

Call for Papers: The policing of resistance in everyday life

Hybrid Workshop of the Working Group “Protest and Policing“ of the Institute for Protest and Social Movement Studies 03/11/2023

Centre for Technology and Society at the TU Berlin

Deadline for submissions: 30/06/2023

Research on protest policing has been predominantly interested in public mass gatherings of social movements, namely demonstrations. Major contributions with lasting impact on the research area investigated global protest events, such as the confrontations during the Seattle WTO-protests in 1999 (Wood 2007), the G8 Summit in Genova in 2008 (della Porta, Reiter, und Peterson 2006), or the mass protests against the G20 summit in Hamburg in 2017 (Malthaner u. a. 2018). In our annual workshop in 2023, we wish to change focus and shed light on the *policing of resistance in everyday life*, which is often not covered by mass media and rarely scrutinized by protest policing research. The turn to everyday life is not only a scholarly endeavour. It is also increasingly performed by activists who disrupt the flows of goods, people in climate action, people who engage in communal solidarity, or more or less collectively refuse to play their role at work. As famously argued by Jacques Rancière (1999), these occasions of the political call for police responses to set things ‘back into place’. With this focus on everyday life we also call policing scholars to revisit daily police work as a policing of occasions of political resistance.

On the one hand, a focus on resistance in everyday life will allow us to discuss a myriad of relations between policing and protest. There are several historical instances that underline the importance of mundane police repression of everyday resistance. Think of the arrest of Black civil rights activist Rosa Parks that sparked mass protests against the persisting *color line* (Du Bois 1935) in the United States. Think of the *quiet encroachment* of marginalized groups that refuse to be excluded from the gentrified and commercialized city centres all over the world, and how social control institutions oppress their right to the city (Bayat 2013). Or think of the policing of young people reclaiming public spaces during Covid-19 lockdowns, especially in contrast to the under-policing of daily disobediences by right wing activists against mask mandates. In all these cases policing may have played a key role for the emergence of social movements. However, the effects of policing are far from linear, nor are they deterministic. Rather, they have to be understood as consequences of a situated interplay of mutual practical responses by (not yet) activists and police within specific structures that urge policing and social movement scholars to empirically investigate and theoretically reflect the policing of resistance in everyday life.

On the other hand, everyday disobedience, small sized spontaneous protests, and the control of marginal social groups are the daily business of police and other security actors. For some, police might be a nearly invisible infrastructure that sustains their daily political engagements. Others, however, may find themselves routinely over-policed. We are not only interested in the political subjectivities that emerge from these encounters, but also in how police analyse, prepare, perform, and experience the policing of small size protests and disobediences in everyday life. Within the policing of everyday resistance, we can also scrutinize new technologies of surveillance that enable policing to evermore pervade activists’ lives and organizing.

Some aspects that might be worth discussing are the following:

- What are the characteristics of the policing of resistance in everyday life? How does the characterisation of deviance as resistance reconfigure our analytical view on police practices?
- How do police organizations experience, frame, and control resistance in everyday life? How do police and activists interact on a daily basis?
- Which surveillance technologies are involved and how do they shape policing and activism? How does policing sneak into the daily lives of activists and mundane practices of organizing?
- How may police action render daily practices into acts of resistance? How does it contribute to making meaning of 'resistance' and the emergence of collective identities among non-collective actors?
- How does the policing of resistance contribute to the constitution of political subjectivities of activists and social groups, the emergence of movements and their decline?
- What are the implications of policing for the dynamics of social protest and articulations of social issues? How does policing affect the development of social movements in this context?
- How does the selective policing of resistance in everyday life intersect with racialization, class, and gender?
- What role does the policing of resistance in everyday life play in the formation of class relations and milieus? How can we theoretically grasp the role of police and policing in the constitution of social inequalities (including their intersection with racism, patriarchy, ableism and other forms of oppression)?

We welcome theoretical and empirical contributions. Please send your abstract of up to 250 words to ipb_police@tutanota.com. Presentations shall not exceed 15 to 20 minutes. Presentations may be held in English or German. Find out more about the Institute for Protest and Social Movement Studies online: <https://protestinstitut.eu/en>.

Date of the panel: November 3rd 2023

Deadline for submission: June 30 2023

Location: hybrid conference, Centre for Technology and Society at the TU Berlin (ZTG)

Organizers: Philipp Knopp, Stephanie Schmidt, Roman Thurn, Peter Ullrich

References

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