

Oswego State University
SOCIAL MOVEMENTS
SOC 463

Instructor: **Prof. Holly Dobbins**
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Fall 2009, Tues & Thurs 7:00 pm – 8:20 pm
Office Hours: TTH 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm

Social movements are the means through which marginalized members of societies establish new norms or resist change. Activism, protest and resistance remain the most dynamic and challenging areas of study in the social sciences. What constitutes a social movement? When and where do they emerge? Why do people participate in them (or choose not to)? Why are some more successful than others? What impacts do they have upon people's lives, communities, and societies? Students in this seminar will seek answers to these questions by gaining exposure to a wide range of social movements as well as the stories of the individuals, organizations, and political/economic actors involved. They will also learn how the study of social movement itself has changed over time, and why social movements matter.

SEMINAR OBJECTIVES:

- (1) To gain a deeper understanding of applied sociology and its relative potential to contribute toward fulfilling what C. Wright Mills characterized as "the promise."
- (2) To gain a solid familiarity with some of the theoretical frameworks and applied approaches to the study of social movements and social change, as well as mastery of some of the analytic tools used in the field, including observation and critical thought. Students will put these skills into practice through discussion, debate, presentation and brainstorming the viewpoints, concepts, issues, theories and tools presented in both the seminars and readings.
- (3) To gain exposure to a broad range of topics and contemporary issues presented through lectures, readings, discussions, local, national and international media, field exploration and writing assignments.
- (4) To work toward getting the most out of higher education through critical thinking, improved written and oral communication ability, and through the ability to connect academic study to real-world events and situations.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

The Social Movements Reader, Cases and Concepts. Jeff Goodwin and James Jasper, editors. Wiley-Blackwell Publishing 2006 (Second edition). (estimated cost used \$18.00).

Wilkinson, Richard. 2005. **The Impact of Inequality. How to Make Sick Societies Healthier.** The New Press. (est. cost \$14 used)

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

Solnit, Rebecca. 2004. **Hope in the Dark. Untold Histories, Wild Possibilities.** Avalon Publishing Group.

All of the course books are or will be available both through the Oswego State University Bookstore and Kraftee's Bookstore on 104. However, it should also be noted that you can often purchase these books on-line and used at usually $\frac{3}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ the cover price. Some on-line search engines include: abebooks.com, alibris.com, addall.com in addition to amazon.com. You will also need access the internet to read **ON-LINE MEDIA** assignments, follow the links on the syllabus, or make sure to copy websites from the board in class during discussion

REQUIRED VIEWING/LISTENING:

Bill Moyers Journal PBS WCNY Channel 24, Friday 10:30 pm.
<http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/index-flash.html>

Tell Me More with Michel Martin, National Public Radio (NPR) WRVO 89.9 FM
Weekdays 1:00 to 2:00 pm or online streamed or podcast:
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=46>

(student are required to listen a minimum of once weekly, preferably T/TH)

Recommended Viewing:

NOW, PBS WCNY Channel 24, Friday 9:30 pm
<http://www.pbs.org/now/shows/432/index.html>

FRONTLINE
Point of View (POV)

FRONTLINE/World
WIDE ANGLE

PROFESSOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

CLASS: You can expect that I will attend class. If, for unseen circumstances, I cannot come to class I will email the class as soon as possible, and will post a note outside the door. Because I commute, please wait the traditional “academic quarter” or **15 minutes** from the start of class time before you depart. Use the wait time for discussion. After that you may depart and take a “READING DAY”, using the time to read for class or meet in study groups. This will only take place in the most extreme of weather conditions. If this situation should arise, please check for class discussion on the Angel website.

CONTACT: I have regular office hours. That is the best way to communicate your interests with me. If you do not have an email account or never use it, **get one and learn how to use it!** There may be times when an unexpected change in class could take place and the department may need to notify you. Please make sure I have your current email address.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

ATTEND CLASS: Participation is a significant part of your grade, and you cannot participate if you are not here. You must notify me of absences in advance, and excused absences must be demonstrable through written documentation. Because of the natures of T/TH classes, **TWO** unexcused absences will result in a drop of one letter grade for the course. **Excused** absences that become too numerous will also result in a drop in your grade.

READ AND PREPARE AHEAD: Nothing is more rewarding than coming to class prepared, and it is so easy to get behind if you miss just one reading deadline. Students are expected to have read each assignment prior to the class date listed in the syllabus. Expect to be quizzed on readings.

TAKE NOTES: Good note taking is often the key to good performance and understanding. Students **must take notes in class**. You are required to take notes on all aspects of the course, whether lecture, discussion, film or other activities. If you are not sure what areas should be highlighted, or what the main focus of your notes should be, then ask! Notes on readings and at-home viewing will be turned in as part of your “Conversations in Social Movements” Log Book.

PARTICIPATE: Students are expected to participate in class discussions by drawing on the assigned readings, on their own personal or professional backgrounds, and by sharing other sources of information with the class relevant to the topic (for example newspaper articles, scholarly and scientific literature, or popular literature.) The value of the seminar depends heavily on the nature of our conversation over the semester. Active participation will be reflected in your final grade. The converse is also true.

GRADING: Participation can “make” or “break” your final grade, therefore take all assignments seriously. Participation is built into the overall grade that you receive.

Participation grade guidelines

A	Student is actively engaged in the class, contributing regularly to class discussions.
B	Student is engaged in the class, contributing often to class discussions.
C	Student is engaged in the class, but rarely contributes to class discussions.
D	Student is not engaged in the class, rarely contributing to class discussions.
E	Student is not engaged in the class, never contributing to class discussions.

ASSIGNMENTS

Participation
Log Book
Two “Think” Papers

DUE

Always
Periodically
9/24 & 11/24

PERCENTAGE

25%
25%
25%

Development of written skills will be an essential component of this course. Good thinking skills and good writing skills go together. If your writing skills could use improvement, I would encourage you to make use of the Writing Center. Demonstrable improvement in writing skills throughout the course will be rewarded in your final grade.

LOG BOOK: This is a hard copy loose leaf journal, separate from your class notebook, which will be turned in periodically for comments and review. It must be loose leaf so that additional pages can be added later, even when turned in for review. The format of the front cover must include the title “Conversations in Social Movements” and the student name.

Content will include a codex of various social movements, brief reflections on the class readings, organized by theory/author, as well as reflections upon a relevant topic or social movement issue discussed or covered on PBS or NPR. [I recommend three separate sections.] For each entry, you must identify the source (author, book, tv program, date, speaker), the topic, and then relate what you learned through the experience of listening or viewing that portion of the program and reflecting upon it.

Log Book and Think Paper Grading Rubric:

Organization.	How well organized is it?	20%
Clarity.	How clear are the entries?	20%
Completeness.	How complete/on task is the assignment?	20%
Depth.	How deeply does the student reflect?	20%
Fairness.	How well does the student consider both sides?	20%

THINK PAPERS: These are critical thought papers on a relevant topic or sociological issue taken from readings, class or media. These summary think papers must be no more than two pages in length, and must be turned in with a cover page including a title, your name, course information, and date.

The criteria for such think papers are that they should include: 1) an introduction that concisely states the topic, the thesis question, and the writer’s interest in the topic; 2) a body that briefly and equally covers OPPOSING sides of the issue with regard to two or three specific points; and 3) a conclusion that clearly details what the author has learned through the process of researching and reflecting upon the topic. (See detailed handout for further guidelines.)

Late assignments will be marked down one grade level each day they are late (e.g. A- to B+), unless you make prior arrangements with the professor and provide documentation of an emergency situation. NO late papers will be accepted more than 5 days after the due date.

COURSE PROJECTS: In this assignment, you are to undertake a case study of a contemporary social movement; this can be any issue that has captured your attention, but it must be relevant to the contemporary context. You will first discuss its history (when it emerged into the contemporary political arena; the nature of conflict; etc.). You will then outline each side of the debate – from the philosophy that informs it to the arguments and rhetoric that is being used. You will then assess how it impacts or could potentially impact the lives of average people - what environment (political, economic etc) it is taking place. Then you will make a closer analysis of each side: What type of leadership is involved in the campaign; what is their agenda; what kinds of strategies are being employed; how active is its membership and from what demographic? In this section you will apply the theories of social movement analysis discussed and covered in class and presented in the class materials.

Finally you will speculate on how this issue could be resolved – does the potential exist to find a middle ground, examine what approaches or strategies might be more effective; and what potential outcomes and policy impacts may be (and/or make an argument that there can be no middle ground). You will conclude with a set of recommendations for the social movement organization involved.

We will have a detailed discussion on this project in class, but it is probably a good idea to be thinking about potential projects while preparing for the first class.

GENERAL CLASS POLICIES

ACCOMMODATION: Students who require accommodation are very welcome. Please contact me for an appointment to discuss how we can meet your accommodation needs. Be sure to bring your letter from the Office of Disability Services. If you have a disabling condition that may interfere with your ability to successfully complete this course, please contact the Office of Disability Services (226 Hewitt Union x-3358). Alternative testing for students with learning disabilities is available through Disability Services.

CONDUCT/ ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: I expect an atmosphere of mutual respect, regardless of the topics being discussed or the differences of opinion that might exist. This is, after all, the point of higher education – to develop critical thinking skills and become more open to new ideas, even when we may not necessarily agree with them. Please consult your Student Handbook for university policies on conduct, also to know your rights as a student.

If you need help learning the materials, get advice, tutors, or take fewer classes so that you can do well. Cheating and plagiarism always have dire consequences. Cheating and plagiarism most commonly involve either presenting work that is not your own, or passing off as your work something conceived or written by someone else. People have had their degrees and professional certifications revoked, even years after the offense. Ultimately, you do not get away with it; either you are caught – or you find yourself in a job that you are unable to do because you did not learn the necessary skills – which leads to unemployment. Please read the university policy: http://www.oswego.edu/administration/registrar/policy_text.html#cpjii.

SARCASM / RIDICULE: Sarcasm and ridicule, hallmarks of the closed mind, are generally employed by people who either cannot or refuse to think critically. Sarcasm does is not a form of humor; it is a means to belittle, denigrate and show disdain for others and their ideas. The purpose of ridicule is to hurt others by making them feel inferior. Use of either sarcasm or ridicule as devices in your papers will result in a zero-grade; their use in the classroom will result in the offending student being asked to apologize to the entire class or to leave.

USE OF COMPUTERS AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES: The use of computers (laptops, netbooks) is prohibited during class. All electronic devices including cellphones, iphones, psps, ipods, mp3s etc., must be turned off and stowed in your backpacks or bags throughout the class session. Do not walk into the classroom with an active device. (If you are experiencing a family emergency and must be reachable, then notify me in advance of the situation and I will give you permission to have your cell phone on vibrate mode.)

FINAL RULE, HAVE FUN: Interacting with peers, colleagues, teachers and professors is the fun part of university learning. Relax, speak your mind, and do not be afraid to laugh (or cry).

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS:

Some things to ponder:

“The story may be local and specific, but the consequences of resistance are universally understood.” – Kurt Vonnegut, *interview with Bill Moyers* 2008

“If the society today allows the wrongs to unchallenged, the impression is created that those wrongs have the approval of the majority.” Barbara Jordan, *Democratic Convention* 1976

WEEK ONE:	9/1	9/3	What this course about?
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READINGS:

9/1	Dobbins: Syllabus
9/3	Johnson: 1-20 “One Thing” (located on the course website) Goodwin: Cover, i-7

ON-LINE MEDIA:

<https://oswego.sln.suny.edu/section/default.asp?id=200909-OSW-SOC-463-800>

(Angel Course Website)

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=100338745>

Honoring Senator Ted Kennedy: Research his legacy online. What difference did he make?

WEEK TWO: 9/8 9/10 Awareness
Mindfulness

READINGS:

9/8 Wilkinson: 1-31
9/10 Johnson: 21-35

ON-LINE MEDIA:

You Tube: Prof. Richard Wilkinson
<http://abcnews.go.com/video/playerIndex?id=6836954>
Why We Hate Us! By Dick Meyer
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=93261726>

WEEK THREE: 9/15 9/17 When/Why Movements?
Participatory Research

READINGS:

9/15 Goodwin 9 - 35
9/17 Goodwin: 35 – 52 (also: consider today's "Iranian Revolution")

ON-LINE MEDIA:

Research the net – bring url sites to class (post them on Angel), that relate to the movements discussed in Part II. These can include movement and organizational sites, u-tube films/music, movie reviews, etc. Be prepared to spend five minutes discussing why you chose this site to share with the class.

Monday 9/21 Rosh Hashanah -NO CLASS [Does not affect T/TH classes]

WEEK FOUR: 9/22 9/24 Who Joins?

READINGS:

9/22 Goodwin: 53 - 90
9/24 Wilkinson: 33-56

ON-LINE MEDIA:

www.now.org
www.nypirg.org
<http://www.oswego.edu/student/organizations/search.html>

Identify student organizations on campus that have a service orientation. What kinds of service do they specialize in? Which ones do you belong to? Why or why not?



9/24: THINK PAPER #1 DUE

WEEK FIVE: 9/29 10/1 Who Drops Out?
Thurs 10/28 Yom Kippur and Fall Break – NO CLASS 9/29

READINGS:

9/29 Goodwin: 91-139 (For Discussion on THURS)
10/1 Goodwin: 91 - 139

ON-LINE MEDIA:

<http://www.ufw.org/page.php?menu=research&inc=page.php?menu=research&inc=history/cesarchavez.html>

WEEK SIX: 10/6 10/8 Thinking and Feeling

READINGS:

10/6 Goodwin: 141 - 186
10/8 Wilkinson: 57-100

ON-LINE MEDIA:

<http://www.unifem.org/campaigns/vaw/>
<http://news.mensactivism.org/>

WEEK SEVEN: 10/13 10/15 Organizing!

READINGS:

10/13 Goodwin: 187 - 225
10/15 Goodwin: 226-248

ON-LINE MEDIA:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kb5XX_ATN4

WEEK EIGHT: 10/20 10/22 Anatomy of a Movement

READINGS:

10/20 Dobbins: Chapter 2 (course website)
10/22 Dobbins: Chapter 4 (course website)



Log Books Due

ON-LINE MEDIA:

<http://www.tungavik.com/>
<http://www.inuit.org/>

WEEK NINE: 10/27 10/29 What Do Movements Do?

READINGS:

10/27 Goodwin: 249-278
10/29 Goodwin: 279-310

ON-LINE MEDIA:

http://www.cnycentral.com/news/news_story.aspx?id=337206

Search internet for examples of "collective action repertoires, enter sites on Angel.

WEEK TEN: 11/3 11/5 Inequality

READINGS:

11/3 Wilkinson: 101-143
11/5 Wilkinson: 145-167

ON-LINE MEDIA:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poverty_in_the_United_States
<http://www.splcenter.org/>

WEEK ELEVEN: 11/10 11/12 Cooperation or Conflict?

READINGS:

11/10 Wilkinson: 169-214
11/12 Wilkinson: 215-234

ON-LINE MEDIA:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/race/audio/cornelwest.html>
<http://www.womeninworldhistory.com/nobels.html>

WEEK TWELVE: 11/17 11/19 Institutions and Movements

READINGS:

11/17 Goodwin: 311 - 332
11/19 Goodwin: 332 - 370

ON-LINE MEDIA:

http://www.religioustolerance.org/var_rel.htm
<http://www.indiancountrytoday.com/>
<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/08/27/national/main5268811.shtml?tag=stack>

WEEK THIRTEEN: 11/24 Petering Out?

READINGS:

11/24 Goodwin: 371 - 408

ON-LINE MEDIA:

<http://www.graypanthers.org/>



11/24 THINK PAPER #2 DUE

Weds 11/25 – 11/29 Thanksgiving Recess

WEEK FOURTEEN: 12/1 12/3 Social Change

READINGS:

12/1 Goodwin: 409- 422
12/3 Wilkinson: 235 - 282

ON-LINE MEDIA:

<http://www.rwjf.org/reports/grr/026422.htm>

WEEK FIFTEEN: 12/8 12/10 What Difference?

READINGS:

12/8 Goodwin:423 443

12/10 Wilkinson: 283 - 318

ON-LINE MEDIA:

<http://www.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/08/12/medal.of.freedom/>



FINAL PROJECT DUE
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2:00 – 4:00 PM

EVENT OPPORTUNITIES: Extra Credit Booster

Those students who choose to attend an outside lecture or event and summarize the experience in **one page or less** may have it considered for extra credit.

STUDY GROUP: Extra Credit Booster

Students who form a “study group” and submit a one-page summary that includes who was present, some of what was discussed, and one thing learned will receive 5 points of extra credit for every group meeting summary submitted. (Note: all group members must submit separate summaries.)

INDEPENDENT RESEARCH: Extra Credit Booster

Students who take the initiative to conduct internet and other research to explore any topic or issue more deeply and submit the results of their research in a one-page summary that includes both the sites/data and a statement as to why the sites are relevant may receive up to 5 points extra credit to be applied to assignment grades.