

Sociology 753
Spring 2019
Tu 4:00PM - 6:30PM
Classroom: SOC SCI 6109

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Office hours: Tu 3:00 - 4:00 PM or by appt.

COMPARATIVE AND HISTORICAL METHODS IN SOCIOLOGY

Overview

Students learn about comparative strategies and historical methods through methodological readings, exercises, and evaluations of exemplary analyses in which investigators of organizational structures, institutional relationships, political conflicts, and cultural patterns bring theory and historical-comparative evidence to bear on one another. Prerequisites are Soc 357 or 358/359 or undergrad methods sequence or consent of instructor.

Course Requirements

1. **Attendance and participation:** Please be prepared at class time to discuss all of the required readings for that week. You are expected to attend class regularly, arrive on time, and be prepared to participate actively and thoughtfully in class discussions. You are encouraged to raise questions during discussions, which counts as participation.
2. **Document analysis worksheet:** Primary sources must be analyzed for contextual understanding and to extract information to make informed judgments. To practice these skills, you must complete a Document Analysis Worksheet for a historical document of your choice following our visit to the Wisconsin Historical Society on Feb. 5. You may use the worksheet for photos, written documents, artifacts, posters, maps, cartoons, or video or sound recordings. Please select a document that is brief and (if possible) relevant to your own research interests. You will not receive a separate grade for this assignment, but it will count toward your participation grade. Due Feb. 12 at 4:00 PM.
3. **Response paper:** You are required to write a short response paper (about 800 words) on historical sociologist [Uri Ben-Eliezer's April 23rd Havens Center lecture](#). Your paper should be analytical, not a summary of his findings or argument; it should focus on and analyze what you see as the most important or interesting methodological issues in his research. For guidance on what kinds of issues to address, I recommend that you read "[Suggested ASR Reviewer Guidelines for Comparative Historical Papers](#)." These are guidelines for reviewing article manuscripts, but some of this guidance will also be relevant to this assignment. Because the paper is short, I expect it to be concise, tightly focused, thoughtful, and well written. The response paper is due Apr. 30 at 4:00 PM.
4. **Book review** of a monograph in comparative-historical sociology. Please select a book that has won or received honorable mention for the Barrington Moore Book Award from the ASA's Comparative and Historical Sociology Section. (See [here](#) or [here](#) for award winners.) Reviews should include both a summary of the book's argument and a discussion of the book's contributions and shortcomings. The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate that you can apply the tools of comparative-historical analysis to evaluate critically scholarship in this field of research. Therefore, your review should focus on methodological issues. The review should be about 800 words. Before writing your review, I recommend that you read "[Suggested ASR Reviewer Guidelines for Comparative Historical Papers](#)." I also recommend that you read Casey Brienza's essay "[Writing Academic Book Reviews](#)." The book review is due Mar. 26 at 4:00 PM.
5. **Oral presentation of research proposal:** During the twelfth and fourteenth weeks of the semester, each student is expected to make a preliminary, 10-minute oral presentation of his or her research proposal. These presentations allow you to give early expression to

your ideas, receive feedback from the instructor and your peers that you may then incorporate into the written proposal (see below), and practice the skill of preparing and delivering conference-style presentations.

6. **Written research proposal:** At the end of the semester, you will be expected to apply what you have learned by writing an original comparative-historical research proposal. The proposal should state the substantive problem you wish to address, review alternative approaches to it, present your own perspective, discuss research design, review sources, and provide a plan for the study. More detailed instructions will be provided in a separate handout. The proposal should be 2500 to 3000 words (about 8 to 10 double-spaced pages). The proposal is due May 7 at 11:59 PM.

All written work must be typed in 12-point font, double-spaced, and submitted online through Canvas. Each student's overall grade for the semester will be determined as follows:

- Attendance: 10%
- Participation (includes reading): 20%
- Response paper: 15%
- Book review: 15%
- Oral presentation: 15%
- Written research proposal: 25%

A = 93-100, AB = 88-92, B = 83-87, BC = 78-82, C = 70-77, D = 60-69, F = 59 or below.

Reading Assignments

There is one required book for the course: Matthew Lange, *Comparative-Historical Methods* (Sage, 2012). This book will be on reserve at College Library and available at the University Book Store. All other required reading assignments will be available through Canvas. If you experience any problems with the readings, please contact me as soon as possible to let me know.

Date	Reading assignment
Week 1 Jan. 22	Lange, <i>Comparative-Historical Methods</i> , 1-21.
Introduction	James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, "Comparative Historical Analysis," in <i>Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences</i> , eds. James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 3-25. Craig Calhoun, "The Rise and Domestication of Historical Sociology," in <i>The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences</i> , ed. Terrance J. McDonald (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 305-337.
	<u>Recommended:</u> C. Wright Mills, "Uses of History," in <i>The Sociological Imagination</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), 143-164. Philip Abrams, <i>Historical Sociology</i> (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), 1-17.
Week 2 Jan. 29	Lange, <i>Comparative-Historical Methods</i> , 22-39.
Intellectual History and Overview	Michael J. Galgano, J. Chris Arndt, and Raymond M. Hyser, "What is History?" in <i>Doing History</i> , 2d ed. (Boston: Wadsworth, 2013), 1-18. Julia Adams, Elisabeth S. Clemens, Ann Shola Orloff, "Social Theory, Modernity, and the Three Waves of Historical Sociology," in <i>Remaking Modernity</i> , ed. Julia Adams, Elisabeth S. Clemens, Ann Shola Orloff (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 1-72.

- Week 3 Feb. 5**
Gathering,
Analyzing, and
Synthesizing
Data
- Special location: Wisconsin Historical Society, 816 State Street, first-floor lobby next to information booth and Forward statue. Meetings with Senior Reference Archivist Lee Grady, librarian Nancy Mulhern, Prof. Tony Michels.**
- Lange, *Comparative-Historical Methods*, 40-69, 140-148.
Galgano, Arndt, and Hyser, *Doing History*, 19-84.
Recommended: Galgano, Arndt, Hyser, Appendix A in *Doing History*, 156-197.
- Week 4 Feb. 12**
Gathering,
Analyzing, and
Synthesizing
Data
- Document Analysis Worksheet due at 4:00 pm**
- Chad Alan Goldberg, "Haunted by the Specter of Communism: Collective Identity and Resource Mobilization in the Demise of the Workers Alliance of America," in *Social and Political Movements*, vol. 3, ed. Cyrus Ernesto Zirakzadeh (London: Sage, 2011), 163-204.
Chad Alan Goldberg, *Modernity and the Jews in Western Social Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 1-15, 76-103.
Recommended: Chad Alan Goldberg, *Citizens and Paupers: Relief, Rights, and Race, from the Freedmen's Bureau to Welfare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 1-8 and 31-75 or 105-152. [Honorable Mention for Barrington Moore Book Award]
- Week 5 Feb. 19**
Analyzing
Temporality and
Relations Among
Cases
- Lange, *Comparative-Historical Methods*, 70-85.
James Mahoney, "Path Dependence in Historical Sociology," *Theory and Society* 29, no. 4 (Aug. 2000): 507-548.
Jeffrey Haydu, "Reversals of Fortune: Path Dependency, Problem Solving, and Temporal Cases," *Theory and Society* 39, no. 1 (Jan. 2010): 25-48.
Charles Tilly, "Encompassing Comparisons," in *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons* (New York: Russell Sage, 1984), 125-143.
Recommended: Paul Pierson, "Big, Slow-Moving, and ... Invisible: Macrosocial Processes in the Study of Comparative Politics," in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, 177-207.
- Week 6 Feb. 26**
Race in Historical
Perspective
- Angel Adams Parham, *American Routes: Racial Palimpsests and the Transformation of Race* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), selections to be announced. [Barrington Moore Book Award]
- Week 7 Mar. 5**
Types of
Comparison
- Theda Skocpol, "Emerging Agendas and Recurrent Strategies in Historical Sociology," in *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*, ed. Theda Skocpol (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 356-391.
Charles Tilly, *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons* (New York: Russell Sage, 1984), 80-124, 144-147.
Charles Tilly, "History and Sociological Imagining," *The Tocqueville Review* 15, no. 1 (1994): 57-72.
Recommended:
Charles Tilly, "To Explain Political Processes," *American Journal of Sociology* 100, no. 6 (May 1995): 1594-1610.
["Professor Sees Parallels Between Things, Other Things,"](#) *The Onion* (May 16, 2007).

- Week 8 Mar. 12** Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), selections to be announced.
Types of Comparison Lange, *Comparative-Historical Methods*, 86-116.
James Mahoney, "Nominal, Ordinal, and Narrative Appraisal in Macrocausal Analysis," *American Journal of Sociology* 104, no. 4 (Jan. 1999): 1154-1196.
- Recommended:
Charles C. Ragin, *The Comparative Method* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), especially Preface and Overview, Chapter 2, Chapter 6.
Jack Goldstone, "Methodological Issues in Comparative Macrosociology," *Comparative Social Research* 16 (1997): 107-120.
- SPRING RECESS MARCH 16 – 24**
- Week 9 Mar. 26** **Book review due at 4:00 pm**
Critics of the Causal-Analytic (Millian) Approach Michael Burawoy, "Two Methods in Search of Science: Skocpol versus Trotsky," *Theory and Society* 18, no. 6 (Nov. 1989): 759-805.
William H. Sewell, Jr., "Three Temporalities: Toward an Eventful Sociology," in *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences*, 245-280.
William H. Sewell, Jr., "Historical Events as Transformations of Structures: Inventing Revolution at the Bastille," *Theory and Society* 25, no. 6 (Dec. 1996): 841-881.
- Recommended:
George Steinmetz, "Odious Comparisons: Incommensurability, the Case Study, and 'Small N's' in Sociology," *Sociological Theory* 22, no. 3 (Sep. 2004): 371-400.
Lange, *Comparative-Historical Methods*, 117-139.
- Week 10 Apr. 2** Stephen Kalberg, "Max Weber's Critique of Recent Comparative-Historical Sociology and a Reconstruction of His Analysis of the Rise of Confucianism in China," in *Current Perspectives in Social Theory* 19 (1999), ed. Jennifer M. Lehmann (Stamford: JAI Press), 207-246.
Two Approaches to the Comparative-Historical Sociology of Religion Chengpang Lee and Myungsahm Suh, "State Building and Religion: Explaining the Diverged Path of Religious Change in Taiwan and South Korea, 1950–1980," *American Journal of Sociology* 123, no. 2 (Sep. 2017): 465-509. [Reinhard Bendix Student Paper Award]
- Week 11 Apr. 9** Lange, *Comparative-Historical Methods*, 148-174.
Selecting Cases, Building and Testing Theory Ivan Ermakoff, "Exceptional Cases: Epistemic Contributions and Normative Expectations," *Archives Européennes de Sociologie/European Journal of Sociology* 55, no. 2 (Aug. 2014): 223-243.
Barry Eidlin, "Why Is There No Labor Party in the U.S.? Political Articulation and the Canadian Comparison, 1932-1948," *American Sociological Review* 81, no. 3 (2016): 488–516. [Charles Tilly Best Article Award]
- Recommended: Rebecca Jean Emigh, "The Power of Negative Thinking: The Use of Negative Case Methodology in the Development of Sociological Theory," *Theory and Society* 26, no. 5 (Oct. 1997): 649-684.

Week 12 Apr. 16 Discussion of your research proposals (with pizza)

Week 13 Apr. 23 **Please attend April 23rd Havens Center lecture at 4:00 pm by sociologist Uri Ben-Eliezer, “The Nation and War, Some Reflections from Israel’s History.”**

Week 14 Apr. 30 **Response paper on Ben-Eliezer due at 4:00 pm**
Discussion of your research proposals (with pizza)

RESEARCH PROPOSALS DUE MAY 7 AT 11:59 PM