

**Comparative Methods
COM597**

**Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:30-1:20
CMU 126**

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Comparative research is the process of asking and answering questions with evidence from carefully chosen cases. Comparative research is exciting because defining cases is tough analytical work, and they can be people, artifacts, communities, field sites, organizations, countries, focus groups, periods of time, or texts. This course is designed help students make definitional decisions in their own work and look at how other scholars do comparative research. In this course, students explore the inquiry process by thinking about how to generate transportable theory by working with people, artifacts, or events in a comparative context. This course has four objectives:

- to teach students about the assumptions, applications, strengths, and limitations of comparative research;
- to give students a sophisticated methodological literacy, enabling them to read broadly and critically, to engage with colleagues who have different approaches to comparison, and to better interpret their own comparative findings;
- to have students develop their scholarly identity by developing a comparative research agenda through a thesis proposal, an article draft, or thesis chapter (as relevant for where they are in their graduate career).

By the end of this class, students should be able to assess the impact of methodological choices on research findings. As much as this is a class in methods, it is also an opportunity for students to choose the questions and themes they find most interesting in comparative. This class will be a workshop in which the instructor, students, and guest lecturers can present ideas on how and when to use different methods of inquiry. Although students are required to try different methods, they have wide freedom to select your line of inquiry, and much of the content of this class will depend on the topics that student interests. Students will finish the course with a good reference packet of notes, reviews, and other handouts.

(Below is a large list of readings on comparative research developed for students who might want to be examined on the topic of comparative research. The final syllabus will only use a selection of these readings.)

COMPARATIVE RESEARCH IN COMMUNICATION

READINGS FOR THE GENERAL EXAM

8/17/2013

Contents

| | |
|--|---|
| I. THEORIES OF COMPARATIVE METHODS | 3 |
| Approaches to Comparative Research | 3 |
| Debate: Large N v. Small N, Selecting on the Dependent Variable? | 3 |
| Debate: Interpretivist v. Positivist? | 3 |
| Case Study Research | 4 |
| Mixed Method as Comparative Research | 4 |
| II. TOOLS FOR COMPARATIVE RESEARCH..... | 5 |
| Building Event, Incident, or Comparative Datasets | 5 |
| Qualitative Comparative Analysis and Fuzzy Set Logic | 5 |
| III. EXAMPLES OF COMPARATIVE RESEARCH IN COMMUNICATION | 7 |
| Comparative Media Systems..... | 7 |
| Comparative Political Communication | 7 |
| Comparative Historical and Cultural Communication..... | 8 |
| Technology and Society | 8 |
| Comparative Journalism Studies | 9 |
| Additional Comparative Communication Research..... | 9 |

I. THEORIES OF COMPARATIVE METHODS

Approaches to Comparative Research

- Byrne, D. 2005. "Complexity, configurations and cases." *Theory, Culture & Society* 22(5): 95.
- Rihoux, Benoit, and Heike Grimm, eds. *Innovative Comparative Methods for Policy Analysis: Beyond the Quantitative-Qualitative Divide*. 1st ed. Springer, 2005.
- Elkins, D. J. 1979. "A cause in search of its effect, or what does political culture explain?" *Comparative Politics* 11(2): 127–145.
- Mahoney, J and D. Rueschemeyer. 2003. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge University Press.
- Przeworski, A., and Henry Teune. 2001. *The logic of comparative social inquiry*. Krieger.
- Ragin, C. C. 2004. "Between Complexity and Parsimony: Limited Diversity, Counterfactual Cases, and Comparative Analysis."
- . 1989. *The comparative method: Moving beyond qualitative and quantitative strategies*. University of California Press.
- Ragin, C.C., and D. Zaret. 1983. "Theory and method in comparative research: Two strategies." *Social Forces*: 731–754.
- Ragin, C.C., L. Amoroso. 2010. *Constructing Social Research: The Unity and Diversity of Method*. Pine Forge Press.
- Rihoux, B. 2003. "Bridging the gap between the qualitative and quantitative worlds? A retrospective and prospective view on qualitative comparative analysis." *Field Methods* 15(4): 351.
- Sartori, G. 1970. "Concept misformation in comparative politics." *The American Political Science Review* 64(4): 1033–1053.

Debate: Large N v. Small N, Selecting on the Dependent Variable?

- Mahoney, J. and Goertz, Gary. 2006 "A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research." *Political Analysis* (2006) 14:227–249
- King, G., R. O Keohane, and S. Verba. 1994. *Designing social inquiry: Scientific inference in qualitative research*. Princeton University Press.
- Leiberson, S. 1991. "Small N's and big conclusions: an examination of the reasoning in comparative studies based on a small number of cases." *Soc. F.* 70: 307.
- Ragin, C. 2008. *Redesigning social inquiry: Fuzzy sets and beyond*. University of Chicago Press.
- Shalev, M. 2007. "Limits and alternatives to multiple regression in comparative research." *Comparative Social Research* 24: 261–308.

Debate: Interpretivist v. Positivist?

- Blaikie, N.W.H. (1991). A critique of the use of triangulation in social research. *Quantity and Quality*, 25(2), 115-136.
- Brady, H.E. and David Collier, Eds. (2004). *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. Rowman and Littlefield.
- Ragin, C. (1987). *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Case Study Research

- Robert K. Yin. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Fourth Edition. SAGE Publications. California, 2009.
- Ragin, C. C, and H. S Becker. 1992. *What is a case?: exploring the foundations of social inquiry*. Cambridge University Press.
- Thomas, G. 2011. A typology for the case study in social science following a review of definition, discourse and structure. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17, 6, 511-521
- Eckstein, H. 1975. "Case study and theory in political science." *Handbook of Political Science* 7: 79-137.

Mixed Method as Comparative Research

- Brewer, J. and Hunter, A. (1989). *Multimethod Research: A Synthesis of Styles*. London: Sage.
- Bryman, A. (2006). Integrating quantitative and qualitative research: How is it done? *Qualitative Research*, 6(1), 97-113.
- Collier, D. and Elman, C. (2008). Qualitative and Multimethod Research: Organizations, Publications, and Reflection on Integration. In Janet Box-Steffensmeier, Henry Brady, and -David Collier, eds., *Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology* (Oxford), pp. 779-795.
- Jick, T.D. (1979). Mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches: Triangulation in action. *Administrative Sciences Quarterly*, 24(4), 602-611.
- Leahey, E. (2007). Convergence and confidentiality? Limits to the implementation of mixed methodology. *Social Science Research*, 36(1), 149-158.
- Lieberman, E. (2005). Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research. *American Political Science Review*, 99(3), 435-452.
- Meeto, D and Temple, B. (2003). Issues in multi-method research: constructing self-care. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2(3), 1-21.
- Paluck, L. (2010). The Promising Integration of Qualitative Methods and Field Experiments. *Annals of the American Academy of Politics and Social Sciences*, 628(1), 59-71.

II. TOOLS FOR COMPARATIVE RESEARCH

Building Event, Incident, or Comparative Datasets

- Collier, David, LaPorte, Jody and Seawright, Jason, Putting Typologies to Work: Concept-Formation, Measurement, and Analytic Rigor (January 1, 2011). *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 65, No. 2, June 2012.
- Gerring, John. 2007. *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- George, Alexander and A. Bennett. 2005. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. MIT Press.
- Maney, G. M., & Oliver, P. E. 2001. "Finding collective events: Sources, searches, timing. *Sociological Methods and Research*", 30(2), 131-169.
- Poteete, A. R., Ostrom, E. 2008. "Fifteen Years of Empirical Research on Collective Action in Natural Resource Management: Struggling to Build Large-N Databases Based on Qualitative Research." *World Development*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (January 2008), pp. 176-195.

Qualitative Comparative Analysis and Fuzzy Set Logic

- Bernard Grofman and Carsten Q. Schneider. "An Introduction to Crisp Set QCA, with a Comparison to Binary Logistic Regression." *Political Research Quarterly* Vol. 62, No. 4 (Dec., 2009), pp. 662-672
- Chan, A. P.C, D. W.M Chan, and J. F.Y Yeung. 2009. "Overview of the application of 'fuzzy techniques' in construction management research." *Journal of Construction Engineering and Management* 135: 1241.
- Downey, J., and J. Stanyer. 2010. "Comparative media analysis: Why some fuzzy thinking might help. Applying fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis to the personalization of mediated political communication." *European Journal of Communication* 25(4): 331.
- Fiss, P. C. 2007. "A set-theoretic approach to organizational configurations." *The Academy of Management Review ARCHIVE* 32(4): 1180–1198.
- . 2011. "Building better causal theories: A fuzzy set approach to typologies in organization research." *The Academy of Management Journal* 54(2): 393–420.
- Greckhamer, T., V. F Misangyi, H. Elms, and R. Lacey. 2008. "Using Qualitative Comparative Analysis in Strategic Management Research." *Organizational Research Methods* 11(4): 695.
- Kogut, B., J. P MacDuffie, and C. Ragin. 2004. "Prototypes and strategy: Assigning causal credit using fuzzy sets." *European Management Review* 1(2): 114–131.
- Meyer, A. D, A. S Tsui, and C. R Hinings. 1993. "Configurational approaches to organizational analysis." *Academy of Management Journal*: 1175–1195.
- Öz, Ö. 2004. "Using Boolean-and fuzzy-logic-based methods to analyze multiple case study evidence in management research." *Journal of Management Inquiry* 13(2): 166.
- Ragin, C. C. 2010. *Fuzzy-set social science*. University of Chicago Press.
- Rihoux, Benoît, and Charles C. Ragin. *Configurational Comparative Methods: Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) and Related Techniques*. Sage Publications, Inc, 2008.

- Schneider, Carsten Q., and Claudius Wagemann. *Set-Theoretic Methods for the Social Sciences: A Guide to Qualitative Comparative Analysis*. Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Schneider, C. Q, and C. Wagemann. 2010. "Standards of Good Practice in Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) and Fuzzy-Sets." *Comparative Sociology* 9(3): 397–418.
- Wagemann, C., and C. Q Schneider. 2010. "Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) and fuzzy-sets: agenda for a research approach and a data analysis technique." *Comparative Sociology* 9(3): 376–396.
- Vis, Barbara. The Comparative Advantages of fsQCA and Regression Analysis for Moderately Large-N Analyses. *Sociological Methods Research*. February 2012 vol. 41 no. 1 168-198.

III. EXAMPLES OF COMPARATIVE RESEARCH IN COMMUNICATION

Comparative Media Systems

- Aalberg, T., P. Van Aelst, and J. Curran. 2010. "Media systems and the political information environment: a cross-national comparison." *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 15(3): 255.
- Braman, S., H. Shah, and J. E. Fair. 2001. "'We Are All Natives Now': An Overview of International and Development Communication Research." *Communication yearbook* 24: 159–188.
- Dobek-Ostrowska, B. 2010. *Comparative media systems: European and global perspectives*. Central European University Press.
- Hallin, D. C, and P. Mancini. 2004. *Comparing media systems: Three models of media and politics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Livingstone, S. 2003. "On the challenges of cross-national comparative media research." *European Journal of Communication* 18(4): 477.
- McKenzie, R. 2006. *Comparing media from around the world*. Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.

Comparative Political Communication

- Anduiza, E., M. Jensen and L. Jorba. (Eds.) *Digital Media and Political Engagement Worldwide: A Comparative Study*, New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Anstead, N., and A. Chadwick. 2008. "Parties, election campaigning, and the Internet Toward a comparative institutional approach." *The Routledge handbook of Internet politics*: 56–71.
- Baek, M. 2009. "A Comparative Analysis of Political Communication Systems and Voter Turnout." *American Journal of Political Science* 53(2): 376–393.
- Bennett, W.L., K. Foot, and M. Xenos. "Narratives and Network Organization: A Comparison of Fair Trade Systems in Two Nations." *Journal of Communication* 61(2): 219–245.
- Beissinger, M. R. 2007. "Structure and example in modular political phenomena: The diffusion of Bulldozer/Rose/Orange/Tulip Revolutions." *Perspectives on Politics* 5(02): 259–276.
- Esser, F., and B. Pfetsch. 2004. *Comparing political communication: Theories, cases, and challenges*. Cambridge University Press.
- Foot, K. A, M. Xenos, S. M Schneider, R. Kluver, et al. 2009. "Electoral web production practices in cross-national perspective: The relative influence of national development, political culture, and web genre." *Routledge handbook of Internet politics*: 40.
- Gunther, R., and A. Mughan. 2000. *Democracy and the media: a comparative perspective*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kaid, L. L, and J. Strömbäck. 2008. "Election news coverage around the world: A comparative perspective." *The Handbook of election news coverage around the world*: 421–431.

- Kluver, R. et al. 2007. *The Internet and national elections: a comparative study of web campaigning*. Taylor & Francis.
- Norris, P. 2009. "Comparative Political Communications: Common Frameworks or Babelian Confusion?" *Government and Opposition* 44(3): 321–340.
- . 2004. "Global Political Communication. Good Governance, Human Development, and Mass Communication." *Comparing Political Communication. Theories, Cases, and Challenges*: 115–150.

Comparative Historical and Cultural Communication

- Anderson, B. 1991. *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso. (Especially 67-82).
- Beniger, J. R. 1986. *The control revolution: Technological and economic origins of the information society*. Harvard University Press.
- Carey, J. 1989. *Communication as Culture*. Boston, MA: Unwin Hyman. Especially 13-36.
- Edelstein, A. 1983. "Communication and Culture: The Value of Comparative Studies". *Journal of Communication* 33(3), 302-310.
- Goody, J. and I. P. Watt, "The Consequences of Literacy," *Comparative Studies in History and Society* 5 (1963), 304-45.
- Habermas, J. 1991. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. Especially 14-73, 159-175.
- Schramm, W., and UNESCO. 1964. *Mass media and national development: The role of information in the developing countries*. Stanford University Press.
- Yates, J. A. 1993. *Control through communication: The rise of system in American management*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Technology and Society

- Boczkowski, P. 2004. *Digitizing the News: Innovation in Online Newspapers*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Fields, G. 2004. *Territories of profit: Communications, capitalist development, and the innovative enterprises of GF Swift and Dell Computer*. Stanford Business Books.
- Carmel, E. 1997. "American Hegemony in Packaged Software Trade and the 'Culture of Software,'" *The Information Society* 13: 1 (January-March), 125-142.
- Fischer, C. 1992. *America Calling: A Social History of the Telephone to 1940*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Especially 33-85, 255-272.
- George, Cherian. 2006. *Contentious Journalism and the Internet: Towards Democratic Discourse in Malaysia and Singapore*. University of Washington Press.
- Hughes, T. 1993. *Networks of Power: Electrification in Western Society 1880-1930*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Kalathil, S., and Boas, T. 2003. *Open Networks, Closed Regimes: The Impact of the Internet on Authoritarian Rule*. Brookings Institution Press.
- Saxenian, A. L. 1996. *Regional advantage: Culture and competition in Silicon Valley and Route 128*. Harvard University Press.

Comparative Journalism Studies

- Beam, R. A. 2003. "Content Differences Between Daily Newspapers With Strong and Weak Market Orientations." *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 80 (2, Summer): 368-390
- Chalaby, J. K. 1996. "Journalism as an Anglo-American Invention: A Comparison of the Development of French and Anglo-American Journalism, 1830s-1920s." *European Journal of Communications* (1996), 11: 303-326.
- George, Cherian. 2006. *Contentious Journalism and the Internet: Towards Democratic Discourse in Malaysia and Singapore*. University of Washington Press.
- John, R. 1995. *Spreading the News: The American Postal System from Franklin to Morse*. Boston, MA: Harvard University Press. Especially Chs 1-2
- Kothari, A. (2010). The framing of the Darfur conflict in the New York Times: 2003-2006. *Journalism Studies*, 11(2), 209-224.
- Popkin, J. 1989. *News and Politics in the Age of Revolution*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. Especially 1-10, 34-60, 68-98.
- Schudson, M. 1978. *Discovering the News*. New York, NY: Basic Books. Especially 3-120.

Additional Comparative Communication Research

- Himmelboim, I. (2008). "Reply distribution in online discussions: A comparative network analysis of political and health newsgroups." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 14(1): 156-177.
- Park, J. H., N. G. Gabbadon and A. R. Chirnin. "Naturalizing Racial Differences Through Comedy: Asian, Black, and White Views on Racial Stereotypes in Rush Hour 2". *Journal of Communication* 56(1), 157-177.
- Metzger, M.J. Flanagin, A.J., and Medders, R.B. (2010). Social and Heuristic Approaches to Credibility Evaluation Online. *Journal of Communication*, 60(3), 413-439.
- Duch, Raymond M. Duch. 1991. *Privatizing the Economy: Telecommunications Policy in Comparative Perspective*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. Especially Chs. 3-4, 7.
- Trumbo, C.W. (2004). Research methods in mass communication research: A census of eight journals 1990-2000. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 81(2), 417-436.