

# Undergraduate Seminar on Order, Violence, & the State

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Fall 2016 Wednesday 2 - 4:40 pm  
Office Hours: Wednesday 10:15-12:15  
323 Harkness Hall

**Description:** Why are some societies plagued by endemic violence and others peaceful? How do peaceful, ordered societies emerge and persist? This course answers these questions by examining the origins of political order over a long-span of human history. Using the tools of modern social science as well as historical and anthropological material we will explore how states emerged from anarchy, how they have come to control the use of force, and the implications of political order for material well-being and prosperity.

**Evaluation:** You will be evaluated in the following manner:

**5x10%** Critical responses: Each student must write five critical response essays of 250-500 words. You may select any five weeks on which to write. An A level response will not only summarize but engage critically with a given week's readings. Essays must demonstrate substantial use of the assigned readings to earn better than a C. You are encouraged to use your notes and to consult the readings when writing your essays, but you CANNOT discuss the essays with any classmates until you have handed them in. You should e-mail them to me before class starts. Late papers will not be accepted.

**30%** Final paper: There will be a final paper of 10-12 pages for W students and 5-6 pages for non-W students. The papers provide students with an opportunity to examine the topics discussed in class from the in-depth perspective of one or several empirical cases of their choosing (although other suitable projects may be substituted for this; for example, students may be allowed to write a paper that includes statistical analysis if they prefer). The paper will require W students to cite at least six academic sources not among assigned readings for the class, and three sources for non-W students. You should meet with me before week eight of the semester to discuss a topic. More details about the final paper will be forthcoming in the first few weeks of class.

**20%** Class participation: This is a small seminar that requires active participation from each student. This is not a free 20% of the grade for students that simply show up. Quality participation requires attending class, demonstrated attempts to understand the readings to the best of your ability, and thoughtful responses to comments by your classmates and the instructor. Related, speaking in class does not necessarily mean you have contributed to the discussion.

**Reading:** I will put all materials online. The exceptions to this will be Brewer's "Sinews of Power" and Stasavage's "States of Credit:" (you can find these cheap on Amazon and other online services). They will be put on reserve as well.

**Academic honesty** Tempted to cheat? Don't do it. Fortunately, there are few possible opportunities for cheating in this course. Students are encouraged to talk to each other about the readings and about their final papers outside of class, and are encouraged to use their notes and readings when writing the five essays and final paper. The only exception is that students are NOT ALLOWED to discuss their answers to essay questions with each other or with anyone else prior to handing them in. If I learn that students collaborated or otherwise received help on an essay, then they will receive no credit for that essay and there may be further repercussions. The university's academic honesty policy can be found at: <http://www.rochester.edu/college/honesty/>.

**Anything else** If any of this is unclear or if there are other relevant details for your situation, please contact me sooner rather than later. I hope this course will be an enjoyable experience for everyone.

**Content:**

**Topic 1.** *Anarchy and the Potential for Spontaneous Cooperation*

- Waltz, Kenneth Neal. "Theory of International Politics." 1979. ch 6.
- Axelrod, Robert M. "The Evolution of Cooperation" 2006. ch 1-2,4,9.

**Topic 2a.** *Why Violence? Evolutionary and Cultural Explanations*

- Wrangham, Richard W., and Dale Peterson. "Demonic Males: Apes and the Origins of Human Violence" 1996. ch 1- 4
- Nisbett, Richard E., and Dov Cohen. "Culture of Honor: the Psychology of Violence in the South" 1996. ch 1-6

**Topic 2b.** *Why Violence? Materialist and Structural Explanations*

- LeBlanc, Steven A., and Katherine E. Register. "Constant Battles: Why We Fight" 2004. ch 1, 2-7
- Fearon, James D. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization* 49.03 (1995): 379-414.

**Topic 3.** *States: Where Do they Come From?*

- Olson, Mancur. "Power and Prosperity: Outgrowing Communist and Capitalist Dictatorships" 2000. ch 1
- Boix, Carles. "Political Order and Inequality: Their Foundations and their Consequences for Human Welfare." pp 1-91
- Robert Carneiro "A Theory of the Origin of the State" *Science*. 1970
- de la Sierra, Raul Sanchez. On the Origin of States: Stationary Bandits and Taxation in Eastern Congo. *Working Paper* University of Chicago 2015.

**Topic 4a.** *State Capacity: What is it & How Should it be Measured?*

- Huntington, Samuel P. Political order in changing societies. 2006. ch 1
- Hendrix, Cullen S. "Measuring state capacity: Theoretical and empirical implications for the study of civil conflict." *Journal of Peace Research* 47.3 (2010): 273-285.
- Lee, Melissa M., and Nan Zhang. 2016. "Legibility and the Informational Foundations of State Capacity." Forthcoming at the *Journal of Politics*.

**Topic 4b.** *State Capacity: The English Case*

- Brewer, John. *The Sinews of Power: War, Money, and the English State, 1688-1783*. 1990.

**Topic 4c.** *State Capacity: Where Does it Come From?*

- Charles Tilly "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime." 1985
- Dincecco, Mark and Mauricio Prado Warfare, Fiscal Capacity, and Performance *Journal of Economic Growth*, vol. 17, pp. 171-203, 2012.
- Hoffman, Philip T. "Why did Europe Conquer the World?" 2015. ch 2
- Karaman, Kivanc and Pamuk, Sevket. "Different Paths to the Modern State in Europe: The Interaction Between Warfare, Economic Structure, and Political Regime" *The American Political Science Review*. (2013)

**Topic 5.** *Constraining the Leviathan*

- North, Douglass C., and Barry R. Weingast. "Constitutions and commitment: the evolution of institutions governing public choice in seventeenth-century England." *The journal of economic history* 49.04 (1989): 803-832.
- Weingast, Barry R. "The Political Foundations of Democracy and the Rule of the Law." *American political science review* 91.02 (1997): 245-263.
- Stasavage, David "Credible Commitment in Early Modern Europe: North and Weingast Revisited" *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 18(1), pp.155-86, 2002
- Boix, Carles, and Milan W. Svobik. "The foundations of limited authoritarian government: Institutions, Commitment, and Power-Sharing in Dictatorships." *The Journal of Politics* 75.02 (2013): 300-316.

**Topic 6. *Public Debt and Representation***

- Stasavage, David. *States of Credit: Size, Power, and the Development of European polities*. 2011

**Topic 7. *The Number and Size of States***

- Tilly, Charles, *Coercion, Capital and the European State: 990-1990*. ch 1 - 3
- Spruyt, Hendrik. "Institutional selection in international relations: state anarchy as order." *International Organization* 48.04 (1994): 527-557.
- Abramson, Scott, "The Economic Origins of the Territorial State" *International Organization* (Forthcoming)

**Topic 8. *Why Does Statelessness Persist?***

- Herbst, Jeffrey. *States and power in Africa*. 2014. ch 1-5
- Scott, James *The Art of Not Being Governed*, 2009 ch 1.

**Topic 9. *Nations and Nationalism***

- Balcells, Laia. "Mass schooling and catalan nationalism." *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 19.4 (2013): 467-486.
- Darden, Keith, and Harris Mylonas. "Threats to territorial integrity, national mass schooling, and linguistic commonality." *Comparative Political Studies* (2015): 0010414015606735.
- Ernest Gellner. 1983. *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Chapters 1-4.

**Topic 10. *Sovereignty***

- Osianer, Andreas. "Sovereignty, international relations, and the Westphalian myth." *International organization* 55.02 (2001): 251-287.
- Krasner, Stephen D. "Compromising Westphalia." *International Security* (1995): 115-151.
- Philpott, Daniel. "The Religious Roots of Modern International Relations." *World Politics* 52.02 (2000): 206-245.
- Ruggie, John Gerard. "Territoriality and beyond: problematizing modernity in international relations." *International organization* 47.01 (1993): 139-174