

Social Issues and Social Movements

Sociology 313

Winter 2006

Tu/Th 10:00 – 11:20 AM

229 McKenzie

Professor:

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Description of course:

What is a social problem in our society? What social problem would motivate you to participate in a social movement for the eradication of this problem or for social change? What stops you from participating in social movements?

This course is designed to give students an introduction to the study of social issues, social problems, and social movements from a sociological perspective. Together we will examine and analyze the changing nature of particular social issues seen as social problems, and try to understand how they become defined and constructed in different ways in certain historical contexts and times. We will critically analyze the construction of particular social issues and what it means to label these as “social problems.” In turn, we will examine the resistance to the construction of some issues as social problems in particular social and economic contexts, and how these perspectives may be affected by race, class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and region of origin. Power is, of course, central to these discussions.

In this course, our focus will be on the collective action of individuals as they participate in social movements to bring about social change in regards to something they define as a social problem. We will discuss sociology’s theoretical contributions to the study of social movements and we will, to the best of our ability in class, try to feel and understand the motivations and intentions of movement participants. While social movements are collective action, we will try to remember that this involves individuals making choices to actively participate in social change efforts. Towards these goals, we will examine the U.S. civil rights movement, the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa (and its global allies), and the environmental justice movement in the U.S.

Required Texts:

Bullard, Robert D. 2000. *Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class, and Environmental Quality*. 3rd edition. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
(ISBN: 0813367921)

Eyerman, Ron, and Andrew Jamison. 1991. *Social Movements: A Cognitive Approach*. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press. (ISBN: 0271007567)

Mayekiso, Mzwanele. 1996. *Township Politics: Civic Struggles for a New South Africa*. New York: Monthly Review Press. (ISBN: 0853459657)

Morris, Aldon D. 1984. *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change*. New York: The Free Press. (ISBN: 0029221307)

*Additional readings on E-Reserve and/or Blackboard.

Evaluation:

Attendance in class is mandatory. Our class will be exponentially strengthened by the increased engagement of all participants – you, me, and our colleagues around us. You are expected to attend class with the readings for the day completed, and ready to engage in discussion. Basic participation will account for 20% of your grade and includes attendance, engagement, and active participation in the classroom (possibly including in-class exercises).

There will be a mandatory in-class midterm exam worth 20% of your grade. Make-up exams will be given only in the case of a documented emergency/medical excuse. The remainder of your grade includes 3 thought memos/essays worth 10% each for a total of 30% (1-2 pages each) and a final research project worth 30% of your grade.

The due dates for assignments are:

First thought memo due in-class	2/9/06
Second thought memo due in-class	3/2/06
Third thought memo due in-class	3/16/06
Final research project due	3/21/06

Each student will complete a research project of five typed, double-spaced pages plus reference page(s) organized in ASA format. The details of this project will be announced in class. Please note that all assignments should be typed with your name and ID number clearly visible.

In short:

Attendance/Participation	20%
Midterm	20%
Thought memos/essays (3)	30%
Research project	30%

If you foresee challenges to fulfilling any of these requirements please speak to me privately.

Accessing class materials:

Readings for the day are listed by author and by where they can be found (unless they are one of the required texts). The required books are on the hardcopy reserve in the Knight library. Please

note that the reading list may change throughout the term. Any additional materials may be put on e-reserve and/or Blackboard. Any changes will be announced in class and you are responsible for changes in the material.

Special Needs:

Any student requiring disability services is encouraged to speak with me as soon as possible. Disability Services should be contacted at 346-1155.

Academic Dishonesty:

All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly acknowledged and documented. For the consequences of academic dishonesty, refer to the Schedule of Classes published quarterly. Violations will be taken seriously and are noted on student disciplinary records. Additionally, the following specific requirements will be expected in this class: all assignments should include references and citations, if appropriate, and should be presented in ASA format (American Sociological Association citation style – see <http://www.asanet.org/>). If you are in doubt regarding the requirements, please consult with the instructor before you complete any requirement of the course. Students committing academic dishonesty will receive a grade of ‘F’ in this course and UO Student Judicial Affairs will be notified.

Definition of plagiarism and tips for how to avoid it:

<http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/>

Outcomes and consequences of academic dishonesty at UO:

http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/programs/student_judicial_affairs/index.htm

Readings and Class Schedule (approximate and subject to change):

Week One:

1/10 Introduction to course.

1/12 Eyerman and Jamison, Introduction and Chapter One. Pp. 1-44.
Eitzen, D. Stanley, and Maxine Baca Zinn. 2006. Chapter One: Sociological Approach to Social Problems. Pp. 2-21 in Social Problems (10th edition). Boston: Pearson.

Week Two:

1/17 Eyerman and Jamison, Chapters 2-3. Pp. 45-93.

1/19 Eyerman and Jamison, Chapters 4-5. Pp. 94-145.
Morris, Preface. Pp. v-vi.
Morris, Introduction. Pp. ix – xiv.

Week Three:

1/24 Eyerman and Jamison, Chapter 6. Pp. 146-159.
Morris, Chapters 1-2. Pp. 1-39.

1/26 Eyerman and Jamison, Chapter 7. Pp. 160-166.
Morris, Chapters 3-4. Pp. 40-99.
Research Proposal due in class

Week Four:

1/31 Morris, Chapters 5-6. Pp. 100-138.

2/2 Morris, Chapters 7-8. Pp. 139-194.

Week Five:

2/7 Morris, Chapters 9-10. Pp. 195-274.

2/9 Morris, Chapter 11. Pp. 275-290.
First thought memo due in-class

Week Six:

2/14 Midterm Exam.

2/16 Mayekiso, Foreword, Preface, and Part One (Chapters 1-2). Pp. 7-48.

Week Seven:

2/21 Mayekiso, Part Two (Chapters 3-6). Pp. 49-124.

2/23 Mayekiso, Chapters 7-10. Pp. 125-189.

Week Eight:

2/28 Mayekiso, Chapters 11-13. Pp. 190-248.

3/2 Mayekiso, Chapters 14-15. Pp. 249-284.
Second thought memo due in-class

Week Nine:

3/7 Bullard, Preface. Pp. xiii-xviii.
Bullard, Chapters 1-2. Pp. 1-36.

3/9 Bullard, Chapters 3-4. Pp. 37-96.

Week Ten:

3/14 Bullard, Chapters 5-6. Pp. 97-136.

3/16 Bullard, Chapter 7. Pp. 137-160.
Eitzen, D. Stanley, and Maxine Baca Zinn. 2006. Chapter 19: Progressive Plan to Solve Society's Social Problems. Pp. 572-590 in Social Problems (10th ed.). Boston: Pearson.
Third thought memo due in-class

Final Exam: 8 AM, Tuesday, March 21, 2006. Research Projects Due.