

LMC 3455: Black Social Movements, The Internet, and Social Media

Spring 2023

Instructor Information

Instructor

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Office location & hours

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General information

Description

The academy has historically studied the social inequalities produced by race, gender, class, nation, sexuality and age and forms of oppression. As a result, we know much about the institutional dimensions of these systems of oppression. At the same time, far less emphasis has been placed on questions of activism and resistance to these systems of oppression. This course investigates these questions of resistance, activism, and social change by examining patterns of contemporary political activism by African Americans and their allies who aim to better the social conditions of people of African descent.

The Internet has proved to be a fertile space for social movements to construct, organize, coordinate, and redefine the public sphere. Using information and communication tools and concepts ranging from mobile phones, flash mobs, and Twitter, these movements inscribe cultural values in computational venues. Governments, universities, and extralegal movements are also responding to challenges posed by the emergence of the Internet as a mundane, inherently democratic technology through increased surveillance, algorithmic constructions of 'other', or delivering propaganda.

The objective of this course is to engage with conceptual and empirical understandings of the interaction between new media and social change. We will explore cases from the last twenty years - primarily focusing on African American culture and cyberactivism - using the public sphere and third spaces as a conceptual framework.

We will explore the integration of new media tools within these movements and governmental and institutional responses to these developments.

Three themes guide our choices. First, responding to racism through political protest, heterogeneous forms of activist politics, and organized social movements constitutes a distinguishing feature of twentieth-century Black activism. Second, we focus on the political activism of people of African descent because grounding our analysis in the specific experiences of those harmed by racism and examining the strategies used to confront it provides a distinctive lens on contemporary social phenomena. Third, we analyze racism as well as selected social movements that aim to dismantle it through an intersectional lens that takes gender, class, sexuality, age, ethnicity, and citizenship category into account.

Class Format and Expectations

The class will be a combination of semi-structured lectures, discussions based on the assigned readings, and learning activities. Dialogue is my preferred mode of instruction, so interactions (class or online) between you, me, and your classmates are the key to getting a good grade.

As a student in this class, you are expected to:

- Bring an open mind and critical perspective to the course materials and class discussions
- read the assigned readings BEFORE class, not during
- post required feedback to the class blog by the agreed-upon deadline
- Complete assignments in a timely fashion

Accessibility and Special Needs

I will make every effort to accommodate any needs around health and accessibility, particularly around learning support or mental or emotional health issues. However, to support you, you must register with ADAPTS. Once you have done so, please email me so we can figure out the best means to support you: <http://www.adapts.gatech.edu/CourseMaterials>

Honor Code and Plagiarism Policy

The Georgia Tech Honor Code is very explicit about plagiarism as “the deliberate use of any outside source without proper acknowledgment,” Page 3 of 10 “appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts of passages of his or her writings, or language or ideas of the same, and passing them off as the product of one’s own mind.” If caught plagiarizing, you will be dealt with according to the GT Academic Honor Code. The full GT Honor Code is available online: <http://osi.gatech.edu/content/honor-code>.

Course Requirements

The course grade will be based on the following elements:

Reading Discussion Leader	20%
Portfolio - Reading Reflections and Responses	50%
Annotations/Class Participation	30%

Grade Policies

A good grade requires thoughtful, informed participation in class and in online discussions, well-executed arguments in writing, and an outstanding portfolio. Readings will be DISCUSSED on the day marked on the syllabus. Assignments are due as scheduled.

Course schedule

Week	Topic	Reading	Exercises
<p>Week 1</p> <p>Jan 10</p> <p>Jan 12</p>	<p>Introduction to the Course</p>	<p>A herstory of the#BlackLivesMatter movement</p> <p>Jeff Goodwin and James Jasper. (2015). "Editors' Introduction,"</p> <p>The Social MovementReader: Cases and Concepts</p>	<p>Syllabus Exam</p> <p>Perusall Sign Up</p> <p>Sign up for SLACK</p>
<p>Week 2</p> <p>Jan 17</p> <p>Jan 19</p>	<p>Understanding Ferguson and Baltimore: Black Protest and Black Lives Matter</p>	<p>DOJ Ferguson: Civil Rights Press Release</p> <p>The Matter of Black Lives</p>	<p>Watch: Ferguson: Report from an Occupied Territory</p> <p>Review: Washington Post database of U.S.' police shootings of</p>

			civilians for 2015 and 2016.
<p>Week 3 Jan 24</p> <p>Jan 26</p>	This Internet Thing	<p>The Internet: A Philosophical Approach. (pg 62-83)</p> <p>The Internet: A Philosophical Approach. (pg 84-102)</p>	Enter exercise
<p>Week 4 Jan 31</p> <p>Feb 2</p>	Democracy and the Internet	<p>Cyberdemocracy: Internet and the public sphere.</p> <p>Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy.</p>	Enter exercise
<p>Week 5 Feb 7</p> <p>Feb 9</p>	First Look: Activism?	<p>Political activities on the Internet: Slacktivism or political participation by other means?</p> <p>What Is Slack about Slacktivism?</p>	Enter exercise
Week 6	Black Feminism, Intersectionality and Black Social Movements		Watch Panel

Feb 14		Kimberlé Crenshaw, Washington Post article Why Intersectionality Can't Wait	Black Feminism and Black Lives Matter
Feb 16		Reflections on Respectability What love looks like in public	
Week 7	Modes of Internet Activism: SNS and UGC		
Feb 21		Harlow, S., & Guo, L. (2014). Will the Revolution be Tweeted or	
Feb 23		Facebooked? Using Digital Communication Tools in Immigrant Activism. Journal of Computer- Mediated Communication, 19(3), 463-478. doi: 10.1111/jcc4.12062	
Week 8	Case Study: Trayvon Martin		Enter exercise
Feb 28		Beers, D. (2008) Social network(ing) sites.revisiting the story so far: A	
Mar 2		response to danah boyd & Nicole Ellison Journal of Computer-Mediated	

		Communication 13,2. pp. 516-529	
Week 9 Mar 7 Mar 9	Modes of Internet Activism: Twitter and Memes	<p>Loken, M. (2014). #BringBackOurGirls and the Invisibility of Imperialism. Feminist Media Studies, 14(6), 1100-1101. doi: 10.1080/14680777.201 4.975442</p> <p>Loza, S. (2014) Hashtag feminism, #SolidarityIsForWhiteW omen, and the other #FemFuture. Ada: A Journal of Gender, New Media, and Technology, No.5. doi:10.7264/N337770V</p>	Enter exercise
Week 10 Mar 14 Mar 16	Cae Study Ferguson		
Week 11 Mar 21 Mar 23	Spring Break		
Week 12	The Arts, Aesthetics and Black Social Movements		Watch

<p>Mar 28</p> <p>Mar 30</p>		<p>#BlackLivesMatter: A Silver Lining to the Movement’s Aesthetic</p> <p>Audre Lorde. 2009 [“Is Your Hair Still Political?” Pp. 224-227 in I Am Your Sister: Collected and Unpublished Writings of Audre Lorde. New York: Oxford</p>	<p>Beyonce Formation Superbowl</p> <p>Kendrick Lemar</p>
<p>Week 13</p> <p>April 4</p> <p>April 6</p>	<p>Going Viral -- Organizing for Social ChangeOnline</p>	<p>Emma Brockes. (2018) “Me Too founder Tarana Burke: ‘You have to use your privilege to serve other people,’”</p> <p>Small Change</p>	<p>Zeynep Tufekci. (2014). “Online Social Change: Easy to Organize, Hard to Win” (Video)</p>
<p>Week 14</p> <p>April 11</p> <p>April 13</p>	<p>Social Media and Global Community Organizing</p>	<p>Sharma, Sanjay. 2013. “Black Twitter?: Racial Hastags, Networks, and Contagion.” New Formations 78: 46-64.</p>	<p>Enter exercise</p>

		<p>Brock, Andre. 2012 "From the Blackhand Side: Twitter as a Cultural Conversation." Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media 65 (4): 529-549.</p> <p>Enter exercise</p>	
<p>Week 15 April 18 April 20</p>	<p>Who Are Your Allies? People of Color and Coalition Politics</p>	<p>Manning Marable. 1995. "Beyond Racial Identity Politics: Towards a Liberation Theory for Multicultural Democracy." Pp. 448-454.</p> <p>"Which side are you on?": #Asians4BlackLives confronts anti-black prejudice in Asian communities</p>	<p>Listen: A Letter From Young Asian-Americans To Their Families About Black Lives Matter</p> <p>On Two Fronts: Latinos & Vietnam</p>
<p>Week 16 April 25 April 27</p>	<p>Educational Equity and Black Student Activism</p>	<p>Missouri 3 Years Later: Lessons Learned, Protests Still Resonate</p>	<p>Enter exercise</p>

		“7 Times inHistory When Students Turned to Activism,” The New York Times	
	Portfolio Day		

Exam schedule

Date	Subject
Portfolio Checks	Feb 2
Portfolio Checks	March 6
Portfolio Checks	April 20