

Professor: Mehdi Shadmehr
E-mail: mshadmeh@gmail.com
Office: 2081 Harris School

Contentious Policy Making

This course explores avenues to influence public policy beyond the routine means of voting and elections, through disruptive methods. These methods include demonstrations, boycotts, strikes, social movements and revolutions, as well as foreign interventions, sanctions, and war. We aim to discuss a variety of movements and conflicts, including the Civil Rights Movement and the Women's Suffrage Movement in the United States, the American and Iranian Revolutions, and the Middle East conflicts. We explore the role of social movement organizations, ideologies, culture, information technology, leaders, tactical innovations and adaptation, and strategic decision-making in the political processes of contentious policy making.

Grades

This is a discussion-based class. Attendance is required, and every student is expected to read the assigned material before the class and be able to make informed discussions. Class attendance and participation constitute 50% of the grade. The other 50% is a final, group paper on a related topic of choice. Groups must present in class their early findings in the last week of the quarter. In most sessions, I will provide an overview of the topic and guide the discussion. I may give lectures in some sessions. As usual, the ethics codes of the University of Chicago and the Harris School apply.

Course Material

The material indicated by bullet points are mostly optional. We may discuss them in class if there is time and sufficient interest in those specific topics.

1. McAdam, Doug. 1999. *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970. 2nd Ed.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (available online through the library)
 - Gillion, Daniel. 2013. *The Political Power of Protest: Minority Activism and Shifts in Public Policy.* New York: Cambridge University Press. (available online through the library)

- Wasow, Omar. 2019. “Agenda Seeding: How 1960s Black Protests Moved Elites, Public Opinion and Voting.” Mimeo. (available online)
2. Tarrow, Sidney G. 2011. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics. 3rd Ed.* New York: Cambridge University Press. (available online through the library)
- Shadmehr, Mehdi. 2014. “Mobilization, Repression, and Revolution: Grievances and Opportunities in Contentious Politics.” *Journal of Politics* 76 (3): 621-35. (available online through the library) (read p. 621-26, and the Conclusion)
 - Shadmehr, Mehdi. 2015. “Extremism in Revolutionary Movements.” *Games and Economic Behavior* 94: 97-121.
 - Morris, Stephen, and Mehdi Shadmehr. 2018. “Inspiring Regime Change.” Mimeo. (available online) (technical, skim Section 1, and read Section 5 for examples from the American Revolution and the early development of Islam)
 - Shadmehr, Mehdi, and Dan Bernhardt. 2019. “Vanguards in Revolution.” *Games and Economic Behavior* 115: 146-66.
3. Kennedy, David M. 1999. *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945.* New York: Oxford University Press. Chapter 10: STRIKE! (available online through the library)
- Kay, Tamara. 2011. *NAFTA and the Politics of Labor Transnationalism.* New York: Cambridge University Press. (available online through the library)
 - Robinson, James. 1999. “Dynamic Contractual Enforcement: A Model of Strikes.” *International Economic Review* 40 (1): 209-29. (available online through the library) (technical, skim the introduction and conclusion for the main idea)
4. McConaughy, Corrine. 2013. *The Woman Suffrage Movement in America: A Reassessment.* New York : Cambridge University Press. (available online through the library)
- Stanton, Elizabeth Cady (mostly). 1848. *The Declaration of Rights and Sentiments.* (available online)
 - Ware, Susan. 2015 *American Women’s History: A Very Short Introduction.* New York : Oxford University Press. (available online through the library)

- Ken Burns and Paul Barnes’s 1999 documentary. *Not for Ourselves Alone: The Story of Elizabeth Cady Stanton & Susan B. Anthony*. (STRONGLY RECOMMENDED)
5. Ehrman, Bard. 2015. *After the New Testament: A Reader in Early Christianity, 100-300 CE. 2nd Ed.* New York: Oxford University Press. (chapters 1-4)
 Stark, Rodney. 1996. *The Rise of Christianity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
 - The Acts of the Apostles (readily available online)
 6. Wood, Gordon. 2002. *The American Revolution: A History*. New York: Modern Library. (available online through the library)
 - Maier, Pauline. 1972. *From Resistance to Revolution: Colonial Radicals and the Development of American Opposition to Britain, 1765-1776*. New York: Norton.
 - Hock, Holger. 2017. *Scars of Independence: America’s Violent Birth*. New York: Crown.
 - Breen, Timothy. 2010. *American Insurgents, American Patriots: The Revolution of the People*. New York: Hill and Wang.
 7. Donner, Fred. 2010. *Muhammad and the Believers: At the Origins of Islam*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. (Ch. 1-3)
 - Crone, Patricia. 2004. *God’s Rule: Government and Islam*. New York: Columbia University Press.
 - 1976 movie, *The Message*. (available on Netflix).
 8. Amanat, Abbas. 2017. *Iran: A Modern History*. New Haven: Yale University Press. (relevant chapters will be made available online)
 Ansari, Hassan, and Mehdi Shadmehr. 2019. “Jurisprudential Origins of the Iranian Revolution.” Mimeo. (will be made available to the class)
 Shadmehr, Mehdi. 2017. “Khomeini’s Theory of Islamic State and the Making of the Iranian Revolution.” Mimeo. (available online)

Table 1: Sequence of Topics

Civil Rights Movement
Theories of Social Movements
Labor and Unions
The Women's Suffrage Movement
Early Christianity (optional topic, we may skip this)
American Revolution
Early Islam
Iranian Revolution
The Middle East
Presentations
