CMST 3169: Rhetoric of Social Movements¹

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"If there is no struggle there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom yet deprecate agitation are men who want crops without plowing up the ground; they want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters . . . Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will."

Frederick Douglass

Course Catalogue Description

Persuasive strategies used to build social identities and collectively agitate for social change.

Additional Description

What is politics? If we are to believe the vast majority of news media and mainstream popular culture, politics takes place in ornate domed buildings or on the campaign trail. In the context of contemporary electoral politics, politics is often what we associate with nauseating gridlock, big money influence, and cynical rhetoric. While the likes of *CNN*, *Fox News*, and *MSNBC* provide the average citizen with near 24-hour access to the day-to-day dynamics of electoral politics, contemporary political discourse often neglects the role of social movements as a key engine of American political history. However, as the emergence of mass movements that span the political spectrum and the globe suggest, protest and other modes of oppositional rhetoric continue to be major forces for making controversial issues visible and advancing changes in public policy. Politics remains the business of the people. This course offers an exploration of social movements by scrutinizing their rhetorical dynamics in public culture.

Course Objectives

Students will develop a stronger appreciation for and critical understanding of the role of social movements in democratic culture. This will be accomplished by achieving the following:

- Engaging concepts that help explain the persuasive dynamics of social movements
- Understanding the exigencies that produce social movements
- Appreciating various ethical and other dilemmas faced by social movements
- Recognizing the role of the state and other institutions in suppressing social movements

¹ I'm very grateful to my colleagues Joel Rollins, Kelly Young, and Chuck Morris for sharing their syllabi and ideas with me.

- Understanding how changes in technology and global capitalism have changed the nature of social movements in the twenty-first century
- Examining case studies that illuminate the successes and failures of social movements across history

Required Texts/Materials

- All readings/materials will be posted online.
- Access to and competency with online search engines and university libraries is essential for success in this course

COURSE POLICIES



Office Hours and Availability If, for whatever reason, my posted office hours do not work for you, please do not hesitate to contact me and arrange an alternative meeting time. Email is typically the best way to reach me. Please allow up to 24 hours for a response to emails. I do not generally respond to emails on weekends.

<u>The Communication Environment</u> The study of social movements engages a wide range of philosophical, political, and ethical questions that often inspire strong, even visceral responses. I am committed to ensuring that our classroom is a hospitable environment where we can respectfully discuss and debate a wide range of relevant issues. Everyone should feel comfortable to speak their minds, but must do so in a way that enables others to do the same. You should also prepare to be held accountable for anything you say in class.

I will not tolerate communication that denigrates individuals, present or absent, on the basis of their race, gender and/or gender identity, sexuality, religious or political beliefs, actual or perceived disability, etc. If your communication results in an inhospitable learning space, I reserve the right to ask you to leave the classroom for the remainder of the session and possibly report your conduct to Office of the Dean of Students.

<u>Participation and Attendance</u> This class is discussion-oriented. Preparation for class and faithful attendance is directly correlated with success. In addition to missing vital information for successfully completing major assignments, you risk missing in-class assignments that will count toward your final grade.

If you plan to miss class or leave early for an unexcused reason (i.e. leaving for a family vacation, attending a job fair, studying for an exam in another class), please do not ask my permission. I will not prevent you from leaving, nor will I give you my blessing. We are all adults and, accordingly, are responsible for our own decisions. If you choose to prioritize something other than attending class during the scheduled time, that is your choice to make. You do not need my permission. However, you should also be mindful of the consequences for doing so.

I will, of course, excuse absences for university-sanctioned activities, religious observances, health reasons, personal emergencies, etc.

Readings This course will draw from a variety of materials, including scholarly articles and book chapters, films, and literature authored by grassroots activists. Some readings will be straightforward, whereas others will be more difficult. Most will be suitable for polite company, but a few will make you blush or want to throw the material across the room. Virtually all of them will challenge you to reconsider your ideas about the nature of social change in the United States. In some cases, you will passionately disagree with an author's argument. At other times, you will wonder where this author has been all of your life. Furthermore, because this class deals with the tumult of movements and social change, many of our readings will deal with subjects that can be disturbing.

Regardless of the day's readings, I expect you to arrive having completed all of them and prepared to engage in thoughtful, mature discussion. One does not need to agree with all, or even most of an author's work to learn from it. Particularly in a course focused on the rhetoric of social movements, it is often a good practice to bracket your feelings about an author's values from the social movement tactics and strategies described and/or exemplified in the reading. The latter is the true focus of this course. It is often possible to passionately disagree with a person's politics but appreciate the skill with which they address the masses. I realize this will be easier for some readings than others, but encourage you to try.²

If you are aware of readings, online videos, etc. that reflect the day's discussion, you should feel free to share them with the class (provided they are appropriate) via Moodle or during the designated class session.

<u>Workload</u> Students are expected, in addition to time spent in class, to spend a minimum of an additional 6 hours per week reading and thinking about material and putting forth effort toward the completion of class assignments. Thus, students are expected to devote at least 9 hours per week toward the successful completion of CMST 3169.

² It is my view that addressing the communicative and cultural dimensions of social change requires all of us to step outside our comfort zones. However, I also realize that such a burden does not fall evenly on all people. If you have serious personal concerns about how readings regarding certain subjects may impact you, please feel free to speak with me privately.

<u>Late Work</u> Late work will automatically receive a 10% point deduction for each day it is late. Most assignments are due by the beginning of class via email.

Academic Integrity I trust students in this class to do their own work. Students are responsible for adhering to the college's standards for academic conduct. Even revising another student's work, collaborating to share research with other students, or adapting your own work from another class is academic misconduct. Failure to acknowledge sources in written assignments or oral presentations constitutes plagiarism. If you are ever confused about how these policies apply to your own work, please play it safe and consult me.

I will officially report all instances of academic dishonesty to the Dean of Students. Consequences can range from zero credit on the assignment in question to dismissal from the university. For more information on this important issue, please look online at https://grok.lsu.edu/Article.aspx?articleId=17072

<u>Drops/Withdrawa</u> If Is you wish to drop this class, you must do so by 4:30pm on August 28, 2018. After this point, you will be issued a withdrawal grade. If you fail to withdraw by 4:30pm on November 2, 2018, you will receive and "F" for the semester.

<u>Religious Observances</u> It is LSU's policy to respect the faith and religious obligations of students, faculty and staff. Students with exams or classes that conflict with their religious observances should notify me well in advance (at least 2 weeks) so that we can work out a mutually agreeable alternative.

<u>Special Needs</u> Louisiana State University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. The syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments is requested to speak with Disability Services and the instructor, as early in the semester as possible. All discussions will remain confidential. This publication/material is available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact the Disability Services, 115 Johnston Hall, 225.578.5919.

<u>E-mail</u> All students must obtain and regularly check an email account. Expect periodic updates from me about what's happening in class via Moodle as well.

E-mail is also the best and quickest way to get in touch with me outside of class.

I will not, under any circumstances, communicate grade information via email or over the phone.

<u>Moodle</u> Please check Moodle for weekly readings, updates to the class schedule, assignment guidelines, grade information, readings, etc.

<u>Commitment to Conversation</u> I believe in the right and responsibility of students to take an active interest in their education. If there is anything inside or outside this class that you care to discuss with me, please do not hesitate to do so.

I understand that "life happens" and will work with you to make REASONABLE accommodations for issues that may be negatively impacting your performance in this class. The sooner you consult me on such matters, the better.

While I am happy to discuss grades on individual assignments throughout the semester (provided you do so no sooner than 24 hours after but within two weeks of receiving the grade), I do not respond well to having responsibility for your entire academic future thrust upon me. In other words, how your performance in this class will impact your GPA, ability to graduate, scholarship eligibility, etc. are not sufficient grounds for discussing a grade on an assignment. More generally, I will not entertain discussions about final grades once the semester is over. If you wish to challenge your final grade, you must do so through the proper university channels. Please visit this link for further information:

http://catalog.lsu.edu/content.php?catoid=1&navoid=27&hl=%22appeals%22&returnto=search#Gr ade_Appeals

<u>Cell Phones, Laptops, etc.</u> Use common courtesy and common sense with electronic devices. Cell phones should remain silenced for the duration of class. Please feel free to use your laptop to take notes and otherwise organize course material. In general, technology is fine as long as it doesn't call attention to itself.

On exam days, any electronic devices must be turned off and securely in your bag. You will not receive a copy of the exam until your desk is void of any such devices and I will confiscate your exam if I see you making use of a cell phone, lap top, etc.

<u>Contractual Agreement</u> Your acceptance of these conditions, as well as the policies outlined in this document, is implied by your continuance in the class. To maintain the integrity of everyone's' grade, and ultimately, degree, all course policies are non-negotiable.

Everything in this document, including the daily schedule, is subject to revision or modification due to unforeseen circumstances.

ASSIGNMENTS

Quizzes There will be at least six unannounced quizzes throughout the semester, three of which (i.e. the ones on which you score highest) will count toward your final grade. These will be based solely on the assigned readings for that day and will consist of multiple choice and/or short response questions. You may use any notes on the readings, but *may not* consult the reading at any point during the quiz. Quizzes begin promptly at the beginning of class and will last for fifteen minutes. If you arrive to class late, you still must hand in your quiz at the same time as everybody else. If you show up after a quiz has been given, you may not retake it.

Exams There will be two exams (including a non-cumulative final) during the semester. Exams will primarily consist of multiple-choice questions, but may include short answer prompts. Exams will cover material from readings *and* lectures.

Research Paper Option In lieu of an exam, you may opt to write a 10-12 page paper that critically analyzes social movement rhetoric. *You must consult me if you choose this option*. An effective essay, at a minimum, will:

• Choose to critically analyze a piece of social movement rhetoric with high social relevance (from a movement other than the one you and your group have selected)

- Use materials from inside and outside of class to frame your discussion
- Provide concrete details from your case study. This includes, but is not limited to, direct quotations and visual examples
- Provide valuable insights into the rhetorical dynamics of the movement under scrutiny
- Use an appropriate citation method (e.g. MLA, APA, Chicago)
- Be free of spelling and grammatical errors

Each paper is due via email by 10:30am on the day of the exam. *If you choose to write a paper, you may not take the concurrent exam*.

Movement Presentations Working in groups, you are responsible for professionally presenting a rhetorical history of a major social movement. An effective presentation, at a minimum, will:

- Clearly identify a social movement with high social relevance
- Provide a concise, but thorough, history of the movement that illuminates both its internal development and the historical circumstances that inspired it (i.e. the social problems/institutions the movement targeted, institutional responses to the movement, salient cultural changes at the time)
- Identify a minimum of *three* distinct rhetorical strategies/tactics the movement used, providing clear examples of each (i.e. direct quotations, images, videos)
- Draw on materials from inside and outside of class to frame your analysis
- Provide valuable insights regarding the effectiveness and implications of the rhetoric under scrutiny
- Effectively use visual and audio aids when appropriate
- Demonstrate professionalism and preparedness
- Equally distribute presentation time among participants
- Last 10-15 minutes

Keep in mind that presenting a rhetorical history of a movement is different from a simple encyclopedic history or taking a position regarding the movement's value. It is not your job to support or oppose the movement's rhetoric, but focus on the strategies its participants used (or use) to advance an agenda. Furthermore, it is not your goal to educate us about the controversies around which the movement mobilized and/or the history of the movement without regard for its rhetorical strategies. Such things are important, but be sure to keep the focus on rhetoric.

In addition to the presentation, each group will be responsible for submitting, via email, the following materials:

- A detailed outline of your presentation
- A timeline of your movement that indicates key events in the designated time period
- A bibliography citing a minimum of ten high quality sources, only three of which may be course readings (using an appropriate citation method such as APA, Chicago, or MLA)

Assessment Questions These are a series of prompts designed to evaluate your knowledge of core concepts regarding communication studies. Its purpose is to help those of us who teach in the Department of Communication Studies collectively assess the ways in which we are serving our

students. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions (again, it is more an evaluation of the department than it is of you), but I will deduct points if it is clear to me that you have not taken the assignment seriously.

Participation While I will spend some time lecturing on material, a significant amount of time will also be dedicated to discussion and activities. Therefore, participation is of the utmost importance for a successful semester. My understanding of participation includes taking part in class discussion, making use of office hours, coming to class prepared, attendance, etc. We will discuss what constitutes good participation more concretely in class.

Extra Credit Over the course of the semester, I will make you aware of extra credit opportunities. They will typically involve viewing or attending an event relevant to course material and possibly completing a related assignment.

You may also choose to attend up to 2 shows in the HopKins Black Box Theatre for 2 points each (i.e. for a maximum of 4 extra credit points). For more information regarding the HBB, including this semester's schedule and ticket reservations, visit https://www.lsu.edu/hss/cmst/hopkins_black_box_theater/current.php

If you currently engage, or plan to engage in some form of campus or local movement organizing, I *may* be able to offer you extra credit associated with this work. If this strikes your interest, please discuss it with me personally.

POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR MOVEMENT PRESENTATIONS

While this is a fairly exhaustive list, you may select a topic not included below. You must, however, consult me if you choose to do so. Appropriate topics will be movements with a discrete history and significant social impact.

Occupy Wall Street (2011-Present)	Gun Rights Movement (1994-Present)
American Temperance Movement (1851-1920)	Anti-Vietnam War Movement (1964-1975)
,	#MeToo Movement (2006-Present)
Modern Gun Control Movement (1998- Present)	American Socialist Movement (1901-1936)
Death Penalty Abolition Movement (1976-	Women's Suffrage Movement (1848-1920)
Present) Anti-Abortion/Pro-Life Movement (1973-Present)	Animal Rights Movement (1965-Present)
	Modern Anti-War Movement (2003-Present)
Slavery Abolition Movement (1780-1865)	Modern LGBTQ Rights Movement (1989-
Black Power Movement (1966-1972)	Present)
Gay Liberation Movement (1969-1981)	Tea Party Movement (2008-Present)

Modern Immigrant Rights Movement (2006-	Prison Abolition Movement (1970-Present)
Present)	F W 1 D' 1 M (1002 1072)
American Anarchist Movement (1905-1950)	Farm Workers Rights Movement (1962-1972)
7 merican 7 marchist 1410 veniciit (1703-1750)	Antifa (1932-Present)
The U.S. Alt-Right Movement (2008-Present)	,
M 2 M (1070 P)	Puerto Rican Nationalist Movement (1968-
Men's Movement (1970-Present)	1983)
Catholic Worker Movement (1933-Present)	Second Wave Feminist Movement (1963-
,	1979)
Black Lives Matter Movement (2013-Present)	H.C. HIN/AIDCM
Anonymous Hactivist Movement (2003-	U.S. HIV/AIDS Movement (1981-Present)
Present)	Modern U.S. Labor Movement (1981-
,	Present)
Liberation Theology (1955-Present)	
Anti-LGBTQ Rights Movement (1977-	False Flag/New World Order Movement (2001-Present)
Present)	(2001-1 Tesent)
,	American Patriot Movement (1958-1996)

AVAILABLE POINTS

American Indian Movement (1968-1978)

Assignment	Actual Points	Possible Points
Exam/Essay 1		100
Exam/Essay 2		100
Movement Presentation		200
Quiz 1		25
Quiz 2		25
Quiz 3		25
Assessment Questions		30
Participation		45
Extra Credit		0
Total		550

REGARDLESS OF YOUR POINT TOTAL, YOU CANNOT PASS THIS CLASS IF:

- 1) You miss more than two quizzes
- 2) You fail to complete one of the exams/essays
- 3) You a) fail to participate in the group project or b) behave in such a way that is seriously detrimental to your group's performance³

Grading Key

Outstanding achievement relative to requirements

532-550 = A+

512-531 = A

492-511 = A-

Above average relative to requirements

479-491 = B+

457-478 = B

437-456 = B-

Meeting basic course requirements

424-436 = C+

402-423 = C

382-401 = C-

Worthy of credit without meeting full requirements

369-381 = D+

347-368 = D

327-346 = D-

Failing to meet basic requirements

326 and below = F

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³ If you and your fellow group members are struggling to work effectively together, I am happy to serve as a mediator. I will do so on the condition that you a) let me know well in advance of your presentation date and b) are able to arrange a time for all of us to meet in person to discuss the situation (I will not take responsibility for scheduling such a meeting). In general, my bias is in favor of keeping groups intact. I am *not* interested in hearing about group problems following a disappointing grade.

SEMESTER SCHEDULE (SSD=Stewart, Smith, & Denton; BOJ=Bowers, Ochs, & Jensen)

	Topic	Reading	Due/Notes
Aug 21	Introduction: Politics by other means		
Aug 23	Culture and struggle (I)	Landy (pp. 164- 167); Abu-Jamal; McCorvey & Thomas; Editorial Staff; Movement for Black Lives; Sheehan	
Aug 28	Culture and struggle (II)	Kornhaber; Childish Gambino; Dylan; Holiday; M.I.A.; Kesha; The Coup; RATM; Green Day; Guthrie; Wonder; Lamar; Meizel	
Aug 30	Citizenship	Asen & Brouwer (pp. 1-17); Douglass; Thompson	
Sep 4	What Do We Want?! That's an Excellent Question	Kelley; Davis; Adbusters; Boggs	
Sep 6	Nature and types of movements	SSD Ch 1	
Sep 11	Identity and coalitions (I)	Charen; Frank; Ramirez-Rosa	
Sep 13	Identity and coalitions (II)	Hess; Blades; Lockhart; Potter	
Sep 18	Other-centered movements	Asenas, McCann, Feyh, & Cloud	
Sep 20	Persuasion and movements (I)	SSD Ch 3	
Sep 25	Persuasion and movements (II)	Darsey; Jesus Camp (I)	
Sep 27	Persuasion and movements (III)	Gould; Jesus Camp (II)	

Oct 2	Raising hell	BOJ Ch 2 (pp. 19- 43); King (I); King (II); Carmichael	
Oct 4			NO CLASS: Fall Break
Oct 9	Moderates and radicals (I)	BOJ Ch2 (pp. 43- 44); Bokhari & Yiannopoulos; Blake; Nordlinger; Brooks; Heer	
Oct 11	Moderates and radicals (II)	Mass & Schulte; B., Farbman, & Zill; Chretien; Solnit	
Oct 16	Networked politics	Shirky; Dean; McDonald & Woo	
Oct 18	Exam review		
Oct 25			Exam/Essay 1
Oct 30	Taming the masses (I)	BOJ Ch 3; Rosenfeld; Gould- Wartofsky; COINTELPRO	Select Movement Presentation topics
Nov 1	Taming the masses (II)	Film, <i>Let the Fire</i> Burn	
Nov 6	Taming the masses (III)	Film, <i>Let the Fire</i> Burn	
Nov 8			NO CLASS: NCA
Nov 13	Violence and Civility (I)	Rand; Hedges; Russo; Wilson	
Nov 15	Violence and Civility (II)	Zurcher; King (III); Zelizer; Kauffman; Leonard; Harrison	

Nov 20	Exam Review	
Nov 22		NO CLASS: Thanksgiving Holiday
Nov 27		Movement Presentations
Nov 29		Movement Presentations
Dec 7 from 3:00pm- 5:00pm		Final Exam/Essay

Readings, Films, and Music

- "A Brief History of Revolution." Adbusters, 1 September 2010.
 - https://www.adbusters.org/magazine/92/brief-history-revolution.html
- Abu-Jamal, Mumia. Live from Death Row. New York: HarperCollins, 1996.
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- Asenas, Jennifer, Bryan J. McCann, Kathleen Feyh, and Dana Cloud. "Saving Kenneth Foster:

 Speaking with Others in the Belly of the Beast of Capital Punishment." In *Communication Activism, Volume3: Struggleing for Social Justice Amidst Difference*, pp. 261-90. New York: Hampton Press, 2012.
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- Blake, Nathanael. "There Is No Such Thing As White Cultural Heritage. The West's Legacy Is

 Open to All." *The Federalist*, 18 August 2017, http://thefederalist.com/2017/08/18/no-thing-white-cultural-heritage-wests-legacy-open/
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- Charen, Mona. "What *Hillbilly Elegy* Reveals about Trump and America." *National Review*, 28 July 2016, https://www.nationalreview.com/2016/07/hillbilly-elegy-jd-vances-new-book-reveals-much-about-trump-america/
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- Churchill, Ward, and Jim Vander Wall. *The COINTELPRO Papers: Documents from the FBI's*Secret War against Dissent in the United States. Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2002.

 The Coup. "The Guillotine." *Sorry to Bother You*. Anti-, 2012.

- Darsey, James. *The Prophetic Radical Tradition and Radical Rhetoric in America*. New York: NYU Press, 1997.
- Dean, Jodi. "The Limits of Communication." *Guernica*, 1 October 2012. http://www.guernicamag.com/features/the-limits-of-communication/
- Douglass, Frederick. "The Meaning of July Fourth for the Negro," 5 July 1852. http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h2927t.html
- Dylan, Bob. "Blowin' in the Wind." The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan. Columbia, 1963.
- Editorial Staff of the *Eagle Eye*. "Our Manifesto to Fix America's Gun Laws." *The Guardian*, 23 March 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/commentisfree/2018/mar/23/parkland-students-manifesto-americas-gun-laws
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- Holiday, Billy. "Strange Fruit." Strange Fruit. Commodore, 1939.
- Jesus Camp. Directed by Heidi Ewing and Rachel Grady. 2006; Los Angeles: A&E Indie Films; New York: Loki Films.
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- Landy, Marcia. "Antonio Gramsci." In *Postmodernism: The Key Figures*. Edited by Hans Bertens and Joseph Natoli (pp. 162-7). Oxford, UK: 2002.

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