This seminar offers a broad overview of different theoretical and empirical approaches within historically and comparatively-oriented political sociology and political science. We begin by surveying some of the grand themes of historical political sociology and political science of the 1970s and 1980s – collective action, revolutions, state formation, war and policymaking, then investigate contemporary rethinking of these themes and the emergence of new perspectives and topics, including agency, power in its “productive” mode, identities, religion, “race” and nations, gender and sexualities, culture.

Course format and requirements: Sociology 476 is a seminar in which students are active participants in discussion. Students will take turns leading class discussions and will write two short essays and a longer paper. In the short essays, approximately 4-5 pages in length, you are asked to assess (some aspect of) the readings critically (due before class – hard copy and in the digital dropbox -- on October 12 and November 9). In the final paper, approximately 15-20 (double-spaced) pages in length and due at noon on Wednesday, December 8 (again, in hard copy and in the digital dropbox), you are asked either to reflect on some aspect of theoretical developments in comparative and historical sociology and/or political science (e.g., how have power or agency been conceptualized? how do rational choice theories of state formation differ from culturalist accounts? what changes when gender or “race” are brought into accounts of state policy? etc.!!), or to discuss how an empirical project on which you are working speaks to a significant debate in comparative and historical sociology and/or political science.
Course readings: We will read four books, and a number of articles (available online at Blackboard [noted with *]). The following books are available at Beck’s Bookstore on Clark St.:


Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979).


The schedule of readings is open to revision by seminar participants.
Seminar Schedule

September 21: Overview of Historical and Comparative Approaches to Politics and Introduction to the Seminar

Required reading:


Recommended reading:

Look over two great classics of the 1960s, which both inspired the practitioners of historicized and historical approaches to politics:

Available in Northwestern Library, Main Core: 309 M821s

Available at Northwestern Library, on reserve (for a different course): 331.0942 T469m 1980

September 28: The Second Wave, part 1: Collective Action and Revolution

Required reading:


Theda Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), Introduction, Part I, and Conclusion.

Recommended reading:

October 5: The Second Wave, part 2: States, War and Welfare

Required Reading:


Theda Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), Part II and Conclusion.


Recommended reading:


Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, editors, Bringing the State Back In (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

SHORT CRITICAL ESSAY #1 DUE BY NOON, OCTOBER 12, HARD COPY IN PROFESSOR ORLOFF’S MAILBOX, ALSO POST TO DIGITAL DROPBOX

October 12: Historicized Political Analysis after the Linguistic and Cultural Turns

Gabrielle M. Spiegel, Practicing History: New Directions in Historical Writing after the Linguistic Turn (New York: Routledge, 2005): Introduction and essays by Eley, Sewell ("The concept[s] of culture") and Part III


Recommended reading:


October 19: The Third Wave: Historical Institutionalism

Required Reading:


TBA

Recommended reading:


October 26: The Third Wave: Agency

Required Reading:

Remaking Modernity, essay by Biernacki

Gabrielle M. Spiegel, Practicing History: New Directions in Historical Writing after the Linguistic Turn (New York: Routledge, 2005): Part II, focus on Sewell and Giddens.


November 2:
The Third Wave: States, Politics, Gender

Required reading:

Remaking Modernity, essay by Orloff
TBA

Recommended reading:


**November 9:**
The Third Wave: Provincializing Europe, Engaging the (Post)Colonial Context, Globalizing Historical Social Science

**Part 1:**


**Part 2:**

Raewyn Connell, Kreeger-Wolf Distinguished Professor of Gender Studies, will visit the seminar.

*Required Reading:*

*Remaking Modernity*, essay by Magubane


**November 16:**
The Third Wave: Collective Action, Revolutions, Identities, Group Formation
Required Reading:

Remaking Modernity, essays by Brubaker, Sohrabi, Kestnbaum, Gould, Spillman and Faeges


**NOVEMBER 18-21: ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCE HISTORY ASSOCIATION** (conference theme is “Power and Politics”) – an unparalleled opportunity to see historicized social science and theoretically-oriented history in action, at the Palmer House in Chicago; graduate students may register for $10 at ssha.org

November 23: No class – Thanksgiving break

[Friday, 3:30 – 6:00 pm, and we'll go to dinner afterwards]

December 3:

Part 1: The Third Wave: Re-examining Imperialism

Required reading:


Recommended reading:


*Julia Adams and George Steinmetz, ”Sovereignty and Sociology: From State Theory to Theories of Empire”*

Part 2: The Future of Historical and Comparative Social Science

Required Reading:

Remaking Modernity, essay by Clemens


FINAL PAPER DUE AT NOON, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8; HARD COPY IN PROFESSOR ORLOFF’S MAILBOX, ALSO POST TO DIGITAL DROPBOX.