

Outreach event at LSE, OLD.3.21, Monday 16th September, 6-8pm

Putting protest in context: Understanding the social, political and cultural effects of protest

Keynote speaker: Dr Clare Saunders

Moderator: Dr Cristiana Olcese

In the permanent state of protest that we live today, how do we determine the impact/success of a protest? Other relevant questions and sub-questions are: What is the relationship between street demonstrations and protest/dissent more broadly defined? What is the impact of protest in economic, cultural and social realms? What are the conditions leading to a successful protest?

Recent research on protest has sought to understand who takes part in street demonstrations, their motivations, and their attitudes towards politics more broadly. The cultural turn in the study of social movements has illustrated that protest movements have influences beyond the policy process, particularly in the realm of lifestyle changes. But attempts to assess the effects of protest have generally focused on those actively involved in particular social movement organisations, at the expense of assessing the broader impacts of protest on those not, or loosely, associated with social movement organisations.

Yet protests and protesters are embedded in social, cultural, economic and political contexts. Protest may both mould and reflect prevailing attitudes, political winds, cultural currents, and more general shifts in understandings at a given point in time. To understand protest thus we need to look at more general features of the social, cultural, economic and political environment that might have changed their course because of protests or might have provided opportunities for protests to be successful. The data to address these sorts of questions exists, but remains disparate and often is not connected.

This event aims to be the first step of a research project that will develop an integrated database combining data at the individual and aggregate levels, and will analyse protest in context by identifying when and what factors make it effective.

Please join the debate! We are interested in contributions from both academics and practitioners, that is protest organisers, civil society groups, cultural organisations, charities, NGOs, art practitioners, media researchers, members of central and local government, and any citizen engaged in practices of dissent.

No need to book, but places on a first come first served basis. There is limited space, so please arrive in good time to get a place. OLD.3.21 is on the third floor of LSE's Old Building.

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