

THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS FOR LIBERTY

# PROTEST HANDBOOK

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2021 EDITION

This handbook is intended to provide an introduction to hosting a student protest for liberty. It is not fully comprehensive, but it rather contains recommendations based on the personal experiences of those contributing to the handbook.





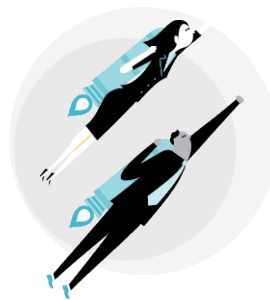
TWO THINGS THAT CHANGE THE WORLD

# Ideas and People

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VISION  
A Freer Future.



MISSION  
Educate, Develop, and Empower the  
next generation of leaders of liberty.

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OF LEADERS FOR LIBERTY

# PROTEST HANDBOOK

2021 EDITION



# Table of Contents

Table of Contents .....	5
Introduction .....	6
How to read this handbook .....	6
Why Non-Violence Matters? .....	6
Section I: Before you start .....	8
Section II: Starting Out .....	8
1. Create a campaign .....	8
2. Mapping out methods and strategy .....	8
3. Planning the protest .....	11
4. Let the world know your message - Marketing your campaign .....	12
5. Execute the Protest .....	12
Your Action Plan .....	14
Section III: Working Under Repression - How To Protest Safely .....	15
Section IV: Tips on Running a Successful Protest & Successful Cases .....	16
Successful examples .....	18
What Now? .....	20

# Introduction

## How to read this handbook

This handbook is intended to provide an introduction to hosting a student protest for liberty. It is not fully comprehensive, but it rather contains recommendations based on the personal experiences of those contributing to the handbook. There may be more effective methods, so, as a result, consider this document as a guide and not a “how to.”

Contained in the handbook are lessons learned from past experiences and practices implemented by many students who have started their own movements for liberty. This handbook is written for those activists who are already working or are considering working on establishing freer societies. This is the third edition of the handbook, and the publication of future editions will rely heavily on the input of activists like you.

Student Protest Handbook is presented in four thematic sections. The first, “Before You Start,” provides you with a basic conceptual and analytical framework. The second, “Starting Out,” teaches you the basic skills that successful activists have mastered, such as crafting a message and planning public actions. The third section, “Working Under Repression”, offers guidance on how to do your work as safely as possible. The last section suggests concrete ways to elevate your skills and knowledge.

The authors hope and believe that communicating the knowledge this way will help you learn how to protest safely so you can win your freedom or establish justice in your hands.

## Why Non-Violence Matters?

Imagine you live in a really repressive country. There are elections but they are fake, the leader wins 100% of the vote each time, security forces beat up opposition leaders with impunity and they harass everyone else. This is a country where raising your voice against something you care about would get you on a list. Now let's say you've had enough and so have many other people that you talk with in low whispers. Assuming you've decided to act, what would be the best way for you to challenge the circumstances and create something new? Coup d'état, conventional wars or even the use of armed weapons are all ways of struggling for a political change or power, but power doesn't only come from a barrel of a gun. In this handbook you will learn an alternative.

This handbook argues that the best way for people to seek really difficult political changes is through non-violent or civil resistance. Civil resistance is an active form of conflict where unarmed civilians use tactics like protest, boycotts, demonstrations and lots of other forms of non-cooperation to seek change. In order to understand why this tactic is always effective, think of what lies at the heart of political power - obedience - if people do not obey, the ruler can not rule. Think of cases like Serbia, where a nonviolent revolution toppled dictator - Slobodan Milošević in October 2000 and the Philippines where the People Power Movement ousted Ferdinand Marcos in 1986.



Hundreds of thousands of people filling up Epifanio delos Santos Avenue (EDSA), facing northbound towards the Boni Serrano Avenue-EDSA intersection. (February 1986)

Source: Wikipedia.org



Otpor! Serbian Youth Movement: Using Strategic Humor and Nonviolence against Milosevic regime.

Source: actbuildchange.org



These pages are for those of you who **believe** in the power of civil society and especially to all of you who are willing to dedicate your time and energy to **civil resistance for a freer future of the world.**



## Section I:

# Before you start

You can not challenge political reality without having the influence necessary to implement your reforms. One way of gaining the power of change is organizing a protest or mass demonstration. Never forget, that protesting is not only fighting for ideals, but it's a struggle for political influence or power in which the main goal is to make your vision come true.

The topic you choose to address while protesting needs to be something that you and other individuals care about. It does not have to be elections or dictatorship, but might be: Taxation, Drug Laws, Free Trade, Free Speech, Gun Control Laws, Smoking Bans etc. Meanwhile the purpose of a protest is not to just shout your opinions in public and have them fall on deaf ears. The purpose is to make your opinions known so that others pay attention and ideally change their opinion in your favor. Remember, power in society comes from people's obedience. Those people, each of whom is individually a source of power - can change their minds and refuse to follow the rulers commands, hence stand on your side. This is when your vision prevails.



## Section II:

# Starting Out

Once you create your vision and understand the nature of political influence you can move from theory to taking the first practical steps towards your action.

As in many serious operations, your most important activities will be related to planning. Without proper planning, your success is based on luck. Every aspect of your campaign should be planned before it is implemented, from the overall strategy to fundraising to grassroots organizing to media relations.

One of the most important issues in your plan is communication. Through targeted communication you must persuade people in your society to change their point of view, pay attention to your activities and, eventually, join your movement. This section offers some tips and tricks for planning your communication activities and public actions.

## 1. Create a campaign

Running a campaign is similar to running any other business. In order to succeed, you must have answered two questions: First, "where are you going" and, second, "how you are going to get there?". Your vision answers the first question, the strategy answers the second.

## 2. Mapping out methods and strategy

Regardless of your topic of choice, you should consider how to address an issue. When we normally think about student protests, the stereotype that comes to mind is the



'60's style of gathering on the college green, playing the guitar and singing songs in response to injustice. The reason this is not a popular method of protesting during this age, is due to the fact that it's an overused form of protest. It's no longer unique and doesn't raise people's attention to the issue at hand.

When students first protested war with love, it was a revolutionary idea. That's why "Make Love Not War" became so popular so fast: because no one had done it before. However, if you can revamp this idea by holding an event such as a concert, don't immediately rule something of the sort out of question. The idea here is to be unique, not trite. To have a successful protest, you need to do something that people are not expecting, something out-of-the-ordinary.

What are some modern examples of unique protest ideas that will make you stand out and attract interest in what you're doing? Gene Sharp researched and catalogued 198 methods of nonviolent action that you might be inspirational for your future action.

Some more examples:

- **Response to Other Events** - If another organization recently protested on campus or had an event about an issue that you disagree with, it's best to hold a protest at the same time to raise a voice of opposition right then. However, if you only learn about it after the fact, organizing a counter-protest within a week can still get attention for the opposite side.
- **Tax Day Smash** - Frustrated with paying your taxes? One student group once bought a beat up old car, parked it in front of the local Post Office, and let people go to town on it with a baseball bat after they walked out



Flower Power (Bernie Boston) National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam's "March on The Pentagon", the photo shows a Vietnam War protester placing a carnation into the barrel of an M14 rifle held by a soldier of the 503rd Military Police Battalion.

Source: Wikipedia.org

of the Post Office. Who doesn't like to take a swing at coercive taxation?

- **Chains & Duct Tape** - When you tie a person up to a tree and duct tape their mouth as a form of performance art, people are going to wonder what you're doing. The idea behind this is to highlight how students' voices are being silenced by either illegal or illegitimate limitations on students' free speech on campus or in the community.
- **Free Consumption Bake Sale** - On April 20th, consider giving away free brownies along with fliers to raise awareness of the harms of drug laws in society. In general, giving things away is always a good idea.

# 198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

## The Methods of Nonviolent Protest and Persuasion

### Formal Statements

1. Public speeches
2. Letters of opposition or support
3. Declarations by organizations and institutions
4. Signed public statements
5. Declarations of indictment and intention
6. Group or mass petitions

### Communications with a Wider Audience

7. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
8. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
9. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
10. Newspapers and journals
11. Records, radio, and television
12. Skywriting and earthwriting

### Group Representations

13. Deputations
14. Mock awards
15. Group lobbying
16. Picketing
17. Mock elections

### Symbolic Public Acts

18. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
19. Wearing of symbols
20. Prayer and worship
21. Delivering symbolic objects
22. Protest disrobing
23. Destruction of own property
24. Symbolic lights
25. Displays of portraits
26. Paint as protest
27. New signs and names
28. Symbolic sounds
29. Symbolic reclamations
30. Rude gestures

### Pressures on Individuals

31. "Haunting" officials
32. Taunting officials
33. Fraternization
34. Vigils

### Drama and Music

35. Humorous skits and pranks
36. Performances of plays and music
37. Singing

### Processions

38. Marches
39. Parades
40. Religious processions
41. Pilgrimages
42. Motorcades

### Honoring the Dead

43. Political mourning
44. Mock funerals
45. Demonstrative funerals
46. Homage at burial places

### Public Assemblies

47. Assemblies of protest or support
48. Protest meetings
49. Camouflaged meetings of protest
50. Teach-ins

### Withdrawal and Renunciation

51. Walk-outs
52. Silence
53. Renouncing honors
54. Turning one's back

## The Methods of Social Noncooperation

### Ostracism of Persons

55. Social boycott
56. Selective social boycott
57. Lysistratic nonaction
58. Excommunication
59. Interdict

### Noncooperation with Social Events, Customs, and Institutions

60. Suspension of social and sports activities
61. Boycott of social affairs
62. Student strike
63. Social disobedience
64. Withdrawal from social institutions

### Withdrawal from the Social System

65. Stay-at-home
66. Total personal noncooperation
67. "Flight" of workers
68. Sanctuary
69. Collective disappearance
70. Protest emigration (hijrat)

## The Methods of Economic Noncooperation:

### Economic Boycotts

#### Actions by Consumers

71. Consumers' boycott
72. Nonconsumption of boycotted goods
73. Policy of austerity
74. Rent withholding
75. Refusal to rent
76. National consumers' boycott
77. International consumers' boycott

#### Action by Workers and Producers

78. Workmen's boycott
79. Producers' boycott

#### Action by Middlemen

80. Suppliers' and handlers' boycott

#### Action by Owners and Management

81. Traders' boycott
82. Refusal to let or sell property
83. Lockout
84. Refusal of industrial assistance
85. Merchants' "general strike"

#### Action by Holders of Financial Resources

86. Withdrawal of bank deposits
87. Refusal to pay fees, dues, and assessments
88. Refusal to pay debts or interest
89. Severance of funds and credit
90. Revenue refusal
91. Refusal of a government's money

#### Action by Governments

92. Domestic embargo
93. Blacklisting of traders
94. International sellers' embargo
95. International buyers' embargo
96. International trade embargo

## The Methods of Economic Noncooperation: The Strike

### Symbolic Strikes

97. Protest strike
98. Quickie walkout (lightning strike)

### Agricultural Strikes

99. Peasant strike
100. Farm Workers' strike

## Strikes by Special Groups

101. Refusal of impressed labor
102. Prisoners' strike
103. Craft strike
104. Professional strike

## Ordinary Industrial Strikes

105. Establishment strike
106. Industry strike
107. Sympathetic strike

## Restricted Strikes

108. Detailed Strike
109. Bumper strike
110. Slowdown strike
111. Working-to-rule strike
112. Reporting "sick" (sick-in)
113. Strike by resignation
114. Limited strike
115. Selective strike

## Multi-Industry Strikes

116. Generalized strike
117. General strike

## Combination of Strikes and Economic Closures

118. Hartal
119. Economic shutdown

## The Methods of Political Noncooperation

### Rejection of Authority

120. Withholding or withdrawal of allegiance
121. Refusal of public support
122. Literature and speeches advocating resistance

### Citizens' Noncooperation with Government

123. Boycott of legislative bodies
124. Boycott of elections
125. Boycott of government employment and positions
126. Boycott of government depts., agencies, and other bodies
127. Withdrawal from government educational institutions
128. Boycott of government-supported organizations
129. Refusal of assistance to enforcement agents
130. Removal of own signs and placemarks
131. Refusal to accept appointed officials
132. Refusal to dissolve existing institutions

### Citizens' Alternatives to Obedience

133. Reluctant and slow compliance
134. Nonobedience in absence of direct supervision
135. Popular nonobedience
136. Disguised disobedience
137. Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse
138. Sit-down
139. Noncooperation with conscription and deportation
140. Hiding, escape, and false identities
141. Civil disobedience of "illegitimate" laws

### Action by Government Personnel

142. Selective refusal of assistance by government aides
143. Blocking of lines of command and information
144. Stalling and obstruction
145. General administrative noncooperation
146. Judicial noncooperation
147. Deliberate inefficiency and selective noncooperation by enforcement agents
148. Mutiny

### Domestic Governmental Action

149. Quasi-legal evasions and delays
150. Noncooperation by constituent governmental units

### International Governmental Action

151. Changes in diplomatic and other representations
152. Delay and cancellation of diplomatic events
153. Withholding of diplomatic recognition
154. Severance of diplomatic relations
155. Withdrawal from international organizations
156. Refusal of membership in international bodies
157. Expulsion from international organizations

## The Methods of Nonviolent Intervention

### Psychological Intervention

158. Self-exposure to the elements
159. The fast
  - a. Fast of moral pressure
  - b. Hunger strike
  - c. Satyagrahic fast
160. Reverse trial
161. Nonviolent harassment

### Physical Intervention

162. Sit-in
163. Stand-in
164. Ride-in
165. Wade-in
166. Mill-in
167. Pray-in
168. Nonviolent raids
169. Nonviolent air raids
170. Nonviolent invasion
171. Nonviolent interjection
172. Nonviolent obstruction
173. Nonviolent occupation

### Social Intervention

174. Establishing new social patterns
175. Overloading of facilities
176. Stall-in
177. Speak-in
178. Guerrilla theater
179. Alternative social institutions
180. Alternative communication system

### Economic Intervention

181. Reverse Strike
182. Stay-in Strike
183. Nonviolent land seizure
184. Defiance of Blockades
185. Politically Motivated Counterfeiting
186. Preclusive Purchasing
187. Seizure of assets
188. Dumping
189. Selective patronage
190. Alternative markets
191. Alternative transportation systems
192. Alternative economic institutions

### Political Intervention

193. Overloading of administrative systems
194. Disclosing identities of secret agents
195. Seeking imprisonment
196. Civil disobedience of "neutral" laws
197. Work-on without collaboration
198. Dual sovereignty and parallel government

Far too often people struggling for democratic rights and justice are not aware of the full range of methods of nonviolent action. Wise strategy, attention to the dynamics of nonviolent struggle, and careful selection of methods can increase a group's chances of success.

Gene Sharp's researched and catalogued these 198 methods and provided a rich selection of historical examples in his seminal work, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (3 Vols.) Boston: Porter Sargent, 1973.

One of the main points of developing a unique approach to holding a protest is to grab people's attention without forcing it on them. Some student groups seek attention by any means possible, including forcing themselves on others' events and limiting people's free speech in the process. For those of us who believe in the free speech of everyone, and that the truth will come through in a market-place of ideas, should not and cannot utilize similar tactics. So called "street theatre" is an amazing way to get out your message and gather interest, just don't create more opposition than interest in the process.

### 3. Planning the protest

So what do you need to plan and when do you need to plan the protest? To answer the latter first, start planning ASAP. Don't delay organizing a protest. It takes lots of time to put a protest together. It's tough to give a specific timeline for how long such an organization should take because protests may be planned a month beforehand or just a few days beforehand. Meanwhile one quality that successful movements share is good organization of their work. For every proposed activity, it is absolutely necessary to answer the questions: Who will do What, When, How, Where and Why?

However, there is a general order you should follow in planning an event:

1. Conceptualize – The first step is to come up with the idea of the event. This should take serious thought to make sure you get the right idea. Don't be bashful about asking Students For Liberty for help in conceptualizing your idea. Additionally, building on the ideas of past successful protests is always encouraged; in short, don't put too much work into "reinventing the wheel," but, instead, spend the most time determining how to make the event successful.
2. Determine the Goal – What do you expect to accomplish with your protest? Raise awareness? Get new members for your group? Stop a policy of a statist administration? Whatever the case, always be aware that a successful protest must have an end goal in mind. Furthermore, a truly successful protest is one that everyone is talking about for some time to come. Leverage existing methods of communication such as TV stations in your area, your local paper. As a rule-of-thumb, if your goal does not entail getting covered by a lot of media, then your protest will likely be less than successful.
3. Craft the Message – Another way of thinking about this is coming up with your sound bites. If the campus newspaper shows up to cover the story (and they should, as it is part of holding any successful protest), you need a clear, concise message that everyone organizing the protest can give them.
4. Create a Timeline of Events – What will happen and when will it happen at the event? If it's just one thing the whole time, fine. Consider chopping it up with intermittent events, though, like a speech in a loudspeaker at certain points, or special prizes for people who come at particular times.
5. Develop a Budget – If you are going to be buying things for the protest, make sure you budget it out and keep costs as low as possible. Make sure to include some kind of give-away. You should have flyers/pamphlets for people to take away, but including something else like candy or a small toy about the issue can be very memorable.
6. Organize Volunteers – Make sure you have a strong number of volunteers at the protest throughout the event. A protest of 1-3 people usually looks pretty sad. Make sure people volunteer for at least 2 hours so they spend enough time at the protest and feel obligated to engage with observers.
7. Create a Marketing Strategy.



## 4. Let the world know your message - Marketing your campaign

You shouldn't just expect to bring 5 people to the center of campus, start a protest, and let people find out about it at their own leisure. Admittedly, with Facebook, Twitter, texts, and the like, spread the word about what's going on around campus spreads faster today than it did 20 years ago, but that doesn't mean people are going to take notice of what you're doing. You need to tell people about the protest beforehand. In short, there's no such thing as too much advertisement or presence.

Draft up a press release preferably two weeks beforehand (or as soon as you can if you're doing the protest on a moment's notice) and send it to your campus newspaper, the alternative campus newspapers, any campus bloggers of note, the local newspaper, the local news station, local radios, and any other media you can think of. This is the direct way of getting the media to take notice of what you're doing. After that, make a Facebook Event to promote it and invite as many people to join the event as possible, in order to get them to show up and support or oppose you. Then go ahead and let as many student groups know you're hosting the protest as possible. Let your potential allies know, as well as your potential opponents. In general, you need to let people know about your protest as many ways as possible before it actually happens.

The next step should be to follow up with the media that you've alerted with your press-release. They may have only glanced over it once, forgot about it, or simply been too busy to acknowledge it. You need to make a concerted effort to confirm their attendance about a week to 4 days in advance. The same sort of follow up should be executed with gener-

al outreach. That is to say, begin a flyering campaign that alerts the campus and/or community of the event that is coming up. Also, don't forget to send out updates via your previously set up social networks, send reminder emails, and message updates.

The day before the event can be equally important. Again, there's really no such thing as too much advertisement. Follow up with your media via a quick phone call reminding them of the location and exact time, and make a final push for your general outreach including emails and social network reminders.

When the day of the protest comes, flyer the campus in the morning with announcements of where the protest will be. People may rarely read flyers or do much with them for events far down the road, but if they read about a protest going on in the College Green right now, they may be inclined to take a detour and see what's going on. If nothing else, it can help build a buzz on campus by having people initiate conversations with "did you check out the X protest?" Also, be sure to keep in mind that text heavy and overly "busy" fliers do you no good. Grab their attention quickly, give them the information required, and remember that brevity is a virtue with fliers.

## 5. Execute the Protest

This is perhaps the most stressful, but exhilarating part of the entire process: Executing the protest. No matter how much you plan, no matter how many possibilities you anticipate, you will never be able to anticipate everything. Something will go wrong, your plans might change, or you might face unexpected opposition. You can limit just how many things go wrong, but something will likely not work out. Following the plan you have made for the event, though, will help you

out tremendously. In brief, keep on your toes and remember to expect the unexpected and be able to react appropriately, with professionalism.

### **Some other tips on what to do to execute a successful protest:**

1. Bring a List-Serv Sign-Up – If you aren't able to collect new names for your list-serve and build your membership, you're missing a crucial benefit of running a protest.
2. Advertise Your Next Event – Always remember to plug new potential members into your next activity. Have some fliers ready to distribute to interested persons that give the times and locations of your next function, even if it is something as small as a social event.
3. Bring a Camera – You want to have as many pictures of your event as possible for your records, newsletters, and proof of your success. Give it to someone and have them go nuts! Remember to capture pictures at interesting angles and, when possible, be sure to get shots that entail action or that conveys an interesting message. These pictures are much more likely to get re- printed by the media.
4. Bring a Video Recorder – This adds another method of documenting your protest for after the event. YouTube videos of protests can be terrific ways to increase your profile and are even more telling than pictures. And, do not hesitate to get it online fast to send out to your local TV stations!
5. Have Someone Who is Loud – In case you don't have a megaphone, having one really loud person to shout is always helpful.
6. Don't Get Caught in the Oppositions Trap – They want to distract you from hosting your protest successfully. That is

to say, if the resident communist decides to pay you a visit and argue with your membership, respectfully turn them away. Do not, under any circumstance, focus on arguing with them. A good tactic to employ is to have your group's number 1 scholar off to the side of the protest, allowing any dissenters the opportunity to argue away, far away from your protest. Don't let the opposition be the highlight of your event—respectfully let them argue to their heart's content, away from your protest with your scholar.

The most important thing to remember, though, is to HAVE FUN! The point of a protest is expressing your opinion in a creative way, beyond just writing an article or giving a speech. A protest is an opportunity to engage people with your ideas and bring on the debate and energy. If you're not having fun at your protest, you're doing something wrong!



# Your Action Plan

## 10-15 DAYS BEFORE PUBLIC EVENT

- ✓ Pick an issue connected to your vision
- ✓ Design an action, create a name and connect them to the message
- ✓ Decide on the time and place that maximize visibility
- ✓ Draw a calendar and post it in a visible place
- ✓ Create budget
- ✓ Prepare printed materials
- ✓ Consider legal requirements

## 7-3 DAYS BEFORE PUBLIC EVENT

- ✓ Meet with the volunteers and explain tasks, agree on tasks
- ✓ Distribute printed leaflets and other promotional materials
- ✓ Plan detailed scenario of event
- ✓ Analyze possible plan for surprises

## 48 HOURS BEFORE EVENT

- ✓ Take necessary legal steps (inform police for example)
- ✓ Remind participants, confirm time and place of the event
- ✓ Prepare press release, and public statement with incorporating the selected message
- ✓ Hold a press conference (if possible)

## 24 HOURS BEFORE THE EVENT

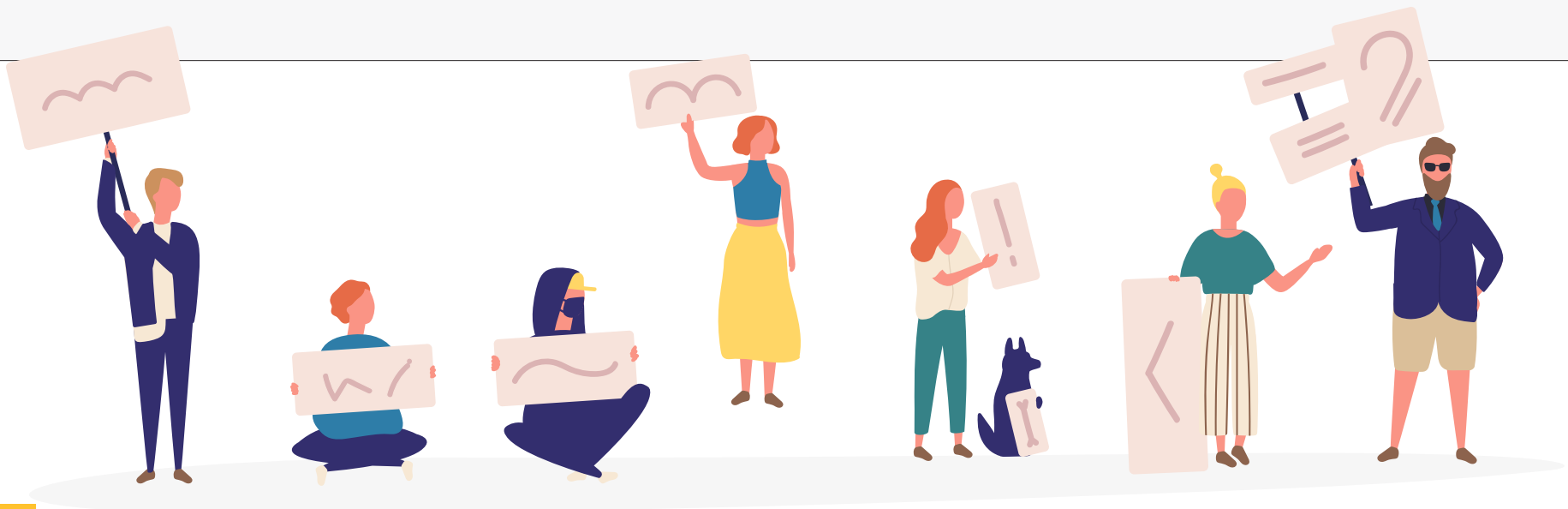
- ✓ Perform a final review of the time schedule and necessary materials
- ✓ Send a press release, inviting journalists to the event
- ✓ Delegate operational tasks for volunteers

## EVENT DAY

- ✓ Gather volunteers in headquarters and motivate them for the event
- ✓ Execute the event
- ✓ Send a press report on the event to the journalists

## AFTER THE EVENT

- ✓ Call the volunteers, giving them recognition for participating in the event
- ✓ Produce press clipping on event media coverage
- ✓ Evaluate the success of the event



## Section III:

# Working Under Repression - How To Protest Safely



## THE SFL GUIDE TO DEALING WITH POLICE

**Badges don't grant extra rights.**  
Follow our handy tips for interacting with cops!



### **AM I BEING DETAINED?**

Ask if you are being detained. If you are not being detained, simply leave.



### **DON'T TALK TO POLICE.**

Everything you say to a police officer can be used against you. You aren't required to talk to police or answer questions.



### **RECORD THE ENTIRE INTERACTION.**

If a police officer knows they're being recorded, they are less likely to violate your rights. It is perfectly legal to record police.



### **ALWAYS SAY NO TO SEARCHES.**

Only a warrant or "reasonable suspicion" of crime gives an officer the right to search you and your property without consent. Let cops know that you don't consent to being searched.



### **STAY CALM.**

Interactions with police can be highly-charged situations, and cops can often act irrationally if things heat up. For your own safety, stay calm, polite, and level-headed.

Disclaimer: this card is not intended to be formal legal advice



[www.StudentsForLiberty.org](http://www.StudentsForLiberty.org)

## THE SFL GUIDE

TO PROTESTING IN THE AGE OF SURVEILLANCE



### **PROTECT YOUR (AND OTHERS) PRIVACY.**

If you're going out to a protest, there are some basic steps you should take to safeguard your privacy, and also others, who may be more at risk than you.

#### **LEAVE YOUR PHONE HOME.**

The device in your pocket is definitely going to give off information that could be used to identify you. Protesters who want full anonymity leave their primary phone at home altogether.

#### **USE A BURNER PHONE.**

If you carry a phone for recording, make it a secondary cell phone that you don't use often, or a burner.

#### **KEEP IT OFF.**

Keep your phone off as much as possible to reduce the chances that it connects to a rogue cell tower or Wi-Fi hotspot being used by law enforcement for surveillance.

#### **USE A BAG.**

To be even more certain that your phone won't be tracked, keep it in a Faraday bag that blocks all of its radio communications.

#### **USE END-TO-END ENCRYPTION.**

Traditional calls and text messages are vulnerable to surveillance. That means you need to use end-to-end encryption for communications (Some secure apps are: Signal, Wire, and Wickr).

#### **KEEP IT LOCKED.**

Always protect devices with a strong passcode rather than a fingerprint or face

unlock. It may be more difficult to resist an officer forcing your thumb onto your phone's sensor than to refuse to tell them a passcode.

#### **THINK TWICE BEFORE POSTING ONLINE.**

Files you upload to social media might contain metadata like time stamps and location information that could help law enforcement track crowds and movement.

#### **BE MINDFUL ABOUT LIVE-STREAMING.**

Think carefully before live streaming. It's important to document what's going on but difficult to be sure who would be potentially identifiable in your content.

#### **AVOID DRIVING.**

If you're driving a car, consider that automatic license plate readers can easily identify your vehicle's movements.

#### **DRESS SMART.**

Colorful clothing or wearing prominent logos makes you more recognizable to law enforcement and easier to track.

#### **COVER YOUR FACE.**

Consider wearing a face mask and sunglasses to make it much more difficult for you to be identified by facial recognition in surveillance footage. If you have tattoos, try to cover them.



Disclaimer: This is not intended to be formal legal advice.

## Section IV:

# Tips on Running a Successful Protest & Successful Cases

## Tip 1: Community, Networking and finding Allies

Since protests are often a numbers game, working with others is vital to making your event a success. That is why building a community, or network that is willing to collaborate on projects, is vital to running a protest.

Utilize team-based management: Have people assemble into teams that are responsible for taking on various aspects of the protest. Everyone then can come back together with their accomplishments and goals to form the holistic vision and plan for making the protest a complete and group success.

Do not be afraid to call established organizations together for coalition meetings to discuss what they are doing in your community. Be willing to assist them on their projects if they will return the favor and help you on yours. This is the perfect time to discuss your protest ideas; be willing to accept constructive criticism.

Over time, if you can develop a working relationship with like-minded people, future events will run much more smoothly. This will also save time, money and manpower at making your protests work. Remember that few protests are developed by one person alone, and those that are, are rarely seen by a large audience.

## Tip 2: Post-Protest Fun

The primary purpose of a protest is to ensure that your message is reached by a large audience to create fundamental change in society. However, the videos and photos from each event should also be used to boost supporter morale and continue to outreach to your audience.

Create a slideshow or a video montage that can be shown to those who attended the protest. Print the pictures and put them on a presentation board to show prospective members how you're active on campus. Host a screening where everyone can watch the final product. Also, don't forget to post the video on YouTube or a blog where your work can be seen by others.

Remember, if people enjoy attending each event, it will be easier to get people to show up to future events. Moreover, there is nothing wrong with meeting people for planned apolitical social gatherings after a job well-done. This is often the best time to brainstorm creative ideas, and it helps to develop bonds between like minded people. The power of friendship should be encouraged. Make friends, not just members!

## Tip 3: Love the Labor

The more work you put into a protest, the more you will get out of it. In short, there is direct correlation between effort and success. Also, keep in mind that the more organized you are before an event, and the more time you give yourself to plan each event, the more prepared you will be to deal with logistical problems. When the event finally comes to fruition, you will remember how much work was required to make it successful.



## Tip 4: Take Risks

The most successful protests are often the most creative. Do not be afraid to try something that has never been done before or expand in a creative way on a previously used idea for a liberty based protest. Furthermore, creativity sometimes raises numbers at an event. If you want to get the media's attention, but don't have 100,000 people marching in the streets for your cause, having a catchy idea may make someone take notice. Give them a multitude of reasons to take notice of your cause.

## Tip 5: Let it be Organic

Encouraging supporters to develop their own creative ideas will work wonders toward getting more people involved. Conversely, utilizing a totally top-down approach will reduce the number of people attending the event; the goal is to make everyone believe they have a stake in the outcome.

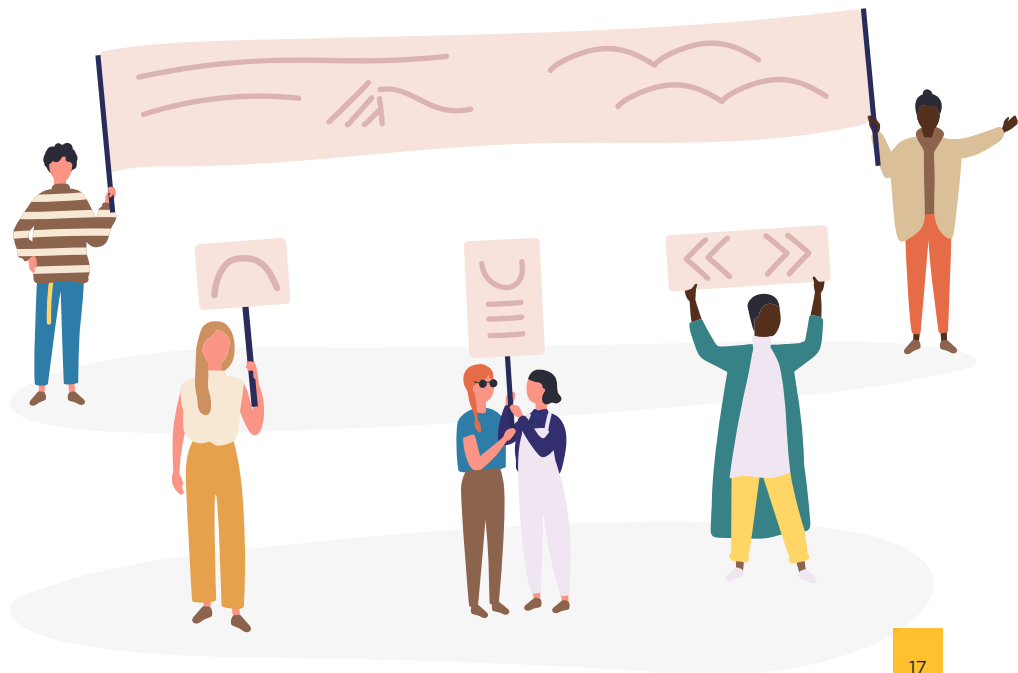
Leadership means much, much more than simply planning and taking everything on for yourself. A true leader is able to get others involved naturally and make them feel an integral part of your initiative. Offer support for your members, offer your ideas, and more often than not, offer the opportunity for them to take on a part of the plan, and make it their own.



## Tip 6: Let people make get creative

Feel free to let people make their own signs, rather than handing out signs for each person. Creative, hand-made signs also look better than mock and branded signs that everyone has. People should feel compelled to run with their ideas, so long as it is “value added” to the protest and overall idea of accomplishing the protest's goals. Also, if supporters want to change the event, the more flexible you are, the more likely others will work with you as well.

Lastly, remember that Mona Lisa died; you don't have to “paint the perfect picture” for your protest to be successful. If members and supporters enjoy the event, and your message is well-received and covered, then your work has been a success.



# Successful examples



## OTPOR, Serbia 2000

After NATO's bombing of Serbia and Montenegro in the Spring of 1999, the Milosevic regime tried to consolidate power and discredit all of its opponents as traitors and hirelings of the countries that participated in the bombing. Many pro-reform parties could not agree to a stable and coherent political platform. These factors helped create the space for non-partisan movement to mobilize the public. OTPOR filled the space very visibly in 2000, but this was only done because of the planning process that was conducted in 1999.



## SHAME MOVEMENT, Georgia 2019

The “Shame Movement” in Georgia started after Sergei Gavrilov, representative of the communist party of Russia, was invited to the Georgian parliament as a spokesman. Georgia's pro-western youth called for protests in response to his decision to deliver a speech from the speaker's seat. He addressed delegates in Russian, angering politicians, and Georgians vehemently opposed to Moscow's presence in the country. Calling for the chairman of the parliament and other officials to resign, about 10,000 protesters breached the police cordon in the capital, Tbilisi. The Georgian government decided to use brute force on some protestors and imprison others. This increased both the number of people who joined the Shame Movement and the demands that the movement had. Alongside the resignation of the chairman and the minister of internal affairs, the people called to switch to proportional elections and to free those who got imprisoned during “Gavrilov's night”. The peaceful protest lasted for more than a month until all of these demands were fulfilled.



## Legalize Belarus

Legalize Belarus is a civic campaign that was launched in 2017 by SFL Belarus as a reaction against extremely inhumane drug policy in the most authoritarian country in Europe. Since then activists organized around 30 public events, got over 250 hits in local, national and international media and even released their own clothing line. For their activities, they were several times arrested, fined, and their website was blocked by the government of Belarus.



## #DoNotArrest movement in Georgia

In 2014, SFL leaders in Georgia helped organize the first rally in Tbilisi to promote marijuana decriminalization. Thousands of activists showed up in support. The protest has become annual, bringing together students, NGO activists and politicians in front of the state chancellery to demand freer and safer drug policies.

SFL leaders in Georgia have hosted a number of smaller events aimed at furthering reasonable discussion and education about drugs. Activists have numerous appearances in national media, publicly advocating for decriminalisation. Thanks to the #DoNotArrest movement and other organizations, on 30 July 2018 the Constitutional Court of Georgia ruled that “consumption of marijuana is an action protected by the right to free personality”. People are no longer arrested for use of cannabis in Georgia.



## End The Drug War Caravan in Mexico

For the last 5 years, SFL Mexico organised a number of conferences, panels and debates, covering the issue of drug regulation. Most of them gathered audiences of 60-200 people. Following the success of the Liberty Roadshow, when SFL Mexico reached 1500 students at 12 events in 6 months, activists are launching their second series of thematic events around the country, with a focus on the War on Drugs.

50 events in 21 cities with an estimated total reach of 3000 people are planned to take place from May 2019 to May 2020. End The Drug War Caravan in Mexico will host three types of events: debates and conferences in universities, cultural and artistic exhibitions in public spaces and social events with local businessmen, stakeholders and activists taking part. Student leaders will travel around Mexico to promote freer drug policies in a simple form for the people who would otherwise never have an exposure to these ideas.

# What Now?

With this overview of how to run a successful student protest, start working on hosting your own protest! Get together with your student group and brainstorm ideas. When you have a plan, submit a proposal to Students For Liberty's Student Protest Grants to try and get funding for it. If Students For Liberty cannot financially support the protest, but we support the effort, we will still provide connections and non-financial resources to support your group.

Additionally, do not hesitate to contact your regional director. We're all here to resource your active participation on campus and help spread the message of liberty. In reality, we really do love hearing about what our groups are doing and will love to hear how we can help. Let us know about your event and we'll do all we can to help you make it a success!

