

## HTS 3068: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

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Architecture 309

MTWR

9:20-11:20am

### **Course Overview:**

Social inequality pervades society. Normally, inequality is relatively stable, and those at the bottom do not challenge the system. But every so often, the “masses” revolt and demand a greater share of societal resources. During such tumultuous times, people often form social movements, which are a means through which people and groups outside of the decision-making centers of society's institutions come to affect change. Movements are an expression of power.

In this course, we will analyze how “ordinary people” challenge powerful segments of society and thereby contribute to changes in the society around them. Social movements are actually relatively rare, and when they appear their gains are generally limited to a short period. With this in mind, this course addresses several basic questions: Why do social movements emerge when they do? Why do movements succeed at some times, but fail at other times? And, what are the consequences of social movements for society and individual participants?

To answer these questions and understand social movements, we need to be familiar with actual movements in history *and* the analytical developments that scholars have made. Therefore, this course will give students the “tools” needed to analyze social movements in the first week of the course. In particular, we will emphasize three dimensions of social movements: organization, political economy, and culture. For the remainder of the course, we will use these insights to examine three social movements that occurred in the twentieth century United States: the civil rights movement, the women’s movement, and the labor movement.

By the end of this course, students should know the predominant perspectives and concepts that sociologists use to understand and analyze social movements. Students will also be familiar with the histories of at least the civil rights, labor, and women’s movements.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

This course fulfills Georgia Tech’s Learning Goal E (Social Sciences), which states:

“Students will demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forces that influence social behavior.”

*How this course satisfies the learning outcome:*

This course will focus on sociological theories to explain various aspects of social movements. Students will learn how social, political, and economic forces influence social behavior through an examination of why some people participate in social movements but others do not; how social movements draw on culture and ideas; how organizational structures influence what social movement activity looks like and whether it is successful; how political contexts allow social

movements to emerge or effectively repress social movements; and how broad social changes, such as urbanization and industrialization, contribute to the emergence of social movements. Students will demonstrate that they have met the Area E learning outcome through in-class discussions about course readings and ideas, as well as two take-home essay examinations.

*Additional learning outcomes for this course:*

- (1) Students in this class will demonstrate the ability to describe theoretical perspectives and concepts used by sociologists to explain social movements.
- (2) Students will be able to describe the social, political, and economic forces that influenced the civil rights, women's, and labor movements in the U.S.
- (3) Students will demonstrate an understanding of why people participate in social movements.

**Requirements:**

Grades will be based on class participation and two exams. Students are expected to adhere to the **Georgia Tech Honor Code** (see [www.deanofstudents.gatech.edu/Honor/](http://www.deanofstudents.gatech.edu/Honor/)). Honor code violations will be addressed appropriately and could result in an "F" on the assignment or in the course. I am happy to accommodate you if you need any special considerations due to a disability, but please let me know *as soon as possible*. You should contact the **ADAPTS Office** (see [www.adapts.gatech.edu/index2.htm](http://www.adapts.gatech.edu/index2.htm)).

*Participation (20%)*

Student participation is essential for this class. Much of each class session will center around discussion. Therefore, *make sure you do the reading **before** class* and come prepared to discuss.

I will distribute discussion questions prior to class meetings. These questions will focus on the central themes, concepts, and points of the readings; they should help guide you in drawing out the insights of the material. *You should come to class with answers to the discussion questions.*

The participation grade will not be based simply on the frequency of comments, but also upon the quality of your comments. For example, bringing up a point from the reading that was unclear or critiquing an argument in the reading is more involved (and of more quality) than merely reciting descriptive information in the text. While attendance is not directly graded, it is at least indirectly important to this part of your total grade. Remember that you must be present in class to be able to participate.

*Mid-Term Exam (35%)*

The mid-term exam is scheduled for Wednesday, **July 10** and will consist of several essay questions and some short answer questions. These questions will draw on issues surrounding the various perspectives and concepts, and they will also require students to apply these concepts. This exam is take-home, and it is due on **July 14** at the *beginning* of class. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

*Final (45%)*

The final exam will consist of a comprehensive, take-home essay exam with several essay questions and some short answer questions. These questions will draw on issues surrounding the

various perspectives and concepts, and they will also require students to apply these concepts. This exam will be handed out on **July 24**, and it will be due on **July 31 at 2:30pm**. As with the mid-term exam, the final exam is due promptly at 2:30pm. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

Summary of grade breakdown:	Participation.....	20%
	Mid-term.....	35%
	Final.....	45%
	Total.....	100%

### **Readings:**

Several books are available at the **Engineer's Bookstore at 748 Marietta Street:**

- Bloom, Jack. 1987. Class, Race, and the Civil Rights Movement.  
Evans, Sara. 2003. Tidal Wave.  
Piven, Frances Fox and Richard A. Cloward. 1977. Poor People's Movements.  
Marx, Karl, and Friedrich Engels. 1989 [1848]. The Communist Manifesto.  
Nelson, Daniel. 1997. Shifting Fortunes.

Other course readings will be located in the "Resources" folder in our course site on T-Square.

### **Weekly Schedule**

Most readings come from the required books. An asterisk (\*) indicates that a reading is on T-Square.

#### **Introduction: What are social movements, and how can we explain them?**

- June 23      *"Like a Fever": How do we generally understand social movements?*  
Piven, Frances Fox and Richard A. Cloward. 1977. Poor People's Movements.  
Introductions, pix-xxiv.
- June 24      *Political Economy: How do politics and economics shape movements?*  
Piven and Cloward. Poor People's Movements. Ch 1 ("The Structuring of  
Protest"), 1-40.

#### **The Civil Rights Movement**

- June 25      *The Southern Racial Caste: What long-term changes "set the stage" for the civil  
rights movement?*  
Piven and Cloward. Poor People's. Ch 4 ("Civil Rights Movement"), p181-208.  
Bloom, Jack. 1987. Class, Race. Ch 2 ("The Old Order Changes"), p59-73.  
*Recommended:* Bloom, Jack. 1987. Class, Race. Introduction, p1-15; & Ch 1  
("The Political Economy of Southern Racism"), p18-58
- June 26      *Political and Economic Conjuncture: How was the movement successful in the  
1950s? (Focus on school integration and bus boycotts.)*  
Bloom. Class, Race. Ch 4 ("The Splitting of the Solid South"), p87-117; Ch 5  
("The Defeat of White Power..."), read p120-137.

Piven and Cloward. Poor People's. Ch 4 ("Civil Rights Movement"), p213-221.  
\*Cobb, James. 1997. "The Lesson of Little Rock." *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.  
September 21:B-2.

June 30 *Mobilizing in the 1950s: How did blacks mobilize and organize?*  
Bloom. 1987. Class, Race. Ch 5 ("...the Emergence of the 'New Negro' ..."),  
p120-154.  
Piven and Cloward. Poor People's. Ch 4 ("Civil Rights Movement"), p221-235.

July 1 *Increasing Defiance, 1960-1964: How was the movement successful?*  
\*Morris, Aldon. 1984. The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement. Ch 10  
("Birmingham"), p229-274.  
Bloom. Class, Race. Ch 6 ("The Second Wave"), only p167-179.  
Piven and Cloward. Poor People's. Ch 4 ("Civil Rights Movement"), p236-252.

July 2 *Freedom Summer, 1964: What did the movement face in Mississippi?*  
\*McAdam, Doug. 1988. Freedom Summer. Ch 3 ("Freedom High"), p66-115.  
(On Reserve)  
Bloom. 1987. Class, Race. Ch 6 ("The Second Wave"), only p179-185.

July 3 *Political and Economic Conjuncture II: Why did the movement decline?*  
Bloom. Class, Race. Ch 7 ("Ghetto Revolts, Black Power..."), p186-213.  
Piven and Cloward. Poor People's. Ch 4 ("Civil Rights Movement"), p252-258.

### **The Women's Movement**

July 7 *Waves of Women's Movements: What are the historical antecedents of the recent women's movement?*  
\*Buechler, Steven M. 1991. Women's Movements in the United States. Ch 1  
("Roots and Orgins"), only p23-40.  
Evans, Sara. 2004. Tidal Wave. Ch 1 ("The Way We Were"), p1-17.  
In-class movie: "Rosie the Riveter"

July 8 *Out of other movements: Why did the women's movement emerge in the 1960s and what made the movement successful?*  
Evans. 2004. Tidal Wave. Ch 2 ("Personal Politics"), p18-60; Ch 3 ("The Golden Years"), p61-97.

July 9 *Sisterhood is Powerful: Was the women's movement exclusionary?*  
Evans. 2004. Tidal Wave. Ch 4 ("Undertow"), p98-127.  
\*Freeman, Jo. 1973. "The Tyranny of Structurelessness." *Ms. Magazine*. July 76-78, 86-89.

July 10 *High Tide and Hard Times: What did the movement achieve? Why did it decline?*  
Evans. 2004. Tidal Wave. Ch 5 ("Crest"), p128-175.

\*Douglas, Susan. 1994. Where the Girls Are. Ch 10 (“The ERA as Catfight”), p221-244.

**Mid-Term Exam** (handed out)

### **The Labor Movement**

- July 14 *Fluctuations of Power: What factors shape the labor movement?*  
Marx, Karl and Frederick Engels. The Communist Manifesto. Parts 1, 2, & 4.  
**Turn in Mid-Term**
- July 15 *The Rise of Labor: Why did the labor movement emerge in the 1800s?*  
Nelson, Daniel. 1997. Shifting Fortunes. Ch 1 (“Union Growth...”), p3-14; Ch 2 (“Miners and Organized Labor”), p15-38.
- July 16 *Labor in the early 1900s: How did the class struggle take shape?*  
Nelson. Shifting Fortunes. Ch 3 (“Urban Workers...”), p39-68; Ch 4 (“New Environments...”), p69-103.  
Piven and Cloward. Poor People’s. Ch 3 (“The Industrial Workers’ ...”), p96-107.
- July 17 *Turning the Tide: Why did labor win so much during the 1930s?*  
Piven and Cloward. Poor People’s. Ch 3 (“The Industrial Workers’ ...”), p107-155.  
Nelson. Shifting Fortunes. Ch 5 (“Labor Movement at High Tide”), p104-131.
- July 21 *The Post-war Decline: Why has labor faltered?*  
Piven and Cloward. Poor People’s. Ch 3 (“The Industrial Workers’ ...”), p155-175.  
Nelson. Shifting Fortunes. Ch 6 (“The Decline of American Labor”), p131-163.

### **The Effects and Consequences of Social Movements**

- July 22 *Outcomes and Effects: How do movements affect participants? Can social movements “change society”?*  
\*McAdam, Doug. 1989. “The Biographical Consequences of Activism.” American Sociological Review. 54(5):744-760.  
\*Winders, Bill. 1999. “The Roller Coaster of Class Conflict.” Social Forces. 77(3):833-862.
- July 23 *Beyond Borders: How does the world economy influence social movements?*  
Reading(s) to be announced
- July 24 *Movements Everywhere: What do some other movements “look like”? What movements might emerge in the future?*  
**Final Exam** (handed out)
- July 31 **Final Exam Due by 2:30pm**