Media and Global Social Movements

Course #: IDSEM-UG 1764-001
MCC –UE 1826-001
Summer 2016
Mondays-Thursdays 10:00-1:15
Room 401

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Course Description
The recent wave of protest movements—from the uprisings of the Arab Spring to events closer to home like Occupy Wall Street—have sparked a renewed interest in the role of the media in mobilizing and sustaining social movements with global resonance. This seminar offers students the opportunity to analyze the power and limits of the media in contemporary social movements in recent historical contexts. First, readings will examine the political-economic conditions that have led to the mobilization of social claims for global justice in the last decade. We will then consider a range of critical theoretical perspectives on whether and how media and information technologies have been instrumental in the articulation of such claims. This seminar draws on interdisciplinary readings from media and cultural studies, anthropology, political science and sociology.

Course Objectives

This class provides a critical overview of contemporary discussions about the relationship between new media technologies and social change in the global context. We cover the following four themes over the course of the semester: Theories of Culture and the Political; The Arab Spring and Mediated Activism; New Media, Surveillance and Islamophobia; Transnational Gender Justice. As we examine how mediated activism shapes political change, we will also consider what is meant by “the political” in distinct economic and political cultural contexts. In addition to scholarly texts, we will watch a number of documentaries and students will be encouraged to explore and keep up to date with relevant blogs, sites and media sources in these regions and share relevant information with your classmates especially as we work towards the final paper. Assignments for this class are designed to provide an opportunity to develop your analytic skills in specific areas that you will draw upon for your final paper.
REQUIRED READINGS
All readings for the class will be posted on NYU Classes Site. To navigate NYU Classes
Please see: https://wikis.nyu.edu/display/nyuclasses/Student+Quick-Start

Requirements, Assignments and Grading

Class Participation 30%
Punctual attendance and active participation is key to your success in this course. In order
to help you organize your thoughts about the readings, highlight a quote or argument
from the readings that raised an interesting question or comment regarding the theme for
the day and come to class prepared to discuss. Each student will be given in-class
assignments or be asked to bring in and summarize texts in class; this will count toward
your participation grade. You are encouraged to be pro-active in your learning about
regions and topics that might be new to you. In addition to the materials assigned for
class, you should watch/read current news and information about regions and topics we
are discussing. To help facilitate class discussions, two students will volunteer to provide
two or three guiding questions based on assigned materials beginning the second day of
class. A sign-up sheet for leading class discussion will be circulated in the first class.

Attendance is very important for this class and if you cannot attend because of illness or
an emergency of some kind, please email me in advance. More than two absences
without a reasonable excuse will result in a lowered grade (one-half grade for each day
missed).

Response Papers (2-3 pages double spaced)_______________________50%

You are required to write 5 short papers based on the books and articles we will be
reading. Each paper will count 10 points toward your final grade.

These papers are meant to offer a close reading of the texts discussed in each class
beginning on our second day of class. In these papers, you should work to identify the
text’s main question/thesis, discuss how the author develops her/his thesis, and situate
the text within broader themes discussed in class. You should pay attention to different
methodological, theoretical approaches taken in each work, and you can structure your
paper around a set of questions. For example: How does each text approach the role of
technology in shaping new social movements? How is “the political” understood and
assessed by the author(s)?

Papers are always due the day after we have read the relevant texts. For example, a
response paper on the Tuesday readings will be due Wednesday morning, Thursday
readings due on Monday, etc.

Final Paper or Project____________________________________20%
Substantive focus: Detailed guidelines for your final paper/project will be posted on the class website. You are encouraged to use outside scholarly and other relevant materials, but the paper or project should also be anchored in relevant readings and other materials from the course.

Format and deadlines: The final paper is due on Wednesday, June 15th by 4:00 PM.

Film Reviews (2-3 pages double spaced)______________________________10%

We will be watching a number of documentaries throughout the class and you are required to write 2 short film reviews of any the documentaries that we view for class. Each review will count 5 points towards you final grade. Reviews will be due in class on dates noted in the syllabus.

Policies

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:
As a Gallatin student you belong to an interdisciplinary community of artists and scholars who value honest and open intellectual inquiry. This relationship depends on mutual respect, responsibility, and integrity. Examples of behaviors that compromise the academic integrity of the Gallatin School include plagiarism, illicit collaboration, doubling or recycling coursework, and cheating. Suspected cases of plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity will be addressed according to Gallatin’s student discipline rules. For a full description of the academic integrity policy, please consult the Gallatin Bulletin or Gallatin website: http://gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/integrity.html

Style for Assignments:
Students will be asked to cite and reference their assignments in the APA (American Psychological Association) or MLA (Modern Language Association) styles, which will be reviewed in class. Standard instructions for class assignments include: identifying assignments with student numbers rather than names, stapling, and double-spacing, and using 12-point font.

Electronic Devices:
All electronic devices should be in the off or vibrate position and out of sight during class session. Laptops should be used only to take notes and or access material directly relevant to class discussion.

Turning in Papers and Assignments:
All papers and assignments are due as hard copies (stapled) in class at the beginning of class, unless otherwise indicated.

Late Assignments:
It is difficult for the instructor to coordinate grading, ensure fairness, or return papers in a timely manner when assignments are not handed in on time. Each day that a paper is late, you will lose half a letter grade (An A paper will be graded as A-, etc). Papers will not be accepted more than 1 week after the assignment was originally due, unless there are extenuating circumstances (such as an illness that can be documented), in which case the student and instructor will come to an agreement together.

Students with Disabilities:
Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with documented disabilities, with the advice and assistance of the appropriate services on campus.

Syllabus Changes: This syllabus is a contract between professor and students. However, it is subject to change with sufficient notice to students.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Week 1

May 23rd: Introduction and Overview of Class


- Screening: The Square (2013)

May 24th: Making Sense of 21st Century Riots and Uprisings


May 25th: Protest, Culture and History

• Screening of “A Dream Deferred” (1963)

May 26th: Storytelling Versus Technology


• Screening of “Ni Aqui, Ni Alla” (2013)

**Week 2**

May 30th: Memorial Day (Holiday)

May 31st: Media and the Immigrant Rights Movement


• Guest Speaker, Thanu Yakupitiyage, New York Immigrant Rights Coalition
  http://www.thenyic.org/about-us

June 1st: Global Gender Justice

• Menon, Nivedita (2012) *Seeing Like a Feminist.* Penguin. (Chapters 1-4)


• Screening: *Daughters of Mother India* (2014)

June 2nd: Affect, Event and Institutions


• Dean, Jodi, *Crowds and Party.* Verso: 1-29 & 115-159.

• Screening: *Spain in Crisis* (2013)

**Week 3**

June 6th: Class and New Social Movements


• Screening: *Occupy Love* (2014)
June 7th: Racial Claims Making and Social Media

- Guest Speaker: Kiran Samuel, MA student MCC, “Current Research on BLM and Social Media”.

June 8th: Contemporary Intersectional Global Protests and Revolts


June 9th: Discussion of Final Papers & Wrap Up

FINAL PAPER/PROJECT DUE June 14th by 5:00 PM.