

# Thierry M. Luescher

Personal Blog and Website with Links to Open Access Publications on Higher Education in Africa - Student Experience - Student Politics - Student Affairs - Institutional Research - Higher Education Policy and Politics Research

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Tuesday, 22 June 2021

## An Anthropology of the Student Movement?



To study the student movement ethnographically shows that protesting comes in many more forms than may be expected.

Many years ago I came across James C Scott's work on the Arts of Resistance where he showed that there were 'hidden transcripts' in play among subordinate communities to express in thinly disguised ways effective ways of subverting the dominant order and resisting everyday exploitation.

Among the most memorable parts of this work was to me his description of various art-forms of resistance, like dances and plays; processions; songs and chants; rituals; paintings.

Chapter 6 of my current book project on #FeesMustFall and related student movement campaigns of 2015/16 also deals with the aesthetic and artistic (but not quite hidden) forms of protesting. South Africa has a rich protest culture.

Many will know that under apartheid, funerals were often a combination of mourning the death (and celebrating the life) and political protest. Struggle songs, protest dances, and so



forth are so common that many a youth knows them intimately. They have been part of their lived reality, their normality, in their communities.



I also remember reading Barrington Moore's work in my undergraduate years, making precisely this argument about social movements, or in my case a student movement, arising from the everyday normality.

For students, this everyday reality is also intimately connected with the digital world; they have digital selves, avatars, choreographed online persona, that are equally protesting.

The combination of text, illustration, pictures as well as online content (AR content) in the book will hopefully be able to reflect the rich tapestry of protesting during the 2015/16

South African student movement.

Photos: Name Trees spray-painted during the February 2016 #ShimlaPark protests on the Bloemfontein Campus of the University of the Free State.



Featuring:

- Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana)
- Julius Nyerere (Tanzania)
- Winnie Mandela (South Africa)
- Chris Hani (South Africa)

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By Thierry Luescher at [June 22, 2021](#)

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### What does Student Governance mean?

When I decided in 2002 to write a Master's thesis on student governance at the University of Cape Town (which eventually became a PhD...



[Clearing Research Ethics Clearance](#)

Credits: Bill Watterson - Calvin and

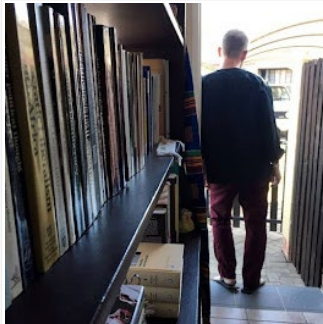
Hobbes - one of my most beloved  
comics strips Good grief... REC/IRB  
here we go again. We do years...

### **Blog Archive**

June (1)

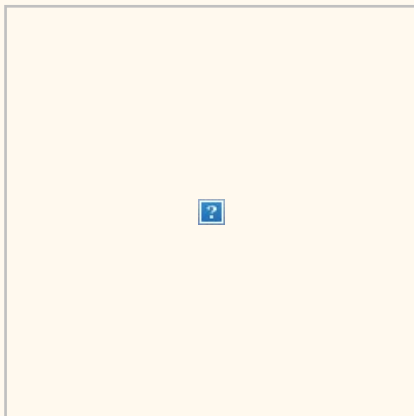
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