



How to Read a Protest: The Art of Organising and Resistance

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The author, who has experience of organizing mass demonstrations (for example against the Iraq War in 2003) compares two major protests: the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom (when Martin Luther King gave his 'I have a dream' speech); and the Women's Marches in Washington and across the USA in January 2017. She focuses on the different styles of protest - the first highly organized and centrally controlled by Civil Rights leaders (who strictly monitored the slogans on banners and signs), the second decentralized and spontaneous in origin with a multiplicity of demands and slogans. There was also a major contrast in the public role played by women (not allowed to speak at the 1963 rally and prominent in 2017). Kauffman argues that the mass protests also had contrasting aftermaths - with the 2017 protests leading directly to continuing grass roots mobilization, whereas the 1963 march did not.

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