Fall 2009

LDST 304-01: Social Movements

Jepson School of Leadership Studies, University of Richmond

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Office hours: Mondays, 2:15-4 p.m. and by appointment.

Fall 2009

The course examines social movements in the United States. The primary but not exclusive focus of the course will be civil rights and labor and economic justice movements, and the primary but not exclusive method will be historical inquiry. We will pay particular attention to the role of leadership and strategic thinking in social movements throughout the semester. The final two weeks of the course will examine contemporary efforts to build a large-scale multiracial social movement in the United States that is simultaneously focused on economic justice and ecological sustainability and that challenges the existing political-economic system.

In most weeks, we will spend about 30-45 minutes of class time watching a relevant film. There will also be a required film night on Monday September 7 (Labor Day) to watch “Norma Rae.”

Course Requirements.

1. Attendance at EVERY Class Session and active participation. The first unexcused absence will lead to a 2.5 point deduction from your semester quiz grade (see below); the second absence will lead to a 5 point deduction; any subsequent absences will lead to a one-third grade drop in your final course grade for each absence. Quizzes missed due to unexcused absences will be graded as zero.

2. Completion of assigned reading. Starting the second week of class, there will be a short 5 question, True/False or multiple choice quiz pertaining on the week’s assigned reading every Wednesday at the beginning of class that you will be given 3 minutes to complete. These will be difficult only if you have not done the reading. Cumulative quiz scores will account for 10% of the final course grade, with lowest quiz score dropped.

3. One classroom presentation of 10-15 minutes during the semester providing an overview of the reading for the day and some questions to get our discussion started. After 15 minutes you will be cut off! You should also prepare a handout outlining the reading to share with your classmates. I will provide a template for this during the first week of class.

4. Attendance at two off-campus events related to social movements or community organizing. At least one should be a public event (as opposed to a function for a local organization intended for its members). Events that are primarily political rallies (i.e. for a gubernatorial candidate) do not count for this purpose, but events at which politicians or candidates happen to be speakers are okay. If in doubt, ask in advance. I will regularly alert you to events that would be appropriate. After attending each event, submit a two-page account of the event, its purpose, and how it relates to what we have
been talking about in class. The writeup for your first event must be submitted by November 1. Note that your primary purpose in attending the event is to observe; it’s not necessary that you agree with the event’s agenda, although you should make an effort to understand the point of view of the participants.

5. Completion of three six (6) page essays corresponding to the first three units of the course: Labor and Economic Justice, Racial Justice and Civil Rights, and Community Organizing. You will be given two or three essay questions to choose from. These papers should be very polished, including proper documentation.

6. Completion of either a take-home final exam or a 12 page paper on any social movement of your choosing, that you may research either through library work or direct participation and involvement. The final exam will consist of an essay question related to the Environmentalism reading and a question on general themes from the entire course. In either case, the final product will be a 12-page paper due on the date of the scheduled final exam. If you plan to write about a social movement of your choosing, you should notify me as early in the semester as possible and begin collecting information about that movement as early as possible. If you have doubts about what counts as a social movement, we will talk about it. It would be very unwise to wait until the exam period to attempt to both research and write about the social movement. The social movement you write about can (and if possible, should) be related to the required off-campus events you attend.

**Evaluation Criteria**

Class Participation (includes class presentation) 10%

Quizzes 10%

Event Write-Ups 5%

Essays 45% (15% each)

Take-home Exam or Paper 30%

**Introduction: Social Movement Theory in Brief**

*Additional film clips TBA are likely to be shown in class.*

**August 24: Introduction and Overview of Social Movements, I**

Betsy Leondar-Wright and William Gamson, “Social Movements and Leadership”

William Vogege, “Protest and Revolution”


**August 26: Social Movements and Democratic Theory**

Thad Williamson, “Leadership, Political Traditions and the Politics of Social Justice”
Francesco Polletta, *Freedom is an Endless Meeting*, Chapter 1.


In-class film: *Northern Lights* (30 minutes)

**PART ONE: Labor and Economic Justice Movements**

**August 31. Populist Movement**


In-class film: *Northern Lights* (30 minutes)

**September 2. Populist Movement**


In-class film: *Northern Lights* (35 minutes)

**September 7. Introduction to Organized Labor**

*Troublemaker’s Handbook*, Chapters 1-3, 15, 21

*Real World Labor*, Chapter 1, 2.1 and 2.3, and 7

Polletta, *Freedom is an Endless Meeting*, 26-34

Brief excerpt from Mimi Conway, *Rise Gonna Rise*, account of the labor struggle at J.P. Stevens on which “Norma Rae” is based.

*Film Showing, 7 p.m. Norma Rae*

**September 9. The Fight at Staley**

Ashby and Hawking, *Staley: The Fight for a New American Labor Movement*. Chapters 1-6;


**September 14. Staley, II**

Ashby and Hawking, *Staley* Chapters 7-12;


**September 16. Staley, III.**


*Troublemaker’s Handbook*, Chapter 9

**September 21. United Farm Workers, I**

**September 23. United Farm Workers, II**

Ganz, *Why David Sometimes Wins*, Chapters 5-7 plus epilogue

**September 28. Labor, Immigrants, and Globalization**

*Troublemaker’s Handbook*, Chapters 16 and 23

*Real World Labor*, Chapters 6 and 9

**September 30. Building Economic Alternatives**

*Real World Labor*, 3.8, 8, and 10

Erik Olin Wright, “Social Empowerment and the Economy,” from *Envisioning Real Utopias*

**First paper due Friday October 2.**

**PART TWO: Racial Justice and Civil Rights Movements**

**October 5. Building the Underground Railroad, I**

Rufus Bordewich, *Bound for Canaan*

**October 7. The Underground Railroad and Abolitionism, II**

Bordewich, *Bound for Canaan*

**October 14. Montgomery 1955-56**

Jo Ann Robinson, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Made It*


**October 19. Ella Baker, I**

Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement* (Chapters 3-7)

**October 21. Ella Baker, II**


**October 26. SNCC, I**

Wesley Hogan, *Many Minds, One Heart*, Chapters 1-6

**October 28. SNCC, II**
Hogan, *Many Minds, One Heart*, Chapters 7-12 and conclusion

In-class visitor (scheduled): Dr. Wesley Hogan, Virginia State University

**Second paper due Friday October 30.**

**PART THREE: Community Organizing**

**November 2. Participatory Democracy in the New Left and Feminism**
Francesco Polletta. *Freedom is an Endless Meeting*, Chapter 5 and 6

**November 4. Community Organizing, I**
1972 interview with Saul Alinsky
Barack Obama, *Dreams From My Father* (excerpt)

**November 9. Community Organizing Film Day!**
In-class films: “Democratic Promise”; “Holding Ground,” Part I.

**November 11. Community Organizing, II**
Swarts, *Organizing Urban America*, Chapters 2-7
*Troublemakers’ Handbook*, 12-13

**November 16. Electoral Organizing**
Readings on grassroots organizing in 2008 presidential campaign (Virginia focus if possible; Williamson, “Obama’s Vote Machine”).
In-class guest: Dr. Tom Shields (UR), 2009 candidate for Virginia House of Delegates

**November 18. Community Organizing and Democratic Participation**
Swarts, *Organizing Urban America*, Chapters 8-9
Polletta, *Freedom is an Endless Meeting*, Chapters 7 and 8.

**Third paper due Friday November 20.**

**PART THREE: Environmentalism and Beyond—Social Movements and Global Warming**

**November 23. The Climate Challenge I, I**
James Gustave Speth, *The Bridge at the End of the World*, Chapters 1-5
Ted Nordhaus and Michael Shellenberger, “Beyond the Pollution Paradigm”

**November 30. Green-Blue Coalitions**

Van Jones, *The Green Collar Economy* (complete)

**December 2. The Climate Challenge, II**

Speth, *The Bridge at the End of the World*, Chapters 6-12

**Final Paper or Take-Home Exam Due Monday December 14 at noon, in hard copy and via Blackboard.**