

*Contesting Injustice (Spring 2019)*

*AFAM 186*

*LAST 214*

*SOCY 170*

*PLSC 378*



**BATON ROUGE, LA. 7/9/2016**  
[Ieshia Evans](#) confronted law enforcement officers in riot gear during a protest following the shooting death of Alton Sterling by the police.  
Jonathan Bachman/Reuters

Prof. Elisabeth Wood

April 5, 2019

Why, when and how do ordinary people organize collectively to challenge political, social and economic injustice? Drawing on case studies, social science theories, and films, we analyze popular mobilization against injustice in both US and international settings.

This lecture course is intended for first and second year students (but open to upper classes as well). The course meets the social science distribution requirement (SO) and an optional track meets the writing requirement (WR).

We will analyze the conditions that lead ordinary people to organize to contest injustice, the various tactics and strategies of mobilization, the moral, political, and strategic dilemmas that activists face, and the conditions for success in altering the norms and institutions that sustain injustice. We will explore theoretical approaches to understanding mobilization against injustice, including those centered on self-interest, moral outrage, social preferences, social networks, political opportunity, and movement culture. Films that document the experience of injustice as well as the process of mobilization are an integral part of the course.

***Class Meetings:*** Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:30-3:45, WLH 207. Note that we will meet on Friday January 18<sup>th</sup> (instead of Monday, January 21, Martin Luther King Jr. Day).

***Sections:*** Those students taking the class to meet the writing requirement (WR) will also have a required section meeting beginning the second week of classes. WR sections will open for registration on the first day of class. Other students will need to register for a “phantom” section.

***Office Hours:*** Mondays 4:00 – 5:00 and by appointment in Rosenkranz 234. In addition, I will be available for about 15 minutes after every lecture.

***Teaching Fellows and guest lecturers:*** Matthew Denney, Danny Hirschel-Burns, Dipin Kaur, Kelly McClure

**Guest lecturers:** Professor Monica Bell (Yale Law School), Professor Inderpal Grewal, Ramon Garibaldo

### ***Course requirements***

All students are required to attend lectures, write a number of response papers on the week's lectures and reading, and take two in-class exams (a mid-term and another on the last day of class, not during finals week).

All written assignments (other than exams) should be posted to Canvas by 10 am on the date due.

*Students taking the course on the track to meet the writing requirement (WR)* will write two response papers, will take only the short-answer section of the exams and will work on two 8 – 10 page (double-spaced) papers. Students will attend a special section led by a teaching fellow trained in teaching writing.

- Participation in class and section (20% of final grade)
- Two response papers (10% total) due Monday February 11 and Friday March 1
- In-class exam 1, short answer section only (10%) Wednesday March 6
- In-class exam 2, short answer section only (10%) Wednesday April 24
- Paper 1 (25%) due Monday March 4 (see below for outline and draft deadlines)
- Paper 2 (25%) due Wednesday May 1 (see below for outline and draft deadlines)

*Students not on the writing track* will write three response papers, will write the essay as well as the short-answer section of the exams and will also submit a short end-of-term essay applying course concepts to design a campaign to contest an injustice (chosen by the student).

- Participation in class (10% of final grade)
- Three response papers (25% total) due Monday February 11, Friday March 1, and Friday April 19
- In-class exam 1 (20%) Wednesday March 6
- In-class exam 2 (20%) Wednesday April 24
- End-of-term essay (5 pages double-spaced, 25%) due Wednesday May 1

***Participation:*** Students are expected to attend class (and WR students to attend section) and participate in class activities and discussion.

The *response papers* (600 words = one page, single spaced with 12-point font) should not summarize lectures and readings but critically assess their strengths, weaknesses, and implications. What appears well established, and why? What claims are inadequately supported? Do they hold in other settings as well as the one analyzed? And so on.

*Papers* for the WR track will focus on topics chosen by the student, assessing a particular movement in light of theories learned in class, comparing its strategies and tactics to those of other movements, and/or evaluating the reasons for its success or failure (well defined). The student should consult with the teaching fellow on the topic and scope of each paper. After receiving comments on both the writing and substance of a draft, the student will submit a revised version to be graded. Students may opt to write a single 16-20 page paper (final version due May 1<sup>st</sup>) but only if approved by the teaching fellow (in which case, an outline, bibliography, first and second draft must be submitted for comments before the final paper).

For the *final essay*, those not on the WR track will choose a particular form of injustice and explain why it is unjust, relevant and important. Drawing on and referring to course lectures and at least seven class readings or films, students will also describe a strategy and tactics that would be effective in developing a campaign or movement to contest that injustice. A strong essay will include a compelling analysis of relevant factors such as an analysis of a relevant political opportunity (or how to overcome its absence), favorable mobilizing structures, and effective collective action frames and framing processes. And it will provide specific evidence in support of the analysis and make explicit comparisons to other campaigns or movements from the course syllabus and lectures. Students are welcome to brainstorm with colleagues but the essay should be written alone.

**Course norms:**

*Plagiarism:* Students are responsible for avoiding the plagiarizing of sources or peers (see <https://poorvucenter.yale.edu/writing/using-sources/understanding-and-avoiding-plagiarism>) and should consult the Writing Center as needed.

*Classroom policy:* An accumulating body of evidence shows that electronic devices are distracting despite our best intentions. Moreover, note-taking by hand leads to improved understanding and retention of material. So please refrain from using laptops, tablets, and phones during lecture (unless granted an exception by the instructor). An outline of the lecture will be provided in advance that may be printed out for note-taking purposes.

**Principal texts** (available at Yale Bookstore; prices as posted, from rent used to buy new):

Mark and Paul Engler. 2016. *This Is an Uprising. How Nonviolent Revolt Is Shaping the Twenty-first Century*. Perseus. ISBN 9781568585703. \$3–17

Devashree Gupta. 2017. *Protest Politics Today*. Wiley. ISBN 9780745671154. \$20-27

Sharon Nepstad. 2011. *Nonviolent Revolutions: Civil Resistance in the Late Twentieth Century*. Oxford University Press. ISBN 9780199778218. \$13-30.

Recommended (very helpful for final assignment)

Srdja Popovic with Matthew Miller. 2015. *Blueprint for Revolution: How to Use Rice Pudding, Lego Men, and Other Nonviolent Techniques to Galvanize Communities, Overthrow Dictators, or Simply Change the World*. Random House. ISBN 9780812995305. \$8-17.

Other materials will be available through syllabus links or on the course website on Canvas.

Among other films, we will watch

*Bringing Down a Dictator*, on the Otpor movement in Serbia

*La Marcha*, a film on the living wage campaign in Santa Fe, New Mexico

*Immigration Demonstrations of 2006*

Selections from *A Force More Powerful* on South Africa, the US, and Chile  
**Course Schedule**

Participants are expected to do the reading before the class meeting. Click on the link to access most readings (other than required books). Items marked with \* will be available on the course site on Canvas.

January 14. Introduction

January 16 and 18. Key concepts

Mark and Paul Engler. 2016. Introduction and chapters 1-2 and 4, *This Is an Uprising*.

Devashree Gupta. 2017. Chapter 1. *Protest Politics Today*.

*A Force More Powerful* on the US Civil Rights Movement

January 21. No class – celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day!

January 23. Games people play

January 28. The puzzle of collective action: Why and how do people mobilize?

Elisabeth Jean Wood. 2003. Chapter 1 of *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*. Cambridge.\*

Devashree Gupta. 2017. Chapter 2. *Protest Politics Today*.

January 30. Social preferences and mobilization

Elisabeth Jean Wood. 2003. Chapters 7 and 8 of *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*. Cambridge.\*

February 4. The political process model and political opportunity structures

Excerpts from Doug McAdam. 1982. *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970*. Chicago. Reprinted in Doug McAdam and David A. Snow, eds., *Social Movements: Readings on Their Emergence, Mobilization, and Dynamics* (Roxbury 1997).\*

February 6. Framing: the cultural work of social movements

Devashree Gupta. 2017. Chapters 3, 4 and 5. *Protest Politics Today*.

February 11. The failure to mobilize

James C. Scott. 1987. Small Arms Fire in the Class War. Chapter 1 of *Weapons of the Weak : Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* Yale. pp. 1–27.\*

Javier Auyero. 2011. [Patients of the State: An Ethnographic Account of Poor People's Waiting](#). *Latin American Research Review* 46(1): 5-29.

Recommended: Steven Lukes. 1974. *Power: A Radical View*. Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 14-38.\*

Guest lecture: Danny Hirschel-Burns

*Response paper #1 due*

February 13. Community organizing

David Walls. N.d. [Power to the People: Thirty-Five Years of Community Organizing](#).

Hahrie Han. 2014. Chapters 1 and 4, *How Organizations Develop Activists: Civic Associations and Leadership in the 21st Century*. Oxford.\*

On your own, watch the film *The Democratic Promise: Saul Alinsky and his Legacy*  
Available on youtube, in six parts beginning here:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0WEeVGSz-qo>

February 18. Faith-based organizing

Richard L Wood. 2007. Higher Power: Strategic Capacity for State and National Organizing, from *Transforming the City: Community Organizing and the Challenge of Political Change*, Marion Orr, ed. University of Kansas Press, pp. 162-192.\*

Martin Luther King, Jr. 1963. [Letter from a Birmingham Jail](#). *Atlantic Magazine*.

Recommended: Luke Bretherton. 2014. The Origins of Organizing. In *Resurrecting Democracy: Faith, Citizenship, and the Politics of a Common Life*. Cambridge. pp 21-56.\*

Guest lecture: Matthew Denney

*WR students: outline and bibliography due for those writing two papers*

February 20. Social movement unionism and living wage campaigns

Jane Schuchert Walsh. 2012. [A 'New' Social Movement: US Labor and the Trends of Social Movement Unionism](#). *Sociology Compass*, 6(2): 192–204.

Jon Gertner, 2006. What is a living wage? *New York Times Magazine*, January 15.\*  
*Film: La Marcha*

February 25 and 27. Social movement coalitions: organizing in New Haven

Jennifer Klein. 2015. [New Haven Rising](#). *Dissent* (Winter).

Dorian T. Warren and Cathy J. Cohen. 2000. [Organizing at the Intersection of Labor and Human Rights: A Case Study of New Haven](#). *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Labor and Employment Law* 2:4: 629-655.

Guest speaker February 27: Charles Decker, New Haven City Council member

*Due Monday February 25, WR students: Rough draft of first paper due for those writing two papers*

*March 1, Friday. Second response paper due*

March 4. Review session.

March 4. *WR students: First paper due; for students writing one longer paper, outline and bibliography due*

March 6. *First exam*

### ***Spring break***

March 25 and 27. Non-violent strategies and tactics

Mark and Paul Engler. 2016. Chapters 3, 5, and 6, *This Is an Uprising*.

Devashree Gupta. 2017. Chapters 6 and 7. *Protest Politics Today*.

Guest lecture: Dipin Kaur

Film (watch on your own): *A Force More Powerful*, [the segment on Chile](#)

Film (watch on your own): [Bringing Down a Dictator](#), written, directed and produced by Steve York (York Zimmerman Inc.)

Recommended (very helpful for final assignment):

Srdja Popovic with Matthew Miller. 2015. *Blueprint for Revolution: How to Use Rice Pudding, Lego Men, and Other Nonviolent Techniques to Galvanize Communities, Overthrow Dictators, or Simply Change the World*.

April 1. Non-violent revolutions and conditions for their success

Sharon Nepstad. 2011. Preface and chapters 1-3, 5, 7 and 8. *Nonviolent Revolutions*.

On your own watch the episode of *A Force More Powerful* on [South Africa](#)

*WR students writing one long paper: first draft due*

April 3. Movement for Black Lives

Amna A. Akbar. 2018. [Toward a Radical Imagination of Law](#). *New York University Law Review* 93(3): 405-479.

Guest lecture: Professor Monica Bell, Yale Law School

April 8. The movement for women's rights

Selections from the *New York Times* and *The New Yorker* on Harvey Weinstein.\*

Jo Reger. 2019. The Making of a March: Identity, Intersectionality and the Diffusion of U.S. Feminism." From Jo Reger, ed. *Nevertheless, They Persisted: Feminisms and Continued Resistance in the U.S. Women's Movement*. pp. 1-22.\*

Recommended: Nancy Whittier. 2019. Activism against Sexual Assault on Campus. Origins, Opportunities and Outcomes. From Jo Reger, ed. *Nevertheless, They Persisted: Feminisms and Continued Resistance in the U.S. Women's Movement*. pp. 133-150.\*

Guest lecture: Professor Inderpal Grewal

April 10. Indigenous-Led Social Movements

Rima Wilkes. 2006. [The Protest Actions of Indigenous Peoples: A Canadian-U.S. Comparison of Social Movement Emergence](#). *The American Behavioral Scientist* 50(4): 510-525

Erich Steinman. 2019. Why was Standing Rock and the #NoDAPL campaign so historic? Factors affecting American Indian participation in social movement collaborations and Coalitions. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 42(7): 1070-1090.\*

Film (watch beforehand): *Mni Wiconi: The Stand at Standing Rock*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4FDuqYld8C8>

Guest lecture: Kelly McClure

Recommended: Johnson, Hayley. 2017. [#NoDAPL: Social Media, Empowerment, and Civic Participation at Standing Rock](#). LSU Faculty Publications. 28

April 15 Organizing for immigrant rights

Irene Bloemraad, Kim Voss, and Taeku Lee. 2011. Excerpts from The Protests of 2006. What Were They, How Do We Understand Them, Where Do We Go? From *Rallying for Immigrant Rights: The Fight for Inclusion in 21st Century America*, eds. Kim Voss, Kim and Irene Bloemraad. University of California Press. pp. 3–43.\*

Chris Zepeda-Millán. 2016. [Weapons of the \(Not So\) Weak: Immigrant Mass Mobilization in the US South](#). *Critical Sociology* 42(2): 269–287.

Film (in class): Public Broadcasting Service 2013, [Immigration Demonstrations of 2006](#)

Guest lecture: Ramon Garibaldo

*WR students: second draft of final paper due for students writing one long paper; second paper outline and bibliography due for students writing two papers*

April 17. Conclusion and brainstorming about final papers

Mark and Paul Engler. 2016. Chapter 10 and conclusion, *This Is an Uprising*.

Devashree Gupta. 2017. Chapter 8 (chapter 9 recommended). *Protest Politics Today*.

April 19, Friday. *Third response paper due (non WR students) at 5 pm*

April 22. Review session

*WR students: first draft of second paper due for students writing two short papers*

April 24. *Second exam*

***Projects due May 1 at 10 am.***

*Non WR students: End-of-term essay due at 10 am*

*WR students: final paper due at 10 am*