**1.3.2019**, (R038/U006), **Alessandro Piazza** (Rice University): *How Stigmatized Categories Emerge: The Genesis of the Abortion Clinic in the United States after Roe v. Wade*

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**Abstract**

A growing area of interest within the literature on categorization concerns stigmatized categories, i.e. groups of organizations that are collectively perceived as engaging in controversial practices. Because such practices draw high levels of societal disapproval, which in turn makes the category unattractive to potential new entrants, the processes through which stigmatized categories of organizations form represent a key empirical puzzle. In this paper, we examine stigmatized category formation through an in-depth historical case study of free-standing abortion clinics in the United States. We analyze primary and secondary materials and identify five mechanisms that contributed to the formation of this stigmatized category: entry by de alio organizations championing allied causes; the founding of de novo, specialist organizations by pro-choice advocates; the exit of generalist organizations from abortion provision; an increase in social movement pressure against abortion providers; and finally involuntary specialization of clinics, as customers no longer frequented clinics for other services. These mechanisms contributed not only to the establishment of this stigmatized category, but also to the sharpening of the category boundary through increased categorical contrast that segregated abortion clinics from mainstream medical providers. We conclude by discussing the relevance of our findings for the literatures on stigma and categories.

**Bio**

**Alessandro Piazza** is an Assistant Professor of Strategic Management in the Jones Graduate School of Business at Rice University. He received his Ph.D. in Business with a focus on management, entrepreneurship, and organizational theory from Columbia Business School. His dissertation research focuses on the social structural determinant of venture financing, with a particular focus on angel investing. Other lines of work touch upon stigmatization and scandal phenomena in organizational settings, as well as social evaluations of organizations. His scholarly work has appeared in press or is forthcoming at a number of journals, including the Academy of Management Journal, Annual Review of Sociology, Journal of Management, Organization Science, and Social Forces. In 2016, he was made a Kauffman Dissertation Fellow by the Kauffman Foundation, and in 2018 he was a Summer Fellow at the Center of Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences (CASBS) at Stanford University.