SOC 135: Social Movements

Instructor: Prof. Matthew Williams
Course meeting time: Tuesday & Thursday, 3:00-4:15 p.m.
Course location: Anderson Hall 211
Cross-listings: PJS 135
Office hours: Tuesday & Thursday, 1:45-2:45 p.m. or by appointment. Please be warned though that I am teaching at another school Monday, Wednesday, & Friday and will only be on campus Tuesdays & Thursdays and will not be available for appointments on other days.
Office location: Eaton 122
Mailbox location: Eaton 102B
Instructor’s e-mail: mw21@mindspring.com or matthew.williams@tufts.edu (Both e-mails end up in the same place.)

Disclaimer: This syllabus is not set in stone. I may change things on it, if I judge doing so will better meet the needs of the class. Please pay attention for any messages I send out indicating such changes.

Overview

Social movements are a vital yet often denigrated part of US and global society. Some of you may have been involved with one, engaging in some sort of social justice activism. Some of you have probably had little to do with social movements beyond walking past a protest or seeing one covered on the news. People who know little about social movements often have negative stereotypes about those involved with them, seeing activists as marginal and slightly crazy figures, who have little real impact. In reality, many of the things we take for granted today--a forty-hour work week, the lack of legal racial segregation, the principle of equal pay for equal work by men and women, the belief that physically abusing your wife is wrong, even a healthy skepticism of authority--are the result of struggles by social movements throughout US history. Many people devoted their lives to fighting for these things we take for granted now--and in some cases were killed in doing so.

Understanding the role of social movements in society will help us better understand the sacrifices people made in the past to gain these things. Equally important, we can come to see how and why social movements are still a vital and important part of society, the role they continue to play in fighting for social justice and greater equality. The study of social movements also helps to illuminate many larger social issues, such as the nature of power and inequality in society; how social change happens; the role of values in society; and how democracy can best work. My hope is that by studying social movements, you will gain a better understanding of how society as a whole works. This, in turn, will help you better understand your own place in society and help you to better play the role of an active, concerned citizen.

We will start the semester with two case studies--the civil rights and global justice (“anti-globalization”) movements. Whatever history and social studies classes you have taken have probably focused very little on the role of social movements. Thus, I want to start with a historical overview of two of them to give you a better appreciation of why people join
movements, their dynamics, and the place they have in history. We will then go on to consider a number of aspects of movements, both how they interact with the wider social world and the inner dynamics of how people within movements interact with each other. In doing so, we will look not only at debates of concern to academic scholars, but those that are important to activists as well.

We will be reading articles by both academics and activists (and some who are both). The scholars who study social movements are generally sympathetic to (if not actively involved in) progressive social movements. The readings reflect this. (One troubling reflection of this is that there is relatively little research on conservative social movements, which is why there is nothing to be found about them on this syllabus.) You are likely to find that many of the ideas in this course will challenge fundamental beliefs of yours. This is likely to be especially the case for conservatives, but will probably be so even for liberals. This can sometimes be an uncomfortable experience. To benefit from this course, you need to be open-minded and willing to work with that discomfort. I don’t necessarily expect you to change your beliefs (although you may); I do hope that you will at least come away having thought through those beliefs more deeply.

Communications

When I have something important to notify the class of, I will try to do so both through an announcement in class and through an e-mail message to the class; at times, it may be by e-mail only though. I may also e-mail students individually if I feel the need to communicate with them about something in particular. I ask that you please read your e-mail regularly and, if I ask you to respond, to do so promptly. If you are not able to check your e-mail regularly for some reason, please let me know early in the semester, so we can agree on an alternate method of communication.

If you need to communicate with me outside of class, please e-mail me. Include the name of the class in the subject line, so I know that it is class-related and therefore deserving of prompt attention--and so I know to which of the classes I am teaching it is related.

Readings

I ask that you complete all reading assignments on the day that they are due. You will be held responsible for all readings on the exams, even those we do not cover in class. (At the same time, if you have a question on a reading we did not cover in class, please feel free to ask about it.)

Books

The following books will be used in the class and are available at the bookstore; they will also be on course reserve at the library:


**Trunk**
Many of the readings will be available in PDF format through the Trunk system.

**On-line**
A few of the readings will be available on the internet. The URLs for such readings are provided in the syllabus.

**Grading and Written Assignments**

Your final grade will be calculated as follows: Your midterm and final exams (both take-homes) will each be worth 25% of your grade, your research paper worth 20%, class participation 15%, journal entries 10%, and attendance 5%.

I will give numerical grades on your exams. They translate into letter grades as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97+</td>
<td>A+</td>
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<tr>
<td>93-96</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>90-92</td>
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<td>87-89</td>
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**Attendance**

I put in a good deal of work preparing for class and, in return, I ask that you come to class regularly. Additionally, we will be discussing certain facts and ideas in class that will not be in the readings, but that you will be expected to know for the exams. Thus, attendance is worth 5% of your grade. For every absence, I will deduct 3 points from your attendance grade (i.e., after one absence, your grade would be a 97%, after two, an 94%, etc.). Thus, good attendance can boost your grade, while poor attendance can hurt it.

If you come into class late, after attendance has been taken, please check in with me at the end of class to make sure you are not marked as absent. I will try to make note of people who come in late, but cannot guarantee that I will do so. If you are more than fifteen minutes late, I will only credit you with half an attendance.

While I permit students to leave early if need be (i.e., for an appointment which couldn’t be scheduled so it didn’t conflict with class), if you leave more than fifteen minutes early, I will only credit you with half an attendance.

**Class Participation**

I hope to have in-class exercises and discussions in which everyone will participate on a regular basis. This will give you a chance to actively explore the ideas we examine in this class and debate with others. Thus, class participation is worth 15% of your grade.
In order to properly keep track of who has said what during class discussion, at the end of each class, I will ask you to turn in a piece of scrap paper or (preferably) an index card with notes of anything you said during large group discussion. These don’t have to be elaborate—just enough to jog my memory. While ideally I would remember what everyone has said during class and would not need these cards as an aid, my memory is fallible and I find if I don’t use this system, I often forget to credit people with participation. This system is meant to allow you to get proper credit for participating.

Please remember that if you don’t come to class, you can’t participate. Thus, unexcused absences will also count against your class participation grade.

**Journal Entries**
Roughly every other week starting Thursday, September 15, I will ask you to turn in journal entries reflecting on the past two weeks’ readings, lectures and class discussions/exercises. This will come to a total of six journal entries. (The specific due dates are listed in the syllabus.) I am asking you to engage in a particular form of journaling, known as the “double-entry notebook” or a “dialogue journal.” First, record your notes summarizing some important part of the readings, lectures, and/or class discussions you wish to reflect upon. Second, I ask you “to create an interactive commentary on the material—posing questions, raising doubts, making connections, seeing opposing views, linking course material with personal experience [or current events], expressing confusion, and so forth.”¹ In short, this is a place for you to engage in dialogue with the class material, perhaps to raise issues you wanted to bring up in class discussion, but didn’t get a chance to. You may cover anything in the past two weeks since the last journal entry, but you certainly don’t need to cover everything. Your commentary does not need to be polished. Indeed, I encourage you to free write, that is to write in a stream of consciousness style, going with whatever thoughts come up, as long as they are in some way related to the class.

The length of each journal entry should be two to three pages (types and double-spaced), with no more than a quarter devoted to summarizing the course material.

The journal entries will be graded on a 12-point scale. (A 12 is roughly equivalent to an A, an 11 to an A-, on down to a 1, which is roughly equivalent to an F.) The criteria by which I will grade the assignment are: 1) The degree to which you show a good comprehension of the class materials in the first part of the journal entry. 2) The degree to which you are engaged with the class material, shown by having something interesting to say about it. 3) Original insights, such as connecting the class materials together in new ways; connecting the class materials with things outside of class, whether your experience, current events, or what you have learned in other classes; raising perceptive criticisms of the class materials; etc.

This will be worth 10% of your grade. If you miss class on the day journal entries are due, please e-mail me a copy of yours, then bring in a hard copy next time you come to class. Journal entries not turned in on time can be turned in up to a week late for half-credit. If you know you will be having a busy week on one of the weeks the journals are due, it is perfectly legitimate to do it a

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week ahead of time, when you have less work, and turn it in one the due date. I am not expecting you to cover all the class material anyway.

**Exams**

There will be two take-home exams, a midterm and final, each worth 25% of your grade. Both exams will involve two short essay (a couple of paragraphs) questions. Both exams will be open-book and open-notebook. My goal is not to test whether you have memorized the material, but how well you understand and can apply the ideas. You may study in groups, but the work on the exams should be your own. The midterm will be passed out via e-mail and Trunk on Tuesday, November 6 (we have no class that day) and be due in class on Tuesday, November 22. The final will be passed out on Tuesday, December 6, and be due on Monday, December 19. The midterm will test you on all the material in the first half of the class, including both the reading and the lectures, while the final will be cumulative (though focusing on the latter half of the semester). Please keep in mind that, while I do not necessarily expect you to agree with any of the ideas in this class, I do expect you to be able to understand, clearly explain and apply them in your exams.

**Research Paper**

I will ask you to write a ten-page research paper about some issue relating to social movements. This paper will be worth 20% of your grade. The movement you focus on can be contemporary or historical, American or foreign, left-wing or right-wing. You may look at the whole movement or focus on one organization within it. For the purposes of this class, a social movement is defined as an organized group of people seeking to change society’s structures, at least in part through confrontational extra-institutional means. Thus a religious or intellectual movement that simply seeks to convert people to their ideas would not count, although such a movement that is also trying to change the social structure and using protest to try to achieve this goal would count. A movement focusing on self-help and personal transformation would also not count, nor would an elite political movement working for change solely within existing institutions. That said, the boundaries of social movements are fuzzy and not all scholars agree on the proper definition of a social movement. You may try to make the case to me to study a movement that doesn’t quite fit the definition of a movement above--one that believes that it can bring about social change by fostering personal transformation for instance--though I reserve the right to veto topics that stray too far from the focus of the class.

Do not simply write a history of the movement. Engage in sociological analysis of some aspect of it: Why did it emerge? How was it organized? Why did it succeed or fail? What tensions or struggles were there within the movement itself? I encourage you to draw on the theory we read in class to help you formulate your research question. If you have any questions or are having trouble coming up with a topic, please feel free to speak to me.

Following are some examples of the sort of movements you could do your paper on, although you certainly are not limited to these:

- The abolitionist movement (nineteenth century anti-slavery movement)
- The American Indian movement
- The Catholic left
- The Chicano movement
• The Christian fundamentalist movement
• The Christian patriot movement (far right, non-white supremacist movement)
• The gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender rights movement
• The human rights movement (focus on a particular country or aspect of this movement)
• The Islamic fundamentalist movement
• The labor movement (choose a country or region and time period)
• The New Left
• The Palestinian intifada
• The peace movement (focus on a particular conflict, e.g., Vietnam, Central America, the first or second Iraq War, etc.)
• The small farmer/peasants’ movement (pick a country and time period)
• The socialist movement
• The white supremacist movement
• The women’s movement (first or second wave)

You should use at least three sources, at least one of which must be a book; the others may be articles or individual chapters from edited books. You are certainly free to use more sources and, assuming you make good use of them, this can raise your grade. Please be careful of what sources you use, drawing primarily on scholarly ones. Many people use the internet for information nowadays, but much of the information on the internet is not reliable. This is also, of course, true for printed material, but the internet has allowed people whose work would never otherwise be published because of its lack of credibility to self-publish. On the other hand, there is also a great deal of valuable information on the internet. Please try to evaluate the quality of the material you are reading, whether it is printed or on-line. Is it a reasoned, scholarly consideration of an issue, backed up by empirical research? Or is it a political rant, without much evidence to back it up? There is nothing wrong with sources that make political judgments, but these judgments should be based on empirical research which you can draw on in your paper and to make your own conclusions. Also make sure that the sources you are using are current. If you are writing a paper on the contemporary civil rights or peace movement, do not use a book from the 1950s--a lot has changed since then. When looking for sources, in addition to searching through the online catalogue for books in the library, I encourage you to also use the numerous databases of scholarly articles that you can access through the library’s home page. JSTOR can be particularly useful because it provides you with access to the articles you find listed in it as PDFs, saving you the trouble of hunting them down.

On Tuesday, October 4, I will ask you to turn in a proposal for your paper--briefly stating the topic you are interested in and listing a preliminary bibliography. This will allow me to see if you are on the right course with your paper and that you’re not heading off in some direction that might result in a poor grade. Failure to turn in the proposal will result in the deduction of three points from your final paper grade. On Thursday, November 10, I will ask you to turn in an outline of your paper, providing a detailed outline of your argument. Again, this is to allow me to gauge if you are on the right course with the paper. Failure to turn in the outline will also result in the loss of three points from your final paper grade. The paper itself will be due the last day of class, December 8. If I feel that you have made only a perfunctory attempt at completing the paper proposal and/or outlines, I reserve the right to give only partial credit to you--i.e. to deduct something like 1 or 2 points from your final paper.
Paper Format
All papers--the journal entries, the exams, and the research paper--should be typed and double-spaced. Please number your pages and use 12-point type in a common font such as Times New Roman or Courier. In your exams and autobiography, please be sure to attend to such matters as proper grammar, organization and writing in a clear style. (Given the nature of journal writing, these are less important for that assignment, as long as I can follow what you say.) The better your writing, the more clearly you can convey your ideas. While some important thinkers have been bad writers, there is no reason to emulate them in this. More often than not, unclear writing reflects unclear thinking. If you are having trouble with the writing process, you may see me during office hours or make an appointment with the Academic Resource Center (http://uss.tufts.edu/arc/).

Late Papers
For every day a paper is late, I will deduct three numerical points from it. A paper handed in on the due date, but after the time listed on the exam, will be counted as half a day late--that is, I will deduct 1.5 points from it. If you want to turn in a paper late on a non-class day, you should both e-mail me a copy (so I have proof of when you finished it) and leave it in my mailbox (in 102B Eaton Hall) so I do not have to print it out myself. If you fail to e-mail me a copy and I only find a copy in my box, I reserve the right to count it as having been turned in on the day I find, which may cost you additional late points. E-mail alone, however, is not sufficient. As a general rule, I will not grade your paper until you give me a hard copy. I may make exceptions in unusual circumstances.

Extensions
If you need an extension on one of your exams or the research paper, please ask. I am willing to be flexible in when your papers are due--but you must plan ahead. I ask that you request an extension well ahead of time; the later you ask for an extension, the less likely I am to say yes. I will make exceptions to all these rules in the case of a medical or personal emergency. If you’re handing in a paper on which you received an extension on a day when class does not meet, please follow the procedures for late papers given above.

Academic Integrity
Please familiarize yourself with Tuft’s definition of academic integrity, which is available for download at http://uss.tufts.edu/studentaffairs/policies/campus/academicintegrity.asp. If you have any questions about how to interpret it in the context of class assignments, please feel free to ask me.

Special Needs
If you have a learning disability or other special need, please tell me during the first week of classes, so that I can best prepare to accommodate you.

Course Schedule
Please note that this schedule is subject to change. I will let you know in class and by e-mail if and when I make any changes.

Tuesday, September 6, Introduction
No reading--first day of class

Thursday, September 8, Case Study I: The Civil Rights Movement: Origins
Morris, The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement, chs. 1-3

Tuesday, September 13, Case Study I: The Civil Rights Movement: Organization
Morris, The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement, chs. 4 & 7

Thursday, September 15, Case Study I: The Civil Rights Movement: Strategy and Tactics
Morris, The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement, chs. 9-10

Journal entry due

Tuesday, September 20, Case Study II: The Global Justice Movement: Introduction
Juris, Networking Futures, pp. 1-18, chs. 1-2

Thursday, September 22, Case Study II: The Global Justice Movement: Strategy
Juris, Networking Futures, chs. 3-5

Tuesday, September 27, Case Study II: The Global Justice Movement: Organization
Juris, Networking Futures, chs. 6-7

Thursday, September 29, Two Views of Social Movements: Richard Flack’s Structural Perspective

Journal entry due

Tuesday, October 4, Two Views of Social Movements: James Jasper’s Cultural Perspective
Jasper, The Art of Moral Protest, chs. 15-17

Research paper proposal due

Thursday, October 6, Social Movements and Their Political Context
Tuesday, October 11, *Strategy & Tactics, part 1*

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Thursday, October 13, *Strategy & Tactics, part 2*
Jasper, *The Art of Moral Protest*, ch. 11

**Journal entry due**

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Tuesday, October 18, *The Nonviolence Debate*

Thursday, October 20, *Movements and Globalization*

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Tuesday, October 25, *Movements and the Mass Media*
Trunk: Charlotte Ryan, *Prime Time Activism: Media Strategies for Grassroots Organizations*, ch. 3 (Boston, South End Press, 1991)
On-line: *Democracy Now* (Producer: Amy Goodman; New York, Democracy Now, 2011): http://www.democracynow.org/. NOTE: Watch (or read the transcripts of) one set of headlines and one or two of the feature stories. They do not necessarily need to be from the same broadcast—pick ones that look interesting to you.

Thursday, October 27, *Movements and Cultural Change*

**Journal entry due**
Tuesday, November 1, *State Repression, part 1*

Thursday, November 3, *State Repression, part 2*

Tuesday, November 8
NO CLASS--Friday schedule
Midterm exam handed out (via Trunk and e-mail; hard copies will be distributed Thursday)

Thursday, November 10, *Movement Organization and Leadership*

Research paper outline due
Journal entry due

Tuesday, November 15, *Movement Culture and Community*
Jasper, *The Art of Moral Protest*, ch. 8

Thursday, November 17, *Movements and Internal Democracy*
Trunk: Francesca Polletta, *Freedom is an Endless Meeting*, ch. 6 (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2002)

Tuesday, November 22, *The Movement Democracy Debate*


Kurtz, *Workplace Justice*, ch. 1

**Midterm exam due**

Thursday, November 24
NO CLASS--Thanksgiving vacation

Tuesday, November 29, *Movements and Social Inequalities*
Kurtz, *Workplace Justice*, chs. 2-3 & 5

Thursday, December 1, *The Multiculturalism Debate*
Kurtz, *Workplace Justice*, ch. 8

**Journal entry due**

Tuesday, December 6, *Coalition-Building*

**Final exam handed out**

Thursday, December 8, *Institutionalization*

**Research paper due**

Monday, December 19, 3:30 p.m.

**Final exam due**