

Duke University

Department of Sociology

GRADUATE QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

ECONOMIC SOCIOLOGY

August 25, 2008

The doctoral exam in Economic Sociology is organized into two parts. The question in Part I is mandatory, and you must select two of the four questions from Part II. The aim of the examination is to determine the student's command of this specialization within the constraints of time. No such examination can test exhaustively the content of your knowledge but it should demonstrate your general familiarity with major theories and methods as well as contemporary issues in the specialization.

Please allocate your time over the next 24 hours as efficiently as possible. Each question of the examination should be allocated four to six double-spaced, typed pages, and the completed exam can have a maximum of 15 typed pages of text (excluding references and analytical charts). Please use standard one-inch margins, and a reasonable font size. You may consult your notes and readings but you may not discuss any aspects of the examination with others until after all exams have been completed. Return your completed exams to Claudette Parker.

DATE AND TIME STARTED: _____

DATE AND TIME COMPLETED: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

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Part I: This first question is REQUIRED:

1. There has been a resurgence of economic sociology in recent years, marked by several handbooks and readers that seek to define the field. These include volumes such as: Neil Smelser and Richard Swedberg (eds.), *The Handbook of Economic Sociology*, 2nd ed. (2005); Frank Dobbin (ed.), *The Sociology of the Economy* (2004); and Richard Swedberg, *Principles of Economic Sociology* (2003). Identify and discuss what you consider to be the five main pillars of contemporary economic sociology, and link them to Core Readings published economic sociology in the past 10 years. How are these similar or different from the primary themes of classical economic sociology highlighted by authors like Weber, Marx, Polanyi or Schumpeter nearly a century earlier? Are you more struck by continuity or change in these definitions of the field? Why?

Part II: Answer TWO of the following four questions.

2. The relationship between the state and the market is a central issue in the globalization debate. Discuss the major views on this relationship and critique their strengths and weaknesses. Provide illustrations from at least three major works in the field, and justify your choice of these studies.
3. What role do social network theories play in economic sociology? Identify two key debates in EITHER the study of organizations OR the study of work and occupations. What role do social network theories currently play in those debates? How might social network theories contribute to resolving those debates?
4. Institutional perspectives and network approaches offer different insights to our understanding of the empirical issues brought about by the ongoing process of globalization. Compare these differences and use empirical evidence from your areas of expertise to verify these insights. What are the most important changes in institutional and network theories since the 1990s?
5. A major challenge wrought by globalization is whether economic sociology can use the same concepts and theories to study advanced industrial societies, such as those in Europe and North America, versus rapidly developing economies such as those in Asia. Select one of your areas of sub-specialization, and identify a problem that involves contrasting theoretical arguments in the literature for countries in different regions of the world. What hypotheses can you formulate? Then, propose a study that can empirically adjudicate between the contrasting arguments. Be sure to make clear what sort of evidence would be necessary to support or refute the contrasting arguments.