SOCIOLOGY 361
CATHOLIC THOUGHT AND SOCIAL ACTION
Fall 2010
Mondays: 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Instructor:      Office Hours:
Susan Crawford Sullivan, Ph.D.   M: 1:30-2:30
Beaven 225                     T: 12:30-2:00
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“In democratic countries, knowledge of how to combine is the mother
of all other forms of knowledge; on its progress depends that of all the others.”
-De Toqueville

A. Introduction

The U.S. Catholic Bishops’ Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) states that
Catholic social teaching emphasizes a “preferential option for the poor.” Organizing has been
the CCHD’s key poverty reduction strategy since its inception: “The U.S. Catholic Bishops’
domestic anti-poverty program, the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, aims to
address the root causes of poverty by empowering the poor through a methodology of
participation and by supporting community-run organizations.”

In this seminar, students will explore the relationship between Catholic social thought,
sociology, and community action. Community organizing brings “the sociological
imagination” -- that is, connecting private troubles with public issues – to life. People
mobilize to address common concerns by forming networks, launching social movements,
engaging in political advocacy, and establishing service agencies. Why do some efforts fail
and some succeed? Does community action make a difference? How do the social teachings
of the Catholic Church relate?

You will explore these and other questions by taking responsibility for an organizing project
with a campus or community-based organization. As reflective practitioners of community
action, you will reflect on your projects in analyzing course material on Catholic social
thought, leadership, and organizations.

B. Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, you will:

(1) Develop a deeper understanding of Catholic social teaching and its relation to key
areas of sociology

(2) Understand how Catholic social thought relates to community action

(3) Drawing on social science theories and your community-based learning project,
develop an understanding of how to put organizing into practice
C. Requirements

1. You will base your class work on a community-based learning organizing project of your own choosing. You may initiate their own project or serve with one of various community or campus organizations. You can continue an existing project or start a new one. A project requires mobilizing others to achieve a measurable outcome by the end of the semester. You are required to spend approximately five hours per week on your project.

2. There is a required “skills session” on Saturday, September 25 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m at Harvard’s John Kennedy School of Government in Cambridge. This all-day workshop is a unique opportunity to join students from several area colleges who are enrolled in a course on community engagement this semester. This will be an exciting chance gain practical hands-on organizing skills and work with other students studying organizing. The skills session will be led by Harvard sociologist Marshall Ganz, whose “Notes on Organizing” we will be reading this semester.

3. The seminar meets for two and a half hours once a week for thirteen weeks. In each session, we will divide time between discussion of readings and applying the readings to student projects. You are required to attend all class sessions, do the reading, and take an active part in discussions.

4. Reflection Papers: You will keep field notes on the basis of which you will submit reflection papers, beginning the fifth week of class. Reflection papers should be one page single spaced and should analyze your project in light of the week’s readings. You are required to do five reflection papers over the course of the semester. The first two reflection papers and the last one are required; you may skip any three of the remaining papers.

5. Presentation. You will sign up for one 20-30 minute presentation, which will present your project to the class and analyze your project in light of the week’s topic. These will occur beginning week 5 and take place at the beginning of the second half of the seminar meeting, after a theoretical discussion of the week’s readings.

6. Mid term paper: On Oct 25, you will submit a seven page paper analyzing whether or not you think your project is working. The paper will not be graded on whether or not the project is working but rather on the analysis of the project based on course concepts and readings in Catholic social thought, social science, and organizing theory.

7. Final term paper: At the end of the semester, you will submit a 20 page term paper, analyzing your project in light of class theory and readings. Further guidance about this paper will be provided later in the semester. Paper is due at 5 p.m. on Dec 10.

Grading:
Reflection papers 15%
Midterm paper 25%
Class Participation/presentation 20%
Final paper 40%
Readings
There are two books for this seminar. Additional readings will be placed on electronic reserves, marked ER in the syllabus.


Academic honesty: Academic honesty in all forms is essential in all of your work for this course. The Department of Sociology and Anthropology adheres to the College’s policy on academic honesty.

From the Holy Cross policy on academic honesty: (http://www.holycross.edu/catalog/academic-honesty-policy.pdf):

As an institution devoted to teaching, learning, and intellectual inquiry, Holy Cross expects all members of the College community to abide by the highest standards of academic integrity. Any violation of academic honesty undermines the student-teacher relationship, thereby wounding the whole community. The principal violations of academic honesty are plagiarism, cheating, and collusion.

**Plagiarism** is the act of taking the words, ideas, data, illustrative material, or statements of someone else, without full and proper acknowledgment, and presenting them as one’s own.

**Cheating** is the use of improper means or subterfuge to gain credit or advantage. Forms of cheating include the use, attempted use, or improper possession of unauthorized aids in any examination or other academic exercise submitted for evaluation; the fabrication or falsification of data; misrepresentation of academic or extracurricular credentials; and deceitful performance on placement examinations. It is also cheating to submit the same work for credit in more than one course, except as authorized in advance by the course instructors.

**Collusion** is assisting or attempting to assist another student in an act of academic dishonesty.

Please read and familiarize yourself with the whole policy. You must develop and submit your own original work for this course, properly citing all sources used, including books, chapters, newspaper, journal, and magazine articles, websites, or other sources. You may not submit work you completed for another class to satisfy the requirements for this course. Internship supervisors will be consulted throughout the semester to ensure the best possible experience for you and to ensure that you are doing the work satisfactorily. If this is unclear to you, please speak with me for further clarification. Breaches of academic honesty will result in a failing grade for the assignment and will be reported to the class dean.

**Classroom etiquette:** You are expected to participate in classroom discussions in a respectful manner, expressing differences of opinion with classmates in a civil way. Class will begin on time. Please turn your cell phone or other gadgets off, as you may not text, surf the web, etc. during class.
COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1 (Sep 6): Introduction to the class
Welcome. This week we get acquainted, get an overview of the course, set goals, answer questions, and discuss internships.

Marshall Ganz, “What is Organizing”


Week 2 (Sep 13): Introduction to community action and the Catholic social tradition
This week we begin learning about the Catholic social tradition and how it relates to sociology and organizing.

C. Wright Mills, “The Sociological Imagination,” (ER)

*Living the Catholic Social Tradition*: Chapter 1, “Living the Catholic Social Tradition: Introduction and Overview” (pp. 3-12); Chapter 3: “From Industrialization to Globalization: Church and Social Ministry” (pp. 41-56); Chapter 4: “Catholic Social Teaching: Starting with the Common Good” (pp. 59-81)

John McKnight, "Services are Bad for People," (pp. 31-35) (ER)

http://www.nccbuscc.org/sdwp/international/EconomicJusticeforAll.pdf

Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, Part II, “Caritas: The Practice of Love by the Church as a community of love”
(http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est_en.html)

Week 3 (Sep 20): The Catholic social tradition, continued
This week we will read more about the history and key themes of Catholic social teaching and look at the contemporary issue of immigration.

*Living Justice: Catholic Social Teaching in Action*: Ch 1, “An Invitation to Catholic Social Ethics” (pp. 1-23); Ch 2 “Going Public” (pp. 25-51); Ch 3, “How We Inherited the Tradition of Catholic Social Teaching” (pp. 55-76); Ch 4, “The Sources and Methods of Catholic Social Teaching” (pp. 81-111)

*Rerum Novarum (On the Condition of Labor)* 1891, Pope Leo XIII,
http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/leo_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum_en.html

Solidarity Will Transform the World: Stories of Hope from Catholic Relief Services, pp. 3-35.

**Week 4 (Sep 27): Learning in the organizing tradition**

This week we explore “how” we will learn over the course of the semester using a pedagogy of “reflective practice,” and we consider the tradition in which organizing is rooted. We also focus on putting into words the sources of your motivation to learn leadership, organizing, and social action. Readings from psychologist Ellen Langer will help us to develop a more mindful understanding of our motivations and actions. This is important to understand not only for its own sake, but because whenever one assumes a role of leadership, especially in a community other than one’s own, people expect an account of who you are and why you are there. These questions of what I am called to do, what the community is called to do, and what we are called to do now are at least as old as Moses’ conversation with God at the Burning Bush: Why me? asks Moses, when he is called to free his people. And, who – or what – is calling me? And, why these people? Why here, now, in this place?

*The Bible*, Exodus, Chapter 2-6 (http://www.catholic.org/bible/)


Marshall Ganz, Notes on Learning to Organize (ER)

Marshall Ganz, What is Public Narrative? (Working Paper) and worksheet (ER)

**Week 5 (Oct 4): Mapping your project world: Actors, Values, Interests, Resources, and Power**

Can you “map” the social world in which your organizing project is unfolding? Who are the actors? What do they want? And why? Are there leaders, a constituency, an opposition? What needs, values, and interests are in play? How do we get the power to act on our interests? What resources does your constituency need to act on its interests? Who controls them? What are their interests? And where do you fit into the picture? How does a social science framework, such as the one provided by Walker, help you understand actors and interests? Does your project align with any of the key themes of Catholic social teaching? Which ones?


*Living Justice: Catholic Social Teaching in Action*. Ch 5 “Nine Key Themes of Catholic Social Teaching (pp. 113-167).
Living the Catholic Social Tradition, Chapter 7, “The Resurrection Project”

Marshall Ganz, “Notes on Actors, Values, and Interests” and “Notes on Actors, Resources, and Power” (ER)
- Project report due
- Reflection paper #1 (required): Actors, Interests, Resources and Power
- First student presentation

Week 6 (Oct 18): Leadership
Where do leaders come from? How do we know one when we see one? What do they actually do?

Ronald Heifetz, Leadership without Easy Answers, Chapter 1, “Values in Leadership,” (pp. 13-27) (ER)

Jo Freeman, "The Tyranny of Structurelessness," Berkeley Journal of Sociology, 1970 (ER)

Dr Martin Luther King, A Testament of Hope, “The Drum Major Instinct,” (pp. 259-67) (ER)

The Bible, Exodus, Chapter 18 (http://www.catholic.org/bible/)

Robert Coles, The Call of Service: A Witness to Idealism, Chapter 3, “Satisfactions,” (pp. 68-94), Chapter 4, “Hazards,” (pp.115-144) (ER)

Mother Teresa of Calcutta, My Life for the Poor, Chapter 9, “My Spiritual Principles,” (pp. 101-114) (ER)

Marshall Ganz, “Notes on Leadership” (ER)

- Reflection paper #2: Leadership (required)
- Student presentation

Week 7 (Oct 25): Relationships and building community
Organizers build relationships to construct a “community of interest”, a constituency. Through relationships we come to understand our interests and develop the resources to act upon them.

Dorothy Day, The Long Loneliness: The Autobiography of Dorothy Day Part III “Love is the Measure” (pp. 169-243 only) (ER)

Ian Simmons, “On One-to-Ones,” 1998 (ER)


Kris Rondeau, “A Woman’s Way of Organizing,” Labor Research Review #18, (pp. 45-59) (ER)
Marshall Ganz, Notes on Relationships (ER)

- Student presentation
- **Midterm paper due**

**Week 8 (Nov 1): Interpretation, Story, and Motivation**
This week, we reconsider the role of motivation in organizing and the role of stories of “us” and “now” in generating action.


Saul Alinsky, Chapter 6, *Reveille for Radicals*, “Community Traditions and Organizations,” (p.76-88) (ER)

Dennis Chong, *Collective Action and the Civil Rights Movement*, Chapter 5, “Creating the Motivation to Participate in Collective Action” (ER)


Marshall Ganz: “Notes on Interpretation I: Story” (ER)

- Reflection paper #3: Story, Interpretation, Motivation
- Student presentation

**Week 9 (Nov 8): Strategy and Deliberation**
We reflect this week on a “classic” tale of strategy recounted in the Book of Samuel: the story of David and Goliath, a tale that argues resourcefulness can compensate for lack of resources by developing “strategic capacity.”

*The Bible*, Book of Samuel, Chapter 17, Verses 4-49 (http://www.catholic.org/bible/)

Marshall Ganz, “Why David Sometimes Wins: Strategic Capacity in Social Movements,” in *Rethinking Social Movements* (pp. 1-10) (ER)

Kim Bobo, *Organizing for Social Change*, Chapter 4 “Developing a Strategy (pp. 30-47), Chapter 12, “Planning and Facilitating Meetings” (pp. 128-139) (ER)

*Living the Catholic Social Tradition*, “Introduction to Case Studies” and “Young Visionaries in the South Bronx” (pp. 89-104)

Marshall Ganz: Notes on Interpretation II: Strategy (ER)

- Reflection paper 4: Strategy
- Student presentation

**Week 10 (Nov 15): Action**
This week we look more closely at action. Acting to make change involves risk, and risk requires courage.

Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, Chapters 4 -5 (pp. 60-89) (http://digital.library.upen.edu/women/addams/hullhouse/hullhouse.html)

Mary Beth Rogers, *Cold Anger*, Chapter 11, “Leave Them Alone. They’re Mexicans,” (pp. 105-126) (ER)


Marshall Ganz, Notes on Action (ER)

- Reflection paper #5: Action
- Student presentation

**Week 11 (Nov 22): Communities in Action: Campaigns and Organizations**
Organizers conduct campaigns to build organizations, and build organizations capable of running campaigns. Successful organizing campaigns can create lasting organizations. But creating organizations that continue to respond, change, and adapt requires learning how to manage the dilemmas of unity and diversity, inclusion and exclusion, responsibility and participation, and leadership and accountability.

*Living the Catholic Social Teaching*, Chapter 13, “Students Against Sweatshops”

Excerpts from Catholic social teaching on labor, unions, and workers rights (ER)


Si Kahn, Organizing, Chapter 3, “Organizations,” (pp. 55-77) (ER)

Marshall Ganz, Notes on Campaigns and Notes on Organizations (ER)

- Reflection paper #6: Campaigns and Organizations
- Student presentation

**Week 12 (Nov 29): Becoming a Good Organizer**
This week we reflect on organizing as a craft, art, and vocation: why do it, what can make a person good at it, what to do about the rest of our lives, how we can make sure we continue to grow?


*Mindfulness*, Chapter 8, “Mindfulness on the Job” (pp. 133-148) (ER)


“Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Reflections of the U.S. Catholic Bishops,” pp. 1-3 (ER)

Cesar Chavez, “The Organizer’s Tale,” *Ramparts Magazine*, July 1966, (pp. 43-50) (ER)

Marshall Ganz, Notes on Becoming a Good Organizer (ER)

- Reflection paper #7: Becoming a Good Organizer
- Student presentation

**Week 13 (Dec 6): Where do we go from here?**
So what does organizing contribute to public life? How does organizing relate to sociology? How does the social teaching of the Catholic church relate?


Theda Skocpol, “Unraveling From Above,” *The American Prospect*, March 1996 (pp. 20-25) (ER)


*Caritas in Veritate (Charity in Truth)*, 2009, Pope Benedict XVI. paragraphs 53-67 and paragraphs 78-79

9
• Reflection paper #8 (required): Where do we go from here?