Solidarity in Theory and Action

SOC-STD 98VT

Spring 2023

Current as of April 19, 2023

Time: Wed 9:45am-11:45am

Place: William James Hall 350

Instructor:

Dr. Rosemarie Wagner (she/they)

[rosemarie\_wagner@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:rosemarie_wagner@fas.harvard.edu)

Office Hours: Tuesday 3-5pm in 384 WJH and by appt.

Course Description:

How do you theorize emancipation when (a) you can’t identify a stable essential self or group to emancipate and (b) power is totalizing and you can never really be “free” from power anyway? When we work so hard to do social theory, whether it is critique or normative ideal theory or even escapist utopianism, how do we then turn to engage in the actual real world to make change in our actual circumstances? We live in a world with domination and oppression that affects all different kinds of people differently. People with different experiences, beliefs, and commitments, are struggling, fighting, and organizing to get free from oppression and empower themselves. They fight against one another and sometimes manage to band together in their struggles. This course examines how emancipation, solidarity, coalition, can be possible in our post-foundational modern world, and how we bridge the gap between social theory and social action.

*Course Requirements*

*1. Participation:* This course is highly dependent on attentive weekly reading and active participation in class discussion. All students are required to come to each class prepared. Prepared means: on time with the necessary texts, having done the reading and taken notes, and ready to ask questions of peers and foster discussion. Students must have audio and video on for the entirety of class (normal exceptions for breaks and unavoidable distractions are of course expected).

2. *Office Hours:* In addition to class discussion, each student is required to meet with me multiple times throughout the semester to discuss preparation and progress for the final papers.

3. *Weekly Questions*: Each student is required to prepare two questions about the reading each week. Each question must include a page #/reference to that week’s reading. Questions must be brought to class each week to begin our discussions.

4. *Research Papers*: The majority of your grade is based on your final research paper and the assignments leading up to it. These assignments include two drafts of your prospectus and a literature review.

*Assignments:*

Goals of this class:

1. to learn about the recent and contemporary literature on solidarity, coalitions, the relationship between self and group, and the kinds of moral and political claims we make.
2. Write a well-researched, well-structured, well-argued, thoughtful and ambitious 20-30 page paper, along with 2 prospectus assignments along the way to help you write it.

For your paper, I expect you to choose a movement, event, or group and to study the dynamics of solidarity, power, conflict, domination, (etc., extrapolate as you will) within and outside this group. You will need to choose a specific question and have a thesis argument you are making and also demonstrate that you have read the relevant literature.

First Draft Prospectus: Due March 10

Second Draft Prospectus (includes a literature review): Due April 19

Final Research Paper: Due May 10, emailed to me by 11:59pm. 20-30 pages double-spaced

Participation (including reading questions but mainly focused on in-class): 25%

First Draft Prospectus: 5%

Second Draft Prospectus: 10%

Literature Review: 10%

Final Research Paper: 50%

You have 2 “late days” throughout the semester which you may use at your discretion. Each late day represents a 24 hour extension. You may use them jointly or separately and at any point in the semester. If you are using it, you must tell me before the official deadline passes.

Schedule of Readings:

1. Jan 25: Introduction
   1. Wendy Brown *States of Injury* Ch. 1
   2. Bernice Johnson Reagon, (1983) “Coalition Politics: Turning the Century” in *Home Girls*
2. Feb 1: Identity
   1. Wendy Brown *States of Injury* Ch. 2
   2. Collins & Bilge “Setting the History of Intersectionality Straight?”
3. Feb 8: Identity cont.
   1. Dembroff and Payton, “Why We Shouldn’t Compare Transracial to Transgender Identity”
4. Feb 15: Solidarity and Democratic Theory
   1. Banting & Kymlicka, *The Strains of Commitment* Chs. 1, 2, and 4.
5. Feb 22: Black American Solidarity
   1. Tommie Shelby, *We Who Are Dark: The Philosophical Foundations of Black Solidarity* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2005), Chs 2, 4, 6.
6. Mar 1: Recognition and Critiques of Political Liberalism
   1. Glen Sean Coulthard’s *Red Skin White Masks*. selections
7. Mar 8: Solidarity, Crisis, and Mutual Aid (New York after Sandy Storm)
   1. Rhiannon Firth, *Disaster Anarchy: Mutual Aid and Radical Action*, selections

*3/10: First Draft Prospectus Due: 5-6 pages double-spaced*

1. Mar 22: Solidarity, Crisis, and Mutual Aid cont.
   1. Dean Spade, *Mutual Aid*, selections
2. Mar 29: Can Love Liberate Us?
   1. Eric Fromm, *The Art of Loving*, selections
   2. Bell Hooks, *All About Love*, selections
   3. Brenda Lyshaug, “Solidarity Without Sisterhood”
3. April 5: Rainbow Coalition
   1. López, Antonio: “‘We Know What the Pigs Don’t Like’: the Formation and Solidarity of the Original Rainbow Coalition”
   2. Ogbar, Jeffrey O.G., *Black Power: Radical Politics and African American Identity*, Ch. 6
   3. Optional, Watch Clip from *American Revolution II:* https://mediaburn.org/video/american-revolution-ii-right-on/
4. April 12: Disability Rights Movement
   1. Kim, “Cripping the Welfare Queen: The Radical Potential of Disability Politics” (2021)
   2. Bailey, Moya, and Izzeta Autumn Mobley. 2018 “Work in the Intersections: A Black Feminist Disability Framework.” *Gender & Society* 33(I): 19-40.
   3. Piepzna-Samarasinha, Leah Lakshmi, “Cripping TJ,” *Beyond Survival: Strategies and Stories from the Transformative Justice Movement*. 2020.
   4. Optional: Watch Documentary *Crip Camp*.

*4/14: Second Draft Prospectus Due : 10-12 pages double-spaced (includes literature review).*

1. April 19: Indigenous movements and Climate Crisis Coalitions
   1. Estes, Nick. *Our History is the Future: Standing Rock versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance*. London: Verso, 2019 (pp. 1-3; 8-10; 14-16; 18-20; 25-29; 33-34; 40-41; 43-48; 54-66).
   2. Bouayad, Aurelien. "Wild rice protectors: An Ojibwe odyssey." Environmental Law Review 22, no. 1 (2020): 25-42.
   3. Waziyatawin. *What does justice look like?: The struggle for liberation in Dakota homeland*. Vol. 978, no. 0-9721884. Living Justice Press, 2008. (Selections)
2. April 26: Final Project Presentations and Workshop
   1. No reading this week. Each student will talk for 10 minutes about their presentation and where they are at and everyone else will ask questions and offer support and constructive criticism for any potential roadblocks.

*5/10: Final Papers Due*

*Course Requirements*

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2. *Office Hours:* In addition to class discussion, each student is required to meet with me multiple times throughout the semester to discuss preparation and progress for the final papers.

3. *Weekly Questions*: Each student is required to write two questions about the reading each week. Each question must include a page #/reference to that week’s reading. Questions can be very short and must be presented at the beginning of each class.

4. *Research Papers*: The majority of your grade is based on your final research paper and the assignments leading up to it. These assignments include two drafts of your prospectus and a literature review.

*Grades:*

* 3/10: First Draft Prospectus: 5-6 pages double-spaced (5%)
* 4/14: Second Draft Prospectus: 10-12 pages double-spaced (includes literature review).  (20%)
* 5/10: Final Paper: 20-30 pages double-spaced (50%)
* In-class participation: 25%

You have 2 “late days” throughout the semester which you may use at your discretion. Each late day represents a 24 hour extension. You may use them jointly or separately and at any point in the semester. If you are using it, you must tell me before the official deadline passes.