

# Gender and ethnic patterns of publication in top sociology journals

(Success stories only!)

Aliakbar  
Akbaritabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

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Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

# Introduction

# Main question of the study

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

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Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

- ▶ Can we find *gendered* and *ethnicized* publication patterns in **top sociology journals**?
- ▶ If yes, are these “*biases*” due to social mechanisms or scientific excellence?
- ▶ A collaboration with **Michèle Lamont**, Harvard university
- ▶ Replicating some of the main results of a research from **Teele and Thelen (2017)** on Political Sciences [see here](#)

# Introduction

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

- ▶ Publications, key for *tenure* and *promotion* (Leahy, Keith, and Crockett 2010; Long 1992; Grant and Ward 1991)
- ▶ Era of “**publish or perish**” & hyper-competition
- ▶ **Funding** agencies heavily rely on bibliometric indicators (i.e., number of publications, citations)(Edwards and Roy 2017; Nederhof 2006)
- ▶ Understanding publication patterns in prestigious journals can help reveal **possible distortions in academic credit allocation**
- ▶ Publication patterns over the **last 70 years** from the American Sociological Review (**ASR**) and American Journal of Sociology (**AJS**), the two most *prominent journals in sociology*

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Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

# Teele and Thelen (2017)

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

- ▶ Women are disproportionately under-published in top **political science** journals
- ▶ Largest percentage of publications were dominated by **all-male teams**,
- ▶ They suggested that this could be due to a *self-selection process*
- ▶ Women may be attracted more by **qualitative** research
- ▶ Also **structural discrimination** in higher education
- ▶ These journals are predominantly *quantitative*
- ▶ They would therefore submit less to these top journals
- ▶ Other research on AJS/ASR (e.g., Moody (2005);  
Moody (2004); Light (2013))

# Gender differences in academic success

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

- ▶ Despite the rise of women in science (Cole and Zuckerman 1984; Cole and Zuckerman 1987; Young 1995)
- ▶ Women are penalized especially in **STEM** research (Cain and Leahey 2014; Lomperis 1990; Kahn 1993; Sheltzer and Smith 2014)
- ▶ Are **paid less** (Prpić 2002)
- ▶ Are preferably hired in **lower level academic positions** and in **less prestigious institutes** (Lomperis 1990; Heijstra, Bjarnason, and Rafnsdóttir 2015)
- ▶ They **publish fewer papers** and are cited less (e.g., Xie and Shauman (1998); Young (1995); Maliniak, Powers, and Walter (2013))

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Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

# Gender differences in scientific collaborations

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

- ▶ Women tend to establish **more homogeneous** and **smaller collaboration networks** (Grant and Ward 1991; Renzulli, Aldrich, and Moody 2000)
- ▶ This would decrease their chance to be part of the *core network of star scientists* (Moody 2004)
- ▶ They prefer **more diversified** research programs
- ▶ Their research is **less specialized**, penalizing their visibility and success (Leahy 2006; Leahy 2007)
- ▶ This could decrease their access to relevant resources for funding and promotion (Xie and Shauman 1998; Weisshaar 2017)
- ▶ Makes their academic career less stable or rewarding (Hancock and Baum 2010; Preston 1994)
- ▶ There is distortion in hiring committees due to family obligations (partner's job) (Rivera 2017)

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Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

# Internalized gender patterns!

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

- ▶ Gendered patterns could be internalized by women (e.g., MacPhee, Farro, and Canetto (2013); Brink and Benschop (2014))
- ▶ Even when women are motivated more to pursue an academic career, they have lower expectations of success (Prpić 2002; Fox and Stephan 2001; Leslie et al. 2015)
- ▶ Confirmed also by **lab experiment**, articles published by women receive lower evaluations even by **female evaluators** (Krawczyk and Smyk 2016).
- ▶ While; more gender, ethnically or culturally diverse teams perform better (Nielsen et al. 2017)

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Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

# Why Sociology?

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

- ▶ Previous research suggests it is probably **less gender biased** than other disciplines, due to more women graduates (Lutter and Schröder 2016)
- ▶ Looking at the top, given that competitive pressure for publication is higher, could reveal general trends in hyper-competitive science today.
- ▶ Co-existence of **quantitative** and **qualitative** sub-communities

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

## Data & Method

# Dataset

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

- ▶ All AJS and ASR publications (extracted from **Scopus** on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2017)
- ▶ **Fields:** article title, authors' names and affiliation, and number of citations received.

Journal name	# papers	Sample Starts	Sample Ends
American Journal of Sociology	1153	1946	2016
American Sociological Review	1440	1965	2016
Total number of papers	2593	-	-

# Gender imputation!

- ▶ Used authors' **first names**
- ▶ Send automatic requests with R scripts to a database of numerous names extracted from social media profiles (Wais 2016)
- ▶ Simultaneously a research assistant (RA) **hand-coded author gender**
- ▶ Any conflicting attribution case, the RA researched the online profile of authors, whenever available.
- ▶ Cases of differences (*41 out of 2,897 authors*), used the hand-coded gender
- ▶ Missing data in the hand-coded procedure (*22 out of 2,897 authors*), used the automatic gender extracted from API
- ▶ Only 17 out of 2,897 missing genders (0.58%)

# Ethnicity imputation!

- ▶ Used another API, based on **US census data** (Khanna, Imai, and Jin 2017)
- ▶ **Last names** of authors, provides a probability distribution of names in: *white, black, Hispanic, Asian* and *other*
- ▶ In parallel, our RA checked each of the 2897 authors' online profiles
- ▶ A photograph of the author exist, **hand-coded the ethnicity**
- ▶ Cases of differences between the two procedures (*132 out of 2,897 authors*), used the hand-coded category
- ▶ Cases of missing data in our hand-coded procedure (*426 out of 2,897 authors*), used the automatic ethnicity extracted from API
- ▶ We ended up without any missing ethnicity

# Gender & Ethnic composition of each paper

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

- ▶ Suggested by Young (1995), Maliniak et al. (2013) and Teele & Thelen (2017)
- ▶ Coded any article as:
  - ▶ ***Solo male, Solo female, All male team, All female team, and Cross gender collaboration***
  - ▶ ***Solo white, Solo non-white, All white team, All non-white team, and Cross ethnic collaboration***

# Gender and Ethnic composition of community

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

- ▶ American Sociological Association (hereafter **ASA**) annual membership as a proxy of the gender and ethnicity composition
- ▶ ASA membership data were not available for some years (i.e., 1982-1998, and 2000)
- ▶ So, in comparative results (ASA and our authors), we included only 18 years (1982, 1999, 2001-2016) and excluded a sub-set to match those years

# Authors CV and background information

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

- ▶ Checked the **CV** and online information of each author
- ▶ Identified *institution that awarded PhD*
- ▶ Current gender and ethnicity composition of the first **12 top ranked Ivy-League sociology departments** in the Shanghai ranking
- ▶ From their official websites (“Shanghai Global Ranking of Academic Subjects: Sociology” 2017)
- ▶ **Goal:** Whether women and minorities were penalized even when they could potentially benefit from an *Ivy-League effect*.

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

# Results

# Results

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

- ▶ Women were **over-represented** among ASA members (53%)
- ▶ Gender balance among authors in AJS and ASR approximated a 70(men)/30(women) ratio.
- ▶ Since 2000 the gender gap has been reducing, even with high instability, it would take more than 10 years to reach a fair gender balance (if perhaps unstable) at the current rate.

# Women: AJS & ASR authors vs. ASA members

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

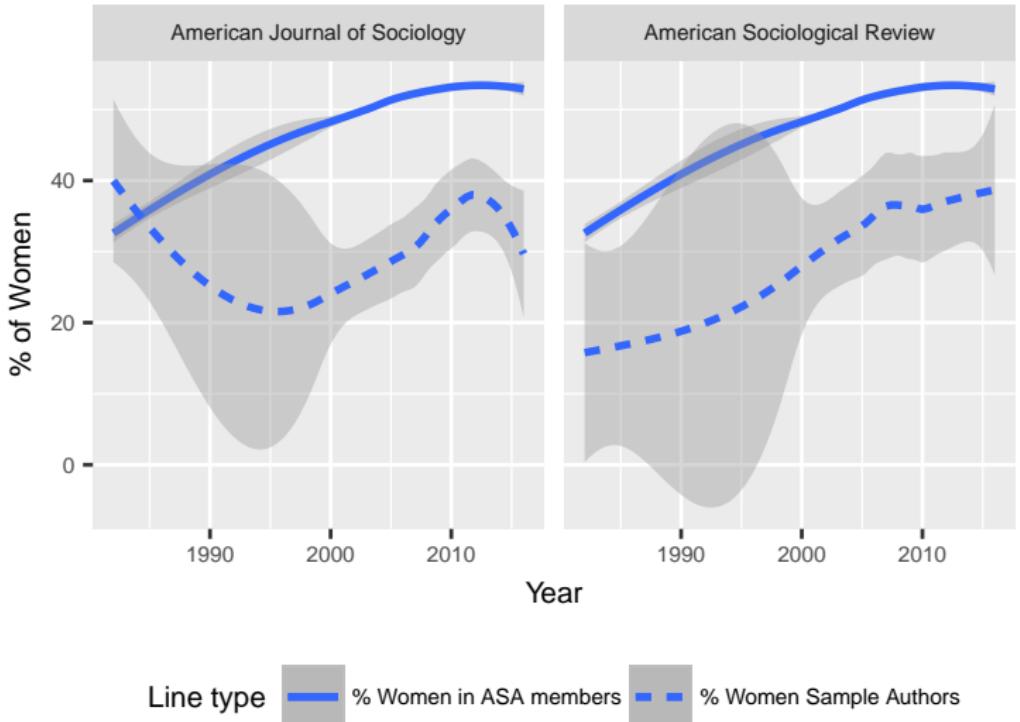
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Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions



# Results

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

- ▶ Number of authors has **increased** over time (e.g., Wuchty, Jones, and Uzzi 2007)
- ▶ Number of women who published in AJS and ASR tended to **increase less than men**

# Gender trend of authorship in AJS and ASR

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patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

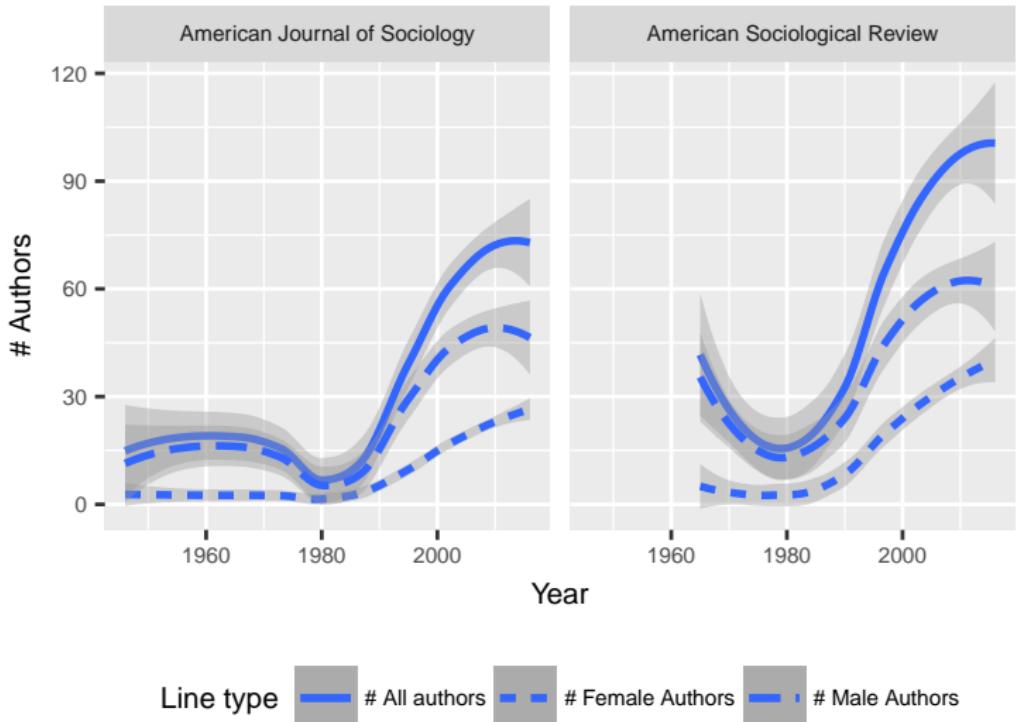
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Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions



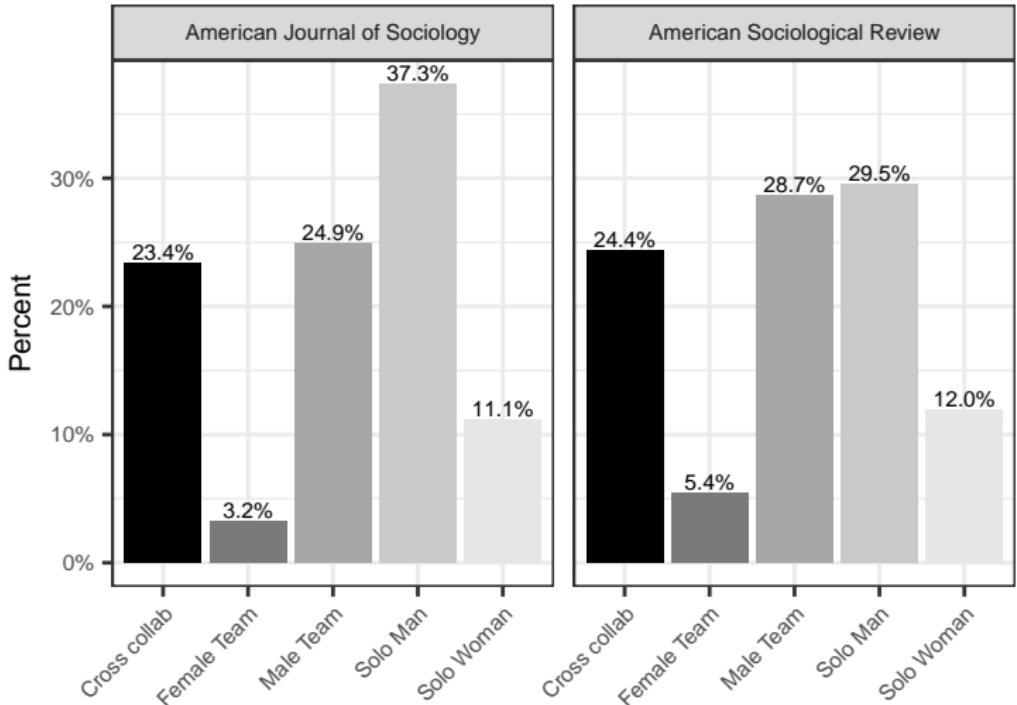
# Co-authorship patterns

- ▶ **84%** of articles in AJS and ASR had **at least one** (or more) *male* author(s)
- ▶ Only **40%** had at least one (or more) *female* author(s)
- ▶ Picture approximates a 70/30 ratio, which is slightly better than what suggested by Young (1995)'s study in political sciences
- ▶ But similar to what found by Teele and Thelen (2017)
- ▶ It seems that fields such as sociology and political sciences do not dramatically differ in terms of gender patterns.

Journal Name	# All Papers	# All Authors	# Men	% Men	# Women	% Women
AJS	1153	2023	1469	72.61	547	27.04
ASR	1440	2686	1860	69.25	813	30.27
Total number	2593	4709	3329	-	1360	-

# Gender co-authorship in AJS and ASR

- ▶ Only **11%**, solo female vs. **37%** in AJS and **29.6%** in ASR of solo male
- ▶ Only **5.4%** in ASR and **3.2%** in AJS by all-female teams



Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

# Cross-gender co-authorship increased!

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

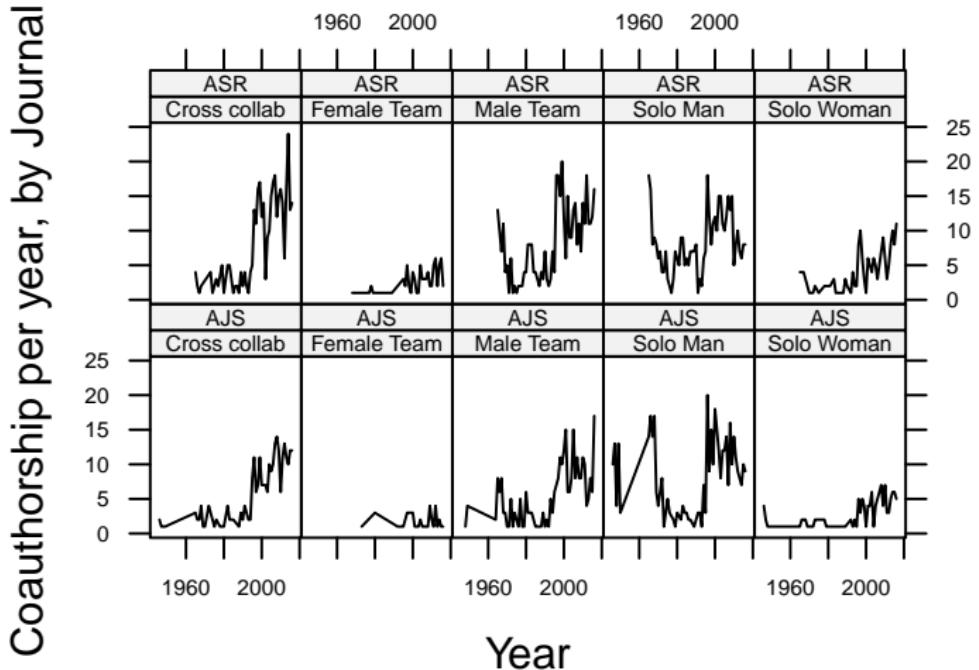
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Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

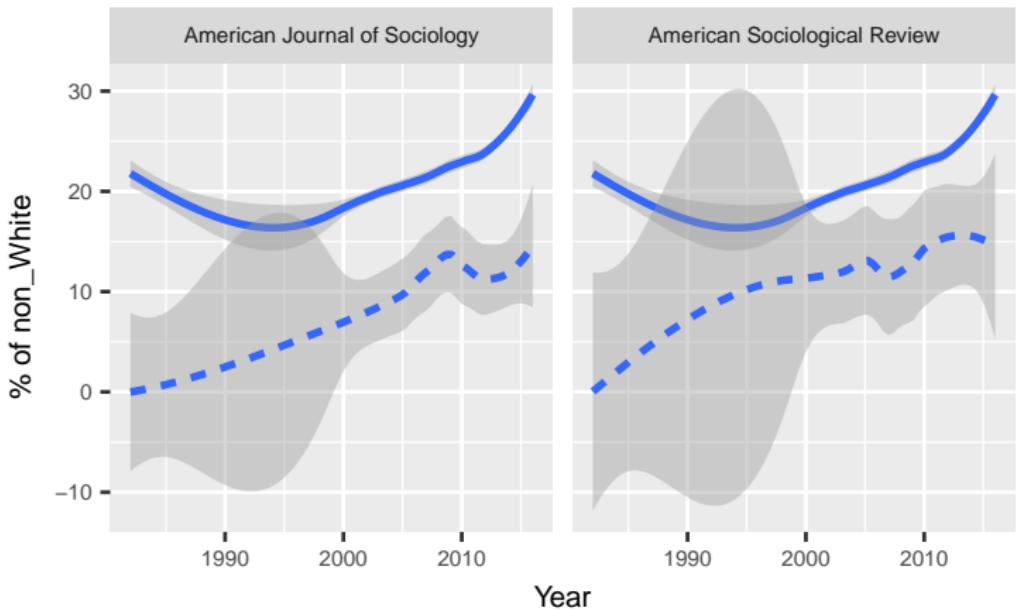
Results

Conclusions



# Non-white: AJS & ASR authors vs. ASA members

- ▶ Number of non-white authors **has increased**, but less pronounced than non-white members in ASA (a maximum 30% of members)
- ▶ The ratio was below 20% in AJS and below 25% in ASR.



Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

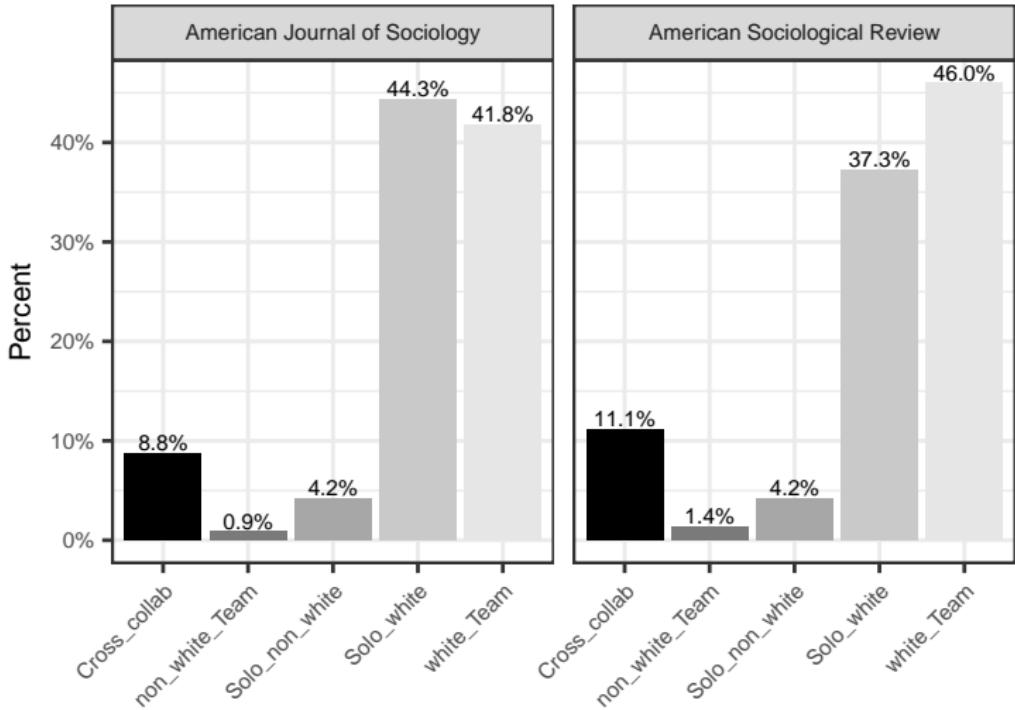
Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

# Ethnic co-authorship in AJS and ASR

- More than **80%** authored exclusively by white authors, alone or by all-white co-authors
- Only **1%** published by a team of *non-white* co-authors



Introduction

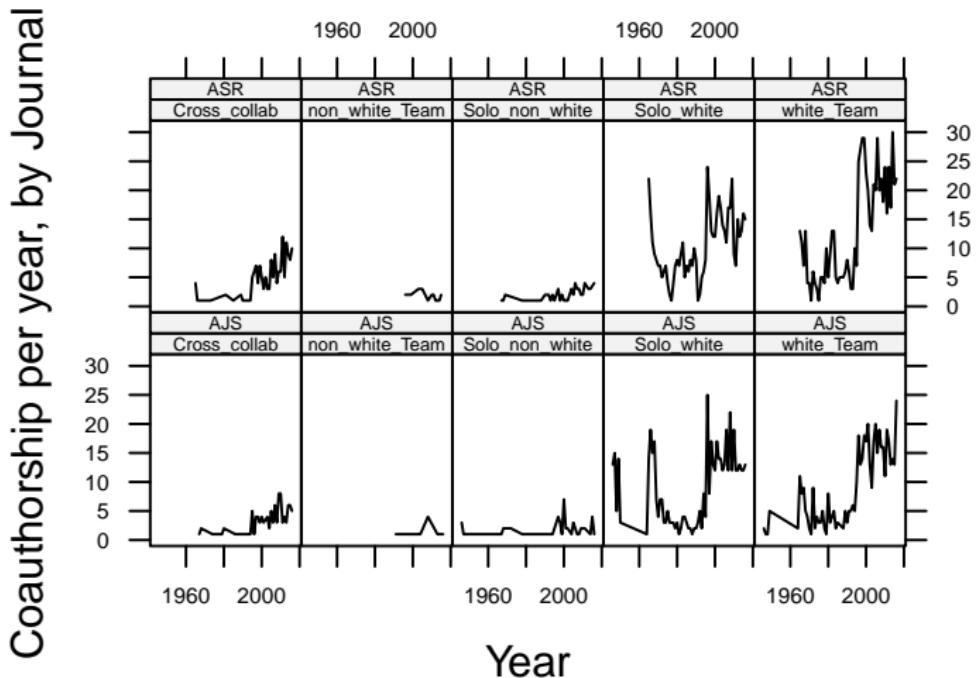
Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

# Ethnic co-authorship dynamics in AJS and ASR

- ▶ Ethnic gap in the academic élite seems to persist for a long time



Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

# American vs. non-American in AJS and ASR

- ▶ **80%** solo-American or teams of American authors
- ▶ Penalties are even probably higher against non-white, female scholars *outside the U.S.*

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

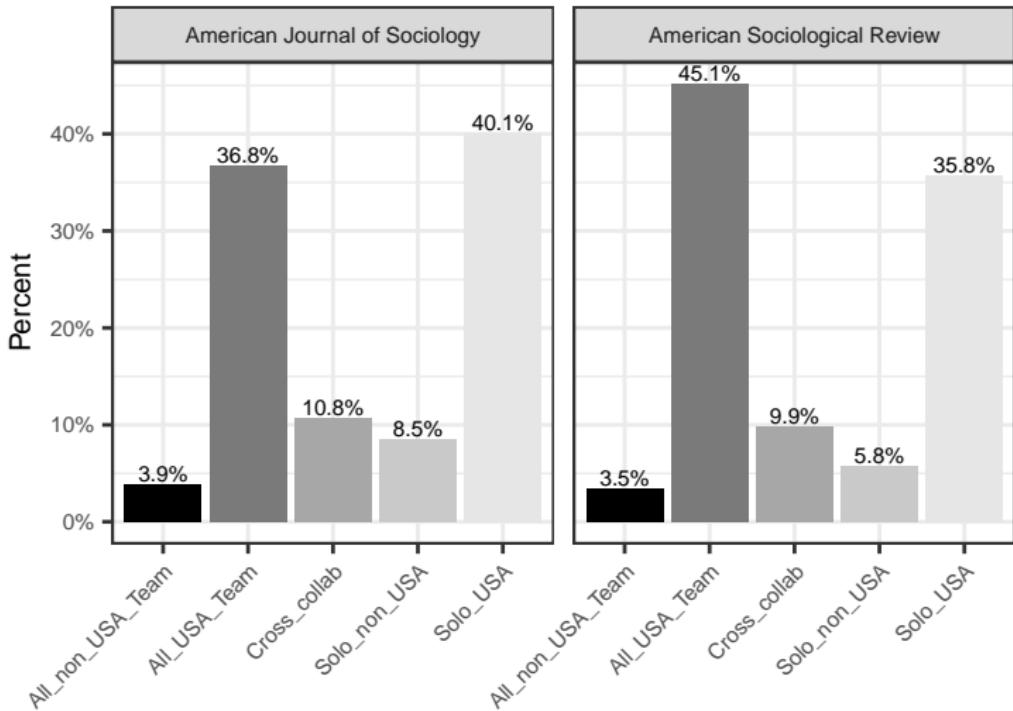
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Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions



# Gender co-authorship dynamics between Ivy and non Ivy-League

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

- ▶ Women had only a **21.5%** premium in terms of higher probability of publishing in AJS and ASR when they were a member of a *prestigious sociology department*,
- ▶ Against a **62%** premium for men
- ▶ Cross-gender collaboration was more frequent among members of *less prestigious departments* (20.8% vs. 16.5%)
- ▶ All-female teams, higher among **non-Ivy-League** (4.5% vs. 2.7%)

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

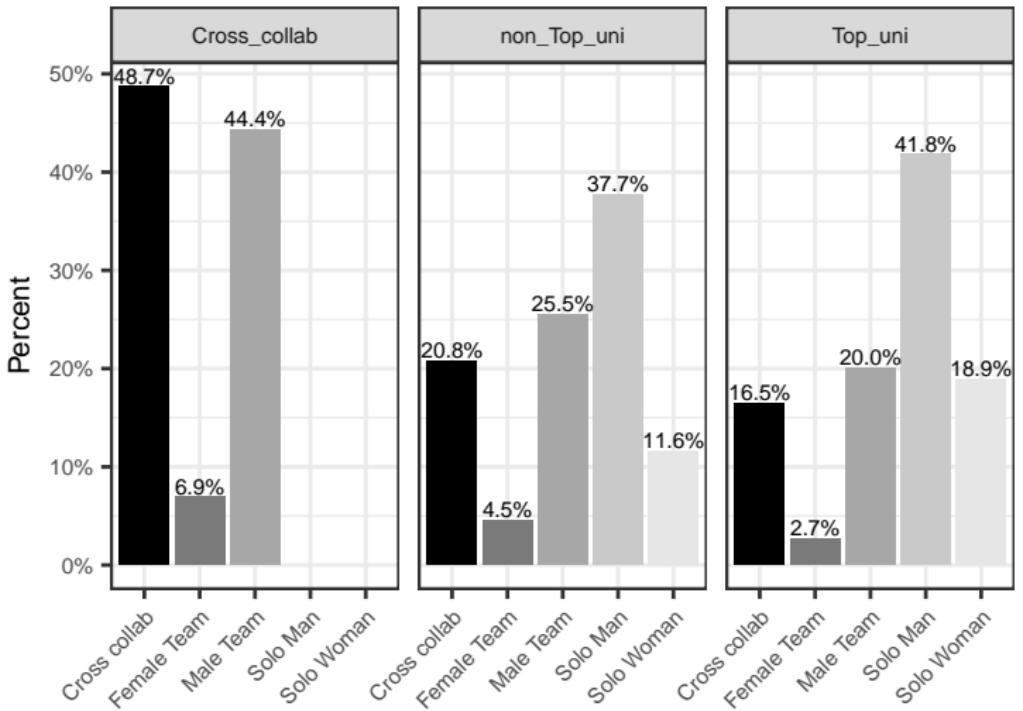
Aliakbar  
Akbaritabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions



# Ethnic co-authorship dynamics between Ivy and non Ivy-League

Gender and ethnic patterns of publication in top sociology journals

Aliakbar Akbaritabar (Ali),  
Flaminio Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

- ▶ **7.5%** solo non-white authors vs. 3.8%, and 1.4% non-white teams vs. 0.6% in **non-Ivy-League**
- ▶ Collaboration between white and non-white authors, more frequent in Ivy-League
- ▶ **75.9%** of all collaborations between Ivy and non-Ivy-League was among all-white teams

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

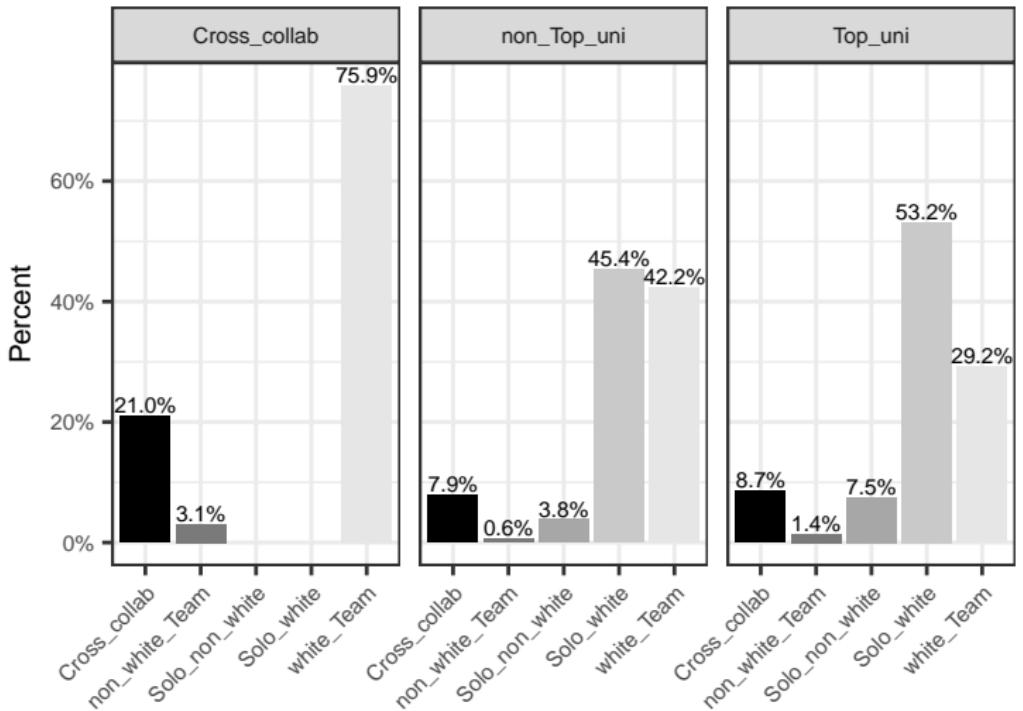
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Akbaritabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions



# Gender patterns of hiring in Ivy-League sociology departments

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

- ▶ These departments hired men dis-proportionally
- ▶ Exception of **New York University** (46.88% of female among faculty members)
- ▶ Similar to what Sheltzer and Smith (2014) found in the life sciences

# Gender and ethnic patterns of publication in top sociology journals

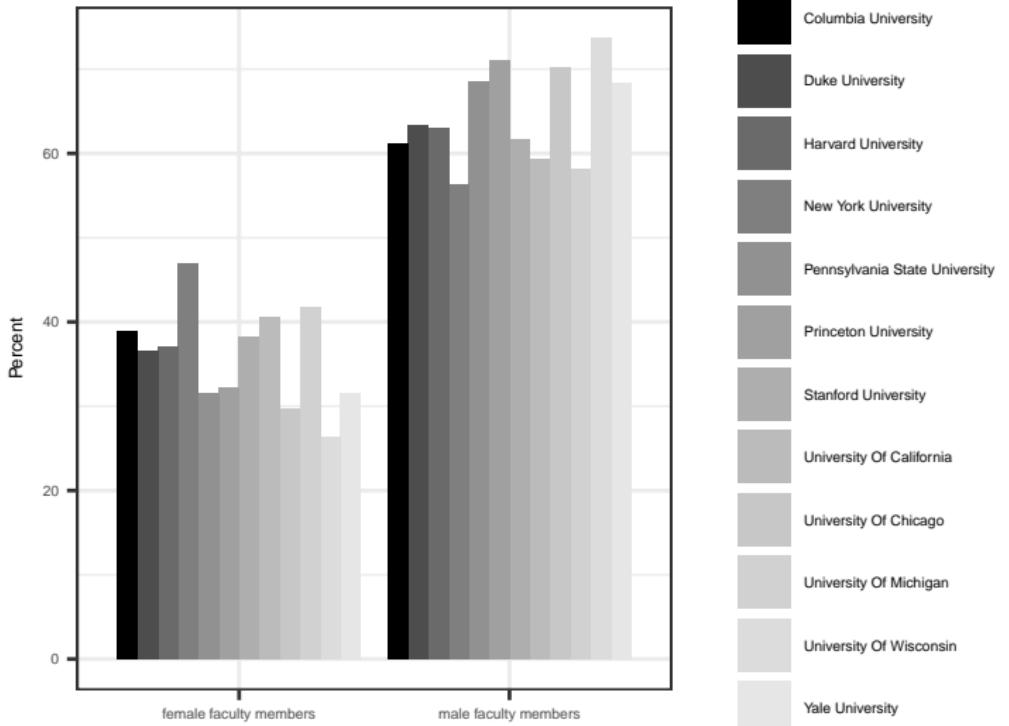
Aliakbar  
Akbaritabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

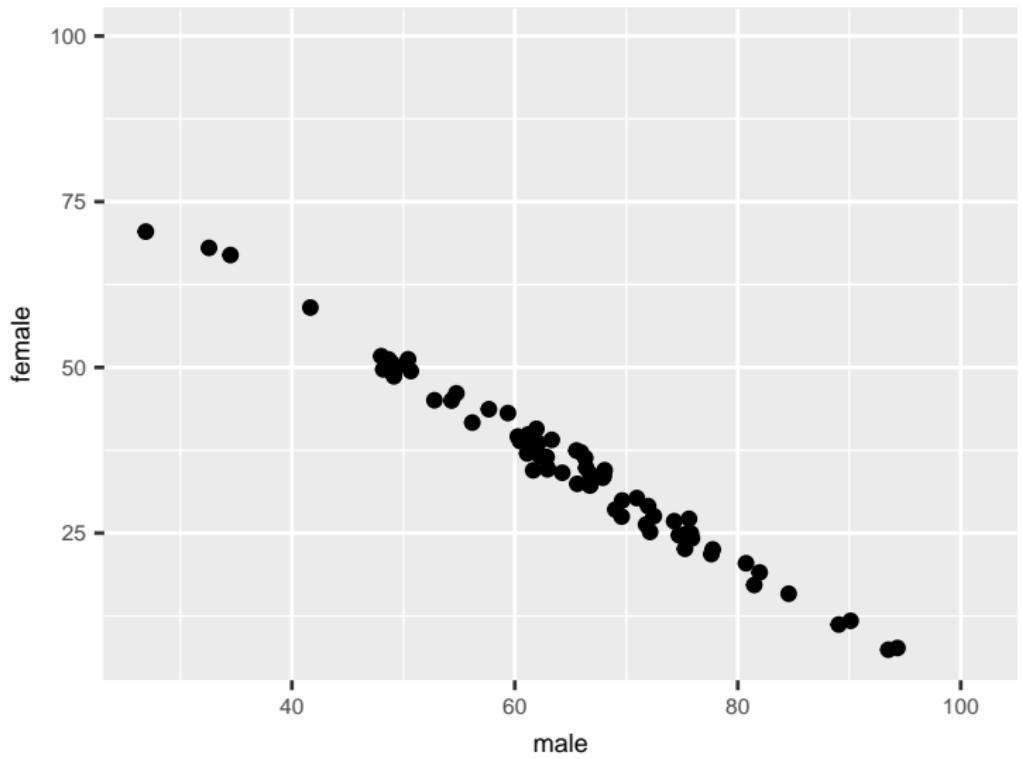
Results

Conclusions



# Gender patterns of publication in top-100 universities

- ▶ Hiring and academic success are **significantly gendered**



Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

# Ethnic patterns of hiring in Ivy-League sociology departments

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

- ▶ Ethnic minorities are **penalized in hiring** in Ivy-League sociology departments
- ▶ More favorable ethnic balance of 30 (non-white)/70 (white) balance reached by **Harvard University**
- ▶ Hiring decisions in top institutes could reflect or amplify gender and ethnic patterns that originate from bias in *education, funding and publication* (Weisshaar 2017)

## Gender and ethnic patterns of publication in top sociology journals

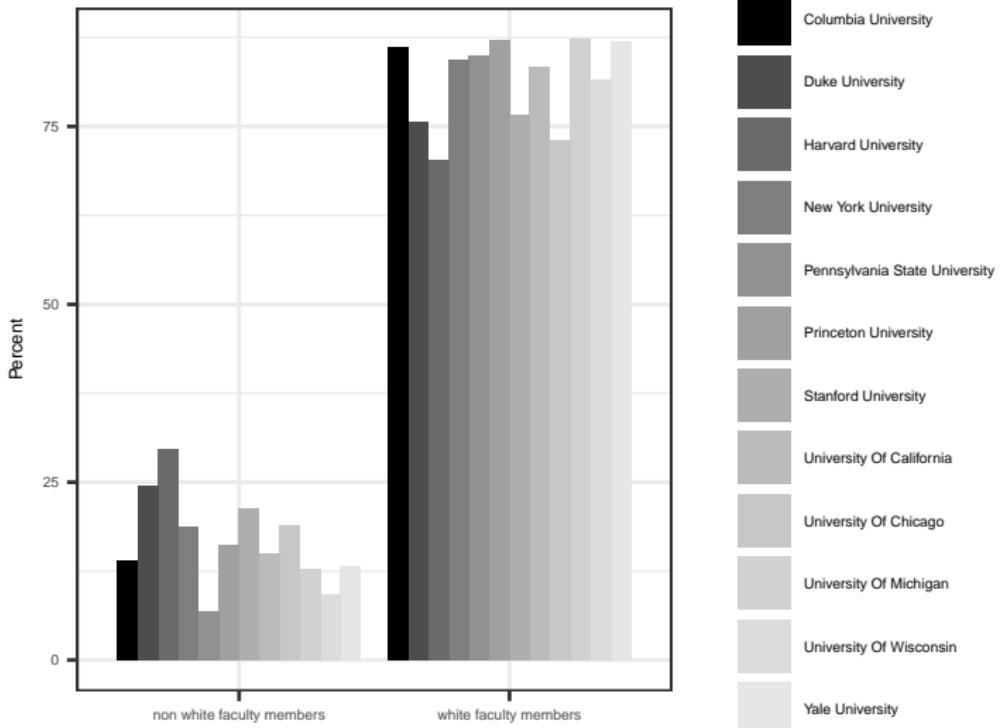
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Akbaritabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions



# Hierarchical linear model confirming descriptive trends

- ▶ Following: Snijders and Bosker (1999), Faraway (2005), Zuur et al. (2009)
- ▶ Check effect of Ivy-League departments by **embedding each scientist in a nested structure**
- ▶ Included the institution in which the scientist originally received his/her PhD
- ▶ His/her latest academic affiliation (Akbaritabar, Casnici, and Squazzoni 2017)
- ▶ Checked whether the gender and ethnicity penalties were **less pronounced over the last decades** (pre-post 2000)
- ▶ Gender and ethnicity had a **positive impact** on the probability of publishing in AJS and ASR
- ▶ Since after 2000, ethnic penalty was less statistically relevant
- ▶ With the exception of *Hispanic* who were more successful before 2000

# Comparative models of number of publications

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaritabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

	Research products as dependent variables		
	Total Publications	Publications before 2000	Publications after 2000
(1)	(2)	(3)	
Gender Male	0.021*** (0.004)	0.192*** (0.064)	0.260*** (0.059)
Ethnicity Black	-0.006 (0.017)	0.108 (0.285)	-0.209 (0.222)
Ethnicity Hispanic	0.009 (0.021)	0.563* (0.325)	-0.086 (0.276)
Ethnicity White	0.020*** (0.007)	0.245** (0.124)	0.174* (0.091)
Constant	0.014 (0.012)	1.051*** (0.151)	1.250*** (0.120)
Observations	2,716	1,293	1,708
Log Likelihood	2,212.361	-1,842.347	-2,706.775
Akaike Inf. Crit.	-4,408.723	3,700.694	5,429.549
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	-4,361.468	3,742.012	5,473.094

Note:

\* p<0.1; \*\* p<0.05; \*\*\* p<0.01

# Is it a matter of research subjects? (STM) 1/2

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaritabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Topic Modeling with Python

CONTINUUM  
LDA vs LDA

ch\_dolg chdolg

Machine Learning

Unsupervised learning

no labels

Supervised learning

labels

clustering

categorical

quantitative

Latent variables/structure

Latent Dirichlet Allocation

LDA: Linear Discriminant Analysis

K-means  
Hierarchical clustering  
Topic modeling

Dimensionality reduction  
Topic modeling

Classification

Logistic regression  
SVM  
Decision trees  
k-NN

Regression

Linear regression

PY TEXAS

13:53 / 50:13

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

# Is it a matter of research subjects? (STM) 2/2

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaritabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Topic Modeling with Python

CONTINUUM  
Parameters and variables

ch\_dolg chdolg

M Documents  
N Words  
collection of text documents

alpha beta Concentration parameters

K Topics  
Topic cluster of words  
wordtokens  
psi frequency of words

Document  
phi distribution of topics

PY TEXAS

16.46 / 50.13

The video player shows a presentation slide titled "Parameters and variables" from a conference. The slide illustrates the Topic Modeling process. On the left, a woman is speaking at a podium. The main part of the slide contains a flowchart and text labels. At the top right are two Twitter handles: "ch\_dolg" and "chdolg". The flowchart starts with "M Documents" and "N Words" leading to a central box labeled "collection of text documents". This leads to "alpha" and "beta" (Concentration parameters). From there, arrows point to "K Topics" (represented by circles with dots) and "Document". "K Topics" is associated with "Topic", "cluster of words", "wordtokens", and "psi" (frequency of words). "Document" is associated with "phi" (distribution of topics). A legend at the bottom identifies symbols: a red square for "M", a blue square for "N", a green square for "alpha", a blue square for "beta", a red circle for "K", a purple circle for "Topic", a red bar chart for "psi", and a green bar chart for "phi". The video player interface includes a progress bar at 16.46 / 50.13 and standard video controls.

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

# Results of STM (high prob)

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Topic	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	V7
1	racial	black	ethnic	segregation	white	race	population
2	class	crime	law	legal	rights	race	cultural
3	organizational	work	practices	organization	organizations	management	process
4	public	religious	social	violence	community	religion	school
5	human	social	article	states	united	male	female
6	family	effects	educational	education	life	data	children
7	gender	labor	market	women	employment	men	womens
8	economic	income	inequality	countries	growth	welfare	development
9	political	social	state	movement	organizations	politics	movements
10	social	network	networks	cultural	theory	status	model

# Results of STM (frex, low prob)

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Topic	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	V7
1	ethnic	segregation	whites	residential	immigrants	hispanic	assimilation
2	homicide	offenders	classification	interviewers	law	tolerance	citizenship
3	accountability	lawyers	leaders	conversation	rational	cohesion	formalization
4	religious	church	pluralism	schools	religiosity	conservative	violence
5	delinquency	socioeconomics	disorders	male	human	govt	juvenile
6	cohort	cohorts	adulthood	childhood	children	birth	college
7	jobs	wage	wages	career	workers	markets	market
8	welfare	foreign	poverty	investment	growth	economic	countries
9	movements	protest	mobilization	polity	voting	movement	protests
10	homophily	network	networks	trust	exchange	generalized	scientific

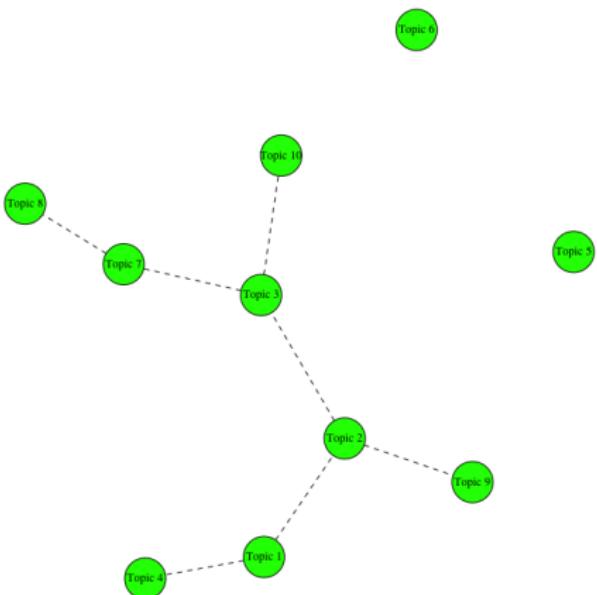
Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

### Correlations between Topics found in STM



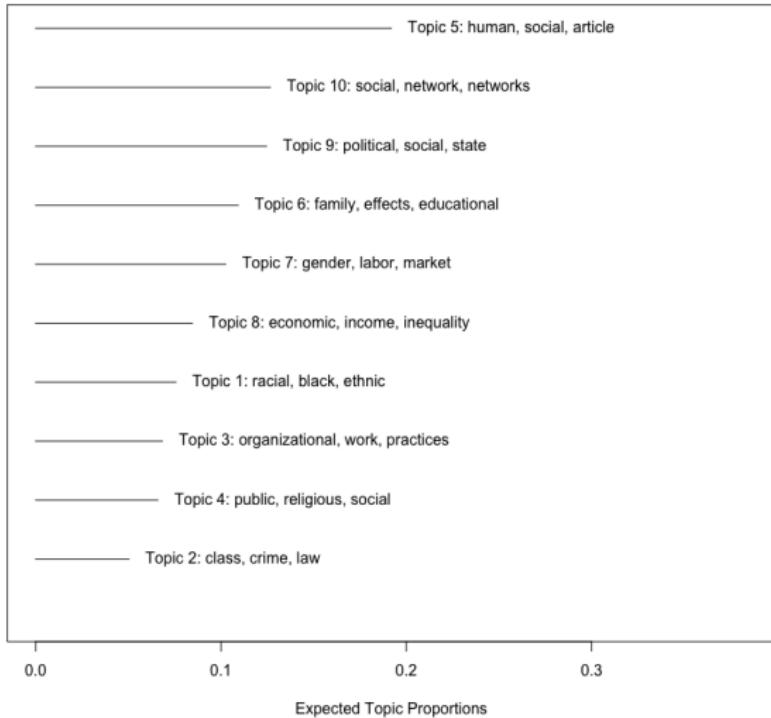
Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

### Top Topics



## Gender and ethnic patterns of publication in top sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaritabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

### Topic 10: close focus on Networks and Exchange theory

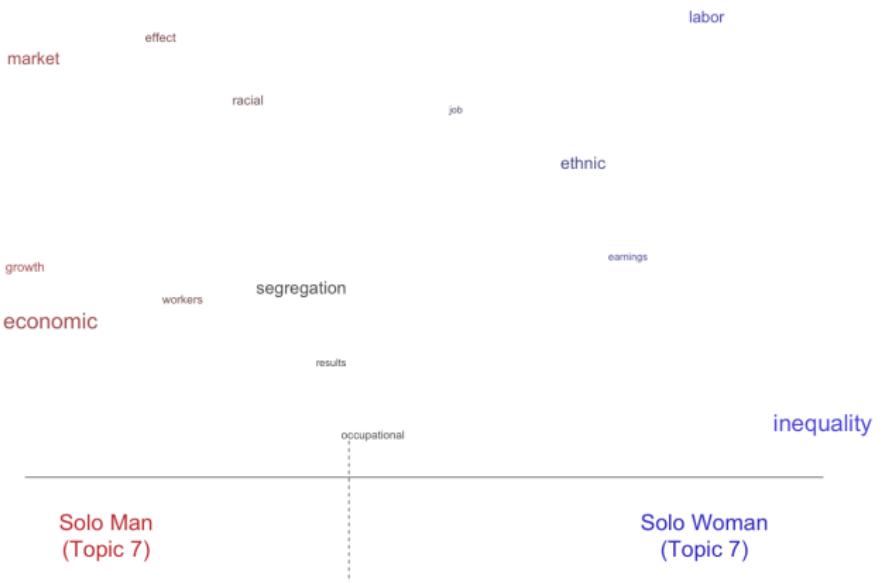


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American Journal of Sociology  
(Topic 10)

American Sociological Review  
(Topic 10)

# Gender and ethnic patterns of publication in top sociology journals



Aliakbar  
Akbaritabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

## Gender and ethnic patterns of publication in top sociology journals

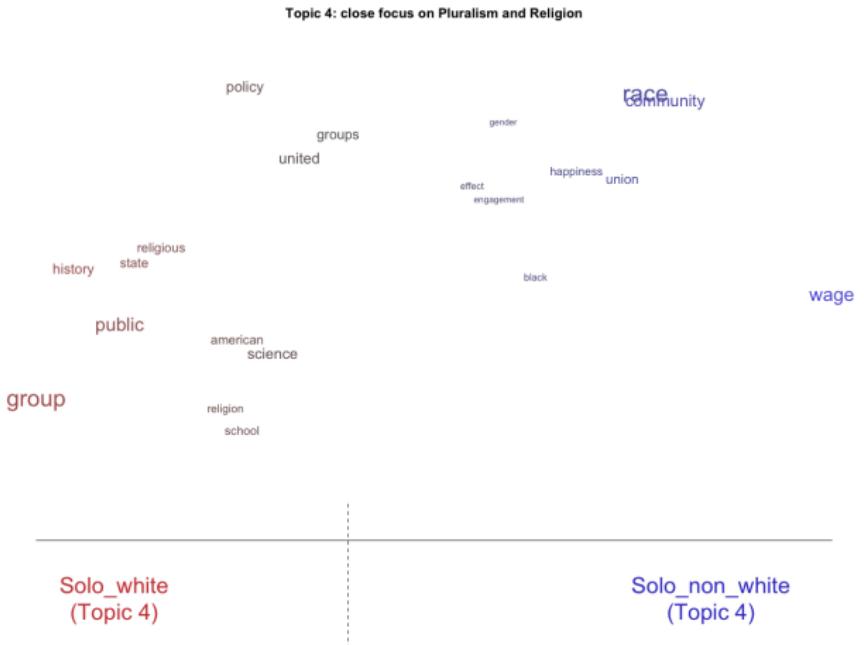
Aliakbar  
Akbaritabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions



Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

# Conclusions

# Conclusions and discussion

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

- ▶ Prestigious journals especially **favor white male authors** and their exclusive co-authorship ties
- ▶ Situation has improved since 2000, but, these gender and ethnicity penalties seem to have persisted even after considering the influence of academic affiliation
- ▶ The 'Ivy-League' effect greatly **benefits only white male authors**
- ▶ Conventional standard of collaboration is the solo-male author or all-male teams, whereas women are less involved in co-authorships (Renzulli, Aldrich, and Moody 2000; Moody 2004).
- ▶ Top journals in sociology seem more favorable to cross-gender collaborations than political sciences journals.

Aliakbar  
Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

# Conclusions

- ▶ Estimating publication bias and its sources would require **more in-depth data** and analysis on **journal submissions**, referees and editors (Østby et al. 2013; Siler and Strang 2014)
- ▶ It is difficult to understand whether these outcomes incorporate **endogenous self-selection bias** tracing back to education, type of research, funding and career (e.g., González-Álvarez and Cervera-Crespo (2017); Hancock and Baum (2010); Sheltzer and Smith (2014)).
- ▶ Examining these differences is also key to discuss the role of diversity in academia
- ▶ **Encouraging diversity is beneficial** to avoid group thinking and mainstream attitudes (Nielsen et al. 2017), detrimental especially in periods of uncertainty as they reduce epistemological and methodological pluralism
- ▶ These patterns could be less pronounced in average and less competitive journals

## Limitations (Success stories only!)

- ▶ Our data **do not cover** the entirety of all of the academic domain, from *education to funding and promotion*
- ▶ Looking only at publications does not help to understand even the gate-keeping role of journal editors, editorial boards and referees
- ▶ Our results cannot help understand editorial measures that might counterbalance these patterns
- ▶ A more in-depth attention to *topics, methods* and *fields* could help reveal vicious circles and self-reinforcing distortions in intellectual capital investment, which could point to education and training more than publications (Kahn 1993)
- ▶ Women and ethnic minorities may have fewer chances to be published in these top journals because they **do not perform** the type of research that these journals prefer (Teele and Thelen 2017)

# Questions?!

Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaratabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

- ▶ Questions, suggestions and comments are very much welcome!

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions

**Thanks a lot for your attention**

**I will be happy to hear your comments/suggestions**

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Gender and ethnic  
patterns of  
publication in top  
sociology journals

Aliakbar  
Akbaritabar (Ali),  
Flaminio  
Squazzoni

Introduction

Data & Method

Results

Conclusions