

**COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, SOCIOLOGY G4097: DESIGNS OF SOCIAL RESEARCH
CHARLES TILLY, INSTRUCTOR; EMRAH GOKER, TEACHING ASSISTANT:
COURSE PLAN, FALL 2003 (10/17/03)**

Monday, 11-12:50

Required of all incoming sociology graduate students, the course prepares students who have already completed an undergraduate major or its equivalent in some social science to evaluate and undertake both systematic descriptions and sound explanations of social structures and processes. Although it takes up general problems of knowledge as well as concrete research techniques, it aims at a middle ground: how to design logically and empirically effective approaches to collection and analysis of evidence. It concentrates on close study of exemplary recent monographs from diverse methodological traditions dealing with multiple phenomena and forms of evidence. The monographs serve as models of dissertation-sized projects that most class members will eventually undertake.

Students divide into two to four working groups. (The schedule below assumes four groups, A to D.) After an introductory session, working groups will alternate in responsibility for class sessions. Group members will:

- work together in reviewing the book assigned for their week
- select and review at least one additional text that a) approaches a similar topic in a contrasting way, b) applies a similar approach to contrasting material, c) provides a critical review of the book and/or d) criticizes this sort of research
- compare the preferred approaches of the current book and the alternative text(s)
- inform other class members of the comparison text(s)
- plan a session based on the week's studies
- run that session

A graduate teaching assistant who is already working on a dissertation will help working groups plan their presentations, will advise students on written assignments, and may start a session or two. Charles Tilly will begin a standard session with thirty or forty minutes of background concerning the research tradition and authors under consideration that day. Then the working group will take over with a presentation designed to stimulate discussion and criticism of the text at hand. (Tilly will, of course, participate in discussion and criticism.) A course bibliography prepared by Tilly (to be distributed) should facilitate identification of background material and comparison texts. Emrah Goker will advise working groups on their presentations when asked, and will also be available for help in thinking through individual written assignments.

Required written work will include a) after two working group presentations, a brief memorandum from each group member concerning her/his contribution to that presentation, b) a final paper of 10 to 20 thousand words offering either 1) a detailed and documented re-

search proposal - not necessarily on a topic discussed in the course -- or 2) a critical review of a research literature - not necessarily one taken up in the course. The two short papers each count 20% of the course grade, the final paper 60%, with upward nudges for stellar class participation.

Students should buy the following paperback books:

Javier Auyero, *Contentious Lives. Two Argentine Women, Two Protests, and the Quest for Recognition*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003

Howard S. Becker, *Tricks of the Trade. How to Think About Your Research While You're Doing It*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Mark Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Elisabeth S. Clemens, *The People's Lobby. Organizational Innovation and the Rise of Interest Group Politics in the United States, 1890-1925*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1997.

Dalton Conley, *Being Black, Living in the Red: Race, Wealth, and Social Policy in America*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.

Jonathan Gershuny, *Changing Times. Work and Leisure in Postindustrial Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Robert E. Goodin, Bruce Headey, Ruud Muffels & Henk-jan Dirven, *The Real Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Roger V. Gould, *Insurgent Identities. Class, Community, and Protest in Paris from 1848 to the Commune*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa. Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.

Don Kalb, *Expanding Class. Power and Everyday Politics in Industrial Communities, The Netherlands, 1850-1950*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1997.

Douglas S. Massey & Nancy A. Denton, *American Apartheid. Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993.

Charles C. Ragin, *Constructing Social Research*. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge, 1994.

Ann Swidler, *Talk of Love. How Culture Matters*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.

COURSE SCHEDULE, FALL 2003 (Working Group in **Bold**)

- 8 September Introduction; read Becker, *Tricks of the Trade*.
- 15 September **[A]** National Surveys: read Goodin et al., *The Real Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*
- 22 September **[B]** Time Budgets: read Gershuny, *Changing Times*
- 29 September **[C]** Demography + Geography: read Massey & Denton, *American Apartheid*.
- 6 October **[D]** Inequality: read Conley, *Being Black, Living in the Red*.
- 13 October **[A]** Participant Observation: read Auyero, *Contentious Lives*; **first memo on working group participation (maximum 1000 words) due.**
- 20 October **[B]** Depth Interviews: read Swidler, *Talk of Love*.
- 27 October **[C]** Historical Networks: read Gould, *Insurgent Identities*.
- 3 November NO CLASS: COLUMBIA HOLIDAY
- 10 November **[D]** Event Analysis: read Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State*
- 17 November **[A]** Regional Comparison: read Kalb, *Expanding Class*; **second memo on working group participation (maximum 1000 words) due**
- 24 November **[B]** Institutional History: read Clemens, *The People's Lobby*
- 1 December **[C]** Cross-national Comparison: read Herbst, *States and Power in Africa*
- 8 December **[D]** Conclusions: read Ragin, *Constructing Social Research*
- 12 December **final paper (10-20,000 words) due**