

**Cho, Younghan**, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Korea

**Mobilizing an Online Community during the Protests against U.S. Beef Imports in South Korea**

This study examines how members of an online community of Korean MLB fans are being mobilized against U.S. beef imports to South Korea, with a focus on monetary contributions, protest events, and alternative media. As they participate, members not only interact online and offline, but also become involved in local political issues. This involvement, which increases members' sense of belongingness to their online community and their social consciousness more generally, shows that an online community and its members do not exist only behind the screen and are not alienated, either from each other or the larger society. The participation of these MLB fans in the beef protests also shows their lives in online community include offline and public dimensions. By interviewing with five members who played central roles in the community, I aim at revealing its unique dynamics and unforeseen obstacles in organizing several activities during the protest period.