

Michaelmas Term, 2024  
**REPLICATION PROJECT**

Dr Michael Biggs

2.30–4.30pm Tuesday, Seminar room

(version 1.0, 5 October 2024)

*If there is any cliché which the graduate student hears more often than “Someone should do a repeat study of that,” it is the words which discourage his following such a course in pursuit of dissertation material. ... Certainly an encouraging beginning step would be allowing, or even urging, graduate students to do replication studies of significant research.*  
—Raymond Mack, 1951

Sociology has largely ignored the ‘replication crisis’ that has swept neighbouring disciplines, beginning with experimental social psychology. Yet several important research findings in sociology have failed to be replicated. This paper will introduce the realities of empirical research through the practice of replication and the principles of open science.

Assessment is through a replication project (100%). The paper should be 6,000–9,000 words in length, suitable for submission to an academic journal (part 1). This is supplemented with a research diary (part 2) and replication code in any statistical software (part 3). The assessment must be submitted by noon of Monday of Week 5 of Hilary Term 2025.

### **Preliminary reading**

Garret Christensen, Jeremy Freese, and Edward Miguel, *Transparent and Reproducible Social Science Research*, University of California Press, 2019.

### **Week 1: Introduction**

Read all these articles. On what basis could a sceptic argue that most quantitative research findings published in sociology are false?

John Ioannidis, ‘Why Most Published Research Findings are False’, *PLOS Medicine*, vol. 2, 2005, e124.

Jeremy Freese and David Peterson, ‘Replication in Social Science’, *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 43, 2017, pp. 147–65.

Nate Breznau et al., ‘Observing Many Researchers Using the Same Data and Hypothesis Reveals a Hidden Universe of Uncertainty’, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, vol. 119, 2022, e2203150119.

Katrin Auspurg and Josef Brüderl, 'How to Increase Reproducibility and Credibility of Sociological Research', Klarita Gërkhani, Nan de Graaf, and Werner Raub (eds), *Handbook of Sociological Science*, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2022, pp. 512–27.

Michael Biggs, Christopher Barrie, and Kenneth T. Andrews, 'Did Local Civil Rights Protest Liberalize Whites' Racial Attitudes?', *Research and Politics*, vol. 7, no. 3, 2020, pp. 1–8.

## **Week 2: Examples of replication**

Choose one of these replications and read the original article as well. Present the replication to the seminar in 5–10 minutes. What did the original article find? What was the finding of the replication? If the original authors responded, what was their counterargument—and who do you find most convincing? In addition, choose two or three articles that you would like to replicate. Print them out. I will discuss these individually with you after the class.

Nicole Schwitter and Ulf Liebe, 'Not Cologne but the Data Collection (Might Have) Changed Everything: A Cautionary Tale on Ignoring Changes in Data Recording in Sociological Research', *European Sociological Review*, vol. 39, 2023, pp. 1005–1010; Arun Frey, 'On the effect of the New Year's Eve Sexual Assaults on Anti-Refugee Violence: A Rejoinder to Schwitter and Liebe (2023)', pp. 1011–17.

Michael Zoorob, 'Do Police Brutality Stories Reduce 911 Calls? Reassessing an Important Criminological Finding', *American Sociological Review*, vol. 85, 2020, pp. 176–83.

Matthew Lilley and Brian Wheaton, 'No, Trump Rallies Didn't Increase Hate Crimes by 226 Percent', *Reason*, 2019, <https://reason.com/2019/09/06/no-trump-rallies-didnt-increase-hate-crimes-by-226-percent/> (the paper they criticize has since been published!)

Dragana Stojmenovska, Thijs Bol, and Thomas Leopold, 'Does Diversity Pay? A Replication of Herring (2009)', *American Sociological Review*, vol. 82, 2017, pp. 857–867.

Nate Breznau, 'The Missing Main Effect of Welfare State Regimes: A Replication of "Social Policy Responsiveness in Developed Democracies" by Brooks and Manza', *Sociological Science*, vol. 2, 2015, pp. 420–41.

Anthony Paik and Kenneth Sanchagrin, 'Social Isolation in America: An Artifact', *American Sociological Review*, vol. 78, 2013, pp. 339–60.

Marco Giugni and Sakura Yamasaki, 'The Policy Impact of Social Movements: A Replication Through Qualitative Comparative Analysis', *Mobilization*, vol. 14, 2009, pp. 467–84.