

Comparative Historical Methods

SOC 613 – Winter 2009

Monday 6-8:50pm in 714 PLC

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Office Hours: Mon. 10-1, 611 PLC

This advanced graduate methods course explores the specialty-area of comparative historical sociology. Substantively and philosophically this sub-field is quite broad, intersecting multiple disciplines (especially history, political science and anthropology) in the social sciences. As we scratch the surface of this subfield, we will also catch a glimpse at some of the deep veins that define this substantial body of scholarship and its contribution to big questions in sociology. Epistemological roots for the subfield begin with the classics (Durkheim, Marx and Weber), but stretch beyond to political economy and philosophy. As we will see, questions that animate early sociology, particularly those concerning origins of modernity and capitalism occupy a privileged location in the primary works of the field. Methodologically, scholars in the subfield have made strides to define the area as a legitimate method of inquiry, often in conflict and sometimes in sync with the prevailing variable-centered methodologies of sociology. The comparative historical approach has been particularly successful in exposing assumptions concerning truth claims about human histories and societies. The reflexive quality of much of the work in this area is integral to the subfield, forming an important and sometimes tenuous link to the development of social theory in general.

Below you will find a list of books, a statement about the course requirements, and a course outline which includes required readings and a list of recommended readings by section.

Books:

1. *Comparative historical analysis in the social sciences*. Edited by James Mahoney, Dietrich Rueschemeyer. Cambridge, UK; New York : Cambridge University Press, 2003. 0521016452 (pb.)
2. *Remaking modernity: politics, history, and sociology*. Edited by Julia Adams, Elisabeth S. Clemens, and Ann Shola Orloff. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005.
3. *Gender and the politics of history*. Joan Wallach Scott. New York: Columbia University Press, c1999. 0231118570 (pbk.)
4. *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison*. Michel Foucault; translated from the French by Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books, 1979, c1977. 0394727673
5. *World-systems analysis: an introduction*. Immanuel Wallerstein. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004. 0822334429 (pbk. : alk. paper)
6. *Unequal freedom: how race and gender shaped American citizenship and labor*. Evelyn Nakano Glenn. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002. 0674007328

7. *Reds or rackets? the making of radical and conservative unions on the waterfront.* Howard Kimeldorf. Berkeley: University of California Press, c1988. 0520063082 (alk. paper)
8. *Social revolutions in the modern world.* Theda Skocpol. Cambridge [England]; New York : Cambridge University Press, 1994. 0521409381 (pbk.)
9. *Agrarian revolution: social movements and export agriculture in the underdeveloped world.* Jeffery M. Paige. New York: Free Press, 1978, c1975. 0029235502 (pbk.)
10. *All that is solid melts into air: the experience of modernity.* Marshall Berman. New York: Simon and Schuster, c1982. 067124602X

Other Readings:

In addition to the books, you will be asked to read articles and/ or book chapters that complement the assigned book readings for a particular week. I have attempted to keep these readings to a minimum, and thus provide a bibliography of *recommended* readings that you may pursue independently.

Course Expectations:

It is my intention to support an environment where the understanding and application of comparative historical methods finds personal relevance for everyone in the class. Each session will begin with a 'mini-lecture' by yours truly. I intend to use this time to highlight themes, posit theoretical and epistemological problems, bridge the course materials and raise questions for our discussion. These mini-lectures (and the discussions that flow from them) will end about half way through the meeting time and will be followed by a break. Following these breaks, small groups will present a summary/ interpretation of the course material for the week and then lead a discussion. I hope that these will facilitate a safe and open context for covering the readings and participating in discussion. Overall, you can expect to read a lot. But, I do encourage a selective approach to the readings, understanding full well the amount of work entailed in taking multiple classes.

Your Grade:

I intend to evaluate your class involvement through 3 graded assignments and regular attendance. Attendance (20%) is considered very important to the seminar. However, everyone is excused for one absence. Any absences beyond that, apart from serious emergencies, will result in a 10% deduction from your grade for each absence beyond the first. If you miss more than 3 seminars, a passing grade is unlikely. Uggghhh!

Your Term Project:

I want you to use the material in this course to develop or refine a project of compelling interest to your academic endeavors. Perhaps you are working on a dissertation or grant proposal, or a MA paper proposal? Your project should follow a format consistent with that of a research proposal or that of a publishable paper. This will account for up to 30% of your grade.

Second, you will be evaluated on your participation in two small group presentations in which you provide a written outline/ summary to the class from which you then lead a discussion. These group presentations will follow my mini-lectures each week, excepting week one. Your group will receive a collective evaluation up to 10% of your total grade for each presentation, totaling 20%. Ask me about these in class.

Weekly Annotations:

Third, I ask that you provide three annotated bibliographies for any of the scheduled weekly readings. You may choose 3 weeks (not including the first week) to provide an concise engagement with those readings. Of course, two of these may be related to your small group presentations. Your annotations are due in class on the day we are scheduled to cover the respective readings. Each of these will account for 10% of your grade. Some samples will be distributed in class.

Course Outline and Readings

(book authors are highlighted, all else for photocopying or online)

I) Classics and the question of how it all began – Week 1 (no readings)

Marx
Weber
Durkheim

Optional and Recommended Readings:

- Marx, Karl. "The Class Struggles in France, 1848-1850," "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," *Capital, Vol 1*, and Grundrisse.
- Max Weber. Selection from *Economy and Society*, p. 1111-1130, and *The Sociology of Religion*.
- Emile Durkheim. *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* and *Suicide, A Study in Sociology*.

II) Epistemes and Ontologies: Week 2

THEMES

A) Comparison (of what?) and the logic of explanation – the scientific norm

B) Categories, knowledge-power, and historical subjects – the interpretive path

Readings (in order of preference):

Introduction and Chapters 1-3. *Social revolutions in the modern world*. Theda Skocpol.

Introduction and Chapters 1. *World-systems analysis: an introduction*. Immanuel Wallerstein. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

* McMichael, Philip. 1990. "Incorporating Comparison within a World-Historical Perspective: An alternative Comparative Method." *American Sociological Review* Jun90, Vol. 55 Issue 3, p385-397.

Adams, et. al. 2004. "Introduction," and all of **Part I** from *Remaking modernity: politics, history, and sociology*. Edited by Julia Adams, Elisabeth S. Clemens, and Ann Shola Orloff.

Intro., Chap. 1-3, 5-7. *Gender and the politics of history*. Joan Wallach Scott. New York: Columbia University Press, c1999.

Optional and Recommended Readings:

- * Barrington Moore. Chaps. 7-9. *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*.
- * Smelser, Neil. J. Chapters 1-3 from *Comparative Methods in the Social Sciences*.
- * Somers and Gibson. 1994. "Reclaiming the Epistemological Other..." in Calhoun, Craig. *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity*. Blackwell.
- * Mildred A. Schwartz. "Historical Sociology in the History of American Sociology," *Social Science History*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (1987), pp. 1-16.
- J.S. Mills. 1845. *A System of Logic*.
- Tilly. Preface and Chap. 1. *Coercion, Capital and European States*.

III) Understanding the Experience of Modernity: Contrasting Cultural Narratives. Week 3.

Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison. Michel Foucault; translated from the French by Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books, 1979, c1977.

Part II and Part III from *Remaking modernity: politics, history, and sociology*. Edited by Julia Adams, Elisabeth S. Clemens, and Ann Shola Orloff.

Optional and Recommended Readings:

Geertz, Clifford. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books.

IV) Modernity and Dialectics, Week 4:

All that is solid melts into air: the experience of modernity. Marshall Berman. New York: Simon and Schuster, c1982.

Chapters 1-4 in *Comparative historical analysis in the social sciences*. Edited by James Mahoney, Dietrich Rueschemeyer. Cambridge, UK; New York : Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Part IV from *Remaking modernity: politics, history, and sociology*. Edited by Julia Adams, Elisabeth S. Clemens, and Ann Shola Orloff.

V) Historical Cases. Week 5:

Unequal freedom: how race and gender shaped American citizenship and labor. Evelyn Nakano Glenn. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002.

All of **Part V** from *Remaking modernity: politics, history, and sociology.* Edited by Julia Adams, Elisabeth S. Clemens, and Ann Shola Orloff.

* Linda Fuller. 2000. "Socialism and the Transition in East Central Europe: The Homogeneity Paradigm, Class, and Economic Inefficiency", *Annual Review of Sociology*. vol. 26:585-609.

VI) Small-N comparisons and the use of Contrasts (Negative cases, shadows) Week 6

Reds or rackets? the making of radical and conservative unions on the waterfront. Howard Kimeldorf. Berkeley: University of California Press, c1988.

Chapter 9 & 10 from *Comparative historical analysis in the social sciences.* Edited by James Mahoney, Dietrich Rueschemeyer. Cambridge, UK; New York : Cambridge University Press, 2003.

* Migh, Rebeca. 1997. "The Power of Negative Thinking: The Use of Negative Case Methodology in the Development of Sociological Theory." *Theory & Society*, 27, 3, 351-375.

Optional and Recommended Readings:

Marx, Anthony. 1998. *Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of South Africa, the United States, and Brazil.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Esping-Anderson, Gosta. 1990. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

VII) Inquiring Minds, Week 7

Chapters 5-8 in *Comparative historical analysis in the social sciences.* Edited by James Mahoney, Dietrich Rueschemeyer. Cambridge, UK; New York : Cambridge University Press, 2003.

- Variables, variables, and more variables...
- Path Dependence
- Creating and Coding Typologies
- Extended Case Method

- Juxtapositions and Reflexivities: on Levels and Contrasts (local/global; self/other; etc.)
- Experience and Oral History
- Interpretation
- Historicize this! Contingency, events, identities and researcher subjectivity

* Odious Comparisons: Incommensurability, the Case Study, and "Small N's" in Sociology, by George Steinmetz. *Sociological Theory* Vol. 22, No. 3 (2004), pp. 371-400.

* Initial Conditions, General Laws, Path Dependence, and Explanation in Historical Sociology, by Jack A. Goldstone. *American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 104, No. 3 (1998), pp. 829-845.

* The Role of General Theory in Comparative-Historical Sociology, by Edgar Kiser; Michael Hechter. *American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 97, No. 1 (1991), pp. 1-30.

* "We're No Angels": Realism, Rational Choice, and Relationality in Social Science, by Margaret R. Somers. *American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 104, No. 3 (1998), pp. 722-784.

* Path Dependence in Historical Sociology, by James Mahoney. *Theory and Society* Vol. 29, No. 4 (2000), pp. 507-548.

* Narrative, Event-Structure Analysis, and Causal Interpretation in Historical Sociology, by Larry J. Griffin. *American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 98, No. 5 (1993), pp. 1094-1133.

* Bayesian Thinking about Macrosociology. Bruce Western. *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 107, No. 2 (Sep., 2001), pp. 353-378

VIII) Large-N comparisons, World System analysis. Week 8 & 9

Agrarian revolution: social movements and export agriculture in the underdeveloped world. Jeffery M. Paige. New York: Free Press, 1978, c1975.

Chapters 2 & 3. *World-systems analysis: an introduction.* Immanuel Wallerstein. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

WEEK 9: Large-N contd. Linking theory and comparative historical method...

Chapters 4-12 and Conclusion. *Social revolutions in the modern world.* Theda Skocpol.

* Inglehart, Ronald. Intro., Chap. 1-3, Chap. 5, from *Modernization and Postmodernization*.

* Southworth, Caleb and Judy Stepan Norris. "Rival Unionism and Membership Growth in the United States 1900-2005: A Special Case of Inter-Organizational Competition," under review.

* A Comparative Study of Working-Class Disorganization: Union Decline in Eighteen Advanced Capitalist Countries. Bruce Western. American Sociological Review, Vol. 60, No. 2 (Apr., 1995), pp. 179-201

* York, Richard, Eugene A. Rosa, and Thomas Dietz. 2003. "Footprints on the Earth: The Environmental Consequences of Modernity." *American Sociological Review* 68(2): 279-300.

IX) Toward a Reflexive Social Science Week 10

Joan Scott. Chaps. 4, 8. *Gender and the politics of history*. Joan Wallach Scott. New York: Columbia University Press, c1999.

Chapters 4 & 5. *World-systems analysis: an introduction*. Immanuel Wallerstein. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

Chapter 11 & 12 from *Comparative historical analysis in the social sciences*. Edited by James Mahoney, Dietrich Rueschemeyer. Cambridge, UK; New York : Cambridge University Press, 2003.

"Afterword," from *Remaking modernity: politics, history, and sociology*. Edited by Julia Adams, Elisabeth S. Clemens, and Ann Shola Orloff.

Optional and Recommended Readings:

The Uses of Theory, Concepts and Comparison in Historical Sociology, by Victoria E. Bonnell. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* Vol. 22, No. 2 (1980), pp. 156-173.

Social History and Historical Sociology: Contrasts and Complementarities, by Theda Skocpol. *Social Science History*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (1987), pp. 17-30.

Revisiting General Theory in Historical Sociology, by James Mahoney. *Social Forces* 83(2):459-489, 2004.

M Somers. 1993 "Citizenship and the Place of the Public Sphere: Law, Community, and Political Culture in the Transition to Democracy." *American Sociological Review* 58 (5): 587-620. (*First Place Prize for Outstanding Article in Political Sociology, 1994*)

Other notable recent books....

- Atul Kohli. 2004. State-Directed Development.
- Janet L. Abu-Lughod. Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250-1350 (Paperback)
- Giovanni Arrighi. The Long Twentieth Century: Money, Power, and the Origins of Our Times.
- Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 2000. Provincializing Europe : postcolonial thought and historical difference. Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, c2000
- Charles D. Brockett. 2005. Political Movements and Violence in Central America.
- Chris Rhomberg. 2004. No There There: Race, Class, and Political Community in Oakland.
- Clifford Bob. 2005. The Marketing of Rebellion.
- Deborah J. Yashar. 2005. Contesting Citizenship in Latin America.
- Diane E. Davis. 2004. Discipline and Development.
- Eiko Ikegami. 2005. Bonds of Civility.
- Jerome Karabel. 2005. The Chosen: The Hidden History of Admission and Exclusion at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton.
- John Agnew. 2005. Hegemony.
- John Foran. 2005. Taking Power.
- John M. Hobson. 2004. The Eastern Origins of Western Civilisation.
- Julia Adams. 2005. The Familial State.
- Michael Mann. 2005. The Dark Side of Democracy.
- Sidney Tarrow. 2005. The New Transnational Activism.