

Seminar Report
Making Sense of Social Mobility in Unequal Societies
February 8, 2019

SALC Graduate School, Ellen Wilkinson Building
The University of Manchester



Photograph by Denisse Sepúlveda ©

Table of Contents

Conference Report	3
Final Budget	4
Programme	5
Panels, presenters and photography	8

Making Sense of Social Mobility in Unequal Societies

Making Sense of Social Mobility in Unequal Societies Seminar took place in the SALC Graduate School on the 8th of February of 2018, thanks to generous funding from artsmethods@manchester, DA Sociology and The University of Manchester. This was organised by Denisse Sepulveda, Andrea Lizama and Alexandrina Vanke from Sociology department of the University of Manchester. The seminar brought together more than fifty attendees from different universities and institutions throughout the UK, representing a wide variety of disciplines and research areas.

This interdisciplinary postgraduate seminar catered for those who either had experience or plan to carry out research in or related to inequalities and social mobility. The seminar provided the opportunity for postgraduate students, early career researchers and established academics to discuss and analyse themes and issues related to their research, as well as to establish productive conversations in a friendly atmosphere.

The event was organised by different sessions: three panels and three break-out round tables. Each session began with four or five presentations from academics and students who presented on their research about social mobility. The sessions were then opened up to discussion. This format allowed PhD students to present alongside experienced researchers and academics, who collaboratively shared experiences, signposting the challenges that social mobility studies can present. In all, participants benefitted from the opportunity to network, to share experiences and to learn from one another in a creative, collaborative and inter-disciplinary environment. Student participants especially highlighted the value of the presence in the seminar of young academics, as well as the experience of senior academics who have made significant contributions to the field. The organisers would like to extend their warm thanks to artsmethods@manchester, The DA Sociology and the University of Manchester, as well as to our speakers, chairs and participants.

Final Budget

Please find below a copy of our final budget.

Item (form)	Pay to	Details	ArtMethods	Sociology	Total
Travel bursary	Sam Friedman	travel	£54.50		£54.50
Travel bursary	Berenice Scandone	travel	£76.50		£76.50
Travel bursary	Charlie Walker	Travel	£106.60		£106.60
Hotel, Standard room (Sam Friedman)	Crowne Plaza: Manchester - Oxford Road	Hotel	£124		£124
Reception	Krobar	Catering	£ 323.80, inc VAT.		£ 323.80, inc VAT.
Materials and presents	Andrea Lizama	Plates, trails, cups and presents to keynote speakers	£35.96		£5.96
	Denisse Sepulveda	Biscuits and bags	£14.91		£14.91
Food and coffee	Taste Manchester	Food and coffee		£399.25	£399.25
Food	Denisse Sepulveda	Cookies, biscuits and refreshment		£51.43	£51.43
Wine	Alexandrina Vanke	3 bottles of Wine		£49.50	£49.50
TOTAL			£736.27	£500.18	£1.236

Programme

- 9.00–9.30 **Registration**
SALC Graduate School Atrium, Ellen Wilkinson Building, M15 6JA
- 9.30–9.40 **Welcome and Opening Words** (seminar committee)
Conference Room Graduate School, Ellen Wilkinson Building (all sessions to be held there)
- 9.40–11.00 **First panel of presentations: Understanding the notion of social mobility**
- Chair: Dr Andrea Lizama (The University of Manchester)
- Susan Oman (Research Fellow, The University of Sheffield) *How do social inequality metrics work in cultural organisations?*
- Louise Folkes (PhD student, The Cardiff University) *Re-imagining social mobility: the role of alternate value systems, social class and locality in reconstructing notions of mobility*
- Gavin Williams (Academic, The Open University) *'I like it here though, I really don't want to move': children's aspirations and understandings of social mobility in the South Wales valleys.*
- Gideon Calder (Senior Lecturer, The Swansea University) *Does fixing social immobility mean promoting equality of opportunity?*
- 11.00–11.15 **Coffee break**
SALC Graduate School Atrium
- 11.15–12.30 **Keynote speaker**
- Chair: Dr Wendy Bottero (Reader in Sociology, The University of Manchester)
- Sam Friedman (Associate Professor, The London School of Economics and Political Science) *The class ceiling: why it pays to be privileged*

- 12.30–13.30 **Lunch**
SALC Graduate School Atrium
- 13.30–15.00 **Second panel of presentations:
Understanding Intersectional Perspectives
of Social Mobilities**
Chair: Dr James Rhodes (Lecturer in Sociology,
The University of Manchester)
- Berenice Scandone (Senior Researcher, The
Centre for Children and Families) *Not just a matter of class: intersecting social
mobility challenges of Bangladeshi-British young
women*
- Charlie Walker (Associate Professor, The
University of Southampton) *'I don't really like tedious, monotonous work':
working-class young women, service sector
employment and social mobility in contemporary
Russia*
- Alexandrina Vanke (PhD student, The
University of Manchester), Irina
Tartakovskaya (Senior Research Fellow, The
Federal Center of Theoretical and Applied
Sociology of the Russian Academy of
Sciences) *The intersectional approach to social mobility of
precariat in post-Soviet Russia*
- Simone Varriale (Lecturer, The University of
Lincoln) *Unequal youth migrations: exploring the synch
between class and age among post-crisis
European migrants*
- Resto Cruz (Research Associate, The
University of Manchester) *Social mobility as regeneration: kinship,
personhood, and the divine*
- 15.00–15.15 **Coffee break**
SALC Graduate School Atrium
- 15.15–16.30 **Third panel of presentations:
Understanding Educational Social
Mobilities**
Chair: Dr Nadim Mirshak (Lecturer in Sociology,
The University of Manchester)
- Gabriela Zapata (PhD student, The
University of Manchester) *More educated, less mobile? Diverging trends in
income and educational mobility in Chile and
Peru*
- Jiexiu Chen (PhD student, The University
College London) *Chinese rural students' social mobility
experiences through higher education across four*

	Diego Angeles (PhD student, The University College London-Institute of Education)	<i>decades: from 1980s to 2010s</i> <i>Mexican first-generation students, tensions between social mobility and inequality</i>
	Malik Fercovic (PhD student, The London School of Economics and Political Science)	<i>Between success and dislocation. The troublesome identity among the upwardly mobile in Chilean society</i>
16.30–17.30	Keynote speaker	Chair: Prof Andrew Miles (Professor of Sociology, The University of Manchester)
	Nicola Ingram (Professor, The Sheffield Hallam University)	<i>A better life? Education and the promise of social mobility</i>
17.30 onwards	Wine reception at Kro Bar 325 Oxford Rd, Manchester M13 9PG	

Panels and presenters

First Keynote speaker



Sam Friedman (Associate Professor, London School of Economics and Political Science).

Chair: Dr Wendy Bottero (Reader in Sociology, The University of Manchester)

The class ceiling: why it pays to be privileged

In this talk I begin by drawing on data from over 100,000 people in Britain's largest employment survey, The Labour Force Survey, to demonstrate that in contemporary Britain it quite literally pays to be privileged. Even when individuals from working-class backgrounds are successful in entering Britain's elite occupations they go on to earn, on average, 16% less than colleagues from more privileged backgrounds. And more significantly, this class pay gap is not explained away by conventional indicators of 'merit'. A substantial gap remains even when we take into account a person's educational credentials, the hours they work and their level of training and experience. The second part of the talk is devoted to unravelling why. Going behind the closed doors of elite employers in four case study occupations – accountancy, television, architecture and acting – and drawing on observation and 175 interviews I explore the drivers of the class pay gap. This reveals that the most powerful drivers are rooted in work cultures historically shaped by the privileged, the affordances of the 'Bank of Mum and Dad', the misrecognition of middle-class self-presentation as 'talent', and sponsorship premised on class-cultural similarity and familiarity. We tend to assume that people get ahead in their careers on the basis of individual skill, experience and effort. These principles, both morally and pragmatically, underpin

Britain's 'meritocratic ideal. Yet the existence of a class ceiling provides a sobering corrective to this lofty aim and reveals a powerful axis of inequality that demands urgent attention.

Dr Sam Friedman is Associate Professor in Sociology, London School of Economics and a Commissioner at the Social Mobility Commission. He has published widely on social class, social mobility and elites. He is the author of *Comedy and Distinction: The Cultural Currency of a 'Good' Sense of Humour* (Routledge 2014) and the co-author of *Social Class in the 21st Century* (Penguin, 2015). Dr Friedman holds a doctorate in Sociology, University of Edinburgh and has worked in University of Edinburgh, University of York, City University of London and London School of Economics. He specialises in the cultural dimensions of contemporary class division. He has recently completed a book entitled *The Class Ceiling: Why it Pays to be Privileged* (with Daniel Laurison), which examines social mobility into Britain's higher professional and managerial occupations.

Second Keynote speaker



Nicola Ingram (Professor of Sociology of Education, Sheffield Hallam University)

Chair: Prof Andrew Miles (Professor of Sociology, The University of Manchester)

A better life? Education and the promise of social mobility

Education, specifically a ‘good education’, and increasingly a higher education qualification (preferably from Oxbridge or a Russell Group university) is seen as the key to social mobility, and the holy grail for the working-classes, who are presumed to want ‘a better life?’ Within this discourse, educational achievement is often presumed to be either synonymous with social mobility, or a prerequisite for social mobility. This view of social mobility, however, is both a distraction from the need to consider the economic basis of the concept (as it reduces economic capital to cultural capital), and a smokescreen for the fact that fundamental shifts in the labour market (including changes in the types of employment available to both the working and middle classes) render social mobility difficult to measure. Moreover, in the public and political imaginary, the term social mobility has come to denote ‘a better life’, without consideration of what ‘better’ entails. Drawing on data from the Paired Peers project, a seven-year longitudinal study of how class impacts on student access, experience and outcomes, this paper will consider social mobility through a higher education lens to question the concept’s utility and use in educational policy and practice. In doing so I will argue that recent middle-class graduates are challenged to reproduce the economic security of their parents, and that for the educationally successful working-classes, what passes for social mobility may usefully be considered a new articulation of class reproduction.

Dr Nicola Ingram is Professor of Sociology of Education at Sheffield Hallam University. Her research focuses on social inequalities and education from secondary schooling to higher education and into the labour market in different national contexts. She is currently co-investigator along with Prof. Lynn McAlpine (Oxford) on an ERASMUS Plus funded project entitled Researcher Identity Development in the Social Sciences, collaborating with colleagues in Spain, Estonia and Finland. The project is considering the experiences of early career researchers across different countries with a view to developing toolkits to support career development. Her most recent publications is ‘Talent-spotting’ or ‘social magic’?: Inequality, cultural sorting and constructions of the ideal graduate in elite professions, in *The Sociological Review*. She has recently published the following books ‘Educational Choices, Aspirations and Transitions in Europe: Systemic, Institutional and Subjective Challenges’ (2018), *When class trumps university status: narratives of Zoe and Francesca from the Paired Peers project* (2018) and *Working-Class Boys and Educational Success: Teenage Identities, Masculinity and Urban Schooling* (2018).

First panel of presentations: Understanding the notion of social mobility

Chair: Dr Andrea Lizama (The University of Manchester)



Susan Oman (Research Fellow, Sheffield Methods Institute, The University of Sheffield)

How do social inequality metrics work in cultural organisations?

People working across the cultural sector see their life-course as contrary the assumed 'norm' that drives social mobility proxy questions in various ways. Asking questions about parental occupation to determine social origin proved to be the most problematic for those who participated in this study. This paper will outline how this issue was dealt with methodologically in a policy sector that must meet demands for robust quantitative recording of social mobility, while reassuring those in cultural professions that these measures might reflect the qualitative experience of their personal life narratives and lead to social change.

Dr Susan Oman's PhD in Sociology focussed on the politics of well-being, metrics, methods and cultural participation. It was awarded by the University of Manchester in 2017 and was attached to the Understanding Everyday Participation – Articulating Culture Values project, specifically contributing to its histories and data themes. Since finishing, she has held an AHRC Creative Economy Engagement Fellowship looking at Data, Diversity and Inequality in the Creative Industries and worked as an Academic Advisor to Arts Council England to help them – and their funded organisations – understand issues related to data and inequality in the sector, with a specific focus of social mobility metrics.

Louise Folkes (PhD student, The Cardiff University)

Re-imagining social mobility: the role of alternate value systems, social class and locality in reconstructing notions of mobility

The extension of neoliberalism has seen the responsibility for 'success' and social mobility shifted onto the individual. Social mobility policy in the UK has focused its attention on marginalised and disadvantaged communities, utilising programmes focused around education and employment as a vehicle for individual social mobility. Often drawing on a discourse of 'lack', this paper questions the power and justice of these hegemonic, individualistic constructs of social mobility.

Based on an ethnographic study in a small, white working-class community, this paper will focus on the analysis of family interviews that explored biography, kinship, and community. The importance of the familial bond and keeping close were central to many participants' narratives, alongside discourses of fulfilment that were decoupled from wealth and work. Furthermore, the complex and varied constructions of community were vital to many families' subjectivities. This paper will argue that constructing a relational self may be more salient to the working-class families in this study than the individualism propagated by dominant social mobility discourses. By focusing more on the 'social' of social mobility, such as family and community, we can see how the families in this study reconstruct the notion of social mobility. The importance of this aspect is undervalued and overlooked in the dominant social mobility discourses that permeate government policy and academia. It is not that these families are not 'strivers' or 'lack' certain abilities, but that the focus of success is not always based on individual gains alone.

Louise Folkes is a PhD student at Cardiff University's School of Social Sciences. Her thesis is exploring social (im)mobility narratives in a working-class community in south Wales, with an interest in the intersection of place-based, classed, and gendered identities. Louise's research interests include: social mobility, social class inequalities, and community organising, with a methodological focus on ethnographic methods and creative research approaches. Louise has recently published a book chapter about community organising in the edited collection 'Activism, Democracy and Participation: Global Perspectives' and a conference paper entitled 'Being the intrusive 'double outsider' inside Welsh family homes: Insights from researcher positionality'.

Gavin Williams (Academic, The Open University)

'I like it here though, I really don't want to move': children's aspirations and understandings of social mobility in the South Wales valleys

The impact of poverty and disadvantage on the attainment of children and young people is well documented and has received much attention in governmental policy. Less evidence is available on the experiences of children living in deprived communities and their perceptions of the impact this has on learning and future life chances. Using a case study approach, this doctoral study investigated the experiences of children living in the Rhondda valley, a post-industrial area in South Wales. Nineteen

children from three primary schools participated in the study using focus groups, individual and photo-elicitation interviews and observation to explore their experiences of living in the area and their perceptions of how this influenced learning and their future aspirations.

Drawing on Bourdieu's Theory of Practice (1986), the study found the topography and geographically-bounded nature of the valley had a significant impact on the children's experiences. It not only shaped the learning opportunities available but the history and culture of the area. The influence of the landscape, school, and family was clear in the aspirational habitus of the children which demonstrated agency and an ability to draw upon their experiences and look beyond the confines of the valley. However, this presented a dilemma: the children recognised the lack of opportunities available locally and the need to look beyond the valley, but did not want to leave. The findings offer insight into working-class children's perceptions and identify the importance of seeking children's understandings of social mobility along with the impact it has on working-class communities.

Gavin Williams is an academic in the School of Education, Childhood, Youth and Sport based at The Open University in Wales where he has been based for the past 5 years. Prior to this Gavin worked for 10 years in the voluntary sector where he managed a range of services for children and young people with disabilities, and then worked as a National Young Person's Lead for a mental health charity. This presentation focuses on some of the findings from Gavin's recent doctoral studies that explored the role of place, poverty and deprivation in shaping working-class children's learning experiences and aspirations.

Gideon Calder (Senior Lecturer, The Swansea University)

'Does Fixing Social Immobility Mean Promoting Equality of Opportunity?'

Social immobility is objectionable from different ends of the political spectrum, and seems to offend against basic intuitions about fairness. This is partly because of a general assumption that equality of opportunity offers a version of equality which can be readily bought into from quite separate ideological directions. This paper argues that when it comes to social mobility, this is part of the problem. Equality of opportunity is far more contentious and unstable as a notion than its wide appeal suggests. This is partly because of the idea that opportunities might be genuinely equal, in an unequal society – and partly to do with problems connected with gauging what counts as 'success', or a valuable destination. Looking at a combination of sociological, policy-based and philosophical dimensions of the issue, this paper will consider the possibility that the notion of 'opportunity pluralism' offers a better way of conceiving both what kinds of problem the social mobility debates reflect, and of genuinely radical and realistic solutions to those problems.

Gideon Calder is Senior Lecturer in Social Sciences and Social Policy at Swansea University, where he directs the Social Policy programme. He is author or editor of 10 books, most recently *How Inequality Runs in Families: Unfair Advantage and the Limits of Social Mobility* (Policy Press, 2016) and *The Routledge Handbook of the Philosophy of Childhood and Children* (Routledge, 2018). He is co-editor of the journal *Ethics and Social Welfare*

Second panel of presentations: Understanding Intersectional Perspectives of Social Mobilities



Chair: Ali Siles (PhD student in Sociology, The University of Manchester)

Berenice Scandone (Senior Researcher, The Centre for Children and Families)

Not just a matter of class: intersecting social mobility challenges of Bangladeshi-British young women

The advocacy of social mobility by UK governments of all sides has been accompanied by an emphasis on 'raising the aspirations' of students from 'non-traditional backgrounds' and expanding access to HE. Women of Bangladeshi origins have long been the object of concerns over their lack of education and labour market participation. Yet, the number of those accessing university has increased substantially over the last two decades, contributing to upward mobility and increasing class differentiation. As those of most minority ethnic backgrounds, these students are however more likely than their white middle-class peers to have lower retention and attainment levels, and bleaker occupational prospects. Here, I examine how social class background, ethnicity and gender intersect to inform the social mobility prospects and experiences of British-born young women of Bangladeshi origins in HE. I present findings

from interviews with 21 female undergraduates of Bangladeshi heritage of both middle-class and working-class origins. I argue that looking at social mobility as involving a movement across spaces where classed, ethnicised and gendered resources acquire differential value improves our understanding of mobility outcomes and subjective experiences. I challenge the rhetoric of 'low aspirations' by illustrating the intergenerational transmission of discourses of 'Bangladeshis valuing education and social mobility' that build on individual and collective experiences. I further demonstrate how class, race, religious faith and gender all contribute to generating differential inclusion / exclusion from institutional spaces and social networks, thus impacting on prospects.

Berenice Scandone is Senior Researcher at NatCen Social Research, Centre for Children and Families. She has recently completed her Ph.D. on the experiences and identities of British-born Bangladeshi women in higher education and is currently working on several post-16 education studies with a focus on inequalities in access, experiences and outcomes.

Charlie Walker (Associate Professor, The University of Southampton)

'I Don't Really Like Tedious, Monotonous Work': Working-class Young Women, Service Sector Employment and Social Mobility in Contemporary Russia

This paper contributes a global perspective to the emerging literature on girlhood in western contexts by examining the changing shape of transitions to adulthood amongst working-class young women in St. Petersburg, Russia. As in many western countries, new forms of service sector employment and an increasingly accessible higher education system appear to offer young women new prospects for social mobility. In contrast to the increasingly impoverished and denigrated traditional pathways into manual labour in the manufacturing sector, the young women in the study derive significant value from these new opportunities, constructing narratives of self-actualisation and approximating notions of respectable femininity. Nevertheless, actual social mobility is elusive, as familiar patterns of classed and gendered stratification limit their prospects. Despite its specificity, the case thus further illustrates the limited nature of the transformations available to young women through the new forms of education and work characteristic of global neoliberal contexts.

Charlie Walker is Associate Professor in Sociology within Sociology, Social Policy and Criminology at the University of Southampton. Charlie's primary research interests concern the impact of postsocialist transformation on different social groups in Russia and the former Soviet Union, and are located within the sociologies of youth, gender, work and education.

Alexandrina Vanke (PhD student, The University of Manchester), Irina Tartakovskaya (Senior Research Fellow, The Federal Center of Theoretical and Applied Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences)

The intersectional approach to social mobility of precariat in post-Soviet Russia

The paper presents the results of the project 'Intergenerational social mobility from the 20th to the 21st century: four generations of Russian history' and is based on 75 biographical interviews with precarious employees, aged between 23 and 58 years and residing in two regional Russian cities. The authors apply intersectional approach and Bourdieusian theory of habitus to social mobility. They argue that social mobility of men and women involved in precarious employment depends on gender, age and ethnicity, as well as on various combinations of other factors, such as marital status, types and volumes of their recourses. According to the research, there are two types of justification of involvement into precarious employment, which are 'forced' and 'free' choices. 'Forced' choice of precarity is more typical for employees of Soviet generations. Precarity as necessity becomes the results of labour market structural transformations, devaluation of some professions and leads to downward social mobility to the precariat. 'Free-will' involvement into precarity is more likely for employees of post-Soviet generations. Young employees explained their 'free' choice of precarious employment by autonomy, flexible timetable, interesting job, perspectives of self-development, closeness of the working place to their home, etc. However, 'free' choice of precarious workers of post-Soviet generations is mostly affected by social structures. Social mobility of young employees is carried out inside their low-resourced networks, allowing easily to find and to change precarious jobs, restrains them in the precariat and limits their chances for upward social mobility.

Alexandrina Vanke, PhD Candidate at the Department of Sociology, the University of Manchester. Her PhD project deals with everyday life of Russian workers and their ways of overcoming difficulties. Alexandrina (together with Irina Tartakovskaya) is part of a group project 'Intergenerational social mobility from the 20th to the 21st century: four generations of Russian history'.

Irina Tartakovskaya, Candidate of Sciences in Sociology, Senior Research Fellow at the Federal Center of Theoretical and Applied Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Her publications (in co-authorship with Alexandrina Vanke) examine gender aspects of social mobility of the working class and social trajectories of the precariat in contemporary Russia.

Simone Varriale (Lecturer, The University of Lincoln)

Unequal youth migrations: exploring the synch between class and age among post-crisis European migrants

This paper explores how symbolic boundaries between youth and adulthood shape experiences of upward and downward social mobility among EU migrants. Drawing on 56 biographical interviews with Italians who moved to England after the 2008 economic crisis, and focusing on three individual case studies, the paper reveals that normative understandings of adulthood emerge as a central concern from participants' biographical accounts, and that they mobilise unequal forms of cultural, economic and social capital to maintain a feeling of synchrony between social ageing and social mobility. Drawing on Bourdieu and the sociology of adulthood, the paper proposes the concept of 'synch' to explore how tensions in the relationship between social ageing and social mobility shape experiences of migration. This allows for an innovative theoretical bridge between cultural class analysis, adulthood studies and

migration studies, and for a better understanding of how intersections of class and age shape intra-European migrations.

The paper draws on a three-year research project funded by the Leverhulme Trust and titled *Transnationalising Class: Culture and Inequalities among Post-Crisis Italian Migrants (2015-18)*. The project used in-depth interviews (N = 56) and participant observation at social and cultural events in two urban areas: Birmingham and Greater London. Drawing on a Bourdieusian framework, the analysis focused on participants' social trajectories (before and after migration), the forms of capital they mobilised for moving to the UK (and sometimes for returning to Italy) and their strategies of distinction in the UK context.

Simone Varriale is Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Lincoln. Previously he was Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at the University of Warwick. His current research explores social inequalities among EU migrants and how they shape their biographies and identities. He is a sociologist of inequalities and culture and tweets at @franklyMrS.

Resto Cruz (Research Associate, The University of Manchester)

Social mobility as regeneration: kinship, personhood, and the divine

I recast social mobility as a regenerative process that involves complex temporalities and relations with humans and the divine, the achievement of which may transform and injure the various relations and notions of personhood that animate it. I draw from 15 months of ethnographic/archival research in the central Philippines, principally amongst the post-1945 generation whose social mobility was shaped by the upheavals of three successive colonisations, a war, and a dictatorship. They experienced mobility as the 'redemption' of selves and families, the substitution of their generation's achievements for their elders' deemed deficiencies, and the pursuit of a 'stable' life 'outside' (the village, country). Upward mobility also entailed heightened inequalities, geographical dispersal, enmity, and the transformation across generations of family life, including its religious and ritual dimensions. I foreground a conflict surrounding a Catholic devotion that my main interlocutors had been observing for seven decades, which originated amidst the dislocations of the war. The devotion had also become entangled with local class politics – it indexed the successful attainment of middle-class status. It was also entwined with parental authority and its eventual decline, and the unequal distribution of responsibilities, as well as opportunities, amongst adult siblings and their respective children. I describe how those responsible for the devotion sought to reconcile competing demands and obligations, including the felt need to honour the past and the desire to ensure a better future for the next generation. Through this recasting, I illuminate how social mobility is not merely about class: it entails relations with the divine; kinship and personhood are at stake too.

Resto Cruz is a Research Associate at the Morgan Centre for Research into Everyday Lives, Department of Sociology, the University of Manchester. He is a social anthropologist of kinship and relatedness, persons and personhood, history and biography, and economic transformation. His main geographical areas of expertise are the Philippines, island South East Asia, and the wider Austronesian world,

although he has recently expanded his focus to include Great Britain. For his PhD at the University of Edinburgh, he investigated the emergence of the post-1945 generation in the central Philippines—their coming of age and experiences of social and geographical mobility, particularly the role of, as well as consequences for, kinship and personhood.

Third panel of presentations: Understanding Occupational and Educational Social Mobilities



Chair: Dr Nadim Mirshak (Lecturer in Sociology, The University of Manchester)

Gabriela Zapata (PhD student, The University of Manchester), Anja Gaentzsh (University of Bremen)

More educated, less mobile? Diverging trends in income and educational mobility in Chile and Peru

The third paper analyses intergenerational persistence in income and education in Chile and Peru for birth cohorts of the early 1950s to 1990. Both countries have seen a structural expansion of education over this period and decreasing income inequality in recent decades. We impute non-observed parental income from repeated cross-sections and estimate persistence in the range of 0.63 to 0.67 in Peru and 0.66 to 0.76 in Chile for household heads of the birth cohorts 1977-1990. The analysis of educational mobility covers household heads of birth cohorts from 1953 to 1990 and relies on retrospective information. We observe an increase in absolute mobility for younger generations in which we relate to the structural expansion of education that created room at the top. In relative terms, mobility patterns remain more stable – parental education is still a strong predictor for own educational achievement. The relationship is non-linear in both countries: persistence among very low and highly educated groups is strong while individuals with parents of average education levels are more mobile. Upward mobility is

stronger in Peru than in Chile: the chances to move from no formal education to higher education across one generation are 46 per cent the average in Peru compared to 20 per cent in Chile. The chances of persisting in the top across generations are also slightly higher in Peru with a factor of 3 times the average compared to 2.76 in Chile.

Gabriela Zapata is PhD researcher at the Global Development Institute of The University of Manchester. Her research is focused on inequality of opportunity and intergenerational mobility theories that try to understand the sources of inequality and its persistence through generations. Currently a Postgraduate Teaching Assistant in Economics at the University of Manchester. Gabriela has a Masters in Economics and Econometrics from the University of Bristol and a Masters in Applied Economics from Georgetown University/Universidad Alberto Hurtado. She also has a Bachelor degree in Economics at The Universidad de Santiago de Chile.

Jiexiu Chen (PhD student, The University College London)

Chinese rural students' social mobility experiences through higher education across four decades: from 1980s to 2010s

Since the Reform and Opening-up policy launched in 1978, China's social, economic and political environment have gone through significant changes. In terms of the higher education sector, the expansion of university admission and the ongoing development of privatization and marketization, together create an increasingly stratified higher education system in China. Meanwhile, the urban-rural divide keeps intensifying the unequal distribution of basic educational resources, and the meritocratic selection, is widely accepted as a fair way to allocate educational opportunities. This research has interviewed 50 rural students who graduated in 1980s, 1990s, 2000s and 2010s respectively. Through life history approach, this research intends to explore how social changes, higher education policy reforms have influenced rural students' social mobility experiences, and how rural students perceive the differences between urban and rural contexts (if there is any). The analyses revealed the development of marketization and meritocratic ideology in the educational sector have reinforced the existing inequality between urban and rural students, and the rural students' chances for upward social mobility have been increasingly squeezed. Moreover, urban-rural differences perceived by rural students appeared in various forms with distinctive and historical features, including interpersonal communication skills, and the ability to mobilise those capitals they can have access to. Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field, capital have been applied as the toolkits to conduct the analysis of rural students' experiences in the urban campus. In addition, for those rural students who are living in the urban context, efforts have been made to reshape the urban context with resistance. They actively maintain the rural guanxi and turn the guanxi into their own social capitals to acquire better education and working opportunities.

Jiexiu Chen is currently a PhD candidate at Institute of Education, University College London. Her research interests include educational inequality, social mobility, cross-cultural adaptation, higher education policy, globalisation and knowledge economy. Her Ph.D. research focuses on Chinese higher education reforms and rural students' social mobility experiences. Her previous research project

explored the cross-cultural adaptation experiences of international scholars working in Shanghai's top public research universities. The manuscript of this book has been scheduled to be published with Springer in 2019. She was awarded a full PhD scholarship by National Construction High-level University Postgraduate Project, China Scholarship Council.

Diego Angeles (PhD student, The University College London-Institute of Education)

Mexican first-generation students, tensions between social mobility and inequality

In Mexico, the participation in higher education (HE) of low-income students whose parents do not hold HE diplomas —also known as first-generation students (FGS)— has increased in the last decade due to the massification of the national educational system. However, their educational pathways and experiences remain shaped by deep socioeconomic inequalities. Research suggests, for instance, that FGS constantly deal with economic constraints that threaten the conclusion of their degree. Based on biographical and in-depth interviews, my presentation discusses the educational upward mobility of 25 FGS from ITGAM, a public university opened in 2009 on the outskirts of Mexico City. It primarily illuminates the ways in which this process was pursued by the participants, while also shedding light on some qualitative aspects of first-generation entry in the Mexican context.

In addition, while recognized as a salient facilitator of social mobility, educational mobility remains an underexplored and undertheorized process. In this sense and drawing upon Pierre Bourdieu's notion of reconversion strategies, I will argue that educational mobility is inscribed and shaped by processes of deep group (family) reconversion trajectories. That is, educational processes within social mobility should be seen through their precedents, not only for its outcomes, as the ways in which upward mobility occurs have roots in the past. In the Mexican context, this is observed in three instances in the 25 participants: recent migration from rural areas to urban settings, delay in marriage and childbearing compared to parental experiences, and occupational reconversion.

Diego Angeles is a PhD student at the Centre for Education and International Development, The University College London-Institute of Education. Originally from Mexico City, he studied his MA in Education and International Development in the same institution and his BA in International Relations in the National University of Mexico. His doctoral research explores low-income and first-generation students in higher education to understand processes of educational upward mobility and social stratification in higher education institutions.

Malik Fercovic (PhD student, The London School of Economics and Political Science)

Between success and dislocation. The troublesome identity among the upwardly mobile in Chilean society

My doctoral research analyses the identities of upwardly mobile people coming from working-class backgrounds and reaching high-status occupations after attending Chile's top universities. Chile is one of

the most unequal countries in the most unequal region of the world (OECD 2016). The existing literature suggests a strong trend towards social closure in the access to the top professional class (Torche 2005; Espinoza et al. 2013; Espinoza & Núñez 2014; Zimmerman 2016, 2018). Yet, beyond research looking at objective mobility patterns, there is striking absence of empirical studies specifically examining the identities of the upwardly mobile reaching the most prestigious and highest paid professions in Chile: lawyers, medical doctors and engineers. My research fills this gap in the available research. Drawing on an extensive qualitative fieldwork (60 interviews conducted with long-range socially mobile men and women in these three high-status occupations), my findings show the deep sense of dislocation my informants experience along their upward trajectories, as well as the persistent forms of discrimination and barriers they face at elite circles. But my data also reveals the upwardly mobile confront a paradoxical situation. They are aware they are the embodiment of 'success' according to current meritocratic standards prevailing in contemporary Chilean society. Yet they do not have a firm sense of collective and personal belonging, feeling 'at the margins', 'in the periphery', 'in a limbo' in Chilean society. I make sense of these troublesome identities using Bourdieu's notions of habitus and field together with Lamont's concepts of cultural repertoires and groupness.

Malik Fercovic is a third-year PhD student in the LSE Department of Sociology. He is also part of the Leverhulme Programme (2016/2017 cohort) at the LSE International Inequalities Institute and the NYLON project. His research investigates the experience of upward social mobility in contemporary Chilean society. Malik holds a MSc in Governance of Risks and Resources from Heidelberg University, and a BA in Sociology from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. Malik's wider academic interests are in interdisciplinary approaches to social mobility and inequality and cultural sociology.



Other information

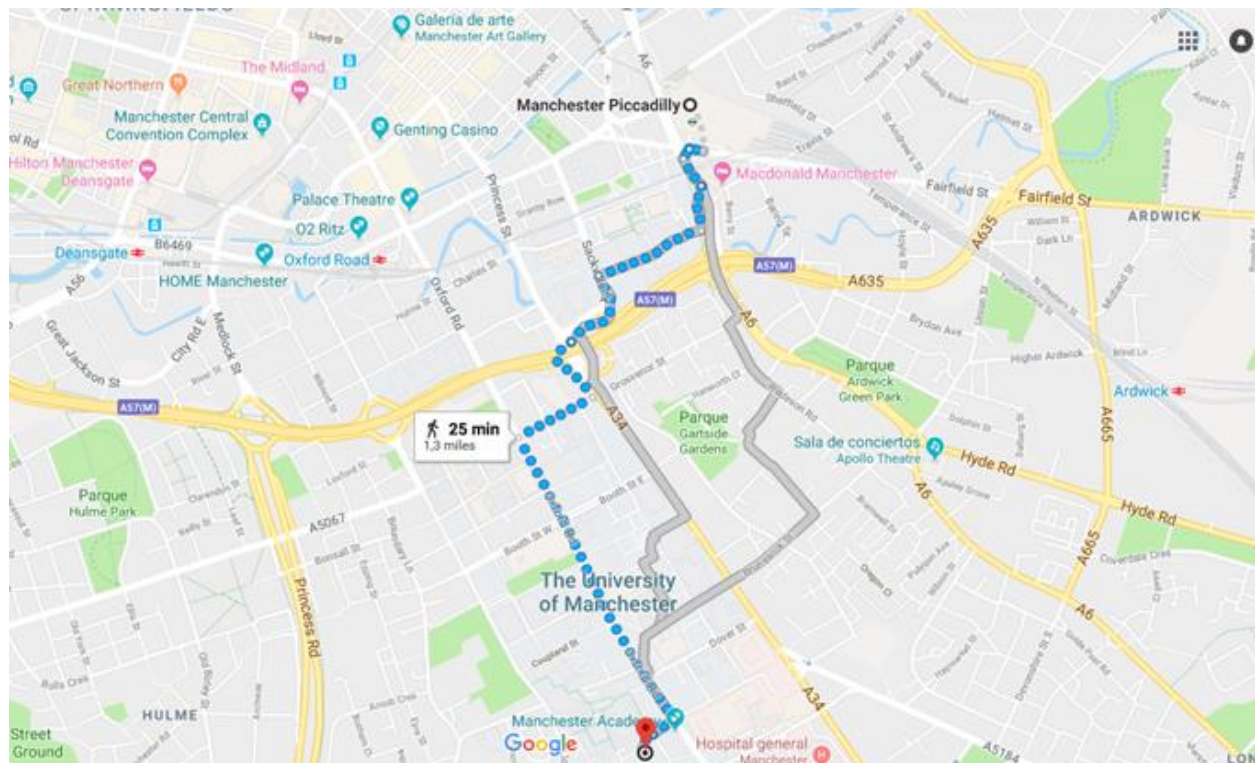
The venue for our conference is the Conference Room, atrium and dining room at the Graduate School, Ellen Wilkinson Building, University of Manchester. Link to interactive CAMPUS MAP: <https://www.manchester.ac.uk/discover/maps/interactive-map/?id=73>

Travelling to the venue

By Bus: If you are coming from Piccadilly Train Station you can take bus 147 – map and timetable here. You can also walk to the main bus station Piccadilly gardens (red star on the map) and take buses 15, 18, 42, 111, or 143 to the (yellow star on map).

By Taxi: Taxis from Piccadilly Train Station or the National Express Terminal to the University cost around £5-6.

Bicycle or walking: From Picadilly Station it is approximately 2 km to Ellen Wilkinson (see route below).



We would like to thank artsmethods@manchester, the DA of Sociology, University of Manchester, Dr Wendy Bottero, Dr Sophie Woodward and Professor Graeme Kirkpatrick for their support in organization of the seminar. We would also like to thank our special guests Professor Nicola Ingram and Dr Sam Friedman, as well as all our presenters and attendees.

Organising Committee:

Denisse Sepúlveda: denisse.sepulveda@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk; denissesep@u.uchile.cl

Andrea Lizama: andrea.lizamaloyola@manchester.ac.uk

Alexandrina Vanke: a.vanke@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk
