

SOCIOLOGY 520 – COMPARATIVE-HISTORICAL METHODS
PROFESSOR CATHERINE LEE
SPRING 2012: TUE 9:50 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.
SOCIOLOGY SEMINAR ROOM

Please read this syllabus carefully. You are responsible for everything stated below.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Office: Sociology (Davison Hall, Douglass), Room 141

Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:30 – 1:30 p.m. and by appointment

The best way to reach me is by email. Please write “Soc 520” in the subject line so that I can recognize your email quickly. Also, please remember to sign your name in the email.

Comparative-historical sociology includes a diverse set of inquiries and approaches. Despite this diversity, there are some general theoretical issues, methodological frameworks, and substantive topics, which have dominated the field, including studies of multiple case analyses, large-scale social change, and regional and/or historical variation. In the first half of the course, we will evaluate general approaches in comparative-historical methods, delving into issues related to case selection (single, small N, big N), making comparisons, time or path dependence, and constructing causal meaning. In the second half of the course, we will focus on evidence and data, being mindful of the particular social relationships that made the creation and preservation of the kinds of special materials comparative-historical sociologists often employ, including census records, government documents, organizational records, newspapers, personal documents, oral history, and visual evidence. Although we will read many studies considered classics or seminal in the field, we will also read many other works that may not appear regularly on syllabi for comparative-historical methods courses. I include them here, because they employ the methodological approach and the use of sources we see in many of the traditional classics. They also help further the goal of the course, which (in addition to understanding the foundational issues) is to gain critical insight into doing good sociological research.

REQUIREMENTS

1) Weekly memos (30%): Short, one- to two-page memos that critically engage the readings. Do not summarize the materials but instead discuss the strengths and weaknesses (of the comparison, case selection, and/or evidentiary source selection) and discover ways to make theoretical and/or empirical connections. Due every Monday by 5 P.M. PRIOR to our class meeting – so that we all have sufficient time to read them in preparation for our class meetings. Please upload your memos onto Sakai (in Resources, Weekly Memos). Please read your classmates’ memos in preparation for discussion.

I will not grade these memos although I will keep a record of your timely submission. You can take two exemptions from writing these memos. Email me by the deadline and indicate that you are opting out. Failure to submit the minimum number of memos in a timely manner will result in a grade no higher than a “C” for the course.

2) Reading Summaries in Class (10%): Each week, students will provide brief (3 minutes) summaries of the readings. Depending on the number of students in the course, you will present several summaries.

3) Class Participation (20%): A successful seminar requires the full participation of all members. I expect you to come to class prepared to discuss the readings and issues raised in each other's memos.

4) Research paper (40% for two parts specified below): I realize that many of you are at various stages of your training. For those of you at the start of your research, I encourage you to develop a research proposal or critical paper that evaluates the central issues of this course. Please see me early to get recommendations on additional readings. Those of you who have already begun research on related themes for qualifying papers or dissertation research are encouraged to write a paper that engages the course materials while extending your research agenda. There are two parts to this assignment.

PART I (10%): You must submit a five-page proposal for the final assignment with a bibliography. PROPOSAL IS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON MARCH 6.

PART II (30%): Final research paper with full references. I anticipate the final assignment will be at least 20 (but no more than 30) pages long, not including references. FINAL PAPER IS DUE IN MY MAILBOX ON FRIDAY MAY 4TH AT 11 A.M.

READINGS

Most of the articles and book chapters are available online on the Sakai site for this course. For books from which I require more than two chapters, I ask that you borrow them from the library or purchase them online.

Hill, Michael R. 1993. *Archival Strategies and Techniques*. Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications.

Ragin, Charles and Howard S. Becker (editors). 1992. *What is a Case? Exploring the Foundations of Social Inquiry*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ragin, Charles. 1987. *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Scott, John. 1990. *A Matter of Record: Documentary Sources in Social Research*. Cambridge: Polity.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: January 17

Introduction

Week 2: January 24

Achievements and Agenda

Mahoney, James and Dietrich Rueschemeyer. 2003. "Comparative Historical Analysis: Achievements and Agendas." Pp. 3-40 in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, edited by J. Mahoney and D. Rueschemeyer. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Tilly, Charles. 1984. *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons*. New York: Russell Sage, selections (pp. 10-15, 60-65, 74-91, 116-24, 144-147)

Adams, Julia, Elisabeth S. Clemens, and Ann Shola Orloff. 2005. "Introduction: Social Theory, Modernity, and the Three Waves of Historical Sociology." Pp. 1-69 in Adams, Clemens, and Orloff, *Remaking Modernity: Politics and Processes in Historical Sociology*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Ragin, *The Comparative Method*, Chapter 1.

Week 3: January 31

Case Selection and Single-Case Studies

Four articles from Ragin and Becker, *What is a Case?*

Ragin, Charles. "Introduction"

Abbott, Andrew. "What do Cases Do?"

Walton, John. "Making the Theoretical Case"

Vaughn, Diane. "Theory Elaboration: The Heuristics of Case Analysis"

Emigh, Rebecca. 1997. "The Power of Negative Thinking: The Use of Negative Case Methodology in the Development of Sociological Theory." *Theory and Society* 26:649-84.

Week 4: February 7

Making Comparisons

Ragin, *The Comparative Method*, Chapter 2.

Skocpol, Theda and Margaret Somers. 1980. "The Uses of Comparative History in Macrosocial Inquiry." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22:174-97.

Skocpol, Theda. 1979. Pp. 47-111 in *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Eyal, Gil. 2010. *The Autism Matrix: The Social Origins of the Autism Epidemic*. Cambridge: Polity, Chapter 3.

Week 5: February 14

"Small N" Comparisons

Ragin, *The Comparative Method*, Chapter 3.

Lieberson, Stanley. "Small N's and Big Conclusions: An Examination of the Reasoning in Comparative Studies Based on a Small Number of Cases." in Ragin and Becker, *What is a Case?*

Moore, Barrington, Jr. 1966. "Preface" and Chapter VII: "The Democratic Route to Modern Society" in *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. Boston: Beacon.

Stephens, John D. 1989. "Democratic Transition and Breakdown in Western Europe, 1870-1939: A Test of the Moore Thesis." *American Journal of Sociology* 94:1019-1077.

Week 6: February 21

"Large N" Comparisons

Ragin, *The Comparative Method*, Chapter 4.

Western, Bruce. 1995. "A Comparative Study of Working-Class Disorganization: Union Decline in Eighteen Advanced Capitalist Countries." *American Sociological Review* 60(April):179-201.

Kentor, Jeffrey. 1998. "The Long-Term Effects of Foreign Investment Dependence on Economic Growth, 1940-1990." *American Journal of Sociology* 103, 4(Jan):1024-1046.

Bornschiefer, Volker and Christopher K. Chase-Dunn. 1978. "Cross-national Evidence of the Effects of Foreign Investment and Aid on Economic Growth and Inequality: A Survey of Findings and a Reanalysis." *American Journal of Sociology* 84(3):651-83.

Week 7: February 28

Time and Path Dependence

Abbott, Andrew. 1998. "Transcending General Linear Reality." *Sociological Theory* 6:169-86

Aminzade, Ronald. 1992. "Historical Sociology and Time." *Sociological Methods and Research* 20:456-480.

Mahoney, James. 2000. "Path Dependence in Historical Sociology," *Theory and Society* 29, 4(Aug): 507-48.

Jeffrey Haydu, "Making Use of the Past: Time Periods as Cases to Compare and Sequences of Problem-Solving," *American Journal of Sociology* 104: 339-71

Anderson, Perry. 1974. Chapter 2: "Class and State: Problems of Periodization" in *Lineages of the Absolutist State*. London: Verso.

Week 8: March 6 ***PROPOSAL DUE***

Causation

Mahoney, James. 2003. "Strategies of Causal Assessment in Comparative Historical Analysis." Pp. 337-72 in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, edited by James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Mayntz, Renate. 2004. "Mechanisms in the Analysis of Social Macro-Phenomena." *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 34:237- 259.

Functional Causation: Chandler, Alfred D. Jr.: "Introduction to The Visible Hand." Pp. 387-397 in *The Essential Chandler*, edited by Thomas K. McCraw. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Demographic Causation: Fligstein, Neil. 1990. Chapter 2: "Direct Control, the State and the Large Firm" in *The Transformation of Corporate Control*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Historicist Causation: Roy, William G. 1997. Chapter 3: "The Corporation as Public and Private Enterprise" in *Socializing Capital: The Rise of the Large Industrial Corporation in America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Week 9: March 13

Spring Break

Week 10: March 20

Evidence and Archives

Scott, *A Matter of Record*, Chapters 1-3.

Hill, *Archival Strategies and Techniques*.

Week 11: March 27

Census and Government Documents

Scott, *A Matter of Record*, Chapters 4, 6.

Conk, Margo A. 1981. "Accuracy, Efficiency, and Bias: The Interpretation of Women's Work in the U.S. Census of Occupations, 1890-1940." *Historical Methods Newsletter* 14:65-72.

Hargis, Peggy G. 2002. "Name Games: Deeds, Mortgages, and the Conventions of Race." *Historical Methods* 35(2):53-62.

Buescher, Paul A., Ziya Gizlice, and Kathleen A. Jones-Vessey. 2005. "Discrepancies Between Published Data On Racial Classification And Self-Reported Race: Evidence From the 2002 North Carolina Live Birth Records." *Public Health Reports* 120(4):393-398.

Pedriana, Nicholas and Robin Stryker. 1997. "Political Culture Wars 1960s Style: Equal Employment Opportunity-Affirmative Action Law and the Philadelphia Plan." *American Journal of Sociology* 103(3):633-91.

Week 12: April 3

Organizational Documents

Scott, *A Matter of Record*, Chapter 5.

Garfinkel, Harold. 1996. "Good Organizational Reasons for 'Bad' Organizational Records." Pp. 116-85 in *Studies in Ethnomethodology*, Cambridge: Polity.

Howell, Joel D. 1995. *Technology in the Hospital: Transforming Patient Care in the Early Twentieth Century*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, Chapters 2, 8.

Starr, Paul. 1982. *The Social Transformation of American Medicine: The Rise of a Sovereign Profession and the Making of a Vast Industry*. New York: Basic Books, Chapter 3.

Thornton, Patricia H. Candace Jones, and Kenneth Kurry. 2005. "Institutional Logics and Institutional Change in Organizations: Transformation in Accounting, Architecture, and Publishing." *Research in Sociology of Organizations* 23:125-170.

Week 13: April 10

Newspapers

Scott, *A Matter of Record*, Chapter 7.

Myers, Daniel J. and Beth S. Caniglia. 2004. "All the Rioting That's Fit to Print: Selection Effects in National Newspaper Coverage of Civil Disorders, 1968-1969." *American Sociological Review* 69(4):519-43.

Tartakovskaya, Irina. 200. "The Changing Representation of Gender Roles in the Soviet and Post-Soviet Press" in *Gender, State, and Society in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia*, edited by Sarah Ashwin. New York: Routledge.

Ferree, Myra M., William A. Gamson, Jurgen Gerhards, and Dieter Rucht. 2002. *Shaping Abortion Discourse : Democracy and the Public Sphere in Germany and the United States*. Cambridge, UK, New York : Cambridge University Press, Chapters 12, 13.

Week 14: April 17

Personal Documents and Oral History

Scott, *A Matter of Record*, Chapter 8.

Maynes, Mary Jo. 1995. *Taking the Hard Road: Life Course in French and German Workers: Autobiographies in the Era of Industrialization*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, Chapter 1.

Rothman, Sheila M. 1994. *Living in the Shadow of Death: Tuberculosis and the Social Experience of Illness in American History*. New York: Basic Books, Part IV: Becoming a Patient.

UCLA Oral History Program: Planning and Conducting an Oral History Interview.

<http://www.library.ucla.edu/libraries/special/ohp/ohpdocs.htm>

Blee, Kathleen M. 1993. "Evidence, Empathy, and Ethics: Lessons from Oral Histories of the Klan." *Journal of American History* 80(2):596-606.

Blee, Kathleen M. 1991. Chapter IV: "Joining the Ladies' Organization." Pp. 101-122 in *Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Week 15: April 24

Visual Evidence

Howells, Richard and Robert William Matson (editors). 2009. *Using Visual Evidence*. McGraw Hill: Open University Press, Chapters 3, 11.

Perlmutter, David D. 1994. "Visual Historical Methods: Problems, Prospects, Applications." *Historical Methods* 27(4):167-84.

Godby, Michael. 1993. "Framing the Colonial Subject: The Photographs of W.F.P. Burton(1886-1971) in the Former Belgian Congo." *Social Dynamics* 19(1):11-25.

Berger, Martin A. 2005. Chapter 2: "Landscape Photography and the White Gaze" in *Sight Unseen: Whiteness and American Visual Culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Metzl, Jonathan M. 2003. "Selling Sanity through Gender: The Psychodynamics of Psychotropic Advertising." *Journal of Medical Humanities* 24, 1-2:79-103.

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