

Álvaro Domínguez-Armas 'Protests as Group Speech Acts' (ÚFaR)

Abstract:

In this paper, I offer an analysis of protests in terms of speech acts. I consider two slogans featured in protest signs carried in feminist rallies that occurred on the 8th March in Lisbon (2020) as a case in point to examine what protests communicate. I survey different approaches to speech act theory to identify which acts constitute protests. I argue that these approaches have overlooked the collective dimension of protests. In the latter part of the paper, I propose that protests are group speech acts constituted by expressions of disapproval and connected prescriptions for change. I argue that protests are speech acts that protesters perform on behalf of social movements to communicate their demands in the public sphere.