HIST-GA.2790 Comparative Social Movements
This course examines a variety of global social movements of the 20th century, including those in South Africa, Argentina, Palestine and the US (civil rights, the Ku Klux Klan, and women's liberation), along with theoretical reading about social movements. It is a research seminar designed to support students in producing a paper related to social movements in their own field of specialization, so the syllabus may change to reflect students' interests.

Social movements have been theorized primarily by social scientists: a typical sociological definition is, episodes of collective behavior and action that aim to create social change and command significant grassroots participation. We will consider these theories but also asking questions of the sorts historians (and thoughtful activists) must ask, such as: what contexts and local histories have engendered social movements? how have social movements constructed identities? have there been entirely apolitical social movements? have there been elite social movements? when and why have social movements become violent? have social movements been inevitably vulnerable to demagoguery and authoritarianism?