

POSC 358: Comparative Social Movements

Carleton College, Fall 2020



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Fall Office Hours (by appointment, on Zoom)

Mondays, 2-4pm

Tuesdays, 6-8pm

Wednesdays, 11-2pm

Other days by prior arrangement

“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. 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, including the senior integrative exercise.

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;
- working in groups—that is, *socially*—as part of the learning process to build collaborative skills and gain first-hand experience working with new methodological tools.

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

1. Participation and class engagement	20%
2. Final research paper	35%
3. Data collection and analysis project	15%
4. Midterm exam	20%
5. Movement analysis	10%

Participation and class engagement (20%)

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.

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.

In addition to general participation, everyone in the class will take turns acting as **discussion leader** and **notetaker**:

- To facilitate the discussion, and to give you greater ownership over the material, you will **each take a turn helping plan two days' discussion** by thinking about the themes and questions that you would like to explore and by serving as the discussion leader. You will have a discussion partner, and you should communicate with that person about how you want to structure the discussion for your day – what activities and questions you want to use. The discussion leaders will be entirely responsible for leading the approximately 30-45 minutes of class.
- Because our socially distanced classroom will likely require everyone to expend a bit more cognitive energy to follow and track the discussion—and because there may be students who are unable to attend some days because they must quarantine/isolate themselves—in each session, **we will designate two people to be responsible for taking notes on the discussion in a shared Google document**. Others can and should add to this set of notes after class, and the notes will be available to everyone as a record of the conversation, thus freeing people up to focus more on conversation in the moment.

Midterm exam (20%)

The midterm will be a take-home exam. You will get a list of prompts and will have one week to turn in a 8-10 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 (15%)

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

The goal is to introduce you to some techniques that are commonly used in the study of movements and that are **not** typically covered in the department's research methods class. These tools may be useful to you for your own research in this class and possibly for comps.

Students will sign up for a specific technique, be trained in it, and work together with others in their methods groups to collect the requisite data and analyze it in order to answer a question about the 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 (35%)

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. Intermediary due dates are noted in the reading schedule to help keep you on track with this work.

Movement analysis (10%)

You will each pick a contemporary movement or grassroots organizing effort to study over the course of this term via regular case study entries. You should pick a movement that interests you, which can be local, national, international, based in the US or elsewhere. I especially encourage you to pick a case in which you can actively involve yourself as a participant in some fashion, as there are ways you can take part in organizing/mobilizing/influence activities at the moment, even though you are based in Northfield. I will have a few resources/options for you if doing some hands-on work is of interest to you, especially heading into the final weeks of this highly consequential election.

Regardless of whether you are doing hands-on work or studying a case from a distance, you will write four short (500-750 words) reflective posts over the course of the term, worth 2.5% each. The posts will respond to weekly prompts that I will post, starting in Week 3 and ending Week 8; each week will have multiple prompts from which to choose. You have up to two weeks from when the prompt is posted to hand in your reflection; you cannot hand in more than one reflection per set of prompts (e.g., there may be four prompts posted at the end of Week 3. You can only write one reflection based on any of these prompts). The reflections will invite you to connect what you see/experience in your chosen movement with ideas that come from the readings and our class discussions – in other words, they are an opportunity to think about the possible connections (and disjunctures) between theory and practice.

Course Policies

Course policies are detailed on the course Moodle page. It is your responsibility to read and familiarize yourself with their contents, especially the sections having to do with pandemic-related policies and procedures for this term.

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

What does the study of social movements involve?

	Topic	Readings
Tuesday, September 15	Introduction to the class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPT, ch. 1 (pp. 1-19). Familiarize yourself with Moodle and the syllabus. Sign up for discussant and notetaker days by the end of Thursday.

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

Thursday, September 17	Theories of participation: crowds and the collective action problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPT, ch. 2 (pp. 32-34, 36-45) 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 (selected pages).
Tuesday, September 22	Resource mobilization, grievances, and emotions	<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 Partial Theory." <i>American Journal of Sociology</i>, 82(6): 1212-1241. McKane, Rachel G. and Holly J. McCammon. "Why We March: The Role of Grievances, Threats, and Movement Organizational Resources in the 2017 Women's Marches." <i>Mobilization</i>, 23(4): 401-424. Azab, Marian and Wayne A. Santoro. 2017. "Rethinking Fear and Protest: Racialized Repression of Arab Americans and the Mobilization Benefits of Being Afraid." <i>Mobilization</i>, 22(4): 473-491. <p>In class presentation of methods choices for data assignment. Sign up for data technique by end of week.</p>
Thursday, September 24	Social ties and biographical availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPT, pp. 51-56. Munson, Ziad. 2008. <i>The Making of Pro-Life Activists: How Social Movement Mobilization Works</i>. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, ch. 2-3. Saunders, Claire, et. al. 2012. "Explaining Differential Protest Participation: Novices, Returners, Repeaters, and Stalwarts." <i>Mobilization</i>, 17(3): 263-280. 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.

What are the internal dynamics of movements?

<p>Tuesday, September 29</p>	<p>Varieties of social movement organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT, pp. 66-89. • Staggenborg, Suzanne. 1988. "The Consequences of Professionalization and Formalization in the Pro-Choice Movement." <i>American Sociological Review</i>, 53(4): 585-605. • 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. • 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.
<p>Thursday, October 1</p>	<p>Targeting</p>	<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.
<p>Tuesday, October 6</p>	<p>Framing</p> <p><i>By this point in the term, you should start to zero in on a topic for your research paper. Come chat with me in office hours to brainstorm possibilities. Have topic finalized by Week 5.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT, ch. 5 • Hon, Linda. 2015. "Social Media Framing within the Million Hoodies Movement for Justice." <i>Public Relations Review</i>, 42(1): 1-11. • Walker, Edward T. and Lina Stepick. 2020. "Valuing the Cause: A Theory of Authenticity in Social Movements." <i>Mobilization</i>, 25(1): 1-25. • 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.
<p>Thursday, October 8</p>	<p>Tactical repertoires</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT, ch. 6 • Shoshan, Aya. 2018. "Habitus and Social Movements: How Militarism Affects Organizational Repertoires." <i>Social Movement Studies</i>, 17(2): 144-158. • 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. • Nepstad, Sharon Erickson and Alexis M. Kenney. 2018. "Legitimation Battles, Backfire Dynamics, and Tactical Persistence in the NFL Anthem Protests, 2016-2017." <i>Mobilization</i>, 23(4): 469-483.
<p>Tuesday, October 13</p>	<p>Prefigurative movements</p> <p><i>Start doing background reading on the theory for your literature review.</i></p>	<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. • Koensler, Alexander. 2020. "Prefigurative Politics in Practice: Concrete Utopias in Italy's Food Sovereignty Activism." <i>Mobilization</i>: 25(1): 133-150. • Jaster, Daniel. 2018. "Figurative Politics: How Activists Lead by Example to Create Change." <i>Mobilization</i>, 23(1): 65-81.

Thursday, October 15	In-class methods presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No reading <p>Midterm exam handed out</p>
Tuesday, October 20	Transgressiveness and respectability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 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.
Thursday, October 22	Movie screening: "Milk"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No reading <p>Midterm exam due on Moodle by 7pm</p>
Tuesday, October 27	<p>Radicalism and extremism</p> <p><i>By this point in the term, you should be immersed in the research for your literature review. Aim to have an annotated bibliography of at least 8-12 sources by end of the week, run it by me, and start drafting the lit review section after that.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Futtrell, Robert, Pete Simi, and Anna E. Tan. "Political Extremism and Social Movements." Pp. 618-634 in <i>The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Social Movements</i>, David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, Hanspeter Kriesi, and Holly J. McCammon, eds. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons. Santoro, Wayne and Max Fitzpatrick. 2015. "'The Ballot or the Bullet': The Crisis of Victory and the Institutionalization and Radicalization of the Civil Rights Movement." <i>Mobilization</i>, 20(2): 207-229. Gupta, Devashree. 2016. "The Limits of Radicalization: Escalation and Restraint in the South African Liberation Movement." Pp. 137-165 in <i>Dynamics of Political Violence: A Process-Oriented Perspective on Radicalization and the Escalation of Political Conflict</i>, Lorenzo Bosi, Chares Demetriou, and Stefan Malthaner, eds. London and New York: Routledge.
Thursday, October 29	Social Media and Digital Movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jost, John T., et. al. 2018. "How Social Media Facilitates Political Protest: Information, Motivation, and Social Networks." <i>Advances in Political Psychology</i>, 39(1): 85-118. Mundt, Marcia, Karen Ross, and Charla M. Burnett. 2018. "Scaling Social Movements through Social Media: The Case of Black Lives Matter." <i>Social Media + Society</i>, October-December: 1-14. Freelon, Deen, Charlton Mcllwain, and Meredith Clark. 2018. "Quantifying the Power and Consequences of Social Media Protest." <i>New Media & Society</i>, 20(3): 990-1011.
Tuesday, November 3	<p>Space and place in protest</p> <p><i>This week, settle on your research design for your paper (consult with me if you are unsure what would be appropriate) and start collecting your empirical evidence</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPT, pp. 194-195. 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.

		Read, and then participate in the Moodle discussion. All posts should be finished before 12pm on Wednesday, November 4.
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How do others respond to movement demands?

Thursday, November 5	<p>Policing and repression</p> <p><i>Move full-on into collecting your empirical evidence for your paper.</i></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. • Haimson, Chloe. 2020. "Interactional Resistance During Black Lives Matter Protests: The Political Stakes of Rebelling Against the Public Order." <i>Mobilization</i>, 25(2): 185-200. • 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.
Tuesday, November 10	<p>Reactions to protest</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT, ch. 7 (pp. 231-242) • Fassiotto, Magali and Sarah A. Soule. 2017. "Loud and Clear: The Effect of Protest Signals on Congressional Attention." <i>Mobilization</i>, 22(1): 17-38. • Wasow, Omar. 2020. "Agenda Seeding: How 1960s Black Protests Moved Elites, Public Opinion, and Voting." <i>American Political Science Review</i>, 114(3): 638-659. • 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.
Thursday, November 12	<p>Policy outcomes</p> <p><i>Start drafting the empirical section of the paper, along with the methods section. Work on revising the literature review</i></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. • Uluğ, Özden Melis and Yasemin Gülsüm Acar. 2018. "What Happens after the Protests? Understanding Protest Outcomes through Multi-Level Social Change." <i>Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology</i>, 24(1): 44-53. • Dixon, Marc, Andrew W. Martin, and Michael Nau. 2016. "Social Protest and Corporate Change: Brand Visibility, Third-Party Influence, and the Responsiveness of Corporations to Activist Campaigns." <i>Mobilization</i>, 21(1): 65-82.
Tuesday, November 17	<p>Do movements matter?</p> <p><i>Continue drafting the paper. Think about the introduction and conclusion. Aim to have a working draft complete by the end of reading days and use exam days to do final revisions and edits.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Van Dyke, Nella and Verta Taylor. 2018. "The Cultural Outcomes of Social Movements." Pp. 482-498 in <i>The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Social Movements</i>, David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, Hanspeter Kriesi, and Holly J. McCammon, eds. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons. • Della Porta, Donatella. 2020. "How Progressive Social Movements Can Save Democracy in Pandemic Times." <i>Interface</i>, 22 May.

Final paper due on Moodle by 11:59pm, Monday, November 23rd.