Who Polices Which Boundaries? How Racial Self-Identification Affects External Classification

Maria Abascal

New York University

How do people classify another person in terms of race, and is it affected by how the target themselves identifies? Research on racial classification has thus far overlooked the role of self-identification, despite theorizing about the reciprocal relationship between the multiple dimensions of race. Self-identification may be an especially contentious marker of race, because people might be motivated both to identify with, and police the boundary around, certain groups. We explore the role of self-identification using a pre-registered conjoint experiment with two racially diverse samples. We find that racial self-identification consistently affects classification, less so than a signal of ancestry does but as much, if not more, than skin color. Consistent with policing, Americans discount self-identification with some categories more than others. However, we do not find that people police the boundary around their own group more diligently than they police other categories. Rather, White, Black, Latino and Asian Americans all police the White category most; that is, they are less responsive when someone claims to be White than when they claim to be Latino, Asian, Middle Eastern or North African, or, in some cases, Black. Our results suggest the US ethnoracial hierarchy rests in part on a consensus around Whites' status in that hierarchy.

Making Sense Of Honor Killings?

Ozan Aksoy

University College London

Honor killings, which occur when women are perceived to have broken purity norms and bring "dishonor" to their family, pose profound moral and public health problems and deep sociological puzzles. Given the immense cost, why do families murder their own daughter, niece, or cousin? And, conversely, given the tragic consequences, why does norm breaking happen in the first place? Drawing on accounts of honor killings, the authors characterize the key actors, actions, and incentives, and create a model that yields sharp predictions for norms and killings. Counterintuitively, the model predicts that honor killings occur most frequently when honor norms are contested; not when they

are strictest. Analyzing a large-scale dataset (25 countries, 26,000 individuals) on Muslim's attitudes towards honor killings and building a unique a dataset of honor killings from Turkey, the authors find broad support for the hypotheses. The authors' work advances the theoretical understanding of honor norms and killings and provides one of the most comprehensive empirical analyses of the factors that increase or decrease them.

Seeing, Not Avoiding The Other Side: The Persistent Role Of Heterogeneous Social Networks In An Era Of Partisan Politics

Delia Baldassarri

New York University

Do heterogeneous political networks still contain out-partisan hostility in the contemporary US context of heightened partisanship? Today, cross-partisan conversations may no longer lead to greater understanding, and people could be exiting the very same heterogeneous networks that are supposed to buffer against animosity. In this article, we use two original surveys including several experiments to test whether partisanship affects social selection, and whether heterogeneous political networks inoculate against partisan animosity. We find that both close and acquaintance networks still display substantial levels of political heterogeneity. Partisanship is not top of mind in social selection, except when partisans receive information about it, which may explain the continued partisan heterogeneity of social networks. Finally, network heterogeneity is strongly related to lower animosity, less selection on partisanship, and fewer misperceptions about the other side. These results suggest that decades of partisan animosity have not yet irreparably damaged social relations in the United States.

Conceptualizing Taste In Sociological Terms

Shyon Baumann

University of Toronto

Taste is a core sociological concept within cultural sociology and within the study of inequality. Taste was theorized by foundational social theorists and philosophers, and Bourdieu built on this foundation to propose an understanding of taste that has informed empirical work on taste since the 1980s. Since that time, almost all sociological work on taste has attended to the determinants and consequences of taste while leaving the nature of taste unexamined. We argue that, despite the advancements of a Bourdieusian

conceptualization of taste, taste remains undertheorized and in need of theoretical refinement and specification. In this paper we advance a sociological conceptualization of taste through leveraging an overview of several decades of empirical work on taste, the sociological work on culture and cognition, and by incorporating work on social identity from Mead. Our conceptualization of taste is specifically sociological, rather than an understanding of taste that would apply across all disciplines, especially those outside the social sciences. We argue that a sociological definition of aesthetic taste has three key dimensions. Tastes are 1) aesthetic preferences involving 2) automatic cognitive engagement that 3) achieve a latent social function. In this paper, we elaborate on and justify each of these three dimensions. Our argument takes the conceptualization of taste past the Bourdieusian platform informing almost all current empirical sociological work on taste by incorporating theoretical insights from both classical and contemporary sociology. In tying the conceptualization of taste to social functions, we demonstrate why an accurate conceptualization of taste relies on a specifically sociological perspective rather than a perspective that prioritizes an individualized understanding of tastes. We illustrate the value of our conceptualization of taste through reference to existing influential studies on tastes.

Forgiveness, Revenge, And Social Status In Intergroup Conflict

Stephen Benard

Indiana University

Conflict between groups influences social relations within groups, and status is an important aspect of these relations. We suggest that intergroup conflict provides opportunities for individuals to gain or lose status by demonstrating their value or commitment to the ingroup. We ask whether individuals can gain status by engaging in either intergroup revenge or forgiveness in response to an act of outgroup antagonism, and by presenting their behaviors as group-motivated (Study 1). We then ask whether observing group members receive status for intergroup revenge or forgiveness encourages these behaviors (Study 2). We evaluate these ideas with two laboratory experiments using a mixed-motive intergroup game, with simulated in- and outgroup members. In Study 1 (n = 192), participants witness an ingroup member respond to outgroup antagonism with vengeful or forgiving behavior, and justify their response with group or self-interest. Participants rewarded vengeful rather than forgiving behavior with status, and encouraged vengeful behavior using chat messages. They did not, however, view avengers as more status-worthy in general, or view claims of group motivation alone as status-worthy independently of behavior. In Study 2 (n = 228), participants watched group members receive status for acts of intergroup revenge, forgiveness, or neither.

Then, participants had the opportunity to behave in vengeful or forgiving ways towards the outgroup. Observing others receive status rewards for forgiveness increased the rate of intergroup forgiveness relative to revenge, but only in cases in which the outgroup had initiated the conflict. Broadly, the results speak to research on conflict, altruism, group cohesion and solidarity, and social status. Understanding how group processes encourage or discourage conflict is also important because conflict spreads through networks via cycles of retaliation and counterretaliation.

Opting Out Of Educational Assessments

Kendra Bischoff

Cornell University

Standardized tests are a key mechanism for assessing academic achievement and progress in U.S. schools and school districts. Although federal education law requires states to measure student progress in math and language arts in 3rd through 8th grades, individual families can opt-out of testing for their children. Grassroots opt-out advocacy groups and journalistic accounts note several possible reasons why families may opt-out of standardized educational tests, but there is little systematic understanding of how individual sociodemographic characteristics and contextual factors may play a role in the rejection of standardized testing. Elevated local rates of opting-out undermine the validity of school-level achievement test outcomes, thereby disrupting the utility of a foundational tool of the accountability movement. New York State has experienced high and increasing rates of opting-out. In this early-stage project, we use annual school-level data from New York State on the number of children who refused to take standardized tests from 2017-2023 to understand how individual and local contextual factors shape test refusal.

Differential Effects Of Transparency: How Transparency Shapes Male And Female Evaluative Behavior

Brittany Bond

Cornell University

Organizations often design employee evaluation systems with the aim of minimizing biases that negatively impact historically marginalized groups, such as women and Blacks, in their evaluation outcomes. There's a wide consensus in research that greater transparency (and reduced anonymity) in evaluation systems is associated with lower bias, resulting in evaluations that are more equitable and fairer. However, recent

research shows that women, under fully transparent conditions, engage more in tasks with limited promotion prospects, such as evaluations, while benefiting less. This has led to policy recommendations to alter women's engagement in these tasks. Using data from a company's 360-degree peer feedback system, in which transparency was inadvertently shifted, we find that transparency affects gender differences in feedback given. Women put in more effort in feedback under full transparency than in private settings. This effect is more significant for junior employees, with some evidence of a reversal at senior levels. Thus, our findings only open the set of potential considerations organizations have to make in designing their evaluation systems with equity as aspiration.

National Identification On Twitter Or How To Find A Needle In A Haystack With Llms

Bart Bonikowski

New York University

People possess multiple identities, the relative salience of which responds dynamically to social context. Whether one thinks of themselves as a parent, an employee, a spouse, a particular gender, or an American varies from place to place and time to time. National identity in particular is a crucial master frame through which people understand their sense of collective belonging and their political choices. Yet, research on national identification, has been limited to cross-sectional data, often gathered using single survey items, which fail to take into account the contextually of identity. With large-scale social media data, however, a new approach is possible. Our study traces daily fluctuations in American identification using a random sample of US Twitter/X users. Because identifying tweets that engage with nationhood is akin to looking for a needle in a haystack, we employ few-shot classification using Llama 2, a large language model, combined with fine-tuning to further improve model performance. Our findings reveal that American identification rises and falls in a patterned manner, partly in response to nation-relevant events widely reported in the media. We show which events have the largest impact on nationalism time trends, estimate the collective half-life of identification events, and examine which events are politically galvanizing versus polarizing.

Relational Holds In Labor Markets

Philipp Brandt

Sciences Po

There is little that workers can do in labor markets. Qualifications, performance, and referrals may improve their chances in hiring decisions, but labor markets are part of larger processes like political reforms or technological change. In this talk, I show how workers find continuity. The empirical context is the widely studied case of New York City's yellow cab industry. The analysis considers the work lives of over 30,000 drivers from a year's worth of their activities, ~150 million passenger trips. An initial computational ethnography discovers two main labor market segments characterized by transactional and relational work arrangements. The subsequent analysis unpacks how drivers navigate them. Drivers quit transactional arrangements in search of a stable partner, often accepting spare shifts of committed pairs along the way. These "relational holds" offer respite during those quests and bolster the viability of stable partnerships. They also ensure the smooth operation of the yellow cab industry.

The Structure Of Human Societies

Elizabeth Bruch

University of Michigan

Theories of social structure typically emphasize relationships among individuals, but our empirical analyses overwhelmingly focus on the distribution of individual attributes. For example, scholars have long highlighted income and wealth inequality as well as occupational and neighborhood segregation as key indicators of social inequality. Network scientists have produced sensitive methods for describing social hierarchies and community structure (i.e., cliquishness), but these measures often lack an interpretable metric and do not reveal the extent to which communities and hierarchies overlap. We develop a framework that provides three theoretically meaningful and practically useful metrics for describing social structure: (1) the depth of hierarchies, (2) the strength of communities; and (3) the extent to which communities and hierarchies overlap. The third of these is, to the best of our knowledge, completely novel. You can imagine that at one extreme we observe caste systems in which communities are isomorphic with hierarchies—everyone within the same community has the same social rank, but the ranks of communities differ. At the other end of the spectrum, we might observe multiple parallel hierarchies in which all variation in rank occurs within communities We apply our framework to data on high school friendships from Add Health and find that schools display a wide range of social structures. Some have deep hierarchies while some have shallow ones. Some are organized more like castes where each community occupies a distinct social rank, whereas others consist of multiple, parallel hierarchies. We explore what demographic and institutional features schools are associated with this social structure. We were surprised to find that smaller schools are more caste-like and display deeper hierarchies than large schools. We propose and test one explanation for

these patterns.

The Rise Of Intra-Job Skill Diversity Beyond High-Paying Jobs

Siwei Cheng

New York University

Prior research on skill profiles at work has primarily focused on their variations across jobs and occupations. Yet, for individual workers, it is the combination of skills within a job, rather than between jobs, that directly shapes their role expectations. While recent research highlights increasing skill diversity within high-paying jobs (such as managers and professionals), they fall short of exploring these patterns across the labor market. Does the growth in skill diversity permeate the entire job spectrum? To address this question, we introduce a Skill Embedding framework, which maps a wide range of skills onto a multidimensional space to elucidate their interrelationships. Employing this framework, we extract detailed skill requirements from large-scale job posting data to construct measures of skill diversity within job roles, which are then matched to data from the American Community Survey to examine their trends and earnings returns. Our analysis contributes three critical insights to the literature. First, the rise of skill diversity extends beyond high-paying jobs, with an equally notable increase observed in personal service positions. Second, the factors fueling the rise of skill diversity in high-paying jobs are distinct from those in lower-paying personal service jobs: in management and professional jobs, skill diversity grew the most among high-paying, high-skill workers, whereas in personal service jobs, skill diversity exhibits the greatest growth in low-paying, low-skill jobs. Third, conditional on a host of demographic and educational variables, workers in personal service jobs receive smaller returns to intra-job skill diversity than those in management and professional jobs. We discuss the implications of our findings for labor market inequality at the end of this article.

Crosscutting Social Ties Stifle Partisan Conflicts Over Books In Libraries And Schools

Clayton Childress

University of British Columbia

Libraries and public schools have faced a wave of "challenges" to books featuring LGBTQ and Black main characters. While this tactic has been adopted by partisan activists and supported by some party elites, the degree to which everyday Americans

find stories about individuals from different backgrounds to be inappropriate for inclusion in public spaces–and which identities those are–is generally unknown. Using an experiment that manipulates the back cover descriptions of 18 published novels, we find that conservative partisans believe that the same stories about gay and lesbian main characters, Muslim and Jewish main characters, and Democrat main characters are inappropriate for classrooms and libraries. Liberal partisans show no symmetrical effects. And yet, social ties to individuals from more left-leaning groups can break up the conservative "mega-identity" linking partisan animus to sociodemographic censure, and shift conservative perceptions of individuals of nondominant sexual and religious background from "bad people" to "good people."

Does Populism Influence Academic Freedom?   A Cross-National Study Of Asia, Europe, And Latin America.

Volha Chykina

University of Richmond

Recent attacks on academic freedom across the world have garnered attention of both researchers and the general public. In Hungary, Viktor Orban has waged a long-lasting campaign against the Central European University, a U.S.-chartered institution (Corbett & Gordon, 2018). In Russia, universities have dismissed academics who criticize Vladimir Putin's regime (Chirikov & Fedyukin, 2021). These attacks have occurred as the governments in these countries turned more populist. In fact, scholars discuss the rise of populism as one potential reason for curtailment of academic freedoms across the world (Reyes-Galindo, 2023; Väliverronen & Saikkonen, 2021). While these case studies propose that there is a relationship between populism and academic freedom (Reyes-Galindo, 2023; Väliverronen & Saikkonen, 2021), to the best of my knowledge, no study has examined this relationship empirically while tracking changes in populism and academic freedom over time across multiple contexts. In this paper, I hypothesize that an increase in populism will lead to a decrease in academic freedom. To test this hypothesis, I employ over-time variation in academic freedom and populism. I collect my academic freedom measures, as well as my control variables, from the Varieties of Democracy (V-DEM) dataset. For my independent variable, populism, I use the vote share received by a populist party or candidate in a given country in a given year collected by Grzymala-Busse and McFaul (2020). To examine my hypothesis, I use regression models with country and year fixed effects. My results support my hypothesis. Since populism is likely to continue to challenge liberal democracies (Galston, 2017), these findings will have implications for our understanding of how academic freedom will evolve. More specifically, scholars and policymakers should expect more curtailment in academic freedom in the future, and calls for protecting academic freedom should

become even more prevalent.

The Duality Of Persons And Cultural Meaning Communities: Studying Systematic Deviations From Cultural Consensus About Social Identities

Aidan Combs

Duke University

The original conceptualization of duality, as a relation between people and groups which can be transformed into a network at two conceptual levels (Breiger 1974), has been expanded dramatically in recent decades. Here, we build on the cultural turn in duality (Breiger 2010) and network research more generally. We examine the duality created by variations in cultural meanings of social identities. The two levels of our analysis are people (the respondents in our surveys of cultural meaning) and the cultural communities that they form by their shared deviations from a consensual cultural meaning (associated with various social identities). We measure cultural meanings using the three affective dimensions that are featured in affect control theory as the basis of social interaction, labeling, and emotional response. These three dimensions are evaluation (good versus bad), potency (powerful versus powerless), and activity (lively versus quiet) (EPA hereafter) (Scholl 2013; Heise 2010). We take deviations of respondents' EPA individual ratings from the mean EPA ratings that are used as the cultural meanings of hundreds of occupational identities as measured in 2019 (Quinn et al. 2021). Correlations among these deviations at the individual level are used as indicators of shared subcultural deviance from the overall shared cultural meaning. We form networks among identity concepts based on the shared deviations from the mean cultural value, and use community detection to find the identities that define different subcultural communities–those that "move together" in respondents' estimations. We investigate the features that pattern groupings on both sides of the respondent-occupation duality.

Cunning Of The Bulls? Social Influence And Collective Intelligence In Stock Market Predictions

Daniel DellaPosta

Pennsylvania State University

In uncertain decision-making environments, we often rely on peers to provide guiding signals. While scholars have long highlighted how such social influence can produce

"wiser" crowds, the tendency to self-sort into homogeneous enclaves can also trap members of the crowd in information-poor echo chambers. This paper examines the intelligence of networked predictions using data from StockTwits.com, a Twitter-like social network in which amateur and professional stock traders post ideas and share opinions. Applying network measures and panel data models to approximately 160 million posts spanning nearly a decade, we show that larger crowds of users produced more accurate collective predictions about stock price movement. However, the crowd's accuracy also depended critically on an individual stock's position in the overall network of stock market discussions. When stocks occupied "bridging" positions in this discussion network, drawing attention from distinct crowds of users who otherwise did not frequently encounter one another on the site, collective predictions were more accurate than for stocks that occupied comparative echo chambers in the discussion network. This study provides large-scale empirical evidence for the "wisdom of crowds," but also highlights the critical ways this wisdom depends on the particular network topologies that make up that crowd.

Division Of Labor, Specialization, And Inequality

Emily Erikson

Yale University

The division of labor is a longstanding problem of social organization and coordination central to economic development. There is a long-history of conflating specialization with the division of labor. I show that these are very different types of social coordination and that network structures and the allocation of resources affect each of them very differently.

How Prevalent Is Racial Discrimination Against Black And Hispanic Americans Across Contexts? A Meta-Analysis Of Correspondence Audits In The United States

S. Michael Gaddis

NWEA, Research and Policy Partnerships

To what extent does racial/ethnic discrimination in America differ across contexts? In this paper, we provide the largest and most comprehensive review of experimental research on racial/ethnic discrimination to date. We conducted a meta-analysis of 103 correspondence audits in the United States, representing over half a million applications, emails, and other forms of correspondence that occur in modern society, including the

hiring, housing, medical, public services, and education sectors. Discrimination against racial/ethnic minorities exhibits substantial contextual heterogeneity not recognized in previous discrimination research. We find that racial/ethnic discrimination in the United States continues to be a large problem in some contexts but is less prevalent in other contexts. While discrimination against Black Americans is prevalent in hiring and rental housing, discrimination against Hispanic Americans is only prevalent in hiring. Although discrimination occurs in education, medical, and public services contexts, it is far less common in these sectors. Our findings suggest that discrimination is largest in contexts that are more resource-intensive and have higher short-term economic stakes, despite stronger legal protections against discrimination in those same contexts. Our work confirms that racial/ethnic discrimination in the United States continues to be a pervasive phenomenon that impacts many core parts of the lives of Black and Hispanic Americans and simultaneously reinforces and exacerbates existing inequalities. Our meta-analysis provides a roadmap for the key areas where additional experiments on discrimination are needed.

Social Trust, Political Ideology, And The American Public's Climate Change Perception—A Study Of Two National Surveys In 2022 And 2023

Feng Hao

University of South Florida

Climate change has brought unprecedented impacts on the planet and human society. The United States is a major contributor to this crisis and has witnessed extreme weather events more frequently in recent years. To address this issue, it is critical to understand how Americans understand climate change. Our study uses data from two national surveys administered in 2022 and 2023 to investigate the public perception of climate change. Descriptive statistics reveal that most Americans are concerned about the risk, recognize the ramifications of extreme weather events, agree that transforming to renewables is a practical solution, and support the Inflation Reduction Act. However, comparing results over time shows a slight decline in those concerns and support. Structural equation modeling results from analyzing both surveys show social trust and political ideology significantly shape climate change perception. Respondents who lean liberal become even more likely to perceive the threat of climate change and concur with climate policies if they also have stronger social trust. The findings contribute to the literature and carry policy implications. It is critical to leverage social trust's effect to bridge the political gap and promote public response to climate change.

The Division Of Rationalized Labor

Michelle Jackson

Stanford University

A key prediction of classical theories of the division of labor is that, over time, specialized occupations are responsible for an ever-narrower range of tasks. In this project, I use historical, archival, and statistical data to examine changes in the division of labor in the United States over the past c.150 years. In contrast to the predictions of classical theories, I show that the macro-level forces of scientific development and rationalization in fact work to complicate tasks and responsibilities.

Marriage And Intergenerational Inequality: Evidence From Us Sisters And Brothers

Kristian Bernt Karlson

University of Copenhagen

We advance the literature on the role of marriage in intergenerational mobility by developing a new approach, which is based on the correlation of siblings' life cycle incomes. Our approach not only nests existing methods but also introduces a novel decomposition of the total family background effect into direct and indirect effects attributable to marriage. This indirect effect is further decomposed into two components: the sibling correlation in marriage, and the marriage premium (i.e., returns to being married) net of family unobservables. We apply our approach to analyze brothers' and sisters' lifecycle earnings and family income, utilizing data from the U.S. National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1979. Our findings are twofold. For women, at all career stages, we observe that marriage does not mediate the total family background effect on individual earnings. However, it does mediate a significant portion for family income—approximately one quarter. This discrepancy, we demonstrate, is due to a very large net marriage premium in husbands' income. In contrast, for men, marriage mediates the total family background effect on both individual earnings and family income across all career stages. The difference in mediation between these two types of income is small, stemming from the low net marriage premium in wives' income. These results have profound implications for theories of reproduction and mobility. They suggest that the economic benefits of marriage—and their influence on family income and individual earnings—vary significantly between genders and across different stages of careers.

Role As Structural Truce: Mechanisms For Addressing Protracted Jurisdictional Conflicts Between Professions With Status Ambiguity

Arvind Karunakaran

Stanford University

Change initiatives, such as the introduction of new policies and technologies, often trigger jurisdictional conflicts between professions. Prior research has identified relational mechanisms for addressing such jurisdictional conflicts. However, when the conflicting professions have ambiguity in relative status, those jurisdictional conflicts tend to become protracted: under such conditions of status ambiguity, members of each conflicting profession want to reassert their dominance vis-à-vis the other profession and often refuse to compromise, thus rendering the relational mechanisms ineffective for addressing jurisdictional conflicts. Therefore, what mechanisms can address protracted jurisdictional conflicts between professions with status ambiguity? I examine this question in the context of a change initiative by the U.S. federal government to introduce 911 as the nationwide emergency number. This initiative, in turn, triggered protracted jurisdictional conflicts between two professions characterized by status ambiguity: police officers and firefighters. I identify and theorize a novel structural mechanism: establishing a new role as a structural truce to address protracted jurisdictional conflicts between police officers and firefighters. This newly established role of 911 dispatchers absorbs jurisdiction over the contested tasks and structurally separates the conflicting professions from each other during the initial stages of coordination when the "definition of the situation" is being worked out. This new role is (a) characterized by lower-status as compared to the conflicting professions; (b) a third-party that is unaffiliated with either the police or firefighting professions. These characteristics of the new role avoid concerns around evoking status threat, playing favorites, or getting co-opted by the conflicting professions, and help address protracted jurisdictional conflicts between professions with status ambiguity.

Unanswered Outreach: Mechanisms Of Gender-Based Network Segregation

Minjae Kim

Rice University

Whereas the popular message of "lean in" implies that "outreach homophily"—e.g., women's tendency to reach out to other women more than to men—is the sole or more responsible factor for gender-based network segregation, "acceptance homophily"—e.g., men's tendency to accept outreach from fellow men more—may also or instead be more

responsible. These mechanisms are separately examined here in an entrepreneurship accelerator in the northeast US, where budding startup founders (as resource-seeking "mentees") and seasoned advisors (as resource-holding "mentors") cultivate interactional ties by sending relationship requests or accepting them. Although same-gender founder-advisor pairs are more likely to form than different-gender pairs, both founders and advisors are equally likely to reach out to counterparts of their own and opposite gender. Instead, we find that such network segregation is driven by male (but not female) advisors accepting outreach from founders of their own gender more. These patterns seem largely explained not by selection based on quality but by cultural fit male advisors may perceive as lower when considering outreach from female founders. The upshot is evidence of acceptance homophily as a sufficient and distinctive mechanism of network segregation.

The Effect Of Political Heterogeneity And Polarization On Performance

Balazs Kovacs

Yale University

Does political discord reduce performance? We tested whether the individual performance of people with politically homogeneous peers differs from that of people with politically heterogeneous peers. To test the causality of peer effects, we used professional golf tournaments on the PGA Tour where golfers are randomly assigned to groups in the first two rounds. We found that playing with politically similar peers led to an average performance improvement of 0.2 strokes per round, which on average resulted in a 5-rank increase before the cut of the tournament. The magnitude of the peer effect of political heterogeneity covaries with the political polarization of society: it increases when polarization is higher and decreases when polarization is lower.

Citizenship Discrimination And The Transformation Of Global Inequality

Charles Kurzman

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Life chances depend heavily on the country in which one is born. But this was not always so. Over the past two centuries, inequality between countries has increased eight-fold, as a handful of countries grew immensely wealthy and others did not. One cause for this shift is the definition of countries themselves, through the development of citizenship

regimes that hoarded rights and resources. The liberatory potential of citizenship, while never fully realized, has incorporated greater proportions of the population of wealthy countries, redistributing wealth and providing public goods such as education and sewerage systems. But citizenship has always had hard edges that exclude non-citizens in colonies and post-colonial nations from political rights, public goods, and material redistribution. This paper outlines and provides illustrative evidence for a theory of citizenship discrimination, or "citizism," that produces and reproduces inequality on a scale comparable to racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination. [Technology permitting, the presentation will be accompanied by a soundtrack and infotaining visuals.]

Truncated Occupation And Political Violence In The Postbellum American South

Hyunku Kwon

University of Chicago

How can governments in racially divided societies protect vulnerable populations from violence after large-scale internal conflict? When the majority is bent on perpetuating its power and privileges in the prevailing racial hierarchy, benevolence by government interveners is unlikely to curb societal support for violence against the racial minority. There is thus no alternative to using military coercion to quell insurgent violence. However, failing to maintain a long-term coercive apparatus can exacerbate violence by triggering revenge dynamics among the dominant group, particularly in communities that were once occupied by troops of the subordinate minority. Our analysis of white supremacist violence in the postbellum U.S. South substantiates these claims. Importantly, we show that racial revenge dynamics produced differential spikes in post-occupation violence against Black citizens: counties that had previously been occupied by Black troops witnessed higher incidences of racial violence for many decades than comparable areas that had not seen such occupation.

The Forward March Of Categorical Tolerance In The United States

Omar Lizardo

UCLA

In a 2016 piece published in Sociological Science, Lizardo & Skiles uncovered evidence for a novel phenomenon in the sociology of taste: the rise of categorically tolerant

individuals, namely, people who, when given the usual menu of musical genres in a social survey and queries about their likes and dislikes, refuse to dislike any genres. Lizardo & Skiles estimated that the proportion of the population expressing zero dislikes rose from about 5% in the 1993 General Social Survey to about 16% in a survey they fielded in 2012. Since cultural dislikes are the primary mechanism via which people draw symbolic boundaries, such a dramatic shift in the proportion of the population that skews this option represents a significant change in people's social behavior. Using Zero-Inflated Poisson (ZIP) models, Lizardo and Skiles also uncovered evidence that the increase in categorical tolerance is cohort and ethnoracially-based, with younger individuals identifying as Black more likely to display the pattern. This paper is an update and replication of Lizardo & Skiles's paper using cultural taste data from two convenient samples collected in 2021 and 2023 (n = 1476) from subject pools in Prolific Academic as part of a larger project on cultural tastes. Comparing the distribution of the pooled 2021-2023 samples to Lizardo & Skiles's estimates, I find that categorical tolerance has continued to rise in the third decade of the 21st century, with about 21% of the sample refusing to like any of the twelve musical genres included in the survey. ZIP models reveal that categorical tolerants are now over-represented in the young to early middle-age adult age category (30-49-year-olds) and, like before, are more likely to identify as Black. I close by outlining the implications of the results and the values of "revisits" and replications of previous work using new data.

Diffusion Interrupted: Social Network And Contextual Influences On The Trajectory Of Solar Panel Diffusion In The U.s., 2013-2019

Kinga Makovi

New York University Abu Dhabi

Due to recent political breakthroughs that are channeling billions of dollars into the deployment of renewable energy technologies, optimism about the clean energy transition has reached an all-time high. However, ongoing global political uncertainty casts doubt on this optimism. Given this, understanding the contexts that disrupt the uptake of critical renewable energy technologies is a vital area of research.We engage with this issue by using the adoption of residential rooftop solar panels in the U.S. ZIP Codes from 2013 to 2019. Theoretically, we situate our work within the literature on the diffusion of innovations, culture, and political polarization to ask three questions: (1) How did solar panel diffusion unfold during 2013-2019?; (2) What effect do exposure networks have on diffusion at different points in time?; and (3) What are the potential disruptive mechanisms of diffusion that account for observed trends?Using data on over 1.3 million solar panel installations, we uncover a previously unstudied 2016

disruption in the diffusion process. We then draw on two datasets of neighborhood connectivity–Facebook social network data and mobility data–to estimate exposure to residential solar panels through over 14 million ZIP Code relationships. Next, using a panel model of installations, we find that greater exposure in the places people go is the more robust predictor of new installations. However, this influence declines after 2015. Going further, we show that the documented disruption to the diffusion process is at least partially attributable to a partisan response to 2016. ZIP Codes where Donald Trump won in 2016 saw greater declines in their installation rate than similar ZIP Codes where Hillary Clinton won. We conclude that the diffusion of renewable energy technologies is sensitive to changes in the broader cultural contexts, and thus, projected trajectories of diffusion need ongoing policy support for their ultimate fulfillment.

Intersectional Experiences Of Perceived Sex Discrimination At U.s. Universities

Vida Maralani

Cornell

Title IX—the 1972 US civil rights law that prohibits sex discrimination in education—is widely recognized as one of the most significant steps toward gender equality in the last century. In this study, we investigate intersectional experiences of sexual harassment—specifically, claims of discriminations at the intersection of race and sex and how these are resolved. Our study asks how do people who file claims of discrimination at the intersection of race and sex describe their intersectional experiences and can the policy that aims to protect against this "see" them in the same light as they see themselves. We find that complainants lived experiences of perceived discrimination are quite different from both the how OCR and universities evaluate experiences of discrimination. This disconnect illuminates an often hard to quantify experience in the academy where individuals with certain social characteristics feel (claim) they are marginalized. Our results highlight the tension between individual experiences and claims and institutional responses, showing how much of the experience of discrimination and its consequences is a matter of interpretation.Data: In April 2016, the authors filed a FOIA request to OCR for 2,745 letters resolving Title IX complains against 4-year non-profit colleges and universities. Three years later we received approximately 1,548 complaint resolution letters (about 12,000 pages of text) describing 1,366 unique complaints of sex discrimination. We have subsequently coded each letter for a detailed set of close-ended variables allowing quantitative analysis and open-ended variables to capture the key details in each letter. We have also conducted inductive qualitative coding for specific research questions, including the focus of the current study.

Evaluating The Quality Of Sociological Evidence Using Evidence Grading

Andrew Miles

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Most sociologists agree that scientific claims should be supported by a robust body of empirical evidence before they are (provisionally) accepted as true. But standards for what counts as good evidence vary widely, meaning that claims that rest on very different evidentiary bases—and potentially reflect empirical reality to widely differing degrees—can nonetheless all be presented as being "strongly supported by the evidence" and work their way into established sociological knowledge. I argue that we can make significant progress in addressing this issue by adopting the practice of evidence grading that is currently used in the medical and (some) applied behavioral sciences. Like pre-registration (another adoption from medicine), evidence grading is a methodological tool that helps researchers apply best-practice principles in a systematic way. Evidence grading provides guidelines that can help researchers both clarify the claims being made in studies and rigorously evaluate the quality of evidence for those claims based on statistical principles known to produce accurate, replicable results. I illustrate the utility of evidence grading by assessing the quality of the evidence supporting the claim that personal values affect voting for left/right political parties.

Taking Systemic Discrimination To Court: Building A Statistical Method That Accounts For Structural Bias In Employment Discrimination Cases.

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The influence of "economic thinking" on legal jurisprudence is widely known and well-documented. In particular, the neoclassical style of marginalist reasoning is pervasive within U.S. law. This is particularly true of employment discrimination law, in which econometric methods have been dominant for almost 35 years. This article argues that the theoretical construction of Becker's (1957) marginalist discrimination theory, and the applied econometric techniques that put that theory into practice, occludes the most pernicious (and today, pervasive) processes of discrimination. By defining discrimination as differential pay or hiring rates between observationally identical employees, Becker's discrimination theory reduces discrimination to its non-systemic parts. In contrast, sociological theories of discrimination emphasize its systemic and structural elements. This article then develops statistical methods that account for such systemic and structural factors that contribute to disparities in employment outcomes.

Care is taken to articulate a method that would be appropriate for adoption within the legal system.

Examining The Causes And Consequences Of Selection Bias In The Social Sciences

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Selection bias, also referred to as "sampling selection bias," "the selection effect," or simply "selection," is a methodological problem that impacts research across a diverse set of disciplines. Selection bias is caused by various processes that influence the collection of data in ways that skew, misalign, or misrepresent the intended target of the analyses, thus obscuring the causal relationships between variables. Put simply, it compromises a researcher's ability to draw valid inferences, potentially leading to erroneous conclusions. This chapter reviews specific causes of selection bias that are relevant to the social sciences and provides an integrated methodological approach to diagnosing the consequences when selection is present. By shedding light on this common methodological issue, researchers can enhance their understanding of selection bias and implement effective strategies to mitigate its impact, thereby strengthening the credibility of their research.

Social Bases Of Partisanship: Cleavages, Alignment, And Intersections

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Partisanship lies at the heart of US politics—it influences electoral behavior, political ideology, out-party animosity, and has possibly spilled-over to influence lifestyles and social relationships. While most theories of partisanship assume that party identities are shaped by sociodemographic divisions, empirical research on the social basis of party identification tends to analyze single lines of social divisions in isolation. In this paper, we go one step further by analyzing the simultaneous consolidation of social divisions with partisanship as well as with one another. In doing so, we identify three distinct ways in which existing social divisions might form a social basis of partisanship——orthogonal cleavage structures, aligned cleavage structures, and intersectional category structures. We develop analytical tools to distinguish these forms empirically and apply them to the American National Election Studies from 1970 to 2020. We find that the racial

cleavage, once rivaled by religion, has become, by far, the deepest social division shaping partisanship. Further, the alignment of partisan cleavages has remained surprisingly low. Lastly, intersectional categories are becoming increasingly important in explaining partisanship in the US.

"There's A War Going On": How Nonprofit Service And Advocacy Organizations Understand The "Right" Way To Approach Addiction

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In this presentation we discuss how addiction service and advocacy nonprofits come to develop divergent and opposed moralized understandings of their role in confronting substance use. Employing a mixed methods approach that combines textual analysis of nonprofit administrative documents with interviews of nonprofit leaders, we find that contemporary nonprofits have universally integrated the chronic disease understanding of addiction into their practice. However, despite sharing a common basic model of addiction, organizations continue to pursue three distinct moral views of the "correct" response to addiction: freedom from addiction; improved functioning; or universal dignity. Addiction organizations also continue to develop their organizational morality by directly contrasting their approaches with that of other organizations, constituting a conflict-ridden moral field.

Studying The West And Ignoring The Rest: Do Stylized Facts Established In The Christian West Generalize?

Landon Schnabel

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Positivist social science seeks to simplify the world and uncover general facts. Much research focuses on the West, often ignoring the rest of the world. This Western focus is particularly problematic in research on religion as Western countries are dominated by one religion—Christianity. Are social science's stylized facts, and the theories based upon these truisms about social life, indicative of general human phenomena, or idiosyncrasies of the Christian West? I leverage global data to examine three stylized facts about religion as test cases: 1) younger people are less religious than older people, 2) women are more religious than men, and 3) religiosity is linked to opposition to science. This study debunks the universality of these "facts." I conclude that stylized

facts are often artifacts of focusing on the Christian West, and argue for more research reconsidering whether stylized facts across the social sciences approximate general human phenomena or just Western phenomena. In short, we need to decolonize and dechristianize the social sciences not only for the sake of justice and equity, but also accuracy.

Differences In Academic Preparedness Do Not Fully Explain Black-White Enrollment Disparities In Advanced High School Coursework

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Whether racial disparities in enrollment in advanced high school coursework can be attributed to differences in prior academic preparation is a central question in sociological research and education policy. However, previous investigations face methodological limitations, for they compare race-specific enrollment rates of students after adjusting for characteristics only partially related to their academic preparedness for advanced coursework. Informed by a recently-developed statistical technique, we propose and estimate a novel measure of students' academic preparedness and use administrative data from the New York City Department of Education to measure differences in Advanced Placement (AP) mathematics enrollment rates among similarly prepared students of different races. We find that preexisting differences in academic preparation do not fully explain the under-representation of Black students relative to White students in AP mathematics. Our results imply that achieving equal opportunities for AP enrollment not only requires equalizing earlier academic experiences, but also addressing inequities that emerge from coursework placement processes.

Inequality In Social Capital: Evidence From Big Diverse Data

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What is the relationship between inequality and social capital? Does social capital tend to level the playing field, or does it reinforce existing disparities? We explore this by examining two core empirical questions. First, how much inequality is there in social capital? Second, how much is social capital consolidated with other forms of advantage – especially high income? Drawing on large-scale, diverse data from 15 different U.S. social science data sources with a pooled sample size of 279,000, our analysis

encompasses dozens of measures of social capital, including personal connections, group participation, and network resources. We find that the Gini coefficient for social capital is comparable to or larger than the Gini coefficient for income, and that social capital consistently rises with income. Inequality in social ties is at least as high as inequality in income, and the primary beneficiaries of social ties are those who make more money. This suggests that social capital mostly serves to consolidate, rather than alleviate, inequality.

What Can Diffusion Teach Us About Invention? Implications Of The Distinctively Halting, Local, Disruptive, And Imprinted Spread Of The Seven-Day Week

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For at least a century, social scientists have exhibited two interlocking default orientations in their research into novel social phenomena: a) a sharp division between studies of invention on the one hand, and diffusion on the other; and b) a lack of concern with distinguishing between types of novel phenomena. These twin default orientations are productive in the vast majority of cases; but our analysis of an extreme case— the social practice of the seven- day week— demonstrates the value of overcoming these default orientations. First, since phenomena like the week require no special knowhow, resources, or infrastructure, any would-be adopter is also a would-be inventor. This serves to reinforce the main puzzle about the week's emergence, which is why it occurred only once. Second, by comparing the distinctive features of the week's diffusion process (it was halting, local, disruptive, and imprinted) with that of other 'invented-once' social practices (notably, the alphabet), technologies (the wheel), and ideas (calendar fixing and era counting), we make progress in resolving this puzzle. Our analysis suggests that the week was not just unthinkable ex ante (as the other cases were), but it was also socially infeasible ex ante (as alphabets were before their long incubation period); and so after the unlikely initial invention, the week primarily spread in a highly distinctive way: via sharing in the practice among adjacent communities.

No Cumulative Advantage In The Life Course

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The theory of the cumulative advantage proposes that chance events set in motion a process of growing inequality among ex ante comparable individuals. We problematize the theoretical difficulty that in a sequence of chance events (i.e. a life course) the purported cumulative advantage effects would compete with one another for dominance over the outcome (e.g. career success). From a simple model we conclude that outcome effects of chance events will peter out. To test this prediction, we use register and high-T panel data data to analyze the long-term income effects of a range of unlucky events in the life course, among which being born in December, being born second, having low-SES classmates, falling just below an elite college admittance threshold, and getting laid off due to a workplace closure. In all cases, against the theory of cumulative advantage, but consistent with our prediction, the income consequences shrink with time and eventually disappear.

The State Of Sociology: Evidence From Dissertation Abstracts

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The academic discipline of sociology is divided methodologically and theoretically, which has long been a source of consternation as well as celebration. Further distinctions include activist versus non-activist orientations, and political orientations generally. Recent political controversy outside academia regarding critical race theory and intersectionality, including politicians singling out sociology for public criticism and targeted policy, has increased scrutiny of these questions. In this paper we describe the state of actually existing sociology as practiced in PhD-granting departments, by analyzing all dissertation abstracts from U.S. sociology departments archived at ProQuest from 2020 through early 2024 (N=1872). We use natural language processing methods to identify qualitative and quantitative approaches, subjects of study, and epistemological approaches – linked to imputed gender and race/ethnic characteristics based on analysis of author names.

A New Summary Measure For The Effect Of Nominal Independent Variables

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Many of the topics most central to sociological study involve nominal groupings. Race-ethnicity, religious affiliation, relationship status, sexual orientation, occupational sector, and political party are but a few examples. There are many cases in which a summary of a nominal variable's effect as a holistic construct is needed and useful for interpretation. For example, has the role of religion in everyday life declined over the last 40 years? Fundamentally, this question involves summarizing the effect of many religious categories at one time point (say, 1980) and at a subsequent time point (say, 2020), and comparing the two summaries. As another example, what amount of the racial-ethnic disparities in health are explained by SES? Here, summarizing the effect of race-ethnicity before and after accounting for SES factors is needed along with a test of the difference in the summaries. In this project, we propose a new summary measure of nominal independent variable's effects. We build on multiple classic approaches that remain useful but limited in their application. We propose calculating absolute and mean inequality measures using marginal effects to summarize a nominal independent variable's holistic effect. The added benefit of our method is both an intuitive effect size metric and an approach that can be applied across many both linear and nonlinear models.

Leveraging Large Language Models For Analyzing Belief Space At Scale

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Recent research has advanced cultural network analysis to map out cultural schemas held by individuals by measuring the correlations or relationality between beliefs in nationally representative surveys. However, longitudinal analysis of belief spaces is largely limited because not all beliefs were repeatedly asked over time. Since the survey questions asked multiple times are more likely to be politically charged, belief spaces constructed in this manner will likely exclude non-political and non-contentious beliefs. Our study aims to address this gap by fine-tuning large language models with the General Social Survey (GSS) from 1972 to 2021. Specifically, we analyze the latent individual belief embeddings trained during the fine-tuning process to examine the patterns of cultural belief spaces across 3,110 opinions among 68,846 individuals. Our initial analysis shows that the cultural divide between liberals and conservatives has widened with liberals moving further to the left, whereas conservatives have maintained similar positions in the belief space from 1972 to 2021 in the GSS. We will extend the analysis to investigate how Americans' cultural belief spaces are structured by socio-demographic characteristics and partisanship over time.

Does Quantitative Sociology Have A Replication Crisis?

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In recent years, fields from psychology to medicine have found that widely cited results published in top journals are often not replicable and may not be correct. We provide several examples of nonreplicable results in sociology and document common practices that contribute to false or nonreplicable results: "p hacking" to publish in sociology journals that only accept statistically significant results; emphasizing interactions which replicate only half as often as main effects; revising hypotheses after results are known; limited transparency in sharing data and code; resistance to replication and reanalysis; excessive flexibility in both theory and methods.The scientific progress of sociology would be aided by more widely adopting practices common to the open science movement. The Society for Sociological Science should play a leading role.