

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
SOCIAL RELATIONS IN THE ECONOMY

SPRING 1999
Monday-Wednesday 11am

Professor Viviana Zelizer
Department of Sociology
2-C-14 Green Hall
Telephone: 8-4557
e-mail: vzelizer@princeton.edu

The course offers a sociological account of production, consumption, distribution, and transfer of assets. Examining different sectors of the economy from corporations and finance to households, immigrants, welfare, and illegal markets, we explore how in all areas of economic life people are creating, maintaining, symbolizing, and transforming meaningful social relations. Economic life, from this perspective, is as social as religion, family, or education.

Preceptors: Kieran Healy, Brian Steensland

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. One in-class midterm examination (short essays).
2. One final examination.
3. One paper (8-10 double-spaced pages), due May Friday, May 7.
4. Precept participation.

A package with required readings is available at Pequod Copy. Readings are also on reserve at Firestone Library and on the web.

COURSE OUTLINE

WEEK 1. (FEBRUARY 1) COMPETING ANALYSES OF ECONOMIC LIFE

- ◆ Richard Swedberg and Mark Granovetter, "Introduction," pp. 1-26 in *The Sociology of Economic Life*, edited by M. Granovetter and R. Swedberg. Boulder: Westview Press, 1992.
 - ◆ Gary Becker, *Accounting for Tastes*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996, chapter 7, "The Economic Way of Looking at Life," pp.139-156.
 - ◆ Mark Granovetter, *Getting a Job: A Study of Contacts and Careers*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995 [1974], Introduction, pp. 3-22; chapters 2 and 3, pp. 41-62.
 - ◆ Christine L. Williams, *Still A Man's World: Men Who Do Women's Work*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995, chapter 1, pp. 1-5; chapter 5, pp. 81-108.
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WEEK 2. (FEBRUARY 8) CORPORATIONS

- ◆ Annalee Saxenian, *Regional Advantage: Culture and Competition in Silicon Valley and Route 128*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994, Introduction, pp. 1-9; chapter 2, "Silicon Valley: Competition and Community," pp. 29-57.
 - ◆ Calvin Morrill, "Conflict Management, Honor, and Organizational Change," *American Journal of Sociology* 97 (November 1991): 585-621.
 - ◆ Nicole Woolsey Biggart, *Charismatic Capitalism: Direct Selling Organizations in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989, Introduction, pp. 1-19; chapter 4, pp. 70-97.
 - ◆ Daniel Kahneman, Jack L. Knetsch, and Richard H. Thaler, "Fairness and the Assumptions of Economics," pp. 220-235 in *Quasi Rational Economics*, edited by Richard Thaler. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1991.
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WEEK 3. (FEBRUARY 15) FINANCE

- ◆ Mitchel Y. Abolafia, *Making Markets*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996, Introduction, pp. 1-13; chapter 1, pp. 14-37, "Homo Economicus Unbound: Bond Traders on Wall Street."
- ◆ Charles Smith, "Auctions: From Walras to the Real World," pp. 176-192 in *Explorations in Economic Sociology*, edited by Richard Swedberg. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1993.
- ◆ Eric Helleiner, "National Currencies and National Identities," *American Behavioral Scientist* 41 (August, 1998): 1409-36.
- ◆ Viviana Zelizer, "Payments and Social Ties." *Sociological Forum* 11 (September 1996): 481-95.

WEEK 4. (FEBRUARY 22) LABOR MARKETS

- ◆ Chris Tilly and Charles Tilly, *Work Under Capitalism*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1998, chapter 1 and 2, pp. 1-35.
 - ◆ Barbara F. Reskin and Patricia A. Roos, *Job Queues, Gender Queues*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990, chapter 1, pp. 3-27; chapter 3, pp. 69-90.
 - ◆ Joe Feagin and Nikitah Imani, "Racial Barriers to African American Entrepreneurship: An Exploratory Study," *Social Problems* 41 (November 1994): 562-84.
 - ◆ Alex Stepick III and Guillermo Grenier, "Cubans In Miami," pp. 79-100 in *In The Barrios*, edited by Joan Moore and Raquel Pinderhughes. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1993.
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WEEK 5. (MARCH 1) CONSUMER MARKETS

- ◆ George Ritzer, *The McDonaldization of America*. Thousand Oaks, California: Pine Forge, 1996, chapter 1, pp. 1-16.
 - ◆ James L. Watson, "Transnationalism, Localization, and Fast Foods in East Asia," pp. 1-38 in *Golden Arches East: McDonald's In East Asia*, edited by James L. Watson. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 1997.
 - ◆ George Sanchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity In Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993, chapter 8, "Familiar Sounds of Change: Music and the Growth of Mass Culture," pp. 171-187.
 - ◆ Kathy Peiss, "Making Faces: The Cosmetics Industry and the Cultural Construction of Gender, 1890-1930," *Genders* 7 (Spring 1990): 143-69.
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WEEK 6. MARCH 8: REVIEW AND EXAM

MARCH 10: MIDTERM

SPRING RECESS

WEEK 7. (MARCH 22) HOUSEHOLD ECONOMY

- ◆ Julie Brines, "Economic Dependency, Gender, and the Division of Labor at Home," *American Journal of Sociology* 100 (November 1994): 652-688.
 - ◆ Viviana Zelizer, "The Creation of Domestic Currencies." *American Economic Review Papers and Proceedings* 84 (May 1994): 138-42.
 - ◆ Kathryn Edin and Laura Lein, *Making Ends Meet: How Single Mothers Survive Welfare and Low-Wage Work*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1997, Introduction, pp. 1-19; chapter 6, "Survival Strategies," pp. 143-67.
 - ◆ Sherri Grasmuck and Patricia R. Pessar, *Between Two Islands*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992, Introduction, pp. 1-3, and chapter 6, "Households and International Migration" pp. 133-61.
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WEEK 8. (MARCH 29) WELFARE ECONOMY. Lecturer: Brian Steensland

- ◆ Charles Murray, "Incentives to Fail: Maximizing Short -Term Gains," pp.154-66 in *Losing Ground: American Social Policy, 1950-1980* (2d edition) New York: Basic Books, 1994 [1984].
 - ◆ Kathryn Edin and Laura Lein, *Making Ends Meet: How Single Mothers Survive Welfare and Low-Wage Work*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1997, chapter 3 , "Why Don't Welfare Reliant Mothers Go to Work?" pp. 60-87.
 - ◆ Patricia Fernandez-Kelly, "Towanda's Triumph: Social and Cultural Capital in the Transition to Adulthood in the Urban Ghetto," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 18 (1994): 88-111.
 - ◆ William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987, chapter 2, "Social Change and Social Dislocations in the Inner City," pp. 20-62
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WEEK 9. (APRIL 5) INFORMAL ECONOMY. Guest lecturer: Bruce Western.

- ◆ Manuel Castells and Alejandro Portes , "World Underneath: The Origins, Dynamics, and Effects of the Informal Economy," pp. 11-37 in *The Informal Economy*, edited by Alejandro Portes, Manuel Castells, and Lauren A. Benton. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989.
- ◆ Sarah J. Mahler, *American Dreaming: Immigrant Life on the Margins*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995, chapter 6, "Making Money off the Margins," pp. 138-58.
- ◆ Philippe Bourgois, *In Search Of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio*. New York: Cambridge University Press, Introduction, pp. 1-18; chapter 3, " Crackhouse Management," pp. 77-113.
- ◆ Bruce Western, Katherine Beckett, and David Harding, "The Penal System and the American Labor Market," unpublished paper, May 1998, pp. 1-30

WEEK 10. (APRIL 12) MARKETS IN HUMAN GOODS. Lecturer: Kieran Healy.

- ◆ Richard Titmuss, *The Gift Relationship: From Human Blood to Social Policy*. New York: New Press [1971] 1997, chapter 11, "Is the Gift a Good One?," pp. 200-218; chapter 12, "Blood and the Law of the Market Place," pp. 219-35.
 - ◆ Andrew Kimbrell, "Baby-Selling, Pure and Simple," pp. 99-117 in *The Human Body Shop* San Francisco: Harper Collins
 - ◆ Elisabeth M. Landes and Richard A. Posner, "The Economics of the Baby Shortage," *Journal of Legal Studies* 7 (1978): pp. 323-48.
 - ◆ David J. Rothman, "The International Organ Traffic," *New York Review of Books* March 26th 1998, pp. 14-17
 - ◆ Lee Gutkind, "Beyond the 'God Squad,'" pp. 152-165 in *Many Sleepless Nights*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press
 - ◆ Karen Wright, "The Body Bazaar," *Discover*, October 1998, pp. 115-120
 - ◆ Margaret Lock, "Deadly Disputes: Ideologies and Brain Death in Japan," pp. 142-67 in *Organ Transplantation: meanings and Realities.*, edited by Stuart J Younger, Renee C. Fox, and Laurence J. O'Connell. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995.
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WEEK 11. (APRIL 19) SEXUAL ECONOMY

- ◆ Richard A. Posner, *Sex and Reason*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992, chapter 5, "Sex and Rationality," pp. 11-43.
 - ◆ Viviana A. Zelizer, "The Purchase of Intimacy," unpublished paper, 1998.
 - ◆ Rebecca Tushnet, "Rules of Engagement." *The Yale Law Journal* 107 (1998):2583-2618.
 - ◆ John Knodel , Mark VanLandingham, Chanpen Saengtienchai, and Anthony Pramualratana, "Thai Views of Sexuality and Sexual Behavior," *Health Transition Review* 6 (1996): 179-201.
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WEEK 12. (APRIL 26) THE FUTURE OF ECONOMIC LIFE

- ◆ Robert H. Frank and Philip J. Cook, *The Winner-Take-All Society*. New York: Penguin, 1995, Chapter 1, pp. 1-22.
- ◆ Saskia Sassen, *Cities In A World Economy*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge, 1994, chapter 1, pp. 1-8; 6 and 7, pp. 99-124.
- ◆ Robert D. Putnam, "The Prosperous Community: Social Capital and Public Life," *The American Prospect* 13 (Spring, 1993): 35-42.
- ◆ Alejandro Portes and Patricia Landolt, "The Downside of Social Capital," *The American Prospect* 24 (May-June 1996): 18-22.

TERM PAPER INSTRUCTIONS AND SUGGESTED PAPER TOPICS

In consultation with your preceptor, select one of the listed topics and follow the outlined guidelines in preparing your paper. Students are encouraged to propose a different paper topic from the suggestions below, provided that it is based on a subject raised during the course. In any case, the paper should reflect knowledge and critical analysis of the pertinent literature plus a brief empirical test. **Turn in a one-paragraph statement that includes your topic, hypothesis, and method to your preceptor no later than March 8.**

To investigate what other sociologists have concluded about your topic, you must do research in the library (or, if you already have the know-how, by means of the Internet). You should begin with *Sociofile* in the Social Science Reference Center in Firestone. Ask a reference librarian to help you define effective search parameters on your topic.

PAPER OUTLINE:

Your paper should include **all** of the following five elements:

1. State your hypothesis and explain how your specific problem is linked to a broader sociological argument or theory.
2. Review the sociological literature in your area, showing how others have approached the same or a similar problem. Consult and incorporate any relevant required readings in the syllabus and **at least three additional academic sources (articles or books)**. As a starting point, check the bibliography in your assigned readings.
3. Conduct a brief empirical test using one of the methods discussed in class (surveys, interviews, participant observation, content analysis).
4. State your conclusions showing how your findings support or invalidate your hypothesis.
5. Include as an appendix your measurement tool. For surveys include a copy of your survey. For interviews, include a list of the questions you asked. For content analysis, provide a few samples of the objects that were coded. For participant observation, attach a diagram of the observation site.

PAPER TOPICS:

1. Every market involves particular sorts of understandings and relations among producers, distributors, and consumers. For your paper, select one or two of Princeton's Student Agencies - - student-run businesses - - and, using interviews and participant observation, examine:

- ◆ What's special about the Princeton market;
- ◆ What makes for a successful student enterprise,
- ◆ How do student entrepreneurs get started, e.g. patterns of recruitment by gender, friendship networks, or ethnicity.
- ◆ Managers' relationships to producers and to employees
- ◆ Employee training practices.

Given your arguments and descriptions, draw conclusions about the conditions likely to lead to the success or failure of a student-run enterprise.

Models for this kind of analysis include: readings from week 2 on corporations, week 9 on the informal economy; and Granovetter's *Getting a Job*.

2. Our discussion of consumer markets (week 5) focuses on the dual process of globalization and localization in consumer practices. For your paper, choose two products, media, or organizations that vary significantly in how much they are oriented to a particular local market or niche. Show how and why the presentation of these goods and services differs. For example, in the case of media you might take an ethnically oriented medium, magazine, or business periodical and conduct a content analysis of advertising appeals. In the case of products, you might look at differences in sales and distribution of the products, including the use of personnel to sell it. In the case of organizations, you might spend time observing differences in language, style, sales practices, and services in an ethnic store vs. a large chain store.
3. In *Getting a Job*, Mark Granovetter discusses the importance of weak ties in the process of finding employment. Discuss alternative theories (economic, psychological, cultural) of job hunting. Test Granovetter's theory on the impact of social networks by asking 20 people how they found their jobs (see appendix on how to phrase your questions). Consult Granovetter's article "The Strength of Weak Ties," *American Journal of Sociology* 78 (May 1973): 1360-79.
4. Readings on the sexual economy - - week 11 - - present different explanations of the relationship between monetary payments and intimate transactions. For your paper, test the validity of these different approaches by examining the economy of teen-age dating, including who pays for what, when; what sorts of gifts are exchanged, how gifts are paid for (money gifts, earned income, parents' credit cards) Compare teen magazines (articles, letters to the editor) with etiquette or advice books, and web sites for teens.