Social Movements
SOCY S216
Summer 2019, Session B (July 1 – August 2)
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:00 - 12:15 AM

** Draft Syllabus, Subject to Change **

Instructor
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Description
This course is about how people act collectively to challenge the status quo of powerful political, social, economic, and cultural systems that resist change. Social movements that challenge such systems vary widely in terms of their group identities, social locations, strategies for action, particular demands, and tactics. In order to better understand social movements, we will begin broadly with some key questions: What are social movements and how do we approach the task of defining them? What tools do we need to analyze how movements work? And how can we appreciate how and why some movements succeed in achieving their goals while others apparently fail?

In this intensive 5-week summer course, we will focus on one case study per week, using each case to work through a set of concepts that will help us understand particular social movements and how movements work more generally. We will pay attention to how movements operate both inwardly (oriented towards their own members) and outwardly (oriented towards opponents and others). Our primary empirical focus will be on social movements within the United States, but we will also pay close attention to the ways that collective behavior and protest in the U.S. matters globally.

Our study of social movements will move back and forth between abstract concepts and particular case studies. Our primary empirical case studies are: 1) The U.S. civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s; 2) Organized Labor in the 20th century, 3) Identity-focused movements that emerged from the 1960s, especially the gay rights and LGBTQ movements, 4) The Tea Party movement and its challengers; and 5) #BlackLivesMatter and the Movement for Black Lives.

We will approach these movements by paying attention to concepts like: Solidarity, Organization, Mobilization, Identity, Resources, Framing, Collective Memory, Narrative, Networks and Organizations, Forms of Protest, and Performance.
Learning Outcomes

After completing this class, you will: (1) Understand a range of approaches that sociologists and scholars of collective behavior use to define and analyze social movements, (2) Be experienced in applying such abstract analytical tools to rich empirical case studies of social movements from the 20th and 21st centuries, (3) Have a firm grasp on how cultural explanations of protest and social movements relate to other approaches that emphasize the structural, material, and rational aspects of collective behavior, and (4) Have interacted with contemporary social movement activists in order to better understand their motivations, their approaches to organizing, protest, and other activities.

Class Format

The class format will be a mix of lectures, discussions, and debates. Short lectures will orient you to the material for each session, helping to identify the main arguments and the significance of each reading with respect to the overarching themes of the course. Our discussions will help you process the readings and apply them to the broader questions the course explores and to your own intellectual interests.

You will be responsible for reading the material assigned for each class session. We will spend most of our time discussing these readings and it is imperative that you come to class having read the materials for the day and prepared to discuss them. You will be responsible for reading up to 100 pages for each class.

Additionally, each week will culminate in reading one book focused on our central case study for the week. These books will be the basis of your weekly short essays, which will be due each Monday following the first week of class.

Attendance and Participation

Because of the discussion-based format of the course, student participation is absolutely essential. We will spend most of our time in class discussing the readings and other relevant topics. You are expected to come to class having done the readings and should be prepared to discuss their content, implications, and related questions. As this is an intensive summer class, full attendance is imperative. Absences will only be excused for unforeseeable exigencies. Please see below for further details on participation grading.

In class, computers may be used for the purposes of taking notes, etc., but should be used sparingly during discussions and other interactive activities. Phones should not be used at any time during class. If an emergency arises and you need to use your phone during class, please excuse yourself and rejoin the class when you are ready.

The central topics of this course—including race, religion, politics, and sexuality—are difficult and personal to many. This class will be a place open to all perspectives on these
topics within the limits of civility and respectful engagement. By civility and respectful engagement, I mean that we will all commit to listening to each other, practicing charity in interpreting each other’s views, positions, and experiences, and speaking to each other with appreciation and respect. That being said, we will all benefit most in an environment that is open to freely and critically investigating difficult ideas related to how our topics of study. We will not always agree with each other on matters that tend to be highly divisive, but we can agree to make an honest effort to understand each other’s views and to treat each other with the utmost respect.

Course Requirements

Participation — Attendance and active participation are key components of this class. Our classes will be conversational in nature and will require regular active engagement during our meetings. You must come prepared to discuss the readings each day and will participate regularly in small and larger group discussions and debates on the material. As part of your participation grade, you will be responsible for presenting on some aspect of the reading and discussion material at least once during the course.

Four Short Essays — Each Monday of the class after the first week, you will have a short essay due. These essays will be primarily focused on the material from the previous week, but there will be a cumulative aspect and you will be asked to incorporate insights and information from previous weeks in each essay. We will discuss the topics and format of these essays in detail during the first week of class.

Essay 1 — Approx. 1,000 words (3-4 pages double spaced); Due Monday, July 8 at Noon
Essay 2 — Approx. 1,500 words (4-5 pages double spaced); Due Monday, July 15 at Noon
Essay 3 — Approx. 2,000 words (6-7 pages double spaced); Due Monday, July 22 at Noon
Essay 4 — Approx. 2,500 words (7-8 pages double spaced); Due Monday, July 29 at Noon

Interview with an Activist – During the course, you will prepare and conduct a short (approximately 30 min) interview with a social movement activist. We will spend a significant amount of time in class preparing for these interviews and you will develop an interview protocol before conducting your interview. The interview could take place on Yale’s campus, elsewhere in New Haven, online, or by phone. You will submit a 4-5 page (double spaced) report on your interview that includes a summary and analysis. This report is due on the last day of the session (August 2) at 11:59 PM.

Grading

Participation and Attendance: 20%

Four Essays

- Essay 1: 10%
- Essay 2: 10%
- Essay 3: 20%
- Essay 4: 20%
Class Policies

Late Assignments

Late assignments will be penalized 10% (one letter grade) per day.

Academic Integrity

Cheating and academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated and will be handled appropriately within the University’s guidelines. If there is any doubt about what constitutes cheating and academic dishonesty, please consult the University’s resources on this or ask me.

Special Accommodations

Students with disabilities who need special accommodations for this course are encouraged to meet with the appropriate disability service provider on campus as soon as possible. All appropriate accommodations will be made according to University policies.

Contacting the Instructor

Email is the best way to be in touch with me. I will email you back within 24 hours.

Readings

Books — The following books will be our primary texts for the course. Please purchase them from the Yale bookstore or wherever you prefer to buy your books:


Other Readings — Selections from these readings will be available on Canvas in the 'Files' tab or linked in the course schedule:

Course Schedule

Week 1 (Week of July 1): Introduction and the Civil Rights Movement

Readings:
- Jasper, James M. 2014. Protest: A Cultural Introduction to Social Movements (Selections)
- Alexander, Jeffrey C. 2006. The Civil Sphere (Selections)
- McAdam, Doug. 1990. Freedom Summer

Week 2 (Week of July 8): The American Labor Movement

Readings:
- Jasper, James M. 2014. Protest: A Cultural Introduction to Social Movements (Selections)

Week 3 (Week of July 15): “New” Social Movements

Readings:
- Jasper, James M. 2014. Protest: A Cultural Introduction to Social Movements (Selections)
- Stulberg, Lisa M. 2018. LGBTQ Social Movements

Week 4 (Week of July 22): The Tea Party and its Challengers

Reading:
- Jasper, James M. 2014. Protest: A Cultural Introduction to Social Movements (Selections)

Week 5 (Week of July 29): #BlackLivesMatter and the Movement for Black Lives

Readings:
- Jasper, James M. 2014. Protest: A Cultural Introduction to Social Movements (Selections)
• Romano, Renee C. and Leigh Raiford. 2006. *The Civil Rights Movement in American Memory* (Selections)
• Taylor, Keeanga-Yamahtta. 2016. *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*