War and Peace? Sociology 267

Professor: Christi M. Smith
Office: King Building 301B
Office Hours: Mondays, 4:30-6pm and by appointment

Meeting Place: King Building 327
Meeting Time: 1:30-2:20pm, MWF

COURSE DESCRIPTION

War and mass violence are important for understanding inequality. In recent years, more than sixty million persons have been displaced through war and violence. How can we begin to understand a crisis of such magnitude? And what possibilities are there for rebuilding societies in the wake of such trauma? This course focuses on the legacies of war and state violence as these relate to social inequality. We will examine how war and mass violence shape social institutions. We will use comparative-historical case studies to understand how state violence contributes to the organization of social categories (race, gender and sexuality, and social class). Following an introduction to sociological approaches to war and violence, this course tackles a few key questions in greater depth. How can we understand the relationship of violence, race, and state-making projects and the legacies of state violence for contemporary social relation? How does military policy relate to domestic social policy and the organization of welfare states? How do domestic party politics matter for anti-war social movements? How do reparations and restitution efforts reshape possibilities for peace, and what kinds of actors should tackle these campaigns?

REQUIRED TEXTS (available at the Oberlin College Bookstore): listed in order of use


Suggested Fall Break or Thanksgiving Reading:

ASSESSMENT
In addition to participation and discussion leadership, there are four written assignments.

Participation: 10 points
High quality participation is demonstrated by being prepared with reading notes and questions for discussion and encouraging others to participate. I will sometimes collect reading reflections in the first five minutes of class or discussion reflections at the end of class as part of assessing participation. These cannot be made up.

Discussion preparation and leadership: 10 points
You will be asked (in coordination with a few others) to jointly lead conversation. In preparation, you will submit to me a one page analytical discussion of the selected reading. This should summarize the author’s chapter, including the theoretical questions raised in the chapter, and connect the reading to prior course readings. What is interesting? Finally, you should offer 5 questions that should stimulate discussion and include passages (with page numbers) to discuss. SIGN UP SHEET OUTSIDE MY OFFICE. (If you have not signed up by the end of the first week, you risk losing points. Take action!)

**Due on the class meeting before your leadership day (if you are leading on Wednesday, turn in your discussion preparation on Monday)

(2) Analytical Memos: 40 points each. Part A: write a one page summary for each reading in a section and Part B: write a 2 page analytical memo that synthesizes the readings from this section and analyzes sociological concepts.

For Part A, summary include the WWWHW (where what why how and when), identify the driving theoretical questions, the evidence used by the author(s) in making their argument, and the big argument.

In the analytical memo (Part B): How do the conceptual tools used by the author ask us to think about familiar events? What are alternatives to their explanation? What is at stake? (Or, how does this research matter?) Discuss practical/policy implications.

(Group 1: sections 3, 5; Group 2: sections 4, 6.)

Analytical Memo #3: Legacies of Slavery and Colonialism and Contemporary Higher Education Protest in South Africa, Brazil and the United States (50 points) Due: September 30.

Together with other members from your assigned group (Brazil or South Africa), prepare suggestions for how best to apply Marx’s case studies to contemporary political challenges. You should draft a 3-5 page policy recommendation. To do so, you should consider the alternative historical legacies and policy trajectories from South Africa/Brazil and look to contemporary university student protests as a site where historical legacies have come into dispute with contemporary policy. You have two days to meet as a group and prepare your
research and remarks. You will each turn in policy recommendations but may work as a group in preparing your research and recommendations.

**Final Paper: Analytical Memo Extension and Application** (50 points): Revise an earlier memo and apply the conceptual framework to a substantive topic of your interest. You should submit a brief description of your topic by November 1st. Additional details on Bb. Final Paper is due on December 16th by 9pm.

Total Possible Points: **200**

**COURSE STRUCTURE AND EXPECTATIONS:**

**Participation:** Please do arrive on time, turn your cell phone off (not to vibrate), *listen* and respond to others. Ask classmates (and me) to clarify comments and provide evidence to support their contributions. To do this, bring your reading notes and discussion questions, have the texts, and reading notes, and *listen to others*. This is a class about mass violence and war. We will talk about subject matter that is very troubling. I anticipate that you will bring high levels of maturity, respect, and thoughtfulness to these conversations. Like all courses, students will bring different types of experience and our course will be richer and more interesting if we are attentive to and engage with multiple perspectives.

**Readings:** It is very important that you read all assigned materials *well in advance* of the class where they are assigned. It is strongly encouraged that you bring detailed reading notes to class and/or print out and bring readings to class. I strongly recommend that you organize a copy share of 2-3 people to divvy up printing out readings.

If a pdf or a link does not work, be resourceful: look for it on your own through OC libraries and the internet first.

The readings are not long but many are quite complex. You can expect to read between 30-60 pages per class meeting. You will need to do more reading for your own research project. That said, there are also quite a few days designated for you to work on your final paper or group presentation. A good rule is that for every 1 hour in class, you spend 2-3 hours preparing for class. One of the goals for the semester is to advance analytical reading skills. Many of the readings are time and place specific. I do not expect that you know all the historical particulars – I do expect that you are *curious*!

**Assignments:** You should contact me within a week of an incorrect grade posted to Bb. Please save all of your corrected work. Assignments are DUE at the beginning of class. Assignments are docked 10 points per 24 hour period. (If received anytime between the start of class until the starting hour of class on the following day = 10 points docked. If you turn in a paper 3 days late, your maximum score is a 70, and so on).
FORMATTING: Assignments should be single-spaced, Times New Roman 11 font, STAPLED, double-sided, and include page numbers. Your name, course title, total word count, and date should be at the heading of each page. Failure to properly format your paper may cost you 5% of the possible score.

Attendance Policy:
***If you do not plan to attend regularly, you should not take this class.
In the event that you do miss a class, you will be responsible for the material covered and all announcements made in class. (yes, this includes late additions to the course!)

**You MUST inform me about missing class by email, preferably at least two hours in advance of class and no later than twelve hours after class unless you have a documented excuse from your Class Dean. Failure to do so will result in a 2 point reduction from your final grade.

If you miss more than 3 classes without documentation, you will not be able to earn more than a B in this course.

College Sanctioned Absences
If you intend to miss class for a college-sanctioned event (such as religious holidays or student athlete events) you should notify me within the first two weeks of the semester and provide the appropriate documentation. If you miss for a college-sanctioned reason, you are responsible for understanding the material but your absence is excused.

Incompletes
I will not grant an incomplete except in cases with exceptionally unusual circumstances. You will need to communicate with your Dean.

Special Needs
Students with special needs should inform me within the first two weeks of class and provide appropriate documentation from university services.

Honor Code
http://www.oberlin.edu/students/links-life/honorcode.html
The Honor Code: Oberlin College students are on their honor to uphold a high degree of academic integrity. All work that students submit is expected to be of their own creation and give proper credit to the ideas and work of others. When students write and sign the Honor Pledge, they are affirming that they have not cheated, plagiarized, fabricated, or falsified information, nor assisted others in these actions.

Honor Pledge: "I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment."
Sign each assignment—it is your reminder to know the boundaries of cheating (not doing your own work) plagiarism (taking credit for someone else’s work) and fabrication (making up sources, quotations or observations).
If you feel hesitant or if you are tempted to plagiarize, come see me.

It is not possible for us to have an intellectual community without honor. I expect that you demonstrate respect by recognizing the labor of those who create scholarly works. If you cheat (and this includes plagiarism/ not citing sources), your final grade will be an F. You will be reported. Ignorance is not an excuse. If in doubt, ask.

Email
I try to respond to emails within 24 hours on weekdays and do my best to answer all emails in a timely manner. If your question is covered in the syllabus, I will simply reply, “See syllabus.” When sending an email, include the course title in the subject line. Please check Bb before sending an email to make sure that the information you need is not available via an announcement.

Cell Phones and Laptops
Please turn your cell phone off or put it in silence mode without light, vibration and sound. Unless specified for special needs accommodation, laptops are only needed for workshop days.

I find it painfully irritating when students text in class. I may not be kind to people who text.

Blackboard
You are responsible for making sure your grades are correctly posted. Class handouts, readings not found in the text, announcements, and important changes to the class schedule will be posted there. Do not use Bb to calculate your grade – use this syllabus. Bb is not set up to calculate your grade.

TAKING NOTES
It is your responsibility to take notes during class. You should exchange contact information with all the members of your group in the event that you are absent and need notes or to inquire about any changes to the schedule.

It is to your advantage to take handwritten notes during class.
[http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/]

Here’s some advice borrowed from Princeton:
(http://www.princeton.edu/mcgraw/library/for-students/great-notes/)

You can maximize what you learn in and from class by following three easy steps:

1) adopt active listening skills; 2) take clear, effective notes; and 3) review your notes within 24 hours of taking them.

Listen actively in lecture
(1. Take notes to be more present in class)

- Get to class early so that you can choose a seat free of distractions and close to the lecturer.
- Look over your notes from last time and prepare for the day’s lecture, anticipating themes, concepts, and ideas that the lecturer will likely present.
- Listen both for main ideas and for the relevant details supporting them.
- Pay particular attention when the lecturer is analyzing, synthesizing, or processing information for you, such as when she makes a list, notes cause and effect, uses superlatives, or spends a lot of time explaining something.
- Ask questions when you don’t understand something.

Take good notes during lecture using the Cornell Method of Note taking

(2. Take notes in a way that helps you up focus and contribute effectively to class)

- Using only one side of your paper, draw a vertical line a few inches from the left side of the paper and a horizontal line a few inches up from the bottom of the page. (See example below.)
- Take legible notes in the central portion of your paper. Don’t transcribe every word that the lecturer says. Rather, focus on main ideas, themes, and concepts, taking down only those details, examples, illustrations, or formulae that will help you to remember the central point(s) of the lecture.
- Use consistent, understandable abbreviations whenever possible.
- Skip lines to indicate transitions from one thought or idea to the next.
- Leave noticeable blanks for words, ideas, or dates that you didn't catch but can fill in later.
- Put question marks in the left-hand margin to indicate that you should do further investigation on this section of your notes, either on your own or by going to office hours.

Fill in and review notes after lecture

(3. Take notes to help you study more effectively)

- Review your notes within 24 hours of taking them. Students forget 50% of what they learn if they don't review within 24 hours.
- Fill in any blanks you left and answer any questions you may have from lecture.
- Use the left-hand margin to annotate your notes indicating key terms, concepts, dates, and any other important information that will help you to review for exams or write papers.
- Use the bottom margin to write a summary of each page of notes—or, if it makes more sense, summarize at the end of one set of lecture notes.
Following these steps will help you to store information in your long-term memory and better learn your course material the first time around.

**SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

**SECTION 1. UNDERSTANDING WAR, VIOLENCE AND STATES THROUGH SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES**

Sub Topics: Social Conflict, State Power, Social Solidarity, Nationalism

**August 29** – Introduction: *When and how are group solidarity and homogeneity created and recreated, and how do these relate to conflict?*

“States of War. How the Nation-State made modern conflict”, in *Foreign Affairs* (online edition), November 7, 2013. (in class, additional copies in the 267 box outside my office)


**Sept. 2** - Malesevic, Introduction, Ch.1 War and Violence in Classical Social Thought


Syria: The Story of the Conflict, BBC. October 9, 2015


**Sept. 7** - Malesevic, Ch.2 The Contemporary Sociology of Organized Violence

Consider the contemporary journalism from the past two class meetings. How do classic and contemporary social thought inform (or differ from) the reportage?

**Sept. 9** – Malesevic, Ch. 4 Organized Violence and Modernity (Key themes: technology, bureaucracy, coercion, ideology. *Please bring examples of media coverage that touches upon two of the four themes that you find in current news coverage of ongoing mass violence.*)
Sept. 12 - Malesevic, Ch. 6: Nationalism and War

SECTION 2. MAKING RACE AND NATION
Historical Legacies of Violence, Race and Ethnicity, and State Formation
Sub Topics: Race and Ethnicity, State Formation, Colonialism

Sept. 14 – Marx, Preface and Acknowledgements, Chapter 1: Introduction

Sept. 16 – Marx, Historical and Cultural Legacies: Ch. 2, Trajectories from Colonialism
Group 1: Portuguese Brazil, Group 2: Dutch and British Colonial Legacies
(read all, but prepare to lead in discussions for your group section)

Sept. 19 - Marx, Ch. 3 Lessons from Slavery
Group 1: Brazil, Group 2: U.S.
(read all, but prepare to lead in discussions for your group section)

Sept. 21- Marx, Racial Domination and the Nation-State. Ch. 6, The United States after the Civil War.

Sept. 23 – Marx, Group 1: Ch. 5, South Africa. Group 2: Ch. 7, Brazil

September 26 and 28: (Group Coordination Days, no class)

C. Smith, “Chapter 1: A Racial Reckoning on Campus” in Reparation and Reconciliation: The Rise and Fall of Integrated Higher Education.

A few sources to get you started:

http://library.brown.edu/create/fivencenturiesofchange/chapters/chapter-7/student-movement/

“Student Protests in Democratic South Africa”


SECTION 3. THE RISE OF THE MILITARY WELFARE STATE
Who provides?: The impact of the military on domestic social policy
Sub Topics: Social Welfare, Social Policy, Policy and Ideas, Privatization


Oct. 7 – Mittelstadt, 1. Army Benefits in a Free Market Era; Mittelstadt, Ch 3. The Threat of a Social Welfare Institution - Group 1

Oct. 10 – Mittelstadt, Ch. 5. Army Wives Demand Support and Milesevic, Ch. 9 Gendering of War- Group 2

Oct. 12 Yom Kippur (No classes on campus)


Oct. 15- 23: Fall Break

Oct. 24 – Guest: Professor Hollie Nyseth Brehm (Sociology, Ohio State University)
Research on genocide in Rwanda and Bosnia: http://theconversation.com/rwanda-how-to-deal-with-a-million-genocide-suspects-38642 (An additional article will be assigned)

**Section 3 Analytical Memo DUE

SECTION 4. PROTESTING WAR: PARTY IN THE STREET
Party politics, mobilization, power, Social Movement Identity
Sub Topics: Political parties, Social Movements, Organizations, Mobilization
Oct. 26 - Heaney and Rojas, Ch. 1 Historical Context (*skim*) and Ch.2 Partisan Politics? Group 1

Oct. 28- Heaney and Rojas, Ch.3 Multiple Identities and Party-Movement Interaction Group 2

Oct. 31 – Heaney and Rojas, Ch.4 Identities and Grassroots Participation; Martin Luther King, "Why I Am Opposed to the War in Vietnam" April 30, 1967, Riverside Church, New York [http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/MRC/pacificaviet/riversidetranscript.html]

Nov. 2 - Heaney and Rojas, Ch.5 Identities and Organizational Action

Nov. 4 - Heaney and Rojas, Ch.6 Identities and Legislative Action; Ch. 8 Social Movements in a Polarized America


**SECTION 5. STATES AND PERSONS IN PERIL**
*Rebuilding after difficult histories*
Subtopics: Rights, Race and Ethnicity, Commemoration, Collective Memory, Restitution


**Section 4 Analytical Memo DUE**


http://www.croatia.hr/
http://www.tourismcambodia.com/
http://www.rwandatourism.com/

Nov. 18 No Class (C.Smith to Conference)

Nov. 21 – 25 Thanksgiving Recess

SECTION 6. THE GOOD PROJECT
*Rationality, commensuration, and the organizational work of humanitarian and philanthropic aid*
Subtopics: Nonprofits, Philanthropy, Commensuration, Organizations, Rights

Nov. 28 – Krause, Introduction and Ch. 1. In Pursuit of the Good Project
**Section 5 Analytical Memo DUE**


Dec. 2 – Krause, Ch. 2. Beneficiaries as a Commodity - Group 1 - and Ch. 3. The Logframe

Dec. 5 - Krause Ch. 4, The History of Humanitarian Authority; Krause, Ch. 5 The Reform of Humanitarianism - Group 2

Dec. 7 - Krause, Ch. 6 What about Human Rights? Krause, Conclusion

Dec. 9 – Last Day of Classes: Summary Discussion
**Section 6 Analytical Memo DUE**