

**SOC 589A SPECIAL TOPICS IN MACROSOCIOLOGY:
INSTITUTIONS, CULTURE AND SOCIAL CHANGE**

Winter 2021 , T 12:300-2:20

Remote Instruction

This is a course in comparative and historical macrosociology. One of the greatest challenges that social scientists grapple with is explaining the forces producing *continuity and change* in the history of societies. History matters for understanding the shape of the contemporary world, its institutions, cultural systems, and patterns of inequality. Although this claim has become axiomatic, precisely *how* history matters and exactly *why* history matters is a challenge in the social sciences. When we refer to history, we also refer to time. Sorting out causes and effects in history is complicated by endogeneity and the co-occurrence of causes with different temporalities. Contemporary social scientists are giving thought to how different temporal processes and sequences can influence outcomes and how to weight the relative impact of different causal events.

This course is an introduction to some of the contemporary social science that tackles continuity and change and the factors that cause enduring social realities. We will read works by scholars who have tried to identify factors that can account for long-term social outcomes. Much of this work shows social change can result from shifts in modes of production, religious and political institutions, demographic processes, and the spread of cultural innovations.

PART I: CONCEPTS AND METHODS IN THE STUDY OF LONG-TERM SOCIAL CHANGE

1/5: INTRODUCTION: COMPARATIVE-HISTORICAL SOCIAL SCIENCE

James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen, 2015. *Advances in Comparative-Historical Analysis*. Focus on Parts I, III, IV.

1/12 SEQUENCE, PATH DEPENDENCE AND LONG-TERM EFFECTS

Paul Pierson, 2004. *Politics in Time: History, Institutions and Social Analysis*.

Nathan Nunn, "Historical Roots of Econ Development", *Science* 2020. pdf

1/19 THE DIFFUSION OF INNOVATIONS AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Sascha Becker, et al. "Multiplex Network Ties and the Spatial Diffusion of Radical Innovations: Martin Luther's Leadership in the Early Reformation" *ASR* 85/5 (2020). pdf

Sean Everton and Steven Pfaff, "Comparative and Historical Research on Social Diffusion" (2020), unpublished ms. Pdf

H.P. Young, "Innovation Diffusion in Heterogeneous Populations: Contagion, Social Influence, and Social Learning", 2009. *American Economic Review*, 99 (5): 1899-1924. pdf

Collar, A., Coward, F., Brughmans, T. *et al.* Networks in Archaeology: Phenomena, Abstraction, Representation. *J Archaeol Method Theory* **22**, 1–32 (2015). pdf

PART II: THE ORIGINS OF INSTITUTIONS AND CULTURAL TRAITS

2/2 AGRICULTURE, THE DIVISION OF LABOR, AND GENDER INEQUALITY

Jane Peterson. 2002. *Sexual Revolution: Gender and Labor at the Dawn of Agriculture*, Chapters 1, "An investigation of labor patterns" and 6, "Modeling Changing Labor Scenarios" (pdf).

Rae Lesser Blumberg, "A General Theory of Gender Stratification" *Sociological Theory* 2 (1984): 23-101. pdf

Rae Lesser Blumberg, "Dry" Versus "Wet" Development and Women in Three World Regions." *Sociology of Development* (2015) 1 (1): 91–122. pdf

Janet Saltzman Chafetz, "The Gender Division of Labor and the Reproduction of Female Disadvantage". *Journal of Family Issues* 1988 (pdf).

Hansen, et al. "Modern Gender Roles and Agricultural History: The Neolithic Inheritance." *Journal of Economic Growth* 2015. (pdf)

Supplemental: Read the seminal analysis by Friedrich Engels, "The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State" in R.C. Tucker, Ed. *The Marx- Engels Reader*. Pp. 734-59.

2/9 STRUCTURAL DETERMINANTS OF THE RISE AND FALL OF LARGE-SCALE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Turchin, Peter. 2018. *Historical Dynamics*.

2/16 RELIGION, THE FAMILY SYSTEM, AND THE SOURCES OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCE

Henrich, Joseph. 2020. *The WEIRDest People in the World*.

Focus on Chapters 1-8, 14.

PART III: THE CONSEQUENCES OF INSTITUTIONS

2/23 THE INSTITUTION OF SLAVERY AND ITS LONG SHADOW

Orlando Paterson, 2018. *Slavery and Social Death*.

Focus on the prefaces, pp. 1-77; 172-261; 334-42.

Nathan Nunn, "Slavery, Inequality, and Economic Development in the Americas", Chapter 4 in E. Helpman, *Institutions and Economic Performance* (2008). pdf

Nathan Nunn, "Shackled to the Past: The Causes and Consequences of Africa's Slave Trade", chapter 5 in Diamond J, Robinson JA, Eds. *Natural Experiments of History*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2010. pdf

Graziella Bertocchi and Aracangelo Dimico, "Slavery, education, and inequality", *European Economic Review* (2014). pdf

3/2/ RELIGION, CULTURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Rubin, Jared. 2017 *Rulers, Religion and Riches*.

Timur Kuran, "Why the Middle East is Economically Underdeveloped: Historical Mechanisms of Institutional Stagnation", *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 18 (2004). pdf

3/9 THE CAUSES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE, DEMOCRACY AND INCLUSION

Francis Fukuyama, 2014. *Political Order and Political Decay*.

Focus on Part I (The State), Part III (Democracy) and Part IV (Political Decay).

&

Wimmer, Andreas. 2020. *Nation-Building: Why Some Countries Come Together While Others Fall Apart*.

Focus on Introduction, Chapters 1, 5, 7 and 8.