

## Social Movements, SOC 356A Spring 2010

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This course is about social movements -- collective action in which groups use institutionalized and non-institutionalized tactics to promote or resist social and political change. The course focuses on the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s as an example of a movement promoting social change.

I became interested in social movements when I was living in Washington, DC. Working for the House of Representatives you get to see many marches, rallies and protests. I became interested in finding out when these types of tactics were effective and who was most likely to participate. As a graduate student at Catholic University in Washington, DC, I spent hours with activists in my research on the anti-drunken driving movement, known in most places by its formal organization MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving).

### Texts

Meyer, David S. 2007. *The Politics of Protest: Social Movement in America*. Oxford University Press.

McAdam, Douglas. 1990. *Freedom Summer*. Oxford University Press.

Handouts

### Course Requirements

Exams (60 X 2)	120
Movies (30 X 2)	60
Reactions (10 X 6)	60
Total	240

I use a standard grading scale: 93% = A, 90% = A-, 87% = B+, and so on.

**Movie Reaction:**

Watch two movies that are scheduled for our class and write a 2-3 page sociological review or analysis of the movie. It should include a short summary and an evaluation of the movie using your sociological imagination. You may borrow the movie from the reserve section of the library or rent it from Blockbuster or Herrick Library.

**Writing Reactions:**

Respond to the class reading for the day. Hand in a typed one-page reaction. It should include a paragraph summary and then a response. The response could be a connection that the reading makes to an experience that you have had, to something you have read or to an experience in another class. Or the response could be your own personal musing about the impact of the reading on you: whether you agree or disagree, whether it is important or not, or if it causes you to question something. The due dates for these reactions are listed in the course schedule.

**Exams:**

Exams will be open book and open note in-exams. It will include multiple choice and short essay answer questions.

**Course Assessment:** Hope College expects all students to assess each course in an effort to continuously improve student learning. At the end of the semester, you will be asked to assess how well this course met its stated goals. Your responses will be kept anonymous, but I will take the collective results seriously in thinking about how to provide Hope students the best possible education. Your responses matter. You are urged to participate in this important process.

**Schedule**

- Jan. 13      Introductions: What is (not) a Social Movement?
- Jan. 15      Are Protest Activities Different from other Forms of Political Action?  
Read: Meyer, Chapter 1

Movie #1: Rent/borrow/find the movie *Glory* and watch it.

- Jan. 18      Why Protest?  
Class Video: Eyes on the Prize: Awakenings  
Read: Meyer, Chapter 2
- Jan. 20      History of the Civil Rights Movement  
Class Video: Eyes on the Prize: Fighting Back  
Read: Morris, Chapter 2 (Handout)  
Due: Writing Reaction #1
- Jan. 22      Role of the Church in the Civil Rights  
Class Video: Eyes on the Prize: Ain't Scared of Your Jails  
Read: Morris, Chapter 3 (Handout)  
Due: Movie Review #1
- Jan. 25      Becoming an Activist  
Read: Meyer, Chapter 3
- Jan. 27      Freedom Summer  
Read: McAdam Prologue, 1-2  
Class Video: Making Sense of the Sixties (Part 2)  
Due: Writing Reaction #2
- Jan. 29      Freedom Summer  
Read: McAdam, 3-4  
Class Video: Eyes on the Prize: Mississippi - Is this America?
- Feb. 1        Freedom Summer  
Read: McAdam 5-6, Epilogue
- Feb. 3        Individuals and Organizations  
Read: Meyer, Chapter 4
- Feb. 5        Exam 1
- Feb. 8        Tactics  
Read: Meyer, Chapter 5

Movie #2: Rent/borrow/find the movie *A Long Walk Home* and watch it.

- Feb. 10      Impact of Tactics  
Read: Alinsky (Handout) and McAdam (Handout)  
Class Video: The Milagro Beanfield War  
Due: Writing Reaction #3
- Feb. 12      Frames  
Read: Snow (Handout) and Polletta (Handout)
- Feb. 15      Winter Break: No Class
- Feb. 17      Movement and Counter-Movement Cycles  
Read: Tarrow (Handout) and Ecology (Handout)  
Due: Move Review #2
- Feb. 19      Use of Violence  
Read: Gamson (Handout)  
Due: Writing Reaction #4
- Feb. 22      Radical Flank  
Read: TBA  
Writing Reaction #5
- Feb. 24      Movement Death  
Read: Meyer, Chapter 8
- Feb. 26      Future Trends  
Read: Meyer, Chapter 9
- March 1      Does Protest Matter?  
Read: Meyer, Chapter 10
- March 3      Final Exam