

James C. Mellody

MIT Sloan School of Management
100 Main Street E62-383, Cambridge, MA 02142
jmellody@mit.edu | jmellody.github.io

EDUCATION

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Sloan School of Management

Ph.D., Management

2024 (*Expected*)

Thesis: “Organizational Success and Cultural Diversity in Ecologies of Attention”

- Committee: Ray Reagans, Susan Silbey, Ezra Zuckerman Sivan
- Finalist for the 2023 INFORMS/Organization Science Dissertation Proposal Competition

S.M., Management Research

2020

University of Pennsylvania

B.A., *summa cum laude*, East Asian Languages and Civilizations

2015

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Cultural Diversity in Organizations and Competitive Ecologies

Digital Platforms and the Attention Economy

Coordination in Knowledge Work

PAPERS UNDER REVIEW

[1] Mellody, James. “A Different Kind of Tradeoff: Cultural Diversity in Ecologies of Attention.”

- Job market paper: under review at the *American Sociological Review*
- Finalist for the 2023 INFORMS/Organization Science Dissertation Proposal Competition

Abstract. What determines the diversity of cultural material produced in a market? In many consumer product markets, periods of competition support cultural diversity, but alternating periods of concentration drive cultural homogeneity. A stable partition can emerge, separating a culturally homogenous market center from a culturally diverse periphery. Cultural diversity exists temporarily, or is relegated to the market fringe. These conditions are reflected in the choice faced by organizations: grow in the market center by producing culturally generic material, or attract a smaller, more engaged consumer base by producing culturally distinct material in the periphery. I examine a different competitive context: ecologies of attention, in which consumers can readily engage with multiple organizations (e.g., online communities, voluntary organizations) simultaneously and easily transition from being consumers to also producers of content. I study Reddit as a case of an attention ecology, leveraging user participation data and the text of over 2 billion comments from over 14 thousand subreddits. I find that subreddits face a tradeoff contingent on their location in the resource space, enabling cultural diversity to survive in crowded, competitive locations, while cultural homogeneity emerges in sparse, uncompetitive areas. I draw on these findings to introduce a broader theory of market partitioning.

[2] Conzon, Vanessa and James Mellody. “Concerted Quantification: How Expert Teams Reconcile Overwork and Client Satisfaction.”

- R&R at *Organization Science*

WORKING PAPERS

[1] Mellody, James. “Narrating Value: How Staff Professionals Form Embedded Relationships with Line Workers.” (preparing to submit)

[2] Mellody, James and Ray Reagans. “Beyond Representation: Extending the Effectiveness of Diversity Approaches via Individuation.” (revising manuscript)

WORKS IN PROGRESS

[1] Mellody, James. “Sources of Cultural Change in Ecologies of Attention.” (data analysis stage)

[2] Mellody, James and Vanessa Conzon. “Keeping Time: Interaction Scripts as Coordinating Mechanisms for Self-Organizing Teams.” (data analysis stage)

[3] Zuckerman Sivan, Ezra, Catresa Barlow, and James Mellody. “What Day is It and Who Cares about the Date? Social Media Expressions of Temporal Disorientation Before and After Pandemic Onset.” (drafting manuscript)

AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

- Finalist, INFORMS/Organization Science Dissertation Proposal Competition (2023)
- AOM OMT Above and Beyond the Call of Duty Award (2023)
- MIT Martin Family Fellowship for Sustainability (2020 – 2021; ~ \$100,000)
- MIT Sloan PhD Fellowship (2017 – 2023)
- Phi Beta Kappa (2016)
- Fulbright U.S. Student Program Research Grant – Alternate (2015)
- William R. LaFleur Memorial Prize for Best Undergraduate Thesis in Japanese Studies at the University of Pennsylvania (2015)
- Greater Philadelphia Asian Studies Consortium Best Paper Award (2015)

RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

“A Different Kind of Tradeoff: Cultural Diversity in Ecologies of Attention.”

- MIT Organization Studies Seminar, Cambridge, MA, 2023
- Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, 2023
- MIT Economic Sociology Working Group, Cambridge, MA, 2023

“Concerted Quantification: How Expert Teams Reconcile Overwork and Client Satisfaction.”

- Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, 2023

“Consolidation or Fracturing: Change in Online Communities.”

- Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA, 2022
- MIT Economic Sociology Working Group, Cambridge, MA, 2022

“Narrating Value: How Staff Professionals Form Embedded Relationships with Line Workers.”

- Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Virtual, 2020
- American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Virtual, 2020
- MIT Economic Sociology Working Group, Cambridge, MA, 2020
- Law and Society Association Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, 2019

“Beyond Representation: Extending the Effectiveness of Diversity Approaches via Individuation.”

- Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Virtual, 2021

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Organizational Processes (MIT Sloan MBA)

Fall 2023

- Teaching assistant for Professor Nathan Wilmers

Organizational Processes for Business Analytics (MIT Sloan Undergraduate) Fall 2019, 2020

- Teaching assistant for Professor Ray Reagans; solo-taught lecture on negotiations
- Teaching ratings: 6.5/7; 5.9/7

Power and Negotiation (MIT Sloan MBA) Fall 2020

- Teaching assistant for Professor Basima Tewfik
- Teaching ratings: 6.3/7

Social Entrepreneurship (Wharton Coursera Course) Fall 2014 – Spring 2015

- Teaching assistant for Professors Ian MacMillan and James Thompson

SERVICE

Student Co-Organizer for 2023 Economic Sociology Job Market Showcase	2023
Reviewer, AOM OMT Division	2019 – Present
Co-Organizer for MIT Sloan Organization Studies Seminar Speaker Breakfasts	2019
Co-Organizer for MIT Sloan Behavioral and Policy Sciences Admitted Students Reception	2019
Co-Organizer for MIT Sloan Alumni Reception at AOM Annual Meeting	2019

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Heidrick and Struggles, Inc. , Chicago, IL and New York, NY	
Leadership Consulting Analyst	2016 – 2017
Executive Search Analyst	2015 – 2016

Snider Entrepreneurial Research Center, The Wharton School , Philadelphia, PA	
Research Assistant	2014 – 2015

Pasona Tech, Inc. , Tokyo, Japan	
Summer Intern	2014

SKILLS

Programming Languages and Software: Python, R, STATA, Gephi, ATLAS.ti
Languages: English (fluent); Japanese (conversational)

REFERENCES

Ray Reagans

Alfred P. Sloan Professor of Management
Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
 MIT Sloan School of Management
 (617) 715-4154
rreagans@mit.edu

Ezra W. Zuckerman Sivan

Alvin J. Siteman (1948) Professor of Entrepreneurship and Strategy
 MIT Sloan School of Management
 (617) 253-1918
ewzucker@mit.edu

Susan S. Silbey

Leon and Anne Goldberg Professor
 MIT Sloan School of Management
 (617) 253-6952
ssilbey@mit.edu