

Západočeská univerzita v Plzni

Fakulta filozofická

Bakalářská práce

**The Flash Mobs: Phenomenon of Modern English
Popular Culture**

Tereza Ryjáčková

Plzeň 2014

Západočeská univerzita v Plzni

Fakulta filozofická

Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury

Studijní program Filologie

Studijní obor Cizí jazyky pro komerční praxi

Kombinace angličtina – němčina

Bakalářská práce

**The Flash Mobs: Phenomenon of Modern English Popular
Culture**

Tereza Ryjáčková

Vedoucí práce:

Mgr. et Mgr. Jana Kašparová

Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury

Fakulta filozofická Západočeské university v Plzni

Plzeň 2014

Prohlašuji, že jsem práci zpracoval(a) samostatně a použil(a) jsem jen uvedené prameny a literaturu.

Plzeň, duben 2014

.....

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank my supervisor Mgr. et Mgr. Jana Kašparová for her strong support, patience and advice, which helped me to complete this thesis.

Table of content

1 Introduction	1
2 Evolution of flash mobs	3
2.1 How to create a flash mob.....	4
2.2 Dance mobbing.....	6
2.3 Spaces, participants and messages of dance mobbing.....	7
2.4 Flash mobbing vs. consumerism.....	9
3 Flash mobs – Public threat or democratic freedom?	11
3.1 Flash mobs as potential threats.....	11
3.2 Flash mobs as democratic freedom.....	14
4 Flash mob as a market tool	17
4.1 Music as an agent.....	17
4.2 Operating flash mob experiment.....	19
5 Flash mob as a form of protest	24
5.1 Double standard for flash mobs.....	25
5.1.1 Pro-Pussy Riot flash mob.....	26
5.1.2 Trainload of arguments.....	26
5.1.3 “Russia without Putin” flash mob.....	27
5.2 Strictly forbidden flash mobs.....	28
6 Conclusion	30
7 Endnotes	32
8 Bibliography	37
Internet sources	38
Sources of the diagrams and pictures in appendices I–III	40
9 Abstract	42
10 Resume	43
11 Appendices	44

1 Introduction

The main aim of the bachelor thesis is to introduce a relatively young phenomenon of social bonding - flash mobs. The objective is to analyse the development of flash mobs and to give the reader basic information on a given theme. The secondary aim of the thesis is to evaluate the evolution of flash mobbing and its impact on society. It also focuses on the flash mobs from several different points of view.

The thesis consists of four main chapters. The main explanation of the term *flash mob* is included at the outset of the thesis for better comprehension. The first chapter discusses the evolution of a new phenomenon and gives the reader basic information about the rise of flash mobbing and about its roots. The chapter also describes the communication among flash mob participants, refers to several types of flash mobs and clarifies the relation between flash mobbing and consumerism.

The rest of the thesis is dedicated to certain branches of flash mob evolution. Firstly, chapter named *Flash mobs – public threat or democratic freedom*, discusses the problem of violent flash mobbing and government's responsibility. It also presents a brief survey of dilemma between the U.S. constitution and government's regulations.

Next chapter introduces flash mobbing as a niche in the market and as an opportunity for managers to attract prospective customers. The chapter *Flash mob as a market tool* deals with the flash mobs from an economical point of view. The majority of the third chapter is dedicated to the results of socio-economical experimental study done by researchers from the Beedie School of Business, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada.

The final chapter, named *Flash mobs as a form of protest*, outlines the flash mobs as a riot device. Its main purpose is to give the reader awareness about the real power of flash mobbing in its consequences. It refers also to constitutional rights violation.

Analysis and summaries of the research paper and essays are going to be used as a source for writing the thesis. The appendices with pictures of several flash mobs are going to be enclosed for better comprehension. The thesis is going to form a survey of this rapidly increasing phenomenon from professional point of view.

2 Evolution of flash mobs

During the second half of the 20th century several public assemblies, which resembled flash mobs, appeared. For example, so called Yippies¹ led by Abbie Hoffman invented playful forms of protest against the Vietnam War. However, the very first flash mob took place in the furnishing department of Macy's a New York department store, in June 2003. The only organizer was Bill Wasik, a senior editor of the *Harper's Magazine*. The name of the initiator was unknown until 2006, when Wasik finally confessed that he had invited people by text messages, emails and blogging. Nowadays, Wasik is better known as Bill the "Moberator". The mob was formed by hundreds of people gathered around a \$-10,000 carpet for ten minutes; they discussed among themselves and with sales managers about purchasing the carpet for their free-love commune to use it as a "love rug". After ten minutes, the whole gathering suddenly vaporized. It was the first apparently spontaneous happening in a public place since the ages of "Yippies". This one-off performance was later used as a pattern for further staged actions created by those who became known as "mobsters" or "flash mobbers".

Flash mobbing has put down the roots as a model of public performance or action that metamorphoses according to its context. The first happenings organized in the 1960s, occurred mainly in spaces hidden from the public sight, but they had a strong internal content and explicitly aimed to catch public attention. The latter part is also the case with dance mobs as they are strictly planned. The whole ensemble performs the same choreography, which appears inconsistent with the urban landscape or townscape rush. Unlike mainstream street theatre, anyone may join the dance mob, although there are clear boundaries between performers and spectators. [1]

The online version of the Oxford English Dictionary describes a flash mob as "*a public gathering of complete strangers, organized via internet or mobile phone, who perform a pointless act and disperse...*" [2] This definition might possibly match with the first manifestation at 2003, however, since then

¹ The acronym for Youth International Party. (see the picture 1 in the Appendix III)

the phenomenon of flash mob has mutated into a multiform performance mode that cannot be precisely defined. Its etymological predecessor may be in the idea of the “smart mob” a leaderless organisation created by a journalist Howard Rheingold or in Larry Niven’s term “flash crowd” that enriched the terminology for massive influx of internet trading, for example, or web site advertisement and sale.

The forms and functions of flash mobbing are as multiple as the groups or communities that appropriate it as a mode of public action. It is evident today that some flash mobs are usually perceived just as a way of having fun. Flash mobs organized as a public statement are seldom pointless. For example; whether the mobile clubbing at Paddington stations in London in October 2006 or at Liverpool Street was organised to pass the time when waiting for the train or to protest against British Criminal Justice Act; whether imitating Michael Jackson’s moves in the streets of Paris and Mexico City in 2009 was organized as a tribute to the deceased singer or to protest against climate change; dancing on a the prepared choreography certainly has meaning for the participants. Even if the organisers do not aim to protest against particular issue, the flash mobs and especially the dance flash mobs inevitably make a point. [3] Warren Goldstein, a Harvard sociologist, describes flash mobs as a community, which is made of people who may or may not be known to one another, they come together to either watch or to be involved in the performance. Flash mob performance can be formed in any number of things from a choreographed dance routine to a spontaneous sing-a-long or even a group of individuals staring at a blank wall. Information about the location and performance expectation is spread via social media and it includes location, time and performance information. [4] Following chapter describes the creation of flash mob in 4 main steps.

2.1 How to create a flash mob

Flash mob organisers need to know how to “go viral”. They use special techniques to involve social media in their meetings. Flash mobs reflect the power of social networks. Attracting people’s attention is a very strong weapon;

the organisers of every gathering or meeting should learn more about the usage of social networking sites. Therefore, this chapter is dedicated to several flash mob rules that every flash mob leader should observe.

Flash mobs are actually not created in a few days; it takes weeks to prepare these mass events. First important step is, in time, to create a meeting website and to build a network by sending emails or social media *feeds*². Good promotion is a half of success. The post should include a link starting “invite your friend” or “click here to share” for quicker spreading among social media users. These links are connected to the meeting website; such website should be represented on Facebook, Google+, Twitter or any other selected blogs. The event website should be catchy, imaginative and gather still increasing number of followers. It is also good to set up an online contest with a prize for “the 100th person to Like us on Facebook” or similar ones. Social communication channels are controlled by communicators that rebroadcast and intensify main messages. It is important to present the event as a shock or metaphorical earthquake whose waves will strike distant environs. To go viral is the second important step. To accomplish such goal the content of the website needs to be interesting. It is good to use a video with respected personalities or to use humorous jingles, but it depends on a severity as well as importance of the event. For example; when the flash mob deals with certain sector of health care or with problems related to the Third world, tact is highly recommended. The quality of promoted records reflects the popularity of the whole event.

In addition to and despite of all the high-tech difficulties, personal relationships are the third pillar of every flash mob. Communication with flash mob followers should be written in form of personal messages. It is recommended to create a casual atmosphere and to use intimate voice. The organiser should avoid sounding like a boss talking to his subordinates. Since the huge amount of information is shared on the web every minute it is important to shorten the message and to catch reader’s attention as quickly as possible. The creator is able to use common shortcuts or casual wording such as “Check out this brand new vid³!”, ROFL⁴ or FYI⁵ to shorten the text.

² Feed - online post shared among social media users.

³ Vid – video.

The campaign should be kept alive until the event has been realized. It is important to add some more news and let the campaign continue to amaze the audience and potential participants. This is also the fourth rule of creating a flash mob – to provide constant updates.

And finally, it is also necessary to mention a warning the flash mob organizers should keep in mind. “*The same forces that make flash mobs powerful can also make them destructive.*” [5] There is a large number of campaigns that went out of control. The main function of social media is to advance the control of communication channels and to simplify the communication among the people. Most of the organisers want to point at some important issues and to elaborate positive discussion, but there often appear negatively thinking people who want to take advantage of the event. The campaign creators should be very thoughtful in selection of the topics and think about what they can tolerate, especially if the topic deals with some controversial issues. If the campaign is connected with some popular celebrities or speakers, there is a possibility that the third parties will also express their minds, which may not correspond with the meeting’s schema. [6]

Further, knowing the simple basic rules for organizing flash mobs, we should also discuss some of its types and popular ways of expression.

2.2 Dance mobbing

The very first events were largely seen as a courteous act of fun. Virag Molnar has identified five types of mobs according to their function or their form of socializing. These are *atomised flash mobs*, *interactive flash mobs*, *political flash mobs*, *performance flash mobs* and *advertising flash mobs*. [7] Ethic categorisation is only a theoretical device; an analysis of any given event often shows that the mob fits into any multiple categories. It is obvious from the following description of a dance mob, which unites celebration and a humanitarian action.

⁴ ROFL – Roll on floor (hilarious laugh).

⁵ FYI – For your information.

In 2009 in Louvre, Paris Opera dancers, led by prima ballerina Marie–Agnes Gillot, organised a fund-raising event for the children’s charity *Chain of Hope*, which aims to provide heart surgeries for those; who are unable to afford it. The event was announced by the scream. Strauss’s Blue Danube rendered the staid museum atmosphere and nine waltzing couples set the scene for almost three hundred individuals to take in “*Bollywood*”⁶ style routine to pop music. Performance culminated with multitude of ballet shoes with printed charity logos strewn all over the performing place. A few weeks before the performance, invitations were sent to dancers via Facebook, giving information about the nature of the event. In the invitation, there were also included dates, times and group numbers for practice at the Opera’s smaller theatre. Organisers created a group of dancers and flash mobbers, who could teach other participants. Two videos of the routine were put on the Internet to give access to the steps for all those who wanted to be involved. The main purpose was to reproduce a simple choreography and offer a spontaneous and interim show to those who were passing by. The event was filmed and returned to the medium which created it, and also put on You Tube. [8]

2.3 Spaces, participants and messages of dance mobbing

In case of promoting political causes or commercial interests, dance mobbing is an effective tool on several counts. The importance of the layout of public space which forces attention on the performance is fundamental. Shopping centres or squares are natural stages, often based on models of Greek and Roman amphitheatres. For example, a Glee flash mob took place on the circular ground floor of balcony-stepped-up architectural space in Madrid. That gave the young dancers excellent site lines. Or, hundred single ladies appeared at 9 a.m. on the raised pedestrian area in Picadilly’s Victorian setting. After they threw their coats away to reveal satin leotard, they danced in high heels to Beyoncé’s hit *Single Ladies*. This short event turned out as a part of a campaign to sell tickets to the show at the O2 venue in the Dome at Greenwich (see the picture 2 of the appendix III). Taking into account these two flash mobs, it is possible to think of such events as site specific.

⁶ Bollywood - name for the Indian popular film industry, based in Mumbai (Bombay).

The next feature of dance mobbing or flash mobbing generally is the way in which the human body is more or less conspicuously presented to the public as in advertising. In case of *the Single Ladies flash mob* all hundred women were arranged as an imitation of Beyoncé; they even emulated dance steps from the original video. In most of the cases, the body has to be enhanced by costume or by other devices, which brings a further eye-catching assets. The flash mob *Oxfam – Groove your Bump*, performed in 2008 on the South Bank of Thames in London under the auspices of the British charity *Oxfam*, became legendary due to the costumes of participants. A group of visibly pregnant women emerged from the crowd and in a moment, they started break dancing to draw public attention to child birth difficulties and to the critical health situation of pregnant women all over the world. The impact of health-risky dancing was multiplied by women's visible pregnancy. Despite the plain extent of the event, this flash mob became memorable.

And it is also the scale of the event that belongs to the features that make long lasting impression, but in more cases, it has greater impact on the participants than on the audience. One such dance mob was organised in October 2009 by youth organisation campaigning for climate change. The event was named after the organisation, *Powershift London*. After the conference they had held in London, young team of volunteers under the age of 25 organised a flash dance in the Thames South Bank Jubilee Gardens. The whole event was posted on You Tube and the management of the *Powershift* organisation justified it. [9]

“Most importantly, we wanted to show how we can communicate our message that climate change can be spoken about in a positive manner by a wider audience, communicate our message that climate change is relevant to all of society and communicate our message that young people from a diverse range of backgrounds can be united in this issue, by doing things like this to inspire us all in a creative, energetic and passionate manner” [10]

This ambitious and well-organised performance was created after a previous successful flash mob staged by *Powershift Australia* nearby Sydney Opera House. The event in London comprised artists with a disc jockey, two

choreographers, camera crew, four professional dancers and the rest were the conference participants. The style of the routine left no message about a purpose of the event. People were looking for information as they were walking through Jubilee Gardens, but the impact of the event stayed more with the participants and community members. [11]

2.4 Flash mobbing vs. consumerism

After a short discussion on the connection of flash mobs, messages they represent and the places they usually take part in, we can discuss some other characteristics and issues connected to this phenomenon. The relation between digital communication technologies and flash mobs is the reason why flash mobs spread so rapidly all over the world. A serious importance is also carried by the links to all the counter cultural performance modes of the 1960s and 1970s or to the various protest movements of the last century. Many of them have used an impressive way to effect political developments⁷. Protest movements have been the first to use mass mobilisation and mobile communication to create a sort of collective act among participants.

To characterise flash mob creation as internally political because of its possible genealogy or as it has been susceptible to recuperation by consumer capitalism would have been very circumspect. Examples of events such as *Beyoncé Single Ladies Flash mob* professionally performed in London's Picadilly Circus in April 2009, the carefully staged *Glee television series* in a Spanish shopping centre in March 2010 and a Belgian television programme's promotional event in Antwerp's Central Railway Station in March 2009 organised to find an actor to act in the musical *The Sound of Music*, show us that there is no doubt that the mobile, participatory character of flash mobbing and its reliance on technological innovations, such as smart phones, internet and related networking facilities (*Facebook, Twitter, MySpace ...*), has allowed it to recuperate for commercial reasons. There exists a dynamic interplay between appropriation of flash mobbing by business and resistance through ridicule and displacement by pop culture. In January 2009, T-mobile

⁷ Remembering the Suffragettes chaining themselves to the railings by the British Prime Minister's front door to protest in favour of woman's right to vote.

released an advertisement based on a flash mob organised at London's Liverpool Street Station (see picture 3 of the appendix III). However, it was highly choreographed version of earlier, less-rehearsed flash mob in the same venue favoured by mobsters. One month later, almost 12,000 of people arrived to the station to reclaim a fun flash mob, in which police had to interfere because of danger of overcrowding (see the picture 4 of the appendix III). [12]

3 Flash mobs – Public threat or democratic freedom?

Apart from commercialization of flash mobs, we need to consider another issue. When flash mobs widened and became better known all over the world, one serious dilemma emerged. Through the peaceful message of flash mobbing, there were few elements, which were case apart. Several individuals, who were participating in a few particular flash mobs, lost their nerves and started rioting. These incidents separate people into two groups. One group supports the idea of flash mobs and perceives them as a symbol of freedom and democracy, the other group takes flash mobs as potential threats. The opinion that perceives flash mobs as threats is a main thought of the article written by Linda Kiltz, Ph.D. that was published in the *Public Management magazine*.

3.1 Flash mobs as potential threats

“Armed with cellphones and connected through social media sites, young people banding in groups have been rushing into stores or assaulting bystanders in a slew of “flash mob” incidents across the United States, leaving police and public officials scrambling to curtail crimes associated with these spontaneous assemblies. Although most flash mobs are harmless, with pointless acts that involve dancing, freezing on the spot, or some other activity, their potential to become sites for criminal and violent behavior should be of concern for law enforcement agencies and local governments.” [13] Then Kiltz mentioned few examples of flash mob violence such as Philadelphia flash mob in 2010, *“when hundreds of teenagers have been converging downtown for a ritual that is part bullying, part running of the bulls: sprinting down the block, the teenagers sometimes pause to brawl with one another, assault pedestrians or vandalize property.”* [14] Further, she referred to flash mob in Chicago in 2011, where a group of 15 – 20 men attacked 5 men separately, then groups of young people rushed into stores, filled their arms with merchandise and left. [15]

Kiltz calls those violent gatherings “flash robs” and she expects; that the number of flash robs rises due to current economic crises. She also predicts; that flash robs will spread to more urban communities and suburbs. Jeff Gardere, a Californian psychologist, who lectures widely on the motivation

of young people, believes that part of the reason why flash mobs have become violent is that young people are discontent and bored. Young people do not have jobs, they also hear from their parents about a lack of jobs and poor economy. They are left feeling that their future options are winnowing every day. Gardere also adds; that it is not just a problem for Philadelphia; or Boston, it is a problem of whole modern world. These groups feel angry and powerless, and they are trying to assume a sense of power. This sense of powerlessness is part of motivation behind the *Occupy Wall Street protests*⁸ that started in September 2011 in New York and they are still spreading across the nation to huge cities such as Boston, Denver, Seattle etc. Despite these groups are not flash mobs, Gardere considers them as flash mobs, because organizers of *Occupy Wall Street protests* are using social media to organize, communicate and raise awareness on a number of issues. As use of social media increases, the potential for more flash mobs that are used for political or criminal purposes is likely to increase. [16]

There is a very thin line between protection of law and human rights abuse. How far should police agencies intervene with private online and mobile phone access – this is the most discussed question among police officials, elected leaders, and civil rights activists. Every side agrees that it is uncharted territory for law enforcement and local government leaders. Flash mobs are an emerging form of crime; there were not set any boundaries for police agencies. How could police agencies possibly monitor such web sites as *Facebook* or *Twitter* without violating privacy rights? At least, it is acceptable for police to browse the Facebook pages and “Tweets”, which are available to the public. But breaching personal information without a warrant or shutting down telephone service in anticipation of a crime is incompatible with constitutional rights.

Elected officials passed legislation criminalizing the use of social media to organize or promote criminal activity without violating free speech rights. For example, in Cleveland, Ohio’s city council passed a law, which made it

⁸ OWS are series of protests, initiated by Adbusters – a Canadian anti-consumerist pro-environment group and magazine. Main issues rised by OWS were economics inequality, greed, corruption, influence of corporations on government etc.

a minor offence to gather a flash mob using Facebook, Twitter or other social media. Mayor Frank Jackson vetoed this proposal with an argument that it might infringe on residents rights. He also added a note that officials should focus their efforts on traditional crime prevention and community-policing strategies.

Law enforcement leaders examine the issue and determine how to use social media tools and technology to prevent or deal with a criminal activity in their communities. Law enforcement agencies use a combination of such tactics as strict curfew ordinances, boosting police presence in youth centres and gathering places, and monitor social media websites for flash mobs. For example, Philadelphia implemented a 9:00 p.m. weekend curfew for teenagers to prevent flash mob violence. Further, Los Angeles Police Department has established a social media unit to monitor strange behaviour on social media sites. [17]

“Part of challenge is generational. Older officers in management decisions – the ones making decisions – are often not as savvy as younger officers with social media,” – said Nancy Kolb, who oversees the International Association of Chiefs of Police’s (IACP) Center for Social Media. Kolb also stated that for many years authorities did not believe flash mobs were a threat. In a 2010 IACP survey of law enforcement agencies in 48 states, 81 percent of responders reported that flash mobs were not a problem in their community. More than 70 percent of responding agencies also said they had not identified any goals for officers’ use of such social media tools as Facebook and Twitter. Sixty- six percent of responders said they had no training in how to use social media, yet social media can be used to fight crime. Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Captain Mike Parker uses social networking sites to help track down criminals, conduct background checks, and identify when flash mob planning is under way.” [18]

Also because of budget cuts, police cannot afford to pay officers for spending their days tracking potential flash mob on telephones or surfing the web in the hope that they will uncover a plot. Instead, local agencies could invest to train officers on how to use social media to prevent and investigate

a broad range of crime. Law enforcement agencies could also use social media to engage citizens in crime fighting efforts by reporting when a flash mob will be formed. They could also assist in identifying suspects in surveillance camera footage.

The most practical solution for law enforcement agencies are community-policing strategies. These strategies support the systematic use of partnerships and techniques to immediately analyse conditions that give rise to violence, crime and public disorder. Agencies are working with community organizations, businesses, schools or neighbourhood watch groups to manage flash mob violence. Officers are allowed to build links with the local community to penetrate social networks of local area. Law enforcement agencies also organize lessons for parents, businesses or community groups about the dangers of flash mobs and crime prevention.

It is clear that flash mob evolved into “flash rob”. Nowadays, number of violent flash mobs is increasing exponentially and it is very difficult to predict and control these spontaneous leaderless gatherings. Some of community-policing strategies might be effective, but the main support should come from local governments. They should find a long-term solution to fight with this new form of crime. [19]

3.2 Flash mobs as democratic freedom

As a denial of Klitz’s article *Flash Mobs: The Newest Threat to Local Governments*, published in *Public Management magazine*, editors of the same magazine decided to publish an article written by Jonathan Anderson; *Flash Mobs Revisited: Public Threat or Democratic Freedom*. In this article the author represents an opinion of flash mob as a symbol of democracy.

The article written by Kiltz left in readers an impression that flash mobs are wrong and dangerous.

“Although the author noted that ‘most flash mobs are harmless’ and that 81 percent of law enforcement agencies reported ‘flash mobs were not a problem in their communities.’ The thrust of the article, coupled with the ominous title, ‘Threat to Local Governments’, created a sense that flash

mobs are bad and implied a need for local governments to take action to monitor, control or prevent such gatherings. The 'highlighted takeaways' are that flash mobs are either criminal activities or 'gatherings of complete strangers ... who perform a pointless act.' The reader is left with a sense that flash mobs are a potentially criminal activity." [20]

Anderson explains flash mobs as a method of gathering people. Another reality is that some criminals have used social media for communications. And these two facts are not the same. Flash mobs are assemblies of people, which are protected by the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution: [21] *"A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."* [22]

The main information, which should the reader apprehend, is that local government's response to public gatherings of any kind is a serious issue. People gather for many reasons and government's response for public activities should be selective and aforethought. Recent activities of the so-called Occupy movements (*Occupy Wall Street project*, etc.) are the latest incarnation of political demonstrations that are piles of American democracy and culture. A public assembly of any kind confronts local government with expression of a vigorous democracy. A focus on order and its enforcement negates the principles of freedom upon which the U.S. were founded: [23] *"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."* [24]

A number of court cases have defined the boundaries for law enforcement actions in traffic stops and house searches, essentially requiring a reasonable suspicion of crimes, not just a gathering of citizens. When the local governments do not want to cross that thin line between order and law abuse, they must consider if the crime has been committed or if a public safety has been so explicitly endangered that individual freedom must be controlled. [25] Police Executive Research Forum published a study of police management of demonstrations, it begins with a comment: *"Perhaps there is no greater*

challenge for police officers in a democracy than that of managing mass demonstrations. It is here after all, where the competing goals of maintaining order and protecting the freedoms of speech and assembly meet.” [26]

Government responses are divided into two categories: monitoring and cooperating with planners of public assemblies. Also, the government is able to manage those assemblies once they happen. It is common that local governments have own policies to manage many types of assemblies, demonstrations, protests, parades etc. The situation when governments cross the line is when they use practices that involve surveillance, hidden activities, infiltration, or disruption of assemblies. Efficacy of government is not a part of democratic principles. Disruption of assemblies could possibly lead to public suspicion of police. [27]

“August 2011, the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District disrupted cellphone reception on its trains in anticipation of a political protest. The resultant uproar was extreme, and the Federal Communications Commission opened an investigation of the action. Recent use of pepper spray by campus police on nonviolent, unresisting protesters at the University of California – Davis campus was national news and cost the police chief his job.” [28]

Such actions as these break down fragile relations between public and police. Short-term and strict measures may lead to long-term decay of public confidence. Violence may escalate after extreme intervention of police officers and local governments should weight pragmatic advantages or disadvantages as well as ethical side of such aggressive behaviour. It is necessary to train officers adequately and to provide oversight mechanism for reviewing continuing activity for protracted justification. Local government should consult critical situation with public solicitors to prevent abuse of civil liberties. Local government’s tasks are not just to deliver goods and services but also to manage a democracy. If this superior is underrated, the consequences for the state and nation will undermine legal and moral foundation of U.S. society and will deny government legitimacy. [29]

4 Flash mob as a market tool

The popularity of a flash mob as a marketing tool, mentioned earlier, has grown exponentially in last eight years. This chapter is dedicated to the issue of how flash mobs affect consumer behaviour, emotions, loyalty and feelings of connectedness.

As the performance element grew out of other historical performance pieces with social aims, flash mobs were in inception a simple social experiment. This experiment caught the attention of savvy marketers and they are now using flash mobs as means of generating consumer interest and to create affinity and loyalty to the product or brand. As an example of, how a flash mob affects consumer behaviour; is used an *operatic flash mob* for its pre-supposed ability to invoke emotions. The first operatic flash mob appeared on 13th November 2009 in Valencia, Spain. Six trained singers stepped out of their ordinary lives and they suddenly began singing a couple of favourite operatic extracts from Verdi's *La Traviata*. They were dressed as general pedestrians, each singer came out of the crowd once at a time, adding his voice to the choir. When the second song ended, the audience had been whipped into a frenzy laughing, dancing and singing along. This flash mob was created by Valencia Opera as a means of increasing interest in a forthcoming performance of *La Traviata*. The whole flash mob had been recorded and posted on YouTube. 4.5 million people have already seen the link. The operatic flash mob presents an opportunity to challenge the audience and protract emotion. Several contributing factors for this kind of performance are the rich clientele, the European origins, the high production costs funded by corporations or the rich, and the scarcity of vocalist endowed with the talent to become opera singers.

4.1 Music as an agent

It is proved by several studies that the aesthetic quality of music has the ability to alter our emotions as well as our state of mind. It has the ability to create a spectrum of emotional responses it can also affect the favourableness of people's feelings and moods. Many experts also believe that the primary

motivation for music consumption is its emotional effect on individuals. In other words music can act as a powerful stimulus for affecting moods.

Researcher found out that exposure of background classical music led subject to a higher willingness to pay in the restaurant. Further they discovered that music has an ability to create a positive influence on pleasure and arousal, which also impacts a customer's willingness to engage in a buyer – seller interaction. [30]

“Willingness to engage in buyer – seller interaction was correlated with the increased pleasure and arousal felt by customers. North and Hargreaves reported that when students liked the music in the student cafeteria, there was an increased willingness to return to the cafeteria and an increase willingness to interact with others in the cafeteria.” [31]

The effect of the music on consumer behaviour is largely measured by background music. Background music had been defined as musicians playing instrumental music. Background music should not complicate the variable of verbal communication among listeners in that case it transforms into foreground music. Foreground music generally catches more attention than background music and it has stronger ability to affect the mood of the listener. It is proved that younger customers spend more time shopping when they are exposed to background music whereas older customers spend more time shopping when they are exposed to the foreground music. Music tempo has also a significant effect on consumer's behaviour. [32]

“Caldwell and Hibbert studied the effect of music on consumer capital expenditure in a restaurant environment: specifically, experiments were conducted charting personal expenditure on food, drinks and total spent. Analysis of these data revealed that slow music increased customer expenditure in all three categories. Similarly, Milliman's study showed that fast music persuaded diners to eat more quickly while slow music led to slower eating. Slower food consumption also led to more drinks being ordered from the bar.” [33]

Other studies also proved the relation between music tempo and speed of the customer's shopping behaviour. Several studies reported that fast music makes shoppers at the supermarket move faster and it also correlates with the amount of spent money. Some restaurants also use fast music to speed up consumer's turnover during times when the demand for tables is high and slow music to keep people calm and relaxed. Experts also measured the effect of different styles of music on perceived characteristics of the dining environment. Classical music affects a subject to pay higher amount of money and has more potential to increase sales than easy listening or silence. Managers and businessmen must use music that properly fits to their products, service approach and environment. An experiment in a wine cellar measured that exposure to classical music led to customers buying more expensive wine.

Since the discovery of this market aspect, many savvy marketers have begun to use background music so much that it has become a marketing technique. As we are on the beginning of flash mobs as a marketing technique and flash mobs are starting to be incorporated by marketers, it is clear that more research is needed. [34]

4.2 Operating flash mob experiment

A field experiment had been designed at Vancouver Canada's Granville Island Market to explore the relationship between consumer's behaviour and flash mobs. Granville Island Market does not represent a traditional shopping centre, because more than 40% of businesses are related to arts and culture. Basically, the experiment was set up with three conditions – no music, recorded music and live music; and the main mode of data collection was observation. The environmental manipulation was used as a mechanism to prove the relation between community connectedness and flash mobs. Eighteen observers and six singers were involved into the field experiment. Observers had to observe the way in which consumers interact with each other. Observers were also asked to record consumer's behaviour on their mobile phones. In the first case (no music); observers were asked to circulate around consumers and observe the interactions between them and vendors. In the second case, observers had the same mission, but the environment was changed. A recording of the third

act quartet from Verdi's *Rigoletto* followed by Luigi Denza's *Funicul, Funicula* was played on the food court. In the third case; the same two musical selections from the second case were performed live. And observers were also circulating and observing. When the third performance ended, performers were asked to stay and speak with the audience, there were also conducted more interviews with consumers. Observers also created a brief demographic survey, as they were interviewing the customers. [35]

"Participants ranged in the age from 19 to 81. Fifty-four participants self-identified as male, while 73 identified as female (1 individual chose not to identify his/her gender). As the flash mob included interaction between performers and visitors to the market, we include their demographic information as well. There were also 18 observers and 6 performers included in the field experiment. The 18 observers were all graduated students at Simon Fraser University. Three students were PhD students while 15 were completing master's degree. The performers were hired by researchers to conduct the flash mob; they are all classically trained opera singers who had worked together prior to the flash mob. There were three female performers and three male performers." [36]

The results of the experiment have been broken down into four major themes: *consumer arousal during flash mob, consumer desirability to be part of the group, consumer connectedness during the flash mob and increased consumer-felt emotion during the flash mob.* In the first case, consumers seemed very introverted. Only individuals interacted with others and mostly with whom they came with. Observers felt the frustration of the consumers and it was very difficult to convince costumers to talk to them. People seemed to walk around continuously, eat quickly and return to other parts of the shopping centre.

In the second case, much of the behaviour of the consumers stayed the same as during the first one. Shoppers also kept to themselves or they were talking to their friends. The observers received many complaints about the recorded music. Most of the consumers did not like the opera, chosen place and volume. It was also very difficult to convince customers to speak to them.

[37] *“Everyone was complaining about the music. They said it was loud and they didn’t like the music. Actually I had to speak with a manager at a coffee shop to calm down her employees (who were complaining about the music);”*
[38] one of the observers said.

The final case, live music (flash mob) changed the behaviour in the market. Observers were asked by customers to speak with them about the flash mob and the market. Almost 300 people gathered around the performance and they were dancing and singing along with the performers. Customers were taking videos of flash mob, while others were staring at the performers. Vendors and other employees of local shops stopped their business and went to watch the performance. Numerous spectators were moved to tears and stayed after to thank performers and observers. The hustle at Granville Island remained for about half an hour after the performance. Conversations spread rapidly and people were coming from all over the market to become a part of the performance. One of the spectators commented the performance:

“I actually came to get something for dinner, and when we came around, and heard... (singing and) I said, “Where is that voice coming from? Where is this voice? Let’s follow the voice.” So we just came down and it did move us to tears. There’s no doubt about it; it’s fantastic and I hope it was impromptu and that you startled everyone here, because what an experience they had. It was lovely, it was wonderful.” [39] The electric atmosphere and evidence of consumer arousal lead initiators to the following proposition:

P1: Live unexpected music can increase consumer’s arousal. The heightened emotion of the shoppers was one of the most discussed themes. Several studies proved that music has the power to magnify emotional experience and emotional response is often a goal in marketing.

P2A: Flash mob can elicit an increase of emotional response in customers.

P2B: The emotional response felt by customers can lead to long-term customer loyalty. Unfortunately, customer’s loyalty was not tested in this

experiment. The duration of the field study did not allow for in-depth study of consumer loyalty.

P3A: Flash mob created a sense of connectedness between audience and performers and it formed a temporary group. During the flash mob, customers were interacting with one another, which did not happen in either of the previous cases. The feeling of connectedness was felt among performers, audience and even among observers.

P3B: Temporary groups can turn into feelings of identification, which can support consumer loyalty. [40]

This field experiment would remove the consumer from the ordinary shopping experience. The operatic flash mob is not similar to the definition of classical background music. Nevertheless, the popularity of flash mob as a marketing tool has grown exponentially. Plenty of companies have used flash mobs as a marketing tool. For example Air Canada sponsored a holiday flash mob at Vancouver's YVR airport. Over 60 dancers and 5 musicians were hired to sing along the Christmas carols on the 21st December 2010. Passengers were videotaping whole performance and shared it on common social sites, almost 300,000 people viewed these amateur videos. Further, press and several news informed about the event, among others *Vancouver Sun* (Canada), *Huffington Post* (Canada), *CTV* (Canada). The expenditures for this event were very low in relation to the exposure Air Canada received.

As this field offers many repercussions, there are three main points that managers can take away from this field experiment. Firstly; managers shall consider consumer involvement as an important area. Consumers know the traditional marketing tactics very well and it is important for a firm to set itself aside from competition. The positive interactions between consumers and producers in a flash mob can help companies to distinguish themselves from others. It is widely known that consumers do not trust marketers, nor do they like to feel manipulated by advertisers. The main aim of flash mob producers is to create a heightened existential experience transparent, combine it with astuteness of the consumer and create a potential trust between the company and consumer. This whole process may result in a "buzz" about the company

on social media platforms. Secondly; social networks are affecting consumer behaviour more and more. Individuals can share the information about flash mob or even the video of the flash mob very easily, which could increase ties to company that sponsored the flash mob. And finally; the live nature of the flash mob increased consumer-felt emotion and arousal. Research demonstrates that consumers feel stronger connectedness in situations when companies can increase emotions towards a product or service. Actually, the nature of the flash mob allows companies to distinguish themselves from the competition and capture mental real estate in the mind of the consumer. [41]

5 Flash mob as a form of protest

It is known from the history that the power of crowd is very redoubtable. Well initiated flash mobs, especially politically motivated flash mobs, which connect citizens with same opinion, can transform into demonstrations. A quotation from George Orwell's famous 1984 says: "*Until they won't be aware, they won't revolt, until they won't revolt, they won't become aware.*" (*Winston's thought about proletariat*) [42] Masses have an incredible power to change established order but they need to realize it. Sometimes this proverbial circle was broken and main reasons for that were flash mobs. This chapter presents flash mobs as political protests, some of them had far-reaching consequences and others were suspended after few minutes. Some of them were peaceful and others were malevolent. But every flash mob fulfilled its purpose – to point at certain issue.

Generally; the biggest flash mobs are demonstrations of public will. This kind of flash mob as a protest appeared in Cairo, Egypt. On 25th January 2011 almost 50,000 people gathered on Tahrir Square, many of them were informed about gathering via Facebook, Twitter and other social sites. A Facebook group "Tahrir Square" encouraged citizens to join the protest during the revolution (see the picture 6 of the appendix III). The wireless internet was shut down by the sixth day of protests. Nevertheless, number of protesters increased to one million. Hosni Mubarak was thrown down and political elite in Egypt has changed. The revolution is over, but activists are still using Facebook to share photos, videos or stories from pre- and post- revolution Egypt. [43]

Social networks are also widely spread in the countries of Middle East, the next great example is a flash mob called *Green Revolution*. Green Revolution also known as *the Twitter Revolution* was a term for Iranian election protests. Thousands of Iranian citizens gathered in large cities in defiance of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Ahmadinejad was re-elected in formal elections, but the public considered those elections to be fraudulent. Activists used Twitter and other social networks to communicate with each other. The government shut the internet down and blocked Facebook, YouTube and

other social sites. Young Iranians tried to help each other by tweeting lists of Web proxy servers.

The riots in the United Kingdom in August 2011 were based on same communication methods as in Iran. Riots started when police got involved with activists who were marching through Tottenham in North London. The march was organised because of violent death of Mark Duggan. Youth connected mostly via BlackBerry instant messaging, began to gather in commercial centres all over the country. They were breaking into stores and destroying merchandise. People were setting fire to cars, busses and buildings. Five people were killed in five days of the mayhem.

Instead of violating flash mobs in the United Kingdom, residents of Manila used a peaceful protest to change their country's situation in 2001. Over 1 million Filipinos gathered at a monument that commemorates the peaceful removal of President Ferdinand Marcos in 1989. They created a massive 4 day protest against government corruption. President Joseph Estrada was overthrown in this Second People Power Revolution. Cell phones were the key of the organisation, all the protest grew so quickly due to mass communication among residents. Even though the revolution happened in 2001, it already used a smart mob technology. [44]

5.1 Double standard for flash mobs

Basically, political flash mobs were meant to be a peaceful way of protest. Indeed, most of them really are. In most of the democratic countries all over the world flash mob organising is not considered as a crime. This advantage is connected with freedom of speech and press or freedom of assembly. Unfortunately, there still exist several countries where flash mobs are punished, even if they are not violating, and where double standard is used. Freedom of press and speech is in those countries only phrase, not reality. Russia ranks among those countries. The following examples of flash mobs that took place in Russia show obvious marks of discrimination, abuse of authority and usage of double standard.

5.1.1 Pro-Pussy Riot flash mob

On 21st January 2012 Russian police arrested 3 members of an illegal music band Pussy Riot. Pussy Riot is a name of a Russian punk band, which consists of several female singers and musicians from age 20 to 31. Their provocative and vulgar performances are well known in Russia. Their songs criticise Vladimir Putin's managed democracy in Russia, sexism, discrimination, censorship and more of those so-called "acid issues" and are often performed in extraordinary public places. Members of this controversial group were arrested because they sang a song called "Mother of God, bump up Putin" in the Christ the Savior Cathedral in Moscow. [45] Popularity of Pussy Riot increased rapidly after their arrest, many foreign singers and musicians supported them with online energizing messages. Heads of democratic states criticised police intervention and Putin's approach. Their supporters organised a pro-Pussy Riot flash mob near the orthodox cathedral (see picture 5 of the appendix III). More than 20 activists wearing balaclavas of various colours formed a chain on the stairs of the cathedral, holding large printed letters "Blessed are the merciful." Security guards tried to break up the flash mob and assaulted minor groups of activists and reporters. Police arrived as protesters had expected. No official commentaries or reports appeared. [46]

5.1.2 Trainload of arguments

A flash mob called "Trainload of Arguments" was created on 17th February 2012 in Yekaterinburg. Vladimir Putin's supporters organised this event to lobby for their chosen presidential candidate. Activists received posters with printed clause "I am for ..." each of them had to fill the missing word on his/her own, stating the reason why he/she would vote for Putin. Flash mobbers filled the train in the city metro at appointed time. They were carrying those posters and travelled the whole way back. The statement said that Putin's supporters wanted to show that there was a large number of objective reasons why Putin should become president. The organizer of the flash mob, Maria Voskresenskaya, mentioned that participants would decide at the scene how they would deal with passengers' reactions. She also mentioned that if they

encountered aggression, they would call police, but if the questions were asked, they would explain why to vote for Putin. [47]

5.1.3 “Russia without Putin” flash mob

Russians have accepted Vladimir Putin’s system of managed democracy for more than a decade. The main mark of this system is to utilize official measures to ensure that only Kremlin-approved political parties can candidate in elections and the ruling party, United Russia, will always get a majority of votes. But on 11th July 2011, when the official election results were announced (UR won almost 50% of votes) up to 10,000 protesters headed towards the Chistye Prudhi metro station. Protesters were informed mainly through social media and they attempted to march to the Kremlin, shouting slogans such as “down with police state” or “Russia without Putin”. Almost 300 of them were arrested and few of them were handed in prison for 15 days for refusing to follow a lawful police order. One of the imprisoned activists was also a radical blogger Alexei Navalny and a liberal opposition leader Ilya Yashin. The protests continued and an evening after, protesters were attacked by thousands of heavily-armoured riot police officers on Moscow’s downtown Triumph Square. Another 250 protesters were arrested, including former Deputy Prime Minister Boris Nemtsov, a leader of the banned liberal party PARNAS and Sergei Mitrokhin, a leader of the liberal party Yabloko, which won 3% of the votes. Protesters also went into the streets of St. Petersburg, Samara and Rostov-on-Don. [48]

“No one expected the public mood to snap like this; these rallies caught everyone by surprise. What is most remarkable is that the people we are seeing in the streets now are not usual handful hard-core protesters, who turn out for regular anti-Kremlin rallies on Triumph Square. These are completely new people, responsible, mature people, who are finally fed up with the open official lies and manipulation that everyone is expected to swallow, and see public protests as the only respectable option. Even a few weeks ago, for these people, taking to the streets would have been unthinkable. But now they feel pushed against the wall.” says Alexander Kononov, president of the independent Institute for Strategic Assessments in Moscow.” [49]

Opposition leaders announced that they planned more flash mobs and big rally on Saturday in Revolution Square, which is adjacent to Kremlin. This gathering was planned weeks ago and it had been granted an official permit but only for maximum of 300 participants. Organizers were asking for 10,000 people, because Revolution Square is very extensive.

Russian state media did not report about anti-government protests, but they accentuated the “Clean Victory” demonstration that had been held every evening in Moscow by members of pro-Kremlin youth groups *Molodaya Gvardia* and *Nashi*. These organisations were created by government after Ukraine’s *Orange Revolution* in 2004 to play a counterbalancing role if similar rioting occurred in Russia. Russian social media were overloaded by commentary about rigged elections and official pressure from first-hand witnesses.

Social media are a key tool for Russian protesters. Many new social sites and blogs were established just to connect citizens, who do not agree with election results. For example; Onespace.ru offers a plenty of helpful advice for first-time protesters, as what to bring with you, how to behave at the gathering or how to get legal help, when you need it. *“If you are detained, do not resist, relax and press your chin to breast, cover your head with hands. If you are beaten, don’t hesitate to shout, the louder the better. Having found yourself inside the paddy wagon, immediately send a phone message.”* [50] On the other side, the ruling political party UR and its leader Vladimir Putin do not support its reputation on the Internet. Mikhail Kasyanov, a former Prime Minister and co-leader of banned liberal party PARNAS, commented that Putin has virtually disappeared from public view as the protests have spread. He also noted that Putin would not take the protests as a lesson. The best solution to satisfy both sides is a dialogue and compromise, but Putin will not negotiate. Still, participants of protests believe that this is the beginning of the end of Putin’s regime. He had been elected but it will not last more than 5 years, added Kasyanov. [51]

5.2 Strictly forbidden flash mobs

Harder times than Russian participants of flash mobs experience flash mobsters in Belarus. Freedom of speech or press is something unimaginable in

this pro-Russian-oriented eastern country. The head of the state since 1994, Alexander Lukashenko, secures police order and undemocratic practices in judicial and legislative system of Belarus. In November 2011, Lukashenko signed into law the bills, which were opposed by civil society representatives and a number of international organizations (including OSCE⁹). The legal changes are related to mass public events, political parties and public organizations. These new amendments require citizens of Belarus to obtain permission from local authorities for gathering in public places in order to express their socio-political sentiments or a protest, including flash mobs organized via Internet. Moreover; the amendments also impose a criminal liability for receiving foreign funding for private organizations in breach of the Belarusian laws. Public organizations are also banned from keeping money, stock or other valuables with banks and non-banking credit financial institutions in foreign countries. International organizations had already urged the Belarusian authorities not to put these laws into practice. These amendments were considered according to the European Union and the OSCE as fundamental rights and freedom of assembly restricting. [52]

Belarusian Interior Ministry Anatoly Kuleshov commented that the purpose of the amendments is to ensure the security of society, not a specific group of people and the Belarusian law is more democratic than the law existing in the developed democratic countries.

Belarusian human rights activists considered the amendments to the law On Mass Events as inadequate to the 21st century. These amendments obviously violate citizen's rights to peaceful assembly guaranteed by the Belarusian Constitution and the basic norms of international law. These amendments are valid in Belarus since 28th November 2011. [53]

⁹ OSCE – Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

6 Conclusion

The main aim of the thesis was to introduce the phenomenon of flash mobbing. Important theoretical fields of flash mobbing were discussed in the first chapter. Therefore, the reader is able to understand the main phrases and abbreviations, which are used by flash mob organizers or flash mob participants. The reader perceives the way how the flash mob is created and organised. As this young phenomenon rapidly spread, it has opened several issues as well as new fields and new opportunities.

The dilemma of flash mobs' threats discussed in the chapter *Flash mobs: Public threat or democratic freedom* introduces advantages as well as disadvantages of flash mobbing. The opposing articles, included in the second chapter, revealed the problem of violating flash mobs and related influx of disagreements, which are contrary to the U.S. constitution and violate some of residents' rights. It follows that banning or regulations of public gatherings cast doubt upon constitutional right. The last chapter is also dedicated to this issue and criticises steps of Russian and Belarus governments in case of flash mob legal abolition or restriction. Several flash mob restrictions mentioned in this thesis are obviously in contrast with rights guaranteed by the constitutions of both countries.

Flash mobs also influence consumers' minds and behaviour; this fact opened new marketing field. This is the main conclusion of the third chapter, dedicated to the flash mobbing used as a market tool. A field experiment organized by the team of researcher from the Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada in department store proved that flash mobs strengthen the relation between consumers and products. Consumers do not trust the marketers because customers are familiar with traditional marketing tactics. Flash mobs bring a completely unknown tactic, which is able to increase consumers' arousal.

We have to admit that the power of public gatherings is strong and flash mobs are relatively easy to form due to nowadays technologies. Participants of flash mobs fell connected to each other, which affects their mind and confidence. This advantage of flash mobs can be used as a support of political

leaders, advertisement or charity support and simply to increase awareness of any kind of imaginable matter.

In the process of working on the thesis, articles and essays from economical and sociological scientific journals were mainly used, because the phenomenon is young and it was difficult to find any published books. Two diagrams and six pictures of flash mobs, which were discussed in the thesis, are included as appendices. It is also possible to enlarge the thesis in the future because several angles, from which the phenomenon can be seen, were left out. An interesting remark to conclude the thesis is that the age we live in has tendency to globalise and connect everything and the high-technologies made the connection among people / consumers / protesters / supporters much easier. This is the reason why flash mobs spread so rapidly.

7 Endnotes

1. Gore, G. Flash Mob Dance and the Territorialisation of Urban Movement. *Anthropological Notebooks*. 2010, vol. 16, n. 3, p. 126.
2. Oxford Dictionaries,. [online]. [accessed 2014-03-01]. Available from: <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/flash-mob?q=flash+mob>
3. Gore, p. 126.
4. Grant, P. S. Operatic Flash Mob: Consumer Arousal, Connectedness and Emotion. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*. 2012, vol. 11, n. 4, p. 244.
5. Cooney, B. 5 Flash Mob Rules: Flash mobs know how to go viral. *Medical Meetings*. 2012, vol. 8, n. 4, p. 34.
6. Cooney, p. 33.
7. Reframing public space,. [online]. [accessed 2014-02-27]. Available from: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/91277534/Reframing-Public-Space>
8. Gore, p. 128.
9. Ibid., p. 128 – 129.
10. Ibid., p. 129.
11. Ibid., p. 128 – 129.
12. Ibid., p. 129.
13. Kiltz, L. Flash Mobs: the Newest Threat to Local Governments. *Public Management*. 2011, vol. 93, n. 11, p. 6.
14. Mobs Are Born as Word Grows by Text Message,. [online]. [accessed 2014-01-06]. Available from: http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/25/us/25mobs.html?_r=0
15. Mag Mile Mobs,. [online]. [accessed 2014-01-16]. Available from: http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2011-06-06/opinion/ct-edit-mob20110606_1_flash-mob-rash-of-similar-crimes-chicago-police

16. Kiltz, p. 8.
17. Ibid., p. 8.
18. Ibid., p. 9.
19. Ibid., p. 9.
20. Anderson, J. Flash Mobs Revisited: Public Threat or Democratic Freedom. *Public Management*. 2012, vol. 94, n. 2, p. 28.
21. Anderson, p. 28.
22. Bill of Rights Transcript., [online]. [accessed 2014-03-01]. Available from: http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/bill_of_rights_transcript.html
23. Anderson, p. 28.
24. Bill of Rights Transcript., [online]. [accessed 2014-03-01]. Available from: http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/bill_of_rights_transcript.html
25. Anderson, p. 28.
26. Ibid., p. 28.
27. Ibid., p. 29.
28. Ibid., p. 29.
29. Ibid., p. 29.
30. Grant, p. 244.
31. Ibid., p. 245.
32. Ibid., p. 245.
33. Ibid., p. 246.
34. Ibid., p. 246.
35. Ibid., p. 247.
36. Ibid., p. 247.

37. Ibid., p. 247.

38. Ibid., p. 247.

39. Ibid., p. 247.

40. Ibid., p. 248.

41. Ibid., p. 248.

42. Orwell, G. 1984. Editor Peter Buitenhuis, Ira Bruce Nadel. Praha: Levné knihy, 2009, Československý spisovatel (Levné knihy), p. 145.

43. Flash Mobs: 5 Biggest Flash Mobs of All Time., [online]. [accessed 2014-04-08]. Available from:

<http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=4&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=8OGE.D29DE4A6.1FEA7F7E>

44. Flash Mobs: 5 Biggest Flash Mobs of All Time., [online]. [accessed 2014-04-08]. Available from:

<http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=4&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=8OGE.D29DE4A6.1FEA7F7E>

45. Ruské punkerky skončily ve vězení za píseň namířenou proti Putinovi., [online]. [accessed 2014-04-15]. Available from: http://zpravy.idnes.cz/ruske-punkerky-skoncily-ve-vezeni-za-pisen-namirenou-proti-putinovi-12s-/zahranicni.aspx?c=A120121_171810_zahranicni_brd

46. Police Drive at Pro-Pussy Riot Flash Mob Scene at Christ Savior Cathedral., [online]. [accessed 2014-04-08]. Available from:

<http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=10&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=78858487>

47. Flash Mob in Putin's Support to Be Held in Yekaterinburg Metro., [online]. [accessed 2014-04-08]. Available from:

http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=23&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbm9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1l aG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=71800174

48. Chanting „Russia without Putin,“ Flash Mob Roil Moscow., [online].
[accessed 2014-04-16]. Available from:

http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=19&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbm9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1l aG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=67723602

49. Chanting „Russia without Putin,“ Flash Mob Roil Moscow., [online].
[accessed 2014-04-16]. Available from:

http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=19&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbm9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1l aG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=67723602

50. Chanting „Russia without Putin,“ Flash Mob Roil Moscow., [online].
[accessed 2014-04-16]. Available from:

http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=19&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbm9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1l aG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=67723602

51. Chanting „Russia without Putin,“ Flash Mob Roil Moscow., [online].
[accessed 2014-04-16]. Available from:

http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=19&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbm9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1l aG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=67723602

52. Lukashenko Limits Possibility of Organizing Flash Mobs via Internet.,
[online]. [accessed 2014-04-16]. Available from:

http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=18&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-

a595-

b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1l
aG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=67185724

53. Flash Mobs Now Require Permits in Belarus., [online]. [accessed 2014-04-16]. Available from:

<http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=18&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8->

a595-

b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1l
aG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=67507675

8 Bibliography

ANDERSON, J. Flash Mobs Revisited: Public Threat or Democratic Freedom. *Public Management*. 2012, vol. 94, n. 2, p. 28-29.

Anglicko-český, česko-anglický multioborový slovník: z oblasti vědy, techniky a ekonomiky. Brno: Computer Press, 2010, p. 979. ISBN 978-80-251-3259-3.

BARNES, N. G. Mob It and Sell It: Creating Marketing Opportunity Through the Replication of Flash Mobs. *Marketing Management Journal*. 2006, vol. 16, n. 1, p. 174-180.

CLAYCOMB, L. Regulating Flash Mobs. Seeking a Middle Ground Approach that Preserves Free Expression and Maintains Public Order. *University of Louisville Law Review*. 2012, vol. 51, n. 2, p. 375-405.

COONEY, B. 5 Flash Mob Rules: Flash mobs know how to go viral. *Medical Meetings*. 2012, vol. 39, n. 2, p. 33-34.

GORE, G. Flash Mob Dance and the Territorialisation of Urban Movement. *Anthropological Notebooks*. 2010, vol. 16, n. 3, p. 125-131.

GRANT, P. S. Operatic Flash Mob: Consumer Arousal, Connectedness and Emotion. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*. 2012, vol. 11, n. 4, p. 244.

GRAY, D. Mob Handed. *Coaching at Work*. 2013, vol. 8, n. 1, p. 47-47.

KAULINGFREKS, R. WARREN. SWARM: Flash Mobs, Mobile Clubbing and the City. *Culture & Organization*. 2010, vol. 16, n. 3, p. 211-227. DOI: 10.1080/14759551.2010.503498.

KILTZ, L. Flash Mobs: the Newest Threat to Local Governments. *Public Management*. 2011, vol. 93, n. 11, p. 6-9.

ORWELL, George. 1984. Editor Peter Buitenhuis, Ira Bruce Nadel. Praha: Levné knihy, 2009, 261 s. Československý spisovatel (Levné knihy). ISBN 978-80-7309-808-7.

RHEINGOLD, H. *Smart mobs: the next social revolution*. Cambridge, Mass.: Basic Books, 2002, xxii, p. 266. ISBN 07-382-0861-2.

Internet sources

Bill of Rights Transcript., [online]. [accessed 2014-03-01]. Available from:

http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/bill_of_rights_transcript.html

Chanting „Russia without Putin,“ Flash Mob Roil Moscow., [online]. [accessed 2014-04-16]. Available from:

[http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=19&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-](http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=19&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=67723602)

[b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=67723602](http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=19&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=67723602)

Flash Mob in Putin´s Support to Be Held in Yekaterinburg Metro., [online].

[accessed 2014-04-08]. Available from:

[http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=23&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-](http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=23&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=71800174)

[b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=71800174](http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=23&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=71800174)

Flash Mobs Now Require Permits in Belarus., [online]. [accessed 2014-04-16].

Available from:

[http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=18&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-](http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=18&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=67507675)

[b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=67507675](http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=18&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=67507675)

Flash Mobs: 5 Biggest Flash Mobs of All Time., [online]. [accessed 2014-04-08].

Available from:

[http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=4&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-](http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=4&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=80GE.D29DE4A6.1FEA7F7E)

[b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=80GE.D29DE4A6.1FEA7F7E](http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=4&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=80GE.D29DE4A6.1FEA7F7E)

Lukashenko Limits Possibility of Organizing Flash Mobs via Internet., [online].

[accessed 2014-04-16]. Available from:

[http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=18&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-](http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=18&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-a595-b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=bwh&AN=80GE.D29DE4A6.1FEA7F7E)

*b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0Z
T1laG9zdC1saXZI#db=bwh&AN=67185724*

Mag Mile Mobs., [online]. [accessed 2014-01-16]. Available from:

*http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2011-06-06/opinion/ct-edit-
mob20110606_1_flash-mob-rash-of-similar-crimes-chicago-police*

Mobs Are Born as Word Grows by Text Message., [online]. [accessed 2014-01-06]. Available from:

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/25/us/25mobs.html?_r=0

Oxford Dictionaries., [online]. [accessed 2014-03-01]. Available from:

http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/flash-mob?q=flash+mob

Police Drive at Pro-Pussy Riot Flash Mob Scene at Christ Savior Cathedral., [online]. [accessed 2014-04-08]. Available from:

*http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=10&sid=3af536bc-d6d0-4ed8-
a595-*

*b45366e933ec%40sessionmgr198&hid=112&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0Z
T1laG9zdC1saXZI#db=bwh&AN=78858487*

Ruské punkerky skončily ve vězení za píseň namířenou proti Putinovi., [online]. [accessed 2014-04-15]. Available from: *http://zpravy.idnes.cz/ruske-punkerky-skoncily-ve-vezeni-za-pisen-namirenou-proti-putinovi-12s-/zahranicni.aspx?c=A120121_171810_zahranicni_brd*

Sources of the diagrams and pictures in appendices I–III

Diagram 1: Flash Mob Popularity Index

BARNES, N. G. Mob It and Sell It: Creating Marketing Opportunity Through the Replication of Flash Mobs. *Marketing Management Journal*. 2006, vol. 16, n. 1, p. 176.

Diagram 2: Flash Mob Media Reports

BARNES, N. G. Mob It and Sell It: Creating Marketing Opportunity Through the Replication of Flash Mobs. *Marketing Management Journal*. 2006, vol. 16, n. 1, p. 176.

Picture 1

Yieppies., [online]. [accessed 04-26-2014]. Available from:
http://www.psychoeconomy.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/yieppies_blackmask.jpg

Picture 2

100 Ladies Take over Piccadilly Circus., [online]. [accessed 04-26-2014].
Available from: <http://www.viralblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/tridentunwrapped.jpg>

Picture 3

T-Mobile Flashmobs Liverpool Street Station., [online]. [accessed 04-26-2014].
Available from: <http://www.adrants.com/2009/01/tmobile-flashmobs-liverpool-street.php>

Picture 4

Flash mob mimics T-Mobile advert and closes train station., [online]. [accessed 04-26-2014]. Available from:
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/facebook/4542840/Flash-mob-mimicks-T-Mobile-advert-and-closes-train-station.html>

Picture 5

Support for Pussy Riot., [online]. [accessed 04-26-2014]. Available from:
<http://www.smh.com.au/photogallery/national/support-for-pussy-riot-20120817-24e99.html>

Picture 6

Tahrir Square Redux: A Tipping Point for Democracy in Egypt?., [online].
[accessed 04-26-2014]. Available from:
<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/07/tahrir-square-redux-a-tipping-point-for-democracy-in-egypt/277416/>

9 Abstract

The thesis discusses a new phenomenon of popular culture, flash mobs. The first part focuses on flash mob in general. The analysis of flash mobbing is mostly based on several sociological essays and articles from scientific journals. It gives the reader basic information about flash mob creation, its origin and rapid spread. It also includes advice how to organise a successful flash mob. The rest of the thesis is dedicated to the advantages as well as disadvantages of flash mobbing. The conflict between flash mob supporters and its detractors is also explained and analysed. The advantages in the form of new marketing field are also discussed. And the last part is focused on rioting flash mobs and their power. The main objective of the thesis is to introduce flash mobbing as a strong, rapidly spreading new-age phenomenon and to chart its evolution since 2003.

10 Resume

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá novým fenoménem moderní kultury, zvaným „flash mob“. Úvodní část práce se zabývá flash moby obecně. K jejímu vypracování byly použity sociologické studie a odborné články. Kapitola přináší čtenáři základní přehled o původu, vývoji a globálním rozšíření flash mobbingu. Dále obsahuje podkapitulu s praktickým schématem jak vytvořit úspěšný flash mob. Další část práce se zaměřuje na výhody a nevýhody spojené s masovým rozšířením flash mobů. Je zde nastíněn konflikt mezi odpůrci a stoupenci flash mobbingu ve Spojených státech. Dále je flash mobbing představen jako nová výzva na poli marketingu a reklamy. Závěrečná část práce se zabývá flash moby z politického hlediska, popisuje jejich sílu a vliv při masových demonstracích po celém světě. Základním cílem této bakalářské práce je přinést obecný přehled o tomto fenoménu a zmapovat jeho původ a dosavadní vývoj od roku 2003.

11 Appendices

List of appendices

Appendix I: Flash mob popularity index

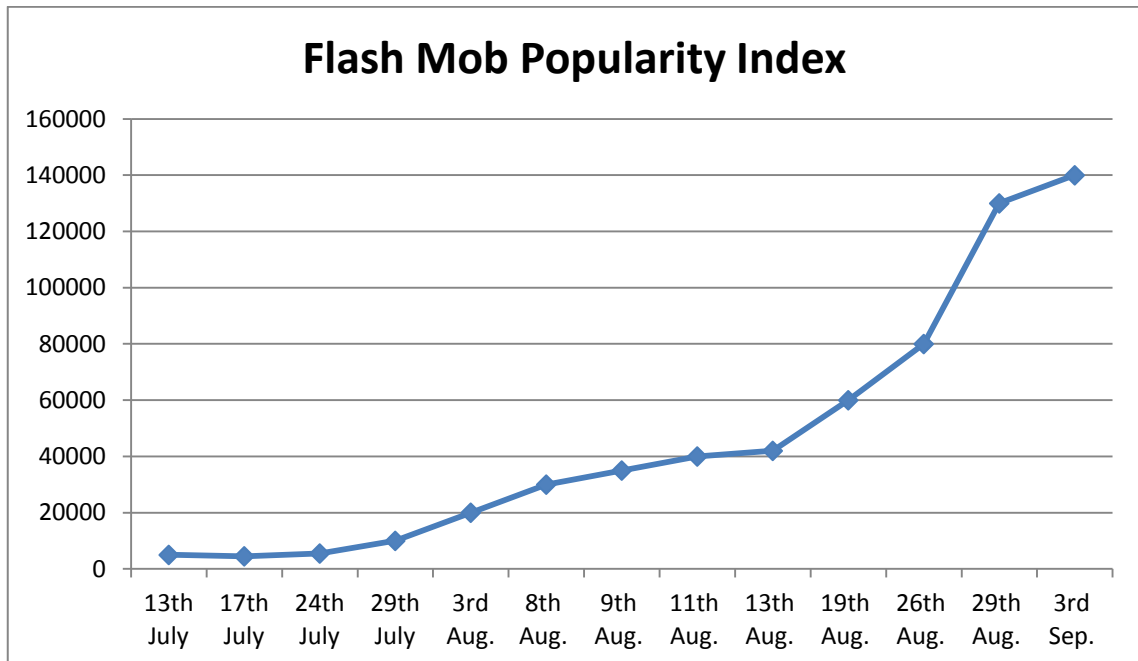
Appendix II: Flash mob media reports

Appendix III: Flash mob pictures

Appendix I: Flash mob popularity index

Below is an index of how popular the flash mob phenomenon is according to how many search hits the term “Flash Mob” receives on www.google.com. It is arranged according to the date of when the search was conducted.

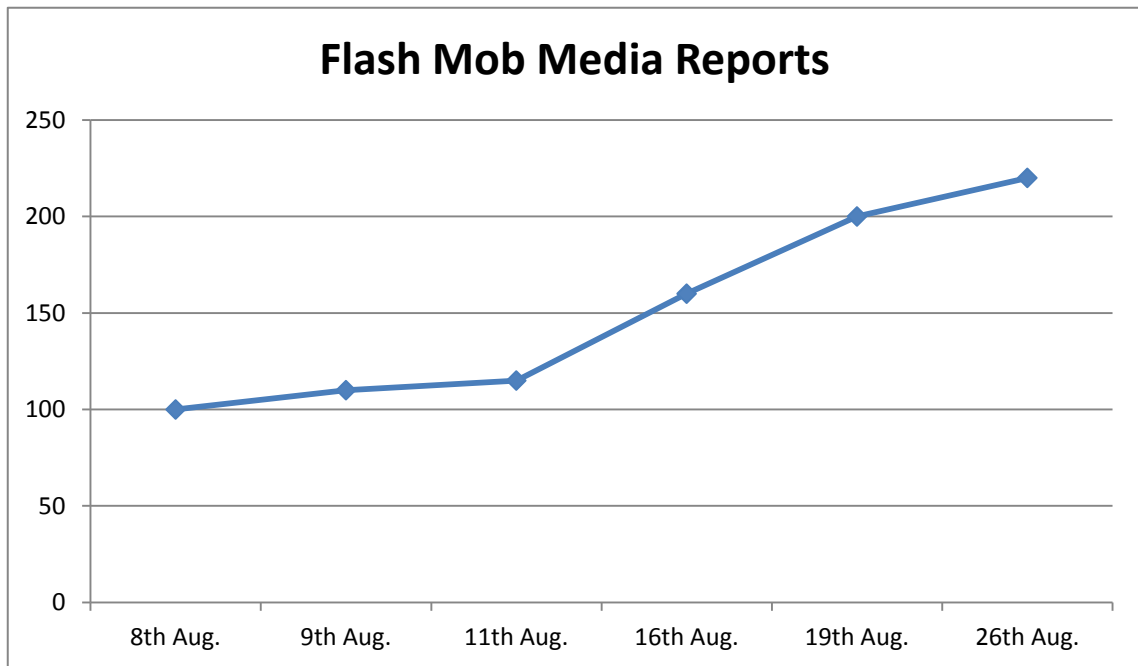
Diagram 1: Flash mob popularity index (July-September 2003)



Appendix II: Flash mob media reports

The index below shows the number of reports regarding flash mobs during the specified time.

Diagram 2: Flash mob media report (8th-26th August 2003)



Appendix III: Flash Mob Pictures

Picture 1: Yippies

Below is a picture of Yippies and their leader Abbie Hoffman protesting in front of the Wall Street stock exchange.



Picture 2: Single ladies

Below is a picture of "Single ladies" flash mob performed in the Piccadilly Circus.



Picture 3: T-mobile flash mob

Below is a picture of flash mob in London's Liverpool Street station released by T-mobile.



Picture 4: Reincarnation of T-mobile advertising flash mob

Below is a picture of London's Liverpool Street station one month after the release of T-mobile advertisement.



Picture 5: Pro-Pussy Riot flash mob

Below is a picture of a „human chain“, which was made by Pussy Riot’s supporters during the flash mob.



Picture 6: Tahrir square

The picture of Tahrir square on 25th January 2011.

