

**NGO Politics (POL S 527 A)**  
**Aseem Prakash**  
Fall 2008

**Class Time:** Thursday, 1:30-4:20 p.m.  
**Class Location:** Mary Gates Hall 248  
**Office Hours:** By appointment  
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**Course Objective**

Non-governmental, non-profit organizations (NGNPOs) have emerged as important actors in local, national, and international politics. As units of collective action, they advocate policy positions and produce collective goods. They are often viewed as crucial building blocks for democracy and economic growth. NGNPOs compete and cooperate with governments and with firms. Importantly, they compete and cooperate with one another for membership, external funding, and media attention. Like firms and governments, NGNPOs suffer from principal-agent problems and develop, with varying levels of success, governance mechanisms to mitigate such problems. Although they are termed as ‘non-governmental’ organizations, many of them rely on governments for much of their funding. And, some NGNPOs have highly questionable and normatively inappropriate goals. In sum, there is a scholarly need to systematically examine NGNPOs as units of collective action, and answer key questions such as under what conditions they emerge, how they structure their organization, how they function, and how they influence public and corporate policy.

Several literatures study the advocacy and collective good provision functions of NGNPOs. These are:

- the NGO politics and civil society literatures in political science,
- the social movement literature in sociology, and
- the non-profit (NP) literature in public policy/administration/management.

This doctoral seminar will investigate key theoretical and empirical issues raised in these literatures pertaining to NGNPO goals, strategy, politics, and efficacy. We will focus on topics that are theoretically and empirically interesting, and have attracted scholarly attention. I hope this seminar will help you synthesize various NGNPO literatures and develop ideas for research papers, research grants, and/or your dissertation.

## Readings

### Book:

- Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists Beyond Border*. Cornell University Press. ISBN 0-8014-8456-1

### Articles:

I have created an electronic reserve for the assigned articles:

- <http://catalog.lib.washington.edu/search/p?SEARCH=prakash>

You will need your UW email password to access the course reserve. These articles can also be accessed through UW's online e-journal library. Here are the URLs:

- On campus: <http://www.lib.washington.edu/types/ejournals/>
- Off campus: <http://offcampus.lib.washington.edu/menu>

## Course Expectations

This seminar *requires* active student participation. You are expected to energetically and thoughtfully contribute to class discussions in the following ways.

### Student Presentations

For every session, students will present and critique the assigned articles. The discussant-presenter should prepare a two page (single-spaced) "Article Memo" which summarizes the article, examines its strengths and weaknesses, and identifies questions it raises for future research. Please email this memo to the class by Wednesday, 12:00 noon. The discussant-presenter should budget about 10 minutes for the in-class oral presentation. I will circulate a sign-up sheet in the class.

### Class Participation

Needless to say, I expect seminar participants to review *all* the assigned readings prior to the class. Based on these readings, please will email me a couple of questions or issues you want to discuss in the class (students assigned a specific article will not do so; they will email their "Article Memo" only). Instead of listing your questions, please briefly explain how these questions contribute to our understanding of the article(s) under discussion. Your "Key Questions Memo" should be about one page (single-spaced) and reach me by Wednesday, 12:00 noon.

### Research Proposal

A five page (single-spaced) research proposal is due December 4. Treat this as a first cut for a grant proposal (say, NSF dissertation grant) or your MA/PhD thesis proposal. One page proposal outlines are due November 6. The research proposal could be structured as follows:

<i>Research Puzzle</i>	What is the central issue you want to study and why is it theoretically important? What is (are) your dependent variable(s), independent variable(s), and the logic connecting the two?
<i>Research Context</i>	How does your topic fit in the existing NGO/Social Movement/Non-Profit literature? What are relevant concepts or models? What are the research gaps?
<i>Research Design</i>	What is the appropriate research strategy for examining your research puzzle? What are your hypotheses? What are your data requirements? How would you analyze and interpret the data?
<i>Research Contributions</i>	What new insight your research is expected to provide? What are the implications for future research on NGOs, social movements, or non-profits?

## Evaluation

Article Memo	40 points
Key Questions Memo and class participation	40 points
Research proposal	20 points

## Class Schedule

*September 25*

### The Civil Society Debate

- Putnam. 1995. Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital. *Journal of Democracy*, 6 (1): 65-78.
- Skocpol, Ganz, and Munson. 2000. A Nation of Organizers. *American Political Science Review*, 94(3): 527-546.
- Sabine. 1952. The Two Democratic Traditions. *The Philosophical Review*, 61(4): 451-474.
- Andersen, Curtis, and Grabb. 2006. Trends in Civic Association Activity in Four Democracies. *American Sociological Review*, 71(3): 376-400.
- Chambers and Kopstein. 2001. Bad Civil Society. *Political Theory*, 29 (6): 837-865
- Aldrich and Crook. 2008. Strong Civil Society as a Double-Edged Sword: Siting Trailers in Post-Katrina New Orleans. *Political Research Quarterly*, 61(3): 379-389.

October 2

### **NGOs: An Overview**

- Tarrow. 2001. Transnational Politics: Contention and Institutions in International Politics. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 4: 1-20.
- Keck and Sikkink. *Activists Beyond Borders*. Chapters 1, 2.
- Sell and Prakash. 2004. Using Ideas Strategically. *International Studies Quarterly*, 48(1): 143-175.
- Salisbury. 1969. An Exchange Theory of Interest Groups. *Midwest Journal of Political Science*, 13 (1) : 1-32;
- Walker. 1983. The Origins and Maintenance of Interest Groups in America. *American Political Science Review*, 77(2): 390-406.
- Lo. 1982. Counter Movements and Conservative Movements in the Contemporary U.S. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 8: 107-134.

October 9

### **NGOs and World Politics**

- Berman. 1997. Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic. *World Politics*, 49 (3): 401-429
- Reimam. 2006. A View from the Top: International Politics, Norms, and the Worldwide Growth of NGOs. *International Studies Quarterly*, 50: 45-57.
- Rohrschnieder and Dalton. 2002. A Global Network? *Journal of Politics*, 54(2): 510-533.
- McClearly and Barro. 2008. Private Voluntary Organizations Engaged in International Assistance. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 37(3): 512-536.
- Price. 1998. Reversing the Gun Sights. *International Organization*, 52 (3): 613-644.
- Vogel. 2007. Who's Making Global Civil Society: Philanthropy and US Empire in World Society. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 57(4): 635-655.

October 16

### **Advocacy Strategies**

- Keck and Sikkink. Chapters 3, 4, and 5
- Ron, Ramos, and Rodgers. 2005. Transnational Informational Politics: NGO Human Rights Reporting. *International Studies Quarterly*, 49: 557-587.
- Bob. 2002. Merchants of Morality. *Foreign Policy*, March-April: 36-45.
- Carpenter. 2007. Studying Issue (Non) Adoption in Transnational Advocacy Networks. *International Organization*, 61(3): 643-667.
- Olson. 1990. Interest-Group Litigation in Federal District Court: Beyond the Political Disadvantage Theory. *Journal of Politics*, 52(3): 854-882.

October 23

### **Accountability**

- Henderson. 2002. Selling Civil Society. *Comparative Political Studies*, 35(2): 139-167.
- Cooley and Ron. 2002. The NGO Scramble. *International Security*, Summer: 5-39.
- Grant and Keohane. 2005. Accountability and Abuses of Power in World Politics. *American Political Science Review*, 99(1): 29-43.
- Wapner. 2002. Defending Accountability in NGOs. *Chicago Journal of International Law*. 3(1): 197-205.
- Ebrahim, 2005, Accountability Myopia: Losing Sight of Organizational Learning. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 34(1): 56-87.
- Bartley, 2007. How Foundations Shape Social Movements. *Social Problems*, 54(3):229-255.

October 30

### **Social Movements (1)**

- Jenkins. 1983. Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements. *Annual Review of Sociology*. 9: 527-553.
- Meyer and Staggenborg. 1996. Movements, Countermovements, and the Structure of Political Opportunity. *American Journal of Sociology*, 101: 1628-1660.
- McAdam. 1983. Tactical Innovation and the Pace of Insurgency. *American Sociological Review*, 48: 735-54.
- Andrews. 1997. The Impacts of Social Movements on the Political Process: The Civil Rights Movement and Black Electoral Politics in Mississippi. *American Sociological Review*, 62: 800-819.
- Miceli. 2005. Morality Politics vs. Identity Politics: Framing Processes and Competition Among Christian Right and Gay Social Movement Organizations. *Sociological Forum*, 20(4): 589-612.
- Kitschelt. 1986. Political Opportunity Structures and Political Protest: Anti-Nuclear Movements in Four Democracies. *British Journal of Political Science*, 16: 57-85.

Research Proposal Outline due

November 6

### **Social Movements (2)**

- Walker, Martin, and McCarthy. 2008. Confronting the State, the Corporation, and the Academy: The Influence of Institutional Targets on Social Movement Repertoires. *American journal of Sociology*. 114(1): 35-76.
- Andrews. 2001. Social Movements and Policy Implementation: The Mississippi Civil Rights Movement and the War on Poverty. *American Sociological Review*, 66: 71-95.
- Soule and King. 2008. Competition and Resource Partitioning in Three Social Movement Industries. *American Journal of Sociology*. 113(6): 1568-610.
- Zald and Berger. 1978. Social Movements in Organizations: Coup d'Etat, Insurgency, and

Mass Movements. *American Journal of Sociology*, 83 (4):823-861.

- Koopmans and Olzak. 2004. Discursive Opportunities and the Evolution of Right-Wing Violence in Germany. *American Journal of Sociology*, 110 (1): 198-230.
- Sampson, McAdam, MacIndoe, and Elizondo, 2005. Civil Society Reconsidered. *American Journal of Sociology*, 111(3): 673-714.

November 13

### **Non-Profits**

- Ortmann and Schlesinger. 1997. Trust, Repute and the Role of Non-Profit Enterprise. *Voluntas*, 8(2):97-119.
- Krashinsky, 1997. Stakeholder Theories of the Non-Profit Sector. *Voluntas*, 8(2), 149–161.
- Wallis and Dollery. 2005. Leadership and Economic Theories of Nonprofit Organizations. *Review of Policy Research*. 22(4): 483 – 499.
- Chang and Tuckman. 1994. Revenue Diversification among Non-Profits. *Voluntas*, 5(3):273-290.
- Brooks and Lewis, 2001. Giving Volunteering and Mistrusting the Government. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 20: 765-770.
- Sloan. 2008. The Effects of Nonprofit Accountability Ratings on Donor Behavior. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*.  
<http://nvs.sagepub.com/cgi/rapidpdf/0899764008316470v1>

November 20

### **Social Capital**

- Wollebaek and Selle. 2002. Does Participation in Voluntary Associations Contribute to Social Capital? *Non-Profit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 31(1): 32-61.
- McFarland and Thomas. 2006. Bowling Young: How Youth Voluntary Associations Influence Adult Political Participation. *American Sociological Review*, 71 (3): 401-425.
- Casey and Christ. 2005. Social Capital and Economic Performance in the American States. *Social Science Quarterly*, 86(4): 826 - 845
- Brehm and Rahn. 1997. Individual-Level Evidence for the Causes and Consequences of Social Capital. *American Journal of Political Science*, 41(3): 999-1023.
- Krishna. 2001. Moving from the Stock of Social Capital to the Flow of Benefits: The Role of Agency. *World Development*, 29 (6): 925-943.
- Coffé and Geys. 2007. Toward an Empirical Characterization of Bridging and Bonding Social Capital. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 36(1): 121-139.

November 27: **Thanksgiving Break, No Class**

Final Paper turned in

December 4

## **In-Class Research Proposal Presentations**