

Spring 2016  
Tuesdays 7:20-10pm  
Robinson Hall B122  
Office Hours: Tues. 4-5pm, Thurs. 1:30-3pm,  
or by appointment.

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## **SOCI 860/660: Comparative Historical Sociology**

### **Syllabus**

This is a seminar in the theory and methods of historical and comparative sociology. We start with an exploration of the classic texts in the field. Then we plunge into historical methods: archival, oral history, census data, and newspaper and content analysis. We will practice these methods, including visiting several archives. Along the way, we will discuss excellent examples of these methods, surveys of developments in the field, and intriguing issues brought up by this field.

### **Course Objectives**

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Discuss major terms, themes, and debates in comparative-historical sociology.
- Analyze exemplary comparative-historical sociological texts.
- Use historical research methods, including archival, oral history, and census methods.

### **Course schedule and readings**

All books are available in the Mason Bookstore. All articles are available on Blackboard. Unless otherwise marked, all readings must be brought to class in non-digital, printed form.

#### **Tues, Jan. 19: Introduction**

- “Can Comparative Historical Sociology Save the World?,” 2015 ASA Conference Report, *Trajectories: Newsletter of the ASA Comparative and Historical Sociology Section* 27(1)(2015): 1-10.
- Lamont, Michèle and Nissim Mizrachi. 2012. “Ordinary people doing extraordinary things: responses to stigmatization in comparative perspective.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 35(3): 365-381.
- Skocpol, Theda. 1984. “Emerging Agendas and Recurrent Strategies in Historical Sociology.” Pp. 356-391 in *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*, edited by Theda Skocpol. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Adams, Julia, Elisabeth Clemens, and Ann Shola Orloff. 2003. “Social Theory, Modernity, and the Three Waves of Historical Sociology.” Working Paper #206, Russell Sage Foundation. (reading online)

Paper #1 (written in class)

#### **Part I: The Classics**

**Tues, Jan. 26:** Polanyi, Karl. [1944] 2001. *The Great Transformation*. Boston: Beacon Press.  
Paper #2

**Tues, Feb. 2:** Skocpol, Theda. 1979. *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China*. New York: Cambridge University Press.  
Paper #3

**Tues, Feb. 9:** Tilly, Charles. 1992. *Coercion, Capital and European States: AD 990-1992*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.  
Paper #4

**Tues, Feb. 16:** Patterson, Orlando. 1982. *Slavery and Social Death*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

*Archive visit:* Class meets instead 9am-noon, first in SOAN conference room and then in Mason's Special Collections and Archives in Fenwick Library. No evening class.  
Paper #5

## **Part II: Archival Methods**

**Tues, Feb. 23:** Aminzade, Ron. 2013. *Race, Nation, and Citizenship in Post-Colonial Africa: The Case of Tanzania*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

*Archive visit:* Class meets instead 9am-noon in SOAN conference room and then in Mason's Special Collections and Archives. No evening class.  
Paper #6

**Tues, March 1:** No class. Hill, Michael R. 1993. *Archival Strategies and Techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

*Archive visit:* You visit one of the following:

Catholic University Archives: <http://archives.lib.cua.edu/manulist.cfm>

GWU Special Collections: <http://library.gwu.edu/scrc/collections>

Library of Congress, Manuscript Reading Room: <http://www.loc.gov/rr/mss/f-aids/mssfa.html>

National Archives (either in DC or in College Park): <http://www.archives.gov/research/>

\*Spring Break: March 7-13\*

**Tues, March 15:** No class and no reading.

*Archive visit:* You visit one of the following:

Catholic University Archives: <http://archives.lib.cua.edu/manulist.cfm>

GWU Special Collections: <http://library.gwu.edu/scrc/collections>

Library of Congress, Manuscript Reading Room: <http://www.loc.gov/rr/mss/f-aids/mssfa.html>

National Archives (either in DC or in College Park): <http://www.archives.gov/research/>

## **Part III: Oral History Methods**

**Tues, March 22:** Gordillo, Luz Maria. 2010. *Mexican Women and the Other Side of Immigration: Engendering Transnational Ties*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

*Archival Assignment Due*

Paper #7

**Tues, March 29:** Riley, Karen L. 2001. *Schools behind Barbed Wire: The Untold Story of Wartime Internment and the Children of Arrested Enemy Aliens*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield.

Paper #8

#### **Part IV: Census Data Methods**

**Tues, April 5:** Brady, David. 2009. *Rich Democracies, Poor People: How Politics Explains Poverty*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

*Oral History Assignment Due*

Paper #9

#### **Part V: Newspaper Methods, etc.**

**Tues, April 12:** Almeida, Paul. 2014. *Mobilizing Democracy: Globalization and Citizen Protest*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

*Census Assignment Due*

Paper #10

**Tues, April 19:** Derluguian, Georgi M. 2005. *Bourdieu's Secret Admirer in the Caucasus: A World-System Biography*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Paper #11

**Tues, April 26:** Other interesting ideas.

- Aminzade, Ronald. 1992. "Historical Sociology and Time." *Sociological Methods and Research* 20(4): 456-480.
- Arrighi, Giovanni. 2000. "Globalization Meets Historical Sociology." Pp. 117-33 in Janet Abu-Lughod, ed., *Sociology for the Twenty-First Century. Continuities and Cutting Edges*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Wallerstein, Immanuel. 1988. "A Comment on Epistemology: What is Africa?" *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 22(2): 331-333.
- Wallerstein, Immanuel. 1991. "Does India Exist?" Pp. 130-4 in *Unthinking Social Science: The Limits of Nineteenth-Century Paradigms*. New York: Polity Press.

Paper #12

**Tues, May 10 at 10:15pm:** Final grant proposal due through BB.

#### **Course Requirements**

Class participation	10%
Short weekly papers	20%
Archival assignment	15%
Oral history assignment	15%
Census assignment	15%
Grant proposal	25%

To receive a passing grade, all six components must be completed.

#### **Grading scale**

A      95      over 93

A-	92	90-92
B+	88	87-89
B	85	83-86
B-	82	80-82
C+	78	77-79
C	75	73-76
C-	72	70-72
D	65	60-69
F	0	0-59

*Class participation:* Participation includes attendance, being on time, bringing the reading, asking questions, and, especially, participating in discussion. The weekly readings will be used extensively during class discussion.

*Short weekly papers:* This is a 2-page paper on the readings each week. You can write more than two pages if you wish. Please include:

- 1) What is the research question of the reading? What is/are the main argument(s)? Choose a passage (or two or more) that illuminates at least one of these arguments.
- 2) What method(s) does the author use? Where was the research conducted? When? How long? How do these methods help to answer the research question? Do the methods work for the research? Why or why not?
- 3) What do you find most interesting or surprising about the reading?
- 4) Discuss or list one or two questions you have about the reading.

The paper must be turned in by email (jbockman@gmu.edu) 4pm on Tuesdays. You can drop two weekly papers from your grade: 10 out of 12 papers will go towards your grade.

*Archival assignment, Oral history assignment, Census assignment*

In each of these five-page assignments, you will report on your practice of each of these methods. I will provide details about these assignments in class. Please submit through BB.

*Grant Proposal*

Each student will submit through BB on Tuesday, May 10<sup>th</sup> at 10:15pm:

- A three-page grant proposal (with additional, one-page bibliography) and
- An SSRC Dissertation Proposal Development Fellowship application.

<http://webarchive.ssrc.org/pdfs/SampleApplicationPDF.pdf>

You will propose to use at least one historical method to study your dissertation or thesis project. Your papers should advance your own intellectual project (your thesis or dissertation). I will meet with each of you individually during the semester to discuss your work and proposal. This proposal is the format of a conventional grant proposal. Tips: <https://www.irex.org/news/10-tips-writing-successful-international-research-fellowship-proposal>

The proposal must have the following sections (no section headers except Methods and Work Plan, and Bibliography):

- Name, Title
- Introduction (introduce your topic, state your proposed topic, research question, methods)
- Literature Review (discuss the major texts in your field)

- Methods and Work Plan (discuss *in detail* the methods you will use, as well as a schedule when this proposed research will take place)
- Conclusion (summarize your proposed topic, research question, methods)
- Bibliography (This is beyond the three pages. Use ASA style here and throughout)

#### *MA Student Requirements:*

MA students have the same required components and percentages as above, but with one alteration: Short weekly papers (2 pages; 8 out of 12 recorded).

#### Late Policy

For each day that any written work is late that grade will be reduced by a step (e.g., an A paper will become an A- paper one day after the due date, a B+ paper two days after the due date, etc).

#### *Laptop, E-Book, I-Phone Policy*

**I do not allow the use of laptops, e-book readers, i-phones, or other devices in class** because I want everyone to be fully present in the classroom. Therefore, hardcopies of all the books and articles must be used in the classroom.

#### **Required Texts**

- All texts listed are required texts.
- Always bring all the readings for the day assigned.
- Do not get bogged down in the details of the reading. We are reading for argument, methods, and big themes. In class, we will look at specific details that are relevant to the discussion.

#### **Additional Items**

- If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474, <http://ods.gmu.edu>. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. <http://ods.gmu.edu>
- Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including communications related to this class. I will not respond to messages sent from or send messages to a non-Mason email address.
- I will not tolerate plagiarism. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee. For more info: <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/>
- Other useful campus resources:  
Writing Center: A114 Robinson Hall, 703.993.1200, <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>  
University Libraries "Ask a Librarian," <http://library.gmu.edu/ask>  
Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), 703.993.2380, <http://caps.gmu.edu>