

## Political Sociology

SOCY S233  
Summer 2021

Class meets on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 9-11:15am  
July 12 – August 13, 2021

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Office Hours: By appointment via Zoom

### Course Description

In its essence, political sociology is the study of social power. Because the modern state has come to occupy our imaginations with its vast reservoir of power, social power is also commonly associated with it. But power is produced and sustained in a wider field well beyond the state. It operates through class, race, gender-based systems of domination, both structurally and in everyday interactions. It has been shaped in the modern history by the processes of capitalism and nation-state formation. Internationally, it has been skewed heavily towards the West through imperial and colonial domination. Some of these elements and processes are commonly ignored when discussing political sociology and power. We will instead problematize both the notion of power and the ways within which it operates. The aim here is to broaden our lenses beyond the naturalized understandings we possess today about state, capitalism, and international structures while acquiring the knowledge of the foundational concepts of political sociology.

We will start with an investigation of power and domination. What does power mean? How does it operate exactly? How does domination occur; how is it sustained? We will then move onto investigating the different axes of domination: class, race, and gender. We will attempt to understand how these axes structure power relations, and how they are interconnected. The second half of the course will focus on significant historical processes in the modern history. It will proceed through four main parts: a) state, state-formation, and nation; b) capitalism and market society; c) colonialism and imperialism; and d) resistance, revolutions, and social movements. As we analyze these broad topics, we will constantly keep in mind that state-formation, capitalism, imperialism, and colonialism are not independent processes but have been reinforcing and reproducing each other in the last several centuries. We will also discuss, in Ursula Le Guin's words, how all systems of power are human products, and thus, can be changed through human actions.

The class format will be a mixture of lectures, discussions, and debates. We will start each class with a short lecture about the social and intellectual context of the writers, their main arguments, and how they are tied to other works and general themes of the course. We will then engage in discussions about the texts and sometimes form debate groups to explore specific topics. These will help you to process, understand, and apply the readings to the questions the course explores and to your own broader intellectual interests.

## Attendance Policy

Attendance is entirely mandatory. Due to the special nature of the summer session, no unexcused absence is allowed. If you need to be absent due to personal and/or health problems, especially because of COVID, please get in touch with me. Please note that there is no Dean's excuse during the summer session, and any case of repeated absence must be reported to the Dean's Office.

## Course Requirements

Attendance and participation (20%): Direct engagement with the texts and in-depth discussion are essential to get the most out of this course. Therefore, attendance and active participation are key components. Students are expected to do all the readings before the class and come prepared to discuss the material. We will emulate a physical class environment using Zoom. In order to give you more time and space to immerse yourselves in the texts, I am keeping other assignments to a minimum.

Discussion questions (10%): You will post a discussion question/comment to Canvas before each class. This can be about an aspect of the text that fascinates you, something that you need clarification or further discussion in the class, or a response to comments/questions written by your fellow students. This should not be a long text and should not take much time as long as you do the readings.

Weekly reflection (10%): At the end of each week (except the last one), you will post a reflection on that week's readings by connecting them to a contemporary event or situation around the world. After a short description of the event/situation chosen, you will analyze and interpret it through the lenses of the readings of the week. You can also choose to criticize the readings by using the empirics of the event/situation. This assignment is not meant to be much longer than one single-spaced page.

1 mid-term paper (4-5 double-spaced pages, 20%): The mid-term paper is meant to be an engagement with the works in the first half of the course. I will distribute specific questions from which you will choose one to answer. You can also devise your own topic in consultation with me. The midterm will be due on Sunday, August 1.

1 final paper (10-12 double-spaced pages - 40%): The final paper will be a broader engagement with the course material. You will be given questions that cover several thinkers and topics. Some of the questions will be about theoretical engagement with the texts while others will be to apply what you have learned to real world events and situations. In the paper, you are expected to go beyond demonstrating comprehension of the material and to develop your own arguments about the texts, the ideas they present, and themes that link them together. The final paper is due on the last day of class (August 13).

## Texts

The below is a representative list of books of which parts we will read. I will post **ALL** of the readings in electronic format to the course website. You do not need to make purchase unless you want to.

The Marx-Engels Reader, ed. by Robert C. Tucker  
Max Weber, From Max Weber, ed. by Gerth and Mills  
Steven Lukes, Power: A Radical View  
W. E. B. Du Bois, The Souls of Black Folk  
Wendy Brown, States of Injury  
V. I. Lenin, State and Revolution  
Fred Block, Revisiting State Theory  
Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, Bringing the State Back in  
Perry Anderson, Lineages of the Absolutist State  
Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities  
Karl Polanyi, The Great Transformation  
David Harvey, A Brief History of Neoliberalism  
Franz Fanon, Black Skin, White Masks  
Eric Hobsbawm, Social Bandits and Primitive Rebels  
Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed

## Note on Academic Integrity

Students are expected to adhere to the standards prescribed in the Undergraduate Regulations publication (<http://www.yale.edu/yalecollege/publications/uregs/appendix/cheating.html>) regarding cheating, plagiarism, and documentation. Appropriately using and documenting sources is an integral component of developing necessary professional and academic skills. Students are encouraged to access the resources available through the Writing Center website (<http://www.yale.edu/bass/writing/sources/why.html>) when preparing writing assignments. I am also always available to discuss these issues and help you throughout the coursework.

## Disability Services

If you are a student with a documented disability who may require specific accommodations, please contact me (as well as the Resource Office on Disabilities, 203-432-2324), so that we can arrange the necessary accommodations.

**COURSE SCHEDULE (Reading load subject to change depending on our progress)**

**Introduction, Power, Domination**

***Introduction, Power*** (There is a relatively heavier reading load in this first day in order to make a strong entry into the course. You should be fine if you give yourself enough time to make these readings before the summer session begins.)

**Day 1: Monday, July 12**

- Lukes, Steven. “Introduction” and “Power: A Radical View,” in *Power: A Radical View*, pp. 1-59.
- Gaventa, John. “Power and Participation,” in *Power and Powerlessness*, pp. 3-25.
- Foucault, Michel. “The Power and Subject.” *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (Summer, 1982), pp. 777-795

**Day 2: Wednesday, July 14**

***Domination***

- Weber, Max. “The Types of Authority and Imperative Co-ordination,” in *Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, pp. 324-333, 341-46, 358-373.
- Weber, Max. *From Max Weber*. “Politics as a Vocation,” pp. 77-87.
- Hall, Stuart. “Gramsci and US.” Available at <http://inclusion.uci.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2016/11/Hall-Gramsci-and-Us.pdf>

**Class, Race, Gender**

**Day 3: Friday, July 16**

***Class***

- Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels. *The Marx-Engels Reader*. “Manifesto of the Communist Party,” focus on pp. 469-491.
- Marx, Karl. *The Marx-Engels Reader*. “The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte,” pp. 594-617.
- Weber, Max. *From Max Weber*. “Class, Status, Party,” pp. 180-195.

**Day 4: Monday, July 19**

***Race***

- Du Bois, W. E. B. “Of Our Spiritual Strivings” and “Of the Sons of Master and Man,” in *The Souls of Black Folk*.
- Hall, Stuart. “Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Dominance,” in Baker Jr., Diawara, and Lindeborg (eds), *Black British Cultural Studies*. Available at <http://ccs.ukzn.ac.za/files/Race,%20articulation%20and%20societies%20structured%20in%20dominance.pdf>

## Day 5: Wednesday, July 21

### *Gender*

- Collins, Patricia Hill, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and Politics of Empowerment* (1<sup>st</sup> edition). “Black Feminist Thought in the Matrix of Domination.” Available at <http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/45a/252.html>
- Zerilli, Linda M. G. “Politics,” in *the Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theory*, pp. 632-650.
- Bettie, Julie. “Women without Class,” in *Women without Class: Girls, Race, and Identity*, pp. 32-56.

## State, State-Formation, and Nation

## Day 6: Friday, July 23

### *State*

- Lenin, V. I. “Class Society and the State,” in *State and Revolution*, pp. 41-58.
- Block, Fred. “The Ruling Class Does Not Rule: Notes on the Marxist Theory of the State,” in *Revising State Theory*, pp. 51-68.
- Mann, Michael. “The Autonomous Power of the State,” *European Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (1984), pp. 185-213.
- Brown, Wendy. “Finding the Man in the State,” in *States of Injury*, pp. 166-196

## Day 7: Monday, July 26

### *State-Making*

- Anderson, Perry. “Conclusions,” in *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, pp. 397-431.
- Tilly, Charles. “War Making and State Making as Organized Crime,” in *Bringing the State Back in*, pp. 169-191.
- Adams, Julia. “Culture in Rational-Choice Theories of State-Formation,” in *State/Culture*, pp. 98-116.

## Day 8: Wednesday, July 28

### *Nation and Nationalism*

- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, pp. 1-46.
- Yuval-Davis, Nira. “Theorizing Gender and Nation,” in *Gender and Nation*, pp. 1-25.
- Chatterjee, Partha. “Whose Imagined Community?” in *The Nation and Its Fragments*, pp. 3-13.

## Day 9: Friday, July 30

### *Immigration and Citizenship*

- Somers, Margaret R. “Citizenship, Statelessness and Market Fundamentalism: Arendtian Right to Have Rights.” Pp. 35-62 in *Migration, Citizenship, Ethnos*, edited by Y. M. Bodemann and G. Yurdakul. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Choo, Hae Yeon, “Decentering Citizenship,” “Everyday Politics of Immigration Raids,” and “Coda,” in *Decentering Citizenship*, pp. 1-14, 72-92, and 164-171.

MIDTERM DUE: SUNDAY, AUGUST 1

### **Capitalism and Market Society**

#### **Day 10: Monday, August 2**

##### *Analysis of Capitalism*

- Marx, Karl. *The Marx-Engels Reader*. “Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts,” pp. 66-105.
- Marx, Karl. *The Marx-Engels Reader*. “Capital, Volume One,” focus on pp. 303-367.

#### **Day 11: Wednesday, August 4**

##### *Market Society and Neoliberalism*

- Polanyi, Karl. “Introduction,” “Societies and Economic Systems,” and “The Self-Regulating Market and the Fictitious Commodities: Labor, Land and Money,” in *The Great Transformation*, pp. xviii-xxxviii, 45-58, 71-80.
- Harvey, David. 2005. “Introduction” and “Freedom’s Just Another Word...” in *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, pp. 1-38.

### **Colonialism and Imperialism**

#### **Day 12: Friday, August 6**

##### *Colonialism*

- Fanon, Frantz. “Introduction,” “The So-Called Dependency Complex of Colonized Peoples,” and “The Fact of Blackness,” in *Black Skin, White Masks*.
- Césaire, Aimé. “Discourse on Colonialism.” Available at [http://abahlali.org/files/\\_Discourse\\_on\\_Colonialism.pdf](http://abahlali.org/files/_Discourse_on_Colonialism.pdf)
- Wolfe, Patrick. “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native.” *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 8, No. 4. (2006): 387-409.

#### **Day 13: Monday, August 9**

##### *Imperialism*

- Lenin, V. I. *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*. Skim the first six chapters (33-90). Focus on Chps. 7-10 (pp. 91-123).
- Said, Edward. *Culture and Imperialism*. pp. 3-19.
- Reeves, Jeffrey. “Imperialism and the Middle Kingdom: The Xi Jinping Administration’s Peripheral Diplomacy with Developing States,” *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 39, No. 5. (2018): 976-998.

**Resistance, Revolutions and Social Movements**

**Day 14: Wednesday, August 11**

***Resistance and Revolutions***

- Freire, Paulo. "Chapter 1," in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, pp 43-69.
- James, C. L. R. [1963] 1989. *The Black Jacobins* – Selections

**Day 15: Friday, August 13**

***Social Movements***

- Della Porta, Donatella, and Mario Diani. "The Study of Social Movements," in *Social Movements: An Introduction*, pp. 1-32.
- Robnett, Belinda. "Rethinking Social Movement Theory: Race, Class, Gender, and Culture," in *How Long? How Long?: African American Women in the Struggle for Civil Rights*, pp. 12-35.

FINAL PAPER DUE: FRIDAY, AUGUST 13