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SOCIAL MOVEMENT SPLINTERING: AN EXAMINATION OF STOCKTON STANDS WITH MINNEAPOLIS AND NEWS MEDIA REPRESENTATION

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SOCIAL MOVEMENT SPLINTERING: AN EXAMINATION OF STOCKTON STANDS WITH
MINNEAPOLIS AND NEWS MEDIA REPRESENTATION

By

Kevin O. Ozomaro

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University of the Pacific
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2022

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By

Kevin O. Ozomaro

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my future wife and family. You have all helped me get through these last few years of school more than you could ever know. I never believed I would ever graduate high school let alone graduate school. Thank you all for never giving up on me, even when I gave up on myself.

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Abstract

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The phenomenon surrounding news media's power to alter group identity and group cohesion is something that rarely a point of focus in communication studies. In this study I worked with a local social movement group called Stockton Stands with Minneapolis. This group illustrated the importance of maintaining shared values. Utilizing relational Interviewing, SSWM members provided evidence showing the connection between news media and group success. News media has had a role in shaping group members' understanding of SSWM and activism. SSWM has faced internal conflict as a result of negative news representation. SSWM is a relatively small and young (2 ½ years) group when compared to more established groups and movements (such as black lives matter and #MeToo), the impact of losing any amount of membership to news representation is important and deserves attention. Therefore, in this paper I argue researchers must go beyond the conventional protest paradigm and media effects research that has commonly only examined the impact of the outgroup. There is a need for a new area of focus within media effects and activist representation, one that examines the impact of news media through multiple lenses of analysis. I argue this area would benefit from incorporating theories and concepts across the communications studies discipline. Utilizing research from the fields of media effects, interpersonal communication, and organizational

communication can bring new insights to already existing understandings of activism and activist success. To help lead the charge into this new area of focus; I introduce a new paradigm and research approach called social movement splintering.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

An Introduction to Social Movements and New Media Representation

On the evening of May 25, 2020, George Floyd was murdered by Derek Chauvin, a white Minneapolis police officer. Witnesses of Floyd's murder recorded and shared the incident giving the world a glimpse into the Black American experience. Derek Chauvin was recorded kneeling on the neck of George Floyd for almost 10 minutes. This recorded death was viewed by millions around the world and set off what may have been the largest protest movement in U.S. history and nationwide recognition of the need for police reform (Buchanan, Bui, and Patel, 2020). Protests began almost immediately in Minneapolis and quickly spread across the nation. Demonstrators chanting "*Black Lives Matter!*" and "*I Can't Breathe!*" took to the streets from coast to coast, and police departments around the country responded at times with riot-control tactics. Floyd's murder came after protests over the killings of Ahmaud Arbery in Atlanta in February and of Breonna Taylor in Louisville in March and came in the third month of nationwide lockdowns due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Buchanan, Bui, and Patel, 2020).

I first learned about the murder of George Floyd online, hours after his death. I witnessed firsthand how the speed in which a movement could form. Within hours after Floyd's death activist groups had started forming and recruiting individuals to participate in demonstrations that honored the memory of George Floyd. Having grown up in a small town known for violence I learned quickly how to avoid conflict. I also learned that I would likely be perceived as a threat to local police simply because of my skin tone. Like Minneapolis, the city of Stockton, California has a diverse population and a police force with a history of brutality.

The Stockton community resonated with the protesters in Minneapolis because of the similarly faced atrocities. The Stockton community made sure their voices would be heard. They wanted the world to understand that police brutality was not a rare occurrence. Additionally, the Stockton community wanted to come together in support of Minneapolis by building a movement that could help curb the police violence that they themselves have experienced. In the following weeks after the death of George Floyd, many Stockton-based social movement groups were formed. Out of all these new groups, the most impactful and organized was formed by a group of college students. These college students came together to form the social movement group called Stockton Stands with Minneapolis.

Stockton Stands with Minneapolis

More than one-hundred people gathered at a local community college in June 2020. The gathering was formed to show support for George Floyd, who was killed by police in Minneapolis the month before (Dickman, 2020). "Participants held signs and chanted things like "no justice, no peace, no racist police" and "Black lives matter" as they marched peacefully from the front of Delta College on Pacific Avenue down Burke Bradley Drive to Pershing Avenue to Robinhood Drive and then back around to where they had started" (Dickman, 2020, para.3). This first protest was the catalyst that sparked the formation of the activism group Stockton Stands with Minneapolis. A group devoted to making a tangible change to a community that has faced many adversities, Stockton Stands with Minneapolis was founded by a group of local college students. The founding members were part of a local debate team where they competed against other universities across the United States. These students formed a shared interest in community activism through their debate experience. Though Stockton Stands with

Minneapolis was relatively new, this group attracted a significant amount of local attention and maintained a healthy social media presence (roughly 900 followers as of November 2021).

Local news coverage of Stockton Stands with Minneapolis has reduced since its inception, but their local presence did not.

Media Representation

Stockton Stands with Minneapolis (SSWM hereafter), like other social movements, was given visibility through mainstream media. SSWM worked within a news system that prioritized stakeholders and investors over social movement groups. News media prioritizes the interest of stakeholders and investors because of their monetary influences. SSWM worked within this hegemonic system whose interests might not align with the movement's. Because of the monetary influence of stakeholders and investors, SSWM's image became limited to what was approved by the hegemonic leaders within the news media system. That being said, social movement groups have succeeded in regard to gaining local media attention; however, the media's negative depiction of SSWM and other related activism groups (BLM) has plagued these movements. Through mainstream media framing, priming, and reaffirmation of the protest paradigm, news media has reprogramed seemingly peaceful and non-threatening protests into riots and increasing calls of malicious actions.

Studies on race in the news media highlight racial minorities as one of the most clearly defined out-groups (Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008). News media frames racial minorities as being outside the general population within the United States. This framing creates a reductive understanding of minority issues, framing racial issues and concerns as an anomaly rather than a regular occurrence. The general news audiences tend to view out-group members negatively,

and audience members often evaluate media that can either confirm or dis-confirm their preexisting biases (Vescio and Biernat, 1999). Selective exposure argues that people are motivated to find news that affirms their group's perceived specialness and portrays their group in the most favorable light (Appiah, 2013). "Selective exposure analyses also rarely explain the challenge faced by minorities when seeking positive news stories to boost their group identity. Media rarely breaks from their routines and often cover news from the dominant group" (Bjornstrom, Kaufman, Peterson, and Slater, 2010, p.269). Understanding this type of media representation becomes essential when news media continues to frame minority groups as unfavorable. Representation not only affects how audiences view and value themselves, but it also affects the way others see them, which may result in negative interactions with the public, disengagement from political understanding, and actions with those who are constantly being negatively viewed by those representations.

Lack of Ingroup Examination

The relationship between mainstream media and social movement groups has become increasingly one-sided. Social movement groups rely on mass media to gain attention. Still, these same media sources continue to sacrifice accurate representation (of social movement goals, mission statements, and positive community engagement) for the more dramatic click generating content. This dilemma is commonly referred to as the protest paradigm. Though there have been studies in this field, researchers have failed to examine the protest paradigm's impact on the social movement members.

The interaction between media content and a group member's understanding comes from social interactions within the groups. Actions and understanding towards media and what

meanings emerge from those actions are social interactions (Littlejohn, Foss, and Oetzel, 2017). Members within a group share a common ideology (i.e., attitudes, feelings, values, and beliefs), and through these shared views, a group identity forms. Members develop a socialized lens that shapes how they consume and interpret media. Thus, group interpretations of media depend on members maintaining a shared ideology. Because of this, it becomes increasingly important to examine the relationship that group members have with media representation to see what, if any, power media has in affecting members already within the group, and in the overall success of a social movement. In this study I used a qualitative research approach utilizing relational interviews with members of Stockton Stands with Minneapolis to investigate the relationship between media representation and social movement cohesion, retention, and success.

Defining Key Terms and Concepts

Before diving into the literature surrounding the present study, it is important to understand the terms and concepts that are frequently referenced throughout this thesis. These definitions were foundational to this study and the lens through which all research was framed.

Protest Paradigm – Conventional media will focus on drama, violence, and confrontation rather than details such as protest agendas, demands, and accomplishments (Chan and Lee, 1984; McLeod and Hertog, 1999; Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993; Kilgo and Harlow, 2019).

- 1) Media Framing - Introducing news items with predefined and narrow contextualization. Frames can enhance understanding or be used as cognitive shortcuts to link stories to the bigger picture (Arowolo, 2017).
- 2) Organizational socialization theory - A learning and adjustment process that enables an individual to assume an organizational role that fits both organizational and

individual needs. It is a dynamic process that occurs when an individual carries a new or changing role within an organization (McDonald and Mitra, 2019, p.100).

- 3) Social movements groups - Social movements groups are defined as networks of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups, and/or organizations, engaged in political or cultural conflicts, on the basis of shared collective identities (Diani, 1992).

It is important to understand that there are many different types of social movements and theories surrounding them. For this research, I took my understanding of social movements and social movement success from structural strain theory. Structural strain theory was proposed by Neil Smelser (1965). The theory advocates that any nascent social movement needs six factors to grow. "These six factors are: people in a society experience some type of problem (deprivation); recognition by people of that society that this problem exists; an ideology purporting to be a solution for the problem develops and spreads its influence; an event or events transpire that convert this nascent movement into a bona fide social movement; the society (and its government) is open to change for the movement to be effective (if not, then the movement might die out); and mobilization of resources takes place as the movement develops further" (San and Avci, 2016, p.128). Structural strain theory provides a clear framework for what a social movement is and how to gauge social movement group success. One key aspect of social movement success under structural strain theory is the idea of recognition. Social movement groups must gain recognition and support from society. This idea of societal support is rooted in the representation of a social movement. In this study, I examined the news representation of the Stockton Stands with Minneapolis activism group and the influence that the news media had on the social movement's success.

Conclusion

Whereas communication and political science research have focused on highlighting biases within media coverage and their effect on viewers, this paper focused on impact of media effects on existing members. Through in-group perspectives, this paper highlighted the media's effectiveness in creating splintering and influencing success within a social movement. There was a need for a new area of focus within media effects and activist representation, one that examined the impact of the news media through multiple lenses of analysis. I believe this area would benefit from incorporating theories and concepts across the Communication Studies discipline. In this thesis, I argued for the inclusion of a new area of focus regarding social movements and their news media representation. To better bring attention to this need for an expanded focus we must first examine the current literary base surrounding news representation and social movement groups.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

While Communication Studies and Political Science research has focused on highlighting biases within media coverage and their effect on viewers, research has not focused on the media effects on existing group members. Because existing members are part of the activist in-group, it follows that these individuals would offer a unique media perspective. Through these perspectives, researchers can examine the media's effectiveness in creating splintering within a social movement. This thesis combined media identification, media framing, and priming theories to illustrate the connections between mainstream media representations and potential splintering within Stockton Stands with Minneapolis.

Protest Paradigm

Social activist and social movement groups are in a constant battle regarding news media representation. These groups struggle to gain accurate news representations; mainstream news media rely on dramatic interpretations of news to attract viewership and subsequently advertisement revenue (Chan and Lee, 1984; McLeod and Hertog, 1999; Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993; Kilgo and Harlow, 2019). This drive for profit results in a reductive representation of activist groups. These less than favorable representations tend to focus on more dramatic storylines instead of activist demands and successes (Brasted, 2005). Even with news media's biased representation, social activist groups still rely on mainstream media to get their name and mission out to the public.

With the growth of other forms of news such as social media and internet blogs, social activist groups still find themselves at the mercy of mainstream media (Roskos-Ewoldsen,

2007). As an alternative, activist groups utilize social platform mediums to project their goals and network (broadcast) their messages to broader audiences. Journalists and other media sources have routinely found little news value in demands for change without action, so protestors create media interest by employing action (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012). With increased activity comes increased media coverage, but this media coverage is not always positive or accurate.

Mainstream media may not be the only channel for news consumption, but it is the channel that provides legitimacy. Because social activist groups have a need for mainstream legitimacy in order to promote their demands for change, activist groups are always in a dilemma. This phenomenon is referred to as the protest paradigm, originally coined by Joseph Chan and Chin-Chuan Lee in 1984. Chan and Lee developed the term in their study which described the relationship between media outlets and Hong Kong protest groups. Chan and Lee (1984) voiced the concept of the protest paradigm as referring to the pattern of delegitimizing news coverage of protest and dissent.

Building on Chan and Lee's concepts, Douglas McLeod and James Hertog (1999) found repeating patterns that took place in media representation of activist groups. McLeod and Hertog defined these recurring elements as a "routinized pattern or implicit template for the coverage of social protests. These patterns, known as the protest paradigm, are ultimately created by the symbiotic but imbalanced relationship between activists and the press" (Kilgo and Harlow, 2019, p.4). This relationship develops in the following way: (1) the press does not cover movements that do not engage in newsworthy activity; (2) advocates stage events to attract media attention, which they need to distribute their message to broader audiences and

to signal their strength; and (3) journalists then cover these staged events without generating substantive information about the event's background or the grievances or agendas of the movement behind the protest. This paradigm thus is a paradoxical situation: Movements must adapt and appeal to media logic to receive coverage, but when they do, protest coverage tends to demonize protesters, characterizing them as menaces to society, marginalizing their voices, and under or inadequately reporting the grievances, demands, and agendas of movements (Chan and Lee, 1984; Kilgo and Harlow, 2019; McLeod and Hertog, 1999). These elements come together to shape news representation of activism groups; Danielle Kilgo and Summer Harlow's research can be used as a method to better apply Chan and Lee's concepts on current news media coverage. Chan and Lee's, together with Kilgo and Harlow's, concepts are still currently applied in contemporary news media coverage; however, researchers have noted that the contemporary news media can exhibit a more complex relation to the politics of protest than assumed in the past (Cottle, 2008, p. 859). This indicates that there is a need to update the approaches we take in examining the relationship between media representation and social movement groups.

Studies focusing on the concept of the protest paradigm have also begun to treat the pattern of media coverage as a variable—that is, instead of assuming or trying to prove that the mainstream media are biased against social protests—the pattern of delegitimizing coverage is treated as existing to varying degrees in the coverage of different types of protests, by different media, or in different types of societies (Lee, 2014). Michael Boyle, Douglas McLeod, and Cory Armstrong (2012) found that protests employing more radical tactics are portrayed more negatively. Michael McCluskey, Susan Stein, Michael Boyle, and Douglas McLeod (2009) found

that news coverage of protests in U.S. newspapers belonging to less diverse communities conforms more to the protest paradigm. This is because less diverse communities do not have established mechanisms for resolving conflicts; thus, the news media organizations have a stronger role in maintaining and creating community consensus.

Through Simon Cottle's (2008) and Francis Lee's (2014) theories, researchers can examine the effect that the protest paradigm has on both in- and out-groups, instead of focusing on whether news biases exist. However, Communication Studies and Political Science research has focused on highlighting biases within media coverage and the effect on viewers, and research has not focused on the media effects of existing members. Since existing members are part of the out-group in society, it is safe to assume that these individuals offer a unique media perspective, and it is one that deserves to be examined.

Studies done on social movement representation in mainstream news media found that protesters are among the most clearly defined out-groups (Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008). People tend to view out-group members negatively, and audience members often evaluate media that can either confirm or dis-confirm their preexisting biases (Vescio and Biernat, 1999). Selective exposure theory is used to illustrate the connection between belief systems and selected media choices. Selective exposure theory argues that people are motivated to find news that affirms their group's perceived specialness and portrays their group in a most favorable light (Appiah, 2013). The news media rarely break from their routines and often cover news from the dominant (societal in-group, individuals who do not identify with activist groups) group's perspective (Bjornstrom, Kaufman, Peterson, and Slater, 2010). For example, coverage of Black Lives Matter protests tends to focus on the effect these protests have on

those outside of a movement such as local business owners, politicians, members from competing groups. To better understand the effect that the protest paradigm has on both in-group and out-group, we must first break down the ways news media can create narratives that propagate activist representation.

SSWM, like most social movement groups, relies on the news media to gain visibility and legitimacy, which in turn results in social movement groups interacting with the effects of the Protest Paradigm. In this study I examined the effects that mainstream media had on the Stockton birthed social activist group, Stockton Stands with Minneapolis. Because of the infancy of this social activist group, this was a prime opportunity to examine the effects that news representation had on the cohesion and success of the group, as well as the influence media had on forming community understanding and interactions. To best break down these concepts it is important to understand the basics of the protest paradigm: media framing and priming, self and group identification, and finally, how these come together to affect the relationships within social movement groups.

Media Framing and Priming Theories

Media framing. Framing theory explains how media creates frames that introduce news items with predefined and narrow contextualization (Arowolo, 2017). This contextualization has a significant effect on audiences' consumption of media. Thus, framing has an immeasurable but qualitatively significant effect on social movement groups that attempt to transmit their intentions through mainstream media. For social movements to gain influential power, movements must rely on mass media. Social movements utilize mainstream media channels to project their goals and mediated messages to broader audiences. These

mediated messages run into capitalist gatekeepers reframing (Arowolo, 2017). Journalists and other media sources frame social movements in a way that creates an interesting storyline that could then be sold to viewers. Douglas McLeod and John Hertog (1995) built on Pamela Shoemaker and Stephen Reese's (1991) protest paradigm studies, by creating five identifying framing tools that conventional television news stations (CNN, FOX, MSNBC, etc.) deploy onto social movement coverage: News frames, reliance on official sources, the invocation of public opinion, "delegitimization," and "demonization."

1. "News framing means 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. Several different frames have been associated with the protest paradigm. Among the frames that are commonly used in the coverage of radical social protests are the "crime story", the "riot", and the "carnival"; there is also the "debate" frame, which is less common.
2. Reliance on official sources and official definitions. Evidence of the heavy reliance on official sources by mainstream news media has been long established. The use of official sources gives news stories prestige, increase news production efficiency, and adheres to the rituals of objectivity. When public officials are the predominant source of information for news stories, stories tend to be told from the perspectives of the powerful, downplaying perspectives that challenge that power.
3. Invocation of public opinion. Cues to public opinion typically point out differences between protesters and mainstream society. They include reports of opinion polls, sweeping generalizations about public opinion, bystander portrayals, norm invocation, and legal transgressions. Most protest stories do not contain reports of actual public opinion polls, with the occasional exception for issues like abortion and anti-war protests. It is actually more common for reporters or the sources they quote to make generalizations about public opinion on protest issues or about public reactions to the protesters. For radical protests, these assertions typically are used in a way that frames protesters as an isolated minority. Mainstream public opinion is also demarcated by the invocation of social norms, violations of which are an indicator of deviance. According to the protest paradigm, news stories often pay considerable attention to the appearance and behaviors of protesters in a way that draws attention to their deviance from social norms. Similarly, news stories about radical protest pay particular attention to violations of law in a way that point out that the protesters oppose mainstream values. Bystanders (who by definition do not join the protest), like letters-to-the-editor, are used symbolically to represent the responses of the citizenry.

4. Delegitimization. The mainstream media often fail to adequately explain the meaning and context of protest actions, leading the audience to perceive them as futile, pointless, and even irrational.' Journalists may further delegitimize protests by judging them as futile or as failures, ignoring many of the latent functions of protest groups (e.g., spreading information, generating resources, building solidarity among individuals and coalitions among like-minded groups, etc.).
5. Demonization. Media coverage includes content that identifies potential threats and negative consequences of protests. For many radical protest groups, the media may create "moral panics" by exaggerating threats. For example, Gitlin asserts that the media over-hyped the communist elements of the anti-Vietnam War movement. Similarly, McLeod and Hertog found that media coverage emphasized the violence, flag-burning, and counter-cultural elements of minority anarchist and anti-war protesters in Minneapolis. A prominent feature of protest coverage is a focus on the negative consequences of the protest, such as the violence, property damage, traffic congestion, and expenditure of community resources (i.e., the cost of law enforcement), that result from the protest."
(McLeod and Hertog, 1995, p.186-187, numerically outlined in original work; Shoemaker and Reese, 1980).

Shoemaker and Reese (1984), and McLeod and Hertog (1995), concluded that groups perceived as more radical (groups challenging hegemonic views), received increased negative mainstream media representation. These representations followed the five identifying framing tools outlined above. It is important to understand the effects these framing techniques had on viewership understandings of the social movement.

Benjamin Detenber, Melissa Gotlieb, Douglas McLeod, and Olga Malinkina (2007) found that highly critical and high conflict media articles made participants of more skeptical of protests than those exposed to noncritical coverage. Detenber, Gotlieb, McLeod, and Malinkina (2007) also found that well-established beliefs were essential to consider when assessing media effects and attitudes toward protest. They found that preexisting attitudes and beliefs were fundamental components of protest image interpretations. Mass media can use these preexisting beliefs to push a protest narrative to be more favorable to their audience. "Mediated frames are designed to enhance understanding or as cognitive shortcuts linking

stories to a bigger picture" (Arowolo, 2017, p.1). Therefore, the media depiction of protest is widely ranging between news networks, each asseverating their viewership's beliefs and attitudes.

Media priming. Frames that utilize cognitive shortcuts derive power from media priming. Priming refers to the effects of media content on people's behavior, thoughts, or judgments. Priming theory aims to explain the short-term effects of media violence, the effects of political coverage on evaluations of a candidate, and stereotyped portrayals of minorities (Roskos-Ewoldsen and Klinger, 2007). Mass media content consumption temporarily effects how an audience member processes messages shortly after exposure (Berkowitz, 1986; Abraham and Appiah, 2006). Priming theory suggests that audience members who consume media that coincide with ideas, memories, or beliefs have activation of nodes (Higgins, Bargh, and Lombardi, 1985; Berkowitz, 1994). Nodes refer to one's unconscious memories that have come from consuming media. Connections of nodes to these related ideas are activated whether the individual believes them or not, provided that they exist in the person's associative network.

The concept of framing nodes is most commonly used within the computer sciences field; but it has frequently been used to describe observed phenomenon within television psychology and media effect studies. Media priming theory originated in psychological network models of memory, in which these concepts are used to break down the connection between user media consumption and user predictable behavior (Iyengar and Kinder, 1987). These models have been adapted into communication studies media effects research (Moy,

Tewksbury, and Rinke, 2016). This concept can be used as a parallel to the general communication studies applications of myth, narratives, and scripts.

Mythic criticism. Myth criticism points out repeating themes within media. Myth comes from the Greek word *mythos*, meaning “tale, story” (Cassirer, 2010; Groden, Kreiswirth, and Szeman, 2004). Myth criticism argues that there are recurring themes in media (Cassirer, 2010; Groden, Kreiswirth, and Szeman, 2004). These themes are meant to resonate with the audience and convey meaning (Cassirer, 2010). In Romantic and post-Romantic lectures, myth is defined as the denial of euhemerism. The theory argues that myths can be explained historically or by identifying their special objects or motives (Groden, Kreiswirth, and Szeman, 2004). Ernst Cassirer (2010) defines myth as a fundamental “symbolic form” meaning that like language, is a means of responding to, and creating our world. But unlike language, or at least the language or philosophy, myth is non-intellectual, non-discursive, and is typically imagistic (Cassirer, 2010; Groden, Kreiswirth, and Szeman, 2004). Myth, like language, can convey a message to an audience, but where myth and symbolic language differ is in the way the message is transmitted (Cassirer, 2010; Groden, Kreiswirth, and Szeman, 2004). A language is a symbolic tool meant to transmit knowledge based on a logical appeal whereas myth’s primary focus is that of emotion-laden, unmediated “Language” of experiences (Cassirer, 2010; Groden, Kreiswirth, and Szeman, 2004). Cassirer (2010) believes that there is no separation of the real and the ideal; the mythic “‘image does not represent the ‘thing’; it is the thing” (p.2). Literature that taps into the recesses of myth conciseness will reveal “dynamic of the life feeling,” which gives meaning and intelligibility to our world (Cassirer, 2010). Wendy Doniger (2010) explains, “myth is a story that is sacred to and shared by a group of people who find their most

important meanings in it; it is a story to have been composed in the past about an event in the past, an event that continues to have meaning in the present because it is remembered” (p.3). These myths are passed down for generations and find their way into media today. Similarly, to priming theory these nodes and/or myths hold strong meanings that are used as a reference point to better understand the world around us. When media uses myths (images, narratives, etc.) audience members pull from the past, this act of remembrance alters all communication channels. These alterations create implicit and explicit biases that govern the way audience members understand the world.

When applying mythic criticism to present-day activist media representation, we run into a limitation. This application of myth is reliant on audience members consuming an adequate amount of data (television news, newspapers, online/social media news) prior to interacting with news media. If audience members lack a frame of reference (myth) for an activist group or similar group, it is fair to believe that there would be a limitation to the effectiveness of media to influence audiences. This limitation can be overcome by reflecting upon the theories previously explained media framing and priming, as well as the theory of racial scripts.

Racial scripts. When analyzing the connection between television myths (frames) and activist groups, it is important to understand the difference in representation between race-based activism groups and their non-race-based counterparts. Danielle Kilgo and Summer Harlow (2019) analyzed media representation across white lead activism groups and non-white activism groups. The authors found that the effect of the protest paradigm is significantly more prevalent in race-based activism groups. Media interactions with groups made up of

predominantly Black and Indigenous people have failed to advance beyond the traditional paradigm structure. Meanwhile, other protests are not systematically delegitimized. Kilgo and Harlow argue that their findings reflect the hierarchy of social struggle, in which certain topics are given precedence and legitimacy, and others are delegitimized, trivialized, or ignored altogether.

These myths of racial delegitimization can be understood as racial scripts. Racial scripts as defined by Anjali Vats (2020) are historically grounded and in racist logic about racial groups. This logic can be accessed at any time to exclude a racial group. These scripts operate as shorthand mechanisms for calling upon dominant American ideas of national identity, patriotism, political economy, and personhood without necessarily explicitly invoking racial categories or colonial logic. Vats (2020) breakdown of racial script illustrates the effect myth has on informing the audience's understanding. Racial scripts isolate the myth of the American dream and American patriotism. Utilizing these racial scripts, the news media can frame race-based movements into movements against American ideals, national identity, and patriotism. News media representation of race-based social movement groups, such as BLM and SSWM are increasingly framed through racial scripts. Through these scripts, conversations surrounding social movement groups are framed into conversations about American core values (American ideals, national identity, and patriotism). This not so uncommon media strategy is employed to drive viewership and online clicks. Notably, Fox News reframed a news story about stolen nuclear military secrets into an issue regarding BLM. In this story Fox news presented a story of Jonathan and Diana Toebe. Jonathan and Diana Toebe were arrested on October 2021 in West Virginia, for espionage-related charges. Jonathan Toebe sold information for nearly a

year to a contact he believed represented a foreign power but was actually an undercover FBI agent. Instead of focusing on how a member of the US Navy was able to smuggle and sell information, Fox news decide it was best to focus on Diana Toebbe's social media activities. Fox News examined Diana's Facebook page, Twitter account, and Instagram page, and found repeated posts supporting the Black Lives Matter movement, including a profile picture reading, "Black Lives Matter," and a post celebrating the social media protest against racism called "#blackouttuesday." Fox framed this story in a way that would entice its audience members to make a connection between espionage and the Black Lives Matter movement. Fox created a script that framed BLM as an attack on the core values of America.

It is important to understand that these phenomena have been studied by communication studies and social science researchers (Bjornstrom, Kaufman, Peterson, and Slater, 2010), but researchers also need to focus on the effect news media has on members within a social movement group. To better understand those effects, we must explore the concept of self-identification, group identification, and social movement identification.

Self-identification, Group Identification, and Social Movement Identification

Kenneth Burke's identity theory. Kenneth Burke's identity theory is one of the most comprehensive understandings of identification (Littlejohn, Foss, and Oetzel, 2017). According to Burke, there are three overlapping sources where identification exists: Material, Idealistic, and Formal identification. For this study we will focus on idealistic identification. Idealistic identification results from members' shared ideas, attitudes, feelings, and values; such, as being a member of the same church or political party (Littlejohn, Foss, and Oetzel, 2017). Burke believes identification occurs when two individuals are consubstantial, or they share substance

in common. Some consubstantiality always will be present merely by virtue of the shared humanness of any two people. Numerous sources of identification occur when members of a group converse freely. Therefore, members within an already established group have higher identification. Burke argues members of a group experience consubstantiality based on material, idealistic, and formal identification. Identification can be considerable or limited, and it can be increased or decreased by the communicators' actions. Those within a group must feel that their ideologies are represented (i.e., attitudes, feelings, values, and beliefs); without representation, members experience cognitive dissonance.

This type of dissonance can be examined and explained through consistency theory; cognitive systems are the primary tool by which consistency among beliefs is maintained. Balance disturbance and attitude change result in actions to restore balance (Littlejohn, Foss, and Oetzel, 2017). These actions come in many forms; this thesis highlights those actions and the threshold for cognitive dissonance. Once members of a group have a shared identity, their elucidation becomes filtered through a group lens. This lens shapes how members interact and interpret nongroup generated communication from local or mainstream media channels (Littlejohn, Foss, and Oetzel, 2017). This understanding is echoed in social action media studies; audiences should not characterize as an amorphous mass. Instead, it consists of numerous, highly differentiated communities, each with its values, ideals, and interests (Littlejohn, Foss, and Oetzel, 2017). Viewing groups in this fashion indicates that we must understand that groups are all made up of smaller groups. The connection between these groups is what creates the social connection that we contribute to an overall group image.

Social action media studies assert that groupthink changes one's understanding and perception of media due to high group conformity. While the meaning of a program or message may vary depending on the individual. The meaning is also a communal activity. It is part of the tradition of a group, community, or culture. The implication of this is that when members join a community, members accept the ongoing activities and meanings of that community or group (Littlejohn, Foss, and Oetzel, 2017). The interactions between media content and group members' understanding come from social interactions within the groups. Actions and understanding towards media and the meanings that emerge from those actions are social interactions (Littlejohn, Foss, and Oetzel, 2017). Members within a group share a common ideology (i.e., attitudes, feelings, values, and beliefs), and through these shared views, a group identity forms. Members develop a socialized lens that shapes how they consume and interpret media together. Thus, group interpretations of media depend on members maintaining a shared ideology.

Social movement group identification. Scholars have wondered why people join collective efforts such as social movement groups. Sociologists and Communication Studies scholars have devoted a great deal of attention to trying to answer that very question. Scholars have argued that social movements rely on group identification; Kenneth Burke argues that idealistic identification (ideas, attitudes, feelings, and values; Littlejohn, Foss, and Oetzel, 2017), can be used to explain why people are drawn to groups. Burke's understanding can be adapted to social movements where shared idealistic values give members a sense of belonging. Once members have a sense of belonging, members begin to intertwine their values and self-image with those of the overall group. This understanding is also reflected within

Bruce Fireman and William Gamson's (1979) study, where they argue that a person whose life is intertwined with a group (through friendship, kinship, organizational membership, informal support networks, or shared relations with outsiders) will develop a stake in the group's overall fate.

When collective actions are urgent, the person is likely to contribute his or her share even if the impact of that share is not noticeable. Fireman and Gamson's (1979) study provides a great illustration of the connection between social movement identification and collective actions. Members with a social movement are willing to put in a great deal of effort into achieving the movement's goals. Even if members' efforts do not materialize into a significant change or action, members still gain a feeling of success because of their shared interaction with the group. This shared interest according to Burke, Stephen Littlejohn, Karen Foss, and John Oetzel, ultimately leads to members intertwining their individual success with their group's success. Similarly, to fans of a sports team, a team win is not only a win for members of the sports team but anyone who has supported that team. Though the understanding of collective identity connection to group action has been widely agreed upon, some scholars feel that the shared interest of those who make up a collective identity are not enough to motivate individual efforts.

Mancur Olson (1965) argues that collective identity does not provide a reward to individuals within a group. Therefore, members within a group fail to receive an individual acknowledgment, members will no longer see themselves as an intertwined appendment of their group. Instead, members will simply see themselves as a supporter of a group. This difference might appear small but has many tangible implications (Olson, 1965). Though Olson

makes a strong argument, I believe that Olson fails to account for the effectiveness of shared idealistic values. Shared idealistic values have a significant effect on member-to-member relationships, which Burke argued is key to forming a collective identity. Therefore, it can be understood that a sense of shared idealistic value results in collective sharing of organizational success. A win for the social movement is a win for the idealistic values the group represents. This understanding can be seen within social movement mobilizations such as the French commune (Gould, 1995), the Russian revolution (Bonnell, 1983), the Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism movement (Snow, Zurcher, and Eckland-Olson, 1980), and even within 2022 Russian and Ukraine conflict. Within these social movements, prior ties motivated participation through norms of obligation and reciprocity. In this instance, collective identity can be understood as the affective connections one has to members of a group that oblige one to protest along with or on behalf of them (Marwell and Oliver, 1993; Oberschall, 1973; Tilly, 1979). In other words, individuals who share idealistic values with social movement groups gain a reward from simply supporting and working with groups that portray values that they deem important.

Dennis Chong (1991) built upon the previous work done by Gerald Marwell and Pamela Oliver (1993), Anthony Oberschall (1973), and Charles Tilly (1979), and he argued that social movement groups must maintain a reputation. Chong (1991) believed this reputational concern to be that groups must keep consistent core values in order for collective identity to retain member support. This understanding raises a fundamental question. Can outside sources change the way members perceive a group's core values, or consistency even with a history of activism and identification? I believe that outside sources have the power to affect or highlight misaligned core values. News media has a strong influence on how audiences

perceive the world around them, and media priming and framing hold the potential to change the way members within a group perceive core values subsequently affecting self and group identification.

Conclusion

Considering the disposition of protest paradigm research toward out-group examinations, there was an apparent lack of in-group examination. There has been a consensus on the existence of the protest paradigm. It is no longer a question of if the protest paradigm exists, but instead to what degree this phenomenon has persisted in media coverage of social movement groups. To further the conversation and change the direction of research, it is important to focus on the in-group effect that the protest paradigm has on social movement groups. SSWM was a relatively small and new social movement group, meaning it provided a unique opportunity to see the impact that the news media can have from the very beginning of a movement's life cycle. Specifically, this study examined the news media's power, or lack of power, to alter social movement intragroup relationships. Utilizing these concepts as a theoretical framework, we uncovered the relationship between the protest paradigm and social movement groups.

With the increasing media attention of social movement groups, it has become more important to analyze the power media has to affect social movements. By examining the protest paradigm from a different perspective, one that focuses on the in-group (members within social movement groups) phenomenon, we open the door to new conversations and understandings surrendering the news media's representation of activism groups. Through conversations and examinations, those within the activist and academic worlds can take more

informed actions in order to combat media representation that has historically been used to dismiss and negatively frame social movement groups.

This project utilized relational interviews to gain a unique perspective of in-group communication within SSWM. These interviews were held using the Zoom video calling platform, with six members of Stockton Stands with Minneapolis. Because of Covid-19 concerns, all interactions were done online. Online interviews may lack the face-to-face connection of in-person interviews, but they created a world of new opportunities to interview individuals that at times were difficult to reach. In the following chapter I review the research methodology, data gathering method, and data analysis methods that were used to conduct this research.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHOD

Research Questions

- 1) What role does news media have within Stockton Stands with Minneapolis's social movement cohesion, group identity, and retention?
- 2) How does news representation impact members' understanding of *Stockton's Stands with Minneapolis's* core values and beliefs?
- 3) What role do core values and belief systems have on Stockton Stands with Minneapolis socialization?

Methodology

To study the role news media has on Stockton Stands with Minneapolis's group cohesion, and the importance of core values and beliefs in maintaining group identity, this thesis employed a praxis driven qualitative research methodology. This approach suggests that qualitative data (interview responses, testimonials, etc.) can be systematically gathered, organized, interpreted, analyzed, and communicated to address real-world concerns (Tracy, 2017). The qualitative methodology approach is commonly used in examining culture and affect phenomena (Tracy, 2020). Qualitative research can uncover salient issues and/or overlooked issues, such as those phenomena surrounding social movements and news media representation. The qualitative methodology allows researchers to gain a new understanding of the world, culture, and institutions (Tracy, 2020). "Qualitative methodology also provides knowledge that targets societal, questions, or problems and therefore serves humankind"(Tracy, 2020). Tracy (2007) argues that the research process should begin with identifying a particular issue, problem, or dilemma in the world and then proceed to

systematically interpret data in order to provide an analysis that sheds light on issues and/or opens a path for possible social transformation. This thesis targeted an overlooked gap in protest paradigm, social movement, and media effects research. The employment of a qualitative research methodology aided in recognizing Stockton Stands with Minneapolis in-group hermeneutic connections between social movement cohesion and media representation, and the impact news media representation has on the group's success.

Method

Relational Interviews

Relational interviewing produces data that emerges dynamically through dialogue between researcher and interviewee (Fujii, 2017). Thus, the main goal was to facilitate open conversation. Through these conversations, researchers collect and interpret data. Relational interviewing utilizes an interpretive methodology to evaluate meaning. Therefore, explanations of phenomena must start with an investigation into the meanings people give to social actions, the social world, and cultural forms. Through this investigation, researchers can understand the epistemology that governs a person's worldview and actions (Fujii, 2017; Schaffer, 2016). Focusing on discovering meaning allows for the researcher to study the social phenomena through organic conversation, rather than leading interviewees knowing and/or unknowingly into reaffirming or supporting a researcher's hypothesis. Lee Ann Fujii (2017) argues, that "relational interview data does not exist in free-standing form prior to the engagement between researcher and participant; rather, they are jointly produced through the back and, forth exchange" (p.5). Thus, the length of an interview and the quality of collected data is dependent on the dialog between the researcher and the interviewee.

Justification. Relational interviews can be utilized in a wide range of research fields. Fujii (2017) argues that relational interviews are best suited for projects whose aim is to uncover understandings of identity and inner group identity. “Relational interviewing is better suited for certain kinds of projects than others. It is particularly well-suited for those that investigate how people construct meaning” (Fujii, 2017, p.6). By using relational interviewing with Stockton Stands with Minneapolis, the researcher can facilitate an organic dialog, one which allows for an analysis of group constructed meaning. Relational interviewing is also effective at analyzing how people explain processes of change or transformation, such as how and why some become doctors, dictators, or drag queens or how others navigate the constraints and vicissitudes of poverty, racism, or illness (Fujii, 2017). Through relational interviewing, a researcher can facilitate conversations aimed at bringing attention to the effectiveness of SSWM to retain membership and the overall success of their group.

Relational interviews provide illumination and insight into multiple perspectives on media effects. Utilizing relational interviews allows for an in-depth analysis of group dynamics within a social movement. This approach has the potential to generate numerous perspectives, methods of consumption, and media interpretations. Because of my personal relationships with members within SSWM, I believe that a relational interview would be the best way to observe and gather unique data. Holding relational interviews online via Zoom makes it possible to overcome the common organizing limitation of face-to-face research methods. Interviews through Zoom also help bring people together from across the country. It is also important to point out that these interviews were done during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic. To make sure that all parties are safe and have limited exposure to Covid-19, I have

opted for a research method that can be done online with similar effectiveness to its face-to-face counterpart.

Research Design and Procedure

Six members of *Stockton Stands with Minneapolis* participated in one-on-one interviews ranging between 45-80 mins. These meetings were held on Zoom because this online platform offers a wide range of tools for automating live text transcriptions. These transcriptions will later be downloaded and used to analyze recurring themes within the interviews. Video interviews also limit exposure of Covid-19 to members of Stockton Stands with Minneapolis. There are some limitations to conducting interviews online, such as reading nonverbal communication from interviewees. Interviews will be recorded, therefore allowing for more in-depth analysis through multiple views of the recorded interviews. Close viewing allows for nonverbal communication patterns to be observed. Zoom recordings provide a more in-depth and detailed analysis in comparison to conventional interview approaches. Therefore, I believe I overcame the perceived limitations of online video interviews.

Participant selection. Members of Stockton Stands with Minneapolis were selected based on their time within the group. All selected members have been active members for the life of the organization (two and a half years). Stockton Stands with Minneapolis was created and organized by early community college students. Therefore, selected participants for this study reflected the medium age of active members (19-26 years old). Although I am not part of this group, I gained access to these activists through personal relationships with the group leader and group influencers. All participants in the study (interviewer and interviewee) have attended community college and are active college students. This commonality better

facilitates an organic conversation. Interviewees have all been active participants in Stockton Stands with Minneapolis since its formation, which means that their experiences can illuminate the successes and struggles of the activist group.

In practice, relational interviews rely on a working relationship between the researcher and the interviewee (Fujii, 2017). This type of relationship enables organic forms of discourse, resulting in a form of data unique to relational interviews. These working relationships must be built over time, creating a limitation to researchers who have limited interactions. More common interviewer's practice relies on rapport; these types of relationships fail to provide a raw, personal, and organic conversation (Fujii, 2017). Thus, relying on a working relationship is significantly more fruitful. Because of my friendships with Stockton Stands with Minneapolis members, I leveraged working relationships to produce organic conversations, which lead to quality data that reflected the inner workings of Stockton Stands with Minneapolis.

Interviewer self-disclosure. To provide a balanced evaluation of Stockton Stands with Minneapolis, it is important to disclose my affiliation with the group. I first became aware of the group in early 2020, roughly a few weeks after their first organized protest. I was contacted and asked to participate in the protest. I was in support of the movement, but I made the choice not to participate. I had been friends with the founding members for a few years, and we all attended the same community college and were members of a local speech and debate team. After graduating from the program, I stayed in contact with the founders. This formed the working relationship that had given me the ability to schedule these interviews. I have never been affiliated with the group or had any decision-making power in their organization.

Although I support the values of the group, as a researcher I aim to be as impartial as possible in conducting and processing interview data.

Interviewee biographies. To better understand the individuals being interviewed, it is important to learn a little about them. Learning about the individuals that were interviewed not only provides the needed insight in understanding their worldviews, but also highlights the key characteristics of members within the group. To protect the identity of SSWM members I have opted to use pseudonyms. SSWM is a small group, and it is important to limit identifying factors.

Oswaldo Burke. Oswaldo Burke is a 23-year-old male Colombian immigrant. Oswaldo immigrated to the United States when he was in high school. Oswaldo finished high school and later attended a local community college in Stockton, CA. Oswaldo was an active member of the speech and debate team before later transferring to a 4-year university, where he became a member of their speech and debate team. Oswaldo spends most of his free time competing in speech and debate and working to obtain a degree in psychology. Oswaldo has been a member of Stockton Stands with Minneapolis from the beginning.

Raine Kailey. Raine Kailey is a 21-year-old Mexican American female. Kailey grew up in Stockton, CA. where she took an interest in local activism. Kailey attended community college at a young age in a program called middle college. Middle college allows students to earn college credits while they obtain their high school diplomas. Kailey was an active member of her local speech and debate team before transferring to a 4-year university. Kailey recently took a step back from activism but continues to maintain her support for Stockton Stands with Minneapolis of which she was a founding member.

Macauley Barrie. Macauley Barrie is a 22-year-old African American college student in Stockton. Barrie has co-organized marches and events protesting police brutality and advocating for education reforms in the wake of the killing of George Floyd. Barrie has continued his work in activism, in which he co-founded Stockton Stands with Minneapolis. Barrie has been a strong advocate for police reform and alternatives to policing in general. Barrie was recently highlighted in the Stockton Record, where he recounts his experiences with policing in Stockton, CA.

Pamella Burke. Pamella Burke is a 26-year-old female Colombian immigrant. Pamella immigrated to the United States when she was in high school. Pamella finished high school and later attended a local community college in Stockton, CA. Pamella was an active member of a local speech and debate team before later transferring to the University of the Pacific, where she became a member of the Pacific speech and debate team. Pamella spends most of her free time competing in speech and debate, working to obtain a degree in international relations, and learning Chinese. Pamella has been a member of Stockton Stands with Minneapolis from its beginning.

Millicent Mtendere. Millicent Mtendere, is a 21-year-old Pakistani American activist and student at San Joaquin Delta College in Stockton, California. Mtendere has co-organized marches and events protesting police brutality and advocating for education reforms in the wake of the killing of George Floyd. Mtendere has been an active member of a local speech and debate team, where she developed friendships with other activists and a love for activism. In an interview with the Stockton Record, Mtendere discussed her beliefs on policing and her community. Mtendere believes in confronting and solving societal issues such as disparities in

wealth, resources, and educational systems. Mtendere is a co-founder of Stockton Stands with Minneapolis. Mtendere currently has taken on a leading role within the organization and has been committed to bringing a tangible change to Stockton, California.

Svanhild Mtendere. Svanhild Mtendere, is a 21-year-old Pakistani American activist and former student of a local community college located in Stockton, California. During Mtendere's time at college, she was an active member of the speech and debate team before graduating and moving out of town. Svanhild participated in some of the first Stockton Stands with Minneapolis protests. Svanhild has taken a step back from activism but continues to support *Stockton's stands with Minneapolis.*

Interview design. I designed these interviews using the organizational theory of socialization. Socialization theory defines the learning and adjustment process that enables an individual to assume an organizational role that fits both organizational and individual needs. It is a dynamic process that occurs when an individual assumes a new or changing role within an organization. This socialization process breaks down into three main parts: pre-arrival stage, encounter stage, and metamorphosis stage (McDonald and Mitra, 2019, p.100). Socialization theory breaks down all the steps required to become part of an organization. Socialization theory also examines the variables behind the recruitment and retention of a group. Because of the dynamic use of this theory, I believe it provides the best outline to build my design and interview questions around.

Socialization theory can be broken down into three main stages. Interview questions were constructed around each stage to better understand the innerworkings of the group, and to detect variables that could affect recruitment and retention.

The pre-arrival stage consists of anything a potential organization member has learned about the organization before joining (McDonald and Mitra, 2019, p.100). In this stage of the interview, group members were asked to talk about their understanding before joining the group. They were also asked to talk about core values they believe the group represented before becoming a member.

The encounter stage is where the new organization members' expectations meet the group's reality (McDonald and Mitra, 2019, p.100). In this stage, members were asked to talk about their experiences being a member. Members talked about what they expected and what the group turned into. Members were asked to talk about any conflicts that came from being part of the group.

The metamorphosis stage is where new members change themselves to adjust to the group (McDonald and Mitra, 2019, p.100). In this section, members are asked to discuss how they feel about the group now. Members are asked to talk about the changes that have taken place with themselves or with the group.

Using socialization theory allows for an investigation of all membership stages. Through this analysis module, I was able to create a relational interview guide that was both focused and promoted organic conversations. Socialization theory also created a point of reference, it allowed me to examine the variables associated with news media and organizational success.

Data analysis. I used a thematic analysis approach when analyzing the interview responses. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, organizing, describing, and reporting themes found within a data set (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Boyatzis (1998) described thematic analysis as a translator for those speaking the languages of qualitative and

quantitative analysis, enabling researchers who use different research methods to communicate with each other. Thematic analysis is best used in research aiming to uncover or spotlight people's views, opinions, knowledge, experiences, or values (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Thematic analysis is a process used by many qualitative methods, it is not a separate method, rather something to be used to assist researchers in analysis (Boyatzis, 1998; Holloway and Todres, 2003; Ryan and Bernard, 2000). Utilizing thematic analysis as a method of evaluating qualitative data can result in trustworthy and insightful findings (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke (2006), and King (2004), argued that thematic analysis is a useful method for examining the perspectives of different research participants, highlighting similarities and differences, and generating unanticipated insights.

Braun and Clarke (2006) outlined a six-phased process for conducting thematic analysis. 1) Familiarizing yourself with your data, 2) Generating initial codes, 3) Searching for themes, 4) Reviewing themes, 5) Defining and Naming Themes, and 6) Producing the Report. Lorelli Nowell, Jill Norris, Deborah White, and Nancy Moules (2017) expanded on Braun and Clarke's six-phased thematic analysis process. Nowell, Norris, White, and Moules argued for a more iterative and reflective process that develops over time and involves a constant moving back and forward between phases.

In this thesis I used Nowell et. al.'s approach to thematic analysis. Nowell, Norris, White, and Moules' (2017) approach provided a clear outline for analysis without the strict formulaic structure of Braun and Clarke's six-phased process. Adopting this approach provided a better understanding from the interview data. This approach was useful in analyzing data from a large set of interviews. Without this approach, insights could have been lost in the vast

amounts of interview data. SSWM has a wide variety of members, and each member provided their own insights. Thematic analysis allowed me to capture and interpret all their unique perspectives. I also decided to use a thematic analysis because of its creation of clean themed data that can later be reexamined and iterated on.

Interview data. After conducting SSWM interviews I collected and analyzed the data set. The data set included six interviews with members of SSWM. Each interview averaged 45 mins in length, which created over 60 pages of raw interview data, and roughly 270 mins (4.5 hours) of interview video recordings. Interview text transcriptions were provided by Zoom, which were reviewed and corrected for any mis-transcription.

Conclusion

To study the role news media has on Stockton Stands with Minneapolis's cohesion, and the importance of core values and beliefs in maintaining group identity this thesis employed a praxis driven qualitative research methodology, as well as a mixed method approach utilizing relational interviews and thematic analysis. Through these frames of research, I was able to gain a new insight into the innerworkings of SSWM and other similar groups. In the results chapter I provide a representation of the combined interview data sets in response to the research questions found in chapter three.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

This results section is organized into the three main components. These components were created after conducting a thematic analysis. These components can be understood as generation of initial coding of the interview data. Data was organized into four coding schemes: 1) Pre-arrival stage, 2) Encounter stage, 3) Metamorphosis stage, and 4) Media consumption. These sections are reflective of organizational socialization theory. Each stage examines the effectiveness of group cohesion and the ability of the group to maintain retention. This section examines the connection between value, core belief, and group goals in response to news media representation on SSWM and other activism groups. Interview data was broken down into these sections because it allowed for a clear representation of SSWM organization structure and was reflective of the process of gaining and retaining members within their organization. Each component was further broken down used to categories interview responses.

Pre-arrival Stage

These first set of questions were focused on individual involvement within Stockton Stands with Minneapolis. Members discussed the formation of Stockton Stands with Minneapolis. The pre-arrival stage is where the process of orientation starts for a new member, wherein the exchange of certain information takes place before an employee or group member officially enters the organization. This stage recognizes that each new employee arrives with a set of organizational values, attitudes, and expectations. The pre-arrival stage cannot be ignored because it shapes the perception of members in an organization. Members

were asked a set of questions that highlighted how they joined or created the organization and what values they believed the group stood for before joining SSWM. The pre-arrival stage is the first stage of socialization process. This stage is a strong indicator of a group's core values and beliefs as well as a member's ability to socialize successfully within SSWM. The pre-arrival stage analysis is needed to answer the research questions. Without this stage analysis examining organizational socialization is impossible. The pre-arrival stage is also needed to as a point of references, this stage gives a base line of members views of SSWM. This baseline understanding is needed in evaluating the influence news media has on the socialization process as well as news media's ability to alter core values and beliefs of members.

Creating and joining Stockton Stands with Minneapolis; Why members joined and what values they believe the group represented before joining or creating SSWM. Members were asked to talk about their understanding of the SSWM activism group before joining. SSWM members were also asked to discuss when they joined and their reasoning behind joining the activism group. The majority of SSWM members have had a history of activism before joining this group and wanted to join to help bring attention to the problems happening in their community. Members responses proved a baseline of values that can then be compared to the encounter stage, metamorphosis stage, and news media influences.

Raine Kailey has been an active member of many different activism groups. Kailey discusses why she decided to be a part of SSWM. She also highlights the importance of community.

“Well, there are many reasons I wanted to be a part of Stockton Stands, the main reason is that I believe in the cause and what it stands for. Inspiration for Stockton stands stems from groups I was already supporting such as the BLM movement that was really big during early 2020. I joined with the intention of standing up for marginalized

communities in Stockton and to help join the community together, I've always believed there's more power in numbers. This is something that I firmly believe is needed in a social movement" (Kailey, 2022).

Kailey's response showed her want to do something. Something that would correct the inequalities she had been seeing around the world and in her community. SSWM provided the hope that Kailey needed. SSWM provide an image of an organization that was created to support the community and fight for marginalized individuals.

Macauley Barrie and Millicent Mtendere have been members of SSWM from the group's beginning. As founding members, Barrie and Mtendere discussed how they started SSWM. Barrie and Mtendere also discussed their hopes for the activism group and why they decided to come together to create this group.

"I was a part of the group since its founding. I was one of the cofounders with Millicent. We started working more and more on the group. The protests were really just something we did to keep the momentum going, to start building it into something. I mean personally, I felt like there's definitely a gap in terms of youth ability and youth power within the city, being able to have the tools to do things like resolution writing organizing and pulling people into different things. Phone banking and text banking there wasn't really a lot of energy focused on incorporating the youth. I wanted to provide a path to recreate their community, and...I felt like this was an opportunity to have that...A movement in the direction different from the stereotypical that we have for the community" (Barrie, 2022).

"We originally started off with planning protests in the wake of George Floyd's murder, we didn't really have an intent to start a nonprofit what we really wanted to do was, just protest and get the word out there, just show solidarity with Minneapolis. We grew so much and we wanted to continue making a change, that's when we decided to become an established nonprofit and focus on criminal justice, housing the community, and the education system" (M. Mtendere, 2022).

Macauley Barrie and Millicent Mtendere responses show that they had a clear goal in mind when starting SSWM. Both members had a strong value and belief system that they brought into the creation of SSWM.

Oswaldo and Pamella Burke discussed their want to support not only activism groups such as Black Lives Matter, but their friends within the speech and debate team. The Burke siblings wanted to support their friends and help them achieve their values and mission.

“I joined because I thought, like what do you stand for, and seeing all the things happening I knew I wanted to join the group. It was something that was important to reflect on. It was important to me, and I felt that I needed to support and stand up for what is right. It was seeing my close friends coming together. I knew I wanted to be there to support them and support their rights. I wanted to help them fight for their values and for their lives” (O. Burke, 2022).

Oswaldo’s response shows a strong connection to the core values of SSWM. Oswaldo responses shows his connection to his friends as while as his want to fight for change in his community. His response is very reflective of the pre-arrival stage, his view of the group was consistent with the core values he believes in.

“I joined the movement at the beginning of 2020 when all the Black Lives Matter protests started to occur. The group started at college and started to recruit all of us. The group started with Millicent who headed the organization. When George Floyd was killed, I felt powerless, I felt that I couldn't do anything about it. When Oswaldo came up to me and told me about the group, I wanted to join and help. It was the only thing that I felt like I would be able to contribute to. As a student, I didn't really have the time to really commit to the protest, but I feel like the least I could help them get food and get resources and get little things I know could help. I wanted to help contribute to the movement, that Black Lives Matter movement and other movements like it, which was really important at the time and it's still really important to me” (P. Burke, 2022).

Pamella’s response also reflective of the pre-arrival stage. Pamella felt that there was a need in her community. She joined SSWM because she felt that the group shared the same goals and values. Pamella felt committed to the organization that she has even tried to continue working with SSWM while attending schooling and having less free time. Pamella perceived view of SSWM was congruent with her core values and beliefs.

Process of joining Stockton Stands with Minneapolis and their roles within the organization. Members were asked how they joined, what process did they go through to become members of the organization. Members were also asked to discuss their role within the organization and what their role within the organization entailed.

SSWM co-founders discussed their initial roles within the organization and future roles they hope to take on.

“My role was basically assisting and trying to make sure that the organization is on track with the mission. That being said I make sure that we're doing our job in terms of looking at different policies and looking at different projects around the country. I then channel projects into something that we can utilize coinciding with the main allocation of responsibilities the whole organization” (Barrie, 2022).

“My role in Stockton Stands with Minneapolis is the president. I can't say that I do it all by myself. I do it with Macauley. Both of us oversee different committees. We've started a few different projects that we're working on. Leading meetings is the basics, carrying out projects, and trying to continue and grow our base is my main role” (M. Mtendere, 2022).

Barrie and M. Mtendere both show that they are actively working to keep a central focus within the organization. Both founding members responses show that they work to create a focus and consistent value throughout all of the communities they work within.

Millicent Mtendere further explained what a typical SSWM meeting looks like.

Mtendere made sure to point out that all members are welcome to SSWM meetings.

Mtendere indicated that they are actively trying to involve more outside members within their public board meetings.

“A typical meeting is about two hours long we focus on whatever initiatives we're working on at the moment. So, lately, we've been focusing on the housing initiative and creating free affordable housing in Stockton. We've been focusing on mental health, and right now we're really focusing on the abolition of the police. We have our board meetings in which everybody who was on our board can come. We have nine people in total, including me, so there's a set amount of people that we expect at the meetings,

and then we have it open to the public as well. So, anybody can join, I will say that, though we haven't really advertised it as much. But we're going to do that more this month that's a goal of ours..." (M. Mtendere, 2022).

Non-founding members were asked to discuss their roles within the organization.

Members all shared a similar experience learning to manage their school and work-life with their roles within the activism group. Most members have taken a step back from their involvement within the group. Members indicated many different reasons for their role change.

"I'm probably just a supporter. I just help with anything that they needed. If they need someone to go pick something up drop something off like I would do that. But, probably just like somebody that helped them during the protest that was doing chants and stuff like that, and like help set up, help give people food" (S. Mtendere, 2022).

"I was part of the debate team, and I didn't have to do much to be part of the group. I just started working with them and tried helping in any way that I could. So, most of it was trying to recruit more people, I was the one that also contacted a lot of other members of the debate team, I also coordinated with others, planning who would bring water and other resources to people that we're going to the protests. I also help with creating signs as well, a lot of signs, that were used during the protests. I basically just joined the movement and protest and helped with anything that was needed. I worked a lot in logistics." (P. Burke, 2022).

"At this moment my role is more of a supporter. I remember at the beginning my role was more of a logistic kind of thing, like the organization of donations. I was the one that would speak to others about donations. I acted as a contact point for those that wanted to provide donations. I also would spread the word and talk to different groups to help support each other. But after everything that happened (moving to a new school), I just became a member. I haven't been contacted about supporting the group. But if anyone does, I will help" (O. Burke, 2022).

"My role it's pretty small, I am just a volunteer currently. I'm a supporter if there's an event I could go to, anyway I can help I would. If they reach out or I'll reach out but apart from that I'm not too involved. In the past I would help with planning events brainstorm ideas for how to further their goal and mission, I would also help them figure out the processes of implementing those ideas, as well as helping them bring those ideas to life" (Kailey, 2022).

SSWM responses in the section show that their roles have changed overtime. Members indicated that this change happened because of other obligation consuming their time. Members have also indicated that they are willing to step in and help with any needs that SSWM may have. SSWM consistently downplayed their roles within the organization. This downplaying showed that members felt that the group was bigger than them. Showing how strongly they felt and believed about the perceived values and core beliefs of SSWM.

Encounter Stage

The encounter stage is the part of socialization, it is where a person joins or enters an organization. Individuals discover how well their expectations match realities within the organization. Members were asked to discuss their relationships in the group and how their first impression of the group matched the reality of being part of the SSWM.

Members favorite and less favorite part of being part of SSWM. SSWM members were asked to talk about their experience within the group. Members discussed their favorite and less favorite parts of being part of SSWM. A majority of members discussed their connection with their friends and being part of a movement they believe in.

“The most interesting part, I think is the fact that we're youth-led. You don't really see that in a lot of organizations. I think it (SSWM) morphed into something different because we did start off with criminal justice, but now we're expanding the areas that we want to make an impact. Like housing the community. Our focus is on, creating better education and implementing better police policies” (M. Mtendere, 2022).

M. Mtendere response shows that her initial hopes for the group have changed overtime. This is a strong indication of the encounter stage. Mtendere had to come to a realization of what the organization is and what she wanted it to be. Mtendere interaction within the encounter stage was positive she came to terms with the current state of the

organization. In this instance Mtendere believed that the organization was still supporting a value system that she believed in.

M. Mtendere later discussed her least favorite part of being part of SSWM. She discussed the difficulties that come from being youth-led. She points out that being new added a lot of frustrations.

“I think the fact that we're youth-led kind of makes it hard for us to have a point of reference. As of right now, everything that we're doing we're learning every single day. We don't have the years of experience, right now, so it's harder to navigate political policy and public policy and, trying to get something in place or even implemented” (M. Mtendere, 2022).

Some members of the group pointed out that they liked being connected with their friends and fighting for what they believed in. They then pointed out that different understandings of political issues have created conflict and have made being part of the group difficult at times.

“I think my favorite part was the actual protest. For example, one of our members performed a lot of poems and there was a lot of music, and the feeling of unity was great in a time when we needed unity. It was really good, and it gives me hope for instance talking with other people talking with a lot of black people that were telling me their experience. All of that opened my mind to the actual situation that I probably didn't understand before because I don't experience it myself. And that was a good opportunity for me to learn a lot about black and people of color experience and really understand more than just what I see on TV, or what I hear from friends. So that was the thing that I liked the most” (P. Burke, 2022).

Pamella Burke goes on to explain what her less favorite part of SSWM has been.

Pamella highlights her struggle in dealing with internal conflicts within the group.

“I guess my least favorite part was dealing with those inner conflicts within the group because, even though we seem to all have the same goal and in the beginning, it's kind of clear what goals are when all of these little things like different understandings of what violence is and all just different understandings of political issues and it started to get in the way of the group. I really don't know how to handle it correctly; I don't want to exclude anybody. We try to keep everything peaceful, but when there is so much

tension it's really awkward and it's hard to deal with those inner conflicts, so I guess that's what I didn't like" (P. Burke, 2022).

S. Mtendere further discussed this impact she believes the movement has been making.

She goes on to talk about her favorite part of being in SSWM. "Probably the community activities and the protest... like the stuff that they did for June 10th, the community involvement, because that's really what matters... Because that's where you see the change" (S. Mtendere, 2022).

When asked about their favorite part Barrie discussed how members within the group continue to grow and learn new aspects of social activism.

"I think it's honestly been how many people we've been able to pull into, social justice, I think beforehand, even before the protests. I hadn't been here in Stockton my whole life, but in the years that I have been here, I hadn't seen anything like that before. So, I think that has definitely been the best part because the people that we've been getting in they've either been going to like to do other internships or create partnerships or even find other jobs. So, I think it's just been great seeing the growth that we see with the people who are coming in" (Barrie, 2022).

Kailey discussed her enjoyment in being part of a group that is helping people. She further discussed some frustrations that come from being part of SSWM.

"My favorite part is obviously helping people, as well as throwing events or even the complete project. Seeing the projects that we set up ourselves, helping with the projects that the organization is working on, as well as helping people I really like that. Well, I don't always enjoy being part of SSWM. We're all still figuring everything out so sometimes things can get very confusing, but like I said it's all about just recognizing that we're new, and we're inexperienced. We're all busy and we're trying our best" (Kailey, 2022).

O. Burke discussed his enjoyment of being part of the group, he also discussed some of the problems he had with the group's organization.

"My favorite part was being able to see the community come together. I remember during that time; I saw a lot of progress in Stockton and Lodi. I feel like a movement like ours was able to bring people together, to support the change, support the victims,

support the values of Black Lives Matter. It felt like we were bringing change, bringing attention, and it was bringing people to the discussion” (O. Burke, 2022).

O. Burke then discussed their least favorite part of being part of the organization.

“The other groups within the group kind of liked to follow back. I don't blame the organization itself, but they did a lot of secret stuff. I remember they would plan their own second protests, a second movement, a second demonstration. Because of the pandemic, we were not always able to have people come out. The turnout was kind of low it was understandable; people were trying to stay safe. But it didn't help that some members were planning their own protests at the same time” (O. Burke, 2022).

Relationship within the SSWM organization. Millicent Mtendere was asked to describe their relationship with members of SSWM. Millicent described the easy-going nature of the group. She discussed how she has tried to create an environment where everyone feels comfortable speaking up for what they believe in. Members responses can be used to examine the effectiveness of socialization within SSWM. The encounter stage is needed to answer the research questions.

“Honestly, I would say that we're all pretty easygoing. Nothing is off-limits between us, at first, it really started off professional but because we've gotten to know each other, a bit more it's becoming more like a friend group” (M. Mtendere, 2022).

Millicent continues talking about the relationships within the group. She later talks about the different groups that formed within the group.

“Yeah, I think the one thing that we noticed is that there are some clicks. We are a relatively new nonprofit; these are people that haven't really ever met each other. But because they hit it off with each other, from the start, they kind of like to stick with one another when it comes to working on a project. We have been trying to get everyone to get along better” (T. Mtendere, 2022).

Pamella talks about the different relationships that she's seen in the group. Pamella highlights the way the group handled conflict or disagreements.

“Well, I think it's good I still talk to a lot of the members. Osvaldo is part of the group and is my brother, so I still talk to him. I still talk to the main members of the group the

ones that have been there since the beginning. I still talk to members that have left the group. I know that they continue with the greater movement just in a different way. They still like supporting the Black Lives Matter movement and all that in other ways, not just in our group, but in other groups that they later joined, but overall, still have a good relationship with everyone, obviously the pandemic didn't allow me to actually go and meet with them, and all that but, overall, I'm still close to the main people" (P. Burke, 2022).

Pamella continues talking about the different relationships she's seen within the group.

She highlights an experience she witnessed where a member felt attacked and ultimately left the group.

"Yeah, to give you more details this person was really concerned about violence. Basically, she said that if the group became violent and we supported violence, she didn't feel comfortable with that. I think she left, not because we became violent, but she left because of the backlash of that comment. Other members of the group started to say that it wasn't the point. The group argued that violence was necessary in some instances. So, she left because of that inner conflict, not because she didn't believe in the group. And I know she still does because on Instagram she shares other movements and she's still sharing a lot of things about Black Lives Matter, so I know she's still involved in the whole movement. Which is BLM right now, but she's not specifically supporting us" (P. Burke, 2022).

Pamella then shared her opinion on why she believed this conflict escalated so quickly.

"Yeah, because most of the communication was done online and, on a chat, I think it's easier to just attack back or argue, than when you're on a meeting or face to face. So, it made it easier for those inner conflicts to occur, instead of like civilized talking when you are on a regular meeting" (P. Burke, 2022).

Barrie discusses the difficulty of working with members whose goals do not always line up with the overall group. Barrie speaks to having to work with an older generation who did not seem willing to work with the younger members of SSWM.

"I think it depends on whom the interaction was coming from, I think a lot of times, it was hard to really be interested, to be able to put ourselves out there because. I think people were really a little difficult and that's not to say that that was on them. Some people aren't as willing to compromise or focus on youth goals, so we heard a lot of things "we've been doing this for years", where it's we've wanted to see change, extremely quickly. Or will have things going into a long process. When we felt that we

could have had things done, in three months. There are a lot of times, or like we had our clashing moments where we didn't want to collaborate or work with us, at times some older members felt we were too ambitious with our goals. But I think outside of that there's been a lot of people who have been really willing to help us as well, so I think it just depends on the scenario" (Barrie, 2022).

Metamorphosis Stage

The metamorphosis stage of the interview focused on highlighting changes that have taken place within the organization. Members were asked to describe any noticeable changes they observed within the group.

Millicent talked about how her relationships within the group have changed over time. Millicent discusses how her relationships have improved and how she is working to make things better for everyone within the group.

"I would say that the relationship is improving. Like I feel like it's getting stronger" (M. Mtendere, 2022). When asked about the frequency of times she talked to members in the group Millicent responded, "I would say, at least every other day, if not every day we're we have a group chat so we're constantly like texting one another" (M. Mtendere, 2022).

Millicent further discusses frustrations that she had experienced due to changes that have taken place over her time with the organization.

"It gets frustrating, especially with like the pandemic, I want group cohesion, but you can't really get that online. We want to meet our deadlines sooner, but it's harder to engage everybody through a Zoom meeting, rather than in person. Like long political readings..." (M. Mtendere, 2022).

Millicent highlights some of the barriers that have limited people from being involved in SSWM.

"We're basically all college students right with some high school students so as soon as the final semester hit for all of us, we kind of didn't get as much work done" (M. Mtendere, 2022).

Millicent further discussed the process of getting members on the same page regarding values, beliefs, and just the overall goal of the movement. Millicent explains that most members are on the same page, but that isn't always true when it comes to logistics. Such as when should the group focus on an issue and what issues should be focused on over another.

“Mostly not, not to the T. That’s what I mean by not. But, in general, yes, we kind of have similarities to what we envision. So, I really haven't discussed this with anybody yet, with this abolition we're really we're trying to start a campaign of doing it and stopped. We're hoping to submit a proposal to the city charter and get it on the ballot by November. That's going to be the main goal, but we few members two at the most that aren't really for abolition they're more towards the defund so it's going to be interesting to see how I'm going to navigate that because I'm setting up a meeting. I think it's just the fear of having your entire life out there, that was the main concern because, considering Stockton is a smaller city it's easy to figure out what's going on with other people and easy to spread rumors and whatnot, especially with the 209 times. So, that's one of the main concerns is that I don't want my political life, in the public eye” (M. Mtendere, 2022).

Mtendere responses shows the negative side of the encounter stage. Mtendere response shows the struggles she has had in trying to get members through the encounter stage. Mtendere is dealing with members who have interpreted SSWM core values and beliefs differently than Mtendere and the current direction of SSWM.

Protest Paradigm and its Connection to Group Identity and Group Cohesion

This next set of questions focused on the ways SSWM interacts with news media. Members discussed how they consume and talk about media. Members also discussed some conflicts that has come from media representation and the overall goals of the movement.

Media consumption, representation, and sharing between family, friends, and SSWM’s members. Members of SSWM were asked to discuss how they consume new media. Members highlighted all the different platforms that they use and how they share and talk about the news to people in their friends, family, and other members of SSWM.

“I get a lot of my news from online social media, I also get my news online from places like the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal* social media. I follow a lot of news on social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. I mainly get my news online because I enjoy scrolling through social media and it makes it easier to see what’s happening. I also like newspapers apps like The *Washington Post*, The *New York Times*, and The *Wall Street Journal*. I can get those apps on my phone which makes things a lot simpler” (O. Burke, 2022).

Oswaldo Burke talked about how he shares news, he discussed how he shared news media and whom he shared this media with.

“I mostly talk with my family. Like Pamella is in the group and we talk also. We always ask each other if they saw something in the news that I found important. Because a lot of in SSWM debated it is normal for us to discuss things in the news” (O. Burke, 2022).

Oswaldo Burke further discussed SSWM media representation. He talked about his experiences seeing SSWM in the news and how he felt about the representation.

“In the beginning, we would get more local news channels. They focused on rogue ethnic and actors that had nothing to do with us. Local newspapers would talk about things outside of the group. They would never focus on the protest. I feel that some news reports tried to be neutral, but some give us a representation of being hostile. They never highlighted what was real. People came together to protest, and things end up being peaceful, like no accidents or anything. There was no coverage that would bring attention from the government. No coverage to you know, talk to the leaders, the activists and also highlight how it was made by DREAM students and college students. I would’ve liked to see them highlighting what we were doing. Like, oh look they’re doing this, but they didn’t. They could have added to the conversation. It was like okay, moving on to other things, they should have looked at what the protesters were saying, what they were trying to say. (O. Burke, 2022).

Oswaldo Burke talked about how little the news media did to tell the story of SSWM.

“I think it's something that usually happens in the news. It’s important to question who is broadcasting or who's talking about it and the outcome. That is something that I try to practice, I try to read news from balanced sources without bias, and form networks with good writers and staff” (O. Burke, 2022).

Millicent broke down how she shares news within SSWM. She later discussed her dream of creating her own news. Something that she believes would provide accurate information to SSWM and non-members.

“I think social media news pages like 209 times (local social media account that spreads unchecked news about Stockton) give us a really bad representation. It’s hard to get a real understanding of us from accounts like that. Like that’s something that we want to create, our own representation. You know, something to have proper media representation. One that shows our goals. We want to create a magazine that we can send out, that’s accessible for all. So, we can share our own news. That’s another project we’re working on. We also use social media to share news, we’re constantly sending each other posts and whatnot. We’re hoping to start off a series of political education we just had, our first reading. I’m not really sure if that counts as media, but like when it comes to news and whatnot it’s mainly through text” (U. Mtendere, 2022).

Barrie discussed how he and other group members discuss their news representation.

Barrie points out how quickly the news can report members’ personal information. He has been working to make sure that members are ready for all that comes with having news media attention.

“We’ve definitely discussed how we’ve been represented in the news. We’ve discussed some articles and videos that had come out previously and the scope of what was talked about and put in there. I guess I felt blindsided when some of our personal names were in there. But with the organization as a whole, we definitely talked about our image what it looks like what it comes off to people, especially with our language. Especially now as we’re preparing to go into our next large-scale project, we are prepping and talking about that, right now, so that people have a good perspective of what comes up. Like to just have your life kind of thrown out there and so we’re trying to prepare for that now, making sure that people have a full understanding before we just dive into things and put them out there so that we kind of have that protection for our members that need it” (Barrie, 2022).

Barrie further discussed the biases within reporting of SSWM.

“It’s been good, mostly positive in terms of showing that we’re non-violent and trying to do good things in the community, I think there’s definitely a lot to that I think, in some instances, there’s been a little bit of bias and exaggeration about what our organization is about with a mission that we’re trying to provide. Whether that be from the Stockton

Record or from other journalists in the 209 times. We can definitely see where things get slanted in some of the articles that have been posted about it” (Barrie, 2022).

When discussing how members within SSWM select and share media, Kailey brings some insight into how media is discussed within the group. Kailey brings some attention to the different interpretations of news media within the group. “I usually get my news from either social media or podcasts...I talked to all of them about the news I see or read. Most of our conversations within the group revolved around some sort of social justice issue” (Kailey, 2022).

Kailey then discussed how some members can see the news differently. “There isn’t anything that particularly jumps out like always there are some different interpretations there are some people that don't believe in defending the police, and some people that do” (Kailey, 2022). Kailey furthers this discussion by talking about the different news representations she has seen for SSWM.

“I think it was on the Stockton record. I think it's has been talked about in the Delta College newspaper. The stuff I’ve seen or read in articles has basically just been informative articles talking about events that we've planned or protested. People were positive about being in the news. People were psyched to see SSWM getting recognition as well as seeing all their hard work, getting recognition. You know it's cool seeing yourself in the newspaper” (Kailey, 2022).

Svanhild discussed times when people understood the news differently from one another“ I think it did when the news was saying all the protesting and looting stuff. They said that protesters were being wild and reckless. Some members started to believe these things and expressed concern. Even when none of that absolutely none of that happened” (S. Mtendere).

Svanhild discussed how members resolve miscommunication, news misunderstandings, and conflict.

“Just by keeping the peace! We're not going to stoop down to that level, we would just show them that it wasn't true...When we did have people there that were pissed, that wanted to do something, they didn't. There was a lot of us, as a community, we would be with them and be like “you know it's not worth it”, “that's not what we're here for”, “that's not what we're doing”. There was a lot of mentorship and guidance from a lot of older people that had come out...” (S. Mtendere, 2022).

Revisiting the Research Questions

The relational interviews with the members of SSWM highlighted important insights that can help to answer the proposed research questions. Interviewing members showed the power of group cohesion that comes from shared values, beliefs, and group goals.

The first research questions asked what role does news media have within Stockton Stands with Minneapolis's social movement cohesion, group identity, and retention? After holding these interviews, I found that news media had a role in creating negative interactions within the group. Members discussed the negative interactions that have happened because of conflicting core belief systems. Belief systems that were not reflective of the overall group's values, beliefs, and group goals. During my interview with Pamella Burke, I learned that members with values may not reflect the overall groups' values and can end up in negative conversations. These negative conversations, as Kenneth Burke argued, create an environment where members no longer feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and opinions. In this case, this member had a competing value and was met with a negative response, this member ultimately left the group. Through these interactions, members lose their group identification resulting in members abandoning Stockton Stands with Minneapolis.

The second research question asked was how does news representation impact members' understanding of *Stockton's Stands with Minneapolis's* core values and beliefs? I found that news representation could alter both in-group and out-group understanding of

Stockton Stands with Minneapolis. During these interviews, I learned about members who had a different understanding of the group's goals and values based on what they learned from online local social media news such as the *209 Times*. These members believed that SSWM protests prompted looting and violence and that the group values and goals were no longer reflective of their own. When confronted by the group members learned that they got this information from an incredible source, a source that was spreading misinformation. Member understanding of Stockton Stands with Minneapolis's core values and beliefs began to reflect those from the news media source.

The third research question asked what role do core values and belief systems have on Stockton Stands with Minneapolis socialization? I found that when members feel that their core values and beliefs conflict with Stockton Stands with Minneapolis members within the group will start to question the movement's value system. Based on Burke's ideological identification, individuals create an identity by identifying with characters or people representing their likeness. Thus, core values and beliefs are key identification factors. When members fail to identify with a group, socialization becomes considerably more difficult to achieve. The SSWM interviews showed that members who had different values or beliefs had a harder time integrating with the group. Members who did not reflect the dominant beliefs of the group were met with resentment and in some cases group shaming. This created a barrier to full integration within the group due to a failure to create safe relationships with other members, which Burke believes is needed to form a group cohesion.

Conclusion

In this chapter I reviewed the SSWM members combined interview data. I used a thematic analysis to code the responses into centralized components. I found that the best way of organizing these results was through the socialization process. The socialization process gave a clear outline of SSWM members views of the group before and after joining SSWM and gave a point of reference that was used to examine the influences news media has had on SSWM cohesion, retention, and success. The next step of the thematic analysis is to take coded data and examine themes that come from the coded data. In the next chapter I discuss the themes I observed and the implications that come from them.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Selective Media Consumption

Members within the SSWM group had many similarities in media consumption. Group members discussed how they transitioned from consuming traditional mainstream news media to more digestible social media platforms (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram). Those who did not have significant interaction with social media got their news from podcasts (i.e., NPR and Pod Save America). A common factor that went into media choice was digestibility. SSWM members described this digestibility as news that predominately focuses on the facts over emotion and clickbait images. SSWM shared a commonality in regard to how news was represented. Members believed that news media should focus on informing individuals, which means giving both sides to a story. Members felt that news media tends to tell a one-sided story when covering their movement and other movements like them.

Member Splintering

The relational interviews discussed how different values, beliefs, and group goals within the SSWM had caused conflict.

"I had a few run-ins with people who wanted different things. One lady called me out because I was too light-skinned and could never understand what black people go through, so I should not have put this group together. I find that we have many problems with people who think this group is just Black Lives Matter in Stockton; we are working to fight problems all around Stockton. We just wanted to show our support, but our whole movement is not to replicate Black Lives Matter (M. Mtendere, 2022).

The members shared similar stories; members argued that some new members do not truly understand what SSWM is fighting for and when they find out that it was not what they

wanted, they get mad and quit. This group's misunderstanding has caused many potential members to turn away because of ideological and methodological differences. Within the interviews members discussed not only having challenges with new members but also existing members. A few members discussed an altercation with a group member.

"We were working on setting up a protest, one of the first we have done. Things were going smoothly until this one lady started asking us to cancel the protest because she saw on the news that much violence was happening at these protests. We talked to her and told her that we were not a violent group, but it was still worth fighting for change even if things got violent. This lady did not want to listen to our reasoning and tried to convince members not to protest. We started to fight, and later she left with some of her friends (P. Burke, 2022).

This past member gained some inaccurate knowledge from the news media and tried to convince everyone that they were on the wrong side of the protest. She wanted to make sure that her views were understood even if they did not match the group's point of view. This lady later left and brought some members with her. This exchange was a great example of how conflicting ideologies can cause conflict within a group.

Nevertheless, these conflicts do not only come from in-person group settings. SSWM members discussed conflicts that had come from the online side of the group.

"I had someone contact me asking if I would post their protest in the Facebook group; I told her that I did not feel comfortable doing that because we are dealing with a large amount of Covid cases in the county. We have been protesting every week for the last few months, and I believed it was best to make sure everyone stayed safe. I did not want to put our members in harm's way. Like, look at the data minorities are largely affected by this. I value my member's safety over everything else. She did not understand and ended up leaving and forming her group" (M. Mtendere, 2022).

This altercation highlighted a shift in values. The SSWM group valued members' health, whereas the former member did not.

When discussing how conflict gets resolved, one member discussed how competing values could lead to a backlash within the group. These conflicts are not always negative to a point of members leaving, but in some cases, it causes members to leave the group.

“Basically, she said that if the group became violent and we supported violence, she didn't feel comfortable with that. I think she left not because we became violent, but she left because of the backlash of that comment” (P. Burke, 2022).

This backlash created an environment where this member no longer felt safe within the group. This member ultimately left the group. I learned from Pamella that this member still supports other activist groups but decided to distance themselves from SSWM. This conflict reflects Kenneth Burke's understanding of group identification. Burke argues that there needs to be a free flow of communication. This flow of communication allows for members to create meaning full connections to one another. These connections are the glue that keeps the group together. It is the glue that guides all relationships within a group. Burke argues once that flow of communication stops group members no longer share a connection leading to a loss of group identity. This disconnection leads to members removing themselves from the group mentally (lack of engagement) or in some cases physically.

Shared values. The SSWM members argued that it is impossible to please everyone within a group. It becomes a question of what is best for the overall group. "It sounds mean, but we do not have the time or energy to deal with people who do not value the same things. We are trying to change and cannot hold everyone's hand and walk them through everything. I do not think it is too much to ask that members know and value the same things” (M. Mtendere, 2022). The other SSWM members interviewed shared the same sentiment.

Interviewing with members within SSWM has shown me that this group is determined to make a difference. This is a new movement, and a lot of the members and leadership are learning as they go. A majority of SSWM members are still in college and want to see a difference in the world. This want and need creates emotion and sometimes conflicts happen. I noticed a common theme when speaking to these members. They felt as if everyone in the group was an extension of their family. They wanted the best for everyone, but in every family, there is conflict. I have studied this group and seen growth in the short time that they have been established. Members all share common values such as equality, education, and justice. They share a worldview and belief system; they believe in a future that can create a tangible change in their community. They have a goal of making change, whether it be in a political method or in a more protest activist method.

That being said, it is important to highlight the effect new media has had on the cohesiveness within SSWM. Members highlighted the biased news representation that they have received from not only television but also from social media news accounts, such as the *209 Times*. SSWM has had members leave the group based on false understandings of key issues and values. During these interviews, I was told stories of members who had competing understandings of the group's goals. Members learned from outside news sources that other protests in the area (some part of the SSWM group) were promoting violence. This promotion of violence was something that this member could not condone. This disconnect happened because a member saw a false representation of SSWM, and this false representation later created a clash of shared values. This member no longer felt that their values were in line with the group's values. This lack of shared values ultimately created a barrier for this member to

retain group identification. This in turn resulted in leaving the group. This is one story of many that were told to me about news representation creating conflict, but this is not a one-off case. This phenomenon surrounding news media's power to alter group identity and group cohesion is something that I believe should be focused on.

Working with this group has illustrated the importance of shared values. SSWM members consistently highlighted core values they believed the group should uphold. Members who did not believe in those core values are commonly pushed aside and are met with criticism. Interviewing SSWM members provided evidence showing the connection between news media and group success. News media has had a role in shaping group members' understanding of SSWM and activism. SSWM has faced internal conflict as a result of negative news representation. SSWM has been able to mitigate some of this conflict through educating members of the group's true values and core beliefs. This phenomenon between media representation and group conflict was frequently a point of discussion. SSWM is a relatively small and young (2 ½ years) group when compared to more established groups and movements (such as black lives matter and #MeToo), the impact of losing any amount of membership to news representation is important and deserves attention. Therefore, I believe research must go beyond the conventional protest paradigm and media effects research that has commonly only examined the impact of the outgroup. There is a need for a new area of focus within media effects and activist representation, one that examines the impact of news media through multiple lenses of analysis. I believe this area would benefit from incorporating theories and concepts across the communications studies discipline. Utilizing research from the fields of media effects, interpersonal communication, and organizational communication can

bring new insights to already existing understandings of activism and activist success. To help lead the charge into this new area of focus I offer the concept of social movement splintering.

Social Movement Splintering

Social movement splintering can be understood as a paradigm that illustrates the connection between news media depiction and social movement group successes. Social movement splintering asserts three premises: (1) Media depictions of social movements influence members' views of the group. (2) Negative media representation of social movement groups can create GDI factors with the potential to alter group identity. (3) Negative media coverage creates splintering and diminished retention within a social movement.

First, media depictions of social movements influenced members' views of the group. I found that media framing and priming significantly impacted the understanding and interpretation of media messages about social movements. Media framing illustrates the media's ability to reprogram messages to create a narrative favoring profit. These messages energize nodes (i.e., memories, stereotypes, and biases); through this energization, social movement splintering theorizes members gradually start to believe media depictions. This understanding is similar to social action media studies, which believes that messages about a group filter through a community lens (Littlejohn, Foss, and Oetzel, 2017). Social splintering does not disagree with social action media studies but instead argues that media framing and priming can slowly alter a member's ability to view outside messages about the group. Every interaction with media creates new nodes or racial scripts. Over time, members of a group become more influenced by media depictions as a result of increased nodes, myths, and racial

scripts. That is not to say, the social action studies premise is incorrect, but groupthink media interpreting may only last for so long.

Second, negative media representation of social movement groups can create GDI factors with the potential to alter group identity. Members are likely to take actions to create consistency within their ideological frame. I call these ideological viewpoints and frames group dissonance influence hereby referred to as GDI factors. GDI defines ideological factors that create conflict and out casting within a group. These GDI factors are a result of media influences altering individual understating of group behaviors and ideologies. Which in turn creates the potential for cognitive dissonance.

Theorized in the first premise, members over time develop nodes that affect how they see media depicting a social movement and idealistic identification is key to maintaining group identity. Identification occurs when two individuals are consubstantial; they share substance in common. Social movement splintering argues that members within a group will begin to have their values challenged after consuming media. Because members of the group no longer feel represented within their values, conversations cease to flow freely. This conflict undermines communal interpretations because members start to feel their identity no longer mixes with the group's identity. This paper theorizes these shifts happen on a scale; ideological factors (i.e., memories, stereotypes, and biases) that conflict with the group socialization and create dissonance. These media-influenced points of conflicting ideologies can be understood as GDI factors. These factors increase opportunities for group conflict and affect ideological beliefs. Members are likely to take actions to create consistency within their ideological frame.

Third, media coverage creates splintering and diminished retention within a social movement. GDI factors explain the factors that create a shift within self-identity and group identity. Social movement splintering suggests that GDI factors create cognitive dissonance within group members. Thus, members with high GDI factors take increased actions to resolve their dissonance. Consistency theory asserts that individuals take actions when the ideological balance is disrupted (Littlejohn, Foss, and Oetzel, 2017). Social movement splintering theorizes these actions create conflicts within a group and negatively affect the groups' ability to retain members. Organizational socialization theory explains that these conflicts can negatively impact the encounter and metamorphosis stages of socialization. These barriers to the socialization process can be understood as a direct factor to group retention success.

By analyzing Stockton Stands with Minneapolis's interaction with mainstream media channels, I was able to observe a phenomenon that I believe can be tested with other movements. Through examining social movement groups through this lens, researchers can offer a unique perspective on news media representation of social movement groups.

Looking back at the research questions, the researcher found significant media influence on engagement and retention. These interviews illustrated the connection between distorted images of a group and influences on group cohesion. I found entrant members regularly gained prior knowledge of SSWM through news media (Online, T.V., Newspapers) and often formed an inaccurate representation of the group. These false understandings led to entrant members clashing with existing members due to conflicts of interest, resulting in limited engagement and low retention.

Theoretical implications. Current research within on social movements has failed to integrate the impact outside media sources have on social movement group success. This lack of research is the central theoretical implication of this thesis. Current research is heavily focused on members outside of the social movement resulting in a reductive view of activism. These reductive views and research on social movement groups results in a few implications.

First, by focusing on the interpretation of news media from an outside perspective (non-social movement member) creates a lack of understanding and importance for in-group communication and interpretations of the news. This approach to researching social movement groups significantly lacks the nuances that comes from examining in-group communication and interpretations of the news. As social movement splintering suggests in-group communication and interactions with news media can have an effect on members willingness to socialize. This socialization process ultimately governs the effectiveness of a group to recruit and retain members. Because of this it becomes even more important for researchers to understand this connection. Without this integration, communication research focused on social movement representation has been reductive. In-group interpretation of news representation must also be examined in order to get a full picture of the impact news media can have on social movement groups.

Second, failing to incorporate social movement splintering in organizational and social movement studies research led to inaccurate examinations of social movement groups and organization. When examining the in-group communication of an organization or group, researchers have failed to account for the impact media has had. This missing variable of media influences can significantly alter examination of these groups. When this variable (news media)

is overlooked research of group success and failures cannot be accurately examined or explained. I believe that current research on social movement successes has failed to paint an accurate picture of social movement groups. Failing to give a proper examination can diminish the impact and potential impact these groups could have had, resulting in a lack of trust in this method. I believe that in order for social movement groups to continue researchers must continually strive to provide in-depth accurate research. Through this research social movement groups can gain legitimacy and alter the negative narratives that continue to plague them.

Last, social movement research must progress beyond the protest paradigm.

Researchers have made some advancements within the study. Research now treats the protest paradigm as a variable instead of a phenomenon that must be proven or disproven. Research must now apply these variables to social movement successes. This shift in focus would provide insight into the effect news media can have on social movement groups. In this thesis, I decided to focus on news media, using social movement splintering to examine other forms of media that represent social movement groups. I believe examinations through the lens of social movement splintering can aid in the progression of communication studies research and social movement research. Failing to progress this research field not only hinders the education we can gain from social movement. Failing to progress also damages the legitimacy and success of the very groups we examine.

Conclusion

Stockton Stands with Minneapolis, like other social movements, is given visibility through mainstream media. SSWM works within a hegemonic system whose interest might not

align with the public's interests. Through mainstream media framing, priming, and reaffirmation of the protest paradigms, the news has been able to reprogram seemingly peaceful and non-threatening protests into riots and increasing calls of malicious actions. Through this thesis, I observed a phenomenon that I have named social movement splintering. This paradigm is my contribution to communication studies research. SSWM has been able to succeed even while dealing with infighting and negative news representation. SSWM not only has worked to improve the Stockton community, but it has also provided me with the insight that was needed to write this thesis and paradigm. By using social movement splintering as a framework for research, other studies can gain the same unique insight that I received from SSWM.

CHAPTER 6: PRAXIS

When looking back to Chapter 3 I indicated that I used a hermeneutical praxis-based research methodology. Stated previously a hermeneutical praxis-based methodology is a research methodology that aims to combine theory with practical application. Hans- George Gadamer argued that hermeneutics not only involves interpretation but the practical application as well. Therefore, I believe that research should not only highlight problems but also look for solutions. Using a hermeneutic approach provides a personal interpretation and solution. Through these personal interactions researchers can avoid reductive research and provide genuine and insightful representation. I am not officially part of SSWM, but I share a personal connection to both the organizers and the values that they stand for. As an African American man in America, I have seen oppression firsthand. That being said, I have also seen the power that social movements have to heal and reunite communities. Because I believe in the preservation of social movement groups, I have decided to provide some solutions that I believe can better combat the negative narrative that social activism groups encounter.

Combating News Framing

Mobilization

For social movement groups to be successful they must first gain a following. This happens within the mobilization process. Mobilization can happen in person at protests, but it also can now be done online. Social movement groups that aim to gain a following should focus on having a clear public image. Social activism groups should focus on creating a stable image of their group. This is an aspect that can be easily overlooked. Through the examination

of SSWM, it was evident that proper representation of a group's outward image was vital. Without this clear image new members can join under incorrect pretenses resulting in a lack of group engagement and retention. Therefore, I believe that social movement groups should focus on their outward image as much as they focus on protesting. Through this shift in priorities, I believe groups can significantly improve their overall retention and member engagement.

Combating News Framing

To combat negative news framing, social movement groups must focus on creating a favorable image within their community. Through these community connections, social movement groups can combat the inaccurate representation they receive from local news. Through creating and diffusing, activist groups can prevent members of their community from believing false representations. Social movement groups must also create their own narratives that are sufficient to win over wider publics and challenge opposition narratives. Through these counternarratives, groups can create a positive frame in local communities and in local politics.

Political Opportunity

Social movement groups should also take advantage of wider social or cultural shifts that enable the movement to win over wider publics and weaken or marginalize opposition. Social movement groups should consistently rally around issues that the group believes in. Social movement groups should also work to gain political power. This can happen through the creation of positive relationships with local politicians and through running for local political titles as while.

Social movement groups must also find the line between protesting and pushing for their goals and without triggering negative opposition, counter movements, and the institutions that are the target of changing policy and necessary for implementation. It will be different for each social movement and each social movement activity. That being said, I believe that groups should promote their movements without severely weakening or undermining their own positions.

Group Cohesion

Conflict Management

Social movement groups should focus on creating a friendly environment for all its members. This means making sure to have organizational building to help bring people within the organization together. This can happen through holding social events and making sure to always have a way for members to engage within the planning process. Social movement groups should hold internal elections for positions within the group. Having these elections can help to improve the engagement of members and provide increased insights and perspectives to the leadership of the movement. Failing to do this can lead to a stagnation of ideas and a leadership that may become unwilling to change or hear outside perspectives.

Social movement groups must also work to limit internal conflict, as shown in the examination of SSWM news media effect on group relationships. Social movement groups must prevent this type of conflict by combating negative narratives of the group. Social movement groups should also prevent these conflicts by actively trying to uphold their group's values. By implementing these standards social movement groups can mitigate conflicts that arise from news media frame and narratives.

Social movement groups must also create guidelines for addressing internal conflicts. Having these steps will allow for a quick de-escalation of conflict and to prevent prolonged infighting. As seen in SSWM group members who were confronted without a de-escalation process, they felt attacked. In order to prevent this type of behavior, social movement groups must actively work to deescalate and focus on the underlining issues rather than the initial action.

Conclusion

Social movement groups have taken on a tremendous task. Social movement groups form because people feel that they must fight for change. To better help social movement groups make those changes, I have provided a framework that I believe can aid new and old social movement groups. By implementing these steps, social movement groups can counter and prevent the impact that news media has had on their group's success. These recommendations are practical, but they can still provide a frame of reference that could be followed and improved upon overtime.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

Practical Implications

Through this examination of SSWM, I found that media has a significant impact on the way people understand a social movement. The media holds a considerable amount of power to alter a group's view from within and outside. Members who watch news media about their group have a higher chance of losing group identification. This group identification is needed to maintain retention within groups.

Social movement splintering shows that group identity can be altered through biased and politically charged media interactions. This has a few implications; first, media has the power to hinder a movement's success from the inside. News media companies can create news campaigns to discredit and destroy an activist group from the inside and outside.

It is essential to interrogate the messages new media is sending out. When narratives created by news organizations go unquestioned, the public understanding of reality becomes distorted. Over time, these unchecked news frames result in individuals adhering to a programmed narrative. It is essential to understand that news media can have meanings and agendas that reframe stakeholders' desires. News organizations have an ethos that can overcome the audience's skepticism. Once audiences stop questioning news media messages, those messages have the potential to alter public understanding and memory. The winner is those who can shape and reframe collective reality and history.

Michel Foucault (1995) argues that knowledge is the key to overcoming oppressive structures. It is essential to learn about these structures to prevent further oppression. It is

also essential to understand where we get our knowledge. Social movement groups aim to break down the structures that create oppression for their members. They use their knowledge of the world around them to question and challenge societal norms. Knowledge is a tool that can both liberate and oppress. If we fail to question our sources of knowledge, the world might remember these social movements as the oppressor and not the ones trying to empower us all.

Second, the increased bias in news media and politically charged members within activist groups try to discredit all news. This discrediting leads to a total disengagement from the news. Although the news has historically favored their members over social movement groups, it is essential for an active body to check and interrogate the news. Through these integrations, social movements can help to create a counter-narrative that provides the truth. SSWM has started moving in this direction by choosing to make its own news. This can be an effective tool to fight the false narrative that mainstream news media tends to provide, but once groups start to only interact with news that they create, members within the group could fall into an echo chamber resulting in a lack of questioning of organizational actions. News should be used as a tool to inform, not as a tool to control. I fear that if news media continues to value their shareholders over news integrity, we will see even more social movements groups disengage. This can lead to polarization and further the divide within our society. This new type of polarization can significantly impact the validity of news, and journalism is one of the most valued aspects of democracy. When people stop trusting journalism, democracy also begins to be challenged.

Third, it is essential to understand the connection that outside sources have on a group. There have been many social movement groups that have failed over the years. Understanding

the power outside sources have had in influencing failure is necessary. Group failures can potentially affect the perceived legitimacy of any groups that come prior. One notable group failure was that of the Black Panther Party. The Black Panther Party's primary role was to provide armed citizen patrols to monitor police behavior and challenge police brutality in Oakland. The movement grew in popularity while garnering a formidable reputation for being militant and the embodiment of Black Power (BBC, 2018).

Black Panther Party membership reached a peak in 1970, with offices in 68 cities and thousands of members. But as the 70s progressed, the movement was increasingly riven by infighting, government infiltration, and controversy (BBC, 2018). That being said, the historical narrative of the group's failure had been more focused on the infighting and controversy than the government infiltration. Public memory has been altered to favor a narrative that frames the group's failure as solely of its own making. SSWM does not have the same government infiltration battle, but it may have been fighting a battle with the infiltration of news ideology and racial scripts. Using the theoretical lens of social movement splintering, researchers and social movement groups can better understand media influences and limit the influence of outside actors on social activist groups.

Limitations/ Further Studies

The SSWM interviews provided information about activist groups' interworking, and the media influences on the activist group members. This study was limited because of Covid-19, and the study was limited to Zoom calls. This paper utilized one set of members within SSWM, which made the sample size small. Member engagement was also limited because of the nature of personal interviews. Members noticeably tried to censure their responses when

speaking about other group members. This filtering restricted the free flow of conversation, which relational interviews rely upon. An ethnographic approach to research these types of social movement groups may provide more in-depth answers to get past this limitation.

Ethnographic research may help mitigate the censoring, and members may become more open with their interactions over time. I also believe setting up interviews with members who have left a social movement group can better highlight the disconnect that led to their falling out.

Conclusion

Stockton Stands with Minneapolis, like other social movements, is given visibility through mainstream media. SSWM works within a hegemonic system whose interests might not align with the public. Whereas communication and political science research have focused on highlighting biases within media coverage and their effect on viewers, this thesis focused on the media effects of existing members. This research highlighted the media's effectiveness in creating splintering within a social movement through in-group perspectives. Social Movement splintering was introduced as a theoretical lens to view and break down how news media creates division within a social movement. This thesis found a significant connection between media depiction and group success. These findings show that activist groups shouldn't disregard news media, but instead, learn to create counter-narratives.

When looking back to San & Avci (2016), we can see that Stockton Stands with Minneapolis is struggling to succeed. San & Avci (2016) argue that a social movement group can be seen as a success once they have established a clear group ideology and gained support from society and the governments they work within. Stockton Stands with Minneapolis has struggled to maintain a shared ideology. Stockton Stands with Minneapolis has also struggled

to gain both societal and governmental support. This study found that news media has had a substantial impact on the ability of SSWM to maintain group ideologies and overall group identity.

News media framing of the group influenced in-group members by making these members question the group's core values and goals. News media is a representation and a tool of society. News media framing, priming, and racial scripts have impacted the societal and governmental approval of SSWM. That being said, SSWM is not a failed social movement group. SSWM is a relatively new social movement group and has not had enough time to grow and correct its in-group communication issues fully. Even with its lack of time, news media was still able to influence them. This study found that news media has significant power and can frame and create narratives. For SSWM and other social movements groups to succeed, groups must educate themselves on the tools used by news media. Groups leaders should actively promote media literacy and counter-narrative development. Social movements groups need to remember that building a healthy relationship and promoting free conversation and ideas are needed to maintain group cohesion, retention, and group identity. The future of SSWM looks bright; SSWM has already started to increase their influences in politics. This study found some concerns, but I believe that the leadership within SSWM will overcome these setbacks.

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