Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:30 to noon, in O’Neill 211
Professor Betsy Leondar-Wright, wrightb@bc.edu, 781-648-0630
Office hours: in McGuinn 426D, Mondays 10 am and by appointment on Wednesdays, 12-12:30

Required books available at bookstore and on reserve:

If the cost of buying the books poses a hardship for you, please notify the professor.
All other readings are posted electronically on Blackboard or library course reserves.

Overview:

Social movements have played a major role in U.S. history, helping to bring about the end of slavery, votes for women, the 40-hour week, and clean water laws, among many other social changes that we now take for granted. But the role of movements is widely misunderstood, denigrated by some and unrealistically glorified by others. In fact, movements face predictable strategic dilemmas and are more effective or ineffective in reaching their goals depending on the choices movement leaders and activists make at key junctures. This course will give an overview of social movement theory and will apply concepts to case studies.

While this course spotlights progressive movements in the U.S., the strategy lessons can be applied to right-wing movements and international movements as well. In readings, assignments and films, students will learn from social movement practitioners as well as from academic researchers and writers.

Studying social movements illuminates many other aspects of our society: for example, how pluralist democracy works and fails to work; the role of emotions and values in public life; issue framing and how public opinion shapes and is shaped by the media; organizational development of voluntary groups; power dynamics among people diverse in race, class, gender and other identities; and the social problems that social movements have addressed.

The course is based on a theory of learning that emphasizes the many different aspects of human intelligence, including auditory, oral, visual, kinesthetic, analytical, interactive, and applied learning. Students will learn by reading, listening to lectures, viewing films, seeing diagrams, participating in and watching exercises, answering questions, solving problems, discussing and debating ideas, and teaching each other. The assignments and in-class activities are deliberately diverse to allow you to demonstrate your strongest mode and to strengthen your ability to learn via other modes.
SCHEDULE OF SESSIONS

Monday January 14 - What is a social movement?

Wednesday January 16 – The historical archetype: The Civil Rights Movement
*Film: Eyes on the Prize* excerpt

Monday January 21 – No class –Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday

Wednesday January 23 – The political contexts of social movements; Overview of course
*Reading: Meyer, Preface, Introduction and Chapter 1, pp. vi to 22*

Monday January 28 – What predicts a movement’s rise?
*Readings: Moyer, Chapter 1; Meyer, Chapter 2*

Wednesday January 30 – Activists and their roles
*Readings: Meyer Chapter 3; Moyer Chapter 2
Sign up for presentations*

Monday February 4 – Stages of social movements
*Reading: Moyer, Chapters 3 and 4
Film: Eyes on the Prize excerpt*

Wednesday February 6 – Applying MAP stages to Civil Rights Movement
*Reading: Moyer, Chapter 6*

Monday February 11 – Factors in movement success; Coalitions
*Reading: Meyer, Chapter 4; and part of Chapter 9, pp. 162-175*

Wednesday February 13- Movement strategies and tactics
*Readings: - Meyer, Chapter 5 (skip or skim pp. 90-99)
- Lofland, Polite Protestors, Chapter 1
Student presentations on a movement with moderate and militant wings*

Monday February 18 – Non-cooperation as power
*Readings: Meyer Chapter 6; Ackerman & Duvall, pp. 1-9
Student presentation on Seattle ’99 WTO protests*

Wednesday February 20 - The anti-apartheid movement and mass non-cooperation
*Readings: - Ackerman & Duvall, pp. 335-368;
- Zunes, Stephen, “The Role of Nonviolence in the Downfall of Apartheid”
*Film: Force More Powerful segment on South Africa*

Monday February 25– Movement endings; What predicts demobilization or failure?
*Reading: Meyer, Chapter 7; also re-read page 76 and p. 79
Student presentation on a labor or worker solidarity movement*

Wednesday February 27– Movements with cultural change goals
*Reading: Moyer, Chapter 8
Student presentations on a lesbian, gay, bisexual &/or transgender movement*
No class March 4 or 6 – Have a great spring break!

Monday March 11 – Midway evaluation of course; Midterm exam

Wednesday March 13 - Collective action frames: Identity, agency and injustice components
   Reading: Gamson, "Constructing Social Protest"

Monday March 18 - Creating a sense of agency & empowerment
   Readings: Piven & Cloward, Poor People’s Movements, Intro, pp. xix-xxiv, 1-39
   Student presentations on a low-income-led anti-poverty movement

Wednesday March 20 – Paths from marginalization to activism
   Reading: Stout, chapters 1 and 2
   Film: Poverty Outlaw

Monday March 25 – Principles of grassroots organizing
   Readings: Stout, chapters 3 and 4

Wednesday March 27 - Framing the injustice
   Readings: Ryan, Primetime Activism chapters 3 and 4

Monday April 1 – no class – Easter Monday

Wednesday April 3 – The mainstream media and social movements
   Readings: Meyer pp. 90 - 100

Monday April 8 – Is movement-building different in the internet era?
   Student presentations on movements using more new media & communications
   Deadline: Choice of movements for final paper due

Wednesday April 10 - Story-telling, memes and parody
   Readings: Meyer, pp. 176-180; Boyd, “Irony, meme warfare” in Shepard & Hayduk

Monday April 15 – no class – Patriots Day

Wednesday April 17 - Counter-movements and frame contests
   Readings: Meyer Chapter 8
   Student presentations on pair of left- & right-wing movements & counter-movements
   Deadline for minimum of 15 Blackboard journal entries

Monday April 22 - Movement culture pros and cons: Lessons from the anti-nuclear movement
   Readings: - Lofland, “Charting Degrees of Movement Culture”
   - Moyer, chapter 7
   Student presentation on a movement with a countercultural component

Wednesday April 24 – Tastes in tactics, power and privilege
   Reading: Stout, chapter 5-6
   Student presentations
Monday April 29 - Class barriers: Whose culture becomes the movement culture?  
*Reading:* Stout, chapter 7-8  
*Student presentation on a cross-class movement*  
Deadline: Outline of final paper with source list due

Wednesday May 1 - Wrapping up lessons learned about social movement strategies  
*Student presentation on a current movement*

**Course Expectations and Grading:**

1) The **readings** are a very important part of the course. Readings are due *on the date they are listed*. Please come to class ready to discuss them. You may be called on and asked to summarize the main points of a reading whether or not you raise your hand.

2) **Class participation** is also important, as this course involves learning from each other, from discussion and from participatory exercises. Both speaking and focused listening will be valued; either too much silence or too much over-participation (interrupting others or dominating discussions) could negatively affect your grade.

If you miss a class session, you are responsible for getting notes from a classmate. **More than two unexcused absences** will lower your final grade by 3 points per absence. A doctor, dean, or other BC official must verify an absence in order for it to be excused on the basis of illness, death or hospitalization in the family, or other emergency (defined as an unforeseen and unavoidable crisis); a clergy member must verify a religious obligation; a coach or other BC official must verify a mandatory schedule conflict. Notes from family members will not be accepted. Arriving more than 15 minutes late counts as an absence; arriving 5-10 minutes late counts as half an absence.

Mental absences will be treated the same as physical absences. Looking at or listening to unrelated content on a screen (laptop, phone, iPod, etc.) during class will lower your grade by 1 point per offense. Offline laptops may be used for taking notes only; all other devices must be turned off during class sessions. Repeated violations may result in disallowing everyone’s laptops for note-taking as well.

3) The **midterm exam** on March 11 will be a multiple-choice test using a scantron form, with approximately 30 questions to be completed in 55 minutes.

The questions will be drawn from the readings, films, and presentations by the professor and by students. Answering them correctly will not require memorizing exact dates or other factual details; instead you will need to understand theories and concepts, lessons drawn from movement stories, and strategies and their outcomes.

Please notify the professor and the Assistant Dean for Students with Disabilities ahead of time if you have a disability and require more time and/or an alternate format for the exam.

4) **ASSIGNMENTS**

A) **Presentations.** Each student will make one 10-minute in-class presentation to teach the class lessons drawn from one movement related to the session’s topic, using at least one mode in addition to verbally telling information (e.g., visual aid, brief video or audio clip, dramatic storytelling, performance, or interactive activity).
A PowerPoint or hand-out containing nothing but a bullet-point outline of the words presented verbally does not count as another mode; but the addition of photos, video, audio or graphic charts do add another learning mode. If you use PowerPoint (or another projected document), please bring it on a flash drive, email it to the professor a day or two in advance, or use a laptop that you have confirmed connects well with the classroom equipment.

Base the presentation on web research and on roughly 75 to 200 pages of extra reading in two or more books or articles. Suggested readings are listed on the sign-up sheet and on the Blackboard site; all are on reserve shelves, on electronic course reserves, and/or on the web. Feel free to substitute other readings; make sure to include sources with some critical evaluation of the movement, not just its chronology.

The ideal presentation will have just a small amount of information about the movement’s issues, goals and major players (introducing two or more organizations), just enough background to orient the listeners. Most of the presentation will focus on the movement’s strategies, tactics, messages, responses from public and power-holders, any notable successes or failures, and strategic implications that could be applied to other movements. In other words, don’t try to cram every fact you learn about the movement into your presentation, but think of two or three important lessons to teach the class and choose examples to make those points.

Your presentation should include relevant theories covered in the course to date; and as the semester progresses, I will expect more of them, better used. Thus there’s a trade-off in which week you sign up for: in earlier weeks, you’ll have more time pressure but lower expectations for grading; later you’ll have more time to prepare, but higher expectations for incorporating more course concepts to get a good grade.

Sign-up for slots will start with a passed-around sign-up sheet during the third week of class and then continue on Blackboard. Each student should commit to a slot no later than February 4. You are encouraged to choose a movement that you know nothing about or whose goals you disagree with.

B) Framing questions online journal. (Ongoing informal writing requirement, to be completed by April 19)

The course is framed by these five sets of questions:

1. EARLY STAGES: Why do social movements start up when they do? Why do some issues not develop into movements? What can aspiring activists do to help spark a new movement?
2. MOBILIZATION: Why do some movements take off and become mass movements? What makes people eager or reluctant to participate in social movements? What works to mobilize supporters and energize activists?
3. MESSAGING: In framing and publicizing an issue, what works to sway public opinion?
4. WHY DEMOBILIZATION?: What causes movements to decline and disappear? What can activists do to slow or prevent premature decline?
5. WHY SUCCESS OR FAILURE AT GOALS?: What factors contribute to movements’ success or failure in winning institutional and/or cultural change? Which factors are within activists’ control, making them strategic choices, and which factors can’t activists control?
Please keep a running journal of your thoughts on each question on the Blackboard site. Write short entries as you notice relevant ideas and examples in the readings, films, presentations, exercises and discussions in the course. Only you and I can see your journal entries.

Each entry should be approximately 20 to 150 words. Please note the source you’re responding to (e.g., “re Moyer,” “re Eyes on the Prize,” or “re Jessica’s presentation.”)

On April 17 I will tally how many entries each student has made on each discussion topic, on what dates. The expectation is that you’ve been averaging two or more entries a week, so by that point you will have more than 15 entries, some written in each of the four months of the course, three or more under each of the 5 questions, responding to two or more course sources per question.

Your journal entries will not be graded on their content or length, and no feedback will be given. Don’t worry about spelling or grammar, full sentences, footnotes, outside sources, eloquent writing or completeness. These brief reflections are a tool to help you notice the themes that run through the course, and a record of your evolving thinking on the framing questions.

You will get full credit if you have made 15 or more appropriate, thoughtful entries, some posted in January, February, March and April; 2/3 credit if you wrote 15+ appropriate entries but skipped one or more months; half credit if you have made fewer than 15 entries or if they seem “phoned in” (i.e. not based on actually reading, listening and thinking, but careless and generated by rote); or no credit for few or no journal entries at all.

C) Final paper. Minimum 12 pages, maximum 22 pages, double-spaced (3000 to 5500 words, not counting title page or bibliography). Due Thursday May 9 (before 8 am on Friday May 10 counts as on time). Submit by email to betsy@classmatters.org.

Intermediate deadlines:
Your choice of movement (just a quick email or slip of paper with the name of movement you will write about) is due April 3.
A one-page outline of your ideas and sources is due April 29.

Topic: Pick a full-fledged social movement, current or historical, whose goals you support, a different one than the movement you did your presentation on. (If you have an idea for a movement not included in the course readings or presentation options, please run it by me before beginning your research.)

Imagine you’ve been asked to come as an advisor to a strategy meeting of all the major organizations that are part of the movement (currently or at a certain year in history). After briefly (1 to 2 pages) describing the issue/goal, the political context, and the multiple organizations involved, make recommendations on how they can make progress towards their goal.

First, evaluate the movement to date (or as of your historical snapshot date). What MAP stage are they in? Applying Meyer’s theories, how favorable or unfavorable is the political context, with what political opportunities for the movement? What specialized niches and roles are organizations in the movement playing (using Meyer’s, Moyer’s and/or Lofland’s terms), using what strategies and tactics? Applying Stout’s theories, are they building the most effective coalitions, and do they have the most empowering organizational forms and cultures?
Second, what would you recommend they do? Design a particular, time-limited campaign for them: propose a winnable goal, a target opponent and a strategy, including non-cooperation; suggest what messaging they should put forth; and lay out the tactics they should use. In your advice for this campaign, include all the components of a collective action frame: identity, agency, and framing the injustice. Recommend which people and groups within their potential constituencies they should mobilize and how, how they should react to opponents, and what potential allies they should and shouldn’t reach out to. Include a realistic prediction of responses from authorities, and of the likelihood of various outcomes and types of potential institutionalization.

Finally, summarize the ideas behind your recommendations and the general lessons you draw from this movement’s actual efforts and from this hypothetical strategy exercise.

Final papers should draw on and cite at least three course readings and at least three non-course sources that are peer-reviewed academic publications, edited books (not self-published), external evaluations, or other rigorous sources, not all written from inside the movement. Wikipedia and promotional websites, brochures and other such organizational materials do not count towards the three non-course sources, though you are welcome to consult them and cite them as well. Include a reference list using APA or another standard academic form of citation (see http://www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/apa).

Creative formats are welcome, such as a fictional account of the strategy meeting. Supplemental materials such as photos or weblinks are also welcome if they add to the strategic points you’re making. However, you will lose no points for writing a traditional expository term paper.

The papers will be graded on a 1-30 scale. Failure to turn in a one-page outline with topic, sources and outline by April 29 will reduce the grade on the final paper by 3 points. Late papers will lose 2 points for each day after the due date, except with a valid health excuse or unforeseen family emergency verified by a note from a doctor, dean or BC administrator.

**GRADING**

Grades will be calculated on a 100-point scale:
- Class attendance and participation 15%
- Framing questions Blackboard journal 15%
- Midterm exam 20%
- In-class presentation assignment 20%
- Final paper 30%

**Grading Scale:**
- 101 or more=A+ 74-77= C+
- 94-100= A 70-73= C
- 90-93= A- 66-69= C-
- 86-89= B+ 62-65= D+
- 82-85= B 58-61= D
- 78-81= B- 54-57= D-
- 53-00= F
**Policy on student opinions**
The presentation, Blackboard journal, and final paper all require you to put forward opinions. Feel free to try out a stance new to you, or one you aren't sure you actually agree with. If you disagree with the professor or the author of a reading, you will not be graded more strictly for that; if you agree, you will not be graded more leniently. All positions you take will be evaluated by whether you have presented evidence and whether you make a reasoned argument.

**Academic Integrity**
Academic integrity standards are of utmost importance in this course. Guidelines for academic integrity in written work are posted on the BC website at:

http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/resources/policy/#integrity

Outright plagiarism of a written assignment or cheating on the midterm exam will result in failing the course and notification of the dean. Lesser degrees of noncompliance with BC’s policies on academic integrity will result in a lower grade on the assignment in question. It is your responsibility to know the rules of citation. If you have any questions pertaining to the academic integrity guidelines, please come and talk with the professor.

**Disability accommodation**
Students needing a change in the time, location and/or format of the midterm exam due to a disability, or needing any other disability accommodation, should inform the professor at the beginning of the semester. For more information, please call the Dean for Students with Disabilities at 617-552-3470 or see http://www.bc.edu/offices/odsd/disabilityservices.html.