THE SUMMIT IN SEATTLE:
AN ANALYSIS OF PERFORMANCE, PROTEST, AND EFFICACY

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in

Communication Studies

by

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May 2002
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Acknowledgements

This thesis is truly a labor of love. Although the project itself has frustrated me, bored me, and angered me, I have always loved the process. Even though I have resented it and been afraid of it, I have continually been excited by the knowledge. The most important outcome as I write my last page is the transformation that has occurred within me. This work has changed me. It is because I see the world through the eyes of an optimist and an aspiring catalyst for change that I began this book. Upon its completion I find myself more inspired, more driven, and more hopeful than ever. So, although this work is done, the lesson I have learned is that my work is not.

First and foremost this work is dedicated to those who inspire me, many of whom participated in the Seattle protests. My work and my life are shaped by those who continue to challenge the status quo, think outside of the box, and make the world a better place. These rebels and revolutionaries include but are not limited to, the Dalai Lama, Michael Moore, Kalle Lasn, Ralph Nader, Thich Nat Hanh, Paul Hawken, Starhawk, bell hooks, Nelson Mandela, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., David Brower, Shel Silverstein, Hunter S. Thompson, Jacques Cousteau, Jimmy Carter. And to their predecessors, Mohandas Karamchand Ghandi, Martin Luther King Jr., Cesar Chavez, Buddha and all critical thinkers who walked before them in the name of a cause. The example they have set inspires me daily.

When I think of my life’s joy, without which I couldn’t have sustained myself during this process, I think of my girls. This list is long because I am blessed. Each one of these women has made their mark on me, and in turn, on this work: Valerie, who has
always been inspired by me and proud of me. What she sees in me has kept me going when I couldn’t see it myself. Her faith in me is unwavering, as is my gratitude to her. We are proud of each other in ways that continue to reveal themselves; April, whose optimism and effervescence are exceptional. She reminds me how good it all is and how great it can be. I thank her for sharing so many miracles and her joy in the simple things with me; Kathy, for embodying the beautiful, the feminine, and the peaceful. My spiritual soul-sister. We have so much more than Idaho; Tonia, for being a catalyst for change. She drives me to work harder and do better because of the example she sets; Michele, whose conviction, values, and kindness are my blessings now as well. Our friendship is my life’s great surprise; Hollie, whose dedication to children and commitment to change is uplifting. She is an example of the greatness that we all possess; Samantha, it is my hope that the lessons of this book will one day be ours to bring to fruition together. Through education, integration, and application I know that we will do our part to change the world. She has walked this road with me more than any, and I am forever grateful; Scott, the token boy on the list. He is has the intelligence, self-confidence, and vision to transform the way that we live. He is my partner-in-crime who never fails to make me smile, even while he’s helping me find myself and my place in this world. For all of my friends who have shared this journey with me, thank you for your patience, your guidance, and your inspiration. Thank you for the laughter and the silliness that puts it all in perspective and reminds me that I am loved.

The course of my life has been altered by the care and nurturing of several special teachers. They have saved me and shown me a new way of seeing and doing. Here I acknowledge those rare individuals who guided me through my academic process, which
often meant support on a personal level as well. I am where I am because of these exceptional professors: Ben, a true friend and fellow non-conformist. I am grateful for the lessons, for the support, and for making every minute of it fun. My life is richer because he is in it; Christie, the reason that I am in this program, that I taught, and that I wrote this book. Her commitment to me is unparalleled and it has changed my life; Kathryn, from whom I have learned what kind of teacher I hope to be. More than that, she shows me the kind of woman I hope to be. I thank her for seeing the revolutionary in me; Peter, for challenging me, caring about me, and never giving up on me. I will never forget what I have learned about compassion and humanity from him.

The best of my gratitude I save for my parents. They are revolutionaries in their own right. They have set an example that has led me to fight for what I believe in, made me strong and proud, and reminded me that altruism and giving back to the community are essential elements of life. My mother and father are the reason that I am who I am, and the reason I had the intelligence, motivation, and capacity to take on this process and see it through. They have earnestly and without falter supported me emotionally and financially through my entire academic career. It is only because of them that this was possible. My love and my thanks are entirely theirs.
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ABSTRACT

THE SUMMIT IN SEATTLE:
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by

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Master of Arts in Communication Studies

Seattle became the site of performance on a global scale during the week of November 30th, 1999. As the World Trade Organization hosted its first summit, nearly seventy thousand activists representing more than five hundred organizations and their related issues poured into the city to express their dissent by using radical and guerrilla theater techniques. These historic seven days were not only important to the planet and the international economy, but to performance studies and communication. By examining the protests as political performance, I will look at the dynamics that effected change in the attitudes of the viewing public and in the performance methods of the protesting activists. This thesis explores the ways that performance theory, particularly that of Victor Turner, Richard Schechner, and Jan Cohen-Cruz, illuminates the protests. It also examines the formation and maintenance of unlikely coalitions between groups formerly in opposition and the ways in which they organized a large-scale demonstration. Lastly, this work seeks to examine the anti-globalization movement since Seattle. It is important to observe the ways in which the faction of activists has been able to sustain momentum and continue performing at sites of struggle around the world. Additionally,
it is paramount to observe the ways that the coalition has remained intact in order to continue their fight. The Seattle demonstration set the tone for the future of activism, and its efficacy is explored herein.
Chapter One

A Synopsis of a Social Drama

Seattle embodies the contradictions of the Northwest. Its residents can be both down-to-earth and elitist. It is a nature lover’s paradise and an urban mecca. Seattle is at once the home of Boeing, Starbucks, and Microsoft, and REI, and the birthplace of grunge, the Direct Action Network, and the Independent Media Center. Seattle is alive with growth and expansion; both financial and cultural. As Author Jeffrey St. Clair says, “It is a city that is at once uptight and laid back, a city of deeply depressed desires and rages” (13). The dichotomy between technology and ecology, between grass-roots activism and the city’s art and music scene and its ever expanding corporate realm gave rise to a theatrical spectacle on a scale one has never seen. Not since the 1981 Rally for a Nuclear Freeze has the public come out *en masse* to take action against a proposed idea. Never before have activists utilized staged drama, costumes, and guerrilla theatre techniques on such a scale.

Estimates now suggest that between fifty and seventy thousand protesters surged into this cultural mecca during the week of November 30th, 1999 (N30). As most of the world remained largely unaware, the World Trade Organization, a reticent and mysterious group based in Switzerland that represents 135 nations and their commercial interests, was attempting to renegotiate global trade barriers, tariffs, and environmental and employment standards. The activists, representing nearly five hundred organizations and interest groups, hoped to generate attention for the multiplicity of issues they represented, including labor, the environment, medicine, and human rights.
The goals of the united protesters were lofty. Their hopes were to be included in the discussions held by the organization that many see as a ruthless tool for globalization, environmental destruction, and oppression of humanity. “We are the ones that make the work, we are the ones that make the profits, we are the ones that are going to have a place at the table of the WTO, or we’re going to shut it down,” bellowed James Hoffa, the president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters to a crowd of several thousand. This theme reverberated throughout the planning and enacting of the performances. John Sweeney, president of the AFL-CIO, reiterated this idea at a rally to a crowd of more than 35,000 when he said simply in closing, “We will stop them” (Deans 1A).

The activists were initially successful. Peaceful marches placed protesters in a six-block radius surrounding the Washington State Convention Center early in the day of November 30th, virtually prohibiting any access to the meetings by the WTO members themselves. Seattle Mayor Paul Schell and Police Chief Norm Stamper, who has since retired as a result of controversy surrounding his handling of the protests, were completely unprepared for the size of the turnout, as well as the effectiveness of the demonstrators in halting the opening day discussions (Keene and Fryer par. 1). On the second day of the summit, a 200 member plus National Guard unit was called in, and police were dispersed in riot gear to insure that negotiations would proceed as planned.

From the eve of the thirtieth on, the protests turned ugly as police sprayed rubber bullets, tear gas, and pepper spray on often-peaceful crowds. A group of Portland, Oregon anarchists known as the Blac Bloc turned their rage on corporate America, breaking windows and starting fires at any visible symbols of globalization, including targets like Starbucks, the Gap, and Niketown, which surround the convention center in
downtown Seattle. The anarchists were an unsanctioned and often scorned group of separatists who acted independently of the tens of thousands of other environmentalists and labor union members. Their presence changed both the tone and the outcome of the demonstration. Many members of the other united groups in attendance criticized the rebels for changing the spin of media coverage from sympathetic to resentful (Thomas 44-46).

What the Battle in Seattle proved to all contingents was this: liberal activism is not dead. If only for one day, seventy thousand idealists held the most powerful people in the world, including Bill Gates and Phil Condit, respective heads of Microsoft and Boeing and chairs of the host committee, hostage. The world’s most influential financial forces, the likes of then President Bill Clinton and U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, had to succumb to the will of the people. Hundreds of representatives from more than 135 countries watched stunned from the fortieth story windows of their Four Seasons Hotel Suites as parades of butterflies and sea turtles, grotesque puppets and carnivalesque performers, topless lesbians and black clad teamsters strolled by. Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Maxxam CEO Charles Hurwitz were rendered helpless as they witnessed their own effigies being carried down the crowded city streets. As the parades wound their way through downtown Seattle, participants and observers on both sides realized that the city belonged to the people, if only for a brief moment in time.

This study will examine the Seattle events as an act of political performance. Through this lens I will analyze the efficacy of the demonstrations. The next chapter of this thesis examines the literature that frames a demonstration of this magnitude. The literature review includes diverse texts that embody the essence of the Seattle summit.
To contextualize a demonstration of this magnitude, the first section examines theories of globalization from the points of view of the activists. Most works included here are not supportive of the current trends in capitalism and a world-wide economy. The World Trade Organization functions as an appendage of this global system, instituting policies on behalf of the world’s wealthiest countries and corporations. Thus, the literature review includes a section that examines the ways in which the WTO conducts its business, as well as reviews its history and opposition to its existence. The third section of the literature review focuses on activism and protest. To understand what was unique and efficacious about Seattle, one must understand the current trends in activism, from non-violent direct action to generating media attention. This section culminates with first hand accounts of participants in the Seattle demonstrations. Lastly, the literature review examines performance theory as it applies to the aforementioned protests. Several key themes and terms help to illuminate the Seattle activist’s use of communication media and theatrics to create the most spectacular rally possible.

Chapter Three of this thesis is an examination of the ways that performance theory and political protest work in conjunction with one another. Here, I argue that the actions of the Seattle demonstrators serve to illustrate the ideas of several key theorists in communication. Victor Turner’s framework of social drama works well as a tool to guide the reader through the chronology of the events that took place between November 30th and December 3rd, 1999. Jan Cohen-Cruz offers two types of theater which are spectacularly utilized by the anti-WTO contingent. Their embodiment of witness theater, which uses the location as the primary feature of a performance is evident, as is their display of utopia when they demonstrate alternative ways of living. Finally, Richard
Schechner’s theories of *carnival* and *transformation* are explored and used to demonstrate the capacity that a theatrical protest has to create change in the performer, the audience member, and the status quo.

Chapter Four also discusses the efficacy of performance and protest, but focuses on a different aspect. Here, I explore the uniqueness of the coalitions that were formed by previously opposing forces to combat the greater enemy of the WTO. I argue that such coalition building is a novel concept that has greatly served its participants in their fight. Additionally, I examine the fragility of a front that is united only because of a common enemy. Finally, in this chapter I look at the rehearsal stage of the events of Seattle, which took place up to a year prior to the summit. I make the claim that this planning, both on-line and at teach-ins and rallies, is one of the new trends of activism, and one that lent itself to the success in shutting down the opening day talks.

Lastly, in Chapter Five, I continue the examination of the Seattle demonstrations by looking at what shape the movement has taken since. Here, I argue that the alliances that were built for a specific event have remained intact, and continue to serve their constituents well. Additionally, I explore the aftermath of Seattle, its successes and its failures, but mostly, the ways in which the demonstrators created transformation whose effects are still being realized.

Political protest is not new. People have probably been rallying against oppression since hierarchies were established in early human history. However, in the last thirty years, since the Civil Rights Movements and Anti-Vietnam war demonstrations of the 1960’s, there has been a focus on the use of theatrics to symbolically represent cause. The performative techniques that demonstrators now use are changing the face of
activism. The images are more stunning. The confrontation between opposing forces is more dramatic. Most importantly, by using radical street theater, the potential for change in the status quo is now greater than ever before.
Chapter Two

Literature Review: A Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

This thesis seeks to examine the innovative and efficacious methods utilized by protesters to successfully shut down a multi-national summit of one of the world’s most powerful and influential organizations. In exploring the performances of the anti-WTO demonstrators it is paramount to examine the systems via which the WTO functions. One cannot wholly understand the arguments made by the activists if one does not have a fundamental grasp the structure of the world economy and the World Trade Organization itself. Thus, in this literature review one will notice the research beginning broad, attempting to define and explicate current theories regarding globalization. In the next section, I explore the current literature about the six-year old World Trade Organization itself, from both proponents and opponents of this association. In the following portion of the literature review I turn to works that examine the current trends in activism, ending with a specific focus on the Seattle protests. Lastly, I provide a theoretical framework for my analyses by looking at performance theory as it relates to social protest.

To begin, I intend to first offer competing definitions of globalization as provided by authors as diverse as Vandana Shiva, George Soros, and Kalle Lasn. A review of this term and its multiplicity of meanings are essential in providing the foundation for the arguments made regarding protest and performance. To contextualize the demonstrations by placing them in a larger social construct is the first step to understanding the specific arguments made by the various groups who participated in the protests. Thus, a further exploration of the consequences of a global society – economic, political, cultural, and
environmental - is offered to give readers an understanding of the effects of the global machine at work.

A chief mechanism in the maintenance of a global society is the World Trade Organization itself. This highly controversial body of economic and political figures represents 136 countries and their interests. It is at the annual meeting for the WTO that demonstrators came out en masse to challenge what they saw as both secretive and corrupt decision making that didn’t represent the interests or values of the constituents of those countries. Thus, the section dedicated to exploring the World Trade Organization’s goals and interests serves as additional background for a reader unfamiliar with the legislative practices of the WTO. Authors from both sides of the issues, including opponents such as independent political candidate Ralph Nader and activist author Kevin Danaher and literature produced by the group itself, provide critical analyses of the group’s practices here.

In laying out a foundation for the arguments made in the antecedent sections, I have chosen to include a body of recent work devoted to the analyses of public dissent and social protest. It is important to frame the unique and effective methods utilized by the Seattle contingent by looking at tactics used in past demonstrations, so works from Graham, Cohen, and Aronson are all examined. Additionally, this section asserts the relevance of this particular demonstration in a historical context by examining the literature from those who attended the summit as protesters. Such books by Thomas, Starr, and Cochran provide candid insight into the motives and strategies of the individuals of the opposition.
Lastly, a theoretical framework rooted in communication is provided for the reader. I have chosen to examine the theories of three figures in the performance studies discipline as they relate to protest. By using Turner’s theory of performance as social drama, Cohen-Cruz’s categories of utopian and witness theater, and Schechner’s ideas of performance as social transformation as lenses through which to critique the Seattle spectacle, we can determine its efficacy.

Globalization

Globalization, in the purest sense of the word, refers to the blurring of lines between nation states, as technology and trade bring us closer to the idea of Marshall McQuahan’s ‘global village’. Recent political decisions, such as the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement and the establishment of the World Trade Organization have led to a reduction in trade barriers and tariffs, thus making it easier for countries around the world to conduct business with one another. These advancements, coupled with the development in the information superhighway and the advancement of satellite communications in transmitting Western mediated images around the globe has created a world where corporate entities hold more power than the individual constituents, and even governments of many countries. The following body of literature seeks to inform my thesis by looking at cultural, economic, political, and environmental consequences of globalization, all of which are interconnected.

The book Global Capitalism, edited by Will Hutton and Anthony Giddens, is essential to understanding the globalization process and many of the arguments for and against it. This piece informs the points of view presented by the Seattle activists, several
of whom have written essays for this work. The two have assembled a diverse group of writers, activists, and corporate figures who present essays arguing their concerns about current trends. These essays are among the most clear and all-encompassing articulations of the current debate about globalization.

Giddens defines globalization as being comprised of three key components. First, there is the “communications revolution” (Hutton and Giddens 1). This idea refers to the developments in mass media and communication, and the ways that images and products are quickly being sent around the world for consumption. Next, there is the change in the economy from industrial to “weightless” or knowledge based. In the past decade, the author believes that we have become increasingly reliant on computer technology, satellite communications, and wireless communication such as the internet and cellular phones. These changes mean instant communication and transfer of products and information around the globe, an idea that has developed only recently. Finally, he defines globalization as coming into effect since 1989 and the demise of the Soviet Union. He also adds that the advancement of women worldwide is a development that affects not only families, but also economic production and growth.

Having defined the elements that make up globalization, the authors move on to a criticism of the system, and what they see as its consequences. In the preface, which is a conversation between the two, they agree on the ruthless aspects of “capitalism without communism” (Hutton and Giddens 10), but argue that we are yet to fully understand the way that this system works and what its outcome will be. Like others who critique globalization’s effects, the authors are aware of its deficiencies. Hutton writes, “There is very little disagreement – even among capitalism’s defenders – that it does produce
growing inequality, dense concentrations of private power, monopoly and instability…” (17).

Following their dialogue about capitalism, the editors include essays that express concern about subjects ranging from genetically engineered food to a rise in fundamentalism around the globe, all consequences of the global economy. The reflections of the authors included are not all critical, but every essay raises doubts as to the effects of global capitalism on all people and the planet.

The first three essays reflect on the financial and economic impacts of globalization. For example, George Soros, a capitalist who speculates on the potential of growth and productivity in world markets and informs investors about their potential, expresses his concern over the destabilization of global economies. As a result of the Asian economic crisis, Soros calls for reform in the current system. The next few essays discuss issues surrounding employment, including inequality, job (in)security, and comparisons between first and third world work standards. The next several texts offer insight into the personal and environmental effects of globalization. Impassioned activist Vandana Shiva criticizes first world exploitation of third world resources. Ulrich Beck’s essay argues that globalization is producing a new breed of activist, and thus informs the following sections in the literature review. Later authors discuss mediated images of Western values being projected worldwide.

The authors have included a wide spectrum of beliefs, from “the broadly optimistic to the broadly pessimistic.” These essays help to inform any discussion of globalization, the function of the World Trade Organization, and the Seattle demonstrations. Finally, the editors tell us in a concluding chapter “what can be done,
and call for nothing less than the establishment of a global civil society on which global regulation and government can be based” (Hutton and Giddens x).

As previously established, the effects of globalization are far reaching and felt by virtually every individual on the planet. The ‘machine’ through which we function has an obvious economical and environmental impact. Many who criticize globalization trends refer to these outcomes, but there is also a dangerous impact that globalization makes on cultural autonomy and values. Benjamin Barber, author of *Jihad vs. McWorld* worries about the potentially disastrous effects that the spread of Western values via trade and technology can have on citizens in third world countries. Barber uses *Jihad* as a metaphor for cultural identity in its strongest sense, but at its base is “A set of common personal attributes to hold out against the numbing and neutering uniformities of industrial modernization and the colonizing culture of McWorld” (9). He believes, as did many of the activists in the Seattle demonstration, that globalization produces homogeny. He writes about the utopian vision of free market ideology, calling it:

[…] A busy portrait of onrushing economic, technological, and ecological forces that demand integration and uniformity and that mesmerize peoples everywhere with fast music, fast computers and fast food – MTV, Macintosh, and McDonalds – pressing nations into one homogenous global theme park, one McWorld tied together by communications, information, entertainment, and commerce. Caught between Babel and Disneyland, the planet is falling precipitously apart and coming reluctantly together at the very same moment. (4)
Barber’s concern about the human casualties in the rapidly developing multicultural society is that third world cultures will lose that identity and autonomy as they are swept up in a wave of free market competitive values that ultimately, they cannot compete with. He views McWorld and globalization as inevitable in their oppression of third world religious and cultural values and control of human destiny.

Dani Rodrik, author of Has Globalization Gone too Far? is also skeptical of the globalization process and its touted benefits. Rodrik argues that proponents of globalization offer unrealistic representations of its benefits and impact on societies worldwide. Often lauded as the epitome of liberal values, Rodrik claims that globalization functions in direct opposition to moral and civic virtue. The author says that the greatest obstacle for the future of the new world market is in “ensuring that international economic integration does not contribute to domestic social disintegration” (2). He believes that the process of globalization will lead to greater inequalities between nations, and greater class differences between individuals in specific countries that are unequipped to deal with the consequences of rapid advancement. Also, like Barber, he sees globalization as a homogenizing process that force-feeds Western values and products to the third world. His three sources of conflict are outlined in the book, and coincide directly with many of the arguments made by the Seattle protesters.

First, he argues that globalization “fundamentally transforms the employment relationship” between countries (Rodrik 4). He sees this as a negative effect for several reasons. To begin, he believes that workers worldwide are now bearing the burden of improving work conditions and benefits, as opposed to the entities that employ them. To follow, he thinks that labor demand and productivity have increased instability and hours
worked for employees. Lastly, he believes that as a result, the power of individuals and unions to bargain has been reduced by this fluidity in the market. Labor disputes worldwide were a primary feature of the Seattle demonstrations.

Second, Rodrik claims that "globalization engenders conflicts within and between nations over domestic norms and the nations that embody them" (5). In this, he means that the process of free trade often emphasizes the difference in, and strains the upholding of norms in labor practices, environmental standards, and human rights values between countries. Rodrik writes, "One cannot produce a principled defense of free trade without confronting the question of the fairness and legitimacy of the practices that generate those consequences". He continues, adding, "One should not expect broad popular support for trade when trade involves exchanges that clash with (and erode) prevailing domestic social arrangements" (6).

Lastly, the author believes that globalization reduces the ability of individual governments to provide social benefits and insurance to their populace. He sees this as highly problematic because social insurance is "one of their central functions and one that has helped maintain social cohesion and domestic political support for ongoing liberalization [...]" (6). The author believes that a consequence of the increasing interdependency of nations weakens a government’s power, and thus, increases the tendency towards protectionism.

Rodrik’s fears of and opposition to globalization can be summed up into two social consequences. The author suggests that if international trade continues at this pace, there will be a great political backlash against it. The author fears that protectionism will become a better alternative in the minds of the voting public as radical
candidates like Patrick Buchanan continue to lobby against free trade. An even greater outcome of this trend is what Rodrik calls social disintegration, "as nations are split along lines of economic status, mobility, region, or social norms" (69).

In *False Dawn: The Delusions of Global Capitalism*, author John Gray also criticizes the global marketplace and the utopian ideals of economic liberalism. His argument is globalization follows patterns experimented with during the Enlightenment Period, when a deregulation of markets took place. Now, with democratic capitalism being imposed worldwide as the norm, Gray says that the imposition of free markets on various societies around the planet is "A Utopia that can never be realized; its pursuit has already produced social dislocation and economic and political instability on a large scale" (2). As we head towards what Gray sees as a universal civilization, the results are catastrophic.

Like Rodrik, Gray’s greatest criticism of the free market is that most countries around the world simply cannot benefit by fashioning their economies after that which exists in the United States. Again, the theme of imperialism is present. Gray’s book compares globalization trends of today with themes of the Great Transformation in England where a laissez-faire economy was developed in the mid-nineteenth century. He believes that much like the Victorian era, the current state of democratic capitalism will serve only to encourage "new inequalities in income, wealth, access to work and quality of life that rival those found in the vastly poorer world of the mid nineteenth century" (5). Globalization, to Gray, emphasizes the economic disparity between first and third world countries.
Unlike several of the other authors in this section, however, Gray does not see globalizing trends as homogenizing. He disagrees with Barber and others in their view that a free market leads to a ‘sameness’ between all countries, or that it exists as a result of a similarity in interests, values, or economic circumstances. For Gray, it is precisely because of these inequalities that globalization is able to thrive. He writes, “Global markets in which capital and production moves freely across frontiers work precisely because of the differences between localities, nation and regions” (58). Many of the Seattle contingents interpreted this as a negative feature of globalization, one that plays on the disadvantages of workers in the third world. A large component of the demonstrators rallied against wealthy multinational corporations and governments who produce goods in Asia and Central America. They see these globalizing trends as human rights and labor issues, which exploit people desperate to work.

Ruud Lubbers, the former Prime Minister of the Netherlands, published a lecture on the topics of globalization and ethics. In this piece, Revitalizing Liberal Values in a Globalizing World, the speaker discusses his interpretations of a system that started out with noble aspirations, but has sunk to appeasing the lowest common denominator. He believes that economization does not have to function in opposition to societal concerns, but that it currently is doing so. Lubbers argues that the trend towards a global economy “should forge a world with more solidarity, more social inclusiveness” (13). He believes, like anti-globalization activists, particularly those in Seattle, that globalization, “while it might produce efficiency, it certainly does not promote equity” (14).

He argues in this presentation that morality must underlie decisions in global societies. He criticizes the current corporate ethic when he writes, “Globalization creates
deficits – a social deficit, an ecological deficit, a deficit in preventing violence, and even a democratic deficit. And these deficits give rise to new systems of civil (self-)
governance – corporate or cooperative, often transcending national boundaries” (26). He coins this ideology the ‘race to the bottom’.

Lubbers believes that this ‘race to the bottom’ need not be a necessary and intrinsic component of globalization. The empowerment of individuals in war-torn and economically disadvantaged countries must still be a goal of corporate and government entities. Furthermore, he suggests that there must be a participatory goal of self-respect and sustainability for the people of those economies. Like the activists I later mention, Lubbers’ arguments do not fundamentally disagree with the ideology of a global marketplace, but with its current reality, which is rooted in specific issues of injustice regarding the environment, labor, and human rights.

In *Culture Jam*, author Kalle Lasn rages against corporate culture, specifically in the United States. The author and founder of the media watchdog organization Adbusters pleads with corporations to become more ethically responsible, and pleads with consumers to not buy into the messages sent by mainstream media. Much like the authors previously mentioned, particularly Ruud Lubbers, Lasn visualizes a world where the power bestowed upon multinational corporations will be used to create solutions for environmental erosion and the economic plight of impoverished peoples in third world countries. He also admits, however, that these goals are seemingly unattainable in a world where ethical considerations directly conflict with profit.
Lasn, like Lubbers, is concerned about the lack of responsibility that multi-billion dollar corporations have to citizens and to the planet. His book emphasizes the terror that is unrestricted authority given to multinational enterprises. He writes:

In boardrooms in all of the major global capitals, CEOs of the world’s biggest corporations imagine a world where they are protected by what is effectively their own global charter of rights and freedoms – the Multinational Agreement on Investment. They are supported in this vision by the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund [...] and other organizations representing twenty-nine of the world’s richest economies. The MAI would effectively create a single global economy allowing corporations the unrestricted right to buy, sell and move their businesses, resources and other assets wherever and whenever they want. It’s a corporate bill of rights designed to override all ‘nonconforming’ local, state, and national laws and regulations [...] (70-71)

Like many other anti-WTO activists, Lasn’s arguments are directed at the marriage between government and private sector. When governmental bodies protect the interests of the corporate world over the interests of their constituents, the outcome will ultimately be disastrous. Says Lasn, “We, the people, have lost control. Corporations, these legal fictions that we ourselves created two centuries ago, now have more rights, freedoms and powers than we do” (71).

Another of the author’s arguments against globalization is what it does to the sovereignty of cultures worldwide. He writes that American values and trends have
become a global plague. He says “Communities, traditions, cultural heritages, sovereignties, whole histories are being replaced by a barren American monoculture” (xiv). As multinational corporations like MTV, McDonalds, and Nike continue to produce their goods abroad, and as mediated images of “American cool” are projected into households from Bora Bora to Bosnia, the pressure on citizens around the world to capture the American Way is unfaltering. In agreement with many of the Seattle protesters, (of whom Lasn was one), Culture Jam is a work that encourages people to rail against the tyranny of corporate culture, consumerism, and unhealthy mediated images, all of which are by-products of globalization.

Mark Rupert, author of Ideologies of Globalization offers a work that presents insight into the multiplicity of theories on the topic. His plan, he says, is to “argue that the dominant liberal narrative of globalization is being contested within the US from at least two distinct positions” (Rupert 15). These are the democratic and progressive left and the nationalistic right. The chapters then cover the broad spectrum of topics on globalization by presenting theories and critiques from both sides of the issue.

In his introduction, Rupert tells readers that the book will include a detailed analysis of the opposition to globalization. First, he presents a look at the groundswell of opposition to the process from activist groups who argue against the tactics of groups like the World Trade Organization, or disagree with the results of decisions like the North American Free Trade Agreement. These activists, the progressive leftists as Rupert refers to them, were the contingent later discussed in this thesis who were present in Seattle. However, many members of the fundamentalist right, including nationalists like Pat Buchanan, and members of extreme religious groups or militia organizations, also
accompanied those activists. Rupert does an excellent job of presenting the arguments of both of these globalization-opposing forces.

Perhaps the chapter of the most relevance to this thesis would be the final one, in which the author discusses the populist backlash, including the events of Seattle. Here he raises questions about the ways that those pressing for continued liberal globalization are responding to their opposition. Rupert writes about globalization; “Yet this project now faces forces of resistance and alternative world-views which appear to pose an increasing threat to the realization of the global liberal vision” (154). Later he concludes:

To the extent that progressive social forces are able to stress the contradictions between capitalism and democratic self-determination, and to apply ongoing pressure through their social movements for realization of the latter within the very social relations which globalizing capitalism has brought into being, they will have begun a process of self-empowerment and social transformation which has no necessary end. (155)

Wayne Elwood’s The No-Nonsense Guide to Globalization is also balanced in laying out the arguments for and against globalization. The author believes that change is an unstoppable process, but that this momentum is not necessarily negative. He believes in the ideals that drive the globalization process, those “deeply seated beliefs in social and economic progress, fundamental human goals which are anchored in the liberal humanism of the Enlightenment”. While his work stresses these ideals, he does agree with many of the previous authors who see that things must change in the current system, or the “tangible benefits of globalization will be swamped by a rising tide of inequality and injustice” (Elwood 10-11).
The No-Nonsense Guide to Globalization is quite possibly the most accessible work on the subject. The book chronicles the history of the international economy, from prior to World War I, through the post World War II Bretton Woods meeting (which established the International Monetary Fund, The World Bank, and The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), up to the current technological boom and the establishment of the World Trade Organization. Elwood admits that he focuses largely on economic forces and impacts, but that does not limit the usefulness of this book in informing a discussion about the successes and failures of a global economy. Elwood’s work also lays out a clear view of what is currently happening in several areas regarding globalization, including third-world debt, the deregulation of many markets, the environmental consequences and current trends regarding international poverty levels and labor standards.

In chapter five, the author discusses the rise of the corporation, and the influence that Western products and image has on people around the world that several of the previous authors had mentioned. Here Elwood is extremely critical, when he writes:

Giant private companies have become the driving force behind economic globalization, wielding more power than many nation-states. Business values of efficiency and competition at all costs now dominate the debate on social policy, the public interest and the role of government. The tendency to monopoly combined with decreasing rates of profit drives and structures corporate decision-making – without regard for the social, environmental and economic consequences of those decisions. (53)
Elwood says that the homogenizing effects of corporate culture are one of the disastrous effects of globalization, noting the erosion of cultural autonomy and individual preferences abroad as American corporations become fixtures in international marketplaces.

Perhaps the most useful section of the book is the one entitled “Redesigning the Global Economy”, where the author lays out a clear plan for a process, which, unlike others, he does not see as inevitable. According to Elwood, there are five features that would contribute to a more productive and mutually beneficial worldwide economy. Briefly, his plan is to first “increase citizen participation by revamping the International Monetary Fund” (Elwood 108). The second step in Elwood’s plan is to “establish a global financial authority” (114). Next, the author suggests that we make the earth itself the number one priority of all governments and corporations worldwide. Like many environmentalists in Seattle, Elwood is critical of what he sees as the WTO’s “trade now, pay later” policy (119). Fourth, he hopes to place a tax on international financial transactions that would stop speculation and generate some money for global development. Last, Elwood wants to revise the current system of giving “carte blanche to wealthy investors while demanding nothing in return” (130). He wants to create an alternative method of investment that would “control capital for the public good” (Elwood 130). Although much of this may seem idealistic, this chapter draws from various experts in the fields of economics, foreign policy, and environmental studies, and creates a powerful argument for the capacity for change in the current system.

One will note that this section of the literature review covers only those works which are skeptical about the process and outcomes of globalization. There is, however,
a rich and diverse body of literature that challenges the assumptions made by such skeptics and defends the current system. Thomas L. Friedman’s *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* and Gary Burtless’s *Globaphobia* are two books that see globalization as both inevitable and positive. The authors make compelling arguments about the current trends in the international market, and do their best to debunk the arguments of those who challenge these ideologies. I must stress that because the arguments made in this thesis concern critiques of and challenges to globalization and the World Trade Organization, the books that I include will be taken from this perspective as well.

The preceding books articulately analyze and explicate current trends in our global economy and prove useful as sources to inform my work. However, these books and essays serve only to provide background information for the overwhelming context in which the Seattle demonstrations took place. Many of the arguments made in these books are articulated and further explored in following sections in which I look at the future of activism that confronts globalization. I will not explore globalization further in this thesis. Instead, I will examine the ways in which local and international communities choose to respond to the trend of globalization, and particularly, the World Trade Organization.

**The World Trade Organization**

The World Trade Organization was established on January 1st, 1995 during the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. The World Trade Organization has since taken over the preexisting system known as GATT. Over the past six years the WTO has incorporated 136 countries with another 30 on the waiting list for
admission. During the time that the WTO was replacing GATT as the primary authority on trade, many activist groups were skeptical that this new system would not incorporate the needs of public interests as the previous one had attempted to do. The following works argue against the inherent problems in the World Trade Organization; its efficiency, its goals, and its corrupt and unfair processes. Again, it must be stressed that there are works that defend the effectiveness of the WTO, but they have not been included in this literature review. In order to better understand the performances of the activists in Seattle, there must be a theoretical outline of the arguments against the World Trade Organization from some of the leading activists in politics, labor, economics, and environment.

Lori Wallach and Michelle Sforza have written two works bashing the World Trade Organization’s very existence. These two authors are the director and research director at Ralph Nader’s Public Citizen’s Trade Watch, respectively. The group’s presence in Seattle was one of the largest and most visible; helping demonstrators representing many issues organize their protests. In the first, The WTO: Five Years of Reasons to Resist Corporate Globalization the authors argue for democratic alternatives to the oppressiveness of the World Trade Organization. They present five years of policies by the group that they see as harmful to the environment, food safety standards and public health, and human and labor rights.

In the first section, “The WTO’s Slow-Motion Coup d’Etat over Democratic Society”, the authors claim that the WTO has failed to live up to its promises, and that its current policies undermine the freedom and progress of a democratic society. They write that “Since the WTO was created, the world has been buffeted by unprecedented
financial instability. Economic growth in the developing world has slowed. Income inequality is rising rapidly between and within countries” (Wallach and Sforza 16). They point to the rising gap in income between the world’s wealthiest and its poorest. They comment on the climbing U.S. trade deficit and the destabilization of many Asian economies as well as the slump in Latin America’s economic growth. All of these factors the authors directly link to the World Trade Organization’s unhealthy policies which are supposed to favor free trade and economic growth over any environmental concerns and human rights. If commercial growth and progress are the WTO’s primary function, ask the authors, then why aren’t we seeing any?

Wallach and Sforza also claim “the WTO challenges and threats undermine the public interest”. The authors say that the World Trade Organization has the power to judge a country’s laws for compliance to WTO policies. For example, they write that in the past five years, every challenge made to the WTO by a government or non-governmental organization has been ruled a violation of free trade – “An illegal trade barrier that must be eliminated or changed” (Wallach and Sforza 17). Thus, those countries are forced to alter or ‘water down’ laws regarding environmental standards, genetically engineered food, animal safety, and labor rights. The authors say that the end result is that countries whose domestic policies in these areas are higher than those of the WTO’s international standards must reduce their expectations in order not to be considered trade barriers.

According to Wallach and Sforza, this is the greatest flaw in the system. It serves only to please corporate needs, and ignores the importance of the individual. The authors make the argument that the WTO has produced a system where even government entities
find their interests subservient to the corporation. Wallach and Sforza write, “The overall theme that emerges from reviewing the WTO’s record: In the WTO forum, global commerce takes precedence over everything – democracy, public health, equity, the environment, food safety and more” (20).

These arguments are made again in Wallach and Sforza’s work Whose Trade Organization? Corporate Globalization and the Erosion of Democracy. Published by Ralph Nader’s Public Citizen group, and including a preface by Nader himself, this detailed work specifically chronicles the World Trade Organization’s horrific record of decisions concerning food safety, public health, medicine, developing countries, human rights, labor rights, and corporate intellectual property rights. Nader was a visible force in Seattle, and his director of Public Citizen in Seattle, Mike Dolan, worked closely with the mayor and police chief to organize peaceful and effective demonstrations. Nader has long been a champion of true democratic values and anti-corporate rule. Whose Trade Organization? offers readers solutions and recommendations that they believe would help to eliminate trends in the system that undermine democracy and public interest.

One of the primary arguments the authors make in Whose Trade Organization? is the WTO conducts its business shrouded in secrecy, and furthermore, is a non-democratic institution that does not represent the constituents it claims to be serving. Nader, Wallach, and Sforza rail against the secrecy of the WTO, claiming that “Many decisions affecting people’s daily lives are being shifted away from our local and national governments and instead are being made by a group of unelected trade bureaucrats sitting behind closed doors in Geneva” (ix). Later in the book, Wallach and Sforza write about the tribunal system that is now in effect that replaced the consensus-based system of the
GATT. Their criticism is directed towards a system under which “WTO panel rulings are automatically binding and do not require unanimous consent to be adopted. Nor do WTO trade sanctions need consensus approval. Indeed, the WTO is unique among all other international agreements in that consensus is required to stop action” (Wallach and Sforza 195).

The book makes compelling arguments against an organization whose status is parallel to the United Nations, and yet, who conducts its business without any due process and in complete secrecy. The authors argue that only the wealthiest of countries are given any real representation and have won any of the cases brought against the WTO. They mention that the higher standards of laws in United States has meant that the U.S. has lost every challenge against the WTO, being forced to reduce standards on anti-dumping policies and endangered animal protection, to name a few. Additionally, the authors claim that once these decisions have been removed from local and national jurisdiction and handed over to the WTO, the panelists deciding the fate of these 135 countries have “a predetermined trade perspective and a stake in the existing trade model and rules.” Further, the authors claim that these panelists, who are not democratically elected, are generally knowledgeable only in the areas of commercial interest, “although they must rule on health, environmental and other issues” (Wallach and Sforza 196-97).

Many of the demonstrators present in Seattle argued against an organization which they saw as shrouded in secrecy, a faceless corporate evil, and decidedly undemocratic. In addition to the specific decisions made by the WTO that concerned environmentalists, human rights advocates, and labor unions, a large contingent of demonstrators rallied for a more democratic system that would uphold democratic values
and freedoms over corporate ideology, and allow public representation in the proceedings. There are those who are not opposed to the function of the WTO as much as its tyrannical methods and anti-democratic processes.

Fiona McGillivray, author of Democratizing the World Trade Organization also believes that the WTO produces results that are unfair to and unrepresentative of the needs of many countries. She believes that the issue that united many of the protesters at the Seattle summit was their obvious lack of representation within the WTO. She writes, “One issue that united this diverse coalition was democratizing global governance. Marchers protested that they had no political voice within the WTO, denouncing it as an undemocratic institution, secretive and uncaring” (McGillivray 1). She argues, however, that this is not where the ineffectiveness of the WTO lies. McGillivray does not believe that opening WTO proceedings to the public will make the WTO more democratic.

Her argument is that the lack of democracy present in the WTO is in its representation of specific countries, particularly those of the third world versus the interests of the United States. McGillivray writes, “Where the WTO is blatantly undemocratic is in underrepresenting the interests of its poorer countries (more than 100 of its 136 members)” (3). According to the author, as a result of the WTO’s method of the Most Favored Nation rule in settling disputes, the negotiations are structured around the largest and most powerful countries. Hence, she claims that many poorer countries are left out of favor in the decision making process.

These arguments were repeated numerous times in Seattle. Many protesters would side with McGillivray’s contention that the WTO is destructive to the goals and
sustainability of third world economies. Many believe that the WTO forces third world countries to comply with trade and tariff negotiations, or be left behind. As a result, there is a continuing “race to the bottom” in this process that exploits the human and environmental resources of developing nations.

The book Trade, Environment and the Millenium also raises concerns about the WTO’s capacity to manage free trade and environmental concerns under one roof. Edited by Gary Sampson and W. Bradnee Chambers, this work explores the arguments of environmentalists, particularly the concerns over environmental standards in developing parts of the world. Written prior to the Seattle summit, this book is comprised of essays by various scholars in academia, government, and civil society that detail policies of the WTO and the negotiations that were at stake during the Seattle ministerial, in addition to providing policy recommendations for future summits. This work can provide concrete insight into the environmental/trade debate by presenting each objective that the WTO had hoped to resolve during December 1999.

The book is a valuable resource for those attempting to understand the specific concerns of many environmentalists and familiarize themselves with current WTO legislation. The first four chapters in the book describe, according to the editors, “The various viewpoints on trade, environment, and the WTO of two groups of stakeholders – developing countries and environmental NGO’s [Non-Governmental Organizations]” (Sampson and Chambers 6). The author of Chapter two, Magda Shahin, articulates the goals of both environmentalists and the World Trade Organization, saying “The central question remains how to bring the trade and the environmental systems closer together
without undermining either system, knowing that they are not necessarily always compatible” (Sampson and Chambers 38).

Like previous works, *Trade, Environment and the Millennium* concludes that the non-democratic processes and goals surrounding the WTO have led to an exploitation of resources. Additionally, there are authors who argue that it is the very policies of the WTO (World Trade Organization) that inhibit individual nations from pursuing or enacting sound environmental policies. The chapters in the book offer suggestions that may alleviate some of the discrepancies in the trade and environment debate.

Gary Sampson is also responsible for another work that focuses on environmental issues as they pertain to free trade and the World Trade Organization. The book *Trade, Environment and the WTO: The Post-Seattle Agenda* is a follow up to the previous book, and chronicles the decisions made at the Seattle summit. Additionally, this policy essay details the specific changes made in international trade and environmental laws at the Seattle ministerial. This book is much more accessible than the previous, and helps to inform the reader about the legitimacy of the arguments made by both sides of the trade and environment debate.

Sampson acknowledges that trade and environmental concerns cannot be taken in isolation from one another. The author’s policy essay focuses on ways that countries, particularly developing ones, can have both a sustainable environment and a profitable economy. He analyzes decisions made at the Seattle summit and attempts to identify what he sees as the most pressing issues for future meetings. His argument is that “development must become an integral part of the trade and environment debate in the
WTO, taking into account the interests and concerns of developing countries" (Sampson 6).

The third and fourth chapters are critical in providing background for this thesis. In chapter three the author addresses criticisms launched at the WTO by non-governmental organizations (NGO's). Many of these are environmental groups, which Sampson acknowledges see the WTO as a "nontransparent organization and unaccountable to the public at large" (7). In chapter four he attempts to create common goals and interests between proponents of both trade and the environment, by suggesting ways in which "WTO rules can be used constructively by NGO's to help them achieve what are in many instances objectives that environmentalists have been pursuing for some time" (Sampson 7). Unlike many environmentalists, Sampson believes that the WTO and NGOs can work in conjunction with one another to remove harmful environmental legislation from their dockets while still protecting trade interests for developing nations. This may seem idealistic, but Sampson's 'win-win' approach seems feasible when he stresses the importance of issues surrounding fisheries, agriculture, forest products, and energy to both trade and environment. For this author, trade and the environment are not in opposition.

Jeffrey Schott, editor of The WTO After Seattle agrees with Campbell on several points. Both see the concerns of environmentalists as being legitimate and both believe that the WTO needs to begin to incorporate environmental concerns into their policy planning. However, both are in agreement that the WTO is being held up to unreasonable expectations from Non-Governmental organizations that seemingly forget that the organization's goals are to promote free trade. In his introduction, former
Director General of the WTO Renato Ruggiero writes, "We cannot – and should not – ask the WTO to also become a watchdog for labor and human rights. This organization cannot be allowed to gradually drift away from its trade vocation. It would serve neither the WTO nor any other cause if it were to pretend it could offer solutions to every nontrade issue" (Schott xv).

The WTO After Seattle includes essays from authors around the world who discuss pertinent issues about what they see as the successes and failures of the Seattle summit. Like Trade, Environment and the WTO, this work raises questions about the ways in which the world should promote both environmental and human rights concerns while pushing for sustainable development. Additionally, the essays ask if it is possible to combine the goals of trade with those of labor, human rights, and environment. It then moves on to analyze the policy challenges faced by the WTO as they attempt to move forward in promoting free trade while faced with opposition from NGOs. The essays discuss the issues that were on the table during the Seattle summit, providing expert analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of each topic. Many of the authors also present ideas and suggestions for future meetings of the WTO (to be held every two years) that can combine trade with the aforementioned concerns. This work is refreshing in its candor, and the broadness of topics covered provides a reader with insight into the interests of the United States, the European Union, and Japan, the existing policies of the WTO, future issues to be addressed by the organization, and policy making and dispute settlement within the WTO.

Schott himself sees the breakdown of the Seattle talks not the result of external forces like demonstrators, but having come from within. Schott argues that
disagreements over policies between developing and developed nations led to tension, in addition to the United States' push for short negotiations, which he says, "resulted in a limited agenda" (7). He suggests, then, that a new round of talks is necessary, and this time, offers his own agenda for such a summit. It is his contention that if the WTO incorporated some concerns from their opposition, several goals would be met. First, he writes, "WTO talks would provide a useful buffer against growing protectionist pressures in the United States". Second, he believes that public support needs for the WTO needs to be "drummed up" prior to a future summit. Lastly, internal revisions in the methods of dispute settlement need to be made in order to maintain what he calls "the integrity of the WTO itself" (Schott 6-7).

Activists and authors Kevin Danaher and Roger Burbach don't believe that the WTO has any integrity to begin with. The editors of Globalize This! The Battle Against the World Trade Organization and Corporate Rule include essays from activists like Vandana Shiva, Peter Rosset, and the group the Environmental Research Foundation. These essays argue against the policies of the WTO concerning third world debt, food protection and bioengineering, and labor and human rights. Danaher's essay, "Top Ten Reasons to Oppose The World Trade Organization," co-written with Juliette Beck, argues that the WTO's secretive policies are harmful to labor, human rights, the environment, public health, developing nations, cultural autonomy, and even free trade itself.

This all-encompassing work makes solid cases against the World Trade Organization from individuals who were present at the Seattle summit. Thus, its importance to this thesis is twofold. It presents arguments against the current global structure and the multilateral institutions that drive it and it presents insight into the
organization and strategies of the activists who protested against that system. Firsthand accounts of the Seattle demonstrations and the debates over media representation, police brutality, and the successes of the demonstrators are presented from activists including Paul Hawken, Starhawk, and Luis Hernandez Navarro. This work covers all of the topics introduced in this literature review, and is invaluable in understanding the arguments made later in this thesis, which defend the performances of the activists and critique the presence of the World Trade Organization in Seattle.

Again, it must be stressed that the books mentioned here function as background information on the ways that the World Trade Organization conducts its business, and the primary arguments launched against it. I choose not to critique the function of the World Trade Organization in this thesis, nor do I propose to examine its methods of operation. It is fair to suggest, however, that the lack of visibility of the members of the WTO was one of the reasons that the Seattle demonstrators were so frustrated. I believe that in light of this lack of visibility, the demonstrators may have martyred themselves to the faceless entity that they sought to fight.

Activism and Protest on a Global and Local Scale

The Seattle demonstrations are the most recent efforts in a long history of attempts by citizens to change public policy. The last fifty years have seen great changes and strides in public protest and activism, particularly regarding organization and the production of spectacular visual effects staged to garner media attention. From Abbie Hoffman in the 1960’s to Greenpeace in the 90’s, activists have learned to use shocking rhetoric and stunning visuals in order to create as great as spectacle as possible for public
consumption. The following works begin broad by chronicling the history of social protest, and end with reviews and explanations of the Seattle demonstrations by those who participated.

**Global Social Movements** chronicles the rise of opposition to many causes, including the environmental movement, the peace movement, the Islamic revival, human rights, the feminist movement, labor standards, and indigenous people’s organization. This anthology is comprised of essays that present reasons for such trends, in addition to providing insight into the methods of planning and the rhetoric used by some grass-roots organizations involved in these causes. The unique feature of this book is the way in which the editors make connections between these social movements and globalization, especially where the religious right is concerned.

Because all of these groups were represented in Seattle, this work is an invaluable resource in defining social movements, in understanding the motivation behind many grass-roots operations, and in helping a reader to empathize with the myriad causes presented at the Seattle summit. The diversity between all of the movements above forces the authors to remind readers that social movements can no longer be fit into one category, but that they do contain common elements. They see movements unfolding over time as being fluid and diverse.

One of the key features of these books is their insight into the innovative use of technology and media by this new wave of activists. Many of the authors comment on the rise in internet and cellular phone communication in helping to organize, and several count the media as the greatest ally of activists in promoting their causes. I refer to these revolutionary changes in my thesis, where I propose that this demonstration, being the
first almost entirely planned and coordinated via the internet, was so efficacious because of its reliance on new technology. When referring to both the environmental and women's liberation movements, the authors suggest that globalization has drastically changed the nature of activism, by fusing "old and new agendas" and linking "local and global struggles" (Cohen and Rai 10). Additionally, as was seen in Seattle, the authors acknowledge a change in the labor movement, as labor aligns itself with other movements and NGOs, where it was previously reluctant to find its affinity to other causes. These essays chronicle the changes in social movements, particularly in relevance to globalization.

Taking Trade to the Streets: The Lost History of Public Efforts to Shape Globalization by Susan Ariel Aaronson also discusses social movements in a global context. Aaronson examines the arguments of trade critics, particularly the activism of environmental and labor groups who criticize the policies of the WTO. The author explores the ways that the WTO, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the North American Free Trade Agreement have forced coalitions among their opposition by uniting traditionally opposing forces like labor and environment against a common enemy. The author focuses on three specific issues – food safety, the environment, and labor standards, and discusses what these movements oppose about current globalization and trade policies.

Of particular use is the final chapter that draws conclusions about what these movements have done to shape trade agreements. Aaronson refers to the progress made by these coalitions, as mentioned later in this thesis, when she writes:
This book has illuminated how a broad group of individuals – including environmentalists, civic leaders, health and consumer advocates, human rights advocates, and others – joined traditional protectionists including economic nationalists, some producer interests, and some labor unions to hinder trade liberalization in the United States, in other nations, and at the WTO. (174)

The author makes five assumptions about these possibilities. First, she says that activists have “changed the content and structure of trade agreements.” She refers to side agreements in NAFTA that accommodate environmental and labor standards. Next, she says that critics and activists “have influenced the structure of the WTO.” Although these ideas are contestable, the author says that due to mounting pressure from activists, the WTO has had to acknowledge concern from various NGOs. Third, she says, “Critics have gotten more people talking about trade policy. Through demonstrations, teach-ins, and forums in the United States and around the world, they have stimulated discussions about NAFTA, GATT, and global economic interdependence.” Fourth, she argues that activists “have raised important questions about the relationship between trade regulation and social/environmental regulation.” Lastly, Aaronson claims (much to the disagreement of the Seattle demonstrators) that activists “have forced trade policymakers at the national and international levels to make their decisions openly and to make such decisions widely available” (175-76). These conclusions prove that activism on a global scale is making a dent in the current system. I use these conclusions to inform my thesis, where I also propose that the efficacy of the battle in Seattle was a turning point in gaining momentum for a new anti-globalization movement. I suggest later that these
demonstrations will ultimately make changes to the current system by drawing light to
issues previously not in the public's consciousness. Two factors that I believe will help
transform the status quo are the radical theatrical methods employed by the demonstrators
which garner media attention, and the broad coalitions of participants that represent the
great spectrum of public interests.

Amory Starr's *Naming the Enemy: Anti-Corporate Movements Confront Globalization* documents current social movements that are responding to corporate
domination. Her major premises are that these movements do exist in a new and united
form, and then she analyzes "How they understand their enemy, and how they envision
rebuilding the world" (Starr x). As opposed to justifying the actions of anti-globalization
activists, which many other works in this area do, Starr says that she focuses on "the
movement's substantive projects, the content of the 'frame'," and therefore does not
"evaluate the movement's size, scope, practices or chances for success" (xi). What she
does provide are three categories of current anti-corporate ideology. As she defines these
categories, she places various movements within them.

Contestation and reform is the first mode of ideology presented by the author.
She says "Peace and human rights movements have long criticized the behaviors of
multinational corporations" and that "most projects of this mode attempt to recover the
authority of the state to regulate corporations, constrain their abuses and deliver social
benefits" (xi). Human rights activists were among the largest contingent of the Seattle
demonstrators.

In the second mode, the author refers to Richard Falk's theory of 'globalization
from below', which is "democratic, humanitarian internationalism" (Starr 40). Starr
writes, “This is workers of the world uniting in a widened framework of dispossession that includes multiple sites of oppression” (xi). Environmental, labor, and anti-free trade activists are all included in this category, according to Starr. She says that these movements attempt to displace existing bodies of power.

Lastly, the author refers to the delinking mode, which she cites as the least familiar to the public. In this mode, activists “voluntarily cut themselves off from the global market and its denizens”. She cites anarchists, sustainable development movements and religious nationalists as those groups who would fall into this category. One of the most remarkable features of the Seattle demonstrations was the presence of protectionists like Pat Buchanan marching with environmentalists and those in favor of third world debt-reduction. Starr comments that groups in this particular mode are “less interested in governance, and busy instead spawning vivacious alternatives” (xi). Upon reading Naming the Enemy, one will find that the broad coalition of demonstrators in Seattle represented the entire spectrum of Starr’s categories.

Although slightly more specific than the previous three works, Kevin DeLuca’s Image Politics traces the history of environmental activism. This book looks at groups like Greenpeace and Earth First! and studies their rhetorical strategies, while also noting their highly effective use of media in generating public awareness and sympathy to their causes. DeLuca aligns himself with environmental activists and anti-corporate demonstrators like those in Seattle, and his work also functions as a defense of such groups. He writes, “This project is rooted in a conviction that industrial civilization is headed for disaster due to its perspectives on nature, humanity-nature relations, and how those relations should be mediated by technology” (xii).
The crux of Deluca's argument is in his study of the ways in which environmental NGOs use the media to further their causes. He notes that groups like Greenpeace have used the media to promote causes not previously known by the public, and that this strategy has been effective in making a difference to current policy. The author praises the efficacy of these groups in changing environmental legislation globally. Deluca's book is an invaluable resource for the arguments made later in this thesis which combine performance theory with rhetorical strategy. The author's opinions are aligned with mine when I discuss how the Seattle protesters made as dramatic a spectacle as possible at the site of the struggle to garner media attention and prohibit the opposition from carrying out their goals.

Several books have been written by activists in the wake of the Seattle spectacle. These works provide critical first hand accounts of the rhetorical strategizing, organizational methods, and obstacles in planning and carrying out a successful large-scale demonstration. First, Five Days That Shook the World: Seattle and Beyond by Alexander Cockburn, Jeffrey St. Clair and Allan Sekula is a personal account of one man's experience as a participant in the Seattle demonstrations, and the subsequent Washington D.C. protests against the IMF and World Bank. The authors also participated in the Los Angeles protests surrounding the Democratic National Convention. The book chronicles those experiences candidly and recounts in vivid detail the series of events that often led to violence and arrests.

Cockburn and St. Clair do draw conclusions, namely in a section entitled, "Who Won?" which refers to the Seattle summit. It is here that the authors scathingly criticize proponents of free trade like author Thomas Friedman (The Lexus and the Olive Tree)
and Biotechnology's Monsanto CEO Robert Shapiro. The authors hold nothing back, calling Shapiro's work, "Influence peddling rampages (that) constitute some of the slimiest pages in the history of the Clinton administration; whose technological toolkit in the form of Bt corn has threatened to wipe out the monarch butterfly" (Cockburn and St. Clair 55).

The authors also come down hard against the liberal contingent who participated in the demonstration, mocking the presence of James Hoffa, Michael Moore, Medea Benjamin and the "middle of the road greens". Their admiration is instead given to the true radicals and street warriors, such as the Longshoremen, Steelworkers, Earth First!ers and even anarchists who "abandoned the respectable, police sanctioned official AFL-CIO parade and joined the street warriors at the barricades in downtown" (Cockburn and St. Clair 59). Here it becomes evident that there is an underlying story to the demonstration, a potential rift in the unity presented by the mainstream press, because this work is sympathetic to the activists, but not all of them.

The greatest feature of value in this work is its attempt to debunk myths perpetrated by mainstream press. It explores the causes of the radical contingent at the demonstrations and justifies their actions by explaining the back-story. It examines the mainstream media blackout of the events, and attacks major networks for their corporate coverage of civil protest. Lastly, it examines the demonstrations from an extreme perspective, one that is angry, but believes the outcome of the demonstrations is hugely successful.

Author Janet Thomas would agree with Cockburn and St. Clair. She, too, attended the Seattle summit and is left a bit disillusioned by the events. However, she is
not angry and sees those five days as a victory. A long time activist from the Seattle area, Thompson chronicles her own history of engagement more than a year prior to the summit. She explains how the turtles became the mascot for the protests, and how lesbians decided to walk without shirts. From someone who attended nearly every pre-summit rally, town hall, and forum, there is no better work out there on the myriad of causes present and the way that their proponents all came together.

Each essay-like chapter of The Battle In Seattle outlines a different feature of the demonstration, from the police attacks on peaceful demonstrators to the circle of jubilee that surrounded the convention center as a symbol of unity in erasing third world debt. She seems to have been all places at all times, or at least knows someone who was. She details every aspect of the demonstrations, including WTO reactions to the event and biased media coverage of the protests.

Throughout the work, she documents the track records of various corporations and governmental agencies that are gears in the machine of globalization. She provides interviews with people from both sides of the issues. If one knew nothing about the World Trade Organization, corporate culture, or the Seattle summit itself, this would be the cornerstone for their research. Moreover, this work places the author at the beginning of the development stages of the protests, more than a year prior, and that insight is invaluable to one studying the planning, enactment, and results of the Battle in Seattle.

The Battle of Seattle: The New Challenge to Capitalist Globalization edited by Eddie Yuen, George Katsiaficas, and Daniel Burton Rose is the most recent of the works published that analyze the specifics of the Seattle protests. The editors praise the efficacy of the demonstrations, seeing them as a “turning point – for capital, the media, activists of
all stripes, and millions of ordinary people who had previously not thought of the global economy as a matter which was relevant to their lives, or, more importantly, alterable by their actions" (Yuen, et al. 4). They see the Seattle spectacle as the beginning of a new frontier for globalization opponents, and one that promises to bring changes in the greater system in the future. Like my thesis, the authors focus on the "history, composition, tactics, and politics of the new movement against global capitalism" (5), instead of choosing to analyze the WTO or the current systems at play in our global economy.

The editors have separated the essays in the book into very different sections. The first, "The Gathering Storm" features essays that examine the building tide of opposition to globalization over the last decade. The authors in this section look at the history of globalization around the world, particularly in third world countries, where they believe the movement has its roots. The second section, "N30 Aftermath" chronicles both sides of the struggle during the demonstrations and afterwards. This section provides very useful essays that emphasize "direct action street movement" (7) and the efficacious techniques utilized by these radical groups during the demonstrations. The third section, entitled "Uneasy Alliances" contradicts the idea of unity within the anti-globalization movement by discussing three key issues. First, there is the dynamic between "the street movement and organized labor, established environmental groups and NGO's" (Yuen, et al. 14). Second, there is the presence of right wing forces and their protectionist interest in fighting globalization. Lastly, the section features essays that explore the homogeneity, particularly racially, of the movement. The last portion of the book will also be very useful to the last section of my thesis. This final section, entitled, "This Movement So Far" brings perspective from activists and theorists who have
participated in or observed anti-globalization demonstrations since Seattle. These accounts discuss issues brought up in Washington D.C., London, Prague, and Genoa, among others. The final chapter of my thesis, which discusses further implications of and further directions for the movement, is greatly informed by these essays.

One book not yet published but worth mentioning for its potential value is Benjamin Shepard and Ronald Hayduk's From ACT-UP to the WTO: Urban Protest and Community Building in the Era of Globalization. This anthology, to be released in the upcoming months, features contributions from many activists and organizations who critique the Seattle spectacle and discuss its successes and weaknesses. Shepard and Hayduks's work presents a history of recent activism, with an emphasis on the anti-corporate demonstrations in Seattle. An editorial at amazon.com says the author sees as innovative the demonstrators' use of "civil rights' era non-violent disobedience, guerrilla theater and sophisticated media work" (http://www.amazon.cm/exec/obidos/tg/store/detail/books/1859843565/reviews). I believe that this work would be essential to the future of scholarship of performance and protest.

This section of the literature review is the most relevant to my thesis thus far. Although I examine the demonstrations initially from a performance theory perspective, I later delve into the practical application of these theories, such as the use of theatre and carnival, the transformative features of theatrical protest, and the idealism inherent in every demonstration. It is essential then, that this application be informed by understanding the historical role that activism has played in changing the status quo. Additionally and more importantly, it is vital to have first-hand accounts of the planning and enactment of the Seattle protests in order to demonstrate that what occurred here was
in fact revolutionary and transformative, with the potential to affect change in a system many believe is firmly established. Although my work aligns itself with many of the arguments made in this section of the literature review, it differs in that I am exploring specific features of the demonstration through the lens of performance theory, as opposed to a socio-political perspective present in many of these books.

Performance Theory

A theoretical framework rooted in Communication lays the foundation for further analysis of the Seattle spectacle. Performance theory studies the communicative aspects of culture that lie in ritual, drama, and protest, among others. Although many theories explore the relationship between performance and protest, the following three are the most applicable to the anti-globalization demonstrations of Seattle.

The seminal work in the field of performance is Victor Turner's *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors*. This book, first published in 1974, combines anthropological insight with performance theory and introduces Turner's theory of social drama. A social drama, according to Turner, is a disharmonic or crisis situation present in many cultures, and is a processual or structured unit. By this, the author means that when dramas unfold in a particular culture, the event has a time contingent, a sequence, that usually reveals itself in four stages. These phases, says Turner, "Are phases of public action, accessible to observation" (38). The four stages Turner has named are: the *breach* of norm-governed relations, the *crisis* that mounts afterwards, the *redressive action* which attempts to address the problem, and finally, either *reintegration* of the group or problem, or an
acknowledgement of an irreparable breach. He lays out the chronology of a social drama as follows:

The breach of regular, norm-governed social relations occurs between persons or groups within the same system of social relations. Such a breach is signalized by the public, overt breach or deliberate nonfulfillment of some crucial norm regulating the intercourse of the parties. Following breach of regular, norm-governed social relations, a phase of mounting crisis supervenes, during which, unless the breach can be sealed off quickly within a limited area of social interaction, there is a tendency for the breach to widen and extend until it becomes coextensive with some dominant cleavage in the widest set of relevant social relations to which the conflicting or antagonistic parties belong. It is now fashionable to speak of this sort of thing as the “escalation” of crisis. In order to limit the spread of crisis, certain adjustive and redressive “mechanisms” informal or formal, institutionalized or ad hoc, are swiftly brought into operation by leading or structurally representative members of the disturbed social system. It is in the redressive phase that both pragmatic techniques and symbolic action reach their fullest expression. The final phases I distinguished consists either of the reintegration of the disturbed social group or of the social recognition and legitimization of irreparable schism between the contesting parties (Turner 38-41).

Future chapters in this thesis will seek to apply each of Turner’s four phases of social drama to the events that unfolded in Seattle, 1999. The unique feature of Turner’s
theory is that the perspective from which it is applied will determine how each phase is viewed in relation to an event. Because this thesis is written from the perspective of the activists and demonstrators, my application of breach, crisis, redress, and integration/recognition of schism will be drastically different, perhaps oppositional, to applications that align themselves with the World Trade Organization, police, or government.

One will see later that I interpret the breach in social norms not as the demonstrations, but as the World Trade Organization functioning on behalf of individuals who disapprove of its very creation, and choosing to host its summit in Seattle, a hotbed of social activism in the United States. Turner mentions that the movement into crisis may be rebellion or even revolution, and I argue that the crisis phase here began with the planning and enacting of the demonstrations, indeed a rebellious and revolutionary act. During the crisis phase, the author says that members of a community are forced to take sides, and in identifying themselves they must decide whether or not to take action in order to maintain or subvert the status quo. It is clear then, that during my interpretation of the crisis phase, individuals were determining their own part in this unfolding spectacle and deciding how to enact or vocalize their identity through protest.

Turner writes that the goal of the redressive phase is to restore the status quo. This is done rationally, with judiciary intervention, or symbolically, such as in the enactment of ritual. It cannot be argued that the crisis began when individuals took to the streets on behalf of their ideals and were met with opposition and force. However, it is precisely that force and opposition which can be viewed as a redressive attempt on the part of the dominant culture to restore order and return things to ‘normal’. Thus, the third
phase in Turner’s social drama would be seen as the efforts on the part of police, riot
squad and city officials to shut down the demonstrations and allow the summit to
continue. The redressive phase attempts to frame what was performed or carried out
successfully by a particular contingent. So, as successful as one may believe the
demonstrators were, the disturbed party is responsible for redressing the issue and
reestablishing the status quo. Lastly, the reintegration phase seeks to determine the
resolution of the crisis. It is entirely a matter of interpretation as to whether following the
demonstration there was a reestablishment of the status quo, or whether the protests were
more successful in creating transformation. This thesis will argue that there was an
acknowledgement of an irreparable schism between the two parties, and that although it
may appear to the mainstream that things returned to normal, future demonstrations and
anti-globalization efforts have proven that momentum was created and not lost.

In his follow up work, From Ritual to Theater, Turner further elaborates on the
theory of social drama. He adds another element, that of star groupers. He writes that
groups are bonded within a social drama by their shared interests and values. Within a
particular social drama, the “main actors are persons for whom the group which
constitutes the field of dramatic action has a high value priority” and that “A star group is
the one with which a person identifies most deeply and in which [s/]he finds fulfillment
of his[/her] major social and personal strivings and desires” (Turner 69). The star
groupers, then, are the leaders of the fight, those individuals or groups who take the most
responsibility for upholding community identity and challenging the status quo.

What is unique about the Seattle protests is that many individual factions
participated, forming one “super” star group that encompassed a myriad of ideologies and
values. This group, comprised of leaders in environment, bioengineering, religion, government, human-rights issues, animal welfare, and labor, were those who “develop(ed) to an art the rhetoric of persuasion and influence, who knew how and when to apply pressure and force, and were most sensitive to the factors of legitimacy”. It is the star-group’s responsibility to “manipulate the machinery of redress”, to handle the police, the government, the leaders of the opposition and the audiences observing (Turner 72). The star group formed in Seattle was deliberately planned to display unity to each other and represent a myriad of causes. The leaders of the star group understood that only through such a coalition would their power potentially be great enough to tackle the goals at hand. Our star group, then, is unique in that it is comprised of so many varying opinions and agendas, and yet, as a united force, and only as such, was capable of garnering much attention, allegiance, and change.

Richard Schechner elaborates on Turner’s theory of social drama in his work Performance Theory. This seminal work in the Communication field examines performance with one key feature in mind, the transformative quality of the performance for both the performers and the audience. The transformation is most apparent when “people use theater as a way to experiment with, act out, and ratify change”. Schechner sees three primary levels where the transformation may occur. First, there is the potential for change within the drama or story itself. Second, there is the transformation within the performers, “whose special task it is to undergo a temporary rearrangement of their body/mind” (Schechner 170). Lastly, there is the transformation that should occur within the observing audience member.
Schechner makes a key distinction between social and aesthetic dramas. The locus of change effected is the element that determines whether a drama is of social or aesthetic value, regardless of the type of theater performed. Schechner would argue that a political protest would have elements of both social and aesthetic drama, because “the changes in status are permanent, while changes in the body are temporary” (171). To continue, one of the elements that is found in both aesthetic and social drama is production. As will be mentioned in this thesis, the Seattle protests contained elements of traditional Western theater. Many demonstrations, as with traditional dramas, rely on staging, costumes, scripts, and characterizations. When we refer to the Seattle spectacle, we are referring to a social transformation that attempts a permanent change in the status of the participants and audience.

Another feature of Schechner’s transformative social drama is the lack of distinction between audience member and participant. While Turner does not focus on the importance of audience, for Schechner a social drama means, “all present are participants, though some are more decisively involved than others” (171). Schechner makes this distinction to clarify the differences between traditional Western theater and what he sees as avant-garde and political theater, which contain elements of aesthetic performances, but hopes for a more lasting effect when the performance is finished.

Schechner presents the interconnectedness of social and aesthetic dramas with his variation on an infinity loop. In this theoretical figure eight, he places social drama on one side and aesthetic drama on the other. In the spectrum of social drama, which works to create change in “the world” there are the visible elements of social and political action, and the behind-the-scenes elements of staging and theatrical production. In an
aesthetic drama, which seeks to create transformation of consciousness, there are the actual elements of staging, and the virtual elements of social and political action. The loop works on a continuum, with all elements influencing one another, and with the differences between social and aesthetic drama not being mutually exclusive.

When we look at Seattle through the perspective of Schechner's infinity loop, we see clearly that political performance is largely theatrical and theatrics can be politically transformative. The elements that are hidden in a social drama, such as production values and preparation, are the ones most noticeable in a typical Western type aesthetic drama. In Seattle, the elements of production and staging were not visible. The construction of banners and costumes had been done long beforehand, and the consequential display for the audience was the social action. Schechner writes about this idea when he says, "The visible actions of a given social drama are informed — shaped, conditioned, guided — by underlying aesthetic principles and specific theatrical/rhetorical techniques. Reciprocally, a culture's visible aesthetic theater is informed — shaped, conditioned, guided — by underlying processes of social interaction" (190). The Seattle demonstrators were using theatrical techniques to change the status quo. The infinity loop serves to remind us that these ideas can all be present at once. As the author says, "Social dramas affect aesthetic dramas, aesthetic dramas affect social dramas" (190). Often, they are one and the same.

Schechner's first work is applicable to the Seattle demonstrations, and equally to this thesis, in that he provides a framework that sees protest as performance, and performance as capable of social transformation. More so, it is clear that the blurred lines between audience member and participant were evident in a demonstration that made
unwitting performers of the members of the World Trade Organization. These individuals, although they watched from behind glass, either in their hotel rooms, automobiles, or board rooms, made the transformation from spectator to performer in a social drama. Later in this thesis I argue that the cast of characters, particularly the nearly invisible presence of the WTO members, is one of the features that made the Seattle demonstrations so efficacious and capable of subverting the system. In the Seattle social drama, it seems that the WTO members were cast as villains.

It is in a future work, The Future of Ritual that Schechner looks at the efficacious qualities of protest in greater detail. Different from his standpoint in Performance Theory, Schechner writes in a chapter entitled “The Street is the Stage” that the purpose of political performance is efficacy, saying “It is efficacious, intending to produce real effects by means of symbolic causes” (51). In this work, Schechner labels social drama “direct theater” where he says that “large public spaces are transformed into theatres where collective reflexivity is performed, and fecund and spectacular excesses displayed” (83).

Schechner uses the term carnival to describe the often celebratory and excessive elements of a protest. He writes:

They put on masks and costumes, erect and wave banners, and construct effigies not merely to disguise or embellish their ordinary selves, or to flaunt the outrageous, but also to act out the multiplicity each human life is. Acting out forbidden themes is risky so people don masks and costumes. They protest, often by means of farce and parody, against what is oppressive, ridiculous, and outrageous […] Festive actions playfully,
blasphemously, and obscenely expose to the general eye for approval and/or ridicule the basic facts of human life and death. Such playing challenges official culture’s claims to authority, stability, sobriety, immutability, and immortality. (46)

Schechner does distinguish between carnival and revolution by suggesting that the difference between the two is that carnival produces temporary change while revolution produces, or attempts to produce, permanent change. However, the author does admit that all revolutions or direct theatre performances contain elements of carnival and festivity. He encapsulates this idea when he writes, “Revolutions in their incipient period are carnivalesque” (Schechner 47). It is possible then, that political protest, by using elements of carnival, has the potential to achieve permanent transformation and invert cultural norms or the status quo. The two need not be separate categories, but as I suggest, can function together when applied to a demonstration like that which occurred in Seattle.

In the next chapter of this thesis, I attempt to further apply Schechner’s theories of direct theatre and carnival to the Seattle protests. I look at the carnivalesque aspects of the Seattle demonstrations, the unique ways that the activists used the street as the stage, the ways in which they donned costumes and masks to change the status quo permanently. These conscious and strategic decisions were made by the demonstrators to raise the potential of efficacy and the level of transformation from temporary to permanent.

Jan Cohen-Cruz, editor of Radical Street Performance, also offers criteria for political protest as performance. In her work, she defines radical street performance by
suggesting that they are acts which "question or re-envision ingrained social arrangements of power, take place in public by-ways with minimal constraints on access, and are intended for public viewing" (Cohen-Cruz 1). Much like Schechner, Cohen-Cruz agrees that an important element in radical performance is the location in which the spectacle takes place. Taking protest to the site of the conflict transforms that site itself.

Cohen-Cruz also offers categories within which a particular social drama may fall. Although she offers five distinct types of radical street theatre, three are of particular use to this project and will be examined further in future sections. First, she suggests that agit-prop theatre "attempts to mobilize people around partisan points of view that have been simplified and theatricalized to capture by-passers' attention directly or by way of the media" (Cohen-Cruz 5). She admits that this has become the umbrella term for many in their understanding of social dramas, and suggests that instead it be viewed as only one approach to the medium. Later, Cohen-Cruz writes, "agit-prop is a militant form of art intended to emotionally and ideologically mobilize its audience to take particular action vis-à-vis an urgent social situation" (13). Like Schechner, she sees aesthetic elements as the unique features of these dramas, including costumes, props and symbolic representations that audiences may identify with. In the case of Seattle, it became clear in the planning stages of the demonstration that elements of theater would be essential in symbolically and visually representing ideologies, and sending spectacular images to viewers worldwide.

Like many protests of the sixties, it was also understood that by using theatrical techniques and dramatic visuals, the media would have more dramatic images to project to viewers. In the vein of Abbie Hoffman and the Greenpeace activists, the Seattle
contingent understood that it was creating a spectacle that would be televised. Their preparation, then, was partly to lure the media in and get the spin that they wanted on the event. They understood the importance of visual and symbolic representation in agit-prop theater like their predecessors in decades earlier. I propose that the techniques of agit-prop theater were essential in creating such an efficacious demonstration, and were, in fact, taught to demonstrators for months prior to the summit.

The second category that is useful to an analysis of the anti-WTO summit is witness theatre. Cohen-Cruz says that witness theatre brings to the forefront a social issue "that one does not know how to change but must at least acknowledge" (5). Again, she mentions that the site of the performance is directly related to the event or conflict being contested or observed. She says that witness theater forces responsibility on the viewer who is witnessing an injustice. The observer may not have to act upon their newfound knowledge, but they will no longer remain ignorant. She cites Greenpeace and The Church Ladies for Choice as two groups who are effectively bringing theater to the site of the conflict, and by doing so, are garnering much media and public attention. It is easy to apply this category of theater to the demonstrations in Seattle when we realize that many of the groups Cohen-Cruz highlights were present at the WTO summit, and they brought with them their strategies for garnering media attention and bringing theater to the site of the conflict, as well as into the hearts and homes of many observers.

Lastly, Cohen-Cruz's category of utopian theater suggests that participants enact an alternative version of life and social organization to demonstrate that the status quo is capable of being subverted. Much like Schechner's version of carnival, this type of theater contains elements of celebration in their critique of social norms. Again, the site
of the performance is essential, as demonstrators literally take over the space being occupied by the dominant culture and claim it as their own. By moving in on this territory, the performers are suggesting that the new occupation of the space is in itself a transformation of the status quo.

Again, like Schechner, this author points out that important to these demonstrations is not the period in which the demonstrations occur, but the level of transformation achieved when the demonstration is finished and the space once again returns to its previous occupants. I argue that the celebratory or carnivalesque elements observed in Seattle are one of the key factors in capturing attention and gaining momentum for the cause. In the Chapter Five of this thesis, I suggest that in the years following the Seattle summit momentum has not been lost. It is clear that although a complete inversion of social norms has not occurred and the WTO remains intact, their practices now fall under heavy public scrutiny, and their meetings have been met with large-scale resistance ever since. This is social transformation, an acknowledgement of a schism, or utopia unfolding as a result of a well carried out social drama.

The theories laid out here will serve to provide a backdrop for the Seattle demonstrations. In order to analyze a specific event, it is necessary that one be able to place it in a larger context. Thus, the relevancy of the works mentioned about globalization become clear. Current literature about the global economy serves to frame the arguments against it. One cannot understand the desperate cries of the demonstrators in Seattle or elsewhere if one does not understand the system which that demonstration sought to fight against. Additionally, it is necessary to lay out the establishment of the World Trade Organization as an appendage of globalization; the arm that dictates
specifically what policies will be enacted and on whose behalf. Lastly, the performance
theory illuminates the ways in which the Seattle contingent utilized current
communication media and theatrical techniques to most effectively argue their point.
The following chapter will highlight the efficacy of the demonstrations in Seattle as they
illustrate the applicability of the ideas of Victor Turner, Jan Cohen-Cruz, and Richard
Schechner.
Chapter Three

Street Theater in Seattle: Performance Theory in Action

*Direct theatre is always staged as, or ends in, swirls, vortexes of activities, people in self-expressive dress or undress, moving in spirals and circles without easy to locate centers or heads. Multivocal and multifocus, a popular deconstructing of hierarchy, the enacting of small scale dramas and guerrilla theatre events...*

_Richard Schechner-

_The Future of Ritual_

*And the Winner for best costume goes to...The Sierra Club's Turtles!!*

_Member of the Rainforest Action Network-

_Salon.com_

The previous chapter sought to contextualize the demonstration in Seattle by placing it in a larger global framework. It has been discussed that the World Trade Organization, like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, serve as apparatus in this larger system. Once the structure of globalization becomes clear, and the role of the WTO within that structure, we can begin to look at Seattle as one event in the history of anti-globalization movement. When we view Seattle in isolation of other episodes in the movement, as I will do in this chapter, several key themes emerge. These
features and functions of the demonstration help to illustrate the use of innovative and efficacious performance and communication methodologies in a modern protest. This section looks at the performative and communicative techniques utilized by the protesters to create a mediated spectacle. It applies the theories of Victor Turner, Richard Schechner and Jan Cohen-Cruz to the Seattle demonstrations, noting the ways in which performance theory blends with real life. Turner’s four stages of social drama are applied to the Seattle protests, as I lay out the chronology of the breach, crisis, redress, and reintegration phases, as well as his concept of star groups emerging out of a social drama. Jan-Cohen Cruz’s categories of Witness and Utopian theater are examined, with features of this demonstration being placed in each group. Lastly, Richard Schechner’s ideas about direct street theater are explored here, as I demonstrate the performative and highly aesthetic techniques utilized by the demonstrators to create a visual and symbolic representation of cause. Schechner uses the term carnival to describe a darkly celebratory method of subverting social norms and transforming both performer and audience. Schechner locates the importance of direct theater in transformation, and I explore the transformative and efficacious qualities surrounding Seattle.

The aforementioned performative techniques created a surreal street drama more effective than any of the last thirty years. In radical theater, activists are living out their ideologies. Demonstrators allow a drama to unfold that presents the world as they would like to see it. This theater is most powerful when its rhetoric is combined with aesthetics, when words are accompanied by movement, costume, and props. The demonstrators of the WTO, under the umbrella of the Direct Action Network, which produces ideas and guidelines for agit-prop theater, were encouraged to make their
performance as vivid as possible, to create a carnivalesque atmosphere that would present the most stunning visual images possible for brief mediated reflections to be carried around the world.

Victor Turner

Performance theorist Victor Turner refers to these staged spectacles as social dramas. In his seminal work *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors* the author lays out a framework for protests that includes four stages. As previously mentioned, he writes that the *breach* is the stage where a violation of social norms has occurred, which escalates the drama into a *crisis* period. Participants in the drama attempt to *redress* the issues through pragmatic or symbolic means, leaving the drama’s resolution as either a *re-* of social norms or an *acknowledgement of an irreparable schism*.

The four phases that Turner uses are evident in the demonstrations of the protesters in Seattle. The phases can be applied to any particular social drama, but their applicability will vary depending on the perspective of the observer. Because this thesis is written from the perspective of the demonstrators, my interpretation of events will be different from one who witnessed or sympathized with the points of view of the members of the World Trade Organization.

The breach that occurred in the minds of the participants was the attempt on the part of the WTO to make economic and environmental decisions without the consent of the public they are representing, and further, to hold their first summit in a hotbed of political and social activism. Again, it must be emphasized that another perspective in the dominant culture would suggest that the breach in this situation was the behavior of
the activists themselves. Long before demonstrators began planning this event, however, social norms had been violated, or breached, with the establishment of the World Trade Organization. Even more so, this breach continued with the WTO’s history of poor representation and inclusion of these groups in their decision making process.

The breach phase in Turner’s theory cannot be reduced to a singular event fixed in time. It began, one could suggest, with the very formation of the World Trade Organization in 1995. The WTO was established to replace the former existing policy on trade, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Many saw the GATT as a well functioning framework for world trade. Environmentalists, economists, and human rights activists were concerned that the establishment of the WTO served to protect the interests of the wealthiest of nations; the United States, Germany, Japan, and a few others, and their corporate interests. Lori Wallach and Michelle Sforza, authors of *The WTO: Five Years of Reasons to Resist Corporate Globalization*, write that the implementation of the WTO would “subjugate core interest needs – such as accountable governance, environmental protection, health and safety, and human and labor rights – to corporate interests” (13).

The breach was elevated to a new level, however, when the WTO began instituting policies that oppressed people of third world countries and continuously ignored environmental concerns. One of the primary breaches that the WTO has participated in is its elimination of any restrictions placed on the free flow of trade, which results in a country’s inability to “set standards, express values, or determine what they do or don’t support” in the words of activist and author Paul Hawken. Thus, the author says, “Child labor, prison labor, forced labor and substandard wages and working
conditions cannot be used as a basis to discriminate against goods” (Danaher 17). This has incensed the labor community as well as human rights activists worldwide. Then there are the environmental breaches, perhaps the most well publicized policies of the World Trade Organizations poor track record. Never in the history of the five-year-old organization had it voted in favor of the environment over corporate interests. This included a well-publicized decision not to allow the United States to block the imports of shrimp caught in nets that capture and drown more than 150,000 sea turtles every year, among others. Author Janet Thomas writes, “In its few short years as a world governing body, the WTO has issued 175 rulings to settle disputes between countries. These have all favored corporate interests at the expense of the environment, labor rights, animal protection, family farms, and freedom of choice” (53).

On the agenda for the Seattle ministerial was a proposal that the European nations could no longer block or demand labels on genetically modified food. Additionally, according to Hawken, there were proposals to privatize all of the world’s water. A “Global Free Logging” proposal was on the books that would increase deforestation by 4 percent a year. Also on the platform for Seattle were negotiations to broaden the reach of the WTO to include health and education. These breaches so infuriated Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO’s) that they responded by planning a demonstration that would potentially shut down the ministerial and prohibit these policies from being discussed, and further, implemented.

Perhaps the final breach that occurred in the minds of this public was the decision on the part of the World Trade Organization to host its summit in Seattle. The Pacific Northwest has long been a hotbed of social and political activism. Seattle is home to a
large contingent of progressive thinkers, and has long been a haven for independent artists, musicians, and media watchdogs. Many NGO’s make Seattle their home base, or have strong contingents in their membership that organize out of the Emerald City. Seattle is also the home of Boeing and Microsoft, whose respective CEO’s Phil Condit and Bill Gates were co-hosting the event. The feeling was that the WTO were in essence asking for trouble by bringing their corporate interests to a city full of vocal independents and trained activists. As author Jeffrey St. Clair writes, “It was the best and the worst of places to convene the WTO, [...] On this week the city was so tightly wound that it seemed primed to crack.” (Cockburn et al 13). The location of the performance, which is crucial to its outcome, was already prepared to welcome a demonstration of this magnitude.

Activist Janet Thomas quotes sea turtle creator Ben White in The Battle in Seattle, who is indicative of the sentiments being expressed more than ten months prior to the arrival of the WTO. He says, “There were about forty of us grizzled old activists. We looked at each other in amazement. ‘Can you believe they’re coming here? They don’t know what they’re in for.’” She continues by explaining that Seattle is not “a complacent part of the country” and that it has a “long and illustrious history of activism in labor rights and environmental protection, as well as in the anti-war and anti-nuclear movements.” One of the striking contradictions in Seattle is its eco-friendly and politically aware population that lives in a city whose economy thrives from the multinational organizations like Starbucks and REI who make it their home base. This must have led WTO organizers, thinks Thomas, to believing that these corporate heads
were “an accurate reflection of the psyche of Seattle” (20). They would soon find out that they could not have been more wrong.

When the breach continues to widen, as the WTO-opponents believe that it did for years, the social drama escalates to a crisis phase. During the crisis portion of this social drama members became aware of a communal identity and quickly determined which side of the mounting struggle they were on. At this point, the members of a community decide whether or not they will take action based on their newly discovered identity. In future chapters the formation and maintenance of coalitions based on these identities will be discussed. As I previously mentioned, crisis is the phase in a social drama where individuals determine their own role in an unfolding spectacle. They begin to articulate this role, particularly in the anti-globalization movement, through protest.

The crisis, like the breach, was unfolding long before November 30th, 1999, the official first day of the summit. If the crisis is the phase where identities are formed, then it is essential to discuss the rising tide of anti-WTO sentiment that developed more than a year prior to the ministerial. Like the breach, the crisis is not a singular event fixed in time, but an unfolding phase in a social drama. This stage began with outrage over perceived injustices, and culminated with the enactment of this outrage via performance and theatre.

The demonstration was being planned more than a year prior to the event. The crisis was escalating in town hall meetings that took place in churches, headquarters for various NGO’s, on the training fields for organizations like Earth First! and the Ruckus Society, on the internet via the Direct Action Network, and in private homes where costumes were being sewn and pamphlets were being designed. It is hard to view such
organized events and meticulous planning as crisis, but it is important to see that the careful plotting of strategies and locations for the protests signaled the end of the breach phase and the beginning of active participation by individuals who could no longer sit in silence.

Identities, many of which had long been formed, were being articulated as early as February 1999, at the first organizing meeting for the protests. At this point, however, individual ways of thinking began to evolve into communal identities. Ralph Nader’s Public Citizen, headed by Mike Dolan, had organized a town meeting, which ended up being standing room only, an indication of what was to come. Those in attendance expressed concern about health care, Third World Debt, animal welfare, human rights, labor standards and a plethora of other issues. Says Ben White, “What do we call ourselves? The organizing group has representatives from all over the activist spectrum. Earth First!ers, organic farmers, labor representatives, academicians, university students, puppet makers, gay and lesbian activists, peace workers, and yes- anarchists” (Thomas, 21). Finding a common thread in these varying identities would be essential. In the following weeks, another meeting was held that determined the goals of the protesters, who decided not to attempt to create changes in the WTO, but to halt their talks completely. Although many were hoping to ultimately dismantle the organization, their immediate task would be to prohibit the summit from taking place. These meetings continued weekly, crisis escalating and lines being drawn, identities forming and rules of procedure being established, for more than thirty-six weeks.

Their identities as individual protesters were shifting. During the ten months of planning that took place in warehouses and town halls, the activists shed a bit of their
individual interests to incorporate the newly formed identity of an anti-WTO protester. This is not to suggest that each did not represent their singular causes, but out of the unity achieved between these individual groups a “star group” began to emerge. Turner defines a star group as the individuals or groups who take the most responsibility for upholding community identity and challenging the status quo. A star group was forming that would provide a voice and representation for all of its participants.

The star group was led by several key individuals and organizing factions. As previously mentioned, Mike Dolan of Public Citizen was a key figure in the planning and orchestrating of events. He consulted with members of city council, with police chief Norm Stamper, and with Seattle mayor Paul Schell to create zones for demonstrations, and to apply for the permits needed to host meetings in sports arenas, parks, and community centers. He effectively presented a clear picture to government and police officials of the type of peaceful protests that could be expected. He was instrumental in organizing the who’s what’s and where’s of the demonstration, and he organized the large and peaceful marches through downtown Seattle on November 30th (N30). More than any other figure, Mike Dolan emerged as the leader of the Seattle star group with his creation of the Citizens Trade Campaign, a broad coalition of groups representing nearly seven hundred international groups who all joined prior to the summit. In essence, this was Mike Dolan’s war.

Sally Soriano, also a member of Public Citizen, was a very vocal member of the steering committee for the People for Fair Trade, which became the moniker that emerged from those early meetings, a name that was chosen over “The WTO Welcome Wagon.” It is Soriano, a resident of Seattle, who was present at every early meeting, and
who organized and informed locals, calling them to action many months before the
summit. Many attribute her creation of the “People for Fair Trade” label with
successfully uniting such oppositional forces to find commonality in a cause. Thomas
writes, “The name claiming was only part of the sleight-of-mind movement that
contributed to the quickly seeded grass-roots movement that grew into such a whopping
groundswell of support” (21).

Additionally, Doctor Michael Fox, the premier expert on bioethics at the Humane
Society, waged the campaign against genetically modified foods, biotechnology, and
animal research. His presence was instrumental in creating commonalities between many
of the groups. Says White, “Food linked it all together, food linked us all together.”
Thomas goes on to write, “Suddenly environmental rights, human rights, and animal
rights were all in the same corner, and there was no looking back” (22).

These are just a few of the vocal participants whose presence was instrumental in
creating a star group for the activists. Nolan, Soriano, and Fox were leaders whose
interest in fighting the oppressive tactics of the WTO overpowered their individual
interests and allowed them to become leaders in this struggle. John Sweeney, the
president of the AFL-CIO, James Hoffa, the president of the International Brotherhood of
Teamsters, and Fred Miller, the program director of Peace Action Washington also
emerged as vital figures for demonstrators to look up to. Author and environmentalist
Paul Hawken spoke at forums prior to the summit, as did corporate-culture critic Michael
Moore. These individuals worked closely in conjunction with one another, as well as the
Direct Action Network, who would provide peaceful demonstration strategies and
necessitate that participants adhere to strict codes of conduct and rules of procedure.
A star group was forming, with visible leaders and organizers who were
determined to form one united front of identity to fight what they saw as the world’s
greatest threat to environmental and human freedom. As Turner writes, the star group is
led by those who “develop to an art the rhetoric of persuasion and influence, who know
how and when to apply pressure and force, and who are most sensitive to the factors of
legitimacy” (72). By this, Turner means that there are those within a system who will
emerge as dominant members. These star group leaders will be the primary forces in
guiding the others in a movement in a particular direction, steering them toward the most
important issues. In a typical and smaller scale demonstration, there are a small number
of individuals who handle the responsibility of media representation, police interaction,
and the leaders of the opposition. Here, in Seattle, with more than 500 interest groups
present, the star group that emerged was the united front of these protesters with several
visible leaders from nearly every faction.

With identities formed and leaders clearly in place, the crisis was escalating for
months. On November 26th and 27th, the International Forum on Globalization hosted
forums to sold out crowds while the WTO representatives silently arrived. On November
28th, another forum was held entitled “The WTO and the Global War System.” Jubilee
2000, the moniker given to the cause of eradicating third world debt, held a prayer
service for thousands at the St. James Cathedral. And the tension continued to build.

The crisis phase in Turner’s social drama had been gaining momentum for ten
months. Now, on the morning of November 29th, action was finally going to be taken. It
is nearly impossible to chronicle the events of a demonstration that included so many
different marches and smaller protests. Nearly every contingent present had a different
agenda and a different starting point. However, there are several significant locations and events that stand out as having shaped the outcome of the summit. Small and peaceful demonstrations began cropping up during the afternoon on November 29th (N29). Media outlets began interviewing the participants, but the members of the WTO still remained invisible.

The momentum of the crisis to climax began calmly on the evening of November 29th. Designated as Environment day, Monday’s festivities included small marches by the symbolic sea turtles, who were joined in a show of solidarity by labor unions and longshoremen. They chanted optimistically, “The people united will never be divided!” The march ended with speeches by Carl Pope, the director of the Sierra Club, and Brent Blackwelder, the director of Friends of the Earth. Afterwards, French Farmer and environmentalist Jose Bove welcomed a vocal contingent to a protest outside of McDonalds, denouncing the United State’s policy on biogenetically enhanced foods. The first acts of violence occurred here, when protesters stormed the fast food icon, breaking windows and rousting out customers.

On the other side of town, the Jubilee 2000 group set the stage by hosting an interfaith ceremony at the First United Methodist Church. The standing room only crowd then moved outside, where a march in support of canceling the debt had been scheduled. Jubilee members had worked diligently with city officials to cordon off a circle around the Exhibition Hall and the Kingdome stadium area. A crowd estimated at fifteen thousand joined hands and encircled the venue, where some WTO members were holding an informal introductory meeting. They chanted “We’re here, we’re wet, cancel the debt” as the rain poured. John Sweeney, California Congresswoman Maxine Waters,
Bishop Vincent Warner and other notable star group leaders were allowed to symbolically close the circle closest to the exhibition hall. After the crowd dispersed, many attended the People's Gala at the Seattle Center, where former California State Senator Tom Hayden spoke. Following a weekend full of teach-ins and rallies, the demonstrators went back to their homes, their hotel rooms, or their makeshift "boot camps" and prepared for what would be the single largest demonstration in U.S. history since the civil rights marches in the 1960's. Optimism ran high, but the crisis would reach its climax on November 30th.

By seven a.m. on N30, the First United Methodist Church was already full to capacity with costumed individuals ready to take to the streets. The church served as a home base for much of the week's events, as a starting point for marches, a meeting point for groups, and later, a safe haven of retreat for victims of violence. This was the launching pad for the Humane Society and the animal rights groups, as well as those representing biotechnology and food safety standards. At the University of Washington and Seattle Community College, students and academics were preparing to march. Denny Park was the unofficial starting point for environmental groups. There, Direct Action Network organizers were preparing nonviolent protesters for the events of the day, confiscating identification to clog up court systems for those individuals who volunteered to be arrested. The group also distributed adult diapers for those who would be rendered unable to move as a result of lockdown processes during the protest. The labor unions were holding a rally that would receive more than 30,000 people, which would culminate in a march downtown. Other groups met at the Space Needle, at homeless shelters, women's shelters, smaller churches and schools. All of these groups, with their varying
platforms and locations, would converge upon the convention center, the site of the WTO ministerial.

Much of the difficulty in describing the climax of crisis is that so many events were happening concurrently. While the labor unions organized, demonstrators downtown were already being gassed and sprayed with rubber bullets. Environmentalists, led by the Direct Action Network’s training in non-violent protest, formed a sit-in and human barricade surrounding the convention center, effectively cordonning off the area and disabling delegates who couldn’t get inside. Labor unions, led by James Hoffa Jr. and John Sweeney, had decided to forgo the traditional route and avoid the downtown area. In a deal struck with WTO delegates, this would allow unions a Wednesday meeting with President Clinton. By the time the unions began their march, their participants were split over this decision. Many decided to join the protesters surrounding the convention center, while others marched peacefully to preordained “safe routes” downtown. Police and riot squads met those who attempted to get close to the throngs of demonstrators near the center of the action, and the violence escalated.

At this point, I argue that the crisis moves into Turner’s redress phase, whereby those in power attempt to restore the status quo. This can be done through symbolic means, but in the case of Seattle it is clear that the redressive actions taken by the dominant culture were more pragmatic and tactical. Later, many observers would suggest that the redressive actions on the part of police and government were not pragmatic, but instead, extreme and unnecessary. The intervention attempts by government officials and police are still a source of contention for those who were present. The efforts of those in power to restore order and return things to ‘normal’ seem excessive and brutal when
reviewed. Although demonstrators had applied for permits months prior, and in spite of the fact that the Police Chief and Mayor both agreed to the staging of the spectacle, once they realized that the summit was effectively being shut down with the entrances to the convention center blocked, they responded with full force.

Turner explains redressive action by saying, "In order to limit the spread of crisis, certain adjutative and redressive mechanisms, informal or formal, institutionalized or ad hoc, are swiftly brought into operation by leading or structurally representative members of the disturbed social system" (40). Redressive action began with urgent phone calls to Mayor Paul Schell by representatives of delegates who were unable to enter the building. One of these was Secretary of State Madeline Albright, who was furious at being confined to her hotel room. At this point, police, who had stood by patiently the previous day, even as Bove and his group stormed McDonalds, were called into action.

Jeffrey St. Clair, who was present in Seattle, recounts the violence that escalated between protesters and police in his book 5 Days that Shook the World. The first of the violence erupted when a group of environmentalists took control of an intersection with a non-violent sit-in. Musicians played and people danced in the street surrounding the sit-in. St. Clair says that riot police gave demonstrators a fifteen-minute warning. He writes:

About ten minutes later, a Peacekeeper vehicle arrived, more cops clinging to its side. The back of the truck was popped open and dozens of tear gas canisters were unloaded. And then, very suddenly, a tear gas can was launched into the sitting demonstrators [...] then seconds later another one. And then five or six more of them were fired into the crowd. (25)
He continues, saying that when disoriented protesters stood up, police instantly assaulted them while those in attendance watched the spray of rubber bullets aimed at the unarmed. In an echo of the sentiments of the 1968 democratic convention protesters who reminded often abusive police that their actions were being observed by more than the immediate audience, the Seattle protesters watched the excessive force while chanting, “The whole world is watching.”

At the intersection of 6th street and University Avenue, protesters locked together with arm casts, unable to move or evacuate the area. After a warning, the police dispersed more tear gas, pepper spray and rubber bullets and later attempted to move the students with their batons. Two of the protesters were knocked unconscious, according to St. Clair, but the group did not move. Enduring nearly two hours of beatings, the battered group held the intersection while the police moved on.

The front lines were held by Direct Action “warriors” according to St. Clair. These included those skilled in theatrics and non-violent protest methods, including lockdown. Earth First!ers, members of the Rainforest Action Network, the Ruckus Society, and even anarchists were those that held the area closest to the convention center, and nearest to the violence. As the crowds from their various starting points descended upon the heart of the struggle, the police became desperate. The redressive tactics continued as the King Country sheriffs’ department was called in to disperse concussion grenades. At this point, St. Clair describes a lull in the redress. None of the protesters knew it, but the police had run out of gas, and had sent a supply plane to Montana to pick up 3,300 pounds more. Once again armed, the police assaulted protesters with a vengeance.
St. Clair describes the rapidity with which the redressive efforts took place. Within hours, at 3:24 in the afternoon, the Mayor of Seattle declared a civic emergency. A seven p.m. curfew was imposed and the Mayor ordered police to clear the streets of all protesters. Within hours, cites the author, “The city had banned the sale, purchase, and possession of gas masks” (31). The police and riot squads began storming their way through the streets in an attempt to restore order, arresting hundreds and assaulting hundreds more.

The level of brutality exerted upon protesters shocked Janet Thomas, also an eyewitness to the crisis and a participant. She has firsthand knowledge that all of the direct action participants were prepared to go through the arrest process and later, the court system as the police, judiciary and governmental systems attempted to redress the crisis. She says that she believed many young people, particularly students, had been inspired by anti-war protests of the sixties, and had taken their non-violent protests cues from parents and other activists. She quotes activist Sarah Joy Staude, who said of the redressive violence:

We were prepared to be confronted by police. We were prepared to understand that they are the authority and that we were going against authority by choosing to attempt to stop the delegates from reaching the talks. What we couldn’t understand, and what was terrifying, was the brutality and the urgency and the value placed on these talks over the well being of people [...] what city police forces have become is a fascist force serving and protecting business, and not the people (Thomas 86).
By November 30th, the permits for the demonstrations had been rescinded. Those willing to participate arrived downtown to find that 25 square blocks in the center of the city had been designated a 'demonstration free zone'. The mayor allowed only WTO delegates, residents, owners and workers in to the downtown area. The author calls this redressive action a violation of the U.S. constitution. St. Clair cites a Supreme Court Case, Collins v. Jordan, which forces local governments to allow protests to continue in an area near enough to be seen and heard by their intended audience (32). WTO officials persuaded the mayor to suppress all acts of civil disobedience, including non-violent speech. Police censorship became the norm as St. Clair says the police “were told to bar any visible signs of protest against the WTO or dissent against police tactics, including signs, leaflets, buttons and even T-Shirts” (33). Logistically, on a pragmatic level, the redressive efforts were successful. The demonstrations were stopped.

The final phase of Turner’s social drama is the reintegration of the disturbed social group or an acknowledgement of an irreparable schism. Although one can argue that the status quo was returned to normal, this was only a temporary feature. When looking at Seattle as an isolated event, it is apparent that the WTO summit, although delayed for a day, did take place. However, Turner also allows for recognition of an irreparable schism between the contesting parties. When reviewing the events of Seattle as one incident in a continued timeline of an anti-globalization movement it becomes apparent that there was no resolution in this conflict.

That the summit actually did continue as planned is not an indication of the reintegration of the disturbed group into the status quo. The World Trade Organization carried out business as usual for several days in Seattle, while frustrated demonstrators
waited in jail, or were held at bay on the outskirts of town. But there was no resolution to the conflict. The two sides never came to an understanding, there was no allowance for the opinions of the opposition, and there was no compromise. More than that, there was no return to "normal."

The rereintegration phase seeks to negotiate the resolution of the crisis. Both parties would acknowledge that no amends have been made, that the gap between the contesting groups remains wide and difficult. It seems that as opposed to returning things to "normal," the success of the demonstrations was located in the momentum they created for future demonstrations opposing the WTO. The success was located in transformation of the system. The World Trade Organization may remain in power, but since Seattle have been unable to meet without protests. The fact that the World Trade Organization, the IMF, The World Bank, and others continue to remain in power is an indication of their dominance over world affairs. Dismantling these institutions seems nearly impossible. Their power over planetary economics, politics, and cultural affairs is insidious and often, invincible. However, there is intense interest in and skepticism about the actions of these organizations. These multilateral institutions have not met in secrecy since. There has been vocal and well publicized opposition at every ministerial. When Turner says that in the reintegration phase there is a return to the status quo, then he means a return to the way that things were. But things will never be the same, for the World Trade Organization, or for the anti-globalization movement. Instead, I argue that the social drama is continuing to unfold in Prague and Washington D.C. the following year, Genoa, Italy in 2001, and most recently, New York City.
Much of performance theory illuminates the ways in which street theater can be used to challenge dominant ideologies and create change. Turner's stages of social drama are effective in illuminating the chronology of a demonstration. However, there are other theories that distinguish specific types of radical theater and their potential for efficacy. Since the establishment of radical theater groups and guerrilla organizations in the 1960's, such as the aforementioned El Teatro Campesino and the San Francisco Mime Troupe, performers have experimented with ways that theater and protest can be used in conjunction with one another. The following two theorists offer insight into types of protest theater and their value.

Jan Cohen-Cruz

Jan Cohen-Cruz defines and describes five different types of staged spectacles designed to change or invert social norms in her book, Radical Street Performance. This work offers essays from important theorists who analyze the use of agit-prop, witness, integration, utopian, and traditional theater techniques by various groups. Encompassing some of the ideas of Schechner and Turner, she offers a definition of radical street performance, saying, “By radical I refer to acts that question or re-envision ingrained social arrangements of power. Street signals theatrics that take place in public by-ways with minimal constraints on access. Performance here indicates expressive behavior intended for public viewing” (1). She says that the goal of radical street theater is to transport reality into something more ideal.

The author also explains that the effectiveness of radical street theater is its use of the location as a primary element in creating transformation. She says that often the
theater takes place at precisely the site that the performers want changed or negotiated. This is much aligned with Schechner, who also argues that essential to the transformation and the efficacy of a performance is its use of the street as the stage. Both Schechner and Cohen-Cruz agree that the street or any large public space actually and symbolically becomes the theater where identities are formed and where the status quo is challenged.

Of Cohen-Cruz’s five types of radical street theater, most demonstrations of the last century fall into the agit-prop category. However, agit-prop has become almost an umbrella term in defining protest. She writes, “Agit-prop theater attempts to mobilize people around partisan points of view that have been simplified and theatricalized to capture by-passers’ attention directly or by way of the media. Popularly identified with the whole domain of street theatre, this represents but one approach to the form” (5). Although the type of demonstration witnessed in Seattle is typically defined as agit-prop theater, according to the author’s criteria the demonstration serves other functions as well. As protests take on unique characteristics, we see that they integrate other aspects of performance.

The utopian theater that Cohen-Cruz refers to is aligned with Richard Schechner’s ideas of the idealized being embodied in the carnivalesque. When people protest, they also celebrate, and these celebrations give both audience and protester a vision of what life could be like - what it should be like. When groups of people unite to protest, they are suggesting an alternative to the present. Their performance is a display of the alternatives. Schechner refers to Tiananmen Square and the Vietnam War protests as such displays. Cohen-Cruz cites Michael Bristol, who writes, “Utopia is a critique of the
official history of a society...Carnival is an old and persistent way of acting out utopia.”

(167).

There is very little difference between Cohen-Cruz’s idea of utopian theater and Richard Schechner’s theory of direct theater. Cohen-Cruz includes in her anthology an essay from Schechner’s work *The Future of Ritual* entitled “The Street is the Stage.” She includes Schechner’s examples of Tiananmen Square, anti-Vietnam protests, and celebration at the dismantling of the Berlin Wall as examples of utopian theater. She writes, “Utopian theater is the enactment of another vision of social organization, temporarily replacing life as it is, and often performed with public participation” (5). It becomes apparent upon reading this that the two authors are aligned in their ideas of the celebratory and carnivalesque as having efficacious qualities.

There were many examples of utopian theater present in Seattle. Several of the theatrical elements were mentioned in the previous section that applied Schechner’s theory of carnival. There are some, however, which stand out among others as having a quality of idealism that embodies Cohen-Cruz’s theory of utopian theater. Cohen-Cruz writes, “When one needs most to disturb the peace, street performance creates visions of what society might be, and arguments against what it is” (6).

Author Janet Thomas describes many of these incidents when she refers to the week prior to the summit. A classic example of idealism in play was the People’s Tribunal held at the King County Labor Temple. For two days, participants enacted life as they would like to see it when they played out the case of the WTO. In this mock trial, participants charged the WTO with “multinational crimes” and role played as attorneys, “judge, and jury” (Thomas 26).
An additional inversion of social norms brought comic relief to the upcoming week’s events while creating a vision of the world as the participants wished it could be, and mocked the world as it is. In a classic example of utopian theater, an anonymous group altered the front and back pages of Seattle’s morning newspaper. Thomas writes that on Wednesday, November 24th, “10,000 copies of the morning paper, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, were revisited in their coin dispensers in the early morning hours, where they became the Seattle Post-Intelligence.” Identical looking pages in the main section replaced the originals, but the new text was drastically different. Thomas reports that the headline read, “Congress Scraps One F22. Decides to build 20,000 schools instead; Mumia Freed. Tens of thousands celebrate in the streets; Jordan gives Nike the Boot” (131). She cites articles about Boeing’s impending move overseas, about underpollution concerns by the world’s leading economists, and about the chemical company Mosanto’s (one of the chief targets of activists in Seattle) bid to patent the food chain. Thomas says of the satire, “It was a brilliant piece of anarchism that was at once very funny and very provocative. The facts about issues were presented within the context of parody, but it was a painful parody that sidestepped satire for something closer to home” (132).

It becomes evident when reading her descriptions of the multiple types of street theatre that the Seattle demonstrations meet the standards for witness theater as well. She writes, “Witness theater publicly illuminates a social act that one does not know how to change but must at least acknowledge. The site of such performance usually relates directly to the event being scrutinized” (5). Having already stressed Schechner and
Cohen-Cruz’s emphasis on the site of the struggle, it is vital here to note the ways in which groups utilize dramatic techniques at the source of the problem itself.

In assessing the efficacy of the Seattle protests one must acknowledge the importance of the space overtaken by the demonstrators. The site of the struggle needed to be immediate to the conflict. As with radical street theater groups that perform in front of abortion clinics, the proximity to the source of the conflict was paramount. That demonstrators took over Tiananmen Square, the seat of the Chinese government, is much different than if they had marched in the streets of downtown Beijing. Celebrating atop the no longer iron Berlin Wall has a more startling effect than celebrating miles away. The visual is more startling, the target of the oppression more immediate. The effect of a demonstration that took the issues to Washington, or to the home of any other seat of government would not have created such immediate symbolic imagery, and would not have had the same capacity for transformation. As Schechner says, and Cohen-Cruz reiterates, the street becomes the stage. What would the demonstrations have done to the WTO if they had been held at a safe distance and the summit had continued as planned? One of the successes of the Seattle event was the way in which the demonstrators utilized the space and stopped the progress of events. Part of the success of Seattle is that the World Trade Organization left the week without a clear agenda for the next round of talks, and without having arrived at decisions on several important issues. This all was a result of successful transformation of space by the protesters, who effectively took back the streets of Seattle from those in power. This transformation of space led to a transformation in the ongoing real world story.
Greenpeace, one of the many environmental groups who participated in Seattle, is well known for its use of location when creating a staged spectacle. The performance is most efficacious, according to the group's protocol, when it occurs at the site of the struggle and incorporates the most dramatic visuals possible. Steve Loper, former Action Director for Greenpeace USA, writes; "Greenpeace believes that image is an all important thing. The direct actions call attention to the issues we're involved in. We put a different point of view out that usually ends up on the front page of the paper. We've called attention to facts that the general public wasn't aware of. If we just did the research and the lobbying and came out with a report it would probably be on the 50th page of the paper" (Cohen-Cruz 68).

Greenpeace, Earth First!, P.E.T.A. and the Rainforest Action Network are environmental and animal rights groups who believe in taking the confrontation to the source of the conflict. They were responsible for some of the most startling images to emerge at the WTO summit, bringing their experience in high-risk escapades on the ocean and in the forests to downtown Seattle. Says author Steve Durland, "Like the best guerrilla theater, the daring escapades and visual images take a backseat to results in the Greenpeace resume." He continues, citing Loper, "In some cases we do a protest and there's too much publicity on the protest itself - how high up we were, how we got there, how cold it was - so we defeat ourselves" (Cohen-Cruz 71).

In spite of this, these groups agree that transforming the location of the conflict for the performance is essential. Witness theatre creates a spectacle for an audience in which the conflict and the conflict resolution are determined at the site of the performance. Says Loper, "When you go on the property of the company that's doing the
damage and actually drape your feelings from their property, it's a very distinctive defeat for them. The company is psychologically towering over those who would oppose it and this is like a slap in the face. It's motivating people to act” (Cohen-Cruz 72) The groups who utilize this type of witness theater pride themselves on their capacity to perform stunts like hanging banners, scaling buildings, and confronting their opponents directly. Their visibility is contingent upon such actions. The outcome of the conflict in this type of theater is largely determined by their conduct during the confrontation.

Richard Schechner

Richard Schechner offers a similar spin on social drama in his book The Future of Ritual. Schechner refers to street dramas as possessing a carnivalesque capacity, whereby individuals take to the streets to invert social norms by means of celebration, utilizing theatrical tools like masks and costumes. He calls these revolutions “public direct theatre” and refers to the importance of the transformation of space as a primary component in heightening the drama. As both Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin alluded to in the 1960's, the street literally becomes the stage. Schechner often refers to these two protest forerunners and their usage of direct street theater and media. He writes:

Acting out forbidden themes is risky so people don masks and costumes. They protest, often by means of farce and parody, against what is oppressive, ridiculous, and outrageous. For one to join the many as a part(ner), is not just a sexy act, it is also a socially and politically generative activity [...] such playing challenges official culture’s claims to authority, stability, sobriety, immutability, and immortality (46).
To ‘play’ is to don another role, to experiment with an identity, and to visualize life as one would like it to be. Children pretend to be something they’re not when they play. When adults play, they often act out darker and riskier themes than their daily lives would normally allow them to. Hence the notion of carnival. Under the guise of celebration, people take chances with their identities. In taking chances with their own identities, they question authority and challenge the dominant social ideology.

When staging an act of direct public theater for an audience, the hope of the performer is to create change in the dominant social structure. Schechner refers to this goal with his notions of Carnival. He writes, “Revolutions in their incipient period are carnivalesque” (47). In other words, many long-term changes have begun with one act of theatrics. A revolution doesn’t necessarily begin with an act of violence, but often with a less forceful spectacle. Tiananmen Square, and the anti-war protests in Vietnam began with celebration and festivity in the streets. These acts of carnival did not reduce the potential power of the movement. In fact, they did end up becoming full-scale attempts at transformation.

This transformative type of street theater aspires to change all participants involved, both audience members and performers alike. A primary characteristic visible in the demonstrations in Seattle is the festivity of the costumes and puppetry used by the demonstrators. Schechner writes, “When people go into the streets en masse, they are celebrating life’s fertile possibilities. They put on masks and costumes, erect and wave banners, and construct effigies not merely to disguise or embellish their ordinary selves, or to flaunt the outrageous, but also to act out the multiplicity each human life is” (46). Schechner specifically acknowledges and emphasizes the importance of the
carnivalesque in the performance as creating a desired result. According to Schechner, the efficacy of the performance is largely contingent upon drawing the audience in with the theatrical use of costumes and props by the performers. Spectacles are staged to draw the media in, who in turn provide a mass audience for the participants.

The activists in Seattle chose to integrate typically Western forms of theater such as costumes, scripted chanting, and props in order to heighten the dramatic effect. During the many months prior to the protests, marchers were busily constructing puppets, banners, and outfits that would rhetorically enhance their causes. Schechner writes about this excess, saying “Parades, mass gatherings, street theatre, sex, and partying — everything is exaggerated, ritualized, done for show” (83). It is apparent that the participants in Seattle knew this.

Seattle was home to some of the most brilliant and inventive displays of theatrics that have been seen on a grand scale. Many of these traditions were developed in the 1960’s by groups like the Bread and Puppet Theater, El Teatro Campesino, and the San Francisco Mime Troupe. More than thirty years ago, these inventive groups began to use theater as a means of voicing their oppression and challenging the dominant ideology. Following in their footsteps, the next generation of activists explored visual representations of their causes. David Kubrin acknowledges this in his essay “Scaling the Heights to Seattle.” He writes, “Activists had begun experimenting with reshaping protests into forms of processions, incorporating dance, costumes and types of theater, building on traditions begun in the 60’s” (64). Later, he reaffirms Schechner’s theory of direct street theater as both carnivalesque and transformative when he writes, “The giant puppets presented allegorical motifs in outrageous imagery, and helped provide the flavor
of a street festival, bringing out the activists’ senses of play and fantasy and turning the mobilizations into spontaneous theaters of resistance” (65).

The U.S. Humane Society was perhaps the group that garnered the most media attention. The Los Angeles Times wrote, “Months before the Seattle summit, the Humane Society made a strategic decision to highlight turtles in its bid to make a larger point that the WTO places no value on wildlife in its trade decisions” (Peterson A1). The organization chose to costume all of their several hundred members in large green turtle shells in order to present a united front opposing a common enemy. The group’s choice was the one of the singular images cast around the world. For the members of the public who saw only brief video reflections on the news and did not understand the specifics of the demonstration, the group’s costumes were largely symbolic and metaphorical in presenting their issue.

Author Jeffrey St. Clair refers to the calculations that went in to the theatrics. He mentions that the Denny Street warehouse became a center for constructing effigies and making last minute banners. He writes, “Inside, so-called affinity groups were planning their separate direct actions; others were constructing giant street puppets, bearing the likeness of corporate titans and politicians, such as Clinton and Maxxam chieftain Charles Hurwitz.” He also writes about the twenty foot tall siege tower created here by the Earth First!ers. The tower, capable of holding fourteen people, would serve as a Trojan Horse, says St. Clair, “designed to be rolled up near the convention center, allowing the people inside to climb out a hatch in the roof and scale over the tops of Metro Buses, which the security forces had parked as barricades near the building” (16).
St. Clair was an eyewitness to many of the celebratory and carnivalesque displays. He emphasizes the importance of these tactics as having set the tone of the demonstrations. He aligns himself with Schechner when he mentions that in spite of the beautiful display of colors and music and festive dress, there was a darker tone underlying the protests. These people, in spite of the spirit they presented, were here to work and to fight. They were the underdogs in a battle against corporate evil. This was no traditional carnival, it had deeper motives, elements of a twisted and angry circus. He writes:

Once again, steelworkers and Earth First!ers led the way, carrying a banner with the image of a redwood tree and a spotted owl. The march featured giant puppets, hundreds of signs, the ubiquitous sea turtles, singing, chanting, drumming and nervous laughter. There was an atmosphere of carnival to the gathering. New Orleans during Mardi Gras. Juarez on the Day of the Dead. A carnival with an ominous edge. (St. Clair 23)

This theme of dark carnival and theatrics reverberated throughout the three-day demonstration. Again, The Los Angeles Times described to the spectacle that helped to generate the attention and interest of the public for the causes of the activists.

“Demonstrators showed up in Santa Claus outfits, marching against the backdrop of smashed holiday storefronts. Some climbed flagpoles to get attention. Many dressed up as dolphins, another animal seen as endangered by global commerce” (Peterson A1).

Environmental groups are renowned for their use of creative dress in order to generate mediated spectacles. Greenpeace and Earth First! are forerunners in a
movement that combines theatrical costumes and real-world action. However, many of the more than 500 groups present also chose to integrate dramatic visual effects as the demonstrations culminated in crisis. The United Brotherhood of Teamsters, led by president James Hoffa, chose to wear black during their main march through town on the opening day of the summit. The Seattle Lesbian avengers chose not to wear shirts, instead marking their bodies with slogans like, “Better naked than Nike” or “WTO: Even Jesus won’t forgive you!”

News accounts of the summit often refer to the carnivalesque feel of the demonstrations. One internet account refers to the “varied use of costumes and street theater in creating a stunning visual for those watching on television.” The article continues, saying, “A large contingent of young women with bared breasts chanted for justice with slogans like ‘No BGH - the artificial hormone used to stimulate cow milk production - as a giant Steelworkers dirigible floated over their heads” (Moberg). Another article mentioned the wide array of passersby, ranging from “stilt walkers to a guy in a get up that made him look like J.P. Morgan with a sinister mosquito beak” (Klee 33). Others mention stunts performed by demonstrators in addition to their dramatic costumes. An issues oriented website wrote, “Five members of the Rainforest Action Network unfurled a banner on top of a construction crane next to Interstate 5. The banner read: WTO with an arrow in one direction and “DEMOCRACY” with an arrow in the other” (Kauffman). The Atlanta Journal refers to the feeling that the demonstrations “were a cross between a rave and the Fremont Summer Solstice parade, with banging bongos, a canopy of giant Mother Earth, tree, corn and dolphin puppets, and chants of ‘This is what democracy looks like’” (Deans 1A).
The protesters were embodying communicative performance theories unwittingly, as their moniker suggests. The Ruckus Society, one of the umbrella groups that sponsored and trained direct action, named the event the “Carnival Against Capital.” The group’s sole intent was to enact the cause through satire and parody. Janet Thomas refers to their tactics, saying “Ruckus aims to amuse, irritate, arouse, and educate folks about issues they deem important […] The goal of the Ruckus Society is to teach a discrete set of tactics and strategies that can be applied to any campaign for social change […] they learn political theater, make up protest songs, and devise cheerleading routines” (86-87).

The Ruckus Society was instrumental in constructing effigies, erecting high-flying banners, organizing costumes, and generally providing a sense of theater and pageantry to the demonstrations as a whole.

Janet Thomas, an author who was present in Seattle, noticed the carnivalesque tone of the demonstrations as well. Her outlook on the spectacle is much more optimistic than that of Cockburn and St. Clair. She saw the inspiration created by the demonstrators; many of whom she believes took to the streets in celebration of their capacity to create change. Although others mention the darkness that descended upon the summit, she mentions the early stages, when people were hopeful about the outcome. She writes, “It was a great ruckus, a carnival of cause. It had all the grace and grandeur of a global family reunion – complete with teenagers and turtles, misfits and ministers. It was a parade, and everybody came” (12).

This is what carnival does. It suggests a changing of the guard, a symbolic resistance of the old by mocking the system on its own terms. Turner would refer to this ‘betwixt and between’ stage as liminality. It is the period where there is no order, where
structures are crumbling and new ones have yet to be established. Carnival highlights the lack of order, the chaos of the unknown, the formidability and excitement of what is to come. It also triumphs the idea that anything is possible – that a new order may emerge which had not been previously thought of. Carnival’s use of pageantry is more than a celebration of aesthetics; it is an offering of a potentially new way of being.

Although all of the aforementioned elements of theater are highly aesthetic, their value lies not only in symbolic representation of a cause. As Schechner writes, the level of change affected is the element that determines whether a drama is of social or aesthetic value. Thus, it becomes apparent that the Seattle protests are both social and aesthetic because, according to Schechner, “The changes in status are permanent, while changes in the body are temporary” (171). In other words, by donning costumes and masks, the body undergoes a temporary transformation. However, as a result of these costumes, the status quo is often changed in the long run. The elements of carnival lent themselves to the efficacy of the performance. The result of the efficacy was transformation, in the participants, in the audience members, and in the greater social system.

Schechner writes that the purpose of political performance is efficacy. He says that the transformation is “how people use theater as a way to experiment with, act out, and ratify change” (170). There are three levels where these changes may occur. First, in a political protest, there is change within the drama or story itself. As mentioned earlier, the efficacy of the first day’s carnival was located in its success in shutting down the opening day meeting of the World Trade Organization. As the drama unfolded, the outcome changed. It happened in part due to the communication among participants. When one contingent would find a break in their lines, a cellular phone call could be
placed to bring more participants to a particular location. When protesters found themselves jailed, members of the movement changed their course and began smaller protests outside of the local jails. Once delegates were kept from their ministerial, they exerted pressure on police and government officials to stop the protests. The level of violence that ensued as a result was a transformation in the story that neither side had anticipated. Because this event was not scripted, not solely an aesthetic drama but an opportunity for free speech, its course was not predetermined. Changes within the story occurred every instant.

The next level of transformation refers to the changes incurred by the participants in this direct street theater. Often, Schechner is referring to the temporary transformation brought upon by the donning of masks and costumes, the temporary transformation of the body. The body momentarily takes on a new image when it is draped in a symbolic costume or a mask. This transformation, however, occurs only as long as the curtains are up and the performance is underway. This did indeed occur, but the more unique and lasting transformation was within the minds of those present. I argue that the demonstrators from Seattle are forever changed as a result of their participation. In future chapters I will present the idea that many went home with renewed vigor for their cause. However, it can also be said that many also ended the week with a sense of discouragement and grief for an idealistic notion gone awry. Much of the disappointment with the outcome stems from the amount of force leveled on peaceful activists, and from the lack of media coverage that the legitimate protesters received versus the intense focus on the anarchists, who functioned independently of the majority of the coalition, and had deliberately defied the rules of procedure established by DAN. Regardless of the type of
transformation, it is safe to say that all members of the anti-WTO factions were altered in some way, in their spirit and in their minds.

Cockburn responds to this idea of transformation when he writes about the intense debates among activists after the delegates had left town and the protesters had gone home. Via the internet and in interviews, many of the leaders of the coalitions attempted to respond to what had happened. During this time the groups often analyzed openly their failures, and discussed candidly their hopes for the next meeting. The following chapter discusses the aftermath of the Seattle struggle, as demonstrators tried to make sense of what had happened. Transformation is not a fixed event, but a process. The transformative progression of the protesters began months prior to the summit, and the changes are still developing.

The final level of transformation that occurs in an act of direct street theater, according to Schechner, is the transformation in the audience members. One of the unique features of a political protest is the blurring of the lines between participant and audience member. It would be difficult to determine precisely a unitary audience for this event. In the case of the anarchists’ looting and burning, the audience became the legitimate protesters who were themselves witnesses to an event. When watching the spectacle first hand, the audience would be uninvolved residents of Seattle (of whom it seems there were few) and the WTO delegates. As the entire spectacle unfolded in the media the audience could have been the viewing public watching safely from their televisions thousands of miles away.

What this indicates is that there were multiple layers of transformation that took place in Seattle, and multiple levels of audiences. If one were to visualize the protests as
if from above, there would be several layers of audiences, depending on the context of what was occurring. The anarchists' performance became one that other demonstrators witnessed and were transformed by. The next level of participation, that of the general masses of protesters, became one that the WTO delegation were in observation of. Finally, the entire spectacle, with all of the aforementioned participants playing their roles, unfolded before an audience of uninvolved passersby and the viewing public. This multiplicity of contexts indicates that in a performance there is generally never one specific performer and one target audience, but that all audience members have the capacity to transform the performance, and all audience members have the potential to be observers as well.

What is important to note where audience is concerned is that all present audience members become unwitting participants in the drama. Transformation is achieved, both within the audience member's mind, and within the ongoing story itself. As the spectator becomes part of the spectacle, the story's outcome changes once again, depending on their degree of involvement in the event. Transformation of the members of the WTO delegates from spectator to performer in this cast of characters is one of the unique features of the political protest. Although members of the disturbed group may feel as if they are merely watching events unfold before them, their presence and response to those events makes them a participant when the drama is viewed from a removed perspective. As in the Tiananmen Square demonstrations, which Schechner explicates in *The Future of Ritual*, the dominant culture is a part of the cast in this act of direct street theater. They are represented, even if they are not visible. Though physically absent, their display of
police force is their presence in this drama. Again, the reaction of the opposition, even if their reaction is not immediately evident, transforms the story itself, and its outcome.

When reviewing Schechner’s criteria for an act of direct street theater it becomes apparent that the Seattle summit meets the standards. It has all of the elements of a revolution “in its incipient period” (47). Schechner believes that carnival critiques but does not actually change the status quo. Carnival is a performer’s way of being heard, of mocking those in power, of challenging the dominant ideology. Schechner thinks that carnival’s efficacious value is limited, because these changes are not permanent.

The preceding three theories serve to illuminate how well performance can work within a social protest to create change. Again, the ideas of Turner, Cohen-Cruz, and Schechner are examined through the lens of one whose sympathy lies with the protesters, and not the WTO or the local officials. From a demonstrator’s point of view, then, the following transformations took place. First, the activist’s were transformed in spirit. As will be mentioned in future chapters, they left Seattle feeling successful, although weary, and were prepared to continue the anti-globalization fight. Their community identities had been formed, and their individual identities transformed as a result of their participation. Next, the members of the World Trade Organization were changed because they now were faced with a vocal and efficient opposition who would not allow them to conduct business as they previously had. From this perspective, we see that the WTO delegates are potentially more cautious and less secure in their footing. As future chapters explore, the WTO has been met with opposition at every summit since Seattle. Additionally, an immediate transformation was that the Seattle ministerial did not accomplish what delegates had hoped it would. The members of the WTO left without a clear agenda for
the next meeting and without resolving the issues that they had come to focus on. Even those who were not present participants were transformed. Although it can be argued that many around the world who watched the drama unfold on their televisions didn’t understand precisely what was occurring, the protesters did bring their causes to light and involve new members in their struggle.

Lastly, there is the system itself which achieved transformation. I argue that the momentum was established with a protest that permanently changed individuals and the status quo. The street became the stage for that week, the carnival inverted and disrupted social norms, and transformation occurred at all levels. As I mentioned earlier when I applied Turner’s acknowledgement of an irreparable schism, things have not returned to the way that they once were. The World Trade Organization, while it remains in power, has fissures in its foundation now. The members of this group are no longer able to meet in secrecy. Each policy decided on now receives intense public attention and angry response from anti-globalization activists. Even those in power have suggested that the WTO ratify some of its practices as a result of the Seattle debacle. The momentum of the opposition, while difficult to maintain, has lasted through several subsequent protests over the past three years. The transformation was more than temporary.

The Seattle debacle is a demonstration that illuminates performance theory perfectly. The criteria for Turner’s social drama can be neatly placed into the chronology of the events of November 30th through December 3rd. The activists’ use of the streets of Seattle as the stage for their performance is a classic illustration of Cohen-Cruz’s witness theater. Additionally, their embodiment of an alternative vision of the future, their performance of life as it could and should be, brings to light the author’s theory of
utopian theater. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, however, is that the Seattle spectacle utilized these methods in a carnivalesque manner. Not simply for the sake of the festival, but for the sake of transformation. The festival of resistance. All of the elements mentioned in this chapter lead to the affirmation that two fateful winter days in the Pacific Northwest created something new. The bodies and the minds of participant and audience were transformed, and there has been an upheaval of social norms whose effects are still being determined.

The outcome of the Battle in Seattle remains to be seen. However, when viewed through the lens of witness theater, it becomes obvious that the location of the subsequent demonstrations has been paramount to the success of the movement. Demonstrators have effectively marched against globalization in Prague, Washington D.C., Genoa, and New York City. As yet they have not achieved the successes of Seattle in shutting down talks, largely due to increased security by those cities in anticipation of more violence. The protests continue, however, at the site of the struggle, hoping to once again transform space, participants, audiences, and the systems that be.

The following chapter will look at the ways in which performers and protesters united to strategically create a formidable front to confront their opponent. I will argue that the star group discussed in Chapter Three will be one of the most unique and efficacious features of the Seattle event. Additionally, the antecedent chapter will note the ways in which performers utilized communication strategies to organize and enact a stunning mediated spectacle. In continuing with the themes of communication and performance theory, Chapter Four will note the dramatic carnivalesque techniques that resulted in spectacular and highly organized direct action against the WTO.
Chapter Four

Unlikely Alliances and Rules of Procedure: Planning a Modern Social Drama

It was a coalition for the ages, of all ages, of all stages, of varying degrees of calm and rages –

Eliot Katz -

“In Praise of the Seattle Coalition”

The Battle of Seattle

Direct Action: A mode of politics that tactically – and for some, strategically – shortcircuits official channels of representation, often by interrupting business as usual, and deploying a variety of means, open and clandestine: street manifestations, blockades, trespass, sit-ins, banner hanging, squatting, sabotage, crop-trashing, pie-throwing.

Iain A. Boal –

“Glossary”

The Battle of Seattle

Strange Bedfellows: A Coalition is Formed

Seattle has often been referred to as ‘The Emerald City’ for its lush landscape, proud backdrop to the great fir trees that blanket the city and its surroundings with vibrant shades of green. Perhaps, also, this moniker is suited to the sense of magical and mythical possibilities that still exist in times of seemingly awesome economic and social
growth in the Pacific Northwest. The Emerald City of Oz in the classic film of the 1940's and its real-life 1990's counterpart are both the loci of infinite possibilities, where pilgrimages are made in the hopes that wishes can be granted.

The comparison made, Seattle would be home to the great Wizard of Oz; the formidable and faceless legend who ruled a kingdom from behind a curtain. Our pilgrims, the road-weary demonstrators who traversed a road well stocked with challenges and obstacles, sought to confront the almighty Oz. They were a flawed group, but an idealistic one, who hoped to create justice and peace in their lives. Along the way, flying monkeys and suffocating trees enforced the rules of the land - at least, the Seattle Police Department and the National Guard did.

It is through the metaphor of a classic cinematic drama that we can establish a modern cast of characters that were presented to the world during three surreal days in December. Just like that heroic group of pilgrims who traversed the yellow brick road, our Emerald City warriors formed an alliance that spanned the gaps between their many causes. Like the odd friendship between a young girl, a lion, a tin man, and a scarecrow, the Seattle contingent saw unlikely bonds form between labor, environment, human rights, and political activists. This section seeks to explore the unique relationship that formed between NGO's before, during, and since the Seattle summit.

I argue here that this coalition building between former adversaries to fight the WTO is the single greatest advantage that the demonstrators had. The alliance was also the most persuasive factor in garnering media attention and interest from an uninformed public. Lastly, the unlikely alliance between these forces who traditionally functioned in opposition of one another is the most unique and efficacious quality of the Seattle
summit. Where the previous chapter sought to illuminate performance theory within the events of Seattle, this chapter will take those theories one step further, by looking at the context in which those performances occurred. The communicative value of a united front of protesters cannot be underestimated and was paramount to the success of this movement.

It has already been established that the dramatic visuals utilized by protesters and the media attention paid to them are largely responsible for generating public attention to the variety of their causes. However, the most important component in establishing the depth and breadth of the problems being addressed at the WTO summit was the creation of unlikely alliances by groups who were normally in opposition. The viewing public became instantly aware that the issues on the table were not just those of extreme environmentalists or anti-trade individualists. The solidarity between ecological preservationists, labor unions, religious leaders, students at all educational levels, radicals and neo-hippies, consumer watchdogs and independent political leaders proved to the audience that every person's concerns were being represented.

As previously mentioned, Turner would dub this phenomenon a *star group*. He mentions that their shared interests and values bond groups within a social drama. "A star group is the one with which a person identifies most deeply and in which [s/]he finds fulfillment of his/her major social and personal strivings and desires (69)." He continues, saying that the star group emerges as the leader in a particular social drama, the one that tackles the responsibility of representation to the opposition and the audience.
What is interesting about the star group in Seattle was that it was not a particular contingent within the demonstration. Leaders from many countries representing many issues were present and highly visible. Jose Bove, Sally Soriano, Pat Buchanan, James Hoffa, Jr., John Sweeney, Lori Wallach and others became representatives for their individual factions. Every interest group seemed to have its own leader. Ultimately, however, a few individuals emerged who dealt with the press, who helped with organization and strategizing, and who were the most visible. More importantly, these individuals were strategic in motivating their contingent through rhetoric and visibility. These men and women spoke on behalf of the interests of the thousands of other participants. They were the voices that were heard, the ones that their followers could look up to. They spoke for those who could not. Thomas writes, “The speakers at the labor rally came from around the world to represent their fellow workers. Their faces – Asian, South American, African – loomed huge [...] Their voices were passionate, their individual stories dramatic, but their message was the same. ‘Be our voice,’ they were pleading. ‘Help us.’” (140). These men and women turned to those in positions greater than their own, those with power in a ‘first-world’ country, and asked for representation. Hence, the aforementioned individuals emerged as leaders of a star group unlike any the country has ever seen.

Never before in America’s history has a union been formed between such a disparity of organizations in order to fight for a singular cause. The anti-war and civil rights movements of the 1960’s and 70’s united individuals in a common fight. However, clear organization took place for the year prior to the WTO summit that required those who normally faced off against one another at the bargaining table to link
arms and set aside differences. These alliances, while they may only be temporary and singular in focus, have sustained themselves for this particular journey. Janet Thomas mentions the formation of what Victor Turner would call a *star group*. She says that its roots span back to early 1999. The Alliance for Sustainable Jobs and the Environment was the foundation for the coalition. She writes:

[The] collaboration of labor unions, environmental organizations, community leaders, social activists, and political thinkers, presented their ‘Houston Principles’ to Charles Hurtwitz, CEO of the Maxxam Corporation, which owns Kaiser Aluminum and Pacific Lumber Company. The Houston Principles acknowledge the common interest of labor and environmentalists in insisting that corporations be held accountable for their actions worldwide. (141)

Later, Thomas mentions that the Houston Principles unite labor and the environment through social issues. These problems prove to labor and the environment how imperative it is to challenge the opponents that threaten both industries.

The allegiance between labor and environment was shocking to many who knew of the difficult and volatile history between the two. Labor unions had long held environmentalists in contempt because of the environmentalists’ dogmatic protectionist perspective. Radical environmentalists believe in protecting natural resources often at the expense of jobs and economic growth. These two factions had come head to head in the past, particularly where logging was concerned. Says *Newsweek* writer Michael Elliot:

Yet even here the protests had a 90’s twist. This time the hard hats were prepared to make common cause with the tree-huggers. Eric Foner, a
Columbia University historian, sees that as a significant change in the climate of protest. In the past, he says, ‘labor has been cautious, even hostile to environmentalism, because it interferes with jobs... Here you had steelworks and Sierra Club members marching together.’ The Sierra Club’s Seligman agrees. Seattle, he says, showed a ‘new kind of bonding’ between labor and greens. ‘There’s a brotherhood and sisterhood that I’ve never seen before. Seattle is different from Chicago ’68 because the students and the workers are on the same side of the fence this time.’ (39)

Author Barbara Epstein agrees. She says that there has not been an alliance between labor and left-wing liberals since the 1930’s, when Communism united the two over workers rights (Yuen et al 55).

The union between labor and environmental pioneers was not the only surprising partnership. The students of Washington had become very defensive about the plight of steelworkers, who were suffering as a result of a long strike against Kaiser Aluminum. The student body helped the Teamsters with publicity during their strike and marched alongside them during the WTO summit. On the day of the summit, longshoremen showed their allegiance to the steelworkers and others by shutting down all of the ports on the West Coast. From Southern California to Northern Washington, nothing moved for a day. This alliance between the Steelworkers and the liberal right had begun years prior as a friendship developed between the United Steelworkers of America (U.S.A.) and Earth First! This unusual duo found their commonality in a mutual hatred of Maxxam, who had bought out both Kaiser Aluminum and Pacific Lumber. David Foster, the director for District 11 of the U.S.A. said, “We came together because we found that we
had a common foe. But that foe is more than Hurwitz [Maxxam’s CEO]. It’s the kind of
global capitalism that exploits both workers and the environment” (Cockburn 9).

Many news reports focus on these unlikely relationships between formerly
isolated and independent tribes, surprised at the breadth of issues that the more than 500
groups represented. Buffalo News staff writer Martha McCluskey writes of the awe-
inspiring affect that the unlikely coalitions had on their viewing public:

    Busloads of blue-collar workers joined thousands of young students and
aging anti-war activists in shouts of “Hell, No, WTO!” - a decidedly
different spin on 1960’s anti-war nostalgia. Environmental leaders rouse
their upper-white middle class followers with speeches demanding
commitment to the fight against global economic inequality. The ranks of
an AFL-CIO led labor march swelled with Human Society members,
consumer groups, AIDS activists, “Veterans for Peace, family farmers,
“Free Tibet” activists and the “Raging Grannies”, just to name a few.

When it costs 250,000 dollars to attend otherwise closed meetings with the
international lawmakers and when Microsoft and Boeing advertise their
sponsorship of the official WTO meetings, then it is not hard for a
surprising array of people to suddenly find they have something in
common. (5H)

Elliot writes, “When they had all gone home, America started to wonder, what
had brought them together?”(36) It can be suggested that America was wondering this
long before the demonstrators packed up their costumes and climbed off their cranes for
the often long bus rides and flights home. If an uninformed member of the public was
viewing the grand spectacle of the first day on television, would he or she not find commonality with one of the nearly 70,000 individuals who paraded down Sixth Avenue? Once the grandiosity of the puppets and banners had been stripped, were these activists not typical members of the American community, with whom the public could relate with concerns about jobs, health, human rights, and environmentalism?

Many members of the American public see environmental or animal rights activists as extremists. Often, the viewer cannot relate to the goals or the extreme actions taken by members of Greenpeace or Earth First! On the other side of the coin, young liberals are often disheartened by what they view as the goals of labor unions or proponents of industry and technology. Forming allegiances with labor unions and civil rights leaders gave credibility to the causes of the eco-activists. The same alliances allowed the viewing public to see union members as being conscious of greater global issues.

The alliances made by groups opposing the WTO were the most surprising feature of the event. Such alliances were beginning to develop prior to the Battle in Seattle, however. Following the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement, Ralph Nader began organizing coalitions between labor groups, environmentalists, consumer groups, and churches. The Citizens Trade Campaign was largely responsible for the maintenance of such improbable relationships, which many saw as a publicity ploy for the activists. Lori Wallach, the head of the CCT, responded to allegations by doubters when she stood along side Chuck Harple, the political director of the Teamster’s union. He is quoted as saying, “I used to hate the Nader people. I despised them. Now I revere Lori Wallach. It’s weird, we fight so much with the environmentalists, but we also
realized that we are both fighting against the administration - the bigger evil” (Postman A1).

Those who were active in Seattle are proud of the coalitions they have formed, and have done their best to maintain solidarity since. In the years since, the momentum of the star group has not lost its power. In their book, The Battle of Seattle, editors Eddie Yuen, George Katsiaficas, and Daniel Burton Rose devote several sections to the continued activity in the anti-globalization movement. Many websites are devoted to the defense of this alliance. Activists remain optimistic about the potential for change, and they refute skeptics who doubt the sincerity of a labor/environment partnership. (Epstein 53-57). Again, they remind the audience that the alliance is essential for fighting the greater cause. The numbers generated and the breadth represented in this coalition does not bring them on equal footing with the World Trade Organization. But it does give them leverage.

These alliances presented the magnitude of the problem simply by allowing viewers to see that environment and industry are not mutually exclusive. When members of The Rainforest Action Network chant alongside members of the United Autoworkers Association, when the action director for Greenpeace is photographed shaking hands with the United Steelworker’s Alliance, the public are made aware of the broad spectrum of causes of concern.

It became clear early on that this was not one person’s battle, but an issue for every individual to be thoughtful of. The viewing public could not disassociate themselves from the problem, because the problems covered an entire spectrum of employment, human rights and environmental issues. I believe that many who typically
were not moved by media coverage of political demonstrations or radical environmental conflicts were forced to acknowledge that this would affect them. The strategy of unity was the greatest strength that the demonstrators had. It garnered them more media interest and attention, and more interest and sympathy from a typically uninterested and uneducated public.

The formation of such unlikely coalitions is one of the most surprising attributes of the Seattle summit. However, the creation of this star group was deliberate and purposeful. Not only did the members of the coalition need each other for individual strength, but also they realized that their display of solidarity would project a unified image to the World Trade Organization. This was paramount to their victory. The power that the star group was able to achieve came not only as a result of their numbers, but because of their spectacular display of solidarity. In order for the performance to be successful, the cast of characters needed to be clearly defined for the audience. The activists’ unity helped to cast them as the protagonists in our modern social drama.

The coalition in Seattle hopes to sustain itself. These groups continue to work together to achieve a place in history, to change the status quo. It is only by maintaining solidarity among each other in their battle with the WTO, the IMF, the World Bank, and the forces of globalization that this can be achieved. Barbara Epstein says it best when she writes, “The mobilization in Seattle holds out the hope, for the first time in decades, of a broad and potentially powerful coalition for a more egalitarian social order” (55). Lastly, she says, “Those who participated in the Seattle mobilization are unlikely to forget that acting in coalition enhances collective power” and with greater hope, she adds, “The mobilization was not only a coalition of organizations but an alliance of
generations” (57). Lastly, photographer Allan Sekula writes in Five Days that Shook the World, “The alliance on the streets was indeed stranger, more varied and inspired than could be conveyed by cute alliterative play with ‘teamsters’ and ‘turtles’” (Cockburn et al. epilogue).

Young and old, greens and workers, lesbians and anarchists will continue to fight their oppression and maintain what they have built. It is unlikely, as Epstein says, that these former opponents will ever be placed in opposition again. They have forged an alliance that the WTO inadvertently helped to create; a network of individuals that spans all ethnicities, religions, ages, and concerns. That coalition is held together in by a common threat, the invasion of corporate interest on freedom and democracy. This new and unlikely family unified to fight an enemy that was bigger than themselves when they stood alone, but less formidable when they became one. They have felt what it is to be a part of something synergistic. In that synergy lies the key to transformation.

Boot Camp and Cell Phones: Organizing Direct Action

These coalitions were revolutionary in their formation due to careful planning far in advance. Typically, street theater is spontaneous, an uprising of the masses who instantly respond to an issue. Tianenmen Square and the celebration at the deconstruction of the Berlin Wall are two types of utopian theater that Schechner discusses in The Future of Ritual. Greenpeace and ACT-UP for AIDS are organizations that rely heavily on planning an event for media coverage in spectacular displays of Witness Theater. Locations are imperative and rehearsals must occur. The demonstrations in Seattle incorporated the best of both of these worlds. Although many
of the demonstrators decided at the last minute to participate, the majority of the planning
for this summit occurred up to a year prior to November 30th.

This section looks at the ways in which the protesters organized using
communicative media like the internet and cellular phones. These advancements in
technology allowed for the building of coalitions as previously mentioned. Additionally,
they improved the organization and cohesiveness of the demonstration by establishing
rules of procedure in advance, and by placing particular contingents in specific locations
on the first day of the summit. In a revolutionary display of communication, the
protesters planned and offered teach-ins, direct action boot camps, and resources for
those who would be jailed, among others. The rapidity of which information can be
distributed via these media also allowed for the last minute dissemination of information
as the protests were happening. Groups around the world were able to read in real time
what was happening. Also as a result of these channels, demonstrators were able to make
instant changes in location or behavior due to a phone call from a fellow activist in
another part of town. Protests had simply never been done like this before.

The success of the demonstration in shutting down the first day of scheduled talks
is largely due to the nine months of planning by individual groups prior to the summit.
Blocks of hotel rooms were reserved by groups more than six months ahead of time.
Speaking engagements were booked and reception halls were rented. Bus rides and
chartered flights were arranged on line for eager participants. More importantly, each
group knew, due to collective strategizing, how many would be in attendance and where
they would be placed. The planning was so meticulous that even city leaders, both the
police chief and the mayor, knew what to expect. Newsweek writer Kenneth Klee writes:
Mike Dolan, field organizer for the Nader group Public Citizen, spent nine months in the city getting things ready (and consulting regularly with city leaders). The demonstrators started showing their tactical smarts the first day of the conference...they had taken up key positions, amounting to a ring around the meeting facilities. The start of the meeting had to be delayed. (33-34)

Janet Thomas agrees, calling the organization by protesters beforehand “astonishing.” She reaffirms that every aspect of the demonstration was planned in advance with the mayor, police chief, and city council. She says that all permits had been acquired for the large rallies and the zoning of the demonstration itself. More so, she mentions that the organization “did not happen without bureaucratic support” (103).

What is interesting is that what happened in Seattle on November 30th is exactly what all those involved in organizing the protest expected to happen. As NGO’s and city officials met to plan the protests, somehow the local government and police failed to see the bigger picture. Even as they allotted space in the city streets for more than fifty thousand protesters, the Mayor, the Police Chief and others lost sight of the potential for change that this demonstration might cause. Seventy thousand peaceful activists parading through the streets of downtown Seattle was precisely what was authorized and pre-approved by the city council and police. And yet, somewhere, things went wrong. In the planning stages, demonstrators were reliant on local officials for permits and zoning, for housing and transportation. Once things were underway, however, local officials had lost their power, and were at the mercy of the even more influential members of the WTO. When someone said, ‘shut this demonstration down’, the authorities responded.
The careful planning beforehand by all members present didn’t eliminate the power struggle that would later occur.

The internet is the communication medium that allowed these contingents from all corners of the globe to organize so effectively. Almost every one of the more than 500 NGO’s present utilized the internet in the months beforehand to organize their roles and garner support. The groups used the medium to their advantage in spectacular ways. Websites popped up instantly, chain letters garnered thousands of signatures, and groups who were located in different parts of the globe were able to form and maintain their alliances via this medium. Janet Thomas writes:

The WTO was the common foe; the internet paved the way for global populism to ride into battle. E-mail list serves, Websites, downloaded artwork, accommodations, work parties, pirated policies, schedules of events, and the round-the-world message to get to Seattle on time rode the internet as it circled, and recircled, the globe. (126)

It becomes clear that on-line planning promotes greater freedom for groups to work out their differences and determine their role in the creation of a large-scale spectacle. An article in the on-line Alternatives journal quotes Rainforest Action Network co-coordinator Patrick Reinsborough as saying, “The net allows for cheap and fast international communication and helps connect local organizers and magnify their power. Activists will also tell you that the net is helping to build a global sense of community and solidarity, not just within the environmental movement, but also with labor, human rights and other activists as well.” (Meisner <http://www.fesuwaterloo.ca/alternatives/264/fulmeisn.htm>)
The internet has been credited by many for the creation and maintenance of alliances by groups around the world. I argue that the internet became the greatest factor in allowing ease and some sense of secrecy during the planning stages of the protests. Never before had an event relied so heavily on a plethora of websites and chain emails to construct an outline for behavior and placement. Organizers and participants admit that this became the tool that will forever change the shape of activism, allowing every detail to be created, debated, and enacted according to plan. London Independent staff writers Joan Smith and Andrew Gumbel say, "If this is anarchy, it is organized anarchy, turning information technology, which has fostered the growth of globalization, into a formidable weapon against capitalism" (16). This cyber dress rehearsal of an event allows for maximum efficacy.

Public Citizen is one of the groups who actively used the internet as their main channel of communication. Although their headquarters are located in Washington D.C., they have interest groups and members all around the country. Mike Dolan, the director for the group, is quoted in The Los Angeles Times as saying "The Internet has become the latest, greatest arrow in our quiver of social activism. It benefits us more than the corporate and government elites we’re fighting" (Thomas 126). He brings up a point that many others were quick to note. Technological advancements and developments in mass communication tools have fostered globalization over the past decade. The irony of the internet becoming one of the ways that the rebel alliance was able to communicate, unite, and organize is not lost on most participants and observers.

The internet has broken down walls and eliminated time and space barriers between countries and peoples. The internet, developed some thirty years ago, was
originally being advanced by government sources and military forces. It ultimately became one of the fostering developments of a worldwide technology system. Alexander Cockburn quotes author Thomas Friedman, who says, "...The defining measure of the globalization system is speed..." (55). This speed allowed for the rapidity of information to flow across oceans in a matter of moments. Again, the initial users of the internet were most likely multinational corporations, who needed the immediate transfer of knowledge to their subsidiaries around the world. However, the internet is being used to the advantage of the disadvantaged. People have reclaimed the medium, and are now attempting to utilize Audrey Lorde's idea of dismantling the master's house using his tools (110-113). The subversive power of the internet is now one of its primary features. Author Iain Boal writes, "It's liberatory refuncttioning as a tool for 'organizing from below' flourishes in the shade of its dominant us as essential support for the global transmission of administrative, military, and commercial intelligence, and the enhanced surveillance of labor" (380).

In her essay "A Global Carnival of the Dispossessed," author Katherine Ainger acknowledges that the development of the internet and other communication technology is one of the features of globalization itself. She says, "New communications technology such as the internet and e-mail has played an integral part in the process of economic globalization, but they have also fuelled a parallel globalization of resistance" (78). The internet has become a dichotomy itself, capable of promoting rebellion and revolution, and at the same time, maintaining mainstream relations that function within a global system.

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Not only is the internet a primary feature of globalization but a primary feature of a rehearsal for a performance. Richard Schechner mentions that one of the most crucial elements of a performance is the rehearsal, the trying on of various identities and themes. The demonstrators in Seattle were privileged to be allowed a cyber-dress rehearsal of their event. The internet helped to solidify the coalition in advance and gave participants a glimpse of what the future might hold. This became essential to the transformation that would later take place.

Once communication had been established, and alliances had formed, it was necessary for this highly organized contingent to develop a code of conduct. Unlike many demonstrations, this protest had very specific rules of procedure that were established long before the week of N30. Members who had been involved from the idea's inception were determined to make the protests non-violent and visually dramatic. At the same time, they were determined to shut down the WTO summit. Rules for behavior would be an important element in the efficacy of this demonstration.

Janet Thomas writes about the invitation issued by the group Art and Revolution to hundreds of potential participants. The announcement was distributed via the internet, but printed copies were also sent to thousands of activists around the world. The invitation demonstrated the commitment that participants had to a non-violent ideology. More so, it was yet another indication of how organized and well thought out every detail of the protest was, long before November. In a tribute to performance theory, the flyer indicated that theatrics would be essential to create a spectacle and asked participants to be as visually arresting as possible. Additionally, the keywords of the pamphlet were
“educate, agitate, and organize.” David Solnit, the creator of the flyer, hoped to make clear both the ends and the means by which they would be achieved when he wrote:

We are planning a large-scale, well-organized, high-visibility action to shut down the World Trade Organization on November 30. We will nonviolently and creatively block them from meeting. We envision colorful and festive actions with large scale street theater as a major element. We will make space and encourage mutual respect for a variety of nonviolent action styles reflecting our different groups and communities. (1) We will use no violence, physical or verbal, toward any person. (2) We will carry no weapons. (3) We will not bring or use any alcohol or illegal drugs. (4) We will not destroy property. (Thomas 83)

Many different groups who taught and guided participants in direct action were enforcing the code of conduct. The most important element of behavior would be a non-violent approach. Thomas mentions that this attitude was to be present even when protesters were being treated aggressively. She mentions the turtle contingent of the Humane Society, who so effectively represented their cause. In a true display of temporary transformation, the leader of the turtles, Dan White, asked participants to “tap into turtle consciousness.” Prior to marching from the United Methodist Church to the convention center on opening day, White laid out the code of conduct for his turtles. Thomas quotes him laying down the law; “One: Not only are we non-violent, we’re anti-violence. Two: If you do anything aggressive, you will be de-turtled on the spot. Three: Comport yourself as a turtle. Turtles are ancient repositories of wisdom. They never fight back. We’re representing them. We owe it to turtles to be their voice” (27).
These guidelines for activity were being repeated all over town by thousands of star-group leaders. Although small contingents did ultimately participate in property damage and defensive behavior against police officers, the majority of the 70,000 protesters had agreed to be peaceful. They made these contentions by communicating via the internet with the umbrella group The Direct Action Network. This organization, (whose website address is www.agitprop.org) laid the foundation for the behavior of most of the participating groups by presenting the structure for the way the theatrical protests would be carried out. D.A.N. offered guidelines nine months prior to the event on their website and in pamphlets that were sent to interested participants. The information directed the energies of participants to create a peaceful and highly visible protest that would occur with minimal injury, arrests, and destruction of property. Nearly one hundred organizations signed contracts and let the Direct Action Network guide them in the rules of procedure prior to and during the summit.

The organization began as an internet communications network, offering a place where participants could “meet” on-line and strategize. It quickly grew into a legitimate umbrella when interested demonstrators realized they needed consistency and agreement in the planning stages. Through the establishment of four ongoing ‘work groups’ D.A.N continues to organize and propose demonstrations by offering communication networks, finances and fund raising, training, and planning of agendas. The group’s website says that groups be free to choose whether or not to participate in the guidelines set forth, but that once a group signs on, it must agree to the rules established.

The group’s website gave information about boot-camps and training where participants could learn climbing techniques in order to scale buildings to place the most
visible banners. It offered strategic tips on how to handle police confrontation without violence. Meetings with participants offer information on where to find resources to protect themselves from tear gas and pepper spray, in addition to places where they can find materials to construct banners and large effigies. Writer L.A. Kauffman comments on the meticulous detail of the planning:

For a week now, a group called the Direct Action Network has been training protesters in a sprawling warehouse just east of downtown Seattle. Activists are learning not only basic principles of nonviolent protest...many are also being trained in elaborate “lockdown” techniques pioneered by Earth First! and animal-rights groups, in which protesters use bicycle locks and other equipment to create immovable human barricades that are difficult and time consuming to dismantle.


Later, the author refers to DAN’s specific arrangement of the various groups to cover the maximum amount of space during the protests. “DAN has developed a sophisticated, decentralized system for covering different areas of town. Organizers have divided the area around the WTO meeting into 13 ‘pie slices’ that scores of small tactical groups are planning to blockade. The efforts of the blockaders will be augmented by dozens of roving teams, both of protesters and ‘support people.’”(<http://www.salon.com/news/feature/1999/11/30/protest.html>)

If the internet helped with pre-protest organization, another technological tool was responsible for the fluidity of movement and quick responses to police during the demonstrations. The cellular phone was a key instrument in last minute planning and
changes. Groups orchestrated their movements and were updated on police strategies via cellular phone and two-way radio conversations. Cell phones allowed participants to call other groups and warn them of impending violence. In addition, the cell phone became a great tool for those who had been jailed; the impounded protesters were able to call for help or response immediately after being booked. Almost instantaneously, demonstrations erupted outside the city jails, as those who were made aware of the plight of fellow activists changed plans and targeted the police stations. The Rev. Robert J. Mahoney, chairman of the sociology department of Rockhurst University refers to this innovation, saying, “We have the potential today for considerably stronger street action and public social action that we did in the 50’s and 60’s. One reason is the internet, and another is cell phones. You can orchestrate things very quickly, and move people and react much more quickly” (Fussel A1).

Proof positive that technology helped to determine the outcome of the performance was an example cited in the Los Angeles Times. At one point during the first day of protesting, the line of activists for the Humane Society became dangerously thin. Concerned that any hole in the front would allow WTO members to enter or leave the Washington State Trade Center, one member of the turtle shell clad group made a call on a cellular phone. Within minutes, dozens more of the costumed protesters had left their original positions to fill the gaps in the line. (Peterson A1).

The demonstrations in Seattle were revolutionary because they presented a highly organized front of individuals whose platforms covered a broad spectrum of interests. These groups, many of whom normally stood in opposition to one another, united themselves in opposition to a singular cause. Their unity, in addition to the grand
spectacle of costumes, strategic placement, and powerful speeches, became the single
greatest rhetorical factor in generating public sympathy for their plight. There is no
persuasive power like the message of former adversaries standing together to object to a
cause. Groups who were nearly enemies only years prior aligning themselves for a fight
created a commanding image to their audience that could not be ignored.

Such unity was made possible largely because of technological advances that
allowed for more rapid and broad communication. That these grass-roots organizations
utilized the apparatus of globalization to their own advantage is one of the great surprises
of the new trends in activism. The use of these communicative channels, developed for
and formerly belonging to those in power, allowed demonstrators to organize against and
subvert that power across continents and party lines. The irony of the reclaiming of
technological tools such as the internet and cellular phones is not lost on the activists or
their opposition. The use of such planning, whether it be on-line or at live training
sessions, will forever change the face of activism.

The following chapter explores the continuation of the trends that were explored
here. In Chapter Five, I look at the evolution of the anti-globalization movement. I
examine how the coalitions discussed here have maintained and sustained themselves.
The alliances that were so unique and efficacious in Seattle have continued to remain
strong, and these performers have repeatedly been present at every meeting of the World
Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and the G8. If
the purpose of this chapter was to bring to light the innovative use of on-line planning
and coalition building, then the next section examines the ways in which those features
continue to serve modern activists in their fight against globalization.
Chapter Five

The World is the Stage: The Aftermath of the Battle in Seattle

*Now the flexible glue to keep a coalition together*

*Now spreading the fun so that more can participate*

*Now there will be more democracy and then even more democracy*

*Now you are welcomed heroic at the dawn of a century*

- Eliot Katz

“In Praise of the Seattle Coalition”

*The Battle of Seattle*

**Efficacy In Question: What Really Happened and Who Won?**

The goal of any political protest is not simply to vent one’s frustrations and bring attention to suffering and injustice, but ultimately, to create change. Some protests are successful in doing so. A few revolutions have begun with one single act of drama. When the drama is over, however – when the curtains have closed and the stage is once again dark, it is essential to continue the critique. Although the purpose of this study was to examine the staging and efficacy of the Seattle performances, this Chapter will examine what activities have taken place since that fateful week in Seattle. This chapter will explore what changes have occurred in the status quo and in the minds and actions of the activists and the WTO delegates. Additionally, I further analyze the formation of alliances described earlier and how they have managed to sustain their momentum towards an anti-globalization fight. What did these alliances actually accomplish? Are the bonds that tied labor and environment, students and steelworkers still holding strong?
What have these activists been doing, and where does the movement go now? These are questions that this final chapter seeks to answer. Mostly, however, it is important to look at the efficacy of the Seattle summit, and determine whether or not real and permanent change has been effected in the system that these activists fought so hard to bring to light. The goal of a demonstration is social transformation, and it is in this chapter that transformation will be explored.

With the ideas of conflict resolution and transformation established, we can determine the efficacy of the Battle in Seattle by looking at what it actually accomplished. Were social perspectives and norms reestablished? It has already been asserted that the demonstrations effectively prohibited the World Trade Organization from meeting on the first day of the scheduled summit. One researcher of protest movements discusses what he sees as the efficacious function of the protests. Dr. Anthony Grayling is quoted as saying, “It wasn’t merely a march. It completely buggered up the World Trade meeting for an entire day! In addition, some people from other countries were saying that a lot of what the demonstrators were suggesting made sense from their point of view” (Gumbel and Smith 16).

In addition to halting the talks and spreading the word, the demonstrators managed to successfully halt specific plans from taking effect. The primary purpose of the WTO’s talks in Seattle was to set forth an agenda for future discussions. Yet, David Postman of The Seattle Times wrote that future plans were left up in the air. In discussing the efficacy of the demonstrations, the paper writes, “Despite worries that vandalism and clashes with police may have obscured their message, WTO opponents left Seattle with some successes. They put the controversies of free trade in the public
eye, and when the meeting adjourned Friday without an agenda for the next round of trade talks, some delegates credited or blamed the mass opposition they could see from their hotels” (A1). The author, like Lori Wallach of Citizen’s Trade Watch, looks to the future and the momentum that was gained from this historic week. Wallach says, “The people at the Seattle rallies have gone home bolstered by their success and they are looking for their next fight” (Cockburn et al 6).

As previously mentioned, Richard Schechner asserts that direct theater can be a powerful tool in effecting change. In The Future of Ritual he writes, “Revolutions, in their incipient period are carnivalesque” (47). However, he also realizes that the traditional result of an act of direct theater is not a revolution, but a reestablishment of social norms. Typically, when the theatrical display is over, the power system remains intact, and the issues are not resolved to the satisfaction of the performers. However, we cannot look at efficacy solely in terms of actual change in the system. Often, the effectiveness of a performance can be seen in much more subtle ways.

Schechner sees transformation as a crucial component in the efficacy of a performance. Transformation is synonymous with change; whether such transformation occurs only at a mental level in the audience and participants is irrelevant. Most of the protesters who left Seattle would say that they were encouraged and invigorated. The majority of those quoted were proud of the work they had done, pleased with the mass display of presence, and lastly, convinced that they had brought attention to their causes. As one activist, Jerry Mander, the president of the International Forum on Globalization, said, “I was elated at the success in Seattle” (189).
Some however, are not as optimistic that their presence resolved anything. Many activists have agreed that since the Seattle summit they feel a mixture of disappointment and encouragement. Often, the disappointment stems from the ways in which these demonstrations, so meticulously planned with the approval of city officials, had turned violent. Says activist Sarah Staude, a student who participated in direct action, “What we couldn’t understand, and what was terrifying, was the brutality and the urgency and the value placed on these talks over the well-being of people” (Thomas 86). Although many were brutalized, discouraged that they had traveled hundreds of miles to be shut down at a city-sanctioned event, and tired from the weather and the long struggle, there were those who retained their optimism. When referring to the idea of transformation, however, it is evident that in spite of the violence, a worldwide movement towards democracy and freedom was occurring. Whether it be an inspiring newfound resolve, a disheartening letdown, or a complex mix of both, transformation was underway.

Through these feelings emerges a sense of hope for the future. Many feel that at least in some form, negative or positive, a message of the WTO’s injustice and oppression was being communicated to the audience. In spite of these themes of frustration and disappointment, many acknowledge that Seattle was one event on a continuum of events that had achieved marked transformation in the protesters, and even brought formerly ambivalent people into the foray. Turtle costume creator Dan White adds that many in the viewing audience around the world witnessed the brutality by police and the arguments of the protesters and decided to do something about it. Thomas says that people saw their “neighbors civil rights shredded in their democratic backyards, got up from in front of their televisions and hit the streets saying, ‘No this is wrong’”
(206). That is where we see the visible transformation. As well, most protesters left Seattle transformed and pleased with their successes. The rules of a society do not have to change dramatically for transformation to occur. Progress need not be seen only in terms of a difference in lawmaking. It could be suggested that every participant in the demonstration, from the police to the demonstrators, was changed as a result of the actions they took during the fateful week. Perhaps the audience members were the most transformed, having been made aware of new issues. If change is not visible externally, the process itself would create change within the participants and viewers. We will find that often in performance where the goal is changing the status quo, the result is not necessarily immediate, nor is it as important as the process. The key is the action which generates a series of reactions. That in itself is efficacy.

The Seattle demonstration was a real celebration that triumphed over social order and created change just by its very occurrence, even if that was not the sole result the participants had hoped for. The transformation occurred not only as a result of the performance, but also within the performance. What began as an organized revolt against those in power took a different turn as people from all walks of American culture met and found their common ground in front of the most powerful institution in the world. Somehow, during the performance, a subtext developed. It became clear that whether or not the police stopped them, whether or not the protesters won the battle, they were rejoicing in the performance itself and its creation of communities. Although this study focuses on the Seattle demonstrations, it can be assumed that this was the effect around the world.
When examining the efficacy of the demonstrations, it is essential to refer again to Victor Turner. Having applied Turner's theory of conflict in the first three phases of a social drama, we now turn to the ways in which the conflict resolution unfolds in the final arena - the reintegration. Turner is aligned with Schechner when he suggests that the most important component in a social drama is the concern with homeostasis. The dominant ideology and power systems often remain. Conflict resolution often occurs when those in power reassert their authority over the protesters and reclaim their territory. The crisis was not necessarily resolved, so much as shut down. Reintegration refers to the idea that many social dramas end their process with the dominant ideology still intact, although some of the ideas from the crisis phase may be integrated into the current system.

One must be clear about Turner's notion of resolution. The term does not imply that there is finality to the conflict. There is no ultimate solving of the problem. Resolution can simply be the point where the process has reached its pinnacle, and the players go home. It can also refer to the utopian vision presented by the participants in the drama. The resolution was present in the demands of the protesters in Seattle, it just wasn't accepted by the WTO.

Turner also allows for another end to the story. He says that often when the conflict cannot be neatly tied up, there will remain an irreparable schism, a disagreement between contesting parties that is impossible to mend. It is entirely a matter of perspective when trying to determine whether or not reintegration of social norms occurred, or whether an irreparable schism still exists between the conflicting parties. This thesis is written from the perspective of the activists - the underdogs - but there is
much contention even among their ranks as to what their presence actually meant and what change it affected. Many could say that they have felt and witnessed the levels of transformation that Schechner described, among themselves, the WTO delegates, and the audience members. However, in spite of these internal changes, they might admit that the wheels of globalization continue to turn as insidiously as before. Their movement made noise, but didn’t accomplish its goals. Others would argue that things have not returned to normal, and most likely will not. They would suggest that in spite of the daunting task of facing an enemy which they cannot see, they will continue to make their causes known, to bring attention to this secretive and anti-democratic group, and to educate the public about the immediate and far reaching effects of globalization.

Demonstrators have repeatedly vowed that the WTO will never again be allowed to meet in secrecy, promising to be present every time the group holds a summit.

In order for the demonstrators to continue their momentum in the fight against globalization, their alliances must remain intact. As previously mentioned, a great portion of the efficacy of Seattle was its success in coalition building. Individuals who participated are most proud of this critical feature. Where this change is concerned, they credit their own willingness to reach across party lines and accommodate other interests. Alexander Cockburn agrees, saying,

Seattle made people feel as if they had some power once again. As the Battle of Seattle showed, the entire World Trade Organization is now being undermined by a growing international alliance of civil society—consumers, farmers, workers, environmentalists, and young people. The
most important lesson of Seattle is that there is now a global new
Democracy Movement being built, from the grassroots up. (7)

The communicative channels between hundreds of groups representing thousands
of activists have remained open. There is still an intense amount of organization and
coalition building to sustain, and it continues. All that was worked towards has not been
lost. The activists still retain a strong sense of unity, as well as a clear focus on their
target, and an awareness of the synergy of their union. And yes, the alliances between
the labor right and the environmental left wing remain strong. Says Thomas:

The student-turtle-Teamster-policy wonk-civil society tree-hugger
partnership is not about to become some mushy, unidentifiable soup. [...] The other WTO, the one that was won, was when the World Turned Out in
Seattle. The faces, the reasons, the cultures were many, but the underlying
passion for global and economic and environmental justice was pervasive.
The people in the streets of Seattle during WTO week represented the
collective force of justice at large. It is a force bigger than we are as
individuals [...]. (207)

Some would question the sincerity of the coalitions built along a continuum that
includes extremists in religious protectionism, union organizing, environmental justice
and unsanctioned anarchists. If one were to look at the continuum politically, labor and
environment would be at polar opposite ends of the spectrum of interests. There are those
who are skeptical as to the sincerity of a coalition built solely to face a common enemy.
Many may wonder what interests these groups have in common other than their
adversary. The answer might be that they have none. The fact is, however, that their ties
remain strong. Seattle activist Rick Simonson says, “This movement doesn’t act as if it just made itself up. It’s good when you get the discipline and gung-ho of the labor unions along with the students and the church-based groups, and they all realize that there’s so much more at stake and that their differences pale in comparison” (Thomas 197).

Labor disappointed many during the week of N30 by demanding a seat at the table and receiving a meeting with Bill Clinton. Many, like Cockburn and St. Clair, speculate that John Sweeney and James Hoffa, Jr. ‘sold out’ in order to better their position at the bargaining table. However, they have not forgotten their tree hugging friends. There are those who believe that the first group to gain acknowledgement or inclusion in the policy making process of the WTO will quickly acquiesce to their own long pending needs and forget their former bonds with other interest groups. Most, however, don’t see that happening. The successes of the alliances are evident in the minds of many. Author Janet Thomas agrees. She quotes activist Vanessa Lee, who participated in Seattle. Lee says of the coalition:

I know some people are looking for holes. Take steel for example. They say steel manufacturing is environmentally destructive, and therefore it’s problematic for environmentalists to have a coalition with steelworkers. This is a movement that has a strength that American social movements haven’t really tapped into before. Solidarity. [...] People are realizing the need to take back control of our own lives. (167)

Whether or not labor, anarchists, environmentalists, political representatives and others specific agendas are different, their collective opposition to the greater enemy and belief in a better world is not. The alliance formed between these formerly isolated tribes
continues to be one of the great successes in the movement against globalization. In defense of the continued coalition of varied interests, author Naomi Klein acknowledges the multiplicity of causes, but says that these disparate groups continue to bring variety and breadth to the battle. She praises those who hope to heal, those who long to destroy, and those who want to be heard for working together. She asserts that it is in the best interest of the movement that the alliances have not singled out specific issues of focus. Regarding their varied agendas, she writes,

But so what? Already, this decentralized, multi-headed swarm of a movement has succeeded in educating and radicalizing a generation of activists around the world. Before it signs on to anyone’s ten-point plan, it deserves the chance to see if, out of its chaotic network of hubs and spokes, something new, something entirely its own, can emerge. (317)

She defends the alliance by reminding observers and participants that whatever comes out of its formation, it will affect change. Whose particular interests the change will benefit remains to be seen, but it certainly will come at the expense of the World Trade Organization, the IMF, and The World Bank.

When examining the efficacy of the demonstrators at the World Trade Organization Summit, I believe that they were successful in achieving the desired result. External change is not the immediate goal. If it were, lobbying those in power in Washington might have been more successful. Participants and viewers did not expect immediate action on the part of the WTO. Every actor and spectator knew that eventually, those in power would respond in a way that would continue to maintain their dominance. But that in itself does not determine efficacy. Perhaps this time the actions
of the masses wouldn’t make a difference to those in real positions of power. But those voices made a difference to all of the others who watched and waited and learned and cheered them on. And it made a difference to those who performed, who cried, who danced, who celebrated their incremental victories in the protest itself.

The fact that there was not an immediate inversion of the systems of domination does not suggest that efficacy was not achieved. It is sure to say that an intervention of this magnitude not only transformed the participants, but made an impression on those in power as well. The governments of the world, the World Bank, the International Money Fund and the WTO will never be as confident in their ability to meet in secrecy, making decisions for people they do not adequately represent. The grand spectacle that was Seattle will not be forgotten, even if the movement loses momentum and another demonstration of this magnitude does not happen again.

In spite of the fact that the structure did not crumble, there are most certainly fissures in the system that are the immediate result of this demonstration. I argue that there is a lesser degree of confidence and certainty in the minds of the members of these multinational organizations. While a complete overhaul of the system did not occur, neither did a reestablishment of the previous social order. When the resolution is examined, it is not quite utopia, but neither is it a complete return to the status quo. What happened in Seattle is a matter of perspective, and every contingent will have a different answer. But this remains true; The World Trade Organization, comprised of the most powerful individuals in politics, economics, and capitalism, were rendered helpless for a day as students and workers, tree-huggers and performers took over the streets. So, who won? Well for one brief day at the end of November, it is clear that the people did.
One can be sure that in the days following the summit, behind closed doors, there was more peace in the minds of the demonstrators than in the minds of the WTO members. One can also be sure that only one group of participants wiped their brows on the long plane rides home, thinking, “Thank God it’s over”. It wouldn’t be for long. As the next section will prove, the alliances and communication remain strong. Activists around the world continue to assault any signs of capitalism and corporate greed, challenging the IMF, WTO, and World Bank at every opportunity. Since Seattle, smaller protests occur continuously on every continent. As a result of their success, I believe that a demonstration on the scale of Seattle will happen again, and perhaps next time, the more profound and visible changes in the system will come. The outcome of this particular protest - the conflict resolution - is still in process.

**Sustaining Momentum: What Happens Next and Who are We Fighting?**

The alliances established and the detailed and comprehensive organization of the Seattle rally were paramount to its success. However, Seattle cannot be viewed as an isolated event in history, but as one incident in a chain of activities that has been developing for years prior to 1999. Additionally, it needs to be mentioned that the demonstrations that took place in the Pacific Northwest were not unique in the world, but part of a larger global continuation in the evolution of anti-globalization activists. Since the late eighties, activists from nearly every country have been using their voices to raise awareness to the causes of third world debt, sweatshops, bioengineering, and animal rights, among others. The creation of the World Trade Organization as a replacement for the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in 1995 was the beginning of an organized
revolt against anti-democratic worldwide oppression. This began a series of small revolutions that would reach its temporary peak in Seattle, 1999, but by no means end there. It has been slightly more than two years since the Carnival against Capitalism occurred. Seattle was an historic event, but only one in a series of international protests that sustain the movement. This section will analyze the momentum gained by activists in the weeks prior to N30, and in the years following. It is the goal of this section to examine the solidarity among groups that span continents. The primary feature of this portion of the study is the analysis of the continued opposition to the wheels of globalization, including but not limited to the WTO, IMF, and the World Bank.

In spite of worries on the part of the activists, keeping the spirit of Seattle alive would not be as daunting a task as previously thought. Author Alexander Cockburn refers to this idea, saying, "In the heady days after the WTO demonstrations in Seattle, the question on everyone's lips was; where do we go from here? How do we sustain the movement? This presented the greatest hurdle to long-term coalition building. How, for example, were French farmers supposed to remain in solidarity with Teamsters from Tacoma?" (5). Although it would be a challenge to maintain allegiances and keep communication channels open, the internet again allowed for ease in organization and frequency of contact. Additionally, the challenge of sustaining global momentum would not prove nearly as difficult as the local obstacles of coping with raids of training facilities and prop warehouses by intelligence officials, lack of local and national government support for future demonstrations, and violence towards protesters on the part of police.
The motivation against globalization by the protesters fueled other movements around the country, although none on the scale of that in the Northwest. Even prior to N30, a group of activists in the Netherlands occupied a replica of a 17th Century Dutch East India Ship. They unfurled a banner that read, "Stop the WTO". The following day, nearly 30 people occupied the WTO World Headquarters in Geneva. In addition to those inside, another group of activists blocked traffic and chained themselves to the staircases. They hung banners from the roof that read, "No Commerce, No Organization, Self-Management!" Another read, "WTO Kills People – Kill the WTO!" One week later, a group of activists began a march from Ankara in protest of the WTO. The 2000-mile march was to culminate on N30, to show sympathy and solidarity with their fellow protesters. On November 24th, 300 residents of New Delhi stormed the World Bank Building. They destroyed the location, covering it with posters, graffiti, dung and mud. On November 27th, the Adbusters organization, led by Kalle Lasn, held their annual "Buy Nothing Day" and held a demonstration in a locus of America's capitalistic tendencies, Times Square. The same day, 5000 activists marched in Geneva back to the already terrorized WTO headquarters. (Laskey 83-84).

On the same day as the Seattle protests, smaller demonstrations were occurring around the country and around the world to show support for the Washington demonstrators. In Austin, Texas over 500 demonstrators marched through the downtown area to the capital. Led by Art and Revolution, they continued in the theatrical tradition carrying a WTO puppet in the likeness of an octopus, and cheerleaders asked for participation from passersby in chanting anti-WTO slogans. In Louisville, Kentucky, more than one hundred protesters met in a park to educate the public about sweatshops,
prisons, global warming, and deforestation, among other causes. In Philadelphia, nearly 200 protesters protested outside the Banana Republic store, owned by The Gap, and a chief target of protectionists who rally against overseas labor standards. These are only a few of the demonstrations of solidarity that occurred in the United States on opening day of the ministerial. (Laskey 86-87).

Similar protests were held in Canada, Iceland, Ireland, Wales, Portugal, the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, Greece, the Czech Republic, Turkey, Israel, Pakistan, Korea, the Philippines, and Australia. France, England, and Switzerland were home to three highly successful and well-publicized protests on a large scale. In Paris, more than 20,000 individuals marched in protest of the WTO and in support of their Seattle counterparts. In London, a few thousand people attempted to block a main road, making similar arguments against globalization. Lastly, in Switzerland, a radical group again targeted the WTO’s headquarters, disabling the organization for hours by bombing their power supply and electrical transformers. For most of the morning while the WTO members dealt with the Seattle demonstrations, they had no internet links to their headquarters. Like the Seattle summit, these worldwide demonstrations were highly theatrical and efficacious. However, continuing in the tradition of Seattle, many of them ended in arrests and brutality by police.

Many vent their anger at the media representation of protests that effectively held the world’s most powerful hostage for a day, when in fact other aspects of the protests had been so efficacious and peaceful. Media sources seemed more content with replaying images of unsanctioned anarchists breaking windows at Niketown and
Starbucks than explicating the issues of the protesters. In the case of some third-world countries, smaller demonstrations didn’t even get coverage on mainstream media sources.

At the beginning of what would be a long and drawn out struggle to combat the forces of globalization following N30, hundreds of demonstrators in Mexico City expressed their solidarity for those arrested in Seattle by protesting in front of the U.S. Embassy. Nearly one hundred dissenters were arrested and held without bail for days. They were tortured in ways that would not leave marks on their bodies so that abuse by police would be difficult to prove. Laskey says, “approximately 285,000 dollars is set for the release of the prisoners. Unions, student unions, and the general public raise the money and the protesters are released […]” (91). This incident barely made headlines in the United States, but demonstrates that the alliances between international activists remains strong, as do the lines of communication.

In the years following the protests of November and December 1999, there has been a great turnout of demonstrators protesting the National Democratic Convention, the meetings of the IMF and the World Bank, and the World Economic Summit. Activists have set goals as to what they hope the coalition will do to combat these institutions over the next few years. Says Naomi Klein, “We were going to give birth to a unified movement for holistic social, economic, and political change” (311). This movement would hope to include more of the direct action techniques covered in previous chapters, as well as to integrate the theatrical performances and media generating spectacles that previously proved so effective.

Many, however, may see the movement as being difficult to sustain. Some believe that Seattle was the high point along the continuum of activism, and that it’s
successes cannot be repeated. Says author Stanley Aronowitz, "Is there a new movement being born or was the Seattle march in December 1999 a fluke?" (195). Whether an observer is a skeptic or an optimist, one must agree that it is nearly impossible to achieve the level of success found in Seattle on a worldwide scale when there are adversaries meeting in various locales nearly every month. How can these contingents of activists continue to mobilize and transport themselves to remote sites around the world? How can they continue to perform direct action and vivid acts of radical street theater when the police and other officials now expect their presence at every turn? The continued presence of organizing groups on-line and in person has surprised even those involved in the movement. It seems that although Seattle may have generated the most media attention, by no means was it the final battle in this war.

Before all of the Seattle protesters had been released from jail and begun the often long bus rides home, organizers were arranging similar protests around the world. Naomi Klein recognizes that following each demonstration there is an undeniable thought process regarding the future. "Was that it?" She writes, "When's the next one? Will it be as good, as big?" (315). She refers to the idea of 'serial protesting', which is what we have seen occurring worldwide in the fight against globalization and its forces since 1995. The first, to be held in Washington D.C., would occur only four months later, in April 2000. This protest against the twice-yearly meeting of the IMF and the World Bank hoped to generate participation by more than 50,000 international activists. Although the protesters' presence numbered nearly 30,000, police quickly cleared most away and hundreds were arrested. Again, in an effective display of carnival, members of the alliance chose to create effigies and construct large puppets. However, demonstrators
report that police raided many warehouses where costumes and props were being constructed, attempting to destroy visual representations of the cause and avoid another Seattle debacle. The websites of DAN and the Ruckus Society are now full of incidents of invasions by police and brutality against protests. (<http://www.agitprop.org>)

Only three months later a spectacular festival of resistance took place in France, where fifty thousand activists protested the arrest of Jose Bove, the leader of the anti-genetically modified food cause. He and ten others had been brought up on charges of vandalizing a McDonald’s, which he sees as the prime target for both globalization and “plain bad food” (Trueheart par. 4). A concert in Bove’s honor was held, and more than one hundred thousand turned up to listen to speeches and dance to the music of international artists. The alliance remained intact in Europe as the contingent included those representing a similar spectrum of interests of those in Seattle. Additionally, there were new faces present; French forces adding to the coalition, speaking and protesting on behalf of “housing activists, Greenpeace, anti-agribusiness […] people fighting the Lyon-Toulouse superhighway, […] people protesting the deaths of 58 Chinese refugees in a refrigerator truck in England, the Young Christian Rural Movement, French public service unions, anarchists, and others” (Trueheart, par. 23). The variety of rebels and revolutionaries that surrounded Bove’s trial in France proved to many that this is a global issue and that the alliance formed for N30, 1999 would sustain itself as long as there was oppression to be fought. It signifies that whenever a demonstration targets a specific location or meeting of a globalizing entity, there are similar sympathetic riots and smaller protests that erupt worldwide. The solidarity and the continued momentum have been surprising.
Only two months later, another group demonstrated this when they rose up en masse to protest the biannual meetings of the IMF and the World Bank in Prague. The protesters in Seattle had promised never to let these forces meet in secrecy again, and were keeping true to their word. Between September 26th and September 29th, tens of thousands of anti-globalization demonstrators took to the streets of Prague. Reminiscent of Seattle, the groups were besieged with tear gas, guard dogs, pepper spray and hand-to-hand aggression by police forces. In a testimony to the power of the alliances created in Seattle, however, independent media channels and the internet were most responsible for the organization and dissemination of information. The lessons learned in Seattle were becoming evident; move swiftly, organize online, do not resort to violence, get the media there.

This is one area where the demonstrators may feel disappointment in subsequent protests against globalizing entities. The theatrical elements of Seattle, the thousands of costumes, stilt-walkers, music and art, have been more difficult to accomplish. Activists are now forced to organize more quickly because there seems to be a meeting or summit to protest nearly every several months. Additionally, with police and government officials on high alert it is becoming increasingly difficult for demonstrators to claim space, much less a stage. Host cities, anticipating difficulties, have quickly shut down the more carnivalesque aspects of the demonstrations, often completely ending the protests themselves.

For example, in Quebec in April of 2001, an estimated 20,000 people appeared to rally against the meeting of the Free Trade Area of the Americas delegates. Quickly, fences were erected to confine demonstrators to specific areas. Effigies were dismantled,
and there was simply no room for theatrical displays. As with so many protests, riots and violence ensued. The festive and celebratory element that was present during the initial days in Seattle has been lost. At least the Washington activists had one week prior to the summit and the opening day to revel in the glory that is a carnivalesque revolution. Since then, the heartbeat of the movement is beating, but its visual spectacle is less visible. In this new guerrilla war against globalization, there simply is no time or space to construct theater.

The most compelling example to prove the point that these protests are no longer celebratory or liberating is the death of Carlo Guiliani in Genoa, Italy. Police at an anti-G8 summit killed Guiliani, a 23-year-old unarmed activist. Italy hosted a meeting between the world’s wealthiest forces, whose representation within the organization is determined by the country’s economic value. 50,000 people initially turned out to protest the meeting between the U.S., Great Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and Russia. Following the young anarchist’s death, more than 300,000 people swarmed the city, while other large-scale demonstrations occurred around the world. The videos and photographs of Guiliani’s beating and subsequent death indicate that the dominant culture has lost tolerance for these displays of radicalism. These festivals of resistance are being squashed with brute force. An editorial in the online Socialist Review reflects on Guiliani’s tragic death and the current state of the movement, saying, “Genoa was a milestone for the global justice movement...in its size, in its enthusiasm, and in the clarity of what many hundreds and thousands of people were out demonstrating against” (Shawki).
As a result of the highly successful efforts on the part of activists, members of the G8 have vowed to meet in an isolated spot in a remote area of Canada where they believe it will be difficult to get protesters to mobilize. They underestimate the power of the internet as a communication medium, because activist groups have already zeroed in on the summit's Alberta location. Additionally, the alliance is planning to protest the Ottawa meeting of the IMF and World Bank. Perhaps, too, these merchants of globalization underestimate the resolve and tenacity of the protesters. These people simply believe in what they're doing that strongly. Their voices cannot be stopped. Perhaps their performances must be toned down. Perhaps they can expect to be gassed, arrested, assaulted, and even killed. But they will keep showing up.

Perhaps there never was a glorious time of yore when protesters celebrated their freedom to protest. Perhaps that idea was just a myth, and what we're really facing is a dark and twisted display of power by a small number of individuals. Perhaps the protesters' fears and frustrations about what they've accomplished are founded. But as David Zirin says in the online Socialist Worker, "They are eight, we are six-billion" (par 1). The six billion often get frustrated at what they see as a lack of concrete support and evidence of change. But I argue that change is not always immediately evident. Efficacy is a process. To refer back to Richard Schechner, we must view transformation not as a singular event, but as a series of small battles being won and mindsets being changed over time. The protesters need to be reminded that although things are not what they ought to be, they are no longer what they used to be, either. And the drama continues to play out, all over the world.
Activists will admit that one of the most difficult challenges that lies ahead of them is not the organization of future protests, nor the sustenance of alliances, but the formidable task of challenging an insidious enemy that they cannot see. Their enemy is invisible. It may reveal a temporary image, that of former Secretary of State Madeline Albright, billionaire capitalist George Soros, or author Thomas Friedman. But even eliminating the most prominent figures in the capitalist playground does not change the structure of the game. The Kansas City Star quoted one activist from California as saying, “It’s one thing if you are in the U.S. and are protesting civil rights abuses. You can take your complaints to Congress or to your mayor. But when you protest the WTO, who exactly do you expect to redress your grievances?” (Al). Michael Elliot addresses this in his Newsweek article, saying, “In a sense, the World Trade Organization is the perfect target for the activists, because so many groups have a beef with what they see as its impact. For a start, it’s headquartered far away, nobody knows who runs it and it is easily endowed with all the suspicious characteristics of bugaboos like the Trilateral Commission” (36). And yet, this is precisely the challenge with trying to fight it.

The difficulty with combating globalization and capitalism is that the processes are pervasive and insidious. Their effects are felt worldwide. The problem is not the passage of a law, the tyrannical power of an individual, or a future proposal. The protesters of the anti-globalization movement are targeting an enemy that is the system itself. The gears that drive the globalization machine work on every level and affect every individual in the world. What is more terrifying and threatening than an antagonist whom one cannot see? How does one beat up the bogeyman? What does a person do when they are fighting a problem they cannot adequately define?
The system creates large divisions in classes, promotes financial gain over environmental freedom, exploits human resources, and feeds upon its own invincibility. It is nearly impossible to place a face to the issue or to narrow down a specific problem. The problems are overwhelming and reach nearly every interest. More importantly, as these demonstrators realize, it is difficult to find victory, even to find the opponent, in this overwhelming battle. Chris Peters, director of the Seventh Generation Fund, refers to the systemic qualities and lack of humanity present in globalization, "The World Trade Organization is a symptom. It is a symptom of an illness, a very significant illness. [...] It is a thought process that is mechanistic, that was created primarily to advance a single thinking process in the world. And it has been successful." Later, he reminds readers that the problem is systemic and not personal when he writes, "We believe that there has to be a systemic change, systemic change at all levels of education, of social existence. Systemic change in economics. Systemic change in spiritual understanding. We need to look at a new narrative [...]" (Thomas 199).

Many activists have expressed frustration with the difficulties of fighting an invisible enemy. Oppression by one party over another is typically easy to identify, and thus, easier to combat. Tyranny, slavery, and war are often forms of oppression with visible villains. Even the foot soldiers of this new revolution have difficulty pinpointing who and what the evil is. It is a thought process, a way of being, a system. Janet Thomas discusses the far reaching effects of groups like the WTO when she writes:

But what about a slavery in which the ownership is less direct, involving, perhaps, a fictional entity, a power with all the rights of a person yet without the human attributes? Then the ownership is more subtle, but in
some ways it can be more pervasive. If someone owns us and we are ‘let go,’ we walk out into freedom. But what if we are owned by a culture and a value system that we are expected to participate in but not expected to help shape? (208)

These challenges will shape the outcome of this continuing struggle between the exploited people of the world and the system created by the few who are in power. When a slight percentage of the planet’s population holds the majority of the world’s wealth, how does the layperson get an opportunity to change the structure? When the bigger picture becomes too overwhelming for one to grasp, and changes seem small and slow to come, these people still continue to show up. They will continue to organize and to educate. They will continue to rely on coalitions that span continents and party platforms. They will continue to try to get their message to the public, via independent media and rallies. It is sure that this international, diverse, and highly motivated group of citizens will continue to be present at every meeting of the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the G8. The formidable and remote snow-capped mountains of the Canadian Rockies may not be as welcoming as Seattle’s lush green landscape, but it is certain that our pilgrims will get there anyway. And maybe this time, they’ll get a seat at the table.

Their efforts to date have not been for naught. The activists around the world have created a fear in the minds of the WTO members and others in power, as is evidenced by the increased policing of demonstrations and the choice of more remote sites for future meetings. These tactics are indicative of a new strategy, one that displays the power that the protesters actually have. It also is indicative of subtle changes in the
system. Who is policing whom? Audiences around the world are witnessing the incremental changes several times a year. We are seeing an increased display of security at these summits, which only indicates a sense of insecurity and intolerance on the part of the WTO, IMF, World Bank, and G8. The meetings are becoming more visible. Even if the pilgrims have yet to make it inside, the cameras are now paying great attention to what's happening outside. And more people are watching. The activists are making a difference, and the agencies they are protesting against are responding they only way that they know how. Again, a reaction on the part of these agencies is something that wasn't happening only a few years ago. Their sense of invincibility is gone, and has been replaced with an awareness that they have a vocal and massive opposition, who will show up and get noticed wherever they try to go. That is the performance, and the efficacy.
Chapter Six

Conclusion: Implications and Suggestions for Further Research

It has been three years since our Seattle pilgrims were so successful in staging and enacting their large-scale social drama. The anti-globalization movement has sustained itself, the alliances remain strong, and the appendages of globalization continue to be met by opposition at every gathering. Much has changed in three years, however. The protests have become more violent, the demonstrations less theatrical, and the presence of police force is now a normal element. In spite of adversity, our unlikely family of tree huggers and anarchists, of students and steelworkers, of religious figures and radical lesbians remains united.

The demonstrations in Seattle were not isolated events. They were one episode in a series of protests that has been shaping a movement for nearly a decade. As the movement continues to evolve and grow, trends emerge that indicate its capacity for transformation. Seattle, although not the first or the last anti-globalization demonstration, was unique and efficacious on several levels. It is important here to reexamine what gave Seattle such a special place in the ongoing struggle against worldwide oppression so that the reader is left with a sense of optimism for the future and reverence for the past.

Seattle was a spectacular display of performance theory in action. Protest is communication. People collectively using their voices to bring about change are the essence of political protest, and at the same time, at the heart of the goals of performance. I chose to analyze these demonstrations through the lens of performance theory. I found that theorists like Victor Turner, Jan Cohen-Cruz, and Richard Schechner lent great insight into an exploration of what happened that fateful week in November 1999.
The first ideas examined in this study were Victor Turner's stages of social drama. The four stages of *breach, crisis, redress,* and *reintegration/acknowledgement of schism* provided a concrete framework for a modern social protest. The chronology of the events in Seattle worked well in this frame, although I argue at the end of Chapter Two that the resolution may not be an either/or situation as much as a combination of both. Next, Jan Cohen-Cruz's categories of *witness* and *utopian theater* were used to illustrate the effective ways in which the Seattle activists used stunning visuals at the site of the struggle. Their use of aesthetics and location helped to garner worldwide attention and present an alternative vision of the future for the multiple audiences watching the event unfold. Lastly, Richard Schechner's theories of *transformation* illuminated the potential for change that a modern protest hopes to bring about. The activists' use of theatrics and carnival lent themselves to the efficacy of the performance. We see in retrospect how these elements created change in the participants, the multiple audiences, and ultimately, subtle changes in the status quo.

Continuing on the theme of efficacy, Chapter Three explored two unique and highly effective features of the Seattle demonstration. The first was the forming of alliances between tribes who had previously functioned in opposition to one another. This was the first time that labor and environment, the religious right and the liberal left had all united to fight a singular enemy. These alliances presented a united front whose numbers and issues were difficult for the WTO and the world to ignore. The formation of this alliance was possible because of very inventive and ingenious planning months ahead of time. One of the features that has shaped this movement as it evolves is the meticulous planning that goes into each event beforehand. I argue that the establishment
of rules of procedure and the details of planning and enacting direct action are elements that helped to shut down the first day of the WTO summit. This planning has its irony. It is only possible that these activists from around the world were able to communicate, align themselves, and organize so effectively because of their use of the internet. This cyber dress rehearsal of events was induced because activists reclaimed the internet as their own. Bringing it from a tool that aids the globalization process to one that aids in the fight against it was ingenious and subversive.

The final issues that I explore are the ways in which the movement has evolved since Seattle. I argue in Chapter Five that the alliances established for the Seattle event have since remained strong and are continuing their struggle. People have speculated as to the legitimacy of a coalition that includes such diverse platforms and interests, some of which function in exclusion or opposition of the other. However, the protesters realize that their display of unity continues to bring more people into the struggle, as witnesses to the events continue to find commonality with the cause.

The evidence that transformation is occurring is found in the reactionary tactics of the institutions of power that are being opposed. Since Seattle, the numbers of protesters continue to grow, while the brutality against them does as well. The World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund and G8 forces are at work attempting to discourage these alliances by shutting down their protests before they’ve gotten underway. This proves that although the changes in the system may not be apparent yet, the transformation in the security of those in power has already occurred.

I chose to analyze these protests through the lens of performance theory because it so effectively illuminates the goals and methods of a modern political protest.
At the same time, it must be noted that this study has its limitations. The following two themes are areas worthy of consideration by future scholars in the field. To have explored either of them in detail, however, would have taken this work in an entirely different direction that veered away from performance and protest. I chose to place my emphasis on the first level of activity in Seattle – what actually happened during those fateful days. By saying this, I remind the reader that I didn’t invest much energy into other aspects of the protest, either what happened prior to the summit, or how it was represented afterward.

First, I did not thoroughly examine media representation of the protests. There has been much controversy surrounding the ways in which mainstream media, who are wheels that help to drive the globalization machine, have covered these protests. The media have been accused of focusing on the violence of the demonstrators, as is the case with Seattle, or the brutality of the police in opposing them, which was evident in Genoa. Although there are numerous independent media sources which have accurately and candidly reflected on the strengths and weaknesses of this movement, the major channels have ignored issues in favor of spectacle. For more accurate critiques on this layer of the protests, I refer readers to Janet Thomas’s *The Battle in Seattle* and Cockburn and St. Clair’s *Five Days that Shook the World*.

Secondly, I chose not to investigate with much detail the use of the internet in planning and staging the demonstration. I note the effectiveness of this communication network in helping to gain worldwide solidarity for the cause. Additionally, I praise the activists for reclaiming a channel that had previously served to benefit their opposition. However, that is where my analysis ends. For a phenomenal exploration into the Seattle
contingent’s use of the internet, see Dr. Melissa Wall’s dissertation, *The Battle in Seattle: How NGO’s used the Internet to Challenge the WTO.*

The most important theme that reverberates throughout this work is the idea of transformation. Protesters are hoping to change their world by using any means possible. Their voices, aided by stunning displays of theatrical imagination, are hoping to be heard and given credibility. Many of us wish that we could be as vocal as those who parade through our city streets, risking their lives to fight an invisible and insidious enemy. We martyr those who participate. We brand them heroes. At the same time, we create an evil in the opposition. We allow the invisibility of the enemy to be an indication of the heartlessness of the powerful. But we have a tendency to point the finger at ‘the bad guy’ and ignore our own role in this process. There are lessons to be learned from Seattle. Lessons about how to organize. Lessons about how to create bonds that are stronger than party lines or platforms. Lessons about how to find success in the smallest victories, and how to maintain optimism when the victories are not clearly evident. Lastly, there are lessons to be learned about how to sustain the energy required to fight a battle that may not instantly be won. The lesson that I learned from Seattle, and from the creation of this work is that we are all complicit in the system of globalization.

We are all oppressed by the establishment of a way of life that no one ever asked us if we wanted. But we are all responsible for our role in oppressing others, in perpetuating patriarchy, and in maintaining greed as a driving force with our capitalistic consumption. We have to learn, as mentioned earlier, to make a ‘spiritual shift’. To accept responsibility for our compliance, and do our best to break out of oppressive patterns. To create meaning in relationships and not products. To care about humanity, animals, and
nature as much as we care about the almighty dollar. I think that this awareness, coupled with a willingness to act, will bring about the long term changes and finally dismantle the systems that be.

So what happens until then? Where do things go from here? Sometimes we want to know the end of the story before we’ve finished the first page. We humans are an impatient lot, bound to want to solve the problem, answer the question, read the ending. But sometimes the ambiguity is where the lessons are. We simply cannot predict the outcome of this one. This drama is continuing to play itself out all over the world nearly every day on many levels. There are more people active in the anti-globalization struggle than ever before, as the building momentum indicates. Each demonstration seems to increase in volume and ferocity. Important to the movement, though, is that each protest increases the visibility of the causes of the activists and the oppressiveness of their situation. And again, they will just keep showing up. No one can predict what shape this will take and what changes could possibly emerge as a result. But the world’s actors and activists can continue to invert norms and create utopia in their protests, and we can visualize as they do.

In a social drama the conflict resolution unfolds as the drama does. The resolution is not preordained. It is being decided in every act, in every moment of the drama itself, so that even in the last moments of the performance, we are unsure as to its finality. The transformations, and ultimately, the resolution, are developing within the minds of the spectators and participants at every moment on every level. Unlike so many other types of theater, where the spectacle is a recreation of a previous act, the drama does not recreate the conflict or its resolution in a modern social protest. The drama is
the conflict and conflict resolution. The performance is happening in real time; the script is being written as the drama unfolds. Thus, the outcome is undetermined and emerges within the performance. As Janet Thomas says, “The process is the solution” (94).
Bibliography


