenitors and guardians, as well as from external supporters,"(p.145). For this kind of collective action frames to be amplified, the highlighting of various other events or issues from the broader interpretive sweep of the movement is necessary (Johnston & Noakes, 2005). Some obvious ways of doing this is to use catchphrases or bumper stickers. Other forms include symbols that can amplify a frame to include historical examples, metaphors and visual images (Ryan, 1991).

Tuchman (1978) talks about framing within the realm of political communication and says that it has to be "defined and operationalized on the basis of this social constructivism." Freedman (2000) highlights an interesting point when he says that a large part of political battles is over how a campaign, a problem or an issue should be understood. This is illustrated clearly when we look at Presidential debates over foreign policy, immigration, abortion etc. He highlights issues such as campaign finance (free speech or democratic corruption?), gun control (right to bear arms or public safety?), welfare policy (humanitarianism or overspending?), hate group rallies (free speech or public safety?) to make this point clear (Freedman, 2000).

When we are presented with a frame that encourages us to process information and interpret things a particular way, we sometimes use preexisting meanings structures. For example, when we see a news story on gun control laws we may use our pre-existing knowledge of the harm that can be caused to the society if guns are easily accessible to criminals or, on the other hand, think that guns are necessary for personal security.

Kosicki and McLeod (1990) identified three dimensions of news processing, namely: active processing, reflective integrators and selective scanners.

Active processing refers to an individual seeking out additional sources based on the assumption that mass-mediated information in general is incomplete, slanted, or in other ways colored by the intensions of the communicator. Reflective integrators ponder or think about information they gather from mass media, or they talk to others about what they have learned from mass media to fully understand what they have learned. Finally, selective scanners use mass media only to seek information relevant to them. (Scheufele, 1999, p. 105)

Therefore we can say that the different ways that individuals can process news depends largely on the way it (news) is communicated along with external and internal factors that have been discussed by Scheufele (1999).

Types of Frames: Media and Individual Frames

Scheufele (1999) in his research identifies two specific types of frames, namely: media frames and individual frames. On media frames Tuchman (1978) says that the news frame organizes everyday reality and it is a part of this reality along with being an essential feature of news (p. 193). On individual frames, Entman (1993) defines them as "mentally stored clusters of ideas that guide individuals' processing of information" (p. 53).

Druckman (2001b) draws up some similarities and differences between "frames in communication" versus "frames in thought." Talking about the similarities and differences between these two types of frames he says:

> ...frames in communication and frames in thought are similar in that they both are concerned with variations in emphasis or salience. However, they differ in that the former usage focuses on what a speaker says (e.g., the aspects of an issue emphasized in elite discourse), while the latter usage focuses on what an individual is thinking (e.g., the aspects of an issue a citizen thinks are most important). (p. 228)

> Druckman (2001b) goes on to say that frames in communication play an important role in shaping frames in thought, and this process is typically known as the "framing effect." (p. 228) One type of framing effects that he talks about is "emphasis framing." He says that this kind of framing works through an automatic, subconscious accessibility process. Nelson, Oxley, and their colleagues (1997a, 1998, 1999) in their studies "show that emphasis framing effects work though a psychological process where individuals consciously and deliberately think about the relative importance of different considerations suggested by a frame." (Druckman, 2001b, p. 241)

Druckman (2001b) goes on to say that if emphasis framing effects worked through a more clear and concise process, we would be able to "expect systematic limits to political manipulation: people will not follow any frame that they recently and/ or frequently hear"(p. 241). Scholars in this field have looked at five moderators of the emphasis framing effects,: "predispositions, citizen deliberation, political information, source credibility, and competition" (p. 241). These five moderators are important to the findings of this study as

well because the possibility that the respondents who took the survey could definitely be exposed to some if not all of these framing effects that Scheufele (1999) talks about.

A study conducted by Nelson, Oxley, and Clawson (1997b) illustrates how predispositions or prior information on a particular topic adds a significant value to the outcome of the experiment. In this study student respondents were exposed to two types of frames to check their beliefs about the causes of poverty while also looking at their overall opinions about welfare. One was a frame in which welfare was seen as a "giveaway to the undeserving" and the other frame was that showed welfare as a "harmful drain on the economy." The results of this study showed that those respondents who were exposed to the frame in which welfare is seen as a "giveaway to the undeserving" gave significantly more weight to their beliefs about the actual causes of poverty. The findings of this study imply that the framing effect was much stronger among respondents with greater familiarity with welfare arguments. The authors suggested that this result may be attributed to the fact that framing works by altering the weight attached to different considerations held in long-term memory, and that only people who are better informed have this information in their long-term memory.

Based on the Nelson et al. (1997a) study in which the authors show that emphasis framing effects work through a deliberative psychological process and that people may be selective on whom they choose to trust, Druckman (2001a) conducted two experiments to test the hypothesis that a speaker can engage in successful framing only if the speaker's target audience considers the speaker a credible source. In one of the experiments, the participants read an article about a request to hold a rally put forward by the American extremist organization – the Ku Klux Klan. The article was framed in two ways. One was a

"free speech frame" and the other was a "public safety frame" discussing the KKKs request. The article came from either *The New York Times,* a credible source or *The National Enquirer*, a less credible source. "The source credibility hypothesis suggests that there will be a larger framing effect among participants who read articles from *The New York Times* than among participants who read articles from *The National Enquirer*" (Druckman, 2001b, p. 243)*.*

The results of this experiment support the source credibility hypothesis. The results show that the overall tolerance opinion, measured on a 7-point scale, with higher scores indicating increased tolerance indicated that the average score for participants who read *The New York Times* free speech article regarding the KKK (4.22) was statistically significant and was higher than the average score for the participants who read *The New York Times* public safety article which was also about the KKK. Also, there was no significant difference among the participants who read the *National Enquirer* article (p= .47).

Therefore, the results show that the alternative frames affected the considerations underlying the tolerance judgments (e.g., the importance of free speech) only for participants who read a *New York Times* article. These results demonstrate that

rather than being manipulated by whichever frame they hear, people tend to delegate to credible sources to help them sort through the many possible frames. Put another way, under certain conditions, framing may be akin to a competent learning process rather than manipulation. (Druckman, 2001b, p. 244)

As illustrated by the results of this experiment, *The New York Times* was seen by a majority of the respondents as a credible newspaper. In order to make the articles that we

used in both the experiments in this study (Appendixes B, C, D, G, H, I) look as credible that I possibly could, the articles were reattributed to the *Associated Press*.

Frames as independent or dependent variables

Scheufele (1999) goes further to break down the study of frames into research examining frames as independent or dependent variables. He says that frames as the dependent variable are examined mostly as direct outcomes of the way mass media frame an issue, whereas frames as independent variables are used in studies that are interested in studying the effects of framing.

Based on the dimensions discussed above, Scheufele (1999) suggests a four-cell typology that can be used to classify previous studies in the area of framing. In this typology he suggests that along with breaking down the study of framing to dependent and independent variables, the studies in framing literature can be further classified into those that examine frames as media frames and individual frames. So for example the Tuchman (1978) study can be seen as one that examines frames as media frames and the frames are the dependent variable in the study.

The typology that Scheufele (1999) suggests is important as it helps to clearly explicate framing as a theory of media effects. He goes on to develop a process model of framing (see Figure 1) which breaks down important links into inputs, processes and outcomes. He conceptualizes framing as a "continuous process where outcomes of certain processes serve as inputs for subsequent processes." (p. 114) He examines frame building, frame setting, individual-level effects of framing; and a link between individual frames and media frames, which he describes as the journalists' and elites' susceptibility to framing processes. (p. 115)
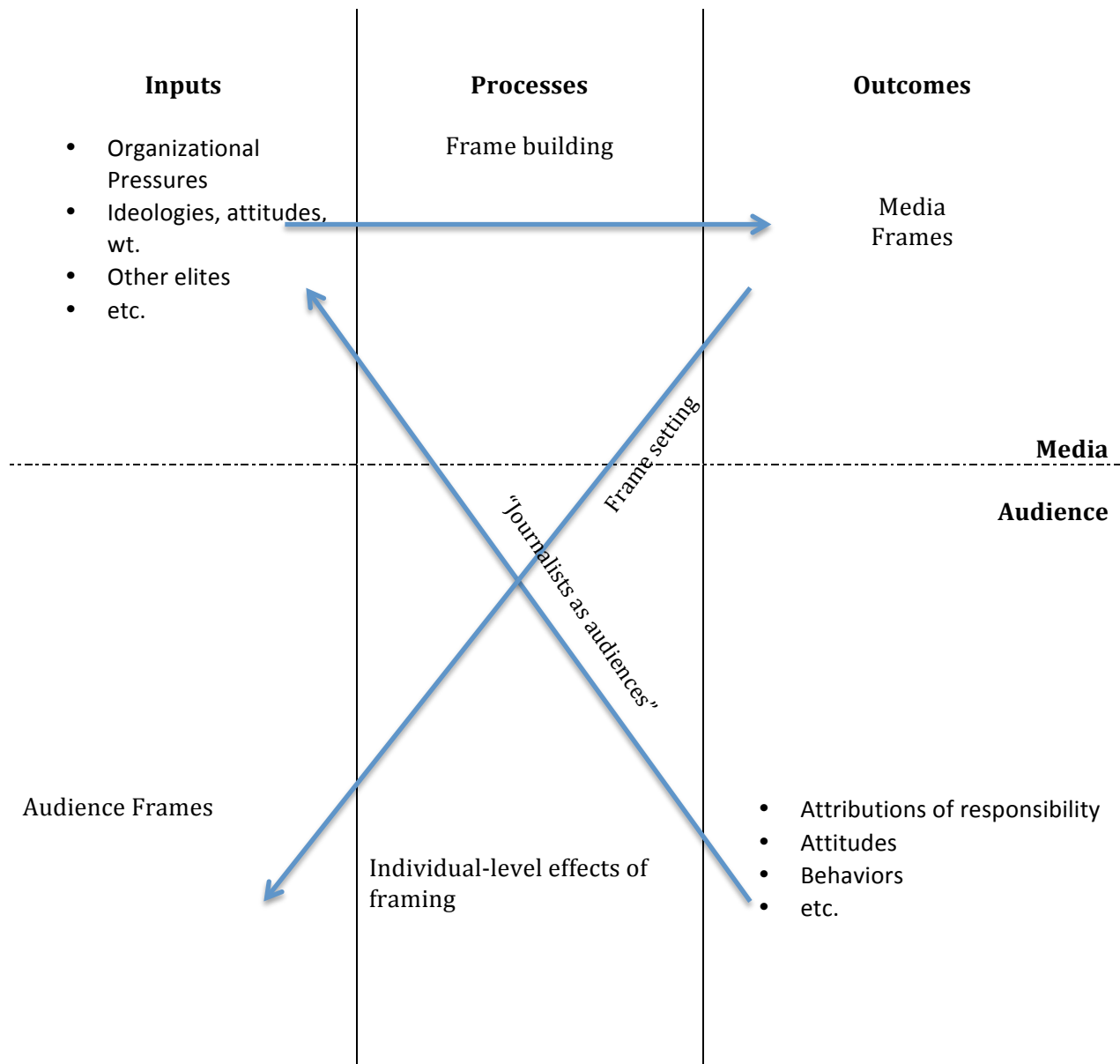
Figure 1.1: Typology of Framing

Source: Scheufele (1999)

Druckman (2001b) says that in order to have a clear understanding of framing, we need to know how to link the way in which citizens psychologically process frames with how elites strategically choose frames. According to de Vreese (2005), "*frame- building* refers to the factors that influence the structural qualities of news frames" (p. 52). Factors that are internal to journalism need to be considered because they determine how journalists and news organizations frame important social issues. Also, we need to keep in mind external factors need too as the frame-building process takes place in a continuous integration between journalists and elites. The outcome of this processes are the "frames manifest in the text" (de Vreese, 2005).

There are many sources that influence the media content that audiences are exposed to in our society. Scheufele (1999) highlights a few sources in his research. The first source of influence he talks about is "journalist-centered influences." He says, "Journalists actively construct frames to structure and make sense of incoming information" (p. 115) and the formation of these frames is moderated by variables such as ideology, attitudes, and professional norms, which in turn are reflected in the way journalists frame news coverage. The second factor that influences framing of news is the selection of frames as a result of factors like the type of political orientation of the medium that is reporting the news. Lastly, the third source of influence is the external sources of influence such as political actors, authorities, interest groups and other elites (Scheufele, 1999).

"*Frame-setting* refers to the interaction between media frames and individuals' prior knowledge and predispositions. Frames in the news may affect learning, interpretation,

and evaluation of issues and events" (de Vreese, 2005, p. 52). In Scheufele's (1999) process model of framing research he refers to *frame setting* in the same platform as agenda setting that McCombs and Shaw (1972) talk about. He says that agenda setting is concerned with the salience of issues, whereas, frame setting, or second-level agenda setting, is concerned with the salience of issue attributes. "At the first glance, this difference between perceived importance and salience of frames seems to be an operational one, with salience and perceived importance representing different ways of measuring essentially the same construct" (Scheufele, 1999, p. 116).

de Vreese (2004) investigated investigated the effects of television news frames on three different issues. The first was the audience interpretations of a political issue, the next issue that he looked at was the salience of news frames versus other information in the story, and lastly he looked at audience support for future policy. The participants, who were drawn from the database of the Audience Research Department of the public broadcaster in the Netherlands, watched an experimental television news bulletin produced in cooperation with reporters and editors at a national television news program about the enlargement of the European Union. A news story was manipulated to reflect a conflict frame or an economic consequences frame. The results of this experiment showed that the two frames that were used for the purpose of this study provided direction to the audience's thoughts about the issue but they did not yield different levels of policy support. de Vreese (2004) goes on to say that frames in the news are as important as core facts in a news story when citizens conceive of a political issue.

This study by de Vreese (2004) also addresses issues that are important to both news practitioners and politicians. He highlights two points:

> First, the experimental bulletin used in this study points to the potential fruitful cooperation between practitioners from news organizations and academia. Second, the study suggests that news frames are influential in shaping an individual's direction of thoughts on a political issue. (p. 47)

Broadly speaking, we can say that there are two levels at which the consequences of framing can be conceived. One is at an individual level, where the consequence may be altered attitudes about an issue based on exposure to certain frames. Whereas, on a societal level, "frames may contribute to shaping social level processes such as political socialization, decision making and collective actions" (de Vreese, 2005, p. 52).

Scheufele (1999) says that previous studies examining the individual-level influences of audience frames on several behavioral, attitudinal, and cognitive variables have neglected the processes linking the key variables. According to him the question of "whether audiences adopt media frames or the degree to which they use frames similar to media frames in their own information processing" has not been answered (p. 117). "In other words although making important contributions in *describing* effects of media framing on behavioral, attitudinal, or cognitive outcomes, these studies provide no *explanation* as to why and how these two variables are linked to one another" (Scheufele, 1999, p. 117).

A study that looks at how media frames impact the importance assigned by individuals to various ways of framing an issue is the Nelson et al. (1997a) study, which is the foundation on which the present research is based. Nelson et al. (1997a) examine the effects of media framing on attitudes toward publicly contentious demonstrations using experiments that involve news coverage of a rally by the American white supremacy organization the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). In the two experiments that they conducted they presented research participants with one of two local news stories about a Klan rally that varied by frame. One framed the rally as a free speech issue, and the other framed it as a disruption of public order. Their research showed that participants who viewed the free speech frame stories expressed more tolerance for the KKK than participants who watched the public order story.

Nelson et al. (1997a) found that differences in how groups are framed changes the extent to which the public is willing to tolerate controversial views expressed by them and any resulting social confrontations, disagreements, and discomforts. When the demonstration was framed in terms of free speech, a popular civil liberty, individuals were more inclined to tolerate the group. Whereas, when the demonstration was portrayed in a way that suggested the potential for riots, conflicts with police, possible violence between the group and the public at large, and other disruption of public order, individuals were understandably more reluctant to extend good will toward the group. However, Nelson et al.'s (1997a) findings, while informative and influential in the research literature, are limited to the context of a well-known group defined primarily in terms of its extreme racism. It is uncertain how consistently these effects might replicate when the attitude

object is qualitatively, ideologically, or otherwise very different, while still socially divisive and controversial.

Another link that Scheufele (1999) talks about in his process model of framing is to see of there is one that sees *journalists as audiences.* He says that just like their audiences, journalists are cognitive misers and as a result they are also equally susceptible to the "very frames that they use to describe events and issues" (p. 117). This is an interesting link that is relevant to this study because of the way journalists themselves can be subjected to framing depending on how the issue that they are covering is conveyed to them by other news sources.

Occupy Wall Street and Public Opinion of Political Demonstrations

The OWS movement attracted widespread media attention in the fall of 2011 with ongoing encampments protesting income inequality and other social and economic issues around the United States and the world. One popular characterization of the movement was as a justified and much-needed reaction to corruption, greed, and unfairness in contemporary economics and politics, while another depicted the movement as a dangerous threat to the established, functional, and fair economic, political, and social order. But by mid-2012 those protests and the attention accorded them had largely subsided, leaving the movement's status as a social influence and provocateur of political discussion and debate in question. Indeed, less than a year after the movement's inception, some had forgotten about it, while others had heard little or nothing about it in the first place.

As explained earlier, the present study was conducted to test the changes in attitudes towards the OWS movement. Two experiments were conducted using three different types of frames. One frame showed the OWS movement as a positive grassroots civic movement (GCM), one was a neutral (NT) frame and the other frame showed the OWS movement as dangerous civic disorder (DCD) movement.

The present study, based on the Nelson et al.'s (1997a) study, examined the effects of media framing on attitudes toward publicly contentious demonstrations. The results of the Nelson et al. (1997a) study showed that participants who viewed the free speech frame stories expressed more tolerance for the KKK than participants who watched the public order story. Accordingly, we expect that the exposure of respondents to articles featuring the differing depictions of OWS as a grassroots civic movement (GCM), a dangerous civic disorder (DCD), or a neutral (NT) depiction will result in differing attitudes toward the movement.

CHAPTER TWO: EXPERIMENTS

Experiment 1

Participants and Procedures

The first experiment was conducted with a convenience sample of 147 undergraduate students with mean age of 20.993 (SD= 3.139). Females made up 44% of the sample whereas the percentage of males was 56%. A plurality said they were freshmen (35%), with about equal numbers saying they were sophomores (30%) and juniors (30%) and a small number saying that they were seniors (5%). Their average reported, cumulative GPA was 3.016 (SD = 0.512). These students were enrolled in two sections of an introductory-level mass communication class at a large public university in the southern U.S. during March 2012. Instructors in the College of Mass Communicaiton were asked whether they were willing to provide their students with an extra credit opportunity in exchange for participation in this study.

Clear instructions were given to the students about their option to participate or not participate in this study (Appendix A). Those who indicated that they were willing to participate were then given an envelope containing one of the three brief news articles (Appendices B, C & D), which they were asked to read. They were then asked to answer a questionnaire (Appendix E)[1]. A *New York Times* article that described the OWS movement was edited to produce three new versions. To maintain the authenticity of the article, it was re-attributed to the Associated Press to avoid any potential effects of source evaluation.

The first (Appendix B; 33% of the final sample) was designed to exemplify the GCM frame, emphasizing OWS's focus on combatting inequality, corruption and greed as a

spontanious, but organized, group of typical citizens. The second (Appendix C; 29% of the final sample) was meant to exemplify neutral, objective reporting on the movement. The third (Appendix D; 39% of the final sample) was designed to embody the DCD frame, emphasizing OWS's questionable legality, decentralized/disorganized nature, and the challenge it presented to accepted economic, political, and social order.

In order to check if the respondends were able to understand the tone of the article that was presented to them, a manipulation check question was included in the questionnaire (question 18 in Appendix E). The manipulation check question was included towards the end of the questionnaire to minimize any influence the question may have on the way the respondents answered the questionnaire.

After reading the article and completing the post-test only questionnaire, participants were instructed to place their articles and questionnaires back in the envelope and give it to a proctor. They were directed to a separate list where they signed their names so that the investigators could notify the professor which students had earned extra credit. Finally, they were presented with a debriefing sheet (Appendix F) and given an opportunity to remove their data from the study if they disagreed with the deception of being told that what they were reading was an actual article.

Dependent Variables: Attitudes Toward OWS

Two scores were used to assess attitudes toward OWS after reading the articles. First, a single-item, 5-point Likert type *approval* item (Q1 in Appendix E) was scored with responses indicating greater approval having higher values (M = 3.340, SD = 0.954). Second, responses to a 6-item (Q2 through Q7 in Appendix E) scale of 5-point Likert type items were coded so that higher scores indicated more positive *general attitude* toward the

movement and then averaged together into a single score (*Cronbach's α* = .798, *M* = 3.295, *SD* = 0.690).

Results

ANOVA results are shown in Table 1. Initial tests did not support the hypothesis that the different frames embodied in the articles would lead to differences in attitudinal reactions to OWS. There were not statistically significant differences in either approval (*F* = 1.158, *df* = 2 (141), *p*= ns) or general attitude (*F* = 2.064, *df* = 2 (144), *p* = ns) between conditions.

As explained earlier in the study, a manipulation check question was included (question 18, Appendix E) which was put in the questionnaire to check if the respondents understood the tone of the article that they were reading. In experiment 1 when data were isolated only to cases where individuals passed the manipulation check (*n* = 67) by indicating, consistent with the intentions of the researchers, that the respondents thought the tone of the article they read was positive (GCM), neutral (NT), or negative (DCD), results more consistent with expectations were obtained. Individuals in the GCM condition who passed the manipulation check (*n* = 20) had the highest approval scores (*M* = 3.850, *SD* = 1.040). However, they were followed not by the individuals in the NT condition who passed the manipulations check (*n* = 32, *M* = 3.063, *SD* = 0.174), but rather by those in the DCD condition (*n* = 15, *M* = 3.133, *SD* = 0.743). This was a statistically significant framing effect (*F* = 4.545, *df* = 2 (64), *p* < .05) for individuals who passed the manipulation check.

Table 1

Experiment 1 Occupy Wall Street Attitude ANOVA Results

DV	Condition	M	SD	df	F
All Data					
Approval	GCM	3.479	0.899	2 (141)	1.158
	NT	3.171	1.046		
	DCD	3.346	0.927		
General Attitude	GCM	3.451	0.628	2 (144)	2.064
	NT	3.170	0.760		
	DCD	3.252	0.676		
Manipulation Check					
Approval	GCM	3.850	1.040	2 (64)	4.545*
	NT	3.063	0.982		
	DCD	3.133	0.743		
General Attitude	GCM	3.625	0.651	2 (64)	4.738*
	NT	3.124	0.678		
	DCD	2.956	0.736		

GCM: Grassroots Civic Movement, NT: Neutral, DCD: Dangerous Civic Disorder

Approval: 5-point single Likert-type item, higher score indicates greater approval

General Attitude: Average of 6 Likert type items, higher score indicates more positive evaluation

df outside parentheses between groups, within parentheses within groups

* $p < .05$

The results yielded by experiment 1 that were most consistent with expectations involved general attitude scores for individuals who passed the manipulation check. Those in the GCM condition exhibited the most positive general attitudes ($M = 3.625$, $SD = 0.651$), followed by those in the NT condition ($M = 3.124$, $SD = 0.678$), followed by those in the DCD condition ($M = 2.956$, $SD = 0.736$). This frame effect was statistically significant, and as expected ($F = 4.738$, $df = 2$ (64), $p < .05$).

Experiment 2

Based on the small proportion of particpants in experiment 1 who passed the manipulation check (47%) a second experiment was conducted with stimuli designed to be clearer and more extreme in their portrayals of OWS. For experiment 2 a pre-test, post-test design was implemented in order to assess changes in attitudes regarding OWS due to framing effects.

Participants and Procedures

The data for the second experiment was collected by using the same southeastern U.S. university's communication research subject pool in October 2012. This was in a different setting when compared to experiment 1, where students were given the questionnaire in a classroom setting. Students enrolled in the introductory-level mass communication course are required to particpate in the pool for course credit as a means of gaining firsthand experience with research. Of the 160 students who particpated in experiment 2, 30% were female and 68% were male (the remaining 2% did not answer the gender question). Their average age was 19.703 ($SD = 2.648$) years. In terms of class rank,

50% were freshmen, 26% sophomores, 17% juniors, and 4% seniors (the remaining 3% did not report a class rank). The average reported cumulative GPA was 3.236 (*SD* = 0.988).

The participants were randomly assigned to one of three revised article conditions. The GCM article (Appendix G, 32%) was revised to depict OWS as even more patriotic, peaceful, and positive than in experiment 1. The NT article (Appendix H, 34%) was simply revised to be consistent in length and topics with the new GCM and DCD articles. Finally, the DCD article (Appendix I, 34%) was revised to make OWS seem even more unpatriotic, dangerous, and negative than in the first experiment. The three revised articles we again credited to the *Associated Press.*

A pre-test (Appendix J)was administered to all participants in experiment 2 that assessed their previous attention to OWS in media and discussion using a 4-item, 4-point Likert-type measure (Q1 through Q4 in Appendix J) with responses coded so that greater attention was indicated by higher scores. Scores for the four items were then averaged into a single, overall OWS communication attention score (*Cronbach's α* = .812, *M* = 0.587, *SD* = 0.618). Additionally, particpants were give a 5-item test of knowledge about the OWS movement in the pre-test (Q13 through Q17 in Appendix J, *M* = 2.450, *SD* = 1.466).

Participants were also administered the same single-item OWS approval measure (Q6 in Appendix J, *M* = 2.159, *SD* = 0.792) and 6-item OWS general attitude measure (Q7 through Q12 in Appendix J, *Cronbach's α* = .779, *M* = 2.165, *SD* = 0.570) in the pre-test for experiment 2 as were administered in the post-test for experiment 1.

In experiment 2 a post-test (Appendix K) was also administered, again assessing OWS approval with the same, single item measure (Q3 in Appendix K, *M* = 2.288, *SD* =

0.964). The 6-item OWS general attitude measure was also used again in the experiment 2 post-test (Q4 through Q9 in Appendix K, *Cronbach's α* = .862, *M* = 2.270, *SD* = 0.749).

By subtracting the pre-test scores from the post-test scores, variables indicating the change in approval (*M* = -0.134, *SD* = 0.777) and change in general attitude (*M* = -0.105, *SD* = 0.545) were calculated.

As in experiment 1, after completing the pre-test, reading their randomly assigned article, and completing the post-test, participants were informed of the deception involved in the study and given the opportunity to remove their data from the set before signing a sheet so that course credit could be assigned.

Results

As mentioned above, the aggreated previous OWS communication attention measure indicated that overall the particpants had heard little about the movement (*Cronbach's α* = .812, *M* = 0.587, *SD* = 0.618). Participants fared a bit better on the OWS knowledge measure (*M* = 2.450, *SD* = 1.466). Greater reported prior OWS communication was associated with greater knowledge about the movement (*r* = .430, *p* < .05).

Table 2 shows the ANOVA analyses for the full data set collected during experiment 2. There were marginally significant differences in frame effects on post-test OWS approval responses (*F* = 2.904, *df* = 2 (153), *p* < .10). But these differences were not in the order expected. The greatest approval was actually exhibited by those in NT condition (*M* = 2.442, *SD* = 0.826), followed by those in the GCM condition (*M* = 2.400, *SD* = 0.990) and then those in the DCD condition (M = 2.037, *SD* = 1.027).

Table 2

Experiment 2 Occupy Wall Street Attitude ANOVA Results: All Data

DV	Condition	M	SD	df	F
Approval	GCM	2.400	0.990	2 (153)	2.904
	NT	2.442	0.826		
	DCD	2.037	1.027		
General Attitude	GCM	2.391	0.746	2 (151)	5.927*
	NT	2.441	0.620		
	DCD	1.997	0.796		
Δ Approval	GCM	0.313	0.689	2 (146)	4.516*
	NT	0.229	0.721		
	DCD	-0.113	0.847		
Δ General Attitude	GCM	0.271	0.416	2 (146)	9.555*
	NT	0.212	0.447		
	DCD	-0.142	0.641		

GCM: Grassroots Civic Movement, NT: Neutral, DCD: Dangerous Civic Disorder

Approval: 5-point single Likert-type item, higher score indicates greater approval from post-test

General Attitude: Average of 6 Likert type items, higher score indicates more positive evaluation from post-test

Δ Approval: Change in approval pre-test to post-test

Δ General Attitude: Change in general attitude pre-test to post-test

df outside parentheses between groups, within parentheses within groups

+ $p < .10$ * $p < .05$

Post-test general attitudes exhibited frame effects (F = 5.927, df = 2 (151), p < .05). However, again these effects were not in the order expected. As in the first experiment, the most positive attitudes were indicated by those in the NT condition (M = 2.441, SD = 0.620), followed by those in the GCM condition (M= 2.391, SD = 0.746), and those in the DCD condition (M = 1.997, SD = 0.796).

However, when it came to changes in approval and general attitudes from pre-test to post-test, results were more consistent with expectations. There was a significant difference in change in approval between the frame conditions (F = 4.516, df = 2 (146), p < .05). As expected, those in the GCM condition (M = 0.313, SD = 0.689) exhibited positive change in approval. Those in the NT condition (M = 0.292, SD = 0.721) also exhibited positive approval change. And those in the DCD condition exhibited negative approval change (M = -0.113, SD = 0.847).

There were also frame effects on change in general attitude (F = 9.555, df = 2 (146), p < .05). Again, the attitudes of those in the GCM condition (M = 0.271, SD = 0.416) became more positive between the pre-test and post-test. Those in the NT condition (M = 0.212, SD = 0.447) also gave more positive evaluations in the post-test than in the pre-test. Finally, those in the DCD condition (M = -0.142, SD = 0.641) gave more negative evaluations in the post-test than in the pre-test, overall.

As with experiement 1, data for experiment 2 were reduced to only those who passed a manipulation check (n = 90, 56%) and re-examined. The clearest results that were most consistent with expectations overall emerged in these analyses, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Experiment 2 Occupy Wall Street Attitude ANOVA Results: Manipulation Check

DV	Condition	M	SD	df	F
Approval	GCM	2.419	1.025	2 (87)	1.184
	NT	2.345	0.857		
	DCD	2.033	1.189		
General Attitude	GCM	2.367	0.697	2 (86)	1.940
	NT	2.425	0.663		
	DCD	2.061	0.910		
Δ Approval	GCM	0.448	0.686	2 (83)	5.830*
	NT	0.000	0.392		
	DCD	-0.200	0.997		
Δ General Attitude	GCM	0.374	0.479	2 (83)	9.159*
	NT	0.148	0.399		
	DCD	-0.211	0.662		

GCM: Grassroots Civic Movement, NT: Neutral, DCD: Dangerous Civic Disorder

Approval: 5-point single Likert-type item, higher score indicates greater approval from post-test

General Attitude: Average of 6 Likert type items, higher score indicates more positive evaluation from post-test

Δ Approval: Change in approval pre-test to post-test

Δ General Attitude: Change in general attitude pre-test to post-test

df outside parentheses between groups, within parentheses within groups

* $p < .05$

While there were no frame effects suggested by the data on post-test evaluations of approval ($F = 1.184$, $df = 2$ (87), p = ns) or general attitudes ($F = 1.940$, $df = 2$ (86), p = ns) for those who passed the manipulation check, there were significant frame effects on change in approval ($F = 5.830$, $df = 2$ (83), $p < .05$) and change in general attitudes ($F = 9.159$, $df = 2$ (83), $p < .05$).

Approval for OWS in GCM condition ($M = 0.448$, $SD = 0.686$) increased, while approval for OWS in the NT condition stayed virtually the same ($M = 0.000$, $SD = 0.392$), and approval for OWS in the DCD condition ($M = -0.200$, $SD = 0.997$) declined for participants who passed the manipulation check. Similarly, general attitudes toward OWS became more positive in the GCM condition ($M = 0.374$, $SD = 0.479$) and the NT condition ($M = 0.148$, $SD = 0.399$), and became more negative in the DCD condition ($M = -0.211$, $SD = 0.662$).

CHAPTER THREE: DISCUSSION

This study was designed to assess framing effect, in the context of public assessments of demonstrations laden with civil liberties issues. Unlike prior research in on this topic (e.g. Nelson et al., 1997) the present study examined these concepts in the context of a group that, while widespread, had relatively little presence in the public consciousness. It is also important to note here that even though this study drew heavily from the Nelson et al. (1997) article there are two important contrasts between the two studies that have to do with visibility of the organizations and/or their reputation. As discussed in the earlier part of the paper, the KKK is extreme right organization, while OWS is extreme left. The KKK is a well-known organization and generally despised, whereas the OWS movement is a relatively organization and it is relatively unknown and unconsidered.

The results of two experiments, though somewhat mixed, suggest that audience attitudes toward events covered in the news are both dependent on the kind of frames that audiences are exposed to in the media. As discussed below, prior knowledge may be an important factor in these effects. One of the questions that arose during the course of this study was why the manipulation check data yielded results that were more consistent with expectations. There may be two possible answers for that: a) the correct manipulation check participants may have paid closer attention to the articles or b) the correct manipulation check participants may think more like researchers where they might have figured the intent of the research and aligned their response accordingly or may might just think rationally about their approval or disapproval of OWS movement. Having highlighted these two points it is also important to note that there may be a few people who passed the

manipulation check by chance as well, but, if so, they probably would have done so in roughly equal numbers across the different treatment conditions and thus would have had little influence on the directions of the patterns detected.

Overall, the two experiments together suggest that the participants who were exposed to the GCM frame showed the most positive attitudes toward OWS movement. There is strong evidence that the popular American values that are comprised within civil liberties have a strong impact on evaluations of attitude objects when they are the central aspects of a media frame.

Prior research conducted on framing effects due to the coverage of public demonstrations, namely Nelson et al. (1997), presented expression by a widely-known white supremacy group (the KKK) as the attitude object. The present study has largely replicated Nelson et al.'s (1997) findings with an attitude object that involves expression by a left- leaning group protesting income inequality and financial corruption. The articles that the respondents read made the political orientation of the OWS movement (as being a left winged organization) quite clear. Between this study and Nelson et al.'s (1997), the results seem to indicate that the group in question matters little when media frames that emphasize civil liberties versus civil disorder are applied.

According to Scheufele (1999) additional research should look at framing from a more "metatheoretical" perspective and look beyond the inputs and outcomes. He says that focusing on the four key links that he suggests in the process model of framing can help us better understand and address unresolved issues in framing systematically.

The most robust results in this study involved attitude changes, which occurred generally as expected. Though simple analyses of attention to communication about OWS

prior to the study and knowledge about OWS prior to reading the articles indicated that both tended to be fairly low for the participants, but were positively correlated, more work should be done to examine the impact of prior communication and knowledge, not only on framing effects, but information acquisition and agenda setting as well. It seems likely that more informed participants may have held more stable, reinforced attitudes about OWS and been less susceptible to framing effects. As the Tewksbury and Scheufele (2009) article suggested, we can see that news frames do have a substantial impact on the what people believe which in turn influences their beliefs and attitudes. Also, as identified by Kosicki and McLeod (1990) the three dimensions of news processing, namely: active processing, reflective integrators and selective scanners can be examined to see if they have any effects on the reasons why participants paid very little attention to communication about OWS prior to the study along with their knowledge about the topic prior to reading the article.

As discussed in the results section, a high proportion of participants in experiment 1 did not identify the tone of the article they read. This may have occurred for a number of reasons. For example – the length of the article may have been too long for undergraduate students, and the fact that it was left up to the participants to read it or not before they answered the questions may have thus contributed to a lack of comprehension. It is important to note here that due to a clerical error, the envelopes containing the questionnaire for experiment 1 were not randomly assigned. This could have played a part in the reason why the approval and general attitude scores were highest in the GCM condition, followed then by the DCD condition and the NT condition respectively.

While a somewhat higher proportion of experiment 2's participants, who were presented with articles revised to further emphasize the frame characteristics intended,

passed the manipulation check, there were still a troublingly large number who did not. It is unclear to at this point what could be done to better emphasize the frames studied here, or to ensure participant attention to the stimuli. One suggestion is to perhaps tell the respondents that they might shortly be asked to participate in a discussion of the article with a group of their fellow research participants. Social pressure not to appear uninformed might prompt them to read the article more closely. The respondents can then be informed in the debriefing that it was talked about as a way to incentivize reading. Future research should take heed to carefully check whether participants perceive experimental stimuli in framing research as intended.

Along with different ways to incentivize reading the articles, future research could also expand on the present study by using visual media clips to portray the OWS movement using GCM, NT, or DCD frames. Previous research suggest that visual media has a stronger impact on audiences than print media. The combination of verbal and visual material that helps to convey a certain message by using the concept of framing may have a unique and powerful effect on viewers and how they psychologically frame an issue, including how they form attitudes regarding emergent controversies (Iyengar 1991, Nelson and Kinder, 1996).

It is important to note two important variables that could play a vital role in helping us understand framing effects better: frame intensity and frame perception. In this study participants who are high on frame perception (as measured by the manipulation check) exhibited the hypothesized approval shifts, but it considers the phenomenon mainly from a methodological standpoint. Specifically, it speculates on how the proportion of participants who correctly perceive the frame could be increased. There seems to be little

consideration, methodological or otherwise, of the circumstantial evidence that the

hypothesized approval shifts became somewhat more pronounced after the intensity of the

frames in the GCM and DCD articles was increased.

Accordingly, I suggest discussing the theoretical roles these two factors might play

and suggesting investigation of these roles in future research. Suggested below are three

models that depict the situation in a few ways that frame intensity and frame depiction

play a part in this process.

At the most basic level, it appears that frame intensity (how overt, numerous or

otherwise salient framing cues are in a message) and frame perception (the degree and/or

frequency with which participants notice framing cues) act as intervening variables

between frame valence (GCM, NT or DCD) and framing effects (specifically, in this case,

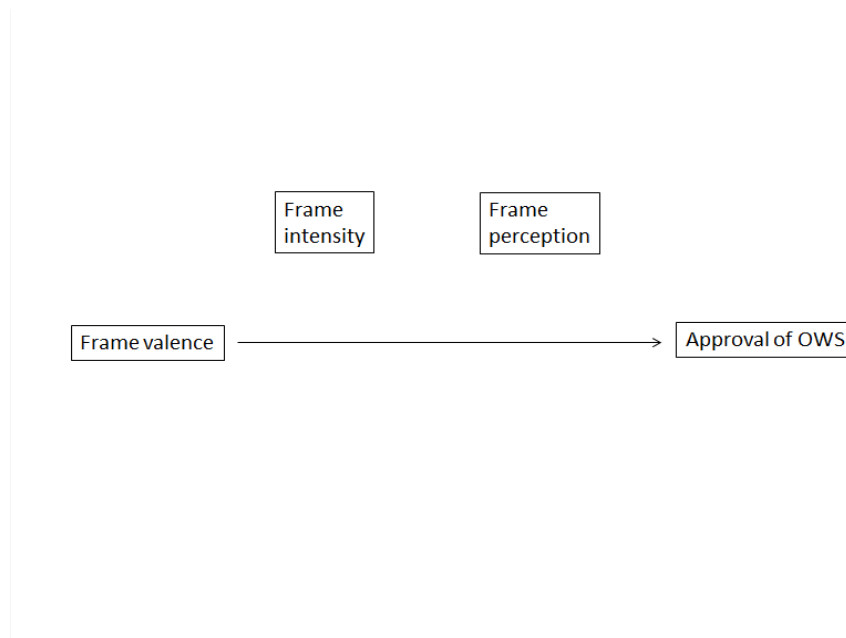approval of OWS) as illustrated in Figure 3. 1 below.

Figure 3.1: Model 1-Frame valance vs. Approval of OWS movement

What we don't know – but perhaps would like to learn in future research – is whether, and how, these variables affect the relationship between frame valence and approval of OWS. Both may, for example, act as moderators that affect the strength and direction for the frame valence / OWS approval connection as illustrated in Figure 3.2 below.
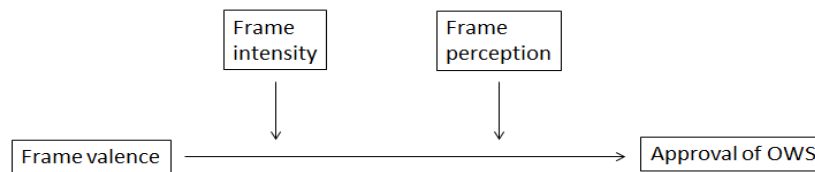
Figure 3.2: Model 2-Frame valence vs. Approval of OWS movement

Or frame perception may be a causal link (that is, a mediator) between frame valence and approval of OWS, with frame intensity moderating frame perception. For example, intensifying the frame may cause more participants to perceive the frame, which may, in turn, make participants more likely to exhibit the hypothesized effects on OWS approval as illustrated in Figure 1.3 below.
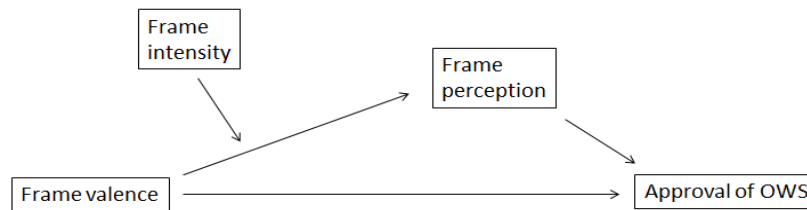
Figure 3.3: Model 3-Frame valance vs. Approval of OWS movement

Still other configurations are possible. Tests of these configurations could be undertaken using Andrew Hayes' process model SPSS macro.

The limitations of this study are also some issues that can be addressed in future research opportunities. Firstly, the sample that was used for this study comprised of only undergraduate students who were part of a rural university. Future research can include a sample from a larger population including rural and urban respondents. Also, the OWS movement in Nashville (which is the closest urban area) was not as high profile as the OWS movement in New York, this may be another reason for the respondents not paying much attention to the movement locally. Journalists are expected to be fair and unbiased, but they are also human beings who have opinions, and their opinion in turn influences how they see and report on society. Lippmann (1922) argues that a journalist's version of the truth is not only subjective, but also limited by her or his worldview. Some of the

consequences of these fundamental truths are made evident by the effects identified in the course of this study.

As the Nelson et al. (1997b) study asserts, framing works by altering the weight attached to different considerations held in long-term memory, and people who are better informed have easier access to it in their long-term memory. Future research can include an in-depth examination of media use of respondents about current events during the time period that the OWS movement was reported in the news before the movement lost momentum towards the end of 2012. This may be another limitation to the current study because the two experiments were conducted over a period of eight months (March-October 2012).

Also, demographic data that was collected for the purpose of this study can also be analyzed to see if variables such as age and education play a role in the way respondents' attitudes towards the OWS movement.

REFERENCES

Baxter, L. A., & Babbie, E. R. (2004). *The basics of communication research.* New York: Wadsworth/Thomson.

Benford, R. D & Snow, D. A. (2000). Framing processes and social movements: An overview and assessment. *Annual Review of Sociology, 26.* 611-639.

Beniger, J. R., & Gusek, J. A. (1995) The cognitive revolution in public opinion and communication research. In T. L. Glasser & C. T. Salmon (Eds.), *Public opinion and the communication of consent* (pp. 217-248). New York: Guilford Press.

Brosius, H. B., & Eps, P. (1995). Prototyping through key events. *European Journal of Communication, 10*, 391–412.

Chong, D., & Druckman, J. N. (2007). Framing theory. *Annual Review of Political Science, 10*, 103-126.

Derry, S. J. (1999). *A Fish called peer learning: Searching for common themes*. In A. M. O'Donnell & A. King (Eds.),

de Vreese, C. H.(2004). The effects of frames in political television news on audience perceptions of routine political news. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, *81*, 36–52.

de Vreese, C. H. (2005). News framing: Theory and typology. *Information Design Journal + Document Design 13 (1).* 51-62.

Druckman, J. N. (2001a). On the limits of framing effects: who can frame? *Journal of Politics* 63: 1041–1066.

Druckman, J. N. (2001b). The implications of framing effects for citizen competence. *Political Behavior, 23: 3*. 225-256.

Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Towards clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication, 43 (4),* 51-58.

Freedman, P (2000). The political logic of framing. Unpublished paper, University of Virginia.

Iyengar, S. (1991). *Is anyone responsible? How television frames political issues.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Iyengar, S. & Kinder, D. R. (1987). *News that matters: Television and American opinion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Jerit, J. (2006). Reform, rescue, or run out of money? Problem definition in the Social Security reform debate. *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics, 11*, 9–28.

Johnston, H. & Noakes,J. A. (2005). *Frames Of Protest: Social Movements And The Framing Perspective*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Kepplinger, H., M. & Habermeier, J. (1995). The Impact of Key Events on the Presentation of Reality. *European Journal of Communication.10*, 371-391

Kosicki, G. M., & McLeod, J. M. (1990). Learning from political news: Effects of media images and information-processing strategies. In S. Kraus (Ed.), Mass communication and political information processing (pp. 69-83). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

McCombs, M., Shaw, D. L., & Weaver, D. (1997). *Communication and democracy: Exploring the intellectual frontiers in agenda-setting theory.* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

McQuail, D. (1994). *Mass Communication Theory*. London: Sage.

Nelson, T, & Kinder, D. (1991). "Framing Effects Need Not Depend on Changes in Construct Accessibility." Presented at the third annual meeting of the American Psychological Society, Washington, DC.

Nelson, T., Clawson, R., & Oxley, Z. (1997). Media framing of a civil liberties conflict and its effect on tolerance. *American Political Science Review, 91,* 567–583.

Nelson, T. E., & Kinder, D. R. (1996). Issue frames and group-centrism in American public opinion. *Journal of Politics* 58: 1055–1078.

Nelson, T. E., & Oxley, Z. M. (1999). Issue framing effects and belief importance and opinion. *Journal of Politics* 61: 1040–1067.

Nelson, T. E., Clawson, R. A., & Oxley, Z. M. (1997a). Media framing of a civil liberties conflict and its effect on tolerance. *American Political Science Review* 91: 567–583.

Nelson, T. E., Oxley, Z. M., & Clawson, R. A. (1997b). Toward a psychology of framing effects. *Political Behavior* 19: 221–246.

Nelson, T. E., Willey, E. & Oxley, Z. M. (1998). Belief content, importance, and accessibility in issue opinion. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Boston, MA, September 3–6.

Nelson, Thomas E. (2000). Goals and values in the language of issue framing. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, DC, August 31–September 2.

Pan, Z., & Kosicki, G. M. (1993). Framing analysis: An approach to news discourse. *Political Communication*, *10,* 55–75.

Price, V., & Tweksbury, D. (1997). News values and public opinion: A theoretical account of media priming and framing. In G. A. Barett & F. J. Boster (Eds.), *Progress in Communication Sciences: Advances in persuasion.13,* 173-212. Greenwich, CT: Ablex.

Ryan, C. (1991). *Prime Time Activism.* Boston: South End.

Scheufele, D. A. (1999). Framing as a theory of media effects. *Journal of Communication, 49,* 103–119.

Simon, A., & Jerit, J. (2007). Towards a theory relating political discourse, media, and public opinion. *Journal of Communication*, 57, 254-271.

Snow, D. A. & Benford, R. D. (1992). Master Frames and Cycles of Protest. In Aldon D. Morris, D. A & McClurg, M. C (Eds), *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*, (pp. 133-155) New Haven: Yale University Press

Tewksbury, D. & Scheufele, D. A. (2009). News framing theory and research. In J. Bryant & M. B. Oliver (Eds.), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research* (pp. 17-33). New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis.

Tuchman, G. (1978). *Making news: A study in the construction of reality.* New York: Free Press.

Wilson, T. (1985). Urbanism and tolerance: A test of some hypotheses drawn from Wirth and Stouffer. *American Sociological Review, 50,* 117–123.

Wood, R. S. (2006). Tobacco's tipping point: The master settlement agreement as a focusing event. *Policy Studies Journal*, 34, 419-436.

Zaller, J. R. (1992). *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

APPENDICES

Appendix A
Instructions from Experiments 1 and 2

Participation in this project this is optional. You are not required to participate and if you choose not to, you will not be penalized. You will be given an opportunity for extra credit for your participation if you choose to participate.

First, please read the news article on the next page.

Then respond to the survey on the page after that. You may skip any items that you are unsure of, don't understand, or for any reason do not wish to answer. Your identity will not be revealed beyond the fact that an undergraduate student enrolled in a mass communication class during [spring / fall] 2012 completed this questionnaire. If you choose to fill out this survey, your responses may be used as data for a graduate student's research project here at MTSU.

Appendix B
Grassroots Civic Movement Frame Article from Experiment 1

Considering the Past and Future of Occupy Movement
By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
Published: March 21, 2012

With the summer of 2012 in sight, groups around the country associated with the Occupy movement say they are preparing for a new phase of larger marches and strikes. They hope to continue momentum and cast an even brighter glare on inequality and corporate greed. This transition is filled with opportunities: Can Occupy become a lasting force for change? Will public demonstrations do more to galvanize the public?

Though still loosely organized, the movement is putting down roots in many cities. Activists in Chicago and Des Moines have rented offices, a significant change for groups accustomed to holding open-air assemblies or huddling in tents in bad weather.

The Occupy Movement began on Sept. 17, 2011, when a diffuse group of activists began a loosely organized protest called Occupy Wall Street, encamping in Zuccotti Park, a privately owned park in New York's financial district. The protest was a stand against corporate greed, social inequality and the corrosive power of major banks and multinational corporations over the democratic process.

The group's slogan — "we are the 99 percent" — inspired people across the nation. The 1 percent refers to the haves: that is, the banks, the mortgage industry, the insurance industry, etc.; and the 99 percent refers to the have-nots: that is, everyone else.

Within weeks, similar demonstrations spread to dozens of other American cities, including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, Chicago and Boston, as well as cities in Europe, Asia and the Americas, drawing thousands of people. Occupy protests rapidly sprouted on major campuses across the country.

Whatever the long-term effects of the Occupy Movement, protesters succeeded in implanting "we are the 99 percent" into the cultural and political lexicon. Soon after the protests began, politicians began using "Occupy" lingo. Democrats in Congress began to invoke the "99 percent" to press for passage of President Obama's jobs act — but also to pursue action on mine safety, Internet access rules and voter identification laws, among others.

Appendix C
Neutral Frame Article from Experiment 1

Considering the Past and Future of Occupy Movement
By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
Published: March 21, 2012

With the summer of 2012 in sight, groups around the country associated with the Occupy movement say they are preparing for a new phase of larger marches and strikes. They hope to continue to draw attention to what they call inequality and corporate greed. But this transition is filled with questions: without the visible camps or clear goals, can Occupy become a lasting force? Will these activities do more to galvanize or alienate the public?

Though still loosely organized, the movement is present in many cities. Activists in Chicago and Des Moines have rented offices, a significant change for groups accustomed to holding open-air assemblies or huddling in tents in bad weather.

The Occupy Movement began on Sept. 17, 2011, when a diffuse group of activists began a loosely organized protest called Occupy Wall Street, encamping in Zuccotti Park, a privately owned park in New York's financial district. The protest was a stand against what demonstrators call negative and anti-social elements of American business, politics, and society.

The group's slogan — "we are the 99 percent" — drew attention across the nation. The 1 percent refers to the haves: that is, the banks, the mortgage industry, the insurance industry, etc.; and the 99 percent refers to the have-nots: that is, everyone else.

Within weeks, similar demonstrations spread to dozens of other American cities, including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, Chicago and Boston, as well as cities in Europe, Asia and the Americas, drawing thousands of people. Occupy protests occurred on major campuses across the country.

Whatever the long-term effects of the Occupy Movement, protesters succeeded in implanting "we are the 99 percent" into the cultural and political lexicon. Soon after the protests began, politicians began using "Occupy" lingo. Democrats in Congress began to invoke the "99 percent" to press for passage of President Obama's jobs act — but also to pursue action on mine safety, Internet access rules and voter identification laws, among others. Republicans pushed back, accusing protesters and their supporters of class warfare; Newt Gingrich called the "concept of the 99 and the one" both divisive and "un-American."

Appendix D
Dangerous Civic Disorder Frame Article from Experiment 1

Considering the Past and Future of Occupy Movement
By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
Published: March 21, 2012

With the summer of 2012 in sight, groups around the country associated with the Occupy movement say they are preparing for a new phase of larger marches and strikes. They hope to regain attention and cause more problems for successful businesses and law enforcement. But this transition is filled with risks: without the visible camps or clear goals, can Occupy survive? Will disruptive protests do more to alienate the public?

Though still loosely organized, the movement is appearing without warning in many cities. Activists in Chicago and Des Moines have rented offices, a significant change for groups accustomed to holding open-air assemblies or huddling in tents in bad weather.

The Occupy Movement began on Sept. 17, 2011, when a diffuse group of activists began a loosely organized protest called Occupy Wall Street, encamping in Zuccotti Park, a privately owned park in New York's financial district. The protest was a stand against business, financial success, and banks as well as capitalism and the American political system in general.

The group's slogan — "we are the 99 percent" — touched a raw nerve across the nation. The 1 percent refers to the haves: that is, the banks, the mortgage industry, the insurance industry, etc.; and the 99 percent refers to the have-nots: that is, everyone else.

Within weeks, similar demonstrations spread to dozens of other American cities, including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, Chicago and Boston, as well as cities in Europe, Asia and the Americas, drawing thousands of people. Occupy protests rapidly overwhelmed major campuses across the country.

Whatever the long-term effects of the Occupy Movement, protesters succeeded in implanting "we are the 99 percent" into the cultural and political lexicon. Soon after the protests began, politicians began using "Occupy" lingo. Republicans have pushed back against the movement, accusing protesters and their supporters of class warfare; Newt Gingrich called the "concept of the 99 and the one" both divisive and "un-American."

Appendix E
Post-test from Experiment 1

Questionnaire:

1.How do feel about the Occupy Wall Street movement overall? Would you say that you:

Strongly approve   approve   neither approve nor disapprove   disapprove

strongly disapprove

For the following statements about Occupy Wall Street, please indicate whether you

strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree:

2.Occupy Wall Street is dangerous

strongly agree   agree   neither agree nor disagree   disagree   strongly disagree

3.Occupy Wall Street is un-American

strongly agree   agree   neither agree nor disagree   disagree   strongly disagree

4.Occupy Wall Street is a nuisance

strongly agree   agree   neither agree nor disagree   disagree   strongly disagree

5.Occupy Wall Street is making America better.

strongly agree   agree   neither agree nor disagree   disagree   strongly disagree

6.Occupy Wall Street truly represents the interests of most Americans, or "the 99%"

strongly agree   agree   neither agree nor disagree   disagree   strongly disagree

7.If the goals of the Occupy Wall Street were realized, that would be a good thing for me

personally.

strongly agree   agree   neither agree nor disagree   disagree   strongly disagree

Please indicate whether you think the following statements about Occupy Wall Street are

true or false.

8.One of the main reasons for the Occupy Wall Street is income inequality.

true   false

9.Occupy Wall Street wants lower taxes for the wealthiest Americans.

true   false

10.Occupy Wall Street is more closely associated with the Democratic party than the

Republican Party

true   false

11.Occupy Wall Street was styles itself after the historical Boston Tea Party, when colonists

protesting taxes dumped tea into Boston Harbor.

true   false

12.Occupy Wall Street was first proposed by the Canadian organization Adbusters.

true   false

13.Before today, how much attention have you paid to stories about Occupy Wall Street

online?

a lot   some   a little   none

14.Before today, how much attention have you paid to stories about Occupy Wall Street on

television?

a lot   some   a little   none

15.Before today, how much attention have you paid stories about Occupy Wall Street on the

radio?

a lot   some   a little   none

16.Before today, how much have you discussed Occupy Wall Street with others?

a lot   some   a little   none

17.Before today, how much attention would you say that you have paid to Occupy Wall Street overall?

a lot   some   a little   none

18.Overall, would you say that the story you just read about Ocupy Wall Street portrayed the movement in a positive light, a negative light, or neutrally?

positive   neutral   negative

19.Are you: female   male

20.Your age in years: ____

21.Your class rank: freshman   sophomore   junior   senior

22.Your approximate GPA: ____

23.Would you describe yourself as: Democrat   Independent   Republican

24.And would you describe yourself as: very liberal   liberal   middle of the road conservative   very conservative

25.Do you agree with the Occupy Wall Street movement? Yes   No

26.Would you consider yourself a member of the Occupy Wall Street movement? Yes   No

27.Have you ever attended an Occupy event?   Yes   No

Appendix F
Debriefing from Experiments 1 and 2

This study aims to test your attitude towards the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement to see how the article that you read influences your attitude towards the movement. A New York Times article was chosen and edited in order to produce three different articles to suit the needs of the survey to study the effects of faming. One version of the article was designed to depict OWS in a relatively negative light, another version depicts OWS in a relatively positive light, and the third version of the article is neutral on OWS. We expect that, overall, people who read the negative article will report relatively negative attitudes toward OWS, those who read the positive article will report relatively positive attitudes toward OWS, and that the attitudes of those who read the neutral article will be in between. If you do not wish to submit your questionnaire, please be aware that you have the opportunity to tell the investigator now of your choice to not be a part of this study. You will not be penalized for doing so. If you go ahead and submit the questionnaire, then please hand your completed questionnaire to the investigator.

Be sure to sign the sheet with your name and M# so that the extra credit will be assigned to you.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns then please do not hesitate to contact the primary investigator or the co-investigator.

Primary Investigator: Reshma Pudota

Email: rp3d@mtmail.mtsu.edu

Co-investigator: Jason Reineke

Email: Jason.Reineke@mtsu.edu

Appendix G
Revised Grassroots Civic Movement Frame Article from Experiment 2

Considering the Past and Future of Occupy Movement
By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
Published: September 2, 2012

With the Occupy Wall Street protest's one-year anniversary in sight, groups around the country associated with the Occupy movement say they are preparing for a new phase of larger marches and strikes. They hope to continue momentum and cast an even brighter glare on inequality and corporate greed. This transition is filled with opportunities: Can Occupy become a lasting force for change? Will peaceful public demonstrations help to make the movement's voice heard, encourage more calls for greater equality, and inspire the public?

Though still loosely organized, the movement is rapidly gaining new members and support in many cities. Activists in Chicago and Des Moines have rented offices, a significant change for groups accustomed to holding open-air assemblies or huddling in tents in bad weather.

The Occupy Movement began on Sept. 17, 2011, when a diverse group of concerned citizens began a grass roots protest called Occupy Wall Street, by peacefully encamping in Zuccotti Park, a privately owned park in New York's financial district. The civil assembly was a stand against corporate greed, social inequality and the corrosive power of major banks and multinational corporations over the democratic process.

The group's slogan — "we are the 99 percent" — inspired people across the nation. The 1 percent refers to the ultra-wealthy, banks, and faceless multinational corporations; and the 99 percent refers to the rest of the public who the activists say have been taken advantage of by those people and institutions.

Within weeks, similar demonstrations grew rapidly of other American cities, including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, Chicago and Boston, as well as cities in Europe, Asia and the Americas, drawing thousands of people. Occupy protests rapidly sprouted and flourished on major college campuses across the country.

Whatever the long-term effects of the Occupy Movement, the citizens involved successfully implanted the idea of "we are the 99 percent" into the cultural and political lexicon.

Appendix H
Revised Neutral Article from Experiment 2

Considering the Past and Future of Occupy Movement
By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
Published: September 2, 2012

With the Occupy Wall Street protest's one-year anniversary in sight, groups around the country associated with the Occupy movement say they are preparing for a new phase of larger marches and strikes. They hope to continue to draw attention to what they call inequality and corporate greed. But this transition is filled with questions: without the visible camps or clear goals, can Occupy become a lasting force? Will these activities do more to galvanize or alienate the public?

Though still loosely organized, the movement is present in many cities. Activists in Chicago and Des Moines have rented offices, a significant change for groups accustomed to holding open-air assemblies or huddling in tents in bad weather.

The Occupy Movement began on Sept. 17, 2011, when a diffuse group of activists began a loosely organized protest called Occupy Wall Street, encamping in Zuccotti Park, a privately owned park in New York's financial district. The protest was a stand against what demonstrators call negative and anti-social elements of American business, politics, and society.

The group's slogan — "we are the 99 percent" — drew attention across the nation. The 1 percent refers to the haves: that is, the banks, the mortgage industry, the insurance industry, etc.; and the 99 percent refers to the have-nots: that is, everyone else.

Within weeks, similar demonstrations took place in dozens of other American cities, including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, Chicago and Boston, as well as cities in Europe, Asia and the Americas, drawing thousands of people. Occupy protests occurred on major campuses across the country.

Whatever the long-term effects of the Occupy Movement, protesters succeeded in implanting "we are the 99 percent" into the cultural and political lexicon.

Appendix I
Revised Dangerous Civic Disorder Article from Experiment 2

Considering the Past and Future of Occupy Movement
By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
Published: September 2, 2012

With the Occupy Wall Street protest's one-year anniversary in sight, groups around the country associated with the Occupy movement say they are preparing for a new phase of larger marches and strikes. They hope to regain attention and cause more problems for successful businesses and law enforcement. But this transition is filled with risks: without the visible camps or clear goals, can Occupy survive? Will the disruptive protests do more damage to public property, lead to more outbreaks of criminal behavior, and further marginalize the Occupy movement?

Though still loosely organized, the movement is taking over many cities at a disturbing rate. Activists in Chicago and Des Moines have rented offices, a significant change for groups accustomed to holding open-air assemblies or huddling in tents in bad weather.

The Occupy Movement began on Sept. 17, 2011, when a shadowy group of radicals began a disorganized protest called Occupy Wall Street, by illegally invading Zuccotti Park, a privately owned park in New York's financial district. The riotous demonstration was a stand against business, financial success, and banks as well as capitalism and the American political system in general.

The group's slogan — "we are the 99 percent" — touched a raw nerve across the nation. The 1 percent refers to the most successful and hard-working Americans, job creators, and businesses that drive the economy; and the 99 percent refers to the rest of the American public, who the often jobless, homeless, and sometimes criminal occupiers claim to represent.

Within weeks, similar demonstrations spread like a wildfire to dozens of other American cities, including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, Chicago and Boston, as well as cities in Europe, Asia and the Americas, creating disturbances and destruction around the globe. Occupy protests rapidly overwhelmed and shut down major college campuses across the country.

Whatever the long-term effects of the Occupy Movement, the ruffians involved forced the idea of "we are the 99 percent" into the cultural and political lexicon.

Appendix J
Experiment 2 Pre-test

This is a questionnaire about the Occupy Wall Street protests and movement. There are no

right or wrong answers. Please circle the response to each item that best indicates your views.

You may skip any items that you do not want to answer for any reason.

The following items are about how much attention you have paid to information about

Occupy Wall Street from various sources. Please indicate whether you've paid "a lot," "some,"

"a little" or no attention to information about Occupy Wall Street from the sources mentioned.

1. Before today, how much attention have you paid to stories about Occupy Wall Street

online?

a lot   some   a little   none

2. Before today, how much attention have you paid to stories about Occupy Wall Street on

television?

a lot   some   a little   none

3. Before today, how much attention have you paid stories about Occupy Wall Street on the

radio?

a lot   some   a little   none

4. Before today, how much have you discussed Occupy Wall Street with others?

a lot   some   a little   none

5. Before today, how much attention would you say that you have paid to information

about Occupy Wall Street overall?

a lot   some   a little   none

The next questions ask about your feelings and opinions regarding Occupy Wall Street. The first asks how much you approve or disapprove of OWS, and the rest present some statements about Occupy Wall Street and ask you to indicate how much you agree or disagree with those statements.

6. How do feel about the Occupy Wall Street movement overall? Would you say that you:

Strongly approve   approve   neither approve nor disapprove   disapprove   strongly disapprove

7. Occupy Wall Street is dangerous

strongly agree   agree   neither agree nor disagree   disagree   strongly disagree

8. Occupy Wall Street is un-American

strongly agree   agree   neither agree nor disagree   disagree   strongly disagree

9. Occupy Wall Street is a nuisance

strongly agree   agree   neither agree nor disagree   disagree   strongly disagree

10. Occupy Wall Street is making America better.

strongly agree   agree   neither agree nor disagree   disagree   strongly disagree

11. Occupy Wall Street truly represents the interests of most Americans, or "the 99%"

strongly agree   agree   neither agree nor disagree   disagree   strongly disagree

12. If the goals of the Occupy Wall Street were realized, that would be a good thing for me personally.

strongly agree   agree   neither agree nor disagree   disagree   strongly disagree

Next, please indicate whether you think the following statements about Occupy Wall Street are "true" or "false."

13. One of the main reasons for the Occupy Wall Street is income inequality.

true   false

14. Occupy Wall Street wants lower taxes for the wealthiest Americans.

true   false

15. Occupy Wall Street is more closely associated with the Democratic party than the Republican Party

true   false

16. Occupy Wall Street was styles itself after the historical Boston Tea Party, when colonists protesting taxes dumped tea into Boston Harbor.

true   false

17. Occupy Wall Street was first proposed by the Canadian organization Adbusters.

true   false

Finally, some questions about any involvement you may have personally had with Occupy Wall Street.

18.Do you agree with the Occupy Wall Street movement? Yes   No

19.Would you consider yourself a member of the Occupy Wall Street movement? Yes   No

20.Have you ever attended an Occupy event?   Yes   No

Appendix K
Experiment 2 Post-test

Here is another questionnaire about the Occupy Wall Street protests and movement. Some of

the questions are the same as before, some are new. Again, there are no right or wrong

answers. Please circle the response to each item that best indicates your views after reading

the article you were given. You may skip any items that you do not want to answer for any

reason.

First, here are a couple of questions about the article you just read.

1. How closely did you read the article?

very closely   somewhat closely   not very closely   I didn't read the article

2. Overall, would you say that the story you just read about Ocupy Wall Street portrayed

the movement in a positive light, a negative light, or neutrally?

positive   neutral   negative

The next questions ask about your feelings and opinions regarding Occupy Wall Street. The

first asks how much you approve or disapprove of Occupy Wall Street, and the rest present

some statements about Occupy Wall Street and ask you to indicate how much you agree or

disagree with those statements.

3. How do feel about the Occupy Wall Street movement overall? Would you say that you:

Strongly approve   approve   neither approve nor disapprove   disapprove   strongly

disapprove

4. Occupy Wall Street is dangerous

strongly agree   agree   neither agree nor disagree   disagree   strongly disagree

5. Occupy Wall Street is un-American

strongly agree   agree   neither agree nor disagree   disagree   strongly disagree

6. Occupy Wall Street is a nuisance

strongly agree   agree   neither agree nor disagree   disagree   strongly disagree

7. Occupy Wall Street is making America better.

strongly agree   agree   neither agree nor disagree   disagree   strongly disagree

8. Occupy Wall Street truly represents the interests of most Americans, or "the 99%"

strongly agree   agree   neither agree nor disagree   disagree   strongly disagree

9. If the goals of the Occupy Wall Street were realized, that would be a good thing for me personally.

strongly agree   agree   neither agree nor disagree   disagree   strongly disagree

Finally, some questions about yourself.

10. Are you: female   male

11. Your age in years: _____

12. Your class rank: freshman   sophomore   junior   senior

13. Your approximate GPA: _____

14. Would you describe yourself as:

 Democrat   Independent   Republican

15. And would you describe yourself as:

very liberal   liberal   middle of the road   conservative   very conservative

End Notes

1) Due to a clerical error, assignment was not random; GCM article packets were

distributed first, followed by DCD article packets, and finally NT packets.

Appendix L
IRB Approval Letter

**MIDDLE
TENNESSEE**
STATE UNIVERSITY

April 2, 2012

Reshma Pudota, Dr. Jason Reineke
Department of Journalism
rp3d@mtmail.mtsu.edu, Jason.Reineke@mtsu.edu

Protocol Title: "Framing and its effects on peoples perception of the Occupy Movement"

Protocol Number: 12-288

Dear Investigator(s),

I found your study to be exempt from Institutional Review Board (IRB) continued review. The exemption is pursuant to 45 CFR 46.101(b) (2). This is because your study involves the use of survey materials and the information was recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

You will need to submit an end-of-project report to the Office of Compliance upon completion of your research. Complete research means that you have finished collecting data and you are ready to submit your thesis and/or publish your findings. Should you not finish your research within the three (3) year period, you must submit a Progress Report and request a continuation prior to the expiration date. Please allow time for review and requested revisions. Your study expires on **April 2, 2015.**

Any change to the protocol must be submitted to the IRB before implementing this change. According to MTSU Policy, a researcher is defined as anyone who works with data or has contact with participants. Anyone meeting this definition needs to be listed on the protocol and needs to provide a certificate of training to the Office of Compliance. **If you add researchers to an approved project, please forward an updated list of researchers and their certificates of training to the Office of Compliance before they begin to work on the project.** Once your research is completed, please send us a copy of the final report questionnaire to the Office of Compliance. This form can be located at www.mtsu.edu/irb on the forms page.

Also, all research materials must be retained by the PI or **faculty advisor (if the PI is a student)** for at least three (3) years after study completion. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
Tyler Hubbard
Graduate Assistant to:
Emily Born
Compliance Officer
615-494-8918
eborn@mtsu.edu