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# **Beyond twenty cents: the impact of the representation of violence on the coverage of the Brazilian protests of June 2013 by the mass media**

**Margarida Gorecki Telles,**  
MSc in Media, Communication and Development

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# **Beyond twenty cents: the impact of the representation of violence on the coverage of the Brazilian protests of June 2013 by the mass media**

**Margarida Gorecki Telles**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation examines the impact of the representation of violence on the overall coverage of the Brazilian protests of June 2013 by two Brazilian newspapers. The wave of demonstrations that erupted in the country was lead by Movimento Passe Livre, a horizontal and nonpartisan social movement, and had results beyond the accomplishment of their claim: the revocation of a recent increase in the transportation fare. The mass media coverage of the protests was abundant and revealed a struggle over meaning between social movements, the authorities and conservative media companies, where the representation of violence had an important role. This dissertation aims to bridge a gap between the theories of political opportunity structures, the use of the logic of damage, the policing of protests, and mediation. The aim of this study is to discuss to what extent the representation of the violence by the mass media had an impact on the opportunities and constrains faced by protesters in the Brazilian Revolts of June 2013. In order to achieve this goal, a conceptual framework based on the theories of framing (Entman, 2007), the protest paradigm (McLeod & Hertog, 1999) and the mediation opportunity structure (Cammaerts, 2012) was adopted. Research was conducted combining content analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis, in order not only to evaluate trends and patterns of the media coverage of protests, but also to discuss the dynamic processes of the negotiation of meaning between social actors, as well as the presence of power relationships within media discourses. Some of the main findings were the significant use by newspapers of frames that delegitimised and demonised protesters, and the presence of a 'law and order' discourse that represented the social movement as illegitimate and protected the government and authorities.

**Key words:** protests; logic of damage; mediation opportunity structure; protests in Brazil

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## INTRODUCTION

‘What a coincidence: when there’s no police, there’s no violence’  
- Hymn sang by protesters (Ortellado, Judensnaider, Lima, & Pomar, 2013: 164)

Twenty cents of the Brazilian real; the equivalent of five pence. That was the reason for the greatest outburst of protests that Brazil witnessed in 20 years. The wave of demonstrations started on 6 June in São Paulo, lead by Movimento Passe Livre (MPL), a horizontal and nonpartisan social movement that defends the social right to public transportation (Movimento Passe Livre, 2013: 15) and demanded the revocation of a recent increase of R\$0,20 in the transportation fare. Initially small in scope, the protesters engaged in repertoires of collective action (Tilly, 1986: 2) such as the logic of damage (Diani & Della Porta, 2005: 174), making use of symbolic violence. Yet, it was only after activists faced disproportional acts of repression from the police that the MPL gained more validity and the number of supporters increased expressively, achieving on 17 June approximately 250,000 people across 77 cities of Brazil (Secco, 2013: 73). On the 19 June, after meeting with the city mayor, Movimento Passe Livre achieved their objective and the transport fares were reduced.

The role of the media in this process was crucial, as social movements need the media to guarantee more mobilization, the validation of their claims and the enlargement of their scope (Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993: 116). The so-called Revolts of June received high levels of media attention, not only by Brazilian outlets but also by international ones, which had foreign correspondents in the country for the occasion of the FIFA Confederations Cup. It has been argued that this media presence, and especially the representation of the violence by demonstrators and the police repression, were crucial elements for the outcomes of this protest wave (Secco, 2013: 73), when more people started to support the MPL not only because of their claims but also to march in favour of the democratic right to protest. However, the intersection between the media, social movements, political opportunity structures and violence is still understudied (Wisler & Giugni, 1999: 171). Only a few studies (Bezerra & Grillo, 2014; Cammaerts & Jiménez-Martínez, 2014; Ortellado et al., 2013) have approached the role of media in the Revolts of June, and their observations were not based on extensive empirical research. Hence, little was concluded about the impact of the representation of violence by the media in the coverage of the Brazilian protests.

Not only does the intersection of these fields lack academic attention, but it also needs urgently to be debated by media producers. The protests of June 2014 achieved their goal but the wave of demonstrations did not stop, gaining new strength with the World Cup in July 2014, where again police repression was intense during protests. And since the country will soon host another international event, the Olympic Games of 2016, it is possible that new cycles of protests will arise. Given that the media coverage help to shape how society and the authorities might respond to the protesters' claims (Della Porta, 1996: 84; Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993: 117; Rosie & Gorringer, 2009: 1), as well as how activists might calculate their chances of success in demonstrations and therefore choose their repertoires of contentious action (Cammaerts, 2012: 122), the study of the Revolts of June 2013 can help to elucidate this new and complex political scenario in Brazil.

The gap in the literature as well as the need to understand this new Brazilian political scenario were the starting point for this dissertation. The purpose of the research is to assess the impacts of the representation of the violence in the overall coverage of the protests of June 2013 by the Brazilian media. The literature review chapter summarizes the main studies in the field of political opportunity structures, violence and policing of protests, and argues that they need to be connected to studies of the mass media. It is suggested that the combination of the framing theory of Entman (2007) with the protest paradigm (McLeod & Hertog, 1999) and the concept of mediation opportunity structures (Cammaerts, 2012) offer interesting tools to explore this intersection. In the methodology section, it is explained why the combination of content analysis with Fairclough's (1992) critical discourse analysis was chosen to analyse 222 news articles from two Brazilian newspapers. Finally, observations are made regarding the results obtained, connecting the findings to the existing literature, and recommendations for further studies are made.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Recent waves of protests such as those in Brazil, Turkey or Egypt have attracted media attention lately, but public manifestations have long been used as tools to demand changes, with the first record of mass demonstration dating from the 1830s when British Chartists protested for political rights for working people. These types of action are part of what Tilly and Tarrow (2007: 4) define as contentious politics, and involve three elements: actors must make demands bearing on someone else's interest; there must be coordinated effort by some group; and governments must be involved as targets, third parties or initiators of claims. The

authors affirm that the participation of the state in this equation is extremely important, since the government makes rules of contention, defining who can make certain claims and by what means, as well as having control over means of coercion such as armies, the police forces, courts and prisons.

In this context, in order to make claims to political actors, social movements engage in contentious performances such as mass demonstration. With the diffusion of mass media, those performances are no longer witnessed only by people located in the neighbourhood of the protests, but by a wide public (Tilly & Tarrow, 2007: 13). In this section, it will be explained how mediation affects opportunity structures, policing, and the media framing of violence in protests.

### **Political Opportunity Structure and its limitations**

In recent years, the focus of research and analysis on Political Opportunity Structures (POS) gained popularity in the literature on social movements (Benford & Snow, 2000: 628; Koopmans & Olzak, 2004: 201). Since the term first started to be used in the 1970s (Gamson & Meyer, 1996: 23), there has been controversy over its scope and meaning. One of the most applied definitions was devised by Tarrow and Tilly (2007), and claims that '[p]olitical opportunities structures refers to features of regimes and institutions (eg. Splits in the ruling class) that facilitate or inhibit a political actor's collective action and to changes in those features' (Tilly & Tarrow, 2007: 49).

Yet the concept of POS has been criticised for being elusive, leading to different interpretations and uses by scholars (Gamson & Meyer, 1996: 24–25), which may lead to the interpretation of any environmental change to be seen as an opportunity structure (Tarrow, 2005: 164). Della Porta (1995: 11) condemns the POS' previous definitions not only for lacking emphasis in repression, but also for ignoring what she calls the policing of protests. The author pertinently argues that police control of protests is an important barometer of the POS available to activists, once it indicates the state's attitudes, and therefore influences not only the opportunities and constraints of social movements, but also the result of their manifestations. Those topics will be explored in what follows.

## **Policing of protests and Violence**

Before exploring the relations and consequences of policing to the media coverage of protests, it is important to start by outlining what is understood here by violence, since many definitions of the term adopted in academic debate lack neutrality (Della Porta, 1995: 2). The use of one single definition that embraces all sorts of violence is rather utopian, so this dissertation will follow the partial definition presented by Della Porta and Tarrow (1986: 614–615) because of its focus on the strategic use of violence by actors. The authors describe violent acts in terms of collective actions where the main intention is to display physical strength, or the outcome is damage to people or things. Nevertheless, it is important to observe that the differentiation between violence against people and violence against things does not always exist in real life, legally and in terms of media representation and public perception (Cammaerts, 2013: 3).

The use of violence is an important part of the repertoire of collective actions of social movements, defined as the combination of means and resources that a social movement can use to make claims (Tilly, 1986: 2). Della Porta and Diani affirm that protesters might choose between three main tactics when protesting: the logic of number, the logic of bearing witness, and the logic of damage. This last tactic might be used as a symbolic rejection to the oppression of the system and the state, but also as a form of obtaining media attention (Diani & Della Porta, 2005: 174). Nevertheless, this kind of violence could be used by the police and the government to delegitimize protesters, framing them as dangerous criminals or even terrorists (Juris, 2005: 416).

The definition of policing of protest can also carry ideological elements. Della Porta defines the term as ‘the police handling of protest events’ (Della Porta, 1996: 62), considering it a more neutral description for what protestors or civil rights defenders usually refer to as ‘repression’ and the state as ‘law and order.’

Wisler and Giugni (1999: 171) raise an important point about the work of authors such as Della Porta on policing: they often neglect the effect media has on policing of protests. The authors argue that the attention of media, which they call ‘the media spotlight’, influences the police’s attitudes (Wisler & Giugni, 1999: 173). At the same time, protesters might well face opportunities and constraints linked to the presence of media in demonstrations, as will be explored in the following section.

## **Mass Media and Mediation Opportunity Structures**

According to Castells, power is the most central process in society since power relationships are what define values and institutions and enable some social actors to acquire disproportionate benefits when compared to others (Castells, 2013: 10). Today, an important part of the interaction between political authorities and social movements happens through mediation (Koopmans, 2004: 367), and how news media frame protests, display their claims and give voice to activists and opponents is part of what Cottle (2008: 854) calls ‘the media politics of dissent’. Media power is a central part of this equation, and can be defined as the concentration of symbolic power in media institutions that is used for ‘constructing reality’ (Couldry, 2000: 4).

While the role of alternative media is gaining space in the field of social movement studies (see Atton, 2001; Kahn & Kellner, 2008; and Tremayne, 2006), the centrality of the mainstream media is still present when mediating the politics of dissent to a broad public (Cottle, 2008: 854). The notion that people rely on mass media for images, guiding information and recognition of public values (Gitlin, 2003: 1) is still valid<sup>1</sup>. Although today new technologies provide tools for a wider diversity of reports on demonstrations (Kahn & Kellner, 2008: 34), many ordinary people, including activists, do not have the time or the means to access independent information from primary sources, and therefore what most people know about politics is what they obtain from the mass media. (Koopmans, 2004: 379). Consequently, the interpretation and perception of political opportunities structures is influenced and even structured by the mass media (Koopmans, 2004: 379).

Mass media is understood in this dissertation as large scale companies owned by the state or private groups, structured vertically and staffed by professionals, focused on homogeneous audiences and carriers of discourse and representations of reality (Carpentier, Lie, & Servaes, 2003: 56). Although scholars tend to contemplate mainly political institutions when approaching political opportunity structures, it has been argued (Scott & Street, 2000: 231) that they should also incorporate media and new media among the main factors that motivate people to take action.

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<sup>1</sup>A recent study in Brazil found that 81% of the executives interviewed believe that newspapers are the most reliable source of information (Instituto Máquina de Pesquisa, 2014).



The increasing role of media for protester's POS has made some (Cammaerts, 2012: 130) argue that the media is not only one aspect of the POS, but should be considered actually as a separated type of opportunity structure. Termed a mediation opportunity structure, this innovative concept comprises the triad of the mainstream media opportunity structure, the discursive opportunity structure and the networked opportunity structure (Cammaerts & Jiménez-Martínez, 2014: 46–47), with the first element of the triad being the most relevant for this research.

Nevertheless, a mainstream media opportunity structure might create a dilemma for activists. If on the one hand the mass media can provide visibility to protesters and help to promote their claims and recruit new members, on the other hand no media attention is usually given to the majority of peaceful protests (McCarthy, McPhail, & Smith, 1996: 494). One alternative to protesters would then be to engage in more disruptive and spectacular demonstrations, that are more likely to gain media attention but equally expected to be negatively reported (Cammaerts, 2013: 6). A good example of this negative media coverage of protests can be found in the early but still influential (Cottle, 2008: 856) study of Halloran (1970) on the anti-Vietnam War demonstration in London. The author argues that there is a good chance for the coverage of protests to focus on violence and confrontation, isolating it from antecedent conditions, and that the entire coverage will usually produce a negative impression of protesters (Halloran, 1970: 315).

Many scholars affirm that this negative bias of the mass media toward protests can be the result of the vertical structure of media companies, their ownership and relation to the state. According to the propaganda model developed by Herman and Chomsky (1995: vv), the media propagandizes ideologies aligned to powerful societal interests that finance those media groups. The authors claim that this is not usually done by clear interventions in the work of journalists, but by selecting those who gain a voice and what are the priorities of the staff. Gitlin observes a similar pattern, acknowledging that this framing selection is embedded in the routine of journalists in activities such as accepting what the editors consider newsworthy, using analytical frameworks provided only by authorities and ignoring ideological assumptions or political consequences of their work (Gitlin, 2003: 12).

The propaganda model, although highly influential, has been criticized by many for not acknowledging that media corporations might have divergent political views (Lehrer, 2006: 68), for being too deterministic and with no space for opposition (Ryan, 1991: 15) or even for assigning an excessively passive role to journalists (Goodwin, 1994: 109). Yet, one of the most

coherent alternatives to the propaganda model when explaining the media bias of coverage of politics of dissent is the consensus paradigm. According to Hall (1981: 163), in this paradigm media would frame the world based on the perception of the social order as a consensus and a model of 'normal' behavior, while any deviant action would be a sickness or an act of corruption. In order to further investigate the consensus paradigm and its applications in the coverage of protests by the mass media, the next section will explore media framing.

### **Media framing and social order**

Framing theory offers important tools to understand how frames can be embedded in texts, and therefore how they influence power relations and the way people perceive reality. (Entman, 1993: 51–52). Nevertheless, the concept of media framing must be carefully defined, since this term has been largely used in different fields (Benford & Snow, 2000: 611) to characterize distinctive research approaches (Entman, 1993: 52; Scheufele, 1999: 103).

One of the most influential definitions of framing was shaped by Goffman (1975: 10–11), who suggests that people need frames to act as cognitive structures that guide them to perceive and interpret reality (Kendall, 2011: 8). Nevertheless, Entman (1993) presents a less passive definition of frames, which might address the process of media framing better. The author claims that:

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described. (Entman, 1993: 53)

Therefore, framing could lead to a bias in the content, where patterns in mediated communication benefits one side of the conflict (Entman, 2007: 166). Gitlin adopts a similar position to Entman's when analysing the frames used in the representation of the New Left movement by the media in the US, and identifies recurrent patterns, such as the trivialisation and marginalisation of protesters (2003: 27–28). Inspired by Gitlin and drawing on a number of studies of media framing of protests, as well as in the idea of the maintenance of the status quo presented in the consensus paradigm, scholars suggested that the set of framing strategies used more frequently by the mass media constitutes a 'protest paradigm' (Xu, 2013: 2414). The term first used by Chan and Lee (1984) was later adopted by McLeod (2007) and defined as 'a set of news coverage patterns that typifies mainstream media coverage' (McLeod, 2007: 185). Therefore, when covering social protests, journalists would

choose among a limited number of frames and look for information to complete these stories' templates, and, instead of seeking to deeply understand the topic, approach new aspects of it (McLeod & Hertog, 1999: 312).

The main frames determined by the protest paradigm and closely linked to the maintenance of the status quo according to McLeod & Hertog (1999: 186–188) are:

- 1 - *Newsframes*, the narrative structure used by the journalists to create the story
- 2- *Reliance on official sources and official definitions*
- 3 - *Invocation of public opinion*, generally through opinion polls and bystander's comments, with the intent to point out differences between the protesters and the rest of the population
- 4- *Delegitimation*, portraying the protests as futile, pointless or even irrational
- 5- *Demonisation*, identifying potential threats and negative side effects of the protests, such as damage to property or traffic jams.

Not only can such frames stereotype protesters and downplay their goals, but the results of this type of framing by the media can also be the creation of moral panics, a term coined by Cohen (1972) and defined by Marsh and Melville (2001: 2) as 'an exaggerated response to a type of behavior that is seen as a social problem'.

The protest paradigm offers a useful link between the consensus paradigm, social movement theory and media framing. However, no literature has applied the protest paradigm to analyse how mass media represents violence in protests and what the impacts of the logic of damage are to the media's opportunity structure for social movements. Those gaps will be the starting point for this research.

## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH QUESTION**

The previous section highlighted some of the main topics on the academic debate regarding Political Opportunity Structures and the use of violence by protesters and the police, arguing that the police control of protests influences the opportunities and constraints of activists (Della Porta, 1995: 11). The literature review has also suggested possible gaps in those theories, such as the lack of significant works connecting POS to the use of violence in protests. At the same time, it has been argued that a significant body of literature on the impacts of the mediation for the POS is lacking. Hence, the mediation opportunity structure

(Cammaerts, 2012) could offer an interesting conceptual tool to study the influence of the media in the opportunities and constraints faced by social movements. Some studies (Cammaerts, 2012) have explored this intersection of fields, but with a few exceptions (Cammaerts & Jiménez-Martínez, 2014; Cammaerts, 2013) none have connected the theories regarding policing of protests and the use of violence as part of the repertoire of collective action to the field of mediation.

Thus, this dissertation intends to draw on the concept of Political Opportunity Structures, defined by Tilly and Tarrow (2007: 49) as features of regimes or institutions that enable or inhibit a social movement's collective action, as well as Della Porta's (1995: 11) considerations over the important role of the policing of protests, in order to explore in the light of the mediation opportunity structure how violence may interfere in the coverage of protests by the mass media, and therefore change its POS.

In order to operationalize the research, framing will be adopted as a tool, following Entman's (1993: 53) definition, previously explained in the literature review. The use of framing has been questioned for just highlighting descriptions of media patterns (Kolbe & Burnett, 1991: 244), but when a more interpretative approach is adopted, framing provides opportunities for the examination not only of trends and patterns on journalistic content, but also of dynamic processes of the negotiation of meaning, as well as the relationships within discourses (Reese, 2007: 152). Therefore, this research will adopt both a quantitative and qualitative approach to framing.

Although the scope of the research proposed here is small, this topic cries out to be explored. The adoption of the protest paradigm's frames in the coverage of demonstrations can have serious consequences, since activists who feel that their voices are not being heard can diverge from healthy discourses and escalate violent practices (McLeod, 2007: 186). By focusing on protest activities instead of exploring socio-political issues that lead to the claims made by activists, the media may also lead to the preservation of the status quo, instead of creating a debate that promotes social change (Xu, 2013: 2414). In developing countries such as Brazil, if the media acts like a 'guard dog' (Donohue, Tichenor, & Olien, 1995) of the order and the elite's interests instead of a 'watchdog' of social rights, the overcoming of social disparities might be threatened.

Based on the conceptual framework presented above, this research project will attempt to provide quantitative and qualitative findings in order to answer the following question:

RQ: How did the representation of violence impact the coverage of the protests of June 2013 in São Paulo made by two Brazilian newspapers?

In order to deepen the discussion, this question will be supported by the following sub-questions (SQ):

SQ1: Did the presence of violence in stories increase the visibility of the claims of Movimento Passe Livre in the coverage of protests?

SQ2: To what extent can the protest paradigm be applied to this coverage?

SQ3: How are the protesters represented by the mass media?

SQ4: How do newspaper's authors engage in the discourse of 'law and order' and the maintenance of the status quo?

## **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

In order to operationalise the research question, two methodologies were chosen: Content Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The combination of one quantitative and one qualitative method was selected for a number of reasons, explained below.

### **The need for validation**

Previous articles have provided comments and perceptions regarding the media coverage of the Brazilian protests of June 2013 (Cammaerts & Jiménez-Martínez, 2014) and even the representation of the violence by the media (Bezerra & Grillo, 2014), but in terms of methodology the strength and validity of those perceptions need to be established and quantified. My research question also demands a systematic analysis of the content of the coverage of protests of June 2013, in order to observe how the representation of violence impacted the overall situation.

Content analysis perfectly addresses those needs, since it is a research technique that allows the objective, systematic and quantitative description of texts (Berelson, 1952: 489). When the researcher has a strong theoretical framework, this method facilitates the drawing of conclusions from content evidence, without the necessity of gaining access to communicators (Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 1998: 30). It was chosen not to interview the journalists who wrote the

selected body of text, as this research is not centrally focused on the process of news production. Opinion polls or focus groups with readers were also discarded, as this research is not intended to analyse the impact of the representation of violence by the media upon audiences.

Another advantage provided by content analysis is the possibility of dealing with large amounts of data (Daniel Riffe et al., 1998: 31; Krippendorff, 2004: 19). During the coverage of the Brazilian protests of June 2013 by newspapers, some days had over 40 articles focusing on the subject. Therefore, it would not be appropriate to select only a qualitative method of analysis and still analyse a representative amount of the coverage in order to infer trends and impacts of the coverage.

Since content analysis aims to produce a ‘big picture’ of the studied media, presenting trends, patterns and absences in vast numbers of texts, it is well suited for the analysis of mass media (Deacon, Pickering, Golding, & Murdock, 1999: 117), providing the researcher with new insights and increasing the understanding of a particular phenomenon. (Krippendorff, 2004: 18). As summarized by Riffe, Lacy and Fico (1998: 32), ‘[c]ontent analysis is crucial to any theory dealing with the impact or antecedents of content’.

Nevertheless, content analysis has been criticised for its emphasis mainly on the description of categorical data, which could lead to a less sensitive analysis of subtleties in texts (Kolbe & Burnett, 1991: 244). If the researcher only looks across texts, it is likely that complex and diverse processes of meaning-making within texts will not be acknowledged (Deacon *et al.*, 1999: 117). In order to avoid the ‘temptation’ of simply highlighting media frames in the body of text analysed (Reese, 2007: 149), it was decided to also adopt CDA as a complementary methodology.

Combining a quantitative and a qualitative method of research, like content analysis and CDA, has been suggested as a positive strategy by many (Creswell, 2009: 14; Reese, 2007: 149), as quantitative and qualitative methods can complement each other, addressing different parts of a research question, and overcoming each other’s weaknesses (Jensen, 2002: 272).

### **The need for a deeper analysis**

CDA was chosen as the qualitative method for this research for a variety of reasons. This method is defined as ‘a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context’ (Van Dijk, 2011: 352). Consequently, CDA can expose structures of power and ideological discourses that may seem neutral (Wodak & Meyer, 2011: 8) and could not be revealed by content analysis.

As protests contest established power relations, to study the media representation of those acts of contestation it was necessary to choose a line of CDA that would not only address the linguistic aspects of the text, but also its connection to the creation of ideological discourse and its possible impact on society. Among the existing variety of CDA methods, Fairclough’s Dialectical-Relational Approach (DRA) was the one that best addressed the present research needs. Fairclough (1992: 64) claims that discourse is something socially constitutive, and contributes not only to the creation of identities but also to the construction of systems of knowledge and beliefs, engaging with the Foucaultian concept of the circulation of power through knowledge (Hall, 1997: 169), so useful to the study of the media. The three-dimensional approach proposed by Fairclough (1993: 136) focuses on the textual, discursive and societal levels, helping to analyse how the representation of protests might be connected to the use of certain discourses and frames, and how those discourses may impact sociocultural practices.

However, CDA has been criticized for its inability to provide universal explanations (Gill, 1996: 155), although the combination of content analysis with this method could compensate for this weakness. In order to do this, the initial content analysis results can inform the secondary data collection, as suggested by Creswell (2009: 211). This research design will be explained in what follows.

## **Research design**

The process of sampling, creating codes and verifying reliability in content analysis, as well as the sampling in CDA, will be discussed in what follows.

### *Sampling in content analysis*

After the research ethics checklist was approved, decisions were taken regarding sampling. Due to the large amount of material produced by newspapers about the protests during June 2013, some decisions had to be taken in order to make the research possible. The first choice was to narrow the study to the state of São Paulo, since the cycle of demonstrations started there. Although this implies that the findings resulting from the research could only be drawn for this region of Brazil, they could give interesting starting points to further research in other regions of the country.

The two newspapers selected were *Folha de S. Paulo* (FSP) and *O Estado de S. Paulo* (OESP) because they are the most popular daily publications in the chosen area and the only ones to achieve an average daily circulation of over 100,000 copies.

**Table 1. Brazilian mainstream newspapers from São Paulo in sample**

Ownership group	Newspaper	Daily circulation
Grupo Estado	O Estado de S. Paulo	232,385 copies
Grupo Folha	Folha de S. Paulo	294,811 copies

Source: IVC – Instituto Verificador de Circulação (2014)

The period of time chosen was the entire month of June 2013, when all the protests from MPL happened. The sample of articles was drawn using two different strategies. The content of OESP could be found on the Nexis database, searching for the terms ‘protests’ (in Portuguese ‘protestos’) and ‘São Paulo’ under *Everything* and *Required Items*, and excluding websites and group duplicates. The timeframe selected was between 01/06/2013 and 30/06/2013. The search resulted in 397 articles, and after discarding the ones not related to the protests led by MPL this number was reduced to 242 articles. As FSP’s content is not available via the Nexis database, I selected the material using the research tool of the newspaper website and searching for the terms ‘protestos’ plus ‘São Paulo’ between the dates of 01/06/2013 and 30/06/2013. The search resulted in 311 articles, and after discarding the ones not related to the protests a final number of 202 articles was obtained.

In order to have a manageable number of articles, a sample plan was adopted to avoid the selected texts biasing the results of the research (Krippendorff, 2004: 113). All 444 articles were ordered by date, and every other article was selected according to the systematic



sampling procedure recommended for regularly appearing publications such as newspapers (Krippendorff, 2004: 115). This resulted in a population of 222 articles.

### *Codes in content analysis*

The first codebook was created based on the literature previously discussed, and consisted of 14 variables. The first variables provided descriptive aspects of the articles, such as date and size and a contextual variable defined the genre of the story. Subsequent variables were related to the presence of certain media frames, such as the violence by the police and the protesters, the representation of protesters as deviants, their trivialisation and the division of activists between 'good protesters' and 'bad protesters'. One variable also addressed the different sources used in the article, and finally the last two variables coded if the claims of the activists could be found in the text and if the article presented a balanced debate<sup>2</sup>.

A pilot research was conducted in order to test the efficacy of the codebook and correct difficulties (Deacon et al., 1999: 128; Weber, 1990: 23); 30 articles were coded, as suggested by Lombard, Snyder-Duch and Bracken (2002: 600). A Portuguese native speaker was selected and trained as a second coder, and also coded the sample of 30 texts. After calculating the inter-coder reliability, some rules of the codebook were corrected and a new variable was added, in order to assess if the stories mentioned disruptions to the daily activities of the city.

### *Reliability in content analysis*

Reproducibility is one of the aspects that distinguishes content analysis from other methodologies used to study communication content (Kassarjian, 1977: 13), since it guarantees the validation of the results and the chances of future replication of the research (Kolbe & Burnett, 1991: 245). Therefore, it is essential to calculate and report the intercoder reliability, indicating the extent of agreement between two or more independent coders over the coding of units (Lombard *et al.*, 2002: 590).

The reliability index selected was the percent agreement, defined as 'the total number of agreements divided by the total number of coding decisions' (Kolbe & Burnett, 1991: 248). In order to calculate this, the second coder coded a sample of 10% of the population (22

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<sup>2</sup> See the final codebook in Appendix 1.

articles), selected randomly, as suggested by Riffe, Lacy and Fico (1998: 123). The overall percentage agreement was 90%, considered satisfactory (Kassarjian, 1977: 14), even for indices known to be liberal such as the percentage agreement (Lombard *et al.*, 2002: 600). The analysis of the data was carried out in Excel, Chi-Square tests were made and correlations between variables were used only when relationships were statistically significant at a 5% level or less. One problem faced by the research was that two important relationships between variables could only be statistically significant at a 10% level, indicating a low presumption against the null hypothesis, which can be expected in studies with small samples (Royall, 1986; Sullivan & Feinn, 2012), such as the subpopulation (N=64) in question. Given the relevance of the data for the research, it was decided to use those two results, indicating that they should be read with caution.

### *Sampling in CDA*

The selection of the material for the second stage of this research was conducted after analysing the results of the content analysis. Based on the frames of the protest paradigm more recurrent in the findings, seven extracts were selected from the two newspapers analysed. Although CDA does not suggest a particular procedure to sample and analyse the material (Wodak & Meyer, 2011: 27-28), a coding frame<sup>3</sup> was created to highlight the aspects of the textual level, the discourse practices and the sociocultural practices and the protest paradigm's frames that could be found in each excerpt. The results will be discussed in a further section.

## **RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

The presentation and analysis of the results will be divided between the quantitative (Content Analysis) and the qualitative (CDA) methods, and will be discussed later.

### **Results in Content Analysis**

The first aspect of the coverage of the Brazilian protests of July 2013 that caught one's attention was the quantity of material published. While at the beginning of the coverage, after the first demonstration (on 6 June) and the second protest (on 11 June), the number of

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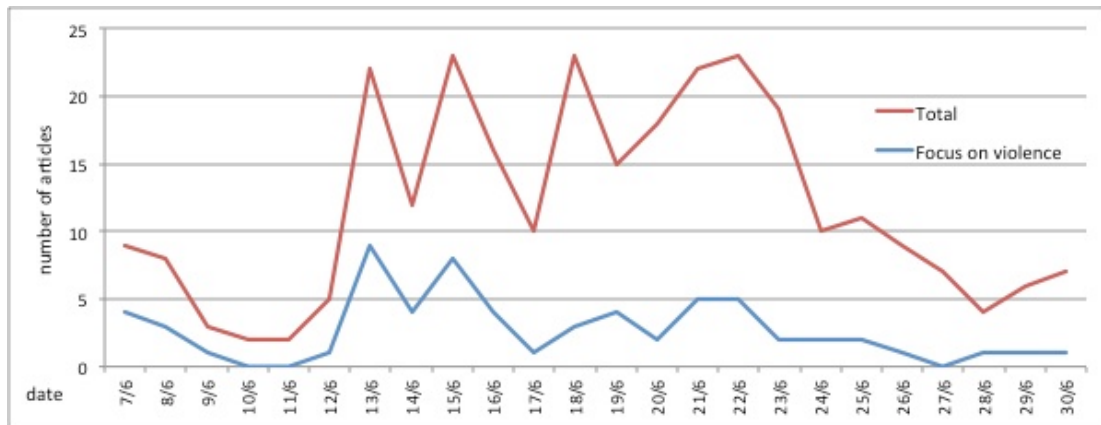
<sup>3</sup> See in Appendix 2.

stories per day fluctuated between 5 and 2, as the month went by the daily number of published articles increased up to 20, as on 18 June.

### *Newsframes*

A variety of focal points were identified in the coverage, with some articles giving only factual accounts of the protest events, while others would focus on the political debate over the increase of the transport wages, and a much smaller number provided debates or analysis from experts, such as sociologists and researchers in the field of public policy. Moreover, a considerable amount of stories (N=64 out of 222) had violence as their main focus.

**Table 2. Number of articles focused on violence over time**



Source: own data

This focus on violence was more prominent at the beginning of the coverage. On 7 June, one day after the first protest, 4 out of the 5 stories (80%) analysed had the logic of damage as their main focus. This resonates to the claim by Della Porta and Diani (2005: 174) that political violence can be used to gain media attention. By that time, the choice of other means of attracting media attention via collective action, such as the logic of numbers, was still restricted, since the first demonstration had only a thousand participants. In a city with over 20 million inhabitants, this would be a non-event. (Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993: 116).

*Claims, visibility and violence*

According to the literature, social movements today acknowledge the necessity of media attention in order to promote their message to a wider public (Cottle, 2008: 853), as well as to validate their claims and gain new supporters (Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993: 116). In order to see how other variables had an impact on the presence of the claims of MPL's, those frames were compared and analysed through the coverage of the protests.

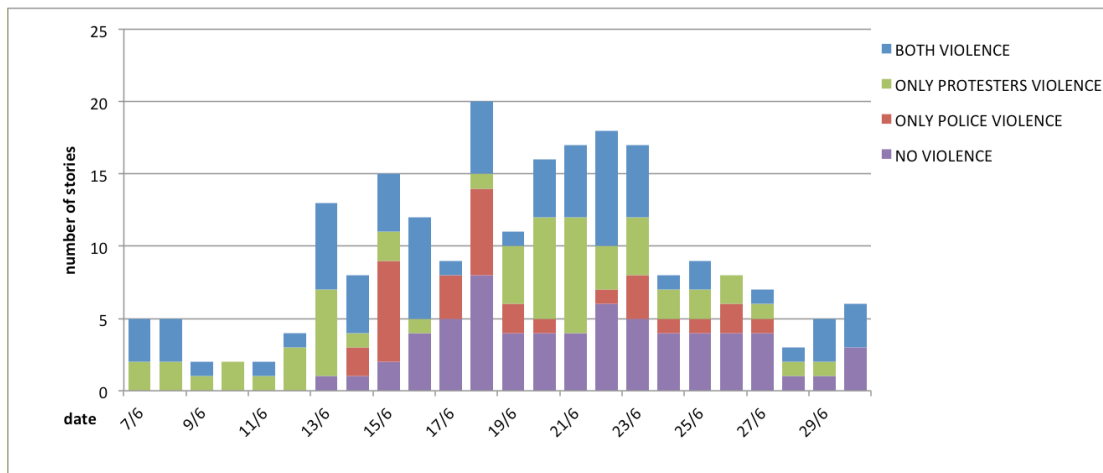
The results indicate that 53% (N= 34 out of 64) of the stories that were focused on violence also presented the claims of the protesters.<sup>4,5</sup> Despite the salience of the literature (Gamson & Meyer, 1996: 288) which affirms that according to the balance norm of journalists the texts that are focused on the violence committed by protesters would also provide their claims, these results point in the opposite direction, indicating that the focus on violence is not a guarantee of more visibility to the social movement's message.

To bridge the gap between mediation and the policing of protests, as suggested previously, the research compared how many news stories had mentions of violence by the police and by the protesters. It is important to note that even when the main focus of the article was not violence, a substantial majority of pieces addressed or mentioned the theme, being in line with Ericson, Baranek and Chan's (1989: 205) observation that aspects of violence and control are often incorporated as minor elements in news stories that are mostly focused on other issues. Overall, 32% (N=70 of 222 stories) of the articles mentioned violence by the police and by the protesters, while 14% (N=30) cited only police repression and 26% (N=57) talked just about violence from the protesters. If we consider just the stories focused on violence, a similar trend is observed. However, it is interesting to notice that the proportion of mentions of each group of actors fluctuates significantly over the month. Until the 12<sup>th</sup> of June, all stories had mentions either of the violence by the protesters or the combination of this frame with the repression frame, mentioning also the violence by the police, and therefore indicating that violent actions are media-value elements (Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993: 124; Gitlin, 2003: 28; Halloran, 1970: 315), or were at least at the beginning of the coverage.

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<sup>4</sup> Caution must be taken as the null hypothesis of the inexistence of association between these variables can only be rejected at a 10% significance level.

<sup>5</sup> See Table 4 in Appendix 3.

**Table 3. Mentions of violence by protesters and police over time**

Source: own data

In the same period, however, no articles were focused exclusively on police repression or presented a contextualization of the protests without emphasis on the logic of damage. This seems to indicate that the debate in this initial moment of coverage was mainly about the protest as an event, with emphasis on the violence and no deeper discussion about the context of the demonstrations and the social problem that created it. These results add credence to the literature (Gitlin, 2003; Halloran, 1970; McLeod & Hertog, 1999; Xu, 2013) that points to the protest versus police conflict news frame as a replacement of the real conflict between the protesters and the government.

After the fourth protest on 13 June, the scenario of the coverage changed, as well as the recurrence of frames related to violence. During this protest, the police made use of significant amounts of violence, harming not only unarmed protesters but also bystanders and journalists. As Della Porta (1996: 62) asserts, the policing of protests is an important barometer for the POS faced by protesters. In the studied case, if on one hand the hard style of policing, typical of militarised police forces (Della Porta, 1996: 82), created constraints for activists willing to engage in future collective actions, on the other hand the brutality of the repression positively impacted the mediation opportunity structure of the social movement. For the first time articles condemning only the violence from the police appeared in the media, in some days corresponding to 47% (N= 7) of the daily coverage of protests, compared to 13% (N=2) of articles citing only the logic of damage adopted by protesters. This corroborates the argument (Wisler & Giugni, 1999: 171) that sometimes when protesters

suffer harsher repression on the streets, at the same time they succeed in attracting media attention and mobilizing the public in their favour.

However, the treatment given to the police authorities was somewhat different from that given to protesters. When contrasting the average size of the stories that focused only on police violence (348 words) and the average size of the texts focused exclusively on protesters' violence (417 words), it is clear that the first are shorter. The media discourse towards police violence also presented significant distinctions, which will be further addressed in the discussion of the CDA results.

In terms of sources<sup>6</sup>, specialists were consulted in 21% (N=46) of the 222 texts analysed, journalists and bystanders served as sources in the same proportion of each (11%; N=25), and 22% (N=29) of the articles used no sources whatsoever. Protesters were included as sources on average in 30% (N=66) of the stories, while authorities, understood here as the police or members of the government, were used as sources in 36% (N=79) of the stories analysed. This resonates with Wisler and Giugni's (1999: 173) perceptions that the use of authorities as sources tends to be higher than the mention of protesters.

The variation in the size of the articles during the studied period was not significant, remaining around 430 words per article. Yet, if we calculate the total number of words published per day, it is possible to see a high oscillation in the coverage<sup>7</sup>. Yet, if we compare the average size of the stories where violence is mentioned (478 words) to the ones where no mention is made (433 words), the insignificant difference might disprove the previously stated theory that violence would increase the visibility of protesters, at least in the long term, during the entire observed period.

The debate frame, suggested by McLeod and Hertog (1999: 313) and defined as the coverage that presents the issues and viewpoints of various parties, was shockingly rare in the coverage. Only 11% (N=26 out of 222) stories gave equal space to at least two conflicting actors. Among them, 42% (N=11) were focused on violence, while 57% (N=15 stories) talked mainly about other topics<sup>8</sup>. Given the large number of stories with the presence of violence or disruption in the overall coverage, this result disproves the argument (Oliver & Meyer, 1999:

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<sup>6</sup> The same article could use more than one source.

<sup>7</sup> See table 5 in Appendix 3.

<sup>8</sup> Caution must be taken as the null hypothesis of the inexistence of association between these variables can only be rejected at a 10% significance level.

42) that disruption always leads to a public debate about the validity of the protest and its strategies.

### *Demonisation and delegitimation of social movements*

According to the literature (McLeod & Hertog, 1999: 319), the demonization and delegitimation of protesters is commonly observed in the mass media coverage of protests. This demonization of protesters was observed in a notable amount of articles: overall, 38% (n=85) of the stories analysed demonised the protesters in some way, most commonly referring to them as vandals or troublemakers. Nevertheless, this was not a constant pattern over the month. Looking at the daily proportion of stories that used this frame, there was a clear shift in the coverage. Until 13 June, more than 50% of the daily articles published about the protests would apply this frame. However, after the fourth protest, where activists suffered vast repression from the police, the tone of the coverage towards protesters changed, and for the next week the number of stories using the frame was always under 36%, with only one peak of 50% (N=6) on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June. Later, the daily average use of this frame ascended again, with around 45% of stories using words such as ‘vandals’ and ‘rioters’. This variation may correspond to a demographic alteration of the composition of protesters after the fourth demonstration, when the number of protesters gained scope and people from different ages and social classes, who had never participated of demonstrations, joined the streets (Sakamoto, 2013: 97; Secco, 2013: 71). This new composition of protesters might be considered less ‘radical’, which leads the media to conform less to the protest paradigm (McLeod & Hertog, 1999: 311), but this could only be verified in further researche with news producers.

Drawing on the protest paradigm, journalists also tend to apply the frame of delegitimation, questioning the validity of social movements by making light of their goals, age, dress code, language, social class or professional status. The delegitimation of protesters through the frame of trivialisation was less recurrent than the demonization, but still appeared in 30% (N=67) of the 222 articles analysed. Interestingly, its distribution did not follow the pattern of the previous frame discussed. Instead, peaks of delegitimation emerged in all weeks, in moments where around 50% of the daily coverage would make light of protesters<sup>9</sup>. The reason for this might rest in another frame adopted by a significant number of stories: the

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<sup>9</sup> See Table 6 in Appendix 3.

artificial division of protesters into two groups, one predominantly pacifistic (the good protesters) and a smaller group (the bad protesters) that would take over the legitimate demonstrations with violence, creating trouble and fear and damage (Cammaerts, 2013: 17). In Brazil, the 'bad protesters' frame was usually associated with the group Black Blocs, which gained large amounts of media attention.

This division is expressed in 29% (N=65) of the coverage, with notable peaks. The first coincided mainly with the fourth protest, where the levels of violence, both from the police and protesters, were high. After the fifth protest, mostly pacifistic, little mention was made to any sort of division among protesters. However, the days following the sixth and seventh demonstrations, which had seen acts of violence against property, were marked for the use of the division frame in around 50% of the stories analysed. Comparing the two newspapers analysed, the use of this frame was on average more frequent in OESP, with 35% (N=42) of its stories, compared to 23% (N=23) in FSP.

The content analysis presented above confirms the adoption of the protest paradigm's frames in a significant number of news articles. This leads to a negative bias of the media towards the militancy, especially when it comes to disruptive protests and the adoption of the logic of damage. However, frames are not static, but susceptible to political dynamics (Cottle, 2008: 858), and the use of some of those frames, such as the demonization of protesters, changed over the period of time observed. In this sense, the content analysis presented above confirms the suggestion that the media opinion towards the protesters went '[f]rom vilification to legitimization and back' (Cammaerts & Jiménez-Martínez, 2014: 44).

Regarding the effectiveness of the use of the logic of damage to create visibility for the social movement's message, the findings were complex. In the first stages, the use of disruptive behaviour by protesters, such as symbolic damage, clearly attracted media attention and gave media exposure to the protests. Although this attention was rather negative, it moved the debate about the increase of the transportation fare from an uncontested media field to a contested one, which can be considered an achievement (Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993: 117). But as the month went by, the use of symbolic damage proved not to be associated with more visibility to the MPL's claims or more balanced articles. Consequently, in the second stage of the coverage the use of violence by protesters created proportionally more constraints for the media opportunity structure (Cammaerts, 2012), such as the adoption of marginalising frames. The use of those frames will be detailed in the next section.



## Results in Critical Discourse Analysis

As mentioned in the content analysis section, the first media accounts of the demonstrations tended to focus mostly on the spectacle of the protests, emphasizing drama and violence, as the following extract shows:

### Extract 1:

While the TV Record car was burning in front of the City Hall, a young man with a covered face surprised all with a suicidal gesture. He climbed on the hood of the van, surrounded by flames. He stayed five seconds with his arms raised, risking being cooked alive, and jumped to safety to be applauded by around 200 people who participated or witnessed the riot in the city centre on Tuesday (O Estado de S. Paulo, 20/6).

It is clear why this scene attracted the attention of the journalist for its dramatic and graphic elements. As Gamson and Wolfsfeld (1993: 124) affirm, '[f]ire in the belly is fine, but fire on the ground photographs better'. In terms of intertextuality, the genre chosen draws on the dramatized model of crime stories, where deviance and infractions of the law are reported in a theatrical manner. Yet, it is important to notice that the adoption of this genre is not only a style choice, since 'journalists don't only recount events, they also interpret and explain them, try to get people to see things and to act in certain ways, and aim to entertain' (Fairclough, 1995: 91).

The story first starts with a mention of the logic of damage towards the media (the TV van in flames), which positions the media personnel as victims in this conflict and provides the readers with a context of riots, providing a background for the social movement and its claims. The main participant of the story is the deviant, represented by the 'covered face' normally associated with 'anarchists' through the frame of demonization. His acts are in the active voice, demonstrating action through the use of verbs such as 'climbed' and 'jumped', and irrationality by the use of the metaphor 'being cooked'. This indicates the use of the frames of delegitimation, as well as the adoption of the 'romper room' narrative, which according to the protest paradigm represents the demonstrators as immature and engaged in childish and irrational behaviours (McLeod & Hertog, 1999: 312).

Another type of frame to delegitimize the activists was observed in the next excerpt:

Extract 2:

They [the MPL] were joined by members of radical political parties, punks, unemployed people and, mostly, people outraged with what happens in Brazil, willing to show their dissatisfaction (O Estado de S. Paulo, 24/6).

Observing the grammatical level of the extract, it is possible to notice that the passive voice is used to describe the adhesion of new profiles of members to the social movement. This type of construction is pointed to by Fairclough (1995: 113) as a way of mystifying the agency and responsibility of the participants. On the level of discourse, it is possible to see how a discourse of radicalisation is built, with the use of the adjective 'radical'. The marginalisation of this new group of activists is also present in the description of the 'punks', historically represented as folk devils (Cottle, 2008), and 'unemployed people', which makes light of protesters' social status and relates to the frame of delegitimation (McLeod & Hertog, 1999: 307). Although the last group of new activists is just described as people who wanted to show their discontent with the 'problems' of the country (not directly linked to the government, it is worth mentioning), the negative connotation previously addressed to radicals, punks and unemployed people associates this last set of activists with the image of an illegitimate group of protesters. As Fairclough (1995: 127) writes, '[m]ost accounts of ideology in the media stress representational issues'. This influences society to the extent that the representation of the protesters leads the reader to the ideological presumption that they do not have a legitimate role in the contestation of the existing political power relations in Brazilian democracy.

A more extreme example of this ideological discourse of delegitimation can be observed in the following excerpt of an editorial:

Extract 3:

They are youngsters prone to act violently in name of a pseudo revolutionary ideology, benefiting from the understandable general discomfort with the prices paid to travel in overcrowded buses and trains. (Folha de S. Paulo, 13/6)

Here, the protesters are represented by the pejorative nominalisation of the adjective young, 'youngsters', indicating a clear use of the protest paradigm through the delegitimation frame.

The activists are also classified as 'prone to act violently', a frame in line with the observations of Wisler and Giugni (1999: 180) regarding the assumptions of protester's future violence, also linked to their demonization. The invocation of public opinion, observed in 11% of the stories coded in the content analysis section, could be found in the use of the term 'general discomfort', where the newspaper implies a popular consensus.

On the level of discourse, it is possible to note that the textual aspects of the editorial lead to more than one ideological discourse. The first, manifested by the division between the newspaper and its readers from the protesters, treated as 'they', is the discourse of Orientalism, defined by Said (1995: 03) as a type of domination by the creation of knowledge and the reproduction of fixed stereotypes about the 'Other'. Such stereotypes, like the protester's 'tendency' to act with violence or their 'vile' personalities, composes a discourse based on social order, which separates those engaged in normal and acceptable behaviors from deviants. The consequences of such at the social level are notable. According to Hall (1997: 258), 'stereotyping, in other words, is part of the maintenance of social and symbolic order'.

#### *Law and Order*

The preservation of the social order can also be observed in another paragraph extracted from the same editorial:

##### Extract 4:

The very few protesters who seem to have something on their minds besides their caps justify the violence as a reaction to the supposed brutality practiced by the police, which in their point of view represses the constitutional right of protesting. In doing so, they underline their ignorance about a basic norm of civil conviviality: it is a public authority's responsibility to determine the rules and limits to the exercise of rights by groups and people when there is conflict among their different demands (Folha de S. Paulo, 13/6).

On the textual level, it is possible to find the use of an understatement ('very few protesters') followed by an irony ('something in their minds besides their caps'). Both rhetorical structures of discourse not only make little of the protester's intelligence, but also have a close relation to ideologies and social beliefs (Van Dijk, 1995: 29). After disqualifying the protesters, the text shields the representation of authority through the use of the 'supposed' before 'police brutality', indicating that the police repression might not be real. This discourse of maintenance of the social order is even greater at the end of the extract, when the editorial

determines that it is a function of the state to determine the ‘rules and limits to the exercise of rights’.

In terms of sociocultural practices, it is necessary to question why the newspaper would adopt the law and order scenario, blaming the protesters for the escalation of violence, instead of using a civil-rights scenario, representing the violence as a sign of social change (Wisler & Giugni, 1999: 173). One reason may rest in the articulation of the political and economic relations that the invocation of the law promotes (Ericson, Baranek, & Chan, 1991: 286). In the Brazilian context, those political and economic relations are closely connected to the ownership of media groups, characterized by an oligopolistic control, where flaws in the broadcast licensing system, the lack of adequate checks on cross-media ownership and the participation of media companies’ owners in politics impacts the diversity of news sources (Mizukami, Reia, & Varon, 2013: 7).

Therefore, it is possible to assume that such oligopolistic patterns of ownership may influence the media content, as suggested by Fairclough (1995: 43). In addition, the celebration of the consensus, in the excerpt represented by the establishment of the common ‘rules and limits’, as well as the denigration of the dissent, represented through the delegitimation and demonization of protesters, is essential to the legitimation of power in corporate capitalist states (Murdock, 1981: 207). This argument, aligned with the propaganda model of Herman and Chomsky (1995), might help to elucidate the interests of the Brazilian media in the coverage of protests, but should be tested in further researches where the media production of news is the main focus.

### *Authorities and voice*

According to the protest paradigm, the media represents the violent actions of the police and of the protesters in different ways. This will be discussed in relation to the following extract, which refers to a protest where the levels of violence were high from both the police and protesters:

#### Extract 5:

If, on one hand, professional rioters made use of the situation of chaos to exercise the most

absolute acts of vandalism, on the other the police forces were not a well-oiled team, also resulting in actions and reactions more and more violent, that focused the public and private patrimony, with damage to underground stations, shopping centers, cars and buses. (O Estado de S. Paulo, 24/6)

On the textual level, the protesters are represented as ‘professional rioters’, while the police actions are described with a euphemism (they ‘were not a well-oiled team’), known as a form of applying a conventional expression to avoid negative values (Fairclough, 2001: 97–98). The following clause describes ‘actions and reactions’, another euphemism for the police repression, and lists a number of damaged goods, without explaining who caused the damage. Those descriptions lead to a discourse of law and order, where protesters are demonized and presented as threats, while the police forces are portrayed as just confused. The enumeration of damaged properties observed on the textual level also leads to a discourse of moral panic (Cottle, 2006: 417), where collective fears and anxieties are amplified by journalists and focused on a symbolic other, a folk devil, in this case an evil ‘professional rioter’.

Another frame of the protest paradigm observed is the reliance on official sources. In the content analysis section, it was noted that 36% (N=79) of the articles used official sources, while 30% (N= 66) listened to protesters. Nonetheless, the literature indicates that the treatment given to those sources might be different. This will be discussed in relation to the following extracts:

Extract 6:

We won’t allow them to feel at home whilst in the streets and we will act to avoid any type of action that violates order, which breaks the legal boundaries. We will do everything to avoid getting to this stage, but it will all depend on the behaviour of the protesters,’ says Lieutenant Colonel Marcelo Pignatari, head of the police operation in the central area (Folha de S. Paulo, 13/6).

Extract 7:

The MPL demands the reduction of the bus, train and tube fares that have risen to R\$3,20 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> to go back to R\$3. “We won’t accept nothing less”, says Marcelo Hotimsky, 19 years old, student of Philosophy at USP and spokesperson of MPL (O Estado de S. Paulo, 12/6).

Extract 6 was published hours before the most violent protest of June, when the levels of

police repression were highest. On the textual level, it is possible to observe that the journalist gave significant space to the police, with the use of long direct quotes. In the content of those quotes, the authority defends a law and order discourse, similar to the one observed in the editorial previously analysed. Those similarities are not infrequent. As Hall claims, 'the assumptions which shape an interview item might coincide with official ideologies and the status quo' (Hall, 1981: 151).

In extract 7, however, a completely different treatment is given to the protester as a source. The size of the quote is small, and does not include the reasons for the demands of protesters. It is also interesting to notice that the age of the spokesperson and his student status are mentioned, while there is no mention to the age of the other actors cited in the news story, such as the mayor and the transport secretary, leading to a trivialisation of the protester for his young age. This type of representation of the protester's voice was more recurrent at the beginning of the coverage, when their demonization was more frequent, as indicated in the content analysis results. While the protesters needed to prove their legitimacy to the media, which was later achieved when their claims were responded to and the transport fares were reduced, the official sources on the other hand did not need any sort of previous validation by the media (Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993: 116) and since the first moments of the coverage were used as reliable sources. This resonates with the observation by McLeod and Hertog (1999: 314) that journalists tend to use official sources in order to add prestige to their texts. On the contrary, the discourse of oppositional forces to the status quo, in this case the protesters, is commonly omitted or relegated to the background (Fairclough, 1995: 98).

Drawing on the results of the Critical Discourse Analysis, it is possible to observe that the adoption of frames from the protest paradigm indicated in the content analysis of this research had a negative impact on the representation of protesters. The newspapers analysed made use of stereotypes, metaphors, ironies and negative adjectives in order to represent protesters as unrepresentative, irrational, invalid political actors or as marginal. The use of symbolic damage by protesters was seen not as a reminder of the inability of liberal democracies to fulfil promises of social justice, equality and liberty (Cammaerts, 2013: 19), but as a deviant behaviour that causes moral panic and must therefore be punished by the authorities. The treatment given to those authorities, on the other hand, presented characteristics of the protest paradigm, where police and government were preserved from criticism by the use of euphemisms, and received more space and visibility in interviews.

The use of such strategies on the textual level had an impact at the discursive level, combining the adoption of a discourse of law and order and defence of the status quo on the one hand, and of the delegitimation of the protesters on the other. It was suggested that patterns of ownership of media companies as well as journalistic routines of framing might rest beside such ideological discourses, but such assumptions could only be proved with further studies where news production – and not content – is the main focus.

## **DISCUSSION**

Analysing the results of this research, it is clear that the representation of violence had a notable impact on the overall coverage of the protests of June 2013. At the first opportunity, the use of the logic of damage by protesters attracted media attention and gave them visibility, which can be observed in the content analysis section, where in the first three days of coverage violence was the main focus of the news stories. However, if in one hand negative resonance is preferable to no resonance at all (Koopmans & Olzak, 2004: 205), then on the other hand the presence of violence in stories did not guarantee more visibility to protesters' claims over the month analysed. Besides, it was possible to measure in the content analysis section the presence of diverse frames from the protest paradigm (McLeod & Hertog, 1999), and they were more recurrent when violence was present in the articles. Those frames painted protesters in a negative light, representing them as dangerous and illegitimate actors. In the CDA section, it was possible to connect this form of representation not only to a discourse of delegitimation of the social movement MPL, but also to a discourse of law and order, where the main goal is to preserve the status quo. This discourse was visible particularly when comparing the media treatment given to protesters and to authorities, such as the police forces. In the second case, more space and reliance was given to official sources, and although the police repression was later condemned in some articles, in one initial moment the use of violence by the authorities was encouraged, supporting Rosie and Gorringer's (2009: 1) hypothesis that media can foment and ignore the same police abuses that they might later condemn. These findings not only show the potential of an under studied but promising intersection of fields, but also might give practical recommendations to media professionals, who might not be aware of their routinized application of the protest paradigm and its consequences, such as the reinforcement of conformity and the power of authorities (Gitlin, 2003: 12; McLeod & Hertog, 1999: 312; McLeod, 2007: 186).

However, it is not to say that the use of the protest paradigm and the discourse of law and order and maintenance of the status quo can be found in all articles observed. Many pieces analysed presented the protesters' claims, and as the demonstrations gained scope and validity, their voice became more prominent, and some articles would even be fully dedicated to their objectives. The presence of counterhegemonic discourse could also be found in a number of articles, mostly outside the mass media. During this wave of protests, the role of the alternative media and of self-mediation by protesters through their website and social networks (Ortellado et al., 2013: 139) was an important factor of the mediation opportunity structure, and should therefore be the focus of further studies.

The research presented here has some limitations, such as the use of a non-exhaustive sample and the failure to obtain very strong statistical evidence in order to reject the null hypothesis of no association between variables in all significance levels. Once those results might be associated to the relatively small size of the sample used (Royall, 1986; Sullivan & Feinn, 2012), further studies with an exhaustive sample could help to verify the validity of the results presented in this research.

## **CONCLUSION**

This dissertation explored the impacts of the violence in the coverage of the Brazilian protests of June 2013 by two local newspapers, *Folha de S. Paulo* and *O Estado de S. Paulo*. In order to approach this topic, a body of literature on the political opportunity structure, violence and policing of protests, mass media and framing led to a conceptual framework where the concepts of the logic of damage (Diani & Della Porta, 2005), mediation opportunity structures (Cammaerts, 2012) and the protest paradigm (McLeod & Hertog, 1999) served as basis for discussion.

In order to approach the research question and the first two sub-questions, a content analysis of 222 news articles published over the period of one month, June 2013, was conducted. Based on the patterns observed, a CDA of 7 excerpts was carried, and answers to the two remaining sub-questions were found. It was observed that the presence of violence was a crucial factor in increasing the visibility of the demonstrations at the start of the protests, but when analysing the entire period of the coverage it was revealed that while the occurrence of violence in the news did not imply an increase in the visibility of the social movement's message, it was associated with a more frequent use of negative frames of the



protest paradigm, demonising and delegitimising protesters. Among the results obtained, it was possible to find that 30% of all news stories trivialised the protesters, making light of their goals, actions and lifestyles, 29% of the articles divided activists between 'good protesters' and 'bad protesters' and 38% of the pieces demonised demonstrators. Therefore, the mediation opportunity structure presented a dilemma for protesters, where the logic of damage could initially attract more media attention but in the long run would affect the perception of the validity of the social movement's claims.

In the CDA section, it was observed that stereotypes, metaphors, ironies and negative adjectives were used to represent the protesters, in line with McLeod and Hertog's (1999) theory of the protest paradigm. It was also possible to acknowledge that the emphasis on acts of violence and on confrontation between protesters and the police relegated to the background the real social conflict over the concept of public transport as a social right. The representation of the authorities was notably different from the representation of activists, and the police actions, even when brutal, received softer criticism and more space for their justification. The treatment given by the media to authorities and to protesters might be related to the discursive practices of the maintenance of the law and order, therefore preserving the status quo favourable to media companies. Moreover, the debate frame, outlining balanced stories, was observed in only 11% of the pieces coded, which indicates a lack of impartiality by the Brazilian newspapers studied. Whilst this methodology cannot provide insights into the motivations behind the adoption of the protest paradigm by journalists, it is recommended that further research investigates the process of news productions in order to further develop the results presented here.

Although the scope of this research is small, it shows the high potential of the intersection between the fields of social protests, media framing and the use of violence in Latin America for further studies. With the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio approaching, Brazil might be the stage for new waves of demonstrations. Therefore, researchers should be prepared to study not the competition over sports played by athletes, but the disputes over meaning played by social movements, authorities and the mass media.

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## APPENDIX 1: CONTENT ANALYSIS CODING FRAMEWORK

V1- Story number \_\_\_\_\_

**V2-** Date \_\_\_\_\_ (day) /06/2013

**V3-** Size: \_\_\_\_\_ words

**V4-** Retrieved from:

- 1- *Estado de S. Paulo*
- 2- *Folha de S. Paulo*

**V5 –** (genre) Is the story:

- 1- Opinionative (*includes editorials and columns*)
- 2- Factual (*stories based on facts, even if not equally balanced*)
- 3- Not clear

**V6-** (focus) Is violence (against property or people, by the police or protesters) during protests the main focus of the story?

- 1 - yes
- 2 - no

**V7-** (repression) Does the story mention violence by the police? (This includes articles with terms such as repression, use of tear gas, etc., even if not used on a critical way)?

- 1 - yes
- 2 - no

**V8-** (marginalisation) Does the story mention violence by protesters (against things or people)?

- 1 - yes
- 2 - no

**V9-** (Deviance) Does the story define at least some of the protesters as vandals, anarchists or rioters?

- 1 – yes (*includes description of acts of vandalism, even if described in the passive voice*)
- 2- no

**V10-** (Trivialisation) Does the story make light of the protester's language, dress code, age, social class, professional status or goals?

- 1- yes
- 2- no

**V11-** (division) Does the story separates protesters between “good protesters” and “bad protesters” (for example, separating “pacific protesters” from violent ones, including Black Blocks)?

- 1 – yes
- 2 – no

**V12-** (disruption) Does the story mentions disruptions to the daily routine of the city and its people (such as traffic interruption, early closing of stores, etc.)?

- 1 – yes
- 2 – no

**V13-** (voices) What are the sources used in the story? (You may use more than one)

- 1- authorities (*the government, the police, etc.*)
- 2- protesters (*including their Facebook*)
- 3- specialists (*teachers, sociologists, analysts, research institutes, etc.*)
- 4- bystanders
- 5- journalists (*others apart from the one who is writing the piece*)
- 6- other
- 7- no sources

**V14-** (claims) Does the article talks about the claims of protesters on transportation (ex: zero tariff/ against the rising in the transport fares)?

- 1- yes
- 2- no

**V15-** (debate) Does the article approaches different points of view (*at least two, for instance protesters X police, or protesters X government*) equally?

- 1- yes
- 2- no

**V16** – The story was coded by the ( ) First coder ( ) Second coder

## APPENDIX 2 – CDA FRAMEWORK

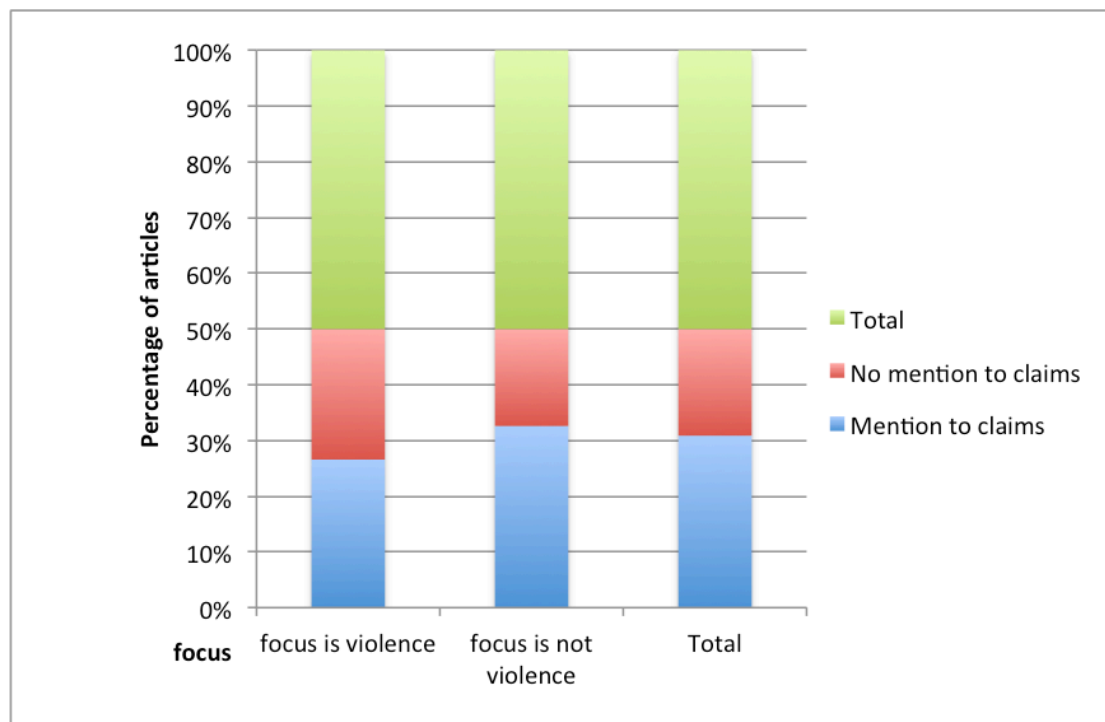
Extract	Textual Level	Interaction With Discourse	Social Theme	Frames from the Protest Paradigm
<b>1-</b> “While the TV Record car was burning in front of the City Hall, a young man with a covered face surprised all with a suicidal gesture. He climbed on the hood of the van, surrounded by flames. He stayed five seconds with his arms raised, risking being cooked alive, and jumped to safety and to be applauded by around 200 people who participated or witnessed the riot in the city centre on Tuesday”. (Pichadores foram protagonistas no quebra-quebra do centro. O Estado de S. Paulo, 20/6)	Dramatic genre with description of violence / Deviant represented as anarchist, “covered face”/ metaphor “being cooked”/	Spectacle/ Radicalism/ Protesters as immature	Delegitimation of protesters / minimization of the real conflicts	Demonisation/ Delegitimation/ Newsframe (romper room/ crime story)
<b>2-</b> “They [the MPL] were joined by members of radical political parties, punks, unemployed people and, mostly, people outraged with what happens in Brazil, willing to show their dissatisfaction.” (“Protestos e	”members of radical parties”/ “punks”/ “unemployed people”/ “people	Radicalism and Marginalisation/	Protesters as trivial group/ illegitimacy	Delegitimation/ Newsframe (freak show)/ Invocation of public opinion

Vandalismo"- O Estado de S. Paulo, 24/6)	outraged"			
<b>3-</b> They are youngsters prone to act violently in name of a pseudo revolutionary ideology, benefiting from the understandable general discomfort with the prices paid to travel in overcrowded buses and trains. ("Retomar a Paulista", Folha de S. Paulo, 13/6)	"Youngsters" - nominalisation/ "prone to act violently" as a tendency/ general discomfort"	Othering/ Law and Order	Threat to social Order/ Protester's illegitimacy/ maintenance of status quo	Delegitimation/ Invocation of public opinion
<b>4-</b> The very few protesters who seem to have something on their minds besides their caps justify the violence as a reaction to the supposed brutality practiced by the police, which in their point of view represses the constitutional right of protesting. In doing so, they underline their ignorance about a basic norm of civil conviviality: it is a public authority's responsibility to determine the rules and limits to the exercise of rights by groups and people when there is conflict among their different demands. ("Retomar a Paulista", Folha de S. Paulo, 13/6)	"something in their minds besides their caps" (metaphor)/ "supposed" shields police/ "underline their ignorance"/ "rules and limits"	Law and order	Threat to social order, Protester's illegitimacy/ maintenance of status quo	Delegitimation
<b>5-</b> "If, on one hand, professional rioters made use of the situation of chaos to exercise the most absolute acts of vandalism, on the other the police forces were not a well-oiled team, also resulting in actions and reactions more and more violent, that focused the public and private patrimony, with damage to underground stations, shopping centers, cars and buses". ("Protestos e Vandalismo", O Estado de S. Paulo, 24/6)	"professional rioters"/ "chaos"/ euphemism to the police/ passive voice to talk about repression	Law and Order, Moral Panics	Threat to social order	Delegitimation, Demonisation, Newsframe (marginalising, property crime story)
<b>6-</b> "We won't allow them to feel at home whilst in the streets and we will act to avoid any type of action that violates order, which breaks the legal boundaries. We will do everything to avoid getting to this stage, but it will all depend on the	Long quotes to authority/ "acts that violates order"/ "legal boundaries".	Law and Order	Threat to social order/ Protester's illegitimacy	Delegitimation/ Reliance on authorities

behaviour of the protesters”, says Lieutenant Colonel Marcelo Pignatari, head of the police operation in the central area. (“Manifestantes não ficarão mais ‘à vontade’ pela cidade, diz coronel”, Folha de S. Paulo, 13/6)				
7- The MPL demands the reduction of the bus, train and tube fares that have risen to R\$3,20 on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> to go back to R\$3,0. “We won’t accept nothing less”, says Marcelo Hotimsky, 19 years old, student of Philosophy at USP and spokesperson of MPL”. (“Governos se calam após destruição na Paulista”, O Estado de S. Paulo, 12/6)	Mention to age, short quote	Protesters as immature	Protester’s illegitimacy	Delegitimation

### APPENDIX 3 – COMPLEMENTARY GRAPHS

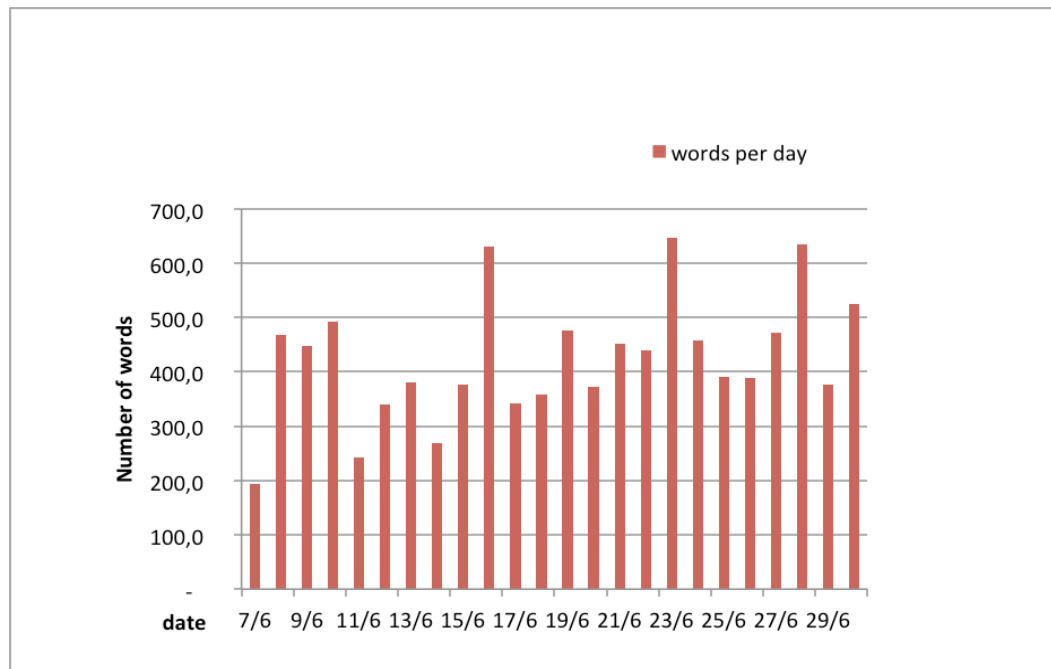
**Table 4. Presence of claims in news stories**



Source: own data

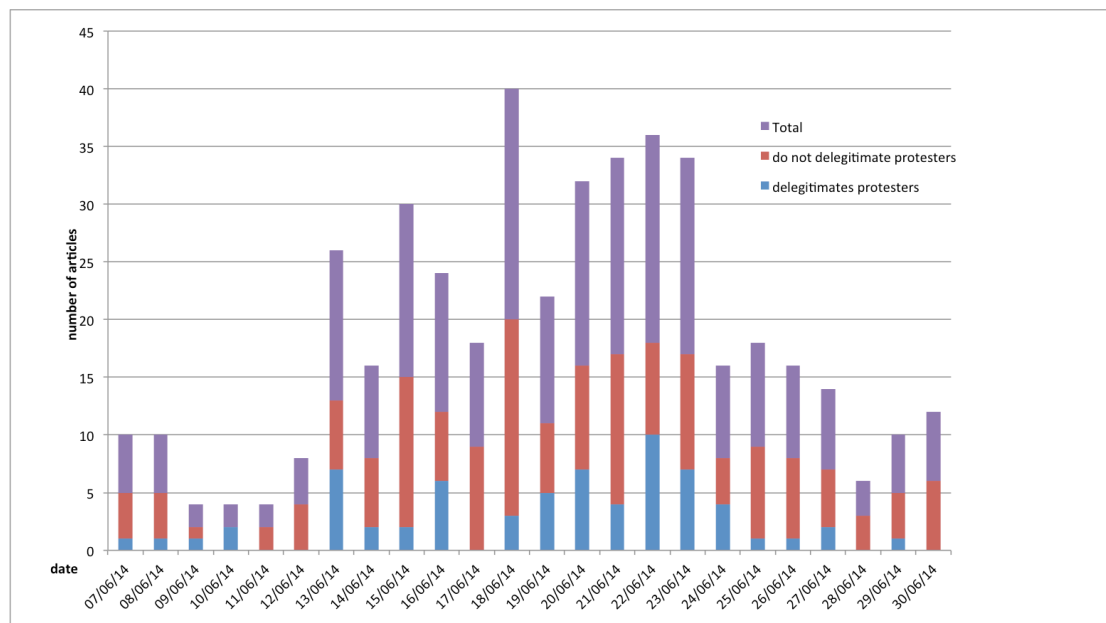
**Table 5. Total size of stories per day**





Source: own data

**Table 6. Use of the trivialisation frame over the month**



Source: own data

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