

Spraying Paint on Stonehenge: The Framing of Climate Change Protest by the Leading Anglophone Media

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Abstract: Anglophone mass media frequently cover climate change protest actions associated with damage to famous artifacts and heritage sites. The present article introduces a qualitative study whose purpose is to shed light on how the leading Anglophone mass media frame an incident of spraying paint on Stonehenge, a UNESCO-protected World Heritage Site in the United Kingdom (the UK), by two members of the environmental group Just Stop Oil. The study involved a corpus of news coverages of the incident by the leading Anglophone mass media. The corpus was analyzed using a qualitative framing methodology. The results of the framing analysis revealed that the incident of spraying paint on Stonehenge was communicated via several qualitatively different types of frames (e.g., *A Disgraceful Act of Vandalism*). The article further discusses the findings through the prism of an ecolinguistic approach to the media framing of contemporaneous climate change protest actions. The study's conclusions indicate that climate change protest actions nowadays are increasingly related to culturally significant artifacts and, particularly, UNESCO-protected World Heritage Sites.

Keywords: climate change discourse; climate change protest; ecolinguistics; framing; Just Stop Oil; mass media; Stonehenge

Introduction

The issue of climate change is a global problem covered quite regularly by mass media (Painter et al., 2024). In media and communication studies, there seems to be a consensus that the issue of climate change is reflective of an intricate and complex communicative relationship among several actors, for instance, (i) mass media, (ii) politicians, (iii) scientists, and (iv) the general public (Boykoff & Boykoff, 2007). Given the complexity of climate change communication, mass media are paramount in facilitating the general public's understanding of climate change (Nisbet, 2009). Typically, mass media communicate the issue of climate change via specific frames that are employed to highlight one or several aspects of climate change-related news (Kapranov, 2023; Mocatta et al., 2023; Wang & Huan, 2024). The framing of climate change by mass media is considered a potent means of communicating climate change mitigation, climate change policies and strategies, as well as climate change-related protest movements (Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2017; Gjerstad & Fløttum, 2017; Kapranov, 2017a, 2017b).

A relatively recent example of climate change-related protest is represented by the incident of spraying paint on Stonehenge, which is considered one of the culturally and historically significant heritage sites in the United Kingdom (the UK) and, generally, in the Anglophone world (Hutton, 2013). Specifically, on June 19, 2024, an environmental group Just Stop Oil performed an act of climate change protest by spraying orange paint on Stonehenge. In this regard, it should be explained that Just Stop Oil is a British climate change protest group whose members resort to civil resistance, traffic obstruction, and vandalism to convince the British government to end using fossil fuel licensing and production (Gayle, 2022). Just Stop Oil, however, defines itself as "a nonviolent civil resistance group in the UK" (Just Stop Oil, n.d.), which wants the British government to ban the use and extraction of oil, gas, and coal by 2030. In line with its climate change-related agenda, Just Stop Oil sprayed paint on Stonehenge to attract the general public's

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attention to stopping fossil fuel extraction and burning. The incident was covered by the leading Anglophone mass media (for instance, ABC, BBC, etc.), which promptly communicated it either on the same day or a couple of days afterward.

While the media amply elucidated the incident, it has yet to be researched in the scientific domains of media and communication and discourse studies. In this respect, it seems relevant to shed light on the way the incident is presented to the public by the media, given that its framing can be conceived of as a potent storyline (Dewulf, 2013), which may (i) guide the public perception of the incident and (ii) provide implications to climate change communication associated with heritage sites, inclusive of UNESCO-protected World Heritage Sites. Considering the deliberations above, the article presents a qualitative study to elucidate how the leading Anglophone mass media framed the incident.

The importance of the present study rests on the fact that Stonehenge is a UNESCO-protected World Heritage Site, which, as outlined above, has been used as a focus of the climate change-related protest incident by Just Stop Oil. Hopefully, the study will help to account for similar climate change-related acts of protest that involve World Heritage Sites and world-renowned artifacts, such as the incidents of throwing soup and other types of food by climate change activists at several famous paintings that are on display in well-known British museums (Kapranov, 2023). Hence, the relevance of the present research investigation in the context of heritage studies and heritage site management involves a contention that Stonehenge, as well as other UNESCO-protected World Heritage Sites in the UK, should be considered by their management bodies as symbolic objects that, potentially, may serve as “the material targets that concretize and express power relations” (Abrams & Gardner, 2023, p. 79). In this light, heritage site management should be made aware of the role shift by heritage sites, which, for example, may be instantiated by moving from the role of a purely passive object, or rather, a passive target of climate change-related protest to that of “a material and symbolic collaborator in acts of resistance” (Abrams & Gardner, 2023, p. 103).

Seeking to provide a deeper understanding of the incident of spraying paint on Stonehenge and how the media framed it, the study employs an approach to framing proposed by Entman (1991, 1993, 2004, 2007, 2010). In particular, Entman (1993, p. 51) argues that framing unpacks the power of news coverage communicated by the media. Specifically, Entman (1993, p. 51) indicates that framing illuminates how news coverage influences media consumers’ consciousness and impacts their actions, attitudes, perceptions, and views (Chau et al., 2022). Furthermore, Entman (1993, p. 52) defines framing as

selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.

Taking Entman’s (1993) view of framing as the point of departure and considering the paramount role of mass media in the framing of climate change-related protest movements, the study aims to address the following research question (RQ):

RQ: *How do the leading Anglophone mass media frame the incident of spraying paint on Stonehenge by Just Stop Oil, and how is the framing related to the media’s political leanings?*

Guided by the RQ, the article proceeds as follows. First, a literature review is provided. The review involves a summary of the prior studies on the framing of climate change protests by Anglophone mass media. Thereafter, an outline of the literature on ecolinguistics in mass media discourse on climate change is presented. Following that, the present study is introduced in conjunction with its research methodology and the

corpus, as well as the results and their discussion. After that, a summary of the significant findings and their implications are given. Finally, the study's limitations and suggestions for future research directions are indicated.

The framing of climate change protest by the Anglophone mass media: A literature review

Framing is amply used in elucidating the issue of climate change and other climate change-related topics, such as, for instance, environmental sustainability, climate change activism, and climate change protest groups (Della Porta & Parks, 2014; Dreher & Voyer, 2015; Hayes & O'Neill, 2021; Haluza-DeLay & Carter, 2014; Kapranov, 2023; Muncie, 2020; Nicholson & Chong, 2011; O'Neill, 2013; Stoddart et al., 2016). Further in this section, I briefly review the recent literature on framing climate change-related protests by the Anglophone mass media.

The literature indicates that climate change protests in American, Australian, and British newspapers are framed through cultural politics and country-specific conditions, respectively (O'Neill, 2013). For instance, one of the aspects of British cultural politics concerning climate protest is framed as the media savviness of the climate camp in the UK (Della Porta & Parks, 2014). As far as the country-specific conditions are concerned, the literature posits that in Canada, for instance, they are manifested by the frame of *Civil Society*, which focuses on a range of activities by nongovernmental organizations, such as environmental campaigns and protests (Stoddart et al., 2016). It follows from the literature that the frame of *Climate Justice* represents another country-specific aspect of the framing of climate protest by the media (Dreher & Voyer, 2015). The frame of *Climate Justice*, as shown by the literature, is closely followed by the media frames that regard climate change activism and climate protest via Greta Thunberg's movement Fridays For Future (Kapranov, 2022).

It should be noted that Fridays For Future is an international youth movement whose participants, typically secondary school students, demonstrate on Fridays to demand action from politicians on the issue of climate change (Parth et al., 2020; Svensson & Wahlström, 2023). In this regard, Hayes and O'Neill (2021) have discovered that mass media in the UK frame Fridays For Future by using a positive pragma-discursive tonality. Furthermore, Hayes and O'Neill (2021) contend that the media framing of the climate protest paradigm has shifted from the focus on protest per se to the framing of climate change as an issue of climate justice and equality. In a similar vein, the framing of radical climate movements in the UK is characterized by environmental and social frames that exhibit a nexus between people's concerns over climate change and social justice (Schlembach, 2011).

Notably, Nicholson and Chong (2011) share a similar observation concerning the coalescence above of climate change-related, environmental, and social issues, which are framed accordingly. Furthermore, the Anglophone media seem to frame climate change protest as the issue of human rights manifested by *Climate Justice* (Nicholson & Chong, 2011). This observation is evocative of the findings reported by Schmidt and Schäfer (2015), who have established that the framing of climate justice in American media is represented by several types of frames, which are reflective of the emphasis on (i) freedom from state intervention and (ii) long-term and cautious political actions.

Importantly, it should be mentioned that the literature describes numerous instances of the framing of climate change protest in terms of quite antagonistic frames, for example, *Peaceful Protesters* vs. *Dangerous Criminals* (Haluza-DeLay & Carter, 2014; Muncie, 2020). In particular, Muncie (2020) refers to the framing of British climate change activists as conflicting, given that the media in the UK portray them via a range of frames that fluctuate between a stark negative tonality on the one hand and a neutral tonality associated with the democratic right to protest on the other hand. Similarly, Haluza-

DeLay and Carter (2014) point out the framing of climate change protests in Canada via heterogeneous and often conflicting frames. Specifically, Haluza-DeLay and Carter (2014) posit that the framing of climate change protest in Canada is communicated via the frames that involve aboriginal, environmental, religious, and labor-related dimensions. In conjunction with the negative framing of climate change protests as *Dangerous Criminals* (Muncie, 2020), it should be added that similar negative framing is reported in the literature (Kapranov, 2023), which demonstrates that British mass media frame the recent instances of climate change-related protest associated with famous artifacts via the frame *Damage*, which de-emphasizes the issue of climate change per se.

Whereas the literature review focuses on the framing of climate change-related protest in the Anglophone mass media, it should be briefly mentioned that there is a substantial body of studies on the framing of climate protest movements by a variety of non-Anglophone mass media (see, for instance, Matejova, 2023; Von Zabern & Tulloch, 2021). Presumably, a contrastive analysis of the literature on the framing of climate change protests by the Anglophone media and their non-Anglophone counterparts will provide a fruitful arena for future investigations. For now, however, let us remain within the confines of the present literature review, which can be summarised as follows. The framing of climate change protests in the Anglophone mass media outlets reflects the complexity of climate change, which is deeply interconnected with other related topics, ranging from climate justice to the school protest movement Fridays For Future.

An ecolinguistic approach to mass media discourse on climate change: An outline of theoretical considerations

An ecolinguistic approach to mass media discourse on climate change is deemed to be a multifaceted and complex framework that involves a multiplicity of discursive perspectives (Forte, 2020) and encompasses “the interconnections between climate change and the media” (Norton & Hulme, 2019, p. 114). The interconnectedness, among other things, is reflective of a host of ideologies, convictions, and attitudes towards climate change, which, in turn, underlie a wide-stretching spectrum of climate change-related discourses (Dryzek, 2022; Jabeen, 2024; Kapranov, 2018a, 2018b; Norton & Hulme, 2019). Indeed, as noted by Dryzek (2022) in his seminal monograph *The Politics of the Earth: Environmental Discourses*, environmental issues, inclusive of the issue of climate change, and their respective discourses “do not present themselves in well-defined boxes labeled national parks, climate change, biodiversity, rainforest, heavy metal pollution, and the like. Instead, they are interconnected in various ways” (Dryzek, 2022, p. 9). Quite often, it is up to the media how to frame a particular label or environmental box in a sense postulated by Dryzek (2022) so that it gets highlighted and becomes salient (Norton & Hulme, 2019), thus promoting a particular approach to a climate change-related issue (Kapranov, 2015).

One of the ways that facilitates our understanding of how environmental and climate change-related issues are framed by the media is found in a programmatic publication by Norton and Hulme (2019), who, by drawing on Stibbe’s (2015, 2017, 2018) interpretation of ecolinguistics, develop an ecolinguistic approach to the framing of climate change by the media. Norton and Hulme (2019) build their strategy on Stibbe’s (2015) ecolinguistic framework, in which ecolinguistics is defined as an analysis of language that seeks to reveal the narratives from an ecological perspective. More specifically, Stibbe (2015, p. 6) argues that narratives determine people’s quotidian lives since they “bring into play socially shared signs and influence the relationships that humans maintain with humans, other animals, plants, forests, rivers, and the physical environment” (2015, p. 6). Furthermore, Stibbe (2017, 2018) posits several forms of ecolinguistic narratives that, arguably, streamline people’s mental spaces, namely ideology, framing, metaphor, evaluation, identity, conviction, and salience. Stibbe’s (2015, 2017, 2018) ecolinguistic framework is further extended by Norton and Hulme

(2019), whose approach to the media framing of climate change involves the following components:

“Critical Discourse Analysis” (CDA) is based on the assumption that language is an irreducible part of social life (Fairclough, 2003, p. 2); frame theory (Lakoff & Wehling, 2012) where ‘framing’ may be defined as a way of emphasising certain aspects of a complex issue, to appeal to people with differing worldviews (Nisbet & Scheufele, 2009); metaphor theory where comparisons are made between two unrelated things (Müller, 2008); appraisal theory which identifies language used for implying positive and negative connotations (Martin & White, 2005); identity theory where identity impacts on environmental behaviour (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006); fact construction which examines how factual information is described to promote action (Potter, 1996); and theories of erasure which explore those areas of life that are suppressed, excluded or ignored in texts (van Leeuwen, 2008). (Norton & Hulme, 2019, pp. 115-116)

Whilst it is beyond the scope of the present article to delve into details of the ecolinguistic approach formulated by Norton and Hulme (2019), it seems pertinent to outline its significant postulates. In particular, Norton and Hulme (2019) have established that there are four climate change narratives that fairly recently have been in circulation in the UK’s mass media, namely (i) Lukewarmer, (ii) Ecoactivist, (iii) Smart Growth Reformer, and (iv) Ecomodernist. Based upon their respective definitions by Norton and Hulme (2019), these narratives are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1. British mass media’s narratives of climate change

#	Narrative	Explanation
1	Lukewarmer	The narrative indicates that the problem of climate change is inconclusive due to flawed scientific evidence. The narrative involves metaphoric comparisons of climate change scientists and their supporters with religious zealots, evangelists, and fanatics. The narrative presents an optimistic outlook on climate change, which is problematised as a non-priority issue that can be successfully solved by humans.
2	Ecoactivist	The narrative posits that the world’s resources are depleted, and the eco-systems are destroyed. The narrative portrays the current issue of climate change as an imminent catastrophe, which is associated with a host of climate change-related challenges that involve health, security, and the environment. The narrative resorts to the metaphors that compare climate change with wars, battles, fights, and combats.
3	Smart Growth Reformer	The narrative agrees with the Ecoactivist’s position that the impact of humankind on the Earth’s ecosystems should be eased by means of the intelligent use of market mechanisms, such as a low-carbon economy. The narrative points to the necessity of CO2 emission quotas and free market solutions in advancing the low carbon economy. This narrative employs such metaphors as <u>green growth</u> , <u>green technology</u> , and <u>clean energy revolution</u> .
4	Ecomodernist	The narrative argues that humans should rely on technological innovations and modernisation in order to mitigate the negative consequences of climate change. The narrative focuses on poverty reduction and nature conservation. The narrative regards climate change is an opportunity to invest in innovative energy technologies, build societal resilience, and spare nature. The narrative is concomitant with the metaphoric discourse associated with a <u>sparing attitude towards nature</u> .

Source: Norton and Hulme (2019)

Having outlined Norton and Hulme’s (2019) ecolinguistic narratives in the media framing of climate change, let us proceed to the present study, which seeks to identify how the leading Anglophone media frame the incident of spraying paint on Stonehenge by Just Stop Oil.

The present study

As mentioned in the introductory part of the article, spraying paint on Stonehenge is relatively recent and, due to its recency, reasonably unexplored. At the same time, however, the incident of spraying paint on Stonehenge is reminiscent of a series of similar acts of climate change protest that focus on iconic artifacts (Kapranov, 2023). Presumably, the acts of climate change protest that involve artifacts and UNESCO-protected World Heritage Sites, for instance, Stonehenge, form part of a novel strategy of climate change activists' public engagement in the issue of climate change that should be studied in depth. In this light, the present study aims to identify and classify how the leading Anglophone mass media frame the incident of spraying paint on Stonehenge (see the RQ formulated in the introduction). Arguably, a novel aspect that arises from the study involves the interpretation of the to-be-identified frames through the prism of the ecolinguistic approach formulated by Norton and Hulme (2019), which is applied to the framing analysis of the incident as mentioned earlier, in which climate change and ecology meet other domains, namely culture and heritage. Presumably, the discussion of the results through this approach, which is further presented in the article, will reveal whether or not it offers a suitable arena for deliberating the nexus between climate change protest and UNESCO-protected World Heritage Sites.

Following the study aim and the RQ, the corpus of the present investigation was collected. The corpus collection involved a search for the keywords "spraying paint on Stonehenge", "Just Stop Oil", and "climate change protesters spray/sprayed paint on Stonehenge" on the official websites of the leading Anglophone mass media in the UK, USA, Canada, and Australia, namely ABC (Australia), ABC (USA), Associated Press (USA), BBC (the UK), CBC (Canada), CNN (USA), New York Post (USA), Reuters (the UK), Sky News (the UK), The Guardian (the UK), The Independent (the UK), and The Scotsman (the UK). The following considerations determined the choice of the media: (i) the location of a media outlet in one of the countries of the so-called Inner Circle of English, i.e., the countries where English is used as the mother tongue by the majority of the population and (ii) a media outlet's substantial domestic and international audiences following the ratings by Press Gazette's (Press Gazette, 2024). In light of the size of the mass media's audiences, two countries of the Inner Circle of English, namely Ireland and New Zealand, were factored out from the corpus collection. The Internet search resulted in the corpus comprising 13 web-based articles (the total number (N) of words = 6 702; mean words = 515.5, standard deviation = 178.6) published online by the aforementioned Anglophone media outlets. The descriptive statistics of the corpus are summarised in Table 2 below. In addition, Table 2 presents the political leanings of mass media outlets provided by the websites allsides.com, constitutionus.com, and pewresearch.org.

Table 2. The corpus of the study

#	Media and their political leanings	Title	Date	N words
1	ABC (Australia); Center-left leaning	Climate Protesters Spray Stonehenge with Orange Powder Paint before Summer Solstice Celebrations	19.06.2024	493
2	ABC (USA); Center-right leaning	Environmental Protesters Spray "Orange Powder Paint" on Britain's Stonehenge	19.06.2024	456
3	Associated Press (USA); Center-leaning	Climate Protesters Arrested over Spraying Orange Paint on Stonehenge Monument	19.06.2024	190
4	BBC (the UK); Center-leaning	Stonehenge Covered in Powder Paint by Just Stop Oil	19.06.2024	640
5	BBC (the UK); Center-leaning	Orange Powder Paint Sprayed on Stonehenge is Removed	20.06.2024	471
6	CBC (Canada); Center-left leaning	Stonehenge Sprayed with Paint by Environmental Protesters	19.06.2024	397
7	CNN (USA);	Stonehenge Orange Powder Paint	20.06.2024	655

	Left-leaning	Removed after Just Stop Oil Protest		
8	New York Post (USA); Right-leaning	Environmental Activists 'Just Stop Oil' Spray Paint on Stonehenge as Good Samaritan Tries to Stop Them in Wild Video	19.04.2024	408
9	Reuters (the UK); Center-leaning	Britain's Stonehenge Sprayed with Paint by Environmental Protesters	20.06.2024	396
10	Sky News (the UK); Right-leaning	Third Person Arrested after Stonehenge Sprayed with Orange Paint Powder	29.06.2024	315
11	The Guardian (the UK); Center-left leaning	Stonehenge Sprayed with Orange Powder Paint by Just Stop Oil Activists	19.06.2024	688
12	The Independent (the UK); Center-left leaning	Prime Minister Slams Spray Paint Incident at Stonehenge as 'Disgraceful Act'	19.06.2024	801
13	The Scotsman (the UK); Right-leaning	9 Pictures of Stonehenge as Just Stop Oil Protesters Spray Paint in 'Disgusting' Act before Summer Solstice	19.06.2024	792

Regarding methodology, the corpus was examined using the framing approach, as postulated by Entman (1993). To reiterate, framing in the study was regarded as selecting an aspect of reality to foreground it and make it more salient in news coverage (Entman et al., 2009). Thus, a desirable problem definition was promoted in conjunction with its causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and possible solution (Entman, 1993).

Grounded in Entman's (1993) framing methodology, the identification of frames in the study involved the following steps. First, each piece of news in the corpus was read multiple times to determine the recurrent themes, words, and phrases associated with the incident (see Kapranov, 2016). Second, each piece of news in the corpus was examined for an explicitly and implicitly mentioned cause of the incident, a moral interpretation, and a possible solution associated with the incident. Third, each piece of news in the corpus was analyzed in the computer program AntConc (Anthony, 2022) to determine the frequently occurring linguistic elements, which facilitated the manual reading of the corpus to arrive at the labeling of the frames (see Kapranov, 2018c). Fourth, each news item in the corpus was manually investigated for multimodality, represented by pictures, videos, hashtags, and hyperlinks. Based upon the prior studies (Kapranov, 2023; Wozniak et al., 2015), multimodality was deemed to be one of the critical elements in determining the identification of the frames. Following Dancygier (2023), Kapranov (2018c, 2023), and O'Halloran (2011), the identification of frames factored in the following considerations: (i) multimodal and, first of all, visual (e.g., photos) elements were assumed to contribute to the clarification of the media news context through featuring evocative elements that connected textual and semiotic dimensions in the frame (O'Halloran, 2011), for instance, a zoomed-in image of the Just Stop Oil protesters being arrested by the police; (ii) visual elements were analyzed in conjunction with such multimodal phenomena, as hashtags and hyperlinks that were conceived of as blends, which visually, as well as textually, facilitated the foregrounding of certain parts of the intended message in a frame (Dancygier, 2023); and (iii) the visual evocation of the "text-plus-multimodality" blends was presumed to expedite the contextual fine-grained underpinnings of the frame.

It should be emphasized that the frame identification process was data-driven and not predetermined or guided by the frames discovered in the prior studies. Another critical remark should be made concerning the limitations of the present qualitative framing analysis. Given the qualitative nature of the investigation, the study did not address the frequency of the occurrence of specific frames and intentionally left out the statistical analysis for future studies. Future research could elucidate a quantitative dimension of framing the incident of spraying paint on Stonehenge. The results of the qualitative framing analysis are further presented and discussed below.

Results and discussion

The qualitative examination of the corpus yielded seven types of frames, summarised in Table 3, which indicates that the mass media outlets employ the respective frames in their coverage of the incident of spraying paint on Stonehenge by the members of Just Stop Oil.

Table 3. The types of frames used by the leading Anglophone mass media in their framing of spraying Stonehenge with paint

#	Types of Frames	Media
1	<i>A Disgraceful Act of Vandalism</i>	ABC (Australia), ABC (USA), Associated Press (USA), BBC (the UK), CBC (Canada), New York Post (USA), Reuters (the UK), The Guardian (the UK), The Independent (the UK), The Scotsman (the UK)
2	<i>An Ancient Iconic Monument</i>	ABC (Australia), ABC (USA), Associated Press (USA), BBC (the UK), CBC (Canada), CNN (USA), New York Post (USA), Reuters (the UK), Sky News (the UK), The Independent (the UK), The Scotsman (the UK)
3	<i>A Ruined Day for Tourists</i>	The Guardian (the UK)
4	<i>Arrest</i>	ABC (Australia), Associated Press (USA), BBC (the UK), CBC (Canada), CNN (USA), Sky News (the UK), Reuters (the UK), The Guardian (the UK), The Scotsman (the UK)
5	<i>Climate Change Protest</i>	ABC (Australia), BBC (the UK), CNN (USA), Reuters (the UK), Sky News (the UK), The Guardian (the UK), The Scotsman (the UK)
6	<i>Damage</i>	ABC (USA), BBC (the UK), CNN (USA), New York Post (USA), Reuters (the UK), Sky News (the UK)
7	<i>Protesters Confronted at Stonehenge</i>	BBC (the UK), Sky News (the UK), The Independent (the UK), The Guardian (the UK), The Scotsman (the UK)

Further, the findings are discussed through the theoretical lens of the ecolinguistic approach to mass media framing climate change formulated by Norton and Hulme (2019). Judging from the data, the leading Anglophone mass media in the UK, USA, Canada, and Australia cover the incident of spraying paint on Stonehenge via the frames that intersect with Norton and Hulme's (2019) Ecoactivist and Lukewarmer narratives, which are discussed below.

First, let us analyze the frames in Table 3 from the vantage point of the Lukewarmer narrative in the sense postulated by Norton and Hulme (2019). In this regard, it seems pertinent to reiterate that the Lukewarmer narrative is characterized by the framing that foregrounds the idea that climate change supporters are fanatics (Norton & Hulme, 2019, p.118). Whilst the frames in Table 3 do not share the aspect of the Lukewarmer narrative that cast doubt on the realness of climate change, the Lukewarmer narrative as an umbrella construal fits the frames *A Disgraceful Act of Vandalism*, *Arrest*, *Damage*, and *Protesters Confronted at Stonehenge* in its pragma-discursive tonality that alludes to the extreme nature of climate protest by the members of Just Stop Oil, whose actions verge on climate extremism and, metaphorically, on climate zealotism. In particular, the foci of extremism and zealotism come to the fore in the frame of *A Disgraceful Act of Vandalism*, which is found in the majority of coverages by the leading Anglophone mass media, for instance, ABC (Australia), ABC (USA), Associated Press, BBC, CBC, New York Post, Reuters, The Guardian, The Independent, and The Scotsman. Presumably, the frame *A Disgraceful Act of Vandalism* represents the most vital moral focus that is evocative of Norton and Hulme's (2019) Lukewarmer narrative with its view of climate change supporters as fanatics and vandals, as evident from the passage taken from The Independent: "The prime minister has described the spraying of orange paint on Stonehenge by Just Stop Oil activists as "a disgraceful act of vandalism" (Hayhurst, 2024).

Similarly to *A Disgraceful Act of Vandalism*, the negative tonality is evident in the frame of *Arrest*, which also intersects with the Lukewarmer narrative (Norton & Hulme, 2019), given that it foregrounds the fact that the extreme act of climate change protest begets legal punishment, as seen in excerpt (1), which is taken from the coverage by ABC (USA):

(1) *British environmental activist Just Stop Oil posted a video of the incident on the social media platform X, showing two of its supporters spraying three stones within the prehistoric megalithic structure on Salisbury Plain in southern England's Wiltshire county. According to the group, both people were subsequently arrested, which also posted video of police taking the two campaigners into custody. Wiltshire Police confirmed in a statement Wednesday that its officers responded to the scene at Stonehenge and "arrested two people on suspicion of damaging the ancient monument."* (Winsor, 2024)

Notably, the major Anglophone mass media outlets from the UK, USA, Canada, and Australia (for instance, ABC, Associated Press, BBC, CBC, CNN, Sky News, Reuters, The Guardian, and The Scotsman) employ the frame *Arrest* to communicate the incident to their audiences (see excerpt 1). The frame of *Arrest* is evocative of the literature (Kapranov, 2023; Muncie, 2020), which reveals that the media may frame climate change protests via a somewhat similar frame of *Dangerous Criminals*. Furthermore, the frame of *Arrest* has been previously identified in the literature (Kapranov, 2023), which investigates how the British mass media frame climate change-related protest associated with throwing food at the famous artifacts exhibited in world-renowned museums in the UK. Additionally, it should be noted that the frames *Arrest* and *A Disgraceful Act of Vandalism* are reminiscent of the prior studies by Haluza-DeLay and Carter (2014) and Muncie (2020), who indicate that the Anglophone mainstream mass media do not frame the acts of climate change protest in a favorable light, except Thunberg's Friday For Future movement.

However, the present findings are in contrast to the literature (Della Porta & Parks, 2014; Dreher & Voyer, 2015; Hayes & O'Neill, 2021; Nicholson & Chong, 2011; O'Neill, 2013), which demonstrates that the media execute the framing of climate change protest as the frame *Climate Justice*, in which justice is seen as equality and fairness. On the contrary, the present corpus does not contain any allusions or direct references to the framing of climate change protest acts via *Climate Justice* in the sense of moral fairness and equality. Arguably, the absence of *Climate Justice* contributes to the negative pragma-discursive tonality of the framing of the incident.

Whilst excerpt (1) indicates that the police arrested the members of Just Stop Oil, the British mass media outlets, specifically BBC, Sky News, The Independent, The Guardian, and The Scotsman, communicate the incident via the frame *Protesters Confronted at Stonehenge*, which emphasizes that the general public tried to prevent the incident from happening. For instance, The Scotsman asserts that "Protesters are confronted following the demonstration at Stonehenge. Members of the public were heard shouting "no" and running to intervene" (Miller, 2024). The frame *Protesters Confronted at Stonehenge* can be interpreted within the context of the Lukewarmer narrative (Norton & Hulme, 2019), given that the protesters are portrayed rather negatively as extremists or, at least, as perpetrators. In contrast to the negative tonality ascribed to the climate change protesters, the members of the public who tried to hinder the act of climate change protest are framed rather positively. In a similar vein, the dichotomy "extremist climate change protesters vs. the public at large" is evident from the frame *A Ruined Day for Tourists* by The Guardian (the UK), as seen in excerpt (2) below:

(2) *Paul Anderson, visiting the stones from Newcastle upon Tyne, said: "We were around the other side, and we saw a lot of orange mist. I can't see how that's good publicity, doing something like that to an ancient monument." His wife, Elaine Anderson, said: "It's ruined the day, but not the holiday. I'm not going to let them. How dare you? It's the last thing you'd expect." Mike and Julie, who did not wish to give their surnames and had come from the US West Coast to visit Stonehenge, said it was a shame the path around the stones was closed after the incident. Mike said: "They*

are ruining it for people who have come from across the world to have their moment and see it.” (Morris, 2024)

In (2), the members of the public are framed by The Guardian through a compassionate lens, which portrays them as victims of the extreme act of climate protest that compromised their holidaymaking experiences. Interestingly, the frame *A Ruined Day for Tourists* is present exclusively in The Guardian's coverage of the incident (see Table 3). Arguably, the presence of this frame could be accounted for by The Guardian's center-left alignment.

Just like *A Ruined Day for Tourists*, the frame *Damage* presents the climate change protesters bleakly. *Damage* echoes the frame *A Disgraceful Act of Vandalism* to an extent since both seem to condemn the incident. Specifically, the frame *Damage* is suggestive of justice as a lawful activity or punishment for the vandalization of the ancient monument, as indicated by BBC: “They had been arrested on suspicion of criminal damage, damaging an ancient monument and deterring a person from engaging in a lawful activity” (Boobyer, 2024). We may contend that *Damage*, as well as the frames *A Disgraceful Act of Vandalism*, *A Ruined Day for Tourists*, *Arrest*, and *Protesters Confronted at Stonehenge*, share a typical negative tonality vis-à-vis the members of Just Stop Oil, whose act of climate change protest is framed by the media along the lines of the Lukewarmer narrative (Norton & Hulme, 2019). To reiterate the point, the framing of the Stonehenge incident by the leading Anglophone mass media, in particular, the frames *A Disgraceful Act of Vandalism*, *A Ruined Day for Tourists*, *Arrest*, *Damage*, and *Protesters Confronted at Stonehenge*, seems to fit into the mold of the Lukewarmer narrative (Norton & Hulme, 2019) due to the portrayal of the climate change activists in a negative light as extremists and zealots. The negative portrayal, however, does not entail the mass media's doubts concerning the realness of climate change. In this regard, the corpus analysis has not yielded any instances of climate denialism in framing the incident by the major Anglophone mass media. Hence, we may argue, so far, that the frames *A Disgraceful Act of Vandalism*, *A Ruined Day for Tourists*, *Arrest*, *Damage*, and *Protesters Confronted at Stonehenge* relate to the Lukewarmer narrative (Norton & Hulme, 2019) in a fragmentary way.

Unlike the frames *A Disgraceful Act of Vandalism*, *A Ruined Day for Tourists*, *Arrest*, *Damage*, and *Protesters Confronted at Stonehenge*, which partially fit into the mold of the Lukewarmer narrative (Norton & Hulme, 2019), the frame *Climate Change Protest* by ABC, BBC, CNN, Reuters, Sky News, The Guardian, and The Scotsman appears to echo Norton and Hulme's (2019) Ecoactivist narrative. According to Norton and Hulme (2019), this narrative is associated with a catastrophic view of climate change, which typically results in increased health- and environment-related risks. Judging from the corpus analysis, the frame of *Climate Change Protest* fits perfectly into the mold of the Ecoactivist narrative, as emblemized by excerpt (3), which is taken from ABC (Australia):

(3) *The group said the pair were demanding that the incoming UK government commit to working with other governments to end the use of oil, gas and coal by 2030. “Continuing to burn coal, oil, and gas will result in the death of millions,” a Just Stop Oil spokesperson said in a statement. “We have to come together to defend humanity, or we risk everything. That’s why Just Stop Oil is demanding that our next government sign up to a legally binding treaty to phase out fossil fuels by 2030.” (“Climate Protesters Spray Stonehenge with Orange Powder Paint before Summer Solstice Celebrations,” 2024)*

Whilst *Climate Change Protest* corresponds flawlessly to the Ecoactivist narrative, the frame *An Ancient Iconic Monument* cannot be ascribed to the existing four narratives that have been developed by Norton and Hulme (2019). The frame *An Ancient Iconic Monument* should be allocated its superordinate narrative or a category, given that it is

tangent to the issue of climate change, but is not intersecting with it. Indeed, the frame *An Ancient Iconic Monument* is characterized by focusing on an artifact (i.e., Stonehenge) within the context of climate change protest, but the artifact itself is climate change neutral. Notably, the majority of the Anglophone mass media outlets, namely ABC (Australia), ABC (USA), AP, BBC, CBC, CNN, New York Post, Reuters, Sky News, The Independent, and The Scotsman frame Stonehenge as an iconic symbol of Britain, which is also a UNESCO-protected World Heritage Site, as seen in the following quote taken from CNN: “Stonehenge is a World Heritage Site, a Scheduled Ancient Monument and is seen by many as a sacred place” (Danaher & Guy, 2024).

Finally, let us return to the section of the RQ that seeks to establish how the framing of the Stonehenge incident is related to the political leanings of the mass media outlets in the present corpus. It follows from Table 2, in which the political leanings of the mass media are summarised, and from Table 3, in which the findings are presented, that all the center-leaning press, irrespective of their countries of origin, frame the incident as *A Disgraceful Act of Vandalism* and *An Ancient Iconic Monument*. Concurrently with this finding, only the British centre-leaning media, particularly BBC and Reuters, frame the incident as *Arrest*, *Climate Change Protest*, and *Damage*. In this regard, it can be argued that whilst the center-leaning Anglophone media highlight the vandalization of Stonehenge as an ancient heritage site, the center-leaning press in the UK, namely BBC and Reuters, foreground the following two aspects of the climate change-related protest incident, namely (i) the extent of damage to Stonehenge as a heritage site and (ii) the subsequent arrest of Just Stop Oil’s members involved in the act of damaging the heritage site.

The analysis indicates that whereas all the right-leaning mass media in the corpus frame the incident as *An Ancient Iconic Monument*, the right-leaning mass media outlets in the UK, specifically Sky News and The Scotsman, are unanimous in framing the incident via the frames *Arrest*, *Climate Change Protest*, and *Protesters Confronted at Stonehenge*. So far, all the media, both in the political centre and its right segment, represent the incident through the lens of the frame of *An Ancient Iconic Monument*. This finding indicates the importance and, presumably, the significance of Stonehenge as a heritage site to the center- and right-leaning mass media outlets. In addition, we can argue that the right-leaning mass media in the UK converge on their British centre-leaning counterparts that frame the incident as *Arrest*. The convergence of the UK’s center- and right-leaning media on the frame of *Arrest* can arguably signify not only a shared approach to framing the incident that transcends the political divide but also shows a UK-specific take on the incident.

Nearly all the center-left mass media outlets except for CNN seem to converge on the framing of the incident as *A Disgraceful Act of Vandalism*. This framing provides a common stance on the incident exhibited by the center-leaning and center-left-leaning mass media. Furthermore, the majority of the centre-left-leaning mass media, apart from The Guardian in the UK, frame the incident as *An Ancient Iconic Monument*. Following this finding, we may argue that the frame *An Ancient Iconic Monument* unites the leading Anglophone mass media irrespective of their political allegiances in looking at the incident from the vantage point of the World Heritage Site. Given that the frame of *An Ancient Iconic Monument* permeates the framing of the incident, we may reiterate the previously mentioned contention, which argues that in their framing of the incident, the Anglophone media appear to foreground Stonehenge as a famous World Heritage Site concurrently with backgrounding the issue of climate change protest, as well as other problems associated with it.

Conclusions

The article has presented a qualitative framing study on the climate change protest manifested by spraying paint on Stonehenge, an ancient iconic monument in the UK. The framing analysis in the study has established that the significant Anglophone mass media outlets in the UK, USA, Canada, and Australia seem to converge on the negative tonality of framing the incident. Specifically, a negative framing is observed in the frames *A Disgraceful Act of Vandalism*, *A Ruined Day for Tourists*, *Arrest*, *Damage*, and *Protesters Confronted at Stonehenge*. In the frames above, the climate change protesters involved in the incident are framed as extremists. This allows us to subsume these frames under the aegis of Norton and Hulme's (2019) Lukewarmer narrative.

There is no positive and/or laudable framing of the incident by the major Anglophone mass media outlets. These findings support the literature, which posits that climate change protests that involve action and damage to famous artifacts are not framed positively by the mainstream Anglophone mass media. Concurrently, the findings have revealed that the incident was not communicated via *Climate Justice*. This finding contrasts previous studies that report a relatively frequent framing of climate change protest movements in Anglophone countries through a positive prism. Hence, we may state that the present findings suggest the predominantly negative framing of the Stonehenge incident.

Another conclusion that arises from the present findings can be formulated as follows. Whilst most frames in the study intersect, at least incompletely, with the Lukewarmer narrative (Norton & Hulme, 2019), the frame of *Climate Change Protest* fits perfectly into Norton and Hulme's (2019) Ecoactivist narrative. However, the frame *An Ancient Iconic Monument* does not seem to be related to the four ecolinguistic narratives proposed and developed by Norton and Hulme (2019). We may posit that in light of the growing number of climate change protest acts that involve famous artifacts, Norton and Hulme's (2019) classification of ecolinguistic narratives should be extended to accommodate artifacts as the focus of climate activism.

On a practical note, it should be concluded that the present findings associated with framing Stonehenge as the UNESCO-protected World Heritage Site provide insight into how world-renowned artifacts are framed by the leading mass media outlets in conjunction with climate change protest activities. As previously mentioned in the article, the spraying of paint on Stonehenge by climate change activists is not the first and, arguably, not the last incident of its kind, and the way media reacts to these incidents is of practical importance to museums and cultural heritage foundations, which may employ mass media's framing of climate change protest associated with artistic and heritage sites and artifacts in their information policies. Specifically, heritage site managers in the UK may use the findings of the present investigation to liaise with the climate change protest groups to communicate that mainstream media does not see their protest actions favorably. Arguably, effective and timely communication between the heritage site managers and the climate change protest groups in the UK would facilitate better protection of heritage sites without compromising public access to the sites.

Finally, it should be emphasized that the present study is only a first attempt at elucidating how climate change protests that involve iconic artifacts in the UK are framed in the Anglophone mass media. Given its pioneering nature, the study has several quite apparent limitations. The first limitation involves a modest corpus of the study. In future research, the corpus should be extended to involve Anglophone and non-Anglophone mass media outlets. Another limitation consists of the qualitative approach to the corpus. Future studies should remedy this limitation by employing a quantitative methodology to establish the most and the least frequent frames in the corpus. In addition, a possible avenue for future studies could involve a qualitative and/or a quantitative comparison of the Stonehenge incident with other disruptive actions by Just Stop Oil, such as, for instance, traffic blockage as a form of climate change-related

protest. Future studies may also discuss the impact of such actions and media coverage on heritage management in the UK.

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