

# THE SYSTEMATIC STUDY OF CONTENTIOUS POLITICS

Professor Christian Davenport

Contact Information:

Phone: 301-314-9473

E-mail: [cdavenport@cidcm.umd.edu](mailto:cdavenport@cidcm.umd.edu)

Webpage: [www.cdavenport.com](http://www.cdavenport.com)

Office: 0145b Tydings Hall

Office Hours: M 3:30-5:00; W 3:30-5:00

---

## INTRO:

The structure of the class is designed around 3 simple themes, each of which is broken down into several paradoxes within the existing literature: 1) definitions/measurement, 2) theories and 3) approaches to the study of. The course is designed to introduce students to the issues that are currently being addressed within the area of empirically-oriented “contentious politics” (i.e., research concerned protest, social movements, repression, revolution, civil war, etc. that pays close attention to issues of data collection and analysis). Although we will draw upon literature that is more theoretically and/or less-rigorously oriented, the primary focus will be on individuals who attempt to systematically analyze the subject. The topic areas selected are intended to be informative about what is taking place within the subfield and generally flexible enough to accommodate diverse interests (e.g., human rights, democratization, globalization, protest policing, terrorism).

The last part of the class is directed toward the development of individual student research projects, which **are going to be** publishable manuscripts by the end of the semester. The final assignment will be mailed to three individuals that have been identified as relevant to the student’s particular area of research. This is normally the preliminary stage in submitting articles to academic journals.

**Immediate assignment:** connect to <http://www.sociology.columbia.edu/conpol/> and join the contentious politics listserv. In your spare time, glance over some of the older newspapers and look at the upcoming workshops. Familiarize yourself with JSTOR and memorize the locations for *International Interactions*, *Social Forces*, *Mobilization*, *The Journal of Peace*

*Research, The Journal of Conflict Resolution, The American Journal of Political Science, The Journal of Political and Military Sociology, The American Sociological Review, The American Journal of Sociology* as well as the various links on my webpage:

[www.cdavenport.com](http://www.cdavenport.com).

---

## REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

<u>Active</u> Participation in Class	20%
April 4 <sup>th</sup> – 5 page paper outlining project	10%
Identify: research question, why relevant theoretically as well as practically, and how you will seek to answer the question.	
April 18 <sup>th</sup> – Chart with Literature Review	10%
Identify: along columns – how the dependent variable is measured, how relevant independent variables are measured, how investigation was conducted, what units of analysis are employed, general conclusions as this relates to your study, and weaknesses with the research effort reviewed; along rows – the author and the citation.	
April 25 <sup>th</sup> – Evidence and Investigation 10-15 page outline (text only)	10%
Begin to develop argument initially provided on April 4 <sup>th</sup> .	
Basic framework:	
<b>Introduction</b> – puzzle, possible hint, how the hint misses the boat, what you will do.	
<b>First Section</b> – theoretical background and previous empirical efforts.	
<b>Second Section</b> – Your theory.	
<b>Third Section</b> – Your data and method of investigation.	
<b>Fourth Section</b> – Actual investigation and presentation of analysis.	
<b>Fifth Section</b> – Conclusion (were you right, how were you wrong, what should be done next?)	
<u>Hint:</u> Basic article structure exemplified by James Gibson in anything that he has ever written in APSR, AJPS, and JOP or	

anything by Charles Tilly. They are clear,  
they are thorough and they are published.

May 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 20-25 page Outline of Paper (text only)	10%
May 9 <sup>th</sup> – Final Draft Paper (everything) Maximum 40-45 pages including text, endnotes, diagrams/figures, and tables, and references	30%
May 18 <sup>th</sup> – Final Papers Mailed to 3 Reviewers	10%

---

## CLASS SCHEDULE:

January 31<sup>st</sup> - Introduction

## DEFINITIONS/MEASUREMENT:

February 7<sup>th</sup> – Collective and Overt Behavior Vs. Covert Repression and  
Unobtrusive Resistance [what are we studying?]

The Traditional Focus:

- John Davies – “Global Events Data System” Codebook  
(<http://geds.umd.edu/geds/>)
- Susan Olzak and Elizabeth West – “Dynamics of Collective Protest in the  
U.S., 1960-1980” Codebook
- Craig Jenkins – “Mass Conflict and Civil Society in East Europe: A  
Codebook”
- Ted Gurr – “Comparative Studies of Political Conflict and Change:  
Cross National Datasets”
- Nancy Horn and Charles Tilly – “Contentious Gatherings in Britain”  
Codebook

#### The Unconventional Focus:

- James Scott. 1985. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*.
- Clark McPhail and R. Wohlstein. 1983. "Individual and Collective Behaviors within Gatherings, Demonstrations and Riots." *American Review of Sociology* 9: 579-609. [JSTOR]
- Ruud Koopmans and Paul Statham. 1999. "Political Claims Analysis: Integrating Protest Events and Political Discourse Approaches." *Mobilization* 4(1): 40-51.
- Charles Tilly 1998. "Contentious Conversation," *Social Research* 65: 491-510.
- Polletta, Francesca. 1998. "'It Was Like A Fever . . . ' Narrative and Identity in Social Protest," *Social Problems* 45: 137-159.

February 14<sup>th</sup> – Rashomonization of Contention Vs. Uni-dimensional reality/event sequence [what can evidence tell us and what kind should we look for?]

#### The Conventional Focus:

- Taylor, Charles L. and David A. Jodice. 1983. *World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators, Volume III*.
- Deborah Gerner and Philip Schrodt. 1996. "The Kansas Event Data System: A Beginner's Guide with an Application to the Study of Media Fatigue in the Palestinian Intifada." Manuscript [<http://falcon.cc.ukans.edu/~schrodt/papers.index.html>].
- Jackman, Robert W. and William A. Boyd. 1979. "Multiple Sources in the Collection of Data on Political Conflict." *American Journal of Political Science* 23: 434-45. [JSTOR]

#### The Unconventional Focus

- Christian Davenport. 2000. *The Rashomon Effect in the Social Sciences: The News Media, Contentious Events and the Importance of Perspective*; introduction as well as chapters 1 and 2. Manuscript.
- Christian Davenport and Marika Litras. 2000. "Rashomon and Repression: A Multi-Source Analysis of Contentious Events" Manuscript.

- Christian Davenport and Patrick Ball. 2000. "Views to a Kill: Exploring the Implications of Source Selection in the Case of Guatemalan State Terror, 1977-1995". Manuscript.
- James Goodman. 1994. *Stories of Scottsboro*.
- Gavan Duffy. 1994. "Events and Versions: Reconstructing Event Data Analysis." *International Interactions* 20(1-2): 147-167.

February 21<sup>st</sup> – Continue Discussion of Data and Measurement

Problem - International Studies Association Meeting; Reschedule

- In Rucht, Dieter, Ruud Koopmans, and Friedhelm Neidhardt, eds. 1998. *Acts of Dissent: New Developments in the Study of Protest*. Berlin, Germany: WZB. Sections I and II.

## THEORIES:

February 28<sup>th</sup> – Is it the Micro, Meso or the Macro that Carries the Explanatory Weight?

Micro:

- Ronald Wintrobe. 1998. *The Political Economy of Dictatorship*.
- Alexander Dallin and George Breslauer. 1970. *Political Terror in Communist Systems*.
- Raymond Duvall and Michael Stohl. 1988. "Governance by Terror". In Michael Stohl, ed., *The Politics of Terrorism*.

Macro:

- Doug McAdam, John McCarthy, and Mayer Zald, eds. *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*. Selected parts of Manuscript.
- Ted Gurr. 2000. *Peoples Vs. States*. Selected parts of Manuscript.

Meso:

- David Kowalewski and Dean Hoover. 1995. *Dynamic Models of Conflict and Pacification: Dissenters, Officials and Peacemakers*. Selected parts of Manuscript.
- Charles Tilly. 2000. "Large-Scale Violence as Contentious Politics." Manuscript.

March 7<sup>th</sup> – Democratic Pacification Vs. Statebuilding [are moves to freedom juxtaposed against moves to order?]

Problem - Rwanda; Reschedule

Affirmation (democracy works, it Does I tell You!!!):

- Christian Davenport - 1999. "Human Rights and the Democratic Proposition." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 43(1): 92-116.
- Rudolph Rummel. 1997. *Power Kills*
- Robert Goldstein. 1983. *Political Repression in 19th Century Europe*. Totowa: Barnes and Noble Books.

Doubt (Beware for what you wish for):

- Bertrand De Jouvenal. 1948. *On Power*. Ted Gurr. 2000. *Peoples Vs. States*. Selected parts of Manuscript.
- Claudia Dahlerus. 2001. *Contentious Consolidations: The Coercive Foundation of Democracy in East Central Europe, 1980-1995*. Manuscript; chapters 1-3.

March 14<sup>th</sup> – Transcending the Traditional Units of Analysis, The Nation-Year

Problem - Rwanda; Reschedule

Transcending Space (Nations are not Independent):

- David Reilly. 2001. "Shatterbelts and Conflict: The Effect of Globalization on High Risk States." Manuscript.
- Michael Ward and Kristian Gleditsch. 2000. "Location, Location, Location: An MCMC Approach to Modeling Spatial Context with Categorical Variables". Manuscript.
- Byron Miller and Deborah Martin. 1998. "Missing Geography: Social Movements on the Head of a Pin?" Manuscript.
- Christian Davenport and David Reilly. 2000. "The Logic of Covert Repressive Action: Hotspots, Dragnets and the Forces of Habit in the Detroit 'Red Squad', 1968-1973. Manuscript.

Transcending Time (Time is not independent):

- Doug McAdam and William Sewell. 1998. "Temporality in the Study of Social Movements and Revolutions." Manuscript.

- Davenport, Christian. 1996b. "The Weight of the Past: Exploring Lagged Determinants of Political Repression." *Political Research Quarterly* 49(2): 377-403.
- Christian Davenport. 2001. "Contentious News Coverage and the Problem of the Continuous Present". Manuscript.

## APPROACHES TO STUDY OF CONTENTIOUS POLITICS

March 28<sup>th</sup> – Quantitative vs. Qualitative [how can each inform our understanding of contention?]

- Quantitative:
  - o Will Moore. 1998. "Repression and Dissent: Substitution, Context and Timing." *American Journal of Political Science* 42(3): 851-873.
  - o Ron Francisco. 1996. "Coercion and Protest: An Empirical Test in Two Democratic States." *American Journal of Political Science* 40(4): 1179-1204.
- Qualitative light:
  - o Sidney Tarrow. 1989. *Democracy and Disorder: Protest and Politics in Italy, 1965-1975*.
  - o Charles Tilly, Louise Tilly, and R. Tilly. 1975. *The Rebellious Century*.
- Qualitative **Heavy**
  - o James Scott – *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*.
  - o Padraic Kenney. *Carnival: Revolution in Central Europe 1989*. Manuscript; selected chapters.
- Combinations:
  - o Davenport, Christian, ed. 2000a. *Paths to State Repression: Human Rights Violations and Contentious Politics*. Boulder: Rowman & Littlefield. 2000.
  - o Franzosi, Roberto. 1995. *The Puzzle of Strikes: Class and State Strategies in Postwar Italy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- o Stewart Tolnay and E.M. Beck. 1992. *A Festival of Violence: An Analysis of Southern Lynchings, 1882-1930.*

April 4<sup>th</sup> – Continuation of Previous Week;  
– 5 page paper outlining project

## DETAILED ATTENTION TO RESEARCH

April 11<sup>th</sup> – Research Questions and Theoretical Orientation

April 18<sup>th</sup> – Chart with Literature Review

April 25<sup>th</sup> – Evidence and Investigation 10-15 page outline (text only)

May 2<sup>nd</sup> – 20-25 page Outline of Paper (text only)

May 9<sup>th</sup> – Final Draft Paper (everything); Discuss cover letter to reviewers and journal designation

May 18<sup>th</sup> – Final Papers Mailed to 3 Reviewers