

# Mobilizing for social change: anthropological perspectives on movements and forces for social change



University of Florida  
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Class meets: MWF 8 @ FLI 119

Office Hours: T and R 2-4 or by appointment @ TUR 3345

## Description

For activists interested in power and politics, for academics and citizens alike, the last decade has offered a treasure of events with which to re-imagine the world: the place of the 'citizen' in it; the relationships between rulers and the ruled; and the very meaning of 'democracy'. Just between 2010 and 2012 we saw the Arab Spring, anti-austerity protests in Greece and Spain, student protests in Chile, Canada and the UK, and the rise (and fall) of Wikileaks, not to mention the global Occupy Movement.

If not successful in the traditional way of winning political representation, these spectacular events have come to testify to sort of a tectonic shift happening in the relationships of power, and one that has been ever more difficult to ignore. They show that new ways are needed in understanding and engaging politics and political action itself. Yet, is there a connection between protests against inequalities of wealth and those other social movements that seem to ride on the fast spreading populist/nationalist projects around the world and Europe today? How can the now longstanding anti-global-capital movement help us grapple with identity-based politics? And moreover, how are we to think about the proliferation of global ecological crises, inequality and social injustices born in the global era?

In order to answer these questions, this class pursues four goals: 1) It offers a short outline of some of the most prominent social movements of the 20 and 21 century, highlighting the political philosophies on the basis of which they have sought to define the way that people should be ruled (i.e. democracy, liberalism, anarchism, socialism, communism, fascism); 2) Discusses some basic structural and procedural characteristics of movements; 3) Offers a reading of the current moment and the wider context of globalization that foregrounds activism today; 4) Concludes with a discussion of the imagined futures that orient thinking and acting for social change. We interrogate the very categories used to apprehend the present and our near future, the principles on which activists today base the ethical foundation of their civic actions.

Scholarship on activism is vast and deep, mapping important differences among organizations, coalitions, and grassroots movements across time, campaigns, and settings. By bringing together analytical approaches from philosophy, political science, anthropology and activism in this class we try to comprehend the differences between contemporary context and traditional forms of mobilization. We acknowledge that it is close to impossible to separate the voluntary sector from social movements, "civic" activism oriented to service delivery from "un-civic" protest, grassroots activism. We take therefore a different task, treating "activism" as a single category and analyzing the processes of corporatization in broad strokes. Our goal is to evaluate what has been happening to the capacity of activism (as a whole) to transform the world order.

### **Format**

The course will consist of lectures, discussions and in-class activities, including student presentations and screenings of documentaries and interviews.

The instructor will deliver lectures geared toward providing (historically, politically, and theoretically) contextualizing information that supplements readings. The purpose of lectures will be to review the major conceptual points of each new topic and to integrate the material students are reading or viewing.

You are expected to attend each class and to have completed assigned readings ahead of the meeting, so that we can use class meetings to discuss points of particular interest (or difficulty) and to move beyond the information presented in the texts. You are **required to read** all the texts (and at least two per week 😊).

### **Course Requirements and Grading**

Materials for this class will be generally available in electronic format via Canvas.

Articles from academic journals are accessible through the UF electronic database on the UF library web page. Students **are expected to access these articles themselves**. Should you need help using the web page, please consult a librarian.

Some of the pieces might be also available through a general *google search* on the internet.

**Your final grade** has three components: a discussion participation grade (20 %); in-class presentation (20 %); and two short reaction papers (30 % each).

Alternatively, you may also choose to write a research paper on topic of your choice (60%). Please, make sure to consult me ahead of time.

The course is designed so as to help students formulate and express their own ideas on the themes taken up. Therefore, **discussion** is an integral component of the course, and **20%** of the grade will be based on participation in **class discussions**.

Students will also be expected to give **in-class presentations (or group presentation)**, which fulfills another **20%** of their final grade. The in-class presentation is a summary of an assigned article from the weekly class readings (about. 10-15 min). The Student presenting is responsible to facilitate a discussion on the reading (together with 3 other students, collectively responsible to frame questions on the presented material).

The remaining **60%** of the class grade will be based on the preparation of **two short reaction papers** (3-4 pages, font 12, double-spaced) responding to class material, typed up and turned in, as scheduled in the syllabus (**March 2 and April 25**).

Each reaction paper address **at least** 3 readings (articles or chapters from books as listed in the syllabus) and incorporates material from the beginning of the previous due date to the due date of the current assignment.

**Alternatively**, students may also choose to work on a research project of their own (i.e current grass-roots incentives; mobilization in a particular field of interest, review of the non-profit activities). Please consult the topic with the instructor prior to the deadline for the first assignment, when you will have to submit a preliminary outline and a short reference list.

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic honesty is not only an ethical issue but also the foundation of scholarship. Cheating and plagiarism are therefore serious breaches of academic integrity. Documented plagiarism of a paper will be given a "D" in instances of one or two sentences, and an "F" in more severe cases, and no revision will be allowed in either instance.

### **Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**

Please refer to the Disability Resource Center @ <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>: 0020 Reid Hall  
Phone: (352) 392-8565

### Getting help with writing

The UF *Writing Studio* is committed to helping University of Florida students and faculty meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers @ <http://writing.ufl.edu/programs/first-year-writing/>

### UF Counseling Services

Resources are available on-campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career and academic goals that interfere with their academic performance. These resources include:

- University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, personal and career counseling
- Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, personal counseling
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling
- Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling.

### Syllabus Change Policy

*This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advanced notice. It is students' responsibility* to be aware of changes in the schedule of readings, which will be announced in class as well as on E-Learning

### Weekly meetings

*Movements past and present and their basic philosophical and pragmatic orientations*

### Week 1. Introduction. The Birth of the Modern Social Movement

Tarrow S, 2011. Power in Movement (pp 37- 91)

### Week 2. Understanding the structure of movements: repertoires, Regimes, and Opportunities

Tilly and Tarrow, 2015 "Making Claims" From "Social Movements and Contentious Politics, 2nd ed (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015) – ch. 1, 2, pp- 5-45

*Ideological and Theoretical doctrines for social change*

### Week 3. Liberalism / conservatism / republicanism

Campbell 2009 From: "The Britannica Guide to Political and Social Movements" the corresponding sections

E. P. Thompson "The moral economy of the English Crowd"

#### **Week 4 Socialism / Communism / Anarchism / Fascism and Neofascism**

Campbell 2009 From: "The Britannica Guide to Political and Social Movements"

#### *Major Social movements*

#### **Week 5. From the Anti-slavery Movement, to the French Revolution, to the Civil Rights Movement: evolving understanding of social contention**

Kendy, 2016 From: *Stamped from the beginning* ch 4,5

Englund, Harri 2012. "Poverty" In: *Companion to Moral Anthropology*. D. Fassin (Ed. )'s. ch 16

#### **Week 6. Feminism and the Feminist Movements**

Feminism. In: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-topics/#FemBelFemMov>

Breines, Wini. 2002. "What's Love Got to Do with It? White Women, Black Women, and Feminism in the Movement Years," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 27(4): 1-095-1133.

Walters, 2017 "In Defense of Identity Politics" In *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* (@<http://signsjournal.org/currents-identity-politics/walters/>)

#### **Week 7. Democratic movements of the 20 and 21 century**

Katherine Verdery. 1997. "What was Socialism and Why did it Fall? From: *What Was Socialism and What Comes Next?* Princeton University Press. Pp. 19-39

Rupnik, Jacques "1968: The year of two springs" @ <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2008-05-16-rupnik-en.html#.UhULKItXHiA.blogger>

Graeber, David, 2011, Introduction (pp. 1-10 ) From: *Revolution in Reverse*. Minor Compositions, London

## *The current moment and globalization*

### **Week 8 Political culture and globalization: changes and paradigms**

Documentary: The End of Poverty?

Harvey D. A 2016 "The New Imperialism" From: "The Ways of the World" ch 9

Fraser N, 1998 "From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a 'Post-Socialist' Age

### *Reaction paper #1, due on March 2*

### *Spring Break: March 3-10*

### **Week 9. Thinking through "Crisis"**

Masco, Joseph 2012 "The End of Ends." *Anthropological Quarterly* 85, no. 4: 1107–24. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/anq.2012.0061>.

Roitman, Janet, on Crisis @ <https://www.politicalconcepts.org/roitman-crisis/>

Sassen 2014 From: *Expulsions* ch 1 and ch 3

### **Week 10. The Global Justice Movement and the current context of transnational contentious action**

Naishtat 2012, "Global Justice and Politics". In: *The Borders of Justice*, Balibar eds. Ch 2

Juris, Jeffrey and Maple Razsa. 2012. Occupy, Anthropology, and the 2011 Global Uprisings." *Cultural Anthropology Hot Spot Forums* @ <http://www.culanth.org/?q=node/641> on

Andrews, Abigail 2011. "How Activists "Take Zapatismo Home" South-to-North Dynamics in Transnational Social Movements In: *LATIN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES*, Issue 176, Vol. 38 No. 1

### **Week 11. How to think time, historical, the future?**

Yusoff, Kathryn 2016 "Anthropogenesis: Origins and Endings in the Anthropocene." *Theory, Culture, and Society* 33, no. 2: 3–28. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0263276415581021>.

Appadurai, 2013. "Research as a Human Right". From: "The Future as Cultural Fact". ch 14

Guyer, Jane I. 2007 "Prophecy and the Near Future: Thoughts on Macroeconomic, Evangelical, and Punctuated Time." *American Ethnologist* 34, no. 3: 409–21

## **Week 12. The Anthropocene and the fight for the Commons**

Joan Martinez-Alier, 2015 "Currents of Environmentalism". In: *Degrowth: A vocabulary for a new era*, ch 5

Silke Helfrich and David Bollier, 2015. "Commons". From: *Degrowth: a vocabulary for a new era*, ch 14

Kumi Naidoo, from Anti-Apartheid Activist to Leading Voice for Climate Justice@[https://www.democracynow.org/2011/12/5/greenpeace\\_head\\_kumi\\_naidoo\\_from\\_anti](https://www.democracynow.org/2011/12/5/greenpeace_head_kumi_naidoo_from_anti)

Naomi Klein – "This changes everything" @ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rqw99rJYq8Q> (9.43 m.)

## **Week 13. Identity politics, right-wing activism and militant (internet-based) movements. Or how online chatter has begun to intersect with real-life violence in dozens of armed confrontations around the globe.**

Bartlett 2014. From "The Dark Net" ch 1 and 2 (May want to also check: [https://www.ted.com/talks/jamie\\_bartlett\\_how\\_the\\_mysterious\\_dark\\_net\\_is\\_going\\_mainstream](https://www.ted.com/talks/jamie_bartlett_how_the_mysterious_dark_net_is_going_mainstream))

Jamie Bartlett 2017, Forget about far-right populism – crypto-anarchists are the new masters The Guardian July 14

Brooking and Singer, 2016. "War Goes Viral. How social media is being weaponized across the world" From: The Atlantic. Nov. 2016

## *Imagined futures*

## **Week 14. Envisioning more just futures (I)**

Étienne Balibar 2012 Justice and Equality A Political Dilemma? Pascal, Plato, Marx In the Borders of Justice ch 1

Urry and Elliot. 2010. Contested Futures. From: *Mobile Lives*

Dauvergne and LeBaron, 2014. "Protest Inc." ch 1 and 3

## Week 15. Envisioning more just futures (II)

MacKenzie, Debora 2014 "End of Nations: Is there an Alternative to countries?" In: *New Scientist*  
@<https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg22329850-600-end-of-nations-is-there-an-alternative-to-countries/>

Graeme Wood, "Re-Engineering the Earth," *The Atlantic* (July/August 2009)  
@<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2009/07/re-engineering-the-earth/307552/>

*Reaction paper #2 due on April 25*