

POSC 358: Comparative Social Movements

Carleton College, Fall 2018



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Fall Office Hours

Monday, 11:30am-1:00pm

Thursdays, 1:00pm-4:00pm

And Skype by appointment

“We can remake the world daily.”

Paul Wellstone

“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Course Overview

This course will examine the role that social movements play in political life from a comparative perspective. We will consider the major theories that have been developed to explain social movement behavior at both the domestic and international levels, and will also consider a range of empirical cases, both historical and contemporary, that will inform our search for answers to several questions, including:

- What are social movements, and how do they differ from other forms of political participation and organization?
- Why do people join social movements?
- How do movements choose their tactics and strategies?
- Under what conditions are movements most likely to become socially and politically influential?

Throughout, we will investigate the major debates that characterize this field of study. We will also try to bridge the world of theory and practice in a limited way by engaging in some “field experiences.” By the end of the course, students should have an overview of the core theoretical and empirical debates in the field, as well as a base of knowledge that will prepare them for further independent research in this area.

Course Materials

There is one required text for this class, which can be purchased at the Carleton bookstore. All other readings will be available on Moodle.

Gupta, Devashree. 2017. *Protest Politics Today*. Cambridge, UK and Medford, MA: Polity.

Course Work and Goals

In this class, you will be asked to do a range of reading, writing, reflective, and active tasks that are intended to develop both your scholarly knowledge of social movements as well as some first-hand appreciation of the real-world challenges of organizing and activism. While this class is not a class on community organizing, it will try to build links between theoretical and practical knowledge where appropriate so that we can think about the study and practice of social movements in a variety of ways. The learning goals for this class, therefore, are somewhat eclectic, and include:

- developing a familiarity with and critical appreciation of the main theories in the study of social movements;
- acquiring hands-on experience collecting and analyzing information on social movements as part of writing an independent research paper;
- investigating real-world challenges involved in activism via hands-on experiences and interactions with community organizers;
- exploring the creative and performative side of movement activism and the range of movement strategies and tactics to effect change;
- working in groups—that is, *socially*—as part of the learning process to build collaborative skills.

To achieve these goals, you will be assessed on five different activities throughout the course of the term, which will be weighted as follows:

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| 1. Participation and class engagement | 20% |
| 2. Group activism project | 20% |
| 3. Final research paper | 30% |
| 4. Data collection and analysis project | 15% |
| 5. Midterm exam | 15% |

Participation and class engagement

This class will be run like a seminar, which means there will be limited lecturing and a great deal of discussion. You will have considerable power to determine the direction of discussion, so it will be vital that you come to class (1) having done all the readings carefully and critically, and (2) prepared to engage in thoughtful conversations about this material. My role as a faculty member is to facilitate discussion, not to hold court and lecture. Learning in a seminar is about engaging in a collaborative, shared process of discovery—that is to say, learning not just from the professor but also from your peers. Consequently, the burden is much more on you to contribute to and extract value from these interactions.

To facilitate the discussion, and to give you greater ownership over the material, you will each take a turn helping plan one day's discussion by thinking about the themes and questions that you would like to explore and by serving as the discussion leader. Active listening is also a core component of participation, but this is not a class where active listening alone will earn you a respectable participation grade. Participation means being present and engaged, but it also requires active contribution to the discussion. Passively taking in information is not the goal of a seminar, and passive learning will not be a successful strategy in this class. If you are someone who finds it difficult to speak in class, please come see me during office hours to discuss ways I

can help you succeed at this class component. Also note that unexcused absences, habitual lateness to class, inattentiveness, and disruptive or discourteous behavior during discussion can lower your participation grade precipitously.

Group activism project

For this component, you will work in small groups of 3-4 people to try your hand at organizing your very own activist event. This is a long-term project that will require you to work together to think about a range of issues, including how to recruit people to your event, how to devise an effective communications strategy to get the word out about your event, doing a site analysis to determine where and when to hold your event, which tactics to use, etc. The exercise is intended to help bridge theory and practice by giving you a chance to engage in the real work of grassroots activism, albeit in a limited way. Your group's selected event should take place no later than the seventh week of the term. Along the way, you will be responsible for maintaining a blog (one per group) to update the rest of the class about your efforts, to think about the connections between what we are reading and talking about in class with your work as an organizer, and to reflect on your own experiences.

Each group member is expected to post a minimum of five blog posts (each post should be no shorter than 250 words and no longer than 750 words). You can choose when to post, though (a) each group should post at least one update per week, and (b) each individual cannot post more than two posts in any given week. Your online posts will be worth 10% of your grade, and will be assessed individually, NOT as by group. In addition, your group will be responsible for an end-of-project presentation to the rest of the class, which will be worth 8% (assessed per group). An addition 2% of the grade will be based on contribution to successful overall group dynamics. More details about this project will be provided in class.

Midterm exam

The midterm will be a take-home exam. You will get a list of prompts and will have one week to turn in a 6-8 page, double-spaced set of responses. The exam is designed to test your understanding and ability to work with assigned texts and will not involve any outside research.

Class data collection and analysis project

To get some hands-on experience collecting the kinds of data that social movement scholars commonly use to do their own research, we will work as a class to analyze one particular movement (chosen by the class from a short list of options)—using different data collection and analysis techniques that may include protest event analysis, social network analysis, content analysis, participant observation, or qualitative comparative analysis (QCA). The techniques will depend on the specific movement chosen and the techniques that are best suited to the data that we are able to access for the selected movement.

The goal is to introduce you to some techniques that are not covered in the department's research methods class, but that may be of interest to those of you interested in carrying out comps research on social movements and protest. Students will sign up for a specific technique, be trained in it, and work together to collect the requisite data and analyze it in order to answer a question about this movement. Groups will present the results of their analysis to the rest of the class and upload supporting datasets and documentation to Moodle for review.

Final research paper

The final written assignment consists of a 20-25 page (double-spaced) research paper on a topic of your own choosing. This paper is meant to be a stand-alone paper, but could also be suitable as a starting point for comps. The completed, final paper is due by midnight on the last day of the exam period.

Course Policies

Course policies are detailed on the course Moodle page. It is your responsibility to read and familiarize yourself with their contents.

Schedule of Readings

The assigned readings come from a variety of sources, though most scholarship on social movements will come from political science and sociology journals. Some of these pieces will be more theory-heavy while others will be more empirical. Some will be easy to read and others may be tougher. Regardless, it is your responsibility to take each one seriously and read it with care to understand the author's main arguments and how they might relate to other ideas and authors we have encountered. Remember, the social movement literature can be treated as an extensive conversation among scholars, and many of these readings are in dialogue with each other. As you read, try to draw these connections and situate readings in this larger context. Please note: as a seminar, this is a reading-intensive class. Please plan accordingly.

Reading from *Protest Politics Today* are designated as PPT in the schedule.

Please note: this schedule is subject to change, especially if opportunities arise to bring guest speakers to class. I will keep you apprised of any such changes by Moodle and email.

What does the study of social movements involve?

| | Topic | Readings |
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| Monday, September 10 | Introduction to social movements: definitions, history, and evolution | <ul style="list-style-type: none">No assigned readings. Familiarize yourself with Moodle and the syllabus. Fill out the different class surveys and sign-ups by the end of Wednesday. |

Why and how do people decide to participate in social movements?

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| Wednesday, September 12 | Crowd behavior and the collective action problem | <ul style="list-style-type: none">PPT, ch. 1 (pp. 19-31), ch. 2 (pp. 32-45)Le Bon, Gustave. 2000 [1896]. <i>The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind</i>. Kitchener, Ontario: Batoche, ch. 1-3.Olson, Mancur. 1965. <i>The Collective Action Problem</i>. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, ch. 1. [NOTE: Olson is an economist. Don't get bogged down by his technical details. Read for his general argument]. |
| Monday, September 17 | Resource mobilization and recruitment processes | <ul style="list-style-type: none">PPT, pp. 46-51, 59-65.McCarthy, John D. and Mayer N. Zald. 1977. "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A |

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| | | <p>Partial Theory." <i>American Journal of Sociology</i>, 82(6): 1212-1241.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cress, Daniel M. and David A. Snow. 1996. "Mobilization at the Margins: Resources, Benefactors, and the Viability of Homeless Social Movement Organizations." <i>American Sociological Review</i>, 61(6): 1089-1109. • Anduiza, Eva, Camilo Cristancho, and José M. Sabucedo. 2013. "Mobilization through Online Social Networks: the Political Protest of the <i>Indignados</i> in Spain." <i>Information, Communication & Society</i>, 17(6):750-764. <p><i>In-class: brief overview of methods assignment and options. Please sign up for your preferred method (on Moodle) by Wednesday's class.</i></p> |
| Wednesday, September 19 | Microfoundations of mobilization | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT, pp. 51-56. • McAdam, Dough and Ronnelle Paulson. 1993. "Specifying the Relationship Between Social Ties and Activism." <i>American Journal of Sociology</i>, 99: 640-667. • Munson, Ziad. 2008. <i>The Making of Pro-Life Activists: How Social Movement Mobilization Works.</i> Chicago: University of Chicago Press, ch. 2-3. • Bray, Laura A., Thomas E. Shriver, and Alison E. Adams. 2018. "Mobilizing Grievances in an Authoritarian Setting: Threat and Emotion in the 1953 Plzeň Uprising." <i>Sociological Perspectives</i> [doi.org/10.1177/0731121418791771], pp. 1-19. |

What role do social movement organizations play in protest?

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| Monday, September 24 | Formal, informal, networked, and horizontal organizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT, pp. 66-74, 76-89. • Zald, Mayer N. and Roberta Ash. 1966. "Social Movement Organizations: Growth, Decay, Change." <i>Social Forces</i>, 44(3): 327-341. • Bennett, W. Lance and Alexandra Segerberg. 2011. "The Logic of Connective Action: Digital Media and the Personalization of Contentious Politics." <i>Information, Communication & Society</i>, 15(5): 739-768. • Sutherland, Neil, Christopher Land, and Steffen Böhm. 2014. "Anti-Leader(ship) in Social Movement Organizations: The Case of Autonomous Grassroots Groups." <i>Organization</i>, 21(6): 759-781. |
| Wednesday, September 26 | The debate over organizations in movements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT, pp. 74-76. • Staggenborg, Suzanne. 1988. "The Consequences of Professionalization and Formalization in the Pro-Choice Movement." <i>American Sociological Review</i>, 53(4): 585-605. |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jenkins, J. Craig and Craig M. Eckert. 1986. "Channeling Black Insurgency: Elite Patronage and Professional Social Movement Organizations in the Development of the Black Movement." <i>American Sociological Review</i>, 51(6): 812-829. Piven, Frances Fox and Richard A. Cloward. 1979. <i>Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail</i>. New York: Vintage, ch. 1. |
| Monday, October 1 | Transnational movements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Della Porta, Donatella and Sidney Tarrow. 2004. "Transnational Processes and Social Activism: An Introduction." Pp. 1-17 in D. della Porta and S. Tarrow, <i>Transnational Protest and Global Activism</i>. Oxford and Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. Brysk, Alison. 1993. "From Above and Below: Social Movements, the International System, and Human Rights in Argentina." <i>Comparative Political Studies</i>, 26(3): 259-285. Smith, Jackie. 2002. "Bridging Global Divides? Strategic Framing and Solidarity in Transnational Social Movement Organizations." <i>International Sociology</i>, 17(4): 505-528. |

What do movements say and do?

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| Wednesday, October 3 | Targeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPT, ch. 4 Bartley, Tim and Curtis Child. 2014. "Shaming the Corporation: The Social Production of Targets and the Anti-Sweatshop Movement." <i>American Sociological Review</i>, 79(4): 653-679, Walker, Edward T., Andrew W. Martin, and John D. McCarthy. 2008. "Confronting the State, the Corporation, and the Academy: The Influence of Institutional Targets on Social Movement Repertoires." <i>American Journal of Sociology</i>, 114(1): 35-76. |
| Monday, October 8 | Framing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPT, ch. 5 Benford, Robert A. and David A. Snow. 2000. "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment." <i>Annual Review of Sociology</i>, 26: 611-639. Berbrier, Mitch. 1998. "Half the Battle: Cultural Resonance, Framing Processes, and Ethnic Affectations in Contemporary White Separatist Rhetoric." <i>Social Problems</i>, 45(4): 431-450. |
| Wednesday, October 10 | In-class methods presentations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No reading <p>Midterm exam handed out</p> |
| Monday, October 15 | Midterm break! | |
| Wednesday, October 17** | Movie screening: "Milk" | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No reading <p>Midterm exam due on Moodle by 7pm</p> |

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| Friday, October 19 (make-up class)** | Space and place in protest | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT, pp. 194-195. • Hammond, John L. 2013. "The Significance of Space in Occupy Wall Street." <i>Interface</i>, 5(2): 499-524. • Sewell, Jr., William H. 2001. "Space in Contentious Politics." In <i>Silence and Voice in Contentious Politics</i>, R.R. Aminzade, J.A. Goldstone, D. McAdams, E.J. Perry, W.H. Sewell, Jr., S. Tarrow, and C. Tilly, eds. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press. • Zhao, Dingxin. 1998. "Ecologies of Social Movements: Student Mobilization during the 1989 Prodemocracy Movement in Beijing." <i>American Journal of Sociology</i>, 103(6): 1493-1529. |
| Saturday, October 20 OR Sunday, October 21 | FIELD TRIP TO ST. PAUL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No reading |
| Monday, October 22 | Tactical choice: repertoires, diffusion, and evolution | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT, ch. 6 • Alinsky, Saul. 1989. <i>Rules for Radicals</i>. New York: Vintage, ch. 7 • Biggs, Michael. 2013. "How Repertoires Evolve: The Diffusion of Suicide Protest in the Twentieth Century." <i>Mobilization</i>, 18(4): 407-428. • Galli, Anya M. 2016. "How Glitter Bombing Lost its Sparkle: The Emergence and Decline of a Novel Social Movement Tactic." <i>Mobilization</i>, 21(3): 259-282. |
| Wednesday, October 24 | Tactical choice: prefiguration and respectability debates | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maeckelburgh, Marianne. 2011. "Doing is Believing: Prefiguration as Strategic Practice in the Alterglobalization Movement." <i>Social Movement Studies</i>, 10(1): 1-20. • Gamson, Joshua. 1989. "Silence, Death, and the Invisible Enemy: AIDS Activism and Social Movement "Newness." <i>Social Problems</i>, 36(4): 351-367. • Obasogie, Osagie K. and Zachary Newman. 2016. "Black Lives Matter and Respectability Politics in Local News Accounts of Officer-Involved Civilian Deaths: An Early Assessment." <i>Wisconsin Law Review</i>, No. 3: 541-571. |
| Monday, October 29 | The strategies of non-violence, transgression, and violence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharp, Gene. 2005. <i>Waging Nonviolent Struggle: 20th Century Practice and 21st Century Potential</i>. Boston: Porter Sargeant, ch. 2-4. • Foust, Christina R. 2010. <i>Transgression as a Mode of Resistance: Rethinking Social Movement in an Era of Corporate Globalization</i>. Plymouth, UK: Lexington, ch. 1. • Bray, Mark. 2017. <i>Antifa: The Anti-Facist Handbook</i>. New York and London: Melville House, ch. 2, 5, 6. |

How do others respond to movement demands?

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| <p>Wednesday, October 31</p> | <p>Policing protest</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT, ch. 7 (pp. 205-230) • Carey, Sabine. 2006. "The Dynamic Relationship Between Protest and Repression." <i>Political Research Quarterly</i>, 59(1):1-11. • Sullivan, Christopher Michael and Christian Davenport. 2017. "The Rebel Alliance Strikes Back: Understanding the Politics of Backlash Mobilization." <i>Mobilization</i>, 22(1): 39-56. <p>Reminder: group activism project should be completed by the end of this week</p> |
| <p>Monday, November 5</p> | <p>States and their antagonists: responding to protest</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT, ch. 7 (pp. 231-242) • Vüllsers, Johannes and Elisa Schwarz. 2018. "The Power of Words: State Reactions to Protest Announcements." <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> [OnlineFirst, doi.org/10.1177/0010414018784059], pp. 1-35. • Ferree, Myra Max. 2005. "Soft Repression: Ridicule, Stigma, and Silencing in Gender-Based Movements." Pp. 138-155 in <i>Repression and Mobilization</i>, Christian Davenport, Hank Johnston, and Carol McClurg Mueller, eds. Minneapolis, MN and London: University of Minnesota Press. • Østbø, Jardar. 2017. "Demonstrations against Demonstrations: The Dispiriting Emotions of the Kremlin's Social Media "Mobilization." <i>Social Movement Studies</i>, 16(3): 283-296. |
| <p>Wednesday, November 7</p> | <p>Reports on group activism project</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No reading |
| <p>Monday, November 12</p> | <p>Political outcomes</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT, ch. 8 • Burstein, Paul. 1999. "Social Movements and Public Policy." In <i>How Social Movements Matter</i>, M. Giugni, D. McAdam, and C. Tilly, eds. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press. • Fassio, Magali and Sarah A. Soule. 2017. "Loud and Clear: The Effect of Protest Signals on Congressional Attention." <i>Mobilization</i>, 22(1): 17-38. |
| <p>Wednesday, November 14</p> | <p>Social movements and the future</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT, ch. 9 (pp. 269-277) • Whittier, Nancy. 2018. "Generational Spillover in the Resistance to Trump." Pp. 205-229 in D. S. Meyer and S. Tarrow, eds. <i>The Resistance: The Dawn of the Anti-Trump Opposition Movement</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press. • |