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# Pedigree: How Elite Students Get Elite Jobs

By Lauren A. Rivera



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## Pedigree: How Elite Students Get Elite Jobs By Lauren A. Rivera

Americans are taught to believe that upward mobility is possible for anyone who is willing to work hard, regardless of their social status, yet it is often those from affluent backgrounds who land the best jobs. *Pedigree* takes readers behind the closed doors of top-tier investment banks, consulting firms, and law firms to reveal the truth about who really gets hired for the nation's highest-paying entry-level jobs, who doesn't, and why.

Drawing on scores of in-depth interviews as well as firsthand observation of hiring practices at some of America's most prestigious firms, Lauren Rivera shows how, at every step of the hiring process, the ways that employers define and evaluate merit are strongly skewed to favor job applicants from economically privileged backgrounds. She reveals how decision makers draw from ideas about talent--what it is, what best signals it, and who does (and does not) have it--that are deeply rooted in social class. Displaying the "right stuff" that elite employers are looking for entails considerable amounts of economic, social, and cultural resources on the part of the applicants and their parents.

Challenging our most cherished beliefs about college as a great equalizer and the job market as a level playing field, *Pedigree* exposes the class biases built into American notions about the best and the brightest, and shows how social status plays a significant role in determining who reaches the top of the economic ladder.



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## **Pedigree: How Elite Students Get Elite Jobs** By Lauren A. Rivera Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #579727 in Books
- Published on: 2015-05-04
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.50" h x 1.10" w x 6.40" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 392 pages

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## Editorial Review

Review

**Winner of the 2016 Max Weber Book Award, Organizations, Occupations, and Work Section of the American Sociological Association**

**Winner of the 2016 Mary Douglas Prize for Best Book, Sociology of Culture Section of the American Sociological Association**

**Co-Winner of the 2016 Distinguished Book Award, Sociology of Law Section of the American Sociological Association**

**Co-Winner of the 2016 Silver Medal in Career (Job Search, Career Advancement), Axiom Business Book Awards**

**One of *Choice's* Outstanding Academic Titles for 2015**

"*Pedigree: How Elite Students Get Elite Jobs* is an academic book with the requisite references to gender theory and Marxist concepts of inequality. But read it carefully and it becomes something far more useful--a guide on how to join the global elite."--***Economist***

"[Rivera's] richly described account is mesmerising--and horrifying."--**Gillian Tett, *Financial Times***

"[*Pedigree*] provides an insider look at how top-notch places hire, and explores how their processes serve those with the most privileged and affluent backgrounds."--**Bouree Lam, *The Atlantic***

"Sociologist Rivera has written an exceptionally useful study of how hiring for elite starting jobs is actually done in the US. This insider study shows how the top investment banks, law firms, and consulting companies hire only from a double handful of leading universities, law schools, and business schools. . . . This significant sociological study will also likely be read as a how-to manual."--***Choice***

From the Back Cover

"In this riveting account of how the nation's top investment banks, consultancies, and law firms choose employees, Lauren Rivera goes inside the recruitment process, interviewing the interviewers and sitting in on their decision meetings. This eye-opening book exposes how the American elite keep the best jobs for themselves."--**Frank Dobbin, author of *Inventing Equal Opportunity***

"*Pedigree* provides a rare behind-the-scenes look at the hiring processes for elite jobs. Rivera's thoughtful ethnographic observations illuminate exactly how social class matters, and how the display of cultural skills can be crucial for job seekers to gain access to elite positions. It is an eye-opening book."--**Annette Lareau, University of Pennsylvania**

"Rivera identifies the myriad ways that class influences every stage of the hiring process at top-tier firms, showing how it is that individuals from affluent backgrounds have come to dominate the most elite segments of the American labor market. She pulls back the curtain time and time again, revealing how processes that are apparently class, race, and gender neutral are anything but."--**Elizabeth A. Armstrong, coauthor of *Paying for the Party: How College Maintains Inequality***

"*Pedigree* sets a new standard of rigor for qualitative social-science research. Rivera shows how educational stratification in the United States is particularly pronounced and caste-like at the gateway to elite professions,

and how the boundary between elite colleges and the elite firms that recruit from them is so fuzzy as to be only ceremonial."--**Mitchell L. Stevens, author of *Creating a Class: College Admissions and the Education of Elites***

About the Author

**Lauren A. Rivera** is associate professor of management and organizations at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management.

## **Users Review**

**From reader reviews:**

**Harriet Blum:**

Do you one among people who can't read enjoyable if the sentence chained inside the straightway, hold on guys this particular aren't like that. This Pedigree: How Elite Students Get Elite Jobs book is readable by simply you who hate the straight word style. You will find the information here are arrange for enjoyable studying experience without leaving even decrease the knowledge that want to give to you. The writer associated with Pedigree: How Elite Students Get Elite Jobs content conveys the idea easily to understand by lots of people. The printed and e-book are not different in the information but it just different by means of it. So , do you even now thinking Pedigree: How Elite Students Get Elite Jobs is not loveable to be your top listing reading book?

**Richard Graham:**

Reading a guide tends to be new life style in this particular era globalization. With reading through you can get a lot of information that may give you benefit in your life. Along with book everyone in this world can easily share their idea. Books can also inspire a lot of people. A lot of author can inspire their particular reader with their story or even their experience. Not only situation that share in the guides. But also they write about the data about something that you need example. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your children, there are many kinds of book that exist now. The authors these days always try to improve their skill in writing, they also doing some investigation before they write to their book. One of them is this Pedigree: How Elite Students Get Elite Jobs.

**Linda Cooper:**

Spent a free time for you to be fun activity to complete! A lot of people spent their down time with their family, or their very own friends. Usually they doing activity like watching television, about to beach, or picnic within the park. They actually doing same task every week. Do you feel it? Would you like to something different to fill your own free time/ holiday? Could possibly be reading a book is usually option to fill your cost-free time/ holiday. The first thing that you will ask may be what kinds of book that you should read. If you want to attempt look for book, may be the reserve untitled Pedigree: How Elite Students Get Elite Jobs can be excellent book to read. May be it might be best activity to you.

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