



Spring 2019 – Global Media Seminar: Media, Activism & Democracy

MCC-UE9452001

M 9.00-11:45 am

Villa Ulivi, Firenze

Class Description:

The course on “Media, Activism & Democracy” aims at, *first*, introducing students to the complex and fascinating topic of civil society activism; *second*, at illustrating them the linkages between activism and media; *third*, at showing them the impact of civil society’s advocacy on contemporary political systems. In a nutshell, the course aims at providing students with a **closer understanding of the civil society activism-media-politics conundrums at the national and global levels.**

- (1) **‘Activism’** embraces the large variety of activities from civil society actors (*e.g.* non-governmental organizations, think tanks, social movements) aimed at influencing public decision-making. Understanding activism is key to get familiar with current cultural, political, social and economic trends occurring at the national and global levels.
- (2) **‘Media’** includes both ‘old media’ (*e.g.* television, radio and printed newspapers) and ‘new media’ (*e.g.* social networks, blogs, podcasts and crowd-sourced/collaborative forms of journalism). Old and new media play a crucial role in spreading causes of activism and influencing collective understanding of activists and their efforts. Understanding the strategies used by civil society activists to influence media, and how media narration of activism impacts on local/global communities is crucial to develop critical skills towards current and future trends of communication.
- (3) **‘Democracy’** is an all-encompassing definition including a large variety of political regimes. In the context of this course, democracy comprises both Western and Eastern political systems, ranging from full and emerging democracies to hybrid regimes. It may go as far as to include authoritarian regimes, when civil society activism has eased the transition towards hybrid or democratic systems of governance (*e.g.* ‘The Arab Spring’ and the ‘1989 Chinese revolution’). Developing a conceptual framework of the bonds between civil society activism and democratic systems is essential to understand how current political regimes are shaped and transformed by civil society actors.

This course combines a theoretical with a practical approach.

- On the *theoretical level*, students will be introduced to authors and theories discussing civil society activism, advocacy, national and supranational policy-making, communication and media. NB. Theoretical approaches will not be learnt in isolation from one another. Theories and concepts will be progressively illustrated to students, put into a coherent framework and exemplified with case studies.

- On the *practical level*, students will be introduced to the analysis of (both successful and unsuccessful) advocacy efforts from civil society actors. Employing key case studies, students will explore elements of advocacy campaigns (including the determination of campaign objectives, target audiences, target responses, message attributes and media channels) and will learn how they impacted on political systems.

Class format will be based on interaction and dialogue.

Typical class will involve illustration of theoretical accounts, case analysis, group problem solving, analysis of relevant materials (movies, podcasts, pictures) and debate. The course is structured as follows:

(A) THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS – The theoretical foundations of civil society activism will illustrate the actors/strategies/tools/places of activism. On completion of the three sections of theoretical foundations, students will master ideas and theories concerning civil society advocacy, the role of the media in supporting/criticizing activism, and the relationship between civil society advocacy and political regimes.

(1) **SESSION I – ACTORS OF ACTIVISM** – The first section will focus on the actors of activism. A brief introductory class will provide the basic definitions of civil society activism and will discuss questions on the role of the media in contemporary democratic regimes. The following classes will be aimed at: (a) illustrating how to classify actors of advocacy; (b) pinpointing the similarities and differences between typologies of activists; (c) understanding under which circumstances movements/groups of activists can turn into something different, *e.g.* a social movement or a political party.

Three typologies of actors of activism will be analyzed and compared:

(a) Individuals (including ‘youth’ and ‘students’ as sub-categories); (b) Civil Society Organizations (including ‘grassroots organizations’ as sub-category); (c) social movements (including ‘Nimbysm’ as sub-category). The first session will also be the occasion to **reflect on the transformation affecting activism**. Focus will be put on transformation from activist groups to political parties.

(2) **SESSION II – STRATEGIES OF ACTIVISM** – The second section of the course will shift the attention on strategies of activism. Students will be enabled to understand which strategies civil society activists use in order to: (a) advocate towards public institutions; (b) receive media coverage of their actions; (c) mobilize public opinion.

Advocacy strategies that will be analyzed include: (a) protest/violence; (b) raising-awareness; (c) networking; (d) empowerment/lobbying. Each of these strategies will be substantiated with current and past cases of activism.

The second session will offer the occasion to **investigate the most recent trends in civil society advocacy**, and specifically to analyze the emergence of advocacy coalitions of civil society actors, and to identify the benefits and the problems related with this phenomenon.

(3) **SESSION III – TOOLS AND PLACES OF ACTIVISM** – The third section of the course will analyze the tools that civil society activists use as part of their advocacy activities, and the spaces where activism takes place. With regard to the tools, three will be explored: (a) traditional (*e.g.* marches, pickets, strikes); (b) digital (*e.g.* social media, app, photography); (c) innovative (*e.g.* gamification, apps for activism). With regard to the places, focus will be put on the distinction between *virtual* and

physical places of activism.

- (B) **ACTIVISM LAB** – the laboratories of activism aim at exploring contemporary forms of civil society advocacy from the activist’s perspective. Students will experiment techniques of advocacy and gain a direct experience of issues related to strategizing/organizing a campaign of activism. Labs are aimed at encouraging students to step outside the rigors of the precise discipline of activism and democracy in order to **experiment with emerging practices**. After completing the two sessions of the lab, students: (a) will have a firm grasp of the stages of an advocacy campaign; (b) will be able to identify and select the targets of advocacy campaigns; (c) will be able to associate targets with actions; (d) will have a direct knowledge of the tools that could be used to mobilize public opinion/gain media attention/influence policy-making.
- (1) **SESSION I – IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET** – The first session of the Activism Lab is dedicated to profiling the target of activism campaigns through the use of data and information. Students will learn: (a) how to use datasets; (b) how to extract and elaborate information from a variety of sources; (c) how to profile targets of activism campaigns.
- (2) **SESSION II – BUILD AND IMPLEMENT YOUR STRATEGY** – The second session of the Activism Lab focuses on strategies and tools of activism. Students will learn how to apply the correct strategy to the various stages of advocacy campaigns. In particular, students will learn: (a) how to set the goals of their campaign; (b) how to build a timeline of actions involved; (c) how to respond to contingencies. They will also learn students will learn: (a) how to identify and use techniques of activism; (b) how to allocate (economic and human) resources efficiently; (c) How to impact on policy-making.
- (C) **IN-FOCUS CLASS** – ‘In-Focus’ classes are designed to **enhance students’ in-depth knowledge** of relevant themes. These classes provide hands-on introduction to the most innovative and influential trends and issues of activism/media/democracy. Selected topics embrace phenomena of great impact on contemporary politics and societies across the globe. These include:
- (1) **SESSION I – ‘Artivism’** – ‘Artivism’ is a portmanteau word that defines the use of artistic means aimed at supporting social/political change. Artivism is referred to artists using traditional mediums (e.g. film, music, paintings) to raise civic awareness as well as the direct involvement of artists in activism (e.g. protest, culture jamming/guerrilla communication, spoken word).
- (2) **SESSION II – ‘Slacktivism’** – ‘Slacktivism’ is a colloquial term that it is used to address the ideology for people who want to appear to be doing something for a particular cause without actually having to do anything. In recent years the world has been used to describe the online behavior of a growing number of people. Many consider Slacktivism the new reality of contemporary activism.
- (3) **SESSION III – ‘Gamification’** – ‘Gamification’ is a term used to identify the use of game elements (e.g. badges, points, leaderboards) into non-game contexts. In recent years game-elements have become increasingly relevant into advocacy strategy. On the one hand, gamification carries the promise of an easy path to engage citizens, and to foster creative collaboration for charitable causes. On the other hand, gamification raises acute legal, societal and cultural challenges.
- (C) **CINEMACTIVISM** – Protests against governments, war and conflicts, environmental concerns, LGBT rights, Critical Mass cycling demonstrations and citizens’ fighting against corporations: the CinemActivism classes offer screenings of documentary and educational films about civil society activism. The aim is twofold: first, to promote debate among students of social issues across the globe; and, second, to critically engage them with the world we live in.

Instructor Details:

Name: **Gianluca Sgueo**

NYU Global Home Email Address:

Office Hours: **By appointment only, Mondays 12pm – 13pm**

Villa Ulivi Phone Number:

Desired Outcomes:

On completion of this course, students will have a firm grasp:

☑ In terms of *knowledge*:

1. Gain a **full understanding of conceptual foundations** of civil society advocacy, media and political systems, and be able to triangulate them;
2. Develop a conceptual framework to **understand how civil society actors shape and transform public policies** (both national and supranational);
3. Gain a **deep understanding of advocacy tools, strategies of influence, arenas and targets of advocacy**, and be able to triangulate them.
4. Be capable of **reflecting critically** on the role of media and communication in social, cultural, economic, psychological, technological, political and legal contexts;
5. Be capable of **elaborating opinions** on possible future scenarios concerning the relationship between democracy and activism;
6. Have improved their **understanding of the methodologies** of pro-democracy advocacy in both democratic and authoritarian regimes, and be enabled to **understand and assess the impact of advocacy campaigns** from a global perspective

☑ In terms of *skills*:

1. Have improved their ability to **think critically** on activism and democracy, **engage in complex reasoning** and **express their thoughts clearly** through their written work, classroom discussions and oral presentations
2. Have improved their skills of **describing** and **comparing** theories, concepts, authors and paradigms of the domains within the political and communication science;
3. Have a basic understanding of **how to research questions** in democracy, activism and media, in a comparative perspective;
4. Have learnt to **recognize works by the principal protagonists of the media activism** and understand why they are significant for media studies as well as political sciences;
5. Have learnt how to **optimize communication for advocacy** and to understand and assess the impact of advocacy campaigns from a global perspective.

Assessment Components

The grading system of this course is structured in a way that allows students to express their full potential. The final grade is determined by the combination of several components, each corresponding to a different task and skills (writing, researching, debating).

- **Attendance and Classroom Discussion** (attendance to classes and discussion of reading materials):
20%

- **Written Home Assignments** (exercises focused on the topics discussed in class. Students are responsible to submit the result of their assignments within the given deadline. A critical assessment of the assignments will be part of the mid-term and final exams): **20%**
- **Activism Labs** (active participation during activism labs implies team spirit and individual contribution to the tasks assigned to each group): **10%**
- **Midterm Exam** (Q&A about the topics discussed in class): **20%**
- **Movie Screening Debate** (at the end of each 'Cinemactivism' class students will be engaged in debate about the message/content of the movie. To be prepared, it is fundamental to read the assigned readings): **10%**
- **Final Exam** (the final exam consists of a case study that students are requested to analyze and develop using the information/knowledge they acquired during the semester): **20%**

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.

Assessment Expectations:

- **Grade A:** The student's work demonstrates an understanding of the subject that goes beyond assigned course readings. The student writes essays/exam questions that are an original synthesis of source materials, demonstrating the ability to evaluate source material critically. Written arguments are clear, well-organized and well-presented; oral presentations are concise, incisive and supplemented by appropriate visual materials. The student has distinguished himself/herself throughout the course of the semester for his/her contributions to class discussion.
- **Grade B:** The student's work shows a clear understanding of assigned readings and materials covered in class. The student writes clear, well-organized and well-presented essays/exam questions; oral presentations are concise, incisive and supplemented by appropriate visual materials. The student is prepared in class and asks relevant questions.
- **Grade C:** The student's work shows a basic understanding of the subject treated in assigned readings and covered in class. However, written and/or oral work is deficient in one or more of the following areas: clarity, organization or content. The student's work is generally in need of improvement
- **Grade D:** The student's work shows occasional understanding of the subject treated in assigned readings and covered in class. Written and/or oral work is deficient in one of more of the follow areas: clarity, organization or content. The student does not participate in class discussion and has not frequented the instructor's office hours.
- **Grade F:** The student's work does not demonstrate understanding of the subject treated in assigned readings and covered in class. Written and/or oral work are either insufficient or arenot submitted. The student appears unprepared in class and has not frequented the instructor's office hours.

Grading Guidelines

A=94-100

A-=90-93

B+=87-89

B=84-86

B-=80-83

C+=77-79

C=74-76

C-=70-73

D+=67-69

D=65-66

F=below 65

Grading Policy:

Please refer to Assessment Expectations and the policy on late submission of work

Academic Accommodations:

Academic accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980 or see the [Moses Center](#) for further information.

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in a class are encouraged to contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at (212) 998-4980 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. For more information, see [Study Away and Disability](#).

Attendance Policy:

Study abroad at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. **To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers is mandatory, and unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade.** Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure.

For courses that meet once a week, one unexcused absence will be penalized by a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade. For courses that meet two or more times a week, the same penalty will apply to the number of class times over a single week

Excused Absences:

In case of absence, regardless of the reason, the student is responsible for completing missed assignments, getting notes and making up missed work in a timely manner based upon a schedule that is mutually agreed upon between the faculty member and the student. **The only excused absences are those approved by the Office of Academic Support; they are as follows:**

Absence Due to Illness

- If you are sick, please see a doctor. Contact the Office of Student Life for assistance.
- For absences that last for **two or more consecutive days**, a **doctor's certificate, "certificato medico" is required**. The doctor will indicate in writing the number of days of bed rest required. Please note **these certificates can only be obtained on the day you see the doctor** and cannot be written for you afterwards.
- Absences can ONLY be excused if they are reported WITHIN 48 HRS of your return to class via the online [NYU Florence Absence Form](#)
- OAS will not accept a student email or telephone call regarding an absence due to illness
- OAS will only notify faculty of absences REPORTED on the ABSENCE FORM
- The Office of Student Life, when assisting you in cases of severe or extended illness, will coordinate with the Office of Academic Support to properly record your absences

Due to Religious Observance

- Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday
- Information regarding absences due to religious observance must be provided at least SEVEN DAYS PRIOR to the date(s) in question using the online [NYU Florence Absence Form](#)
- Please note that no excused absences for reasons other than illness can be applied retroactively.

Due to a class conflict with a program sponsored lecture, event, or activity

- All students are entitled to miss one class period without any penalty to their grade in order to attend a lecture, event or activity that is sponsored by La Pietra Dialogues, Acton Miscellany or the Graduate Lecture series.
- Information regarding absences due to a class conflict must be provided at least SEVEN DAYS PRIOR to the date(s) in question using the online [NYU Florence Absence Form](#)
- Please note that no excused absences for reasons other than illness can be applied retroactively.

Students with questions or needing clarification about this policy are instructed to contact a member of the Office of Academic Support located in Villa Ulivi or to email florence.academicssupport@nyu.edu

Late Submission of Work

- All course work must be submitted on time, in class on the date specified on the syllabus.
- To request an extension on a deadline for an assignment, students must speak to the professor one week prior to the due date.
- To receive an incomplete for a course at the end of the semester, two weeks before final exams, both the student and the faculty member must meet with the Assistant Director of Academic Affairs to review the request and if granted, they must both sign an Incomplete Contract detailing the terms for completing missing coursework.

Plagiarism Policy

PLAGIARISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED IN ANY FORM:

The presentation of another person's words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

In the event of suspected or confirmed cases of plagiarism, The faculty member will consult first with the Assistant Director for Academic Affairs as definitions and procedures vary from school to school. Please consult the "Academic Guidelines for Success" distributed on your USB key at Check-in and on the NYU Florence Global Wiki.

For a detailed description of some possible forms of plagiarism and cheating please consult the Community Compact that you signed at Orientation, a copy of which is on the above mentioned Wiki and USB key.
Writing Center: [Please use this standard text]

The Writing Center:

Located in Aula Belvedere in Villa Ulivi, offers you feedback on any type of writing, at any stage in planning or drafting. Sign up for a consultation at the [Writing Center's website](#) and submit your working draft or ideas a day in advance to [NYU Florence Writing Center](#). Drop in for a consultation, but remember that appointments are given priority. Be assured that very rough drafts are welcome. Please note that we do not correct or "fix" your writing; instead we prompt you to think and work. Our aim is to create stronger writers in the long term, not necessarily perfect papers in the short term

Required Text(s):

1. [SGUEO, G. \(2016\)](#), *Beyond Networks. Interlocutory Coalitions, the European and Global Legal Orders*, Springer;
2. [SGUEO, G. \(2018\)](#), *Games, Powers & Democracies*, Bocconi University Press

Copies of each textbook are available for consultation and short term loans in the [Villa Ulivi Library](#). Extra copies of some textbooks are also available for semester long loans. More information on [Books and Course Materials](#).

Supplemental Texts(s):

📖 BACKGROUND READINGS:

1. ALEMANNI, A. (2017), *Lobbying for Change*, Iconbooks
2. CLARKE, A. (2013), *Exploiting The Web as a Tool for Democracy: New Ways Forward in the Study and Practice of Digital Democracy*, World Forum for Democracy
3. COGLIANESE, C. (2005), *The Internet and Citizen Participation in Rulemaking*, 1 (1) *Journal of Law and Policy*
4. DUNBAR-HESTER, C. (2012), *Soldering Toward Media Democracy: Technical Practice as Symbolic Value in Radio Activism*, 36 *Journal of Communication Inquiry*
5. KLEINER, F. (2017), *Lessons from Fighting Swiss Right Wing Populism*, Civic Hall
6. SGUEO, G. (2015), *Web-Based Participatory Democracy. Findings From Italy*, in REDDICK, C.G.; ANTHOPOULOS, L. (eds.) *Information and Communication Technologies in Public Administration: Innovations from Developed Countries*

📖 READINGS ON ACTORS OF ACTIVISM & 'SOCIAL MOVEMENTS':

1. ANDERSON, M. (2015), *The Other Student Activists*, *The Atlantic*
2. CARROLL, W.K.; HACKETT, R.A. (2006), *Democratic Media Activism Through The Lens of Social Movement Theory*, 28 (1) *Media, Culture & Society*
3. COUNCIL OF EUROPE (2013), *Human Rights Activism and the Role of NGOs*
4. CHRISTIANSEN, J. (2009), *Four Stages of Social Movements*, EBSCO Research Network
5. FREELON, D.; MCLLWAIN, C.D.; CLARK, M.D. (2016) *Beyond the Hashtags*, Centre for Media and Social Impact, 2016
6. KILLIAN, L.M., SMELSER, N.J., TURNER, R.H., *Encyclopedia Britannica: "Social Movement"*

7. SGUEO, G. (2015), Financial Accountability of Civil Society Organizations. Improving Cooperation with EU Institutions, European Parliamentary Research Service

📖 **READINGS ON 'THE FIVE STARS MOVEMENT':**

1. HARTLED, F. (2013), *Digital Campaigning and Growing Anti-Elitism: The Pirates and Beppe Grillo*, 12 European View
2. MOSCA, L. (2013), The 5 Stars Movement. Exception or Vanguard in Europe?, *The International Spectator*
3. TURNER, E. (2013). *The 5 Star Movement and its discontents: A tale of blogging, comedy, electoral success and tensions*, 5:2 Interface: a journal for and about social movements, 178 – 212

📖 **READINGS ON FEMEN & 'BLACK BLOCS':**

1. ARKHIPENKO, V. (2012), Reconsidering The Conventional Private/Public Dichotomy: Examining the Femen Movement Through The Arendtian Lens of the Social
2. BECK, J. (2015), What Good is "Raising Awareness"?, *The Atlantic*
3. BOYLE, M. (2016), The violence of nonviolent protest, *New Internationalist*
4. DUPUIS-DÉRI, F. (2011), The Black Blocs Ten Years after Seattle: Anarchism, Direct Action, and Deliberative Practices
5. REERSTORF, C.M. (2014), Mediatised affective activism. The activist imaginary and the topless body in the Femen movement, *Convergence: The International Journal of Research Into Media Technologies*

📖 **READINGS ON NETWORKS OF ACTIVISM:**

1. BEUTZ LAND, M. (2009), Networked Activism, 22 *Harvard Human Rights Journal*
2. KECK, M.E., SIKKINK, K. (1999), Transnational Advocacy Networks In International and Regional Politics
3. PUDROVSKA T., MARX FERREE, M. (2004), Global Activism in "Virtual Space": The European Women's Lobby in the Network of Transnational Women's NGOs on the Web, 11:1 *Social Politics*

📖 **READINGS ON PLACES OF ACTIVISM:**

1. HAMM, M. (2003), A r/c tivism in Physical and Virtual Spaces, *European Institute for Progressive Cultural Policies*
2. BAEK, KANG HUI (2015), Physical place matters in digital activism: investigating the roles of local and global social capital, community, and social networking sites in the occupy movement, *University of Texas*

📖 **READINGS ON GAMIFICATION:**

1. CLICKTIVIST (2014), Can Activist Be a Game?
2. DIXON, D. (2011), Players Types and Gamification, *University of the West of England*
3. GRACHEV, M. (2016), The Application of Gamification to Transmedia Activism: The Case of Fort McMone, *Russian National Research University*

📖 **READINGS ON THE 'ARAB SPRING':**

1. C. FRANGONIKOLOPOULOS, I. CHAPSOS, (2013), Explaining the Role and Impact of Social Media on Arab Spring
2. LAM, A. (2012), From Arab Spring to Autumn Rage: The Dark Power of Social Media, *The Huffington Post*
3. SCHINDEHUTTE, G. (2015), Remembering is Resistance: In Physical and Virtual Places of Downtown Cairo, *Miami University*
4. WOLFSELD, G; SEGEV E.; SHEAFER T. (2013), Social Media and the Arab Spring, 18(2) *The International Journal of Press/Politics*

📖 **READINGS ON 'SLACKTIVISM':**

1. PFELFIE, M. (2012), *Changing the (Face)Book of Social Activism*, *The Huffington Post*

📖 **READINGS ON 'ARTIVISM':**

1. COLUCCI, E. (2015), Can Art Be a Form of Political Activism?, *VICE Magazine*
2. PRAATESKA, N. (2016), How a 17-year-old girl is using Artivism to change the way people think, *YourStory*
3. RAMSDEN, C. (2016), Artivism: art as activism, activism as art, *OpenDemocracy*

📖 **READINGS ON 'CIVIC-TECH':**

1. KNIGHT FOUNDATION (2013), *The Emergence of Civic Tech: Investments in a Growing Field*
2. OMIDYAR NETWORK (2016), *Engines of Change. What Civic Tech Can Learn From Social Movements*
3. M. STEMPECK (2016), *Towards a Taxonomy of Civic Technology*

Internet Research Guidelines:

The careful use of internet resources is encouraged and a list of recommended websites will be given. Failure to cite internet and other non-traditional media sources in your written work constitutes plagiarism.

Additional Required Equipment:

N/A

Class Assignments and Topics:

Session 1 – 02 September

INTRODUCTION TO THE CLASS: What is activism and why it is important to democracy?

(1) Students' introductions: what is your background and why are you taking this course?

(2) Explanation of course structure and main objectives – What distinguishes the theoretical and the practical parts of the course? Where will the field trip be organized? What are the objectives of the course? What are the course's policies (*e.g.* use of laptops, excused absences)?

(3) Syllabus Review – What is Activism? How do we define civil society? How do we define democracy? What roles have media and activism in contemporary political regimes? Why strategies, actors, tools and places are crucial to understand contemporary activism? Is civil society activism impacting on democracies?

(4) Introduction to the 'Activism Lab' – What is the "Activism Lab"? What are students supposed to do during the laboratory activities? How to be prepared to lab-sessions?

(5) Introduction to the 'In-Focus Classes' – What are the "In-Focus Classes"? What is the difference between in-focus classes and theoretical foundations? How to be prepared to in-focus classes?

(6) Introduction to 'CinemActivism' – How are 'Cinemactivism' classes structured? What kind of work is required to prepare for these classes?

(7) Glance through class textbooks and other reading materials

(8) Introduction to the Grading System

CASE STUDIES: None

READINGS: None

Session 2 – 09 September

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS – SESSION I (Actors of Activism) – Part 1 (*Individuals and CSOs*)

(1) Introduction – How do we define actors of activism? How many nomenclatures are in use to define actors of activism? How different civil society groups make use of media outlets according to their vision and values? What distinguishes individual activists from Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)?

(2) Individuals as actors of activism – What are the main types of individual activists (*e.g.* leader/follower; youth/student)? Which role students and young people play in activism? How crucial are leaders for activism?

(3) CSOs as actors of activism – How many types of CSOs exist? Why are CSOs criticized? Are CSOs impacting on political systems?

(4) Movie Screening: [The Activist State](#). (A documentary on the 1968 students protests in San Francisco)

CASE STUDIES:

- (1) 1989 Chinese revolution
- (2) 1968 university protests
- (3) College campuses' anti-violence activism
- (4) Colin Kaepernick
- (4) Greenpeace
- (5) Human Rights Watch
- (6) Amnesty International

READINGS:

- (1) SGUEO, G. (2016), Beyond Networks. Interlocutory Coalitions, the European and Global Legal Orders, Chapter 1 (pp. 1-51);
- (2) ANDERSON, M. (2015), [The Other Student Activists](#), The Atlantic;
- (3) COUNCIL OF EUROPE, [Human Rights Activism and the Role of NGOs](#)
- (4) CIVIC HALL, [Lessons from Fighting Swiss Right Wing Populism](#)

Session 3 – 16 September

CINEMA ACTIVISM

EVERYDAY REBELLION – [Everyday Rebellion](#) is a cross-media documentary about creative forms of nonviolent protest and civil disobedience worldwide. What does the Occupy movement in New York have in common with the Spanish Indignados protests or the Arab Spring? Is there a connection between the struggle of the Iranian democracy movement and the nonviolent uprising in Syria and what is the link between the Ukrainian topless activists of Femen and an Islamic culture like Egypt? And to top it off, what do Serbia and Turkey have to do with all this? The reasons for the various people's uprisings in these countries may be diverse, but the creative nonviolent tactics they use in their struggles are strongly connected to each other.

CASE STUDIES: None

READINGS: None

HOME ASSIGNMENT #1 – 'Social Storms'

Session 4 – 23 September

IN-FOCUS CLASS – Session 1 – Art + Activism = Artivism

'Artivism' is a portmanteau word that defines the use of artistic means aimed at supporting social/political change. Artivism is referred to artists using traditional mediums (*e.g.* film, music, paintings) to raise civic awareness as well as the direct involvement of artists in activism (*e.g.* protest, culture jamming/guerrilla communication, spoken word).

CASE STUDIES:

- (1) Ai-Weiwei
- (2) Banksy
- (3) The Artivist Film Festival
- (4) The 'Straight-Edge' Scene
- (5) Kaanchi Kopra
- (6) Zulu VooDoo Liberation Taxi
- (7) Sofia Ashraf and the rap "Kodaikanal Won't!"
- (8) The Amplifier Foundation
- (9) Reclaim the streets
- (10) Act Up
- (11) Guerrilla Girls

READINGS:

- (1) COLUCCI, E. (2015), [Can Art Be a Form of Political Activism?](#) VICE Magazine;
- RAMSDEN, C. (2016), [Artivism: art as activism, activism as art](#), OpenDemocracy;
- (2) Praateska, N. (2016), [How a 17-year-old girl is using Artivism to change the way people think](#), yourStory

Session 5 – 30 September

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS – SESSION I (Actors of Activism) – Part 2 (Social Movements)

(1) Introduction – How do we define social movements? What are the main social movements of 21 century?

(2) Social Movements and Democracies – Are social movements impacting on democracies?

(3) Actors in transition – Under which circumstances movements/groups of activists can turn into something different? Does activism always implies transformation? Can political parties be equaled to social movements?

(4) Group exercise – Students identify a social movement of this century and debate its points of strength and weakness.

CASE STUDIES:

- (1) Occupy Wall Street
- (2) Black Lives Matter
- (3) The 'No-Globals'
- (4) No-TAV
- (5) The Anti-fracking Movement
- (6) The Fair Trade Movement
- (7) The 'Million Mom March'
- (8) The 5 Stars Movement

- (9) Podemos
- (10) The 'Tea Party' Movement
- (11) The Women's March
- (12) #MeToo

READINGS:

- (1) KILLIAN, L.M., SMELSER, N.J., TURNER, R.H., Encyclopedia Britannica: "[Social Movement](#)";
- (2) CHRISTIANSEN, J. (2009), [Four Stages of Social Movements](#), EBSCO Research;
- (3) MOSCA, L. (2013), [The 5 Stars Movement. Exception or Vanguard in Europe?](#), The international Spectator;
- (4) TURNER, E. (2013). [The 5 Star Movement and its discontents](#): A tale of blogging, comedy, electoral success and tensions, 5:2 Interface: a journal for and about social movements, 178 – 212.
- (5) D. FREELON, C.D. MCLLWAIN, M.D. CLARK, [Beyond the Hashtags](#), Centre for Media and Social Impact, 2016
- 6) M. WHITE, [Without a path from protest to power](#), The Women's March will end up like Occupy
- 7) [Funnytics and humorous tactics from social movements](#)
- 8) The commercialization of social movements: the [PEPSI Commercial Ad](#) and [Let's Talk About the Fantasy That Was Pepsi's Performative Protest](#)

Session 6 – 07 October

MID-TERM EXAM

Session 7 – 14 October

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS – SESSION II (STRATEGIES OF ACTIVISM) – Part 1 (*Protest and Raising Awareness*)

(1) Introduction – How do we define “strategies of activism”? How many strategies can activists use to influence decision-makers? Are strategies of activism inter-related? What are the pros and cons of strategies of activism?

(2) Protest as a strategy of activism – How does violent direct-action differentiates from non-violent direct action? What is the definition of “violent” activism? Is ‘civil disobedience’ a form of violent activism? Which “ingredients” make a protest a successful one? Is there a relationship between (failed) negotiation and protest? In which political/social arenas does protest prevail over negotiations? And why?

(3) Raising Awareness as a strategy of activism – How many ways exist to raise awareness? What are the aims of raising awareness of the public?

(4) Movie Screening –

- (1) *FEMEN: Sextremism in Paris* (A VICE documentary on [FEMEN](#), including an interview with Inna Shevchenko, one of Femen's founding members;
- (2) [Black Bloc – a story of violence and love](#) (3 minutes short-film about the Black-Blocs;
- (3) [Black Bloc – we are the resistance](#) (a documentary on Black-Blocs).
- (4) [How to Film Protest](#) (a documentary from Witness)

CASE STUDIES:

- (1) Black blocs
- (2) Femen
- (3) Anonymous (e.g. the Maryville MO rape case)

- (4) Animal Liberation Front
- (5) The Soweto Uprising
- (6) The Health Awareness days

READINGS:

- (1) BOYLE, M. (2016), [The violence of nonviolent protest](#), New Internationalist;
- (2) DUPUIS-DÉRI, F. (2011), [The Black Blocs Ten Years after Seattle](#): Anarchism, Direct Action, and Deliberative Practices;
- (3) BECK, J. (2015), [What Good is “Raising Awareness”?](#), The Atlantic.
- (4) [Can We Predict Political Uprising?](#)
- (5) [Protest and Persist. An Article on the Evolution of Protest](#)
- (6) [Troops, Trolls and Troublemakers](#): A Global Inventory of Organized Social Media Manipulation

Session 8 – 21 October

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS – SESSION II (STRATEGIES OF ACTIVISM) – Part 2 (*Networking and Empowerment/Lobbying*)

(1) Networking as a strategy of activism – How do we define ‘networking for activism’? Why are networks increasingly considered as a successful form of advocacy? Is networked activism the future of civil society advocacy? What are the pros and cons of networks of advocacy? How do networks of civil society actors differ from those in which institutions are involved?

(2) Empowerment/Lobbying as a strategy of activism – How do we define ‘empowerment/lobbying’ as a strategy of activism? When activism produces policy-making changes? How crucial is policy-change for the success of an advocacy campaign? Under which conditions does “exit” become a strategy of advocacy? Is exit always an option?

CASE STUDIES:

- (1) The ‘Good Lobby’
- (2) CIVICUS
- (3) YuthCan (the Youth Civil Activism Network)
- (4) Mom Bloggers for Social Good
- (5) The European Women’s Lobby
- (6) Access Now
- (7) *El Poder del Consumador* and the ‘soda tax’
- (8) *Women’s March*

READINGS:

- (1) SGUEO, G. (2016), Beyond Networks. Interlocutory Coalitions, the European and Global Legal Orders, Chapter 2 (pp. 55-73);
- (2) KECK, M.E., SIKKINK, K. (1999), [Transnational Advocacy Networks In International and Regional Politics](#)
- (3) BEUTZ LAND, M. (2009), [Networked Activism](#), 22 Harvard Human Rights Journal;

- (4) PUDROVSKA T., MARX FERREE, M. (2004), [Global Activism in “Virtual Space”](#): The European Women’s Lobby in the Network of Transnational Women’s NGOs on the Web, 11:1 Social Politics;
- (5) UNITED NATIONS (2017), [10 Principles for the Proper Management of Assemblies](#)

HOME ASSIGNMENT #2 – ‘Network Powers’

FALL BREAK

Session 9 – 04 November

ACTIVISM LAB – Session 1: *Identify your target*

MID TERM EXAM: The exam consists of a multiple-choice test that will cover all topics discussed during previous classes.

ACTIVISM LAB: Part 1 of the ‘Activism Lab’ is dedicated to profiling the target of activism campaigns through the use of data and information.

(1) The use of datasets – open-data portals, tools to extract data, data-journalism.

(2) How to extract information from a variety of sources – [fact-checking](#), media monitoring, social-network analysis, web-research engines.

(3) Profiling targets of activism campaigns – Power mapping.

Session 10 – 11 November

CINEMACTIVISM

DEMOCRACY: IM RAUSCH DER DATEN – Digitalization has changed society. While data is becoming the “new oil”, data protection is becoming the new “pollution control”. This creative documentary opens and astonishing inside view into the lawmaking milieu on EU level. A compelling story of how a group of politicians try to protect today’s society against the impact of Big Data and mass surveillance.

CASE STUDIES: None

READINGS: None

Session 11 – 18 November

IN-FOCUS CLASS – SESSION 2 – ‘Slacktivism’

‘Slacktivism’ is a colloquial term that is used to address the ideology for people who want to appear to be doing something for a particular cause without actually having to do anything. In recent years the world has been used to describe the online behavior of a growing number of people. Many consider Slacktivism the new reality of contemporary activism.

CASE STUDIES:

- (1) The Ice-Bucket Challenge

- (2) The Mannequin Challenge (Simone Shepherd, Kevalena Everett and Todd Anthony “BLM”)
- (3) The ‘Arab Spring’
- (4) Joseph Kony 2012
- (5) ‘#JeSuisCharlie’
- (6) ‘#LoveWins’
- (7) The Engine Room

READINGS

- (1) S. ROXOUBOURH (2017), [How the #MeToo Movement Is Changing Showbiz Culture Worldwide](#), The Hollywood Reporter;
- (2) C. FRANGONIKOLOPOULOS, I. CHAPSOS, (2013), [Explaining the Role and Impact of Social Media on Arab Spring](#) ;
- (3) WOLFSELD, G; SEGEV E.; SHEAFER T. (2013), [Social Media and the Arab Spring](#), 18(2) The International Journal of Press/Politics;
- (4) LAM, A. (2012), [From Arab Spring to Autumn Rage: The Dark Power of Social Media](#), The Huffington Post;
- (5) PFELFIE, M. (2012), [Changing the \(Face\)Book of Social Activism](#), The Huffington Post;
- (6) INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRACY AND ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE (1999), [Youth Voter Participation: Involving Today’s Young in Tomorrow’s Democracy](#);
- (7) AMERICANS PRESS INSTITUTE, [Who Shared It?](#) How Americans Decide What News to Trust on Social Media

Session 12 – 25 November

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS – SESSION III – TOOLS AND PLACES OF ACTIVISM

SECTION I - TOOLS

- (1) Introduction** – How tools of activism can be defined and classified? How many taxonomies of tools of activism exist?
- (2) Traditional tools of activism** – How many traditional tools of activism do we know? What distinguishes marches from pickets and strikes? How did traditional tools of activism evolved over the years?
- (3) Digital tools of activism** – How many digital tools of activism do we know? How relevant are digital tools of activism for contemporary advocacy campaigns? How has the Internet revolutionized the world? What are the shortcomings of the Internet as a driver of global advocacy?
- (4) Innovative tools of activism** – How many innovative tools of activism exist? Is innovation crucial to activism? How does ‘Apptivism’ work? Is ‘Apptivism’ the future of activism?
- (5) Class exercise No. 1:** Select 1 app that has been used as advocacy tools. You will illustrate the use of these apps to the class, and will explain why, in your opinion, these apps contributed to the success or failure of the related advocacy campaign.
- (6) Class exercise No. 2:** read and analyse the digital guide [Cyberwomen](#) and discuss its main points

CASE STUDIES:

- (1) Panic Button App
- (2) I Am Alive App
- (3) CrowdVoice App
- (4) GoodGuide App
- (5) Mobilize App
- (6) Wikileaks
- (7) X-Net
- (8) Public Telegrams and Emperor Guangxu
- (9) SMS Messging in Philippines (
- (10) ProofMode

READINGS:

- (1) SGUEO, G. (2016), Beyond Networks. Interlocutory Coalitions, the European and Global Legal Orders, Chapter 4 (pp. 97-126);
- (2) CLARKE, A. (2013), [*Exploiting The Web as a Tool for Democracy: New Ways Forward in the Study and Practice of Digital Democracy*](#), World Forum for Democracy

SECTION II - PLACES

1) Introduction: How do we define places of activism? Why geographical location is important to understand activism? What tensions exist between physical and virtual places of activism?

(2) Physical places of activism – How do we define a ‘physical’ place of activism? How central is “the square” in activism?

(3) Virtual places of activism – How do we define a ‘virtual’ place of activism? Are virtual places always separate from physical places of activism?

(4) Group exercise: identify a case of activism in which both a physical and virtual component is relevant. Students are encouraged to compare the case of their choice with the class.

CASE STUDIES:

- (1) Critical Mass
- (2) The European No-Border Network
- (3) Indymedia
- (4) Gezi Park
- (5) Zuccotti Park
- (6) Tahrir Square

READINGS:

- (1) SCHINDEHUTTE, G. (2015), [*Remembering is Resistance*](#): In Physical and Virtual Places of Downtown Cairo, Miami University;
- (2) HAMM, M. (2003), [*A r/c tivism in Physical and Virtual Spaces*](#), European Institute for Progressive Cultural Policies;
- (3) BAEK, KANG HUI (2015), [*Physical place matters in digital activism*](#): investigating the roles of local and global social capital, community, and social networking sites in the occupy movement, University of Texas.

HOME ASSIGNMENTS #3 – Digital vs Offline

Session 13 – 01 December

Make-Up Class - IN-FOCUS CLASS – SESSION 2 – Gamification and Nudge

Nudge and Gamification are at the forefront of innovative strategies of advocacy. Nudging consists of incentives to adopt certain (preferred) behaviors; gamification consists of the utilization of game elements in non-game contexts, with the former aimed at making the latter more fun. Both nudge and gamification have great potential, but also significant drawbacks.

Watch this video in preparation for the class: Sgueo, TedxTalk, [‘What if Government Was a Game?’](#)

CASE STUDIES:

- (1) I-Hobo
- (2) Recyclebank
- (3) Gemma’s World
- (4) Fun ways to Die
- (5) Cluck-Around

READINGS:

- (1) SGUEO, G. (2018), Games, Power & Democracies, Chapter 1 (pp. 97-126);
- (2) GRACHEV, M. (2016), [The Application of Gamification to Transmedia Activism: The Case of Fort McMoney](#), Russian National Research University

Session 14 – 02 December

ACTIVISM LAB – SESSION 2 – Build and Implement Your Strategy

Session 2 of the ‘Activism Lab’ is dedicated to ideating the right strategies to use for advocacy campaigns throughout its stages (outset, development, conclusion).

NB. This lab will be highly interactive, with group exercises

- (1) Setting the goals of advocacy campaigns** – adopting a realistic approach; evaluation of the policy-making cycle; analysis of political scenarios;
- (2) Building a timeline of actions** – building a timeline of relevant events;
- (3) Identifying professionals/volunteers needed** – identification of the number/types of professionals needed; identification of the number of volunteers needed; organization of professionals and volunteers;
- (4) Identifying the techniques of advocacy campaigns** – policy monitoring; policy dialogue; mass-mobilization; media relations;
- (5) Responding to contingencies** – how to prevent contingencies; how to respond quickly to unplanned events.

CASE STUDIES: None

READINGS:

Session 15 – 09 December

FINAL EXAM

The test consists of a case study to analyze and develop using the information/knowledge learnt during the semester

CASE STUDIES: None

READINGS: None

Classroom Etiquette

- Eating is not permitted in the classrooms. Bottled water is permitted.
- Cell phones should be turned off during class time.
- The use of personal laptops and other electronic handheld devices are prohibited in the classroom unless otherwise specified by the professor.
- We recycle! So keep it green! Please dispose of trash in the clearly marked recycle bins located throughout the on campus buildings

Required Co-curricular Activities

Suggested Co-curricular Activities

Suggested optional co-curricular activities will be announced in class and/or via email by the professor throughout the semester.

Your Instructor

[Gianluca Sgueo](#); Twitter: [@GianlucaSgueo](#) ; LinkedIn: [GianlucaSgueo](#)

Gianluca Sgueo is **Associate researcher** at the Centre of Social Studies, University of Coimbra (Portugal) and **Adjunct Professor in “Global Advocacy”** at the Vrije University in Bruxelles (Belgium). JD Law (University of Rome, La Sapienza, 2004); JD Political Sciences (University of Viterbo, 2006). MA in Administrative & Public Law (Scuola Superiore della Pubblica Amministrazione, Rome, 2005), MA in European Law (European Public Law Academy, Athens, 2009), PhD in Public Law (University of Salento, Italy, 2010).

In 2008 Gianluca Sgueo was appointed visiting research fellow at the Law School of the New York University. In 2009 (January-September) he was nominated *enseignant-chercheur* at Sciences Po, Paris. Since 2011 he is **Department Director** (Area: Institutions) at I-Com (Institute for competitiveness – a think tank devoted to economic and social analysis). Since 2009 he is **Freelance Journalist**.

His professional background includes several experiences in the **public sector**. In 2007, he was nominated expert in legal matters for the Italian Ministry of Public Administration. In 2010 he was appointed legal and communication expert for the Italian government. In 2012 he was appointed Coordinator of the Press Office of

the Italian Government. Since 2014 he is policy analyst in the European Parliamentary Research Service of the European Parliament, in Brussels.

Gianluca Sgueo has authored several books, chapters and articles in Italian and English. He authored *“Esperimenti di democrazia globale”* (Rubbettino) in 2011, *“Lobbying&Lobbismi. Le regole del gioco in una democrazia reale”* in 2012 (EGEA-Bocconi University Press); *“Beyond Networks. Civil Society Coalitions between the European and the Global Legal Orders”* (Springer 2016). His last book is *“Games, Powers & Democracies”*, edited by Bocconi University Press in 2018.