

# ***SOCIOLOGY of POLICING***

**Laleh Behbehanian, Ph.D.**

**Tuesday/Thursday 5:00–6:30**

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Monday 3:00-4:00 & Tuesday 2:00-3:00

This course explores a wide range of critical scholarship on policing. We begin by developing a sociological conceptualization of “policing” before proceeding to examine the emergence of police in the modern period. Focusing on the case of the United States, we trace the historical development of policing from the colonial era through the contemporary period.

How are we to understand the power, means, and function of police? If the mandate of police is to enforce and guarantee “order”, what is the relationship between policing and the maintenance of the class order of capitalism, the racial order of white supremacy, and the gendered and heteronormative order of patriarchy? And how are deviations and resistances to these orders criminalized as forms of “disorder” that then become targets of policing?

The second part of the course examines major developments that are transforming contemporary policing. How can we understand the phenomenon referred to as the “militarization of police”? What new forms of policing have emerged alongside neoliberalization, and what becomes the role of police in the maintenance of a neoliberal order? How have contemporary technologies ushered in a new era of “predictive policing”?

Finally, we focus on resistance, particularly the increasing centrality of criticisms of policing within contemporary social movements, and we conclude the course by imagining the possibilities for abolition...

## **INTRODUCTION – A Sociological Approach to Police**

**8/27 Course Introduction: *Police, Policing and “the Police”***

## **HISTORICAL ORIGINS - The Ordering of Class Society**

**9/1 “*Masterless Men*” and the Emergence of Modern Police**

Neocleous, Mark. 2000. *The fabrication of social order: a critical theory of police power*. Sterling, VA: Pluto Press. Excerpts of Preface & Ch.1 “Police Begets Good Order” (Pp. ix-xii; 1-6; 13-21).

**9/3** *Vagrancy and the Idleness of Disorder*

Neocleous, *The fabrication of social order*. Excerpts of Ch.4 “Ordering Insecurity II: On Social Security” (Pp.63-72; 75-78).

<b>HISTORICAL ORIGINS – The United States: The Order of White Supremacy</b>
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**9/8** *Fabricating the “Color Line” in a White Democracy*

Neocleous, *The fabrication of social order*. Excerpt of Ch.4 “Ordering Insecurity II: On Social Security” (Pp.84-91).

Brucato, Ben. 2014. "Fabricating the color line in a white democracy: from slave catchers to petty sovereigns." *Theoria*: 30-54. (Read only Pp.30-41)

**9/10** *Policing White Supremacy*

Brucato, “Fabricating the color line.” (Pp.41-49)

Hadden, Sally E. 2001. *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Excerpt of Ch.1 “Colonial Beginnings and Experiments” (Pp.6-14).

**9/15** *Police Predecessors: Slave Patrols*

Hadden, *Slave Patrols*. Excerpts of Ch.1 “Colonial Beginnings and Experiments,” Ch.3 “Patrol Personnel: ‘They Jes’ Like Policemen, Only Worser” and Ch.4 “In Time of Tranquility: Everyday Slave Patrols” (Pp.14-24; 38-40; 79-84; 99-117).

Suggested Additional Reading:

Reichel, Philip L. 1998. “Southern Slave Patrols as a Transitional Police Type.” *American Journal of Police* 7, no.2: 51-77.

**9/17** *The Origins of American Policing*

Williams, Kristian. 2015. *Our Enemies in Blue: Police and Power in America*. Oakland: AK Press. Excerpts of Ch.2 “Origins of American Policing” and Ch.3 “The Genesis of a Policed Society” (Pp.51-55; 63-67; 70-78; 103; 105-113).

**EXAM 1 distributed on 9/17 – DUE on 9/20**

## VIGILANTISM and the BLURRED BOUNDARIES of POLICING

### 9/22 *Reconstruction and the Rise of the Ku Klux Klan*

Hadden, *Slave Patrols*. Excerpt of Ch.6 “Patrollers No More: The Civil War Era” and Epilogue “Black Freedom, White Violence: Patrols, Police and the Klan” (Pp.198-220).

Williams, *Our Enemies in Blue*. Excerpt of Ch.4 “Cops and Klan, Hand in Hand” (Pp.121-129).

### 9/24 *“Cops and Klan, Hand in Hand”*

Williams, *Our Enemies in Blue*. Excerpt of Ch.4 “Cops and Klan, Hand in Hand” (Pp.149-156; 164-173).

Skolnick, Jerome H., and James J. Fyfe. 1993. *Above the Law: Police and the Excessive Use of Force*. New York: The Free Press. Excerpt of Ch.2 “Vigilante Justice” (Pp.23-29).

Romero, Simon. 2019. “Cross Border-Patrols, Mercenaries and the K.K.K.: The Long History of Border Militias.” *The New York Times*, April 25.  
(<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/25/us/border-militia-mexico.html>)

Suggested Additional Reading:

“Map of White Supremacy Mob Violence” (<http://www.monroeworktoday.org/explore/map2/>)

## POLICING PATRIARCHY

### 9/29 *Feminist Revision of the “Transition” to Capitalism*

Federici, Sylvia. 2014 [2004]. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. Brooklyn: Autonomedia. Introduction and excerpts of Ch.1 “All the World Needs a Jolt” and Ch.2 “The Accumulation of Labor and the Degradation of Women” (Pp.11-14; 21-26; 30-31; 44-50; 61-64; 68-75; 82-84)

### 10/1 *The Witch-Hunt and the Fabrication of a New Patriarchal Order*

Federici, *Caliban and the Witch*. Excerpts of Ch.2 “The Accumulation of Labor and the Degradation of Women” and Ch.4 “The Great Witch-Hunt in Europe” (Pp.85-103; 115; 163-186)

### 10/6 *“White Slavery,” “Sex Trafficking” & the Rise of the F.B.I.*

Pliley, Jessica. 2014. *Policing Sexuality: The Mann Act and the Making of the FBI*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Introduction and excerpts of Ch.1 “The American Myth of

White Slavery”, Ch.4 “Creating a Moral Quarantine” and Ch.6 “Policing Seduction and Adultery” (Pp.1-12; 24-25; 84-86; 88-93; 131-139; 146-149; 156-158).

### 10/8 “Masterless Women”: “Age of Consent” and “Statutory Rape”

Odem, Mary. 1995. *Delinquent Daughters: Protecting and Policing Adolescent Female Sexuality in the United States, 1885-1920*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. Introduction and excerpts of Ch.1 “‘White Slaves’ and ‘Viscous Men’: The Age of Consent Campaign”, Ch.2 “Teenage Girls, Sexuality, and Working Class Parents” and Ch.3 “Statutory Rape Prosecutions in California” (Pp.1-11; 20-25; 36-39; 45; 47-50; 53; 58-71).

#### Suggested Additional Reading:

Schlossman, Steven and Stephanie Wallach. 1978. “The Crime of Precocious Sexuality: Female Juvenile Delinquency in the Progressive Era.” *Harvard Educational Review* 48, no.1: 65-94.

Roberts, Dorothy. 2020. “Abolishing Policing Also Means Abolishing Family Regulation.” *The Chronicle of Social Change*. (<https://chronicleofsocialchange.org/child-welfare-2/abolishing-policing-also-means-abolishing-family-regulation/44480>)

Arnold, Gretchen. 2019. “Neoliberalism’s Assault on Women’s Citizenship: The Case of Nuisance Laws and Intimate Partner Violence in the United States.” *The Sociological Quarterly* 68, no.1: 71-93.

## **EXAM 2 distributed on 10/8 – DUE on 10/11**

### 10/13 *Policing Heteronormativity: The “Disorder” of “Homosexuality”*

Arrioloa, Elvia R. A. 1995. “Faeries, Marimachas, Queens, and Lezzies: The Construction of Homosexuality Before the 1969 Stonewall Riots.” *Columbia Journal of Gender and Law* 5, no.1. Excerpt (Pp.33-46).

Chauncey, George.1994. *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940*. New York: Basic Books. Ch.12 “The Exclusion of Homosexuality from the Public Sphere in the 1930s” (Pp. 331-354).

#### Suggested Additional Reading:

Hobson, Emily K. 2014. "Policing Gay LA: Mapping Racial Divides in the Homophile Era, 1950-1967." In *The Rising Tide of Color: Race, State Violence, and Radical Movements across the Pacific*, edited by Moon-Ho Jung, 188-212. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Mogul, Joey L., Andrea J. Ritchie and Kay Whitlock. 2015. “The Ghosts of Stonewall: Policing Gender, Policing Sex.” *Truthout* July 8.

[\(https://truthout.org/articles/the-ghosts-of-stonewall-policing-gender-policing-sex/\)](https://truthout.org/articles/the-ghosts-of-stonewall-policing-gender-policing-sex/)

Stewart-Winter, T. 2015. "Queer Law and Order: Sex, Criminality, and Policing in the Late Twentieth-Century United States." *Journal of American History* 102, no.1: 61-72.

## The "DISORDER" of RESISTANCE

### 10/15 *Black Panthers, Police Patrols and the Origins of "Gun Control"*

Bloom, Joshua and Waldo E. Martin, Jr. 2013. *Black Against Empire: The History and Politics of the Black Panther Party*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press. Excerpts of Introduction, Ch.1 "Huey and Bobby," Ch.2 "Policing the Police," and Ch.8 "Law and Order" (Pp.2-3; 25-30; 37-39; 45-62; 209-215).

Suggested Additional Reading:

Mire, Muna. 2015. "Here's How to Cop Watch." *The Nation*, September 23.  
[\(https://www.thenation.com/article/heres-how-to-cop-watch/\)](https://www.thenation.com/article/heres-how-to-cop-watch/)

### 10/20 *Policing in Times of Uprising: From Slave Revolts to Urban Riots*

Parenti, Christian. 1999. *Lockdown America: Police and Prisons in the Age of Crisis*. London: Verso. Ch.1 "Nixon's Splendid Little War: Social Crisis and Containment" (Pp.3-28).

Suggested Additional Reading:

Hadden, *Slave Patrols*. Excerpt of Ch.5 "In Times of Crisis: Patrols during Rebellions and War" (Pp.137-144).

Williams, *Our Enemies in Blue*. Ch.7 "Secret Police, Red Squads and the Strategy of Permanent State Repression" and Ch.8 "Riot Police or Police Riots?" (Pp.239-285; 287-319).

## The MILITARIZATION of POLICING

### 10/22 *The "WAR" on Drugs*

Alexander, Michelle. 2012. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: The New Press. Excerpts of Ch.2 "The Lockdown" (Pp.58-68; 71-88).

### 10/27 *The Rise of Paramilitary Policing and Immigration Enforcement*

Parenti, *Lockdown America*. Excerpts of Ch.6 "Carrying the Big Stick: SWAT Teams and Paramilitary Policing" and Ch.7 "Repatriating la Migra's War: The Militarized Border Comes Home" (Pp.135-142; 149-154).

In-Class Viewing: *Do Not Resist* (2016)

Suggested Additional Reading:

Williams, *Our Enemies in Blue*. Ch.9 “Your Friendly Neighborhood Police State” (Pp.321-361).

Kraska, Peter B. and Victor E. Kappeler. 1997. “Militarizing American Police: The Rise and Normalization of Paramilitary Units.” *Social Problems* 44, no.1: 1-18.

Radley, Balko. 2014. *Rise of the Warrior Cop: The Militarization of America’s Police Forces*. New York: Public Affairs.

**10/29 *The Racial Politics of Protection: Origins of the Posse Comitatus Act***

Gamal, Fanna. 2016. “The Racial Politics of Protection: A Critical Race Examination of Police Militarization [notes].” *California Law Review* 4: 979 -1008.

<b>POLICING the NEOLIBERAL ORDER</b>
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**11/3 *From “Masterless Men” to “Surplus Populations”***

Parenti, *Lockdown America*. Ch.2 “From Crisis to Rollback” and excerpt of Ch.3 “A War for All Seasons: The Return of Law and Order” (Pp.29-60).

Suggested Additional Reading:

Forrest, Stuart. 2011. “Race, Space, and the Regulation of Surplus Labor: Policing African Americans in Los Angeles's Skid Row.” *Souls* 13, no.2: 197-212.

**11/5 “Zero Tolerance” and “Quality of Life”: Urban Policing in the Era of Neoliberalization**

Parenti, *Lockdown America*. Excerpts of Ch.4 “Discipline in Playland, Part I – Zero Tolerance: The Science of Kicking Ass” and Ch.5 “Discipline in Playland, Part II – Policing the Themepark City” (Pp.69-82; 90-95; 100-103; 106-107).

Erzen, Tanya. 2001. “Turnstile Jumpers and Broken Windows: Policing Disorder in New York City.” In *Zero Tolerance: Quality of Life and the New Police Brutality in New York City*, edited by Andrea McArdle and Tanya Erzen, 19-49. New York: New York University Press. Skim Appendix only (Pp.35-44).

Suggested Additional Reading:

Barr, Heather. 2001. “Policing Madness: People with Mental Illness and the NYPD.” In *Zero Tolerance: Quality of Life and the New Police Brutality in New York City*, edited by Andrea McArdle and Tanya Erzen, 50-84. New York: New York University Press.

Stuart, Forrest. 2014. "From 'Rabble Management' to 'Recovery Management': Policing Homelessness in Marginal Urban Space" *Urban Studies* 5, no.9: 1909-1925.

### 11/10 *Policing Space, Policing Race*

Bass, Sandra. 2001. "Policing Space, Policing Race: Social Control Imperatives and Police Discretionary Decisions." *Social Justice* 28, no.1: 156-176. Excerpt (Pp.156-171)

Lynch, Mona and Marissa Omari, Aaron Roussell and Matthew Valasik. 2013. "Policing the 'progressive' city: The racialized geography of drug law enforcement." *Theoretical Criminology* 17, no.3: 335-357. Excerpt (Pp.335-337; 339-351).

#### Suggested Additional Reading:

Kaufman, Emily. 2016. "Policing mobilities through bio-spatial profiling in New York City." *Political Geography* 55: 72-81.

## PREDICTIVE POLICING

### 11/12 *Predictive Policing: Risk Assessments*

Ferguson, Andrew Guthrie. 2017. *The Rise of Big Data Policing: Surveillance, Race and the Future of Law Enforcement*. New York: New York University Press.  
Introduction and Excerpts of Ch.1 "Big Data's Watchful Eye" and Ch.3 "Whom We Police: Person Based Predictive Targeting" (Pp.1-6; 7-12; 34-40; 42-44; 47-52)

Angwin, Julia, Jeff Larson, Surya Mattu and Lauren Kirchner. 2016. "Machine Bias: There's software used across the country to predict future criminals. And it's biased against blacks." *ProPublica*, May 23. (<https://www.propublica.org/article/machine-bias-risk-assessments-in-criminal-sentencing>).

Sweeney, Annie. 2019. "Can police data predict how 'bad apple' officers influence their fellow cops? New study says yes." *Chicago Tribune*, August 1.  
(<https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/criminal-justice/ct-predicting-bad-police-behavior-20190801-xumudeezmjlbpbmqwyvh26tdi-story.html?sfns=mo>)

### 11/17 *"Hot Spots": Predictive Spatial Policing*

Ferguson, *The Rise of Big Data Policing*. Excerpts of Ch.4 "Where We Police: Placed-Based Predictive Policing" and Ch.5 "When We Police: Real-Time Surveillance and Investigation" (Pp.62-67; 72-76; 84-95).

Lum, Kristian and William Isaac. 2016. "To Predict and Serve?" *Significance* 13(5): 14-19. (<https://hrdag.org/publications/to-predict-and-serve/>)

#### Suggested Additional Reading:

Easter, Brandee and Tori Thompson Peters. 2017. "White Collar Crime Risk Zones" *Digital Rhetoric Collaborative*. September 19.  
(<http://www.digitalrhetoriccollaborative.org/2017/09/19/white-collar-crime-risk-zones/>)

<b>CONCLUSION: ABOLITION...</b>
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**11/19 *The Re-emergence of Resistance: Police & Contemporary Social Movements***

Murch, Donna. 2015. "Ferguson's Inheritance." *Jacobin*, August.  
(<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2015/08/ferguson-police-black-lives-matter/>)

Levin, Sam. 2019. "'Police are a force of terror': the LGBT activists who want cops out of Pride." *The Guardian*, June 14. (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jun/13/cops-out-of-pride-lgbt-police>)

**EXAM 3 distributed on 11/19 – DUE on 11/23**

**11/24 *Abolition: Making Police Obsolete***

Williams, *Our Enemies in Blue*. Excerpts of Afterword "Making Police Obsolete" (Pp.363-379; 384-387; 391-397).

Rose City Copwatch, 2008, "Alternatives to Police."  
(<https://rosecitycopwatch.files.wordpress.com/2010/03/alternatives-to-police-draft.pdf>)  
Excerpts (Pp.3-4; 9-10; 12; 20)

**11/26 NO CLASS (University Holiday)**

**12/1 *Abolitionist Justice***

McLeod, Allegra M. 2018. "Envisioning Abolition Democracy." *Harvard Law Review* 132: 1613-1649. Excerpts (Pp.1613-1623; 1628-1630; 1633-1649)

**12/3 CONCLUSION**

"8 To Abolition: Abolitionist Policy Changes to Demand from Your City Officials"  
(<http://8toabolition.com>)

**RESEARCH PAPER DUE on 12/14**



## **GRADE DISTRIBUTION:**

**25%** Exam 1 (Due 9/20)

**25%** Exam 2 (Due 10/11)

**30%** Exam 3 (Due 11/23)

**20%** Research Paper (Due 12/14)

*Students are expected to thoroughly and carefully read the course policies below.*

**DO NOT** email me with questions that can be answered by referring to this syllabus.

## **LECTURES:**

All lectures will be held via **Zoom** (<https://zoom.us/download>) and will begin promptly at 10 minutes after the scheduled hour (**3:40 pm**). All lectures will be **recorded** and made available to students (access to recordings is limited to students in the course only). While you will have access to these recordings, students are expected and highly encouraged to attend the real time lectures – this kind of active engagement and discussion is crucial for the learning process and will make the course much more enjoyable. Attending real time lectures will also enable us to build our community in the classroom, which is particularly important given the social isolation we all struggle with during this pandemic. While it is understandable that this may not always be possible, I also ask that you have your video turned on during lecture, as actually seeing each other is crucial for community building and connecting as a class.

## **REQUIRED READINGS:**

The primary work for this class is reading – this course requires extensive and careful reading. The assignments listed for each class meeting are to be read **prior** to that scheduled class. The expectation is that students allocate the necessary time to undertake a **thorough and careful reading**. The examinations for this course consist of take-home, open-book essays which you will have a limited time to complete and which will require extensive citation (in other words, your answers to the exam questions will require you to provide the corresponding page numbers from the text). Hence, keeping up with the readings and notetaking throughout the semester are crucial for performing well on exams.

All readings listed on the syllabus are included in the **course reader**, available at **Replica Digital Ink** (510 549-9991) at 2138 Oxford Street (by the Center Street entrance to campus). You must first purchase the reader on their website (<https://store.replicadigitalink.com/>), and then you'll have the option of picking it up or having it shipped to you.

While course readings are **also available on bCourses**, I strongly recommend that you utilize a course reader rather than these digital copies. Extensive research indicates that we learn and process

information much more effectively with hard copies. The course reader is also advantageous for the exams (all your readings/notes will be organized and easily accessible).

## **READING GUIDES:**

Included in the course reader (and available on bCourses) are reading guides for most of the assigned readings (with the exception of 10/15, 11/24, 12/1 and 12/3). You should always **refer to the reading guides before beginning the assigned readings** as they are intended to make the process easier (especially for the more difficult theoretical texts). Utilizing these guides will enable you to focus on the most important issues and help clarify your reading.

## **EXAMS:**

The 3 exams for this course will be **open-book, take-home examinations** that consist of short essays that assess students' mastery of the course materials. Exams will be cumulative (covering material from the entirety of the semester) and will be geared towards asking students to synthesize and bring together the scholarship covered in the course.

The distribution and due dates for the exams are listed on this syllabus. Students are expected to be aware of these dates and to schedule and prepare accordingly. (You should check these deadlines against your other academic obligations at the beginning of the semester and ensure that you are able to meet them before deciding to remain in this course.) **Please do not contact me with requests to change due dates because of other academic obligations.** Late submissions will result in a grade penalty.

## **RESEARCH PAPER:**

The final assignment for this course is a research paper (due 12/14). Students will have the opportunity to research any topic of their choice related to policing. The research paper will require both engaging with course materials, as well as identifying other sources relevant to the chosen topic.

## **SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS:**

Please notify me immediately if you require any special accommodations for the course. If you are registered with the DSP program, please ensure that your accommodation letter is forwarded to me at the beginning of the semester. Students who wish to utilize DSP accommodations for the exams are required to contact me about this well in advance.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

All written work must be your own. Any words, or even *ideas*, drawn from another source (even if paraphrased) must be appropriately cited.