

Tuesdays, 4:15-6:15 pm, Room 6496

The study of unions and labor movements, at one time integral to the sociological study of social movements, has become increasingly marginal to that field in recent decades, as “new” social movements, especially those involving “identity” politics, have moved to center stage. Yet in this same period, sociological research on labor and labor movements has burgeoned, emerging as a subfield of the discipline in its own right. This course explores both the reason for the historical divergence of these two areas of study and the potential synergies between them.

**Course Requirements:**

1. Faithful attendance and participation in class discussion.
2. Weekly response papers - one single-spaced page of reflections on the required readings, to be posted 24 hours before each class meeting
3. A longer paper (about 20 double-spaced pages) on a topic related to the course and approved by the instructors will be due at the end of the semester. This can be an empirically grounded research paper, a literature review, or a research proposal. The instructors will schedule meetings to discuss the paper topics during the period between Sept. 8 and Sept. 29. Each student should submit a one-page memo outlining her or his proposed topic for discussion at that meeting.
4. Oral presentations on the course readings (max. 10 minutes each) by pairs of students collaborating each week, starting with the Sept. 29 class meeting.

*Schedule of Class Meetings and Readings*

Week 1: Introduction: What are social and labor movements? Differences and Similarities. (September 1)

**Part I: When the Fields Were Closer**

Week 2: Labor Movements and Social Movements (September 8)

*Readings:*

David Snyder and Charles Tilly, “Hardship and Collective Violence in France,” *American Sociological Review* 37 (1972): 520-532.

J. Craig Jenkins and Charles Perrow, “Insurgency of the Powerless,” *American Sociological Review* 42 (1977): 249-268.

Andrew Walder, "Political Sociology and Social Movements," *Annual Review of Sociology* 35 (2009): 393-412.

Week 3: NO CLASS September 15 and September 22. During this interval the instructors will meet with each student individually about final paper topics.

Week 4: Disruption and Insurgency (September 29)

*Readings:*

Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward, Introduction and "The Industrial Workers' Movement," chapter 3 of *Poor People's Movements* (1977).

Frances Fox Piven, *Challenging Authority* (2006), Introduction and Chapter 2.

Stephen Lerner, "On the Contrary: A New Insurgency Can Only Arise Outside the Progressive and Labor Establishment," *New Labor Forum*, Fall 2011: <http://newlaborforum.cuny.edu/2011/09/08/on-the-contrary-a-new-insurgency-can-only-arise-outside-the-progressive-and-labor-establishment/>

Week 5: The Forgotten Tradition: Rational Choice (October 6)

*Readings:*

Mancur Olson, *Theory of Collective Action* (1965), chapters 1-3.

Claus Offe and Helmut Wessenthal, "Two Logics of Collective Action," *Political Power and Social Theory* (1980), 1: 67-115.

## **Part Two: Divergence?**

Week 6: Class Consciousness and Collective Action (October 13)

*Readings:*

Michael Mann, *Consciousness and Action Among the Western Working Class* (1973).

Ira Katznelson, "Working-Class Formation: Constructing Cases and Comparisons," chapter 1 of *Working-Class Formation*, eds. Ira Katznelson and Aristide R. Zolberg (1986), pp. 3-41.

Week 7: Theories of New Social Movements (October 20)

*Readings:*

Alain Touraine et al, *Solidarity: The Analysis of a Social Movement: Poland 1980–1981* (1984).

Alberto Melucci, “The new social movements: A theoretical approach,” *Social Science Information* 19 (1980): 199-226.

Craig Calhoun, "New Social Movements" of the Early Nineteenth Century, *Social Science History* 17 (1993): 385-427.

Week 8: Politics and Social Class: Hidden Limits to Cross-Class Alliances (October 27)

*Reading:*

Betsy Leondar-Wright, *Missing Class: Strengthening Social Movement Groups by Seeing Class Cultures* (2014) - entire book

**Part III: Exemplary Case Studies**

Week 9: Class Formation and the Challenges of Early Labor Movements (November 3)

*Reading:*

Kim Voss, *The Making of American Exceptionalism: The Knights of Labor and Class Formation in the 19th Century* (1994) - entire book

Week 10: Passions of the Moment (November 10)

*Readings:*

Rick Fantasia, *Cultures of Solidarity: Consciousness, Action and Contemporary American Workers* (1988) - entire book

Aristide Zolberg, “Moments of Madness,” *Politics & Society* 2 (1972): 183-207.

Week 11: Global Labor Movements (November 17)

*Reading:*

Hwa-Jen Liu, *Leverage of the Weak: Labor and Environmental Movements in Taiwan and South Korea* (2015) – entire book

Week 12: Leadership. (November 24)

*Readings:*

Marshall Ganz, "Resources and Resourcefulness: Strategic Capacity in the Unionization of California Agriculture, 1959-1966," *American Journal of Sociology* 105 (2000): 1003-1062.

Sharon Erickson Nepstad and Clifford Bob, "When Do Leaders Matter? Hypotheses on Leadership Dynamics in Social Movements," *Mobilization* 11 (2006): 1-22: <http://courses.arch.vt.edu/courses/wdunaway/gia5274/nepstad.pdf>

Reread Jenkins and Perrow (See above, week 2)

Week 13: Rational Choice Revisited (December 1)

*Reading:*

John Alquist and Margaret Levi, *In the Interests of Others: Organizations and Social Activism* (2013) - entire book

Week 14: Toward a Synthesis (December 8)

*Readings:*

Neil Fligstein and Doug McAdam, *A Theory of Fields* (2012), Chapters 1-4.

James Jasper and Jan Willem Duyvendak, eds., *Players and Arenas* (2015), Introduction, Chapters 6 and 7.