

**J. ADAM COBB**

University of Texas  
McCombs School of Business  
2110 Speedway, Stop B6500  
Austin, TX 78712  
(w) 512.471.9435

[adam.cobb@mcombs.utexas.edu](mailto:adam.cobb@mcombs.utexas.edu)

---

---

**ACADEMIC APPOINTMENT**

**University of Texas, McCombs School of Business, Austin, TX**

Associate Professor, Business, Government, & Society, 2020-present

Assistant Professor, Business, Government, & Society, 2018-2020

**University of Pennsylvania, The Wharton School, Philadelphia, PA**

Assistant Professor, Management, 2011-2018

**EDUCATION**

**University of Michigan, Ross School of Business, Ann Arbor, MI**

Ph.D. Management & Organizations, April 2012

Dissertation: "From the 'Treaty of Detroit' to the 401(k): The Development and Evolution of Privatized Retirement in the United States"

Committee: Gerald (Jerry) Davis (Chair), Margaret Levenstein, Mark Mizruchi, Kathleen Sutcliffe

**University of Texas, McCombs School of Business, Austin, TX**

M.B.A. with Management concentration, May 2005

**Southwestern University, Georgetown, TX**

B.A. in Economics and Business Administration (double major), *cum laude*, May 1999

**RESEARCH**

(\* indicates equal authorship)

***A. Articles Published and Forthcoming in Peer Reviewed Journals***

[1] **Cobb, J. Adam.** 2015. "Risky business: The decline of defined benefit pensions and firms' shifting of retirement risk." *Organization Science*, 26(5): 1332-1350.

[2] **Cobb, J. Adam.** 2016. "How firms shape income inequality: Stakeholder power, executive decision-making, and the structuring of employment relationships." *Academy of Management Review*, 41(2): 324-348.

- Winner, Best Article Award, *Academy of Management Review*, 2017
- Finalist, Best Article Award, Academy of Management, Organizational Behavior Division, 2017
- Winner, Practice Implications Award, *Academy of Management Review*, 2020. Awarded to the paper published in past 7 years that makes the most significant impact on managerial practice.

- [3] **Cobb, J. Adam**, Tyler Wry, and Eric Y. Zhao.\* 2016. “Funding financial inclusion: Institutional logics and the contextual contingency of funding for microfinance organizations.” *Academy of Management Journal*, 59(6): 2103-2131.
- Winner, Impact on Practice Award, Academy of Management, Organizations and Natural Environment Division and The Network for Business Sustainability, 2017
- [4] Lavine, Marc, **J. Adam Cobb**, and Christopher Roussin. 2017. “When saying less is something new: Social movements and frame contraction processes.” *Mobilization*, 22(3): 275-292.
- [5] **Cobb, J. Adam** and Flannery G. Stevens. 2017. “These unequal states: Corporate organization and income inequality within the United States.” *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 62(2): 304–340.
- Winner, Best Paper Award, Academy of Management, Organizational & Management Theory Division, 2014
  - Previously appeared in the *Academy of Management Conference Best Paper Proceedings*, 2014. Awarded to the best papers (approximately 10%) accepted for inclusion at the conference
- [6] **Cobb, J. Adam** and Ken-Hou Lin.\* 2017. “Growing apart: The declining firm-size wage premium and its inequality consequences.” *Organization Science*, 28(3): 429-446.
- [7] **Cobb, J. Adam**. 2019. “Managing the conflicting interests of workers and shareholders: Evidence from pension assumption manipulations.” *ILR Review*, 72(3): 523-551.
- [8] Benton, Richard and **J. Adam Cobb**.\* 2019. “Eyes on the horizon? Fragmented elites and short-term focus of the American corporation” *American Journal of Sociology*, 124(6): 1631-1684.
- Runner-up, Best Paper Award, Academy of Management, Organizational & Management Theory Division, 2019
  - Previously appeared in the *Academy of Management Conference Best Paper Proceedings*, 2019. Awarded to the best papers (approximately 10%) accepted for inclusion at the conference
- [9] McDonnell, Mary-Hunter and **J. Adam Cobb**. “Take a stand or keep your seat: Independent director exit after social activist challenges.” *Academy of Management Journal*, 63(4): 1028-1053.
- Winner, Best Paper Award, Annual Conference for the Alliance for Research on Corporate Sustainability, 2019

### ***B. Articles Submitted to Peer Reviewed Journals***

- [10] **Cobb, J. Adam**, JR Keller, and Samir Nurmohamed.\* “How do I compare? The effect of work-unit demographics on reactions to pay inequality.” Under review [1<sup>st</sup> revision]: *ILR Review*
- [11] Benton, Richard, **J. Adam Cobb**, Timothy Werner.\* “Firm partisan political positioning and perceptions of COVID-19-related risk.” Under revision [1<sup>st</sup> revision]: *Strategic Management Journal*

### ***C. Other Publications***

- [12] Davis, Gerald F. and **J. Adam Cobb** 2010. “Resource dependence theory: Past and future.” *Research in the Sociology of Organizations*, 28: 21-42.
- [13] Davis, Gerald F. and **J. Adam Cobb** 2010. “Corporations and economic inequality around the world: The paradox of hierarchy.” *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 30: 35-53.

- [14] Wry, Tyler, **J. Adam Cobb\***, and Howard Aldrich 2013. "More than a metaphor: Assessing the historical legacy of resource dependence and its contemporary promise as a theory of environmental complexity." *Academy of Management Annals*, 7: 439-486.
- [15] **Cobb, J. Adam** and Tyler Wry.\* 2014. "Resource-dependence theory." *Oxford Bibliographies in Management*, Oxford University Press.
- [16] Review of "The Vanishing American Corporation" 2015. *Perspectives on Work* 19(1): 60-61.
- [17] **Cobb, J. Adam**. 2016. "How firms shape income inequality: A rejoinder to Zardkoohi and Bierman." *Academy of Management Review*, 41(4): 749-754.

#### ***D. Research in Progress***

- An analysis of elite cohesion in the non-profit sector (with Richard Benton)  
Elite cohesion and corporate political activity (with Richard Benton & Tim Werner)  
An analysis of firm demand for foreign workers (with Exequiel Hernandez)  
Population aging and firm innovation (with Exequiel Hernandez)  
Changes in compensation structures (with Peter Cappelli)  
The impact of outsourcing on racial segregation within establishments (with JP Ferguson & Rem Koning)  
The sensitivity of labor productivity to shock-related versus stable CSR (with Luis Ballesteros & Vanessa Burbano)

#### **PRESENTATIONS**

(\* indicates refereed conference)

Eyes on the horizon? Fragmented elites and short-term focus of the American corporation [8]

- Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, Boston, MA, 2019\*
- McCombs Research Colloquium, University of Texas, Austin, TX, 2019

The effects of pay dispersion and demographic similarity on employee turnover (*previous title*) [10]

- University of Texas, Austin, TX, 2018
- McGill University, Montreal, QC, 2017
- University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, IL, 2017
- Annual People and Organizations Conference at The Wharton School, Philadelphia, PA, 2017\*
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston, MA, 2017
- Annual Meeting of the Labor and Employment Relations Association, Anaheim, CA, 2017\*
- Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, Anaheim, CA, 2016\*
- Annual Meeting of the European Group on Organization Studies, Naples, ITA, 2016\*

Growing apart: The declining firm-size wage premium and its inequality consequences [6]

- INSEAD, Fontainebleau, FRA, 2017
- Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, Atlanta, GA, 2017\*
- Annual Society for Institutional & Organizational Economics Conference, New York, NY, 2017\*
- Annual People and Organizations Conference at The Wharton School, Philadelphia, PA, 2016\*

- Annual Meeting of the Labor and Employment Relations Association, Minneapolis, MN, 2016\*

Take a stand or keep your seat: Independent director exit after social activist challenges [9]

- Community of Social Innovation Conference, Toronto, ON, 2017

When principals conflict: Stakeholder power, executive decision-making, and the manipulation of pension assumptions (*previous title*) [7]

- Organizational Theory Junior Faculty Conference, Toronto, ON, 2015

Funding financial inclusion: Institutional logics and the contextual contingency of funding for microfinance organizations [3]

- National University of Singapore, Singapore, 2015
- Community of Social Innovation Conference, Ann Arbor, MI, 2015

These unequal states: Corporate organization and income inequality within the United States [5]

- University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB, 2015
- Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, CA, 2014\*
- Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, Philadelphia, PA, 2014\*
- Annual Meeting of the European Group on Organization Studies, Rotterdam, NLD, 2014\*
- Annual People and Organizations Conference at The Wharton School, Philadelphia, PA, 2013\*

Whose interests are being served? Owners, employees, and the fraying employment relationship (*previous title*) [1]

- Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston MA, 2013
- Harvard Business School, Boston MA, 2013
- Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, 2013
- Annual Meeting of the Labor and Employment Relations Association, San Diego, CA, 2013\*
- Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, San Antonio, TX, 2011\*
- Annual Meeting of the Industrial Studies Association, Pittsburgh, PA, 2011\*
- Annual People and Organizations Conference at the Wharton School, Philadelphia, PA, 2010\*

“Too old to work and too young to die”: The framing of strategic change and the Treaty of Detroit (*previous title*) [4]

- Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, Boston, MA, 2012\*

What explains the paradox of hierarchy? A cross-national exploration of corporate organization, finance, and economic inequality

- Annual Meeting of the European Group on Organization Studies, Helsinki, FIN, 2012\*
- Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, Montreal, QC, 2010\*

Effects of shared capitalism on firm and worker outcomes

- Annual Beyster Symposium, La Jolla, CA, 2011

Individual thriving: Measurement, validation, and implications for organizations

- Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, Anaheim, CA, 2008\*

## **Organized Symposia**

with JR Keller, 2016. “The Causes and Consequences of Income Inequality and Economic Scarcity Inside Organizations” (Carrie Leana, Discussant). Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, Anaheim, CA\*

with Forrest Briscoe, 2011. “Shifting Power and the Changing U.S. Employment Relationship” (Gerald Davis, Discussant). Winner of the Organization and Management Theory Division Best Symposium Award. Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, San Antonio, TX\*

with Flannery G. Stevens, 2010. “Unequal America: Examining How Organizations Influence Inequality Across Levels of Analysis” (Gerald Davis, Discussant). Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, Montreal, QC\*

with Flannery G. Stevens, 2008. “Toward Theory Refinement: Advancement of Positive Organizational Scholarship Through Measure Development” (Jeffrey Edwards, Discussant). Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, Anaheim, CA\*

## **Other**

2019. Participant in symposium, “Labor Market Inequalities: Integrating the Demand-Side and the Supply-Side Perspectives” (Yuna Cho & Allison Elias, Organizers). Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Boston, MA\* (scheduled)

2017. Participant in symposium, “The Causes and Consequences of Income Inequality: A Management Perspective” (Kaifeng Jiang & Anne Tsui, Organizers). Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA\*

- Selected as a *Showcase Symposium*. Awarded to the best symposia (approximately 10%) accepted for inclusion at the conference.

2013. Participant in symposium, “The Macro-Structures and Micro-Processes of Cultural Mixing: Exploring Opportunities for Synthesis” (Matthew Grimes & Tyler Wry, Organizers). Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Orlando, FL\*

2012. Panelist in the professional development workshop, “Occupy, Economic Inequality and Business: Setting the Agenda” (Hari Bapuji & Suhaib Riaz, Organizers). Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, Boston, MA

2012. Panel chairman, “Public-Private Welfare” Business History Conference, Philadelphia, PA

## **TEACHING**

### **University of Texas, McCombs School of Business, 2019-Present**

Business & Policy in the Age of Inequality

Average Rating (1 to 5 scale): 4.65 (MBA); 4.8 (BBA)

### **University of Pennsylvania, The Wharton School, 2011-2018**

Industrial Relations & Human Resource Management

Average Rating (0 to 4 scale): 2.95

**University of Michigan, Ross School of Business, 2009**

Behavioral Theory in Management

Average Rating (0 to 5 scale): 4.32

**GRANTS**

Co-Principal Investigator, “Understanding the Relationship between Employment Context and Job Quality” (PI: Ken-Hou Lin); Gates Foundation (\$181,799)

Wharton Dean’s Research Fund Grant, 2012-2016

Global Initiatives Research & Teaching Materials Program, 2012

Mack Center Grant, 2012

Louis O. Kelso Fellowship, 2011

Robert Kahn Fellowship for the Scientific Study of Social Issues, 2010

Rackham Graduate Student Research Grant, 2010

**AWARDS & HONORS**

Practice Implications Best Paper Award (“How firms shape income inequality: Stakeholder power, executive decision-making, and the structuring of employment relationships” [2]), *Academy of Management Review*, 2020

CBA Foundation Research Excellence Award for Assistant Professors, University of Texas at Austin, McCombs School of Business, 2019-20

John T. Dunlop Outstanding Scholar Award, Labor and Employment Relations Association, 2019

Extraordinary Service to the Editorial Board, *Organization Science*, 2019

Best Paper Award (“Take a stand or keep your seat: Independent director exit after social activist challenges” [9]) Alliance for Research on Corporate Sustainability Annual Meeting, 2019

Extraordinary Service to the Editorial Board, *Organization Science*, 2018

Best Article Award (“How firms shape income inequality: Stakeholder power, executive decision-making, and the structuring of employment relationships” [2]), *Academy of Management Review*, 2017

Research Impact on Practice Award (“Funding financial inclusion: Institutional logics and the contextual contingency of funding for microfinance organizations” [3]), Organizations and Natural Environment Division and The Network for Business Sustainability, Academy of Management, 2017

Best Paper Award (“These unequal states: Corporate organization and income inequality within the United States” [5]), Organizational & Management Theory Division, Academy of Management Annual Meeting, 2014

Ralph Alexander Best Dissertation Award, Human Resources Division Academy of Management, 2013

Best Symposium Award, (“Shifting Power and the Changing U.S. Employment Relationship”), Organizational & Management Theory Division, Academy of Management Annual Meeting, 2011

Finalist, INFORMS/Organization Science Dissertation Proposal Competition, 2010

State Farm Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Award, 2010

## **SERVICE**

### **McCombs School of Business Committee Memberships**

Member, Public Policy Bridging Disciplines Program, 2019-present

### **Editorial Board Member**

*Administrative Science Quarterly*, 2019-present

*Academy of Management Journal*, 2017-present

*Organizational Science*, 2013-present

### **Other Service**

#### *Professional Committee Memberships*

Member, Best Paper Award Committee, Academy of Management, Organizational & Management Theory Division, 2020

Member, *Administrative Science Quarterly* Dissertation Award Committee, 2020

Chair, Ralph Alexander Best Dissertation Award Committee, Human Resources Division Academy of Management, 2019

#### *Ad hoc reviewer*

*Academy of Management Discoveries, Academy of Management Review, American Sociological Review, Business and Society, Human Relations, ILR Review, Industrial and Corporate Change, Journal of Management Studies, Management Science, Organizational Studies, Socio-Economic Review, The Sociological Quarterly, Strategic Management Journal, Academy of Management Annual Meetings, INFORMS Dissertation Award, Strategic Management Society*

#### *Wharton Committee Memberships*

Member, Dissertation Committee for Adam Castor (Sungkyunkwan University), 2016

Member, Management Seminar Series Committee, 2013-2014, 2016-2018

Member, Management Doctoral Committee, 2014-2016

Second-year Paper and Comprehensive Exam Committee Memberships: Shinjae Won (2012), Andrew Boysen (2015), Tracy Anderson (2016), Shoshanna Schwartz (2017)

#### *Ross Committee Memberships*

Doctoral Grants Committee, 2008-2011

Co-organizer Seminar Series, Management Department, 2009-2010

## **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

Academy of Management

American Sociological Association

Labor and Employment Relations Association