

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

[tentative syllabus]

Sociology 308 / Fall Semester 2017
Smith Hall 240 / Wednesday & Friday
11:30 a.m. to 12:50 p.m.

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OVERVIEW

This course is an introduction to the study of *social movements*; i.e., attempts by people to promote social change through grassroots mobilization outside of conventional political channels. Participants in social movements have legitimate grievances, but are unable to redress their grievances satisfactorily through conventional politics. Therefore, they engage in unconventional political actions—such as protest demonstrations and civil disobedience—in addition to, or instead of, conventional political actions.

We will examine what social movements are and their historical development, theories and concepts used to understand and explain them, the origins, trajectories and consequences of social movements, their strategies and tactics, the important contextual factors that constrain them, and why they succeed or fail. Our primary focus is on social movements in the United States, but we will adopt a comparative and historical perspective to learn about social movements in other countries as well. The course is inter-disciplinary, drawing on scholarship from sociology, political science, political philosophy, and history, as well as from knowledge developed by experienced activists.

By the end of the course you should:

- understand why it is difficult for people to take a stand against injustice
- understand why people participate in social movements and engage in acts of protest
- recognize the historical impact and potential of social movements for promoting social change
- comprehend what is necessary to organize and lead a social movement

- have a basic understand of the strategy of civil resistance (nonviolent resistance), and
- be able to apply theories and concepts used by social scientists to analyze social movements

TEXTS

Two books are required. They are on reserve at Dana Library. The books may be purchased from the Rutgers University Bookstore (Bradley Hall; 973-353-5377) or from a variety of other sources.

- Snow, David A. and Sarah A. Soule. 2010. *A Primer on Social Movements*. New York: W. W. Norton.
- Staggenborg, Suzanne. 2016. *Social Movements*, second edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

In addition there are **four readings** on Blackboard:

- Brandzel, Ben. “What Malcolm Gladwell Missed About Online Organizing and Creating Big Change.” *The Nation*, November 15, 2010.
- Gladwell, Malcolm. “Small Change: Why the Revolution Will Not be Tweeted.” *The New Yorker*, October 4, 2010.
- Johnston, Hank. 2014. “The Study of Social Movements,” chapter 2 in *What is a Social Movement?* Cambridge: Polity.
- Johnston, Hank. 2014. “Researching Social Movements,” chapter 6 in *What is a Social Movement?* Cambridge: Polity.

GRADING

First Exam	28
Second Exam	30
Final Exam	32
Presentation	<u>10</u>
	100%

Exams (90%)

The three exams are in-class and closed book. They are composed of short answer questions. The questions are based on the readings, the material discussed in class, and the films shown in class.

Presentation (10%)

The presentation will be on a topic selected from a list of appropriate topics. Presentations will be scheduled for the last few weeks of the semester. Details will be provided in a separate handout.

Class Participation - is highly encouraged. Feel free to ask questions or express your relevant thoughts.

PLEASE NOTE

- In order to pass this class you must be able to read and write at a satisfactory college level and you must attend class on a regular basis. Excessive absences (4+) will result in a failing grade.
- If you happen to miss a class, then you will have missed something important. In addition to the assigned readings done outside of class you are responsible for all material covered and discussed in class, all handouts distributed in class, all films shown in class, and all announcements made in class.
- Some Rutgers University students have a bad habit of sending e-mails to their professors without identifying themselves in the text of the e-mail. The professor of this course does not respond to anonymous e-mails. If you send the professor an e-mail and expect a response, then clearly state your full name in the **text** of the e-mail.
- According to university regulations an “incomplete” final grade can be given only under the following circumstances: (1) at least 75% of the coursework has been completed, and (2) there is an extraordinary and documented circumstance that prevents you from completing the remainder of the coursework.
- It is your responsibility to be aware of the University’s policies on **academic integrity**, **student conduct**, and **plagiarism**. Violations of these policies will be dealt with according to University procedures. Cheating on exams will not be tolerated. To familiarize yourself with these regulations, see the following Rutgers University web page:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>

SCHEDULE

Changes in the schedule will be announced in class.

<u>Week 1</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
Wed, 9/6 Fri, 9/8	introduction to social movements	Staggenborg: chapter 1
<u>Week 2</u>		
Wed, 9/13 Fri, 9/15	introduction to social movements	Snow & Soule: chapter 1
<u>Week 3</u>		
Wed, 9/20 Fri, 9/22	theories of social movements	Staggenborg: chapter 2 Johnston: chapter 2
<u>Week 4</u>		
Wed, 9/27 Fri, 9/29	mobilizing grievances; movement emergence, growth & decline	Snow & Soule: chapter 2 Staggenborg: chapter 3
<u>Week 5</u>		
Wed, 10/4 Fri, 10/6	protest in the 1960s	Staggenborg: chapter 4
<u>Week 6</u>		
Wed, 10/11 Fri, 10/13	First Exam	

<u>Week 7</u> Wed, 10/18 Fri, 10/20	<u>Topic</u> women's movement; LGBT movement	<u>Readings</u> Staggenborg: chapter 5 Staggenborg: chapter 6
<u>Week 8</u> Wed, 10/25 Fri, 10/27	environmental movement; right wing movements	Staggenborg: chapter 7 Staggenborg: chapter 8
<u>Week 9</u> Wed, 11/1 Fri, 11/3	global justice movement	Staggenborg: chapter 9 Staggenborg: chapter 10
<u>Week 10</u> Wed, 11/8 Fri, 11/10	contextual conditions; movement participation	Snow & Soule: chapter 3 Snow & Soule: chapter 4
<u>Week 11</u> Wed, 11/15 Fri, 11/17	<i>Second Exam</i>	
<u>Week 12</u> Wed, 11/22	<u>Topic</u> researching social movements	<u>Readings</u> Johnston: chapter 6
<u>Week 13</u> Wed, 11/29 Fri, 12/1	dynamics of social movements; consequences of social movements	Snow & Soule: chapter 5 Snow & Soule: chapter 6
<u>Week 14</u> Wed, 12/6 Fri, 12/8	digital technology	Gladwell: article Brandzel: article
<u>Week 15</u> Wed, 12/13		
<u>Finals Week</u> (12/15 - 12/22)	<i>Final Exam</i>	