

Political Science W3921, Section 2

SEMINAR ON "ISSUES THAT HAVE DIVIDED AMERICA"

Monday, 11:00 AM – 12:50 PM
Room 1101 IAB
Fall Term, 2007

Prof. Irwin N. Gertzog
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Office Hours: Mon., 1:00 – 3:00 PM,
and by arrangement.

This seminar focuses on four political issues so contentious that they have produced enduring cultural, socio-economic and political divisions throughout the United States. The four issues are slavery and efforts to end it; the use of alcoholic beverages and the struggle to curtail it; abortion and attempts to prohibit it; and gay and lesbian rights and the battle to deny them.

Inasmuch as the nature and consequences of issue conflict may be explained within frames of reference found in the literature on social movements, the first group of reading assignments treats conceptual frameworks devised by leading students of social movement theory. Subsequent assignments address abolition, alcohol, abortion and lesbian and gay rights. Additional assignments deal explicitly with political opportunity structures that may encourage or inhibit social movement activities, mobilizing structures that affect the dynamics and impact of movements, and cultural and ideological frames of reference within which movements may be defined and understood. The last group of readings deals with social movement cycles and their impact.

These assignments are drawn from about a dozen sources, all of which are on reserve in the Butler Library. Items marked with an asterisk (*) are available electronically. Several assignments are made up of entire texts of five books, and each of the five is available for purchase from the college book store in paperback edition. They are:

Steven M. Buechler, *Women's Movements in the United States*, 1990;

Kristin Luker, *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*, 1984;

Thomas R. Pegram, *Battling Demon Rum: The Struggle for a Dry America, 1800-1933*, 1998;

Craig A. Rimmerman, *From Identity to Politics: The Lesbian and Gay Movements in the United States*, 2002;

James B. Stewart, *Holy Warriors: The Abolitionists and American Slavery*, Revised Edition, 1997.

Three criteria will be used to evaluate student performance: 1) the quality of participation in class discussion; 2) the effectiveness of oral presentation of research projects; and 3) the merits of research papers. To perform well in class discussion, students should: a)

read the assigned works carefully; b) craft one or more useful questions or observations that will serve as points of departure for class discussion; c) participate in class discussion judiciously and thoughtfully, and d) offer constructive criticism of the research proposals offered by other students in their oral presentations.

Questions and observations referred to in part “b” in the paragraph above should be sent to me via e-mail no later than 7:00 PM the night before the class meets, i.e., Sunday evening. (Please note my e-mail address in the top right hand corner of page 1 of this syllabus.) These questions and observations may address the meaning and application of the concepts that appear in the reading; the accuracy and interpretation of the historical developments discussed by the authors; and the connections (or disconnections) among the ideas and findings presented in two or more assigned works. The repertoire of questions and observations that may be offered is, of course, not limited to these suggested topics.

Class attendance is required, except in cases of illness, religious observance, or a class conflict caused by mandatory participation in university-sponsored academic or athletic events. Unexcused absences will necessarily detract from the quality of class participation – which constitutes 40 percent of the final grade. An oral presentation of research findings in the final month of the course makes up an additional 10 percent of the final grade. The research paper is valued at 50 percent.

Topics for research papers, along with their scope, length and due date will be discussed early in the term. The paper may deal with one or more of the four issues addressed in the course, and typically will employ conceptual frames of reference appearing in the literature on social movements. I will meet with students individually to help define a topic and work out a research design. Prior to these meetings, seminar members will submit a one-page research proposal and a list of sources they have consulted or plan to consult while preparing their papers. There are no minimum or maximum limits on the length of the papers, although most successful papers have ranged between 20 and 30 pages.

Class Meetings, Topics, and Assignments

September 10 Organizational Meeting

September 17 Introduction to the Course; Perspectives on Social Movements

Reading Assignments:

Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, “Introduction: Opportunities, mobilizing structures, and framing processes – toward a synthetic perspective on social movements,” pp. 1-20 in Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald (editors), *Comparative Perspectives on Social*

Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings.

Doug McAdam, "Conceptual origins, current problems, future directions," pp. 23-40 in McAdam, et al., *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*.

John D. McCarthy, "Constraints and opportunities in adopting, adapting and inventing," pp. 141-151 in McAdam, et al., *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*.

Mayer N. Zald, "Culture, ideology, and strategic framing," pp. 261-274 in McAdam et al., *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*.

September 24 The Abolitionist Movement and Countermovement

Reading Assignment:

*David S. Meyer and Suzanne Staggenborg, "Movements, Countermovements and the Structure of Political Opportunity," pp. 1,628-1660 in *The American Journal of Sociology*, 101 (May, 1996).

*Bert Useem and Mayer N. Zald, "Movement and Countermovement Interaction: Mobilization, Tactics and State Involvement," pp. 247-272 in Mayer N. Zald and John D. McCarthy, *Social Movements in an Organizational Society*.

Stewart, *Holy Warriors*, entire book.

October 1 The Temperance, Prohibition and Repeal Movements

Reading Assignment:

Pegram, *Battling Demon Rum*, entire book.

October 8 The Pro-Choice and Pro-Life Movements

Reading Assignment:

Luker, *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*, entire book.

Individual Conferences Begin

October 15 The Lesbian and Gay Rights Movement and Countermovement

Reading Assignment:

Rimmerman, *From Identity to Politics*, entire book.

Individual Conferences Continue

October 22 Political Opportunity Structures

Reading Assignments:

*Anne N. Costain and W. Douglas Costain, "Strategy and Tactics of the Women's Movement in the United States: The Role of Political Parties," pp. 196-214 in Mary Fainsod Katzenstein and Carol McClurg Mueller (editors), *The Women's Movements of the United States and Western Europe: Consciousness, Political Opportunity and Public Policy*.

*N.E.H. Hull and Peter Charles Hoffer, *Roe v. Wade: The Abortion Rights Controversy in American History*, pp. 225-279.

*Douglas R. Imig, "American Social Movements and Presidential Administrations," pp. 159-170 in Anne N. Costain and Andrew S. McFarland, *Social Movements and American Political Institutions*.

Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics* (2nd edition), Chapter 5 (Political Opportunities and Constraints), and Chapter 6 (Acting Contentiously).

Individual Conferences Continue.

October 29 Social Movements' Mobilizing Structures

Reading Assignments:

Buechler, *Women's Movements in the United States*, Introduction, and Chapters 1 and 2.

Carol J.C. Maxwell, *Pro-Life Activists in America: Meaning, Motivation, and Direct Action*, Chapter 2 ("Pro-Life Direct Action in St Louis").

*John D. McCarthy, "Pro-Life and Pro-Choice Mobilization: Infrastructure Deficits and New Technologies," pp. 49-66 in Zald and McCarthy, *Social Movements in an Organizational Society*.

Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, Chapter 8 ("Mobilizing Structures and Contentious Politics.")

Individual Conferences Continue

November 5 No Class; Academic Holiday

November 12 Cultural and Ideological Framing

Reading Assignments:

Buechler, *Women's Movements in the United States*, Chapters 3 and 4.

Doug McAdam, "The framing function of movement tactics: Strategic dramaturgy in the American civil rights movement," pp. 338-355 in McAdam et al., *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*.

Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, Chapter 7 ("Framing Contention").

*Laura R. Woliver, "Social Movements and Abortion Law," pp 233-247 in Anne W. Costain and Andrew S. McFarland (editors), *Social Movements and American Political Institutions*.

Individual Conferences Continue

November 19 The Life Cycle of Social Movements

Reading Assignments:

Buechler, *Women's Movements in the United States*, Chapters 5 and 6.

Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, Chapter 9 ("Cycles of Contention") and Chapter 10 ("Struggling to Reform").

Mayer N. Zald, "The Future of Social Movements," pp. 319-336 in Mayer N. Zald and John D. McCarthy, *Social Movements in an Organizational Society*.

Individual Conferences Conclude

November 26 Presentation of Research Findings

December 3 Presentation of Research Findings

December 10 Presentation of Research Findings

December 17 Research Papers Due in Two Copies