

NEWSLETTER OF THE
Comparative & Historical SOCIOLOGY
SECTION OF THE AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

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**WHAT'S UP WITH GRADUATE PROGRAMS
IN COMPARATIVE-HISTORICAL SOCIOLOGY?**

Rachel R. Parker and William G. Roy, UCLA

How many graduate programs offer formal programs in comparative-historical sociology and/or macrosociology? There is no doubt that the specialty is flourishing and thriving. In the last two decades, it has moved from the periphery into the mainstream of the discipline. Many of the best-known figures in the area basically trained themselves. Today, graduate students are able to select among a wide variety of formal training programs. But just how extensive such programs are has remained a matter of conjecture. The 1990 Business Meeting of the Comparative-Historical Section commissioned this report to examine the distribution of training programs in a more systematic fashion. The basic finding is that formal programs in comparative-historical sociology are widespread, but still found only in a minority of doctoral programs.

Surveys were sent to 75 universities. The sample was selected by examining the *ASA Guide to Graduate Departments* and selecting top-ranked departments, departments known to have a program, and departments which included well-known comparative-historical sociologists. No doubt, some programs were missed. We lacked the resources to send the survey to all graduate programs, and this strategy seemed the fairest and most effective. Forty-three surveys were returned, a response rate of 57%.

Of the universities returning questionnaires, 17 (40%) have a formal graduate program in comparative-historical sociology and/or macrosociology; 3 (7%) have an informal program; 23 (53%) have no program. For the schools with macrosociology programs, the average length of time the program has been in existence is ten years. We are still a young specialty that has begun to mature in the last decade. Only three programs have been in existence for more than twenty years. The average number of faculty in the program is 7, with a range from 2 to 20. The average number of graduate students is 21, with as few as two and as many as one hundred.

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SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. Does your department offer a graduate program in Macrosociology and/or Comparative-Historical Sociology?
2. How many years has it been in existence?
3. How many faculty are involved in the program?
4. How many graduate students?
5. Does your department offer a graduate course in Comparative-Historical Methods?
6. How often is it offered? [1 = every year; 2 = every other year; 3 = less often]
7. What is generally the course enrollment?
8. If not, do you plan to add a course in the near future?

[Results on facing page]

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The election of Council members for the Comparative Historical Sociology Section has been completed. A total of 170 ballots were cast, and the two nominees receiving the largest numbers of votes were Andrew Abbott and Sonya Rose. In accordance with Section by-laws, the three-year terms of Council members begin on the day after the annual business meeting of the Section at the ASA Annual Meeting. The by-laws also urge newly-elected Council members to attend meetings of the Council as non-voting members prior to assuming office.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Nominations Committee--Liz Clemens, Harland Prechel, and Rick Rubinson--for their numerous contributions in selecting the four nominees and to the Ad Hoc Subcommittee--Bob Antonio, Norm Yetman, and Pat Johnston--for tallying the ballots.

--Lew Mennerick, Chair, Nominations Committee

Social Science History Association Conference

The SSHA will hold its 16th annual conference in New Orleans, LA on October 31-November 3, 1991. This year's program committee has actively solicited papers in the areas of race and ethnicity, historical demography, and comparative/global perspectives. For more information, contact: Indiana Univ. Conference Bureau, Indiana Memorial Union, 1-9, Bloomington, IN 47405.

Now Available: Applied/Practice Directory

The ASA and the Society for Applied Sociology have made available the 1991 directory of "Graduate Programs in Applied Sociology and Sociological Practice" (2nd ed). This 48-page directory lists the details of 118 graduate programs that offer applied or practice components. Copies are available for \$5.00 from: ASA Teaching Services Program, 1722 N Street NW, Washington DC 20036.

	SURVEY QUESTION NUMBERS							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Arizona State Univ	no				no			no
Brown University	yes	20	4	2-3	no (included in general course)			
Columbia University	informal		2	10-15	yes	2	20	
Cornell University	yes	15	10	25	no (sociology of development)			
CUNY	yes	10	20	25	yes	1	6-10	
Emory University	no				no			yes
Florida State University	yes				yes	2	15	
Fordham University	no				no			maybe
George Washington Univ	no				no			no
Harvard University	no				yes	2	10-15	
Iowa State University	no				no (covered in other methods courses)			
Johns Hopkins Univ	yes	4	3	8	yes	2	15	
Michigan State Univ	no				no			maybe
New School Social Res	yes	6	4	18	yes	1	20	
North Carolina State	no				yes	2	5	
Northwestern Univ	yes	5	3-6	10-15	yes	1	10-15	
Ohio State University	(being established)				yes	1	10	
Penn State University	no				no			depends on hiring
Rutgers University	yes	22	8	10	no			yes
SUNY, Albany	yes	1	6	8	yes	1	10	
SUNY, Binghamton	yes	21	12	100	yes	1	10	
Syracuse University	no				yes	3		
University of Alabama	no				no			no
U of Cal, Berkeley	no				yes	1	20-30	
U of Cal, Irvine	informal		2		yes	2	10-12	
U of Cal, Los Angeles	yes	7	19	29	yes	1	20	
U of Cal, Santa Barbara	no				yes	1	15	
U of Cal, Santa Cruz	yes	12	6-8	25	yes	2	10	
University of Florida	no				no			no
University of Georgia	no				no			no
University of Illinois	no				no			don't know
University of Kansas	yes	16	6-7		yes	2	10	
University of Kentucky	no				yes	2	15	
U of Md, College Park	yes	8	8	20	no			no (pol. economy)
Univ of Minnesota	yes	6	5-6	15	yes	2	15	
U of Nebraska, Lincoln	no				no			no
Univ of North Carolina	no				yes			
Univ of Pennsylvania	informal		6	4	yes	2	6-7	
Univ of Texas, Austin	yes	5	6	10	yes	1	15	
Univ of Washington	yes		7	10-12	yes	1	10	
Vanderbilt University	no				no			yes
Yale University	no				no			yes

The questionnaires reveal the broad range of topics covered by macro and historical research. Some of the formal programs have specific foci: several emphasize the comparative and historical study of international development; two programs are called Political Economy. Several universities without a graduate program in comparative historical or macrosociology noted that they offered programs or courses which contained a strong macro and/or comparative historical focus. Topics included work, gender, and inequality, and the study of far-Eastern societies. One university has a department of Rural Sociology which offers a macro program in Developmental Sociology.

The courses offered in the formal comparative-historical or macro programs illustrate the broad range of topics covered by our specialty. The majority of courses emphasize large-scale political and economic transformations; other topics include inequality and citizenship, gender stratification, and age differentiation. Typical course offerings include the transition from feudalism to capitalism, modern capitalist development, historical and modern states, emergence of the welfare state, Third World development, class formation, social movements, revolution, culture, and ideology.

Twenty-five (58%) of the schools returning questionnaires offer a graduate course in comparative-historical methods. Of these, 11 offer the course every year; 12 offer it every other year; and one offers it less frequently. (One school did not specify.) The average course enrollment is 13. Not surprisingly, the universities with formal programs are more likely to offer a comparative-historical methods class. Of the 17 schools with a formal program, 13 offer the course, while all three with an informal program offer a methods class. Of the 23 schools with no program, 8 have a methods course.

These methods courses generally follow three strategies. Most require the study of exemplary scholarly works. Second, methodological works are often assigned which address such issues as the logic of comparison and contrast, causation, time and space, units of analysis,

types of data, strategies of explanation, archival work, and the use of evidence. Finally, many courses require hands-on work including document analysis, historical demographic techniques, and/or quantitative methods such as time-series or event history analysis. One course includes a visit to the state historical library.

The orientation in most is toward empirical analysis. As a field we seem to emphasize solidly-grounded substantive studies of concrete events and processes. Both the comparative and historical dimensions are stressed. Our methods courses generally highlight the importance of place and time. The comparative includes not only the study of more than one society or nation, but a self-consciousness about comparative logics regardless of the number of societies studied. The historical dimension is how we teach methods that deal with events, change, and the historical context of all social processes.

Of the universities which do not offer a comparative-historical methods class, four plan to add one in the near future; nine do not plan to add a course, and five are uncertain. Several universities without the methods class mentioned that the principal difficulty in adding one was lack of funding, rather than lack of faculty or student interest in such a course.

The general picture is one of vitality and growth. We can begin to see a convergence toward a few distinct styles of programs, but there is still enough variety and experimentation that there is little chance of stagnation. The most important development is that graduate students entering the field will not have to discover for themselves as much about doing comparative-historical sociology as many of their mentors did.

Did we miss your program?

If so, write a letter about it to the Newsletter...

The letter will appear in the October issue

SECTION ACTIVITIES AT THE ASA ANNUAL MEETING

FRIDAY, AUGUST 23

8:30 am

Rational Choice Theory and Historical Sociology: Pro and Con

Organizer and Presider: Craig Calhoun, Univ. of
North Carolina-Chapel Hill

Panel:

Michael Hechter, University of Arizona
Jack Goldstone, University of Calif-Davis
Charles Tilly, New School for Social Research

10:30 am

Social Movements in Historical Perspective

Organizer and Presider: George Steinmetz,
University of Chicago

Panel:

Julia Adams, Univ. of Michigan-Ann Arbor
Harold Benenson, McGill University
Eiko Ikegami, Institute for Advanced Study and
Yale University

2:30 pm

Author Meets Critics: Charles Tilly's *Coercion, Capital and European States*

Organizer and Presider: Ron Aminzade,
University of Minnesota

Panel:

Julia Adams, Univ. of Michigan-Ann Arbor
Christopher Chase-Dunn, Johns Hopkins Univ.
Charles Tilly, New School for Social Research

4:30 pm

Refereed Roundtables

Organizer: Carole Turbin, SUNY-Binghamton

5:30 pm

Section Business Meeting (to 6:20 pm)

8:00 pm

Section Reception and Party!

in Barbara Laslett's suite

*There are lots more sessions and
seminars of interest to comparative-
historical sociologists at the ASA ,
but no more space in the Newsletter*

So check your programs, and

***DON'T FORGET THE SECTION
PARTY !***

*Friday August 23, 8 pm
Barbara Laslett's suite*

CHANGE OF EDITORSHIP AT PPST

Beginning with Vol. 9, Political Power and Social Theory will be guided by the editorial team of Diane E. Davis and Howard Kimeldorf. The new editors, working closely with an expanded editorial board, will continue the journal's commitment to publishing original scholarship that advances our interdisciplinary, critical understanding of the linkages between class relations, political power, and historical development. Potential contributors should send manuscripts (4 copies) to Prof. Diane E. Davis, Department of Sociology, New School for Social Research, 65 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10003.

Editorial board members are: Ronald Aminzade, Michael Burawoy, John Coatsworth, Susan Eckstein, Gosta Esping-Andersen, Peter Evans, Michael Goldfield, Nora Hamilton, Evelyn Huber Stephens, Florencia Mallon, Jeffery M. Paige, Jill Quadagno, Richard E. Ratcliffe, Ian Roxborough, Michael Schwartz, John D. Stephens, Charles Tilly, Jonathan Weiner, Maurice Zeitlin, Sharon Zukin.