



Front of the House, Back of the House: Race and Inequality in the Lives of Restaurant Workers

Eli R. Wilson, Department of Sociology, University of New Mexico

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12 • 2:00 PM • Register to attend at: <https://bit.ly/3bLdjKD>

Two unequal worlds of work exist within the upscale restaurant scene of Los Angeles. White, college-educated servers operate in the front of the house—also known as the public areas of the restaurant—while Latino immigrants toil in the back of the house and out of customer view. In *Front of the House, Back of the House*, Eli Revelle Yano Wilson shows us what keeps these workers apart, exploring race, class, and gender inequalities in the food service industry. Drawing on research at three different high-end restaurants in Los Angeles, Wilson highlights why these inequalities persist in the twenty-first century, pointing to discriminatory hiring and supervisory practices that ultimately grant educated whites access to the most desirable positions. Additionally, he shows us how workers navigate these inequalities under the same roof, making sense of their jobs, their identities, and each other in a world that reinforces their separateness.

*Eli R. Wilson is an assistant professor of sociology at the University of New Mexico. His research broadly examines how social inequality is both reproduced and contested in urban labor markets. His first book, *Front of the House, Back of the House: Race and Inequality in the Lives of Restaurant Workers*, was released through NYU Press in December of 2020. Dr. Wilson's current project explores labor dynamics and cultural narratives about work in the U.S. craft beer industry.*



This lecture is free and open to the public. Individuals of all abilities are encouraged to attend LAI-sponsored events. If you are a person with a disability who requires a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in one of our events, please visit laii.unm.edu/events/accessibility.html. You can find more information on available accommodations on the UNM Accessibility Resource Center website. For more information, visit laii.unm.edu or contact laiioutreach@unm.edu.