

Fall 2018
TuTh 12:30-2pm
Evans 60

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SOC 140
POLITICS AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Course description: This course focuses on the interaction between politics and society. We will look at different forms of politics including voting, social movements, party politics, state policies, direct democratic action, and revolution. We will discuss whether, how, when, and why each of these forms of political action impact social change. We will ask whether some are more influential ways of bringing about change than others. We will study both historical examples and contemporary cases based on sociological perspectives.

Evaluation:

There will be two take-home examinations (prompts will be distributed in advance). You will write one research paper. Section discussions also constitute a part of the final grade.

Midterm (October 2, 5 double-spaced pages): 17%

Final (December 14, 11 am, 7-8 double-spaced pages): 27%

Research paper (December 1): 36%

Section participation: 20%

Required texts: The reader is available at Copy Central (on 2411 Telegraph).

The research paper

The goal of the research paper is applying the perspectives we have learned to cases that interest you. You will pick one revolution, policy, or movement and discuss it within the context of the theories. You can, for example, take one theory and discuss why it works better in the case you have chosen than other plausible theories (you do not have to cover all the theories we have learned). You can also seek to combine the insights of two or more theories.

You will have to build the argument you develop in this paper on additional research. This means that you have to read additional articles and books about the revolution, policy, or movement of your choice and refer to these in your paper (along with the articles and books covered in class).

First step: On October 11, you will hand in a research proposal that will outline your argument and provide a provisional bibliography (1 double-spaced page, not counting the bibliography).

Second step: 5-page version -- peer-reading (instead of the GSIs). A fellow student will read your paper and offer comments on it. You need to find somebody who is working on a different topic. (Due on November 13; peer comments due on November 20).

Final step: The final paper will be double-spaced, and a maximum of 9-10 pages (including the bibliography).

Week 1: Voting in America

Piven, Frances Fox and Richard A. Cloward. 2000. *Why Americans still don't Vote*. Boston: Beacon Press. Pp. 23-71, 108-36.

<https://www.brennancenter.org/new-voting-restrictions-america>

Week 2: Values and politics

Lipset, Seymour Martin. 1963. *The First New Nation: the United States in Historical and Comparative Perspective*. New York: Basic Books. Pp. 101-139, 207-247.

Week 3: Class, slavery, and party

de Leon, Cedric. 2008. "'No Bourgeois Mass Party, No Democracy': The Missing Link in Barrington Moore's American Civil War." *Political Power and Social Theory* 19: 39-82.

Week 4: The New Deal

Eidlin, Barry. 2016. "Why is There No Labor Party in the United States? Political Articulation and the Canadian Comparison, 1932-1948." *American Sociological Review* 81(3):488-516.

Davis, Mike. 1980. "The Barren Marriage of American Labour and the Democratic Party." *New Left Review* 124: 43-84.

Week 5: Direct Action in the Civil Rights movement and the New Left

Polletta, Francesca. 2002. *Freedom is an endless meeting: democracy in American social movements*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Pp. 44-48, 55-146.

Week 6: New Social Movements and the media

Gitlin, Todd. 2003. *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pp. 146-246.

Week 7: Comparative analysis of revolutions

Skocpol, Theda. 1979. *States and Social Revolutions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 3-43, 284-293.

Burawoy, Michael. 1989. "Two methods in search of science: Skocpol vs. Trotsky." *Theory and Society* 18/6: 759-805.

Week 8: New Social Movements and "life politics": liberation and dispersion

Giddens, Anthony. 1991. *Modernity and self-identity: self and society in the late modern age*. Cambridge: Polity Press. Pp. 209-241.

Boltanski, Luc. 2002. "The left after May 1968 and the longing for total revolution." *Thesis Eleven* 69(1): 1-20.

Week 9: End of dispersion? The Global Justice Movement

della Porta, Donatella et. al. 2006. *Globalization from below: transnational activists and protest networks*. Minneapolis, Minn: University of Minnesota Press. Pp. 1-23, 232-248.

Sörbom, Adrienne and Magnus Wennerhag. 2013. "Individualization, Life Politics, and the Reformulation of Social Critique: An Analysis of the Global Justice Movement." *Critical Sociology* 39/3: 453-478.

Week 10: Occupy Wall Street

Gould-Wartofsky, Michael A. 2015. *The Occupiers: The Making of the 99 Percent Movement*. New York: Oxford University Press. Pp. 1-35, 54, 59-85, 209-228.

Week 11: The Tea Party

Vasi, Ion, David Strang, and Arnout van de Rijt. 2014. "Tea and Sympathy: The Tea Party Movement and Republican Precommitment to Radical Conservatism in the 2011 Debt-Limit Crisis." *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 19/1: 1-22.

Perrin, Andrew J, Steven J Tepper, Neal Caren, and Sally Morris. 2014 "Political and Cultural Dimensions of Tea Party Support, 2009-2012" *Sociological Quarterly* 55/4: 625-652.

Week 12: The de-laborization of the Democratic Party and labor's Republican turn

Pacewicz, Josh. 2015. "Playing the neoliberal game: why community leaders left party politics to partisan activists" *American Journal of Sociology* 121(3): 826-881.

McQuarrie, Michael. 2017. "The revolt of the Rust Belt: place and politics in the age of anger." *The British Journal of Sociology* 68: S120-S152.