

ECONOMIC SOCIOLOGY

T-Th (2:50-4:10), 201 Beck Hall (LIV)
Rutgers University, Fall 2004

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B 207 Lucy Stone Hall (LIV)

The economy--the interaction among individuals, groups, institutions, organisations, societies, humankind, and their natural and social environment in making their livelihood--is one of the most complex and intellectually exciting of all social phenomena. It has been a prime subject of sociological inquiry ever since the birth of sociology as a discipline, and it is certainly one of the most dynamic fields of sociology today. This course (1) takes a glance at the rich history of economic sociology to acquaint you with the most important perspectives it has produced, (2) discusses some fundamental, large-scale processes of change capitalism has undergone, and (3) examines a set of economic institutions as social phenomena. It employs a historical approach, takes a comparative perspective, and emphasizes the importance of large and macro- (i.e., very large) structures. Instead of focusing only on the narrow present of the wealthiest societies, the course draws on material from the last four centuries or so of the rich and the poor regions of the world, focussing on the variety of capitalism, in the plural, as well as the past and present of state "socialist" alternatives.

The course assumes that you have at least a basic understanding of the nature of, and the most fundamental concepts used in, the social sciences. In other words:

***THIS CLASS IS FOR JUNIORS AND SENIORS.
IT IS ABSOLUTELY NOT DESIGNED TO BE YOUR FIRST COURSE
IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES!!!***

The course consists of two meetings--roughly, a lecture and a discussion--each week. (For the precise schedule of the lectures and discussions, including the required reading for each week's discussions session, see pages 3-4 of this handout.) The lectures build partly on the readings but **ALMOST NEVER REPEAT THEM**. You will not be able to do well unless you (1) come to class, (2) do the readings thoroughly and on time and, most important, (3) use your head while doing both.

Grading is a judicious combination of scores obtained from:

- *attendance and homework assignments (10%),*
- *lively, mature, concerned, and constructive participation in the discussions (15%),*
- *midterm (25%),*
- *final exam (25%)*
- *paper (25%).*

Readings:

For a bibliography of the readings--including alternative sources for pieces that have been published several times--consult the last pages of this handout. The books have been ordered through the Livingston Bookstore as well as NJ Books. They are on Reserve in the KILMER library, and the single papers are also available on Electronic Reserves. For this, find the Reserves for this course in the Rutgers Library catalog IRIS, and click on the appropriate link, from a campus computer.

Midterm and Final:

The midterm (to take place on October 19, *no exceptions!*) is an in-class, closed-notes and closed-books exam. The end-of-semester exam is take-home (you will receive it in the last class), and it is non-cumulative (it only covers the second part of the semester). Their purpose is to see how well you have digested the weekly readings and lectures and to reward those of you who did best. The midterm consists of a set of questions requiring short answers (definitions or mini-essay-style explanations of a concept), and probably 1 question requiring a one-page answer; the take-home at the end of the semester will be two questions asking for short answers (approximately 1-page each). If you do the work (attend and follow the lectures, do the readings, and participate in the discussions, etc.) during the semester, you should find the exams easy and the time allotted for them plenty. I invite you to propose questions that you would like to see in the exams. If I find them smart/interesting enough, I will include them.

Term Paper:

Choose one of the volumes listed at the end of this syllabus (and ordered through the University Bookstore for your convenience). Write a book review of the selected volume. Length: between five and eight pages (1250 to 2000 words). Hand in a word-processed version (and indicate word count, along with author, title, course number, etc., on the cover page).

A good book review contains the reader's well-organized and convincingly argued, original observations on a book. I do not want you to simply summarize the book's contents. The best idea is to read the book with a notebook at hand and to jot down your observations as you read. Then organize your ideas, sketch an outline, and write up your review. The more you revise your review, the better its quality (and your grade). This requires that you give yourself time to do all this: begin selection and reading early! I do enjoy reading original, witty and well argued papers and, like most humans, disdain stuff that is boring, repetitive, or un-inspired.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- Midterm: **October 19**
- hand in your choice of a book for review: **November 23** (last class before Fall Break)
- hand in your book review: **December 9** (last class before the end of semester)
- pick up take-home: in the same class on **December 9**
- hand in take-home: **4pm, December 10, B 207 Lucy Stone Hall**

The Classroom Is a Workplace

The most important aspect of this course is the interaction that takes place in the classroom. None of the lectures is available in a written form, and the discussions are by default unavailable in any other form, time, or place. Therefore, it is imperative for you to come to class regularly and, if you absolutely have to miss a class, to make up for the lost work immediately.

Experience has shown that late arrivals and early departures are extremely distracting. Please do your best to be in class on time, and remain there until the discussion is over. For the same purpose, I must ban the use of cell phone and other electronic forms of distraction in the classroom. It is part of your responsibility to the course to turn off your electronic equipment before entering the class and to keep them that way until it is over.

Lecture / Discussion Schedule

(italics mark the meetings for which you are required to do some specific preparation—readings or other homework assignments)

Tuesdays		Thursdays	
		9/2	intro
9/7	tools	9/9	Marx(isms)
9/14	other classics	9/16	<i>discussion: Polanyi</i>
9/21	before Capitalism	9/23	<i>discussion: Sahlins</i>
9/28	transformations I: merchant - industrial (Taylorism / Fordism / post-Fordism)- finance Film: Modern Times part 1.	9/30	Film: Modern Times part 2. <i>discussion: Carruthers & Babb: ch. 4. + film</i>
10/5	transformations II: emergence and structuration of global capitalism	10/7	<i>discussion: Carruthers & Babb: ch. 7.</i>
10/12	transformations III: socialism(s)	10/14	review before the midterm
10/19	MIDTERM	10/21	institutions: labour <i>discussion:</i>

<p>10/26 institutions: the state (core, peripheral, semiperipheral)</p> <p><i>discussion:</i> <i>required: Evans</i></p>	<p>10/28 institutions: informality</p> <p><i>discussion:</i> <i>required: Böröcz 2000: 351-5 and Portes & Sassen-Koob 1987.</i></p> <p><i>Recommended: Böröcz 1996.</i></p>
<p>10/30 institutions: inequality</p> <p><i>discussion: Carruthers & Babb: 103-19.</i></p>	<p>11/4 film: <i>The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter</i></p>
<p>11/9 institutions: gender</p> <p><i>discussion:</i> <i>Crowley</i> <i>Carruthers & Babb: 120-42.</i></p>	<p>11/11 institutions: “race”</p>
<p>11/16 institutions: money</p> <p><i>discussion: Zelizer</i></p>	<p>11/18 institutions: property</p> <p><i>discussion: Haslett</i></p>
<p>11/23 institutions: corporate organization & bureaucracy</p> <p><i>discussion: Carruthers & Babb: 71-100.</i></p>	<p>11/25 FALL BREAK</p>
<p>11/30 institutions: consumption and commercialisation</p> <p><i>discussion: Carruthers & Babb: 15-44.</i></p>	<p>12/2 institutions: advertising</p> <p><i>discussion: commercials 1</i></p>
<p>12/7 institutions: advertising</p> <p><i>discussion: commercials 2</i></p>	<p>12/9 review session before take-home take-home exams distributed</p>

List of Readings:

- Böröcz, József. 1993. "Simulating the Great Transformation: Property Change under Prolonged Informality in Hungary." *Archives européennes de sociologie / European Journal of Sociology / Europäisches Archiv für Soziologie*. XXXIV,1(May):81-107.
- Böröcz, József. 2000. "Informality Rules." *East European Politics and Societies*, 14,2(Spring): 348-80. only pp. 352-5.
- Carruthers, C. Bruce & Sarah L. Babb. 2000. *Economy / Society. Markets, Meanings, and Social Structure*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.
- Crowley, Helen. 1995. "Women and the Domestic Sphere." Pp. 343-62 in Stuart Hall, David Held, Don Hubert, and Kenneth Thompson (eds.) *Modernity. An Introduction to Modern Societies*. London: Polity Press.
- Evans, Peter. 1994 (1990). "Predatory, Developmental, and Other Apparatuses: A Comparative Political Economy Perspective on the Third World State." Pp. 84-111. in Kincaid, A. Douglas and Alejandro Portes. (eds.) *Comparative National Development. Society and Economy in the New Global Order*. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill **OR:** *Sociological Forum*, 1990, 4,4:561-87.
- Haslett, D.W. 1986. "Is Inheritance Justified?" *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 15,2(Spring):122-55.
- Polanyi, Karl. 1992(1957). "The Economy as Instituted Process." Pp. 31-49. in Swedberg, Richard and Mark Granovetter (eds.) *The Sociology of Economic Life*. Westview Press, Boulder. **OR:** in Karl Polanyi, Conrad M. Arensberg and Harry W. Pearson (eds.) 1957. *Trade and Market in the Early Empires. Economies in History and Theory*. The Free Press, Glencoe, Ill.
- Portes, Alejandro & Saskia Sassen-Koob. 1987. "Making It Underground: Comparative Material on the Informal Sector in Western Market Economies." *American Journal of Sociology*, 93,1(July):30-61.
- Sahlins, Marshall. 1972 (1968). "The Original Affluent Society." Chapter 1 (pp. 1-40) in Marshall Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Zelizer, Viviana. 1996. "Payments and Social Ties." *Sociological Forum*, 11: 481-95.

List of Books for Book Review

(choose one, hand in your choice by **11/23** and hand in the review by **12/9**)

Böröcz, József. 1996. *Leisure Migration. A Sociological Study on Tourism*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Burawoy, Michael. 1992. *The Radiant Past: Ideology and Reality in Hungary's Road to Capitalism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Itzigsohn, José. 2000. *Developing Poverty. The State, Labor Market Deregulation, and the Informal Economy in Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Sennett, Richard and Jonathan Cobb. 1972. *The Hidden Injuries of Class*. New York: Vintage.