

Tackling Civil Unrest: Policing or Redistribution?

MICROCON Policy Briefing 2 May 2008 Patricia Justino

Summary: There is much evidence to suggest that economic and social factors are major causes of civil unrest. However, governments often resort to the use of police and military to tackle such upheavals, rather than using policies that directly address the causes of discontent. This briefing uses data from India to compare the effectiveness of redistributive transfers and policing in reducing conflict. It finds that transfers have a significant effect on the prevention and reduction of civil unrest, particularly in the medium term. While policing reduces conflict in the short term, the continued use of police has either inconsequential effects, or even leads to increases in rioting. These findings have important lessons for other countries where social cohesion breaks frequently, but large-scale conflict may be avoidable.

[HTTP://WWW.MICROCONFLICT.EU/PUBLICATIONS/PB2_PJ.PDF](http://www.microconflict.eu/publications/pb2_pj.pdf)

UNREST, DEFIANCE, PROTESTS, STRIKE, PEN-DOWN, WORK TO RULE ...

Brazilian Unrest

What causes people in large numbers to step outside their daily routines and gather in public to voice demands on issues that affect a group much larger than themselves?

If we're to believe [a recent article in *Time*](#) on the protests bursting across **Brazil, (BRIC?)** then the answer is, well, a lot of things. Here's a list of all the "causes" of the recent Brazilian protests identified in the space of just a few hundred words:

- Social inequality
- World Cup spending
- Police violence
- A - nine-cent rise in bus fares
- Corruption
- A lack of return on high taxes
- Inadequate government spending on infrastructure, education, and health care
- "The country's dramatic rise on the world stage"

- “The incapacity of traditional political representation to deal with the new and unheard of demands of a changing society”
- Youth
- Inflation

I don’t mean to pick on *Time*, which does a lot of solid international reporting, or on the authors of that particular piece. As [Christian Davenport](#) observes in [a recent post](#) on the blog *Political Violence @ a Glance*, press coverage of social unrest often gives us “a blow-by-blow account of the street battles taking place” without carefully connecting those events or their alleged causes to prior theory or empirical research. When comparisons are made, it’s usually by analogy, with strong bias toward cases that are recent, geographically proximate, and emotionally salient. As a result, “It all just seems to be new and eventful without much rhyme or reason.”

I realize that journalism isn’t rigorous social science, and it’s not supposed to be. Still, one of the intellectual dangers of laundry-list explanations is that they make it even easier to succumb to [confirmation bias](#)—that is, to pick through the list and pull out the items that support our prior beliefs. In the *Time* piece on Brazil alone, for example, there’s “evidence” to support many different and potentially competing hypotheses about causes of mass protest, from neo-Marxist claims about the centrality of economic inequality to socio-demographic theories emphasizing [youth bulges](#) and an expanding middle class to “homo economicus” models focused on price hikes and public spending.

We can’t learn a whole lot about the causes of mass protest by simply cataloging the conditions and things participants tell us about their motivations in cases where they occur. That information is useful, but not so much on its own.

To make real headway on causal analysis, we have to engage in contrasts. To learn about the origins of mass protest, for example, we need to compare cases where uprisings occur with ones where they don’t. Yes, income inequality is high in Brazil, but [the same can be said for many of its regional neighbors](#). If inequality foments uprisings, why aren’t we seeing waves of mass protest in Honduras or Bolivia or Colombia or Paraguay? Meanwhile, inequality was comparatively low in many countries touched by the “Arab awakening.” According to World Bank data, income inequality is lower in Tunisia, Egypt, and Syria than in virtually every country in Latin America. Together, these

contrasts imply that high inequality is neither necessary nor sufficient for mass protest, but that's probably not what you'd expect if you saw the *Time* headline proclaiming that "Social Inequality and World Cup Spending Fuel Mass Unrest."

In general, laundry lists of concerns and plausible causes like the one proffered in that *Time* article can be useful as fodder for what Alex George and Andrew Bennett [call](#) "heuristic case studies," which "inductively identify new variables, hypotheses, causal mechanisms, and causal paths." What they most certainly don't do is test theory. These analyses are the social-science equivalent of ambulance chasing. When we hear the noise of the crowd, we rush toward it, ask the participants why they're angry, read their signs and banners, and try to spin a coherent story from what we see and hear. That's fine as far as it goes—which, it turns out, isn't very far.

<http://dartthrowingchimp.wordpress.com/2013/06/20/what-causes-social-unrest-apparently-everything/>

SAMPLE LIST FOR ONE WEEK IN SEPTEMBER 2013

NEW DELHI, September 23, 2013; Parties disturbing communal harmony ahead of 2014 polls: Akhilesh

NEW DELHI, September 23, 2013, Centre encroaching on State powers: Jayalalithaa

CAIRO, September 23, 2013; Egypt bans Muslim Brotherhood

MANILA, September 23, 2013; Eight killed as Muslim rebels attack Philippine town;

BEIRUT, September 21, 2013; Syrian troops storm central village, 15 dead

BEIJING, September 20, 2013; Flag in mosques stirs anger in China

NEW DELHI, September 21, 2013; Minister seeks ordinance for communal violence bill

NEW DELHI, September 20, 2013; Only small group of people involve in riots: Manmohan

HYDERABAD, September 21, 2013; National platform for reconciliation needed on bifurcation issue, says Lok Satta chief

Some causes of civil unrest include oppression, inequitable resource distribution, insecurity, alienation from main stream, segregation, apartheid, injustice etc.

Novel protest against poor road condition

The Road Vikasana Janakeeya Munnani on Thursday staged a novel protest against the poor condition of the Badiadukka-Mullaria road by turning it into a playground of sorts and cooking delicacies.

Volunteers of the Munnani blocked vehicular traffic on the road by placing huge logs and stones.

The protesters prepared tea and snacks by the roadside.

Hundreds of people joined the protest at Badiadukka bazaar, Bavadukka, Arthappallam, Narambadi, and Mullaria. The protest was supported by the local units of the Vyapari Vyavasayi Ekopana Samithi. A strong posse of police personnel ensured that no untoward incidents took place during the day-long protest.

Most road networks in the district, including the busy Kasaragod-Kanhangad coastal State highway, are in poor condition. 'Maintenance work was carried out just before the onset of the monsoon.

However, barely a week into the monsoon, the upper layer of the roads developed cracks.

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/novel-protest-against-poor-road-condition/article5174364.ece>

Mob Behavior and Campus Security

Police rapport with the community is stressed, and the individual officer is made more aware of and more sensitive to the behavior of cultural and socio-economic groups and to pertinent critical issues. The gathering of intelligence data, by an intelligence unit and by the individual officer, performs an important function in predicting and reacting to civil disturbance. Officers, including campus police, should be thoroughly trained in mob behavior and mob control, so that they are prepared to handle the special physical and mental demands present in such situations. The community at large should support civil order and should have opportunities to participate in local decision-making and to air grievances. The news media have the responsibility of opening communication channels and informing the public on critical issues. A list of information elements essential to the handling of civil disorders is appended.

<http://www.ncjrs.gov/App/Publications/abstract.aspx?ID=10941>

Throwing the 'Book' At Them

Campus cops delve into the cyber-world, using facebook.com to track students.

By Josh Duboff
Current Magazine

Summer 2006 issue — Filled with the euphoria of victory and dreams of their first Big Ten title in 11 years, Penn State University students rushed the field as time expired in their win over Ohio State. In the chaos that followed, the campus police struggled to keep control, and identifying the over-zealous fans seemed impossible. Impossible, that is, until the police department turned to a new crime-fighting tool: facebook.com.

Penn State officers had warned the students in advance last October that crossing over from the stands was a safety hazard and would not be permitted. When the rules were broken, a quick search online revealed the facebook.com photo album "I rushed the field after the OSU game and lived." The album creator had even helpfully tagged all of those involved—offering the campus police an easy way to issue stern warnings. "It was really dangerous and not acceptable behavior," says Tyrone Parham, assistant director at the PSU police. "We needed to send a message. We searched the group, contacted the individuals and said that this was not tolerable behavior."

Long a student favorite and the seventh most-trafficked Internet site, facebook.com has found a new following—those who wear blue. Traditionally, campus police forces have followed noise reports in their attempt to keep Saturday nights safe. But the advent of social-networking sites is starting to revolutionize campus detective work.

George Washington University police department chief Dolores Stafford claims, "Facebook exists and can certainly be a tool, but we're not out there looking at the site." Students at the college, however, are not so sure. When rumors flew that campus cops were using the student social network to infringe their right to party, GWU students decided to exact revenge. In a carefully executed plan, students filled facebook.com with chatter about a

raging party they were throwing, hoping the police would be watching. They were not disappointed. When the officers arrived, they found shots glasses brimming with chocolate cake, Beirut cups filled with frosting, and partygoers loaded up on sugar rather than alcohol.

While the GWU police deny using the Internet to find the party, the students felt vindicated. 'Cake Party' attendee Kyle Stoneman comments: "From a larger standpoint, there's nothing immoral or illegal about [the police using facebook.com]. I guess they'll play their game, we'll play ours, and we'll see who wins."

For college police forces, however, the issue is about more than winning. Instead, they try to find that delicate balance between upholding the law (read: preventing underage drinking) and maintaining good relations with the students (read: turning a blind eye). "It's a never-ending struggle," says Fisher College Chief of Campus Police John McLaughlin. "Like any other college and university, we want this to be as open of a relationship as possible. We don't want to be too obtrusive and we also don't want to be too strict. It requires real diligence."

McLaughlin's police force found itself logging onto facebook.com in September 2005 when a student alerted them to activity in a college group. The group's chatter outlined a plot in which a female student planned to falsely accuse a particular sergeant of sexual harassment.

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/12209620/>

Celebratory riots combine the volatile ingredients of alcohol abuse, immaturity, overzealousness, and a mob mentality. Such riots typically involve attempts to destroy public and private property. The CALEA manual has a chapter that provides guidelines for the formulation of strategies to address occasional significant threats to public safety, such as celebratory riots. Durham, NH is host to the University of New Hampshire and approximately 12,000 students. When the University of New Hampshire's men's hockey team made it to the "Frozen Four" in the National College Athletic Association national hockey championship, the Durham Police Department (DPD) drew upon the CALEA manual to prepare for the eventuality of a celebratory riot. The 19 DPD officers worked in partnership with the 22 campus police officers and officers from nearby agencies under mutual aid agreements to develop a plan for preventing a celebratory riot. Police teams were formed under the supervision of DPD or campus police. Each team was given the primary responsibility of moving crowds in its assigned area; secondary goals involved maintaining control over a specific location. Other issues addressed were communications among personnel, procedures for making and processing arrests, the use of horses and motorcycles, and the use of riot gear. When the University of New Hampshire hockey team lost to the University of Minnesota in the national championship game, the celebratory riot lasted approximately 2 hours and produced 87 arrests. Police de-escalation of the riot began in a structured and methodical manner, preventing property damage and injuries.

<http://www.ncjrs.gov/App/Publications/abstract.aspx?ID=232411>

Domestic Violence

The Illinois Domestic Violence Act (Illinois Compiled Statutes Ch. 750 ILCS 60/101 and Ch. 725 ILCS 5/112A-3) defines domestic violence crimes, establishes remedies for them and explains who is covered. Protected “family or household members” are defined as follows: “spouses, former spouses, parents, children, stepchildren, and other persons related by blood or by present or prior marriage, persons who share or formerly shared a common dwelling, persons who have...a child in common, persons who share ...a blood relationship through a child, persons who have or have had a dating or engagement relationship....” Domestic Violence / Abuse is defined as: “physical abuse, harassment, intimidation of a dependant, interference with personal liberty or willful deprivation.”

Campus Security encourages victims of domestic violence that occur off campus to report any abuse to their local police department. Incidents of domestic violence occurring on campus should be reported to Campus Security at (630) 617-3000 or 9-911 in cases of emergency. Remedies available include criminal charges against the offender and Orders of Protection that prohibit offenders from further abuse, interference or stalking. Campus Security encourages students and staff who have obtained orders of protection to notify us so that we can work to protect them from any further violence while they are on campus.

Sexual Assault/Date Rape

Sexual assault is perhaps one of the most under-reported crimes. Though statistics vary, estimates are that between one-in-four and one-in-six women will be the victim of a sexual assault or attempted sexual assault. The reasons for non-reporting vary from fear and embarrassment to self blame for being in a susceptible setting, especially in a situation of date or acquaintance rape. In the situation of a “stranger” assault, victims may find it easier to “strike back” by reporting the assault and prosecuting it. In a case of acquaintance rape, the emotional trauma of an assault is multiplied by the knowledge that the offender is someone who was trusted, related and perhaps even loved.

Date rape and the use of “date rape drugs” is especially common among teens and young adults, who make up the bulk of college students. Though females comprise the bulk of sexual assault victims, males account for approximately ten percent of victims. It is important that you be aware of and avoid risks that could lead to sexual assaults.

A few safety tips to keep in mind are:

- Be aware of your surroundings - pay attention to who may be walking near you or following you. If something or someone makes you feel uncomfortable, go with your gut. Drive or move to a well lighted public location or a police station or call someone for help.
- Avoid being alone in unfamiliar places, especially at night.
- Enroll in a personal safety course such as RAD (Rape Aggression Defense) available through Campus Security.
- In acquaintance or dating situations, remain in public or group settings until the person has earned your trust.

- Set clear boundary regarding what is and is not acceptable behavior – do not allow yourself to be pressured into going beyond those boundaries. If you feel pressured or strong armed, clearly and loudly state that it is unacceptable and leave the area.
- Do not allow yourself to become intoxicated, especially if you are not well acquainted with those with whom you are drinking.
- Never leave a drink or food unattended in a bar or at a party. If you do leave it unattended or out of your sight, pour it out and get a fresh one. Date rape drugs can quickly be put into a drink without detection.
- If you are a victim of a sexual assault, Campus Security encourages you to:
- Get to safety as soon as possible
- Do not wash or change clothes (this could destroy crucial evidence needed, if you wish to prosecute the offender).
- Obtain medical help at a hospital or medical facility (hospital personnel are trained in dealing with victims in a sensitive manner and in collection of evidence for possible future use in court).
- Report the assault to Campus Security or to the local police department as soon as possible (it will be your decision whether or not you choose to pursue the matter in court. However, if evidence is not properly collected immediately, it may prevent any future prosecution).

Hate Crimes

Elmhurst College takes hate crimes very seriously. All members of the Elmhurst Community are entitled to a learning or working environment free of discrimination based on race, color, creed, religion, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability or national origin. Those committing a hate crime must understand that the penalties for hate crimes are very serious and are more severe when the crime is committed on school property or on any “public way within 1000 feet” of the property of a school. The penalty for a first offense is a Class 3 Felony which carries a penalty of up to five years in prison. A second offense is a Class 2 Felony with a penalty of up to seven years in prison.

The Illinois Compiled Statutes Ch.720 ILCS 5/12-7.1 states that a person commits a Hate Crime when because of the actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, or national origin of another person or group of persons, (even if there are other motivating factors), he commits any of the following crimes: assault, battery, aggravated assault, misdemeanor theft, criminal trespass to residence, misdemeanor criminal damage to property, criminal trespass to vehicle, criminal trespass to real property, mob action, disorderly conduct, harassment by telephone or harassment through electronic communications.

Hate crimes and “Bias Incidents” are also violations of the *E-Book* and will be subject to legal actions as well as disciplinary action by the College.

public.elmhurst.edu/security/22719159.html

Mob Rule on College Campuses

November 29, 2006|By Cinnamon Stillwell

America's college campuses, once thought to be bastions of free speech, have become increasingly intolerant toward the practice. Visiting speakers whose views do not conform to the prevailing left-leaning political mind-set on most campuses are at particular risk of having their free speech rights infringed upon.

While academia has its own crimes to atone for, it's the students who have become the bullies as of late. A disturbing number seem to feel that theirs is an inviolate world to which no one of differing opinion need apply. As a result, everything from pie throwing to disrupting speeches to attacks on speakers has become commonplace.

Conservative speakers have long been the targets of such illiberal treatment. The violent reception given to Jim Gilchrist, founder of the Minuteman Project, an anti-illegal immigration group, at Columbia University in October is a recent example. Gilchrist had been invited to speak by the Columbia University College Republicans, but was prevented from doing so by an unruly mob of students. What could have been mere heckling descended into yelling, screaming, kicking and punching, culminating in the rushing of the stage and Gilchrist being shuttled off by security.

The fact that the rioting students could be heard yelling, "He has no right to speak!" was telling. Apparently, in their minds, neither Gilchrist nor anyone else with whom they disagree has a right to express their viewpoints. In any other setting this would be called exactly what it is -- totalitarianism. But in the untouchable Ivy League world of Columbia, it was chalked up to student activism gone awry. While condemning the incident, Columbia University President Lee Bollinger [has yet to apologize](#) to Gilchrist or to conclude the supposed investigation into the affair. In other words, mob rule won the day.

Bay Area PC Intolerance

Such behavior is certainly not limited to East Coast universities. Last February at San Francisco State University, former liberal activist-author turned conservative activist-author David Horowitz had [his entire speech shouted down](#) by a group of protesters. Composed primarily of students and other members of the Spartacus Youth Club, a Trotskyist organization, the group stood in the back of the room shouting slogans and comments at every turn.

Even this was not enough to warrant their removal, so Horowitz and his audience, which included me, simply had to suffer through the experience.

Horowitz, whose speech centered on his [Academic Bill of Rights](#), took on his critics and attempted to engage them in dialogue, with varying degrees of success. But those who actually came to hear him speak, whether out of sympathy for his views or out of a desire to tackle them intellectually, were unable to do so fully because of the actions of a few bullies.

It is not only conservative speakers who are at risk of having their free speech rights trampled upon on American college campuses. Those who dare criticize radical Islam in any way, shape or form tend to suffer the same fate.

In 2004, UC Berkeley became the locus for bullying behavior during a speech by Islam scholar Daniel Pipes. I was witness to the spectacle, one I'll never forget. Members of the Muslim Student Association and other protesters formed a disruptive group in the audience, shouting, jeering and chanting continually. They booed loudly throughout and called Pipes everything from "racist" and "Zionist" (which in their minds is an insult) to "racist Jew" -- all because Pipes had the audacity to propose that moderate Muslims distance themselves from extremist elements in their midst; that in tackling terrorism authorities take into account the preponderance of Muslim perpetrators and that Israel has a right to exist peacefully among its neighbors.

This was [hardly the first time](#) that UC Berkeley students had espoused hostility toward speakers with "unpopular" views or those hailing from "unpopular" countries such as Israel. Nonetheless, it was a wake-up call for many in the audience who had not yet experienced first-hand the intimidation of the mob.

Arab Reformers Silenced

Recently, reformers from within the Arab world itself have been on the receiving end of such treatment. Whether it be the work of student groups or faculty, insurmountable security restrictions and last-minute cancellations have a strange way of arising whenever such figures are invited to speak on college campuses.

articles.sfgate.com/.../17318484_1_free-speech-minuteman-project-speakers