

**SOED-UE.0020/EDST-UE.0060: American Social Movements, 1950 – Present:  
Power, Resistance, Identity**

Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development

Spring 2016

Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:30 – 1:45 p.m.

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Through the lenses of power, resistance, and identity, this course provides an introduction to American social movements from the 1950s to the present. Drawing from history, sociology, and politics, it examines a range of social movements, including: civil rights and Black Power, feminist movements, gay and lesbian liberation and LGBTQ movements, and Black Lives Matter. The course also examines the question of how social activism on both the political Left and Right has changed since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Understand, analyze, and compare a range of social movements of the past 60+ years and use lessons from these movements to raise questions about current politics
- Identify and understand intra-movement debates about political goals and tactics
- Critically read and respond to a wide range of sociological, historical, and political literature

**GRADED REQUIREMENTS**

- Class Participation: 15% of grade
- 4 Reading Memos: 40% of grade (due at the beginning of class – by 12:30 p.m. – on February 24<sup>th</sup>, March 28<sup>th</sup>, April 18<sup>th</sup>, and May 2<sup>nd</sup>)
- Midterm Exam: 20% of grade (Wednesday, March 9<sup>th</sup> in class)
- Final Exam: 25% of grade (Monday, May 9<sup>th</sup> in class)

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & POLICIES**

1. *Class attendance and participation:* Class attendance is required for this course. If you must miss or arrive late to a class for any reason, please let me know in advance. I expect that everyone will come to class prepared and will participate actively in class discussion. I also expect that this participation will be based on an informed familiarity and thoughtful engagement with the assigned reading.

2. *Office hours*: I am available by appointment. I also am regularly accessible by e-mail and by phone. I will make every effort to respond as promptly as possible to all e-mails.
3. *Reading Memos*: Students have four 3-4 page (double-spaced) reading memos due at the beginning of class, by 12:30 p.m., on the following dates: February 24<sup>th</sup>, March 28<sup>th</sup>, April 18<sup>th</sup>, and May 2<sup>nd</sup>. The purpose of these assignments is to give students the opportunity to critically engage with the readings and to learn to build and support an argument using texts. No outside reading is required. Assignments are listed in the course outline below.
4. *Midterm and Final Exams*: Students will have a midterm essay exam on Wednesday, March 9<sup>th</sup> in class. This exam will cover the material in the first half of the course. Students will be given four essay questions from which to study. Two of these questions will make up the exam. Students will have a final essay exam on Monday, May 9<sup>th</sup> in class. This exam will cover the material since the midterm. For the final, students will be given four essay questions from which to study. Two of these questions will make up the exam. We will set aside some class time to review for these exams.
5. *Proofreading, etc.*: All assignments should be thoroughly spellchecked and proofread before they are submitted to me. Please allow time to do this before assignments are due. I reserve the right to lower grades on assignments that are turned in with excessive spelling, formatting, and other proofreading errors.
6. *Deadlines*: All course deadlines are firm. *I will not grant extensions*, except in the case of absolute emergency. For each day that an assignment is late, its grade will be lowered by one-third of a grade (e.g., an A- becomes a B+ if an assignment is one day late). *Assignments are also considered late if they do not meet the time deadline* (e.g., assignments due at 12:30 p.m. are due *promptly* by 12:30 p.m.).
7. *Grading Rubric\*\**:

#### A: Outstanding

Students who earn an *A* for class participation are consistently present and prepared for class, synthesize course materials, contribute insightfully and analytically, listen well to others, and generally move the discussion forward and are actively engaged each class. For written work, an “A” applies to outstanding student writing. A grade of “A” indicates not simply a command of material and excellent presentation (spelling, grammar, organization, writing style, etc.), but also sustained intellectual engagement with the material. This engagement takes such forms as shedding original light on the material, investigating patterns and connections, posing questions, and raising issues.

An “A” paper is excellent in nearly all respects:

- It is well argued and well organized, with a clear thesis
- It is well developed with content that is specific, interesting, appropriate and convincing

- It has logical transitions that contribute to a fluent style of writing
- It has few, if any, mechanical, grammatical, spelling, or diction errors
- It demonstrates command of a mature, unpretentious diction

#### B: Good

Students who earn a *B for class participation* generally contribute consistently and thoughtfully and listen well to other but may be less consistent in their participation and/or their presence in class and may be less likely to move discussion forward with their contributions. *On written assignments*, a “B” is given to work of high quality that reflects a command of the material and a strong presentation but lacks sustained intellectual engagement with the material.

A “B” paper shares most characteristics of an “A” paper, but

- It may have some minor weaknesses in its argumentation
- It may have some minor lapses in organization and development
- It may contain some sentence structures that are awkward or ineffective
- It may have minor mechanical, grammatical, or diction problems
- It may be less distinguished in its use of language

#### C: Adequate

Students who earn a *C for class participation* do not contribute regularly and may be absent from class regularly and/or their contributions to class discussion are often tangential and unclear and they do not listen well to others. *Written work* receiving a “C” is of fair overall quality but exhibits a lack of intellectual engagement as well as either deficiencies in the student’s command of the material or problems with presentation.

A “C” paper is generally competent; it is the average performance. Compared to a “B” paper, it may have a weaker thesis and less effective development.

- It may have serious shortcomings in its argumentation
- It may contain some lapses in organization
- It may have poor or awkward transitions
- It may have less varied sentence structures that tend toward monotony
- It may have more mechanical, grammatical, and diction problems

#### D: Unsatisfactory

Students who earn a *D for class participation* have spotty attendance, come to class unprepared, and make comments that are off-topic. *On written work*, the grade of “D” indicates significant problems with the student’s work, such as a shallow understanding of the material or poor writing.

- It presents no clear thesis
- It displays major organizational problems
- It lacks adequate support for its thesis
- It includes irrelevant details
- It includes confusing transitions or lacks transitions altogether
- It fails to fulfill the assignment
- It contains ungrammatical or poorly constructed sentences and/or demonstrates problems with spelling, punctuation, diction or syntax, which impedes understanding

### F: Failed

Students who earn an *F for class participation* also have spotty attendance, come to class unprepared, fail to participate, demonstrate lack of engagement, and might create a hostile environment in the classroom. *On written work*, an “F” is given when a student fails to demonstrate an adequate understanding of the material, fails to address the exact topic of a question or assignment, fails to follow the directions in an assignment, or fails to hand in an assignment.

NOTE: Pluses (e.g., B+) indicate that the paper is especially strong on some, but not all, of the criteria for that letter grade. Minuses (e.g., C-) indicate that the paper is missing some, but not all, of the criteria for that letter grade.

\*\* This rubric is adapted from those developed by Prof. Fabienne Doucet and Prof. Helen Nissenbaum, NYU Steinhardt.

8. *Academic Integrity*: All students are responsible for understanding and complying with the NYU Steinhardt Statement on Academic Integrity. A copy is available at: [http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic\\_integrity](http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic_integrity).
9. *Students with Disabilities*: Students with physical or learning disabilities are required to register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities, 726 Broadway, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, (212-998-4980) and are required to present a letter from the Center to the instructor at the start of the semester in order to be considered for appropriate accommodation. Please see: <http://www.nyu.edu/life/safety-health-andwellness/students-with-disabilities.html>.

## REQUIRED READINGS

All readings listed on the syllabus are required readings (to be read by the day on which they are listed on the syllabus). There are 8 required books for this course. The other readings, as marked in the syllabus, will be made available as PDFs on NYU Classes (under the “Resources” tab) or will be available online (as listed). All books also are available on reserve at Bobst Library. These books are:

Howard Zinn. *You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train: A Personal History of Our Times*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1994.

Jeanne Theoharis. *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2013.

Peniel E. Joseph. *Dark Days, Bright Nights: From Black Power to Barack Obama*. New York: Basic Civitas, 2013 edition.

Sara Evans. *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left*. New York: Vintage, 1980.

Roxane Gay. *Bad Feminist: Essays*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2014.

George Chauncey. *Why Marriage: The History Shaping Today's Debate over Gay Equality*. New York: Basic Books, 2004.

Susan Stryker. *Transgender History*. Berkeley, CA: Seal Press, 2008.

Ta-Nehisi Coates. *Between the World and Me*. New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2015.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **Monday, January 25: Introduction**

*Read together in class:*

Steve Locke. "I Fit The Description." <http://artandeverythingafter.com/i-fit-the-description/>

Jon Greenberg. "10 Examples that Prove White Privilege Protects White People in Every Aspect Imaginable." November 26, 2015. <http://everydayfeminism.com/2015/11/lessons-white-privilege-poc/>

### **Part 1: The Study of History, the Study of Power, Resistance, and Identity**

#### **Wednesday, January 27: Why Study History?**

Howard Zinn. *You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train: A Personal History of Our Times*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1994. Introduction and Chapters 1 – 6 (pages 1 – 84).

#### **Monday, February 1: Why Study History (Continued)?**

Howard Zinn. *You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train: A Personal History of Our Times*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1994. Chapters 11 – 15 (pages 141 – 208).

### **Part 2: The African American Freedom Movement of the 1950s and '60s**

#### **Wednesday, February 3: *Brown v. Board of Education* and the Start of the Civil Rights Movement**

Richard Kluger. "Chapter 26. Simple Justice." Pages 700 – 747 in *Simple Justice*. New York: Vintage Books, 1977. PDF on NYU Classes.

Text of the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision of 1954.  
<http://www.nationalcenter.org/brown.html>

#### **Monday, February 8: The Civil Rights Movement and School Desegregation Struggles**

*Watch in class:* "Eyes on the Prize" Volume 1: "Fighting Back (1957 – 1962)"

### **Wednesday, February 10: Rosa Parks Reconsidered**

Jeanne Theoharis. *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2013. Introduction and Chapters 1 – 4 (pages vii – 115).

### **Monday, February 15: NO CLASS. PRESIDENTS' DAY**

### **Wednesday, February 17: Rosa Parks Reconsidered (Continued)**

Jeanne Theoharis. *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2013. Chapters 5 – 7 and Conclusion (pages 116 – 244).

### **Monday, February 22: Civil Rights and the Turn to Black Nationalist Movements**

Martin Luther King, Jr. “The Ethical Demands for Integration.” Pages 117 – 125 in James M. Washington (ed). *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.* New York: Harper San Francisco, 1986. PDF on NYU Classes.

Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton. “Chapter II. Black Power: Its Need and Substance.” Pages 34 – 56 in *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation*. New York: Vintage Books, 1967. PDF on NYU Classes.

*Short video to watch in class:* Lin-Manuel Miranda reading Dr. King’s 1967 “Beyond Vietnam” speech (January 2016)

[http://jezebel.com/heres-lin-manuel-miranda-reading-mlks-beyond-vietnam-sp-1753642838?utm\\_medium=sharefromsite&utm\\_source=Jezebel\\_twitter](http://jezebel.com/heres-lin-manuel-miranda-reading-mlks-beyond-vietnam-sp-1753642838?utm_medium=sharefromsite&utm_source=Jezebel_twitter)

### **Wednesday, February 24: Black Power, 1967-1975**

Peniel E. Joseph. “Reimagining the Black Power Movement.” Pages 11 – 34 in *Dark Days, Bright Nights: From Black Power to Barack Obama*. New York: Basic Civitas, 2013 edition.

*Watch in class:* “The Black Power Mixtape”

READING MEMO #1 DUE: How do African American integrationists and nationalists seem to differ politically? How are they similar? Please consider some of the following: political and social goals, political tactics, views of America and American institutions, and definitions of equality. Please use very specific examples to substantiate your argument.

### **Part 3: Second Wave Feminism and Beyond**

#### **Monday, February 29: From Civil Rights to Second Wave Feminism**

Sara Evans. *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left*. New York: Vintage, 1980. Chapters 1 – 2 (pages 3 – 59).

#### **Wednesday, March 2: From Civil Rights to Second Wave Feminism (Continued)**

Sara Evans. *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left*. New York: Vintage, 1980. Chapters 3, 4, 7, 8 (pages 60 – 101, 156 – 211).

#### **Monday, March 7: Midterm Prep: From Civil Rights, to Black Power, to Feminism**

#### **Wednesday, March 9: MIDTERM EXAM**

#### **Monday, March 14: NO CLASS. SPRING BREAK**

#### **Wednesday, March 16: NO CLASS. SPRING BREAK**

#### **Monday, March 21: The Start of Second Wave Feminism**

Betty Friedan. *The Feminine Mystique*. New York: Dell Publishing, 1963. Chapters 1 and 3 (pages 15 – 32, 69 – 79). PDF on NYU Classes.

#### **Wednesday, March 23: Critiques of Second Wave Feminism**

Paula Giddings. “The Women’s Movement and Black Discontent.” Pages 299 – 324 in *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America*. New York: William Morrow, 1984. PDF on NYU Classes.

Rita Mae Brown. “Reflections of a Lavender Menace.” *Ms. Magazine* (July/August 1995): 40 – 47. PDF on NYU Classes.

Rebecca Walker. “Being Real: An Introduction.” Pages xxix – xl in *To Be Real: Telling the Truth and Changing the Face of Feminism*. New York: Anchor Books, 1995. PDF on NYU Classes.



## **Monday, March 28: New Feminisms**

Roxane Gay. *Bad Feminist: Essays*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2014. Selections TBA.

READING MEMO #2 DUE: From the readings we've done on feminist movements, how have the meanings and politics of gender changed since Friedan's time (if at all)? What is your opinion of these changes? Please use very specific examples to substantiate your argument.

## **Part 4: LGBTQ Movements: From Pre-Stonewall 1960s to Marriage and Beyond**

### **Wednesday, March 30: 1960s Mobilizations**

*Read and watch embedded video clips*: Solvej Schou. "Roland Emmerich's 'Stonewall' Finds Controversy." *New York Times*. September 18, 2015.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/20/movies/roland-emmerichs-stonewall-finds-controversy.html>

*Watch in class*: "Screaming Queens: The Riot at Compton's Cafeteria"

### **Monday, April 4: Same-Sex Marriage Politics, History, and Law**

George Chauncey. *Why Marriage: The History Shaping Today's Debate over Gay Equality*. New York: Basic Books, 2004. Chapters 3 and 4.

*Guest speaker*: Dave Fleischer. Leadership LAB, Los Angeles LGBT Center

### **Wednesday, April 6: The LGBTQ Civil Rights Movement Beyond Marriage Equality**

Adam Liptak. "Supreme Court Ruling Makes Same-Sex Marriage a Right Nationwide." *New York Times*. June 26, 2015. [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/27/us/supreme-court-same-sex-marriage.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/27/us/supreme-court-same-sex-marriage.html?_r=0)

Human Rights Campaign. *Beyond Marriage Equality: A Blueprint for Federal Non-Discrimination Protections*. 2015. PDF on NYU Classes. Report can also be found here: <http://www.hrc.org/campaigns/beyond-marriage-equality-a-blueprint-for-federal-non-discrimination-protect>

### **Monday, April 11: Transgender History and Politics**

Susan Stryker. *Transgender History*. Berkeley, CA: Seal Press, 2008. Chapters TBA.

## **Wednesday, April 13: Pop Culture and LGBTQ Social Change**

GLAAD. *Where We Are on TV: 2015-2016*. PDF on NYU Classes.

“Gay Teens on TV.” *Entertainment Weekly*. <http://www.ew.com/gallery/gay-teens-tv-timeline>

Parker Malloy. “Trans Celebs Are Great; Trans Leaders Are Better.” *The Daily Beast*. July 26, 2014. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/07/26/trans-celebs-are-great-trans-leaders-are-better.html>

*Guest speaker*: TBA

## **Monday, April 18: The LGBTQ Sports Movement**

*Readings*: TBA

*Guest speaker*: Chris Mosier. Athlete, TRANS\*ATHLETE, and GO! Athletes.

READING MEMO #3 DUE: What does the relatively quick success of the marriage movement teach us about how social change happens these days? And, in your opinion, now that marriage equality has – at least according to the law – been achieved, where will/should the LGBTQ movement go from here? Please use very specific examples to substantiate your argument.

## **Part 5: The Black Lives Matter Movement**

### **Wednesday, April 20: History and Context of the Black Lives Matter Movement**

Peniel E. Joseph. “‘A Place Where All Things Are Possible’: Barack Obama and Dreams of Democracy.” Pages 161 – 229 in *Dark Days, Bright Nights: From Black Power to Barack Obama*. New York: Basic Civitas, 2013 edition.

“Mapping Police Violence 2015.” <http://mappingpoliceviolence.org/2015/>

Elizabeth Day. “#BlackLivesMatter: The Birth of a New Civil Rights Movement.” *The Guardian*. July 19, 2015.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/19/blacklivesmatter-birth-civil-rights-movement>

Mychal Denzel Smith. “A Q&A with Alicia Garza, Co-Founder of #BlackLivesMatter.” *The Nation*. March 24, 2015. <http://www.thenation.com/article/qa-alicia-garza-co-founder-blacklivesmatter/>

Mychal Denzel Smith. "A Q&A with Opal Tometi, Co-Founder of #BlackLivesMatter." *The Nation*. June 2, 2015. <http://www.thenation.com/article/qa-opal-tometi-co-founder-blacklivesmatter/>

*Read and watch embedded video clip:* Chris Greenberg. "NFL Player Emotionally Explains Why He Won't Apologize to Police after His 'Call for Justice.'" *Huffington Post*. December 16, 2014. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/12/16/andrew-hawkins-browns-protest-justice\\_n\\_6334384.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/12/16/andrew-hawkins-browns-protest-justice_n_6334384.html)

*Read and watch embedded video clip:* Tyler Kingkade. "The Incident You Have to See to Understand Why Students Wanted Mizzou's President to Go." *Huffington Post*. November 10, 2015. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/tim-wolfe-homecoming-parade\\_56402cc8e4b0307f2cadea10](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/tim-wolfe-homecoming-parade_56402cc8e4b0307f2cadea10)

*Read and watch embedded video clip:* Hilary Hanson and Simon McCormack. "Fox News Suggest Black Lives Matter Is A 'Murder' Movement, 'Hate Group.'" *Huffington Post*. September 1, 2015. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/black-lives-matter-fox-news-hate-group\\_55e5c102e4b0b7a9633a3b12](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/black-lives-matter-fox-news-hate-group_55e5c102e4b0b7a9633a3b12)

George Yancy and Judith Butler. "What's Wrong with 'All Lives Matter?'" January 12, 2015. *New York Times*. <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/01/12/whats-wrong-with-all-lives-matter/>

### **Monday, April 25: Black Lives, White Privilege**

Ta-Nehisi Coates. *Between the World and Me*. New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2015. Chapters TBA.

### **Wednesday, April 27: Black Lives Matter, New York City**

*Guest speaker:* Allen Kwabena Frimpong. Black Lives Matter NYC

### **Monday, May 2: Black Lives Matter, Queer Politics, and 2016 Electoral Politics**

*Watch:* "Queerness On The Front Lines Of #BlackLivesMatter." MSNBC. February 20, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0YHs9jIH-oo>

Alicia Garza. "A Herstory of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement." *The Feminist Wire*. October 7, 2014. <http://www.thefeministwire.com/2014/10/blacklivesmatter-2/>

Darnell L. Moore. "Black Freedom Fighters in Ferguson: Some of Us Are Queer." *The Feminist Wire*. October 17, 2014. <http://www.thefeministwire.com/2014/10/some-of-us-are-queer/>

Jennifer Senior. "The Paradox of The First Black President." *New York Magazine*. October 7, 2015. <http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2015/10/paradox-of-the-first-black-president.html>

Michael Eric Dyson. "Yes She Can: Why Hillary Clinton Will Do More for Black People than Obama." *New Republic*. November 29, 2015. <https://newrepublic.com/article/124391/yes-she-can>

Sabrina Siddiqui. "Republicans 'Cautious' about Confronting Black Lives Matter on Campaign Trail." *The Guardian*. November 2, 2015. <http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/nov/02/black-lives-matter-republicans-democrats-2016>

*Watch*: "What Are 'Black Lives Matter's' Demands?" MSNBC. August 11, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7UnBykVezRI>

*Watch the embedded video re: Hillary Clinton on white privilege*: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2016/01/12/white-privilege-just-made-an-appearance-in-the-presidential-race-its-about-time/>

READING MEMO #4 DUE: How, in your view, is Black Lives Matter a modern social movement? In what ways do you see this movement drawing on examples from history and in what ways do you see it taking a different path? You might consider the role of social media as an organizing tool and the place of intersectionality/intersectional politics in the movement as two examples to discuss. Please use very specific examples to substantiate your argument.

**Wednesday, May 4: Final Exam Review and Course Wrap-Up on Moving Forward from History**

**Monday, May 9: FINAL EXAM**

