

Communication and Social Change

CMS 340K—72960—Summer 2005

Meets Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 12:30-3 p.m. CMA 5.156

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Office Hours: Mondays, 10-12 (until July 22); Thursdays 3-5 (starting July 25)

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Introduction: The main purpose of this class is to encourage your engagement with the tradition and ongoing practice of movements for social change in the United States. We'll speed through some history of how social change agents have used communication—from oratory to the internet—to raise awareness of injustice, demand redress, mobilize others in the cause, and prompt other kinds of direct action including civil disobedience and strikes. The guiding questions for the course are (1) How does social change happen? And (2) How have people used communication to intervene effectively and with integrity in the process of social change? How can we make social change today (if we want to)?

The course presumes your interest in issues like civil rights, gay marriage, and global justice. It also requires your willingness to engage in controversial discussions. Controversy is the soul of social change; without someone standing up and talking back, there would be no change. Everyone's point of view—radical, liberal, or conservative—is entirely welcome in discussion. You are responsible for arguing respectfully, being open to alternative points of view, avoiding personal attacks, and researching your claims so that you can argue with evidence and reason.

Books (available at the Co-Op)

Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States* (New York: Harper Collins, 2003).

Howard Zinn and Anthony Arnove, *Voices of a People's History of the United States* (Seven Stories Press, 2004).

John Bowers, Donovan Ochs, and Richard Jensen, *Rhetoric of Agitation and Control* (Waveland Press, 1992).

Occasional supplemental packets.

Requirements and Grading:

- Regular attendance and discussion participation: 30 points (evaluated based on quality of discussion then subtract 1 for each missed day after the 2nd class day; if you earn a B in discussion, you start at 25 points, and then I subtract 1 for each missed day).
- Weekly 2-page papers responding to readings: 4 at 40 points each: 160 points
- Team debate addressing today's social change issues: 60 points
- Final Quiz over readings and lecture: 50 points

Final grade based on a straight percentage of 300 points: 270-300 =A, 240-269=B, 210-239=C, 180-209=D, below 180=F.

Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments BOJ=Bowers, Ochs, & Jensen,
Voices=Zinn and Armove, Zinn=People's History

Tuesday July 12	What is Social Change? The Importance of Controversy
Wednesday July 13	Introduction to Social Movements Read Bowers, Ochs, and Jensen, pp. 1-64 Assign response papers
Thursday July 14	19th Century Movements: Abolition & Suffrage Read Zinn <i>History</i> 103-124, 171-210 <i>Voices</i> Stanton (126), Truth (128), Douglass(183) Choose debate groups/debate assignment
Tuesday July 19	Response paper 1 due Labor movement Read Zinn <i>History</i> 211-252 <i>Voices</i> Pullman Strikers (234), Jones (258) Introduction to debate skills
Wednesday July 20	Introduction to 20th century movements: a timeline Socialist Movement Zinn <i>History</i> 329-358, <i>Voices</i> Goldman (270), Debs (295)
Thursday July 21	Debate Groups I & II
Tuesday July 26	Response Paper 2 due Civil Rights Movement and Black Power Read <i>History</i> 443-468, <i>Voices</i> King (423), Malcolm X (400), Hamer (404). BOJ 107-122
Wednesday July 27	Women's Liberation Movement Read <i>History</i> 503-540; supplemental packet
Thursday July 28	Debate Groups III & IV
Tuesday August 2	Response Paper 3 due Vietnam and the Anti-War Movement Today Read <i>History</i> 469-502, <i>Voices</i> King (423), Ali (431)
Wednesday August 3	New Social Movements: Gay Rights and Global

Justice

Read *Voices* Duberman (457); supplemental packet

Thursday August 4

Debate Groups V-VI

Tuesday August 9

Response Paper 4 due

Conservative Movements

Read BOJ 123-140; Course Instructor Survey

Wednesday August 10

Quiz Review; Wrap: Do we need movements today?

Thursday August 11

Final Quiz

Response Paper Assignment

1. Each week, choose one speech or other document on this week's topic from *Voices of a People's History of the United States*. You may choose documents that were not assigned reading, so long as they come from the same chapter of the book. In two typed, double-spaced pages, please answer the following questions to turn in the following Tuesday.
2. Summarize the main idea and purpose of the document. (10 points)
3. Using Zinn's *History* or other credible source, describe the context of this document: What was going on in society, politics, economy, etc. at the time it was delivered/written? What did the speaker or author want to change? (10 points)
4. Did the document convince you? Why or why not? (10 points)
5. Discuss the relevance of the issue addressed by this speaker/author to problems in society today. Are the problems described still problems? Would this speech work today? (10 points)

Debate Assignment

Preparation:

- Choose groups of 4 to debate a controversial proposition related to a social change issue. You may formulate your own proposition, but here are some examples.
 - Example: Civil rights policies such as affirmative action have been effective at redressing past harms and should be continued.
 - Example: Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion in 1973, should be overturned.
 - Example: We should support the war in Iraq.
 - Example: Gay marriage is a civil right and should be granted immediately.
- Two people should take one side of the argument (the affirmative) and two should take the negative. You may debate on a side contrary to your own beliefs; doing so is a good exercise in understanding other points of view in a safe setting.
- Each side must refine their claims, do research, define terms, and provide evidence in support of their argument.
- Good evidence comes from established institutional sources, credible academics, scholarly books and articles, etc. Partisan sources may be acceptable if they are widely recognized as credible and if you balance partisan information with confirming sources. Visiting with Professor Cloud about sources is a good idea.

Presentation:

- Each side has 20 minutes, divided as follows: Affirmative side 10 minutes, Negative side 15 minutes, Affirmative rebuttal (response to negative) 5 minutes, Negative Rebuttal 5 minutes, concluding statements 5 minutes each.
 - Please rehearse and time yourselves—points taken off for going long.
 - Divide the presentation between the two people on each side; you can split the main presentation or assign one person the main presentation and the other rebuttal and concluding remarks.
- Class will discuss for 15 minutes; then we will divide the room (have people move to side they agree with) to see who “won” the debate.
- Debating team must present full outline of the main case, including evidence and source for each main point, with bibliography.

Grading:

Grades for this project will be assigned holistically (that is, everyone in group gets the same grade, not divided by which side you are on or who “won”).

Criteria:

Quality of evidence: 20 points

Quality of argument: 20 points

Presentation and outline: 20 points