

4-1-2019

In the Eye of the Activist: Surveying Student Movements through Visual Mediums

Amber Tavakoly
tavakoly.amber@gmail.com

Recommended Citation

Tavakoly, Amber, "In the Eye of the Activist: Surveying Student Movements through Visual Mediums" (2019). *Library Research Scholars Program 2018-2019*. 4.
https://scholarlyrepository.miami.edu/library_research_scholars_program_2018/4

This Annotated Bibliography is brought to you for free and open access by the Library Research Scholars Program at Scholarly Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Library Research Scholars Program 2018-2019 by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Repository. For more information, please contact repository.library@miami.edu.

**Library Research Scholars
2018-2019
Project Proposal**

Name of Library Research Scholar: Amber Tavakoly

Project Title: In the Eye of the Activist: Surveying Student Movements through Visual Mediums

Project Description:

By researching and analyzing propaganda of various social movements of the 20th and 21st century, this project will examine the power of visual mediums of communication (e.g. posters, flyers, brochures, photographs, art, etc.) to promote the messages and missions of movements. This project will explore how visual messages permeate public thought to enhance advocacy, with a particular emphasis on how some images ultimately define the movements in which they were born. With an emphasis on student-led protest movements, this project will cross-examine how visual media influences the branding and perception of a protest. Social movements include student-led protests in Brazil, Chile, France, Iran, New Zealand, Tunisia, the United States, and others. The final project will be designed using Adobe software, specifically InDesign, Photoshop, and Illustrator.

Project Justification:

Social progress is dependent on citizens standing up for their values, and students have always been at the forefront of social change. By researching activism and art and how they influence each other, this project will be an investigation in communication methods and human expression. Recent times have seen a resurgence of community

organizing and citizen activism within the current political climate, not only in the United States, but also in countries all over the world. Just as before, students continue to be a powerful force and agents of social change. This project combines my interests of art, graphic design, communication, political science, and sociology, while also allowing for my own creative freedom when designing the final project.

Project Stakeholders / Team (if appropriate):

Who else is involved in the project, and what are their roles? What will you need from others to complete the project?

- Terri Robar, mentor
- Vanessa Rodriguez, mentor
- Library Research Scholars Program Team

Annotated Bibliography: See end of document.

*Please attach an annotated bibliography of sources (collected in **Zotero** or another citation manager) that you have found thus far. You may also paste the bibliography here or at the end of this document.*

Project Deliverables:

At this time, I plan to design a booklet using Adobe software containing images and writing on my research that can function online, as well as printed. Images will be displayed side-by-side with relevant text. This booklet can function as both a physical copy and can be viewed and interacted with online.

Resources Needed:

Access to and support for professional printing to present the final booklet, multiple copies, with binding, printed on high-quality paper. University funding to have professional printing services would be appreciated.

Timeline:

- December 2018 – Project proposal
- January 2019 – Rough draft of booklet layout, pinpoint key visuals to focus on
- February, March 2019 – Compile information, assemble visuals and text into booklet layout
- April, May 2019 – Finalize all project details and prepare for presentation

Project Reviewers:

Library Faculty Mentor: Terri Robar, Vanessa Rodriguez
Dean of the Libraries: Charles Eckman

Annotated Bibliography

Bogerts, L. (2016). Die Responsibility to Protest : Street Art als Waffe des Widerstands?

Zeitschrift Für Außen- Und Sicherheitspolitik, 9(4), 503-529.

According to the article's description, Bogerts makes a claim that street art is a legitimate branch of study within international relations and political science on the basis of previous scholarship within the field of visual culture studies and social movement research. The article "develops a methodological framework for analyzing the visual political narratives of resistance," and by analyzing two case studies, the article "supports the assumption that street art can be considered a means of communication in transnational conflicts." Although the article seems extremely interesting, with relevant information related to the project, a complete and accurate English translation has still yet to be found.

Deželan, T., & Maksuti, A. (2016). Humanist propaganda: The poster as a visual medium of

communication used by 'new' social movements. *Romanian Journal of Political Sciences*, (2), 56-86.

Although this article has the specific focus of analyzing activism in Slovenia in the 1980s and onward, it provides context on how political circumstances and the financial circumstances of activists can alter social movement campaigns and the resulting propaganda. From its description, "the findings of this study offer original insights into the poster campaigns of social movements in the context of the transition from propaganda to political communication in a democratic society."

Fahlenbrach, K., Sivertsen, E., & Werenskjold, R. (2014). *Media and revolt : Strategies and performances from the 1960s to the present (Protest, culture and society)*. New York, New York ; Oxford, England: Berghahn Books.

By studying the intersectionality of literature in media, history, and sociology, the authors delve into the symbiotic nature of social movements and mass media from the 1960s to 2014. Information on how protests attract media attention and how the media presents movements varies in the case studies the book focuses on. The most influential and relevant aspect of the book on this project is that it discusses how activists and organizers have “influenced public attention via visual symbols, images, and protest performances.”

Lampert, N. (2013). *A people's art history of the United States: 250 years of activist art and artists working in social justice movements (New Press people's history)*. New York: The New Press.

Lampert places art into the context of the time in which it was created, showcasing that art is inherently political, regardless of the artist’s original intentions. This book highlights “key works of American radical art alongside dramatic retellings of the histories that inspired them.”

Martin, S., Track 16 Gallery Mainspace, & Center for the Study of Political Graphics. (1996). *Decade of protest : Political posters from the United States, Viet Nam, Cuba 1965-1975*. Santa Monica, Calif.: Smart Art Press.

This book is a catalogue of art and posters presented at the Track 16 Gallery in Los Angeles, California, from January 19 to March 19 in 1996. Martin’s collection is compelling, comprehensive, and enlightening.

McCaughan, E. (2012). *Art and social movements : Cultural politics in Mexico and Aztlán*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

According to the description, “Art and Social Movements offers a comparative, cross-border analysis of the role of visual artists in three social movements from the late 1960s through the early 1990s: the 1968 student movement and related activist art collectives in Mexico City, a Zapotec indigenous struggle in Oaxaca, and the Chicano movement in California.”

Neumayer, C., & Rossi, L. (2018). Images of protest in social media: Struggle over visibility and visual narratives. *New Media & Society*, 20(11), 4293-4310.

Neumayer and Rossi present the interesting argument that beyond the items and exhibits, such as posters, that may influence a social movement’s visual brand, a protest itself is a form of visual expression, as well. This article compiles data from quantitatively analyzing photos and videos from the “Blockupy” protests in Frankfurt on March 18, 2015 against the opening of the European Central Bank headquarters. Neumayer and Rossi’s research provides heightened context into how visuals from protests on social media influence perception.

Ross, Bengtson, Lennon, Phillips, & Wilson. (2017). In search of academic legitimacy: The current state of scholarship on graffiti and street art. *The Social Science Journal*, 54(4), 411-419.

This article outlines the history of legitimization of scholarship related to street art and graffiti since the 1960s, when the first academic survey of contemporary graffiti was published. The authors also contextualize the obstacles researchers of street art and graffiti face and promote the burgeoning academia related to the subject.

Protest messages and propaganda have often been communicated through the medium of street art and graffiti and should not be discounted from consideration on the basis of informality or illegitimacy.

Young, R. (2016). *Make art not war: Political protest posters from the twentieth century*. New York: New York University Press.

This book recognizes that visual components of a social movement's marketing (i.e., posters) play key roles in how a protest movement is perceived by public opinion, along with recruiting activists and "sustaining morale." *Make art not war* is a collection of posters created by artists that are representative of progressive social movements of the twentieth century, including anti-war, civil rights, feminism, and LGBTQ rights movements.