“We revolt simply because, for many reasons, we can no longer breathe” Fanon (1925-1961)
“My theory is, strong people don’t need strong leaders.” – Ella Baker (1903-1986)

Instructor: Bobby Wengronowitz (wen-grahn-uh-wits), PhD candidate in sociology
Email: wengronr@bc.edu 617-552-4148 | Office: 410A McGuinn Hall
Office hours: M, W 1:00-2:45 with some exceptions (write that you’d like to come)

Social movements have played major roles historically, helping bring about much that is often taken for granted: democratic governance, chattel slavery’s demise, women’s suffrage, the 40-hour work week, basic environmental regulations, and much more. Social problems cannot be solved individually, but collective mobilization is difficult. In this course, we’ll learn from past and ongoing movements, utilizing academic research as well as activist reflection. Our overarching goal is to better understand how movements make social change. The course is highly participatory. Each student will select a campaign or movement as a case. This provides an opportunity for greater depth in an area of particular interest for you. It will also provide material for the class as a whole to grapple with by bringing a broader range of social struggles into the classroom.

The Readings
I’ve worked hard so that you only have to purchase one book: Cynthia Kaufmann’s Ideas for Action (2016 edition). While it is modestly priced, please let me know if purchasing it represents a challenge. It’s also on reserve at O’Neill Library. You can also contact the Montserrat Coalition (Montserrat.coalition@bc.edu) if you need financial assistance, for this or other courses. All other readings are in a flashdrive that I’ll pass around the first few days of class. They are also in our online folder: https://goo.gl/75i8w2

This class is reading intensive. It is critical that you read the material before the class. You’ll learn far more and earn a higher grade if you do so, plus the course will be much more enjoyable for all of us.

Request for Accommodations/Accessibility
I want this course to be accessible to any student at BC. Help me in doing this by providing advanced notice and appropriate documentation for accommodations. BC staff will also work with you, but you need to reach out. Please contact Kathy Duggan (617-552-8093, dugganka@bc.edu) at the Connors Family Learning Center regarding learning disabilities and ADHD. Contact Paulette Durrett (617-552-3470, paulette.durrett@bc.edu) in the Disability Services Office regarding all other disabilities, including temporary ones.

Academic Honesty
Your work must be your words and ideas. Plagiarism is any representation of someone else’s work as your own, and it doesn’t have to be intentional. When writing papers, use quotation marks around someone else’s words and identify whose words they are. If you come across a good idea, use it, but be sure to acknowledge that person. Failure to comply will result in both automatic failure of the assignment and a report to the Dean and the Committee on Academic Integrity. For further information, please review the College’s policies here: http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/integrity.html

Grading scale
A+ none at Boston College
A 93-100%
A- 90-92%
B+ 87-89%
B 83-86%
B- 80-82%
C+ 77-79%  
D+ 67-69%  
F below 60%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Percentage of grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Throughout</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection papers</td>
<td>Before Monday classes*5</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case study</td>
<td>Several</td>
<td>50%</td>
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**Assessment**

**Participation:** Your participation grade is made up of your attendance and participation during class. Participation in class discussion is necessary. Different people have different styles and patterns of contribution. Those who dominate and those who say nothing do equally poorly. Try to be thoughtful, but don’t worry about being “right”—we want to hear your perspective. And please, ask questions (others probably have the same question).

Obviously, it will be difficult to participate if you are absent. You may miss two classes without any repercussions. However, each missed class after that will lower your grade by an increasing amount as follows (I list classes missed and cumulative grade reduction here): 1-0%, 2-0%, 3-1%, 4-2%, 5-6%, 6-12%, 7-20%, 8-30%, 9-automatic failure. If you miss a substantial part of any class (more than 20 minutes), I will consider it a whole class unless you have a legitimate excuse.

**Five Reflection Papers:** You will write five reflection papers that react to the week’s readings. These should be approximately 500 words. You will choose the weeks you write them, but I encourage you to space them out. They are due before class on Monday (no exceptions). Please upload to Canvas using .doc or .docx because I’ll give feedback electronically.

Do not just provide simple summaries. Instead, try to make it clear you understand the content by showing you can engage with it. It will be helpful to try and connect your reflection to your case study. Doing so will improve your final paper. These papers serve to ensure you stay on track with your reading and allow me to gauge comprehension. They will also be useful for class conversation and may be helpful as you go on in college and beyond (instead of reading an entire text again). Please feel free to include current events and material specific to your case and relate that to the readings.

**Case Study:** You will select a case study to utilize throughout the course, in your reflections, in assignments, and in discussion. There are two options: a more participatory hands-on approach or a more academic hands-off approach. Please think about these options and which makes sense for you.

The hands-on option is built around your participation in an activist campaign or an ongoing movement. This may be a group or organization that you are already involved in or that you haven’t yet heard of. The cause can be one you agree with or would rather protest against. It can take place on or off campus. You will attend at least three events, hopefully several more than that. These might include meetings, protests, recruitment events, or whatever else the group/organization does. As you learn more about your case, through your participation and in talking with others involved, you’ll likely focus in on one aspect—how the group is structured, gender dynamics, something difficult for the group. The point will be to have something manageable that you can write about and apply material from the course. I expect this option to be somewhat more time consuming and will consider that when grading.
The hands-off approach is based on non-participatory research. This may involve archival research, discourse analysis, media study, or any number of approaches that do not involve your participation in the activism. You may select a case that is ongoing or has already happened, something you believe in or despise, on or off campus, in the US or abroad. Just as in the more hands-on approach, you’ll almost certainly have to focus on a smaller part of the case. The paper will utilize social movement theory and other material from the course. While both options could be something you try to publish (and I’m happy to help on this), this hands-off approach is probably easier.

The case study accomplishes a number of tasks. First, it provides an opportunity for you to hone your writing skills. Second, it allows me to assess your understanding of social movement research through a case of your own choosing. Third, it enriches discussion by bringing a diverse range of movements and issues into the classroom. Specific evaluation criteria will be provided later in the semester.

Case study assignments and dates: Case selection (9/19), Focus of your paper (10/5), Draft of paper (11/7), Case study discussions (last week of class), 2-3,000-word paper (During our scheduled exam period).

**Community Agreements**

- What helps you learn? What limits your comprehension? What distracts you? We'll discuss and amend so that these agreements provide the best learning environment for the class.
- We will try to maintain a supportive and safer space for all those present.
- Respect others and their ideas, what you know to be true will be different from others.
- Share the space—do not dominate discussion and try to step up if quiet type.
- No one interrupts when someone is speaking.
- We will turn off our cell phones and other sound making devices in class.
- We live in a digital age. I don’t want to make a blanket rule excluding electronic devices (computer, phones, etc.). However, I will ban devices if they become an issue. I expect you to be taking notes and that’s all. Violation of this policy may result in lowering your grade as well as eliminating privileges for your classmates.
- What would you like to add?

**Note well:** I may modify the syllabus and will let you know if I do so. We will use Canvas for written work, an online google folder for class materials (like readings or handouts), and I will also email you with announcements and other material I want to call special attention to. Please consult this material before you email me with a question.

**PART I: SOCIAL MOVEMENT STUDIES**

**August 29: Introduction**

- Introductions, syllabus, agreements, expectations.

**August 31: Social Movement Studies-Overview**


**September 5: LABOR DAY (no class)**

**September 7: Collective Behavior**

- Transcript in folder as “Linebaugh…”
**September 12, 14: Rational Choice & Resource Mobilization**


**Recommended:**


**Extra credit: September 15, 5PM Higgins 300, Film: Tell the Prime Minister**

Attend and write a 500 page reflection about it.

A film by Oguma Eiji, a sociologist in Tokyo, organized by Franziska Seraphim of BC’s history department. She writes that Eiji is perhaps Japan's best-known scholar of social movements at the moment (his books are displayed in every bookstore in Tokyo as I saw for myself this summer and yes, he speaks English) and has made a foray into documentary filmmaking. He produced a 109-min. film on the mass demonstrations in Tokyo against nuclear energy after the Fukushima Daiichi meltdown.

**September 19, 21: Political Opportunity Structure & Political Process**

*DUE: Case selection (September 19)*


**Extra Credit: September 21, 7PM, Gasson 100. Matthew Desmond on Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City.**

Attend and write a 500 page reflection about it.

**September 26, 28: Frames, New Social Movements**


**October 3: Relevance of SMS for activists?**


**October 5:**

*DUE: Case topic selection and share with classmates*

**October 10 Columbus day, no class**


BC Theatre Department Events surrounding Waiting for Lefty ($12)
October 11, 6PM, Gasson 100: Christine Chavez on Fight for Civil Rights, Social Justice, and Labor Equality.
October 12, 4:30PM, Devlin 101: Screening of film Salt of the Earth
October 13, 4:30PM, Robsham Mainstage: Panel on labor movement
October 13-15, 7PM; October 16, 2PM Robsham Mainstage: Waiting for Lefty and a short play called Still Waiting.
http://www.bc.edu/schools/cas/theatre/perfandpro/16-17season/Lefty.html

PART II: MORE RELEVANT THEORY

October 12: Ideas for action I

Extra Credit. October 14-15. Explore White Privilege Symposium at Lesley University
Extra credit opportunity if you attend and write a 500 word paper. Likely to sell out.
http://www.whiteprivilegeconference.com/

October 17, 19: Ideas for action II
Kaufman: pp. 55-150 [95 pages]

October 24, 26: Ideas for action III
Kaufman: pp. 151-298 [147 pages]

Extra Credit: October 27, 6PM, Fulton 511. History of climate movement with organizers Alyssa Lee and Craig Altemose from Better Future Project

PART III: PERSPECTIVES AND CASES

October 31, November 2: Civil Rights, Black Liberation


King, Martin Luther, Jr. April 4, 1967. “Beyond Vietnam.” | [11 pages] Also gave you two pages of question and answer you can find the audio here:
http://kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/documentsentry/doc_beyond_vietnam


Recommended:


**November 7, 9: U.S. Election**

**DUE November 7: Draft of case study paper**


Recommended (highly!):


**November 10, 6PM, Fulton 511. Social Justice and Environment with Maria Elena Letona from Neighbor to Neighbor.**

**November 14, 16 US Democracy and its discontents**


Read the following less closely. Just gather main points:


This is commentary on the Gilens and Page article.

**Recommended:**

**November 21, 23: Conservatism**

**November 28, 30: Recent Activism—Arab Spring, Tea Party, Occupy**
GUEST SPEAKER: A local activist
Read the Movement for Black Lives platform and six policy areas here: https://policy.m4bl.org/platform/

**December 5, 7: Case study discussions**
This week will be discussions about your cases. More information will be forthcoming.

Final Paper due at our exam time