

# Global Actors Beyond the State: Methods and Cases

McMaster University, Institute on Globalization and the Human Condition  
Globalization Studies GS718 – Fall 2019  
Course instructor: Dr. Paula Butler

## Land Acknowledgement:

*While meeting for this course, we recognize and acknowledge our presence on the traditional territories of the Mississauga and Haudenosaunee nations, and within the lands protected by the 'Dish With One Spoon' Wampum agreement. This acknowledgement gives rise to a commitment to honour treaties and work toward decolonization and establishment of just relationships.*

Course time and location: Fridays 9:30 – 12:20 pm; L.R. Wilson Hall

Instructor's office hours and location: Friday 12:30-1:30 pm; L.R. Wilson Hall 2023 (students can drop in during office hours, but appointments are preferred – please book ahead via email; some alternate timing may also be available)

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**Course description:** This course examines non-state sources of pressure, influence and self-determination in the context of neoliberal globalization. While some analysis will be made of corporate and private sector influence, and on populist/reactionary/"right wing" movements, our primary focus is on the emergence and impact of progressive social movements as non-state actors. We will read and debate major theoretical perspectives on the current context and on the study of social movements. Students will conduct secondary research to produce a culminating essay on an aspect of a specific social movement (case study), a comparison of movement strategies or successes, or an analysis of social movement theory.

## Texts and Reading Materials:

\*Wendy Brown. *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution*. Zone Books, 2015.

\*Lawrence Cox and Alf Gunvald Nilsen, *We Make Our Own History: Marxism and Social Movements in the Twilight of Neoliberalism*. Pluto Press, 2014.

\*Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*. Penguin Press, 2004.

\*other texts are available on the Internet or on the course Avenue site under Readings.

**Learning Goals:**

1. Course members will acquire familiarity with major approaches to the study of social movements, and with key terms and concepts used in the study of social movements;
2. Course members will develop, and present both orally and in essay format, in-depth reflections on a key issue or question pertaining to one or more social movements;
3. Course members will expand their knowledge of social change through active debate and discussion with peers in the course.

**Assessment – summary:**

<b>Item</b>	<b>weight</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Submission</b>
Attendance, preparation, and participation in class discussions	15%	Throughout	In class
Lead class discussion on assigned reading	15%	To be assigned	In class
Journal reflection or “think piece” on selected course themes or readings	20%	On or before Oct. 25	Avenue course site drop box
Class presentation of essay-related research content and insights	10%	Weeks 10-12	In class
Research essay	40%	Dec. 14 midnight	Avenue course site drop box

**Assessment – details:**

**Attendance, preparation, and participation in class discussion:**

As a graduate seminar course, all class members are expected to prepare for, attend and actively participate in all classes. Completed reading of assigned materials is essential for active class participation.

**Lead class discussion on assigned readings:**

Each week, one or more students will be responsible to facilitate or lead off discussion of assigned readings (i.e. one article per student; with full texts, you can divide up material). The discussion question should be posted on the Avenue course site discussion tab the day before class (exact time TBD), in order to allow everyone to organize their thinking. Remember to avoid “close-ended questions” and rather pose a question that requires thoughtful reflection and engagement with key concepts presented in the article. In class, please take a couple of minutes to briefly summarize the author’s main themes before posing the discussion question. You should aim for 15-20 minutes of discussion. Small-groups or partners are often effective ways to engage all class members.

### Journal reflection on course themes/readings:

The purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to explore and synthesize in writing key learnings, insights and questions you have at mid-point in the course, and to allow me to get to know you better via your writing. This is a more informal piece of writing – feel free to write in first person. No formal bibliography is needed, although please reference any readings by author and page numbers.

The assignment: with detailed reference to at least 3 key course readings thus far, what are your most important learnings, reflections, “take-aways” or new questions about the roles of “non-state actors” in effecting social change in the world today? (You may also want to use this assignment to begin to explore questions you may want to address in your final research essay.)

Length: approximately 1000 words

### Class presentation on research topic:

The final 2-3 classes will be allocated for student research presentations. The time available per student will depend on final class enrolment, but should be at least 30 minutes each. During your session, please allocate some portion (e.g. at least 10 minutes) to class discussion of your presentation. You may want to pose 1 or more specific discussion questions. Or you may want to invite constructive feedback on your research findings and thoughts.

### Research essay:

The culmination of your work throughout the term will be a research paper (13-16 pages double-spaced, 12 pt font, or approximately 3500-4000 words) focused on your selected topic. Any referencing style (notes and bibliography) is acceptable as long as it is consistently used. Each paper should draw on at least 6 scholarly sources (peer-reviewed journal articles or books/book chapters). Students must ensure that their work is edited prior to submission to eliminate grammar and spelling errors.

Research topic: you may want to explore in depth a particular social movement as a case study and use some of the theoretical concepts discussed in class to analyze it. (See list of general topics and articles posted in Avenue.) You may want to compare two different movements in terms of their strategies, successes/failures, etc. You may also choose to write a “theory essay” that compares and assesses two or more different theoretical approaches to social movements that we will discuss in the course. Such a paper could, for instance, form the basis of a “theory chapter” for an extended research project.

## WEEKLY THEMES AND SCHEDULE:

### **Sept. 13 – Course Introduction: Setting the Context**

#### Reading:

\*Bergeroglu (Palgrave online text), Chapters 1, 6-12 [Read at least 3 of these chapters, or as much as you can. These chapters provide concrete historical examples that will help to anchor the theoretical reflections throughout the course.]

### **Sept.20 – Theorizing the current context I: What’s wrong with the state?**

- Rationale: before we can talk about non-state actors, we need to understand the (changing) nature of the state itself
- Historical state (colonial, bourgeois, racial)
- Neoliberal state – blurred boundaries of public/private
- Power of corporations and capital vis-à-vis the state

#### Reading:

\*Government of Canada. Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development – Hearings on Bill C-300, 2009-2010. Accessible via the links below. *NOTE: you are not expected to read all these files – but skim through them to see what kind of organizations are making presentations to this government committee and read a couple of presentations from different types of actors to get the gist of their arguments.*

<http://www2.parl.gc.ca/CommitteeBusiness/CommitteeMeetings.aspx?Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=40&Ses=2&Cmte=FAAE&Stac=2718913>

<http://www2.parl.gc.ca/CommitteeBusiness/CommitteeMeetings.aspx?Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=40&Ses=3&Cmte=FAAE&Stac=3023047>

\*Rumina Sethi, “The End of the Nation?” (Chapter 2, pp. 30-58) in *The Politics of Postcolonialism: Empire, Nation and Resistance*. Pluto Press, 2011.

\*D. T. Goldberg, “Racial States”, (Chapter 5, pp. 98-137) in *The Racial State*. Blackwell, 2002.

\*Achille Mbembe, “Of Commandment” (Chapter 1, pp. 24-65) and “On Private Indirect Government” (Chapter 2, 66-101) in *On the Postcolony*. California University Press, 2001.

\*Ian Bruff, “The rise of authoritarian neoliberalism”. *Rethinking Marxism* (2014) 26:1, pp. 113-129.

### **Sept. 27 - Classical theories of social movements**

#### Reading:

\*Bergeroglu (Palgrave online text), Chapter 2

\*Eugene Nulman and Raphael Schlembach, "Advances in social movement theory since the global financial crisis", *European Journal of Social Theory* (2018) 21:3, pp. 376-390.

\*R. D. Benford and D.A.Snow, "Framing processes and social movements: an overview and assessment". *Annual Review of Sociology* (2000) 26: 611-639.

#### **Oct. 4 - Marxist theories of social transformation**

##### Reading:

\*Cox and Nilsen, Chapters 1, 3 and 4.

\*Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, "The Pitfalls of National Consciousness". [This classic book, and individual chapters, can be found on the internet, e.g.

<https://www.marxists.org/subject/africa/fanon/pitfalls-national.htm>

##### Additional/Optional:

\*Bergeroglu, Chapter 4

\*David Austin, "Vanguards and Masses: Global Lessons from the Grenada Revolution", pp. 173-189 in Choudry and Kapoor, *Learning from the Ground Up: Global Perspectives on Social Movements and Knowledge Production*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

#### **Oct. 11 – Cooptation/Disciplining of Civil Society: NGOization**

##### Reading:

\*Feyzi Ismail and Sangeeta Kamat, "NGOs, Social Movements and the Neoliberal State: Incorporation, Reinvention, Critique". *Critical Sociology* (2018) 44:4-5, pp. 569-577.

\*Mufid Qassoum, "Aborting the Revolution: Imperial Agendas, 'Civil Society' and Global Manipulation". *Between the Lines* (2003).

#### READING WEEK

#### **Oct. 25 – Theorizing the Current Context, II: Neoliberalism as 'Stealth Revolution'**

##### Reading:

\**Undoing the Demos* (Wendy Brown)

#### **Nov. 1 - Right-wing Populist Movements**

Reading:

\*J. Eric Oliver and Wendy M. Rahn, "Rise of the *Trumpenvolk*: Populism in the 2016 Election". *The Annals of the American Academy* (Sept. 2016) 667: pp. 189-206.

\*Ann Pettifor, "Brexit and its Consequences". *Globalizations* (2017) 14:1, pp. 127-132.

\*Seva Gunitzky, "Corrupting the Cyber-Commons: Social Media as a Tool of Autocratic Stability". *Persepectives in Politics*. 2015.

### **Nov. 8 – Theorizing the Current Context, III: Possibilities of Deep Transformation?**

Reading:

\*Hardt and Negri, *Multitude*

### **Nov. 15 – Social Movement Strategies: Case Studies**

\*August H. Nimtz, "Violence and/or Nonviolence in the Success of the Civil Rights Movement: the Malcolm X/Martin Luther King Jr. Nexus". *New Political Science* (2016) 38:1, pp. 1-22.

\*Seabrooke, Leonard, and Wigan, Duncan (2013) 'Emergent Entrepreneurs in Transnational Advocacy Networks: Professional Mobilization in the Fight for Global Tax Justice', GR:EEN Working Paper No. 41, Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation, University of Warwick.

[www.greenfp7.eu/papers/workingpapers](http://www.greenfp7.eu/papers/workingpapers)

\*other readings to be selected based on areas of student interest

Nov. 22            Student research presentations

Nov. 29            Student research presentations

Dec. 6             Student research presentations

### **University, departmental, and course policies:**

**Late submission of work:** Students are expected to demonstrate professionalism in meeting deadlines as set out in the syllabus, or contacting the instructor well in advance of a due date (e.g. at least one week) if there are reasonable anticipated circumstances for altering the deadline. In the case of unforeseen circumstances such as illness or family emergency/death, students should provide documentation and contact the instructor as soon as possible to arrange an alternate deadline.

**Academic Integrity:** Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in

unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour does result in serious consequences. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty and its consequences. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

**Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities:** Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca). For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.

**Faculty of Social Sciences Email Communication Policy:** Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all email communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University email account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion. Email Forwarding in MUGSI: [www.mcmaster.ca/uts/support/email/emailforward.html](http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/support/email/emailforward.html)

\*Forwarding will take effect 24-hours after students complete the process at the above link.

**Statement on Electronic Resources:** In this course we will be using Email and Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster email accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

**Course Modification Statement:** The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The instructor may make changes with consideration to class size, student learning needs, etc. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.