

**Florida International University  
Department of History**

Professor Terrence G. Peterson  
WOH 5935 Spring 2021

# The Making of the Global Police State



*Police officers hold a in front of the White House during the nationwide protests in June 2020. © Olivier Douliery/AFP/Getty*

Thursdays, 5:00-7:40 PM

Live on Zoom

With three face-to-face sessions in GL 137

Office DM 390  
tpeterso@fiu.edu

Virtual Office Hours Wednesdays  
11am-1pm or by appointment

In the summer of 2020, protests against police violence reverberated across the United States and the world. At issue for many was a particular form of violent, racially targeted policing that seemed to bear remarkable similarities across national borders. As scholars were quick to point out, police practices have both local and global histories that have shaped the form, function, and meaning of such practices. This graduate seminar takes a comparative approach to understand the evolution of policing in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We will examine works that engage the distinct historiographies of policing in the United States, European Empires, and the Global South side-by-side in order to explore the common practices and connections that defined policing across the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. What are the historical roots of the modern 'police state,' and what drove its evolution? Why is policing so often tied to issues of race? Why do policing and police violence look so similar across the globe today, and what transnational connections might we trace?

This course is open to graduate students working in all eras, regions, and disciplines.

## Course Work

### Participation (60%)

Active participation is the heart of graduate seminar. I expect all students complete the readings and engage in the seminar activities before and during each week's seminar. Unlike undergraduate courses, grad seminar is a collective, collaborative endeavor. What we get out of it depends on the efforts we put into it.

### Papers (40%)

For this seminar, you will write two 5-page reflection papers on the readings, each worth 20% of your final grade. Each paper will critique and analyze either two books or one book and two articles with the aim of examining the larger themes of the course as well as the methodologies, sources, or assumptions of the authors.

## Seminar Structure

This course is a **hyflex course**. That means that this semester we will meet synchronously on Zoom for most of our meetings during our scheduled time – from 5:00 to 7:40pm every Thursday – with the exception of three face-to-face meetings scheduled toward the end of the semester (3/18, 4/1, 4/15). These face-to-face meetings are contingent on the public health situation and we will decide collectively whether and how they will occur.

Students will also interact online to prepare for each week's seminar. This semester we will use a system called the '**Australian Rules**' to promote ongoing participation and continuous collaboration between the seminar members. This system will allow us to develop a shared set of questions and problems in advance so that we can devote class time to in-depth discussion, make writing a key part of our intellectual endeavor, and create an atmosphere of collegial exchange. I have adapted these rules from a set created by Dr. Jennifer Sessions at UVA.

**How it works:** The class is divided into two teams – A and B – who work together to develop the discussion agenda for the week. To succeed, both teams must work together thoughtfully and stick to the following schedule before each week's class meeting.

Step 1: Team A will collectively develop a set of 3 written questions based on the week's readings. These questions should be framed to address both the substance of the reading and some problem of method or historiographical argument. The questions must be posted on Canvas by Monday midnight.

Step 2: Team B, after mutual consultation, will then respond briefly in writing to Team A's questions and post their responses to Canvas by midnight on Wednesday.

Step 3: After reading Team B's responses, Team A should work together to prepare a rebuttal or critique to Team B's answers, and (possibly) raise new issues or problems not addressed by the initial questions or responses. This rebuttal/critique will be offered at the beginning of seminar to kick off discussion.

The next week, teams switch: B poses questions, A responds, and B rebuts, etc.

Team makeup will rotate at the end of each unit of the course, so that each seminar member will get a chance to work with all the others by the end of the semester.

### **Ground Rules:**

- Groups should not divide up readings or the writing of questions. Our aim is to develop habits of intellectual collaboration and to share the work evenly between team members.
- Respect and courtesy are key principles. Disagree, but do it productively and professionally. Differences of interpretation and opinion are often the basis of excellent discussions.

### **Readings**

Many of the books for the course are available online through the FIU Library Catalogue, as indicated below. Balto and Slyomovics are available for purchase in the campus bookstore, and Vitale is available at a very reasonable price online. I highly recommend that you work together to interlibrary loan and photocopy two books – Thomas, and House & MacMaster – for your own personal use.

Articles and excerpted chapters are all available as .pdfs on Canvas.

### **Thriving – or just surviving – amidst a global pandemic**

The pandemic is tough on all of us. If you need to miss a meeting, submit a paper late, or any other kind of help, just reach out. We're in this together, and I hope we can show each other the patience, flexibility, and willingness to pull our weight that are needed to help make this a successful seminar.

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

### **Week 1 (1/14) – Introduction: what is policing?**

Before class, please read: Michel Foucault, “The Means of Correct Training,” from Paul Rabinow, ed. *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), pages 188-197.

Optional: If you would like an overview of the recent explosion of historical work on the policing and the carceral state in America, I recommend you skim this article for The Metropole by Charlotte Rosen and Matthew Guariglia:

<https://themetropole.blog/2021/01/04/disciplining-the-city-scholarship-and-the-carceral-state-year-in-review-2020/>

## PART I: POLICING BETWEEN EMPIRE AND NATION

### **Week 2 (1/21) – Policing and the Political Economy of Empire**

Martin Thomas, *Violence and Colonial Order: Police, Workers and Protest in the European Colonial Empires* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), Introduction, Part I and three case studies from Part II chosen collectively.

### **Week 3 (1/28) – Empire and the Origins of the Surveillance State**

Kathleen Keller, *Colonial Suspects: suspicion, imperial rule, and colonial society in interwar French West Africa* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2018). [Available as an E-book through FIU Libraries HERE.](#)

Alfred w. McCoy, “Policing the Imperial Periphery: Philippine Pacification and the Rise of the U.S. National Security State,” in McCoy and Scarano, eds. *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009): 109-116.

### **Week 4 (2/4) – Policing Migrants in the European Metropolises**

Clifford Rosenberg, *Policing Paris: The Origins of Modern Immigration Control between the Wars* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006). [Available as an E-book through FIU Libraries HERE.](#)

Danielle, Beaujon, “Policing Colonial Migrants The Brigade Nord-Africaine in Paris, 1923–1944,” *French Historical Studies* Vol. 42, No. 4 (October 2019): 655-680.

### **Week 5 (2/11) – Race and Policing in the American Metropolis**

Simon Balto, *Occupied Territory: Policing Black Chicago from Red Summer to Black Power* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2020).

## PART II: MILITARIZED POLICING

### **Week 6 (2/18) – Building Networks**

Julian Go, “The Imperial Origins of American Policing: Militarization and Imperial Feedback in the Early 20th Century,” *American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 125, No 5 (March 2020): 1193–1254.

Robert Whitaker, “From Cooperation to Neocolonialism: Colonial Police and International Policing, 1920-1960,” in Blanchard, Bloembergen, and Lauro, eds. *Policing in Colonial*

*Empires: Cases, Connections, Boundaries, ca. 1850-1970* (Brussels: P.E. Lang, 2017): 161-176.

### **Week 7 (2/25) – Decolonization and the Transformation of Policing**

Jim House and Neil MacMaster, *Paris 1961: Algerians, State Terror, and Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Jordanna Bailkin, “Leaving Home: The Politics of Deportation in Postwar Britain,” *Journal of British Studies* 47 (October 2008): 852–882.

### **Week 8 (3/4) – Unofficial Spring Break – no meeting or readings**

**First paper due Friday 3/5 at midnight**

### **Week 9 (3/11) – Technologies of Violence**

Brian Drohan, “Unintended Consequences: Baton Rounds, Riots, and Counterinsurgency in Northern Ireland, 1970-1981,” *Journal of Military History* 82 (April 2018): 491-514.

Erik Lindstrum, “Domesticating Chemical Weapons: Tear Gas and the Militarization of Policing in the British Imperial World, 1919–1981,” *The Journal of Modern History* 91 (September 2019): 557–585

Kim A. Wagner, “Expanding Bullets and Savage Warfare,” *History Workshop Journal*, Vol. 88 (Autumn 2019): 281–287.

### **Week 10 (3/18) – Counterinsurgency and Policing**

**\*\*This week’s meeting will take place face-to-face\*\***

Stuart Schrader, *Badges Without Borders: How Global Counterinsurgency Transformed American Policing* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019). Available as an E-book through FIU Libraries [HERE](#).

Bernard E. Harcourt, *The Counterrevolution: How Our Government Went to War Against Its Own Citizens* (New York: Basic Books, 2018), Part I.

## **PART III: POLICING AND JUSTICE IN THE POSTCOLONIAL ERA**

### **Week 11 (3/25) – Police Archives and the Practice of History**

Kirsten Weld, *Paper Cadavers: The Archives of Dictatorship in Guatemala* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014). Available as an E-book through FIU Libraries [HERE](#).

**Week 12 (4/1) – Policing the Postcolony**

***\*\*This week's meeting will take place face-to-face\*\****

Susan Slyomovics, *The Performance of Human Rights in Morocco* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005).

**Week 13 (4/8) – Racial Policing and Resistance**

Marisol LeBrón, *Policing Life and Death: Race, Violence, and Resistance in Puerto Rico* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019). Available as an E-book through FIU Libraries [HERE](#).

**Week 14 (4/15) – The End of [Police] History?**

***\*\*This week's meeting will take place face-to-face\*\****

Alex S. Vitale, *The End of Policing* (New York: Verso, 2017). Available as an E-book for \$4 through Verso's Website [HERE](#).

**Week 15 (4/22) – Finals Week (no meeting)**

**Second paper due Thursday 4/22 at midnight.**