

## SC358 S09: Social Change in Action II

T-Th, 3:00-4:45, Campion 235

Professor:	Darcy Leach	Office:	519b McGuinn
Phone:	617-552-4645 (office)	Office Hours:	M 12-1; T 11-12;
Email:	leachd@bc.edu		or by appt.

### Course Description

It is easy to feel overwhelmed by the problems of our times. What can ordinary people do to bring about social change? How can they organize themselves effectively without sacrificing the very values for which they are fighting? This two-part course is designed to help students learn about various organizing strategies through readings and discussion, and also gain practical skills in participatory decision-making, publicity and outreach, alliance-building and more, through trainings and a hands-on collective action project. Over the course of the year, the class chooses an issue, sets a goal, and designs a campaign strategy, then works together to carry out the first steps of that campaign. Students should have either prior coursework in social issues/social movements or activist experience.

This course is a continuation of SC357 from last semester. The Fall semester was dedicated primarily to choosing an issue, researching it, developing a campaign strategy, and collectively writing a detailed action plan for the campaign. This semester, the idea is to *carry out* the plan (or as much of it as possible) in pursuit of our goal. That's how the course was designed, in any case. Despite the intention of it being a year-long course, we were not able to structure it that way with the registrar (to keep the same meeting time, pre-register students for both terms, submit a grade for both semesters at the end of the second term, etc.). Consequently, many of the students who took the course first semester were not able to take it again this semester. As a result, we are opening the course to new students and may well end up with more new students than returning students, a fact that presents us with a couple of questions to answer as a group. The primary question is whether we want to continue working on the project that was begun last semester, or if we want to come up with something new. Starting something new has the advantage of making sure everyone feels that it is "their" project and will be committed to working on it together. On the other hand, the disadvantages of starting something new are that those who invested so much last term wouldn't get to see their work lead to anything tangible, and second, that one semester is much less time in which to choose a topic, research it, plan a campaign, and carry it out, so we probably wouldn't be able to do as much. You will all receive a copy of the action plan that was created last term along with this syllabus. The project deals with the issue of free speech and removing structural barriers to political activism on campus. Please take the time to look through it before our next class and we will talk about it in more detail then.

### Course Format

Whichever route we decide to take, the primary focus of the term will be on learning concrete organizing skills and putting them into practice on a collective action project. The course is designed to have a strong experiential component. It is meant to give you practical knowledge of various kinds of organizing skills and hands-on experience using them in a collective project. At the same time, we will be discussing these issues critically, considering the practical and ethical implications of various options available to organizers and the

dilemmas they face, in terms of how to mobilize people, how to deal with the media, what strategies for social change work best, what tactics, etc. Many of the options that have been tried historically are either not within the scope of this course for us to try ourselves (developing a national coalition, for example) or are ethically/morally inappropriate to be carrying out as a class (e.g. violent tactics), yet it is important from an intellectual standpoint to understand what has been tried in the past and what has or has not worked in different situations. Consequently, the course is designed so that the experiential component and our consideration of historical approaches to social change run parallel to each other. While we may have to adjust it occasionally depending on the needs of the project, the basic format will be to spend one day each week discussing the readings and the other day working on the group project/campaign.

Because the question of what project we pursue is central to how we proceed this term, the schedule below is necessarily tentative and we will be able to shape it as we go. If we choose to continue with the original project, we will need to spend some time initially going over and finalizing the action plan, making sure everyone has had a chance to give feedback, and collectively making any improvements we think are necessary. As a part of this, we would continue working out a media strategy and creating a general timetable for specific events or stages in the campaign, and carrying out the plan. What I have included here is a rough outline of the topics and schedule of assignments that we will cover regardless of the project we decide to work on. In terms of the readings, most of it will be in the form of “how-to” guides focused on specific skills, but there are also weeks where we will step back and look at some of the larger issues organizers face in terms of strategy—questions about how to align means and ends in such a way as to, for example:

- continue mobilizing larger and larger numbers of people
- prevent both cooptation and factionalization
- prevent oligarchization through participatory democratic process, i.e. ensuring that everyone participating has a say in what happens
- makes use of everyone’s talents and skills so that people feel appreciated and acknowledged but also so that the campaign can be successful!
- create a life for yourself that meets your everyday needs for emotional and material sustenance, but also reflects your political principles and contributes to larger cultural and structural change
- make tangible gains at the local level without losing sight of broader goals by tying local struggles into longer-term strategies for large-scale structural change.

These are dilemmas that progressives have been struggling with for centuries now, so it is unlikely we will suddenly solve them (though you never know!). At the same time, there is no need for each generation of activists to “rediscover” them through trial and error, so the goal here is simply to raise the issues and begin thinking about them as we work on our own project.

### **Course Requirements (Semester II)**

- 1) Participation and discussion questions. These are especially important since so much of the class revolves around group work. I will *not* be taking roll each week, but your classmates will need you to be there for the project to come together well, so absences will be noticed. If you have to miss a class, please make sure to get notes from a fellow student and keep up with all readings and assignments. My assessment of your overall level of engagement with the class will constitute a significant part of your grade. Things that will count toward your participation grade are:

- participation in class discussions
- once during each term, you will sign up to bring in discussion questions which we will use to guide discussion that day

Other (optional) things you can do to ensure a good participation grade might be:

- email correspondence
- coming to my office hours
- attending relevant lectures or events on campus and talking to me about it in person or writing up a page summarizing the event and giving your reactions.

Everyone will get to suggest what grade they should receive for their work on the group project by writing up a one-page report explaining what role you played, how much time you put in and what work you did on the project over the course of the semester, and what grade you think you deserve. I will then use these reports to inform my assessment of each person's contribution.

- 2) Two short (3-5 page) papers. One paper, early in the term, will be on the topic of free speech on campus. This may be changed, depending on our decision about the group project. The second paper, around week 12, will be on the question of larger strategies for social change and how to address some of the dilemmas listed above.
- 3) Journals. As a supplement to in-class discussion and as a way of processing the materials we cover, I will ask each student to keep a journal, recording your thoughts and reactions to the readings, our discussions, and your experience in the course. You should buy a separate spiral notebook or journal to use for this purpose. I will periodically read and respond to the journals as a way of entering into a more individualized intellectual dialogue with you. These won't be graded on content, but on the degree to which you seem to be *consistently and thoughtfully* engaging with the issues and ideas that come up.
- 4) Movement report/presentation. This will be a research paper investigating and evaluating a recent social movement, which you will also present to the class. You may choose to work on this individually or with one or two partners. I will work with you both to find an appropriate case and to locate resources for your study, then you will submit a proposal/outline before writing the paper.
- 5) Final reflections paper (10-12 pgs). At the end of the term, each student will write a 10-12 page final paper, reflecting on the action, your experiences in the group project aspect of the course, and what you learned through the readings and discussion.

## Grading

Participation:

• In-class/discussion questions	10%
• Group Action Project	20%
Free speech paper	7.5%
Strategies for social change paper	7.5%
Journal	10%
Social movement presentation/report	20%
Final paper	25%

## Academic Integrity

It is each student's responsibility to understand and adhere to the accepted norms of intellectual honesty in their academic work. Any form of cheating, plagiarism, dishonesty, or collusion in another's dishonesty is a fundamental violation of these norms. To see the College's policies in this area go to: <http://www.bc.edu/integrity>. Two other sources to consult about proper citation rules and exactly what constitutes a breach of policy are: "Plagiarism Examples and Guidelines: A Quiz" at [http://www.bc.edu/schools/cas/polisci/integrity/quiz/#Example\\_four](http://www.bc.edu/schools/cas/polisci/integrity/quiz/#Example_four) and the American Sociological Association's "Quick Style Guide" at <http://www.asanet.org/page.wv?section=Sociology+Depts&name=Quick+Style+Guide>).

### **A note about late papers (please read carefully!).**

Papers are graded down by *5 percentage points for each day they are late*. If there is an emergency (i.e. something that is both *unavoidable* and *unforeseen*), make sure to contact me by email as soon as possible. If you know about an unavoidable conflict ahead of time, let me know *in advance*, and we can arrange an extension. If you miss your assigned day to give your presentation, without arranging with me ahead of time, you will get a zero for those assignments, unless it was an emergency.

## Readings

There are five new books required for this semester:

- Kim Bobo, Jackie Kendall, and Steve Max. 2001. *Organizing for Social Change: Midwest Academy Manual for Activists*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Santa Ana, CA: Seven Locks Press. (ISBN: 0-929765-94-X)
- Paul Rogat Loeb. 2004. *The Impossible Will Take a Little While: A Citizen's Guide to Hope in a Time of Fear*. New York: Basic Books. (ISBN: 978-0465041664)
- Harvey A. Silverglate, David French, and Greg Lukianoff. 2005. *FIRE's Guide to Free Speech on Campus*. Philadelphia: Foundation for Individual Rights in Education. (ISBN: 0-9724712-4-3)
- Timothy C. Shiell. 1998. *Campus Hate Speech on Trial*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas. (ISBN: 0-7006-0889-3)
- Amory Starr. 2005. *Global Revolt: A Guide to the Movements Against Globalization*. New York: Zed Books. (ISBN: 978-1842774830)

We will also continue to use Salzman's book from last semester, which anyone coming in new this term will also need to pick up:

- Jason Salzman. 2003. *Making the News: A Guide for Activists and Nonprofits*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press. (ISBN: 978-0813340951)

The books haven't come in yet, but should be available at the Bookstore sometime next week. Until then, I will make copies available to you. The books will also be on reserve at O'Niell Library. The Salzman and Shaw books will arrive in a couple of weeks. All other assigned readings will be on electronic reserve. From the library home page (<http://www.bc.edu/libraries/>), click on "course reserves" under "Find Library Materials," log in, and look up the course.

## Weekly Schedule and Readings

### Week 1.

Thursday, 1/15      Introductions and Welcome to New People

### Week 2.

Tuesday, 1/20      Discuss action plan, go over consensus process

- Action Plan from Last Semester

Thursday, 1/22      **Free Speech on Campus – the Situation at BC**

- Policies from student guide
- Articles from *Heights* on previous incidents

### Week 3.

Tuesday, 1/27      **Free Speech on Campus – BC vs. Other Schools**

- Michael Gould-Wartofsky. “Repress U.” *The Nation*, January 28, 2008. Online at: <http://www.thenation.com/docprint.mhtml?i=20080128&s=gould-wartofsky>
- Aaron Kreider. 1998. “Creating a Culture of Intolerance—Barriers to Student Activism at Notre Dame: A Three Dimensional Power Analysis” at: <http://www.campusactivism.org/akreider/essays/apathynd6.doc>
- Research reports on other schools (handout)
- *Organizing for Social Change*. Ch. 2-3, pp.8-28.
- *FIRE’s Guide to Free Speech on Campus*. “Introduction: Free Speech Then and Now” pp.1-22, and “Free Speech: The Basics” pp. 23-62

Thursday, 1/29      Finalize goal(s)

- *FIRE’s Guide*. Rest of “The Basics” chapter, pp.63-123; and “From Law Books and Theories to Practice: Free Speech on Today’s Campuses” sections 1, 5, 16, 17.

### Week 4.

Tuesday, 2/3      **Free Speech on Campus – Larger Issues**

- Timothy C. Shiell. *Campus Hate Speech on Trial*. At least Ch.1-3 and 7, but try to get through as much of the book as you can.
- Film: “Berkeley in the Sixties” (probably Wednesday evening)

Thursday, 2/5      Discuss strategy, timeline, and tactics: what do we actually want to *do*?

- *Organizing for Social Change*. Ch. 4-5, pp.30-61.
- Albert Einstein Institution. “198 Methods of Nonviolent Action” (1 pg.) at [www.aeinstein.org](http://www.aeinstein.org).
- Steve D. 2008. “Thinking About Protest Tactics” Posting on London Indymedia. <http://londonontario.indymedia.org/?q=node/394> (2 pgs)

## Week 5.

### Monday, 2/9: Free speech papers due in my box by noon.

Tuesday, 2/10            **The Art & Science of Mobilization**

- Eric L. Hirsch. 1999. "Sacrifice for the Cause: Group Processes, Recruitment, and Commitment in a Student Social Movement" in *Waves of Protest: Social Movements Since the Sixties*. Jo Freeman and Victoria Johnson, eds. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. pp.47-64.

Thursday, 2/12            Planning events/actions.

- *Organizing for Social Change*. Ch.6-8 and 10, pp.62-99 and pp.110-117.

## Week 6.

Tuesday, 2/17            **Media: Framing and What Counts as News**

- *Making the News*, Introduction and Chapters 1-3, pp.1-62.
- Char Ryan and Bill Gamson. 2006. "The Art of Reframing Political Debates." *Contexts* 5(1):13-18.

Thursday, 2/19            What's our argument/story/frame? How can we get the media to care?

- *Making the News*, Ch. 7-10, pp.75-89

## Week 7.

Tuesday, 2/24            **Nuts & Bolts of Campaign PR**

- *Making the News*, Ch.13-19, pp.98-152

Thursday, 2/26            Finalize media strategy and assign tasks: exactly how will we get our message across?

## **MARCH 2-6, SPRING BREAK**

## Week 8.

Tuesday, 3/10            **Power and Privilege in the Movement: the Iron Law of Oligarchy**

- Robert Michels. 1962 [1911]. *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy*. New York: Free Press. "Introduction, by Seymour Martin Lipset" pp.15-42; and "Anarchism as Prophylactic" pp.325-29.
- Andrei Markovits and Philip S. Gorski. 1993. New York: Oxford University Press. Ch.5 "Ideology: The World Imagined" pp.125-151.
- Joyce Rothschild & J. Allen Whitt. 1986. *The Cooperative Workplace: Potentials and Dilemmas of Organizational Democracy and Participation*. New York: Cambridge University Press. "Introduction" and Ch. 1 "Cooperatives in the late twentieth century: the democratic impulse and the challenge of oligarchy" pp.1-24.

Thursday, 3/12            Organizing.

### **Week 9.**

Tuesday, 3/17

#### **Power and Privilege in the Movement: Organizational Structure and Decisionmaking**

- Jo Freeman. 1984. "The Tyranny of Structurelessness" and Cathy Levine "The Tyranny of Tyranny" from *Untying the Knot: Feminism, Anarchism and Organization*. London: Dark Star/Rebel Press. pp. 5-23.
- Rhoda Linton. "Seneca Women's Peace Camp: Shapes of Things to Come" from *Rocking the Ship of State*, Adrienne Harris and Ynestra King, eds. Boulder, CO: Westview Press. pp. 239-261.
- Starhawk. 2002. *Webs of Power: Notes from the Global Uprising*. "The Practice of Direct Democracy" pp.169-178.
- Starr, *Global Revolt*. Ch. 21 "Spokes only: reinventing direct democracy"
- Francesca Polletta. 2005. "How Participatory Democracy Became White and Other Stories of Organizational Choice." *Mobilization* 10(2):271-288.

Thursday, 3/19

Organizing.

### **Week 10.**

Tuesday, 3/24

#### **Power and Privilege in the Movement: Building Coalitions Across Race and Class**

- Betsy Leondar-Wright. 2005. *Class Matters*. New Society Publishers. pp. 13-15, 26-63; 88-99; 103-106; 116-123; 125; 131-138.
- From the Class Matters website:  
[http://www.classmatters.org/working\\_definitions.php](http://www.classmatters.org/working_definitions.php)  
[http://www.classmatters.org/reality\\_check.php](http://www.classmatters.org/reality_check.php)
- Betita Martinez. "Where was the Color in Seattle?: Looking for reasons why the Great Battle was so white." <http://colours.mahost.org/articles/martinez.html>
- Starhawk. 2002. *Webs of Power: Notes from the Global Uprising*. "Building a Diverse Movement." pp.179-200.
- Chris Crass. 2001. *Collective Liberation on my mind: Essays by Chris Crass*. Montreal: Kersplebedeb Distribution. ISBN: 0-968950-21-0. "Beyond the Whiteness – Global Capitalism and White Supremacy: Thought on Movement Building and Anti-Racist Organizing," pp.11-16.
- Organizing for Social Change. Ch. 9, pp.100-109.

Thursday, 3/26

Organizing.

### **Week 11.**

Tuesday, 3/31

#### **Power and Privilege in the Movement: Community Organizing and the Vanguard Question**

- Starr. *Global Revolt*. Ch. 8 and 12.
- Tom Hayden. 1988. *Reunion*. New York: Collier Books. Ch. 6-7, pp.123-172.

- Kristina Smock. 2004. *Democracy in Action*. New York: Columbia University Press. Ch. 2 and 9. pp.10-36; 247-262.
- John P. Kretzmann & John L. McKnight. 1993. *Building Communities from the Inside Out*. "Introduction" Online at: <http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/publications/community/introd-building.html>
- Film: "Rebels with a Cause" (probably Wednesday evening)

Thursday, 4/2 Organizing.

**Friday, 4/3: Strategy papers due in my box by noon.**

**Week 12.**

Tuesday, 4/7 **Student Activism Then & Now: New Conditions, New Ideas?**

- George Katsiaficas. 1987. *The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968*. Ch. 2 "Social Movements of 1968." pp.29-82.
- Robert A. Rhoads' *Freedom's Web: Student Activism in an Age of Cultural Diversity*. Ch.1-2, pp.1-60.
- Jason Rosenbaum. "Hoping for a New Countercultural Revolution." <http://www.theseminal.com/2007/07/22/hoping-for-a-new-countercultural-revolution/>

**APRIL 9<sup>TH</sup>, EASTER HOLIDAY**

**Week 13.**

Tuesday, 4/14 **On Strategy & Tactics: Can the Master's Tools Rebuild the Master's House?**

- Audre Lorde. 1984. "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House" from *Sister Outsider*. Trumansburg, NY:Crossing Press. pp.110-113.
- Starr. *Global Revolt*. Ch. 13, 15 and all of Part Four.
- Film: "The Edukators" (probably Wednesday evening)

Thursday, 4/16 Organizing.

**Week 14.**

Tuesday, 4/21 **Lifelong Activism: How to Maintain Hope and Avoid Burnout**

- Paul Loeb. *The Impossible Will Take A Little While*. Selections.
- *Organizing for Social Change*. Ch. 25-26, pp.338-379.

Thursday, 4/23 Organizing.

**Week 15.**

Tuesday, 4/28 **Lifelong Activism: No Correct Living in a False Life**

- Carol Hanisch. 1969. "The Personal is Political." <http://www.perdigiorno.net/manifesto/personalpolitical1969.pdf>
- Starr, *Global Revolt*. Ch.14.

- Ralph Blunthal and Rachel Mosteller, May 18, 2008. “Voluntary Simplicity Movement Re-emerges” *International Herald Tribune*.  
<http://www.iht.com/articles/2008/05/18/america/simplicity.php?page=1>
- John Cavanagh & Jerry Mander, eds. *Alternatives to Economic Globalization: A Better World is Possible*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc. Chapter 11. “Global to Local: What You Can Do,” pp. 333-345.
- Loeb. *The Impossible Will Take a Little While*. Selections.
- Film: “Reverend Billy and the Church of Stop Shopping”

Thursday, 4/30          Wrap-up Discussion.

**Final Papers due Thursday, May 7th, 12:30 pm**