



Life Course and Generational Dynamics

Second Term Seminar – Winter 2010

Martin Kohli (SPS) & Raya Muttarak (MWF)

Thursdays 08.45-10.45 – Seminar room 2

(Please register with liz.webb@eui.eu)

The life course and generational approach has become essential for a sociological understanding of the dynamics of social life. It examines how contemporary societies reproduce themselves and change through the succession of generations and the conflicts and exchanges among them, and how individuals maintain continuity and transform themselves over their life time. More recently, this approach has also gained increasing attention in political science.

The seminar will provide an introduction and overview of the life course and generational approach as well as a discussion of some of the current research literature. The first sessions of the seminar take up the basic theoretical and methodological problems of the approach. The middle sessions, more research-oriented, go into some of the substantive fields that are being renewed by life course and generational research: inequality, health, gender, migration. The final sessions focus on life course and generational politics and policies.

Most sessions will be based on readings. Participants are expected to join in the discussion of the basic readings for each session, with questions prepared in advance. Each participant will be required to critically present some additional readings for one of the sessions and kick off the discussion on how they contribute to the key questions of the seminar.

Session 1 (January 14)

Introduction to the study of the life course

General readings

Kohli, Martin. 1986. "The world we forgot: A historical review of the life course." Pp. 271-303 in *Later life: The social psychology of ageing*, edited by Victor W. Marshall. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Mayer, Karl Ulrich. 2009. "New Directions in Life Course Research." *Annual Review of Sociology* 35:413-433.



Additional readings

- Elder, Glen H., Jr., Monica Kirkpatrick Johnson, and Robert Crosnoe. 2003. "The Emergence and Development of Life Course Theory." Pp. 3-19 in *Handbook of the life course*, edited by Jeylan T. Mortimer and Michael J. Shanahan. New York: Kluwer.
- Marshall, Victor W. and Mueller, Margaret M. 2003. "Theoretical Roots of the Life-Course Perspective." Pp. 3-32 in *Social Dynamics of the Life Course*, edited by Walter R Heinz. and Victor W. Marshall. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Mayer, Karl Ulrich. 2000. "Promises fulfilled? A review of 20 years of life course research." *Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 41:259-282.

Session 2 (January 21)

Introduction to the study of generations

General readings

- Mannheim, Karl. 1952 [1928]. "The problem of generations." Pp. 276-322 in *Essays on the sociology of knowledge*, edited by P. Kecskemeti. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Kertzer, David. I. 1983. "Generation as a Sociological Problem." *Annual Review of Sociology* 9:125-149.

Additional readings

- Attias-Donfut, Claudine. 1988. *Sociologie des générations. L'empreinte du temps*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.
- Kohli, Martin. 1996. *The problem of generations: Family, economy, politics. Collegium Budapest, Public Lecture Series No. 14*. Budapest: Collegium Budapest.
- Kohli, Martin, and Marc Szydlik (Eds.). 2000. *Generationen in Familie und Gesellschaft*. Opladen: Leske+Budrich.

Session 3 (January 28)

Concepts and methods in life course and generational research

General readings

- Alwin, Duane F., and Ryan J. McCammon. 2003. "Generations, cohorts and social change." Pp. 23-49 in *Handbook of the life course*, edited by Jeylan T. Mortimer and Michael J. Shanahan. New York: Kluwer.
- Glenn, Norval D. 2003. "Distinguishing age, period, and cohort effects." Pp. 465-476 in *Handbook of the life course*, edited by Jeylan T. Mortimer and Michael J. Shanahan. New York: Kluwer.
- Settersten Jr, Richard A., and Lynn Gannon. 2005. "Structure, agency, and the space between: On the challenges and contradictions of a blended view of the life course." *Advances in Life Course Research* 10:35-55.



Additional readings

- Giele, Janet Z., and Glen H. Elder, jr. 1998. "Life Course Research: Development of a Field." Pp. 5-27 in *Methods of Life Course Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, edited by Janet Z. Giele and Glen H. Elder, jr. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Mayer, Karl Ulrich, and Johannes Huinink. 1990. "Age, period, and cohort in the study of the life course: A comparison of classical A-C-P-analysis with event history analysis or Farewell to Lexis?" Pp. 211-232 in *Data quality in longitudinal research*, edited by David Magnusson and Lars. R. Bergman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- O'Brien, Robert M. 2000. "Age-period-cohort-characteristic models." *Social Science Research* 29:123-139.
- Scherger, Simone. 2007 *Destandardisierung, Differenzierung, Individualisierung. Westdeutsche Lebensläufe im Wandel*. Wiesbaden: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

Session 4 (February 4) **Intergenerational relations and transfers**

General readings

- Albertini, Marco, Martin Kohli, and Claudia Vogel. 2007. "Intergenerational transfers of time and money in European families: Common patterns - different regimes?" *Journal of European Social Policy* 17:319-334.
- Kohli, Martin. 1999. "Private and public transfers between generations: Linking the family and the state." *European Societies* 1:81-104.
- Silverstein, Merril. 2006. "Intergenerational family transfers in social context." Pp. 165-179 in *Handbook of aging and the social sciences (6th ed.)*, edited by Robert H. Binstock and Linda K. George. San Diego: Academic Press.
- Uhlenberg, Peter. 2009. "Children in an aging society " *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences* 64B:489-496.

Additional readings

- Arber, Sara, and Claudine Attias-Donfut (Eds.). 2000. *The myth of generational conflict. The family and state in ageing societies*. London: Routledge.
- Bengtson, Vern L. 2001. "Beyond the nuclear family: The increasing importance of multigenerational bonds." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 63:1-16.
- Saraceno, Chiara (Ed.). 2008. *Families, ageing and social policy: Intergenerational solidarity in European welfare states*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Silverstein, Merril (Ed.). 2004. *Intergenerational relations across time and place (Annual Review of Gerontology and Geriatrics, Vol. 24)*. New York: Springer.

Session 5 (February 11) **Intergenerational transmission of well-being and inequality**

General readings

- Amato, Paul R., and Danelle DeBoer. 2001. "The transmission of divorce across generations: Relationship skills or commitment to marriage?" *Journal of Marriage and Family* 63:1038-1051.
- Kohli, Martin, Harald Künemund, and Jörg Lüdicke. 2009. "What transfers from parents contribute to the economic well-being of adult children." Pp. 493-516 in *Wohlfahrtsstaatlichkeit in entwickelten*



- Demokratien: Herausforderungen, Reformen und Perspektiven*, edited by Herbert Obinger and Elmar Rieger. Frankfurt/M: Campus.
- Uhlenberg, Peter, and Margaret Mueller. 2003. "Family context and individual well-being: Patterns and mechanisms in life course perspective." Pp. 123-148 in *Handbook of the life course*, edited by Jeylan T. Mortimer and Michael J. Shanahan. New York: Plenum.

Additional readings

- Albertini, Marco, and Jaap Dronkers. 2009. "Effects of Divorce on Children's Educational Attainment in a Mediterranean and Catholic Society. Evidence from Italy." *European Societies* 11:137-159.
- Dronkers, Jaap, and Juha Härkönen. 2008. "The intergenerational transmission of divorce in cross-national perspective: Results from the Fertility and Family Survey." *Population Studies* 62:273-288.
- Moen, Phyllis, Mary Ann Erickson, and Donna Dempster-McClain. 1997. "Their Mother's Daughters? The Intergenerational Transmission of Gender Attitudes in a World of Changing Roles." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 59:281-293.
- Wolfinger, Nicholas H. 2005. *Understanding the divorce cycle: The children of divorce in their own marriages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Session 6 (February 18)

Health across the life course

General readings

- Blane, David. 2006. "The life course, the social gradient, and health." Pp. 54-77 in *Social determinants of health*, edited by Michael Marmot and Richard G. Wilkinson. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hayward, Mark D., and Bridget K. Gorman. 2004. "The long arm of childhood: The influence of early-life social conditions on men's mortality." *Demography* 41:87-107.
- Hertzman, Clyde, and Chris Power. 2004. "Child development as a determinant of health across the life course." *Current Paediatrics* 14:438-443.

Additional readings

- Kuh, Diana, Imran Shah, Marcus Richards, Gita Mishra, Michael Wadsworth, and Rebecca Hardy. 2009. "Do childhood cognitive ability or smoking behaviour explain the influence of lifetime socio-economic conditions on premature adult mortality in a British post war birth cohort?" *Social Science & Medicine* 68:1565-1573.
- Palloni, Alberto. 2006. "Reproducing inequalities: Luck, wallets, and the enduring effects of childhood health." *Demography* 43:587-615.

Session 7 (February 25)

Gender in the life course

General readings

- Blossfeld, Hans-Peter, and Sonja Drobnic. 2001. "Theoretical Perspectives on Couples' Careers." Pp. 16-50 in *Careers of Couples in Contemporary Societies. From Male Breadwinner to Dual Earner Families*, edited by Hans-Peter Blossfeld and Sonja Drobnic. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Moen, Phyllis. 2001. "The gendered life course " Pp. 179-196 in *Handbook of aging and the social sciences (5th ed.)*, edited by Robert H. Binstock and Linda K. George. San Diego: Academic Press



Giele, Janet Z. 1998. "Innovation in the typical life course." Pp. 231-263 in *Methods of life course research: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*, edited by Janet Z. Giele and Glen H. Elder, jr. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Additional readings

Allmendinger, Jutta. 1994. *Lebensverlauf und Sozialpolitik. Die Ungleichheit von Mann und Frau und ihr öffentlicher Ertrag*. Frankfurt/M.: Campus.

Krüger, Helga. 2003. "The life course regime: Ambiguities between interrelatedness and individualization." Pp. 33-56 in *Social dynamics of the life course: Transitions, institutions, and interrelations*, edited by Walter R. Heinz and Victor W. Marshall. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Session 8 (March 4)

Life course and generational dynamics of migration

General readings

Clark, Rebecca, Jennifer E. Glick, and Regina M. Bures. 2009. "Immigrant families over the life course: Research directions and needs." *Journal of Family Issues* 30:852-872.

Jasso, Guillermina. 2003. "Migration, human development, and the life course." Pp. 331-364 in *Handbook of the life course*, edited by Jeylan T. Mortimer and Michael J. Shanahan. New York: Plenum.

Wong, Rebecca, Alberto Palloni, and Beth J. Soldo. 2007. "Wealth in middle and old age in Mexico: The role of international migration." *International Migration Review* 41:127-151.

Additional readings

Böhlmark, Anders. 2009. "Integration of childhood immigrants in the short and long run – Swedish evidence." *International Migration Review* 43:387-409.

Frank, Reanne, and Elizabeth Wildsmith. 2005. "The grass widows of Mexico: Migration and union dissolution in a binational context." *Social Forces* 83:919-947.

Milewski, Nadja. 2007. "First child of immigrant workers and their descendants in West Germany: Interrelation of events, disruption, or adaptation?" *Demographic Research* 17:859-896.

Wakabayashi, Chizuko. 2009. "Effects of immigration and age on health of older people in the United States." *Journal of Applied Gerontology* 20:1-23.

Session 9 (March 10, 17:00-19:00)

Life course and generational politics

General readings

Bonoli, Giuliano, and Silja Häusermann. 2009. "Who wants what from the welfare state? Social-structural cleavages in distributional politics: evidence from Swiss referendum votes." *European Societies* 11:211-232.

Braungart, Richard G., and Margret M. Braungart. 1986. "Life course and generational politics." *Annual Review of Sociology* 12:205-31.

Kohli, Martin. 2006. "Aging and justice." Pp. 456-478 in *Handbook of aging and the social sciences (6th ed.)*, edited by Robert H. Binstock and Linda K. George. San Diego: Elsevier.

Additional readings

Campbell, Andrea Louise. 2009. "A new macropolitics of aging? The case of the USA, older voters, and AARP." Pp. 287-298 in *Altern: Familie, Zivilgesellschaft, Politik (Altern in Deutschland, Bd. 8)*,



edited by Jürgen Kocka, Martin Kohli, and Wolfgang Streeck. Stuttgart: Wissenschaftliche Verlagsgesellschaft.

Goerres, Achim. 2009. *The political participation of older people in Europe: The greying of our democracies*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Lutz, Wolfgang, Sylvia Kritzinger, and Vegard Skirbekk. 2006. "The demography of growing European identity." *Science* 314:425.

Sinn, Hans-Werner, and Silke Uebelmesser. 2002. "Pensions and the path to gerontocracy in Germany." *European Journal of Political Economy* 19:153-158.

Session 10 (March 18)

Policies of life course and generations

General readings

Leisering, Lutz. 2003. "Government and the life course." Pp. 205-225 in *Handbook of the life course*, edited by Jeylan T. Mortimer and Michael J. Shanahan. New York: Plenum.

Lynch, Julia. 2006. *Age in the welfare state: The origins of social spending on pensioners, workers, and children*. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press (Ch. 1, pp. 1-14 + Ch. 2, pp. 15-40).

Zhou, Xueguang, and Liren Hou. 1999. "Children of the Cultural Revolution: The state and the life course in the People's Republic of China." *American Sociological Review* 64:12-36.

Additional readings

Blossfeld, Hans-Peter, Sandra Buchholz, and Dirk Hofäcker (Eds.). 2006. *Globalization, uncertainty and late careers in society*. London: Routledge.

Börsch-Supan, Axel. 2007. "European welfare state regimes and their generosity toward the elderly." Pp. 23-47 in *Government spending on the elderly*, edited by D. Papadimitriou. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Heckman, James J. 2006. "Skill formation and the economics of investing in disadvantaged children." *Science* 321:1900-01.

Kohli, Martin. 2007. "The institutionalization of the life course: Looking back to look ahead." *Research in Human Development* 4:253-271.

Mayer, Karl Ulrich. 2001. "The paradox of global social change and national path dependencies: life course patterns in advanced societies." Pp. 89-110 in *Inclusions and exclusions in European societies*, edited by Alison Woodward and Martin Kohli. London: Routledge.

Mayer, Karl Ulrich, and Urs Schoepflin. 1989. "The state and the life course." *Annual Review of Sociology* 15:187-209.