

CriticalMassBulletin

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Message from the Chair



Edwin Amenta
CBSM Section Chair
Professor of Sociology
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When William Gamson published *The Strategy of Social Protest* in 1975, modern social movement scholarship was just emerging. Gamson and his team sampled U.S. challenging organizations across a long

stretch of history, assessed their influence, and sought to identify the strategies that helped them win their goals and improve their standing with their targets. One might have expected that the potential impact of social movements—which by all definitions seek social change—would become a major concern of social movement scholarship after that. For the rest of the twentieth century, however, most work addressed instead why social movements emerged and why individuals chose to participate in them. It was assumed that if the free-rider problem were solved, social change would follow—just as once a group of students could agree to chip in for a keg, beer would arrive.

But scholars soon recognized that social movements not only frequently failed to induce desired change, but sometimes even acted in ways that set back their causes and constituents. The beer did not always arrive, and sometimes instead the police appeared. And so movement scholars in this century have turned increasingly to addressing questions surrounding the impacts of movements. Thinking about social movements as a potential explanation for something rather than the thing to be explained required a new outlook and theoretical orientation, one with movements no longer at the center of analyses.

The first work along these lines focused on political and policy outcomes, for several good reasons: Most social movements target states, state policies matter to movements' constituents, and, not least, these policies were often

easier to conceptualize and measure, given longstanding scholarly attention and available data. Scholars found that the strategies and contexts that drive support for movements often diverge from those that brought influence in politics; sometimes strategies that successfully mobilized people proved counterproductive in politics. Scholars also were able to distinguish which sorts of policies might be easier to influence, where in the policy process movements could be most influential, and what might matter to influence at different phases of the process.

But social movements do far more than influence public policy and political institutions. First, they seek influence over all manner of institutions, including businesses, universities, media, science, medicine, churches, police, and the military. Accordingly, scholars have sought to address when and why movements have had impacts on these institutions. Some insights from political research have been useful in formulating initial hypotheses. But mostly studies showed that non-political institutions have different sorts of susceptibility to movements and require different paths to influence. Indeed, why would the same strategies that induce the Democratic party to endorse carbon-emission goals also influence the Catholic Church to upgrade the status of women, universities to adopt Black studies programs, the *New York Times* to stop using the term “homosexuals,” or the Body Shop to end testing on animals? And so these analyses required different ways of thinking about how movements might matter.

What is more, scholars also began to act on the idea that social movements seek broader cultural change. These considerations go beyond policies in different institutions and include shifts in public discourse, public opinion, cultural form, and everyday practices. These questions called for yet different ways of thinking and analysis. And, circling back to initial questions about social mobilization, scholars have also addressed the impact of social movements on the life courses of those who participated in them, asking whether and how it drove their future activism.

On the 50th anniversary of Gamson’s work, we are planning to take stock of the outpouring of research about the consequences of social movements. The CBSM section is holding a mini conference on this broad topic on August 7 and 8, 2025, just before the ASA annual meeting in Chicago. (Our section day is on the first day of the meeting this year, August 9, when we will hold a variety of panels as well our roundtables and business meetings.) Organized by the CBSM workshop committee, the mini conference will be hosted at the downtown campus of Northwestern University’s Kellogg School of Management (aided with its generous support and that of the University of California-Irvine Jack W. Peltason Center for the Study of Democracy). Centered on the many kinds of influence of social movements and the drivers of that influence, the workshop will be organized into plenary sessions, thematic sessions, and roundtables. Please save the dates and stay tuned for more details about this exciting set of meetings.

After I drafted this, the election results came in. Much to my dismay, which I am sure is widely shared here, they showed that Donald Trump would be returning to the White House. This happened despite his having badly mishandled the Covid crisis, having been impeached twice, and having been convicted of multiple felonies while being under indictment for more, including for leading an insurrection seeking to overturn the results of the previous presidential election. Like many of you, I have spent the last several days trying to understand why this happened, what it might mean, and what might be done in the way of resistance to his plans. (As I am writing this on the Sunday after the election, I have also lost hope that late-counting California districts and a few others will somehow give Democrats a House majority to aid this resistance.) Trump’s plans include mass deportations, vengeance against political opponents, more tax cuts for the wealthiest, the hollowing out of the administrative state, vaccination requirement rollbacks, and possibly cuts to Social Security and Medicare and national abortion restrictions. It is helpful that social movement scholars have been at the forefront of analyzing the reasons behind the rise of the political right and the resistance to the previous

Trump administration. A special section of this issue includes summaries of relevant scholarship on these issues, and it is well worth reflecting on as we approach another Trump term.

My own take on the election, marinated in equal parts of fear, grief, and discontent, is that the election was far from an endorsement of Trump and Trumpism. In 2024, there were many elections worldwide, and they all rejected incumbents, whether of the left or right, that had to deal with the Covid pandemic and its economic aftershocks. And most of these elections swung against the incumbents far more dramatically than here. The simplest way to read our results is that the Democrat standard bearer Kamala Harris was the vice president of incumbent Joe Biden, and an unpopular regime was turned out of power in large part for problems out of its control. The animus seemed to be against the administration for a variety of reasons: inflation, plus how it was portrayed in the media, nostalgia for the pre-Covid “Trump economy” (established by the Obama administration), dissatisfaction with immigration policies, and Gaza and Ukraine. The Biden administration has been blamed even though it weathered the economic fallout of Covid better than governments in other rich countries and has put the economy back on track—perhaps just in time for Trump to take credit again. As for Harris’s messaging, in the seven battleground states where Harris and Trump campaigned most frequently, the electoral swing against the Democrats was less than half the size than it was in the states where they barely campaigned. A less than two-point swing in favor of Harris would have seen her entering the White House. And in the five of those contested states where a Democratic senatorial candidate was running, four of them won. What is more, referendums regarding abortion rights did far better than the Democratic national ticket. All this suggests that the electorate was tacking opposite from many of the policy positions of Trump, despite its wholesale rejection of the administration for its perceived poor performance.

In short, almost none of the reasons for the Democrats’ loss have to do with Trump’s plans as I have outlined them above. Yet despite this minimal mandate, as research has shown, the structure of U.S. political institutions will likely give Trump and right-wing movements great leeway to put into effect many aspects of their agenda. Although nothing in the election results suggests support for the anti-abortion, anti-vaccine, or income-tax-cutting movements, each has opportunities to make great gains in the coming year. But this agenda was by no means demanded by the electorate, and it should be resisted. The research summarized in this issue provides some ideas about how that might happen, but it also underscores the need for more.

Edwin Amenta
November 10, 2025

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2024 Section Award Winners

Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship Dissertation Award

Kaylin Bourdon. “Who Speaks for a Movement? The Construction and Reception of Activists’ Claims to Standing”

Kaylin Bourdon’s “Who Speaks for a Movement? The Construction and Reception of Activists’ Claims to Standing” dissertation goes deep into the theoretical and empirical issues surrounding media standing in activism surrounding the U.S. gun debate. Working from her own database of thousands of articles about this subject focused on the period since 2012, she goes beyond finding that mass shootings drive this debate but digs into the substance of it. In tracking who is granted the right to speak for the sides in this debate, she identifies an important shift. Gun control activists including victims and their families, public figures, and those who made monetary contributions to the cause, have taken prominence over movement organizations, altering the terms of discussion, which now revolve in important ways about motherhood. As in previous movement campaigns, women have leveraged motherhood in public and political discourse. Gun control and safety advocates seek to speak for children across the country, while gun rights advocates address how best to protect their own children. In the process they rework collectivist versus individualist themes in politics. “Who Speaks for a Movement” not only breaks new ground in addressing the impact of activism on public discourse, but it also helps us to make sense of a serious social problem.

Honorable Mention

Reynolds-Stenson, Heidi. 2019. “Building a Wall of Resistance:” *Collective Action and Rationality in the Anti-Terror Age*

Reynolds-Stenson’s dissertation finds that the impact of repression on SMOs is strongly shaped by their attempts to cope with it. Through interviews, participant observation and content analysis, Reynolds-Stenson shows that SMOs utilize a variety of strategies for limiting the effects of repression on their activists. They provide material and social support to activists, implement anti-surveillance security measures and honor activists that withstand repression. They also redefine movement efficacy to include both persistence in the face of repression and repression itself, since it indicates that the state actors view them as a threat. Finally, they develop a movement culture in which participation in the face of repression is habitual and almost automatic. The committee was impressed by the methodological sophistication and theoretical insights of the dissertation.

Committee Chair: Leslie Bunnage
Nominated by: David Meyer

Mayer N. Zald Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship Student Paper Award

Co-Winners

Catharina O’Donnell and Weijun Yuan

Catharina O’Donnell. “Mobilizing the Mailing List: How National Political Organizations on the Right and Left Communicate with their Bases”

Cat O’Donnell’s paper addresses a key way that social movement organizations seek collective action in our online world. In analyzing an original data set including thousands of emails from 29 U.S. SMOs that call for action from their bases, she shows that right movements differ importantly from left movements in their demands. Right movement organizations call for ideological participation, whereas left movements call for tactical participation. Cat contributes to the literature by highlighting differences between left and right movements as well as to our understanding of asymmetric political polarization.

Co-Winner

Weijun Yuan. “Collaborating across Boundaries: Inter-Organizational Dynamics in the 2019 Hong Kong Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill Protests.”

Weiwei Yuan’s paper addresses the fundamental question of when organizations in a movement are likely to cooperate. In analyzing protests in Hong Kong against its extradition law, she relies on an original data set based on Telegram posts and communications by dozens of organizations, focusing on the top 20. Among other findings, she shows that peaceful groups are more likely to endorse insurgent groups when peaceful groups are denied channels to negotiate. This paper also opens the way to a greater understanding of alliances, coalitions, and disputes among organizations in larger social movements.

Committee Chair: Edwin Amenta

*Charles Tilly Distinguished
Contribution to Scholarship Book
Award*

Hajar Yazdiha. *The Struggle for the People’s King* by Hajar Yazdiha (Princeton University Press)

In the post-civil rights era, wide-ranging groups have made civil rights claims that echo those made by Black civil rights activists of the 1960s, from people with disabilities to women’s rights activists and LGBTQ coalitions. Increasingly since the 1980s, white, right-wing social movements, from family values coalitions to the alt-right, now claim the collective memory of civil rights to portray themselves as the newly oppressed minorities. *The Struggle for the People’s King* reveals how, as these powerful groups remake collective memory toward competing political ends, they generate offshoots of remembrance that distort history and threaten the very foundations of multicultural democracy.

Drawing on a wealth of evidence ranging from newspaper articles and organizational documents to television transcripts, press releases, and focus groups,

Hajar Yazdiha documents the consequential reimagining of the civil rights movement in American political culture from 1980 to today. She shows how the public memory of King and civil rights has transformed into a vacated, sanitized collective memory that evades social reality and perpetuates racial inequality.

The Struggle for the People’s King is a compelling exploration of Dr. King’s legacy and how it has been used. It is meticulously researched and beautifully written. It is my pleasure to present Dr. Yazdiha with the Best Book Award.

Honorable Mention

Anjuli Fahlberg. *Activism Under Fire* (Oxford University Press)

In *Activism under Fire*, Anjuli Fahlberg provides an original account of how conflict activism operates in Rio de Janeiro’s favelas, which have been well known sites for gang and police violence. Despite these challenges, nonviolent politics remains an integral element in Cidade de Deus--City of God--one of Rio's most dangerous and famous favelas. Drawing on fieldwork, virtual ethnography, and participatory action research, Fahlberg documents how activists strategically navigate local constraints and opportunities--including gendered governing dynamics and racialized practices of solidarity--to create space for non-violent governance amid armed repression. By working within urban, national, and transnational political networks and social movements, local activists bring resources into their neighborhoods and protest violence while avoiding dangerous alliances.

This book is riveting and is based on compelling field research. *Activism under Fire* demonstrates that non-violent collective action is possible amid extreme poverty and violence, and shows what strategies enable it to survive and effect political change. In so doing, Fahlberg reveals the possibilities for collective action in violent and chaotic democratic states, not only in Latin America, but throughout the world.

Committee Chair: Catherine Corrigan-Brown

Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship Article Award

Daniel Karell, Andrew Linke, Edward Holland, Edward Hendrickson. (2023). “Born for a Storm”: Hard-Right Social Media and Civil Unrest. *American Sociological Review*, 88(2), 322-349.

In their 2023 study, Daniel Karell and colleagues provide a groundbreaking analysis of the interplay between hard-right social media dynamics and civil unrest. Their paper offers an incisive and fascinating examination of how extremist digital spaces catalyze and exacerbate social instability. Through meticulous empirical research and innovative methodological approaches, the authors illuminate the complex mechanisms through which far-right online communities influence real-world political and social outcomes. Their work stands out for its depth of analysis, scholarly rigor, and relevance to contemporary socio-political phenomena, making a profound contribution to the understanding of digital radicalization and its tangible impacts on society.

Co-honorable Mention

Samantha Agarwal. Bivalent Hegemony: How Hindu Nationalists Appeal to Caste-Oppressed People in Communist-Ruled Kerala [CARE-A-LA]. *Politics & Society*. 2023;0(0).

Samantha Agarwal has written a theoretically cogent and empirically rich study on why India’s most marginalized caste—the Dalits—have supported the Hindu nationalist movement led by the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP). The Dalit’s support for the BJP is particularly puzzling in Kerala, a state with a long and fertile history of left movements and their election to government, where Agarwal focuses her inquiry. To explain this paradox, she draws on philosopher Nancy Fraser’s concept of bivalent oppression that reconstructs Gramsci’s bivalent hegemony to understand how BJP positions themselves as welfare brokers in the provision of services and provides representation in a way that makes the left appear to be anti-Dalit and the BJP, who has preserved

caste hierarchies, as the most just alternative for Kerala’s marginalized population. Agarwal uses copious amounts of qualitative data from 200 interviews and eight months of ethnography that help us understand the meaning-making processes of Dalits themselves. Agarwal’s study is a major contribution to the literature on right-wing movements and parties and their appeal to the most oppressed members of society.

Co-honorable Mention

Yang Zhang and Feng Shi. The micro-foundations of elite politics: conversation networks and elite conflict during China’s reform era. *Theory and Society* 53, 193–237 (2024).

Yang and Feng have done a remarkable job of creating a full data set of conversational links among CCP leaders during the crucial period of Reform following Mao Zedong. This period included the turn to market-based relations in the economy, the ouster of Hu Yaobang, the primacy of Deng Xiaoping, the Tiananmen Sq. protests, and the fall and disgrace of Zhao Ziyang. All of these events have been examined in biographies, but never through a network-based analysis of shifting polarization and centrality in networks. By undertaking a longitudinal analysis of the changing conversational network among CCP leaders, Yang and Feng are able to quantitatively track and explain the rise and fall of key figures in the CCP Politburo. The paper demonstrates the value of this novel form of elite interaction analysis, as well as contributing to a better understanding of decisions in this key period of China’s history.

Committee Chair: Deana Rohlinger

Section on Collective Behavior and Social Movements’ Aldon Morris Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Scholarship of Social Movements

Winner: David Snow

Dave Snow's contributions to the study of social movements have been nothing short of transformative, offering nuanced insights into the processes that underpin collective action. His seminal work on frame analysis has provided a

robust framework for understanding how social movements craft narratives and build collective identities to mobilize support- a framework that has been adopted by thousands of scholars globally. Among other things, Snow's research meticulously dissects the interplay between movement leaders and participants, highlighting the strategic and dynamic nature of activism. His innovative approach to examining the micro-level dynamics of movement participation, combined with his thorough empirical investigations, has redefined our comprehension of social movements. Snow's scholarship continues to illuminate the complexities of how movements not only navigate but also shape the social and political landscape. This, of course, only speaks to his scholarly accomplishments. Dave's work has shaped communities. His work with Leon Anderson, which collected data from unhoused individuals as well as service providers, hospitals, and local government agencies prompted a prominent county policy initiative as well as workshops conducted by the United Way. And, it shouldn't be overlooked, that Dave has positively shaped the lives and careers of thousands of undergraduate and graduate students inside and outside of the classroom – many of whom are in this room today.

Committee Chair: Deana Rohlinger

Featured: Resilience, Dynamics, and Varieties of Collective Actions

Edited by: Ana Lopez-ricoy and David Su

Transnational Feminism and Global Governance: Peace, Economic Policy, and Covid-19

By Moghadam, V. M.
Northeastern University

How do feminist organizations mobilize in response to threats to women's security and welfare?

In previous work, I have described the origins, aims, and strategies of transnational feminist networks (TFNs), from the first wave in the early 20th century for suffrage and peace, to the mid-20th century activities against nuclearization and the Cold War, and to the late 20th and early 21st century TFNs opposing neoliberalism, religious fundamentalisms, and wars (e.g., Moghadam 2023). Feminist strategies encompass research, advocacy, lobbying, coalition-building, and public protests. Petition drives and open letters are part of the panoply of advocacy and lobbying activities, and feminists often take part in collective efforts such as the December 2023 International Coalition of Human Rights and Antiwar Organizations", formed to "demand an end to genocide in Palestine" and "call on nations to support the South African petition to the World Court" against Israeli actions in Gaza (see [Global Responses to the Israel-Gaza Conflict and the ICJ Ruling | Norwich University](https://blackallianceforpeace.com/movement-news/israel2icj)). Along with the Black Alliance for Peace, leading organizations were Code Pink: Women for Peace, and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (US Section); they helped draft and circulate a petition that was endorsed by worldwide social movements and trade unions. As of January 2024, the petition had 1,504 signatories, with 700 more in process (<https://blackallianceforpeace.com/movement-news/israel2icj>, accessed 11 November 2024).

In October 2024, feminist organizations from across the globe issued an Open Letter addressed to the permanent representatives of the United Nations in advance of the annual Open Debate on Women, Peace, and Security. Initiated by the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace, and Security (<http://www.womenpeacesecurity.org>), the letter noted the upcoming 25th anniversary of the UN's Security Council Resolution 1325 (adopted October 2000), which initially had held much promise but which has fallen short in implementation and transformation in the face of "record levels of armed conflict, militarization and military spending,

which undermine gender equality, threaten to reverse decades of progress on women's rights, and jeopardize global efforts for peace." The Open Letter referred to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, the Sudan war, and conflicts in the Sahel, but most of it suggested a preoccupation with the ongoing Israel-Palestine-Lebanon war.

In analyzing the 628 signatories, I found that nearly half were from the Global South, including 54 organizational signatories from countries in the Middle East region, which has been the site of relentless Israeli attacks, many of which preceded the brutal 7th October 2023 Hamas attacks on southern Israel but have since taken on a ferocity that has been globally condemned (although not by the U.S. and its European allies). The Middle East women's organizational signatories were from Lebanon (8), Yemen (13), Iraq (7), Libya (4), Jordan (3), Palestine (4), Algeria (2), Syria (5), Turkey (3), Morocco (1), Egypt (2), and Bahrain (1), along with one Regional organization. Conspicuously missing were signatories from Israel, Tunisia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Qatar – indicative, to my mind, of the fraught domestic conditions in those countries. Some 290 organizational signatories were from other world-regions, including Europe and North America, including fully 11 sections of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). Nineteen Afghan women's groups, based mostly outside Afghanistan, signed the letter.

Noting that "the WPS agenda's vision of peace and equality has never been so important – or so under threat", the letter called on member-states to prevent, avert, and end conflict; reform the Security Council; stop arms transfers; defend women's rights; advance reproductive justice; insist on women at the table; support principled humanitarian action; demand justice and accountability; stand for feminist movements; and fund peace, not war.

The history of transnational feminist mobilizations has been long and impressive. In the context of more rather than fewer conflicts and wars, such

mobilizations will continue until threats to women's security end and demands for equality, justice and peace are finally realized.

Reference: Moghadam, V. M. 2022. "Transnational Feminism and Global Governance: Peace, Economic Policy, and Covid-19." In *Handbook of Feminist Governance*, Marian Sawyer, Lee Ann Banaszak, Jacqui True, and Johanna Kantola (eds.). Edgar Elgar (2023): 274-285.

Irrationality and pathology: how right-wing studies questions are sometimes public health questions in disguise

By Emma Tran

Department of Public Health, UCLA

Hallmark questions of health and right-wing studies—"why do some people engage in unhealthy behaviors?" and "why do some people vote against their own interests?"—might actually be cut from the same cloth. Both rely logically on what Lisa McGirr has called an "excessively psychological interpretation" of the right. Both view their subjects as irrational, uninformed, poorly educated, and/or destructive. But by employing this stance, we have done a terrible job at understanding how public health is actually conceived, contested, and managed differently *all the time*, especially in communities that have been historically aggrieved. The intervention I propose is one that reconceptualizes "public health" in order to reconceptualize the incentive for people to endorse the right wing. To study what people are hopeful for, who they imagine to be included in their community, how they imagine caring for and protecting their community, including the natural world—for me, *that* is public health. It is sensitive to the infinite contexts through which we understand a "public" and how "health" might appear for them. Public health can therefore help us generate a set of local questions to ask about the kind of choices people make in pursuit of that goal. And if that is public health, then understanding political behavior as a way to achieve those goals makes the question more legible, meaningful, and

potentially useful to right-wing studies. It responds to a call from Daniel HoSang and Joseph Lowndes to disavow our tendency to “write [the right] off as a collection of racist and conspiratorial groups on the margins of society.” Hopefully, it also answers Terri Givens’s appeal for “social scientists to let go of our assumptions and develop new models and tools to help us gain greater understanding of the societal shifts that are being impacted by and shaping party politics.” Perhaps by asking questions about right-wing politics through the lens of survival and wellbeing, we could interrupt the narrative that people who endorse the right are ill in some way. When it comes to the logic of pathology, we must remain especially vigilant to how we invoke this for racialized people.

I reconceptualize public health as a set of politically motivated choices that people and their collectives make, within the local particularities of oppression, to protect their health and well-being. Racialized and immigrant communities understand that to give themselves the best chances of surviving and thriving in the US, they must forestall these interlocking conditions that otherwise send them careening toward premature death. The stakes are so high for some of these communities that they take up a politics that seemingly contradicts their best interests but, in actuality, might give them the best odds to maintain a quality life. What if for communities of color, what if right-wing politics *is* public health?

Reference: Tran E. Irrationality and pathology: how right-wing studies questions are sometimes public health questions in disguise. *Journal of Right-Wing Studies*. 2024;1(2).

* This is an edited excerpt from the publication by the author, with citations abridged by the editor.

The “Trump Effect” and White Supremacist Activism

Alessandro Giuseppe Drago
McGill University

During the 2010s, a flurry of racist and misogynistic content spread across online and offline spaces in the U.S., fueled in part by

movements like GamerGate. This environment shaped a dynamic *constellation* of white supremacy^[1], often referred to as the “Alt-Right”. These groups became some of the largest white supremacist organizations in recent decades and included Identity Evropa (I.E.), the Traditionalist Workers Party (T.W.P) and Patriot Front (P.F.), which remains active. I analyzed a dataset of close to 2 million leaked Discord chat messages between 2015 and 2020 from over 7000 users and up to 20 organizations. In this ongoing analysis, I explore how white supremacists discuss the threats and opportunities facing their movement, with a focus on the voices of the rank and file. While this work is still in progress, it offers preliminary insights into how these groups perceive their shifting political landscape.

On Discord, white supremacists frequently expressed fears about perceived threats across gender, cultural, economic, political, and demographic lines. Perceived demographic shifts and grievances over the “demonization” of white men were the most frequently cited reasons users gave for joining white supremacist Discord servers. The threats that had simmered during the two Obama administrations now appeared to converge with new opportunities: platforms like Discord enabled white supremacist groups to organize more effectively, and many saw a perceived ally in the White House. However, the organizations in my sample differed markedly in their assessments of Trump’s alignment with their movement goals. Many Discord users were initially ecstatic about Trump’s electoral victory, though enthusiasm waned after Trump’s 2017 strikes on Syria. Organizations which interpreted Trump as an opportunity, rather than a saviour focused on offline activism, recognizing his role in shifting the “Overton Window” and believed that Trump’s presidency signalled lessened repression. They argued that Trump’s rhetoric and actions—such as his refusal to disavow former KKK leader David Duke, his equivocal response to the 2017 Unite the Right rally, and his inflammatory rhetoric—normalized

previously fringe discourses. These groups aimed to capitalize on this shifting discursive environment to appeal to the median Trump voter while pushing more extreme narratives.

A second Trump presidency could further embolden white supremacist groups, intensifying their politics of resentment while also highlighting new opportunities for action. This shift could reinforce a sense of grievance among both extremist and non-extremist factions, potentially leading to increased violence, hate crimes, and activism. These movements thrive on narratives of lost status—racial, gendered, and cultural—galvanizing those who feel their traditional power and privileges have been eroded in a diversifying society. Examining how this environment, along with Trump’s actions and rhetoric, resonates with young men will be crucial in understanding whether we see an increase in far-right extremist violence, especially as white supremacists organize on more secretive/secure online spaces such as Telegram.

Reference: Blee, Kathleen, Robert Futrell, and Pete Simi. 2024. “A Constellation Approach To Understanding Extremist White Supremacy.” *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 28(4):435–44.

Opinions on Social Movements

Editor’s Note on the New Column

In response to our community’s demand, we are introducing a new column in the newsletter dedicated to fostering constructive academic debates that advance social movement theories. The views expressed in this column are solely those of the authors and do not reflect the stance of the editors or the CBSM section as a whole.

We encourage new contributions to this column and engage with these ideas—whether by responding directly to the author or by submitting a response piece for potential publication in the next Spring edition of *Critical Mass*. Responses or reflections can be submitted to cbsmnews@gmail.com.

On the Socioemotional Aspect of Collective Behavior

Jeffrey Broadbent
University of Minnesota
broad001@umn.edu

Dear CBSM colleagues,
I bring up the following points because I think they are very relevant to explaining the reasons for the MAGA movement and with its support, Trump’s victory.

Driving down Lake street in Minneapolis, the many closed storefronts and shoddy, depressed atmosphere remind me of the riots along that street after the May 25, 2020 murder of George Floyd. On the day after, people mostly Black but with white supporters fielded peaceful protest marches. But by the night, and for three days thereafter, local Black people plus out of town white provocateurs rioted, breaking windows, looting, and burning out many businesses and the Third Precinct police station. A striking picture from the local paper shows a young black man giving a black power salute in front of a blazing pawn shop (he started the fire and accidentally killed a person who was hiding there).

After the riot, it struck me that the dominant McTeam (McAdam, Tilly, Tarrow) theory of social movements could not explain the riot. Rather, to explain it, we had to go back to Smelser’s theory of collective action. Such a statement will arouse

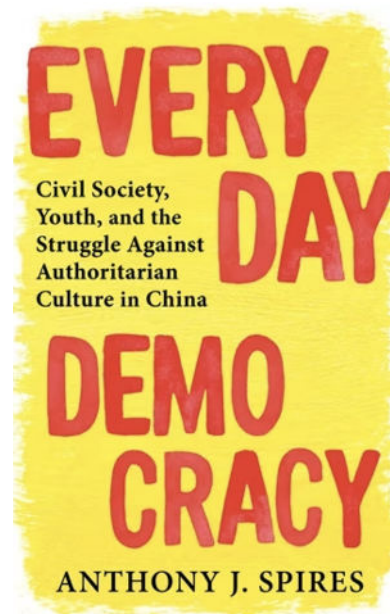
accusations of functionalism. However, that is not my meaning or intent. I mean that the McTeam theory (consisting of mobilizing structural resources like existing local organizations, conducive new cognitive framing of an issue, and a neutral or facilitating political opportunity structure) did not explain the riots because their theory rests basically on a strategic rational actor model. Rather, I think, Smelser's value-added sequence of factors leading to collective behavior made a lot of sense in this case, especially the part where a situation of social strain (perhaps tension would be a better term) is hit by a catalyzing event that releases an outburst of frustration and anger that turns into destructive rioting. At least the local Black people, releasing lifelong anger and resentment at their impoverished, discriminated status, seemed to me to be reacting in this way. And very understandably so. However, they were not rational, strategic actors. They were emotional actors expressing rage but without strategic purpose. George Floyd's murder catalyzed them to collectively express that anger as a riot. The riot melted away in a few days. Following the riot, the murder reinvigorated and strengthened the existing BLM movement throughout the country. The McTeam theory helps explain the rapid rise and spread of those purposeful and strategic BLM organizations.

The reason I bring this up is because Smelser's social strain-catalyst-collective behavior theory also helps explain the MAGA movement, much better than the McTeam model. Worsening over the preceding decades, especially white non-college males had seen their wages stagnate, good jobs disappear, communities decay, and opioid deaths skyrocket. They held huge pent-up frustration and anger at their terrible circumstances, but did not know who to blame or how to define and express their anger. Along comes Trump who is the clever catalyst of their anger, turning their anger against the "elites," illegal (and even legal) immigrants

from Latin America, the deep state, evil Democrats, and the press (anywhere but the vast concentration of wealth in the hands of businesses owners and top investors). Of course, that is a new or strengthened cognitive framing. But Trump's rallies went much deeper. They became psychodramas in which Trump on stage acted out and personified their anger, saying "I am your retribution," giving the audience also permission to feel and express their anger. So they supported him. So, I think that Smelser's value-added model has important implications for social movement theory. It hinges on an interaction between a widespread social strain/tension and a catalyst. I don't see that that part of his theory has any reliance on functionalism.

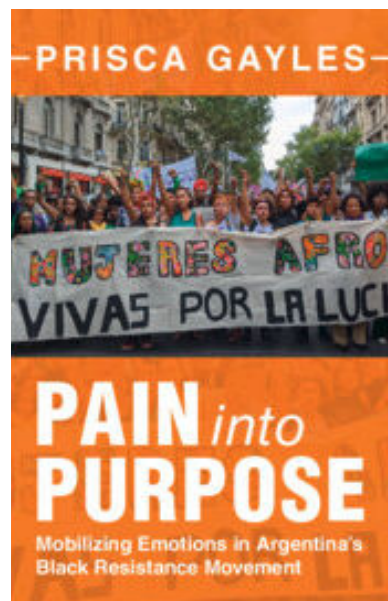
Recent Publications

Anthony J. Spires. 2024. [Everyday Democracy: Civil Society, Youth, and the Struggle against Authoritarian Culture in China](#). New York: Columbia University Press.



Bottom-up voluntary associations, it is commonly thought, are among the fundamental building blocks of democracy,

preparing people for engaged citizenship. A great deal of interest in Chinese civil society is premised on the idea that such groups might foster the emergence of democracy. But in a society where virtually all major institutions—from schools to workplaces to government—bear the deep imprint of authoritarian rule, can voluntary associations still spur social and political change? *Everyday Democracy* is a groundbreaking study of bottom-up organizations in China, arguing that even in an authoritarian state, they nurture the skills and habits of democracy. Anthony J. Spires offers an in-depth look at two youth-based, youth-led volunteer groups, showing how their values and practices point the way toward the emergence of new, more democratic forms of association. In mainstream Chinese organizational life, even in grassroots civil society groups, hierarchy and autocracy are pervasive. In these groups, however, ideals of equality, mutual respect, and dignity have motivated young people to invent new practices and norms that contrast greatly with typical top-down organizational culture. Drawing on more than a decade of field-based research with a diverse array of participants, *Everyday Democracy* pinpoints the seeds of a democratic culture inside an authoritarian regime.



Pain into Purpose is a groundbreaking exploration of Argentina's *Movimiento Negro* (Black resistance movement). Employing a multi-year ethnography of Black political organizing, Prisca Gayles delves deep into the challenges activists face in confronting the erasure and denial of Argentina's Black past and present. She examines how collective emotions operate at both societal and interpersonal levels in social movements, arguing that activists strategically leverage societal and racialized emotions to garner support. Paying particular attention to the women activists who play a crucial role in leading and sustaining Argentina's Black organizations, the book showcases the ways Black women exercise transnational Black feminist politics to transform pain into purpose.

Allen, Shaonta' E., 2024, "'I can't tell you what freedom is 'cause I've never seen it': Addressing the Omission of Liberation Narratives in Sociology," *Social Problems*.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/socpro/spae055>.

Simi, Pete, Robert Futrell, and Adam Burtson. 2024. "How Threat Mobilizes the Resurgence and Persistence of US White Supremacist Activism: the 1980s to the Present." *Annual Review of Sociology*, v. 50.
<https://www.annualreviews.org/content/journals/10.1146/annurev-soc-031021-112151>.

Taura Taylor, 2024. "Daughters of the comb: exploring consciousness-raising, anchored consciousness, and micro-resistance in the natural hair movement." *Interface: a journal for and about social movements*, 15(1).

Gayles, Prisca. *Pain into Purpose: Mobilizing Emotions in Argentina's Black Resistance Movement*. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2024)

Broadbent, J. (2024). Power and theory: toward a multidimensional explanation of the dynamic political field. *Journal of Political Power*, 1–30.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2158379X.2024.2408017>

Goldberg, Allison. 2024. "Reciprocity or Redistribution: Mutual Aid as a Moralized Market in Gentrifying Brooklyn." *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 29(3): 353–374.
doi.org/10.17813/1086-671X-29-3-353

Trevizo D. 2014. "Organizational Form and Fragmentation in the Lethal Outcomes of Mexico's Vigilante Mobilizations, 2012–2015." *Latin American Research Review*. Published online:1-19. doi:10.1017/lar.2024.39

Elizabeth Chiarello. 2014. *“Policing Patients: Treatment and Surveillance on the Frontlines of the Opioid Crisis”* (Princeton University Press).



Doctors and pharmacists make critical decisions every day about whether to dispense opioids that alleviate pain but fuel addiction. Faced with a drug crisis that has already claimed more than a million lives, legislatures, courts, and policymakers have enlisted the help of technology in the hopes of curtailing prescriptions and preventing deaths. This book reveals how this “Trojan horse” technology embeds the logics of surveillance in the practice of medicine, forcing care providers to police their patients while undermining public trust and doing untold damage to those at risk.

Elizabeth Chiarello draws on hundreds of in-depth interviews with physicians, pharmacists, and enforcement agents across the United States to take readers to the frontlines of the opioid crisis, where medical providers must make difficult choices between treating and punishing the people in their care. States now employ prescription drug monitoring programs capable of tracking all controlled substances within a state and across state lines. Chiarello describes how the reliance on these databases blurs the line between medicine and criminal justice and pits pain sufferers against people with substance-use disorders in a zero-sum game.

Shedding critical light on this brave new world of healthcare, Policing Patients urges medical providers to reaffirm their roles as healers and proposes invaluable policy solutions centered on treatment, prevention, and harm reduction.

Ebbinghaus, Mathis. 2024. “Decoupling social movements from modernity: a critical reappraisal of Charles Tilly’s theory on the origins of social movements.” *Theory and*

Society 53:1151–1175.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11186-024-09569-0>

Andriano, Liliana and Mathis Ebbinghaus. 2024. “Demographic consequences of social movements: local protests delay marriage formation in Ethiopia.” *Social Forces*, soae112. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soae112>

Jo Reger, 2024. “Lesbian Feminist Music and Meaningful Community Work.” *Popular Music and Society*.

Yao Li, Cassard, M., Holmes, B., & Wu, H. 2024. “Variations in media framing of movements in China, France, and the U.S.: An intersectional approach.” *British Journal of Sociology*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.13153>.

Announcements

CBSM Mini Conference before ASA 2025 – The Many Impacts of Social Movements: Fifty Years after William Gamson’s The Strategy of Social Protest

Initially, most social movement research concerned what drove mobilization and why people participated in social movements. William Gamson’s 1975 work stood out in seeking to address whether social movements were able to gain influence and why. Although slow to take this lead, scholars over the last quarter century have turned attention to the potential influence of social movements and their actions over a variety of important social outcomes. Early work concerned movements’ political and policy influence, but since then, research has expanded to other potential sites of impact. These include social movements’ influence on nonpolitical institutions, such as business, medicine, science, religion, education, the police, and the military, movements’ cultural impacts on public discourse, media, collective memory, public opinion, and art, movements’ influence on other movements, including on broader

tactical repertoires, and on movement participants' later activism.

To take stock of these advances and highlight new research, the Collective Behavior and Social Movements (CBSM) section of the American Sociological Association is holding a mini-conference at the downtown campus of Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management in Chicago, Illinois, on August 7 and 8, 2015 – the two days immediately prior to opening of the American Sociological Association's national meeting in Chicago. (The CBSM section day is the first day of the conference.) Centered on the many kinds of influence that social movements have had and what drives that influence, the workshop will be organized into plenary sessions, thematic sessions, and roundtables.

The mini-conference is being sponsored in part by Northwestern University and the University of California-Irvine Jack W. Peltason Center for the Study of Democracy. More information about registration and submission will follow, but we hope you can save the dates!

Details to be announced

- More information about it will be available soon and there will be a Resources tab on the CBSM webpage about it, and ultimately an ASA link to register for it.
- Conference date: Two days before the annual meeting in Chicago this August.

Call for papers to Alternative Futures and Popular Protest

We're writing to announce the call for papers for the next edition of Alternative Futures and Popular Protest.

AFPP is an international, cross-disciplinary conference on social movements, protest and cognate topics. It has drawn participants from over 60 countries, whether based in departments of sociology, politics, cultural studies, psychology, economics, history, geography or elsewhere. Discussions are marked by a long-established spirit

of collegial and comradely participation, making for a friendly meeting ground between academia and activism.

AFPP 2025 will be the 30th anniversary of the conference and we'll be using the occasion to reflect on the past and look to the future of social movement scholarship. If you've been to AFPP in the past and would like to aid our reflections by sharing memories, stories or testimonials, we'd love to hear from you – please visit here for more details: <https://www.movements.manchester.ac.uk/afpp/testimonials-subs/>

The 2025 conference will be held in Manchester on 16-18th June. We look forward to welcoming delegates to the city, with all of the informal socialising, organising, and collaborating that that format entails. To help cover the costs of an in-person conference, we will be charging a delegate fee. The amount is still to be confirmed, but will be broadly in line with the 2024 fee of £45.

We invite offers of papers relevant to the broad conference theme, which might address such matters as:

- contemporary or historical movements and protests from any global region
- theories of social movements, labour movements and revolution
- utopias, experiments in alternative living and everyday politics
- ideologies, imaginaries and strategies of collective action
- opposition to discrimination and confrontations with capitalism, patriarchy or coloniality

To offer a paper, please send a title, abstract (max 300 words) and 4-6 keywords to the organisers via the following form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScECn p9cJjN1pRkNLcxv0UoTiw4T79-JHRjZmFBE_Tg2iQTLA/viewform?usp=sf_link

If your abstract is accepted you will be invited to supply a written paper in advance of the conference, which will be distributed to all participants. Ideally, this would take the form of a fully-referenced

working paper, of 6-8,000 words in length in MS Word .docx, Adobe .pdf or compatible format. However, some speakers have submitted different kinds of documents in the past (e.g. extended notes; powerpoint slideshows and so on). We are open to the submission of such documents instead of a working paper as long as they successfully communicate the main argument and evidence base for your paper without the need for specialist software.

Deadlines

- **Deadline for receipt of abstracts: 18th December 2024.**
- Expected response by February 2025.
- For queries by email: afpp@manchester.ac.uk (Please do not email abstracts, use the submission form instead.)
- The AFPP 2025 Organising Committee are: Josh Bunting, Gemma Edwards, Simin Fadaee, Kevin Gillan, Lidia Yanez Lagos, Steven Speed, Meghan Tinsley, Daniela Fazio Vargas and Luke Yates.

Call for papers to a Special Collection of the Global Social Challenges Journal

This Special Collection of the Global Social Challenges Journal will advance an emergent field of scholarly research, which is coalescing around the concept of “revolutionary constitutionalism”, understood as the participatory practices of a social movement in deliberating, articulating, and constituting a new social order. This field of inquiry is in part a response to our current conjuncture and the failures of existing systems to address the multiple, intensifying and interconnected crises we face. Where the global social movement of the turn of the millennium declared ‘another world is possible’, scholarship on revolutionary constitutionalism examines both the sources as well as the emerging institutional contours and systemic designs of this other possible world.

Constitutions and constitution-making processes have often been understood as a province of technocrats and elites, removed from real-world struggles of the great multitudes of the world’s peoples. The articles in this collection will counter this persistent bias, drawing on scholarly studies of popular constitutionalism, revolutionary constitutionalism, the sociology of constitutions, prefigurative legalities, radical governance, systemic movements, and next system design to show the power and the relevance of constitutional politics in wider struggles for democracy, justice and ecological sustainability.

Submissions should address at least some aspects of the following questions:

- What can be learned from movements from below that seek to systematically reorder the relationships between human beings, communities, institutions, the state, ecosystems, and the world system?
- What are their constitutional designs for the next world system or its subsystems?
- How do they develop them, articulate them, mobilise for them, establish them, enact them, practice them, and/or defend them?

We seek contributions from community-based scholar activists, as well as those in the academy. We are particularly seeking contributions from writers based in and writing from perspectives of the Global South, though we also welcome contributions from scholars of all regions, who are grappling with these questions. This Special Collection is a project of a new [International Research Collaborative on Revolutionary Constitutionalism](#), supported by Next System Studies at George Mason University.

Deadlines

- Abstract submission deadline: 20 December 2024
- Guest edited by Carys Hughes (University of East London, U.K.) and Ben Manski (George Mason University, U.S.).
- Interested authors should send a 250-word abstract to Special Collection Editors Dr Carys Hughes (carys.hughes@uel.ac.uk) and Dr Ben Manski (bmanski@gmu.edu) by 20

December 2024. Invitations for full paper submissions will be sent in mid-January 2025, and full papers will be due by end of March 2025.

Call for papers
The Sociological Quarterly Special Issue: Sociological Perspectives on Student Activism

Guest Editors: Jonathan S. Coley, Oklahoma State University

Gabby Gomez, Oklahoma State University

Jericho R. McElroy, Oklahoma State University

Jessica L. Schachle-Gordon, Stephen F. Austin State University

The United States and other countries are currently witnessing a surge in student activism. For example, over the past year, numerous campuses have become home to protests over Israel and Palestine. Schools are also increasingly serving as vibrant spaces for racial justice activism (Reyes 2018), intersectional feminist organizing (Reger 2018), and LGBTQ+ movements (Coley 2018). Conservative groups, too, have recently made significant inroads onto campuses (Binder and Kidder 2022). Although students have long served as agents of social change (e.g., Klatch 1999; McAdam 1988; Van Dyke 1998), the current high visibility of student activism suggests that now is an important time to (re)consider what sociology has to offer to the study of student activism.

This special issue of *The Sociological Quarterly (TSQ)* will feature innovative, theoretically engaged, and methodologically rigorous sociological research on student activism. By student activism, we refer to students' efforts to promote or resist social change. We are thus open to contributions that profile the variety of ways that students engage in activism, including through traditional social movement organizations, officially recognized student organizations that promote change through methods other than protest, and individual-level "everyday activism." We are also open to contributions focusing on student activism taking place within a variety of educational contexts (e.g., secondary schools,

postsecondary schools), outside the formal confines of schools, and around the world.

In terms of theoretical perspective, we invite submissions that use new and established social movement frameworks, such as political opportunity theory, educational opportunity theory, threat-based theory, resource mobilization theory, framing theory, or collective identity theory. However, as a generalist sociology journal, we also welcome submissions that use (or combine) theoretical frameworks from outside of social movement studies, including theories from the sociology of labor and labor movements, sociology of education, organizational sociology, sociology of children and youth, sociology of race, gender, and sexuality, sociology of religion, or cultural sociology. Finally, we welcome research using a variety of methodological approaches, including quantitative, qualitative, experimental, historical, and mixed-methods approaches.

Topics of interest may include, but are not limited to:

- Characteristics of political, cultural, and educational contexts that facilitate or stymie student activism
- Pathways into student activism
- Constraints on (or possibilities for) student activism based on the intersections of students' race, class, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, etc.
- Types or "modes" of student activism
- Analyses of leadership in student activism
- Strategies and tactics of student activism
- Role of art, music, and similar cultural products in student activism
- Role of religion in student activism
- Use of social media in student activism
- Analyses of ecologies or subcultures of student activism
- Political, cultural, educational, biographical, and other outcomes of student activism
- How student activism shapes, and is shaped by, the formal curriculum
- How students transform schools conceptualized as racialized organizations, gendered organizations, heterosexualized organizations, or inequality regimes

- Explanations for differential success of student activism
- Collecting data on and with student activists

Interested contributors should take note of the following timeline and submission instructions:

- *Paper proposal.* Submit a proposed article title, author names, and extended abstract (approximately 500 words) by e-mail to tsq@okstate.edu by January 15, 2025. In the extended abstract, we recommend discussing the proposed article's research question (or research aims), theoretical approach, data and methodological approach, findings, and implications.
- *Abstract acceptance.* Authors of accepted proposals will be notified by January 31, 2025. Note that abstract acceptance does not constitute a guarantee of publication.
- *Paper submission.* Complete manuscript drafts are due by May 31, 2025. Manuscripts can be up to 12,000 words, inclusive of main text, references, tables, and figures.
- *Peer review.* The editors will send papers out for external review in summer 2025. Contingent on reviews, authors will be given up to 3 months to revise their papers.
- *Publication.* Articles will appear online first after acceptance and will subsequently be published in a special issue of up to 12 articles in 2026.

Next Issue of Critical Mass

Call for Submissions on Research Briefings & Announcements

Critical Mass, the newsletter of CBSM, invites short summaries (300-500 words) of research presented at ASA or current and ongoing projects that critically engage with the following themes: right-wing movements, resistance during the Trump era, campus activism, and threat-based mobilization. In light of the evolving political climate, we seek to provide a platform for our community to reflect, analyze, and engage with these pressing issues. We welcome contributions that bring theoretical insights, empirical research, or reflections on mobilization strategies, collective resistance, and the dynamics of activism and threat.

In addition, we are accepting recent publications and announcements as usual.

Please send all materials to *Critical Mass* co-editors David Su and Ana López Ricoy at cbsmnews@gmail.com by **March 1, 2025**.