

Critical Mass *Bulletin*

Newsletter of the Section on Collective Behavior and Social Movements, American Sociological Association

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Fall 2020

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Rachel L. Einwohner
CBSM Section Chair
Professor of Sociology
Purdue University

Like most of you, I start emails these days with words like "Hope you're doing well, or as well as can be expected during these awful times." At a time of such great fear and uncertainty, I am grateful for community. Being part of a community grounds me and provides some stability in an otherwise unstable world. One of those

communities is the CBSM Section. Our section has been my intellectual home in the ASA for many years, and I am honored to serve as your Chair this year.

Still, it feels strange to write a column like this. Given our worries about our loved ones and our communities—not to mention our concerns about systemic racism, the election and its aftermath, climate change, and oppression of all forms—what can I say here to make a difference? I won't claim that these words will change anything. However, at a time when it is sometimes all we can do to get through each day, I'm here to remind you that our work matters.

These are unprecedented times, to say the least. Daily (or more often), we hear about rising numbers of COVID cases, increased positivity rates, new restrictions, and dire forecasts for the future. We use this information to assess the threat of this disease, for ourselves, our loved ones, our communities, and even for people we don't know whose health we still want to protect. And we do our best to reduce the risk of disease transmission.

Everyone is taking in this information and trying to choose the best course of action. But as social movement scholars, we know a thing or two about risk and threat. We are primed to think about the threats and grievances that inspire collective action. We are used to considering the risks associated with protest—including bodily harm, job or income loss, arrests, jail time, and even death. We recognize that the way people frame and understand risks and threats depends on cultural and structural factors, and at the micro, meso, and macro levels. (Continued on page 2)

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Our field's interest in the role of risk and threat predated COVID, of course. Our studies of high-risk activism in a variety of settings produced robust findings explaining what draws people into activism, despite the risks. In my own work on Jewish resistance during the Holocaust, I argue that those who fought in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943 did so even though they fully expected to die—in fact, they resisted because they knew they would die, and dying while fighting was preferable to being murdered. As Tom Maher's work on resistance in concentration camps shows, assessments of "total threat" can compel collective action, despite the risks involved.

COVID has brought these concerns into sharp focus. Anti-mask protests in the early days of the pandemic in the U.S. felt surreal. Why would people take to the streets, risking a deadly disease, to protest measures that were intended to protect them from that very disease? And why were front-line health care workers the focus of those protesters' ire? Later, after the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and so many others, the resurgence of street protests in support of Black lives took place when even the most peaceful street protests were nonetheless life-threatening. Ideas about risk, threat, and the decision to participate in protest were front and center. Why risk one's life to participate in protest? One reason is that systemic racism's threats to Black lives are just as great, if not greater, than the risks of street protests during a pandemic.

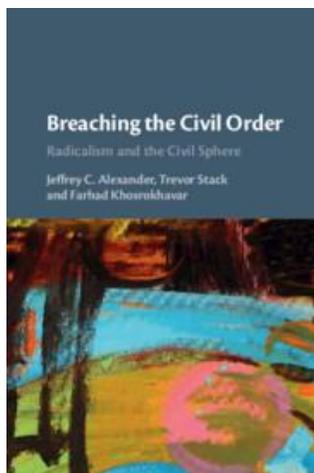
Discussions about risk and threat are only part of what we have to offer. We are crucial to the conversation about the role of protest in society. By studying the repression of protest, we bring nuance to discussions about violence, policing, and rights. Our research on intersectionality in social movements calls attention to diversity and difference and centers the experiences of those who are marginalized within movements, which can help build solidarity and create more effective coalitions. And in a world where being an antifascist is cast as bad and dangerous thing, while white supremacists include "very fine people," our work clarifies the dynamics that brought us to this moment, which is necessary if we're going to get out of it.

Thank you all for your scholarship, activism, teaching, and mentoring. What we do matters.

Stay safe and be well,
Rachel

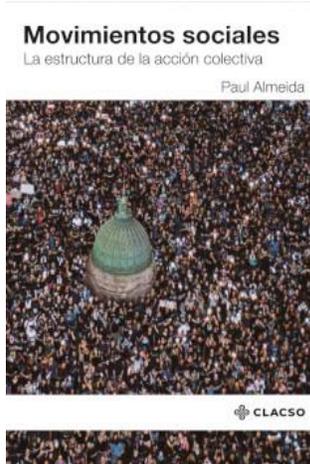
RECENT PUBLICATIONS

New Books



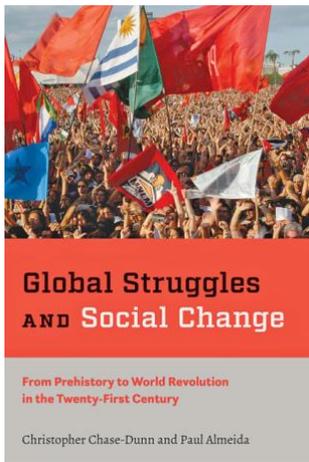
Alexander, Jeffrey C., Stack, Trevor., and Khosrokhavar, Farhad. 2019. *Breaching the Civil Order: Radicalism and the Civil Sphere*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/breaching-the-civil-order/C522D6D921948243D67DD19485152F4F#>



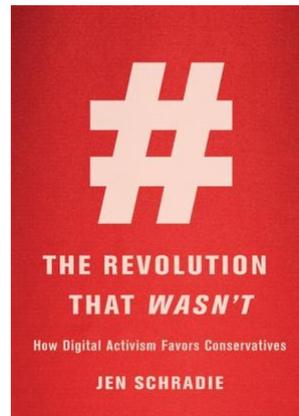
Almeida, Paul. 2020. *Momientos Sociales. La estructura de la acción colectiva*. Buenos Aires, Argentina: CLACSO.

https://www.clacso.org.ar/libreria-latinoamericana/libro_detalle.php?orden=&id_libro=2220&pageNum_rs_libros=0&totalRows_rs_libros=1411



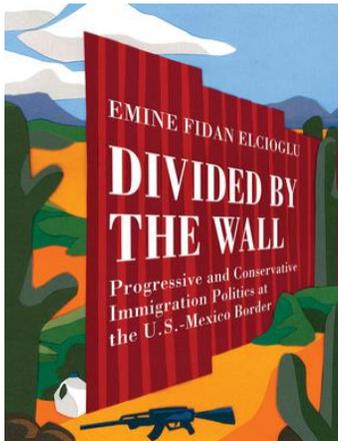
Chase-Dunn, Christopher, and Almeida, Paul. 2020. *Global Struggles and Social Change. From Prehistory to World Revolution in the Twenty-First Century*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.

<https://jhupbooks.press.jhu.edu/title/global-struggles-and-social-change>



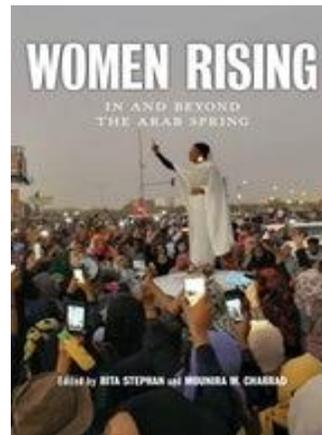
Schradie, Jen. *The Revolution That Wasn't: How Digital Activism Favors People with More Money, Power, and Organization*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

<https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674972339>



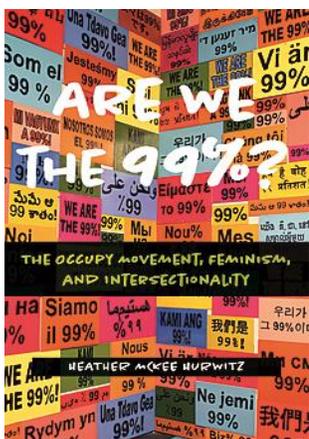
Elcioglu, Emine Fidan. 2020. *Divided by the Wall: Progressive and Conservative Immigration Politics at the US-Mexico Border*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

<https://www.ucpress.edu/book/9780520340367/divided-by-the-wall>



Stephan, Rita and Charrad, Mounira M. (Editors) *Women Rising: In and Beyond the Arab Spring*. New York, NY: NYU Press.

<https://nyupress.org/9781479801046/women-rising/>



Hurwitz, Heather McKee. 2020. *Are We the 99%? The Occupy Movement, Feminism, and Intersectionality*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

<http://tupress.temple.edu/book/20000000010062>

Other Publications

Almeida, Paul., and Perez Martin, Amalia. 2020. "Economic Globalization and Social Movements in Latin America." in Xochitl Bada and Liliana Rivera (eds), *Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Latin America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Charrad, Mounira M., and Reith, Nicholas. 2019. "Local Solidarities: How the Arab Spring Protests Started." *Sociological Forum* 34: 1174-1196. <https://doi.org/10.1111/socf.12543>

Charrad, Mounira M., and Stephan, Rita. 2020. "The Power of Presence: Professional Women Leaders and Family Law Reform in Morocco." *Social Politics* 27 (2): 337-360. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sp/jxz013>

Charrad, Mounira M., and Zarrugh, Amina. 2020. "Women are Complete, not Complements: Terminology in a New Constitution in Tunisia." in Stephan R. & Charrad M. M. (eds) *Women Rising: In and Beyond the Arab Spring*. New York, NY: NYU Press.

Gallo-Cruz, Selina, and Tulinski, Hannah. 2020. "Restaging Women's Sexual Politics: Receptivity and Resistance to The Vagina Monologues Movement." *Feminist Formations*. 32(2): 207-234.

2020 ISRF Essay Prize in Social Theory Winner: Shultziner, Doron and Goldberg, Sarah. 2019. "The stages of mass mobilization: separate phenomena and distinct causal mechanisms." *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior* 49: 2-23. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jtsb.12187>

Shultziner, Doron and Stukalin, Yelena. 2020. "Politicizing What's News: How Partisan Media Bias Occurs in News Production." *Mass Communication and Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15205436.2020.1812083>



The recipient of the 2020 Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship Dissertation Award is Tyson Patros, (University of California, Irvine) for *The Links on the Chain: Popular Uprisings and Political Re-constitutions in the Global Middle East and North Africa*.

All of the submissions the committee considered were excellent and demonstrated the breadth of work being done by early career CBSM scholars, but Dr. Patros' dissertation stood out for its contribution to scholarship on social movements more broadly. He begins his dissertation by asking, not about a particular case, but about a core set of questions about revolutions that continue to animate a great body of social movement scholarship.

The dissertation uses multiple data collection methods to triangulate what separated Tunisia from Egypt, Tunisia and Egypt from other attempted revolutions, and attempted revolutions from non-mobilizers. The fluid movement between theory, case comparisons, and case detail made it a particularly interesting read; one committee member complimented Dr. Patros' "uncanny ability to get to the heart of what matters." The committee was particularly impressed with the way the case analyses and interviews were used to address the temporal

2020 CBSM SECTION AWARDS

Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship Dissertation Award

Patros, Tyson. 2020. "The Links on the Chain: Popular Uprisings and Political Re-constitutions in the Global Middle East and North Africa."

sequencing and complicated outcomes of the revolutions.

Finally, the committee believed that the concept of Organized Disruptive Capacity, especially as it relates to constitutional change, was an innovative idea that will have an impact on movement studies, especially for those seeking to better understand the Arab Spring and movements throughout East Africa and parts of Latin America.

Committee:

Caroline Lee (chair)

Nicole Fox

Thomas Maher

Anjuli Fahlberg

Mayer N. Zald Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship Student Paper Award

**Zhelnina, Anna. "The Apathy Syndrome:
How We Are Trained Not to Care About
Politics."**



This terrific paper takes a new look at the role of emotion in protest, not by studying how emotions facilitate collective action, but how they prevent it, by producing apathy. The "production" part is important here: author Anna Zhelnina cautions that non-participation in protest is not simply a default position, but is created through emotion and cultural work. Her paper therefore turns the literature on emotion and social movements on its head, prompting one member of the selection committee to say that they were "taken by the (paper's) question immediately."

Drawing on interview data from 60 young people in two cities in Russia (St. Petersburg and Vyborg) collected between 2011-2012, during and after a period of anti-government protests, Zhelnina uncovers the mechanisms that produce what she calls the "apathy syndrome." These mechanisms include gendered norms about emotional displays as well as norms of mistrusting both the government and other political actors, all of which are shaped by socialization (e.g., in the family).

A final mechanism is disassociation, by which individuals disconnect from politics, preferring to focus on their small network of friends and family rather than concerning themselves with politics; as one respondent said, she preferred to "live calmly." Together, these mechanisms translate feelings of fear, anger, and frustration over politics, emotions that might otherwise compel protest participation, into respondents' sense that collective action is inappropriate or simply not worth it.

The committee found the paper's focus on apathy important, and we believe the argument is useful and will lead to a great deal of further theoretical development. This paper is forthcoming in *Social Problems* and we encourage you all to check it out and cite it.

Honorable Mention

Marquez, Alejandro. "Detached Attachments: Dealing with and Preventing Burnout among Caregivers in the Immigrant Rights Movement."



Alejandro Marquez's paper also focuses on the dynamics of emotion and protest. His case is the immigrant rights movement in El Paso, where members of social movement organizations provide the bulk of the emotionally exhausting care work (including both legal assistance and housing) for migrants and asylum seekers at the border. Yet despite a high prevalence of burnout, few activists leave the movement. Using fieldwork and interviews with members of two SMOs, Marquez solves this puzzle of persistence with the concept of "detached attachments."

As Marquez shows, activists strategically "detach" from their work in order to take time to reflect, process negative emotions, and reaffirm their commitment. Yet, they never leave the movement while doing so. While detached—that is, while taking time off from their work—they remain attached in a cognitive sense, in that they are reflecting on and processing their emotions

and burnout. This strategy gives the activists the rest they need to refuel and remain in the movement.

The committee found this paper very well written, compelling, and timely. We especially appreciated the look "behind the scenes" at the daily grind of the immigrant rights movement, focusing on the very hard work that activists do – as Marquez notes, activism is not always about the big march or the fiery speech. As one committee member said, "I was still thinking about this paper even after I read it. That's the sign of a good paper."

We congratulate both Anna and Alejandro, and we thank the authors of all the nominated papers for their hard work and excellent scholarship. The future of our section, and of social movement research, is bright indeed.

Committee:

Rachel Einwohner (chair)

Paul Almeida

Lisa Leitz

Grace Yukich

Charles Tilly Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship Book Award

Schradie, Jen. 2019. *The Revolution That Wasn't: How Digital Activism Favors Conservatives*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

This book provides a fresh examination of activism in the digital age by focusing on labor rights in North Carolina. Using a field-level approach, Schradie compares digital activism and practices across social movement organizations on the left and right, and her analysis reveals how and why technology may not be the great equalizer. By focusing on the everyday activities of different social movement groups, the book unpacks the ways in which social class operates to reproduce advantages for only some, challenging the notion that a new

digital democracy includes all voices. *The Revolution That Wasn't* provides a timely contribution to the study of social media and mobilization. It has relevance for researchers and activists alike and will undoubtedly generate new research on the digital activism gap.

Braun, Robert. 2019. *Protectors of Pluralism: Religious Minorities and the Rescue of Jews in the Low Countries during the Holocaust*. Cambridge University Press.



This compelling book examines why some religious groups are more likely than others to intervene in state purification campaigns, namely genocide. Focusing on the Holocaust, Braun analyzes an extensive array of archival and spatial data from the Netherlands and Belgium to understand where and why some groups intervened to save the lives of Jews. He carefully demonstrates how religious norms regarding empathy and local community structures, which can quickly transform into networks of assistance, operate as mechanisms to produce resistance.

Protectors of Pluralism is an impressive piece of research that provides valuable insights as to why religious minorities were instrumental in protecting their threatened neighbors, and makes key contributions to the study of collective action and political violence.

Committee:
Dina Okamoto (Chair)
Sharon Erickson Nepstad
Amanda Pullum
Tamara L. Mix

Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship Article Award

Lu, Yao. 2019. "Empowerment of Disintegration? Migration, Social Institutions, and Collective Action in Rural China" *American Journal of Sociology* 125(3): 683-729.



A letter nominating the article observed "This article breaks new ground by linking population and political processes. It integrates the role of demographic forces, in particular population migration, into understanding collective action. The study examines ways in which migration influences contentious politics in migrant-sending areas by shaping the cognitive and social foundations of collective action and by interacting with pre-existing local social institutions. Drawing on both longitudinal village data and in-depth interviews, the paper shows two countervailing processes.

On the one hand, migration spurs collective action in migrant-sending areas through relational diffusion (transmission and brokerage of political remittances along established social ties). On the other hand, migration reshapes the connective structure of local communities in ways that weaken communal cohesion. Because of these countervailing processes, the political impact of migration is conditioned by local context: migration is especially conducive to collective action in communities embedded in strong solidarity institutions that provide mobilizing structures and shield against communal erosion."

The committee found that among many other strong articles, this one stands out both for its theoretical contribution and its rich empirics. The framework for empowerment through relational diffusion offers an innovative connection between the social movements and migrations scholarship, and this framework is grounded in an impressive mix-methods analysis of longitudinal village-level data and in-depth interviews. It's a beautiful execution of the best practices of sociological scholarship.

Committee:

Jo Reger (chair)

Amin Ghaziani

Selina Gallo-Cruz

Yan Long

CALLS FOR PAPERS AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

CBSM Section Sessions at the 2021 ASA Meetings

CBSM sessions and organizers for the 2021 ASA Meeting are listed below. The ASA portal for paper submissions will open November 9, 2020.

Collective Behavior and Social Movements
Refereed Roundtables.

- *Organizer: Preethi Krishnan, Western Carolina University*

Intersectionality and Social Movements.

- *Organizer: Fernando Tormos-Aponte, University of Maryland-Baltimore County*

Male Supremacism and Right-Wing
Movements.

- *Organizer: Emily Carian, California State University-San Bernardino*

Pandemic-Inspired Social Movements.

- *Organizers: Phil Brown, Northeastern University and Anjuli Fahlberg, Tufts University*

Race, Ethics, and Protest Research.

Organizers:

- *Laura Heideman, Northern Illinois University and Andrea Boyles, Tulane University*

2021 CBSM Section Awards

Mayer N. Zald Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship Student Paper Award

Current students, as well as those who received their PhD in 2020 or later, are eligible. Any

paper (published or unpublished) written in 2020 by a student or students (i.e., no PhD coauthors) is eligible.

The committee will accept only one submission per student. A previously submitted paper may be resubmitted only if significantly revised. Authors may submit their own work, or nominations may be made by section members. No lengthy nominating letters please, and please send all questions to the committee chair. Send a copy of the paper electronically to each member of the award committee (below) by March 1, 2021. Winners will be notified by June 1, 2021.

- Rory McVeigh (chair): rmcveigh@nd.edu
- Dina Okamoto: dokamoto@indiana.edu
- Kelsy Kretschmer: Kelsy.Kretschmer@oregonstate.edu
- Anna Zhelnina: azhelnina@gradcenter.cuny.edu

Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship Article Award

Articles and chapters from edited books with publication dates of 2020 are eligible. All authors must be members of the section. Authors may submit their own work, or nominations may be made by section members. No lengthy nominating letters please, and please send all questions to the committee chair.

Send a copy of the article or chapter electronically to each member of the award committee by March 1, 2021:

- Tina Fetner (chair): fetnert@mcmaster.ca
- Sharon Erickson Nepstad: nepstad@unm.edu
- Yao Lu: yao.lu@columbia.edu
- Thomas E. Shriver: tom_shriver@ncsu.edu

Charles Tilly Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship Book Award

Section members, authors, or publishers may

nominate books with publication dates of 2020. All authors must be members of the section. No lengthy nominating letters please, and please send all questions to the committee chair. Send or have publishers send a copy of the book to each member of the award committee by March 1, 2021. Please contact the committee chair for committee members' preferred mailing addresses.

- Rachel Einwohner (chair): einwohnerr@purdue.edu;
- Selina Gallo-Cruz: sgallo@holycross.edu
- Robert Braun: robert.braun@berkeley.edu
- Joshua Bloom: joshuabloom@pitt.edu

Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship Dissertation Award

Any doctoral dissertation completed (i.e., successfully submitted, defended, and approved) in calendar year 2020 is eligible. Only nominations from the student's dissertation chair or co-chair will be accepted. Nomination letters should not exceed two typed pages in length. The nomination letter should be accompanied by the dissertation in electronic form. Send a copy of the nomination letter and dissertation to each of the award committee members by March 1, 2021:

- Lynette Ong: Lynette.Ong@utoronto.ca
- Paul Almeida: palmeida@ucmerced.edu
- Edward Flores: eflores52@ucmerced.edu
- Tyson Patros: tcp235@nyu.edu

Call for Submissions, Social Psychology Quarterly

Social Psychology Quarterly (SPQ), a journal of the American Sociological Association, publishes theoretical and empirical papers on the link between the individual and society. This includes papers on the role of the individual in groups, collectivities, and institutions, as well as papers

on how individuals are influenced by social structure and cultural processes. Additionally, we encourage research using a broad range of quantitative and qualitative methods and that focus on current events and social problems. *SPQ* routinely publishes research on the dynamics of prosociality, civic engagement, collective behavior, and social movements.

Job Announcements

The Department of Sociology (in the Dana and David Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences) will be making one tenure-track appointment available at the rank of assistant professor, including advanced assistant professors, with an anticipated start date of Fall 2021.

The position is open with regard to specialization. A doctoral degree is required by the time of appointment. The search committee is especially interested in candidates who, through their research, teaching, and/or service, will contribute to the diversity and excellence of the academic community.

NEXT ISSUE:

Critical Mass Newsletter is working on a Special Issue to be released later this fall! This issue will focus on scholars and activists of color in the area of collective action and social movements.