

## COLLOQUIA 2018 University of Groningen, department of Sociology

*Wednesday December 19*

### **Bas Hofstra (Stanford University): Diversifying Intellectual Reproduction**

The primary means of intellectual reproduction in the professoriate is faculty mentoring doctoral students who then go on to become faculty mentors themselves. However, the social opportunities helping faculty reproduce are not equal, which helps explain why underrepresented groups are often unable to build and sustain their representation in the professoriate. To address this, we analyze nearly all PhD recipients in the United States from 1980 to 2015 (~1.03 million) and follow their careers. We find underrepresented groups are less likely to experience reproductive success than males and whites. However, women and minorities have greater success when they are paired with same-attribute advisors, and when their representation in the field increases. In contrast, white scholars experience reproductive barriers with increasing representation and they garner no benefits from having same-attribute over different-attribute advisors. Thus, matching underrepresented groups with same-attribute mentors and diversifying hiring practices in the most imbalanced fields are likely effective targeted ways to diversify the professoriate.

Bas Hofstra did his PhD at ICS Utrecht. He now works as a Postdoctoral Scholar at Stanford University, under prof. dr. Daniel McFarland, studying innovation in science at the School of Education. He has published in the American Sociological Review, Social Networks, Big Data & Society, Computers in Human Behavior, and New Media & Society.

*Thursday October 18*

### **Beate Volker (University of Amsterdam): Imagined Social Structures. Comparing Ego Networks of Characters in Contemporary Dutch Literature with the Networks of the Population in the Netherlands**

In this colloquium, I will first give a short overview about my work and my research agenda. Then I present results from a pilot study that compares networks of characters in books with networks of people in the Netherlands. This study is done in cooperation with the department of literary and culture at Nijmegen university. I examine whether segregation in personal networks is found in networks of characters in highbrow novels. A sample from Dutch novels (n=170), submitted to the Libris Prize in 2013 is drawn and the networks of their characters are compared to the networks of people in the Netherlands. Multilevel models reveal that networks in novels are more heterogeneous in terms of ethnicity, but less heterogeneous in age and education than networks in the actual world. I argue that studying networks in novels provides a new testing ground of theories for social sciences and probably a more comprehensive understanding of social divides. For humanities, it contributes to the old discussion about the reflection of society in literature.

Beate Volker works at the Department of Sociology at the University of Amsterdam, where she heads the program group 'Institutions, Inequalities and Life courses' (IIL). Her research is on conditions and consequences of social networks. She is fascinated by the sociological proposition that people's relationships are not only a product of their preferences, but also of their opportunities to engage in contacts.

*Thursday April 26*

### **Dingeman Wiertz (Nuffield College, University of Oxford): Durable Civic Disparities across the US: Civic Deserts, Hotspots, and Their Destinies**

There is stark variation across local areas in their civic traditions (e.g., prevalence of volunteering, rate of political participation, density of non-profit organizations) and these disparities are remarkably durable. This has been shown for different places, in different periods, and at different spatial levels. However, why such civic disparities are so persistent is not well understood. To explain this phenomenon, we develop a parsimonious theory, which we apply to variation in the prevalence of volunteering across the US. Key elements of our theory are positive feedback effects driven by volunteer recruitment through social networks, and structural constraints that determine the growth potential of areas. Depending on their exact interplay, these two forces together can explain civic convergence, civic divergence, or durable civic disparities across local areas. We empirically assess the micro-level foundations and macro-level implications of our theory using data on volunteering from the Current Population Survey, covering the period 2002-2015. Our analyses reveal that people are more likely to start and less likely to quit volunteering in metropolitan areas where the volunteering rate is already high. Nevertheless, we observe that civic disparities across metropolitan areas have diminished over the period studied. We further explore the longer-run implications of our theory as well as the sensitivity of these longer-run projections using simulation analyses.

Dingeman Wiertz is a Postdoctoral Prize Research Fellow at Nuffield College, University of Oxford. His research interests include civic engagement, ethnic integration and segregation, and the wider societal implications of adverse labour market experiences. Some of his recent research has been published in the American Sociological Review, and together with Nan Dirk de Graaf and Noah Carl he is currently working on a multidisciplinary social science textbook with the title "Societal Problems as Public Bads". Today's presentation is based on collaborative work with Chaeyoon Lim from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

*Thursday March 22*

**Bram Vanhoutte (University of Manchester): The Road to Resilience: A Comparative Life Course Study**

Ageing can be associated with losses in health, partnership and wealth, but some people manage to limit the impact of these events on their well-being substantially. In a context of population ageing with scarce public resources, the issue of coping with adverse aspects of ageing becomes even more important. To explore these issues, I will use innovative theoretical insights into the nature of resilience and a mixed methods approach. This will incorporate a combination of comparative longitudinal data from England (the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing) and the USA (the Health and Retirement Study) and qualitative in-depth interviews with older residents of Manchester who have experienced adverse events. The study will create insight into novel ways of maintaining well-being, through the study of the four distinct phases of the causal impact chain. Outcomes of the project will highlight new ways of maintaining well-being in the face of adversity, by examining material and life-course resources mobilized to foster successful ageing. The project focuses on vulnerability, adverse events and resilience.

Bram Vanhoutte is a Research Fellow in Sociology at the University of Manchester, affiliated with the Manchester Institute for Collaborative Research on Ageing (MICRA) and Cathie Marsh Institute for Social Research (CMI). He holds a Master's degree in Sociology (Free University of Brussels, 2004) and in Economics (University of Ghent, 2005), and was awarded his PhD in the Social Sciences in 2012 (University of Leuven).

*Wednesday February 21*

**Jessica Barker (Aarhus Institute of Advanced Studies): The Limits of Parochial Altruism: Insights from Evolutionary Biology for Promoting Inter-Group Cooperation**

Humans and other animals must make tradeoffs in allocation of resources: acquiring benefits for oneself comes at the expense of cooperatively providing them to others, and cooperating with members of one's own group may preclude cooperating with members of other groups. It is often assumed that people show favoritism towards their own group members at the expense of others. Here I explore the limits of such "parochial altruism" in humans. First, I use an economic game based on theory for the division of reproduction in non-human animal societies to show how cooperation with group members is reduced by the potential for competition over resources. Second, I present data from a study on group identity in Southeast Alaska to show how Tlingit (Alaska Native) participants' expectations of help and reciprocity from clan and community members reveal opportunities for inter-group cooperation. I argue that such cooperation between groups may be qualitatively different to cooperation within groups, and discuss factors that may promote cooperation at these two levels of organization.

Jessica Barker is a Junior Fellow at the Aarhus Institute of Advanced Studies, and from April 2018 will be a Research Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Toulouse. She is trained as a behavioral ecologist, studying non-human animals as well as humans, and her studies of behavior are informed by an evolutionary perspective. She is broadly interested in cooperation, and her current work focuses on cooperation between groups, particularly in the context of environmental dilemmas.

*Tuesday January 16*

**Caspar Chorus (TU Delft): Models of Moral Decision Making: A Research Program and a Case Study into Taboo Trade-Offs**

Discrete choice theory provides a mathematically rigorous framework to analyse and predict choice behaviour, which is widely used throughout the social sciences. However, the theory has a blind spot for moral choice behaviour: it was designed to analyse choices that are optimal given people's consumer preferences, rather than choices that are right, given people's moral preferences. This presentation will introduce a research program, funded by an ERC-Consolidator grant, which extends discrete choice theory to the domain of moral decision making. Based on the example of taboo trade-off aversion – a behavioral phenomenon well established in moral psychology – I will explain how we plan to produce and empirically validate a suite of new mathematical representations of choice behaviour (i.e., choice models), which are designed to capture the decision rules and decision weights that determine how individuals behave in moral choice situations. A crucial part of the program consists of using these validated choice models as input for agent based model systems, to identify how social interaction processes lead to the emergence, persistence or dissolution of moral equilibria at larger spatio-temporal scales. With this seminar, I hope to explore and trigger research collaborations between me and my discrete choice theory-group at TU Delft, and scholars in agent based modeling and ethics at Groningen University.

Caspar Chorus is a professor of Choice behavior modeling. He develops and empirically tests quantitative, formal models of human decision making. Crucially, he attempts to improve the behavioral realism of such choice behavior models, without compromising on mathematical tractability. This endeavour is supported by funding from personal grant competitions at the national and European level (NWO Veni 2010 and Vidi 2012; ERC Consolidator 2016).