SOCIOLOGY OF THE *Good*

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings to all members of the Altruism, Morality, and Social Solidarity section!

I hope this finds you all well. I wanted to briefly recap what has happened in the section over the past academic year and highlight new developments and program events coming up in Philadelphia at the annual meeting.

First, we have concluded a very successful section election. Our proposal to change the name of our Publications Committee to the Communications Committee passed, and so did the proposal to increase the dues of regular section members (NOT student members) by $2 – from $10 to $12. The money raised by this dues increase will go directly toward providing financial support for the winner(s) of the Outstanding Graduate Student Paper Award to help defray the costs of travel to the annual meeting in August. Thank you to everyone who voted to support these changes, especially the vote to increase dues to support travel for our student members.

We have also elected a slate of new officers who will take on their new responsibilities in August. Our incoming Chair-Elect is Dana Moss, our new council members are Jeff Guhin, Candice Robinson, and Shi Yongren; and our new student council representative is Emily Maloney. Congratulations to all of our new section leaders! And my sincere thanks to everyone who agreed to stand for election.

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR CONTINUED: PENNY EDGELL

This newsletter also has an announcement about the winners of our section awards, along with a list of everyone who served on an award committee or the nominating committee this year. Congratulations to all our award winners, and my sincere thanks to all those who served on our section committees this year! The section could not thrive without your hard work and dedication.

You will all have a chance to greet our new section leaders, congratulate our award winners, and thank those who served the section this year at our annual business meeting, to be held on Saturday, Aug. 19th, at 9 am in room 105B of the Philadelphia Convention Center. Immediately before the business meeting, in the same room, and starting at 8 am, is our special Incoming Chair's panel, organized by Bin Xu, on the theme of "Morality and Global Civil Society." And don't miss our open-submission section session, starting at 10 am in the same room, on "Interrogating Solidarity, Justice, and Inequality," organized by Corey Abramson. I'm so excited about our sessions this year and hope to see a good turnout for both of them, and for the business meeting as well, where our award winners will be announced and celebrated.

Looking ahead, it is important that our section continues to involve new people in both section leadership and section service. Early in the fall, after our meeting in Philadelphia, it will be time to recruit new people to run for open council positions and section officer positions, and we will need volunteers, as well, to organize our open paper section and to serve on our award and nominating committees. If you're interested in being more involved in the section, please email me at edgell@umn.edu or, fill out this form with your name and email address and any notes on what you might be interested in doing. I'd love to hear from you!

One thing I've always enjoyed about working in academia is the annual rhythm of each school year – fall semester, break, spring semester, summer. I enjoy the regular transitions and the little rituals associated with them. This morning, the first morning of "summer" for me because I was in an administrative position this year, I celebrated a bit by sitting on my patio with coffee, starting the day slowly and listening to the birds. Whatever your summer plans are, my wish is that you have a real break from the school-year routine and some time for relaxation and renewal.

See you in Philadelphia!

Penny

THE MORAL IMAGINARY IN AMERICAN PUBLIC LIFE – INCOMING CHAIR'S INVITED PANEL, ASA 2022

The Moral Imaginary in American Public Life – Incoming Chair's Invited Panel, ASA 2022

Penny Edgell, University of Minnesota

In 2022, as part of my duties as the incoming chairperson for the section, I had the opportunity to plan and host an invited panel session at the ASA annual meeting in Los Angeles. I decided to organize the panel around a theme that has been important for my own research – "The Moral Imaginary in American Public Life." Who do I imagine is "like me," who do I believe to be different, and how do those understandings shape the moral obligations I embrace or reject? These questions have motivated my research for many years, from analyzing conflicts in local congregations to examining who is included – and excluded – by local churches' family-oriented ministries,[1] and, in later work, working to understand the nature and causes of negative sentiment toward religious and racialized outgroups.[2]

So I decided to use the opportunity to organize the incoming chair's panel to engage other scholars working on similar questions in a discussion that I hoped would be of broad interest to our section members. The scholars who agreed to serve as panelists – Ruth Braunstein, Paul Lichterman, and Francesca Polletta – along with our discussant and interlocutor, Omar McRoberts, drew in thoughtful ways on their extensive research on public discourse, social movement rhetoric, and interaction in small groups to grapple with what the term "moral imaginary" means and to consider how it might be useful for understanding American public life and culture. It was a smart, evocative conversation, and I am delighted that the panel members have agreed to write up their thoughts more formally for our newsletter.

I was intentional in choosing a very broad theme for the panel discussion, and in not giving the panelists much in the way of instructions for what to talk about. (They did not all necessarily like that.) The idea was to use the concept of "moral imaginary" as a kind of focal point for reflecting on their own research. I wanted them to share what they had learned about how ordinary Americans think about, talk about, and enact both solidarity (a sense of shared identity and fate) and moral commitments. And I wanted to hear their thoughts on why moral imaginaries *matter* – why a shared imagining of "who we are," and what we owe to one another -- affects our politics, public culture, and the way our institutions work. I offered several focus questions: What kinds of moral obligations do Americans imagine that we have to one another? What moral identities and commitments do Americans cherish, and how do we express them in community life, in social movements, and in our political behavior? How do we imagine what we have in common and what divides us? And what moral relationships do we envision both with those we imagine to be similar and those we imagine to be different?

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[1] See Penny Edgell Becker, *Congregations in Conflict: Cultural Models of Local Religious Life,* 1999 (New York: Cambridge University Press), and Penny Edgell, *Religion and Family in a Changing Society: Understanding the Transformation of Linked Institutions*, 2005 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press Series in Cultural Sociology).

[2] This work was conducted with colleagues and graduate students working on the American Mosaic Project at the University of Minnesota. See Penny Edgell, Evan Stewart, Sarah Catherine Billups, Ryan Larson, 2019, "The Stakes of Symbolic Boundaries," *The Sociological Quarterly* 61(2):309-33; Penny Edgell, Douglas Hartmann, Evan Stewart, and Joseph Gerteis, 2016, "Atheists and Other Cultural Outsiders: Moral Boundaries and the Non-Religious in the United States," *Social Forces* 95(2):607-638; Penny Edgell and Eric Tranby, 2010, "Shared Visions? Diversity and Cultural Membership in American Life, "*Social Problems*, 57(2):175-204; Joseph Gerteis, Douglas Hartmann, Penny Edgell, 2020, "Racial, Religious, and Civic Dimensions of Anti-Muslim Sentiment in America," *Social Problems* 67(4):719-740.

The panel discussion was thoughtful and engaging. Panelists emphasized the plural – the need to theorize and examine diverse, and often contested or conflicting, moral *imaginaries,* and emphasized that moral boundaries exclude some people as they include others. They focused on how moral imaginaries establish and defend hierarchies of worth and how they reproduce privilege – and inequality – along lines of race and social class. That is, they treated moral imaginaries as having real-world implications for who has access to power and resources. There was a critique of the penchant, in American society, to place so much importance on shared, morally salient identities as necessary for good citizenship and to think of citizenship as a moral category. The discussion raised interesting questions about whether our moral imaginaries "get in the way" of us working together to solve common problems or pursue shared interests (think, for example, about addressing climate change, or strengthening our democratic institutions, eliminating anti-Black bias in policing, or increasing affordable housing). And it was noted that interest-based organizing, itself, rests on shared moral assumptions. There were tough questions about *whose* moral imaginaries become more broadly shared, and whose do not.

From my perspective, the panel discussion illustrated that the concept of "moral imaginary," is general enough – and, perhaps, ambiguous enough – to spark a useful discussion. The panel remarks, and McRoberts' response to them, are a useful jumping-off point for what I hope is a sustained conversation about the shared and divergent expectations that we have of one another as citizens, for considering the nature of the solidarities we embrace and the conflicts that divide us. I hope you enjoy reading them as much as I enjoyed attending the panel.

Moral Imaginaries and the Battle between Competing Sacreds

Ruth Braunstein, University of Connecticut

Before "In God We Trust" was declared the official motto of the United States in 1956, the country's unofficial motto was *E pluribus unum*, Latin for "out of many, one." The idea behind this original motto seems to have been that the diverse population and distinct state governments that comprised the new country would, through some mysterious political alchemy, be fused into a single political community. This was, to put it lightly, a statement of aspiration more than a description of reality.

Even so, observers have spent centuries looking for that elusive *thing* that binds the country together: a unifying civil religion; a national spirit; a set of shared ideals. Even the most rigorous efforts to locate such a thing, however, have run into the inescapable reality of American division. Not just geographical or political or racial or religious division, though these are easily found. But fundamental disagreement about the very idea of America.

In recent years, scholars have turned to the concept of "imaginaries" to better understand the situation.[3] Often building on Charles Taylor's articulation of the "modern social imaginary," the concept of an imaginary is used to reflect taken-for-granted ideas broadly shared by members of an entire society—ideas about how society or government should be structured; about right relationships between people, communities or institutions; about what is sacred or profane; and the like. These understandings of the imaginary go by different names—the social imaginary, moral imaginary, democratic imaginary, religious imaginary. But in each case, the background understandings embedded in the imaginary are viewed as widely accepted – indeed, nearly unquestioned – and thus at some abstract level *unifying*.

But imaginaries can also be plural, such that there are multiple imaginaries present within a single society.[4] These operate in a similar manner to a broader imaginary: as sets of (sometimes unarticulated, rarely questioned) background understandings about how the world works or ought to work and our place within it. But these imaginaries are held by subgroups or at more localized levels of a society. And importantly, they are often deeply contradictory. Meaning that the way I imagine my society should work is not only different from yours, but directly threatened by yours. They are like two different operating systems vying for control over a single computer, and each views the other as a virus.

My research has consistently pointed to the presence of multiple imaginaries, and I have come to see these competing imaginaries as a root cause of the intense animosity and the crisis of truth at the heart of American political culture. Americans do not simply disagree on matters of policy or priorities; they move through the world using fundamentally different operating languages. Below, I briefly discuss how my understanding of these competing imaginaries emerged, and how it has developed over time.

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[3] An excellent review of this literature can be found in Fuist, Todd Nicholas. 2021. "Towards a sociology of imagination." *Theory & Society* 50: 357–380.

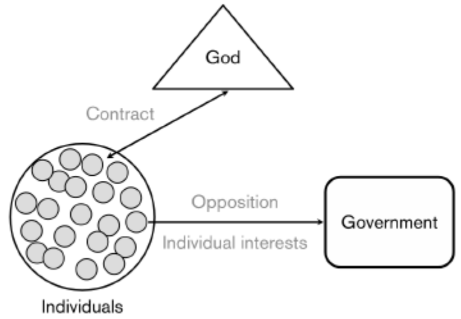
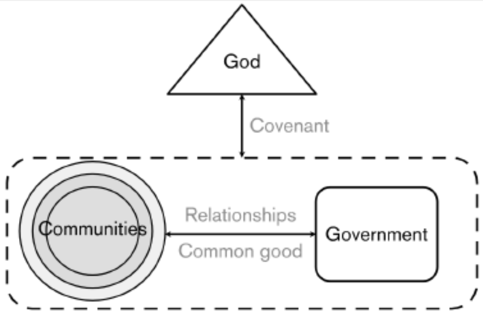
[4] On the multiple imaginaries animating civic life, see: Braunstein, Ruth. *Prophets and Patriots: Faith in Democracy across the Political Divide*. 2017. Oakland, CA: University of California Press; Baiocchi, Gianpaolo, Elizabeth A. Bennett, Alissa Cordner, Peter Taylor Klein, and Stephanie Savell. *The Civic Imagination: Making a Difference in American Political Life*. 2014. Paradigm Publishers; Perrin, Andrew J. Citizen Speak: *The Democratic Imagination in American Life*. 2006. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Competing visions of right relationships

In *Prophets and Patriots: Faith in Democracy Across the Political Divide*, I compare the conservative Tea Party movement to a progressive faith-based community organizing (FBCO) coalition. Drawing on fieldwork and interviews with a local chapter of each movement, I sketch what I called their respective democratic imaginaries. These involved different ways of imagining right relationships with one's fellow citizens, with the government, and with God. After reading Francesca Polletta's wonderful new book, *Inventing the Ties That Bind*, I would now say the groups drew on different "relationship schemas" to imagine each of these relationships.

For the Tea Partiers I came to know, the citizenry was comprised of atomized individuals who sought to maximize their own liberty and prosperity. In terms of their relationship to government, the Tea Partiers saw this relationship as zero sum: the more power government has, the less I have as an individual. They also saw it as confrontational and hierarchical, often reminding elected and public officials that they work for the citizens — as the taxpayers and the voters — rather than the other way around. Finally, the Tea Partiers viewed the United States as God's chosen nation. But they were clear that they saw each American's relationship to God as an *individual* one—a contract between two parties rooted in "Judeo-Christian" law.

For the FBCO leaders I came to know, the citizenry was a set of nested and overlapping communities, and individuals could not be imagined outside of those dense webs of relationships. They related to government as a potential partner. This did not mean they avoided confrontation with government officials, but rather that they approached those confrontations as part of building long-term relationships built on respect, listening, and accountability. Finally, this interfaith community imagined citizens' relationship to God in *communal* rather than individual terms. In so doing, they drew from a longer history of social gospel-style activism that framed the entire national community as accountable for living up to their end of a covenant with God.

Tea Party imaginary	FBCO imaginary
 God Contract Opposition Government Individual interests Individuals	 God Covenant Relationships Communities Government Common good

Source: *Prophets and Patriots,* p.150

These differences are, I believe, interesting in their own right. But uncovering these imaginaries also helped me decode the group's political choices. Similar to what Paul Lichterman found in his influential work on group styles, the ways that the two groups imagined these relationships shaped what policies made sense to them, as well as what kinds of civic and political action seemed appropriate or sensible. It also shaped their impressions of one another—

the fact that they viewed each other not only as opponents but *enemies*; and viewed each other's approaches to policy and politics not only as wrong but *undemocratic* and *un-American*.

Competing visions of the (civic) sacred

Since completing this project several years ago, I have turned my attention to taxes. The way I see it, the complex flows of tax dollars through our system are like actual ties that bind us together. And yet, my previous project led me to suspect that no single tax system could honor or reflect the vastly different ways that citizens imagine these ties. The tax system is thus a material manifestation of the tug of war between these vastly different imaginaries.

Though my current project on taxpaying has taken me to a variety of new field sites, it was during my previous project that taxes first piqued my interest. It was not uncommon in my conversations with Tea Partiers for them to analogize taxation to theft. This idea is drawn straight from libertarianism, though they would often overlay it with the Biblical admonition that "Thou shalt not steal" or "covet they neighbor's" tax dollars. One man caught my attention, however, when he insisted that this didn't mean he wasn't generous with those in need. He explained that his faith demanded he be charitable, and he rattled off examples of causes he proudly supported. But that was between him and his God. In his view, the government overstepped by engaging in "philanthropic tyranny" (a term he borrowed from Frédéric Bastiat).

Federal tax policy did not come up nearly as much in my conversations with members of the local FBCO, but in one instance I had an extended conversation with a group leader who expressed deep concern about the Tea Party's position on taxation. Like the Tea Partier worried about "philanthropic tyranny," this man was a white Catholic professional in his 50s. Yet he thought it was offensive to frame taxation as theft, and argued, to the contrary, that paying taxes was akin to *sharing*. He, too, justified this in religious terms: sharing with others, especially strangers, was a central theme of the Bible and of his faith; an expression of a community's covenantal relationship with one another and with God.

These different interpretations of taxpaying can clearly be traced to different democratic imaginaries. The Tea Partier's position reflected his view of society as a community of atomized individuals whose modes of interacting with one another should be based on their personal relationship to God, not government. The organizer's position reflected a vision of society as a collection of people embedded in communities of obligation, with government as a partner to ensure no one slips through the cracks.

But these different ways of imagining right relationships were not just casual reference points for these men, or for the hundreds of men and women I have encountered in my new project. The basic tenets on which these imaginaries rested (individual freedom vs. communal obligation; individual property ownership vs. the common good) are sacred pillars of their imagined society. Each opposing imaginary is not just distasteful but a deep threat to these sacred foundations. No tax system could possibly accommodate both visions. All tax systems will inevitably represent a profane threat to someone.

Just think about the words we use to talk about taxation. It is commonly said that taxes are boring, mundane, impersonal, technical, just business. But also: they are the *lifeblood* of public institutions, and the government a beating heart. And also: the government is a *beast*, sucking the life from its people, and our only defense is to *starve* it of that basic nutrient: money. Which is it? We talk of taxes like they are a mere annoyance to be withstood or avoided, and also like they are a matter of life and death. We talk of taxpaying like it is a badge of honor, and also like it is a crime.

In a country as deeply divided as the United States and a modern world characterized by multiple and competing visions of the sacred, public disagreement over an issue like taxpaying is seldom about the fine print of tax policies. But it is not just about different imagined relationships either, though this is part of it. It is better understood as a battle over clashing visions of the *sacred*, and the fact that one group's sacred is often another group's *profane*. Given the depth of these differences, is there a possibility of ever bridging them? Of finding, to use my image from earlier, a common operating language? I am not sure, but I keep searching.

Moral Things in Mundane Moments

Paul Lichterman, University of Southern California

I want to spotlight a practical kind of morality. I'm going to do that by building on a few ideas from my recent book, *How Civic Action Works: Fighting for Housing in Los Angeles* (Princeton, 2021). The book explains how Angeleno advocates crafted different strategies to address inadequate housing. It focused on 4 campaigns for affordable housing and a variety of organizing and service efforts with unhoused people. I want to think aloud about how moral meanings suffused these efforts. These will not be finished thoughts, but a thought-experiment, to see if we find "moral" things in mundane moments less often searched.

A common approach to morality in social movements and public debate sends us out to listen for compelling moral discourse. I heard that on occasion among the housing advocates. An affordable housing coalition adopted the slogan, "people who work in LA should be able to live in LA"; a community organizing outfit strung a banner across a church wall announcing the Hebrew prophet Isaiah's vision: "They shall not build, and another inhabit." Discourse of "should" and "ought" is a central concern of sociological, moral inquiry as carried out by, say, Robert Bellah or Richard John Neuhaus. It teaches us important things about civic life and plays a role in my book. For many of us, this discourse would be the prime site of moral imaginaries and we might argue that it orients the public actors we study.

Let's entertain the possibility that moral meanings *also* are embedded in civic action itself, apart from moral visions of the world that civic actors sometimes articulate. By *civic* action I mean collective, relatively freely organized problem-solving that intends to improve some condition of common life. We find it in social movement organizations, citizen interest groups, volunteer projects, some nonprofit groups, and occasionally in governmental settings or enterprises too. While civic actors like the ones I followed do enunciate moral principles, I am inviting us to look for moral meaning somewhere else -- in the ways they coordinate collective action. I make a bid to expand our research imagination regarding where to find moral imaginaries.

Recent theoretical developments assist me. Anthropologists and sociologists have been pondering the social life of morality with new vigor. I pull from some of these recent writings a provisional, thumbnail-sketch understanding of "moral" action. Put conversationally and all too briefly, in modern North Atlantic contexts moral action involves emotionally charged effort to manifest oneself as a good person. While affirming and attaching to principles sometimes is moral effort, I am suggesting that how participants coordinate themselves also has significance for participants' self-understandings as good people and is morally significant apart from the moral significance of their shared visions.

In the perspective I'm suggesting, we can consider practical, normative visions of collaboration as moral imaginaries. They don't necessarily guide action in the sense of first principles or motivators that make people do things they would not do otherwise. Still, they accompany, co-animate, are part of, civic action, and are separable analytically for the researcher who is interested in how moral meanings work in action. A compact way to put it is that civic coordination involves doing things with the right people in the right places, in relation to the right others. Different kinds of coordination build on moral meaning differently – different concatenations of "rightness."

A skeptic might reply that I am only talking about appropriateness; there is nothing really moral going on here. My gambit is that there *is*, *sometimes*. While manners, etiquette, appropriateness are powerful in civic life, I do not mean to assign them all "moral" significance. Some telling everyday clues may help us make the cut. When people violate norms of appropriateness, sometimes we laugh, or we ignore it, or we feel sorry. But as a fieldworker, sometimes I see and hear strong indignation, anger, revulsion, when actors challenge other actors' implicit images of a good collaborator. And further, these seem to matter to a witness's sense of who that actor is. The unsavory association may stick to the actor's reputation as a decent collaborator for at least awhile; it may matter beyond the scene of the gaffe. So it is worth trying out the idea that moral meanings are at work here.

I have been learning that there are different ways to collaborate in civic life. Each defines obligation differently and privileges a different kind of personhood. One way of collaborating is to create what I call a community of identity: activists collaborate selectively to defend a self-identified "community" of people who share many issues, not just one. Participants assume they are *obligated* to identify with each other tightly, over a long haul, to protect the community and its authenticity. In this vision, there are two kinds of people out there: collaborative allies who lift up the most authentic community members--and antagonists who can never be collaborators because they threaten the community, and so they elicit little obligation of any kind. Tight bonds between insiders make the boundary with outsiders rigid and high. To anticipate a question: The basis for those bonds, and boundaries, is not necessarily racial or ethnic identity; it is togetherness that draws strength from participants' act of *identifying* strongly with each other. As I discuss in the book, "community of identity" is not just another phrase for the overused, underspecified and sometimes unhelpfully evaluative term "identity politics."

A wide swath of grassroots civic action in the past 40 years approximates a community of identity. I followed a coalition of tenant groups, urban development outfits and health advocates who talked continuously about defending "the community" against agents of gentrification: property developers, city bureaucrats, non-Latinx students moving into neighborhoods once working-class and Spanish speaking. Coalition participants talked about displacement of longtime community members as a blow to morally felt bonds. At the coalition's block party one year, a leader handed me a paper facsimile of a brick and invited me to inscribe it with the name of a resident who had been displaced from the neighborhood and tape the brick to the "memorial wall" in the middle of the street. I knew displacement stories from the neighborhood only second-hand and asked what about someone I knew elsewhere in LA who had suffered displacement. She equivocated; "Maybe." Later, I figured out this wasn't about "housing problems" in general; the point was to honor bonds to the right people in the right place. That was how to be a good person in a collectivity those strength depended on people *identifying* with one another as "the community."

Another kind of collaboration I call a community of interest. Collaborators promote a limited interest and may continue pursuing other interests with other groups. They coordinate themselves for short-term, segmented obligation. My example here is an 18-month campaign for affordable housing mandates in LA. Participants did not expect to identify closely with each other over a long haul. In a *good* collaboration as they imagined it, there were concentric circles of actors that may be further and further from the shared interest, but none were completely walled off. In this case, the shared interest was affordable housing. Big property owners occupied the far rings, but in this vision of collaboration, even they could be *potential* if unlikely collaborators, or parties to a deal. Very few actors would be treated as permanent enemies. This kind of collaboration is criticized sometimes for being morally thin. While it does not depend as continuously or explicitly on moral meanings, those do emerge when an internal crisis is big enough to challenge the implicit terms of collaboration.

A clash between these two forms of civic collaboration made the moral meaning of them more palpable. The coalition running the affordable housing campaign had a special meeting with endorsers who normally did not attend meetings. Some disgruntled coalition members criticized the coalition in front of the invited guests. The next meeting of the coalition was a thunderstorm of bitter recriminations. The dissenters had violated an implicit *obligation* to the right people in the right place; they were disloyal when the performance of cohesiveness around a shared interest really mattered. For their part, the dissenters had been incensed that the fast-moving coalition leaders appeared to make decisions about policy positions without regard to what they considered as the most pressing needs of low-income tenants. They were disloyal to the community, not sufficiently identified with it. A year later, a leading member of a dissenting group was still talking about the former partners with a tone of disgust, not just disagreement; he still needed to distance himself.

For another example: Early in my study a large group of activists and affordable housing developers had a public meeting with a California state agency official. This was their chance to promote their interest in affordable housing to a powerful gatekeeper. One attendee launched a barrage of questions that communicated suspicion of affordable housing developments, implying they were ill-planned--and ugly. “You have to call a barracuda a barracuda,” she said. The nonprofit developer sitting next to me said aloud to no one in particular, “I’m turning this way,” and rotated in her molded plastic seat to get that speaker out of eyesight; averting our gaze is a time-honored response to a moral violation. The attendee with the demeaning fish metaphor was not being a good collaborator. It was as if this speaker’s comments smeared the speaker’s own personhood and threatened to pollute everyone else’s. Attendees remarked derisively about the questioner afterwards.

It may seem like these scenarios portray secondary, ‘human relations’ problems not worth dignifying with the term “morality.” We are not talking about visions or end-goals. But collective, civic action depends on ordinary human relations that embody mundane kinds of moral ascription. These matters of collaboration won’t always rise to the level of moral effort. Yet the scenarios here make me think that sometimes they do. Participants come to question the personhood, individual or collective, of their challengers and conduct emotional heat in the process. These conflicts may derail meetings, strain or end collaborations, make it harder for actors to achieve seemingly winnable visions--moral ends that they agree on. It can be worth the trouble for us to look for practical moral imaginaries in collective action.

Moral Imaginaries and the Boundaries of the We

Francesca Polletta, University of California – Irvine

Americans today are divided. Democrats and Republicans distrust each other, dislike each other, and disbelieve one another's facts. Racial, ethnic, religious, and class divides operate alongside partisan ones. But political commentators and civic leaders, without denying the depth of our conflicts, often sound a hopeful note. We can heal these rifts if we talk to one another; if we share our stories, listen to one another empathetically, and aim to identify what we have in common, not what makes us different. In line with this belief, there are now many organizations that bring ordinary Americans together to talk. You can join Storycorp's *One Small Step* initiative, where you learn "how to talk across the divide in a constructive, empathetic way" or *a Braver Angels* workshop, where "you can actually become friends and colleagues with people you don't agree with." You can participate in *Make America Dinner Again*, whose centerpiece is a "Radical Empathy Story Exchange," where participants share their experiences to develop empathy across difference.

The idea that professionally-facilitated intimate conversation between ordinary Americans can heal divides that are wide in scope and long in the making is somewhat odd. After all, research shows that people tend to develop empathy with those who are like them, not those who are different. Most of the time, hearing someone else's story has no impact whatsoever on one's opinion, and it may in fact lead one to hew even more firmly to that opinion. The people who volunteer to participate in facilitated conversations, for their part, tend not to be the ones who hold extreme positions. Even if participants do change their minds, moreover, there is scant evidence that their new tolerance is likely to spread to enough people to do anything significant about existing divides. That is especially unlikely given the fact that Americans today live with a political party system that rewards extreme positions and a media industry that profits from controversy.

Yet this moral imaginary—of personal conversation in intimate settings producing the seeds of broader solidarity – is hugely popular among the civic leaders, philanthropists, government officials, advocacy groups, and social commentators who are concerned with the state of American society and whose job is to make it better. I use the term moral *imaginary* because, more than an ideology, philosophy, or schema, an imaginary is a kind of feeling-saturated picture, a fantasy of exemplary people, relationships, or action that underpins more explicit moral beliefs and, in this case, recipes for civic repair. The popularity of this imaginary, I believe, has made it more difficult to develop the strategies that actually can help create solidarity across difference.

In my 2020 *Inventing the Ties That Bind* (Univ. Chicago Press), I trace this imaginary in part to the growth of a field of professional facilitators: people trained to conduct carefully structured conversations. Their mandate initially was to resolve conflicts in the workplace, but since then, their remit has expanded. For example, in the early 2000s, when Americans' political apathy more than their polarization was of concern, public deliberation initiatives brought ordinary Americans together in carefully facilitated small groups to talk about issues like health care and urban sprawl. Again, the promise was that that sharing experiences and aiming to identify common ground would lead people to become more invested in political institutions, with the effects rippling outward beyond the people in the conversation. Today, the answer to humanitarian abuses is to train the people who have suffered injustice to share their expert-coached personal stories, thereby building the empathy that will lead people distant from sex trafficking in Cambodia or sweat shops in South Los Angeles to support the cause. Gary Adler, in his *Empathy Beyond US Borders* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 2019), found the same imaginary operating in immersion travel initiatives, where church and college groups visit the sites of social problems – the Mexican American border in the case he studied – to listen to people's stories, develop empathy and insight, and then go back to their communities to share their stories. Katherine Cramer Walsh, in *Talking About Politics* (Univ. Chicago Press, 2004), found the same imaginary in the professionally-facilitated dialogues aimed at racial reconciliation she studied.

Now, I am by no means opposed to such initiatives. But I am skeptical that fleeting experiences of intimacy arrived at through professionally facilitated conversation can create lasting relations of solidarity among participants and somehow "spiral outward," as Paul Lichterman put it in *Elusive Togetherness* (Princeton Univ., 2012), to the people who do not participate. I believe that such efforts *seem* a sure route to civic repair not because of their demonstrable effects but because of the moral imaginary—the fantasy—of intimate connection underpinning them. More important, I believe this imaginary crowds out other ways of attacking our fractured civic landscape. For one thing, it diverts our attention from explicitly political and top-down solutions, such as reforming electoral politics or the media industry so as not to advantage extreme candidates and perspectives. It crowds out other forms of talk: alternatives to intimate sharing as a way to reach understanding and even agreement across difference such as bargaining, compromise, debate, or critical introspection. Cramer Walsh, for example, found that the racial dialogues she studied really got somewhere when Black participants defied facilitators' instruction to simply share their stories and instead began to question white participants about the basis for the claims they made.

Finally, this imaginary of intimate connection crowds out other ways of imagining the ties that bind. We can and do cooperate by thinking of ourselves not as friends but as neighbors, allies, a movement, or bargaining partners. The New Yorkers I interviewed who participated in a public deliberative forum about rebuilding the World Trade Center site after 9/11 were expected only to share personal opinions and then go home. But they wanted to do more than that. They talked about themselves as a "mini-United Nations," representing people outside the forum and arriving at compromises on their behalf. They also talked about themselves as an advocacy group, wanting to press the recommendations they had arrived at with decision makers. The forum would have been more effective, I concluded, if organizers had taken a cue from the relationships participants themselves imagined.

The community organizers working around issues of police brutality, fair wages, and health care whom Ruth Braunstein studied (*Prophets and Patriots*, Univ. California, 2017) sought to build "community." But their understanding of community demanded conflict and accountability. You could not just drop into a meeting, have a sense of connection, and then leave without being asked to do something after you left. Activists in contemporary racial justice, LGBTQ+, and feminist movements, for their part, talk about *allyship*, which is yet another imagined relationship that can motivate solidary action without requiring intimacy.

Even more broadly, we can imagine what binds members of the *nation* in ways that promote cooperation or undermine it. In an interesting experiment in 2004, psychologists Qiong Li and Marilyn Brewer ("What Does It Mean to Be an American" in *Political Psychology*) had one group of subjects read a statement that 9/11 had united Americans by reminding them "what we have in common as Americans . . . the core essence of what it means to be American." The other group read that 9/11 had united Americans by reminding them of "a common purpose to fight terrorism in all its forms and to work together." Then both groups were asked their views about policies around immigration and minority rights. People in the first group, who were primed to think about their Americanness as a fundamental essence, and who scored high on measures of national identity tended to oppose policies supporting immigrants and minorities. But people in the second group, who were primed to think that what joined them as a nation was their habit of working together rather than their common essence, expressed more tolerant views even when they scored high on national identity. In other words, *how* subjects imagined the bonds that joined them led them to support more or less inclusive policies. When the emphasis was on their habit of cooperating, the boundary between us and them was just not as powerful. Note too that these ways of thinking about the group were not new to research subjects. They simply had to be primed.

People who work together, a mini-United Nations, accountable community, allyship--each of these has helped to forge solidarity without requiring intimacy. We can think about what binds us in diverse ways, and the way we do truly matters.

2022 ASA "Moral Imaginaries" Panel Response

Omar McRoberts, University of Chicago

In response to Penny Edgell's important and provocative question about the nature and impact of "moral imaginaries," Francesca Polletta, Paul Lichterman and Ruth Braunstein each raised the challenge of plurality and diversity to unitary notions of the moral ideal. My own listening to these wonderful responses raised the possibility that such challenges come from the way people talk about and live moral imaginaries through fundamentally *ontological* claims about feeling, peoplehood, and the sacred. Perhaps ironically, the matter of moral imaginaries is very much about contested notions of the *real*. Moral imaginaries, in other words, are not imaginary to people actually living through them. They are realities, perhaps struggling for unicity or competing for primacy, but realities, nonetheless.

Among Francesca Polletta's professional facilitators, intimate dialogue is deployed as a way to heal civic divisions so people can feel at one and potentially act as one. The stories people tell are meant to reveal a shared reality through the practice of empathy. This is feeling practice in the service of discovery of common reality. Here the imaginary is soaked with feeling and empathy, which are identified as the basis of reality. Without shared feeling and empathy, the stories shared are merely imaginary. Shared feeling is the real, the ontological substance of the commons. The challenge, though, is that these empathic discursive procedures may not have an impact outside the immediate crucible of in-person dialogue. And with their emphasis on emotional consensus, might such procedures obscure other paths to social change and collective action, including structural solutions, open debate and confrontational struggle?

For Paul Lichterman's housing campaigns, the moral imaginary is embedded in ideals regarding what it means to be a real partner in struggle, rather than an interloping, opportunistic, or otherwise fake partner. Here the moral imaginary is about the politics of authenticity. As with Francesca Polletta's activists there is emotional charge, but here that charge arises not to heal civic rifts but to establish firm boundaries between authentic insiders and inauthentic outsiders while building solidarity among insiders. This is a politics of emotional investment in the authentic people, who are morally right and worthy of trust, and emotional divestment from inauthentic civic actors. I would suggest that Lichterman's activists are living an ontologically and emotionally saturated struggle to produce social capital. Normally defined in terms of network closure, shared values and trust, Lichterman's activists operationalize social capital as the boundary around the authentic people (closure), a shared sense of moral rightness (values), and trust. This is bonding rather than bridging social capital though – it is meant to create solidarity within, rather than between, multiple groups making disparate morality claims. Notions of authenticity, and their concomitant emotional valences, are thus problematic to the formation of a singular moral imaginary.

For Ruth Brauntein's political actors, moral imaginaries – what she calls democratic imaginaries – also are real, but their ontological basis is the *sacred*. Teapartiers and Faith Based Community Organizations alike take some fundamental unit of civic life is sacred. But Teapartiers understand the individual as that fundamental unit, the sacredness of which is violated when government impinges upon it in some way. FBCOs, in contrast, view the polity itself as sacred; here, contention with government is understood as part of a sacred process that enfolds individuals, communities, and the state in the promise of partnership. Moral imaginaries thus simultaneously unify and divide, as multiple notions of the sacred inspire civic actors to confront government and envision the commons in very different ways. Notions of the sacred matter because they infuse civic identities with such potent reality. Yet the same sacred investments could also be the greatest barrier to the achievement of a unified moral imaginary.

In short, panelists emphasized the pluralistic, diverse, and even contested nature of moral imaginaries. They described the ways moral boundaries exclude some actors as they include others. They explored citizenship itself as a moral category. They asked: when, why, and how do moral imaginaries actually thwart the emergence of broad solidarity and widely shared moral commitment? And one key thing we learned from the exchange is that moral imaginaries are concerned with what is *real*: either the reality of empathic connection between people from different socio-political backgrounds, the authenticity of various groups making moral claims, or the sacred reality of individuals and the civic realm itself. Diversity among these moral imaginaries poses serious challenges to any project arching toward a unitary or singular vision precisely because they are so deeply ontological.

NEW SECTION OFFICERS

CHAIR- ELECT (3-YEAR TERM BEGINS IN '23 AS CHAIR ELECT)

Dana Moss, Notre Dame is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology. Her research and teaching focus on collective resistance against repression and injustice, including the transnational repression of diaspora and refugee communities by authoritarian regimes. Her award-winning book, The Arab Spring Abroad: Diaspora Activism Against Authoritarian Regimes (Cambridge, 2022) explains how and to what extent anti-regime diaspora members mobilized to support the 2011 uprisings in Libya, Syria, and Yemen. Her next book project will examine how and why members of military institutions rebel against participation in state-sanctioned violence. To date, her work has been published in venues such as the American Sociological Review, Social Forces, Social Problems, Mobilization: An International Journal, and Comparative Migration Studies. She comes to the University of Notre Dame from the University of Pittsburgh (2016-2020), where she was awarded the 2020 David and Tina Bellet Excellence in Teaching Award. She received her PhD in Sociology from the University of California, Irvine in 2016.

COUNCIL MEMBERS (2-YEAR TERM BEGINS IN '23)

Jeffrey Guhin, UCLA is an Assistant Professor of Sociology. He is the director of the Social Thought minor and is affiliated faculty for the Islamic Studies program and the Center for the Study of Religion. He teaches courses on Islam, the sociology of religion, the sociology of education, and social theory. He has published widely in magazines and academic journals. His research interests include education, culture, religion, and theory. He is the author of *Agents of God: Boundaries and Authority in Muslim and Christian Schools.*

Yongren Shi, Iowa University. He is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Iowa. The foundation of his research is the sociological study of human behavior and group dynamics. He uses extensively large-scale digital trace data and a wide range of computational methods, including network analysis, computational textual analysis, agent-based computational models, machine learning, online experiments and sequence analysis. His research appeared in outlets such as American Sociological Review, American Journal of Sociology, Nature Human Behavior, Social Forces, and Sociological Methods & Research, among others.

Candice Robinson, University of North Carolina Wilmington. She is an Assistant Professor of Sociology whose work focuses on Race and Ethnicity, Social Movements, Black Middle Class, Civic Engagement, and Public Policy. Her work has appeared in Sociological Compass and Sociological Perspectives and has an upcoming book discussing the 'Sociology of Cardi B'.

STUDENT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE (TERM BEGINS IN '23)

Emily Maloney is a doctoral candidate in sociology at Duke University. Her research uses computational, relational, and experimental methods to investigate questions concerning identity and emotion processes. Her current work focuses on the role that humor plays in the acquisition of extreme identities and beliefs.

SECTION AWARDS

DISTINGUISHED CAREER AWARD

Committee: Jan E. Stets (Chair), Brad Fulton, and Barbara Kiviat

Craig Calhoun, University Professor of Social Sciences at Arizona State University.
Dr. Craig Calhoun's portfolio contains decades of scholarship that has advanced our understanding of altruism, morality, and social solidarity. Some of his important contributions to the mission of the AMSS section include Neither Gods Nor Emperors: Students and the Struggle for Democracy in China (University of California Press, 1994); Nations Matter: Citizenship, Solidarity, and the Cosmopolitan Dream (Routledge, 2007); and Degenerations of Democracy (Harvard University Press, 2022). He is a prolific scholar with 10 books that he has authored or co-authored, 22 books that he has edited, 70 refereed articles that he has published, and 100 book chapters that address culture, religion, capitalism and globalization, among others. Craig's current research addresses contemporary transformations and possible futures for the political economy of the modern world-system, for universities and knowledge institutions, for democracy, and for shifting structures of social solidarity from local communities to nations. He takes his insights out into the world and works to effect social change. You can see this in his leadership in various institutes, and how his work often connects to or crosses over to different disciples and professional worlds. For example, Dr. Calhoun has been President of the Berggruen Institute, Director and President of the London School of Economics and Political Science, President of the Social Science Research Council, and Founder and Director of the Institute of Public Knowledge. His impact is evident across the globe. Dr. Craig Calhoun is truly deserving of the 2023 AMSS Distinguished Career Award.

OUTSTANDING PUBLISHED BOOK AWARD

Committee: Philip Gorski (Chair), Ruth Braunstein, and Elisabeth Clemens

Tavory, Iddo, Sonia Prelat, and Shelly Ronen. Tangled Goods: The Practical Life of Pro Bono Advertising. University of Chicago Press, 2022.
A novel investigation of pro bono marketing and the relationship between goods, exploring the complex moral dimensions of philanthropic advertising. Interviewing over seventy advertising professionals and managers, the authors trace the complicated meanings of the good in these pro bono projects. Doing something altruistic, they show, often helps employees feel more at ease working for big pharma or corporate banks. Often these projects afford them greater creative leeway than they normally have, as well as the potential for greater recognition. This book sheds new light on how goodness and prestige interact with personal and altruistic motivations to produce value for individuals and institutions and produces a novel theory of the relationship among goods: one of the most fraught questions in sociological theory.

Honorable Mention: Galen Watts, The Spiritual Turn: The Religion of the Heart and the Making of Romantic Liberal Modernity (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022).

OUTSTANDING PUBLISHED ARTICLE AWARD

Committee: Shai Dromi (Chair), Robin Bartram, and Jacqui Frost

DeSoucey, Michaela, and Miranda R. Waggoner. 2022. "Another Person's Peril: Peanut Allergy, Risk Perceptions, and Responsible Sociality." American Sociological Review 87 (1): 50–79.
This article examines perceptions of health risk when some individuals within a shared space are in heightened danger but anyone, including unaffected others, can be a vector of risk. Using the case of peanut allergy and drawing on qualitative content analysis of the public comments submitted in response to an unsuccessful 2010 U.S. Department of Transportation proposal to prohibit peanuts on airplanes, we analyze contention over the boundaries of responsibility for mitigating exposure to risk.

Honorable Mention:
Abbott, Owen. 2022. "W. E. B. Du Bois's Forgotten Sociology of Morality: Contesting the Foundations and Informing the Future of the Sociology of Morality." ***The Sociological Review,*** **3802612211382.**
Du Bois's work, especially his early work, was explicitly concerned with morality, including dedicated studies into the moral lives of black Americans and their perceived moral standing in American society. His wider oeuvre was also regularly concerned with the role of stratified moral status and power-laden judgement as instruments of oppression. Yet, the long-overdue revival of Du Bois's contribution to sociology has given little credence to his work on morality...The primary intention of this article is thus to introduce and explore Du Bois's work on morality.

OUTSTANDING STUDENT PAPER AWARD

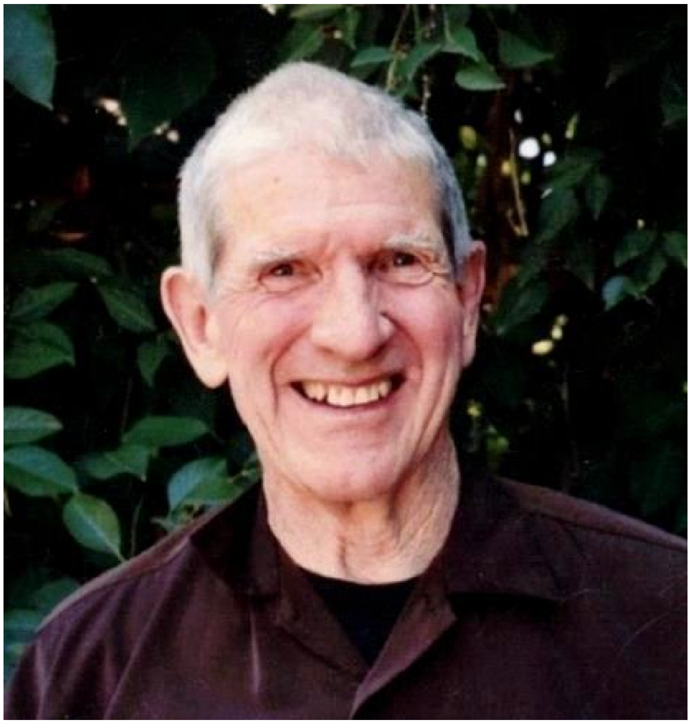
Committee: Paul Josse (Chair), Wesley Longhoffer, and Aisha Upton

Martin Eiermann, for: "'Towards a Higher Morality': Privacy and the Remaking of Urban Space During Progressive Era Tenement Reforms"
This paper analyzes how moral codes are embedded into the material world by examining the politics of urban development in tenement reform campaigns. Drawing on archival records, government reports, and census micro-data, Eiermann shows that social reformers framed domestic privacy as a remedy to the apparent moral ills of urban life, aiming to manage the visibility of families through spatial enclosure. The paper argues that the instrumentalization of space as the material instantiation of middle-class moral imaginaries infused mundane features of urban space with moral meaning and elevated their political significance, helping to translate abstract moral norms into laws that re-shaped urban space. The findings point towards privacy as a vehicle for the expression of class-specific moral imaginaries in the modern United States and highlight tthe importance of physical spaces as objects of political struggle during moral panics.

Honorable Mention:
Katharine Khanna, for: "Egalitarian Attitudes as Mechanisms for Status Enhancement: Social and Symbolic Benefits for Men Who Support Gender Equality."

IN TRIBUTE TO VINCENT JEFFRIES

Vincent Jeffries was the inaugural Chair of the AMSS section and the editor of the Palgrave Handbook of Altruism, Morality, and Social Solidarity.



March 15, 1936 - March 3, 2023

In 2012, Vince served as the inaugural Chair of the American Sociological Association's Section on Altruism, Morality, and Social Solidarity. I worked closely with Vince in the early years of the formation of this Section and I can state with certainty that it would not exist without his tireless, behind-the-scenes efforts that unfolded over at least three years. In fact, our first bid for Section status failed and we needed help from the ASA President at the time in order to have a second chance. This resulted in "Morality" being added to the Section's name. Vince's field-building vision -- and he led a group of esteemed authors on an article about the need for a new, coherent field that was published in The American Sociologist in 2006 -- inspired others like me to help with the effort to launch a Section-in-Formation, which eventually became a regular Section. Vince was the heart and soul of the effort. He anonymously subsidized graduate student memberships to help increase our numbers to meet the ASA's requirements, he co-edited the Section newsletter with me when I needed help, and he received the Section's Outstanding Published Book Award in 2015 for his field-building book, The Palgrave Handbook of Altruism, Morality, and Social Solidarity.

The common theme in all of this activity was Vince's heart of a servant, which traced back to his life-long interest in the virtues and how social contexts might better cultivate them. Vince genuinely cared about the field, the section, the discipline of sociology, and especially the people who benefitted, and continued to benefit, from the creation of a new space to share our understanding of topics that connect to virtue. There are of course downsides to (in-group) expressions of altruism, (unskillful) moralities, and (unhealthy) solidarities. Vince did not turn a blind eye to the negative, which was why he opposed the rebranding of the Section as "Positive Sociology." But he maintained an optimistic outlook that promoted the thoughtful practice of the virtues and held that social groups could always become more understanding, caring, and ultimately forces for the greater good. I am grateful for the time I spent with Vince and for the generativity of his life, which continues on through the work of the students he taught, his scholarship, the ASA Section, and especially his friends.

Matthew Lee, Professor of the Social Sciences and Humanities, Baylor University
Research Associate, Harvard University

IN TRIBUTE TO VINCENT JEFFRIES

A tribute to Vince Jeffries' scholarship and as a best friend

I first met Vince at UCLA. We were beginning graduate students in the Ph. D program in Sociology in the early 60s. We hit it off right away taking the same classes and laughing and talking together in the hallways and informal gatherings of students and faculty. I felt Vince was a good guy, a friend and someone I could trust. After completing the basic course work, we faced qualifying exams that allowed graduate students to proceed on for the Ph. D. degree. Quals in sociology were really tough in the early 60s with exams in about 8 specialty areas

Our friendship anchored our commitment to each other as we became study partners for a tough exam. Vince and I divided the labor each being responsible for certain readings and meeting frequently to pool our information. We both made it!! What a relief. Thank God.

From this collaborative experience, I experienced Vince as determined, with a strong work ethic, committed to holding on to key concepts and perspectives that he believed and in interpersonal relations with others, kind and sweet.

This was the time of civil rights demonstrations across the country and the Watts riot of 1965. Social justice issues were everywhere present. We were both motivated to conduct solid empirical research on race and class inequality to better understand the mood of the 60s. Vince established himself as a solid researcher at this time in the social inequality field. Our collegial connection deepened leading to scholarly projects of importance to each of us.

Vince and I co-authored two journal articles and wrote a book on social inequality. One article dealt with White reactions to the Watts riot and specifically the importance of past social contact with Blacks as a key explanatory variable as to how Whites interpreted the Watts disorder. We found that Whites who lacked friendly egalitarian contacts with Blacks prior to the riot were more fearful of Blacks, evidenced more feelings of increased social distance toward Blacks, cited more outside agitator explanations for the riot and voiced more punitive responses toward the participants than those who had had prior interracial contact.

In the book we co-wrote (1980s) we developed a paradigm of four hierarchies –social class, race, gender, and age—each affecting the distribution of power, social status, and wealth. The interactions across these four hierarchies (as in multiple advantage vs. multiple disadvantages in getting good health care) became a fascinating project. We felt this was a major contribution to the inequality field expanding the stratification literature from the usual single focus on social class to four stratification hierarchies in dynamic interaction. Unlike many co-authored books we each wrote single authored chapters on inequality topics in which we were especially interested. Vince wrote a terrific chapter on the ideologies or belief systems that surround and maintain stratification hierarchies. For example, the belief, held by many, is that the system is open, and opportunity abounds and the poor have only themselves to blame for their lower socioeconomic position or their poverty.

The book got good reviews and was adopted in upper division stratification classes.

In writing our projects together we frequently met at Vince's house, the two of us plus his large German shepherd dog. It was a great work environment. When we disagreed on some point we usually argued for our position passionately while Rex the dog would growl. Hitting an impasse, we would retreat to Vince's back small house and bat around his large punching bag. (Vince used to be a Second or Cornerman in boxing matches) We always reconciled or compromised on our positions after returning to the house.

Following these collaborations, Vince and I went in different directions. Vince moved increasingly toward writings on the concepts of love, altruism, and that which brings people together in solidarity, (sociology of good). He was fascinated with the writings of big classical theorists (like Thomas Aquinas and Aristotle in their writings on the virtues, and more contemporary sociology theorists like Emile Durkheim, Randall Collins, and Pitirim Sorokin and their writings on morality and social solidarity.) For example, Sorokin notes the importance of altruistic love, the giving of the self for the welfare of the other, as manifested in various forms such as volunteering, benefitting oppressed groups, gratitude, apology and forgiveness.

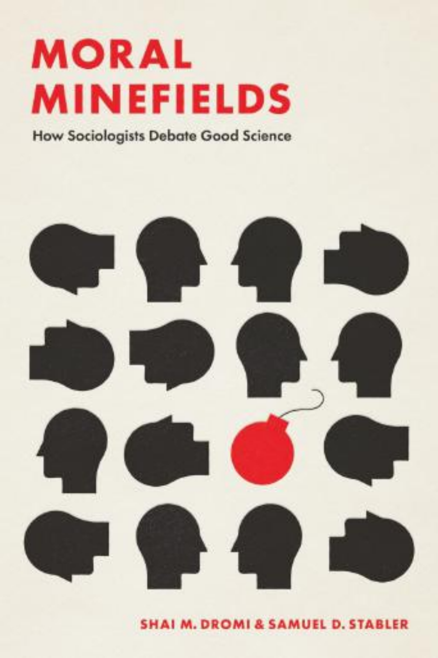
Aristotle's virtues were key origins in much of Vince's later research (the four noteworthy virtues of Aristotle are prudence, justice, temperance and courage). According to Aristotle, the possession of these virtues makes a person good, happy and flourishing. Vince wrote several articles on family cohesion based on the virtues.

Given all these interests, Vince was increasingly driven to found a new recognized area in the sociology of good, an officially recognized area of sociology with altruism, morality and solidarity in the title. Getting a new area launched with the ASA is no easy task. The American Sociological Association (ASA) demands a list of 200 or so supporters who support a new area, will contribute to it in scholarship and are willing to pay a membership fee for this new section. Vince's dogged determination as a key founder of the new area was exceptional. He was absolutely determined to get the area off the ground and accepted, and he did. An important note: I was struck by his love for his wife Ceja and how it deepened and expanded his sense of kindness, gratitude, and care for others.

He was a friend and scholar, a social justice advocate and a wonderful human being. I will miss him dearly.

Edward Ransford, Professor Emeritus of Sociology, University of Southern California

MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS


MORAL
MINEFIELDS
How Sociologists Debate Good Science
SHAI M. DROMI & SAMUEL D. STABLER

Available September 2023 through University of Chicago Press

In *Moral Minefields*, Shai M. Dromi and Samuel D. Stabler consider five recent controversial topics in sociology—race and genetics, secularization theory, methodological nationalism, the culture of poverty, and parenting practices—to reveal how moral debates affect the field. Sociologists, they show, tend to respond to moral criticism of scholarly work in one of three ways. While some accept and endorse the criticism, others work out new ways to address these topics that can transcend the criticism, while still others build on the debates to form new, more morally acceptable research.

Moral Minefields addresses one of the most prominent questions in contemporary sociological theory: how can sociology contribute to the development of a virtuous society? Rather than suggesting that sociologists adopt a clear paradigm that can guide their research toward neatly defined moral aims, Dromi and Stabler argue that sociologists already largely possess and employ the repertoires to address questions of moral virtue in their research. The conversation thus is moved away from attempts to theorize the moral goods sociologists should support and toward questions about how sociologists manage the plurality of moral positions that present themselves in their studies. Moral diversity within sociology, they show, fosters disciplinary progress.

AMSS PODCAST:

Visit our site at https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/amss. to listen to conversations with section leaders Penny Egdell, Bin Xu, David Melamed and more.

Listen to our Latest episode with Francesca Polleta -

The Altruism, Morality and Social Solidarity communications team has been recording interviews with scholars for a podcast series on works relevant to the section and the scholars who produce them. If you are interested in talking about your own research exploring altruism, morality, and social solidarity reach out to a member of the Communications team!

Appreciation to the Nominating Committee David Melamed, Chelsea Kelly, and Francesca Polleta for their work with the incoming officers and section awards

MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Appreciation to all the members who served on our 2022-23 AMSS committees:

Nominating Committee:

David Melamed (Chair), Chelsea Kelly, and Francesca Polletta

Distinguished Career award

Committee: Jan E. Stets (Chair), Brad Fulton, and Barbara Kiviat

Outstanding published Book Award

Committee: Philip Gorski (Chair), Ruth Braunstein, and Elisabeth Clemens

Outstanding published Article award

Committee: Shai Dromi (Chair), Robin Bartram, and Jacqui Frost

Outstanding Student Paper award

Committee: Paul Josse (Chair), Wesley Longhoffer, and Aisha Upton

SECTION LEADERSHIP

Penny Edgell, University of Minnesota, Chair

David Melamed, Ohio State University,
Past-Chair

Bin Xu, Emory University
Chair-Elect

Daniel Shank, Missouri University of Science & Technology,
Secretary/Treasurer

SECTION COUNCIL

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Brad Fulton, Indiana University SPEA
Mary R. Rose, University of Texas at Austin

2020-2022
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Andrew Miles, University of Toronto
Charles Seguin, Pennsylvania State University

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