

Social Movements and Collective Action

Sociology 174/Political Science 156b

Philosophers have only interpreted the world...

The point, however, is to change it...

(Karl Marx, 1818 - 1883)

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Class time: 11:00 to 12:50

Class Days: Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Class location: RH 104

Social movements are important arenas for social change. By joining together, individuals can work to change social values or norms, alter social policy, and change laws. This class will aim to further our understanding of social movements by examining how they develop, are sustained, and eventually decline. We will begin by examining theories of social movements and look at the ways in which our understandings of social movements and those who participate in them have changed over time. We will also examine mobilization to social movements and ask why some people come to participate while others do not. For those who do participate, we will assess the effect of this participation on them as individuals. We will also examine the tactics and goals of social movements and police and state regulation of these movements.

This course introduces students to the concepts of and perspectives on social movements and collective action through an examination of contemporary American movements. The goal is for students to learn the analytic tools necessary in order to begin to examine and more critically assess the role of social movements in our society. The selected texts cover case studies of social movements as well as readings in sociological journals which will further our theoretical and conceptual understanding of social movements as a whole.

Required Books and Additional Readings

1. McAdam, Doug. (1988) Freedom Summer. Oxford University Press: New York, NY.
2. Thomas, Janet. (2000). The Battle in Seattle. Fulcrum Publishing: Golden, CO.
3. All other readings can be downloaded and printed from the library reserve website.

SCHEDULE AND READING

Week 1:

Monday: Introduction to the course, key concepts.

- Tilly, Charles. (Forthcoming) “Social Movements as Political Struggle”. In the Encyclopedia of American Social Movements.

Wednesday: Brief history of social movement theory
(Get in groups and sign up for presentation)

- Couch, Carl J. (1969) “Collective Behavior: An Examination of Some Stereotypes”
- Thomas –Chapters 1-5 (p.17-63)

Friday: Resources

- McAdam, Doug “Resource Mobilization” in Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency.

Week 2:

Monday: Independence Day – NO CLASS

Wednesday: Political Process and Social Movements

- McAdam, Doug. “The Political Process Model” in Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency” (p.36-51 only).
- McAdam – Introduction and Chapter 1.

Friday: Framing

- Snow, David A. and Robert D. Benford. “Master Frames and Cycles of Protest” in Frontiers in Social Theory.
- Rohlinger, Deana A. “Framing the Abortion Debate: Organizational Resources, Media Strategy, and Movement-Counter-movement Dynamics”

Week 3:

Monday: Participation: Collective Action Problem and Selective Incentives

- Klandermans, Bert. (2000). “Principles of Movement Participation.” In The Social Psychology of Protest.

Wednesday: Mobilization: Networks and Organization Building

- Klandermans, Bert. (2000). “The Transformation of Discontent into Action”. In The Social Psychology of Protest.

Friday: MIDTERM

Week 4: (CLASS PRESENTATIONS)

Monday: Strategy and Tactics: Tactical Innovation

- McAdam, Doug. (1983). "Tactical Innovation and the Pace of Insurgency". *American Sociological Review*. 48: 735-754.
- Gamson, William. "The Success of the Unruly"

Wednesday: Policing Protest

- Thomas – Chapters 6-8.
- McPhail, Clark, David Schweingruber, and John McCarthy. (1998) "Policing Protests in the United States". Pp. 49-69 in *Policing Protest: The Control of Mass Demonstrations in Western Democracies*.

Friday: Social Movements and Identity

- McAdam – Chapter 2 and 3

Week 5: (CLASS PRESENTATIONS)

Monday: Social Movements and Self-Change

- McAdam – Chapter 5

Wednesday:

- Thomas – Chapter 9-11.

Friday: Social Structure and Change: Is policy change and social change possible?

- Thomas - Chapter 21.
- McAdam – Chapter 6.

Week 6:

Monday: Review for the Final Exam (PORTFOLIOS DUE)

Wednesday: FINAL EXAM

Requirements and Evaluation

1: Social Movement Portfolio (30% of grade) (In groups of 3-4)

- A large portion of your grade will be based on the creation of a social movement portfolio which will consist of a variety of items related to one particular social movement. Throughout the semester you will be researching the movement and adding items to your portfolio.
- You must choose the movement that you will be researching by the second class session. On that day you will hand in a paragraph naming the movement you have chosen and giving a brief description of that movement.
- Portfolio contents (out of 100)
 - 1: Newspaper articles (20)
 - You will find 5 articles related to your movement and discuss the activities and tactics of your movement.
 - 2: Historical time-line of the movement (15)
 - 3: Activist biography or interview (20)
 - 4: Movement analysis essay (35) (**Done individually**)
 - You will use the theoretical concepts and additional readings from class and apply these to your movement.
 - What sort of tactics, goals, participants, etc. does this movement use? How successful has it been?
 - 5: Presentation of your portfolio (10) (in the last 2 weeks of class)

2: Midterm Exam (20% of grade)

- This exam will consist of fill in the blank, short answer, and essay questions.

3: Final Exam (30% of grade)

- This exam will consist of short answer and essay questions.

4: Quizzes (4 – only the top three of which will be counted) (15% of grade)

- These quizzes will be a surprise. They are intended to make sure that students are keeping up on the readings and attending class.

5: Participation and Attendance (5% of grade)