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 conclude the course by focusing on resistance and imagining the possibilities for abolition…

INTRODUCTION – A Sociological Approach to Police

1/18 Course Introduction: Police, Policing and “the Police”

HISTORICAL ORIGINS - The Ordering of Class Society

1/20 “Masterless Men” and the Emergence of Police

The “Bloody Discipline” of Wage Labor: *Criminalization of Vagrancy & Customary Rights*

Neocleous, *The fabrication of social order*. Excerpts of Ch.4 “Ordering Insecurity II: On Social Security” (Pp.63-65; 67-68; 69-72; 75-76; 77-78).

**HISTORICAL ORIGINS – The United States: The Order of White Supremacy**

1/27 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.84-85; 87-91).

Brucato, Ben. 2014. "Fabricating the color line in a white democracy: from slave catchers to petty sovereigns." *Theoria*: 30-54. (Pp.30-33; 35-41)

*Reading Response Due*

2/1 Policing White Supremacy

Brucato, “Fabricating the color line.” (Pp.41-47)


2/3 Police Predecessors: *Slave Patrols*


*Reading Response Due*

*Suggested Additional Reading:


2/8 The Historical Development & Distinguishing Characteristics of American Policing


VIGILANTISM and the BLURRED BOUNDARIES of POLICING

2/10  Reconstruction & the Rise of the Ku Klux Klan


Williams, Our Enemies in Blue. Excerpt of Ch.4 “Cops and Klan, Hand in Hand” (Pp.121-127).

*Reading Response Due

2/15  “Cops and Klan, Hand in Hand”

Williams, Our Enemies in Blue. Excerpt of Ch.4 “Cops and Klan, Hand in Hand” (Pp.149-155; 164-173).


Suggested Additional Reading:


2/17  The Second Amendment, Settler Colonialism, and the Deputization of Police Power


EXAM 1 distributed on 2/17 – DUE on 2/22

2/22  NO CLASS – EXAM 1 DUE
2/24 Feminist Revision of the Transition to Capitalism


*Reading Response Due*

3/1 The Fabrication of a New Patriarchal Order

Federici, *Caliban and the Witch*. Excerpts of Ch.2 (Pp.68-70; 71-75; 85-103; 115)

*Reading Response Due*

3/3 The Witch-Hunts

Federici, *Caliban and the Witch*. Excerpts of Ch.4 (Pp.163-171; 173-176; 179-186)

3/8 “White Slavery,” “Sex Trafficking” and the Rise of the F.B.I.


*Suggested Additional Reading:*


3/10 Policing Heteronormativity


**Suggested Additional Reading:**


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**Policing as Counterinsurgency**

3/15  *Black Panthers, Police Patrols and the Origins of “Gun Control”*


**Suggested Additional Reading:**

Hadden, Slave Patrols. Ch.5 “In Times of Crisis: Patrols during Rebellions and War”


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**The Militarization of Policing**

3/17  *The “War on Drugs”*


*Reading Response Due*
Suggested Additional Reading:

Parenti, *Lockdown America*. Ch.6 “Carrying the Big Stick: SWAT Teams and Paramilitary Policing” and Ch.7 “Repatriating la Migra’s War: The Militarized Border Comes Home”

3/22 NO CLASS - Spring Break 😊

3/24 NO CLASS - Spring Break 😊

3/29 The Racial Politics of Protection: *Origins of the Posse Comitatus Act*


In-class viewing of excerpt of *Do Not Resist* (2016)

3/31 The Imperial Origins of Police Militarization


*Reading Response Due

Suggested Additional Reading:


POLICING the NEOLIBERAL ORDER

4/5 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.29-48; 55-60).

*Reading Response Due
Suggested Additional Reading:


4/7 “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.69-73; 77-80; 90-95)


Suggested Additional Reading:


PREDICTIVE POLICING

4/12 Predictive Policing: *Risk Assessments*


4/14 “Hot Spots”: *Predictive Spatial Policing*

Ferguson, *The Rise of Big Data Policing*. Excerpts of Ch.4 “Where We Police: Placed-

EXAM 2 distributed on 4/14 – DUE on 4/21

4/19 NO CLASS
4/21 NO CLASS – EXAM 2 DUE

ABOLITION…

4/26 Abolition: Making Police Obsolete


*Reading Response Due

Suggested Additional Reading:


4/28 Abolitionist Justice


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

*Reading Response Due

RESEARCH PAPER DUE on 5/9
GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

15% Reading Responses
30% Exam 1 (Due 2/22)
40% Exam 2 (Due 4/21)
15% Research Paper (Due 5/9)

_Students are expected to thoroughly and carefully read the course policies below._

ATTENDANCE:

Students are expected to attend all lectures, which is crucial for understanding course content and performing well in the class. Being present and actively participating in class is central to the learning process. Please note that while class recordings will be posted on bCourses, they will not capture class discussions and are therefore not complete or ideal, but they are available for you in cases where you have to be absent from class.

Class begins promptly at 10 minutes after the scheduled hour (5:10 pm). Please be _present on time_ as late arrivals disrupt the class. Students are expected to remain in the classroom until the conclusion of the lecture. Students should _never leave class early_ without discussing this with me prior.

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 exams which you will have limited time to complete, and which will require extensive citation (in other words, your answers to the exam questions will require that you 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 (the link for doing so will be posted on bCourses) and then you’ll have the option of picking it up or having it shipped to you.

All course readings are _also available on bCourses_. However, 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 will also prove highly advantageous for the exams (all your readings/notes will be organized and easily accessible).
Whether you choose to purchase the course reader or utilize the digital copies on bCourses, you are expected to bring the assigned readings to every class meeting.

**READING GUIDES:**

Included in the course reader (and available on bCourses) are reading guides for all of the assigned readings. 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.

**READING RESPONSES:**

Students are required to submit reading responses for 8 out of 10 reading assignments. These reading responses require answering questions from the reading guides (the specific questions to be answered are noted at the bottom of the reading guides). Your answers may be brief but must clearly reflect that you carefully and thoroughly read the assignment. There are a total of 10 reading responses (marked on the syllabus), from which you choose 8 to complete. For students who submit more than 8, the lowest grades will be dropped and only the highest 8 grades will count.

Reading responses *must* be uploaded to bCourses by 5pm (prior to our class meeting) to receive full credit. Submission by this deadline is required because the purpose of these assignments is to assess whether students have completed the reading before class.

Late submissions will be accepted for up to 1 week after the deadline for partial credit.

**EXAMS:**

The 2 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 the scholarship covered in the course.

The time allotted for completing these exams is purposively limited because part of the objective is to assess how well students have kept up with course readings and lectures. Those who have done so will have sufficient time to complete the exam, while those who have not will be struggling to catch up with completing the course work. Late submissions will result in a grade penalty.

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.
RESEARCH PAPER:

The final assignment for this course is a research paper (due 5/9). 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.

POTENTIAL DISRUPTIONS:

If our ability to hold class in person is interrupted for any reason, class will be held via zoom until in person instruction resumes. All course requirements will remain in effect.

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. bCourses will automatically screen all submitted coursework for plagiarism.