

## **Social Movements**

Soci 810  
Spring 2012

Tuesday 2-4:30pm  
151 Hamilton Hall

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This course focuses on contemporary sociological research on social movements. We will address central questions in the field such as why don't more people protest? Why do so many people protest? What makes something a social movement? Who joins them? What do social movements do? What relationship do they have to the mass media or political parties? How do social movements win? Each week we will explore a different concept that is central to the way that scholars think about social movements, such as diffusion, framing or repression.

Rather than looking at the historical origins of each of these questions and how debates on the topics evolved over time, this class will focus on contemporary social movements scholarship and its roots. The disadvantage of this strategy is that you will have less of a sense of where the field has been, particularly for concepts that were once popular but are no longer, such as new social movements. The advantage of this approach is that by the end of the semester, you will have a thorough understanding of where the field stands, what are the major debates, open questions, movements being studied, who is doing that work, and what methods are being used.

### **Readings:**

Each week you will have to read three articles. One contemporary article is listed on the syllabus for each week. This is work that has been recently published in a major general interest sociological journal, such as *American Sociological Review* or *Social Problems*, or a journal for social movement research, such as *Mobilization*. In addition to this article, you are required to read two more articles of your own choosing on the week's topic that the contemporary article engages with. That is, after reading the contemporary article, you should look to find prior work that author(s) of the contemporary article found to important and cited. Using Google Scholar, you should then find each of those works. If they are books or book chapter, you might need to find at the library, or, if you want, buy them. If they are articles, you should be able to get find them through Google Scholar. If you are on campus, or using the library proxy, you should then be able to download the articles. When looking for articles, try and find ones that look important and interesting. It is especially good if you can find a piece that takes a different approach than contemporary one, either in method or theory. If you want to pick a book, feel you

don't need to do any additional articles. For each week, I have provided one suggested additional article. You can use this as one of your two additional articles or not. Contemporary readings will be made available in a shared Dropbox folder.

Additionally, you will be expected to follow two social movement blogs: <http://mobilizingideas.wordpress.com/> and <http://politicsoutdoors.com/>.

### **Assignments:**

*Class attendance and participation (20%):* The class will succeed or fail based on student participation. While I will occasionally provide background information on the week's topic, most of each week will be spent discussing the articles. Additionally, since you will often be the only person who read a specific article, you will be responsible for orally summarizing the article and should be able to discuss how the articles are related. Talk at least once every week. Good participation: Demonstrates excellent preparation: analyzed case exceptionally well, relating it to readings and other material (e.g., readings, course material, discussions, experiences, etc.); offers analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, e.g., puts together pieces of the discussion to develop new approaches that take the class further; contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussion: keeps analysis focused, responds very thoughtfully to other students' comments, contributes to the cooperative argument-building, suggests alternative ways of approaching material and helps class analyze which approaches are appropriate, etc.; and demonstrates ongoing very active involvement.<sup>1</sup> You can skip one week without impacting your attendance grade.

*Reading notes (30%):* Each week, you should submit 200-word reading notes on *each* of your three articles. These should demonstrate to me that you attempted to understand the author's ideas and provide a resource for in-class discussion. Reading notes for each article should begin with the full citation, and include the main theoretical point of the article; definitions of major concepts employed or introduced; a description of what the authors did; your evaluation of the theoretical and methodological strengths and weaknesses; links between this article and others for that day or prior; and questions for discussion. These need not be written in a polished format, although the grammar/spelling should not distract the reader. Where possible, you can copy and paste from the original, making sure to include appropriate attribution, including page numbers. These are due each week on Monday by 9pm.

You should write your reading notes in a Google Document. In order to do that, create an account with Google, if you don't already have one. Go to docs.google.com and "create" a new "document". Rename the document to "Soci 810 Notes" followed

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<sup>1</sup> Based on:

[http://trc.virginia.edu/Publications/Teaching\\_Concerns/Spring\\_1996/TC\\_Spring\\_1996\\_Maznevski.htm](http://trc.virginia.edu/Publications/Teaching_Concerns/Spring_1996/TC_Spring_1996_Maznevski.htm)

by your first and last name by clicking on “Untitled Document” and typing in the new name. Finally, share the document by clicking on the blue “Share” box. You should share it with me ([neal.caren@gmail.com](mailto:neal.caren@gmail.com)).

*Analytic article (50%):* On the last day of class, you should submit a 2,000-word article that uses social movement scholarship to understand a contemporary social movement. Think Malcolm Gladwell and not *Annual Review of Sociology*. Your research for this article does not need to be something that would withstand peer review, but should be based on second or primary sources, such as newspaper accounts or movement websites. The movement that you select could be large (e.g. the Tea Party) or more modest (e.g. Occupy Boston). It could take place in the US, abroad (e.g. the Tunisia revolution), or be transnational. You should be prepared to discuss your case and sources in class by February 28<sup>th</sup> and your preliminary analysis by March 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Schedule:**

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| January 10 | Introductions   |
| January 17 | Participation<br>Contemporary: Klandermans, B, J van der Toorn, and J van Stekelenburg. 2008. “Embeddedness and Identity: How Immigrants Turn Grievances into Action.” <i>American Sociological Review</i> 73(6):992–1012.<br>Suggested: McAdam, Doug. 1986. “Recruitment to high-risk activism: The case of Freedom Summer.” <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> 64–90.   |
| January 24 | Resources<br>Contemporary: Soule, Sarah A, and Brayden G King. 2008. “Competition and Resource Partitioning in Three Social Movement Industries.” <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> 113(6):1568–1610.<br>Suggested: McCarthy, JD and Zald, MN. 1977. “Resource Mobilization and Social Movements - Partial Theory.” <i>American Journal Of Sociology</i> 82:1212-1241.   |
| January 31 | Political Process<br>Valentine M. Moghadam and Elham Gheythan. 2010. “Political Opportunities and Strategic Choices: Comparing Feminist Campaigns in Morocco and Iran” <i>Mobilization</i> 15:267-288.<br>Suggested: Kitschelt, HP. 1986. “Political Opportunity Structures and Political Protest - Antinuclear Movements In 4 Democracies.” <i>British Journal Of Political Science</i> 16:57-85.  |
| February 7 | Threat<br>Contemporary: Maher, T V. 2010. “Threat, Resistance, and Collective Action: The Cases of Sobibor, Treblinka, and Auschwitz.” <i>American Sociological Review</i> 75(2):252–272.<br>Suggested: Goldstone, Jack A. and Charles Tilly. 2001. “Threat (and Opportunity): Popular Action and State Response in the Dynamics of Contentious Action.” Pp. 179–94 in <i>Silence and Voice in the Study of Contentious Politics</i> , edited by R. Aminzade, J. Goldstone, D. McAdam, E. |

- Perry, W. H. Sewell, S. Tarrow, and C. Tilly. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
- February 14 Organizations  
 Contemporary: Walker, Edward T, and John D. McCarthy. 2010. "Legitimacy, Strategy, and Resources in the Survival of Community-Based Organizations." *Social Problems* 57(3):315–340.  
 Suggested: Clemens, Elisabeth S. 1993. "Organizational Repertoires and Institutional Change: Women's Groups and the Transformation of U.S. Politics, 1890–1920." *American Journal of Sociology* 98:755–98.
- February 21 Strategy  
 Contemporary: Amy L. Stone. 2010. "Dominant tactics in social movement tactical repertoires: Anti-gay ballot measures, 1974–2008", in Patrick G. Coy (ed.) 31 (*Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change, Volume 31*), Emerald Group Publishing Limited, pp.141-174  
 Suggested: McAdam, Doug. 1983. "Tactical Innovation and the Pace of Insurgency." *American Sociological Review* 48(6):735.
- February 28 Diffusion  
 Contemporary: Myers, Daniel J. 2010. "Violent Protest and Heterogeneous Diffusion Processes: The Spread of US Racial Rioting From 1964 to 1971." *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 15(3):289–321.  
 Suggested: Andrews, Kenneth T, and Michael Biggs. 2006. "The Dynamics of Protest Diffusion: Movement Organizations, Social Networks, and News Media in the 1960 Sit-Ins." *American Sociological Review* 71(5):752–777.
- March 6 Abeyance  
 Suggested: Taylor, Verta. 1989. "Social Movement Continuity: The Women's Movement in Abeyance." *American Sociological Review* 54(5):761–775.  
 Suggested:
- March 13 Framing  
 Contemporary: Staggenborg, S., and J Lecomte. 2009. "Social movement campaigns: Mobilization and outcomes in the Montreal women's movement community." *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 14(2):163–180.  
 Suggested: Snow, DA and Worden, SK and Rochford, EB and Benford, RD. 1986. "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation." *American Sociological Review* 51:464-481.
- March 20 Countermovements  
 Contemporary: Lind, Benjamin, and Judith Stepan-Norris. 2011. "The Relationality of Movements: Movement and Countermovement Resources, Infrastructure, and Leadership in the Los Angeles Tenants' Rights Mobilization, 1976–1979." *The American Journal of Sociology* 116(5):1564–1609.  
 Suggested: Meyer, David S, and Suzanne Staggenborg. 1996. "Movements, countermovements, and the structure of political opportunity." *American*

- Journal of Sociology 1628–1660.
- March 27      Repression  
 Contemporary: Davenport, C, S A Soule, and D A Armstrong. 2011. "Protesting While Black?: The Differential Policing of American Activism, 1960 to 1990." *American Sociological Review* 76(1):152–178.  
 Suggested: Earl, Jennifer. 2003. "Tanks, Tear Gas, and Taxes: Toward a Theory of Movement Repression." *Sociological Theory* 21(1):44–68.
- April 3      Mass Media  
 Contemporary: Sobieraj, Sarah. 2010. "Reporting Conventions: Journalists, Activists, and the Thorny Struggle for Political Visibility." *Social Problems* 57(4):505–528.  
 Suggested: Oliver, Pamela E, and Daniel J Meyer. 1999. "How Events Enter the Public Sphere: Conflict, Location, and Sponsorship in Local Newspaper Coverage of Public Events." *American Journal of Sociology* 105(1):38–87.
- April 10      Identity  
 Contemporary: Leitz, Lisa. 2011. "Oppositional Identities: The Military Peace Movement's Challenge to Pro-Iraq War Frames." *Social Problems* 58(2):235–256.  
 Suggested: Bernstein, Mary. 1997. "Celebration and Suppression: The Strategic Uses of Identity by the Lesbian and Gay Movement 1." *American Journal of Sociology* 103(3):531–565.
- April 17      Cultural Processes  
 Contemporary: Roy, William G. 2010. "How Social Movements Do Culture." *International Journal of Politics*.  
 Suggested: Taylor, V, K Kimport, N Van Dyke, and E A Andersen. 2009. "Culture and Mobilization: Tactical Repertoires, Same-Sex Weddings, and the Impact on Gay Activism." *American Sociological Review* 74(6):865–890.
- April 24      Outcomes  
 Contemporary: McCarthy, John D., Jon Agnone, and Erik W. Johnson. 2010. "Movement Organizations, Synergistic Tactics and Environmental Public Policy." *Social Forces* 88(5):2267–2292.  
 Suggested: Amenta, E, B.G. Carruthers, and Y. Zylan. 1992. "A hero for the aged? The Townsend Movement, the political mediation model, and US old-age policy, 1934-1950." *American Journal of Sociology* 308–339.