

**Emory University****Roberto Franzosi**

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Lectures T-Th 1:00 - 2:30 206 Tarbutton Hall

Office Hours T-Th 2:30-4:00

or by appointment

Sociology is the science with more methods and fewer results. Every new doctoral thesis proposes a new method.

Jules-Henri Poincaré (*Sciences et methods*, 1908)

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Sociologists, as social “scientists”, have a fundamental concern with methods. The aim of the course is to familiarize students with the three most common methodological approaches used in Sociology: interpretive, multivariate, and comparative-historical. The course will outline the fundamental features of each research method (its advantages and disadvantages). The course will also introduce students to the basic jargon of methodology: research design, variables, operationalization, causality, hypothesis testing, models. It will focus on the relationship between theory and method (looking at Galileo’s work!) and on the relationship between research questions and methods as these come together in the research design. The roots of the quality versus quantity debate will be explored (going back to the Newton and Goethe debate!). Finally, science politics and the rhetoric of science will be analyzed in light of sociologists’ obsession with methods (“a methodological pestilence” in Max Weber’s expression).

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

There will be weekly reading assignments taken from the following books and from journal articles.

**Books are expensive. You do not need to purchase all of the books listed here. You can choose the ones to purchase if you want to keep them. Several used copies are also available from Amazon.com. All books will be placed in reserve at the library (and I have copies of the books as well).**

Robert Alford. *The Craft of Inquiry. Theories, Methods, Evidence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Barrington Moore. 1966. *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Roberto Franzosi. 1995. *The Puzzle of Strikes: Class and State Strategies in Postwar Italy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Roberto Franzosi. 2004. *From Words to Numbers: Narrative, Data, and Social Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Carlo Ginzburg. 1982. *The Cheese and the Worms. The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Elliot Liebow. 1993. *Tell Them Who I Am: the Lives of Homeless Women*. New York: Free Press.
- Peter Rossi. 1989. *Down and Out in America. The Origins of Homelessness*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. New York: Aldine.
- Joel Levine. 1993. *Exceptions Are the Rule. An Inquiry into Methods in the Social Sciences*. Boulder, Co.: Westview Press.
- Ragin, Charles. 1987. *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Arthur L. Stinchcombe. 1968. *Constructing Social Theories*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.
- C. Wright Mills. 1959. *The Sociological Imagination*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

There are also several **general research methods textbooks** that you may wish to purchase or consult.

- Earl R. Babbie. 2006. *The Practice of Social Research*. (9<sup>th</sup> edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.
- W. Lawrence Neuman. 2005. *Social Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*. (6th edition). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

For **feminist methods**, see:

- Sandra Harding (ed.). 1987. *Feminism and Methodology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Shulamit Reinharz. 1992. *Feminist Methods in Social Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Caroline Ramazanoğlu with Janet Holland. 2002. *Feminist Methodology: Challenges and Choices*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber and Michelle L. Yaiser. 2004. *Feminist Perspectives on Social Research*. New York: Oxford University Press.

## Grading

Grading will be based on the following items:

1. *participation* (10%). Students are expected to attend classes regularly and contribute to class discussion. Each student is also expected
  - a. to present in class the week's material; **presentations are due on Tuesdays;**
  - b. to present in class their draft research proposal;
2. *weekly memos* (20%). Students are expected to write an informal 2-page memo on each week's topic (reactions, thoughts, main points, etc.). **Memos due each Tuesday. Late memos cannot be accepted.**
3. *research proposal* (35%). Students are expected to produce a final 10-12 page research proposal on a topic of their choice. The proposal will be due on the last day of class. Students are also expected to write two drafts of the proposal. All drafts will be circulated among all students and will be collectively discussed in class. **Drafts are due on weeks 7 and 11.** Different types of research proposals will be made available to students as samples. The research proposals should start from the research question and discuss the methods of data collection and data analysis, discuss the project's research design; it should also address aims and objectives, significance, ethical issues (when appropriate), timetable, and expected outcomes.
4. Take home *final exam* (35%).

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **INTRODUCTION: LESSONS FROM GALILEO**

Week 1 (*Sep 2-4*): Theory and/or method? Which route to scientific discovery?

### **PART I: THREE MAIN METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES IN SOCIOLOGY**

Week 2 (*Sep 9-11*): The three approaches

#### *I.1. The historical-comparative paradigm*

Week 3 (*Sep 16-18*): Historical knowledge and evidence

Week 4 (*Sep 23-25*): History and historical sociology. Where is the difference?

#### *I.2. The interpretive paradigm*

Week 5 (*Sep 30-Oct 2*): *Verstehen* (“understanding”)

Week 6 (*Oct 7-9*): Is qualitative research fundamentally different?

Week 7 (*Oct 14 Fall Break - Oct 16*): Ethical issues: Emory University’s Institutional Review Board

#### *I.3. The multivariate paradigm*

Week 8 (*Oct 21-23*): Approaching the homeless ... from a different angle

Week 9 (*Oct 28-30*): Induction, deduction, outliers

### **PART II: OF METHOD AND SCIENCE**

Week 10 (*Nov 4-6*): Can you have your cake and eat it too? Beyond quality vs. quantity: quality *and* quantity?

Week 11 (*Nov 11-13*): Rigor, rigidity, and rhetoric

Week 12 (*Nov 18-20*): What kind of explanation?

Week 13 (*Nov 25 – Nov 27 Thanksgiving*): The language of measurement: Concepts, operationalization, validity, reliability, sampling, causation

Week 14 (*Dec 2-4*): Can you spot the differences? Sociological writing in comparative perspective.

**CONCLUSION: BACK TO GALILEO. *IMPARA L'ARTE E METTILA DA PARTE*. BUT ... WHICH ART?**

Week 15 (*Dec 9*): Theory, method, or what else? Back to Galileo and to the question of the route to scientific discovery.

**INTRODUCTION: LESSONS FROM GALILEO****Week 1 (Sep 2-4): Theory and/or method? Which route to scientific discovery?****Tuesday: Presentation**

Galilei, Galileo. 1610 [January 7]. Letter to Antonio de' Medici.

<http://www.fisicamente.net/LEOPERE10.htm>, then search for document "259."

Galilei, Galileo. 1610. *Sidereus Nuncius* [*Starry Messenger*]. Venice. [pp. 1-3]

<http://www.bard.edu/admission/forms/pdfs/galileo.pdf#search=%22Galileo%20%22great%20indeed%20are%20the%20things%20which%22%22>

Galilei, Galileo. 1624 [September 23]. Letter to Federico Cesi.

<http://www.fisicamente.net/LEOPERE13.htm>, then search for document "1665."

English translations of Galileo's letters will be circulated before class.

Mills, C. Wright. 1959. *The Sociological Imagination*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

**Thursday: Discussion****PART I: THREE MAIN METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES IN SOCIOLOGY****Week 2 (Sep 9-11): The three approaches****Tuesday: Presentation**

Alford, Robert. *The Craft of Inquiry. Theories, Methods, Evidence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

**Thursday: Discussion****I.1. The historical-comparative paradigm****Week 3 (Sep 16-18): Historical Knowledge and Evidence****Tuesday: Presentation**

Abbott, Andrew. 1990. "Conceptions of Time and Events in Social Science Methods." *Historical Methods*, Vol. 23, No. 4, pp. 140-50.

Franzosi, Roberto. 1996. "A Sociologist Meets History: Critical Reflections Upon Practice." *Journal of Historical Sociology*, Vol. 9, No. 3, pp. 354-92.

Franzosi, Roberto. 2005. In: pp. 438-53, Robert E. Goodin and Charles Tilly (eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Contextual Political Studies*. Oxford University Press.

Ginzburg, Carlo. 1982 [1976]. *The Cheese and the Worms. The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

**Thursday: Discussion**

**Week 4 (Sep 23-25): History and historical sociology. Where is the difference?**

**Tuesday: Presentation**

Moore, Barrington. 1966. *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. Boston: Beacon Press.

**Thursday: Discussion**

**I.2. The interpretive paradigm**

**Week 5 (Sep 30-Oct 2): Verstehen (“understanding”)**

**Tuesday: Presentation**

Liebow, Elliot. 1993. *Tell Them Who I Am: The Lives of Homeless Women*. New York: Free Press.

Gambetta, Diego and Heather Hamill. 2005. “Introduction.” In: pp. 1-27, Diego Gambetta and Heather Hamill, *Streetwise: How Taxi Drivers Establish Customers’ Trustworthiness*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Duneier, Mitchell. 2001[1999]. “Appendix: A Statement on Method.” In: pp. 333-58, Mitchell Duneier, *Sidewalk*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

**Thursday: Discussion**

**Week 6 (Oct 7-9): Is qualitative research fundamentally different?**

**Tuesday: Presentation**

Glaser, Barney G. and Anselm L. Strauss. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. New York: Aldine.

**Thursday: Discussion**

**Week 7 (Oct 14 Fall Break – Oct 16): Ethical issues: Emory University’s Institutional Review Board**

**Tuesday: FALL BREAK!**

**Thursday: Discussion of ethical issues and the Institutional Review Board**  
(<http://www.emory.edu/IRB/>)

**FIRST DRAFT OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE IN CLASS**

**I.3. The multivariate paradigm**

**Week 8 (Oct 21-23): Approaching the homeless ... from a different angle****Tuesday: Presentation**

Freedman, David. 1991. "Statistical Models and Shoe Leather," in: Peter V. Marsden (ed.), *Sociological Methodology*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 291-313.

Rossi, Peter. 1989. *Down and Out in America. The Origins of Homelessness*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

**Thursday: Discussion****Week 9 (Oct 28-30): Induction, deduction, outliers****Tuesday: Presentation**

Franzosi, Roberto. 1995. *The Puzzle of Strikes: Class and State Strategies in Postwar Italy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (*Preface*, Chapters 1, 2, 4, 7, 8)

Levine, Joel. 1993. *Exceptions Are the Rule. An Inquiry into Methods in the Social Sciences*. Boulder, Co.: Westview Press.

Whewell, William. 1859. *History of the Inductive Sciences from the Earliest to the Present Time*, "Introduction"

<http://books.google.com/books?id=mmQSAAAAIAAJ&printsec=toc&dq=History+of+the+inductive+sciences+volume+1&sig=v3C4fxeQYj8TwSTzhlaY8KhFs6w#PPP1,M1>

**Thursday: Discussion****PART II: OF METHOD AND SCIENCE****Week 10 (Nov 4-6) – Can you have your cake and eat it too? Beyond quality vs. quantity: Quality and Quantity?****Tuesday: Presentation**

Franzosi, Roberto. 2008. "Introduction". In: Roberto Franzosi (ed.), *Content Analysis*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Franzosi, Roberto. 2004. "Content Analysis". In: pp. 547–66, Alan Bryman and Melissa Hardy (eds.), *Handbook of Data Analysis*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Franzosi, Roberto. 2004. *From Words to Numbers: Narrative, Data, and Social Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (*Before*, Part I, *Journeys*)

Ragin, Charles. 1987. *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

**Thursday: Discussion**

**Week 11 (Nov 11-13) – Rigor, rigidity, and rhetoric**

**Tuesday: Presentation**

Franzosi, Roberto. 2004. *From Words to Numbers: Narrative, Data, and Social Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Part II, *Tales of Measurement, And After*)

**Thursday: Discussion**

**SECOND DRAFT OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE IN CLASS**

**Week 12 (Nov 18-20) – What kind of explanations?**

**Tuesday: Presentation**

Abbott, Andrew. 1992. "From Causes to Events: Notes on Narrative Positivism." *Sociological Methods and Research*, Vol. 20, No. 4, pp. 428-55.

Abbott, Andrew. 1997. "Of Time and Place: The Contemporary Relevance of the Chicago School." *Social Forces*, Vol.75, No. 4, pp. 1149-82.

Abbott, Andrew. 1988. "Transcending General Linear Reality." *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 6, No. 2, pp. 169-86.

Abell, Peter. 2004. "Narrative Explanation: An Alternative to Variable-Centred Explanation?" *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 30, pp. 287-310.

**Thursday: Discussion**

**Week 13 (Nov 25 - Nov 25 Thanksgiving): The language of measurement: Concepts, operationalization, validity, reliability, sampling, causation**

**Tuesday: Presentation**

Goldthorpe, John. "Causation, Statistics, and Sociology." In: pp. 190-216, John Goldthorpe, *On Sociology Second Edition Volume One: Critique and Program (Studies in Social Inequality)*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Stinchcombe, Arthur L. 1968. *Constructing Social Theories*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.

Zeller, Richard and Edward Carmines. 1980. *Measurement in the Social Sciences. The Link Between Theory and Data*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 3 and 4 on "Reliability" and "Validity", pp. 48-101.

**Thursday: THANKSGIVING**

**Week 14 (Dec 2-4): Can you spot the differences? Sociological writing in comparative perspective.**

For this week, trod to the library and flip through the pages of the following journals: *American Journal of Sociology* (established in 1895), *American Sociological Review* (established in 1936 as the flagship journal of the American Sociological Association), *American Economic Review* (first published in 1911), and *Sociology* (the flagship journal of the British Sociological Association and first published in 1967). Use the following terms of comparison:

1. Compare the *American Sociological Review* and the *American Economic Review* in the 1930s. Can you spot any differences? Are there disciplinary differences?
2. Compare the *American Journal of Sociology* in the 1920s and in this century. Can you spot any differences? Do disciplines change overtime? In which way?
3. Compare the *American Sociological Review* in the early 1940s, early 1950s, early 1960s, and in this century. Can you spot any differences? Do disciplines change overtime? In which way?
4. Compare the *American Sociological Review* and *Sociology* in the early 1980s and in this century. Can you spot any differences? Are there national, disciplinary traditions?

***Tuesday: Presentation***

***Thursday: Discussion***

**CONCLUSION: BACK TO GALILEO. IMPARA L'ARTE E METTILA DA PARTE. BUT ... WHICH ART?**

**Week 15 (Dec 9): Theory, method, or what else? Back to Galileo and to the question of the route to scientific discovery.**

***Tuesday (last day of class)***

Edgerton, Samuel Y. 1984. "Galileo, Florentine 'Disegno' and the 'Strange Spottedness' of the Moon." *Art Journal*, Vol. 44, pp. 225–32.