

SOC256H1F: LIVES AND SOCIETIES

2018 FALL TERM

Class meets: Tuesdays, 2-4 PM; LM161; Lash Miller, 80 St. George Street

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Teaching Assistant: TBA

Office hours: TBA
Room 225, 725 Spadina Avenue

Readings: All readings will be available electronically

Prerequisite: 0.5 SOC FCE at the 100+ level. Students without this requirement will be removed at anytime discovered and without notice.

Much sociological work considers people at one point in their lives: while working, while in school, while parents of young children, and so forth. Life course analysis makes its special contribution by paying attention to biographies and to the ways that (1) human life histories are shaped by a person's place in society and in social history, and (2) how human life decisions cumulate to affect societies.

SOC256 considers the very large scale comparative picture: very different kinds of society (from hunter-gatherer groups to modern industrial societies) and the differences that kind of society makes to: qualitative differences in life course stages, the timing of stages, transitions between stages, the basic facts of birth and death, and the ways people see the life course.

TOPICS AND REQUIRED READINGS

September 11: Introduction: Types of Societies

In this class we review a theory of the evolution of human societies from ones with very simple subsistence technologies to ones with very elaborate subsistence technologies. The theory includes discussions of important differences between societies with different subsistence technologies. We will spend the rest of the course considering the consequences of these societal differences for the lives of people living in these societies.

Required Reading

Chapters 3 and 4 from Patrick Nolan and Gerhard Lenski, 2015, *Human Societies: An Introduction to Macrosociology*, Twelfth Edition. New York and Oxford: Oxford

University Press.

September 18: Introducing Hunter-Gatherer Societies

Your reading and the video we will watch in class introduce you to the history and way of life of two very well studied, and very different, hunting and gathering societies: the Ache and the !Kung. We will use this material as examples of the Nolan and Lenski model of the societal consequences of a foraging subsistence technology, and, as examples of how foraging societies differ from each other in ways that affect life courses.

Required Reading

Pages 41-57 and 65-73 from Kim Hill and A. Magdalena Hurtado, 1996, *Ache Life History: The Ecology and Demography of a Foraging People*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Figure 5.3, page 117, from Patrick Nolan and Gerhard Lenski, 2015, *Human Societies: An Introduction to Macrosociology*, Twelfth Edition. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Special resources: Class will start with the video “A Human Way of Life” (Videocass 001452 from the Audiovisual Library).

September 25: The Life Course for Hunters and Gatherers

Howell, and Hill and Hurtado, describe the life courses of the!Kung and the Ache while they were still living in foraging societies. To give some life to these life course descriptions, please read the selection from Shostak, in which an intelligent and articulate!Kung woman tells us about some of the important events in her own life story.

Required Reading

Chapter 2: Life History Stages, pages 26-57 in Nancy Howell, 2010, *Life Histories of the Dobe !Kung: Food, Fatness, and Well-Being Over the Life Span*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Pages 149-166 from Marjorie Shostak, 1981, *Nisa: The Life and Words of a!Kung Woman*. New York: Random House.

Pages 219-237 from Kim Hill and A. Magdalena Hurtado, 1996, *Ache Life History: The Ecology and Demography of a Foraging People*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

October 2: Life Course Stages in Different Societies: Timing and Types of Stages

Here we compare different types of societies in terms of the kinds of life stages they have and how they are timed, with special attention to the role of functional versus chronological age. The readings for the previous week provide rich information for hunting and gathering societies. Gillis discusses the transition from pre-industrial, advanced agrarian society to industrialized society in Europe. Gee provides the changing ages at which people in Canada made key life transitions during industrialization.

Required Reading

Gee, Ellen M. 1987. "Historical Change in the Family Life Course of Canadian Men and Women." Pp. 265-287 in *Aging in Canada: Social Perspectives, Second Edition*. Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside.

Gillis, John R. 2004. "Life Course and Transitions to Adulthood." Pp. 547-552 in Paula S. Frass (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood in History and Society*. New York: Macmillan Reference USA.

NOTE: This class will begin with the first mini-lecture on your research for your essay. We will discuss ethical issues and how to select and recruit a suitable respondent.

Required reading: Chapter 1(on general principles of inquiry), and Chapter 3 (on ethical issues) from:

Earl Babbie and Lance W. Roberts. 2018. *Fundamentals of Social Research, Fourth Canadian Edition*. Toronto: Nelson Education. ISBN-13: 978-0-17-657011-8.

October 9: Transitions between Stages: Transition Rites

Required Reading

Davis-Floyd, Robbie Elizabeth. 1991. "Ritual in the Hospital: Giving Birth the American Way." Pp. 275-284 in Philip Whitten and David E. K. Huner (eds.), *Anthropology: Contemporary Perspectives, 6th Edition*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

Pages 151-166 from Marjorie Shostak, 1981, *Nisa: The Life and Words of a!Kung Woman*. New York: Random House. You have read this earlier, but now focus on the material on transitions rites.

Stearns, Deborah C. 2004. "Rites of Passage." Pp. 241-242 in Paula S. Frass (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood in History and Society*. New York: Macmillan Reference USA.

Stearns, Deborah C. 2004. "Grief, Death, Funerals." Pp. 401-404 in Paula S. Frass (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood in History and Society*. New York: Macmillan Reference USA.

NOTE: This class will begin with the second mini-lecture on your research: how to conduct your interview.

Required reading: Chapter 11 (Qualitative Interviewing) from:

Earl Babbie and Lance W. Roberts. 2018. *Fundamentals of Social Research, Fourth Canadian Edition*. Toronto: Nelson Education. ISBN-13: 978-0-17-657011-8.

October 16: In-class mid-term test

October 23: Childhood in Different Societies *Required Reading*

Bradbury, Bettina. 1993. "Conclusions." Pp. 214-186 in Bettina Bradbury, *Working Families: Age, Gender, and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montreal*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.

"Comparative History of Childhood." 2004. Pp. 226-231 in Paula S. Frass (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood in History and Society*. New York: Macmillan Reference USA.

Gleason, Mona. 2004. "Canada." Pp. 129-131 in Paula S. Frass (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood in History and Society*. New York: Macmillan Reference USA.

Lassonde, Stephen. 2004. "Age and Development." Pp. 38-45 in Paula S. Frass (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood in History and Society*. New York: Macmillan Reference USA.

"Native American Children." 2004. Pp. 617-621 in Paula S. Frass (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood in History and Society*. New York: Macmillan Reference USA.

October 30: Old Age in Different Societies

Required Reading

Keith, Jennie. 1985. "Age in Anthropological Research." Pp. 231-240 in Robert H. Binstock and Ethel Shanas (eds.), *Handbook of Aging and the Social Sciences*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.

NOTE: this lecture will begin with a mini-lecture on: analysing your data and writing it up.

November 6: Reading Week, no class

November 13: Societies and Mortality – How and When do People Die?

Required Reading

Pages 174, 210 from Kim Hill and A. Magdalena Hurtado, 1996, *Ache Life History: The Ecology and Demography of a Foraging People*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

McCracken, Kevin and David R. Phillips. 2005. "International Demographic Transitions." Pp. 36-60 in Gavin J. Andrews and David R. Phillips (eds.), *Ageing and Place: Perspectives, Policy, Practice*. London: Routledge. For this week, focus on the material on mortality.

Meckel, Richard. 2004. "Infant Mortality." Pp. 474-478 in Paula S. Frass (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood in History and Society*. New York: Macmillan Reference USA.

Pages 248-250, 309, 316-17 from Marjorie Shostak, 1981, *Nisa: The Life and Words of a!Kung Woman*. New York: Random House.

November 20: Societies and Fertility; Social Implications of Mortality and Fertility

Required Reading

Pages 262, 267, 467-9 from Kim Hill and A. Magdalena Hurtado, 1996, *Ache Life History: The Ecology and Demography of a Foraging People*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

“Fertility Rates.” 2004. Pp. 359-362 in Paula S. Frass (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood in History and Society*. New York: Macmillan Reference USA.

McCracken, Kevin and David R. Phillips. 2005. “International Demographic Transitions.” Pp. 36-60 in Gavin J. Andrews and David R. Phillips (eds.), *Ageing and Place: Perspectives, Policy, Practice*. London: Routledge. Read parts on fertility.

Optional Reading on changes in mortality and fertility as a society changes:

Howell, Nancy. 2000. “Return to Dobe.” Pp. 362-382 in Nancy Howell, *Demography of the Dobe !Kung, Second Edition*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

NOTE: Essays due!

November 27: How People in Different Societies *See* the Life Course

Required Reading

Collings, Peter. 2000. “Aging and Life Course Development in an Inuit Community.” *Arctic Anthropology* 37: 111-125.

Klassen, Sherri. 2001. “The Life Cycle.” Pp. 193-203 in Peter N. Stearns (ed), *Encyclopedia of European Social History from 1350-2000*. New York: Scribner.

Optional Reading

Ikels, Charlotte, et al. 1992. “Perceptions of the Adult Life Course: A Cross-cultural Analysis.” *Ageing and Society* 12: 49-84.

December 4: In-class final test

EVALUATION

- 1) In-class mid-term test October 16, 25%
- 2) In-class final test, December 4: 25%.

3) Essay, due November 20, 50%

IMPORTANT! HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR ESSAY

You must hand in a hard copy of your essay AND you must submit it to Turnitin.com. The due date for both is November 20.

Handing in your hard copy: This is due November 20. You may hand this in weekdays 9-5 in room 225, 725 Spadina - be sure to date/time stamp it, and place in the 200 level mailbox, or at the START of the class on November 20.

NO FAX OR E-MAIL SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED. YOU CANNOT HAND YOUR PAPER IN TO ANYONE WORKING IN THE SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT NOR THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT MAIL ROOM.

Submitting your paper to Turnitin.com: This must also be done on or before November 13. Detailed instructions will be provided. Please note the following paragraph:

Turnitin.com: To deter and detect plagiarism, this course will make use of the turnitin.com system. Here is a standard paragraph about this: “Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site”.

Here is a link to instructions for students on how to use Turnitin:

<http://www.teaching.utoronto.ca/teaching/academicintegrity/turnitin/guide-students>
Assignments not submitted through *Turnitin* will receive a grade of zero (0%) **unless a student instead provides, along with their assignment**, sufficient secondary material (e.g., reading notes, outlines of the paper, rough drafts of the final draft, etc.) to establish that the paper they submitted was truly their own. The alternative (not submitting via *Turnitin*) is in place because, strictly speaking, using *Turnitin* is voluntary for students at the University of Toronto.

Plagiarism. Plagiarism is presentation of the writing of others as though it were your own. This includes copying passages from works written by others and including them in your essay without quotation marks. It is NOT sufficient to cite your sources; if you use their words, you must put them in quotation marks AND give proper citation.

Please also read the section on Academic Integrity issues below.

ESSAY TOPICS

All of you will write a research essay comparing the same kind of transition rite in two different societies, based on an interview with an informant. Your goal is to use course materials to explain similarities and differences in the “same” rite in different types of societies.

Transition rites are rituals marking a change from one life stage to another, or marking steps in the life course. Since the October 9 lecture on transition rites will use funerals as an example, you should consider another kind of transition rite such as weddings or graduation ceremonies.

To compare two different kind of society, you could:

1) compare Canada now to Canada some time ago, by interviewing an elderly person who has taken part in the kind of transition rite you are interested in, both recently and decades ago. Your focus will be on major ways that Canada has changed in (say) the past half century, how these changes have changed the transition rite, and how some aspects of the rite may have survived extensive societal changes.

Or

(2) do the same thing for a different country, interviewing an older person who has experience of the same transition rite in that country in recent times and long ago.

Or

(3) compare the same rite in Canada today and a very different country today. The comparison country should be different in terms of the societal variables discussed in Lenski et al. In today's world, this means looking at a much less well developed society.

Be sure that you compare truly comparable transition rites. For example if your rite of choice is the wedding, it would not make sense to compare a Christian wedding in Canada with a Hindu wedding in India. It would be too difficult to establish which differences come from different religious traditions and which from the different societal contexts.

IMPORTANT: YOU MUST FOLLOW ETHICAL GUIDELINES!!

Since your essay will be based on an interview, you must follow the proper procedures for ethical research using human subjects. These procedures include: no research on vulnerable populations, protection of your informant's privacy and anonymity, gaining informed consent, and emphasizing the informant's freedom to not answer questions and to stop the interview at will. These matters will be discussed in more detail in the mini-lecture on October 2. Copies of the necessary "informed consent" form will be provided. Since these are very important issues, do not start your research until after the lecture on October 2.

TIMING OF YOUR INTERVIEW

You **MUST NOT** start your research until after the lecture on October 2 (see previous paragraph). It is also highly advisable to wait until after the lecture on transition rites on October 9, since this will be of great help to you in preparing for your interview. You may look for a suitable respondent before these dates but do not interview them. You should also do the relevant course readings (especially those on transition rites) before your interview.

GUIDELINES FOR ESSAY WRITING AND SUBMISSION

PAGE LIMITS

There is a strict page limit of no more than 15 pages for the essay, double spaced, with font size 12 points and margins 1". References and tables (if any) are not included in the page

limit.

Please review relevant materials in the Academic Handbook, such as the warnings about plagiarism.

LATE WORK

If your essay is handed in late, I will deduct 10% of the maximum possible grade for *each weekday* the work is late. To hand your hard copy in on time, you must do so at class on November 20 or in room 225 (725 Spadina) by 5 PM when the room will be locked. Your Turnitin copy is on time if submitted by midnight of November 20.

PERMISSION FOR LATE SUBMISSIONS AND MAKE-UP TESTS

If you have acceptable reasons concerning things beyond your control, you may apply for permission to write a make-up test or hand in your essay late. You must have a very good reason, and you must be able to document it.

The most common reason is ill health that makes it impossible to write the test at the scheduled time, or a period of ill health that makes it impossible to complete your essay on time. You must supply a duly completed Verification of Student Illness or Injury form (available at www.illnessverification.utoroto.ca). This form may only be completed by a physician, surgeon, nurse practitioner, dentist or clinical psychologist. Or, you may provide a doctor's note. This note should not indicate the specific nature of a health issue but **MUST** include the start and estimated end time of the illness and the extent it affects your ability to do your course work. Submit the form or note to the instructor in a sealed envelope addressed to the instructor, in class, during the instructor's office hours, or via the drop boxes in room 225, 725 Spadina. Please note that it is your responsibility to work ahead on your essay, so a minor short illness days before the due date is not an excuse for lateness.

In case of problems other than your own illness, such as personal or family crisis, get a letter from your registrar. College registrars are very experienced, very discreet, and there to help you.

Submit your documentation to your professor only, not the TA or the Sociology Department.

Unacceptable reasons for lateness include: (1) "It is the end of term and I have so many tests and assignments." So does every other student! And you knew this was coming; it is your responsibility to work ahead. (2) "My family has booked me in for a vacation/my sister's wedding in a foreign country/ other trips or occasions." It is your responsibility to show up for your academic work, including lectures, tests, and handing in essays. (3) "My computer crashed." It is your responsibility to work ahead and to back up your work. (4) "I got stuck in traffic, my car broke down, etc." It is your responsibility to show up on time.

DATES FOR MAKE-UP TESTS

If you have to miss a test for a valid reason beyond your control, and you have appropriate documentation as described above, you may write a make-up test.

Dates will be announced later.

GETTING HELP IN WRITING YOUR ESSAY

Please remember that your college has a writing lab with lots of experience. These labs are always very popular and very busy, so you need to make appointments well in advance.

MORE ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. Academic integrity is a fundamental value of learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that your University of Toronto degree is valued and respected as a true signifier of your individual academic achievement.

The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters outlines the behaviours that constitute academic misconduct, the processes for addressing academic offences, and the penalties that may be imposed. You are expected to be familiar with the contents of this document. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgment.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment (this includes working in groups on assignments that are supposed to be individual work).

On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone.
- Looking at someone else's answers.
- Letting someone else look at your answers.
- Misrepresenting your identity.
- Submitting an altered test for re-grading.

Misrepresentation:

- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes.
- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following the procedures outlined in the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*. If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information from me or other available campus resources like the College Writing Centers, the Academic Success Centre, or the U of T Writing Website.

STUDENTS WHO NEED ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please approach Accessibility Services at (416) 978 8060; accessibility.utoronto.ca.

Accommodations include getting a volunteer note-taker and writing tests under special conditions.

Do not approach your professor or TA about accommodations. Accessibility services has the necessary expertise, and they provide full confidentiality, so your privacy is protected.