SOCILOGY 476 (Topics in Sociological Analysis)  
Political Sociology of the State  
(The Many Hands of the State)  
Fall 2019, Tuesdays, 4:30 – 6:50 pm

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Board of Lady Managers of the Columbian Exposition Chair  
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Office hours: Thursdays, 3:35 – 4:35 pm, and by appointment

The seminar provides an overview of the theoretical and empirical debates focusing on  
states as institutions engaged in coercion and competition; regulation and redistribution;  
the classification, stratification and production of citizens/subjects; production and  
reproduction. We discuss the emergence, development and futures of states and  
empires, and their (usually uncertain) boundaries. Sociology 476 is a seminar in which  
students are active participants in discussions of readings. I encourage you to come to  
talk with me after class or during office hours or by appointment, to discuss questions  
about the course material or ideas for projects related to it.

Course Requirements:

(1) Participation in seminar discussions: Regular attendance and active engagement  
in discussions on the part of all members of the seminar is crucial to the success of the  
enterprise; attendance is mandatory. If you need to miss a class for a good reason,  
simply email me ahead of time and you will be excused. Please come into each seminar  
prepared to express your opinions and voice your views in acts of comradely contention  
with each other on all aspects of our intellectual endeavors.

Constitutes approximately 20% of your grade

(2) Participation in class discussion forum/blog, and contributing one or two lead  
blog entries [with appropriate scholarly citations and references] addressed to readings  
of the relevant week. The lead blog entry will identify and focus on a theme, topic, or  
problem in a critical and evaluative (i.e. not descriptive or reconstructive) mode, taking a  
stand and proposing an agenda for discussion. Each week, one or two students will  
serve as lead bloggers; after meeting with me the week before the readings for which  
they are responsible, they will write a blog entry for that week’s readings, to be posted  
by 5:00 pm Monday. All the other students should post replies by 11:00 am Monday.  
Everyone should read all posts before class.

Constitutes approximately 20% of your grade
(3): Critical Papers

(a) Two (8-10pp) critical papers focused on seminar material. These papers will address particular debates related to seminar readings; they are not meant to be research papers but rather scholarly interrogative essays (with appropriate text citation and references) written in your own authorial voice, well-documented, and engaging themes, problems, topics, and difficulties posed by the thinkers and texts addressed in this seminar. You are free to bring in empirical material with which you are engaging in your own research projects. The first paper should attend to (selected) readings and issues raised in the first half of the seminar (weeks 1-5) and the second with texts and issues raised from the second half (weeks 6-10). Although you should take care not to overlap material, themes, and arguments in your essays, the second paper may be an extension of themes identified in the first, or you may write two separate and unrelated papers. Each paper constitutes approximately 30% of your grade.

Due dates for the papers are as follows:
Paper #1: Monday, October 28, 2019 (on weeks 1-5)
Paper #2: Monday, December 9, 2019 (on weeks 6-10)

(b) For advanced graduate students and only with my permission: One (18-20pp) paper focused both on seminar readings and additional scholarship on states in sociology, history, political science. A memo outlining how you would engage the seminar readings in conversation with your topic is due October 14, 2019. A first draft of the paper (on which I'll provide comments and suggestions for revision) must be submitted on November 11, 2019. The final draft is due December 9, 2019.

The paper constitutes approximately 60% of your grade.

All papers must be printed, using no less than 11 point font, with hard copies put in my mailbox in the Department of Sociology, by no later than 5:00 pm on the due date; please also post on Canvas.

Class format:

At the beginning of class, lead bloggers will propose an agenda for discussion, to which we can add or modify. Our first order of business will be to clarify what is the argument being presented, answer questions of fact about the topic and get our definitions straight. Then we move into an evaluative phase of discussion, in which we will both appreciate and criticize the works we have read. Finally, we will try to summarize what we think about the particular topic under discussion.

Please, no cellphones, tablets or laptops in class, as they distract you, your peers and me. (I know there are some costs to this policy, but I am convinced that the benefits outweigh them: https://www.npr.org/2016/04/17/474525392/attention-students-put-your-laptops-away )
Communication: This course will use the Canvas course management system (http://www.it.northwestern.edu/education/learning-management/login.html). You are responsible for logging in, checking regularly for posted announcements, and obtaining readings and assignments from the site. You will receive course announcements that will be sent to the students’ registered campus email address. In addition, I usually communicate with you by email, so please check every weekday. The easiest way to reach me – besides in class and during office hours – is via email at a-orloff@northwestern.edu. I generally respond to emails within 48 hours (except weekends and university holidays/vacations). It’s helpful if you can put the name or number of the course in the subject line of your email.

Canvas course website: Readings not available in the required texts or online through Northwestern libraries will be posted to the course site under the “Modules” tab, and are marked with an asterisk in the syllabus. Assignments are also posted under “Modules” for the relevant week.

Please do not record the class without my express permission, (or sell, give away, or otherwise make public the notes taken in this class; this includes any of the various websites that facilitate this).

Health and safety: Students can find useful resources for safety and security, academic support, and mental and physical health and well-being at the NUhelp website and app. I am also happy to talk with you outside of class about any concerns you may have about the course, college life, or any other topics.

Academic integrity: Students are responsible for reading and understanding Northwestern’s Academic Integrity policies. All work must be your own. See the WCAS website on academic integrity and Academic Integrity: A Basic Guide for more information.”

Accessibility: Any student with a documented disability needing accommodations is requested to contact the Accessible NU Center: http://www.northwestern.edu/accessibleenu/about-us/our-office/evanstoncampus/index.html.

Please also speak with me as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first two weeks of class). All discussions will remain confidential. My office is, unfortunately, not wheelchair-accessible (it’s on the second floor of one of Northwestern’s old houses); however, I am happy to arrange a meeting in an accessible office.
Course readings: We will read excerpts from books, and a number of articles. I expect you can find published articles through Northwestern library’s online services. Book excerpts will be posted to the course site in Canvas (before class begins), under “Modules.” The schedule of readings is open to revision by seminar participants. In many weeks, there are too many pieces to read – this is the product of my desire to bring in a wide range of viewpoints and the sheer volume of scholarship on states. We will decide collectively on what we want to focus, or decide on a division of labor.

The syllabus is subject to change by decision of class members or in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

The following books are available for purchase through Norris or other online booksellers:

Required:

Mara Loveman, National Colors: Racial Classification and the State in Latin America (Oxford University Press, 2014).


George Steinmetz, editor, State/Culture: State-Formation after the Cultural Turn (Cornell University Press, 1999).

Recommended (we’ll be reading several essays from the collections, but not the entire book, or excerpts from single-authored books; many of these are available relatively inexpensively online); items marked with an asterisk have been put on reserve.


*Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol, editors, *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge University Press, 1985).


Seminar Schedule

week 1
Tuesday, September 24, 2019: Overview of Historical and Comparative Political Analyses of States and Introduction to the Seminar

Required reading:

*Kimberly Morgan and Ann Shola Orloff, eds., “Introduction,” in *The Many Hands of the State: Theorizing Political Authority and Social Control*, edited by Morgan and Orloff (Cambridge University Press, 2017); the essay will also be posted on the course site on Canvas.


Stephan Leibfried, et al., *Oxford Handbook on Transformation of the State* (Oxford University Press, 2015) – online resource from NU library:
- Jonah Levy, “Changing Perspectives on the State”

week 2
Tuesday, October 1, 2019:
Bringing the State Back In: War, Revolution, Taxes, States
(we will decide collectively which articles/pieces we want to focus on)

Required reading (continues on following page):

Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China* (Cambridge University Press, 1979), Introduction and Conclusion, and (recommended) as much of the rest as you can manage.

Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol, editors, *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge University Press, 1985):
- *Theda Skocpol, “Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research,”* pp.3-43


- Ajay Mehrotra, "Taxation as the Lifeblood of the Modern American State."
- Meyer Kestnbaum, "Unexpected Adversaries: The Revolution in War at the End of the Eighteenth Century."
- Christian Davenport, "Performing Order: An Examination of the Seemingly Impossible Task of Subjugating Large Numbers of People, Everywhere, All the Time."

**Recommended reading:**


Giovanni Arrighi, *The long twentieth century: Money, power, and the origins of our time* (Verso, 1994).


**week 3**

**Tuesday, October 8, 2019:**

**Bringing the State Back In: Welfare and Political Economy**

*Required reading (continues on following page):*

(we will decide collectively which articles/pieces we want to focus on)


Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol, editors, Bringing the State Back In (Cambridge University Press, 1985) read at least one of the following chapters:

- "Alice Amsden, "The state and Taiwan's economic development," pp.78-106.


Peter Evans and Patrick Heller, "Human development, state transformation and the politics of the developmental state," The Oxford Handbook of Transformations of the State (Oxford University Press, 2013; online resource).

Recommended reading:


Kathleen Thelen, How Institutions Evolve: The Political Economy of skills in Germany, Britain, the United States, and Japan (Cambridge University Press, 2004).


week 4
October 15, 2019
States and Culture

Required reading:


- George Steinmetz, “Introduction: Culture and The State,” pp.1-49
- Pierre Bourdieu, "Rethinking the State: Genesis and Structure of the Bureaucratic Field," pp.53-75
- Julia Adams, “Culture in Rational-Choice Theories of State-Formation,” pp.98-122

Recommended reading:

other essays in the *State/Culture* volume


week 5
Tuesday, October 22, 2019:
States, Success and Failure, Development and Democracy

Required reading (continues on following page):
(we will decide collectively which articles/pieces we want to focus on)


*Recommended reading:*

Apter and Sohrabi in *State/Culture*


Tuong Vu, *Paths to Development in Asia: South Korea, Vietnam, China, and Indonesia* (Cambridge University Press, 2010),

**SHORT CRITICAL ESSAY #1 DUE BY MONDAY, OCTOBER 28, HARD COPY IN PROFESSOR ORLOFF’S MAILBOX; PLEASE ALSO POST ON CANVAS**

**week 6**

**Tuesday, October 29, 2019:**

**American Political Development and the American State**

*Required reading:*

(we will decide collectively which articles/pieces we want to focus on)


**Recommended reading:**


**week 7**  
**Tuesday, November 5, 2019:**  
**Recognizing States, Bounding States, Implementing States**

**Required reading:**  
(we will decide collectively which articles/pieces we want to focus on)


Recommended reading:


**week 8**
**Tuesday, November 12, 2019:**
**States, Empires and the Transnational**

Required reading (continues on following page):
(we will decide collectively which articles/pieces we want to focus on)


- George Steinmetz, “Social Fields at the Scale of Empires: Revising Bourdieu’s Theory”
- Iza Hussin, "Colonial Conflations and the Making of the Modern Muslim State.”


Ann Laura Stoler, "Tense and tender ties: The politics of comparison in North American history and (post) colonial studies." The Journal of American History 88, no. 3 (2001): 829-865, plus commentaries following this essay in JAH.

Recommended reading:


Stratifying States I: Gender and Sexuality

Highly recommended: attend the annual meeting of the Social Science History Association Thursday November 21 – Sunday November 24, at the Chicago Palmer House Hilton; registration for non-presenting graduate students is only $10

Required reading:
(we will decide collectively which articles/pieces we want to focus on)

- Mala Htun and Laurel Weldon, "States and Gender."


Jyoti Puri, *Sexual states: Governance and the struggle over the antisodomy law in India* (Duke University Press, 2016), excerpt – online access from NU library.


Recommended reading:


**week 10**  
**Tuesday, November 26, 2019:**  
**Stratifying States II: Race, Nation, Ethnicity**

*Required reading:*
*(we will decide collectively which articles/pieces we want to focus on)*

- Desmond King and Robert Lieberman, "The Civil Rights State: How the American State Develops Itself."


Recommended reading:


**SHORT CRITICAL ESSAY #2 DUE DECEMBER 9, HARD COPY IN PROFESSOR ORLOFF’S MAILBOX, ALSO POST ONLINE**