

## **ANTH 361-002: Social Movements and Activism**

**Fall 2013**

**Tu Th 2:30-3:45      Dumbach Hall – Room 4**

**Dr. Ben Penglase**

Dept of Anthropology  
office: 806 BVM Hall

**Office hours:** Wed 3-5

or by appointment

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This class will examine social movements and activism from an anthropological and ethnographic perspective. Social movements are forms of collective and sustained social action aimed at altering relations of power and meaning. Examples will range widely across topics and regions, from peasant networks in Central America, to women's health activists in southern Africa, to Buddhist peace movements in Sri Lanka. Three in-depth case studies will look at: environmental racism in the southern U.S.; anti-corporate global activism in Europe, and youth subcultures in the U.S. The general questions we will examine will be: how can anthropology help us understand social movements and activism? What socio-political contexts shape, and are shaped by social movements? Why do people join social movements or become activists? How do social movements organize themselves? What meanings or belief systems do they appeal to? Overall, this is a class about anthropological theories *of* social movements. But we will also ask: what kind of contributions can anthropologists make *to* social movements?

### **Course objectives:**

1. To familiarize students with the anthropological analysis of social movements and political activism
2. To expose students to how anthropologists analyze the socio-cultural effects of global commodity flows, secularization, environmental pollution, deterritorialization, corporate power, commodification, migration and other contemporary political issues
3. To examine how people resist, reproduce and alter relations of power and inequality
4. To introduce students to the broader field of political anthropology

### **Required books:**

June Nash, ed. *Social Movements: an Anthropological Reader*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2004.

Melissa Checker, *Polluted Promises: Environmental Racism and the Search for Justice in a Southern Town*. New York University Press, 2005.

Jeffrey Juris, *Networking Futures: the Movements Against Corporate Globalization*. Duke University Press, 2008.

Ross Haenfler, *Straight Edge: Clean-Living Youth, Hardcore Punk and Social Change*. Rutgers University Press, 2006.

**Additional readings:** available on-line and/or posted on Sakai (see schedule below)

## **Assignments and Grading: (out of a total possible 100 points)**

Four short essays (10 points each): 40 points

- These short essays (3-5 pages) are designed to encourage students to keep up with the reading. Topics will be announced in class one week before the essays are due.

Group project presentation: 20 points

- Students will be divided up into 8 groups, and at the end of the semester will give class presentations analyzing a social movement of their choice. Possible social movement topics include: feminism and gender/sexuality, anti-corporate globalization movement, environmental justice, indigenous rights, youth subcultures, immigrant rights, religiously-based activism, alternative media, peace and non-violence movements, and others.

In-class participation: 10 points

- To earn a good participation grade, come to class having read the assigned material.

Final, individually-written research paper: 30 points

- This paper (6-8 pages) can analyze the movement you chose for your group project. Paper topics must be approved by me in advance.

**Grading scale:** A = 100-92; A- = 91-90; B+ = 89-88; B = 87-82; B- = 81-80; C+ = 79-78;  
C = 77-72; C- = 71-70; D+ = 69-68; D = 67-62; D- = 61-60; F = 59-0

**Deadlines and due dates:** Deadlines for all tests and assignments are absolute. No extensions will be given without prior notification and written verification (e.g., doctor's excuse).

**Class etiquette:** Students must also be punctual for all class sessions. Behavior in class that disrupts fellow students is also strongly discouraged (i.e. turn off cell phones, no text messaging in class, no checking out facebook, etc.)

**Communication:** will occur via the Sakai website and the student's Loyola email address.

**Academic integrity:** It is the student's responsibility to fully understand Loyola's policies on cheating, plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct. Read your Undergraduate Catalog on Academic Integrity, or see:

[www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg\\_academicintegrity.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml).

It is mandatory for professors to report any form of academic dishonesty to the Dean's Office. This could lead to failure of the entire course and possible expulsion from the university.

**Contacting me:** If you are having problems with the class or want to discuss the class material, please speak to me during my office hours. I can often meet other times if too, but please email me beforehand to set up an appointment.

**WARNING:** This is a challenging class. You will be responsible for doing the readings and participating in class. If you do not attend class, do not do the reading, or attempt to complete all the readings the day before an essay is due, it is unlikely that you will be successful in this class.

## FALL 2013 SCHEDULE

### **Week 1: What are social movements? How do anthropologists study them?**

Tuesday, August 27: introduction to class

Thursday, Aug 29: thinking about social movements

- Sidney Tarrow, “Collective action and social movements,” in *Power and Movement* (on Sakai – what used to be blackboard!)
- skim: June Nash, “Introduction: Social Movements and Global Processes,” in June Nash, ed. *Social movements: an anthropological reader*.

### **Week 2: How are social movements connected to civil society? To the state?**

Tues, September 3: social movements and networks

- Marc Edelman, “When Networks Don’t Work: The Rise and Fall of Civil Society Initiatives in Central America” in *Social movements: an anthro reader*

Thurs, Sept 5: social movements and the state

- Katherine Bowie, “The State and the Right Wing: the Village Scout Movement in Thailand,” in *Social movements: an anthro reader*

### **Week 3: Social movements and identity: or what’s “new” about social movements?**

Tues, Sept 10: how do social movements relate to gender?

- Lynn Stephen, “Gender, citizenship and the politics of identity,” in *Social movements: an anthro reader*
- Recommended: Claus Offe, 1985. “New Social Movements: Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics,” Social Research 52(4):817-868. (on Sakai)

Thurs, Sept 12: is class still relevant?

- Sharryn Kasmir, “Activism and Class Identity: the Saturn Auto Factory Case,” in *Social movements: an anthro reader*.
- **DUE DATE: short essay 1**

### **Week 4: Secularization and religion: what role does belief play in activist movements?**

Tues, Sept 17: accounting for fundamentalism

- James Toth, “Local Islam Gone Global: the roots of religious militancy in Egypt,” in *Social movements: an anthro reader*.

Thurs, Sept 19: belief as a social force?

- George Bond, “The Sarvodaya Movement’s Vision of Peace and a Dharmic Civil Society,” in *Social movements: an anthro reader*.
- **DUE DATE: identify social movement for group presentation**

## **Week 5: First case study: confronting environmental racism in the U.S.**

Tues, Sept 24: what is environmental racism? How is it created and reproduced?

- Melissa Checker, *Polluted Promises: Environmental Racism and the Search for Justice in a Southern Town* (read Chapters 1 and 2)
- film: excerpts from “Laid to Waste”

Thurs, Sept 26: activist traditions and “race-ing” the environment

- Checker, *Polluted Promises* (read Chapters 5 and 6)

## **Week 6: Deterritorialization and place: how do social movements engage with space?**

Tues, October 1: challenging global neoliberalism

- June Nash, “Defying Deterritorialization: Autonomy Movements against Globalization,” in *Social movements: an anthro reader*.

Thurs, Oct 3: culture, class and land

- Renée Sylvain, “‘Land, Water and Truth’: San Identity and Global Indigenism,” in *Social movements: an anthro reader*
- **DUE DATE: short essay 2**

## **Week 7: Second case study: Confronting Global Capitalism.**

Tues, Oct 8: (no class, mid-semester break)

Thurs, Oct 10: movement inspirations: the “Seattle Effect”

- Jeffrey Juris, *Networking Futures: the Movements Against Corporate Globalization* (skim Introduction, read Chapter 1)
- recommended: David Graeber, “The New Anarchists,” New Left Review 13, Jan-Feb 2002:61-73 (on Sakai)
- film: excerpts from “This is What Democracy Looks Like” or “30 Frames a Second”

## **Week 8: Second case (continued)**

Tues, Oct 15: movement cultures: confronting corporate globalization in Barcelona

- Juris, *Networking Futures* (read Chapters 2 and 3)

Thurs, Oct 17: movement practices: direct action and alternative media

- Juris, *Networking Futures* (read Chapters 4 and 8)

## **Week 9: Privatization, individualism and global forces**

Tues, Oct 22: Challenging privatization and creating citizenship

- Robert Albro, “‘The Water is Ours Carajo!’” in *Social movements: an anthro reader*.
- film: excerpts from “Leasing the Rain” or “Flow”

Thurs, Oct 24: women's activism and social roles: two examples

- Ida Susser, "From the Cosmopolitan to the Personal: Women's Mobilization to Combat HIV/AIDS," in *Social movements: an anthro reader*
- Ligia Simonian, "Political Organization among Indigenous Women of the Brazilian State of Roraima," in *Social movements: an anthro reader*.
- **DUE DATE: short essay 3**

## **Week 10: Global human rights networks and discourses**

Tues, Oct 29: the emergence of a global human rights network

- Kathryn Sikkink, "Human rights, principled issue-networks, and sovereignty in Latin America" International Organization, 47(3), 1993:411-441 (on Sakai)

Thurs, Oct 31: campaigning for immigrant rights

- Roberto Gonzalez, "Left Out but Not Shut Down: Political Activism and the Undocumented Student Movement." Northwestern Journal of Law & Social Policy, 3(2), 2008:219-239 (on Sakai)
- Special guest speaker: Dr. Ruth Gomberg-Muñoz

## **Week 11: Third case study: youth subcultures as social movements?**

Tues, November 5: is "straight edge" a social movement?

- Ross Haenfler, *Straight Edge: Clean-Living Youth, Hardcore Punk and Social Change* (read Chapters 1 and 2)
- film: excerpts from "Edge: Perspectives on Drug Free Culture"

Thurs, Nov 7: can subcultures produce change?

- Haenfler, *Straight Edge* (read Chapters 3, 4 and Conclusion; recommended: Chapt 5).

## **Week 12: Alternative modes of resistance: non-violence, humor and occupying**

Tues, Nov 12: non-violence and the power of humor?

- Majken Sorensen, "Humor as a Serious Strategy of Nonviolent Resistance to Opposition," *Peace & Change* 33(2), 2008 (on Sakai)
- recommended: Joshua Paulson, "Removing the Dictator in Serbia, 1996-2000," in Gene Sharp, ed. *Waging Nonviolent Struggle*. (on Sakai)
- film: excerpts from "Bringing Down a Dictator"

Thurs, Nov 14: occupy, horizontalism and alternative politics?

- Jeffrey Juris. 2012. "Reflections on #Occupy Everywhere" *American Ethnologist* 39 (2):259-279 (on Sakai)
- Marina Sitrin, "Horizontalism and Territory," Possible Futures, Jan. 9, 2012 (avail at: <http://www.possible-futures.org/2012/01/09/verticalism-and-territory/>)
- **DUE DATE: paper topic proposals**

## **Week 13: Assessing and student presentations**

Tues, Nov 19: anthropology's role: observation or engagement? Militant scholarship?

- Nancy Scheper-Hughes, "The Primacy of the Ethical: Propositions for a Militant Anthropology," (read Andrade's response and skim other responses), *Current Anthropology*, 36(3), 1995:409-440 (on Sakai)
- **DUE DATE: short essay 4**

Thurs, Nov 21: Student presentations

- Groups 1 and 2

## **Week 14: Student presentations**

Tues, Nov 26:

- Groups 3 and 4

Thurs, Nov 28: (no class, Thanksgiving)

## **Week 15: Student presentations**

Tues, December 3:

- Groups 5 and 6

Thurs, Dec 5:

- Groups 7 and 8

**FINAL PAPER: due by Thursday, December 12 at 11 am**