



ICS SEMINAR SERIES 2024

The racial wealth divide, elites and tax justice

18 April 2024 | 11:30am - 1:00pm

Room: EZ.G.22 Parramatta South Campus

Abstract

Over the past decade escalating wealth inequalities are increasingly evident across the globe and pose fundamental analytical and political issues. Analytically, these include how to measure and define wealth, how to recognise the intersectional ways that wealth reinforces racial, gender and other divides, and how to draw out the implications of wealth for social mobility and life chances across numerous domains. Politically, there is increasing interest in exploring how to tax wealth and develop other strategies for addressing entrenched wealth inequalities. Both these issues are related to a broader interest in the formation of wealthy elites who also are coming to have disproportionate power and influence. After unpacking these issues using recent research in the UK and South Africa, I will turn to focus specifically on how legal devices underwrite wealth accumulation. Focusing specifically on the British legal conception of 'domicile' which originates in imperial history I discuss the 'non-dom' tax regime which is now especially used by those at the top end of the UK economic distribution and report original information about the scale and significance of the non-dom phenomenon. I will also present initial findings from the World Elite Database project, the largest and most systematic study of comparative elites ever undertaken.

Biography

Prof. Michael Savage is an esteemed British sociologist specialising in social class. Since 2014 he has been the Martin White Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). In addition to being Head of the Sociology Department between 2013 – 2016, he was Director of LSE's International Inequalities Institute between 2015 – 2020. Prof. Savage was elected a Fellow of the British Academy (FBA) in 2007, an award granted to leading academics for their distinction in the humanities and social sciences.

Presenter: Mike Savage

Discussant: Brett Neilsen

Chair: Isaac Lyne

Research Alignment:
Borders and Migration

**NEXT SEMINAR:
2 MAY**