

French Scandals on the Web, and on the Streets: A Small Experiment in Stretching the Limits of Reported Reality

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The main argument of this paper is that the Web is well suited for the role of a streetwise informant for protest events. Using special software, we plot the network of Web sites of organisations related to the meat and anti-globalization protests in Milau, France, in June of 2000, and compare our findings about the nature of the actors with the reports in the mass media. Not only do the findings deepen mass media accounts but they also point to a new web-sociological means to re-open the question of the real. Putting on display the institutional dimension of the protest, the Web network simultaneously undermines and enriches the mass media accounts of the protests. The Web may provide a reality check on existing accounts of the protest and document encounters between opposing definitions of reality. Our analysis also suggests the Web can be harnessed to complicate the definition of real social action.

Methodological Dictum

*If it's not on the streets, it may be on the Web
But if it's not on the Web, and it's not on the streets . . .
Case closed?
Farmers are on the streets, but who are these farmers?
Better check the Web!
Academic Graffiti, 2000*

Introduction: Newsreel

On 30 June 2000, the Dutch daily newspaper *de Volkskrant* published a short report on the globalization protests taking place in the French town of Milau. The report referred to a “bunch of disorganized anarchists” engaged in “activist tourism”. The piece also cast doubt on the viability of this form of social criticism. Referring to the smashing of windows at

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'MacDo' as a case in point, the piece expressed concern about the corner that activism has been backing itself into ever since the violent encounters during the WTO meeting in Seattle in 1999.

Inevitably, the Internet had a part to play in these accounts. The advent of anti-globalization protest in its current form is closely tied to the wiring up of society. The Internet was introduced as an essential for the widespread dissemination of announcements for upcoming events, as well as for in situ logistical support for the protesters. What was surprising about the role allocated to the Internet in these accounts was its depiction as a medium of convenience. Just as the activists were portrayed as youthful, backpacking travellers, the Internet was characterized as their guidebook in this particular context. The Internet served as a kind of *Lonely Planet* edition.

In this paper we will argue that the Internet — or the World Wide Web — may serve as a substantive guide to the events in Milau, France. The location and analysis of the Milau protest network on the Web will show how the Web may have provided insights into the substantial organizational efforts that were behind the event. What is more, these organizational accounts potentially served as adequate means of evaluating the larger rationale of the event. Our empirical analysis of the role of the Internet in recent global protest events, thereby, potentially undermines mass media accounts of the same. But more importantly, it aims to show how the Web undermines and enriches accounts of anti-globalization protest events themselves and the Internet. In the process, questions about the part played by social science in the broader societal critique of mass media arise, as do questions about the broader societal commitment to the new medium, not to mention social science's commitment to that commitment.

The definition of the Internet as a channel of alternative reporting, which would potentially make up for the deficits of mass media, has been evoked by both mass and Web media ever since the integration of new media into publishing practices took off about eight years ago. Moreover, the promise of alternative media, historically, has a special status within social science. Recently, Steve Jones (2000:172) has pointed to the deep-rooted connection between social science and alternative reporting, citing an adage by John Dewey that "a proper daily newspaper would be the only possible social science." While Jones is quick to reject a simple transplantation of Dewey's grand aspirations onto the Web — by which the Internet would be embraced as candidate for bridging the great divide between social science and the public — he does single out the definition of the Web as an alternative to off-line media. According to Jones, it is in its guise as an alternative to established reporting practices that the Web becomes an important object of social science reporting. In the case study that follows, we take up this understanding of the Web as an alternative as an empirical question worthy of investigation.

From our controlled exercise of searching the Web for alternative accounts of mass media events, we have two key findings. On the one hand, from the vantage point of empirical study, the Web cannot be properly understood as a parallel universe, existing 'alongside' the world of mass media. On the other hand, the exercise indicates that the Web may be especially well equipped to serve as an informant of sociological accounts of events reported in the mass media.

Romanticisms of the Web and of the Streets: the Web as 'Reality Check'

The definition of the Internet as a realm of alternatives has been part of the repertoire of social studies of the Internet. The question of whether interactions via the Internet 'complement' or 'substitute' their off-line manifestations, for example, has occupied social scientists. As Sherry Turkle (1999:341) puts it, it proves difficult to keep out of the 'war of the worlds' while defending or resisting the 'virtual life'. Even the post-disciplinary framing of a research field called 'Internet studies' already contains the seeds of this conflict (Stone, 1995; Borgman, 1999). It points towards the definition of the Internet as a domain unto itself, juxtaposed with social lives off the Net. While this definition of the Internet can, of course, at all times be dismissed on methodological, theoretical, or, as we will show, empirical grounds; the simple fact of dedicating one's inquiries to the one channel in particular, brings along with it the risk of inadvertently choosing sides in the conflict between the virtual and the real, indeed, favouring the former.

We became particularly aware of this divide when asked by a French sociologist whether we, as Web analysts, could explain why the French did not hit the streets after a fraud scandal surrounding the *Crédit Lyonnais* bank. The initial suspicion handed to us was that the French may instead have 'hit the Web'. As Web analysts within the broader field of the sociology of scandals and protests, we sought not just to dig up alternative accounts, but also to check whether the Web perhaps provides an alternative to the streets. The definition of the Internet as alternative, not just to the news, but also to the off-line in general in this respect, seemed to come with the job of being the Web sociologist among sociologists.

Turning this problem into a virtue, we decided to go after French protesters on the Web, as a way of testing the understanding of the Web as a realm of alternatives. Using the earlier methodological dictum as a guideline, our intention was to provide a reality check for the idea that the Internet has the potential to somehow substitute the mass media, or for empty streets. We will, thus, test the twin assumptions that the Web provides an alternative to mass media reporting, and to the streets. As to

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the first assumption, our small experiment of ‘checking the Web’ provided an empirical answer to the question of whether the Web can be approached as a realm that exists alongside that of mass media reporting. As to the second assumption, the aim of our small experiment was to see if and how the Web can come to our aid in filling in, and complicating, the picture of the streets. To the degree that the Web allows for a depiction of the substantial organizational efforts that go into street protests, the small experiment also provides a reality check for the romanticism of the streets — found in the mass media as well as in some social science circles — which equates real social action with street gatherings. Our small experiment, in this way, aims to provide a test of the explanatory power of the Web; on whether it can provide an account of events that add to mass media and social science reporting.

In a lecture to the British Virtual Society Research Centre, Bruno Latour (1998), argued that the Web is mainly of importance to social science insofar as it makes possible new types of descriptions of social life. According to Latour, the social integration of the Web constitutes an event for social science because the social link becomes traceable in this medium. Thus, social relations are established in a tangible form as a material network connection. We take Latour’s claim of the tangibility of the social as a point of departure in our search for French protesters on the Web.

Encounters with the Street and the Web, and the Indispensability of ‘Webbified’ Mass Media

It is important to point out that we know little of the Crédit Lyonnais scandal from our vantage points in Amsterdam and Budapest, and from our respective wired sources of knowledge and information. We hear that the French did not hit the streets because of the Crédit Lyonnais scandal. All we know in terms of the French hitting the streets, recently, concerns not bankers but French farmers. While not wishing to make too much of our semi-ignorance, we consider the circumstance favourable in light of our question, i.e., what *the Web* — not merely TV and the newspapers — can tell us about the French protests and scandals on the streets.

In asking whether the French hit the Web as an alternative to the streets, we are of the impression that an affirmative answer would imply a radical transformation of the rules of mobilization as they are perceived by the mass media. The problem with the Crédit Lyonnais scandal, as we speculated, was likely to be a problem of iconization. The scandal’s focal points — the *faux bilans* published by Crédit Lyonnais and the ‘substantial costs per French taxpayer’ — assumed the form of numbers. Was it the scandal’s resistance to movement from this numerical realm into the more

colourful, more material realm of media icons that kept the French off the streets? If so, a solid presence of protesting French on the Web as opposed to the streets would mean that this medium in some way evaded the golden rule assumed by the mass media: iconization as indispensable for mobilization. When boarding the Web, it is precisely the hope to short cut the mass media and their golden rule of iconisation that has to be stowed. In order for the uninitiated to find protesting French on the Web, a familiar starting point is required; this can be none other than a mass search engine like www.altavista.fr or a mass 'journal' like www.tout.lemonde.fr.

For our attempt to locate a displaced protest surrounding the Crédit Lyonnais scandal, www.altavista.fr and www.tout.lemonde.fr provided the starting points. A story from www.tout.lemonde.fr yielded the names of the main actors involved in the scandal, among which were a number of potentially 'http-ed' institutions such as Crédit Lyonnais, MGM, Commission des Opérations de Bourse, la Cour des comptes, l'Inspection des Finances, le Trésor, etc. With the aid of the search engine, their URLs can be found. But these actors, even if they mention the scandal, do not link to one another. A web-based network of organizations involved in or mobilizing around the scandal could not be located. In the absence of any direct acknowledgement of other parties involved among our actors, we were forced to conclude that the Web showed no sign of collective engagement with the issue.

The question of whether the Web allows for mobilization in the absence of media iconization had to be, at least for this case and at that moment, answered in the negative. In this instance, we admit we were unable to harness the explanatory power of the Web. The only way the absence of the Crédit Lyonnais issue on the Web could provide an explanation for the empty streets would be the argument that the French did not hit the streets *because* they failed to hit the Web. We would not want to go that far. Secondly, we must admit that from the standpoint of the uninitiated, an unfulfilled romanticism of the streets cannot be replaced by a romanticism of the Web. The streets are empty, but so is the Web. In the case of empty streets, the hope that mobilization may occur through the Web must be abandoned. Finally, we gladly admit that, at least for the moment, there is no need to start grappling with the issue of the absorption of the French streets by the Web. Thus, we partially fill in the dictum: There are Frenchmen not in the streets and not on the Web in the Crédit Lyonnais case. But there are farmers in the streets.

The television representation of French farmers on the streets looked like proper street protest. The newspaper articles, however, presented a less straightforward story, questioning the farmers' authenticity. [Www.tout.lemonde.fr](http://www.tout.lemonde.fr) alluded to the 'phoneyess' of the farmers; the Dutch newspaper *de Volkskrant* subsequently referred to a 'bunch of disorganised

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anarchists', joyfully hopping on the protest train, whose act of 'activist tourism' thereby compromised the original cause of the farmers. The involvement of an impressive range of international entities in the trial following the farmer attack on a 'Macdo' seems to complicate the picture further. It is hard to believe that the international entities just dropped out of the air, as the romanticist perspective that portrays street protest as a spontaneous phenomenon might have it.

We return to our dictum:

There are Frenchmen not in the streets and not on the Web (Crédit Lyonnais)
There are farmers in the streets; but who are these farmers? (Better check the Web!)

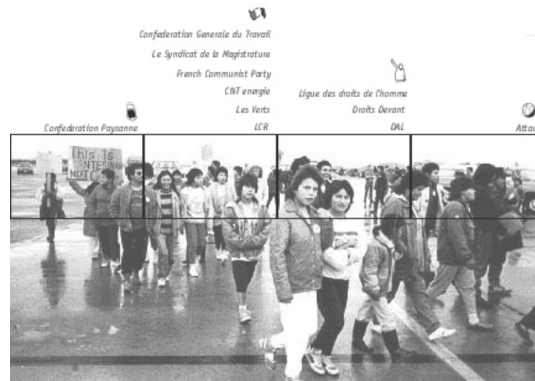
From the newspapers, we seem to have stumbled upon the delicate subject of the French streets potentially being invaded, perhaps even taken over, by international entities. Because it is not just the romanticism of the streets, but of French streets that seems shaken, the issue of the identity of the protesters becomes vital. How does one find out? Better check the Web! Whilst it is the case that, for the uninitiated, protests on the Web cannot be seen as distinct from protests on the streets, from real worldly icons; the Web may nevertheless provide us with the means to stretch the limits of iconization and gain a clear view of what the farmers do besides farming.

Web Findings: Who are these Farmers? Whose are these Streets?

Following the same methodology as outlined above, involved actors were distilled from an article at www.tout.lemonde.fr, and their URLs easily found. Interestingly, even though the fact cannot be perfectly squared with allusions to 'phoney farmers' made elsewhere on www.tout.lemonde.fr, our finding indicates French-only starting points, with the semi-exception of Attac, the NGO founded in France, and now internationalized (see Figure 1). Our list of starting points is in keeping with the historicized French street romance of a spontaneous alliance of students and workers. The impression is only reinforced by that fact that quite a few of the websites of the syndicates, political party branches and associations mentioned by the newspaper, do mention the farmers' trial. Was the gathering in the town of Milau, after all, predominantly French, and maybe even ad hoc?

We now turn to our homemade 'netlocator' software to find out whether an authoritative network is disclosed from our chosen starting points. If it locates such a network, the 'netlocator' would give us an indication of the degree to which the streets are still romantic, still French. With the netlocator serving as our medium, the Web was searched in an

Figure 1. Actors in “French Farmers Protest” Media Story



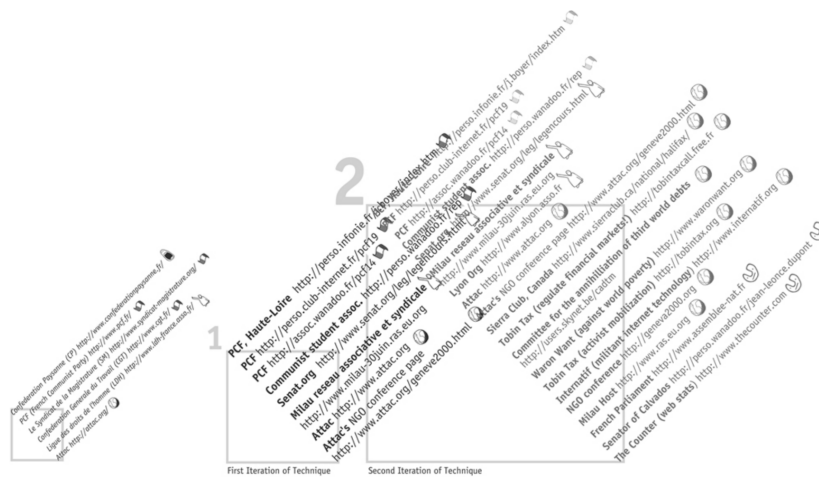
attempt to re-make or unmake the various spectacles brought to us by CNN, *de Volkskrant* and www.tout.lemonde.fr.

Actors from the newspaper article that (a) have a website, (b) mention the farmers' trial and (c) link to other domains, were entered into the netlocator. Links from the URLs of the French farmers, French left wing political parties and syndicates, French NGOs, and a network were returned through co-link analysis. This network contained mainly French political parties, syndicates and NGOs. The farmers are absent. The brief analysis yielded the view that, according to the Web, the farmers were not farmers, but mainly French 'politicos'. Without the farmers, we had only a portion of the ingredients for the romantic streets recipe. Taking these French politicians and the initial starting points, and then inputting them into the netlocator, however, returned not only French politicians, but also a significant number of international, issue-based, activist organizations, many of which are dedicated to global economy issues. There were still no farmers. Thus, according to the Web, the farmers were not farmers, but represented an organizational configuration that moved from the national to the global, and from the political-ideological to the issue-activist. As is evident from Figure 2, it was quite an organized picture, whereby not farmers, nor 'phony farmers', nor 'a bunch of disorganized anarchists' made up the protests. Instead, it was a professional national-international network.

It is important to stress that merely querying the Web does not allow the uninitiated to locate the protest network. We were unable to evade the media's narrow definition of what counts as real protest. But the Web enabled us to put the media's rehearsals of the events as well as our friendly analysts' romanticism of the streets in their proper places, as it shows us that, like Russian dolls, organized professionals inhabited the iconized and perhaps romanticized figures of farmers (see Figure 3). By means of the Web, the limits of iconization and street romanticism can be stretched.

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Figure 2. Actors in “French Farmers Protest” Network on the Web.



- Legend**
-  National farmers organisations
 -  National grassroots organisations
 -  National student organisations, unions, political parties
 -  International grassroots organisations
 -  Remaining

Here, we would like to make clear, to the proverbial French romantic, that the Web does not remedy the dying romanticism of the streets. Rather, the streets are alive with ‘webby’ networks.

Conclusions

We wish to conclude with the idea that the main virtue of the virtual is to open up the question of the real. There are four steps in this position. Firstly, one could be tempted, from the outset, to believe in the purity of French farmer protest and the streets, especially if one is a foreigner. Secondly, upon examination of the media, the reality of the event of French farmer street protest is compromised when it is cynically represented and mystified as ‘a bunch of disorganized anarchists’, engaged in a novel form of conflict tourism. Such a rendering also unintentionally blurs journalism with cultural studies. Thirdly, ‘checking the Web’ becomes a ‘reality check’ in the sense that it allows one to fill in the integrity of the streets that were sullied and compromised through reporting. Of course, one could

Figure 3. “From the Web to the streets: French Farmers as Russian Dolls”.



travel to Milau, and by observing and/or participating, capture some of the complexity of the French streets in the age of the Web. But the streets tend to have no names. Indeed, reports from Seattle often lacked any semblance of knowledge about the actual networks of groups involved and their positions. Sound bites on TV and one-liners in newspaper articles often strip “a group calling itself . . .” of a (networked) past and a (networked) future. Only an overall anti-message from a group of protestors, plus TV spectacle, was communicated. Fourthly, and finally, it could be argued that the Web and Web analyses ultimately enriches the streets. Without it, the ‘coded’ website for ‘swimmers’ announcing team ‘meets’, as was in the case of Milau, France on 30 of June, would remain opaque.

In adding the description of the organizational network that supported it to the mass media accounts of the street protest, our small exercise brought in the web and a research instrument to take up the formidable task put to social science by C. Wright Mills (1971:212) as “no less than to present conflicting definitions of reality itself.” Whereas the goal of Mills’ social science was to extract the marginal definitions of reality from social life by means of the interview and the survey, Web analyses can rely on pre-existing documentations of social life, having been encoded on to the Web by the actors ‘themselves’. In the context of the new media, the staging of the conflict between competing definitions of realities thus becomes a question of crossing available information streams, to bring those emanating from news agencies in contact with those generated on the Web. Insofar as the justification for this type of research is concerned, however, Mills’ mission statement can be transplanted to the context of the new media

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virtually unchanged. It was Mills' conviction that as documenter of the conflict between dominant and marginal definitions of reality, social research counts as a viable alternative to "hitting the pavement, taking the next plane to the scene of the current crisis [. . .] or buying a newspaper plant." Web analysis adds descriptions of the encounter between action and reporting. But as a footnote to Mills, we would like to add that in documenting that encounter on the Web, it is possible to show that *political action itself* may extend well beyond the narrow limits to action suggested by 'hitting the pavement' or 'buying the plant'.

Methodological Appendix

We ask, who are these farmers? Or, how are we able to find (or be sure not to find) French farmers on the Web, and determine whether *they* are hitting the streets? To make a determination, one first finds the 'issue network' — those (1) discussing and debating the 'issue' and (2) mobilizing other actors to action. In order to find an issue network among the swells of sites whose issues somehow revolve around protesting French farmers, one is in need of fixed starting points. Previously, we have identified and discussed the outcomes of at least five distinct starting points for locating issue networks on the Web: search engines, associative reasoning, media stories, public actors and/or discussion lists (Rogers/Zelman, 2001). In isolation or in combination, these means of identifying starting points are aimed at finding those organizations whose sites reveal the debate most extensively by virtue of their respective link lists. This is the first step in locating an issue network. We then deploy a simple, home-made machine (the "netlocator" also called the 'depluralising engine' by www.govcom.org) to 'rub' the network and chart the most relevant sites. By 'rub', we mean that the netlocator mines each starting point three levels deep, follows links and identifies candidate sources; those sources linked by at least two actors (in the 'medium inclusiveness' setting) are brought back by the locator. The netlocator currently supports up to seven starting points. Normally, a minimum of three will suffice.

As for the different means of locating the starting points with search engines, it is assumed that the keywords are known by the surfer. One uses the top returns as starting points, and rubs for a network with the machine. Associative reasoning relies on intelligent guesswork; either the issue or the presumed relevant organization is simply typed into the browser, with .org, .com or another suffix attached (in a previous case study, we began with milk.org, grains.org and corn.org). One follows links from the associatively reasoned site(s), until one finds sites displaying the debate extensively. These sites are rubbed. The third technique allows a leading media story to be the guide; those organizations mentioned are then located either through a search engine, or by associative reasoning. The URLs are

then rubbed. Public actors are similarly located; one presumes well-known public actors (e.g., Greenpeace for climate change) will display the debate around an issue extensively, and they are located through a search engine or by associative reasoning. One could also subscribe to a discussion list about the topic in question, and chart the links recommended by the discussants in their ongoing postings over a particular period in time. It is important to note that each means relies on distinctly different 'expertise' or 'recommenders' with varying epistemological and 'info-societal' consequences for each of the subsequent networks located (Marres/Rogers, 2000).

We present the case study with the aid of the 'diary of a crawler'. The kept log explains how the network is located; it also details the most significant finding touched upon above, that is, *the de-iconization of the romantic French streets by organized, virtual, global civil society*. We present the case through the following steps below:

1. Knowing nothing of the issue concerning French farmers, we turned to www.tout.lemonde.fr. There was no need to take recourse to their *moteur de recherche*; the first headline on their homepage staged our farmers. The issue according to *le toutlemonde* (<http://www.lemonde.fr/article/0,2320,seq-2030-74010-QUO,00.html>):

Événement planétaire à Millau, Aveyron: 30 000 à 50 000 manifestants venus du monde entier sont attendus pour le procès, le 30 juin, de José Bové. Figure emblématique de la résistance à la mondialisation, il sera jugé pour avoir attaqué, en août 1999, le McDonald's en construction dans cette ville. La chaîne américaine CNN a installé ses caméras dans plusieurs appartements face au tribunal.

Then some background:

Le 12 août 1999, un groupe de trois cents éleveurs du Syndicat des producteurs de lait de brebis et de la Confédération paysanne «démontent» virilement le restaurant McDonald's en construction dans la ville. Avec M. Bové à leur tête, ils entendent protester contre la surtaxation américaine du fromage de roquefort après que l'Union européenne eut décidé de ne plus importer de viande aux hormones des Etats-Unis.

2. The article yielded a long list of potentially webby (http-ed) actors:

- CNN (present at the scene)
- Jose Bove (leader of the resistance)
- *le Syndicat des producteurs de lait de brebis* (farmers)
- *la Confédération paysanne* (farmers)
- Lori Wallace of Public Citizen ('expert' witness in the trial)
- *Confédération paysanne* (the farmers)
- CGT (*Confédération Generale du Travail*)

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- *les SUD (solidaire, unitaire et démocratique, a syndicat)*
 - CNT (*confederation nationale de travail*)
 - PS (Socialist party)
 - PCF (Communist party)
 - Verts (Green party)
 - LCR (*ligue communiste revolutionnaire*)
 - *Ligue des droits de l'homme* (human rights organization)
 - DAL (*droit au logement*)
 - Attac (association of citizens, newspapers and syndicats)
 - *Droits devant!* (human rights organization, linked to DAL)
 - *Le Syndicat de la Magistrature* (syndicat)
3. Most of these actors were easily found by surfing from search engine returns (www.altavista.fr) and by following links. That is to say, we were on familiar ground where the behaviour of civil society actors was concerned; we had linking organizations that disclosed their cohorts. A selection of these actors (those that had a website, discussed the issue, and linked to other actors) was ready to be fed into the network locator. Judging from the intensity of linking, a demarcated sample would have probably emerged, and we would have had the makings of an issue network map.
 4. As is often the case with freshly erupted events, two actors presented as central players by the newspaper *Syndicat des producteurs de lait de brebis* and the French McDonald's, had a very thin presence on the Web. www.altavista.fr returned only five entries when queried for the syndicat: three online newspaper articles (*midilibre*), the *confederation paysanne*, and *millau-clic*, a local portal for the town that was our scene of action. (For reasons that are easy to guess, that site was almost impossible to reach on 30 June 2000 — a protest day). The syndicat did not own its own domain on the Web, and www.Macdonalds.fr was 'under construction'. For the sake of contrast, we would like to mention that during the Kyoto Conference on Climate Change (1998), the website of Shell, a main target of the CO₂ emission reduction lobby, initially remained more or less silent on the issue. When British eco-terrorists destroyed GM crops in the summer of 1999, the Monsanto website initially showed no sign of awareness of the protests against its business. While McDonalds is certainly less central to the farmers protest, and the fact that its site was under construction most probably due to other reasons, it is surprising to notice how actors that are at the centre of the action according to the mass media, remain in the background on the Web, at least initially.
 5. Judging from its 'links in from the issue-network' the following site has a solid presence: <http://www.millau-30juin.ras.eu.org>. It is a practical information site set up by, well, some of the people involved. Self-

evidently this site did not figure in the newspaper article. Newspapers only go so far in contributing to mobilization.

6. As to the question whether 'they' were really farmers, the answer seemed to depend on the centrality of the *confederation paysanne* (farmers' federation) in the network. In any case, it was clear that there were many people in Milau dressed up as farmers. Or more accurately, the farmers were serving as 'dress' for many other players. Not surprisingly, it turned out that for .orgs, it was more a question of going to where the action was, than whether one was already tied to the issue. The organizations involved range from 'against homelessness' to 'the workers' to 'the environment'. That is to say, they did not exactly have careers in farming. They were civil society swarms.

On a final note, it should be mentioned that two domains that appeared in the Credit Lyonnais scandal also figured at <http://www.verts.imagnet.fr> and wanadoo.fr.

Actors in 'French Farmers Protest': Media Story Network

- | | |
|--|---|
| • <i>Confederation Paysanne</i> (CP) | http://www.confederationpaysanne.fr/ |
| • <i>Ligue des droits de l'homme</i> (LDH) | http://www.ldh-france.asso.fr/ |
| • Attac | http://attac.org/ |
| • <i>CNT energie</i> (CNT) | http://assoc.wanadoo.fr/energie/ |
| • PCF (French Communist Party) | http://www.pcf.fr/ |
| • <i>Les Verts</i> | http://www.verts.imagnet.fr/ |
| • <i>Le Syndicat de la Magistrature</i> (SM) | http://www.syndicat-magistrature.org/ |
| • <i>Confederation Generale du Travail</i> (CGT) | http://www.cgt.fr/ |
| • LCR | http://www.lcr-rouge.org/ |
| • DAL | http://www.easynet.fr/appelsan/dal.html |
| • <i>Droits Devant</i> (DD) | http://www.easynet.fr/appelsan/mani.html |

Having found these linking actors with so little effort, the presence of an issue-network was to be expected. Thus, the network locator was called in to crawl and cull the network.

The link lists of CP, CNT, PCF, verts and CGT above were inputted as starting points. Hit and crawl from CP, CNT, PCF, verts, CGT brought up the following actors (By hit and crawl is meant that the locator crawls the site three levels deep and follows the outward links to sites other than its own; those sites linked by at least two actors in the sample are returned by the locator).

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| • PCF, Haute-Loire | http://perso.infonie.fr/j.boyer/index.htm |
| • PCF | http://perso.club-internet.fr/pcf19 |
| • PCF | http://assoc.wanadoo.fr/pcf14 |
| • Communist student association | http://perso.wanadoo.fr/rep |
| • Attac, Toulon | http://perso.infonie.fr/lvaise/ |

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- CGT <http://www.multimania.com/cgtforclum>
- CGT <http://assoc.wanadoo.fr/ufcmpx>

It is clear that these starting points disclose a national kinship network of allied organizations. Perhaps, interestingly, *confederation paysanne* — the organization presented as central by the newspapers and one that could be regarded as such on the basis of its site — was not in the webby issue network. Also, note the frequency of the perso (personal) domain. This brings to the surface that there are people (identifiable people no less) behind this protest event! In the Crédit Lyonnais scandal, people were not self-evident. The former crawl being a trial, six starting points were next entered: CP, LDH, Attac, PCF, SM, CGT (leaving out those public actors that did not discuss the issue). Hit and crawl brought us the following:

- Attac's NGO conference page <http://www.attac.org/geneve2000.html>
- *Le Monde Diplomatique* <http://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/md/1997/12/ramonet/9665.html>
- PCF, Haute-Loire <http://perso.infonie.fr/j.boyer/index.htm>
- PCF <http://perso.club-internet.fr/pcf19>
- PCF <http://assoc.wanadoo.fr/pcf14>
- Communist student association <http://perso.wanadoo.fr/rep>
- Senat.org <http://www.senat.org/leg/legencours.html>
- *Milau reseau associative et syndicale* <http://www.milau-30juin.ras.eu.org>

Then we inputted this actor network and the original starting points. This rub would affirm the presence of an issue-network if the sites returned here overlapped with original starting points, and these actors themselves. The second rub would yield medium threshold yields:

- Attac's NGO conference page <http://www.attac.org/geneve2000.html>
- Attac Netherlands <http://www.attac.nl>
- *Le Monde Diplomatique* <http://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/md/1997/12/ramonet/9665.html>
- PCF, Haute-Loire <http://perso.infonie.fr/j.boyer/index.htm>
- PCF <http://perso.club-internet.fr/pcf19>
- PCF <http://assoc.wanadoo.fr/pcf14>
- Communist student association <http://perso.wanadoo.fr/rep>
- Senat.org <http://www.senat.org/leg/legencours.html>
- *Milau reseau associative et syndicale* <http://www.milau-30juin.ras.eu.org>
- French Parliament <http://www.assemblee-nat.fr>
- Senator of Calvados <http://perso.wanadoo.fr/jean-leonce.dupont>
- Sierra Club, Canada <http://www.sierraclub.ca/national/halifax/>
- The Counter (web stats) <http://www.thecounter.com>
- *Tobin Tax* (regulate financial markets!) <http://tobintaxcall.free.fr>

- Committee on annihilation of Third World debt <http://users.skynet.be/cadtm>
- *Waron Want* (against world poverty) <http://www.waronwant.org>
- *Tobin Tax* (activist mobilization) <http://tobintax.org>
- *Internatif* (militant internet technology) <http://www.internatif.org>
- Lyon organization <http://www.alyon.asso.fr>
- NGO conference <http://geneva2000.org>
- Milau host <http://www.ras.eu.org>

We noticed the globalizing tendencies of issue-networking. In the second rub, many more international organizations were returned, and again the *confederation paysanne* is absent. What is more, the delocalized issue of the regulation of markets re-emerged at the second rub, where it seemed to have been absorbed by French revolutionary politics after the first rub.

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