

PLSC 3910-01: Social Movements in the United States

Winter 2017, T/Th 8:00-10:05, Engineering 307

Professor Rose Ernst

*Some people may feel that academic scholarship on injustice and resistance is beside the point—maybe because it is too intellectual and not activist enough. I want to remind readers that whenever extreme repression takes over in any place, its agents become really organized about getting rid of the intellectuals. They slaughter them, they defund research, privatize schools, dismiss professors. They crush the capacity—which is the power—to learn and teach, so that we can't use our time and skills to learn so that other people can learn. Being a public scholar, or a scholar-activist, or anything that has "scholar" in name, means that you are a scholar, that you are engaged in critique. Studying the injustices that we also want to change often means going back and forth between despair—of the statements, the archives, the government data that are so painful to read—and the joy in getting glimpses of resistance, of patterns of resistance, of the emergence of freedom over and over from the ground up. There are times that this work fills me with me with the most joy I can imagine, just from figuring stuff out, and figuring it out well so that other people can use it. —Ruth Wilson Gilmore**

Office: Casey 406

Email: ernstr@seattleu.edu

Office Phone: 206.398.4414

Office Hours: Thursdays, 1:30-3:30, and by appointment

Course Description

This course introduces students to concepts of collective resistance, domination, and the politics of institutional and societal change. Why do social movements emerge? What factors explain differing goals, strategies and tactics employed? What is the relationship between movements and the state? What are the politics of *intramovement* disputes? What happens to movements after they achieve their goals? These are just a few of the questions that we will explore in this course. We begin with theoretical work on the contours of power, resistance and domination, paying special attention to problems of structure and agency. While we will explore conventional academic social movement scholarship in this course, we will move beyond this literature to include a more robust consideration of power at an individual and collective level. We will accomplish this through a series of historical and contemporary case studies of individual movements in the United States.

Course Objectives

1. Introduce a range of forms of resistance.
2. Understand the varied factors that move people to join collectively together to make social change.
2. Appreciate how power, domination and oppression shape and motivate movements.
3. Understand the dynamics of state and social movement interactions.
4. Develop writing and research skills through a series of reading, writing and research assignments.
5. Make connections between your life and movements for change.
6. Critically evaluate U.S. power dynamics.

* "Afterword" In *Youth Resistance Research and Theories of Change*, edited by Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang. New York: Routledge, I want to thank Dean Spade and my organizing families for their support in creating this syllabus.

Course Requirements

Participation & Preparation	15%
In-class Journaling	5%
Reading Question Days	20%
Organizer Biographies Paper	12%
Movement Participant Memo	10%
Movement Presentation	20%
Final Take Home Exam	18%

Participation and Preparation (15%)

This course requires regular participation. I understand the material will often provoke emotional responses – this means that we need to treat each other with respect. While I expect you to respect your peers’ viewpoints, I also expect you to speak up when you have questions or something to contribute. ***Your grade is based on facilitating your peers’ learning in class.*** The usual rule of “quality” assumes an individual interaction between professor and student. ***My method is different: you need to consider how your questions and comments move the class forward.***

If you are an introvert or feel shy and uneasy about speaking in class, please come see me at the beginning of the quarter (or whenever you feel this way) so we can discuss how to proceed. I also reserve the right to have short writing exercises in class. Participation in these exercises will count toward your general participation grade. Finally, I do reserve the right to call on students in class if discussion is less than robust (bring coffee if you need it!).

In-class Journaling (5%)

This assignment serves two goals. First, it is a centering and grounding exercise at the beginning of class. Second, it gives you an incentive to come to class on time (since it’s 8am!). You will journal about a specific or general question that I give you at the beginning of class. You’ll spend 10 minutes writing a response which you will then turn in to me. I will skim them and give you credit/no credit for it, but you have to do this exercise in class. I am not sure which days will be journaling days – it will be contingent on what is going on in the world and what is going on in class. We will have a minimum of 6 days of journaling (possibly more) so you will not lose credit if you miss one day.

Reading Question Days (20%)

I want to encourage you to read regularly so we may have productive discussions. We will have five “surprise” reading question days. I have posted a series of questions on Canvas for each day we have reading assigned (this may include films we are not watching in class together). You will answer the questions and post them in the appropriate folder for that day. I will grade three questions from that day (regardless of how many are posted). Each question is worth two points, for a total of 6 points per question day. I will only grade *four of the five* days, so you will drop the lowest grade. The point system (for an individual question day) converts to: 6/6=100%, 5/6=83%, 4/6=67%, 3/6= 50%, 2/6=33% 1/6=17%.

At the beginning of a reading question day I will announce this in class. You will have posted your responses on Canvas already, ***so it should not cause anxiety!***

Organizer Biographies Paper (12%)

Grace Lee Boggs’ *Living for Change* is the story of organizing across multiple movements and generations. Her book provides a glimpse into the identities of organizers and their motivation for action. What drives different people to engage in organizing and social movements (however that might be defined)? Do they share certain histories or experiences in common?

This six-page paper offers the opportunity to reflect on these questions by first selecting Grace Lee Boggs or Assata Shakur as one of your organizers for the paper. Then you should select two more organizers to discuss by watching their oral histories. You have plenty of options for this (you may also include Laura Whitehorn from the *Out* documentary as one organizer):

Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project's activist oral histories:
<http://depts.washington.edu/civilr/interviews.htm>.

The Asian American Reproductive Justice Oral History Project
https://media.smith.edu/departments/ssc/aarj/aarj_playlist.html

ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) Oral History Project
http://www.actuporalhistory.org/interviews/interviews_01.html - agosto

Welfare Rights Initiative Oral History Project
<http://wri-voices.org/>

More details about this paper will be forthcoming in class.

Social Movement Participant Memo (10%)

In order to get a sense of how movements *feel*, and how you feel when you witness them engaged in different forms of action, you will write about two movement events this quarter as an observer or participant. You may attend two separate events as part of the same movement or go to events hosted by different movements. I want you to be safe, so you should always leave if you feel uncomfortable (if this happens, talk to me and we will discuss how to write it up). I will set up a calendar on Canvas that we will use to post possible events. If you have any ideas or hear about anything, I encourage you to let me know and I will post it on the calendar of events. If you attend an event that is *not* on the calendar, you need to get it approved by me to count (obviously prior to the event will be better). ***You should spend a minimum of one hour at each event.*** I encourage you to go with another person in the class. If you do this, you may write up your paper together. I may schedule time for a share out of experiences during the quarter. I will let you know in advance if I do this. The paper will be approximately four to five pages long, but will not be a formal essay (you'll be answering specific questions). ***Guidelines will be forthcoming in class.***

International Activist Exchange Presentations (20%)

You have the opportunity, as scholar-activists, to share wisdom about movements in the United States with organizers and scholars from around the world. A group of these activists and scholars are visiting Seattle to learn more about the novel visions, strategies and tactics used by movements here in the United States with the aim of learning from them. This group is interested in a broad ideological range of movements on the left and right. ***They are particularly eager to learn more about new emerging movements, or, conversely, movements that seemed to (at least on the surface) emerge over the past five years, but then lose their momentum. If your movement is new/emerging, you will need to predict whether you think it will continue on, recede, disband, co-opted and/or infiltrated by the state or other movements. If your movement emerged and quickly receded, disbanded, was co-opted and/or infiltrated by the state or other movements in the past five years, then you need to provide an explanation as to why you think this happened.***

You will be assigned to a small scholar-activist group that will explore a particular movement (hopefully one that you're interested in researching further). You will write a briefing paper that will accompany your presentation (which will be approximately 25-30 minutes) about the movement at the end of the quarter. The class will act as the visiting group of organizers and scholars and will evaluate your analysis of this movement's trajectory. They are eager to learn, so they may ask you some tough questions. **If you fail to respect your group members' time—by not attending class, not communicating or doing your share of the work—**

your presentation AND participation grade will be lowered dramatically. *Guidelines will be forthcoming in class.*

Take-Home Exam (18%)

You will receive the final take-home exam on the last day of class. You will have options when selecting which question prompts to answer. The exam will be based on the key concepts covered in lectures in class and the readings. The expected length for the final exam will be between 6 and 8 pages. You may see the a sample of this on canvas.

Films

We will watch films in class (as well as at-home watching assignments like readings), as noted below on the course schedule. You should approach studying these films just as you would readings—take notes and reflect critically on what you are viewing. I will provide discussion questions to guide your note taking. They are fair game for your final take-home essay.

Letter Grades

All assignments will be graded using a 100-point scale (or converted to a 100 pt. scale). At the end of the quarter, when I calculate the percentages of your total grade, I will convert the point scale into the following letter grades:

A	= 95-100
A-	= 92-94
B+	= 88-91
B	= 84-87
B-	= 80-83
C+	= 77-79
C	= 73-76
C-	= 70-72
D+	= 67-69
D	= 63-66
D-	= 60-62
F	= 0 to 59

Electronic Device Policy

Laptops: You may use a laptop for note-taking purposes in class. I reserve the right to ask everyone to remove their laptops from the classroom, however, if they become distracting (e.g. internet usage).

Phones (and other similar devices): Please refrain from checking your phone during class. You may do so when we take a break during class. If you think I do not see you checking your phone, you are wrong. I have eyes in the back of my head and I hear and see **everything** classroom. ☺ Your participation grade will be negatively affected if you use your phone in class (this is the same if you use your laptop for anything other than taking notes).

Deadlines & Incompletes

As noted above, there are NO makeup summary days, regardless of circumstance. Full credit for late assignments is available only in extraordinary circumstances. This also applies to a missed assignment or presentation. If you anticipate a scheduling problem, you must contact me **prior** to the due date to get permission to reschedule or turn in work late.

If you do turn in an assignment late, **I subtract 10 pts for every day it is late** (but the weekend counts as one day late). **As all assignments are due at the beginning of class, turning it in after the class will count as one day late.**

Incomplete grades are only extended for those students in extraordinary circumstances. You must contact me for approval of an incomplete.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism and any other form of cheating will not be tolerated and will be subject, at a minimum, to the penalty of a failing grade for the assignment. Seattle University's Academic Honesty Policy defines plagiarism as follows:

The unacknowledged use of the work or intellectual property of other persons, published or unpublished, presented as one's own work. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to, copying, paraphrasing, summarizing, or borrowing ideas, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, or an entire paper from another person's work without proper reference and/or acknowledgement. While different academic disciplines have different modes for attributing credit, all recognize and value the contributions of individuals to the general corpus of knowledge and expertise. Students are responsible for educating themselves as to the proper mode of attributing credit in any course or field. *A student does not need to have intended to plagiarize; the unacknowledged use of another's work is sufficient.*

Full text of the policy is available at <https://www.seattleu.edu/WorkArea//DownloadAsset.aspx?id=78679>

Additional Accommodations

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an 'invisible disability' such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to arrange support services and/or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff in the Learning Center, Loyola 100, (206) 296-5740. Disability-based adjustments to course expectations can be arranged only through this process.

Office Hours and Contact Information

Email is the best way to contact me. *I will do my best to respond to your email within a 48-hour period. I do not check email on weekends.* If you are unable to attend regular office hours, please let me know and we can set up another appointment.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Tuesday, January 3rd

FIRST DAY OF CLASS

Logistics

Getting to know each other

Film in class: *Alcatraz is Not an Island*

Additional Resources:

- (Note: this is chapter that is a required reading later in the quarter): Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang. "Introduction to Youth Resistance Research and Theories of Change." In *Youth Resistance Research and Theories of Change*, edited by Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang. New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2014.

Thursday, January 5th

Historical Grounding

Social Movement timeline

Discuss *Alcatraz* Film

Tuesday, January 10th

LIST OF 3 POSSIBLE CONTEMPORARY MOVEMENTS DUE ON CANVAS

Domination and Everyday Resistance

Required Reading:

- James Scott. "The Infrapolitics of Subordinate Groups." In *The Global Resistance Reader*, edited by Louise Amoore. 2005. London: Routledge, 2005. ([Connect through google books – the entire chapter is readable](#)). Pp. 65-72.
- Cindy Cruz. "LGBTQ Street Youth Doing Resistance in Infrapolitical Worlds." In *Youth Resistance Research and Theories of Change*, edited by Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang. New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2014.
- Robin D.G. Kelley. "Resistance as Revelatory." In *Youth Resistance Research and Theories of Change*, edited by Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang. New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2014.

Total pages: 32

Additional Resources:

- James Scott. [Domination and the Arts of Resistance](#).
- Barbara Ransby. "[Quilting a Movement](#)." In *These Times*, 2011.
- Southern Movement Blueprint. (see Canvas)

Thursday, January 12th

Domination and Everyday Resistance

Required Reading (Same as previous day)

PART II: INDIVIDUALS AND IDENTITY

Tuesday, January 17th

What motivates people to act? Grace Lee Boggs' Story and Prefigurative Politics

Required Reading:

- Boggs. [Living for Change](#) (link to read through SU library). This is a biography, so you do not need to read it as closely as you do the other readings. I encourage you to read the entire book, but here are the most important sections: Introduction, Chapters 1, 2, 5, 6, 8 & 9.

Total pages: approximately 100

Additional Resources:

- [American Revolutionary: The Evolution of Grace Lee Boggs](#). Documentary (1.5 hrs). Can rent for \$3.99.
- Harsha Walia. [Undoing Border Imperialism](#) Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2013.
- [No One Is Illegal](#). Organizing.
- [Not1More](#). Organizing.
- [Kiko Martinez from Cointelpro 101](#) (10 minutes). Entire documentary with organizer interviews (10 min each) available on Vimeo.

Thursday, January 19th

Guest Presentation: TBA

Required Reading:

- Assata Shakur, [Assata: An Autobiography](#), (please note racial epithets are in the text). Ch. 2 Pp. 18-44.
- Film (watch on your own) : [Eyes of the Rainbow](#) (1 hr)
- [Democracy Now clip](#) (watch on your own) (30 min)

Total pages: 1.5 hours of film and 26 pages.

Additional Resources:

- Angela Davis, "[From Michael Brown to Assatta Shakur, The Racist State of America and Persists.](#)" *The Guardian*, November 1, 2014.
- Assata Shakur. "[An Open Letter from Assata.](#)" 2013.
- Evelyn. William. [Inadmissible Evidence: The Story of the African-American Trial Lawyer who Defended the Black Liberation Army.](#) 1993.

Tuesday, January 24th

Meet in movement groups in class

Required Reading (thinking about solidarity):

- Film (watch on your own): [Out: The Making of a Revolutionary](#) (1 hr)
- [Marilyn Buck Interview](#) (related to Assata Shakur story) (10 minutes)

Total time: 1 hour and 10 minutes

Additional Resources:

- Dan Berger. [Outlaws of America: The Weather Underground and The Politics of Solidarity.](#) Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2006.
- [Weather Underground](#) documentary (1.5 hrs)
- Peter Gelderloos. [How Non-violence Protects the State](#), 2007.
- Response to Gelderloos: Brian Martin, "[How Nonviolence is Misrepresented.](#)" 2008.
- Kelsen Caldwell. "[Toward a Fierce Liberatory White Anti-Racist Practice in the Times of Trump.](#)" *South Seattle Emerald*. 2016.
- Angela Harris, "[From Stonewall to the suburbs?: Toward a political economy of sexuality.](#)" 14 *William and Mary Bill of Rights Journal*, 1539 (2006).
- Lillian Smith. [Killers of the Dream.](#) New York: W.W. Norton, 1949.

- Bonnie Berman Cushing. [*Accountability and white anti-racist organizing: stories from our work*](#). Roselle, N.J.: Crandall, Dostie & Douglass Books, 2010.

Thursday, January 26th

Social Movement Theory

Required Reading:

- Watch Dr. Ernst's lecture on Canvas with slides/handouts (approximately 1 hr.). Will send links.

PART III: MOBILIZATION AND MASTER FRAMES

ORGANIZER BIOGRAPHIES PAPER DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON CANVAS,
TUESDAY, JANUARY 31ST

Tuesday, January 31st

ORGANIZER BIOGRAPHIES PAPER DUE

The Mother of Movements: Civil Rights

Required Reading:

- Belinda Robnett. *How Long? How Long?: African-American Women in the Struggle for Civil Rights*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. Pp. 12-35; 71-114. ([Available as ebook through SU Library online](#)).

Total pages: 68

Additional Resources:

- Akinyele Omowale Umoja. 2013. [*We will shoot back: armed resistance in the Mississippi Freedom Movement*](#). New York: NYU Press, 2013.
- Danielle L. McGuire. [*At the dark end of the street: black women, rape, and resistance- a new history of the civil rights movement from Rosa Parks to the rise of black power*](#). New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010.
- James H. Cone. [*Martin & Malcolm & America: a Dream or a Nightmare*](#). Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1991.
- Winston A Grady-Willis. [*Challenging U.S. Apartheid: Atlanta and Black Struggles for Human Rights, 1960-1977*](#). Durham: Duke University Press, 2006.

Thursday, February 2nd

Splintering, Cooptation, Infiltration and Unraveling

Required Reading:

- Robnett. *How Long?* Pp. 157-202. ([Available as ebook through SU Library online](#)).
- Film (watch on your own): [*Eyes On The Prize - \(Part 9\) Power! 1967-1968.*](#)

Total pages: 45 plus 1 hr. film

Film (in class): *Eyes on the Prize - 12 - A Nation of Law? (1968-1971)*

Additional Resources:

- [*'The Black Panthers Vanguard Of The Revolution'*](#) (2015 documentary)
- FBI Freedom of Information Documents: [Cointelpro docs](#).
- Sonnie, Amy, and James Tracy. 2011. [*Hillbilly nationalists, urban race rebels, and black power: community organizing in radical times*](#). Brooklyn, N.Y.: Melville House.
- [Government bombing of MOVE in Philadelphia](#). (documentary)
- Rising Tide, [Security Culture](#).
- Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall, [COINTELPRO Papers](#).
- Matsimela, Muntu et al. eds., [Black Prison Movements USA](#) New Jersey: Africa
- ["Verdict of the International Tribunal on Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War in the United States."](#) Yale Journal of Law and Liberation: Vol. 2: Iss. 1, Article 7, 1991.

Tuesday, February 7th

Spillover Effects, Networks and New Movements

Required Reading:

- Alondra Nelson. 2011. *Body and Soul: The Black Panther Party and the Fight against Medical Discrimination*. Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press. Pp. 1-22, 75-114, 181-187.
- [Young Lords Party 13-Point Program and Platform](#).

Total pages: 69

Additional Resources:

- [The Young Lords: Palante Siempre Palante](#) (documentary)
- Darrel Enck-Wanzer, *The Young Lords: A Reader*,
- [Laura Whitehorn: CointelPro 101](#) (10 minutes)

PART IV: THE STATE AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Tuesday, February 14th

Targeting the State for Action: Welfare Rights Movement

Required Reading:

- Piven and Cloward. “The Welfare Rights Movement.” 264-359.
- Listen to [interview with Johnnie Tillmon, Head of the NWRO](#) (30 min. Make sure you read her short bio).

Total pages: 48 (they’re small) plus 30 min.

Additional Resources:

- Premilla Nadasen. *Welfare warriors: the welfare rights movement in the United States*. New York: Routledge, 2005.

Thursday, February 10th

Targeting the State for Action: Welfare Rights Movement

In-class Film: *A Day’s Work, A Day’s Pay*

Additional Resources:

- Rose Ernst. *The Price of Progressive Politics: The Welfare Rights Movement in an Era of Colorblind Racism*. New York: NYU Press, 2010.

Tuesday, February 21st

Unintended (or Intended) Consequences of Engaging the State

Required Reading:

- Marie Gottschalk. 2006. *The Prison and the Gallows: The Politics of Mass Incarceration in America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
 - Chapter 1: The Prison and the Gallows: The Construction of the Carceral State in America. Ch.5: Not the Usual Suspects: Feminists, Women’s Groups, and the Anti-Rape Movement. Chapter 6: The Battered-Women’s Movement and the Development of Penal Policy.” Pp. 1-17; 115-138. ;139-164.

Total pages: 66

Additional Resources:

- [Interview with Naomi Murakawa about her book, The First Civil Right: How Liberals Built Prison America](#), 2014.
- Eric A. Stanley and Nat Smith. 2011. *Captive genders: trans embodiment and the prison industrial complex*. Oakland, CA: AK Press.

Thursday, February 23rd

Structure of the Non-Profit Industrial Complex (NPIC)

Required Reading:

- Andrea Smith. "Introduction." In *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-profit Industrial Complex*, edited by INCITE!. Cambridge, Mass: South End Press, 2007.

Total pages: 16

Additional Resources:

- Martinez, Elizabeth, [What is Neoliberalism?](#)
- [The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-profit Industrial Complex](#), edited by INCITE!. Cambridge, Mass: South End Press, 2007.

**MOVEMENT PARTICIPANT MEMO DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS ON CANVAS
ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23RD**

Thursday, February 23rd

MOVEMENT PARTICIPANT MEMO DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS

Individuals and the Non-Profit Industrial Complex (NPIC)

Required Reading:

- Jordan Flaherty, Jordan. *No More Heroes: Grassroots Challenges to the Savior Mentality*. Chico, CA: AK Press, 2016. Introduction, Chapter 1 (History of Saviors) and Chapter 11 (Decentering Privilege).

Total pages: Not sure yet. Making copies!

Additional Resources:

- Noah Berlatsky. "Why We Don't Need Anymore Heroes. Interview." *The Establishment*, November 5, 2016.

Tuesday, February 28th

Youth Organizing

Required Reading:

- Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang. "Introduction to Youth Resistance Research and Theories of Change." In *Youth Resistance Research and Theories of Change*, edited by Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang. New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2014.
- Film (watch on your own): [Precious Knowledge. 2015. Access through SU Library](#) (Kanopy). 70 min.

Total pages: 13 pages plus 70 min film.

Additional Resources:

- [Freedom schools](#)
- Youth Undoing Institutional Racism. [Here](#) and [here](#).
- [Asian American Studies](#) (10 min documentary)
- [Barbara Ransby, "From Mizzou to Yale: The Resurgence of Black Student Protest," Truthout](#), November 25, 2015.

Thursday, March 2nd

Presentation Planning Time in Class

Tuesday, March 7th

International Activist Exchange Presentations

Thursday, March 9th

LAST DAY OF CLASS

TAKE-HOME EXAM HANDED OUT AT END OF CLASS

International Activist Exchange Presentations

GROUP PAPER DUE BY 10AM, TUESDAY, MARCH 14TH (on CANVAS)

TAKE-HOME EXAM DUE BY 8am, FRIDAY, MARCH 17TH (on CANVAS)
