

Cambridge University Press

0521607868 - The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media, and International Activism

Clifford Bob

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

The Marketing of Rebellion

How do a few political movements challenging Third World states become global causes célèbres, whereas most remain isolated and obscure? *The Marketing of Rebellion* rejects the common view that needy groups readily gain help from selfless nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Even in the Internet age, insurgents face a Darwinian struggle for scarce international resources – and, to succeed, they must aggressively market themselves. To make this argument, Clifford Bob systematically compares two recent movements that attracted major NGO support, Mexico’s Zapatista rebels and Nigeria’s Ogoni ethnic group, against similar movements that failed to do so. Based on primary document analysis and more than 45 interviews with local activists and NGO leaders, the author shows that support goes to the savviest, not the neediest. *The Marketing of Rebellion* develops a realistic, organizational perspective on social movements, NGOs, and “global civil society.” It will change how the weak solicit help, the powerful pick clients, and all of us think about contemporary world politics.

Clifford Bob is Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science and the Graduate School of Social and Public Policy at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh. He specializes in transnational politics, social movements, human rights, and ethnic conflict. His published work includes articles in *Foreign Policy*, *Social Problems*, *International Politics*, *American Journal of International Law*, *Journal of Human Rights*, and *PS: Political Science & Politics*.

Cambridge University Press

0521607868 - The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media, and International Activism

Clifford Bob

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge Studies in Contentious Politics

Editors

Doug McAdam *Stanford University and Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences*

Sidney Tarrow *Cornell University*

Charles Tilly *Columbia University*

Ronald Aminzade et al., *Silence and Voice in the Study of Contentious Politics*

Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*

Jack A. Goldstone, ed., *States, Parties, and Social Movements*

Charles Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence*

Charles Tilly, *Contention and Democracy in Europe, 1650–2000*

Charles D. Brockett, *Political Movements and Violence in Central America*

Deborah J. Yashar, *Contesting Citizenship in Latin America*

Gerald F. Davis et al., *Social Movements and Organization Theory*

Cambridge University Press

0521607868 - The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media, and International Activism

Clifford Bob

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

The Marketing of Rebellion

INSURGENTS, MEDIA, AND
INTERNATIONAL ACTIVISM

CLIFFORD BOB

Duquesne University



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
0521607868 - The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media, and International Activism
Clifford Bob
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521845700

© Clifford Bob 2005

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2005

Printed in the United States of America

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Bob, Clifford, 1958–
The marketing of rebellion : insurgents, media, and international activism / Clifford Bob.
p. cm. – (Cambridge studies in contentious politics)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0-521-84570-X (hardback) – ISBN 0-521-60786-8 (pbk.)
1. Insurgency. 2. Government, Resistance to. 3. Human rights – Cross-cultural studies. 4. International relief. 5. Non-governmental organizations. 6. Public relations. 7. Mass media. 8. Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (Mexico)
9. Ogoni (African people) – Government relations. I. Title. II. Series.
JC328.5.B63 2005
322.4 – dc22 2004024987

ISBN-13 978-0-521-84570-0 hardback
ISBN-10 0-521-84570-X hardback
ISBN-13 978-0-521-60786-5 paperback
ISBN-10 0-521-60786-8 paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Internet Web sites referred to in this book and does not guarantee that any content on such Web sites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press

0521607868 - The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media, and International Activism

Clifford Bob

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

To Joan

Contents

<i>Maps and Tables</i>	<i>page</i> x
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi
1 INSURGENT GROUPS AND THE QUEST FOR OVERSEAS SUPPORT	1
2 POWER, EXCHANGE, AND MARKETING	14
3 FROM ETHNIC TO ENVIRONMENTAL CONFLICT: NIGERIA'S OGONI MOVEMENT	54
4 THE MAKING OF AN ANTIGLOBALIZATION ICON: MEXICO'S ZAPATISTA UPRISING	117
5 TRANSNATIONAL MARKETING AND WORLD POLITICS	178
APPENDIX 1: NGO STANDARDS FOR SUPPORTING LOCAL MOVEMENTS	197
APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEWS	201
<i>Bibliography</i>	207
<i>Index</i>	227

Maps and Tables

Maps

3.1 Selected Ethnolinguistic Groups of the Niger River Delta	<i>page</i> 57
4.1 Chiapas	122

Tables

2.1 Movement Strategies for Attracting NGO Support	22
2.2 Structural Factors Affecting Success of Movement Strategies	44

Cambridge University Press

0521607868 - The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media, and International Activism

Clifford Bob

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgments

My debts in this project are great. First, I thank the many activists I interviewed from various movements and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). They gave me extraordinary access to their viewpoints and files even as most accepted my offer to maintain their anonymity in this book. If I have achieved my goal of writing a realistic explanatory account of transnational networking, this is in large measure due to the openness of my sources. If my view is more skeptical of movements and NGOs than most existing scholarship, this is a tribute to their highly strategic approaches. I believe that transnational movements and NGOs offer valuable counterpoints to a global politics dominated by state and corporate interests. Yet to help these alternative actors reach their promise, one must take an unsentimental view of their operations. It is not enough to extol them as “moral” forces while refusing to scrutinize their interactions with each other and the public. I seek to offer a critical yet constructive perspective that not only illuminates these important interactions for scholars but also helps the local movements seeking aid and the NGOs distributing it.

Friends and mentors contributed much to this project. At the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where the book started as a doctoral thesis, I thank the late Myron Weiner for his enthusiasm and broad learning, Stephen Van Evera for his generative skepticism and championship of clear writing, and, most important, Daniel Kryder for his encouragement, strategic advice about theses, books, and jobs, and knowledge of the social movements literature. All of them read early versions of the manuscript and gave me detailed comments. Friends and faculty members also provided generous feedback and encouragement when the book was in its earliest stages. I thank Karen Alter, Eva Bellin, Amy Gurowitz, Brian Hanson, Richard Joseph, Daniel Lindley, Richard Samuels, Frank Schwartz, Taylor

Cambridge University Press

0521607868 - The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media, and International Activism

Clifford Bob

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgments

Seybolt, and Steve Wilkinson. For allowing me to stay with them during a research trip to London, I thank Norman Letalik and my great aunt Lottie Levy. At the John F. Kennedy School of Government, I received not only office space and computer equipment but also new viewpoints (and job interview tips) from Sean Lynn-Jones, Steven Miller, Michael Brown, and Samantha Power. In addition, I thank two anonymous reviewers at Cambridge University Press and one at Cornell University Press for their incisive and helpful criticisms.

At Duquesne University, I have benefited greatly from the friendship and support of faculty in the Political Science Department and the Graduate Center on Social and Public Policy. The McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts and the university as a whole have backed my research with grants from the Wimmer Family Foundation Faculty Development Fund and the Presidential Scholarship Fund. Faculty who have been particularly helpful include Charles Rubin, Richard Colignon, and Sharon Erickson Nepstad. Students in my graduate and undergraduate classes have also contributed to my thinking. Beyond the bounds of my institutional affiliations, other scholars have generously offered encouragement, ideas, and in some cases close readings over the many years of this project's gestation. Among them are Rogers Brubaker, Alison Brysk, Jeffrey Checkel, Bernard Finel, Jonathan Fox, Thomas M. Franck, Betty Hanson, Daniel Lev, John Markoff, Jackie Smith, Sidney Tarrow, Paul Wapner, and Michael Watts. In addition, I thank Thomas Olesen for permission to use a portion of an interview from his book *International Zapatismo*.

My research has appealed to audiences across the narrow bounds of academic disciplines, not only in political science but also in sociology, communications, and public policy. I have therefore had the privilege of presenting my arguments at diverse conferences and workshops where pointed comments broadened my perspectives and renewed my interest in the project. In addition to regular disciplinary gatherings in political science, international affairs, and sociology, I am particularly grateful for invitations to speak at the Cornell University/Syracuse University Workshop on Transnational Contention, the University of Connecticut Human Rights Initiative, Duke University's Comparative Politics Workshop, the University of Pittsburgh's Social Movements Forum, the University of California, Santa Cruz's conference on "Human Rights, Globalization and Civil Society Actors," the University of California, Irvine's conference on "Globalization and Human Rights," and Smith College. Of particular help was the Social Science

Cambridge University Press

0521607868 - The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media, and International Activism

Clifford Bob

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgments

Research Council/American Council of Learned Societies conference on “Rethinking Social Science Research on the Developing World in the 21st Century.”

Foreign Policy magazine published a brief version of my arguments under the title “Merchants of Morality” as the cover story in its March/April 2002 issue. In their zeal to market the magazine, however, the senior editors distorted the article’s argument with cover photographs and language, as well as a summary blurb in the table of contents, that I had no hand in writing or designing. These did not reflect my findings, most importantly by implying that local movements “bull[y]” their way to international support. I was informed of the cover less than a week before the issue began circulating and did not see the blurb until I received a printed copy of the magazine. The issue was later one of three that *Foreign Policy* submitted in winning a 2003 National Magazine Award for Editorial Excellence. Ironically, then, the editors’ “spin” on my arguments may have helped the magazine win this prestigious award. I hope this book will clarify my views.

The financial support of several institutions has been critical to the completion of this project. I thank the Smith Richardson Foundation International Security and Foreign Policy Junior Faculty Program, the United States Institute of Peace, the John F. Kennedy School of Government’s Human Rights Initiative, the Albert Einstein Institution, the Harvard-MIT MacArthur Transnational Security Program, and the Social Science Research Council/American Council of Learned Societies.

Although my debts to these individuals and institutions are many, all of the views expressed here are my own, and I take full responsibility for errors.

Finally, my family has supported me wholeheartedly throughout the long years of graduate school training and writing this book. My mother, Renate Bob, and my late father, Murray Bob, have been an inspiration, with their warmth, generosity, intellectual curiosity, and skeptical attitude toward received wisdom. I only wish that I had completed this book in time for my father to see it. My in-laws, Ludmila Miles and the late Richard Miles, were also extremely helpful to me and my family over the years. My children, Alex and Natalie, have been a joy, providing endless fun and diversions as they have grown. Our skiing, biking, camping, and playing together refreshed me for the hard work of thinking and writing that went into this book. My wife, Joan Miles, deserves my special thanks. Early in our marriage, just after the birth of our first child, she supported my decision

Cambridge University Press

0521607868 - The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media, and International Activism

Clifford Bob

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgments

to leave the security of law practice for the vagaries of the academic world. Throughout my years of study and research, her humor, support, patience, and love have been essential. And without her cheerful willingness to move our young family from New York to Boston and then to Pittsburgh at the cost of her own job as a lawyer, I could not have finished my work. This book is dedicated to her.

Cambridge University Press

0521607868 - The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media, and International Activism

Clifford Bob

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

The Marketing of Rebellion