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Sociology 514:
Workshop in Historical Sociology
M: 3-5:30, location TBA

Historical sociology is an extremely broad subfield encompassing the study of events in the past, from the recent past to hundreds of years ago. Authors in this tradition may analyze a range of primary documents (e.g., archival materials, newspaper articles), use secondary historical sources to draw large-scale comparisons, or analyze quantitative datasets. These methods can be used to address an enormous range of topics, from the comparative study of revolutions to changing discourse on sexuality in the U.S. in the late twentieth century.

Given the vagueness and scope of the subfield, there are many ways of designing a course in historical sociology. Because I anticipate that students will have widely varying interests, I have taken the “smorgasbord” approach. The first half of the course, before Spring Break will be spent dealing with methods; during this period, we will think long and hard about the different ways of “doing” historical sociology, and the relative advantages (and disadvantages) of different approaches. Since most of you have all had (or will have) classes in statistical methods, this class will focus on qualitative approaches to historical sociology. After laying this methodological groundwork, we will launch into the thematic part of the course: week-long units on particular topics. Throughout this part of the course, we will pay close attention to the research methods different authors are using to substantiate their claims.

This class is a “workshop.” This means that class participation is essential. It also means that students working on—or interested in working on—historical-sociological projects are strongly encouraged to air their interests, questions, concerns, and methodological issues in class.

To encourage class participation, each student is required to make two brief, informal presentations over the course of the semester. These presentations are 1) a 5-10 minute discussion of the *substantive arguments* of a particular reading; and 2) a 5-10 minute discussion of the *methods* used by an author, focusing on how he/she uses evidence to support his/her arguments. Each presentation must be on a different reading (i.e., if you are presenting on the argument for a particular reading, you should *not* present on the methods for that reading as well).

Also to encourage class participation, students will e-mail me written responses to assigned readings. These responses may range in length from 800 to 1,500 words, and may cover such issues as what you found convincing and unconvincing, what the readings remind you of, what you didn’t understand, etc.; obviously, different people will have more or less to say in any given week, depending on their interest in the topic. The guidelines for the weekly responses are as follows:

- Weekly responses are worth five points each, are not graded, and can be written in an informal style. However, they must be thoughtful and in your own words to count for the five points.
- You are only required to respond to *seven* weeks of readings (i.e., each student is entitled to miss five out of the 12 weeks remaining after the introductory class session). Additional weeks of missed responses will result in a five point deduction per week missed.
- Your responses must be e-mailed to me by 8 a.m. on the Monday morning before class.
- You are required to respond to *all* the readings for that week to get the full five points.
- You may only respond to readings on a week that you are *not* presenting.

Twenty percent of your course grade will be based on the quality and quantity of your participation in class. Each student is entitled to miss one class per semester. More than one absence from class, without official documentation of a serious emergency will lead to a penalty in this component of your grade.

There will also be five very brief homework assignments over the course of the semester, worth one point each.

There will be a final paper due at the end of the semester, worth 40% of your grade.

The breakdown of final grades is:

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| • Weekly responses | 35% |
| • Homework assignments | 5% |
| • Class participation | 20% |
| • Final paper | 40% |

Course Outline:

January 22: Introduction.

January 29: Skocpol, “Sociology’s Historical Imagination;” Amenta, “Making the Most of a Case Study;” Western and Beckett, “How Unregulated is the U.S. Labor Market?;” Babb, “A True American System of Finance.”

February 5: Establishing facts. Milligan, “The Treatment of an Historical Source.” Dibble, “Four Types of Inference from Documents to Events.” Tilly, Tilly, and Tilly, excerpts from *The Rebellious Century*.

February 12: Establishing discursive patterns. Excerpt from Riffe, Lacy and Fico, “Analyzing Media Messages;” Gamson and Modigliani “Media Discourse and Public Opinion;” Excerpt from Gamson, *Talking Politics*.

Homework assignment #1 due in class.

February 19: The interpretation of meaning. Geertz, “Thick Description.” Excerpts from Wagner-Pacifici, *Discourse and Destruction*.

February 26: Comparative Methods. Ragin, “Case-Oriented Comparative Methods,” “Using Comparative Methods to Study Diversity,” and “Using Quantitative Methods to Study Covariation.” Wickham-Crowley, “Winners, Losers, and Also-Rans: Toward a Comparative Sociology of Latin American Guerilla Movements.”

Homework assignment #2 due in class.

*****SPRING BREAK*****

March 12: War, States, and Economic Development.

Tilly, “War Making and State Making as Organized Crime;” Weir and Skocpol, “State Structures and the Possibilities for ‘Keynesian’ Responses to the Great Depression in Sweden, Britain, and the United States;” Evans, “The State as Problem and Solution.”

Homework assignment #3 due in class.

March 19: Grassroots Movements. Read Purnell, *Popular Movements and State Formation in Revolutionary Mexico*.

March 26: Revolutions. Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*.

Homework assignment #4 Due in class.

April 2: Race. Marx, *Making Race and Nation*.

April 9: NO CLASS—EASTER MONDAY.

April 16: Gender and Sexuality. Irvine, excerpts from *Talk about Sex*. Excerpts from Bliss, *Compromised Positions*.

April 23: Neoliberalism. Read Babb, *Managing Mexico*.

Homework assignment #5 due in class.

April 30: Current Debates in the Subfield.

Adams, Clemens, and Orloff, “Social Theory, Modernity, and the Three Waves of Historical Sociology”; Magubane, “Overlapping Territories and Intertwined Histories: Historical Sociology’s Global Imagination”; Mahoney, “Strategies of Causal Assessment in Comparative Historical Analysis.”

Readings:

- Adams, Julia, Elisabeth S. Clemens, and Ann Shola Orloff. 2005. "Introduction: Social Theory, Modernity, and the Three Waves of Historical Sociology." Pp. 1-72 in Adams, Julia, Elisabeth S. Clemens and Ann Shola Orloff. *Remaking Modernity: Politics, History, and Sociology*. Durham, NC and London, UK: Duke University Press.
- Amenta, Edwin. 1991. "Making the Most of a Case Study: Theories of the Welfare State and the American Experience." *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* XXXII: 172-94.
- Babb, Sarah. 1996. "A True American System of Finance: Frame Resonance in the U.S. Labor Movement, 1866-1896." *American Sociological Review* 61(6): 1033-52.
- . 2001. *Managing Mexico: Economists from Nationalism to Neoliberalism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Bliss, Katherine Elaine. 2001. *Compromised Positions: Prostitution, Public Health, and Gender Politics in Revolutionary Mexico City*. University Park, PA: Penn State University Press. Pp. 18-22, pp. 95-125.
- Dibble, Vernon K. 1963. "Four Types of Inference from Documents to Events." *History and Theory* 3(2): 203-21.
- Evans, Peter. 1992. "The State as Problem and Solution: Predation, Embedded Autonomy, and Structural Change." Pp. 139-181 in Haggard, Stephan and Robert R. Kaufman (eds.). *The Politics of Economic Adjustment*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Gamson, William A. 1992. *Talking Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 215-57.
- Gamson, William A. and Andre Modigliani. 1989. "Media Discourse and Public Opinion on Nuclear Power: A Constructionist Approach." *American Journal of Sociology* 95(1): 1-37.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books. Pp. 3-30.
- Irvine, Janice: 2002. *Talk about Sex: The Battles over Sex Education in the United States*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Magubane, Zine. 2005. "Overlapping Territories and Intertwined Histories: Historical Sociology's Global Imagination." Pp. 92-108 in Adams, Julia, Elisabeth S. Clemens and Ann Shola Orloff. *Remaking Modernity: Politics, History, and Sociology*. Durham, NC and London, UK: Duke University Press.
- Mahoney, James. 2003. "Strategies of Causal Assessment in Comparative Historical Analysis." Pp. 337-72 in Mahoney, James and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (eds.). *Comparative Historical*

Analysis in the Social Sciences. New York, NY and Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

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

Milligan, John D. 1979. "The Treatment of an Historical Source." *History and Theory* 18(2):177-96.

Purnell, Jennie. 1999. *Popular Movements and State Formation in Revolutionary Mexico: The Agraristas and Cristeros of Michoacan*. Durham, NC: Duke.

Ragin, Charles C. 1987. *Constructing Social Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press. Pp. 105-53.

Riffe, Daniel, Stephen Lacy and Frederick G. Fico. 1998. *Analyzing Media Messages*. Pp. 1-53.

Skocpol, Theda. 1979. *States and Social Revolutions*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

----- . 1984. "Sociology's Historical Imagination." Pp. 1-21 in Skocpol, Theda (ed.). *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Tilly, Charles. "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime." 1985. Pp. 168-191 in Evans, Peter B., Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol (eds.). *Bringing the State Back In*. Cambridge, UK and New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Tilly, Charles, Louise Tilly and Richard Tilly. 1975. *The Rebellious Century, 1830-1930*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Pp. 1-86 and pp. 313-16.

Wagner Pacifici, Robin. 1994. *Discourse and Destruction: The City of Philadelphia versus MOVE*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Pp. ix-xii, pp. 1-75.

Weir, Margaret and Theda Skocpol. 1985. "State Structures and the Possibilities for 'Keynesian' Responses to the Great Depression in Sweden, Britain, and the United States." Pp. 107-63 in Evans, Peter B., Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol (eds.). *Bringing the State Back In*. Cambridge, UK and New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Western, Bruce and Katherine Beckett. 1999. "How Unregulated is the U.S. Labor Market? The Penal System as a Labor Market Institution." *The American Journal of Sociology* 104 (4): 1030-1060

Wickham-Crowley, Timothy. 1992. *Guerillas and Revolution in Latin America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Pp. 302-26.