

COMM 412: Communication and Social Movements



Fall, 2012
2:00-4:50 W
ASC 232

Instructor: Dr. Randy Lake
Office: ASC 206C
Phone: (213) 740-3946
Email: rlake@usc.edu (NOTE: This is the most efficient way to reach me. I check my email regularly during the weekday. However, evenings and weekends are much more sporadic so, if you email me at these times, please do not expect an immediate reply.)
Hours: 1:00-3:00 TTh, and by appointment

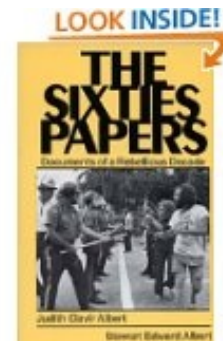
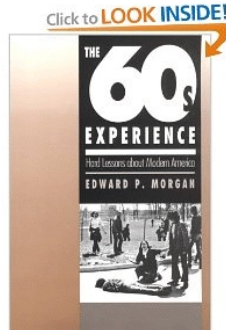
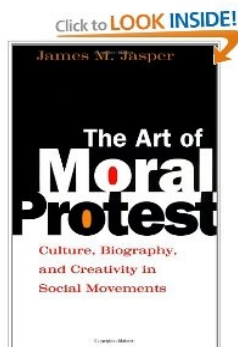
Course Objectives and Description:

This course is designed to promote a rhetorical and historical understanding of social movements in recent history. We will examine communication's role in seeking social change, including: the issues of power, organization, and audience that advocates confront; the strategies employed to attract members, generate support, gain media attention, combat counter-movements, and influence institutions; and the role of new media in emerging networked movements. Because they have so profoundly influenced both scholars of movement rhetoric and subsequent movements for change, the American social movements of the 1960s (including the various ethnic and civil rights, anti-war, feminist, and countercultural movements) will ground our exploration of more recent movements, both here and abroad (e.g., the anti-nuclear, animal rights, and environmental movements, the "Color" Revolutions in Eastern Europe, including Otpor! and the ouster of Slobodan Milošević in Serbia; the Green Revolution in Iran; Arab Spring, including the ouster of Hosni Mubarak in Egypt; and Occupy).

Readings:

- ❑ James M. Jasper, *The Art of Moral Protest: Culture, Biography, and Creativity in Social Movements* (U of Chicago P, 1999)
- ❑ Edward P. Morgan, *The '60s Experience: Hard Lessons About Modern America* (Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1991)

- ❑ Judith Clavir Albert and Stewart Edward Albert, eds. *The Sixties Papers: Documents of a Rebellious Decade* (New York: Praeger, 1984)
- ❑ Other readings (which I will make available to you) as assigned



The readings for this class **will be challenging**, and it is important that you keep up with them. When you read, take notes in the book (if it belongs to you!) and/or on paper. Note words or concepts that you don't understand, mark passages that are unclear, summarize the main points of the reading, and come to class prepared to ask questions.

Class Format:

Our primary mode will be directed discussion and collaborative learning. I will lecture sometimes, but I generally will **not** lecture directly over the assigned readings. However, you will be held accountable for these readings (and other materials presented in class) by your participation grade and by the exam. I expect you to have completed the reading for each class *before* class begins, and to be prepared to contribute questions and comments to our discussions. I understand the temptation to wait until *after* class to do the reading, in the hope that I will have told you what is (and isn't) important, but *avoid this temptation*: If you do, your understanding, performance on the exam, and course grade all will suffer.

Blackboard:

There is a course website, located at <http://blackboard.usc.edu>. This website will be an important place for posting information relevant to the class, additional readings and materials, and so on. You are just as responsible for material posted to this website as you are for material presented in class.

Assignments:

- ❑ Participation (asking questions about the materials, offering insights, and so on): 20%. **Extremely** important; you will be graded on both quantity and quality. There are two ways to participate: in class and in the course's Blackboard discussion fora.
- ❑ Reports: 10%. Students will present a variety of reports on specific topics and readings over the course of the semester. I will provide a list of possible reports, and due dates, for which you may volunteer; if you do not volunteer, you will be assigned one. Everyone will complete at least one report, which will comprise both a written summary (one- to two-page outline) and an oral (ten-minute) presentation. There may be some opportunities

to report a second time, for extra credit. Reports will be graded on comprehension and effective explanation to the class. All reports are potential fodder for final exam questions.

- ❑ Course Project: 40%. This is the major assignment in this course. You have two options: (A) a field experience, in which you volunteer for a social movement organization of your choice; graded parts of this project include: (i) a brief background paper on the organization (10%); and (ii) an analysis of the organization and movement that applies concepts from the course to your experience (30%); or (B) a scholarly study of a social movement of your choice, including a history of the movement (incorporating timelines, key events and figures), a discussion of its communication problems and strategies, important rhetorical materials (such as key speeches, documents, flyers, and videos that illustrate the movement's strategies in building support, as well as media portrayals of the movement), analysis of the movement's effectiveness, and a bibliography of resources for further study. Your study can take the form of a traditional term paper, a Powerpoint/Prezi presentation, or some combination of the two. With my advance approval, this can be a small group project; in this case, a portion of your grade will be based on the success of the project as a whole and a portion will be based on your individual contribution. NOTE: A more detailed explanation of these options is available on Blackboard (under Assignments).
- ❑ Final Examination: 30%. A comprehensive exam, covering all course material, including reports. Precise format to be determined, but it is likely to include essay questions, and possibly will be open book.

All assignments must be the original work of the student and may not have been submitted or used in any other course.

Written Work:

Spelling and grammatical correctness are fundamental requirements of all written work (including outlines, handouts, Powerpoint slides, and the final exam). Writing also will be evaluated according to college-level standards of organization, clarity, gender-neutral language, and conformity to MLA style guidelines (7th edition). Remember that spell-checking is **not** the **same** as proofreading; you need to do both. Work with errors will receive a lower grade than otherwise might have been achieved, and **cannot** be rewritten for credit.

Attendance:

Because we meet only once per week, attendance is **very** important. You are expected to be present, and any absence for any reason may lower your course grade (not just your participation grade); excessive absences may even cause you to fail the course. Because arriving late and leaving early are very disruptive, they will be counted as absences. Because cell phones are equally disruptive, please turn them off or leave them at home, or you may be asked to leave and marked absent for the day. Exceptions to this policy will be granted only rarely, for extremely good reasons, and on an individual basis only.

Because everyone is expected to be present at every class, every student is responsible for being aware of all announcements and other instructions. I will not sympathize with the excuse that "I didn't know" because "I wasn't here the day you said . . .".

Late Work:

Turning in work late is strongly discouraged; you will only hurt yourself by getting behind. Late work may be penalized as much as one-third of a letter grade for each **day (not class meeting)** late (including weekends). Oral presentations **cannot** be made up or rescheduled; missing them will result in an “F”.

Technology:

Please turn off cell phones before coming to class (see above). I reserve the right to banish computers should they become intrusive or hamper your participation. Needless to say, computers *never* should be used for nonclass-related activities.

Academic Integrity:

The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University’s academic integrity code as detailed in the *SCampus* guide. It is the policy of the School of Communication to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the academic integrity code will result in the student’s expulsion from the Communication major or minor.

If you have any doubts about what is and is not an academic integrity violation, please check with me. **The University presumes that you will be familiar** with its standards and policies, and –should you be found to have committed a violation–**ignorance of these standards and policies will not be accepted as an excuse.**

Disabilities:

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure that the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. DSP’s phone number is (213) 740-0776.

Tentative Daily Syllabus:

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

The following represents, tentatively, the basic flow of the course, and of the readings from our core texts. Some minor adjustments may be necessary as we proceed. Additional materials will be made available week-by-week.

- Aug 29: Introduction to the course, and to the study of social movements
- Sept 5: 19th-century Roots: Agrarian Populism and Labor
READ Jasper, Pt. 1 (Chs. 1-4)
- Sept 12: The 1950s/60s and Ethnic Civil Rights Pt. 1
READ Morgan, Chs. 1-2

- Sept 19: Ethnic Civil Rights Pt. 2
READ Albert, Ch. 2; Jasper, Pt. 4 (Chs. 12-14)
- Sept 26: New Left/Anti-War
READ Morgan, Chs. 3-4; Albert, Chs. 3-4
- Oct 3: Counterculture
READ Morgan, Ch. 5; Albert, Ch. 5
- Oct 10: Feminism
READ Morgan, Ch. 6 (pp. 217-231); Albert, Ch. 6
- Oct 17: Environmentalism
READ Morgan, Ch. 6 (231-262)
- Oct 24: The '80s and '90s
READ Jasper, Pts. 2-3 (Chs. 5-11)
- Oct 31: The "Color" of Europe
READ
- Nov 7: Iran's Green Revolution
READ
- Nov 14: Arab Spring
READ
- Nov 21: Thanksgiving break—NO CLASS
- Nov 28: Neoliberalism and Transnationalism
READ
- Dec 5: Neoliberalism and Occupy
READ Jasper, Pt. 5 (Chs. 15-17)
- Dec 14 (Friday): FINAL EXAM, 2:00-4:00

