



**The Consequences of Color:
Rethinking Ethnoracial Inequality in the U.S. and Brazil**



Monday, October 17, 2016

1:30 - 3:00 pm

W113 Seashore Hall

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The United States and Brazil are most likely the two most commonly compared cases in the study of racial inequality across the social sciences. Nevertheless, genuinely comparative studies of these two canonical cases remain rare. Rarer still, are studies of either case individually or comparatively, which focus specifically on how skin color shapes life chances. Instead, conventional research typically consists of between-group comparisons using census categories, which inadvertently obscure how gradations of skin color may significantly stratify life chances within and across these categories. Using nationally representative surveys of the U.S. and Brazil, I examine the consequences of color within and across descent groupings in each country individually, as well as in comparison to one another. I find that color is a significant predictor of life chances in each country -- often more than categorical race as measured in census categories. Moreover, there is little compelling evidence that skin color matters any less in the U.S. than Brazil, even though their systems of ethnoracial classification seem to differ at the macro-level (e.g. census categories and the differential weight of ancestry and color for categorization). I conclude by discussing the implications of these findings for the study of racial inequality, as well as for a series of pressing debates about the future(s) of the U.S. and Brazilian racial orders (e.g. 'Latin Americanization' and U.S.-Brazil 'Convergence/Divergence'). I also discuss the advantages of shifting our attention from social categories to the cues of categories for the study of social inequality and stratification more broadly.

This talk is part of the **Inequality Seminar** which is a seminar and speaker series that provides a forum on campus for faculty and graduate students who are interested in inequality broadly defined. It is an opportunity for faculty and graduate students to present their research and to hear about other inequality-related work from researchers on the off-campus. These talks are free and open to the public. For more information about the Inequality Seminar, contact Professor Sarah Bruch at sarah-bruch@uiowa.edu.

Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to attend all University of Iowa-sponsored events. If you are a person with a disability who requires an accommodation, in order to participate in this program, please contact the Department of Sociology in advance at 335-2502.