

Political Science 329
From City Limits to City Trenches: The Local Roots of American Politics

Spring 2010

Time: Wednesday; 2:00PM - 4:20PM
Location: 311 2BSB
Professor Michael Fortner
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 11:00AM-1:00PM

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Course Description:

Tip O’Neill, former Speaker of the House, once declared, “All politics is local.” Although a truism embraced by politicians of all stripes, political scientists have rejected this insight in both thought and deed. In fact, since Paul Peterson declared that “city politics is limited politics,” local political conflict has been relegated to the periphery of American political studies. Consequently, this course hopes to resuscitate the study of local politics by exploring whether local political analyses can yield insight into broader political patterns.

The course begins by asking, “who governs?” It introduces students to the dominant theoretical and analytical approaches to the study of politics, particularly urban politics. The course then situates urban politics within broader social, economic, and institutional contexts, assessing how these factors can structure local political outcomes. Next, the course examines how local spaces and politics structure broader political patterns. After giving students a historical and theoretical grounding, this course returns to its central task: exploring the relationship between local and national politics. This section of the course begins by reviewing the dramatic rise of conservatism and the ascendance of the Republican Party in national American politics since the 1960s. Then, through the use of case studies, this course will investigate how *uniquely* local social and political dynamics influenced this transformation.

Course Organization and Requirements

The class will be a combination of lecture and discussion. The lectures will not only cover the themes addressed in assigned readings but will also provide a broad overview of those topics. I will reserve time at the end of each class for questions and brief discussions. Frequently, entire classes will be discussion-based. Additionally, this course fulfills the college’s *writing-in-the-discipline* requirement and, as result, is writing intensive. There will not be any quizzes or exams: only memos and papers.

Evaluation

Grades will be determined as follows:

- Participation (30%)
- Midterm Paper (30%)
- Final Paper (40%)

Grading

Letter grades will be assigned according to the following scoring scheme.

- A 90-100%
- B 80-89%
- C 70-79%
- D 60-69%
- F below 60%

Participation/presentations

Attendance is mandatory. A sign-in sheet will be passed around at the beginning of each class. Any student with more than three unexcused absences automatically fails the course. All students must come to class prepared, having completed all assigned readings prior to class. Students should be ready to respond questions and engage in serious discussion. We will also use Blackboard to continue class discussions or start new ones. Feel free to post questions about the readings or offer your initial thoughts. Blackboard will provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate their engagement with course materials and boost their participation grade. Your attendance/discussion grade represents 50% of your participation grade.

Students must post a one-page memo on the assigned readings on Blackboard by 9:00am on days when our class meets. Students should also email me copy. These memos should not summarize the readings. Instead, they should offer a critical analysis of course materials. On occasion I will ask students to respond to specific discussion questions. I will NOT accept late memos. Memos not posted by 9:00am will automatically receive a zero. Also, each week two or three students will begin class by introducing the readings and offering their own critical analysis. Your memos and class presentations represent 50% of your overall participation grade.

Midterm Paper

A paper (10-11 pages) is due Mar 17. You will select one city from the list below. Drawing on primary and secondary sources, you will describe and compare local politics in that city in the 1950s and the 1990s. You should investigate how political power and/or party competition shifted from the 1950s until the 1990s. Furthermore, you will assess which internal (e.g. political institutions) and external factors (e.g. demographic shifts) influenced the transformation of politics in that city from the 1950s until the 1990s. You will receive a memo detailing the specifics of this assignment on February 3. A paper proposal is due on February 24. These proposals should identify the city you are studying, your primary and secondary sources, and a preliminary argument. You should also include a detailed outline of your paper.

Houston, Texas
Phoenix, Arizona
San Antonio, Texas
San Diego, California
Jacksonville, Florida
Indianapolis, Indiana
Columbus, Ohio

Charlotte, North Carolina
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Denver, Colorado
Seattle, Washington
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Tucson, Arizona
Kansas, City Missouri

Louisville, Kentucky
Omaha, Nebraska
Raleigh, North Carolina
Tulsa, Oklahoma
Wichita, Kansas

Tampa, Florida
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
St. Paul, Minnesota
Buffalo, New York
Orlando, Florida

Final Paper

Your final paper will build on your midterm paper. In fact, half of your final paper will be a revised version of your midterm paper. You final paper will compare the development of local politics from the 1950s until the 1990s in two cities: the city you examined in your first paper and another city from the list above. You must select cities from the same region. Similar to your analysis of the first city, you will explore how political power and/or party competition shifted from the 1950s until the 1990s in another city. You will assess which internal (e.g. political institutions) and external factors (e.g. demographic shifts) influenced the transformation of politics in that city from the 1950s until the 1990s. You will conclude this paper by comparing your findings and assessing the extent to which the political transformations you observed yield or do not yield insight into the broader transformation of American politics. This paper will be 23 to 25 pages. It will be due in my mail box by 5:00pm on our assigned date during the final-exam period.

Late Work

Your final paper is due on our assigned time during the final exam period. Extensions will not be granted for this assignment unless I receive a notification of the medical and family emergencies noted above. In the absence of such notification, students will lose one letter grade (e.g. A to B, C to D) for each day that the assignment is late.

Academic Honesty

Students should follow the university's regulations regarding academic integrity as laid out in the Student Handbook. Students are strongly advised to read and familiarize themselves with these regulations. If students violate standards of academic honesty they will receive a failing grade in the class and may face expulsion from the University.

Required Books:

Elizabeth A. Strom and John H. Mollenkopf. 2006. *The Urban Politics Reader*. New York: Routledge. **ISBN-13:** 978-0415319966

Paul Pierson and Theda Skocpol. 2007. *The Transformation of American Politics: Activist Government and the Rise of Conservatism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. **ISBN-13:** 978-0691122588

Earl Black and Merle Black. 2003. *The Rise of Southern Republicans*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University. **ISBN:** 0674012488

Thomas Sugrue. 2004. *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. **ISBN-13:** 978-0691121864

Lisa McGirr. 2002. *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. **ISBN-13:** 978-0691096117

Thomas Frank. 2005. *What's the Matter with Kansas?: How Conservatives Won the Heart of America*. New York: Holt Paperbacks. **ISBN-13:** 978-0805077742

Matthew D. Lassiter. 2007. *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. **ISBN-13:** 978-0691133898

Kevin M. Kruse. 2007. *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. **ISBN-13:** 978-0691133867

Recommended Reading:

William Strunk Jr. and E. B. White. 1998. *The Elements of Style*. New York: Longman. **ISBN-13:** 978-0205309023

Thomas Byrne Edsall. 1992. *Chain Reaction: The Impact of Race, Rights, and Taxes on American Politics*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. **ISBN-13:** 978-0393309034

Thomas A. Guglielmo. 2003. *White on Arrival: Italians, Race, Color, and Power in Chicago, 1890-1945*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. **ISBN-13:** 978-0195155433

Earl Black and Merle Black. 2008. *Divided America: The Ferocious Power Struggle in American Politics*. New York: Simon & Schuster. **ISBN-13:** 978-0743262071

Theoretical and Analytical Approaches

Jan 13 Political Science and Urban Politics

Elvin K. Wyly, Norman J. Glickman, and Michael L. Lahr, "A Top 10 List of Things to Know About American Cities," in *The Urban Politics Reader*

John H. Mollenkopf, "How to Study Urban Political Power," in *The Urban Politics Reader*

Robert A. Dahl, "Who Governs?" in *The Urban Politics Reader*

Richard Sauerkopf and Todd Swanstrom, "The Urban Electorate in Presidential Elections," in *The Urban Politics Reader*

Theda Skocpol. 1985. "Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research," in *Bringing the State Back In*, eds. Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (*On Reserve*)

Jan 20

Structuring Local Politics

Paul E. Peterson, “The Interests of the Limited City,” in *The Urban Politics Reader*

Clarence Stone, “Looking Back to Look Forward: Reflections on Urban Regime Analysis,” *The Urban Politics Reader*

John Mollenkopf, “The Postwar Politics of Urban Development,” in *The Urban Politics Reader*

Martin Shefter, “The Political Economy of Urban Fiscal Crises,” in *The Urban Politics Reader*

H.V. Savitch, Paul Kantor, and Selena Vicari, “The Political Economy of Urban Regimes,” in *The Urban Politics Reader*

Adolph Reed, “Demobilization in the New Black Political Regime: Ideological Capitulation and Radical Failure in the Post-Segregation Era,” in *The Urban Politics Reader*

Peter Dreier, “The Limits and Potential of Organizing in Low Income Neighborhoods,” in *The Urban Politics Reader*

“Saskia Sassen,” Overview and Economic Restructuring as Class and Spatial Polarization,” in *The Urban Politics Reader*

Jan 27

The Structuring Potential of Local Spaces and Politics- Race, Ethnicity, and Class

Susan Stall and Randy Stoecker. 1998. “Community Organizing or Organizing Community? Gender and the Crafts of Empowerment,” *Gender and Society*, 12(6): 729-756. (*On Reserve*)

Ira Katznelson. 1981. *City Trenches: Urban Politics and the Patterning of Class in the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapters 1 and 3. (*On Reserve*)

Dawson, Michael. 1993. *Behind the Mule: Race and Class in African-American*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chaps 3. (*On Reserve*)

Kathleen Neils Conzen, “Immigrants, Immigrant Neighborhoods, and Ethnic Identity: Historical Issues,” *Journal of American History* 66.3 (1979): 603–15 (*On Reserve*)

Michael Jones-Correa, "Resistance from Outside: Machine Politics and the (Non) Incorporation of Immigrants," in *The Urban Politics Reader*

Recommended:

Thomas A. Guglielmo. 2003. *White on Arrival: Italians, Race, Color, and Power in Chicago, 1890-1945*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Feb 3 The Structuring Potential of Local Spaces and Politics-Gender and Sexuality

Michael Jones-Correa, "Wanting In: Latin American Immigrant Women and the Turn to Electoral Politics," in *The Urban Politics Reader*

Robert W. Bailey. 2001. "Sexuality Identity and Urban Space: Economic Structure and Political Action," in *Sexual Identities, Queer Politics*, ed. Mark Blasius. Princeton: Princeton University Press. (*On Reserve*)

Bryant Simon. 2002. "New York Avenue: The Life and Death of Gay Spaces in Atlantic City, New Jersey, 1920-1990," *Journal of Urban History* 28: 300-327. (*On Reserve*)

Marc Stein. 2001. "Sex Politics in the City of Sisterly and Brotherly Loves," *Radical History Review* 59 (1994): 60-92. (*On Reserve*)

Kevin J. Mumford. 1996. "Homosex Changes: Race, Cultural Geography, and the Emergence of the City," *American Quarterly* 48: 395-414. (*On Reserve*)

The Transformation of American Politics

Feb 10 The Conservative Turn-Part I

Paul Pierson and Theda Skocpol. 2007. *The Transformation of American Politics: Activist Government and the Rise of Conservatism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. *Selected Selections*

Recommended Reading:

Earl Black and Merle Black. 2008. *Divided America: The Ferocious Power Struggle in American Politics*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Earl Black and Merle Black. 2003. *The Rise of Southern Republicans*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University.

Feb 17 The Conservative Turn-Part II

Earl Black and Merle Black. 2003. *The Rise of Southern Republicans*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University

Recommended Reading:

Thomas Byrne Edsall. 1992. *Chain Reaction: The Impact of Race, Rights, and Taxes on American Politics*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company

Earl Black and Merle Black. 2008. *Divided America: The Ferocious Power Struggle in American Politics*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Local Roots of National Politics

Feb 24 **Midwest**

Thomas Sugrue. 2004. *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Mar 3 **Midwest**

Thomas Sugrue. 2004. *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Mar 10 **West**

Lisa McGirr. 2002. *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Mar 17 **West**

Lisa McGirr. 2002. *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Midterm Paper Due

Mar 24 **No Class**

Mar 31 **The Plains**

Thomas Frank. 2005. *What's the Matter with Kansas?: How Conservatives Won the Heart of America*. New York: Holt Paperbacks.

Apr 7 **The South-Part I**

Kevin M. Kruse. 2007. *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Apr 14 The South-Part I

Kevin M. Kruse. 2007. *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Apr 21 The South-Part II

Matthew D. Lassiter. 2007. *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South*. Princeton: Princeton University Press

Apr 28 The South-Part II

Matthew D. Lassiter. 2007. *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South*. Princeton: Princeton University Press

Final Paper Due