

## **Riot, Unrest and Protest On The Global Stage**

Edited by David Pritchard and Francis Pakes

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*Riot, Unrest and Protest on the Global Stage*, brings together world class experts from around the globe providing an extensive and interdisciplinary discussion of riots and unrest to date. The field has attracted scholarship from a wide range of disciplines including criminology, law, politics, geography, sociology, and economics amongst others. This gives the book a unique outlook on the events discussed, by utilising a plethora of international expertise on the subject. The book explores rioting in a diverse range of countries and contexts from the UK, France and Germany whilst also looking at food riots and the #Occupy movement. Each chapter describes, as the title suggests, riots and unrest on the global stage. The book uses the term ‘stage’ to encapsulate several meanings from global audiences to localised protests. The book is not simply about riots but about how globalisation has affected riots and how we as the public understand them.

From the outset, the text does much to enlighten the reader with the fundamental values and principles of protests and unrest, and how these events give rise to the current state of affairs. For example their introductory chapter explores some of the key concepts found within the books and provides succinct yet rational explanations for reasons behind protests especially with regards to the financial crisis. Within this introduction is an outline of the book chapters and how they are loosely ordered thematically, starting locally within the UK and then increasingly demonstrating a transnational and global orientation.

Chapter 2 focuses on a 30 year period of political protests that have occurred within western democracies from the early 80’s through to 2013. It is localised to Sheffield to highlight policing strategies and tactics that have adopted a more facilitating and permissive method, which have ensured an efficient and effective way of containing protests. This chapter utilises case studies to provide concrete examples of the prevailing political climate and the strategies chosen by police. There is a deep descriptive element within this chapter that provides any reader with a clear idea of how things were situated and offers the imagination a vivid picture of events. The bookends of this chapter are assisted by case studies from various eras such as the ‘Thatcherite Era’ of the 1980’s towards the neo-liberal more globalised era, better known as the ‘New Millennium’, and instances occurring within times of great austerity. This chapter in particular gives justification for police to adopt permissive strategies with a combination of differentiating attitudes thus to not warrant an opposition. Chapter 3 follows on from this nicely but takes a very historical approach. The focus here is on capitalism and the power of corporations, and the control they have in our daily lives in terms of food, energy etc. with particular reference to the supermarket Tesco. Moreover Clements draws on his argument by using anomie theory to acknowledge the legitimate success and power Tesco have, and the political undercurrent the riot has to oppose the power of

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the capitalist corporation (p44). This chapter is a localised example and provides a somewhat underrated and probably overlooked example of unrest within the UK.

Chapters 4 and 5 take a different approach on riots and protest and look at the dramatization of protest within different media and performance outlets. With chapter 4 focusing on the UK 2011 riots, the analysis lies within the *'cultural prism'* through which riots can be interpreted and reinterpreted. This chapter, although interesting, deviates from the book's current theme and takes a more laid back approach to understanding rioting as *'The language of the unheard'* (p71). Bretherick suggests that drama may be the best way to achieve the underlying message that is situated within riots as a riot is not useful unless the 'message' is communicated. This perspective delivers cultural representations to unrest rather than the more traditional standpoints within the book, giving the reader a chance to reflect more widely on what rioting means and the message behind it. El-Enany in the following chapter continues with the British themed riots and protests and takes a historical approach ranging from 1819 to 2010. El-Enany's developing argument is on the depoliticising of riots. Its main emphasis is on the criminalisation process, providing an interesting twist and knowledge base. This argument makes the book suitable for students who are interested in the legality of the protest situation as opposed to why or how a riot occurs. Chapter 6 develops a critical edge. Hall and Winlow criticise the social sciences, arguing how *'social science is an incestuous, narrow, self-referential, exhausted and hierarchal institution, and do not leave sufficient room for new ideas and concepts to be examined'* (p110). This chapter is insightful, gaining readers attention, and unlike previous chapters it is humorous in its approach and utilises funny one-liners such as *'caught with its trousers down'* (p112). Moreover the authors of this chapter display their frustration well by using the term of 'undead presence' (p110) to describe how social science has become self-referential and exhausted, arguably lacking the conceptual insight required to utilise and import new concepts which are more suitable for an analysis of today's current climate.

Chapter 7 discusses the 2011 riots and delves into the issue a bit deeper by focusing upon three cities in the UK: Manchester, Sheffield and London. This chapter begins to develop discussion around inequality, showing that the divide between rich and poor is more noticeable now than in previous years. This divide between rich and poor is arguably being unnoticed and this chapter suggests that the rioters do not consider this point when rioting. Chapters 8 (France), 9 (Germany), and 10 (Greece) take a global perspective on unrest and disorder. These chapters focus upon various aspects within the aforementioned countries from contextual elements and young people's immediacy to riot through to antagonistic social and political landscapes. Throughout all three chapters they reject the simplistic notion of *'senseless and thrill seeking'* as explanations for riots. This is especially well placed within chapter 9, which uses a cultural criminology lens to make sense of such spectacles and corresponds well with the 'stage' metaphor discussed previously. This chapter in particular asks what motivates young people to take to the streets in Sternschanze, and challenge the state's monopoly on violence (P152), looking closely at control, identity and solidarity alongside processes of *'moral transcendence'* (P164), which discusses how every transgression is a conscious act of rule breaking.

Chapters 11-16 place their attention on the inequality embedded within riots, paying particular attention to food riots and the deep seated inequalities that coerce and control modern societies. Pritchard examines this in chapter 11 by assessing statistical relationships between protest events

and sociological and economic dimensions of inequality. Chapters 15 and 16 take this a step further and examine the West responses to global situations. Rounding off the last chapter of the text nicely with a discussion surrounding the #Occupy movements. Considering responses to various forms of state repression whilst analysing the alternatives for this, with particular reference to socio economic status and inequality occurring within the ongoing argument of the 99% vs 1%.

*Riots, Unrest and Protest on the Global Stage* is undoubtedly aimed at students of all levels, social scientists, and in particular criminologists; predominantly those who have a desire to focus on rioting within a global context. This book provides a thorough yet concise overview of various countries from across the globe. This is a good starting point for any student wishing to get a full-bodied overview of international riots within a short space of time. Having said this, the book tends to have a Western European centric foci. Therefore, although it examines several nations, a subsequent volume could benefit from a wider focus on other countries that have also experienced unrest, which would create a nice companion and comparative element to this text. This book challenges criminology in positive and negative ways on various levels to take the reader on insightful and interesting perspectives of unrest and protest. As discussed previously, the text is direct and accessible throughout, with each chapter providing a different view of what a riot is, how it may begin, or simply how the message should be depicted. Additionally, considering this in hindsight of previous economic transformations and recent social occurrences, it provides understandable examples particularly useful for tutors discussing this with their students. This text acknowledges that there is a lot more to be discussed but the way each chapter has progressed leaves room for thought. It can be noted that although the majority of the text is easily digestible, some chapters tend to take a more philosophical exploration of unrest; and although this is interesting to read, it may be a struggle for beginners who have not encountered this before. Granting this book has not been able to address every riot and issue that has occurred, it has pinpointed important and sometimes overlooked occurrences, thus providing the reader with the ability to develop a strong baseline from which to work and develop.