

BASIC PROBLEMS IN SOCIOLOGY II
SOCI 502
COURSE SYLLABUS

2:00-4:25 p.m. Tuesday
302 Uris Hall

Fall 2007

Instructor: Douglas Heckathorn, Professor of Sociology
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Office Hours: 2:00-3:00pm Wednesday, 3:00-4:00pm Thursday, or by appointment

Description: Complements Sociology 501. Emphasis is on the logic of theory construction underlying both classical and contemporary theory. The course includes an introduction to basic concepts used in the logical analysis of theories and examines their application to specific theories and theoretic traditions.

The primary emphasis is on contemporary theory in sociology, including theories that focus on purposive action and agency (e.g., rational choice and exchange theory), structure (e.g., the functionalism, macrostructural theory, and networks), and interpretive processes (e.g., symbolic interactionism, and narrative theory).

The aim of the course is not only to survey some important developments in contemporary sociological theory, but also to prepare students to construct their own theories.

Everyone is expected to come to class fully prepared to participate in a discussion of the readings. At a minimum, this means you should have at least two comments on each book chapter or article.

Grading: Requirements for the course include: a term paper (due on December 10, the prospectus for the term paper is due October 16); class participation; three to five page discussion papers that are due each week beginning week three (due by e-mail Monday at 8:00 a.m.); and a class presentation on your term paper project. The term paper and discussion papers are one half of the grade. The other half of the grade is based on class participation and the oral presentation.

Readings: The readings are drawn from a combination of articles and book chapters. See attached reading list. The readings are available in the sociology mailroom in a course box.

Schedule:

- Week 1: Overview of Course
Readings: None
- Week 2: Perspectives on Theory Construction
Readings:
“Social Mechanisms: An Introductory Essay.” *Social Mechanisms: An Analytical Approach to Social Theory*, Peter Hedström and Richard Swedberg, pp. 1-32.
“Theory Construction as a Balancing Process: Analytic Power, Scope, and Descriptive Accuracy as Trade-Offs.” Douglas D. Heckathorn (chapter from a book in progress, expansion of 1984 article from *Journal of Mathematical Sociology*), 1999.
Constructing Social Theories, Arthur L. Stinchcombe, pp. 3-13, 1968
Theory Construction: From Verbal to Mathematical Formulations, Hubert M. Blalock, pp. 1-9.
- Week 3: The Foundation of Sociological Theory: Intentionality, Agency, and Rationality
Readings:
“Flight from Intention.” Willard Van Orman Quine, *Word and Object*, pp. 191-232, 1960.
"Marxism, Functionalism, and Game Theory." Jon Elster. *Structures of Capital: The Social Organization of the Economy*, Sharon Zukin and Paul DiMaggio (eds.), pp. 87-117.
“Beyond Rationality in Models of Choice.” Michael W. Macy and Andreas Flache. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 1995.
"The Paradoxical Relationship between Sociology and Rational Choice." By Douglas D. Heckathorn. *The American Sociologist*, 28, #2, pp. 6-15, 1997.
“What is Agency?” Mustafa Emirbayer and Ann Mishe. *American Journal of Sociology* 103:962-1023, 1998.
- Week 4: Exchange Theory and Rational Choice: Core Issues
Readings:
"Subjective Rationality and the Explanation of Social Behavior." Raymond Boudon. *Rationality and Society*, Vol. 1, #2, pp. 173-196. 1989.
“Structural Social Psychology and the Micro-macro Problem.” Edward J. Lawler, Cecelia Ridgeway, and Barry Markovsky. *Sociological Theory* 11:268-290, 1993.
"Homo Socio-oeconomicus: The Emergence of a General Model of Man in the Social Sciences." Siegwart Lindenberg. *Journal of Institutional and*

Theoretical Economics, 146, #4, pp. 727-748.

“Rational Choice.” Douglas D. Heckathorn, in *Encyclopedia of Social Theory, Volume II*, ed. George Ritzer, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 620-624.

"The Contribution of Rational Choice Theory to Macrosociological Research." Debra Friedman and Michael Hechter. *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 6, pp. 201-218, 1988.

“Adolescent Educational Expectations: Rationalized, Fantasized, or Both?” Steven Morgan, *Rationality and Society*, 1998.

Week 5: The Rational Choice Controversy Readings:

"Should Social Scientists Care about Choice Anomalies?" Bruno S. Frey and Reiner Eichenberger, *Rationality and Society*, 1989.

Pathologies of Rational Choice Theory: A Critique of Applications in Political Science. Donald P. Green and Ian Shapiro. Yale: New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994, chapters 1-3 (pp. 1-46).

"Feminist Critiques of the Separative Model of Self: Implications for Rational Choice Theory." Paula England and Barbara Stanek Kilbourne. *Rationality and Society*, Vol. 2, #2, pp. 156-71, 1990.

"Unification, Universalism, and Rational Choice Theory." John Ferejohn and Debra Satz, pp. 71-84 in *The Rational Choice Controversy: Economic Models of Politics Reconsidered*. Jeffrey Friedman, editor. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.

"Rational Choice: Empirical Contributions, and the Scientific Enterprise." Morris Fiorina, pp. 85-94 in *The Rational Choice Controversy: Economic Models of Politics Reconsidered*. Jeffrey Friedman, editor. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.

"The Poverty of Green and Shapiro." Susanne Lohmann, pp. 127-154 in *The Rational Choice Controversy: Economic Models of Politics Reconsidered*. Jeffrey Friedman, editor. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.

Week 6: Collective Decisions and Social Dilemmas

Readings:

"Analyzing Long-Enduring, Self-Organized, and Self-Governed Common Pool Resource Problems." In *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*. Elinor Ostrom. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 58-102. 1990.

“Collective Action, Rival Incentives, and the Emergence of Antisocial Norms.” *American Sociological Review*, 2006.

Soule, Sarah A. and Susan Olzak. 2004. “When Do Movements Matter? The Politics of Contingency and the Equal Rights Amendment.” *American Sociological Review* 69:473–97.

"Development of a Theory of Collective Action: From the Emergence of Norms to AIDS Prevention and the Analysis of Social Structure," by Douglas D. Heckathorn, in *New Directions in Sociological Theory: Growth of Contemporary Theories* (Joseph Berger and Morris Zelditch, editors). Rowman and Littlefield. (in press)

Week 7: Fall Break

Week 8: Structural Analysis: Functional and Adaptive Theories of Social Behavior

Readings:

Sociological Theory: What Went Wrong? Nicos Mouzelis, (chapter seven), 1995.
Neofunctionalism and After. Jeffrey C. Alexander, (chapters two and three) 1998.

"The Offspring of Functionalism: French and British Structuralism." Alexandra Maryanski and Jonathan H. Turner. *Sociological Theory*, 9:106-115, 1991.

"False Connections: Systems and Action Theories in Neofunctionalism and in Jurgen Habermas." Thomas Schwinn. *Sociological Theory*, 16:75-95, 1998.

"General Social Equilibrium: Toward Theoretical Synthesis." Thomas J. Fararo. *Sociological Theory*, 11, 1993.

Week 9: Macrostructural Theory

Readings:

"A Circuitous Path to Macrostructural Theory." Peter Blau. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 1995.

Structural Contexts of Opportunities. Peter Blau, (chapters one and two) 1994.

"Unification Research Programs: Integrating Two Structural Theories." Thomas J. Fararo and John Skvoretz. *American Journal of Sociology* 92, 1987.

"Homophily in Voluntary Organizations: Status Distance and the Composition of Face-to-Face Groups." J. Miller McPherson and Lynn Smith-Lovin. *American Sociological Review* 52: 370-379, 1987.

"Sampling and Estimation in Hidden Populations Using Respondent-Driven Sampling." By Matthew J. Salganik and Douglas D. Heckathorn. *Sociological Methodology*, 2004.

Week 10: Networks, Norms, and Social Capital

Readings:

Anthony, Denise. "Cooperation in Micro-Credit Borrowing Groups: Identity, Sanctions and Reciprocity in the Production of Collective Goods." *American Sociological Review*, 2005.

"Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology." Alejandro Portes. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 1998.

- "The Gender of Social Capital." Ron Burt. *Rationality and Society*, 1998.
- "Embeddedness and Beyond: Institutions, Exchange, and Social Structure." Victor Nee and Paul Ingram. Pp. 19-45 in *The New Institutionalism in Sociology*, Mary C. Brinton and Victor Nee, editors. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1998.
- "Social Capital and Homicide." Richard Rosenfeld, Steven F. Messner, and Eric P. Baumer, *Social Forces*, 2001.

Week 11: Interpretive Theory, Historical Analysis, and Ethnomethodology

Readings:

- "The Sad Demise, Mysterious Disappearance, and Glorious Triumph of Symbolic Interactionism." Gary Alan Fine. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 1993.
- "Rationality and Interpretation: Parliamentary Elections in Early Stuart England." John Ferejohn.. In *The Economic Approach to Politics*, Kristen Monroe (ed.), New York: Harper Collins, 1991.
- "The Role of General Theory in Comparative-Historical Sociology." Edgar Kiser and Michael Hechter. *American Journal of Sociology*, 1991.
- Analytic Narratives*, edited by Robert H. Bates, Avner Grief, Margaret Levi, Jean-Laurent Rosenthal, and Barry R. Weigast, pp. 3-63.
- "Narrative Analysis—Or Why (and How) Sociologists Should be Interested in Narrative." *Annual Review of Sociology*, 1998.
- "Rational Rhetoric in Politics: The Debate Over Ratifying the U.S. Constitution." Denise L. Anthony, Douglas D. Heckathorn, and Steven M. Maser. *Rationality and Society*, 1994.
- "Postmodern Storytelling versus Pragmatic Truth-Seeking: The Discursive Basis of Social Theory." Robert J. Antonio. *Sociological Theory* 9:154-163, 1991.

Week 12: Emotions and Social Theory

Readings:

- "The Sociology of Emotions." Peggy A. Thoits. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 1993.
- "The Strategic Role of the Emotions: Reconciling Over- and Undersocialized Accounts of Behavior." Robert H. Frank. *Rationality and Society*, Vol. 5, #2, 1993.
- "How Many Emotions Are There?" Theodore D. Kemper. *American Journal of Sociology* 96:32-68, 1987.
- "Network Structure and Emotion in Exchange Relations." Edward J. Lawler and Jeongkoo Yoon. *American Sociological Review* 63, 1998.
- Polletta, Francesca. 1998. "'It was Like a Fever': Narrative and Identity in Social Protest." *Social Problems* 25:137-139.

Week 13: Presentations

Week 14: The Uses and Limits of Social Theory

Readings:

- "The Rational Reconstruction of Society." James S. Coleman. *American Sociological Review*. 1993.
- "The Normative Foundations of Emancipatory Theory: Evolutionary versus Pragmatic Perspectives." Robert Antonio. *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 94, #4, pp. 721-748, 1989.
- "Initial Conditions, General Laws, Path Dependence, and Explanation in Historical Sociology." Jack A. Goldstone. *American Journal of Sociology* 104:829-846, 1998.
- "The Inevitability of Future Revolutionary Surprises." Timur Kuran. *American Journal of Sociology* 100:1528-1521, 1995.
- "Prediction in Macrosociology: The Case of the Soviet Collapse." Randall Collins. *American Journal of Sociology* 100, 1995.