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**CLICK IF YOU CARE: FRAME ALIGNMENT PROCESSES IN ANTI-POVERTY MOVEMENT WEBSITES**

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**ABSTRACT:** Transnational social movement organizations (SMOs) must construct and align frames that resonate with potential supporters within a national context, while remaining congruent with the message of the global social movement. Snow, Rochford, Worden and Benford's (1986) and Snow and Benford's (2000) theoretical work in core framing tasks and frame alignment processes point out the importance of framing to collective identity formation, and yet no research has been conducted on the frame processes of the largest anti-poverty movement, the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP). This study was planned to uncover core framing tasks and frame alignment processes within the web sites of two GCAP national platforms, Make Poverty History (MPH) Canada and the ONE campaign in the United States, to determine the likelihood of, and the Internet's role in, frame resonance. Content analysis compared text and visual media within the web site of each national campaign using the Snow et al. (1986) and Snow and Benford (2000) core framing tasks and frame alignment processes. The data analysis revealed that MPH and ONE use culturally relevant language and visual media to frame the anti-poverty movement, while addressing core framing tasks in the same manner as GCAP. While the Internet was not specifically required for frame alignment, it is likely that the Internet serves as mediator for individuals to negotiate their collective identity as GCAP supporters.

**KEYWORDS:** collective action frames, frame alignment, frame resonance, Internet, transnational social movements, development, Make Poverty History, ONE campaign

**Click if you Care: Frame Alignment  
Processes in Anti-Poverty Movement  
Websites**

Calling upon collective action is a process. Encouraging millions of people worldwide to act on behalf of a cause requires a complex combination of education, buy-in, proposed action and collective identity. Transnational social movements are increasingly turning to the Internet as a platform for reaching more people and driving collective action (Carty & Onyett, 2006). The manner in which social movement organizations (SMOs) mobilize supporters can be analyzed against what are called collective action frames (Johnston & Noakes, 2005). Movements frame a message in order to resonate with potential supporters. Sociologist and frame analysis scholar Erving Goffman (1974) describes frames as “definitions of a situation [that] are built up in accordance with principles of organization which govern events—at least social ones—and our subjective involvement in them” (Goffman, 1974, p. 10).

For SMOs, collective identity formation—that is, the process of forming a collective identity among individuals, and the negotiation of that identity among group members—depends on the movement’s ability to create frames that resonate widely (Gamson,

1991; Snow & Benford, 2000). For example, brought on in part by a consistent message that plastic pollutes the planet, there has been a recent shift from plastic to reusable cloth bags. This is just one instance of collective action taken by consumers. Framing is then an intentional process and goal of the SMO, which employs various techniques and tools to align its ideology and goals with the beliefs and values of potential supporters, with the aim of engaging people in collective action for social change.

While frame alignment research has been conducted on transnational movements, there has not been significant research on the use of framing strategies in internet-based campaigns. The purpose of this paper is to identify and examine the use of frame alignment strategies by two internet-based national platforms of the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) campaign in their attempts to increase civic engagement in the anti-poverty movement. How has GCAP, an SMO largely using the Internet for public communication and engagement, framed itself as a global anti-poverty movement, and how have its associated national platforms negotiated their identity to encourage mobilization, participation, and successful lobbying of world governments? This paper relies on Snow, Rochford, Worden, and

Benford's (1986) and Snow and Benford's (2000) work in the development of core framing tasks and frame alignment, which pivot around the theory that well-constructed frames prompt a collective sense of identity that is essential to building social movements. It is the author's intent that this study will offer helpful insight for improving frame resonance in other internet-dependent social movements.

The study began with a literature review related to the use of the Internet by SMOs, along with literature related to core framing tasks and frame alignment processes by transnational social movements. A brief review of GCAP's website, [www.whiteband.org](http://www.whiteband.org), and GCAP's 2009-2011 Global Call To Action Against Poverty strategy for Snow et al. and Snow and Benford's core framing tasks was conducted to identify how GCAP publicly frames itself as an anti-poverty movement. Content analysis of two nationally-based GCAP campaigns, the ONE United States (US) campaign at [www.one.org/us](http://www.one.org/us) and Canada's Make Poverty History (MPH) campaign at [www.makepovertyhistory.ca](http://www.makepovertyhistory.ca), was then conducted for the purpose of comparison with the research of Snow et al. and Snow and Benford, to determine congruency with the GCAP mission and vision and the presence of

core frame tasks and frame alignment processes. Both the presence of core framing tasks and frame alignment processes have been identified as possible indicators of a social movement's success in recruiting and mobilizing for their cause (Snow et al.; Snow & Benford).

### **The Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP)**

In 2000, when the United Nations (UN) adopted a large range and ambitious list of objectives known as its Millennium Development Goals, anti-poverty activists rejoiced. Top of the list was the goal of cutting the number of the world's extreme poor and hungry in half by 2015. To do so would require worldwide improvements in education, gender disparity, child and maternal mortality rates, environmental sustainability and the incidents of HIV and AIDS. Though G8 members, including Canada and the United States, signed and committed to the terms of the UN Millennium Development Goals, it became evident to anti-poverty groups by 2003 that those commitments were not being met. This led to the establishment of the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) in Johannesburg, South Africa, later that year (GCAP, 2009a).

The GCAP movement has one main objective: to hold world leaders to their

promise to cut global poverty in half by 2015 (GCAP, 2009a). It argues that the world is in crisis, noting that one billion people live on less than one dollar a day, and 100 million more will be pushed into absolute poverty in 2009 (United Nations, 2008). Climate change, biofuels, changing diets, urbanization, natural disasters, unfair agriculture policies, trade subsidies, and fluctuating oil prices have all contributed to dramatic increases in food costs over the last two years (Sachs, 2008; United Nations). The global financial crisis has prompted the world's wealthiest nations to scale back food aid commitments to the world's poorest nations, despite the fact that every six seconds a child dies of hunger (World Food Programme, 2008).

GCAP's self-described mission is to "[challenge] the institutions and processes that perpetuate poverty and inequality across the world; to defend and promote human rights, gender justice, social justice, and security needed for survival and peace" (GCAP, 2009a). Its pursuit of that goal is heavily dependent on the Internet for raising awareness and mobilization; however, its success has been notable. On a single day, the movement urged one million Live 8 attendees around the world to 'click' their fingers every three seconds for each poverty-related death, while three billion people clicked on their

television sets and computers to watch (Live 8, 2009). The GCAP movement for the eradication of poverty has been based on nurturing similar grassroots anti-poverty movements around the world. The GCAP website explains its approach this way:

The Global Call to Action Against Poverty is a coalition of international organizations, but also operates on a national level. Each country can mount its own campaign, and choose the important emphasis for the national campaign from within the framework of the Johannesburg Declaration. Each country can name its own campaign, but each campaign is linked to the Global Call to Action against Poverty. (GCAP, 2009b)

GCAP became a global force as an anti-poverty movement when national platforms acknowledged their common interest in poverty eradication. By 2005, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada had MPH movements, while the ONE campaign was debuting in Germany, France, and the United States as anti-poverty movements under the GCAP umbrella. An important communication objective was to ensure the national platforms remained aligned with GCAP's vision and mission, to ensure a consistent message was presented to world leaders. (GCAP, 2009a).

The GCAP message to world leaders to “keep the promise” was as important to success as the campaign goals. The anti-poverty movement had to speak authoritatively and consistently to engage the most people in collective action for social justice.

### **Literature Review**

While rallying people, even people within the same country, to support a social cause or issue is not an easy task, it is essential to the goal of creating change. The social movement organization (SMO) must frame a message that inspires, and frame theory helps to explain the processes at work in effective collective identity formation. Successful social movements go transnational when they diffuse across borders around a single source of contention (Tarrow, 1998), and the Internet has served many SMOs in this task (Warf & Grimes, 1997; McCaughey & Ayers, 2003), including GCAP. Successful social movements do not happen by accident; they consist of carefully constructed processes of recruiting and deploying troops of people for social change.

### **Transnational Social Movements and the Internet**

The Internet has helped transform our perception of our global neighbour because the needs of The “Other” seem much like our own since the world started broadcasting on

YouTube. SMOs are increasingly turning to the Internet to help forge links across great distances on a variety of justice issues (Carty & Onyett, 2006). Some scholars applaud the Internet for thrusting social movements forward, while others suggest its limitations exceed its ability to serve the greater good.

The Internet has been used by SMOs in many different capacities including awareness building, advocacy, organization, mobilization, and direct action to varying degrees of success across national and cultural boundaries (Warf & Grimes; McCaughey & Ayers). Though social movement scholars tend to agree that interpersonal networks are a key ingredient for sustaining social movements over the long term (Tarrow), there is also consensus among advocacy researchers that the Internet has powerfully thrust the era of the transnational social movement forward (Warf & Grimes). One reason is that low-cost tools like e-mail make it possible for the SMO to run a campaign, even if it cannot afford a two-page spread in the *National Post* (Garrett, 2006). Furthermore, due to its capacity for mass, rapid information distribution, the Internet is not necessarily bound to cycles of political contention or media interest (Garrett). Despite this relative independence from the ebb and flow of politics, the Internet is still subject to weak messaging and bad timing.

Timing may not be everything in Internet campaigning, but it bears significant weight when trying to raise the social consciousness of the masses.

The new “cyber-diffusion” has thrust the social movement business forward, but the Internet, like any communication tool still in its adolescence, has the potential to do more harm than good (McCaughey & Ayers, 2003). One argument is that the Internet cannot be contained; information sent into cyberspace is subject to interpretation and manipulation by a wide range of recipients who might engage in activities counterproductive to a movement’s agenda, such as staging riots for peace (McCaughey & Ayers). A well-constructed frame limits opportunity for any misunderstandings, thereby keeping social movement entrepreneurs and supporters on the same page. However, the Internet’s limited accessibility is a concern for some social movement advocates. Often cultural groups most in need of a voice, such as indigenous tribes, have limited access to the Internet, and therefore must depend on those with the means and infrastructure to speak on their behalf.

Proponents of the Internet, maintain the web is currently the best option for those with limited finances and political freedom to seek justice and intervention: “For activists in the Third World, the Internet allows cheap access

to sympathetic counterparts abroad, without the need to obtain an exit visa” (Warf & Grimes, p. 264). The Zapatista movement in Chiapas, Mexico is one example of a grassroots SMO that used the Internet to voice its grievances for an international audience (Froehling, 1997). The Internet may be the safest place to stand up and point a finger at injustice amid political deterrence and threat. In unfriendly places in our world, internet access provides activists with the ability to speak freely with a safe degree of anonymity.

### **Collective Identity, Collective Action, and Framing**

GCAP’s mission is to help end poverty. Its key strategy is to unite people around the world to put pressure on governments to meet their millennium aid promises by 2015 (GCAP, 2009a). How well GCAP and its national platforms have presented a uniform message that resonates across political borders can be contingent on how well it frames issues. Framing a problem or issue that resonates across political borders is crucial for the global SMO in collective identity formation, and the Internet has been a conduit in the collective identity process that raises collective action (Snow et al., 1986; Snow & Benford, 2000; Johnston & Noakes, 2005). Tarrow (2005) states that the global justice movement has had to adapt to cultural

differences while unifying diverse peoples under a common theme pulled from complex issues. Carty and Onyett (2006) suggest that one defining feature of the growing number of transnational movements is that they tend to frame, interpret, and attribute their grievances to global issues, including global standards of justice. For example, while Greenpeace national platforms tailor their message to achieve local goals for environmental sustainability, such as the anti-tar sands campaign in Canada, the global ethic for human justice and sustainability under the Greenpeace brand stands. Strong global movements have strong universal messages that serve as a bedrock on which national movements can be built and sustained.

SMOs do not only want the individual to sympathize with their causes, they want the individual to personally identify with the movement. The process of identifying with a group is called collective identity formation. Gamson (1991) says that collective identity formation is “a process in which movement participants socially construct a ‘we’ that becomes, in varying degrees with different individuals, part of their own definition of self” (p. 45). The SMO constructs frames in a deliberate manner, similar to the way an individual may create a set of schemes to make sense of the world (Goffman, 1974). What sets

the social movement frame apart is its dependency on the wider collective to recognize and identify with a single constructed reality (Goffman). Collective action frames inspire and legitimize claims and campaigns, and they help interpret what is going on in the world, condensing it into digestible and easily processed chunks of information that groups of people can identify with and support (Snow & Benford, 2000). Collective identity of an organization depends greatly on that organization’s ability to frame an issue in a way that resonates with the masses. The Live 8 concerts on July 3, 2005 united three billion people around the world under the banner of basic rights to food, water, and education. Sharing common values attaches the individual to the group, and enhances a sense of self (Ayers & McCaughey, eds., 2003).

The SMO may attempt to ‘implant’ its values in the minds of potential followers, but a good communication strategy recognizes that frame construction is a two-way street. Johnston and Noakes (2005) cite research that claims the construction of collective action frames is a negotiated process between the SMO, the individual, and culture. Conversely, SMOs often craft frames by selectively deciding what to say and what not to say, and cultures often participate in framing as well,

by adapting and shaping frames to reflect their cultural ideals, norms, and priorities (Johnston & Noakes). Therefore, frames can be negotiated across borders. Gamson (1991) explains it this way:

Framing is also critical in establishing cross-national networks of activists. By facilitating flows of information across national borders, organizations with transnational ties can help cultivate movement identities, shape new activist frames, transcend nationally defined interests, and build solidarity with a global emphasis.

Greenpeace is again a good example of an organization that effectively frames its bottom line message, environmental justice and sustainability, across borders by ensuring the message is both culturally relevant and of universal importance. It is likely then that transnational movements like Greenpeace and GCAP make highly selective choices from the colour palette in order to paint the world as it will be most recognized.

Frames that create emotional bonds between activists also help solder and sustain collective identity (Klandermans, 1994; Melucci, 1996). A person is more likely to join a social movement when he or she experiences a strong feeling such as anger or sadness

(Jasper & Polletta, 2001). The peace movement against the 2003 war in Iraq may not have gone global were it not for an overwhelming sense of injustice by people around the world (Carty & Onyett). Emotional involvement strengthens an individual's commitment to a movement like GCAP, while reducing their likelihood of giving up.

Frame construction plays a leading role in the formation of collection identity for the purposes of mobilizing transnational movements like GCAP. Movement scholars have narrowed down the tasks and processes of framing in order to better study the evolution, growth, and maintenance of healthy social movements. Snow et al. (1986) and Snow and Benford (2000) identify three framing tasks that foster collective identity formation: diagnostic framing, prognostic framing, and motivational framing. Diagnostic framing identifies the problem and assigns blame, such as when people blame fast food restaurants for widespread obesity. Prognostic framing identifies potential outcomes of an organization's strategic direction, such as lobbying for food labels that provide better information to the consumer. Motivational frames give potential followers a reason to act and get involved, like calling for anti-pollution legislation that could improve the health of future generations (Snow & Benford). The



assumption is that by successfully framing the issues, strategies, and actions, the SMO will have a greater likelihood of resonating with the masses, therefore providing context for collective action and identity formation.

Frames need to align with the values and norms of the individual, which are often carved out by culture. Snow et al. (1986) point out the importance of frame alignment in movement participation, which is described as “the linkage or conjunction of individual and SMO interpretative frameworks” (p. 467). Frame alignment strategies are employed by SMOs like GCAP to improve the likelihood of frame resonance with potentially new supporters (Johnston & Noakes, 2005). Snow et al. and Snow and Benford outline the four basic processes of frame alignment: frame bridging, frame amplification, frame extension, and frame transformation. The presence of these processes in the MPH and ONE campaign web sites improves the likelihood of effective collective identity formation. Frame bridging connects two ideologically similar ideas to create a single frame (Snow et al.; Snow & Benford). Gamson (1991) explains, “all social movements have the task of bridging individual and sociocultural levels. This is accomplished by enlarging the personal identity of a constituency to include the

relevant collective identities as part of their definition of self” (p. 41). An environmentalist who identifies with GCAP after learning about the impact of climate change on the poor will have experienced frame bridging. Frame bridging by ONE or MPH would enlarge a person’s sense of self to include anti-poverty activist.

Frame amplification often uses discursive processes to appeal to people’s emotions and cultural values to increase relevancy and encourage involvement (Snow & Benford). Johnston and Noakes (2005) state that frame amplification is the slogan or bumper sticker that sums up the movement in a few short words. The slogan “Make Poverty History” performs the task of frame amplification by boiling the anti-poverty movement down to three words, thereby simplifying the movement’s goal into something easy understood, action-oriented, and attainable. Frame amplification simplifies the complex.

Frame extension occurs when a movement reaches beyond its own goals in an attempt to resonate with a particular culture’s core beliefs, such as a movement that appeals to the American concept of liberty (Johnston & Noakes; Snow et al.; Snow & Benford). Finally, frame transformation is the complete overhaul of ideology: Martin Luther King’s “I

have a dream” speech may have served that purpose to transform racism (Snow & Benford). Frame extension offers a hand; frame transformation expands the mind. It is then for MPH and ONE to use frame alignment processes to reach out to as many people as possible and inspire them to advocate for change. If GCAP is the spider, MPH and ONE are strands in the web, and poverty is the fly.

Successful social movements expend considerable energy on framing the causes, problems, and solutions of an issue, as well as on frame alignment that will resonate best with potential supporters and align them for collective action. MPH Canada and the ONE campaign have yet to be studied for frame resonance with potential followers. By looking for frame alignment processes at work within each campaign, the author might be able to predict success, and then determine ways to improve collective identity formation and collective action.

#### **Method and Analytical Framework**

The analytical framework for this study was based on Snow and et al.’ (1986) and Snow and Benford’s (2000) work in core framing tasks and frame alignment processes, which indicates that well-constructed frames help spawn a collective sense of identity necessary for collective action. Frame

alignment processes—frame bridging, frame amplification, frame extension, and frame transformation—were searched in text and video within MPH and ONE web sites to infer likelihood of frame resonance. The method for data collection was as follows:

- i. GCAP’s core diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frames were identified and categorized by reviewing the GCAP web site at [www.whiteband.org](http://www.whiteband.org) and GCAP 2009-2011 strategy document;
- ii. Content analysis of the MPH Canada web site at [www.makepovertyhistory.org](http://www.makepovertyhistory.org) and the US-based ONE campaign website at [www.one.org](http://www.one.org) was then conducted between March 1 to March 20, 2009, to uncover congruence with GCAP’s core frames and characteristics of Snow et al. (1986) and Snow and Benford’s (2000) four frame alignment processes that both deepen resonance with GCAP, and deepen resonance with the national platform. Web page content was compared against Snow et al. and Snow and Benford’s four frame alignment processes—frame bridging, frame amplification, frame extension, and frame transformation—to infer campaign frame resonance with

potential adherents and therefore encourage action by visitors to each campaign site. Frame bridging links ideologically similar ideas to create a single frame. Frame amplification simplifies a movement's message. Frame extension broadens a movement's message to appeal to core cultural beliefs, and frame transformation reconfigures a potential adherent's ideology to reflect that of the social movement.

Evidence of each of the four frame alignment processes as defined by Snow and Benford (2000) were sought in text, photos, and video on each web site. Data were categorized by asking the following questions: Does this phrase, photo, or video address the core framing tasks outlined by GCAP? If no, then the researcher moved on to the next phrase, image, or video on the web page. If yes, then the researcher asked: what frame alignment strategy was used and how was it used? Textual, photographic, or video data were then measured against each of Snow et al. (1986) and Snow and Benford's (2000) four frame alignment process categories, and the data recorded for further analysis as to the possibility for collective identity formation. Pages analyzed in this study were limited to the home page and the first generation

daughter pages. Additionally, if pages were available in two or more languages, only pages in English were studied. Limiting the number of pages kept the study simple and scientific, as each campaign web site had equal opportunity to show proof of frame alignment processes within a set grouping of pages, thereby reducing the likelihood of researcher bias. The website structure diagrams in Figure 1 show the home and daughter pages of each campaign web site analyzed in this study.

### **Results and Discussion**

Identification of the three core framing tasks at work in the GCAP 2009-2011 strategic directions document revealed how GCAP currently frames the anti-poverty movement: GCAP diagnoses and prognoses poverty in terms of systemic issues and uses ethics of basic human rights and past campaign successes to motivate people to get and stay involved in the anti-poverty movement.

#### **Diagnostic Framing**

Diagnostic framing identifies the problem and the culprit. GCAP frames poverty because of internal conditions, such as dictatorial governments and high unemployment rates, as well as external events aggravated by a global economic crisis beyond the control and without fault of the poor. The external events explicitly mentioned are: rising

Figure 1. Home page and daughter pages in ONE campaign and MPH Canada, March 2009



food and fuel prices; backsliding aid commitments by G8 members; climate change; and biased trade agreements and alliances among wealthy nations that marginalize poor nations, such as G8 and G20 limitations on contributions from countries with low Gross Domestic Products (GCAP, 2009a). Gender inequality, conflict, and militarization—such as those issues currently occurring in Iraq and Afghanistan—complete GCAP’s diagnostic framing.

### **Prognostic Framing**

Prognostic framing explores strategies and solutions to the problem. GCAP’s route to addressing global poverty is described in six main lobbying priorities for 2009-2011. The priorities include: increase aid from each G8 country to at least 0.7 per cent of Gross National Product (GNP); cancel 100 per cent of the debt to the poorest countries; develop a new gender equality monitoring system within the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*; abandon trade policies that hurt poor countries and foster “fair” trade; establish a legal strategy that enforces the fulfillment of aid commitments; and halt and reverse the effects of climate change. In addition to lobbying government and the World Trade Organization (WTO) directly, GCAP cites an exhaustive list of strategies for achieving these goals,

including public awareness campaigns, support for GCAP national platforms, and increased influence with global multilateral organizations, such as the United Nations and the International Criminal Court (GCAP, 2009c).

### **Motivational Framing**

Motivational frames provide possible supporters with reasons to act and get involved with the issue. GCAP primarily answers the need for this framing by pointing to its successes in its first four years as proof of the power seen in solidarity. It specifically cites the movement’s influence on the European Union (EU) commitment to increase aid to 0.7 per cent by 2015 (GCAP, 2009b) and its annual Stand UP and Take Action campaign, which attracted 169 million people in 113 countries to participate in 2008 (GCAP). In terms of motivational framing, GCAP also advances the argument that there is simply enough global wealth to eliminate extreme global poverty. Among its statistics, it notes that The United States spent four per cent of its GNP on bank bailouts in 2008-2009, while 0.2 per cent of GNP had been that country’s highest foreign aid commitment to date.

Diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational core frames provide a framework for national coalitions to run advocacy

campaigns that speak to justice issues at home and around the world. Campaigns for Dalit rights in India and poverty reduction for Canadian children are examples of national platforms addressing a domestic social injustice, while remaining compliant with the wider GCAP core frames.

### **Frame Alignment Processes Within MPH and ONE Web sites**

#### **Make Poverty History (MPH).**

Successful frame alignment fuses self-identity with the aims and goals of the collective to mobilize action. MPH Canada knows what it is, whom it is trying to recruit, and how to frame its message to resonate with the greatest number of Canadians. The result: over 250,000 Canadians have signed on to make poverty history since 2005 (Make Poverty History, 2009b). It is not surprising then that MPH emphasizes recruitment on its home page, choosing to highlight all diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational core frames.

#### **Frame bridging.**

Linking two identities together is the goal of frame bridging. MPH suggests that being a Canadian is tantamount to being a humanitarian. It suggests, "...Canadians, including the Canadian government, care deeply and react generously when the world is faced with humanitarian disasters" (Make

Poverty History, 2009c, ¶ 4). As humanitarians almost by default then, Canadians should want to 'make poverty history' to solidify their sense of self and confirm what the world believes about them: Canadians cares about others. Frame bridging, in this case, serves as a reminder to site visitors that compassion is an inherently Canadian trait and taking action for the plight of the poor is an act of patriotism.

#### **Frame extension.**

Frame extension is another process that seeks to strike a cultural chord with the intent of prompting collective action. MPH's prognoses are congruent with those cited in the GCAP 2009-2011 strategy document: increase aid to 0.7 per cent of Canada's GNP, rewrite international trade law to protect human rights and the environment, and cancel 100 per cent of debt held against the poorest countries. Furthermore, the MPH web site lists "end child poverty in Canada" as one of MPH's campaign goals, which is a "help those at home" approach to frame extension that still echoes the core prognostic frames of the GCAP movement. By employing frame extension, MPH increases the chance that the GCAP message will resonate with a larger number of Canadians, including those Canadians most concerned with helping Canada's poor first. MPH continues to

negotiate its identity within the GCAP structure as a national movement by appealing to a typical Canadian value: help others in need.

### **Frame amplification.**

MPH applies frame amplification as a means of increasing resonance of the 0.7 per cent objective by summing up the diagnosis and prognosis in four words: “Get to the point” (Make Poverty History, 2009a) The slogan serves as a summary of what needs to be done, and what the Canadian government has not done, so far. Frame resonance, as described in the literature review, can be improved when a movement takes steps to identify with the ideals and values of a culture. As we have seen, the MPH web site attempts to bridge nationalist values with a transnational movement by appealing to Canadian pride. For example, the Get to the Point video, which was sent to e-mail inboxes and is embedded in the MPH home page, features Canadian celebrities like Feist, Jann Arden, Tom Cochrane, and George Stroumboulopoulos speaking to the need, and the relative ease, of increasing international aid by 0.7 per cent. While discursive strategies like the Get to the Point slogan can stand alone, the video addresses all three of Snow et al. (1986) and Snow & Benford’s (2000) core framing tasks and applies three frame alignment processes—

frame bridging, frame alignment, and frame extension—which serve to improve resonance in under a minute.

### **The ONE Campaign**

#### **Frame bridging and frame extension.**

Similar to MPH Canada, the ONE campaign attempts to bridge patriotism with anti-poverty advocacy. The home page is primarily driven by “what’s new” in the American effort to end world poverty; recent campaign successes, legislative changes, and national anti-poverty activities provide an American context to the global anti-poverty movement (ONE, 2009a). Recruitment is not given the same attention as on the MPH home page; the ONE campaign seeks to inform first, possibly suggesting different degrees of global poverty awareness between Canadian and American audiences. Extensive personal experience with managing bi-national, Canadian and American, fundraising, and awareness campaigns suggest this might be accurate. Efforts to raise financial donations from Americans following the Southeast Asia tsunami in 2004 proved to be a more difficult task than it was in Canada. On the other hand, Americans emptied their pockets readily and most generously for Hurricane Katrina relief in 2005. Frame bridging must therefore be sensitive to cultural awareness and motivation

in order to effectively link patriotism with a global movement.

### **Frame amplification.**

The ONE campaign continues its appeal to American culture through frame amplification. The campaign's main objective is amplified by squeezing a big concept into a few short words: "Join the fight against extreme poverty" (ONE, 2009b). Though likely not intentional, the ONE recruitment slogan echoes the familiar "We want YOU" message of the American Armed Forces, which may further extend the frame by being culturally relevant. Furthermore, the ONE "Issues" page takes a different approach than MPH in outlining the anti-poverty movement. While MPH identifies the *goals* of the GCAP movement, with the addition of a Canada-specific goal to end child poverty in Canada, the ONE Issues page uses images to highlight issues *affecting* global poverty, such as "maternal health and child health", and "climate and development," illustrating a contextual difference in how each campaign presents the global anti-poverty movement (ONE, 2009b). As with MPH, the ONE website demonstrates that frame amplification is a culturally-dependent process.

### **Frame transformation.**

Frame transformation transcends cultural values and norms to arrive at a new

way of thinking; for GCAP, it is the suggestion that a world without poverty is possible. Neither web site employed frame transformation on the home page or within the first-generation daughter pages, which is not entirely surprising: frame transformation is a big job better left for visitors willing to delve deeper into the web site, so as not to scare off potentially new followers with too much information.

Furthermore, neither MPH nor ONE point to any golden rule or moral authority in diagnostic, prognostic, or motivational framing; to do so might align itself with one faith-based group or another, and both campaigns are decidedly secular humanitarian responses to poverty. The morality argument could be construed as finger wagging at the same people GCAP seeks to engage. In this case, MPH and the ONE approach framing the same: both campaigns respect the multiculturalism and diversity of their respective target audiences.

### **Conclusions, Limitations, and Recommendations for Further Research**

Giving the world a push forward is certainly easier with the weight of millions behind it. MPH Canada and the ONE campaign have each framed themselves as a member movement of GCAP, providing weight and validity to GCAP's goals for



ending extreme poverty, while at the same time remaining a distinctive and culturally relevant national campaign.

Both web sites have similar goals, and use the same frame alignment processes to help achieve those goals. Frame bridging was the most strongly employed framing strategy by both MPH Canada and the ONE to address the diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frames of GCAP, but with culturally appropriate language and approaches to information sharing. Both websites used text and visuals to link an activist identity with national identity by exposing strongly held beliefs about what it means to be patriotic. Frame bridging with national identity might prove more successful in recruiting for the global anti-poverty movement than negotiations with other identities, such as gender or age. Further research in frame bridging with national identities might shine additional light on this theory. Furthermore, recognizing the importance of culturally relevant content in frame alignment processes might be of help to researchers interested in American and Canadian cultural responses to global conditions.

As communication studies have revealed, there is no hypodermic needle for the transfer of ideas and the Internet is no exception. However, the Internet has the

benefit of being an unthreatening medium for the curious. A web-based campaign offers a new visitor an opportunity to learn about an issue, and even make a financial donation, at a self-directed pace, unlike phone campaigns, direct mail, or door-to-door canvassing. Site developers might better serve new visitors by providing more intellectual content in third generation pages for those interested in learning more about the issues; the ONE campaign employed this strategy much more effectively than MPH. Since frame alignment is a negotiated process, the interactive nature of the Internet allows for ongoing negotiations between the SMO and the individual, so long as the individual remains engaged in the website. GCAP has not enlisted its army by osmosis, but via hundreds of web sites carefully constructed for interaction.

While every effort was made to limit researcher bias, findings in this study are subjective and limited by researcher comprehension as to the presentation of core frames and frame alignment processes in the GCAP strategy document and on the MPH and ONE websites. Third party data collection through interviews and focus groups was not possible for this study. Furthermore, this study cannot prove the effectiveness of either website or its resonance with a target audience. Nor can it attest to whether or not framing was

intentional, accidental, or a combination of both. Instead, the study points to the presence of Snow et al. (1986) and Snow and Benford's (2000) core framing tasks and frame alignment processes, and any congruence between GCAP, MPH, and the ONE campaign. It is only fair to also acknowledge that limitations on the part of campaign web sites may be related to funding and staffing issues; MPH Canada had only two paid staff members at the time this paper was written.

New research in framing and frame resonance might ask: in the future, what issues should the global anti-poverty movement choose to frame, and what issues might be better to avoid? How can the Internet be employed to improve collective identity negotiation? Researchers who are passionate about ending extreme poverty may discover they can make as much difference investigating questions such as these as they can by rallying on Parliament Hill.

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