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Assistant Professor of Sociology
Interim Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of Sociology
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EDUCATION

University of California, Irvine

Ph.D., Sociology, 2017

Dissertation: “Academic Segregation: The Criminalization of Misfits and the Institutionalization of Ethnic Capital”

Dissertation Committee: Jennifer Lee (chair), David A. Snow, Gilberto Q. Conchas, and Jacob Avery

M.A., Sociology, 2015

Stanford University

B.A. (with honors), Psychology, 2007

APPOINTMENTS

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

2022- Faculty Affiliate, Center For Equitable Family & Community Well-Being, School of Social Work

Syracuse University

2023- Faculty Associate, Introduction to Sociology (SOC 101), Project Advance
2021- Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Maxwell School of Citizenship & Public Affairs
2021- *Senior Research Associate*, Center for Policy Research, Maxwell School of Citizenship & Public Affairs

New York University

2019-2021 Visiting Assistant Professor of Sociology and Education
Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development
2017-2019 Provost’s Postdoctoral Fellow, Sociology of Education
Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION AND RESEARCH

Race and Ethnicity; Schools and Education; Alienation; Refugee Youth; Neighborhood Organization and Inequality; Immigrant Incorporation; Homelessness; Ethnographic Methods

PUBLICATIONS

Book

Drake, Sean J. 2022. *Academic Apartheid: Race and the Criminalization of Failure in an American Suburb*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

<https://www.ucpress.edu/book/9780520381377/academic-apartheid>

* **Winner**, SSSP Educational Problems Division's 2024 Outstanding Book Award

* **Finalist**, ASA Section on Education's 2023 Pierre Bourdieu Award for the Best Book in Sociology of Education

* Reviewed in *American Journal of Sociology*:

<https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/full/10.1086/727699>

* Reviewed in *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*:

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/23326492221145194>

* Reviewed in *Social Forces*:

<https://academic.oup.com/sf/article-abstract/102/1/e2/7030634>

* Reviewed in *Contemporary Sociology*:

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/00943061231191421j>

Peer-Reviewed Articles and Book Chapters

Drake, Sean J. and Jeffrey Guhin. 2025. "The Achievement Narrative and Alienation in School: A Typology of Academic Disconnection." *Sociology of Education*. Online first:

<https://doi.org/10.1177/00380407251381695>

Drake, Sean J. 2020. "The Segregation of 'Failures': Unequal Schools and Disadvantaged Students in an Affluent Neighborhood." *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk (JESPAR)* 25 (3): 201-224
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10824669.2019.1687301>

Drake, Sean J. 2019. "Academic Segregation and the Institutional Success Frame: Unequal Schooling and Racial Disparity in an Integrated, Affluent Community." In *Asian Migration and Education Cultures in the Anglosphere*, ed. M. Watkins, C. Ho, and R. Butler. New York, NY: Routledge. (This volume was originally published in 2017 as a special issue of the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*.)

Lee, Jennifer, **Sean J. Drake**, and Min Zhou. 2019. "The 'Asian F' and the Racialization of Achievement." In *Education & Society*, ed. T. Domina, B. Gibbs, L. Nunn, and A. Penner. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Drake, Sean J. 2017. "Academic Segregation and the Institutional Success Frame: Unequal Schooling and Racial Disparity in an Integrated, Affluent Community." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 43 (14): 2423–2439.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1315868>

Drake, Sean J., Gilberto Q. Conchas, and Leticia Oseguera. **2015**. “‘I Am Not the Stereotype’: How an Academic Club in an Urban School Empowered Black Male Youth to Succeed.” In *Inequality, Power, and School Success: Case Studies on Racial Disparity and Opportunity in Education*, ed. G. Q. Conchas and M. A. Gottfried. New York, NY: Routledge.

Drake, Sean J., Gilberto Q. Conchas, Briana M. Hinga, and Michael A. Gottfried. **2015**. “Inequality, Power, and School Success.” In *Inequality, Power, and School Success: Case Studies on Racial Disparity and Opportunity in Education*, ed. G. Q. Conchas and M. A. Gottfried. New York, NY: Routledge.

Conchas, Gilberto Q., Alex R. Lin, Leticia Oseguera, and **Sean J. Drake**. **2015**. “Superstar or Scholar? African American Youth’s Perceptions of Opportunity in a Time of Change.” *Urban Education* 50 (6): 660-688.

Alex R. Lin, **Drake, Sean J.**, and Gilberto Q. Conchas. **2015**. “Conceptualizing Disparity and Opportunity in Education as a Racial Project: A Comparative Perspective.” In *Inequality, Power, and School Success: Case Studies on Racial Disparity and Opportunity in Education*, ed. G. Q. Conchas & M. A. Gottfried. New York, NY: Routledge.

Policy Briefs

Drake, Sean J. and Jeffrey Guhin. **2025**. “Student Alienation in Schools Goes Beyond Low Achievement.” Maxwell Center for Policy Research. Policy Brief #23. Accessed at: <https://doi.org/10.14305/rt.cpr.2025.7>

Drake, Sean J. **2025**. “Public School Districts Should Close Their ‘Alternative’ and ‘Continuation’ High Schools.” Maxwell Center for Policy Research. Policy Brief #22. Accessed at <https://doi.org/10.14305/rt.cpr.2025.6>

Conchas, Gilberto Q. and **Sean J. Drake**. **2011**. “From Truancy and Alienation to School Fluency and Graduation: Increasing Student Engagement by Bridging Institutions.” *University of California Center for Latino Policy Research (eScholarship)*.

Manuscripts Under Review

Cureton, Ashley E., Erick Aguinaldo, and **Sean J. Drake**. “‘I’m Terrified to go to School’: Refugee Youths’ Perceptions of Gun Violence in Schools.” *Revised and resubmitted to *Children and Schools*.

Manuscripts In Progress

Sean J. Drake. “Onward and Upward: Race and Refugee Youth in a Rust Belt City.” *Book manuscript supported by a Russell Sage Foundation Pipeline Grant*.

Drake, Sean J. “Gaining and Maintaining Access to Schools as Field Sites: Strategies and Lessons From the Field.”

Sean J. Drake. “Like a Sore Thumb: Experiences of Students of Color in Historically White Sororities.”

Cureton, Ashley E., **Sean J. Drake**, Michelle Bellino, Katie Lopez, and Shima Sadaghiyani. "Higher Learning: An Exploration of the Welcome Corps on Campus Program to Support Refugee Youths' Access to College in the U.S."

Theoharis, George, Christine Ashby, **Sean J. Drake**, Lauren Ashby, and ParKer Bryant. "I Was Getting Called the N-Word All Game': Experiences With Racism in High School Sports."

Book Reviews

Drake, Sean J. 2024. "The Culture Trap: Ethnic Expectation and Unequal Schooling for Black Youth." *Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews* (53) 5: 470-473.

Drake, Sean J. 2019. "Exposing the Rules of Racial Inequality." *Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews* (48) 2: 173-174.

HONORS AND AWARDS

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| 2025 | Outstanding Reviewer, ASA Section on the Sociology of Education |
| 2024 | SSSP Educational Problems Division's 2024 Outstanding Book Award |
| 2024-2025 | Syracuse University Appleby-Mosher Fund for Faculty Research (\$2,000) |
| 2023 | Finalist, ASA Pierre Bourdieu Best Book Award in Sociology of Education |
| 2023-2025 | Russell Sage Foundation Pipeline Grant (\$30,000) |
| 2022-2023 | Syracuse University Appleby-Mosher Fund for Faculty Research (\$1,500) |
| 2017- | Diversity Scholar, National Center for Institutional Diversity |
| 2016-2017 | Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship (\$25,000) |
| 2016 | UC Irvine Sociology Department Summer Research Grant (\$1,400) |
| 2014-2017 | Yale University Urban Ethnography Project Junior Fellowship |
| 2015 | UC Irvine Sociology Department Summer Research Grant (\$1,400) |
| 2014-2015 | UC Irvine Faculty Mentor Program Fellow (\$20,000) |
| 2014 | Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship (honorable mention) |
| 2014 | UC Irvine School of Social Sciences Associate Dean's Fellowship (\$5,000) |
| 2014 | UC Irvine Sociology Department Summer Research Grant (\$1,400) |
| 2014 | UC Irvine Mentor Excellence Program Certificate of Completion |
| 2013 | Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship (honorable mention) |
| 2003-2007 | Stanford University Dean's List (multiple academic quarters) |

REFEREED PRESENTATIONS

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| 2025 | "We Can't Fix What We Don't Want to See": School Leaders' Experiences with Race and High School Athletics." American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, Denver, CO. |
| 2025 | "They Call Us the N-Word and We're Just Supposed to Take it": High School Student Athletes of Color Experiences with Race and High School Athletics." American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, Denver, CO. |
| 2024 | "Precarious Hope: Refugee Youth and Cultural Change in a Rust Belt City." Presented at the Russell Sage Foundation Pipeline Capstone Conference, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI |

- 2022 “The Northside: Race and Refugee Youth in an American City” Presented at the All-In: Co-Creating Knowledge for Social Justice Conference, UC Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA
- 2020 “Understanding Student Homelessness in New York City.” Presented at the 2020 Beyond Housing Conference: A National Conversation on Child Homelessness and Poverty, New York, NY
- 2018 “The Criminalization of ‘Failures.’” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, Philadelphia, PA
- 2017 “Academic Segregation and the Criminalization of Misfits.” Presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, Cincinnati, OH
- 2016 “Academic Apartheid: School Segregation and Racial Disparity in an Integrated, Affluent Community.” Presented at the 2016 Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, Seattle, WA
- 2015 “Academic Apartheid: Racializing Achievement and Criminalizing Failure in a Context of New Diversity.” Presented at the 2015 Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, Chicago, IL
- 2015 “I Just Want to Change My Stereotype So Bad”: How an Academic Club in an Urban School Empowered Black Male Youth to Succeed.” Presented at the Critical Questions in Education Conference hosted by the Academy for Educational Studies, San Diego, CA
- 2014 “The Model Majority: How Achievement and Ethnoracial Diversity in High Schools Destabilize the Racial Order.” Presented at the Yale University Urban Ethnography Project Conference and Retreat, New Haven, CT

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

- 2025 “Onward and Upward: Race and Refugee Youth in a Rust Belt City.” Presented at the Department of Sociology at the University of California, Irvine
- 2025 “Academic Apartheid: Race and the Criminalization of Failure in an American Suburb.” Presented at the Department of African American Studies at Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY
- 2025 “Onward and Upward: Race and Refugee Youth in a Rust Belt City.” Presented at the NYU Ethnography Workshop in the Department of Sociology at New York University, New York, NY
- 2025 “The Proposed Dismantling of the U.S. Department of Education: What’s at Stake for Students, Families, and Communities.” Presented at the Center for Policy Research in the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, Syracuse NY

- 2025 “Onward and Upward: Race and Refugee Youth in a Rust Belt City.” Presented at the Chicago Education Workshop, sponsored by the Committee on Education at the University of Chicago, Chicago, IL
- 2024 “How Local and Regional Development Patterns in Affect Neighborhood and School Inequality.” Presented at the Smart Growth in CNY Conference, Syracuse, NY
- 2024 “Precarious Hope: Refugee Youth and Cultural Change in a Rust Belt City.” Presented at the Northside Symposium, Assumption Catholic Church, Syracuse, NY
- 2024 “Academic Apartheid: Race and the Criminalization of Failure in an American Suburb.” Author Meets Critics session at the Association for Humanist Sociology 2024 Annual Meeting, Rochester, NY
- 2024 “Academic Apartheid: Race and the Criminalization of Failure in an American Suburb.” Book talk at the Syracuse University Maxwell School Black History Month Event, Syracuse, NY
- 2023 “Precarious Hope: Race and Refugee Youth in a Rust Belt City.” Presented at the Moyinhan Institute of Global Affairs, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY
- 2023 “What’s at Stake for Colleges and Students in the Wake of the Supreme Court’s Affirmative Action Decision.” Presented at the Center for Policy Research in the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, Syracuse NY
- 2023 “Academic Apartheid: Race and the Criminalization of Failure in an American Suburb.” Book talk at The University of Michigan School of Social Work, Ann Arbor, MI
- 2023 “Academic Apartheid: Race and the Criminalization of Failure in an American Suburb.” Book talk at the New Mexico Highlands University, Las Vegas, NM
- 2022 “Academic Apartheid: Race and the Criminalization of Failure in an American Suburb.” Book talk at the Syracuse University Project Advance (SUPA) Upstate Seminar, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY
- 2022 “Academic Apartheid: Race and the Criminalization of Failure in an American Suburb.” Book talk at the Workshop in Urban Ethnography, Yale University, New Haven, CT
- 2022 “Academic Apartheid: Race and the Criminalization of Failure in an American Suburb.” Book talk at the Syracuse University Project Advance (SUPA) Downstate Seminar, New York, NY
- 2022 “Academic Apartheid: Race and the Criminalization of Failure in an American Suburb.” Book talk at the Center for Research on Educational Opportunity (CREO), University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN

- 2021 “Empty Achievement: How Achievement Ideology Alienates Successful Students.” Presented at the Syracuse University Sociology Department Ethnography Workshop, Syracuse, NY
- 2021 “Empty Achievement: How Achievement Ideology Alienates Successful Students.” Presented at the Syracuse Maxwell Center for Policy Research Education and Social Policy Working Group, Syracuse, NY
- 2021 “Academic Apartheid: Race, School Culture, and the Symbolic Criminalization of Failure.” Presented at the Le Moyne College Department of Anthropology, Criminology, and Sociology Social Seminary Series, Syracuse, NY
- 2021 “Academic Apartheid: Race, School Culture, and the Symbolic Criminalization of Failure.” Presented at the University of California, Berkeley Sociology Department Colloquium Series, Berkeley, CA
- 2019 “School Desegregation and Resegregation in an Increasingly Diverse America.” Presented at the NYU Steinhardt Online EdD in Leadership and Innovation Residency Program, New York, NY
- 2018 “Segregation without Borders: Race, Achievement, and the Criminalization of ‘Failures’ in an Integrated Neighborhood.” Presented at the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development ASH Department Colloquium Series, New York University, New York, NY
- 2018 “Segregation without Borders: Race, Achievement, and the Criminalization of ‘Failures’ in an Integrated Neighborhood.” Presented at the Sociology Department Ethnography Workshop, New York University, New York, NY
- 2016 “Academic Segregation and the Institutional Success Frame: Unequal Schools and Racial Disparity in an Integrated, Affluent Community.” Presented at the 2016 Conference of Ford Fellows hosted by the National Academy of Sciences, Washington, DC
- 2016 “Mentoring Diverse Students: Lessons from the DECADE PLUS Program” Presented at the 2016 Fall Training Retreat for the UC Irvine School of Social Sciences First Generation – First Quarter Challenge Program, UC Irvine
- 2015 “Mentoring Across Differences: Awareness, Belief, and Communication” Presented during the 2015 Mentoring Excellence Program, UC Irvine, Irvine, CA

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- 2025– Editorial Board, *Sociology of Education*
- 2023–2024 Nominating Committee, ASA Section on Sociology of Education
- 2019– Reviewer of articles for *Sociology of Education*, *American Sociological Review*, *American Journal of Sociology*, *Social Forces*, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, and *Contemporary Sociology*; reviewed a book manuscript for Oxford University Press

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

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| 2026 | Interim Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of Sociology |
| 2023– | Faculty Affiliate, Syracuse University Project Advance (SUPA) |
| 2023–2024 | Chair, Syracuse University Scholars Selection Committee |
| 2023–2024 | Syracuse University Chancellor’s “Syracuse Statement on Academic Freedom and Free Expression” Working Group |
| 2023–2024 | Faculty Advisor, Syracuse University Black Graduate Student Association |
| 2023–2026 | Advisory Board Member on Addressing the Racial Wealth Gap in the United States, Lender Center for Social Justice, Syracuse University |
| 2022–2023 | Syracuse University Scholars Selection Committee |
| 2019–2020 | Panelist and Mentor for NYU Steinhardt’s Faculty First Look Program |
| 2014–2017 | UC Irvine Advisory Council on Diversity |
| 2014–2017 | UC Irvine Social Sciences Dean’s Fellowship Advisory Committee |
| 2015–2016 | Lead Mentor, UC Irvine Diverse Educational Community and Doctoral Experience: Partnering in Leadership for Undergraduate Students (DECADE PLUS) Program |
| 2014–2015 | Mentor, UC Irvine Diverse Educational Community and Doctoral Experience: Partnering in Leadership for Undergraduate Students (DECADE PLUS) Program |

DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE AT SYRACUSE

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| 2026– | Interim Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of Sociology |
| 2023–2026 | Undergraduate Committee, Department of Sociology |
| 2022–2023 | Executive Committee, Department of Sociology |

COURSES TAUGHT

Sociology of Race and Ethnicity; Sociology of Education; Ethnographic Methods; Qualitative Methods in Sociology; Organizational Change; Introduction to Qualitative Methods; Education as a Social Institution; Research Approaches and Techniques in Education; Social Inequality and Education

MEDIA APPEARANCES

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| 2022 | <i>Academic Apartheid</i> featured in New York Times op-ed on racial bias in education (November 1, 2022): https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/01/opinion/affirmative-action-asian-american-bias.html |
| 2022 | Discussed <i>Academic Apartheid</i> on the FreshEd Podcast: https://player.fm/series/freshed/freshed-284-academic-apartheid-sean-j-drake |
| 2022 | Discussed <i>Academic Apartheid</i> on the New Books Network Podcast: https://newbooksnetwork.com/academic-apartheid |
| 2022 | Discussed <i>Academic Apartheid</i> on the BhD Podcast: https://soundcloud.com/user-365850231/episode-205-academic-apartheid-w-dr-sean-drake |

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- American Sociological Association
- Eastern Sociological Society
- Society for the Study of Social Problems

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Director, Youth Speaking Circle Club, North Side Learning Center, Syracuse, NY (2023 –)
- Volunteer tutor at the North Side Learning Center, Syracuse, NY (2022 – 2024)
- Board Member, A Tiny Home For Good, Syracuse, NY (2022 – 2024)