

# ***SOCIOLOGY of POLICING***

Sociology 149P  
University of California, Berkeley  
Fall 2023

**Laleh Behbehanian**

**Tuesday/Thursday 2:00–3:30** (101 Morgan)

**Email:** laleh@berkeley.edu

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 11:30–12:30 & Thursday 10:30–11:30  
Drop-in (no appt needed) in 434 Social Sciences

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 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 to 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**

### **8/24 Course Introduction: *Police, Policing and “the Police”***

Read the course policies laid out on Pp.9-11 of this syllabus *before* our first class meeting.

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

### **8/29 “Masterless Men” and the Emergence of 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-xi; xii; 1-6; 13-14; 15-20).

**8/31 The “Bloody Discipline” of Wage Labor: *Criminalization of Vagrancy & Common 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***

**9/5 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**

**9/7 Policing White Supremacy**

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

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

**9/12 Police Predecessors: *Slave Patrols***

Hadden, *Slave Patrols*. Excerpts of Ch.1, 3 & 4 (Pp.14-24; 38-39; 99-110; 114).

**\*Reading Response Due**

*Suggested Additional Reading:*

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

**9/14 The Historical Development & Distinguishing Characteristics 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.51-54; 63-64; 66-67; 71-78; 103; 105-108)

Brucato, Ben. 2021. “Policing Race and Racing Police: The Origin of US Police in Slave Patrols.” *Social Justice* 47, nos.3-4: 115-136. (Pp.115-118; 126-127; 130-131; 133)

# VIGILANTISM and the BLURRED BOUNDARIES of POLICING

## 9/19 Reconstruction & 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).

*\*Reading Response Due*

## 9/21 “Cops and Klan, Hand in Hand”

Williams, *Our Enemies in Blue*. Excerpts of Ch.4 “Cops and Klan, Hand in Hand” (Pp.122-124; 126-127; 149-150; 152-155; 164-165; 167-171; 173).

Maher, Geo. 2021. “The Pig Majority” in *A World Without Police: How Strong Communities Make Cops Obsolete*. New York: Verso. (Pp.19-23; 35-39; 40-41; 44-46)

Suggested Additional Reading:

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>)

Deveraux, Ryan. 2019. “The Bloody History of Border Militias Runs Deep – And Law Enforcement is Part of it.” *The Intercept*, April 23.  
<https://theintercept.com/2019/04/23/border-militia-migrants/>

Hernandez, Kyle Lytle. 2010. *Migra! A History of the U.S. Border Patrol*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

## 9/26 The Second Amendment, Settler Colonialism, and the Deputization of Police Power

Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. 2017. *Loaded: A Disarming History of the Second Amendment*. San Francisco: City Lights Books. (Pp.16-24; 25-26; 29-36; 41-53; 57)

In-class viewing of excerpt of *Exterminate All the Brutes* (2021)

*\*Reading Response Due*

**EXAM 1 distributed on 9/26 – DUE by 6pm on Saturday 9/30**

9/28 NO CLASS – Working on Exam 1

# POLICING PATRIARCHY

## 10/3 Feminist Revision of the Transition to Capitalism

Federici, Sylvia. 2014 [2004]. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. Brooklyn: Autonomedia. (Pp.7-8; 11-13; 62-64; 14; 21-25; 30-31; 44; 46-49)

### Suggested Additional Reading:

Federici, Sylvia. 2018. *Witches, Witch-Hunting, and Women*. Oakland: PM Press.

## 10/5 The Witch-Hunts: *The Fabrication of a New Patriarchal Order*

Federici, *Caliban and the Witch*. (Pp.68; 69-70; 71-75; 85-94; 97-98; 99-103; 163; 164-165; 166; 168-171)

### **\*Reading Response Due**

### Suggested Additional Reading:

Howard, Grace. 2020. "The Pregnancy Police: Surveillance, Regulation and Control." *Harvard Law & Policy Review* 14: 347-363.

Oishi, Isabella. 2022. "Legal Vigilantism: A Discussion of the New Wave of Abortion Restrictions and the Fugitive Slave Acts." *The Georgetown Journal of Gender and the Law* 23.

## 10/10 Witch-Hunting & Gang Policing

Federici, *Caliban and the Witch*. (Pp. 174-176;184-186)

Toch, Hans. 2007. "Sequestering Gang Members, Burning Witches, and Subverting Due Process." *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 32, no.2. (Pp.274-279; 280-283; 285)

## 10/12 "Protective" Policing: "White Slavery," "Sex Trafficking" and 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. (Pp.1-11; 24-25; 84-86; 88-89; 91-92; 131-132; 135-137).

Kaba, Mariame and Brit Shulte. 2021. "Not a Cardboard Cutout: Cyntoia Brown and the Framing of a Victim" in *We Do This 'Til We Free Us: Abolitionist Organizing and Transformative Justice*. Chicago: Haymarket Books. (Pp.35-40)

### Suggested Additional Reading:

Odem, Mary. 1995. *Delinquent Daughters: Protecting and Policing Adolescent Female Sexuality in the United States, 1885-1920*. Chapel Hill: UNC Press.

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.

## 10/17 Policing Heteronormativity

Chauncey, George. 1994. "The Exclusion of Homosexuality from the Public Sphere in the 1930s" in *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940*. New York: Basic Books. (Pp.331-337; 339; 343-345; 346-349; 350-351; 353-354)

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. (Pp.33-34; 36; 59-60; 67-68).

### Suggested Additional Reading:

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/>)

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>)

## **POLICING as COUNTERINSURGENCY**

### 10/19 *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; 45-50; 57-62; 209-215).

### Suggested Additional Reading:

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

Parenti, Christian. 1999. "Nixon's Splendid Little War: Social Crisis and Containment" in *Lockdown America: Police and Prisons in the Age of Crisis*. London: Verso.

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

## The MILITARIZATION of POLICING

### 10/24 The “WAR on Drugs”

Alexander, Michelle. 2012. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: The New Press. Ch.2 “The Lockdown” (Pp.58-68; 71-83).

### 10/26 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. (Pp.979-997; 1000-1003; 1005-1008)

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

### 10/31 The Imperial Origins of Police Militarization

Go, Julian. 2020. “The Imperial Origins of American Policing: Militarization and Imperial Feedback in the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.” *American Journal of Sociology* 5: 1193-1254. (Pp. 1193-1194; 1196-1197; 1199; 1200-1203; 1205-1210; 1217; 1237; 1238)

Anonymous. 2020. “UC Berkeley’s role in shaping modern police.” *Daily Californian*, June 9.

Kaba, Mariame and Tamara K. Nopper. 2020. “Itemizing Atrocity” in *We Do This ‘Til We Free Us: Abolitionist Organizing and Transformative Justice*. Chicago: Haymarket Books.

#### **\*Reading Response Due**

#### Suggested Additional Reading:

Schrader, Stuart. 2019. *Badges without Borders: How Global Counterinsurgency Transformed American Policing*. Oakland: University of California Press.

## POLICING the NEOLIBERAL ORDER

### 11/2 From “Masterless Men” to “Surplus Populations”

Parenti, Christian. 1999. *Lockdown America: Police and Prisons in the Age of Crisis*. London: Verso. Ch.2 “From Crisis to Rollback” and excerpt of Ch.3 “A War for All Seasons: The Return of Law and Order” (Pp.29-46; 70-72; 77-79).

*\*The reading below is an appendix listing Quality of Life offenses in NYC – just skim it to get a sense of what is being criminalized.*

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).

### 11/7 "Quality of Life" & the Policing of Poverty in San Francisco

Herring, Chris. 2019. "Complaint-Oriented Policing: Regulating Homelessness in Public Space." *American Sociological Review* 84, no.5: 769-800. (Pp.769-788; 789-791; 795-6)

*\*Reading Response Due*

## PREDICTIVE POLICING

### 11/9 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.3 "Whom We Police: Person Based Predictive Targeting" (Pp.1-3; 34-40; 42-43; 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>).

#### Suggested Additional Reading

Alexander, Michelle. 2018. "The Newest Jim Crow." *The New York Times*, November 8.

### 11/14 "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; 88-90).

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

**EXAM 2 distributed on 11/14 – DUE by 6pm on Tuesday 11/21**

11/16 NO CLASS - Working on Exam 2

11/21 NO CLASS – EXAM 2 DUE

11/23 NO CLASS – University Holiday

## ABOLITION...

### 11/28 Abolition: *Making Police Obsolete*

Williams, *Our Enemies in Blue*. Excerpt of Afterword “Making Police Obsolete” (Pp.363-366).

Maher, Geo. 2021. *A World Without Police: How Strong Communities Make Cops Obsolete*. London: Verso. (Pp.127-129; 137-147)

Roberts, Dorothy. 2022. “I Have Studied Child Protective Services for Decades. It Needs to Be Abolished.” *Mother Jones*.

*\*Reading Response Due*

### 11/30 Abolitionist Justice

McLeod, Allegra M. 2018. “Envisioning Abolition Democracy.” *Harvard Law Review* 132: 1613-1649. Excerpts (Pp.1613-1622; 1628-1631; 1633; 1637-1643; 1646)

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

*\*Reading Response Due*

## RESEARCH PAPER DUE by 1pm on Monday 12/11

### GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

15% Reading Responses

30% Exam 1 (Due 9/30)

40% Exam 2 (Due 11/21)

15% Research Paper (Due 12/11)



## **ATTENDANCE, COVID & CLASS RECORDINGS**

Class **attendance is required** and is crucial for understanding course content and performing well on exams. Being present and actively participating in class is central to the learning process. Attendance will be taken at every class meeting, and it is students' responsibility to make sure they have signed the attendance sheet.

All students will be **allotted 4 absences** without penalty. Each additional absence will result in a 1% deduction from the final grade. These allotted absences are intended to accommodate for all personal issues, illness, or potential COVID exposure. There is no need to email me to notify me of or explain absences – the absence allotment is intended to accommodate for any/all reasons for missing class, and to relieve me of the administrative work of dealing with absence requests on an individual basis.

To accommodate for necessary absences, **class recordings** will be available in your Media Gallery in bCourses for **2 weeks** after the class session (*except during exam periods*). However, these recordings are limited in that they do not capture class discussions and therefore won't include all the class content. Furthermore, there is no guarantee that recordings will be available for all classes, as technical issues may occur. Students are responsible for viewing any missed classes within two weeks, after which recordings will no longer be available. **No class recordings will be available during exam periods.**

Class begins promptly at 10 minutes after the scheduled hour (2:10 pm). Please be **present on time** as late arrivals disrupt the class. This means being seated and ready to begin (not running through the door) at 2:10. Students are expected to remain in the classroom until the conclusion of the class. If for some reason you need to leave class early, you should discuss this with me beforehand.

## **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) before going to pick it up.

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 advantageous for 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 the assigned readings. You should always **refer to the reading guides before beginning the readings** as they are intended to make the process easier (especially for the more difficult 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 **7 out of 9 reading responses**. 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 to each question may be brief (a few concise sentences) but must clearly reflect that you carefully and thoroughly read the assignment. There are a total of 9 reading responses (marked on the syllabus and the reading guides), out of which you are required to complete 7. This is intended to accommodate for all situations of illness or other crises, allowing you to skip 2 when necessary. For students who submit more than 7, the lowest grade(s) will be dropped and only the highest 7 grades will count.

Reading responses *must* be uploaded to bCourses **by 1:30pm** (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. Responses submitted after 1:30pm will not receive full credit. There are no extensions for reading responses given that their purpose is to exhibit having read before class, and because there is an allotment for skipping 2 when necessary.

**Late submissions** will be accepted for up to **72 hours** (3 days) after the deadline for **partial credit**. No submissions will be accepted after 72 hours.

## **TAKE-HOME EXAMS:**

The 2 exams for this course will be **take-home, open book examinations** that students have limited time to complete and which consist of short essays that assess mastery of the course materials. Exams will be **cumulative**, covering material from the entirety of the course.

The time allotted for completing these exams is purposely 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. There are no extensions, but late submissions will be accepted with a grade penalty.

The **exams periods** (distribution and due dates) are listed below. Students are expected to be aware of these dates and to schedule and prepare accordingly. *You should check these deadlines against*

*your academic and other obligations at the beginning of the course and ensure that you are able to meet them before deciding to remain in this class.* No changes will be made to the scheduled exam periods.

**EXAM 1: 9/26 – 9/30**

**EXAM 2: 11/14 – 11/21**

### **RESEARCH PAPER:**

Over the course of the semester, students will work on a secondary **research paper** on any chosen topic related to policing (**due on 12/11**). The objective of the paper is to utilize academic scholarship to develop an analysis of your chosen topic that also incorporates concepts, arguments and insights from the course.

### **DSP:**

Students who require any DSP accommodations should forward their accommodation letter and contact me (email or office hours) at the beginning of the course. Students who wish to utilize DSP accommodations for the exams are required to contact me about this well in advance. *Requests for accommodation will not be considered during the exam period (after the distribution of the exam).* Please note that accommodations with specified percentages of additional time (i.e., 150% time) are for in-class exams only and do not apply to this course, for which we have no in-class exams.

### **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.

### **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 through the Turnitin system which automatically compares the submitted document to all other student submissions (in current and previous years), as well as to all academic sources and publicly available web content.