Everything is NOT awesome

A study on the campaign that ended LEGO’s partnership with Shell

”Alt er IKKE helt utrolig”
Et studie av kampanjen som endte LEGO’s partnerskap med Shell.

Ingrid Kirchoff
Abstract
There is an on-going discussion in public relation scholarship surrounding the implication of critical theory on the study of activists’ utilization of public relations tools. One side believes that the mainstream theoretical models are sufficient for explaining the situation in which conflicts and negotiations between activists and corporations are happening, the other believes that critical theory needs to be applied. The purpose of this thesis is to provide an example that sheds light on this type of situation. It will study the 2014 conflict between Greenpeace and LEGO to see if orthodox theories are applicable, or if not, how and why critical theory should get more attention from public relations scholars.

The aim of the thesis is to solve the conflict through studying a case. To solve the dispute two research questions are aiming to scrutinize the negotiation situation between LEGO and Greenpeace. The questions are asking what images of the Greenpeace campaign was most frequently used by the media, and how these frame LEGO. A method triangulation was applied to answer these questions. First, a quantitative study identified what images that were most frequently used by the media to cover the story. Later a qualitative text analysis in the form of semiotics was used to analyse how these images framed LEGO. The result shows that almost 90% of the images used by mass media was directly illustrating Greenpeace’s campaign. The messages in these images framed LEGO on one hand, as a passive player that would stand by and watch as their business partner polluted both the earth and kids’ imaginations. On the other hand the company was portrayed as an almighty institution that would not take stakeholders wishes and opinions into consideration.

The study serves as an example on the negotiation situation between activists and corporations. The conclusion relates the thesis back to the problem definition. The public relation communication utilized by Greenpeace, and studied in this thesis, is evidence that the scholarship needs broaden the intellectual domain by incorporating activism and critical theory into the academic field.

Key words: Critical theory, public relations, Non-Governmental organisation, power, activism.
Preface

I want to dedicate this preface to my supervisor Elizabeth Van Couvering. Without whom, this thesis would never been finished. Thank you for being so understanding. Thank you for your wise, and sometimes not so wise, words. They will forever cherished.

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Oslo, October 2015
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1 Introduction

Power negotiations. They are happening all around us. It can be a woman that negotiates her position in a man-dominated industry, a car company negotiating with legislators for policies to be made in their favour, or maybe a labour union negotiating with a company’s board to get fair pay for their members. Power negotiations between different segments in society have been an area of focus for many theories in media and communication, but less so in public relations. Public relations have evolved in another direction. As an academic field it has theorised and developed different measures for negotiating positions in in a marked, in a political arena, or generally in society. Small family companies, big transnational corporations, politicians, non-profit organisations, celebrities, activist groups and others use these measures. Public relation strategies and tools are adopted into practise to, for example, win court cases or, to win the hearts of consumers. It is used to gain influence through the negotiation of power positions. The situations in which these negotiations take place are scrutinised in PR theory from a practical perspective. How should a company act publicly? How should they talk and whom should they talk to? What public relations activities and actions achieve the best reputational outcome? And are these actions ethical? Where does the line go?

Different scholars have answered the different questions in different ways. But in later years some academics has doubted that these answers are sufficient enough to understand all sides of a situation where public relations is used as a tool for negotiation. Does public relations theory comprehend the measures used by the labour union? Or has it only theorised about how the board of the company should act and react when under attack? Does it comprehend actions that are made from a different ethical ground that an economical one? Scholars do not agree upon this. Some say the scholarship need to implement a missing critical perspective, some say the existing theories and models are sufficient enough.

In the summer of 2014 Greenpeace initiated a negotiation process with the toy company LEGO. They used public relations tactics to force the LEGO Company to change. Public relations can be used at many levels, in this case it was used by a NGO to influence and thus gain power over a corporation. This conflict is an illustration of a negotiation situation between two different blocks in society. One who is representing the economy, one that is representing civil society. The goal is to study this example to provide an answer to the identified question: does public
relations theory fall short or does it have the means to comprehend all aspects of a situations in which positions of power are mediated?

1.1 Problem definition

There is an on-going dispute between scholars in the field of public relations. Public relations have evolved as an academic field with a practical purpose. The field has developed a number of measures that a company can use to better economical outcomes through strategically communicating with the outside world. Public relations as an academic field have traditionally focused on developing theories that can be used in professional practice (Karlberg 1996). But in later years, some public relations scholars have brought to attention that the scholarship should evolve to become something beyond a series of tools to be applied to a company’s interaction with the public (e.g. Coombs & Holladay, 2007, 2012; Dozier & Lauzen, 2000; Karlberg, 1996; Moffitt, 2011). Some scholars believe that the field has failed to incorporate a critical perspective into the orthodox scholarship while others argue that this perspective is superfluous as the dominant model takes care of power inequalities between corporations, activists and publics (e.g. Grunig, 2001). The critique against the dominant public relations model Excellence theory is based on the argument that the mainstream model is idealistic and not realistic. The theory has its basis in the belief that conflicts are best solved through dialogue, listening, understanding and relationship building (Grunig, 2001). Grunig’s critics argue that even if this type of situation is more efficient and beneficial for solving conflicts, this is not the way in which these negotiations play out in reality (e.g. Dozier & Lauzen, 2000). This dispute reflects a problem within the scholarship of public relations. This thesis will, through a case study, try to solve this problem by identifying if critical theory is necessary for the science of public relations and how it, in that case, could contribute to develop the intellectual domain of the field.

A case study looking at a NGO’s public relations activities helps shed light on how the problem identified above can be solved. This is the motivation for studying Greenpeace’s campaign against LEGO. The case study is an example of a negotiation situation where a NGO utilized public relations tools to gain influence and power over a corporation. To identify how this situation played out, the study is first identifying a theoretical framework, which works as a ground for the empirical study. The study is design specifically around the case and the chosen methods are a reflection of this. This thesis aims to use the case study to answer if the negotiation situation was happening in accordance with Grunig’s (2001) Excellence theory or if critical theory is an actual necessity to be able to understand all sides of a power negotiation.
1.2 Purpose

The overall purpose of this dissertation is to solve the identified conflict within the field of public relations. This will be done through researching a negotiation situation between two different segments in society. The goal is to research how a NGO utilizes public relations strategies to gain power and influence and if this is in accordance with the mainstream theory or not. This research will use Greenpeace’s campaign against LEGO’s partnership with Shell as a case study to detect how visually appealing images, used as PR measures in the negotiation situation, were utilized to achieve influence over the toy company. By doing so this thesis will contribute to public relations research by granting a much needed, and called for, study that addresses power, advocacy and persuasion.

1.3 Research questions

This thesis is divided into two layers in order to address the purpose of the research. The higher level aims to answer the purpose:

1. Are power negotiations happening in accordance with the dominant Excellence theory, or is it necessary to implement critical theory into public relations scholarship?

To be able to answer this a lower level has been added. This level is the actual empirical study in this thesis and it scrutinizes the public relation activities utilized by Greenpeace. The questions are designed from the theoretical framework to fit the specific LEGO-, Greenpeace case. The consequence of this is that the questions focus on images, as images were the campaign element that spread in mainstream media. The importance of images is further explained in the theoretical framework.

2. What images of Greenpeace’s public relations activities related to their “everything is NOT awesome” campaign were picked up and used frequently by mainstream media?

3. How did the images that were most frequently used, frame the toy company LEGO?

The merge of the two levels happens in part “9. Analysis and discussion” and “10. Conclusion and further research”. Those are the parts where the theory will be discussed in relation to the research results. The discussion is examining if Greenpeace’s communication or public relations activities are in accordance with the excellence theory or not. The actual research does not focus on the higher level, and it might seem that it gets lost in the empirical part of the study. This is
done intentionally, so that the empirical study does not become confusing or ends up losing focus.

1.4 Definitions and limitations

**Nomothetic** is “Relating to the study or discovery of general scientific laws.” (Oxford dictionary, 2015) used by Dozier & Lauzen (2000).

**Denotation and connotation** are central concepts in semiotics. They explain different levels of readings of a text. The denotative level is the manifesto content of an image while the connotative level is the cultural associations related to the manifesto content that is visible in the image. The description of the campaign video in part 8.1.5 is on a denotative level while the analysis of what it communicates is on a connotative level.

**Discourse** theory is a field of its own. Critical discourse analysis is linked to linguistics and social theory and it is used to scrutinize texts in the sociocultural context to research, for example, patterns of power (Leitch & Motion, 2005). In this paper this term is used more in a general sense, relating to the public conversation and debate.

**Framing** is a key word in this thesis and therefore it needs to be conceptualized. When someone or something is framed it means that it is represented in a certain way, which brings attention to certain elements to communicate a certain meaning with a text or an image (Hallahan, 2005). This means that the construction of a text can trigger the reader to understand the message of a text in a particular way by focusing on some elements, putting them into context with additional elements, or leaving out other elements related to an issue (Hallahan, 2005). This is related to cognitive processes, which Hallahan (2005) explains by stating that “Framing affects cognitive processing by selectively influencing which sets of experiences the message draws upon and how audiences think about or define a particular topic” (p. 341). In relation to this case study Greepeace framed the issue in a certain way by focusing on specific elements in their public relations communication. The empirical research scrutinizes these elements and their belonging cultural connotations to see how Greepeace framed LEGO in the images picked up by the media.

**Hegemony** is defined by Juliet Roper (2005) as “… domination without physical coercion through the widespread acceptance of particular ideologies and consent to the practices associated with those ideologies” (p. 70).
Global public sphere: There is an on-going discussion on how to conceptualise the global public sphere, its limitations with respect to the digital divide, or if it even exists (e.g. Sparks, 2005). In this thesis, the discussion on global public sphere, international public sphere, or global civil society, is not relevant of several reasons. First, the context in which the campaign takes place is transnational but not worldwide or global in the sense that it does not aim to reach the whole earth population. Greenpeace is targeting publics in Europe, possibly the US, the LEGO group and LEGO stakeholders. Both Greenpeace and LEGO are transnational organisations and because of that it is important to recognize the “global” context. But the discussion related to if this global public sphere is reality or not, is not relevant for this paper, as both organisations communication facilitates a need for the reader to have access to mass media. Not only because the campaign was covered by online newspapers (among others) but also because the main element of their campaign was the video posted on YouTube.

The broader purpose of this thesis is to solve a conflict within PR scholarship by approaching activism from a critical public relations perspective with the aim to identify how NGO’s utilizes public relations strategies to gain power and influence in society. This research area is very broad, studying effectiveness of NGO’s public relations actions is an impossible task for a bachelor thesis. There are to many factors that may be involved. Current events, readers’ interpretations, statements by public figures, and more can influence the possibility for a cause to become a theme in the public discourse. This thesis will instead focus on the “image” element of activists’ public relations communication. Linking media theories on media coverage, framing and signs to critical public relations theories and corporate reputation will contribute to understanding how images produced by activists can affect corporate reputation and thus change its policies and operations.

This paper is focusing of the type of organisation Greenpeace is defined as, and will therefor not go into the discussion of how to conceptualize different activist organisations.

1.5 Disposition

Introduction: Introducing the theme, problem area, purpose and research questions. The thesis gains a direction and a framework.
BACKGROUND: Gives an overview of the case. This includes information on Greenpeace, LEGO, Shell, and the “Everything is NOT awesome” campaign.

FRAMEWORK: Gives an account for the excellence theory and the critical theory discussion in public relations. Presents theory on media coverage, corporate reputation, and semiotics. This part presents the theoretical framework, which the empirical study is based upon, as well as theory relevant for the discussion surrounding the first research question.

METHOD: Motivation for method structure is presented as well as an overview operationalization for both methods. Motivation for choosing quantitative content analysis and qualitative text analysis is presented.

QUANTITATIVE TEXT ANALYSIS- METHOD PART ONE: Population and selection, operationalization of the quantitative research is presented. Discussion surrounding methodical problems, expected generalisation, reliability and validity.

RESULT QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH: SPSS analysis results are scrutinized and the selection for the qualitative study is made.

QUALITATIVE TEXT ANALYSIS- METHOD PART TWO: Operationalization, methodical problems, generalization, validity and reliability are presented. The selection was made through the quantitative research.

RESULT QUALITATIVE RESEARCH: The meanings of the elements are presented in relation to the cultural context.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION: The findings are scrutinized and analysed. What the different elements mean in context to each other and how this frames LEGO. The findings are discussed in relation to the purpose, if the negotiation tools Greenpeace used were in accordance with excellence theory or not.

CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH: The analysis is concluded and the research questions are answered. Suggestions for further research are presented.
2 Background

2.1 Greenpeace

Greenpeace is an international NGO operating over 40 countries through both local and transnational activist groups (Greenpeace, 2014b). Greenpeace international or the official registered entity name “Stichting Greenpeace Council” has its headquarters in Amsterdam. The Stichting coordinates global strategies and monitor the national and regional offices (Greenpeace, 2014b). The organisation is known for using aggressive tactics and methods (Bastasch, 2015) and even stepping outside the law when pushing for their cause (The Denver Post Editorial Board, 2014). One example of this is a stunt Greenpeace pulled off as the Cop 20 talks in Peru started in December 2014. To deliver the message and create awareness around what Greenpeace classifies as an urgent need to take action for the climate (Greenpeace, 2015a) Greenpeace activists painted the message “Time for change, the future is renewable” next to the hummingbird Nazca lines, which is a word heritage site (Collyns, 2014). As a consequence the earlier Peru’s vice-minister for culture Luis Jaime Castillo stated to The Guardian that they seek to persecute the activists for breaking the law by stepping on the protected site. Greenpeace expressed their regrets for the stunt in an apologetic press release two days later. Nevertheless, the case is an illustration of the length in which Greenpeace is willing to go to get their message through to the media. Their intentions with the stunt can paint a picture of the organisation’s overall purpose.

“What happened to the Nazca people on a local scale could happen to mankind on a global scale due to climate change (Greenpeace, 2015a)”.

Climate change and the urgency to “renew the future” are key words, they illustrate what the activist organisation works for. This is reflected in their areas of concern which are categorized in their homepage into climate change, forests, oceans, agriculture, toxic pollution, and nuclear power (Greenpeace, 2014g).

One of their campaigns within the area of “climate change” is “Save the Arctic”. This campaign has focused on how global warming is changing the artic as temperatures are rising and thus increasing the levels of melting sea ice each year (NASA, 2014). One consequence of the retreating sea ice is the new possibility for finding oil, natural gas, and minerals in the deep seas of the arctic zone (Bourne, 2013). This has lead to an oil race between the “superpowers” of the world (Rosenthal, 2012). The campaign Save the Arctic is working towards protecting the arctic by preventing oil companies from drilling and industrial trawlers from fishing in the arctic.
Greenpeace is targeting corporations, which plan to expand their operations into the arctic, through different “save the arctic” campaigns. One of these targeted corporations is the Dutch Royal Shell.

### 2.2 Dutch Royal Shell

Greenpeace and the Shell have history dating back to 1995 when Greenpeace stopped the company from dumping of the offshore oilrig Brent Spar in the North Sea (Tsoukas, 1999). A quick search for “Shell” on the organisations homepage reveals 382 results dating from 6th of June 1995 until 29th of April 2015 (Greenpeace, 2015b). In later years, the dispute between Greenpeace and Shell has escalated because of the oil company’s plans to drill in the arctic region. In their fight against these plans, Greenpeace activists have climbed Shell’s arctic oil rig hanging up banners (Joling, 2015), they have urged president Barack Obama to forbid arctic drilling, and they have asked a Shell partner of 50 years back to end an long standing partnership.

Shell and the toy producer LEGO have had a long-standing cooperation. Their partnership dates back to the 1960 as LEGO have distributed their toys at Shell stations in over 26 countries, they also produced Shell-branded LEGO sets in the 1990s (Vaughan, 2014). The partnership has been of real value for both parts, and the cooperation between shell, LEGO, and Ferrari has been estimated to have a PR value of 116 million dollars (Vaughan, 2014). This long-standing relationship was the target of one of Greenpeace’s later campaigns.

### 2.3 The LEGO Group

The Danish family Kirk Kristiansen founded the LEGO GROUP in 1932. Today their mission is “To inspire and develop the builders of tomorrow”. They strive to help, develop and stimulate children’s imagination and creative expression through play (The LEGO Group, 2015c). LEGO provides children with building bricks in different sizes and shapes. These can be put together in numerous ways to create numerous of different figures. They put children’s creativity first and this is the focus when the toy company communicate their brand. This is mirrored in the fashion in which they have written about themselves on their webpage:

> “The LEGO Group wants to leave a positive impact – be it in respect to the Group’s stakeholders or the wider community. The LEGO Group is committed to caring for the environment and the society that children will inherit, and to inspiring and developing the builders of tomorrow.” (The LEGO Group, 2015c).
As the quote reads, LEGO communicates that they are taking environmental and societal responsibility to “leave a positive impact” for the world that “children will inherit”. The LEGO Group’s homepage even have an own tab dedicated to communicate the group’s responsibility actions. Under this tab there are different topics in which the corporation writes about their responsibility actions and policies. The way in which LEGO aims to operate responsible in their conduct of business can be found under this tab. And just like many other companies in today’s corporate environment (Pérez, 2015), the toy maker has a corporate social responsibility (CSR), or a “Responsible Business Conduct”. This contains 12 corporate policies which are categorized under the five areas “Environmental Policy”, “Health & Safety Policy”, “People & Culture Policy”, “Responsibility and Human Rights Policy”, and “Gender Diversity Policy” (The LEGO group, 2015a). The LEGO Group’s Environmental Policy encompasses guidelines for the corporation’s operations when it comes to products, suppliers, responsibility, and compliance. With regards to these, LEGO states that it will “respect the surrounding environment” in their activities (The LEGO group, 2015a). Specifically they describe that their “[...] long-term objectives are to protect natural resources and reduce climate impacts, with primary focus on energy, materials and waste.” further they explain that they “[...] seek to achieve this through a range of means including stakeholder dialogue, collaboration, procurement and innovation” (The LEGO group, 2015a). This policy was published the 25th of March 2013, hence before Greenpeace launched their campaign against the Danish toy company.

2.4 The case of LEGO

The activities and actions described below are in this thesis defined as Greenpeace’s public relation activities. They are the result of carefully planed tactics to influence LEGO to change. It is of significance to define these activities because this study researches the negotiation situation in which Greenpeace used PR as a tool to gain persuasive power.

2.4.1 “Everything is not awesome”

The 9th of July 2014 almost a million people had clicked on Greenpeace’s new campaign video (Vaughan, 2014). On the day before, Greenpeace had released a video on YouTube aimed at the toy company LEGO. The message was simple, “LEGO: Everything is NOT awesome.” (Greenpeace, 2014d). Located under the video is a short written text, which states that the partnership between LEGO and Shell resulted in polluting childrens’ minds and imagination. This message is also presented in the end of the video “Shell is polluting our Kids’ imaginations”
(1:30), “Tell LEGO to end its partnership with Shell” (1:36), with a belonging link “Sign the petition” (1:16). By the time the campaign was finished the video had 6 million views.

Elena Polisano (2014), an arctic activist for Greenpeace UK, wrote an article for The Guardian describing the “everything is NOT awesome” campaign. In the article she describes how the various elements of the campaign “ended the Lego-Shell partnership”. She starts by explaining how the campaign video went viral and that the creativity behind the production of the short film gained attention and respect from different design and advertising groups. This resulted in increasing mainstream medias’ attention in addition to the existing attention on social media platforms and again this led to the spreading of the campaign. As the campaign extended, more and more people watched the video and got involved, but one actor was missing. The LEGO group itself was not responding to the campaign. Greenpeace used their silence and delivered the campaign petition directly to the corporation’s doors in the UK and in Denmark forcing the company to some kind of action. LEGO answered by turning the blind eye, they rejected the petition by refusing to accept it. This, according to Polisano (2014), added fuel to the fire and even more people got involved on Greenpeace’s side. The campaigners kept pushing on and on the 29th of July they staged a protest outside LEGO headquarters in London (Fran G, 2014). 50 children lead the protest by playing with oversized LEGO bricks creating different arctic animals (Polisano, 2014). Not long after the protest Shell gave out a statement telling that they were planning to start drilling in Alaska. Greenpeace used this turn of events and urged more people to get involved and sign the petition. At the same time as Greenpeace gained more and more support from the public LEGO started to distribute collectibles at gas stations. According to Polisano (2014) this was the turning point that pushed over the number of signatures to one million. Greenpeace further developed the campaign by inviting different creative agencies to come up with ideas. They also made sure LEGO heard about the happening by inviting journalists. The result of this creative process was a mini protest. Different locations around the world and LEGOLAND Windsor became invaded by over 5000 protesting LEGO figures (Polisano, 2014).

2.4.2 “Everything is awesome again”

“We continuously consider many different ways of how to deliver on our promise of bringing creative play to more children. We want to clarify that as things currently stand we will not renew the co-promotion contract with Shell when the present contract ends.
We do not want to be part of Greenpeace’s campaign and we will not comment any further on the campaign. We will continue to deliver creative and inspiring LEGO play experiences to children all over the world.” (Knudstorp, 2014)

The 08th of October 2014, 18:00 o’clock, a response to Greenpeace’s campaign was posted on LEGO’s homepage. The LEGO President and Chief Executive Officer gave the campaigners what they had been pushing for, an end to a 50-year relationship between the toy company LEGO and the oil company Shell (Greenpeace, 2015c). LEGO gave into Greenpeace’s pressure, but nevertheless the press release expresses that LEGO distance itself from the environmental organisation. They do not want anything to do with the NGO nor its campaign. LEGO evidently felt unfairly treated and caught in the middle by Greenpeace’s campaign. Knudstorp (2014) writes:

“The Greenpeace campaign uses the LEGO brand to target Shell. As we have stated before, we firmly believe Greenpeace ought to have a direct conversation with Shell. The LEGO brand, and everyone who enjoys creative play, should never have become part of Greenpeace’s dispute with Shell.” (Knudstorp, 2014)

This statement is a good example on the mainstream public relations theories view of activists’ PR strategy. Dozier & Lauzen (2000) uses another Greenpeace campaign as an example when explaining that PR practitioners working with an issue from the organisational standpoint would view Greenpeace’s tactics as unethical and even immoral. The two scholars also observe how the two types of organisations, NGO’s and corporations, are fundamentally different in their core. The two scholars are not the only ones that have observed this. In a interview with The Guardian, Kumi Naidoo executive director of Greenpeace International, answered the question if businesses and NGOs can ever become partners by saying “I think that the tension between business and NGOs will always be there – because they are driven by fundamentally different starting points” (Confino, 2013).

Conclusively, when taking this “fundamentally difference” into consideration, the case has to be studied from another perspective than from a mainstream theoretical public relations perspective. To be able to understand how a NGO’s utilizes PR strategies to gain power and influence the research needs to move beyond the nomothetic models of PR theory (Dozier & Lauzen, 2000). The next part presents a theoretical framework that brings this fundamental difference into the mix. The framework will work as the theoretical basis for the research conducted. It will serve as a guide for the empirical research as well as for the end analysis and discussion.
3 Framework

Coombs & Holladay (2012) argue that critical theory is moving from being fringe theory towards becoming apart of mainstream public relations research. Fringe theory is defined in their paper as a theoretical direction, which is established, but differs significantly from the orthodox, or mainstream traditions within an academic field and thus exists on the periphery of the area. According to Coombs & Holladay (2012) the key driver in this progression is activism. The statement is based on the argument that the increasing significance that corporate reputation and corporate social responsibilities have for commercial organisations has given activists leverage over corporate managers. This leverage exists in the possibility of exposing corporate “greenwashing”, or “bluewashing”, that is exaggerating, falsifying, or overstating environmental (greenwashing) or socially impacting (bluewashing) corporate social responsibility activities and policies (Coombs & Holladay, 2012). The greater possibility for activist influence facilitates the process of bringing critical PR theory into mainstream academia.

Activists’ leverage opportunities have created “[…] a pressing need for greater understanding of activists, how they use public relations to gain power and their effects on critical corporate assets such as reputation and CSR” (Coombs & Holladay, 2012, p. 885). According to Coombs & Holladay (2012), this change constitutes that activists, in a greater scale, becomes objects of research in PR academia. This study aims to research a case study to clarify a conflict, in which one side, represented here by Coombs & Holladay (2012), believe critical theory is necessary and the other side think it is superfluous. The case study, described above, is chosen because the central factor that the campaign was successful. The campaign can be classified as successful as Greenpeace did make LEGO change. The success serves as evidence for the effectiveness of the PR tactics Greenpeace used in their campaign against LEGO. The success is also supported by the fact that the campaign gathered over one million signatures and that the video had over 6 million views by the time it was finished (Polisano, 2014). By studying the arguably successful campaign “Everything is NOT awesome”, this thesis will contribute to understanding the situation in which PR activities where utilized by activist to gain leverage over a corporation.

In this section a theoretical framework relevant and necessary for studying the phenomena of interest will be presented. First of all it is of significance to conceptualize what activists and activism are and what type of activist organisation a NGO is. The focus will be on the latter since, as explained later, Greenpeace is defined as a non-governmental organisation. Then, the theoretical debate will move on to the discussion of power between critical and mainstream
public relations theories. This will give a nuanced picture of why and how this study is of importance to PR scholarship. The last part will link together one aspect of media theory and to one aspect of PR theory. This part is of great significance to the study as it illustrates the connection between activists’ possibility of exercising power through targeting corporate reputation.

3.1 Activists, activism and NGO’s

Activism is, according to Smith (2005), a process where different people and groups use diverse tools to apply pressure on “organisations, institutions, policies, practices, or conditions” with the intention to make them change (p.6). Activists are people who perform these activism activities and activism activities are the different tools and measures activists use to gain influence (Smith, 2005). These tools can be methods like spreading information, direct confrontation through protests and petitions, or addressing governments to apply stricter regulations to corporate practises (Smith, 2005). This definition is too broad because it describes every group and every person whom preform an activity to influence someone or something (Smith, 2005). Therefore, to understand what separates activists and activism from other groups and actions, it is necessary to describe what differentiates them and their actions from others (Smith & Ferguson, 2001). Activism is defined in the oxford dictionary as “the policy or action of using vigorous campaigning to bring about political and social change” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2015). This definition implies that the goal of activist actions is to change political and social aspects of society. This relates to Smith’s (2005) claim that activism occurs when citizens identify political or social problems and as a result feel motivated to change the situation through action. Activism comes in many forms, it can be global scale, social movement or grassroots activism in a local community (Jong, 2005). Movements are non-institutionalized and informally structured. Stammers & Eschle (2005) defines a social movement as “a network of informal interactions that ties together informal groups and individuals, and some times formal organisations, in struggles for social change on the basis of a shared identity” (Stammers & Eschle, 2005, p. 54). Social movements are thus informal networks of activists that have a shared purpose. The formal organisations, which Stammers & Eschle (2005) talks about here, are, among others, non-governmental organisations. Greenpeace is a formal organisation that is apart of a bigger and informal social movement. The organisations that are apart of a social movement are often, according to Stammers & Eschle (2005), confused for the social movement when in fact, it is only one part of the huge network which a social movement consists of. Greenpeace might bee looked upon as a representative for this movement even if a movement and a non-governmental organisation differs quite a lot. Young, Shaw & Stammers (2005) observes that the term non-
governmental organisation (NGO) is used by different scholars to describe institutionalized and formally structured organisations that perform activism activities. Greenpeace is such an organisation, and since it operates as apart of the global civil society (Lipschutz, 2005) or within the international public sphere (Sparks, 2005), or as apart of a transnational social movement (Stammers & Eschle 2005) it can even be conceptualized as an international non-governmental organisation (INGO) (Young et.al., 2005). Rather than discussing the different terms used to label activist organisations and what those might imply from different scholars perspective, this paper will be using the term non-governmental organisation to describe Greenpeace. The difference between a formal activist organisation and an informal social movement have consequences for the media exposure that the organisation or movement might get (Andrews & Caren, 2010). More on this subject can be read under 3.2.2 Power, media and public relations.

Smith (2005) has observed a connection between increasing activism activities and an increasing number of public relations practitioners. He relates this to the development of the PR field and states that, under periods with higher levels of activist actions, the field has evolved more rapidly than in periods with lower activism activities. His conclusion surrounding these observations is that activism has been one of the catalysts for public relations to emerge as both a professional and an academic field, and thus it has become a field based on how to best manage measures taken by activists to target an organisation or institution. This perception of activism has shaped the “nomothetic” models of public relations. According to Dozier & Lauzen (2000) these models do not have the means to study how NGO’s utilize PR to gain salience because activist organisations are fundamentally different from commercial corporations. Instead they suggest an introduction of critical theory into the field. The next part will scrutinize these two different views on PR in the context of activism, more specifically the NGO.

3.2 Critical theory

The purpose of Coombs & Hollady’s (2012) paper is to explain why critical theory should be gaining more attention from public relations scholars. One of their points is that mainstream theories are not sufficient for explaining all the aspects of PR activities within society. This claim is supported by Dozier and Lauzen (2000), who state that the emergence of organisations whose ambitions are not to make money but instead to change organisations, institutions, policies, practices and conditions facilitates a need for public relations academia to approach the phenomena from a different angle. It is not possible to achieve a deeper understanding of NGO’s public relations strategies by studying the phenomena from the orthodox point of view because it does not consider terms of persuasion, power and advocacy (Coombs & Holladay,
Mainstream public relations theory is focused on how different communication measures can be used to promote and protect corporate image and reputation, reduce cost of conflicts an organisation might find itself in, motivate customers to buy an organisation’s products or services, generate market shares, donations, founding and revenue (Health, 2001). Academics are also interested in looking at what role practitioners play in organisations and society and if their actions are ethical or unethical with regards manipulation and persuasion (Health, 2001). Despite this, Dozier & Lauzen (2000) argue that public relations theory has failed to widen the intellectual domain by not incorporating critical theory onto activism and activist’s use of public relations from the activists’ point of view. Several scholars (e.g. Karlberg, 1996; Dozier & Lauzen, 2000; Coombs & Holladay, 2012) have called attention to the capacity of critical theory to evolve and develop public relation scholarship because it considers terms of power, persuasion, advocacy and activism. It has to be added that question of power relations in society is widely discussed in public relations scholarship. This discussion will be presented in the following section.

3.2.1 Power negotiation

Public relations research has traditionally and commonly been shaped around the conception that it is an instrument for bettering organisations’ commercial outcomes (Karlberg, 1996). From this point of view public relations is an instrument with different communicative abilities to influence stakeholders values and behaviours, to control corporate image, to cultivate markets, and to handle corporate management issues (Karlberg, 1996). In short, public relations works as a measure for increasing the economic value of a corporation, seen from the instrumental perspective (Karlberg, 1996). The Excellence Theory, according to Coombs & Holladay (2012) is the dominant paradigm of mainstream public relations theory. In contrast to the mainstream theory, which looks upon activists’ public relations activities as unethical and asymmetrical, critical theory will help shed light on activist groups’ behaviour (Dozier & Lauzen, 2000). Power is described by Coombs & Holladay (2007) as the state “when others can influence our behaviour [regardless of whether they choose to or not] …” (p. 40). Asymmetrical communication is when a practitioner perform public relations with the aim to persuade publics to behave in favour of the organisation in question, with basis in research done on this targeted group (Grunig, 2001). According to Coombs & Holladay’s (2012) interpretation of the Excellence theory, NGOs asymmetrical communication works as an antithesis to the organisations thesis. The concept, which they call “The Excellence Dialectic”, is based upon the principals of the Hegalian dialectic and the Excellence theory. The Excellence Dialectic states that two-way symmetrical communication, or synthesis, is achieved when corporations consider
activists’ wishes, which they express through two-way asymmetrical communication (Coombs & Holladay, 2012). This excellence dialectic is a process in which the power balance between corporations and NGOs becomes reality, according to Excellence theory. But Coombs & Holladay (2012) bring attention to the fact that this situation is not a given. They quote Holtzhasuen (2007; cited in Coombs & Holladay, 2012) to explain that the Excellence theory fails to consider inequalities between corporations and NGOs when it comes to access to resources. Not only do corporations have the upper hand economically but they also have a huge advantage as they are in a position where they can choose if they are going to act upon the activists’ communication or not (Coombs & Holladay, 2012). To be able to identify when this asymmetrical power relation between corporations and NGO’s occurs, research needs to consider “How […] activists create effective advocacy messages that successfully draw the attention of organizational managers” (Coombs & Holladay, 2012, p. 886). J. E. Grunig (2001), one of the founders of the two-way symmetrical model theory, defends the model against critique regarding question of power in his review of the model:

In my conceptualization, by contrast, symmetrical public relations does not take place in an ideal situation where competing interest come together with goodwill to resolve their differences because they share a goal of social equilibrium and harmony. Rather, it takes place in situations where groups come together to protect and enhance their self-interests. Argumentation, debate and persuasion take place. But dialogue, listening, understanding, and relationship building also occur because they are more effective in resolving conflict that are one-way attempts at compliance gaining (Grunig, 2001, p. 18)

When comparing the critical perspective (2000) together with Grunig’s answer several conclusions can be drawn. First, it seems that the two directions are agreeing upon the situation in which power negotiations take place. Second, even if Grunig (2001) states that “dialogue, listening, and understanding” is beneficial, he does not consider this with respect activist motivation and thus in which way they practice of public relations. As Jong (2005) observed, NGO’s, in her case study: Greenpeace, works with basis in their morality and will not stop for even legal actions taken by the other part, much less the possibility of resolving a conflict with compromises through dialogue. Dozier & Lauzen (2000) states that critical theory does take the “moral and ethical contradictions in public relations practises” into consideration, in contrast to the two-way symmetrical model (p. 19). The final conclusion is thus that the Excellence theory is not as ignorant as its critical scholars claims, but that public relations theory still might need to
widen the intellectual domain and consider activism in terms of critical theory to be able to understand how they use public relation to influence organisations.

The next section will show how activists can gain media attention and thus achieve public support and consequently possible leverage over corporations. This part is crucial as it demonstrates the links between the theories that makes this study relevant.

3.2.2 Power, media and public relations

Media and communication theory, in contrast to public relations scholarship, has a long tradition of critical theories dating back to Western Marxism and the Frankfurt School in the nineteen twenties and thirties (L’Etang, 2004). One area which media and communication scholars have studied, is the structures of the power inequalities between official and unofficial sources, regarding media coverage (Deacon, 2003). Deacon’s (2003) studies found that official sources had a huge advantage when seeking media coverage compared to unofficial like Greenpeace. These inequalities have also been studied by Anderson (2003), but then in relation to public relations, NGOs and corporations. In her reflection on Greenpeace’s Brent Spar campaign she observes that the organisation does not have a frequent access to journalists and consequently mass media as the official sources does, but instead they have to use visual images to get media and thus publics attention. Jong (2005), in her comment to Deacon’s (1996; cited in Jong 2005) earlier work, said that yes, pressure groups such as Greenpeace need “sophisticated media strategies to overcome their structural weakness in the news production process” (p. 113) but she also states that they have a strength in the possibility to take advantage of the press’ search for “visually attractive events”. She argues that one of the main reasons why Greenpeace got media coverage in the Brent Spar case was the visual appeal of the events they invited journalists to be apart of. Another reason was that the campaign matched with the current political discourse represented by the Esbjerg conference where several governments were to meet and discuss the future of the North Sea (Jong, 2005). Gaber & Willson (2005) made some of the same observations in their case study on ActionAid’s campaign “Dying for diamonds”. First they empathises the importance for NGO’s to get access to mainstream media illustrated in this quote:

“Working with the media can help NGOs to intervene in negotiations, influence international conversations, to inspire actions and change policies and practice. Media coverage offers a fast-track means of building public support and leveraging political will” (Gaber & Willson, 2005, p. 100).
They further explain that for NGO’s to be able reach their goals and influence their target they have to interact with mass media agencies. For this interaction to be successful the NGO has to understand what news value their campaign might have and use this to get media coverage. One way to do this is to deliver their message in creative ways and play on current events and themes in the public discourse. They come back to this argument by concluding that media coverage can be achieved through message creativity, extensive knowledge of news value, good timing and some luck. They stress the fact that if a NGO is to achieve influence and gain public support it needs mainstream media coverage. By successfully creating campaign messages and images that journalists find newsworthy, the NGO can strengthen their position by “…[harnessing the power of mainstream media]” (Gaber & Wills, 2005, p. 109). This is also important because activist media, the direct communication from an activist group through their homepage, Facebook page, twitter account, and e-mail newsletters are not enough for getting the public engaged in a cause. But media coverage does not always play out positively for an organisation. Anderson (2003) points out that the amount of coverage does not equal pubic support. She argues that the packaging or the framing of the issue in the news stories has an implication on the end result.

Greenpeace is known for being a sophisticated and experienced mass media communicator (Jong, 2005) and the organisation has a structural advantage over grassroots activist groups and bigger movements as it structural way of operating is comparable to those of transnational corporations (Anderson, 2003). This relates to the research that shows that media coverage is linked to an “organisation’s size, finance, public relations skills, expertise and geographical base” (Anderson, 2003; p. 120). Despite these facts NGOs like Greenpeace have two major setbacks according to Anderson (2003), which makes the inequality between NGOs and corporations reality. First, their structure and finances cannot be compared to the transnational corporation, which have their own PR departments and budgets to invest heavily in promotion and advertisement in favour of their image. Secondly, even if Greenpeace is an experienced mass media communicator, they have bigger difficulties getting favourable framing of the stories in the mass media. Because of these framing issues it is especially important for NGO’s to have a clear and well-formulated message, which is framed in a way that gives it news value. In an interview with Anderson in 1990 Chris Rose, the Campaigns Director at Greenpeace made a reflection over how Greenpeace overcome these elements media exposure inequalities:

“You’ve got to have the pictures, it doesn’t matter what they’re talking about, you’ve got to have the pictures. So that takes Greenpeace straight out of the
Anderson (2003) further explains this. Greenpeace’s strategies are often successful in gaining media attention but in a way that differs from official sources. As Rose expressed in the interview, the organisation is dependent on visually appealing pictures to achieve media coverage. What is important in these images are the ‘signs’ and what they communicate. This relates back to the difficulties an unofficial source has when it comes to shaping the discourse. Visually appealing pictures that communicate the “right” message becomes key to “generate public outcry and are intended to force an issue on to the political agenda” (Anderson, 2003, p. 123).

This section illustrates the opportunities and difficulties NGO’s has when trying to achieve media coverage in their favour. Media coverage is crucial for activists to reach campaign goals as demonstrated by Gaber & Willson (2005). The key element, which is consistent through the arguments presented, are the news value of the visual images together with the framing of the message they communicate. For NGO’s to achieve public support and thus influence, they need not only to get their stories published or recognized in media, but they need to frame the images and communicate signs that is beneficial for their cause (e.g. Anderson, 2003). The phrase taken from Andersons interview with Chris Rose shows that Greenpeace already in the 1990s, used pictures as a tactic to overcome the power inequalities between NGO’s and corporations.

Following part will present the critical theory of semiotics. Semiotics is a theory that is widely used to analyse pictures. As discussed above, visual appealing images are crucial for activists to gain media attention. For the media coverage is to be in favour of the sender, these pictures need to be framed right so that the receiver creates meaning that is beneficial for the NGO’s cause. This is where semiotic theory comes into the picture.

3.2.3 Semiotics
Mary Anne Moffitt (2011) has written an article dedicated to demonstrate how critical theory is applicable on public relations messages. She states, in contradiction to Coombs & Holladay (2012), that critical theory has gotten significant attention from public relations scholars but that “relatively little research exists in exactly how to put message components together in a message to be effective” (p. 34). One of the three critical theory tools she presents for researching campaign messages and media text is semiotics.
“...semiotics provides a set of tools for identifying the signs of any text, or in other words, for finding the cultural meaning of one idem or several words or visuals used together” (Moffitt, 2011, p. 24)

Semiotics identifies the signs that builds up a text, take them apart, give them meaning in a cultural, social and political context and puts the part back together to see what the meaning the signs give to each other (Moffitt, 2011). This process is described by Barthes (1972;1975; 1981; as cited in Moffitt, 2011) through the terms a signified, a signifier and the sign. The signified is the meaning the reader gives to the signifier, which is the concrete image or text, that combined becomes the sign. In semiotics an image is looked upon as a system of these signs, the analysis of these can both give the researcher insight to the intended message and the readers “possible received meanings” (Moffitt, 2011). Semiotics sees the process of readings and giving meanings to signs as products of cultural connotations in the context of society. The theory is used both when creating and analysing campaign messages (Moffitt, 2011).

To be able to understand the meaning of the elements that will be brought forth in by the quantitative study, there is a need for a theoretically based explanation of what meanings these elements contain. These explanations will be presented in the qualititative analysis part. This is because the findings of the first part of the study will identify what image elements were used to cover the LEGO Greenpeace case. Consequently, how and why this theory will be used in this study is explained in the method parts. The next section will present the final link in this theory part. Corporate reputation and its relation to media coverage is a key issue, and this relation will be scrutinized in the next part.

3.3 Corporate reputation

As stated before, activists have gained potential leverage over corporations because of the ever-growing importance corporate reputation and corporate social responsibility for managers (Coombs & Holladay, 2012). This leverage facilitates an opportunity for activist to become more prominent in corporations managerial decision processes (Coombs & Holladay, 2012). Coombs & Holladay (2012) links activists’ leverage to corporate reputation, and the possibility to expose unsatisfying CSR activities through media coverage, when explaining how activists can achieve their goals of changing corporation’s policies and operations. Digging deeper into theories on corporate reputation and its link to media exposure will help to make sense of this reasoning.
Media exposure is “the aggregated news reports relating to a specific company within a prescribed period” (Wartick, 1992, p. 34). Corporate reputation is “the aggregation of a single stakeholders perceptions of how well organizational responses are meeting the demands and expectations of many organizational stakeholders” (Wartick, 1992, p. 34). These definitions were used in Wartick’s study that researched the relation between media coverage and corporate reputation. Stakeholder expectations and how well these are met determine a corporation’s reputation. Media exposure influence stakeholder’s perceptions of the corporate reputation at the same time as it reflects what stakeholder expects (Wartick, 1992). According to Fombrun (2005) corporate social responsibility policies has increasingly become an element that stakeholders expect corporations to implement in their practises. Failing to meet stakeholders expectations of CSR practises “can be a source of reputational risk” (Fombrun, 2005, p. 7). Coombs & Holladay (2012) links this risk to media exposure stating that revealing if a company is not meeting stakeholders expectations towards CSR actions it can lead to reputational damage. According, activists can use this to leverage corporations and thus gain a power position. Wartick’s (1992) study goes deeper into the exposure-reputation relationship. His research aimed to uncover what kind of media exposure that could pose a risk and change corporate reputation. From his analysis of earlier studies he created a row of hypothesis, which he tested out by comparing the amount, tone (negative, positive) and recency of media exposure to the magnitude, direction (negative, positive) and total movement of corporate reputation. The results of the study showed that the tone of the media content had most effect on the direction and total movement of corporate reputation. The recency of the media exposure was correlated with the magnitude of change, the more recent the media exposure was, the larger was the absolute change for the corporate reputation. Wartick’s (1992) hypothesis are good indicators to what the general view on this relationship is in academia. This is because he created the hypothesis from analysing the results of earlier studies on the topic. The problem might have been that they would be out-dated as a field would change after 20 years, but Zhang (2014) in his PhD found evidence through his literature review that more recent studies indicates the same general views.

LEGO’s extensive CSR reporting (see 2.3 The Lego Group) can be an illustration of the company’s stakeholder expectations. Their CSR activities also express that LEGO is aiming to meet these expectations. This is expressed on their homepage as they state “The LEGO Group wants to leave a positive impact – be it in respect to the Group’s stakeholders or the wider community” (The LEGO Group, 2015c).
3.4 Conclusion

When Greenpeace aim to change a corporation’s behaviour, it works towards gaining mainstream medias attention (Anderson, 2013). According to the theory, a NGO can execute power by exposing a corporation’s “bad” activities with respect to corporate social responsibility (Coombs & Holladay, 2012). This becomes a reputation risk for corporations when stakeholders become aware that their expectations are not met (Fombrun, 2005). The struggle for a NGO that aims to change a corporation becomes a question of how to gain mainstream media coverage and how to frame the messages in the content that the media picks up. Section 3.2.2 gives an account of how NGO’s can gain media coverage and thus influential possibilities. Key words here are visually appealing images and what the signs that build these communicate. The next part will present the method in which aims to answer the research question. With the basis in this theoretical framework the method will look at how the images picked up by mainstream media, communicated by Greenpeace, frame the discourse regarding the toy company LEGO.

Activist organisations gain leverage over corporations through public relations activities by creating and composing visually appealing images of these activities. This is because mainstream media will pick up these visually appealing images and use them in their coverage of the case. Through these images, activist organisations get to communicate their messages to a broader audience and thus frame the discourse in their favour.
4 Method

This thesis method section is structured in three parts. This first part presents the methods used for this research. These, quantitative and qualitative text analysis, are initially presented in a general sense explaining the motivations for choosing them. After the explanation of the “corpus” the method section is split it two. First, the quantitative method operationalization and the quantitative method discussion with respect to generalization, validity, reliability, problems are deliberated. After this part, the quantitative results follow and succeeding these results is the qualitative method operationalization and discussion. This is further explained under section ”4.2 Corpus”. The empirical research preformed here answers the second and third research questions. The first question is scrutinized in context to the results in the analysis and discussion where the empirical research works as footing for the discussion if critical theory should be implemented in public relations or not.

4.1 Method for data collection

The methods aim to answer the lower level research questions. To be able to do this several sub questions have been developed. These are answered through a method triangulation of quantitative and qualitative text analysis. The analysis happens in two layers, first a quantitative text analysis that tells which images the press used to cover the story. Later, the qualitative text analysis is applied to analyse the findings of the qualitative results. This will show how the messages communicated through those pictures frame LEGO.

4. What images of Greenpeace’s public relations activities related to their “everything is NOT awesome” campaign were picked up and used frequently by mainstream media?
   a. What types of images did the media frequently pick up?
   b. What image elements did the media frequently pick up?
   c. What elements were frequently used together?

5. How does the images that were most frequently used, frame the toy company LEGO?
   o What are the meanings of the elements?
   o What are the meanings of the elements in context with each other?
   o How do these meanings frame the LEGO discourse?
The term “elements” used here, equals the term “signs” which is used in semiotic theory.

4.1.1 Quantitative text analysis
Quantitative text analysis is used to find connections between variables in a text and show these casual relationships are related to reality (Østbye, Knapskog, Helland & Larsen, 2003). This is in contrast to qualitative text analysis, which is applied when analysing messages and meanings in smaller text amounts. Therefore, for this study to be able to analyse the messages in the images that were picked up by the media, the research initially needs to identify what images were most frequently used. The quantitative research design will thus work as the selection for the qualitative analysis. Quantitative research is used to analyse large quantities of texts. The quantitative methods have the means to measures variables in numbers for so to analyse the patterns between two (bivariate) or several (multivariate) variables (Østbye et.al., 2003). This way it is possible to draw conclusion regarding which types of images that were most frequently used, what elements in the images that were most frequently used and what elements was most frequently used together. To be able to do this, the elements in the images have to be defined, selected, and converted into countable variables. This is elaborated in later sections. The goal with the quantitative part of this study is to identify the images that are most frequently used, in order to be able to identify what images and what parts of the images that is furthermore used by mainstream media, for so to analyse these qualitatively. By selecting the images this way, the qualitative research gain a higher quality as it analyses the images that were actually used to illustrate the conflict.

4.1.2 Qualitative text analysis
Qualitative text analysis will contribute to understanding the messages Greenpeace communicated through the visual images and how these frame LEGO. After identifying the most attractive elements through the quantitative study, the qualitative study will bring understanding to what these elements communicate. Qualitative text analysis is based on the belief that the reader gives meaning to a text’s content through personal reference frames (Ledin & Moberg, 2010). The meaning created by the reader is a product of how the object in the text is represented by the words and signs that the text is constructed with (Ledin & Moberg, 2010). The term text is used here in an expanded sense, which means that it includes not only written words but also images and sound. Semiotic and discourse text analysis is the most applicable method to answer the research question because it sheds light on how a message can be interpreted by an audience with basis in social, political and cultural meanings within a historical context (Fogde, 2010). An interpretation or creation of a text always happens within a context
from a certain perspective. These elements have to be taken into consideration for the study to be able to draw conclusions on how Greenpeace’s campaign images framed and communicated LEGO’s brand. There are several qualitative tools that can be used to analyse a text. Rhetoric’s is one of these. The rhetorical analysis aims to explain how the author of a text tries to convince the reader of the cause advocated through the text (Vigso, 2010). This qualitative analysis would be applicable to if the study aimed to scrutinize how Greenpeace tried to convince a certain audience to engage in their campaign. However this study focuses on what visual elements the media picked up and how these are frames the brand LEGO.

4.2 Corpus
The material is images gathered from mass media texts. They have been collected through the online media-monitoring site “Retriever” (n.d). Retriever is a member of the International Association for Measurement and Evaluation of Communication and it is the leading newsgathering research tool in the Nordic region. Retriever is also recommended through a link on Karlstad’s University library page. It contains printed newspapers, magazines, TV, radio and Internet news stories from 45 different countries, but the greater part of these sources comes from the web. These media texts are analysed quantitatively and the result of this analysis will become the corpus for the qualitative analysis.

Since the result of the quantitative analysis is used for the qualitative analysis the remaining part of this method section will be separated in two. First the quantitative study is operationalized. The result of the conducted research is presented thereafter. The quantitative findings serve as the selection for the qualitative study and of this reason the results from the quantitative results are presented before the remaining part of the qualitative method section. This structure is unorthodox, but it is the best way to structure this specific research since the results of the qualitative analysis works as the selection for the qualitative and thus the qualitative method part will be easier to understand. The reader needs to get an understanding of the quantitative results, because they have a big impact on the qualitative method.
5 Method: Quantitative text analysis

5.1.1 Population and selection

The population consists of all text communicated through the mass media that speaks of Greenpeace’s “Everything is not awesome” campaign. But, as presented in this section, certain limitations are applied. Up until now this paper has discussed how to get mainstream medias attention or how to get a story covered by the media. This study is focused on online coverage since Greenpeace’s campaign first and foremost used Internet to reach publics, illustrated by both in their campaign video (which was posted YouTube) and the petition (which was online). Online coverage of campaign statements can be presented in different forms like online viewership, blogs and blog discussions, and mainstream media coverage (Wallsten, 2010). The focus in this analysis is centred around mainstream media because corporations perceive that this has the most influence on their corporate reputation (Zhang, 2014). This view is also represented by the studies on media exposure and corporate reputation because they too focus on mainstream media. These studies found that media coverage has great implications for corporate reputation (e.g. Fombrun & Shanley, 1990; Wartick, 1992; Zhang, 2014). 48 % of CEO’s perceive that printed media has most influence on their corporations reputation, according Opinion Research Firm (2003; cited in Zhang, 2014). This fact together with the medium Greenpeace chose to communicate their campaign, are the decisive factors for limiting the selection to only incorporate online articles. The time frame is also limited. Articles posted about LEGO’s submission the 10th of October are not relevant for researching how the media coverage framed the brand. This is because the thesis is interested in the campaign as a public relations measure used to force the corporation to change not on how the media covered LEGO’s decision to change. Another argument is that there is a possibility that the tone and focus in the media coverage changed after LEGO gave in and Greenpeace proclaimed “Everything is awesome again” (Herbison, 2014). Of this reason the material will be restricted in the time period between the 8th of July, when the campaign video was released, and the 7th of October, the day before LEGO’s press release announced that they would not renew their partnership with Shell. Greenpeace’s campaign is transnational and it got coverage in several countries. Retriever as a research tool is therefor applicable since it gathers articles from 45 different countries.

There are several search tools on the retriever platform to help a researcher optimize the gathering of news. First of all, the tool “Utökad Sökning” (translation “advanced search”) was used to get more detailed and specific search options. Second, the search words “LEGO”
“Shell” and “Greenpeace” were applied to the “alla dessa ord” (translation “all of these words”) box. Then the time period (“tidsperiod”) was set to “from-until” (från och till) and the time frame was set to 2014-07-08 until 2014-10-07. Another limitation was applied before searching for the news articles. Retriever enables the user to specify if it is going to search for specific words in the whole text, the headline or the headline and the preamble. This study will limit the search by applying the setting “Only search in: headline and preamble”. This way, only articles which main focus was on the campaign was included in the study. The last setting that was put into place before the data gathering started, was the Web filter. This way, only articles that were posted on the web are included in the selection of the material. The selection ended up with incorporating 103 articles and 157 images, the latter number is the one used in the analysis. One image equals one unit coded into SPSS. The data gathering process is further explained in the validity discussion and in attachments three and four.

5.2 Operationalization
The sub research questions, the population and the selection have been defined. The next step is to define variables and their value and code these into a coding program for analysis (Nilsson, 2010). In this study the statistics program SPSS has been used for the quantitative research.

The variables in this study are the different elements in the images. These was identified through one, looking at the Greenpeace video and two, browsing through the gathered material. The first quantitative sub questions ask what image types the media frequently used, the first category of variables aims to answer this. The rest of the variables aim to identify what elements that the unit is composed by. One unit equals one image.

5.2.1 Identifying image types
“Image types” is used to identify what kind of images the media picked up, and variable 1 aim identify these. What is important here is that the variable values first categorise pictures that are directly representing Greenpeace’s public relations activities and later those who are not illustrating any of these. Most of the values are related to Greenpeace activities, as these are most relevant for the study. The images that fall into the second category can be scrutinized by looking at the elements in which they contain. Some of the images did, as an example, show the LEGO logo, or a LEGO representative. These are not directly illustrating Greenpeace PR activities. The variable values also distinguish between articles where it is possible to see the campaign video directly in the article and those who used hyperlinks. This is because hyperlinked
videos become an outside source while a direct display becomes an integrated part of an article. The variable values are:

1. First campaign video – watch directly
2. First campaign video – hyperlinked
3. Second campaign video
4. Other video related to campaign
5. Image taken from first campaign video
6. GIF taken from first campaign video
7. Image taken from second campaign video
8. Photograph of protest activity
9. Other image illustrating Greenpeace PR activities
10. Photograph LEGOLAND
11. Photograph other
12. Image taken from LEGO movie
13. Drawing
14. Other Video

The findings here show what image types the media have used when covering the conflict and thus answer the first quantitative research question “what types of images did the media frequently pick up?”. The phrase “pick up” indicates that the media picked up images that were communicated by Greenpeace through their public relation activities. The results from the first variable contributes to analyse if the frequently used images were the result of Greenpeace’s public relations activities (activities explained in section 2.4.1) and in that case which PR activities.
5.2.2 Identifying image elements

The main body of the question variables is created to identify elements. These are categorized into the four groups LEGO, Shell, Arctic, Greenpeace. These categories are asking detailed questions because different figures might possess different cultural connotations. For example, asking if there are any arctic animals is too broad as a polar bear might have a different connotative meaning than, for example, a wolf. All of the variables has the belonging variable units 1= present, 2= not present if not specified otherwise.

The first category aims to identify all elements that are directly related to LEGO. Most of these try to identify figures that are represented in the campaign video.

2. LEGO figures
3. LEGO bricks
4. LEGOLAND
5. LEGO logo
6. LEGO child figure
7. LEGO Santa clause figure
8. LEGO Fantasy figures
9. LEGO representative
10. LEGO figures playing
11. LEGO figure sad/crying
12. LEGO movie features
13. LEGO movie characters
14. LEGO figures drowning in oil

In the second category, six variables seek elements that are related to Shell.

15. Shell logo
16. Oil
17. Gas station
18. Oilrig
19. Shell equipment, machines
20. Shell workers

The third category identifies if there are any elements related to the Arctic. These questions are related to either landscape or animals.

21. Polar bears
22. Fox
23. Whale
24. Birds
Last are the variables that are representing Greenpeace, the “Everything is not awesome” campaign messages and or their public relations activities. There are eight question variables in this category.

28. Protesting figures
29. Greenpeace logo (not on banners)
30. Campaign logo (not on banners)
31. Banners with Greenpeace logo
32. Banners with campaign slogans messages
33. Banners with campaign logo
34. Other campaign messages (not on banners)

5.2.3 Identifying elements used together
In this section the selection of images have been narrowed down in light of the results from the two earlier parts. The elements that are identified as most frequently used together in this part are the basis of the final selection for the qualitative part.

The image groups that have been identified through the SPSS analysis are looked at in this third and last quantitative part. The final selection of images was done with the basis in the identification of those image elements that are most frequently used in the group. This way, the selected images are representing the group they were chosen from.

5.3 Methodical problems
One of the main critiques against quantitative text analysis is that the method looks at separate parts of a text and thus is in danger of loosing the holistic perspective. In this case this critique can be applied. The fact that the study focuses on the images, and of this reason does not consider the totality of the news articles, can result in a skewed perception of the tone in the media articles. The images are only one part of the mass media coverage but since this study is interested in how Greenpeace, through their public relation activities, framed LEGO as a result of medias image use, the scrutiny of written text content falls outside the purpose.
For a quantitative study to be of high quality it has to be executed consistently. The study has 34 variables and several can be interpreted in different ways. Because of inconsistencies in the coding, which came forward in the SPSS analysis process, the coding of variables was carried out three times. The result of this became a very thorough and detailed coding instruction.

5.4 Expected generalisation, reliability and validity
The selection is consistent of 157 units taken from a 103 news articles. This represents almost half of all the articles that were found by the data gathering tool retriever. Many of the links at retriever was bad, or not present in its original form. Because of this these articles were not brought into the study. Even if many articles fell away, the amount of the analysed data is high enough to draw general conclusions for this specific case study. The study will not be able to draw conclusions on the behalf of other campaigns or of the general scene of NGOs trying to gain influence over corporation.

Because the SPSS process that failed two times this study has gained a high validity. The values were tested in many different ways to see if they were consistent with each other. This is a criterion if the researcher wants to be able to comment on the validity of a quantitative study (Nilsson 2010). In the last analysis (the one presented in the result) there were no such inconsistencies. For a quantitative study to have a high reliability it needs to be objective, systematic, quantitative and manifesto. When it comes to objectivity, “attachment 2- coding instructions” was written as detailed as possible so that any person could conduct the research and get the exact same results. This rubs of on the systematics or consistency of the study. Consistency is a prerequisite for an analysis to be objective (Nilsson, 2010). Quantitatively has been ensured through the coding schema (see attachment 2). All the variables in this study are elements that can be counted and therefore converted into numbers. Manifesto is established in the coding instructions, which states that only elements that are readable at first sight shall be counted. That means that the counted elements are visible to all observers/readers. The articles that were selected for the study are readable for all. To make sure of this, all the articles have been gathered in the same way.
6 Result: Quantitative research

The results of the SPSS analysis is presented here through figures and belonging comments. This result section starts by presenting the outcome related to the first sub question.

6.1 Image types

At first glance a frequency analysis of the first variable can show what type of images was most frequently used.

Figure 2- most frequently used image types
The three biggest blocks of this chart is related to Greenpeace’s public relations activities. The biggest part is of Greenpeace campaign video with 31.2%. On second and third place is “photographs of protests” (23.6%) and “images taken from the first campaign video” (20.4%).

Put together, the video and images taken from it represents over 50% of all the images that were used by the media to cover the case, that is excluded videos that were only available through a hyperlink in the article. The fourth biggest category was “other photographs” with 8.9%. But when put into a bigger context it is safe to say that it only represents a small amount of the total coverage.

The pie diagram below (Figure 2) shows this bigger picture. The media coverage is overrepresented by images that is related some kind of Greenpeace campaign action. 87.9% of the images used was directly related to Greenpeace activities while only 12.1% of the images were not. Because this results shows that an insignificant portion of the images were not related to Greenpeace activities these images will not be included in the rest of the analysis. This is also linked to the research question as it aims to scrutinize how images related to Greenpeace PR activates is framing LEGO.

![Figure 3- frequencies of images related to Greenpeace activities versus all other types images](image)

Figure 2, N=157
Looking at what Greenpeace activities were covered gives an insight to what activity gained the most attention. These results will be used in the next part. The findings of image types shows that the campaign video, photographs of protests and images of the first campaign video were prominent in the media coverage. Since these three are most frequently used in media coverage they will be used when identifying the most frequently used elements.

6.2 Image elements
The video can in itself be analysed qualitatively. Since the “video unit” always contains the same elements and these elements always interact in the same way there is no further need to analyse it quantitatively. Because of this, and the fact that the video was the most frequently used image, the video is selected for qualitative analysis.

The second biggest category was “photo of protest”. In this image group represented 24% of the overall coverage which, when counted, becomes 35 units. The figures present in these protest images were either children, LEGO figures, adults or none of the above. There were six units were no figures were present. In these photographs there were instead banners with slogans, with the Greenpeace logo or the campaign logo. Figure 4 shows that of the 35 images, 14 were of protesting adults, 12 were of LEGO figures and 3 were of children. The biggest groups are thus those who show adults and LEGO figures.

![Different protesting figures in "Photographs of protest activities"](image)

Figure 3, N=35

Amongst the adult protesters 11 of 14 were dressed up as LEGO figures. That means that 23 of 35 pictures (65%) illustrated some kind of LEGO figure. But, not only protesting figures were
present in these photographs. As figure 4 illustrates, in 33 of 35 of the images there were campaign slogans or messages present, and most of these were on banners. Next after this came the Greenpeace logo, and after this the Shell logo. Most of the Greenpeace logos are present on banners. The green coloured category has been labelled “present”. This does not imply that the elements in the red and blue categories are not present but rather that these elements are present in their physical form. 5 of the protest pictures where photographed in LEGOLAND, 10 outside gas stations and 3 were of oil rigs. All of the pictures of the oil rig were taken in LEGOLAND, this was the only photographed protest location where an oilrig was present. The most used location in this category was gas stations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Number of units in banner</th>
<th>Number of units not on banner</th>
<th>Number of units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greenpeace Logo</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign Logo</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign slogan/LEGO bricks</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEGOland</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEGO logo</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shell Logo</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil rig</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas station</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polar bears</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arctic landscape</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4, N=35

The third biggest image type category was images taken from the campaign video. Together with GIF’s taken from campaign video this category becomes the second largest containing 39 units (24,9%). The result from these categories shows what elements in the campaign video were mostly used. Figure 5 illustrates this:
What stand out in this figure is that almost all of the pictures contain some kind of LEGO figure (35 of 39 units), and that 28 of these are drowning in oil (one of the drowning elements are of landscape being drowned in oil). Oil is present in 31 of the 39 images and thus becomes the second most frequent element, LEGO bricks and arctic landscape follow close. Amongst the variables that asks for specific figures the crying or sad figure is used 13 times, while LEGO figures that are classified as children is used 6 times. Polar bears and Shell logos are used equally as many times (5). There were only two figures in the movie that were sad. Those were of, one, a child and, two, a LEGO man with headphones. That entail that almost 50% of the figures in the crying/sad category was a child (6 units of 13) and a little over 50% (7 units of 13) was of the LEGO man with headphones.

Some conclusions can be drawn from these results. First, amongst image group “photo of protest” the main protest groups were adults and LEGO figures. Approximately 78% of the adults were dressed up as LEGO figures, which mean that LEGO figures were the most frequent element in this category. The most frequent locations were gas stations and LEGOLAND, some photographs of gas stations were located in LEGOLAND. Photographs of protesting LEGO figures at gas stations and at LEGOLAND is therefore selected to be scrutinized in the next section which aims to identify what other elements were used in these
contexts. Further, 33 of the 35 units in this category showed campaign messages or slogans either on banners or in other forms. This result is also brought further to the next section. Amongst the group “image taken from first campaign video” the most present elements were the ones brought forward in Figure 5. The elements taken into consideration in this figure is also used in the next parts analysis.

6.3 Image elements frequently used together

This section looks at results showing which elements were used most frequently together. In the category “photo of protest” the units with protesting LEGO figures are most frequently used together with elements that has been identified in these types of images. All in all, there were 23 units where LEGO figures or adults dressed up as LEGO figures were present.

Ten of the images illustrate LEGO men protesting with banners at different locations. Of these there are two that have the Greenpeace logo, two has the Shell logo and five with the campaign logo. Seven of the images have campaign messages on banners in written words, amongst those who don’t have this, there are one with the campaign logo, one with the campaign and the Shell logo, one with the Greenpeace logo and the campaign logo. The problem here is that there is no common location. The only shared elements are the campaign messages and logos used. Because of this, the selected images are those who have both campaign logos and campaign slogans, which are three images (see attachment 3).

The next main group in this category is located at a gas station. This group contains 11 images, nine of which contain campaign messages. This is the largest group within the category “photograph of protest activity” and of this reason they are selected for the qualitative analysis. There are two main themes in this selected category. One is of LEGO figures protesting at the LEGOLAND Shell gas station and one is of adults dressed up as LEGO figures outside a Shell station posing with a banner and a polar bear. The two pictures with the best overview of these situations are chosen for the qualitative analysis (see attachment 3).

In the category “images taken from the video” there are 39 photographs. Here there are some elements that are very frequently used. Oil is visible in 31 images, and 28 of these are showing figures that are drowning in oil (one were only landscape is drowning). The figures that are reoccurring are the crying man (8), the sad child (4), polar bear (4), and Santa Claus (4). Arctic landscape is reoccurring in these images, and the Shell logo is used three times together with
arctic landscape, oil and a polar bear. These images are selected for qualitative analysis (see attachment 4).

6.4 Conclusion

With basis in the quantitative research several images have been chosen for the qualitative analysis. The video in full was selected in the first part of the results. The images that have been selected through this quantitative research can be found in attachment 3 and 4. Three images illustrating LEGO men protesting at different locations have been chosen together with two images of protest at gas stations (attachment 3). From the next category “images taken from campaign video” four images illustrating different LEGO figures have been chosen. These were the ones that were most frequently used together with other elements that were reoccurring. The next part goes through the qualitative method that is used to analyse the images and the video.
7 Method: Qualitative text analysis

The quantitative study method researches the manifesto content of texts, measurable in numbers. The critique against the method is based on this (Østbye et al. 2003). Because quantitative methods only have the means to research the surface of a text the study becomes shallow. To solve this a second analysis layer has to be added. This has to be done not only because of this method weakness but also because the research problem facilitates this. As Wartick’s (1992) study showed, the tone of the media exposure had the greatest impact on the negative or positive movement of the corporate reputation. By adding a qualitative analysis the research is able to identify the latent meanings of the texts, or as Wartick would call it, the tone of the media exposure.

7.1 Methodical framework

The images brought forth by the quantitative results are the manifesto of the power in which Greenpeace tries to execute by changing the actions of LEGO. The campaign video and the campaign activities are mediating a story to the broader public through the media coverage. This part of the research studies the texts from a symptomous reader perspective, which means that it looks at how the dominant beliefs in society gives meaning to a text (Østbye et.al. 2003). Semiotics is a type of symptomous reading. It looks at the signs, which a text is constructed by, and identifies the meanings by looking at the cultural context (Østbye et.al. 2003). A qualitative study has to be based on earlier research to be able to say something about the cultural association of a sign. In this case study the signs identified in the images and their connotations are presented in the qualitative result.

7.2 Operationalization: Qualitative text analysis

Several images have been chosen through the quantitative analysis. These are analysed with the text analysis tool “semiotics”. Nine images and one short film have been chosen for the qualitative analysis. To be able to analyse these images semiotically, the different elements or signs are put into a cultural context. This is presented in part “8. Result qualitative research”, and it works as a background for the qualitative analysis and answers the first sub question “What are the meanings of the elements?”. Further, in part “9. Analysis and discussion”, the second and third sub questions are answered. The pictures are analysed in a “one by one” structure, and because of this the answer to the sub questions can be read out from the text, and not as direct answers. The analysis is not structured after the questions because this would influence the flow
of the text, which is important to be able to understand the link between the disposition of the image elements and the framing of LEGO.

7.2.1 Operationalization

In this part the results are presented and they are the cultural associations that belongs to the different elements are presented. It will cover the first sub question “First, some general questions are asked to identify values and other associations connected to the four categories LEGO, Shell, the arctic, and Greenpeace. These are giving the qualitative study a background to work with in the analysis. This background is presented in the results and it is used in the analysis of the images. As in the analysis part, the operationalization questions are not presented as direct answers, but can rather be read out of the flowing text. The questions connected to the elements, are constructed so that the study is answering the research question and in the end contribute to the discussion of research purpose.

- LEGO
  - What values are LEGO associated with?
  - What values does The LEGO movie communicate about the LEGO brand?

- Shell
  - How does the public perceive Shell?
  - How has Greenpeace communicated about Shell as a company?

- Arctic
  - What are the cultural associations towards the arctic in relation to the climate change discourse?

- Greenpeace
  - How is Greenpeace perceived in relation to their work for the environment?
    - What is the narrative of the campaign video?

These questions aims to answer what cultural associations are linked to the image elements and thus answer the research question, which aims to identify the latent meanings behind the elements used in the images. Further, the research presents the culturally associative meanings connected to these elements:

- Child
- Polar bear
- Santa clause
7.2.2 Analysis

First, this part looks at how the different parts correlate with each other in the image composition. To scrutinize this, the following questions are used to form the analysis:

- Campaign video
  - How are the different elements related to LEGO, Shell and the arctic interacting with each other throughout the narrative of the video?
  - What do the sound and the picture communicate in relation to each other?
- Images taken from the campaign video
  - How are the different elements related to LEGO, Shell and the Arctic composed in relation to each other?
  - What does this composition communicate in context of the elements separate meanings?
- Photographs of protests activities- protesting LEGO figures (Image 1-3, attachment 3)
  - What are the LEGO figures doing?
  - In what context are they doing this?
  - How are the LEGO figures connected to the campaign slogans and messages?
- Photographs of protest activities- protest outside gas station (Image 4 and 5, attachment 3)
  - What are the protesting figures doing?
  - How are they related to the location?
  - How does the messages relate to the image composition?
  - How is the Shell logo composed in relation to the other elements?

7.3 Methodical problems

The main problem with this method is that different cultures might associate different meanings with the different elements. The campaign is transnational, and the elements are somewhat universal, but the meaning that is interpreted in this thesis might not be the meanings interpreted in another cultural context. Another problem relates to the fact that the images are only one part of the articles they are apart of. As stated before, the text in these articles might influence how the reader interprets the message of the image, and this is not taken into consideration here. Last,
the message of the images might not even be of importance. There is a possibility that Greenpeace got LEGO to change because of the media exposure the campaign generated and not because of the way the images framed the corporation, even if theory states otherwise. Another important aspect is the objectivity of the researcher. Individual association influence the interpretation of the images and this might impact the results of a qualitative study.

7.4 Expected generalisation, reliability and validity
The analysis will only be able to say something about the specific case and the specific images. As the quantitative study has identified the most frequently used images the qualitative analysis is capable of drawing conclusion for the media coverage on this specific case. But even if the research cannot be generalized the study is not compromised. Generalization is not a necessity, as it is not required to be able to solve the conflict within PR academia. The result of study works as a ground for the end discussion: if implementing critical theory into PR research is needed or not. The study does not aim to generalise about activists utilization of PR, but rather to be able to say something about the tools the researcher needs when studying exactly this.

This method aims to research what the images communicate or in other words, frame LEGO. For a method to be valid it has to research the exact thing that it is supposed to measure (Bergström & Borés, 2012). The qualitative text analysis tool semiotics is appropriate to use for the third research question, as it is able to analyse the latent meanings within an image, what the image communicate in a cultural context. The method gives insight to how the reader interprets the messages in an image, and thus it is valid to use when researching how the images frame LEGO. Reliability is a term that is most commonly used in context with quantitative studies. When it comes to qualitative analysis, reliability is related to the accuracy in the implementation of the study. In this thesis the quantitative research works as a tool for reliability, the results of the first part of the study made sure that the right images was chosen for the qualitative study. Also, the qualitative research is based upon an extensive knowledge of the case and the belonging discourse. This makes the study thorough and as accurate as possible.
8 Result: Qualitative research

8.1 Background
This section presents what values and perceptions are associated to LEGO, Shell, arctic and Greenpeace together with a description of the campaign video’s narrative. It also presents the cultural meanings associated with the elements child, polar bear, Santa Claus and oil.

8.1.1 LEGO
The global consultancy Brand Finance defines a brand as:

“A marketing related intangible asset including, but not limited to, names, terms, signs, symbols, logos, and designs, or a combination of these, intended to identify goods, services or entities, or a combination of these, creating distinctive images and associations in the minds of stakeholders, thereby generating economic benefits/value” (cited in Dill, 2015)

This means that elements related to LEGO, such as the logo, or their products like LEGO figures and bricks, are associated to the companies belonging values. LEGO is ranked as the most powerful brand in 2015 (Dill, 2015). One of the factors that have contributed to LEGO’s move from being a solid brand to the worlds most powerful is the creation and popularity of The LEGO Movie (Dill, 2015; Brand Finance, 2015). The video attributes (song, characters, theme, narrative) are, as a result of this, also associated to the brand as well as the brand is associated to the movie. The company has been linked to the values familiarity, loyalty, promotion, staff satisfaction, corporate reputation, creativity, and it is associated with fundamental creativity and childhood nostalgia. Since The Lego Movie has been an important part of creating the most powerful brand (Brand Finance, 2015) the story of the movie can illustrate values and perceptions of LEGO1. One of the main themes in the movie is the representation of a society were “bread-and-circus mass entertainments distract the masses from fascist oppression” (Mendelson, 2014). This can be linked to hegemony, the movie illustrates a society which functions in a hegemonic way where people act and talk as they are told without questioning why. The theme song “Everything is awesome” is a manifestation of this, the lyrics reads that everything is great, while the movie clearly tells the story of a deeply flawed society. The bottom line in the story is that older generations should open up for new creative input that

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1 The story line of the movie can be read in attachment 5
crosses established boundaries (Mendelson, 2014). This also incorporates that new generation will inherit the work of the older generations and together with them continue this work in new directions. Creativity, breaking loose from oppression and generations are key words and values here.

**8.1.2 Shell**

TalkWalker is a research tool that gathers and analyse media content. In their report about Shell they have found that 73.1 % of the content that mentions Shell is negative (TalkWalker, 2015b). This might because they are apart of an industry that is the target of much criticism. The second larges theme that is associated with Shell is “Arctic” (TalkWallker, 2015b). The following themes are dominating this shell and arctic discourse:

- Climate
- Drilling
- North
- Seattle
- Change
- World
- #arctic
- Coast
- Arctic
- Shell

These key words are representing the perception of shell in relation to the Greenpeace campaign. And as the statistics show this discourse in this context is mainly negative towards Shell. These themes also relate to how Greenpeace talks about Shell in their public relations communication (Greenpeace, 2015b). In the campaign video Greenpeace stated that “Shell is polluting our kids’ imaginations” (Greenpeace, 2014d)

**8.1.3 Arctic**

Arctic is the worlds air-condition, but because of climate change the ice is melting and the air-condition effect is lessened (NASA, 2014). It is also the home of many species that are endangered because of the retreating ice. The discussion of the arctic in relation to Shell is focused around the devastating consequences of an oil spill in the area (Vidal, 2011). The arctic
is described as fragile region and an oil spill would be close to impossible to clean up (Vidal, 2011).

8.1.4 Greenpeace
Greenpeace is associated with the environment, being the David against Goliath in the fight for the environmental causes (Tsoukas, 1999). They are also known for being radical when pushing for their cause (Bastasch, 2015). They are associated with their campaign areas like climate change, rainforests, oceans, and animals. They have for a long time been known for involving themselves directly in oil, gas and nuclear operations with their own ships, even being shot at by the French royal navy (Milliken, 1995).

8.1.5 The campaign video
The campaign video is telling the story of an oil spill in the arctic. The movie set is made up by LEGO bricks and LEGO figures. The video starts with zooming up an icy wall for two polar bears to appear on the top. The image moves past the bears and the scene switch to a pack of wolves. The next clip displays a fishing Eskimo standing on the edge of the ice by the water. The image zooms out and shifts over to a gang of LEGO figures playing hockey on an ice field. The image shifts and swirls around a seagull standing on top of a small iceberg in the water. At the beginning of the swirl a pack of wolf is apparent in the background, as it moves, some red machines become barely visible on the top of the next icy hilltop. The images changes into a group of LEGO figures playing football before the scene moves on and slides past an oil rig (which is so close in the picture and thus not in focus) and focuses on the red machines and working figures in the background. After this, the video shows a close up of the machines, it is now visible that they are drilling in the ice. Changing again the image displays a truck driver with the word “oil” on his uniform. An oil tanker with “Shell” written on the front is clearly visible in the background, as the images moves the truck comes into focus. The next picture is of a flag with the Shell logo on it. As the image moves downwards an oil rig, with a flame on the top, comes into vision. On land, in the background, drilling machines are visible in the foreground as the image changes and focuses on a man in a formal suit smoking a cigar. The shell logo is present in the last three sequences. The next thing that appears, is an image displaying the feet of the oil rig where they break the water. Black liquid is starting to pour from the middle pipe that goes into the water. The image zooms out as the liquid spreads. The next thing happening displayed is an overview image showing the blue ocean, the icy cliffs and the red machines on the hill to the left. The liquid is flowing across the water covering it. Fish swallowed by the black liquid is the next thing that appears before the image shifts back to the overview. The liquid is
now covering half of the water in the icy bay. Moving back to the Eskimo the image shows how the liquid swallows his feet. The next image is showing three characters from the series “game of thrones”. Ygrid, John Snow and his white wolf Ghost is now covered up till the waist with black liquid. The next image was selected for the qualitative analysis by the quantitative results. It is showing a crying child holding a teddy bear. He is half hidden behind an icy wall while the liquid is moving upwards. Three wolfs are now shown as the liquid keeps flowing, the image changes to a polar bear. The image shifts again, and the liquid is spreading around a fox that is standing on the ice. Next the liquid swallows a baby in the arms of its mother, which is standing outside a house with her husband (interpretation). A white owl becomes the next image element as the liquid continues to rise. Emmet and Wildstyle, the main characters in The LEGO Movie, holds hands as the liquid covering the ground around them is rising upwards their lower bodies. Santa and a helping elf get the liquid up to their chins, before the image changes again. This image of Santa is also selected through the quantitative results. The next image is the one that is used most frequently within the category of “images taken from the campaign video”. A man with a blue teal and sad eyes is visible from the neck up, the image zooms in on his face and he is almost totally covered in oil before the image shifts. In the next image it looks like a third of the camera is below the liquid surface. The remaining part of the picture illustrates the top of an iceberg with a polar bear climbing it. On top of the iceberg there is a flag with the Shell logo. The liquid keeps rising and the image shifts again. Now it is showing the top of a LEGO brick. The images shows how the oil slowly moves in and covers the last of the brick. “LEGO” is written on the top of the brick’s dots. In this picture a pop-up window appears with the text “Sign the petition!”. After the liquid has covered the whole brick, the image moves upwards over the surface. The only thing visible now is the Shell flag. The images pauses and the message “Shell is Polluting our Kids’ imaginations”. The text fades out and the flag moves to the left out of the picture. When the flag is out of sight the next message fades in: “Tell LEGO to end its partnership with Shell”, legoblockshell.org. All of this while the “sign the petition” pop-up window is still visible.

Throughout the whole video a modified version of The LEGO Movie’s theme song is playing. It starts with simple piano tones that are associated with a child’s lullaby. The vocal starts singing “everything is awesome” when the image is focusing on the drilling equipment and machines. The song is played in a minor key, the tempo is slow.
8.1.6 Child
A child is an archetype that represents different meanings. Vulnerability, innocence, purity, imagination and dependency are some of these (Myss, 2010). LEGO talks of children in context the words play, growth, development, imagination, and creative expression (The LEGO Group, 2015 (legogroup). One of their brand statements are “The LEGO Group is committed to caring for the environment and the society that children will inherit, and to inspiring and developing the builders of tomorrow” (The LEGO Group, 2015 (legogroup).

8.1.7 Polar Bear
The polar bear has become the symbol of the victims of climate change. The white bear is used when illustrating the consequences of the rising temperatures. Greenpeace is amongst those who have used the bear as a visual element when the NGO is communicating messages related to the arctic and climate change.

8.1.8 Santa Clause
Santa Clause is believed to live at the North Pole (the arctic) and is also a representation of children fantasy and imagination. Santa Clause is the bearer of good, and he rewards the kids that are behaving well. He is also magical, the story that is told to children from parents and by movies is that he can fly with help of reindeers and that he has magical helpers (elves) that makes Christmas presents that are delivered on Christmas eve.

8.1.9 Oil
Oil was before a symbol of industrialisation, development and modernity, but with the recent changes in the discourse regarding fossil fuels this has changed. Now oil is looked upon as a dirty energy source that has changed the planet for the worse. This started with the discussion of global warming. Al Gore was one of the main advocates in spreading the message of how people’s use of fossil fuels has consequences for the planet. Oil spill catastrophes have also contributed to the negative conception on oil. The BP oil spill in the gulf is an example on this and the catastrophic consequences for wildlife was portrayed by the media.

8.2 Conclusion
The cultural context which surrounding LEGO, Shell, arctic and the other elements in the above section, is used in the analysis of the images and the video. The analysis and discussion in the next part looks at what the images communicate and later the analysis is put into the discussion of if critical theory should be implemented into public relations theory or not.
9 Analysis and discussion

9.1 Quantitative analysis

The theory section scrutinized the concept of NGOs gaining leverage and thus power over corporations by targeting their corporate reputation (Coombs & Holladay, 2012). This possibility has arisen from the increasingly importance of corporate social responsibility for stakeholders (Coombs & Holladay, 2012; Fombrun, 2005). To be able to target the reputation NGOs have to get their messages out in mainstream media (Anderson, 2013). The key tool for achieving this type of media coverage is visually appealing images (Anderson, 2003; Jong, 2005; Gaber & Willson, 2005). From the qualitative results it is not possible to draw conclusion of why the press found images appealing, but it is possible to say something of what images they did pick up in light of this theory.

There are many factors that can influence mass media to cover a story. As Gaber & Willson (2005) writes, the timing of public relations activities in relation to events and other news worthy stories have a big impact on the amount of coverage. The results presented in Figure 1 and 2 does, on the other hand, show that almost 90% of the images used in the coverage was directly related and representing some kind of Greenpeace activity. This result strongly indicates that Greenpeace’s activities were so visually appealing that the press used these to illustrate the conflict over other types of images. The most successful of these activities was the video. This is evident in the frequencies demonstrated in Figure 1 and 2. Not only was it possible to watch the video directly in 31% of the units, but also 20% of the images were taken from this video. By creating a visually appealing campaign video Greenpeace achieved to get the mass media to use their own images which they had created to influence LEGO’s decisions.

The second most frequent image type was images of protesting activities. The results show that these images were mostly contained LEGO figures and campaign messages. It was also evident that elements from the different categories “LEGO”, “Shell”, “Arctic” and “Greenpeace campaign” were used in most images (see Figure 4). This has implications for the qualitative study. In relation to theory the same conclusions can be made. Greenpeace managed to compose visually appealing protest images that resulted in media coverage. This way, Greenpeace got to communicate their messages because the images they had composed in respect to their case, were the ones that were most used by the media.
The overrepresentation is a manifesto of Greenpeace’s power execution since this gave the NGO a superior position for advocating their message. The fact that LEGO gave into Greenpeace’s request is in itself one evidence for that their PR activities worked. The qualitative study shows a link between the effectiveness of the public relations activities and the media coverage. Theories state that the tone of this mass media coverage has implications for the corporate reputation, and this quantitative study has shown that Greenpeace has set this tone through the overrepresentation of images taken directly from their public relation activities. The tone and how this frames LEGO is analysed in the next section.

9.2 Qualitative analysis

9.2.1 Campaign video

The storyline of the video is presented in section 8.1.9. The video plot is based on many contrasts. First there is the contrast between the arctic nature and the Shell workers and equipment. The video starts out showing the idyllic nature and wildlife, natural colors, in the arctic before it gets interrupt by first people, than machines and workers. Its made to look like somewhat of an invasion. The contrast in colour between elements that represent the arctic and elements that represent shell is contributing to this. The oil, that represents Shell, swallows both the nature and the different LEGO figures that are not related to Shell. This result in the message that Shell swallows everything in its path, animals, nature, children, figures representing fantasy and imagination. The man smoking in a cigar looks happy and not affected by the catastrophe happening below. While the LEGO men, which represent the LEGO values, like creativity and fantasy, can not do anything but passively watch while they drown. The way in which the elements interact with each other makes LEGO look like a passive victim to Shells crimes. But because the shell figures also are LEGO figures the corporation is also represented as the evil business that looks the other way when nature, the future generation and imagination is destroyed.

The contrast between the melody and the words in the song gives an impression that something is fake. The text state that everything is awesome while the low-key melody implies that this is not the case. While this message is present throughout the whole movie other contrast become apparent as the story moves from beginning to end. When the oilrig comes into focus the text sounds “everything is awesome”, the image zooms in on the corporate figure with the cigar as the text goes “when your living on a dream”. The word “dream” implies that in a situation were
Shell gets to drill and make money of arctic oil safely, is not a realistic but a fantasy, this is also accompanied by the contrast between happy text and sad melody. The man with the cigar is living in an illusion. The black liquid that is oil, starts poring from out from the pipe that goes in the water. The idyllic landscape is now getting drowned in oil, animals, landscape and people alike. This happens while the music keeps playing “Everything is awesome”. The song say that the arctic adventure is where everything is awesome and oil pours out but the melody and together with the picture tells another story. The sad melody and the sad pictures contribute to the understanding that Shell is not awesome, it’s a lie, just like the words in the song. Since the song is also the theme song or The LEGO movie, it is possible to draw links between the plot of the movie to the campaign video. The society represented in the movie is through the use of the song, linked to the reality of Shell drilling for oil in the arctic. As the society in the movie that naïvely accepted Lord Business way of governing without suspecting a catastrophe, the campaign video communicates that LEGO naïvely accepted and supported Shells actions in the arctic, believing that everything was awesome.

The video ends with the message “Shell is polluting our kids’ imaginations”. This message gives meaning to the different sequences of the video. The oil that represents Shell is swallowing the symbols that stand for innocence, creativity, future, vulnerability, inheritance, fantasy, imagination, and more. Through its partnership with Shell, LEGO is polluting (represented by the oil) these values. LEGO is framed as someone that contributes to destroying a child’s fantasy, creativity, imagination and future by having a deal with Shell. LEGO is framed as a passive actor (none of the figures were active in stopping the catastrophe) watching as the hopes and dreams of kids gets swallowed by the thick black liquid. Or as the actual cause of this catastrophe.

### 9.2.2 Images taken from the campaign video

Image 1 is showing a young man (indicated by his headphones), with a tear rolling down his chin. His eyes gives the impression that he is not scared, but sad about what he sees around himself. He is a symbol of the youth, maybe those who tried to change the faith of the arctic. He is almost swallowed whole before the image changes. The young LEGO figure gets swallowed by Shells actions, together with his future.

Image 2 illustrates a little boy that is holding on to his teddy bear. The child represents innocence and vulnerability, he becomes a symbol of the arctic as it is presented as fragile and vulnerable in
the video and in media. Children also represents a future and a new generation. The child is hiding and his scared face can be a testimony of the crimes that are made against him and his inheritance. The fact that the oil is swallowing him indicates that the future is ruined by fossil fuels, he will have no future, just like the arctic.

The next image is of Santa and his elf (image 3). Santa is a symbol of a child's imagination. Just like the child itself, the oil is swallowing the fantasy and the imagination of the child manifested in the Santa Clause figure.

The polar bear, the symbol of the victims of climate change and possible oil spills, is crawling up an iceberg with the Shell flag on top. The polar tries to crawl up the last iceberg, which is surrounded by oil. The flag on the top of the iceberg, which is postured as a concurring flag, has a Shell logo on it. This symbolises that Shell has concurred the arctic and the struggling bear symbolises the victims of climate change as all the other ice has disappeared under Shells oil. This can be a metaphor for the climate changes that has caused the sea ice to retreat and leave the polar bears struggling to find food.

9.2.3 Photographs of protesting figures: Protesting LEGO figures

Image 1 through 3 in attachment five is showing several LEGO figures protesting with banners. In image one there are 11 LEGO men holding up these signs. The signs are showing campaign logos, some with slogans on and some with only the half shell half polar bear campaign logo. They are standing outside some kind of parliament building, the flags outside together with the architectural facade are indicators of this. The figures are protesting. This act is protected by law in democratic countries, and it symbolizes the civil society, social movements, and it is a tool used by the publics to stand up and show the state, or someone else, that they want things to change. The act of protesting can in itself be a manifestation of power, as it has been used to make change and succeeded in the past. The location gives even more meaning to this act. Important buildings and squares, which are central to the to countries or cities governments are often used when people wants to tell the state what they are dissatisfied or angry over. The LEGO men are in this situation expressing their dissatisfaction. They are standing outside a symbol of greater power and holding up signs telling this power what they want to change. They want someone to #blockshell. The figures are connected to Greenpeace through one, a sign with the organisation logo on, and two, by advocating Greenpeace’s Save the Arctic. The connection to LEGO is through the actual LEGO men. In image number 1 and two there are no clear
messages talking of LEGO, in image number 2 many of the signs says “Get the shell out of the
LEGOS” and “LEGOS unite to save the arctic”. As Moffitt (2011) describe in her account for
semiotics, the signs gets meaning in the cultural context and in relations to each other. The
context was here that Greenpeace was targeting LEGO to end their partnership with shell. But
instead of showing up in “human” form and protesting outside their office for several days they
composed so that the LEGOS themselves protested against the company. By staging protests at
different locations in the world, were LEGO men are posing as Greenpeace activists made it
look like the message came from the inside of the company, that the will of the LEGO’s were to
end the relationship with Shell.

9.2.4 Photographs of protest activities: Protest outside gas station
There are two images in this category that will be analysed separately. Image four (attachment 3)
shows a protest scene outside a shell stations. There are three men dressed up as LEGO figures
standing on each side of three large white LEGO blocks with an apparently tired polar bear
sitting on them. The bear is sitting with its legs hanging loosely, the head is bent down and an
arm resting on the highest block. The text on the blocs is in Spanish and it reads “LEGO rompé
to acuerdo con shell” (translation: LEGO, end the deal with Shell) and by the polar bears feet it
a Greenpeace logo is visible. There is a banner in the background with the Shell logo, dripping
oil and the LEGO logo. There are huge LEGO bricks that are placed on the road and around
the station so that no one can drive in or out. These bricks are symbolic for the campaign
message #blockshell. The presence of the LEGO men standing in front of them implies that the
LEGO men are the ones that have put up the blocks to Shell. The polar bear and the white
LEGOS are a reference to the arctic in when taking the context into consideration. The
polar bear represents a victim of climate change, and now possibly an artic oil spill as
Greenpeace has emphasized in their save the arctic campaigns. The posture of the polar bear
also indicates that it is being affected negatively by the changes around it. Once again there are
protesters are in the form of LEGO figures. The LEGO figures are the ones that have put up
roadblocks to Shell. This makes it look like the message is coming from within the organisation,
that the LEGO men which symbolizes the LEGO brand is the ones asking and protesting for a
change within.

The second picture (image 5, attachment 3) is illustrating another protest, which Greenpeace
staged inside LEGOLAND. All the shell logos on the gas station are switched out with the
campaign logos. Two Greenpeace LEGO men are hanging from the roof of the station on each
side of a big banner saying “SAVE THE ARCTIC, STOP SHELL, GREENPEACE”. In front of the gas pump there are two white teddy bears that are dirty with oil. The image gives this impression as the bears are in the context of a protest against an oil company. Their white fur makes them to be perceived as polar bears. This is also readable from the context as the polar bear is used as a symbol for the victims of global warming and a possible arctic oil spill. As with the pictures analysed above, this message is also coming from LEGO men. But in this situation the location amplifies the meaning. The citizens of LEGOLAND is standing up and protesting for their land to be Shell free. This is again relatable to the metaphor that frames the LEGO group as the state. The LEGO men are the citizens of the LEGOLAND and not listening or taking your citizens wishes’ into consideration would be a demonstration against democratic principals.

The images of protests activities used by the media are staged so that it looks like the demand is coming from inside the company. This frames LEGO as a state that possibly oppress its citizens.

9.3 Is everything awesome in public relations academia?

The analysis showed how LEGO was framed in the images, but the thesis has the goal to put this into a bigger academic context. The analysis of the empirical data has shown how Greenpeace has framed LEGO through their campaign. According to Coombs & Holladay (2012) activist can gain leverage by exposing corporate behaviour that is not in accordance with stakeholder expectations. In the campaign Greenpeace has framed the issue to communicate that LEGO does not care for the opinions of the stakeholders. In the background LEGO’s CSR policies were presented. Their values to promote creativity and kids imagination, to protect the environment, were used against them in the video and the images. Greenpeace made it look like they did not listen to their own stakeholders, that they were not living up to their own promises by letting them drown in Shells polluting oil. The effectiveness of these activist PR measures is illustrated by the fact that LEGO gave in. Grunig’s excellence theory is based on the belief that “…[D]ialogue, listening, understanding, and relationship building … are more effective in resolving conflict” Grunig, 2001, p. 18. But for Greenpeace, in this case, none of these measures lead to the successful results. The images rather attacked LEGO’s weak point, and influenced it to change through persuasion. The case study is more in compliance with Coombs & Holladay’s (2012) Excellence dialectic. LEGO considered Greenpeace’s wishes, which they expressed through asymmetrical communication. According to this dialectic a power balance is supposed to be achieved through this process, but the case study rather exemplifies that Greenpeace gained a power position over LEGO by framing the corporation the way they did in their public
relations activities. The manner in which Greenpeace framed LEGO is not in agreement with the excellence theories notion of right PR practise.
10 Conclusion and further research

The analysis of image 1-5 (attachment 3) has given insight to how Greenpeace framed LEGO during the campaign. First of all they made it look like the message came from within LEGO, that the message was a plead from their own. They associated LEGO with Greenpeace making it look like the LEGO figures were environmental fighters, the David against the goliath, in the struggle for justice. The struggle for justice was symbolized through the act of protesting. By getting these images into mainstream media coverage the activist organisation managed to make it look like the “little men” were speaking up against a higher power. The LEGO group became the almighty state in these pictures, and the protesting figures were the people standing up for their case. As the LEGO group had the power to make changes, as the do state in society, ignoring the wishes of “its people” might have given the company a reputation for being the stereotypical “Lord Business” (reference to the LEGO movie, attachment 5). The visually appealing pictures of protest activities that were picked up by the media, framed LEGO in much of the same way they framed the bad guy in their own movie, one that was not willing to change or to listen to the wishes of “the people”. But than again, Lord Business changed his ways in the movie finally, just as the LEGO group did in the end.

The campaign video frames LEGO as a passive actor that stands by and watches as the future generations inheritance gets destroyed. The movie uses strong images and symbols to communicate that LEGO’s partnership with Shell is both bad for the environment and also bad for kids’ imagination and development. The products of kids’ imaginations drowns alongside the kids themselves. The contrast in the song expresses that LEGO lives in an illusion, just as Emmet did in the LEGO movie. The message at the end urges people to make LEGO emerge from this illusion, and to end the partnership because outside the illusion everything is not awesome.

The elements communicated by Greenpeace through the images picked up by the media shows that they have used many symbols which become meaningful on another level when put into context. The images framed LEGO as a passive bystander living in an illusion that everything is awesome. The company was also framed by the protesting figures to be a powerful institution that oppresses the wishes’ of its stakeholders. Greenpeace used LEGO figures as symbols for those stakeholders, giving the impression that they want the company to change. What is clear is that Greenpeace does not shy away from utilizing strong measures in their public relations.
communication. Crying children drowning in oil and a mini LEGO revolution are evidence of this.

This case study is an example of a negotiation situation between a NGO and a corporation. These types of negotiation situations are the basis of the dispute, identified in the problem definition, in public relations scholarship. Grunig (2001) said that:

*In my conceptualization, by contrast, symmetrical public relations does not take place in an ideal situation where competing interest come together with goodwill to resolve their differences because they share a goal of social equilibrium and harmony. Rather, it takes place in situations where groups come together to protect and enhance their self-interests. Argumentation, debate and persuasion take place. But dialogue, listening, understanding, and relationship building also occur because they are more effective in resolving conflict that are one-way attempts at compliance gaining (Grunig, 2001, p. 18)*

The result of this study can conclude if the conflict resolving in this given situation was based on argumentation, debate and persuasion, dialog, listening, understanding and relationship building. Grunig (2001) say that this situation is more efficient for conflict resolving, this was from a corporate point of view. This case study shows that how a NGO operates when trying to influence a corporation, and it is evident that it is not based on the principals of The Excellence theory or two-way symmetrical communication. Greenpeace used visual appealing images to achieve media coverage and thus get the attention of the broader publics. They composed these images in a way that framed LEGO as one, a possible oppression corporation, and two, someone that did not care for the future of the children. The public relations tools that Greenpeace used to make LEGO change, was based on persuasion through images by creating a situation that could have changed the reputation of the corporation for the worse. Brand Finance made a comment on this in their description of LEGO in their latest report on the most powerful brands:

“2014 saw a brush with controversy when Greenpeace protesters challenged Lego over its partnership with Shell. Greenpeace created its own Lego video, with a mournful version of the Lego Movie theme song played over scenes of Shell’s alleged destruction of the arctic. The virality of similar videos that has been such a boon for the brand was used against it. Lego wisely chose not to renew its Shell partnership, diffusing the negative publicity and reputational impact.” (Brand Finance, 2015)
Media explosion is a reputational risk for corporations and Greenpeace used this with no apparent evidence of dialog, listening, understanding and relationship building. This is where suggestions for further research come in.

The case study is an example showing how a NGO can use images to gain media attention and thus affect corporate reputation. Further studies could try to identify what measures can be taken to create images that will be picked up and used by mainstream media. A discursive perspective can be applied to see how the images can use the current trends and agendas to gain attention from media. Another suggestion is to look at other media channels. How do social media and Internet forums impact the spreading of a campaign? Critical theory could also be used to study power negotiation regarding hegemony. How do civil society mediate and challenge the common beliefs that are accepted in the public discourse? It would be interesting to get more general knowledge of activists public relations, a study that researches a bigger amount of campaigns would contribute to a deeper understanding of how activists in general work to gain influence in society.

In context to the broader conclusion of this thesis further studies should apply critical theory. Public relations is no longer a tool reserved for corporations with deep pockets. The case of LEGO and Greenpeace showed that the mainstream theory in public relation excludes the activist perspective, it does not consider that asymmetrical communication actually might be the most effective option for activist organisations. Activists operate with a different moral ground than corporations, and because of this they use measures that are neither ethical nor symmetrical from the Excellence point of view. Further studies can try to develop models that use the activist position as its point of view. How can activist use public relations tools to persuade bigger corporations, or the state, to change their ways? Critical theory should be applied to address the terms of power, persuasion, and advocacy in the negotiation situation both to get a deeper understanding of the structures and workings of society and for practical purposes. Semiotics worked well in this case study, and it might as well work well in other cases. As the case study results showed that the power negotiation between Greenpeace and LEGO did not happen in accordance with The Excellence theory, a conclusion can be drawn. The theory falls short and cannot conceptualize all aspects of a negation situation. The measures Greenpeace used were successful in this case and this shows that Excellent public relations may be achieved through other measures than dialog, listening, understanding and relationship building. Critical theory
needs to become apart of public relations so that the scholarship may evolve to also include activist measures and persuasive tactics.
11 Implications for society and business

This thesis exemplifies how an activist group uses public relation tools to influence corporations. It can have implications for both corporations and activists. Corporations have to consider the possibility that an activist group can use the same type of measures to affect their reputation, and they have to consider the impact it might have for their own business. Business should not expect activist organisations, illustrated by this Greenpeace case study, to operate what they look upon as ethical public relations. The activist will not necessary invite to dialogue but might attack the weak point of the organisation.

This study has an academic impact as it concludes that public relations need to evolve and develop its intellectual domain. The thesis does not state that the Excellence theory is out-dated but rather that other perspectives are needed to understand different study objects. The academic field should incorporate critical theory in different forms, and it should consider that not all public relation actors operates with the same moral ground and therefore not with the same ethical responsibilities.
12 References


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13 Attachments

13.1 Attachment 1: Code schema

Variable 1 – image type

1. First campaign video – watch directly
2. First campaign video – hyperlinked
3. Second campaign video
4. Other video related to campaign
5. Image taken from first campaign video
6. GIF taken from first campaign video
7. Image taken from second campaign video
8. Photograph of protest activity
9. Other image illustrating Greenpeace PR activities
10. Photograph LEGOLAND
11. Photograph other
12. Image taken from LEGO movie
13. Drawing
14. Other Video
Variables related to LEGO

Variable 2- Lego figures
1. Present
2. Not present

Variable 3 – Lego Bricks
1. Present
2. Not present

Variable 4 - LEGOLAND
1. Present
2. Not present

Variable 5 – Lego logo
1. Present
2. Not present

Variable 6 – LEGO child
1. Present
2. Not present

Variable 7 – LEGO Santa Claus
1. Present
2. Not present

Variable 8 – Fantasy figures
1. Present
2. Not present

Variable 9 – LEGO representative
1. Present
2. Not present

Variable 10 – Playing figures
1. Present
2. Not present

Variable 11 – Crying/ sad figure
1. Present 2. Not present

Variable 12 – LEGO movie features
1. Present 2. Not present

Variable 13 – LEGO movie characters
1. Present 2. Not present

Variable 14 – Figures drowning in oil
1. Present 2. Not present

Variables related to Shell

Variable 15 – Shell logo
1. Present 2. Not present

Variable 16 – Oil
1. Present 2. Not present

Variable 17 – Gas station
1. Present 2. Not present

Variable 18 – Oilrig
1. Present 2. Not present

Variable 19 - Equipment/machines
1. Present 2. Not present

Variable 20 – Shell workers
1. Present 2. Not present
Variables related to the arctic

Variable 21 – Polar bear
1. Present 2. Not present

Variable 22 - Fox
1. Present 2. Not present

Variable 23 - Whales
1. Present 2. Not present

Variable 24 - Birds
1. Present 2. Not present

Variable 25 - Eskimos
1. Present 2. Not present

Variable 26 - Wolf
1. Present 2. Not present

Variable 27 – Arctic landscape
1. Present 2. Not present

Variables related to Greenpeace and the campaign

Variable 28 – Protesting Figures
1. Lego figures 3. Children
2. Not present 4. Adults

Variable 29 – Greenpeace logo
1. Present 2. Not present

Variable 30 – Campaign logo
1. Present 2. Not present
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable 31 – Banners with Greenpeace logo</th>
<th>1. Present</th>
<th>2. Not present</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variable 32 – Banners with campaign slogans/messages</td>
<td>1. Present</td>
<td>2. Not present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable 33 – Banners with campaign logo</td>
<td>1. Present</td>
<td>2. Not present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable 34 – Campaign messages</td>
<td>1. Present</td>
<td>2. Not present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13.2 Attachment 2: Coding Instructions

General instructions

1. All units (screenshots of images used in media coverage) are saved with a number that matches the unit number in SPSS.
2. One image is counted as one unit.
3. Only elements visual at first look is identified as present elements. If you have to zoom in to see an element it is classified as not present.
4. Elements that are blurry or in the background but still a hundred present readable (the reader can identify what it is) is counted as present

Variable 1 – image type

15. First campaign video – watch directly
16. First campaign video – hyperlinked
17. Second campaign video
18. Other video related to campaign
19. Image taken from first campaign video
20. GIF taken from first campaign video
   (*GIFS are counted as images taken from first video in SPSS analysis*)
21. Image taken from second campaign video
22. Photograph of protest activity
23. Other image illustrating Greenpeace PR activities
24. Photograph LEGOLAND-
   *images that are taken in LEGOLAND but that illustrates a protest activity counts as “8. Image of protest activity” not photograph of LEGOLAND*
25. Photograph other
26. Image taken from LEGO movie
27. Drawing
Variables related to LEGO

Variable 2 - LEGO figures
*People dressed up as LEGO men count as present, BUT NOT painted pictures/drawings of LEGO*

3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 3 – LEGO Bricks

3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 4 – LEGOLAND
*The oilrig and the Shell gas station that has real LEGO men (not dressed up protesters or drawings) or LEGO bricks are taken from LEGOLAND, and thus LEGOLAND count as present in these images.*

3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 5 – LEGO logo
*Only the LEGO logo counts, not words that writes lego.*

3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 6 – LEGO child

3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 7 – LEGO Santa Claus

3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 8 – Fantasy figures
*Figures that are known from fantasy movies, fairytales etc. EXCLUDED Santa clause or from the LEGO movie.*

3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 9 – LEGO representative

3. Present 4. Not present
Variable 10 – Playing figures
3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 11 – Crying/ sad figure
3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 12 – LEGO movie features
3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 13 – LEGO movie characters
3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 14 – Figures drowning in oil
Figures and landscape that are about to drown in oil, or are drowning is identified if it looks like there is flowing oil on the ground towards them or swallowing them. This is assumed when looking at pictures in context of the campaign movie.
3. Present 4. Not present

Variables related to Shell

Variable 15 – Shell logo
Same as for the LEGO logo, only the exact shell logo. The shell logo with oil dropping from it is identified as Shell logo as well, as long as its form is not modified.
3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 16 – Oil
All representations of oil count, the oil that is flowing in the video, oil that is painted on logos or walls, etc.
3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 17 – Gas station
Both real gas stations and LEGO gas stations
3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 18 – Oilrig
Both real oilrigs and LEGO oilrig
3. Present 4. Not present
Variable 19 - Equipment/machines
Includes sponsored cars with Shell logo.

3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 20 – Shell workers
This includes the man with the cigar in the campaign video that stands on the oil platform. If any figure is standing on an oil platform, using Shell equipment or machines without engaging in protest activities or wearing a red Greenpeace suit they will be counted as Shell workers.

3. Present 4. Not present

Variables related to the arctic

Variable 21 – Polar bear
Real polar bears, people dressed up as polar bears, drawings/illustrations of polar bears, polar bear teddy bears, LEGO figure polar bears: all counted as present

3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 22 - Fox
3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 23 - Whales
3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 24 - Birds
3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 25 - Eskimos
3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 26 - Wolf
3. Present 4. Not present

Variable 27 – Arctic landscape (ice, icebergs, snow)
Includes white LEGO bricks that aims to illustrate arctic landscape

3. Present 4. Not present
Variables related to Greenpeace and the campaign

Variable 28 – Protesting Figures
If both adults and children are present in the image the unit will be counted according to the group consistent of the biggest number of people. If there are more children than adults the unit will be counted as “3. Children”.

5. Lego figures
6. Not present
7. Children
8. Adults

Variable 29 – Greenpeace logo (exclusive on banners)

3. Present
4. Not present

Variable 30 – Campaign logo (exclusive on banners)

3. Present
4. Not present

Variable 31 – Banners with Greenpeace logo

3. Present
4. Not present

Variable 32 – Banners with campaign slogans/messages

3. Present
4. Not present

Variable 33 – Banners with campaign logo

3. Present
4. Not present

Variable 34 – Campaign messages (not on banners)

3. Present
4. Not present

Campaign logo is identified as the half shell, half polar bear logo or the modified shell logo with “devil” born
13.3 Attachment 3: Selection from category “photographs of protest activity”

**LEGO MEN DROWN IN OIL IN GREENPEACE CAMPAIGN**

This story was originally published by Forbes

*The latest instalment in Greenpeace’s ‘Save the Arctic’ campaign shows Lego men succumbing to overpowered oil.*

Emma Mackenzie

Protest image 1
Greenpeace pide que Lego rompa su alianza con petrolera Shell

Al asociarse con Shell, Lego está poniendo las ganancias por encima de su compromiso con el medioambiente y el futuro de los niños.
"El mejor compromiso de LEGO con los niños es desarmar definitivamente este acuerdo con Shell y

Protest image 4

Endnu en gang har Greenpeace-aktivister forceret heget i Legoland uden for åbningstid og anbragt små Lego-figurer og bannere ved Shell-stationen. Foto: Greenpeace

Greenpeace fortsætter protesten

Publiceret: 07.08.2014 09:29

Protest image 5
13.4 Attachment 4: Selection from category “Images taken from first campaign video”
En el video se muestran animales y personas del Ártico afectados por una ola de petróleo. (Captura de YouTube)

Video image 2

Video image 3
Video image 4
13.5 Attachment 5: The LEGO Movie Storyline

This storyline is taken from the movie and TV show website IBDM.com:
http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1490017/synopsis?ref_=ttpl_pl_syn

“The wizard Vitruvius attempts to protect the "Kragle", a superweapon, from the evil Lord Business. He fails to do so, but warns Lord Business of a prophecy where a person called the "Special" will find the Piece of Resistance capable of stopping the Kragle.

8 and a half years later, Emmet Joe Brickowski, an ordinary construction worker with no special qualities, comes across a woman, Wyldstyle, who is searching for something after hours at Emmet's construction site. When he investigates, Emmet falls into a hole and finds the Piece of Resistance. Compelled to touch it, Emmet experiences vivid visions and passes out. He awakens elsewhere, with the Piece of Resistance attached to his back, in the custody of Bad Cop, Lord Business' lieutenant (whose head sometimes turns around to reveal his other side, Good Cop). There, Emmet learns Business' plans to destroy the world with the Kragle. Wyldstyle rescues Emmet and takes him to Vitruvius, who explains that he and Wyldstyle are "Master Builders" capable of building anything they need, both with great speed and without instruction manuals. Years ago, Lord Business rose to power, his disapproval of such anarchic creativity resulting in him capturing many of them. As the "Special", Emmet is destined to defeat him, yet Wyldstyle and Vitruvius are disappointed to find Emmet displays no creativity.

Lord Business plans to use the Kragle (a tube of Krazy Glue with some of the logo's letters rubbed out) to freeze the universe perfectly in place. Bad Cop tracks down Emmet and Wyldstyle, who are rescued by her boyfriend, Batman. He takes them to a meeting of the remaining Master Builders. Unimpressed with Emmet, they refuse to fight Lord Business. Bad Cop and his forces attack and capture all the Master Builders except for Emmet and a few others. Emmet believes the Master Builders' weakness is that their individual creativity prevents them from working together. He devises a team plan to infiltrate Lord Business' headquarters. As Emmet and his allies are captured and imprisoned, Vitruvius attempts to fight back but is killed; with his dying words he admits the prophecy was made up. Business throws the Piece of Resistance off the edge of the universe, sets his headquarters to self-destruct, and leaves with the Kragle while leaving Bad Cop behind. Vitruvius' ghost tells Emmet that even if the prophecy
isn't real, Emmet can still save the world. Emmet, tied to the self-destruct mechanism's battery, sacrifices himself for his friends, flinging himself off the edge of the universe.

Inspired, the Master Builders escape and rally with the help of Bad Cop. Soon, Lego people across the universe are building their own creative weapons. The Master Builders lead the charge against Business.

Emmet finds himself in the real world, where the events of the story are being played out within the imagination of a boy, Finn. His father "The Man Upstairs" chastises his son for ruining his father's Lego set by mixing characters with the wrong playsets, and originating hodgepodge creations. Finn argues that Lego are for children, but his father prefers to Krazy Glue his perceived perfect creations together permanently, as this is how adults play with Lego. In the Lego world, Lord Business' forces gain the upper hand. Realizing the father will glue all the Lego in place, Emmet wills himself to move and falls off the table, gaining Finn's attention. Finn returns Emmet to the Lego set, where Emmet builds a massive robot to assist his friends before confronting Lord Business. In the real world, Finn's father looks at his son's creations again and finds himself impressed. Realizing his son based the evil Lord Business on him, the father has a change of heart and allows his son to play with his Lego however he sees fit. In the Lego world, Emmet convinces Lord Business that Business, too, is special, as is everyone. Moved by Emmet's speech, Business destroys the Kragle and unfreezes his victims.

With the world saved, Emmet celebrates with his friends, and Wyldstyle, whose real name is Lucy, becomes his girlfriend. However, alien Duplo beings beam down, announcing their intentions to invade, due to the father allowing Finn's little sister to play with his Lego set as well. Then at the end they get captured by the Duplo toys."