

# ACCOUNTS

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## GREETINGS FROM THE SECTION CHAIR

Dear Colleagues:

The first quarter of 2011 has passed in without bringing to an end the uncertainties and the economic difficulties brought about by the financial implosion of 2008. Record numbers of Americans remain out of work and high levels of economic inequality show no signs of declining. Globally, currency wars, the record price of oil, and threatened bankruptcies in several European countries add to an atmosphere of apprehension and fear about the future course of the world economy. The adage that economics is too complex a matter to be left to economists acquires in this environment a poignant new meaning. While our colleagues in that sister discipline will undoubtedly continue to play a leading role in the investigation and the management of economic institutions, it has become obvious that they stand in need of assistance.

The notable failure of regulators of financial markets in the U.S. and the absence of effective measures to avert a crisis that had been widely anticipated demonstrate that the comfortable assumptions that underlie orthodox economic theory and policies can no longer be accepted. Instead of assuming self-regulated markets and then formulating policy as if these suppositions were real, there is an urgent need for investigations of how these markets actually function, including the vested interests and the networks of power that, more often than not, alter the course of economic events in their favor. Above all, close attention to the unexpected consequences

of well-meaning, but uninformed policies based on unrealistic assumptions is a task of utmost importance.

Economic sociology has an important role to play in correcting these shortcomings by substituting idealized models for actual knowledge and by analyzing economic phenomena as inserted in broader social contexts. The plaintive remark of former Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan as to how his favorite theories had failed him can be interpreted as a call for action for others to help prevent such painful failures in the future. Markets are not level playing fields, but rocky formations punctuated by differentials of power and conflicts of interests among classes and multiple collectivities. The study of such things is our bread and butter. The sociological understanding of the economy needs to be brought, front and center, as a counterweight to the theoretical lenses that have driven us into the present situation. This is a worthy task to which our discipline can make a major contribution.

As we prepare to convene again in the next meetings of the American Sociological Association, it would be worthwhile to reflect collectively on how best to bring about this goal.

-Alejandro Portes



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## INTRODUCTION TO THIS ISSUE OF *ACCOUNTS*

This year, each issue of *Accounts* will focus on a different topic within economic sociology. The focus of this issue is on the relationship between culture and the economy.

We begin by presenting an interview with Yale professor Rene Almeling, author of the forthcoming book *Sex Cells: The Medical Market for Eggs and Sperm*. This interview

explores the ways in which cultural meanings shape the market for bodily goods.

Next, we review *Longing and Belonging*, by Allison Pugh, who qualitatively examines the social and cultural meanings of children's consumption and how parents shape these patterns.

We next present two thought pieces,

one article on how culture is a constitutive part of the global food market "from farm to fork" and another on how cross-national research can inform our understandings of organizational dynamics.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *Accounts*. Please send any comments or questions you have to: vreyes@princeton.edu.

- The *Accounts* Editorial Board

## THE MARKET FOR BODILY GOODS: FAMILIES FOR SALE

### AN INTERVIEW WITH RENE ALMELING

BY ROURKE O'BRIEN

*Rene Almeling (Ph.D. UCLA) is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Yale University where she researches questions at the intersection of economic sociology, gender, culture, and medical sociology. Her book, Sex Cells: The Medical Market for Eggs and Sperm, will be published by the University of California Press in Fall 2011. From 2008 to 2010, she was a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Scholar in Health Policy Research at the University of California-Berkeley, where she began a new book project on genetic testing.*

**Rourke O'Brien: In your forthcoming book, you explore the market for sperm and eggs. In what ways does gender shape this market?**

**Rene Almeling:** It was really not until the 20th century that it became possible to think about the clinical transfer of eggs and sperm from body to body. Although it would be shocking to see a child listed for sale and it is illegal to sell one's organs, it is routine for egg and sperm donors to receive financial compensation. Despite the monetary exchange, staffers in egg agencies and sperm banks consistently refer to this practice as "donation." Depending on the sex of the donor, though, there are subtle differences in how donation is understood: egg donation is portrayed as an altruistic gift, while sperm donation is considered an easy job. Given that eggs and sperm are similar kinds of cells—each contains half of the genetic material needed to create an embryo—what explains these different understandings?

In the book, I argue that the an-

swer to this question is not reducible to biology or technology. I bring together sociological theories of the market with gendered theories of the body to create a framework for analyzing markets for bodily goods,

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“PAID DONATION AS A GIFT OR A JOB ALSO PROFOUNDLY AFFECTS THEIR EXPERIENCES OF BODILY COMMODIFICATION, INCLUDING THEIR EMBODIED EXPERIENCES OF DONATION, HOW THEY TALK ABOUT THE MONEY THEY RECEIVE...AND HOW THEY DEFINE THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO CHILDREN BORN FROM DONATIONS

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both in terms of how such markets are organized and in how they are experienced. Specifically, I build on Viviana Zelizer's sociological model of a market, which incorporates cultural, economic, and structural factors, by adding in biological factors. In this market, taking biology into account involves conceptualizing eggs and sperm as cells that are associated with female and male bodies, as well as gendered expectations of women and men.

In the first part of the book, I demonstrate how these factors interact to produce variation in the organization of the market. Looking at the historical development of egg and sperm donation, as well as the day-to-day practices of contemporary egg agencies and sperm banks, I find that the gendered framing of donation as a gift or a job influences how donation programs do business. In the second part of the book, I turn to the donors, finding that or-

ganizing paid donation as a gift or a job also profoundly affects their experiences of bodily commodification, including their embodied experiences of donation, how they talk about the money they receive (as a gift for the gift they have given or wages for a job well done), and how they define their relationship to children born from their donations.

**RO: How do you view the relationship between culture and economy?**

**RA:** I contend that the market for sex cells collapses a deeply held cultural distinction between the public sphere of the market and the private sphere of the home, because it is *family* that is *for sale*. Certainly, the staff in donation programs would never put it so bluntly, and economists might identify the actual product as eggs or sperm or the donors who provide them. But what those cells and donors make possible is families. Consequently, there is a tension between what is for sale and what is culturally appropriate, a tension that both egg agencies and sperm banks manage by deploying the altruistic rhetoric of donation.

Furthermore, given that women are more closely associated with the home and family life, paid egg donation is a more direct violation of this cultural distinction than is paid sperm donation. Traditionally, men's relationship to the home has been defined in terms of being a breadwinner, of providing financially for the family, so the connection between monetary exchange and family life that exists in sperm banks does not pose the same "threat" that

(continued on next page)

## INTERVIEW WITH RENE ALMELING (CONT'D)

it does in egg agencies. As a result, it is not only the language of donation that appears in egg agencies, but also the language of the gift, which serves to manage the cultural tension of women being paid for eggs that become children and create families.

**RO: In what ways is this market similar to markets for other goods? How is it distinct?**

**RA:** Markets in bodily goods are unusual in that they generally provoke enormous controversy. Like markets for blood and organs (Healy 2006), surrogate motherhood (Markens 2007; Teman 2010), and prostitution (Bernstein 2007), the market for eggs and sperm raises hackles because economic value is being assigned to the human body. However, as scholars have tended to assume that bodily

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“HOWEVER, AS SCHOLARS HAVE TENDED TO ASSUME THAT BODY COMMODIFICATION IS INHERENTLY AND UNIFORMLY DEGRADING, THERE HAS ACTUALLY BEEN RELATIVELY LITTLE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH [ON THIS TOPIC]...”

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commodification is inherently and uniformly degrading, there has actually been relatively little empirical research on the experiences of those who participate in such markets.

These markets are also unusual in that commodified exchange co-exists with gift rhetoric, an issue that I think is in need of more sociological research. In markets for bodily goods, when does altruistic rhetoric/framing occur? How is it mobilized and by whom? What are its effects? For example, gift rhetoric does appear in the markets for blood, organs, and surrogacy, but not in the

market for prostitution. It is very difficult to imagine a male or female prostitute claiming to "donate" sex, even as they are being paid for their services. But this is exactly what happens with egg donors, sperm donors, and surrogate mothers. One possibility is that gift rhetoric may be more likely to appear, and to be more "sticky," when it comes to bodily goods that women donate because of cultural ideals of women as caring and selfless. Along the same lines, production rhetoric may appear more often for goods that men donate.

However, this still does not explain why gift rhetoric does not appear in female prostitution. Lesley Sharp (2000) suggests that gift talk and bodily commodification are especially likely to co-exist in medical settings, and that would certainly hold for the cases discussed here (eggs, sperm, blood, organs, and surrogacy vs. prostitution). Another potential explanation is that prostitution does not violate the market/family distinction in quite the same way as egg donation and surrogacy, markets in which children are being created.

**RO: How might a cultural perspective be useful for crafting social and economic policy?**

**RA:** I think that policy debates about bodily commodification need to be infused with a more detailed understanding of what actually happens when people are paid for parts of their bodies. We need systematic, empirical research on markets for bodily goods and services, rather than relying on abstract distinctions between gifts and commodities or between the family and the market. Learning more about how these markets work in practice

will offer a way out of the interminable discussions over whether commodification is objectifying or liberating, dehumanizing or empowering, because normative questions such as these cannot be answered *a priori*. Commodification is not a generic or uniform process, and it can result in different kinds of outcomes for different kinds of people in different kinds of situations. Social scientists working in this arena can contribute to policy debates by analyzing precisely how it is that the structure and experience of bodily commodification is shaped by social categories and social inequalities, as economic valuations intertwine with cultural norms in specific organizational contexts.

**RO: What advice do you have for students of economic sociology interested in conducting research on culture, gender and the economy?**

**RA:** Pick a topic that fascinates you, because it is likely that you will be working on it for a long, long time. I did the first interview for this project as a first-year graduate student in 2002, and I just finished reviewing page proofs for the book yesterday!

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## REVIEW OF *LONGING AND BELONGING: PARENTS, CHILDREN AND CONSUMER CULTURE*

BY DAVID S. PEDULLA

Few sociologists can adequately bridge the diverse academic literatures on culture, consumption, childhood, inequality, families, and race. Yet, this is precisely what Allison Pugh is able to do in her skillful ethnography, *Longing and Belonging*. Drawing on rich ethnographic data, Pugh explores how parents and children interpret and use consumption in the process of constructing childhood.

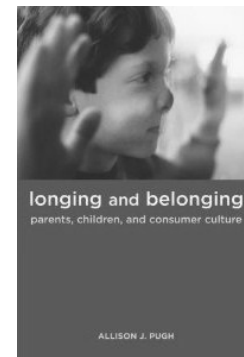
Three years of ethnographic fieldwork and interviews with parents and caregivers in 54 families provide the rich empirical basis for Pugh's analysis. Her observational data are drawn from three schools in Oakland, California: a public school with largely low-income African American families as well as another public school and a private school, each with more affluent families. The class diversity of her field sites allows Pugh to explore how social class is implicated in parents' and children's consumption processes and practices.

Most refreshing about Pugh's analysis is her desire to reframe the debate about the commodification of childhood and the mass marketing of consumer goods to children. Rather than contribute to the voluminous, and important, literature on the negative consequences of consumerism for children, Pugh seeks to understand the ways that commercialization shapes the meanings of care and belonging for children and the relationships among children and within families. In shifting her research question to the cultural and social meanings of children's consumption, Pugh enters into conversation with an exciting strand of sociological research at the nexus of cultural analysis and economic sociology. Some economic sociologists use culture as a concept that merely regulates, constrains, or shapes economic activity. More recently, however, sociologists have focused their attention on the ways that economic activity is actually constitutive of culture, social meaning, and interpersonal relationships. Pugh's ethnographic fieldwork provides the rich and textured data necessary to understand how children's consumption is used to create cultural meanings and social bonds.

*Longing and Belonging's* core theoretical contribution is the development of a concept that Pugh calls "the economy of dignity." The economy of dignity is "the system by which children make themselves audible, and therefore present, therefore mattering to their peers. Even for children, consumption is a language, a symbolic medium that communicates a message ..." (p. 51). The author describes the ways that consumer goods – and the meanings ascribed to them – create the social space within which children engage with one another, build their relationships, and establish their positions within status hierarchies. Drawing on Goffman, Pugh also identifies four types of facework – bridging labor, claiming, patrolling, and concealing – that children employ in order to maintain their dignity among their peers when their consumption does not align with the expectations of their social setting (p. 67).

Looking at variation in class, Pugh also describes the distinct ways that affluent and low-income parents relate to social and economic constraints on consumption. She argues that affluent parents engage in "symbolic deprivation" (p. 85) – consumption practices that allow them to maintain a self-image and social position as not being materialistic and hold on to their ambivalence about commercialism. Among low-income parents, Pugh identifies a pattern of "social indulgence," which she defines as: "the practice of buying for their children specific goods and experiences that would yield the most social impact for their dollars" (p. 124). These constructs provide a lens not only into the role of class in shaping consumption, but also the ways in which consumption – at its core – is a fundamentally social and cultural process.

Another important contribution of *Longing and Belonging* is expanding the concept of consumption to include the process whereby parents purchase the social contexts that will have a large impact on their children's futures. Labeled "pathway consumption," this type of buying includes providing children with certain types of neighborhoods in which to live, schools in which to study, and access to particular types of day care and



camp settings (p. 178). Pathway consumption is certainly shaped by cultural schemas and social understandings. At the same time, however, this form of consumption plays an integral role in reproducing homophilous social relationships, cultural understandings, and class inequality.

While Pugh's ethnographic account contains much to praise, there are some limitations to the analysis. First, as with much ethnographic work in low-income communities, it is difficult to separate the effects of race and class. In the low-income school under investigation in Pugh's analysis, 95% of the students were non-white (70% African American, 6% Asian American, 17% Latino, and 2% Other Races) (p. 30). The high concentration of students of color makes it difficult for the analyst to separate out what processes are class-related and what processes may have to do with racial identity. While this is certainly not something that a researcher has control over, it raised some concern that the analysis in *Longing and Belonging* centers on class difference when it is not necessarily possible to disentangle race from class in the low-income field site under investigation. Additionally, many of the cases Pugh describes in her analysis are explicitly about immigrant families. However, there is limited theorizing about how immigration more broadly may impact the dynamics of consumption.

These relatively minor points aside, *Longing and Belonging* is an important contribution to economic sociology and the literatures on social inequality, consumption, and childhood. For scholars interested in the ways that economic activity is constitutive of our cultural and social worlds, not just shaped by them, this is an exciting addition to the literature.

## CULTURE AND THE ECONOMY: FROM FARM TO FORK

BY MICHAELA DESOUCHEY

The current economic recession and political crises around the globe foreground questions around the cultural impacts of, and influences on, globalizing markets. How do cultural repertoires shape relationships among market economies, economic institutions, and systems of production? And how do economic structures inform social relationships and cultural tools? Taking a full measure of the whole system of economic exchange means considering markets to be cultural creatures with the power to inform or provoke on-the-ground reactions. Our challenge is to make sense of the diversity and interplay of social arrangements that shape production, consumption, and exchange – from micro to macro levels – a Polanyian ‘instituted economic process.’ Culture is a necessarily constitutive component of these dynamic relationships.

Recent considerations of culture in economic sociology research can be characterized by several approaches. A Bourdieuan approach connects cultural and economic capital. One body of scholarship in this vein examines cultural markets – such as film, music, the arts, or cuisine – as separate types of markets. Scholars distinguish facets of these “cultural industries” from those of other types of markets. Another approach focuses on the negotiations that take place in everyday economic transactions and relationships outside of firms. Scholars like Viviana Zelizer and Daniel Miller have highlighted the significance of using relational approaches to understanding how values and cultural meaning structures are central to the constitution of economic phenomena.

Comparative studies of culture, globalization, and economic development constitute a third growing area of research interest. Shehzad Nadeem’s new book, *Dead Ringers* (2010), nicely amplifies this domain.

The common bond of these approaches is a focus on how goods and markets are used in building and mediating relationships and in organizing an unstable social world. In my graduate work, I used food as a lens to investigate some of these connections. Food’s significance for cultural meaning, economic activity, and political relationships (as well as for biological necessity) is evident from the level of the individual and family to the nation and the globe. In public debates over the present status and future of food, for example, we find questions about individual freedoms, health, social stratification, commodification, government interventions versus free-market mechanics, critiques of economic systems, and the like. Yet, it is only recently that food has become a topic of serious consideration for cultural and economic sociologists.

Following food from farm to fork necessarily complicates divisions between culture and economy. Consumer demand for, or aversion to, certain foodstuffs is both conditioned by and reflected in cultural, as well as economic, structures. For example, the U.S. Department of Agriculture reports that within the last decade, Americans’ meat consumption has reached an all-time high – 195 pounds per capita per year. This is 57 pounds greater than per capita consumption in the 1950s. Understanding this change requires that we understand both the practicalities of the beef industry as well as the cultural value of beef in America. Alone, neither can explain this shift. Examining cross-national variation of the shifting economic and social importance of foodstuffs, we find that in Europe, country-level variation of trust in food producers is a subject of public discourse following a series of recent scandals and crises involving BSE (mad cow disease) and GM (genetically modified food) protests (Kjaernes, Harvey, and Warde 2007). Culture is necessarily implicated in how different countries respond to these predicaments and why similar crises have not occurred in the United States.

My own research focuses on the smaller-

scale locales of production and the contentious fringes of consumption – places where changes in practice are hotly debated and first take root. Although broad-scale change in practices of food production, distribution, and consumption require systemic and structural transformation, my work explores the micro-negotiations that form the foundations of these shifts. One of these foundations is the *space* of economic exchange – markets and marketplaces – which, as Fred Wherry (2008) shows, are important to study through a cultural lens. My (and others’) research on farmers markets, for example, shows that they serve as desirable spaces of community engagement, economic transaction, and lived cultural experience. Money changes hands, cultural values are monetized, and social relationships between buyer and seller are consecrated. Today there are more than 6,000 farmers markets across the country, double the number from 2002.

Farmers markets have themselves become cultural commodities. They serve as both points of pride for municipalities and cooperative business ventures for small-scale producers – linked by shared interest in the relationships that foods create. While corporate customers are generating increased interest for some of these producers, due to their ability to provide more consistent demand (such as Wal-Mart’s recently announced decision to carry local produce in its stores), alternative spaces and modes of consumption must be recognized as providing the foundation.

Producers also exploit cultural opportunities when deciding *what* to produce, *how* to produce it, and *how to market* their products to the discerning public. Generating consumer demand often involves framing a new product as desirable. My work with Klaus Weber and Kathryn Heinze on transformations in the grass-fed meat and dairy industry reveals the influence of culture on both the supply and demand sides

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## CULTURE AND THE ECONOMY (CONT'D)

of markets. For example, identity codes of “authenticity” and “natural” helped grass-fed meat and dairy producers create demand for their products in two ways: first, to inform mainstream consumers of problems within the meat industry and second, to challenge them to change their consumption patterns in order to address these issues. Emphasis on these cultural codes helped producers overcome the challenges of grass-fed’s higher prices and to alleviate consumer concerns about quality (Weber, Heinze, and DeSoucey 2008).

Consumption links culture and economic exchange to purchasing power. ‘Alternative’ foods serve as a form of cultural capital and a vehicle for class distinction (Johnston and Baumann 2009), due to their higher prices (offering a cultural explanation for why Whole Foods’ popular nickname is Whole Paycheck). Yet, supporters of these alternative foods argue that when goods are inexpensive, social and environmental costs are high, pointing to

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how the subsidized production of corn, soy, and commodity crops makes unhealthy food widely available. Thus food historian Lynne Olver cogently writes that “culinary irony” – the conflux of artisanal cheeses and fast food, free-range chicken and factory-farmed nuggets, local organic produce and packaged snacks, farmers’ markets and big-box superstores – characterizes the contemporary American diet. Despite these contradictions, organized efforts to widen economic access to healthier foods have gained steam in recent years, merging economic issues with questions of culture. For example, many farmers markets now

accept EBT (food stamp) cards, groups are creating community gardens on abandoned urban lots, and public school lunch programs across the country are seeing cultural-culinary reformers at their kitchen doors.

In expanding the focus to global markets, we see how cultural mobilization is used as an effective tool for combating the flattening effects of globalization. For example, international free trade agreements – including GATT, and NAFTA – protect certain goods and practices as special by building in “cultural exception” clauses, which legitimate nationally restrictive measures for the media and audiovisual industries. Supporters often frame such clauses as a country’s right, or even duty, to preserve and promote its culture and cultural heritage.

My recent article on ‘gastronationalism’ in the European Union (DeSoucey 2010) extends this cultural exception model to food. I examined the politics of authenticity for foods legitimated as nationally protected by EU ‘designation of origin’ labels. Protecting authenticity requires affective and economic resources, however, which impose new limits and logics of action in return. We can ask, for example, to what extent countries level their internal cultural variation in constructing a coherent ‘national food culture’ as a counter to globalization.

Although these policies can be viewed as value-adds to protecting jobs and commodity chains, for economic sociologists interested in culture, their very existence – and the contention surrounding their enactment – further indicates that global markets are contentious spaces made up of players with unequal starting points and cultural resources. We also need further investigation of the relationship between culture, economics, and politics in countries whose rising standards of living are creating increased demand for consumer markets for previously inaccessible foods (such as meats), and where rising food prices are generating social and political unrest.

While it is often methodologically and epistemologically helpful to distinguish culture from economy, the two are never truly separate. Economic sociologists stand to benefit from asking more questions about how cultural understandings – especially when they become contentious – are mediated through, and provide bases for, economic institutions and practices.

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Michaela DeSoucey received her PhD from Northwestern, and is currently a Postdoctoral Research Associate for the Center for the Study of Social Organizations at Princeton University

## A NEW INQUIRY INTO INSTITUTIONS AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY LORI SMITH

How do institutions affect national development? That was the central question in a recent project sponsored by the National Science Foundation and the Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies. Institutions have long attracted the attention of social scientists, but few studies have examined the role of institutions in national development 'on the ground', or through systematic comparative field research. The project summarized here did just that. The project brought together a multinational team of scholars - under the direction of Alejandro Portes (Princeton University) - and focused on five institutions of a national scope (the Stock Exchange, Internal Revenue Service, National Health Service, Civil Aeronautics Agency, and National Postal Service) in five major countries (Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic).

The idea for the project came from a graduate seminar in economic sociology and evolved through a series of conversations with colleagues at Princeton University about the rise of the 'new institutionalism' in the social sciences. Peter Evans' recent work on the 'institutional turn' in development studies also called attention to the need for new empirical research concerning what this 'turn' meant in reality. Conversations with colleagues - including future collaborators in Latin America - revealed that the path ahead consisted of empirical research on real institutions of national scope.

Following these conversations, research teams were formed in each country with individual investigators assigned to specific institutions. For each institution and each country, in-depth interviews were conducted with members at different levels of the organization including managers and rank-and-file personnel), as well as strategic users and clients (e.g.

commercial airlines, pension funds investing in the stock market) and other external informants. In addition to site visits, case studies also involved the compilation of: 1) legal rules governing the activities of each institution; 2) internal reports and evaluations; 3) academic and journalistic reports. The idea was to triangulate different methodological approaches so that each investigator could arrive at an authoritative assessment of the institution. The goal was to establish the extent to which real organizations conform to their institutional blueprints and the extent to which they make a significant contribution to economic and social development.

Conferences held in Buenos Aires in 2006 and in Santo Domingo in 2008 brought together the authors of the twenty-three completed institutional studies to discuss their findings and their policy implications. The institutional studies were then posted on the website of the Center for Migration and Development at Princeton University (<http://cmd.princeton.edu/papers.shtml>). The theoretical framework for this study, including a definition of institutions, was published in *Population and Development Review* (Portes 2006). Results from the first phase of the study, including nine institutions in three countries, have been published in *Studies in Comparative International Development* and, in Spanish, in *Instituciones y Desarrollo* (Siglo XXI Editores, 2009). The main findings of the study are included in a paper recently published in the *Socio-Economic Review* by Alejandro Portes (Princeton University) and Lori D. Smith (Princeton University).

A final book publication aims to bring comparative organizational analysis into contemporary studies of national development. The book volume will include synthetic country-focused chapters authored by the lead investigators for each country, a theoretical introduction, and a

comparative analytic conclusion. Much of the strength of this volume lies in the comparative study of institutions both within and across different countries.

At first glance, observers may be tempted to lump institutional features observed across these contexts - for example, managerial autonomy in federal agencies - under the umbrella of 'New Public Management', or to attribute specific institutional features to the 'imperatives' of globalization and modernization. But a homogenous view of these institutions is challenged by national and international comparisons, given variation in the actual implementation of these models and in specific national and organization-level conditions.

Results from the project thus caution against a monolithic treatment of organizations and institutions, and should help to move development theory and research beyond speculative typologies and vague declarations that 'institutions matter.' More generally, this project demonstrates the viability of empirical comparative research using organizations as units of analysis, and shows how comparative methodologies can help not only in explaining outcomes at the aggregate level but also in comprehending the actual complexity of organizations and institutions.

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Lori Smith is a PhD Candidate at Princeton University

## ECONOMIC SOCIOLOGY NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### THE *ACCOUNTS* SPOTLIGHT: MIN ZHOU, CO-WINNER OF THE BURT STUDENT AWARD

Min Zhou is a PhD Candidate in Sociology at Harvard University, and expects to defend his dissertation by May 2011. Min is broadly interested in political and economic sociology with a global or transnational perspective. His dissertation research focuses on the causes and mechanisms driving the global institutionalization of human rights since the end of World War II. In addition to the dissertation, he studies societal involvement in international relations in East Asia, and also tries to develop a deeply relational account of global trade networks.

Born in Nanjing, China, Min lived there until college, when he moved to Beijing to study Sociology at Peking University. Ignoring the longtime feud between Sociology and Economics, he took Economics as a second major, which made him more open-minded towards, and less critical of, economic perspectives. Affiliation with the Weatherhead Center for International Studies at Harvard further opened his mind to political science and international relations. As a result, his research reflects these interdisciplinary influences.



Min will start working as an Assistant Professor at the University of Victoria in Canada this fall. In addition to sociology, he likes traveling and being immersed in different cultures. When at home, reading and watching comedies take up most of his leisure time. *Tao Te Ching* is his longtime favorite read and a source of inspiration.

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### Call for News & Announcements

If you have any news or announcements relevant to the ASA Economic Sociology Section, we encourage you to submit them for publication in future issues of *Accounts*. To submit an item for publication, please send an e-mail with the relevant information to Victoria Reyes at: [vreyes@princeton.edu](mailto:vreyes@princeton.edu)

We also encourage you to submit announcements regarding publications and relevant meetings to our listserv and to be published on our website: [www2.asanet.org/sectionecon/](http://www2.asanet.org/sectionecon/) To submit an item for inclusion on our website, please send an email with the relevant information to Eric Cheney at: [cheneye@cwu.edu](mailto:cheneye@cwu.edu)

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# ASA ROUNDTABLES ON ECONOMIC SOCIOLOGY

## Table 1: Social Structure and Financial Markets

**Topics:** 1. Economic Sociology; 2. Organizations, Formal and Complex; 3. Occupations/Professions

**Session Organizer:** Damon Jeremy Philips, University of Chicago

*Room at the top: Relative Performance, Category Membership and Equity Ratings*

-Anne Fleischer, University of Toronto  
*Securitization - Organizational Novelty, Global Assemblage, and the Rapid Emergence of Misunderstood "Alter-Markets"*

-David C. Lubin, University of Chicago  
*Security analysts' attention structures and evaluation models*

-Matteo Prato, IESE Business School  
*Ethnicity and Susceptibility to Network-based Learning: Recruiting Investors into the Kenyan Capital Market*

-Christopher B. Yenkey, Cornell University

## Table 2: Networks and Entrepreneurship

**Topics:** 1. Economic Sociology; 2. Occupations/Professions

**Session Organizer:** Damon Jeremy Philips, University of Chicago

*Cross-National Sociological Examination of Entrepreneurship*

-Richard A. Colignon, Saint Louis University; Chikako Usui, University of Missouri-St. Louis

*Diverse Metropoli & Iconic Ghettos: Neighborhood Determinants of Inner City Entrepreneurship*

-Christopher Wheat, MIT; Alfred Reed, Rutgers University

*Stinchcombe was Right: Revisiting His "Liability of Newness" Hypothesis*

-Tiantian Yang, University of North Carolina; Howard E. Aldrich, University of North Carolina

*The Power of Founding Institutions: Comparative Studies of Two Chinese Start-up Cohorts' Network*

-Chenjian Zhang, Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences

(BIGSSS); Justin Tan, Schulich School of Business

## Table 3: Institutional Logics of Markets

**Topics:** 1. Economic Sociology; 2. Organizations, Formal and Complex

**Session Organizer:** Damon Jeremy Philips, University of Chicago

*Postsocialist Economic Change through a Gender Lens: "Add Gender and Stir" versus Gender as Constitutive*

-Jeffrey Hass, University of Richmond

*The German model going through crisis?*

*SMEs, Institutional Change and the Economic Crisis 2008/09*

-Stefan Kirchner, University of Hamburg; Jürgen Beyer, University of Hamburg

*Shareholder Power: Institutional Logics, Categories, and CEO Dismissal in Large U.S. Firms, 1985-2007*

-Shoonchul Shin,

*How Does Legitimation Cognitively Influence Actors?*

-Hongwei Xu, INSEAD; Litao Zhao, National University of Singapore

## Table 4: Networks and Innovation

**Topics:** 1. Economic Sociology; 2. Organizations, Formal and Complex

**Session Organizer:** Damon Jeremy Philips, University of Chicago

*Small-firm Networks and Innovation: A Case Study of the Taiwanese Bicycle Industry*

-Michelle Fei-yu Hsieh, Academia Sinica  
*Inter-organizational dynamics in organizational fields. Technological development as a source of self-reinforcing inter-organizational mechanisms*

-Uli Meyer, Berlin Institute of Technology

*Organizational Innovation in Creative Industries: High-technology Enablers, Fashion Incumbents and Digital Branding*

-Iva Petkova, Columbia University

*The Insider Problem: Measuring Information Access in Social Networks*

-Craig Tutterow, University of Chicago

## Table 5: Labor Markets I

**Topics:** 1. Economic Sociology; 2. Occupations/Professions; 3. Work and Labor Markets

**Session Organizer:** Damon Jeremy Philips, University of Chicago

*A Theory of Dual Job Search and Sex-Based Occupational Clustering*

-Alan Michael Benson, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

*Is My Friend My Colleague? Danwei and Coworker Ties in Contemporary Urban China*

-Soyoung Kwon, Purdue University  
*How Contacts Matter: A Re-examination of Network Effects across the Earnings Distribution*

-Steve McDonald, North Carolina State University

*New labor-market intermediary and shifting market morphology*

-Antoine Vernet, Université Paris-Ouest / Université Paris I

## Table 6: Labor Markets II

**Topics:** 1. Economic Sociology; 2. Organizations, Formal and Complex; 3. Work and Labor Markets

**Session Organizer:** Damon Jeremy Philips, University of Chicago

*Quitting a Job: The Effect of Job Characteristics on Job Separation of University Educated Women*

-Mito Akiyoshi, Senshu University;

Junya Tsutsui, Ritsumeikan University  
*No Quick Fix: De-agglomeration and Flexible Specialization in the American Film Industry*

-Heather D. Gautney, Fordham University; Chris Rhomberg, Fordham University

*Apples to Oranges: How Category Overlap Facilitates Commensuration in an Online Labor Market*

-Ming De Leung, UC Berkeley

*Organizations, markets, and surveillance: making sellers for centers of calculation*

-Zsuzsanna Vargha, Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies

(continued on page 10)

## ASA ROUNDTABLES (CONT'D)

### Table 7: Economic Sociology of Work

Topics: 1. Economic Sociology; 2. Work and Labor Markets; 3. Social Networks

Session Organizer: Damon Jeremy Philips, University of Chicago

*Documenting Unregulated Work: A Survey of Workplace Violations in Chicago, Los Angeles and New York City*

-Annette Bernhardt, National Employment Law Project; Michael W. Spiller, Cornell University; Diana Polson, City University of New York, Graduate Center

*A Rural handloom Textile Industry in Bihar, India: A Case of social embeddedness*

-Uma Sarmistha, Kansas State University

*Conflicts, norms and social relations at work*

-Kirsten Thommes, Radboud University Nijmegen; Agnes Akkerman, Radboud University Nijmegen; Rene Torenvlied, Utrecht University; Marieke Born, Radboud University Nijmegen

*Outsourcing, skill and quality of work-life in global production networks: case of Indian software industry*

-Asha Titus

### Table 8: Economic Sociology of the Life Course

Topics: 1. Economic Sociology; 2. Demography; 3. Stratification/Mobility

Session Organizer: Damon Jeremy Philips, University of Chicago

*Financial Socialization of College Students: A Comparison of University Students in Ankara and Florida*

-Zeynep Copur, Hacettepe University; Michael S. Gutter, University of Florida *Where Education Matters Most: A Multilevel Analysis of Higher Degrees and Earnings across Metropolitan Statistical Areas*

-Colby R. King, University of South Carolina

*Latent Classes of Mental Wants in the Korean and Hongkong Population: for Marketsegmentation*

-Aejung Kwon, Yonsei University, South Korea

*Occupation, Retirement, and Well-Being*

-Michelle Pannor Silver, University of Chicago

### Table 9: Comparative Regimes of Regulation

Topics: 1. Economic Sociology

Session Organizer: Damon Jeremy Philips, University of Chicago

*A Relational Account of the Rise and Decline of Defined Benefit Provision in the UK (1948-2008)*

-Yally Avrahampour, London School of Economics & Political Science

*An integrative framework for theorizing socially responsible markets and corporate regulation*

-Keith R. Brown, Saint Joseph's University; Paul Dean, University of Maryland *Mobilizing Competing Standards: Transnational Private Regulation in the Field of Copyright*

-Leonhard Dobusch, Free University

Berlin; Sigrid Quack, Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies

*Myth of Neoliberalism in South Korea - Neoliberalization with absence of Neoliberalism*

-Jeehye Kang, University of Maryland at College Park

### Table 10: Income Inequality – Empirical Evidence

Topics: 1. Economic Sociology; 2. Occupations/Professions; 3. Labor and Labor Movements

Session Organizer: Damon Jeremy Philips, University of Chicago

*Income Inequality and Economic Growth: The Estimation of Structural Equation Modeling Across the U.S. Metropolitan Areas*

-Huiping li, Shanghai U. of Finance and Economics; Stephanie Moller, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

*Opportunities for a Few: Pro-market Economic Policies and the Regressive Redistribution of Income*

-Marcos Emilio Perez, The University of Texas at Austin

*Does Increasing the Minimum Wage Hurt Employment? A Look at Midwestern States in the US*

-Michael Franklin Thompson, Indiana University Bloomington

*Fat, Muscles, and Wages*

-Tobias Wolbring, LMU Munich; Christiane Bozoyan, Institute of Sociology, LMU Munich

### Table 11: Economic Sociology and Inequality

Topics: 1. Economic Sociology; 2. Political Sociology; 3. Political Economy

Session Organizer: Damon Jeremy Philips, University of Chicago

*Inside Out/Outside In: Tensions of Belonging and the American Dream*

-Melanie E. L. Bush, Adelphi University

*Robin Hood Reversed*

-H. Jacob Seilo, UC Berkeley *Attitudes toward Inequality and the Welfare State in the United States (1990-2006)*

-Liza Steele, Princeton University

### Table 12: Market Crises

Topics: 1. Economic Sociology; 2. Political Economy

Session Organizer: Damon Jeremy Philips, University of Chicago

*Short-Sighted Genius: How Financial Innovation Transformed Euphoria into Crisis*

-John Barnshaw, University of South Florida; Lynn Letukas, University of Delaware

*Economic Crises and Poverty in Turkey*

-Didem Gurses, Yildiz Technical University

*The Scarring Effects of Bankruptcy: Cumulative Disadvantage across Credit and Labor Markets*

-Michelle Lee Maroto, University of Washington

*A Cyclical Accumulation Theory of Capitalist Crisis*

-Edo Navot, University of Wisconsin - Madison

## ASA ECONOMIC SOCIOLOGY SESSIONS

### **Invited Session. From Embeddedness to Relational Work: A Revised Agenda for Economic Sociology**

Session Organizers: Fred Block, University of California-Davis; Viviana A. Zelizer, Princeton University

### **Information Asymmetry, Uncertainty, and Markets for Lemons: How do Actors, Organizations, and Institutions Cope?**

Session Organizers: Cristobal Young, Stanford University; Donald Light, University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey

*Information Asymmetry, Uncertainty, and Risk Aversion: Prices and Pricing on the Dissertations for Sale Market*

-Ararat L. Osipian, Vanderbilt University

*Function through Ambiguity: Extending the  $W(y)$  Model of Production Markets*

-Xiaolu Wang, Columbia University

*Face Value: Information and Signaling in an Illegal Market*

-Trevon D. Logan, The Ohio State University; Manisha Shah, University of California, Irvine

*Interorganizational Trust Production Contingent on Product and Performance Uncertainty*

-Oliver Schilke, UCLA; Lynne G. Zucker, UCLA; Gunnar Wiedenfels, ProSiebenSat.1 Media AG; Malte Brettel, RWTH Aachen University

### **Inequality and the Crisis of American Capitalism**

Session Organizer: Bruce Western, Harvard University

*It's Good to Be a Capitalist: Why Capitalists are Getting More and Workers are Getting Less*

-Tali Kristal, Stanford University; David B. Grusky, Stanford University

*Executive Compensation in the Economy of Permanent Crisis: Do Institutional Pressures for Change Matter?*

-Ed Carberry, Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University

*The Incidence of Low-Wage Work in the United States, 1949-2007: A Structuralist-Regulationist Analysis*

-Pablo Andres Mitnik, Stanford University

*Financialization, Wealth, and Income Inequality*

-Michael David Nau, Ohio State University

### **New Institutionalism in Economic Sociology**

Session Organizer: Victor Nee, Cornell University

*Inter-Firm Status Signaling Through Conversational Exchange*

-Scott Golder, Cornell University; Victor Nee, Cornell University

*How Are Legal Institutions Formulated?: Organizational Dynamics of Art Bill Deliberations in Korean National Assembly*

-Kang San Lee, Yonsei University; Dongyoub Shin, Yonsei University; Eunmee Kim, Seoul National University; Joongeek Lee, Seoul National University

*The Extra-Legal Governance Structure of a Shadow Financial System: Governance in the Absence of Formal Regulation*

-Todd Arthur Bridges, Brown University

*The Paradoxical Resurgence of Managerialism in the Shareholder Value Era, 1984-2001*

-Adam Goldstein, UC Berkeley

*From Economic Openness to Institutional Embeddedness: Global Investors and Firm Performance in China's Stock Market*

-Junmin Wang, University of Memphis; Doug Guthrie, Stern School of Business, New York University

### **Culture and Exclusion in the Organization of Work**

Session Organizer: Alexandra Kalev, University of Arizona

*Cultural Labor & Industrial Upgrading in India's IT Enabled Service Industry*

-Eric Richard Eide, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor

*Off to a Green Start? How State Agents Shape the Employment Outcomes of Foreign Nationals*

-Ben A Rissing, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Emilio J. Castilla, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

*Organizational Culture and Politics of (In)visibility: On the Blind Spots of Women's Discrimination in the Academy*

-Nitza Berkovitch, Ben Gurion University; Anat Waldman, Ben Gurion University; Riza Yanay

*The Equal Employment Opportunity Law and the Institutionalization of Sex Segregation in Japan*

-Eunmi Mun, Harvard University

*Branding Femininity at Hooters: Permissible Sex Discrimination*

-Emilie Dubois, Boston College

### **The Creative Economy**

Session Organizers: Ashley Mears, Boston University

*Performance implications of outward personnel mobility networks in creative industries*

-Frederic Clement Godart, INSEAD; Andrew Shipilov, INSEAD; Kim Claes, INSEAD

*Measuring and Quantifying the Art Market: Indexes and Analysis from the 1960s to 1990s*

-Erica H. Coslor, University of Chicago

*Great Chefs or Great Dishes?: A Gendered Analysis of Media within a Creative Occupation*

-Deborah A. Harris, Texas State University-San Marcos; Patti A. Giuffre, Texas State University-San Marcos; Jamie Hornbuckle, Texas State University - San Marcos

*Disclaiming the Hamburger? Maintaining Status with Disclaimers in the Face of Lowbrow Behavior*

-Oliver Hahl, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Renee Richardson Gosline, MIT Sloan School of Management

# ASA SECTION ON ECONOMIC SOCIOLOGY

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