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
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Excessive white male privilege biases the measurement of intersectional wage discrimination

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We study how overlapping identities shape wage gaps, focusing on gender and race in the United States. The extant theoretical and empirical literature typically interprets intersectionality as *intersectional discrimination*: multiply marginalised groups (e.g., Black women) suffer a distinct wage penalty over and above the additive combination of gender- and race-based wage gaps. We show that this standard empirical operationalisation is fragile because it implicitly embeds a rarely discussed reference-group convention: the cumulative gap is benchmarked against White men, while the “additive” components are often constructed without them, thereby omitting any wage premium uniquely accruing to White men. To address this, we propose a structural decomposition of group mean wages using simple tree diagrams that allocate observed gaps into gender, race, and an interaction component. Crucially, the interaction can be interpreted in two conceptually distinct ways: as an *intersectional penalty* (multiply marginalised disadvantage) or as *excessive privilege* (multiply advantaged surplus). We derive closed-form expressions showing that these two interaction terms are mechanically related and that commonly used estimators may therefore misattribute excessive White male privilege to intersectional discrimination. Applying the framework to U.S. wage data and to adjusted gaps from existing studies, we find persistent evidence of excessive White male privilege and little evidence of an additional intersectional penalty in wages. Beyond measurement, we translate the decomposition into political economy and policy design. Treating the estimated excess White male premium as a tax base, we show that redistribution can be structured so that all non-White male groups experience positive net gains, creating scope for broad coalitional support. We compare three stylised redistribution rules, (i) equal per-capita transfers that preserve additive gaps, (ii) proportional scaling that preserves relative gaps, and (iii) a Rawlsian leximin (poorest-first) strategy, highlighting how different normative objectives map into distinct post-redistribution wage structures while maintaining majority support.

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Introduction

Intersectional or multiple discrimination has become a central point of enquiry for understanding the structural disadvantages that individuals encounter owing to multiple dimensions of their identity. The term refers to a “theoretical framework rooted in the premise that human experience is jointly shaped by multiple social positions and cannot be adequately understood by considering these positions independently” (Bauer et al. 2021). For instance, a woman of colour might face discrimination that is different in nature from what a White woman or a man of colour might face due to the intersection of gender and race. Yet, intersectionality is of course not limited to the categories of gender and race, as e.g., studies of the discrimination against Black gay men show. Likewise, it is not limited to a single sphere such as education (Pedulla 2014), healthcare (Richman and Zucker 2019) or the housing market (Ghekierre et al. 2023) but may appear in all societal contexts, and these contexts might even overlap in complex shapes (McCall 2005). Against this backdrop of potentially not doing the holistic nature of the phenomenon justice, quantifying intersectionality might contribute to its understanding (Bowleg and Bauer 2016; Scott and Siltanen 2017; Richman and Zucker 2019; Zubizarreta and Beccia 2025).

One domain of intersectional discrimination that particularly lends itself to a quantitative assessment is the wage gap: One can quantify this as the amount that the actual cumulative wage gap that women of colour face compared to White men exceeds the additive one defined as the sum of the gender wage gap (comparing White women to White men) and the racial wage gap (comparing Black men to White men). The quantitative intersectionality literature is largely based on the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition method as pioneered by (Kim 2009) to adjust wage gaps for factors like years of schooling or age does indeed find evidence for intersectional discrimination for the US (Kim 2009; George et al. 2022; Paul et al. 2022), without sufficient data present for other countries).

While this standard method is carefully motivated econometrically, its results are somewhat dependent on the reference groups used (Browne and Misra 2003). In particular, it hinges on one crucial assumption that is seldom discussed or elaborated: By its definition, the cumulative wage gap includes the high wage premium that White men receive compared to any other studied group, as evident in Fig. 1. At the same time, the two components of the additive wage gap are calculated without any reference to White men, i.e., they are calculated based on the wage gap between Black men and women (for the gender gap) and between White and Black women (for the racial gap). Due to this, the

additive wage gap does not capture the wage premium exclusive to White men. Deviating from this unstated convention of reference groups and either calculating the gender gap between White men and women or calculating the racial gap between White and Black men for the additive gap would reverse the results in the US sample used here and prominently in the literature (Kim 2009; George et al. 2022; Paul et al. 2022). This indeterminacy was acknowledged in early works on the topic (Almquist 1975) and occasional works (King 1988; McGuire and Reskin 1993) point to the sensitivity of results towards reference groups, but they neither explore the effects of the calculation method conceptually nor present a structural approach that does not rely on ad-hoc assumptions about which reference groups to use.

This paper proposes such a structural approach to analysing intersectional effects on wages, decomposes the wage gaps, and defines which component applies to which group. It identifies components attributed to gender, race, and intersecting features. For these intersecting features, we contrast two perspectives that can be studied within an intersectionality framework: multiple discrimination and excess privilege. The former explores the wage penalty that multiply marginalised individuals experience; the latter examines the undue advantages that White men, as a multiply privileged group, accrue beyond what individual dimensions such as race or gender alone can explain.

Contrasting concepts of intersectionality and privilege

To comply with the existing literature and for reasons of data availability, regarding gender and race, we stick to the overly simplistic binary categorisation that is standard in the literature. While this does not do the complex reality of gender and racial identities justice, it is, in this case, unfortunately necessary to enable us to analytically derive the expressions for the intersectional penalty and privilege terms. However, it is likely that our results prevail when taking additional ethnicities and gender identities into account.

Intersectional discrimination attempts to formalise the intersectionality concept first theorised by Crenshaw and argues that (multiply) marginalised people suffer from an additional wage penalty compared to all other groups of people adding to the other wage gaps they suffer due to the individual aspects of their identity taken separately (1989). As shown in Fig. 2., all women suffer from the gender-based discrimination that can be quantified as g_g , the proportion women (regardless of race) who earn less than White men because of gender-based discrimination.

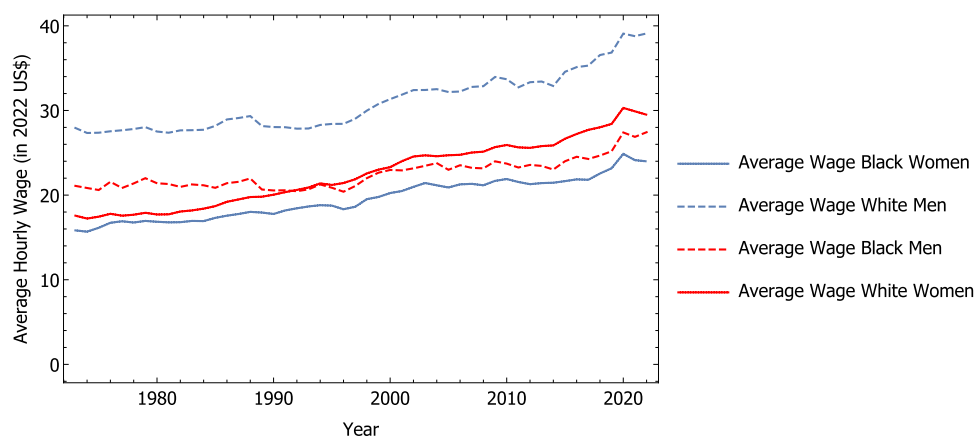


Fig. 1 Time-series of mean (unadjusted) hourly wages of full-time employees in the U.S. by gender/race groups. Data presented is the average wages in the US according from the Economic Policy Institute, State of Working America Data Library, “Median/average hourly wages,” 2022.

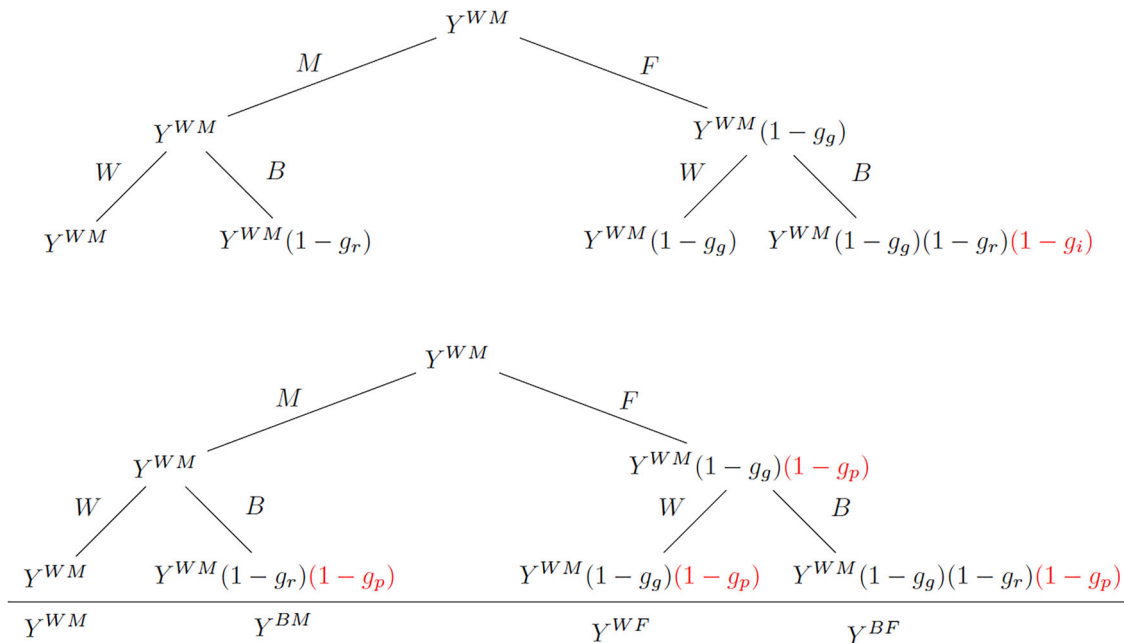


Fig. 2 Two tree diagrams formalizing the intersectionality (upper panel) and privilege (lower panel) views. The reference group is in both cases White males (WM).

Likewise, the racial wage gap g_r denotes the proportion that Black men and women earn less than White men because of racial discrimination. In the same manner we quantify intersectional discrimination by g_i , the proportion that Black women earn less than anyone else because of being intersectionally discriminated against.

The excess privilege concept put forward here also argues that the interplay of various dimensions of discrimination causes effects that are not reducible to the constituent dimensions of people’s identity; but it focuses on the (multiply) privileged. Excessive privilege would imply that the multiply privileged group, white men in our application, are advantaged compared to all other groups beyond what by the gender and racial wage gaps imply. We call this wage privilege term g_p , and in Fig. 2, it uniquely privileges White men to everybody else. Only the first concept is true to the verbal definition by Crenshaw (1989, 315), though, and looks at the specific disadvantages multiply marginalised people face or “the particular manner in which Black women are *subordinated*” (emphasis by the authors).

Even though both terms are conceptually similar and are indeed arguably often conflated in the literature, it turns out that they imply radically different conclusions about the existence of intersectionality (see the Results section).

The upper two leaves of the two trees in Fig. 2 refer to the gender dimension. For the male group, there is no penalty and the income stays as it is ($\cdot 1$), while for the female group, the gender wage gap kicks in ($\cdot(1-g_g)$). The second dimension is race. Again, for the White group, the conditional income stays the same ($\cdot 1$), while the Black group is affected by the racial wage gap ($\cdot(1-g_r)$).¹ So far, we described a situation for which there is no interaction between gender and race. However, of course, both the theoretical and empirical literature give us reason to believe that this is not the case. Thus, we need to specify the specific type of interaction. On the upper tree of Fig. 2, we formalise the intersectionality view: Black women face an additional wage penalty vis-à-vis all other groups which implies that only they are affected by the term $\cdot(1-g_i)$. The lower tree formalises the privilege view. In this case, White men are uniquely privileged

compared to all other groups. Since they are the reference group in Fig. 2, this implies that all other groups face an additional wage penalty factor of $(1-g_p)$.

As shown in Fig. 3, the same logic can be applied by starting from Black women as a reference group, with the only difference being that wage gaps are now added rather than subtracted here. Since percentage differences are not symmetric, this change of reference groups also implies slightly different analytical expressions for g_i and g_p .

The tree diagrams now allow us to express the average income of all groups other than White men (Fig. 2) or Black women (Fig. 3) as functions of the wage gaps and the average income of White men (Y^{WM}) or Black women (Y^{BF}). For this, one needs to trace the path of all groups from the reference group down the tree to the specific subgroup. For example, for Black males, one would choose the “male” branch at the gender dimension and the “Black” branch at the race dimension. This gives rise to a system of equations; see the example of the intersectionality view with a White male reference view below and the other systems in Supplementary Methods:

$$\begin{aligned}
 Y^{WM} &= 1 \cdot 1 \cdot Y^{WM} \\
 Y^{BM} &= 1 \cdot (1 - g_r) \cdot Y^{WM} \\
 Y^{WF} &= (1 - g_g) \cdot 1 \cdot Y^{WM} \\
 Y^{BF} &= (1 - g_g) \cdot (1 - g_r) \cdot (1 - g_i^{WM}) \cdot Y^{WM}
 \end{aligned}$$

Each system of equations has three equations and three unknowns (apart from the trivial case of the reference group income equalling itself), enabling us to straightforwardly solve for the implied g_i and g_p purely as a function of the average incomes for all groups. The results for these derivations are visible below. The superscript denotes the reference group, while the subscript denotes the specific view:

$$g_i^{WM} = \frac{Y^{BM} \cdot Y^{WF} - Y^{BF} \cdot Y^{WM}}{Y^{BM} \cdot Y^{WF}}$$

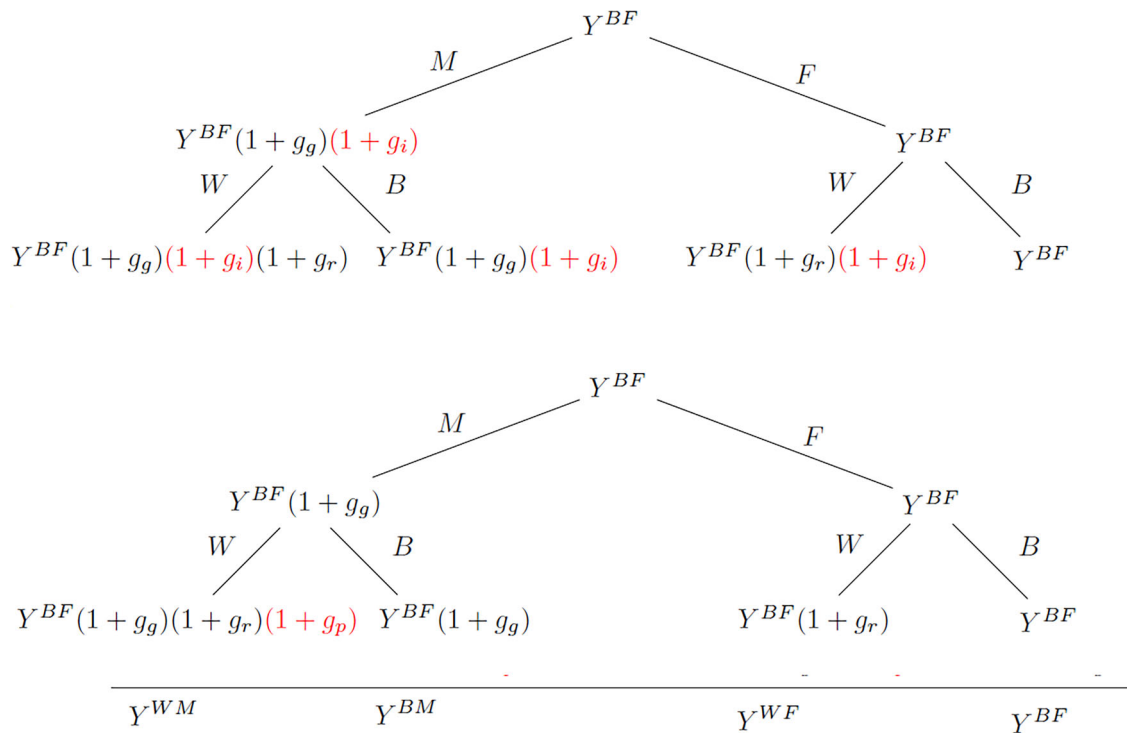


Fig. 3 Two tree diagrams formalizing the intersectionality (upper panel) and privilege (lower panel) views. The reference group is in both cases Black females (BF).

$$g_p^{WM} = \frac{Y^{BF} \cdot Y^{WM} - Y^{BM} \cdot Y^{WF}}{Y^{BF} \cdot Y^{WM}}$$

$$g_i^{BF} = \frac{Y^{BM} \cdot Y^{WF} - Y^{BF} \cdot Y^{WM}}{Y^{BF} \cdot Y^{WM}}$$

$$g_p^{BF} = \frac{Y^{BF} \cdot Y^{WM} - Y^{BM} \cdot Y^{WF}}{Y^{BM} \cdot Y^{WF}}$$

Two findings stand out from this purely analytical derivation: First, expectedly, the reference group matters for the estimation. However, since (average) incomes are empirically always positive, the reference group matters only for the size, not the sign of the estimate, since the numerator is equivalent across reference groups (within a view), while the denominator varies. Put differently, the choice of the reference group is inconsequential for determining if intersectional discrimination or excessive privilege exists but might be relevant to quantify its extent. Second, crosswise (switching both the view and the reference group), the two estimates for the two views are additive inverses of each other and will thus always exhibit inverse sign (except for the special case with no interaction and $g_i = g_p = 0$). Thus, the more consequential choice is certainly the choice for a view rather than the one of a reference group.

Beyond the immediate scientific interest, we will also demonstrate in the results section that disentangling the different wage gap components can be used to redistribute income with strong broad coalitional support. Namely, redistributing the excessive White male wage premium will ceteris paribus not come with net-loss for anyone but White men. There might of course be disagreement about how the excess premium would be distributed among the other groups: One might consider counteracting intersectional discrimination by over-proportionally benefitting women of colour, retain the wage ratios between

other groups or redistribute evenly across everyone. Furthermore, redistribution could be direct (as fiscal transfers) or indirect, e.g., via an investment in infrastructure such as schools or public transport that would specifically benefit under-privileged groups. Yet, as long as everybody (except for White men) get some positive net-benefit, it would be in their interest to support the redistribution. Hence, public discourse and positions of political actors are likely to shift in favour of such redistribution.²

Explicating the possible empirical coalitions to counter this privilege is thus also consequential for diversity policies. To illustrate this, we will look at three stylised redistribution policies. We assume that we tax the whole excess White male privilege income away, i.e., $\Delta^{WM} = s_p^{WM} \cdot Y^{WM}$, with s as the population share. This measure might appear strong but, in the absence of taxation or redistribution inefficiency, if any redistribution of any amount of the White male privilege would win majority support, so would redistribution of every amount, including the full one. Likewise, assuming any lower amount would not change the below considerations qualitatively or quantitatively. In principle, there will be infinitely many ways to redistribute the collected excess White male privilege tax with a majority, since each distribution of transfers will (weakly) increase the absolute income of all non-White male groups that empirically constitute a majority. One way to discipline this problem is to assume that voters also care about their relative standing compared to the other groups. Two strategies could thus be to either keep the absolute or the relative distance to all other groups constant (or decrease/reverse the gap to White males). This leads us to our first two strategies:

1. Preserve additive gaps by Redistributing constant T to each non-WM:

$$T = (\Delta^{WM} \cdot s^{WM}) / (1 - s^{WM})$$

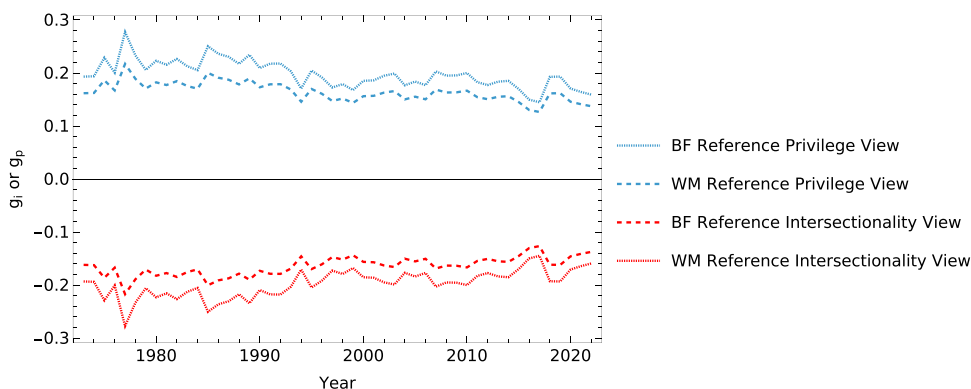


Fig. 4 Results for the privilege and intersectional penalty term for both reference groups. Data uses the average wages in the US according from the Economic Policy Institute, State of Working America Data Library, “Median/average hourly wages,” 2022.

2. Preserving relative gaps by increasing all non-WM incomes by the common factor a defined by

$$a = 1 + \left[s^{WM} \cdot \Delta WM / \sum_{g \neq WM} s^g \times Y^g \right].$$

In practice, both of these strategies will yield almost identical results, since g_p is relatively small. To see this, consider the first-order Taylor expansion of some multiplicative increase ϵ of the income Y by $(1 + \epsilon)y \approx y + \epsilon y$, so additive and relative strategies will be almost identical.

3. Rawlsian Leximin strategy (poorest-first equalisation)
As a third strategy, we look at another potential, particularly salient focal point in the set of potential redistribution strategies, namely supporting only the least-well off, which is, empirically, the group of Black women. Use the revenue by taking from White men and transfer to Black women (BF) until they reach White women (WF) as in (others receive zero at this step). Second, with the remaining funds, give equal per-capita transfers to BF and WF so they jointly reach Black men (BM). Third, if funds remain, compute the residual and distribute it equally per capita among BF, WF, and BM. White men (WM) do not receive transfers. This procedure raises the minimum as much as possible at each stage. This aligns with normative ideals, such as in Rawls’ (2003, 266) difference principle of justice, but accounts for the fact that at some point the initially worst-off can catch-up to the second-worst-off and that the spirit of the idea should then treat both these groups equally (Tännsjö 2019).

Results

For the sake of clarity in exposition, we first apply our methodology to the raw unadjusted data summarised in Fig. 1 as a common benchmark that does not suffer from the ultimately arbitrary choice of appropriate controls.³ Yet, our results are robust to considering only the adjusted wage gaps as well, as we show for the example of Paul et al. (2022) in the last subsection. Applying all four measures to (raw) data from the US Current Population Survey prepared by the Economic Policy Institute, we get the results depicted Fig. 4 (Economic Policy Institute 2025a). In contrast to much of the empirical literature, we find negative intersectional wage penalties (for both White men and Black women as reference groups) and thus no evidence for intersectional wage discrimination. Yet, this does not necessarily imply that intersectionality does not exist. It might simply just not be visible, as it is superseded by excessive White male privilege.

Indeed, we find such excessive White male privilege for the whole observation period. This excessive privilege might explain why so many empirical studies report evidence for

intersectionality, as they pick up this privilege in their estimates rather than the original intersectionality concept based on cumulative disadvantage.⁴ At the same time, the superseding effect of White male privilege might explain why other works, like McLaughlin and Neumark 2025 who work with similar data as this paper, claim to find no immediate evidence for intersectionality. While the quality of our estimates is naturally a function of the quality of data we use, the fact that our results are qualitatively so consistent over time and based on official statistics makes it seem quite implausible that our estimates just pick up noise caused by faulty data processing or collection. Furthermore, several prior studies indirectly support the existence an excessive White male wage privilege though they do not pay explicit attention to it: For example, Mandel and Semyonov (2016) and Ferraro et al. (2025) find that, in the US, the gender gap is larger between White women and men than between Black or Hispanic women and men, which can be explained by the excessive privilege. As is visible in Fig. 4 and more clearly in Fig. 5, there also exists a slight downward trend in White male privilege. Yet, naively extrapolating the linear trend shows that this phenomenon is unlikely to be sufficiently fast for policy: It will take until 2154 (for Black women as the reference group) or even until 2185 (for White men as the reference group) for White male privilege to “naturally” vanish completely.

One objection to our analysis so far could be that we use raw data and our postulated measures could then pick up factors like sorting in occupations or educational differences rather than true privilege or discrimination. To examine this, we build on Table 5 of Paul et al. 2022 to recover the implied (relative) average wages for the four groups, adjusted for various controls such as age, education and occupation. Paul et al. (2022) report log-point differences for the average adjusted wages of one group compared to White males. For Black men, the log-point difference is 0.132, for White women, it is 0.176 and for Black women it is 0.224. Denote this log-point difference by d and consider an arbitrary average income Y . Consider the expression for this log-point difference:

$$\log(Y^{WM}) - \log(Y) = d.$$

Assume without loss of generality that $Y^{WM} = 1$ which implies that

$$-\log(Y) = d$$

and thus that

$$\exp(-d) = Y.$$

With this, we can straightforwardly recover the implied average incomes (relative to the White men average income) from the

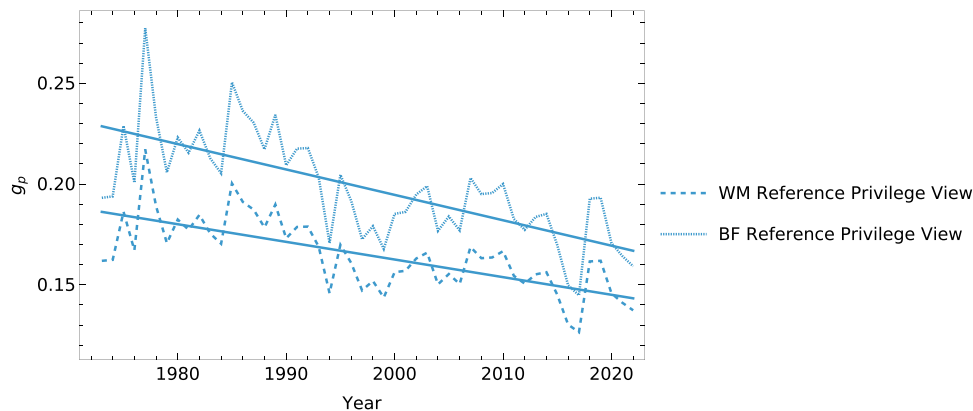


Fig. 5 White Male Privilege over time. Calculated privilege benefits and superimposed best OLS fit for the whole sample.

Table 1 Effect of redistribution strategies on group incomes, based on the corrected wage gap data in Paul (2022).

Group	Initial Wage	Additive	Proportional	Leximin
White men	1.0000	0.9194	0.9194	0.9194
White women	0.8386	0.8932	0.8934	0.8923
Black men	0.8763	0.9310	0.9336	0.8923
Black women	0.7993	0.8539	0.8515	0.8923

log-point differences. These are $Y^{BM} = 0.876$, $Y^{WF} = 0.839$ and $Y^{WM} = 0.799$, rounded to three decimal digits. Plugging those into our expressions for the intersectionality penalty and privilege term, we get $g_i^{WM} = -0.088$, $g_p^{WM} = 0.081$, $g_i^{BF} = -0.081$ and $g_p^{BF} = 0.088$. Hence, we get the same qualitative result that there exists excessive White male privilege but do not find evidence for intersectional discrimination. The privilege is expectedly quantitatively much more modest: Current adjustment procedures that focus on single-dimension discrimination still partially capture White male privilege.

What do these estimates imply for redistributive coalitions? We apply the three discussed redistribution strategies to the estimate of $g_p^{WM} = 0.081$. We use population figures for the working age population (Economic Policy Institute 2025b) in 2020 which yield $s^{WM} = 0.404$, $s^{WF} = 0.409$, $s^{BM} = 0.087$ and $s^{BF} = 0.099$.⁵

The resulting effects on wage levels are summarised in Table 1.

For the additive and proportional redistribution, all non-White male groups are strictly better off in absolute and in relative terms, as they gained in absolute terms and their relative position towards all other non-White male groups is unchanged, while they are at the same time strictly better positioned towards White men. This implies that such a policy should guarantee a broad coalition and illustrates the impact on reducing wage inequality - for both scenarios, overall wage inequality has shrunk substantially. Politically, these policies appear to be very promising to tackle overall wage inequality as well. The Leximin policy inspired by Rawls will likely also mobilise a broad coalition, as there is sufficient volume to equalise the wages of Black women, Black men and White women, and increase everyone’s absolute wages (except for White men). This is since the White male privilege is so large and the number of White men in the workforce is relatively high. This illustrates the potential such a policy could have, even beyond concerns about the necessary political coalitions. Note also that this redistribution negates any gender and racial gaps between all groups except White male, meaning that also the wage effects of intersectional discrimination against Black women are compensated.

Discussion

Our findings indicate that the excess privilege accruing to White men overshadows any intersectional wage discrimination within the US labour force. Hence, much of the empirical literature purporting to demonstrate such discrimination might actually be capturing this excess privilege. Consequently, explaining components of the wage gap requires a more general understanding of intersectionality. Econometrically, however, the situation is tricky: Since wage gaps are obviously inherently relational, it is hard to control for excessive privilege without losing the contribution of White males to the intersectional penalty completely, which is what motivated this study in the first place. To deal with that issue, both theoretical and empirical studies should carefully elaborate the underlying mechanisms generating interaction effects and, in particular, distinguish between the privilege and discrimination view.

It is important to note that i) our findings do not imply the absence of intersectional wage discrimination altogether. Instead, they merely prompt to a need for more refined metrics that capture them, specifically controlling for the excessive white male privilege that we find: It is plausible that the privilege accorded to white men is so dominant that it obscures the disadvantages that other groups experience. While our analysis focuses on wage gaps, we acknowledge that these disadvantages also manifests through non-wage channels such as access to benefits, job security, or working conditions (Acker 2006; Castilla 2008). Some of these factors are observable and could, in principle, be incorporated into an extended model. However, many remain unobservable which makes causal identification a big challenge. As our framework is applied to uncorrected gaps, it implicitly captures some, though not all, of these effects. Furthermore, ii) we only work with two forms of privilege/discrimination, and the picture may change if including, for example, able-bodiedness (Cech 2022), historical class (Alonso-Villar and del Rio 2022), education (Morar and Awawda 2024), or age (Han et al. 2024; Teixeira Da Silva et al. 2024). Pedulla (2014) finds that gay Black men receive higher salary recommendations than straight Black men, while it is the other way round for White men. This showcases that excessive wage privilege (in this case excessive White straight male privilege) can exist even in the demonstrated absence of intersectional wage discrimination (in this case against gay Black men). Another dimension worth noting is sectoral variation. While our current scope does not disaggregate by sector, doing so would introduce additional complexity because sectoral sorting itself can be endogenous to privilege and discrimination processes (e.g. individuals being excluded from certain sectors) (Acker 2006; Kerrissey and Meyers 2022). In that sense, the raw, aggregated approach adopted here can be considered more

“honest” in reflecting the total observed gaps without conditioning on potentially privilege-influenced variables.

Moreover, iii) even the absence of evidence for intersectional discrimination in wage gaps does not question the existence of intersectionality in other realms of life. For example, pay disparities can be shaped by group-specific returns to the same credential: Budig et al. (2021) show that educational attainment explains some racial pay gaps but not gender pay gaps, and that Black women face lower returns to education relative to other race-gender groups. Similarly, correspondence-audit evidence shows that intersectional hiring discrimination can be highly context dependent: Chavez et al. (2022) document that callback patterns shifted during the early COVID-19 pandemic (improving for White women and changing for Black women, while discrimination against Black men persisted). Related field experiments also show that race-gender combinations can be advantaged or penalised depending on job gender-typing, underscoring that intersectional “fit” is mechanism- and context-specific (Di Stasio and Larsen, 2020). Moreover, our findings only apply to women in the workforce and do not necessarily preclude that intersectional discrimination exists in the realm of unpaid care work (Koziara et al. 1987, chap. 10). Finally, iv) the time trend analysis reveals that the level of excess privilege is gradually declining, albeit at a pace too slow to be considered sufficient from a policy standpoint. Thus, whilst the study points to the complex interaction between intersectionality and White male privilege in wages, it also raises pressing questions about the persistence of systemic inequality. In the context of labour market interventions, our findings imply that policies should address not only measured wage discrimination but also the broader structure of uncorrected wage gaps, including disparities in educational opportunities, occupational sorting, and other forms of discrimination documented in the literature (Tomaskovic-Devey 1993; Acker 2006). Building on our proposed g_p measure, one approach would be to require each firm to publish its level of White male privilege (the g_p value) annually and impose a tax precisely equal to this excess privilege amount, similar to proposals for redistributive levels on inequitable wage structures (Cullen 2024). This revenue could fund targeted redistribution as discussed above. Discussing concrete policy implications is beyond the scope of the paper. Yet, recent work on gender inequality at the workplace has highlighted the role of policies that reduce temporal inflexibility (Goldin 2014) which might have also contributed to the excessive White male privilege in earnings our study finds. The novel analytical category of White male privilege we introduce can be of academic and political value: Academically, it offers a new tool for intersectionality theory that can complement existing analyses. Politically, excessive privilege might be of interest for social movements mobilising for gender and racial equality: While it is notoriously hard to mobilise across diverse interests in an intersectional context (Fisher et al. 2017), reducing White male privilege provides a common, unified interest for these diverse marginalised groups. The analysis in this paper shows that various regimes for redistribution of the White male wage premium would be capable of winning a majority. One of these redistribution policies would simultaneously compensate for intersectional distribution, which highlights the importance of the excessive White male privilege for politically framing and combating intersectionality.

Data availability

The datasets and the complete replication code required to reproduce all figures and analyses reported in the main text and in the supplementary materials are publicly available on GitHub at

<https://github.com/mayerhoffer/excessive-white-male-privilege-in-data>.

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Notes

- 1 Note that due to the multiplicative nature of the calculation, switching the upper and lower leaves (considering racial penalties first and gender ones thereafter) does not impact the results.
- 2 There might be practical obstacles such as White men working fewer hours if some of their wage is taken away or members of households with White men as main breadwinners objecting a redistribution which would benefit them personally. On the other hand, as a complementary effect, labour force participation by other groups would increase, which might yield to a net economic growth that would benefit everyone. Making more detailed macroeconomic predictions in that regard and estimating their effects on individual life courses will take considerable additional effort, but the necessary precondition of such considerations is met in the finding that there is an excessive White male wage privilege.
- 3 All our results refer to the average wage but are robust also for using the median wages instead. Results available upon request.
- 4 However, we also find excessive privilege in the case of East Germany vs. West Germany (Bundesagentur für Arbeit 2022) where there is no intersectionality (cf. Supplementary Note). This case also supports the robustness of our findings.
- 5 One obvious limitation of those population shares is that they might not reflect the labour force participation and potential income within households. We opted for only the working age population shares to mediate between these two concerns of using only raw population shares versus only labour force participation rates but this might induce some bias in the calculation. Note that since the labor force participation of men is generally larger than that of women, the effects from transferring away from (White) men would likely be even larger when considering only working White men.

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