

THEORY AND METHOD IN HISTORICAL SOCIOLOGY
SOC 6401H

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We know only a single science, the science of history. One can look at history from two sides and divide it into the history of nature and the history of men. The two sides are, however, inseparable; the history of nature and the history of men are dependent on each other so long as men exist.

Marx & Engels (1845)

Every social science—or better, every well-considered social study—requires an historical scope of conception and a full use of historical materials.

C. Wright Mills (1959)

SYNOPSIS:

Can the major constraining dichotomies and polarities that have skewed the history of the social sciences over the past two centuries—voluntarism/determinism, agency/structure, nominalism/realism, micro/macro, objectivism/subjectivism, nomothetic/idiographic, maximizing rationality/cultural specificity—be resolved and transcended through use of a contextual-sequential logic of explanation, as offered in Historical Sociology? In an effort to answer that question, we will examine the central ontological and epistemological issues and controversies raised by recent efforts to develop a fully *historical social science*, a fully *sociological historiography*.

We will open with a review of the celebrated *Methodenstreite* that shaped the formation of the social science disciplines in the late 19th and early 20th centuries—disputes that turned heavily on disagreements regarding the proper relationship between historical inquiry and sociological theorizing. The program of positivism—to model social science after the nomological natural sciences—gained institutional ascendancy, and history was driven to an “external” and largely “auxiliary” status within disciplines such as sociology and economics. Nomological-deductive modes of explanation, abetted by the probabilistic logic championed by statistics and sundry technical advances in quantitative methods, defined the grounds of proper theorizing. Hermeneutics, genealogy, and narrative—the analytical “logics” of historiography—were deemed preliminary to full scientific explanation, which sought to specify the determinant relations of social forces and variables “abstracted from” or independent of time and place considerations.

Over recent decades, there has occurred a significant resurgence of historically-oriented and informed social science—though this still remains a sectional speciality rather than a general current. Inspired in the main by the pioneering legacies of Marx and Weber, this movement has been led by distinguished scholars such as Barrington Moore, Charles Tilly, Theda Skocpol, Immanuel Wallerstein, Perry Anderson, Braudel, E.P. Thompson, Hobsbawm, Eric Wolf, Marshall Sahlins, Bourdieu, Giddens, and Michael Mann. Directly challenging the traditional idiographic-nomothetic antinomy, and insisting upon the mutual and necessary interdependence of history and sociology, the work of these scholars is currently forcing a return to the contested and divisive issues of the earlier *Methodenstreite*, all of which were—and remain—keyed to the fundamental question of whether the social sciences are, or are not, inherently historical disciplines.

In critically assessing the merits and viability of the emerging transdisciplinary project of historical social science, this course will address the following thematic foci:

I. Philosophy of Science

i. the ontology of the social-historical

- * time and place as *constitutive mediums* of social life, intrinsic to both meaningful agency and processes of structuration
- * the formation of minded selves, roles, institutions, and social orders as historical phenomena
- * on causality and contexts

ii. the epistemic foundations of historiography: critical realism or skeptical, postmodern “constructivism”?

- * the past-as-it-happened and past-as-imagined, as ideologically reconstructed, commemorated
- * the “historiographical operation” (Barthes, De Certeau, Hayden White)
- * “arduous confrontations” of evidence and theory (E.P. Thompson)

iii. levels of abstraction and concreteness in historical social science

- * ideal types revisited - analytical vs. historical concepts

II. Historical Social Science as Theory

i. the logic of contextual-sequential analysis

* the *via media* between transhistorical generalizations and particularistic narrations: social phenomena to be explicated by tracing both their genesis and their intrinsic relations to other mediating structures and processes

* history as part of the present, owing to the rootedness of present structural and cultural arrangements in past practices; of “chronotopes” and “trajectories”

ii. concept-formation and historical-comparative generalization

- * cases and the so-called “small N” problem
- * excursus on the use of secondary sources

iii. theorizing agency, structure, and culture as temporal phenomena

* on time and place as culturally defined apperceptions that provide essential frames of meaning for social action (i.e., the sequentially-ordered and site specific nature of most forms of reflexive agency)

- * on path-dependence: present arrangements—institutions, cultural forms—are the cumulative and

selectively reproduced products of past social actions, which in turn provide the basis for future endeavours and aspirations

III. Methods in Historical Social Science

i. on historical evidence: remnants, records, residua

- * typically clustered, catenated & so “narrative entailing”
- * as objectifications of human intentionality, and thus characterized by “social authenticity” and “implicative density” (or multivalence)

ii. hermeneutics and the “construction” of narratives

- * canons of interpretation, *verstehen*, and the hermeneutic circle
- * colligation, emplotment, rhetoric
- * on the integration of so-called “first-order” accounts (phenomenological or ideological representations by the agents themselves) and “second-order” synthesizing narratives that objectively situate and contextualize the subjective experiences of the actors
- * from “chaotic chronicle” to the narrative logic of situated social action (historical sociology)

iii. reflexive protocols for enhanced objectivity

- * source criticism
- * the sociology of knowledge and “epistemic vigilance”

TEXTS and READINGS:

For background, you will find these two volumes quite helpful:

Theda Skocpol, ed., *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*, Cambridge University Press, 1984.

T. McDonald, ed., *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences*, University of Michigan Press, 1999.

& A list of digitally available assigned readings, addressing methodological and theoretical concerns, as well as exemplars of historical-sociological research.

One **Essay**, due at the end of term (50 pts), based on your research interests or field (~8000 words);

Five **Position Papers** (4 pts each = 20 pts), drawing out key implications from the readings (~800 words each);

One **Seminar Presentation** (20 pts), to provide a critical overview and discussion platform for the readings and related works for the weekly topic of your choice (one of the Position Papers can expand upon your presentation);

One short critical **Reflection Piece** (10 pts. ~1000 words).

This course will follow a conventional seminar format: dialogue and reasoned argumentation will constitute the operating principles for our shared inquiry and exploration. Your questions, observations, and criticisms are necessary in promoting rounded and reflective discussion, and will be appreciated.

SOC 6401H - *THEORY AND METHOD IN HISTORICAL SOCIOLOGY*

Week 1 ***Introduction: History and the Social Sciences***
Sept. 13

Reading: J.M. Bryant & John Hall, "Towards Integration and Unity in the Human Sciences: The Project of Historical Sociology," Introduction to *Historical Methods in the Social Sciences, Volume I*, pp. i-xv.

Recommended: Andrew Abbott, "History and Sociology: The Lost Synthesis," *Social Science History*, 1991, 15/2: 201-38, and related essays in his *Time Matters*, 2001. Terrence McDonald, "What We Talk about When We Talk about History: The Conversations of History and Sociology," pp.91-118; and Craig Calhoun, "The Rise and Domestication of Historical Sociology," pp.305-338, both in McDonald, ed., *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences*, 1999. See also Wallerstein, et al., *Open the Social Sciences*, 1996.

*** A comprehensive collection of foundational texts is now available, in *Historical Methods in the Social Sciences*, IV volumes, edited by John A. Hall & Joseph M. Bryant, Sage Publications, 2005:

Volume I. *Historical Social Science: Presuppositions and Prescriptions*
Volume II. *Foundations of Historical-Sociological Inquiry*
Volume III. *The Logic of Historical-Sociological Analysis*
Volume IV. *Social Worlds in Flux: Legacies and Transformations* [Call number: HM487]

Week 2 ***On Scientific Explanation: The Methodenstreit Revisited***
Sept. 20

Reading: Max Weber, "'Objectivity' in Social Science and Social Policy (a selection)," chap. II, pp. 67-112 in M. Weber, *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*, 1949.

Supplemental: An excellent overview is provided by Peter Manicas, *A History & Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 1987. A foundational collection is Frederick Suppe, ed., *The Structure of Scientific Theories*, 1977, covering the rise and fall of logical positivism. Classic contributions are: May Brodbeck, ed., *Readings in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 1968; and Maurice Natanson, ed., *Philosophy of the Social Sciences: A Reader*, 1963 (with a strong phenomenological orientation). Quentin Skinner's edited volume, *The Return of Grand Theory in the Human Sciences*, 1985, offers informative sketches of Althusser, the Annales Historians, Derrida, Foucault, Gadamer, Habermas, Kuhn, Levi-Strauss, and Rawls. Pierre Bourdieu, J-C Chamboredon, and J-C Passeron, *The Craft of Sociology: Epistemological Preliminaries*, 1991, insightfully links philosophy to research practice; see also Bourdieu's *In Other Words: Essays Towards a Reflexive Sociology*, 1990. From anthropology, Clifford Geertz, *Available Light*, 2000, offers a series of brilliant meditations on a number of interpretive disputes and challenges. See also William Roseberry, *Anthropologies and Histories*, 1994, and Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*, 2002. Pertinent reflections by a historian are found in Geoff Eley, *A Crooked Line: From Cultural History to the History of Society*, 2005.

Week 3 ***On the Ontology of the Social-Historical:
Sept. 27 Nominalism, Social Realism, and Dialectical Totality***

Readings: Theodore Adorno, "Sociology and Empirical Research," pp. 68-86 in Adorno, et al., *The Positivist Dispute in German Sociology*, 1976. Peter Berger and Stanley Pullberg, "Reification and the Sociological Critique of Consciousness," *History and Theory*, 1965, 4/2: 196-211.

Supplemental: E. Gellner, "Holism versus Individualism in History and Sociology," and J. Watkins, "Historical Explanation in the Social Sciences," pp. 488-515 in Patrick Gardiner, ed., *Theories of History*, 1959. C. Castoriadis, "The Social-Historical," chap. 4 in *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, 1998. John Wilson, "Realist Philosophy as a Foundation for Marxian Social Theory," *Current Perspectives in Social Theory* 1982 (3):243-63. M. Archer, Roy Bhaskar, et al., eds., *Critical Realism: Essential Readings*, 1998. See also Jean-Paul Sartre's short programmatic work, *Search for a Method*, 1963; more dauntingly, his *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, 1960. Raymond Aron, *History and the Dialectic of Violence*, 1973, offers a critical assessment. Synoptically lucid is Y.Yovel, "Existentialism and Historical Dialectic," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 1979, 39/4: 480-97. For background, on Dilthey, Heidegger, Ortega y Gasset, consult Howard Tuttle, *The Dawn of Historical Reason*, 1994. See also Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "The Crisis of The Understanding," chapter 14, pp. 318-37, in *The Essential Writings of Merleau-Ponty*, 1969. Judicious and informed is James Miller, "Merleau-Ponty's Marxism," *History and Theory*, 1976, 15/2: 109-32. Wide-ranging is Mustafa Emirbayer, "Manifesto for a Relational Sociology," *American Journal of Sociology*, 1997, 103/2: 281-317. Also noteworthy: Fredric Jameson, "Marxism and Historicism," *New Literary History*, 1979, 11:41-73; and Joseph Fracchia, "Dialectical Itineraries," *History and Theory*, 1991, 38/2: 169-97. For a Wittgensteinian approach, Rom Harré, "Forward to Aristotle: the Case for a Hybrid Ontology," *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 1997, 27 (2/3):173-91; more extended, Theodore Schatzki, *The Site of the Social*, 2002. Ian Hacking's collection, *Historical Ontology*, 2004, contains several thought-provoking explorations. On the hazards of reification and the deletion of human agency through conceptual nominalization, see Michael Billig, "The Language of Critical Discourse Analysis: The Case of Nominalization," *Discourse & Society*, 2008, 19/6: 783-800.

Week 4 ***Questions of Causality and Temporalities of the Social***
Oct. 4

Readings: Jean-Paul Sartre, "Temporality: Phenomenology of the Three Temporal Dimensions," pp.83-105 in *Being and Nothingness*, 1956. Raymond Martin, "Causes, Conditions, and Causal Importance," *History and Theory*, 1982, 21/1: 53-74.

Supplemental: Herbert Marcuse, "Contributions to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism," *Telos*, 1969, 4: 3-34. Fernand Braudel, "History and the Social Sciences: The *Longue Durée*," pp. 25-54 in his *On History*, 1980. A. Abbott, "On the Concept of Turning Point," *Comparative Social Research* 1997 (16): 85-105. Michael Scriven, "Causes, Connections and Conditions in History," pp.238-64 in W. Dray, ed., *Philosophical Analysis and History*, 1966. G. H. Mead, "History and the Experimental Method" and "Time," chaps. 12 & 13 (pp.319-41) in *On Social Psychology* (Selected Papers), 1964. R. Aminzade, "Historical Sociology and Time," *Sociological Methods & Research*, 1992, 20/4:

456-80. G. Reisch, "Chaos, History, and Narrative," and D. McCloskey, "History, Differential Equations, and the Problem of Narration," both in *History and Theory*, 1991, 30/1: 1-36. A. Abbott, "Temporality and Process in Social Life" chapter 7, pp.209-39 in his *Time Matters*, 2001. I. Wallerstein, "The TimeSpace of World-Systems Analysis," *Historical Geography*, 1993, XXIII, 1/2: 5-22. L. Isaac, "Reflections on Time, Causality, and Narrative in Contemporary Historical Sociology," *Historical Methods*, 1997, 30/1: 4-12. And also the Symposium: "Rom Harré on Social Structure and Social Change," *European Journal of Social Theory*, 2002, 5/1: 111-48, with comments by Harré, Carter, and Strydom. Interesting but difficult is Ernst Bloch's "Nonsynchronism and the Obligation to Its Dialectics," translated English version in *New German Critique*, 1977, 11: 22-38. Bender & Wellbery, eds., *Chronotypes: The Construction of Time*, 1991, is an instructive collection, theoretical and substantive.

Week 5 ***What If? Counterfactual History and the Agency-Structure Dialectic***

Oct. 11

Readings: Randall Collins, "The Uses of Counter-Factual History," *Amsterdams Sociologisch Tijdschrift*, 2004, 31/3: 275-95. William Sewell, Jr., "Theory of Action, Dialectic, and History: Comment on Coleman," *American Journal of Sociology*, 1988, 93/1: 166-172; and James Coleman, "Actors and Actions in Social History and Social Theory: Reply to Sewell," *American Journal of Sociology*, 1988, 93/1: 172-5.

Supplemental: Selections from John Merriman, ed., *For Want of a Horse: Choice & Chance in History*, 1982; or from J.C. Squire, ed., *If It Had Happened Otherwise* [D210s7], 1972. Counterfactual reasoning receives renewed and sophisticated attention in *Unmaking the West: 'What If?' Scenarios That Rewrite World History*, edited by Philip Tetlock, et al., 2006. W.H. Sewell, Jr., "A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency, and Transformation," *American Journal of Sociology*, 1992, 98/1: 1-29. W. Outhwaite, "Agency and Structure," and Margaret Archer, "Human Agency and Social Structure," chapters 6 & 7 in Clark, Modgil & Modgil, eds., *Anthony Giddens: Consensus and Controversy*, 1990. M. Archer, "Morphogenesis versus structuration: on combining structure and action," *British Journal of Sociology*, 1982, 33/4: 455-83. Perry Anderson, "Structure and Subject," chap. 2, pp.32-55 in his *In the Tracks of Historical Materialism*, 1983, is luminous. See also Anderson on "Agency," chap. 2, pp.16-58 in *Arguments Within English Marxism*, 1980. A critical survey and synthesis of major European reflections is Axel Honneth and Hans Joas, *Social Action and Human Nature*, 1988. Nicholas Thomas, *Out of Time: History and Evolution in Anthropological Discourse*, 1989, is incisive on the hazards of ahistorical analyses in ethnography. For economics, Paul David, "Why Are Institutions the 'Carriers of History'? Path Dependence and the Evolution of Conventions, Organizations and Institutions," *Structural Change and Economic Dynamics* 1994, 5/2: 205-20. The most instructive explorations to date of the structure-event dialectic are offered by Marshall Sahlins, most notably "Structure and History," chap. 5 in his *Islands of History*, 1985, and "The Return of the Event, Again," chap. XI in his *Culture in Practice*, 2000. His most recent work, *Apologies to Thucydides: Understanding History as Culture and Vice Versa*, 2004, offers illuminating case studies on the theme. Also relevant: Paul Secord, "Subjects versus Persons in Social Psychological Research," chap. 11 in *Harré and his Critics*, edited by Roy Bhaskar, 1990; and Sherry Ortner, "Subjectivity and Cultural Critique," *Anthropological Theory* 2005, 5/1: 31-52.

Week 6 ***Laws that “Cover” or Narratives that “Bind”?***
Oct. 18

Readings: Andrew Abbott, “Transcending General Linear Reality,” *Sociological Theory*, 1988, 6: 169-86. David Carr, “Narrative and the Real World,” *History and Theory*, 1986, 25/2: 117-31. William Sewell, Jr., “Geertz, Cultural Systems, and History: From Synchrony to Transformation,” *Representations*, 59, 1997: 35-55.

Supplemental: Alan Donagan, “The Popper-Hempel Theory Reconsidered,” chapter 5, pp.127-59, in William Dray, ed., *Philosophical Analysis and History*, 1966. “Symposium on Prediction in the Social Sciences,” *American Journal of Sociology*, 1995, 100/6: 1520-1625 (Hechter, Collins, Tilly, Kiser, Portes). A. Abbott, “From Causes to Events,” *Sociological Methods & Research*, 1992, 20/4: 428-55. Peter Hall, “Aligning Ontology and Methodology in Comparative Research,” pp.373-404 in Mahoney & Rueschemeyer, eds., *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, 2003. Two classic meditations: Ortega y Gasset, “History as a System,” pp. 283-322, in Klibansky and Paton, *Philosophy and History: The Ernst Cassirer Festschrift*, 1963, and Isaiah Berlin, “The Concept of Scientific History,” *History and Theory*, 1960, 1/1: 1-31. The foundational statement for the covering-law position is Carl Hempel, “Explanation in Science and History,” reprinted as chapter 4, pp.95-126, in Dray, *Philosophical Analysis and History*, 1966. Informative and revealing is the recent Sica-Mahoney debate: James Mahoney, “Revisiting General Theory in Historical Sociology,” *Social Forces*, 2004, 83/2: 459-89, and Alan Sica, “Why ‘Unobservables’ Cannot Save General Theory,” pp.491-501, which continues online with Mahoney, “Reply to Sica: Epistemological and Ontological Debates in Historical Sociology,” and Sica, “Reply to Mahoney’s Rebuttal: Hunting the Grail with Realist Enthusiasm.” Another debate treatment is Philip Gorski, “The Poverty of Deductivism: A Constructive Realist Model of Sociological Explanation,” and Jack Goldstone’s comments, “Response: Reasoning About History, Sociologically ...,” with Gorski’s short reply, “The Varieties of Deductivism,” all in *Sociological Methodology*, 2004. Still valuable is Blumer’s classic piece, “Sociological Analysis and the ‘Variable’,” *American Sociological Review*, 1956, 21/6: 683-90.

Week 7 ***History and Historiography I.***
Oct. 25 ***On Historical Evidence and the Logic of Hermeneutics***

Readings: Raphael Samuel, “Reading the Signs,” and “Reading the Signs II: Fact-grubbers and Mind-readers,” *History Workshop Journal*, 1991 (32): 88-109, 1992 (33): 220-51 [on the necessity and pitfalls of semiotical analysis]

Supplemental: Marc Bloch, *The Historian’s Craft*, 1953, especially chapter III: “Historical Criticism”. Raymond Aron, “Evidence and Inference in History,” pp. 19-47 in D. Lerner, ed., *Evidence and Inference*, 1959. G.R. Elton, *The Practice of History*, 1967, chapter II: “Research”. Peter Gay, *Style in History*, 1974, Conclusion, pp.183-217. David Hackett Fischer, *Historians’ Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought*, 1970. For a practical guide on Ethnohistory, consult R. Barber and F. Berdan, *The Emperor’s Mirror: Understanding Culture through Primary Sources*, 1998. John and Jean Comaroff, *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*, 1992, brilliantly put theory to practice. Nicholas Dirks, “Annals of the Archive: Ethnographic Notes on the Sources of History,” pp. 47-65 in Brian Keith Axel, ed., *From the Margins: Historical Anthropology and Its Future*, 2002. Peter Laslett, “The Wrong Way Through the Telescope: A Note on Literary Evidence in Sociology and in Historical Sociology,” *British Journal of Sociology*, 1976, 27/3: 319-42.

Paul Ricoeur's magnum opus, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, 2004, is a comprehensive exploration; for a synopsis, see his "History and Hermeneutics," *Journal of Philosophy*, 1976, 73/4: 683-95. Also valuable: Agnes Heller, "From Hermeneutics in Social Science Toward a Hermeneutics of Social Science," *Theory and Society*, 1989, 18: 291-322; and Frederick Olafson, "Hermeneutics: Analytical and Dialectical," *History and Theory*, 1986, 25/4: 28-42. Karl-Otto Apel's *Analytical Philosophy of Language and the 'Geisteswissenschaften'*, 1967, offers an insightful critical assessment of positivistic reasoning.

Week 8 ***History and Historiography II.***
Nov. 1 ***On Historical Evidence and the Logic of Hermeneutics***

Readings: V. K. Dibble, "Four Types of Inference from Documents to Events," *History and Theory*, 1963, 3/2: 203-21. Jennifer Platt, "Evidence and Proof in Documentary Research, I & II," *Sociological Review*, 1981, 29/1: 31-66. Ann Stoler, "Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance" *Archival Science*, 2002, 2: 87-109.

Supplemental: Alison Wylie, "Archaeological Cables and Tacking," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 1989, 19/1: 1-18. G.S. Couse, "Collingwood's Detective Image of the Historian and the Study of Hadrian's Wall," *History and Theory*, 1990, Beiheft 29: Reassessing Collingwood, pp.57-77. Joan Ramon Resina, "Historical Discourse and the Propaganda Film," *New Literary History*, 1998, 29/1: 67-84. On the pictorial arts, Svetlana Alpers, *The Art of Describing*, 1983, is a stimulating case study. Interesting on oral history is Luise White, "Telling More: Lies, Secrets, and History," *History and Theory*, 2000, 39/4: 11-22. On museums, Susan Crane, "Memory, Distortion, and History in the Museum," *History and Theory*, 1997, 36/4: 44-63. More generally, Wulf Kansteiner, "Finding Meaning in Memory: A Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies," *History and Theory*, 2002, 41/2: 179-97. Reinhart Koselleck's *The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts*, 2002, contains a number of stimulating pieces.

Week 9 ***Emplotment, Rhetoric, & the "Historiographical Operation":***
Nov. 8 ***Assessing the Postmodernist Challenge***

Readings: Roland Barthes, "The discourse of history," *Comparative Criticism*, 1981, vol. 3: 7-20. Hayden White, "The Question of Narrative in Contemporary Historical Theory," *History and Theory*, 1984, 23/1: 1-33. Raymond Martin, "Progress in Historical Studies," *History and Theory*, 1998, 37/1: 14-39.

Supplemental: E.P. Thompson, "The Poverty of Theory or an Orrery of Errors," pp.193-242 (sections i-vii), in his *The Poverty of Theory & Other Essays*, 1978. Hayden White, "Historical Emplotment and the Problem of Truth"; Perry Anderson, "On Emplotment: Two Kinds of Ruin"; and Martin Jay, "Of Plots, Witnesses, and Judgments," chapters 2, 3, and 6 in Saul Friedlander, ed., *Probing the Limits of Representation*, 1992. See also the debate issues on "History and Post-Modernism," in *Past and Present*, 1991, No. 131 (L. Stone), No. 133 (P. Joyce & C. Kelly), and 1992, No. 135 (Stone & Gabrielle Spiegel). Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, chapter 2, 1988, offers his basic take. Insightful is Nancy Partner, "Making Up Lost Time: Writing on the Writing of History," *Speculum*, 1986,

61/1: 90-117. For offerings by a leading hyper-constructionist, consult F.R. Ankersmit, *Historical Representation*, 2001. Highly influential is Gérard Genette, "Fictional Narrative, Factual Narrative," *Poetics Today*, 1990, 11/4: 755-74.

Week 10 ***Reflexivity and the Quest for Objectivity:***
Nov. 15 ***On Source Criticism and the Sociology of Knowledge***

Readings: L. Wacquant, "Toward a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu," *Sociological Theory*, 1989, 7/1: 26-63; Joseph M. Bryant, "On Sources and Narratives in Historical Social Science," *British Journal of Sociology*, 2000, 51/3: 489-523.

Supplemental: Karl Mannheim, chapter V: "The Sociology of Knowledge," pp.264-311, in his *Ideology and Utopia*, 1936. Thomas Haskell, "Objectivity is not Neutrality," *History and Theory*, 1990, 29/2: 129-57. Chris Lorenz, "Can Histories Be True? Narrativism, Positivism, and the Metaphorical Turn," *History and Theory*, 1998, 37/3: 309-29. Instructive on the possibility of a fallible yet correctible objectivity is Kerry Whiteside, "Perspectivism and Historical Objectivity: Maurice Merleau-Ponty's Covert Debate with Raymond Aron," *History and Theory*, 1986, 25/2: 132-51. The distinguished historian Carlo Ginzburg offers much valuable instruction in his *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method*, 1989. Thomas Nagel, *The View From Nowhere*, 1986, is a brilliant meditation. Also important is Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: power and the Production of History*, 1995. On Post-Colonial epistemological reflections, see "Comments on *Orientalism*. Two Reviews," by Amal Rassam and Ross Chambers, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 1980, 22/4: 505-12. A critically instructive take is Aijaz Ahmad, *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures*, 2008 edition. Central to debates now is Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 2007 edition. For an empirical exemplar from the dawn of the colonial period, see James O'Toole, "Cortes's Notary: The Symbolic Power of Records," *Archival Science*, 2002, 2: 45-61. Talal Asad, ed., *Anthropology & the Colonial Encounter*, 1973, is a classic early collection on the theme. Two other important works are Joan-Pau Rubiés, *Travel and Ethnology in the Renaissance: South India Through European Eyes, 1250-1625*, 2000, and Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 1992.

Week 11 ***Historical Sociology: Advocacy and Critique***
Nov. 22

Readings: J. Goldthorpe, "The Uses of History in Sociology," *British Journal of Sociology*, 1991, 42/2: 211-30; "The Uses of History in Sociology: A Debate," *British Journal of Sociology*, 1994, 45/1: 1-77, papers by Bryant, Hart, Mouzelis, and Mann, with a reply by Goldthorpe.

Supplemental: J. Goldthorpe, "Current Issues in Comparative Macrosociology," *Comparative Social Research* 1997 (16):1-26; see especially the rejoinders by D. Rueschemeyer & J. Stephens, "Comparing Historical Sequences," pp.55-72, and Jack Goldstone, "Methodological Issues in Comparative Macrosociology," pp.107-20, and Goldthorpe's reply, pp.121-32. Stanley Lieberon, "Small N's and big conclusions," and Howard Becker, "Cases,

causes, conjunctures, stories, and imagery,” chapters 4 and 9, in C. Ragin & H. Becker, eds., *What is a Case?*, 1992. William Sewell Jr., *Logics of History*, 2005, offers a valuable collection of his many contributions on the necessary interplay of sociological and historical modes of analysis.

Week 12 ***Formalization, Quantification, and Historical Sociology***
Nov. 29

Readings: L. Griffin, “Narrative, Event-Structure Analysis, and Causal Interpretation in Historical Sociology,” *American Journal of Sociology*, 1993, 98/5: 1094-1133. Roberto Franzosi, “A Sociologist Meets History: Critical Reflections upon Practice,” *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 1996, 9/3: 354-92.

Supplemental: R.Franzosi and J.Mohr, “New Directions in Formalization and Historical Analysis,” *Theory and Society*, 1997, 26: 133-60. J. Hall, “Temporality, Social Action, and the Problem of Quantification in Historical Analysis,” *Historical Methods*, 1984, 17/4: 206-18. Larry Griffin and Marcel van der Linden (eds.) *New Methods for Social History*, 1999, offers a cutting-edge collection (on which see the review by Chris Lorenz). Challenging technically but critically important are the essays in *Causality in Crisis? Statistical Methods and the Search for Causal Knowledge in the Social Sciences*, edited by Vaughn McKim and Stephen Turner, 1997. See also Andrew Sayer, “Abstraction: A Realist Interpretation,” *Radical Philosophy*, 1981, Summer, pp.6-15. On the academic politics of “method choice,” see the illuminating article by John H. Summers, “Perpetual Revelations: C.Wright Mills and Paul Lazarsfeld,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, 2006, 608: 25-40.

Week 13 ***Beyond the Methodenstreite?***
Dec. 6 ***Mills and the Sociological Imagination Revisited***

Readings: C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, chaps. 2 and 3.

There may be no end of the poets who communicate to us what they see in an object with reference to their own individuality; what it was before they saw it, in reference to the aggregate human mind, will be as desirable to know as ever.
Robert Browning, “Essay on Shelley”

Ashes denote that Fire was—

Emily Dickinson

*Description is revelation. It is not
The thing described, nor false facsimile.
It is an artificial thing that exists,
In its own seeming, plainly visible,
Yet not too closely the double of our lives,
Intenser than any actual life could be, ...*

Wallace Stevens, “Description without Place”

The historical investigation of the development of a science is most needful, lest the principles treasured up in it become a system of half-understood precepts, or worse, a system of prejudices. Historical investigation not only promotes the understanding of that which now is, but also brings new possibilities before us by showing that what now exists is in great measure conventional and accidental.

Ernst Mach

Philosophy of science is, like all philosophies, not simply a rehearsal and recitation of what is done and said; it is also an analysis and an appraisal of the rationale and logical justification of scientists doing and saying what they do.

Norwood Russell Hanson

It is not sufficient for a theory to affirm no false relations; it must not hide true relations.

Henri Poincaré

To have mastered 'theory' and 'method' is to have become a self-conscious thinker... To be mastered by "method" or "theory" is simply to be kept from working, from trying, that is, to find out about something that is going on in the world.

C. Wright Mills