French social theorist Michel Foucault famously argued that where there is power, there is resistance to power. Through the lens of social history, this course will focus on social movements and the rhetoric of their leaders. We will examine methods of communication that challenge dominant ideologies such as political tyranny, racial inequality, patriarchy, and industrial capitalism, while encountering arresting message mediums such as public speeches, essays, literature, photography, music, film, and the body. By these means, we will gain an understanding of the historical roots of much contemporary social controversy concerning issues of social justice.

Objectives of the course

In this course will be engaging with the rhetoric of great American dissenters through individual analyses in written and presentation form. Students will be required to write short reaction papers to the course’s readings and audio/visual materials as well as to research and analyze the socio-political context and rhetoric of an historical figure of their choice, which they will share with the class at the end of the semester in an oral presentation. In addition, because this class is not primarily a lecture course, students are expected to participate robustly in the class exercises and discussions that ensue throughout the semester. In all these ways, we hope to develop an appreciation for the passion, eloquence, and courage found in big ideas resisting institutional power, and some means to articulate our understandings and reactions to them in written and oral form.

Some general goals of the course as a part of the Perspectives on Inquiry unit:

- Engage students as active learners through inquiry into interdisciplinary questions
- Help students learn how knowledge from a variety of perspectives can be integrated to provide richer and more complex insights.
- Introduce students to the intellectual habits of: critical thinking; critical reading; accuracy and thoroughness; creativity; using reasoning and evidence to support arguments; thoughtful consideration of others’ ideas and positions; effective oral, written, and visual communication; using textual, empirical, and other kinds of research; effective learning strategies; and time management.
- Help students identify with MTU’s mission to promote diversity, creativity, leadership, and teamwork in order to meet the changing needs of our society.
Requirements and Grading

Required Reading

Choose ONE novel from the following:
- Richard Wright, *Native Son*
- Sinclair Lewis, *Babbitt*
- Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid’s Tale*
- Edward Abbey, *The Monkey Wrench Gang*

Additional reading posted on Blackboard under “Course Content”

20% Attendance and participation:
You are expected to arrive on time, having read the class’s assigned readings, and prepared to participate in discussions. This includes the quality with which you ask and answer questions and make relevant comments in class that demonstrate your efforts in understanding the reading materials. Each absence beyond three excused absences will result in a loss of 5% credit toward this part of your grade. If you have ten absences or more you will NOT receive a passing grade. Please be aware that absences are not an acceptable excuse for not having done the required work. You are expected to find out from a classmate what you missed in the event that you are absent. If you have a special problem with attendance, please bring it to my attention as soon as possible.

It is important to me that you demonstrate your commitment to participating in this class by arriving on time. I consider it a significant distraction for students to enter and exit at times other than the designated start and finish of the class. Thus, for each two times you are late, it will count as one absence. I also ask that you plan your schedule so that you will not need bathroom breaks in the middle of the class (with the exception of emergencies, of course). Finally, cell phones, blackberries ipods, and other electronic devices are not to be used in class.

Writing assignments (details on all assignments will be provided):

15% Credit but ungraded:
You will keep an electronic journal in which you will respond to the readings, class discussions, and exercises in seven separate entries, about 3 typed pages. There will be two deadlines for turning in your journals, 10/5 and 11/20.

30% Graded:
Novel response paper, 4-5 pages (15%)
Rhetorical analysis, 4-5 (15&)

25% Research paper and presentation
The class will culminate in a final research paper on a dissenter of your choice. There are four parts to this assignment:
**Part One (due October 26):** One page description of the dissenter you wish to study, including why you wish to study this person and why the historical context is especially noteworthy.

**Part Two (due November 11):** Three to four pages on the historical context in which your dissenter lived, a short discussion (or preliminary analysis) of the mode of rhetoric the dissenter employed, and a bibliography that includes a scholarly biography and two additional scholarly sources. (It’s okay if you haven’t read them yet, but you should be looking.)

**Part Three (due 11/30-12/11):** A short presentation of your dissenter to the class. This should include a visual component or a performative aspect if you prefer, e.g., playing of music, or reading of poetry, using visual art, etc.

**Part Four (due 12/11):** Your final research paper, 8-10 typed pages, not including your bibliography and any supplemental materials you wish to include.

10% **Quizzes:**

There will be periodic unannounced open book quizzes given at the beginning of class to insure that students keep up with the course’s reading. The lowest score will be dropped. There are no make-ups for the quizzes.

**Evaluation Standards and Policies:**

A = Excellent. Work is outstanding work in all respects. This work demonstrates comprehensive and solid understanding of course material, and presents thoughtful interpretations, well-focused and original insights, and well-reasoned commentary and analysis. Writing demonstrates impressive understanding of readings, discussions, themes and ideas. Includes skillful and precise use of source materials, illuminating examples and illustrations, and fluent expression, which is well organized and grammatically polished.

B = Good. This work demonstrates a thorough and accurate understanding of course material, presents a reasonable degree of insight and broad levels of analysis. Written work reflects competence, but is somewhat general or a bit vague, or otherwise lacking in precision, and stays at a general or predictable level of understanding. Although analytical, writing presents more description than analysis. Arguments are solid but not thoroughly original or polished. Source materials, examples, illustrations are used appropriately and articulation/writing is clear. Papers have been carefully proofread.

C = Adequate/fair. This work demonstrates somewhat fragmented understanding of readings, discussions, themes and ideas. Shows acquaintance with reading and ideas, but not intellectual engagement. Written work is choppy and arguments somewhat difficult to follow, examples are vague or irrelevant, and ideas are imprecise. Source materials may be used inadequately or inappropriately, and arguments lack concrete, specific examples and illustrations, are incomplete or expressing some significant errors or weaknesses. Writing/articulation veers toward underdeveloped ideas, off-topic sources or examples, personal anecdotes, creative writing etc., or may be loaded with typos and other technical errors.
D = Unsatisfactory. This work demonstrates a serious lack or error in understanding, and fails to express acquaintance with readings, discussions, themes, and ideas, in short, the most rudimentary aspects of the course. Written work is choppy, fractured and unclear. Arguments follow little logical development, or work presents little discernable argument whatsoever. Sources may be used entirely inappropriately or not at all, and writing/articulation appears deficient.

F = Failed/Unacceptable. This work does not demonstrate understanding of topics, ideas, and readings. This also includes the grade for work not submitted or attempted, or work that has been plagiarized.

**For all written assignments, please follow this format: in the upper left corner, include your name, course name, date, and assignment heading or paper title (no title pages). Type all work, double space, number all pages using a header in the upper right hand corner, and STAPLE multiple pages. Follow a formal style manual for guidelines on citations, quotations, etc. Make sure you edit/proofread your paper before submitting it. Your grade will partly be based on your ability to follow the norms and conventions of writing using Standard English styles and conventions. Also please see the forthcoming handout: “Content, Style & Form.”

Recommended style manuals:

**LATE PAPERS will result in a drop in a letter grade.** You may email your paper ONLY in the event of an emergency that precludes you from coming to class.

**PLAGIARISM is not tolerated and will result in failing the assignment and possibly the course.

Here is how the University defines plagiarism:

*Plagiarism:* Knowingly copying another’s work or ideas and calling them one’s own or not giving proper credit or citation. This includes but is not limited to reading or hearing another’s work or ideas and using them as one’s own; quoting, paraphrasing, or condensing another’s work without giving proper credit; purchasing or receiving another’s work and using, handling, or submitting it as one’s own work.

Please note that all materials used in the construction of your written work (notes, outlines, rough drafts, etc.) should be saved until you have received a passing grade from me.

**University Policies:**

Academic regulations and procedures are governed by University policy. Academic dishonesty cases will be handled in accordance with the University’s policies. For more information on this serious breach of conduct, see: http://www.studentaffairs.mtu.edu/dean/judicial/policies/academic_integrity.html

If you have a disability that could affect your performance in this class or that requires an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act, please see me as soon as possible so
that we can make appropriate arrangements. The Affirmative Action Office has asked that you be made aware of the following:

Michigan Tech complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at Michigan Tech, please call the Dean of Students Office, at 487-2212. For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department head or the Affirmative Action Office, at 487-3310.

For more information on these policies, see:
Affirmative Action:
http://www.admin.mtu.edu/aoa/
Disability Services:
http://www.admin.mtu.edu/urel/studenthandbook/student_services.html#disability
Equal Opportunity Statement: