

Syllabus: Sociology 223
Social Movements
Lasell University - Spring 2023
Professor Betsy Leondar-Wright

Required textbook available at bookstore and on reserve: Moyer, Bill, with McAllister and Soifer. 2001. *Doing Democracy: The MAP Model for Organizing Social Movements*.

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

Overview: You are breathing cleaner air right now thanks to the environmental movement. Maybe you can vote thanks to the Civil Rights or women's suffrage movement. And don't forget the labor movement, the folks who brought you the weekend! What changes will future social movements bring about?

This course will bring US and global social movements to life through videos, photos, stories, interactive exercises, reading, writing and discussing. By the end of the course you will understand how movements arise and end, succeed and fail.

Movements are more effective or ineffective in reaching their goals depending on the strategic choices leaders and activists make at key moments. So if you dream of making a difference, this course will give you ideas of how to do it well. But even if you never expect to join a social movement, learning how movements work will make you a sharper citizen of the world, able to join conversations about making change.

Summary of deadlines:

February 23 - Synthesis essay #1 on lessons of the Civil Rights movement

March 2 - Midterm exam

April 4 - Synthesis essay #2 on success factors

April 20 - Outline and bibliography for final paper

May 2 - Final paper

SCHEDULE OF SESSIONS AND READINGS

WEEK 1

Thursday January 19 - What is a social movement?

WEEK 2 - *Reading:* Moyer, Chapters 1 and 4 (for Thursday)

Tuesday January 24 - The historical archetype: The Civil Rights Movement

Thursday January 26 – How do movements make change?

WEEK 3 - *Reading:* Moyer, Chapters 2 and 6

Tuesday January 31 – Activists' roles

Thursday February 2 – Roles and strategy; homework due

WEEK 4 - *Reading for Thursday*: Milkman, "A New Generation of Protest," online at http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/90d188_8e76f3799c4e4b8bb882bae9c7287079.pdf

Tuesday February 7 – Practicing campaign strategizing

Thursday February 9 – Millennial movements (quiz on Milkman reading); What predicts movement success?

WEEK 5 - *Reading*: Moyer, Chapter 3; and re-skim Chapter 6 to find stages by Thursday

Tuesday February 14 – Stages of social movements

Thursday February 16 - Applying the stages to the Civil Rights movement
Presentation on the Black Panther Party and/or Black Nationalism

WEEK 6 - *Reading*: Ackerman & Duvall, pp. 1-9 and pp. 335-368

Tuesday February 21 - Noncooperation - the power of withdrawing support
Presentation on the Philippines democracy movement, and/or nonviolent overthrow in India or Russia

Thursday February 23 - Economic noncooperation and the anti-apartheid movement

Assignment deadline: Essay #1 on lessons from the Civil Rights movement

WEEK 7 - *Readings*: Lakey, *How We Win*, chapters 1 and 4; Your team's Blockadia role

Tuesday February 28- Disruptive tactics

Thursday March 2 –**Midterm exam**; Positive and negative rebels
Presentation on Occupy Wall Street or Mayday action in Vietnam anti-war movement

WEEK 8 - *Reading*: Moyer, Chapter 8

Tuesday March 7 – LGBT history and other movements with cultural change and identity goals
Presentation on the LGBT movement or the second-wave feminist movement

Thursday March 9 - **Asynchronous**, not in classroom - Watch film on ACT-UP and take quiz

Spring Break - No classes on March 14 or 16

WEEK 9 – *Reading*: Staggenborg, *Social Movements*, Chapter 8

Tuesday March 21 – Electoral politics and the reformer role
Presentation on the NRA and gun owners' rights movement or the Tea Party Movement

Thursday March 23 - Rightwing movements in the US

WEEK 10 - *Reading*: Stout, *Bridging the Class Divide*, chapters 1 and 2 “Growing Up Poor” and “Becoming an Activist”

Tuesday March 28 – Factors in the rise of social movements

Thursday March 30 - Asynchronous, not in classroom - Recruitment and social networks - watch film *Crip Camp* on your own and participate in online discussion in the Module

WEEK 11 - *Reading*: Stout, chapters 4, 6 and 7, “PPP: Creating our own model for social change” and “Principles of a new organizing model” and “Invisible Walls”

Tuesday April 4 - Empowering working people
Presentation on living wage campaigns in Vermont and elsewhere

Assignment deadline: Essay #2 - How do successful social movements win social change?

Thursday April 6 – Coalition-building practice - Smithville Mall simulation

WEEK 12 – *Reading for Thursday*: Ryan, *Primetime Activism* chapters 3 and 4

Tuesday April 11 – Community organizing and poor people’s movements
Presentation on the welfare rights movement

Thursday April 13 – Framing, mainstream media, social media
Presentation on framing and media work in immigrant rights protests of 2006 or pro-life/pro-choice or domestic violence activism from 1970s to today or the climate change movement

WEEK 13 - *Reading*: ZeynepTufekci, Ch. 8

Tuesday April 18 - Movements in the era of social media
Presentations on social media use by Black Lives Matter movement

Thursday April 20 – Humor and viral memes

Assignment deadline: Outline and bibliography for final paper

WEEK 14 - *no reading*

Tuesday April 25– Wrap up; Applying these principles to today’s movements

Thursday April 27 – No class - please attend Symposium

Tuesday May 2 – Assignment deadline: Final paper due

Course Expectations and Grading

1) The **readings** are a very important part of the course. Weekly readings should be finished *before the first class of the week (Tuesday)* unless noted. Please come to class ready to summarize and discuss them.

2) Attendance matters, as we will often use the classroom time for interactive activities. If you miss a class session, please email the professor; you are responsible for opening documents in the Module and for getting notes from a classmate. More than three unexcused absences will lower your final grade by 1 point per absence. Arriving more than 15 minutes late counts as half an absence. Mental absences will be treated the same as physical absences; please do not look at or listen to unrelated content on a screen (laptop, phone, iPod, Apple Watch, earbuds, etc.).

3) **ASSIGNMENTS**

A) **Synthesis essays** - Minimum 500 words, maximum 1000 words of text. 15 points each.

Please summarize the main points from the required readings, films, handouts and class discussions on the recurring themes below, with your own responses and opinions. Grading will be based on thoroughness, use and understanding of course concepts, and clarity. The format is flexible: an essay, a bulleted list or an outline. Cite ideas taken from readings by putting author and page number in parentheses – e.g. “(Moyer, p. 25).” Submit on Canvas.

Deadlines and topics:

1. February 23 - Essay #1: What lessons could today’s movements draw from the Civil Rights Movement?
2. April 4 - Essay #2: Success factors - How do successful social movements change society?

B) **Midterm exam** – March 2 – Questions on key concepts from Moyer and handouts – 10 points

C) **Presentation and final paper**

Each student will sign up for a historical movement (or an unusually well-documented current movement), do extra reading, make a presentation in class, and write a final paper about it.

Sign-up for movements and presentation dates must be finalized by February 11.

1) **Presentation** - 10 minutes - up to 20 points

Sign-up for slots will start with a passed-around sign-up sheet during the third week of class.

Your presentation should include at least one mode in addition to verbally telling information (e.g., a visual aid, brief video or audio clip, or interactive activity). A PowerPoint 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.

Base your presentation on web research and on the 50 to 150 pages of extra reading listed on the sign-up sheet; all are on library reserve shelves, on the course website, and/or online.

Each option is timed to fit with a certain theme that's our focus that week, so please emphasize that theme in your presentation. 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), ~2 minutes, just enough background to orient the listeners. Most of the 10 minutes should focus on the movement's strategies, tactics, messages, responses from public and power-holders, any notable successes or failures, and/or 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 related to strategy and our daily theme, and choose examples to make those points.

2) **Final paper** on the same movement as your presentation topic. 20 points.

Length: **1500 to 3000 words** of text (not counting title page or bibliography). **A one-page outline of your ideas and bibliography is due April 20** (for up to 5 points). **Paper due May 2** (before 8 am on May 3 counts as on time) (for up to 15 points).

Final papers should draw on and cite at least two course readings, the extra reading you did for your presentation, and at least one other rigorous non-course source (i.e. peer-reviewed academic journal articles, edited books (not self-published), or other analytical sources.) Meet with a librarian if you find this requirement challenging. Wikipedia and promotional websites, brochures and other such organizational materials do not count as a rigorous non-course source, though you are welcome to consult and cite them as well. Include a reference list using APA citation rules (see <http://www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/apa>).

Your paper should have three components. Briefly (in <400 words) describe the issue, the movement and its main organizations, and what happened during the time period you're focusing on. (This overview could be the first section, or it could be integrated into the whole paper.)

In addition, apply course concepts to the movement:

- What MAP stages did it go through (or not go through)? What roles were organizations and leaders in the movement playing (using Moyer's terms), using what strategies and tactics?
- Using the class handouts as checklists, which factors in mobilization, success and failure do you see in the movement's history?
- What framing, messaging, media work and/or social media did the movement use, to what effect?

Finally, draw general lessons from the movement, using your own critical thinking. Two examples of questions you could answer: Which choices by movement organizations and leaders made success more or less likely? Looking at the outcomes of the movement, what confirming or disconfirming evidence do you see of strategic principles covered in the course? Or feel free to ask and answer another question that seems more compelling to you. (This component could be integrated into your answers to the 3 questions above; it doesn't have to be a separate section. Make an outline whose sequence makes sense to you.)

The paper will be graded on a 1-25 scale, based on completeness (adherence to assignment), use of rigorous outside source(s), accurate use of course concepts, thoughtfulness and depth of strategic understanding, and writing quality. Five of the points are for a one-page outline with topic, sources and outline by April 20. Late papers will lose 1.5 points for each weekday after May 2, except with an excused extension.

GRADING

Grades will be calculated on a 100-point scale:

Class attendance and participation, demonstrated reading comprehension	15
Online film discussions and quizzes	5
Midterm exam	10
Synthesis essays – 2 @ 15 points	30
In-class presentation	20
<u>Final paper (5 for outline/bibliography; 15 for final version)</u>	<u>20</u>
	100

Extra credit opportunity for presenting at Symposium

+5

COURSE POLICIES

Policy on student opinions

The presentation, papers and some classroom activities will 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 only by whether you show you understand the course concepts, whether you present evidence and whether you make a reasoned argument. There's just as much to learn from studying a movement whose goals you oppose as one you support; none of us will presume anything about a student's beliefs from their choice of topics.

Definition of Connected Learning

Connected Learning is the Lasell University educational philosophy describing the process of integrating ideas, concepts, and direct experience through action, combining projects, simulations, and real-world situations with direct, critical reflection. At Lasell, we include these components in every course so that students further develop and apply the knowledge and skills learned in the classroom.

Lasell's mission statement: We immerse students in experiential and collaborative learning that fosters lifelong intellectual exploration and social responsibility.