San Diego State University

Sociology 456: Collective Behavior Instructor: Tom Semm

Fall 2008

Class Meets: Office: NH232

M,W, F 1-1:50PM Phone: 594-5906

SH 258 e-mail: [psemm@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:psemm@mail.sdsu.edu)

Office Hours:

M, W 12:00-1:00

T, Th 10AM-11AM

Or by appointment

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Gourevitch, Philip. We Wish To Inform You.

Hedges, Christopher. American Fascists

Stauber and Rampton. Weapons of Mass Deception.

Zinn, Howard. A People’s History of the United States (Unabridged).

Internet Assignments

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is intended to give an overview of the study of collective behavior. It is divided into three parts. The first part examines classical theories of collective behavior and the social phenomena that classical theorists examine. Classical theorists focus on riots, disasters, fads, cults, crazes, and mass hysteria. The second part of the course examines contemporary theories of collective behavior and the phenomena they examine. Contemporary theorists focus on social movements and their causes. The course will examine social movements in the U.S. and globally, including current anti-globalization movements. The third part of the course will explore the influence of theories of collective behavior on the development of propaganda. The focus will be on how the mass media has been used in the United States, and continues to be used, as a instrument of propaganda, what Stauber and Rampton call an institution of “mass deception.”

EVALUATION PROCESS:

There will be three exams consisting of multiple choice, fill-in, matching, true/false and short answer questions. One exam can be missed on the date that it is given, but must be made up. There will also be two short papers (3 to 4 pages in length) assigned during the semester (see Course Schedule). A prompt will be given for each of the papers. The exams will make-up two-thirds of the final grade, and the papers one-third. Late papers will be accepted but with a grade deduction. Class participation (negative and positive) can significantly help or hurt a student’s final grade. Positive class participation consists of asking relevant questions and making relevant comments. Negative class participation consists of carrying on private conversations, reading the Daily Aztec, or engaging in non-class related technological interactions.

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**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

**WEEK TOPIC ASSIGNMENT**

**I. CLASSICAL COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOR**

Sep 2-5-31 Intro: Crowds and Riots

Sep 8-12 Disasters fair.org

Sep 15-19 Fads, Crazes, and Mass Hysteria Gourevitch PP 1-74

Sep 22-26 Cults Gourevitch PP 75-185

P**aper Assigned Sep 22**

Sep 29-Oct 3 Genocide Gourevitch pp 186-274

**Paper due Fri Oct 3**

**EXAM # 1 MON OCT 6**

**II. CONTEMPORARY COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOR**

Oct 6-10 Political Process Theory Zinn, “The Socialist Challenge”

Oct 13-17 Black Insurgency Zinn, “Or Does It Explode?”

Oct 20-24 National Liberation Movements Zinn, “The Impossible Victory”

Oct 27-31 Anti-Globalization Movements thetake.org

**EXAM #2 MON NOV 3**

**III. COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOR AND FASCISM**

Nov 3-7 Fascism American Fascists (Ch 1-3)

Nov 10-14 Fascism and Populism American Fascists (Ch 4-7) **Paper Assigned Nov 14**

Nov 17-21 Christian Fascism American Fascists (Ch 8-10)

**IV. COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOR AND PROPAGANDA**

Nov 24-28 PR and Propaganda Weapons of Mass Deception

Thanksgiving Break **Paper Due Mon 24**

Dec 1-5 War and Propaganda Weapons of Mass Deception

Dec 8-12 War and Propaganda Weapons of Mass Deception

**EXAM # 3 FRIDAY DEC 12**

San Diego State University

Sociology 456: Collective Behavior Instructor: Tom Semm

Spring 2006

Class Meets: Office: NH219

Thursdays 3:30PM-6:10PM Phone: 594-5906

Storm Hall 253 e-mail: psemm@mail.sdsu.edu

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Berlet and Lyons, Right Wing Populism In America (RWP)

Gourevitch, Philip. We Wish To Inform You

Hedges, Christopher. War Is A Force That Gives Us Meaning

Lewis, Sinclair. It Can’t Happen Here

McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency (PP)

REQUIRED FILM:

Battle of Algiers

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The sociological discipline of collective behavior studies a wide range of social phenomena, from fads and crazes to social movements and revolutions. This course is intended to give an overview of the field of collective behavior. Some of the behavior that will be studied include riots, crowds during catastrophic events, fashion, cults, crazes, social movements, genocide, and war. The theories of collective behavior both classical and contemporary will also be a focus of the course. There will be an emphasis one of the most important and least studied social movements of the late twentieth and early twentieth-first century: right wing populism.

EVALUATION PROCESS:

There will be three exams consisting of multiple choice, fill-in, matching, true/false and short answer questions. Each exam might also have a longer essay question. There will also be four short papers (3 to 4 pages in length) assigned and due during the semester. A prompt will be given for each of the papers. The exams will make-up two-thirds of your final grade, and the papers one-third. The papers must be handed in on the day that they are due. Class participation (negative and positive) can

significantly help or hurt the final grade. Positive class participation consists of asking relevant questions and making relevant comments. Negative class participation consists of carrying on private conversations, reading the Daily Aztec, or engaging in technological social interactions.

Regarding the papers. The prompt will give specific instructions for writing the paper. It is easy to download articles, reviews, and papers from the Internet.

If I suspect a paper of being plagiarized in this or any other way, I will give the student an F for the course.

COURSE SCHEDLE:

Date TOPIC ASSIGNMENT DUE

Jan 19 Intro. to Collective Behavior

Jan 26 Crowds and Riots RWP: Intro and Ch 1

PP: Intro and Ch 1

Feb 2 Natural and Man-Made Disasters **PAPER 1 DUE**

Feb 9 Crazes and Cults RWP: Ch 12

Feb 16 Fads and Fashions **EXAM #1**

Feb 23 Mass Hysteria RWP: Chs 8 and 9

Mar 2 Genocide We Wish To Inform

**PAPER 2 DUE**

Mar 9 Black Insurgency PP: Chs 2, 3, and 4

MARCH 13-17 SPRING BREAK

Mar 23 Black Insurgency/ Anti- PP: Chs 6,7, and 8

Vietnam War RWP: 10

Mar 30 Free Speech Movement/ **EXAM #2**

Academic Freedom

Apr 6 National Liberation/ Anti- RWP: 14

Globalization Movements The Battle of Algiers

Apr 13 Fascism It Can’t Happen Here

RWP: 7

**PAPER 3 DUE**

Apr 20 Right Wing Populism RWP: 11,12,13 and 14

Apr 27 War War Is A Force

**PAPER 4 DUE**

May 4 **EXAM #3**