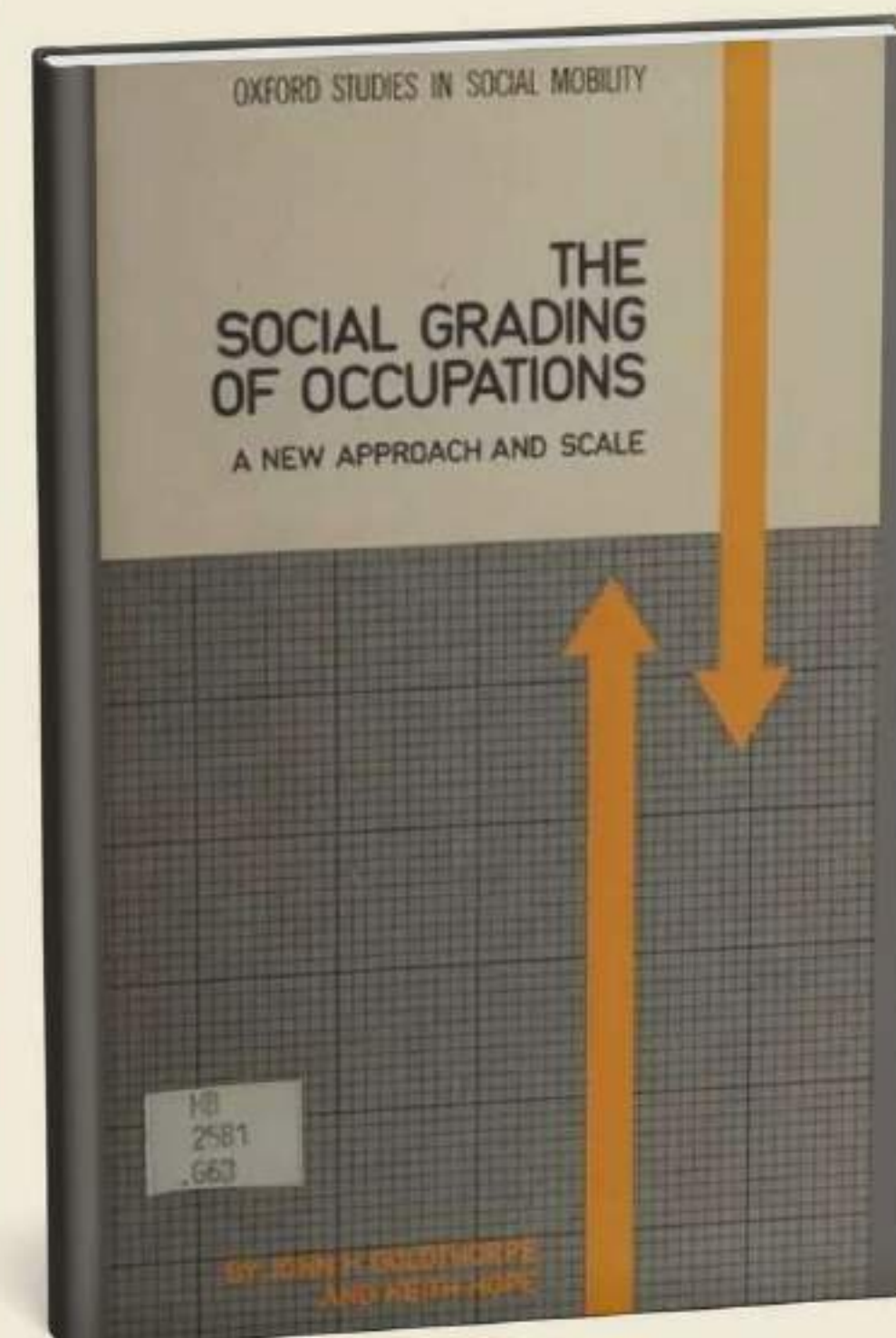
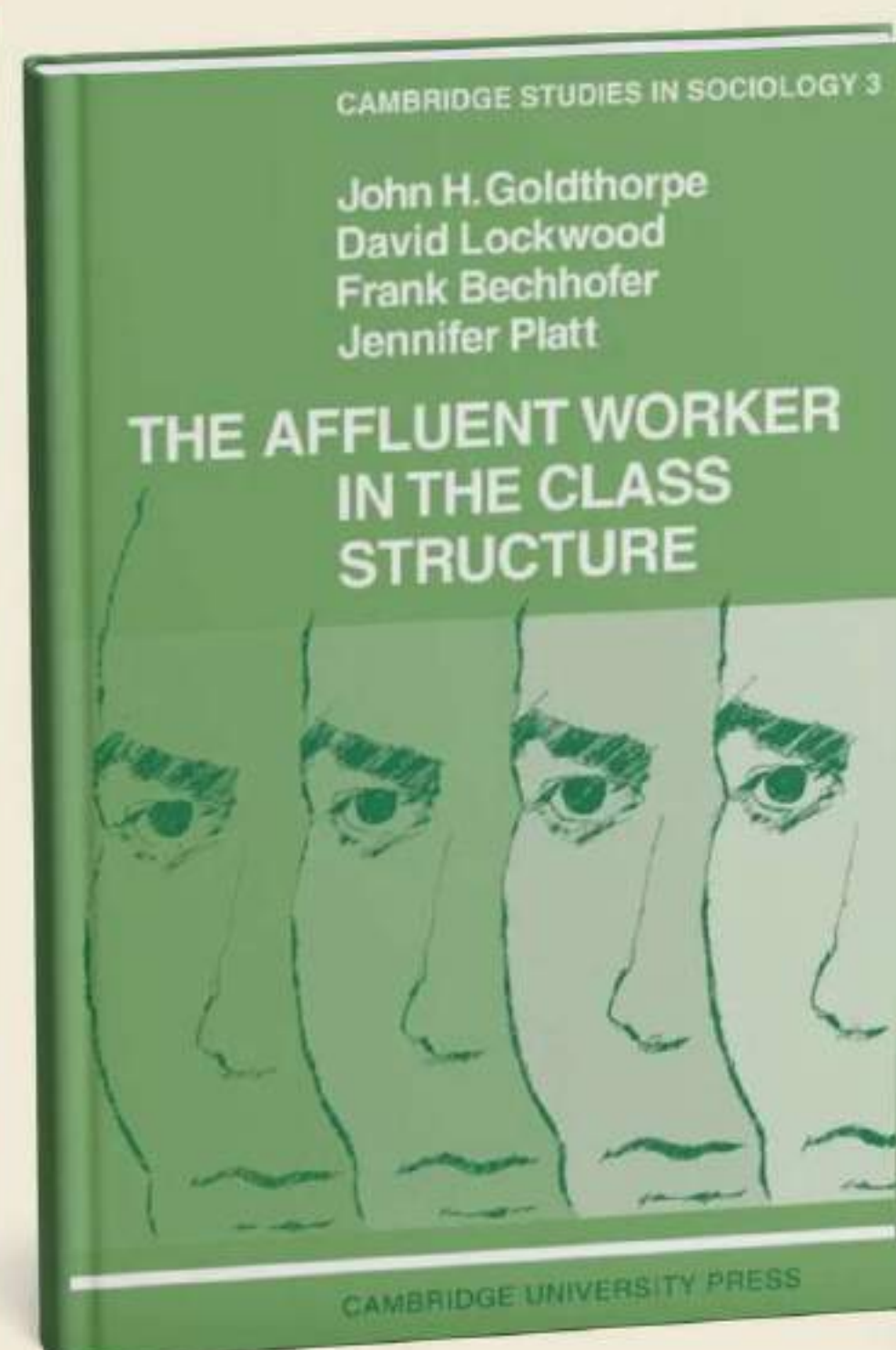
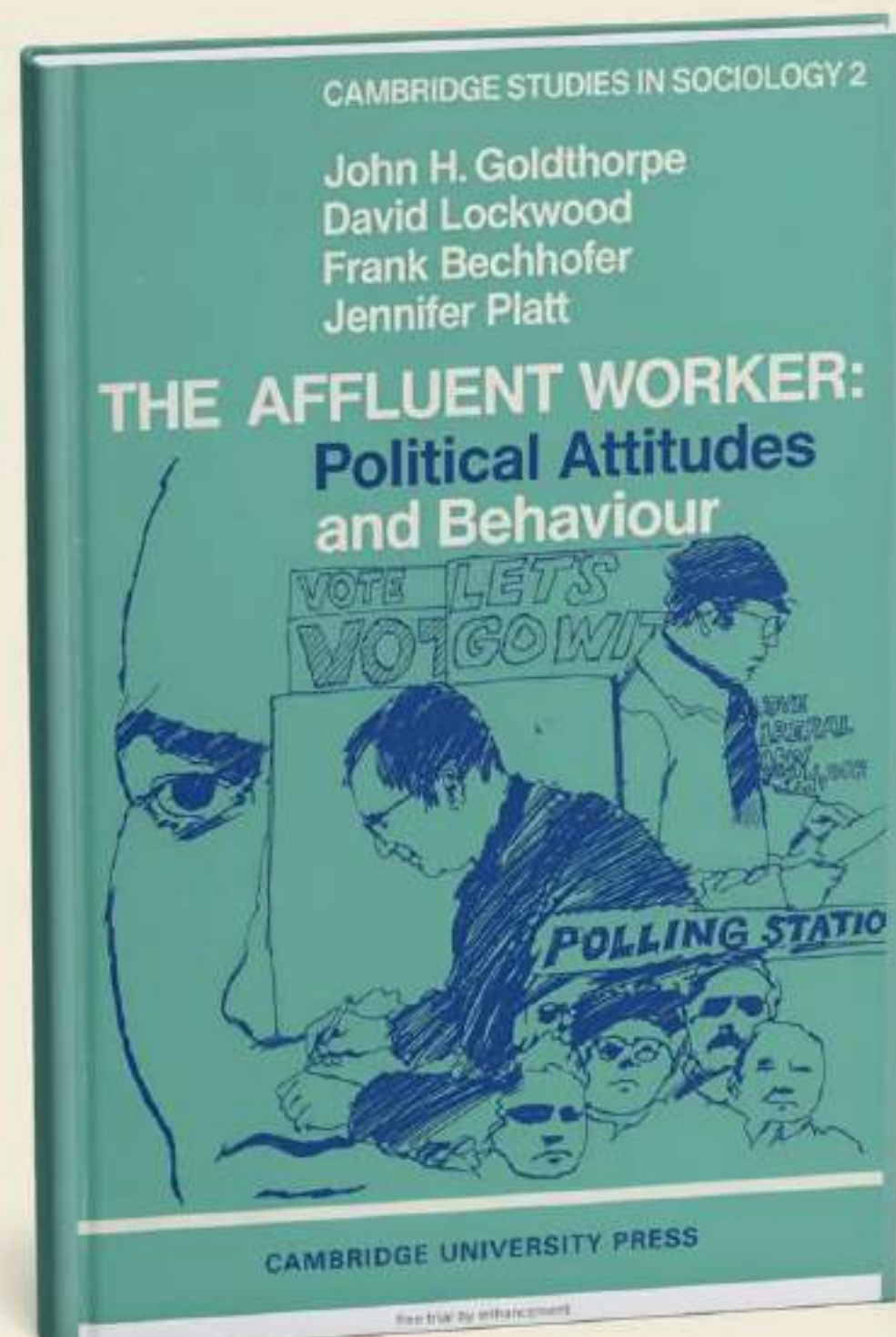
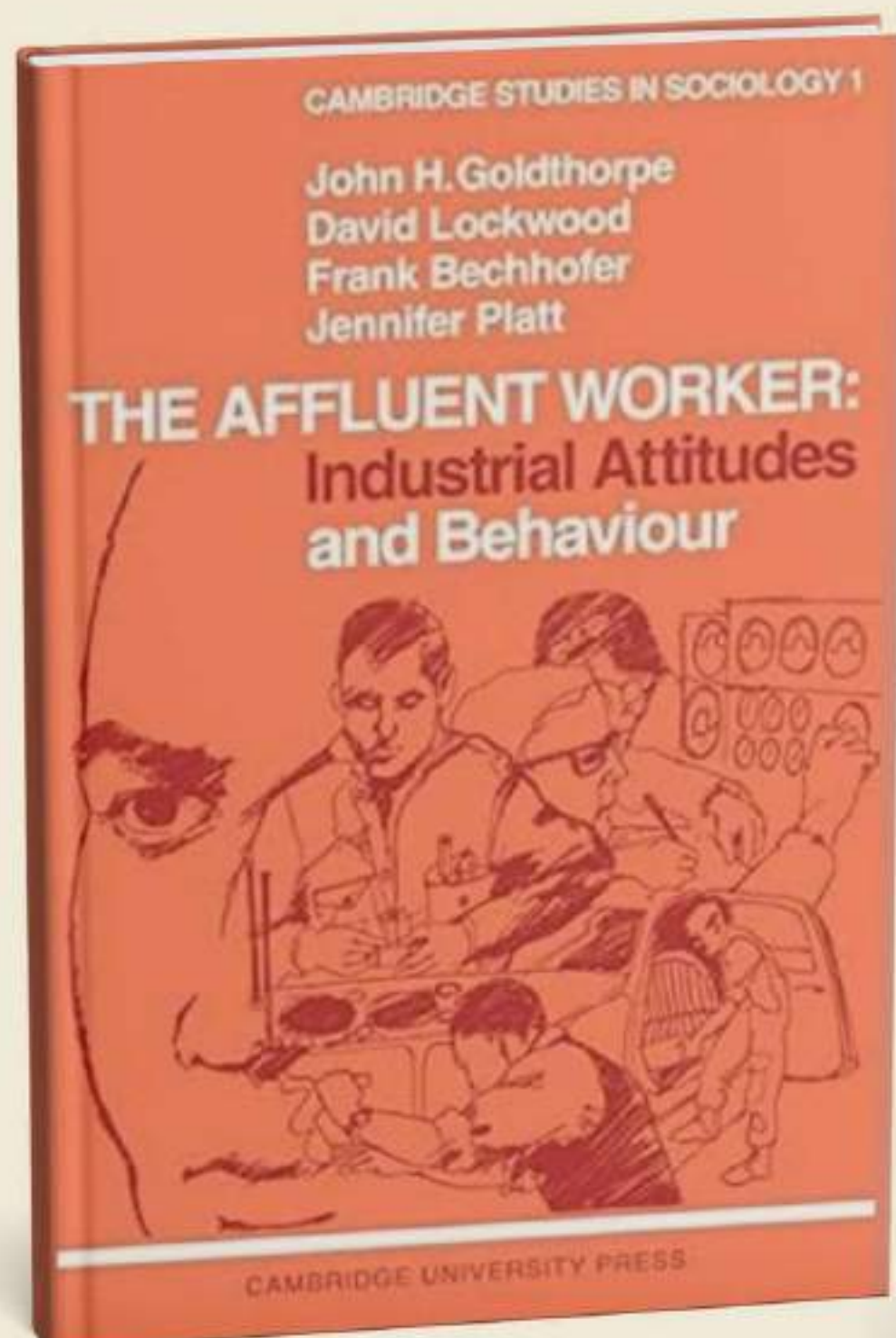
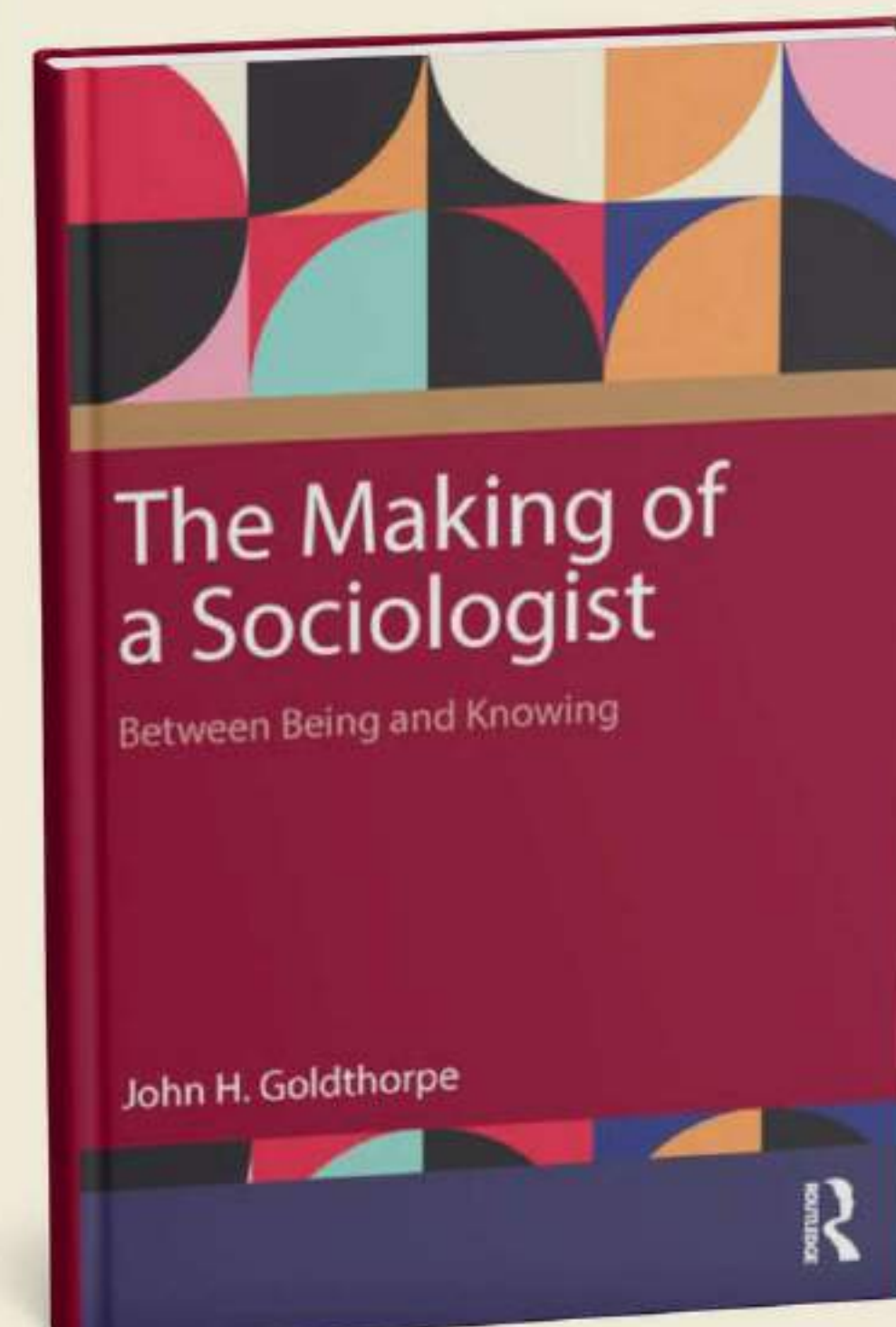
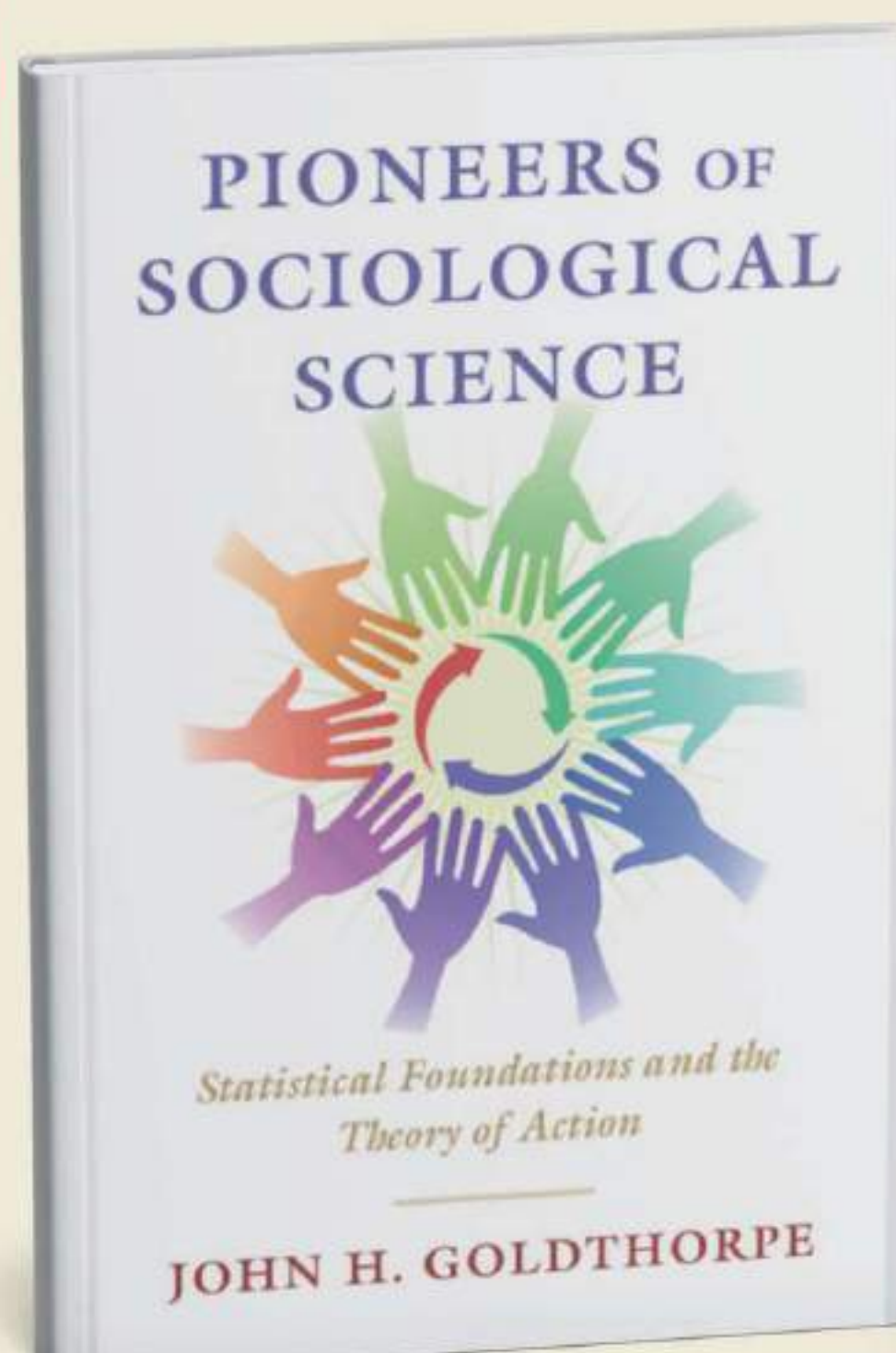
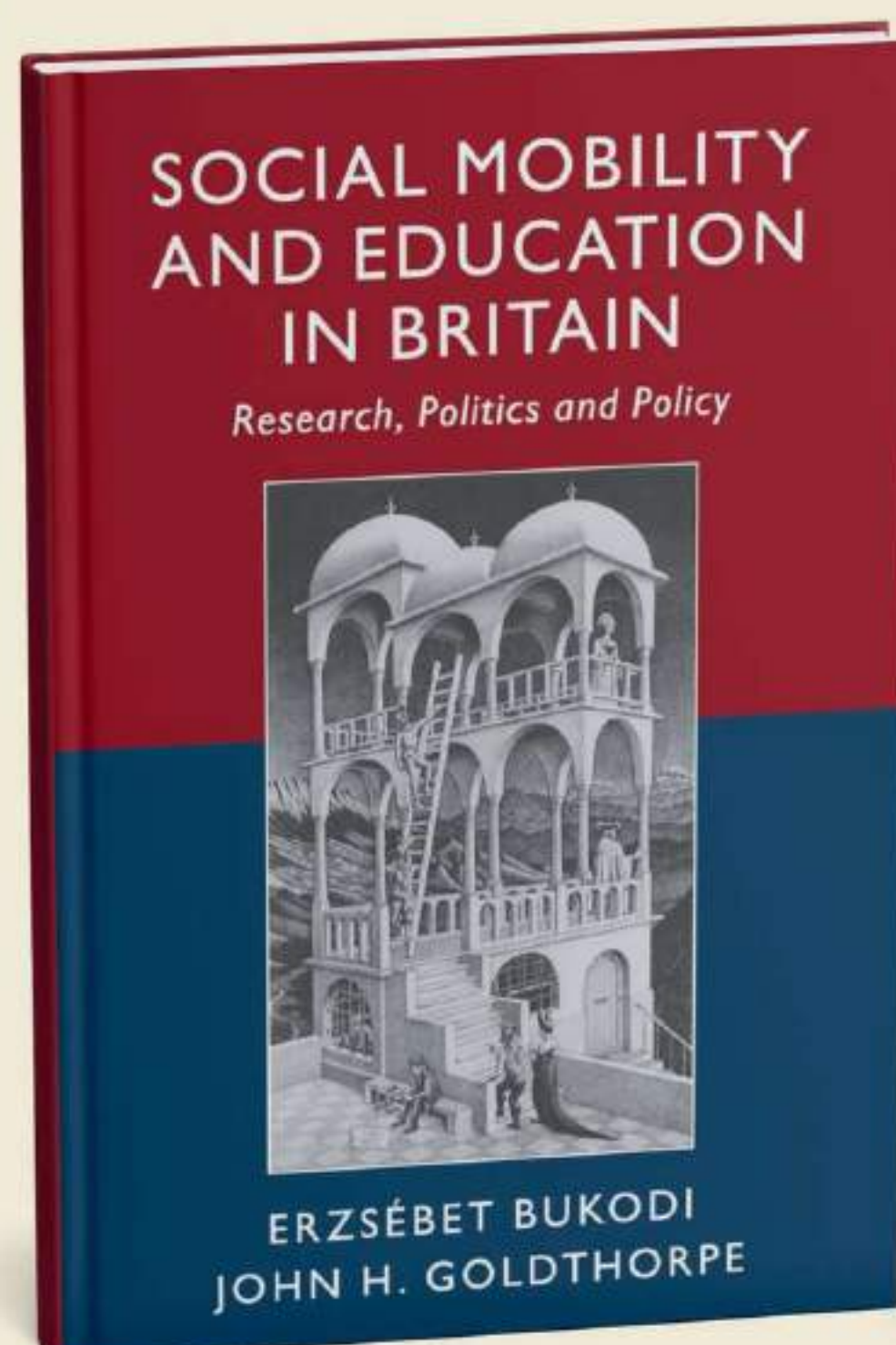
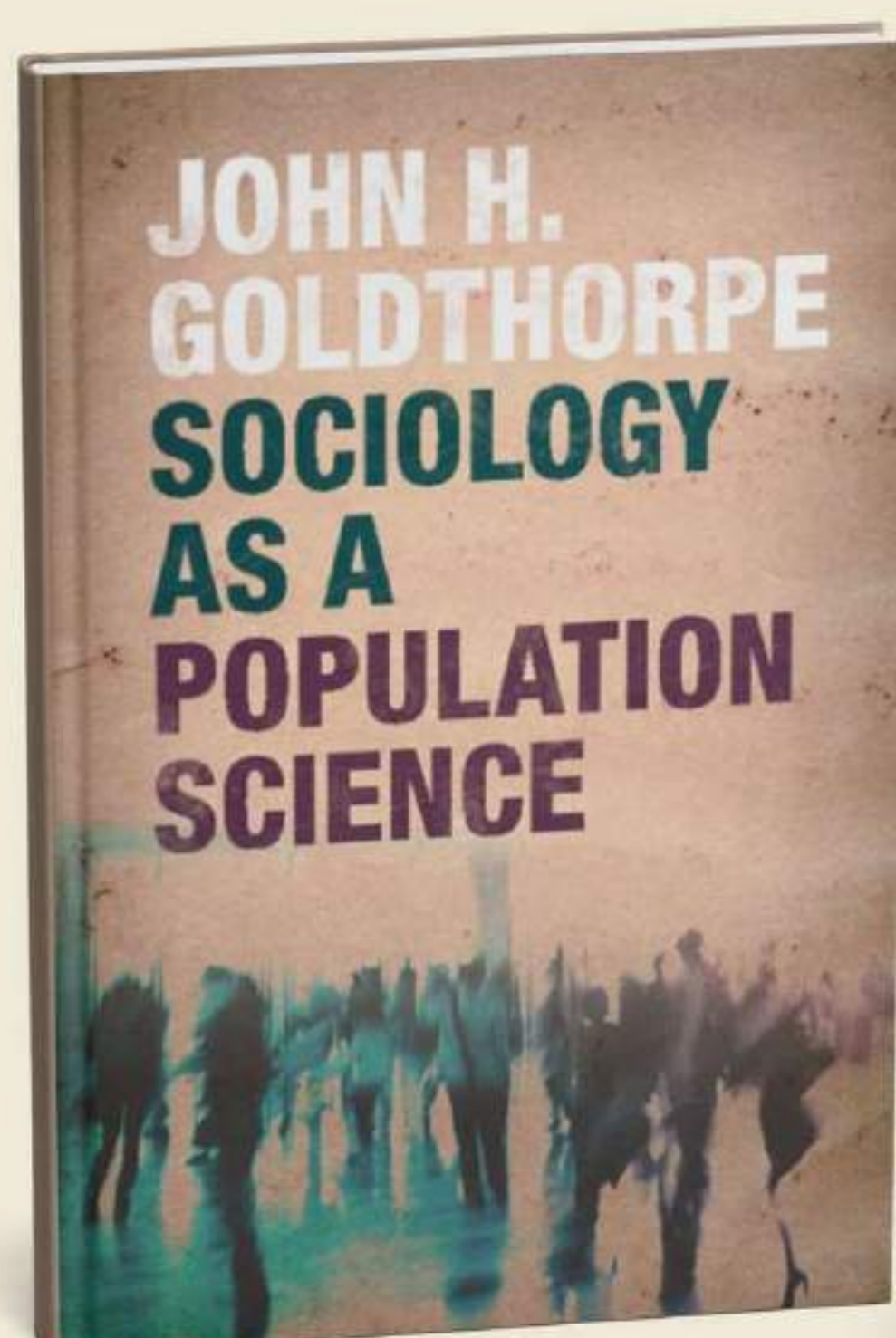
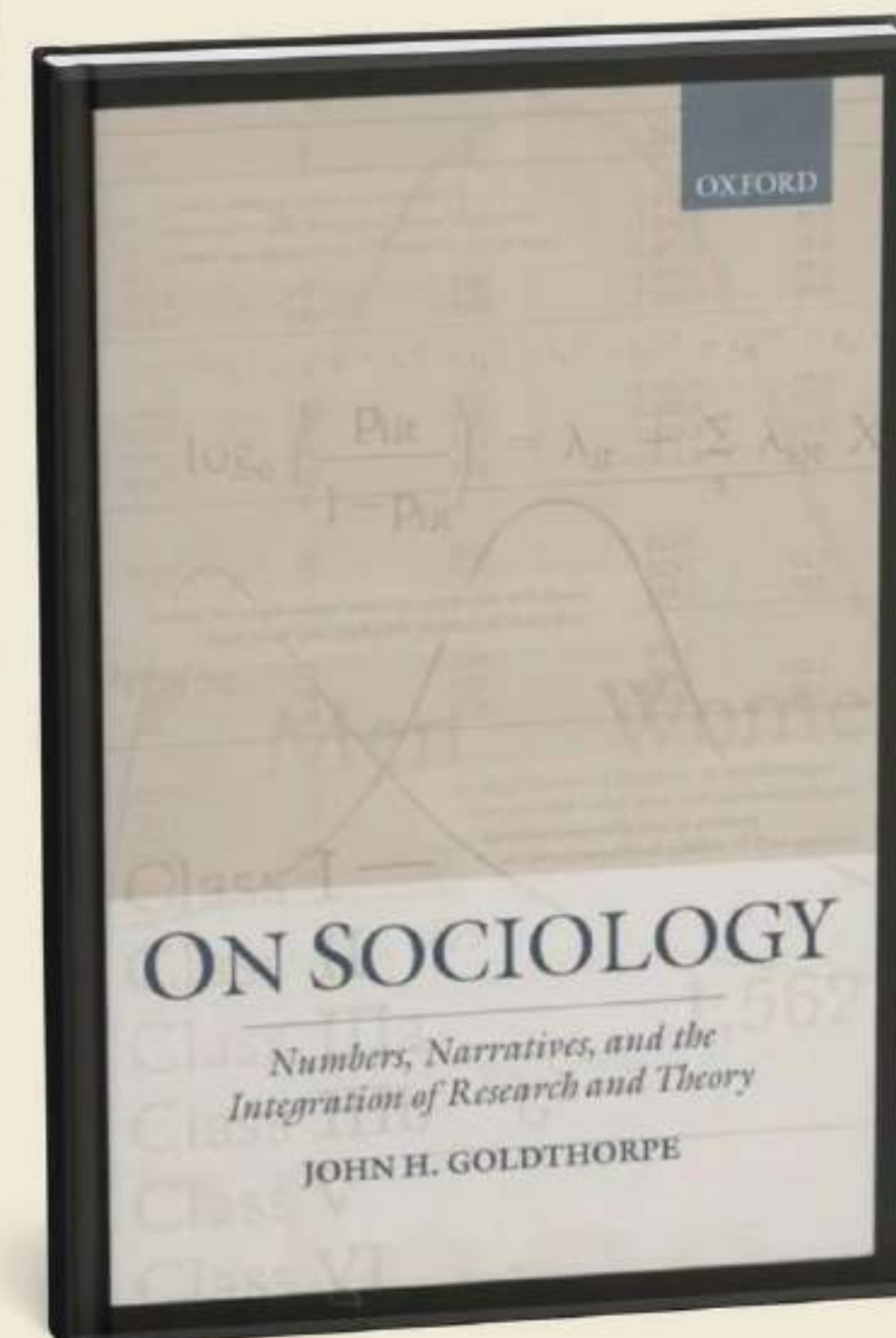
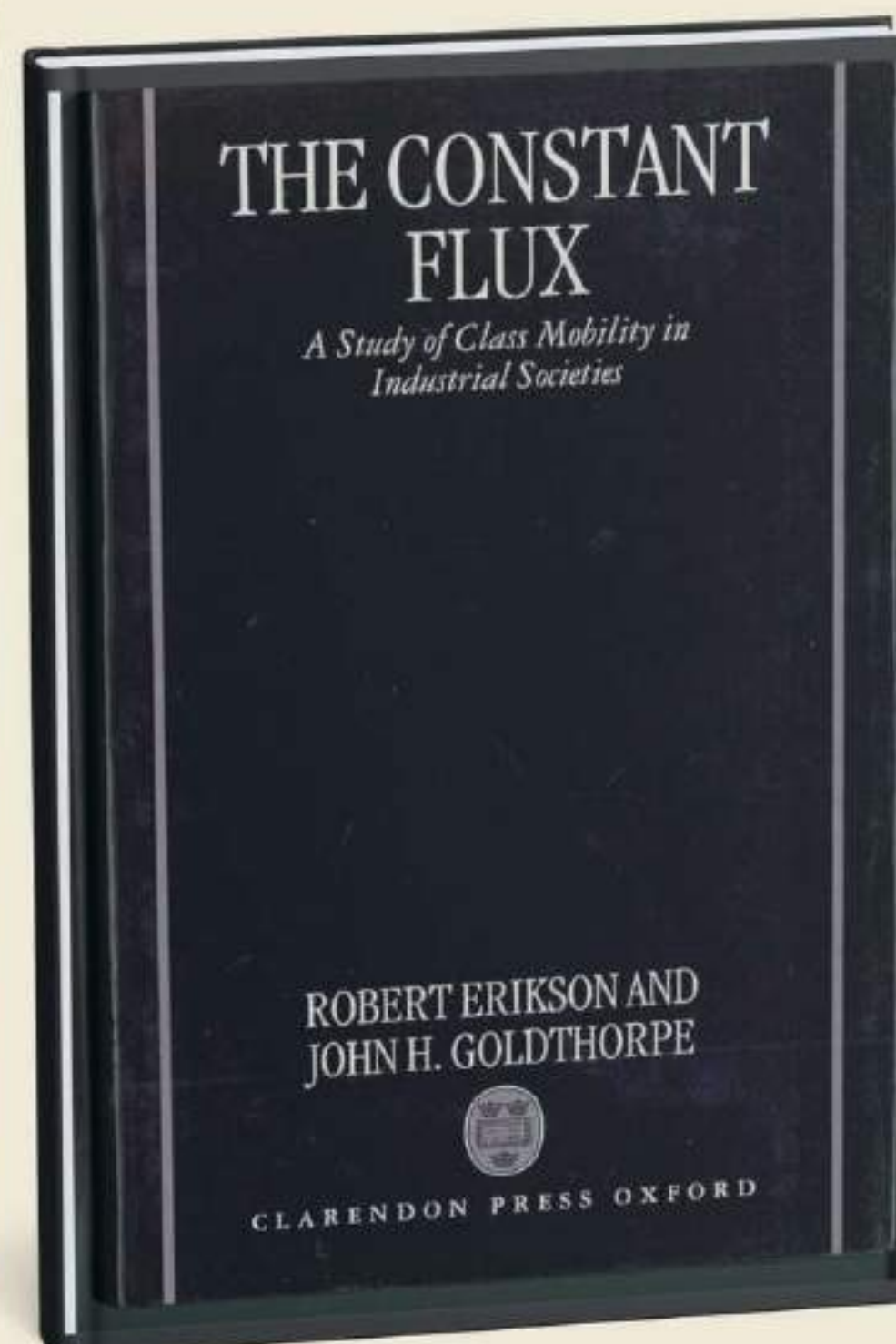
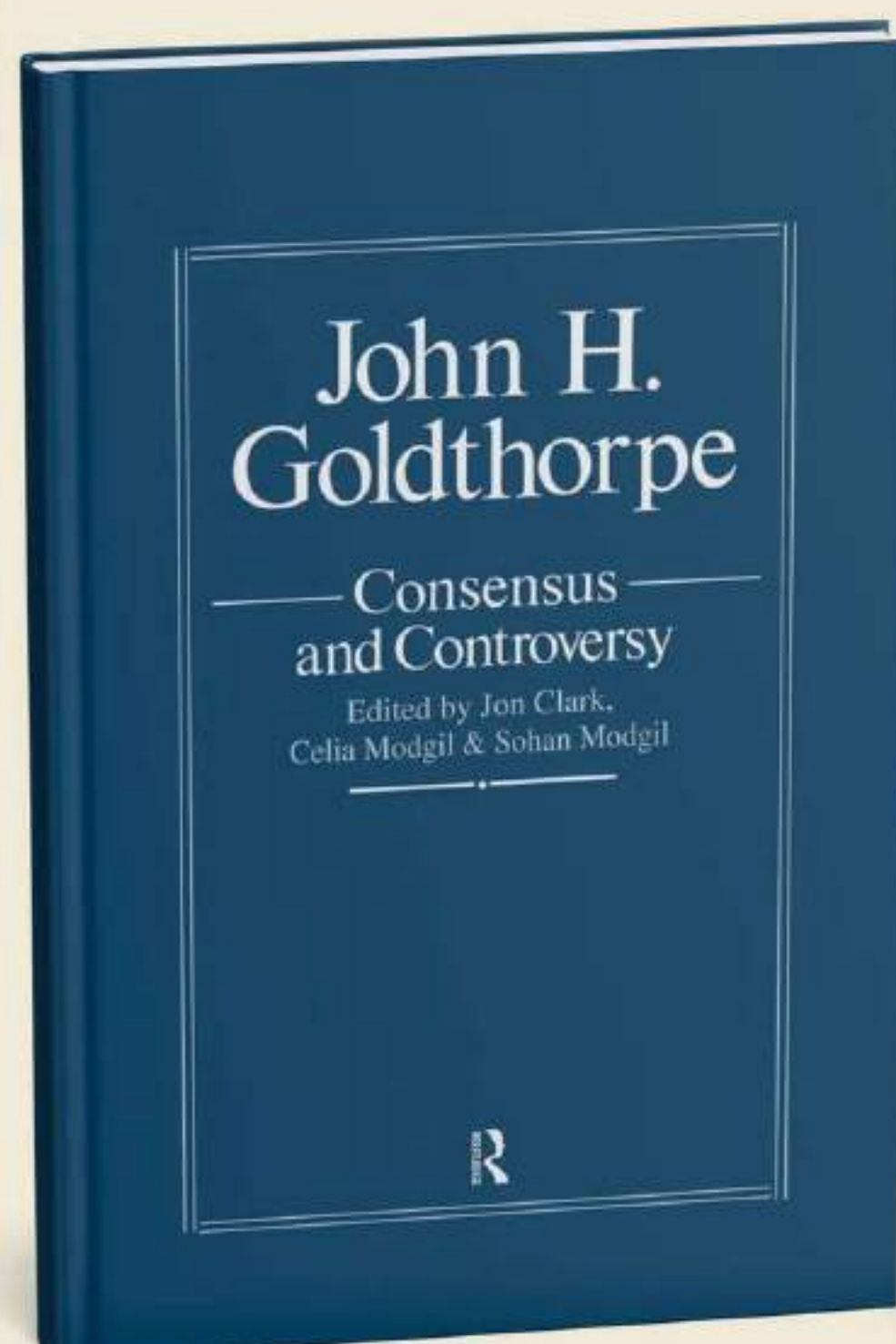
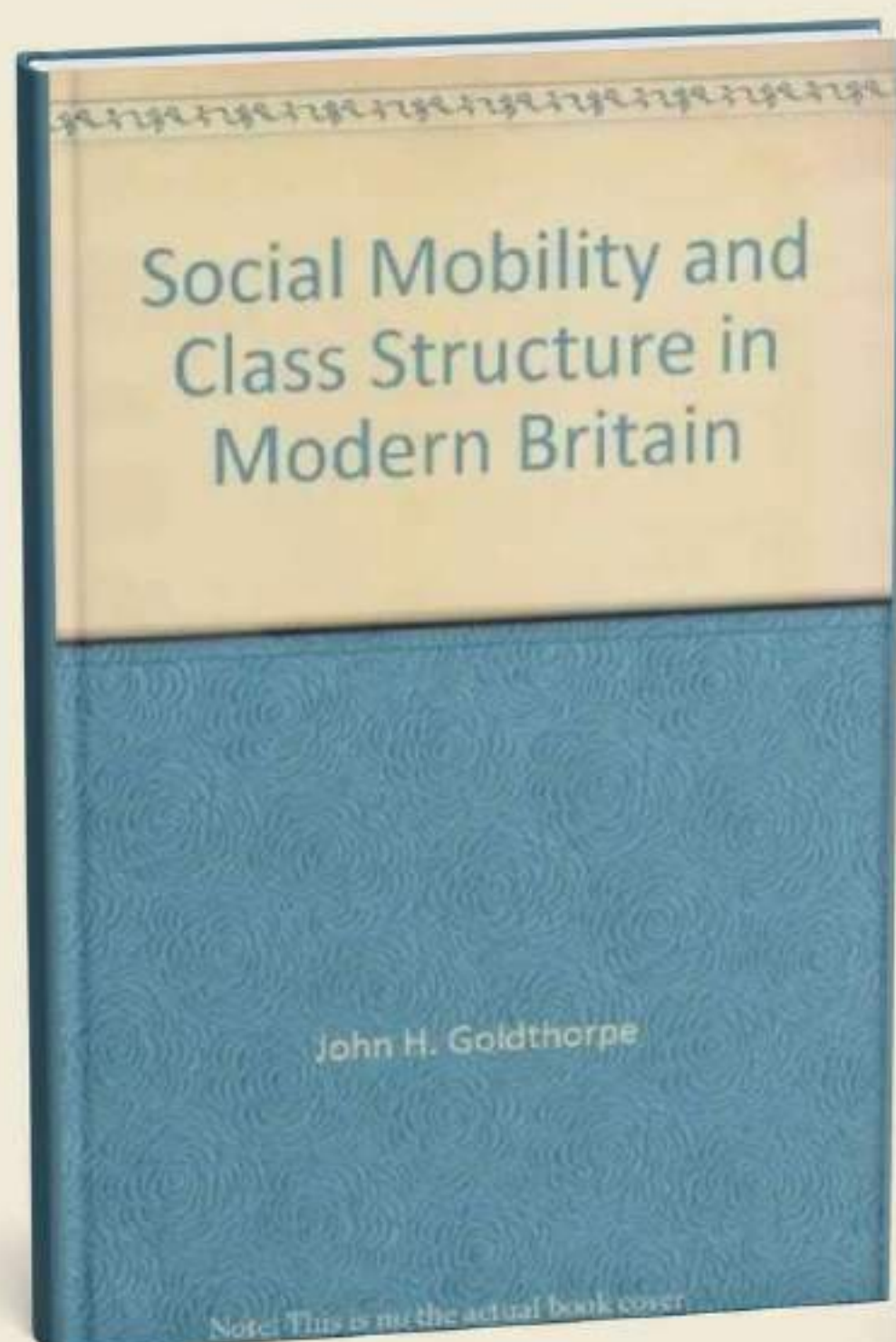




Tribute to *John Goldthorpe*



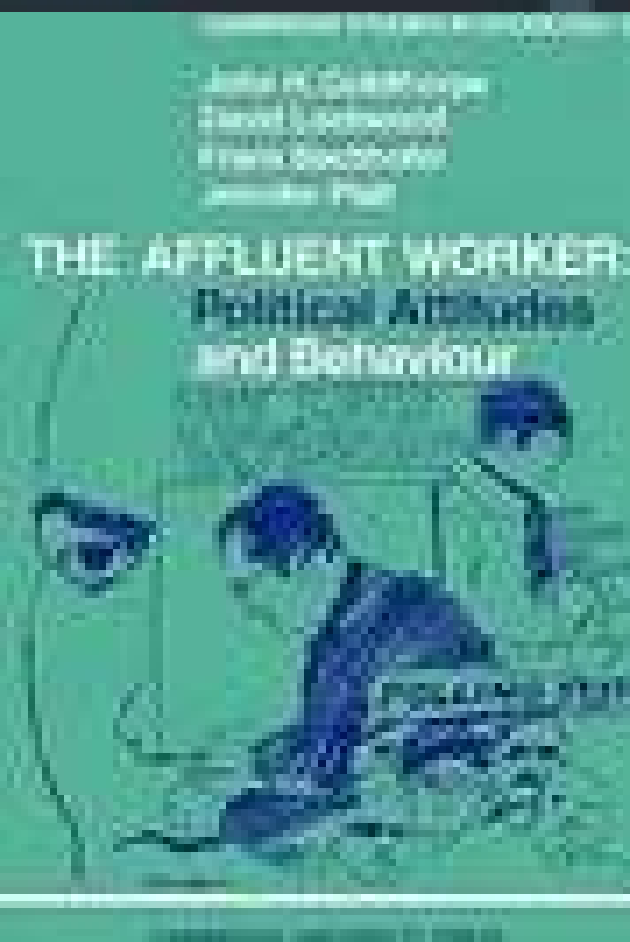
The Affluent Worker

Political Attitudes and Behaviour.

The Affluent Worker

Political Attitudes and Behaviour.

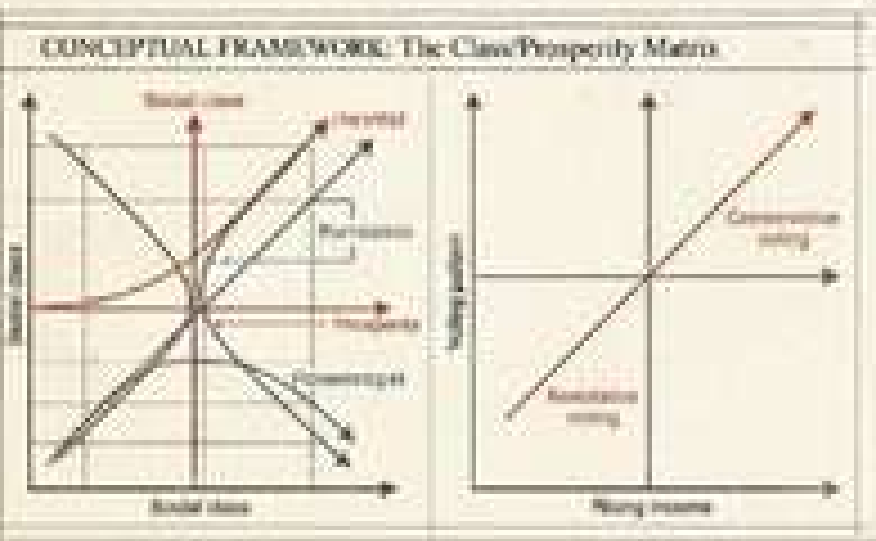
The Anatomy and Preservation of a 1968 Sociological Artifact.



FALSIFYING EMBOURGEOISEMENT

John H. Goldthorpe,
David Lockwood,
Frank Bechhofer,
and Jennifer Platt

The Affluent Worker: Political Attitudes and Behaviour (1968)



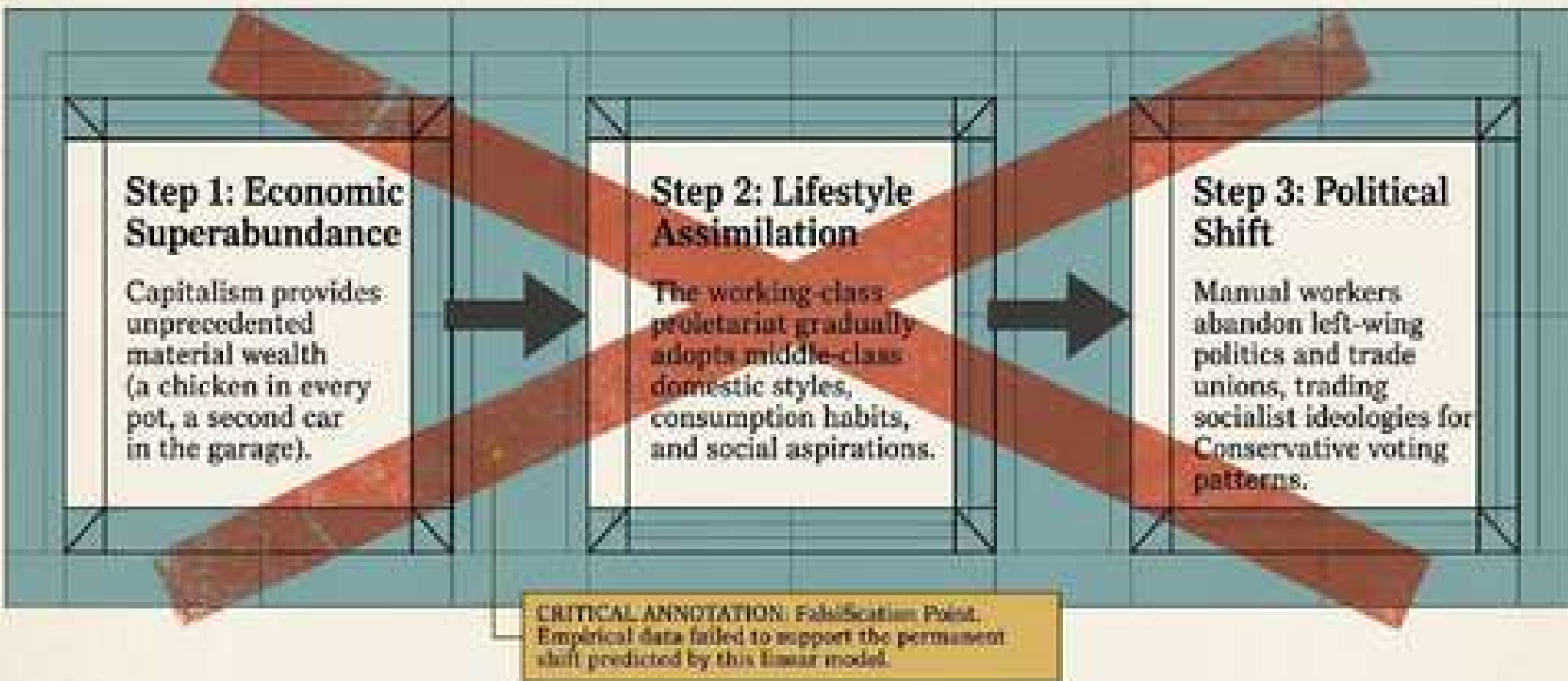
BRIEFING NOTE: How an intensive study of manual factory workers in Luton reshaped the 20th-century understanding of class structure, wealth, and voting behavior—proving that economic prosperity does not automatically erase working-class political identity.

SOURCE: Cambridge University Press, Sociology Series, No. 5.
DATA POINTS: Luton, Bedfordshire, 1968, 34-966.



THE EMBOURGEOISEMENT HYPOTHESIS

The mid-20th-century political assumption: The capitalist engine of production will permanently solve political division through widespread wealth distribution.

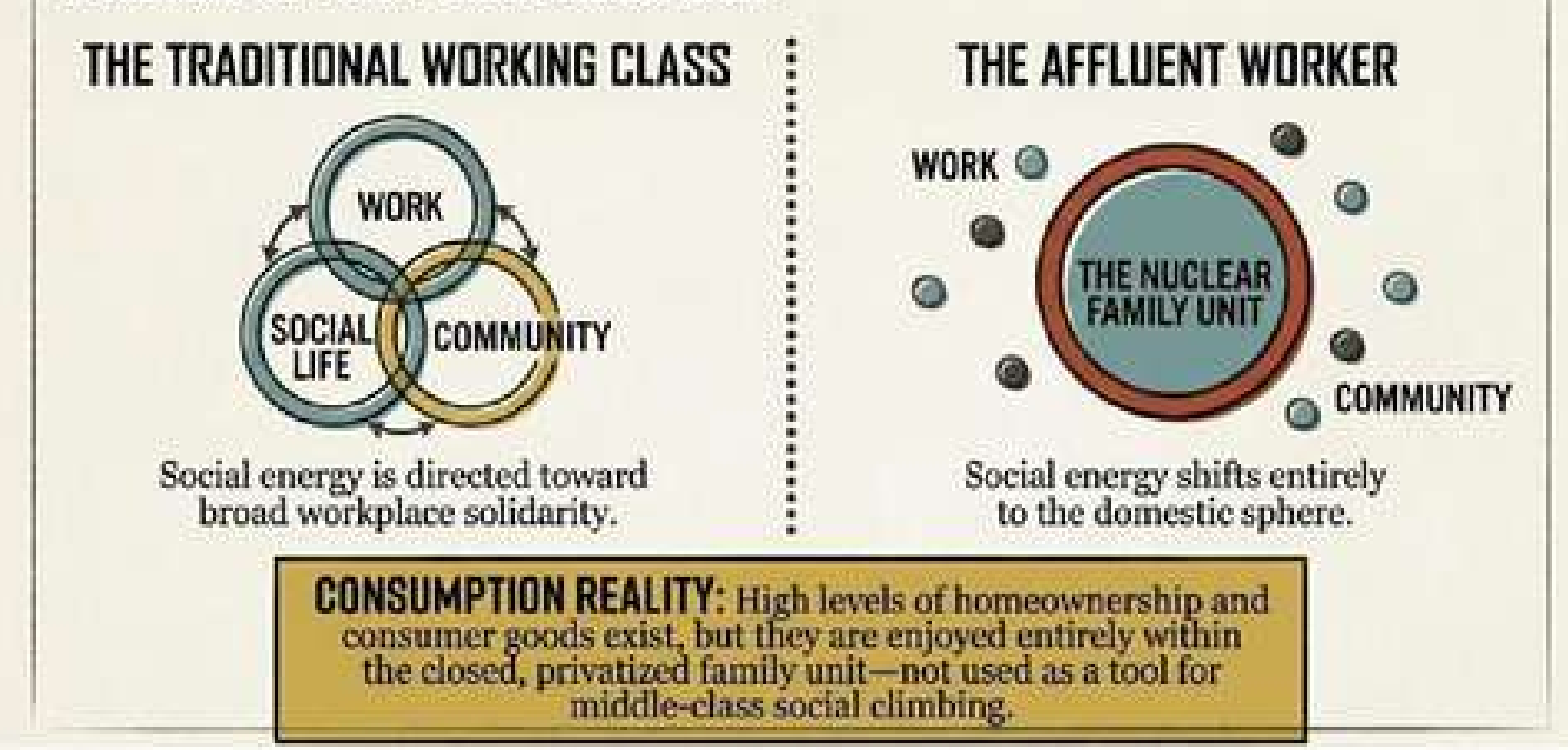


THE SOCIAL LABORATORY: LUTON, 1962

To find the absolute strongest case for embourgeoisement and test it. If the thesis holds anywhere, it must hold here.

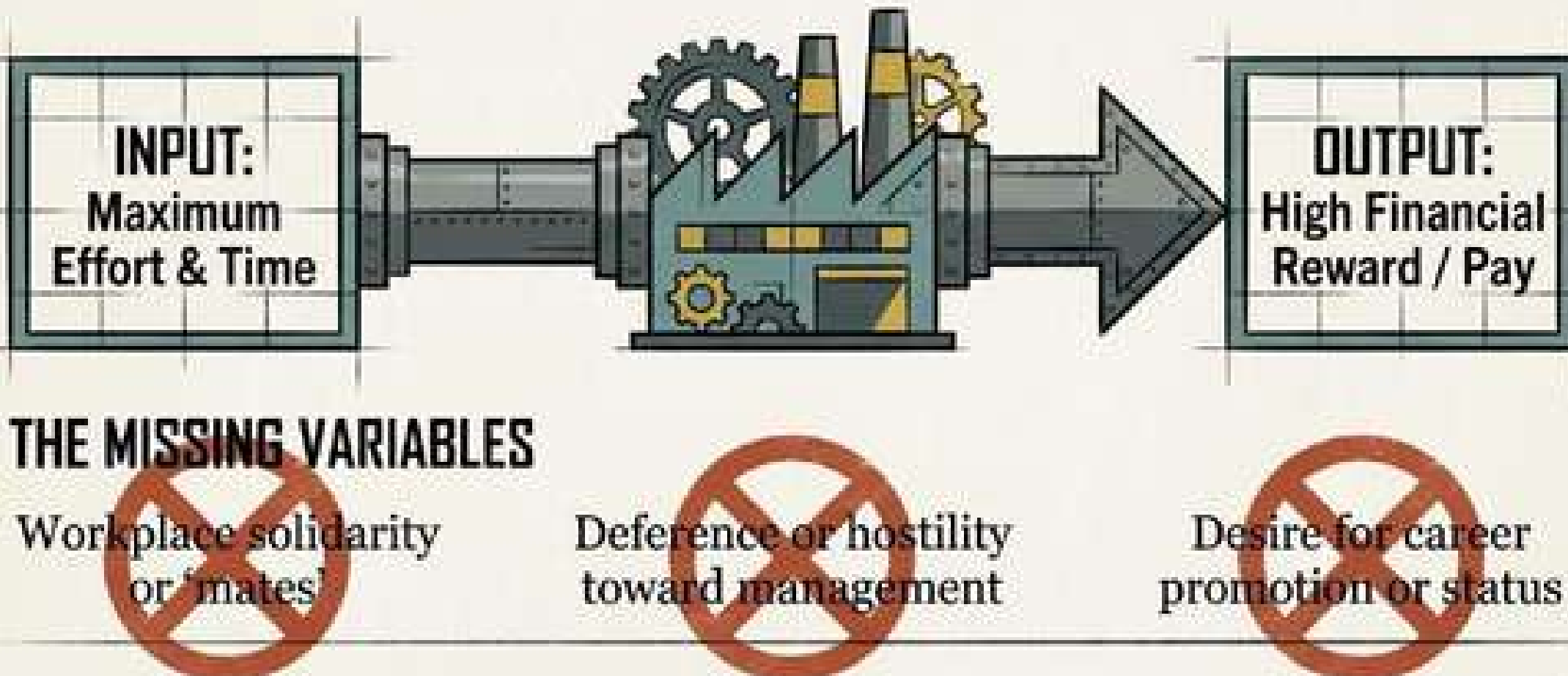
SUBJECT PROFILE			
1	LOCATION: Luton. A hub of rapid economic expansion, deliberately chosen for its distance from old industrial centers and folk memories of the depression.	2	THE SAMPLE: 229 male, shop-floor manual workers.
3	DEMOGRAPHICS: Young or early middle age, geographically mobile.	4	ECONOMIC STATUS: High regular incomes (at least £17 per week), enjoying a lower-middle-class standard of living with widespread consumer durables.

FINDING II: THE PRIVATIZED LIFE



FINDING I: THE INSTRUMENTAL WORKER

The affluent worker's relationship with the factory is entirely transactional, lacking affective content or loyalty. They behave as desiccated calculating machines.

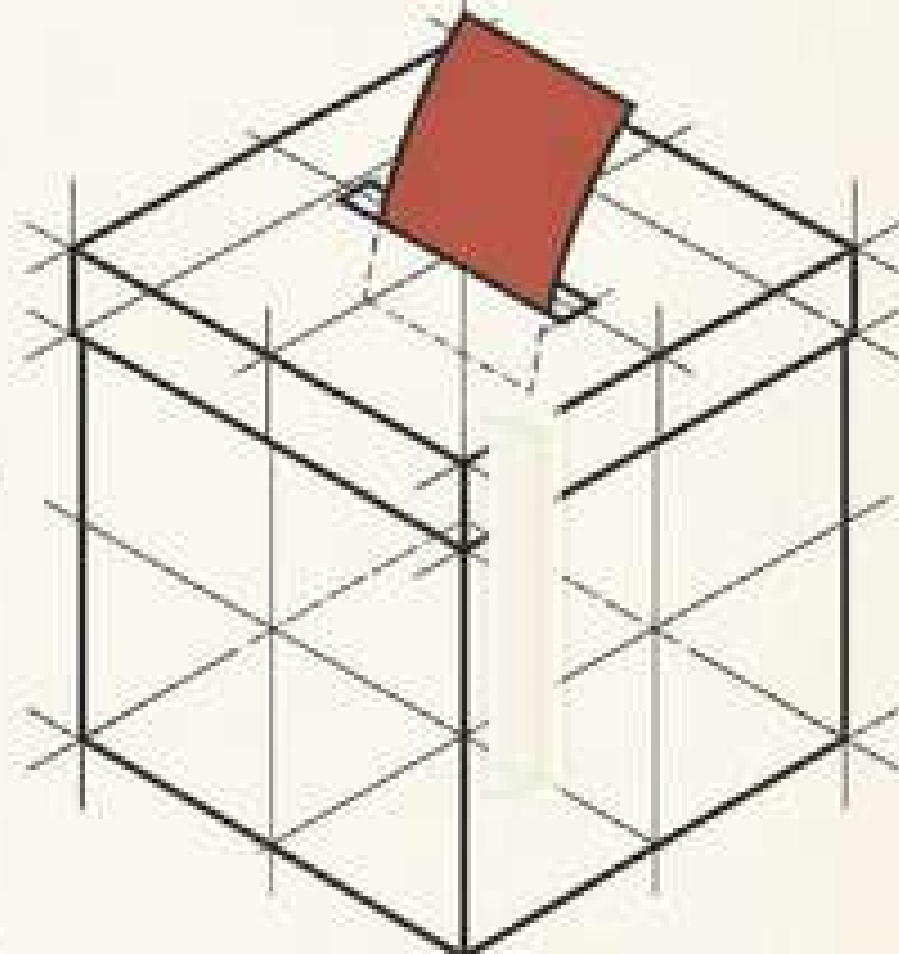


THE POLITICAL REALITY: FALSIFYING THE THESIS

70% Intended to Vote Labour

(1964 General Election)

- The Revelation:** Despite possessing middle-class incomes, homeownership, and consumer goods, support for the Labour Party remained remarkably widespread and stable.
- The Motivation:** Voting behavior was driven by a calculation of economic advantage rather than deep-seated traditional loyalty or abstract socialist principles.
- Union Paradox:** Low participation in formal union branch meetings, but highly aggressive interest in localized, shop-floor wage bargaining.



SYNTHESIS: REDEFINING THE CLASS MAP

	TRADITIONAL WORKER	MIDDLE CLASS	THE AFFLUENT WORKER
ATTITUDE TO WORK	Solidarity & Mates	Career & Promotion	Instrumental & Marketplace
SOCIAL LIFE	Communal & Affective	Broad Social Networks	Privatized & Family-Centric
POLITICAL DRIVERS	Class Loyalty & Tradition	Status Quo & Conservative	Calculated Economic Advantage & Labour

TAKEAWAY: The 'Affluent Worker' represents a distinct structural shift within working-class attitudes, completely refuting the idea of assimilation into the middle class.

THE ACHIEVEMENT

- Successfully shattered the perceived inevitability of the Embourgeoisement thesis.
- Proved conclusively that economic prosperity and consumerism do not automatically trigger right-wing ideological shifts in the working class.

THE ENDURING DEBATE

- Did the researchers successfully map a new, universal 'instrumental' class archetype?
- Or did they accidentally measure the cultural stubbornness of Welsh and Irish migrants displaced in an English factory town?

The Affluent Worker remains a foundational text, proving that studying one anomalous industrial situation deeply can force a total rethink of macro-political assumptions.

Claudia Baeza: assisted with NotebookLM

WORKFORCE SEGMENT A:
INDUSTRIAL LABOR

13 Gern

THE AFFLUENT WORKER IN THE CLASS STRUCTURE

A visual synthesis of the seminal 1969 sociological study
by Goldthorpe, Lockwood, Bechhofer, and Platt.

MANUFACTURING
OUTPUT

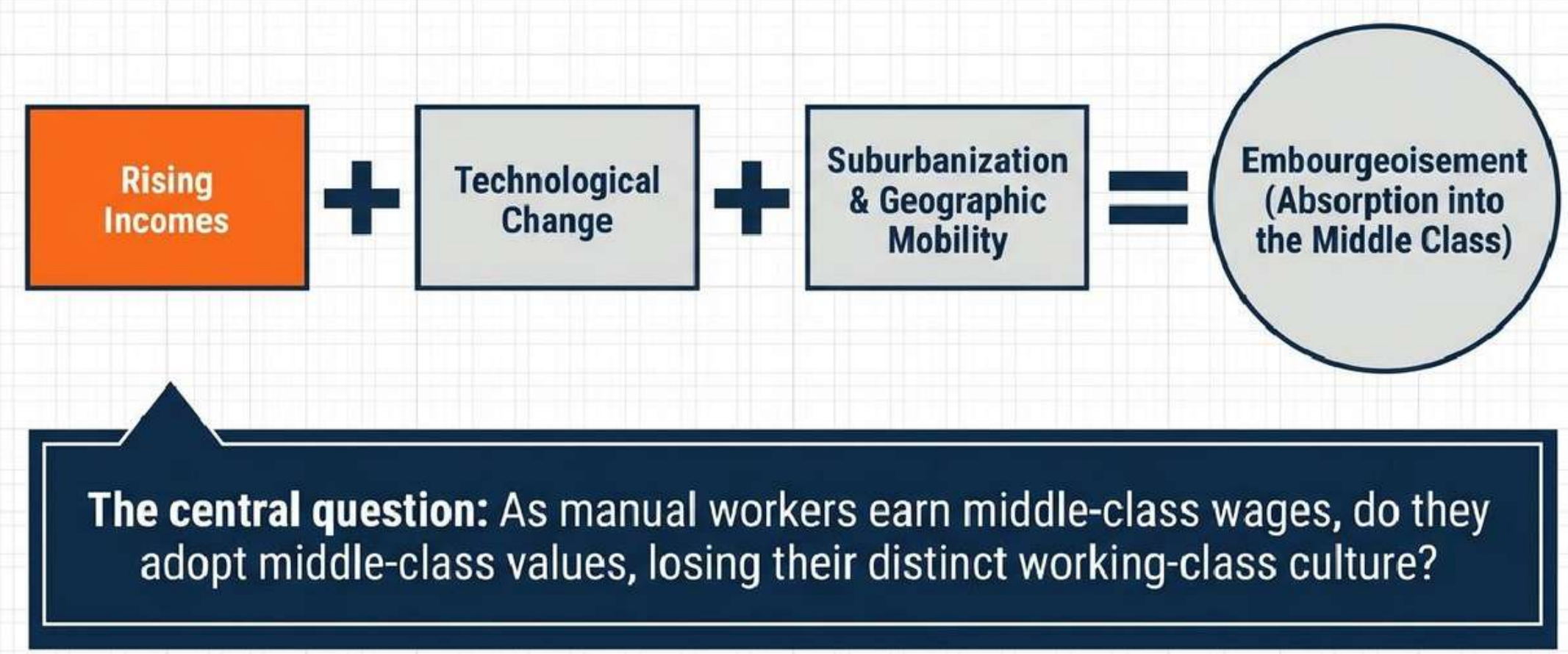
20 Gern

John H. Goldthorpe
David Lockwood
Frank Bechhofer
Jennifer Platt

THE AFFLUENT WORKER IN THE CLASS STRUCTURE

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

The prevailing theory of the 1960s: Affluence equals assimilation.



In the backdrop of Marxist predictions of increasing alienation, bourgeois sociology predicted **total assimilation**. Goldthorpe et al. sought to test this.

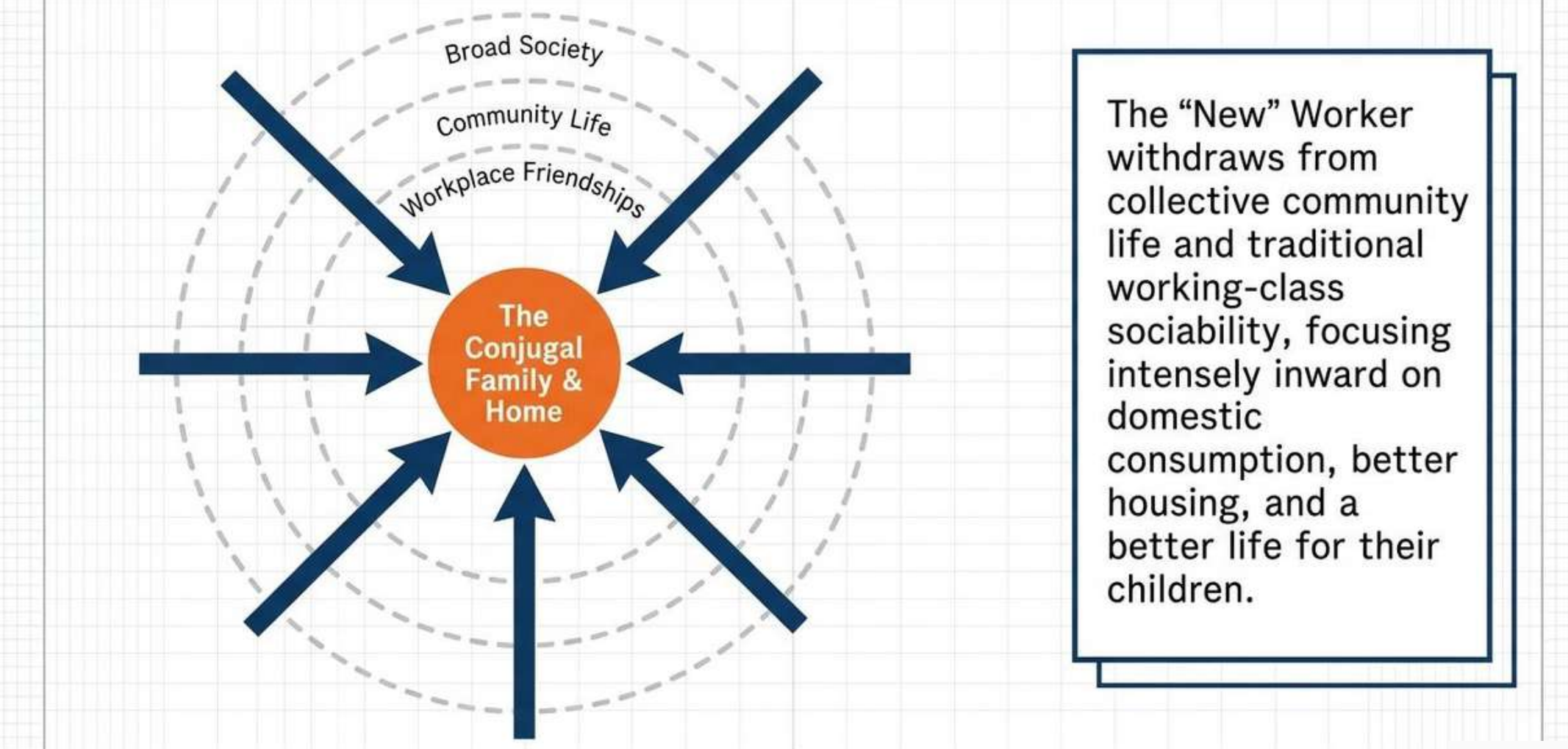
The data rejects the Embourgeoisement Thesis.

EMBOURGEOISEMENT

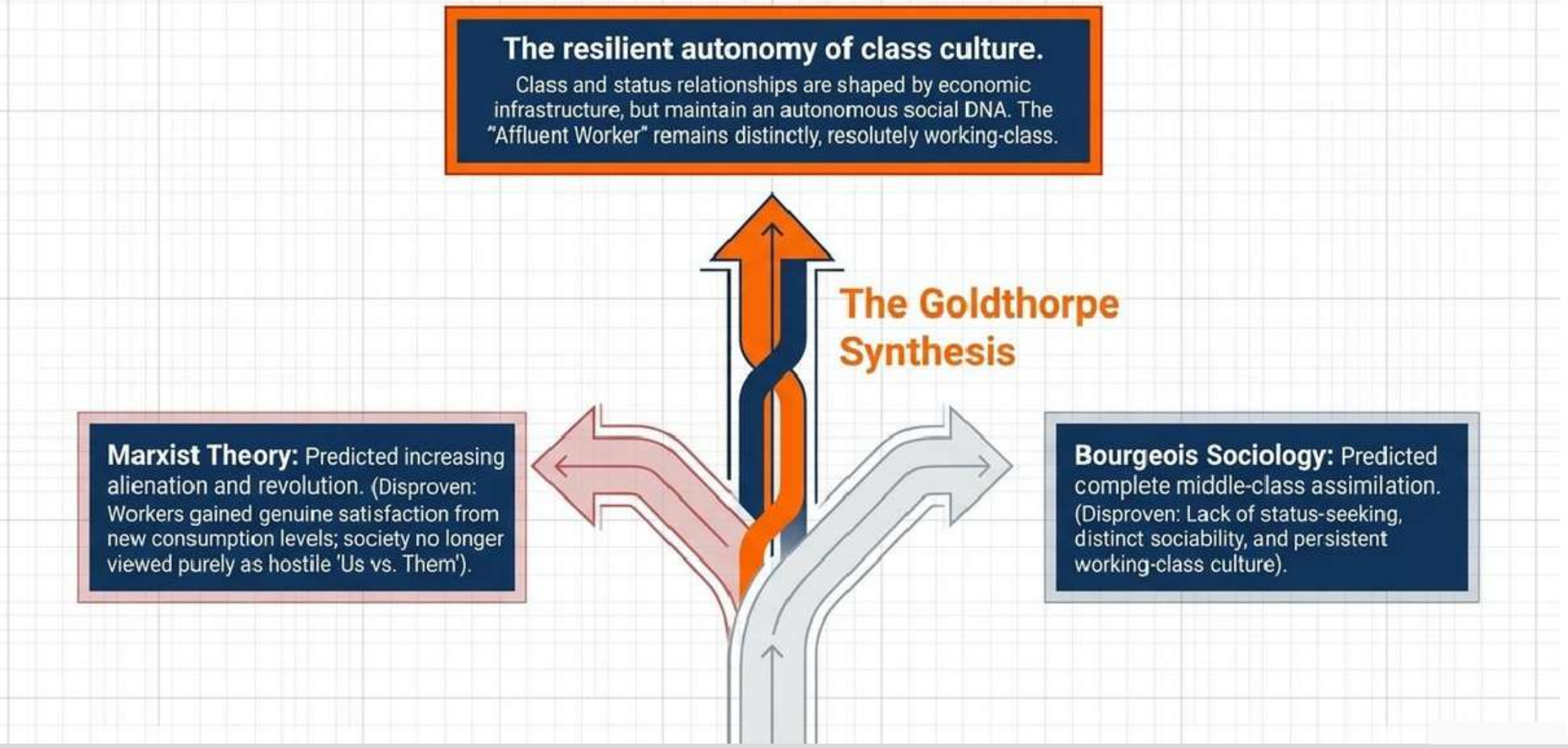
Despite progressive affluence, the manual workers studied display few middle-class traits. Affluence does not equal assimilation. The working class is actively resisting absorption into the middle strata.

Income	Status
Blue-collar workers achieved parity with white-collar clerks.	The majority remained downwardly mobile in terms of social status despite income gains.

The emergence of the “Privatized” Worker



A third path in sociological theory



Designing the ultimate stress test in Luton.

The Sample

229 Affluent Blue-Collar Workers 54 White-Collar Clerks

The Environment

- Industries:** Chemical, Automobile, Ball-bearing manufacturing.
- Conditions:** Progressive, employee-oriented management; high job security.

The Premise

The Crucial Condition: These were atypical workers deliberately chosen for their high incomes and modern industrial environments. If the embourgeoisement process exists anywhere, it must be present here.

Diverging values on the factory floor:
The World of Work.

Dimension	Affluent Manual Worker	White-Collar Clerk
Meaning of Work	Instrumental (Labor is merely a tool for financial gain)	Inherent Satisfaction (Work holds intrinsic personal value)
Ambition & Mobility	Seeks higher pay; highly willing to sacrifice for money; views promotion as unlikely and uninteresting	Seeks higher social status; views career as a ladder of advancement
View of Society	Earnings-based (‘Us vs. Them’ softening into an income focus)	Complex status hierarchy

Manual workers entirely ignored employer-sponsored social activities and cared nothing for status distinctions like separate canteens.

Economic convergence is not cultural assimilation.

Assimilation (The False Assumption)

The belief that rising income automatically leads to the complete adoption of middle-class norms, values, and social patterns.

What Converges: Consumption levels, desire for affluence, privatization of the home.

Convergence (The Reality)

Economic and consumption levels meet, but distinct social and cultural patterns persist alongside each other without merging.

What Remains Parallel: Sociability, attitudes toward work, status-striving, and long-term planning. Workers cannot budget or plan spending in a middle-class fashion—a persistent remnant of working-class DNA.

Debunking the Embourgeoisement Thesis

Working-class affluence—higher incomes and homeownership—did not lead to middle-class conservative voting, though methodological flaws complicate the findings.

The ‘Embourgeoisement’ Myth	The ‘Instrumental Voting’ Reality
Assumes economic affluence automatically causes the working class to assimilate into middle-class lifestyles and adopt Conservative Party voting patterns.	Workers vote Labour based on a practical “calculation of advantage” rather than abstract loyalty. They align with the party they believe serves their specific class and financial interests.

Affluence itself does **not** endanger loyalty to the Labour Party. Political shifts are instead directly driven by ties to the white-collar world:

- White-Collar Ties
 - Upbringing in a white-collar family.
 - Personal history of working in a white-collar job.
 - Having a wife who works in a white-collar job.

70%

Of manual workers sampled voted Labour in 1955 and 1959 (and intended to repeat in 1964).

3 out of 5

Believed a Labour government would make them financially better off.

71%

The Luton Sample Bias

71 percent of the studied sample consisted of immigrants to the town of Luton, heavily overrepresenting populations from the Irish Republic and Wales.

Because these demographics possess a built-in historical bias in favor of the Labour Party, the study’s findings regarding working-class Labour retention may be artificially inflated.

Claudia Baeza: assisted with NotebookLM

The Sociological Blueprint: Deconstructing the Hope-Goldthorpe Scale

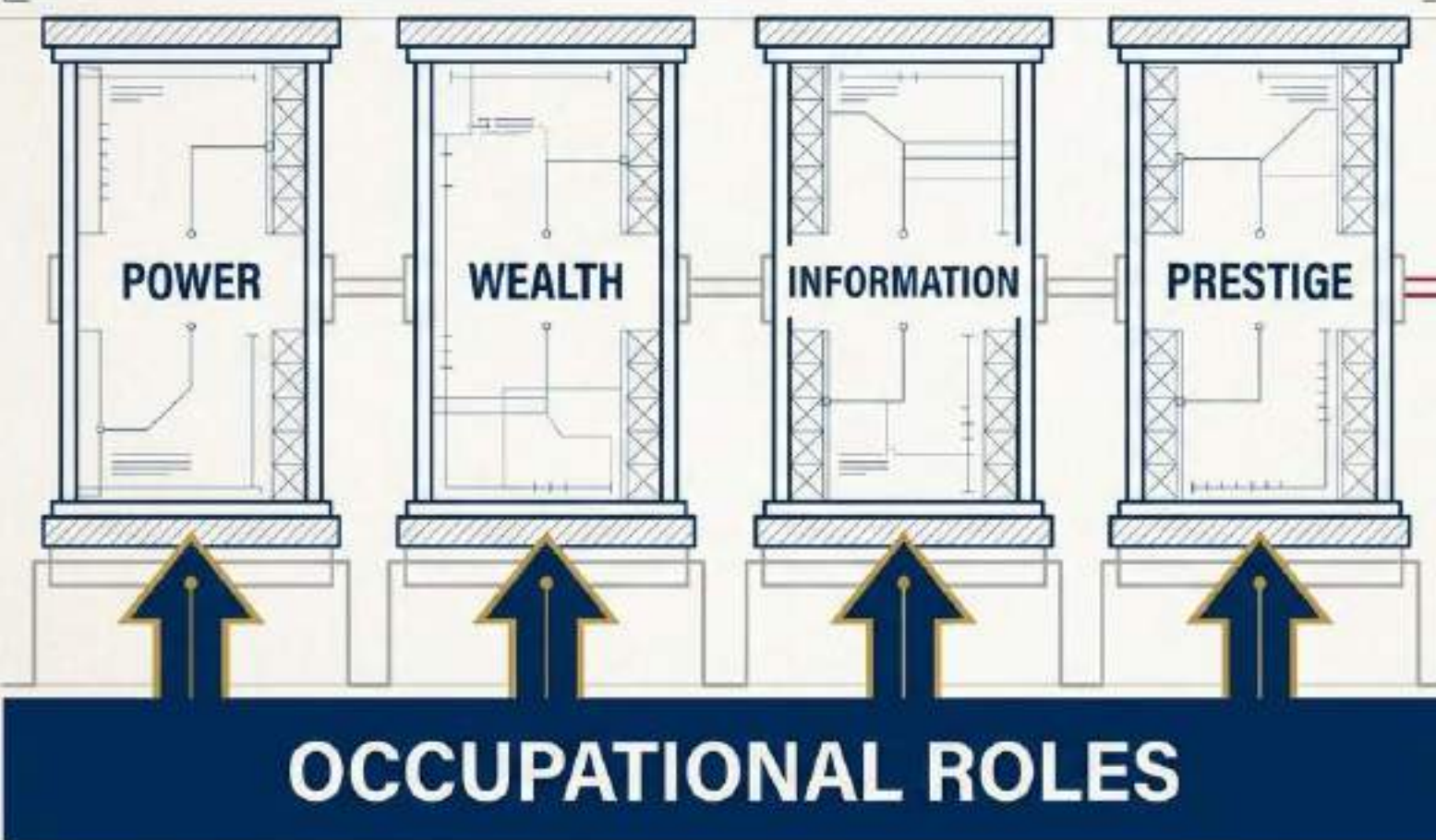
A structural breakdown and synthesis of peer reviews on
The Social Grading of Occupations (1974)

Authors:	J.H. Goldthorpe and K. Hope
Publisher:	Oxford: Clarendon Press (Oxford Studies in Social Mobility)
Deck Intent:	Synthesizing the academic reception (Coxon, Haller, Noble, Svalastoga) of a 50-year methodological paradigm shift.



The 50-Year Quest to Map Stratification

The Core Assumption: For over half a century, sociologists have labored to measure occupational mobility. Why? Because occupational roles are the structural bedrock of modern society.



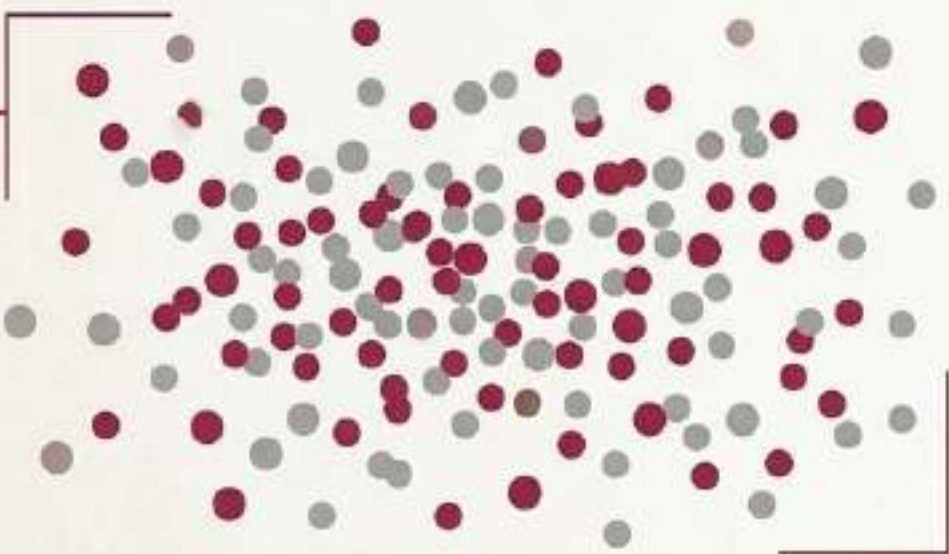
The Catalyst for Goldthorpe & Hope

- Previous attempts (like the Hall & Jones scale) relied on flawed, inconsistent popular evaluations of "prestige."
- G&H set out to build a rigorously objective scale to serve as the definitive foundation for the Oxford studies of occupational mobility.

The Core Objective: Scaling Categories, Not Titles

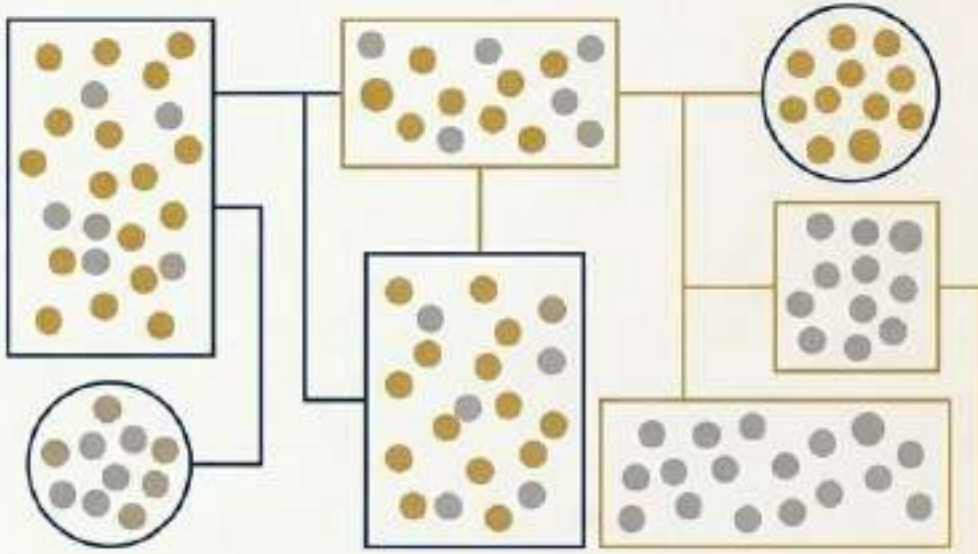
The Goal: To create a highly reliable, finely graded index that maps perfectly to measurable, stable demographic groups, insulating the data from the whims of isolated job title evaluations.

The Traditional Approach



Attempting to scale thousands of specific, fluid occupational titles individually leads to unreliability and subjective noise.

The Hope-Goldthorpe Pivot



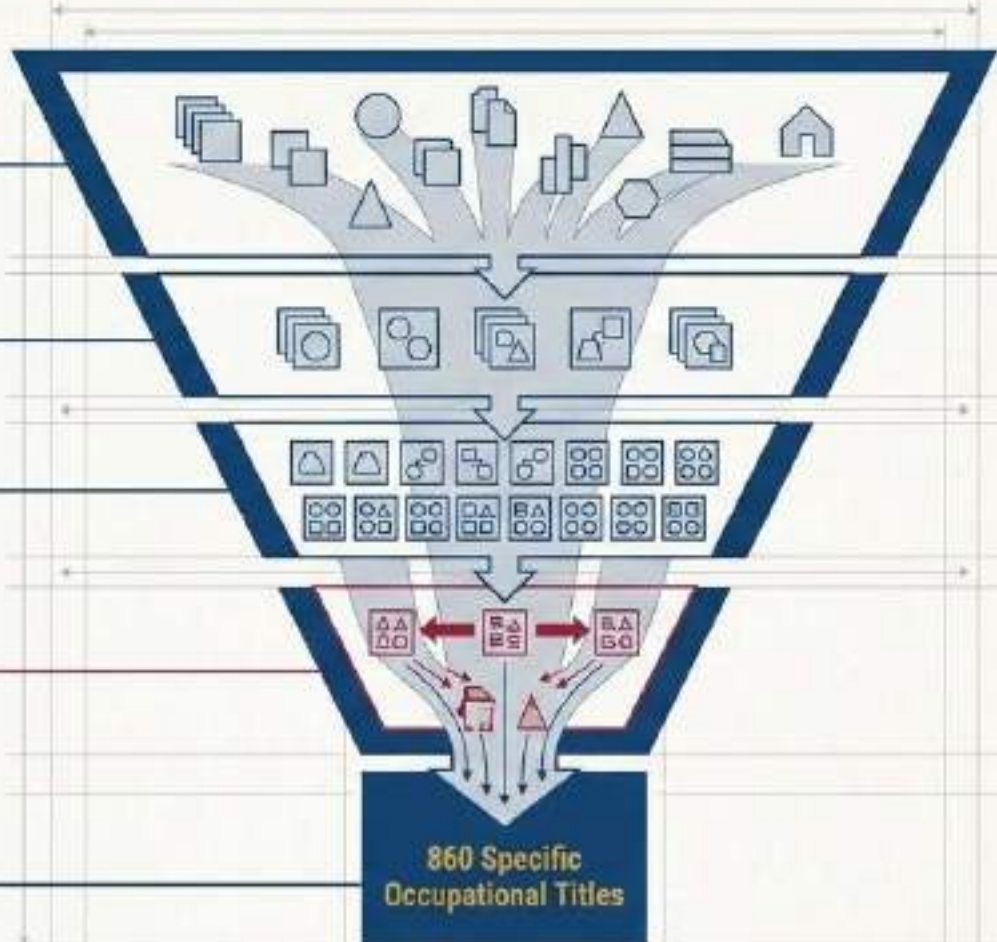
Instead of scaling job titles directly, G&H engineered a system to scale **broad categories** of occupations.

The Theoretical Shift: Redefining Prestige

REJECTED PARADIGM: Prestige (Deference)	ADOPTED PARADIGM: Social Desirability
Definition The traditional hierarchy of honor, deference, and precedence.	Definition A synthetic, underlying dimension reflecting general societal evaluation.
The Flaw True prestige requires an elaborate, face-to-face etiquette of deference and status symbols. In complex, modern urban societies, strangers cannot reliably enact this occupational deference.	The Four Variables Proven in pilot studies to encompass four distinct factors: - Standard of Living - Power and Influence - Level of Qualification - Value to Society

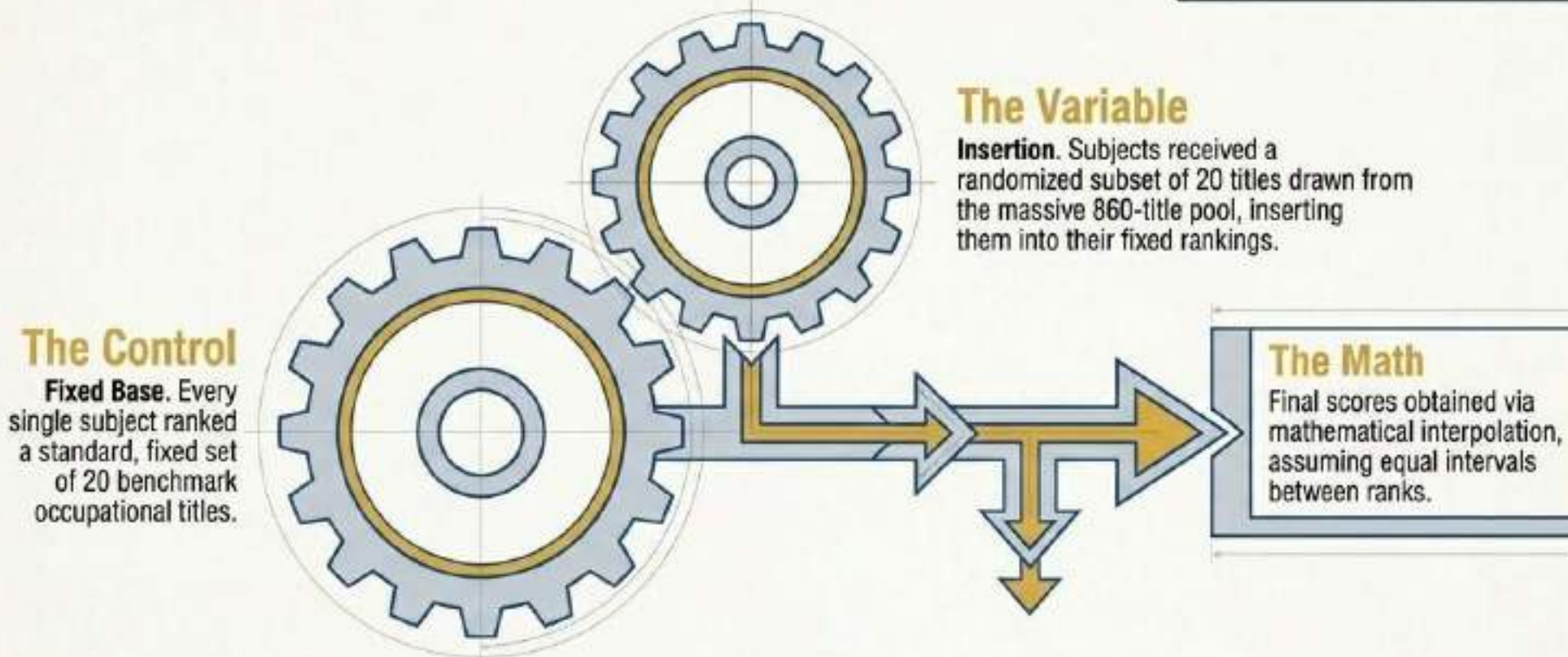
Methodology Phase I: The OPCS Data Funnel

- Tier 1: Raw Input**
223 OPCS Unit Groups + 7 categories of employment status (differentiating levels of self-employment and management).
- Tier 2: First Consolidation**
~1,000 preliminary grading units.
- Tier 3: OPCS Sorting**
Condensed by the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys into 45 relatively homogeneous groups.
- Tier 4: Expert Intervention**
4 expert colleagues refined the groups into 124 operational categories.
Note: Disagreements resolved by majority decision and authors' casting vote.
- Final Output Pool**
860 specific occupational titles (5 to 10 representative titles per category).



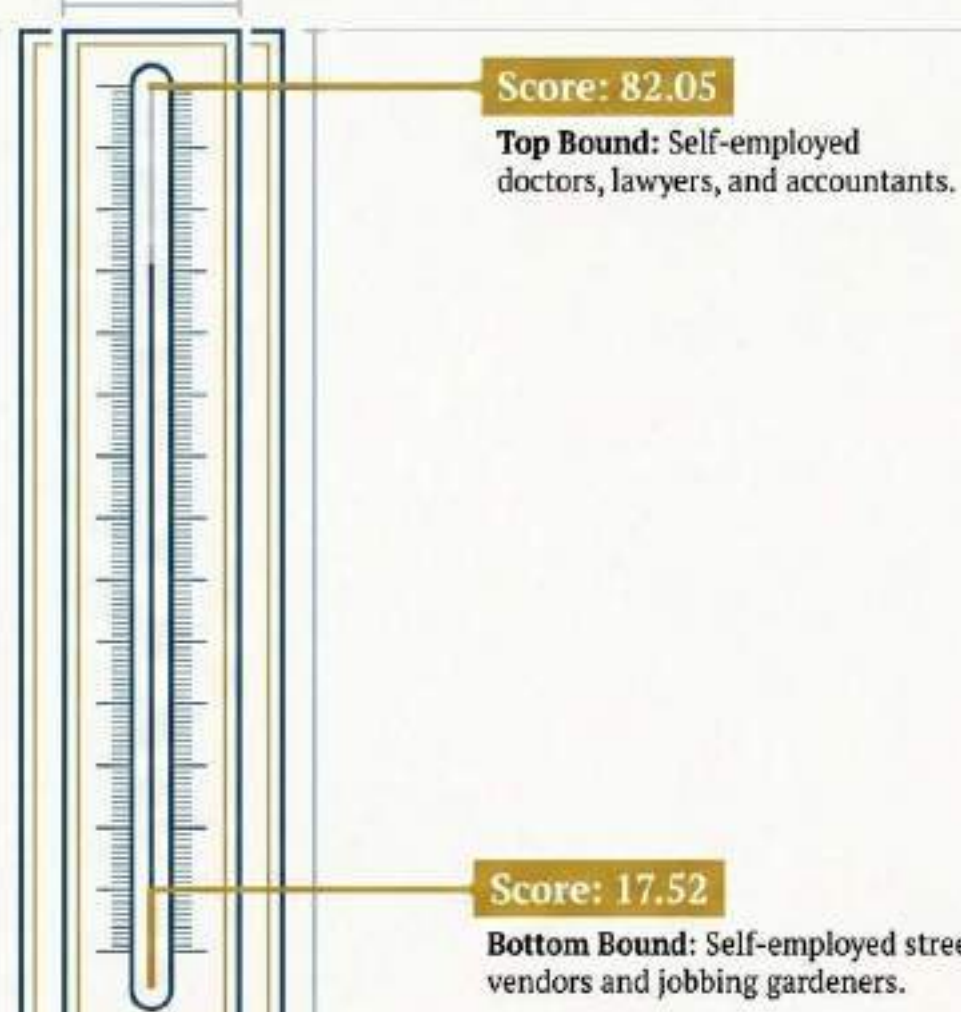
Methodology Phase II: The Ranking Mechanics

The Sample: 620 respondents tasked with ranking occupations according to "social standing."



Reviewer Caveat: Because of the vast pool, each individual job in the variable set was ranked by an average of only 14 persons (Svalastoga).

The Output: The Hope-Goldthorpe Scale



The Collapsed Alternative

Anticipating limited computer hardware of the era, the book provides a 36-category collapsed version.

- Yields 29 distinct 2-digit scores.
- Ranges from 75 (higher-grade professionals) to 18 (lower-grade workers).

The Strategic Advantage: Census Integration



Operational Powerhouse

The true brilliance of the H-G scale was its mechanical design. By firmly basing the 860 ranked titles on the OPCS 1970 framework, G&H ensured structural compatibility with national data.

Immediate Utility

The inclusion of numerous detailed translation tables allowed researchers to immediately map subjective social grading scores onto vast, objective British census datasets.

The Inspection Report: Academic Synthesis

High Praise



- "Unquestionably the most methodologically sophisticated of occupational scales." (Noble)
- Vastly superior integration with British census data (Svalastoga).

Methodological Friction



Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group

- Arbitrary expert resolutions; hidden data on disagreement (Coxon).
- Narrow base: only 14 respondents per variable job title (Svalastoga).
- Readability suffers from a "plethora of methodological minutiae" buried in text (Coxon).

Theoretical Critiques



- "Aggregate scale values have no known representational properties." (Coxon)
- Evades questions of perceived social distance (Noble).
- Premature to claim one basic dimension accounts for all status stratification (Haller).

Conclusion: A Definitive Research Manual

The Verdict

Academics debated heavily whether the scale measured true 'prestige', 'deference', or 'general desirability'. However, the sheer technical rigor of The Social Grading of Occupations rendered these theoretical debates secondary to its practical utility.



The Legacy

It transcended being a mere sociological essay to become a foundational Research Manual. It successfully laid the operational infrastructure for future generations of comparative stratification research.

The Escalator and the Staircase

An Empirical Analysis of John H. Goldthorpe's Social Mobility and Class Structure in Modern Britain

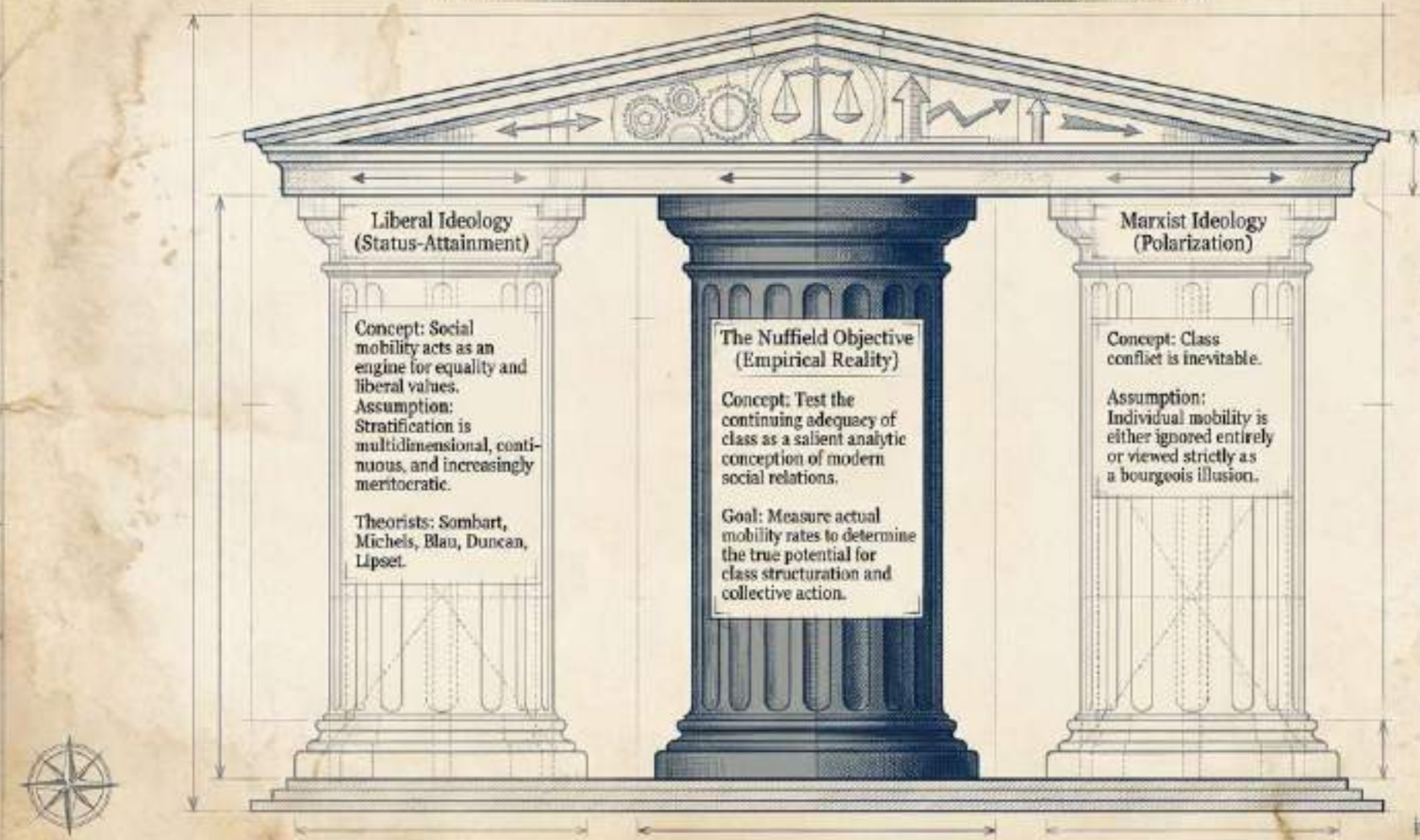
Social Mobility and Class Structure in Modern Britain

John H. Goldthorpe

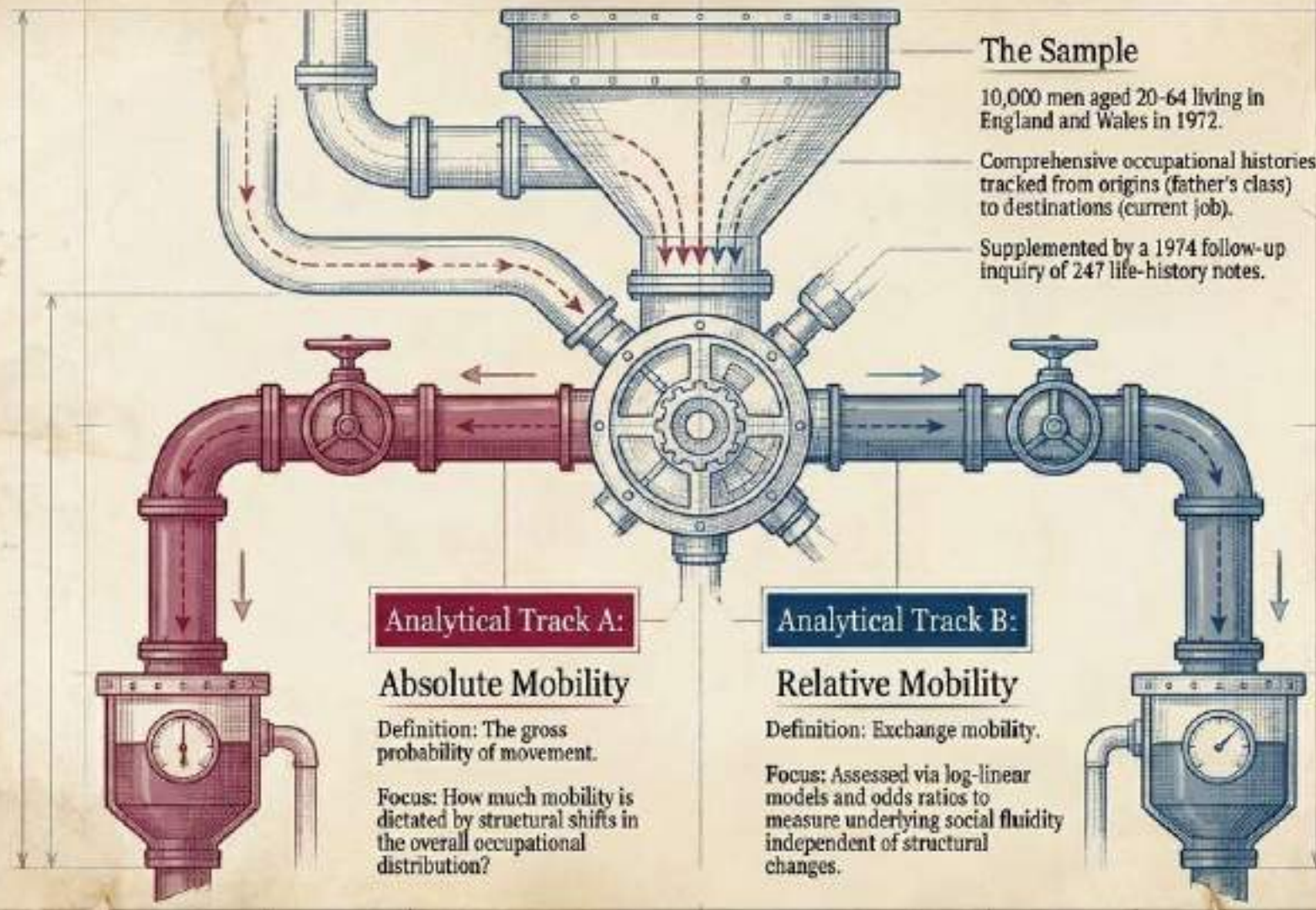
Notes: This is not the actual book cover.

Based on the 1972 Nuffield Mobility Study | Authors: John H. Goldthorpe, Catriona Llewellyn, Clive Payne

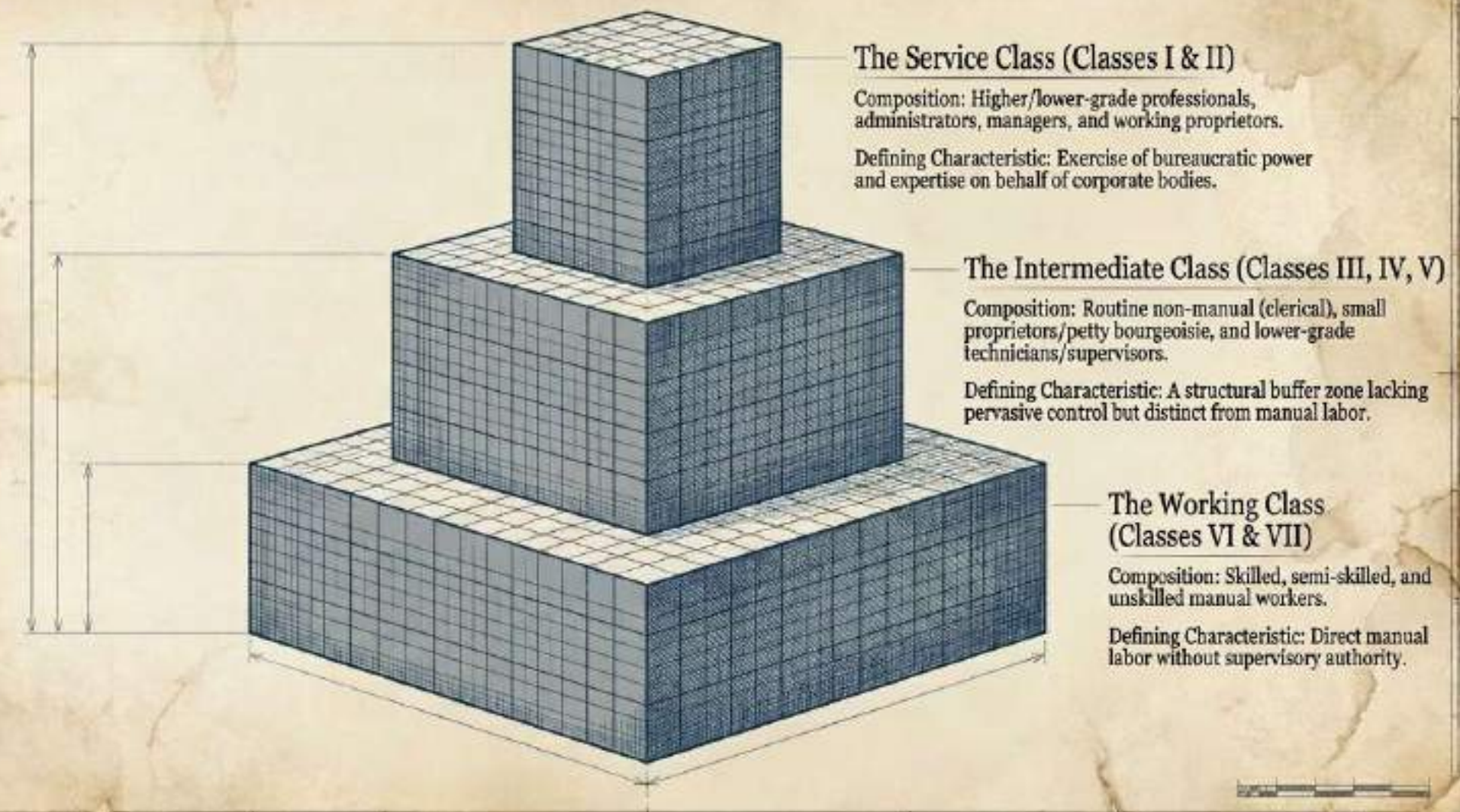
Evaluating the Salience of Class in Advanced Industrial Society



The 1972 Nuffield Mobility Study Framework



The Architecture of the Modern British Class Schema

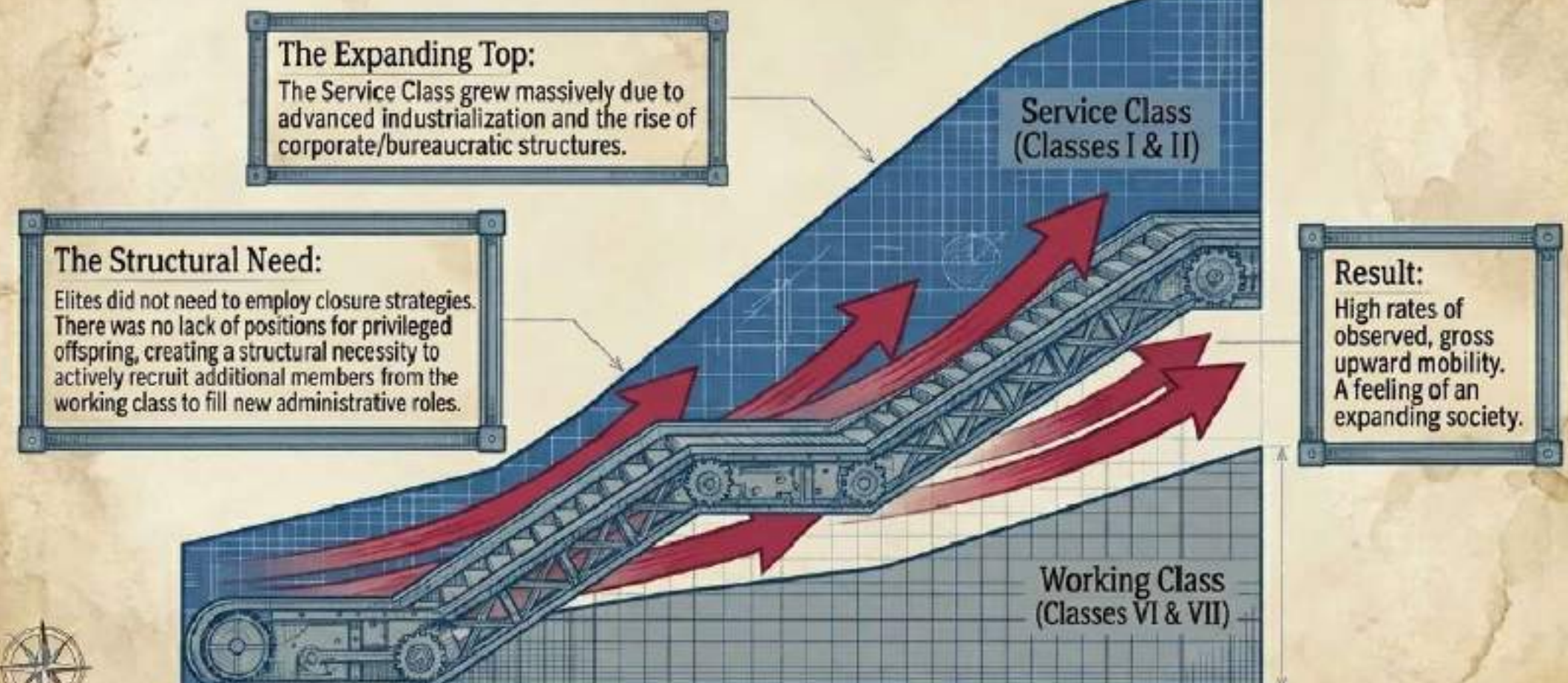


Testing Structural Theses Against Empirical Reality

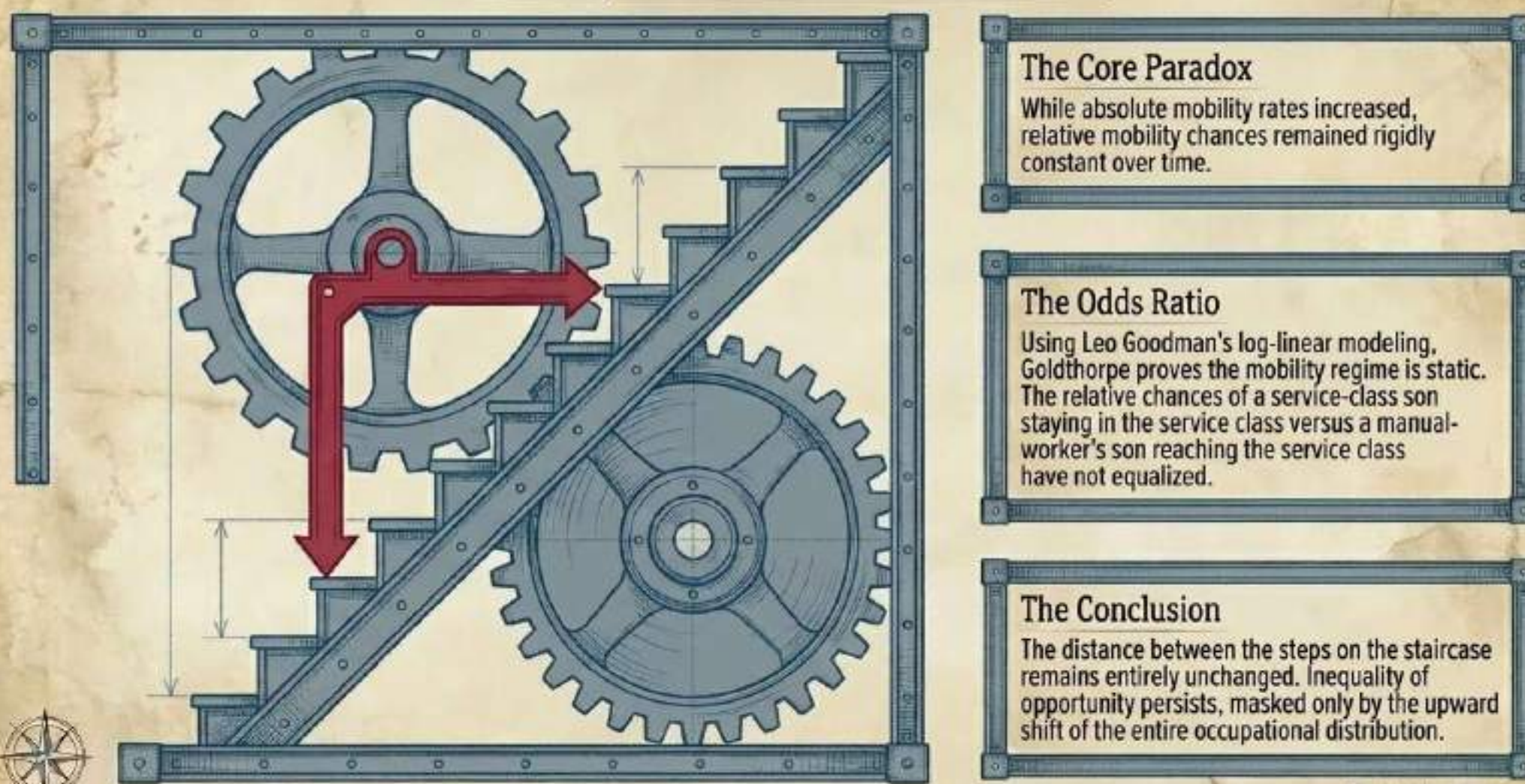
Theoretical Thesis	Verdict	Empirical Reality
The Closure Thesis Theory: Mobility tends to be short-range; elites reproduce themselves completely.	REFUTED	40% of men in the higher professional and managerial levels originated from the working class (Classes V-VII).
The Buffer-Zone Thesis Theory: The boundary between manual and non-manual work is an impenetrable barrier.	REFUTED	High rates of mobility routinely cross the manual/non-manual boundary due to the creation of new occupational positions.
The Counterbalance Thesis Theory: Educational gains in intergenerational mobility are cancelled out by decreasing career opportunities.	REFUTED	Cohort comparisons show upward mobility continues robustly throughout the life-cycle (occupational maturity).

Absolute Mobility Driven by Structural Expansion

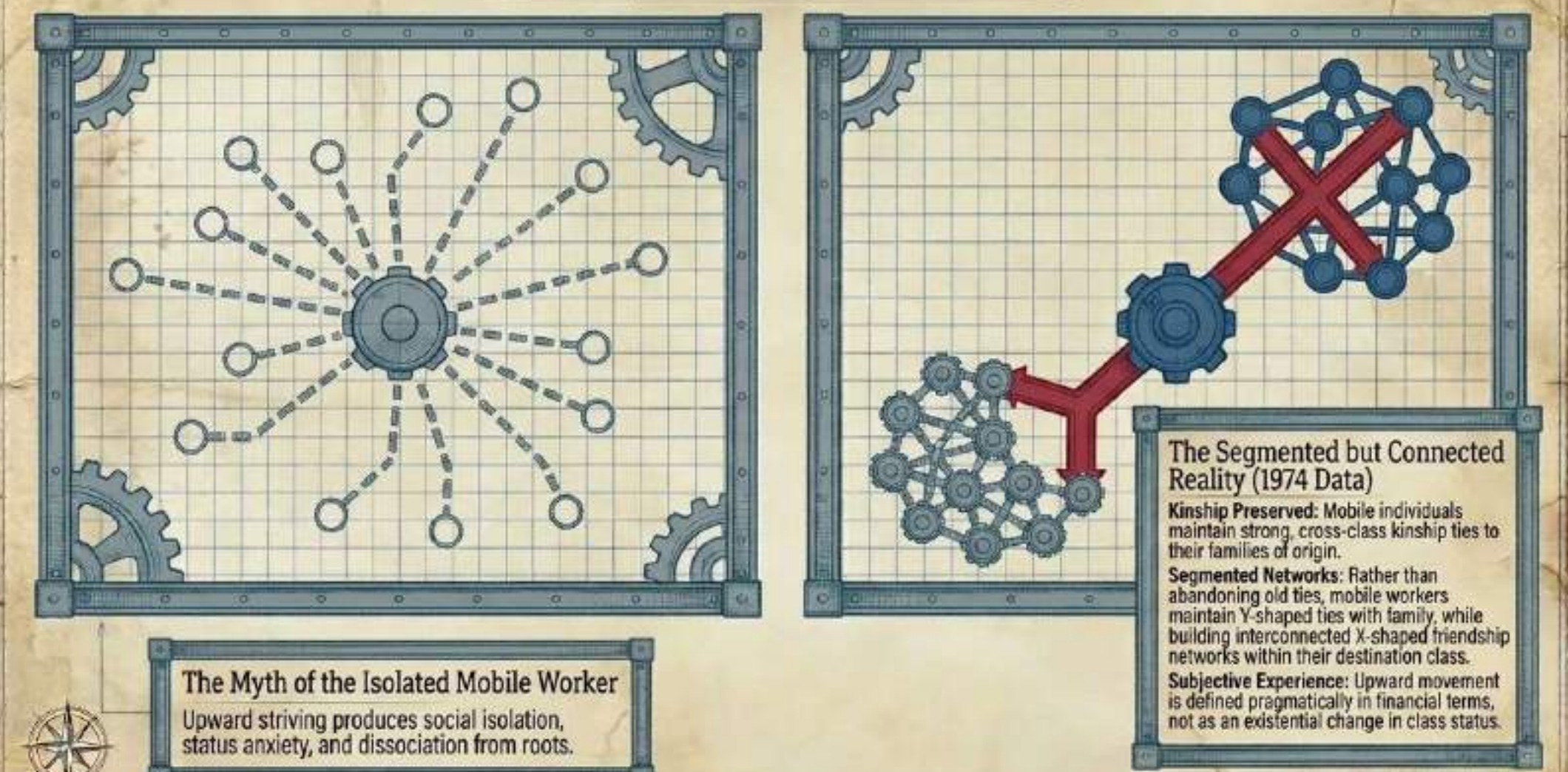
Upward mobility in 20th-century Britain was induced mainly by structural economic changes, not by a shift in societal values.



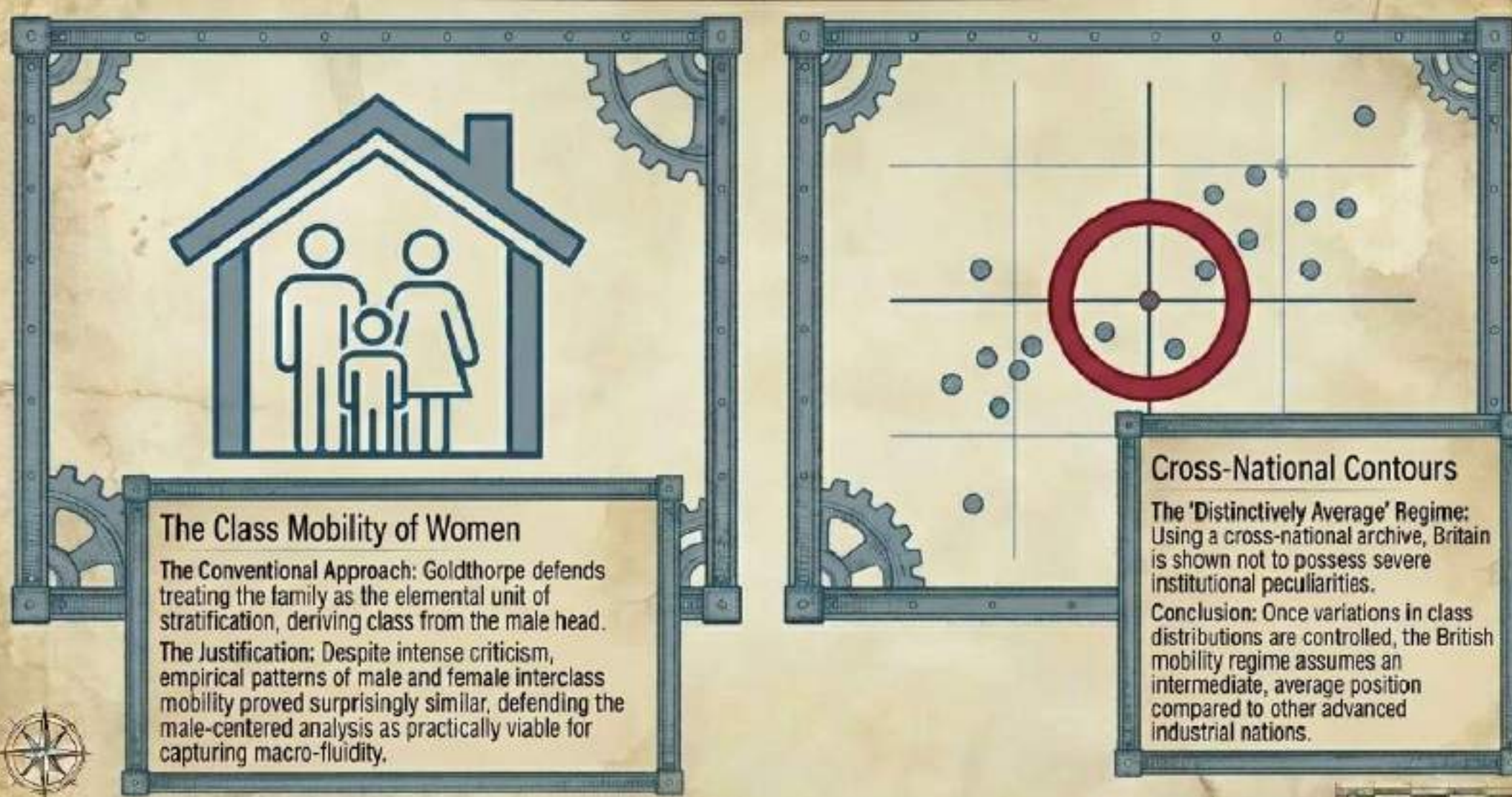
Relative Mobility Reveals a State of Constant Social Fluidity



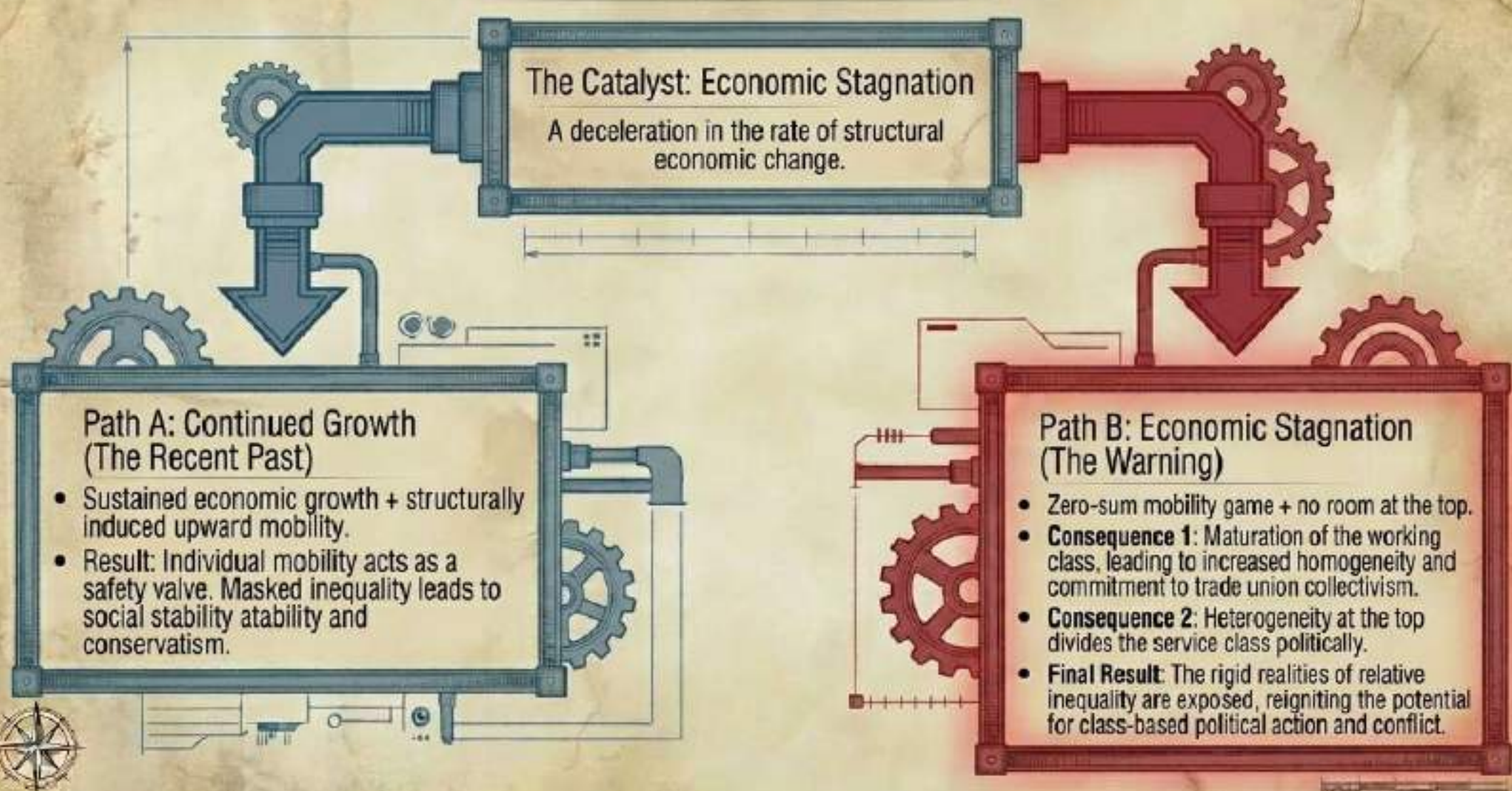
The Social Consequences: Kinship, Networks, and Integration

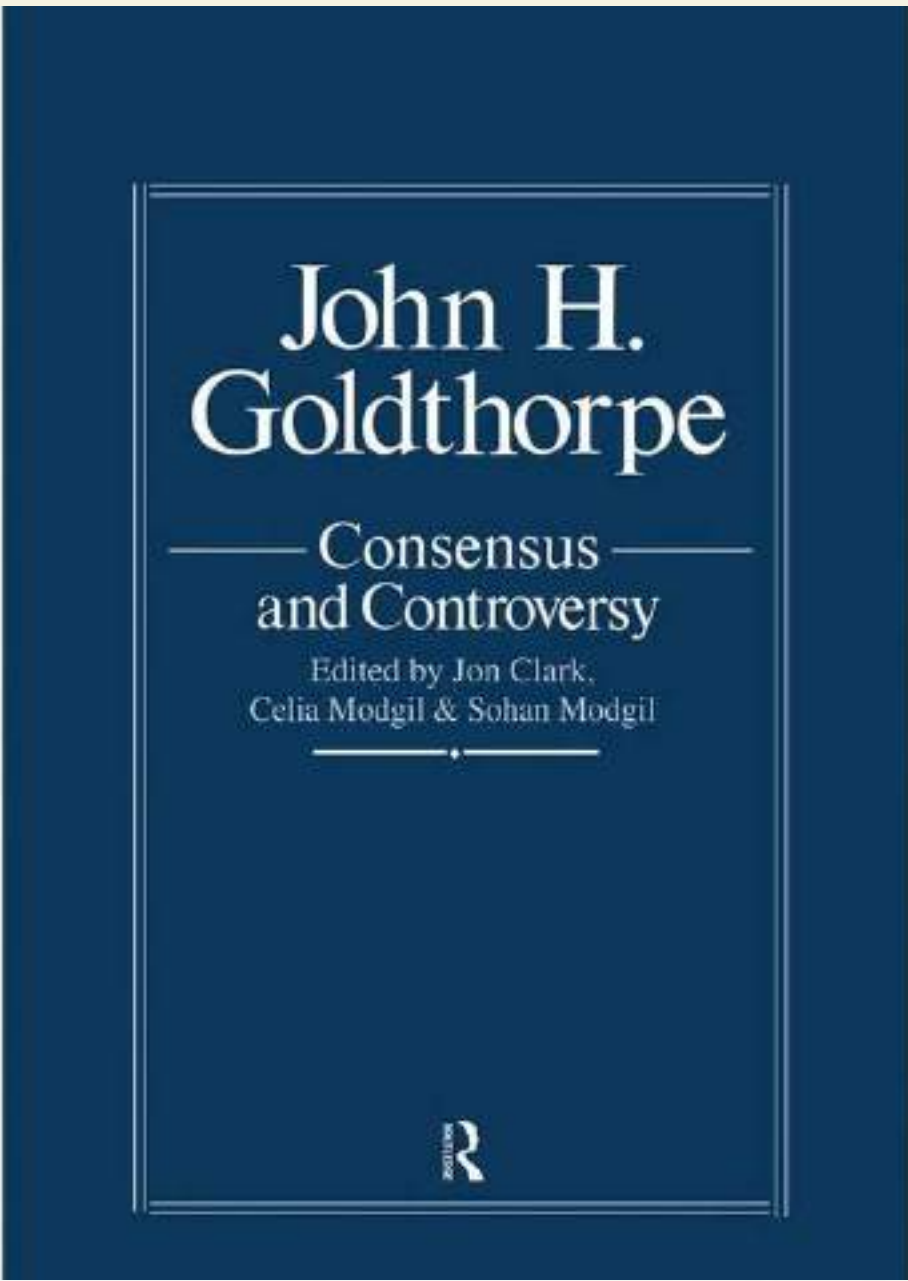


Broadening the Lens: Gender and Global Perspectives



Prognosis: The Potential for Renewed Class Conflict



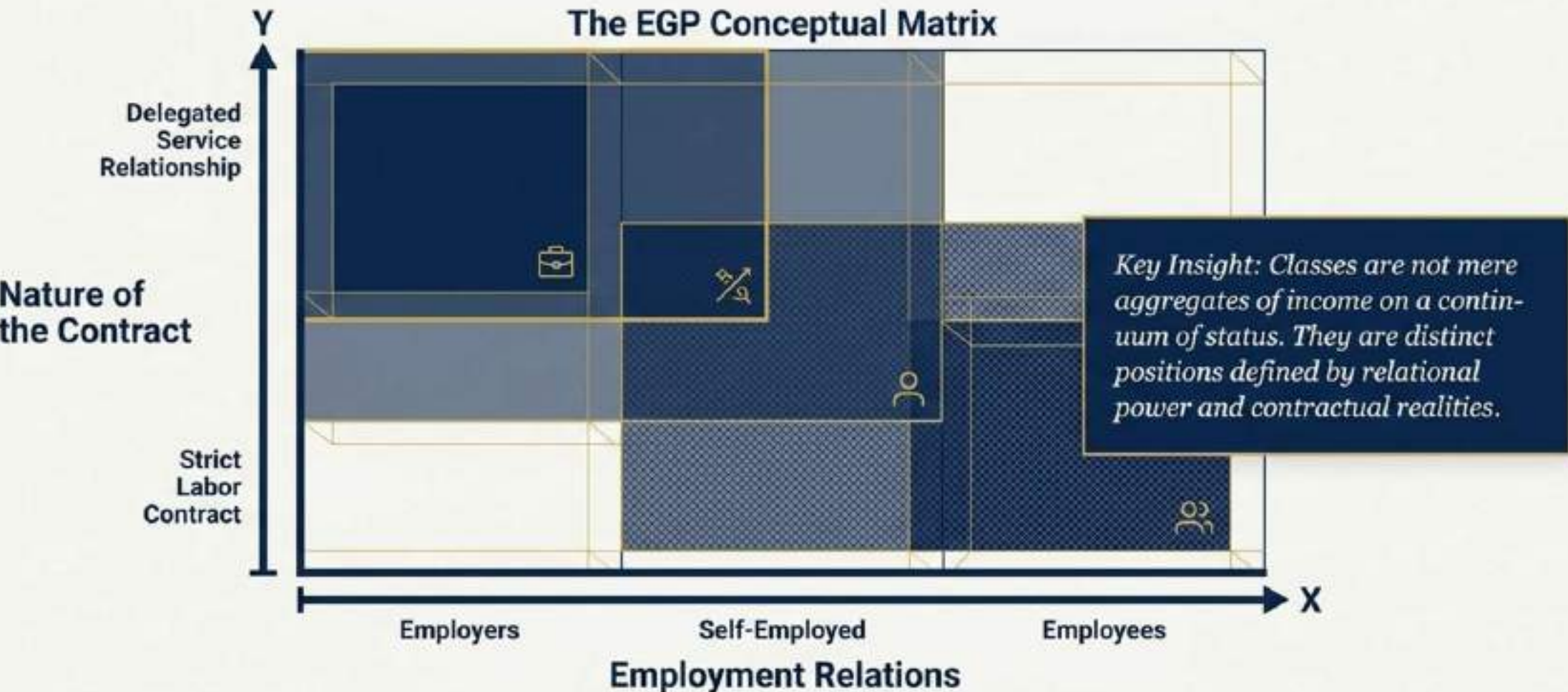


CONSENSUS AND CONTROVERSY

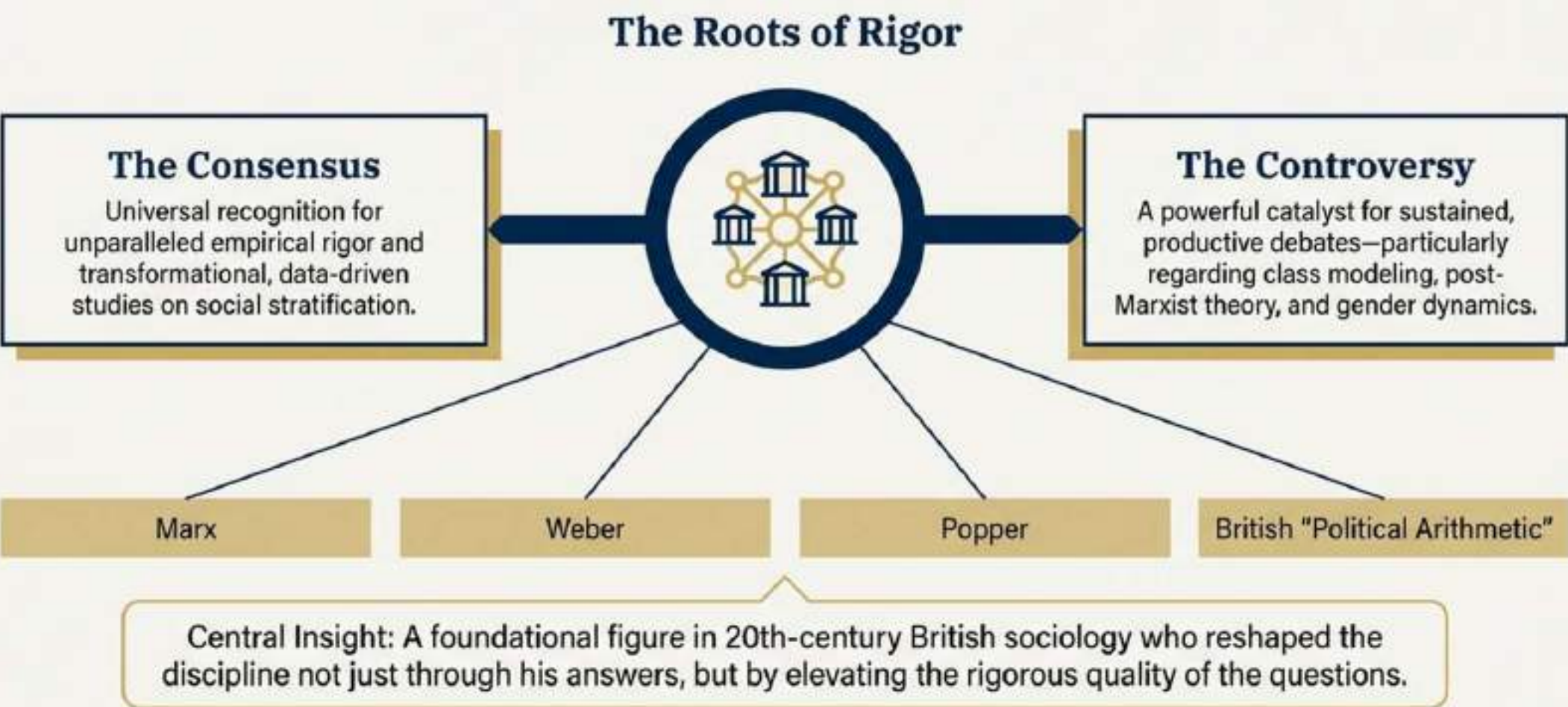
Honoring the Intellectual Legacy of John H. Goldthorpe

Redefining Class Through Relational Power

Moving beyond income and status to define class as a dynamic employment relationship.



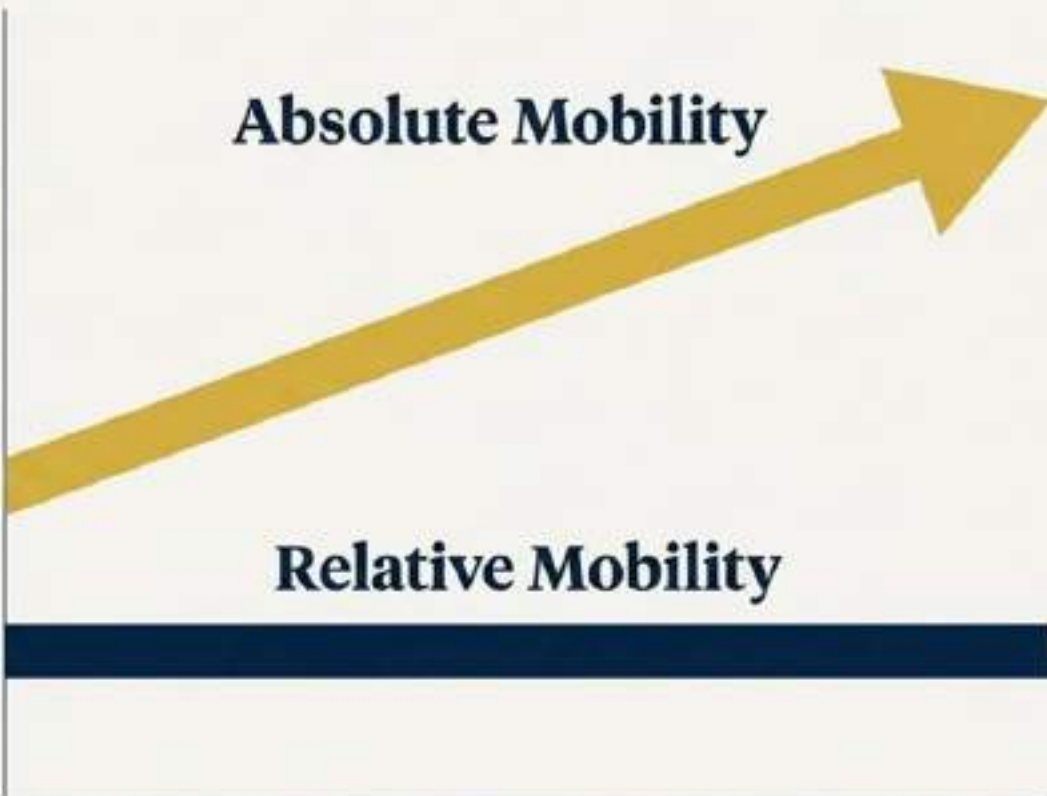
The Dual Legacy of Consensus and Controversy



The Paradox of Social Progress and Mobility

Driven by the expansion of the service sector, the total volume of upward mobility in society increases, creating an illusion of pure meritocracy.

Despite absolute structural gains, the underlying relative inequality of opportunity between different classes remains stubbornly persistent.



The 'Constant Flux' Thesis (CASMIN): In relative terms, patterns of social fluidity are remarkably similar and stable across industrialized nations.

A Catalyst for Critical Debate

Marxist Theory

The Stance: A Neo-Weberian approach to historical development.

The Debate: Rejects the thesis of generalized proletarianization and economic determinism, while firmly maintaining class relations as the central explanatory factor in society.

Class & Gender

The Stance: The "Conventional Approach" (classifying households by the male head).

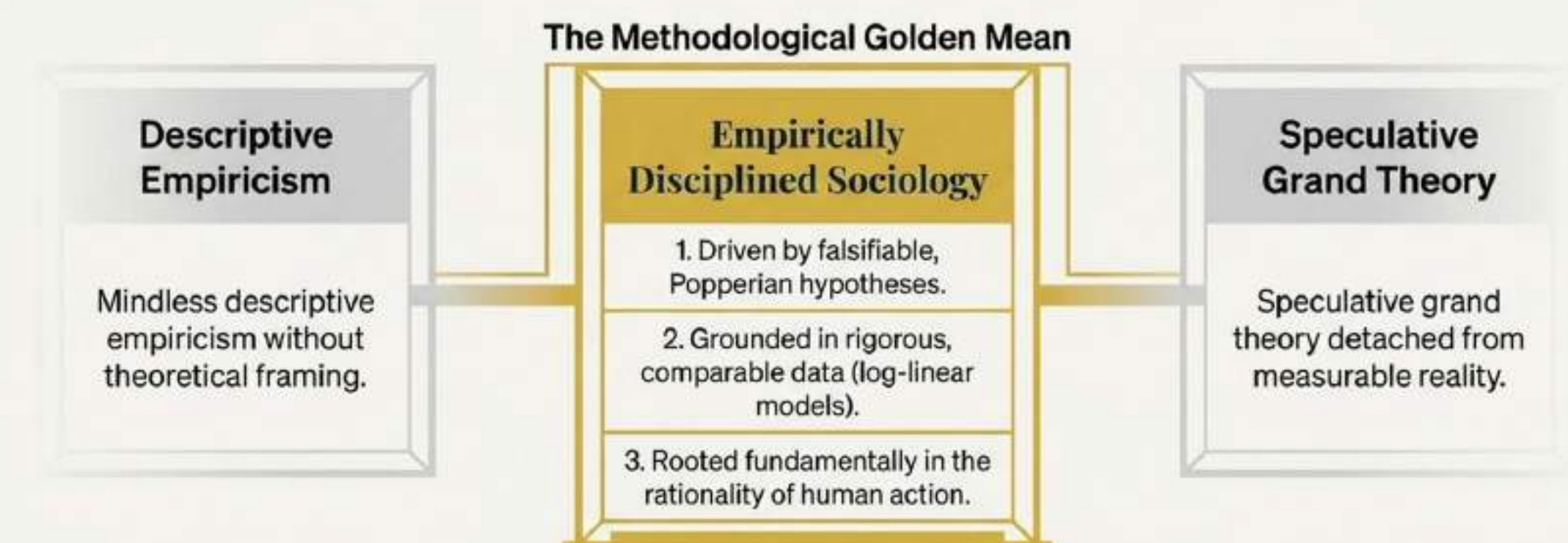
The Debate: Sparked intense feminist critique for obscuring female labor trajectories—an enduring, highly productive controversy shaping the modern sociology of care.

Political Partisanship

The Stance: The persistence of class voting.

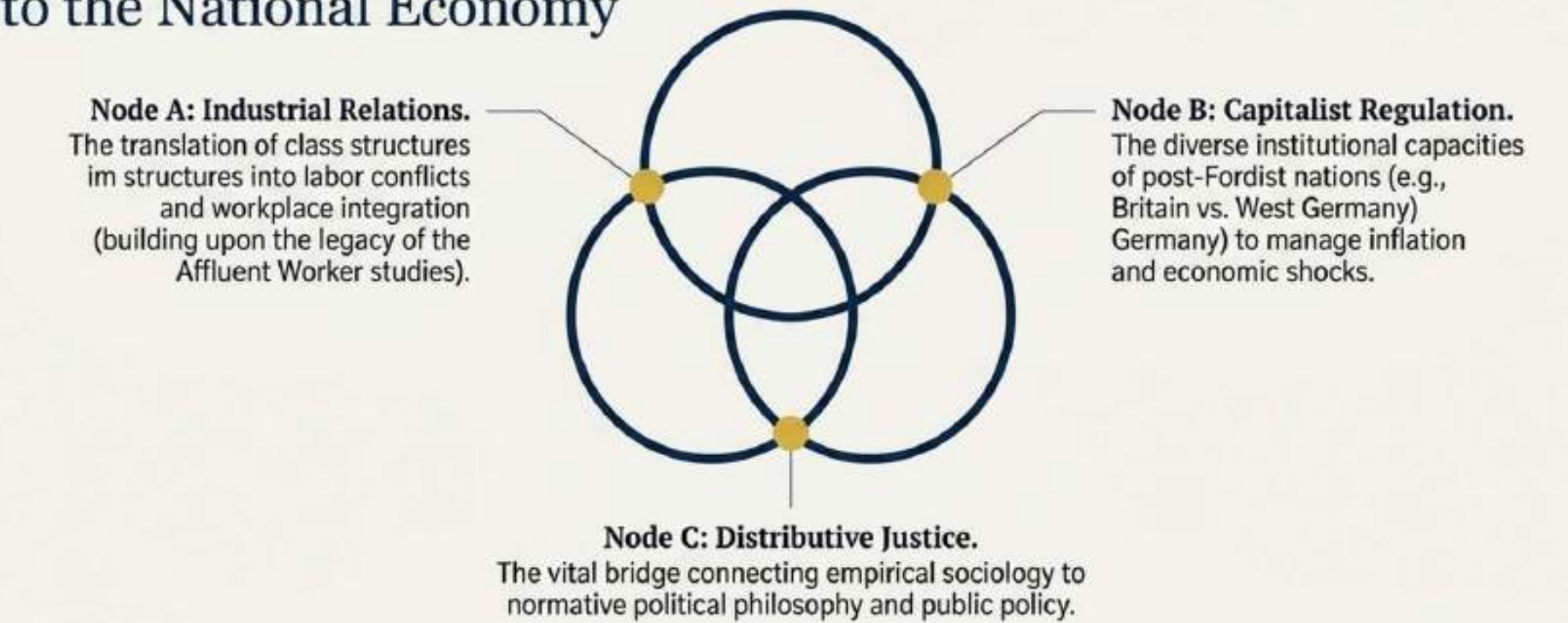
The Debate: Countered popular 1980s "dealignment" theories, empirically proving the enduring, structural link between class position and political ideology.

The 'Tennis Player' View of Sociology



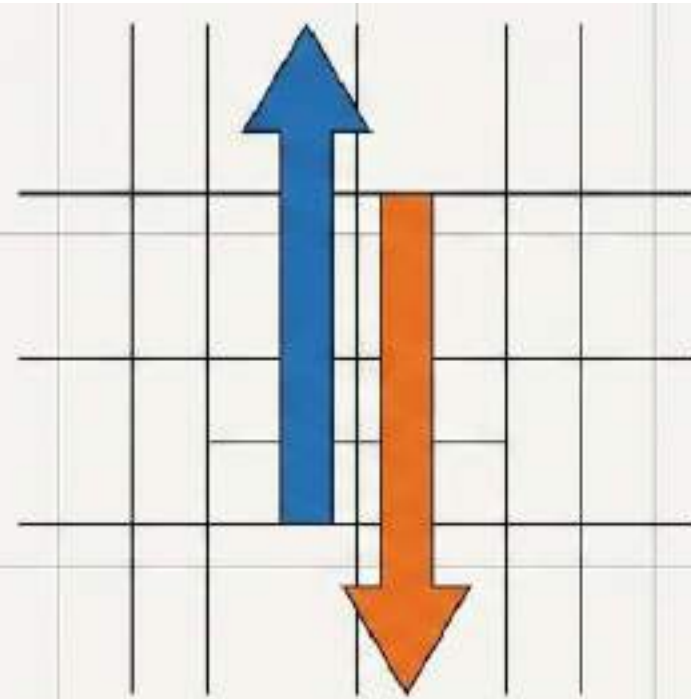
The Author's Defense: Throughout Consensus and Controversy, Goldthorpe famously engages his critics, continuously refining his models and fiercely defending the vital, unbreakable link between theory and data.

Connecting the Factory Floor to the National Economy



Goldthorpe demonstrates how underlying class friction directly determines a nation's capacity to process distributive conflict and sustain economic stability.

“Goldthorpe’s ultimate legacy lies not just in the rigorous empirical answers he provided, but in the vital, discipline-defining controversies he had the courage to ignite. He gave modern sociology its architectural blueprints for understanding class, mobility, and inequality.”



Unraveling the Competing Theories of Social Mobility in Industrial Societies

📓 Notebook.N

The diagram illustrates the 'Convergent Developmental Path' through three stages of economic development, represented by blue blocks of increasing size and complexity:

- Agriculture:** The smallest, simplest block at the base.
- Manufacturing:** A medium-sized block with internal structural details, sitting on top of Agriculture.
- Services & Bureaucracy:** The largest, most complex block at the top, also with internal structural details, sitting on top of Manufacturing.

A large, thick blue arrow curves upwards from the bottom left towards the top right, pointing towards the 'Services & Bureaucracy' stage. A line connects the text 'Convergent Developmental Path' to this arrow.

© Antares Ltd 2004

Key Insight: To understand industrial society, we must see social structure as being 'peopled' (Stinchcombe, 1983). Mobility dictates how structural positions shape identities, interests, and ultimately, political stability.

The terminal decline of family-based enterprise and agriculture.

The diagram illustrates the 'Great Wheel' as a central mechanism for balancing social forces. At the top, a large wheel is supported by a central axle. Two arms extend from the wheel's rim, each ending in a platform. The left platform is labeled 'High Upward Mobility & Meritocratic Selection'. The right platform is labeled 'Legitimized Inequality & Political Stability'. A callout points to the central axle, stating 'The counter-force to working-class radicalization.' Below the wheel, three arrows point downwards to three boxes: 'Weakens Class Identification', 'Encourages Individual vs. Collective Effort', and 'Defends Against Socialist Threats'.

A diagram illustrating the concentration of autonomy and capital. At the top, a dark grey rectangular box contains the text "Concentration of Autonomy & Capital". Below this box, a funnel shape is formed by numerous black lines that converge downwards. At the base of the funnel, a large orange trapezoidal area is labeled "The Degraded Wage-Labor Majority". The entire diagram is set against a light blue background with a faint grid.

Heightened Class Conflict

Key Insight: Industrial societies do not converge; they maintain highly distinctive, divergent mobility patterns.

Liberal Theory

Marxist Theory

Variation Theory

Cross-National Empirical Testing

The Reality of Social Mobility

Ricardo Alonzo y Sandra Fachelli

Ricardo Alonzo y Sandra Fachelli

1

The 'Horatio Alger' Myth

A distinctive ethos of extreme openness and long-range mobility (even if partly mythic).

2

'Sclerotic' Rigidities

Defensive associations, craft unions, and ancient universities restrict mobility (Olson, 1982).

3

Structural Disjuncture

WWII and totalitarianism completely destroyed pre-industrial hierarchical institutions, forcing an artificial openness.

The Architecture of Choice

Why class inequality persists in the age of free education—and how Rational Action Theory explains the structural mechanics of social mobility.

The British Journal of Sociology 2010



Class analysis and the reorientation of class theory: the case of persisting differentials in educational attainment¹

John H. Goldthorpe

Historicist theories failed to predict the stubborn stability of class relations.

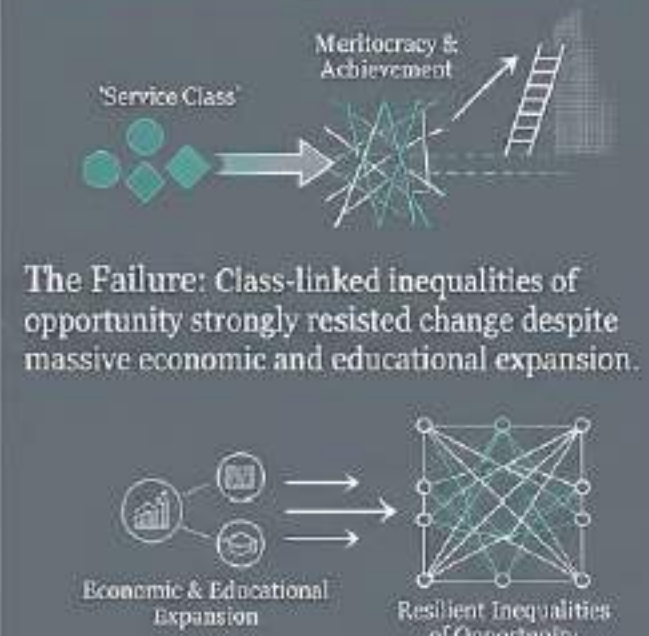
Marxist Theory (The Left)

Expected Outcome: Class Formation
Intensifying internal contradictions would generate revolutionary collective action (the proletariat as the 'gravedigger' of capitalism).



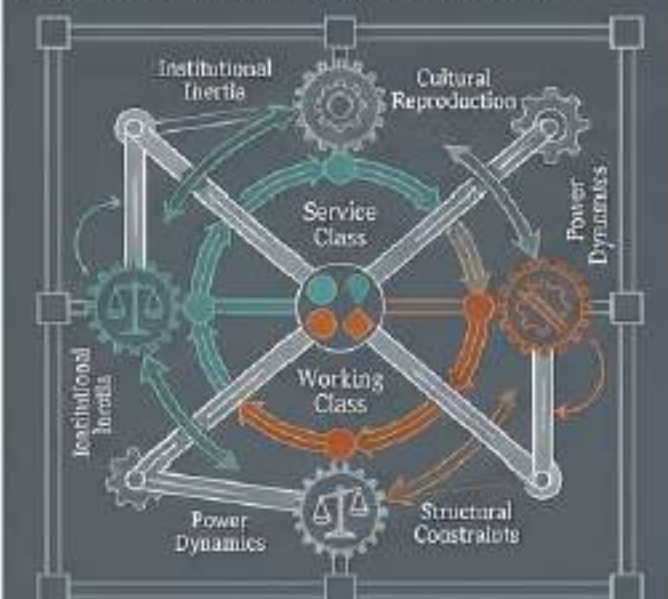
Liberal Theory (The Right)

Expected Outcome: Class Decomposition
A 'logic of industrialism' would replace ascription with achievement, driving meritocracy and the general decline of class.

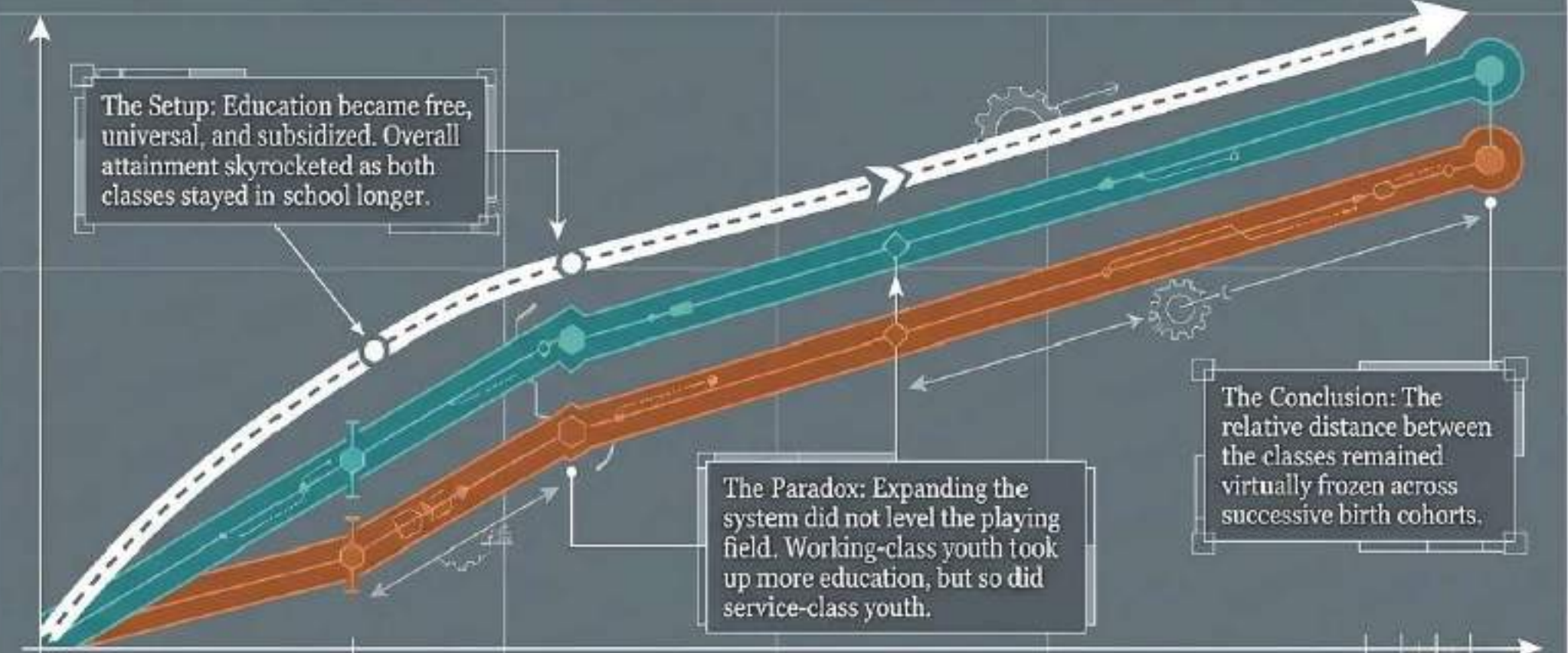


The Reality (The New Explanandum)

The True Mystery: Stability
Neither revolution nor withering occurred. The theoretical challenge is explaining the powerful, self-maintaining resistance to change displayed by class relations over decades.

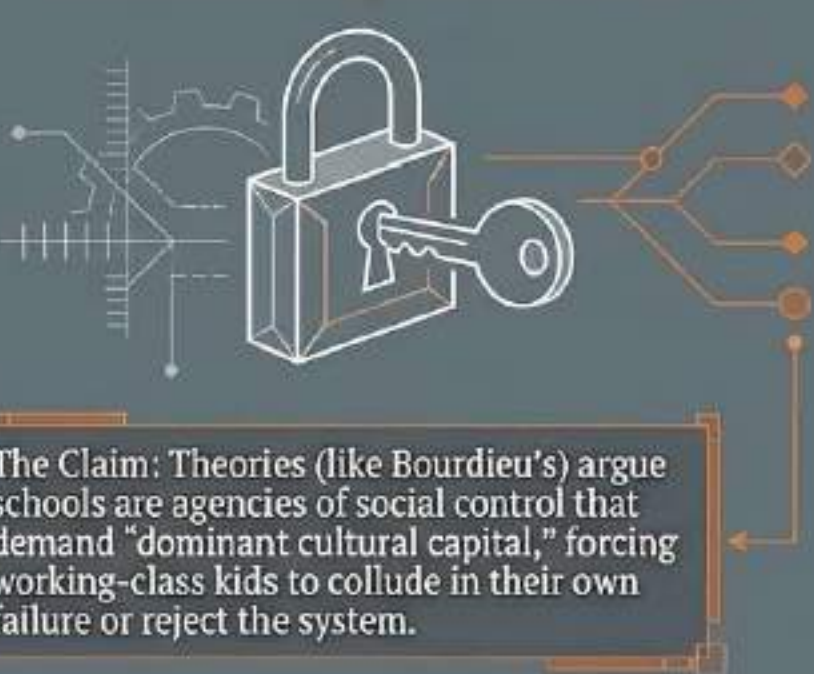


Expanding universal education elevated absolute attainment without closing the relative class gap.



Cultural reproduction theories misread the empirical reality of educational expansion.

The Flawed Suspect: Culturalism



The Empirical Reality

The Evidence: Working-class children did not reject the system. Educational expansion was largely demand-led. The majority of children entering selective secondary and higher education during post-war decades were "first-generation."

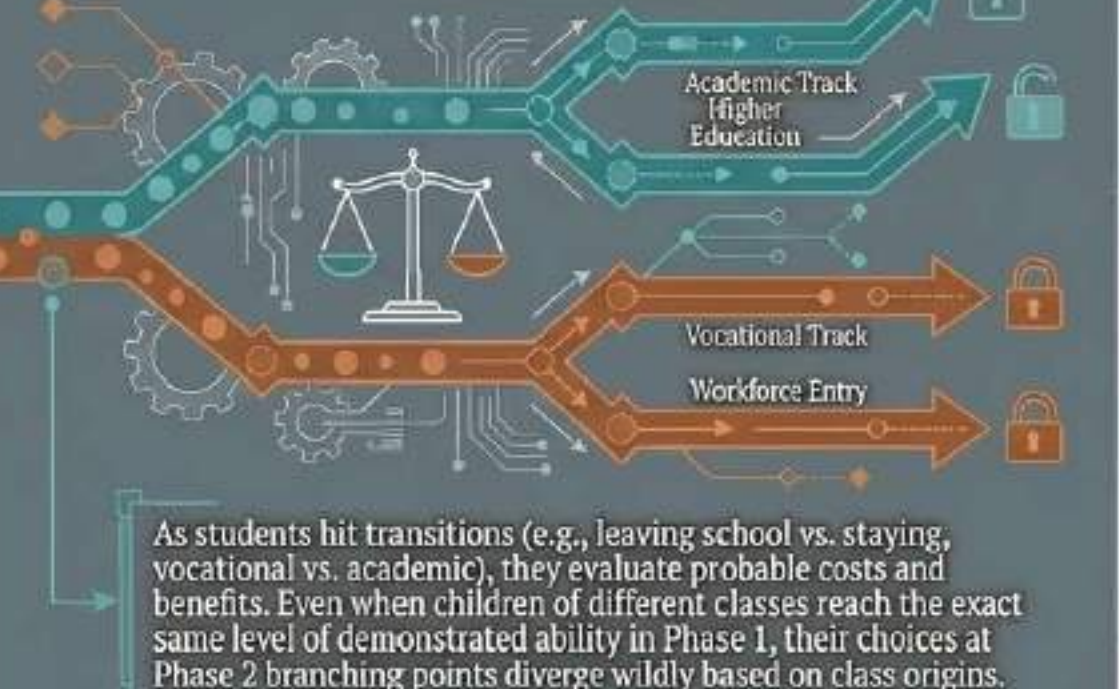


Class inequalities are generated at structural branching points, not just through early childhood socialization.

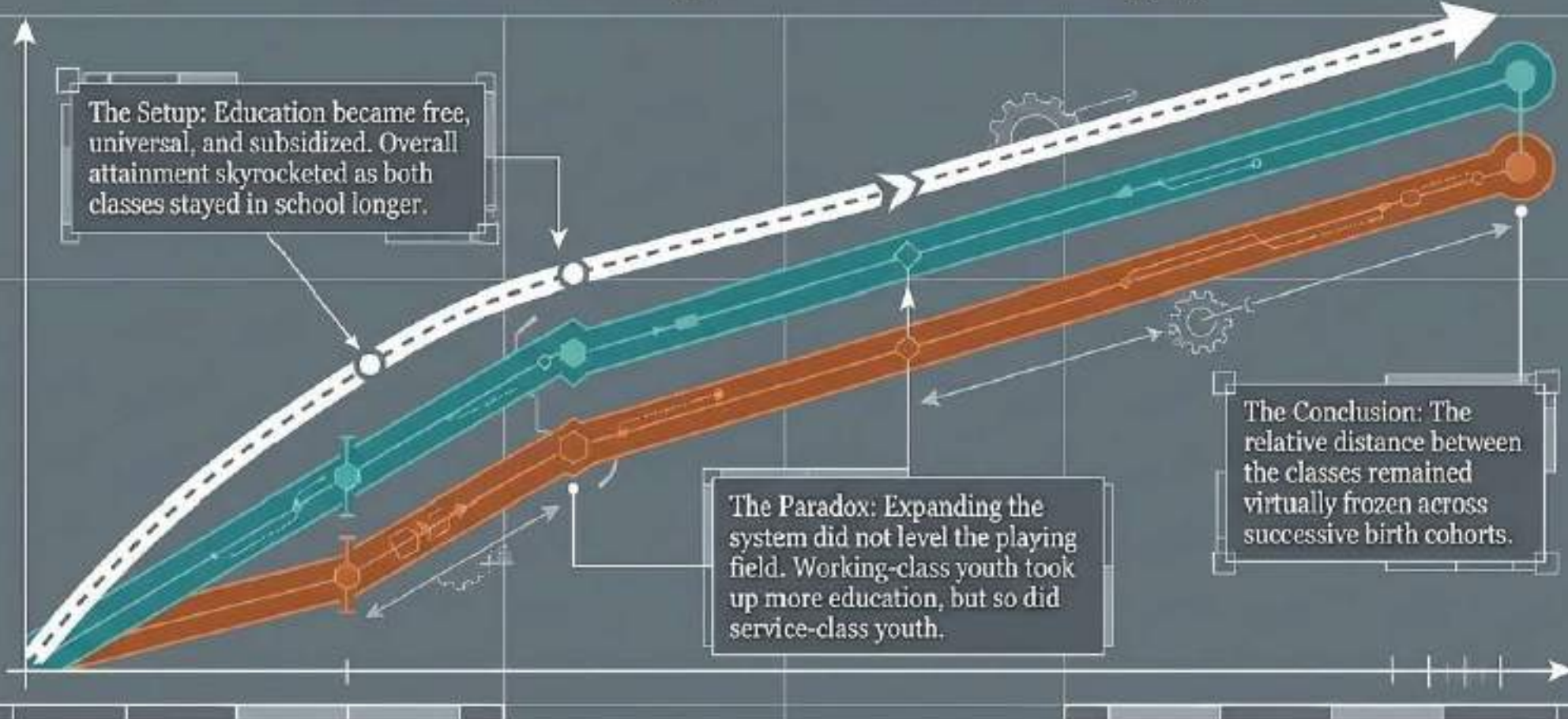
Phase 1: Primary Effects (The Ability Phase)



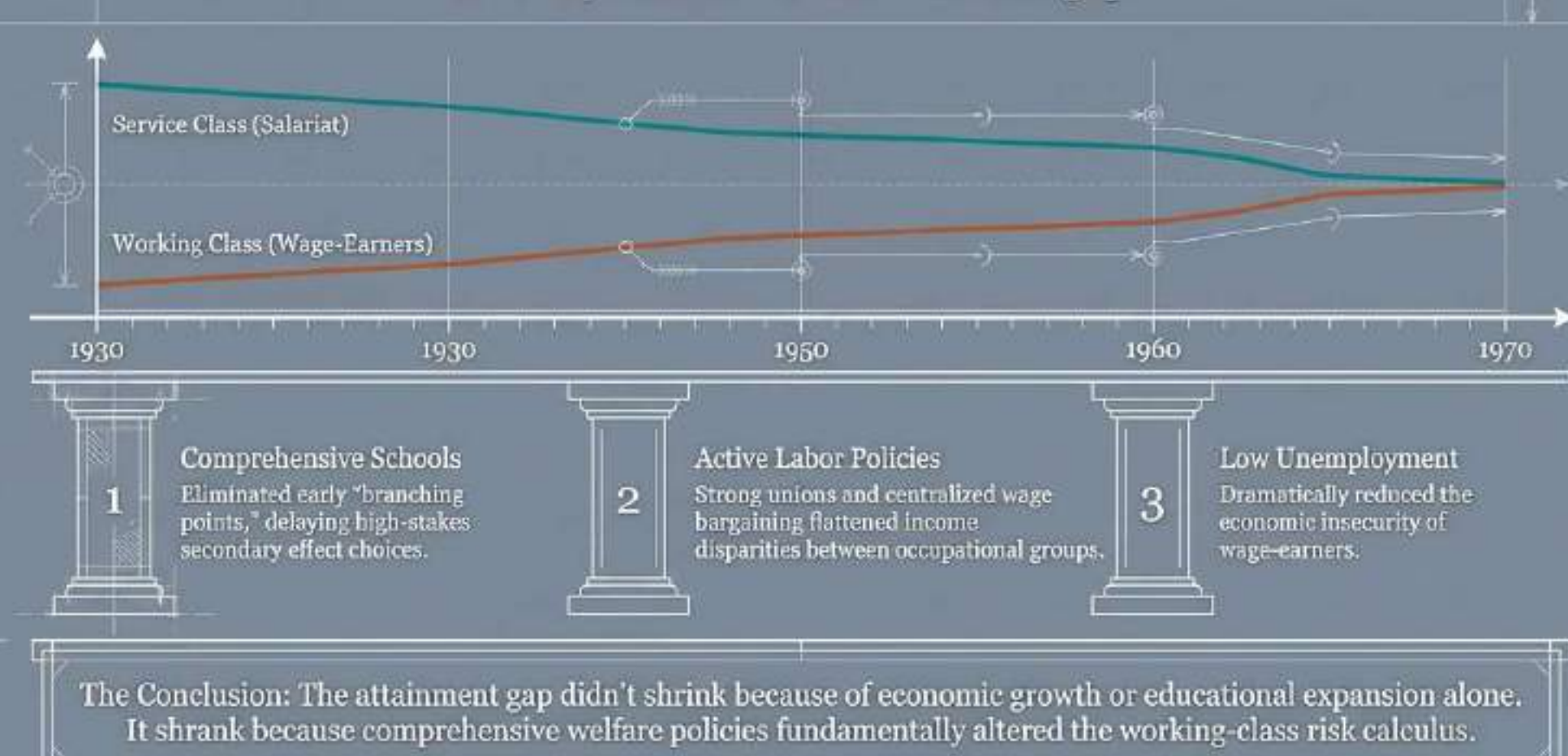
Phase 2: Secondary Effects (The Choice Phase)



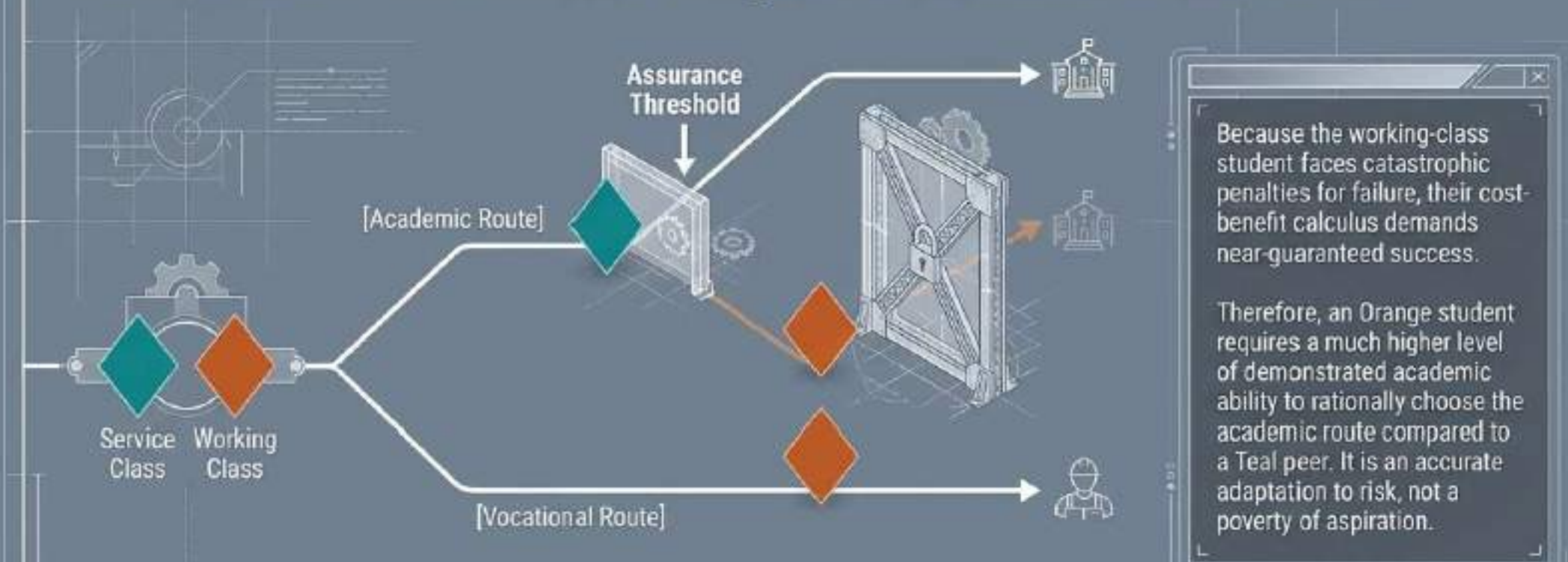
Expanding universal education elevated absolute attainment without closing the relative class gap.



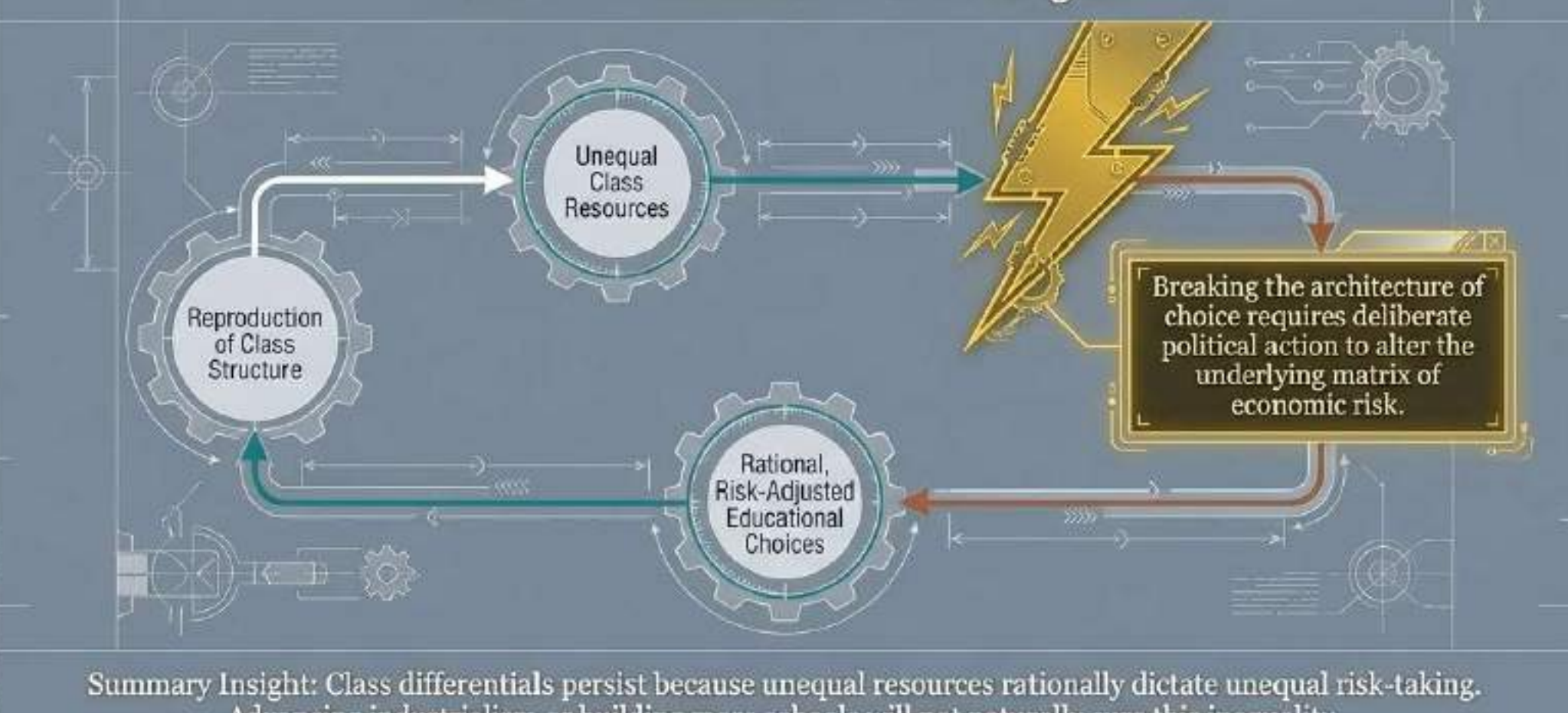
The Swedish Exception: Reducing economic insecurity actively shrinks the educational gap.



Working-class students require a significantly higher 'Assurance Threshold' to pursue academic routes.



Class structures are self-maintaining properties built on rational survival strategies.



Rational Choice Theory
and Large-Scale
Data Analysis

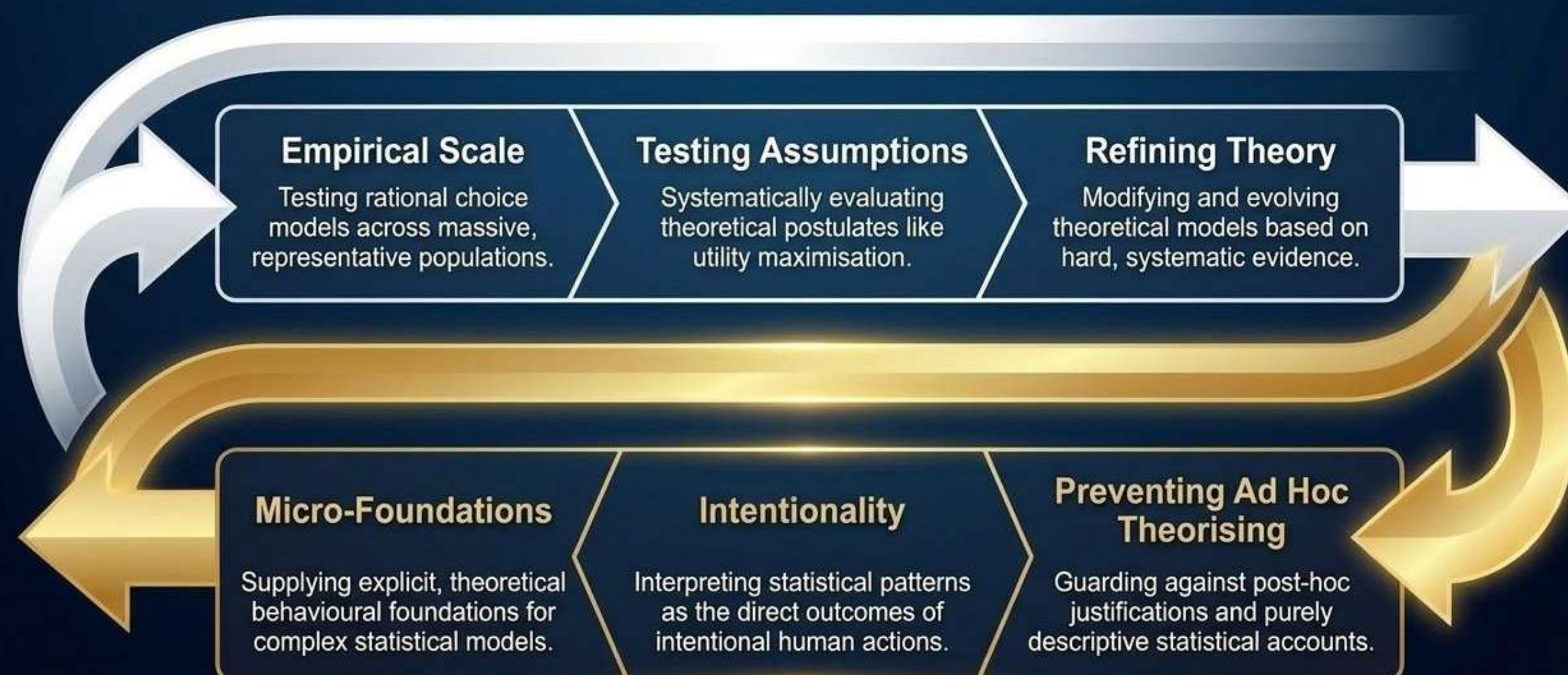
Edited by
Hans-Peter Blossfeld and
Gerald Prein



The Quantitative Analysis of Large-Scale Data-Sets and Rational Action Theory: For a Sociological Alliance

A Tribute to the Visionary Methodology
of John H. Goldthorpe (1996)

The Bi-Directional Exchange of Rigour and Scale



Bridging the Methodological Divide



Overcoming Limitations Through Integration



A Turning Point in European Sociology



There is no reason why quantitative analysis of large-scale data-sets and rational action theory should remain separate cultures. Their alliance is desirable and feasible.

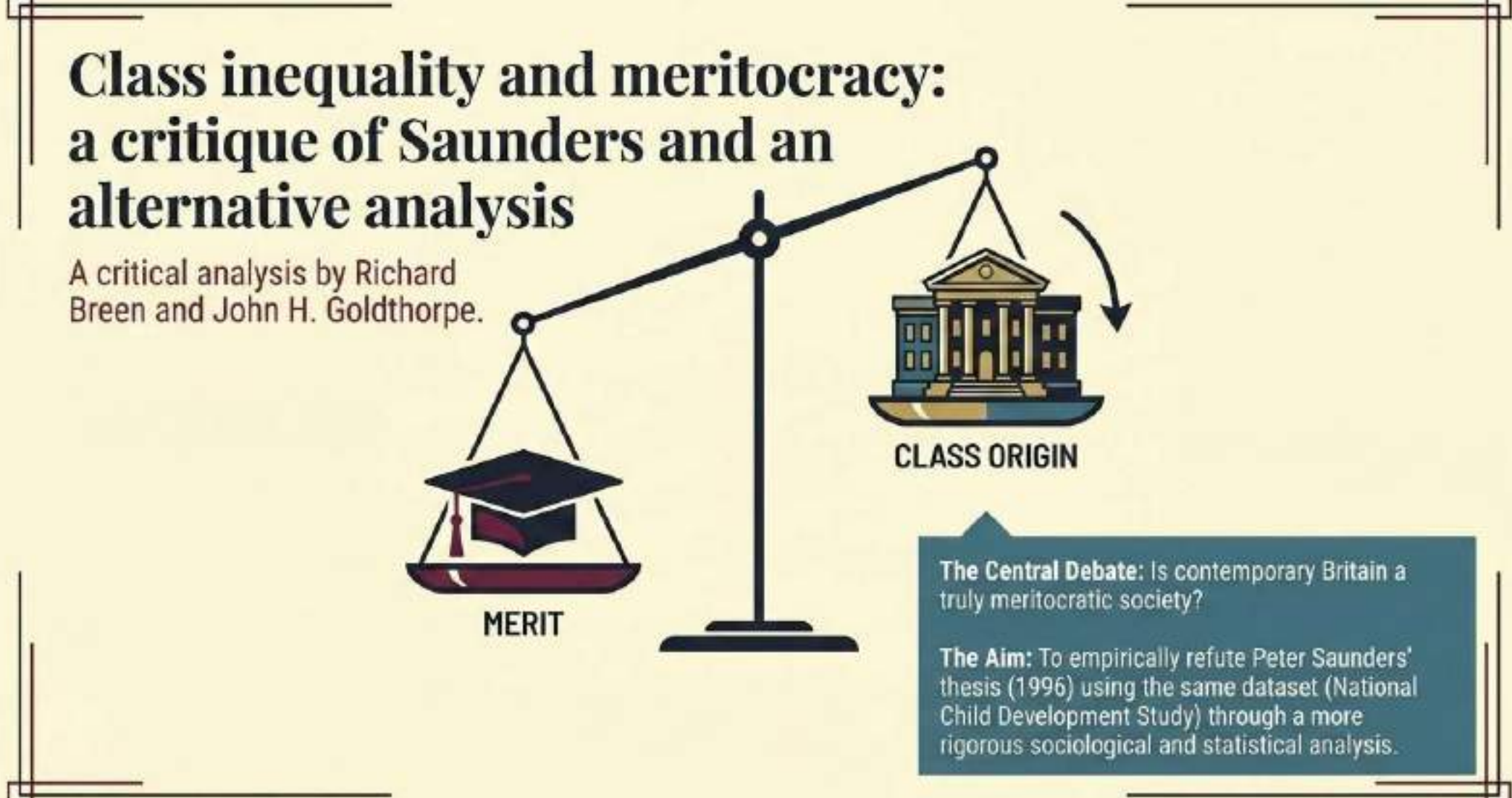
Immediate Impact:
Sparked vital, transformative debate within the European Sociological Review.

Peer Validation:
Praised by contemporaries like Lindenberg as a highly attractive and superior approach.

Enduring Legacy:
A definitive programmatic text that permanently reshaped methodology towards integrated, theory-driven data analysis.

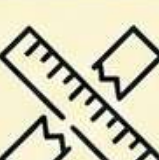
Class inequality and meritocracy: a critique of Saunders and an alternative analysis¹

Brit. Jnl. of Sociology Volume no. 50 Issue no. 1 March 1999 ISSN 0007-1315 © London School of Economics 1999



The Flaws of the Previous Analysis: Identifying the Rigged Race

Breen and Goldthorpe identify three critical technical and conceptual biases in the original thesis that artificially favoured a meritocratic conclusion:

Dimension	Saunders's Error	The Methodological Reality
 Mobility	He prioritised Absolute Mobility.	He confuses structural changes in the labour market with equality of opportunity. Inequality is an intrinsically relative concept.
 Statistical Measurement	He used Disparity Ratios.	Misleading measure. Odds Ratios are the only appropriate metric to isolate social mobility from the structural effects of the market.
 Variable Bias	He created a biased race of variables.	He measured merit in continuous detail, but collapsed class origin into a scale of only 3 points, artificially minimising its real impact.

A Refined Methodology: Redefining Merit

Using a representative sample of 5,090 individuals, the authors adjusted the variables (based on Young, 1958) to avoid result contamination that invalidated previous studies.

[MERIT] = [ABILITY (IQ)] + [EFFORT]

Ability

Metric: General Ability Test (GAT)
When: Assessed at age 11.
Why?: It is the best empirical indicator before learning in secondary school (highly influenced by social class) alters the results.

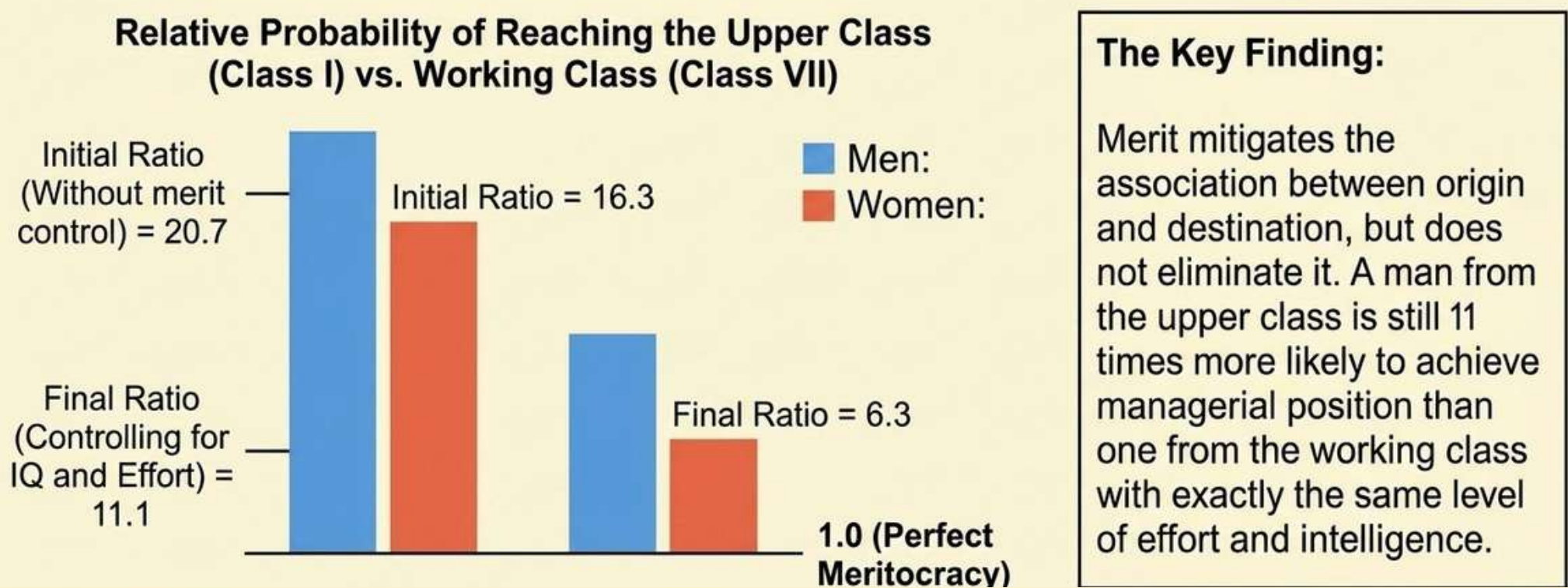
Effort

Metric: Academic Motivation Scale
When: Assessed at age 16.
Why?: Saunders measured work attitude at age 33, when the individual's class destiny is practically decided, invalidating causality.

Fundamental Inclusion: A critical factor: This analysis includes the parallel study of men and women, eliminating the gender bias inherent in the original thesis.

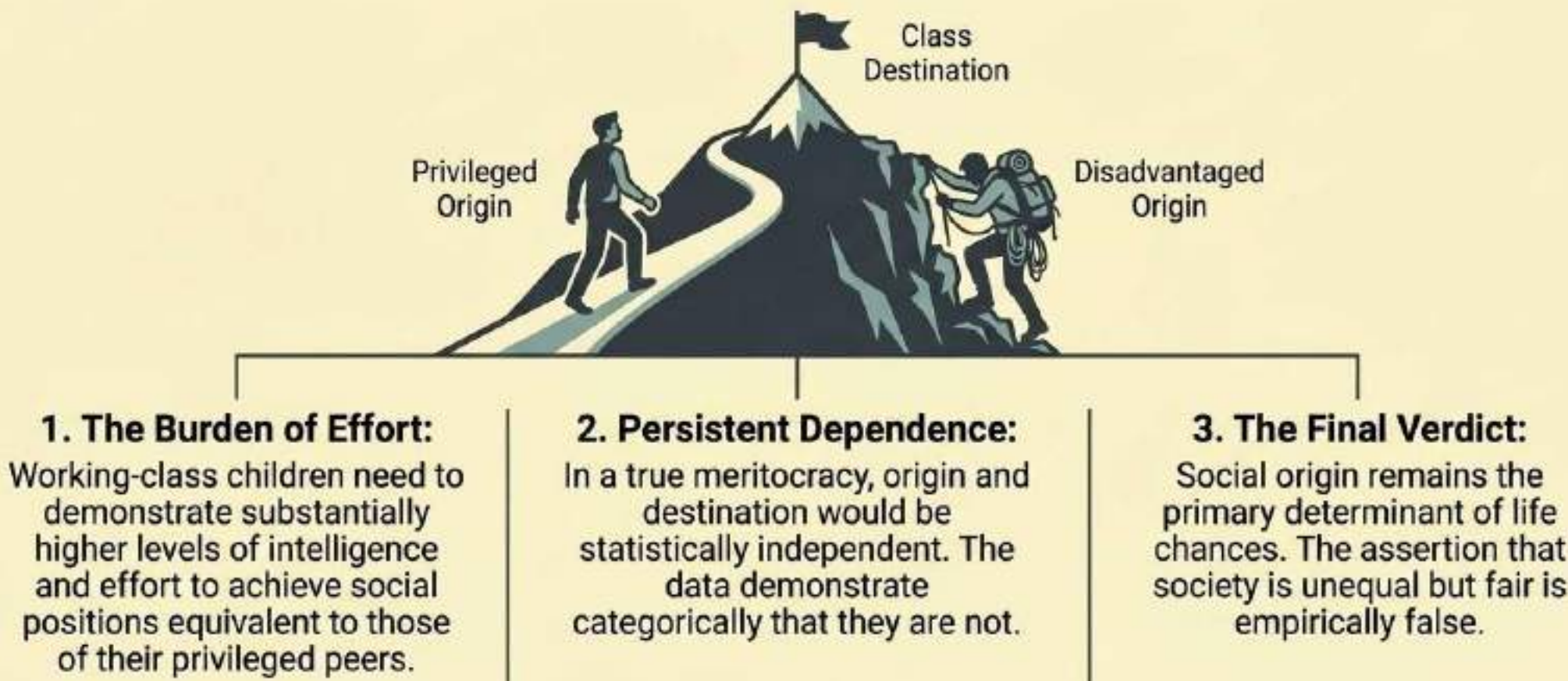
The Data: Merit Matters, but Origin Dominates

In a perfect meritocracy, the Odds Ratio (the probability gap between classes) would fall to 1.0 after controlling for merit. Topological log-linear models reveal a different reality.



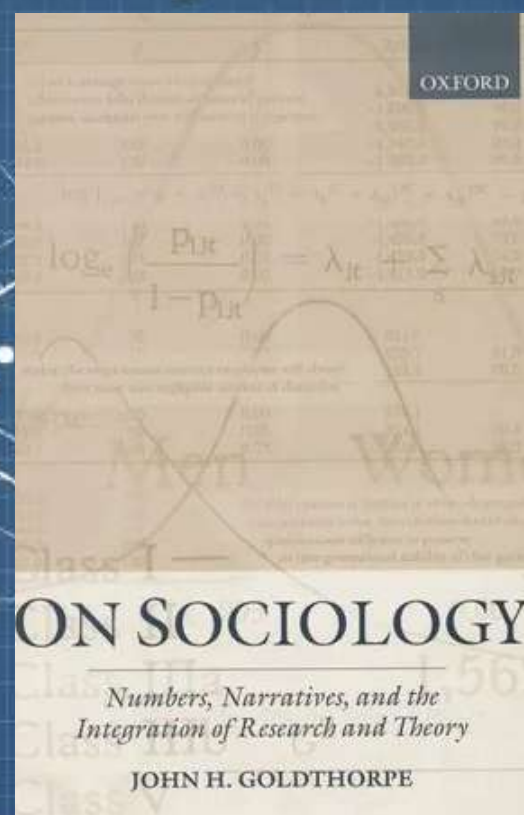
Conclusion: The Double Standard of Merit

The attempt to legitimise class inequality as a meritocratic result fails under empirical scrutiny. British society remains deeply tied to social origin.



Rebuilding the Core of Sociological Inquiry

An Analysis of John H. Goldthorpe's On Sociology: Numbers, Narratives, and the Integration of Research and Theory



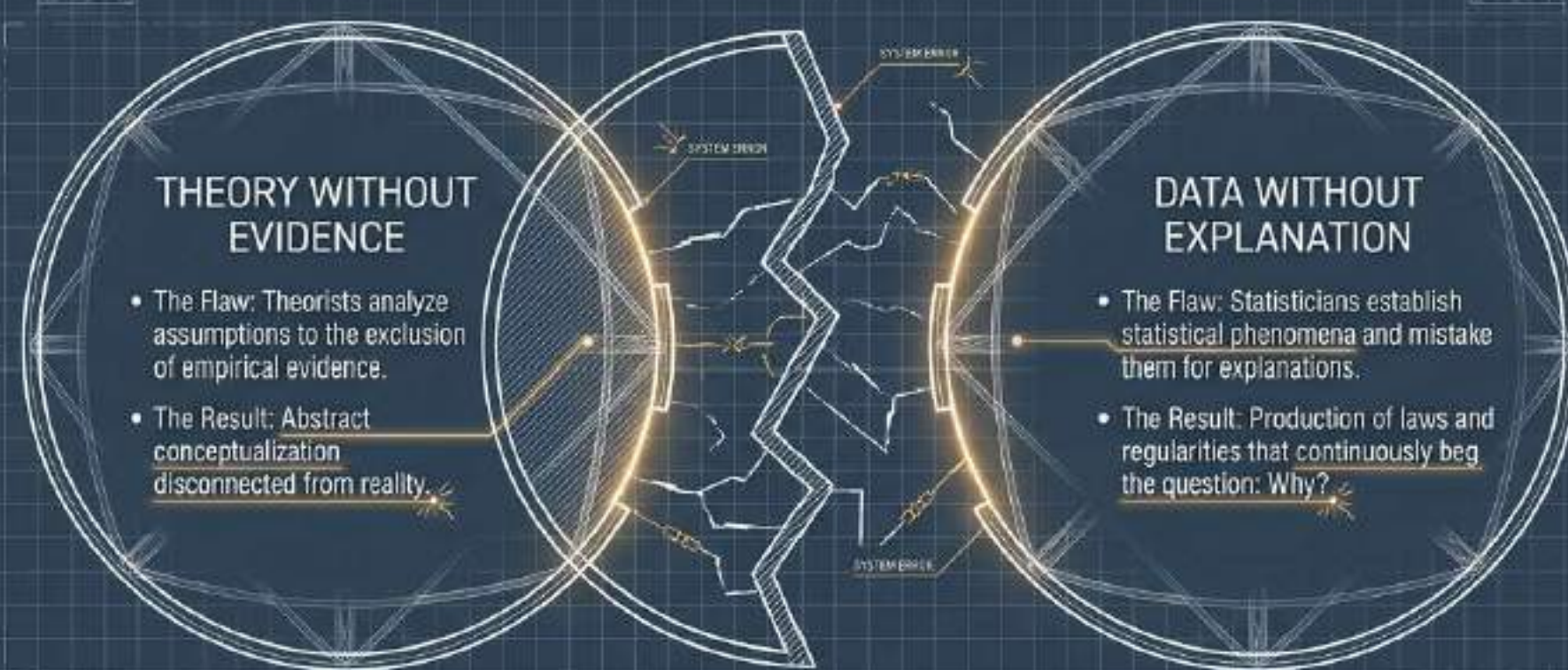
Project: Unifying Quantitative Analysis & Rational Action Theory

STATUS: STRUCTURAL INTEGRATION ENGINEER: GOLDTHORPE

Scale: Micro-to-Macro Linkages

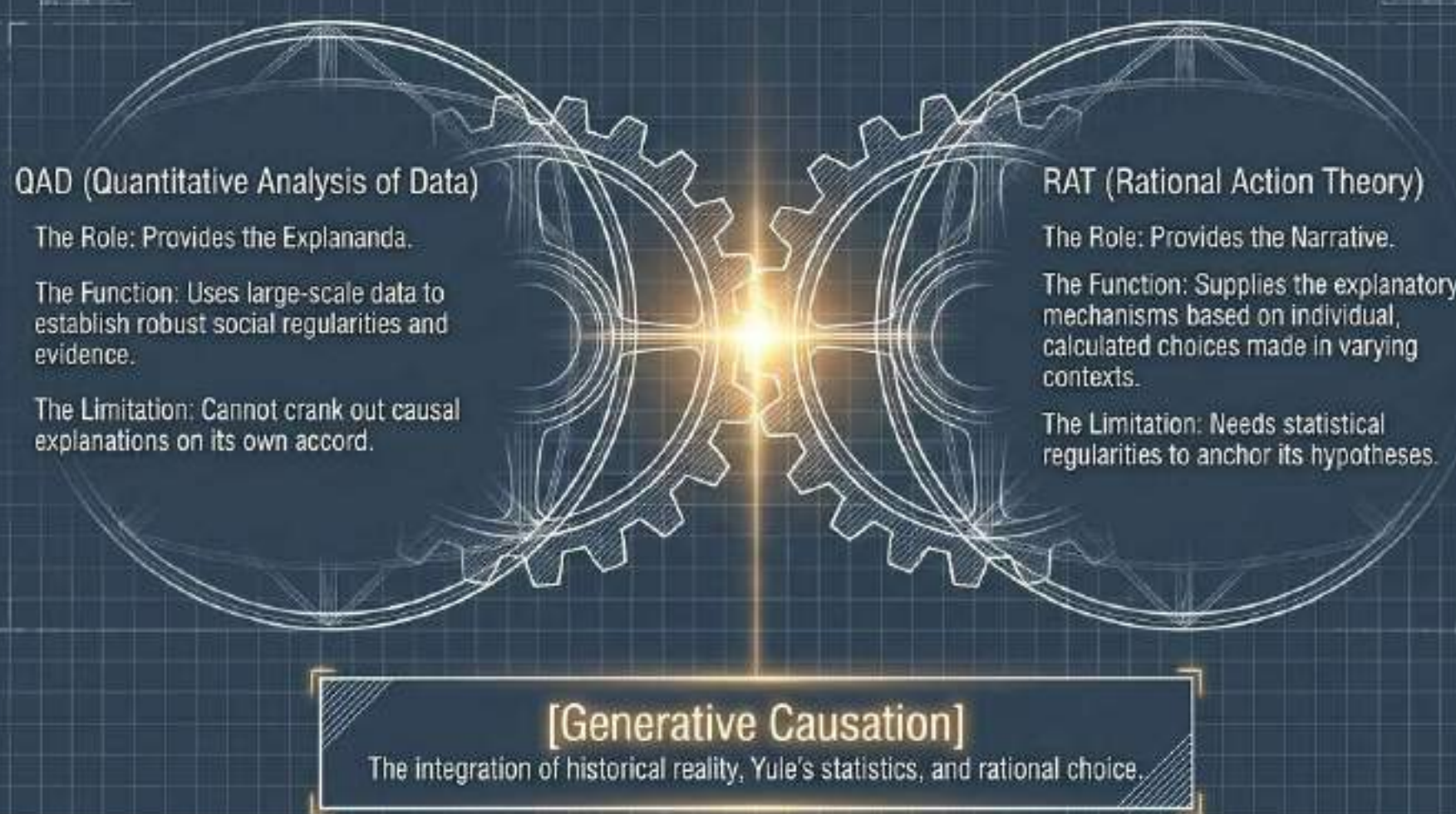
SPECIFICATION: MICRO FOUNDATIONS, MACRO CONSEQUENCES
LINKAGE MECHANISM: RATIONAL ACTION

THE CRISIS OF SPURIOUS PLURALISM



The 1960s anti-positivist reaction left the discipline fractured. What is celebrated as theoretical pluralism actually masks a collective failure to define the discipline's scientific core.

The New Blueprint: The QAD + RAT Alliance



RETHINKING SOCIOLOGICAL CAUSATION

Causation as Robust Dependence

Status: Outdated.

Logic: Assumes correlation equates to cause.

Flaw: Leaves the black box of social mechanisms closed, assuming the statistical process is self-explanatory.

Causation as Consequential Manipulation

Status: Experimental.

Logic: Relies on randomized, controlled trials.

Flaw: Largely impossible or unethical for macrosociological phenomena.

Causation as Generative Process
The Goldthorpe Model

Status: Essential.

Logic: Identifies the underlying mechanisms and individual choices responsible for bringing phenomena into being.

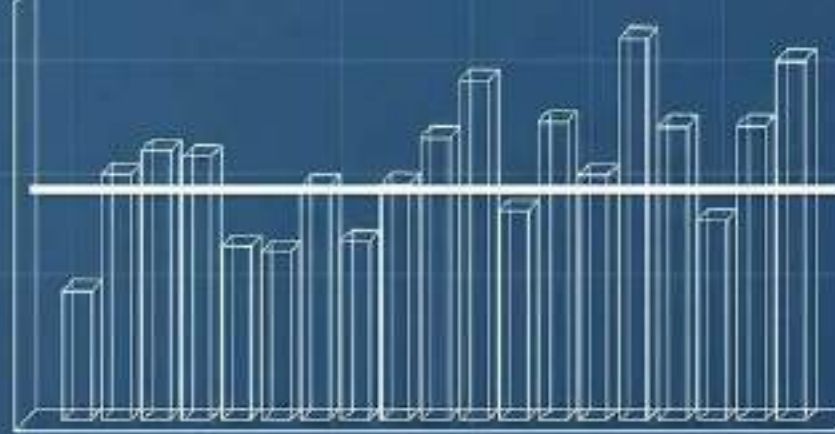
Advantage: Opens the black box to reveal the human why behind the aggregate data.

Operationalizing the Theory: The 3-Step Generative Method



STRESS-TESTING THE MODEL: CLASS DIFFERENTIALS IN EDUCATION

The QAD Finding (The Regularity)



Observation: Class differentials in educational attainment stubbornly persist.

Context: This remains true despite universally available opportunities and changes in policy and cost structures.

The RAT Narrative (The Mechanism)

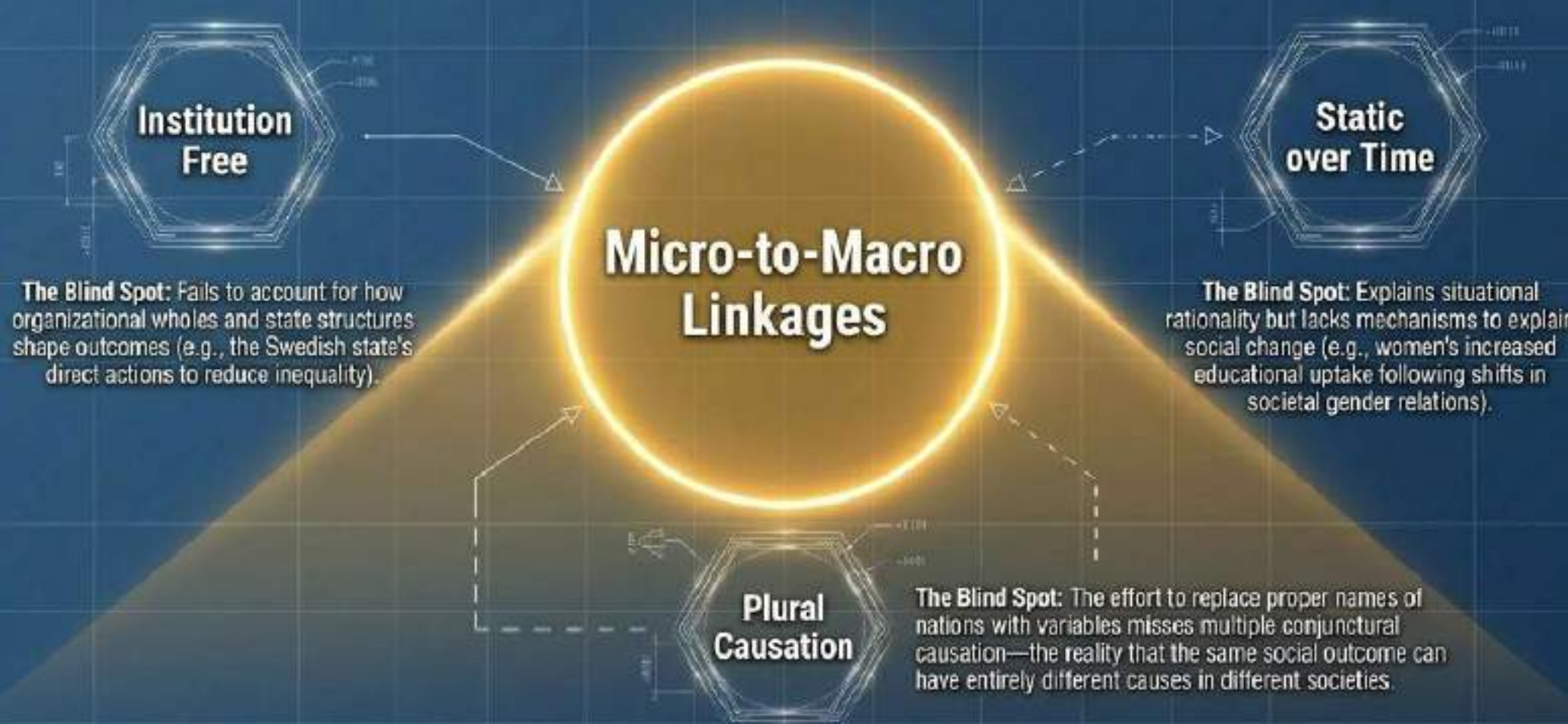


Calculated Choice: Families make rational decisions based on their starting socio-economic positions.

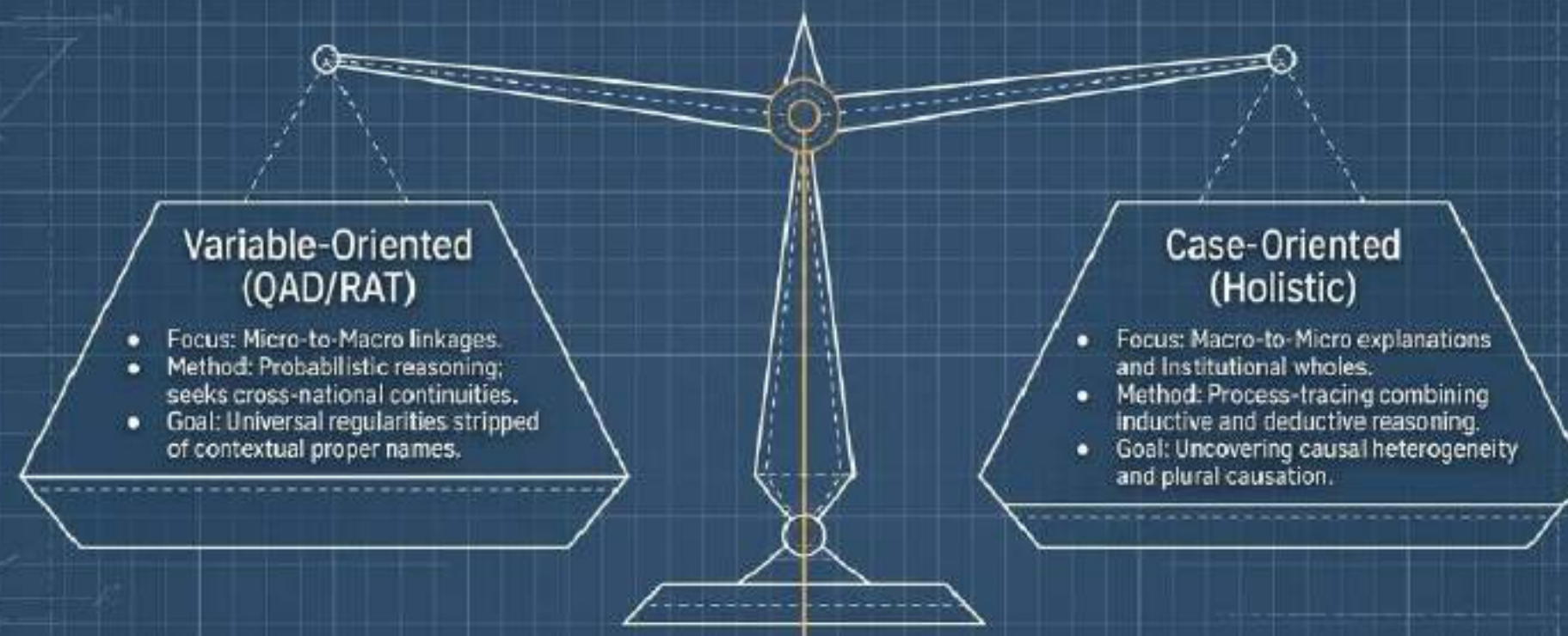
Advantage Dynamics: Advantaged families perceive lower relative costs and higher probabilities of realizing the benefits of advanced education.

Result: Micro-level rational choices consistently generate macro-level inequalities.

The Missing Pillars: Critiques of the QAD/RAT Paradigm



Interdependence, Not Mortal Combat



Goldthorpe dismisses holistic sociology as rigid Millian logic, but critics argue case-oriented process-tracing is essential to grasp the phenomena as wholes.

The Defined Role of Ethnography

"There might be a role for ethnography in testing hypotheses about 'local causes,' that is, about mechanisms, operating in particular contexts and not others, that cannot be tested in large data sets."
— John H. Goldthorpe

The Function:

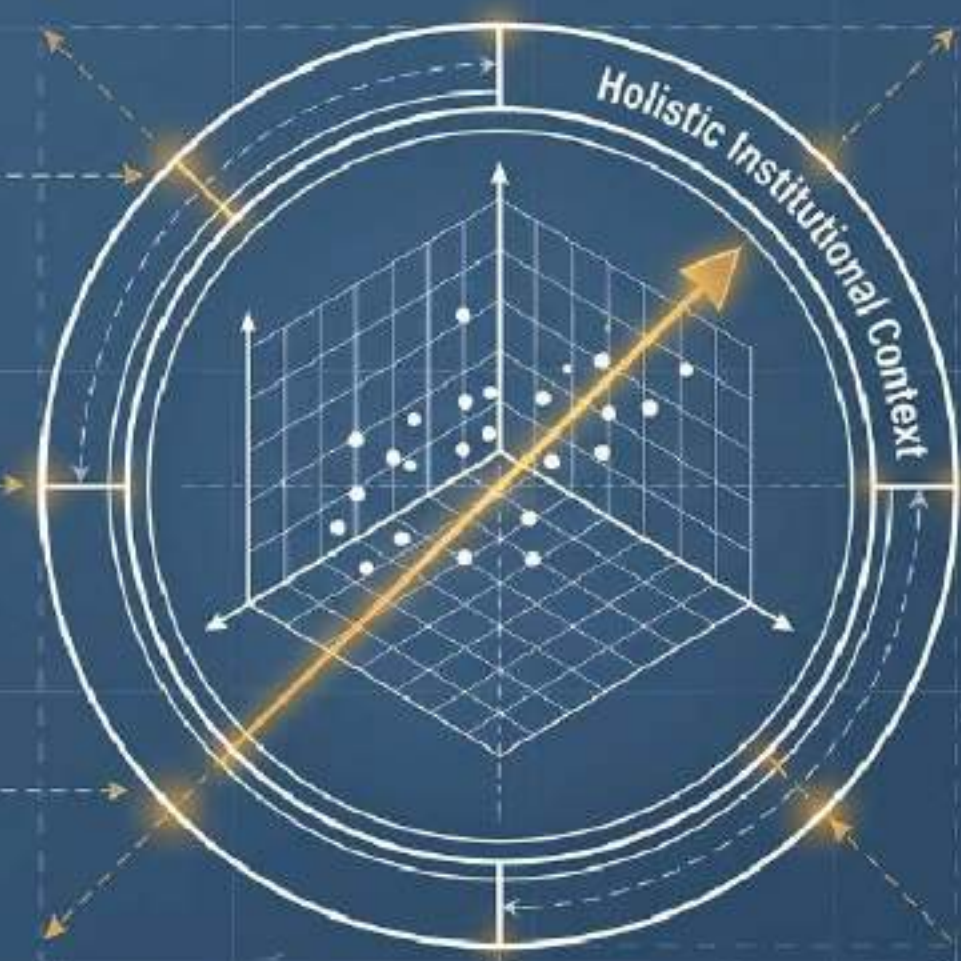
Ethnography is not an alternative to QAD, but a precise tool for Step 3 (Validation).

The Target:

It verifies the validity of RAT-based causal narratives when large-scale statistical surveys lack the contextual granularity to map the actual mechanism.

Synthesizing a Rebuilt Discipline

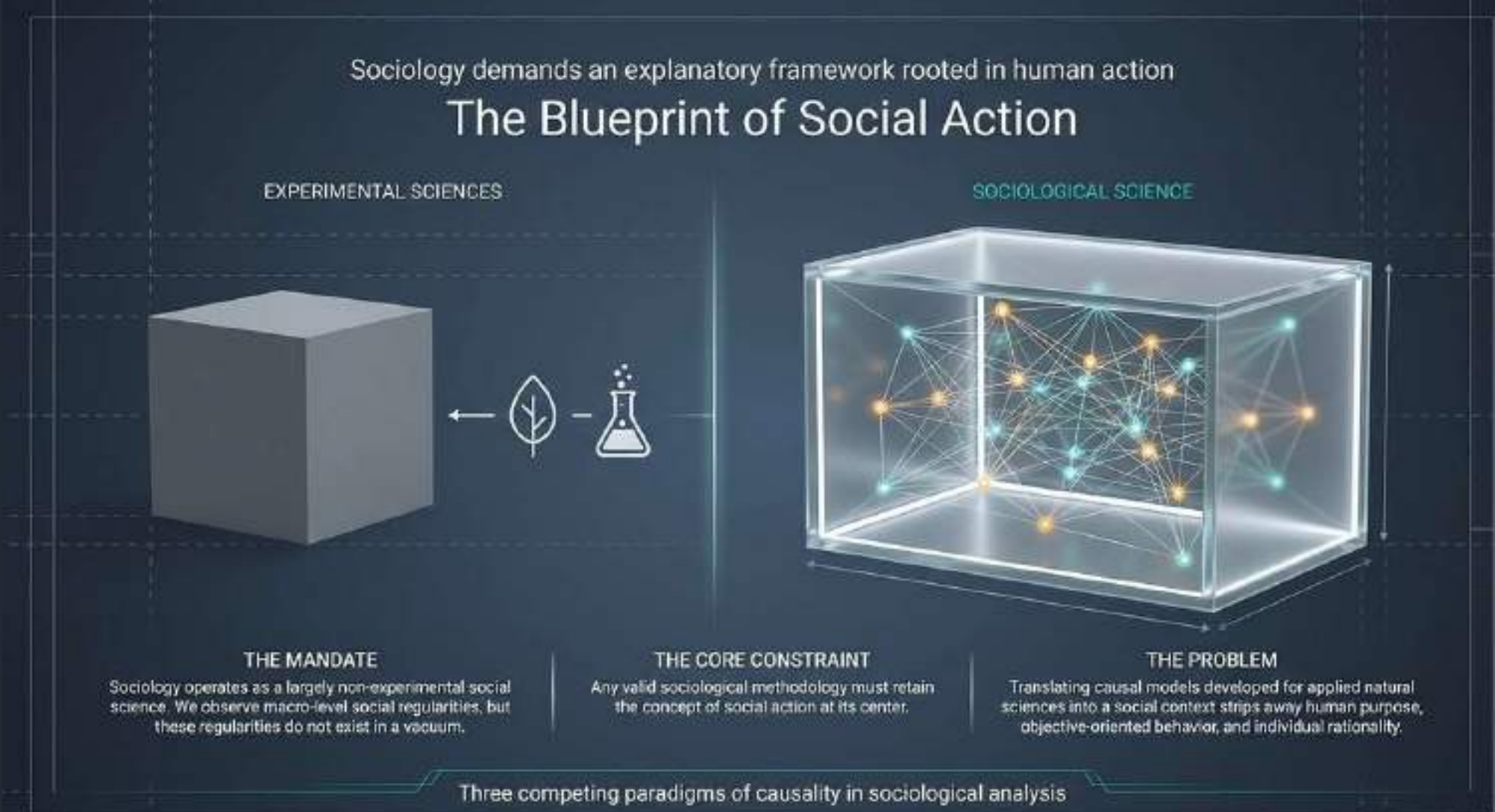
- Acknowledge the Reality**
Accept that the social world exists independently of our ideas; rigorous inference is required to extend knowledge beyond the data at hand.
- Embrace Generative Causes**
Move permanently beyond correlations. Social statistics must test the actual, human mechanisms that generate aggregate patterns.
- Expand the Core**
Combine the probabilistic precision of the QAD/RAT alliance with the contextual depth of holistic, macro-to-micro sociological research.



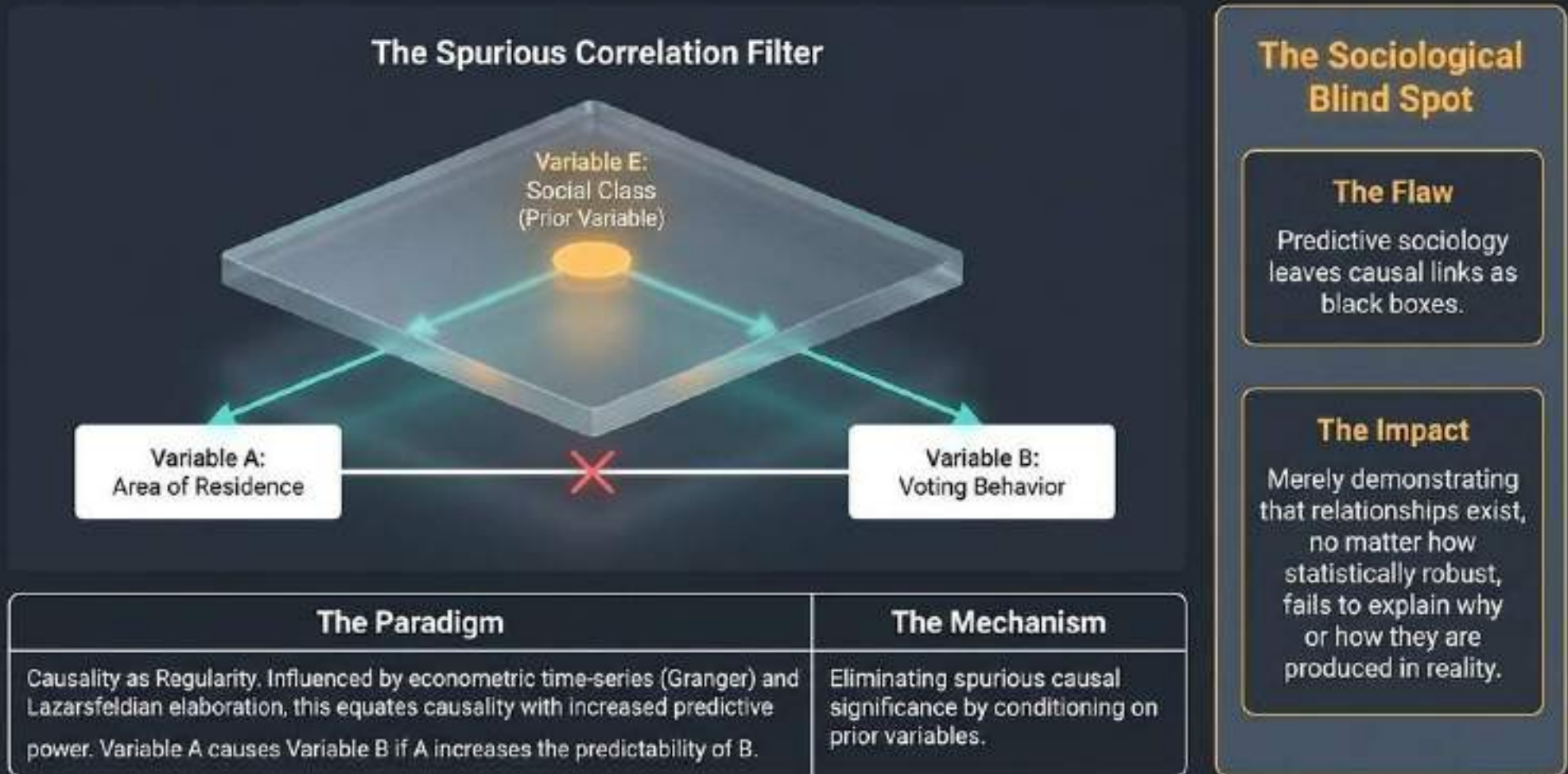
Final Takeaway: A revitalized sociology requires both radically analytic models and holistic understandings to fully map the social world.

Causation, Statistics, and Sociology

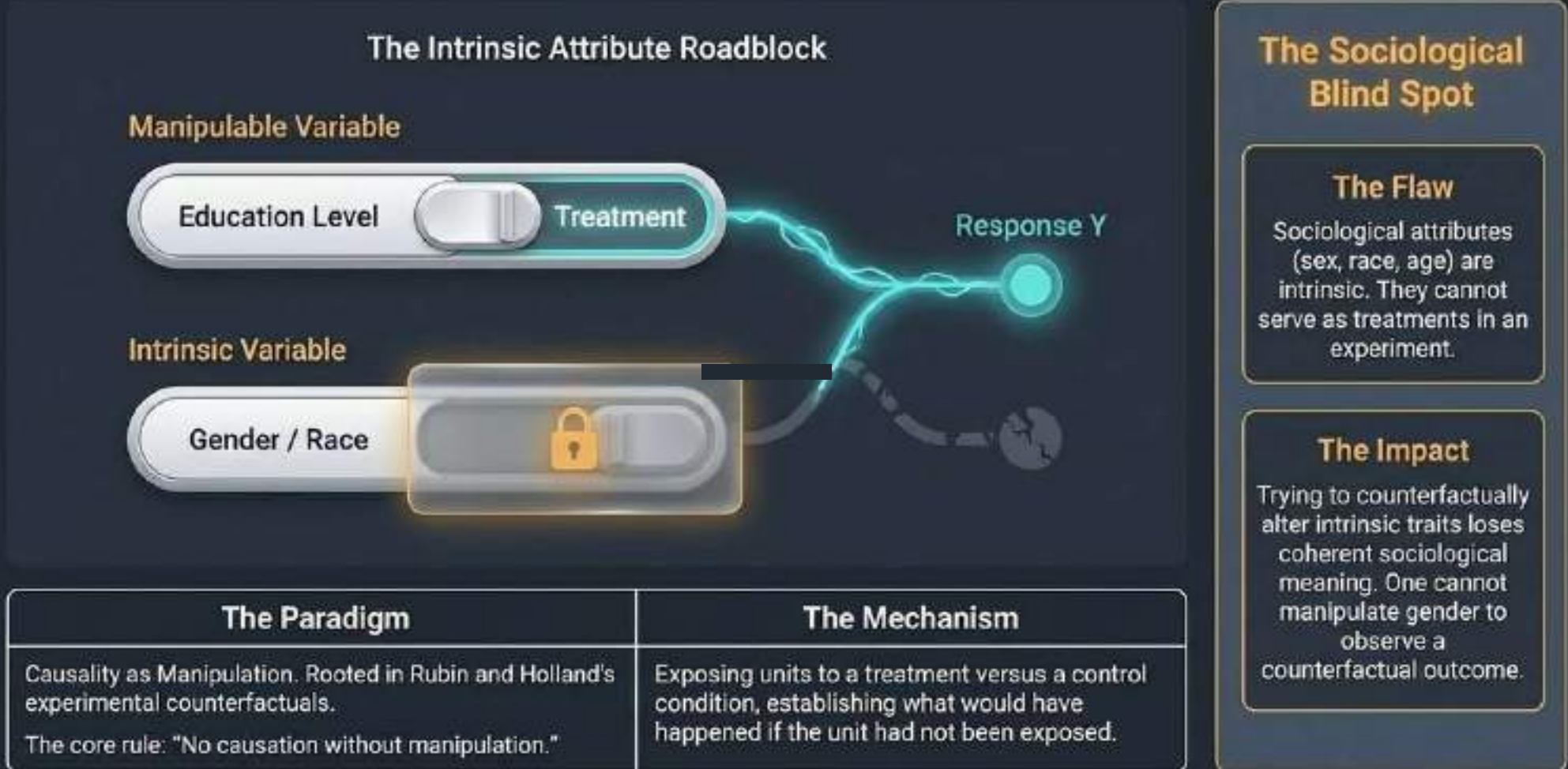
John H. Goldthorpe



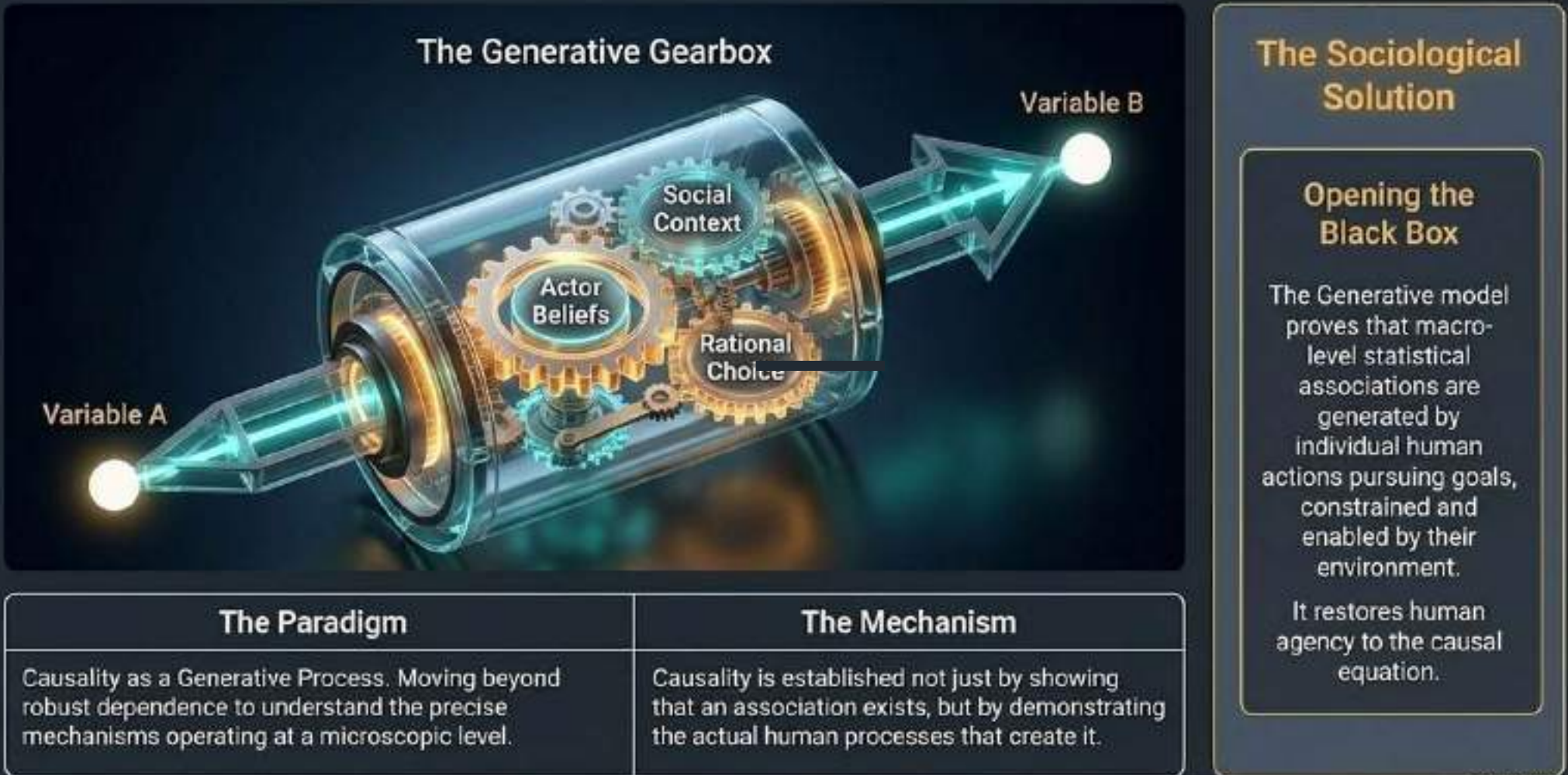
Paradigm I establishes causality through robust statistical dependence



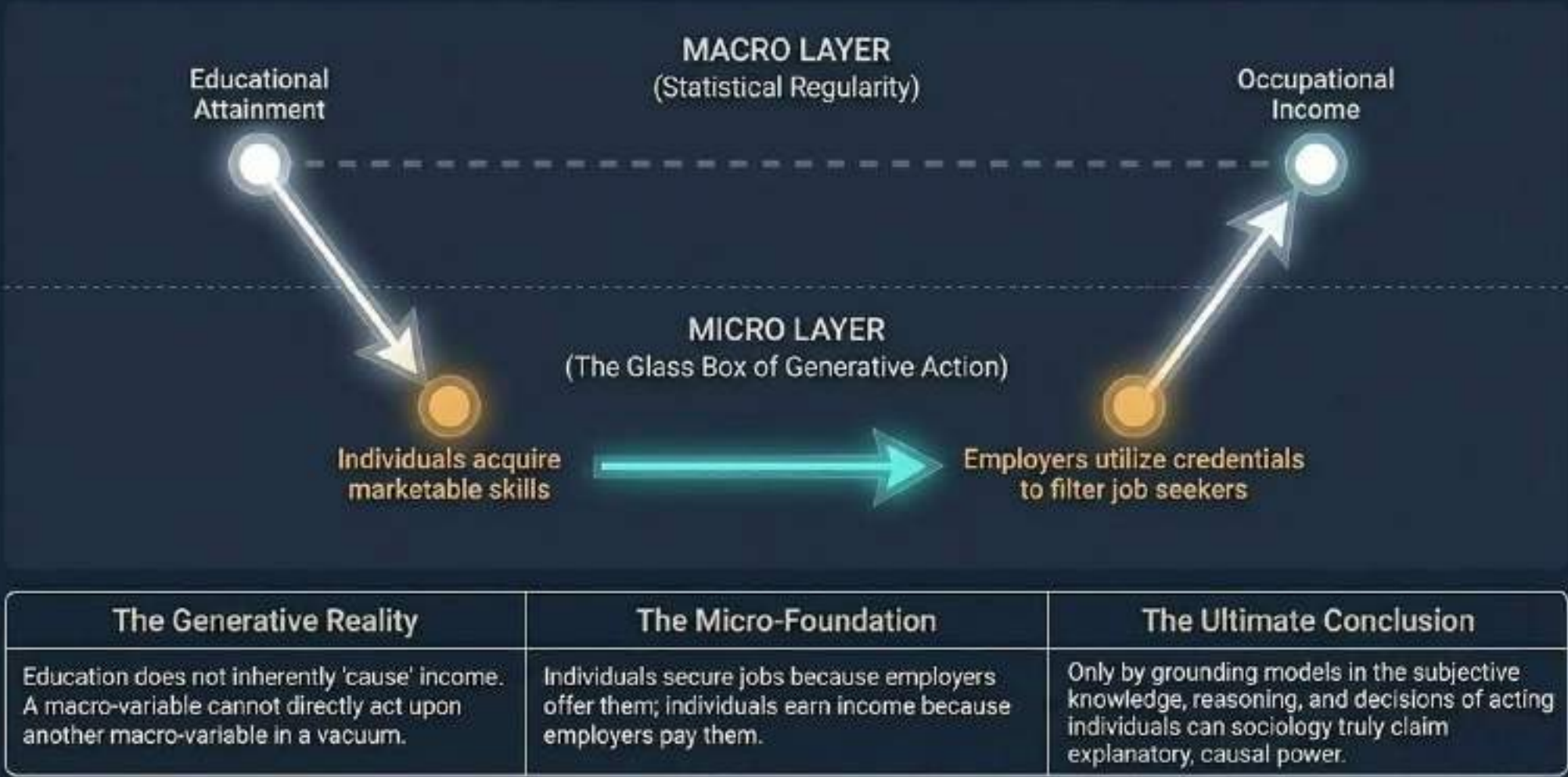
Paradigm II requires consequential manipulation to establish a causal link



Paradigm III views causality as a generative process of mechanisms



Macro-level regularities are synthesized through micro-level social actions



On class differentials in educational attainment
Robert Erikson¹, John H. Goldthorpe², Michael Jackson³, Mai Yaish⁴, and D. R. Cox⁵
¹London University, ²University of York, ³University of York, ⁴University of York, ⁵University of York

Since class differentials in educational attainment have been extensively studied, evidence in the social sciences to explain class differentials in the progression to higher education is abundant. Among the principal theories in sociology and social science, the primary effects of differing levels of academic performance in secondary education have been the most widely studied. However, the secondary effects of performance on educational attainment have been less well studied. In this paper, we use data from the British Cohort Study to examine the secondary effects of performance on educational attainment. We use data to compare with the level of attainment of students, showing that secondary effects are important and that the transition to higher education is more likely for students who have higher performance in secondary education.

Secondary effects of performance on educational attainment

Since class differentials in educational attainment have been extensively studied, evidence in the social sciences to explain class differentials in the progression to higher education is abundant. Among the principal theories in sociology and social science, the primary effects of differing levels of academic performance in secondary education have been the most widely studied. However, the secondary effects of performance on educational attainment have been less well studied. In this paper, we use data from the British Cohort Study to examine the secondary effects of performance on educational attainment. We use data to compare with the level of attainment of students, showing that secondary effects are important and that the transition to higher education is more likely for students who have higher performance in secondary education.

R.Erikson, J.H.Goldthorpe, M.Jackson, M.Yaish,&D.R.Cox. (2005).
Onclass differentialsineducational attainment, *Proc.Natl.Acad.Sci.U.S.A.*, 102(27), 9730-9733.
<https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.0502433102>

The studyexamineshow**academicperformance**and**educationalchoice**create class differentials in progression to **A-levels** using **logistic regression**and **counterfactual decomposition**, developing a method applied by Erikson & Jonsson (1996).

- ➔ **Social class differentials in educational attainment** have been extensivelystudied: “**childrenfrommoreadvantagedclassbackgroundshavehigherlevels ofeducationalattainmentthanchildrenfromlessadvantagedclassbackgrounds**”(p. 9730).
- ➔ Explanations have focused on how economic, social, and cultural **resources lead to different academic performance**.
- ➔ Boudon (1974)arguedthatinterclassdifferencesineducationalchoices **at given levels of performance** also contributes as a **secondary effect**.

Boudon, R. (1974). *Education, Opportunity, and Social Inequality: Changing Prospects in Western Society*. New York: Wiley.
Erikson, R. & Jonsson, J. O. (1996) in *Can Education be Equalized?*, eds. Erikson, R. & Jonsson, J. O. (Westview, Boulder, CO), pp. 65–93.

Data

YouthCohort Study (2002) sample, representative of **16 year-olds**inthe UK.*
***At 16 students complete compulsory education and choose whether they will pursue advanced levelacademic qualifications (A-level)or not**

Analytical model

```
graph LR; Class((Class)) -- Primary effect --> Outcome((Outcome)); Class -- Secondary effect --> Performance((Performance)); Performance -- Primary effect --> Outcome; EarlyChoice[Early choice component] --> Outcome;
```

Limitations

Single-wave data.
Response rate ~55%, implying possible underestimation of secondary effects due to unobserved early decisions.

① “For example, it is possible that an anticipatory decision not to enter A-level courses would lead to less work being done in preparing for the examinations used to measure performance and hence to lower performance” (p. 9733)

Table 1. Specification of classes

Our system	Seven category NS-SEC
Salariat	I, Higher managerial and professional occupations II, Lower managerial and professional occupations
Intermediate	III, Intermediate occupations IV, Small employers and own account workers V, Lower supervisory and technical occupations
Working	VI, Semi-routine occupations VII, Routine occupations

NS-SEC, National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification.

Primary effects

Class	Percent making transition		Sample size
	Observed	Fitted	
Salariat	76.6	76.1	5,062
Intermediate	54.7	53.9	4,706
Working	39.7	39.5	1,870
All	62		11,638

Odds ratios from raw numbers are: Salariat (S)/Working (W), 4.96; S/Intermediate (I), 2.70; I/W, 1.84.

~75% of the effect

```
graph LR; Class((Class)) -- Primary effect --> Outcome((Outcome)); Class -- Secondary effect --> Performance((Performance)); Performance -- Primary effect --> Outcome;
```

~25% of the effect

Primary effects: differences in academic performance across classes. Standardized to z-scores:

Fig. 1. Fitted normal distributions for performance within each of three classes. Fitted logistic curves for probability of transition as a function of performance

Class	$\hat{\mu}$	$\hat{\sigma}$
Salariat	0.365	0.920
Intermediate	-0.185	0.952
Working	-0.530	0.959
All	0.00	1.00

“the 50% point corresponds to an academic performance score of 0.47 for students of salariat background, as against 0.20 for working class students” (p. 9731)

Secondary effects and counterfactual analyses

```
graph LR; Class((Class)) -- Primary effect --> Outcome((Outcome)); Class -- Secondary effect --> Performance((Performance)); Performance -- Primary effect --> Outcome;
```

~75% of the effect

~25% of the effect

Counterfactual analyses

Counterfactual analyses combine one class's performance distribution with another's choice probabilities.

Table 4. Estimated probabilities and odds and log odds, direct and under additive assumption, of transitions for real and counterfactual combinations of estimated distributions of performance (rows) and transition probabilities (columns)

	Salariat	Intermediate	Working
Estimated probabilities and odds			
Salariat	0.761; 3.182	0.710; 2.448	0.681; 2.135
Intermediate	0.596; 1.475	0.539; 1.169	0.507; 1.028
Working	0.481; 0.927	0.426; 0.742	0.395; 0.653
Log odds			
Salariat	1.158; 1.140	0.895; 0.901	0.758; 0.770
Intermediate	0.389; 0.394	0.156; 0.155	0.028; 0.024
Working	-0.076; -0.063	-0.298; -0.303	-0.426; -0.434

Results show **additive structure**: swapping performance distributions produces larger changes than swapping choice curves.
Log odds and probability estimates confirm the dominant role of **performance** in determining transitions.

① “To represent secondary effects, we use separate binary logistic regressions for each class predicting whether a student with a given performance score, x , enters A-level education” (p. 9731)

② $\Lambda_j(\alpha_j + \beta_j x)$

x performance score
 α_j overall mean for class j
 β_j value of x at which 50% entrance is achieved

Class and Status: The Conceptual Distinction and its Empirical Relevance

Tak Wing Chan
University of Oxford

John H. Goldthorpe
University of Oxford

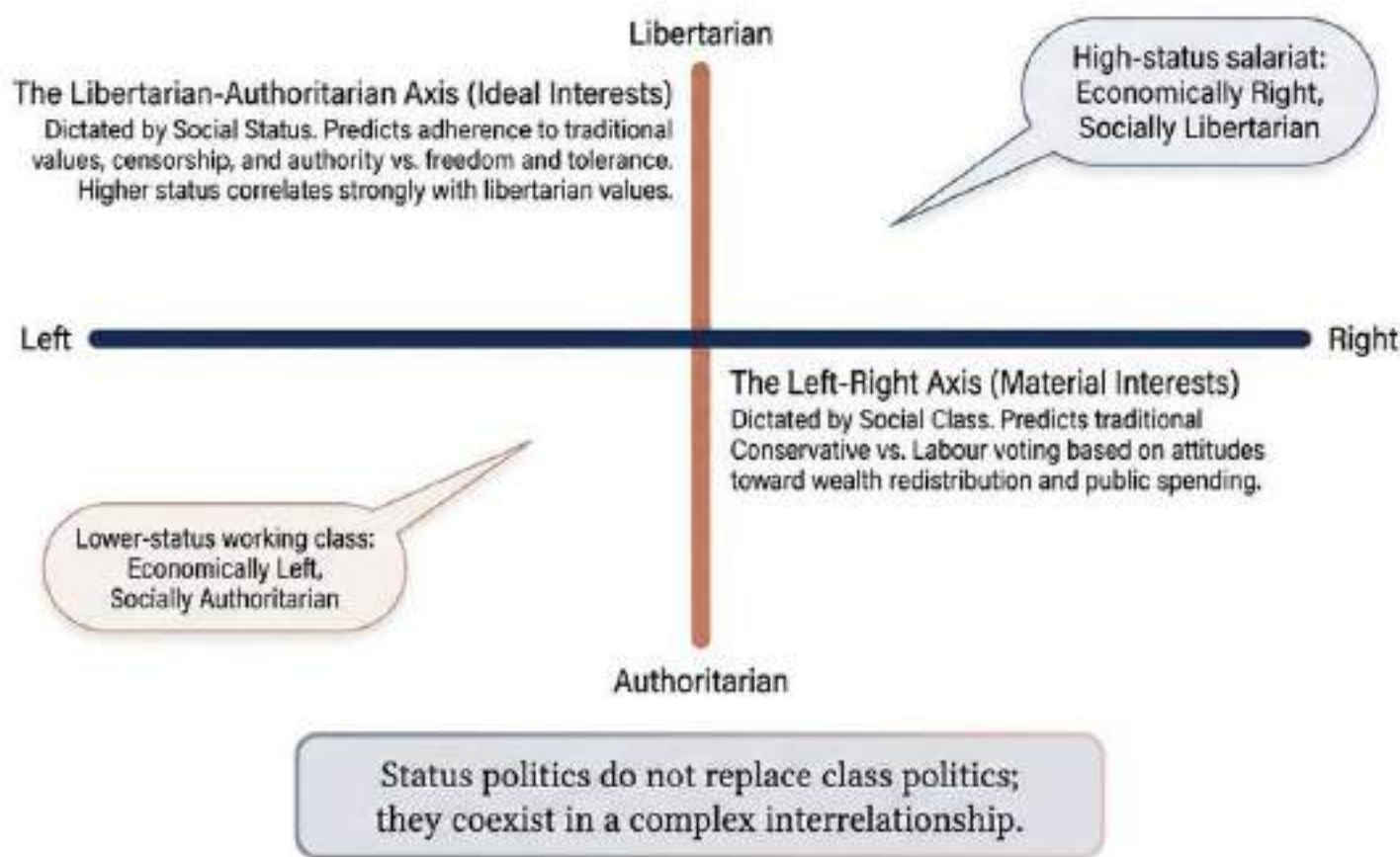
In this article, we return to Max Weber's distinction between class and status as related but different forms of social stratification. We argue that this distinction is not only conceptually cogent, but empirically important as well. Indeed, class and status do have distinct explanatory power when it comes to studying varying areas of social life. Consistent with Weber's assertions, we show that economic security and prospects are stratified more by class than by status, while the opposite is true for outcomes in the domain of cultural consumption. Within politics, class rather than status predicts Conservative versus Labour Party voting in British general elections and also Left-Right political attitudes. But it is status rather than class that predicts Libertarian-Authoritarian attitudes.

Deconstructing Stratification: The Diagnostic Matrix

Social Class	Social Status
Core Definition: Social relations in economic life; relations in labor markets and production units.	Core Definition: A structure of perceived social superiority, equality, and inferiority based on social honor.
Theoretical Root: Max Weber's concept of economic life-chances (Massenhandeln).	Theoretical Root: Max Weber's concept of intimate sociability, commensality, and connubium.
Empirical Measure: Employment contracts and occupational proxies (measured via the NS-SEC / EGP schema).	Empirical Measure: Multidimensional scaling of close friendship networks (assessing occupational distance).
Primary Driver: Material constraints and opportunities.	Primary Driver: Ideal interests, values, and lifestyle choices.

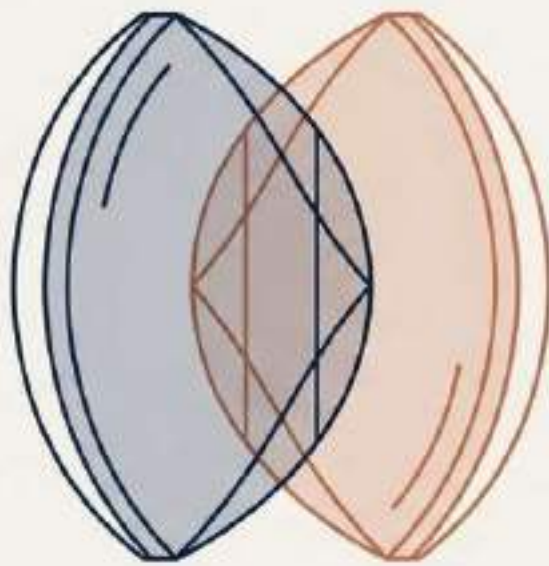
Stratification cannot be reduced to a single socio-economic index. It requires measuring both employment relations and social honor independently.

The Political Intersection



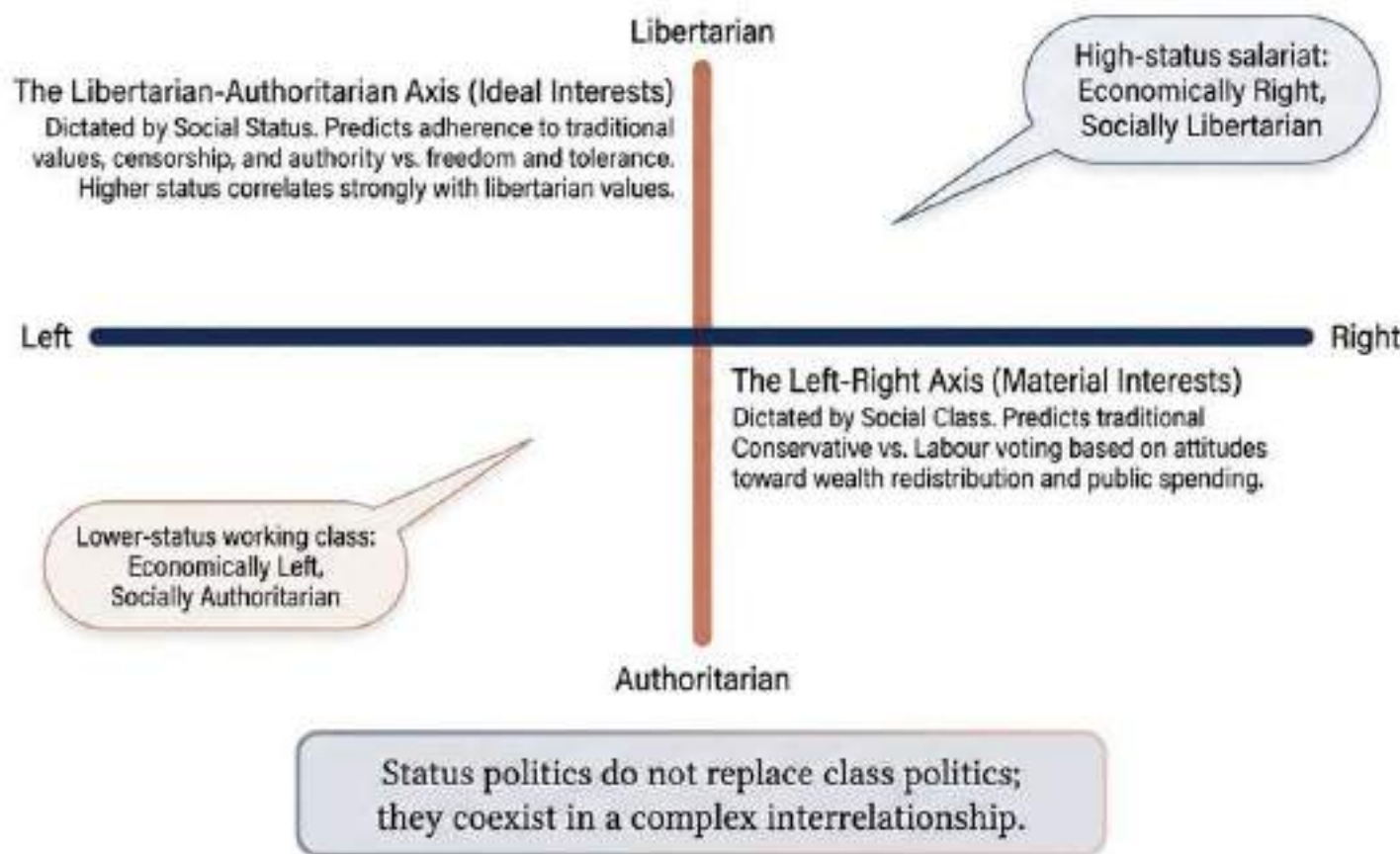
The Dual Lenses of Inequality

Honoring John H. Goldthorpe's conceptual distinction between Class and Status and its enduring empirical relevance.



BASED ON CHAN & GOLDTHORPE (2007), AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW

The Political Intersection



An Enduring Legacy of Clarity

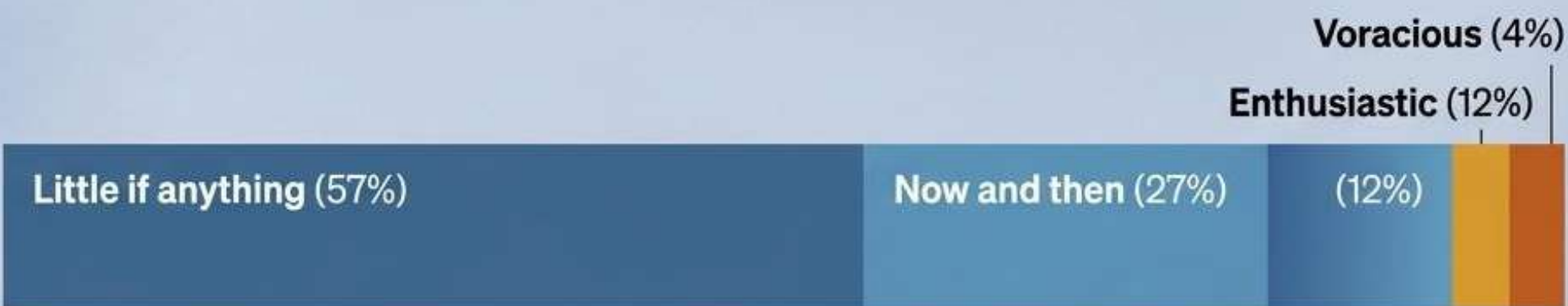
Tatkeaway: Conflating class and status into a single metric blinds us to the multidimensional reality of inequality.



- Methodological Rigor**
Proving that social honor can be empirically mapped through friendship networks, not just theoretically debated.
- Analytical Precision**
Establishing that material outcomes (economics) and ideal outcomes (culture/values) run on separate tracks.
- The Goldthorpe Standard**
A permanent reminder to sociology that true understanding requires separating the structural constraints of the labor market from the symbolic boundaries of lifestyle.

A foundational contribution that continues to map the true contours of modern society.

From Indifference to Enthusiasm: Patterns of Arts Attendance in England



Based on a robust 2005/06 survey of 28,117 adults in England, the population divides into four distinct attendance groups.

'Voracious' attenders engage broadly across both high and popular culture, dispelling the sociological myth of an isolated cultural elite.

'Enthusiastic' attenders show frequent cultural engagement, highly concentrated within specific art forms such as music.

The majority—characterised by 'Little if anything' and 'Now and then' behaviours—primarily participate in mainstream popular events like cinema.

Demographic Influences and the Dual Nature of Barriers

Demographic Realities

- Women more likely to attend
- Attendance peaks up to age 70
- Higher likelihood in White populations
- Londoners show higher Voracious attendance

A Practical Hurdles

Geography:

- Living outside major cultural hubs drastically reduces access.

Family Life:

- Caring for young children (ages 0–4) actively limits participation.

Health:

- Poor physical health forms a significant physical barrier.

B Psychological Walls

Self-Exclusion:

- Deep-seated feelings of exclusion from cultural spaces.

Unfamiliarity:

- Anxiety regarding venue etiquette, dress codes, and unwritten rules.

Disconnection:

- A pervasive lack of cultural ownership and relevance.

Educational Attainment and Social Status as Primary Drivers

Strong Drivers

Education

Higher education significantly increases the likelihood of Enthusiastic or Voracious attendance.

Social Status

Measured by the Chan-Goldthorpe scale; reflects deeply ingrained shared lifestyles.

Balance of Influence

Non-Factors

Income

Little or no actual effect on attendance after controlling for other factors.

Social Class (NS-SEC)

Traditional class metrics and disability status exert no effect.

The importance of social status suggests that arts attendance is driven by some concept of identity. This explains why many individuals genuinely feel the arts are not for people like me.

Policy Implications and the Challenge of Self-Exclusion

Practical Interventions

- Aggressively improve regional arts provision outside of London.
- Make venues fundamentally easier to navigate for families with young children.

Psychological Interventions

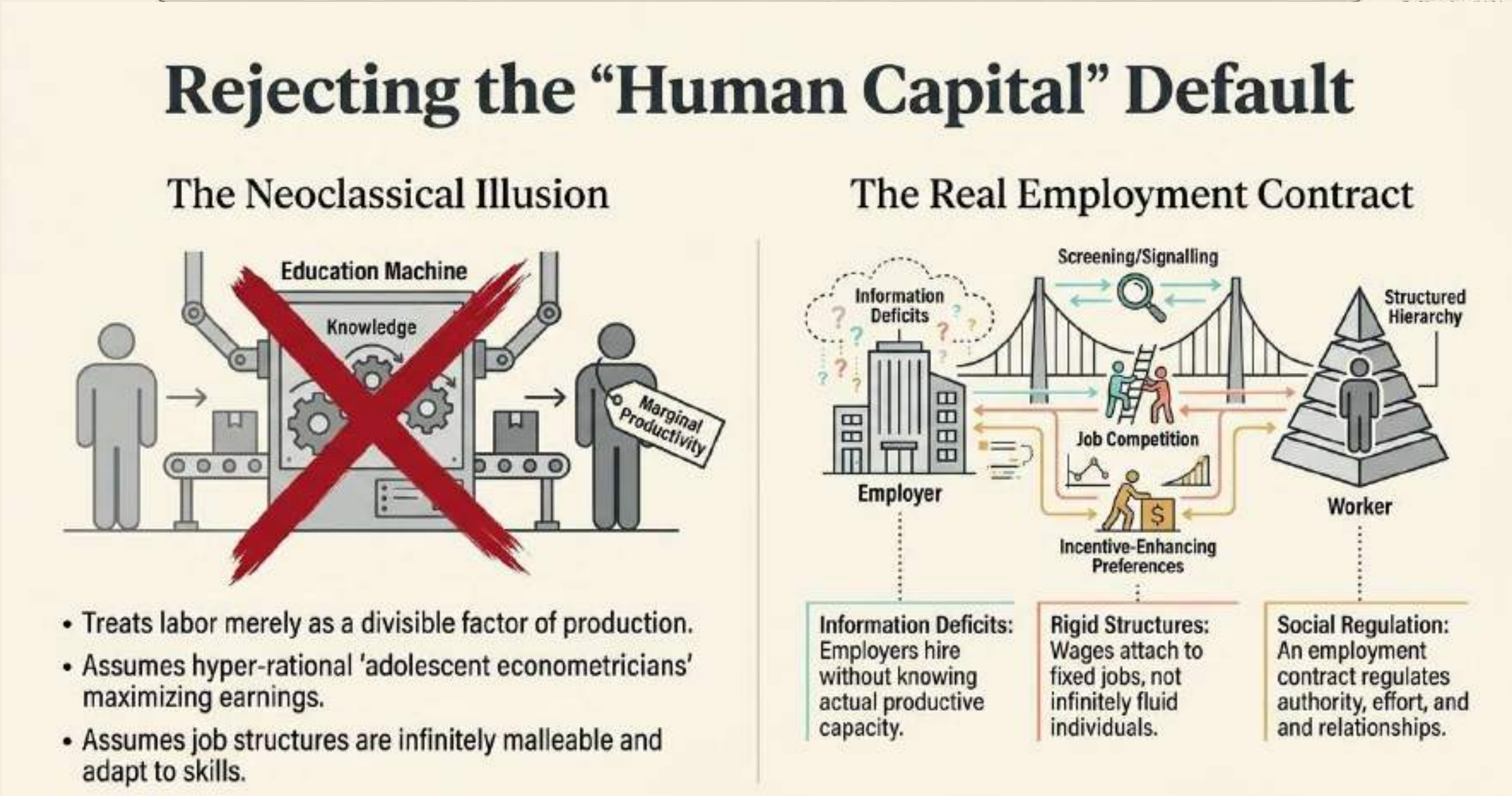
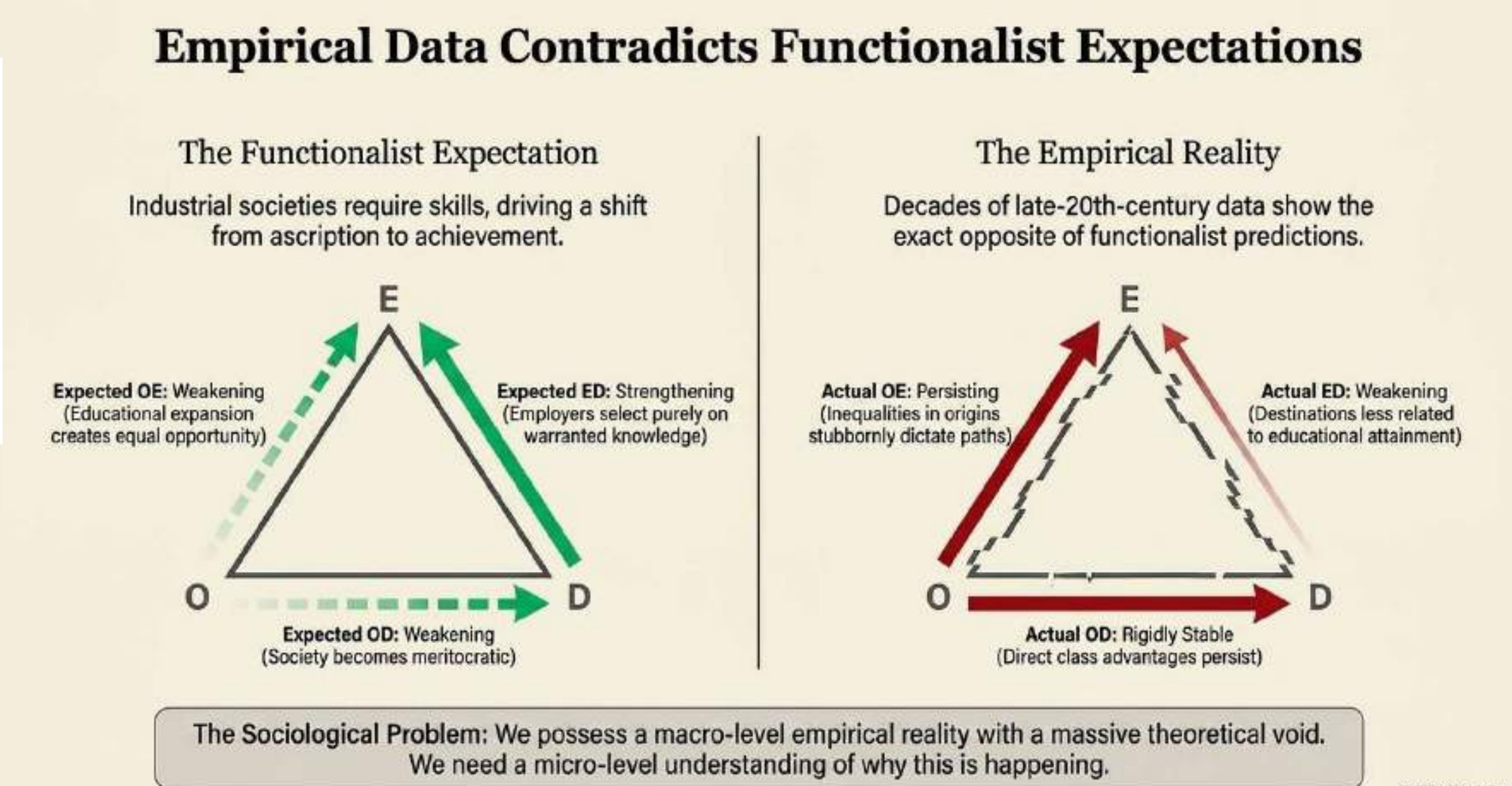
- Demystify the cultural experience with clear guidance on dress codes and content.
- Bring the arts into public, local spaces and utilise participatory budgeting.

Bridge to Relevance

Overcoming Self-Exclusion

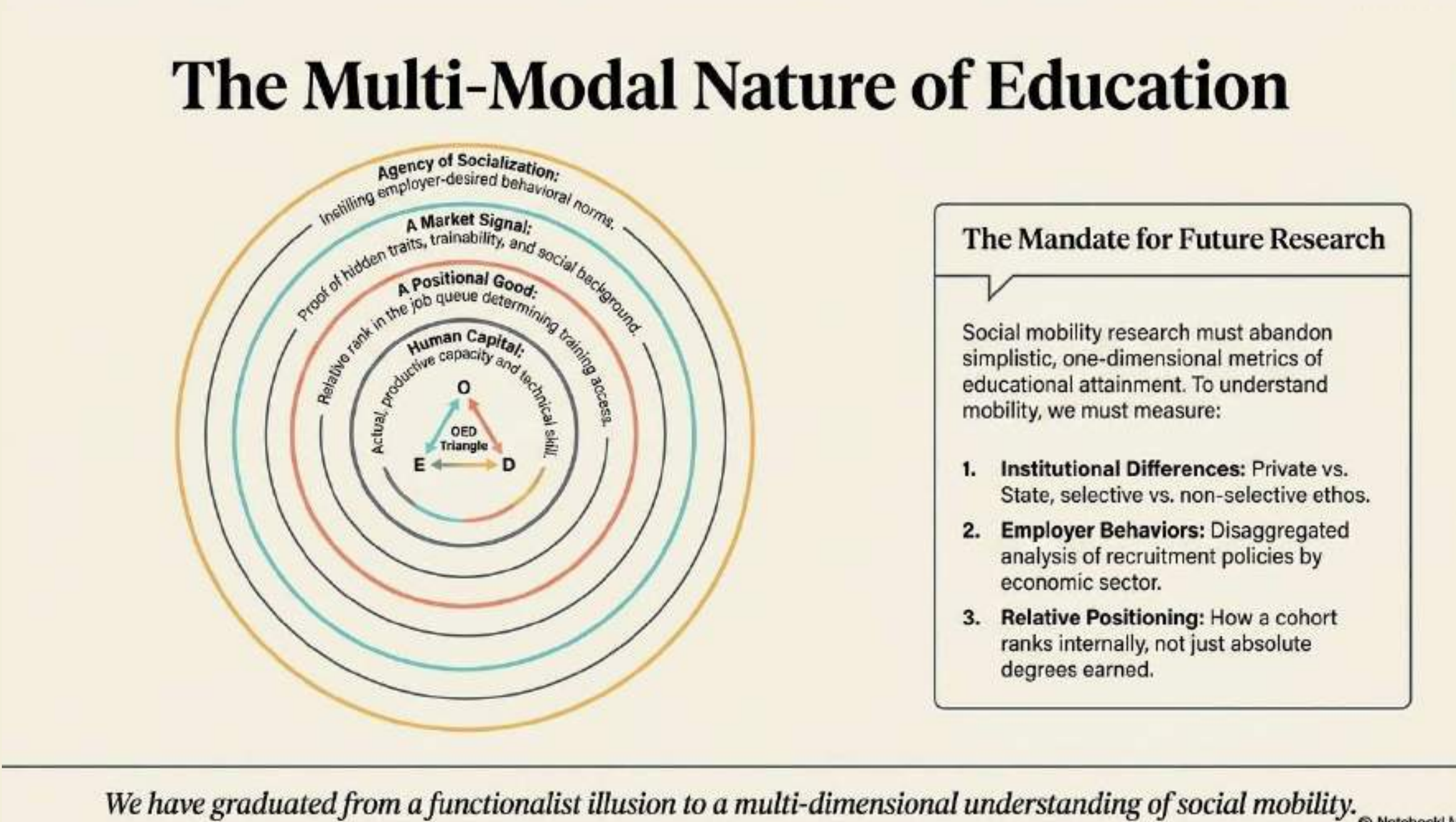
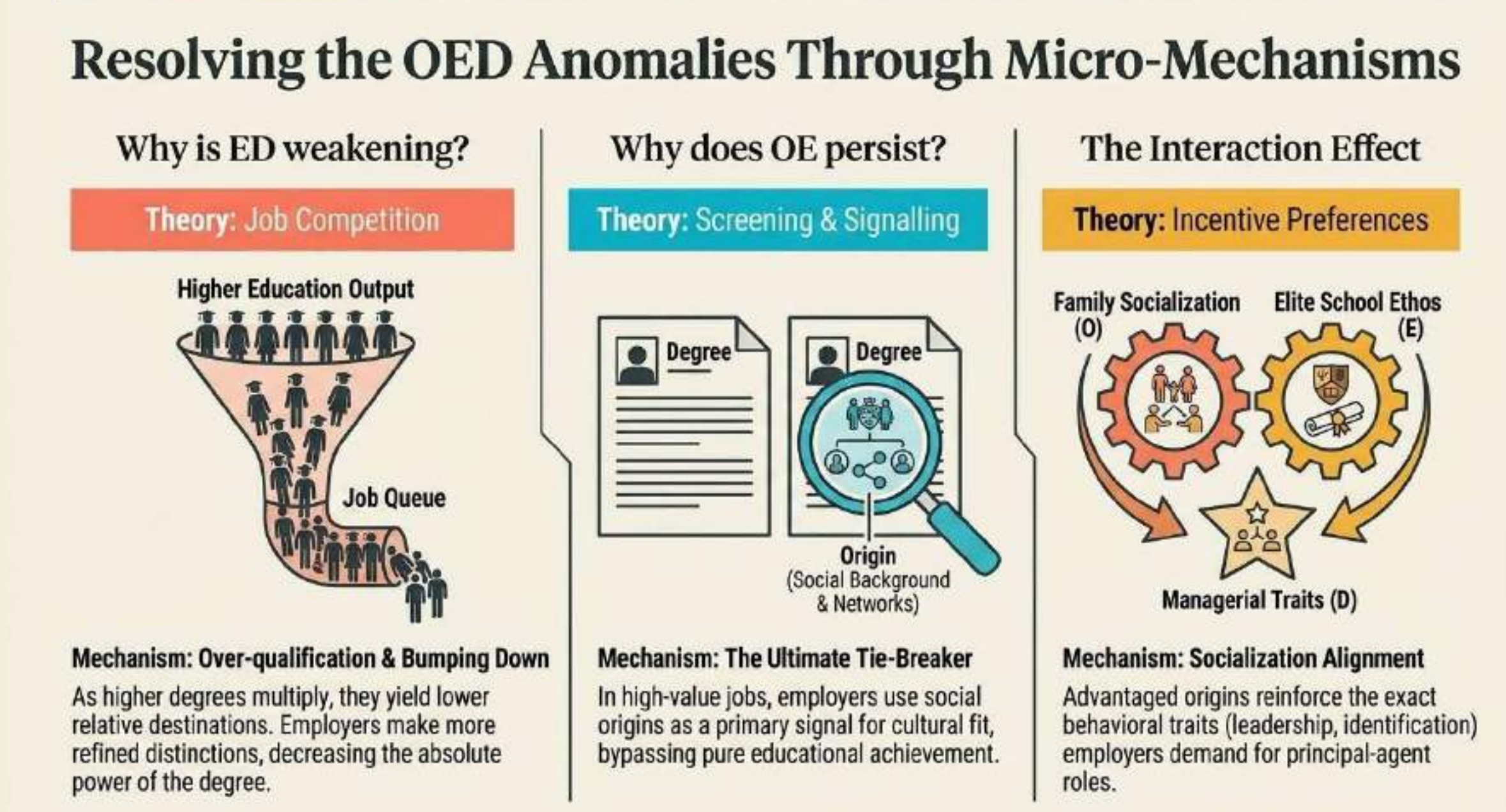
Even if all systemic and logistical barriers are successfully removed, the profound challenge remains for individuals who still actively choose not to attend.

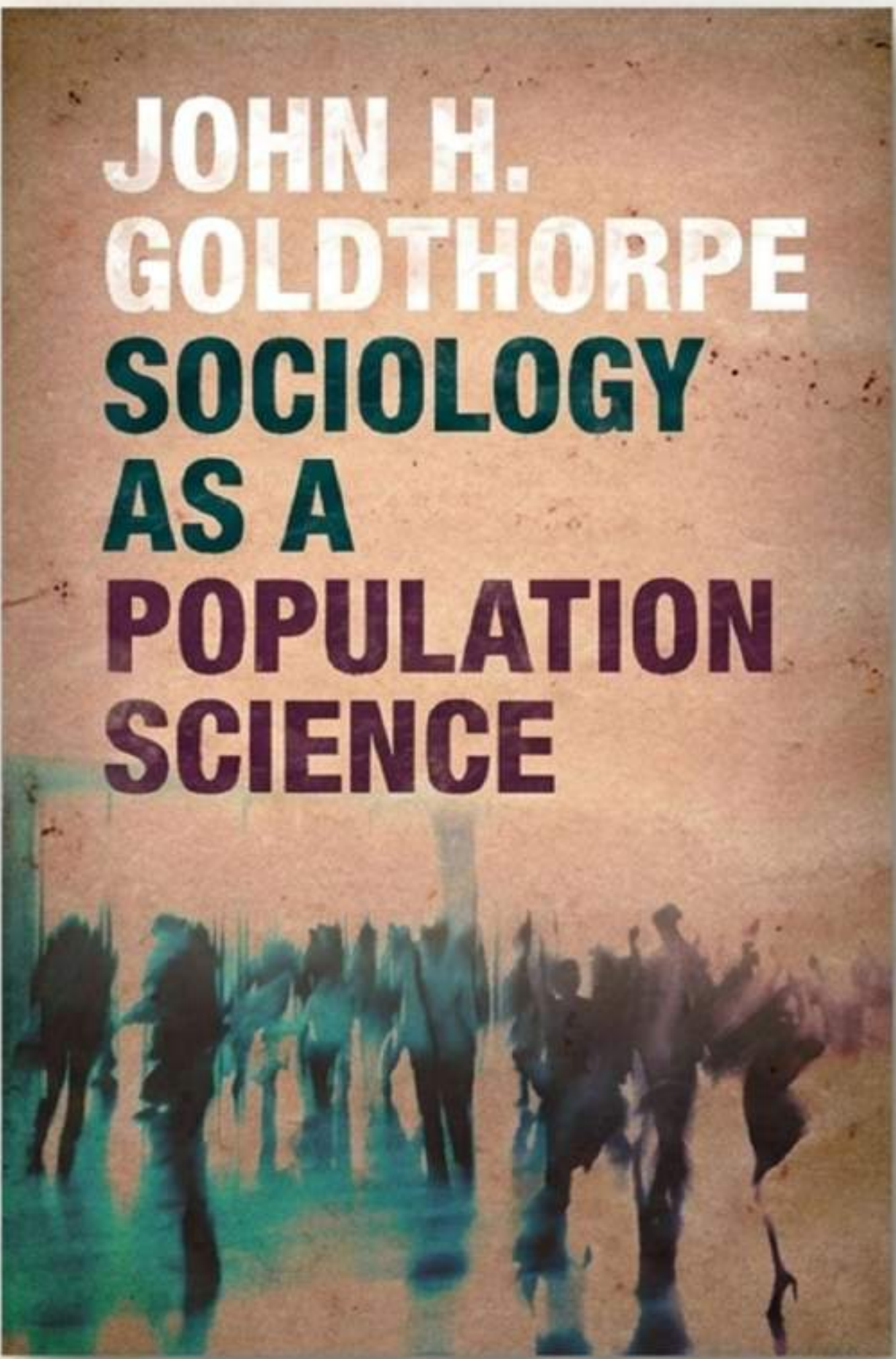
Ultimately, transforming indifference into enthusiasm requires ensuring the cultural offer resonates with diverse, modern lives. As McMaster (2008) states: 'To be excellent, the arts must be relevant.'



Three Micro-Economic Lenses to Explain the Market

Lens & Theorists	View of Education	The Labor Market Mechanism	Role of the Employer
Screening & Signalling (Arrow, Spence)	Not a skill-builder, but a Signal of hidden traits.	Degrees prove effort and trainability, as costs to acquire them are lower for high-potential workers.	An information-starved screener looking for statistical proxies for productivity.
Job Competition (Thurow)	A Positional Good dictating one's place in line.	Two queues matching: The 'Job Queue' (training opportunities) vs. The 'Labour Queue' (relative worker rankings).	A distributor of fixed training opportunities based on relative worker rankings.
Incentive-Enhancing Preferences (Bowles, Gintis)	An Agency of Socialization enforcing the contract.	Instills low time-preference, deference, and work ethic to mitigate the principal-agent problem.	A manager of contractual hazards seeking workers responsive to endogenous enforcement.



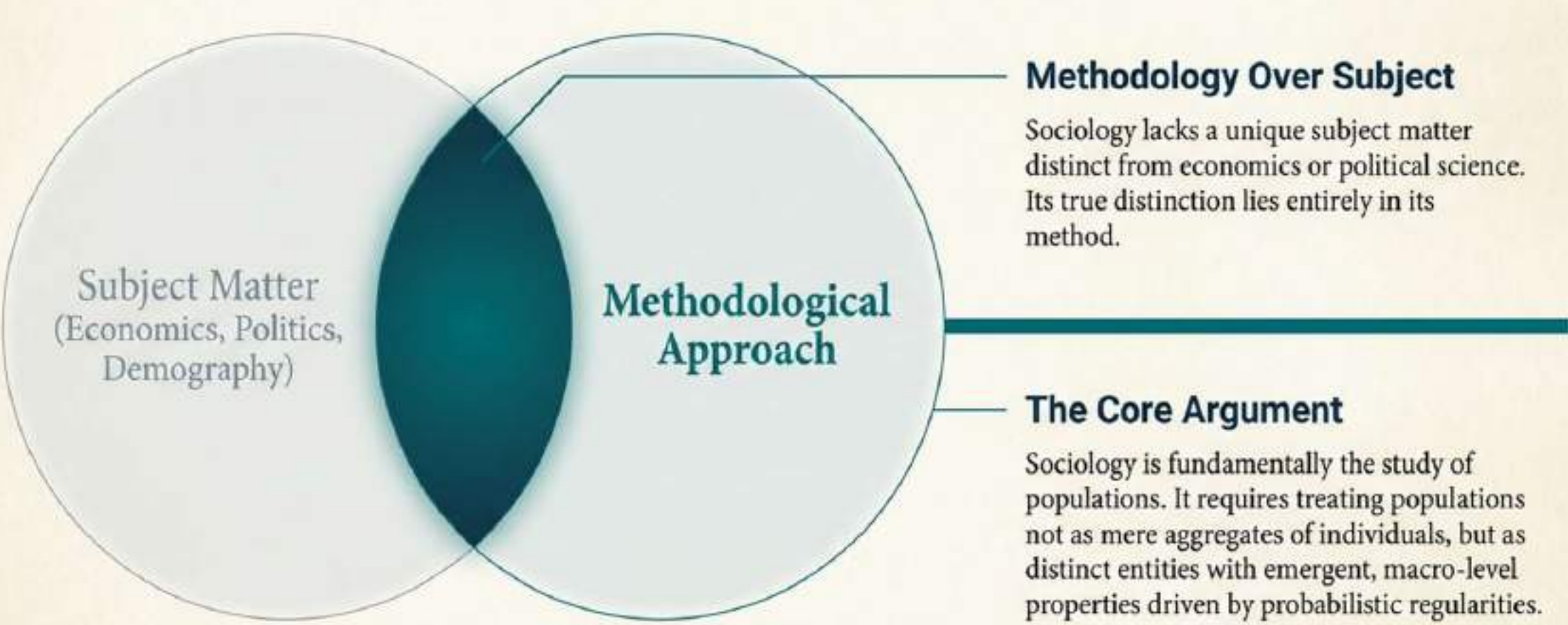


Defining sociology not by a distinct subject matter, but by its fundamental methodology.

Rethinking the Sociological Paradigm

An Executive Synthesis of John H. Goldthorpe's *Sociology as a Population Science*

The Population Science Paradigm

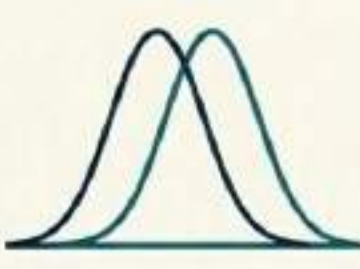


Foundations of the Approach



Intrinsic Variability

Human populations are inherently variable. Variance is the primary reality of the social world, not merely a statistical error to be eliminated or ignored.



Probabilistic Regularities

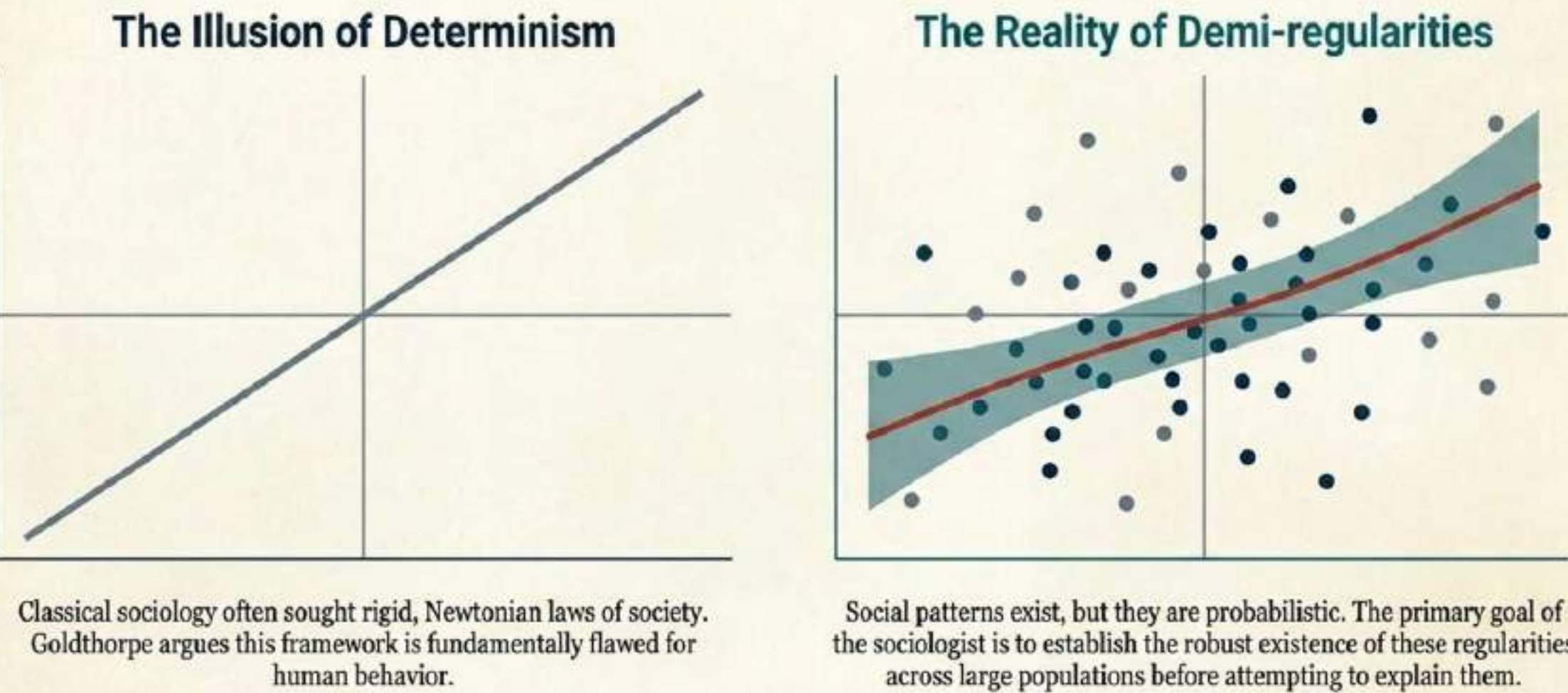
Sociology cannot seek deterministic, Newtonian laws. Instead, it must seek statistical rates and robust patterns over time and space.



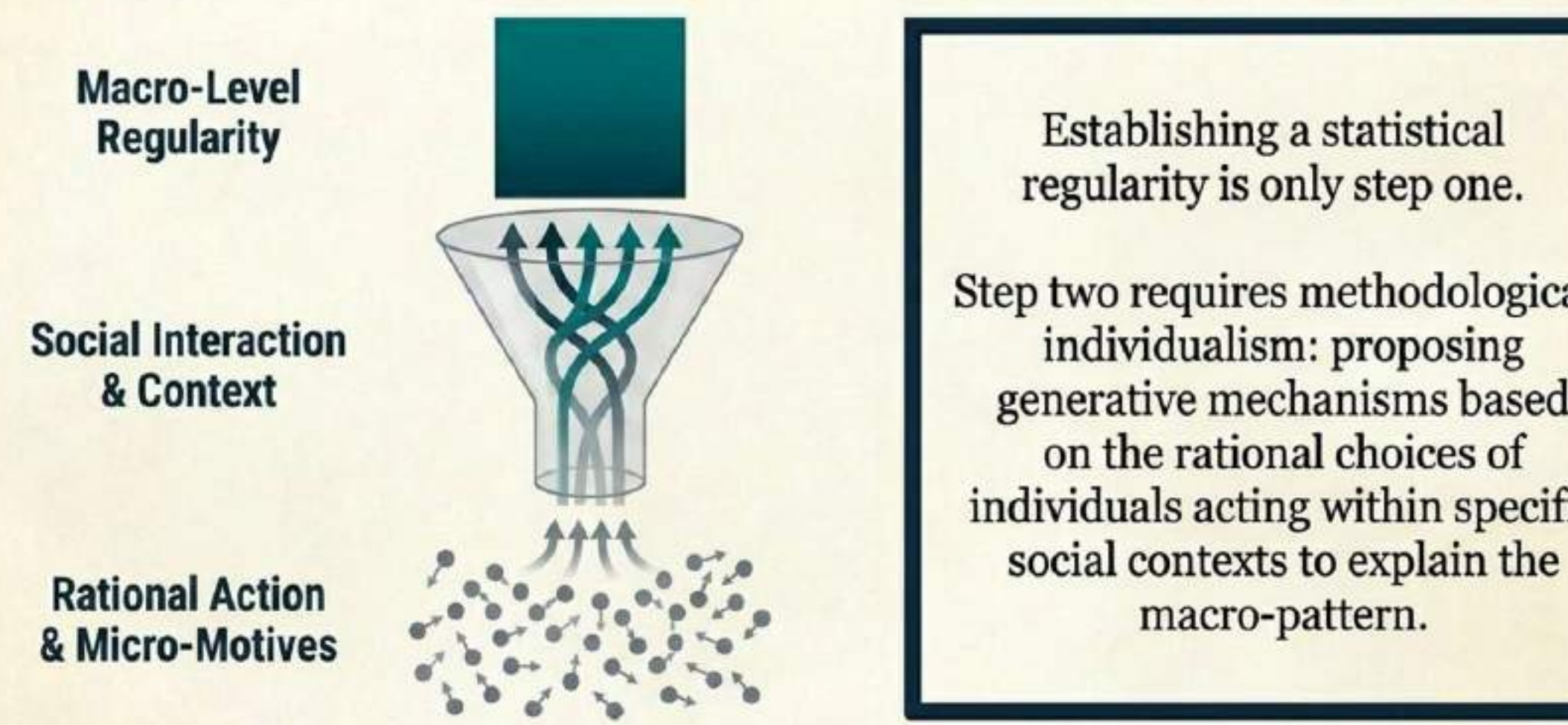
Generative Mechanisms

Statistical patterns are insufficient on their own. They must be causally explained by the rational actions and interactions of individuals at the micro-level.

From Deterministic Laws to Probabilistic Regularities



Bridging the Micro-Macro Divide: The Explanatory Engine



Doing Population Science: Methodological Imperatives



Large-N Datasets

Emphasis on extensive survey data, national demographic registries, and longitudinal cohort studies as the absolute foundation of empirical observation.



Advanced Statistics

The imperative to move beyond basic correlations to advanced statistical techniques capable of handling complex variability and structural causal modeling.

The Role of Ethnography

Qualitative work is repositioned, not discarded. It serves a vital role to suggest potential generative mechanisms, which must subsequently be rigorously tested at the population level.

Doing Population Science: Methodological Imperatives



Large-N Datasets

Emphasis on extensive survey data, national demographic registries, and longitudinal cohort studies as the absolute foundation of empirical observation.



Advanced Statistics

The imperative to move beyond basic correlations to advanced statistical techniques capable of handling complex variability and structural causal modeling.

The Role of Ethnography

Qualitative work is repositioned, not discarded. It serves a vital role to suggest potential generative mechanisms, which must subsequently be rigorously tested at the population level.

Market versus Meritocracy: Hungary as a Critical Case*

Erzsébet Bukodi and John H. Goldthorpe

The Capitalist Paradox: Does the free market actually destroy meritocracy?

Free Market Capitalism

The Assumption: In the West, we assume that liberal capitalism naturally creates a meritocracy. We believe the free market inherently rewards the most educated and capable individuals.

Education-Based Meritocracy

The Reality Check: Sociological data from a unique historical natural experiment suggests the exact opposite.

The Subject: Market versus Meritocracy (Bukodi & Goldthorpe). By tracking seven birth cohorts from 1915 to 1984 through Hungary's transition from strict State Socialism to Liberal Capitalism, we can definitively prove which system builds a meritocracy.

The Battle of Theories: Functional Imperative vs. Market Reality

Meritocracy as Functional Imperative (MFI)

Championed by Daniel Bell & American Liberals

Core Philosophy

Capitalism demands meritocracy for technological and economic efficiency. It forces society to exploit all human resources regardless of background.

The Prediction

As a modern economy develops, social selection becomes based entirely on educational attainment. Education determines class.

Market versus Meritocracy (MVM)

Championed by Friedrich Hayek & European Liberals

Core Philosophy

Free markets are fundamentally incompatible with engineered meritocracy.

The Prediction

Markets reward raw economic value, not objective education. Left free, employers use diverse hiring criteria, and wealthy parents buy systemic advantages.

The Laboratory: Engineering a meritocracy through a command economy

The Socialist Experiment

To build a pure education-based meritocracy, Hungary utilized an authoritarian command economy.

State crushes class privilege via strict working-class university quotas.

O-E-D Triangle

State directly allocates jobs based entirely on standardized qualifications.

The Result

They successfully engineered the O-E-D machine.

Real social mobility was dictated almost entirely by schooling, effectively nullifying the advantages of wealthy origins.

The Capitalist Rewiring: How free markets dismantled the meritocratic machine

1. Wealth Buys Access

As income inequality widened under capitalism, advantaged families utilized superior market resources to legally buy systemic educational advantages.

2. Degrees Lose Monopoly

Freed from state planning, employers stopped relying solely on education. They prioritized soft skills, personality, and social networks—traits tied to privileged upbringing.

3. Social Fluidity Drops

The overarching social fluidity achieved under socialism stalled and reversed. Class origins reasserted their direct dominance over final class destinations.

Social Blueprint

The Verdict: Pure meritocracy requires authoritarianism

MFI Theory (American Liberalism)

The MFI Myth is Busted: As Hungary embraced liberal capitalism, the linkage between education and class weakened, not strengthened.

MVM Theory (Friedrich Hayek)

Hayek Vindicated: A free-market economy inevitably clashes with the principles of a strict meritocracy.

Free Markets & Employer Choice

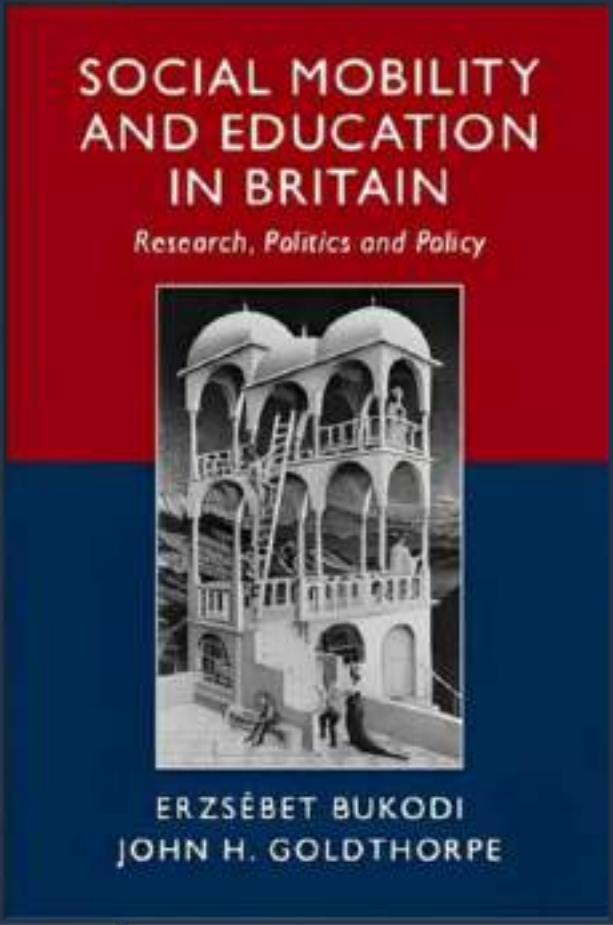
Engineered Meritocracy

To build a pure, education-based meritocracy, a state requires the draconian control of a command economy to dictate hiring and suppress inherited wealth. Once you introduce the freedoms of a capitalist market, employers prioritize diverse signals over pure education, and wealthy parents purchase systemic advantages—ultimately tearing the meritocratic blueprint apart.

The Illusion of the Great Equalizer

Erzsébet Bukodi and John H. Goldthorpe's
Social Mobility and Education in Britain

Synthesizing the research, politics, and policy of the Nuffield tradition



Shattering the Political Consensus



The Promise of Education

For decades, bipartisan policymakers have championed educational expansion as the ultimate engine for social mobility. Widen access to schools and universities, and a true meritocracy will naturally follow. Education is the ultimate social leveler.



The Goldthorpe & Bukodi Revelation

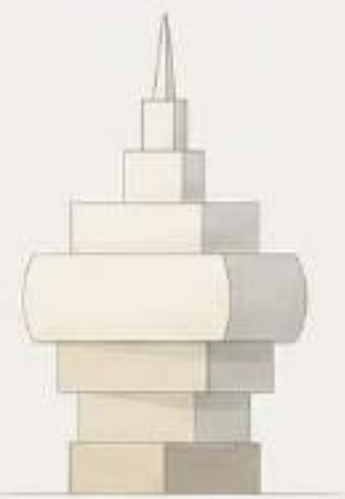
Education is not the great equalizer. Despite massive educational expansion, the link between social origins and adult destinations remains stubbornly intact. Multivariable statistical analyses of decades of birth cohort studies prove that true meritocracy remains structurally out of reach.

Architecture of Class

Anchoring the Analysis in the Nuffield Tradition



The Duality of Mobility Unpacks the Paradox



Absolute Mobility (The Structural Shift)

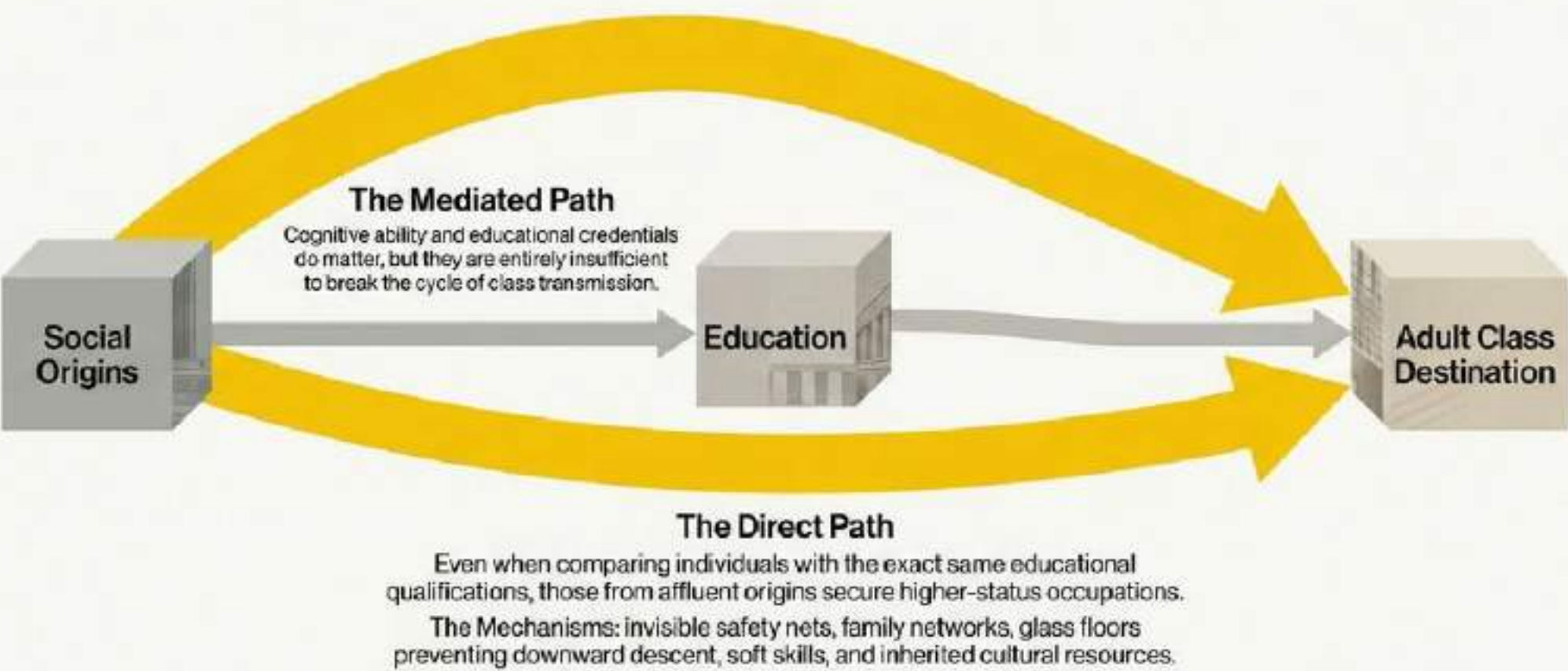
Definition: The total proportion of people achieving higher class positions than their parents.
The Trend: The Golden Age is over. Driven by post-war transitions from manufacturing to administrative services, upward mobility surged until the 1970s birth cohort. Today, downward mobility is rising rapidly as high-status salariat occupational growth stalls.



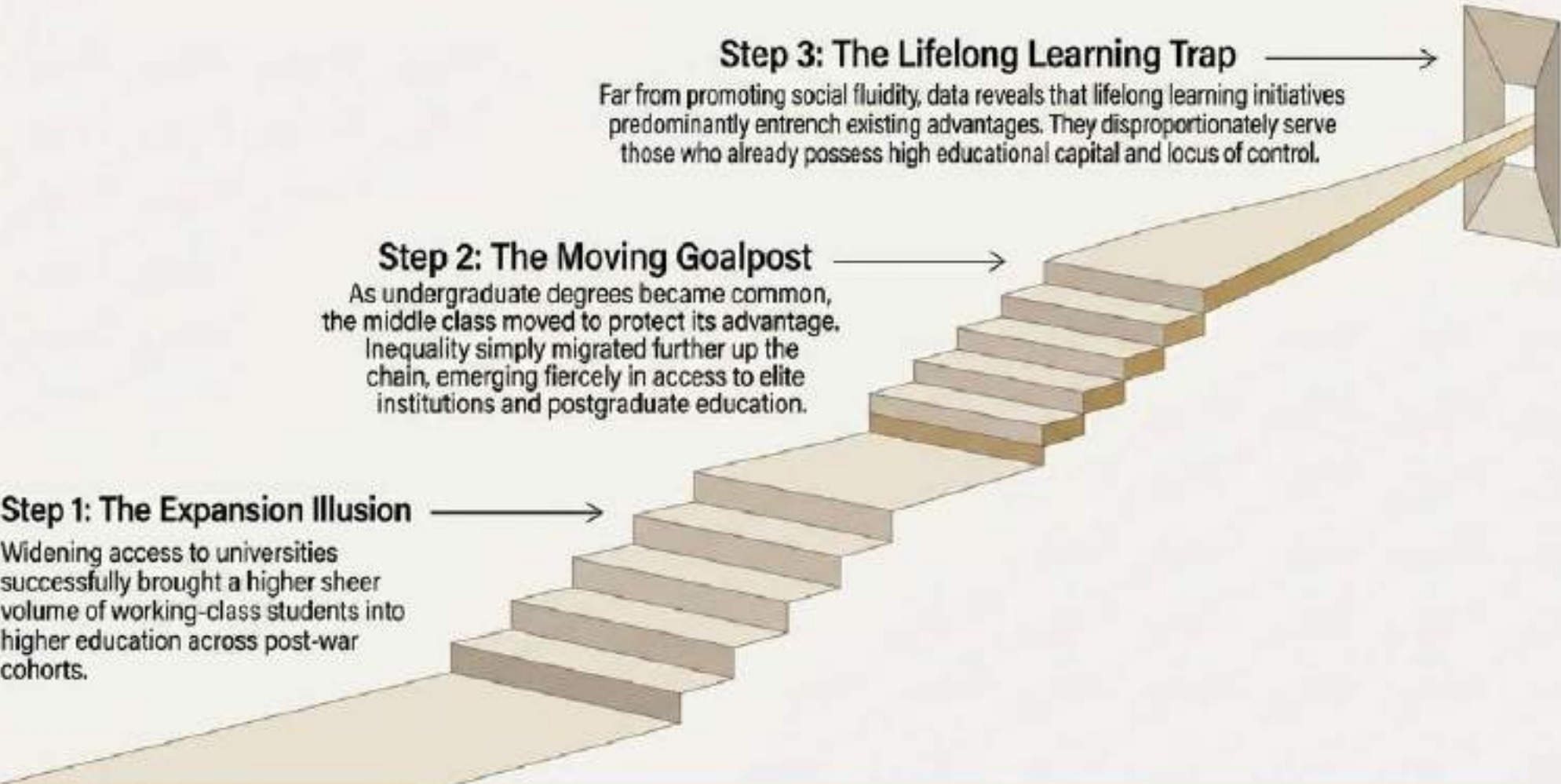
Relative Mobility (The Sticky Hierarchy)

Definition: The comparative odds of someone from the working class ascending versus someone from the salariat staying at the top (Social Fluidity).
The Trend: Astonishingly stable. Across the entire post-war period, the relative advantage of being born into a higher class has barely shifted. The playing field has never leveled.

Bypassing the Leveler via the Direct Effect



Opportunity Hoarding and the Education Arms Race



Locating the Legacy in Mobility Research

Dimension	Nuffield Tradition (Bukodi & Goldthorpe)	Economics Tradition (Chetty, Blanden)	Bourdiesian Tradition (Friedman, Laurison)
Core Metric	Social Class (Occupational Employment Relations)	Income and Earnings Elasticity	Cultural Capital and Habitus
View of Education	Highly skeptical of its power to equalize; focuses on the Direct Effect of class bypassing the classroom.	Views human capital and skills accumulation as the primary engine for lifetime earnings and mobility.	Views elite institutions as sites of cultural sorting, creating a strict class ceiling within top professions.
Methodology	Log-modelling, large-scale birth cohort studies, absolute/relative odds ratios.	Tax records, rank-rank slopes, large administrative datasets.	Mixed methods; combining large datasets with deep qualitative interviews and narratives.

The Policy Imperative Moves Beyond Education



The End of Educational Tinkering

Education policy alone cannot engineer a fairer society. Policymakers must stop treating schools and university access as a cure-all for deep-seated economic inequalities.



Focus on the Labor Market

Because absolute mobility is mechanically driven by occupational structure, policy must shift to the demand side. The priority is creating high-status, high-quality jobs rather than perpetually over-credentiating the workforce.



Confronting the Glass Floor

True relative mobility is a zero-sum game. To fundamentally increase upward mobility for the disadvantaged, society and politicians must tolerate higher rates of downward mobility for the privileged.

The Enduring Architecture of Class

Social Mobility and Education in Britain remains an essential corrective to modern political optimism. By refusing to shy away from the complex, sometimes dry realities of multivariable statistical analysis, Bukodi and Goldthorpe force us to face an uncomfortable truth:

Meritocracy cannot be taught in a classroom if it is not structurally built into the economy.

Their work stands as a cornerstone of sociological research—reminding us that class is not a relic of the past, but a remarkably resilient architecture of the present.

PIONEERS OF SOCIOLOGICAL SCIENCE



Statistical Foundations and the Theory of Action

JOHN H. GOLDTHORPE

The Architecture of the Aggregate

Establishing the Baseline: The 17th Century

London Bills of Mortality				
Buried	#	Christened	Age Groups	
1	111	111	1	112
2	111	111	1-3 ve 24	63
3	111	111	10-1 - 24	36
4	111	111	29-1 - 34	29
5	111	111	40-1 - 54	14
6	111	111	64 Groups	4
7	111	111		178
8	111	111	5-6+ years	3
9	111	111	16-30 years	11
10	111	111	3-45 years	6
		Christened	> 90 years	0
				165

John Graunt (1620–1674)

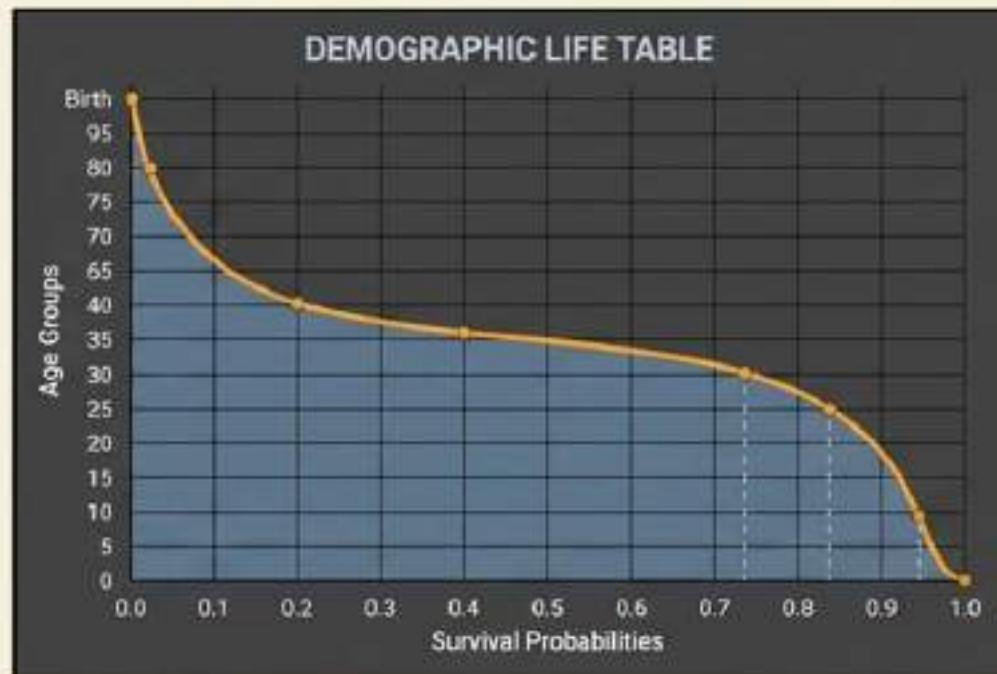
Invented **reasoning with numbers**. Used flawed mortality data to estimate London's population, initiating elementary statistical modeling to find intrinsic (constant) values.

Edmond Halley (1656–1742)

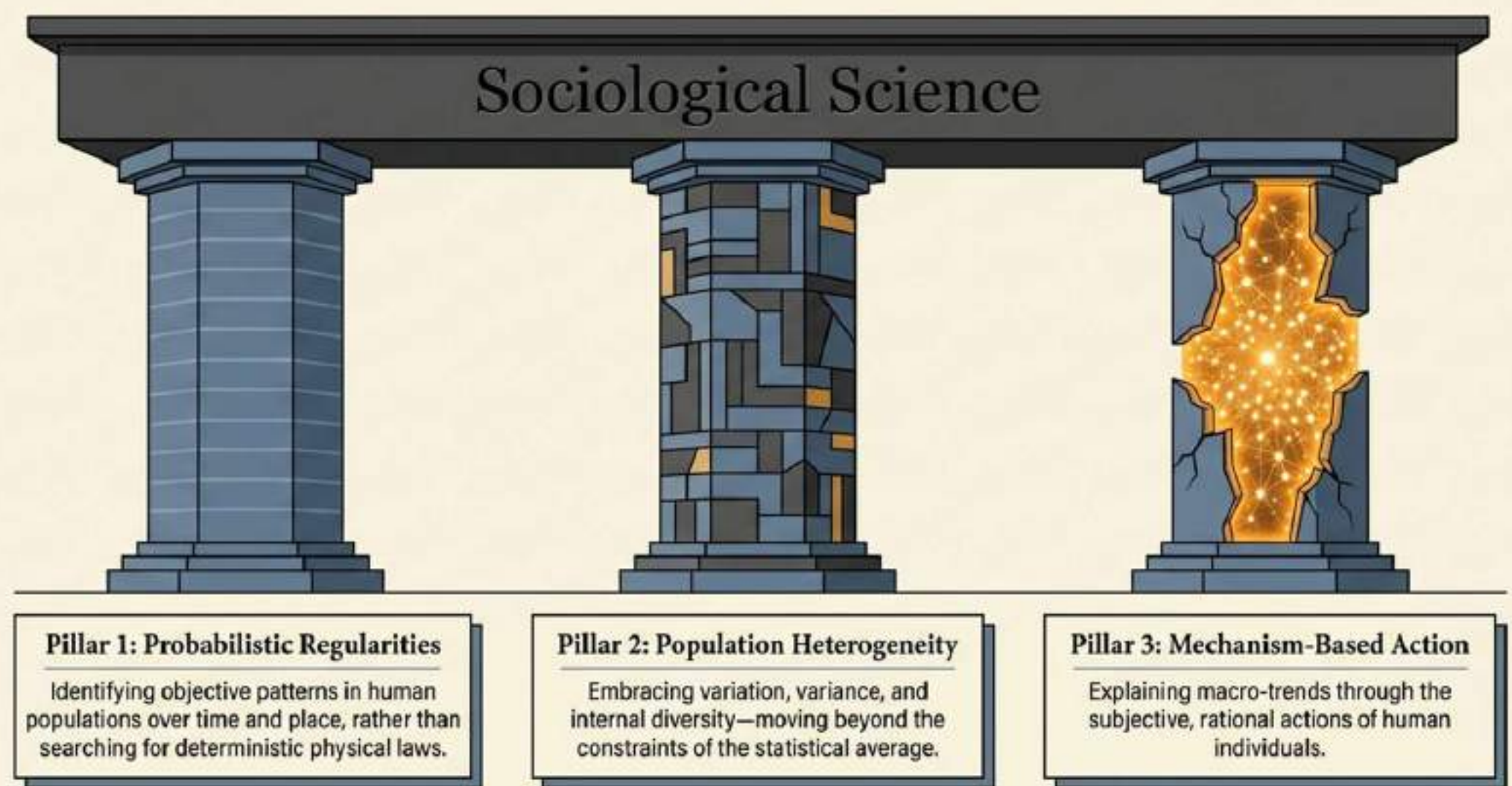
Applied probability to mortality using Breslau data, creating the first rigorous life table and initiating the analysis of **odds**.

The Methodological Shift

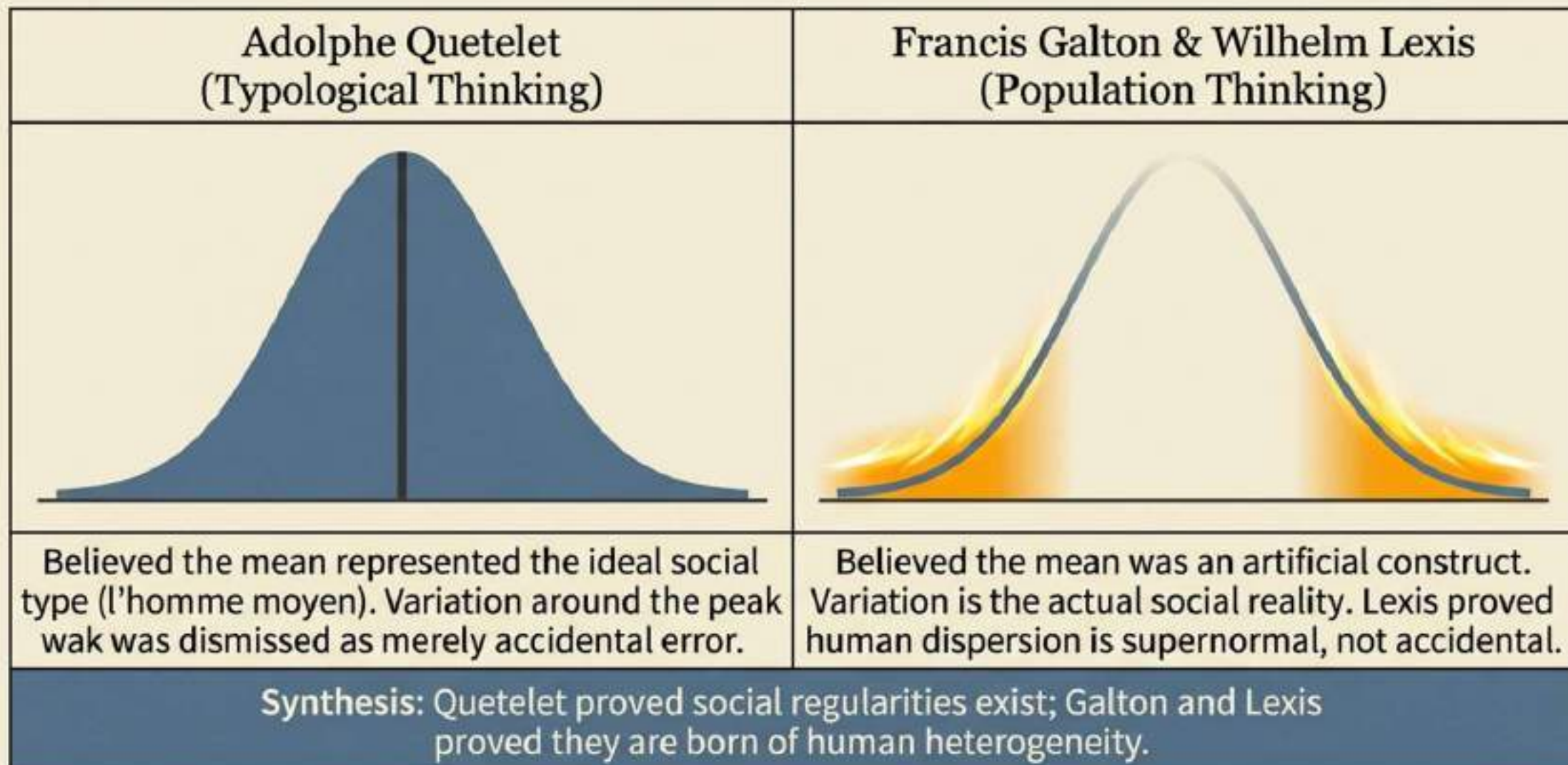
Leaving behind idle speculations for empirical observations that subsequent ages could examine, amend, or confute.



The Triad of Population Science

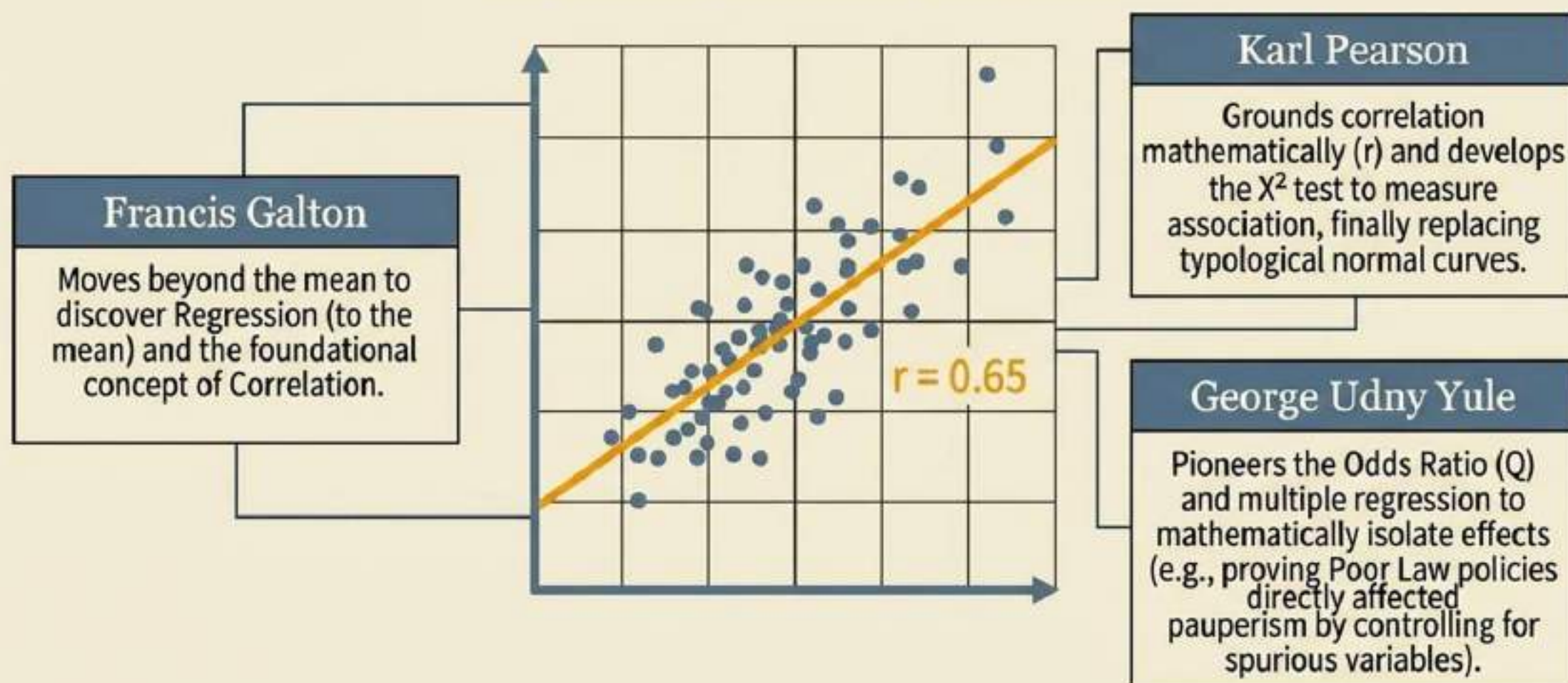


The Battle Over the Bell Curve: Typology vs. Variation

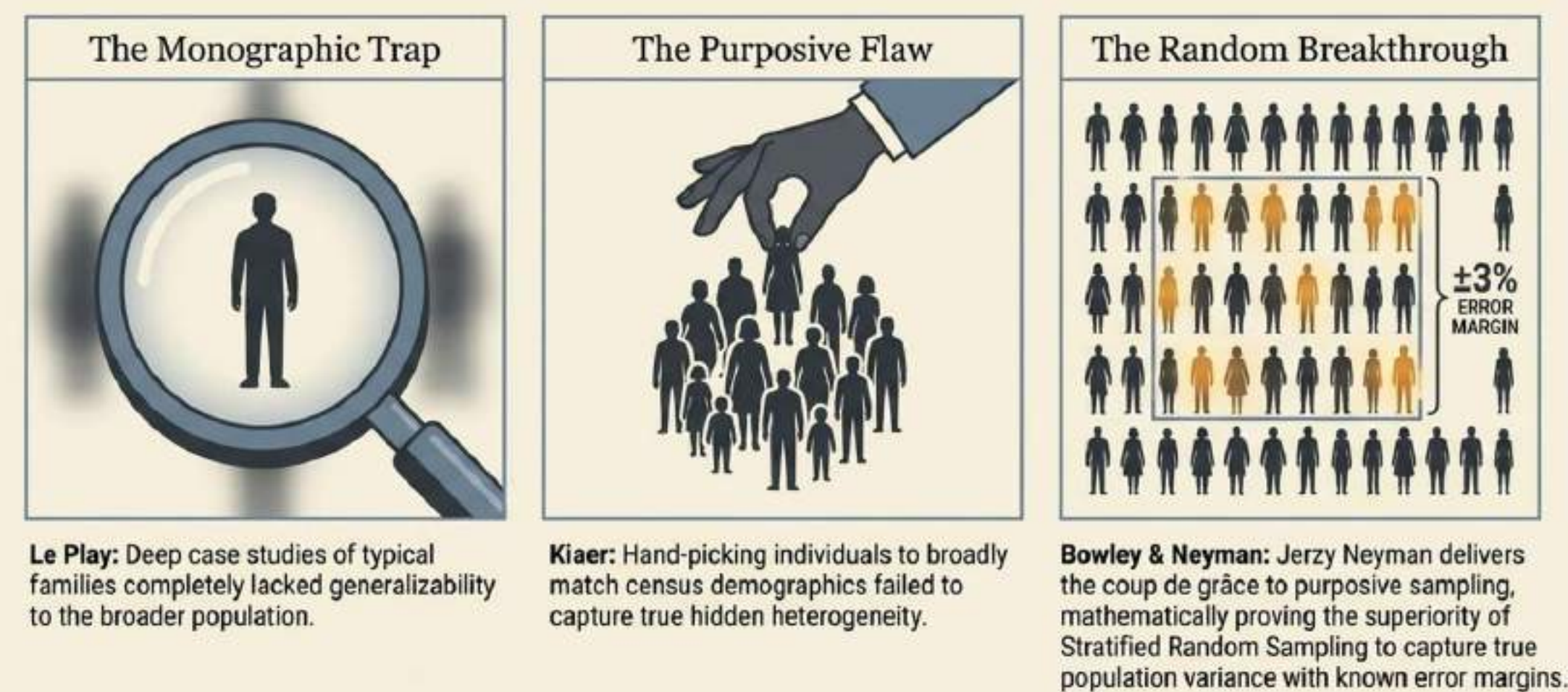


The Architecture of the Aggregate

The Birth of Relational Statistics



Solving the Part-to-Whole Problem



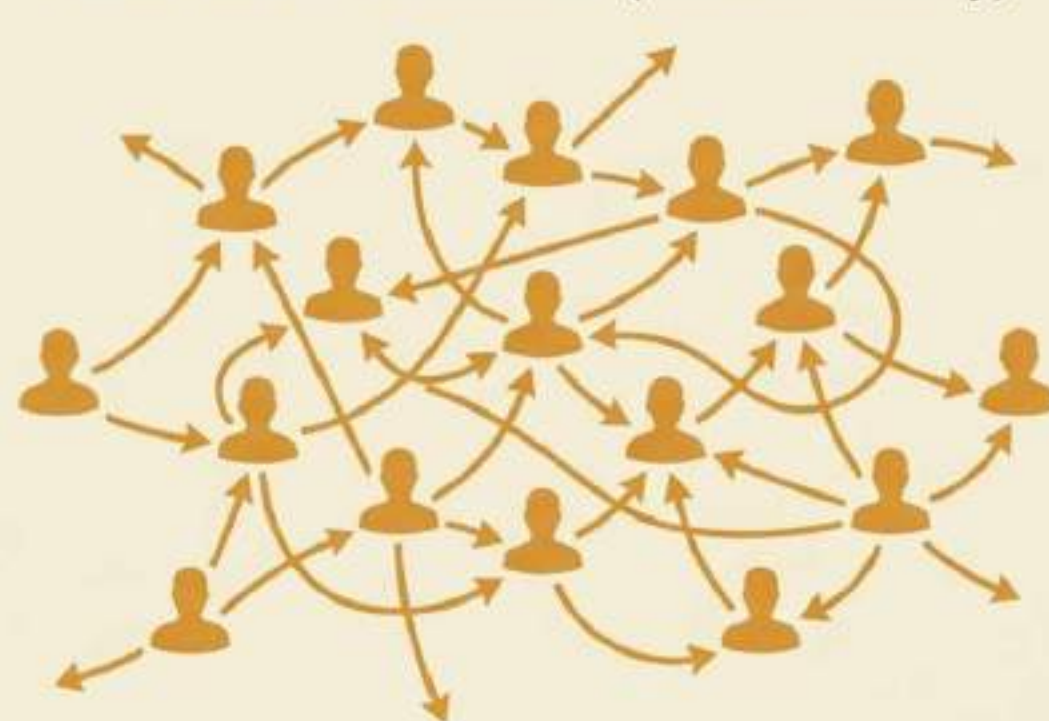
The Limits of Pure Statistics: The Weberian Pivot

The Durkheimian Trap (Holism)



Treating statistical regularities (like suicide rates) as the deterministic result of external, supra-individual forces. Humans are merely passive outputs of society.

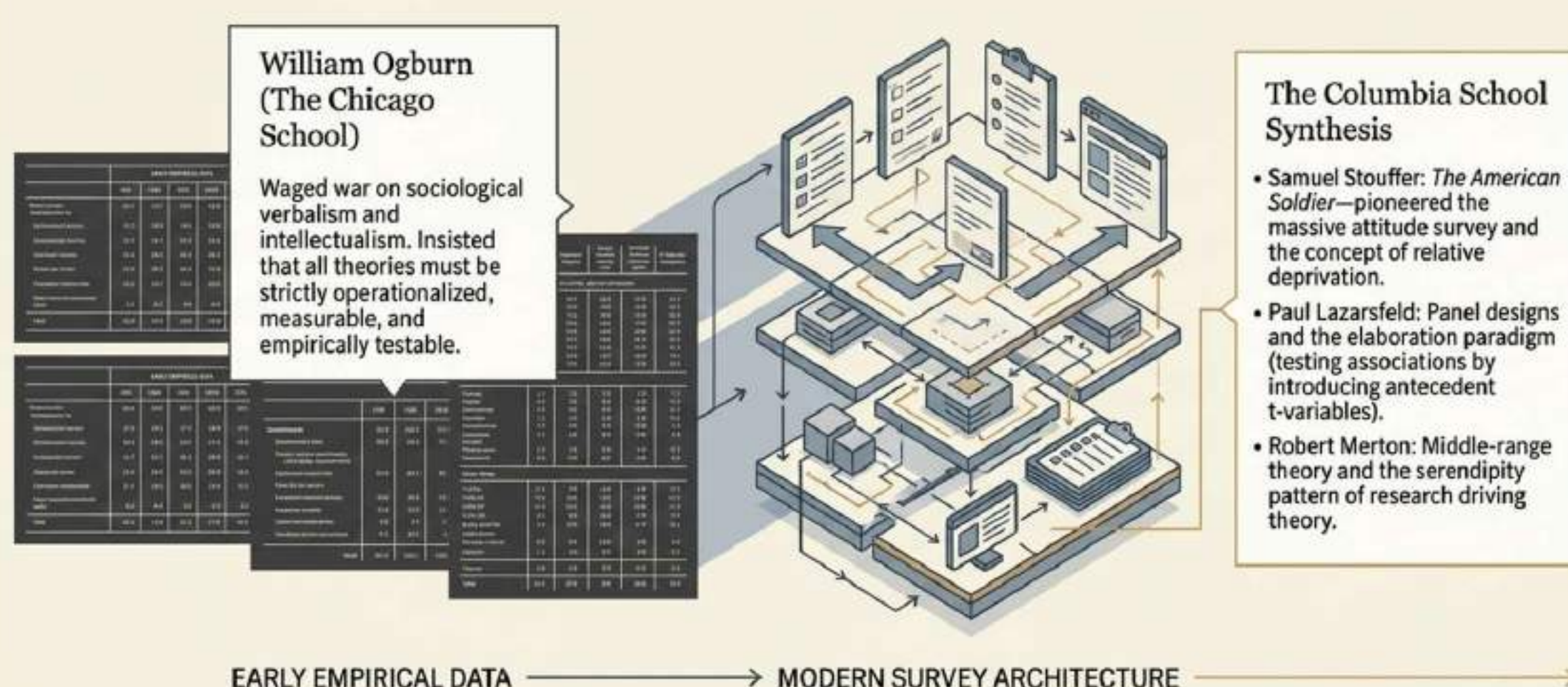
Max Weber's Solution (Action Theory)



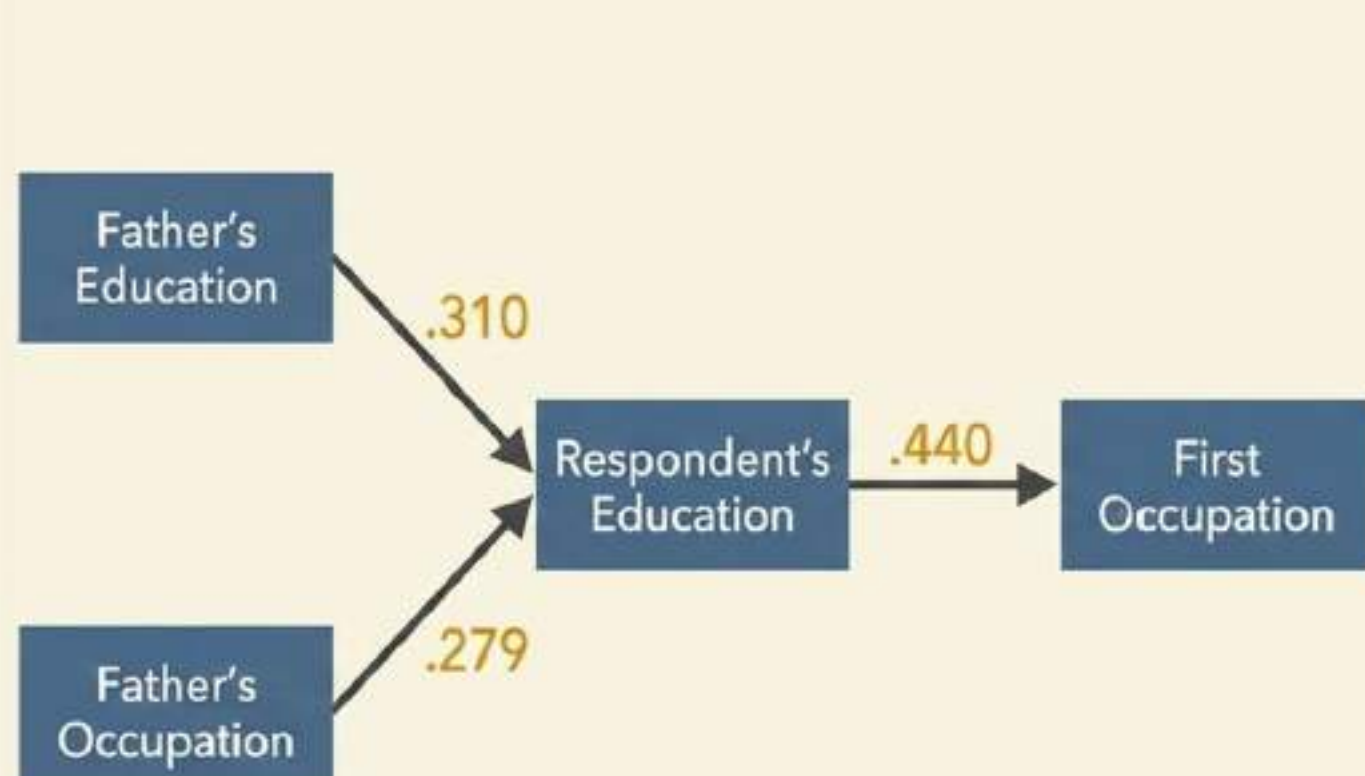
Erklärendes Verstehen (Explanatory Understanding).

The Principle: Statistical probabilities remain incomprehensible until they are explained by the subjectively rational actions and choices of individual humans.

American Empiricism: Theory Meets Data



Otis Dudley Duncan & The Architecture of Attainment



The Tool: Path Analysis

Unpacked the mechanisms of social mobility by mathematically mapping Ascription vs. Achievement.

The Philosophy of Regression

- The Gaussian Error: Falsely believing regression discovers deterministic, universal causal laws (Statisticism).
- The Galtonian Truth: Regression provides parsimonious descriptions of between-group variability in a population. It tests theoretical models; it does not invent them.

James S. Coleman: Mechanism-Based Explanation



The Micro-Macro Link

We cannot link Macro causes to Macro effects directly. We must descend to the individual level to map the mechanisms of rational action, then aggregate back up to the societal outcome.

Intergenerational class mobility in industrial and post-industrial societies: Towards a general theory

Towards a general theory

Moving Beyond the Liberal Theory of Social Fluidity

2022 | Erzsébet Bukodi | John H. Goldthorpe

Rationality and Society
Volume 34, Issue 3, August 2022, Pages 271-301
© The Author(s) 2022, Article Reuse Guidelines
<https://doi.org/10.1177/10434631221093791>



Article



Intergenerational class mobility in industrial and post-industrial societies: Towards a general theory

Erzsébet Bukodi¹ and John H Goldthorpe²

Core Objectives and Methodology

1

Aim

Explain empirical regularities in class mobility via a general theory grounded in Rational Action.

Methodology: Comparison of European nations and the US.

2

1

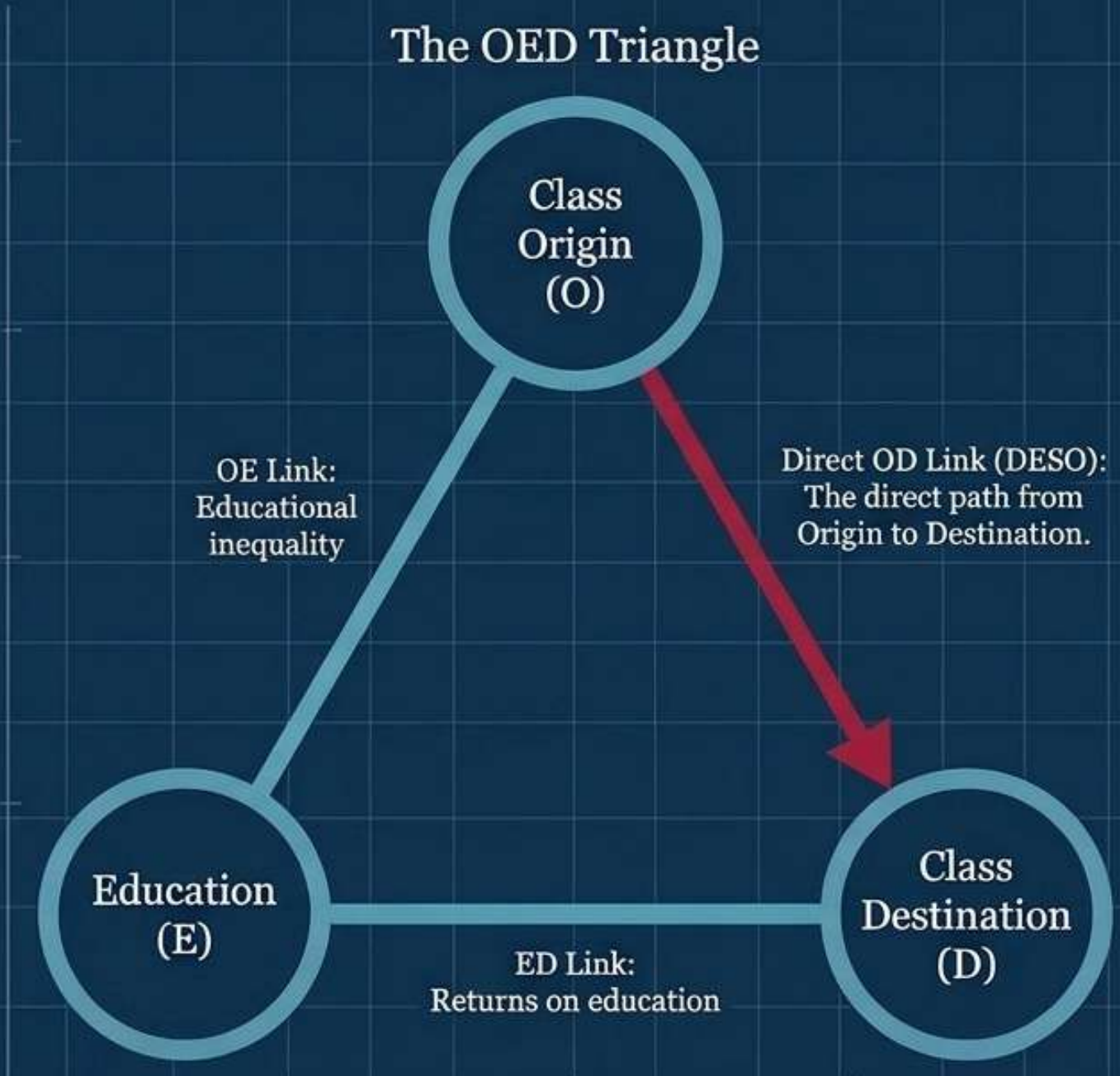
Absolute Mobility

Structural changes in society (e.g., expansion of white-collar jobs creating a positive-sum game).

2

Relative Mobility

Inherent social fluidity and equal chances of mobility regardless of origins.



Conclusion: The Structural Limits of Fluidity

The Glass Floor

Driven by profound Loss Aversion, advantaged families deploy superior economic and social resources to trigger counter-mobility, actively avoiding social descent.

Theoretical Asymptote of Fluidity

- Social fluidity is strictly limited by the rational “loss aversion” of families protecting against descent.
- In capitalist liberal democracies, the family is the ultimate source of resistance to state-led equality.

Expectations vs. Empirical Reality

	Liberal Theory Expectations	Empirical Reality
Macro Trend	Continuous upward mobility.	End of the 'Golden Age' — More downward than upward mobility recently as professional expansion stalls.
Relative Mobility	Weakening Origin-Destination links over time.	Stalled Social Fluidity — Endogenous mobility regimes show marked resistance to change .
Role of Education	Education acts as the “great equalizer” (an absolute measuring stick).	Education as a “Positional Good” — An arms race where relative ranking matters more than absolute learning.
Direct Origin Effects	Direct origin effects fade away in a meritocracy.	Persistent Direct Social Origin Effects (DESO) — Origins dictate destinations via “glass floors”.

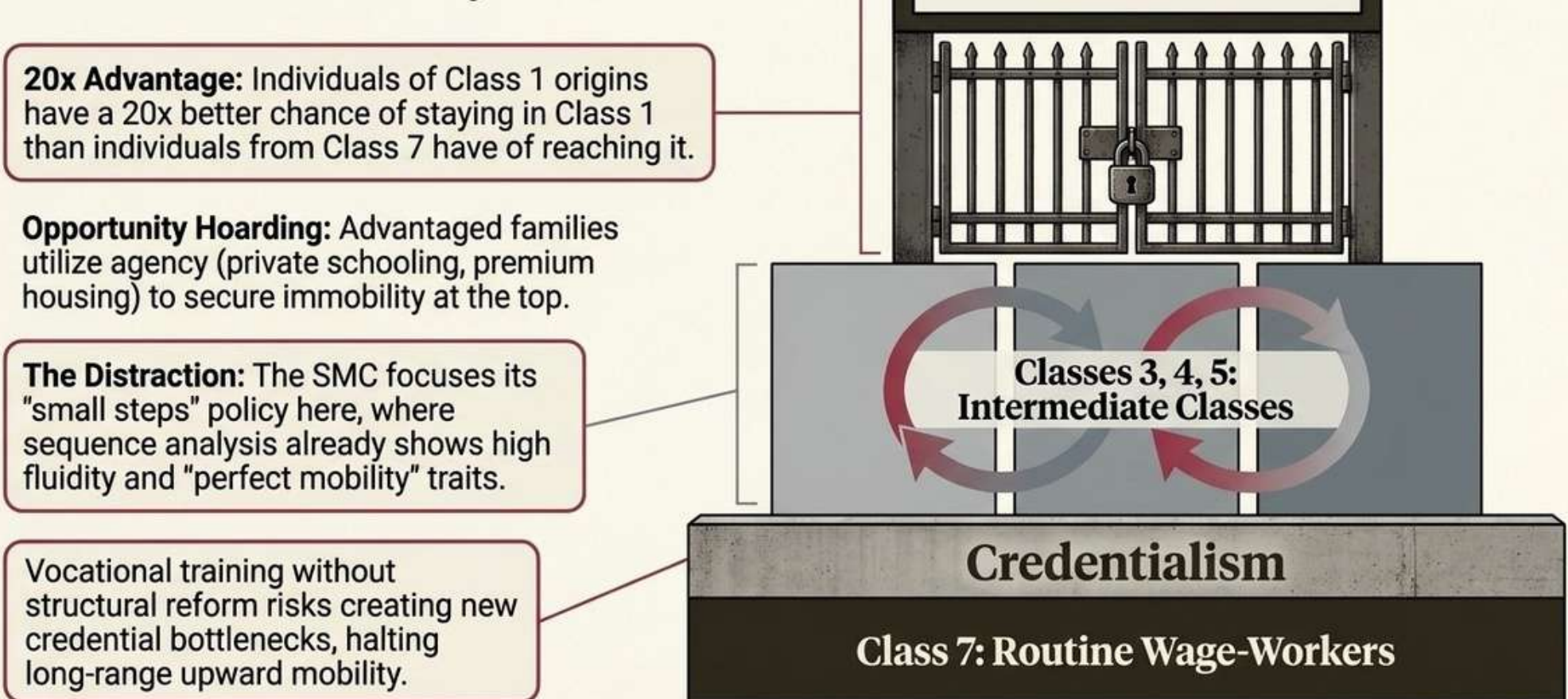
The Social Mobility Commission, State of the Nation 2022: A Fresh Approach to Social Mobility. A Commentary

ERZSÉBET BUKODI AND JOHN H. GOLDTHORPE

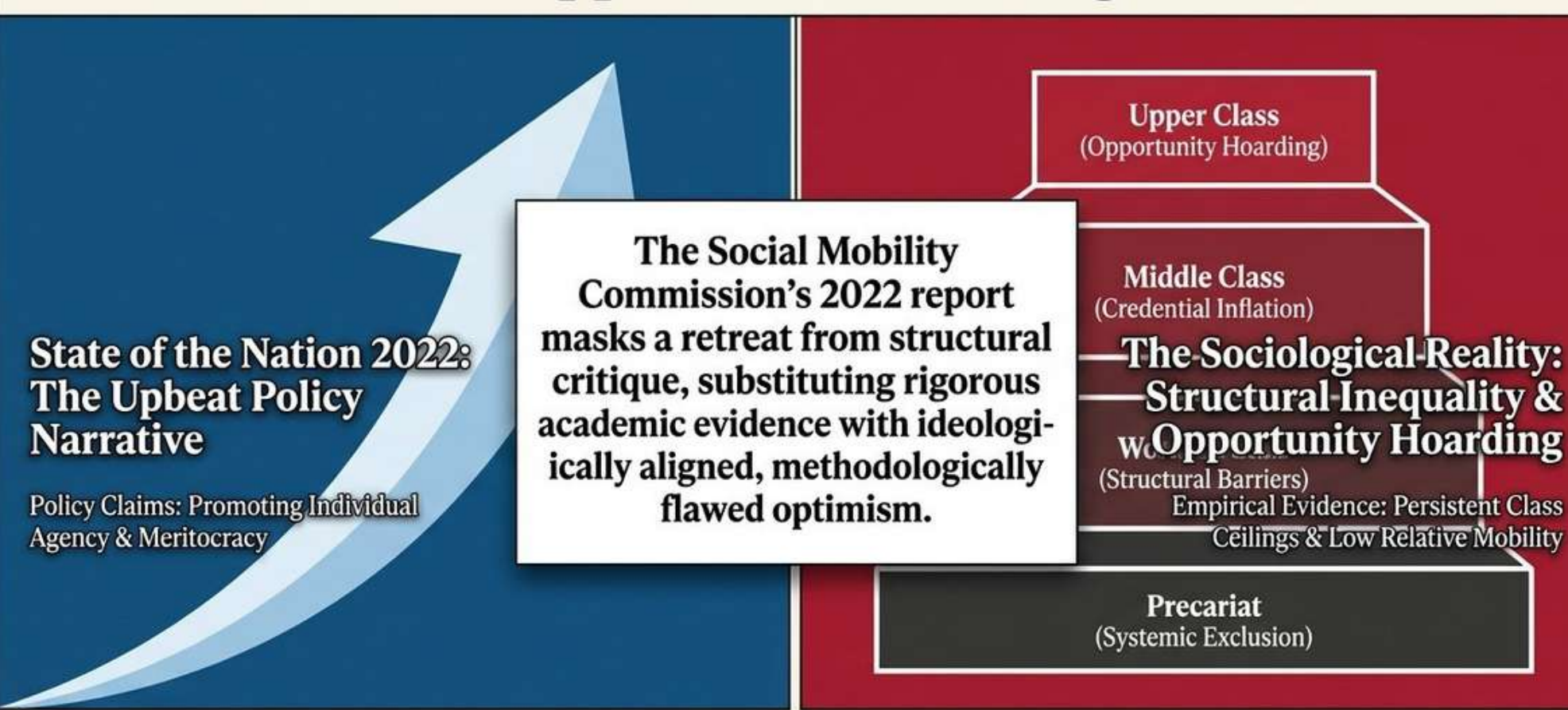
Deconstructing the Four Claims to “Newness”

	SMC Claims	Sociological Reality
Academic Integration	Relies on academic research to dispel “gloomy” popular narratives.	Selective citation. Relies heavily on opaque, in-house harmonized data while ignoring the rise of downward absolute mobility.
‘Small Steps’ vs. Long-Range	Shifts focus away from “Dick Whittington’ long-range mobility toward local, vocational “small steps”.	Distracts from extreme, persistent inequality between the highest and lowest NS-SEC classes; ignores the trap of “credentialism”.
The Role of Agency	Emphasizes individual character and effort to overcome disadvantaged origins.	Fails to recognize “opportunity hoarding”—how advantaged classes use their own agency and resources to prevent déclasserment.
Institutional Tone	Adopts a determinedly upbeat, “good news” tone regarding intermediate outcomes.	Abandons the SMC’s statutory duty to hold government accountable, ignoring major structural interventions.

The Architecture of Inequality: The NS-SEC Reality



The SMC’s ‘Fresh Approach’: A Sociological Peer Review



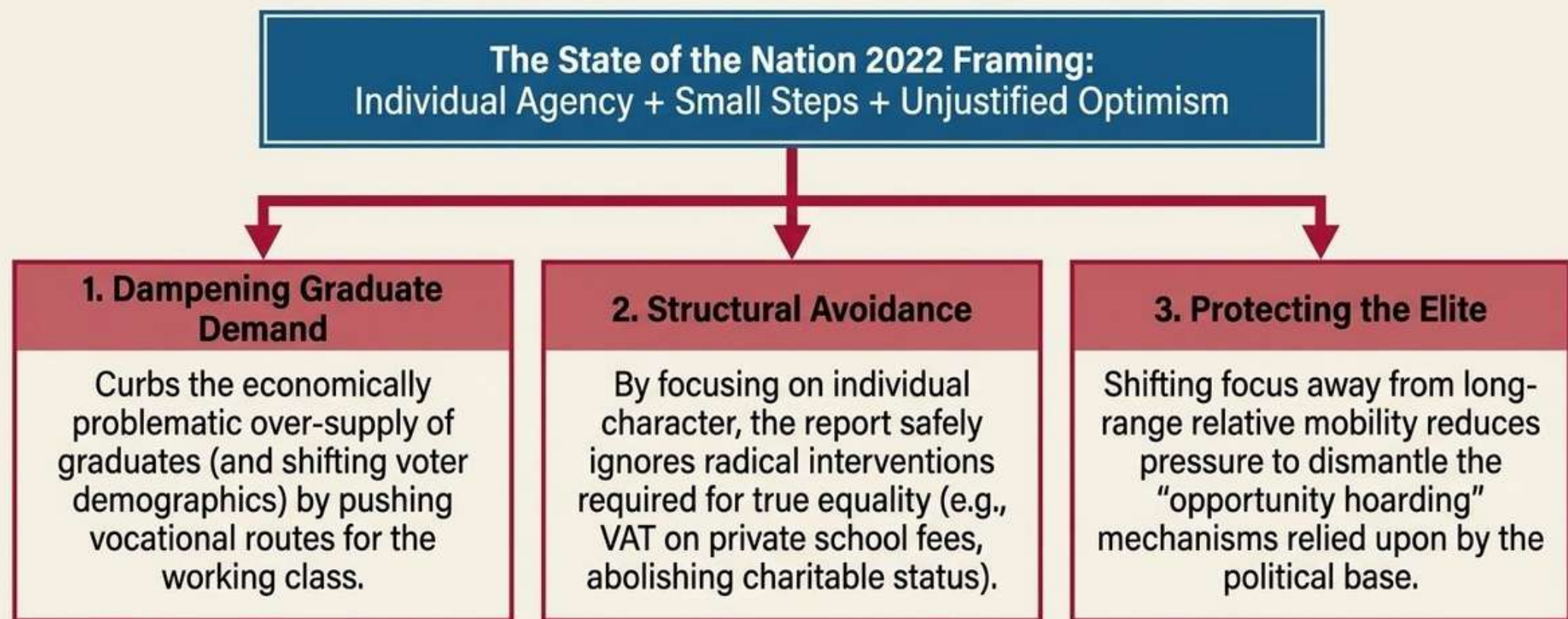
Authors: Erzsébet Bukodi & John H. Goldthorpe

Subject: Deconstructing the 4 primary claims of the UK SMC’s 2022 State of the Nation report.

Methodological Fallacies: What the In-House Data Hides

The SMC Illusion	The Sociological Reality
Combines GHS, BHPS, UKHLS, and LFS data without transparent harmonization. Fails to run statistical significance tests on ‘narrowing’ class gaps. Strategically selects time-points (e.g., claiming reduction from 2018–2021, ignoring stagnation since 2015).	Downward Absolute Mobility Post-1950s cohorts face high rates of downward mobility due to slackening growth of professional roles. Counter-Mobility Advantaged origins use further education to recover from downward labor market entry, artificially stabilizing class positions.

Institutional Capture: The Ideology Behind the “Good News”



Conclusion: In replacing objective structural analysis with ideological alignment, the SMC risks operating as an underwriter of a party-political program rather than an independent watchdog holding power to account.

The Social Fluidity Illusion

Why Education Stalled as the 'Great Equalizer' and the Hidden Drivers of Class Mobility in Europe.

European Sociological Review, 2025, 41, 363-381
https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/ezae003
Advance access publication 18 October 2024
Original Article

OXFORD

Understanding trends in social fluidity in Western Europe: class structural change and the OED triangle

Erzsébet Bukodi^{1,2} and John H. Goldthorpe²

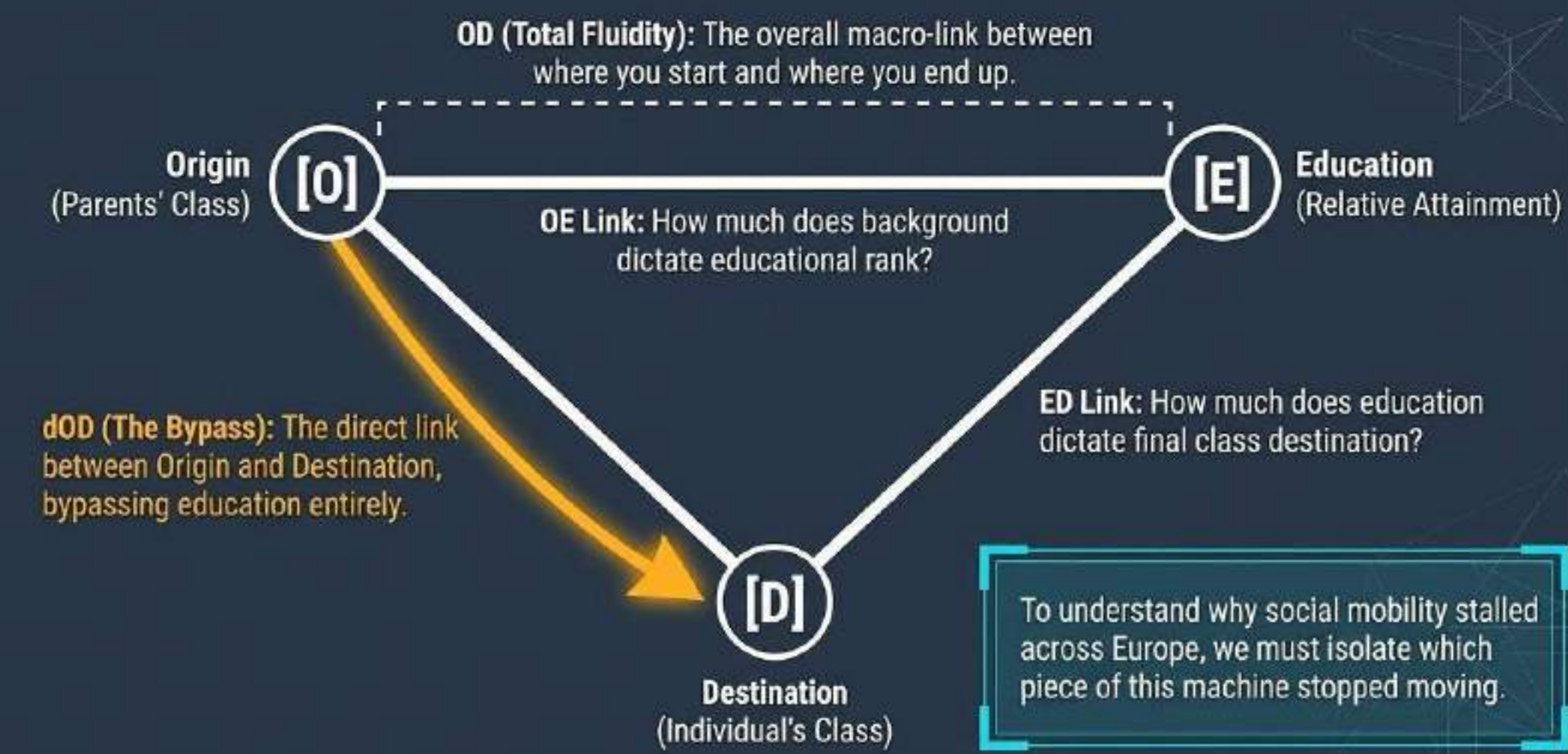
¹Department of Social Policy and Intervention, Balliol College, University of Oxford, Oxford, OX1 1NF, UK
²Balliol College, University of Oxford, Oxford, OX1 1NF, UK
³Corresponding author. Email: erzsabet.bukodi@balliol.ox.ac.uk

Synthesizing the analysis of 17 European nations and birth cohorts from 1923–1977 (Bukodi & Goldthorpe, 2024).

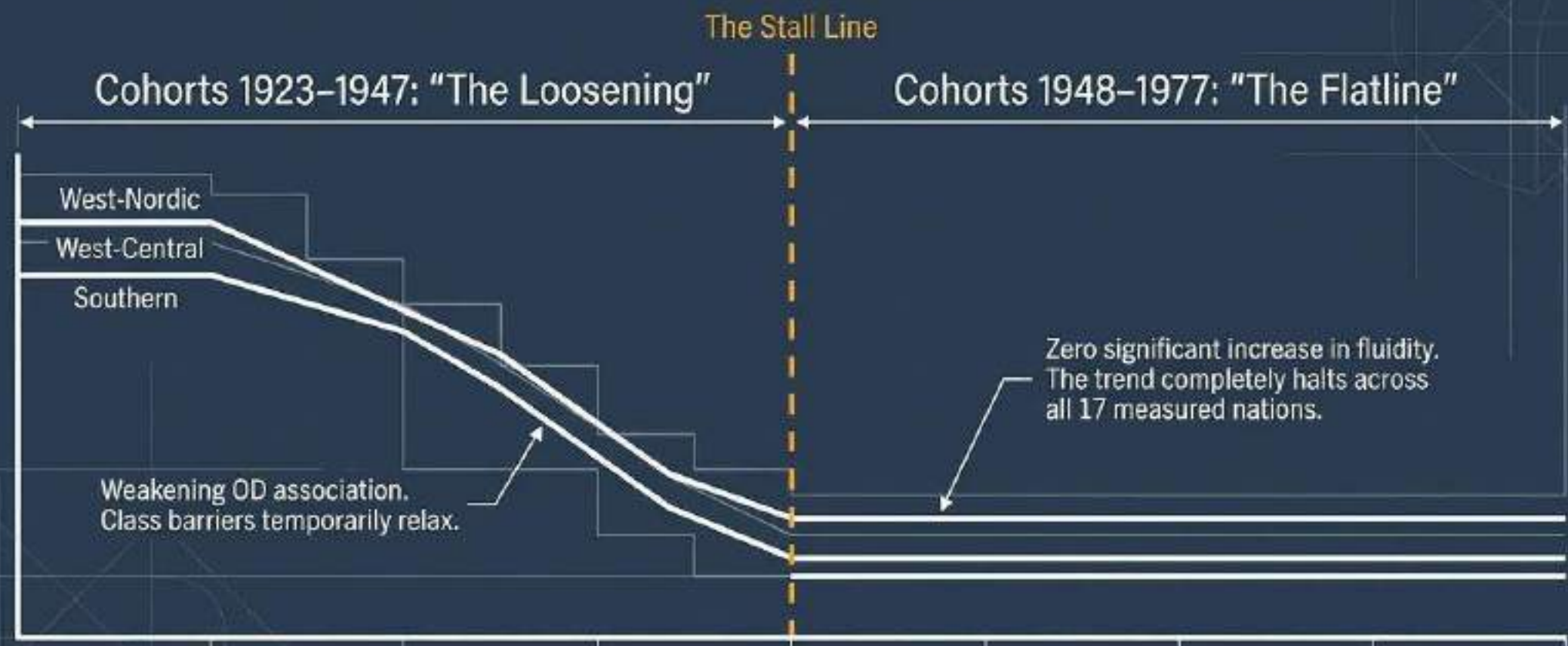
The End of the 'Worldwide Secular Trend'

The Liberal Theory (Functionalist Paradigm)		Rational Action Theory (The New Reality)	
Premise	Post-industrial societies inherently demand "educated talent," driving endless social fluidity.	Premise	Social fluidity is a historical anomaly tied to specific periods of rapid economic/structural growth.
Mechanism	Education acts as the ultimate equalizer (a true meritocracy).	Mechanism	Loss Aversion. Advantaged parents deploy resources to protect children from downward mobility.
Prediction	Continuous, linear weakening of class inheritance.	Prediction	Fluidity increases during economic booms, but stalls violently when growth slows.

The Blueprint: Deconstructing the OED Triangle



The Fluidity Window Has Closed (Total OD Link)



Core Insight: The data explicitly rejects a continuous global trend toward meritocracy. Social fluidity was a distinct, time-bound historical window that has now shut.

Why Education Didn't Save Us

The OE Stall (Origin -> Education)

Structural Block

Low Origin

Equality

- Measured relatively (as a 'positional good'), the link between class origin and educational rank weakened initially but has stalled or reversed in most nations.

More degrees overall didn't change who gets to the top of the educational hierarchy.

The ED Limits (Education -> Destination)

The link between education and class destination weakened slightly over early cohorts, then stabilized.

The labor market is not perfectly meritocratic. Education's power to dictate class destination has a hard ceiling.

The Hidden Driver: The Direct Link (dOD)

The weakening of the direct, non-educational link (dOD) was at least as consequential as education in driving early social fluidity.

- The Agricultural Collapse:** Post-WWII Europe saw massive declines in agricultural sectors (farming, smallholding).
- Structural Immobility:** Agricultural classes are historically characterized by severe intergenerational immobility (Class 4 to Class 4).
- The Compositional Shift:** Shrinking this highly immobile sector artificially boosted the overall societal fluidity metrics, masking the lack of true meritocratic change.

Takeaway: Early mobility was an economic compositional shift, not an educational miracle.

Fluidity Requires Favorable Tailwinds

Les Trente Glorieuses
Post-WWII to Mid-1970s

- **Macro:** Record-high, sustained economic growth.
- **Structure:** Rapid expansion of the professional/managerial "Salarial" (Classes 1 & 2).
- **The Math:** It was a "positive-sum" game. Massive upward absolute mobility made relative equality painless for the elite.

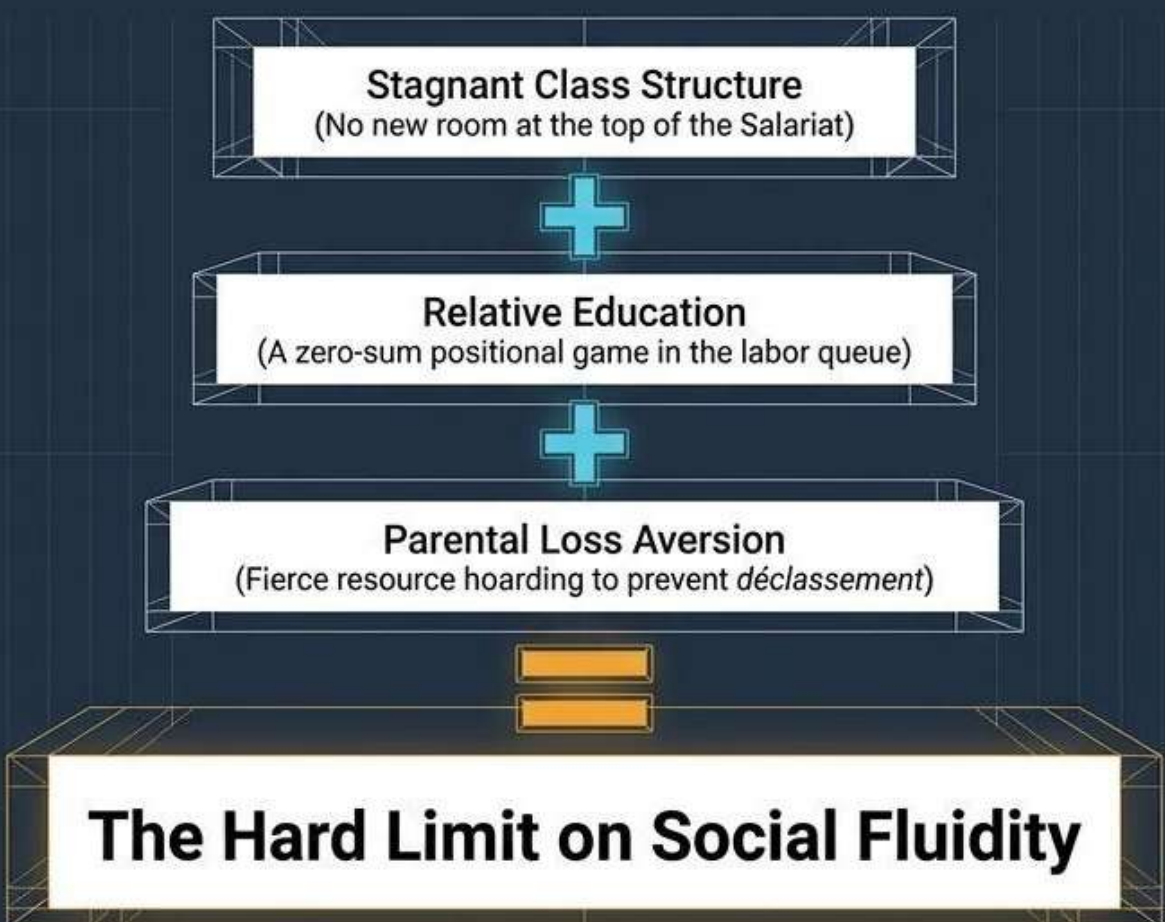
The Modern Stall
Post-1970s to Present

- **Macro:** Slower, stabilized economic growth.
- **Structure:** Salarial expansion slows; agricultural decline is completely exhausted.
- **The Math:** A "zero-sum" game. Equalizing relative mobility today explicitly requires increasing downward mobility for the advantaged classes.

The Family as the Ultimate Conservative Force



The Architecture of Immobility



Synthesis Insight: Functional requirements for a 'meritocracy' are entirely powerless against the motivation and capacity of advantaged parents to maintain their position in a zero-sum economy.

Rethinking Social Mobility: Three New Realities

Education is Not a Panacea

We cannot 'educate' our way to perfectly fluid societies. Expanding higher education only shifts the positional goalposts; it does not dismantle class inheritance.

Structure Dictates Fluidity

Changes in the physical shape of the economy (the death of agriculture, the size of the professional salariat) drive mobility outcomes far more effectively than isolated policy tweaks.

The Zero-Sum Reality

Achieving further equality in mobility must mathematically mean increasing downward mobility for the advantaged. Policies that fail to anticipate the fierce, well-resourced resistance of families will inevitably fail.

Description, Causal Explanation, and Policy Intervention in Sociology

John H. Goldthorpe

Not a choice, but a sequence

Description and explanation are complementary — not rival strategies.

SYNTHESIS

Description → Explanation → Policy

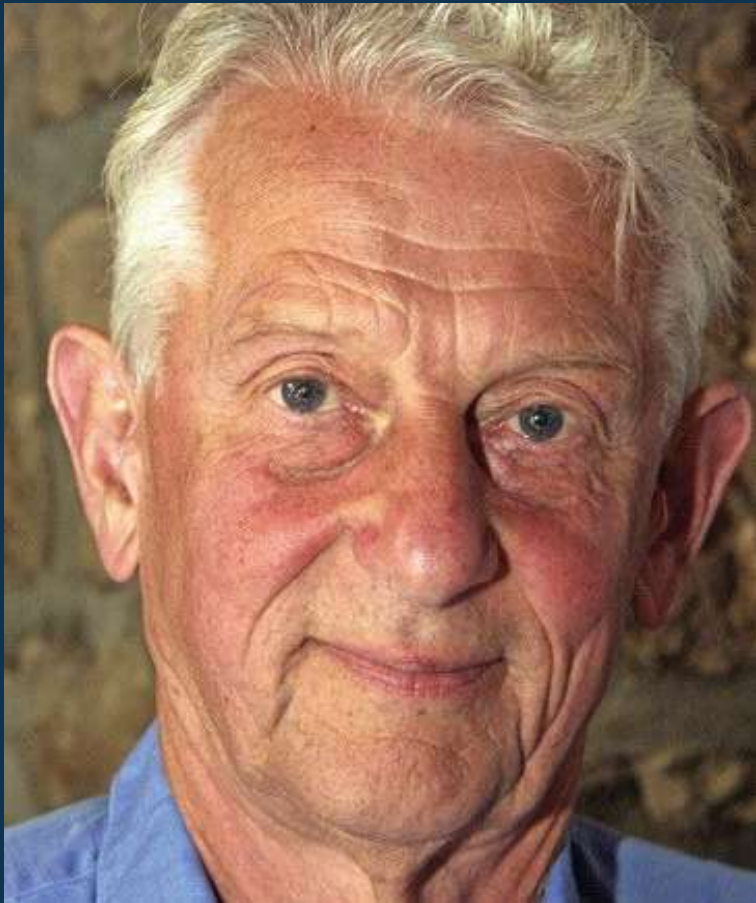
Why sociology needs all three

Based on John H. Goldthorpe
Description, Causal Explanation, and Policy Intervention
in Sociology (2025)



Two causal questions

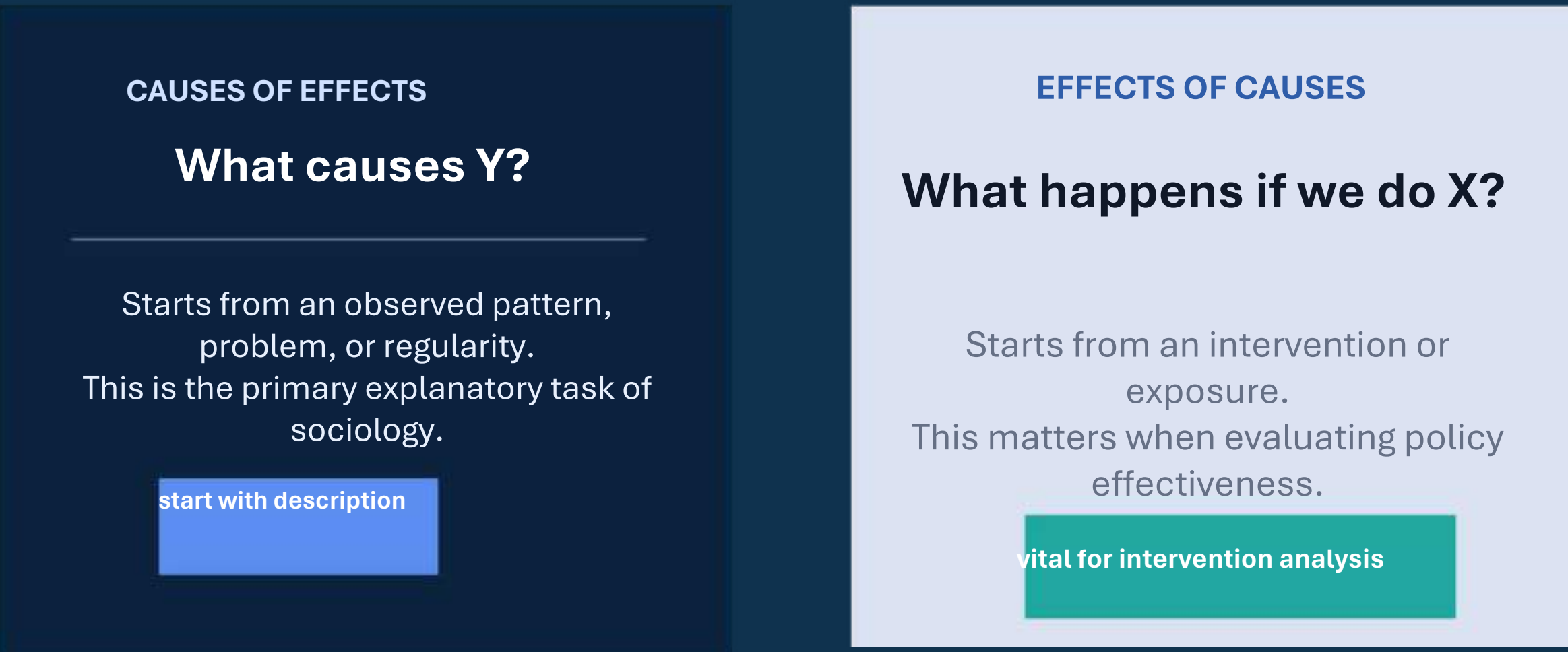
Goldthorpe revives a basic distinction often missed in the debate.



Three claims drive the paper:
1 Good description matters
2 Explanation needs mechanisms
3 Policy needs causal understanding

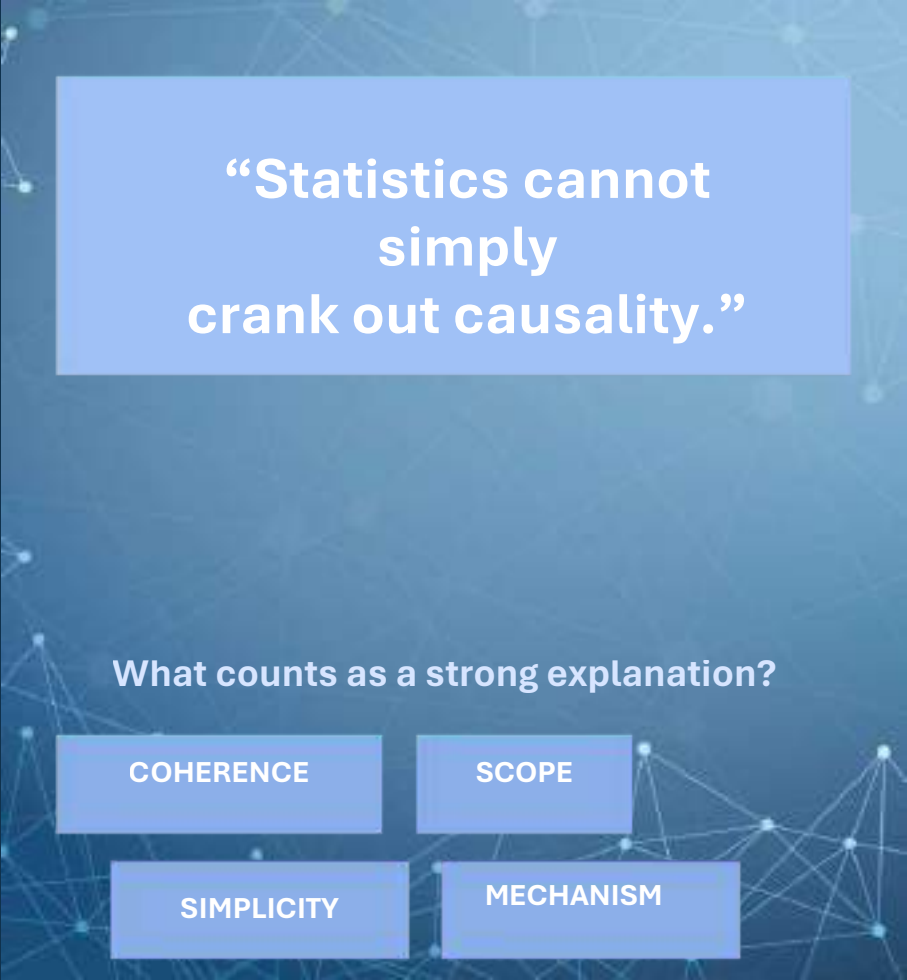


Stopping at description, Goldthorpe argues, weakens both sociology’s scientific ambition and its value for social policy.



From patterns to mechanisms

Goldthorpe rejects the idea that statistics alone can deliver explanation.



Why this matters for policy

Causal sociology helps policymakers do three things:



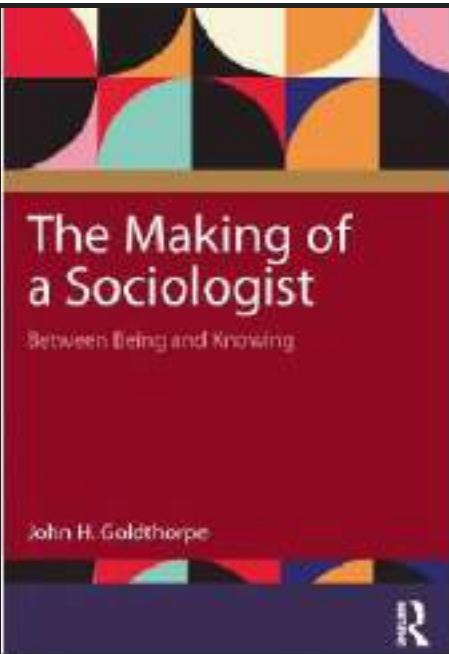
WHY POLICY NEEDS CAUSAL SOCIOLOGY

Interventions succeed only when the mechanism and the support conditions are understood.



Good sociology makes patterns visible, mechanisms legible, and

Alejandro Gonzalez: Assisted with NotebookLM



Becoming a Sociologist: A Tale From a Lost World

The Making of John H. Goldthorpe—Between Being and Knowing

The Productive Gap Between Knowing and Being

LIVED EXPERIENCE

Personal biography, origins, and the intimate reality of being.

EMPIRICAL DATA

Impersonal science, rigorous research, and objective knowing.

MICHAEL POLANYI & FRANÇOIS JULLIEN'S INSIGHT:
Personal biography and objective research are deeply connected yet strictly autonomous. True sociological insight is forged in the "écart"—the productive gap between them. Mastery requires actively maintaining the "right distance".

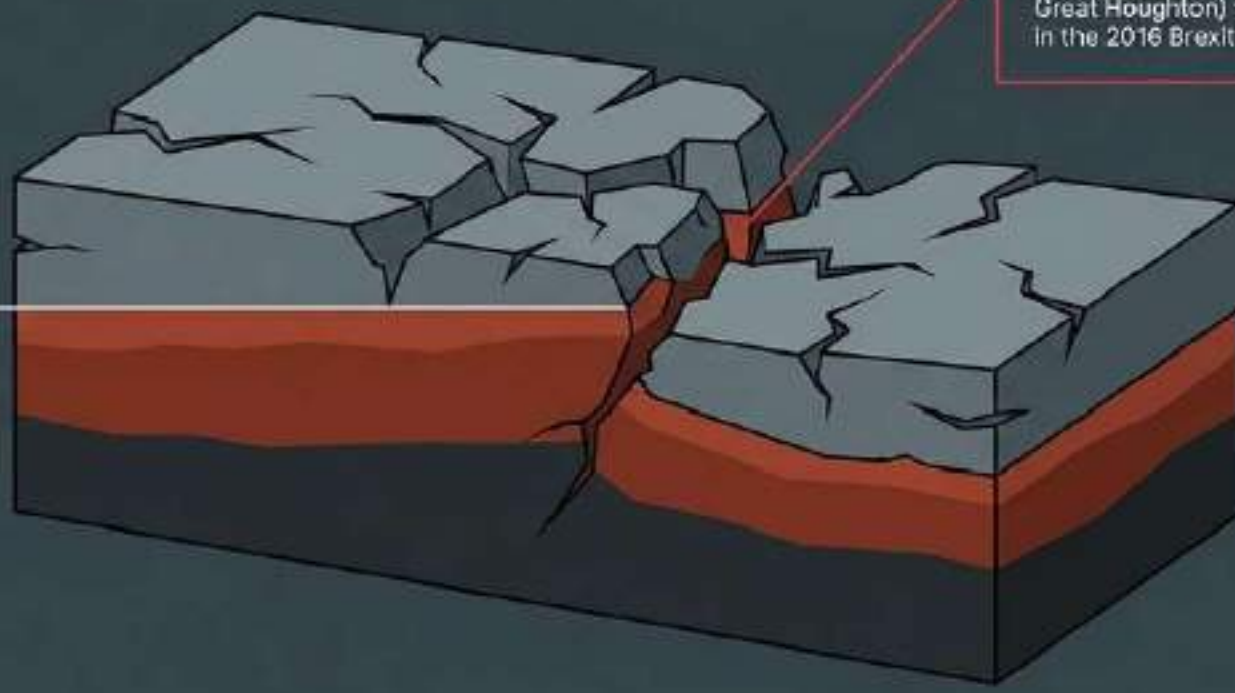
Great Houghton and the Limits of Grand Theory

MODERN SHIFTS (CONTRACT)

The failure of liberal democracy to deliver equal opportunities. A trajectory exposing the limits of Marxist and functionalist modernization theories.

TRADITIONAL HIERARCHY (STATUS)

South Yorkshire mining village origins. Defined by the coal hewer and the rural worker.



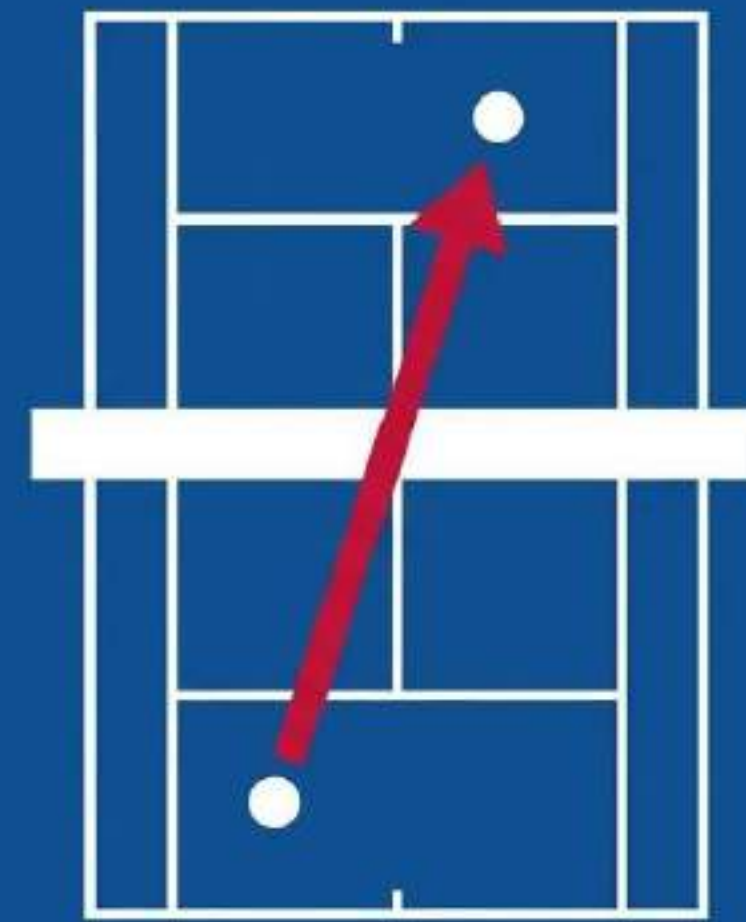
THE MODERN ECHO

This structural trajectory fuels spatial, anti-establishment voting behavior today. Bamsley constituency (home to Great Houghton) voted 68.3% 'Leave' in the 2016 Brexit referendum.

Social Mobility as a Zero-Sum Game

THE METAPHOR

Social mobility, exactly like tennis, operates on a finite distribution of points. When one side gains, the other inherently loses.



THE HARD TRUTH

Genuine advances in equality require limiting the weight of family background. Upward mobility for the disadvantaged mathematically necessitates encouraging downward mobility for the privileged.

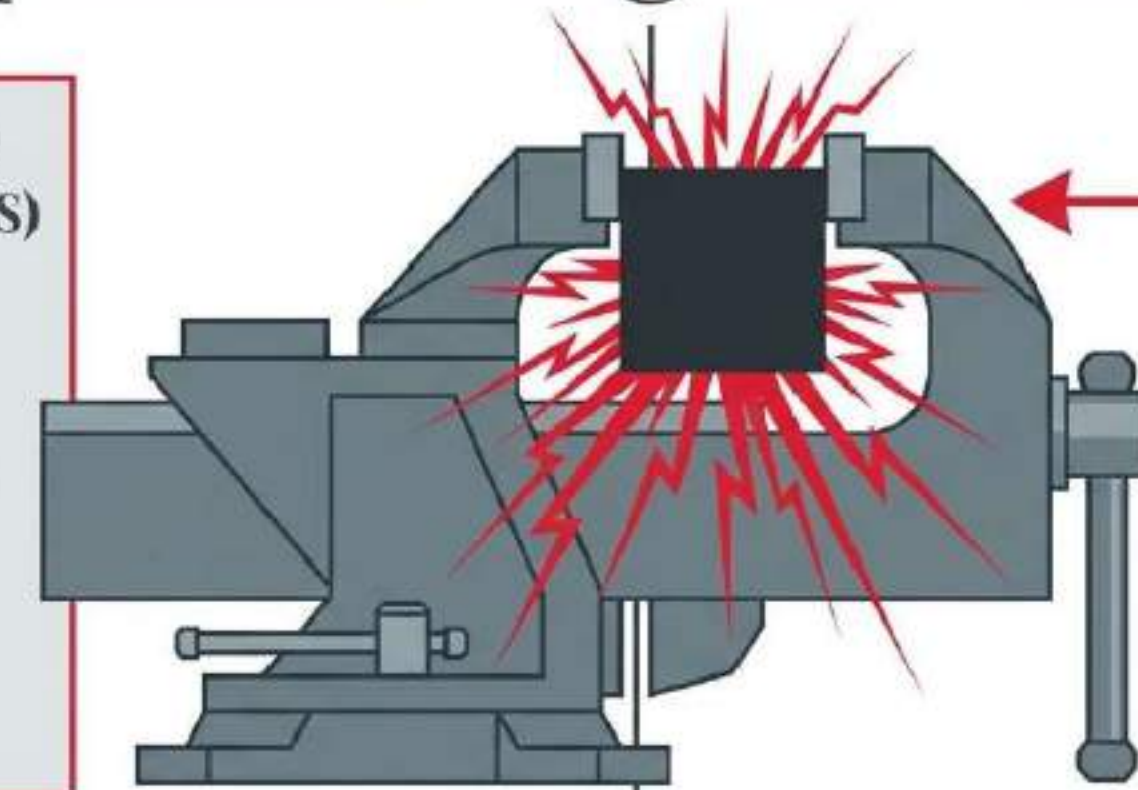
Transformative Encounters and the Sociological Toolkit



The Epistemological Stress Test

THE CONTRAST (NORBERT ELIAS)

Research acts as the supportive scaffolding used to build and prop up grand theory.



THE STANDARD (GOLDTHORPE & POPPER)

Theory must never be protected by data. Theory is a tool that must be placed in a vice-grip and subjected to immense productive strain against empirical reality.

This rigorous empirical justification secured admission as a Fellow at King's College after intense interrogation by Nobel laureate Fred Sanger.

Debunking the Myth of the 'Affluent Worker'

1959 Context: Labour's defeat spawned the myth of working-class 'em bourgeoisement'—the assumption that workers were becoming middle class. The 1969 empirical reality proved otherwise.

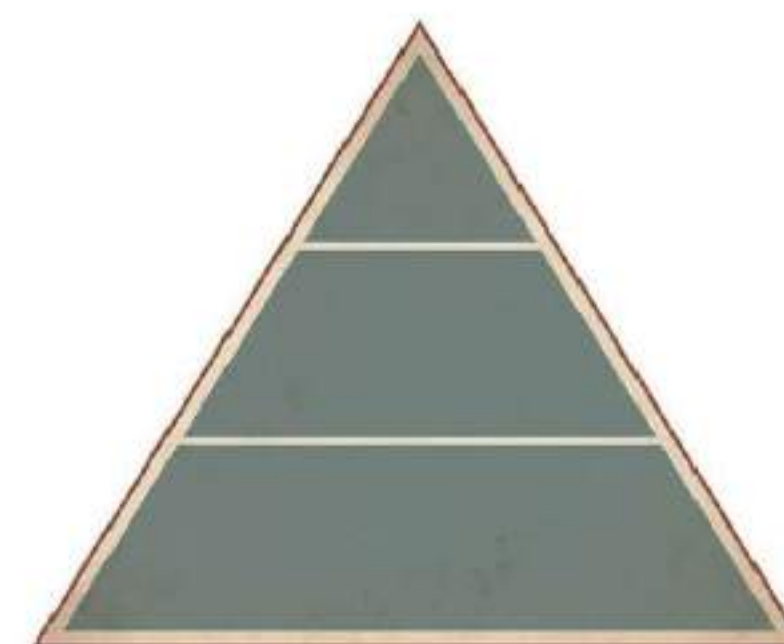


THE FINDINGS

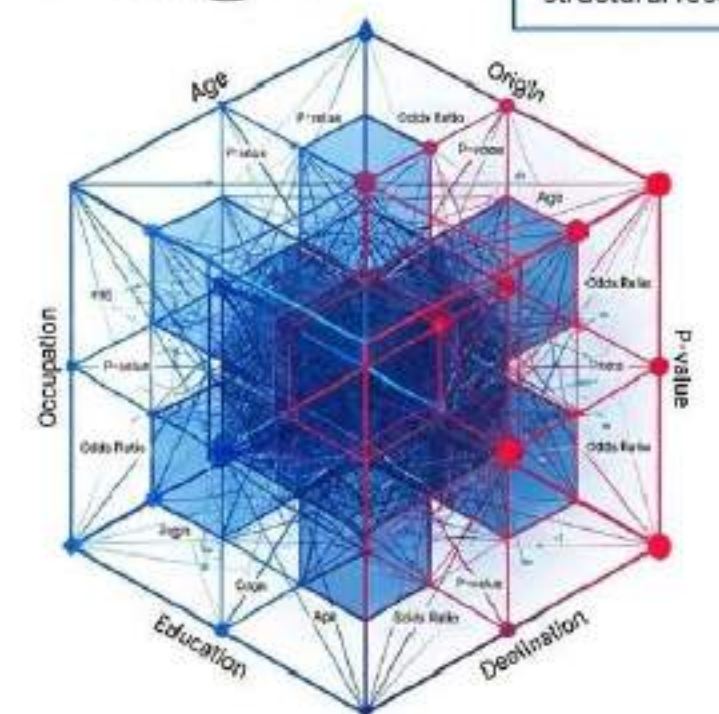
Improved living conditions did not cause an abandonment of the Labour party. Instead, working-class identity reframed itself. It shifted away from pure historic class solidarity and toward the pragmatic pursuit of social mobility and citizenship goods.

The Nuffield Era and the Analytical Breakthrough

Nuffield College: The 'Club Med of the social sciences'—providing unparalleled isolation to focus purely on structural research.



1969-1980s: Moving away from localized observation and simplistic hierarchical assumptions.

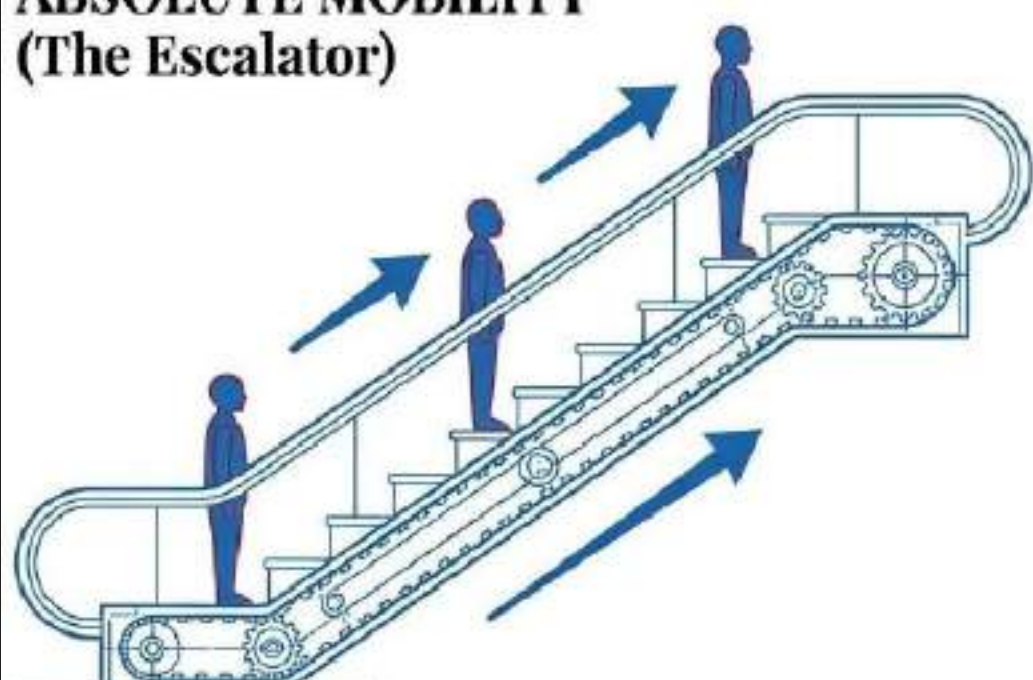


THE TECHNICAL LEAP

The introduction of log-linear models and massive, statistically representative samples (e.g., male population of England and Wales, aged 20-64) allowing for the precise mathematical isolation of mobility variables.

Mapping the Flux: Absolute vs. Relative Mobility

ABSOLUTE MOBILITY (The Escalator)



Tracks how far a society as a whole has moved due to structural economic expansion.

● **Finding:** Growing upward mobility across the population.

RELATIVE MOBILITY (The Staircase)



Measures the extent to which a person's origins determine their comparative chances against others.

● **Finding:** Persistent, rigid immobility at the top; origins still heavily dictate competitive outcomes.

Building the European Network (CASMIN)



THE PROCESS

'Solvitur Ambulando': Breakthrough ideas literally 'solved by walking'—forged during long walks in the woods around Mannheim with Walter Müller and Robert Erikson.

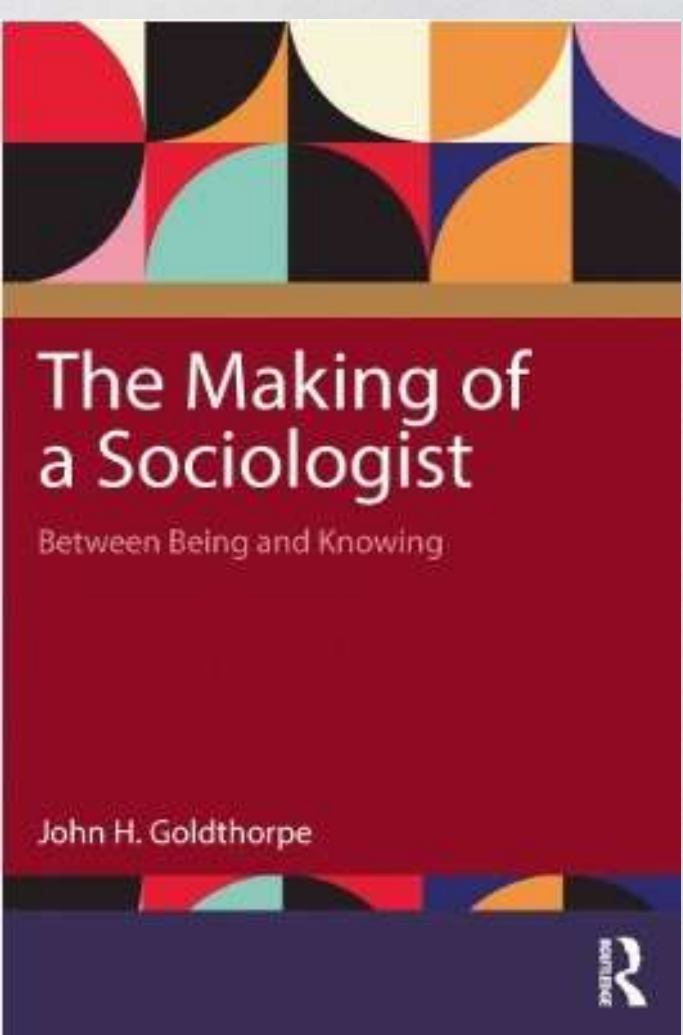
THE OUTPUT

The creation of the highly influential EGP class scheme for occupational stratification.

THE LEGACY

Established CASMIN and the European Sociological Review, building the institutional architecture for modern quantitative European sociology.

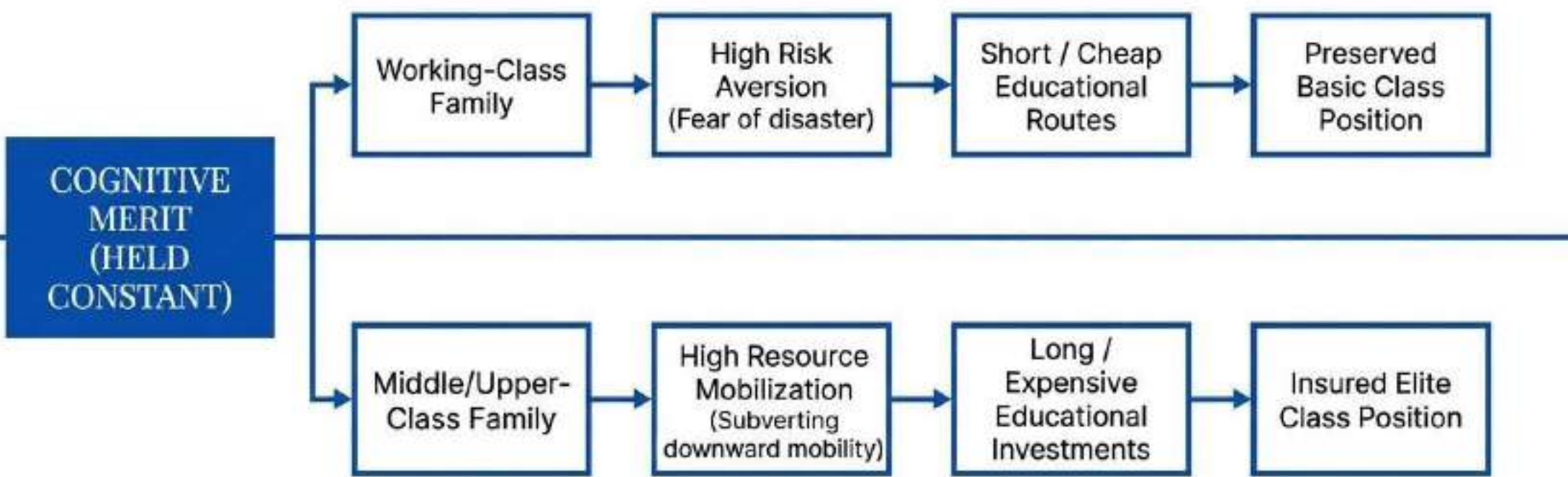
Sandra Fachelli: Assisted with NotebookLM



Tribute of John Goldthorpe

The Breen-Goldthorpe Model

Formalizing the "Betty Problem" into rational-action models:
How identical merit yields unequal outcomes.

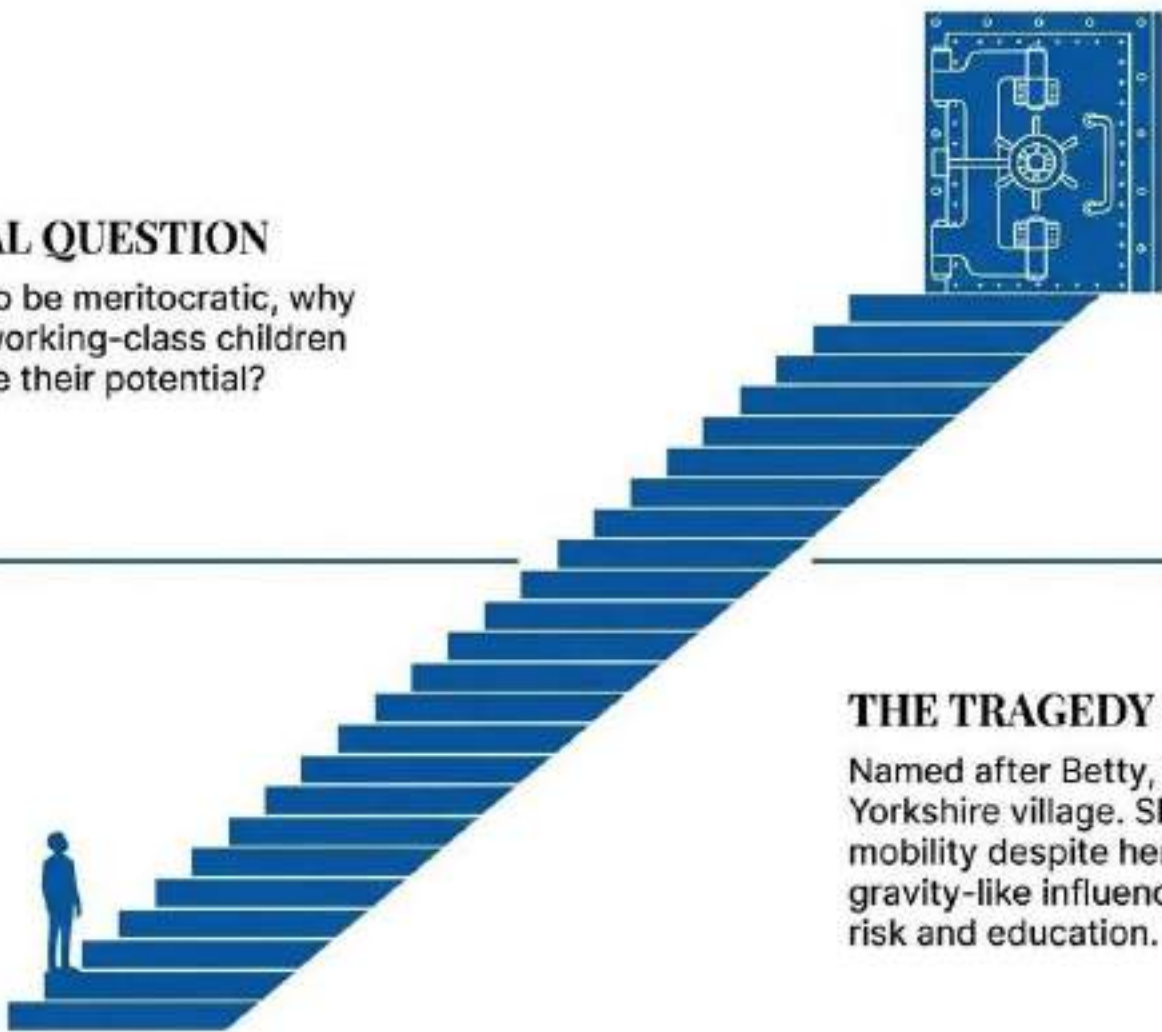


The Asymmetry of Strategy: Inequality persists because working-class families minimize risk, while affluent families maximize resources.

‘The Betty Problem’ and the Waste of Talent

THE SOCIOLOGICAL QUESTION

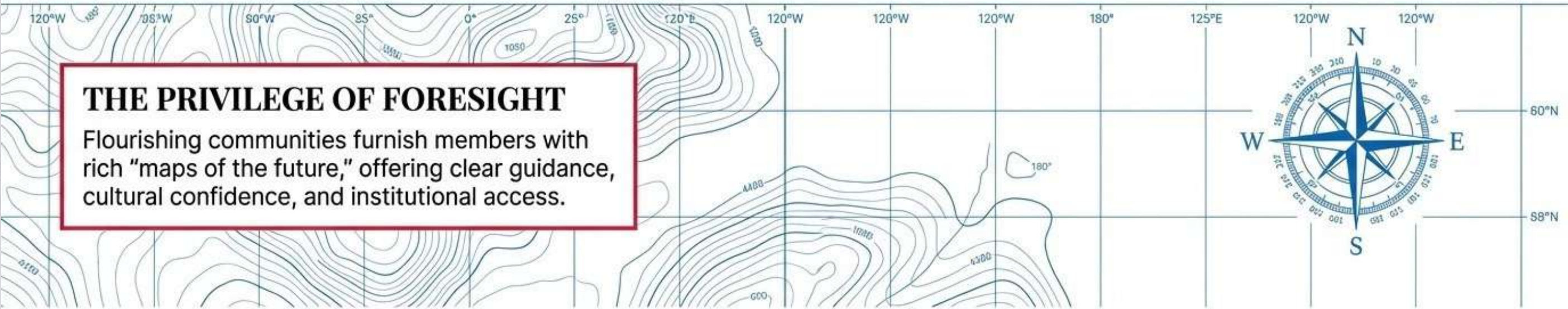
In a society that claims to be meritocratic, why do exceptionally gifted working-class children consistently fail to realize their potential?



THE TRAGEDY OF ORIGINS

Named after Betty, a gifted girl from his Yorkshire village. She was denied social mobility despite her merit due to the invisible, gravity-like influence of family background on risk and education.

Maps of the Future and the Capacity to Aspire



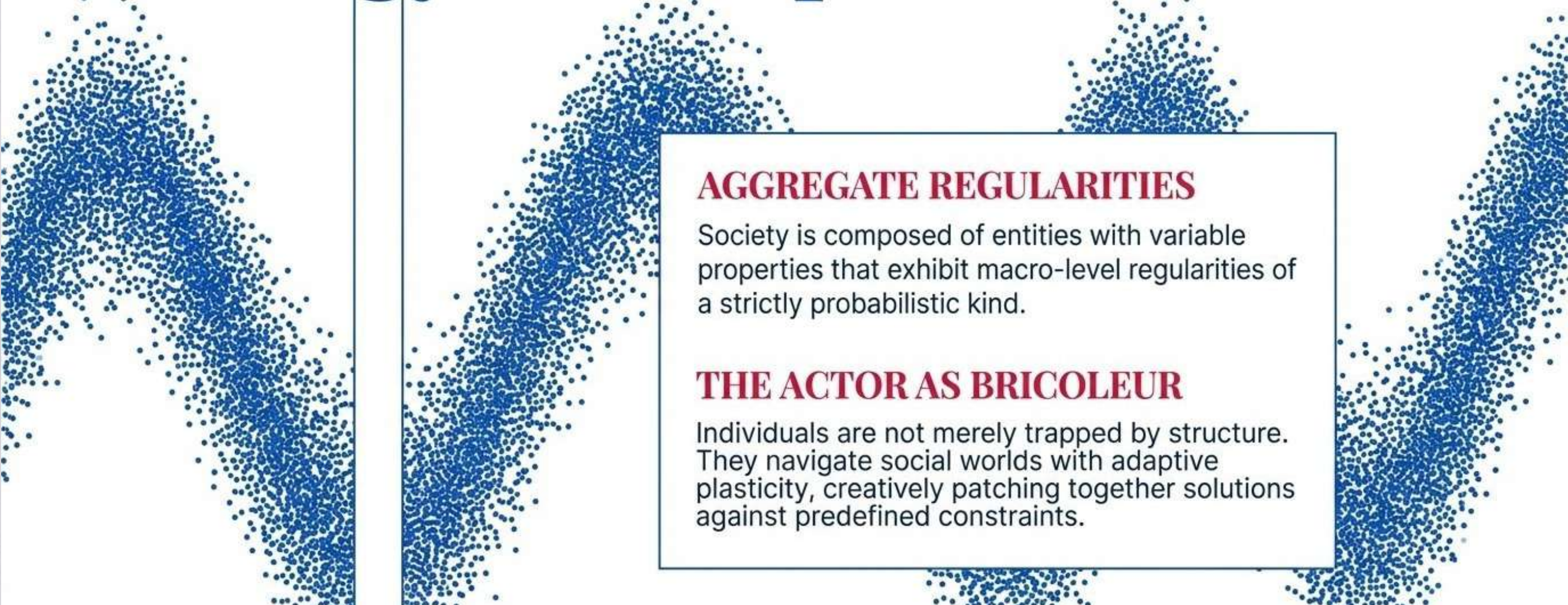
THE PRIVILEGE OF FORESIGHT

Flourishing communities furnish members with rich “maps of the future,” offering clear guidance, cultural confidence, and institutional access.

TRUNCATED HORIZONS

Disadvantaged groups confront foreshortened horizons where the future appears inherently riskier, unsupported, and perilous. Aspiration itself is an unequally distributed resource.

Sociology as a ‘Population Science’



AGGREGATE REGULARITIES

Society is composed of entities with variable properties that exhibit macro-level regularities of a strictly probabilistic kind.

THE ACTOR AS BRICOLEUR

Individuals are not merely trapped by structure. They navigate social worlds with adaptive plasticity, creatively patching together solutions against predefined constraints.

Maintaining the Right Distance

THE FINAL TENSION

Goldthorpe's work demands a dual existence: living life as a deeply pragmatic social actor, while theorizing life entirely through rigorous rational-action models.

THE LEGACY

Sociological mastery does not come from collapsing lived experience into objective data, nor from ignoring data for ideology.

THE LESSON

True insight relies on maintaining the écart—preserving that perfect, productive distance between personal value commitment and unyielding empirical standards.

Sweden is the clearest long-run case of equalization

Edited by Robert Erikson and Jan O. Jonsson

- Egalitarian welfare conditions were paired with explicit reforms against class-based educational inequality.
- Across the comparative evidence, Sweden is the clearest documented case of long-run equalization.
- But the outcome is partial: Sweden lowered the gap more than most countries, not to zero.



Best one-line reading:
Sweden reduced inequality more than most countries, but did not abolish it.

Inequality is reproduced through two channels

A. Achievement & performance gap

- home learning and parental support
- school bias and class-coded norms
- unequal preparation before key choices

B. Transition & choice gaps

- different decisions at branching points
- different perceived benefits and risks
- aspirations shaped by social position

The book treats performance differences and choice differences as the two key engines of class inequality in education.

Opening more seats is not enough if students arrive unequally prepared — or evaluate educational paths unequally.

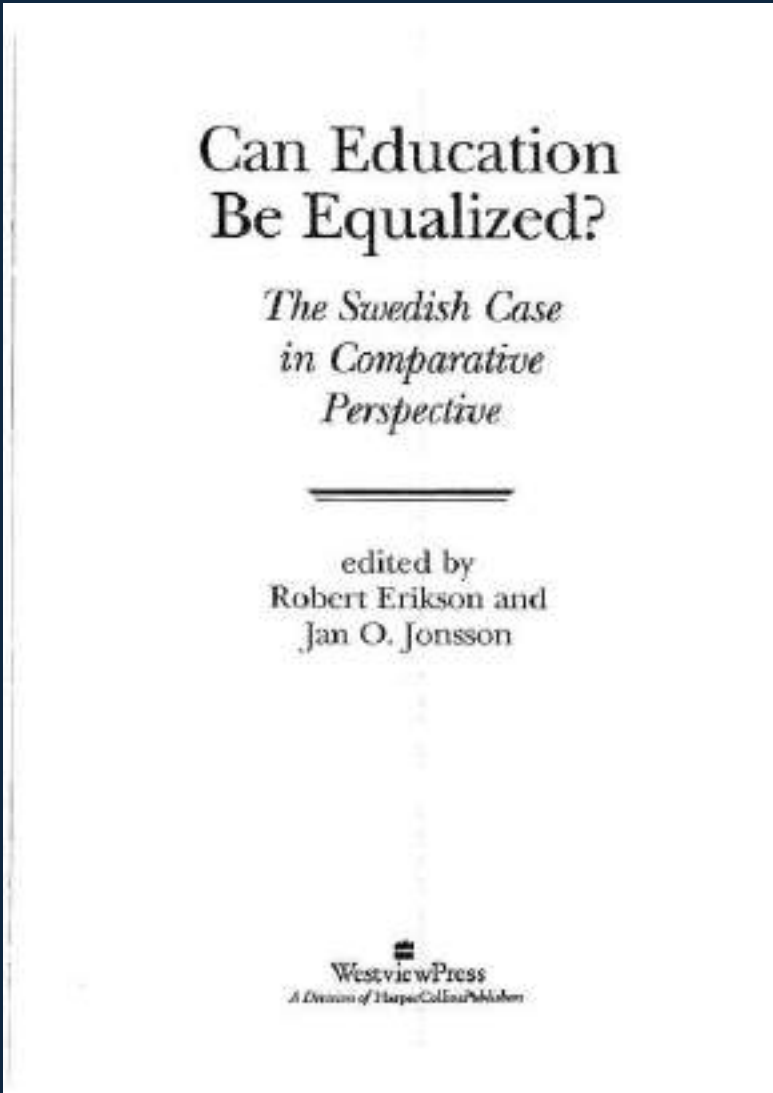
Can Education Be Equalized?

The Swedish case in comparative perspective

A 5-slide synthesis for exhibition display

Core message

Sweden shows that educational inequality can be reduced through institutional reform — but not fully erased.



Why Sweden narrowed the gap

- Comprehensive schooling
less early separation
- Later selection & mixed ability
broader common routes
- Expanded secondary & adult routes
longer participation
- Student aid & open pathways
easier continuation

These reforms widened access. But they did not end class reproduction, because families kept converting resources and information into educational advantage.

Final takeaway: reform access + reform decisions

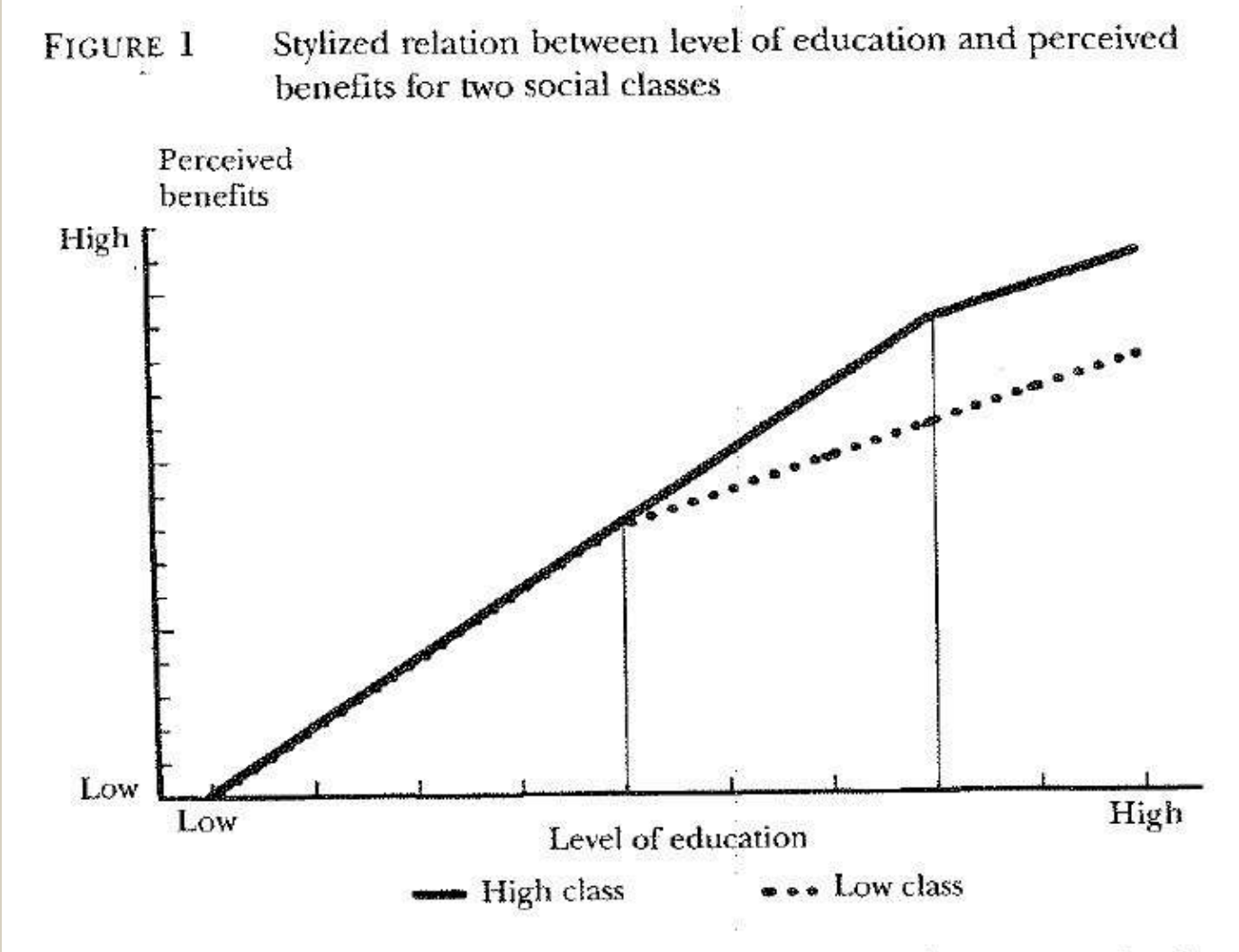
What matters most?

Moneymatters —butparental education, school-system knowledge and aspirations

Class gaps persist in both performance and in how families read the value and risk of

That is why equalization is possible, yet typically partial.

more clearly than most countries — but never escaped class reproduction



Stylized figure from the book: perceived benefits of education rise for both groups, but m

expanding social inequality in education: The Swedish Test Case

ient, and not firm or branch specific as in Germany) characterizes the reformed school system, one largely intentional consequence being the diversion of students away from academic studies (Murray 1988). This diversion policy, in combination with decreasing returns to higher education and the introduction of *numerus clausus* at universities, arrested the dramatic expansion of tertiary education in the early 1970s. Though participation rates resumed a high level in the 1980s, Sweden still today has, in an international perspective, a high proportion of students pursuing secondary education up until age 18, but a fairly medium sized tertiary sector (OECD 1995).

The relatively low level of inequality of conditions, in combination with far-reaching educational reforms, should, one might assume, promote equality of opportunity in Sweden. Ascriptive features (such as the economic situation or social status of the family of origin) should be less pervasive in a society in which resources are relatively evenly distributed between social classes, and in which traditional barriers in the school system have been removed. The transmission of resources across generations should arguably be less influential in determining the future life chances of children, resulting in a comparatively "open" society, with high and increasing social mobility (cf. Goldthorpe 1980/87).

Empirical studies seem to some extent to verify this. Unlike most other comparable nations, relative social mobility — or, "social fluidity" — has increased in Sweden (Erikson 1983; Jonsson and Mills 1993a), and the degree of "social inheritance" is relatively low (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992). In another perspective, however, it is perhaps more striking how *similar* nations are with respect to social fluidity. The *pattern* of inequality is very much the same in Sweden as in other nations, and even if the degree is somewhat lower, the differences are not particularly great. Our impression is that Sweden deviates less from other nations when it comes to inequality of social opportunity than in terms of inequality of living conditions. This suggests that the mechanisms behind inequality of opportunity are highly resistant to change.

It is in this perspective we would like to see the studies of educational inequalities carried out in this book.² Arguably, Sweden is somewhat of a deviant case with regard to inequality of conditions, the power of

2. We shall use the terms "educational inequality" and "class/social inequality in educational attainment/outcomes" interchangeably in this chapter, though "educational inequality" of course could be defined with reference to sex, ethnicity, etc. Our usage of the term is also in conflict with some scholars' definition of educational inequality as *disparity* in education, that is, individual-level differences in educational attainment (e.g., Jencks *et al.* 1972).

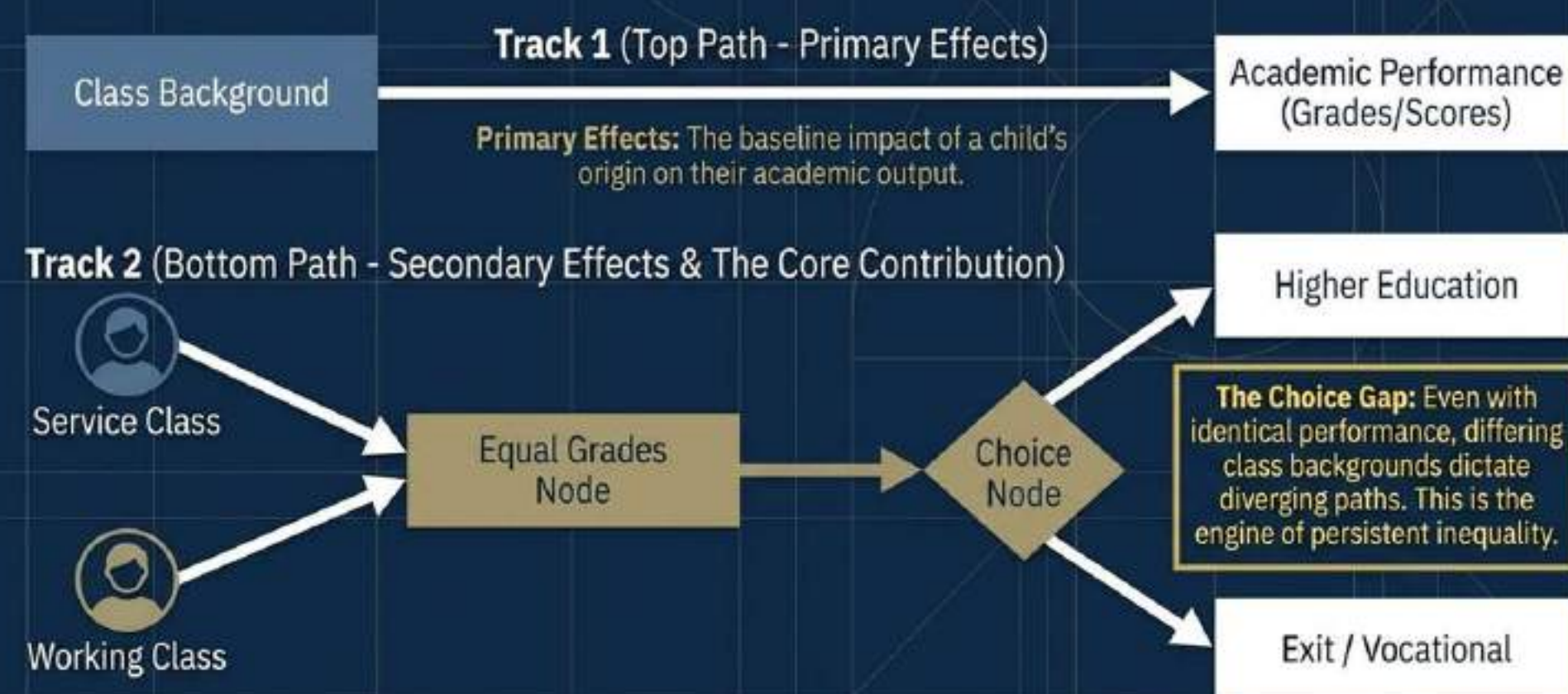
THE RATIONAL ACTION TURN IN SOCIOLOGY

Understanding Educational Inequality through Breen & Goldthorpe (1997)

Honouring John H. Goldthorpe: A giant of contemporary sociology whose commitment to empirical rigor and formal modelling transformed our understanding of social stratification.

EXPLAINING EDUCATIONAL DIFFERENTIALS : TOWARDS A FORMAL RATIONAL ACTION THEORY
Richard Breen and John H. Goldthorpe
Rationality and Society 1997 9: 275
DOI: 10.1177/104346397009003002

BEYOND CULTURAL CAPITAL: MAPPING THE TWO MECHANISMS OF INEQUALITY



DESIGNING THE ARCHITECTURE OF MODERN STRATIFICATION RESEARCH

The Nuffield School

A leader in the Oxford tradition of empirical class analysis.

The Bridge Maker

Connecting macro-level social regularities with micro-level individual mechanisms.

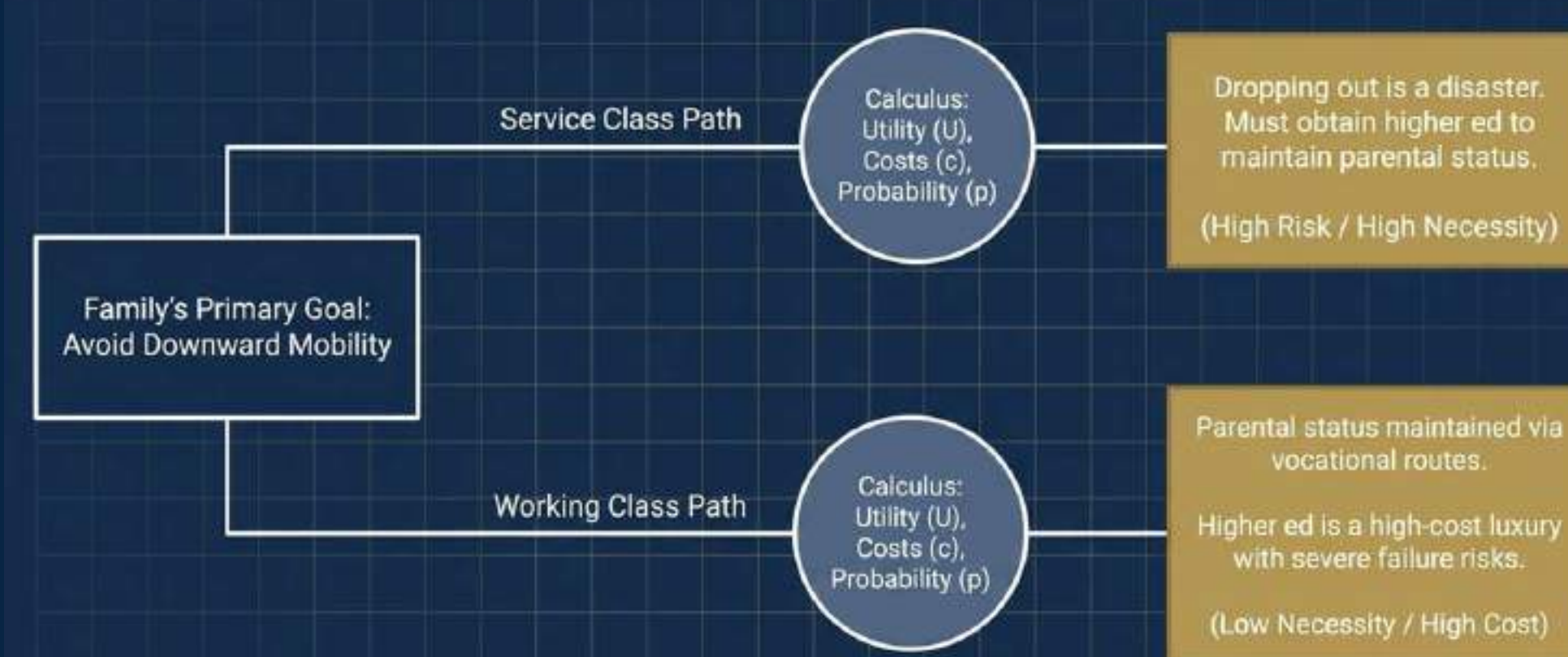
Methodological Stance

Advocating for Sociology as a Population Science—moving past pure description toward causal explanation.

Goldthorpe Class Schema diagram



THE LOGIC OF CHOICE: RELATIVE RISK AVERSION (RRA)



THE PERSISTENT PUZZLE OF EDUCATIONAL DIFFERENTIALS

The Context: Late 20th Century: Extensive educational expansion across all advanced societies. More 'room at the top.'

A. Persistent Inequality



Despite expansion, the relative advantage of higher classes remained remarkably stable (the 'ODD' ratio stability).

B. The Gender Revolution



The gender gap in education closed rapidly. Why did class gaps remain frozen?

"Sociology should be a science that explains, not just describes."

— John H. Goldthorpe

Formalization

Brought mathematical clarity to sociological theory, making it testable and cumulative.

Agency & Structure

Proved that 'irrational' looking inequalities are driven by rational individuals acting under different structural constraints.

Policy Implications

Demonstrated that reducing inequality requires shifting the risks and costs perceived by disadvantaged families, rather than trying to fix their 'culture'.

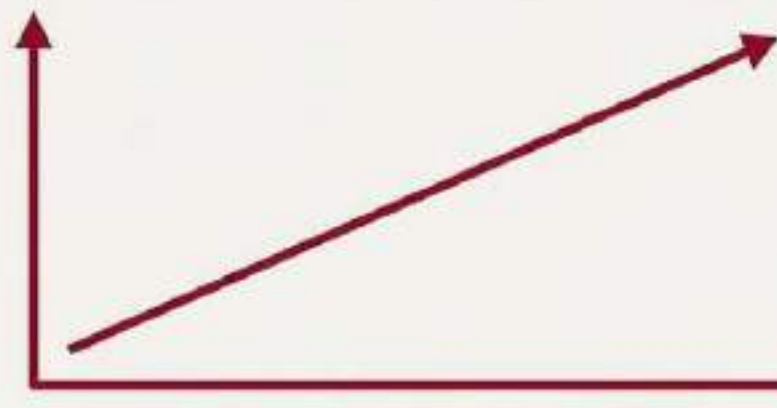
The CASMIN Project and the American Dream

Distilling Erikson & Goldthorpe's response to the critics of comparative macro-sociology.

OXFORD JOURNALS

Social stratification is fundamentally a multidimensional structure, not a simple vertical ladder.

The "American Dream" (Duncan, Hout, Hauser)



- Core Philosophy: Society is a single "hierarchy of inequality".
- Focus: Vertical "achievement", occupational prestige, and socio-economic status.
- Method: Parsimonious linear regressions seeking universal rules.

The Root of the Debate: The critics attempt to force CASMIN's multidimensional structural data into a unidimensional "achievement" paradigm.

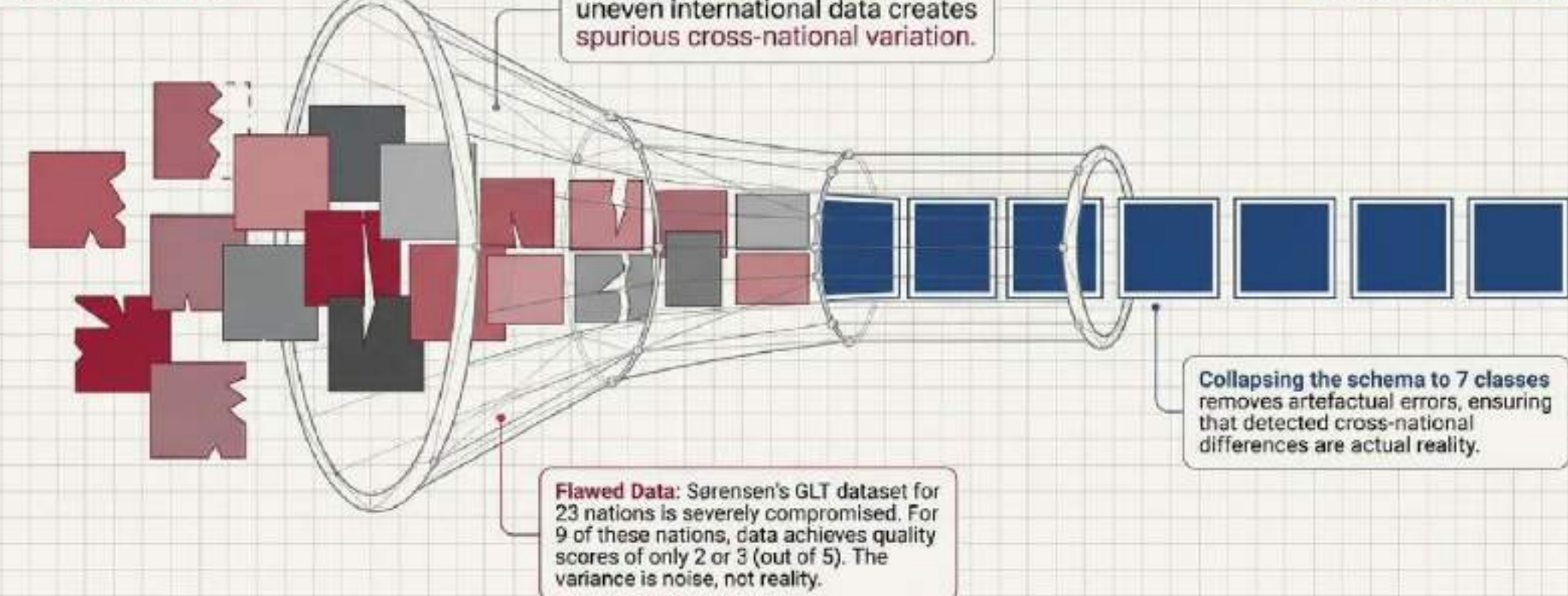
The CASMIN Project (Erikson & Goldthorpe)



- Core Philosophy: Society is composed of distinct class structures based on employment relations.
- Focus: Multidimensional barriers, property classes, and lateral mobility.
- Method: Topological models respecting historical specificities.

True comparative macro-sociology requires sacrificing granular detail for absolute cross-national reliability.

The Critics' Flaw



The CASMIN Rule

Anatomía de la Fluidéz Social Central (Core Fluidity)

El modelo log-lineal traducido a una topología física estructural.

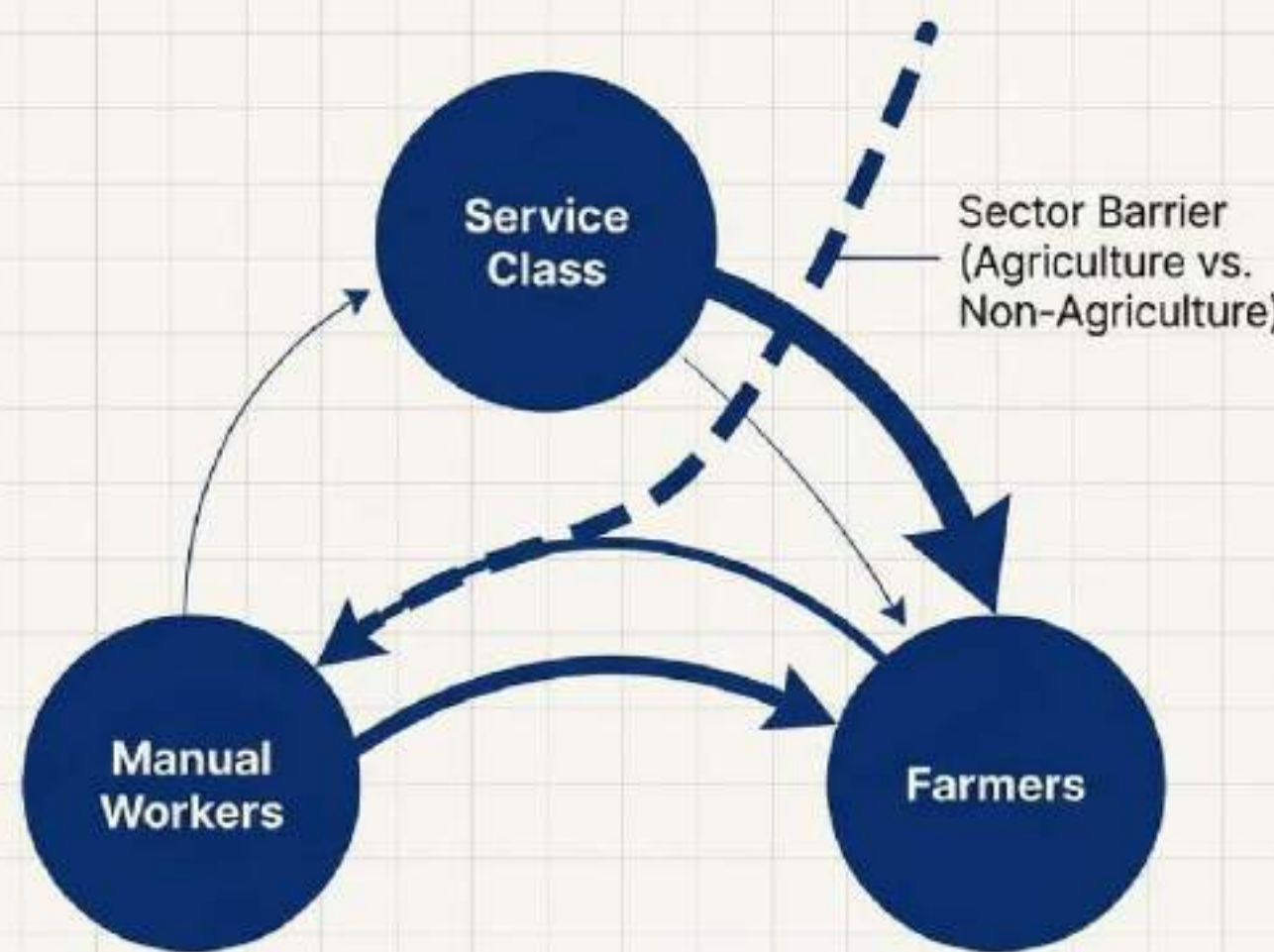
[HI] Barreras Jerárquicas: Muros en escalera que separan los diferentes bloques de estatus ocupacional.

[IN] Efectos de Herencia: Mecanismos de cierre intergeneracional (ej. transmisión de propiedad).

[SE] Barreras Sectoriales: La gran división estructural entre el bloque agrario y el bloque industrial/urbano.

[AF] Afinidades y Desafinidades: Vías de tránsito directo o zanjías infranqueables entre sectores específicos que rompen la linealidad pura.

Mobility flows laterally through structural affinities, not just up and down a hierarchy.



Empirically Grounded

Anchored in empirical data from central European models (England and France), not arbitrarily tailored to fit.

Asymmetry is Reality

Fluidity is not perfectly symmetrical. Structural shifts impact origins and destinations differently.

Beyond Hierarchy

Incorporates inheritance, specific sector barriers, and class "affinities" rather than a single vertical climb. This rejects the outmoded distinction between "structural" and "exchange" mobility.

Topological social distance provides a mathematically superior fit compared to arbitrary prestige continua.

The Critique



Hierarchy must be modeled linearly based on occupational prestige or status continua.

The CASMIN Reality



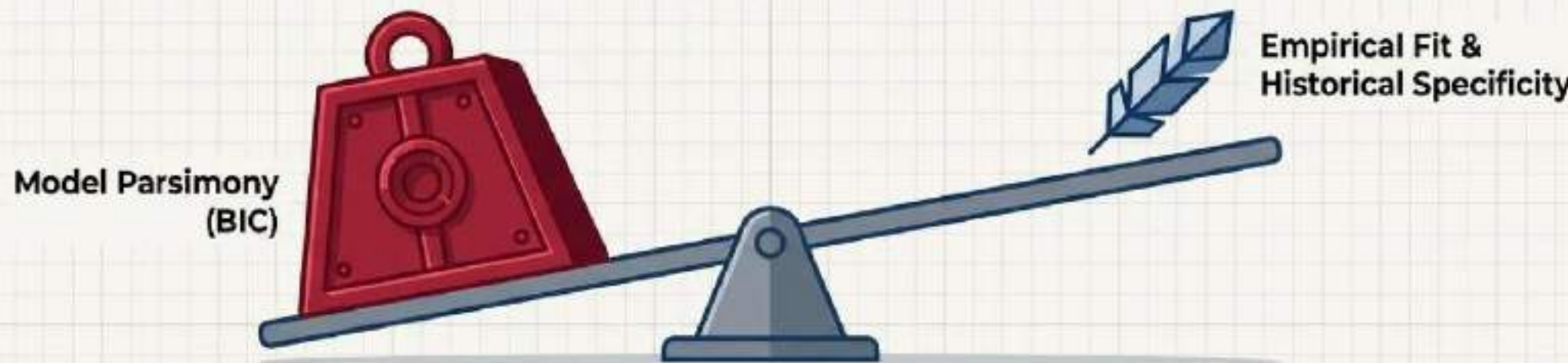
Mobility is constrained by distinct hierarchical divisions and measurable "social distances" between distinct classes.

The Decisive Test

When CASMIN's core fluidity model is extended to 12 classes to match Hout & Hauser's exact parameters, the mathematical fit heavily favors CASMIN (lower BIC is better).

Model Evaluated	Metric	BIC Statistic
Hout & Hauser's Linear Prestige Model	Model Parsimony	-6663
Extended CASMIN Social Distance Model	Mathematical Fit	-6813

An over-reliance on statistical parsimony mathematically forces critics into theoretical contradictions.



The Paradox Flowchart

Step 1: The Bias

Raftery's BIC statistic heavily rewards simple, parsimonious models over complex, historically accurate ones.

Step 2: The Choice

Hout & Hauser strictly follow BIC to select their preferred 'Model 13'.

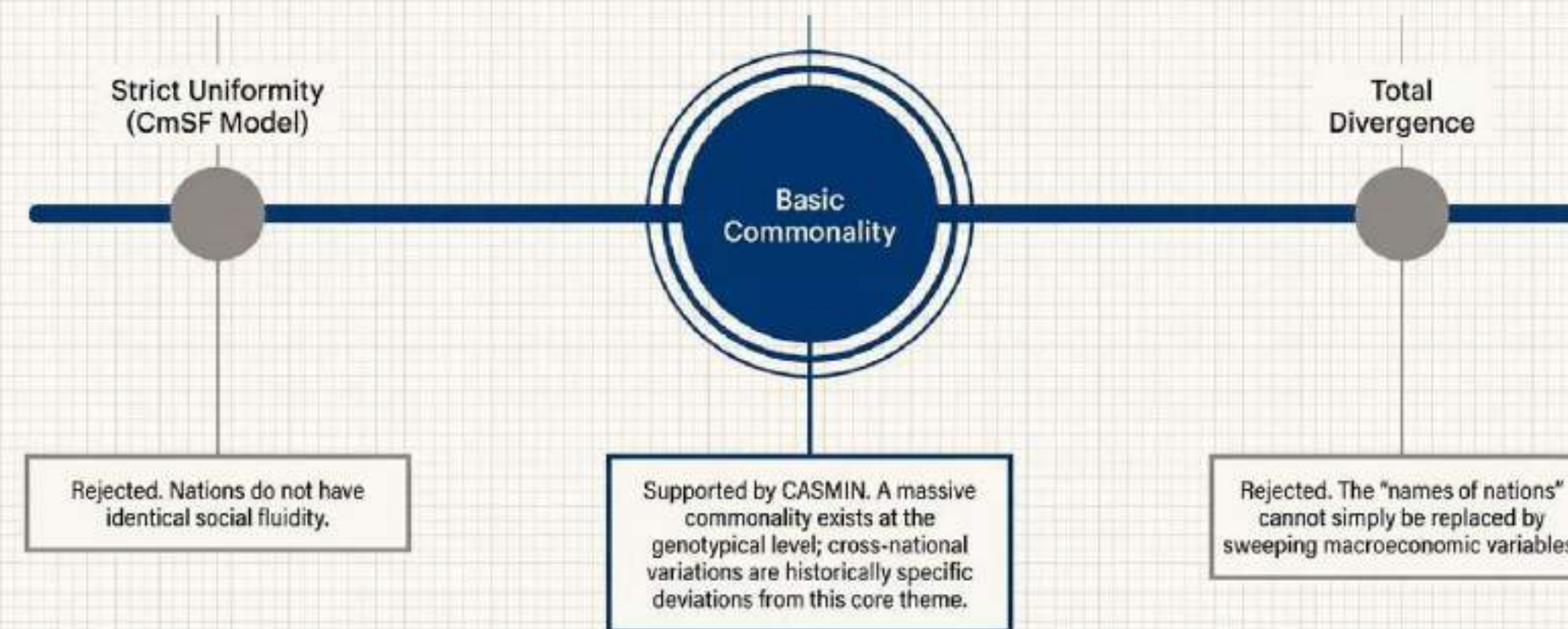
Step 3: The Trap

Model 13 mathematically allows for zero cross-national variation in fluidity.

The Irony: By blindly following the BIC statistic, the critics inadvertently support the strictest version of the FJH Hypothesis—a theory they explicitly claimed was 'long obsolete.'

Featherman-Jones-Hauser (FJH) Hypothesis

Social fluidity shares a massive cross-national commonality, punctuated by historically specific deviations.



Deviations from core fluidity are driven by the state and the economy, not universal structural laws.

Variations in Social Fluidity

Political Intervention (The State)

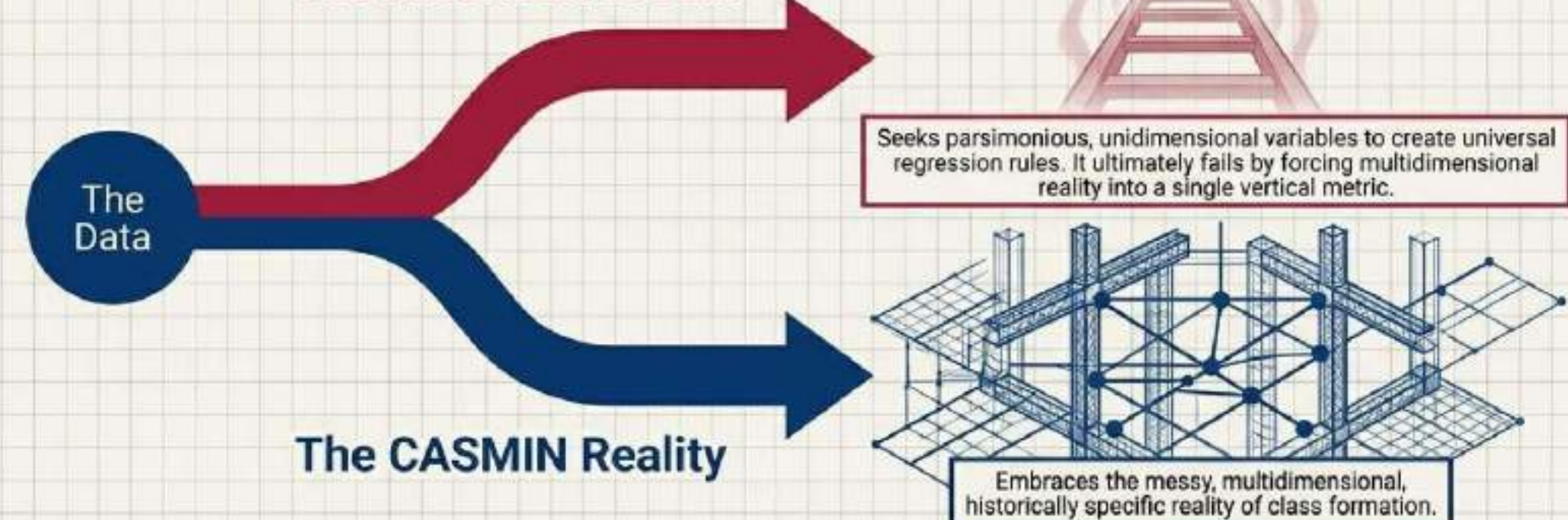
The baseline effects of the market and family (the pillars of civil society) can be fundamentally modified by political action taken via a modern state apparatus.

Economic Inequality (The Market)

Emerging evidence suggests an inverse relationship: lower economic inequality among individuals and families correlates with a higher overall level of social fluidity.

Imposing an "achievement" lens on structural class data obscures the reality of comparative mobility.

The American Dream



Final Takeaway: True comparative macro-sociology must respect the absolute limits of data and recognize the distinct structural properties of class. The "American Dream" model remains an unfulfilled aspiration.

The Architecture of Inequality: Primary Factors in European Class Mobility

Results from a Topological Model across 30 Nations

Based on the research of
Erzsébet Bukodi & John H. Goldthorpe

European Sociological Review, 2021, Vol. 37, No. 1, 1–17
doi: 10.1093/esr/jeaa028
Advance Access Publication Date: 16 October 2020
Original Article

OXFORD

‘Primary’ Factors in Intergenerational Class Mobility in Europe: Results from the Application of a Topological Model

Erzsébet Bukodi^{1,*} and John H. Goldthorpe²

¹Department of Social Policy and Intervention, Nuffield College, University of Oxford, Oxford OX1 1NF, UK
and ²Nuffield College, University of Oxford, Oxford OX1 1NF, UK

Reframing the Mobility Question: A Paradigm Shift

Secondary Factors (The Old Focus)



- Past research focused on variation: Why does mobility differ between the UK, Germany, and Poland?
- Focused on localized modifiers: Economic development, education systems, and welfare states.

Primary Factors (The New Focus)



- We must first understand existence: What drives the universal “core pattern” of social fluidity present everywhere?
- Focuses on the universal engine that generates inequality of opportunity before national institutions modify it.

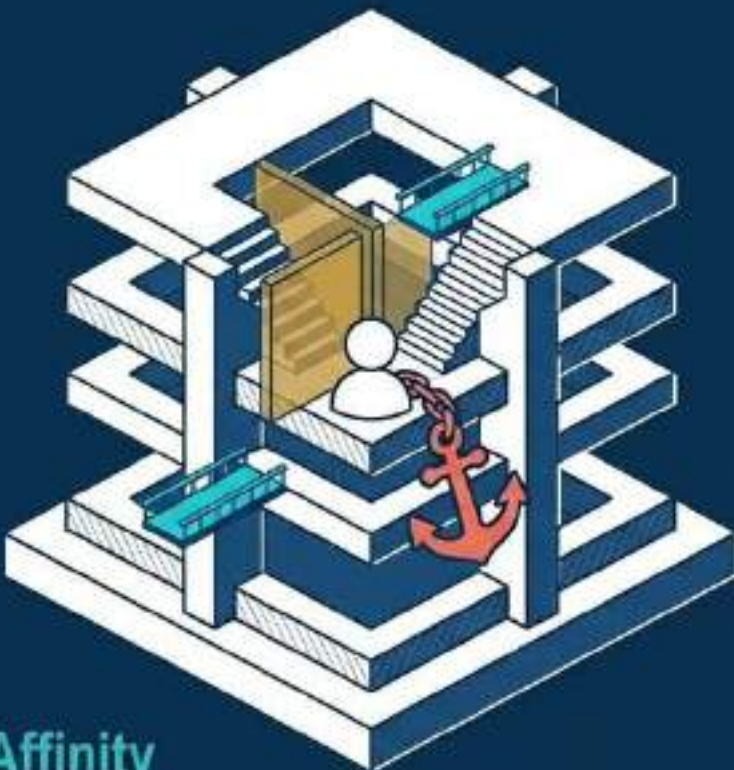
To understand cross-national variation, we must first isolate the core architecture of social fluidity.

The Universal Engine: The 3 Primary Forces



Class Hierarchy

The barriers to moving up (glass ceilings) or down (glass floors). Driven by differences in required skills, capital, and occupational desirability.



Class Inheritance

The gravitational pull of the parents' specific class. Enhanced by family traditions and direct transmission of capital (exceptionally strong in Class 1: Managers/Professionals and Class 4: Small Employers).



Status Affinity

Linkages based on shared social status (e.g., White-Collar networks vs. Blue-Collar networks). Acts as a mobility enhancer, offsetting hierarchical barriers.

Diverging Regimes: The Gender Lens

How the three primary forces exert different pressures based on gender.

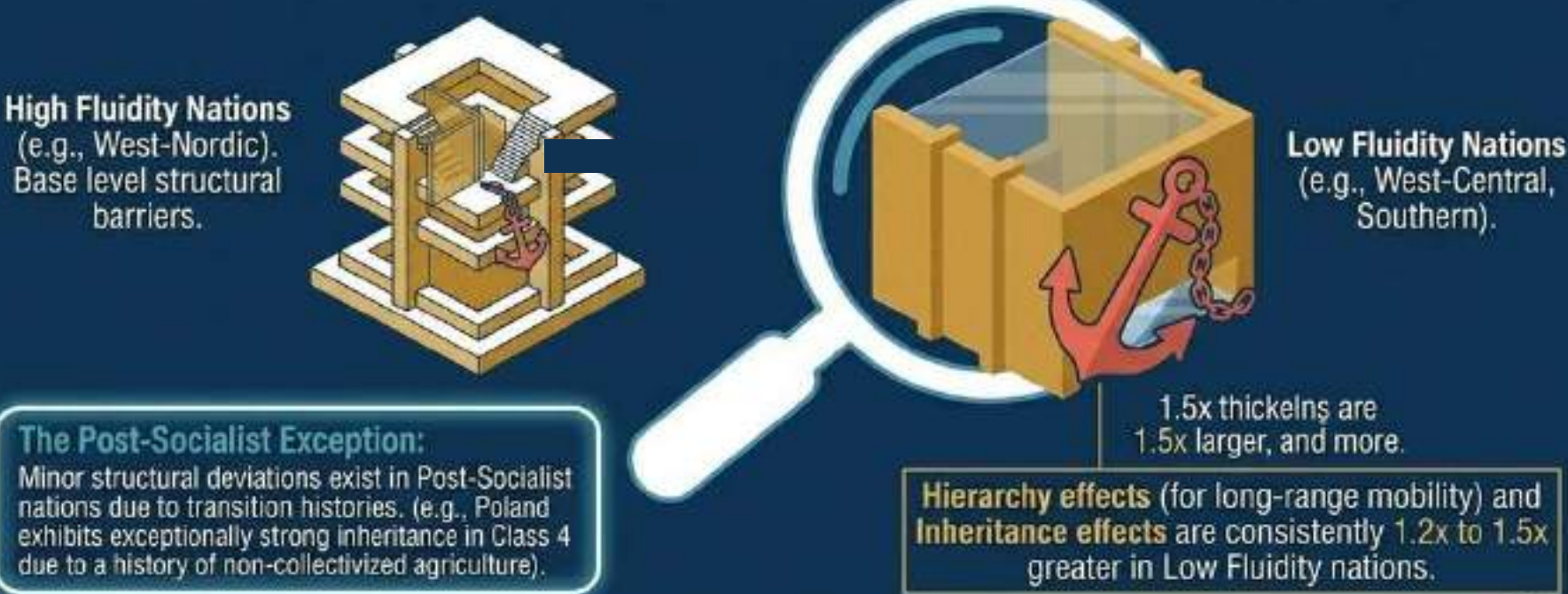
Men

Women (Full-Time)

	Men	Women (Full-Time)
Hierarchy 	Moderate Barriers 	Stronger Barriers Women experience thicker glass ceilings preventing medium-to-long-range upward mobility, and glass floors protecting against downward mobility.
Inheritance 	Strong Pull Higher propensity to stay exactly in the parents' specific class. 	Weaker Pull More likely to move away from specific class origins.
Affinity 	Strong Status Linkages Cross-class status homogeneity heavily offsets hierarchy. 	Weaker Status Linkages Less ability to use status networks to bypass hierarchical barriers.

Mapping Europe: The ‘Blown-Up’ Effect

The endogenous regimes are structurally identical. Low fluidity nations do not have different rules; they are simply blown-up versions of high fluidity nations.



The Unified Architecture of Social Mobility



Education



Welfare State

Point 1: The Universal Engine

A pan-European pattern of social fluidity exists, driven almost entirely by the primary forces of Hierarchy, Inheritance, and Affinity.



Political History



Gender

Point 2: The Modifiers

Nations do not possess fundamentally different mobility rules. Instead, localized secondary factors apply varying pressures to the same three universal levers.

Future policy and research must stop searching for new, nation-specific rules of mobility. The focus must shift to understanding how local institutions amplify or dampen these three universal forces.

The Illusion of Social Change



ROYAL STATISTICAL SOCIETY
DATA | EVIDENCE | DEBATIONS

Journal of the Royal Statistical Society
Statistics in Society
Series A

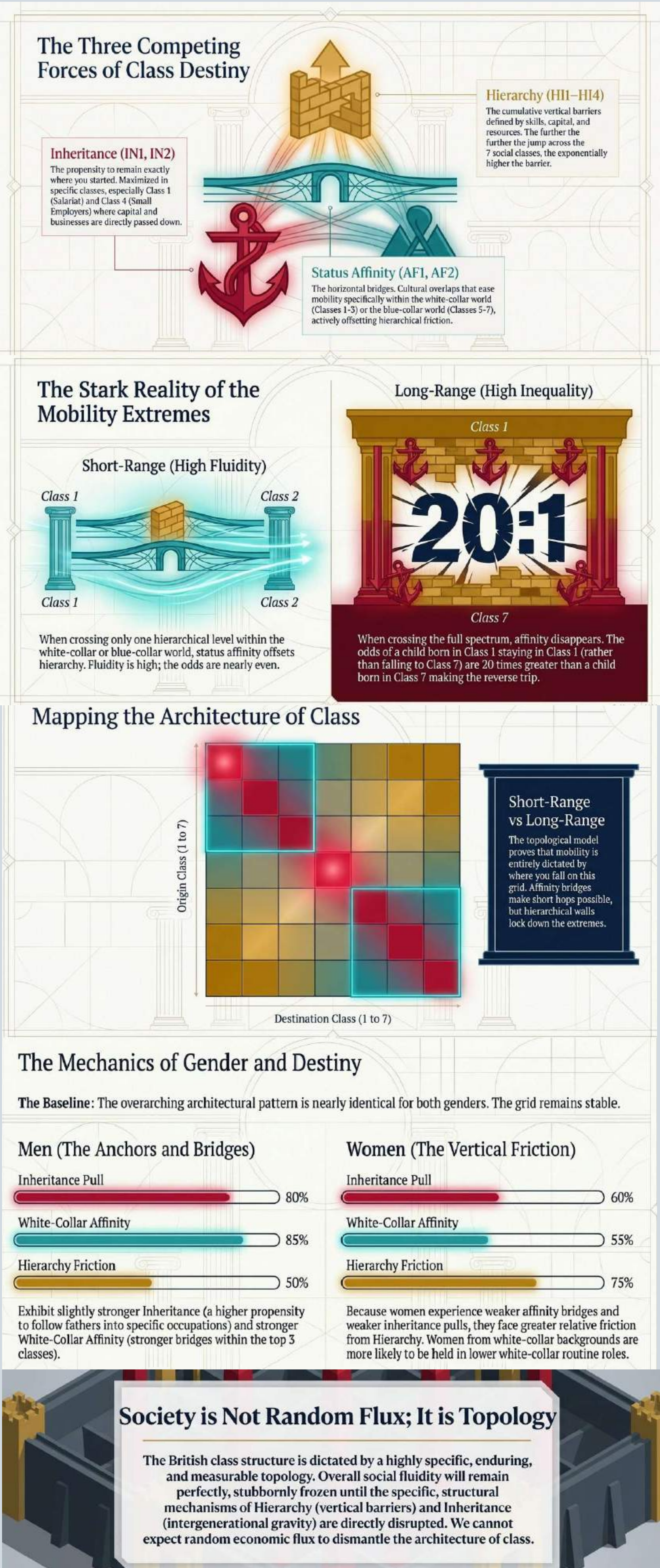
J. R. Statist. Soc. A (2017)
180, Part 3, pp. 841–862

The pattern of social fluidity within the British class structure: a topological model

Erzsébet Bukodi and John H. Goldthorpe
University of Oxford, UK

and Jouni Kuha
London School of Economics and Political Science, UK

Downloaded from https://ac



The Stark Reality of the Mobility Extremes

Short-Range (High Fluidity)

When crossing only one hierarchical level within the white-collar or blue-collar world, status affinity offsets hierarchy. Fluidity is high; the odds are nearly even.

Long-Range (High Inequality)

When crossing the full spectrum, affinity disappears. The odds of a child born in Class 1 staying in Class 1 (rather than falling to Class 7) are 20 times greater than a child born in Class 7 making the reverse trip.

Mapping the Architecture of Class

Origin Class (1 to 7)

Destination Class (1 to 7)

Short-Range vs Long-Range

The topological model proves that mobility is entirely dictated by where you fall on this grid. Affinity bridges make short hops possible, but hierarchical walls lock down the extremes.

The Mechanics of Gender and Destiny

The Baseline: The overarching architectural pattern is nearly identical for both genders. The grid remains stable.

Men (The Anchors and Bridges)

Inheritance Pull

80%

White-Collar Affinity

85%

Hierarchy Friction

50%

Exhibit slightly stronger Inheritance (a higher propensity to follow fathers into specific occupations) and stronger White-Collar Affinity (stronger bridges within the top 3 classes).

Women (The Vertical Friction)

Inheritance Pull

60%

White-Collar Affinity

55%

Hierarchy Friction

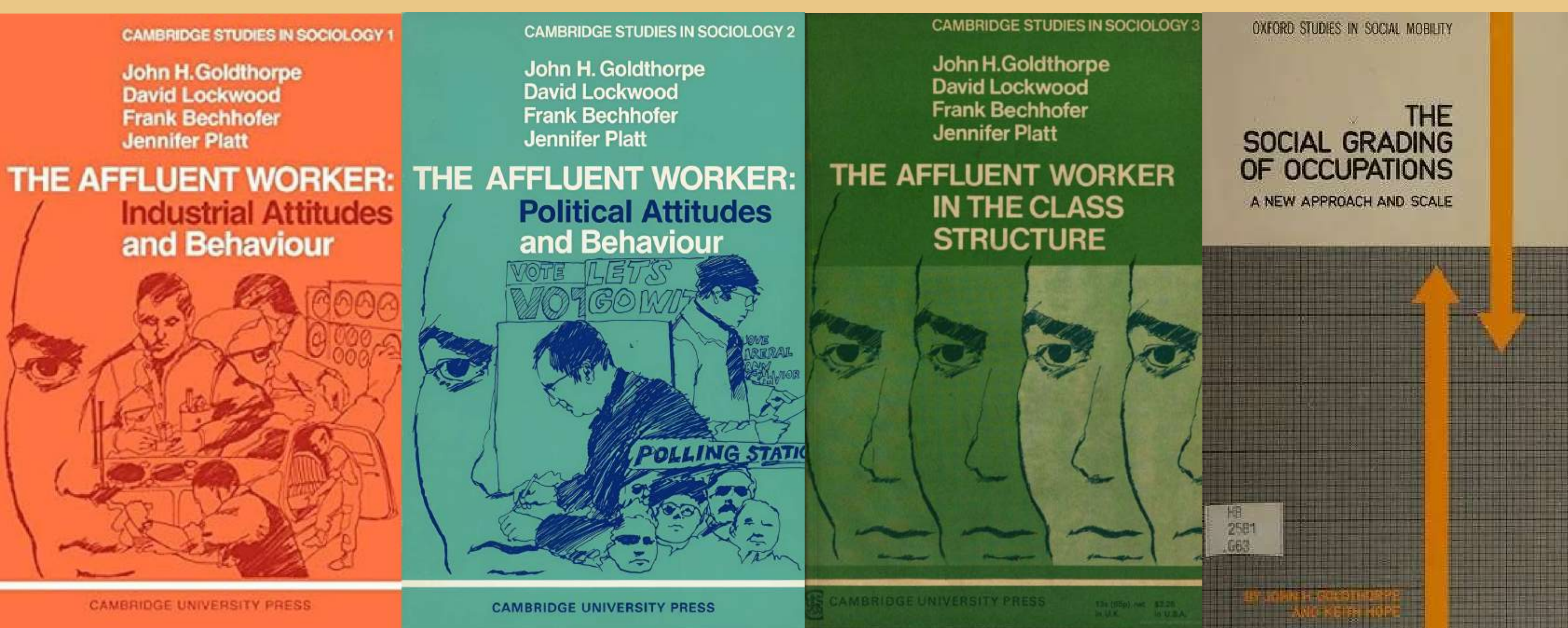
75%

Because women experience weaker affinity bridges and weaker inheritance pulls, they face greater relative friction from Hierarchy. Women from white-collar backgrounds are more likely to be held in lower white-collar routine roles.

Society is Not Random Flux; It is Topology

The British class structure is dictated by a highly specific, enduring, and measurable topology. Overall social fluidity will remain perfectly, stubbornly frozen until the specific, structural mechanisms of Hierarchy (vertical barriers) and Inheritance (intergenerational gravity) are directly disrupted. We cannot expect random economic flux to dismantle the architecture of class.

Jade Ferreira Lopez: Assisted with NotebookLM



Tribute to John Goldthorpe

