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This paper investigates the coverage of pro-Palestinian protests at Columbia University by The Columbia Daily Spectator from April 17 to May 17, 2024. The paper analyzes 143 reports, focusing on the language, narratives, and perspectives presented to understand how the campus media narrates the protest movement and shapes public discourse. Employing narrative analysis method, the findings reveal that the newspaper primarily adopts a chronological reporting style, vividly depicting the students' commitment and urgency.

Keywords: campus media; narrative analysis method; pro-palestine protest movements; the columbia daily spectator.

Classification: LCC Code: PN4784.C15

Language: English

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I.   INTRODUCTION

On October 7, 2023, Hamas launched an unprecedented attack on Israel, prompting a two-month retaliatory operation by Israel in the Gaza Strip. This conflict not only caused significant turmoil and tension in the Middle East but also ignited fierce debates in American university campuses and public opinion. Israel's military actions against Hamas in Gaza resulted in numerous civilian casualties, leading to growing dissatisfaction with Israel and the Jewish community among Americans. Protesters have called for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza and for the US to halt its military aid to Israel.

Although there have been sporadic protests on American campuses calling for a ceasefire and supporting Palestine since the outbreak of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the recent protest at Columbia University sparked a wave of similar actions across the nation. On April 17, a pro-Palestinian protest erupted at Columbia University, where students set up tents on campus

to call for the university to divest from companies linked to Israel. The protest was jointly initiated by the Columbia University Apartheid Divest (CUAD), Students for Justice in Palestine and Jewish Voice for Peace. Subsequently, the university administration chose to involve the police, citing the violation of regulations prohibiting unauthorized demonstrations. When the police arrived, they demanded that the students disperse. Upon their refusal, the police proceeded to arrest them. Columbia University President Minouche Shafik authorized the Police Department to dismantle the protesters' tents. However, this move backfired, prompting more protesters to gather on campus and inspiring similar protests at other universities across the country. To quell the situation, Shafik announced on April 22 that in-person classes would be suspended and moved online until the protests subside. According to several American media outlets, about 80 protest tents remained on Columbia's campus as of April 24. On that day, U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson appeared at Columbia University, condemning the protest as "mob rule" and stating that the National Guard would be deployed if necessary. He also decried the "virus" of the protest on American campuses and expressed support for Jewish students, stating that Israeli and Jewish students on campus will not be left isolated.

Students at other prestigious American universities have also been staging large-scale pro-Palestinian gatherings, setting up camps on campus and displaying a stance of long-term resistance. On numerous campuses, pro-Palestinian students and faculty members have openly expressed dissatisfaction with the U.S. government's favoritism towards Israel. Yale University students protested, demanding Yale cease investments in Israel and end various academic partnerships. The number of participating universities is growing, with the movement even spilling over into other countries. Outside the US, at least 20 universities in Australia, Germany, France and the UK have launched anti-war demonstrations in solidarity with American students.

Columbia University is the origin and epicenter of this wave of protests. The demands of the pro-Palestinian students include the university condemning Israel's attacks on Gaza, severing financial ties with Israel, such as divesting from companies that sell weapons to Israel, disclosing investments in companies that support Israel's military actions in Gaza, and recognizing their right to protest without repercussions and punishment. Protestors have also called for academic boycotts of Israel, such as ending partnerships with Israeli universities and establishing new programs for Palestinian studies.

Many of the protests are driven by opposition to Israeli government policies and actions in Gaza, rather than an inherent opposition to Jewish people. Protesters often emphasize human rights and solidarity with Palestinian civilians. It is crucial to differentiate between anti-Zionism (opposition to the political ideology supporting a Jewish national state in Palestine) and anti-Semitism (hostility or prejudice against Jewish people). Conflating the two can obscure legitimate criticisms of Israeli policies.

However, the wave of pro-Palestinian movements sweeping American universities has evolved into an "antisemitism movement" that has made headlines worldwide. Many American politicians continue to label these protests as "antisemitism" and claim that there are "external agitators" behind the activities, threatening to punish students and organizers severely. It seems that some politicians and media outlets intentionally use the highly politically charged term "antisemitism" to describe this movement, equating opposition to U.S. support for Israel with opposition to Jewish people. This appears to be a case of conceptual slippery, exacerbating tensions and potentially delegitimizing the movement.

Media report plays a significant role in shaping public perception. By using the term "antisemitism," media outlets can frame the protests in a way that emphasizes hostility toward Jewish people rather than focusing on the political and humanitarian issues raised by the protesters. Equating criticism of Israel with antisemitism can stifle legitimate discourse and

critique of state actions. This can mobilize public opinion against the protesters and shift the narrative away from the issues they aim to highlight.

The Columbia Daily Spectator, the student-run newspaper of Columbia University, stands as a prominent voice within the campus community, providing coverage and commentary on a wide range of social and political issues. It serves as a lens through which campus events and movements are interpreted and disseminated to a diverse readership. *The Spectator*, with its extensive coverage of campus events and issues, provides a unique vantage point for examining the portrayal of protest movements within the Columbia University community. This paper would like to choose *the Spectator* as the research subject.

This paper aims to explore how *The Spectator* reports this particular movement by analyzing articles, opinion pieces, and editorials related from April 17, 2024, to May 17, 2024, including the language used, the narratives constructed, and the perspectives presented, and tries to find out whether there are differences in coverage focus, narratives, and discourses during this period. By examining these, this study aims to shed light on the role of campus media in shaping public discourse and perceptions of the protest.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This part aims to explore the existing research on the campus media reporting of protest movements, with a particular focus on *The Columbia Daily Spectator*.

2.1 Research on the Protest Movements

Different scholars analyze protest movements from various perspectives. Political analysts and scholars typically focus on the political motives and impacts behind the protests. Studies have shown that media coverage may be influenced by political stances, thus exhibiting specific biases or tendencies in their reporting (Smith, 2015; Johnson, 2017). Social and cultural researchers tend to explore how protest movements reflect and shape social and cultural identities. Protests

are not only political expressions but also manifestations of cultural and identity recognition (Al-Haj, 2018; Said, 2019). Economic factors in protest movements are also significant. Some studies indicate that economic inequality and unequal distribution of resources are key factors driving protests (Fischer, 2016; Harvey, 2014).

Since the spread of protest activities across campuses in the U.S., there has been intense discussion about how higher education institutions balance freedom of speech with the safety and order of students and campuses. Oren Root, a lawyer who served as senior editor of the student newspaper *The Spectator* during the anti-Vietnam War protests at Columbia University in 1968, commented in *The New York Times* that Shafik's decision to involve the police was an "extraordinary misjudgment." He stated, "President Shafik and her advisors clearly did not learn from history; calling in the police was obviously a mistake and the situation was not resolved as a result" (Root, 2023).

In the view of American progressives, Shafik's decision to bring the police onto campus provoked public outrage, making it seem that university campuses could no longer serve as "buffers" for diverse viewpoints. Zach Greenberg, a senior officer at the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE), told CNN that arrests are "drastic measures" that should only be used to address "the most immediate and severe threats." He said, "This action might weaken the trust between the administration and students, who might witness their peers, or even their professors, being arrested by police in riot gear" (Greenberg, 2023).

Some believe that Shafik's congressional summons indicate that some American politicians are actively crafting and utilizing misleading rhetoric to frame campus protests as "anti-Semitic" by leveraging isolated incidents of anti-Semitism against Jewish students. Lauren Rassabee Shepherd, a lecturer at the University of New Orleans School of Education, wrote that bipartisan politicians are relentlessly portraying anyone opposing Israeli military actions as "anti-Semites." These actions are akin to how

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conservative forces in the U.S. during the Cold War linked civil rights activists with communism (Shepherd, 2023).

There are also moderate voices who do not support the Gaza Solidarity Camp protests but believe that characterizing peaceful protests as anti-Semitic is an exaggeration.

2.2 Research on Campus Media Report

From Bogotá to Berlin, Tehran to Paris, scenes of protests and arrests of protesters have made headlines around the world. Mainstream media reports may focus more on the broader impact and national-level reactions to these events. Researchers have analyzed the frameworks and narrative strategies used by mainstream media when reporting similar events (Entman, 1993; Tuchman, 1978). Protests, ranging from small sit-ins and large marches to the current student-led camps, have similar components. For mainstream media, some elements have more news value than others, with confrontation and spectacle often taking precedence. As a result, these elements are reported more frequently than others. For example, in analyzing the protests following George Floyd's murder in 2020, mainstream media such as the Associated Press and cable news headlines focused more on the destruction and chaos rather than police violence or protesters' demands (Klein, 2015).

This is also true for the coverage of the current protest movement. In reports about campus camps, the confrontation between protesters and police has become the core of news coverage (Brown, 2024), rather than focusing on protesters' grievances and demands. Media shapes the way most people understand these events. However, as the coverage of university protests has shown, the focus is often on the spectacle rather than the substantive content. Mainstream media such as *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* often emphasize the conflict and consequences of Pro-Palestine protests (Klein, 2015).

In contrast, non-mainstream media usually adopt more diverse and critical perspectives when reporting on Pro-Palestine protests. For instance,

Abdel-Fattah (2018) studied how independent media covered Pro-Palestine protests and found that these media outlets often focused more on the legitimacy of protesters' demands and actions, rather than merely presenting the conflict (Abdel-Fattah, 2018).

Campus media, such as student-run newspapers, play a crucial role in shaping campus discourse. They provide a platform for diverse voices, foster a culture of debate and critical thinking, and influence student perceptions on various social and political issues. Studies by Harp, Loke, and Bachmann (2010) and Armstrong and Hamilton (2013) emphasize the importance of campus media in reflecting and shaping student activism and opinion. Campus media operates within a unique context. It is both a reflection of the student body and a shaper of campus culture.

The Columbia Daily Spectator, founded in 1877, is one of the oldest continuously published and prominent student newspapers in the U.S. *The Spectator* provides an ideal case for examining how campus media report the protest. By selecting which stories to cover and how to report them, the newspaper can influence readers' perceptions and understanding of these issues. As a campus newspaper, *the Columbia Daily Spectator* may have different reporting methods compared to mainstream media. Studies suggest that non-mainstream media may pay more attention to local issues, community perspectives, and specific group voices (Gitlin, 2003; Atton, 2002). Although specific research on *the Columbia Daily Spectator* is limited, similar studies, such as Dorman's (2020) analysis of other campus newspapers, indicate that these media typically prioritize students' voices and viewpoints over those of the administration (Dorman, 2020).

In general, non-mainstream media tend to focus more on the demands and backgrounds of protesters, while mainstream media are more inclined to focus on the order and potential risks of events. Non-mainstream media often take on the role of expressing marginalized voices and providing alternative perspectives (Gitlin, 1980).

This difference reflects the distinct media frameworks and reporting objectives.

2.3 Research on Current Media Analysis Framework and Coverage Focus

Current research frameworks for media coverage mainly include Construction theory, framing analysis, and agenda-setting theory. Construction theory emphasizes how media construct social reality through reporting, influencing public understanding of events (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Agenda-setting theory explores the role of media in determining the importance of issues (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Framing analysis focuses on how media selectively report and emphasize certain aspects to shape public perceptions and attitudes (Goffman, 1974). Framing is important when an issue can be presented in multiple ways which may potentially influence how people think about an issue (Popkin, 1991; Gamson and Modigliani, 1987). These theoretical frameworks provide powerful tools for understanding media coverage and offer valuable insights for this research. Additionally, mainstream media often employ framing theory and agenda-setting theory to analyze how selective reporting influence public opinion and social perception (Entman, 1993; McCombs & Shaw, 1972).

And existing studies show that media coverage usually revolves around several core focus points, such as the causes, processes and impacts of events. Additionally, the media may focus on the identities, motives, and strategies of protesters (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989).

2.4 Research on Antisemitism

Antisemitism, the prejudice against or hostility towards Jewish people, has a long and troubling history. Wistrich (1991) and Lipstadt (2019) have documented the persistence of antisemitism through various historical periods, from medieval times to contemporary society. Modern antisemitism often manifests in different forms, including stereotyping, conspiracy theories and Holocaust denial. Antisemitism is the irrational, psychologically pathological version of an ethnocentric and religiocentric anti-Judaism that achieved its evil apogee in the Holocaust (Beller, 2015).

One of the most contentious debates in recent years is the distinction between antisemitism and anti-Zionism. Anti-Zionism refers to opposition to the political movement supporting the establishment and maintenance of the state of Israel. Scholars like Judith Butler (2012) and Noam Chomsky (1999) contend that it is crucial to distinguish legitimate political critique from hatred towards Jews, warning against conflating the two to stifle political discourse.

Antisemitism on college campuses is a significant concern (Marcus, 2015; Feldman, 2018). They argue that universities, traditionally seen as bastions of free thought and inclusivity, are not immune to antisemitic incidents. The rise of anti-Israel sentiment, particularly in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, sometimes blurs the line between legitimate political criticism and antisemitism, leading to contentious debates within academic circles. For example, labeling pro-Palestinian movements as antisemitic without clear evidence of anti-Jewish prejudice can delegitimize these movements and distract from their political and humanitarian concerns.

2.5 Research Gap

Although studies have explored the characteristics of mainstream media coverage, research on the reporting methods and impacts of non-mainstream media like *the Columbia Daily Spectator* is relatively scarce. This indicates a significant research gap that needs further exploration. Also, studies have examined media narrating social movements, but they often focus on mainstream media, with less attention given to how student-run campus media portrays controversial social issues, including whether student-run media incorporates diverse voices, reflects students' demands, and how its coverage differs from that of mainstream media outlets when reporting on related events. And the existing studies often fail to fully explore the unique perspectives and methods of non-mainstream media in reporting Pro-Palestine

protests. Given the influence and special status of campus newspapers among student groups, researching their reporting methods and content has important academic value and practical significance. Moreover, compared to other historical events, the current Pro-Palestine protests have unique research potential in the context of global political and social backgrounds, deserving further in-depth exploration. Although there is some research on related protests, as of May 17, there is limited research available because of the ongoing protests. And research focusing on the narrating of protests in campus media, especially in the Spectator is limited.

This research aims to fill this gap by deeply analyzing *the Columbia Daily Spectator*'s coverage to reveal the unique perspectives and strategies of non-mainstream media in reporting the Palestine protest movements.

III. RESEARCH METHOD AND STRUCTURE

This research delves into the qualitative realm due to its focus on understanding the nuanced reporting of protest movements by campus media, particularly *The Columbia Daily Spectator*. Qualitative research is apt for this investigation as it allows for an in-depth exploration of the socio-cultural context, language nuances, and subjective interpretations present in media coverage.

The mass media play an important role in shaping the narratives in news. The media modifies the discourse system of society, shapes how social issues are discussed in the public sphere and may diverge the public attention from some problems and even change the public attitudes towards certain issues or people. Nowadays news goes far beyond an "objective reporting of fact" and has become "a form of storytelling", which shapes objective events into stories for the definition of the world and reflection of the "audiences' notion of reality" (Bird & Dardenne, 2009).

This paper will choose the narrative analysis method to examine how the protest movements are portrayed and narrated in *The Columbia Daily Spectator*.

The narrative analysis method is a qualitative research method that studies the connotations of stories by looking into the text and the elements of the story that convey meaning, which are usually culturally or socially significant themes (Bamberg, 2012). Narrative analysis plays an important role in understanding social issues because self-and collective narratives help to construct individual and community identities and enable social action by allowing an individual to identify with an imagined community that is homogenous in class, gender, race, ethnicity, and nation (Jacobs, 1996). Rather than focusing on individual articles, narrative analysis aims to read across texts to "weave together" storylines and their sub-plots from the topics mentioned (Bergman, 2017; Hampton, 2004). Narrative analysis prioritizes identifying how texts act as social meaning makers rather than as simple conveyers of facts and, therefore, focuses not just on content but also the tone and emphasis of the storytelling (Paschen & Ison, 2014). According to Labov and Bell, there are three analytical stages: organizing interviewees' interpretation (abstract, background, complication, evaluation, result, coda), then researchers' interpretation (hidden meanings, minor process, patterns- from basic to organized themes), and finally integration (from organized to grand themes). This paper will follow these three steps to analyze newspaper reports in *The Columbia Daily Spectator* to explore how the media narrates the protest movement and refer to relevant literature to ensure the robustness and depth of the analysis.

The second stage will resort to Bal's (2009) narrative elements to form the researcher's interpretation.

3.1 Plot

It refers to the sequence of events and actions that make up a story and includes the beginning, rising action, climax and end (falling action, resolution). It establishes the context, introduces conflicts, and shows how these conflicts are resolved, creating a coherent and engaging narrative flow, which guides readers through the story's development.

What is the main event described in the report? What are the main issues or topics addressed in the report?

3.2 Characters

It refers to the individuals, entities and stakeholders involved in the narrative. Characters can be protagonists, antagonists or supporting roles. Characters drive the narrative forward through their actions, decisions and interactions. They embody the themes and moral values of the story, making it relatable and engaging for the audience.

Who are the main actors or groups involved in the report? How are they portrayed?

3.3 Setting

Setting includes the time and place in which the main plot occurs. The setting provides the backdrop for the narrative, influencing the characters and plot. Time includes the chronological sequence of events, like flashbacks and flash-forwards.

Where and when does the event take place? How is the sequence of events presented? Is it chronological, or does it use flashbacks/flash-forwards?

3.4 Tones and Emotions

Tones and emotions may impact readers' recognition and views towards issues described in the report.

What emotions or attitudes are conveyed in the report? Is the tone neutral, sympathetic, critical, etc.? From whose perspective is the story told? Is there a dominant voice or multiple perspectives?

3.5 Language Usage

It refers to the specific words, phrases, and style of writing used to tell the narrative, including diction, tone, rhetorical devices, etc. Language shapes the voice and tone of the narrative, influencing how the story is perceived and interpreted.

What specific words or grammatical structures are used? Are there any recurring metaphors or symbols that convey deeper meanings? How do these usages impact the narrative?
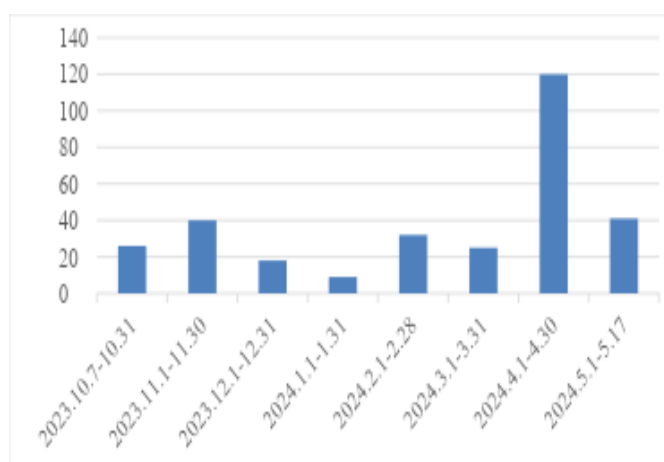
IV. DATA COLLECTION

This paper will choose news reports related to the Pro-Palestine protest in *The Columbia Daily Spectator* as the research subjects.

On the official website of The Spectator, there are different modules such as News, The Eye, Spectrum, etc. Before conducting the research, a preliminary collection of relevant materials was necessary. Given the large number of keywords related to the protest activities, relying solely on keyword search methods might result in missing some relevant reports. Therefore, this paper chooses to review all news articles published in each module of the website within the time frame from October 7, 2023, to May 17, 2024. In addition to reports directly related to the protest activities and the Israel-Palestine conflict, any article containing keywords such as "Israel, Palestine, encampment, etc." throughout the entire content will be included. After the preliminary collection, the basic information of the news report, including date, module, title, writer, and site, was summarized. (Detailed information can be found in Excel: Appendix-data.) And a total of 311 reports were identified, covering three modules: Opinion (Op-Eds; Letters to the Editor; Race and Place; Love, Actualized; Staff Editorials), The Eye, and News (Student Life; Administration; Academics). Below is the summary of the number of reports for each module.

Module	Dimensions	Number
Opinion	Op-Eds	51
	Letters to the editor	5
	Race and place	1
	Love, actualized	1
	Staff editorials	7
The Eye	The Eye	1
News	Student life	114
	Administration	109
	Academics	22

Campus Media Narrating of Pro-Palestine Protest Movements: Case Study of *The Columbia Daily Spectator*

This paper also counts the number of stories published each month.

Period	Number
2023.10.7-10.31	26
2023.11.1-11.30	40
2023.12.1-12.31	18
2024.1.1-1.31	9
2024.2.1-2.28	32
2024.3.1-3.31	25
2024.4.1-4.30	120
2024.5.1-5.17	41

From the chart, it can be seen that since October 7, 2023, there has been continuous coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict and campus protest activities. However, since the new wave of campus protests began on April 17, 2024, the number of related reports has increased dramatically. The substantial number of reports in the past two months provides abundant material for this paper's research. To ensure the specificity and richness of the research materials, this paper aims to explore how the Spectator frames and describes the new wave of protests from April 17, 2024, to May 17, 2024. And this new wave of campus protests can be outlined as several key events. (Detailed information can be found in the Appendix.)

Based on the research questions and focus, a secondary selection from the 311 reports was conducted. The secondary collection is based on the following three criteria: (1) The report is about the protest activities, including the events, the university's response and the reactions of students or other organizations, etc. (2) The report must primarily discuss the protest activities and related events, meaning that these should occupy the majority of the report's content. (3) The report must have been published between April 17, 2024 and May 17, 2024. After the secondary selection, a total of 143 reports were identified from April 17 to May 17. Below is the summary of the number of reports for each module.

Module	Dimensions	Number
Opinion	Op-Eds	12
	Letters to the editor	1
	Love, actualized	1
	Staff editorials	3
The Eye	The Eye	1
News	Student life	53
	Administration	63
	Academics	9

By reading through the 143 reports, the basic content information was further summarized and organized, including Date, Module, Title, Writer, Main Plot, Characters, Setting (Time & Space), Themes, and Others. Through summarizing some key information from the 53 reports in the "News: Student Life" module, several themes were identified, including Protest, NYPD arrest, Counterprotest movement, University countermeasures: oppression & appeasement (University suspension, University prohibition, University threatening measures, University appeasement), Views from different sides, and Others. These themes are derived from the perspectives of different actors involved in the protest activities. Below is a further explanation of these themes.

4.1 Protest

This includes the initial protest activities, campus encampment, subsequent escalated and sustained protests such as the Hamilton Hall occupation, actions against the University President (e.g., graduates choosing not to shake Barnard President Laura's hand), and protests supporting arrested students (e.g., by faculty, some student groups, admitted students, and even some Jewish students). These all belong to the extension and expansion of the protest movement.

4.2 NYPD Arrest

This includes the NYPD arrests of protesters following Shafik's authorization, such as police arresting 108 students, and the police force inside Hamilton using stun grenades and tactical gear.

4.3 Counterprotest Movement

This includes opposition to the April 17 protest activities, such as pro-Israel counterprotesters, protests protecting Jewish students, EndJewHatred, pro-Palestine students being verbally and physically harassed, and boycotting Columbia events following student arrests.

4.4 University Countermeasures: Oppression & Appeasement

From reading this news, it is found that the university's response to the protest roughly includes two aspects: oppression and appeasement. On one hand, the university uses some oppressive and threatening measures to stop the protest activities; on the other hand, it adopts some so-called appeasement measures to temporarily calm the intense emotions of protesting students.

University oppression measures include University suspension, University prohibition, and University threatening measures.

- University suspension: Suspended Columbia students cannot enter any of Columbia's campuses or "common spaces" in their residence halls, but they are permitted to remain in their individual rooms. The students also cannot participate in any academic courses or extracurricular activities.
- University prohibition: The University outdoor space policy states that "camping tents and/or smaller coverings meant for individual use and not suitable for events/ceremonies are strictly prohibited."
- University threatening measures: This includes the cancellation of significant events for students such as commencement ceremonies and "Days on Campus" programming, expressing the university's dissatisfaction with the protest activities.

University appeasement measures refer to some policies adopted by the university administration to temporarily soothe protesters' emotions, aiming at resolving conflicts, improving relationships, or maintaining peace and stability within the university environment. For example, three Barnard Student Admissions representatives resigned from their posts. Barnard reaches a resolution with 'nearly all' suspended students so that they can return to campus life. And Columbia College has passed a divestment referendum by a large margin.

4.5 Views from Different Sides

This includes reports specifically covering the voices of students, faculty, alumni, etc., on campus. For example, The Columbia Daily Spectator and New York Magazine created a

report by leveraging its people to tell the story from the inside.

4.6 Others

This category includes reports that cannot be fully classified under protest or other categories. For example, the General Studies Student Council voted against holding a referendum about the University's divestment from Israel. A CUAD member issued an apology for a January video in which they said, "Zionists don't deserve to live."

By organizing and summarizing these themes, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the different dimensions and perspectives of the protest activities as covered by *The Spectator*.

V. ANALYSIS

After summarizing and identifying themes from the 53 reports in the "News: Student Life" module, this paper is going to conduct a pilot analysis of a report to provide a reference and framework for the future analysis of all the selected reports.

Among these themes, "Protest" is the focal point in news coverage, also appearing most frequently. Therefore, this part will choose a news report under the "Protest" theme as pilot material. Also, the initial report on this new wave of Pro-Palestine protest may influence the stance, choice of words, and descriptive methods of subsequent reports. Therefore, this part selects the first report under the "News: student life" module regarding the protest as the pilot analysis material. This report is titled "Hundreds of protesters occupy South Lawn, call for divestment from Israel during Shafik testimony", published on April 17, 2024.

This part will analyze how this piece of news narrates this protest according to Labov and Bell's three stages and Bal's narrative elements. Firstly, this paper conducted a first-stage analysis and formed interviewees' interpretation, with a total of 8 Events. Then, the researchers' interpretation was formed through the second-stage analysis, as follows.

Narrative Elements:

Plot:

- Beginning: Hundreds of students began setting up tents on South Lawn around 4 a.m., pledging to occupy the space until the university divests from companies tied to Israel.
- Climax: The protest coincided with President Shafik's testimony before Congress. NYPD arrested 108 protesters after Shafik authorized police intervention.
- End: Despite arrests and university warnings, protesters voted to continue their occupation, demonstrating their resolve and solidarity.

Characters:

- Protesters: Students and supporters demanding divestment from Israel.
- Minouche Shafik: University President testifying before Congress.
- NYPD: Police officers who arrested the protesters.
- University Administration: Issued warnings and disciplinary notices to protesters.
- Counterprotesters: Voiced opposition to the protest, chanting pro-Israel slogans.

Setting:

- Primary Location: Columbia University's South Lawn, which was occupied by tents and protesters, creating a significant visual and physical presence on campus.
- Time: The protest began early Wednesday morning and continued over two days. And the article was published on April 17, 2024, providing a timely account of the events.

Tones and Emotions:

- Protesters: Demonstrated strong solidarity, determination, and defiance against university policies.
- University: Expressed concerns about safety and policy violations.
- Counterprotesters: Showed opposition and hostility towards the main protest.
- *The Spectator:* Neutral, detailing the progress of the protests and the university's response.

The language used in the report is crucial in shaping readers' perceptions. Terms like "occupation, resistance, and solidarity" evoke a sense of struggle and justice. However, the university's actions are described with words like "safety concern, violation of policies, disciplinary consequences," framing them as rigid and impersonal.

VI.   FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the thorough analysis, some findings can be identified. This part will have a further discussion on it.

The report narrated the protest event basically in a chronological order and began with a vivid depiction of the protesters setting up tents early in the morning, establishing an immediate sense of urgency and commitment from the students. It first explained the main events in the first several paragraphs, from students occupying South Lawn, the president attending a hearing, the president appointing police to suppress the protest, and the eventual arrest of 108 students. As a result, the scale and scope of the protest expanded. This creates a dramatic opening, engaging readers with a sense of immediacy and action.

Then, the report described the progress. It detailed specific events such as the four warnings issued by various university bodies (University administration, University Senate, University spokesperson, Bernard administration), interspersed with responses and actions from the protesting students, and included a review of previous protests in March, as well as descriptions of counter-protest activities. However, the description of these specific events was somewhat disorganized and primarily structured around the four warnings, interspersed with student responses. The narrative was not entirely chronological, leading to some confusion.

In this news, different voices and perspectives are included, which provide a balanced view of the events, allowing readers to understand the motivations and actions of all parties involved. The report extensively used direct quotes to express the views of the university, protesting students, and counter-protesting students, avoiding presenting its own stance and opinion. The report primarily presents the perspective of the protesters, highlighting their resistance and actions. The university's perspective is also included, providing context for their response and policies. Counterprotesters' views are briefly mentioned, emphasizing the polarization of opinions on the issue. For example, *"Around 12:15 p.m., a counterprotester carrying an Israeli flag approached the South Lawn from the Sundial and began speaking through a megaphone, drawing boos and chants of "Shame on you" from the crowd as they gathered around the counter-protester. The counterprotester chanted, "Terrorists go home, terrorists go home" and asked the protesters "Do you condemn Hamas?""* The inclusion of a counterprotester with an Israeli flag introduces a contrasting perspective, albeit briefly. This individual's presence and the crowd's reaction to him highlight the polarized nature of the issue and add complexity to the narrative. However, the focus remains predominantly on the protesters and their viewpoint, with the counterprotester's perspective serving as a momentary interruption rather than a significant counter-narrative.

The article highlights the tension and confrontational nature of the protest activity by describing the actions of the protesters and the responses from the university. It portrays a firm stance from both the university, law enforcement and protesters. Interspersed throughout are approximately 11 paragraphs featuring statements from the university spokesperson regarding their views on the protest activity and the university's stance. Additionally, there are about 9 paragraphs presenting the thoughts of the protesting students. The news extensively uses direct quotations to depict the attitudes, positions, and viewpoints of both sides, avoiding the presentation of the campus newspaper's own stance.

However, there are differences in the direct quotes selected from different stakeholders. The direct quotes from the university mainly focus on warnings, violations of regulations, punishments,

and consequences, while the direct quotes from the protesting students are mostly about opposition and slogans. The students' demands are rarely addressed, and most quotes are emotional expressions. Apart from mentioning at the beginning that the students hope the university divests from companies connected with Israel, the later descriptions, whether in direct quotes or reported statements, do not mention the students' demands and purpose. This narrative approach can easily lead readers to misunderstand that the students are deliberately violating regulations and disrupting the normal teaching and living order of the university, putting students at a disadvantage in public opinion.

6.1 The Contradiction Between Regulations and Students' Freedom of Expression

Freedom of speech and thought are individual rights that protect individuals from being accused of expressing their own thoughts (Taskin, 2014). Although society promotes this idea, laws enshrine it and classrooms respect students' right to express themselves, is this really the case?

Schools and students occupy unequal positions within the power hierarchy. Schools are at the upper level of this hierarchy, while students are at the lower level. Power is not only exercised through suppression and restriction but also through shaping and managing individuals (Foucault, 1974; Baumgarten & Ullrich, 2016). Power influences and shapes individuals and groups through various institutions, rules, and norms, and this influence is often implicit and pervasive. In the school environment, there are many rules and standards, and schools can use regulations to dictate students' behaviors. These rules and standards are mandated by school authorities, determining what behavior is acceptable and what is not. In this process, power is pervasive and implicit. Students cannot refute and their behavior is continually shaped and confined by this environment. When students act against these regulations, they face punishment from the upper authority. Over time, students gradually adapt to and internalize these rules, becoming shaped and tamed in the process.

Moreover, the disadvantaged position of students means that they are not on an equal footing with schools and cannot equally communicate their demands. When students' demands are not taken seriously or addressed, and when there is a significant discrepancy in positions between schools and students, students may resort to actions that schools do not permit, such as protest movements, to voice their concerns. However, when protests occur, the first response from schools is often suppression, fearing that protests might negatively impact the school's image. This response seems to forget the legitimacy of students as important subjects expressing their voices and demands, as well as the potential irrationalities in school decisions and whether they effectively respond to students' concerns.

The university newspaper's coverage of these protests, although devoid of explicit stance-taking and directional words, and lacking commentary, primarily reports events through direct quotes or paraphrasing. However, when reporting on protesting students, the focus is mostly on what the students said. These statements are often either against the school's suppression and punitive measures or protest slogans, seemingly overlooking the initial demands of the students. For example, a protester said, "The more they try to silence us, the louder we will be." "Say it loud, say it clear, we don't want no Zionists here."

It appears as if the students are the instigators of the conflict, while the school, considering safety and regulations, resorted to suppression after several warnings were ignored, even authorizing police intervention. It seems that the students' actions caused the conflict and confrontation, but in reality, it is the school's inaction and disregard for students' demands and voices that led to the protests. However, the school newspaper may not realize this, as some perspectives have been completely internalized.

This protest movement has a distinctly anti-establishment tone, with the student groups behind it trying to challenge the "taboo" areas of American politics, including the special relationship between the US and Israel. The biggest impact of this protest movement, when

young Americans express a different voice from their elders, is to prompt American society to reflect on the current crisis in Gaza.

Another very important point is the absence of middle-ground voices in the report—those who neither support the protesting students nor the counter-protesting students. This omission might be because this was the first report following the new wave of protests and the newspaper did not have time to include all possible perspectives, focusing instead on the most influential groups. This biased reporting could lead to a one-sided understanding of the event, overlooking the positions and views of those who hold neutral or alternative opinions.

In general, through the analysis, it becomes clear that the student newspaper constructs a story of committed and principled student activists standing up against a rigid and controlling administration. To a certain extent, the narrative strategies, and word usage contribute to a narrative that sympathizes with the protesters and portrays their actions as part of a larger struggle for justice.

Following the pilot analysis, a comprehensive examination of the remaining 142 reports was conducted, applying the same narrative analysis method. The findings revealed several consistent themes and patterns in *The Columbia Daily Spectator*'s coverage of the pro-Palestine protests.

- Chronological Reporting Style: The majority of the reports followed a chronological framework, detailing the sequence of events in a linear fashion. This approach provided readers with a clear understanding of the progression of the protests, from the initial encampment to the eventual confrontations with the police and university administration.
- Inclusion of Diverse Voices: While the initial pilot analysis highlighted the inclusion of various perspectives, the broader analysis confirmed that *The Spectator* made a concerted effort to represent a range of voices, including students, faculty, administrators, and even counter-protesters. However, the analysis also revealed a subtle bias towards

the protesters' narratives, which were often more emotionally charged and therefore more compelling to readers.
- Implicit Bias and Framing: The analysis identified an implicit bias in the coverage, with the protesters often portrayed as instigators of conflict, while the university's responses were framed as necessary measures for safety. This framing sometimes overshadowed the underlying issues that motivated the protests, such as the students' demands for divestment and recognition of their right to protest.
- Absence of Middle-Ground Voices: Consistent with the pilot analysis, the comprehensive analysis found a notable absence of moderate or neutral perspectives in the coverage. This omission may have contributed to a one-sided portrayal of the events, which could potentially influence readers' perceptions by emphasizing the voices of the most vocal groups.
- Anti-Establishment Sentiment: The protests were characterized by a strong anti-establishment sentiment, with students challenging both the university administration and broader political norms. The coverage reflected this sentiment, often positioning the students as principled activists fighting against a rigid and controlling establishment.
- Narrative Strategies and Word Usage: The analysis of language usage revealed that *The Spectator* employed narrative strategies that sympathized with the protesters, portraying their actions as part of a larger struggle for justice. Words like "resistance," "solidarity," and "oppression" were frequently used, which can evoke strong emotional responses and contribute to the overall narrative.

VII. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, *The Columbia Daily Spectator*'s coverage of the pro-Palestine protests at Columbia University from April 17 to May 17, 2024, was characterized by a chronological reporting style that included diverse voices but also reflected an implicit bias towards the protesters' narrative. The coverage often framed the students as instigators of conflict, overshadowing their

underlying demands and the administration's failure to engage with their concerns. The absence of middle-ground voices and the emphasis on anti-establishment sentiment contributed to a narrative that sympathized with the protesters and portrayed their actions as part of a broader struggle for justice.

This study has shed light on the role of campus media in shaping public discourse and perceptions of protest movements. It has also highlighted the importance of considering narrative strategies and word usage in media coverage, as these can significantly influence how readers understand and interpret events. Moving forward, it is crucial for campus media, and media in general, to strive for balanced reporting that acknowledges and represents the complexities of social and political issues, rather than perpetuating biases or oversimplifying narratives. As the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues to evolve, and protests on campus and beyond persist, the role of media in narrating these events will remain a critical area of study.

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Key events during this new wave of protest from April 17, 2024 to May 17, 2024

Date	Event
Day 1- 4.17 Wednesday	Hundreds of protesters occupy South Lawn, calling for Columbia's divestment from companies with ties to Israel. University President Minouche Shafik testifies before Congress on Columbia's handling of antisemitism on campus.
Day 2- April 18 Thursday	Three Barnard students suspended for the "unauthorized" encampment on South Lawn, before Shafik authorizes the New York Police Department to sweep the "Gaza Solidarity Encampment". Officers in riot gear arrest 108 students. Students begin to enter the west side of South Lawn as Public Safety dismantles the "unauthorized encampment."
Day 3- April 19 Friday	"Gaza Solidarity Encampment" enters its third day following mass arrests. Columbia begins formally notifying students of suspension for participation in Wednesday's encampment.
Day 6- April 22 Monday	Business School assistant professor Shai Davidai is denied access to Morningside campus ahead of planned entry into encampment. Separately, over 100 faculty members protest in "Rally to Support our Students and Reclaim our University." Congressional Democrats visit Kraft Center for Jewish Student Life and condemn antisemitism at Columbia. The Columbia College Student Council overwhelmingly passes a divestment referendum voted by the general student body.
Day 7- April 23 Tuesday	Barnard suspends and evicts at least 53 students, outlines steps for "amnesty." Over 1,400 academics around the world commit to boycotting Columbia events following student arrests. Shafik announces a midnight deadline for ongoing encampment negotiations before consideration of "alternative options." The "Gaza Solidarity Encampment" approaches the one-week mark on South Lawn.
Day 10- April 26 Friday	Barnard reaches resolution with "nearly all" suspended students, a college spokesperson tells Spectator. Columbia does not plan to call the NYPD to campus "at this time," according to a community email.
Day 14- April 30 Tuesday	Dozens of protestors occupy Hamilton Hall in the early hours of Tuesday morning. The "Gaza Solidarity Encampment" spreads to the Lewisohn Lawn at around midnight on Tuesday. Protesters also move a set of tents to the area outside of Hartley Hall. Columbia locks Morningside campus following Hamilton occupation, Barnard restricted to college affiliates. Protestors occupying Hamilton will face expulsion, University spokesperson tells Spectator. Hundreds of NYPD officers swarmed campus on Tuesday evening, arresting dozens of

	protesters both inside and outside of Hamilton. Personnel disassembles the "Gaza Solidarity Encampment" at around 11:40 p.m. on Tuesday following the NYPD's sweep of the occupied Hamilton. The NYPD confirms the arrest of 109 individuals following the sweep of Hamilton and "Gaza Solidarity Encampment" at a press conference on Wednesday.
Day 20 -May 6 Monday	The Universitywide Commencement ceremonies, initially scheduled for May 15, have been canceled. The decision to move Class Days and cancel the Commencement ceremonies follows several University communications that stressed the urgency of dismantling the encampment in order to allow Commencement to occur on campus.