

**ECONOMIC SOCIOLOGY PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION
JANUARY 2002**

AFTERNOON SESSION

Part III (50 percent of exam grade)

Answer **three** of the following questions.

1. Define contingent work. Based on your definition, how can we best measure the concept? What are the prevailing explanations for the rise of contingent work? Which theory do you believe is supported most by the existing evidence?
2. Capitalist countries vary considerably with respect to the institutional environments for making investment decisions. Some countries rely on stock markets, while others use banks for allocating capital. What does the research suggest are the effects of the different institutional structures of managerial decision-making? Choose three countries with different systems of capital markets and assess how it affects the behavior of economic actors.
3. Economic theory tends to treat firms as independent, isolated units. There is growing evidence, however, that businesses often cooperate and share technology and information with other firms, develop long-term contractual relations, and are connected through shareholding and interlocking directorates. What explains the variety of ways in which business groups are formed in different settings? What are the implications of business groups for theories of firm behavior and markets?
4. To what extent is the concept of social embeddedness useful for understanding regional development processes? To what extent can the local and regional environment shape migration/location decisions and organizational arrangements within firms? Conversely, how can firms/industries shape regional development processes?
5. Is there a universal tendency towards decentralization of wage determination and collective bargaining in advanced industrial economies? What forces might lie behind such a trend, and can you identify any counter-tendencies? What are the social and economic consequences of increased decentralization of industrial relations?
6. Theories of urban inequality have emphasized the importance of race, space, and skills. Summarize the basic theoretical positions and the evidence for and against them. Evaluate how race, space, and skills interact in urban areas. Draw on available evidence to evaluate these theories.
7. The economic contribution of the "social" is one of the hoariest issues in economic sociology. This has been variously understood as the reduction in transactions costs that social institutions permit, the completion of otherwise incomplete markets that they provide, or the production of non-tradeable positive externalities. Discuss, and criticize, these contending approaches.
8. Slavery was succeeded by capitalism because of moral struggle, not just waning relative productivity. On what moral and economic basis might present capitalism be succeeded?