Social Movements, Development Projects and the Corporate Media

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How development practitioners can learn from social movements and journalism

The media can be a highly useful tool for agencies and individuals involved in development projects. It can be used to raise awareness of the problems they are working to overcome, to apply political pressure, and to gain financial or material support. Unfortunately, at times the way that the media and the way that development projects function often come in to conflict, especially for corporate news outlets. This paper will examine the tensions and potential for productive collaboration between development projects and corporate journalism. It will begin by outlining different forms of journalism and how they work, what news outlets aim to achieve with an article, and the mechanisms used for sharing a story. It will then explore a long-standing social movement, the Narmada Bachao Andolan, to examine how it has successfully built a functional partnership with the news media that has led not only to attention to their cause, but to wider debate on the meaning of development. The paper will conclude with a discussion of what development practitioners at various scales can learn from both the principles and practicalities of journalism and from the engagement of social movements with the media. It will point toward the usefulness of the media as a place of discussion for the broader meanings and ideas surrounding development.

The principles and motivations of journalism

Journalism is a constantly evolving field, much like those of social movements and development. It does, however, have principles, characteristic modes of operations, and objectives, which can either benefit or work against development practitioners. Many development practitioners have not yet learned how to accommodate these appropriately, but many social movements have done so. Social movements are furthermore in essence more suited to media attention because their efforts have more clearly defined oppositional players and a greater sense of immediacy.

Journalistic principles include impartiality, objectivity, balance, and accuracy. Often these are extremely difficult to achieve as every journalist, editor, or broadcaster is human, and thus has a personal perspective that will colour their report. However, journalists will try to “be fair in very complex conditions,”[1] and to “report events in a way that will survive scrutiny.”[2] Balance does not necessarily imply giving equal time to the different sides, but “not giving one side of the argument unreasonable attention to its advantage or disadvantage.”[3] Meanwhile, accuracy can be challenged by misleading sources and powerful interest groups. To counteract this, journalists will try to fact-check as much as possible, although this can slow down the release of the news.[4] These principles, naturally, are followed to a lesser or greater degree by different individuals and different news outlets, meaning that a critical approach and knowledge of any particular biases is important.

In particular, there are major differences between corporate and alternative journalism. Corporate news outlets tends to be "produced within complex organizations with hierarchical structures,"[5] generally communicating from a single or unified source aiming to reach a wide audience.[6] One of the primary criticisms of corporate media is the focus on profit, which can have limiting effect on the range of viewpoints and the quality of the information being relayed.[7]

While there are many different understandings of alternative media, Couldry and Curran present a broad definition that characterizes it as "media production that challenges, at least implicitly, actual concentrations of media power, whatever form these concentration may take in different locations"[8] They explain that this may or may not include aspects of social empowerment, or the politicization of citizens, but that it will essential involve alterations in the organizations or institutions that have traditionally held central control of media, and, as a result, have social power in modern complex societies.[9]

Each form of media has its strengths and its disadvantages. Corporate news outlets may indeed help create structured inequalities in society, but can also addressed many contemporary social and political struggles.[10] Their established structure and reputation, and their extensive audience can give a variety of actors the ability to communicate their message effectively and extensively. Meanwhile, alternative news outlets "may be quite innovative and may provide alternative perspectives not heard elsewhere, but they often do not benefit from the cross-checking, editing, or even credibility of more mainstream media organizations."[11] Their ability to communicate messages and meanings beyond their locality or group of established supporters may be more limited.

One of the primary objectives of news media is to communicate information about current events and issues. They can "furnish readers with a vital connection to the nation and the world, and often intend to help the public make more informed decisions. News programs also present vital information about the reader's community"[12] and can be a "forum for debate."[13] They attempt to disclose injustice and abuse, while also looking to entertain and make a profit.[14] Alternative media tend to focus on the former, while corporate media usually take the latter into strong consideration, sometimes bringing the two aims can in conflict with each other.[15] This paper will focus on corporate media and the potential to resolve this conflict in vibrant, diverse, and informative news publications.

The best news stories are unexpected.[16] Readers, listeners and viewers feel like the media they are consuming is closer to real life, an emotional response that corporate media uses very much to its advantage. While some news outlets can try and set their story agenda, many media scholars argue that "media presentations derive their significance from the events of the day."[17] This does not mean that the public will never have heard of the topic before, but that a new development in the situation has occurred and they can follow its evolution with only a brief time lapse. A perceived proximity to the events taking place allows the public to form opinions, and to feel those opinions matter in the face of an evolving situation.

Corporate media must also understand the demands of its audiences,[18] which tend to enjoy controversy. For this reason, the "oppositional relationship between actors who seek control of the same stake"[19] that qualifies a social movement is more interesting than the reports given by development workers, which can be perceived to be ritualistic and easy to support.[20] Development practitioners who highlight only successes and try to negate any controversies limit the potential for public discussion and subsequently, public and media interest.

This can lead to accusations of news reporting being permanently critical and gloomy.[21] However, it is "pictures of disaster and failure persist in the mind while pictures and information of positive developments have little impact at all or it fades rapidly."[22] Responding to the public can often be the priority for journalists over critical analysis,[23] but the public does tend to respond quite strongly when their emotions are affected.[24] Social movements are often able to "use narrative power to obtain their objectives,"[25] telling an emotionalized story of a struggle to right a perceived injustice.

Development projects often attempt to tell the same types of tales about struggles against poverty, disease, and marginalization. Unfortunately, the complexity of these problems is often difficult to encompass in a short news report or article. While the best reporting will incorporate the historical, cultural, and global context, these are often

neglected due to time and space constraints, particularly within corporate media where profitability is a main concern. In order to convey the entire situation and let as many sides speak, to near the ideal of unbiased reporting, sometimes only a clip or a few quotations will be used, leaving the people involved feeling misrepresented or cheated.[26] Journalists will often portray the poor people involved in the development projects as "pitiable victims," disregarding their often active and productive involvement in society[27] and in the projects. Development practitioners looking for support thus have to use their limited opportunity for media coverage to get the most easily understood type of message or image across – usually the most extreme story of victimization, which may be a misrepresentation of the overall population. In contrast, journalists reporting on the results of a project often come into conflict with project organizers who usually try to strictly control the impression they make. They will often hide any of the more complex challenges or areas of failure and focus solely on the successes.

Journalists and editors decide not only on what news to include, but what information to include or omit from a particular story.[28] This happens as the story goes through a chain of journalists and editors who tweak the story to make it as concise and newsworthy as possible.[29] There is a greater chance of misrepresentation or mistakes when the size of the media outlet's staff is limited, as there are less people to gather sources and fact-check,[30] as well as when the journalist has to rely on sources and cannot be on the ground to investigate.[31] Corporate media can often avoid this problem due to the extent of their available resources. However, with this power of disclosure or exclusion journalists can face pressure from various actors – including the members of social movements or development projects – to push a certain agenda, which is clearly against the principle of impartiality.

Aside from depth of coverage, the frequency of coverage plays an important role in bringing attention to a particular issue by keeping it actively in public consciousness.[32] Social movements have adapted to this successfully, by organizing numerous "novel, dramatic, unorthodox, and non institutionalized forms of political expression"[33] in order to bring their cause to the public in a concrete and visible way. They usually continue to organize public displays of protest until their cause is successful, or the movement disbands. It is more challenging for a development project to be able to garner media exposure multiple times over, as there are fewer events on which coverage can be based. It is especially hard for a smaller initiative which can become repetitive. People "are not newsworthy for their ordinary roles"[34] even if the developments, such as having a job, or safe water, are not all that ordinary for the people who gain them. While many suggest that people become accustomed to horrors of poverty, violence, and disease the more these things are shown, studies show that this reaction is not the most common.[35] This is good news for development projects, which would have to get into a downward spin of competing for media coverage by being the 'most poor' or the 'most disadvantaged'.

The basic tenants of journalism have a significant influence on what is reported and how, and development practitioners can only benefit from having knowledge of these. With this knowledge they can tailor their projects to have aspects that appeal to the media. If they are able to appeal to corporate news outlets, development projects can benefit from being able to spread their message to a wider audience, and from the extensive resources available to most corporate media groups. Many social movements have done this to great effect, as will be explored through the example of the Narmada Bachao Andolan in the next section. As a regionally-based social movement with international support, its strategies contain various lessons for development practitioners.

Social Movements and Narmada Bachao Andolan

Social movements are a worldwide phenomenon that bring people together to pursue a certain cause. Individuals create informal networks and share a "distinct collective identity" in order to take collective action in a situation of conflict with clear opponents.[36] They are necessarily engaged in protest, which can take many forms including "conventional strategies of political persuasion…confrontational tactics such as marches, strikes, demonstrations…violent acts that inflict material and economic damage and loss of life; and cultural forms of political expression.[37] Often local or regional movements gain national and international prominence and support, in part via the corporate media coverage of their activities and of their cause.

The Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA; "Save the Narmada Movement") was formed in the late 1980s by a merger of the Narmada Ghati Navnirman Samiti in the state of Madhya Pradesh and the Narmada Ghati Dharangrastha Samiti in the state Maharashtra.[38] They attracted a diverse group of NGOs, local people, environmental activists, academics and other professionals whose shared cause was to oppose the Government of India's plans to develop dams along the Narmada River.[39] Dams have long been considered for the Narmada River, but in 1978 India sought funding and expertise from the World Bank, solidifying the actions it wished to take: building 30 large, 135 medium, and 3000 small dams on the 1312 km river.[40] It was claimed that this "would provide large amounts of water and electricity which are desperately required for the purposes of development,"[41] with benefits that would flow to the millions of people living in the Narmada River Valley and exceed any of the costs.[42]

The concerns of the members of the NBA varied: some were concerned about human rights violations incurred with depriving already marginalized people of their homes and livelihoods.[43] Twenty-one million people live in the River Valley.[44] Others were very concerned about the environmental costs of the dams. Author and activist Arundhati Roy's essay *The Greater Common Good* pointed out some of these: "They lay the earth to waste. They cause floods, water-logging, salinity, they spread disease." Overall, the effects are hugely detrimental to "the riverine ecosystem."[45] Despite the diversity of concerns the members formed a collective identity through their sense of common purpose of opposition to the dam construction, "not [as] necessarily identical but compatible" agents.[46] Their opponents were, principally, the Government of India, as well as the World Bank and the Supreme Court of India, at certain periods. Their protests included marches and demonstrations in towns that were to be flooded, hunger strikes (although activists had to begin eating after 21 days when it was apparent that officials were not going to compromise),[47] *satyagrahas* (acts of civil disobedience), and *jal samarpan*, when people allowed themselves to drown in the rising waters.[48] These acts were event-based and, in regard to the latter two, often quite controversial. Hence they were well-suited to the demands of journalism at local and national levels.

A further novel protest move, and the one focused on in this paper, was to file a case with the Supreme Court of India in May 1994.[49] The Court had previously been known to favour cases that argued for the preservation of human rights, specifically including the right to livelihood, potable drinking water, fresh air, health care, and clean environment.[50] However, despite halting the dam's construction for five years, the Court decided in February 1999 to cease considering the question of the building of the dams. In June it considered "trying the NBA for contempt of court for its media advocacy tactics and direct political action."[51] The final decision came in October 2000 and permitted construction to continue and "stated that the completion of the construction of the dam was a matter of priority.[52] In the end it did not pursue the NBA legally for being in contempt, although it gave a fine and one-day imprisonment of its vocal supporter, Arundhati Roy. Her aforementioned essay garnered a great deal of attention and was included as one of the NBA's contemptuous "media advocacy tactics."[53] This demonstrates the powerful role that the media was playing in the court case's development, and the threat it posed to the institutions that the movement was countering.

The NBA's Use of the Media

While the NBA's actions have all been covered quite extensively by Indian national press,[54] this paper will focus primarily on the coverage following the Supreme Court's decision in 2000, a turning point in the movement's work and existence. Before the decision "the struggle in the valley… [was] no longer as fashionable as it used to be."[55] The Supreme Court's decision created a new rush of energy and attention from the media as the case had given the movement a concrete narrative. The eventual verdict was the conclusion of this clear-cut story line; although the movement's efforts continue, they are again waging a rather nebulous fight against numerous actors, and against numerous types of developments on the river. Therefore the intensive media coverage following the decision continued for a few months before diminishing again. This paper will examine the articles' headlines, the sources quoted in the articles, and the mix of positive and negative language used to describe the situation.

Social movements often wish to use the media because it is "the major site of contests over meaning," and because "all of the players in the policy process assume its pervasive influence, "[56] especially that of corporate news outlets.

As explained in the above section, the media is often interested of its own accord in protest movements because of their confrontational, event-based nature. As such, social movements reasonably hope to use this attention to their benefit. Social movements have many uses for the media: informing people about demonstrations or actions being organized;[57] mobilizing third parties to support the cause; creating collective empowerment through the presentation of a representative figure of the movement;[58] equalizing power by being recognized as a legitimate player; and assessing their own effectiveness.[59] In order to mobilize or raise discussion through a protest, journalistic coverage is necessary. "A demonstration with no media coverage at all is a non-event,"[60] unworthy of the efforts put into its organization and the presence of protesters.

For example, the NBA's hunger strike, although eventually unsuccessful in its ultimate goal, succeeded in one of its subgoals of publicity for the cause. It was covered extensively by the media: "The Indian and International Press, TV camera crews and documentary film-makers, were present in force. Reports appeared in the papers almost every day."[61] Every day coverage is no exaggeration. The Friends of the River Narmada – an international coalition of individuals against the construction of the Narmada River dams – have an extensive database of article from Indian and international newspapers.[62] While there is the obvious motive to conceal articles that don't correspond to their cause, an examination of the list shows that both positive and negative views of the dam are represented.

The Indian media's coverage of the the Supreme Court decision and the subsequent acts of the NBA activists continued actively throughout the month after the verdict. Of course, as William Gamson points out, "the mass media system also has autonomous interests of its own…[it] is not neutral,"[63] so the coverage varies. For example,*The Hindu* carried an article in which "people cheered and rejoiced as the construction machinery logged onto its rhythm" on the day that construction on the dam resumed.[64] Soon after the decision, The *Times of India* reported more sympathetically: "You can stand in front of the map of India and throw darts anywhere on it without bothering about the environmental or human costs. If a man or woman is going to be grounded to dust, the only option is to fight back."[65]

Much of the coverage immediately after construction resumed on October 31 2000 covered the violence of some of the protests that occurred. The NBA described previous demonstrations after the verdict as "a series of spontaneous, yet strong actions" including "fasts, *dharna*, marches and other innovative actions in various parts of the country and abroad," and described similar functions for October 31.[66] The day after, papers were full of the news of the Gujarati Minister of State for Education, Mr.Bipin Shah's injury, as well as the fact that four cars belonging to other Ministers were set on fire "by suspected Narmada Bachao Andolan activists."[67] The*Times of India* contained an article entitled "Violence mars Gujarat Govt's Narmada Bash," with *Asian Age* and the *LA Times* reporting the event internationally. Meanwhile, the NBA released a press release the day after the accusatory article in *The Hindu* denying "that it has anything to do with the chaos and the burning of cars of ministers at the inauguration of the construction work at the Sardar Sarovar Dam site."[68] While the NBA and *The Hindu* are evidently at odds in this example, few of the others accused the NBA outright. The NBA pointed to the violence as the discontent of the people living in the affected areas, despite the fact that they were not part of the organized movement.[69] This was a clever and effective twist to the media report that promoted their cause as just.

More sympathetic coverage dominated when protests were peaceful. For example, *The Hindu* equally gave space to articles analyzing the basis and the results of the decision. "Not only has the judiciary, as one of the defining institutions of the Indian state, set aside the people's struggle as of little consequence; it has also put aside with a metaphorical shrug every significant issue that the movement has raised for the people of India," wrote Neera Chandhoke on November 2.[70] Later in the month Anand Patwardan joined in, criticizing the costs of the project and the decision to continue it. She ranks it with the Union Carbide Bhopal disaster as a case in which "highly paid lawyers and political pressures combined to engender patently unjust judgements with epochal repercussions."[71]

Reports on the *BBC*, the *Washington Post*, the *Guardian*, *The Telegraph* and *The Financial Times* show the clear interest of the international press. Most of these papers covered the situation by using the Narmada case to generalize about the human cost of big dams, especially in light of the release of a report by the World Commission on Dams on November 16, 2000. Roy argues exactly that point, saying that the question of the dam projects evolved into larger questions such as who owns natural resources, and that the *'specific* facts about *specific* issues in this

specific valley – ha[ve] been blunted by the debate on the big issues."[72] Nevertheless, the attention of media outlets from around the globe has brought the case of the NBA to a huge number of people who might have otherwise been ignorant, or not considered these larger questions of public good ownership.

The NBA, Roy and the movement's leader, activist Medha Paktar, are represented in the Indian media as recognizable actors in an ongoing drama. Patkar in particular managed to "get support from the mainstream media.[73] "An identifiable cast of characters," is one of the qualities news producers tend to use to select stories,[74] and is another reason why social movements are more powerful than individual projects lacking the involvement of strong personalities.

NBA members are often quoted in the press. The BBC quotes Roy as an "award-winning novelist,"[75] and*The Hindu* often quoted Patkar's reaction to the decision: "Ms. Patkar said the valley was much stronger that one expected it to be. The people were ready to fight it out."[76] They also allowed her to explain her arguments for the NBA's protests against the government: "We are not against development. But we want it to be people- oriented. The Government cannot snatch the rights of the poor masses to bring light into the life of a privileged few."[77] The*Times of India*, *The Deccan Herald*, and *The Hindustan Times* directly refer to Patkar and Roy in headlines for articles such as "Up Close and Personal – Medha Patkar," "SC judgement biased, says Medha," "CJI urged to prosecute Patkar, Roy," and "Medha, Roy counter allegations." The inclusion of these activists is significant because "by including quotations and paraphrases from various spokespersons, journalists decide which collective actors should be taken seriously as important players."[78] The NBA is thus presented as having a legitimate voice that journalists want to include to have a more impartial, objective, balanced, and accurate story. Furthermore, since it is "almost inevitabl[e that…] governments get more coverage than opposition parties and other expressions of opposition" because of their numerous advisers, experts and formal press officials,[79] the frequent inclusion of the NBA proves them to be a match to their identifiable opponents in the government.

The NBA attracts media attention through their dramatic forms of opposition; from hunger strikes to legal action, their actions are significant enough to merit attention. Effective use of the media does not mean controlling it for one's own purposes and avoiding criticism completely. However, it does imply having a standing, which "is not the same as being covered or mentioned in the news…standing refers to a group being treated as an agent, not merely as an object being discussed by others."[80] The NBA gains legitimacy through the press coverage that treats the movement and its leaders as recognizable actors who are consulted as regular sources on the issue of the dams on the Narmada River. These leaders are also public rallying points for members of the movement. Through media coverage they are able to spread word of their passion and of their resistant actions to more people, and to recruit new supporters. They were even able to create discussion to the point of changing meaning, at least for some readers. Big dams went from being unquestionably "the Temples of Modern India"[81] to being considered more and more frequently as "troubled waters" that "are not only bad for the people they submerge but also for the economy."[82] While many still support the construction of large dams, journalists' inclusion of arguments both for and against create definite complications and qualification to the views of these enthusiasts. As such, the change in the meaning of "dam" is a powerful symbol of how the NBA as a social movement has effectively used the corporate media in a way that connects to the public.

Development Projects and the media

Development practitioners often face greater challenges in getting sufficient coverage for their work. This varies according to the project and the organization, but dealing with the media is an issue that every development project should at least consider. Examining the principles of journalism, as well as how social movements use corporate news outlets can suggest how development practitioners can better interact with journalists.

Some projects are more successful in garnering media attention than others. With competition for donors, support

and influence being very intense, “news coverage can boost a particular charity at the expense of others.” This competition results in “The big [projects]…inevitably win[ning] so much attention through legitimately newsworthy activities that the balance is already tipped heavily against the smaller, less noteworthy causes.”[83] The ability to involve itself in noteworthy activities can depend on the size, the people or organization involved, the funds of the project, and the novelty of the project attempted.

A notable figure or well known organization will generally not have to fight for media coverage because, as previously described, news producers prefer stories that are “dramatic, sensational, have an identifiable cast of characters, and a clear narrative structure.”[84] A good example is that of the Millennium Villages. These villages are created and run by noted author, scholar and UN Special Advisor to United Nations Secretary General, Jeffrey Sachs. The high-profile character of Sachs means that the media already recognizes him as a legitimate actor and expert, giving him a voice. He also has vocal critics, such as William Easterly[85], to raise the subject in the media in order to dispute the idea’s impact and broader applicability. This gives the project more coverage, although in a negative light. The more times it appears in the media, the more the audience – whether they agree with him or not – will respond with recognition.

The Millennium Villages project attempts to implement “tightly focused, technology-based and relatively straightforward programs on a number of fronts simultaneously…[that] could rapidly lift people out of poverty” in specific communities dotted across Africa.[86] The strategy is intensive and controversial, and debate exists over the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) themselves. They therefore have an aspect of novelty and drama that attracts media attention. The deadline set for the MDGs allows there to be a narrative structure to the story. While the main media coverage will be at the beginning and ending periods, in the past three months there has been at least eleven stories pertaining to the Villages in media publications such as *The New York Times*, *The National* [Abu Dhabi], and numerous outlets across Africa[87].

One problem that Sach’s project faces as much as any project of a smaller scale is that journalists want to investigate a project. They do not want to simply receive press releases or reports from the organization. “There are so many ‘image improvers’ keen to bend journalism to their purpose – especially from formerly discriminated and repressed peoples” that journalists are very unwilling to go along with a specific story line proposed by an organization.[88] Development projects may feel a loss of control when journalists want to report on a project independently, especially if the project is going through a period of problems, or it is still in an early phase at which results are less apparent. However, limiting information can lead to stories that are devoid of personal stories, or empirical data. Journalists may lack the opportunity to verify the truth,[89] as they must according to the principles of objectivity and accuracy. Without freedom to write about a project from their own perspective, based on the principles of impartiality, objectivity, balance, and accuracy, a project will not receive a great deal of coverage. Development practitioners should allow journalists this freedom if they want more and better reporting on their projects.

Journalists also want their skills to be of use. They are often able to overcome the challenges faced by development projects in appealing to the wider media industry and the public. For example, when it comes to reporting on a project going through a rough stage, journalists can “mask a story without losing its power or potency.”[90] This does not mean lying, but pointing to the broader context in which the project operates and in which it may face impediments.

A good example is the Edwell education project run by Vivek Tyagi in the slums of Gurgaon, outside of New Delhi. In March 2008 he began holding classes for elementary-school-aged children. The project was proving successful and Edwell hoped to expand it to other areas of the city. The project was reported on by Delhi metro tabloids, City Plus and Metro Now, which provided a short and praising explanation of the project.[91] A year later a fire in the slums burnt the facilities being used and left the organizers with major financial losses. Metro Now reported that the slum dwellers were “undeterred” and that they were happy with what Edwell had accomplished to that point. In the article, Tyagi admitted the challenges and asked for support from “people or institutions which really believe in changing the lives of the underprivileged.”[92] This presented the situation honestly, and showed the organization in an ultimate point of weakness, but gave it a personal and positive spin.

The Edwell project is evidently on a much smaller scale, and with a much smaller profile than other projects such as the Millennium Development Villages. As such, it lacks many of the attributes that make Sachs' project so attractive to the media. It gets coverage from local dailies that are short and thus devoid of context, although these do have a wide circulation and are part of a larger corporate body owning regional and national based papers. There are both good and bad journalists and media outlets, and finding one with which a development practitioner can partner is a good first step,[93] while good reporting at a local level may attract attention from larger outlets.

Other problems that small projects like that of Edwell face include a lack of events on which stories can be made immediate; limited ability to express the complete political, social and historical context framing the projects; and a disinterest in the successes that achieve things assumed to be "normal" by people in developed countries. Development agencies tend to feel that their information is relevant for a long time, but, for example, the public, and thus the media is unlikely to be interested in the opening of a new school after the first few opportunities. To combat this problem a good journalist will try to "create a contemporary peg to hang a story to" but the development practitioners also need to be creative and open. Meanwhile, educating students for two hours five days a week as Edwell does may be viewed sceptically by people who have always attended school for six hours during the week, despite the difference it makes for students who were unable to attend school regularly before. To properly express that this is indeed abnormal, articles should include a broader context and point out parallels to something of which the broader public already has knowledge.

Recommendations for development practitioners

Development practitioners can learn from social movements, which, working with the media, are often able to link their causes to a larger theme or debate. For example, the NBA had a "fruitful partnership" with the corporate media, which created "many a useful by-product…includ[ing] a debate on the desirability of big dams in India, the actual human cost of development, the need for proper rehabilitation and re-settlement, and wider issues concerning development-induced displacement."[94] This not only adds context, and potential controversy, but creates an issue to which the public can relate and about which they can engage in discussion. Social movements also take actions on which media coverage can be made current and immediate. Development projects could benefit from this tendency to innovate in the way of expressing their message without altering the core of their project. This could be used, for example, to attempt to change the typical representations of poor people in the media from "pitiable victims"[95] to a more active and positive role, especially if the participants in the project are the main force behind a new event or campaign.

Finally, if development projects can have a leading spokesperson or a recognizable character they will greatly increase their media coverage. UNICEF's Goodwill Ambassadors are the perfect example of using this tool. "Celebrities attract attention, so they are in a position to focus the world's eyes on the needs of children," their explanation of the programme stated.[96] Using celebrities is widely debated but undoubtedly does raise media attention and public recognition.

The form of media will evidently have an impact on the spread of information about the project, and on its impact. The "positive effort of reading means people are likely to absorb more from a newspaper,"[97] and these allow for more background information to be shared. Meanwhile, image and sound in TV and radio are powerful tools: "famine in a foreign land did not mean as much when it was described as when it was shown…nor were they driven in such large numbers to contribute their charity to alleviate it."[98] Using a variety of media types is therefore beneficial to a development project; indeed several of the recent reports on the Millennium Villages were podcasts.[99]

Finally, the note-worthy American journalist Ben Bagdikian "maintains that the basis of solid journalism is values…every basic step of the journalistic process involves a value-laden decision"[100] Development projects must take this into account and trust that there are journalists who "want to record, document, initiate a debate, shake the

policy-makers out of either their slumber or rank opportunism, research for alternatives, and open up space for dissent."[101] They want to work with development practitioners in these areas and mediate between different public spheres,[102] to use their work to inform, raise debate, and influence opinions.[103] Development projects can benefit from this dynamic to bring their issues to light, determine public support, and make people question the overall context in which their projects are occurring.

All development practitioners will have to deal with how to approach and use the media at some point in their work, whether it be to gain funds, volunteers or ideological support or to bring attention to the problems they are trying to combat. However, development practitioners need to understand how the media works, both in principle and in practice, as well as to distinguish the advantages of corporate and alternative news outlets. In this they can learn from social movements, which have strategies, such as using a variety events or campaigns to give a sense of immediacy, tailored to the needs of the media to ensure that they receive coverage. At their most effective they enter into a partnership with the corporate media, allowing them free reign to explore stories and craft them into newsworthy stories that reach a broad audience. Development practitioners should be open to a variety of media, and, especially for small projects, make real attempts to connect with journalists as more than a publicity tool. Through this sensitivity and strategy, the media and development practitioners can enjoy a partnership that spreads knowledge and debate on the crucial issues in development.

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[3] Wilson, 45.

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[6] Grossberg, 8.

[7] Grossberg, 100.

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[9] Couldry and Curran, 4.

[10] Grossberg, 33.

[11] Grossberg, 79.

[12] Silverblatt, Art. *Media literacy : keys to interpreting media messages.* Westport, CT : Praeger, 2008: 213.

[13] Silverblatt, 213.

[14] Silverblatt, 214.

[15] If the affiliations of journalists, and in particular, senior staff of news outlets, are threatened by a particular story they are covering, they may come under pressure or be tempted to censor the information they publish. For example, A. P. Parigi, the Director of the Board of Indiatimes, an Indian media company publishing multiple Indian daily newspapers, has many connections to industry. He has been CEO of BPL Mobile and a member of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Federation of Indian Chambers and Commerce Industry (FICCI). These prior roles could be an incentive to restrict the criticism of industry in the paper.
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[16] Wilson, 31.

[17] Silverblatt, 67.

[18] Wilson, 31.

[19] Della Porta, Donatella and Mario Diano. Social Movements: An Introduction. Blackwell Publishing: Malden MA, 2006: 26. [Google Books]

[20] Panneerselvan

[21] Wilson, 54.

[22] Wilson, 55.

[23] Silverblatt, 7-8.

[24] Silverblatt, 11.

[25] Sanders, Karen. *Communicating politics in the twenty-first century*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2009: 98.

[26] Wilson, 50.

[27] Wilson, 251.

[28] Silverblatt, 249.

[29] Wilson, 29.

[30] Silverblatt, 121.

[31] Wilson, 29.

[32] Silverblatt, 252.

[33] Taylor, Verta, and Nella Van Dyke. "'Get up, Stand up': Tactical Repertoires of Social Movements." The Blackwell companion to social movements. Ed. Snow et al.: 263. [Google Books]

[34] Wilson, 251.

[35] Wilson, 121.

[36] Della Porta, 20.

[37] Taylor, 263.

[38] Narula, Smita. "Part Four Globalization, Foreign Policy and the Economy." The Story of Narmada Bachao Andolan: Human Rights in the Global Economy and the Struggle Against the World Bank New York University School of Law: New York University Public Law and Legal Theory Working Papers; NELLCO Year 2008: 358.

[39] Narula, 352.

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[42] Narula, 352.

[43] Friends of the River Narmada. "A Brief Introduction to the Narmada Issue." 2009. <http://www.narmada.org/introduction.html>

[44] Narula, 354.

[45] "A Brief Introduction to the Narmada Issue."

[46] Della Porta, 21.

[47] Narula, 362.

[48] Narula 363.

[49] Narula 373.

[50] Narula 374.

[51] Narula 359.

[52] Narula 377.

[53] Narula 376.

[54] This discussion will be limited to newspaper articles and not other forms of media. This decision was made based on the accessibility of media from a distance. It was also to maintain a reasonable scope in the paper. For the same reasons, as well as that of language, national and not regional or local press will be discussed.

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[57] Wilson, 128.

[58] Sanders, 99.

[59] Gamson, 243.

[60] Gamson, 252.

[61] Roy.

[62] Unfortunately many of the links no longer function, as some of the newspaper no longer keep their full archives on file. This has limited the assessment, although headlines give a good indication of the article’s focus and slant.

[63] Gamson, 248.

[64] Kumar, Vinay. “People cheer as work on Narmada dam resumes.” *The Hindu.* October 31, 2010. <http://www.hindu.com/2000/11/01/stories/01010004.htm>

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[69] Dharmadhikary.

[70] Chandhoke, Neera. “Social struggles & human rights.” The Hindu. November 2, 2000. <http://www.hindu.com/2000/11/02/stories/05022523.htm>

[71] Patwardan, Anand. “Judgment and after.” *The Hindu*. November 26, 2000. <http://www.hindu.com/2000/11/26/stories/13260412.htm>

[72] Roy.

[73] Panneerselvan

[74] Silverblatt, 214-215.

[75] BBC

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New Delhi, November 3, 2000. <http://www.hindu.com/2000/11/04/stories/01040008.htm>

[77] Balakrishnan, Lakshmi. “From Narmada Valley with anger.” November 11, 2000. <http://www.hindu.com/2000/11/12/stories/14122182.htm>

[78] Gamson, 243.

[79] Wilson, 174.

[80] Gamson, 248.

[81] Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru made this infamous statement in a speech on October 22, 1963, while dedicating the new Bhakra dam on the Sutlej River (Roy; “Bhakra Dam” Wikipedia).

[82] Bakshi, Rajni. “Troubled waters.” *The Hindu*. November 12, 2000. <http://www.hindu.com/2000/11/12/stories/1312061d.htm>

[83] Wilson, 262.

[84] Silverblatt, 214-215.

[85] Wiliam Easterly is a Professor of Economics at New York University, and Co-director of its

Development Research Institute. He has published several books criticizing foreign aid, including *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Harm and So Little Good* (2006), and *The Elusive Quest for Growth: Economists' Adventures and Misadventures in the Tropics* (2001).

[86] Gettleman, Jeffrey. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/09/world/africa/09kenya.html?ref=global-home>

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[88] Wilson, 59.

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[91] Thapa, Anupam. "Jai Ho!" Metro Now Gurgaon Edition. February 29, 2009.

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[93] Panneerselvan

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[95] Wilson, 251.

[96] "Goodwill Ambassadors." UNICEF, 11 September 2009. <http://www.unicef.org/people/people_ambassadors.html>.

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[98] Wilson, 120-121.

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[100] Silverblatt, 225.

[101] Panneerselvan

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Written by: ***Rebecca Dixon***
Written for: ***Dr David P. Thomas***
Written at: ***Mount Allison University***
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