

Peter McMahan

McGill University
Department of Sociology

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Academic Appointments

Assistant Professor of Sociology, McGill University	2018–
Postdoctoral Scholar, Stanford University, Departments of Computer Science, Education, and Linguistics	2017–2018

Education

PhD Sociology, University of Chicago	2017
MPP, Harris School of Public Policy, University of Chicago	2007
BA in Mathematics, Reed College	2003

Research Interests

Social networks, status, culture, computational methods, mathematical models, statistical methods

Publications

- McMahan, Peter (2024). “Ambiguous Status Relations and Complex Hierarchy among Adolescents.” *Socius* 10.
- McMahan, Peter, and Eran Shor (2024). “Status Ambiguity and Multiplicity in the Selection of NBA Awards” *Sociological Science* 11:680–706.
- McMahan, Peter and Daniel A. McFarland (2021). “Creative Destruction: The Structural Consequences of Scientific Curation” *American Sociological Review* 86(2).
- Boluda, Inès Moreno, Elizabeth Patitsas, and Peter McMahan. (2021) “What Do Computer Scientists Know About Conflict Minerals?” *LIMITS Workshop on Computing within Limits*.
- McMahan, Peter, Adam Slez, and John Levi Martin (2019). “Local Network Regressions” *Socius* 5.
- McMahan, Peter and James Evans (2018). “Ambiguity and Engagement” *American Journal of Sociology* 124(2): 860–912.
- McMahan, Peter (2016). “Like Family: Network Coevolution and the Emergence of Altruism” *Journal of Mathematical Sociology* 40(2): 112:122.

Small, Mario Luis, Vontrese Deeds Pamphile, and Peter McMahan (2015). “How Stable Is the Core Discussion Network?” *Social Networks* 40 (January): 90–102.

Padgett, John F, Peter McMahan, and Xing Zhong. 2012. “Economic Production as Chemistry II.” In *The Emergence of Organizations and Markets*, edited by John F Padgett and Woody Powell. Princeton University Press.

McMahan, Peter (2008). “Cohesive Blocks Algorithm”, ‘igraph’ package for R statistical environment.

Grants and Funding

FRQSC Soutien à la recherche pour la relève professorale , Principal investigator (\$56,562) <i>Uncovering boundaries and influence in scientific fields</i>	2023–2026
McGill SSHRC General Research Fund supplement to IDG , Principal investigator (\$7,000)	2021–2022
SSHRC Insight Development Grant (IDG) , Principal investigator (\$62,139) <i>Uncovering social influence online: power, propaganda, and hierarchy from natural language</i>	2020–2024
NFRF Exploration Grant , Co-applicant (\$250,000) <i>Holistic evaluation of the determinants of mobility to enhance social and work participation: Platform trial of the Electronic Mobility Monitoring and Intervention (EMMI) Portal</i>	2020–2022
SSHRC Partnership Grant , Co-applicant (\$2.5 million) <i>Consortium on Analytics for Data-Driven Decision-Making (CAnD3): Developing Talent for Population Analytics in Aging Societies</i>	2019–2026
McGill University Start-up Grant (\$13,000)	2018–2021

Academic Appointments and Honors

Benjamin Bloom Fellowship, University of Chicago, Division of Social Sciences	2016–2017
Associate Editor, <i>American Journal of Sociology</i>	2013–2014
Manuscript Board, <i>American Journal of Sociology</i>	2012–2013
Academic Fellowship, University of Chicago, Division of Social Sciences	2009–2014
Academic Fellowship, University of Chicago, Harris School of Public Policy Studies	2005–2007

Workshops and Conferences

Sunbelt Conference (International Network for Social Network Analysis)

<i>Setting the Record Straight: The Dynamics of Public Critique and Rebuttal in Scientific Publication</i>	2023, Portland, OR
<i>Online Networks: Identity, Boundaries, and Culture</i> (discussant)	2022, Portland, OR
<i>Setting the Tone: How Talk Reveals Relational Structures of Power</i>	2019, Montreal, Quebec
<i>Creative Destruction: The Structure and Consequences of Scientific Curation</i>	2018, Utrecht, Netherlands
<i>Adolescent Status Hierarchies</i>	2014, Saint Petersburg Beach, FL
<i>Ambiguity and Knowledge Fragmentation</i>	2013, Hamburg, Germany
<i>Evolution of Cooperation: A Networked Model of Natural Selection</i>	2012, Redondo Beach, CA

Canadian Sociological Association annual conference

<i>Setting the Record Straight: The Dynamics of Public Critique and Rebuttal in Scientific Publication</i>	2023, Toronto, Ontario
<i>Setting the Tone: How Talk Reveals Relational Structures of Power</i>	2019, Vancouver, British Columbia

American Sociological Association annual conference

<i>Adolescent Status Hierarchies</i>	2015, Chicago, IL
<i>Ambiguity and Knowledge Fragmentation</i>	2012, Denver, CO

Invited talks

Annual Reviews

<i>Creative Destruction: The Structure and Consequences of Scientific Curation</i>	2021 board meeting
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Summer Institute in Computational Social Science

<i>Culture, Knowledge, & Data</i>	June 2021
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McGill School of Computer Science Colloquium

<i>Discovering group status structures using conversational data</i>	November 2019
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McGill Centre on Population Dynamics: Social statistics
& Population Dynamics Seminar series

*Creative destruction: the structure and
consequences of scientific curation*

March 2019

Media Appearances

“Review Articles Cause ‘Dramatic Loss’ in Citations for Original Research.” (Clare Watson) Nature Index (blog), May 11, 2021. <https://www.natureindex.com/news-blog/review-articles-cause-dramatic-loss-in-citations-for-original-research>.

“Literature Reviews ‘Poach Attention’ from Original Research.” (Jack Grove) Times Higher Education (THE) (blog), May 12, 2021. <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/literature-reviews-poach-attention-original-research>.

“Academic Review Articles Lead to Fewer Citations for Underlying Research.” (Jack Grove) The Academic Times (blog), March 28, 2021. <https://academictimes.com/academic-review-articles-lead-to-fewer-citations-for-underlying-research>.

“Uncertainty in Science Communication: Include It or Lose It?” (Alice Fleerackers) *ScienceBorealis.ca Blog*. May 4, 2020. <https://blog.scienceborealis.ca/uncertainty-in-science-communication-include-it-or-lose-it/>.

Teaching

† indicates course substantially revised by P. McMahan

‡ indicates new course developed by P. McMahan

Social Networks (McGill University, SOCI 624) ‡

Winter 2024 · Fall 2022

Networks and Social Structures (McGill University, SOCI 424) ‡

Winter 2024 · Fall 2022 · Fall 2021 · Fall 2020

Sociology of Science (McGill University, SOCI 325) ‡

Fall 2024 · Fall 2023 · Fall 2022 · Fall 2021 · Winter 2021 · Winter 2020

Quantitative Methods 2 (McGill University, SOCI 620) †

Winter 2023 · Winter 2022 · Winter 2021 · Winter 2020

Sociological Perspectives (McGill University, SOCI 210) †

Winter 2024 · Winter 2023 · Winter 2022 · Fall 2020 · Fall 2019 · Fall 2018

Computing for Social Sciences and Humanities (University of Chicago) ‡

2015 · 2014 · 2012 · 2011

Academic service

Service to the McGill Department of Sociology

- Member, Graduate Admissions Committee, 2020–2021, 2024–2025
- Member, Ad Hoc Hiring Decision-making Committee, 2024–2025
- Member, Social Committee, 2024–2025
- Member, Equity Committee, 2023–2024
- Organizer, Graduate Professional Development Seminar, 2021–present
- Organizer, Department Research Series, 2022–present
- Member, Comprehensive Exam Committee (Social Stratification), 2018–present
- Chair, Comprehensive Exam Committee (Sociology of Knowledge), 2018–present
- Chair, Quantitative Curriculum Committee, 2023–present
- Pre-tenure representative, Chair Selection Committee, 2023
- Member, Search Committee (Demography), 2023
- Member, Search Committee (Open), 2022
- Member, Graduate Committee, 2019–2020
- Departmental representative to Faculty of Arts Meetings, 2018–2021
- Member, Visiting Speaker Series Committee, 2018–2019

Service to the Faculty of Arts and McGill University

- Member, Fellowships Evaluation Committee for the 2023 SSHRC Canada Graduate Scholarships - Doctoral (CGS D) competition, 2022–present
- Member, Internal Social Science and Humanities Development Grants committee, 2022–present
- Co-organizer, Summer ‘prefresher’ courses in mathematics and R 2019–present
- Pro-dean, PhD oral defense (Department of Civil Engineering and Applied Mechanics), 2021
- Guest lecturer, Research Methods: Theory and Practice (EDEM 690), Faculty of Education, 2020
- Co-organizer, *Stan for the people* (graduate workshop in advanced statistical computation), 2019

Service to the Profession

Journal article reviewer:

American Journal of Sociology · *American Sociological Review* · *Social Forces* ·
Network Science · *Social Networks* · *Plos One* · *Poetics*

Conferences:

Sunbelt Conference (INSNA), *reviewer and session chair*: “*Online networks: Identity, boundaries, and culture*”, 2022

ICA Regional Conference 2022 (Computational Communication Research),
member of programming committee and reviewer, 2022

International Conference on Computational Social Science, *reviewer, 2018*

Social Informatics, *reviewer, 2017*

External grant/fellowship reviewer:

European Research Council (ERC) Frontier Research Grants, 2023–present

National Killam Program fellowship, 2023–present

New Frontiers in Research Fund - Exploration grant, 2020

Professional memberships

American Sociological Association

Canadian Sociological Association

McGill Centre on Population Dynamics

Consortium on Analytics for Data-Driven Decision-Making

Languages

- English (native speaker)
- French (CEFR certified level B2)
- Spanish (intermediate)