

Professor Benjamin Bradlow, Princeton University, presents:

**“Urban Power:
Democracy and Inequality in São Paulo and Johannesburg”**



Description: Why are some cities more effective than others in reducing inequality? Urban Power answers this question through a comparison of “mega-cities” in two of the largest young democracies in the world. Over three decades ago, São Paulo in Brazil and Johannesburg in South Africa each emerged from authoritarian rule as rationed cities. Small minorities could access the benefits of urban life, while vast populations lived in peripheral slums, without adequate housing, functioning toilets, or access to reliable collective transportation. But in the ensuing years, São Paulo has managed to deliver policies that enabled widespread access to improved housing, toilets, and an integrated, more extensive and cheaper system of public transportation. Though Johannesburg had similar policy priorities and was expected to be more successful than São Paulo, it has failed to deliver anything close to these successes. To explain this divergence, Urban Power uncovers the political and professional conflicts within and between movements, bureaucratic agencies, corporations, and political parties. In doing so, it proposes theoretical tools for a global urban sociology focused on variation in the coordination of local governing power.

Benjamin H. Bradlow is an Assistant Professor of Sociology and International Affairs at Princeton University, jointly appointed in the School of Public and International Affairs and Department of Sociology. He is the author of *Urban Power: Democracy and Inequality in São Paulo and Johannesburg* (Princeton University Press, 2024).

Thursday
April 25, 2024
12:30-2:00pm

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