‘Demonstrations, Riots and Uprisings’
Mediated Dissent in a Changing Communication Environment

Simon Cottle
PERSON OF THE YEAR

THE PROTESTER

FROM THE ARAB SPRING TO ATHENS, FROM OCCUPY WALL STREET TO MOSCOW
Past findings and beyond?
The important point is that the movement paid a high price for the publicity it claimed and needed. It entered into an unequal contest with the media: although it affected coverage, the movement was always the petitioner; the movement was more vulnerable, the media more determining.

(Gitlin 2004: 128)
ANARCHY IN THE UK

PM dashes back as riot terror spreads
FLAMING MORONS
THUGS AND THIEVES TERRORISE BRITAIN'S STREETS

Hard-up OAPs are forced to sell their homes so they can pay the bills

THE ANARCHY SPREADS

"To blame the cuts is immoral and cynical. This is criminality pure and simple"
Out of control: riots reach crisis point

- Fires burn across London on worst night of violence
- Trouble breaks out in Birmingham as tension builds
- Cameron flies back to confront escalating chaos
Mobs rule as police surrender streets

Rampaging gangs burn buildings and loot shops
Cameron flies home to chair emergency meeting

Streets of fire

London burns as riots spread
Cops in running battle with thugs
PM flies back for crisis summit
Fears grow over excessive sentencing as cases pile up

By Emily Dugan and Matt Thomas
*The Independent, Sunday, 14 August 2011*

As courts struggled to process the cases arising from last week's riots, fears were growing last night that disproportionate sentences were being handed down.

A mother of two was given a five-month sentence yesterday for accepting shorts stolen by someone else. Ursula Nevin, 24, was asleep during the riots, but she took the shorts, which were part of a stash of clothing taken by her flatmate Gemma Corbet from the Vans store.

Greater Manchester Police appeared triumphant at the news, posting on their official Twitter account: "Mum-of-two, not involved in disorder, jailed for FIVE months for accepting shorts looted from shop. There are no excuses!" They later apologised and deleted the message, after widespread criticism.

David Cameron made it clear on Thursday that he wanted tough sentencing for those who had taken part in the disorder. "Anyone charged with violent disorder and other serious offences should expect to be remanded in custody – and anyone convicted should expect to go to jail," he said.

Justice and welfare experts are concerned that draconian sentences could be handed out without due thought. On Thursday a 23-year-old was sent to prison for six months for stealing a £3.50 case of water from Lidl. A 43-year-old is still being held in prison for stealing items worth £1 from a newsagent.

Others believe the courts have not been hard enough – arguing that sentences of a few days, which some people have been given, do not reflect the seriousness of the harm they caused.

City of Westminster Magistrates' Court was in chaos yesterday, with lawyers describing "a complete shit fight" as hearings were rushed through. One said: "I've been here a day, and what with the heavy press presence too, the atmosphere has been even more pressured than usual."
Behind the curve: Twitter and the rioting

Day one: Saturday 6 August

20:30
Tottenham


two police cars near Tottenham police station set alight. Riots break out with bricks and petrol bombs thrown. Rumours suggest confrontation with 16-year-old girl was flashpoint.

Day two: Sunday 7 August

18:30
Enfield

Police called in to Enfield after petrol vandalises a police car and smashes two windows on Enfield High Street.

19:30
Early reports of petrol bomb and window smashing in Birmingham.

20:00
Car crash on North Circular Road, Clapham

21:00
Windows smashed and cars set alight in Enfield

23:00
Initial disturbances break out in Gloucester

Day three: Monday 8 August

16:30
Reports of a crowd throwing stones at a police van in Hackney

18:00
Giant Manchester police confirm disturbances in the city centre

20:00
Group of youths setting objects on fire in Croydon

21:00
 Violence in Liverpool on Smithdown Road and Lawrence Road

Day four: Tuesday 9 August

16:00
The Metropolitan Police announce operation of Croydon. Croydon

18:00
Gloucester Manchester police confirm disturbances in the city centre

20:00
A large police operation is underway in Liverpool.

23:00
Initial disturbances break out in Swansea

RESEARCH: John Burns-Murdoch, Paul Lewis, James Ball | GRAPHIC: Christine Oliver, Michael Robinson

Twitter use during the riots. Click image to see graphic.

Amid a growing censorship row, government sources said the home secretary did not expect to discuss closing social networks, but wanted to explore what measures the companies could take to help contain future disorder. Including how law enforcement agencies can use the sites more efficiently.

Riots database of 2.5m tweets reveals complex picture of interaction Facebook and Twitter in
Cameron ditches his pledge to shut down Twitter, Facebook and Blackberry during riots

By REBECCA CAMBER

Last updated at 7:44 AM on 26th August 2011

David Cameron's plan to shut down social networking sites to prevent disorder was ditched in a humiliating U-turn yesterday.

The Prime Minister vowed to look at banning thugs plotting violence from communicating on sites such as Facebook and Twitter or via instant messaging services such as BlackBerry Messenger.

All were said to have been used by rioters in the disturbances earlier this month.

But yesterday the Home Secretary Theresa May firmly killed off the prospect of any clampdown in the face of opposition from human rights groups and social networking companies.

In a summit with Facebook, Twitter and Research in Motion – makers of BlackBerry – the Home Secretary indicated that Mr Cameron's plan did not even merit discussion. She told the firms that she was not there to talk about restricting internet services. Instead Mrs May appealed for help, seeking advice on how law enforcement could more effectively use social media.

Social networking firms are said to have advised police to employ internet monitoring firms to help keep an eye on public chatter on the web.

More...

- Looter who took one lick of stolen ice-cream is jailed for 16 MONTHS
Space, time and genre
Developments and debates

- Political mediated control and transnational communications
- From the local to the global: scaling up and down
- Delegitimizing framing and political dramaturgy
- Public sphere or public screens
- Old media, new media (the politics of representation and politics of connectivity)
- Media systems and communication networks (for media ecology)
Political mediated control and transnational communications
From the local to the global: scaling up and down

1. Local actions resonating with transnational charge
2. Seeking international legitimation and support
3. Transnational issues mobilized in and through the local/national – ‘rooted cosmopolitans’
4. Global/transnational – ‘unrooted cosmopolitans’
Piracy Up-Linked: Sea-Shepherd and the Spectacle of Protest on the High Seas

David Crouch and Katarina Damjanov

... almost instantaneously images are spread across the globe via satellite up-links, webcams, and around-the-clock internet blogging. Sea Shepherd takes their environmental protest in this remote and unforgiving location, impossibly beyond everyday reach, and broadcasts it back to the world, disseminating it through the Internet and blogosphere; they constantly send out fresh broadcast-quality images and a barrage of news releases, twitters, and updates of events ... by staging their anti-whaling protest as spectacular “pirate” attacks, they also exploit elements of popular culture, tapping into the social imagination of a potentially transnational public sphere.
Delegitimizing framing and political dramaturgy
Delegitimizing framing and political dramaturgy

The Editor

The Sunday columnists

Dance macabre A techno fan faces Czech riot police

Those who believe the Mail and Times newspapers are becoming increasingly interchangeable could have pointed to yesterday’s editions of the Mail on Sunday and the Sunday Times as evidence. Pondering militant Islam’s disgust with the west in the former, Des McEwan said “even I am sickened by our debased, sex-obsessed society,” while Minette Marrin said in the latter we had been “confronted with our own decadence.”

“There is no such thing as restraint,” said McEwan. “Children are not taught it. So-called celebrities do not show it, and the idea of it is detested by those with power over our mass media... The aggressive materialism—which deludes us into thinking we have the right to own virtually anything we want—breeds ignorance and self-importance. Ignorance rules.”

“We have somehow created a society that is characterised by growing disorder, uncertainty and loss,” added Marrin. “For a long time now, Britain—or rather many of its institutions—has been suffering from a...
The Habermasian public sphere, which is based on the dialogic articulation of ideas and interests, establishes the ground for the formation of public opinion. Shared ideas form as interacting private individuals search for recognition ... I suggest that cyberspace provides its participants with more or less fair conditions for this kind of interaction. It moreover provides participants with the information they need to evaluate the validity of claims made in the course of this interaction. And it gives them the opportunity to participate anonymously, with limited fear of social or political threat. In fundamentalist societies in particular, as in the example of Iran, cyberspace provides its users with more reliable and significant means of participation in the formation of public opinion. 

(Nazanin Ghanavizi, chapter 18)
Public sphere or public screens

In comparison to the rationality, embodied conversations, consensus, and civility of the public sphere, the public screen highlights dissemination, images, hypermediacy, spectacular publicity, cacophony, distraction, and dissent. We have focused on the image event as one practice of the public screen because it highlights the public screen as an alternative venue for participatory politics and public opinion formation that offers a striking contrast to the public sphere.

(DeLuca and Peeples, 2002: 145)
Old media... new media
Old media, new media
Media systems and communication networks

Figure 1.1: World News Ecology

Western Corporate Media
- News Agencies
  - Reuters, APTN, AFP, Bloomberg

National/Commercial
- NBC, CBS, ITV,

Transnational/Global
- Euronews, BBC World TV & Radio, bbc.co.uk,

Alternative News and New Social Movements
- Indymedia, Amnesty International, Greenpeace, Human Rights Watch, Mizzima

Contra-flows

Contra-flows

Peripheral Regions/Nations
- Diasporic News Media
  - (Al-Jazeera, aljazeera.net, ZEE TV, CCT)

New Media Networks
- (blogosphere, warblogs, citizen journalism, YouTube, Ogilsh, Military.com, insurgent postings...)

National/Commercial
Throwing punches and mowing them down with motorbikes: The shocking videos which 'prove brutal police overstepped the mark with Wall Street protesters'

- Videos show police 'attacking protesters, punching them and mowing them down with their motorbikes'
- Shocking images suggest authorities have 'gone too far'
- Officers now gear up for weekend of violent clashes across the country
- Protesters jubilant after trying to confront NYC Mayor Bloomberg last night
- Attempted to deliver a petition while he was at Manhattan restaurant Cipriani

By MARK DUELL and PAUL BENTLEY
Last updated at 6:16 PM on 15th October 2011

The police have been accused of shocking brutality after videos emerged showing officers in New York punching Occupy Wall Street protesters and mowing them down on motorbikes.

As demonstrations turned bitterly violent, hundreds of protesters clashed with police as they marched in Manhattan - jumping over barriers, pushing over police scooters and blocking traffic.

Officers in turn seem to have responded in the most draconian manner. In one clip a policeman appears intentionally to run over a protester, trapping his leg under his motorbike's back wheel.

Scroll down for videos

Heavy handed? Police have been accused of brutality after footage has emerged showing officers mowing down protesters on their motorbikes.
...Riot police and soldiers are beating monks... I saw a truck full of police with guns... They are using tear-gas bombs against the crowd... Buddhist monks are now chanting: “All humans be free from killing and torturing”... A monk was beaten to death while he was praying... The military has been ordered to shoot... About 200 people were hauled off on to the trucks and driven away... One patient died on arriving in hospital – four are still in a bad way... They are starting a crackdown... The junta is reducing the internet connection bandwidth... I think they will cut off communication... We are so afraid..."
Bahrain’s secret terror

Desperate emails speak of genocide as doctors who have treated injured protesters are rounded up

Julie Burchill
If only every woman could have Cindy Crawford’s brains

Steve Richards
When did republicanism become taboo in the UK?

John Sentamu
Is the Big Society big enough for honest fairness?

sponsors The Independent Earth Day supplement
Cell phones, camels and the global call for democracy
Camels – symbolism and dramaturgy *for* democracy
The global call for democracy: journalism getting close-up and personal
Here Are The Journalists Who Have Been Harassed, Attacked, Or Detained In Cairo

Joseph Alexiou  |  Feb. 4, 2011, 6:58 PM  |  4,423  |  5

The other night CNN’s Ben Wedeman, the network’s correspondent in Cairo, tweeted that it was likely there was going to shortly be a crackdown on media in Egypt. And sadly he was correct.

Many of the stories coming out Cairo this week were about journalists being threatened, arrested, assaulted or detained.

Fox’s Greg Palkot and Olaf Wiig appear to have suffered the worst: On Wednesday they were severely beaten and hospitalized.

But it’s sadly not limited to them.

ABC’s Erin McGlaughlin and Joanna Suarez compiled a list of journalists who have been in some way threatened, attacked or detained while reporting in Egypt.

It’s a lot of people (at least 40). Let’s hope it doesn’t get any bigger.

Click here to see the journalists >

View As One Page

Please follow The Wire on Twitter and Facebook.

Tags: People, CNN, NBC, ABC, Anderson Cooper, Christiane Amanpour, Violence, Egypt, Protest, Features | Get Alerts for these topics »
Cross-section of Egyptian society attend protests

1 February 2011 Last updated at 19:41

Egyptian protesters are holding huge rallies in Cairo and other cities as they step up their efforts to force President Hosni Mubarak from power.

Journalists at the scene estimated that hundreds of thousands of people - men, women and children from a cross-section of Egyptian society were there, although in the absence of official estimates, there is no way of finding out the exact numbers.

George Alagiah went to meet some of the protesters.

Read More

Mass protest fills central Cairo        Egypt protesters use voice tweets
- End -
Media and the Arab Uprisings of 2011

- State controlled Arab media, blind western media
- Media, consumerism and democracy
- Media conviviality in everyday life
- Facilitating/communicating protest
- Facilitating repressive state responses
- Media contagion
- International recognition and protest legitimization
- Media and the global village of repressive states
- Human rights surveillance and the responsibility to protect
- Media systems & communications maintaining democratic momentum
Who’s Reporting the Protests? Converging practices of citizen journalists and two BB World Service newsrooms, from Iran’s election protests to the Arab uprisings.

Maximillian T. Hänska-Ahy and Roxanna Shapour
Table 6.2  Social groups labelling Handsworth 1985: the event

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Criminal</th>
<th>Riot</th>
<th>Trouble</th>
<th>Incident</th>
<th>Rebellion</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>77.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politician</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall usage</td>
<td>71 16.6</td>
<td>291 68.2</td>
<td>48 11.2</td>
<td>15 3.5</td>
<td>2 0.5</td>
<td>427 100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: percentages indicate frequencies in usage of event terms in each social group; overall usage indicates each term’s occurrence as percentage of all event terms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criminal/violence</td>
<td>‘violence’, ‘orgy of looting’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riot</td>
<td>‘riots’, ‘rioting’, ‘Handsworth riots’,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trouble/disturbance</td>
<td>‘troubles’, ‘disturbances’, ‘disorder’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incident/event</td>
<td>‘incident’, ‘event’, ‘occurrence’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Success stories from the Avaaz movement worldwide**

**Breaking the Middle East Blackout**

Funded by donations from almost 30,000 Avaazers, an Avaaz team is working closely with the leadership of democracy movements in Syria, Yemen, Libya and more to get them high-tech phones and satellite internet modems, connect them to the world's top media outlets, and provide communications advice. We've seen the power of this engagement – where our support to activists has created global media cycles with footage and eyewitness accounts that our team helps distribute to CNN, BBC, Al Jazeera and others. The courage of these activists is unbelievable – a Skype message read 'state security searching the house, my laptop battery dying, if not online tomorrow I'm dead or arrested.' He's ok, and together we're helping to get his and many other voices out to the world.

**Worldwide Solidarity for Egypt**

In the darkest hours of their struggle for liberation from Mubarak, Egyptians told the world they needed solidarity – and Avaaz members answered the call. 600,000 of us around the world signed messages of support carried by Al Jazeera broadcasts straight into Tahrir Square – helping to sustain a movement fueled by hope through some of its darkest and most uncertain hours.

**Mubark's Billions, Frozen**

When Mubarak left power in Egypt, he tried to take his stolen fortune with him – but within days, more than half a million of us petitioned the G20's Finance Ministers to immediately freeze his billions, delivering the message with a 'protest pyramid' built opposite the Eifel Tower during the financial summit in the center of Europe, in the summer of 2011.
Demonstrations, Riots, and Uprisings: mediated dissent in a changing communication environment

Professor Simon Cottle
General editor, "Global Crisis and the Media"

Dr Bart Cammaerts
Chair, LSE

Suggested hashtag for Twitter users: #lsecomms