

PolS 399 **Fall 2010**
Seminar in Political Theory: The Politics of Social Identity

Prof. Moruzzi
Office: 1122A BSB
312-996-2794/nmoruzzi@uic.edu
Office Hours: Wed. 1-2 and by appointment

Required Readings:

James Scott, et al, "The Production of Legal Identities Proper to the State:
The Case of the Permanent Family Surname"
Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*
Joan Didion, "Trouble In Lakewood"
Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction*
Norma Claire Moruzzi, "A Problem with Headscarves"
Edward Said, *Orientalism*

Recommended Readings:

Anna Read, "Lakewood, California: Postwar Suburbia in the 21st Century"
Anna Read Bio

All books are available from Women and Children First Bookstore, and will be delivered to class during the first class meeting. Articles will be available thorough the Blackboard course site.

Course Description:

This course examines the complex formal and informal relationships between the modern individual and the modern state. Most formal politics (and much of political theory) takes for granted that contemporary individuals and their social practices are free from direct control by the liberal state. But a closer examination reveals that the modern "free" individual is very much a product of ordinary institutions that shape daily practices into a coherent experience of social identity, and that the appropriate organization of social identities is crucial to the smooth functioning of the modern liberal state.

The authors of the three books we will read have each revolutionized theoretical work in their area of study. Foucault has shown that modern identity is often the inverse of its own self-assumptions: liberal citizens are as much the historical product of effective institutions for internalizing discipline, as they are the beneficiaries of lack of overt state constraints. Bourdieu has demonstrated that our most habitual daily practices are integrated in an effective web (*a habitus*) of defining social lineages: we like what we know we can afford to like, and our likes confirm the rightness of what we can afford. Said has revealed the extent to which the other (the "Orient") is an elaborate political and intellectual construction, more in keeping with the logic of domination than any mutual form of cultural recognition or political exchange.

Course Requirements:

Attendance is required; two unexplained absences will lower your grade. Students are expected to do all assigned readings, and to participate in class discussions. All responsible contributions to discussion are welcome. Students with disabilities must inform the instructor of the need for accommodations. Those who require accommodations for access and participation in this course must be registered with the Disability Resource Center. Please contact ODS at 312/413-2183 (voice) or 312/413-0123 (TTY). Students must notify the instructor within the first ten days of the semester of the specific dates on which they are requesting an absence for religious observance. All students are expected to do their own work; cheating will be punished.

All students will be required to submit a weekly one page critical response to the week's reading, the day before the reading is discussed. These papers must be left in the box on my office door (BSB 1122A) by 5pm on each Tuesday before the Wednesday class: do NOT email me your paper unless I have given you explicit permission. Students must also bring a copy of that week's critical response paper to class; you may be asked to use your paper as the basis for leading class discussion. Three 5-7 page papers on assigned topics are also required; these paper will build on the critical response papers you have already written. Grades will be calculated on the following basis: class participation 10%; critical response papers 15%; three papers worth 25% each.

Course Schedule:

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| W | Aug. 25 | Introduction | Books Delivered to Class |
| W | Sept. 1 | Scott, "The Production..." | |
| W | Sept. 8 | Foucault: Part I "Torture," Part II "Punishment" (3-134) | |
| W | Sept. 15 | Foucault: Part III "Discipline" (135-230) | |
| W | Sept. 22 | Foucault: Part IV "Prison" (231-308) | |
| W | Sept. 29 | Didion, "Trouble in Lakewood" | First Paper Due |
| | | (recommended: Read, "Lakewood, California: Postwar Suburbia in the 21 st Century" plus Read Bio) | |
| W | Oct. 6 | Bourdieu: Preface, Introduction, Chapter 2 (xi-8, 99-168) | |
| W | Oct. 13 | Bourdieu: Chapters 3, 4, look over 5 (169-256, look over 257-317) | |
| W | Oct. 20 | Bourdieu: Chapter 7, 8, look over 6 (372-465, look over 318-371) | |
| W | Oct. 27 | Bourdieu: Conclusion, Postscript (466-500) | |
| W | Nov. 3 | Moruzzi, "A Problem with Headscarves" | Second Paper Due |
| W | Nov. 10 | Said: "Introduction," (1-28), Chapter 1 "The Scope of Orientalism" (29-110) | |
| W | Nov. 17 | Said: Chapter 2 "Orientalist Structures & Restructures" (113-200) | |
| W | Nov. 24 | No Class | |
| W | Dec. 1 | Said: Chapter 3 "Orientalism Now" (201-328) | |

Final Paper Due during Finals Week