

Systemic Hierarchy Within Academic Disciplines: How Resource Capital and Social Capital Stratify Academics and Form the Basis of Disciplinary Group-Based Inequality

Demis E. Glasford¹, Donald V. Brown Jr.²

[1] *Department of Psychology, John Jay College & the Graduate Center, City University of New York, New York, NY, USA.* [2] *Department of Psychology, York University, Toronto, ON, Canada.*

Journal of Social and Political Psychology, 2025, Vol. 13(1), 116–131, <https://doi.org/10.5964/jspp.10409>

Received: 2022-10-04 • Accepted: 2025-05-04 • Published (VoR): 2025-06-17

Handling Editor: Johanna Ray Vollhardt, Clark University, Worcester, MA, USA

Corresponding Author: Demis E. Glasford, Department of Psychology, John Jay College, 525 West 59th Street, New York, NY 10019, USA. E-mail: dglasford@jjay.cuny.edu

Abstract

In the present work, we approach academic disciplines as social systems. We suggest group-based hierarchy exists within the social system of academic disciplines as a function of resource and social capital. We review evidence that both resources and disciplinary social capital can operate independent of societal identity to produce group-based disparities within academic disciplines. Utilizing this new means of classifying groups, we argue that these two factors position a small number of people to be advantaged (i.e., an elite) and most people to be disadvantaged (i.e., the periphery) within most disciplines. We then illustrate how our framework provides an alternative way to understand issues facing academic disciplines. Finally, we conclude with recommendations for reducing group-based inequality as a function of resources and disciplinary social capital.

Keywords

inequality, academic, discipline, social capital, resources

The present work seeks to understand and approach academic disciplines as relatively independent social systems. Whereas many analyses of academic disciplines explore how historical, economic, social, or political forces such as colonialism (Bulhan, 2015; Decolonial Psychology Editorial Collective, 2021), racism (Buchanan et al., 2021), or neoliberalism (Fine, 2023) impact academia, little attention has been given to considering disciplines as internal group-based social systems. Indeed, academic disciplines not only produce knowledge through their epistemic function, but they also exist as social units with all the concomitant characteristics (Hammarfelt, 2019), including subgroups, shared cultural practices, and values (Tellmann, 2022). In the present work, we seek to move conversations around issues facing academic disciplines away from a strict focus on the individual or societal level (e.g., challenges facing underrepresented groups in a national context) toward a framework that considers disciplines as internal, informal group-based social systems. We believe greater attention on the social system and the informal tiered group-based hierarchy within academic disciplines is an important component to re-defining both the problems and solutions facing disciplines (Burris, 2004).

We explore three basic ideas regarding academic disciplines. Firstly, academic disciplines operate as tiered, group-based hierarchical systems as a function of resource capital and social capital with a relatively small, advantaged group (the elite) and a large, disadvantaged majority (the periphery). To be explicit, we are suggesting that to understand inequality occurring within the discipline, disciplines should begin to categorize people and groups based on resources and disciplinary social capital, utilizing these two factors to analyze group-based disparities. Importantly, as disciplines



are transnational, we suggest this tiered, group-based system operates independently, but also concurrently with societal or nation-based inequities. Thus, because we seek to focus attention on resources and disciplinary social capital as input factors for explaining inequality within any academic discipline, our analysis is not organized around factors such as race/ethnicity, nationality, or socio-economic status. Nevertheless, we view these factors as embedded in our framework—and thus relevant to understanding group-based disparities. Secondly, we examine how our framework suggests new ways of understanding problems within academic disciplines (e.g., lack of diversity). Finally, we present points of intervention to reduce group-based inequality as a function of resource and social capital within academic disciplines.

Academic Disciplines as Group-Based Social Systems

As a starting point, we suggest that academic disciplines operate as *internal*, group-based social systems. By “internal system” we mean that disciplines operate with their own set of norms, values, sub-groups, policies, procedures, and internal structures that can effectively function relatively independently of broader organizing systems. Nevertheless, we acknowledge that academic disciplines operate within and across social, economic, national, and political contexts and as a result manifest the biases of these respective forces. Indeed, it could be argued that the tiered, group-based system we present is merely a manifestation of neoliberalism in academia (Coşkan et al., 2021). Though informed by these political and social dynamics, however, academic disciplines operate in a variety of ways independent of them as well. For example, if all people in an academic discipline decided to shift the merit criteria for publishing in the top journals or for determining who was worthy of obtaining high-status positions within the field, these changes could be made as an internal disciplinary matter (if desired) – despite the influence and restrictions of operating within broader society. Thus, there is an abundance of power and control held by academics regarding the nature and degree of group-based inequality *within* their respective academic disciplines.

Social Systems and Inequality: Resource Capital and Social Capital

Group-based hierarchies naturally form within social systems (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). We suggest that the group-based social system of academic disciplines is rooted in resource capital and social capital. Thus, consistent with a variety of system-level theories (e.g., world systems theory; Wallerstein, 1974; see also Avin et al., 2018), we argue that many academic disciplines are implicitly organized around asymmetrical relations between a core/elite (a small centralized group with decision-making power) and a periphery (a large decentralized number of groups with little or no decision-making power). In most academic disciplines status is conferred by way of production (e.g., research productivity; Altbach, 2015). Accordingly, it seems quite uncontroversial to note that those with more access to resources (e.g., money, space, time, or infrastructure) are advantaged, compared to those with relatively less access to resources. The implicit nature of the way production is tied to merit in a field, then, positions a small, select number of people in high-resourced institutions or regions to be advantaged (*the elite*) and the remaining majority to be disadvantaged (*the periphery*). Having access to greater resources therefore means those working in high-resource contexts within academic disciplines are relatively advantaged compared to those working in environments that have fewer resources. Accordingly, one means of distinguishing between elite and periphery group membership in the group-based hierarchy of academic disciplines is based on *resource capital*.

Though resource capital is useful in understanding group-based hierarchy within academic social systems, it is often intimately tied to another form of capital that is linked to group-based inequality: *social capital*. Defining academic fame is, of course, subjective, but our hope is that most academics would agree that there is variance in the extent to which people have academic fame, status, and/or power within academic disciplines. It seems reasonable to suggest that there are scholars within most disciplines that are stars, have academic fame, or are high status—based on publication record, development of an influential theory, or other factors. As such, for the purposes of this work, *social capital* is one’s connection or personal relationship to the stars of the academic discipline. In examining social capital, we utilize a tiered

approach to social networks (Avin et al., 2018). Within a tiered framework, there is a select or exclusive tier, reflecting a small but relatively well-connected and highly influential group; then there is the remaining tier (the rest of the individuals in the social system). Thus, in practical terms, there is a relatively small number of stars or individuals with high status as a function of academic fame within an academic discipline. Importantly, social capital is not necessarily always tied to resources (e.g., a person that does not attend a well-resourced university, but nonetheless capitalizes on elite social networks; a person who works at a low-resource institution but is a star within their discipline). Therefore, another means of distinguishing between elite and periphery group membership within academic disciplines is based on *social capital*.

Taken together, the cumulative effect of both resource and social capital positions a select number of people to be relatively advantaged (the elite tier) compared to the great majority of people in the discipline, the disadvantaged (the periphery tier). Whereas working in high resource contexts provides opportunity to produce at the level needed to achieve merit within an academic discipline, social capital operates in many informal ways to shape professional opportunities and outcomes. Accordingly, we argue that resource and/or social capital *within* an academic discipline should be utilized as a means for classification of group membership, as well as for understanding group-based inequality within a discipline.

Importantly, placement into the elite or periphery as a function of resource and/or social capital can occur for a variety of reasons. For example, within most nations, a two-tiered system exists—with a select number of well-resourced institutions at the top (i.e., financial resources or endowment) and many low-resourced institutions at the bottom (Ahmad et al., 2012; Clotfelter, 2017; Vawda, 2003). Thus, one's placement in the elite group of an academic discipline may be a function of attending a high-resourced institution at the undergraduate and/or graduate level of one's respective country. Considering intersectionality, many social categorizations associated with forces of discrimination (e.g., socio-economic status and classism) intersect and are mutually reinforcing, to make it less likely for one to attend elite institutions or find a path to elite group membership within a discipline. Similarly, to the extent that the resource/social capital of many academic disciplines tend to be centered on western, industrialized, and capitalist spaces (people and universities), placement into the elite or periphery can also be a function of residing in a specific region. In sum, placement into the elite or periphery of a discipline is dependent on a variety of factors.

Expressions of Group-Based Inequality Within Academic Disciplines as a Function of Group Membership in Elite and Periphery

Within group-based hierarchies, advantaged groups often possess a disproportionately large share of positive social value, or all the material and symbolic things for which people strive (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). What is positive social value of an academic discipline? An inexhaustive list of what might be termed *academic positive social value* includes the following: employment at top universities, salary, editorial positions (power to shape the field), size of collaborative network, and number of citations (see Table 1). At the heart of group-based inequality is differential access to activities, positions, and goods that are valued within the given social system (i.e., the structure of privileges; Bourdieu, 1984). Group-based inequality often includes access to prestigious positions, unequal rewards associated with those positions, sorting mechanisms rooted in criteria that benefit those in prestigious positions, as well opportunity hoarding of rewards (Tilly, 2003). Importantly, many of these factors not only combine in different ways, but are generative and mutually-reinforcing. Consistent with work illustrating that bias manifests in systemic ways within academic disciplines (Tetlock, 2017), we expect patterns of bias to emerge that benefit the elite on outcomes relevant to academic positive social value.

Independent of societal disadvantages linked to specific group memberships (e.g., race, gender), research suggests there are clear group-based disparities within academic disciplines as a function of resource and social capital. As a starting point, disciplinary social capital shapes both doctoral admissions and recruitment to faculty positions (Bauder, 2020). In addition, applicant pools are often narrowed to a select number of people from high-resource environments and/or those with connections to stars of the field (Mai et al., 2015). Prestigious institutions typically hold both resources and a disproportionate number of stars (i.e., social capital). Accordingly, a large body of work suggests that prestige of one's doctoral institution is the *single best predictor* of not only whether a person is hired into a faculty position

(e.g., in the United States 80 percent of tenured faculty come from 20 percent of the universities; Wapman et al., 2022), but also level of the position's prestige (Clauset et al., 2015). Thus, much of employment (who gets it and where) is directly linked to resources of one's institution and/or status of one's social networks. Within the societal context, sociological research suggests that where you are born is one of the strongest determinants of future success (O'Rand, 2006), even when holding constant for ability/talent (Alexander et al., 2014). We suggest one's academic origin is one of the strongest predictors of employment.

Table 1

Indicators of Positive Academic Social Value

Material Benefits
Employment (employed vs. not)
Category of employment (e.g., full-time vs. part-time; adjunct)
Tier of employment (e.g., at top/elite universities)
Salary
Power Within the Discipline
Editorial positions
Number and status of positions within disciplinary organizations
Number of ad-hoc reviewer requests for journals and grant agencies
Status and Prestige Within the Discipline
Awards and honors
Professional appointments
Number of tenure and promotion file reviews
Number of citations
Social
Size of collaborative network
Research Productivity
Published research articles
Conference presentations

Beyond admissions and employment, there are disparities on a variety of other disciplinary outcomes as a function of resource and/or social capital, all of which are linked to scholars' entire career trajectory. At the most basic level, both resource capital (e.g., teaching load; teaching assistants for a class) and social capital (e.g., who is and isn't allowed to avoid academic labor) shape the time that scholars have to devote toward research (Joseph & Hirshfield, 2011). The resources of an institution are also associated with research productivity (Zhang et al., 2022) and explain changes in individual scholar citations (Allison & Long, 1990). Productivity, in turn, shapes disparities in academics' salaries, which are of course also tied to resources of institutions (Ehrenberg, 2003). Importantly, social capital alone (independent of resources) can also greatly impact scholars' entire career trajectory. With respect to social capital, many factors relevant to a scholar's productivity and academic life are shaped by connection to influential stars of the discipline, such as inclusion in collaborative projects (Rubin & O'Connor, 2017), manuscript decisions (Nazar et al., 2022), and promotion (Pezzoni et al., 2012; Wieczorek et al., 2020). Those with low and high social capital, for example, are evaluated differently by editors (Huber et al., 2022); illustrating that the same work or accomplishment is valued differentially as a function of academic fame (Lin, 2000). Moreover, social capital shapes narrowing of applicant pools and selection decisions for many powerful/high-status positions (e.g., editors; Rynes, 2006), as well as influencing external funding awards (Murray et al., 2016).

In sum, although some inequality is the result of individual differences in talent, work-ethic, or skill, as well as societal-based inequities, we suggest a great deal of inequality *within* academic disciplines is rooted in systems, structures, processes, and biases that privilege an elite tier while disadvantaging the periphery within the discipline. Resource and social capital greatly impact who is deemed eligible (opportunities) and ultimately gets (outcomes) a variety of valued goods within academic disciplines. Indeed, as others have noted, "Despite the confounded nature of

merit and social status within measurable prestige, the observed hierarchies are sufficiently steep that attributing their structure to differences in merit alone seems implausible” (Clauset et al., 2015, p. 5). It is important to note that the cumulative advantages the elite possess are often passed along to others in their peer network or younger generations (e.g., “the next generation”; Tilly, 2003).

Our classification diverges from a strict focus on underrepresented identities at the national or societal level and thus is a more expansive framework for understanding inequality within disciplines. It is, of course, difficult to provide robust evidence for a group-based social system in which not only the groups, but also the processes operate in an informal manner. Nevertheless, we view our work as a commentary (rather than an empirical case) and suggest our approach is a necessary and complementary framework to other frameworks (e.g., focused on societal identities) for understanding inequality within academic disciplines.

At the heart of all group-based hierarchies are the ideological mechanisms that maintain the hierarchy, convincing both the advantaged and disadvantaged groups that either: (1) there is no group-based social system or (2) that the system is fair, just, and legitimate (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). We move to explore the role of legitimizing myths in obscuring group-based hierarchy and providing justification for inequality based on resource and social capital.

Legitimizing Myths of Group-Based Social Systems in Academic Disciplines

Hierarchy-enhancing legitimizing myths are the values, beliefs, causal attributions and ideologies that provide moral, intellectual, and instrumental justification for group-based hierarchy (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). We do not have the space in the present work to identify and provide support for how capitalism and neoliberalism *within* academia (Coşkan et al., 2021), as well as racial capitalism or white supremacy (Hassan, 2023), for example, bolster and justify group-based hierarchy in the terms we have defined. Nevertheless, a variety of legitimizing myths obfuscate the group-based hierarchy within academic disciplines and provide justification for disparate outcomes related to academic positive social value. We now note how the notion of meritocracy, aggregated bias, and individual elite minority exemplars, may be especially relevant to legitimizing the group-based hierarchy of academic disciplines.

Some might suggest there is no hierarchy based on resource capital or social capital and all inequality within disciplines is a function of disparities in individual work ethic/talent or societal based inequities (i.e., that meritocracy largely exists in most academic disciplines). Indeed, many “liberal” people in academia strongly believe in meritocracy and that their personal accomplishments are solely a function of their own hard work. However, meritocracy and the protestant work ethic are two central legitimizing myths that uphold stable group-based hierarchies (Sidanius et al., 1992). Indeed, as others have noted, the notion of meritocracy provides the illusion of mobility and is the single greatest obstacle to equal opportunity within many social systems (Guinier, 2015). Meritocracy frames disadvantage in terms of individual deficits in skill and effort—which not only leads to a politics of humiliation (Markovitis, 2019), but also blunts group-based resistance by those disadvantaged within the system.

From a social dominance perspective, two of the proximal processes for group-based hierarchy are 1) aggregated individual discrimination and 2) aggregated institutional discrimination. Consistent with a framework that suggests bias manifests in systematic ways within academic disciplines (Honeycutt & Jussim, 2020), we suggest there are numerous aggregated individual-level biases against those in the periphery of academia expressed by those in power of the discipline. Beyond implicit and explicit favoritism toward those connected to stars in the discipline, aggregated individual-level biases include: bias against what questions are deemed acceptable to ask, method(s) bias (e.g., against qualitative studies), measurement bias, role models, idea suppression, citations, interpretation of findings, epistemic bias (e.g., which ideas are canonized as integral to the discipline’s scope of knowledge production) and everyday negative interpersonal bias (within departments, universities, and the larger discipline). Many of these biases are represented in the negative treatment of academics from a variety of countries around the world (i.e., those in the periphery; e.g., Majority World/Global South or Southern and Eastern Europe; Bou Zeineddine et al., 2022). Similarly, there are clear biases based on race/ethnicity (e.g., the need for a White comparison group; Stanley, 2007; Wang, 2016; review procedures; King et al., 2018) and gender (e.g., variance in citations and citation impact; Nosek et al., 2010). At the institutional level, both standard of practice discrimination (i.e., rules and procedures that have a discriminatory effect, such as criteria for promotion) and individual-mediated institutional discrimination (e.g., individual biases of the powerful that manifest

in institutional policies) result in disparate treatment of those in the elite and periphery. For example, with respect to institutional standards and practice, many of the criteria for external funding make it challenging (if not impossible) for those around the world, such as in Latin America, the Middle East (Saab et al., 2020) or the Majority World more broadly (Bou Zeineddine et al., 2022), to be awarded funds. Individual-mediated institutional discrimination is prevalent in the norms and values of the elite group dominating the culture of most academic disciplines, such as in conferences, group meetings, or in response to social/political events (e.g., disciplinary public statements). Similarly, those in the elite group (and editors) can reward a focus on certain topics, but not others—thereby socializing and molding scholars to disproportionately attend to specific topic areas, at the expense of others.

Finally, consistent with work illustrating that the existence of a few token members of underrepresented groups in high status positions bolsters support for the social system (e.g., perceptions of individual mobility; Danaher & Branscombe, 2010), we suggest the presence of a few minorities in the elite of an academic discipline functions in a similar way within the disciplinary social system. Within many disciplines, there are a small number of minority group members (defined within the specific national context) that attend prestigious institutions of the nation and who, in turn, receive all or most of the benefits of elite group membership. These individuals are seen as success stories for individual mobility (both in the national context and the academic discipline; often irrespective of their initial individual-level privilege—such as socio-economic status). Though disadvantaged and certainly likely to be the target of a variety of prejudices, however, to the extent that they are products of elite group membership (e.g., attended a well-resourced prestigious institution with connections to stars of the field), they are relatively advantaged *within* the group-based social system of the academic discipline.

In practice, therefore, members of minoritized groups within the academic elite—through no fault of their own—may indirectly obscure the stark inequality within the academic discipline as a function of resource and/or social capital. To be clear, we note the role of individual token minorities not to take away or disparage these individuals within elite spaces, but to demonstrate how their presence may ultimately serve to blur recognition of inequality as a function of our group-based classification—rooted in resource capital and social capital *within* the academic social system. This analysis is consistent with frameworks that illustrate how a select number of well-positioned people from underrepresented groups often receive a disproportionate number of resources (e.g., from institutes or centers), blur identification of inequality, and ultimately help to maintain group-based inequality within social systems (e.g., professional managerial class: Liu, 2021; elite capture: Taiwo, 2022). Accordingly, we suggest that minoritized individuals within the national context that attend prestigious institutions (and are effectively a part of the elite of the discipline) illustrate the need for a more nuanced understanding of the meaning of advantage and disadvantage *within* the group-based academic social system.

In sum, the notion of meritocracy, aggregated discrimination, and the presence of a few minorities in elite spaces all serve as legitimizing myths, to help blur recognition of the group-based social system based on resource and social capital and provide justification for inequality. The starkest manifestation of group-based hierarchy within a social system is clear disparities in the composition of who disproportionately obtains the material and symbolic things for which people strive. As noted earlier, if one were to classify people along resource and social capital dimensions to designate group membership as elite or periphery within academic disciplines, an extraordinarily disproportionate number of outcomes are possessed by members of the elite group. The factors we have highlighted, as well as other legitimizing myths, ensure that academics fail to conceive of their academic discipline as a social system in the terms we have noted, which results in a lack of identity or group-based consciousness around periphery group membership. Moreover, for those in the periphery, notions of meritocracy and individual mobility provide an illusion of inclusion, which leads to a version of cruel optimism (Berlant, 2011). *Academic cruel optimism* might be conceived as the attachments a scholar has to the material or aspirational “good life” of academia and the negative psychological effects of working with low resources/social capital, meaning this good life is not attainable, but always appears possible.

Implications of a Group-Based Hierarchical Social System Framework for Issues Facing Academic Disciplines

Our social systems approach moves away from individual-level analyses to suggest that variance in opportunities and outcomes is rooted in an individual's position within the academic social system. At the heart of our argument is the notion that many issues facing academic disciplines would be better understood if analysis linked individual opportunities and outcomes *to* the group-based hierarchy of the academic discipline. That is, we cannot understand individual outcomes of scholars unless we consider that they are rooted in the context of a larger social system of power relations *within* the respective discipline. Utilizing a framework that distinguishes between individual hierarchy and a group-based hierarchy (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999)—while simultaneously understanding their interanimating and mutually constitutive nature (Brown, 2020)—we suggest that access to the means for achievement and biases in evaluation differentially operate as a function of membership in the socially constructed (informal) groups of academic social systems (i.e., the elite and periphery) and a variety of issues can be seen differently if viewed from our group-based social system framework.

In practice, inquiry into issues within academic disciplines often falls into two levels of analysis: the micro level (i.e., analysis and evaluation of individual biases) and macro level (i.e., analysis of and evaluation of societal patterns). Thus, at the individual level, there is an extreme focus on individual or committee-level attitudes, behaviors, and biases. At the societal level, there is a strong emphasis on groups and sociological patterns that explain or justify inequality within disciplines. Both frameworks, however, fail to provide any analysis of how group-based dynamics within the academic social system shape outcomes. Our analysis seeks to illustrate how factors at the meso-level, the academic group-based social system, can provide a unique understanding of academic problems. To illustrate our point, we utilize our framework to examine two issues: diversity and scientific crises.

Diversity

Within many academic disciplines, diversity issues are typically understood as a 'problem' that functions primarily at the site of societal disparities within any given societal context. Accordingly, the solutions to the problem of diversity, or lack thereof, are often rooted in a need to (a) manage individual or committee-level biases against underrepresented groups or (b) seek to provide support for underrepresented groups within the national-societal context. A reclassification of people and places into levels of resource and/or social capital at the meso level of academic group-based social systems, however, provides an additional lens for understanding the problems of diversity.

From our perspective, part of the problem of achieving adequate diversity lies in the failure of academic disciplines to acknowledge the demographic composition of elite/periphery in their respective discipline, coupled with merit criteria that ignore disciplinary context. With respect to demographic disparities, both within and across nations, sociocultural and structural patterns of power tend to privilege Whites (Harris, 1993), those from prestigious institutions (Binder et al., 2016), and those with higher socio-economic status (Rahman Khan, 2012). As a result, and consistent with how inequality operates at the societal level (e.g., racial capitalism; Burden-Stelly, 2020), many groups are not only less likely to be included in the elite group of disciplines, but academia itself, including: working-class people (irrespective of race/ethnicity), religious people or specific religious minorities, people belonging to lower castes, military veterans, LGBTQ+ minorities, minorities within national context, and those from non-western countries around the world (i.e., the neglected '95%'; Arnett, 2008). Lack of representation sometimes also generalizes to political orientations for specific disciplines within national contexts (e.g., those who are politically conservative in the social sciences and liberal people in finance in the United States). Accordingly, the tiered, group-based social system of most academic disciplines will show clear systematic demographic and regional patterns in the composition of those in the elite and periphery group memberships. These demographic disparities in the composition of the elite and periphery, coupled with decontextualized merit criteria that ignore disciplinary context, can help situate the difficulty of achieving diversity (at least partially) in evaluation procedures that ignore the meso-level of the disciplinary system. For example, the production-dependent merit criteria of many disciplines means that only those at elite institutions have the output necessary to be seen as *qualified*, leading to a situation in which a select few underrepresented individuals from elite

institutions are seen as the only “qualified” applicants for many positions—leading to the refrain “there just aren’t enough qualified minority applicants!” Thus, the pool of “diverse” applicants shrinks and is minimized as a function of merit criteria, composition of the elite, and evaluation—all working together at the meso-level. Many evaluations relevant to the “problem” of diversity lack disciplinary context by not only ignoring resources of people/places, but also failing to acknowledge the way in which the degree and nature of social capital shapes opportunities, outcomes, and experience of underrepresented groups (e.g., even in elite spaces, racial/ethnic minorities will have less social capital in those predominantly White spaces).

Individuals (labs), committees (admissions; hiring), and disciplinary organizations (leadership; conference representation) have a great deal of control over the current (e.g., employment) and future (e.g., admissions to labs and doctoral programs) composition of their discipline. If greater attention of diversity-improvement efforts were focused and organized around training, pipeline programs, employment, and leadership as a function of elite and periphery group membership (i.e., resource capital and social capital), we would expect a variety of new solutions to emerge around diversity. Our reclassification encourages those interested in achieving diversity to focus on the meso level of the group-based system of their respective academic discipline. Understanding the interrelated nature of individuals and the disciplinary social system expands the notion of the problem. Accordingly, disparities in demographics at elite/periphery institutions, production-focused merit criteria, and evaluation lacking disciplinary context – with respect to resources and social capital – all shape diversity outcomes. One consequence of our framework, and consistent with past work that has described the “visibles” and the “not-so-visibles” of academic disciplines (Lubek, 1976, p. 321), is that it helps to illuminate that in thinking about diversity, some sites may receive too much attention (e.g., prestigious institutions or people connected to stars of the field) and some too little (e.g., small public universities; minority-serving institutions; specific countries or regions).

Crises of Science

Much of the discussion and analyses regarding both the problems and solutions for scientific disciplines facing crises have been rooted in micro (individual) level frameworks (e.g., pre-registration; Gonzales & Cunningham, 2015), but we suggest many of these issues would be better understood as manifestations of the discipline as a social system and/or the tiered group-based hierarchy (i.e., meso-level issues). Many scientific disciplines have faced crises rooted in the value, generalizability, and utility of scientific findings, including the failure of findings to generalize to most of the world (Henrich et al., 2010), the replication crisis (Nosek et al., 2012), fraud (Simmons et al., 2011), and generalizability of the work to naturally-occurring settings (Cialdini, 2009). We suggest that many of these issues (and others facing social scientific disciplines) may be rooted in incentive structures *within* the academic social system, as well as the predominant sociocultural profile of the people and place(s) of the elite group.

With respect to replication and generalizability, there is the issue of how the predominant sociocultural demographic composition of the elite group of academic disciplines (e.g., based on race/ethnicity; class; national country of origin) may have a narrow and unrepresentative perspective or lived experience. It is important to note that for a majority of the world, most people’s lived experience is characteristic of those in the periphery, not those in the elite of academic disciplines. The overreliance on WEIRD samples has been thoroughly reviewed (Cheon et al., 2020; Henrich et al., 2010) and continues to be an issue with online data collection (e.g., overrepresentation of those with higher education in online samples; Hitlin, 2016). However, we would suggest that the narrow sociocultural profile of the elite is presented in *all* parts of the production of knowledge: theorizing, the lens of researchers, measurement, samples, reviewers, and editors. It could be argued that the predominant profile, experience, and perspective of many academic disciplines has been, and is, of a liberal White person that attended a well-resourced prestigious university in a Western country. It seems reasonable to conclude one’s life experiences and viewpoints likely shape a person’s assumptions, goals, and interpretation of data as a scientist (e.g., what is considered normal behavior or who is considered problematic; Teo, 2010)—indeed, this assumption is foundational to the claims of standpoint theory as a counterpoint to traditional epistemologies (Haraway, 1988; Pohlhaus, 2002). Importantly, there is also a predominant *place* profile: White, suburban, Western, and well-resourced, with work suggesting these spaces have their own independent effects on human behavior

(Brink et al., 2019; Mani et al., 2013; Piff et al., 2010). Accordingly, the problem of replication and generalizability may at least partially be a function of predominant sociodemographic profiles of the elite within academic disciplines.

Incentive structures within academic disciplines also may help to explain other outcomes. In most academic disciplines, status is conferred by way of production (e.g., research productivity; journal or book publications). Of course, as others have noted, the values of a research culture that disproportionately focuses on production may implicitly incentivize a schism between what is good for scientists and what is good for science (Nosek et al., 2012). The goal of productivity may implicitly influence how individual scientists theorize, design studies, collect data, interpret results, and even review studies. Thus, we view a portion of the problem of scientific fraud practices (e.g., *p*-hacking; Simmons et al., 2011) as partially shaped by production-focused merit criteria and incentive structures within the academic social system. Akin to a philosophy that suggests speed is sometimes detrimental to quality (e.g., the slow food movement; Petrini & Padovani, 2006), then, it is possible that the quality of science might benefit from slowing down as well (Berg & Seeber, 2016; i.e., de-incentivizing fast production). Having made the case for a group-based system that functions based on resource and social capital and identified some implications of this system, we now examine ways to reduce group-based inequality.

Leverage Points of Intervention

In this section we examine leverage points of intervention to address group-based hierarchy as a function of resource and social capital. One goal of the present work is to shift conversations of inequality away from a strict focus on individualistic narratives or societal macro disparities *toward* the group-based system of academic disciplines—explicitly incorporating analyses of status, power, resource capital, and social capital within the academic social system. Through the actions of agentic social actors in the social system of academic disciplines, change can occur in disciplines and society (i.e., as people reflect and change, so too do the structures and systems that their actions create; Brown, 2020). With respect to resources, it is impossible to create a level playing field for all, but individuals and collectives within academic disciplines can eliminate or reduce the impact of resources on merit criteria for professional outcomes. Regarding social capital, we can eliminate the role of social capital in shaping opportunities and outcomes by reducing the use of social networks as an informal identification and vetting procedure, blinding evaluation (to whatever extent possible), and increasing transparency around evaluation procedures.

More generally, it is important to guard against change that takes the form of neoliberalism (Coşkan et al., 2021). In the spirit of prefigurative politics, we present ideas that can help to foster alternative and radically democratic practices to create “another discipline” (Cornish et al., 2016). We acknowledge that some of our points provide more of an idealist roadmap than all the necessary details to realize practical implementation. However, we expect that the more that solutions are concretely linked to merit-criteria, status, and incentive structures, the more people will be motivated to adhere to new ways of being. Moreover, we advocate for a shift toward collectively organized solutions that move beyond the elite, which are rooted in collective working groups inclusive of those on the periphery. Thus, solutions should move away from investing resources in individuals (e.g., a select number of privileged elite minorities) toward collectives (e.g., a large number of groups in the periphery). As such, we hope that the starting point for reducing disciplinary inequality is rooted in the periphery.

Within-System Changes

A great deal of work has painstakingly detailed excellent suggestions for reducing inequality within academic disciplines, including how to improve diversity in faculty hiring (DeLisi et al., 2022; Finkelstein et al., 2016; O’Meara et al., 2020), reduce the impact of university status in employment (Clauzet et al., 2015), reduce regional bias (Bou Zeineddine et al., 2022), decolonize (Adams et al., 2015; Durrheim, 2024; Reddy & Amer, 2023), strengthen support for racial/ethnic minorities (Dupree & Boykin, 2021; Saab et al., 2020), or how to create open/inclusive disciplines (Ledgerwood et al., 2022). In addition, there are clear guidelines for improving how science is conducted, reported, and reviewed (Buchanan et al., 2021). Thus, there is an abundance of guidelines, which suggests the problem is not in the *knowing* (i.e., lack

of information; ignorance), but in the *doing* (i.e., taking concrete actions). Thus, we note the need for action and implementation. To the extent that individuals often exhibit a gap in their self-reported principles and actions (Dixon et al., 2017; including liberals; Glasford, 2022), we suggest institutions, disciplines, and organizations move toward an evidence-based testing framework: test, implement, and evaluate practices on the basis of metrics rooted in analyzing group-based patterns on material outcomes.

Diversify the Leadership of Disciplines

Diversifying the leadership of a discipline can bring new perspectives regarding human behavior, help to shift merit criteria, and (via the first two) expand access to the discipline. Utilizing the current framework, diversifying leadership means more than merely placing people from underrepresented groups from elite or prestigious institutions into positions of power. Indeed, diversifying leadership of a discipline should be explicitly inclusive of those in the periphery of the discipline. Thus, academic disciplines, institutions, and committees could take affirmative actions on the basis of our classification system (i.e., resource and social capital within the discipline) to increase the representation of qualified people from the periphery within leadership positions.

In advocating for a shift in representation of leadership, it is important to note that unlike most other social systems, academic disciplines are closed (i.e., there is a great deal of control over people, policies, and practices) and as a result, academics themselves are “unevenly distributed yet equally implicated” in *the problem* for the degree of inequality within their academic social system (Brown, 2020). Indeed, there is a collective complicity from all involved, that some, including many White liberals (who often feel above reproach), are unwilling to confront. It seems troubling, at best, to observe people of a variety of racial, ethnic, and/or socioeconomically privileged backgrounds study topics related to inequality (thereby demonstrating a comfort in trafficking in the suffering of others for theory), but observe these same individuals show little discomfort in the degree of inequality within their own academic discipline. Indeed, for some that study inequality or racism, there is a vast disconnect between their theories (seeking to achieve equality) – and their interpersonal treatment of people on the periphery or that are not connected to stars (exacerbating inequality). To the extent that the powerful are interested in doing more than *DEI theatre*, it’s important that they diversify leadership as a function of resource and social capital. Although those in academia are “...perhaps too busy living in their power relations to analyze them” (Lubek, 1976, p. 318), we hope an explicit identification of a group-based social system (and its many consequences) encourages reflection, motivation, and new paths to connect justice values to the practice, policies, and processes of academic disciplines (Prilleltensky, 1997). Given a diverse leadership’s ability to set standards from their place of situated knowing, changes in leadership can shift merit criteria and incentive structures.

Shift Incentive Structures

To truly shift practices within a discipline, there is a need to shift the incentive structures that motivate behavior (Giner-Sorolla, 2019). We have noted the impact of resources on professional outcomes and thus one potential leverage point for intervention concerns merit criteria within the field—in particular, disentangling merit criteria from production. It is often the case that the definition of merit that prevails within a social system generally expresses the interests of those that currently benefit from the respective system (Karabel, 2005). Existing merit criteria disproportionately favor those in high resource institutions and regions (i.e., the elite; those most likely to be in power) and have several consequences for those in the periphery. For example, for many around the world, there is the dilemma of needing to choose between personal success within one’s discipline, which requires a focus on Western topics and limited relevance to the local context, *versus* focusing on one’s local context and becoming irrelevant within the discipline (Bulhan, 2015). Similarly, to the extent that a population may be far away or challenging to recruit, merit criteria that rewards fast production discourages the inclusion of many groups as samples (Bou Zeineddine et al., 2022).

At a very basic level, there is a need for many disciplines to have larger disciplinary conversations linking existing merit criteria, incentive structures, and what constitutes *good science* (Clegg, 2022). Of course, intimately tied to merit criteria and incentive structures, is a larger question of who is the audience for the work? Unfortunately, there is a version of many academic disciplines in which other academics are the only intended audience for the work. In this version of academia, the primary byproducts of the work are published evidence and arguments about the way the

world is (or should be), which primarily has the most direct impact on the individual career advancement of academics (i.e., this is the sole byproduct of the work). Individual career advancement of those focused on ambition, though, is profoundly disconnected from the material realities of everyday people. More generally, we believe incentive structures and existing working conditions have created a spiral of silence, which occurs when people perceive that an unpopular or controversial opinion will result in social/professional isolation or have other material consequences (e.g., loss of professional opportunities). In this type of context, individuals are less likely to express the opinion, thereby creating an inaccurate picture of the true majority opinion (Noelle-Neumann, 1974). We suspect there is a strong desire to change merit criteria and the production-driven incentive structures by the majority of people in many disciplines, but a variety of factors (e.g., loss of status or professional opportunities) has blunted expression of this opinion.

A change in merit criteria, incentive structures, and what constitutes good science, could shift a variety of outcomes. For example, merit criteria that included factors such as question or sample relevance (Giner-Sorolla, 2019), geographic diversity of place, minimum requirements for sample diversity (Buchanan et al., 2021), collaboration with under-resourced institutions or regions, multiple methods, or inclusion of local community (in person—as non-students; or place), all might help to expand incentive structures and who/what is valued. Similarly, a shift in conferring awards on the basis of individual research output toward a *constellation of researchers* on the basis of collaborations across disparate resource environments would help to incentivize collaboration across regions (Ledgerwood et al., 2022). Thus, changing merit criteria and shifting incentive structures (via a diverse leadership) could occur at the national (e.g., funding agencies), discipline (e.g., journal editors; conference reviewers), and university or department levels (e.g., integration into funding structures and training of students).

Change Evaluation Practices

Our group-based social system framework suggests a need to incorporate resources and disciplinary context within existing evaluation practices. A *context-sensitive* decision-making framework would account for the resource and social capital of individuals during evaluation. Because both resources and social capital can vary at the level of institution, as well as at level of the individual (e.g., individuals occupying the periphery can have access to elite tier resources and social connections), we suggest decision-makers develop classification systems and evaluation rubrics that account for resource and social capital at both the institutional and individual level. For example, at the most structural level, disciplines might seek to develop a classification system based on resources and/or social capital, such that a target could be classified into low, medium, or high for both categories of resource and social capital. Utilizing a capital-based rubric would facilitate a contextualized, blind evaluation (e.g., manuscript review; *triple-blind review* procedures; editors are blinded to both authors and reviewers' identities to reduce impact of social capital). Beyond evaluation, a classification system would also allow for tracking and monitoring of group-based disparities as a function of resources and/or disciplinary social capital.

Redistribution of Resources

Reducing group-based inequality will require investment to support low-resourced individuals, institutions, and regions within the respective discipline. In practice, there is a need for *disciplinary mutual aid* on behalf of people in the periphery group of the discipline. Mutual aid is designed to share resources and put time into meeting the needs of those most vulnerable within an unequal/unfair system (Spade, 2020). Mutual aid projects typically start with building a shared understanding of why people do not have what they need and includes three elements: (1) meet the needs of those most vulnerable, (2) mobilize people to expand solidarity, and (3) they are participatory—solving problems through collective action—rather than being charity from the advantaged. At the level of academic disciplines, mutual aid might start with explicitly developing programs and incentive structures that create meaningful connections and collaborative projects between those in the elite and periphery of an academic discipline. Similarly, disciplinary committees might move toward participatory budgeting, in which those in the periphery are more involved in the processes of deciding how disciplinary organization funds are spent. Finally, it might also take the form of utilizing resources to develop open-access platforms (e.g., PsychOpen GOLD), which would help to equalize the playing field. Of course, it's critical to avoid incentivizing extractive and exploitative research practices (thereby reproducing problematic structures in our leverage

points) and thus it would be necessary to establish anti-extractive and anti-exploitative practices, develop disciplinary legislations against such practices, and establish mechanisms to investigate and enforce violation of these respective practices (e.g., third-party review). As such, we are suggesting that rather than investing in systems of extraction, we should invest in co-creating systems of development and autonomy that decolonize disciplinary economic structures (e.g., circular economy).

The above changes seek to reduce the impact of resources, but a true change in group-based inequality as a function of resource capital requires a redistribution of resources. At the societal level, there is clear evidence for the association among tax systems and reduction of inequality (Dianov et al., 2022). Therefore, we suggest that academic disciplinary organizations explicitly “tax” high resource individuals (or institutions) and re-distribute these funds to the periphery of the discipline. Development of these tax policies would need to be organized via periphery group participation and enforcement would need to be linked to participation and benefits associated with disciplinary organizations (e.g., participation at conferences; editorial positions). A periphery group fund could be used for a variety of ends, such as to buy-out teaching, research activities, or to invest in regional professional associations (see Saab et al., 2020). Of course there is also a need to expand access to disciplinary activities to existing faculty that have little or no access to academic disciplines because of the precarity of their material conditions (e.g., adjunct; part-time instructors). One way to reduce inequality, then, is for disciplinary associations to explicitly invest funds in people, associations, collectives, and places *within the periphery*. As such, many disciplines would be improved by investing in establishing, strengthening, and grounding satellite associations within the unique history, contexts, and opportunities of specific regions. These investments could not only create disciplinary-based infrastructure within low-resourced areas, institutions, and regions, but also build community among the periphery.

To the extent that these funds could be primarily controlled by those in the periphery with the aim of developing sovereignty within the local context, these funding initiatives could also impact inequality at the societal level. Indeed, most people within academic disciplines (including those on the periphery) are relatively socioeconomically privileged relative to the working class people of their local context. There is a version of academia in which (mostly liberal) middle and upper-class people retreat into their institutions and spend much of their time debating how to understand or solve inequality—but never investing time or resources in creating material opportunities for vulnerable working class people. We view localized disciplinary associations as a potential avenue for expanding opportunities (e.g., jobs) for a variety of working-class people outside the academic discipline. Thus, rather than seeking to understand the problems of the world strictly by investing in privileged individuals and centers at universities to research these issues, there is a need to directly invest in working class people and communities. In sum, to achieve disciplinary social change, it will be necessary to change leadership, shift incentive structures, and advocate for investment in the large (silent) majority of many disciplines (the periphery).

Reimagining the Academic Discipline by the Periphery

In closing, we make a call to action by the periphery. Specifically, that the periphery of academic disciplines begin to organize and engage in collective action, on the basis of periphery group membership. All social change is precipitated, organized, and achieved through a bottom-up process, driven by the passion, moral conviction, and the work of a disadvantaged collective (Della Porta & Diani, 2015).

History demonstrates that those on the periphery shouldn't hope for the better nature of those in the elite to achieve change, nor should they be content with the warm satisfaction of the good intentions of those in power. Indeed, when status and the immediate material interests of the advantaged are linked to the maintenance of the social system, it is difficult to change social structures that maintain inequality. As Upton Sinclair suggested, it is difficult to get a person to understand something when their salary depends on not understanding it. The refusal to acknowledge a group-based system and active resistance of those that benefit from the status quo may suggest the need to try and develop entirely new systems.

As a starting point, those on the periphery should seek to develop and organize resources—independent or untethered from elite university and disciplinary organizations—to transform the disciplinary economy of resources and allow

for self-determination. As such, beyond working within the existing system (as has been outlined above), we suggest those on the periphery (and allies in the elite) come together to invest in the periphery, create alternative systems, and reimagine their disciplines.

Funding: The authors have no funding to report.

Acknowledgments: We would like to thank the editors and reviewers for their critical comments and helpful suggestions.

Competing Interests: The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

References

- Ahmad, A. R., Farley, A., & Naidoo, M. (2012). Funding crisis in higher education institutions: Rationale for change. *Asian Economic and Financial Review*, 2(4), 562–576.
- Adams, G., Dobles, I., Gómez, L. H., Kurtiş, T., & Molina, L. E. (2015). Decolonizing psychological science: Introduction to the Special Thematic Section. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, 3(1), 213–238. <https://doi.org/10.5964/jspp.v3i1.564>
- Alexander, K., Entwisle, D., & Olson, L. (2014). *The long shadow: Family background, disadvantaged urban youth, and the transition to adulthood*. Russell Sage Foundation.
- Allison, P. D., & Long, J. S. (1990). Departmental effects on scientific productivity. *American Sociological Review*, 55(4), 469–478. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2095801>
- Altbach, P. G. (2015). What counts for academic productivity in research universities? *Industry and Higher Education*, 79, 6–7. <https://doi.org/10.6017/ihe.2015.79.5837>
- Arnett, J. J. (2008). The neglected 95%: Why American psychology needs to become less American. *American Psychologist*, 63(7), 602–614. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.63.7.602>
- Avin, C., Lotker, Z., Peleg, D., Pignolet, Y., & Turkel, I. (2018). Elites in social networks: An axiomatic approach to power balance and Price’s square root law. *PLoS ONE*, 13(10), Article e0205820. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0205820>
- Bauder, H. (2020). International mobility and social capital in the academic field. *Minerva*, 58(3), 367–387. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11024-020-09401-w>
- Berg, B., & Seeber, B. K. (2016). *The slow professor: Challenging the culture of speed in the academy*. University of Toronto Press.
- Berlant, L. (2011). *Cruel optimism*. Duke University Press.
- Binder, A. J., Davis, D. B., & Bloom, N. (2016). Career funneling: How elite students learn to define and desire “prestigious” jobs. *Sociology of Education*, 89(1), 20–39. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038040715610883>
- Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste* (R. Nice, Trans). Harvard University Press. (Original work published 1979)
- Bou Zeineddine, F., Saab, R., Láštiová, B., Kende, A., & Ayanian, A. H. (2022). “Some interesting data from a faraway country”: Inequity and coloniality in international social psychological publications. *Journal of Social Issues*, 78(2), 320–345. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12481>
- Brink, W. D., Lee, L., & Pyzoha, J. S. (2019). Values of participants in behavioral accounting research: A comparison of M-Turk population to a nationally representative sample. *Behavioral Research in Accounting*, 31(1), 97–117. <https://doi.org/10.2308/bria-52103>
- Brown, D. V. (2020). Self-structure singularity: Considerations for agential realism in critical psychology. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 14(12), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12569>
- Buchanan, N. T., Perez, M., Prinstein, M. J., & Thurston, I. B. (2021). Upending racism in psychological science: Strategies to change how science is conducted, reported, reviewed, and disseminated. *American Psychologist*, 76(7), 1097–1112. <https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000905>
- Bulhan, H. A. (2015). Stages of colonialism in Africa: From occupation of land to occupation of being. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, 3(1), 239–256. <https://doi.org/10.5964/jspp.v3i1.143>

- Burden-Stelly, C. (2020, July 1). Modern U.S. racial capitalism: Some theoretical insights. *Monthly Review*.
<https://monthlyreview.org/2020/07/01/modern-u-s-racial-capitalism>
- Burris, V. (2004). The academic caste system: Prestige hierarchies in PhD exchange networks. *American Sociological Review*, 69(2), 239–264. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240406900205>
- Cheon, B. K., Melani, I., & Hong, Y.-y. (2020). How USA-centric is psychology? An archival study of implicit assumptions of generalizability of findings to human nature based on origins of study samples. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 11(7), 928–937. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550620927269>
- Cialdini, R. B. (2009). We have to break up. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 4(1), 5–6.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-6924.2009.01091.x>
- Clauset, A., Arbesman, S., & Larremore, D. B. (2015). Systematic inequality and hierarchy in faculty hiring networks. *Science Advances*, 1(1), Article e1400005. <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.1400005>
- Clegg, J. W. (2022). *Good science: Psychological inquiry as everyday moral practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Clofelter, C. T. (2017). *Unequal colleges in the age of disparity*. Harvard University Press.
- Cornish, F., Haaken, J., Moskovitz, L., & Jackson, S. (2016). Rethinking prefigurative politics: Introduction to the Special Thematic Section. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, 4(1), 114–127. <https://doi.org/10.5964/jspp.v4i1.640>
- Coşkan, C., Acar, Y. G., & Bayad, A. (2021). Revealing the manifestations of neoliberalism in academia: Academic collective action in Turkey. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, 9(2), 401–418. <https://doi.org/10.5964/jspp.7077>
- Danaher, K., & Branscombe, N. R. (2010). Maintaining the system with tokenism: Bolstering individual mobility beliefs and identification with a discriminatory organization. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 49(2), 343–362.
<https://doi.org/10.1348/014466609X457530>
- Decolonial Psychology Editorial Collective. (2021). General Psychology Otherwise: A decolonial articulation. *Review of General Psychology*, 25(4), 339–353. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10892680211048177>
- DeLisi, L. E., Elvevåg, B., Gooding, D. C., Park, S., & Schwab, S. G. (2022). Celebrating the accomplishments of thought leaders in psychiatry research: Introduction. *Psychiatry Research*, 316, Article 114761. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2022.114761>
- Della Porta, D., & Diani, M. (Eds.). (2015). *The Oxford handbook of social movements*. Oxford University Press.
- Dianov, S., Koroleva, L., Pokrovskaia, N., Victorova, N., & Zaytsev, A. (2022). The influence of taxation on income inequality: Analysis of the practice in the EU countries. *Sustainability*, 14(15), Article 9066. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14159066>
- Dixon, J., Durrheim, K., & Thomae, M. (2017). The principle-implementation gap in attitudes towards racial equality (and how to close it). *Political Psychology*, 38(S1), 91–126. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12393>
- Dupree, C. H., & Boykin, C. M. (2021). Racial inequality in academia: Systemic origins, modern challenges, and policy recommendations. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 8(1), 11–18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2372732220984183>
- Durrheim, K. (2024). Conversational silencing of racism in psychological science: Toward decolonization in practice. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 19(1), 244–257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17456916231182922>
- Ehrenberg, R. G. (2003). Studying ourselves: The academic labor market. Presidential address to the Society of Labor Economists. Baltimore, May 3, 2002. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 21(2), 267–287. <https://doi.org/10.1086/345558>
- Fine, M. (2023). Prec(ar)ious knowledge and the neoliberal academy: Towards re-imagining epistemic justice and critical psychology. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 62(S1), 180–193. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12617>
- Finkelstein, M. J., Conley, V. M., & Schuster, J. H. (2016). Taking the measure of faculty diversity. *Advancing Higher Education*, 1(4), 13.
- Giner-Sorolla, R. (2019). From crisis of evidence to a “crisis” of relevance? Incentive-based answers for social psychology’s perennial relevance worries. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 30(1), 1–38. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10463283.2018.1542902>
- Glasford, D. E. (2022). The privileged liberal principle-implementation gap: How the personal behavior of privileged liberals contributes to social inequality. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 52(9), 865–885. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jasp.12896>
- Gonzales, J. E., & Cunningham, C. A. (2015). The promise of pre-registration in psychological research. *Psychological Science Agenda*, 29(8), 2014–2017.
- Guinier, L. (2015). *The tyranny of the meritocracy: Democratizing higher education in America*. Beacon Press.
- Hammarfelt, B. (2019). Discipline. In B. Hjørland & C. Gnoli (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of knowledge organization*.
<http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:hb:diva-21859>
- Haraway, D. (1988). Situated knowledges: The science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective. *Feminist Studies*, 14(3), 575–599. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3178066>

- Harris, C. I. (1993). Whiteness as property. *Harvard Law Review*, *106*(8), 1707–1791. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1341787>
- Hassan, A. (2023). Who has the capital on knowledge production? Reflections on the ‘sharp white background’ of academia and anti-racist scholarship. *Stolen Tools*, *1*(1), 25–31. <https://doi.org/10.59745/st.v1i1.18>
- Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010). Beyond WEIRD: Towards a broad-based behavioral science. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, *33*(2-3), 111–135. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X10000725>
- Hitlin, P. (2016, July). *Research in the crowdsourcing age, a case study*. Pew Research Center. <http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/07/11/research-in-the-crowdsourcing-age-a-case-study>
- Honeycutt, N., & Jussim, L. (2020). A model of political bias in social science research. *Psychological Inquiry*, *31*(1), 73–85. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1047840X.2020.1722600>
- Huber, J., Inoua, S., Kerschbamer, R., König-Kerting, C., Palan, S., & Smith, V. L. (2022). *Nobel and novice: Author prominence affects peer review* (University of Graz, Working Paper 2022-01). SSRN. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4190976>
- Joseph, T. D., & Hirshfield, L. E. (2011). Why don't you get somebody new to do it? Race and cultural taxation in the academy. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *34*(1), 121–141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2010.496489>
- Karabel, J. (2005). *The chosen: The hidden history of admission and exclusion at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- King, E. B., Avery, D. R., Hebl, M. R., & Cortina, J. M. (2018). Systematic subjectivity: How subtle biases infect the scholarship review process. *Journal of Management*, *44*(3), 843–853. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206317743553>
- Ledgerwood, A., Hudson, S.-K. T. J., Lewis, N. A., Jr., Maddox, K. B., Pickett, C. L., Remedios, J. D., Cheryan, S., Diekmann, A. B., Dutra, N. B., Goh, J. X., Goodwin, S. A., Munakata, Y., Navarro, D. J., Onyeador, I. N., Srivastava, S., & Wilkins, C. L. (2022). The pandemic as a portal: Reimagining psychological science as truly open and inclusive. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *17*(4), 937–959. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17456916211036654>
- Lin, N. (2000). Inequality in social capital. *Contemporary Sociology*, *29*(6), 785–795. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2654086>
- Liu, C. (2021). *Virtue hoarders: The case against the professional managerial class*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Lubek, I. (1976). Some tentative suggestions for analyzing and neutralizing the power structure in social psychology. In L. H. Strickland, F. E. Aboud, & K. J. Gergen (Eds.), *Social psychology in transition* (pp. 317–333). Plenum Press.
- Mai, B., Liu, J., & González-Bailón, S. (2015). Network effects in the academic market: Mechanisms for hiring and placing PhD's in Communication (2007-2014). *Journal of Communication*, *65*(3), 558–583. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcom.12158>
- Mani, A., Mullainathan, S., Shafir, E., & Zhao, J. (2013). Poverty impedes cognitive function. *Science*, *341*(6149), 976–980. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1238041>
- Markovits, D. (2019). *The meritocracy trap*. Penguin UK.
- Murray, D. L., Morris, D., Lavoie, C., Leavitt, P. R., Maclsaac, H., Masson, M. E. J., & Villard, M.-A. (2016). Bias in research grant evaluation has dire consequences for small universities. *PLoS One*, *11*(6), Article e0155876. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0155876>
- Nazar, K., Spalter-Roth, R., & Witte, J. C. (2022). Who gets accepted and who gets rejected? Status in the production of social science. *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences*, *8*(7), 192–209. <https://doi.org/10.7758/RSF.2022.8.7.10>
- Noelle-Neumann, E. (1974). The spiral of silence a theory of public opinion. *Journal of Communication*, *24*(2), 43–51. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1974.tb00367.x>
- Nosek, B. A., Graham, J., Lindner, N. M., Kesebir, S., Hawkins, C. B., Hahn, C., Schmidt, K., Motyl, M., Joy-Gaba, J., Frazier, R., & Tenney, E. R. (2010). Cumulative and career-stage citation impact of social-personality psychology programs and their members. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *36*(10), 1283–1300. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167210378111>
- Nosek, B. A., Spies, J. R., & Motyl, M. (2012). Scientific Utopia: II. Restructuring incentives and practices to promote truth over publishability. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *7*(6), 615–631. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691612459058>
- O'Meara, K., Culpepper, D., & Templeton, L. L. (2020). Nudging toward diversity: Applying behavioral design to faculty hiring. *Review of Educational Research*, *90*(3), 311–348. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654320914742>
- O'Rand, A. M. (2006). Stratification and the life course: Life course capital, life course risks, and social inequality. In R. H. Binstock, L. K. George, S. J. Cutler, J. Hendricks, & J. H. Schulz (Eds.), *Handbook of aging and the social sciences* (6th ed., pp. 145–162). Academic Press.
- Petrini, C., & Padovani, G. (2006). *Slow food revolution: A new culture for dining and living*. Rizzoli International Publishing.

- Pezzoni, M., Sterzi, V., & Lissoni, F. (2012). Career progress in centralized academic systems: Social capital and institutions in France and Italy. *Research Policy*, 41(4), 704–719. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2011.12.009>
- Piff, P. K., Kraus, M. W., Côté, S., Cheng, B. H., & Keltner, D. (2010). Having less, giving more: The influence of social class on prosocial behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 99(5), 771–784. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0020092>
- Pohlhaus, G. (2002). Knowing communities: An investigation of Harding's standpoint epistemology. *Social Epistemology*, 16(3), 283–293. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0269172022000025633>
- Prilleltensky, I. (1997). Values, assumptions, and practices: Assessing the moral implications of psychological discourse and action. *American Psychologist*, 52(5), 517–535. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.52.5.517>
- Rahman Khan, S. (2012). The sociology of elites. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 38, 361–377. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-071811-145542>
- Reddy, G., & Amer, A. (2023). Precarious engagements and the politics of knowledge production: Listening to calls for reorienting hegemonic social psychology. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 62(S1), 71–94. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12609>
- Rubin, H., & O'Connor, C. (2017, July 18). *Discrimination and collaboration in science* [Paper presented at the Formal Models of Scientific Inquiry workshop, Ruhr-University Bochum]. https://homepage.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/defeasible-reasoning/docs/Book_of_Abstracts_FMSI.pdf
- Rynes, S. L. (2006). "Getting on board" with AMJ: Balancing quality and innovation in the review process. *Academy of Management Journal*, 49(6), 1097–1102. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2006.23478050>
- Saab, R., Ayanian, A. H., & Hawi, D. R. (2020). The status of Arabic social psychology: A review of 21st century research articles. *Social Psychological & Personality Science*, 11(7), 917–927. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550620925224>
- Sidanius, J., Devereux, E., & Pratto, F. (1992). A comparison of symbolic racism theory and social dominance theory as explanations for racial policy attitudes. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 132(3), 377–395. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224545.1992.9924713>
- Sidanius, J., & Pratto, F. (1999). *Social dominance: An intergroup theory of social hierarchy and oppression*. Cambridge University Press.
- Simmons, J. P., Nelson, L. D., & Simonsohn, U. (2011). False-positive psychology: Undisclosed flexibility in data collection and analysis allows presenting anything as significant. *Psychological Science*, 22(11), 1359–1366. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797611417632>
- Spade, D. (2020). Solidarity not charity: Mutual aid for mobilization and survival. *Social Text*, 38(1), 131–151. <https://doi.org/10.1215/01642472-7971139>
- Stanley, C. A. (2007). When counter narratives meet master narratives in the journal editorial-review process. *Educational Researcher*, 36(1), 14–24. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X06298008>
- Taiwo, O. O. (2022). *Elite capture: How the powerful took over identity politics (and everything else)*. Haymarket Books.
- Tellmann, S. M. (2022). The societal territory of academic disciplines: How disciplines matter to society. *Minerva*, 60(2), 159–179. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11024-022-09460-1>
- Teo, T. (2010). What is epistemological violence in the empirical social sciences? *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 4(5), 295–303. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2010.00265.x>
- Tetlock, P. E. (2017). *Expert political judgment: How good is it? How can we know?* Princeton University Press.
- Tilly, C. (2003). Changing forms of inequality. *Sociological Theory*, 21(1), 31–36. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9558.00173>
- Vawda, A. Y. (2003). Who benefits from public education expenditures? *Economic Affairs*, 23(1), 40–43. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0270.00399>
- Wallerstein, I. (1974). *The modern world system: Capitalist agriculture and the origins of European World economy in the sixteenth century*. Academic Press.
- Wang, Q. (2016). Why should we all be cultural psychologists? Lessons from the study of social cognition. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 11(5), 583–596. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691616645552>
- Wapman, K. H., Zhang, S., Clauset, A., & Larremore, D. B. (2022). Quantifying hierarchy and dynamics in US faculty hiring and retention. *Nature*, 610, 120–127. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-022-05222-x>
- Wieczorek, O. J., Wittek, M., & Heiberger, R. H. (2020). *Being published successfully or getting arXived? The importance of social capital and interdisciplinary collaboration for getting printed in a high impact journal in physics* [arXiv preprint arXiv: 2006.02148]. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2006.02148>
- Zhang, S., Wapman, K. H., Larremore, D. B., & Clauset, A. (2022). Labor advantages drive greater productivity of faculty at elite universities. *Science Advances*, 8(46), Article eabq7056. <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.abq7056>