



The logo for the American Behavioral Scientist (ABS) journal. It features the letters 'ABS' in a large, stylized, serif font. Below the letters, the full name 'American Behavioral Scientist' is written in a smaller, elegant serif font. The entire logo is set against a dark blue rectangular background.

# ABS

*American Behavioral Scientist*

Call for Abstracts for Special Issue:

**How Protests and Counterprotests Interact: Mutual Influences, Context Conditions and Consequences**

American Behavioral Scientist

Special Issue Editors:

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Counterprotests have long been observed in issue-areas like abortion, migration, LGBTQ+ rights, disarmament and labor. But more recently, protest-counterprotest dynamics have spread to other issue areas, intensified and become more common across the globe – reflecting a growing polarization of issues and political conflicts. Some examples of large protest events faced with counterprotests are the Black Lives Matter protests and protests against Covid19-related measures.

Our knowledge about protest and counterprotest interactions, however, is limited. While several studies address *countermovements*, research about *counterprotests*—or protests that oppose and challenge a specific protest “event”—remains scarce. Only more recently have scholars started to analyze temporally and spatially bound interactions at the event level. The special issue seeks to contribute to this emerging field of research by extending and systematizing our understanding of the dynamic interaction of protests and counterprotests. It will explore a broad range of internal and external factors affecting their emergence, development and outcomes, going beyond existing research’s focus on mobilization size and political elites.

We seek to bring together empirical studies about protests and counterprotests across a range of issue-areas and (geographical) contexts. In particular, we seek papers that pursue one or more of the following questions:

1) How do protests influence counterprotests and vice versa? Specific research questions may include but are not limited to:

- How do counterprotests affect the framing of the original protests and vice versa?
- How far can we observe mutual adjustments in terms of action repertoires?

- How (if at all) do the organizational structures mounting protests and counterprotests change over the course of interaction?
- How do counterprotesters construct their collective identity in opposition to the protesters and how does the emergence of counterprotests strengthen (or weaken) protesters' collective identity?
- How do the emotional registers of protesters alter in reaction to counterprotests?

2) What are the conditions and factors facilitating and shaping the interaction between protests and counterprotests? Specific research questions may include but are not limited to:

- What role does the broader political and societal context play (such as public opinion, media coverage, legal environment, political allies)?
- How influential are specific protest-related context factors (such as prior mobilizations), and movement characteristics (such as forms of organization and emotional registers)?
- How are protest-counterprotest interactions influenced by the degree of political polarization in a society?
- How do digital technologies and platforms facilitate or undermine protest-counterprotest interactions?
- How do conditions differ across different kinds of contexts, including different geographical regions, kinds of movements and issue-areas?

3) What are the consequences of protest-counterprotest interactions? Specific research questions may include but are not limited to:

- To what extent do protest- counterprotest interactions affect public opinion and political polarization?
- How do protest- counterprotest interactions affect activist strategies or administrative responses, such as policing?

Please send your extended abstracts (max 500 words, excluding references) to [priska.daphi@Tuni-bielefeld.de](mailto:priska.daphi@Tuni-bielefeld.de) by 15 January 2024. Abstracts should contain a detailed description of data and methods, (potential) findings and their contribution to existing scholarship.

### **Timeline**

- Submission deadline for abstracts: 15 January 2024
- Decision to authors: Mid-February 2024
- Submission deadline for full papers: 30 June 2024
- Targeted publication date: November 2024