

SOCIO 376-0-20: Special Topics in Sociological Analysis:

Global Health and Transnational Social Movements

Spring Quarter 2011
MW 11:00am-12:20pm
Annenberg Hall G21

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Course Summary:

Increasingly in recent years, activists have been working and thinking transnationally—organizing across borders to challenge perceived global injustices, including injustices within the arena of “global health.” While various international institutions affect human health, many activists often claim these institutions have misplaced priorities, or that resources have been unfairly allocated. Much attention has been granted to the “global justice” movement, which has challenged global financial institutions (e.g. World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund, World Bank) involved in global development projects that affect human health. While global health institutions like the World Health Organization stand in complicated relationships with global neoliberal institutions, nation states, and movement organizations, they can be both targets and allies of activists. The network of pharmaceutical companies and global finance institutions have been key targets of transnational activists concerned with health as well. Needless to say, the challenges facing transnational social movements seeking to address global health problems are complex and numerous, but there have been many significant changes resulting from activists’ efforts.

To better understand the phenomenon of transnational social movements that address global health concerns, this course examines the formation, tactics, and effects of such networks. We will examine ways that movements interact with international and state institutions, organizing across national borders to galvanize resources and challenge authorities and elites. Investigation into theory and case studies will illuminate how certain social conditions enable or constrain the development of these networks, and how organizing across different local contexts can present

specific challenges. We will also take into account criticisms of transnational movements, especially regarding questions about the ways in which resources become allocated and distributed. The course will begin with an examination of humanitarian medical organizations such as “Partners in Health” that seek to establish the delivery of health care in developing nations, and will then turn to theorizing transnational social movements in relation to global health challenges. The latter portion of the class will be devoted to additional case studies including global AIDS treatment activism and global women’s health movements.

In the class we will address questions such as:

- What are transnational social movements, and what factors shape their mobilization and efficacy?
- What challenges do transnational movements face when organizing across borders and within different local contexts?
- What are the relationships between global health challenges, global inequalities, international health organizations, and transnational organizing efforts?
- What are the benefits and drawbacks of transnational social movement efforts for dealing with global health problems?
- What are the challenges specific to cases of organizing in response to different health problems?

Course Mechanics:

- Three books are required for the course, and are available at the Norris Center Bookstore:

Tracy Kidder. 2009. *Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World*. (New York: Random House). ISBN: 978-0812973013 [This is the book for the “One Book One Northwestern” program this year]

Jackie Smith. 2007. *Social Movements for Global Democracy*. (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press). ISBN: 978-0801887444

Meredeth Turshen. 2007. *Women's Health Movements: A Global Force for Change*. (New York: Palgrave MacMillan). ISBN: 978-1403978981

Additional readings are available on the Blackboard site for the course.

- **Course grade breakdown:**

Take Home Essay	30%
In-Class Midterm	30%
Take Home Final Exam	40%

- Students are responsible for all material presented in the readings, films, and lectures. **Attendance** is required in all class meetings. Come to class having *already read* the readings for that day (bring them with you), and be prepared to participate.

- **Late papers** will not be accepted, unless you contact me before the paper is due *and* submit a doctor's note. Please note that failing to keep electronic backups of your data (for example, on flash drives, CDs, external hard drives, or other computers) is not a sufficient excuse for late papers (in case your computer fails or hard drive crashes).
- I strictly enforce university regulations concerning **plagiarism and integrity of scholarship**. All cases **will be reported** to university authorities and will result in an **academic penalty**, typically a failing grade for the entire course. Please familiarize yourself with the Northwestern University academic integrity policy found online (<http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc>). All take-home writing assignments must be submitted to the “**Safe Assignments**” program in electronic form, in addition to paper form. This program compares papers with online material and other papers to ensure that there are no violations of the academic integrity policy. More information on using this program will follow.
- Please **be respectful of others** in class. This includes maintaining civility during class discussions, keeping cell phones off or on vibrate, arriving on time, and not being disruptive during lectures.
- Any requests for classroom or assignment **accommodations** for disability-related needs should be made as early as possible in the course. Please contact me by email or drop in my office hours.
- This syllabus and all lectures are ©2011 by Tom Waidzunas. **No recordings** of course lectures are permitted **without permission** of Professor Waidzunas, and no students are permitted to sell notes or be paid for taking notes without written permission.

Course Outline:

Part I. Humanitarian Biomedical Organizations

Week 1

Monday, March 28: Introduction: What is a “transnational social movement”?

Wednesday, March 30: Disaster Response

FILM: “The Quake” (PBS Frontline 2010)

Sanjeev Kaghram, et al. 2002. “From Santiago to Seattle: Transnational Advocacy Groups Restructuring World Politics.” Chapter 1 in *Restructuring World Politics: Transnational Social Movements, Networks, and Norms*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. pp. 3-10.

Read Kidder, pp. 3-32

Week 2

Monday, April 4: International Red Cross, Doctors without Borders

Read Kidder, remainder of Part I, Part II-Part III

Wednesday, April 6: Partners in Health

Read Kidder Part IV-V

Part II. Theorizing Transnational Movements in Context

Week 3

Monday, April 11: Global Framing, Opportunity Structures

Sidney Tarrow. 2006. “Global Framing.” Chapter 4 in *The New Transnational Activism*. New York: Cambridge University Press. pp. 59-76.

Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. “Transnational Advocacy Networks in International Politics: Introduction.” Chapter 1 in *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. pp.1-38.

Wednesday, April 13: Health Movements

Phil Brown, et al. 2004. “Embodied Health Movements: Uncharted Territory in Social Movement Research” *Sociology of Health and Illness* 26: 50-80.

Maria Paula Meneses, ““When there are no problems, we are healthy, no bad luck, nothing?: Towards an Emancipatory Understanding of Health and Medicine,” in *Another knowledge is possible: beyond northern epistemologies*, Ed. by Boaventura de Sousa Santos. New York: Verso. pp.352-380.

*****Take Home Essay Prompt Distributed**

Week 4

Monday, April 18: Global Institutions

Theodore Brown, et al. 2006. "The World Health Organization and the Transition from 'International' to 'Global' Public Health" *American Journal of Public Health*. 96 (1): 62-72.

Read Smith Chapter 1-4

Wednesday, April 20: Global Activist Networks

Read Smith Chapter 5-6

David Hulme and Michael Edwards. 1997. "NGOs, States, and Donors: An Overview." in *NGOs, States, and Donors: Too Close for Comfort?* Ed. by David Hulme and Michael Edwards. New York: St. Martin's Press. pp.3-22.

Part III. Case Studies of Global Health and Transnational Social Movements

Week 5

Monday, April 25: Alternative Political Spaces

FILM: "Another World is Possible" Rob Rooy, Susan Davis. 2006.

Read Smith Chapter 10

People's Health Movement et al. 2005. "Introduction" and "Part A: Health and Globalization, Chapter A1: Health for all in a 'borderless world'?" in *Global Health Watch 2005-2006: An Alternative Health Report*. New York: Zed Books. pp. 1-44.

*****Take Home Essay Due at Beginning of Class**

Wednesday, April 27: Malaria Activism

Readings to be determined

Week 6

Monday May 2: AIDS Treatment Activism

FILM: "Pills, Profits, Protest: Chronicle of the Global AIDS Movement" (Anne-christine d'Adesky, Shanti Avirgan, and Ann T. Rossetti 2005)

Raymond Smith and Patricia Siplon. 2006. "Many Places, One Goal: Connecting Global Actors" Chapter 3 in *Drugs into Bodies: Global AIDS Treatment Activism*. Westport, CT: Praeger. pp.81-116

Wednesday, May 4: Complexities of HIV/AIDS Organizing

Raymond Smith and Patricia Siplon. 2006. selection from "Win Some, Keep Going: Sustaining Global AIDS Treatment Activism" Chapter 4 in *Drugs into Bodies: Global AIDS Treatment Activism*. Westport, CT: Praeger. pp. 117-137.

Vinh-Kim Nguyen, Chapter 4: "Life Itself: Triage and Therapeutic Citizenship" in *Republic of Therapy: Triage and Sovereignty in West Africa's Time of AIDS*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. pp.89-110.

Week 7

Monday, May 9: Deaf Community Activism across Borders
Stuart Blume, 2010 Chapter 3: “The Cochlear Implant and the Deaf Community” and Chapter 4:
“Globalization of a Controversial Technology,” in *The Artificial Ear: Cochlear Implants
and the Culture of Deafness*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. pp.58-110.

Wednesday, May 11: *In-Class Midterm. BRING BLUE BOOK.**

Week 8

Monday May 16: Global Women’s Health Movements and Structural Inequalities
Read Turshen CH 1-2

Wednesday, May 18: Women’s Health Movements: Improving Environments and Stopping
Violence
Read Turshen CH3 and 5

Week 9

Monday May 23: Women’s Health Movements: Health Care and Reproductive Rights
Read Turshen CH 4, 6, and 7
*****Take Home Final Exam Distributed**

Wednesday May 25: Labor, Environment, and Health
Stephen Zavestoski. 2009. “The Struggle for Justice in Bhopal: A New/Old Breed of
Transnational Social Movement” *Global Social Policy*. 9(3): 383-407.
Leslie A. Byster and Ted Smith, “From Grassroots to Global: The Silicon Valley Toxics
Coalition’s Milestones in Building a Movement for Corporate Accountability and
Sustainability in the High-Tech Industry.” in *Challenging the Chip: Labor Rights and
Environmental Justice in the Global Electronics Industry*. Ed. by Ted Smith, David A.
Sonnenfeld, and David N. Pellow. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
pp. 111-119.

Week 10

Monday, May 30: Memorial Day Holiday, No Class

Tuesday, May 31 WCAS Reading Period Begins

***** Take Home Final Exam due by end of scheduled final exam time *****