

EXTINCTION REBELLION MOVEMENT- by Sienna

September 2019- extinction Rebellion Protest outside Shell Oil head office and cause blockages Infront of right-wing printing presses.

- Over 1000 people were arrested and awarded special permission to travel during lockdown to London for in person court case. (Taylor, 2021, The Guardian)

With this example of a controversial XR protest it raises the question of whether disruptive action is worth breaking the law to benefit the cause.

Any publicity is good publicity...?

- Is this commonly known statement correct. I would argue No. There is only a very slim proportion of the time where bad publicity is good for a company, cause or political figure. Bad publicity and a smeared image have the ability to give a large amount of people good enough reason to discredit what you are trying to say. This concept is very important in the context of a protest as the primary goal should be to put a united viewpoint and statement forwards.
- For this reason, I do not believe that militant actions would be appropriate for an extinction rebellion protest. I fear that any act of this kind would shadow the message of the protest.

Should innocent people's day to day lives be impacted by a protest...?

- This is a question that is very current with the government bill that is being introduced in order to give the police more power to handle protests that they believe to be too loud or causing chaos. By law you must tell the police in writing 6 days before a public march if you're the organiser.

Tell the police the:

- date and time of the march
- route
- the names and addresses of the organisers

The police have the power to:

- limit or change the route of your march
- set any other condition of your march

If you arrange a march at short notice, you must still tell the police as soon as you can.

The police can also:

- change the location
- limit how long a rally lasts
- limit the amount of people who attend



- the policing bill and governmental restrictions on protests are in many ways necessary as if everyday life got put on hold for every single protest with no authority over protestors the world would be a very different place and it would be very chaotic and harmful.
- However, I would argue that the reason it is such a difficult situation to manage is that the whole idea of a protest is to disrupt. Even peaceful protestors aim to make some noise. If a protest was made up of lots of people but not enough to get in the way, with opinions but not loud enough to be heard or disturb, then this protest would be allowed in the eyes of the law. But it would not be noticed, it would not be publicised, and no one would hear their message. The idea of a message is to make enough noise about an issue so that even those that are not seeking to hear what you have to say have no choice but to hear your viewpoint. Because if only those that agree or want to listen notice a protest then it is not changing any minds and it is not reaching the scope of people necessary to make a difference.
- I think something to realise is that it is very uncommon for protests to cause government cooperation immediately.

The ideal outcome of a protest for protestors is to receive government action without the use of violence. An example of this ideal was Martin Luther King's historic "I Have a Dream" speech which was delivered during the August 1963 rally to promote racial equality in the United States. More than 200,000 demonstrators gathered peacefully at the Lincoln Memorial in D.C., and the event is credited with pressuring President John F. Kennedy to draw up firm civil rights legislation. (Whipps, Specktor, 2020)

As a member of the extinction rebellion the movement I organised would consist of 3 structural features and aims.

1. List of clear demands.
 - Having a list of key goals of the protest stating the action I would hope to cause or receive in response to the movement.
 - Provide Incentive to buy electric cars
 - A rating system on a company's level of sustainability and eco friendliness. This would work similarly to the Fairtrade initiative to try and provide clear information as to which businesses environmental CSR is just for publicity to boost sales and which are actually valid differences in their company to help the fight against climate change.
 - Pressure fossil fuel companies to spend at least half of their retained profit into research of alternative green energy.
2. Raise awareness
 - Extinction rebellion have always worked towards making climate change an immediate issue for everyone.
 - I think with the protest I organise it is vital to realise the restrictions of the current environment with COVID 19. But I think just as important to stand up and say. 'Just because another global issue has come along doesn't mean everything else is put on hold'
 - National lockdowns should not affect the proactive actions that need to be taking place right now and in the next ten years.



3. ENSURE WE ARE HEARD

- If we are to organise a protest with the new bill and completely abide by the laws of the bill, I vote we go the other way and do exactly what the government and police expect. We tell them exactly what we are doing in protest, where we are going and how many people there will be months in advance.
- But we also bombard them with information about the cause and letters about the demands.
- We say that if we obey the protest guidelines for the first 5 hours of the protest and do not receive direct government response then we will disrupt daily life again, we will block printing presses and Organise country wide road and rail blocks.
- However, just for 1 hour and then we stop immediately and walk away. But if the protest gathers enough speed that 1 hour period will show the government and cooperate companies that extinction rebellion has a large amount of power. It will show them that there is a large community of people that support this cause and unless they act soon, we have the ability to cause some chaos.

With this action I would hope to trigger governmental response, corporate decisions and individual change. With a protest or any movement for a cause the target public audience is not those that believe in your cause because there would be no point in that, it is not those who are fully against your cause because chances are their minds are made up. The target is the small group of individuals who are on the fence. They are middle ground and have not yet made up their mind. With my action for extinction rebellion, I would aim to persuade this group of people to join the cause and take action. This is why it is important not to do anything drastic or violent that would push them to the other team and to focus on showing them scientific data and facts about the future that will give them no choice but to see our perspective

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/jan/08/more-than-1000-extinction-rebellion-activists-taken-to-court#:~:text=Extinction%20Rebellion%20activists%20protesting%20against,company's%20London%20offices%20in%20September.&text=The%20peaceful%20protests%20brought%20large,and%20fossil%20fuel%20companies%20targeted.>

<https://inews.co.uk/news/environment/extinction-rebellion-protests-continue-london-shell-offices-climate-change-639513>

<https://www.police.uk/pu/contact-the-police/>

<https://labourlist.org/2021/03/the-police-crime-sentencing-and-courts-bill-would-hit-the-marginalised-hardest/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-crime-sentencing-and-courts-bill-2021-factsheets/police-crime-sentencing-and-courts-bill-2021-protest-powers-factsheet>

<https://www.livescience.com/16153-10-significant-political-protests.html>

