

DGC1000H Dynamics of Global Change 2008-2009

Wednesday 4-6pm
Trinity College, Room 24
Professor Janice Gross Stein
University of Toronto

Contact Information:

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Course Description

The goal of this course is to examine different theories of large-scale change from an interdisciplinary perspective. The course poses one question: at what point does change cumulate so that there is a shift in trajectory or so that it becomes irreversible? After creating a common ground of key concepts, themes and questions, the course will examine global change from a number of perspectives, including anthropology, medicine, law, economics, development, the environment, religion, and technology. There will be a different guest speaker each week who will present a theory of cumulative change from his/her discipline. The course challenges us to not only develop a better understanding of how global change occurs, but also to understand the different theories we use to explain change.

Course Readings

The required readings for this course are available in a course packet, which is available for purchase at *****

There is also one book that is required reading, which is on order at the Toronto Women's Bookstore located at 73 Harbord Street (Harbord and Spadina).

Malcolm Gladwell, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* (Boston: Back Bay Books, 2002).

Assignments and Grading

1) Article review (25%) – Due October 15

For this assignment, you are required to review an article that addresses an example or a dimension of cumulative change at the global level. You should analyse and evaluate how the article accounts for change. What are the strengths or limitations of the theory of change? What aspects of change are not captured in its account? You should analyse your article with reference to the theories of change that have been discussed in class and the readings. Your paper should be between 5-7 pages, double-spaced.

2) Major paper (75%), due January 5, 2009.

For this assignment, you should compare and contrast two or three different explanations of change at the global level that have been discussed in this class. You should consider the following questions:

- What are different ways of thinking theoretically about explaining change?
- How do different explanations of change speak to each other?
- What explanations do a better job of explaining cumulative change?
- What are the limitations of these theories?

This is not a research paper, but rather an opportunity for you to think on a theoretical level about these questions. You may use specific examples of change in the paper, but the primary goal of this assignment is theoretical rather than empirical.

Your paper should be 15-20 pages, double-spaced.

Course Schedule and Readings

September 12: Introduction – Janice Stein

Malcolm Gladwell, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*

September 17: Mediated exchange: Money, morality and social relatedness - Janice Boddy

Required readings:

Bohannon, Paul. 1955. Some Principles of Exchange and Investment among the Tiv. *American Anthropologist* 57(1): 60-70.

Bohannon, Paul. 1959. The Impact of Money on an African Subsistence Economy. *The Journal of Economic History* 19(4): 491-503.

Recommended reading:

Charles Piot, "Of Persons and Things: Some Reflections on African Spheres of Exchange", *Man* (N.S.) 26: 405-424, 1991.

September 24: Religion and Reform – Pamela Klassen

Required Readings:

Talal Asad, "Secularism, Nation-State, Religion" in *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003, pp. 181-204.

José Casanova, "Secularization Revisited: A Reply to Talal Asad" *Powers of the Secular Modern: Talal Asad and his Interlocutors*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006, pp. 12-30 (plus notes).

Additional non-required readings:

José Casanova, "Beyond European and American Exceptionalisms: towards a Global Perspective" in Grace Davie, ed. *Predicting Religion: Christian, Secular, and Alternative Futures*, Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2003, pp. 17-29.

Robert Borofsky, "Cook, Lono, Obeyesekere, and Sahlins" *Current Anthropology* 38(2, April), 1997: pp. 255-282.

October 1: Pandemics and Epidemiological Models of Change – James Orbinski

October 8: Climate change and the Environment - Dick Peltier

October 15: The Rise of the Internet - Robert Latham

Robert Latham, "Networks, Information, and the Rise of the Global Internet."

October 22: Scaling up delivery of nutrients – Stanley Zlotkin and Chris Grasset

October 29: ICTs as a Technological Revolution – David Wolfe

Giovanni Dosi, "Technological Paradigms and Technological Trajectories," in *Long Waves in the World Economy*, ed. C. Freeman, pp. 78-101.

C. Freeman and F. Louca, *As Time Goes By*, pp. 139-151, 301-335

R. Alcaly, *The New Economy*, ch. 2

November 5: ICTs as Technologies of Globalization – David Wolfe

Henry S. Rowen, "How Governments Shaped their IT Industries," in H.S. Rowen, et al, eds, *Making IT: The Rise of Asia in High Tech*, pp. 269-89

Dan Schiller, *Digital Capitalism: Networking the Global Market System*, ch. 1 and 2.

November 12: MNCs in the Global Economy – David Wolfe and Brian Silverman

Eric Thun, "The Globalization of Production," in John Ravenhill, ed., *Global Political Economy*, 2nd. Ed., pp. 346-72.

T.J. Sturgeon, "How Do We Define Value Chains and Production Networks," MIT IPC Globalization Working Paper 00-010.

November 19: The ICC and Normative Change in International Law – Karen Knop

Readings to be distributed electronically.

November 26: The Great Transformation – Richard Sandbrook

K. Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Times*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2001 [1944], "Introduction" by Fred Block, pp. 3-5, & chs. 3-6, 11-13, and 21.

F. Block and M. Somers, "Beyond the Economistic Fallacy: The Holistic Social Science of Karl Polanyi." In T. Skocpol (ed.), *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*, pp. 47-84. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

S. Halperin, "Dynamics of Conflict and System Change: *The Great Transformation* Revisited," *European Journal of International Relations* 10(2), 2004, 263-306.

December 3: Microfinance and Development – Nigel Biggar

Marge Magner, *Microfinance: A Platform for Social Change*
<http://www.grameenfoundation.org/pubdownload/~pubid=41>

Jonathan Morduch, "The Microfinance Schism," *World Development* 28.4 (2000): 617-629.

http://library.financialaccess.org/pdf/G2_FAI_MicrofinanceSchism.pdf

Connie Bruck, "Millions for Millions," *The New Yorker*, October 30, 2006.

http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2006/10/30/061030fa_fact1