



Sociology Department Seminar Series

Wednesday, May 15, 12:15 am ET

Location: PH 347

Food and beverages will be served

Sam Stabler, Hunter College, CUNY



Moral Minefields: How Sociologists Debate Good Science

Few academic disciplines are as contentious as sociology. Yet despite the controversy, scholars manage to engage in thorny debates without being censured. How? 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. 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.

Sam Stabler is a doctoral lecturer in the Sociology Department at Hunter College, CUNY and completed his PhD in Sociology at Yale University. His research examines how material settings are transformed into moral landscapes by religious missionaries and contributes to enduring debates in the sociology of religion, cultural sociology, and comparative-historical sociology. In one collaborative project he examines the moral implications of routine sociological debate, and in another he explores the sociology of humor. His writing has appeared in *Sociology of Religion*, *Demography*, and *Theory and Society*.

We look forward to seeing you there!