

# Zachary B. Levenson

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(804) 514-9428 ♦ Zachary.Levenson@gmail.com

## Education

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Ph.D. Candidate, Sociology, **University of California, Berkeley** (Expected May 2017)  
Designated Emphasis in Global Metropolitan Studies  
*Dissertation*: “The Post-Apartheid State: The Politics of Housing in South Africa”  
*Committee*: Michael Burawoy (chair), Dylan Riley, Gillian Hart, Michael Watts

*Abstract*: Most accounts of urban change represent the state as a monolithic entity remaking the entire city in the image of capital. By contrast, my dissertation examines variation *within* a single city: post-apartheid Cape Town. Drawing on extended ethnographic research in three mass land occupations, I demonstrate that where residents organize into a single settlement committee, they are likely to be viewed by provincial courts as a coherent community and therefore tolerated. But when factions persist among squatters, judges view them as undeserving opportunists and authorize their eviction. My dissertation explains how these struggles over representation within settlements are inextricably bound up with struggles for recognition by the state. This is the politics of negotiation at the basis of the post-apartheid state.

M.A. in Sociology, **University of California, Berkeley** (December 2010)  
*Title*: “Freedom by Necessity: Neoliberal Housing Policy and the Persistence of Self-Help Solutions”  
*Committee*: Loïc Wacquant (chair), Peter Evans, Cihan Tuğal

B.A. in Sociology, **Columbia University** (May 2005)  
*Thesis*: “Black Enough City: Black Action Cinema in the Era of Commissions”  
*Committee*: Sudhir Venkatesh (chair), Mignon Moore

## Research and Teaching Interests

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urban sociology, political sociology, ethnography, race and ethnicity, social theory, law and society, sociology of development

## Publications

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### *Peer-Reviewed*

Levenson, Zachary. 2017. “Precarious Welfare States: Urban Struggles over Housing Delivery in Post-Apartheid Cape Town.” *International Sociology* 32(4):474-92.

Levenson, Zachary. 2017. “Living on the Fringe in Post-Apartheid Cape Town.” *Contexts* 16(1):24-9.

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→ awarded Alumni Prize for Public Sociology, UC Berkeley

Levenson, Zachary. 2017. "Social Movements beyond Incorporation: The Case of the Housing Assembly in Post-Apartheid Cape Town." Pp. 89-104 in *Global Resistance in Southern Perspective: The Politics of Protest in South Africa's Contentious Democracy*, edited by Marcel Paret, Carin Runciman, and Luke Sinwell. London: Routledge.

→ published in the *Mobilization* book series

→ awarded Herbert Blumer Prize, UC Berkeley

Levenson, Zachary. 2014. "‘We Are Humans and Not Dogs’: The Crisis of Housing Delivery in Post-Apartheid Cape Town." *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* 58:15-22.

Levenson, Zachary. 2014. "Permanent Temporariness: Relocation Camps in Post-Apartheid Cape Town." *SLUM Lab* 9:156-8.

Cullings, Harry M., Zachary B. Levenson, Sachiyo Funamoto, and Sachiko Teranishi. 2006. "Changes in Atomic Bomb Survivors' Dosimetry with the New Dosimetry System DS02." *Japanese Journal of Health Physics* 41(4):261-71.

## **Book Reviews and Review Essays**

Levenson, Zachary. 2017. "A Wake for Urban Theory." *British Journal of Sociology*. Advance online publication. doi: 10.1111/1468-4446.12273.

Levenson, Zachary. 2016. Review of Keith Breckenridge's *Biometric State: The Global Politics of Identification and Surveillance in South Africa, 1850 to the Present*. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*. 51(5):636-8.

Levenson, Zachary B. 2012. Review essay on Marie Huchzermeyer's *Cities with 'Slums': From Informal Settlement Eradication to a Right to the City in Africa*. *Transformation* 78:133-43.

## **Other Writing**

Levenson, Zachary, Sam Ashman, and Trevor Ngwane. 2017 (forthcoming) "ANC Hegemony Crumbling to the Right: Opportunities in South Africa, Missed and Otherwise." *Catalyst* 1(2).

Levenson, Zachary. 2017. "Articulating Trumpism, or, Thanks, Obama!" *Berkeley Journal of*

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*Sociology* (<http://berkeleyjournal.org/2017/04/articulating-trumpism-or-thanks-obama/>).

→ Republished by *Huffington Post*

Levenson, Zachary. 2012. "Social Movements in South Africa." *Against the Current* 160:14-6.

Levenson, Zachary. 2011. "Occupying Education: The Student Fight against Austerity in California." *NACLA Report on the Americas* 44(6):25-8.

Regular contributor to *Africa Is a Country* ([africasacountry.com](http://africasacountry.com)).

## Work in Progress

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Levenson, Zachary. "The Road to TRAs Is Paved with Good Intentions: Dispossession through Delivery in Post-Apartheid Cape Town."

→ Revise and resubmit, *Urban Studies*

Levenson, Zachary. "Explaining Evictions: The Politics of Representation and Recognition in Post-Apartheid Land Occupations." Manuscript in preparation.

Levenson, Zachary. "Urbanization in Hostile Environments: On the Containment of Surplus Populations in Democratic South Africa." Manuscript in preparation.

Levenson, Zachary. "Dislocating Surplus Populations: The Political Logic of Dispossession in South African Cities." Manuscript in preparation.

Levenson, Zachary and Kate Doyle Griffiths. "Leaving Either/Or in the Dustbin: What South African Debates Teach Us about Race and Class in the United States." Manuscript in preparation.

## Fellowships and Distinctions

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2017 Summer Research Grant, Global Metropolitan Studies, UC Berkeley

Alumni Prize for Public Sociology, Department of Sociology, UC Berkeley

Herbert Blumer Prize, Department of Sociology, UC Berkeley

Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award, Graduate Division, UC Berkeley

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- 2016 Social Science Matrix Dissertation Fellowship, UC Berkeley
- Herbert Blumer Fellowship for Excellence in Teaching, Department of Sociology, UC Berkeley
- Research Fellow, Slow Science Institute, Berkeley, CA
- 2014 Leo Lowenthal Fellowship, Department of Sociology, UC Berkeley
- 2013 Small Grant, Department of Sociology, UC Berkeley
- Summer Grant, Graduate Division, UC Berkeley
- 2012 John L. Simpson Memorial Research Fellowship in International and Comparative Studies, Institute of International Studies, UC Berkeley
- Andrew and Mary Thompson Rocca Scholarship in Advanced African Studies, Center for African Studies, UC Berkeley
- Leo Lowenthal Fellowship, Department of Sociology, UC Berkeley
- Summer Grant, Graduate Division, UC Berkeley
- 2011 Dean's Normative Time Fellowship, Graduate Division, UC Berkeley
- 2008 Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship, Southeast Asian Studies Summer Institute, University of Wisconsin, Madison
- 2005 Gilbert W. Beebe Fellowship, Radiation Effects Research Foundation, Hiroshima, Japan
- 2005 Honors awarded for senior thesis "Black Enough City: Black Action Cinema in the Era of Commissions," Department of Sociology, Columbia University

## Conference Presentations

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- "Determining When to Evict: A Comparative Ethnography of Land Occupations in Post-Apartheid South Africa," August 15, 2017, "Ethnographic Studies," American Sociological Association 112<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.
- "Urbanization in Hostile Environments: On the Containment of Surplus Populations in Democratic South Africa," June 7, 2017, "Capitalist Development in Hostile Environments: 30 Years Later," Università della Calabria, Italy.

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“Evictions beyond Rationality: How Squatters Achieve (Rather than Receive) the Right to the City in South Africa,” April 5, 2017, “The Where of Rights and the Right to the City,” Association of American Geographers Annual Meeting, Boston, Massachusetts.

“Dislocating Surplus Populations: The Political Logic of Dispossession in South African Cities,” October 8, 2016, “Proletarianization in an Age of Surplus Populations,” Sociology of Development 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

“How States Decide to Evict: The Politics of Land Occupations in Post-Apartheid Cape Town,” October 7, 2016, “Bringing the State Back Out: Ethnographies of the State as a Site of Struggle,” Sociology of Development 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

“Poverty without Community: Explaining Evictions in Post-Apartheid South Africa,” September 21, 2016, Africa Colloquium, Center for African Studies, University of California, Berkeley.

“Precarious Welfare States: Urban Struggles over Housing in South Africa,” August 23, 2016, “States, Bureaucracy, and Civil Society,” American Sociological Association 111<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, Seattle, Washington.

“Explaining Evictions: The Politics of Representation and Recognition in Post-Apartheid Land Occupations,” August 20, 2016, “Comparative Ethnography of Power,” American Sociological Association 111<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, Seattle, Washington.

“Explaining Evictions: The Politics of Representation and Recognition in Post-Apartheid Land Occupations,” May 20, 2016, “Politics in the Global South,” Class, Politics, and Society Conference, New York University, New York, New York.

“The Road to TRAs is Paved with Good Intentions: Dislocation and Confinement in Post-Apartheid Cape Town,” March 30, 2016, “Social Geographies of Urban Abandonment,” Association of American Geographers Annual Meeting, San Francisco, California.

“Patrimonial Bureaucracy and Permanent Provisionality: On the Limits of Housing Delivery in Post-Apartheid South Africa,” September 16, 2015, “Housing in an Unequal World,” International Sociological Association RC43: Housing and the Built Environment, University of Illinois-Chicago, Chicago, Illinois.

“Negotiated Delivery: Technocratic Failure and the Politics of Housing Delivery in Post-Apartheid South Africa,” August 21, 2015, American Sociological Association 110<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, Chicago, Illinois.

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“Delivering Provisionality: Competing Logics of Housing Delivery in Post-Apartheid South Africa,” May 18, 2015, “The Neoliberal State in the Developing World,” Class, Politics, and Society Conference, New York University, New York, New York.

“Land Occupations and the Housing Question in Post-Apartheid Cape Town,” April 26, 2015, “Social Reproduction in South Africa,” Historical Materialism, New York University, New York, New York.

“TRAs and the Grass Roots: Competing Logics of Delivery in Post-Apartheid South Africa,” March 14, 2015, “Transformative Possibilities in the Global South,” Sociology of Development 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island.

“The Dialectic of Representation and Recognition in Post-Apartheid Land Invasions: Case Studies from Cape Town,” August 19, 2014, American Sociological Association 109<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, San Francisco, California.

“The Politics of Selective Dispossession: Land Invasions in Post-Apartheid Cape Town,” July 18, 2014, “Informality and Spatial Confinement Across the Global Order: Every Day and Policy Perspectives,” XVIII International Sociological Association World Congress of Sociology, Yokohama, Japan.

“Social Movements Beyond Incorporation: The Case of the Housing Assembly in Post-Apartheid Cape Town,” May 22, 2014, “Contentious Politics, Capitalism, and Social Movement Theory: South Africa in Global Perspective,” University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa.

“Dispossession through Delivery: Notes on the Post-Apartheid Delivery Apparatus,” May 11, 2014, “Social Reproduction in South Africa,” Historical Materialism, York University, Toronto, Canada.

“The Dialectic of Representation and Recognition in Post-Apartheid Land Invasions: Case Studies from Cape Town,” May 9, 2014, “Urban Circulations: The Politics of Scale,” Global Metropolitan Studies, University of California, Berkeley.

## Invited Talks

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“Explaining Evictions: The Politics of Housing in Post-Apartheid Cities,” February 6, 2017, Department of Urban Studies, Yale-NUS, Singapore.

“Changing Order in Political Societies: The Politics of Land Invasions in Post-Apartheid Cape Town,” April 21, 2015, “The Impact of Human Rights in a Global Age,” Social Science Matrix, University of California, Berkeley.

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“The Political Economy of Housing Struggles after Apartheid,” December 8, 2013, Department of Geography, City University of New York Graduate Center, New York, New York.

“Resistance after Apartheid: Social Struggles and the State in South Africa since 1994,” September 12, 2012. La Peña Cultural Center, Berkeley, California.

## **Workshops**

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“Race, Space, and Violence: Challenging Scholarly Praxis,” June 5-7, 2015, Department of Geography (UC Berkeley & UCLA), Oakland, California.

“Urban Circulations: The Politics of Scale,” April 23 & May 9, 2014, Global Metropolitan Studies, University of California, Berkeley.

## **Teaching Experience**

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### *Instructor of Record*

- Fall 2017     Instructor for original course: “Racialization in Comparative Perspective,” Department of Sociology, UC Berkeley
- Fall 2016     Co-instructor with Professor Cihan Tuğal for graduate course in pedagogy, Department of Sociology, UC Berkeley
- Fall 2015     Instructor for original course: “Absolutely Surplus: Social Exclusion in Contemporary Sociology,” Department of Sociology, UC Berkeley
- Fall 2014     Instructor for original course: “Space and Power: A Global Sociology of Urban Planning,” Department of Sociology, UC Berkeley

### *Teaching Assistant*

- Spring 2016     Graduate Student Instructor for Professor Gillian Hart: “History of Development and Underdevelopment,” Department of Geography, UC Berkeley
- Summer 2015     Reader for Professor Rakesh Bhandari: “Introduction to Social Theory and Cultural Analysis,” Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, UC Berkeley

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- Spring 2014 Graduate Student Instructor for Professor Gary Wren: “Introduction to Social Theory and Cultural Analysis,” Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, UC Berkeley
- Spring 2011 Graduate Student Instructor for Professor Michael Burawoy: “History of Sociological Theory: Sociology,” Department of Sociology, UC Berkeley
- Fall 2010 Graduate Student Instructor for Professor Michael Burawoy: “History of Sociological Theory: Marxism,” Department of Sociology, UC Berkeley
- Spring 2010 Graduate Student Instructor for Professor John Lie: “Contemporary Social Theory,” Department of Sociology, UC Berkeley
- Fall 2009 Graduate Student Instructor for Professor Dylan Riley: “Contemporary Social Theory,” Department of Sociology, UC Berkeley
- Spring 2009 Graduate Student Instructor for Professor Dylan Riley: “Classical Social Theory,” Department of Sociology, UC Berkeley
- Fall 2008 Graduate Student Instructor for Professor Laura Enriquez: “Political Sociology,” Department of Sociology, UC Berkeley

## ***Mentorship***

- 2016-17 Senior thesis advisor (with Professor Gillian Hart) for Daniel Tutt’s thesis
- 2012-15 Senior thesis mentor for undergraduate sociology majors
- 2009-11 Advisor, Latin@ Sociology Association

## **Research Experience**

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- 2010-11 Research Assistant to Professor Dylan Riley, Sociology, UC Berkeley, research for forthcoming volume *Knowledge Production or Construction?: A Comparative Analysis of Census Taking in the West* (Oxford UP)
- 2010 Research Assistant to Professor Nancy Scheper-Hughes, Anthropology, UC Berkeley, assisted with research on transnational organ theft
- 2009 Research Assistant to Professor Loïc Wacquant, Sociology, UC Berkeley, research and editing for book *Prisons of Poverty* (University of Minnesota Press, 2009)



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- 2008 Research Assistant to Professor Thomas Gold, Sociology, UC Berkeley, aided in preparation of edited volume *Laid-Off Workers in a Workers' State: Unemployment with Chinese Characteristics* (MacMillan, 2009)
- 2004-05 Research Assistant to Professor Sudhir Venkatesh, Sociology, Columbia University, aided in preparation of numerous publications and in post-production of film *Dislocation* (2005)

## Professional Activities

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### *Editorial*

2011-present Occasional reviewer:

*British Journal of Sociology*  
*American Journal of Sociology*  
*Berkeley Journal of Sociology*  
*American Sociological Review*  
*Historical Materialism*

2007-09 Editorial board, *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*

### *Conference Organizer*

“Changing Urban Spaces,” University of California, Berkeley, March 13, 2009.

“Violence,” University of California, Berkeley, March 14, 2008.

### *Professional Organizations*

American Sociological Association (ASA)  
International Sociological Association (ISA)  
Association of American Geographers (AAG)  
Social Science History Association (SSHA)

### **Film**

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2012 Production assistant on *Jeppe on a Friday* (d. Shannon Walsh & Arya Laloo).

2005 Post-production assistant on *Dislocation* (d. Sudhir Venkatesh).

### **Language**

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Japanese (intermediate); German (intermediate); Spanish (beginner); Burmese (beginner);  
Afrikaans (beginner)

## References

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### **Michael Burawoy**

Natalie Cohen Professor of Sociology  
Department of Sociology  
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### **Dylan Riley**

Associate Professor  
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### **Gillian Hart**

Professor Emeritus  
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### **Michael Watts**

Professor Emeritus  
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