

Ruth Braunstein, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Sociology at University of Connecticut

Stamford, CT, US

Dr. Braunstein is a cultural sociologist interested in the role of taxes, taxpaying, religion, and morality in American political life.

Biography

Ruth Braunstein is an Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Connecticut, where she is Director of Undergraduate Studies and Director of the Meanings of Democracy Lab. Ruth's award-winning research has been published in the American Sociological Review, the American Journal of Cultural Sociology, Contexts, the Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, Political Power and Social Theory, Sociology of Religion, Theory and Society, and Qualitative Sociology, among other outlets. Her research has been covered in the New York Times, Washington Post, Time Magazine, Huffington Post, New York Magazine, National Catholic Reporter and Religion News Service, among other outlets, and recent writing has appeared in The Guardian, The Conversation, and the New York Daily News. Her first book, *Prophets and Patriots: Faith in Democracy Across the Political Divide*, is a comparative ethnographic study of progressive faith-based community organizing and Tea Party activism. She is also the co-editor of a volume exploring the role of religion in progressive politics, entitled *Religion and Progressive Activism: New Stories About Faith and Politics*. Her current book project, *My Tax Dollars: The Sacred Taxpayer and the Almighty Dollar* (under contract with Princeton University Press), examines how the mundane act of taxpaying can, under certain circumstances, become infused with intense moral significance -- sometimes positive, sometimes negative -- with major implications for American politics and institutions. She is a Faculty Fellow at the Center for Cultural Sociology at Yale University, and has previously been a Visiting Fellow at Princeton University's Center for the Study of Religion; a Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) Public Fellow; a Public Discourse Project Faculty Fellow; and an American Fellow of AAUW. She was also a core faculty member of the UConn Humanities Institute's Humility and Conviction in Public Life Project. Ruth is a former Associate Editor of *Sociology of Religion* and serves on the Editorial Boards of the *American Sociological Review*, the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, *Sociological Forum*, and *Qualitative Sociology*. She served for several years on the inaugural editorial board of *The Immanent Frame*, a digital forum on secularism, religion and the public sphere published by the Social Science Research Council. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of PRRI (Public Religion Research Institute).

Areas of Expertise

Taxes and Taxpaying, Religion Politics & Culture, Faith-based Communities, Religious Studies, Cultural Sociology, Sociology of Religion

Affiliations

Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI): Member, Board of Directors, Center for Cultural Sociology, Yale University : Faculty Fellow, Public Discourse Project : Faculty Fellow, AAUW : American Fellow

Education

New York University
Ph.D. Sociology

New York University
M.A. Sociology

Georgetown University
B.S. Foreign Service

Accomplishments

Faculty Mentor Award, University of Connecticut's Department of Sociology
2021

Distinguished Early Career Award, American Sociological Association's Religion Section
2021

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