

# Civil Resistance and the Everyday

Sociology and Psychology 791R-01  
UMass, Amherst, Fall Semester 2014, 09/02/2014 – 12/05/2014

Thompson Hall room 620  
Mondays 5:00PM - 7:30 PM

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## OVERVIEW

This course focus on what has sometimes been called 'everyday forms of resistance', 'quite encroachments' or political 'lifestyles' and 'subcultures'. It applies sociological perspectives on the 'resistance' that is played out in the 'everyday life' of 'ordinary' people: a resistance that might be widespread and diffused, individual or small scale, implicitly political, disguised or even hidden. It brings to light how the 'private' or 'personal' can be political, and explores the creativity of 'cultural resistance'. A special attention is turned towards the 'intersectionality' of both domination and resistance in the everyday life, and therefore the problematics of how resistance does not only liberate, but also recreate domination.

This kind of activity has often been made invisible by a mainstream understanding of what constitutes (real) 'politics', or has made itself disguised in order to provide space for autonomous development and avoid screening and repression. Therefore this kind of political engagement is sometimes called 'infrapolitics'. As such, the politics of the everyday constitute a special challenge for research, both in terms of access, and in

terms of ethics. How do we study and publish the disguised or hidden without making it more vulnerable to domination and control? Is it possible to contribute to the empowerment of subjugated groups and activities through carefully crafted research processes?

The politics/resistance of the everyday is important to understand for many reasons. As part of the mundane routine life it constitutes the very arena in which subjectivity is formed, where dominant discourses are played out. Also, since we all, without exception, are participants in the everyday life, we are affected by, and do affect politics, in some way and to some degree. Furthermore, as a neglected area for research (except within gender and queer studies, ethnomethodology, subaltern studies, etc.), much is still needed to explore. Also, as will be argued during the course, it is very likely to be a key social phenomenon to understand if we ever want to explain why sometimes large mass mobilizations happen, and sometimes not.

By the end of the course you should, based on your learning from the literature and class discussions:

- recognize key features of everyday forms of resistance/politics when you encounter it in various discourses or in your own life.
- understand the differences between key concepts such as hidden transcripts, public forms of resistance, everyday forms of resistance, quite encroachments.
- be familiar with several different theoretical frameworks that try to explain the everyday forms of politics/resistance.
- be able to apply at least one theoretical framework on a case of everyday resistance/politics.
- understand how it is possible to argue that this kind of activity constitute 'politics'.
- recognize ethical and methodological questions to ask to research focused on everyday forms of politics/resistance.
- show ability to critically analyze and problematize a case involving everyday forms of resistance/politics.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

**Participation in class discussions:** This course is organized primarily as a seminar, but apply a combination of different class meetings (lectures, text seminars, movie seminars and paper seminars). During text seminars we discuss some key texts together, and during lectures and other types of seminars you will be given supplementary perspectives on the course theme. Therefore you must complete the required readings of some specified texts before the class meeting for which they are assigned (see schedule below), and it is expected that you actively participate in the discussion of the readings during seminar sessions. In addition to demonstrating an understanding of the main arguments and themes of the readings, you are encouraged to think critically about the readings (i.e. identify strengths and weaknesses), compare and contrast them to other readings or literatures, and make connections to ongoing social processes and current events.

**Text seminar rapporteurs:** For each of the seminars for which we have required readings, one or more students will be designated as rapporteurs, who are responsible for presenting to the class a concise summary of the main points and arguments of the readings (time limit: 20 minutes).

**Text seminar questions:** Each student will have to team up with another student and together hand in a paper with two questions to the seminar (i.e. 2 questions per pair of students). Based on the reading of the required reading for the seminar your question has to be well informed, and one that is a problematizing one. (It is not accepted to hand in a question that can be answered with a simple yes or no, or where the answer is to find on a certain page.) Make copies of your paper with questions to yourself and your student team member, as well as one copy to the professor to hand in before the meeting starts (i.e. three copies in total).

**Story Sharing:** Accessing everyday forms of resistance or the politics of the ordinary is not easy. There are few good sources for this. Per definition we do not find it 'news worthy', as it looks like mundane life, as 'non-events'. But we have all encountered such 'small acts' of bravery or dignity in our lives; conducted by ourselves or people we met. So, this class activity involves the sharing of a short story from your own experience, something you encountered, observed or learnt of. We take turns and share a story of maximum 5 minutes, to make the class learn about the variations this kind of politics might articulate. At each occasion it is the storyteller that decides what deserves to be called 'everyday resistance/politics' (even if an informative discussion on the concept might follow an interesting story).

**Texts:** This course apply some more texts to read than normal, but the idea is to read extensive, to learn and understand the main concepts, models, claims and theoretical frameworks. The emphasis is not on remembering details in a smaller collection of texts, rather on your ability to compare, criticize, problematize and discuss differences within the literature, and to form your own positions in relation to that literature. To secure that kind of learning we apply the learning form of seminars with discussions, and lectures that bring in perspectives that supplement the readings. It is only the required books that are mandatory reading, even if some articles are strongly recommended (see lists below). Below you also find suggested and relevant literature that might help you in your own selection for your Course paper.

**Discussion/reading groups:** In order to facilitate both the reading before the class, and discussions during meetings you will be divided up in groups. It is a general recommendation to meet before and/or after class and read together, since it facilitates discipline and collaboration, but that is not mandatory. You are responsible to form your own meeting schedule and inform all students in the group when you plan activities. During class meetings you will regularly be asked to sit and discuss within your group.

**Review essay:** Each student is required to choose one recent scholarly book (published the last three years) that falls within the substantive domain of this course, such as an everyday form of resistance, a political lifestyle/subculture, or a relevant theoretical issue, and to make a review essay of the book. The book needs approval from the professor before you start to write. Since each student need to choose a book someone else has not yet chosen, it is good to be quick in reporting which book you choose. This

essay should consist of 3 double spaced pages, and the text shall be evenly distributed with 1/3 of the text (1 page) per section: (1) Summary of the main content and points of the chosen book, (2) Analytical comparison with the mandatory literature at this course, and (3) Your critical reflection of the strengths and weakness of the chosen book. The review is due at the beginning of the class meeting on Oct 20 (see schedule below).

**Course Paper and presentation, and peer-review:** A paper is required on a topic of your choice that falls within the substantive domain of this course. The aim is to make something that could be submitted as a journal article (it does not have to be submitted, but it is recommended). You can have a theoretical (with a literature review) or an empirical focus. If you choose an empirical focus it should utilize realistically limited and accessible material within the time frame (e.g. by analyzing popular fiction, like movies, novels, poetry or similar). You have the opportunity to get direct feedback on your choice if you have one idea to present on the class September 22 (see schedule). You must get approval from the professor of your topic before starting to write. After getting approval, submit a 2-page paper that describes your topic (similar to an abstract) and includes a preliminary bibliography with at least 10 scholarly sources. It is also part of the assignment to search, find and name a possible academic journal that tentatively could be interested in your paper. The 2-page paper is due at the beginning of class on October 6. Include your email on this submission, and you will get written feedback from the professor.

The paper is due at the beginning of class on November 10. The paper should be double spaced, with between 7 000 and 8 000 words in total, excluding bibliography, title and abstract (which is a common limit for journals in Sociology), with a consistent style of specific referencing to the literature (preferably use the style of the journal you have in mind). It is absolutely mandatory to follow conventional principles of academic honesty and not use any concepts or text (even shorter sections) from other sources without referring to the source. Presentations will be scheduled for the last classes. The presentations should be no more than 15 minutes in length.

The papers will go through a proper peer-review process in which each student will comment on a paper written by someone else. The written peer-review, which will be copied and given to the author, shall follow either the format of the journal in question, or a standard format of some journal you know of (including your recommendation and detailed comments for editing). This also includes a 5 minutes oral review with the main points during the seminar. More details will be provided during class meetings.

**Always remember to identify yourself:** Remember to state your full name and class when you communicate with the professor via email, handing in papers or in any other way hand in material for the grading of the course. The only exception is the written evaluations that are done anonymously.

**Grading:**

Participation in class discussions.....	10 %
Text Seminar rapporteur .....	15 %
Text Seminar questions.....	15 %
Storyteller.....	5 %
Review essay .....	15 %

Paper, presentation and  
peer-review of other paper..... 40 %

## TEXTS

### Required extensive readings: books

1. Bayat, Asef (2013) *Life as Politics: How Ordinary People Change the Middle East*, Second edition, Stanford University Press: Stanford.
2. Bleiker, Roland (2000) *Popular Dissent, Human Agency and Global Politics*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. (282 pp.)
3. Cooper, Davina (2014) *Everyday Utopias: The Conceptual Life of Promising Spaces*, Duke University Press: Durham. (228 pp.)
4. de Certeau, Michel (1984) *The Practice of Everyday Life*, University of California Press: Berkeley. (203 pp.)
5. Portwood-Stacer, Laura (2013) *Lifestyle Politics and Radical Activism*, Bloomsbury: New York. (161 pp.)
6. Scott, James C. (1990) *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*, Yale University Press: New Haven. (227 pp.)

### Strongly recommended extensive readings (not mandatory): articles

1. Abu-Lughod, Lila. (1990). "The Romance of Resistance. Tracing transformations of Power through Beduin Women. *American Ethnologist*, 17 (1):41-55.
2. Butz, David & Michael Ripmeester (1999) "Finding Space for Resistant Subcultures", *Invisible Culture*, Issue 2, pp. 1-16.
3. Chabot, Sean and Stellan Vinthagen (2007) "Rethinking Nonviolent Action and Contentious Politics: Political Cultures of Nonviolent Opposition in the Indian Independence Movement and Brazil's Landless Workers Movement", *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change*, Elsevier Sciences/JAI Press, Oxford, Vol. 27, pp. 91-122.
4. Gutmann, Matthew C. (1993) "Rituals of Resistance: A Critique of the Theory of Everyday Forms of Resistance", *Latin American Perspectives*, Vol. 20, No. 2, Rethinking Theory and Practice As Class Conflict Continues, Spring, pp. 74-92.
5. Hart, Gillian (1991) "Engendering Everyday Resistance: Gender, Patronage and Production Politics in Rural Malaysia", *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 19 (1): 93-121.
6. Johansson, Anna and Stellan Vinthagen (2014) "Dimensions of Everyday Resistance: An Analytical Framework", *Critical Sociology* 0896920514524604, first published on May 12, 2014.
7. Marx GT (2003) A tack in the shoe. neutralizing and resisting the new surveillance. *Journal of Social Issues* 59(2): 369-390.
8. Scott, James C. (1989) "Everyday Forms of Resistance", *Copenhagen Papers*, No. 4, pp. 33-62.
9. Simi, Peter & Futurell, Robert. (2009). "Negotiating White Power Activist Stigma" *Social Problems* Vol. 56, No 1, p.p. 89-110.
10. Stevphen Shukaitis (2012) Below the Perceptible, the Political?, Rethinking Marxism: A Journal of Economics, Culture & Society, 24:3, 424-427
11. Sivaramakrishnan, K. (2005) "Some Intellectual Genealogies for the Concept of Everyday Resistance", *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 107, No. 3, Sep, pp. 346-355.

12. Vinthagen, Stellan (2006) "Power as Subordination and Resistance as Disobedience: Nonviolent Movements and the Management of Power", *Asian Journal of Social Science*, 34:1, pp. 1-21.

**Relevant extra readings:**

1. Lakey, George (1973) *Strategy for a Living Revolution*, San Francisco: W. H. Freeman and Company.
2. Campbell, John E. (2004). *Getting it On Online: Cyberspace, Gay Male Sexuality and Embodied Identity*. N.Y:Harrington Park Press.
3. Chin, Christine B. N. & James H. Mittelman (1997) "Conceptualising Resistance to Globalisation", *New Political Economy*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 25-37.
4. Crewe, Ben (2007) "Power, Adaptation and Resistance in a Late-Modern Men's Prison", *The British Journal of Criminology*, Vol. 47, pp. 256-275.
5. Foucault, Michel (1978) *The History of Sexuality. Vol. 1: An Introduction*. New York: Random House.
6. Gagne, P. & Tewksbury, R. (1998) "Conformity Pressures and Gender Resistance Among Transgendered Individuals", *Social Problems*, Vol. 45 (1), pp. 81-101.
7. Gupta, D. (2001) "Everyday Resistance or Routine Repression? Exaggeration as Stratagem in Agrarian Conflict", *Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 1, pp. 89-108.
8. Hardt, Michael & Negri, Antonio (2004) *Multitude*, New York: The Penguin Press.
9. Haynes, Douglas & Gyan Prakash (eds.) (1991) *Contesting Power: Resistance and Everyday Social Relations in South Asia*, Berkely: University of California Press.
10. Hennen, Peter. (2005). "Bear, Bodies, Bear Masculinity. Recuperation, Resistance or Retreat", *Gender and Society*, Vol. 19, No. 1, pp.25-43.
11. Hollander, Jocelyn A. & Rachel L. Einwohner (2004) "Conceptualizing Resistance", *Sociological Forum*, Vol. 19, No. 4, Dec., pp. 533-554.
12. Katsiaficas, George (1997) *The Subversion of Politics; European Autonomous Social Movements and the Decolonization of Everyday Life*, Humanities Press International, New Jersey.
13. Kerkvliet, Benedict J. Tria. (2009). "Everyday politics in peasant society (and ours)". *Journal of Peasant Studies*. 36(1):227-243.
14. Ludden, David (ed.) (2002) *Reading Subaltern Studies*, Permanent Black: Delhi.
15. Mihelich, John & Debbie Storrs (2003) "Higher Education and the Negotiated Process of Hegemony: Embedded Resistance Among Mormon Women", *Gender & Society*, Vol. 17, No. 3, pp. 404-422.
16. Riessman, Catherine Kohler. (2000). "Stigma and everyday resistance practices. Childless Women in South India". *Gender and Society*. Vol 14 (1). 111-135.
17. Scott, James C. (1985). *Weapons of the Weak*. Yale University Press.
18. Sharp, Joanne P.; Paul Routledge; Chris Philo & Ronan Paddison (2000) (eds.) *Entanglements of Power: Geographies of Domination/Resistance*, Routledge: London.
19. Tilly, Charles (1991) "Domination, Resistance, Compliance ...Discourse", *Sociological Forum*, Vol. 6, No. 3, pp. 593-602.
20. Wietz, Rose. (2001). "Women and their Hair. Seeking Power through resistance and accommodation". *Gender & Society*. Vol, 15, No 5, pp. 667-686.
21. Zajicek, Anna, M. & Koski, Patricia, R. (2003). "Strategies of resistance to stigma among white middle class singles." *Sociological Spectrum* 23(3):377-403.

22. Wright J and Harwood V (eds) (2009) *Biopolitics and the 'Obesity Epidemic': Governing Bodies*. New York, NY: Routledge.
23. Stevens DO and Lavin A (2007) Stealing time: the temporal regulation of labour in a neoliberal and post-Fordist work regime. *Democratic Communiqué* 21(2): 40–61.
24. Prasad P and Prasad A (2000) Stretching the iron cage: the constitution and implications of routine workplace resistance. *Organization Science* 11( 4): 387–403.
25. Bobel C and Kwan S (2011) (eds) *Embodying Resistance: Challenging the Norms, Breaking the Rules*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.
26. LeBesco K (2004) *Revolting Bodies? The Struggle to Redefine Fat Identity*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.
27. hooks b (1990) Marginality as a site of resistance. In: Ferguson R et al. (eds) *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Culture*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 41–44.
28. Halberstam J (2005) *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgendered Bodies and Subcultural Lives*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
29. Dupont B (2008) Hacking the Panopticon: distributed online surveillance and resistance. In: Deflem M (ed.) *Surveillance and Governance: Sociology of Crime Law and Deviance, Volume 10*. Bingley: Emerald, 257–278.
30. Deleuze G (2011 [1992]) Postscript on the societies of control. In: Szeman I and Kapozy T (eds) *Cultural Theory An Anthology*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 139–142.
31. Murphy, Alexandra G. (1998) Hidden Transcripts of Flight Attendant Resistance, *Management Communication Quarterly*, 11: 499.
32. Galvanek, Janel B. (2013) Translating Peacebuilding Rationalities into Practice: Local Agency and Everyday Resistance, Berghof Foundation.

**Some further suggestions of relevant literature to chose from (but it is your own choice!):**

When you chose your own literature you need to choose a minimum of scholarly texts, but you are encouraged to also, in addition, choose other literature. That could be more “popular” literature as novels, poetry, or “activist” literature, as activist biographies, collections of stories from movements, etc.

Classical examples of activist literature:

- Gandhi, M. K. (1927) *An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Trans. Ahmedabad: Mahadev Desai, Navajivan.
- King, Martin Luther Jr. (1958) *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers.

Relevant scholarly literature:

- Naess, Arne (1974) *Gandhi and Group Conflict*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- McAllister, Pam (1982) *Reweaving The Web of Life: Feminism and Nonviolence*, Philadelphia: New Society Publishers.
- Jefferess, David (2008) *Postcolonial Resistance: Culture, Liberation and Transformation*, University of Toronto Press: Toronto.
- Ludden, David (ed.) (2002) *Reading Subaltern Studies*, Permanent Black: Delhi.

- Mahdavi, Pardis (2009) *Passionate Uprisings: Iran's Sexual Revolution*, Stanford University Press: Stanford.
- Smith, Gavin (1989) *Livelihood and Resistance: Peasants and the Politics of Land in Peru*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Camp, Stephanie M. H. (2004) *Closer to Freedom: Enslaved Women & Everyday Resistance in the Plantation South*, The University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill.
- Melucci, Alberto (1996:a) *Challenging Codes - Collective Action in the Information Age*, Press Syndicate University of Cambridge, USA.
- Eyerman, Ron and Jamison, Andrew (1991/1996) *Social Movements - A Cognitive Approach*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, USA.
- Jo Freeman's *The Politics of Women's Liberation* (1975)
- Chabot, Sean Taudin (2011) *Transnational Roots of the Civil Rights Movement: African American Explorations of the Gandhian Repertoire*, Lanham: Lexington Books.
- Kozlov, Vladimir A (2011) *Sedition: everyday resistance in the Soviet Union under Khrushchev and Brezhnev*, New Haven [u.a.]: Yale Univ. Press.

**Some recommended outlets to get inspiration for storytelling:**

<http://www.palestine-family.net/index.php>

<http://www.amazon.com/Walking-Fire-Haitian-Survival-Resistance/dp/080148748X>

<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/freedom/1609-1865/essays/slavenarrative.htm>

<http://www.yesmagazine.org/people-power/10-everyday-acts-of-resistance-that-changed-the-world>

[http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/education/interviews/shulamit\\_imber.asp](http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/education/interviews/shulamit_imber.asp)

<http://www.everydayrebellion.net/related/>



## **SCHEDULE OVERVIEW**

More details on class meetings will be provided during the course.

This schedule may be modified. If so, changes will be announced in class.

Note: The schedule for your assigned discussion/reading group might involve some meetings outside of this schedule.

The meetings are always on Mondays in Thompson Hall room 620 between 5:00PM - 7:30 PM (except Oct 13, which needs to be changed)

### Monday September 8 Course introduction: Syllabus and intro of the theme

#### Lectures

September 15: Resistance and Power

September 22: 'Constructive resistance' and politics as a 'way of life', (Time for collection of ideas for Course Paper)

September 29: Researching resistance

#### Text seminars on mandatory literature (see literature lists above):

(Note: Seminar questions must be handed in at the start of each seminar, see above)

Text seminar rapporteurs present (20 min.) and then we discuss the rest of the time.

October 6: Scott. (Time to hand in the 2-page summary of your planned course Paper)

"October 13" : de Certeau. **NOTE** that this date needs to be changed to another time. The new time will be agreed upon in class

October 20: Bayat. (Time to hand in the Review essay). The last part of class will be focused on the Midterm evaluation. The course so far is evaluated. What have been good, and what could be improved?

October 27: Bleiker.

November 3: Portwood-Stacer.

November 10: Cooper. (The course Paper is due).

#### November 17 and 24: Paper seminars

Paper seminars with examination of individual student papers based on chosen problems and literature. Strictly a total of 30 minutes per paper (15 min presentation, 5 peer-review, and 10 discussion). More information will be provided during class meetings.

#### December 1: Summary discussion seminar: What have we learnt?, and Course evaluation

We sum up together what we have learnt about everyday forms of resistance/politics, and what kind of research questions that is outstanding. And, the theme of the course is evaluated in an end-of-semester teaching evaluation, both in terms of its content and course form, as well as other practical issues (examinations, information, administration, student service, etc.).

