



Thursday, 13 December 2012, 18.30 h

**Hiroshi Ono**

**Texas A & M University**

## **Welfare States and the Redistribution of Happiness**

This lecture highlights recent developments in international and comparative happiness, with particular focus on work, marriage and family in Japan. Our empirical study uses large-scale international data set to examine the determinants of happiness in a comparative perspective. We hypothesize that welfare states redistribute happiness among policy-targeted demographic groups in these countries. We apply multi-level modeling and focus on public social expenditures (as percentage of GDP) as proxy measures of state intervention at the macro-level, and happiness as the specific measure of welfare outcome at the micro-level. We find that aggregate happiness is not greater in the welfare states, but happiness closely reflects the redistribution of resources in these countries. Happiness is “transferred” from low-risk to high-risk individuals. For example, women with small children are significantly happier, but single persons are significantly less happy in the welfare states. This suggests that pro-family ideology of the welfare states protects families from social risk and improves their well-being at the cost of single persons. Further, we find that the happiness gap between high versus low-income earners is considerably smaller in the welfare states, suggesting that happiness is transferred from the privileged to the less privileged.

**Hiroshi Ono** is Associate Professor of Sociology at Texas A&M University. He has extensive international experience, having held professional and academic positions in the U.S., Japan, and Sweden. His research integrates sociology and microeconomics to study the causes and consequences of stratification and inequality, with applications in the areas of gender, family, education, and labor markets. His current work looks at patterns of career mobility in the Japanese labor market, and determinants of happiness in an international context. His papers have appeared in the *American Sociological Review*, *Social Science Quarterly*, and other leading journals. For a complete list of his publications please visit [http://sociweb.tamu.edu/faculty.php?faculty\\_id=54](http://sociweb.tamu.edu/faculty.php?faculty_id=54).

The lecture will be given in English. It will take place on **Thursday, December 13, 2012 at 6.30 p.m.** at the DIJ. Admission is free, please register at: [forum@dijtokyo.org](mailto:forum@dijtokyo.org) or