DIGITAL RESISTANCE

Political activism and protest online
This course studies the proliferation, and implications, of digital technology in political resistance. The goal is to provide students with analytical tools and skills for understanding the strengths, weaknesses of contemporary digital resistance. The course’ resistance that is played ‘ordinary’ people: a widespread and diffused, implicitly political, brings to light how the be political and explores resistance’.

Particular interest will be payed to the study of new sources of power and their ability to subvert or censor acts of digital resistance. By taking this course the participants will gain a understanding of the role played by technology, and technology providers, in the performance of, and resistance to, power. Course participants will develop a critical understanding of the nature of technology and its implications for local, regional, and global justice.

The course will present the basics of theories of social movements, civil resistance and disobedience before moving on to dig deeper into the ways in which digital technology both supports and hinders activism. The focus on practice of activism and the course participant to ways in which the course participant to ways in which better understand the ability to both enable interactions.

The course will also dig deeper into the understanding of the activist identity, the ways in which corporations and the media portray and participate with activism in order to both present themselves as good corporate citizens but also to maintain the structures of power that have been assembled. By mixing theory and practice, history and the present, academia and case studies this course offers its participants the space to observe social and political activism from an array of perspectives.

Where there is power there is resistance
Michel Foucault

Where there is resistance, there is power
Lila Abu-Lughod

This course is held entirely online. The instructor is Dr Mathias Klang who can be reached via email mklang@fordham.edu, cell phone (215) 882 0989, Twitter & Instagram @klangable, and his website www.klangable.com The class Zoom link is https://fordham.zoom.us/j/8897318580
How this course works...
This class is scheduled twice a week on Tuesdays and Fridays. In order to be able to cover the material I have decided that we will have an in person discussion on Tuesdays and work asynchronously on Fridays. Therefore, to prepare for our Tuesdays we will need to read the texts via the Perusal platform. The point of Perusal is that you should mark, comment, and question what you read. All these will be visible to the rest of the class (and to me) and you are encouraged to reply and comment back.

One drawback with Perusal is that once the instructor makes a comment everyone else nods in agreement and any discussion stops. This means I will be participating but trying my best not to control or stifle the discussion. As I am passionate about this topic it is very, very difficult for me – so we shall see how that whole thing works.

When we meet on Tuesday you should be prepared to discuss the reading. I may call on any of you to give me your read on what the author has said. Here is a good short guide to critical reading to give you an idea of what you should be thinking about when you read https://pcur.princeton.edu/2017/04/in-between-the-lines-a-guide-to-reading-critically/

Sometime it's appropriate to scream at them.
Helen Caldicott

Naturally I will be giving my take on the reading and adding additional materials and ideas. So you may still need to take notes (even on Zoom). I will make my slides and other materials available after class so that you can refer back to them if you want.

The Friday session will consist of video or audio material (but some reading may occur) and an assignment that shall be handed in over the weekend.

In addition to the weekly work there will be (1) an introduction video, (2) a Non Western Activism "midterm" assignment, (3) a group project on Protest Safety, and (4) a short final paper on Digital Resistance: The American Experience.

Movements are most powerful when they begin to affect the vision and perspective of those who do not necessarily associate themselves with those movements.

Angela Y. Davis
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic &amp; Readings</th>
<th>Due</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 8/28</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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| Tue 9/1 / Fri 9/4 | **Social Movements and Resistance**  
DeFronzo & Gill - Sociology of Social Movements  
Civil Resistance: A First Look | Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution (2020)             |
| Tue 9/8 / Fri 9/11 | **Social Movements and the Internet**  
Madison & Klang – The Case for Digital Activism  
Jackson - Progressive Social Movements and the Internet | How Facebook Changed the World: The Arab Spring   |
| Tue 9/15 / Fri 9/18 | **Civil Disobedience**  
James - the orthodox theory of civil disobedience  
Thoreau - Civil Disobedience | A Force More Powerful (1999)                       |
| Tue 9/22 / Fri 9/25 | **Everyday Resistance & Everyday Activism**  
Scott – Everyday forms of resistance  
Madison & Klang - Recognizing Everyday Activism | Nae Pasaran (2018)                                |
| Tue 9/29 / Fri 10/2 | **Digital Activism**  
Milan & Barbosa - Enter the WhatsApper  
DeAtley - Mobile Ambivalence at Standing Rock | The Internet’s Own Boy: The Story of Aaron Swartz (2014) |
| Tue 10/6 / Fri 10/9 | **Identity**  
Bobel - I’m not an activist, per se, though I’ve done a lot of it  
Milan - From social movements to cloud protesting | The Death and Life of Marsha P Johnson - Netflix (2017) |
| Tue 10/13 / Fri 10/16 | **Crowd Surveillance (and resistance)**  
Aston - State Surveillance of Protest  
Klang & Madison - Entire History of You | Citizenfour (2014)                                |
| Tue 10/20 / Fri 10/23 | **Markets for activism**  
Kovic et al – digital astroturfing  
Pezzulo - Contextualizing Boycotts and Buycotts | Boycott (2001)                                    |
| Tue 10/27 / Fri 10/30 | **Red Power Movement**  
Hitchmough - Performative Protest  
| Tue 11/3 / Election Day / Fri 11/6 | **Violence & Non-Violence**  
Letter from a Birmingham Jail by Martin Luther King  
The Black Panthers (2015) |
| Tue 11/10 / Fri 11/13 | **Case Studies: From Women’s Rights to #MeToo**  
Case Studies: From Women's Rights to #MeToo | She's Beautiful When She's Angry (2014)            |
| Tue 11/17 / Fri 11/20 | **Case Studies: From Civil Rights to BLM**  
Case Studies: From Civil Rights to BLM | Freedom Riders (2010)  
Whose Streets (2017) |
| Tue 11/24 / Fri 11/27 | **Case Studies: From Workers Rights to Occupy**  
Case Studies: From Workers Rights to Occupy Thanksgiving NO CLASS | Harlan County, U.S.A. (1977)                      |
| Tue 12/1 / Fri 12/4 | From Environmentalism to Thunberg | Earth Days (2009) YouTube                          |
| Tue 12/8 | Closing | **Case Studies: From Women’s Rights to #MeToo**  
Case Studies: From Women's Rights to #MeToo | She's Beautiful When She's Angry (2014)            |

HPRH 2101
Course Assignments

The final grade for the course is based on the following percentage scale: A 94 or above A- 90–93, B+ 87–89, B 83–86, B- 80–82, C+ 77–79, C 73–76, C- 70–72, D+ 67–69, D 63–66, D- 60–62, F 59 or below.

Recurring Assignments

Perusall (Due Mondays) = 20% total grade
Weekly Exercise (Due Sundays) = 20% total grade

Single Assignments

Video (Due 9/1) = 5% total grade
Non-Western activism (Due 10/20) = 15% total grade
Protest Safety Group assignment (Due 9/28) = 15% total grade
Final Paper (Due 12/10) = 25% total grade

Introduction video

Due 9/1
In order to build a better sense of community the participants will create a short (2-3 minute) video introduction of themselves and upload it to the course Google Drive space (which I will create and invite you to). Remember these videos will be available to the whole class, but only to the class. The uploaded video file name should be your surname. The video should addresses the following things (in any order):
- Introduction of yourself and your favorite object (other than your phone)
- A cause that you are passionate about.
- A personal reflection/experience related to protest. It’s ok if you have never participated I want you to give us your impressions.
In addition to this you can include any number of things, such as what: things do you do during your spare time? do you want to do after you graduate? are your career goals?

Non Western Activism (“midterm”)

Due 10/20, length minimum 1000 words.
There are a whole range of factors that lead to the news prioritizing certain events and ignoring others. This usually means that our knowledge outside these ‘spheres of interest’ is very limited. The goal of this project is for you to find and explain the root causes, tactics, participants, and results of activism in ‘lesser known’ regions. In order to do this you must first find a cause or campaign then check with me if it counts as ‘lesser
known’. The cause you chose cannot be online (obviously it may have an online component) check in with me if you are unsure about this.

**Perusal commenting**
Due Weekly (Latest Midnight Monday)
Perusall is an e-reader platform that allows students and faculty to annotate the assigned readings and engage the reading material in a style akin to social media posting. Students can write full comments, “like” comments, use hashtags, link URLs to their comments and even use emoticons.

READ: How [Perusall Works](#) & how [Perusall scoring works](#)

![Anti-Vietnam march, by Marc Riboud (1967)](image)

**Weekly Individual exercises**
Due Weekly (Latest Midnight Sunday)
Each week will have its own asynchronous work assignment. These will be made available at the beginning of the week and will consist of materials to watch/listen to and a question to be answered. You should use all the resources at your disposal to explore the assignment. Each assignment should be 400-500 words. Only 10 of these assignments need be submitted.

**Protest Safety Group Assignment**
Due 10/16
For this work you will be decided into groups. Each group will research and present a document examining what individuals can do to maintain safety and security while participating in public protests. More details TBA.

![Protest in Portland by Alex Wittwer (2020)](image)

**Final Short Paper**
Due 12/10
The final assignment for the course is a paper on Digital Resistance in relation to The American Experience. This paper will require you to explore the concept of resistance in relation to the the ambiguous term of American experience.
Important Information You Should Read

Zoom
Synchronous class sessions will be held LIVE AND ONLINE via our Zoom Classroom. Students are expected to make a reasonable effort to attend these online courses (with video and audio on), but the uncertainty of the situation means there will be flexibility offered to students in terms of attendance (see attendance policy).

I am also very sensitive to the fact that students have multiple reasons you may not want to use your webcam, not the least of which is privacy. I cannot in good conscience teach about protest and activism and yet "demand" you all use your webcams... YET, it is to all our enormous benefit to try to bond in a course dealing with super current issues. Black screens are truly a challenge and make the online environment even more disconnected. I ask you to please consider using your webcam for this course. It is so hard to get to know you -- and for you to know each other -- if we can't see each other's faces. If this is a hardship, please reach out and discuss it with me so I understand your situation and we can find a good workaround.

What are lecture (even online) for?
They are not about facts – even if they contain them. They are highly inefficient as transfers of information compared with reading a book. A lecture is about changing students ways of seeing things, about pushing students to think harder, helping them to take intellectual risks, and showing them how you (the lecturer) learnt to do that. It's a conversation not a performance even if one side is more talkative than the other. This is why eye contact is important. The lecturer needs to see when the students are lost, glaze over, or when they have that “aha-experience”. For this the lecturer needs to 'feel' the room. It's the imperceptible difference between instructing and inspiring.

Effort
While it may seem odd to include in a syllabus, your effort is a required component of this course. The federal definition of course credit hours assumes a minimum of “two hours of out-of-class student work per Module for a semester hour.” According to this metric, a student should assume at least six hours of out-of-class work per Module for each 3-credit course.

Inclusivity
Inclusivity: Every student in this classroom, regardless of personal history or identity categories, is a valued member of this group. Your experiences are valuable and important, and you should feel free to share them as they become relevant to our class. No student in this class is ever expected or believed to speak for all members of a group.

In this classroom you have the right to determine your own identity. You have the right to be called by whatever name you

We protect ourselves from knowing the pain of others because it’s painful, and it’s uncomfortable.

Tunde Oyeneyin
wish, and that name to be pronounced correctly. You have the right to be referred to by whatever pronouns you wish. You have the right to adjust those things at any point in your education. If you find that there are aspects of course instruction, subject matter, or classroom environment that result in barriers to your inclusion, please contact me privately without fear of reprisal. For more see https://klangable.com/blog/teaching/inclusivity-policy/

**Attendance**

Paradoxically, attendance is more difficult online. There are many things that can go wrong and prevent us from being in front of the camera (see Zoom policy) or even online. It's also easy for the instructor to not notice when something is amiss online. Therefore the attendance policy of this course is “Talk to me”. If you cannot attend (or fail to attend) contact me as early as possible. There is work to be done and I want you to complete this course successfully. If you are experiencing difficulties with this course, I can help if you reach out to me. The worst thing you can do in college (and especially online) is to go dark and isolate yourself so please reach out.

**Scheduling**

Changes to the syllabus may be made at the instructor's discretion and if circumstances require. Participants will be notified of changes via Blackboard/university email. Participants are responsible for keeping up to date with these changes.

Once you have read this syllabus to completion please email me a picture of a cute puppy.

**Writing Aid**

Writing is a painful, but rewarding, process. For help and tips see https://klangable.com/blog/teaching/writing-resources/

**Writing Center**

If you struggle with the writing required in this course, please make use of the Writing Center. For more information about their services see https://www.fordham.edu/academics/programs_at_fordham_/english/writing_center

**Contacting Me**

Email is the best way to reach me for work related questions. Feel free email me anytime. Most often I reply within 24 hours, unless it is a holiday or weekend.

For more about communicating with faculty check out https://klangable.com/blog/teaching/annoy-the-faculty/

**University Statement on Academic Integrity**

A University, by its nature, strives to foster and recognize originality of thought. Originality can only be recognized, however, when people acknowledge the sources of ideas or works that are not their own. Therefore, students must maintain the highest standards with regards to honesty, effort and performance. As
a Jesuit, Catholic University, Fordham is committed to ensuring that all members of the academic community strive not only for excellence in scholarship but also for integrity of character. In the pursuit of knowledge and personal development, it is imperative that students present their own ideas and insights for evaluation, critique and eventual reformulation. As part of this process, each student must acknowledge the intellectual contribution of others. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to plagiarism, cheating on exams, falsification, unapproved collaboration, and destruction of library materials. For further details, consult the Standards of Academic Integrity on the University website.

Plagiarism
The following is a university-wide policy and those violating it will be subject to failure of the course. If you have any question concerning the plagiarism policy or about documentation of sources in work you produce in this course, come talk to me. For more information about how to cite see

Academic Coaching
Any student who struggles with time-management and/or organization is invited to one-on-one academic coaching sessions (typically once a week for 45 minutes). Please contact disabilityservices@fordham.edu for more information.

Accommodations
The Office of Disability Services at Fordham University helps to ensure equal educational access and opportunity for all members of our community. In the Jesuit tradition of cura personalis, members of the ODS staff work individually with each student to understand his or her strengths and limitations in order to develop their most effective and comprehensive accommodation plan. Fordham will offer reasonable and appropriate auxiliary aids and services to assist otherwise qualified persons in achieving access to its programs, services, and facilities once students meet with ODS for an initial intake meeting to develop an accommodation plan directly with the student in accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Students seeking accommodation(s) should the Rose Hill Office of Disability Services, (718) 817-0655 or email disabilityservices@fordham.edu.

If you believe that you have a disabiling condition that may interfere with your ability to participate in the activities, coursework, or assessment of the object of this course, please visit the Office of Disability Services, email, or call them.

Counseling and Psychological Services
University life is full of challenges. Fordham offers support for anyone who feels like they need help dealing with the pressures of life as a student. CPS offers free individual and group counseling and psychotherapy in a safe and confidential setting. For more information about their services see www.fordham.edu/campus_resources/student_services/counseling_and_psych/
**Student well-being**

Any student who faces difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat everyday, or who lacks a stable place to live is urged to contact your class dean for support. I also urge you to contact me, or our dept chair, about these or other hardships you may be going through. Your well-being is of primary importance to us. If you are facing challenges related to your physical or mental health, or obstacles like food or housing insecurity, please do not hesitate to reach out. **We can help.**