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

9/3 Vagrancy and the Idleness of Disorder


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


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)


9/15 Police Predecessors: Slave Patrols


*Suggested Additional Reading:*


9/17 The Origins of American Policing


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


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).


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.

“Masterless Women”: “Age of Consent” and “Statutory Rape”


Suggested Additional Reading:


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

Policing Heteronormativity: The “Disorder” of “Homosexuality”


Suggested Additional Reading:


**The “DISORDER” of RESISTANCE**

10/15  *Black Panthers, Police Patrols and the Origins of “Gun Control”*


*Suggested Additional Reading:*


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


*Suggested Additional Reading:*


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*


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:**


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


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**POLICING the NEOLIBERAL ORDER**

**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:**


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


**Suggested Additional Reading:**


11/10 Policing Space, Policing Race


Suggested Additional Reading:


PREDICTIVE POLICING

11/12 Predictive Policing: Risk Assessments


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).


Suggested Additional Reading:
**CONCLUSION: ABOLITION…**

11/19  *The Re-emergence of Resistance: Police & Contemporary Social Movements*


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

11/24  *Abolition: Making Police Obsolete*


11/26  NO CLASS (University Holiday)

12/1  *Abolitionist Justice*


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 others 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 ACCOMMODATIONS:

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.