

COMM 514: Social Movements as Rhetorical Form



Fall, 2015
3:30-6:20 T
ASC 230

Instructor: Dr. Randy Lake
Office: ASC 206C
Hours: 2:00-3:30 MW, and by appointment
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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 sampling of more recent and ongoing contemporary movements, both here and abroad.

Texts:

- Deva R. Woodly, *The Politics of Common Sense: How Social Movements Use Public Discourse to Change Politics and Win Acceptance* (Oxford UP, 2015)
- Donatella dell Porta, *Social Movements in Times of Austerity* (Polity, 2015)
- Charles E. Morris, III, and Stephen Howard Browne, *Readings on the Rhetoric of Social Protest* (3rd ed.; Strata, 2013) [RECOMMENDED]
- Other readings as assigned

Assignments:

- First and foremost, discussion. In a graduate seminar, your participation is extremely

- important; I will lecture only sparingly.
- ❑ Weekly reactions to readings. You may wish to synthesize the readings and identify key issues, concepts, etc., critique, and/or ask questions and otherwise seek clarification. These reactions (which will not be graded) will help guide our discussion; in order to facilitate this, please post your comments to the Discussion Board section of the website for the appropriate week no later than 9:00 p.m. each Monday evening.
 - ❑ Reports, on topics or additional readings, as assigned. Please prepare handouts as appropriate to supplement your oral presentation. Handouts should synopsise essential points; these points should be amplified and illustrated during presentation.
 - ❑ One seminar project, on a topic of your choosing, suitable given course content, and approved by me in advance. Collaborative projects are possible. Strive for a paper that, at the end of the term, is ready for submission to a professional conference, if not to a journal. Approx. 25-30 pages. Due final class session, December 1, at which it will be presented.

Technology:

Please turn off cell phones before coming to class. 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.

Tentative Weekly Syllabus:

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

