

THE CYBERFACE OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE: WTO DISCOURSE AND THE
MANAGEMENT OF GLOBALIZATION

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Abstract

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This study seeks to address the contested character of globalization by highlighting two important features of contemporary global processes; first, emerging forms of global governance, second, emerging forms of legitimization in cyberspace. The study will argue that emerging forms of governance represented by intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and the increasing use of cyber-discourse as a form of legitimization can be theorized through the concept of the cyberface of global governance. The cyberface of global governance refers to the ways in which IGOs representing forms of global governance utilize cyber-discourse as a means to legitimize that governance, through the creation and maintenance of an organizational web presence that manages representations of organizational identity and organizational issues. This study conducts a case study discourse analysis of the official website of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to assess the ways that the WTO uses cyber-discourse to legitimize the WTO system as a form of global governance. The WTO cyber-discourse legitimizes the WTO system by articulating its organizational identity and organizational issues in a way that attempts to manage globalization through the management of the sovereignty of the nation-state.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

On November 30, 1999, human rights, labor, environmental, and other activist groups converged on Seattle to protest a meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO). The protest in Seattle was one of a series of large and widely reported protests throughout the world against various international organizations that Bruner (2003) described as the last large scale progressive movement of the 20th century. Although often perceived as an anti-globalization movement, such a representation reflects a limited understanding of the objectives of the various groups involved. Most of these groups promoted particular versions of globalization (Best 2005) in terms of their concern for encouraging the globalization of worldwide standards for human rights, labor, and the environment.

By recognizing this movement as proposing “alternative visions of globalization” (Best, 2005, p. 223) these events come to represent a more politicized notion of globalization. Globalization is not something inevitable, but is a deeply contested and fought over political process; a process of struggle to implement particular versions of globalization and to institutionalize particular structures of global order. Globalization is “not a structure that is already set in place” (Shome & Hegde, 2002, p. 175) but an emergent structure that is contested by a variety of political and economic actors. As such, this study addresses the contested character of globalization by highlighting two important features of contemporary global processes; first, emerging forms of global governance, and second, emerging forms of legitimization in cyberspace.

An important feature of contemporary globalization is the rise of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) that represent prominent forms of emerging global governance. Held and McGrew (2003) described globalization as including “an expansion of international governance at regional and global levels—from the EU to the WTO” (p. 38). IGOs such as the WTO are formal organizations with an international membership made up of nation-states for the purposes of engaging in cooperative regulatory efforts on behalf of the interests of its members (Evans & Newnham, 1998; Carin et al., 2006). By targeting a very specific type of international organization for their protests, activists in Seattle and elsewhere exhibited an understanding of the issues of globalization in how particular versions of globalization are implemented, maintained, and managed. This movement contested IGOs because the activists saw them as representing global networks that are the source of power behind a particular market oriented version of globalization (Best, 2005). The movement specifically targeted IGOs because they recognized these international organizations function to institutionalize the rhetoric and form the policy structures of a particular type of market oriented global order (Bruner, 2003).

Highlighting the role of IGOs as formal organizations, as well as the role of market oriented rhetoric and its relationship to policy is important in clarifying the distinction between government and governance. Both government and governance refer to systems of rule, yet government designates activities backed by a usually formal, centralized, and sovereign authority, whereas governance has a wider meaning that includes governmental institutions and formal organizations like IGOs, but also includes informal regulatory mechanisms (Evans & Newnham, 1998). IGOs are important forms

of global governance as formal organizations and as sites of discourses that have implications for regulation on a global scale. Discourse is an important feature of emerging forms of global governance that seek to manage globalization because “global governance does not happen only through bureaucratic organizations...rules with a planetary scope are also formulated, implemented, and enforced through deeper structures: for example, the informal networks of what some have called the “global managerial class”; and the reigning policy discourse of what many have termed ‘neoliberalism’” (Carin et al., 2006, p. 2).

The role of IGOs as formal organizations and as sites of discourses in emerging forms of global governance highlights the importance of organizational communication to understanding globalization. Especially useful is a theoretical trajectory that addresses how organizations and organizational communication are embedded within mutually constitutive relationships between themselves as social entities and the larger sociopolitical environment (Benson, 1977; Clegg, 1981; Mumby & Stohl, 1996; Finet, 2001; Carlone & Taylor, 1998; Deetz, 1992; Stohl, 2005). More specifically, this trajectory provides insight into how “the discursive practices of and within organizations also influence the larger sociopolitical context, including the direction of social change” (Finet, 2001, p. 273; Deetz, 1992). Addressing externally oriented organizational communication and the ways it is deployed to manage organizational identity and organizational issues provides one important way organizations seek to derive legitimacy and influence the larger sociopolitical environment (Cheney & Christensen, 2001). Another way organizational communication can contribute to the study of globalization is by addressing how IGOs and the discourse of IGOs influence the direction of the global

social changes characteristic of globalization. Critical organizational work in particular has begun to develop an understanding of the role of IGO legitimization discourse and the implementation of neo-liberal versions of economic globalization (Ganesh et al., 2005; Zoller, 2004).

This trajectory in organizational communication is important in addressing the communicative impact on the larger sociopolitical environment of the legitimization efforts of organizational entities, and specifically in understanding the role of the legitimization efforts of IGOs in forms of global governance that attempt to manage globalization. However, the value of this trajectory to understanding the increasingly prominent issues related to global governance can be advanced further by including the rise of legitimization in cyberspace as an equally important feature of contemporary globalization. The global expansion of the Internet and with it the increasing use of cyber-discourse for organizational legitimization has important implications for the influence of organizational communication on the larger sociopolitical environment. This is indicated in the rise and potential dominance of the use of web communications for public relations activities (Jackson, 2007), the use of the web to develop a cyberface (Mitra, 1997) by social groups and nation-states that acts as an external representation of collective identity in the context of globalization processes (Mitra, 1997; Fursich & Robbins, 2002), how the web provides for a “new electronic face of government” (Chadwick, 2001, p. 454) for the political legitimization functions of governmental entities, and the growing usefulness of the web to the functions of IGOs (Antoine & Geeraerts, 1997).

Organizational communication research needs to address both the role of IGOs as organizations that represent emerging global governance and how organizational cyber-discourse can contribute to the legitimization of emerging global governance. This study will argue that emerging forms of governance represented by IGOs, and the increasing use of cyber-discourse as a form of organizational legitimization, can be theorized through the concept of the cyberface of global governance. That is, the cyberface of global governance refers to how the IGO use of cyber-discourse to articulate its organizational identity and organizational issues in cyberspace contributes to the construction and maintenance of a presence within cyberspace that attempts to legitimize forms of global governance.

Discourse and Global Structure

The externally oriented organizational discourse of IGOs is able to have a significant influence on the larger global sociopolitical context and the direction of the global social changes characteristic of globalization because the discourse is not only reflective of, but also contributes to the constitution of global structures. This study specifically highlights the way IGO discourse attempts to contribute to the constitution of political and economic structures on a global scale.

This is consistent with the discourse theory developed by Laclau and Mouffe (1985). In this approach, social agents must contend with constraining political and economic social structures that provide the subject with real experience, but those structures themselves are constituted through previously enacted discursive formations that have been temporarily fixed through hegemonic struggles, they are articulated

entities. Torfing (1998) argued that discourse contributes to the construction of the political structures of the state and to economic structures. Political and economic structures are articulated ensembles that are temporarily fixed through social struggles and are subject to contestation and re-articulation (Torfing, 1998; 1999). Discourse theory designates “the economy as a discursive formation” and directs analysis toward the “discursive construction of the economic” (Torfing, 1999, p. 39).

This study addresses Alvesson and Karreman’s (2000) concern that studies of organizations through discourse analysis need to provide definition and discussion of what discourse actually means. Based on the developments of discourse theory (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Howarth, 2000; Torfing, 1999; Norval, 2000), this study defines discourse as organizing systems of difference. These organizing systems of difference provide the conditions of possibility for the meaning of all objects, subjects, and relations between objects and subjects, and thus for all meaningful social practices, including the practices that are articulated and temporarily unified in the form of political and economic structures. The discourse theory approach to the way discourse contributes to the production of political and economic structure reflects a focus on discourse as providing quasi-transcendental conditions of possibility, that is, “the very possibility of perception, thought and action depends on the structuration of a certain meaningful field which pre-exists any factual immediacy” (Laclau, 1993, p. 431; quoted in Torfing, 1999, p. 84). Cognitions, speech acts, practices, etc, become meaningful and possible through contingently constructed and historically variable discursive conditions of possibility that are “subject to political struggles and historical transformation (Torfing, 2005, p. 10; Torfing, 1999).

Discourse designates the way social subjects organize the material world into systems of difference to produce systems of signification that provide meaning in order to engage in material production and practice in a concrete and material world. That is, discourse is a material force. However, in advancing this conceptualization of discourse it is important to address the notion of materiality. Johnson (2007) suggested that the notion of discourse being material has two different senses. First, a sense derived from a Marxist tradition “where ‘material’ is taken up as attention to the influence of socioeconomic factors on communication” (p. 28). The second sense of “material is an ontological notion that posts the “objectiveness” of discourse itself” (p. 28). The division between the material and the symbolic is a problematic dichotomy, all symbols are physical phenomena and so are ontologically material, that is “discursive entities are considered to be literally material just as physical and biological entities are material” (p. 29). This study adopts the second sense of the ontologically material conceptualization of discourse to ensure that discourse is understood as a concrete part of the material world that does not just reflect but has the power to constitute other material structures, including the socioeconomic. This ontologically materialist emphasis on discourse as providing quasi-transcendental conditions of possibility provides a rationale for how the organizational discourse of IGOs can make a significant contribution to the constitution of the global political and economic structures of globalization.

Moving from discourse as organizing systems of difference to the constitution of structural constraints in the social order, and for the purposes of this study specifically, the global order, is provided through conceptualizing discursive struggles over globalization and the constitution of global order with a dialectical reading of hegemony

(Mumby, 1997, 2005; Norton & Sadler, 2006), the concept of interorganizational discourse (Norton, 2008), the concept of sedimentation (Clegg, 1981; Mumby, 2001; Mendoza et al., 2002; Laffey, 2000; Torfing, 1999, 1998), and the hegemonic universalization of particular interests (Gramsci, 1971; Torfing, 1999; Norval, 2000; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000).

Understanding globalization through a dialectical reading of hegemony highlights how globalization is not an inevitable phenomenon but rather a field of discursive contestation over versions of global order advocated by competing social forces. A dialectical reading of Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony in terms of organizational communication highlights a movement away from either control or resistance, and instead conceptualizes hegemony as a constant tension between controlling and resistance forces in a field of struggle (Mumby, 1997, 2005). That is, hegemony needs to be examined "as a process of struggle and contestation" (Norton & Sadler, 2006, p. 366) that is not a static state of affairs but rather "an ongoing, always problematic or dialectical struggle through and within discourse" (Norton & Sadler, 2006, p. 367).

The link between the discourse of IGOs and globalization as a field of discursive struggle is provided through the concept of "interorganizational discourse" (Norton, 2008). Globalization is an interorganizational discourse that functions as a global field of contestation in which social forces engage in the pursuit of political-economic sets of interests. In Norton's (2008) discussion of property as an interorganizational discourse, he argued that "as interorganizational, I mean that property functions as site of politics and contestation among collectives...property is thus a discourse among organizations whereby stakeholders gain and defend rights to land" (p. 211). Similarly, globalization is

also a discourse among organizations. Consequently, rather than just placing organizations within a context of globalization processes, an interorganizational view is able to account for how the interorganizational discourses of globalization can contribute to the constitution of global structures that implement a particular version of globalization. An important characteristic of globalization is that it is a constantly contested and evolving product contributed to by the interorganizational discourse of IGOs and other organizational entities.

The interorganizational discourses of globalization can have a constitutive effect on global structures because of the way the globalization discourses of particular social forces representing sets of sociopolitical interests can become institutionalized and sedimented as global structural constraints. Clegg (1981) highlighted the concept of sedimentation in theorizing organizations as sites of the relations of production of a particular class structure and the evolution of control rules for that class structure within those organizations and between those organizations, both “intra-and interorganizationally” (p. 551). He argued that “the layers of rules exist in a dynamic relationship with each other...the metaphor most apt for representing this layering is drawn from geology: sedimentation” (p. 551-552). For Clegg (1981) these “layers of sediment (or strata) provide a record of historically evolved structure” such that we are “dealing with a sedimented structure” (p. 552). An important feature of the concept of sedimentation is its historical dimension and Clegg (1981) related the history of capitalist development to organizations and structure through the use of the concept of sedimentation. Clegg (1981) argued that “each turn in accumulation has seen the emergence of institutions that have intervened in, and thus framed, the organization of the

labor process...the institutions have been major determinants of renewed accumulation, and they have been historically sedimented” (Clegg, 1981, p. 554).

The concept of sedimentation enables a useful understanding of organizational power and the relationship between social agents and structural constraints when power is conceived as “rooted in the dialectical interplay between conscious, acting subjects and the institutionalized, sedimented structures that reflect the underlying relations of production” (Mumby, 2001, p. 600). As Mumby (2001) suggested, “power is not framed simply as a struggle over resources (economic, political, informational, etc.) but rather as a struggle over meaning” (p. 600) where “social actors construct a meaningful environment that functions ideologically, simultaneously securing and obscuring power relations that undergird everyday practices” (p. 600). The concept of sedimentation provides an important link between structural constraints and the capacity of discourses to potentially resignify and rearticulate sedimented structural constraints. Mendoza et al. (2002) suggested that “institutional/structural formations (e.g. cultures, nations, legal/educational/religious systems)... [represent] powerful sedimentations of normative practices and conventions” (p. 316-317). Performative acts of identity “draw on and engage historically sedimented conventions and re-encode these conventions in the process...the act is performed because of the existence of the sedimented conventions that have become entrenched by being repetitively enacted and thus define the universe of possibilities through which a subject can be constituted” (Mendoza et al., 2002, p. 317-318).

Similarly, in international relations work, Laffey (2000) used the notion of sedimentation to explore the reproduction of U.S. national identity. Laffey (2000) argued

that the continuity and change in U.S. identity can be explained with reference to the “materializations and sedimentations that have accumulated as a result of the performative reproduction” (Laffey, 2000, p. 441) of the identity. That is, the reproduction of identity “produces over time a landscape of institutions, apparatuses, and social relations [that] enable and make more likely the reproduction of a particular construction” (Laffey, 2000, p. 441). The notion of sedimentation as enabling the continuity of structural constraints on the reproduction of identity can “be traced in part to the sheer weight and density of those accumulated institutions, apparatuses and relations” (Laffey, 2000, p. 441).

The concept of discursive sedimentation enables an understanding of how the meanings of globalization and global order produced through discursive contestation can become sedimented such that they have institutional and structural effects. Political and economic structures consist of the materializations and sedimentations of hegemonic discourses and the sociopolitical and economic relationships those discourses have engendered and entrenched. Torfing (1999; 1998) provided an account of discursive sedimentation that relates to the shaping of social structures through hegemonic political struggles. Particular configurations of social relations become “sedimented into an institutional ensemble of rules, norms, values and regularities” that become “sedimented and institutionalized” as “relatively enduring social institutions” and “range[s] of sedimented practices conditioning the formulation, realization and transformation of the political strategies responsible for the shaping and reshaping of social relations” (Torfing, 1999, p. 70-71). Political structures such as the state can be described as “an ensemble of sedimented social institutions” that provide a “sedimented framework for political

struggles” (Torfing, 1999, p. 71). Although in principle they are inherently contingent because they are constituted through discursive contestation, political and economic structures are very real, material, and consequential; they have a significant conditioning effect because they consist of sedimented discourses and particular configurations of quasi-transcendental conditions of possibility, that have achieved a degree of stability and continuity due to attempts to fix meaning through hegemonic struggles.

Crucial to the capacity of discursive sedimentation to form reified social structural constraints is that sedimentation consists of an “effacement of the traces of the act of forceful repression, which constitutes the social in one way rather than another, [that] is crucial for the stabilization of a hegemonic project” (Torfing, 1999, p. 70). Particular discourses can become reified into structural constraints because sedimentation functions to efface the ultimately contingent character of a particular configuration of meanings and a particular set of social relations, and make them seem natural and inevitable. This effacement of particularity is an important feature of Gramsci’s (1971) moment of hegemony which consists of the last phase of the development of class-consciousness where the interests of the hegemonic forces are universalized as the interests of all. That is, hegemony “consists of a universalization of particularist demands” (Norval, 2000, p. 229). Similarly, in discourse theory, the concept of myth designates the “constructing of a new space of representation” (Torfing, 1999, p. 303) that “operate[s] at the level of the interests of a particular group” (Norval, 2000, p. 229), while a social imaginary consists of “cases where a particular group succeeds in moving beyond its particular interests onto a universal terrain” (Norval, 2000, p. 229) and becomes “a horizon or absolute limit which structures a field of intelligibility” (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000, p. 15-16;

Laclau, 1990). The hegemonic process “of the movement from myth to imaginary and vice versa” (Norval, 2000, p. 228) through discursive struggles highlights the way discourse as organizing systems of difference can become sedimented into structural constraints through the universalization of particular interests.

Understanding discursive contributions to the constitution of social structures involves an analysis of the process of transition from myth to imaginary, specifically in the “identification and delineation of collective social imaginaries” (Norval, 2000, p. 228). These are larger discourses that attempt to universalize a particular set of interests by providing a universal framework of meaning for understanding the material world. Similar to a dialectical reading of hegemony (Mumby, 1997, 2005; Norton & Sadler 2006), the discourse theory reading of hegemony and the universalization of particular interests puts emphasis on “hegemony construction as a process...rather than being bound to a static analysis, involving what may amount to simplistic judgments as to whether or not a specific discourse is hegemonic at a given point in time” (Norval 2000, p. 228).

Discourse and Globalization

Hegemonic discourse can constitute global structure through the universalization of particular interests. In this way, the discourse of IGOs can have a hegemonic function by contributing to the constitution of particular structures of global order and the implementation and management of a particular version of globalization. Understanding globalization requires an account of the role of discourses in contestations over the constitution, implementation, and maintenance of particular versions of globalization.

Globalization should be studied through discursive approaches because highlighting the relationship between globalization and discourse enables a more politicized understanding of globalization. Globalization is not an inevitable process with a singular trajectory, but rather is a discursive phenomenon that is variable because it is constructed and contested through discursive struggles by a variety of social forces in a variety of institutional contexts.

The discursive scripting of versions of globalization is one of the reasons globalization creates challenges for communication studies (Shome & Hegde 2002). Similar to Held and McGrew's (2003) position that globalization is an open-ended and indeterminate process, Shome and Hegde (2002) argued that globalization is not something that is already established but is in a constant state of becoming that is actively contested by a variety of social forces. Hegde (2005) has rejected the notion that such social changes as economic globalization are inevitable and highlighted how the discourses of media representations and media accounts mobilize and script the global in particular ways for particular interests. In this way, the "politics of globalization" (Hegde, 2005, p. 59) are integrally related to the "politics and practices of representation in the global context" (p. 62). For Hegde (2005), "the contemporary geopolitical moment also calls for a critical examination of how globalization gets defined, constituted and deployed in both public and academic discourse" (p.59). This direction provides an important emphasis on the relationship between globalization and discourse by acknowledging the politics of communicative practices that are crucial in contestations over constructing and maintaining particular versions of globalization. An important characteristic of globalization is its status as a communicative phenomenon whereby

“various discourses of globalization...intersect, create, and deploy the transnational imaginary” (Shome & Hegde, 2002, p. 182).

It is important to recognize the material structural changes characteristic of globalization, such as the growth of multinational corporations, world financial markets, global cultural diffusion, and global environmental degradation etc., thus Held and McGrew (2003) emphasized the importance of using a “multidimensional conception of globalization” (p. 6) that does not reduce globalization to the outcome of one type of logic such as the economic or technological. A multidimensional conception of globalization is more consistent with an “understanding of social reality as constituted by a number of distinct institutional orders or networks of power: the economic, technological, political, cultural, natural, etc.” (Held & McGrew, 2003, p. 6). Conceptualizing globalization as a set of such differentiated yet interrelated forces that develop differently and have different impacts highlights the importance of “a conception of globalization as a somewhat indeterminate process; for globalization is not inscribed with a preordained logic which presumes a singular historical trajectory or end condition” (Held & McGrew, 2003, p. 7). As a “product of multiple forces” and “specific conjunctural factors” globalization is a significant set of social changes but it is not necessarily a determined phenomenon and can have instead a variety of contingent causes and effects based on “how such systems and patterns of global interconnectedness are organized and reproduced, their different geographies and histories, and the changing configuration of interregional power relations” (Held & McGrew, 2003, p. 7). Understanding globalization as not inevitable accounts for contestations over

globalization and how the social changes associated with globalization are both promoted and extended in some contexts while resisted and in retreat in others.

[Globalization] harbours no fixed or given pattern of historical development. Moreover, since it pulls and pushes societies in different directions it simultaneously engenders cooperation as well as conflict, integration as well as fragmentation, exclusion and inclusion, convergence and divergence, order and disorder. Rejecting historicist or determinist interpretations of globalization, the globalist account invites an open-ended conception of global change rather than a fixed or singular vision of a globalized world. It is therefore equally valid to talk of a partially globalized world or processes of de-globalization (Held & McGrew, p. 7).

Similarly, Schirato and Webb (2003) placed the open-ended character of globalization within the context of its “hegemonic role in organizing and decoding the meaning of the world” and “struggles over its meaning, its effects and its origins” (p. 1) by emphasizing the notion of the politics of naming. For them “the wider story of globalization is that it worked as a profound instance of the politics of naming...[which]...signals the efficacy of naming in bringing things into social reality, and in foreclosing, or shutting out, other ‘realities’” (Schirato & Webb, 2003, p. 4). Schirato and Webb (2003) made an important link between the open-ended character of globalization and the way that particular hegemonic versions of globalization can become reality. The social changes of globalization when framed “in terms of the politics of naming...[indicate]...that the changes are located within, and can be evaluated in terms of, powerful discourses that shape everyday life; discourses which simultaneously name,

and thus help bring into being, what they are supposedly designating or describing” (Schirato & Webb, 2003, p. 9). Schirato and Webb (2003) highlighted how conceptualizing globalization through the politics of naming enables an understanding of how one reality of globalization can be created and implemented while another alternative reality is foreclosed. Globalization is a phenomenon that “functions, theoretically, as an empty set” and the “empty set that is globalization” (p. 6-7) can be filled with the content of particular “values, institutions and politics” (Schirato & Webb, 2003, p. 6-7). This is consistent with the way hegemonic discourses attempt to use signifiers like globalization to articulate a particular absence or lack of something in the social order and where “various political forces can compete in their efforts to present their particular objectives as those which carry out the filling of that lack...to hegemonize something is exactly to carry out this filling function” (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000, p. 8; Laclau, 1996, p. 44). The notion of globalization as an empty set enables an understanding of how the open-ended character of globalization is subject to contestation by various political and economic forces. These social forces attempt to fill globalization with their particular discursive contents in a hegemonic struggle over the political-economic interests of particular versions of globalization and global order.

A broad spectrum of work from a diverse set of areas in communication has studied the relationship between globalization and discourse by highlighting the operation of discourse in contestations over particular versions of globalization. These diverse bodies of research share a common focus on identifying a variety of institutional contexts within which different types of globalization discourse are articulated, and how that discourse is articulated to promote particular versions of globalization and global order.

Some of the most important institutional contexts for globalization discourses are corporate, governmental, and news media contexts.

Many communication studies have focused on the operation of corporate discourse in contestations over particular versions of globalization. This work highlighted how corporate discourse articulates particular versions of globalization. Shome and Hegde (2002) identified how the global dissemination of representations from such sources as Bollywood and US film and television corporations contribute to a global flow of images that produce and perpetuate a “transnational imaginary” (p. 182) that takes the character of a capital and market oriented version of globalization. The “discourse of corporate multiculturalism” (Shome & Hegde, 2002, p. 186) and forces striving to create a world market and forms of global commodity consumerism are an integral part of the production of a particular form of transnational imaginary. This imaginary includes a particular version of globalization that consists of “a strident discourse of consumer cosmopolitanism authored by corporate interest with an obvious stake in scripting the world as a connected market” (Hegde, 2005, p. 59). Machin and Thornborrow (2003) showed how an important dimension of globalization is the production and dissemination of global corporate brands that function as globally distributed discourses which constitute sets of core values that are operational world-wide. These corporate brand global discourses, such as the *Cosmopolitan* magazine brand or “Cosmopolitan discourse” (p. 468), embody sets of values and aspirations for their audiences that, following the logic of the brand discourse, are only achievable through the consumption of the brand’s commodities. Such corporate discourse reinforces a global discourse of consumerism that is an integral part of “neo-capitalism”

(p. 468) and the contemporary market oriented global economy. Greenberg and Knight (2004) situated such corporate discourse in the context of hegemonic and counter-hegemonic discursive struggles between the corporate discourse of Nike and critics of sweatshop labor practices. They highlighted how the corporate discourse of Nike reflects a dominant neo-liberal ideology and provides support for the economic and social policies of a distinctly neo-liberal version of globalization.

Other communication research has focused on the operation of government discourse in contestations over particular versions of globalization. This work highlighted how governmental discourse is articulated to promote particular versions of globalization. Fursich and Robins (2002) studied the discursive responses of sub-Saharan African nations to the market oriented pressures of globalization. Using governmental websites, these African nations discursively construct forms of national identity in a way that brands them, much like a commodity, to market their nations to global economic interests in order to attract foreign investment capital. This discursive branding reflects and reinforces the pressures of a distinct “corporate globalization” (p. 199) and “neo-liberal globalization principles” (p. 193). Similarly, Flowerdew (2004) analyzed the Hong Kong government’s use of discourse to brand Hong Kong as a World City in the context of globalization induced international competition over the positioning of large cities as national or regional centers of trans-national capital. Through the use of “World City discourse” (p. 580), the Hong Kong government discursively constructed the city as a World City to target both the local Hong Kong audience and the international audience of potential visitors, investors, and multi-national companies. Bruner also (2002b) showed how the globally dominant rhetoric of free trade and the worldwide pressures of

neo-liberal globalization and its moves toward market democracy influenced nation building in the Russian transition from a centrally planned economy to a market oriented economy. The Russian President Boris Yeltsin utilized the same “discursive equation of free markets and democracy” (p. 167) to radically restructure the Russian economy that underlies contemporary international globalization policies.

Communication studies have also examined the operation of news media discourse in contestations over particular versions of globalization. This work revealed how news media discourse articulates particular versions of globalization. Kellner (2004) demonstrated how in the context of a neo-liberal form of globalization, American mainstream media discourse has shaped, constructed, and limited public discourse and public opinion to themes that promote a pro-business, pro-market corporate agenda, and a conservative political hegemony, with the consequences of reinforcing a “triumph of neo-liberalism” (p. 33). Rojecki (2005) studied the ways American media discourse has drawn a connection between globalization and the terrorist attacks of 911 and how these connections promote particular policies. The two main features of the press discourse that connect globalization to 911 are a political connection and an economic connection. The political connection recommends enhancing state power while the economic connection promotes neo-liberal free market economic policy. Bennet et al. (2004) analyzed the “discourse patterns of journalistic representations” (p. 440) that produced news discourse of globalization debates that favored the perspective of the neo-liberal globalization policies of the World Economic Forum (WEF) and marginalized its critics. One specific purpose of the WEF is to shape public opinion about globalization and the news discourse about conflict between WEF and its critics functioned to reinforce the

WEF's public relations campaign. Similarly, Greenberg and Knight (2004) highlighted media representations of the discursive struggles between corporate discourse and activist discourse as an important site of ideological struggle over the hegemony of neo-liberal market ideology. Although they found that activists were able to achieve some success in getting media representations to define sweatshops as a problem, the representations had little to do with issues of systemic global political and economic issues and instead defined sweatshops as a problem for Western consumers.

Although there is much work in communication that has identified institutional contexts where particular globalization discourse are articulated to promote particular versions of globalization, such as corporations, government, and news media, it is equally as important to identify institutional contexts that function explicitly at the global level, such as the globalization discourses articulated in the institutional context of IGOs.

IGOs and Global Governance

IGOs are an increasingly important institutional context within which globalization discourse is articulated to promote particular versions of globalization. IGOs are an especially important institutional context in relation to the discursive constitution of social structure and the universalization of particular interests in the promotion of particular versions of globalization. The importance of IGOs is due to their function as organizational entities that represent emerging forms of global governance that construct, implement, and enforce concrete global policy and global systems of regulation. Including an emphasis on the role of IGOs and IGO discourse in emerging forms of global governance as an integral part of understanding globalization addresses

the “need to broaden our theoretical scope in order to unravel the nexus of practices that condition and regulate everyday lives under conditions of globality” (Shome & Hegde, 2002, p. 186) as well as the “need to ask how globalization is being produced and what the genealogies of these productions are in various international sites” (Shome & Hegde, 2002, p. 186-187). Additionally, the need to address the production of globalization in international sites requires that “in seeking to differentiate global networks and systems from those operating at other spatial scales, such as the local or the national, the globalist analysis identifies globalization primarily with activities and relations which crystallize on an interregional or intercontinental scale” (Held & McGrew, 2003, p. 6).

Held and McGrew’s (2003) concern with ensuring that globalization analysis specifically identifies sites at a global spatial scale highlights the need to address the role of IGOs as a specific global institutional context where the crystallization of globalization activities occurs. Examining the role of IGOs as an institutional context of globalization has important theoretical and practical political implications. As Greenberg and Knight (2004) found in their analysis of media coverage of globalization debates concerning sweatshops, the lack of coverage of “supranational governing agencies such as the World Trade Organization or International Labour Organization suggests partial success for neo-liberal ideology” (Greenberg & Knight, 2004, p. 169). This characteristic of the coverage indicated in part that:

...the coverage was clearly not concerned for the most part with systemic, political economic factors that are responsible for sweatshop production practices. Very little discussion was offered, for example, of the pressures placed on local governments—which often take a repressive stance towards human and labour

rights—by structural adjustment programmes that encourage the formation of export-processing zones in which sweatshops thrive (Greenberg & Knight 2004, p. 170).

Communication studies have frequently highlighted globalization putting pressure on more local institutional contexts, such as on national and city governments (Flowerdew 2004, 2002; Fursich & Robins 2002). Yet those pressures, especially those that come in the form of structural adjustment programs, often come directly from the globalization activities crystallizing in the global institutional context of IGOs and the concrete activity of producing global policies. Consequently, a lack of scholarly attention to the relationship between globalization and discourse as it functions in the institutional context of IGOs indicates a problematic and limited conceptualization of global order and globalization, and may represent a similar neo-liberal victory. Communication scholars who examine globalization and who want to critically evaluate the variety of linkages that define globalization “must analyze the institutions whose members are in charge of designing and implementing globalization policies and the forms of political/public memory associated with those institutions and policies” (Bruner 2002a, p. 180). Bruner’s work in particular (2002a, 2002b, 2003) has moved in this important direction by highlighting the institutionalization of a particular market oriented rhetoric in global economic IGOs and their subsequent policy formulations, in the emphasis on the relation between neo-liberal rhetoric and “policymaking and institution building” (2003, p. 692).

IGOs are a global institutional context within which socially significant discourses are articulated that have implications for contestations over globalization and the constitution of global order. As organizational entities that represent emerging forms

of global governance, IGOs make up an integral part of the contours of a global transstate terrain within which various political and economic actors engage in contestation over the structuring of global order.

Crofts Wiley (2004) has highlighted the emergence of global and transnational spaces as central sites for global politics. In this perspective, nationality is a particular logic of social and spatial organization among other organizing logics that actively articulates the national as a social space. What is important here is the emphasis on “interconnected global networks” (p. 87) in the era of globalization as representing a “new terrain” (p. 79) within which nationality as a form of identity must operate. It is precisely a “new global context” (p. 87) because the “infrastructure on which the nation is built” (p. 87) is no longer connected solely to a national space. Rather, the social changes of globalization are increasingly forcing national actors to “lose control over the discursive terrain” (p. 87). Consequently, nationality as a specific form of identity must operate in an increasingly global discursive terrain by “constantly be[ing] redefined and reinforced in the midst of a fluid geography” (p. 90).

Similarly, Soysal (2000) identified post-war changes in the dynamics of citizenship as showing reason for rejecting an analysis of identity within the dichotomy of the national and transnational. Instead, the national and transnational should be treated as jointly operating levels of “contexts and processes that are beyond the nation-state” (pg. 12). Most importantly, this work highlighted the increasing role of “transnational frameworks” (p. 9), “global rules and institutional frameworks” (p. 6) and “international agreements and institutions” (p.4) that embody transnational discourses and legal codifications. This transnational framework consists of international organizations like

the United Nations, UNESCO, and the Council of Europe (Soysal 2000). A significant effect of this development is that “the source and legitimacy of rights shift to the transnational level” (p. 6). Consequently, particularistic claims of political and economic actors can seek legitimacy through the articulation of universalistic discourses that link their claims to these transnational frameworks (Soysal 2000). In the process these discourses are “enacted and improvised for mobilizing and making claims in national and world politics” (p. 6). This points to changes that have occurred in the “locus of struggle” (p. 7) as the contexts for claims-making by differing groups have moved beyond the nation-state and have begun to “diversify the spaces for and of politics” (p. 10).

Faist’s (2001) discussion of the links between bounded political communities that produce “border-crossing spaces” (p. 3) also contributes to understanding the development of a global terrain of contestation. Although Faist (2001) warned against making the assumption that border-crossing development necessarily means “a quantum leap in collective affiliation” (p. 3) the work highlighted the integrative potential in these border-crossing spaces due to transstate symbolic and social ties. Faist (2001) advocated the use of the term “transstate” to designate these global spaces so as to identify “interstitial ties...spanning states but not necessarily nations” (p. 6). These “transstate spaces” consist of “border-crossing networks” of organizations and communities within which states and other organizations work to regulate a variety of border-crossing exchanges (p. 19).

Describing the dynamics behind the development of this new global terrain and new global spaces for political contestation, particularly as it relates to the global governance functions of IGOs highlights “the critical role organizations play in the

development, maintenance, and transformation of the global system” (Stohl, 2005, p. 226). IGOs provide an integral part of the interlocking infrastructure that allows for the continuity and shape of the new global terrain and its provision of new global political spaces. Consequently, the notion of transstate terrain captures the contours of this new global context in accounting for IGOs as central sites of a global terrain made up of varied configurations of international organizational structures. Perspectives on globalization that point to the development of new global spaces (Crofts Wiley, 2004; Soysal, 2000; Faist, 2001) have contributed to conceptualizing the role of IGOs as central sites for the operation of this new global terrain of international frameworks, interconnected global networks and transstate spaces. Political and economic actors operating within this transstate terrain can find it increasingly necessary to act in and through dominant international organizational structures. These transstate sites enable the achievement of collective objectives because they represent sources of global legitimacy.

International organizational structures are increasingly important for political-economic struggles on a global scale because “interested action is typically oriented toward the framework of an organization, with members striving to secure their sectional claims within its very structure” (Ranson et al., 1980, p. 7). IGOs are central sites of transstate terrain because as organizations operating on a global scale they can function as “multipurpose tools for shaping the world as one wishes it to be shaped...they provide the means for imposing one’s definition of the proper affairs of [people] on other [people]” (Perrow, 1972; quoted in Ranson et al., 1980, p. 7). Organizational activities function as the primary means through which collective formations are able to exert influence over the development and direction of globalization (Stohl, 2005). Political and

economic forces are able to pursue their objectives through organizational entities that function to maintain and extend their interests because organizations function as “disciplinary sites that structure meanings and identities” (Mumby 2001, p. 608).

Political and economic actors operating within the contours of transstate terrain are increasingly oriented toward IGOs as central global sites to pursue interests and as central sites for the legitimization and universalization of their particular interests. IGOs are integral parts of contemporary globalization because they function to anchor interests in sites of global legitimacy, and so act as a site with which to engage and within which to engage in contestation over the constitution of global structures.

As integral parts of the contours of transstate terrain, IGOs and IGO discourse make a significant contribution to the sedimentation of particular global structures because of the IGO function in the construction, implementation, and enforcement of global policies and systems of regulation. Specifically, many contemporary IGOs exhibit a policy orientation that attempts to sediment and regulate a particular market driven global structure. This neo-liberalism and economic liberalism orientation to global policy and global structure is “conceived as state-managed market democracy based on elite decision making” and in its various forms, “the impact of ‘utilitarian liberalism,’ the ‘self-regulating market,’ ‘market fundamentalism,’ and/or ‘neo-liberalism’ on the international political economy—is unquestioned” (Bruner 2003, p. 689).

Accounting for the role of IGOs in neo-liberal versions of globalization is important because of the way neo-liberal economic philosophy is perpetuated through its institutionalization into IGOs and how the policies produced in these organizations form global structures of economic governance for a corporate and market oriented version of

globalization (Bruner, 2002a, 2002b, 2003). This emphasis highlights not only the role of IGOs in the implementation of a particular version of globalization but also the role of the rhetoric of free trade and the rhetorical tactics and strategies of these IGOs as a crucial part of this implementation (Bruner, 2002a, 2002b, 2003). The rhetoric of free trade and market liberalization has become institutionalized into the organizations that were designed specifically to manage world trade and globalization through the implementation of globalization policies (Bruner, 2002a). The rhetoric of corporate globalization, free trade philosophy, and economic liberalism is embodied in the rhetorical strategies of the IGOs that govern economic globalization. These IGOs create structures of global governance through policies that reflect market oriented principles (Bruner, 2003). Specifically, Bruner (2002b) showed how a dominant theme of globalization discourse is the way the rhetoric of free trade and free market discourse creates a discursive equation between free markets and democracy, and more broadly between economic liberalization and political freedom. Contemporary globalization policies, primarily overseen through the management of IGOs like the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and WTO are based on this equation of free markets and political freedom (Bruner, 2002b). In this way the “discourse of democracy has been grafted onto the public discourse of those defending the New Economy” (Bruner, 2002b, p. 179). Through their organizational structures and policies, these IGOs form the “institutional infrastructures...designed to ‘harmonize’ global standards for trade, finance, labor and the environment” (Bruner, 2002b, p. 168).

The global role of IGOs and their contribution to the structuring of the global order and the particularity of their policy orientation highlights the hegemonic function of

IGOs in relation to the universalization of the interests of a particular version of globalization. The role of IGOs highlights the way contestations over globalization consist in part of a neo-liberal hegemonic project operating in a global context of social forces engaged in contestation over the production of and destabilization of forms of consent to a particular type of global order (Worth and Kuhling, 2004). Robinson (2005) links globalization with the operation of global hegemony through transnational institutions like IGOs and others. Globalization consists of a particular hegemonic project conducted by transnational classes that are horizontally related through these transnational institutions, who are supporting the development and maintenance of an emerging global capitalist historic bloc (Robinson, 2005). The locus of consent to the neo-liberal global order is increasingly found in the transnational apparatus provided by international organizations in general (Hattori, 2002). These organizations provide a mechanism of consent to the order supported by transnational classes by serving as forms of moral regulation and discipline for conformity to the neo-liberal global order (Hattori, 2002). Additionally, they provide the norms, rules, and institutional frameworks and infrastructure for the operation of transnational capital (Hattori, 2002).

The hegemonic role of IGOs is due in part to the way they have emerged as institutional solutions to the social dislocations brought about by globalization processes. IGOs take advantage of how processes of globalization have induced experiences of dislocation in previously entrenched discourses related to economic sovereignty. Events related to “the globalization and deterritorialization of the economy” (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, pg. vii) initiate dislocation in previously entrenched discourses of economic sovereignty which has provided IGOs the opportunity to define problems and solutions

related to that dislocation. As Crofts Wiley (2004) has argued, “globalization is increasingly difficult to manage exclusively through nation-based institutions, laws, and regulatory practices” (p. 87). Economic and trade related IGOs in particular have emerged as a means through which to manage global processes on a global scale and have benefited from conditions in which “the process of globalization tends to dislocate the idea of the nation-state as the privileged terrain for economic activity” (Torfing, 1999, pg. 301).

Historically entrenched discourses related to economic sovereignty consist of the historically “hegemonic position of the nation-state as polity” where “the nation-state polity has for many years appeared as pre-given” (Hansen & Sorensen, 2005, p. 93). Yet the discourses of the primacy of the nation-state have been dislocated by the way “radical transformations of governance institutions in Western democracies have taken place in the last decades of the twentieth century”, specifically, “this transformation as a change ‘from government to governance’” (Hansen & Sorensen, 2005, p. 93; Rhodes, 1997; Pierre, 2000; Scharpf, 1997). One fundamental feature of this transformation is the “decentralization and globalization of the political system, which challenges the sovereign position of the nation-state by transforming it into one among several territorial levels of governance in a multilayered governance structure” (Hansen and Sorensen, 2005, p. 93).

This is not to suggest the inevitable decline or irrelevance of the nation state. Researchers continue to “debate how far this process towards ‘governance’ has actually advanced” (Hansen and Sorensen, 2005, p. 93; Hirst and Thompson, 1996; Van Heffen, Kickert, and Thomasson, 2000). However, what is important to note is that the very

existence of such debate and contestation over the role of the nation-state and its sovereignty indicates a significant degree of dislocation to discourses supporting the preeminence of nation-state sovereignty. That is, regardless of the position taken in this debate about the contemporary role of the nation-state, such debates indicate discursive contestation due to the condition that “the traditional image of governance as the outcome of sovereign nation-state rule has lost its hegemonic position” (Hansen and Sorensen, 2005, p. 93). In such an environment, “nation-states must justify their right to govern in competition with other potential territorially or functionally demarcated polities” (Hansen and Sorensen, 2005, p. 93).

Consequently, social forces and organizational entities, such as those represented by IGOs and others, mobilize to offer their particular discourses as answers to the question of “what polity is the legitimate body of authoritative decision-making”(Hansen and Sorensen, 2005, p. 93). The dislocation of the previously entrenched national economic sovereignty discourse by processes of globalization has provided an opportunity for discourses of global economic sovereignty to attempt to provide a different orientation to the locus of control of economic sovereignty. IGOs that represent prominent forms of emerging global economic governance are integral to this discursive struggle and their organizational discourse represents an important intervention in the larger global sociopolitical environment by social forces supporting a shift to global economic sovereignty.

Organizational Communication

The relation between discursive contestation and globalization, along with the global governance role of IGOs in globalization and the implications for hegemonic struggles over global order, highlights the discipline of organizational communication to a comprehensive understanding of globalization. For Stohl (2005), the importance of organizational communication is highlighted especially through how it can contribute to understanding the concept of globalization. Globalization more generally designates the worldwide phenomena of the acceleration of all aspects of social interconnection (Stohl, 2005, p. 231). Inquiry then proceeds toward the analysis of the social consequences of these interconnections as they relate to organizational communication and the function of organizations within globalization. Stohl (2005) has structured a review of approaches to globalization and organizational communication in two useful ways, “globalizing organizations” and “organizing globalization” (p. 225-226).

“Globalizing organizations” refers to early theories and studies that were either characterized by a divergence or convergence approach (Stohl, 2001; Stohl, 2005). The divergence perspective focuses on the way cultural variability can account for differential effects on the structure of the organization and organizational communication practices. Even when organizations are subjected to the same structural and global pressures, the divergence perspective focuses on how the differing meaning making practices of the people within the organization will make sense of those pressures in variable ways that are influenced by their cultural backgrounds. The divergence focus on variability in the context of similar structural conditions flows from its specific conceptualization of communication as meaning making practices and its relationship to culture. Culture

consists of the patterns of communication/interaction and meaning making practices of the human subjects. In this way culture as forms of communicative practice have a dramatic effect on organizing because organizations are seen as a communicatively driven process of organizing. Culture will then influence the direction of organizing as the culturally saturated process of organizing is constituted in the communicative practices of the cultured organizers. Cultural understandings of identity and relationships between identities and hierarchies for instance will influence how those issues are understood and approached by organizational members in the process of organizing. One example of this is in Stohl's (1993) work on European managers differing understanding of worker participation. The cultural backgrounds of the different managers were linked to the different ways they provided meaning to the same concept of worker participation.

The convergence perspective focuses on the way structural conditions can account for the similar patterns of organizational structure and communication practices (Stohl, 2001; Stohl, 2005). Even organizations that cut across differing cultural/national contexts will display patterns of similarity in their development as they adapt to common structural conditions. Organizations are seen as moving through similar stages of development that are determined by the environmental context of globalization pressures. These pressures of convergence consist of the structural imperatives of the global order that organizations must adapt to in order to survive. For instance, the rise in forms of economic interdependence and the rapid diffusion of information through new communication technologies are seen as conditions that require all organizations that want to survive to create flexible internal communication systems and links to external communication networks in order to manage these increased demands. One example is

in Monge and Fulk's (1999) discussion of the global network organization that adapts to the structural imperatives that determine the convergence of organizations toward similar patterns of organization structure and communication practices.

Although both the divergence and convergence approaches have proven useful to understanding aspects of organizational communication and globalization, Stohl (2005) suggested that "neither perspective alone or even both together adequately accounted for...complex organizational processes" (p. 230). More specifically for research on divergence and convergence is that, "what is not clear in this literature is the association between the mechanisms and processes of communicative convergence and divergence" (Stohl, 2001, p. 357). Especially problematic is that "there is still little information about the conditions under which convergence or divergence takes precedence or explorations and explanations of the dynamic interplay among the two" (Stohl, 2001, p. 357). Moving toward an analysis of these conditions is important because contemporary organizational experience is characterized by the constant need to manage both the opposing tendencies toward the variation of divergence and the similarity of convergence (Stohl, 2001).

"Organizing globalization" on the other hand refers to approaches that attempt to take account of "the mutual oppositions, disjunctures, paradoxes, differentiation, and unity that are embodied in the process" (Stohl, 2005, p. 230) of globalization. Guided by an orientation toward communication as an "interpretive symbolic process" these approaches investigate how "globalization is intersubjectively constructed and meaningfully evolves as individuals, groups, and organizations struggle to survive and compete across the world stage" (Stohl, 2005, p. 241). This is an orientation toward the relationship between organizations and globalization where "organizations are theorized

variously to be at the root of the changes in contemporary experience, the cause of most of the problems associated with globalization, and the solution to the many challenges that we face” (Stohl, 2005, p. 242).

Consistent with understanding the hegemonic role of IGOs in contestations over globalization, this “organizing globalization” approach suggests a much more active role for organizations in the production of globalization as “organizations recursively structure, respond to, and restructure the global system” (Stohl, 2005, p. 242). This addresses the way organizations are implicated in contestations between groups over globalization, in that “organizational activities are the primary means by which individuals, small clusters of people, and large groups influence the trajectory of globalization” (Stohl, 2005, p. 243). Unlike divergence and convergence, such theoretical approaches to globalization “try to capture the oppositional and dialectic forces that simultaneously obliterate, maintain, and maximize homogeneity/heterogeneity within the global system” (Stohl, 2005, p. 244). Addressing the hegemonic role of IGOs is one such way to address globalization.

Ganesh et al. (2005) address the way particular social forces attempt to influence the trajectory of globalization through organizational entities by explicitly situating the “contested nature of globalization” (p. 169) and “the discursive terrain of globalization” (p. 170) within a backdrop of the hegemonic role of transnational economic institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the WTO, in economic globalization. In the IGO use of “neo-liberal economic rhetoric” (p. 171) to promote a global market orientation, “the mission of these transnational institutions has shifted from preventing global financial crises to promoting neo-liberal economic policies” (p. 171).

In this global context there is a “need to understand how multiple interests...communicate to construct new global economic relationships” (p. 172). The relationship between globalization, IGOs, and discursive contestation is addressed in the suggestion that “the Foucaultian concept of governmentality, which treats neo-liberalism as an economic discourse that diffuses across and ‘governs’ institutions and cultures, can be used to understand the multiple centers of the global economy” (Ganesh et al., 2005, p. 180; Foucault, 1991). This “form of discursive control” (p. 180) and the “instances of the diffusion of neo-liberal governmentality” (p. 180) are explicitly situated by Ganesh et al. (2005) within the context of Gramsci’s (1971) conception of hegemonic struggles between social forces to produce forms of common sense, and Mumby’s (1997) conception of hegemony as struggle within organizational communication contexts (Ganesh et al., 2005, p. 180).

Additionally, Zoller (2004) has described globalization in terms of the attempts of “global trade institutions and agreements including the World Trade Organization (WTO), the North American Free Trade Agreement, ...the World Bank [and] the Transatlantic Business Dialogue (TABD)” to “promote and legitimize a hegemonic role in establishing...business and trade policy” (p. 205). Organizations such as the TABD offer examples of the participation of corporations in global policy formation that represent new forms of governance and a “shift in government-corporations relations in the global era” (Zoller, 2005, p. 206-207; Green Cowles, 2001). Specifically, corporations develop regulatory standards that become implemented through such organizations as the TABD and others that “when implemented in global trade policy, these standards can override the laws of individual nation-states” (p. 207). The

development of “global trade organizations and bilateral and multilateral trade agreements increasingly establish policies in areas traditionally considered the domain of domestic politics” (p. 211). The organizations of the “Bretton Woods institutions including the WTO, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund” (p. 211) pursue neo-liberal policies in terms of forms of state deregulation and privatization that are linked to how “these global institutions provide unparalleled corporate access to economic and regulatory policy construction” (p. 211). This highlights “the dominance of TNCs in global policy construction” (p. 234) and “the growing direct influence of corporations on global trade policy and the impact of those policies on domestic laws” (p. 235).

The link between particular versions of globalization and discursive contestation is in the necessity of such organizations as the TABD to maintain legitimacy and “promote and justify its role in policy construction” (p. 208). The TABD produces public communication that “constitutes and justifies its role in global policy making to legitimize and forward its goals in the face of potential conflicts” (p. 208). Zoller (2004) described this public communication using Gramsci’s (1971) notion of hegemony and argued that “disciplinary neo-liberalism [involves] a world in which the actions of governments, as well as firms and workers, are internally and externally disciplined by market forces” (Zoller, 2004, p. 212; Gill, 2001, p. 50). The cooperation between a business class, governments, and institutions “articulate and organize hegemony by defining and redefining the world in terms that secure and maintain the authority of the dominant class” (Gill, 2001, p. 76; Zoller, 2004, p. 212). It is through “this discursive process of redefinition” that “capital interests construct, justify, and defend new

government relationships” (Zoller, 2004, p. 213). Such international organizations as the TABD provide an “example of the discursive process of establishing and legitimizing disciplinary neo-liberalism by redefining state activity toward the promotion of TNC interests while maintaining the privateness of the economic realm” (Zoller, 2004, p. 223) and so function as a “mechanism of disciplinary neoliberalism” to “legitimate corporate hegemony” (Zoller, 2004, p. 230).

Organizational Legitimization

Approaching the discursive legitimization of organizational entities from perspectives that account for the relationship between organizational communication and the larger sociopolitical environment is an important part of understanding the hegemonic role of IGOs and IGO discourse in emerging forms of global governance.

Benson (1977) highlighted the importance of a dialectical approach to the development of a critical orientation to a sociological understanding of organizations that has important implication for the relation between organizational communication and its sociopolitical environment. Of the four dialectical principles he reviewed, it is the principle of totality that most explicitly links organizations to the larger sociopolitical environment. In general, the principle of totality approaches social phenomena as embedded in a set of relations and interconnections such that “any particular structure is always seen as part of a larger concrete whole rather than as an isolated, abstract phenomenon” (p. 4). More specifically for organizations, the principle of totality emphasizes the variety of ties between organizations and the larger society, such as to “the everyday activities of people” and “macrostructural features such as economic and

political systems” (p. 9). The intricate relation between changes within the organization and changes in the larger society indicate how “the organization is a part of these larger patterns” (p. 12). These “organization-environment linkages” consist of “the patterning or structuring of relations with organizations and individuals external to the focal organization” (Benson, 1977, p. 11).

A number of organizational features can be accounted for in terms of these “organization-environment linkages” (Benson, 1977, p. 11). These features include the “grounding of organizational authority in larger systems-interorganizational networks, political-economic power blocs, legal systems” (p. 8) and linkages between organizational substructure and the larger society which includes among others “the framework of interests in the larger society setting limits upon the operations of the organization” (p.12). Another important feature is how the contradictions involved in organizational life result from the variety of relations between the organization and the larger society, specifically in how contradictions generated in the larger society are imposed on the organization and “may directly reflect the fundamental features of the larger economic-political system” (p. 14-15).

Clegg (1981) related organizations to the larger sociopolitical environment through an emphasis on organizations as “historically constituted entities” (p. 545) that are related to the historical course of economic development and capital accumulation. Organizations are integrally related to the larger sociopolitical environment because they are produced by economic agents in a way that reflects the class structure of the social context within which they are embedded. Organizations function as sites of the

organization of production of the larger society, and of the perpetuation of its class structure and its particular configuration of class interests.

Mumby and Stohl (1996) highlighted the “problematic of the organization-society relationship” (p. 65) as one of four issues that frame the discipline of organizational communication. Although many disciplines interested in organizations assume that organizations are embedded in a larger social context that affects and is affected by the organization, this is often accompanied by a tendency to “see organizations as separate and distinct from society” (p. 65). Organizational communication brings to the study of the organization-society relationship an understanding of the dynamic interaction between organizations and society that highlights how “the boundaries between an organization and its environment are indistinct and permeable” (p. 65). Importantly, Mumby and Stohl (1996) suggested that “organizational communication scholars are extremely well positioned to study the dynamics of globalization because our view of communication as an embedded, collective, and emergent process can capture the complex interplay between organizational, national, and global factors (p. 66). Organizational communication has addressed the organization-society relationship in such ways as the communicative constitution of organizational structure in new formations related to globalization pressures, integrated studies of broad social contexts with the micro-practices of organizing, and “organizations as important sites of participation and decision making that have effects far beyond the immediate context of the organization” (p. 67).

Carlone and Taylor (1998) pointed to the role of organizations in “the organization of culture” and the “dialectical relationship between organizations and civil

society” (p. 362). Organizations are productively viewed “as nodes through which larger cultural work...is accomplished in interaction among and between members of various stakeholder groups (p. 341). Similarly, in his discussion of corporate organizational power, Deetz (1992) identified organizations as important “sites of decision” (p. 43). For Deetz (1992), corporate organizational power functions “like a web that has sites or nodes of decision and control” (p. 23). Specifically applicable to the role of IGOs in the implementation of particular global economic and political structures, Stohl (2005) has highlighted “the critical role organizations play in the development, maintenance, and transformation of the global system” (p. 226).

Organizational communication has traditionally prioritized the study of intraorganizational interaction to such an extent that a focus “on the interactions of organizations in the context of their sociopolitical environments” (Finet, 2001, p. 270, 287) is often neglected. Finet (2001) has sought to address this underdeveloped area by highlighting a discourse-centered model, extending upon the work of Weick (1979) and Taylor (1995), of the relationship between organizations and the sociopolitical environment. The discourse-centered model is useful because it prioritizes communication and discursive practices as important and principal features of an organization’s interaction and relationship with its environmental context and so highlights communicative approaches to organizational/environmental interaction.

Such an emphasis contributes to “understanding the larger societal significance of organizational discourse” (Finet, 2001, p. 287) by recognizing the ways that organizations and organizational communication are embedded “in complex and dynamic sociopolitical environments, and the reciprocal influences of each upon the other” (Finet,

2001, p. 270). Accounting for the reciprocal relationship between organizational communication and the sociopolitical environment is crucial in understanding both “the consequences of sociopolitical transformation for organizations and the implications of organizational practices for the larger culture” (Finet, 2001, p. 287). Recognition of the ways organizations and the larger society mutually influence and affect each other enables understanding of how organizations adapt to social changes and how organizations can influence the direction of social changes.

Approaches to the relationship between organizations and the sociopolitical environment have tended to “view the sociopolitical environment as the origin of normative change” (Finet, 2001, p. 273) where specific demands would emerge and be imposed on organizations and organizations were required to respond and adapt to these expectations. Finet (2001) suggested that Weick and Taylor offer a much needed contrast in understanding changing norms as a process of reciprocal influence that occurs simultaneously within organizations and within the environmental contexts that can at times be complementary and at times conflict. Organizational communication has an impact on the larger sociopolitical environment through “the means by which organizational discourse creates, sustains, or disestablishes particular sociopolitical understandings” (Finet, 2001, p. 273). That is, understanding the relationship between organizational communication and the sociopolitical environment involves more than just how social change affects organizational communication but also in recognizing how “the discursive practices of and within organizations also influence the larger sociopolitical context, including the direction of social change (Finet, 2001 p. 273; Deetz, 1992).

Organizations respond communicatively to changes in the environment and “organizational discourse contributes largely to the direction and nature of this societal transformation” (Finet, 2001, p. 273). Consequently, politics are an integral component of the relationship between organizational discourse and the sociopolitical environment because some social interests inside and outside of organizations are realized while some other interests are not. Inevitably, the relationship between organizations and the environment is characterized by a context of “sometimes fierce conflict in the face of social change and organizational discourse will both reflect and contribute to it” (Finet, 2001, p. 274)

An organization’s use of institutional rhetoric to pursue its sociopolitical interests through specific policy advocacy represents an important way organizational discourse can have influence on the direction of changes in the larger sociopolitical environment. Institutional rhetoric is the “externally directed corporate expression of relatively formal collective entities” (Finet, 2001, p. 274). Institutional rhetoric represents the “rhetorical linkages established by the discursive engagement of organizations with other entities within the overall sociopolitical context to promote what are taken as these organizations’ sociopolitical interests” (Finet, 2001, p. 276). Institutional rhetoric also represents the perspective of the organization and its expression and advocacy of its “interests within the larger sociopolitical environment” (Finet, 2001, p. 283) and involves the “strategic collective advocacy of what organizations take to represent their sociopolitical interests” (Finet, 2001, p. 278). This strategic organizational discourse to advocate organizational interests is directed toward both its own organizational members and to other organizations within the sociopolitical environment. One of the more specific ways an

organization utilizes institutional rhetoric to pursue its interests is in the way that institutional rhetoric functions to strategically position the organization “within the context of normative opinion” (Finet, 2001, p. 278), by publicly situating the organization relative to serious social problems and as advocates of particular causes or issues. Consequently, an organization’s “specific arguments for and against [specific] policies” (Finet, 2001, p. 283) and “public articulations of organizations’ support of and opposition to [specific] policies reflects an important expression of institutional rhetoric” (Finet, 2001, p. 283).

Although the use of institutional rhetoric to advocate organizational perspectives on sociopolitical issues are often the results of sociopolitical changes that affect the organization, an organization’s institutional rhetoric can also have a strong influence on the direction of social changes and are often engaged in competition within the sociopolitical environment for “societal legitimacy” (Finet, 2001, p. 275). The collective expressions of an organization’s institutional rhetoric are “intended to influence the larger social normative climate” (Finet, 2001, p. 274) by engaging social issues and social changes in ways that bring about outcomes beneficial to the organization. Specifically, this organizational discourse “promotes alternative interpretations of the meaning and significance of such changes, especially the degree to which they represent social problems and what policies and actions represent appropriate solutions” (Finet, 2001, p. 274). The primary role of an organization’s institutional rhetoric is to strategically advocate the organization’s perspectives on sociopolitical issues through attempts to influence the wider meanings characterizing the larger sociopolitical environment. The way institutional rhetoric attempts to influence broader social norms and normative

understandings in the direction of its interests is by generating a particular “context of meaning around sociopolitical questions” (Finet, 2001, p. 281). Importantly for issues of contestation over globalization, among the variety of positions on social issues and social changes “one of these positions, expressed as institutional rhetoric, may dominate sociopolitical understanding at some times [while] at others, there may exist little consensus, and perhaps great social division” (Finet, 2001, p. 286).

An emphasis on an organization’s externally oriented communication highlights an important dimension of the relationship between organizations and the larger sociopolitical environment. Overlapping with Finet’s (2001) discussion of institutional rhetoric, Cheney and Christensen (2001) argued that “external organizational communication can be thought of as a subset of those processes specifically concerned with meaning construction by way of an ‘external’ environment” (p. 234-235). Consequently, an organization’s externally directed messages are an “integral part of the organization’s operating discourse” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 232). Cheney and Christensen (2001) situated organizational external communication practices such as public relations in an important role in the relationship between organizations and the larger sociopolitical environment. They highlighted the rhetorical dimension of external communication as the strategic and communicative means through which an organization engages in meaning-making practices to intervene and modify its sociopolitical environment, and so emphasize that there is a need to “bring activities such as marketing, public relations, and some kinds of advertising within the purview of organizational communication” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 246).

Specifically, “issues management and identity management” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 235) are important ways that organizational external communication strategically and rhetorically intervene in the sociopolitical environment. Identity management consists of the ways an organization attempts to define itself to make it distinctive and legitimize its role in the sociopolitical environment (Cheney & Christensen, 2001; Ganesh, 2003; Zoller, 2004). This rhetorical work of identity management is directed toward shaping the perception of the organizational entity for external audiences as well as functions as a form of “auto-communicating” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 246) that actively reinforces and constructs the organization’s own sense of its identity (Cheney & Christensen, 2001; Ganesh, 2003). Issue management refers to rhetorical activities through which the organization seeks to actively “shape and manage its environment more directly” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 238) by attempting to rhetorically and strategically shape the attitudes of its audience in the direction of its organizational concerns and more broadly to “shape the grounds for discussing social and political issues of the day” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 233).

The organizational discourse of identity and issues management is an important way that organizations intervene in and influence the larger sociopolitical environment. In this way, organization identity and issues management discourse shares central features of the operation of hegemonic discourse. Specifically, the discourse of organizational identity and issues management exhibits features of hegemonic discourse in the way it functions to position the organization in the context of social dislocation, the way it derives a distinctive identity for the organization through the use of a nodal point,

and the implications the discourse has for the inclusion and exclusion of particular meanings.

One function of organizational identity and issues management discourse is the way it relates and positions the organization in the landscape of the larger sociopolitical environment by taking stands on sociopolitical issues and general concerns in a way that defines external developments in the organization's own terms that are consistent with its aspirations (Cheney & Christensen, 2001). Organizational identity and issues management discourse does this by defining events and processes and giving them particular significance and a sense of urgency to show that the organization's responses and activities take into account and integrate the public's demands and so represent broad public and societal interests (Cheney & Christensen, 2001). Specifically, organizational identity is "closely related to the ways organizations define, diagnose, and respond to problems in their surroundings" (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 249; Dutton & Dukerich, 1991). In general, issues of significance are created "when one or more human agents [attach] significance to a situation or perceived problem" (Craley & Vibbert, 1985, p. 5; Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 239) and when it is decided to "articulate this attention publicly" (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 239; Heath, 1988). An organization that has effectively positioned itself within the larger social environment by taking stands on significant issues has "not only defined the problem but also identified the problem in the first place" (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 255; Vibbert & Bostdorff, 1993). It is successful specifically when an organization can be found to have "tapped into some sort of suspicion or resentment already held by a significant segment of the citizenry" (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 255; Vibbert & Bostdorff, 1993). An organization can

position itself in the larger social environment through “the way in which ‘crises’ often emerge through being declared, defined, and interpreted by proactive corporate actors” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 255).

This function of organizational identity and issues management discourse is consistent with the objectives of hegemonic discourses in the aftermath of a crisis of dislocation. Dislocation refers to “a destabilization of a discourse that results from the emergence of events which cannot be domesticated, symbolized or integrated within the discourse in question” (Torfing, 1999, pg. 301). That is, the contingency of previously entrenched discourses is made visible through the “decentering of the structure through social processes such as the extension of capitalist relations to new spheres of social life” (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000, pg. 13). Dislocation creates a “lack at the level of meaning that stimulates new discursive constructions, which attempt to suture the dislocated structure” (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000, p. 13).

A stable hegemonic discourse becomes dislocated when it is confronted by new events that it cannot explain, represent, or in other ways domesticate. Most discourses are flexible and capable of integrating a lot of new events into their symbolic order. But all discourses are finite and they will eventually confront events that they fail to integrate. The failure to domesticate new events will disrupt the discursive system. This will open a terrain for hegemonic struggles about how to heal the rift in the social order. There will be political struggles about how to define and solve the problem at hand (Torfing, 2005, p. 16).

Yet, the extent of the impact of dislocation is variable because “there is always a certain combination of discursive change and discursive stability...the balance between change

and stability varies according to the depth of the dislocation” (Hansen & Sorensen, 2005, p. 96). In the wake of dislocation, discourses of particular configurations of sociopolitical forces attempt to position themselves as capable of addressing the dislocation by providing a meaningful account of the dislocating events and the discourse’s role in addressing those events in a way that represents a broad range of sociopolitical interests. The extent to which a discourse is successful in gaining the support of other social groups behind its particular approach is able to suture the dislocated space and achieve a hegemonic position. This positioning function of organizational discourse in the context of social dislocation is intricately related to the way organizations attempt to define an essence for the identity of the organization.

Another function of organizational identity and issues management discourse is how it attempts to seek legitimacy through the construction and maintenance of a coherent and distinctive identity in the larger sociopolitical environment (Cheney & Christensen, 2001). This consists of efforts to define the essence of the organization, what it is and wants to be, its values and what it stands for, and the organization’s concerns and goals (Cheney & Christensen, 2001). Integral to this function is the way organizational identity and issues management discourse attempts to tap into general societal concerns and demands by taking stands on social issues for the purposes of “convincing an external audience about their deeds (e.g., their protection of the environment or defense of human rights)” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 232). This attempt to connect to the broader interests of the larger sociopolitical environment is an organizationally oriented process. Organizational identity and issues management discourse functions to define and diagnose these social issues and concerns in terms of

the organization's own aspirations in a way that projects the organization's internal concerns "by grounding their own worldview and strategies in external opinions and demands" (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 251). Specifically, organizational identity and issues management discourse attempts to reduce the complexity of the larger sociopolitical environment and its broad range of concerns, issues, and interests to the organization's own predetermined codes, offering particular organizationally oriented interpretations of socially valued terms that allows for the organization to legitimize its organizational activities as appropriate responses to societal issues (Cheney & Christensen, 2001).

These functions of organizational identity and issues management discourse are consistent with the various functions of the nodal point in hegemonic discourse. Nodal points are "the privileged signifiers or reference points in a discourse that bind together a particular system of meaning or chain of signification" (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000, p. 8). Nodal points function in a discourse as "organizing metaphors" (Hansen & Sorensen, 2005, p. 96) in the way that "the meaning and representation of the polity [are] condensed in the metaphor" (Hansen & Sorensen, 2005, p. 109) and "function as points of legitimization, in the promotion of concrete political objectives" (Hansen & Sorensen, 2005, p. 102). This accounts for "hegemonic projects, which are expressed by the organizing metaphors" (Hansen & Sorensen, 2005, p. 112) because an organizing metaphor "condenses the content of the hegemonic discursive polity" (Hansen & Sorensen, 2005, p. 107). An essential quality of the nodal point is how it functions as an empty signifier (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000). A particular discourse uses the empty signifier quality of the nodal point to signify an absence or lack that exists within the

larger sociopolitical environment and then to “present their particular objectives as those which carry out the filling of that lack” (Laclau, 1996, p. 44). Specific terms or sets of terms become important as “any term which, in a certain political context becomes the signifier of the lack, plays the same role” (Laclau, 1996, p. 44). The nodal point of any discourse has broad implications for other signifiers in a discourse. The nodal point functions to bind together a system of meaning because it functions as a central point around which other signifiers become linked and transforms other signifiers into internal moments of a particular discourse (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000). The meaning of other signifiers take on a particular connotation derived from the nodal point and “their meaning is partially fixed by reference to the nodal point” (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000, p. 8; Zizek, 1989). By conferring distinctiveness to organizational identity, the nodal point of an organizational discourse has implications for the inclusion and exclusion of particular meanings.

Organizational identity and issues management discourse also functions “to express what the organization is and is not” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 242). This includes “what issues publics or stakeholders are concerned with” and “how these issues are perceived, defined, and managed by the organization” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 254). This attempt to shape the issues relative to specific stakeholders is an important part of organizational identity and issues management because “the identification of stakeholders is increasingly used as a point of reference in the dynamic identification and demarcation of a polity, and thus in the political legitimization of the patterns of inclusion and exclusion that it establishes” (Hansen & Sorensen, 2005, p. 94).

That is, the way an organization's nodal point or organizing metaphor helps to establish a coherent and "clearly distinctive identity" (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 233) relates to how "a given metaphor...has important political effects in terms of inclusion and exclusion" (Hansen & Sorensen, 2005, p. 106). The organizational nodal point attempts to express "the true 'essence' or the defining goals and values" (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 247) of the organization and so its particularity has "considerable impact on the patterns of political inclusion and exclusion" (Hansen & Sorensen, 2005, p. 107). Actors, issues, and meanings more generally that are included are ones that can be linked or related to the organizational nodal point, that can be inscribed within the discursive framework engendered by the organizational nodal point, and that can be argued to contribute to what is defined as the common good (Hansen & Sorensen, 2005, p. 106-107, 112-113). Those excluded are ones that remain without a link or relation to the organizational nodal point, are not inscribed within its discursive framework, and are argued to not be contributing to the common good (Hansen & Sorensen, 2005, p. 106-107, 112-113).

Organizational identity and issues management discourse has important implications for organizational inclusion and exclusion because "in a concrete analysis of discourse, social antagonism shows itself through the production of political frontiers, which often invoke stereotyped pictures of friends and enemies" (Torfing, 2005, p. 16). However, the organization's discursive production of a line separating the friendly from the threatening is never completely fixed and is characterized by a continuous "struggle over what and who are included and excluded" (Torfing, 2005, p. 16).

Organizational identity and issues management discourse has implications for inclusion through the way it attempts to integrate external sociopolitical interests. Organizational identity and issues management functions in this way as an integrated discourse because of the way organizational “identities are often intertwined with the issues the organizations seek to address” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 242). One of the most important reasons “organizations take stands on prominent social and political issues” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 242) is to maximize their adaptation and influence on the sociopolitical environment. An organization engages in issue management in order to “identify potential issues relevant for its business and to organize activities to influence the development of those issues ‘in an effort to mitigate their consequences for the organization’” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 238; Hainsworth & Meng, 1988, p. 28). These activities are integrally related to an attempt to address the characteristics of social groups, “in rhetorical terms, issue management means that the organization attempts to both “read” the premises and attitudes of its audience and work to shape them, often in advance of any specific crisis or well-defined debate” (Cheney & Christensen, 2002, p. 239; Heath, 1980).

Addressing relevant issues with regard to other social entities allows an organization to “connect with more general concerns so as to be maximally persuasive and effective” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 233). In this way, organizational identity and issues management discourse attempts to create an “articulation/representation of genuine public interest” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 260) that “an organization professes to represent broad, public or societal interests” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 261). This is an important feature of the sociopolitical context of organizational activities

“as contemporary organizations face a growing demand to listen to relevant publics before they carry out their operations, systematic efforts to integrate these publics somehow into deliberations when taking stands on salient issues gradually becomes a more common phenomenon” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 245). Integrating other social entities with regard to organizationally relevant issues is an important function of organizational identity and issues management as “much of this activity is designed to get citizens as well as consumers to identify with some level of the organization” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 254).

This effort at inclusion is consistent with how hegemonic discourses use the logic of difference. A discourse that employs the “logic of difference attempts to weaken and displace a sharp antagonistic polarity, endeavoring to relegate that division to the margins of society” (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000, p. 11). That is, a discourse attempts to minimize differences between itself and a variety of other social entities so as to begin “incorporating those disarticulated elements into an expanding order” (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000, p. 11). A hegemonic project attempts to gradually incorporate the signifiers associated with the discourses of other relevant social entities and transforms those signifiers as they become “organized around the powerful metaphor” (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000, p. 11; Adamson, 2000) of the hegemonic discourse. For a hegemonic project, the logic of difference functions to “expand its bases of consent by differentially incorporating [other social entities] into the dominant order by offering them certain political, social and economic concessions” (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000, p. 12; Howarth, 2000). In addition, a hegemonic project’s efforts to incorporate other social entities simultaneously attempts “to disarticulate the growing political alliances between

these groups, thus weakening” opposition to the hegemonic project (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000, p.12).

Organizational identity and issues management discourse has implications for exclusion through the way it attempts to define itself against an external opposition. Organizational identity and issues management discourse functions as an integrated discourse to give the organization “a certain distinctiveness that allows the organization to create and legitimize itself, its particular ‘profile,’ and its advantageous position” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 241). This includes functioning “for organizations in drawing lines between themselves and the outside world” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 232). But also, because organizational discourse attempts to connect to other social entities, often “by leaning on, or exploiting, more well-known images or positions” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 242) that are related to important sociopolitical issues, it is also important for organizational discourse to function in “emphasizing small, but in a way significant differences” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 242). Organizational discourse contributes to the distinctiveness of the organization’s profile by detailing the differences between the organization and other entities and by what the discourse excludes.

Organizational identity and issues management discourse can both successfully position the organization in the larger sociopolitical environment as an entity capable of addressing particular problems and give the organization a clearly distinctive identity through forms of exclusion “that succeeded in locating the problem” within external institutions (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 254-255; Vibbert & Bostdorff, 1993). Specifically, organizational discourse attempts “defining a complex situation in

polarizing terms, and clearly placing blame outside its own institutional borders” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 254-255; Vibbert & Bostdorff, 1993). For organizational discourse, “to succeed in proclaiming a situation as urgent and especially to identify blameworthy parties is to mobilize opinion and responses” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 255), and is beneficial to the organization’s distinctive identity and its influence on the larger sociopolitical environment.

This effort at exclusion is consistent with the way hegemonic discourses use the logic of equivalence. This discursive logic “functions by creating equivalential identities that express a pure negation of a discursive system (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000, p. 11). That is, a particular hegemonic project attempts “to weaken their internal differences and organize themselves” as a unified entity “by opposing themselves to a series of others” that are also seen as unified (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000, p. 11; Buenfil Burgos, 2000). In this way the sameness of the social entities that are included in the hegemonic project is solidified and unified by excluding other social entities who “were made equivalent to one another by being presented as” the opposition (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000, p. 11; Buenfil Burgos, 2000). The unifying results of the logic of equivalence are based on forms of exclusion that function “by splitting a system of differences and instituting a political frontier between two opposed camps” (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000, p. 11). The discourse attempts to “divide social space by condensing meanings around two antagonistic poles” (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000, p. 11).

This binary is important to a hegemonic project because “the construction of social antagonism...involves the exclusion of a threatening Otherness that stabilizes the discursive system” (Torfing, 2005, p. 15). The role of this other is to function as a

“constitutive outside which has no common measure with the discourse in question” (Torfing, 2005, p. 16) yet it helps constitute the discourse. This constitutive outside is constructed through “the exclusion of a series of identities and meanings that are articulated as a part of a chain of equivalence, which emphasizes the ‘sameness’ of the excluded elements” (Torfing, 2005, p. 16). That is, the one thing the excluded elements have in common is that “they pose a threat to the discursive system” (Torfing, 2005, p. 16). A hegemonic discourse “involves the construction of a threatening otherness that is incommensurable with the discursive system and therefore constructs its unity and limits” (Torfing, 2005, p. 16). Exclusion is integral to a hegemonic discourse because “the process of ‘othering’ helps to stabilize the discursive system” (Torfing, 2005, p. 16).

The constitutive outside functions to unify a discursive system, but “the price for this stabilization is the introduction of a radical other that threatens and problematizes the discursive system and prevents it from achieving a full closure” (Torfing, 2005, p. 16). The construction of social antagonism through exclusion plays “a crucial role for the attempt to unify dissimilar points of identification” and “facilitates the displacement of responsibility...onto the enemy, which is held responsible for all evil” (Torfing, 2005, p. 17). This exclusion and displacement of responsibility onto the excluded has important social implications as “the externalization of the subject’s lack to an enemy is likely to fuel political action that will be driven by an illusionary promise: that the elimination of the other will remove the subject’s original lack” (Torfing, 2005, p. 17). Consequently, the organizational discourse of identity and issues management has important implications for the exclusion of particular meanings that function in the discourse as the source of social problems in the larger sociopolitical environment.

In all, organizational identity and issues management discourse shares central features of the operation of hegemonic discourse. Specifically, the discourse of organizational identity and issues management exhibits features of hegemonic discourse in the way it functions to position the organization in the context of social dislocation, the way it derives a distinctive identity for the organization through the use of a nodal point, and the implications the discourse has for the inclusion and exclusion of particular meanings.

A critical analysis of the hegemonic features of organizational identity and issues management discourse can be applied specifically to understanding the contested nature of globalization and the hegemonic role of IGOs. In highlighting research that can contest the supposed “naturalness of neo-liberalism,” Ganesh et al. (2005) have suggested that “critical issue management studies bring tools for dissecting corporate discourse aimed at identification, legitimacy, and co-operation” (p. 182; Cheney & Christensen, 2001; German, 1995). One such example of a critical issue management study of globalization and organizational discourse is Zoller’s (2004) analysis of “global issue management” (p. 204) that studied the way organizational issues management communication functions to legitimize corporate oriented global policy construction. Identifying the hegemonic features of organizational identity and issues management discourse represents a critical approach to global issue management that can be applied to the hegemonic role of IGOs and their influence on the constitution of global political and economic structures.

Organizational Cyber-Discourse

The rise of the internet has provided a site of organizational legitimization discourse that plays an increasingly important role in hegemonic struggles. Cyberspace is an increasingly significant site of organizational identity and issues management and thus is an important site where organizations attempt to intervene in the larger sociopolitical environment and influence the direction of social change. With respect to the role of IGOs and IGO discourse in emerging forms of global governance that attempt to manage globalization, IGO cyber-discourse is becoming an increasingly important means of global issue management to legitimize these emerging forms of global governance.

In a prescient statement from his work on organizations as historically constituted entities that function as sites of the sociopolitical context of class structure, Clegg (1981) encouraged research that addresses how “technological developments such as the possibly bunched innovations in computerized intelligence systems seem poised to produce very different organizations that will certainly have unforeseen political effects” (p. 560). Indeed, the emergence of organizational cyber-discourse enabled by computer technology developments has provided an important new site of discourse in general and more specifically for organizational discourse that has implications for globalization. The intervention of IGO cyber-discourse in the sociopolitical environment to manage globalization is one way such technological developments realize socially significant political effects. Emphasizing organizational cyber-discourse is important for understanding the role of organizational communication in globalization because of the way cyber-discourse represents increasing forms of organizational discourse and

globalization discourse. That is, organizational cyber-discourse is an important means through which organizations engage in the discursive management of organizational identity and the discursive management of organizational issues that, especially with regard to the role of IGOs, in turn have important implications for the legitimization of global governance.

As early as 1997, representatives of the NATO Integrated Data Service and the Centre for Peace and Security Studies of the Free University of Brussels issued a report detailing the needs of international organizations and the increasing use of the internet for the information dissemination needs of international organizations (Antoine & Geeraerts, 1997). In an example of this trend, the report highlighted the use of the internet by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The report discussed NATO's use of the internet as a simple and "effective way to spread its message" (Antoine & Geeraerts, 1997, p.6). The authors detailed the specific use by NATO of an official NATO website and described it as functioning to enhance communication with quick and effective information dissemination that could circumvent news media (Antoine & Geeraerts, 1997). This function of being able to circumvent news media indicates the way NATO can use its website to increase its capacity to manage its organizational identity and organizational issues in the larger sociopolitical context.

Another function of the NATO website highlighted in the report mentions the need for a cost-effective and quick way to update information such as the NATO handbook (Antoine & Geeraerts, 1997). The report stated that the NATO information that needs constant updating is nearly impossible to amend in the printed form, yet electronic versions are easily revised (Antoine & Geeraerts, 1997). In addition, whereas

many NATO texts may not even be available in printed form, they are all easily made available on-line (Antoine & Geeraerts, 1997). This function indicates that due to cost-effectiveness and ease of revision, the website cyber-discourse of IGOs and organizations more generally has a tremendously increased capacity to be responsive to the changing conditions of the larger sociopolitical environment and adapt and manage organizational identity and issues far more effectively than traditional printed organizational texts.

The many organizational uses of the digitization of communication highlight the rapid rise of cyber-discourse as a significant source of organizational discourse. The digital character of these technological developments provides valuable means for various organizational functions. Rice and Gattiker (2001) suggested that the “digitization of content allows the integration and exchange of multiple communication modes—such as graphics, video, sound, text—across multiple media and distribution networks (p. 545). Jackson (2007) has emphasized this increase in digital communication in the contexts of business organizations by suggesting that “the scope, scale, and substance of business communication are undergoing a sea change as the result of recent developments and emerging uses of communication technologies” (p. 3), specifically, the “dramatic increase in the amount of online communication archived on Web sites and available publicly” (p. 5). Such an increase in digitized communication highlights the importance of an analysis of organizational cyber-discourse. Jackson (2007) has argued that “we are witnessing the creation of readymade data sets on a scale we have never before experienced...this is truly a new sea of communication” (p. 6). More specifically for critical approaches to discourse, Mautner (2005) made “a plea for more critical discourse analysts to work with web-based corpora” (p. 809). Similar to Jackson’s

(2007) emphasis on the rising social relevance of web discourse but with a more critical orientation, Mautner (2005) argued that “the contemporary relevance of the web as a key site for the articulation of social issues should make it a prime target for critical discourse analysts with a political and emancipatory brief...nonetheless, CDA publications are still predominantly based on conventional, non-electronic sources of data” (p. 809).

Among the organizational uses of digital communication, the one most applicable to the role of IGO discourse in legitimizing emerging forms of global governance through organizational identity and issues management has to do with the way organizational cyber-discourse constitutes a discursive presence for the organization. Jackson (2007) highlighted the link between communication technologies and the functions of the institutional rhetoric of an organization’s externally oriented discourse when she asked “how does this new environment change models for communication with publics, for marketing, for management practices?” (p. 7). Additionally, Jackson’s (2007) suggestion that this form of “mediated communication is infused into nearly any business communication context, perhaps even coming to dominate certain areas such as public relations” (p. 10) indicates how organizational cyber-discourse may become the primary means through which an organization engages in the external communication of organizational identity and issues management.

Organizational websites are an important example of these organizational cyber-discourse functions. Boardman (2005) argued that “the Web is now so well developed as a mainstream mass communication medium that most organizations are considered foolish if they do not have a presence on it” (p. 21). In discussing the function of “institutional websites” for an organization’s web presence Boardman (2005) suggested

understanding “websites as metaphorical buildings” (p. 21) in the way that they create a structure that allows the viewer/reader to see the organization engaging in its daily work. Additionally, Boardman (2005) argued that an organization’s web pages should not be seen merely as a technologically updated version of traditional organizational discourse artifacts like flyers, leaflets and magazines that provide information on an organization’s work and services, but rather as something more in terms of establishing a presence for the organization. That is, “it is often more helpful to see the high-budget web presence of a major organization as something resembling a building with multiple offices, conference suites, corridors, lifts and all manner of areas where information is stored...how those different parts of the building signal to you that they are available to look at, and in some cases get things from” (Boardman, 2005, p. 22).

The notion of an organization’s website functioning as an “institutional website” (Boardman, 2005, p. 21) is consistent with and should be considered an example of an organization’s “institutional rhetoric” (Finet, 2001, p. 271). Additionally, the function of the organizational cyber-discourse of a website in establishing a presence is consistent with Cheney and Christensen’s (2001) description of the function of external organizational discourse in establishing and discursively managing an organizational identity and managing organizational issues.

Similarly, Mitra’s (1997) description of the use of internet discourse by social groups to construct and maintain a “cyberface” to produce a public face for external audiences can be used to conceive of the organizational uses of cyber-discourse as an expression of institutional rhetoric (Finet, 2001) and external organizational discourse (Cheney & Christensen, 2001). Mitra and Watts (2002) have also suggested that the

notion of “voice” helps to describe the use of discourse in cyberspace in the way that “web pages represent the presence of individuals and institutions representing what they have to say” (p. 479). For them “cyberspace can be conceptualized as a discursive space and calls for a textual/discursive/rhetorical analysis focusing on the eloquence of representation as a principal means by which people and institutions voice themselves in this space (Mitra & Watts, 2002, p. 480).

Fursich and Robins’ (2002) analysis of the discursive strategies of sub-Saharan African countries to shape their image and present it to the world focused solely on the countries’ official government websites. They focused on the official websites because of how “new information technologies offer another conduit for the negotiation of an evolving national identity” (p. 191) and how the countries “use internet sites to lend themselves authority and authenticity” (p. 196). They argued that “developing a ‘cyberface’ to the world becomes an obligatory aspect of national identity work” (Fursich & Robbins, 2002, p. 199; Mitra, 1997), especially as it relates to the way these African countries use websites as a form of cyber-discursive identity management to negotiate their position within the context of the market oriented pressures of a neo-liberal version of globalization. Individuals, institutions, and nation-states, engage in forms of cyberface management, that is, the strategic management of their presence in cyber-space to intervene in and effect their position in the larger sociopolitical environment.

The legitimating function of cyber-discourse is also consistent with how the institutional rhetoric of the external communication of organizational discourse is oriented toward deriving legitimacy for the organizational entity (Finet, 2001; Cheney & Christensen, 2001; Ganesh, 2003; Zoller, 2004). Consequently, the notion of cyberface

applies to organizational entities in general. Organizations can use cyber-discourse to construct an organizational cyberface, that is, an organizational presence in cyber-space. Similarly, organizations can engage in forms of organizational cyberface management, that is, the strategic management of the organization's presence that manages organizational identity and organizational issues in cyberspace to intervene in and effect the organization's position in the larger sociopolitical environment.

The link between legitimization and the use of organizational cyber-discourse in organizational identity and issues management is valuable to understanding the role of IGOs and IGO discourse in emerging forms of global governance because of the governmental functions of IGO policy and regulatory frameworks. Chadwick's (2001) work regarding the "politics of the information age" (2001, p. 437) emphasized that "the Internet offers political elites many opportunities to intensify and diversify the ways in which they sustain themselves in positions of power" (2001, p. 455). Cyber-discourse is an important part of the governing activities of legitimization because of the way "the Internet has spawned a new electronic face of government, but one which exhibits many of the features identified as central to political legitimization" especially in regard to "the properties of the web as a medium and how this may contribute to the symbolic dimension of government activity" (Chadwick, 2001, p. 454). For Chadwick (2001), the use of cyber-discourse offers something new to the legitimization of government:

...the Internet allows for a new 'electronic face' of government which has previously been unavailable. This is controlled by government itself and is subject to the central demands of early twenty-first century politics,

namely presentational professionalism in the form of attention to imagery, symbolism, language use and genre (p. 436).

Because the use of the “internet offers the prospect for government to create new electronic faces, which act to support a symbolic architecture of power” (Chadwick, 2001, p. 435) it is crucial to analyze such cyber-discourse as Chadwick’s focus on the websites of government executive branches or similarly, the websites and cyber-discourse more generally of IGOs that represent emerging forms of global governance, to see how “an examination of their electronic face reveals some potentially significant aspects of how political legitimation is reinforced through new ICTs” (Chadwick, 2001, p. 446).

Contribution of the Study

The role of IGOs in the implementation of a particular version of globalization is a relatively recent development. As Ganesh et al. (2005) suggested “the mission of these transnational institutions has shifted from preventing global financial crises to promoting neo-liberal economic policies” (p. 171). That is, one of the important dimensions of what is new about globalization is the emergence and rise of global organizational entities whose objective it is to manage globalization for a particular set of political-economic interests. In describing the common ground shared by most analyses of globalization, Held and McGrew (2003) argue that one of the most important features of globalization is that “there has been an expansion of international governance at regional and global levels—from the EU to the WTO—which poses significant normative questions about the kind of world order being constructed and whose interests it serves” (p. 38). Because

of the power of IGOs to produce concrete global policy and regulatory infrastructures, the way that IGOs attempt to manage globalization through cyber-discourse has important socially significant implications.

As such, there exists an important need to theorize the role of these global organizations and their cyber-discourse in the social changes of globalization in a way that contributes to “understanding the larger societal significance of organizational discourse” (Finet, 2001, p. 287). This requires an approach that “instead of taking the globalized capitalist economy as a given starting point for the analysis of political responses in terms of political regulation of the financial markets...[would] analyze how the discourse on globalization constructs different accounts of globalization and its likely effects” (Torfing, 2005, p. 22).

A critical issue management study (Ganesh et al., 2005; Cheney & Christensen, 2001) and global issue management study (Zoller, 2004) applied to the various manifestations of the cyberface and cyberfaces of global governance can be an important direction of organizational communication research. Such a direction of study can begin to address the social and political implications of a combination of two increasingly prominent issues of our time; the rise of forms of global governance and the rise of the internet, into the legitimization of global governance in cyberspace.

This study seeks to make a contribution by highlighting these two important features of contemporary global processes; first, emerging forms of global governance, second, emerging forms of legitimization in cyberspace. The study argues that emerging forms of governance represented by IGOs and the increasing use of cyber-discourse as a form of legitimization can be theorized through the concept of the cyberface of global

governance. That is, the cyberface of global governance addresses how IGOs as organizational entities representing emerging forms of global governance, utilize cyber discourse as a means to legitimize that governance, through the creation and maintenance of an organizational web presence that manages organizational identity and organizational issues. This study examines how IGOs use cyber-discourse to manage their organizational identity and organizational issues and contribute to the legitimization of forms of global governance.

Research Questions

RQ1: How does the WTO cyber-discourse of organizational identity and issues management attempt to legitimize the WTO system as a form of global governance?

RQ2: How does the WTO cyber-discourse manage specific cases of nation-state trade policy?

CHAPTER TWO

DATA AND METHOD

Data

In their review of approaches to discourse analysis in organizations, Putnam and Fairhurst (2001) highlight the importance of discourse analysis researchers to consider a major sampling question in terms of how they determine which texts to select from the large number and variety of texts that organizations produce, where not all texts have an equal amount of saliency in organizing processes. This project addresses this concern by sampling data guided by theoretical developments related to the particular phenomenon that is the object of study. The data sampled are theoretically relevant sections of the official “institutional website” (Boardman 2005) of the WTO: home page: <http://www.wto.org>, site map: http://www.wto.org/english/info_e/site2_e.htm. The selection of the WTO website and relevant sections of the website for analysis are appropriate for an analysis of the cyberface of global governance. The cyberface of global governance highlights how IGOs attempt to legitimize global governance through the use of cyber-discourse to establish a presence for the organization that attempts to manage organizational identity and organizational issues. Consequently, the sections of cyber-discourse selected are reflective of the organization’s explicit and strategic choices concerning its institutional presence in cyber-space.

After extensive review of the available data on the WTO website, theoretically relevant sections of the website were selected utilizing Cheney and Christensen’s (2001) discussion of the functions of organizational identity and issues management. Specific sections of the website were selected that most explicitly highlighted the content as

representative of the WTO's definition of itself, its objectives, and its policy orientation. Based on this theoretical rationale, the following table contains the digital texts that were selected for more in-depth analysis.

1. The WTO in brief: 8 pg. PDF
2. About the WTO-“Understanding the WTO”: 116 pg. PDF
3. 10 benefits of the WTO trading system: 18 pg. PDF
4. 10 common misunderstandings about the WTO: 14 pg. PDF
5. Multimedia presentations
 - Overview of the WTO: Overview of the WTO A Multimedia Training Package
 - Multimedia Presentation: video script 24 pg. MS Word
 - e-Documents: 29 web pg.
 - Frequently asked questions: video script 5 pg. MS Word
 - Self Evaluation: 1 web pg.
6. WTO/CPA booklet for MPs: 36 pg. PDF
7. WTO policy issues for parliamentarians: 48 pg. PDF
 - WTO Director-General Mike Moore address to European Parliament: 4 pg. PDF
9. WTO Public Forum 2007 on Globalization
 - WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy keynote address: 7 web pg.
10. Trade Policy Reviews: Secretariat report contents and summary observations
 1. Trade Policy Reviews Gateway: 3 web pg.
 2. Trade Policy Reviews Introduction: 2 web pg.
 3. Trade Policy Review United States 2006: 12 pg. MS Word
 4. Trade Policy Review China 2006: 16 pg. MS Word

5. Trade Policy Review Republic of Korea 2004: 12 pg. MS Word
6. Trade Policy Review Japan 2007: 10 pg. MS Word
7. Trade Policy Review South African Customs Union 2003: 11 pg. MS Word

Selected digital texts were downloaded and saved in their original format on a computer hard drive. The original formats made available on the WTO website that were saved included PDF files, web pages, MS Word files, and video files. The WTO website included video scripts on web pages of the videos selected. The text of the web pages of the video scripts was copied and pasted into and saved as MS Word files. Next, all digital texts were printed so that hardcopies would be available. All files not originally available in MS Word were converted into MS Word documents and then all selected digital texts were imported into NVivo 7 qualitative analysis software.

Method

The specific analytical procedures used to map the cyber-discourse of the WTO consists of three different levels of readings of the selected digital texts, moving from general to specific. The first reading consisted of reading through all of the hardcopies of the digital texts in their original format made available on the WTO website, and watching the videos. During the first reading, notes were taken on possible emerging themes and examples of those possible emerging themes were highlighted. Guided by the notes on possible themes and examples of those possible themes derived from the first reading, the second reading consisted of a more detailed reading of the hardcopies of specific texts and specific sections of those texts that had the noted themes and examples.

During the second reading emerging themes and examples of those emerging themes were identified. The third reading consisted of identifying the key signifiers of the emerging themes and examples of those emerging themes. This included specific words and phrases that were identified as characteristic of those emerging themes. These specific words and phrase were used as search terms for an NVivo 7 text search query of all of the selected digital texts. Another detailed reading was done on the sections of the digital texts that had the search terms. During the third reading emerging themes and examples of those emerging themes were refined. After the three levels of reading were finished, the last step was to finalize the themes by turning them into analytical categories supported by an analytical synthesis of discourse theory and identity and issues management, providing labels and descriptions of those categories, and selecting exemplars from the data to correspond to each category.

The critical analysis deployed in this study is meant to offer an analysis of data that is one analyst's particular interpretation that makes a contribution and intervention in the social construction of reality. Consequently, the analysis is not meant to reflect a singular and objective reality, but instead reflects a particular context and set of practical interests. The practical interests and particular values guiding this analysis of the discourse of the WTO are oriented toward the critical concerns of contributing to the social construction of reality in way that increases an understanding of the possibilities for alternative constructions of global reality and alternative structures of global order. The analysis of the construction of the legitimization of global governance contributes to the social construction of a reality that suggests that other alternatives are capable of being constructed that reflect different and potentially wider sets of interests.

Consequently, the analysis of this study is oriented toward a critical approach to the discourse and the discursive construction of the realities of global order. This emphasis of this study on a critical approach to discourse in a global context is consistent with others such as Fairclough (2002) who adopt a critical approach to a discourse analysis of the dominant legitimization discourses of the contemporary global order and globalization with a focus on “language in New Capitalism” (p. 163).

This is consistent with critical organizational communication concerns derived from Benson (1977) and Deetz (1985) that highlight the way social scientific analysis makes a contribution to the construction of social reality and the practical social interests associated with particular constructions of social reality. For Benson (1977) the practice of social science is a process of social construction that is embedded in a social context and reflects the practical concerns of particular groups of people that are acting within that context and “the interplay between practical interests and scholarship” (p. 16). An analytical description is a contribution and intervention in the society-wide processes of social construction where “the social scientist uses the tools and raw materials at hand to construct realities” (p. 6). Analysis as social construction that reflects a particular context and practical interests rejects the notion of value neutrality in research. As Deetz (1985) suggested “the presumption of value neutrality in much current research hides its complicity with privileged interests. The choice of research conceptions, questions, and methods is always value-laden. The question is not whether values, but whose and which values” (Deetz, 1985, p. 123).

Also, the discourse analysis of the single case of the WTO organizational identity and issues management discourse allows for increased attention to detail and proximity to

the object of analysis and enables “the means to condense a number of theoretical and empirical elements in order to elucidate a singular practice or phenomenon” (Howarth, 2005, p. 331). Specifically, this project is a “paradigmatic case” where a singular case is “selected and used to provide an accurate representation of a wider field of phenomena...[which]...function as exemplars or metaphors for an entire society” (Howarth, 2005, p. 331; Flyvbjerg, 2001). Howarth (2005) argued that just as Foucault ((1977) used Bentham’s concept of the Panopticon to indicate the wider phenomenon of a disciplinary society; a paradigmatic case can be an “exemplary embodiment” of the phenomenon under study (p. 331). The analysis of the WTO as a paradigmatic case provides an important exemplar of the wider global phenomenon of the cyberface of global governance.

The focus on organizational discourse in this case study discourse analysis is consistent with Putnam and Fairhurst’s (2001) argument that discourse analysis in organizations should be concerned with how “discourse patterns fuse with organizational processes in ways that make language and organizations a unique domain—one that differs from the study of linguistics in general and discourse analysis in other social settings” (p. 78). Each one of a variety of approaches to discourse and organizations will “differ in their emphases on discourse features” and “what features of discourse are privileged, and how discourse patterns relate to organizational processes and constructs” (Putnam & Fairhurst, 2001, p. 80). They go on to suggest that “the study of language and discourse in the process of organizing...needs synthesis and critique as an ontological base for the study of organizations” (Putnam & Fairhurst, 2001, p. 79). Addressing these concerns, this project’s paradigmatic case study of the cyber-discourse of the WTO was

conducted using a discourse-analytical framework derived from a theoretical synthesis of discourse theory (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Torfing, 2005; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000; Torfing, 1999) and its discussion and privileging of the features of hegemonic discourse, with Cheney and Christensen's (2001) discussion of the functions of organizational identity and issues management.

Important to understanding how the WTO cyber-discourse attempts to legitimize the WTO system as a form of global governance is in how it manages organizational identity and issues as an integrated discourse. As Cheney and Christensen (2001) have stressed, "the ways in which organizations attempt to manage both identifiable issues and their own identities...have become so interwoven as to make their analytical separation unproductive if not impossible" (p. 233). The discursive construction of organizational identity is "intertwined with the issues the organizations seek to address" (p. 242). This is principally because "organizational identity affects the diagnosis of issues" and identity itself becomes a "salient issue closely related to the ways organizations define, diagnose, and respond to problems in their surroundings" (p. 249). Consequently, an organization's "issue management becomes closely tied up with the question of organizational identity" (p. 257). Contemporary organizations "perceive and manage issues as identities, and identities as issues" (pg. 257-258).

A synthesis of Cheney and Christensen's (2001) theorization of organizational identity and issues management with Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) theorization of the universalizing attempts of hegemonic discourses provides insight into how the particular networks of signification deployed in the WTO's integrated identity and issues management discourse constructs how these global policies and particular interests are

universalized. This happens primarily through the accounts given of the world that discursively construct the necessity of particular policies that contribute to the shaping of global economic structure. This study proceeds through an analysis of how the integrated discourse of WTO organizational identity and issue management exhibit the specific discursive features that attempt to legitimate global economic governance and universalize a particular version of globalization.

This is a productive and complementary synthesis due to the overlap that exists between the two in terms of a general approach that highlights discourse as a system of signification. An integral component of discourse theory is the incorporation of poststructural theories of the sign (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). As Putnam and Fairhurst (2001) suggested, “poststructuralism, with its emphasis on the science of signs, cast language as a structural system of relationships...objects, ideas, and symbols are constituted through signifiers or referents linked to other referents” (p. 79). This poststructural orientation overlaps productively with how a particular “approach to semiotics underlies research on organizational identity, corporate image, and marketing communication (Putnam & Fairhurst, 2001, p. 102). Such an approach suggests that “organizational identity and corporate image evolves through the interplay of texts and the relationships that exist among multiple signs...[and]...treats organizing as developing chains of signifiers that represent belief systems and characterize corporate identity and images” (Putnam & Fairhurst, 2001, p. 102-103).

Discourse theory is also appropriate for this particular case study because of the central role of global policy formulation and implementation in the WTO system of global governance. Policy orientations are an important product of organizational

discourse as policy consists of defining the situations and events that call for policy action (Weldes, 1998). In this way, policymaking is itself dependent on “discursive and representational practice and the discursive struggles in and through which worlds are constituted, policy issues are defined, and policy is made” (Weldes, 1998, p. 217). Policymaking is an important site of discursive struggle because the “language of policymaking, that is, does not simply reflect “real” policy issues and problems; instead, it actively produces the issues with which policymakers deal and the specific problems they confront” (Weldes, 1998, p. 217). As for the decision of an organization to adopt a particular policy, Castor’s (2005) study of organizational decision making highlights how the communication of particular “vocabularies” are deployed to actively construct the meaning of the object of an organizational decision. Castor’s (2005) analysis points to the contestation between different vocabularies articulated by organizational members seeking to define social reality in different ways with different practical policy implications. The negotiation of meaning in the construction of policy choices of an organizational decision is a process of discursive contestation.

Organizational issues management and policy orientation are related through discourses that provide a framework of intelligibility through which the world becomes a meaningful space within which to act, and so policy as a discursive construction refers to how subjects, objects, and relations between subjects and objects and events, are configured in meaning in such a way as to make particular policies seem as if they are the inevitable courses of action. In this respect, Torfing (2005) suggests that discourse theory is valuable in its ability to “address the core topics and areas within social and political science” such as “public administration, policy analysis, security politics etc” (p.

25). The discourse theory focus on “the discursive construction of sedimented norms, values, and symbols” (Torfing, 2005, p. 4) has begun to help policy analysts “to recognize the importance of paradigmatic frameworks of knowledge for the identification and solution of policy problems” (p. 4).

Additionally, the form of discourse analysis developed through discourse theory is especially suited to the analysis of cyber-discourse because of the different and particular properties of discourse that have been enabled by the development of the new communication technologies of the internet. First, the discourse theory integration of the Gramscian theory of hegemony with post-structural theories of the sign addresses the sedimented, yet contested and ultimately contingent character of discursive structures. These principles are better able to adequately account for the particular properties of cyber-discourse, specifically “the non-linear and ephemeral aspects of Web content connect to cultural-critical scholars’ poststructural concept of “text” as an unsettled, open and shifting process of meaning making, never fully fixed between encoding and decoding” (Fursich & Robins, 2002, p. 194). Second, the discourse theory development of an expanded concept of discourse includes “linguistic and non-linguistic data...as text or writing” (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000, p. 4). This expanded concept of discourse is better able to adequately account for the way cyber-discourse provides discursive features that cannot be found in other media that are providing organizations with a technologically expanded repertoire of discursive strategies. Specifically, a concept of discourse that includes linguistic and non-linguistic phenomena as discourse is better able to address the multi-media character of the cyber-discourse of organizational institutional websites. The expanded concept of discourse is also able to address a number of other

particular features of cyber-discourse that represent a much larger discursive ensemble than previously available; by including as discourse and then subject to discourse analysis the signifying systems of words, images, visual design and graphic alignment, etc. This includes hyperlink and hypertext configurations because they themselves constitute signifying systems in providing the ability to make links between signifiers and thus construct particular meanings in ways unavailable to other forms of discourse.

Howarth and Stavrakakis (2000) provide some definitions of concepts that guide the specific analytic procedures of this case study of WTO cyber-discourse. First, the practice of articulation is the practice of establishing relationships between signifiers to produce the structured totality that is a discourse. A discourse is made up of different signifiers that have been linked together. These signifiers are linked to each other through being linked to nodal points in the discourse that function as the privileged signifiers that bind the other signifiers together (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000).

Due to this linking function of the practice of articulation, discourse is often referred to as “chains of signification” (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000), however this case study will approach discourse as a structured totality of signifiers by analyzing these combinations of signifiers and referring to them as networks of signification and discursive networks. Discourses as temporarily sedimented yet dynamic and changing networks of signifiers provides an understanding of how signifiers function in a network formation that are in turn linked to the signifying networks of discourses in the larger sociopolitical environment. Discourse as networks of signifiers also points to how these networks can be analyzed using the metaphor of mapping.

Several scholars who focus on discourse have used the metaphor of mapping in their analysis. Crofts Wiley (2004) engaged in a “mapping of the context” in order to “map the network of forces, relations, and consequences that give a cultural event or practice its value or effectivity” (p. 88). Also Hebdige (1991) suggested that social/cultural signs and codes constitute “maps of meaning” that naturalize particular configurations of social relations. Thus Hebdige (1991) suggested that an analysis of those codes and signs can “trace them out as maps of meaning” (p. 18). As Wetherell and Potter (1992) have argued, “the aim of a map is to find your way around a certain terrain” (p.1). Similarly, this study’s discourse analysis of the cyber-discourse of the WTO proceeds by “mapping the language” and the “patterns of signification and representation” such that the objective will be to “make the discursive practice the object of [the map]” (Wetherell & Potter, 1992, p. 1). For the present study, this consists of mapping the networks of signification of the WTO cyber-discourse by providing descriptions of the specific signifiers used and the ways those signifiers are linked together in a network to constitute particular patterns of meaning.

CHAPTER THREE

ANALYSIS

Legitimizing the WTO System as a form of Global Governance

The WTO cyber-discourse of organizational identity and issues management attempts to legitimize the WTO system as a form of global governance by positioning the WTO system as responsible for managing globalization. Specifically, the WTO cyber-discourse attempts to manage the sovereignty of the nation-state members of the WTO by orienting nation-state trade policy toward the free trade and liberalization objectives of the WTO governance system. This discourse of organizational legitimization is conducted through a number of the hegemonic features of the WTO's discourse of organizational identity and issues management. These features of the discourse include organizational positioning, organizational nodal point, organizational inclusion, and organizational exclusion.

The WTO was formed as an international organization in the 1995 Uruguay Round of international trade negotiations to formally replace and encompass the international trade regime that had been in place since 1948 under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The WTO provides the principle political and legal framework for a wide variety of economic and specifically trade related issues for economically developing and developed nation-states (Sen, 2003). International trade rules implemented worldwide through the WTO are one of the world's most powerful regimes of global regulation. Consequently, the WTO as an IGO concerned with global economic and trade regulation represents a prominent form of emerging global economic governance. The ways the WTO discursively manages its organizational identity and

organizational issues legitimizes this form of emerging global economic governance and functions as an attempt to manage globalization by universalizing a particular version of globalization and global economic order. The primary way the WTO sediments a particular version of globalization is in legitimizing its principles as a form of global economic governance.

The WTO organizational identity and issues management discourse takes advantage of the way processes of globalization have induced experiences of dislocation in previously entrenched discourses related to economic sovereignty. Dislocation of the previously entrenched national economic sovereignty discourse by processes of globalization has provided an opportunity for discourses of global economic sovereignty to attempt to provide a different orientation to the locus of control of economic sovereignty. The WTO's current and growing power as a global regulatory force is widely recognized as inducing concerns over threats to nation-state sovereignty (Sen, 2003). The WTO as a prominent form of emerging global economic governance is integral to this discursive struggle and its organizational discourse represents an intervention in the larger global sociopolitical environment that is supporting a shift to global economic sovereignty.

Organizational Positioning: Positioning the WTO in the Global Order

The WTO discourse engages in organizational positioning by attempting to position the organization as capable of playing a significant role in the larger global environment in its ability to address problems related to the dislocating effects of globalization. Organizational positioning describes the positioning functions of both

organizational identity and issues management discourse (Cheney & Christensen, 2001) and the attempts of hegemonic discourses to provide a discursive framework of meaning in the aftermath of dislocating events (Howard & Stavrakakis, 2000). Organizational positioning describes attempts by organizational discourse to position the organization as capable of playing a significant role in the larger sociopolitical environment by addressing the problems, events, and processes of societal concern.

Specifically, the WTO discourse attempts to position the WTO in the global order by highlighting how globalization induces a lack of capacity on the part of the nation-state and how international organizations and the WTO are able to address the limits of the nation-state and provide solutions to global issues.

The WTO discourse attempts to legitimize the general role of international institutions in the larger global environment. This is consistent with the way organizational identity and issues management discourse functions to position an organization in the landscape of the larger sociopolitical environment. The following section of discourse from a speech to the European Parliament by former WTO Director-General Mike Moore shows how legitimization of international institutions is premised upon the identification and definition of a particular problem in the organization's surroundings. Specifically, the WTO discourse identifies and defines a problem of a lack of capacity on the part of the nation-state. According to Mike Moore this is due to the reality of a global world that limits the capacity of nation-state governments to act without cooperative efforts. These conditions challenge nation-states and require their cooperation.

The realities of a more global world make it harder for governments to act independently of each other. Global challenges call for shared and cooperative solutions. (**WTO Director-General Mike Moore Address to European Parliament, April 2001**)

By defining external developments, events, and processes in its own terms, WTO discourse defines characteristics of globalization as conditions that induce the problem of a lack of capacity of nation-states to attend to a growing number of specific issues. This point is made by Mike Moore in his speech to the European Parliament. In it he argues that nation-state governments are aware of their own lack of capacity and inability to serve the interests of its citizenry without international cooperation between nation-states, especially as it takes the form of the establishment of international institutions. The WTO declares and defines a crisis related to how globalization has induced a particular crisis in the capacity of the nation-state, and international institutions are positioned in an important role in the larger global environment through their own capacity to address and compensate for the limits of the nation-state. This is an important example of an attempt to define a problem in a particular way and then provide a solution that is consistent with organizational objectives, in that it addresses the problems associated with dislocation in the global order by advancing a discourse of the primacy and importance of international institutions.

A big debate is raging about how to promote, some say preserve, democracy in a globalizing world. Whereas democracy remains rooted in local communities and nation states, a growing number of issues require global attention and action. Governments know they cannot effectively

serve their people and their peoples' interests without the cooperation of others. They cannot ensure clean air and a clean environment, run an airline, organize a tax system, attack organized crime, solve the plagues of our age; AIDS, cancer, poverty, without the cooperation of other governments and international institutions.

Too much of the last century and the century before was ruled by coercion. But I believe we are now in a better world of persuasion. To be sure, it remains an imperfect world. But it is a vast improvement on earlier times. And it is due to wise men and women of vision who established international institutions and negotiated important treaties like the UN Charter, Law of the Sea, the Antarctic Agreement; all the better to advance civilized behaviour. **(WTO Director-General Mike Moore Address to European Parliament, April 2001)**

The following is another quote from Mike Moore's speech that is an example of an organizational discourse that attempts to define events and processes to give them a particular sense of urgency that then calls for the organization's own favored and particular responses. In this speech Mike Moore uses a historical narrative to highlight the importance of global institutions. In this section of discourse the role of global institutions is reinforced through being positioned in history as the solutions brought about by the lessons learned from negatively defined historical events, such as the two world wars, the depression, and the rise of fascism and marxism. The WTO discourse exhibits the hegemonic function of defining and advancing a solution to a problem by highlighting the historical emergence of these global institutions as a solution because of

their contribution to the constitution of a structure that provides stability, predictability and a less dangerous world to the history of the global order.

Our global institutions are 50 years old. We are middle-aged, and at 50 it is prudent to undergo regular check ups. We were established out of the horror and lessons of the First World War and Great Depression, made deeper and more lethal by protectionism policies and higher tariffs. The twin tyrannies of our age, fascism and marxism, were given momentum from this economic collapse. Then came the Second World War. From this came the noble Marshall Plan, where the victors funded former enemies into future competitors. The mirror opposite of the Versailles Treaty, they gave us the United Nations and its many agencies, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the GATT.

It is time for a check-up, an audit of our global institutions. I believe in the post-war structure. With all its imperfections, the world would be less stable, less predictable and more dangerous without these institutions.

(WTO Director-General Mike Moore Address to European Parliament, April 2001)

The following quote from the “About the WTO” document shows how the WTO discourse defines the events and processes of globalization in its own terms. In this section of discourse, globalization is defined as introducing further complexity into the global environment, specifically through the expansion of a world economy. This section of discourse is an important instance of how WTO discourse represents a discourse of global economic sovereignty. The WTO discourse defines a global problem and

advances a particular solution which positions the WTO as an institutional solution to the complexity brought to world trade by economic globalization. According to the discourse the WTO is thus brought about by the recognition that the multilateral system should be reinforced and extended through the creation of an international institution that functions specifically for global trade related purposes.

By the early 1980s the General Agreement was clearly no longer as relevant to the realities of world trade as it had been in the 1940s. For a start, world trade had become far more complex and important than 40 years before: the globalization of the world economy was underway, trade in services — not covered by GATT rules — was of major interest to more and more countries, and international investment had expanded. The expansion of services trade was also closely tied to further increases in world merchandise trade. In other respects, GATT had been found wanting. For instance, in agriculture, loopholes in the multilateral system were heavily exploited, and efforts at liberalizing agricultural trade met with little success. In the textiles and clothing sector, an exception to GATT's normal disciplines was negotiated in the 1960s and early 1970s, leading to the Multifibre Arrangement. Even GATT's institutional structure and its dispute settlement system were causing concern. These and other factors convinced GATT members that a new effort to reinforce and extend the multilateral system should be attempted. That effort resulted in the Uruguay Round, the Marrakesh Declaration, and the creation of the WTO. **(About the WTO: Understanding the WTO)**

The WTO discourse defines the external developments, events, and processes of globalization in the organization's own terms. In another section of discourse from Mike Moore's speech, globalization is described as exacerbating feelings of alienation and inducing anxiety in people affected by globalization. It is defined explicitly in the WTO discourse as a process that is not new but rooted in history. This definition has the effect of providing globalization with a degree of inevitability; it is not a policy that can be changed but a historical process that must be accommodated.

We need a comprehensive and cohesive response to international governance because many people feel alienated from power and ownership. Their feelings of anxiety have been made more stark by the process of globalization. Globalization is not new. It is not a policy. It is a process that has been going on since the beginning of time. Some historians claim trade is now at about the same level as it was at the turn of the last century. Certainly there was a greater movement of people across borders 100 years ago than today. **(WTO Director-General Mike Moore Address to European Parliament, April 2001)**

In this speech, the acceleration and increased pace of globalization is highlighted to suggest that it has led to the recognition by people that globalization has broad implications that must be addressed.

What is different? Overall, globalization has accelerated. And the information and technological explosion has ensured people are aware of the increased pace of globalization and are aware as well of its implications. That is a good thing. We live in an age where democracy

has flourished, where voters and consumers want more information and control, greater accountability and greater ownership. **(WTO Director-General Mike Moore Address to European Parliament, April 2001)**

In another section of Mike Moore's speech, the organizational discourse attempts to show how the WTO takes into account and integrates the public's demands and represents broad public and societal interests. The discourse highlights how the implications of globalization can be addressed in a way that benefits all people through international cooperation, specifically with the WTO at the center of these efforts. The WTO is positioned as just such an advanced instrument of international cooperation and constitutes a force of good for the world, specifically in its ability to address world poverty through its trade liberalization objectives.

The challenge is how to work together internationally for the benefit of ordinary people everywhere. The WTO is at the very heart of this debate.

That is not surprising. International trade is an important cross-border issue. Even more so nowadays, since trade policy touches on sensitive issues like the environment and food safety, which are becoming the very stuff of politics in the post-Cold War era. And the

WTO, with its many ambitious and wide-ranging agreements and its uniquely binding dispute settlement mechanism, is a particularly advanced instrument of international co-operation.

I have no doubt that the WTO is a force for good in the world. A glance at history tells us that the past 50 years of trade liberalization are incomparably better than the protectionist nightmare of the 1930s. Indeed,

the last 50 years has seen unparalleled prosperity and growth and more has been done to address poverty in these last 50 years than the previous 500.

(WTO Director-General Mike Moore Address to European Parliament, April 2001)

In the following sections of discourse from the “WTO Public Forum 2007 Homepage” and a speech by current WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy, globalization processes represent the events and processes of societal concern that the WTO is positioned to adequately address through its capability to harness and shape globalization, and to construct and provide coherency to a larger system. In these ways, WTO discourse relates and positions the organization in the landscape of the larger sociopolitical environment by taking stands on sociopolitical issues and general concerns. The discourse positions the WTO in a significant role in the larger global environment as the entity that specifically manages globalization, and thus becomes the hegemonic solution to the problems of the dislocation effects of globalization. According to the discourse, the global governance the WTO represents does not result in a lack of input from external social forces, such as the groups referred to in the quote as civil society, but rather input by these groups is welcomed and in fact encouraged to reinforce and further strengthen that governance. This highlights the hegemonic role of the WTO not as an instrument of domination but rather as a struggle for the consolidation of the interests of particular social forces into a hegemonic bloc. The hegemonic bloc here is an emerging form of global economic governance and a discourse of global economic sovereignty represented by the organizational entity of the WTO. WTO organizational identity and issues management discourse on the “WTO Public Forum 2007 Homepage” and in Pascal

Lamy's speech functions to legitimize the WTO as a form of global economic governance because of its capacity to manage globalization. In this way, the WTO discourse attempts to suture the dislocated discursive space of economic sovereignty brought about by the way globalization processes create problems for the capacity of the nation-state. This discourse contributes to the discursive struggle away from the discourse of national economic sovereignty and toward the discourse of global economic sovereignty.

Welcome to the WTO's 2007 Public Forum on how the WTO can help harness globalization.

The Forum is intended to provide civil society, academics and the public at large with a unique opportunity to debate with WTO Members how the WTO can best contribute to the management of globalization. As with previous WTO Public Fora, members of civil society will be able to organize their own events during the Forum, and to structure those events around the topics that are of greatest interest to them. Trade and global governance, the contribution of the WTO to the construction of a coherent multilateral system and the interaction between trade and sustainable development will be but a few of this year's topics. **(WTO Public Forum 2007, Homepage)**

If we are opening our doors to the public today it is because WTO Members wish to tap into a wider pool of ideas—into fresh ideas—on how the WTO can best contribute to shaping the forces of globalization. **(WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy, Speech, 4 October 2007)**

The WTO discourse defines globalization as the set of external developments, events, and processes that are implicated in the identified problem of rendering the nation-state incapable of addressing a whole range of issues and the needs of its citizenry. Consequently, WTO discourse is able to effectively position the WTO organization as an entity capable of addressing the limits of the nation-states and so increasingly relevant to the way the world experiences globalization. In another section of discourse from Pascal Lamy's speech the WTO is argued to be globally relevant because of the WTO's capacity to meet the world's needs and aspirations, emphasizing how the WTO specifically takes into account and integrates the public's demands and represents broad public and societal interests.

Today, I am proud to announce that 1750 participants from across the globe have registered for this Forum—in and of itself an indicator of the extent of globalization!

This number testifies to the relevance of the WTO to the wider world, and it is precisely for this reason that the WTO must continue to consult that wider world on how best it can meet its needs and aspirations.

(WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy, Speech, 4 October 2007)

An important part of how the WTO is positioned in a management role in the larger sociopolitical environment as the entity responsible for managing globalization is in how the WTO discourse defines the relationship between the WTO and representatives of the nation-state. In the following section of discourse from the “WTO/CPA Booklet for MPs” document, globalization is defined as the sociopolitical issue and general concern that once again brings complexities that affect nation-state communities and

need to be understood and coped with. For the WTO, parliamentarian representatives of the nation-states link together the citizenry of the nation-states with international organizations like the WTO. Specifically, parliamentarians can help the WTO manage globalization by becoming advocates of the WTO trading system that explain its benefits and advance understanding of the system among the communities the parliamentarians represent. In the WTO discourse, the nation-state parliamentarians become representatives of the WTO governance system because of the system's capacity to deal adequately with globalization processes relative to the limits of the nation-state.

WTO's current drive to engage with parliamentarians also recognises the wider role they can play in terms of bringing international organizations and people closer together. Specifically, parliamentarians can help explain the workings and benefits of the trading system; parliamentarians can help citizens understand and cope with the complexities of globalization; and parliamentarians can also encourage greater awareness and informed debate on international trade issues. In addition, as legitimate representatives of the people, parliamentarians provide an important interface between the people, civil society and government. Thus, in my view it is vital that we assist parliamentarians to perform their duties effectively. The greater their understanding of what our agreements are all about and what is happening at the WTO, the more effective the WTO will be as an organization. Or, expressed conversely, I strongly believe parliamentarians will benefit from knowing about trade-related processes that may potentially affect the communities they represent, and from

having opportunity as well to make known the interests and concerns of their constituents. **(WTO/CPA Booklet for MPs)**

In summary, the WTO discourse engages in organizational positioning by positioning the organization as capable of playing a significant role in the larger global environment because of its ability to address problems related to the dislocating effects of globalization. Specifically, the WTO discourse highlights how globalization induces a lack of capacity on the part of the nation-state and how international organizations and the WTO are able to address these limits and provide solutions to global issues.

The way the WTO discourses positions the WTO in the larger global sociopolitical environment is also linked to how the WTO discourse constructs the distinctiveness of its organizational identity. In this way the WTO's organizational positioning overlaps with the function of the WTO's organizational nodal point.

Organizational Nodal Point: Global Rules of Liberalization and Free Trade

The organizational nodal point of the WTO discourse is *global rules of liberalization and free trade*. This set of signifiers function to provide the WTO with a distinctive identity in the global sociopolitical environment that provides a defined essence of the organization in terms of what it is and wants to be, its values and what it stands for in regard to the organization's concerns and goals. This organizational nodal point also functions to condense the meaning and representation of the WTO organizational entity in terms of the promotion of its concrete political objectives.

Organizational nodal point describes the way organizational identity and issues management discourse constructs a distinctive identity for an organization that attempts

to ground itself in broader societal concerns by defining those issues in a way that is consistent with organizational objectives (Cheney & Christensen, 2001). Organizational nodal point also addresses the way hegemonic discourse uses a privileged signifier or set of signifiers to bind together a discourse and signify a lack that the discourse is able to fill with its objectives that also modifies the meaning of other signifiers that are linked to the nodal point (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000).

Organizational nodal point describes the term or set of terms that provide the major principle and objective of the organization and how the organization suggests that its activities lead to the fulfillment of the concerns of the larger sociopolitical environment. Specifically, the WTO discourse highlights how liberalization and free trade oriented global rules represent the essence of the WTO's organizational identity and objectives and how those rules fulfill a lack in the global order by providing solutions for international peace and conflict.

The focus on global rules as part of the distinctive identity provided by the organizational nodal point highlights how the WTO as an organizational entity represents an emerging form of global governance in terms of a system of global trade regulation. The following sections of discourse from "The WTO in Brief" and "WTO Issues for Parliamentarians" documents highlight how WTO agreements constitute the legal ground-rules of global trade activity which bind nation-state government policies. These global rules are integral to the organization's establishment of a coherent and distinctive identity in the larger sociopolitical environment. The WTO agreements are defined in the organizational discourse as the center of the multilateral trading system. The WTO discourse defines the WTO as representing a form of global economic governance and

legitimizes it in an attempt to connect to the broader interests of the sociopolitical environment. It attempts this by linking the system and the limits it puts on nation-state policies, to global interests because of the prosperity it brings to the world's people.

At the heart of the system—known as the multilateral trading system—are the WTO's agreements, negotiated and signed by a large majority of the world's trading nations, and ratified in their parliaments. These agreements are the legal ground-rules for international commerce.

Essentially, they are contracts, guaranteeing member countries important trade rights. They also bind governments to keep their trade policies within agreed limits to everybody's benefit. **(The WTO in Brief)**

The prosperity trade brings gives people the opportunity to buy the things they value most: an education, access to health care, proper housing and food for their families. It is the job of the World Trade Organization to establish the rules and preserve and nurture this web of commercial activity. **(WTO Policy Issues for Parliamentarians)**

The other integral part of the WTO's organizational nodal point that contributes to the production of a distinctive organizational identity is the particularity of the kind of global rules that lie at the center of the system of global governance. Sections of discourse from the documents "The WTO in Brief", "Overview of the WTO", and "10 Common Misunderstandings of the WTO", indicate how the global rules of the WTO trading system represent a version of global order and a particular way of managing globalization by structuring trade and global economic relations in a particular way. Specifically, the WTO discourse highlights that the WTO's function is to establish and

enforce rules that are focused on the objective of trade liberalization, which means removing trade restrictions that are present in individual nation-state policies, to make global trade flows smooth, predictable and free within a global market.

In brief, the World Trade Organization (WTO) is the only international organization dealing with the global rules of trade between nations. Its main function is to ensure that trade flows as smoothly, predictably and freely as possible. **(The WTO in Brief)**

The WTO is certainly one of the most important institutions dealing with international economic relations. In broad terms, its role is twofold.

To establish and enforce the rules of the road for international trade in both goods and services. And second, to progressively liberalize that trade, presently valued at close to eight thousand billion dollars every year. **(Overview of the WTO: E-Documents)**

WTO system is commonly referred to as the open and liberal rules-based multilateral trading system. It is open and liberal because of the process of progressive removal of trade restrictions. It is rules-based as international trade is conducted according to agreed rules. **(Overview of the WTO: E-Documents)**

The WTO's role is to provide the forum for negotiating liberalization. It also provides the rules for how liberalization can take place. **(10 Common Misunderstandings of the WTO)**

The organizational nodal point of the WTO also functions to signify an absence or lack that exists within the larger global sociopolitical environment and how the WTO's

particular objectives carry out the filling of that lack. In the “Overview of the WTO” document, the WTO discourse identifies a lack within the larger global order that represents global concerns and then emphasizes how the implementation of the WTO’s policy objectives of global rules of liberalization and free trade are able to address that lack. The WTO discourse once again highlights and identifies a problem of the limits of the nation-state as it identifies both the historical context of the Great Depression and nation-state protectionist policies that created barriers to trade, as the origin of a particular lack in the global order. According to the discourse, recognition of this particular lack emerged out of the lessons of the Second World War, specifically that there was a lack of economic security that needed to be addressed in order to have a secure political future. Importantly, the WTO discourse explicitly identifies a lack within the global order as the *need for economic security* and identifies the solution to that lack in economically oriented international institutions, functioning to advance the discourse of global economic sovereignty as the solution to this global need.

While the WTO began its life on 1 January 1995, its origins are more than half a century old. They lie in the economic and social disaster of the Great Depression of the 1930’s. At this time in history, countries turned inwards, and provoked a descending spiral of declining output and trade. The reaction in terms of trade policy was to resort to extreme protectionism. This meant raising tariffs and other trade barriers to such a level that imports were drastically reduced. Discriminatory arrangements that favoured some countries and excluded others became the name of the game.

The need for economic security

The Second World War followed. With the advent of War many important lessons were learned. One of the most important was that a secure political future could not be built without greater economic security. The search was on for better international instruments of international cooperation.

This search bore fruit at a conference held in Bretton Woods in the United States in 1944. At this conference, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank were created to deal with matters such as currency instability and the financing of post war reconstruction. **(Overview of the WTO: E-Documents)**

The multilateral trading system represented by the WTO is specifically identified as the international institution capable of addressing the need for economic security through its trade liberalization objectives. In a section of discourse from the “About the WTO” document this system of global governance is articulated as able to address the global lack by functioning in the significant stabilizing role as an anchor for global trade and economic structure. In both the “About the WTO” and “10 Benefits of the WTO Trading System” documents the WTO discourse attempts to connect to broader sociopolitical interests by attempting to ground its particular worldview in external opinions and demands by basing the legitimacy of this form of governance on how it fulfills such global concerns and provides benefits to the global system.

And the momentum of trade liberalization helped ensure that trade growth consistently out-paced production growth throughout the GATT era, a measure of countries’ increasing ability to trade with each other and

to reap the benefits of trade. The rush of new members during the Uruguay Round demonstrated that the multilateral trading system was recognized as an anchor for development and an instrument of economic and trade reform. **(About the WTO: Understanding the WTO)**

From the money in our pockets and the goods and services that we use, to a more peaceful world—the WTO and the trading system offer a range of benefits, some well-known, others not so obvious. **(10 Benefits of the WTO Trading System)**

International peace and conflict resolution are the most salient and important set of signifiers linked to the WTO's organizational nodal point and are articulated as a positive consequence of the way the WTO is able to fulfill the identified lack in the global social order and thus address broader global concerns. In this way, international peace and conflict resolution are used by the WTO discourse to tap into general societal concerns and demands to convince external audiences about the good deeds of the organization. In the "10 Benefits of the WTO Trading System" document the WTO discourse legitimizes the governance system as a mechanism for the peaceful resolution of conflicts between nation-states and highlights how the WTO is able to compensate for the limits of the nation-state by managing conflict between nation-states. Nation-states now have a peaceful option not available before the existence of the WTO system that reduces international tension and is capable of keeping nation-states from declaring war on each other.

The system allows disputes to be handled constructively

As trade expands in volume, in the numbers of products traded, and in the numbers of countries and companies trading, there is a greater chance that disputes will arise. The WTO system helps resolve these disputes peacefully and constructively.

There could be a down side to trade liberalization and expansion. More trade means more opportunities for disputes to arise. Left to themselves, those disputes could lead to serious conflict. But in reality, a lot of international trade tension is reduced because countries can turn to organizations, in particular the WTO, to settle their trade disputes.

Before World War 2 that option was not available. After the war, the world's community of trading nations negotiated trade rules which are now entrusted to the WTO. Those rules include an obligation for members to bring their disputes to the WTO and not to act unilaterally.

When they bring disputes to the WTO, the WTO's procedure focuses their attention on the rules. Once a ruling has been made, countries concentrate on trying to comply with the rules, and perhaps later renegotiating the rules—not on declaring war on each other. **(10 Benefits of the WTO**

Trading System)

This discourse reduces the complexity involved in nation-state conflicts in the broader sociopolitical environment by using the WTO's predetermined codes to legitimize the WTO's system of global governance. The "WTO/CPA Booklet for MPs" document suggests that representatives of nation-states recognize this limitation

of the nation-state and the role the WTO can play in providing the nation-state with the ability to resolve its conflicts peacefully. This articulated function of the WTO system to help resolve nation-state conflicts continues to reinforce the WTO discourse emphasis on the incapacity of nation-states to address global challenges. The discourse emphasizes that nation-states are unable to operate in a peaceful manner without the intervention of international institutions such as the WTO and the global governance system that it represents.

Workshop participants recognised the importance and potential benefits of a well-functioning multilateral trading system. Such a system, providing the legal ground-rules for international commerce, can promote peace and the peaceful resolution of disputes, stimulate trade expansion and economic growth (including raised incomes, improved living standards and greater consumer choice), and ensure all Members, even the smallest and most vulnerable, have a voice in the management of global trade.

(WTO/CPA Booklet for MPs)

By linking international peace and conflict resolution to the WTO's organizational nodal point of global rules of liberalization and free trade, the meaning of international peace and conflict resolution is given a particular definition that is consistent with the organization's objectives. This is an example of how a specific signifier in the WTO discourse takes on a particular connotation and has its meaning partially fixed through its linkage and reference to the WTO's nodal point. Such a connection allows the WTO to provide organizationally oriented interpretations of

socially valued terms that enable the organization to legitimize its organizational activities as appropriate responses to societal issues. In the “WTO Policy Issues for Parliamentarians” document the signifiers of international peace and conflict resolution take on a distinct economic dimension as it is suggested that international economic growth and stability are crucial to promoting and securing peace. Recognition of the economic dimension of peace is said to underlie and thus legitimizes the creation of the multilateral governance system itself and the WTO as an international organization with strong and broad authority.

Restoring international economic growth and stability through the promotion of trade was crucial to securing a lasting peace after World War II. It was this vision that led to the creation of the multilateral trading system in 1948. At first this was a provisional agreement between 23 countries called the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (the GATT). In 1995, the GATT became the WTO, a fully-fledged international organization with stronger and broader authority. **(WTO Policy Issues for Parliamentarians)**

Peace also takes on a distinct trade liberalization connotation through being linked to the WTO’s organizational nodal point. In the “10 Benefits of the WTO Trading System” document the WTO governance system is said to help keep the peace and contribute to international peace precisely because the definition of peace provided in the discourse includes the two fundamental principles of helping trade flow smoothly and having an outlet for dealing with trade disputes.

The system helps to keep the peace

This sounds like an exaggerated claim, and it would be wrong to make too much of it. Nevertheless, the system does contribute to international peace, and if we understand why, we have a clearer picture of what the system actually does.

Peace is partly an outcome of two of the most fundamental principles of the trading system: helping trade to flow smoothly, and providing countries with a constructive and fair outlet for dealing with disputes over trade issues. It is also an outcome of the international confidence and cooperation that the system creates and reinforces. **(10 Benefits of the WTO Trading System)**

The following section of discourse from the “10 Benefits of the WTO Trading System” document reinforces the WTO’s trade related definition of peace. The discourse indicates how the trade relationship between a seller and a customer functions for the WTO as a model of peaceful relationships that leads to the reduction of the possibility of political conflict.

Crudely put, sales people are usually reluctant to fight their customers.

In other words, if trade flows smoothly and both sides enjoy a healthy commercial relationship, political conflict is less likely.

What’s more, smoothly-flowing trade also helps people all over the world become better off. People who are more prosperous and contented are also less likely to fight. **(10 Benefits of the WTO trading system)**

In summary, the organizational nodal point of the WTO discourse is global rules of liberalization and free trade. This set of signifiers function to provide the WTO with a

distinctive identity in the global sociopolitical environment that provides a defined essence of the organization in terms of what it is and wants to be, its values and what it stands for in regard to the organization's concerns and goals. This organizational nodal point functions to condense the meaning and representation of the WTO organizational entity in terms of the promotion of its concrete political objectives. Specifically, the WTO discourse highlights how liberalization and free trade oriented global rules represent the essence of the WTO's organizational identity and objectives and how those rules fulfill a lack in the global order by providing solutions to international peace and conflict.

The way the WTO organizational nodal point provides a distinct identity to the organization also has implications for the kinds of meanings that are included in the organizational discourse. In this way the function of the WTO's organizational nodal point overlaps with organizational inclusion.

Organizational Inclusion: Including Nation-State Sovereignty

WTO discourse engages in organizational inclusion in order to integrate the interests of nation-states by including the sovereignty of the nation-state as an important principle within the WTO governance system. Organizational inclusion describes both the way organizational identity and issues management discourse attempts to integrate publics related to organizationally relevant issues (Cheney & Christensen, 2001) and the way a hegemonic project incorporates the signifiers of other social entities in order to expand its base of consent (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000). Organizational inclusion thus

draws boundaries of what and who are included in the WTO's discourse and how the discourse suggests the WTO represents those issues and interests.

Specifically, the WTO discourse engages in the organizational inclusion of nation-state sovereignty by situating the construction of limits to nation-state sovereignty in the context of the need for international cooperation and international institutions, and by defining the WTO system of global governance and the limits the system places on nation-state sovereignty as an expression of nation-state sovereignty.

In identifying nation-states as primary stakeholders of the WTO system and subsequently managing the issues of concern of the nation-state the WTO attempts to integrate the nation-state and its demands into the WTO system. The WTO discourse is explicit about not only who and what are included but also what meanings are included. The discourse puts considerable emphasis on the inclusion of the sovereignty of the nation-state as an important principle that is integrated into the vision and structure of the WTO's global governance system. In the "WTO Policy Issues for Parliamentarians" document sovereignty is situated within the context of the requirements of international cooperation and the ability of an international system to function. To the WTO discourse, these require nation-states to express their sovereignty by choosing to set limits on their capacity to engage in unilateral action for what is defined as the common good. According to the discourse, choices by nation-states to limit their actions do not represent a loss of sovereignty but rather a choice to cooperate and constitute an international system.

The concept of "sovereignty" should be distinguished from that of "interdependence". Sometimes international cooperation on a regime of

rules requires governments to make the choice to set limits to their own behavior, with certain exceptions, in the interest of the common good. However, this is not about losing sovereignty but about ensuring that everyone abides by rules which have been mutually agreed. This is not peculiar to the WTO but is the norm for all multilateral rule making organizations. Without such a willingness to set commonly agreed limits on unilateral action, the international system would not be able to function effectively. **(WTO Policy Issues for Parliamentarians)**

The link between the requirements of an international system and nation-state sovereignty is important for the way the WTO discourse relates sovereignty to international institutions. The following quote from a speech by former WTO Director-General Mike Moore indicates how the WTO treats nation-state sovereignty as an integral part of an international governance system. According to Mike Moore it is international institutions that actually advance and guarantee the sovereignty and authority of nation-states.

And it is due to wise men and women of vision who established international institutions and negotiated important treaties like the UN Charter, Law of the Sea, the Antarctic Agreement; all the better to advance civilized behaviour. Let me add that far from diminishing the authority of the nation state, these institutions and mechanisms advance and guarantee the sovereignty of nations – by stopping the unilateral aggressive behaviour of states, especially the more powerful ones. Perhaps I see things a little differently –as a non-European and a citizen of a small nation, New Zealand. But for me, international institutions do not threaten

the authority of the state. They guarantee that authority. (WTO Director-
General Mike Moore address to the European Parliament, April
2001)

The “WTO Policy Issues for Parliamentarians” document indicates the attempt to incorporate the nation-state into the hegemonic bloc of the WTO system by offering the nation-state political concessions related to the preservation of nation-state sovereignty. The WTO discourse reinforces its inclusion of nation-state sovereignty as an important principle of the WTO system by describing the WTO member governments as sovereigns. Also, the “WTO Policy Issues for Parliamentarians” document contains a construction that is similar to how the WTO discourse describes the relationship between nation-state sovereignty and the requirements of an international system. In this document the relationship between nation-state sovereignty and the specific international institution of the WTO is described as one where sovereign nation-state members of the WTO express their sovereignty by choosing to construct and abide by international agreements that limit their unilateral action. In the WTO discourse the limits imposed by the WTO governance system on nation-state action are articulated as the results of the prior expression of nation-state sovereignty.

Do governments lose sovereignty when they join the WTO?

“Sovereignty” is a word that connotes different things to different people. It conjures up a wide spectrum of ideas of national pride and independence. In the WTO, sovereignty is understood in several ways. All WTO member governments are “sovereigns” over their “customs

territory”. By joining the WTO, member governments undertake to make laws that comply with WTO Agreements and to change laws that do not. Compliance with WTO Agreements does not in any way reduce the right of a government to make laws for its own territories. Most WTO Agreements make no attempt to guide governments on the content of their laws: they concern only the ‘external’ effects of the laws or regulations. There are some WTO accords, however, such as the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement and the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, which encourage the harmonization of policies in specific technical areas. But even here, there are exceptions available. Ultimately, WTO Agreements are the result of the exercise of sovereign trade powers by WTO member governments. **(WTO Policy Issues for Parliamentarians)**

The WTO discourse includes nation-state sovereignty within the WTO system by describing the WTO organizational entity itself as merely the expression of the sovereign nation-states that are its members. In this way the organizational discourse attempts to get the concerned publics of the nation-state to identify with the organization. In the following sections of discourse from the “10 Common Misunderstandings about the WTO” document and the “Multimedia Presentation Video” the WTO discourse argues that the WTO does not tell the nation-states what to do or how to construct its policies because the WTO is explicitly a member-driven organization that is driven by the interests of the nation-states themselves. The governments of the nation-state members

of the WTO are considered central such that the WTO itself is an expression of the collective action of its sovereign nation-states.

The WTO does NOT tell governments what to do

The WTO does not tell governments how to conduct their trade policies.

Rather, it's a "member-driven" organization.

That means:

- the rules of the WTO system are agreements resulting from negotiations among member governments,
- the rules are ratified by members' parliaments, and
- decisions taken in the WTO are virtually all made by consensus among all members.

In other words, decisions taken in the WTO are negotiated, accountable and democratic. **(10 Common Misunderstandings about the WTO)**

Above all...Governments

But most importantly, the WTO comprises almost 150 sovereign states, the vast majority of which are democratically elected. They have collectively agreed to conduct their trade according to multilaterally agreed rules that have been agreed to on a consensus basis. After agreement is struck between trade negotiators, the agreements are then ratified by the domestic parliaments of all WTO member countries. To criticize the "WTO" is - in practical terms - to criticize the collective action of close to 150 sovereign states acting on the basis of consensus and

according to rules accepted by their national parliaments. **(Multimedia Presentation Video)**

The inclusion of the sovereignty of the nation-state is reinforced in the WTO discourse's definition of the relationship between the WTO as an organizational entity and the nation-state members. In another section of discourse from the "10 Common Misunderstandings about the WTO" document, the relationship is defined as one in which the nation-states do not lose their sovereignty from the WTO dictating the actions of the nation-states, but rather, the nations-states express their sovereignty by dictating the actions of the WTO.

In all other respects, the WTO does not dictate to governments to adopt or drop certain policies.

As for the WTO Secretariat, it simply provides administrative and technical support for the WTO and its members.

In fact: it's the governments who dictate to the WTO. **(10 Common Misunderstandings about the WTO)**

In summary, the WTO discourse engages in organizational inclusion in order to integrate the interests of nation-states by including the sovereignty of the nation-state as an important principle within the WTO governance system. Specifically, the WTO discourse engages in the organizational inclusion of nation-state sovereignty by situating the construction of limits to sovereignty in the context of the need for international cooperation and international institutions, and by defining the WTO system of global governance as the expression of nation-state sovereignty.

The way the WTO organizational nodal point provides a distinct identity to the organization has implications for the kinds of meanings that are included in the organizational discourse as well as the kinds of meanings that are excluded by the organizational discourse. In this way the function of the WTO's organizational nodal point also overlaps with organizational exclusion.

Organizational Exclusion: Excluding Protectionism

In the WTO discourse nation-state sovereignty is explicitly included while protectionism is explicitly excluded. Protectionism functions in the discourse as a signifier for expressions of nation-state sovereignty in policy actions that are inconsistent with the trade liberalization objectives of the WTO. The way that the WTO discourse manages what the organization is, stands for, and wants to be has implications for a logic of appropriateness that excludes other alternative logics in terms of what is appropriate policy action. The WTO discourse is not only explicit about who and what are excluded but also what meanings are excluded. The discourse engages in organizational exclusion by constructing a constitutive outside with the signifier of protectionism.

Organizational exclusion describes the way organizational identity and issues management discourse attempts to provide a distinctive identity to the organization and differentiate itself by locating problems and identifying blameworthy entities outside of the organization (Cheney & Christensen, 2001). Organizational exclusion also describes the way a hegemonic project constructs a constitutive outside to unify its discursive system and project responsibility onto an excluded entity (Torfing, 2005). Organizational

exclusion thus draws boundaries of what and who are excluded in the organization's discourse and how the discourse suggests it opposes those issues and interests.

Specifically, the WTO discourse engages in the organizational exclusion of protectionism by constructing an opposition between free trade and protectionism, linking protectionism to international conflict, and highlighting the way protectionism is opposed to the interests of the nation-state because of its negative consequences. Most importantly, the WTO discourse highlights the ever-present danger of protectionism as a way to regulate nation-state actions that are considered legitimate expressions of sovereignty.

The WTO discourse consistently labels and outlines activities that stand outside its discourse and that threaten its liberalization and free trade policy orientation. A clear division is articulated between liberalization/free trade and forms of protectionism. Protectionism functions as a signifier of sovereign acts by nation-states that produce trade barriers and is subsequently linked to the potential for negative consequences for the nation-state and for the global order. The construction of a political frontier between liberalization/free trade and protectionism to divide the policy world between an appropriate inside and a threatening outside provides the WTO discourse with a capacity to regulate the sovereignty of the nation-state. In this way, identifying those who would engage in protectionism as the external and antagonistic other to the policies of liberalization/free trade functions to suggest that actions by countries to address issues that may limit global trade are allowed, but such regulations must not be *protectionism in disguise*. The sovereignty of nation-states is incorporated into the policy framework of the WTO through organizational inclusion, but it is regulated through organizational

exclusion, to ensure that nation-state actions do not threaten the hegemony of the WTO's liberalization/free trade policy orientation.

By excluding protectionism the WTO discourse attempts to define the complexity of global situations in polarizing terms. This polarization constructs a political frontier between two opposed camps that divides the global policy world and condenses policy meanings and policy action around two antagonistic poles. In the following section of discourse from the "10 Benefits of the WTO Trading System" document the WTO discourse sets up the exclusion and blame of protectionism as the entity responsible for global problems. In this quote the discourse creates an opposition between the free trade component of the WTO's organizational nodal point and the excluded entity of protectionism.

There are plenty of studies showing just what the impacts of protectionism and of freer trade are. **(10 Benefits of the WTO Trading System)**

The WTO discourse locates particular global problems and places blame for those problems outside its institutional borders by identifying blameworthy parties and placing responsibility on the excluded entity of protectionism. In the "WTO Policy Issues for Parliamentarians" and "10 Benefits of the WTO Trading System" documents specific forms of nation-state policy action that are inconsistent with WTO objectives are positioned within a historical context to suggest that these forms of nation-state action are examples of economic nationalism that have contributed to economic depression and the outbreak of war.

But trade is not entirely a natural phenomenon, it depends on political will. Compare, for example, the starkly different policy responses to two of the

most major economic and financial disasters of this century. When crisis set in during the 1930's, the knee-jerk reaction was economic nationalism. As one country raised its tariff barriers, so too did others in retaliation. Trade plummeted, unemployment became entrenched, cooperation between nations broke down and guns, soldiers and tanks took over. The human and economic costs were catastrophic. **(WTO Policy Issues for Parliamentarians)**

History is littered with examples of trade disputes turning into war. One of the most vivid is the trade war of the 1930s when countries competed to raise trade barriers in order to protect domestic producers and retaliate against each others' barriers. This worsened the Great Depression and eventually played a part in the outbreak of World War 2. **(10 Benefits of the WTO Trading System)**

The following sections of discourse from the “Overview of the WTO” and “10 Benefits of the WTO Trading System” documents indicate how economic depression and war function in the WTO discourse as two important negative consequences of protectionism. Nation-state actions that turn inward and that are related to trade policy, such as raising tariffs and trade barriers that have an effect on imports are defined explicitly as extreme forms of protectionism that contribute to disastrous economic consequences. There is a regular and consistent linkage in the WTO discourse between the actions that represent protectionism and war as the consequence. This linkage provides the proof for the WTO discourse that nation-state actions that can be considered protectionist are opposed to wider social interests.

They lie in the economic and social disaster of the Great Depression of the 1930's. At this time in history, countries turned inwards, and provoked a descending spiral of declining output and trade. The reaction in terms of trade policy was to resort to extreme protectionism. This meant raising tariffs and other trade barriers to such a level that imports were drastically reduced. Discriminatory arrangements that favoured some countries and excluded others became the name of the game. **(Overview of the WTO: E-Documents)**

The trade wars in the 1930s are proof of how protectionism can easily plunge countries into a situation where no one wins and everyone loses.

(10 Benefits of the WTO Trading System)

The “10 Benefits of the WTO Trading System” document contains important examples of the organizational exclusion efforts of the WTO discourse. In advancing the benefits of the WTO governance system it places considerable emphasis on the negative consequences of protectionism. This highlights how important the signifier of protectionism is in its function as the constitutive outside for the WTO discourse. The following sections of discourse from the document define historical events in a very specific way. It argues that historical proof of the negative consequences of protectionism has produced important lessons about how protectionism leads to war and to the loss of interests for all parties concerned. Even small-scale nation-state protectionist action has the potential to lead to retaliation by other nation-states that accumulates into a negative economic scenario for everyone involved. Protectionist

actions have such negative consequences that these actions are opposed to everyone's interests, even the interests that the protectionist actions were initially designed to protect.

One of the lessons of the protectionism that dominated the early decades of the 20th Century was the damage that can be caused if narrow sectoral interests gain an unbalanced share of political influence. The result was increasingly restrictive policy which turned into a trade war that no one won and everyone lost. **(10 Benefits of the WTO Trading System)**

The short-sighted protectionist view is that defending particular sectors against imports is beneficial. But that view ignores how other countries are going to respond. The longer term reality is that one protectionist step by one country can easily lead to retaliation from other countries, a loss of confidence in freer trade, and a slide into serious economic trouble for all—including the sectors that were originally protected. Everyone loses.

(10 Benefits of the WTO Trading System)

Protectionism can also escalate as other countries retaliate by raising their own trade barriers. That's exactly what happened in the 1920s and 30s with disastrous effects. Even the sectors demanding protection ended up losing. **(10 Benefits of the WTO Trading System)**

The construction and exclusion of protectionism as the policy *other* that threatens the WTO's discursive system is implemented through the identification of actions by nation-states that are to blame for a variety of more specific negative consequences. The "10 Benefits of the WTO Trading System" and "About the WTO: Understanding the WTO" documents highlight how protectionist action by nation-states causes specific

forms of damage not only internationally to the global system but also domestically to the nation-states themselves. These negative domestic consequences include very specific political and economic effects on the nation-state, such as corruption and bad government, inflation, inefficiency, bad products, factories closing, job losses, and general domestic economic recession. These all serve as important reasons in the WTO discourse for why protectionist action is against the interests of the nation-states.

Protectionism in general is unwise because of the damage it causes domestically and internationally, as we have already seen.

Particular types of trade barriers cause additional damage because they provide opportunities for corruption and other forms of bad government.

(10 Benefits of the WTO Trading System)

Protection ultimately leads to bloated, inefficient producers supplying consumers with outdated, unattractive products. In the end, factories close and jobs are lost despite the protection and subsidies. If other governments around the world pursue the same policies, markets contract and world economic activity is reduced. One of the objectives that governments bring to WTO negotiations is to prevent such a self-defeating and destructive drift into protectionism. **(About the WTO: Understanding the WTO)**

Protectionism is expensive: it raises prices. The WTO's global system lowers trade barriers through negotiation and applies the principle of non-discrimination. The result is reduced costs of production (because imports used in production are cheaper) and reduced prices of finished goods and

services, and ultimately a lower cost of living. **(10 Benefits of the WTO Trading System)**

The WTO discourse also uses the signifier of protectionism to link a variety of issues and potential actions of the nation-state under the same label of protectionism. This use of protectionism as the constitutive outside allows the WTO discourse to emphasize the sameness of the excluded elements. Excluding protectionism serves in an integral way to attempt to unify what is included under the WTO's organizational nodal point as all that which is opposed to the dangers of protectionism. Importantly, this unifying function of the excluded attempts to regulate issues related to the sovereignty of the nation-state. Through the use of the excluded entity of protectionism, the included element of the sovereignty of the nation-state is modified by the WTO discourse and becomes a free trade-disciplined form of sovereignty. That is, the included forms of sovereignty of the nation-state define the responsibilities of the nation-state within the WTO system, but do not extend to defiance of the WTO principles of liberalization/free trade. The WTO discourse is able to include the sovereignty of the nation-state and at the same time regulate it to be consistent with the WTO's liberalization/free trade objectives by highlighting how the excluded element of protectionism has a pervasive capacity to constantly threaten and corrupt the sovereign actions of the nation-state.

Sections of discourse from the "About the WTO: Understanding the WTO" and "WTO Policy Issues for Parliamentarians" documents indicate how the signifier of protectionism functions in the discourse in an attempt to regulate the sovereign actions of the nation-state. In the WTO discourse, protectionism is presented as a siren call for the governments of the nation-state, as an uncontrollable but inevitably disastrous

compulsion. This compulsion, more importantly, has the capacity to hide behind the legitimate policy objectives of the nation-state. This portrayal of protectionism is an important example of how the act of exclusion of a series of potentially disparate meanings leads to them being articulated as equivalent and thus their sameness becomes emphasized. The actions by the nation-state that the WTO discourse considers legitimate expressions of the sovereignty of the nation-state, such as the issues of the environment and consumer protection, are still held suspect for their capacity to function as an excuse for protectionism. Both the signifiers of non-tariff barrier and disguised protectionism are consistently deployed throughout the WTO discourse to function to regulate the sovereignty of the nation-state. Non-tariff barrier functions to encompass a potentially unlimited variety of nation-state actions that are not directly linked to the restriction of imports, but potentially threaten the WTO's liberalization/free trade objectives. Disguised protectionism is an important signifier in the WTO discourse that functions to indicate the extent to which all legitimate expressions of the sovereignty of the nation-state are suspect.

Nevertheless, the temptation to ward off the challenge of competitive imports is always present. And richer governments are more likely to yield to the siren call of protectionism, for short term political gain—through subsidies, complicated red tape, and hiding behind legitimate policy objectives such as environmental preservation or consumer protection as an excuse to protect producers. **(About the WTO: Understanding the WTO)**

Why are trade rules required for member governments' regulations?

Part of the reason lies in the emergence of non-tariff barriers as a form of disguised protectionism. Some examples of such non-tariff barriers could include domestic regulations on the sale of goods, labeling, pricing, storage and value-added taxation, etc. Member countries negotiate commitments to ensure the transactions which take place at the border are as fair and as open as possible. It would be pointless if the benefits of these commitments were nullified by transactions which re-introduce the protection or discrimination which WTO rules seek to eliminate. **(WTO Policy Issues for Parliamentarians)**

In the “About the WTO: Understanding the WTO” document the WTO discourse attempts to regulate nation-state sovereignty by first putting considerable emphasis on how nation-states, even in the context of their integration into the WTO system that commits them to trade liberalization, still retain their sovereign ability to pursue their policy objectives through such specific nation-state actions as setting standards, regulations, qualifications, etc.

Commitments to liberalize do not affect governments’ right to set levels of quality, safety, or price, or to introduce regulations to pursue any other policy objective they see fit. A commitment to national treatment, for example, would only mean that the same regulations would apply to foreign suppliers as to nationals. Governments naturally retain their right to set qualification requirements for doctors or lawyers, and to set standards to ensure consumer health and safety. **(About the WTO: Understanding the WTO)**

However, in other sections of the same document these expressions of sovereignty are regulated to be consistent with the trade liberalization objectives of the WTO governance system. In the WTO discourse these legitimate expressions of the sovereignty of the nation-state are the legitimate right of nation-states only in so far as they are not an excuse for protectionism or protectionism in disguise.

Technical regulations and standards are important, but they vary from country to country.

Having too many different standards makes life difficult for producers and exporters. Standards can become obstacles to trade. But they are also necessary for a range of reasons, from environmental protection, safety, national security to consumer information. And they can help trade.

Therefore the same basic question arises again: how to ensure that standards are genuinely useful, and not arbitrary or an excuse for protectionism. **(About the WTO: Understanding the WTO)**

When two (or more) governments have agreements recognizing each other's qualifications (for example, the licensing or certification of service suppliers), GATS says other members must also be given a chance to negotiate comparable pacts. The recognition of other countries' qualifications must not be discriminatory, and it must not amount to protectionism in disguise. These recognition agreements have to be notified to the WTO. **(About the WTO: Understanding the WTO)**

The WTO discourse consistently utilizes the same strategy of acknowledging and supporting the expression of nation-state sovereignty while regulating that sovereignty

with regard to a number of specific issues. In the “10 Common Misunderstandings of the WTO” document, the discourse integrates environmental issues into its domain of concern and articulates how environmental issues are reflected formally in WTO provisions. The discourse emphasizes the sovereignty of nation-states to engage in actions regarding the environment.

Many provisions take environmental concerns specifically into account.

(10 Common Misunderstandings of the WTO)

WTO members can, should and do take measures to protect endangered species and to protect the environment in other ways, the report says.

(10 Common Misunderstandings of the WTO)

However, in the “10 Common Misunderstandings of the WTO” and “WTO Policy Issues for Parliamentarians” documents the WTO discourse makes it clear that those actions taken with regard to the environment are regulated to be consistent with trade liberalization. Nation-state actions on the environment, although legitimate, should not be inconsistent with WTO trade rules or, once again, merely another form of disguised protectionism.

What’s important in the WTO’s rules is that measures taken to protect the environment must not be unfair. **(10 Common Misunderstandings of the WTO)**

The UN Convention on Biodiversity—a multilateral environment agreement (MEA) with which WTO cooperates—formally endorsed in 2000 the ‘precautionary principle’ as an approach to dealing with novel genetic materials. It is not difficult to see that there is a potential for

conflict over whether a decision is truly ‘precautionary’ or is merely disguised protectionism: the difference between ‘precaution’ and ‘protection’ may well depend on what is an ‘acceptable’ level of risk associated with the decision. **(WTO Policy Issues for Parliamentarians)**

Food safety and human health and safety are another set of specific issues identified in the “10 Common Misunderstandings of the WTO” document that the WTO discourse treats with the same strategy. The discourse highlights how these issues are incorporated into the WTO’s domain of concern by being formalized into the WTO agreements and is clear to reaffirm the right of the nation-states to take policy action on these issues.

Key clauses in the agreements (such as GATT Art. 20) specifically allow governments to take actions to protect human, animal or plant life or health. **(10 Common Misunderstandings of the WTO)**

Some of the agreements deal in greater detail with product standards, and with health and safety for food and other products made from animals and plants. The purpose is to defend governments’ rights to ensure the safety of their citizens.

As an example, a WTO dispute ruling justified a ban on asbestos products on the grounds that WTO agreements do give priority to health and safety over trade. **(10 Common Misunderstandings of the WTO)**

The “WTO Policy Issues for Parliamentarians” document indicates how the WTO discourse puts considerable emphasis on affirming the nation-states’ sovereign ability to deal with the issue of health safety. Simultaneously and within the same context of that

affirmation of sovereignty the discourse also provides extensive detail about how nation-state action on the issue of health safety has the potential to become a form of protectionism. In the WTO discourse protectionism might be covertly practiced by nation-states in the name of health.

The globalization of markets makes the interaction between trade regulations and other health and environmental regulations very common. The WTO Agreements provide governments with the appropriate flexibility they need to meet their objectives. Governments do not want to be prevented from restricting imports that may pose unacceptable risks to health or to their environment. But that does not mean they are willing to accept protectionism in the name of protecting health. There is a difference between the two stances. All member governments agree it is possible to avoid both protectionism and policies that could cause harm to human health. But the path between the two is very narrow. **(WTO Policy Issues for Parliamentarians)**

The potential for health and safety to be used as illegitimate excuses for nation-state protectionism is reinforced in the “About the WTO: Understanding the WTO” and “10 Common Misunderstandings of the WTO” documents where there is a repetitive use of the signifier of disguised protectionism to explicitly discipline the actions taken by the nation-state.

Article 20 of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) allows governments to act on trade in order to protect human, animal or plant life or health, provided they do not discriminate or use this as disguised

protectionism. In addition, there are two specific WTO agreements dealing with food safety and animal and plant health and safety, and with product standards in general. Both try to identify how to meet the need to apply standards and at the same time avoid protectionism in disguise. **(About the WTO: Understanding the WTO)**

But these actions are disciplined, for example to prevent them being used as an excuse for protecting domestic producers—protectionism in disguise. **(10 Common Misunderstandings of the WTO)**

At the same time, the agreements are also designed to prevent governments setting regulations arbitrarily in a way that discriminates against foreign goods and services. Safety regulations must not be protectionism in disguise. **(10 Common Misunderstandings of the WTO)**

In summary, in the WTO discourse protectionism functions as a signifier for expressions of nation-state sovereignty in policy actions that are inconsistent with the trade liberalization objectives of the WTO. The way the WTO discourse manages what the organization is, stands for, and wants to be has implications for a prevailing logic of appropriateness that excludes other alternative logics of what is appropriate policy action. The WTO discourse is not only explicit about who and what are excluded but also what meanings are excluded and engages in organizational exclusion through the construction of a constitutive outside with the signifier of protectionism.

Specifically, the WTO discourse engages in the organizational exclusion of protectionism by constructing an opposition between free trade and protectionism,

linking protectionism to international conflict, and highlighting the way protectionism is opposed to the interests of the nation-state because of its negative consequences. Most importantly, the WTO discourse highlights the ever-present danger of protectionism as a way to regulate nation-state actions that are considered legitimate expressions of sovereignty.

Organizational inclusion and organizational exclusion are important features of the WTO organizational discourse. Simultaneously including nation-state sovereignty as an important principle of the WTO governance system and excluding protectionism as an illegitimate expression of nation-state sovereignty allows the WTO discourse the ability to regulate nation-state sovereignty to be consistent with the liberalization/free trade objectives of the WTO governance system. Organizational inclusion and exclusion are not only deployed generally throughout the WTO organizational discourse but are also deployed in the attempt to manage and regulate specific cases of nation-state trade policy.

Managing Specific Cases of Nation-State Trade Policy

The WTO cyber-discourse also attempts to manage specific cases of nation-state trade policy through the use of organizational inclusion and exclusion. By including and excluding specific signifiers that indicate specific policy actions, the WTO discourse attempts to regulate each nation-state's trade policy by including nation-state expressions of sovereignty that are consistent with the WTO system and by excluding nation-state expressions of sovereignty that are inconsistent with the WTO system.

The WTO's organizational nodal point of global rules of liberalization and free trade helps to establish a coherent and distinctive identity (Cheney & Christiansen, 2001)

by including and excluding particular options for national and global trade policy (Hansen & Sorensen, 2005). That is, by attempting to manage what the organization is, stands for, and wants to be (Cheney & Christiansen, 2001) the WTO discourse produces a prevailing logic of appropriateness (Hansen & Sorensen, 2005) that defines a standard of appropriate policy for the WTO system that includes and reifies liberalization/free trade oriented policies while it excludes other alternative policy orientations. Policy actions, issues, and meanings that are included are ones that can be linked or related to the organizational nodal point, that can be inscribed within the discursive framework engendered by the organizational nodal point, and that can be argued to contribute to what is defined by the WTO as the common good (Hansen & Sorensen, 2005).

Organizational inclusion is deployed by the WTO discourse to highlight examples of specific nations' trade policies that are consistent with the organization's objectives.

Policy actions, issues, and meanings that are excluded are ones that remain without a link or relation to the organizational nodal point, are not inscribed within its discursive framework, and are argued to not be contributing to what is defined by the WTO as the common good (Hansen & Sorensen, 2005). Organizational exclusion is deployed by the WTO discourse to highlight examples of specific nations' trade policies that are inconsistent with the organization's objectives.

The Trade Policy Review Mechanism

The discourse of the WTO Trade Policy Review Mechanism (TPRM) is the primary site of the attempt to regulate the trade policy of specific nation-states. The "WTO: Trade Policy Reviews Introduction" and "About the WTO: Understanding the

WTO” documents indicate how the TPRM function of the WTO governance system consists of regular and systematic examinations of each nation-state’s trade policies and the presentation of the WTO Secretariat’s perspective on those trade policies. Through this review and presentation of perspective, nation-state policies are subjected to the inclusion and exclusion functions of the WTO discourse. The primary objective of this review process is to make nation-state policies transparent, specifically to heighten the predictability of the conditions of trade and the smooth functioning of the multilateral trading system. The inclusion and exclusion functions of this review process attempt to regulate nation-state trade policies within the parameters of the trade liberalization objectives of the WTO governance system.

The reports consist of detailed chapters examining the trade policies and practices of the Member and describing trade policymaking institutions and the macroeconomic situation; these chapters are preceded by the Secretariat’s Summary Observations, which summarize the report and presents the Secretariat’s perspective on the Member’s trade policies.

(WTO: Trade Policy Reviews Introduction)

Trade policy reviews: ensuring transparency

Individuals and companies involved in trade have to know as much as possible about the conditions of trade. It is therefore fundamentally important that regulations and policies are transparent. In the WTO, this is achieved in two ways: governments have to inform the WTO and fellow-members of the specific measures, policies or laws through regular “notifications”; and the WTO conducts regular review of

individual countries' trade policies—the trade policy reviews. (**About the WTO: Understanding the WTO**)

The objectives of the TPRM, as expressed in Annex 3 of the Marrakesh Agreement, include facilitating the smooth functioning of the multilateral trading system by enhancing the transparency of Members' trade policies.

(WTO: Trade Policy Reviews Introduction)

The explicit use of the signifiers overseeing and surveillance to describe the policy review process in the “WTO: Trade Policy Reviews Introduction” document is an important feature of the regulation function of the TPRM and the way the sovereignty of nation-states is regulated. By overseeing and engaging in the surveillance of national trade policies the WTO governance system is able to systematically identify expressions of nation-state sovereignty that are consistent and inconsistent with the governance system. Importantly, despite the previous description of the trade policy reviews as consisting of the perspective of the Secretariat, considerable emphasis is taken in the “WTO: Trade Policy Reviews Introduction” and “About the WTO: Understanding the WTO” documents on characterizing the nation-state trade review process as peer-group assessments and peer-reviews by other nation-states. This has the function of attempting to highlight the equitable and non-hierarchical nature of the reviews in order to emphasize the inclusion of the nation-states' sovereignty. Yet, it is also an integral part of a well functioning surveillance and disciplinary system where the nation-states themselves contribute to watching and regulating each other. The regulation function is clear in the way that the reviews are meant to provide feedback to each nation-state on

their consistency with the governance system and to encourage the modification of the nation-state's behavior to be consistent with the system.

Trade Policy Reviews: Brief Introduction

Overseeing national trade policies: the TPRM

Surveillance of national trade policies is a fundamentally important activity running throughout the work of the WTO. At the centre of this work is the Trade Policy Review Mechanism (TPRM).

The reviews take place in the Trade Policy Review Body which is actually the WTO General Council—comprising the WTO's full membership—operating under special rules and procedures. The reviews are therefore essentially peer-group assessments, although much of the factual leg-work is done by the WTO Secretariat. **(WTO: Trade Policy Reviews**

Introduction)

The importance countries attach to the process is reflected in the seniority of the Trade Policy Review Body—it is the WTO General Council in another guise.

The objectives are:

- to increase the transparency and understanding of countries' trade policies and practices, through regular monitoring
- improve the quality of public and intergovernmental debate on the issues
- to enable a multilateral assessment of the effects of policies on the world trading system

The reviews focus on members' own trade policies and practices. But they also take into account the countries' wider economic and developmental needs, their policies and objectives, and the external economic environment than they face. These "peer reviews" by other WTO members encourage governments to follow more closely the WTO rules and disciplines and to fulfill their commitments. In practice the reviews have two broad results: they enable outsiders to understand a country's policies and circumstances, and they provide feedback to the reviewed country on its performance in the system. **(About the WTO:**

Understanding the WTO)

The WTO discourse of the TPRM indicates how global surveillance is an important function of the WTO governance system in the attempt to manage and regulate nation-state trade policy to be consistent with the trade liberalization objectives of the WTO governance system. The TPRM discourse attempts to regulate specific nation-states' trade policies by engaging in the organizational inclusion and exclusion of particular policy actions.

The TPRM discourse in the "WTO Trade Policy Review: United States 2006" document highlights policy characteristics of the United States that are consistent with the trade liberalization objectives of the WTO system; openness, transparency, and liberalization. These signifiers are then subsequently linked with consequences that the discourse defines as in the interests of the United States, the openness and transparency specifically are responsible for contributing to the United States' solid economic growth.

Trade Policy Review: United States

Openness fuels solid economic growth

The United States has undergone solid economic growth since its last Trade Policy Review in 2004, aided by the openness and transparency of its trade regime which has supported the continuous drive for change and efficiency characteristic of the US economy as a whole, according to a WTO Secretariat report on the trade policies and practices of the United States. **(WTO Trade Policy Review: United States 2006)**

During the period under review, the United States, the world's largest import market and a key engine of global growth, continued making incremental changes to its trade regime, including liberalization on an MFN and preferential bases. **(WTO Trade Policy Review: United States 2006)**

The "WTO Trade Policy Review: United States 2006" document also highlights policy characteristics that are inconsistent with the trade liberalization objectives of the WTO system; protectionist, market access barriers, distorting measures, distortions, and subsidies. The use of the signifier protectionist is an important feature of this review because it deploys the WTO's primary signifier of its constitutive outside, protectionism, the explicitly identified threat to the WTO system. The review uses protectionism to emphasize that because of the possibility of the threat, action by the United States to preempt that possibility of protectionism is necessary. This is an important mechanism of this attempt at regulation, identify the possibility of the principle threat and use that as a rationale that necessitates the modification of policy to deal with the threat. Additionally,

the other signifiers grouped as general distortions, although not explicitly linked to negative consequences that are not in the United States' interests, are implicitly linked by the suggesting that modification of the United States policy action that addresses such distortions would serve United States and global interests.

The report also says that it is important to preempt possible protectionist sentiment, which may require efforts in the United States, including through a reduction in public sector absorption, and in the rest of the world, through increased spending. **(WTO Trade Policy Review: United States 2006)**

The report notes, nonetheless, that market access barriers and other distorting measures, notably subsidies, persist in a few but important areas, and that addressing these distortions would benefit U.S. consumers and taxpayers and help strengthen the global economy. **(WTO Trade Policy Review: United States 2006)**

In the “WTO Trade Policy Review: SACU 2003” document the review highlights policy characteristics of the nation-states that belong to the South African Customs Union that are consistent with the trade liberalization objectives of the WTO system. These are economic reform, and trade and investment liberalization. Importantly, the report acknowledges the SACU’s continuation of economic reform but the discourse modifies the meaning of reform to take on a liberalization connotation; policy reform in this review becomes defined as specifically liberalization policy.

A report on the trade policies and practices of the Southern African Customs Union (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and

Swaziland), was released on 25 April by the WTO Secretariat. The report says that since the last Review of their trade policies in 1998, SACU countries have continued their economic reform programmes, where trade and investment liberalization have played key roles. **(WTO Trade Policy Review: SACU 2003)**

The 2003 trade policy review of the South African nation-states identifies policy characteristics that are potentially inconsistent with the trade liberalization objectives of the WTO system. In an explicit attempt at regulating the nation-states' policy the discourse highlights a number of areas that SACU policy action needs to address to ensure consistency with the WTO system; simplification, continued economic reforms, trade liberalization, outward-orientation. According to the report, the SACU needs to engage in policy action that moves toward the objectives of attracting foreign investment and integration into the world economy that are implied to be in the SACU nation-states' interests. This is an important feature of this review especially related to the SACU status as developing countries. The influx of foreign capital and further integration into the world system are consistent with the objectives of the WTO system and the emphasis in the WTO discourse is not on how these are actually in the interests of these developing nation-states, but rather, in what ways the SACU nation-states should act in order to achieve those objectives.

However, simplification of the tariff structure is needed the report indicates. **(WTO Trade Policy Review: SACU 2003)**

Trade Policy Review: Southern African Customs Union

Continued economic reforms would attract more foreign investment

(WTO Trade Policy Review: SACU 2003)

It is hoped that, once in force, the new SACU Agreement, combined with multilateral trade liberalization and outward-orientation, will help SACU countries to foster their integration into the world economy. (WTO

Trade Policy Review: SACU 2003)

In the TMRM discourse of the “WTO Trade Policy Review: China 2006” document specific policy characteristics are highlighted that are consistent with the trade liberalization objectives of the WTO system; economic reform, opened the economy, barriers have declined, and trade and structural reforms. Again, as in the SACU review, the meaning of economic reform is modified by its linkage to opening the economy to international trade. In the discourse reform gets defined as nation-state policy action that moves toward the objectives of the WTO system. Additionally, these policy characteristics that are consistent with the trade liberalization objectives of the WTO system are linked to positive consequences that are claimed to be in China’s interests, such as having a level of economic growth that is the fastest in the world and the reduction of poverty within China. Another important feature of this trade policy review is the explicit reference to WTO commitments and China’s membership in the WTO as the very specific reasons for China’s positive policy movement and positive consequences.

Trade Policy Review: China

Economic reform has produced impressive results but important challenges remain

China's gradual economic reforms have opened the economy to international trade and investment and have made it one of the fastest growing in the world, with a nearly nine-fold increase in GDP per capita since 1978, according to a WTO Secretariat report on the trade policies and practices of China. **(WTO Trade Policy Review: China 2006)**

Trade and investment barriers have declined considerably, in part due to WTO commitments. **(WTO Trade Policy Review: China 2006)**

Ongoing trade and structural reforms, given added impetus by China's membership of the WTO since 2001, have made it the world's third largest trader and one of the largest FDI recipients. These reforms have also reduced the proportion of China's population living in poverty from 73% in 1990 to 32% in 2003. **(WTO Trade Policy Review: China 2006)**

The 2006 trade policy review of China also highlights policy characteristics that are inconsistent with the trade liberalization objectives of the WTO system; intervene to manage trade. This is an important feature of this review because it has strong implications for the regulation of nation-state sovereignty. In this discourse, the Chinese government's intervention to manage trade for domestic considerations is an excluded element, suggesting that a nation-state's own intervention and management are inconsistent with the WTO system objectives. This reinforces the more general thesis that the WTO is positioning its governance system as responsible for managing the trade related dimensions of globalization. The review also highlights policy characteristics that are potentially inconsistent with the trade liberalization objectives of the WTO system and emphasizes a number of areas that China policy action needs to address to ensure

consistency with the WTO system; continued need to restructure, and more market oriented. Similar to how the meaning of reform is modified in a particular way, restructuring is linked and modified to mean policy movement that is market-oriented, another central feature of the objectives of the WTO system.

Nevertheless, the report notes that the Government continues to intervene to “manage” trade, including for domestic supply considerations. (WTO Trade Policy Review: China 2006)

Other challenges include bottlenecks in infrastructure as well as the continued need to restructure the financial sector and capital markets by making them more market oriented. (WTO Trade Policy Review: China 2006)

In the “WTO Trade Policy Review: Japan 2007” document specific policy characteristics that are consistent with the trade liberalization objectives of the WTO system are; progress in terms of improving the competitive environment, and promoting structural reforms. Additionally, these policy characteristics that are consistent with the trade liberalization objective of the WTO system are linked to positive consequences that are claimed to be in Japan’s interests, such as an improved economic situation and movement out of deflation.

Japan’s economic situation has improved since the previous Trade Policy Review in 2005 and the country seems to be getting out of deflation. Progress has been made in improving the competitive environment and in promoting structural reforms in the energy and services sectors, according

to the WTO Secretariat report on the trade policies and practices of Japan.

(WTO Trade Policy Review: Japan 2007)

The “WTO Trade Policy Review: Japan 2007” document also highlights policy characteristics that are inconsistent with the trade liberalization objectives of the WTO system; inward Foreign Direct Investment is still low, and high level of government assistance. The review also identifies policy characteristics that are potentially inconsistent with the trade liberalization objectives of the WTO system and emphasizes a number of areas that Japan policy action needs to address to ensure consistency with the WTO system; continued reform is needed, continued structural reforms, increase its attractiveness to foreign investors, strengthening of competition policy, and adopting further trade liberalization. Again, the review of Japan’s trade policy provides another example of how the signifiers of reform are modified in a way that is consistent with the WTO system objectives by being linked in the discourse to liberalization policy.

Trade Policy Review: Japan

Economic recovery but continued reform is needed **(WTO Trade Policy Review: Japan 2007)**

The report notes that Japan’s inward Foreign Direct Investment is still low compared with other large economies, and measures are needed to increase its attractiveness to foreign investors. The report also notes the high level of government assistance in agriculture and the low labour productivity in this sector. **(WTO Trade Policy Review: Japan 2007)**

Sustained recovery would appear to hinge on continued structural reforms including in the financial, corporate and public sectors, and

in strengthening of competition policy and adopting further trade liberalization particularly in agriculture, according to the report. (WTO

Trade Policy Review: Japan 2007)

The TPRM discourse in the “WTO Trade Policy Review: Republic of Korea 2004” document identifies policy characteristics that are consistent with the trade liberalization objectives of the WTO system; wide-ranging structural reforms, and outward-oriented trade and investment policies. Additionally, these policy characteristics are linked to positive consequences that are argued to be in the interests of the Republic of Korea. In the discourse the positive consequences of the Republic of Korea’s implementation of trade policies that are consistent with the WTO system are reinforced through their definition as the solution to a crisis. The review makes a firm and explicit connection between the implementation of those liberalization policies and the Republic of Korea’s ability to recover from the Asian economic crisis.

Trade Policy Review: Republic of Korea

Further trade liberalization and structural reforms, the key to sustained growth

Korea’s economy has achieved an impressive recovery from the Asian crisis, with its GDP per capita having been restored to pre-crisis levels, according to a report on the trade policies and practices of the Republic of Korea released on September 17 by the WTO Secretariat. (WTO Trade Policy Review: Republic of Korea 2004)

This economic recovery has undoubtedly been fostered by wide-ranging structural reforms and the maintenance of outward-oriented trade and

investment policies as far as manufacturing and services are concerned.

(WTO Trade Policy Review: Republic of Korea 2004)

The review of the Republic of Korea also indicates policy characteristics that are potentially inconsistent with the trade liberalization objectives of the WTO system and highlights a number of areas that the Republic of Korea policy action needs to address to ensure consistency with the WTO system; need for further liberalization, structural reforms, and develop a more competitive economy. The review of the Republic of Korea's trade policy provides yet another example of how the signifiers of structural reform are modified in a particular way that is consistent with the WTO system objectives. In the discourse, structural reform is linked to policy action that moves toward the WTO's objectives of increasing the economic competition of the global market.

Nonetheless, the WTO Secretariat report notes that Korea faces several related economic challenges. These include sluggish domestic demand, resulting in possible over-reliance on exports as the main source of current growth, and the need for further trade liberalization and structural reforms to develop a more competitive economy. **(WTO Trade Policy Review:**

Republic of Korea 2004)

In all, the TPRM discourse in the documents reviewing nation-state trade policies indicate how the WTO cyber-discourse also attempts to manage specific cases of national trade policy through the use of organizational inclusion and exclusion. Specifically, by including and excluding specific policy actions by these nation-states, the WTO discourse attempts to regulate each nation-state's trade policy by including nation-state expressions

of sovereignty that are consistent with the WTO system and by excluding nation-state expressions of sovereignty that are inconsistent with the WTO system. In this way, the attempt to manage specific cases of nation-state trade policy to be consistent with the liberalization/free trade objectives of the WTO governance system makes an important contribution to the legitimization of the WTO system as a form of global governance.

In summary, the WTO cyber-discourse of organizational identity and issues management attempts to legitimize the WTO system as a form of global governance by positioning the WTO system as responsible for managing globalization. Specifically, the WTO cyber-discourse attempts to legitimize the WTO system as a form of global governance through how it attempts to manage the sovereignty of the nation-state. These attempts at legitimization are conducted in general through a number of the hegemonic features of the WTO's organizational identity and issues management discourse; organizational positioning, organizational nodal point, organizational inclusion, and organizational exclusion. Legitimization of the governance system is also conducted in specific through the WTO's Trade Policy Review Mechanism, where the national trade policies of nation-states are subjected to surveillance and regulation.

This case analysis of the cyberface of global governance suggests that the WTO cyber-discourse of organizational identity and issues management exhibits features of a hegemonic discourse that attempts to universalize and sediment a particular discourse and version of globalization and global order. The WTO discourse of organizational identity and issues management contributes to the discourse of “a particular social force [that] assumes the representation of a totality...[and] a form of ‘hegemonic universality’” (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, pg. x). By legitimizing a form of emerging global economic

governance, that in turn represents a particular version of globalization, the WTO identity and issues management discourse “transforms what is a conjunctural state of affairs into a historical necessity... [whereby] the forces of globalization are detached from their political dimensions and appear as a fate to which we all have to submit” (pg. xvi). This growing global regulatory force represents a very particular vision of global order and economic relations. Bruner (2003) suggests that the WTO along with the International Monetary Fund and World Bank represent the institutionalization of neo-liberal and economic liberal ideas about the primacy of unfettered markets that now represent an entrenched infrastructure for global capitalist development and expansion. Thus, the growing regulatory power of the WTO is linked to specific sets of interests, specifically corporate capitalist interests (Bruner 2003).

Although presenting itself as “being the only natural or possible societal order” (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, pg. xvi), the emerging form of global economic governance represented by the WTO “is the expression of a certain configuration of power relations. It is the result of hegemonic moves on the part of specific social forces which have been able to implement a profound transformation in the relations between capitalist corporation and the nation-states” (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p. xvi). Features of WTO discourse show potential global sedimentation at work in how the “rhetoric of free trade...was institutionalized” (Bruner, 2002, p. 28) though the discursive construction of policy to constitute global economic structure. The discourses of market fundamentalism and the triumph of economic liberalism (Bruner, 2003), are becoming universalized and sedimented into global economic structures through the legitimization of the particular policy formations of the WTO governance system.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The Cyberface of Global Governance and Critical Organizational Communication

This study examines the contested nature of globalization by highlighting two new features of contemporary globalization; the rise of IGOs that represent emerging forms of global governance and the rise of the Internet and the World Wide Web that provides for emerging forms of legitimization in cyberspace. Highlighting these two features contributes to the field of organizational communication in understanding globalization and global processes. Specifically, this study's emphasis on IGO cyber-discourse makes contributions to the theory and practice of critical organizational communication in a global context.

Theoretical Implications

The theoretical significance of this study is increased understanding of the way organizational discourse influences social changes on a global scale. It shows how IGO cyber-discourse strongly influences the direction of the social changes associated with globalization. Specifically, this study contributes to understanding the role of the discursive construction of policy in the construction of social structure and in contestations over social interests. It also enhances our understanding of the social significance of organizational cyber-discourse.

This study adds to this understanding by showing how an organization's discursive construction of policy contributes to the construction of social structure. Scholars like Benson (1977), Deetz (1985), and Stohl (2005) have long highlighted the role of organizational communication in the construction of broader social structures,

such as in Benson's (1977) emphasis on the totality principle of a dialectical approach that understands organizations as involved in a mutually constitutive relationship with larger social structures, and Stohl's emphasis on the way organizations are involved in "organizing globalization" (2005, p. 225-226) This study provides an empirical exploration of the way organizational discourse becomes sedimented into structural constraints through the discursive construction of policy and the systems of regulation guided by that policy. The analysis found that the WTO constructs global policy that has a concrete regulating effect on the global order and thus constitutes structural constraints. Additionally, the WTO discourse of organizational identity and issues management is central to the discursive construction of global policy. For example, the WTO constructs the necessity of the policies of liberalization and free trade by shaping the meanings of prominent global issues related to the dislocating effects of globalization. Through these discourses, the WTO constructs a standard of appropriate global trade policy and manages specific cases of nation-state trade policy through the WTO's Trade Policy Review Mechanism. It does this by identifying and including and excluding nation-state policy actions that are consistent or inconsistent with the WTO system. As a result, the WTO implements a regulatory system that places structural constraints on nation-state actions.

This study adds to this understanding by showing how an organization's discursive construction of policy also contributes to contestations over social interests. Benson (1977) and Deetz (1985) have long emphasized the way organizational communication contributes to and constitutes contestation among collectives over social interests. This study's examination of WTO discourse extends this basic idea and

demonstrates how WTO discourse constructs, through specific textual tactics, global policy and simultaneously reifies a neo-liberal set of interests. The WTO discursively constructs global policy that is oriented toward liberalization and free trade, hence shifting power away from nation states and toward global power centers like the WTO. These particular policies contribute to global structures that privilege market-oriented global capitalist interests. The WTO discourses accomplish this by universalizing these global market interests through policy formation which define globalization and the role of IGOs. The discourses define globalization as a set of conditions that place limits on the capacities of the nation-state and define IGOs and specifically the WTO as having a superior capacity to address the effects of globalization. Through these two definitions, nation-states become incapable of fulfilling their own interests and the WTO is positioned as capable of fulfilling global interests, the interests of nation-states, and the interests of citizens of the nation-states.

Neoliberal interests thus get universalized through IGO-centered policies that legitimize the regulation of the trade policy of specific nation-states. These discourses and the legitimacy they imbue allow the WTO to identify and define nation-state actions that are inconsistent with the WTO system as not just against the interests of the WTO, but against the interests of the nation-states themselves. In this way, the WTO's discursive construction of global policy contributes to struggles over economic sovereignty between national economic sovereignty and global economic sovereignty. The policies the WTO discursively constructs contribute to the contestation over sets of interests that are embedded in the larger political and economic structures of the global environment.

This study makes a contribution to this emphasis by showing how organizational cyber-discourse has a significant influence on the direction of the social changes associated with globalization. Many organizational scholars have stressed the influence of institutional rhetoric (Finet, 2001) and external communication (Cheney & Christensen, 2001) on larger sociopolitical processes (Ganesh et al., 2005; Zoller, 2004; Elwood, 1995; German, 1995). These concerns highlight the importance of taking seriously organizational cyber-discourse such as those discourses manifest on the WTO website. This study demonstrated how the website is used not only to shape the image of the WTO, but functions more widely as a crucial site of discourse to define globalization and manage regulatory policy and the actions of nation-states. In this way, the discourse on the institutional website of the WTO reflects and contributes to larger global struggles over economic sovereignty. As a form of external organizational communication, the WTO cyber-discourse has a globally significant impact in its discursive construction of global policy and its legitimization of a particular form of global governance.

Practical Implications

The practical significance of this study is in the analysis and refinement of digital and globally oriented organizational discursive practice. It reveals how global order is organized and the potential for increased involvement in that organization. This study analyzes types of organizational discursive practice and contributes to the potential refinement of organizational discursive practice. The results provide a map of a global discursive terrain that is constructed and reconstructed through the organizational discourse of the WTO. This provides counter-hegemonic forces with a map of potential points for the intervention and modification of the terrain. Specifically, some of these

potential points of intervention include contesting the WTO discourse on its positioning of the WTO as manager of globalization, its legitimization of liberalization and free trade policies, its definition of sovereignty, and limiting the way it uses the exclusion of protectionism as a way to regulate the nation-state. Additionally, highlighting the role of cyber-discourse in the construction of global policy provides counter-hegemonic forces with an understanding of it as an important site of contestation and as a means to engage in contestation.

A central feature of the WTO discourse is the way it positions the WTO in the role of managing globalization. The discourse positions the WTO as capable of playing a management role in the global order because of its ability to address problems related to the dislocating effects of globalization. It highlights how globalization induces a lack of capacity on the part of the nation-state and how the WTO is able to address the limits of the nation-state and provide solutions to global issues. Contesting the WTO as manager of globalization contributes to questioning the inevitability of the particular version of globalization and global order constructed by the discourse of the WTO. It also shows how global structures are constructed sets of social arrangements. The WTO influences the construction of global structures through its role in the construction of global policy. Analyzing the discursive construction of global policy contributes to the de-reification of policy. That is, it functions to move particular policies from being seen as necessary actions required by global realities, to being seen instead as policies of a particular version of global reality that supports particular sets of interests. Analysis of how the WTO uses a particular definition of globalization to construct the necessity of its free trade and liberalization policies contributes to such de-reification. Addressing the way

WTO organizational discourse constructs global policy highlights how such discourse sets limits on alternative policy considerations and alternative structural arrangements. Questioning the inevitability of global policies and global structures and showing their constructed character raises insight into the possibility of alternative global policies and structural arrangements. This informs the discursive practice of groups that represent alternative conceptions of global realities, global policy, and global order that are linked to different and wider sets of interests. Exposing and contesting the particularity of the WTO as manager of globalization opens up space for the management of globalization along the lines of the “alternative visions of globalization” (Best, 2005, p. 223) of different social forces with interests, policies, and visions of global structure that are guided primarily by such issues as human rights, labor, and the environment, rather than global market-oriented free trade and liberalization.

Another central feature of the WTO discourse is its nodal point of *global rules of liberalization and free trade*. This functions to define the essence and objectives of the WTO and to highlight the ways that the WTO is capable of fulfilling global interests in the resolution of international conflicts. The WTO discourse identifies the lack of economic security as a central condition for conflict between nation-states. In identifying this lack, the WTO discourse positions its sets of rules and its liberalization and free trade policies as the solution to international conflict. In the WTO discourse, nation-states are incapable of resolving conflicts between themselves without the rules and policies of the WTO. Contesting the legitimacy of this nodal point is a crucial way to question the legitimacy of the particular form of global governance that the WTO represents. Highlighting and exposing the particularity of the global rules supported by the WTO can

contribute to moving the global rules away from their function as rules for a global market, and toward the inclusion of non-market social issues. Additionally, the WTO's linkage of liberalization and free trade with the resolution of international conflict can be countered with examples of how a market-orientation can lead to international conflict due to the focus on competition and de-emphasis of non-competitive social values.

Importantly, the WTO discourse limits and regulates the sovereignty of the nation-state. It does this by including the sovereignty of the nation-state as an important principle of the WTO system, but then defines sovereignty in a way that limits the sovereignty of the nation-state. The WTO discourse includes the sovereignty of the nation-state in order to integrate the interests of the nation-states and to get the nation-states to identify with the WTO system. However, the discourse highlights the necessity of limits to nation-state sovereignty because of the need for international cooperation and international institutions. Finally, it defines the WTO system of global governance and the limits the system places on nation-state sovereignty as an expression of nation-state sovereignty. Other groups and especially nation-states themselves can contest this definition of sovereignty and reclaim a more expansive definition of sovereignty by appropriating the WTO's own discursive efforts to include sovereignty as an important principle.

Nation-state actions are regulated through the WTO's exclusion of protectionism. Protectionism functions as a signifier for nation-state policy actions that are inconsistent with the policies of the WTO. The discourse constructs an opposition between free trade and protectionism, links protectionism to international conflict, and highlights the way protectionism is opposed to the interests of the nation-state. In this way, the discourse

attempts to highlight the ever-present danger of protectionism as a way to regulate nation-state policy. The WTO's use of protectionism is an important potential point of intervention. The exclusion of alternative policy options through the exclusion of policy actions by the nation-state that the WTO condenses together under the label of protectionism is integral to the WTO's discursive construction of global policy. Specific cases of nation-state trade policy are then subjected to surveillance and regulation within the parameters of acceptable policy actions that are consistent with the WTO system. An important point of intervention is in contesting the way the WTO uses the label of protectionism to apply to an increasing amount of nation-state policy activities. Groups supporting non-market oriented issues and concerns can attempt to restrict the WTO's expanding use of the label of protectionism. Struggling to limit how the label of protectionism is applied can defend the position of particular non-market oriented issues and policies, such as nation-state policy actions on the environment.

This study contributes to the practical understanding of uses of institutional rhetoric and external organizational communication by highlighting the importance of cyber-discourse for organizational legitimization and its contribution to the direction of social changes. In this way, it contributes to the development of a global and digitally oriented critical approach to institutional rhetoric, external organizational communication, and the various forms of organizational communication that are oriented toward influencing the larger sociopolitical environment. Contemporary external organizational communication is increasingly cyber-discourse in part because it operates in an increasingly interactive context where other entities develop content that has implications for organizational identity and organizational issues. This requires a

proactive approach and ability to adapt to the proliferation of content. One of the most important and useful functions of an official website is that digital external organizational communication allows for the increased ability to be proactive and adaptable because the content is more easily and more economical to revise. This allows organizations to be responsive in managing discursive challenges to organizational interests and objectives. Highlighting the role of cyber-discourse in the struggles of the larger sociopolitical environment provides an awareness of an important means through which powerful organizations like the WTO attempt to manage organizational identity and organizational issues to influence social changes. It can also provide other groups with an understanding of how organizational cyber-discourse can be used to advance their own non-market oriented objectives. Through the use of cyber-discourse, other groups can manage organizational identity and organizational issues in a way that attempts to influence the direction of social changes toward alternative visions of globalization and global order.

Limitations and Future Directions

This study addresses the overlap between the rise of IGOs that represent forms of global governance and the rise of legitimization in cyberspace. The rise of global governance and the rise of legitimization in cyberspace are new features of contemporary globalization processes that not only need to be addressed individually, but more importantly, the repercussions of their overlap need to be addressed by critical organizational communication research and approaches to globalization and global order.

Critical organizational communication emphasizes how “organizations constitute important instruments of domination in the advanced industrial societies” (Benson, 1977,

p. 19) and that effort to change these societies and to construct alternative social arrangements need to address this role of organizations. Addressing IGOs that represent forms of global governance emphasizes a similar perspective on the role of IGOs in global society and global order. This study argues that IGOs constitute important instruments of domination in contemporary global society and that efforts to change global society and to construct alternative global social arrangements need to address the integral role of IGOs. In this study the WTO is understood as an organization that functions to implement a particular type of global structure that reflects a particular set of interests through the construction of policies that provide a form of global governance.

However, this study is limited with regard to the rise of IGOs that represent forms of global governance. The case study of the cyberface of global governance was an analysis of the discourse of a single IGO, the WTO. Additionally, it was analyzed in isolation from the discourse of other IGOs and other organizational entities that have a bearing on contestations over global policy. Analyzing the legitimization of global governance requires further work on case studies of the cyber-discourse of other IGOs and the ways the discourse of those IGOs are shaped relative to the discourses of each other. It should also assess how IGO discourse is shaped relative to the discourses of other organizational entities, such as nation-states, corporations, and non-profit groups. An important direction of further research is in analyzing other IGOs that are identified with representing forms of global governance, comparing the discourses, and placing the discourses in the context of the discourses of other organizational entities. Investigating the cyberface of global governance would benefit from this direction and from additional case studies of other economically oriented IGOs implicated alongside the WTO in the

legitimization of neo-liberal versions of globalization and global order, such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (Ganesh et al., 2005; Bruner, 2002a, 2002b, 2003; Robinson, 2005), and also more politically oriented ones such as the United Nations.

This study also addresses the rise of legitimization in cyberspace by emphasizing institutional rhetoric and external organizational communication as important forms of organizational communication oriented toward influencing the direction of social changes in the larger sociopolitical environment. Addressing the way external organizational communication attempts to manage organizational identity and organizational issues highlights the influence of organizational cyber-discourse. This requires attention to forms of external organizational communication such as public relations discourse. This means taking seriously the impact of public relations discourse on social arrangements and developing a critical approach to the practice of organizational legitimization and the implications of that legitimization. Highlighting the legitimization functions of the WTO website addresses the need for critical scholarship to approach external organizational communication. Public relations discourse contributes to the construction of social structure, in that “public relations does not just contribute messages and products to the public dialogue, but it also creates relationships that hold consequences for the evolution of society...we can investigate those relationships by asking about the legitimation created by public relations messages” (German, 1995, p. 284). Also, public relations discourse reflects contestation over interests. That is, “public relations is based on a will to power...public relations messages reflect the interests of the dominant powers, which in our society are entrenched political and financial interests” (German, 1995, p. 293).

This study addresses how cyber-discourse is increasingly becoming a dominant means of the organizational legitimization functions of public relations discourse. Consequently, this study highlights organizational legitimization in cyberspace, and more specifically how organizational legitimization contributes to the legitimization of governance in cyberspace. The cyber-discourse of IGOs is an important means of organizational legitimization that has an influence on the larger global sociopolitical environment because of its contribution to the legitimization of global governance. Specifically in this study, the cyber-discourse of the WTO functions to legitimize the WTO and contribute to the legitimization of the WTO trading system as a form of global governance.

However, this study is limited with regard to the rise of legitimization in cyberspace. The case study focus on the cyber-discourse of the WTO's institutional website was an analysis of a single form of cyber-discourse. Other forms of cyber-discourse can contribute to organizational legitimization and might be an important dimension of an organization's management of organizational identity and organizational issues. These other forms of cyber-discourse include web 2.0 Internet technologies and services such as wikis, podcasts, blogs, user-generated content sites, and social networking sites. For example, Anstead & Chadwick (2007) analyzed the use of such activities in political campaigns and highlighted their function in establishing "the Internet presence of candidates" (p. 3) and "attempts to construct an online network of supporters and activist" (p. 5). Future research should investigate a variety of forms of cyber-discourse and assess the extent to which IGOs might use such web 2.0 technologies as a part of the legitimization functions of their cyber-discourse.

Extending the cyberface of global governance to an analysis of other IGOs within the context of the discourses of other organizational entities, and to the use of different forms of cyber-discourse to legitimize forms of global governance, addresses critical organizational communication in both global and digital contexts. This deeper investigation of the cyber-discursive legitimization of global governance can provide direction for a research program for future critical research. The emergence of global governance and the emergence of the Internet are two of the most prominent issues of our time, and the framework of the cyberface of global governance can make a contribution to the relevance of critical organizational communication to these prominent social issues, both in the theoretical dimension of understanding global processes, and in the practical dimension of the possibility of intervening in those global processes.

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