

POLSC 37218 Protest and Dissent

Department of Political Science
Hunter College
Fall 2013: Wednesdays, 9:10 AM-12:00 PM, 1731 HW

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Course Description

This course explores ideas and practices of political protest and dissent through a range of cases drawn from around the globe and utilizing comparative methods. Why do people protest? Against whom or what is protest directed? To achieve what ends? What forms of protest are employed? While political activism, marches, riots, strikes, and other tried-and-true forms of protest are easily recognizable, what are the other ways in which individuals and groups might register or express political dissent? What makes a particular act of protest or dissent *political*? We will utilize a wide range of sources—including scholarly writings, memoirs, primary documents, films, music, art, and more—to examine protest and dissent activities in a wide range of contexts.

Course Requirements

The final grade will be determined as follows:

Reading quizzes	25%
5 Short response papers	25%
Diary	25%
Final Paper	25%

Reading Quizzes: Students MUST complete readings and assignments prior to each class. An in-class quiz on the readings will be given at the beginning of *every* class for which there is assigned reading. **Students who are not in their seats at the start of class (9:10 AM) will not be allowed to take the reading quiz and will receive a grade of F for that quiz** (the same as missing a quiz without an excused absence). Quizzes will be letter-graded and returned approximately every two weeks.

One book is widely available for purchase:

Adam Hochschild, *Bury the Chains: Prophets and Rebels in the Fight to Free an Empire's Slaves* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2006).

Please keep your purchasing local by buying your books at independent bookstores.

All other readings will be distributed by email or posted on Blackboard (once it is set up). IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO LOCATE A PARTICULAR READING, PLEASE INFORM ME AT LEAST 24 HOURS PRIOR TO THE CLASS FOR WHICH THE READING WAS ASSIGNED. Do not wait until the last minute, as you will not receive a sympathetic hearing if you show up to class unprepared with the excuse that you could not find the reading. Since this is a seminar, you should plan to do at least 3-4 hours of reading per week, and often as much as 6 (depending on how quickly you read). Plan accordingly.

Short response papers: Students will be asked to write 5 short response papers, approximately 250-words in length (about one standard double-spaced page; you may write longer but not more than 2 pages). The topics and dates of these papers are listed on the syllabus. Suggestion questions are listed, but you need not limit yourself to these. Topics will be drawn from films, class discussions, and readings, so students will need to attend all classes to be prepared to write these papers. *Response papers are not summaries of readings or debates;* they are short essays in which you develop and articulate your own personal response to a particular question posed by the professor. They will be graded on grammar as well as content, and will be returned with a letter grade and comments. Papers are due in hard copy or electronically by the start of class (9:10 AM) on the dates indicated on the syllabus.

Diary: Students will be required to keep a diary for the duration of the class. This can be done electronically or by hand, but must include at least 20 entries of at least a paragraph in length, written on different days. The diary will be collected once around the middle of the semester, and again at the end of the semester. The diary is the place to comment on the class discussions, films, readings, etc., and where you should feel free to register reflections or frustrations that are more personal in nature (though they need not be personal). For example, you might have been particularly touched or frustrated by something you have heard or read, or perhaps you want to continue a line of discussion that began in class. Please try to spread your comments across the semester. At least 10 entries are required before the mid-semester submission.

The diary may be prepared by hand writing in a journal, written electronic entries, a blog, etc. The format is not important—choose whatever you think will encourage you to contribute the most.

Final Paper: A final paper of 1,500 words in length will be due during the end of the exam period. Several topics will be provided, and students will have a chance to select a topic of their own with permission from the instructor.

Late Assignments: The response papers, diary, and final paper are all due on the dates and times indicated on the syllabus. Late assignments will be marked down one-third grade for each day late. For example, a paper due at 9:10 AM submitted the same day after that deadline but before 11:59 PM will be marked down from A to A-. That paper submitted the next day will be marked down to B+, etc. Exceptions will be made for late assignments due to religious obligations, illness, or serious events (such as the death of family members); students should be prepared to present documentation to support all requests that late assignments not be penalized.

Code of Academic Integrity

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.

Details can be found here:

<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/provost/academic-integrity>

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES:

Wednesday, August 28: NO CLASS

(Professor attending American Political Science Association meeting)

Wednesday, September 4: NO CLASS

(In observation of a religious holiday)

Wednesday, September 11: Introduction & The First Modern Social Movement?

Section 1: Slaves

Adam Hochschild, *Bury the Chains: Prophets and Rebels in the Fight to Free an Empire's Slaves* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2006), "Twelve Men in a Printing Shop"; Part I: "World of Bondage" (Chapters 1-5); Part II: "From Tinder to Flame" (Chapters 6-11).

Recommended reading:

Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, "Introduction: Opportunities, mobilizing structures, and framing processes," in McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, eds., *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 1-20.

Wednesday, September 18

Adam Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*," Part III: "A Whole Nation Crying with One Voice" (Chapters 12-16); Part IV: "War and Revolution" (Chapters 17-20).

Wednesday, September 25: No Holds Barred & Slavery in Antiquity and Today

Adam Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*," Part V: "Bury the Chains" (Chapters 21-23).

Theresa Urbainczyk, *Slave Revolts in Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), pp. 1-44.

Ethan B. Kapstein, "The New Global Slave Trade," *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 6 (November/December 2006): 103-115.

Additional Readings on Slavery:

Kevin Bales, *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

Kathryn Farr, *Sex Trafficking: The Global Market in Women and Children* (Worth, 2004).

Siddharth Kara, *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

Victor Maralek, *The Natashas: Inside the New Global Sex Trade* (Arcade Publishing, 2005).

Section 2: Students, Youths, Activists

Wednesday, October 2: Paris 1968 & The Weather Underground

Andre Glucksmann, "Strategy and Revolution in France 1968," *New Left Review*, no. 52 (November-December 1968).

Documentary to be shown in class: "The Weather Underground."

First short response paper due by 9:10 AM in class on October 9, but preferably prepared soon after viewing the documentary: What was your reaction to the documentary about the Weather Underground? Some questions to consider (you need not answer all, or any, of these): Were you previously aware of this movement? As students, how did you react to these student-initiated protest activities? Can you imagine yourself in similar circumstances and making similar decisions? Have you previously heard of Bill Ayres? If yes, how does this documentary support or challenge what you previously learned?

Wednesday, October 9: Kent State and the Global Justice Movement

Second short response paper due at 9:10 AM in class: Spend at least 30 minutes watching videos and reading memoirs or short online articles about the Kent State Massacre. Write a response particularly focusing on the images you see. Some questions to consider (though you need not address them all): What were the causes for what happened that day? How did you react to the images? Were you previously aware of these events, or familiar with any of the protest songs about the events? Can you relate these events to UMass-Amherst? Have you ever noticed or wondered about the grounds around Whitmore administration building on campus? How did the Kent State event relate to other protest events during that time?

T.V. Reed, "Will the Revolution Be Cybercast? New Media, the Battle of Seattle, and Global Justice," Chapter 9 in *The Art of Protest: Culture and Activism from the Civil Rights Movement to the Streets of Seattle* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), pp. 240-285.

Please spend some time before class searching for images of the Battle of Seattle and come prepared to talk about those images and your reaction to them.

Wednesday, October 16: ACT UP and the Civil Rights Movement

Third short response paper due at the start of class: Spend at least an hour reading the documents and profiles at the links below and write about your response to what you find. Possible questions to consider: Have you heard of this group previously? Who was engaged in this movement? How did they come to be engaged? How does an "oral history" like this compare to or differ from a more conventional history of a protest movement?

ACT UP Oral History Project: <http://www.actuporalhistory.org/index1.html>

ACT UP Document: <http://www.actupny.org/documents/documents.html>

Documentary to be shown in class: "Crossing the Bridge."

Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from Birmingham Jail."

Available at: http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html

Section 3: Dissent is Global

October 23: Selling Dissent, India and Mexico

M.K. Gandhi, "Hind Swaraj," in Stephen Duncombe, ed., *The Cultural Resistance Reader* (New York: Verso, 2002); also available in many other readers and in the book of the same title.

Third short response paper due at start of class: Spend at least 30 minutes searching online for items available for sale connected with protest movements, domestic or globally. Possible for consideration (beyond the Zapatista movement discussed in the article): Che Guevara, Sin Fein (Northern Ireland), Hizbullah (Lebanon), Tamil Tigers (Sri Lanka), and any that you would like to explore. Possible questions to consider: What items are available for purchase? Who is selling these? Where do the profits go? Who is wearing these items? (You can search google images, flicker, etc., for images of celebrities or others wearing particular clothing articles.) Do you feel that “marketing rebellion” diminishes those movements or attracts global attention?

Clifford Bob, *The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgent, Media, and International Activism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), Chapter 4, “The Making of An Anti-globalization Icon: Mexico’s Zapatista Uprising,” pp. 117-177.

Wednesday, October 30: The Middle East

Diary due, please bring to class.

Readings TBA

Section 4: Mobs and Riots

Wednesday, November 6: Mob Mentality?

Gustav Le Bon, *The Crowd* (New York: Penguin, 1960), Introduction and Chapter 1, pp. 13-34.

Bill Buford, *Among the Thugs* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), pp. 265-313.

Wednesday, November 13: Urban Riots

Documentary to be shown in class: “Civil War Draft Riots.”

Fourth short response paper due at start of class: Spend at least 30 minutes each (an hour total) watching videos related to the Los Angeles riots of 1992 and the Tompkins Square Park riots of 1988. Be sure to do some online background reading as necessary (news articles, wiki entries, memoirs, etc.) to understand the basic picture of what happened during these events, but focus on the images you see. Questions to consider for your response paper: What sparked each of these events? How did “the mob” form? How did the role of the police vary in these cases? Were there particular spatial dimensions that made the riots possible? Who recorded these images? Where were the images disseminated? What were the broader contexts in which these events unfolded? Were you previously aware

of either or both of these events? Be sure to include some comparative discussion of both events.

Also watch these videos:

Public Enemy, "Fight the Power," from the soundtrack for Do the Right Thing (1989):
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PaoLy7PHwk>

Also explore the unofficial videos made for two songs: Dr Dre, "The day the niggaz took over," from The Chronic (1992); Sublime, "April 26 1992."

Section 5: Punks and Other Deviants

Wednesday, November 20: Punks and Moral Panics

Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (New York: Routledge, 1979), Chapter 1, "From Culture to Hegemony," pp. 5-19; Chapter 2, "Holiday in the Sun: Mr. Rotten Makes the Grade," pp. 23-29; Chapter 3, "Back to Africa," pp. 30-45; and Chapter 5, "The Function of Subculture," pp. 73-89.

Documentary shown in class: "The Filth and the Fury."

Swati Ghosh, "Surveillance in Decolonized Social Space: The Case of Sex Workers in Bengal." *Social Text* 23 (2005): 55-69.

Topics for final paper distributed in class.

Wednesday, November 27: NO CLASS

(Friday schedule followed)

Wednesday, December 4: "I Just Wanna Be a Rich Somebody"

John Champagne, *The Ethics of Marginality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), Chapter 4, "'I Just Wanna Be A Rich Somebody': Experience, Common Sense, and *Paris is Burning*," pp. 88-128.

Documentary shown in class: *Paris is Burning*

Wednesday, December 11: TBA

Wednesday, December 18: TBA

FINAL PAPER DUE ELECTRONICALLY OR IN HARD COPY BY 11:59 PM.