

SOCIOLOGY 924

Theories of the State

Spring 2017

Room 8108 Social Sciences

Thursday, 3:00 – 5:00

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WHAT THIS SEMINAR IS ABOUT

This seminar is motivated by a moral and political concern: to what extent is it possible to achieve a more egalitarian, humane and democratic society within a capitalist society? Even if in many of the discussions we will not explicitly address this issue, ultimately a crucial political stake in understanding the nature of the state in capitalist society is the problem of emancipatory social change.

It is a fundamental tenet of Marxist theories of the state that the state in capitalist society is deeply shaped and constrained by the class relations of capitalism, but this leaves quite open the extent to which progressive change can be achieved within those constraints. At one extreme is classical Leninism, which sees the capitalist state as so profoundly imbued with a capitalist character that even where nominally democratic institutions exist, there is little prospect for progressive change. The state is fundamentally a “superstructure”: its form and structures functionally reproduce the basic class relations of capitalism. As a result the state must be smashed and radically reconstructed on a new basis; serious reforms in an egalitarian direction using the capitalist state will inevitably fail or be reversed. At the other extreme is classical social democracy which views state apparatuses as basically class neutral and regarded class structure as simply one among a variety of obstacles to be overcome. Popular mobilization, particularly when organized through a coordination of the labor movement and socialist parties, had the potential to gradually reform capitalism in a radically egalitarian direction through social democratic state policies. Between these extremes are a variety of theoretical and political positions which see the constraints on radical change imposed by the capitalist state as variable, both in terms of the kinds of changes they permit and the extent to which struggles can transform the constraints themselves. The “contradictory functionality” of the state creates a complex, variable political space within which egalitarian, democratic, and even emancipatory politics can be pursued.

The central task of this seminar, then, is to explore a range of theoretical and empirical issues that bear on the problem of understanding such possibilities for radical, egalitarian politics in capitalist societies. Above all we will focus on the problem of the complex interconnections between class, the economy, and the state in capitalist societies. To develop the theoretical tools to approach these issues we will have to grapple with some fairly abstract of conceptual questions: what does it mean to say that the state has a “class character”? What is the difference between an external constraint on state actions imposed by class relations and an internal institutionalization of class constraints within the state itself? What does it mean to describe the state as having “autonomy” -- relative, potential, limited or absolute?

In more practical terms, this seminar has two primary objectives: First, to deepen students’ understanding of alternative theoretical approaches to studying the state and politics within broadly Marxist and critical traditions of state theory, and second, to examine a range of interesting empirical/historical studies that embody, in different ways, these approaches in order to gain a better understanding of the relationship between abstract theoretical ideas and concrete empirical investigation.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

1. Weekly reading interrogations

To facilitate discussions of the core readings, all participants are required to prepare a “reading interrogation” each week which will form the basis for the discussion. These interrogations are not meant to be mini-papers on the topics of the readings. Rather, they are meant to be think pieces, reflecting your own intellectual engagement with the material: specifying what is obscure or confusing in the reading; taking issue with some core idea or argument; exploring some interesting ramification of an idea in the reading. These memos do not have to deal with the most profound, abstract or grandiose arguments in the readings; the point is that they should reflect what you find most engaging, exciting or puzzling, and above all: **they should clearly specify what you would most like to talk about in the seminar discussion.** A good interrogation is one that poses a clear and discussable question – not a half a dozen different questions, but one focal question. (Since I use the memos to distill the seminar agenda, it is pretty frustrating when I have to read a memo several times in order to extract an agenda item from it.) There is no set length for these interrogations. It is fine (even preferable!) for them to be quite short – say 200 words or so – but longer memos (within reason – remember: everyone in the class will read them) are also OK. The interrogations should be written *single-spaced* in MS-Word.

These interrogations are due by **Wednesday noon of each week** so that I can assemble them into a single document, distill an agenda, and distribute these materials to all students by email by Wednesday night. (This is a real deadline; I simply will not have time to do this task if the interrogations arrive later than this). All students should read these interrogations before class meets on Thursday afternoon. At the seminar when we get to a specific agenda item, students whose memos contributed to that issue will be asked to speak first on the topic.

2. Term paper and Presentation

For this seminar I have a very specific kind of assignment for term papers, rather than an open-ended research paper as sometimes is assigned in graduate seminars. I have assembled a list of historical case studies, nearly all of which were originally dissertations. Some of these directly deploy Marxist theories of the state. Others are not embedded in the tradition of Marxist state theory, but nevertheless present empirical material directly related to Marxist themes. I have posted the table of contents and first chapter of all of these books on the course website:

<http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~wright/sociology924-2017.htm>

The components of the assignment are as follows:

- i. Each student will rank-order four (or more) books that they are interested in working on from this list. I want each student to pick a different book, so if more than one person indicates a particular book is their first choice, I will randomly select the person for that book. Students can pick a case study not on the list, but if they do so, they need to confirm their choice with me. Students are free to switch books with other students after the allocations have been made.
- ii. Students in the seminar will prepare a 20-25 minute presentation in which they distill a talk on the basis of the book *as if they had written the book*. This is a very specific kind of task, one which graduate students eventually face: how to distill a complex piece of work – their dissertations! – into a short, punchy presentation which is still intellectually exciting. Since the books on this list are (nearly) all revisions of dissertations, preparing this presentation can be an occasion for honing this skill. These presentations will take place at the weekend retreat for the course on April 29-30 and, if necessary, in the seminar session the last week of class.

- iii. There are several possible kinds of term papers that you can write based on your study of the case-study book:
1. **Review essay.** Review essays books (not just a simple review, but a *review essay*) of the sort that appears in journals such as *Contemporary Sociology*, *Theory and Society*, *Socio-economic Review*, *New Left Review*, etc., differ from ordinary book reviews in that they usually involve discussion of references other than those in the principle book under review, and they make some kind of general argument about the subject matter. Sometimes such essays revolve around the comparison between the analyses of several books; other times they take the form of an analytical critique and reconstruction of the arguments in the main book under review. Some examples of such essays that I have written are: "[Metatheoretical foundations of Charles Tilly's *Durable Inequality*](#)," (*Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol 42:3, April 2000. pp. 458-474); "[The Triadic model of Society in Somers' *Genealogies of Citizenship*](#)" *Socio-economic Review* (2011) 9: 405-418, and "[Review of Peter Evans, *Embedded Autonomy*](#)." *Contemporary Sociology*, Vol. 25, No. 2. (Mar., 1996), pp. 176-179.
 2. **Debate and development on the topic since book was published.** If the book you choose is part of an on-going literature on a topic, then you could write an essay which tracks the development of the arguments around the topic to the present. This would be particularly relevant for a book that was originally published in the 1970s or 1980s. For example, David Abraham's book, *The Collapse of the Weimar Republic*, was originally published in 1981. At the time it sparked an intense (and sometimes ugly) debate. A good essay could be written on the discussion of this issue over the subsequent 35 years.
 3. **Theoretical essay.** A more theoretical essay that takes a core theme/concept/argument from the case-study book and explores a range of alternative treatments of the theoretical issues in play. For example, you could take a book like Ellen Kay Trimberger's *Revolution from Above: Military Bureaucrats and development in Japan, Turkey, Egypt and Peru*, and compare it with other treatments of the relationship between the military and state. Or Nora Hamilton's *The Limits of State Autonomy* could be the basis for a general essay on the theoretical problem of state autonomy, comparing this with Peter Evans and others.

There are no firm length requirements for the term paper. These are meant to be serious pieces of analysis and writing built around the core case study you have chosen. My general expectation is that papers should be in the 5,000-10,000 word range.

Books for term paper project

(* books from UW sociology PhDs)

1. David Abraham, *The Collapse of the Weimar Republic*. (second edition, Holmes and Meier, 2002). An analysis of the complexity of forming stable coalitions of dominant class fractions and their relation to subordinate classes, and how the failure to form a stable block created the conditions for the collapse of Weimar Germany
2. *Julia Adams, *The Familial State: ruling families and merchant capitalism in early modern Europe* (Cornell University Press: 2005). An exploration of the complex relationship between elite family dynamics and state formation in the Dutch Republic.
3. *Gianpaolo Baiocchi, *Militants and Citizens: the politics of participatory democracy in Porto Alegre* (Stanford, 2006). An analysis of the transformations of the relationship between state and civil society through participatory budgeting in Brazil.
4. *Carolyn Baylies, *Class structure and State formation in Zambia* (PhD dissertation, 1978, unpublished). A study of the formation of a proper colonial state with relative autonomy from local class relations as a response to the initial completely nonautonomous state established by the colonial capitalist class.
5. Richard Bessel, *Yankee Leviathan: The Origins of Central State autonomy: 1859-77* (Cambridge, 1990). An analysis of how the Civil War shaped the structure of the national state in both North and South.
6. *Vivek Chibber, *Locked in Place: state-building and late industrialization in India* (Princeton, 2003). Analysis of the ways in which particular configurations of class forces both within countries and across countries generate institutions that constrain state strategies for development.
7. Manali Desai. 2007. *State formation and Radical Democracy in India*. Routledge.
8. Dahlia Sabina Elazar. 2001. *The Making of Fascism: Class, State, and Counter--revolution, Italy 1919-1922*. Praeger
9. *Gosta Esping-Anderson, *Politics Against Markets* (Princeton, 1985). An explanation of variations across Scandinavian countries in the dynamics of social democracy, and how the class base for social democracy was more firmly established in Sweden than in Denmark.
10. *Roger Friedland, *Power and Crisis in the City: corporations, Unions and Urban Policy* (McMillan 1982). An analysis of the link between (a) the location of cities in the national system of capital accumulation, (b) the relationship between the national state and the local state, and (c) variation across cities in policies around urban renewal.
11. *Ran Greenstein, *Genealogies of Conflict: Class, Identity, and State in Palestine/Israel and South Africa*. (University Press of New England, 1995). This book compares the relationship between the state and national minorities in Israel/Palestine and South Africa during the apartheid era.
12. *Nora Hamilton, *The Limits of State Autonomy* (Princeton, 1982). An exploration of the problem of the "relative autonomy" of the capitalist state and the role of strategic intervention by dominant class forces to block autonomy when it threatens their interests.
13. Patrick Heller, *The Labor of Development: Workers and the transformation of capitalism in Kerala, India* (Cornell University Press, 1999). A study of the way class formation and communist party politics shape the strategies of the state.
14. *David James, *The Transformation of Local State and Class Structures* (unpublished dissertation, University of Wisconsin 1981). A study of the local racial state in the U.S. South and how variations in its relationship to both the local class structure and the national class structure shaped the patterns of its transformation across the South in the Civil Rights era.
15. Kathleen McNamara, *The Power of Ideas: monetary politics in the European Union* (Cornell, 1998). An analysis of the power of capital mobility and the pressures that induced European states to form the EU

16. Suzanne Mettler, *Soldiers to Citizens: The G. I. Bill and the Making of the Greatest Generation* (Oxford, 2005).
17. Vedat Milor, *A Comparative Study of Planning and Economic Development in Turkey and France* (Berkeley, PhD dissertation, 1989). A study of how the contrasting relationship between the capitalist class and the state in Turkey and France helps explain the different capacity for planning by the capitalist state in the two countries.
18. Ton Notermans, *Money, Markets and the State* (Cambridge: 2000). An argument about the dilemmas of social democracy, about the conditions that blocked its emergence and the conditions of its reproduction.
19. Alice O'Connor, *Poverty Knowledge: Social Science, Social Policy, and the Poor in Twentieth-Century U.S. History* (Princeton, 2001)
20. Ann Orloff, *The Politics of Pensions: a comparative analysis of Britain, Canada, and the United States, 1880-1940* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1993). An explanation of the timing of national social security pensions in different countries on the basis of the way path-dependent historical processes interact with the institutional structures of states.
21. James Ron, *Frontiers and Ghettos: state violence in Serbia and Israel* (California 2003). An exploration of the use of violence by the state to secure social control over ethnic minorities when minorities are located on the borders of a country or in the interior.
22. Ian Roxborough. *Chile: State and Revolution*, (with P.O'Brien and J.Roddick) Macmillan: 1977.
23. Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: a comparative analysis of France, China and Russia* (Cambridge University Press, 1979). An argument for a purely structural account of revolutions that emphasizes the “potential autonomy” of the state and the conditions under which it collapses from the combination of internal contradictions and contingent shocks.
24. Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State* (Cambridge University Press, 1982). An explanation for why the difficulty in creating effective administrative capacities in the state undermined the ability of the U.S. national state solving certain kinds of regulatory problems.
25. Richard Snyder, *Politics After Neoliberalism: reregulation in Mexico* (Cambridge University Press: 2001). An analysis of variations across states in Mexico in the response to neoliberalism, showing how variations in configurations of class structures and class forces conditioned the response of the local state,
26. *George Steinmetz, *Regulating the Social: the welfare state and local politics in Imperial Germany* (Princeton University Press, 1993). An account of variations across regions of Germany in the process of constructing the modern capitalist state and how this conditions the forms of development of the welfare state,
27. Ellen Kay Trimberger, *Revolution from Above: Military Bureaucrats and development in Japan, Turkey, Egypt and Peru* (Transaction Books, 1978). A study of the role of the initiatives of military bureaucracies in transforming states.
28. Jeffrey Winters, *Power in Motion: capital mobility and the Indonesian State* (Cornell, 1996). A book about the subordination of the Indonesian state to the structural power of capital through an examination of 40 years of Indonesian history.

SPECIAL EVENT, APRIL 28-29: MINI-CONFERENCE ON SOCIALISM, REAL UTOPIAS, AND THE STATE

On the last weekend of the semester – April 28-29 – we will be having a two-day mini-conference jointly with the students in Sociology 621.

The workshop will have two different kinds of sessions:

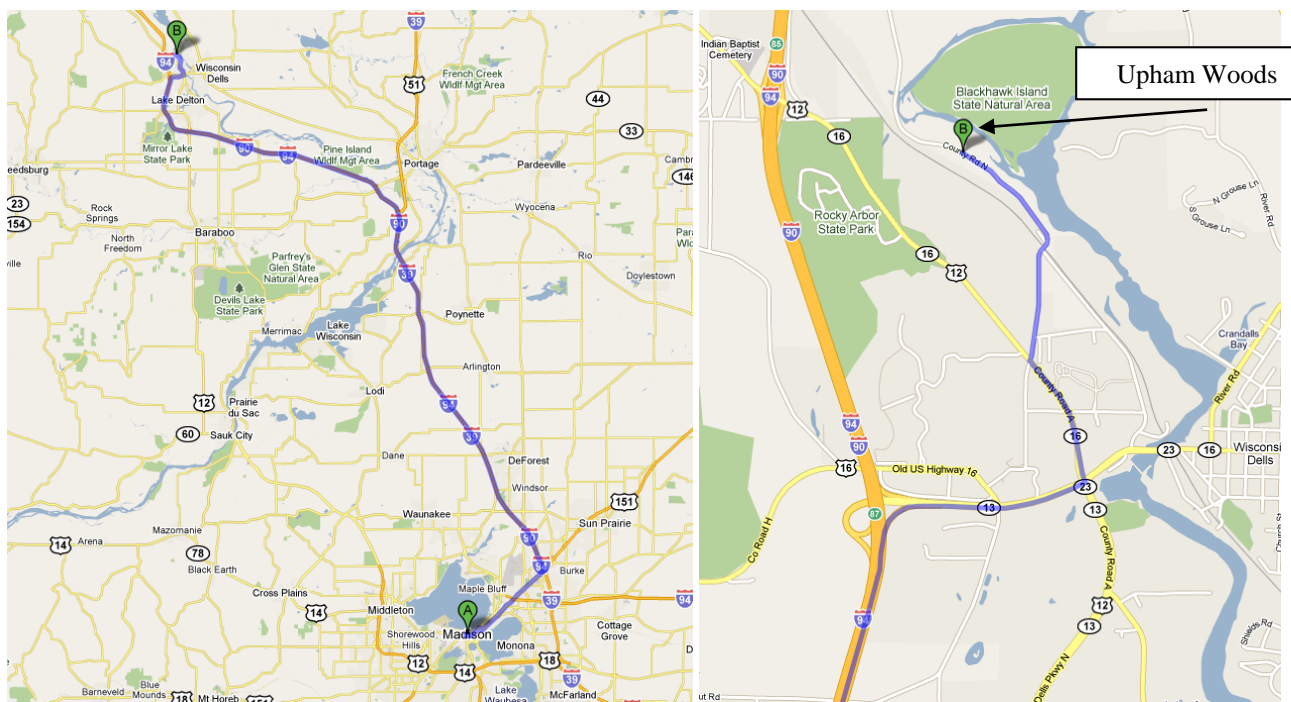
(1). Book talks by students in Sociology 924. I will organize this like an academic conference, where presentations on thematically linked books will appear on a panel. Depending on the number of presentations, this should involve a total of roughly 8 hours of presentations. These will take place in three blocks: Saturday morning, Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning.

(2). A discussion of the capitalist state and the struggle for socialism. In both classes gathered for the retreat, students will have read Goran Therborn's *What Does the Ruling Class Do when it Rules?* At the retreat, we will revisit this book in the context of a discussion of strategies for socialism in the 21st century. Specifically, we will explore the question of what kinds of institutional transformations in the state within capitalism can contribute to forms of democratic empowerment that point beyond capitalism. This session will take place Saturday afternoon. I have assigned two readings to facilitate this discussion, one a recent essay I published on Therborn's book, and the second a central chapter of a new book I am writing.

The workshop will be held at Upham Woods, a beautiful University of Wisconsin facility on the Wisconsin River about an hour north of Madison. In addition to the academic sessions, the retreat will also include a gourmet potluck and party Saturday evening – with music, dancing, singing, general carousing – and, if we have snow, a couple of hours of tobogganing on a wonderful toboggan run at the conference center.

Spouses/partners, friends and children are also welcome to come for the weekend – there are nice activities in the area for children while the workshop is in session (including indoor water Parks in Wisconsin Dells). I will cover part of the costs of the retreat, so the out-of-pocket expenses should be about \$40/person for room and board. While it is not an absolute requirement for students to participate in this event, I feel it will be a valuable and enjoyable way to wrap up the semester so I strongly urge everyone in the class to come.

Directions to Upham Woods



Readings

Most of the Readings for the course come from books. When books are out of print or are incredibly expensive, I have made pdfs of the relevant chapters and placed them on e-reserve at the social science reference library. Books that have been ordered from the bookstore are:

- Göran Therborn – *What does the ruling class do when it Rules* (Verso: 1978)
- Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States: AD 990-1990* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990)
- Bob Jessop, *The State* (Polity Press, 2015)
- Adam Przeworski, *Capitalism and Social Democracy* (Cambridge, 1985)
- Wolfgang Streeck, *How Will Capitalism End?* (Verso, 2016)

General Background Readings

Students interested in general background readings on the perspectives we will be examining can consult the following:

- Clyde Barrow, *Critical Theories of the State* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1993)
- Martin Carnoy, *The State and Political Theory* (Princeton University Press, 1984)
- Bob Jessop, *The Capitalist State: Marxist Theories and Methods* (New York University Press: 1982)
- Ralph Miliband, *Marxism and Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).
- Albert Szymanski, *The Capitalist State and the Politics of Class*, (Winthrop, 1978)
- David Gold, Clarence Lo and Erik Olin Wright, “Recent developments in Marxist Theories of the State,” *Monthly Review*, October and November, 1975. (available on my website)
- Fred Block, “The Ruling Class Does Not Rule,” *Socialist Review* No.33, 1977.

A NOTE ON THE WEEKLY READINGS

Roughly speaking, there are two styles of reading assignments in seminars: Huge amounts of weekly readings which students read at break-neck speed if they have any hope of getting through the readings, or more limited amounts of reading which students are expected to read quite closely. The argument for the first of these is that it enables a seminar to cover a very wide range of literature, perhaps even covering all of the most central works on the subject matter of the seminar. The advantage of the second is that it enables students to grapple with the nuances of arguments and try to really figure out what is in play in different perspectives. I have vacillated between these two ways of organizing a seminar, but generally have adopted the first. This is sometimes called a book-a-week seminar. This time I have decided to have some of the topics spread out over two weeks. This doesn't mean spending less time preparing for the seminars for those weeks, but having the time for close readings of the assignments.

COURSE WEBSITE

The course website is: <http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~wright/sociology924-2017.htm>
This website will, the weekly reading interrogations, and a range of other materials.

Schedule of sessions

1.	1/19	Introduction
2.	1/26	Classical Marxism: the logic of the Base/superstructure model
3.	2/2	Göran Therborn I. <i>What does the ruling class do when it rules?</i>
4.	2/9	Göran Therborn II. <i>What does the ruling class do when it rules?</i>
5.	2/16	Bob Jessop I. <i>The State: past, present, future</i>
6.	2/23	Bob Jessop II. <i>The State: past, present, future</i>
7.	3/2	Adam Przeworski. Analytical Marxist approaches to the state
8.	3/9	Michael Mann. <i>The Sources of Social Power</i>
9.	3/16	Charles Tilly. <i>Coercion, Capital and European States</i>
10.	3/30	Robert Alford and Roger Friedland, <i>Powers of Theory: Capitalism, the State and Democracy</i>
11.	4/6	Wolfgang Streeck, <i>How will capitalism end?</i>
12.	4/13	Joe Conti, <i>Transnational Stateness</i>
13.	4/20	Seminar does not meet [or optional session]
14.	4/27	Seminar presentations
15.	4/28-29	Seminar retreat, Upham Woods
16.	5/3	Seminar does not meet

WEEKLY READING ASSIGNMENTS

* Available on library e-reserve

Session 1. January 19 Introduction

In this first session we will have a free-floating discussion about the idea of “the state” as an object of theoretical analysis and why this matters. I will also present some general meta-theoretical guidelines (i.e. principles for how to think about “theory”) which will help frame our discussions throughout the semester. These include:

- The distinction between *concept* formation and *theory* construction.
- The knotty problem of the *level of abstraction* at which particular concepts are formed, theories constructed, and empirical research is conducted. Mismatches are common.
- The problem of being clear on what precisely is the *object of explanation*: fine-grained vs coarse grained objects of explanation.
- The heterogeneity of explanatory logics: causal, functional, intentional
- “Clinical” vs “scientific” use of theory: learning *about* a case versus learning *from* a case.
- The general idea of the “double discipline” of both concepts and theories: the importance of disciplining concepts/theories both in terms of their capacity to solve empirical problems and their logical coherence within broader conceptual frameworks.
- The necessary tension between eclectic and paradigmatic approaches to social science
- The crucial importance of *variation*: the capacity of concepts to give coherence to empirically observed variation.
- The centrality of normative issues: emancipatory social science.

Supplementary readings (not required):

Erik Olin Wright, *Class, Crisis, and the State* (Verso: 1978), Chapter 1. [Methodological Introduction](#)

Erik Olin Wright, *Classes* (Verso: 1985), Chapter 2. [The Biography of a Concept: contradictory class locations](#), especially the subsection on “The Logic of Concept Formation”, pp.20-24; Chapter 5. [Empirically Adjudicating Contending Class Definitions](#) and [Appendix I](#), “Practical Strategies for Transforming Concepts”

Erik Olin Wright, “[Reflections on Classes](#)”, pp.49-77 in *The Debate on Classes* (Verso, 1989)

Ray Pawson, *A Measure for Measures: a manifesto for empirical sociology* (New York: Routledge, 1989), especially chapter 2, “Against variable analysis”; Chapter 3, “Against scaling”; and chapter 6, “From variables to mechanisms (and back again)”.

*Erik Olin Wright, “Class and Politics”, in *Interrogating Inequality* (Verso: 1994). pp.88-106.

Session 2. January 26 Classical Marxism: the logic of the Base/superstructure model

Relatively few writers today explicitly adopt the “base/superstructure” model of the state that is associated with certain versions of classical Marxism. Nevertheless, the central intuition of this model remains present, sometimes in a shadowy way, in many analyses of the state. The basic intuition is this:

Capitalist society contains deep, potentially explosive contradictions. Two clusters of these contradictions are especially important: contradictions rooted in the accumulation process (or, as it is sometimes stated: contradictions rooted in the market), and

contradictions rooted in class antagonisms. The first of these threatens the stability of the capitalist economy; the second ultimately threatens the overthrow of capitalism. Some kind of mechanism is needed to reproduce capitalism in the face of these contradictions; capitalism by itself cannot provide all of the conditions for its own reproduction. Here is where the “superstructure” comes in: The super-structure constitutes all of those noneconomic structures – broadly, political and ideological structures and institutions – which reproduce the capitalist economic structure and class structure in the face of these contradictions. Accomplishing these tasks constitute the “functions” of the superstructure in general, and the state in particular.

This is what is called a *functional description*: a claim about the beneficial effects of a structure for the system of which it is a part. The most controversial aspect of the base/superstructure model makes an even stronger argument, which is called a *functional explanation*: these beneficial effects also explain the existence of the structure in question. In this view, the explanation for why capitalist state takes the form it does and acts the way it does is that this is necessary for the reproduction of capitalism. Similar arguments in the Marxist tradition are made about racism (racism exists and takes the forms it takes because this is good for capitalism), ideology, the family, and other noneconomic institutions and relations.

Readings:

*Paul Sweezy, “The State”, Ch. XIII in *The Theory of Capitalist Development* (Monthly Review Press, 1947), 239-253

*G.A. Cohen, *Karl Marx’s Theory of History: A defense* (Princeton, 1978), Chapter VIII. Base and Superstructure, pp. 216-248

*Jon Elster, *Making Sense of Marx*, (Cambridge, 1985), chapter 7. Politics and the State, pp. 398-428

Supplementary Reading:

Both of the papers below were written while I was a graduate student in Berkeley and a member of the Bay Area *Kapitalistate* journal collective. The second paper was a collaborative effort with two members of the Madison collective. While these essays may be a little dated, I thought students in the seminar might be interested in seeing the kind of work that was produced through left-intellectual networks in the period.]

*David Gold, Clarence Lo, and Erik Olin Wright. “[Recent Developments on Marxist Theories of the State](#)”, *Monthly Review*, October and November, 1975.

*Gösta Anderson, Roger Friedland and Erik Olin Wright. “Modes of Class Struggle and the Capitalist State,” *Kapitalistate*, no. 4 (1976).

Sessions 3 & 4 February 2 & /9 Göran Therborn

Probably more than any other Marxist theorist, Göran Therborn has attempted to elaborate a formal framework for specifying the class character of the very form of the state. Following on the work of Nicos Poulantzas, Therborn insists that the state should not be viewed simply as “a state in capitalist society” but must be understood as “a capitalist state”, i.e. a state in which capitalist class relations are embodied in its very institutional form. However, whereas Poulantzas and most other theorists who make these claims leave them at a very abstract and general level,

Therborn sticks his neck out and tries to develop a fairly comprehensive, concrete typology of the class character of formal aspects of state institutions. This enables him to also attempt to map out the ways in which these institutional properties of the state vary across a variety of different kinds of class states: the feudal state, the capitalist state of competitive capitalism, the monopoly capitalist state, the socialist state. In this session we will examine in detail Therborn's claims. The supplementary reading by Barrow provides a general overview of the theoretical context of Therborn's work.

Reading:

Göran Therborn, *What Does the Ruling Class Do When It Rules?* (Verso, 1978)

February 2. Part I. "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Class Character of the State Apparatus"

February 9. Part II. "State Power – On the Dialectics of Class Rule"

Supplementary reading

Clyde Barrow, *Critical Theories of the State*, c2. "Neo Marxism: the structuralist approach"

Sessions 5 & 6. February 16 & 23 Bob Jessop

Bob Jessop is a prominent British Marxist political scientist who, like Therborn, was strongly influenced by Nicos Poulantzas. Since the early 1980s he has written a series of books attempting to develop a broad Marxist theory of the state that is responsive to a variety of criticisms and weaknesses – *The Capitalist State: Marxist Theories and Methods* (1982); *Nicos Poulantzas: Marxist theory and political strategy* (1985); *State Theory: putting the State in its place* (1990); *The Future of the Capitalist State* (2002), *State Power: a strategic-relational approach* (2007), and most recently, *The State: past, present, future*. His most recent work, especially, attempts to integrate Marxist and non-Marxist approaches to the state and also to bring to the study of the state issues of space and scale in an effort to connect the theory of the state to large scale changes in the nature and dilemmas of capital accumulation.

Jessop's writing is difficult and may require patience. I suggest initially reading the assigned pages quite quickly and then going over them a second time with a close reading.

Reading:

Bob Jessop, *The State: past, present, future* (Polity Press: 2016)

February 16. Introduction & Part I. The State as Concept, Relation and Reality. pp. 1-120

February 23. Part II. On Territory, Apparatus and Population. pp. 121-186

Part III. Past and Present (Futures) of the State, pp. 187-249

Session 7. March 2 Adam Przeworski

Adam Przeworski's work on the state, especially the work he did in the 1980s, falls within the theoretical tradition often called Analytical Marxism." One of the hallmarks of this approach is a focus on the micro-foundations of social processes, especially the problem of rational strategic action and human agency. It thus constitutes a sharp contrast to the kind of state theory elaborated by Nicos Poulantzas, Goran Therborn, Bob Jessop and others working in the structuralist tradition. While Therborn, and to an even greater extent Jessop, do talk about strategies-embedded-in-relations (Jessop calls this a strategic relational approach), nevertheless they do not attempt to ground their arguments in the micro-analysis of strategic action.

The notion of strategic action (i.e. action in pursuit of goals based on the conscious, rational calculation of likely actions of others) has a relatively precarious place in Marxist theory. On the one hand, as is often noted, the ultimate purpose of Marxism is to "change the world", not simply to understand it, and this implies a central concern with agency and strategy. On the other hand, in the actual elaboration of theoretical positions about the state, Marxists have tended to marginalize the role of strategic action. When it is discussed, furthermore, the main focus is on the way in which dominant classes constitute strategic actors with respect to state institutions (especially in power structure research); relatively little systematic attention is given to the problem of strategic action by subordinate classes.

One of the consequences of marginalizing the strategic practices of workers and other subordinate groups is that the role of the state in reproducing class relations tends to be viewed either as primarily involving repression or ideology (in the sense of mystification). In the former case, strategic action is unimportant because there are no real choices available to workers; in the latter case, strategic action is unimportant because the state engenders forms of subjectivity which render choices illusory.

Analytical Marxists place the issue of strategic action at the center of their analysis of the state. Of particular importance for the general study of politics in this regard is the work of Adam Przeworski. He treats workers (and other potential collectively organized actors) as rational, strategic actors in pursuit of interests under a specified set of "rules of the game". These rules are determined both by the underlying property relations of the society and by the institutional characteristics of the state. His fundamental argument is that in developed capitalist democracies these rules help to create the conditions for a hegemonic system in which the interests of exploited classes are objectively coordinated with the interests of dominant classes through the rational, strategic choices and practices of workers. This hegemonic system cannot be viewed as primarily the result of repression of struggles or ideological distortions of subjectivities; it is the result of the way rational, strategic choices are structured within the social conflicts of the society.

Reading

*Tom Mayer, "State", Chapter 6 in *Analytical Marxism* (Sage Publications, 1994)

Adam Przeworski, *Capitalism & Social Democracy*, chapters 1, 3-5

*Adam Przeworski and Michael Wallerstein. "Popular Sovereignty, State Autonomy and Private Property," *European Journal of Sociology* XXVII (1986), 215-259

Further reading

Adam Przeworski and John Sprague, *Paper Stones* (University of Chicago Press, 1986)

Adam Przeworski. *Democracy and the market: political and economic reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (Cambridge University Press, 1991)

Adam Przeworski. *Economic reforms in new democracies* (Cambridge, 1992)

Adam Przeworski. *State and the economy under capitalism* (New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1990).

Session 8. March 9 Michael Mann

Perhaps the main rival to class-analytic approaches to the state are strategies of analysis that treat the state as a formal organization with specific powers and forms of autonomy that enable it to act in ways not dictated by class and capitalism. This does not imply that the state is unaffected by economic conditions; it just means that class dynamics and capitalist imperatives do not have a privileged explanatory role in understanding why the state does what it does.

This general stance has gone under a variety of names: Skocpol calls this the “state centered approach” to the state and politics; some people call it an institutionalist approach; others – like Mann – have used the expression “organizational materialism” to capture the underlying reasoning. Generally, sociologists identify this strand of theorizing with the Weberian tradition of social theory since Weber placed such importance on questions of organizational structure and certainly treated the state as a special kind of organization, but many people who adopt this approach are also significantly influenced by the Marxist tradition. In any case, the contemporary theorizing on the organizational logic(s) of the state go far beyond Weber’s own formulations.

We will focus in this and the next seminar session on two theorists who adopt an organizational-analytical approach to the state: first, Michael Mann, and then Charles Tilly. Mann, more than any other organization-analytic theorist, has attempted to integrate his specific account of the state into a more general framework for the study of social power and social change. His central idea is that all power depends upon organizations; different kinds of power, then, is based on the characteristics of different kinds of organizations. “Political power” (the distinctive power linked to states) is based on the development of organizational infrastructures to authoritatively administer territories. Unlike most Weber-inspired theorists he thus sharply distinguishes the political power of states from military/coercive power. Political power constitutes a *sui generis* source of power which, in variable and often contingent ways, becomes “entwined” with other forms of power (economic, ideological, and military). The relative power of different actors, collective and individual, depends upon the character of this entwining.

In many ways, this approach is more like a conceptual menu than a “theory” – it provides a complex array of categories in terms of which to analyze power in general and states in particular, but generally shies away from general, abstract theoretical arguments or models. Generally, the explanations offered are formulated at relatively concrete levels of abstraction for explaining specific historical events and processes. One of the issues we should focus on, then, is the problem of levels of abstraction in this kind of organization-analytic approach compared to Marxist class-analytic approaches to the state.

Background reading

Clyde Barrow, *Critical Theories of the State*, chapter Five, "Post-Marxism II: The Organizational Realist Approach"

Required Reading:

*Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power, Volume I. A History of power from the beginning to A.D. 1760* (Cambridge University Press, 1986), chapter 1. "Societies as organized power networks", pp. 1-33

*Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power, Volume II. The Rise of classes and nation states, 1760-1914* (Cambridge University Press, 1993), chapters 1-3, 7-8, 11-14, 20

Additional reading in the Organization-analytic approach

Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions* (Cambridge University Press, 1979)

Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschmeyer, and Theda Skocpol (eds), *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge University Press, 1985)

Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State: the expansion of national administrative capacities, 1877-1920* (Cambridge University Press, 1982)

Session 9. March 16 Charles Tilly

Charles Tilly was one of the most prolific and influential macro-sociologists of the last four decades. In the first part of his career his main focus of research was social movements and their impact on large scale social change. In the last two decades of his life he turned to more institutional questions, and in particular the problem of the development of the modern state. While Tilly (like Michael Mann) draws heavily from Marxist ideas, he sees class as only one of the forces impelling the development of state forms, and probably not in general the most central one. Tilly deploys an interesting, eclectic mix of Marxist and Weberian elements in a theory of state formation that places the state-centered dynamics of war-marking on a par with economic forces in explaining social change in general and the formation of the state in particular. What is particularly interesting in his book, *Coercion, Capital and European States*, is the specific way he explores the interactions of two conceptual triplets: Capital/cities/exploitation and States/coercion/domination.

Reading:

*Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States: AD 990-1990* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), chapters 1-5.

Session 10. March 30 Robert Alford and Roger Friedland

Alford and Friedland argue that there are three broad theoretical perspectives for studying the state: *class theories*, generally anchored in Marxism; *managerialist theories*, which are often identified with Weber; and *pluralist theories*, which dominated American political science in the decades following the Second World War. Each of these approaches has what they refer to as “home domain”: respectively as a capitalist state, a bureaucratic state, or a democratic state. But each of the perspectives also has something to say about the home domains of the other two approaches. The heart of the book is an attempt to bring these different approaches into alignment. This is accomplished by distinguishing three “levels” of power within a social system, which they refer to as systemic, institutional, and situational, and then treating these as nested within the functioning of the system: systemic power imposes limits on institutional power and institutional power imposes limits on situational power. Using a metaphor of society as a “game”, they argue that systemic power is embedded in the nature of the game itself; institutional power in the rules of the game; in situational power in the moves within the rules.

Reading:

Robert Alford and Roger Friedland, *The Powers of Theory: capitalism, the state and democracy* (Cambridge University Press: 1985), pp. 1-32;408-443

*Erik Olin Wright, “Class and Politics”, in *Interrogating Inequality* (Verso: 1994). pp.88-106.

Session 11. April 6 Wolfgang Streeck

Wolfgang Streeck is a leading German economic sociologist whose work has primarily focused on dynamics and contradictions within advanced capitalist economies. In his recent work he has focused on the ways in which neoliberalism, financialization and globalization have undermined the capacity of the democratic capitalist state to effectively intervene to foster the conditions for capital accumulation. In his most recent book he paints a very pessimistic picture of the possibilities for the renewal of any sort of effective state capacity to democratically constrain capitalism. He does not develop an explicit theory of the state in this book. Part of our task is to reconstruct the theory of the state in terms of which he builds his specific diagnoses of the current situation.

Wolfgang Streeck, *How Will Capitalism End?* (Verso: 2016), especially: pp.1-46, 73-141, 184-199

Session 12. April 13 Joe Conti

Joe Conti (in the Wisconsin Sociology Department) is in the final stages of completing a book, *Transnational Stateness*. The book is a study of the ways in which international courts – the WTO court among others – have begun to assume the kind of super-ordinate authority associated with states. This week we will read the entire manuscript. Students are encouraged to write more extensive interrogations than for the rest of the seminar in order to give Joe as much feedback as possible on the book. Joe will be present for the discussion.

Reading: Joe Conti. *Transnational Stateness: The Juridification of International Affairs and the Globalization of Political Power* (unpublished book manuscript, 2017)

Weekend Retreat. April 28-29 *How to be an Anticapitalist for the 21st Century*

The weekend retreat brings together students from Sociology 621, Sociological Marxism, with students from Sociology 924, Theories of the State. In both classes, students read Goran Therborn's *What Does the Ruling Class Do when it Rules?* At the retreat, we will revisit this book in the context of a discussion of strategies for socialism in the 21st century.

Here is the basic theme: Since a systemic rupture with capitalism is not a plausible way of achieving a democratic egalitarian alternative, then if socialism is ever to be possible we must figure out ways of building the alternative inside of capitalism and then gradually displacing and subordinating capitalism to socialist relations. I refer to this as a strategy of *eroding* capitalism. But here's the problem: the credibility of a strategy of eroding capitalism depends in significant ways on initiatives by the state. However, the state in capitalist society is not simply a neutral apparatus that can be readily used by social forces opposed to capitalism. It is a particular kind of state – a *capitalist* state – designed in such a way as to systematically protect capitalism from threats. Eroding capitalism, therefore, is only possible if, in spite of the in-built class biases of the capitalist state, it is nevertheless possible use the state to create new rules of the game that can facilitate the expansion of emancipatory non-capitalist relations that point beyond capitalism. Just as in feudal society, in spite of its feudal character the state enabled new rules of the game that ultimately undermined feudalism, so too in capitalism it may be possible for a capitalist state to enable (or at least coexist with) rules that ultimately undermine capitalism. The fact that the capitalist state is not an instrument ideally suited to the erosion of capitalism may not mean it cannot be used imperfectly for that purpose.

On the other hand, perhaps this is wishful thinking.

Readings:

Erik Olin Wright, "How to be an Anticapitalist for the 21st Century" (unpublished mss., 2016)

Erik Olin Wright, "The Capitalist State and the Possibility of Socialism," in Gunnar Olofsson and Sven Hort (eds). *Class, Sex and Revolutions: Goran Therborn -- A critical appraisal* (Stockholm, Arkiv forlad: 2016)

ADDITIONAL TOPICS & BIBLIOGRAPHIES

The following are topics that were included in earlier versions of this seminar dating back to the 1980s. I have not updated the readings for any of these sessions, so some of them will be quite out of date. Still, I the bibliographies may be useful. [There is one open seminar session – April 20 – which could be used for either the first or second of the topics below if students are interested].

1. Claus Offe

Much traditional Marxist work on the state work has been rightfully criticized as emphasizing the essential functionality of the relationship between the institutional form of the state and the requirements for the reproduction of capitalism. While there is often talk about “contradictions” in the functioning of the state, these are generally much less rigorously elaborated than are arguments about functionality. In contrast, Claus Offe has constantly stressed the problem of contradiction and the problematic functionality of the state. He has approached these issues both as a methodological problem and as a substantive problem.

Methodologically, Offe interrogates the meaning of the claim that the state has a distinctive, functionally specific class character which can be specified at the level of abstraction of the capitalist mode of production. Offe asks: by what criteria could we establish the truth of such claims? How can we distinguish a situation in which the state does not engage in anticapitalist practices because it is prevented from doing so by its form from a situation in which it does not engage in such practices simply because the balance of political power between contending forces in the society prevents it from doing so. This leads him to elaborate a systematic conceptualization of what he calls the “negative selectivity” of the state, that is, the properties of the state which exclude various options from state action. The methodological task, then, is to establish that these exclusions have a distinctive class logic to them. Framing the problem in this precise way opens up the possibility that these negative selections operate in a much more contradictory, less functional manner than the structural-Marxists generally acknowledge.

Substantively, Offe has explored a variety of ways in which the internal structures of the state and the problems it confronts in “civil society” lead it to act in quite contradictory ways. The forms of rationality which it institutionalizes to cope with certain demands are systematically dysfunctional for the accomplishment of new tasks thrust upon it by the development of capitalism. The end result is that far from being a well-oiled functional machine for reproducing capitalism, the state is, in his view, much more of an internally contradictory apparatus in which it is always uncertain the extent to which it will function optimally for capitalism.

Readings:

All Offe readings are available at: <http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~wright/sociology924-2011.htm>

Core readings by Claus Offe on the state from the 1970s and 1980s

“Structural Problems of the Capitalist State: Class rule and the political system. On the selectiveness of political institutions,” in Von Beyme (ed). *German Political Studies*, vol. I (Sage, 1974).pp.31-57

“The Capitalist State and the Problem of Policy Formation,” in Leon Lindberg (ed), *Stress and Contradiction in Contemporary Capitalism* (D.C. Heath, 1975)pp.125-14

“Theses on the theory of the State, in *Contradictions of the Welfare State*,” by Claus Offe (MIT Press 1984), pp. 119-129

“Crises of Crisis Management: elements of a political crisis theory,” *International Journal of Politics*, 6:3, Fall, 1976, pp.29-67

More recent writing on the state

“Governance: an empty signifier?” *Constellations*, Volume 16:4, 2009

“Crisis and innovation in liberal democracy: can deliberation be institutionalized?” *Czech Sociological Review* (3) 2011

“Ungovernability”, unpublished manuscript, 2011

“Political disaffection as an outcome of institutional practices? Some post-Toquevillean speculations”, in Mariano Torcal and J.R. Montero (eds), *Political Disaffection in Contemporary Democracies* (London: Routledge, 2006: 23-45)

Supplementary reading

Clyde Barrow, *Critical Theories of the State*, c.4, “Post-Marxism I: The systems-analytic approach”

John Keane, “The Legacy of Political Economy: thinking with and against Claus Offe,” *Canadian Journal of Political & Social Theory*, 1978.

2. The Poulantzas-Miliband Debate

No writer had a bigger impact on the debates over the theory of the state in the heyday of the renaissance of Marxist theory in the late 1960s and 1970s than Nicos Poulantzas. Poulantzas was a Greek Marxist who lived in France and was closely associated with the French Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser. While there is a great deal to criticize in his work, both in terms of the form of exposition (opaque & Marxiological) and many of his specific formulations, still his ideas have systematically shaped the analysis of the state of both his critics and supporters for more than a decade. In spite of its difficulty, therefore, it is important to become familiar with the central themes and theses of his work.

The key text in which Poulantzas explores the problem of the state is also probably his most difficult work, *Political Power and Social Classes*, published originally in France in 1968 and translated into English in 1973. This book was the first major, comprehensive attempt during this period at constructing a rigorous Marxist theory of the state, and it immediately sparked a great deal of debate. This book is exceptionally difficult, especially for American students not used to the obliqueness of continental European writing, but even for seasoned social theorists the formulations are often murky and elliptical. For this reason I am only assigning a few pages from the book – just enough to give students a flavor for this kind of theoretical exposition.

Mostly we will focus on what came to be known as the Poulantzas-Miliband debate, carried out

over several years in the pages of *New Left Review* between 1969 and 1976, with one final piece by Miliband in 1983. This debate revolved around the problem of the extent to which the state should be analyzed primarily in terms of the structural properties connected to its functional location within a class-defined social system, or, in contrast, in terms of the nature of collectively organized social forces that shaped its actions. This contrast was sometimes referred to as structuralist vs instrumentalist views of the state.

All readings for this session are available at: <http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~wright/sociology924-2011.htm>

Background Readings (summaries and exigeses of Poulantzas):

- *Erik Olin Wright, "A reading guide to Poulantzas, *Political Power and Social Classes*" (typescript, 1977; updated, 1981) available at: <http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~wright/sociology924-2011.htm>
- *Martin Carnoy, *The State and Political Theory* (Princeton University Press, 1984), chapter 4, "Structuralism and the State: Althusser and Poulantzas"
- *Bob Jessop, "Recent Theories of the Capitalist State," chapter 1 in Bob Jessop, *State Theory: putting capitalist states in their place* (Penn State University Press, 1990), especially pp. 29-34.
- * Gøsta Esping-Anderson, Roger Friedland and Erik Olin Wright, "Modes of Class Struggle and the Capitalist State", *Kapitaliststate* No 4/5, 1975

Readings

- *Nicos Poulantzas, *Political Power and Social Classes* (London, New Left Books, 1973), pp. 37-56, 186-194
- *"The Problem of the Capitalist State," Nicos Poulantzas, NLR I/58, November-December 1969, pp. 67-78
- *"The Capitalist State--Reply to N. Poulantzas", Ralph Miliband, NLR I/59, January-February 1970, pp. 53-60
- *"Poulantzas and the Capitalist State," Ralph Miliband, NLR I/82, November-December 1973, pp. 83-92
- *"The Capitalist State: A Reply to Miliband and Laclau," Nicos Poulantzas, NLR I/95, January-February 1976, pp. 63-83
- *"State Power and Class Interests," Ralph Miliband, NLR I/138, 1983, pp. 57-68

Further Readings:

A. Other work by Poulantzas

- Fascism and Dictatorship* (London: NLB. 1974)
- Classes in Contemporary Capitalism* (NLB, 1975)
- State, Power, Socialism* (NLB, 1978)

B. Critiques of Poulantzas:

- Ernesto LaClau, "The Specificity of the Political", in LaClau, *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory* (NLB, 1977)

Simon Clarke, "Marxism, Sociology and Poulantzas' Theory of the State," *Capital and Class* #2, 1977.

Simon Clarke, "Capital, Fractions of Capital and the State: Neo-Marxist Analysis of the South African State," *Capital and Class* #5, 1978.

Amy Bridges, "Nicos Poulantzas and the Marxist Theory of the State", *Politics & Society* 4:2, 1977.

John Solomos, "The Marxist Theory of the State and the problem of Fractions: some theoretical and methodological remarks", *Capital and Class* #7, 1979.

3. Peter Evans, *Embedded Autonomy*

Peter Evans's well-known book on states in developing capitalist economies revolves around the problem of specifying the forms of "state autonomy" that affect the capacity of the state to effectively support economic growth and development. He offers an account of what he terms the "embedded autonomy" of the state: an autonomous capacity for initiative and action that comes from the specific forms of connection between state and elite interests in society rather than from the isolation or separation of state from society. This concept is then used in a comparative study of the variability of autonomy across countries which he uses to explain the variability in the success of their developmental projects. Waldner also accords the state considerable capacity to generate impacts on economic development, but he sees the pivotal issue that determines the success of development projects to be the extent to which elites in the state are forced to forge cross-class alliances or are able to act as a more or less unified class in launching development projects. Where they are forced into cross-class alliances, this leads to a "precocious Keynesianism" which ultimately stifles innovation and productivity enhancing competition and thus undercuts development.

Reading: Peter Evans, *Embedded Autonomy: States and Industrial Transformation* (Princeton University Press: 1995)

4. Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*

One of the most celebrated historical studies of the class character of the state is Perry Anderson's *Lineages of the Absolutist State*. "Absolutism" has always been something of a puzzle for Marxists. If states are always class states, then the Absolutist state must either be a feudal state, a capitalist state or some peculiar amalgam characteristic of the transition period. Yet none of these characterizations is entirely satisfactory. Of these positions, the sharpest lines of debate have been between those who see the state in this period as fundamentally feudal in character (e.g. Perry Anderson) and those who see the Absolutist State as basically an early form of the capitalist state (e.g. Wallerstein). The theoretical puzzle for Anderson is derived from his steadfast commitment to the Marxist tradition: understanding how the "Absolutist State" could occur within a class structure that remained dominated by "feudalism". One of the hallmarks of feudalism is "parcellized sovereignty", whereas Absolutism constitutes a form of centralized, apparently unitary state power. Anderson's complex, comparative historical analysis attempts to reconcile these seemingly discordant conceptual elements.

Reading:

Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State* (London, NLB: 1974).

I recommend reading the entire book because the richness comes from the multiple iterations of the same themes within different comparative contexts. If you cannot read the entire book, be sure to read at least the following:

Part I: pp.7-59 and at least two of the national case studies Part II. pp. 195-235 and at least two of the national case studies

Further Readings on the State in the Transition to Capitalism:

Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System* (Academic Press 1978)

Gianfranco Poggi, *The Development of the Modern State* (London: Hutchinson)

Michael Hechter and William Brustein, "Regional Modes of Production and Patterns of State Formation in Western Europe," *American Journal of Sociology*, 85:5, 1980.

5. A Marxist Approach to the State in the Third World: Nora Hamilton, *The Limits of State Autonomy*

Nora Hamilton's book is one of the first sustained attempts at applying the lessons of the state theory discussions of the 1970s to the problem of the state in developing societies. She is particularly concerned with the problem of the distinction between two distinct kinds of autonomy which the state might be said to have: instrumental autonomy (autonomy from direct manipulations by powerful class actors) and structural autonomy (autonomy from structural constraints imposed by the capitalist economy). It is limits to the latter kind of autonomy which she feels is most central to a Marxist class analysis. She develops these ideas in the context of a study of the Mexican Revolution and the attempt by the Mexican state to guide Mexican development.

Reading:

Nora Hamilton, *The Limits of State Autonomy: Post-Revolutionary Mexico* (Princeton University Press, 1982)

6. Class Coalitions & Social Democracy: Gösta Esping-Anderson, *Politics Against Markets*

Esping-Anderson's study explores the importance of the stability of particular class coalitions in countering the structural constraints the capitalist economy imposes on the state. His book compares the fates of social democratic parties and policies in three Scandinavian countries -- Sweden, Norway and Denmark. There are two pivotal parts to his analysis: 1) He shows how different configurations of class coalition provide more or less solid foundations for social democratic rule, and 2) how the policies enacted by social democratic parties can either strengthen or undermine those foundations. The long success of Swedish Social democracy comes from a benevolent dialectic of these two processes: the class coalition that formed the base of the party was such as to generate policies which in turn solidified that base, whereas in Denmark the policies the party was forced to pursue by virtue of its class base had the long term effect of undermining the stability of social democratic rule.

Readings:

Gösta Esping-Anderson, *Politics Against Markets: The Social Democratic Road to Power* (Princeton University Press, 1985)

Further Readings:

Michael Shalev, "The Social Democratic Model and Beyond: Two generations of comparative research on the welfare state" *Comparative Social Research*, vol. 6, 1984

Walter Korpi, *The Working Class in Welfare Capitalism*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978)

Goran Therborn, et. al. "Sweden Before and After Social Democracy: a first overview", *Acta Sociologica* 21 (supplement), 1978

Richard Scase, *Social Democracy in Capitalist Society* (London: Croom Helm, 1977)

Andrew Martin, *The Politics of Economic Policy in the United States: a tentative view from a comparative perspective* (Sage, 1973)

J.A. Fry, *The Limits of the Welfare State: critical views on post-war Sweden*, (Farnborough, England: Saxon House, 1979)

John Stephens, *The Transition from Capitalism to Socialism* (London: McMillan, 1979)

7. Class formation and State capacity in explaining variability in the Welfare State: George Steinmetz, Regulating the Social

The study of innovation in state institutions is often a particular good context for studying contending general theories of the state. Steinmetz uses a peculiar fact about German history to examine in a fine-grained way the relationship between state capacity and class forces in shaping the state and state policies. In the 19th century a series of national enabling laws were passed which made it possible for German municipalities to introduce new forms of welfare provision, but which did not mandate that they do so. We therefore have a kind of controlled experiment: all German cities were operating under the same basic "rules of the game", but some rapidly introduced these new forms of welfare state provision while others did not. One hypothesis is that cities varied in their bureaucratic capacity for administering such programs, and this variability explains the variability of outcomes. A more Marxist hypothesis is that it was the balance of class forces and class struggles which explain the variability. And, of course, there is the possibility that the outcome reflects an interaction of the two. Steinmetz creatively explores these issues through a combination of quantitative and qualitative historical analysis.

Reading: George Steinmetz, *Regulating the Social: the welfare state and local politics in Imperial Germany* (Princeton University Press, 1993)

8. A Debate over the centrality of class analysis to understanding the New Deal (Skocpol, Domhoff, Gilbert, Howe)

The New Deal has been a favorite object of debates within state theory. It offers an exceptionally good empirical setting for exploring many of the issues in class theories of the state. The New Deal reforms were vehemently opposed by many segments of the capitalist class and thus pose a *prima facie* challenge to strong Marxist accounts of the state. Here is an instance of a massive set of reforms in the practices -- and even the structure -- of the state in a capitalist society which, on the surface, was opposed by the dominant class. And yet, by most accounts, these reforms helped to stabilize and even strengthen American capitalism. The New Deal thus sharply poses the problem of the "relative autonomy" of the state: a state capable of (apparently) acting against the wishes of many powerful representatives of the bourgeoisie in order to serve the interests of the class as a whole. Alternatively, the New Deal reforms have been understood by some theorists as largely a statist project, driven by state elites and policy intellectuals, only weakly responsive to the "needs of capital" and much more preoccupied with the task of expanding state capacities in their own interests.

Readings:

Skocpol, Theda, "Political Response to Capitalist Crisis: Neo-Marxist Theories of the state and the Case of the New Deal", *Politics & Society* 10:155-201

Skocpol, Theda, and Kenneth Fiengold. 1982. "State Capacity and Economic Intervention in the Early New Deal," *Political Science Quarterly*, 97: 255-278

G. William Domhoff. 1993. "Class Conflict or State Autonomy in New Deal Agricultural Policy: yet another counterattack on a theoretical delusion." *Political Power and Social Theory*, volume 8, pp.45-78

Jess Gilbert and Carolyn Howe. 1991. "Beyond 'state vs society': theories of the state and New Deal Agricultural Policies". *American Sociological Review* 56, April: 204-220

9. Reconstructing Capitalist Democracy, Joshua Cohen & Joel Rogers, *Associations & Democracy*

The topics in this seminar have mainly focused on the institutions of the capitalist state as they exist today and how they have developed historically. The fundamental point of a critical analysis of the state, however, is to expand our vision of alternative possibilities and sharpen our analysis of how to get there. Joshua Cohen and Joel Rogers have developed the outlines of a model of a radical democratic alternative to existing democratic institutions. The pivot of the model is a proposal to expand the role of various kinds of secondary associations -- organizations that stand between individual citizens and state apparatuses -in the democratic governance. This involves not merely deepening their role as vehicles for interest representation, but also involving them in the actual implementation and administration of public policy. In this session we will examine the Cohen and Rogers proposal and a range of criticism and amendments offered by various commentators on their project.

Readings: Joshua Cohen & Joel Rogers, *Associations & Democracy* (Verso,1995)

10. Critical Theory approaches to the state: Habermas

Discussions of the state in the tradition of critical theory have been marked by two interconnected concerns: (1) the problem of state rationality; and (2) the problem of legitimation. Claus Offe's work (which we have discussed in several sessions) is particularly preoccupied with the first of these. He asks: given the formal, institutional separation of the state and economy in capitalist society, what (if anything) guarantees that the state will pursue policies that are rational from the point of view of the interests of the capitalist class? Habermas has also been concerned with analyzing rationality and the state, but his central focus has been on the question of legitimation, more specifically, for the tendencies for the contradictions of the capitalist economy to become displaced onto the political arena as the role of the state expands with capitalist development. The core of his work on the state thus concerns the dynamics of what he calls "crises of legitimacy." Although the idiom of his analysis often seems closer to sociological systems theory than to Marxism, nevertheless the underlying theoretical problems are closely linked to traditional Marxist concerns with contradictions, capitalist development and revolutionary transformation.

Readings:

Jurgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis* (Beacon Press, 1975), especially Part II and Part III.

Alan Wolfe, "New Directions in the Marxist Theory of Politics", *Politics & Society*, 4:2, 1974.

Further readings:

Tony Woodiwiss, "Critical Theory and the Capitalist State", *Economy and Society*, 7:2, 1978.

Bertell Ollman, "The State as a Value Relation", in *Alienation* (Cambridge University Press, 1976, second edition, pp.212-220.

Jurgen Habermas, "The Public Sphere," *Telos*, 1:3, 1974

Paul Connerton (ed) *Critical Sociology* (Penguin, 1976), essay on "Legitimation" by Habermas

Goran Therborn, "A Critique of the Frankfurt School", *New Left Review*, #63, 1970.

11. The State as a "Condition of Existence" of Capital: Barry Hindess, Paul Hirst and "post-Althusserian" British Marxism.

The work of Poulantzas and Althusser had a particularly important impact on certain tendencies within British Marxism in the 1970s. In particular, a group of Marxists sometimes referred to as "post-Althusserians" (because of the way in which they have extended Althusser's framework and carried it to a logical extreme which resulted in a wholesale rejection of Althusser) have had a major influence among academic Marxists in sociology and related disciplines.

Within this group, the work of Barry Hindess and Paul Q. Hirst have been the most widely read and discussed. Their basic point in the analysis of the state is that attempts to derive any kind of "essence" of the state from the analysis of class relations must be rejected. The state, they argue, cannot be understood in terms of the fulfillment of necessary functions dictated by the

class structure of capitalism or as the ideal expression of those class relations. Rather, the state must be understood in terms of the historically specific ways in which certain "conditions of existence" of capitalist production relations are secured. The securing of these conditions of existence, they argue, can never be taken for granted and is never guaranteed by the simple fact of capitalist class relations; rather, such conditions are only created through concrete struggle.

Readings:

Barry Hindess, "Classes and Politics in Marxist Theory", in Littlejohn (ed), *Power and the State* (Croom Helm, 1978)

Barry Hindess and Paul Q. Hirst, "Primitive Communism, Politics and the State", in *Precapitalist Modes of Production* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975).

Anthony Cutler, Barry Hindess, Paul Hirst and Athar Hussain, "Mode of Production, Social Formation, Classes", chapter 6 in *Marx's Capital and Capitalism Today* vol I. (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977).

Further readings:

Barry Hindess, "Marxism and Parliamentary Democracy", in Hunt (ed) *Marxism and Democracy* (Lawrence & Wishart, 1980).

Barry Hindess, "Democracy and the Limitations of Parliamentary Democracy in Britain," *Politics & Power* #1, 1980

12. Capital Logic and State Derivation Perspectives.

Perhaps the least familiar tradition in the Marxist theory of the state in North America is the tradition which attempts to derive the central features of the capitalist state from the "logic" or "form" of the capital relation. This tradition has been extremely influential in West Germany and Scandinavia, and has begun to have a certain influence in Britain as well among more "orthodox" Marxists.

The essential thrust of the approach is to attempt to derive logically various characteristics of the state from the analysis of capital accumulation and/or class struggle in Capital. These properties of the state are not, in general, derived on a functional basis, but on a logical/definitional basis. Take for example one of the properties of the state that is most frequently discussed: the formal institutional separation of the state from the economy (production). A functionalist argument would explain this by saying that such an institutional arrangement is functional for capitalism. The Capital logic school, in contrast, would simply argue that because of the definition of what makes capitalism "capitalism", from a logical point of view the system would not be capitalist unless this institutional separation existed. This separation is thus logically entailed by the concept of Capital.

Holloway and Picciotto provide a good overview of the approach in the introduction to their book, *State and Capital*, and the chapter by Hirsch is an example of the approach by one of the leading German proponents.

Readings:

John Holloway and Sol Picciotto, "Towards a Materialist Theory of the State", chapter 1 of *State and Capital* (University of Texas Press, 1978).

Joachim Hirsch, "The State Apparatus and Social Reproduction: elements of a theory of the Bourgeois state", in *State and Capital* ed by Holloway and Picciotto.

Bob Jessop, "Form and Functions of the State", chapter 3 in *The Capitalist State*

Further readings:

John Holloway and Sol Picciotto, "Capital, Crisis and the State", *Capital and Class* #2, 1977.

Margaret Fay, "Review of State and Capital", *Kapitalistate* #7, 1979

John Holloway and Sol Picciotto (eds), *The State and Capital* (University of Texas Press, 1978): an anthology of capital logic essays.

13. Gramsci and the State

Gramsci's fragmented work on the state has probably been more influential in shaping the thinking of recent Continental discussions of the state than any other writer of the first half of the twentieth century other than Lenin. Because of the conditions under which he wrote (in a Fascist prison in the 1920s and 1930s) his work is often very difficult to decode, and the theoretical arguments are often elliptic and ambiguous. Nevertheless, his discussions of hegemony, war of position/war of manoeuvre, civil society and the state, intellectuals, passive revolution and various other topics have helped to define the terrain of much contemporary work.

Readings:

Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the *Prison Notebooks* (International Publishers, 1971), especially the following essays:

"State and The Civil Society" (206-275)

"Problems of Marxism: Economy and Ideology" (pp.407-409)

"The formation of Intellectuals" (pp.5-14)

"The Modern Prince" (123-202)

Readings about Gramsci:

Perry Anderson, "The Antinomies of Antonio Gramsci", *New Left Review* #100, 1977.

Carl Boggs, *Gramsci's Marxism* (Pluto Press, 1976)

Christine Buci-Glukzman, *Gramsci and the State* (hardback: Humanities Press, 1981; paperback: London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1981)

_____ "State, Transition and passive revolution". in Chantal Mouffe (ed) *Gramsci and Marxist Theory*, (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979)

Biagio de Giovanni, "Lenin and Gramsci: state, politics and party", in Mouffe, *ibid.*

Walter Adamson, *Hegemony and Revolution: Antonio Gramsci's Political and Cultural Theory*, especially chapter 7, "The Autonomy of Politics", pp. 202-228, (U. of California Press, 1980)

Anne Showstack-Sassoon, *Gramsci's Politics* (Croom Helm, 1980)

Harvey Kaye, "Antonio Gramsci: an annotated bibliography of studies in English", *Politics & Society*, 10:3, 1981.

14. Rational Action, Strategic Action and the State

The notion of strategic action (i.e. action in pursuit of goals based on the conscious, rational calculation of likely actions of others) has a relatively precarious place in Marxist theory. On the one hand, as is often noted, the ultimate purpose of Marxism is to "change the world", not simply to understand it, and this implies a central concern with agency and strategy. On the other hand, in the actual elaboration of theoretical positions about the state, Marxists have tended to marginalize the role of strategic action. When it is discussed, furthermore, the main focus is on the way in which dominant classes constitute strategic actors with respect to state institutions (especially in power structure research); relatively little systematic attention is given to the problem of strategic action by subordinate classes.

One of the consequences of marginalizing the strategic practices of workers and other subordinate groups is that the role of the state in reproducing class relations tends to be viewed either as primarily involving repression or ideology (in the sense of mystification). In the former case, strategic action is unimportant because there are no real choices available to workers; in the latter case, strategic action is unimportant because the state engenders forms of subjectivity which render choices illusory.

Recently, a number of theorists have placed the issue of strategic action at the center of their analysis of the state. Of particular importance for the general study of politics in this regard is the work of Adam Przeworski. He treats workers (and other potential collectively organized actors) as rational, strategic actors in pursuit of interests under a specified set of "rules of the game". These rules are determined both by the underlying property relations of the society and by the institutional characteristics of the state. His fundamental argument is that in developed capitalist democracies these rules help to create the conditions for a hegemonic system in which the interests of exploited classes are objectively coordinated with the interests of dominant classes through the rational, strategic choices and practices of workers. This hegemonic system cannot be viewed as primarily the result of repression of struggles or ideological distortions of subjectivities; it is the result of the way rational, strategic choices are structured within the social conflicts of the society.

In this session we will look at a number of nonMarxist and Marxist treatments of rational action as it pertains to the analysis of the state. North uses a range of principles from neoclassical economics to understand the sources of stability and instability, growth and decline, in the interactions between state and economy. His focus is on the ruler as a utility or wealth maximizer, and the implications of ruler strategies for the trajectory of changes in state institutions. While North's arguments are not embedded in the Marxist (or other radical) tradition, nevertheless, they have been used by radical scholars in the elaboration of what is sometimes called the "predatory theory of the state". Levi then uses this general perspective on the predatory state to approach the specific problem of how states acquire revenues. She is particularly concerned with the puzzle of why people pay taxes given that the enforcement capacity of the state is usually too low to coercively insure tax payments. She solves this puzzle by

examining the nature of the strategic interactions of rulers and ruled in terms of what she calls "quasi-voluntary compliance" Cohen and Rogers analyze the political dynamics of the liberal democratic capitalist state from the vantage point of the rational action of potential challengers to the state (rather than the rational action of rulers). In particular, they are concerned with the ways in which it structures the feasible courses of action and time horizons of different kinds of actors are shaped by the rules of the game of political conflict. Finally, James Buchanan and Frederick Hayek present neo-conservative views of the state and democracy, in which strategic rationality under unconstrained democratic institutions generates (in his views) oppressive state apparatuses. All of these writers deploy rational action models, but with very different political and theoretical objectives.

Readings:

Douglas North, "A Neoclassical Theory of the State", in Jon Elster (ed) *Rational Choice* (NYU Press, 1986), pp.248-260

James Buchanan, "The Threat of Leviathan", in *The Limits of Liberty* (University of Chicago Press, 1975), pp.147-165

Margaret Levi, *Of Rule and Revenue* (University of California Press, 1988) pp.10-40,48-70.

Further readings:

Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market* (Cambridge)

Adam Przeworski, "Marxism and Rational Choice," *Politics & Society*, 1986, 14:379-409

Adam Przeworski, *The State and Economy under Capitalism* (Harwood Academic Publishers, 1990)

Frederick Hayek, "Majority Opinion and Contemporary Democracy", c.12 in *Law, Legislation and Liberty* (vol.3 of *The Political Order of a Free People*), Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979

R.D. Tollison, "Rent-seeking: a survey", *Kyklos* 35 (1982): 575-602

Douglas North and Robert Thomas, *The Rise of the Western World* (Cambridge University Press, 1973)

Robert Ekelund and Robert Tollison, *Mercantilism as a rent seeking society* (Texas A&M University Press, 1982)

Richard Emerson, "State Formation in Baltistan," *Politics and Society*, 1984.

Anthony Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), pp.3-74

Michael Hechter and William Brustein, "Regional Modes of Production and Patterns of State Formation in Western Europe," *American Journal of Sociology*, 85:5, 1980.

Jon Elster, "Marxism, Functionalism and Game Theory," *Theory and Society*, July, 1982

_____ *Ulysses and the Sirens* (Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp.1-36.

Brian Barry, *Sociologists, Economists and Democracy* (Collier McMillan, 1970).

14. The State and the Oppression of Women

The development of feminist theory in recent years has posed a significant challenge to Marxism. Is it possible to understand the specificity of the oppression of women within a theory that revolves around the concept of class? Does Marxism ultimately entail some kind of reduction of gender oppression to class relations? These and related questions have underwritten a wide ranging and lively debate which has, I think, enriched both Marxism and feminism.

Relatively little of the dialogue between Marxists and feminists, however, has centered on the state. The site of the debate has been much more on the family and work. Yet, in many ways the analysis of the state should be an especially fertile terrain for trying to understand the relationship between class and gender. The challenge to feminists in terms of the theory of the state would be: Can the state be understood as a form of patriarchal domination/relations? Can the state become a theoretical object within the conceptual framework of feminist theory as it now stands? In answering these questions it is not enough to simply document the effects of the state in reproducing male domination (any more than in a class theory of the state is a catalogue of the class-effects of the state sufficient). What is needed is a theory of the mechanisms which generate and reproduce such effects. To use a familiar expression: is the state just a state in patriarchal society, or is it in some theoretically coherent sense a patriarchal state?

The challenge of these issues for Marxists, on the other hand, would be: Can a theory of the state which understands the structures, mechanisms and effects of the state in terms of class provide an account of the state's role in the reproduction of gender relations? Does such an attempt inevitably lead to a class functionalism within which sexual domination can be understood only in terms of the ways in which it contributes to class domination?

Readings:

- Catherine A. MacKinnon, "Feminism, Marxism, Method and the State: toward Feminist Jurisprudence", *Signs*, 8:4, 1983, pp. 635-658. (Note: this is part II of a two-part essay. Part I is cited in the suggested readings below)
- Catherine A. MacKinnon, *Towards a Feminist Theory of the State* (Harvard University Press, 1989)
- Lena Bruselid, "Women, Class and State: evaluating social policy and political demands", in *Work and Inequality*, ed by Paul Boreham and Geoff Dow (Melbourne: McMillan of Australia, 1980).
- Mary McIntosh, "The State and the Oppression of Women," in *Feminism and Materialism*, ed. by A. Kuhn and A. Wolpe (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978).
- Anne Philips, *Engendering Democracy* (Polity Press, 1991)
- Michael Mann, "A Crisis in Stratification Theory? Persons, Households\Families\Lineages, Genders, Classes and Nations", in *Gender and Stratification*

Further readings:

- Jalna Hanmer, "Violence and the Social Control of Women," in Littlejohn (ed). *Power and the State* (Croom Helm, 1978)
- Rayna Reiter, "Men and Women in the South of France: public and private domains," in *Towards and Anthropology of Women*, ed. by Reiter, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975).
- Lesley Caldwell, "Church, State and Family: the women's movement in Italy," in *Feminism and Materialism*, op.cit.
- Ann Corine Hill, "The Protection of Women Workers and the Courts: a case history," *Feminist Studies*, 5:2, pp.247-274
- J. Humphries, "Protective Legislation, the Capitalist State, and Working class men," *Feminist Review*, #7, 1981.
- Diana L. Barker, "The Regulation of Marriage: repressive benevolence" in Littlejohn, (ed), op.cit.
- Linda Gordan, *Woman's Body, Woman's Right*, esp. pp.313-402

15. The Crisis of the Democratic Capitalist State I: Legitimation and Accumulation

Perhaps the most common general explanation for the current crisis of the welfare state found in Marxist discussions is that the crisis reflects a deep contradiction between the legitimation and accumulation functions of the state. In this line of thought, the welfare activities of the state expanded largely out of the need for the capitalist state to create legitimacy (either for itself or for capitalism) among subordinate groups/classes. This expansion was possible so long as such policies did not conflict with the requirements of capital accumulation. Eventually, however, the expansion of welfare spending began to undermine accumulation itself for various reasons -- it was a drain on surplus value because it was unproductive; it reduced the effectiveness of the reserve army of labor and thus resulted in a lowering of the rate of exploitation; it directly raised the value of labor power by transferring income to the working class (raising the "social wage"). The result, then, is a particular kind of economic crisis -- "stagflation" -- combined with a particular kind of political crisis -- initially a fiscal crisis of the state, followed by a concerted assault on welfare state programs. In this session we will examine a number of versions of the legitimation/accumulation contradiction thesis.

Readings:

- Erik Olin Wright, *Class, Crisis and the State*, chapter 3, "Historical Transformations of Capitalist Crisis Tendencies"

Further readings:

- Ian Gough, *The Political Economy of the Welfare State*, ch.6. "The Welfare State and the Capitalist Economy" and ch.7. "The Welfare State and the Crisis", pp.102-52
- James O'Connor, *The Fiscal Crisis of the State* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973),
- Sam Bowles and Herb Gintis, "The Crisis of Capital and the Crisis of Liberal Democracy: the case of the United States", *Politics & Society*, vol.11:1,1982, pp. 51-94.

Alan Wolfe, "The Legitimation Crisis of the State", chapter 10 in *The Limits of Legitimacy* (New York: Basic Books, 1977)

Further readings:

Alan Wolfe, *The Limits of Legitimacy*, pp.214-321

Claus Offe, "Competitive Party Democracy and the Keynesian Welfare State", *Policy Sciences*, 15, 1983, pp.225-246. reprinted in Offe, *Contradictions in the Welfare State*, op.cit.

Sam Bowles, "Have Capitalism and Democracy come to a Parting of the Ways?" in *U.R.P.E., Capitalism in Crisis* (URPE, 1978)

Jurgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis* (Boston: Beacon, 1975)

16. Crisis of the Democratic Capitalist State II: form and function

While the central theme of most analyses of the current crisis of the state is some sort of version of the legitimation/accumulation contradiction, there is a second line of thought that has emerged which focuses more on the internal organization of state apparatuses -- what Therborn calls their "administrative technologies" -- and the tasks required of those apparatuses. In this case, instead of their being a contradiction between two functions of the state, there is a contradiction between its form and its functions. The implication of this perspective is that the resolution of the crisis requires more than just a change of state policies -- elimination or reduction of programs, changes in emphases among types of state spending, etc. -- but a structural reorganization of the apparatuses as well.

Readings:

Claus Offe, "The Capitalist State and the Problem of Policy Formation", in Leon Lindberg (ed), *Stress and Contradiction in Contemporary Capitalism* (D.C. Heath, 1975)

Stephen Skorownek, "National Railroad Regulation and the Problem of State Building: interests and institutions in late nineteenth century America", *Politics & Society*, 10:3, 1981

Further readings:

Stephan Leibfried, "The Bureaucracy of the 'Statist Reserve': the case of the U.S.A." *Western Societies Program Occasional Paper No. 12* (Center for International Studies, Cornell University, 1979)

David Abraham, "State and Classes in Weimar Germany," *Politics & Society*, 7:3, 1977

17. Resolutions of the Crisis: New forms of Representation and State Intervention.

The readings in the previous two topics focussed on two faces of the contemporary crisis: the dimension of the crisis which revolves around the welfare activities of the state -- what the state does -- and the dimension which revolves around the institutional form of the state, specifically is "bourgeois democratic" forms of representation.

As one would expect, the discussions about the possible resolutions to the current crisis also revolve around these two dimensions. On the one hand there are discussions which focus primarily on the new types of state intervention needed in the context of global, transnational capitalism. The emphasis here is on new forms of state regulation and management of investment, state coordination of productivity changes, new kinds of manpower-planning, etc. On the other hand, there has been considerable discussion about the new form of the state needed to accomplish these tasks while simultaneously containing the new forms of social conflict characteristic of advanced capitalism. The heart of this discussion has been around "neocorporatism" -the various institutional arrangements in which organizations representing different social categories (unions, business, consumers, the handicapped, etc.) are represented on government decision-making bodies. Instead of representing citizens as atomized individuals as in parliamentary democracy, corporatism is a system of representing categories of individuals who are already organized into some sort of corporate entity.

In this session we will focus on the debate over neocorporatism. To what extent are neocorporatist arrangements actually replacing traditional parliamentary democratic forms of representation? Is it plausible that such forms will eventually become the central institutional form of legitimation-representation in advanced capitalist societies? Under what conditions are such neocorporatist forms likely to be stable and under what conditions unstable and ineffective? Overall, are corporatist institutions a more or less favorable terrain for struggles for socialism?

Readings:

Philippe Schmitter and Gerhard Lehmbruch (eds), *Trends Towards Corporatist Intermediation* (Beverly Hills: SAGE, 1979), Especially the following essays:

Philippe Schmitter, "Modes of Interest Intermediation and Models of Social Change in Western Europe", pp.63-95

Leo Panitch, "The Development of Corporatism in Liberal Democracies", pp. 119-146

Bob Jessop, "Corporatism, Parliamentarism and Social Democracy", pp. 185-212

Leo Panitch, "Trade Unions and the Capitalist State," *New Left Review* #125, pp.21-43, January-February, 1981.

Ian Gough, *The Political Economy of the Welfare State*, pp.146-152.

Nicos Poulantzas, "The Decline of Democracy: authoritarian statism" in *State, Power and Socialism*, by Nicos Poulantzas (London: NLB, 1978).pp. 203-247

Further readings:

Adam Przeworski and Michael Wallerstein, "Democratic Capitalism at the crossroads", *Democracy*, July, 1982

Bob Jessop, "Capitalism and Democracy: the best possible shell?" (concluding section, pp.40-49) in Littlejohn, (ed), *Power and the State* (London: Croom Helm, 1978).

J. Westergaard, "Class, Inequality and 'Corporatism'" in A. Hunt,(ed) *Class and Class Structure* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1977)

Leo Panitch, "Recent Theorizations of Corporatism: reflections on a growth industry," *British Journal of Sociology*, June 1980

Peter Katzenstein, "Corporatism and the Politics of Industry" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, 1982)

M.Crozier, et.al., *The Crisis of Democracy* (NYU Press, 1975)

19. The State and Racism

Most Marxist discussions of racism focus primarily on how racial divisions serve the interests of the capitalist class, both economically (superexploitation) and politically (divide and conquer). Where the state is included in the analysis it is typically in a relatively instrumentalist way: the bourgeoisie has interests in racism and unproblematically translates those interests into state policies. It is only recently that a more concerted analysis of the specificity of the state's relationship to racism has begun. Much of this analysis has centered on debates over the South African state, since South Africa is the modern example of a state organized to its core systematically around the issue of race, but similar analyses have appeared for the U.S. South, Northern Ireland and a variety of other places. In this session we will explore this basic question: how should we understand the specificity of the role of the state in the production and reproduction of racial (or ethnic, or national, etc.) oppression? Is there a racist form of the state, or does the state simply engage in racist policies contingently?

[Note: The readings below do not reflect a thorough knowledge on my part of the literature on race and the state. If students chose this topic as an optional topic for the seminar, therefore, I will try to identify any additional readings that would be important to include]

Readings:

Michael Burawoy, "The Capitalist State in South Africa: Marxist and Sociological Perspectives on Race and Class," in Zeitlin (ed), *Political Power and Social Theory*, vol. 2, 1981. (JAI Press).

Gideon Ben-Tovim, et. al., "Race, Left Strategies and the State" *Politics & Power* #3, 1981

Manning Marabel, "Black Politicians and Bourgeois Democracy," chapter 3 in *Black American Politics* (London: Verso, 1985)

Further readings:

David James, *The Resistance to the Civil Rights Movement in the South* (unpublished PhD Dissertation, Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin, 1981).

Stanley Greenberg, *Race and State in Capitalist Development* (Yale University Press, 1980)

Michael Burawoy, "State and Social Revolution in South Africa: reflections on the comparative perspectives of Greenberg and Skocpol," *Kapitalistate* #9, 1981

Harold Wolpe, "Towards an Analysis of the South African State", *International Journal of Sociology of Law*, 8:4, 1980

20. The State and the Labor Process

The labor process constitutes one of the most fundamental categories of Marxist analysis, and yet there is very little theoretical or empirical work which attempts to link this category to the problem of the state. Michael Burawoy argues that it is impossible to satisfactorily understand either the logic of development of the labor process itself or the nature of political struggle around the state without a structural investigation of the linkage between the two. The state helps to define the rules of the game of struggles in the labor process; the nature of the labor process, its contradictions and dilemmas helps to define the development of the state.

Readings:

Michael Burawoy, "The Production of Politics and the Politics of Production", in *Political Power and Social Theory*, vol. I (JAI Press, 1979).

Michael Burawoy, *The Politics of Production* (Verso, 1985)

21. Historical Studies of State Formation

There are two historical circumstances in which the "experimental" conditions exist for potentially observing the formation of the class character of state apparatuses: First, in the historical periods in which states are initially formed, and second in periods in which they undergo rapid, radical transformations. When states are formed, many of the institutional properties which later become taken for granted are objects of conscious choice, objects of struggle and debate, and thus the class-specificity of those choices may become observable. Similarly, in periods of rapid transformation, the structural properties of institutional forms are likely to be objects of debate and contestation, and in such contestation the class logics of the alternatives may be revealed. In this session we will examine a number of historical case studies which try to investigate the class character of the state in periods of formation and transformation.

Readings:

Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State* (Cambridge University Press, 1982), especially, pp. 1-46, 121-176, 248-292

Carolyn Baylies, *The Formation of the State in Zambia* (unpublished PhD dissertation, Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin, 1978), excerpts to be made available in class.

David Abraham, *The Collapse of the Weimar Republic* (Princeton University Press, 1981)

Margaret Fay and Margit Mayer, "The Formation of the American Nation-State", *Kapitalistate* #6, 1977, pp.39-90

22. Quantitative Research on the State

Marxists have generally been quantophobic. Nevertheless, in recent years a number of interesting quantitative studies of state questions have emerged, many of them from graduate students in the Wisconsin sociology department. The danger of such research, of course, is that in attempting to use statistical techniques, the substantive theoretical preoccupations of the research become

subordinated to the constraints of the research technologies: dynamic processes become emptied of any "dialectic", the contingencies of historical processes become obliterated in the search for regularities, etc. In the end, it sometimes seems that after the expenditure of such enormous effort, we really do not learn anything very new from quantitative research. On the other hand, there may be situations in which the only effective way of adjudicating between contending claims is to subject those claims to quantitative scrutiny.

Readings:

Roger Friedland, "Class Power and Social Control The War on Poverty", *Politics and Society*, 6:4, 1976.

Gosta Esping-Anderson, "Social Class, Social Democracy and the State: housing policy in Denmark and Sweden", *Comparative Politics*, Fall, 1978.

Alexander Hicks, et. al., "Class Power and State Policy", *The American Sociological Review*, vol. 43, 1978.

David R. Cameron, "The Expansion of the Public Economy: a Comparative Analysis", *The American Political Science Review*, 72:4, 1978.

Michael Mann, "State and Society, 1130-1815: an analysis of English State Financies", in Zeitlin (ed.) *Political Power and Social Theory*, vol. I, 1980, pp.165-208.

23. Law and the State

The law and the legal system have rarely been systematically studied by Marxists. Most investigations have either collapsed the discussion of the law into the discussion of ideology, seeing law as simply one variety of legitimating ideology, Or, the problem of the law has been collapsed into the theory of the repressive apparatus of the state, seeing the legal system as simply the technical form through which repression is exercised in capitalist society. Relatively little attention has been given to law in its own right, as a structure or set of practices and relations within which struggles take place and contradictions of a specific sort develop. This session will try to identify some of the key features that a Marxist theory of law should develop.

Readings:

Bob Jessop, "On Recent Marxist Theories of Law, the State and Juridico-Political Ideology," *International Journal of the Sociology of Law*, 8:4, Nov. 1980.

Issac Balbus, "Commodity Form and Legal Form," *Law & Society Review*, 1977.

Further readings:

Bernard Edelman, *Ownership of the Image: Elements for a Marxist theory of Law*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979).

Pashukanis, *Selected Writings on Marxism and Law*, ed. and introduced by P. Bierne and R. Sharlet, (Academic Press, 1979).

Maureen Cain and Alan Hunt, *Marx and Engels on Law* (Academic Press, 1979)

Colin Sumner, *Reading Ideologies: an investigation into the Marxist Theory of Law and Ideology* (Academic Press, 1979)

Isaac Balbus, *The Dialectics of Legal Repression*

Erik Olin Wright, *The Politics of Punishment* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973).

Mark Tushnet, "A Marxist Analysis of American Law," *Marxist Perspectives*, 1978.

Boaventura Santos, "Law and Community: the changing nature of state power in law capitalism," *International Journal of the Sociology of Law*, 8:4, 980.

PRINCIPLES FOR SEMINAR DISCUSSIONS

The following guidelines are intended to facilitate seminar discussions. Some of them may sound obvious, but from past experience it is still important to make them explicit.

1. **READINGS.** At least for the first part of each seminar session the discussions should revolve systematically around the week's readings rather than simply the topic. There is a strong tendency in seminars, particularly among articulate graduate students, to turn every seminar into a general "bull session" in which participation need not be informed by the reading material in the course. The injunction to discuss the readings does not mean, of course, that other material is excluded from the discussion, but it does mean that the issues raised and problems analyzed should focus on around the actual texts assigned for the week.

2. **LISTEN.** In a good seminar, interventions by different participants are linked one to another. A given point is followed up and the discussion therefore has some continuity. In many seminar discussions, however, each intervention is unconnected to what has been said before. Participants are more concerned with figuring out what brilliant comment they can make rather than listening to each other and reflecting on what is actually being said. In general, therefore, participants should add to what has just been said rather than launch a new train of thought, unless a particular line of discussion has reached some sort of closure.

3. **TYPES ON INTERVENTIONS.** Not every seminar intervention has to be an earth-shattering comment or brilliant insight. One of the reasons why some students feel intimidated in seminars is that it seems that the stakes are so high, that the only legitimate comment is one that reveals complete mastery of the material. There are several general rules about comments that should facilitate broader participation:

- No intervention should be regarded as "naive" or "stupid" as long as it reflects an attempt at seriously engaging the material. It is often the case that what seems at first glance to be a simple or superficial question turns out to be among the most intractable.
- It is as appropriate to ask for clarification of readings or previous comments as it is to make a substantive point on the subject matter.
- If the pace of the seminar discussion seems too fast to get a word in edgewise it is legitimate to ask for a brief pause to slow things down. It is fine for there actually to be moments of silence in a discussion!

4. **BREVITY.** Everyone has been in seminars in which someone consistently gives long, overblown speeches. Sometimes these speeches may make some substantively interesting points, but frequently they meander without focus or direction. It is important to keep interventions short and to the point. One can always add elaborations if they are needed. This is not an absolute prohibition on long statements, but it does suggest that longer statements are generally too long.

5. **EQUITY.** While acknowledging that different personalities and different prior exposures to

the material will necessarily lead to different levels of active participation in the seminar discussion, it should be our collective self-conscious goal to have as equitable participation as possible. This means that the chair of the discussion has the right to curtail the speeches by people who have dominated the discussion, if this seems necessary.

6. SPONTANEITY vs. ORDER. One of the traps of trying to have guidelines, rules, etc. in a discussion is that it can squelch the spontaneous flow of debate and interchange in a seminar. Sustained debate, sharpening of differences, etc., is desirable and it is important that the chair not prevent such debate from developing.

7. ARGUMENTS, COMPETITIVENESS, CONSENSUS. A perennial problem in seminars revolves around styles of discussion. Feminists have often criticized discussions dominated by men as being aggressive, argumentative, competitive. Men, on the other hand, have at times been critical of what they see as the “feminist” model of discussion: searching for consensus and common positions rather highlighting differences, too much emphasis on process and not enough on content, and so on. Whether or not one regards such differences in approaches to discussion as gender-based, the differences are real and they can cause problems in seminars. My own view is the following: I think that it is important in seminar discussions to try to sharpen differences, to understand where the real disagreements lie, and to accomplish this it is generally necessary that participants “argue” with each other, in the sense of voicing disagreements and not always seeking consensus. On the other hand, there is no reason why argument, even heated argument, need be marked by aggressiveness, competitiveness, put-downs and the other tricks in the repertoire of male verbal domination. What I hope we can pursue is “cooperative conflict”: theoretical advance comes out of conflict, but hopefully our conflicts can avoid being antagonistic.

8. CHAIRING DISCUSSIONS. In order for the discussions to have the kind of continuity, equity and dynamics mentioned above, it is necessary that the discussion be lead by a “strong chair.” That is, the chair has to have the capacity to tell someone to hold off on a point if it seems unrelated to what is being discussed, to tell someone to cut a comment short if an intervention is rambling on and on, and so on. The difficulty, of course, is that such a chair may become heavy-handed and authoritarian, and therefore it is important that seminar participants take responsibility of letting the chair know when too much monitoring is going on.

9. REFLEXIVITY. The success of a seminar is a collective responsibility of all participants. Professors cannot waive magic wands to promote intellectually productive settings. It is essential, therefore, that we treat the process of the seminar itself as something under our collective control, as something which can be challenged and transformed. Issues of competitiveness, male domination, elitism, bullshit, diffuseness, and other problems should be dealt with through open discussion and not left to the end of the seminar. Please let me know if you have concerns of any sort, and it is always appropriate to raise issues with our collective process.