

Sociology 924 (Spring 2018)

**Social Capital and Public Life
(Network Mechanisms in Sociology)**

9:30AM – 12PM, Mondays
SocSci 8108

Office Hours: Tuesday 2-4pm or by appointment

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Overview:

This graduate course aims to provide a *selective* survey of the social networks and social capital literature (broadly defined) in sociology and other social science disciplines. Because the concept of social capital has been actively applied to a wide range of topics across multiple disciplines, our survey will be inevitably limited in its scope. The focus will be on understanding how various properties and mechanisms of social networks can shape our social, economic, and political life.

As a graduate seminar course, the main goal of this course is to help you develop your own original research. I expect you to pay attention to methodological issues (i.e. research design, measurement, data sources, analytic methods etc.) as well as theoretical and substantive issues in reading materials. Toward the end of the semester, I hope you find the theories of social capital a productive “research programme” and useful for developing your own research project.

Format

This is a seminar course, and as such participation and dialogue is essential. Each session will begin with a brief set of comments by me, in which I will set the stage by summarizing the content of readings assigned for that week and trying to provide some context for them. The remainder of the session will be led by student discussion leaders.

I will lead the discussions in the first two weeks, while everyone else is getting settled. After that, each student will be assigned to lead the discussion on at least one article (possibly more) in most weeks. The student will serve as the “author” of the assigned article and lead the discussion about the article, very briefly presenting the key arguments & contributions of the article and responding to other students’ comments and criticisms.

Summary of Requirements:

Participation. I expect that you will do the assigned readings, attend seminar regularly, and participate actively.

Reading responses. Each week you must turn in a short statement (no more than two double-spaced pages) outlining your reactions to the reading you have done for that week. You do not have to summarize. I am interested in what you think about what you have read. These are due by noon on Sunday at the course website.

Term paper. The major course requirement is a research paper or research proposal, depending on your stage in graduate school. If you opt to do a research paper, it should be a paper that brings data to bear on a research question. I encourage you to think of this not simply as a term paper for this course, but as something you will seek to publish or develop into a publishable paper. If you already have a project, you are more than welcome to develop a paper from that project, as long as it is relevant (somehow) to the topics we cover in the course. If you do not have a project and are not ready to write a research paper, you can opt for a research proposal in which you will outline a research project you would like to pursue in the near future.

You are encouraged to begin working on this assignment immediately and work on it throughout the term. A 2-page proposal will be due on Monday in Week 6 (March 5) in class (you are welcome to submit this earlier in the semester). At the end of the semester, we will have a mini-conference in which you will present your paper. The final draft of the paper is due on Friday, May 11.

Grading:

I am reluctant to adopt a rigid percentage weighting scheme in a seminar setting, but the following is a rough guideline: 60% term paper; 15% discussion initiation; 15% reading responses; 10% for 'qualitative factors' including participation.

Readings:

Most readings will be available from the course website in digital format or through the University libraries.

Topic Schedule

Week 1 (Jan 29) Introduction & Organizing; Social Capital: History and Debates

Required readings:

- James Coleman. 1990. *Foundations of Social Theory*. Ch. 12
- Robert Putnam. 1993. *Making Democracy Work*. Ch 6.
- Nan Lin, 1999 “Building a Network Theory of Social Capital” in *Social Capital: Theory and Research*.”
- Alejandro Portes. 1998. “Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology,” Annual Review of Sociology.

Further readings:

- Pierre Bourdieu. 1986. “The Forms of Capital”
- James Moody and Pamela Paxton. 2009. “Building Bridges: Linking Social Capital and Social Networks to Improve Theory and Research,” *American Behavioral Scientist*.
- Michael Woolcock. 2010. “The Rise and Routinization of Social Capital, 1988-2008”
- Kwon and Adler 2015. “Social Capital: Maturation of a Field of Research”

Week 2 (Feb 5) Social Networks and Social Capital: Data, Measurement, and Methods

Required readings:

From *The SAGE Handbook of Social Network Analysis*:

- Alexandra Marin and Barry Wellman. “Social Network Analysis: An Introduction”
- Robert Hanneman and Mark Riddle. “Brief Instruction to Analyzing Social Network Data,” “Concepts and Measures for Basic Network Analysis”
- Peter Marsden, “Survey Methods for Network Data”
- Peter Marsden, “Network Data and Measurement.”

Further readings:

- Daniel Hawes et al. “Social Capital in 50 States: Measuring State-level Social Capital, 1986-2004.”
- Anil Rupasingha et al. “The Production of Social Capital in US counties.”
- Stanley Wasserman and Katherine Faust, *Social Network Analysis: Methods and Applications*
- Peter Carrington et al. *Models and Methods in Social Network Analysis*.

Week 3 (Feb 12) Where Do Networks Come From?

Required readings:

- Peter Blau & Joseph Schwartz. 1984. *Crosscutting Social Circles: Testing a Macrostructural Theory of Intergroup Relations*. Ch. 1, 2, 7.
- Miller McPherson, Lynn Smith-Lovin, and James Cook. 2001. “Birds of a Feather: Homophily in Social Networks.” *Annual Review of Sociology*.
- Scott Feld. 1981. “The Focused Organization of Social Ties.” *AJS*.
- Christopher Winship. “Time and Scheduling” in *The Oxford Handbook of Analytical Sociology*
- Randall Collins. *Interaction Ritual Chains*. Ch. 3
- Steve Vaisey & Omar Lizardo. 2010. Can cultural worldviews influence network composition? *Social Forces*, 88: 1595– 1618.

Week 4 (Feb 19) With a Little Help from My Friends: Social Networks as Resources

Required readings:

- Fernandez et al. 2000. "Social Capital at Work: Networks and Employment at a Phone Center"
- Ted Mouw. "Social Capital and Finding a Job: Do Contacts Matter?"
- Sandra Smith. 2005. "Don't Put My Name on It: Social Capital Activation and Job-Finding Assistance among the Black Urban Poor." *AJS*.
- Lauren Rivera. 2012. "Hiring as Cultural Matching: The Case of Elite Professional Service Firms." *ASR*.
- Matthew Desmond. 2012. "Disposable Ties and the Urban Poor." *AJS*.
- Cameron Macdonald. "If We're Not Calling You... We Don't Need You: Habitus and Deficits in Middle-Class Social Support." Unpublished Manuscript.

Further readings:

- Nan Lin 1999. "Social Networks and Status Attainment" *ARS*
- R. Fernandez and I Fernandez-Mater, "Networks, race, and hiring" *ASR*
- RM Fernandez, ML Sosa "Gendering the job: Networks and recruitment at a call center" *ASR*

Week 5 (Feb 26) Social Isolation in America? Changing Personal Community

Required readings:

- Miller McPherson, Lynn Smith-Lovin, and Matthew Bradshears. 2006. "Social Isolation in America: Changes in Core Discussion Networks over Two Decades." *ASR*
- Matthew Bradshears. 2011. "Small Networks and High Isolation? A Reexamination of American Discussion Networks." *Social Networks*
- Claude Fischer. *Still Connected*. Ch1 & 7
- Mario L. Small. 2013. "Weak Ties and the Core Discussion Network: Why People Regularly Discuss Important Matters with Unimportant Alters." *Social Networks*
- Eric Klinenberg. 2012. *Going Solo*. "Introduction."
- Robert Putnam. "How Bowling Alone Leads to Aging Alone: Social Capital in the Later Years of Life" in *Hearing on the State of Social Capital in America*.

Further readings:

- Robert Putnam. 2000. "Informal Social Connections" in *Bowling Alone* (Ch.6)
- Byungkyu Less and Peter Bearman. 2016. "Important Matters in Political Context" *Sociological Science*
- Peter Bearman and Paolo Parigi. 2004 "Cloning Headless Frogs and Other Important Matters: Conversation Topics and Network Structure." *Social Forces*
- Paolo Parigi and Warner Henson II. 2014. "Social Isolation in America." *Annual Review of Sociology*
- Ashton Verdery and Rachel Margolis. "Projections of White and Black Older Adults without Living Kin in the United States, 2015 to 2060"
- Ceylan Yeginsu. "U.K. Appoints a Minister for Loneliness." *New York Times* (Jan 17, 2018)

Week 6 (Mar 5) Position, Brokerage, and Competitive Advantages

Required readings:

- Joel Podolony. 2001. "Networks as Pipes and Prisms of Market" *AJS*.
- Ronald S. Burt. 2005. *Brokerage and Closure*. Ch. 1 (Pp. 10-28, 47-57), Ch. 2 (Pp. 58-72)
- Ronald S. Burt. 2010. *Neighbor Networks: Competitive Advantage Local and Personal*. Ch. 2
- Katherine Stovel and Lynette Shaw. 2012. "Brokerage" *ARS*
- Mathijs de Vaan, David Stark, and Balazs Verdes. 2015. "Game Changer: The Topology of Creativity." *AJS*

Further readings:

- Xiao, Z., & Tsui, A. 2007. When brokers may not work: The cultural contingency of social capital in Chinese high-tech firms. *ASQ*.
- Gabriel Rossman, Nicole Esparza, and Phillip Bonacich. 2010. "I'd Like to Thank the Academy, Team Spillovers, and Network Centrality." *ASR*.

Week 7 (Mar 12) Closure, Trust, and Neighborhood Effects

Required readings:

- Ronald S. Burt. 2005. *Brokerage and Closure*. Ch. 3
- Robert Sampson. 2012. *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*. Ch. 1-2 & 7-9
- Patrick Sharkey. 2017. "Community and the Crime Decline: The Causal Effect of Local Nonprofits on Violent Crime"
- David J. Harding. 2011. "Rethinking the Cultural Context of Schooling Decisions in Disadvantaged Neighborhoods." *Sociology of Education*.
- Satyahath et al. 2017. "Bowling for Fascism: Social Capital and the Rise of the Nazi Party." *JPE*

Further readings:

- Robert Sampson. 2012. *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*. Ch. 10-14
- Ronald Burt. "More or less *guanxi*: Trust is 60% network context, 10% individual difference"
- David J. Harding and Peter Hepburn. 2014. "Cultural Mechanisms in Neighborhood Effects Research in the United States." *Sociologica Urbana e Rurale**
- Mario Small, Erin Jacobs, and Rebekah Massengill. 2008. "Why Organizational Ties Matter for Neighborhood Effects: Resource Access through Childcare Centers." *Social Forces*.
- Hubert M. Blalock. 1984. "Contextual-Effects Models: Theoretical and Methodological Issues." *Annual Review of Sociology*.

Week 8 (Mar 19) Social Capital Longue Duree: History, Culture, and Social Trust

Required readings:

- Robert D. Putnam. *Making Democracy Work*. Ch. 5
- Nathan Nunn and Leonard Wantchekon. 2011. "The Slave Trade and the Origins of Mistrust in Africa." *American Economic Review*.

- Henrich Greve and Hayagreeva Rao, “Echoes of the Past: Organizational Foundings as Sources of an Institutional Legacy of Mutualism.” 2012. *AJS*
- Avidit Acharya et al. 2016. “The Political Legacy of American Slavery,” *Journal of Politics*.
- Luigi Guiso, Paola Sapienza, and Luigi Zingales. 2007. “Social Capital as Good Culture,” *Journal of the European Economic Association*.
- Uslaner, Eric M. 2008. “Where You Stand Depends Upon Where Your Grandparents Sat: The Inheritability of Generalized Trust.” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 72(4):725-740.

Further readings:

- Dinesen, Peter. T. 2011. “Where you come from or where you live? Examining the cultural and institutional explanation of generalized trust using migration as a natural experiment” *European sociological review* 29(1): 114-128.
- Helliwell, John F., Shun Wang, and Jinwen Xu. 2016. “How Durable Are Social Norms? Immigrant Trust and Generosity in 132 Countries.” *Social Indicators Research* 128(1):201-219.
- Yann Algan and Pierre Cahuc. 2010. “Inherited Trust and Growth.” *American Economic Review*.
- Guiso, Luigi, Paola Sapienza, and Luigi Zingales. 2016. “Long Term Persistence.” *Journal of the European Economic Association* 14(6):1401–1436.

Week 9 (Mar 26) Spring Break (No Meeting)

Week 10 (Apr 2) Networks, Social Influence, and Diffusion

Required readings:

- Charles Kadushin. 2012. “Networks, Influence, and Diffusion” in *Understanding Social Networks: Theories, Concepts, and Findings.* in *Understanding Social Networks: Theories, Concerns, and Findings*.
- Ronald Burt, 1987. “Social contagion and innovation: Cohesion versus structural equivalence” *AJS*.
- Peter Bearman, James Moody, and Katherine Stovel. “Chains of affection: The structure of adolescent romantic and sexual networks” *AJS*
- Damon Centola and Michael Macy. 2007. “Complex Contagions and the Weakness of Long Ties.” *AJS*
- Damon Centola. 2015. “Social Origins of Networks and Diffusion” *AJS*
- Damon Centola. “The spread of behavior in an online social network experiment.” *Science*

Further readings:

- KY Liu, M King, PS Bearman, “Social influence and the autism epidemic” *AJS*

Week 11 (Apr 9) Network, Solidarity, Power, and Collective Action

Required readings:

- Roger Gould. 1991. "Multiple Networks and Mobilization in the Paris Commune, 1871." ASR 45
- Doug McAdam and Ronnelle Paulsen. 1993 "Specifying the Relationship Between Social Ties and Activism."
- Kenneth Andrews and Michael Biggs. "The Dynamics of Protest Diffusion: Movement Organizations, Social Networks, and News Media in the 1960 Sit-ins." ASR.
- Roger Gould. 2000. "Revenge as Sanction and Solidarity: An Analysis of Vendettas in Nineteenth Century Corsica." ASR
- Delia Baldassarri. 2015. "Cooperative Networks: Altruism, Group Solidarity, Reciprocity, and Sanctioning in Ugandan Producer Organizations." AJS
- Delia Baldassarri. 2007. "The Integrative Power of Civic Networks." AJS

Further readings:

- Hedstrom, P., R. Sandell, et al. (2000). "Mesolevel Networks and the Diffusion of Social Movements: The Case of the Swedish Social Democratic Party." American Journal of Sociology 106(1): 145-172
- Diani, Mario Social Movements and Social Capital: A Network Perspective on Movement Outcomes. Mobilization; 1997, 2, 2, Sept, 129-147
- Stefaan Walgrave and Ruud Wouters. 2014. "The Missing Link in the Diffusion of Protest: Asking Others." AJS
- Bert Klandermans and Dirk Oegema. 1987. "Potentials, Networks, Motivations and Barriers: Steps Toward Participation in Social Movements." ASR
- Roger Gould. 1999. "Collective Violence and Group Solidarity: Evidence from a Feuding Society."

Week 12 (Apr 16) Diversity and Social Capital

Required Readings:

- Robert D. Putnam. 2007. "E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-First Century" Scandinavian Political Studies.
- Peter Thisted Dinesen and Kim Mannemar Sønderskov. 2015. "Ethnic Diversity and Social Trust: Evidence from the Micro-Context." ASR.
- Maria Abascal and Delia Baldassarri. 2015. "Love Thy Neighbor? Ethnoracial Diversity and Trust Reexamined." AJS.
- James Laurence. 2016. "Wider-community Segregation and the Effect of Neighborhood Ethnic Diversity on Social Capital: An Investigation into Intra-Neighborhood Trust in Great Britain and London." Sociology.
- Miller McPherson and Thomas Rotolo. 1996. "Testing a Dynamic Model of Social Composition: Diversity and Change in Voluntary Groups." ASR.
- Dingeman Wiertz. 2016. "Segregation in Civic Life: Ethnic Sorting and Mixing across Voluntary Associations." ASR.
- Ryan D. Enos. 2015. "What the Demolition of Public Housing Teaches Us About the Impact of Racial Threat on Political Behavior." AJPS
- Van der Meer & Tolsma. 2014. "Ethnic Diversity and Its Effects on Social Cohesion."

Recommended Readings:

- Jeffrey Smith et al. 2014. "Social Distance in the United States: Sex, Race, Religion, Age, and Education Homophily among Confidants, 1985 to 2004." ASR.

Week 13 (Apr 23) Social Networks, History, and Ideology

Required Readings:

Networks, Events, and Text

- Peter Bearman and Katherine Stovel. “Becoming a Nazi: A Model for Narrative Networks.” *Poetics*.
- Peter Bearman, James Moody, and Robert Faris. 2002. “Networks and History”
- MA Hoffman et al. 2018. “The (Protestant) Bible, the (printed) sermon, and the word (s): The semantic structure of the Conformist and Dissenting Bible, 1660–1780) *Poetics*.

Networks and Polarization

- Delia Baldassari and Andrew Gelman. 2008. “Partisans without Constraint: Polarization and Trends in American Public Opinion.” *AJS*.
- Delia Baldassarri and Amir Goldberg. 2014. “Neither Ideologues nor Agnostics: Alternative Voters’ Belief System in an Age of Partisan Politics.” *AJS*.
- Andrei Boutyline and Stephen Vaisey. 2017. “Belief Network Analysis: A Relational Approach to Understanding the Structure of Attitudes.” *AJS*.
- Byungkyu (BK) Lee. “Political Events, Issue Salience, and Core Values: The Contextual Sensitivity of Belief Centrality in the General Social Survey.” *Contexts*.

Week 14 (April 30) Final Project Presentations