

Shay O'Brien

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APPOINTMENTS

Postdoctoral Scholar, Harvard University 2023-2025
Stone Program in Wealth Distribution, Inequality, and Social Policy

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Sociology, Princeton University 2023
Dissertation: Dallas: Kinship, Mobility, and Inheritance in an Elite Population, 1895-1945
Committee: Paul Starr (chair), Shamus Khan, Ellis Monk, and Viviana Zelizer

M.A. Sociology, Princeton University 2019
Exams: Elites (Paul Starr), Race and Ethnicity (Ellis Monk), and Economic Sociology (Viviana Zelizer)

B.A. Anthropology with Honors, Brown University 2012
Best Honors Thesis in Anthropology
Highest Achievement in Linguistic Anthropology

PUBLICATIONS

O'Brien, Shay. 2024. ["The Family Web: Multigenerational Class Persistence in Elite Populations."](#) *Socio-Economic Review* 20(1):1-27.

- 2022 Winner, Robert D. Mare Graduate Student Paper Award from the ASA Inequality, Poverty, and Mobility Section
- 2022 Co-Winner, Graduate Student Paper Award from the ASA Family Section

CONDITIONAL ACCEPT

O'Brien, Shay. "The Gender of Inheritance in an Upper-Class Family Network: Dallas, 1895-1945" *Socio-Economic Review*.

UNDER REVIEW

"The New Money Myth: Patterns and Perception of Upper-Class Mobility in Oil Boom Dallas, 1925-1942." Submitted to *Social Science History*.

"Centering the Family in Elite Studies." Equally co-authored with Shamus Khan. Submitted to *Sociologica*.

"Varieties of Economic Elites? Preliminary results from the World Elite Database (WED)." Research note co-authored with 59 other members of the [World Elite Database team](#). Submitted to *British Journal of Sociology*.

WORKING PAPERS

“Kinship Interlocks: Mapping the Family Ties Between Economic, Political, and Social Elites.”

“Rethinking New and Old Money.” Invited chapter for the *Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Global Elites*, eds. Annette Lareau, Maria Luisa Méndez, and Mike Savage.

“The Ties that Bind: Matrilineal and Patrilineal Marriage Networks in the Emergence of an Upper Class.” Equally co-authored with Fabien Accominotti.

“The Disinherited: Legal Fights over Family Fortunes in an Upper Class, 1895-1945.” Abstract accepted for submission to *British Journal of Sociology* special issue on Families and Wealth.

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AND AWARDS

EXTERNAL

Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship 2022-23
American Council of Learned Societies

Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant 2022-23
American Sociological Association, on behalf of the National Science Foundation

Robert D. Mare Graduate Student Paper Award 2022
ASA Inequality, Poverty, and Mobility Section

Outstanding Graduate Student Paper Award (Co-Winner) 2022
ASA Family Section

Portal to Texas History Research Fellowship 2018-19
University of North Texas

Clements Center-DeGolyer Library Research Travel Grant 2018
Southern Methodist University

KOSMOS Summer Fellowship in Urban Sociology 2017
Humboldt University

Graduate Research Fellowship, Honorable Mention 2016-17
National Science Foundation

INTERNAL

Stone Research Grant 2023
James M. and Cathleen D. Stone Program in Wealth Distribution, Inequality, and Social Policy at Harvard Kennedy School

Center for Digital Humanities Data Fellowship 2021-22
Princeton University Center for Digital Humanities

Data-Driven Social Sciences Research Grant 2021-22
Princeton University Data-Driven Social Sciences Initiative

Prize Fellowship in the Social Sciences 2020-22
Princeton University School of Public and International Affairs

Religion and Public Life Graduate Student Fellow Princeton University Center for Culture, Society, and Religion	2017-20
University Fellowship in the Humanities and Social Sciences Princeton University	2016-21
Sociology Department Travel Grant Princeton University	2019
Center for the Study of Social Organization Research Award Princeton University	2019
Religion and Public Life Discretionary Research Grant Princeton University Center for Culture, Society, and Religion	2018-19
American Studies Summer Research Grant Princeton University	2017
Anthropology Department Research Apprenticeship Award Brown University	2009-12
International Undergraduate Research and Teaching Award Brown University	2010, 2011
Solsbery Summer Research Fellowship (<i>declined</i>) Brown University	2011

DATASETS

Dallas Elites, 1841-1963 (*In progress.*) Hand-constructed relational database ($n = 18,009$). Includes kinship network, demographic data, organizational memberships, occupations, social ties, phenotypical data, and multiple measures of wealth, status, and power.

World Elite Database (*In progress.*) U.S. team with Kevin Young, François Schoenberger, Jorge Quesada Velazco, and Sean McQuade.

TEACHING

Applied Social Science Statistics (Graduate course)
2018, Teaching Assistant for Brandon Stewart

Money, Work, and Social Life: Introduction to Economic Sociology (Undergraduate course)
2018, Teaching Assistant for Frederick Wherry

Applied Social Science Statistics (Graduate course)
2017, Teaching Assistant for Matthew Salganik

INVITED TALKS

Political Economy / Economic History and Development Seminar at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst (2024)

Stone Multidisciplinary Seminar at CUNY Graduate Center (2024)

Economic Sociology Seminar at Harvard University (2024)
Rick W. A. Smith's Lab at George Mason University (2023)
Gender and Elites Workshop at Oxford University (2022)
Aaron Reeves's Research Group at Oxford University (2021)
Princeton Prize Fellowship in the Social Sciences Meeting (2020, 2021)
Portal to Texas History Fellowship Talk at the University of North Texas (2019)

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics (2024)
Inequality and the Environment Symposium at SciencesPo (2024)
American Sociological Association Annual Meeting (2019, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024)
Social Science History Association Conference (2019, 2022, 2023)
Eastern Sociological Society Annual Meeting (2019, 2022)

SERVICE

Department Climate Committee, Student representative, 2018-19
Graduate Student Advisory Council, Second-year representative, 2017-18
Interdisciplinary Ethnography Workshop, Co-organizer, Spring 2017

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Sociological Association
Social Science History Association
Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics

EMPLOYMENT

MDRC	New York, NY
Research Assistant, Families with Children Department	2013-16
Brown University Department of Anthropology	Providence, RI
Research Assistant to Paja Faudree	2009-13

Last Update: May 2024