

## **Sociology 2030: Social Stratification, Inequality and Mobility**

Fall 2023: Brown University

**Where and When:** 108 Maxcy Hall, Mondays 9am-12pm

**Instructor:** Margot Jackson, 303 Maxcy Hall, 401.863.3192

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 9:30-11:30am. [Sign up](#).

**Course website:** Accessible through [Canvas](#).

### **OVERVIEW**

This course provides an introduction to the contemporary empirical literature on social stratification, social mobility, and inequality in the United States and abroad, based on research articles and books. We focus on theories, data, methods, and facts about categorical dimensions of inequality (race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation); core dimensions of stratification systems (income, earnings and wealth distributions; poverty; education; the intergenerational transmission of socioeconomic status; social mobility); the social institutions that govern social stratification (families, schools, labor markets, welfare states, and the justice system); and key inequalities that stem from stratification systems (e.g., health). This is an empirical reading course, not a research seminar. Sociology 2010 is useful preparation for the course, but is not required.

### **COURSE GOALS**

The goals of the course are the following: 1) To understand major concepts, data, methods, and substantive issues involved in social stratification research; 2) To be prepared to use this information in future research on a topic pertaining to social stratification; and 3) To acquire a solid basis for preparing the prelim exam in social inequality.

The course provides a general survey of the field, which is quite large and growing. We will not have time to cover all topics in this field, and I intentionally exclude some important relevant topics that are covered in other courses in the department (e.g, migration, neighborhoods and urban processes). However, you will leave the course having gained familiarity with classical theories of inequality and important conceptual and methodological debates in the field, and you should be prepared to follow major debates and pursue independent research in this field.

### **READING**

Readings will be accessible online or available as PDF files on our website. Our focus will be on empirical (quantitative and qualitative) research. Though more and more data are becoming available, the existing body of empirical research on social stratification is disproportionately in the United States and Europe. It is also disproportionately quantitative. Our syllabus reflects the state of the field, but I make an active effort to include work in many regions and traditions, and this is not a course that should only be useful to students who plan to do research in the U.S. and Europe.

### **ASSIGNMENTS AND FORMAT**

Each week we will read several articles or book excerpts, and discuss them in class. There will be two categories of assigned readings each week: 1) core, required readings that all students read each week; and 2) optional readings, which students are encouraged to read and bring into their writing and discussion.

In addition, all students will regularly prepare memos (approximately 500 words) on the core readings for the week (as well as any optional readings, if you wish), on a topic that I will provide. Each student should prepare at least **five** memos during the course of the semester, during weeks of your choosing. Successful graduate students should be able to synthesize knowledge, and these essays will provide you with an opportunity to think about the core readings in an integrated way. Your memo should be organized around a broad question or theme raised by the readings that week, and should include at least two questions you would like to discuss further in class. **Essays are due by Sunday morning at 9am (on Canvas), prior to each class meeting on Monday morning.**

Each week, a small group (depending on enrollment) of students will serve as discussion leaders. Responsibilities of discussion leaders include preparing a brief oral introduction to the readings/themes in order to jumpstart our discussion; preparing a set of questions that will guide the discussion (to be posted on Canvas); and reading the optional readings that week. The role of discussion leaders is not to lecture, but to help maintain a discussion that stays focused on key aspects of the readings and provides connections to discussions from previous weeks. All students should be prepared to discuss the readings each week, even when not serving as a discussion leader. Successful seminars reply on all members completing readings, sharing ideas with the group, helping to maintain a focused discussion, and being attentive to classroom dynamics so that everyone is able to speak.

Finally, students will take a midterm and a final exam, both in the format of a prelim exam (open-note, take-home exams to be completed over several days). Students who successfully complete this course are encouraged to take the prelim exam in Social Inequality at an upcoming exam offering.

Students should plan to spend 3 hours per week in class, and approximately 12 hours per week outside of class on reading and writing.

## **GRADING**

The final course grade will be based on the following:

Take-home midterm: 1/3

Take-home final: 1/3

Weekly essays and class participation: 1/3

## **ACADEMIC SUPPORT**

Brown University is committed to full inclusion of all students. Please inform me early in the semester if you have a disability or other conditions that might require accommodations or modification of any of these course procedures. For more information, please contact [Student and Employee Accessibility Services](#) at 401-863-9588 or SEAS@brown.edu. Students in need of short-term academic advice or support can contact one of the deans in the Dean of the College office.

## **ACADEMIC CONDUCT**

Students who submit academic work that uses others' ideas, words, research, or images without proper attribution and documentation are in violation of the academic code. This includes the use of ChatGPT and other AI tools, which must be cited like any other reference. Infringement of the academic code will result in an NC for the course and will be reported to the university.

## **TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE**

**\*Note: I reserve the right to change the schedule or readings before and during the semester!\***

### **September 11: Introductions and Course Overview**

#### **September 18: Framing Readings: Theories and Dimensions of Stratification**

Blau, Peter M. and Otis Dudley Duncan. 1967. *The American Occupational Structure*. New York: Wiley. Chapters 1 and 5 (Pgs. 1-22, 163-205).

Bourdieu, P. (1986) The forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.) *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (New York, Greenwood), 241-258.

Grusky, David B. 2000. "The Past, Present, and Future of Social Inequality." Pp. 3-51 in *Social Stratification: Class, Race, and Gender in Sociological Perspective*. Revised edition. Boulder: Westview Press.

Ridgeway, Cecilia L. 2014. "Why Status Matters for Inequality." *ASR* 79: 1-16

Tilly, Charles. 1998. *Durable Inequality*. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press. Chapter 1 (Pgs. 1-40).

Korzeniewicz, Roberto and Timothy Moran. Introduction (pgs. xiii-xx) in *Unveiling Inequality: A World-Historical Perspective*. Russell Sage Foundation: New York (2009).

*Optional Readings* (Note: These are readings you might have encountered in previous courses. If not, you should read them as background.):

Karl Marx. "Classes in Capitalism and Pre-Capitalism." Pgs. 32-43 in *GS*

Max Weber. "Class, Status and Power." Pgs. 44-55 in *GS*

Davis, Kingsley and Wilbert E. Moore. "Some Principles of Stratification." Pgs. 14-17 in *The Inequality Reader: Essential Readings in Race, Class and Gender*, Grusky, David and Szonja Szelenyi (Eds.). 2006. Westview Press: Cambridge, MA. (Hereafter *GS*.)

Du Bois, W.E.B. 1903. *The Talented Tenth*. James Pott and Company: New York.

#### **September 25: Income and Wealth**

Piketty, Thomas, and Emmanuel Saez. 2014. "Inequality in the long run." *Science* 344(6186): 838-843.

Manduca, Robert A. 2019. "The contribution of national income inequality to regional economic divergence." *Social Forces* 98(2): 622-648.

Mijs, Jonathan JB. 2021. "The paradox of inequality: Income inequality and belief in meritocracy go hand in hand." *Socio-Economic Review* 19(1): 7-35.

Lin, Ken-Hou, and Donald Tomaskovic-Devey. 2013. "Financialization and US Income Inequality, 1970–2008." *American Journal of Sociology* 118 (5): 1284–1329.

Wu, Xiaogang. 2019. "Inequality and social stratification in postsocialist China." *Annual Review of Sociology* 45: 363–382.

Pfeffer, Fabian T., and Nora Waitkus. 2021. "The wealth inequality of nations." *American Sociological Review* 86(4): 567–602.

*Optional:*

Leslie McCall and Christine Percheski. 2010. "Income inequality: New trends and research directions." *Annual Review of Sociology* 36(1): 329–347.

Fligstein, Neil. 2010. "Politics, the Reorganization of the Economy, and Income Inequality, 1980–2009." *Politics and Society* 38(2).

Piketty, Thomas, and Gabriel Zucman. 2014. "Capital is Back: Wealth-Income Ratios in Rich Countries 1700–2010." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 129: 1255–1310.

Autor, David H., Lawrence F. Katz, and Melissa S. Kearney. 2008. "Trends in U. S. Wage Inequality: Re-Assessing the Revisionists." *Review of Economics and Statistics* 90(2): 300–323.

Wilkinson, Richard G. and Kate E. Pickett. 2009. "Income Inequality and Social Dysfunction." *Annual Review of Sociology* 35:493–511.

**October 2: Poverty and the Welfare State**

Esping-Andersen, Gøsta. 1990. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Ch. 3. "The Welfare State as a System of Social Stratification."

Brady, David. 2005. "The Welfare State and Relative Poverty in Rich Western Democracies, 1967–1997." *Social Forces* 83 (4): 1329–64.

Baker, Regina S. 2022. "The historical racial regime and racial inequality in poverty in the American South." *American Journal of Sociology* 127(6): 1721–1781.

Desmond, Matthew, "Eviction and the Reproduction of Urban Poverty." 2012. *American Journal of Sociology* 118: 88–133.

Faber, Jacob W. 2019. "Segregation and the cost of money: Race, poverty, and the prevalence of alternative financial institutions." *Social Forces* 98(2): 819–848.

Waldfogel, Jane. 2016. "Presidential address: The next war on poverty." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 35(2): 267-278.

*Optional:*

Brady, David and Amie Bostic. 2015. "Paradoxes of Social Policy: Welfare Transfers, Relative Poverty and Redistribution Preferences." *American Sociological Review* 80(2): 268-298.

Duncan, Greg J., W. J. Yeung, and J. Brooks-Gunn 1998. "How Much Does Childhood Poverty Affect the Life Chances of Children?" *ASR* 63: 406-423.

Parolin, Zachary. 2019. "Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and the Black–White child poverty gap in the United States." *Socio-Economic Review* 19(3): 1005-1035.

Shaefer, H. Luke and Kathy Edin. 2013. "Rising Extreme Poverty in the United States and the Response of Federal Means-Tested Transfer Programs." *Social Service Review* 87(2): 250-268.

Western, Bruce, Deirdre Bloome, Benjamin Sosnaud, and Laura Tach. 2012. "Economic Insecurity and Social Stratification." *Annual Review of Sociology* 38: 341-359.

**October 9: No Class: Indigenous Peoples' Day**

**October 16: Social Mobility and Social Reproduction**

Blanden, Jo. 2013. "Cross-country rankings in intergenerational mobility: A comparison of approaches from economics and sociology." *Journal of Economic Surveys* 27 (1): 38–73.

Chetty, Raj, Nathaniel Hendren, Patrick Kline, and Emmanuel Saez. 2014. "Where is the land of opportunity? The geography of intergenerational mobility in the United States." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 129(4): 1553-1623.

Pfeffer, Fabian T., and Alexandra Killewald. 2018. "Generations of advantage. Multigenerational correlations in family wealth." *Social Forces* 96(4): 1411-1442.

Tomaskovic-Devey, Donald, Melvin Thomas and Kecia Johnson. 2005. "Race and Accumulation of Human Capital across the Career: A Theoretical Model and Fixed-Effects Application." *American Journal of Sociology* 111(1): 58-89.

Torche, Florencia. 2005. "Unequal but Fluid: Social Mobility in Chile in Comparative Perspective." *American Sociological Review* 70 (3):422-450.

*Optional:*

Diprete, Thomas A. 2002. "Life Course Risks, Mobility Regimes, and Mobility Consequences: A Comparison of Sweden, Germany, and the United States." *American Journal of Sociology* 108(2): 267-309.

Diprete, Thomas A. and Gregory M. Eirich. 2006. "Cumulative Disadvantage as a Mechanism for Social Inequality: A Review of Theoretical and Empirical Developments." *Annual Review of Sociology* 32: 271-297.

McDermott, Monica. 2002. "Trends in the Race and Ethnicity of Eminent Americans." *Sociological Forum* 17(1):137-160.

Mare, Robert D. 2011. "A Multigenerational View of Inequality." *Demography* 48(1): 1-23.

Torche, Florencia. 2015. "Analyses of Intergenerational Mobility: An Interdisciplinary Review." *ANNALS* 657(1): 37-62.

Warren, John Robert, and Robert M. Hauser. 1997. "Social Stratification across Three Generations: New Evidence from the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study." *ASR* 62:561-72.

### **October 23: Educational Opportunity and Inequality**

Blossfeld, Hans-Peter and Yossi Shavit. 1993. "Persisting Barriers: Changes in Educational Opportunities in Thirteen Countries," pp. 1-23 in *Persistent Inequality: Changing Educational Attainment in Thirteen Countries*, edited by Yossi Shavit and Hans-Peter Blossfeld. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Breen, Richard, and Jan O. Jonsson. 2005. "Inequality of opportunity in comparative perspective: Recent research on educational attainment and social mobility." *Annual Review of Sociology* 31: 223-243.

Fischer, Claude S. and Michael Hout. 2006. "How America Expanded Education and Why it Mattered." Chapter 2 (pgs. 9-22) in *Century of Difference: How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years*.

Feliciano, Cynthia and Yader R. Lanuza. 2017. "An Immigrant Paradox? Contextual Attainment and Intergenerational Educational Mobility." *American Sociological Review* 82(1):211-241.

Attewell, Paul. 2001. "The Winner-Take-All High School: Organizational Adaptations to Educational Stratification." *Sociology of Education* 74(4): 267-295.

Kerckhoff, Alan C., Lorraine Bell Haney, and Elizabeth Glennie. 2001. "System effects on educational achievement: A British–American comparison." *Social Science Research* 30(4): 497-528.

#### *Optional:*

Buchmann, Claudia and Thomas A. Diprete. 2006. "The Growing Female Advantage in College Completion: The Role of Family Background and Academic Achievement." *American Sociological Review* 71(4): 515-541.

Hannum, Emily and Claudia Buchmann. 2005. "Global Educational Expansion and Economic Development: An Assessment of Findings from the Social Sciences." *World Development* 33(3): 333-354.

Hout, Michael and Alexander Janus. 2011. "Educational Mobility in the United States since the 1930s." Chap. 8 (Pgs. 165-185) in *Whither Opportunity? Rising Inequality, Schools, and Children's Life Chances*. Russell Sage Foundation: New York.

Raftery, Adam and Michael Hout. 1993. "Maximally Maintained Inequality: Expansion, Reform, and Opportunity in Irish Education, 1921-75" *Sociology of Education*, 66(1): 41-62.

Song, Shige and Sarah Burgard. 2011. "Dynamics of Inequality: Mother's Education and Infant Mortality in China, 1970-2001." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 52(3): 349-363.

## **October 30: Social Processes Affecting Education**

### **MIDTERM EXAM DUE**

Bowles, Samuel and Herbert Gintis. 2002. "Schooling in Capitalist America Revisited." *Sociology of Education* 75:1-18.

Calarco, Jessica McCrory. 2020. "Avoiding us versus them: How schools' dependence on privileged "helicopter" parents influences enforcement of rules." *American Sociological Review* 85(2): 223-246.

Coleman, James A. 1988. "Social Capital and the Creation of Human Capital." *AJS* 94: S95-S120.

Legewie, Joscha. 2019. "[Aggressive Policing and the Educational Performance of Minority Youth.](#)" *American Sociological Review* 84(2): 220-247.

Haskins, Anna R., and Wade C. Jacobsen. 2017. "Schools as Surveilling Institutions? Paternal Incarceration, System Avoidance, and Parental Involvement in Schooling." *American Sociological Review* 82(4): 657-684.

#### *Optional:*

Gamoran, Adam and Robert D. Mare. 1989. "Secondary School Tracking and Educational Inequality: Compensation, Reinforcement, or Neutrality?" *AJS* 94:1146-1183.

Legewie, Joscha, and Thomas A. DiPrete. 2012. "School context and the gender gap in educational achievement." *American Sociological Review* 77(3): 463-485.

Jonsson, Jan. 2010. "Child Well-Being and Intergenerational Inequality." *Child Indicators Research* 3: 1-10.

Palloni, A. 2006. Reproducing inequalities: Luck, wallets, and the enduring effects of childhood health. *Demography*, 43(4), 587-615.

Shavit, Yossi. 1984. "Tracking and Ethnicity in Israeli Secondary Education." *American Sociological Review* 49(2): 210-220.

## **November 6: Race and Ethnicity**

Pager, Devah. 2003. "The Mark of a Criminal Record." *American Journal of Sociology* 108(5): 937-75.

Monk Jr, E.P. 2015. The cost of color: Skin color, discrimination, and health among African-Americans. *American Journal of Sociology* 121(2): 396-444.

Telles, Edward and Stanley Bailey. 2013. "Understanding Latin American Beliefs about Racial Inequality." *American Journal of Sociology* 118(6): 1559-1595.

#### *Optional:*

Alba, Richard. 2005. "Bright vs. Blurred Boundaries." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28(1): 20-49

DuBois, W.E.B. 1901. "The Relation of the Negroes to the Whites in the South." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 18: 121-140.

Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. "Racial Formation in the United States." Pgs. 197-202 in GS.

Pager, Devah and David Pedulla. 2015. "Race, Self-Selection and the Job Search Process." *American Journal of Sociology* 120(4): 1005-1054.

Wilson, William Julius. "The Declining Significance of Race: Blacks and Changing American Institutions." Pgs. 225-238 in GS. (See Wilson's 2011 "The Declining Significance of Race: Revisited and Revised." *Daedalus* 140(2): 55-69).

Wimmer, Andreas. 2008. "The Making and Unmaking of Ethnic Boundaries: A Multilevel Process Theory." *American Journal of Sociology*. 113 (4):970-1022.

### **November 13: Gender and Sexual Orientation**

Weisshaar, Katherine. 2018. "From opt out to blocked out: The challenges for labor market re-entry after family-related employment lapses." *American Sociological Review* 83(1): 34-60.

Tilcsik, András. 2011. "Pride and prejudice: Employment discrimination against openly gay men in the United States." *American Journal of Sociology* 117(2): 586-626.

Thébaud, Sarah, and David S. Pedulla. 2022. "When do work-family policies work? Unpacking the effects of stigma and financial costs for men and women." *Work and Occupations* 49(2): 229-263.

Daminger, Allison. 2019. "The cognitive dimension of household labor." *American Sociological Review* 84(4): 609-633.

#### *Optional:*

Buchmann, Claudia, Thomas DiPrete, and Anne McDani. 2008. "Gender Inequalities in Education." *Annual Review of Sociology* 34: 319-37.

Correll, Shelley, Stephen Benard and In Paik. 2007. "Getting a job: Is there a motherhood penalty?" *American Journal of Sociology* 112: 1297-1338

Song, Shige and Sarah Burgard. 2008. "Does Son Preference Influence Children's Growth in Height? A Comparative Study of Chinese and Filipino Children." *Population Studies* 62(3): 305-320.

### **November 20: Families**

Cross, Christina J. 2023. "Beyond the binary: Intraracial diversity in family organization and black adolescents' educational performance." *Social Problems* 70(2): 511-532.

Lareau, Annette. "Invisible Inequalities: Social Class and Childrearing in Black and White Families." *American Sociological Review* 67: 747-776.



Jackson, Margot I., and Daniel Schneider. 2022. "Public investments and class gaps in parents' developmental expenditures." *American Sociological Review* 87(1): 105-142.

Smock, Pamela J., and Christine R. Schwartz. 2020. "The Demography of Families: A Review of Patterns and Change." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 82(1): 9-34.

Gonalons-Pons, Pilar, Christine R. Schwartz, and Kelly Musick. 2021. "Changes in couples' earnings following parenthood and trends in family earnings inequality." *Demography* 58(3): 1093-1117.

*Optional:*

Gibson-Davis, Christina, Kathryn Edin and Sara McLanahan. 2006. "High Hopes but Even Higher Expectations: The Retreat from Marriage among Low-Income Couples." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67: 1301-1312.

McLanahan, Sara and Christine Percheski. 2008. "Family Structure and the Reproduction of Inequalities." *Annual Review of Sociology* 34: 257-276.

**November 27: Labor Markets**

Brady, David, Regina S. Baker and Ryan Finnigan. 2013. "When Unionization Disappears: State-Level Unionization and Working Poverty in the U.S." *American Sociological Review* 78: 872-896.

Logan, John R., Richard D. Alba, and Brian J. Stults. 2003. "Enclaves and Entrepreneurs: Assessing the Payoff for Immigrants and Minorities." *International Migration Review* 37: 344-388.

Lui, Yujia, and David B. Grusky. 2013. "The Payoff to Skill in the Third Industrial Revolution." *American Journal of Sociology* 118 (6): 133-1374.

Pedulla, David. 2013. "The Hidden Costs of Contingency: Employers' Use of Contingent Workers and Standard Employees' Outcomes." *Social Forces* 92(2): 691-722.

Rivera, Lauren A. 2012. "Hiring as cultural matching: The case of elite professional service firms." *American Sociological Review* 77(6): 999-1022.

*Optional:*

Kalleberg, Arne L., Barbara F. Reskin and Ken Hudson. 2000. "Bad Jobs in America: Standard and Nonstandard Employment Relations and Job Quality in the United States." *American Sociological Review* 65(2): 256-278.

Weeden, Kim A. 2002. "Why Do Some Occupations Pay More than Others? Social Closure and Earnings Inequality in the United States." *AJS* 108:55-101.

**December 4: Global and Comparative Debates about Inequality**

Beckfield, Jason. 2003. "Inequality in the World Polity: The Structure of International Organization." *American Sociological Review* 68:401-424.

Firebaugh, Glenn and Brian Goesling. 2004. "Accounting for the Recent Decline in Global

Income Inequality.” *American Journal of Sociology* 110:283-312.

Korzeniewicz, Roberto and Timothy Moran. 1997. “World-Economic Trends in the Distribution of Income, 1965-1992.” *American Journal of Sociology* 102(4): 1000-1039.

Bakhtiari, E., Olafsdottir, S. and Beckfield, J. 2018. Institutions, incorporation, and inequality: the case of minority health inequalities in Europe. *Journal of health and social behavior* 59(2): 248-267.

*Optional:*

Walder, Andrew G. 2003. "Elite opportunity in transitional economies." *American Sociological Review*: 899-916.

Wade, Robert. 2004. "Is Globalization Reducing Poverty and Inequality?" *World Development* 32(4): 567-589.

**\*Final Exam Distributed December 4, Due December 11\***