

**News Coverage of Taiji's Dolphin Hunts:
Media Framing and the Birth of a Global Prohibition
Regime**

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Abstract

The Cove, a US documentary highly critical of annual dolphin hunts in the small town of Taiji, Japan, triggered a surge of global activism aimed at pressuring local fishermen and the Japanese government to stop the hunts. The resulting moral standoff between Western activists and various actors within Japan supporting Taiji fishermen was closely covered by the international and Japanese media.

This study uses a content analysis to examine framing and sources in articles about Taiji from the three main Western news agencies—the Associated Press (AP), Agence France-Presse (AFP), and Reuters—as well as the main Japanese news agency, Kyodo News (Kyodo). The study reveals that the release of *The Cove* corresponded to an overall spike in coverage of Taiji, as well as significant differences in the way the town was portrayed.

The results of the study strongly indicate the birth of a “global prohibition regime” to ban Taiji's dolphin hunts, based on Western moral standards and promoted by activists in mainstream media coverage. Understanding the development of prohibition regimes is

crucial today, given the global power and influence of the Western media and its tendency to target different cultures and ideologies.

1. Introduction

Taiji, Japan, is an isolated coastal village with a documented history of whaling that goes back over four centuries. Since World War II, local fishermen have increasingly targeted dolphins over whales, due to bans on whaling and demand from dolphin shows at aquariums (Taiji Chōshi, 1979). In recent decades, Western activists and environmental groups have protested Taiji's dolphin hunts, portraying them as a moral evil and a symbol of global environmental destruction.

This was the main perspective of *The Cove*, a US documentary highly critical of the hunts. The movie was released to high acclaim in 2009 and won an Academy Award the following year, triggering a new surge of global activism. The resulting moral standoff between Western activists campaigning to save Taiji's dolphins and various actors within Japan backing the long-running hunts in Taiji was closely covered by the international and Japanese media.

A seminal article by Nadelmann (1990) described the rise and spread of international moral taboos, like the one against dolphin hunting in Taiji, using the concept of "global prohibition regimes." These regimes, often promulgated through the international media, are marked by the presence of "transnational moral entrepreneurs," usually from Western countries, who are prone to "moral proselytism" and seek to "remake the world" according to their ethical beliefs. They are, however, opposed by what Nadelmann terms "deviants"—communities

that actively reject outsiders' moral impositions, especially from abroad.

Given the importance of global prohibition regimes, it is not surprising to find that several studies of their coverage in the media have been published (Campbell & Sato, 2009; Papanicolaou, 2008; Sadath, Kleinshmit, & Giessen, 2013). Such studies have used mass communication theory such as media framing to examine the characteristics of global prohibition regimes, but have neglected to analyze the media's role in how such regimes are established.

This exploratory study bridges this gap by using a content analysis to examine framing and sources in news articles about Taiji during the years before and after the release of *The Cove*. The study compares articles from the three main Western news agencies—the Associated Press (AP), Agence France-Presse (AFP), and Reuters—to those from the main Japanese news agency, Kyodo News (Kyodo). It finds clear evidence for the birth and widespread adoption of a global prohibition regime, namely, the Western movement to ban Taiji's dolphin hunts.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Global Prohibition Regimes and “Deviance”

International regimes are defined as “implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures” in specific areas of international relations, around which nations, organizations, and other actors converge to achieve desired outcomes. A given regime is therefore inseparable from its principles and norms; new principles

and norms lead to new regimes, which can emerge to compete or conflict with older regimes (Krasner, 1982, pp. 186–188).

A “global prohibition regime” is a type of international regime that prohibits “the involvement of state and nonstate actors in particular activities” (Nadelmann, 1990, p. 479). While international regimes often reflect the economic and political motivations of the most powerful nations and other international organizations, global prohibition regimes “tend to involve moral and emotional considerations more so than most other laws and regimes,” particularly the “norms of dominant societies, notably those of Europe and the United States” (Nadelmann, 1990, p. 480). Prohibition regimes tend to be concerned with how targeted actors or communities treat certain groups or natural resources, rather than how states treat each other, in contrast to traditional political conflicts, which are defined along national borders (Nadelmann, 1990).

Global prohibition regimes develop and evolve in a series of stages. In the earliest stage, a specific activity by a given community is targeted for criticism by small numbers of individual activists and scholars, but that activity is widely considered to be legitimate and within moral bounds by the general public, or at least tolerable under the right conditions. The criticism gradually increases in scale and acceptance until the final stages of the regime, when it is widely considered to be abnormal and immoral, even becoming the subject of criminal laws and active monitoring by international organizations (Andreas & Nadelmann, 2006, pp. 20–21). This shift to normalcy is often promulgated by the mainstream media, which inserts the regime

into the media agenda and frames it in the activist perspective. Even as global prohibition regimes mature, so-called “deviant” communities persist, often because they reject the moral and ethical assertions of the regimes that target them, and actively continue with activities that violate international norms. Because global prohibition regimes often involve ethical and emotional considerations, their proponents are likely to consider any occurrence of the targeted activity as “an evil in and of itself,” and therefore “strive to ban rather than to regulate” (Nadelmann, 1990, p. 525).

2.2 Framing Theory

While various definitions of the terms “frame” and “framing” exist in mass communications literature, one widely cited definition is that media framing operates by “selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution” (Entman, 2004, p. 5). Under this definition, framing theory holds that “an issue can be viewed from a variety of perspectives,” with the process of framing referring to the way “people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue” (Chong & Druckman, 2007, p. 104). Regarding a specific topic, media framing dictates “what will be discussed, how it will be discussed, and, above all, how it will not be discussed” (Altheide, 2002, p. 45).

This is particularly true of news topics that take place in locations or conditions not readily accessible by media consumers. Studies of audience discussion of international affairs found that “it was far more

likely that they would rely on media frames and popular wisdom than on their experiential knowledge, for they had no personal experience with the issues at hand” (Johnson-Cartee, 2004, p. 29). One large-scale study of the framing of war imagery found that media frames “can affect not only *how* audiences react to the news of war but also *what* noncombatants know of war” (Schwalbe, Silcock, & Keith, 2008, p. 448, emphasis in original).

Frames compete, so that “what is seen in media texts is often the result of many interrelated, competing principles from contending sources and media professionals themselves” (Reese, 2001, p. 14). On the international level, efforts to frame a certain subject by competing ideologies across national borders can entail a “struggle for the definition of political realities” (Bennett, 1982, p. 290). Previous studies that compare frames in coverage of a specific topic by media from different countries “suggest that the congruence between media frames across countries depends on the issue that is covered” (Camaj, 2010, p. 638). For instance, Davidson (2006) examined print coverage of media mergers in France and the United States and found only modest differences in framing. Frames used in the coverage of controversial topics appear to have more variance between countries. For instance, Camaj (2010) found that framing of the Kosovo conflict in 2006 and 2007 differed greatly between Western and Russian news agencies.

One explanation for the difference in framing across national borders is that journalists tend to use frames reflecting the national context in which they operate. Theory holds that “frames that employ

more culturally resonant terms have the greatest potential for influence [and] use words and images highly salient in the culture, which is to say *noticeable, understandable, memorable, and emotionally charged*" (Entman, 2004, p. 6, emphasis in original).

Studies of international reporting on controversial topics have shown that media coverage, both in framing and the types of sources that are quoted, reflects the cultural and political environment of the country in which the coverage is based. Studies of news reports on the Iraq War that compared coverage in Swedish and US newspapers found broad differences in framing and sources used, with Swedish newspaper articles more focused on responsibility and antiwar protests and US articles more concerned with military conflict and war strategy (Dimitrova & Stromback, 2005). Analysis of newswire reports from the United States and Japan about the Tiananmen movement in China revealed that in cases where the subject matter is "remote from public knowledge, experience, or concern...home readers would interpret the news in accordance with the dominant messages rather than deconstruct or subvert their meanings" (Lee & Yang, 1996, p. 15). Hibino and Nagata (2006) measured the public's acceptance of biotechnology in Japan and Europe over a ten-year time span, concluding that "framing of biotechnological developments [in newspapers] does not result naturally from the inherent properties of the technology themselves, but is considerably regulated by discourse in a public sphere" (p. 22).

2.3 Media Framing and Global Prohibition Regimes

Analysis of the frames and sources employed by news media can be used to identify the telltale moral and emotional appeals that spur the rise and spread of global prohibition regimes. For example, the antiwhaling movement actually began as an effort to *protect* whaling as an industry and maintain whale stocks in international waters, but was hijacked by moral entrepreneurs like Greenpeace and other environmental groups, which promulgated a prohibition regime in the media depicting the animals as “humane” and deserving of exceptional sympathy (Nadelmann, 1990, p. 517). Andreas and Nadelmann (2006) have documented how, in the years after the September 11 attacks, the global prohibition against terrorism was framed as a moral battle and applied to previously unrelated fields such as the US “war on drugs” and domestic law enforcement. A study of a prohibition regime against human trafficking in Greece found that it was often framed as an emotional appeal against organized crime rather than as a problem better addressed through “more substantive paths of inquiry into the structures of national economy” (Papanicolaou, 2008, p. 379).

Given the prominent role of “moral entrepreneurs” in pushing for the adoption of global prohibition regimes, activists and the frames they endorse can be expected to have a prominent role in media coverage as regimes emerge. A study of framing efforts by the Sierra Club showed that journalists covering environmental issues such as Arctic drilling use members of environmental groups “about as often as they turn to policymakers and regulators” (Reber & Berger, 2005, p. 14).

When a prohibition regime targets the activities of a specific deviant nation, frames and sources diverge sharply based on the origin of news media coverage. An exploratory study of a global regime banning harm to tigers compared published articles in an international newspaper to those in a local newspaper from Bangladesh, finding that international coverage used far more activist sources, while local coverage relied more on government officials and administrators (Sadath et al., 2013). At the international level, attacks by tigers on humans were blamed on broader environmental problems such as climate change, painting the animals as victims in need of saving, while local papers deviated from the global stance by portraying tigers as fearful predators that people needed protection against. In comparing the framing of international attitudes toward tobacco use, one study found that the United States had become the target of a global prohibition regime because it failed to adopt a global treaty to limit smoking (Campbell & Sato, 2009). News media reports in Japan, which did adopt the antismoking treaty, were found to cite emotional personal studies more often than reports in the United States.

Existing literature has demonstrated the efficacy of using media frames and sources to analyze global prohibition regimes. A key part of Nadelmann's theory, however, is the evolution of regimes—the process by which they transform from extreme ideas promoted by small numbers of activists and other moral crusaders to widely accepted global norms. The hunting of sea mammals, especially whales and dolphins, has repeatedly been targeted by global prohibition regimes, many of which have matured into legal bans. Some societies continue

with local hunts, often drawing the ire of activists and spawning new regimes. The small community of Taiji, Japan, where dolphins are hunted openly, is one such place.

2.4 Taiji, Japan: Target of a Global Prohibition Regime

Taiji is an isolated village of three thousand people on the southeast coast of Japan. It has a centuries-long history of hunting whales and dolphins, and about three dozen locals still actively participate in hunts. Most of them join Taiji's "dolphin drives," which take place from September through March each year and in which a dozen or so high-speed boats herd pods of dolphins or pilot whales close to shore, where they are pinned in with nets. Captured dolphins are then slaughtered for meat or sold live to aquariums.

Foreign activists began to take an interest in Taiji and its dolphin hunts from the late 1970s as the burgeoning Western antiwhaling campaign gained momentum. Over the previous decade, the international environmental movement had emerged and advanced a number of global prohibition regimes concerning whales and the environment. Greenpeace was founded in 1970; the 1972 Stockholm Conference, attended by 113 countries, declared the importance of protecting the environment; and in 1970, Capitol Records released an album of whale noises that became the "soundtrack of the of the 'Save the Whales' campaign" (Burnett, 2012, p. 629).

This eventually branched into a prohibition regime against harming dolphins, which led to actions such as legislation banning the hunting of the animals in the United States and other Western countries,

as well as bans on international tuna fishing methods that harmed them. Unlike whales, many of the dolphin species covered by the bans are not endangered; these bans are not motivated by scientific data, but rather by emotional appeals against harming the animals.

Taiji was not widely known until the release of *The Cove*, a documentary about the town and the local hunts that aired in the United States in 2009 and Japan in 2010. The movie was highly critical of the hunts, showing them as “nonchalantly brutal and gut-churningly primitive” (Catsoulis, 2009) and won a host of distinctions, including an Academy Award for Best Documentary. This triggered a worldwide wave of protests against Taiji that continue today (Winter, 2015). The movie and protests received heavy coverage in Japan, and national broadcaster NHK released a documentary criticizing Western protesters and supporting the town in 2011.

The campaign against Taiji’s dolphin hunts meets the criteria for a global prohibition regime, as an international, morality-based norm that seeks to ban an activity. Japan, where the government is largely supportive of the hunts, has become a “deviant” nation against the regime. This study will analyze news coverage of Taiji during the years when the global campaign to end its hunts became mainstream.

2.5 International News Agencies and Japan’s Kyodo News

International news agencies are recognized as important sources of news (Camaj, 2010) and “initial sources of a majority of news items, as is often or usually the case in the supply of nonlocal news for many news media...especially so in international news, where there are fewer

corroborative sources” (Boyd-Barrett, 1980, p. 20). Corroborative sources have sharply decreased in recent years in media markets such as the United States, where the number of foreign correspondents employed by newspapers and television networks has fallen sharply (Kumar, 2011). This has increased the overall dependency of such outlets on news agencies.

Western international news agencies, comprised mainly of the “Big Three” agencies of the AP, AFP, and Reuters, have dominated the flow of global news and together exercise great control over what is reported from foreign countries and how it is covered (Camaj, 2010, p. 640). The AP is a not-for-profit news cooperative, while AFP and Reuters are private companies, but all three are considered trusted news agencies that share core values of independence and accuracy, as well as focusing on “hard news” over editorial content (Boyd-Barrett, 1980). While the AP is based in the United States, AFP in France, and Reuters in England, all three disseminate news to news providers and readers around the world mainly in English. All three news agencies maintain large bureaus staffed with teams of foreign correspondents in Tokyo. They compete with each other, and are “drawn to conflict and the exceptional” in their coverage (Boyd-Barrett, 1981, p. 257).

Kyodo is Japan’s largest independent news agency (Lee & Yang, 1996, p. 8). In contrast to the AP, AFP, and Reuters, Tokyo-based Kyodo disseminates news to providers and readers mainly in Japan. Operating as a nonprofit cooperative similar in structure to the AP, it similarly claims to be “completely independent of government and commercial interests” (Kyodo News). Kyodo maintains a network of 52

bureaus around Japan, and the majority of the country's major newspapers and television broadcasters are subscribers or partners (Kyodo News). The news agency is the largest provider of domestic news within Japan and a key supplier of news to the country's domestic media organizations.

For these reasons, the news content delivered by the three international news agencies can be considered representative of news reported out of Japan to Western audiences, while reporting by Kyodo can be considered representative of domestic news coverage to Japanese audiences.

3. Hypotheses

Based on the literature discussed above and the theory of global prohibition regimes and deviant nations, this study proposes four hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: News coverage of Taiji published by international news agencies and Kyodo increased following the release of the documentary *The Cove*.

Hypothesis 2: Frames used in news coverage of Taiji differed significantly between international news agencies and Kyodo.

Hypothesis 3: The types of sources use in news coverage of Taiji differed significantly between international news wires and Kyodo.

Hypothesis 4: The nationality of sources used in news coverage of Taiji differed significantly between international news wires and Kyodo.

4. Method

This study used a content analysis to test the hypotheses and assess the theoretical implications of differences in articles published by international news agencies and Kyodo. Building on previous research, the study seeks to use aspects of framing theory to identify the emergence of a global prohibition regime that targets the dolphin hunts carried out in the town of Taiji, Japan. Of note is the study's focus on news agencies and limitations posed by comparing content in different languages. Previous research affirmed the exploratory value of using a multilanguage content analysis similar to the one applied in this study.

5. Sample and Units of Analysis

The sample for this content analysis consisted of all articles that mentioned the town of Taiji, Japan, published by AP, Reuters, AFP, and Kyodo News over a nine-year period from 2007 to 2013. This period coincided with a sharp increase in media coverage of the dolphin hunts carried out in Taiji, beginning with the screening of the *The Cove* documentary at the Sundance Film Festival in January 2009, and peaking in 2010 when the movie won an Academy Award for Best Documentary. English-language news stories were selected from the LexisNexis and Factiva databases using the word "Taiji" as the

keyword, January 2007 to December 2013 as the time frame, and the individual news agencies (AP, AFP, and Reuters) as the sources. English was used as it is the main publishing language for the international news agencies, and the default language of the Western world. Japanese-language news stories were selected from the Kyodo News 47 Gyosei Journal database using the three Japanese characters for “Taiji Town” as the keyword and January 2007 to December 2013 as the time frame. Japanese was selected as it is the main publishing language of Kyodo and the default language for domestic news in Japan.

In both the English and Japanese samples, false positives (such as when an individual in a story was named “Taiji”) were discarded, as were calendars and lists of headlines published by the news agencies for scheduling purposes, as these were unlikely to be viewed by news consumers. Under these criteria, the AP search yielded $n = 28$ articles, the AFP search yielded $n = 59$ articles, and the Reuters search yielded $n = 11$ articles, for a total of 131 articles from Western news agencies. The Kyodo search yielded $n = 215$ Japanese-language articles.

The unit of analysis for this study varied for the different hypotheses. For the first hypothesis, the unit of analysis was the individual news story. For the second hypothesis, the unit of analysis was the news frame, as described in the next section. For the third and fourth hypotheses, the unit of analysis was the news source, as described in the next section.

6. Content Analysis

As described above, this study collected basic objective information for each article, namely news source and date of publication. Consistent with previous studies, the articles were also coded for frames and sources (Camaj, 2010; Dimitrova & Stromback, 2005; Dimitrova, Kaid, Williams, & Trammell, 2005; Semetko & Vakenburg, 2000; Trumbo, 1996).

Sources were adopted from two previous studies (Dimitrova & Stromback, 2005; Trumbo, 1996). The coding categories included specific mentions of sources to which a quote (either direct or indirect) was attributed. The sources used were *working individual* (e.g., fisherman, dolphin trainer, business owner, shop employee); *government or local official* (e.g., politician, bureaucrat, spokesman from fishing cooperative); *activist* (e.g., protester, nationalist); *local source* (e.g., man-on-the-street, local citizen); and *knowledgeable source* (e.g., scientist, journalist, writer). Sources were also coded for nationality, with coding categories of *Japanese*, *Western* (as it was often impossible to tell which specific Western country non-Japanese sources were from), and *Other*.

Frames were also adopted from previous studies (Camaj, 2010; Dimitrova & Stromback, 2005; Dimitrova, Kaid, Williams, & Trammell, 2005; Semetko & Vakenburg, 2000; Trumbo, 1996). After a review of the source articles, the frames were adjusted using the previous literature as a basis. A single article could contain zero or more of the identified frames. Specifically, the frames included in the content analysis were these: *conflict frame* (emphasis on a dispute or standoff

between two or more parties); *human interest frame* (emphasis on specific individuals or places, with a “soft news” focus containing elaborate descriptions and details); *economic frame* (emphasis on financial details or consequences); *morality/responsibility frame* (emphasis on right/wrong, or on the party/individual responsible for an occurrence); *environmental/health frame* (emphasis on effects on the natural environment, or on health effects to groups/individuals); and *culture/nationalism frame* (emphasis on the culture of a nation/group/individual, or on national character/pride).

Two bilingual coders were employed for this study. The first examined all of the content, while the second examined a sample of the content consisting of 10 percent of the sample for intercoder reliability purposes. The Scott’s pi intercoder reliability test had a value of .82.

7. Results

The purpose of this study was to test four hypotheses, which proposed that the three international news agencies and the largest news agency in Japan would differ in their reporting of dolphin hunts in Taiji, Japan. All of the hypotheses won support.

The first hypothesis proposed that news coverage by global news agencies and Kyodo increased with the release of the documentary *The Cove*. This hypothesis was supported, as shown in Table 1.

While *The Cove* was released in 2009 in the United States, it was released internationally and won the Academy Award the following year (2010), drawing media attention to the film and its portrayal of Taiji. Media coverage of Taiji clearly peaked in 2010, reaching its

seven-year high in both international news agencies and Kyodo. That year, stories from the AP increased fourfold (from four stories to 17), those from AFP nearly tripled (from eight stories to 22), and Reuters published six stories compared to none in 2009, while Kyodo's output also increased by a third (from 34 stories to 45).

Table 1

Taiji Coverage by News Agency, Total Number of Articles by Year

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2013	2013
AP	3	2	4	17	2	0	0
AFP	1	5	8	22	4	13	6
Reuters	4	1	0	6	0	0	0
All English News Agencies	8	8	12	45	6	13	6
Kyodo	6	34	34	45	31	32	33

$$X^2=92.86, df=15, nsd$$

In 2011, the year of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, coverage of Taiji fell sharply. Total coverage by the international news agencies fell from 45 stories to six, and Kyodo's coverage decreased from 45 stories to 31. In 2012 and 2013, international coverage of Taiji was only available from AFP among the international news agencies, and Kyodo's coverage remained consistent.

The second hypothesis proposed that the framing of news coverage would differ between international news coverage and Kyodo. This hypothesis was strongly supported, as shown in Table 2.

As expected, the data show large differences in framing between the international agencies and Kyodo. This was especially true for the

conflict frame. For the international news agencies, 95 percent of articles published during the time frame contained this frame. This indicated that international readers were highly unlikely to encounter Taiji in the news without some mention of conflict—the town was portrayed as a controversial place, at the center of an ongoing debate.

Further, 78 percent of international news coverage contained the *culture* frame and 64 percent contained the *morality* frame. This indicated that in the international press, the debate around Taiji was often described as one pitting culture against moral standards. These three frames were the only ones used in the majority of all international articles.

Table 2 News Frames in Taiji Coverage (Total for 2007–2013)

	Conflict	Human Interest	Economic	Morality/Responsibility	Environmental/Health	Culture
AP	27	7	15	21	14	24
AFP	55	5	20	35	20	41
Reuters	11	1	5	7	9	11
All English News Agencies	93	13	40	63	43	76
Percent of Total English Articles	94.9%	13.27%	40.82%	64.29%	43.88%	77.55%
Kyodo	70	28	123	14	49	52
Percent of Total Kyodo Articles	32.56%	13.02%	57.21%	6.51%	22.79%	24.19%

$X^2=92.86$, $df=15$, nsd

In coverage by Kyodo, by contrast, the *conflict* frame appeared in just 33 percent of articles published during the time frame. This is because the Japanese news agency also covered general town news from Taiji unrelated to the conflict around the dolphin hunts, such as elections, economic developments, and local events. Taiji was represented as an actual, functioning town, apart from the dolphin debate. The majority of stories about Taiji in Kyodo coverage contained the *economic* frame, furthering this everyday perspective.

A large difference was observed in the *morality/responsibility* frame, which was included in 64 percent of the articles from the international agencies and in just 7 percent of the Kyodo articles. This supported the idea that any notion of “moral” issues around Taiji and its dolphin hunts were mainly highlighted in the Western press.

Less than half of the articles from both sets of sources contained references to the *environmental/health* frame, and only a small portion contained the *human interest* frame.

The third hypothesis predicted that the international news agencies and Kyodo would use different types of sources. This was confirmed, as the data demonstrated that there was a clear difference in the sources present in the two sets of articles, as shown in Table 3.

The biggest differences were in the use of *official* sources. Kyodo used almost twice as many official sources as the international news agencies did. This may be a reflection of the Japanese media culture, in which reporters are members of press clubs and have close access to official sources from the beats they cover, access that is often unavailable to foreign reporters.

Kyodo's use of official sources also far outstripped its use of any other kind of source.

Table 3 News Sources in Taiji Coverage, total for 2007 – 2013

	Worker	Government / Local Official	Activist	Local Resident	Knowledgeable Source	Total
AP	5	35	5	38	11	
AFP	11	64	28	44	3	
Reuters	5	12	5	9	0	
All EnglishNews Agencies	21	111	38	91	14	275
Percent of Total Sources	7.64%	40.36%	13.82 %	33.09%	5.09%	100 %
Kyodo	35	216	18	25	14	308
Percent of Total Sources	11.36%	70.13%	5.84%	8.12%	4.55%	100 %

$$X^2=111.47, df=12, nsd$$

In international news coverage, official sources also made up the largest share of overall sources, but were still less than half of the total. *Local* sources also had a large share, perhaps a reflection of a comparatively large number of longer, in-depth stories about Taiji in the international press.

Surprisingly, none of the news agencies investigated used a significant number of *working* sources or *knowledgeable* sources such as experts and scientists. While the use of *activist* sources was low for all agencies, the international coverage used over twice the portion that Kyodo's coverage did.

The fourth hypothesis, proposing a difference in the nationalities of the sources used between the international news agencies and Kyodo, was also confirmed, as shown in Table 4.

The international news agencies, which all follow rules for providing “unbiased” news, used sources that were split roughly 50:50 between English and Japanese, with the Japanese sources slightly higher. This was in clear contrast to Kyodo, which used 92 percent Japanese sources. The high number of Japanese sources in Kyodo was at least partially a reflection of the large amount of local news, with no need to quote foreign sources.

Table 4 Nationality of Sources in Taiji Coverage, total for 2007 – 2013

	Western	Japanese	Other	Total
AP	48	46	0	94
AFP	70	74	6	150
Reuters	11	20	0	31
All English News Agencies	129	140	6	275
Percent of Total Sources	46.91%	50.91%	2.18%	100%
Kyodo	25	282	1	308
Percent of Total Sources	8.12%	91.56%	0.32%	100%

$$X^2=20.22, df=6, p \text{ value}=0.0025$$

Limits of the present study include difficulties with equating sources and frames between Japanese and English, the disruptive influence of a major news event (the 2011 Tohoku earthquake and nuclear disaster) that may have reduced or eclipsed coverage of Taiji, and the presence of many domestic (Kyodo) articles that mention Taiji only in passing. Despite these difficulties, the overall trends discussed above were clearly represented.

8. Discussion

All of the hypotheses were supported by the analysis, strongly suggesting the presence of an emerging global prohibition regime against Taiji's dolphin hunts, based in the English-speaking world outside of Japan. International news coverage portrayed Taiji as a controversial town embroiled in conflict, describing it in moral and cultural terms, and quoting a large number of both Japanese and Western sources. In contrast, coverage by Kyodo was more focused on the town as a political and economic entity, apart from any moral conflict around the local dolphin hunts.

Previous literature strongly supports the notion that existing prohibition regimes, the understanding of which are crucial in our globalized world today, can be identified through content analysis of media coverage. The study demonstrated that it is also possible to use such analysis to detect the birth of regimes. A burgeoning prohibition regime is likely to be marked by a sudden rise in media coverage of the controversy surrounding the targeted activity. As the regime strengthens, international media coverage will pick up its message and rely on its activists and other moral crusaders to tell its story, emphasizing the conflict and moral frames surrounding the activity. This is an early victory for the activists, as they are often presented as sources alongside government officials and other established figures. Indeed, as this study indicates, in the early stages of the global prohibition regime against Taiji, all coverage relied on "official" sources from Japan to balance activists backing the regime.

In addition, as the town of Taiji largely did not exist in international news coverage except as a battleground around the dolphin hunts, it became synonymous with the hunts in the international sources, another victory for the activists. During the time frame examined for this study, Taiji was constantly referred to in the English-language articles by descriptions such as “Dolphin Hunt Town” or “Dolphin-hunting village.”

Nadelmann’s model predicts that a growing global prohibition regime will spread from activists and crusaders to Western government officials and multinational organizations. This “jump” to legitimacy is an avenue for future research. While outside of the time scale of this study, in the case of Taiji’s dolphin hunts, three years after *The Cove* the prohibition regime was being promulgated by the United States ambassador to Japan, who had the full support of the United States State Department. A local aquarium run by the town lost a lawsuit filed by an activist group, and under pressure from the growing prohibition regime, the major international body for zoos and aquariums banned the use of dolphins captured from the hunts, a major economic blow for local fishermen in Taiji.

A surprising finding of the study, which was not part of the anticipated frames and sources, was the tendency of the Kyodo articles to frame articles about Taiji’s hunts in the form of reactions against pressure imposed by the Western global prohibition regime. Local fishermen and government officials were often portrayed as defiant in the face of Western criticism. As the anti-dolphin-hunting regime gained strength outside of Japan, a counter-movement against the

regime seemed to gained strength within Japan. This is also an interesting avenue for future research.

While the present study focused on the small fishing village of Taiji, detecting the emergence of global prohibition regimes, and the communities that oppose them, is crucial in modern society. Global prohibition regimes promulgated by the international media have targeted everything from religious beliefs to food culture, triggering resentment and even militant responses in targeted communities.

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