

Rural Sociology 7600
Theories and Concepts in Rural Sociology
Fall 2019 Syllabus

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Office Hours: Thursdays 4:00-6:00 PM, Fridays 3:45-5:00PM, and by appointment

Course Description

Rural sociology is a broad sub-field of sociology which is informed theoretically and methodologically by the broader discipline. This course examines the distinct substantive foci of rural sociology, including agriculture/the food system, social inequalities, the environment, globalization/international development, community, and demographic processes--and the conceptual perspectives that have been applied to understand these substantive topics. In addition, the course addresses broader sociological questions about uneven regional development, the role of space in social theory, and the social construction of "rurality."

We will focus on classical and contemporary "big-picture questions" that rural sociologists address—and also examine how these might be carried-down to more empirically-oriented work.

The course has a seminar format and is directed toward students with a strong social science background. It is centered upon class discussion, critique of the readings, and your involvement in research assignments related to the course topic. We will also have rural sociology faculty members visit the course to discuss the exciting range of research questions they study!

Course Objectives

Student completing this class should gain the following knowledge and skills:

1. Understand the major research areas in contemporary rural sociology with their conceptual literatures and empirical traditions.
2. Gain a general background in key substantive focus areas of rural sociology, particularly social inequalities, agriculture/the food system, the environment, demographic change, and development/globalization.
3. Gain extra opportunity to pursue independent research related to thesis, dissertation work, and other scholarly interests, including working on your own articles for presentations and publications.
4. Acquire an understanding of rural sociology as an overall field. Students will gain a "sociology of knowledge" understanding of rural sociology, which situates the sub-field of rural sociology into the broader discipline of sociology and other social sciences-- and also traces the development of the literature in rural sociology historically.

5. Be able to demonstrate how rurality introduces a spatial contingency to theory and social science generalization. That is, students should understand how and why trends and relationships involving social life found in the urban U.S. (the main focus of “modern” sociology) may not hold in other sociospatial settings.
6. Gain expanded analytical skills necessary for advanced work in the social sciences. We will discuss how sociologists apply theory and concepts to various substantive topics and how they interpret research results. The class should also help you to sharpen critical thinking as you engage in critiquing the theoretical and methodological approaches presented in the readings.

Course Requirements and Grading

This course has three sets of written requirements in regard to grading: (A) a short review of literature on a rural sociological topic to be selected by the student--this review can be used to develop your term paper (literature review due date October 7); (B) a term paper on a topic that is mutually agreeable (due date, the last day of class, December 2) (C) three critical essay papers involving questions about the readings (I will provide these questions to you a week earlier in advance). In addition, each student will participate in an assignment that involves leading discussion of readings for part (e.g. 1 ½ hours) for one or two class periods).

The grade you earn is determined in the following way. The literature review and the term paper count 10% and 30%, respectively, toward your final grade. Each critical essay paper counts 10%. An evaluation of your class discussion performance and other class participation will count the remaining 30%. Criteria regarding class participation will be: (1) that your class participation reflects thoughtful consideration of the required readings, clearly demonstrating your knowledge, questions, and concerns about the topics introduced in the readings for each week; (2) that your discussion assignments are well-prepared and that your individual contribution is clear and high quality; (3) that you are consistent in class participation, which also means that you are fully present for each class in addition to being a conscientious participant. Please be mindful that arriving late/leaving early disrupts on-going class discussion--and hurts a seminar climate where everyone is counted upon to contribute and to be “on the same page” in terms of material discussed. Please put away all cell phones. Based on my teaching experience and other researchers’ studies on student learning, I suggest that you do not use laptops but rather pen and paper for taking notes. Please be mindful not to text, check email, and chat as these destroy the learning environment for other students.

Required Readings

Books:

1. Bailey, Conner, Leif Jensen, and Elizabeth Ransom. 2014. *Rural America in a Globalizing World*. West Virginia University Press.
2. Salamon, Sonya. *Newcomers to Old Towns: Suburbanization of the Heartland*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (2003).

Optional: Hans Bakker. 2016. *Rural Sociologists at Work*. New York: Routledge

Articles: *Available electronically*. All or most readings are available for you to download directly from Carmen. If a reading is not posted on Carmen please download it via the OSU Library electronic journal system.

More About Rural Sociology – see below!

For an overview of the history of various subfields, key literatures and articles in rural sociology, go to the OSU library site, search for *Oxford Bibliographies. Sociology* [electronic resource] / editor in chief: Jeff Manza, go to the section on Rural Sociology, edited by Nick Garcia and Linda Lobao, 2018]

LIST OF TOPICS AND REQUIRED READINGS

Week 1 (August 26) Overview of course.

Grading and Administrative Procedures. Begin discussion of class topics, focusing on rural sociology's relationship to other social sciences and the discipline of sociology.

Week 2 (September 2) No Class – Labor Day--- a break for workers!

Contextualizing Rural Sociology into: Sociology, Sociological Theory, and the University Institutional Setting

This section addresses how rural sociology evolved historically as a distinct sub-field in sociology and its link with the broader discipline and related fields. It also addresses how rural sociology is practiced in institutional settings and the contribution that OSU rural sociologists have made to the field.

Week 3 (September 9) Surveying the Field

Creed and Ching, "Recognizing Rusticity: Identity and the Power of Place" from *Knowing Your Place: Rural Identity and Cultural Hierarchy*, edited by Barbara Ching and Gerald Creed. New York, Routledge 1997, pp. 1-38.

L. Lobao, "Rural Sociology," *The Handbook of 21st Century Sociology*, Sage Publications 2007.

Bailey et al. (2014) "Rural America in a Globalizing World: Introduction and Overview" pp. xiii-xxx

L. Lobao, "A Sociology of the Periphery Versus a Peripheral Sociology: Rural Sociology and the Dimension of Space." *Rural Sociology*, Issue #1 Spring, 1996, pp.77-102.

[Optional: Newby, Howard, "The Sociology of Agriculture: Toward a New Rural Sociology," *Annual Review of Sociology* 1983, pp. 67-81].

Week 4 (September 16) Connections with Classical Sociological Theory and Public/Policy Sociology

Daniel Lichter and David Brown, "Rural America in an Urban Society: Changing Spatial and Social Boundaries." *Annual Review of Sociology* 2011, volume 37, pp. 565-592.

M. Waters, *Modern Sociological Theory*, Sage: 1994. Chapter 1, "General Theory in Sociology," pp 1-14; Chapter 9, "Differentiation and Stratification," pp. 291-343 (Some of this material will be a review if you have a sociology background.)

David Harvey, "Class Relations, Social Justice, and the Political Geography of Difference," from *Nature and the Geography of Difference*, Cambridge: Blackwell, 1997, Chapter 12, pp.334-365.

Michael Burawoy, 2005 "For Public Sociology," *American Sociological Review* 70: 4-28.

Week 5 (September 23) Contemporary Research in Rural Sociology: OSU examples- Part I

Guest speakers—an exciting line-up of rural sociology faculty: Professors Shoshanna Inwood (5:30 pm), Douglas Jackson-Smith (6:15 pm) and Kristi Lekies (7:15 pm) will discuss their research. *Readings will be provided beforehand on Carmen for the class.*

[Optional: For examples of how theory, research, and public sociology intersect with biography, choose articles from Hans Bakker, *Rural Sociologists at Work*—see particularly Flora and Flora; Schulman; and Zimmerman.]

Week 6 (September 30) Contemporary Research in Rural Sociology: OSU examples-Part II

Guest speakers—yet another exciting line-up of rural sociology faculty, Professors Cathy Rakowski, Kerry Ard (6:15 pm), and Jeffery Jacquet will discuss their research. *Readings will be provided beforehand on Carmen for the class.*

Week 7 (October 7) Population Patterns, Urban - Rural Differences and Patterns of Change

This section addresses major economic, social, and demographic changes relevant to understanding U.S. rural society, including a comparison with past history. It covers the "rural demography" tradition including the measurement of "rurality" from this tradition.

Articles in Bailey et al. *Rural America in a Globalizing World* (2014): Brown (pp.299-310); Crowley and Ebert (Chapter 21).

Johnson, Kenneth and Daniel T. Lichter. 2019. "Rural Depopulation: Growth and Decline Processes over the Past Century." *Rural Sociology* 84 (1):3-27.

Isserman, Andrew M. "In the National Interest: Defining Rural and Urban Correctly in Research and Public Policy." *International Regional Science Review*. 28 (2005): 465-499.

[Optional: Lichter, Daniel et al. 2007. "National Estimates of Racial Segregation in Rural and Small Town America." *Demography* Volume 44 #3, pp. 563-581.]

****LITERATURE REVIEW DUE OCTOBER 7****

Week 8 (October 14) Agrarian Change and Land Dispossession under Capitalist Development

This section addresses the fate of farm populations in the course of development and from a historical comparative perspective. It covers the classical "sociology of agriculture" tradition.

Berstein, Henry, "Agrarian Classes in Capitalist Development," in *Capitalism and Development*, edited by Leslie Sklair, 1994.

Lobao, Linda and Katherine Meyer "The Great Agricultural Transition: Crisis, Change, and Social Consequences of Twentieth Century Farming." *The Annual Review of Sociology* 2001, pp. 103-124.

Borras, Saturnino and Jennifer C. Franco. 2012. "Global Land Grabbing and Trajectories of Agrarian Change: A Preliminary Analysis." *Journal of Agrarian Change* 12 (1): 34-59.

[Optional:

Friedmann, Harriet and Philip McMichael. 1989. "Agriculture and the State System: The Rise and Decline of National Agricultures, 1870 to the Present." *Sociologia Ruralis* 29 (2) 93-117. This article takes a classic political economy approach which has long been the theoretical foundation of much work in the sociology of agriculture tradition.

Martin Ruef, "The Demise of an Organizational Form: Emancipation and Plantation Agriculture in the American South, 1860-1880. *American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 109, May. 2004, pp. 1365-1410. This article takes a human-ecology theoretical approach which thus is different from most work in the sociology of agriculture tradition]

Week 9 (October 21) The Contemporary Food System

This section addresses modern food system and questions about production/consumption in agriculture.

Articles in Bailey et al. *Rural America in a Globalizing World* (2014): Bonanno (pp.3-15); Sharp and Deemer (chapter 7); Hinrichs and Eshleman (chapter 8).

Goodman and DuPuis, "Knowing Food and Growing Food: Beyond the Production-Consumption Debate in the Sociology of Agriculture." *Sociologia Ruralis*, volume 42, No. 1, January 2002.

Pechlaner, Gabriela and Gerado Otero. "The Third Food Regime: Neoliberal Globalism and Agricultural Biotechnology in North America." *Sociologia Ruralis* volume 48, No. 4, October 2008, p. 351-371.

(Optional: Friedland, William Agrifood Globalization and Commodity Systems. Paper presented at Agriculture and Human Values Society annual meeting, Austin, Texas, June 2003)

Week 10 (October 28) Environment and Natural Resources

This section addresses the relationship between the environment and development and provides an overview of the lens rural sociologists bring to environmental sociology.

Article in Bailey et al. *Rural America in a Globalizing World* (2014), Fortmann, Baker-Medard, and Kelly (pp 159-171).

Buttel, Fred, "Environmental Sociology and the Sociology of Natural Resources: Institutional Histories and Intellectual Legacies." *Society and Natural Resources*, Vol. 15, March, 2002, pp. 205-211. (OSU Library, electronic journal system).

Thomas K. Rudel, Timmons Roberts, and JoAnn Carmin, "Political Economy of the Environment." *Annual Review of Sociology* 2011, volume 37, pp. 221-238.

Freudenburg, William. "Environmental Degradation, Disproportionality, and the Double Diversion: Reaching Out, Reaching Ahead, and Reaching Beyond." (Presidential Address). *Rural Sociology* 2006, Volume 71 #1: 3-32.

[Optional: Bunker, Stephen, "Modes of Extraction, Unequal Exchange, and the Progressive Underdevelopment of an Extreme Periphery: The Brazilian Amazon." *American Journal of Sociology* 1984, Volume 89.]

Week 11 (November 4) Inequality in Rural Society: Class, Gender, and Ethnicity

This section examines the contours of stratification in the rural U.S. and covers the "rural poverty" tradition.

Ann Tickamyer, Rural Poverty. (Chapter 30 in Cloke, Marsden, and Mooney volume on Rural Studies, Sage. 2006). (electronic copy via Carmen).

C. Matthew Snipp, "Understanding Race and Ethnicity in Rural America," *Rural Sociology* 1996 Issue Number 1, pp. 125-142.(OSU Library, electronic journal system).

Articles in Bailey et al. *Rural America in a Globalizing World* (2014), Sachs (pp.421-443) Green (Chapter 22), Wulfhorst et al. (Chapter 23), and Struthers (Chapter 25).

Week 12 (November 11) Rural Development and Spatial Inequality

This section addresses uneven development, place-stratification, and policy response strategies to rural disadvantage such as economic development. This literature also is part of the "sociology of development" specialty area which has a new section in the American Sociological Association.

Articles in Bailey et al. *Rural America in a Globalizing World* (2014), Lobao (pp.543-555), Dickies and Robinson (Chapter 30), and Flora and Flora (Chapter 31).

Sherman, Jennifer. 2018. "'Not Allowed to Inherit My Kingdom': Amenity Development and Social Inequality in the Rural West." *Rural Sociology* 83 (1): 174-207.

Lobao, Linda Continuity and Change in Place Stratification, *Rural Sociology*, Vol. 60, #1 2004, pp. 1-30. (Presidential Address)

Week 13 (November 18) Community

This section address the rural community research tradition. Salamon's book won the ASA urban/community section award for the best book and is particularly germane given the results of the 2016 presidential election.

Salamon, *Newcomers to Old Towns* (Chapters 1-6 and 8-9)

Liepins, New Energies for an Old Idea: Reworking Approaches to Community. *Journal of Rural Studies* 2000, Volume 16, No. 1, pp. 23-35.

Week 14 (November 25) Development and Globalization. *While articles have addressed other nations throughout this course, this section specifically addresses research applied to international development/globalization and social change.*

Alejandro Portes. 2015 "The Sociology of Development: From Modernization to the "Institutional Turn." *Sociology of Development*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Spring 2015), pp. 20-42.

Bonini, Astra. 2012. "Complementary and Competitive Regimes of Accumulation: Natural Resources and Development in the World System." *Journal of World Systems Research* 18 (1): 50-68.

Raynolds, Laura. "The Globalization of Organic Agri-Food Networks." *World Development*, 2004 Vol. 32, # 5, pp. 725-743.

Rudel, Thomas. "How Do People Transform Landscapes? A Sociological Perspective on Suburban Sprawl and Tropical Deforestation." *American Journal of Sociology* July 2009: 129-154.

Week 15 (December 2) Future Work and Continuing Challenges for Rural Sociology

Porter, Jeremy. 2011. "Context, Location, and Space: The Continued Development of our 'Geo-Sociological Imaginations.'" *American Sociologist* 42: 288-302.

Linda Lobao and Gregory Hooks. 2015. "Development Sociology at the Subnational Scale: Open Questions about State and Market Processes Across the United States." *Sociology of Development*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Spring 2015), pp. 43-76 (OSU Library, electronic journal system).

Scala, Dante J. and Kenneth M. Johnson. 2017. "Political Polarization along the Rural-Urban Continuum? The Geography of the Presidential Vote, 2000-2016." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 672 (July): 162-184.

Wallerstein, Immanuel. 2012. "Land, Space, and People: Constraints of the Capitalist World Economy." *Journal of World Systems Research* 18 (1): 6-14.

[Optional: Tickamyer, Ann "Sex, Lies, and Statistics." *Rural Sociology* 1996 Issue Number 1, pp. 5-24.]

COURSE TERM PAPER DUE WEEK 15, December 2

