

Academic Year 2023-24

Education 374 / Political Science 334 / Sociology 374 / Law 781

SEMINAR ON PHILANTHROPY AND CIVIL SOCIETY

CONVENERS:

Woody Powell, Aaron Horvath, and Lisa Overbey

Law School, Crown Bldg. Room 320-F

[UPDATED: 4/1/2024]

Course Description

This is a year-long course, associated with the Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society (PACS). This seminar is intended for PhD students and postdoctoral fellows doing research on the nature and ramifications of civil society and/or the effects of philanthropy on civil society, both domestically and globally. The course is also open to advanced undergraduates writing senior theses on these topics. Our purpose is to support students in pursuing research and writing on topics concerning civil society. We accomplish this through several means. Faculty and students will lead discussions of recent writings that form the corpus of scholarly knowledge of civil society, philanthropy, and the nonprofit sector. This effort will allow us to build a common foundation of scholarship that we can all draw on. As we move into winter and spring, students will circulate drafts of chapters and papers to get constructive feedback from faculty and fellow students. We will also have leading practitioners, journalists, and scholars visit us for talks throughout the academic year, and students will have ample opportunity to interact with these guests.

Our aim is to help students produce high-quality work that will have an impact on their respective disciplines and shape the scholarly terrain of research on civil society, philanthropy, and nonprofits. *Our expectation is that all participants will take the course for the full year.* Postdoctoral fellows associated with various PACS labs are most welcome, of course. The course may be taken multiple times, and for 1-3 units. Grading is on a pass/fail basis.

The course meets in person on Fridays, from **10:00am – 12:00pm**. See meeting dates below.

Readings

All readings are either linked below, [available in this folder](#), posted to Canvas, or accessible through Stanford Library.

Quick link to...

[Fall Quarter syllabus](#)

[Winter Quarter syllabus](#)

[Spring Quarter syllabus](#)

FALL QUARTER

September 29: What *is* civil society?

What are the boundaries of this thing we're talking about – if there even are boundaries? Civil society? Community? The space between work and home? The world that isn't government or business? A cultural ethos or attitude? An action or set of practices? An artifact? A myth?

Read for seminar

- Dewey, John. 1927. *The Public and Its Problems*. New York: Henry Holt and Company. (read Chapter V, "Search for the Great Community" pp 143-184 in 1946 Gateway Books edition; available on Internet Archive, [link](#))
- Almond, Gabriel A. and Sidney Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture*. New York: Sage. (read Ch 1, "An Approach to Political Culture" pp 3-42; available on Internet Archive, [link](#))
- Schudson, Michael. 1995. "Was There Ever a Public Sphere?" pp189-203 in *The Power of News*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press ([pdf](#))
- Igo, Sarah E. 2006. "'A Gold Mine and a Tool for Democracy': George Gallup, Elmo Roper, and the Business of Scientific Polling, 1935–1955." *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 42(2): 109–34. ([pdf](#))

Review if interested

- Fraser, Nancy. 1990. "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy." *Social Text* ([pdf](#))
- Powell, W.W. 2020. "What is the Nonprofit Sector?" Chapter 1 in *The Nonprofit Sector: A Research Handbook*, edited by W. W. Powell and P. Bromley. 3rd edition. 3rd edition. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. (Handbook)

Recommended for the truly obsessed

- Adut, Ari. 2012. "A Theory of the Public Sphere." *Sociological Theory* 30(4): 238–62. ([pdf](#))
- Lichterman, Paul, and Nina Eliasoph. 2014. "Civic Action." *American Journal of Sociology* 120(3): 798–863. ([pdf](#))
- Stewart, Evan, and Douglas Hartmann. 2020. "The New Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere." *Sociological Theory* 38(2): 170–91. ([pdf](#))
- Ferree, Myra Marx, William A Gamson, Juo Rgen Gerhards, and Dieter Rucht. 2002. "Four Models of the Public Sphere in Modern Democracies." *Theory and Society* 31: 289–324. ([pdf](#))
- Bellah, Robert. 1967. "Civil Religion in America." *Daedalus* 96(1): 1-21. ([pdf](#))
- Watch: "Can We Rebuild Social Cohesion in the U.S.?", Stanford CASBS event, 2020 ([link](#))

For those who can stay, we will continue our discussion over lunch. Everyone will give a very short introduction of their research interests We also ask that you post a longer description of your work and interests on the course Canvas page. Our postdoctoral fellows should also post a

paper or chapter of theirs. PhD students may post a paper of theirs or if you prefer a paper you really admire.

In addition, we will discuss how different social science disciplines think about associational life, nonprofits, and philanthropy, as well as the interaction between normative and positive orientations to scholarship. The goal is to enlarge our respective fields of vision, and see how other disciplines decide what is interesting, what methodological approaches are deployed, and what counts as good scholarship.

October 13: The Civic Life of the City

Eyes on the street.

Read for seminar

- Jacobs, Jane. 1961. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Random House (“The Uses of Sidewalks: Contact” pp55–73, and “The Uses of City Neighborhoods” pp112–140) ([pdf](#))
- Klinenberg, Eric. 1999. “Denaturalizing Disaster: A Social Autopsy of the 1995 Chicago Heat Wave.” *Theory and Society* 28(2): 239–95. ([pdf](#))
- Horvath, Aaron. 2023, April. “Your Package Has Been Delivered.” *Current Affairs* 8(2): 32–36. ([pdf](#))
- Levine, Jeremy R. 2017. “The Paradox of Community Power: Cultural Processes and Elite Authority in Participatory Governance.” *Social Forces* 95(3): 1155–79. ([pdf](#))

Review if interested

- Li Roland, and Noah Arroyo. 2023. “Cities are struggling. San Francisco could be in for the biggest ‘doom loop’ of all.” *San Francisco Chronicle*. ([link](#))
- Krystal Laryea, Yi Zhao, and Walter W. Powell. 2022. “San Francisco Bay Area: A Left Coast Metropolis Grapples with Technocracy and Inequality.” *Global Perspectives* 3(1, *Special Collection: The Civic Lives of Cities Around the World*). ([pdf](#))
- The US Surgeon General’s 2023 report on America’s “epidemic of loneliness and isolation” ([link](#))

Recommended for the truly obsessed

- Duneier, Mitchell. 1999. *Sidewalk*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Plys, Kristin. 2017. “Political Deliberation and Democratic Reversal in India: Indian Coffee House during the Emergency (1975–77) and the Third World ‘Totalitarian Moment.’” *Theory and Society* 46(2): 117–42. ([pdf](#))
- Marwell, Nicole P. 2007. *Bargaining for Brooklyn: Community Organizations in the Entrepreneurial City*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Brandtner, Christof, and Claire Dunning. 2020. “Nonprofits as Urban Infrastructure.” Chapter 11 in *The Nonprofit Sector: A Research Handbook*, edited by W. W. Powell and P. Bromley. 3rd edition. 3rd edition. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. (Handbook)

- Dunning, Claire. 2022. *Nonprofit Neighborhoods: An Urban History of Inequality and the American State*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press
- Franks, Mary Anne. 2021. “Beyond the Public Square: Imagining Digital Democracy.” *The Yale Law Journal Forum*. 427–453. ([pdf](#))
- Schudson, Michael. 1997. “Why Conversation Is Not the Soul of Democracy.” *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 14(4): 297–309. ([pdf](#))

October 27: Making democracy work (or maybe not?)

So much of civic life is held up in a sort of Tocquevillian fantasy. But many of these dreams fall flat. What can we learn from both positive and negative cases to make sense of the complex social dynamics at play in this sphere?

Read for seminar

- Putnam, Robert D, Robert Leonardi, and Raffaella Y. Nanetti. 1993. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (Read Ch. 6, “Social Capital and Institutional Success” pp 163-192) ([pdf](#))
- Clemens, Elisabeth S. 2020. “Nonprofits as Boundary Markers: The Politics of Choice, Mobilization, and Arbitrage.” Chapter 7 in *The Nonprofit Sector: A Research Handbook*, edited by W. W. Powell and P. Bromley. 3rd edition. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. (Handbook)
- Beckert, S. 2002. “Democracy and Its Discontents: Contesting Suffrage Rights in Gilded Age New York.” *Past & Present* 174(1): 116–57. ([pdf](#))
- Eliasoph, Nina. 1997. “‘Close to Home’: The Work of Avoiding Politics.” *Theory and Society* 26(5): 605–47. ([pdf](#))

Review if interested

- Fung, Archon. 2003. “Associations and Democracy Between Theories, Hopes, and Realities.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 29: 515–39. ([pdf](#))

Recommended for the truly obsessed

- Bennett, Elizabeth A., Alissa Cordner, Peter Taylor Klein, Stephanie Savell, and Gianpaolo Baiocchi. 2013. “Disavowing Politics: Civic Engagement in an Era of Political Skepticism.” *American Journal of Sociology* 119(2): 518–48. ([pdf](#))

November 10: The Public Influence of Private Wealth

What is the role of private wealth in shaping the character of the public good? Philanthropy is a core consideration here—but there are other means both throughout history and at present. Is civil society a conduit through which bad money becomes good money?

Read for seminar

- Karl, Barry D., and Stanley N. Katz. 1981. “The American Private Philanthropic Foundation and the Public Sphere 1890-1930.” *Minerva* 19(2): 236–70. ([pdf](#))

- O'Connor, Alice. 2011. "Bringing the Market Back In: Philanthropic Activism and Conservative Reform." Pp. 121–50 in *Politics and Partnerships: The Role of Voluntary Associations in America's Political Past and Present*, edited by E. S. Clemens and D. Guthrie. Chicago. [\(pdf\)](#)
- Saudners-Hastings, E. 2021. "'Send back the bloodstained money': Frederick Douglass on Tainted Gifts." *American Political Science Review* 115(3): 729-741. [\(pdf\)](#)
- Scutari, Mike. 2023. "'You Can't Pick and Choose': A revealing look at why leaders accept toxic donations." *Inside Philanthropy* [\(link\)](#)

Review if interested

- Reich, Rob. 2013. "What are foundations for?" forum in *Boston Review* [\(link\)](#)
- McElroy, Micah and Aaron Horvath. 2023, June. "Good Apples from a Rotten Tree." *Alliance Magazine* 52–55. [\(link\)](#)

Recommended for the truly obsessed

- Zunz, Olivier. 2011. *Philanthropy in America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Duquette, Nicolas J. 2019. "Founders' Fortunes and Philanthropy: A History of the U.S. Charitable-Contribution Deduction." *Business History Review* 93(3): 553–84. [\(pdf\)](#)
- Lagemann, Ellen Condliffe. 1989. *The Politics of Knowledge : The Carnegie Corporation, Philanthropy, and Public*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.
- Sealander, Judith. 1997. *Private Wealth and Public Life: Foundation Philanthropy and the Reshaping of American Social Policy from the Progressive Era to the New Deal*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Magat, Richard. 1999. *Unlikely Partners: Philanthropic Foundations and the Labor Movement*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Mayer, Jane. 2017. *Dark money: The hidden history of the billionaires behind the rise of the radical right*. Anchor.

November 17: Organizing Civic Life

Considered especially through nonprofits and similarly structured formal groups—with special attention to the limitations and kinds of challenges those organizations face. (We are hoping to arrange a zoom lunch with Ben Soskis after class.)

Read for seminar

- Soskis, Benjamin. 2020. "A History of Associational Life and the Nonprofit Sector the U.S." Chapter 2 in *The Nonprofit Sector: A Research Handbook*, edited by W. W. Powell and P. Bromley. 3rd edition. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. (Handbook)
- Bloch, Ruth H. and Naomi Lamoreaux. 2017. "Voluntary Associations, Corporate Rights, and the State: Legal Constraints on the Development of American Civil Society, 1750-1900." Chapter 7 in *Organizations, Civil Society, and the Roots of Development*, edited by N. R. Lamoreaux and J. J. Wallis. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [\(pdf\)](#)

- Skocpol, Theda. 2004. "Voice and Inequality: The Transformation of American Civic Democracy." *Perspectives on Politics* 2(1): 3–20. ([pdf](#))
- Fong, Benjamin Y. and Naschek, Melissa. 2021. NGOism: The Politics of the Third Sector. *Catalyst*. ([link](#))

Review if interested

- Fones-Wolf, Elizabeth. 1996. "Labor and Social Welfare: The CIO's Community Services Program, 1941-1956." *Social Service Review* 70(4): 613–34. ([pdf](#))

Recommended for the truly obsessed

- Johnson, Victoria, and W. W. Powell. 2017. "Organizational Emergence and the Transformation of Civic Order in 19th-Century New York City." Chapter 6 in *Organizations, Civil Society, and the Roots of Development*, edited by N. R. Lamoreaux and J. J. Wallis. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. ([pdf](#))
- Lee, Caroline W. *Do It Yourself Democracy: The Rise of the Public Engagement Industry*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Hwang, Hokyū, and W. W. Powell. 2009. "The Rationalization of Charity: The Influences of Professionalism in the Nonprofit Sector." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 54: 268–98. ([pdf](#))

December 8: Ways of Seeing (and schemes for shaping) the Public Good

History reveals no shortage of technocratic or managerial efforts to see, assess, and improve the people, organizations, and general enterprise of civic life. How we see informs how we act—what could go wrong?

Read for seminar

- Horvath, Aaron, and Walter W. Powell. 2020. "Seeing Like a Philanthropist: From the Business of Benevolence to the Benevolence of Business." Chapter 3 in *The Nonprofit Sector: A Research Handbook*, edited by W. W. Powell and P. Bromley. 3rd edition. 3rd edition. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. (Handbook)
- Sealander, J. (2003). Curing evils at their source: The arrival of scientific giving. In L. J. Friedman & M. D. McGarvie (Eds.), *Charity, philanthropy, and civility in American history* (pp. 217-240). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. ([pdf](#))
- Harvey, Hal. 2016. "Why I Regret Pushing Strategic Philanthropy." *Chronicle of Philanthropy* ([link](#))
- Jack, Andrew. 2022. "Is Mackenzie Scott's 'hands off' approach paving a new way for rich donors'?" *Financial Times* ([link](#))
- Greaves, Hilary and William MacAskill. 2021. "The Case for Strong Longtermism." Global Priorities Institute, GPI Working Paper No. 5-2021. ([link](#))

Review if interested

- DiMaggio, Paul. 2001. "Measuring The Impact Of The Nonprofit Sector On Society Is Probably Impossible But Possibly Useful: A Sociological Perspective." P. 20 in *Measuring the Impact of the Nonprofit Sector*, edited by Virginia Hodgkinson. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. [\(pdf\)](#)
- Horvath, Aaron. 2022. "Counting Alone?" in Lucy Bernholz (ed.) *Philanthropy and Digital Civil Society: Blueprint 2023*. [\(pdf\)](#)

Recommended for the truly obsessed

- Beer, Jeremy. 2015. *The Philanthropic Revolution An Alternative History of American Charity*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

WINTER QUARTER

January 12th: How to fund activism without distorting it

Surging interest in activism, big questions about how to fund radicalism without distorting it, and the uber-wealthy are being awfully coy about their philanthropic giving—including the question of whether it counts as giving at all.

Read for seminar

- Walker, Edward and Yotala Oszkay. 2020. "The Changing Face of Nonprofit Advocacy: Democratizing Potentials and Risks in an Unequal Context." Chapter 21 in *The Nonprofit Sector: A Research Handbook*, edited by W. W. Powell and P. Bromley. 3rd edition. 3rd edition. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. (Handbook)
- Sherman, Rachel. 2021. "Against Accumulation: Class Traitors Challenge Wealth and Worth." *Sociologica* 15(2): 117–42. ([pdf](#))
- Dunning, Claire. 2023. "No Strings Attached: Philanthropy, Race, and Donor Control from Black Power to Black Lives Matter." *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 52(1): 29–49. ([pdf](#))
- Francis, Megan Ming. 2019. "The Price of Civil Rights: Black Lives, White Funding, and Movement Capture: Price of Civil Rights." *Law & Society Review* 53(1): 275–309. ([pdf](#))
- Mitchell, Maurice. 2022. "Building Resilient Organizations." *The Forge*. ([link](#))

Review if interested

- Silver, Ira. 1998. "Buying an Activist Identity: Reproducing Class through Social Movement Philanthropy." *Sociological Perspectives* 41(2): 303–21. ([pdf](#))
- Francis, Megan Ming, and John Fabian Witt. 2021. "Movement Capture or Movement Strategy? A critical history exchange on the beginnings of Brown vs Board." *Yale Journal of Law and the Humanities*. ([pdf](#))

Recommended for the truly obsessed

- Kolhatkar, Sheelah. 2019. "The Ultra-Wealthy Who Argue That They Should Be Paying Higher Taxes" *New Yorker*. ([link](#))
- Incite! 2007. *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-profit Industrial Complex*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Solnit, Rebecca. 2020. "'The way we get through this is together': the rise of mutual aid under coronavirus." *The Guardian* ([link](#))
- Grim, Ryan. 2022. "Elephant in the Zoom: Meltdowns have brought progressive advocacy groups to a standstill at a critical moment in world history." *The Intercept*. ([link](#))

January 26: Readings from Economics and Political Theory

These readings give an overview of how economists and political theorists approach philanthropy, charitable giving, and social enterprises, as well as think about cost-benefit analysis.

Also: *Happy Hour 4:30 January 26 PACS Kitchen Area*

Read for seminar

- Hansmann, Henry. 1987. "Economic Theories of Nonprofit Organizations," in W.W. Powell, ed., *The Nonprofit Sector*, 1st edition, Yale University Press, 1987. ([pdf](#))
- Bénabou, Roland and Jean Tirole. 2006. "Incentives and Prosocial Behavior." *American Economic Review*, 96(5): 1652-1678. (for those allergic to modeling, read to pg. 1660) ([pdf](#))
- Tirole, Jean. 2017. "The Moral Limits of the Market," Ch. 2 in his *Economics for the Common Good*, Princeton University Press. ([pdf](#))
- Reich, Rob. 2018. "A Political Theory of Philanthropy," Ch. 3 in his *Just Giving*, Princeton University Press.

Review if interested

- Andreoni, James. 1990. "Impure Altruism and Donations to Public Goods: A Theory of Warm-Glow Giving". *The Economic Journal*. 100 (401): 464–77 ([pdf](#))
- Cordelli, Chiara. 2015. "Justice as Fairness and Relational Resources." *Journal of Political Philosophy* 23(1): 86-110. ([pdf](#))
- Sen, Amartya, Angus Deaton, and Tim Besley. 2020. "Economics with a moral compass? Welfare economics: past, present, and future." *Annual Review of Economics* 12. 1 - 21. ([pdf](#))
 - A video of this discussion is available at [this link](#)
- Gertner, Robert H. 2023. "The Organization of Social Enterprises." *Annual Review of Economics* 15:41–62. ([pdf](#))

For the truly obsessed

- Weisbrod, Burton. 1988. *The Nonprofit Economy*. Harvard University Press.
- Harbaugh, William. 1998. "What do donations buy? A model of philanthropy based on prestige and warm glow." *Journal of Public Economics* 7: 269-84. ([pdf](#))
- For a longer overview of the economics of charity, see James Andreoni and Abigail Payne, "Charitable Giving" Ch. 1 in the *Handbook of Public Economics*, Vol. 5, 2013, Elsevier.
- Tirole, Jean and R. Bénabou. 2016. "Mindful Economics: The Production, Consumption, and Value of Beliefs," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 30(3): 141-64. ([pdf](#))
- Finkelstein, Amy and Nathaniel Hendren. 2020. "Welfare Analysis Meets Causal Inference." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 34 (4): 146-67. ([pdf](#))
- Ottoni-Wilhelm, Martin and Lise Vesterlund. 2023. "Motives to give in economics and psychology: A step towards unification." *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization* 216: 354-65. ([pdf](#))

- Espinosa, Romain and Nicolas Treich. 2024. “Animal welfare as a public good.” *Ecological Economics*. 216. [\(pdf\)](#)

February 9: Film Showing—UnCharitable; Discussion over Lunch.

Please arrange your schedules to stay for discussion (12-1pm)

February 23: Research workshop

- Sandy Handan-Nader, “A Classification Approach to Measuring Partisan Polarization in Congress”
- Krystal Laryea, “Epistemic encounters: How modes of carrying beliefs influence interactions with alternative worldviews”

March 8: Research workshop

- Gowun Park, “Which Nonprofits Become Government Contractors for Human Services? A Multidimensional and Multilevel Explanation”
- Suhani Jalota, “How Work-from-Home Jobs Affect Female Labor Force Participation in Urban India”

SPRING QUARTER

April 5: Research workshop

- Jacob Conway
- Taylor Stephens

PACS Happy Hour @ 4:30pm in kitchen area

April 18: Workshop with visitors Leah Hunt-Hendrix and Astra Taylor

NOTE: This a Thursday 12:30-2:00pm session to accommodate our visitors' schedules.

We'll be reading and discussing two chapters from Leah and Astra's new book, *Solidarity: The Past, Present, and Future of a World-Changing Idea*.

May 3: Research workshop

- Minju Choi
- Alvaro Calderon

PACS Happy Hour @ 4:30pm in kitchen area

May 17: Research workshop

- Enna Chen
- Woody Powell & Yi Zhao

PACS Happy Hour @ 4:30pm in kitchen area

June 7: Research workshop

- Tyler Leeds
- Fenja Nolting