

## SOCIAL SCIENCES

Social sciences include disciplines as diverse as sociology, psychology, social anthropology and political sciences. The articles selected for this issue of the MCFA Annals show that despite the diversity of theoretical and methodological approaches, what unites such disciplines is a focus on a common theme: the ways humans in different social, cultural, economic and geographic contexts react (and adapt) to the transformations that the turn of the millennium is witnessing.

The article by Alexandra Steinberg analyses, from a social psychological perspective, the effects, in the Greater London business area, of a change that shook the global markets in 1999/2000: the dotcom stockmarket collapse. Starting from the realization that very little is known about the entrepreneurs' perspectives on technological and socio-economic transformations, the author discusses the changing meanings of success and decision-making in light of the dotcom crash. In her analysis, Steinberg describes entrepreneurship as a *collective* sense-making process (something antithetical to the individualistic ethos that is believed to be central to entrepreneurship), and illustrates how values as well as practices are renegotiated through communication and interaction among businesspeople. In exploring how a system of thinking that engenders a sense of 'business community' comes to the fore in the aftermath of the dotcom crash, the author points to the valuable contribution social psychology can make to understanding entrepreneurship.

Isabella Crespi's article explores, from a sociological perspective, different dimensions of gender socialisation. It sets out to shed light on the pattern of association between socio-economic conditions and parents' gender attitudes. In addressing this issue, Crespi avails herself of mainly quantitative information from Britain drawn from British survey data sources. Central to her article is the role of 'tradition', and particularly the transmission of 'traditional' gender roles (in the division of labour, for example) from one generation to another. The author shows how status may play a decisive role in hindering the transmission of 'traditional' gender roles, and argues that family life and relationship still determine, to a significant extent, the ways gender roles are conceptualised and enacted in everyday life.

Both case studies represent instances of different approaches to different themes. However, they also point to the significance of interdisciplinarity, and especially to the practical uses that can be made of the knowledge generated by such studies. Furthermore, these works reveal the extent to which approaches that seem the exclusive domain of one discipline can illuminate questions asked in other disciplinary fields.

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