

Social Movements
Sociology 4930 Section 7871

University of Florida
Department of Sociology
Fall 2008

M-W-F Period 6 (12:50-1:40)
CSE E119

Instructor: Professor Brian Mayer
Office Hours: Mondays 9-11 and Tuesdays 2-4
Office Location: 3338 Turlington Hall
Phone: (352) 392-0265 x228
Email: bmayer@soc.ufl.edu

*“Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing
because he could only do a little.” -- Edmund Burke*

Course Description and Purpose

We live in a social movement society. Though we are not always aware of the level of activism going on around us, the number and different types of organizations working to create some type of social change is larger than ever before. Globalization and communication technologies have broken down barriers to worldwide participation in movements for change. Understanding how the world is influenced by individuals working together is vital in today's society.

Social movements are about organizing on a local, national, or international level to bring people together in order to affect change in society. We will approach the study of social movements from a sociological perspective, through which we will examine how movements form, how they accomplish their goals, and the forces that work in opposition to social movements. Students will develop a social movement portfolio over the course of the semester that will profile a single social movement of their own choosing. The portfolio will consist of various elements including a book report, timeline, profile, short biography or interview with an activist, a collection of artifacts that represent the movement, and a short analytical paper.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course students will be expected to have achieved the following learning objectives:

- 1) Demonstrate knowledge of the major perspectives in social movement research.

- 2) Understand the how the major perspectives developed and interact with other social forces.
- 3) Critically assess the development of social movements through key theoretical perspectives.
- 4) Understand how social movements attempt to accomplish their goals and why they succeed and why they fail.
- 5) Be able to offer a comprehensive account, verbally, visually, and in writing of a particular social movement.

Requirements

Social Movement Portfolio

Your grade will be primarily determined through the creation of a social movement portfolio. The social movement portfolio will consist of a variety of items pertaining to a single social movement of the student's choosing. Over the course of the semester, students will add and develop items which will be graded individually. By the end of the semester, the social movement portfolio will provide a detailed look at the dynamics of your social movement.

Portfolio Contents

1. **Project Prospectus.** Prior to beginning work on your portfolio, students must submit a **1 page** summary of which movement you will be studying and a short justification of why. This prospectus will help the student and instructor to develop a basic research plan and allow the instructor to offer advice and direction on how best to proceed.

Due Date: September 12

2. **Book Review of a Study on your Movement.** Students will identify and read a book on your social movement. The book you select does not have to be from the sociological literature on social movement, but you must apply the concepts from class to your discussion. Your book review is to be **5 pages** long (typed and double-spaced). The book review should address questions such as how is the movement defined? How did the author collect data from the movement? And what are the major findings and conclusions of the book?

Due Date: September 26

3. **Historical Timeline of the Movement.** The timeline should dates of major events in the movement's history, including the emergence and when applicable, the end of the movement. Think of your timeline as an introduction to the movement for someone completely unfamiliar with its

history. Be creative (use photos, drawing, etc.) in your presentation! You will turn in this assignment on regular office paper, but will eventually incorporate this information into your poster – so think visually!

Due Date: October 8

- 4. Activist Biography or Interview.** Every movement has its sung and unsung heroes. This assignment requires you to research a significant activist's biography. Write a **5 page** essay examining the history of an activist from the movement of your choosing. Provide a brief overview of the person's life history and a discussion of how they came to be involved in the movement and what role they played. You are welcome to substitute a real interview with an activist involved in your movement if you choose. If you select this option, prepare a list of interview questions and conduct, record, and transcribe the interview. Please see me for assistance with these tasks.

Due Date: October 24

- 5. Demographic and Resource Profile.** Each movement appeals to a different group of people and requires different resources. This assignment requires you to write a **3 page** profile of the individuals participating in your movement. What elements of the population were most likely to participate? Was this an intended outcome and how were people recruited? Next, what resources were most important to your movement? Were there challenges in acquiring these resources?

Due Date: November 7

- 6. Artifacts of Movement Culture.** Every social movement has its own culture, language, and artifacts. These artifacts can include posters, flyers, signs, newsletters, bumper stickers, songs, T-shirts, websites, etc. You are to gather at least 5 different items in three of these or related categories (i.e. you can't have 5 bumper stickers or four signs!). To turn in this assignment, you must hand in the 5 items with a typed description of the items and their origins.

Due Date: November 21

- 7. Movement Analysis Essay.** This final assignment is an essay on your movement in which you examine a number of theoretically important aspects of the movement. Analyze the movement using the three primary theoretical perspectives discussed in class. How does each explain why the movement emerged and the trajectory it took? Develop an argument in which you describe which of the theoretical perspectives best explains the formation and development of your movement – or alternatively, why one theory cannot provide a complete explanation on its own. **5 pages.**

Due Date: December 5

Poster Presentation

Students will share their work with the entire class by presenting their portfolio during one of several poster sessions. The main assignment is to develop a display to present all of the elements of your portfolio. Students will be divided into groups and present only on the day of that group. However, students are required to attend all the poster presentations and complete feedback forms for each of the posters. Specific requirements for the poster presentation will be discussed in class.

Short Writing Assignments

10 Short Writing Assignments (SWAs) must be completed by the end of the semester. You are responsible for preparing a one page paper on eight of the weeks' reading. There are twelve weeks with full reading assignments; therefore you need to plan on writing these almost every week. SWAs are not summaries of the week's readings. We will be reviewing most of the readings in class. Instead, you are required to engage with the reading and respond with a question or comment of your in the SWA. Examples including disagreeing with a reading's conclusion, where you present your argument followed by your reasoning why in the paper. Papers are due on Fridays before class. You may opt to complete *all* the SWAs for potential extra credit (20 points).

Grading

Your overall grade for this course is based primarily on your Social Movement Portfolio. The work for your portfolio will be conducted largely outside of class. Therefore it is imperative that you keep up with deadlines and plan ahead for each assignment. I am available during office hours and by appointment if you have any concerns or questions regarding the portfolio. As each assignment builds on your work for previous assignments, it is important to address any problems or concerns you may have early on.

Portfolio

Prospectus:	20 points (5%)
Book Review:	40 points (10%)
Timeline:	20 points (5%)
Biography/Interview:	40 points (10%)
Resource Profile:	40 points (10%)
Artifacts:	40 points (10%)
Essay:	40 points (10%)

Poster Presentation: **20 points** (10%)

Reaction Papers: **100 points** (20%)

Participation: **20 points** (10%)

Total: **380 Points**

Extra Credit: **20 Points** (2 extra SWAs)

Official Business

Students requesting classroom accommodation for any disability must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

Cheating is unethical, and as such, will not be tolerated under any circumstances. **Plagiarism, whether it be from your fellow student's work or professional publications, in any form for the research paper and take home exam will result in an automatic F for that assignment and appropriate institutional action will be taken.** There should be no need to cheat. My goal is to help you perform well in this course and if you need information about how to do well on assignment, I will always be available to you. For further information on the University's Honor Code and Academic Honesty policy, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/academicguide.php>

A note on classroom behavior: please endeavor to be at class on time. If you must be late, enter the classroom quietly without disruption. Use of cell phones, texting, and browsing the internet, should you bring a laptop, is not allowed. Please be respectful in your comments and courteous to your fellow students and the instructor. The classroom is a learning environment and each student, as well as the instructor, will contribute to the overall process of learning about social movements. You are expected to actively participate in this course.

Assignment Standards

The elements of the portfolio should be handed in to me by the due date in typed form. Assignments should be double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman font, and with one-inch margins on all sides. Proper credit should be given to source information and ideas that are not your own. Proper citation format in the text includes author, year, and page when necessary, e.g. (Mayer 2005: 14). Citations in your lists of references should include author, year, title, source, publisher information, and pages. I will go over this in class to make sure everyone understands proper citation. Failure to do so will make it appear as if you are plagiarizing the information.

All written assignments must be turned in with proper spelling and grammar. Given the importance of the research paper and take-home exams to your grade, I expect the highest quality from you. Repeated spelling mistakes and grammatical errors will result in the lowering of your grade for the assignment. If you have questions about these requirements, contact me before you turn in the assignment.

Papers and other portfolio assignments will generally not be accepted late. Under exceptional circumstances, your grade will be reduced by a – for each day (e.g. from a B to a B- for one day, B- to a C+ for two days, etc.)

Required Readings (Available at the University Bookstore):

Doug McAdam and David A. Snow. 1997. *Social Movements: Readings on their Emergence, Mobilization, and Dynamics*. Roxbury Publishing Company.

Reading Schedule

Students should come prepared at the beginning of each day having read all of the readings assigned for that particular day.

Week One: The Problem of Collective Action

8/25: No Readings

8/27: No Readings

8/29: Newspaper Assignment

“In the beginning of a change, the patriot is a scarce man, brave, hated, and scorned. When his cause succeeds however, the timid join him, for then it cost nothing to be a patriot.” -- Mark Twain

Week Two: What is a Social Movement? Why do People Join?

9/3: Introduction

9/5: Reading on Cyberactivism
<http://archive.greenpeace.org/cyberstory/cyberactivism.htm>

Week 3: Conflict & State Breakdown

9/8: Chapter 1

9/10: Chapter 2

9/12: Chapter 3

Project Prospectus Due

Week 4: Political Opportunities

9/15: Chapter 4

9/17: Chapter 5

9/19: Chapter 6

Week 5: Movements & Organizations

9/22: Chapter 7

9/24: Chapter 8

9/26: Chapter 9

Book Report Due

Week 6: Mobilizing Structures

9/29: Chapter 10

10/1: Chapter 12

10/3: Chapter 13

Week 7: Micromobilization & Commitment

10/6: Chapter 14

10/8: Chapter 15

10/10: No Class

Historical Timeline Due

"My grandfather once told me that there were two kinds of people: those who do the work and those who take the credit. He told me to try to be in the first group; there was much less competition." -- Indira Gandhi

Week 8: Review of Organizations & Political Opportunities

10/13: No Class

10/15: Chapter 16

10/17: Chapter 17

Note: No SWA this week

Week 9: Framing & Discourses

10/20: Chapter 18

10/22: Chapter 19

10/24: No Class

Biography / Interview Due

"Ideas must work their way through the brains and arms of men, or they are no better than dreams." -- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Week 10: Motivation & Participation

10/27: Chapter 21

10/29: Chapter 23

10/31: Chapter 24

Week 11: Strategies & Tactics

11/3: Chapter 25

11/5: Chapter 26

11/7: Chapter 27

Demographic & Resources Due

Week 12: Countermovements & Movement Interaction

11/10: Chapter 30

11/12: Chapter 28

11/14: Chapter 29

Week 13: Intra-Movement Dynamics

11/17: Chapter 31

11/19: Chapter 32

11/21: Chapter 34

Artifacts Due

Week 14: Transnational Activism

11/24: Grassroots Movements as Transnational Actors (elearning)

11/26: No Class

Week 15: Outcomes and Consequences

12/1: Chapter 35

12/3: Chapter 36

12/5: Group I (Poster Presentations)

Final Essay Due

Week 16: Poster Sessions

12/8: Group II

12/10: Group III