

ELINOR OSTROM: A BIOGRAPHY OF INTERDISCIPLINARY LIFE

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Sara Catherine Clark

To my parents
For walking with me

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Preface

In the biography of Elinor Ostrom contained in the pages that follow, I have attempted to capture the essence of her career. You, careful reader, will note my choice to limit discussion of Ostrom's scholarly qualifications and accolades. It is not my goal to evaluate her contributions, nor do I believe Ostrom derived motivation by counting her achievements. By typical measures of scholarly success—articles and books published, positions held, and honors awarded—Ostrom's career was extraordinary. For those yet unfamiliar with the high points of her professional life, I summarize Ostrom's curriculum vitae briefly here.

Ostrom was born August 7, 1933, in Los Angeles, California, and died June 12, 2012, in Bloomington, Indiana. In 2009, she became the first woman to receive the Nobel Prize in Economics, sharing the prize with Oliver E. Williamson. Ostrom holds three degrees in political science from the University of California, Los Angeles, including a Ph.D. completed in 1965. Beginning as Visiting Assistant Professor of Government in 1965, Ostrom remained at Indiana University at Bloomington (IU) for her entire career, including serving as the first female Chair of the Department of Political Science.¹ She ended her career as the Arthur F. Bentley Professor of Political Science (1991-2012). In 1973, she co-founded IU's Vincent and Elinor Ostrom Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis with her husband, Vincent Ostrom; in 1996, she co-founded IU's Center for the Study of Institutions, Population, and Environmental Change; and in 2006, she founded the Center for the Study of Institutional Diversity at Arizona State University.

Ostrom authored or coauthored 16 books and edited 17 collaborative volumes, including *Patterns of Metropolitan Policing* (1978); *Governing the Commons* (1990); *Rules, Games, and Common-Pool Resources* (1994); *Understanding Knowledge as Commons* (2007); and *Working*

¹ The Department of Government was later renamed the Department of Political Science.

Together (2010).² She served as president of four scholarly associations: the Public Choice Society (1982-84), the Midwest Political Science Association (1984-85), the International Association for the Study of Common Property (1990-91), and the American Political Science Association (1996-97). She regularly received funding from major grant-making institutions for her research including the Ford Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, National Science Foundation, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, US AID, and US Department of Justice.

Prior to receiving the Nobel Prize in 2009, Ostrom was recognized for her academic achievements through membership in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (1991), the National Academy of Sciences (2001), the American Philosophical Society (2006), and the American Academy of Political and Social Science (2009). In 1999, she received the Johan Skytte Prize in Political Science, and in 2008, she received the William H. Riker Prize in Political Science from the University of Rochester. Ostrom traveled extensively after receiving the Nobel, receiving many honorary doctorate degrees and awards for her lifetime achievements.

² E. Ostrom, Roger B. Parks, and Gordon P. Whitaker, *Patterns of Metropolitan Policing* (Ballinger Cambridge, MA, 1978); E. Ostrom, *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990); E. Ostrom, Roy Gardner, and James Walker, *Rules, Games, and Common-Pool Resources* (University of Michigan Press, 1994); Charlotte Hess and E. Ostrom, eds., *Understanding Knowledge as a Commons: From Theory to Practice* (MIT Press, 2007); Amy R. Poteete, Marco Janssen, and E. Ostrom, *Working Together: Collective Action, the Commons, and Multiple Methods in Practice* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010).

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ELINOR OSTROM: A BIOGRAPHY OF INTERDISCIPLINARY LIFE

My dissertation is a study of 2009 Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences Elinor Ostrom (1933-2012) that sheds light on intellectual life and the organization of knowledge in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Using biography, this project uncovers Elinor's interdisciplinary practice, especially through the influences of her husband and intellectual partner Vincent Ostrom and their interdisciplinary research Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis at Indiana University Bloomington. My analysis focuses on how Elinor, the only woman yet to receive the Economics Nobel, negotiated complex studies of human behavior—from water supply in Southern California to police services throughout the United States to forest governance around the world—by developing a primarily collaborative research approach that integrated methods and insights from the social sciences. Elinor prioritized increasing understanding of these global problems over identifying with a clear disciplinary community. I argue that who Elinor was as a person made it possible for her to develop and give meaning to her interdisciplinary practice.

Organized chronologically and structured by significant events, this study examines Elinor's intellectual life in four parts: her childhood and early adult education, development of the Ostrom Workshop, publication of her most well-known book *Governing the Commons* (1990), and global expansion of her ideas and research community. Attention to Elinor's various roles as student, team leader, teacher, mentor, partner, entrepreneur, art collector, field researcher, administrator, and philanthropist contributes a complex, dynamic example of a female intellectual life. Interviews with members of the Ostroms' academic and personal communities as well as examination of their personal papers and art collection provide primary

perspective to this study. Ultimately, the blurred boundaries between her personal life and professional career point to four shaping tenets of Elinor's interdisciplinary practice: hard work, artisanship and contestation, collaboration, and openness to multiple solutions.

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Introduction

“We always seem to be betwixt between,” read the opening line of a holiday newsletter Lin and Vincent Ostrom sent one winter to friends and colleagues of their Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis at Indiana University, Bloomington. Offering guidance beyond seasonal tidings they continued, “What we see in Bloomington is unfortunately only a very small part of the complex of events involving colleagues with whom we are associated. *It is hard to know where to begin and what to include when so much is happening.*”³

This study is their story beginning with Lin. Born in 1933 in Los Angeles, Lin spent her childhood living on the edge of posh Beverley Hills, where she attended school. Like many young adult students, Elinor—who found her nickname Lin in adulthood—stayed close to home and attended college at nearby UCLA.⁴ After a brief stint in Boston and after ending her first marriage to her college sweetheart, she returned to her alma mater to study political science as a graduate student, where she met and married Vincent Ostrom, an established professor of political science and key contributor to the Natural Resources Article of the Alaska Constitution. He was fourteen years her senior. Many years later, their student and friend Barb Allen recalled, “According to each of them it was a marriage of true soul mates.”⁵

The Ostroms moved to Indiana University (IU) in Bloomington in 1964, where Lin began as a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Government. They co-founded the

³ E. Ostrom and V. Ostrom to “Friends and Colleagues,” [ca. December 1992], box 331, folder “Workshop-History-misc. (2 of 2),” Elinor Ostrom Papers, ca. 1953-2011, The Lilly Library, Indiana University Libraries (my emphasis).

⁴ Elinor’s colleagues, students, and friends referred to her by the nickname “Lin.” Even though she published as “Elinor Ostrom,” she introduced herself by her nickname. The choice to refer to Elinor by her nickname throughout this dissertation reflects this community.

⁵ Barbara Allen, “Working Together, In Memoriam: Elinor Ostrom,” *The Commons Digest*, Summer 2013, <http://www.iasc-commons.org/sites/default/files/cd13.pdf>; Barbara Allen, “Actual World Possible Future: A Documentary about the Lives and Work of Elinor and Vincent Ostrom,” accessed December 15, 2014, <http://ostromsthemovie.tumblr.com>. *Actual World Possible Future* remains in production as Allen continues filming and fundraising for the project.

Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis in 1973. Their Workshop continues to attract student “journeymen” and “apprentices” to collaborate with experienced international scholars. Lin was named the co-recipient of the *Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel* in October 2009 “for her analysis of economic governance, especially the commons.”⁶ For one person to be awarded such a big prize made little sense to Lin, and she went to great lengths to redirect praise to her collaborators, especially to Workshopers, and their combined efforts over many years. This inquiry is motivated by Lin’s role in the interdisciplining of the social sciences in the second half of the twentieth century through her application of mixed method research—including fieldwork and case study analysis—that brought together scholars from multiple disciplines toward the shared goal of increasing global understanding of common-pool resource governance.⁷

As Lin and Vincent indicated in their holiday letter to friends and colleagues, their story has many beginnings and their net of interests was wide. This research highlights everyday and once-in-a-lifetime moments in Lin’s life as they relate to her contributions to the development of contemporary interdisciplinary practice. This project does not seek to define which people, memories, places, or academic accolades are the ones most worthy of memory. Importantly, Vincent and others within their shared network play key roles in this history; their Workshop is an important character.

⁶ “The Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel 2009,” NobelPrize.org, accessed November 25, 2018, <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/economic-sciences/2009/summary/>.

⁷ Lin collaborated with colleagues to revise the definition of common-pool resources, offering in 1985, “Natural or man-made resources which produce flows of separable use-units per unit of time (or several flows of different types of use units) where physical exclusion from the resource system is costly to achieve and the resource system can potentially be utilized by more than one person or production unit simultaneously and/or sequentially.” E. Ostrom, “The Rudiments of a Revised Theory of the Origins, Survival, and Performance of Institutions for Collective Action,” for Panel on Common Property Resource Management (Board on Science and Technology for International Development (BOSTID), National Academy of Sciences, National Research Council, Annapolis, MD, 1985), 3, <http://hdl.handle.net/10535/8225>.

Moreover, this study sheds light on intellectual life and the organization of knowledge in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries through Lin's biography. Lin's interdisciplinary practice is uncovered, especially through the influences of her husband and intellectual partner Vincent Ostrom and their interdisciplinary research Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis at Indiana University Bloomington. My analysis offers family, community, institutional arrangements, marriage, and teammates as nodes for understanding interdisciplinary principles for organizing knowledge. Others have written (and I expect more will write) alternate, important, versions of the Ostroms' stories; however, this study uniquely recognizes how Lin merged personal life and professional work.⁸ My analysis focuses on how Lin, the only woman yet to receive the Economics Nobel, negotiated complex studies of human behavior—from water supply in Southern California to police services throughout the United States to forest governance around the world—by developing a primarily collaborative research approach that integrated methods and insights from the social sciences. She prioritized increasing understanding of these global problems over identifying with a clear disciplinary community. I argue that who Lin was as a person made it possible for her to develop and give meaning to her interdisciplinary practice.

⁸ See Derek Wall, *The Sustainable Economics of Elinor Ostrom: Commons, Contestation and Craft*, 1st edition (London; New York: Routledge, 2014); Daniel H. Cole and Michael McGinnis, eds., *Elinor Ostrom and the Bloomington School of Political Economy: Polycentricity in Public Administration and Political Science* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014); Tim Harford, "Do You Believe in Sharing?," *Financial Times*, August 30, 2013, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/afc5377e-1026-11e3-a258-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2dTB5FhL1>; Peter Boettke, Liya Palagashvili, and Jayme Lemke, "Riding in Cars with Boys: Elinor Ostrom's Adventures with the Police," *Journal of Institutional Economics* 9, no. 4 (December 2013): 407–25, doi:10.1017/S1744137413000118; Theo Toonen, "Resilience in Public Administration: The Work of Elinor and Vincent Ostrom from a Public Administration Perspective," *Public Administration Review* 70, no. 2 (March 1, 2010): 193–202, doi:10.1111/j.1540-6210.2010.02147.x; Vincent Ostrom et al., eds., *The Practice of Constitutional Development: Vincent Ostrom's Quest to Understand Human Affairs* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2009); Mark Sproule-Jones, Barbara Allen, and Filippo Sabetti, eds., *The Struggle to Constitute and Sustain Productive Orders: Vincent Ostrom's Quest to Understand Human Affairs* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2008); Michael D. McGinnis and Indiana University, Bloomington Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, *Polycentric Governance and Development: Readings from the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999); Vlad Tarko, *Elinor Ostrom: An Intellectual Biography* (London; New York: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2016).

Organizing Knowledge

The emergence of interdisciplinarity as a recognizable mode of intellectualism in the twentieth century reflected broader, simultaneous disruptions to American life. Intellectual historian Daniel T. Rodgers characterized the last quarter of the twentieth century as “a great age of fracture.”⁹ More fluid conceptions of identity, economy, memory, and citizenship contested trends toward consolidation that defined the first half of the century. Market vernacular spread out from university departments of economics, challenging Americans to “reimagine themselves and their society.”¹⁰ “History was said to accelerate into a multitude of almost instantaneously accessible possibilities. Identities became fluid and elective,” explained Rodgers.¹¹ He chronicled all the usual characters of public choice theory in his review of the intellectuals who reshaped the economic analysis of politics, including: William Riker, James Buchanan, Gordon Tullock, Mancur Olson, and Garrett Hardin.¹² These men were Lin’s predecessors and her colleagues.

According to Rodgers, conservative and liberal political economists since the 1960s steadily eliminated aggregate analysis—disintegrating ideas like the state, the nation, and the people—opting instead to examine the actions of the rational individual. These combined projects led to the disaggregation of political science and the rise of methodological individualism as the predominant research paradigm at universities throughout the United States

⁹ Daniel T. Rodgers, *Age of Fracture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 3.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹² *Ibid.*, 86-87. See James M. Buchanan and Gordon Tullock, *The Calculus of Consent, Logical Foundations of Constitutional Democracy* (University of Michigan Press, 1962); William H. Riker, *The Theory of Political Coalitions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962); Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965); and Garrett Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons,” *Science* 162, no. 3859 (December 13, 1968): 1243–48, <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.162.3859.1243/>.

in the 1980s and 1990s.¹³ Other social science disciplines like sociology split internally because of the move, which prioritized focus on self and choice.¹⁴ Lin maintained a steadfast normative commitment to methodological individualism throughout her career.¹⁵

Like her commitment to methodological individualism, Lin's interdisciplinary practice also represented her response to fracturing ideals. At its beginnings "interdisciplinary," a term not in common use until the 1950s, indicates the interaction of disciplines.¹⁶ Lin, however, did not intuitively consider expertise to arise from "the discipline" or "the department." Through the lens of methodological individualism these collectives lacked meaningful identities, and instead, were composed of groups of individuals. Practically, disciplines remained key administrative organizers within the university structure, but scholars could feel justified to pursue extra-disciplinary intellectual arrangements through research partnerships with individuals representing various disciplines. Interdisciplinarity offered a means of mitigating the limitations wrought by aggregate thinking.

According to Roland Barthes, "To do something interdisciplinary it's not enough to choose a 'subject' (a theme) and gather around it two or three sciences. Interdisciplinary consists in creating a new object that belongs to no one."¹⁷ Lin and Vincent did not explicitly utilize Barthes' definition of interdisciplinarity in their own work. However, Barthes' attention to creating "new objects" while not "confronting already constituted disciplines" mirrors how Lin

¹³ David Apter, "Structure, Contingency, and Choice: A Comparison of the Trends and Tendencies in Political Sciences," in *Schools of Thought: Twenty-Five Years of Interpretive Social Science*, ed. Joan Wallach Scott and Debra Keates (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 252–87, cited in Rodgers, *Age of Fracture*, 88.

¹⁴ Rodgers, *Age of Fracture*, 89.

¹⁵ Peter J. Boettke and Christopher J. Coyne, "Methodological Individualism, Spontaneous Order and the Research Program of the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis," *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, Polycentric Political Economy A Festschrift for Elinor & Vincent Ostrom, 57, no. 2 (June 2005): 145–58, doi:10.1016/j.jebo.2004.06.012.

¹⁶ Roberta Frank, "'Interdisciplinary': The First Half Century," in *WORDS: For Robert Burchfield's Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. E.G. Stanley and T.F. Hoad, vol. 6 (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1988), 95.

¹⁷ Roland Barthes, "Jeunes Chercheurs," *Communications* 19, no. 19 (1972): 1–5; Translation by James Clifford and George E. Marcus, eds., *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography: A School of American Research Advanced Seminar* (University of California Press, 1986), 1.

practiced interdisciplinarity. Together, the Ostroms remained committed to their respective faculty positions within political science, while also creating a new space for research and collaboration through their Workshop. As a study of the organization of knowledge in the twentieth century, this dissertation answers the research question, “How did Elinor Ostrom define and practice interdisciplinarity throughout her life?”

Key details of interdisciplinary practice are revealed through discipline histories.¹⁸ “By problematizing definitions of academic and professional fields, discipline history seeks to reconstruct the processes by which maps of knowledge are constructed,” wrote Ellen Condliffe Lagemann.¹⁹ According to Hunter Heyck, all post-war social scientists were united across disciplines in their vision of the world as system, “one that conceived of all things in terms of organization, structure, system, function, and process.”²⁰ In this way, scholars’ projects merged across disciplines as they sought to organize human behavior. Others have situated the development of interdisciplinarity in relation to area studies programs.²¹ Recent scholarship on interdisciplinarity traces the development of specialties within research universities and the tensions between disciplinary devotees and interdisciplinary practitioners.²²

¹⁸ In her book *The Origins of American Social Science* Dorothy Ross synthesized the origins of economics, sociology, and political science. Dorothy Ross, *The Origins of American Social Science* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991). See also Alexandra Oleson and John Voss, eds., *The Organization of Knowledge in Modern America, 1860-1920* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979).

¹⁹ Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, *An Elusive Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), xiv.

²⁰ Hunter Heyck, *Age of System: Understanding the Development of Modern Social Science* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015), 1.

²¹ Philo A. Hutcheson and Ralph D. Kidder, “In the National Interest: The College and University in the United States in the Post-World War II Era,” *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research*, 2011, 221–64, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0702-3_6.

²² Harvey J. Graff, *Undisciplining Knowledge: Interdisciplinarity in the Twentieth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015); Jerry A. Jacobs, *In Defense of Disciplines: Interdisciplinarity and Specialization in the Research University* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2014).

Systems analysis can also be detected in the relationship that developed between complex systems theory and the development of interdisciplinary studies.²³ In 2001, William H. Newell proposed “A Theory of Interdisciplinary Studies.”²⁴ According to Newell, “The central insight behind the theory is that the objects of interdisciplinary studies are all complex—indeed, that complexity is both a necessary and a sufficient condition for interdisciplinary studies.”²⁵ His theory of interdisciplinary studies acknowledges the important role study of complex systems has played in the development of interdisciplinarity. In an interview Lin provided insight about her value of complexity: “I get so upset when people use complexity as a reason not to do things—complexity and context are essential for operating in many different situations. In order to make sure decisions are relevant, we have to understand the context of decisions, and the complexity of the situation.”²⁶ Complexity is a repeated theme throughout Lin’s scholarship and in how she mentored students.²⁷

Scholars rightfully feared the security of their positions within the academic hierarchy would be jeopardized by interdisciplinary research that was not easily measured and rewarded by one’s home discipline. Interdisciplinarity challenged familiar metrics of creditability and influence; scholarly publishing (including peer review), promotion and tenure processes, internal

²³ Nobelist economist and philosopher F.A. Hayek notably laid groundwork for Ostrom in his rebuttal to scientism within of the study of human behavior and advocacy for complex answers to human problems. F.A. Hayek, *The Counter-Revolution of Science: Studies on the Abuse of Reason* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1952).

²⁴ William H. Newell, “A Theory of Interdisciplinary Studies,” *Issues in Integrative Studies* 19 (2001): 1–26. See also Julie Thompson Klein, *Interdisciplinarity: History, Theory, and Practice* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990).

²⁵ William H. Newell, “The State of the Field: Interdisciplinary Theory,” *Issues in Interdisciplinary Studies* 31 (2013): 31.

²⁶ Ben Ramalingam, “Conversations on Complexity: A Tribute to Elinor Ostrom,” *Aid on the Edge of Chaos*, accessed April 26, 2015, <http://aidontheedge.info/2012/08/16/conversations-on-complexity-a-tribute-to-elinor-ostrom/>; for additional excerpts from his interviews with Ostrom (2009-2010) see Ben Ramalingam, *Aid on the Edge of Chaos: Rethinking International Cooperation in a Complex World*, 1st edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

²⁷ For Ostrom’s use of complex system theorist F.A. Hayek’s ideas, see, for example, Charlotte Hess and E. Ostrom, “Ideas, Artifacts, and Facilities: Information as a Common-Pool Resource,” *Law and Contemporary Problems* 66 (Winter/Spring 2003): 111–45.

university and external funding for research remain highly dependent on the disciplinary structure of the research university. Interdisciplinary practice eluded ready-made formulas for success, as indicated by early failures like the Laboratory of Social Relations at Harvard that by 1949 yielded a “degree of disillusionment with interdisciplinarity.”²⁸ More personally, scholars who worked beyond their disciplines no longer had built in identities or communities. If an interdisciplinary scholar no longer identified with her disciplinary (department) home, how might she construct her intellectual identity? This question about intellectual life helps to motivate study of Lin’s interdisciplinary practice through biography.

Writing Women’s Intellectual Lives

The second reason I have chosen to study Lin Ostrom is, at least in part, selfish. As Mary Catherine Bateson, daughter of anthropologists Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson, suggested, “Women today read and write biographies to gain perspective on their own lives.”²⁹ In Lin, I similarly sought perspective about my interdisciplinary identity, which I began developing in college. I wanted to transfer after my first semester of college. Like many students, I battled loneliness, fear, and anxiety about what my future would hold; unexpectedly, I also felt limited by degree requirements meant to guide students toward foundational disciplinary knowledge. I only wanted to enroll in courses that interested me and to learn from teachers I admired inside and outside their classrooms, no matter their disciplinary identity. My naiveté was my armor. What could be wrong with pursuing knowledge in this way?

And so I refused the guardrails my nearest disciplines tried to impose and instead, proposed a meandering path through university. This project began then—now more than a decade ago—when at eighteen I learned a new word: interdisciplinary. Ultimately, I completed a

²⁸ Roger L. Geiger, *Research and Relevant Knowledge: American Research Universities Since World War II* (London; New York: Routledge, 2017).

²⁹ Mary Catherine Bateson, *Composing a Life* (New York: Grove Press, 1989), 5.

degree of my own making through my college's Interdisciplinary Studies Program. As I neared graduation, however, I received advice from a small handful of faculty members to fall in line. If I wanted to have a successful academic career, they said, I needed strict disciplinary training and identity. Again, I felt lonely in my pursuits but determined to go my own way. I entered an interdisciplinary doctoral program to study education's histories, where I began this study in earnest in my third year of coursework.

Biography is both an unusually collaborative and intimate process between author and subject.³⁰ As much as Lin is the primary subject of this study, there is no denying my presence, beginning with my choice of subject. Biographer of Florence Kelley, Katherine Kish Sklar explained, "Like many historians of women, I cannot easily say where my research ends and my personal life begins."³¹ I "met" Lin and Vincent when working as part of a team of graduate students collaboratively curating the Ostrom's private art collection, which they left as part of their estate to IU. At the Mathers Museum of World Cultures (MMWC), I learned about an accomplished academic couple who also collected Navajo rugs, porcupine quill boxes, prints gathered from Ojibwe artists in Manitoulin Island, Canada, and ceramics from throughout the American Southwest.³² In each artifact simultaneous stories from artist and collector merged with my perspective as an education historian. I recognize my introduction to Lin and Vincent as special but not unlike how they regularly welcomed their students, colleagues, and staff.

³⁰ Sara Alpern et al., eds., *The Challenge of Feminist Biography: Writing About Twentieth-Century American Women*, Women in American History (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992); Richard White, "Here Is the Problem: An Introduction," *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 1 (June 1, 2002): 17–19, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2700777>.

³¹ Katherine Kish Sklar, "Coming to Terms with Florence Kelley: The Tale of a Reluctant Biographer," in *The Challenge of Feminist Biography: Writing About Twentieth-Century American Women*, ed. Sara Alpern et al. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 29.

³² "Ojibwe Public Art, Ostrom Private Lives," *Mathers Museum of World Cultures Digital Exhibits*, accessed March 9, 2015, <http://dlib.indiana.edu/omeka/mathers/exhibits/show/ojibwe-public-art--ostrom-priv/introduction>.

Writings about the intellectual lives of men have long dominated biographical studies. Many intellectual biographies and autobiographies, including those about social scientists, offer models for mapping men's intellectual lives.³³ Patricia A. Graham said for researchers working on the history of women in higher education there was "So Much to Do" in 1975.³⁴ Institutional studies of individual colleges and universities, studies of ideas about higher education (e.g. academic freedom), and biographical studies, usually about college presidents, dominated higher education histories.³⁵ "The theme that runs through the entire history of higher education in the United States is that higher education has been dominated by men and that the most interesting persons to be understood in its histories have been the leaders, also men," wrote Graham.³⁶ Although she recognized exceptions to the rule, like an early biography of female college president M. Carey Thomas, Graham called for changes in method in order to write women's intellectual lives. Recent biographical studies of Howard University history faculty member Merze Tate by Linda Perkins and Dean of Women Emily Taylor by Kelly Sartorius stand out for their exposure of histories of dynamic female, intellectual activists in the twentieth-century.³⁷

Models for this study also come from collective biographical studies of women in education, a method borrowed from social history. Patricia Graham's position remains clear

³³ See, for example, Kay R. Jamison, *Robert Lowell: Setting the River on Fire: A Study of Genius, Mania, and Character*, First edition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2017); John A. Hall, *Ernest Gellner: An Intellectual Biography* (London; New York: Verso, 2012); David S. Brown, *Richard Hofstadter: An Intellectual Biography*, New edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Sylvia Nasar, *A Beautiful Mind: A Biography of John Forbes Nash, Jr., Winner of the Nobel Prize in Economics, 1994*, 1st Touchstone ed. (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1999); Herbert A. Simon, *Models of My Life*, 1st edition (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 1996).

³⁴ Patricia Albjerg Graham, "So Much To Do: Guides for Historical Research on Women in Higher Education," *Teachers College Record* 76, no. 3 (1975): 421–30; also see Jill K. Conway, "Perspectives on the History of Women's Education in the United States," *History of Education Quarterly* 14, no. 1 (April 1, 1974): 1–12, doi:10.2307/367602; Geraldine Joncich Clifford, "Saints, Sinners, and People: A Position Paper on the Historiography of American Education," *History of Education Quarterly* 15, no. 3 (October 1, 1975): 257–72, doi:10.2307/367844.

³⁵ Graham, "So Much To Do: Guides for Historical Research on Women in Higher Education," 421.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Linda M. Perkins, "Merze Tate and the Quest for Gender Equity at Howard University: 1942–1977," *History of Education Quarterly* 54, no. 4 (November 2014): 516–51, <https://doi.org/10.1111/hoeq.12081>; Kelly Sartorius, *Deans of Women and the Feminist Movement: Emily Taylor's Activism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

today as she posited doing women's history of higher education requires a different methodological lens from writing men's histories, particularly because of how success is defined. According to Graham, "To write about the history of successful women in higher education is to distort the record of women's experience in higher education much more than to write about the history of successful men in higher education" because success is shaped by external and internal circumstances unique to women.³⁸ Collective biography was the most promising approach for Graham, and she hoped for future research using this method on women in coeducation, women faculty, sex-linked curriculum, informal college life like sororities, and academic wives.³⁹ Ellen Condliffe Lagemann's life history of five Progressive Era reformers, including Grace Dodge, Maud Nathan, Lillian Wald, Lenora O'Reilly, and Rose Schneiderman, demonstrated this approach executed by focusing on the social reform that united these women.⁴⁰

Lin's partnership with Vincent was both intellectual and marital, and their relationship is an essential part of her intellectual biography because, as Susan's Ware's stated, historians need to attend in their research to "whom you share your bed."⁴¹ Lois Banner's comparative biographical study of anthropologists Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead offered one possible model.⁴² Banner testified that Benedict and Mead were connected "as friends, lovers, and professional collaborators," which required her to pursue "intellectual history, the history of the professions, the history of the concepts of race and racism," religious history, anthropological

³⁸ Graham, "So Much To Do," 423.

³⁹ Ibid., 424–28; Geraldine Clifford and others soon began work on an edited volume examining women in coeducational institutions. See Geraldine J. Clifford, ed., *Lone Voyagers: Academic Women in Coeducational Institutions, 1870-1937* (New York: The Feminist Press at CUNY, 1993).

⁴⁰ Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, *A Generation of Women: Education in the Lives of Progressive Reformers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979).

⁴¹ Susan Ware, "Unlocking the Porter-Dewson Partnership: A Challenge for the Feminist Biographer," in *The Challenge of Feminist Biography: Writing about Twentieth-Century American Women*, ed. Sara Alpern et al. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 61.

⁴² Lois W. Banner, *Intertwined Lives: Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict, and Their Circle* (New York: Vintage, 2004).

field methods, and the history of lesbianism, bisexuality, and queer theory.⁴³ The Ostroms' interconnection requires similarly complex context.

Documenting Lin's intellectual life required developing context across two primary areas: organization of knowledge and histories of education. While organizing knowledge provides a uniting theme across all chapters, this study contributes to and relies on histories of education for support, including the development of higher education in the postwar period, women's access to higher education, women faculty experiences with anti-nepotism, economics and political science methods, faculty service to departments and professional organizations, institutional histories of research centers, and philanthropy in higher education. Histories of women in US higher education have focused primarily on documenting where women were educated and complicating understandings of women in the academy, especially relevant to gender. This project contributes to existing literature by not only documenting Lin's intellectual life, but also by asking specific questions about how educated women like her lived. Histories like this, ones that may not follow typical college to marriage to motherhood life progressions, are largely missing from intellectual histories of academics. Lin's life contributes a complicated, twentieth and early twenty-first century story of a female intellectual.

Biography of Lin's intellectual life works against what Joanne Meyerowitz labeled a tendency among historians of the post-World War II era to "flatten the history of women."⁴⁴ In other words, documenting Lin's intellectual life adds nuance to the variable lives of women in this era, which have more often been reduced to stereotypes of quiet, suburban housewives. Revisionist historian Meyerowitz wrote, "To state the obvious, in the years following World War

⁴³ Banner, "Biography as History," *The American Historical Review* 114, no. 3 (June 1, 2009): 583-584, <https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr.114.3.579>.

⁴⁴ Joanne J. Meyerowitz, ed., *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960*, *Critical Perspectives on the Past* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 2.

II, many women were not white, middle class, married, and suburban: and many white, middle-class, married, suburban women were neither wholly domestic nor quiescent.”⁴⁵ Women like Lin, went to college and then graduate school in pursuit of careers.

Lin was born in California in 1933 and grew up during the Great Depression and postwar era. Historian Linda Eisenmann dramatically revised postwar era histories through her classification of women’s experiences as activism. She characterized like-minded women in this period as a quieter, but supportive network, still facing “internal charges of racism and external charges to their professional advancement, each producing a particular activist response.”⁴⁶ Lin did not present herself as an activist, but her persistence and follow through throughout her career signaled her “quiet activism,” a label coined by Eisenmann.⁴⁷

Lin’s quiet activism manifested in part as philanthropy, as she and Vincent gave their time and financial resources, especially through the Workshop.⁴⁸ Andrea Walton has worked to make sense of women’s access to higher education through benevolence. Walton aimed to “integrate women’s experience more fully into the narratives of both philanthropy and education.”⁴⁹ And in her introduction to her edited volume on *Women and Philanthropy in Education* she carefully outlined the major historiographical problem in the scholarship on philanthropy and education: the marginalization of women's experiences. According to Walton, this marginalization resulted for two reasons. First, women's philanthropy was pushed from

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Linda Eisenmann, *Higher Education for Women in Postwar America, 1945-1965* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 6, 11–42; Eisenmann, “A Time of Quiet Activism: Research, Practice, and Policy in American Women’s Higher Education, 1945–1965,” *History of Education Quarterly* 45, no. 1 (2005): 1–17.

⁴⁷ Eisenmann, “A Time for Quiet Activism.”

⁴⁸ E. Ostrom, V. Ostrom, and W. George Pinnell, “Gift Agreement Establishing the Tocqueville Endowment for the Study of Human Institutions,” Indiana University Foundation Gift Agreement, 28 December 1984, box 372, folder “Workshop Enterprise,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁴⁹ Andrea Walton, “Women and Philanthropy in Education: A Problem of Conceptions,” in *Women and Philanthropy in Education*, ed. Andrea Walton, Philanthropic and Nonprofit Studies (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 2.

memory by a narrowing definition of philanthropy that prioritized monetary donations and foundation activity rather than work being done by women and second, because of the rise of universities in the late-nineteenth century, which prioritized large financial donations almost exclusively donated by men.⁵⁰ As a recipient of several academic prizes that include monetary awards, Lin's philanthropy included large financial donations by directing award funds to the Workshop through the IU foundation. It is easy to recognize the influence of Geraldine J. Clifford's on the scholarship produced by Walton and others like Mary Ann Dzuback in this volume.⁵¹ Clifford's plea to revise male-centric definitions of success can be seen through Dzuback's attention to the careful means by which women accessed financial support for higher education.⁵² These women were no doubt intelligent resisters to typical male success arcs as they found ways into the academy.

Histories of women in the academy in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries focused topically on women in science, and as Alice Kessler-Harris observed, "We grasp how class and racial contexts are reciprocally related to gender stratification."⁵³ More specifically, contributions from Margaret Rossiter and Mary Ann Dzuback demonstrated persistent focus on women in the social sciences.⁵⁴ Rossiter's three-volume *Women Scientists in America* not only

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 9–10.

⁵¹ Clifford, "'Shaking Dangerous Questions from the Crease'"; Mary Ann Dzuback, "Creative Financing in Social Science: Women Scholars and Early Research," in *Women and Philanthropy in Education*, ed. Andrea Walton, Philanthropic and Nonprofit Studies (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 105–26.

⁵² Dzuback, "Creative Financing in Social Science: Women Scholars and Early Research"; see also Dzuback, "Gender, Professional Knowledge, and Institutional Power: Women Social Scientists and the Research University," in *The Woman Question and Higher Education: Perspectives on Gender and Knowledge Production in America*, ed. Ann Mari May (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2008), 52–77; Clifford, *Lone Voyagers*.

⁵³ Alice Kessler-Harris, "Do We Still Need Women's History?," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, December 7, 2007.

⁵⁴ Margaret W. Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Struggles and Strategies to 1940* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984); Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Before Affirmative Action, 1940-1972* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Forging a New World Since 1972* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012); Dzuback, "Gender, Professional Knowledge, and Institutional Power." Also see, Alice S. Rossi, "Women in Science: Why So Few?," *Science*, New Series, 148, no. 3674 (May 28, 1965): 1196–1202.

took up the repeated proposal for collective biography as an insightful method for historical research on women in higher education but the third volume in the series also demonstrated needed attention to oral history methods.⁵⁵ Rossiter essentially wrote the encyclopedia on women scientists; however, Dzuback's work extended her research through focus on women in the social sciences.⁵⁶

This dissertation responds in part to existing literature on the history of women in US higher education through its focus and method. Research on Lin, who was trained and worked as a political scientist, extends the timeline pursued by Mary Ann Dzuback to a twenty-first century history of women in social sciences from previous focus on late nineteenth and early twentieth century female social scientists.⁵⁷ Margaret Rossiter mentions Lin in her last volume of *Women Scientists*, as her final example of women in the sciences making recent history.⁵⁸ Lin's story occupies the second-to-last paragraph of Rossiter's epilogue. Needless to say, Lin's history was outside the scope of Rossiter's and Dzuback's projects but her story and the multiple histories of individuals, systems, disciplines, and communities it intersects demand attention.

Methods

Ellen Condliffe Lagemann wrote that, "much that is considered in an educational biography would also be considered within a psychobiography or a literary biography."⁵⁹ Her definition of education biography is applied to this study:

In an educational biography an historian investigates the experience of education: the meaning of education within the context of an individual's life. The approach is designed

⁵⁵ Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America*, 1984; Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America*, 1998; Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America*, 2012.

⁵⁶ Ibid.; Mary Ann Dzuback, "Gender and the Politics of Knowledge," *History of Education Quarterly* 43, no. 2 (2003): 171–95, doi:10.1111/j.1748-5959.2003.tb00119.x; Dzuback, "Creative Financing in Social Science."

⁵⁷ Dzuback, "Creative Financing in Social Science"; Dzuback, "Gender, Professional Knowledge, and Institutional Power."

⁵⁸ Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America*, 2012, 284.

⁵⁹ Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, *A Generation of Women: Education in the Lives of Progressive Reformers* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1979), 5.

to bring into view the educative functions of a variety of different institutions, as well as the effects of non-institutionally related teaching and learning, on the individual under consideration.⁶⁰

Education philosopher Jane Roland Martin's critique of education provides a philosophical reference point. She writes, "Education is so powerful a force that it can transform not merely what an individual knows but who that person is."⁶¹

This dissertation extends research begun as a student in a course on museum curatorship in Spring 2013, offered through the Mathers Museum of World Cultures (MMWC). As part of a team of graduate students I co-curated the spring 2014 MMWC exhibition "Ojibwe Public Art, Ostrom Private Lives" and an online exhibition by the same title.⁶² In addition, a 2014 grant in partnership with the Indiana University Center for the Study of History and Memory (CSHM), "Coming Together: An Oral History of the Ostroms and their Scholarly Impact on Problem Solving," allowed for over 30 oral history interviews with peers, students, and friends of the Ostroms.⁶³ These interviews are transcribed and a finding aid for future research with this collection is available to the public for further research.

Oral history interviews used for this study can be divided into two categories: (1) interviews collected specifically for this project, and (2) previously collected interviews. Over 35 interviews and approximately 60 hours of recordings make up these combined categories. All interviews are either held by the researcher or are part of the permanent collection at the IU CSHM, supported by IU College of Arts and Sciences Ostrom Grants Program. Interview participants were asked to detail their relationships with the Ostroms, including scholarly or

⁶⁰ Ibid., 167.

⁶¹ Jane Roland Martin, *Educational Metamorphoses: Philosophical Reflections on Identity and Culture* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 6.

⁶² "Ojibwe Public Art, Ostrom Private Lives," *Mathers Museum of World Cultures Digital Exhibits*, accessed March 9, 2015, <http://dlib.indiana.edu/omeka/mathers/exhibits/show/ojibwe-public-art--ostrom-priv/introduction>.

⁶³ The CSHM is now the Indiana University Center for Documentary Research and Practice.

personal collaborations and interactions related to the Workshop. Interviews of the second type are rare but significant. For example, Lin conducted a series of oral history interviews throughout 1976-1978 with IU political science professor Charles Hyneman and IU Chancellor Byrum E. Carter (appointed chancellor 1969). Perhaps more significantly, Lin was interviewed many times after receiving the Nobel. In these interviews she reflected on events ranging from her childhood to current research projects at the time of the award to future goals.

A second phase of participatory-observation began in fall 2015 focusing on understanding the Ostrom legacy through their Workshop. I observed “Introduction to Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD)” for the semester; this course was originally developed by the Ostroms and frequently taught by Lin. The course serves as a meeting ground for interactions between faculty, Workshop visiting scholars, and graduate students. Completing course readings and attending class sessions provided me with a needed introduction to the Ostroms’ scholarship and in particular to institutional analysis in the Bloomington School of Political Economy.

Archival research with the Elinor Ostrom Manuscript Collection (IU Lilly Library) represented the most extensive data collection, which contains approximately 386,000 items. Photographs, academic writings, furniture, paintings, correspondence, scrapbooks, diaries, professional records, awards, ceramics, memos, notes, textiles, books, research files, teaching materials, and jewelry are only some of the items that made up the Ostroms’ lives.

Chapter Outline

Let me now offer a brief outline of how this dissertation is organized. Chapter 1 presents a foundational education history of Lin’s childhood and early adulthood contextualized by the experiences of women in post-WWII US higher education. Analysis of Lin’s life as

interdisciplinary practice is contained in Chapters 2, 3, and 4. In these chapters I chronicle the development of the Ostrom Workshop from inception, investigate Lin's research program and methodological development, and track evidence of how the Ostroms' created a global scholarly network. Each chapter is independent; when read as a whole, however, this dissertation is a chronology of Lin's interdisciplinary practice and a biography of her intellectual life. In conclusion, I elucidate my interpretation of Lin's interdisciplinary life as practiced through four tenets: hard work, contestation and artisanship, collaboration, and openness to multiple solutions.

Chapter 1 Educating Elinor, 1933-1963

While it was a challenge being a poor kid in a rich kid's school, it did give me a different perspective on the future. Since 90 percent of the students in Beverly Hills High School went to college, it appeared going to college was the “normal” thing to do after high school. Even though no one in my immediate family had any college experience, I decided that I should go on to college.¹

Lin’s early education did not predestine her to a life of academic pursuit, but rather, led her down a path defined by hard work and self-sufficiency. This chapter tracks the lessons Lin learned through early formal and informal education, as well as the educational context of the postwar period in which Lin—born Elinor Awan in 1933—came of age. Because Lin did not yet know her potential, the context of her experiences is particularly instructive. Much is learned about the choices Lin made in adulthood from the experiences she had in her youth.

Navigating The University of California System

The expansion and solidification of the University of California system corresponded with shifting gender dynamics brought by the end of World War II. California state history reflected the national experience at this moment in that its higher education system was not built to serve men and women equally. The passage of the 1944 GI Bill, which funneled federal dollars into higher education through massive subsidies for veterans who attended colleges and universities after they returned home from World War II, dramatically shifted gender dynamics on campuses throughout the United States.² Men—specifically white men—overwhelmingly dominated this group, while white women were quietly pushed to the background of higher education. According to John Thelin, “Whereas women represented about 40 percent of the

¹ “Elinor Ostrom - Biographical,” The Nobel Prize, accessed October 31, 2013, http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/economic-sciences/laureates/2009/ostrom-bio.html.

² John R Thelin, “Gilt by Association: Higher Education’s ‘Golden Age,’ 1945-1970,” in *A History of American Higher Education*, second (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 263.

undergraduate enrollment in 1939-40, this participation rate dropped to 32 percent in 1950.”³

The enrollment gains made by women during wartime were not reached again until 1970.

Institutional histories of UCLA covering the postwar years are more likely to find women in “Gayleyville,” temporary housing units for veterans and their families, nicknamed Maternity Row.⁴

Increased tax revenues, which resulted from wartime industrial growth, “went to the development of the University of California system, with UCLA’s portion cited by the *Los Angeles Times* as ‘the largest single amount ever earmarked for any one campus in the history of American education.’”⁵ According to Thelin, “The period between 1945 and 1970 represented the peak of investment in mass higher education in California,” and as if to prove this impact, “California boasted the highest per capita expenditure on students.”⁶ Elinor benefitted from these early roots of a mass system of public education provided by the state. In 1941, UCLA had a total enrollment of 7,000 students, but by the end of the decade, “the continued influx of veterans caused enrollment to more than double, hitting an all-time high of 15,000.”⁷ In the decade before she enrolled, the campus Elinor chose was experiencing growth and growing pains.

During the postwar period, Provost Clarence Addison Dykstra led UCLA. The University of California President Robert Gordon Sproul, who went on to head the system for a total of 28 years, said in 1930 at the beginning of his tenure that, “there must be but one state university, and by this I mean not only one institution which is called the State University, but only one state-supported institution in the field of higher education—there must not be colleges or

³ Ibid., 267.

⁴ Marina Dundjerski, *UCLA: The First Century* (Los Angeles: Third Millennium Publishing, 2011), 105.

⁵ Ibid., 102.

⁶ Thelin, “Gilt by Association: Higher Education’s ‘Golden Age,’ 1945-1970,” 286–87.

⁷ Dundjerski, *UCLA*, 102.

universities at every crossroads or even at every county seat.”⁸ Sproul intended to foster mass education through a university system with a system of research university, junior college, and community college campus that together made up California university system. During Sproul’s leadership, the University of California became publicly known as a “Show Place for Mass Education,” as a 1947 *Time* headline stated.⁹

It was under Sproul’s strong vision for “one university,” that Dykstra expanded the UCLA infrastructure in the years following WWII. Dykstra accepted the provost position in February 1945; of the potential for this position he remarked: “It is the fastest growing educational institution in the United States, I presume, and its future is quite unlimited. Furthermore it is young enough not to be so set that many things can be done easily and enthusiastically that are difficult to do in older institutions.”¹⁰ Dykstra’s lasting impacts included a “\$50 million building program, and the creation of multiple academic departments, a law school, medical school and hospital;” more than 300 faculty positions were also added during his short five-year tenure, and he hoped to transform UCLA into a residential school, a goal not accomplished in his lifetime.¹¹ Dykstra died in 1950 after suffering a heart attack.¹²

Just before Dykstra’s death, national anti-communist sentiments sparked the “loyalty oath controversy” and jolted UCLA’s expansion. In spring 1949 the UCLA Graduate Student Association hosted recently dismissed University of Washington tenured faculty member and admitted Communist Herbert J. Phillips to participate in a debate “over whether a Communist could be an impartial teacher and scholar.”¹³ Despite a student petition with over 2,000

⁸ John Aubrey Douglass, *The California Idea and American Higher Education: 1850 to the 1960 Master Plan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 135; 248.

⁹ Thelin, “Gilt by Association: Higher Education’s ‘Golden Age,’ 1945-1970,” 286.

¹⁰ Dundjerski, *UCLA*, 106; 108.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 104.

¹² *Ibid.*, 109.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 120.

signatures, Provost Dykstra refused to open the forum beyond graduate students and faculty attendance.¹⁴ Though histories of UCLA's expansion in the postwar years are largely narrated by university leaders, this event brought the perspectives of graduate students and faculty to focus. Free speech and academic freedom were under fire and garnered public media attention in early 1950, as Cold War fear of Communist rhetoric took hold at home.¹⁵ It is unclear how undergraduates would have responded, if at all, had they been allowed to attend this event.

This administrative and faculty fallout left a lasting impression on the campus at the opening of the 1950s, the decade that welcomed entering students like Elinor. On June 24, 1949, an amended oath was approved and required by all staff and faculty employees or risk release from the university.¹⁶ The new oath read: "I am not a member of the Communist Party or under any oath or party to any agreement or under any commitment that is in conflict with my obligations under this oath."¹⁷ Ultimately, UCLA fired 31 people, not necessarily because they identified as communist, but because they refused to sign the agreement and conceivably because they took a stand on academic freedom.

Institutional histories of UCLA and the University of California system more broadly usually stop here; that is, the histories of these institutions are most often told through governance and institutional change with hints of personal and sometimes student politics. In more recent years, historians attune to gender have worked to revise this narrative to include representative groups of students and individual female voices from multiple race, class, gender, and sexual identifications. Historians continue to seek out these voices, with the simultaneous

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid., 122; for more on the impact of the Red Scare on University of California faculty, see Michael Hiltzik, *Big Science: Ernest Lawrence and the Invention That Launched the Military-Industrial Complex* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015).

¹⁶ Dundjerski, *UCLA*, 121.

¹⁷ Ibid.

goal of asking pointed but broad educational questions—what lessons were taught and what was being learned?

When Elinor matriculated to UCLA renegotiations about the status of higher education for women dominated discussion; whether she knew it or not, the meaning of gender changed during her time in college. According to Lynn Peril, “Arguments for and against a ‘functional’ education for women made headlines in the 1940s and 1950s.”¹⁸ North of Los Angeles, a nearby Oakland college’s curriculum classified interior design, childcare, and cooking as examples of functional education in the service of family and community.¹⁹ Elinor avoided these subjects at UCLA, and along with time spent gardening at home with her mother, her “functional” education likely occurred alongside peers both in and outside the classroom.

It would have taken Elinor less than twenty minutes to commute from her childhood home on the edge of Beverley Hills to the UCLA campus. Santa Monica Boulevard divides Elinor’s childhood neighborhood of Beverley Hills from Westwood, where UCLA’s campus is located. It is unlikely that Elinor understood her choice to attend UCLA over other schools as one defined by the University’s role as a developing national research institution; instead, it was a nearby college she could attend. Like she had attended her neighborhood Carthay Center [elementary] School, Horace Mann Junior High, and Beverly Hills High School, she attended UCLA. This reading of Elinor’s early educational history is both accurate and misleading. It is also true that Elinor began attending UCLA in the fall of 1951 *because* she graduated from Beverly Hills High School (BHHS). The wealth and social and cultural capital of her peers at BHHS helped grant them access to and awareness of higher education.

¹⁸ Lynn Peril, *College Girls: Bluestockings, Sex Kittens, and Coeds, Then and Now*, 1st ed. (New York, N.Y: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2006), 200.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Becoming a College Girl at Beverly Hills High School²⁰

Elinor’s experiences at BHHS allowed her to transform herself into a “college girl.” That is, she learned how to choose higher education and simultaneously and how to make sense of herself separated from her parents. Much of Elinor’s education during high school, which reflected how she chose to divide her time during college, did not occur in traditional classrooms. Instead, her classrooms were stages, swimming pools, dance halls, dates with high school boys, area debate tournaments, and local published photo-shoots. Elinor seemed to learn most in the spaces between scheduled classes and homework, especially as she learned to navigate and gained leadership positions in her community and at BHHS. These lessons foreshadowed Elinor’s academic and social successes at UCLA.

Elinor’s father, Adrian Awan, designed theater sets and lighting in the Los Angeles area.²¹ Adrian later went on to work at Twentieth-Century Fox Film Corporation in New York City.²² Adrian Awan and Leah Hopkins Awan separated before Elinor entered high school. Elinor occasionally mentioned in her childhood diary spending time at both parents’ homes.²³ Though she lived with her mother, her father exposed her to theater and involved her in local productions as a young child. In May of 1939, just a few months before she turned seven years old, the *LA Times* reported Elinor’s role as “Flower Girl” in the Los Angeles Civic Light Opera Association production of *Waltz Dream*; her father created the setting and lighting effects for the show.²⁴ Experiences like this, as well as other opportunities that came with living in Beverly Hills—a

²⁰ Lynn Peril, *College Girls*.

²¹ Elaine Woo, “Elinor Ostrom Dies at 78; First Woman to Win Nobel in Economics,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 13, 2012, <http://articles.latimes.com/2012/jun/13/local/la-me-elinor-ostrom-20120613>.

²² Adrian Awan, business card, n.d., box 27 (Dec. 16 accn.), Elinor Ostrom Papers.

²³ Elinor Awan, “Year Book,” diary, 1949, box 17 (Dec. 16 accn.), Elinor Ostrom Papers.

²⁴ “‘Waltz Dream’ Next Civic Light Presentation,” newspaper clipping, 21 May 1939, box 4 (Biographical/Family Papers), Elinor Ostrom Papers.

place where many of her peers' families were involved with the arts and the film industry—helped Elinor foster an interest in the stage.

This interest continued into high school, when she acted in school productions. She played the role of Carol Carter in *The Cinema Kid*, and had the title role during her senior year at BHHS in the production of *Divine Flora*.²⁵ Elinor shared the role of Rex with her friend Rosalyn Specht in another production, and the pair shared the stage again in a dance number for the sophomore talent show at BHHS.²⁶ The playbills from Elinor's productions and those she attended became prominent keepsakes from her time in high school and college.²⁷

During her time in high school, Elinor learned to say “yes” to opportunities that access to the well-supported BHHS afforded her. Fifty years after graduating from BHHS, Elinor memorably recalled, “Walking to and from school with Rosalyn Specht[,] [p]articipating in the Debate team and the swimming team.”²⁸ Her diary entries from high school focus most on the boys she was interested in dating (and even counting the number of dates she went on per year); if invitations to school dances and leadership roles in school clubs measured social status, then Elinor was a popular student.²⁹ Elinor may have felt some combination of pressure to succeed and enjoyment of the spotlight when she her peers named her a “Frosh to Watch”; a reporter noted, “Elinor Awan will no doubt be in the Aquacade in the near future, displaying her

²⁵ *The Cinema Kid*, playbill, n.d., box 1 (Biographical/Family Papers), folder “1956, Clippings of EO,” Elinor Ostrom Papers; Beverly Hills High School, *Watchtower 1951 Yearbook*, 1951, ancestry.com, 59.

²⁶ Playbill, 20 May 1949, box 1 (Biographical/Family Papers), folder “1956, Clippings of EO,” Elinor Ostrom Papers; “Sophs Conduct New York Tour,” newspaper clipping, n.d., box 2 (Biographical/Family Papers), folder “scrapbook for high school & college,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

²⁷ E. Ostrom, scrapbook (playbills), 1949, box 2 (Biographical/Family Papers), folder “scrapbook for high school & college,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

²⁸ E. Ostrom, “Beverly Hills High 50th Reunion Questionnaire,” 2001, box 1 (Biographical/Family Papers), folder “‘50 Years Later...’ books from EO’s high school,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

²⁹ Elinor Awan, “Year Book,” diary, 1949, box 17 (Dec. 16 accn.), Elinor Ostrom Papers, ca. 1953-2011, The Lilly Library, Indiana University Libraries; Elinor Awan, “Standard Daily Journal 1949 [1950],” diary, 1950, box 27 (Dec. 16 accn.), Elinor Ostrom Papers.

swimming ability....”³⁰ The swim-gym where Elinor practiced was just a few years before featured in the classic film *It’s A Wonderful Life* (1946), featuring BHHS’ state-of-the-art swim-gym—a basketball court that opened to a swimming pool underneath.³¹ Elinor gained notoriety among her peers and in the community as a member of the Aquabelles, a water ballet group.

Although she attended a high school known for the upper class status of its students’ families (as well as their connection to the film industry), Elinor’s family did not have a lot of money. The Awan family home was located on the edge of the BHHS district. “Since our home in Los Angeles was located at the lower edge of Beverly Hills, my mother arranged for me to attend Beverly Hills High School,” she recalled later.³² By sending Elinor to BHHS, her mother Leah did what she felt was the best interest of her child. Leah was educated as a musician at the Northeast Conservatory of Music and previously attended Boston Girls Latin School, two well known institutions on the opposite coast.³³ Her education did not focus on academic achievement, so Elinor learned to make her own way. She used her skills in the pool to earn money as a swim instructor during summer breaks.³⁴ Elinor reflected later on the important role of swimming in her young adulthood, “My major recreational activity was swimming, and I eventually joined a swimming team and swam competitively until I started teaching swimming to earn funds that I could save to help put me through college.”³⁵ She received no financial support from her parents beyond high school.³⁶

³⁰ “Frosh to Watch,” newspaper clipping, n.d., box 2 (Biographical/Family Papers), folder “scrapbook for high school & college,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³¹ “Aquacade to BHS to be held 11/21-22 in the Swim-Gym,” newspaper clipping, 7 November 1947, box 4 (Biographical/Family Papers), Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³² “Elinor Ostrom - Biographical.”

³³ Larkin, Roosevelt & Larkin, Ltd. (Boston) to Leah Hopkins, 1 February 1945, box 2 (Biographical/Family Papers), folder “Leah Hopkins, professional folder business card in San Fran. & letter of reference,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³⁴ “Teaching Assignments,” filed in diary, 1950, box 27 (Dec. 16 accn.), Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³⁵ “Elinor Ostrom - Biographical.”

³⁶ Ibid.

Her peers and teachers praised Elinor for her successes in the classroom and presumably, as an emerging leader among her peers. She was named to the all-female honor group the Adelprians in 1949, and also found herself among the ‘Lektos’, whose “Members were selected on the basis of one from every two hundred students in each department, with the faculty making final casting choices.”³⁷ The night after the Adelprians honored her, she wrote in her diary about the experience: “Third period I was summoned to Mrs. Moore’s. I was then told I was an Adelprian. I was so excited. They gave me a Red Medallion with a White A on it to wear around my neck.”³⁸ Other students and teachers praised Elinor for her honors. The Adelprian pledge “Adelprian Alway,” which she taped into her diary promised service and togetherness:

Adelprian, we pledge to thee
 Our hearts in service true,
 To work, to serve with loyalty
 Through ev’ry passing day;
 At Beverly our hearts will be
 United, strong, and true;
 Thy red and white, our guiding light!
 Adelprian, alway!
 Adelprian, through changing years
 Thy spirit will abide; We’ll work and serve unceasingly
 In every useful way;
 Where’er we be, the world will see
 Why spirit shining bright!
 Close by our side, be thou our guide!
 Adelprian, alway!³⁹

Sharing in this pledge hinted at the sisterhood Elinor sought upon joining a sorority at UCLA. She likely recited a similarly spirited pledge when joining the Alpha Omicron Pi sorority sisters a few years later and a few miles away.

³⁷ Beverly Hills High School, *Watchtower 1949 Yearbook*, 1949, ancestry.com, 104; Beverly Hills High School, *Watchtower 1950 Yearbook*, 1950, ancestry.com, 105.

³⁸ Elinor Awan, “Year Book,” diary, 23 February 1949, box 17 (Dec. 16 accn.), Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³⁹ “Adelprian, Alway,” pledge filed in diary, 23 February 1949, box 17 (Dec. 16 accn.), Elinor Ostrom Papers.

As she was recognized for her academic potential though Lektos during her junior and senior years, Elinor emerged as the president of two women's organizations during her senior year at BHHS, Alpha and the Girls Athletic Association (G.A.A.).⁴⁰ As G.A.A. president, Elinor "inaugurated something new--monthly meetings of the entire organization," and the organization also transformed the swim-gym in honor of the U.S.S. Normandy "in the motif of a luxury liner, [which] drew scores of Norman couples to dance to the music of Dick Telane and his Band of Fame."⁴¹ In this experience, as with time in the Girl's League, which hosted a "Panel discussion on clothes and high school social life" for incoming freshman, Elinor gained opportunities to speak publicly, to understand social politics, and to organize her peers.⁴²

Elinor honed public speaking skills leading various school organizations but most importantly developed these skills after a teacher "encouraged [her] to join the debate team in my junior year of high school" leading her to compete around the state in debate competitions.⁴³ Elinor competed in oratorical declamation (an individually written, memorized, and performed speech) in forensics, as well as partnered debate events.⁴⁴ Elinor's choice to attend the "Fifteen Annual Summer Session" at the University of Denver, where she was able to select among the study of drama, debate, radio, and art, transformed her educationally.⁴⁵ A handwritten note at the top of a brochure on tuition scholarships for sessions signaled for "Lynn Awan," along with two other boys to "please read"; a thoughtful teacher or coach may have presented the encouragement she later remembered.⁴⁶ She pocketed the pamphlet, and traveled to Denver in July. Elinor documented her solo travels in a detailed scrapbook. "This is the history of my 5

⁴⁰ Beverly Hills High School, *Watchtower 1951 Yearbook*, 1951, ancestry.com, 114.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid., 20.

⁴³ "Elinor Ostrom - Biographical."

⁴⁴ *Citizen News, Los Angeles*, newspaper clipping, 30 March 1950, box 2 (Biographical/Family Papers), folder "scrapbook for high school & college," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁴⁵ "1950 Scholarships for High School Students," brochure, 1950, box 27 (Dec. 16 accn.), Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

week trip to Denver University,” she began.⁴⁷ That Elinor chose to spend her summer furthering her skills in debate not only showed her interest in the activity, but also her willingness to pursue the next step of an idea; she began to make extra efforts toward intellectualisms that interested her. The program also allowed her to live on a college campus for the first time, no doubt a key experience that made attending college a more attainable aspiration.

No less important were the social understandings and friendships Elinor gained as a member of a group of similarly bright students; another summer session student wrote a message in her scrapbook: “Good Luck always. See you at Nationals!”⁴⁸ After celebrating her seventeenth birthday away from home, Elinor sent her mother a postcard, reporting that she “debates every day and they are long and hard. Coach is a wonderful man and I’m learning a lot of debate.”⁴⁹ Years later and after winning the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences, she cited her skills in debate as essential to early her intellectual development. “Learning debate was an important early impact on my ways of thinking. You are taught that there are always at least two sides to public policy questions, and you have to learn a good argument for both sides as well as knowing how to critique both sides,” Lin stated.⁵⁰ This mode of thinking may have prepared her early in life to learn to approach problems from multiple perspectives, ultimately key to her interdisciplinary practice. Without realizing her training, Elinor learned that multiple positions provided new insights for problem solving.

Members of the community also supported and recognized Lin as a young adult for her physical beauty. In 1949, Elinor was selected as “Uncle Sam’s Sweetheart” for the American

⁴⁷ Elinor Awan, “University of Denver,” scrapbook, 1950, box 27 (Dec. 16 accn.), Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Elinor Awan to Leah Hopkins, 16 August 1950, box 27 (Dec. 16 accn.), Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁵⁰ “Elinor Ostrom - Biographical.”

Youth Party.⁵¹ Elinor learned of the honor a month before her picture appeared in the local newspapers alongside Dave Wykoff, who was similarly honored with the title “Hi, Unk.”⁵² She recalled in her daily diary entry: “Mr. Lovett phoned Mom tonight and asked if I could pose for some pictures at the Hall of Records downtown. That I would be titled U.S. Sweetheart. Gee that will be wonderful.”⁵³ A few days later, Elinor (accompanied by her mother) and Dave Wykoff met with a photographer from the *Beverly & Hollywood Citizen* newspaper in downtown Los Angeles.⁵⁴

Though perhaps more interested in gaining Dave’s affections during the photo-shoot, she also noted a connection, “Mom told Mr. Lovett to get in touch with Mr. Mitchekec who was in charge of my pictures for the rededication of the George Washington Statue. It was a wonderful contact for me to have him see me again.”⁵⁵ Elinor, just fifteen at the time, displayed she had learned how to network, a skill that would long serve her. In late June of 1947, about a year and half before the “Sweetheart” recognition, Elinor served as official hostess at the rededication ceremony of the George Washington Statue located at the Hall of Records. She was named to the position through her participation in the Children of the American Revolution, and photographs of Elinor dressed in period costume appeared in several Los Angeles newspapers, including the *Los Angeles Examiner* and the *LA Times*.⁵⁶ As a BHHS student recognized as “Uncle Sam’s Sweetheart,” Elinor learned to connect her previous experience with one in her present; she learned to build a public image through repeated connections. She also gained notoriety among

⁵¹ *Beverly & Hollywood Citizen*, “It’s A Date,” photograph, 3 February 1947, box 1 (Biographical/Family Papers), folder “1956 Clippings of EO,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁵² *Ibid.*; Elinor Awan, “Year Book,” diary, 19 January 1949, box 17 (Dec. 16 accn.), Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Elinor Awan, “Year Book,” diary, 20 January 1949, box 17 (Dec. 16 accn.), Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Los Angeles Examiner*, “Beverly Hills Girl Hostess at Washington Statue Rite,” newspaper clipping, 29 June 1947, box 1 (Biographical/Family Papers), folder “1956 Clippings of EO,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

her peers and the community; from Elinor's perspective, however, these instances were *just fun* and were not altogether unusual occurrences in her teenage years.

UCLA

With a vivid high school experience just behind her and geographically not far away, Elinor made a big entrance as a first year student at UCLA in fall 1951. She rushed a sorority and ran for a position in student government. Elinor asked her peers to "Win with Lynn" as she ran for Vice-President of her freshman class.⁵⁷ Posters with this slogan were hung up "on all the trees on fraternity and sorority row"; she later recalled, "Sally Kay won but I was happy where I came in."⁵⁸ Though the beginnings of a degree in political science were on the horizon, she immediately committed to Alpha Omicron Pi sorority. This group provided a foundation for her college experience.

Elinor's experience with sororities also incorporated her into a larger process of social selection. Supporters of sororities, according to Lynn Peril, "pointed to lifelong friendships made, the way sisters banded together to boost underachieving members' academic performances, and the community service performed by various houses."⁵⁹ Alternately, those against sororities saw these organizations as "not democratic...they admitted girls based on social position and wealth, excluded others because of racial and religious prejudices, while the rushing procedure itself made for hurt feelings."⁶⁰

A photographic essay in the December 17, 1945, issue of *Life* magazine took aim at societal fears of women's Greek Life in an article title "College Sororities: They Pose a Social

⁵⁷ Elinor Awan, "Win with Lynn," campaign sign, 1951, box 2 (Biographical/Family Papers, folder "scrapbook for high school & college," Elinor Ostrom Papers, ca. 1953-2011, The Lilly Library, Indiana University Libraries.

⁵⁸ Elinor Awan, scrapbook, 1951, box 2 (Biographical/Family Papers, folder "scrapbook for high school & college," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁵⁹ Peril, *College Girls*, 80.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

Problem.”⁶¹ The essay followed the rush “week” (17 days) experiences of Shirley Smith at the University of Colorado; however, the author quickly noted, “But of the 802 freshmen girls at the University of Colorado, only 259 were taken into sororities.”⁶² Elinor glimpsed both college life and sorority houses during her stay in the university residence halls at the University of Denver.⁶³ According to the *Life* article, Shirley Smith’s wealth and family background made her a good candidate, but “she had to guard against the slightest social slip that would blackball her, try to select the right sorority and at the same time keep second- and third-choice sororities interested in her.”⁶⁴ Elinor did not come from a wealthy family, and though her rush experience took place five years after Smith’s, the social pressures were likely similar. Elinor’s concerns may have been compounded by financial pressure to keep up with the other women.

The article casts not just Shirley’s story but also the entire notion of sorority social exclusivity under public examination. “The adolescent tragedies inflicted on some of the girls who are excluded has made the whole college sorority system a foremost issue in the U.S. academic life today,” reported the 1945 *Life* article.⁶⁵ Furthermore, there were a growing number of “antisorority spokesmen” or in this case, *spokeswomen* emerging in the mid-1940s. The author of the article identified “Mrs. Frank” as a key detractor of this period; Mrs. Frank, married to the late Glenn Frank, former president of the University of Wisconsin, had “been expelled from Pi Beta Phi sorority for publishing her views that sororities’ good is outweighed by their evil and that their social exclusiveness has in isolated cases even caused suicide.”⁶⁶

⁶¹ “College Sororities: They Pose a Social Problem,” *LIFE*, December 17, 1945, 97–105.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 97.

⁶³ Elinor Awan, “Standard Daily Journal 1949,” diary, 23 July 1950, box 27 (Dec. 16 Accn.), Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁶⁴ “College Sororities: They Pose a Social Problem,” 98.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 97.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 102.

Students across the country felt the beginnings of a national Civil Rights Movement, but the experiences highlighted here were in large part those of white women in all-white sororities. However, in mid-1950s select sorority chapters lost their charters after accepting black pledges.⁶⁷ Not until 1966, in the midst of the Civil Rights Movement, did all-white female sororities organize their efforts for the admittance of women regardless of race or religious affiliation.⁶⁸ The Northwestern University chapter of Elinor's sorority, Alpha Omicron Pi, started a "Greeks Against Discrimination" movement at its Illinois school.⁶⁹

In 1950, UCLA selected Allyn Smith, then nineteen, as its homecoming queen. *Life* magazine featured Smith on the cover of the November 27, 1950 issue. The photographic essay reported, "she has gray-blue eyes and honey hair, and her figure is much better than her figuring. So when homecoming celebration came around, Allyn suddenly found herself Homecoming Queen and officially prettiest girl on the UCLA campus."⁷⁰ Elinor, a rising freshmen, submitted an application to be considered for Homecoming Queen at UCLA the following year. Though not selected, in October 1951, her application was accepted, approved, and "judged on facial beauty, poise, personality, and figure only."⁷¹

In the midst of sorority formals, classes, football games, dates, and homework, Elinor found time to support herself financially. She reflected later on her college experience at UCLA:

My mother saw no reason to support me during my college years since she had been supported only through high school. Fortunately, the semester fees at UCLA at that time were extremely low. I worked in the library, at a dime store, and at the bookstore. I was able to complete my undergraduate degree without going into debt. I took courses across the social sciences and graduated after three years by attending multiple summer sessions

⁶⁷ Peril, *College Girls*, 84.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 85.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ "Queen's Choice: College Crown Shifts Allyn Smith from Kindergarten to the Movies," *LIFE*, November 27, 1950, 65.

⁷¹ UCLA Homecoming Queen Contest Application, 19 October 1951, box 2 (Biographical/Family Papers), folder "scrapbook for high school & college," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

and by taking extra courses throughout. In my last year as an undergraduate, I graded Freshmen Economics.⁷²

As college came to an end, her life was almost set on a predetermined path. Over the winter holiday of her senior year, she and her classmate Charles “Chuck” Scott became engaged to be married on Christmas.⁷³ In the spring, Elinor graduated with a degree in political science; Chuck was pre-law.⁷⁴ Together they married and moved to the east coast, where she “worked to put him through law school.”⁷⁵ However, she soon began considering graduate school.⁷⁶

Finding Water

For three years Elinor lived in Cambridge, Massachusetts, with her new husband Chuck as he attended Harvard Law School. Elinor worked full-time, first as an export clerk at General Radio Co. and then at Godfrey L. Cabot—“a distinguished Boston firm that had never hired a woman for any position above secretary”—as Assistant Personnel Manager conducting employment interviews.⁷⁷ She typed Chuck’s assignments and occasionally attended courses with him held on weekends.⁷⁸ Along with a few of her friends from work, Elinor joined the Harvard Law Wives Association. In her spare time, she knitted, learned shorthand via correspondence, and read political science books.⁷⁹ After a year in Cambridge, she began planning her return to school: “I am trying to keep myself up on the subject so that when I go

⁷² “Elinor Ostrom - Biographical.”

⁷³ *Daily News Life*, engagement announcement Elinor Awan to Charles Scott, 28 December 1953, box 4 (Biographical/Family Papers), folder “E.O. engagement announcement” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ Woo, “Elinor Ostrom Dies at 78; First Woman to Win Nobel in Economics.”

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ Elinor Scott to Leah Awan, 10 September 1954, box 124, folder “Correspondence 1950-1954,” Elinor Ostrom Papers; E. Ostrom, “A Long Polycentric Journey,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 13, no. 1 (2010): 3, doi:10.1146/annurev.polisci.090808.123259.

⁷⁸ Elinor Scott to Leah Awan, 21 November 1954, box 124, folder “Correspondence 1950-1954,” Elinor Ostrom Papers; Elinor Scott to Leah Awan, 21 October 1954, box 124, folder “Correspondence 1950-1954,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁷⁹ Elinor Scott to Leah Awan, February 1955, box 122, folder “Correspondence 1955,” Elinor Ostrom Papers; Elinor Scott and Charles Scott to Leah Awan, 31 October 1954, box 124, folder “Correspondence 1950-1954,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

back to school it won't be so much of a strain."⁸⁰ In 1957, Elinor and Chuck returned to California and amicably separated not long after. Elinor's work experience in Boston allowed her to easily gain employment in the Personnel Office at UCLA.

After a year of part-time coursework toward a Masters in Public Administration, Elinor took action to enroll as a full-time Ph.D. student at UCLA.⁸¹ "The graduate advisor in economics strongly discouraged pursuit of a Ph.D. in economics because I had so little mathematics background...but he did approve of an outside minor in economics if I pursued a Ph.D. in political science," she recalled.⁸² Male faculty members warned Lin that only positions with heavy teaching loads at city colleges awaited her should she complete a doctoral degree. Joined by three other women in a class of 40, Elinor's return to UCLA was met with disagreement: "There was a huge controversy in the faculty because they hadn't had a woman faculty member or graduate student for multiple decades. People wondered why that committee let four of us in. They thought it would hurt the reputation of the department."⁸³

At UCLA's Political Science Department, Elinor—who began spelling her nickname "Lynn" as "Lin" around this time—met faculty members Jack Hirshleifer, Vincent Ostrom, and Charles Tiebout: "Their early work challenged the notion that order in the public sector stemmed only from central direction," which provided the dominant dialogue for her graduate education.⁸⁴

Written while Lin was their student, Vincent Ostrom, Charles Tiebout, and Robert Warren's

⁸⁰ Elinor Scott to Leah Awan, 7 April 1955, box 122, folder "Correspondence 1955," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁸¹ E. Ostrom, "A Long Polycentric Journey," 3.

⁸² "American Political Science Association Oral History Project, Transcripts of tapes Recording Conversations with Charles S. Hyneman," 1976-1978, box 164, folder "Professional Act-IU-Other Political Science Dept. Oral History Project Transcripts of Charles S. Hyneman," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁸³ E. Ostrom, interview by Sarah Auffret, "Collective Action, Singular Accomplishment: ASU Magazine Interviews 2009 Nobel Laureate Elinor Ostrom," box 115, folder "Writings-EO-Publicity-Writings about EO 2010," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁸⁴ E. Ostrom, "Learning from the Field," in *Elinor Ostrom and the Bloomington School of Political Economy: A Framework for Policy Analysis*, ed. Daniel H. Cole and Michael D. McGinnis, vol. 3 (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017), 391.

influential 1961 study probed “polycentric” complex metropolitan organizations.⁸⁵ From them, Lin learned to consider governance beyond the market or top-down arrangements. Polycentric organizations offered more than one center, with “multiple authorities with overlapping areas of responsibility interact[ing] with each other in the absence of any single overarching final authority.”⁸⁶

One research seminar taught by Vincent Ostrom on the water industry in Southern California early in her coursework offered Lin a laboratory to study public entrepreneurship. Vincent assigned Elinor to study “how water producers were coping with or ignoring overdrafts” in the West Coast Basin.⁸⁷ Of the project, Lin later explained, “I was witnessing forms of public entrepreneurship that would be hard to match if one were studying elected public officials representing state or federal agencies with limited access to relevant records or the officials themselves.”⁸⁸ Over the next few years, Lin expanded the project started in the seminar into her dissertation.⁸⁹

Lin did not anticipate meeting her second husband when she enrolled in his seminar. Born in Nooksack, Washington, in 1919, Vincent Ostrom completed his Ph.D. in political science at UCLA in 1950 by studying water. In hindsight, Vincent’ dissertation “Government and Water: A Study of the Influence of Water Upon Governmental Institutions and Practices in the Development of Los Angeles,” provided groundwork for Elinor’s doctoral research and the

⁸⁵ Ibid.; Vincent Ostrom, Charles M. Tiebout, and Robert Warren, “The Organization of Government in Metropolitan Areas: A Theoretical Inquiry,” *American Political Science Review* 55, no. 4 (1961): 831–842.

⁸⁶ Paul Dragos Aligica et al., *Elinor Ostrom and the Bloomington School of Political Economy: Polycentricity in Public Administration and Political Science*, ed. Daniel H. Cole and Michael D. McGinnis (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014), xv-xvi.

⁸⁷ E. Ostrom, “Learning from the Field,” in *Elinor Ostrom and the Bloomington School of Political Economy: A Framework for Policy Analysis*, ed. Daniel H. Cole and Michael D. McGinnis, vol. 3 (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017), 391.

⁸⁸ Ibid. 392.

⁸⁹ E. Ostrom, “Public Entrepreneurship: A Case Study in Ground Water Basin Management,” (Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 1965).

beginning of their intellectual partnership.⁹⁰ By the time they met in the late 1950s, Vincent's reputation as an expert in natural resource policy was growing: "In 1960, both the Kennedy and Nixon presidential campaigns asked him to help draft their positions on the subject (he worked for Kennedy because his campaign was the first to ask)."⁹¹ Like Lin, Vincent had been previously married; he had two boys—Jim and Peter—with his first wife, Isabell.⁹¹ Elinor and Vincent married quietly in 1963.

⁹⁰ V. Ostrom, "Government and Water: A Study of the Influence of Water Upon Governmental Institutions and Practices in the Development of Los Angeles," (Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 1950).

⁹¹ Isabell Ostrom to V. Ostrom, 4 June 1963, box 4, folder "Biographical & Family-VO-Immediate Family-Correspondence-Letters from Isabell about sons, 1963," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

Chapter 2 The Workshop, 1963-1980

Lin and Vincent formally established the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis at Indiana University January 1, 1973.¹ The roots of the Workshop idea, however, can be traced through its founders' shared histories over nearly two decades, beginning in 1954.

The emergence of the Workshop idea may be understood by placing it within conversations about modern social science. Specifically, how would political science define itself following World War II? What relationships should research methods have to the discipline? And of particular concern to the Ostros, how could research, community, and graduate instruction be productively combined? Each of these questions probes the possibility of and processes needed for interdisciplinary research to occur.

The circumstances that surrounded the Ostros' arrival and early employment at Indiana were complicated by informal anti-nepotism practices, which left unacknowledged at UCLA and Indiana University, meant Lin met obstacles at all stages of graduate education and employment. Lin carefully navigated discrimination by her department through awareness that circumstances were little better elsewhere. Lin and Vincent worked hard to make Indiana their home both intellectually and in community with friends, students, and colleagues. However, the Ostros remained private people. True complements in life and work, they retreated every summer from growing pressures on campus—brought on both by chaotic student protests in the 1960s and status quo leadership within their department. The Ostros' early years together at IU pulled them closer together and apart from the stalwarts of their discipline. Their eyes were on the horizon of knowledge, aiming to make major changes in political science. These critical years of

¹ V. Ostrom to Leroy N. Rieselbach, [ca. 1972], box 331, folder "Workshop-History Rieselbach, L.N. c. 1972-74," Elinor Ostrom Papers, ca. 1953-2011, The Lilly Library, Indiana University Libraries.

struggle brought about the creation of their namesake Workshop and made the next forty years of scholarship possible.

Indiana University

The Department of Political Science at Indiana University reached out to Vincent with the promise of an offer for full-professorship in October 1963.² At Indiana, Vincent might have hoped to rejoin J.W. Milliman, a professor of Business Administration. Vincent and Milliman knew one another from UCLA, where as a graduate student in the early 1950s Milliman was assigned to read Vincent's dissertation to assist with his own work on the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.³ The pair crossed paths again while both were working for Resources for the Future in 1963.⁴ "I consider Vincent Ostrom to be one of the most competent social scientists working in the general area of water resource policy today," wrote Milliman.⁵ Milliman immediately recommended to Byrum Carter, the Political Science Department Chair, that he continue to pursue Vincent:

He has a fine background in water resources coupled with a keen analytical mind and a nice talent for conceptualizing. I would be extremely pleased to see Mr. Ostrom join our faculty. His presence on our campus would help direct national attention in the field of water resource research to Indiana.⁶

On December 21, 1963, Vincent wrote two letters: one to Richard Longaker, his current department chair at UCLA and another to Byrum Carter at Indiana. To Longaker, Vincent articulated what finally pulled him away from UCLA and Resources for the Future and what pushed him to join new students and colleagues at Indiana.

² V. Ostrom to Richard Longaker, 27 October 1963, box 242, folder "Personnel Files UCLA Resignation 1963-64," Elinor Ostrom Papers; J.W. Milligan to Byrum Carter, 25 October 1963, box 281, folder "Personnel Files Indiana University Dept. of Government Position," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³ Milliman to Carter, 25 October 1963, Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

Salary alone is not a controlling condition so far as I am concerned. As you are well aware I have had a very long term interest in UCLA, but unfortunately one's hopes and wishes may have very little to do with the terms and conditions of university life. At Indiana I found a genuine understanding and respect for the scholarly interests and style of work that I have developed and an enthusiasm for the pace that these interests and efforts may have upon the growth of significant scholarship in the department and the university. At UCLA I felt that there was neither understanding, respect, nor interest in what I was trying to do on the part of those who were making departmental and university decisions that affected my work.... I guess the basic issue is what a university should strive to be, and how it seeks to organize itself to become a community for significant scholarship.⁷

Vincent foresaw his next decade of academic work to be his most significant: "I would like to indicate that my primary concern is to find the intellectual environment which will afford favorable opportunities to bring my life's work to effective fruition." Further, he saw his position as within a broader intellectual shift within political science "that will lift the work in political science to a new level of sophistication both in relation to its theoretical dimensions and in relation to the evolution of a professional practice in political analysis."⁸

Lin did not publicly participate in her husband's negotiations with Indiana; however, Vincent carefully established her as his intellectual partner to be taken seriously by the University. "My wife and I share a number of intellectual interests, and I shall be pursuing some of my work in collaboration with her. She also has some other interests as, for example, in the field of public personnel administration which are quite independent of my interests," Vincent explained to Carter. "I would hope that there would be no serious institutional constraint to our collaboration in projects that might be funded in grants to the university or that she would not be precluded from pursuing independent professional interests in teaching or in research at Indiana

⁷ V. Ostrom to Longaker, 21 December 1963, box 242, folder "Personnel Files UCLA Resignation 1963-64," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁸ V. Ostrom to Byrum Carter, 21 December 1963, box 281, folder "Personnel Files Indiana University Dept. of Government Position," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

University. She would want to be judged on her own credentials and in relation to her own merit,” he continued.⁹

By insisting that Lin be “judged on her own credentials and in relation to her own merit,” Vincent spoke directly to strict anti-nepotism policies still common then. Universities created these regulations as means of protection from pressures to hire those with influential family connections, but faculty wives were primary targets of these rules, especially those working in the same departments.¹⁰ According to Michele Shover’s study of “Married Academic Women” published in 1978, “The legitimacy of such policies was long-grounded in general population attitudes, reflected in the consistent patterns of higher unemployment for married women than for married men or single women.”¹¹ And as Margaret Rossiter found, there were many more women scientists in academia by 1970, the positions they held were subordinate to their male colleagues—many who were supported by the GI Bill; “they were even less often than earlier in faculty or administrative positions and more often research assistants, librarians, or other non-faculty personnel on someone else’s grant.”¹² Maria Geoppart Mayer, the second female recipient of the Nobel Prize in Physics (the first was Marie Curie) held an unpaid position as a full professor at the University of Chicago, where her husband Joseph Mayer was fully compensated for his work as a chemist. Anti-nepotism rules blocked her salary.¹³

Before their move, Vincent reiterated his commitment to working with Lin in his request for office space, “I would appreciate a study with sufficient space as my wife might have a

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Margaret W. Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Before Affirmative Action, 1940-1972* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 124.

¹¹ Michele Shover, “Married Academic Women: ‘Go to the End of the Line,’” *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 3, no. 1 (1978): 57, doi:10.2307/3345994.

¹² Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Before Affirmative Action, 1940-1972*, 123.

¹³ Shover, “Married Academic Women,” 57.

separate desk for some of the work we shall be doing together.¹⁴ Hidden behind Vincent's early letters to Indiana concerning collaboration and space are conversations between Lin and Vincent that preceded their delivery. Lin was no fool to the discriminatory hiring practices that awaited her upon graduation. In 1962, Lin's master's degree had only just been conferred, and she did not receive her Ph.D. until they were settled in Bloomington in 1965. Although anti-nepotism regulations did not exist at Indiana to prevent employment of a dual-career couple at the same university or even in the same department by 1965, it was no doubt to the Ostros' advantage to state their position carefully. This was sensitive territory that moved beyond rules on paper. Lin and Vincent may have viewed their move to Indiana prior to her degree completion as strategic for their potential dual employment. By selecting Indiana—a university without anti-nepotism rules—over continued employment at UCLA one of the first claims they made as a couple was their desire to pursue recognized work together.

Like so much discrimination that occurs for any reason, anti-nepotism practices that affected academic women were more likely to be unacknowledged and informal than to result from formal regulation and policy.¹⁵ In 1965—the year Lin completed her Ph.D.—of the 18,239 doctorates awarded in the United States, only 2,118 (11.6 percent) were received by women. “When Vincent was recruited to Indiana University, I was not invited to visit Bloomington, but fortunately IU did not have the kind of nepotism rule that many universities (including UCLA) had at that time, which would have precluded my eventual employment anywhere on campus,” Lin remembered.¹⁶ At UCLA, there were examples of academic couples that received

¹⁴ V. Ostrom to Walter H.C. Laves, 31 July 1964, box 281, folder “Personnel Files Indiana University Dept. of Government Position,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁵ Adrian Tinsley and Elaine Ruben, “Academic Women, Sex Discrimination, and the Law: An Action Handbook.” (MLA Commission on the Status of Women, January 1973), 15, <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED082613>.

¹⁶ E. Ostrom, “A Long Polycentric Journey,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 13, no. 1 (2010): 6-7, doi:10.1146/annurev.polisci.090808.123259.

appointments; the first in 1960, were both meteorologists.¹⁷ However, anti-nepotism was practiced in some university departments and not others.¹⁸ Just as Lin finished her Ph.D. academic women found federal support to end sex-based discrimination in higher education. Executive Order 11246, as amended was issued by President Lyndon B. Johnson on September 24, 1965, and provided that all government contracting agencies “will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin,” and that they will take affirmative action to ensure equal treatment on these bases.¹⁹ Revisions to the Higher Education Act of 1965 brought by Title IX in 1972 aimed to end sex discrimination in higher education, but also signaled anti-nepotism regulations leading to sex discrimination had not yet been eradicated from colleges and universities.²⁰

Many years later, the Ostroms’ students and colleagues attached significance to the story of how Lin received her first position at Indiana. Michael McGinnis, her friend and research collaborator at Indiana, shared this story:

IU hired Vincent and then she came here as part of the deal on that—got a position, probably would not have gotten a position on her own in that set up. We still have those traditions of spousal hires; we handle them a little better than I think we used to. Back then UCLA apparently had a law that you couldn’t even have a husband and wife in the same department, but, you know, that was to our advantage. They came here. And we had them here.²¹

Barbara Allen, the Ostroms’ friend and student, similarly wrote in 2014, “Vincent took a job at Indiana University on the condition that Elinor was granted a faculty position—a common

¹⁷ Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Before Affirmative Action, 1940-1972*, 140.

¹⁸ Tinsley and Ruben, “Academic Women, Sex Discrimination, and the Law,” 16.

¹⁹ “Executive Order 11246 of September 24, 1965, Establishing Equal Employment Opportunity,” 3 C.F.R. 339 (1964-65). <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/executive-order/11246.html#top>.

²⁰ Title IX (Education Amendments of 1972), Public Law No. 92-318, 86 Stat. 235 (June 23, 1972), codified at 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681–1688; Tinsley and Ruben, “Academic Women, Sex Discrimination, and the Law.”

²¹ Michael McGinnis, interview by Sara Clark, June 6, 2013, transcript, “Coming Together.”

practice in academia where a ‘trailing spouse’ is sometimes granted a ‘courtesy appointment.’”²²

Both personal and official correspondence with Indiana University and UCLA at this time provides contradictory memories of how and why the Ostroms came to Indiana. However, Lin recounted the story otherwise: “My husband received an offer as full professor at IU, and I came with him without a position, which was normal in the mid-’60s. Then I had the good luck to be offered a visiting assistant professor position since they needed someone to teach political science at 7:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, and I was willing to do that.”²³

Bloomington

“My wife and I, indeed, are looking forward, with great anticipation to the day when we shall be heading for Bloomington to join the University community.”²⁴ -Vincent Ostrom, January 27, 1963

Upon Vincent’s request, he completed two projects with Resources for the Future—“One is a study of the California Water Industry and the other is on the International Development of the Columbia River”—before beginning at Indiana in Spring 1965.²⁵ Early in the Fall of ’64 Lin and Vincent drove from Lin’s mother’s home in Los Angeles to Washington, D.C., where Vincent would finish work with Resources for the Future. Together their travels became a task to be studied and recorded. Along the way they entered careful notes into a palm-sized three-ring journal kept in their car for at least two decades. In their first entry from their trip east, dated October 4, 1964, they recorded:

²² Jay Walljasper, “The Story of Vincent and Elinor Ostrom,” January 10, 2014, <http://www.onthecommons.org/magazine/story-vincent-and-elinor-ostrom>.

²³ Sarah Auffret, “Collective Action, Singular Accomplishment: ASU Magazine Interviews 2009 Nobel Laureate Elinor Ostrom,” box 115, folder “Writings-EO-Publicity-Writings about EO 2010,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

²⁴ V. Ostrom to Edward M. Buehrig, 27 January 1963, box 281, folder “Personnel Files Indiana University Dept. of Government Position,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

²⁵ Vincent’s contract with Indiana University began September 1, 1964, but he received an unpaid leave of absence for Fall 1964. V. Ostrom to Byrum Carter, 21 December 1963, box 281, folder “Personnel Files Indiana University Dept. of Government Position,” Elinor Ostrom Papers; Elvis Stahr to V. Ostrom, 27 April 1964, box 281, folder “Personnel Files Indiana University Dept. of Government Position,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

Los Angeles-Bloomington-Washington, D.C.

Left Gregory Way on Monday afternoon at 3:10 p.m. 19365. Drove all the way on 66 to Tucumcari. On Tuesday night stayed at the Golden W in Tucumcari which was very nice. Big room, free TV, large bath, air conditioned, free ice & paper, nice people. Winter rates 8.00 per night. Ate in our rooms.

Stopped at Albuquerque on our way & found a marvelous Indian Store with a whole room of baskets which weren't quite ready for sale yet, but they let us look & buy 3. Jim Price the owner. His personal collection. He bought all three baskets from the Knox collection purchased in 1860's

Ate lunch at a Mexican place near University but not very good.²⁶

They documented times and mileage, people met, memories, and reviews of restaurants and motels. Significantly, the couple also recorded purchases of art and artifacts. On this trip to D.C. they purchased three American Indian baskets from Jim Price, a dealer and collector they noted, perhaps as a source for future acquisitions. These baskets would soon occupy their home in Bloomington.

To Protect You

In 1965, the classrooms and main offices for the Department of Government occupied the recently completed Ballantine Hall. Ballantine—which housed twelve departments when it opened in 1959—soared above other campus buildings and represented a new era of “skyscraper” campus construction.²⁷ Like so many colleges and universities in these years, Indiana University was experiencing massive expansion. A report on “Growth and Change at Indiana University” produced in 1966 reported staggering change over the previous decade:

In 1965 more than 53 per cent of the degrees granted at Indiana University were postbaccalaureate, and in the decade since 1955, baccalaureate degrees had increased by 70 per cent, but the percentage of graduate degrees had increased 135 per cent. Somewhat more specifically, the university awarded 1,275 graduate degrees in 1955, and 2,991 in 1965.²⁸

²⁶ E. Ostrom and V. Ostrom, travel journal, 4 October 1964, box 4, folder “Adult Life Travel Journal, 1962-1990,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

²⁷ Thomas D. Clark, *Indiana University: Midwestern Pioneer* (Indiana University Press, 1977), 192.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 377.

The students who filled the increasing number of hallways and classrooms echoed the nation with growing preoccupation over the war in Southeast Asia. Students at Indiana University—like at most other colleges and universities—varied in the amount of interest they showed to activist causes. Mary Ann Wynkoop, author of *Dissent in the Heartland: The Sixties at Indiana University*, suggested that students who entered college in this era, unlike Lin and her faculty colleagues, had never known the impact of the Great Depression, and “Instead, they asked themselves, ‘What makes life worth living?’”²⁹ This cohort had its own fights: civil rights, women’s liberation, and the war in Vietnam forced many students to understand what it meant to live in a participatory democracy. Battles against racism and for peace were often fought by the same students.

In the midst of these campus cries against discrimination and war, Lin had a conversation that forced her to course correct. For the past year Lin had been working as a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Government—a position that offered only temporary security and no line of advancement. She taught Introduction to American Government to freshmen on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday at 7:30 a.m., a preferred slot for neither student nor instructor.³⁰ In memory, colleagues view this position as a “spousal hire,” a position gained as part of Vincent’s contract with the University.³¹

“I want to talk to you,” Walter H.C. Laves said to Lin and indicated they should sit down on a bench in the close quarters of the elevator passage.

²⁹ Mary Ann Wynkoop, *Dissent in the Heartland: The Sixties at Indiana University* (Bloomington, IN.: Indiana University Press, 2002), viii.

³⁰ E. Ostrom, interview by Kristen Monroe, [ca. 2000], transcript, box 178, folder “Publicity-Interviews Given Transcript Nov. 6, 2000,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³¹ Michael McGinnis, interview by Sara Clark, June 6, 2013, transcript, “Coming Together.”

Before becoming chairman of the Department of Government at Indiana, Laves served as deputy director of UNESCO, as well as various positions within the Federal government.³² When he sat down with Lin that day, he was twice her age and nearing the end of his professional career.

“I want you to know Byrum [Carter] has done this and he has gotten unanimous consent of the other faculty members that we should make your appointment a regular appointment. I want you to know for your sake I’ve decided against it,” Laves said to Lin.

Byrum Carter, then a professor of political science and the current graduate advisor had been key to Vincent’s initial negotiations when joining Indiana’s faculty, and he had continued to advocate for the Ostros since their arrival.³³

The explanation that followed shocked Lin: “Well 20 years from now someone might ask if you had been appointed because you are Vincent’s wife and I don’t think that should happen so to protect you I am not going to appoint you.”

“I couldn’t say anything. I was in shock,” Lin reflected later. But Lin did do something; “I guess, well, I thought I would continue and see if I cannot show him that I’m being appointed on my own.”³⁴

Unfortunately, this interaction was all too common for faculty spouses. The now classic study of anti-nepotism regulations produced by Eleanor Dolan (American Association of University Women) and her assistant Margaret P. Davis in 1959-60, supports Laves actions as

³² “Walter H.C. Laves is Dead at 81; Ex-Academic and UNESCO Officer,” *The New York Times*, October 12, 1983, sec. Obituaries, <http://www.nytimes.com/1983/10/12/obituaries/walter-hc-laves-is-dead-at-81-ex-academic-and-unesco-officer.html>.

³³ V. Ostrom to Byrum Carter, 21 December 1963, box 281, folder “Personnel Files Indiana University Dept. of Government Position,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³⁴ E. Ostrom, interview by Kristen Monroe, [ca. 2000].

familiar barriers to advancement for married academic women.³⁵ Indiana University's Department of Government under Laves seemed to struggle to clarify the specifics of its rules permitting spousal hiring. In some ways the department acted like a small category identified by Dolan and Davis made up of 52 (18.25 percent) of the 363 institutions surveyed that "had no fixed policy or written rules on the subject but instead an abundance of various labor practices...lower salaries for wives despite their credentials or accomplishments, no permanency or tenure, slower advancement, and the like."³⁶ In this case, the rules were informal and unacknowledged.

A change in administration spelled new opportunity for Lin, and her entrepreneurial awareness shone through. Byrum Carter vacated his position as department graduate advisor as he moved up the administrative ladder to become Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences in 1966 and University Chancellor in 1969.³⁷ Laves was no longer Chairman; instead a more amenable Edward H. Buehrig took his place. Lin was asked to be the graduate advisor, a three-year appointment. Lin recounted the event later: "I was at that point a Visiting Assistant Professor. I suggested it looked a little funny to have a graduate advisor who was a visitor and they said, 'Don't worry about it,' so that is how I got a job."³⁸

*She got the job; someone asked and she quietly pushed to be fully recognized; it was like she was sneaking in the back door of the academic castle.*³⁹ "That was the first in her many steps

³⁵ Eleanor F. Dolan and Margaret p. Davis, "Antinepotism Rules in American Colleges and Universities: Their Effect on the Faculty Employment of Women," *Educational Record* 41 (1960): 285-95. Cited in Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Before Affirmative Action, 1940-1972*, 127.

³⁶ Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Before Affirmative Action, 1940-1972*, 127.

³⁷ Scott. D. Bacon, *Student Demonstration at IU in 1970*, digital exhibit, Indiana University Archives, accessed July 18, 2016, <http://www.dlib.indiana.edu/omeka/archives/studentlife/exhibits/show/studentdemonstrationsatiu1970/cambodiastrikeskeyplayers>.

³⁸ E. Ostrom, interview by Kristen Monroe, [ca. 2000].

³⁹ Linda Eisenmann, "A Time of Quiet Activism: Research, Practice, and Policy in American Women's Higher Education, 1945-1965," *History of Education Quarterly* 45, no. 1 (2005): 1-17.

of making good deals for herself and being a tough bargainer,” fellow Indiana political scientist Michael McGinnis assessed.⁴⁰ Lin, however, perceived the new position, her entry-point, as a result of her age and work experience in Boston and Los Angeles: “The chair knew I was a little older and had a fair amount of personnel experience and thought I could handle it.”⁴¹ It was this series of events that brought Lin—then in her early thirties—to a tenure-track position as an Assistant Professor, from where all professors begin to climb the ranks of tenure. “Thus, I spent the first years of my regular appointment serving as graduate advisor during the Vietnam era, when our entry class came close to 90 students each fall. Needless to say, I was not able to start an ambitious research program in my early years as an Assistant Professor,” she remembered.⁴²

During her term as graduate advisor, Lin encountered prospective graduate student Joel Allen. He visited her office in April 1968 for an interview, a skill Lin had honed during her time as an Assistant Personnel Manager at Cabot in Boston.⁴³ Allen, reported Bloomington underground newspaper *The Spectator*, “explained that he had been active in Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) as an undergraduate, serving as SDS chairman at Washington University, and had been disciplined for his political activities several times including a Dow protest.”⁴⁴ When asked whether his plans to continue as an activist at Indiana would impact the University’s invitation to attend, Lin informed Allen that his political activism “would present no problem as long as Joel completed his academic work.”⁴⁵ Within a year, Allen shot to the top of the circle of campus activists. On May 8, 1969, Allen was among a small group of students, faculty, and administrators meeting to discuss student demands regarding tuition and fee

⁴⁰ Michael McGinnis, interview by Sara Clark, June 6, 2013, transcript, “Coming Together.”

⁴¹ E. Ostrom, “A Long Polycentric Journey,” 7.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Charles Kleinhans, “Will the Real Joel Allen Please Stand Up,” *The Spectator*, October 28, 1969, Independent Voices; E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 24 April 1956, folder “Correspondence 1956,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁴⁴ Kleinhans, “Will the Real Joel Allen Please Stand Up.”

⁴⁵ Ibid.

increases, hopefully ending a class boycott.⁴⁶ The goals of this meeting shifted when over 100 black student activists, including Clarence “Rollo” Turner, interrupted the meeting, staging a lock-in at Ballentine Hall. According to Wynkoop, “Rising tuition threatened African-American students’ ability to remain at IU and made it more difficult for would-be students to enroll.”⁴⁷ Only five months before, on December 26, 1968, racism was publicly announced to onlookers when the Ku Klux Klan firebombed The Black Market, a student-led store located on Kirkwood Avenue just off campus.⁴⁸

Then in October 1969, Allen caught the attention of University administration for derogatory comments towards the university, and Chancellor Byrum Carter promptly fired him. Lin wrote to her colleague Dina Zinnes expressing her dissatisfaction, “I must say that thoughts of resigning my position have been seriously going through my mind. I just don’t see how we can take firings for political reasons too easily. I don’t know the full facts of this case yet, and consequently I don’t intend to do anything until I really find them out. But it doesn’t look like the beginnings of a very good year.”⁴⁹ Further, Lin explained in a letter to her mother her involvement and the swift action taken by Carter and indirectly by the University administration more broadly:

My letter offering him the four-year package was reviewed by the Board of Trustees, and they decided that it did constitute a firm contract; and consequently, he was put on the payroll. Several more incidents occurred on campus, and the chancellor simply wrote Joe, a letter suspending him. There was no consultation with the man for whom he is working. There was only an advisory meeting with the chairman of the department in which he was informed of what was going to occur.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Scott. D. Bacon, *Student Demonstrations at IU in 1960s*, digital exhibit, Indiana University Archives, accessed July 18, 2016, <http://www.dlib.indiana.edu/omeka/archives/studentlife/exhibits/show/studentdemonstrationsatiu/1969ballantine/lockin>.

⁴⁷ Wynkoop, *Dissent in the Heartland*, 133; Bacon, “Student Demonstrations at IU in 1960s.”

⁴⁸ Wynkoop, *Dissent in the Heartland*, 130-31

⁴⁹ E. Ostrom to Dina Zinnes, 21 October 1969, box 360, folder “Dina Zinnes,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁵⁰ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 29 October 1969, box 174, folder “EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1968-1976,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

Lin was not alone in her frustration. She and the other members of the Political Science Department drafted a letter to Chancellor Carter dated October 24, 1969, outlining steps for a full review, including urging that “the question of professional conduct be referred to the Political Science Department for consideration and recommendation.”⁵¹ For Lin, “It [was] a perplexing problem for a department to have one of its own members fired without the department feeling that it is an appropriate action.”⁵²

In the midst of a decade of activism, Lin remained aware as her campus was agitated by change but she did her best to give what little attention she could to progressing her research. “Life on our campus has been relatively calm in comparison to many other campuses throughout the country,” she reported to her mother in California.⁵³ Then following the May 4, 1970, shooting of four students at Kent State University during an antiwar protest, about 8,000 students at Indiana rallied and marched together; speakers included political sciences professor Bernard Morris, who urged renewed focus, saying, “no more Earth Days, no more anti-pollution days, no more goody-goody anti-litter diversions until the war is ended.”⁵⁴ Lin wondered in the days after the Indiana march:

If our administration had met somewhat earlier with students, we probably would not have had any violence on campus at all. However, students did finally cordon off our Administration Building in an attempt to get some sort of a meeting. The police were called, and eight students were arrested.⁵⁵

Graduate teaching assistants organized teach-ins in the auditorium following these events, of which some students reported was “one of the most important learning experiences they had ever

⁵¹ Kleinans, “Will the Real Joel Allen Please Stand Up,” 6.

⁵² E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 29 October 1969.

⁵³ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 20 May 1970, box 174, folder “EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1968-1976,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁵⁴ Wynkoop, *Dissent in the Heartland*, 108-9.

⁵⁵ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 20 May 1970.

had in their lives.”⁵⁶ Lin and Vincent took part by giving different workshops throughout the evening, which in its first night brought nearly 3,000 attendees staying until 2:00 a.m.⁵⁷

However, Lin found joy in scholarship. Despite being steered away from the opportunity in all of her formal education, Lin pursued the training in advanced math and statistics, and Lin frequently wrote her mother to update her on her life and work:

Have I mentioned that I am taking an Algebra course at 7:30 in the morning on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday? Next year I will be taking some more advanced courses so I wanted to review my Algebra and learn trigonometry this spring if at all possible. ... I never did have trig in high school. Since I was a girl they advised me to take speech instead of Trig. The speech was good for me but trig would have been also. Math is becoming so important in political science now.⁵⁸

In fall 1969, she enrolled in calculus and statistics as Indiana alongside undergraduates; “The thing that is so interesting is that I am using everything that I am learning as fast as I am learning it.”⁵⁹ By then she became an Associate Professor, climbing the ranks of the department. Along the way a friend Dina Zinnes, another female professor in the department, played an important supportive role. In a typical letter to her friend, who moved to University of Illinois by 1970, Lin wrote, “While it is absolutely marvelous not being graduate adviser, I still find that I am busy and not able to respond to correspondence as fast as I would like. Let me see if I can catch you up on news in the department first.”⁶⁰

Lampkins Ridge Road

The Ostroms’ decision to make Bloomington a permanent home may have brought them calm during the chaos of the 1960s. “When we first arrived in January 1965, we were fortunate to find acreage in the woods surrounding the university. We spent that first semester designing a

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 22 March 1969, box 174, folder “EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1968-1976,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁵⁹ E. Ostrom to Dina Zinnes, 6 November 1969, box 360, folder “Dina Zinnes,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁶⁰ E. Ostrom to Dina Zinnes, 13 February 1970, box 360, folder “Dina Zinnes,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

house and worked together with a crew that summer in building it,” Lin recalled.⁶¹ Though Lin’s early days in Bloomington were also filled with helping Vincent manage his duties as editor of *Public Administration Review*, a position he held until 1966, their project building the home they shared on Lampkins Ridge Road brought them respite from the expectations of academic life.

Boundaries between their projects at home and their work at the University, however, were increasingly difficult to detect. Vincent foresaw opportunity for mutual benefit between these worlds in the design of their home:

As you may know, my wife and I have been through the experience of building a home during the past several months. Our impression is that southern Indiana has excellent craftsmen whose one serious deficiency is lack of skill in design. I have a hunch that southern Indiana craftsman could do as well as the Scandinavian craftsman. Yet, who bears the primary responsibility for sustaining the flow ideas and interests that constitute the principal ingredients of design, if it is not the university as the community’s most advanced center of intellectual concern? A proper concern about design need not be limited to a concern about artifacts and the arts, but should extend outward to concerns about designs for living. As political scientists, for example, we should be the source of ideas and inspiration relevant to the design of political institutions. If we fail to contribute to the imagination and sense of design among people in our own immediate political community, perhaps we run a serious risk that they may not be able to appreciate and sustain our efforts to design and build a great university.⁶²

Together they carefully furnished and outfitted their home, which was designed to reflect the style of a Pacific Northwest Coast Indian longhouse.⁶³ On June 30, 1965, the Ostroms purchased a totem pole from Hill's Koksilah General Store in Koksilah, British Columbia.⁶⁴ From then on the totem welcomed visitors to their Bloomington home.

If people are the things they surround ourselves with, Vincent and Lin were Pacific Northwest Coast pottery reminiscent of Vincent’s childhood home, well worn Navajo rugs

⁶¹ E. Ostrom, “A Long Polycentric Journey,” 7.

⁶² V. Ostrom to Joseph Sutton, 14 December 1965, box 281, folder “Personnel Files Indiana University Dept. of Government Position,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁶³ Carol Parks, interview by Gloria Colom, June 11, 2014, transcript, “Coming Together.”

⁶⁴ Hill’s Koksilah General Store, receipt, 30 June 1965, MM249DOC0286, folder “Sculpture, Carvings, Totem Pole,” Vincent and Elinor Ostrom Collection, Mathers Museum of Cultures.

collected on drives through the Southwest, porcupine quill baskets from summers at the Manitoulin Island in Canada, handmade furniture designed for practical use, piles of books, and stacks of shuffled papers with detailed comments. The objects that filled their home stored memories and sparked stories to be shared with guests, of which there were many over the years.

Carol Parks remembered:

They used to have parties once or twice a year at their house, which involved hiking in the woods. That was the activity and people would bring, people would pitch in all sorts of things, and Lin would always make lasagna. Lin's lasagna was notorious, but she would make lasagna and everybody would bring other things. And we would go for a long hike in the woods near their house around Lampkins Ridge Road and then go back and have dinner.⁶⁵

Carol continued, laughing:

Most of their entertaining was done to foster intellectual conversation and dialogue. They were pretty disciplined about what they ate and drank so they didn't serve a bunch of alcohol and turn on the Rolling Stones.⁶⁶

The Ostroms respected the artisanship of the craftspeople who labored to create, appreciated the exchange with trader or artist, and eventually found places for each item in their own collection. With these items, however, each one became part of their lives and part of the community they were well known for fostering. When visitors came to their home, an important aspect of dinner with the Ostroms was a tour through their collection of art and artifacts. These objects were a means of the Ostroms sharing their lives with people, an extension of their academic work and another means of exchange.

Their home was persistently in motion as they expanded their collection. Together their love of baskets, pottery, rugs, prints, paintings, jewelry, and other objects, both traditional and contemporary, grew to encompass a significant collection of work especially by North American Indians. As seen in Figure 1, the Ostroms' shared interest in purchasing art and artifacts

⁶⁵ Carol Parks, interview by Gloria Colom, June 11, 2014.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

originated with their marriage and grew as they furnished their home. As early as 1964, Vincent had ongoing correspondence with William Hill, the owner of Log Cabin Antique in Duncan, British Columbia; when Hill offered to set aside baskets for Lin and Vincent, he replied:

Unfortunately, we shall not be able to be in British Columbia again before next summer. We are, however, interested in continuing to build our collection of Indian baskets on the assumption that we may someday be able to make some useful additions to a university, provincial or state museum in addition to the satisfaction that we are able to gain from collecting the baskets ourselves.⁶⁷

What began as a fun and practical hobby, shifted when by the early 1970s the Ostroms' purchases increased and they began to develop relationships with dealers and artists. They were collectors.

As Lin and Vincent grew roots in Bloomington, Vincent's youngest son James (Jim) Ostrom from his first marriage came to live with them at the age of thirteen.⁶⁸ Lin and Vincent decided not to have any more children: "I made the decision not to have a family, because, in earlier times, that would have been a very, very difficult thing to accomplish."⁶⁹ "A woman could have a career or a woman could have a child," Lin shared later with friend and collaborator Harini Nagendra as she navigated the same decisions.⁷⁰ Together they chose to prioritize their work and the family they created through friends and colleagues.

Sadly, after only five years, Jim was killed in an automobile accident July 19, 1969, "just as he was finding himself":

Jim had been driving north from Bloomington with 2 friends in his car. A truck with a camper on it was coming south. One story given was that the camper came lose [sic] and flew over into Jim's car. Another story was that Jim veered slightly to the left [and] hit the other car. In any case Jim was not aware of impending danger. The two friends in his

⁶⁷ V. Ostrom to W. Hill, 20 December 1964, MM249DOC0204, folder "Receipts So Far Unidentified," Vincent and Elinor Ostrom Collection, Mathers Museum of Cultures.

⁶⁸ Vincent's eldest son Peter Ostrom had muscular dystrophy. He lived until he was 38 (1947-1985).

⁶⁹ Auffret, "Collective Action, Singular Accomplishment: ASU Magazine Interviews 2009 Nobel Laureate Elinor Ostrom."

⁷⁰ Harini Nagendra, interview by Gloria Colom, 2 July 2014, "Coming Together."

car did not see anything unusual or feel him put on the brake. It happened at 5:45 in the evening....⁷¹

That summer Jim had been working hanging drywall and spending time with his girlfriend Paula Baker.⁷² They held a simple Quaker memorial service in Bloomington before his ashes were returned to Washington state: “We are both kind of numb.”⁷³

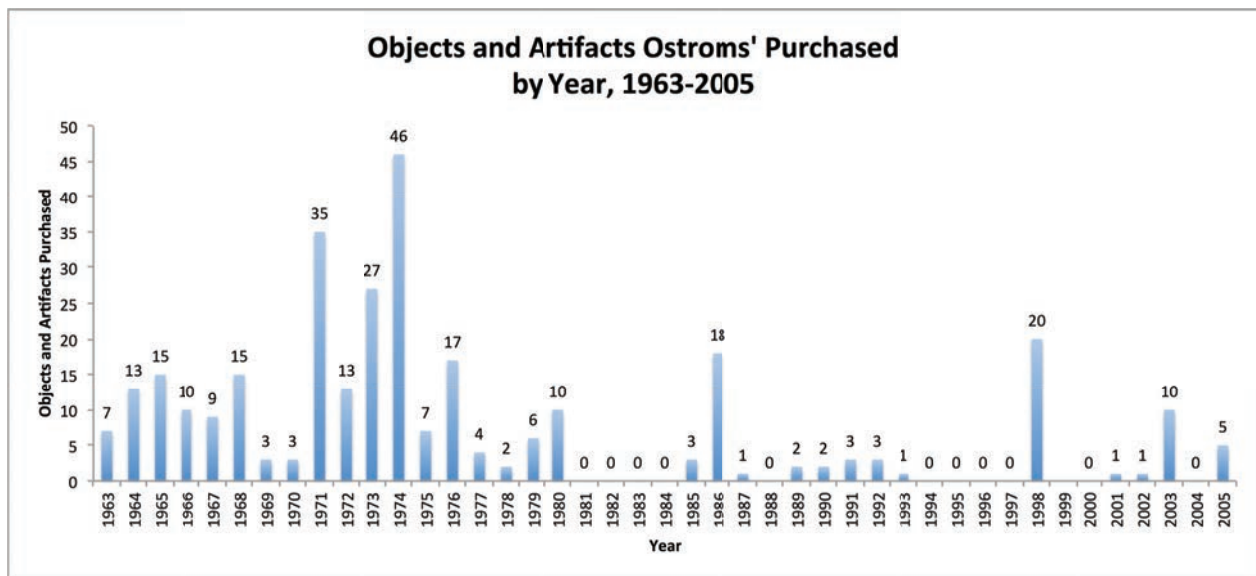


Figure 1. Objects and artifacts Lin and Vincent Ostrom purchased by year, 1963-2005. Undated items were not included. In the decade 1960-1969 an additional ten items were purchased, but receipts did not indicate years purchased. Similarly, in the decade 1970-1979 one additional item was purchased but did not indicate the year purchased. Finally, thirty-eight undated receipts were also counted but were not included in this chart. Sources: Indiana University Mathers Museum of World Cultures Elinor and Vincent Ostrom Collection and the Indiana University Lilly Library Elinor Ostrom manuscript collection.

⁷¹ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 28 July 1969, box 174, folder “EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1968-1976,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁷² E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, [ca. 1970], box 174, folder “EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1968-1976,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁷³ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 28 July 1969.

The Manitoulin

Though their trips began in 1967, in the summer of 1968 the Ostroms built a small log cabin on Manitoulin Island, Ontario, a Canadian Island located in Lake Huron. For them, it was a writing retreat and intentionally equipped for simple living. The primitive cabin offered the couple a place to work in solitude. Friends Carol and Roger Parks visited them in the early 1970s at the cabin. Carol remembered that Vincent would always write with a pen and ink on paper; Lin used a manual typewriter.⁷⁴ The cabin had no electric lights, heating provided by firewood, a propane tank for cooking, and had “one big room with kitchen and a bathroom and a sleeping loft.”⁷⁵ Life in “the bush,” as Lin called it, offered escape, and they returned nearly every summer until 2008.⁷⁶ Close friends on the island included Vic and Ev Goulter and Lyle and Sharon Dewar; with friends they went hiking and shared meals. But mostly, the Ostroms enjoyed one another and the Manitoulin: “We just returned from the Manitoulin where we had a quiet, thoughtful, soul-nurturing period. Just to listen to the rhythm of the waves and the gurgling of water among the rocks of the shore is deeply nourishing to the soul.”⁷⁷ Their friend Vic Goulter helped supervise the construction of a seventy-five foot bridge they used to access the property with their Jeep nicknamed Bluebell; “There are pretty bad swampy bogs on either side of the bridge, but those we just wallow through and the back part of the jeep just goes wobble-wobble as we drive through them.”⁷⁸ Vincent likely experienced some of his happiest moments during the

⁷⁴ Carol Parks, phone interview by Sara Clark, 10 October 2013.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 9 August 1969, box 174, folder “EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1968-1976,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁷⁷ V. Ostrom to Minoti Chakravarty-Kaul, [ca. 1995], box 284, folder “Minoti Kaul,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁷⁸ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 23 August 1968, box 174, folder “EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1968-1976,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

construction of their cabin; years later, friends jokingly thought of him as a lumberjack, sometimes even splitting wood on their property in Bloomington for exercise.⁷⁹



Figure 2. Lin and Vincent in 1968 on Manitoulin Island. E. Ostrom and V. Ostrom, photograph, 1968, box 1, folder “EO/VO Manitoulin, Canada House 1968,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

Manitoulin Island provided unique opportunities for the Ostros to pursue collection of indigenous art and artifacts, and through purchases they made there, they developed their most focused interest in the art and artifacts created by today’s Anishinaabeg or Ojibwa, the First People on Manitoulin Island. For Lin, “It [was] kind of fun hunting through used furniture and antique places to find things of this sort for the cabin or for here in places which we haven’t

⁷⁹ Jeffrey Hart, interview by Paulina Guerrero, 19 June 2014, “Coming Together.”

finished.”⁸⁰ Some Ojibwe artists, for example, tightly wove porcupine needles and birch bark to make lidded boxes made almost exclusively for tourist sale.⁸¹ Lin and Vincent owned more than a dozen such boxes and displayed many at their homes. With time, Vincent began to see application of his growing knowledge of pottery to his academic work in public administration. In his well-recognized essay, “Artisanship and Artifact,” he wrote:

An artisan does much more than mix ingredients and transform them from one state to another. In shaping a pot, a potter has a conception in mind about the purpose to be served by a pot, a feel for his materials, and a sense of proportion about what constitutes a good pot. These considerations are built into the pot just as much as the material ingredients that are used.

However, we should be careful not to assume that all of these different elements are somehow mixed together in the same way. The material elements used to make the pot are fashioned and transformed by an artisan. The knowledge, purpose, skill, and sense of proportion that are drawn upon by an artisan affect the way that he or she shapes and transforms the materials. The product represents the result of these various elements and processes. A pot can be both a practical utensil and a thing of beauty. Its utility need not detract from its beauty nor its beauty from its utility.⁸²

But summer always ended. Lin wrote to Dina Zinnes before they left for their second summer at their cabin, “Well, we are heading for Canada to try to concentrate on our writing and forget about some of the problems in the department.”⁸³ As much as Lin and Vincent may have wanted to find escape from departmental problems, by the early 1970s, their frustrations could no longer be ignored.

The Workshop Idea

Vincent completed a fellowship with the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences (CASBS) from 1955-56.⁸⁴ While still part of the University of Oregon faculty earlier in his career, Vincent was invited to stay in residence at Stanford in California. Though he

⁸⁰ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 26 January 1969, box 174, folder “EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1968-1976,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁸¹ Andrew Hunter Whiteford, “Mystic and Decorative Art of the Anishinabe (Chippewa/Ojibwa),” *Arctic Anthropology*, 1991, 81.

⁸² V. Ostrom. “Artisanship and Artifact.” *Public Administration Review* 40, no. 4 (1980): 309–10.

⁸³ E. Ostrom to Dina Zinnes, 19 June 1970, box 360, folder “Dina Zinnes,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁸⁴ The Center officially became part of Stanford University in 2008.

intermittently returned to Oregon, his fellowship was extended by support from the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) until August 1958.⁸⁵ There Vincent worked on a grant funded project through the W. K. Kellogg Foundation as Associate Director of the Pacific Northwest Cooperative Program in Educational Administration; this work included “the development of the Community Study Project as an inter-disciplinary research and graduate training program.”⁸⁶ Moreover, this work pushed him to reevaluate his research methods and to seek time for uninterrupted thought. In January 1957 he explained to the acting head of his department at the University of Oregon, “Since I was confronted with some perplexing problems of research design as a result of my previous years work on an inter-action analysis of the decision-making process, I welcomed this opportunity to clarify my thinking and to work though the general problem of research design for the study of political behavior in the local community.”⁸⁷ Here Vincent also laid foundation for his contributions to the Natural Resources Article of the Constitution of Alaska; “The epistemological connection between science and politics was at the forefront of my mind with extensive readings in both historical and comparative jurisprudence that had general relevance both for my work at the Center and for my work with the Alaska Constitutional Convention [1955-56].”⁸⁸

CASBS was established in 1954, and Vincent arrived in residence just after the first class departed in 1955. There he met education evaluation researcher Ralph W. Tyler, the first

⁸⁵ V. Ostrom, “Report on Professional Activities (1955 and 1956) — Vincent Ostrom,” box 282, folder “Personnel Files UCLA Appointment 1958 resignation 1962,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁸⁶ V. Ostrom to Waldo Schumacher, 7 January 1957, box 282, folder “Personnel Files UCLA Appointment 1958 resignation 1962,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ V. Ostrom to Minoti Chakravarti-Kaul, 9 July 1999, box 284, folder “Minoti Kaul,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

Director of the Center.⁸⁹ CASBS aimed to mix isolate, focused academic production with opportunities for co-production with fellow social scientists:

Their residencies, spent in individual studies overlooking the Stanford campus and Silicon Valley, are solely devoted to the production of knowledge. During their time at CASBS, fellows have no departmental commitments and no teaching. Proximity to scholars working in other social and behavioral science disciplines occur regularly at lunch and in fellows' seminars, providing an opportunity for exposure to new methods, perspectives, theories, and problems.⁹⁰

Sanford (Sandy) Dornbusch, a 1954-55 fellow recalled of early meetings at CASBS that, “There was almost a complete lack of hierarchy, even though hierarchy was the original mission, and I thought that was a tremendous shift.”⁹¹ Originally, two classes—senior and junior fellows—had been planned for the Center; within the first year, Tyler made the final decision that there would be one equal class of fellows.⁹² CASBS similarly pushed disciplinary boundaries by encouraging specialists to learn across disciplines. A sociologist by training, Dornbusch expressed the kind of betweenness that so often occurs among interdisciplinary scholars as they attempt to fit into disciplinary boxes defined by others: “my image of sociology is so broad that it enabled me to go into lots of things I wouldn't have done before. I learned a lot of economics, for example.”⁹³ In the summer 1955, Vincent took Dornbusch's place, as he began his time in residence at CASBS.⁹⁴

⁸⁹ Jeri Ridings Nowakowski, “On Educational Evaluation: A Conversation with Ralph Tyler,” *Educational Leadership* 40, no. 8 (1983): 24–29.

⁹⁰ “History of the Center,” *Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University*, 2015, <https://casbs.stanford.edu/history-center>.

⁹¹ Beginning in 1959, Sanford was the chair of the Stanford of the Department of Sociology. Sanford Dornbusch, interview, April 16, 2005, Center for Advanced Study in Behavioral Sciences 50th Anniversary Oral History, http://www-casbs.stanford.edu/60th/?page_id=20.

⁹² Duncan Luce, interview April 16, 2005, Center for Advanced Study in Behavioral Sciences 50th Anniversary Oral History, http://www-casbs.stanford.edu/60th/?page_id=20.

⁹³ Sanford Dornbusch, Center for Advanced Study in Behavioral Sciences 50th Anniversary Oral History.

⁹⁴ “Ghosts in the Studies | CASBS 60th Anniversary,” accessed July 19, 2016, http://www-casbs.stanford.edu/60th/?page_id=238.

After the 1955-56 academic year spent in Stanford, California, Vincent reported that he shifted to the use of the case study method:

As a result of that work I have shifted the strategy of my present research interests to the case study method in analysing [sic] the events which transpire in the development of a series of decisions as a basis for arriving at general inferences on the characteristics of the political system of a local community. Through this method the researcher can hone to approximate the amount of information possessed by the participants and thus be able to inquire into the meaning of events from a variety of different perspectives.⁹⁵

In an undated response to a memo from Tyler in the summer of 1956, Vincent shared insights and knowledge gained during his time at the Center. In addition to the switch to case study method he identified, he also expressed to Tyler new interests in cybernetics, game theory, psychoanalytic theory, and corporative jurisprudence.⁹⁶

Following his time in residence at the CASBS, Vincent received funding as a Faculty Research Fellow through the Social Science Research Council through August 1958. The SSRC acted as a funding body for Vincent, rather than a research home in the way that CASBS worked hard to cultivate connection and intellectual innovation. However, he was influenced by his role on the SSRC's Committee on Comparative Political Behavior. In a note to his soon-to-be colleague at Indiana University Charles Hyneman regarding organizing the 1962 American Political Science Association meeting, Vincent wrote:

I have been much impressed by the intellectual ferment developed especially by the Committee on Comparative Political Behavior of the SSRC. As a result, it seems to me that the association should do much more in organizing 'work groups,' 'study committees,' or some such designated arrangement to provide an opportunity for people who are working on comparable problems to get together, to exchange ideas, to pursue work related to these mutual interests, and then to present the results of their work in special sessions at the association meeting. Hopefully, the results of this work would also contribute significantly to the professional literature.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ V. Ostrom, "Report on Professional Activities (1955 and 1956) — Vincent Ostrom."

⁹⁶ V. Ostrom to Ralph W. Tyler, [ca. July 1956], box 302, folder "VO-Correspondence-General 1955-1984," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁹⁷ V. Ostrom to Charles Hyneman, 5 December 1960, box 302, folder "VO-Correspondence-General 1955-1984," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

Further, Vincent concluded, “The results will only be as good as the people who can give intelligence, imagination and high priority to such an approach. As a result, I would think that the beginning should be on a small scale....”⁹⁸

In 1958, Morton Grodzins left his position as chairman of the Department of Political Science at University of Chicago and joined Vincent in California. Vincent was simultaneously transitioning into his new position as Associate Professor at UCLA. Grodzins spent the next year at CASBS in Stanford. Today Grodzins is known for his critique of the internment of Japanese-Americans following World War II and for coining the term “tipping point” through study of metropolitan racial segregation.⁹⁹ However, at the Center he raised a different critique; there he studied the American federal system. In the isolation of the Center he wrote much of his book *The American System: A New View of the Government of the United States*.¹⁰⁰ By hypothesizing that American federal government function more like “marble cake” than “sheet cake”—that is there was more overlapping and sharing than formal structure—Grodzins embraced chaos and decentralization as identifiers of American government.¹⁰¹ Similarly, Vincent’s 1961 paper with Charles Tiebout and Robert Warren proposed the notion of polycentricity that permitted institutional overlap and decentralized organization.¹⁰² Though Grodzins was only two years his senior, Vincent likely knew of Grodzins prior to their shared interest in federalism. He formed

⁹⁸ V. Ostrom to Charles Hyneman, 5 December 1960.

⁹⁹ Morton Grodzins, *Americans Betrayed: Politics and the Japanese Evacuation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), <https://www.sac.edu/Library/BookOfTheYear/Documents/BIBLIOGRAPHY-Hotel-on-the-Corner-of-Bitter-and-Sweet9-14-2011.pdf>; Grodzins, “Metropolitan Segregation,” *Scientific American*, 1957, <http://doi.apa.org.proxyiub.uits.iu.edu/?uid=1959-01065-001>; Special To The New York Times, “Morton Grodzins, Political Scientist,” *The New York Times*, March 10, 1964, <http://www.nytimes.com/1964/03/10/morton-grodzins-political-scientist.html>.

¹⁰⁰ Morton Grodzins, *The American System: A New View of Government in the United States*, ed. Daniel J. Elazar, Rand McNally Political Science Series (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1966), viii.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, v.

¹⁰² V. Ostrom, Charles M. Tiebout, and Robert Warren, “The Organization of Government in Metropolitan Areas: A Theoretical Inquiry,” *American Political Science Review* 55, no. 04 (1961): 831–42.

the University of Chicago Federalism Workshop in 1955 and between 1956 and 1961 the group reached its height. Among the key members of the Federalism Workshop was Daniel Elazar, who later reflected on Grodzins' mentorship, "He sought to reach the kind of accommodation with his students and colleagues that allowed all parties to profit in a common partnership."¹⁰³

Growing Dissatisfaction

After only two semesters, Vincent began to express dissatisfaction with the Department of Government at Indiana. In particular, he feared problems with leadership, departmental policies, and what he perceived to be lacking attention to the "state as a community of people."¹⁰⁴ Vincent wrote to Joseph Sutton—then dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and soon to be University President—that he believed energy needed to be expended toward state issues:

This would not be too bad if the enterprises originally organized in the university to serve Indiana's educational and research needs were able to maintain the energy and vitality of their programs. However, I have a sense that these enterprises are being raided of their personnel and are being diverted from their earlier function to serve the new order of priority of the new entrepreneurs. As a result, important programs related to Indiana interests are deteriorating from lack of interest and vitality. New opportunities in our own primary community are being neglected while we parlay ventures in new marketing areas.¹⁰⁵

Increasingly, Vincent's story was Elinor's too, and their ideas became difficult, if not impossible to parse as their frustrations with the department reached a boiling point in the late 1960s.

During the fall and spring of 1969, Lin's colleague and friend Dina Zinnes spent the year in Oslo, Norway; they wrote letters to one another every few weeks, Lin updating Dina on issues in the Department. The two also actively strategized how to gain the approval of their obstinate

¹⁰³ Grodzins, *The American System*, vii.

¹⁰⁴ V. Ostrom to Joseph Sutton, 14 December 1965.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

chairman in order to team-teach a course in game-theory, an interest they both shared.¹⁰⁶ Lin shared that she and Vincent felt boxed out by the current department chair, James B. Christoph, and sometimes by colleagues. Christoph began department meetings with “his normal half-hour speech from the throne” and let their recruitment recommendations pass him by with seemingly little consideration; “And, in each and every case the faculty involved have gone on to very good jobs at other Universities during the year in which we were urging their consideration.”¹⁰⁷ Lin’s work with graduate student activist Joel Allen was also under the spotlight at this time. In early 1970, the Ostroms traveled to the University of Washington in Seattle so that Vincent could interview for a position as department chair. Lin explained to Dina:

Vincent is more and more convinced from this fall's experience here that the department is not going to attempt to do any of the things intellectually that he would like to see accomplished and that his own is looked upon as somewhat of an offbeat political science. Washington may offer the opportunity of developing a “critical mass” where a different approach to political science may well be developed.¹⁰⁸

Dina worried about her friends’ happiness. Ultimately, limited financial resources at the University of Washington and some skepticism from existing faculty about Vincent’s goals for the future of political science lead Vincent to withdraw his name from consideration.¹⁰⁹

According to Lin, “the only way he would have wanted the Chairmanship was if the Department was really prepared to do some fundamentally different things that most departments in the U.S. are not doing now.”¹¹⁰ They stayed at Indiana.

Soon the Ostroms noticed movement within the department to only recognize four major fields of study, three included comparative government, international relations, and American

¹⁰⁶ E. Ostrom to Dina Zinnes, 13 February 1970.

¹⁰⁷ E. Ostrom to Dina Zinnes, 21 October 1969; E. Ostrom to Dina Zinnes, 24 February 1970, box 360, folder “Dina Zinnes,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁰⁸ E. Ostrom to Dina Zinnes, 9 January 1970, box 360, folder “Dina Zinnes,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁰⁹ E. Ostrom to Dina Zinnes, 13 February 1970, box 360, folder “Dina Zinnes,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹¹⁰ E. Ostrom to Dina Zinnes, 27 February 1970, box 360, folder “Dina Zinnes,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

Government. This pushed subspecialties, and by default any prospects of interdisciplinary teaching, beyond curricular recognition. If the curriculum did not recognize a field, then why did it need to exist? This was a less-than-subtle message to Lin and Vincent. The Ostroms felt pushed out: “But when what you teach is most appropriately called either analytical-political theory or public policy analysis then you have a somewhat rough time trying to relate your courses to that kind of rigid program. Vincent has asked and gained a half-time leave for next year.”¹¹¹ Vincent feared his instruction would lead students to bureaucratic failure when tested by his colleagues, and aside from Lin, he felt alone.¹¹² For Lin and Vincent, graduate education was more than “a maze” that “faculty was to run the students through,” as another faculty member suggested.¹¹³

After finishing her term as graduate advisor, Lin offered a seminar in 1969-70 “on the theories related to urban government and the measurement of public goods and services.”¹¹⁴ Fueled by national reform interest in consolidating public services, Lin began the course knowing “They had not undertaken serious research, however, to test their assumption.”¹¹⁵ Likewise, race riots instigated by police brutality in major metropolitan cities like Los Angeles (Watts neighborhood), Chicago, and New York set the stage for needed investigation into policing effectiveness.¹¹⁶ At the urging of student Roger Parks, students used nearby Indianapolis as their laboratory, collecting interviews and other data. Over the next several years in collaboration with Parks and Gordon Whitaker, this initial project in Indianapolis grew to Chicago and St. Louis and gained national grant funding. Lin later referred to this confluence of

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ E. Ostrom. “A Long Polycentric Journey,” 7.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ See, for example, Gerald Horne, *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s* (Charlottesville: Da Capo Press, 1997).

events as a ““happening”” responsible for the idea behind the Workshop.¹¹⁷ As Lin and Vincent struggled to identify their place within academia and in particular at Indiana University, they simultaneously began to weave together the threads of their work with ideas they admired from their peers. Just as they did at home, they dreamed about, designed, and built their place at work.

The Workshop

Together Lin and Vincent sent a memo on November 1, 1972, to Leroy N. Rieselbach, Chairman of the Department of Political Science, putting into motion a plan that had long brewed as a disassembled collection of ideas. Their plan hatched from their misgivings with expectations for academic life and optimism for the way education and knowledge production could coexist. They foresaw the good life—as much as Lin and Vincent’s proposal sprang from the heart of academic thought, it was also purely from the heart. They shared a unique prescription for academic life, not widely practiced in academia and certainly not among their peers at IU. Leading up to their proposal Lin and Vincent had been up before dawn, and Lin was swimming three times a week: “We are still on our hermit schedule. We were up at 3:45 this morning and at work at our desks by 5:15.”¹¹⁸ The memo, typed on inter-departmental communication stationery, began with their shared assumptions about the present state of the field. The first few sentences were as follows:

For the past several years we have been concerned with educational and research efforts to develop political theory as an analytical tool which can also be used to guide empirical research and policy analysis. We assume that research is not very productive unless informed by theory and that theory is not very useful unless it can stand the test of experience.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Tom Tierney, “A Foundation for Collaboration,” *Research and Creative Activity*, January 1994, box 372, folder “Workshop Enterprise,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹¹⁸ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 23 October 1972, box 174, folder “EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1968-1976,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹¹⁹ E. Ostrom and V. Ostrom to L.N. Rieselbach, 1 November 1972, box 109, folder “Interdepartmental Communication TO: L.N. Rieselbach, Chairman From: EO & VO November 1, 1972,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

This memo was eventually recognized as a founding document for the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, which from its start acknowledged an essential connection between theory and empirical research. The Ostroms shared a sense of responsibility to student instruction, desire to attain long-term internal and external funding for students and faculty, and distinct plans for what it would mean to operate as a workshop. The use of the term “workshop” they wrote:

is one that we borrow from use at the University of Chicago. Morton Grodzins, for example, conducted his scholarly efforts through a Workshop on Federalism. As we understand the concept of a workshop, it is an arrangement which is entirely internal to a department within a university. It provides the bare rudiments of a structure where two or more faculty members might agree to collaborate in a series of research efforts. The internal organization of a workshop is left to the participating scholars to arrange among themselves. Depending upon its ability to procure financial support a workshop may support publications, colloquia, instructional efforts, and research projects.¹²⁰

Grodzins’ Workshop on Federalism had certainly influenced Vincent. More than ten years had passed since Grodzins’ followed Vincent’s path to the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences in Stanford, California. This time, Vincent made sure to recognize his impact.

Officially founded January 1, 1973, the origins of the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis today are more often linked to Lin and Vincent’s interests in woodworking. Like many stories shared among Workshop colleagues and community members, the process of telling and retelling stories is part of the informal process of becoming a “Workshopper.” That is, there are stories—like this one—that outlive the Workshop’s founders. Along the way, these stories continue to bring students, visitors, staff, and faculty members into the community of the Workshop. Workshopper Paul Dragos Aligica tells a version of the Workshop origin story here:

¹²⁰ Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, “1983 Annual Report and Review Document,” 3 February 1984, box 380, folder “1983 Annual Report & Review Document 2/3/84,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

So the idea is this, that at one point, they realized that they might not be able to make it in academia, right? Or things were pretty tough. And at least, that's my understanding and this is the way that the story goes. ... They decided they [needed an] additional skill [or] tool to make it in this world, so they started to be interested in carpentry and building furniture. So, it looks like that they are very skillful in this respect. So, they were apprentices to somebody who was very good, in terms of furniture making here in Indiana. And here you are at the point, they were sure they would be able to [make a] living and surviving even if their careers in academia did not make it. So they have this backup thing.... They have sort of exit point and sort of safety net and safe strategy, which they were able to confront the challenges of academia and the intellectual environment they were operating in from a much [more] comfortable, safer, and autonomous position. These were people that actually were the real thing—intellectually—up to the point where as human beings existentially they were able to confront stuff without making the compromises. They're prepared for an exit option.¹²¹

Aligica seems to say that the authenticity of this story is almost besides the point. But much of his story is true. Lin and Vincent did apprentice with their friend, Bloomington cabinetmaker Paul Goodman. The Ostroms shared Goodman's impact on the origins of the Workshop. "We saw problems through the eyes of a master craftsman," Lin said years later of Goodman.¹²²

"The graduate students at the Workshop are like Vincent and I were in the cabinet shop, interested and informed," explained Lin. "So they have to advance from apprentice to journeymen. You don't expect Ph.D.'s who are wet behind the ears to be masters of their craft, but you do expect them to be qualified to set up their own shop," she continued.¹²³

A series of moves occupied the early years of the Workshop before finding its longest and current home at 513 North Park, tucked behind a large campus residence hall in a former fraternity house. "The Workshop was originally housed in a small suite of offices located on the third floor of Woodburn Hall."¹²⁴ "In 1974, we moved to Morgan Hall where we occupied the first two floors of what had been a dormitory. In 1978, the Workshop moved to 814 East Third Street where it occupied a former fraternity house. Our most recent move came in May of 1983,

¹²¹ Paul Dragos Aligica, interview by Joseph Stahlman, 18 June 2014, transcript, "Coming Together."

¹²² Tierney, "A Foundation for Collaboration."

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, "1983 Annual Report and Review Document."

when we moved most of our facilities into the building at 513 North Park to enable an administrative office of the University to occupy our former building on Third Street. The Park Street building is certainly the nicest quarters we have had,” the Ostroms’ remarked.¹²⁵

Students and colleagues like Roger Parks recognized from the Workshop’s start a special atmosphere created by its founders:

The Ostroms were very rare faculty members in my experience, in being willing to treat graduate students as potentially intellectual equivalents. Vincent’s phrase for it was as “as apprentice.” And the Workshop was a place for journeymen and apprentices to come together to make things or study things and so on. When we would have meetings or meetings to discuss topics or issues, everybody wants to raise items of significance to equal footing. Everybody does. Each argues their point-of-view, oftentimes quite rigorous arguments, and it really makes you feel like you were part of the team. But also, at the Workshop you felt like you were part of a family. You were working with a bunch of co-workers, but we also—most of us were good friends outside of the school experience. Many of us are good friends to this day.¹²⁶

Significantly, the organization of the Workshop rested outside the confines of a department. Their 1972 proposal for a “workshop” encouraged the kind of self-governance not present within the hierarchy of the Political Science Department where their frustrations fell. “They recognized that these principles apply to a small research organization just as much as they apply to an entire nation,” wrote one campus reporter about the Workshop’s self-governing organization.¹²⁷

In 1975, the Workshop completed its third year and became an “official Research Center responsible to the Office of Graduate Development at Indiana University.”¹²⁸ It included robust teaching, research, and publication agendas all supported by staff who were increasingly knowledgeable and committed to the Workshop enterprise. The Workshop’s year-end report, aptly titled, “The Third Year,” outlined continued data collection for the Police Services Study, preparation of eleven book-length manuscripts, the beginning of “a newsletter to public officials

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Roger Parks, interview by Sara Clark, 4 June 2014.

¹²⁷ Tierney, “A Foundation for Collaboration.”

¹²⁸ Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, “1983 Annual Report and Review Document.”

and citizens interested in our Police Services Study,” five proposals out for review at external funding agencies, nomination to the American Political Science Association for success in undergraduate teaching, and continued weekly colloquia meetings on Mondays.¹²⁹

¹²⁹ Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, “The Third Year,” 1976, box 84, folder “Workshop 1972-1975,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

Chapter 3

Police Cars to Commons, 1981-1990

Roger B. Parks—who went on to become a Professor of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University—began as Lin’s prospective graduate student and soon became her doctoral student and collaborator on a series of studies about police services throughout the 1970s and early 1980s. While America’s urban center pulsed with racial tension and political critiques pushing for consolidation of public services, Lin and her team countered metropolitan reform efforts that lacked evidence for their claims: “Decreasing the number of governmental units within metropolitan areas was presumed to have a positive impact on all dependent variables by scholars supporting the metropolitan reform approach.”¹ In 1969-70 Lin offered a graduate seminar on “the theories related to urban government and measurement of public goods and services.”² Together with many other undergraduate and graduate students, Lin and Roger Parks found that centralized service delivery was not necessarily more efficient; in other words, the reformers were unfounded in their claims for consolidation.

Parks began his decades-long collaboration with Lin after developing an interest in political science later in life; while working full-time for RCA in Indianapolis, he began taking courses at IU, starting with Lin’s in January 1970. “She wanted the class to do some field research on some form of public goods that were difficult to measure,” he recalled.³ Parks turned Lin and his classmates on to Indianapolis as a site for their research, and Lin brought a team of student collaborators together: “So, happily, Lin was also teaching an undergraduate urban studies class, and she put together—I think some of their personal money and maybe some grant money that Vincent had—so that we could have University cars, and we did an interview study

¹ E. Ostrom, “A Long Polycentric Journey,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 13, no. 1 (2010): 8, doi:10.1146/annurev.polisci.090808.123259.

² *Ibid.*, 7.

³ Roger Parks, interview by Sara Clark, June 4, 2014, transcript, “Coming Together.”

in the three small communities in the adjacent neighborhoods in Indianapolis.”⁴ Lin led the team of students through interviews comparing police behavior. Together with Parks and fellow graduate student Gordon Whitaker, Lin published several articles and monographs documenting their findings.⁵

Lin’s efforts to understand urban service consolidation created an almost natural progression in her collaboration with Vincent. Initially, she expanded on Vincent’s writing about the Lakewood Plan in Los Angeles County—a program “started in 1954 by a new community in Southern California that wanted to incorporate so that it could contract for services with Los Angeles County rather than pay taxes to that larger unit” and assist with service decisions.⁶ Vincent influenced these new studies but did not have direct involvement. Vincent worked with Charles Tiebout and Robert Warren to study the Lakewood Plan, and Lin’s graduate education was deeply influenced by their pivotal work that gave rise to the notion of “polycentric” governance in part because she was Vincent’s student. Polycentricity “connotes many centers of decision-making which are formally independent of each other.”⁷ Among the public goods considered by Vincent Ostrom, Tiebout, and Warren was police protection. According to Mike McGinnis, who developed this connection between Vincent’s 1960s work on California water and Lin’s research,

The mainstream interpretation there was that in metropolitan areas if you have lots of different jurisdictions and complicated arrangements—quasi-public, quasi-private organizations running the water supply—that that’s a lousy way to do it. You need to

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ E. Ostrom et al., *Community Organization and the Provision of Police Services* (Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE Publications, 1973); E. Ostrom, Roger B. Parks, and Gordon P. Whitaker, *Policing Metropolitan America* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977); and E. Ostrom, Roger B. Parks, and Gordon P. Whitaker, *Patterns of Metropolitan Policing* (Cambridge, MA: Ballinger, 1978).

⁶ Michael D. McGinnis and E. Ostrom, “Reflections on Vincent Ostrom, Public Administration, and Polycentricity,” *Public Administration Review* 72, no. 1 (January 1, 2012): 17, doi:10.1111/j.1540-6210.2011.02488.x; also see V. Ostrom, Charles M. Tiebout, and Robert Warren, “The Organization of Government in Metropolitan Areas: A Theoretical Inquiry,” *American Political Science Review* 55, no. 4 (1961): 831–42.

⁷ V. Ostrom, Tiebout, and Warren, “The Organization of Government in Metropolitan Areas,” 831.

consolidate everything together into one big government office; have the bureaucrats sort of be able to manage it and put it together in a more efficient way. And be scientifically efficient in the way you do this process. And so a lot of the initial work in the Workshop was to test that proposition with the consolidation police studies in Indianapolis, and it showed that—in St. Louis and several other places—that there were advantages to not consolidating everything together.⁸

Though this body of research is often referred to broadly by names such as “Police Studies” and “The Measures Project,” by 1979 Lin developed her own characterization of this work in her application for sabbatical. She wrote: “Since 1970, I have been actively engaged in a research program that has examined the effects of organizational structure on public employee conduct, and the evaluation of public agency output.”⁹ Lin successfully applied for external funding from a number of different agencies, including the National Science Foundation, the National Institute of Mental Health, and the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. Throughout the 1970s she headed studies continuously in 80 metropolitan areas across the United States, including in Indianapolis, Chicago, St. Louis, Rochester, and St. Petersburg.¹⁰

For Lin this project represented a chance to finally begin much anticipated research; she previously paid her administrative dues and readily set to work teaching and researching. Later she reflected in an essay she wrote for IU’s publication *Teaching and Research*, which Vincent regularly circulated as explanation of the Workshop’s unique approaches to both, that a “major bone of contention in the modern university is the proper balance between teaching and research.”¹¹ Her study of police began as a graduate seminar on how to go about measuring outputs from public agencies in the fall of 1970. In the spring, she added undergraduate students from her sophomore honors course to the mix. At least in part by the design of students, they

⁸ Roger Parks, interview by Sara Clark, June 4, 2014.

⁹ E. Ostrom, “Application for Sabbatical Leave,” 2 October 1979, box 101, folder “EO’s Sabbatical Leave File, VO’s,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁰ E. Ostrom, “Ventures in Teaching and Research,” *Teaching and Research* (Winter 1974): 10-17.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

conducted fieldwork—first in Indianapolis, about 60 miles north. Among their research methods in the first year of the study were interviews, observations, and field notes taken while riding along with police officers. In early April they pre-tested a questionnaire Lin and her students developed. In a typical letter updating her mother on her life, Lin shared: “I must confess that I was a little nervous myself the first day we went out. However, it goes so well that the students really get quite a deal out of the interviewing and enjoy it a great deal.”¹²

Like her students, Lin typed her field notes after returning from a ride-along that took her through the night with “The Two-Woman Police Car in Indianapolis” on May 5, 1970. Lin noted, “They think they are also the first two women to ever patrol in the United States...They had no one ride with them from the beginning so they were really very much on their own.” With the officers, she rode through Woodruff Place in Indianapolis, where Lin wondered about changes in the community and the “magnificent wrought iron street lights that [were] rotting away.”¹³ The next day graduate student Ron Oakerson rode along with a police sergeant for a night as the officer patrolled the southwest side of Indianapolis; Oakerson divided his observations: “attitude toward his patrol area,” “what he perceives to be the demand of citizens,” “how he spends his time,” and “perceived structures of incentives within the police force.”¹⁴ On May 8, 1970, Lin and her students finished collecting their first data set. Lin allowed herself a few moments to capture the pace that followed nine rainy days of collecting nearly 700 interviews. “The students need a basic set of tables produced by May 18 so that they can write

¹² E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 17 April 1970, box 174, folder “EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1968-1976,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹³ E. Ostrom, “Riding With The Two-Woman Police Car in Indianapolis,” 5 May 1970, box 72, folder “EO’s riding in car notes,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁴ Ronald J. Oakerson, “Indianapolis Police Patrol Non-Participant Observation,” 6 May 1970, box 72, folder “EO’s riding in car notes,” Elinor Ostrom Papers; Oakerson went on to receive his master’s and doctoral degrees from Indiana University, gaining expertise in metropolitan governance.

their final exams based upon the data from the survey. This really puts the pressure on, but it should be a fairly meaningful semester for the students involved,” she wrote.¹⁵

As this research continued and expanded, Lin responded to a suggestion made by a black graduate student to include predominantly black neighborhoods outside Chicago—including Phoenix and East Chicago Heights, Illinois—with support from the Afro-American Studies program.¹⁶ In 1972, a new group of students implemented a third similar study in St. Louis. On these trips, Lin set the agenda and had high expectations for participation by her student-collaborators: “Lin always encouraged participation by everybody; it was never her telling us how it was going to be. It was, ‘Here’s a thought.’”¹⁷

In 1973, after gaining financial backing from the National Science Foundation, Lin and Roger Parks began “The Measures Project,” researching street repair and street lighting: “The idea was to test whether or not people’s perceptions of the services that they received were related to the actuality of those services.”¹⁸ Led by their desire to understand the reality of individual experience, they designed equipment that could measure the bumps in the road: a “roughometer.” “It was a trailer with a free wheel that we towed around behind a truck, and the wheel would bounce up and down to measure the roughness of the road,” Parks explained.¹⁹ Others measured potholes with yardsticks, street lighting with light meters, or conducted interviews with people about their experiences. Police departments seeking specific advice for internal reforms regularly solicited the results of these studies.

¹⁵ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 8 May 1970, box 174, folder “EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1968-1976,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁶ E. Ostrom, “Ventures in Teaching and Research,” 12.

¹⁷ Roger Parks, interview by Sara Clark, June 4, 2014.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

Lin's status as a scholar with a successful funding record grew through this research, but this period is significant because Lin developed her approach to institutional analysis that grew up with the Workshop and alongside her intellectual partnership with Vincent. Some have postulated that the on-the-ground approach to research Lin developed during these years will be her greatest legacy.²⁰ This is certainly true for those studying her contributions from this period. An outsider observing Lin and her students conducting fieldwork would have likely guessed Lin and her team to be anthropologists studying culture.

How should a political scientist construct her identity and what types of research should she be doing? Lin's awareness of these questions was not expressed outwardly, but instead through her methodological decisions. By 1982, Lin envisioned herself "straddling the academic disciplines of political science and economics."²¹ This description accurately positioned her work in the space of multidisciplinary scholarship, rather than within interdisciplinarity, as she drew together literature from more than one discipline to inform her work on institutional analysis. Rather than beginning in the space between recognizable disciplines to create something new—as she did in later work—Lin's feet "straddled" political science and economics. That is, she has one foot in either discipline but did not yet integrate their approaches toward a new result. In an essay she wrote with Larry Kiser, then a post-doctoral student at the Workshop, they acknowledge their multidisciplinary labor:

[Institutional] Analysts attempt to identify the smallest set of working parts to yield a coherent and testable theory for observed patterns of actions and results. Given the complexity of the theoretical models used in institutional analysis, social scientists wishing to understand this literature are frequently confused about how the various elements of the theories are linked together and about how theorists use key terms. We

²⁰ Peter Boettke, Liya Palagashvili, and Jayme Lemke, "Riding in Cars with Boys: Elinor Ostrom's Adventures with the Police," *Journal of Institutional Economics* 9, no. 4 (December 2013): 407–25, doi:10.1017/S1744137413000118.

²¹ Larry Kiser and E. Ostrom, "Three Worlds of Action: A Metatheoretical Synthesis of Institutional Approaches," in *Strategies of Political Inquiry*, ed. E. Ostrom (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1982), 179.

try to provide a synthesis and overview of the political-economy literature that uses the individual as a unit of analysis while asking how institutional arrangements affect the level, type, and distribution of outcomes.²²

She and Kiser actively recognized the difficulty of beginning work situated beyond traditional disciplinary divides and invited others to join their conversation by facilitating the language one needed to converse. When Peter Lyia Palagashvili and Jayme Lemke assessed Lin's police research methods years later, they situated Lin's work along disciplinary divides: it "combines the economists' and political economists' theoretical apparatus of a rational choice framework with institutional analysis using the empirical methods of anthropologists and historians."²³ Further, they compared economists' preference for "thin description" and "clean empirical work" like statistical tests of significance with anthropologists' practice of "thick description," "dirty empirical work" supported by small-N case study methodology.²⁴

Central to understanding Lin's developing academic practice is the importance of the community she created, often in spite of opposition from their University peers. She and Vincent's Workshop was their central point of outreach. In addition to her research on metropolitan reform throughout the 1970s, Lin developed a graduate seminar on microanalysis and institutional arrangements. Vincent offered a parallel seminar on the impact of institutional design. "Our seminars were offered in the Political Science Department, but our colleagues did not like our approach because we drew on economic theory as well as political thought. Graduate students were frequently advised against taking our seminars," Lin explained.²⁵

The Ostroms' work repeatedly overflowed traditionally professional boundaries as they personally impacted the lives of those with whom they worked. It is easy to focus on the results

²² Larry Kiser and E. Ostrom, "Three Worlds of Action: A Metatheoretical Synthesis of Institutional Approaches," 181.

²³ Peter Boettke, Liya Palagashvili, and Jayme Lemke, "Riding in Cars with Boys."

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ E. Ostrom, "A Long Polycentric Journey," 11.

of the research without more broadly considering the impact of the people in Lin's life as extensions of her commitment to methodological individualism. Colleague Paul Dragos Aligica described them as academics who were always prepared to leave academia; this idea personally impacted him. He explained that the Ostroms were sometimes concerned about "making it" in academia: "There were frictions between what the mainstream was thinking and what they were thinking. Frictions between how they see an academic organization should be organized and what they saw around that."²⁶ It was under these conditions that the Workshop was created. This is the reasoning they provided for pursuing apprenticeship with an Indiana carpenter, Paul Goodwin, who taught them about building furniture: "They have [a] sort of exit point and [a] sort of safety net...they were able to confront the challenges of academia and the intellectual environment they were operating in from a much [more] comfortable, safer, and autonomous position."²⁷ The Ostroms were never only academics; from their perspectives, it would be dangerous to live this way. In her academic work, Lin remained committed to the idea that individuals—academics, peers, friends, students, spouses, citizens—were the decision makers. She was no exception.

Chair with an Escape Clause

The summer of 1980 in Bloomington was exceptionally hot and humid. Lin and Vincent were glad to have escaped to the cool of Manitoulin up north, but fall came fast as Lin anticipated her new position as department chair.²⁸ Accepting the position was not easy; Lin felt pulled between her intellectual needs and the administrative concerns of the Department. Ultimately, she put her needs on the back burner. "Basically, I do not think the job is a good idea.

²⁶ Paul Dragos Aligica, interview by Joseph Stahlman, June 14, 2014, transcript, "Coming Together."

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 15 September 1980, box 174, folder "EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1977-1982," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

I think it is moving in the opposite direction of your own personal interests. It seems to me that you need to create more time for writing and thinking rather than less time,” her friend and Workshop colleague Judy Gillespie warned.²⁹ Gillespie had reason to worry; Lin was developing a record of putting others’ needs before her own at work. Lin had been looking forward to a sabbatical for years—she applied and eventually withdrew for this leave in 1977, 1978, and that fall in 1979—as a chance to bring resolution to her writings about measurement of public services and police service delivery.³⁰

To her mother, she made the tension she felt palpable: “If I take it, it means giving up my sabbatical. That is a very high cost decision for me since this is the third time I have applied for a year's leave and would be the third time I would have turned it down. It will put a big crimp in my capacity to write for the next several years and I really don't want to have such a crimp.”³¹ In the end Gillespie supported her decision to accept the position, and as if trying to justify taking the position to herself, Lin tallied the Department’s “headache”: “The headache is also affecting me so I would like to see it solved and unfortunately don't have a ready solution of someone else who could take it on right this moment. There are several younger colleagues whom I think could do the job in several years.”³² Lin and Vincent did their best to remain above the fray in their Workshop offices located a few blocks from the Department’s location at Woodburn Hall.

Prior to a December 1979, meeting with Homer Neal, Indiana’s Dean for Research and Graduate Development (1976-1981), Lin sent a memo outlining her concerns that accepting the

²⁹ Judy Gillespie to E. Ostrom, 12 December 1979, box 172, folder “Ostrom, Elinor 1 of 9,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³⁰ E. Ostrom, “Application for Sabbatical Leave,” 1 October 1977, box 101, folder “EO’s Sabbatical Leave File, VO’s,” Elinor Ostrom Papers; E. Ostrom to Alfred Diamant, 1 May 1978, box 101, folder “EO’s Sabbatical Leave File, VO’s,” Elinor Ostrom Papers; E. Ostrom, “Application for Sabbatical Leave,” 2 October 1979, box 101, folder “EO’s Sabbatical Leave File, VO’s,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³¹ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 1 January 1980, box 174, folder “EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1977-1982,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³² *Ibid.*

chair position would negatively impact her and her Workshop colleagues fundraising efforts.³³ Then, after an early January 1980 meeting, Lin wrote to then Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Kenneth R. R. Gros-Louis, highlighting the details of their agreement and accepting the position of chair of the Department of Political Science.³⁴ The existence of these memos provides insight into Lin's approach to professional negotiation and communication. As others have noted, she was an intellectual entrepreneur, pursuing institutional development from the bottom-up.³⁵ Her message to Neal made it clear that her identity as a researcher who drew major external funds was important to her. She risked losing this as she considered the position of chair; she wrote of her performance measurement theory research with Gordon P. Whitaker funded by the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, "I have serious reservations about combining working on a continuation grant with assuming the Chair and am perplexed about how to approach this continuation request."³⁶

Finally, she made her case to Neal, "Before I would accept the Chair, I have to assure myself that I can continue to devote a major portion of each day to my scholarly work." "I cannot take the chance of letting four years pass before I return to my own work. I must also ensure that the Workshop is a healthy, productive enterprise," she continued.³⁷ She asked for additional secretarial and administrative support so that she might sufficiently continue her own work, noting that she would not be able to serve as such an active grant writer for the Workshop during the chair position. In the few years since she and Vincent founded their Workshop, she had come to view herself as essential to its survival; without her grant-raising efforts, she

³³ E. Ostrom to Homer Neal, box 172, folder "Ostrom, Elinor 1 of 9," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³⁴ E. Ostrom to Kenneth R. R. Gros-Louis, 9 January 1980, box 172, folder Ostrom, Elinor 1 of 9," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³⁵ Daniel H. Cole and Michael D. McGinnis, *Elinor Ostrom and the Bloomington School of Political Economy: Polycentricity in Public Administration and Political Science* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014), 25.

³⁶ E. Ostrom to Homer Neal, 14 December 1979, box 172, folder "Ostrom, Elinor 1 of 9," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³⁷ Ibid.

worried about financial ruin. From the beginning, however, Lin also planned to take a sabbatical while she was chair; “After fifteen years on the faculty, my desires for a sabbatical leave grow ever stronger while competing demands make it ever more difficult to take!”³⁸

By January, her feelings toward the position had solidified: “I must reflect that I am somewhat optimistic about the possibility of working with my colleagues and with your support to continue the strong tradition of the Department of Political Science at Indiana University,” she wrote to Dean Kenneth R.R. Gros-Louis. Her hesitant optimism was reflected in a detailed agreement including plans for of an “escape clause” that could relieve her of the appointment within a semester if her “research, writing, and general academic activities were severely hampered to the administrative load involved in being Chair of the Department.”³⁹ Though she continued to struggle with feeling overworked and at times, anxious over the coming years, the worries she expressed indicated the careful thought she gave to returning to an administrative role. Despite Lin’s efforts to account for all potential speed bumps in her transition, anti-nepotism regulations were formally raised by the Department fearing their new—and first—chairwoman would give favor to her husband with regard to salary, teaching assignments, and the like.⁴⁰

Although many westerners presume to understand the role of professors—teaching classes, mentoring students, and performing something called “research”—the same cannot be said of the position of department chair. This jargon is left to the ranks of the academy, and more often than not, undergraduates have few dealings or knowledge of chairs. Department chairs, however, are leaders, usually appointed by deans of colleges—in this case, the College of Arts

³⁸ E. Ostrom to Frank A. Franz, 21 January 1980, box 101, folder “EO’s Sabbatical Leave File, VO’s,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³⁹ E. Ostrom to Kenneth R.R. Gros-Louis, box 172, folder “Ostrom, Elinor 1 of 9,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁴⁰ E. Ostrom to Alfred Diamant, 25 February 1980, box 343, folder “Alfred Diamant,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

and Sciences. Chairs spend less time teaching and more time stewarding departmental needs including: promotion and tenure evaluations, recruitment of new faculty, scheduling classes, budgeting, leading departmental meetings, and facilitating the department's relationship with the college. This role, hopefully, balances paper-pushing with big-picture thinking about the role of political science within a broader community. Lin reflected after a few months on the job: "I am surviving the Chairmanship, so far. I have to be honest and say surviving and not thriving. There is just an awful lot of routine stuff that I am trying to handle as fast as possible, so it does not come to dominate my life. It is all too easy to end up as a paper pusher and nothing else, and I don't want that to happen."⁴¹

In time, this "routine stuff" became results. Lin oversaw the Department's return to a renovated Woodburn Hall in 1981, and over more time, she fought to raise faculty salaries to levels comparable with other major universities.⁴² Soon after, Lin successfully recruited Roberta "Bobbie" Herzberg, "a young scholar from Washington University in St. Louis."⁴³ Though Herzberg was recruited to join the Department of Political Science, Lin made plans with her that also supported the Workshop efforts to incorporate game theoretics and experimental research:

We plan to examine our long-standing interest in the effects of institutional arrangement on public sector performance utilizing experimental methods to supplement our previous reliance on field research. Bobbie Herzberg and I plan to offer a joint graduate research seminar in the spring of 1984. This will be a study of institutional arrangements.⁴⁴

Robert Hart, who began as a faculty member in the Department just as Lin became Chair recalled that Lin's recruitment efforts sometimes left Department members who were not

⁴¹ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 14 October 1980, box 174, folder "EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1977-1982," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁴² E. Ostrom to Ted Carmines, 13 March 1986, box 8, folder "Chronological File - March 1986," Elinor Ostrom Papers; "Woodburn Hall Planning Meeting," 19 December 1979, box 359, folder "Woodburn Hall Renovation," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁴³ Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis at Indiana University, "Annual Report," 1 March 1983, box 84, folder "Workshop 1983-85," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

Workshoppers upset: “Even when she was Chair there was a little bit of resentment that some of the decisions she made about the Department of Political Science may have been good for the Workshop but not necessarily good for Department of Political Science.”⁴⁵

In fall 1983, Lin collaborated with Herzberg to utilize and promote the Department’s recently established Behavioral Lab, “an excellent facility for experimental gaming.”⁴⁶ As Lin began this work in experimental methods, she again found herself operating outside the typical methods use by her political science colleagues. Lin is not memorialized for her contributions as a department chair, nor are most academics remembered for this work. Instead Lin’s term as department chair may demonstrate that she did not picture herself as exceptional; instead she worked hard to complete necessary tasks and participated in incremental change.

Still by the early 1980s, Lin and Vincent felt they should be more recognized for their efforts by their Department or the University. After ten years of carrying full teaching loads—in addition to their roles as researchers and Workshop Co-Directors—Lin and Vincent expressed their frustrations in the Workshop’s 1984 Annual Report. Their concerns were with the Department of Political Science over its lack of differentiated teaching loads for faculty, like them, with active research programs; “At risk is the longer, book-length manuscripts that require blocks of time. The summary of our police studies has been on the writing agenda for several [four] years. Teaching and administrative pressures have intervened.”⁴⁷

ZiF

⁴⁵ Jeffrey Hart, interview by Catherine Guerro, July 19, 2014, transcript, “Coming Together.”

⁴⁶ Workshop, “Annual Report,” 1 March 1983.

⁴⁷ Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, “1983 Annual Report and Review Document,” 3 February 1984, box 380, folder “1983 Annual Report & Review Document 2/3/84,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

Lin planned a sabbatical during the spring term of her second year as chair.⁴⁸ She joined Vincent in Bielefeld, Germany, from January to August 1981, at the Center for Interdisciplinary Research at Bielefeld University:

In the fall of 1980, Vincent joined a year-long research effort called “Guidance, Control, and Performance Evaluation in the Public Sector” at the Center for Interdisciplinary Research (ZiF), Bielefeld University.... I took my first sabbatical leave and joined the group in Germany for the spring semester and summer of 1981.⁴⁹

While at the Center, Lin planned to finalize a draft of a manuscript with the working title *An Institutional Approach to Urban Service Delivery*, written with Roger Parks.⁵⁰ Alas, she continued to search for time to bring closure to her research on urban service delivery. “The volume will enable me to provide an overview of the research program in which I have been engaged since the spring of 1970,” Lin hoped.⁵¹

Established in 1968 as the first Institute for Advanced Study in Germany, the Center was designed by German sociologist Helmut Schlesky, and it is known locally by its German language acronym ZiF (Zentrum für interdisziplinäre Forschung).⁵² Today it continues as “an internationally operating institute for advanced study that supports and houses interdisciplinary research projects from all fields across the natural and social sciences, engineering, and the humanities.”⁵³ ZiF aims to “reintegrate already existing interdisciplinary activities that before meeting at the Center, [took] place mostly between and outside of universities.”⁵⁴

⁴⁸ E. Ostrom, “Application for Sabbatical Leave,” 1 October 1980, box 101, folder “EO’s Sabbatical Leave File, VO’s,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁴⁹ E. Ostrom, “A Long Polycentric Journey,” 11.

⁵⁰ This book was not published. This project was previously titled *Roles, Structure, Conduct, and Performance of Local Public Service Delivery Systems*. E. Ostrom, “Application for Sabbatical Leave,” 1 October 1980.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² “What is the ZiF? Center for Interdisciplinary Research” (Center for Interdisciplinary Research Universität Bielefeld), accessed October 26, 2016, [http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/\(en\)/ZIF/Allgemeines/ZiF-Flyer.pdf](http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/(en)/ZIF/Allgemeines/ZiF-Flyer.pdf).

⁵³ Ipke Wachsmuth, “ZiF,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Interdisciplinarity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 292.

⁵⁴ Sabine Maasen, “Introducing Interdisciplinarity: Irresistible Infliction? The Example of a Research Group at the Center for Interdisciplinary Research (ZiF), Bielefeld, Germany,” in *Practicing Interdisciplinarity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 176. See also, Hermann Lübke, “Helmut Schelsky Und Die Interdisziplinarität.

Before traveling to Bielefeld, Lin had already begun to develop a multidisciplinary practice through her study of metropolitan service and urban governance, and with Vincent, they created a home for this practice through their Workshop. In his application for sabbatical leave, Vincent compared the center at Bielefeld University to the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences (CASBS) at Palo Alto and the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton.⁵⁵ Whereas Vincent had experienced an intellectual environment like Bielefeld before during his time at CASBS in the 1950s, Lin discovered new insights at ZiF. For the first time, at ZiF Lin found that interdisciplinary communication could not only be encouraged but facilitated. Sabine Maasen's study of another ZiF research group, "Biological Foundations of Human Culture" (1991-92) revealed "a patchwork of intersections" as a more "do-able" representation of interdisciplinary practice: "Centers like the ZiF proceed on the assumption that while the results of multidisciplinary communication cannot be controlled, one can see to it that this type of communication occurs and that interdisciplinarity has the chance to emerge."⁵⁶ Lin recalled:

It was wonderful to be with academics from multiple disciplines— including Christopher Hood, Franz-Xaver Kaufmann, Hans-Günter Krüsselberg, Gian-domenico Majone, Paul Sabatier, Reinhard Selten, Martin Shubik, and others—in a setting where one could develop ideas about institutional analysis that were not focused on one discipline alone. We could not seriously attempt to develop an interdisciplinary approach to guidance, control, and performance evaluation in the public sector without building a common language that crossed the social sciences!⁵⁷

These experts in government, political economy, sociology, economics, and political philosophy brought wide-ranging assumptions and methodological predispositions to their shared examination. Developing a common language depended not only on identifying and defining

Zur Philosophie Gegenwärtiger Wissenschaftskultur," *Kocka, J., (Hg.), Interdisziplinarität, Praxis– Herausforderungen–Ideologie, Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 1987, 17–33.*

⁵⁵ V. Ostrom, "Application for Leave Without Pay Fellowship," [ca. 1981], box 101, folder "EO's Sabbatical Leave File, VO's," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁵⁶ Sabine Maasen, "Introducing Interdisciplinarity: Irresistible Infliction? The Example of a Research Group at the Center for Interdisciplinary Research (ZiF), Bielefeld, Germany," in *Practicing Interdisciplinarity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 174-5.

⁵⁷ E. Ostrom, "A Long Polycentric Journey," 11-12.

significant terms relevant to inquiry—a monumental task in itself—but also on learning a new language: German. Language lessons were a time-consuming part of an already rigorous schedule. “We try to use [it] with one another. This is pretty difficult as one feels silly talking in a foreign language when one could express ideas better in a different tongue,” Lin explained.⁵⁸ “Differences in language are the least of the problems...” commented Myra H. Strober in her study of interdisciplinary conversations. “What is much more difficult is coming to understand the way colleagues from different disciplines *think*—their assumptions; concepts; categories; methods of discerning, evaluating, and reporting ‘truth’; and styles of arguing—their disciplinary cultures and habits of mind.”⁵⁹

Vincent’s academic interest in the centrality of language to cultural understanding leading up to these experiences likely helped he and Lin understand the significance of their experiences at ZiF. “All use of language involves simplification,” wrote Vincent in his 1980 essay “Artisanship and Artifact.” “Furthermore, the use of words to name classes of things and relationships depends critically upon a shared understanding of the meaning of words. Language is easily subject to abuse when the same word is used to mean different things. Such abuse can lead to confused thought and senseless discourse,” he continued.⁶⁰ The organization of the world through rule-order relationships helped to explain Vincent and Lin’s perspectives; people inherently depended on the flawed qualities of language to create the rules that bind them. This worldview was particularly suited to a research practice that fostered interdisciplinarity.

Schedules at ZiF were organized to facilitate collaboration across disciplines, and participation in a “research group” was key to this design. According to Maasen, who also served

⁵⁸ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 11 February 1982, box 174, folder “EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1977-1982,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁵⁹ Myra Strober, *Interdisciplinary Conversations: Challenging Habits of Thought* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 4.

⁶⁰ V. Ostrom, “Artisanship and Artifact,” *Public Administration Review* 40, no. 4 (1980): 312.

as a “scientific assistant” to her 1991-92 research group lead, these groups were “established as an incentive to advance *sustained multidisciplinary cooperation*,” in which each aspect—sustained, multidisciplinary, and cooperation—were believed “to be crucial for interdisciplinarity to emerge.”⁶¹ Like the other participants in the Guidance, Control, and Performance Evaluation group, the Ostroms lived in an on-site apartment, which facilitated on-going contact among collaborators.⁶² That interdisciplinary activity might inductively occur via “sustained multidisciplinary practice” was likely appealing and familiar to Lin and Vincent who strived to create a similar environment at home.⁶³

Conference presentations bookended the research group’s schedule. For Lin, this meant no time to pause as she tied up loose ends in Bloomington as department chair and traveled to Germany. “I will have to sleep in sets of two or three hours at a time then getting up working for two or three hours at a time then going back to bed. Once I get to Germany I can rest,” wrote Lin.⁶⁴ Her hopes of rest, however, had to wait. She recalled of arriving in Bielefeld, “That same afternoon I had to deliver a paper and answer questions shot at me by my colleagues. My most distinct memory of delivering that paper was the sense of holding on to the podium for fear that I might not be able to continue standing throughout my presentation.”⁶⁵ She felt exhausted and underprepared.

⁶¹ The research group scientific assistant works with the head of the research group in preparation for participants’ arrival through finishing resulting publications. Sabine Maasen, “Introducing Interdisciplinarity: Irresistible Infliction? The Example of a Research Group at the Center for Interdisciplinary Research (ZiF), Bielefeld, Germany,” in *Practicing Interdisciplinarity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 176.

⁶² “Universität Bielefeld Zentrum für interdisziplinäre Forschung: Accommodation and General,” [ca. 1981], box 360, folder “ZiF-Center for Interdisciplinary Research, Bielefeld, Germany,” Elinor Ostrom Papers; E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 23 December 1981, box 174, folder “EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1977-1982,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁶³ Sabine Maasen, “Introducing Interdisciplinarity: Irresistible Infliction? The Example of a Research Group at the Center for Interdisciplinary Research (ZiF), Bielefeld, Germany,” in *Practicing Interdisciplinarity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 177.

⁶⁴ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 15 December 1981, box 174, folder “EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1977-1982,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

Lin's memories of spring 1982 from her participation in the Guidance, Control, and Performance Evaluation group, led by Franz-Xavier Kaufmann, are indicative of her tireless and joyful commitment to academic pursuit. She occupied herself by continually with meetings with group members, language lessons, and interactions with invited guests. Lin shared these experiences in monthly letters to her mother. Highlights along the way included visitors from the German and Swiss governments in January, waking regularly at 3:30 in the morning to enjoy working uninterrupted, yoga and long walks, and coursework in mathematical economics.⁶⁶ Lin also confronted disagreement and new ideas:

The interests of the different scholars here are really very diverse and difficult to get agreement on things. It means we spend more time in meetings than we would otherwise. However, many of the discussions are very interesting and we are both being exposed to new ideas and literature.⁶⁷

Looking back on her letters to her mother, Lin's first report, in January 1982, cloaked just as much as they shared. Parents do not always receive the full report, especially in busy times and as differences in education can cloud communication. Paul Sabatier, also a fellow at the Center that year, had asked her to make a presentation on "organizational learning."⁶⁸ Perhaps it took more time for the significance of this presentation or the conversation she and Sabatier had after to sink in; in this early presentation, "I used as my example of organizational learning the set of rules that groundwater producers had developed in the southern California groundwater basins."⁶⁹ A little more than fifteen years had passed since Lin's dissertation research; her data

⁶⁶ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 9 January 1982, box 174, folder "EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1977-1982," Elinor Ostrom Papers; E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 12 March 1982, box 174, folder "EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1977-1982," Elinor Ostrom; E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 24 March 1982, box 174, folder "EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1977-1982," Elinor Ostrom Papers; E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 21 April 1982, box 174, folder "EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1977-1982," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁶⁷ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 11 February 1982, box 174, folder "EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1977-1982," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁶⁸ E. Ostrom, *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), xiii.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

was old. How, Sabatier asked, could she know the systems “were still operating and performing well?”⁷⁰ At the time, Lin was puzzled by his question.

Was Lin propelled to action by her love of research or being consumed by the constant need to keep stress at bay? Perhaps, she felt some of both. Her reports were sometimes frenetic but always full of energy and enthusiasm for the work to be completed; her need for sleep was merely an impediment to be overcome rather than the respite that others craved. In these months she met and worked alongside German economist Reinhard Selten; they forged a bond, going on long hikes in the Teutoburg Forest, located behind the ZiF’s campus.⁷¹ “Reinhard and I discussed an evolving framework for institutional analysis and the centrality of game theory to its development,” Lin shared later.⁷² With Selten’s expertise in game theory, Lin formulated the early stages of her Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework, which set the stage for larger meta-analysis of case studies of common-pool resource systems.⁷³ Selten was awarded the 1994 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences, along with the highly controversial recipient John F. Nash, Jr., “for their pioneering analysis of equilibria in the theory of non-cooperative games.”⁷⁴

Lin’s first trip to Bielefeld was a turning point in her academic career and within her evolution as a multi- and interdisciplinary practitioner. In July 1982, Lin made her final presentation to her colleagues at ZiF, “The Genetic Structure of Organization,” and probed the question, “How do institutional rules used to organize decision-making situations affect

⁷⁰ Ibid., xiv.

⁷¹ E. Ostrom, “A Long Polycentric Journey,” 12.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ E. Ostrom, “Beyond Markets and States: Polycentric Governance of Complex Economic Systems” (lecture, The Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel 2009, Aula Magna, Stockholm University, December 8, 2009), http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/economic-sciences/laureates/2009/ostrom_lecture.pdf.

⁷⁴ “Reinhard Selten - Biographical,” accessed February 3, 2016, http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/economic-sciences/laureates/1994/selten-bio.html; on John F. Nash, Jr., see Sylvia Nasar, *A Beautiful Mind* (Simon and Schuster, 2011); Harold William Kuhn and Sylvia Nasar, *The Essential John Nash* (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002).

individual behavior and consequent joint results?” In her analysis she noted that formal games are examples of models that could be used to understand decision situations.⁷⁵ Though Lin had a working knowledge of game theory prior to her trip to Bielefeld—she had proposed a graduate seminar on the topic with Dina Zinnes in 1969-1970—it was her exposure to Selten and others at Bielefeld that cemented the potential contributions of this approach to institutional analysis problems.⁷⁶ Although Lin completed some economic training in graduate school, game theory was ultimately a method honed by economists and fell outside of Lin’s primary disciplinary identity. This became typical of Lin’s emerging interdisciplinary practice. Her methods were not limited to those historically utilized by political scientists; instead, the problems she approached determined methodology. That is, she selected methods tested and chosen to best fit the dilemmas at hand by the results they offered. In this case, game theory yielded promising answers for analyzing public sector policy problems.

Back home in Bloomington the momentum of their time abroad was not lost. Following up on Paul Sabatier’s unanswered question, Lin quickly enlisted her doctoral student William Blomquist to re-examine California’s groundwater basins, a study that like Lin became the topic of his dissertation. Blomquist’s peers who were familiar with political science asked him about the topic of his dissertation: “‘What’s a political scientist like you doing in a research project like this?’”⁷⁷ Suffice to say, study of commons dilemmas were not centerfield topics for upcoming political science students. Others viewed Lin’s work as outside the normal range of topics that *should* be covered within the discipline. When writing up the findings for his dissertation a few

⁷⁵ E. Ostrom, “The Genetic Structure of Organization,” outline, 5 July 1982, box 123, folder “Conferences/Meetings/Lectures Bielefeld Public Lecture, Outlines,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁷⁶ Their proposed course was not approved or taught at this time; E. Ostrom to Dina Zinnes, 21 October 1969, box 260, folder “Dina Zinnes,” Elinor Ostrom Papers; E. Ostrom to Dina Zinnes, 19 June 1970, box 360, folder “Dina Zinnes,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁷⁷ William Blomquist, “Getting Out of the Trap: Changing an Endangered Commons to a Managed Commons (prisoner’s Dilemma; Groundwater)” (Ph.D., Indiana University, 1987), v, <http://search.proquest.com.proxyiub.uits.iu.edu/pqdtglobal/docview/303599324/abstract/272B19AF60F4428CPQ/2>.

years later, Blomquist reflected not only on Lin's exceedingly efficient responses to his work, but also her intellectual influence: "I am at times in doubt as to which ideas are hers and which are mine, and so however many references to her work I make, they will still insufficiently capture her influence. Most likely the good ideas are hers."⁷⁸ Just as Lin revealed through her dissertation research, Blomquist found "the institutions the water producers themselves had designed were still in place and operating effectively."⁷⁹

In February 1984, along with their co-authors and co-editors—Lin authored a chapter, Vincent edited the collection—a completed manuscript for *Guidance, Control, and Evaluation in the Public Sector: The Bielefeld Interdisciplinary Project* was scheduled for publication the following year.⁸⁰ Lin's contribution, "A Method of Institutional Analysis," to the edited book documented an important development in her theoretical understanding of collective action. In this essay she introduces the "action arena."⁸¹ Within the IAD framework (Figure 2) used to predict results the action arena is a "complex conceptual unit containing a set of variables called an *action situation* and a set of variable called an *actor*."⁸² This work was influenced by Selten's then forthcoming work on general equilibrium theory.⁸³

⁷⁸ Ibid., viii.

⁷⁹ E. Ostrom, *Governing the Commons*, xiii.

⁸⁰ *Guidance, Control, and Evaluation in the Public Sector* was ultimately published in 1986; the Ostroms records indicate the first publication date given was 1985; Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, "Annual Report: 1984," 18 February 1985, box 84, folder "Workshop 1983-85," Elinor Ostrom Papers; Franz-Xaver Kaufmann, Giandomenico Majone, and V. Ostrom, eds., *Guidance, Control, and Evaluation in the Public Sector: The Bielefeld Interdisciplinary Project*, De Gruyter Studies in Organization 4 (Berlin ; New York: W. de Gruyter, 1986).

⁸¹ E. Ostrom, "A Method of Institutional Analysis," in *Guidance, Control, and Evaluation in the Public Sector: The Bielefeld Interdisciplinary Project*, ed. Franz-Xaver Kaufmann, Giandomenico Majone, and V. Ostrom, De Gruyter Studies in Organization 4 (Berlin ; New York: W. de Gruyter, 1986), 459–75; see also, E. Ostrom, "The Elements of an Action Situation" (Working Paper, Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Bloomington, Indiana, 1983), <http://hdl.handle.net/10535/4080>.

⁸² E. Ostrom, "A Method of Institutional Analysis," 462.

⁸³ John C. Harsanyi and Reinhard Selten, *A General Theory of Equilibrium Selection in Games: Chapter 3, Consequences of Desirable Properties* (Institut für Mathematische Wirtschaftsforschung an der Universität Bielefeld, 1982); John C. Harsanyi and Reinhard Selten, *A General Theory of Equilibrium Selection in Games* (Inst. für Math. Wirtschaftsforschung and Univ., 1988).

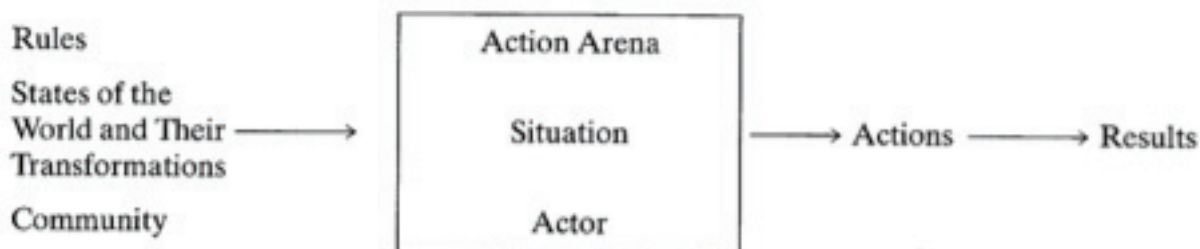


Figure 2. Early version of Institutional Analysis and Development framework, showing action arena. Elinor Ostrom, “A Method of Institutional Analysis,” in *Guidance, Control, and Evaluation in the Public Sector: The Bielefeld Interdisciplinary Project*, ed. Franz-Xaver Kaufmann, Giandomenico Majone, and Vincent Ostrom, De Gruyter Studies in Organization 4 (Berlin ; New York: W. de Gruyter, 1986), 462.

Back at IU, the Ostroms envisioned this volume as part of a larger transition for their Workshop. The 1984 Workshop Annual Report summarized it as follows: “A deliberate effort is made to avoid the intellectual constraints characteristic of academic departmentalization. Our emphasis is upon fashioning an intellectual community of discourse among practicing scholars from different academic disciplines concerned with the study of human institutions.”⁸⁴ Interdisciplinary rhetoric took center stage. For Lin and Vincent, the Workshop and its growing network occupied the base of their initial refrain.

The “Bielefeld Volume”—as Vincent referred to it—triggered a broadening strategic understanding for communication across disciplines. Vincent reflected:

Our basic message is that human societies are complex orders and that we have to move to multiple levels and foci of analysis to make any serious headway in the study of complex orders. If we can get this message across we may make an important contribution to work in the social sciences.⁸⁵

In a letter to German colleague Hartmut Picht, Vincent continued, “Whatever you and others can do to give attention to this fundamental character of the problem will contribute to accomplishing

⁸⁴ Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, “Annual Report: 1984,” 18 February 1985, box 84, folder “Workshop 1983-85,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁸⁵ V. Ostrom to Hartmut Picht, 15 January 1986, box 8, folder “Chronological File-January 1986,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

the task we face. We need good review essays in the public administration and law journals, as well as those in the social sciences.”⁸⁶ He drew others into the cause, as if it were a battle.

If other academics compared Lin’s and Vincent’s contributions—Lin’s struggle to achieve a tenure-track academic position solely on her own merits evidences this comparison at least within Indiana University—the markers of “achievement” between the two were narrower than ever. In addition to departmental leadership as Chair, scholars recognized Lin through professional organizations and increasingly through the reputation of her academic publications. Significantly, she served as president of the Public Choice Society from 1982-84 and the Midwest Political Science Association from 1984-85, as well as chairing American Political Science Association committees. She served quietly and perhaps, unknowingly, as a role model for younger women, if only by being in these positions of leadership. Later, Catherine Tucker found Lin looking out for her early in her academic career: “Lin was really a kind of anchor for me in showing that you really could be a productive professional and still be your own person. She told me about the fact that she did woodworking and built furniture with Vincent and for a while when I was under quite a bit of stress.”⁸⁷

At times she did so much there was no way for her to keep track of it all mentally. She maintained day timers beginning in 1970 with records of appointments and steady (and increasing) support from secretaries at the Workshop or within the Department helped maintain her schedule, as well as her contacts. Though Lin took many handwritten notes, sometimes using shorthand learned in her twenties, she also relied on dictations transcribed by her secretaries.⁸⁸

The Ostroms were quick to acknowledge the impact their time abroad had on their growing enterprise as they outlined plans for the Workshop’s “Ten-Year Prospectus.” ZiF and the

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Catherine Tucker, interview by Catherine Guerro, July 9, 2014, transcript, “Coming Together.”

⁸⁸ See, for example, E. Ostrom, journal, [ca. 1981], box 176, Elinor Ostrom Papers.

Workshop shared similar features including workshops, colloquia, research fellows, and a commitment to interdisciplinarity. Their time in Bielefeld, “reinforced [their] working presuppositions about the essential ties between theory, policy analysis, and empirical inquiry and opened our awareness to more extended intellectual vistas with regard to European traditions of scholarship.”⁸⁹ The experience also caused them to focus Workshop efforts on comparative institutional analysis and development. Co-authored by Lin and Vincent, this prospectus, positioned the Workshop and implicitly, the Ostroms’ research on a global path.

⁸⁹ V. Ostrom and E. Ostrom to John Lombardi and Morton Lowengrub, “Ten-Year Prospectus for the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis,” [ca. 1 January 1986], box. 383, folder “Addl. Acc.-Jan. 2014-Writings-VO-Notes-1989; VO on the Workshop, 1970s,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

1985-1986

“This has been a big transition year for us,” wrote Lin of the 1985-86 academic year to Margaret Levi, a political scientist then at the University of Washington.⁹⁰ “The next four months should see a number of decisions being taken which will pretty well set the frame for our next ten years of work,” Vincent echoed.⁹¹ Their words expressed their thrill and apprehension about what was to come. In the three years since returning from Bielefeld, Germany, their lives had shifted. No longer leading their Department, Lin dedicated herself fully to her research and to the Workshop.

Nearby in Seymour, Indiana—just outside of Bloomington—a young songwriter, John Cougar Mellencamp, expressed life in the midwestern farm economy:

But I've seen it all in a small town
 Had myself a ball in a small town
 Married an L.A. doll and brought her to this small town
 Now she's small town just like me⁹²

“Small Town” rose to No. 6 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart in January 1986.⁹³ Mellencamp was talking about the Ostroms’ home. They had lived together in Bloomington longer than anywhere else. And while they loved their retreat on Lampkins Ridge Road, away from the hustle of town; ultimately, the University made them stay in Bloomington.

In 1986, Vincent was approaching seventy—Lin was in her early fifties. As early as 1975, Vincent started experiencing chronic eye pain associated with excessive, painful blinking, which led the following year to a diagnosis of a disease that limited Vincent’s vision and ability

⁹⁰ E. Ostrom to Margaret Levi, 25 February 1986, box 8, folder “Chronological File - February 1986,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁹¹ V. Ostrom to Harmut Picht, 15 January 1986, box 8, folder “Chronological File-January 1986,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁹² John Cougar Mellencamp, “Small Town,” in *Scarecrow*, Riva Records, 1985.

⁹³ “The Hot 100: January 18, 1986,” Billboard Hot 100 Chart, <http://www.billboard.com/charts/hot-100/1986-01-18>.

to read for extended periods of time.⁹⁴ Vincent reduced his teaching obligations, and Lin began assisting with some of his daily care. Even still, their trip to Bielefeld was prompted because Vincent was invited by Franz-Xavier Kaufmann to participate in his research group; Lin was invited in tow.⁹⁵ Vincent's eye condition did not immediately limit their plans; his withdrawal from academia was slow and stubborn. While overseas colleagues asked Vincent to present an address in Belgium.⁹⁶ By comparison, Vincent's scholarship had a wider audience than Lin's work at the time of their travels. However, her position within their academic community began to change when the couple returned from Germany. This effect was not immediate, nor did her ascension appear contrived by their joint efforts. Instead, as Vincent's declining health caused him to reduce travel and professional involvements, Lin's career continued to evolve.

Michael McGinnis recalled meeting Vincent in 1985 during his first year as a Professor of Political Science at IU. He observed Vincent as more involved in the Workshop than the Department: "Vincent at that time was a real curmudgeon. He was not practical-minded at all."⁹⁷ He recalled Vincent's frank, outspoken opinions at faculty meetings. Vincent was more vocal than Lin about their shared struggles with departmental approaches to teaching political science.

In part their frustrations about the lack of appreciation among their immediate colleagues and much of their broader research network for theory as equally significant as policy analysis and empirical research. In a letter to Robert Hawkins, president of The Sequoia Institute—a

⁹⁴ Vincent was diagnosed with essential blepharospasm. According to K.B. Digre, this condition "has profound effects on visual quality of life and overall quality of life, and there is a tendency to more depression. For such a disabling condition, we have limited treatment options. There is a real need for greater understanding of this disorder and better treatments to help our patients." James B. Christoph to V. Ostrom, 12 November 1975, box 109, folder "Departmental Memos VO," Elinor Ostrom Papers; E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 24 March 1976, box 174, folder "EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1968-1976," Elinor Ostrom Papers; K.B. Digre, "Benign Essential Blepharospasm—There Is More to It Than Just Blinking," *Journal of Neuro-Ophthalmology* 35, no. 4 (01 2015): 379–81, doi:10.1097/WNO.0000000000000316.

⁹⁵ V. Ostrom, "Application for Leave Without Pay Fellowship," [ca. 1981], box 101, folder "EO's Sabbatical Leave File, VO's," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁹⁶ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 9 January 1982, box 174, folder "EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1977-1982," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁹⁷ Michael McGinnis, interview by Sara Clark, June 6, 2014, transcript, "Coming Together."

conservative think-tank in Sacramento, California—and advisor to Reagan on intergovernmental relations, Vincent expressed his concern about locating his work outside of mainstream political science publications, “We ground our work in methodological individualism and then proceed to different levels and foci of analysis depending upon the character of the problem. This drives us to analysis that places a strong emphasis upon complexity....”⁹⁸ In the same letter Vincent critiqued most scholarship in political science as flawed because it attempted to take “the perspective of an omniscient observer,” favoring a centralized government authority.⁹⁹ Hawkins, who was trained as a political philosopher, may have shared some of Vincent’s discontentment. Methodological individualism was one of only two normative commitments—the other being a polycentric approach to understanding governance—to which Lin and Vincent held tightly. In their approach, the individual was the key unit of analysis.¹⁰⁰

Beginning in the 1970s the pressure of reduced federal funding for social science research could no longer be kept at bay.¹⁰¹ Sociologist Irving Louis Horowitz described the “crisis,” which “cut to the social sciences, specifically sociology and economics, are in the area of 65 to 75 percent.” In contrast, federal budgetary cuts to the physical sciences were only 3.5 percent in 1981-82; according to Horowitz, the budget reflected “movement sharply away from theoretical issues and toward practical, policy concerns.”¹⁰² This reduction not only in total

⁹⁸ V. Ostrom to Robert Hawkins, 15 August 1984, box 378, folder “Recent Budget & Space Memos,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ See, for example, V. Ostrom, “Public Choice Theory: A New Approach to Institutional Economics,” *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* 57, no. 5 (1975): 844–50; Louis F. Weschler et al., *Public Choice: Methodological Individualism in Politics* (JSTOR, 1982), <http://www.jstor.org.proxyiu.uits.iu.edu/stable/976017>; Peter J. Boettke and Christopher J. Coyne, “Methodological Individualism, Spontaneous Order and the Research Program of the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis,” *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, Polycentric Political Economy A Festschrift for Elinor & Vincent Ostrom, 57, no. 2 (June 2005): 145–58, doi:10.1016/j.jebo.2004.06.012.

¹⁰¹ Jay Demerath, “From the Executive Office . . . The Emerging Crisis in Federal Funding,” *American Sociologist* 6, no. 3 (August 1971): 268.

¹⁰² Irving Louis Horowitz, “Social Science and the Reagan Administration,” *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management (pre-1986)* 1, no. 1 (Fall 1981): 126.

funding but also in the type of projects funding significantly impacted the Workshop at a key moment.

Lin and Vincent explained the local impact on the Workshop budget in the 1984 Annual Report presented to University administrators, “Money for social science research is much tighter. Agencies give out less for any one proposal. It is getting more difficult to get secure even smaller funds.” Funds were cut most for secretarial support and technology; “fee remission, publication costs, and material and supply budget were totally eliminated.” In order for the Workshop to remain financially solvent, Lin and Vincent needed to look inward to the University for support: “These changes in NSF and other funding practices make our University budget that much more essential to the survival of research enterprises such as the Workshop.”¹⁰³

Although the Ostroms recognized the need and potential for multidisciplinary collaboration and interdisciplinary research over a decade before—first in their independent research and then by co-founding their Workshop—only in the early 1980s did social science scholars more broadly commune with the interdisciplinary quality of its most important questions. According to Horowitz:

The social sciences must confront the fact that every major problem which they address has become interdisciplinary. Whether the subject is crime, health, or foreign policy, the character of the research and the definition of expertise have gone far beyond older disciplinary boundaries. Budgetary patterns, on the other hand, have been locked into older patterns of disciplinary boundaries that are no longer relevant or justifiable.¹⁰⁴

What Horowitz labeled a “fragmentation of immense proportions” from within the social sciences was responsible for an increasingly diversified substantive and methodological variety.¹⁰⁵ Though both Lin and Vincent had been working in multidisciplinary teams before

¹⁰³ Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, “Annual Report: 1984,” 18 February 1985, box 84, folder “Workshop 1983-85,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁰⁴ Horowitz, “Social Science and the Reagan Administration,” 128.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

their return from Bielefeld, the interdisciplinary nature of their practice as expressed through their goals for the Workshop had only just been clarified. In 1986, however, their combined labors came to a head; University of Nebraska Press agreed to publish Vincent's' *Compound Republic*, an examination of *The Federalist Papers* using constitutional analysis.¹⁰⁶ Likewise, Lin had transitioned from working on municipal service delivery during her time at Bielefeld to begin work on “common’s dilemmas”: “under what conditions sets of rules may evolve that enable individuals to cope successfully with these dilemmas (as well as how such institutions may survive and under what conditions they may perform well).”¹⁰⁷

An essay by Garret Hardin published in 1968 examining “the tragedy of the commons” sparked Lin’s attention to these problems. Hardin argued no solution existed to the “population problem”—global over-population: “As a rational being, each herdsman seeks to maximize his gain.”¹⁰⁸ According to Hardin, the commons—resources belonging to a group or community (e.g. fisheries, forests, and irrigation systems)—were not justifiable: “Individuals locked into the logic of the commons are free only to bring on universal ruin....”¹⁰⁹ Since 1968, Hardin’s notion of “the tragedy of the commons” became the recognizable framework—the herdsman and his pasture—for the degradation of scarce common-pool resources.¹¹⁰

With her doctoral student William Blomquist, Lin delivered a different narrative in their article “Institutional Capacity and the Resolution of a Commons Dilemma,”

¹⁰⁶ V. Ostrom, *The Political Theory of a Compound Republic: Designing the American Experiment*, 2nd. ed., rev. and enl. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987).

¹⁰⁷ E. Ostrom to Roy Gardner, 27 January 1986, box 8, folder “Chronological File - January 1986,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁰⁸ Garrett Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons,” *Science* 162, no. 3859 (December 13, 1968): 1244, doi:10.1126/science.162.3859.1243.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 1248.

¹¹⁰ E. Ostrom, “How Inexorable is the ‘Tragedy of the Commons?’ Institutional Arrangements for Changing the Social Structure of Social Dilemma” (Distinguished Faculty Research Lecture, Office of Research and Graduate Development, Bloomington, IN, April 3, 1986), <http://hdl.handle.net/10535/1998>.

Not every common-pool resource will necessarily produce a commons dilemma.... Whether or not a commons dilemma arises in a particular case of a common-pool resource depends upon the behavior of users, which in turn depends upon the structure of their situation and the incentives they face.¹¹¹

Lin had been in correspondence with Hardin regarding his work on commons, and in 1977 published two essays—one co-authored with Vincent—in *Managing the Commons*, a book Hardin edited with John Baden.¹¹² “Lin and Garrett Hardin had a long correspondence that was a no-holds barred conversation about the commons,” Barb Allen, Workshopper and longtime friend to the Ostroms recalled.¹¹³ Lin’s work on commons dilemma’s gained momentum in the mid-’80s, but her dissertation on the California groundwater basin tackled another such dilemma. Lin thought of this work as more of a return to commons work than a new chapter in her research program.¹¹⁴

Lin presented IU’s Distinguished Faculty Research Lecture in April 1986 featuring her study of the commons in her lecture titled, “How Inexorable is the 'Tragedy of the Commons?' Institutional Arrangements for Changing the Social Structure of Social Dilemmas.” She offered four lessons: (1) the commons dilemma was a useful analytical device, (2) the presumption that commons dilemmas always lead to tragedies of the commons was false, (3) there is more than one way to solve a commons dilemma, and (4) for progress to occur in social sciences, multiple levels of analysis needed to occur. Lin’s final lesson—her methodological remedy—left room for interdisciplinarity. Interestingly, she never used the word. Instead, she alluded to the

¹¹¹ William Blomquist and E. Ostrom, “Institutional Capacity and the Resolution Of A Commons Dilemma,” *Review of Policy Research* 5, no. 2 (November 1, 1985): 383, doi:10.1111/j.1541-1338.1985.tb00364.x.

¹¹² For an example of their correspondence, see, E. Ostrom to Garrett Hardin, 11 September 1985, box 331, folder “Workshop-History Reviews, letters of commendations (1 of 2),” Elinor Ostrom Papers; E. Ostrom and V. Ostrom, “A Theory for Institutional Analysis of Common Pool Problems,” in *Managing the Commons*, ed. Garrett Hardin and John Baden (New York: W.H. Freeman and Company, 1977), 157–72; E. Ostrom, “Collective Action and the Tragedy of the Commons,” in *Managing the Commons*, ed. Garrett Hardin and John Baden (New York: W.H. Freeman and Company, 1977), 173–81.

¹¹³ Barbara Allen, “The Story of Vincent and Elinor Ostrom,” interview by Jay Wallijasper, *On the Commons*, January 10, 2014, <http://www.onthecommons.org/magazine/story-vincent-and-elinor-ostrom>.

¹¹⁴ E. Ostrom, “A Long Polycentric Journey,” 14.

approach through complex analysis: “We need self-consciously to examine different levels of analysis and develop technical languages for work at these different levels.”¹¹⁵

Increasingly, the Ostroms’ work confronted the nature of complexity. In January 1986, Lin and Vincent addressed complexity as a problem to be solved by social scientists in the Workshop’s Ten-Year Prospectus: “From our cumulative experience of working with theory, collective choice, and empirical consequences, we have become increasingly aware that the phenomena being investigated involve extraordinary complexity requiring multiple levels of foci of inquiry.”¹¹⁶ In a letter to David J. Hikson in his capacity as editor-in-chief of the journal *Organizational Studies* later that month, Vincent expressed his developing thoughts on how complex organizations might be more adequately addressed in forthcoming research efforts:

I came to appreciate in a way that I had not appreciated before that human societies, especially those of the more “advanced” societies, involve an extraordinary complexity that can only be addressed by having recourse to multiple levels, facets and foci of analysis. We cannot resolve the analytical problems by being loosely impressionistic in painting word pictures of free ranging associations about societies as a whole.¹¹⁷

He credited his time at Bielefeld with influencing this conclusion. “The only way out of this problem is to concern ourselves with how to develop multiple levels, facets and foci of analysis...” Vincent continued.¹¹⁸ In what may have been an almost unavoidable evolution, disciplinarity and complexity were brought face to face.

Privately, Lin felt less assured of her future and briefly considered leaving IU. Lin also likely felt pressure to consider other positions because of the intensity of the funding crisis within social sciences. In January 1986—the same month they submitted the Workshop’s Ten-

¹¹⁵ E. Ostrom, “How Inexorable Is the ‘Tragedy of the Commons?’”

¹¹⁶ V. Ostrom and E. Ostrom to John Lombardi and Morton Lowengrub, “Ten-Year Prospectus for the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis,” c. 1 January 1986, box. 383, folder “Addl. Acc.-Jan. 2014-Writings-VO-Notes-1989; VO on the Workshop, 1970s,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹¹⁷ V. Ostrom to David J. Hikson, 22 January 1986, box 8, folder “Chronological File - January 1986,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

Year Prospectus—she gave in to Duke University’s invitation for an on-campus interview, noting she had “not gone out on an outside interview in my 20 years at IU.”¹¹⁹ Duke made her an offer, but she remained hopeful about staying at IU, unwilling to abandon their Workshop. By mid-February she ended the negotiations with Duke: “I think we do have something worthwhile to build in the Workshop, and we’ll try to keep relationships with the Department of Political Science, Economics, and other places on campus as open and friendly as it is possible to keep them.”¹²⁰ Still, another offer to pull her away from IU rolled in. In March, Lin declined an offer to be considered by Michigan State for the position of Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs.¹²¹

Lin and Vincent understood the need for interdisciplinarity twenty years before it was theorized that study of complex human behavior necessitated interdisciplinarity.¹²² Though scholars including economist F.A. Hayek had explored the implications of complexity theoretically, the groundswell of systems theory and complexity science had not yet occurred.¹²³ Certainly Vincent’s early attention to a polycentric approach to governance and Lin’s development of this idea through on-the-ground research signaled they were open from an early stage to complex systems. However, William H. Newell’s theory of interdisciplinary studies—not advanced until 2001—proposed that “The ultimate objective of an interdisciplinary inquiry is to understand the portion of the world modeled by that particular complex system.”¹²⁴ That the Ostroms’ work paved the way for Newell’s theory is besides the point. More startling, their work

¹¹⁹ E. Ostrom to Roy Gardner, 27 January 1986, box 8, folder “Chronological File - January 1986,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ E. Ostrom to Lester Manderscheid, 18 March 1986, box 8, folder “Chronological File - March 1986,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹²² William H. Newell, “A Theory of Interdisciplinary Studies,” *Issues in Integrative Studies* 19, no. 1 (2001): 1–25.

¹²³ F.A. Hayek, “The Theory of Complex Phenomena,” *The Critical Approach to Science and Philosophy*, 1964, 332–349.

¹²⁴ William H. Newell, “A Theory of Interdisciplinary Studies,” 2.

proceeded without support or guidance from others who had come before them. There was no path for this approach and very few others were—at first—willing to follow them.

Governing the Commons

Lin's actions had shifted toward a new book she'd been planning for years: "Having completed two additional papers on various aspects of how institutional arrangements may (or may not) help individuals cope with the management of common-pool resource problems, I think I am now ready to think about the book project itself."¹²⁵ Prompted by a trip to Washington University in St. Louis the previous fall, Douglass North and James (Jim) Alt invited Lin to contribute to their book series on "Political Economy of Institutions and Decisions." North, an economist who received the economics Nobel in 1993, was the founding director of the Center for Political Economy at Washington University, and Alt, a political economist like Lin, was in his last year at Washington University as he prepared to transition to Harvard.¹²⁶ Lin submitted a few of her recent writings, promised them a copy of her Distinguished Faculty Research Lecture, and an outline for a book she titled, "The Commons and Institutions for Collective Action."

Lin's exchange with Alt and North revealed her conception of the task ahead:

I think I can make an effective argument that many, but not all policy relevant analysis are dependent upon the development of a more general model of the individual. But, the development of this more general model of the individual does not require us to throw away the work already done on well defined market situations and other similarly well defined situations.¹²⁷

The next fall semester, Alt—along with Kenneth Shepsle—invited Lin to present a series of five lectures at Harvard.¹²⁸ Lin originally estimated she would finish this book by the end of 1986.¹²⁹

¹²⁵ E. Ostrom to James E. Alt and Douglass C. North, 20 March 1986, box 8, folder "Chronological File - March 1986," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹²⁶ "Douglass C. North - Biographical," The Nobel Prize, accessed November 16, 2016, http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/economic-sciences/laureates/1993/north-bio.html.

¹²⁷ E. Ostrom to James E. Alt and Douglass C. North, 20 March 1986.

¹²⁸ E. Ostrom, "A Long Polycentric Journey," 15.

¹²⁹ E. Ostrom to James E. Alt and Douglass C. North, 20 March 1986.

In time, it became clear that the manuscript for her book would come from her lectures at Harvard, not scheduled until April 1988.¹³⁰

When Lin sent her proposal to Alt and North, she mused over which cases might be included and shared that she was “heavily involved in reading and coding.” In total, Lin and her research team compiled more than nearly 5,000 case studies documenting common-pool resources around the world and recorded by authors from multiple disciplinary perspectives.¹³¹ With William Blomquist, James Wunsch, Edella Schlager, Shui-Yan Tang, and Sharon Huckfeldt, she developed the Common-Pool Resource (CPR) database, which relied on the previously developed Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework for its organizing principles.¹³² Lin recognized a shared goal in so many people from around the world and across disciplines attempting to solve the same dilemmas but lacked a forum for communication:

The disciplines represented in the bibliography include rural sociology, anthropology, history, economics, political science, forestry, irrigation sociology, and human ecology; included also are area studies, such as American studies, Asian studies, West European studies, and so forth.¹³³

Meta-analysis of this massive qualitative dataset required developing coding forms that could standardize and identify significant variables across cases, which were not originally designed with cross-disciplinarity in mind.

On the last weekend in April, 1986 Lin and Vincent were packing and planning for a month-long trip to Poland, but Lin was preoccupied with the recommendations she and her team received for their latest coding forms from economist David Feeny: “David’s comments

¹³⁰ E. Ostrom, “A Long Polycentric Journey,” 16.

¹³¹ As of 1989, the Common-Pool Resource database approached 5,000 cases. E. Ostrom, *Governing the Commons*, xxix.

¹³² E. Ostrom, “A Long Polycentric Journey,” 14.

¹³³ E. Ostrom, *Governing the Commons*, xxix.

reverberated in my head all day Sunday.... I thought I would try to write out some of my reflections this morning while they were still fresh.” She explained her approach, “My basic strategy is to go down to observable components of complex variables whenever we think these components can be readily coded rather than to code the complex variables themselves.”¹³⁴ Lin demonstrated her meticulous attention representing the complexities of the dataset, what she later called “an exercise in theory development ”and a deep involvement with her research team.¹³⁵

Bloomington School of Political Economy

Team building was essential to Lin’s research practice and signature to her interdisciplinary practice. The Workshop approach to apprenticeship style teaching and mentorship also relied on teams, where the professor-student hierarchy was flattened. The Common Pool Resource and Collective Action Group, which assumed responsibility for the CPR database, included doctoral students and Workshop staff like Fenton Martin who compiled the initial CPR bibliography. Paul Dragos Aligica reflected about both Lin’s and Vincent’s abilities to develop teams, “I think that this comes both from their personalities, but also from their theories....” He was impressed by the Ostroms’ ability to view knowledge production as both a scientific and a social enterprise: “the better you understand the social nature of this enterprise, the better you be able to apply those principles to your own work.”¹³⁶ Collaborative research and writing allowed Lin to tackle the intricacies of multiple methods research by assembling the expertise of a cross-section of her colleagues and students. While conducting the research for *Governing the Commons*, she evaluated and trusted researchers with the case studies they had

¹³⁴ E. Ostrom to “Common Pool Resource Collective Action Group,” 28 April 1986, box 8, folder “Chronological File - April 1986,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹³⁵ E. Ostrom, *Governing the Commons*, xxix.

¹³⁶ Paul Dragos Aligica, interview by Joseph Stahlman, June 14, 2014, transcript, “Coming Together.”

already produced within their respective disciplinary frames. Undoubtedly reading, understanding, and finally, analyzing these works felt insurmountable at times.

Vincent's interests in language as it related to the development of institutions as artifacts was in part supported by his study of the works by John Dewey and Jean Piaget. Some time after its publication, Vincent made detailed notes of a minor book by Piaget, *Main Trends in Interdisciplinary Research*, a publication that was originally part of a larger 1970 UNESCO study on trends in social sciences. Vincent was attentive to write "EO" in the margins, as if to indicate a connection to his wife's work or perhaps reminding himself to mention an idea to her and at other points jotted notes to himself. Piaget's brief review concludes with a discussion of hybridization among disciplines: "The true object of interdisciplinary research, therefore is to reshape or reorganize the fields of knowledge by means of exchanges which are in fact reconstructive recombinations."¹³⁷ Vincent, indicating at the very least his attention, underlined the phrase "reconstructive recombinations" more than once and read on. In 1970, Piaget's aim for interdisciplinarity was "genuine 'hybridization,'" something he explained took place between two disciplines "in mutual assimilation such that the second explains the first, but does so by enriching itself with properties not previously perceived, which afford the necessary link."¹³⁸ Almost an afterthought, Piaget adds that training at university level "is undoubtedly the main obstacle to be overcome."¹³⁹ Of course, for the Ostrows university training was central to their endeavor.

Lin and Vincent looked to work by Dewey, Piaget and others including Karl Popper and Michael Polanyi as they advised students like H. Aaron Bell in study of the political economy of

¹³⁷ Jean Piaget, *Main Trends in Interdisciplinary Research*, 1st Harper Torchbook (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1973), 66. See box 282, folder "VO-Writings by Others Piaget "Main Trends in Interdisciplinary Research."

¹³⁸ Piaget, *Main Trends in Interdisciplinary Research*, 67.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

education. Through their advice to Bell, Lin and Vincent also gave voice their own understandings of education and knowledge. Lin wrote to Bell:

The difference between an educational process which teaches dogmatic belief (as many religious educational systems do) and what I think is essential for education in a democratic and evolving system, is making students aware that there are frequently competing theories to explain events and that progress in knowledge involves the slow increase in the warrantability of some theories and the eventual discarding of parts or wholes of other theories.¹⁴⁰

Lin then went on to explain education might be better conceived of as “coproduction of a variety of skills rather than the coproduction of knowledge.”¹⁴¹ Lin’s perspective on education may be unsurprising; she was consistently interested in the simplification of complexities. By organizing knowledge into a set of skills, instead of, for example, disciplinary silos Lin might have seen an unfettered academia. Before signing off, Lin underscored to Bell another such theory of education; this time it was hers:

Coproduction is, in my opinion, the true secret of education. But, this represents a theory of education that is at some variance from the theory of education that dominates current thinking. To be somewhat factious—much of current thought is the “Greyhound Bus Theory of Education”—“leave the teaching (instead of the driving) to us.” In fact, much of the current infatuation with professionalism in all field[s] is of the same ilk. The presumption is that here area experts and the experts know how best to educate, heal, and “run society.”¹⁴²

Lin’s responses to Bell offered encouragement and a window to their own frustrations and struggles with education at all levels. Lin’s commitment to coproduction and disapproval of the professionalization of academia jumps off the page, suggesting her loyalties were to a citizenship united by common learning without the need of a professional ruling class.

In another response to Bell sent three days later, Vincent shared what he viewed to be the weight of his responsibility to the pursuit of knowledge:

¹⁴⁰ E. Ostrom to Aaron Bell, 18 March 1986, box 8, folder “Chronological File - March 1986,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

What I view as increasingly important in that context is a willingness to press our own conjectures, test them both in relation to other critical minds, and our own experiences, listen sympathetically to what others have to say, and then to see if we cannot move to deeper levels of analysis.¹⁴³

Throughout the 1980s, the Workshop method—which included the reach of its approach to graduate education, publishing, and scholarly network, as well as the theories developed and research findings produced—gained notoriety. And in 1988, William Mitchell gave name recognition to the “Bloomington School” of political economy, placing it alongside the Virginia and Rochester schools; “At each of these institutions one or two dominant figures led and continue to lead in the effort to construct theories of collective choice: [William] Riker at Rochester, [James] Buchanan and [Gordon] Tullock at various Virginia universities, and, the Ostroms at Indiana.”¹⁴⁴

Returning to Bielefeld

Lin’s calendar burst at the seams throughout the 1985-1986 academic year, and in January she found time to think about the future: “I have indicated my intention to apply for a sabbatical during the 1987-88 year so I could join Reinhard [Selton] for part of the year at ZiF. I really want to do this and pray that I can get away.”¹⁴⁵ Lin and Vincent were not religious people, and her call to prayer was not one to deity but rather her eloquent request, a hope for a release valve from day-to-day living. She needed time and space for uninterrupted writing and thinking that her escalating commitments no longer afforded her. The Ostroms’ cabin on Manitoulin Island continued to offer some relief each summer, but these retreats were granted

¹⁴³ V. Ostrom to Aaron Bell, 21 March 1986, box 8, folder “Chronological File - March 1986,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁴⁴ William C. Mitchell, “Virginia, Rochester, and Bloomington: Twenty-Five Years of Public Choice and Political Science,” *Public Choice* 56, no. 2 (1988), 101.

¹⁴⁵ E. Ostrom to Roy Gardner, 27 January 1986, box 8, folder “Chronological File - January 1986,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

less and less time in these years—a month at most, instead of entire summers spent writing with only the cool breeze off of the Huron waters to interrupt their thoughts.¹⁴⁶

Reinhard Selton, the game theory expert with whom Lin connected during their first fellowship at ZiF, was assembling his own research group on Game Theory in the Behavioral Sciences. This time Lin made the trip without Vincent: “Vincent has had a very intensive year involving three long, overseas trips, while his health has not been up to par.”¹⁴⁷ She was not alone, though; her research collaborator, Workshopper Roy Gardner participated in his first ZiF research group that year.¹⁴⁸ Gardner was an economist who specialized in game theory and had been on the Indiana University faculty since 1983. Lin, Gardner, and James Walker, another economist, had been working together since 1985 on a series of common pool resource laboratory experiments that Lin hoped would offer empirical support for her case study analysis of the CPR database.

While at Bielefeld, Lin divided her time between two major tasks: participating in Reinhard Selten’s research group “Game Theory and the Behavioral Sciences” and writing the Harvard Lectures for the first draft of her book for Cambridge University Press. Lin received a paid sabbatical from her department for the spring 1988 semester; a few weeks before leaving, she wrote a letter to Selten, outlining her plans for the semester: “While I am at ZiF, I will be hard at work on a book-length manuscript elucidating the underlying game and rule structure of various common property arrangements and the resulting incentives as well as working with Roy on several more formal papers.”¹⁴⁹ Lin had a little over three months to prepare five lectures, an

¹⁴⁶ E. Ostrom and V. Ostrom, [ca. 1985-90], log, box 4, folder “Biographical & Family-EO/VO-Adult Life Manitoulin Log, 1972-2007,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁴⁷ E. Ostrom to Reinhard Selton, 22 December 1987, box 134, folder “ZiF Research Project on “Game Theory in the Behavior Sciences,” 87/88—EO participating 12/15/87-7/31/88,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁴⁸ Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis at Indiana University, “Annual Report: 1987,” 12 January 1988, box 380, folder “Workshop Annual Report 1987,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁴⁹ E. Ostrom to Reinhard Selton, 22 December 1987.

unnerving task for even the most efficient scholar. Even still, the tasks laid out for the Game Theory in the Behavioral Sciences research pulled her attention toward the excitement of learning more.

The Game Theory in the Behavioral Science research group “included scholars in game theory, economics, political science, biology, linguistics, and philosophy.”¹⁵⁰ The group sought to understand collective action and to answer the following question: “Under what conditions will individuals adopt coordinated strategies so as to cooperate with one another within the structure of an on-going situation or to change the structure of that situation?”¹⁵¹ In a report she compiled after returning from Bielefeld, Lin labeled the research group as “interdisciplinary,” a change from she and Vincent’s previous categorization of their ZiF experience a few years earlier as “multidisciplinary”:¹⁵²

I spent most of my sabbatical leave in Germany working with an interdisciplinary group. I learned a great deal from this exposure to formal, mathematical theories. I also worked on my German, but the working language of our research group was English, so I could only make minimal progress in regard to language skills.¹⁵³

This represented a shift in Lin’s rhetoric, though not necessarily her methodological practice. In this case, Lin’s methodological approach had already begun to evolve from multidisciplinary gathering of skills toward a synthetic problem-driven analysis.

Not as much is known about Lin’s experiences during her second fellowship at ZiF. In March 1985, Lin’s mother Leah Hopkins Awan died at age of 89.¹⁵⁴ And where there were once

¹⁵⁰ E. Ostrom, “Report on Completion of Sabbatical Leave,” [ca. Spring 1988], box 170, folder “Sabbatical Leave Applications - EO and Reports,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁵¹ Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis at Indiana University, “Annual Report: 1988,” 12 February 1989, box 380, folder “Workshop Annual Report 1988,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁵² V. Ostrom and E. Ostrom to John Lombardi and Morton Lowengrub, “Ten-Year Prospectus for the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis,” c. 1 January 1986, box. 383, folder “Addl. Acc.-Jan. 2014-Writings-VO-Notes-1989; VO on the Workshop, 1970s,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁵³ E. Ostrom, “Report on Completion of Sabbatical Leave,” [ca. Spring 1988].

¹⁵⁴ “Leah Hopkins Awan,” 28 March 1985, obituary, box 4, folder “Biographical & Family-EO-Immediate Family-Leah Hopkins Leah Awan obituary,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

letters home, a new silence took their place. At other points in the past and soon in the future, Lin wrote in diaries and journals or dictated her memories and thoughts. Always a student, Lin kept notes from ZiF meetings, sketching games and occasionally notes from important discussions with colleagues.¹⁵⁵ Another notebook documented a trip to Warsaw, where she tabulated her purchases: two weavings, two amber necklaces, one amber ring, six pins, three clay whistles.¹⁵⁶ She found some time for collecting. Lin was also churning out pages, drafting five lectures for her upcoming Harvard visit. She likely woke before the sun rose, finding a writing routine that allowed her to complete a full day's work before turning to study mathematical economics with the rest of her research group. One can imagine her pausing to stretch or hoping to slip away to the campus pool to swim, feeling the stress build in her body as she often did.

For Lin it was important that she be drafting her book based on findings from the CPR database, while also studying game theory. Later she explained the impact of the overlap: "Although only a few game-theoretical examples are used in this book, the way that game theorists think about strategic possibilities in social settings strongly influences the way I analyze the central questions addressed here."¹⁵⁷ Lin traveled to Cambridge, Massachusetts, and presented a series of five public lectures at the John F. Kennedy School of Public Affairs at Harvard University April 18-22, 1988.¹⁵⁸ Lin further developed these lectures to become her book *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*, which she revised during the summer and fall of 1989.¹⁵⁹ Cambridge University Press published the final manuscript in September 1990.

¹⁵⁵ E. Ostrom, March 1988, journal, box 174.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ E. Ostrom, *Governing the Commons*, xxx.

¹⁵⁸ Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis at Indiana University, "Annual Report: 1988," 12 February 1989, box 380, folder "Workshop Annual Report 1988," Elinor Ostrom Papers; E. Ostrom, 1988, calendars, box 117, folder "Writings - EO - Calendars 1990," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁵⁹ E. Ostrom, "Report on Completion of Sabbatical Leave," [ca. Spring 1988].

Chapter 4 Building a Global Network, 1991-2012

Among the chief obstacles to interdisciplinary work is communication among disciplinary experts. For Lin and her colleagues the concepts *framework*, *theory*, and *model* posed particular problems, with social scientists often using them interchangeably and without clarification. The distinct uses of these terms are now hallmarks of the Bloomington School of Political Economy. Lin explained, “We use these concepts in a nested manner to range from the most general to the most precise set of assumptions made by a scholar.”¹ By recognizing the need to differentiate among these terms, Lin and her colleagues facilitated disciplinary border crossings to perform complex institutional analyses.

The three terms range from general to specific. Frameworks are the most general, providing a “set of variables that can be used to analyze all types of institutional arrangements” and “a metatheoretical language that can be used to compare theories.”² Over her career, Lin developed and refined two frameworks central to the Bloomington School, the Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework and the Social-Ecological System (SES) framework. Theories are an analyst’s tool “to specify which working parts of a framework are considered useful to explain diverse outcomes and how they relate to one another.”³ Lin applied theories like game theory and micro-economic theory, working closely with economists who considered these theories part of their disciplinary expertise. Models offer the most specific level of analysis, allowing researchers to “make precise assumptions about a limited number of

¹ E. Ostrom, “Beyond Markets and States: Polycentric Governance of Complex Economic Systems” (prize lecture, The Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, Aula Mana, Stockholm University, December 8, 2009), https://www.nobelprize.org/uploads/2018/06/ostrom_lecture.pdf.

² E. Ostrom, “Background on the Institutional Analysis and Development Framework,” *Policy Studies Journal* 39, no. 1 (February 15, 2011): 8, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1541-0072.2010.00394.x>.

³ E. Ostrom, “Beyond Markets and States: Polycentric Governance of Complex Economic Systems.”

variables in a theory that scholars use to examine the formal consequences of these specific assumptions about the motivation of actors and the structure of the situation they face.”⁴

The definition and use of these nested terms is a demonstration of interdisciplinary practice. By defining these terms, Lin and her colleagues developed a baseline for communication and a standard for analysis that facilitated integration across disciplines. These definitions seem simple, but without insisting on their distinction, assumptions about shared meaning could stop interdisciplinarity before it began. Lin operationalized these terms in her research, sometimes emphasizing just one or bringing them together to create meaning in her studies of human behavior. Together frameworks, theories, and models offered an understandable, familiar language for delivering her message. Equipped with the clarity these terms supplied, Lin implemented the approach they prescribed across her research and in the cultivation of like-minded scholars around the world.

Two Research Networks

With Emilio Moran, Lin founded and co-directed the Center for the Study of Institutions, Population, and Environmental Change (CIPEC) in 1996 as a two-campus center located at Indiana University and at University of Arizona. A \$6.3 million cooperative grant from the National Science Foundation provided initial financial support.⁵ Like the Workshop and located about one block from its peer institute at its IU location, CIPEC included researchers, post-doctoral students, and full-time administrators. Researchers integrated geographic information systems (GIS), remote sensing, and statistical analysis, along with internal protocols for gathering data about people and their environments.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ E. Ostrom and Emilio Moran, “1998-99 Budget Planning Document,” Center for the Study of Institutions, Population, and Environmental Change, 5 Jan. 1998, box 84, folder “Annual Reports,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

Trained at Arizona, Catherine Tucker joined CIPEC as a post-doctoral researcher at its start in 1996; she described CIPEC as a “team project”: “We had regular meetings, discussing everything from definitions to research proposals to carrying out research and data analysis.”⁶ Like she did for many young female scholars, Lin mentored Catherine. In the late 1990s, a USAID grant supported Lin and Catherine’s work with Zapotec communities and study of community forest management in Mexico.⁷ Catherine learned valuable skills managing and carrying out a major grant, as well as “integrating the findings into her sort of larger understanding of how, in this case community forestry works and local organization collectively on land.”⁸ Lin modeled fluidity between case-level, field research and broad perspective knowledge integration, showing her students the importance of both standpoints. For Catherine, the impact of Lin’s example on future research is multi-part but emphasizes “doing systematic and rigorous data collection, doing it on a large scale, doing it over an extended time period, following it up, learning from the data, going back, expanding on the questions, adopting new methods.”⁹

Studying the Amazon River basin in 1996 to 1997, CIPEC researchers were asking questions like, “What is the current condition of the forest?” and “What is the history of land use of the area?” Together these questions are illustrative of the Center’s interest in people and their environments.¹⁰ In another early project, CIPEC students and researchers studied Yellowwood State Forest in Brown County, Indiana: “We wanted to begin a project proximate to Indiana University where tools and methodologies from multiple disciplines such as remote sensing,

⁶ Catherine Tucker, interview by Catherine Guerro, July 9, 2014, transcript, “Coming Together.”

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Emilio Moran and E. Ostrom, “Progress Report to the National Science Foundation,” 1 Feb. 1997, box 84, folder “Annual Reports,” Elinor Ostrom Papers, ca. 1953-2011, The Lilly Library, Indiana University Libraries.

geographic information systems, and institutional analysis could be integrated and calibrated.”¹¹ Researchers regularly developed theoretical models—like one for studying vegetation growth in Brown County—and collected extensive data using established International Forestry Resources and Institutions (IFRI) protocols.

Lin originated the IFRI research program in 1992, and coordinated the program for fourteen years.¹² IFRI protocols were developed to standardize measures of, for example, forest density, tree frequency, and dominance of tree species leading to better understanding of human impacts on their environment.¹³ Researchers using these protocols conducted field research at sites around world, including in Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Uganda, and the United States, with the goal of assembling sufficient data to draw comparisons and to analyze patterns. CIPEC employed Julie England, as a full-time database administrator to develop a custom, scalable IFRI database, a duty she similarly performed for the Workshop.¹⁴

Lin served as the Founding Director of the Center for the Study of Institutional Analysis at Arizona State University (ASU) in 2006 and formally launching in 2008. ASU publicity about the Center proudly called it “another dimension of cross-disciplinary collaboration to the New American University.”¹⁵ Like the Ostroms’ Workshop at IU, the Center focused on collaborative research and teaching, bringing scholars together from around the globe. As part of her role, Lin spent time at their campus during the winter annually.¹⁶ The Center was later renamed the Center

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² “About Us,” International Forestry Resources and Institutions, May 10, 2012, <http://www.ifriresearch.net/about-us/>. The IFRI network now includes 14 collaborating research centers, based at University of Michigan, and coordinated by Arun Agrawal.

¹³ Moran and E. Ostrom, “Progress Report to the National Science Foundation,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁴ E. Ostrom and V. Ostrom, “1998-99 Budget Planning Document and Annual Report,” Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, 5 Jan. 1998, box 84, folder “Annual Reports,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁵ “Center for the Study of Institutional Diversity,” 2008, box 115, folder “EO-Publicity-Writings about EO. Arizona State University, School of human evolution and social change. 2008, 2009,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁶ E. Ostrom to Billie Turner, 5 September 2008, “Re: request,” box 152, folder “Workshop on ‘Lab and Field Experiments on Social and Commons Dilemmas’ ASU January 11-13, 2009,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

for Behavior, Institutions, and the Environment. Lin's collaborator, Marco Janssen is now the Center's Director; he called her approach "Ostromology," "since it combines so many disciplines and is a unique way of looking at collective action problems."¹⁷

American Political Science Association President

Lin was nominated to serve as the president of the American Political Science Association (APSA) for the 1996-1997 academic year, a prominent position within the discipline but also an intensive time and travel commitment. As APSA president Lin made presentations at five regional meetings and visits to campuses around the United States, including Western Michigan University, University of Michigan, MIT, Harvard, Emory University, Rice, University of Houston, and University of Arizona. "I have decided to make a series of presentations related to social dilemmas and collective action which is of major interest not only to political scientists but also to anthropologists, ecologists, economists, game theorists, historians, philosophers, and sociologists," Lin explained.¹⁸ Ultimately, Lin gave her presidential address titled "A Behavioral Approach to the Rational Choice Theory of Collective Action" at the August 1997 APSA meeting in Washington, D.C.¹⁹ Lin was the second woman to serve as APSA president and the only person yet from IU; the first woman was Judith N. Shklar, a political theorist at Harvard, during the 1989-1990 academic year.²⁰ Lin's position as APSA president led to increased awareness for the overlapping methods and disciplinary innovations

¹⁷ Sarah Auffret, "Collective Action, Singular Accomplishment: ASU Magazine Interviews 2009 Nobel Laureate Elinor Ostrom," box 115, folder "Writings-EO-Publicity-Writings about EO 2010," Elinor Ostrom Papers; also see Poteete, Amy R., Marco Janssen, and E. Ostrom. *Working Together: Collective Action, the Commons, and Multiple Methods in Practice*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010.

¹⁸ E. Ostrom, "Application for Sabbatical Leave," 30 Sept. 1996, box 170, folder "Sabbatical Leave Applications - EO and Reports," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁹ E. Ostrom, "A Behavioral Approach to the Rational Choice Theory of Collective Action: Presidential Address, American Political Science Association, 1997," *American Political Science Review*, March 1998, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2585925>.

²⁰ "Judith N. Shklar, 63, Professor at Harvard," *The New York Times*, September 19, 1992, sec. Obituaries, <https://www.nytimes.com/1992/09/19/obituaries/judith-n-shklar-63-professor-at-harvard.html>.

she employed, as well as growing recognition of Lin as a leader in the field. Further, the APSA Presidency lectures and presidential address offered her a chance to integrate the varied projects she advanced in the decade prior.

While scholars beyond Lin's immediate academic circle had begun to know her for utilizing institutional analysis to study commons and most notably through her publication of *Governing the Commons* in 1990, Lin advanced complementary research efforts not highlighted by this project since the mid-1980s. With Jimmy Walker and Roy Gardner—both Workshoppers—Lin published *Rules, Games and Common-Pool Resources* in 1994, bringing together a laboratory-based research program she originally planned to include in *Governing*.²¹

Beginning in 1985, Lin worked with Jimmy and Roy to conduct experiments on public goods problems. Sparked by ongoing conversations with IU economist Scott Gordon, who published an influential article examining common property resources like fisheries, Jimmy suggested they create environments to study common pool resource problems in a laboratory.²² Roy shared his knowledge of game theory with the group. Jimmy recalled the three of them hashing out questions: “Where does game theory come in play in terms of...helping us develop hypotheses about behavior?” and “What would be the equilibrium of the game, and how do you start designing the experiment to sort of parallel the game theoretic issues that would be involved?”²³

Funded by the National Science Foundation, Lin, Jimmy, and Roy tested the “Tragedy of the Commons,” the broadly accepted assertion that “in the absence of private property rights or a

²¹ E. Ostrom, Roy Gardner, and James Walker, *Rules, Games, and Common-Pool Resources* (University of Michigan Press, 1994), 5; E. Ostrom to James E. Alt and Douglass C. North, 20 March 1986, box 8, folder “Chronological File-March 1986,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

²² H. Scott Gordon, “The Economic Theory of a Common-Property Resource: The Fishery,” *Journal of Political Economy* 62, no. 2 (April 1, 1954): 124–42, <https://doi.org/10.1086/257497>.

²³ James Walker, interview by Sara Clark, 11 June 2014, transcript, “Coming Together.”

central planner, users of CPRs will overinvest in appropriation from the resource.”²⁴ Experiments were conducted using PLATO computer systems, which minimized interaction and recorded data.²⁵ The team recruited research subjects primarily from IU undergraduates taking economics classes, testing them on a series of investment decisions.²⁶ They initially struggled to gain recognition, finding it difficult to publish their findings in reputable, peer-reviewed disciplinary journals. Their use of game theory and lab-based protocols made them stand out, causing their peers initially to question their findings; in other words, their integration of methods from multiple disciplines did not fit the usual mold. “Our approach has been to address CPR [common-pool resource] issues using the theory of N-person, finitely repeated games. Our mode of analysis has been to embed the resulting games in a broader institutional framework,” they summarized in the book that resulted from their work.²⁷

Their dynamic began with multidisciplinary labor—with each member providing disciplinary expertise—and gave rise to an interdisciplinary, emergent method for considering social dilemmas. “So the three of us somehow—it’s a mix of these things—sometimes it’s me talking to Roy, sometimes it’s me talking to Lin, sometimes it’s Lin talking to Roy; it’s a combination,” explained Jimmy looking back on their day-to-day interactions.²⁸ The group struggled to navigate the role of technology in their shared writing tasks, with Jimmy and Lin committed to using computers for word processing and Roy holding tightly to his typewriter.

²⁴ James M. Walker, Roy Gardner, and E. Ostrom, “Rent Dissipation in a Limited-Access Common-Pool Resource: Experimental Evidence,” *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management* 19, no. 3 (November 1, 1990): 203, [https://doi.org/10.1016/0095-0696\(90\)90069-B](https://doi.org/10.1016/0095-0696(90)90069-B).

²⁵ PLATO was developed at the Coordinated Science Laboratory at University of Illinois-Urbana in the early 1960s as the first computer-assisted teaching system and facilitated simultaneous independent instruction through a centralized computer. Donald L. Bitzer, Elisabeth R. Lyman, and John A. Easley Jr, “The Uses of PLATO: A Computer-Controlled Teaching System” (Coordinated Science Laboratory: University of Illinois-Urbana, 1965).

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 204-5.

²⁷ E. Ostrom, Roy Gardner, and James Walker, *Rules*, 5.

²⁸ James Walker, interview by Sara Clark, 11 June 2014, transcript, “Coming Together.”

Friendship was not incidental to the success of their interdisciplinary arrangement. They wrote papers—editing and developing ideas—often by sitting and working together, correcting one another using direct yet friendly language: “I mean luckily for us, I think all three of us got along very well, and I don’t think, well I know there was never a harsh word...yet we were good enough friends, and flexible enough that we could be that way.”²⁹ Jimmy Walker later characterized Lin’s work in the 1980s and early 1990s, during their collaborations, as when her professional work was “coming together.”¹¹ He perceived her research utilizing experimental methods as informative to the arc of her career, though not its peak. No doubt her work in the lab informed her other labors, which from an outsiders’ perspective seemed to multiply exponentially.

When Lin became APSA president in the fall of 1996, her research program was wide and deep, having cultivated a network of scholarly collaborators, ongoing lines of funding to support international research projects and pathways for future scholars, and increasing recognition of her influence by academic peers. Her work in the lab was only one facet of her labor. A month after her presidential address, Lin accepted the Frank E. Seidman Distinguished Award in Political Economy.³⁰ As organizers of the 1997 APSA meeting, Lin, James Alt and Margaret Levi assembled a series of panel discussions titled “The Impact of Economics on Political Science: A Conversation with Several Nobelists.” The panels featured James Buchanan, Douglass North, and Herbert Simon, Kenneth Arrow, Gary Becker, and Reinhard Selton.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ E. Ostrom and V. Ostrom, “1998-99 Budget Planning Document and Annual Report,” Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, 5 Jan. 1998, box 84, folder “Annual Reports,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

A sabbatical the following year offered personal and professional reprieve.³¹ Lin applied for the sabbatical ahead of her term, hoping to align her APSA Presidency speaking commitments with advancing her research on social dilemmas and collective action, including meeting with scholars like 2002 Economics Nobel laureate Vernon Smith, whom Lin admired as a leader of “one of the finest research laboratories in the country.”³² The summer leading up to Lin’s APSA presidential address was physically difficult for the Ostroms. Lin broke her ankle in three places in Sweden in May 1996, and in August, they learned Vincent had prostate cancer. As Lin or Vincent often did, Lin logged these events in a handwritten journal kept at their cabin on Manitoulin Island: “We got the news that that the tumor in Vincent’s prostate is malignant on August 1. Trying not to worry over much to work on keeping Vincent’s health in general as good as possible.”³³ Holding this information close likely also allowed Lin to focus on finishing her remaining duties before beginning her sabbatical work.

By the middle to late 1990s Lin had arguably climbed higher than most academics. She was in her sixties. It is reasonable to ask: Why did Lin stay at IU instead of looking for opportunities elsewhere that might have fast-tracked her academic success or otherwise offered her measurable advancement? It seems possible Lin could have achieved earlier prestige through title change, access to additional funding, or alignment with likeminded administrators looking to support her particular success. One nexus for this decision arose around the publication of *Governing the Commons* in 1990; during this academic year, she also served as president of the International Association for the Study of Common Property (IASCP) and as president of the

³¹ E. Ostrom, “Report on Completion of Sabbatical Leave,” AY 97-98, box 170, folder “Sabbatical Leave Applications - EO and Reports,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³² Ibid.

³³ E. Ostrom, 6 Aug 1996, “Manitoulin Log,” notebook, box 4, folder “Biographical & Family-EO/VO-Adult Life Manitoulin Log, 1972-2007,” Elinor Ostrom Papers; “Lin’s Past Calendar—1996,” box 117, folder “Writings - EO - Calendars 1996,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

Public Choice Society from 1982-1984. Both academic societies included some overlap in membership with the APSA, but all three positions publicly indicated Lin's growing and steady influence at the intersections of political science and economics throughout the 1980s.

Professionally Lin might be pigeonholed as any of the following: active, intense, dynamic, entrepreneurial, or peripatetic. At times, Lin was all of these things. These chaotic traits were countered by the consistency of her commitment to Vincent, their simple home in Bloomington, annual retreats to Manitoulin Island, and remaining at IU for the entirety of her career.

According to Lin, she only received two offers to leave IU during her career—one from Duke University and another from Harvard University—though others courted her. The University of Minnesota hoped Lin might leave Indiana to serve as their Dean of the College of Liberal Arts in 1996, though Lin would not consider this position. In a letter to their Provost, Lin declined: “Given the research program under way here, I just cannot consider a move at the present time.”³⁴ A month later Lin also confirmed to a colleague that she had been asked to apply for a prestigious position as Director of the Udall Center at the University of Arizona.³⁵ In this same letter she revealed she had only ever received two external offers, one from Duke University and one from Harvard in 1994:

Duke asked me for a “lecture” which turned out to be a job interview much to my consternation. They offered me a position, which I just could not take. Ken Shepsle at Harvard some time ago made me promise as a close friend that if a position came up there, that I would allow my name to be considered. Two years ago they [made] me an offer, which after considerable agony, I declined.³⁶

³⁴ E. Ostrom to Sara Evans, 6 March 1996, box 172, folder "Ostrom, Elinor 2 of 9," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³⁵ E. Ostrom to William Mishler, 28 April 1996, box 172, folder "Ostrom, Elinor 2 of 9," Elinor Ostrom Papers. Lin did submit her curriculum vita for consideration. Mary D. Cox to E. Ostrom, 1 Aug. 1996, box 172, folder "Ostrom, Elinor 2 of 9," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³⁶ Ibid.

Lin noted similar hesitation in preparation for a phone conversation with the Dean of Arizona's College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Holly Smith: "It is extremely unlikely that I would make a move unless I had the sense that Arizona was willing to provide a major, interdisciplinary home for work in the social sciences.... The walls are too high in most places."³⁷ Lin had navigated IU long enough not to have to worry about the walls, and her knowledge about the limitations imposed by university systems felt less restrictive if only because of their familiarity.

Johan Skytte Prize in Political Science

In early 1999, Lin received the Johan Skytte Prize in Political Science, an award which recognized her for "the most valuable contribution to our discipline," accompanied by 400,000 Swedish crowns, or about \$50,000.³⁸ Administered by the Johan Skytte Foundation at Uppsala University, Sweden—which established the prize in 1995—Lin was recognized as the fifth prize recipient in Uppsala in October 1999 for her "profound, empirical as well as theoretical, analysis of the nature of collective action and rational choice," and especially for her book, *Governing the Commons*, by then considered a "modern classic."³⁹ The Johan Skytte Prize is widely considered the most prestigious international award in Political Science and has been nicknamed the "Nobel Prize" in Political Science.⁴⁰ Lin was widely acclaimed as the "first woman" to receive the prize, a sentiment surrounding her success that echoed throughout her career. Though Lin commented on the impact of her gender on her career when asked, this was not central to how she framed her public identity. Instead, whenever possible she directed the spotlight to her collaborators, and in

³⁷ E. Ostrom, "Confidential notes from phone conversation with Holly Smith, University of Arizona," 10 Sept. 1996, box 172, folder "Ostrom, Elinor 2 of 9," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³⁸ Leif Lewin to E. Ostrom, 22 March 1999, box 172, folder "Ostrom, Elinor 4 of 9," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³⁹ Ibid.; "The First Woman to Receive the Johan Skytte Prize," 16 September 1999, press release, box 172, folder "Ostrom, Elinor 4 of 9," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁴⁰ "Congratulations to Professor Amartya Sen on His Award of the 2017 Johan Skytte Prize in Political Science!" Harvard University Department of Economics, April 26, 2017, <https://economics.harvard.edu/news/congratulations-professor-amartya-sen-his-award-2017-johan-skytte-prize-political>.

particular, to the Workshop. “I was particularly pleased to receive this prize as it represents the recognition of years of hard work conducted by many people associated with the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis,” she remarked about the Skytte Prize.⁴¹ Lin contributed the \$50,000 prize money to the IU Foundation, earmarked for the Tocqueville Endowment for the Study of Human Institutions, which she and Vincent had established in 1984 in connection with the Workshop.⁴²

Lin and Vincent were quiet philanthropists who provided financial support for a future of like-minded scholarly work within and beyond their lifetimes. The Tocqueville Endowment had long been established—for about fifteen years—at the time the Ostroms “redirected the prize funds and donated an equal amount” to create the Elinor Ostrom-Johan Skytte Prize Fellowship for graduate students in political science (“including political economy, cultural anthropology, social psychology, cognitive psychology, sociology, and law”).⁴³ This followed their previously established plan for directed major prize funds: Lin donated the \$25,000 prize for the Frank E. Seidman Distinguished Award in Political Economy in 1997 to the Tocqueville Endowment.⁴⁴ With the Ostroms’ initial donation of \$20,000 in 1984, the establishment of the Tocqueville Endowment with the IU Foundation perpetuated financial support for Workshop activities including research, student fellowships (undergraduate, graduate, and post-doctoral), expenses for visiting scholars, and publications. Guidelines for the Endowment also directed the creation of an Advisory Committee to oversee allocations of funds; Lin and Vincent served on the

⁴¹ “IU Professor is First Woman to Receive International Prize,” 13 September 1999, press release, box 172, folder “Ostrom, Elinor 4 of 9,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁴² “The First Woman to Receive the Johan Skytte Prize,” 16 September 1999, press release, box 172, folder “Ostrom, Elinor 4 of 9,” Elinor Ostrom Papers; E. Ostrom, V. Ostrom, and W. George Pinnell, “Gift Agreement Establishing the Tocqueville Endowment for the Study of Human Institutions,” Indiana University Foundation Gift Agreement, 28 December 1984, box 372, folder “Workshop Enterprise,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁴³ “2001 Annual Report, Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis,” 4 January 2002, box 386, folder “Ostrom Elinor mss-adel. Acc. Oct 2014-Workshop-Annual Reports-2001,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁴⁴ “1998-99 Budget Planning Document and Annual Report, Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis,” 5 January 1998, box 84, folder “Annual Reports,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

founding committee with Workshoppers Ronald Oakerson and Roger Parks.⁴⁵ Only three months after their initial donation, the Ostroms donated \$50,000 to the Endowment, matching the Skytte Prize funds.⁴⁶ The Endowment grew with the help of donations from Workshoppers all over the world, with Lin and Vincent remaining the principal donors.

As of September 1997, the Tocqueville Endowment was valued at over \$1.9 million, and grew to \$2.3 million by October 2000.⁴⁷ In December 1997, Lin and Vincent began plans to leave their estate to the Workshop through the IU Foundation. This was sparked by a new initiative to create a new Workshop Research Chair for Visiting Scholars by drawing on “their prior contributions to the Tocqueville Foundation for 1995 and 1996 and to contribute \$500,000 by 2002.”⁴⁸ Second, they “pledged to make an irrevocable agreement to leave \$1 million from their estate to this Chair.”⁴⁹ As with other directed donations, they sought opportunities for the university to match their funds or designate additional benefits that would not be available without partnering with the IU Foundation. Lin and Vincent looked to the future, as they limited immediate use of Endowment funds: “We continue to use the interest from this account sparingly as we can so that we can re-invest as much of it as possible to build the endowment itself.”⁵⁰ In 2002, Lin and Vincent distributed another \$70,000 to the Endowment. Their growing financial commitment to the Workshop scaled with Lin’s salary. During the 2001-2002 academic year, Lin’s salary was \$140,688, a 250 percent increase from her salary in the 1986-1987 academic

⁴⁵ E. Ostrom, V. Ostrom, and W. George Pinnell, “Gift Agreement Establishing the Tocqueville Endowment for the Study of Human Institutions.”

⁴⁶ John Ryan to V. Ostrom and E. Ostrom, 28 March 1985, box 355, folder “John W. Ryan, President,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁴⁷ “1998-99 Budget Planning Document and Annual Report, Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis”; “2000 Annual Report, Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis,” 19 December 2000, box 386, folder “Ostrom Elinor mss-adel. Acc. Oct 2014-Workshop-Annual Reports-2000,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁴⁸ “1998-99 Budget Planning Document and Annual Report, Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis.”

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

year (\$56,522).⁵¹ The Ostroms' gifts to Indiana University grew alongside their commitment to the Workshop, showing careful financial forethought.

Lin's attention to the future of the Workshop's finances and increased giving echoed her concern over declining financial commitment of the University to the Workshop, as well as her upcoming retirement from leadership of the Workshop. Lin was frustrated when others did not recognize the productivity of the Workshop or its collaborative spirit akin to a research laboratory with its essential staff support. From 2006 to 2008, she noted that direct financial support from IU declined from \$560,000 to \$460,000.⁵² Around the same time, Lin made plans to step down as Workshop Co-Director in July 2009, with Mike McGinnis and Jimmy Walker agreeing to step in as Co-Directors.⁵³ In her exchange with Sarita Soni, then IU's Associate Vice President for Research and Vice Provost for Research, Lin hinted at her frustration about repetitive conversations about succession planning for the Workshop with administrators: "I am somewhat puzzled by a sense from your note that you thought I was just now proposing a change in the Workshop Co-Directorship." Lin continued, "But if there is some doubt, let me reiterate the plans."⁵⁴ She was frustrated because she felt she had already made her succession plans clear. While Lin had long since established her position as a scholar within the global academic community, this credibility did not necessarily extend her privilege within IU's governance.

2009 Nobel Prize in Economics

In the early morning hours of October 12, 2009, Lin received a call from the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences: *Mrs. Ostrom, you have been selected as the co-recipient of The*

⁵¹ Jeff Hart to E. Ostrom, "Merit Evaluation for 2000 and three year average (1998-2000)," 6 June 2001, box 170, folder "E. Ostrom- Merit Evaluations 1986-2001," Elinor Ostrom Papers; Harvey Starr to Political Science Faculty, "Salary Figure for 1986-87" 23 April 1986, box 170, folder "E. Ostrom- Merit Evaluations 1986-2001," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁵² E. Ostrom, 12 October 2009, notebook, box 176.

⁵³ E. Ostrom to Jeffrey Isaac, James Walker, Michael McGinnis, and Carol Buszkiewicz, n.d. [ca. 2009], box 170, folder "EO Future Plans - Sabbatical," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁵⁴ E. Ostrom to P. Sarita Soni, 5 April 2009, box 170, folder "EO Future Plans - Sabbatical," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, the voice on the phone relayed. This Prize is commonly referred to as the Nobel Prize in Economics. Lin was selected to share the prize with University of California, Berkeley, economist Oliver E. Williamson. “I’ve never thought that I should even try to win a prize like that. It is a wonderful, marvelous thing to happen,” Lin said of the award.⁵⁵ The Prize committee recognized Lin “for her analysis of economic governance, especially the commons” and Williamson “for his analysis of economic governance, especially the boundaries of the firm.”⁵⁶ Together they were honored in the press for recognizing complexity, for the application of their research to the “real world,” and for crossing disciplinary boundaries: “Their win reminds economists that the borders between disciplines...can be profitably crossed.”⁵⁷ Separately, however, Lin’s award was uniquely characterized.

In 2008, the financial markets dropped to the lowest level since the Great Depression; this set the stage for public interpretation of Lin’s Prize. Lin was not among the favorites to win; many would not have considered her, as her Ph.D. was in political science, not economics. Reporters from *Business Week* and *Time* even admitted not knowing who she was before the announcement.⁵⁸ University of Chicago’s Eugene Fama, the “father of efficient market theory,” was a top choice but the market downturn seemed to preclude his chance: “Given the failure of the market itself to anticipate its own collapse, perhaps this was a very poor year to expect much in the way of recognition of the theories that supported many of the decisions that led to the

⁵⁵ “Elinor Ostrom: Nobel Laureate,” *The College: Indiana University’s Commitment to Arts and Sciences* 32, no. 2 (2009): 7.

⁵⁶ “The Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel 2009,” NobelPrize.org, accessed November 25, 2018, <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/economic-sciences/2009/summary/>.

⁵⁷ “Elinor Ostrom and Oliver Williamson win this year’s Nobel prize for economics,” *The Economist* (17 October 2009). Williamson drew on legal studies to support his prize-winning research.

⁵⁸ John Cassidy, “The Nobel That Should Have Been,” *The New Yorker*, October 13, 2009, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/john-cassidy/the-nobel-that-should-have-been>.

collapse,”” stated economic commentator Barry Ritholtz.⁵⁹ Reporters regularly mixed messages as they situated Lin’s research, fitting her work into a liberal versus conservative political spectrum or more often state intervention versus the free market. “Last year, financial markets took the worst drubbing since the Great Depression, so perhaps not surprisingly this year’s ‘Nobel Prize’ in economics honors two researchers who studied economic behavior in other settings,” wrote Adrian Cho for *Science* just after the prize was announced.⁶⁰

Lin did not fit on any political “side” in the way others wished she would. Years later her friend and colleague, Michael McGinnis, still remembered Lin emerging from her Workshop office frustrated and tired after several lengthy interviews with reporters who pressed her to explain her antagonism to free markets and on the next call, her antagonism to the state. “Her arguments did not fall on a left-right continuum. The state’s important, the market’s important, and so are all the other...institutions that are out there. And we can’t reduce it down to state and market,” McGinnis explained.⁶¹

More privately, she and Vincent’s community around the world reverberated with support. Messages from students and colleagues poured in by phone, mail, and e-mail. When asked about the significance of the prize, Lin almost always redirected praise toward her collaborators and always toward Vincent. However, some students were careful to make sure Lin received particular credit. “It has always been you, however, who set the example of patience, the need to listen below and around the words, the need to translate ideas into action,” wrote her student and friend Barb Allen, whom Lin asked to join her at the Nobel ceremony in Sweden.

“Yet it also must be said that each of you recognized and nurtured an individual, rare talent in the

⁵⁹ Barrie McKenna, “It’s the People, Stupid: Pioneering Winner Champions Collective Power of Humanity over Policy or Private Enterprise,” *The Globe and Mail* (13 October 2009).

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/its-the-people-stupid/article4195988/>.

⁶⁰ Adrian Cho, “Laureates Analyzed Economics Outside Markets,” *Science* (16 October 2009): 347.

⁶¹ Michael McGinnis, interview by Sara Clark, June 6, 2014, transcript, “Coming Together.”

other,” Allen continued.⁶² Others recognized the Ostroms’ partnership: “These particular congratulations are addressed to you both in happy recognition of an archetypical mutually productive relationship.”⁶³

Because of poor health, Vincent did not travel to Stockholm for the award ceremony in early December 2009. Instead Lin’s friend and colleague Jimmy Walker flew with her to Stockholm: “It wasn’t just flying. It was the whole process of getting there and sort of, in a sense, being embraced by the Nobel Prize Committee,” Jimmy laughed as he characterized the experience with his friend years later.⁶⁴ With more than ten hours in the air, the pair reviewed her presentation for the ceremony. The week of celebration culminated for Lin with her prize lecture, “Beyond Markets and States: Polycentric Governance of Complex Economic Systems,” wherein she constructed a narrative of her academic contributions, bringing together five decades of research.⁶⁵ In summation, she called for a more general theory of human behavior and asked social scientists to consider “the diverse contexts that humans face,” including the role of trust, microinstitutional variables (e.g. a controlled setting in the lab or field), contextual variables related to the social-ecological system (SES), and the need to “to be willing to deal with complexity instead of rejecting it” if public policy solutions are to be successful.⁶⁶ Upon

⁶² Barbara Allen to E. Ostrom, 14 October 2009, box 113, folder “Awards & Honors-Nobel Prize-Congratulations-A, 2009, Oct.,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁶³ Jamie Thomson and Ellen Thomson to E. Ostrom and V. Ostrom, 12 October 2012, box 114, folder “Awards & Honors-Nobel Prize-Congratulations A-M, 2009, Oct.,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁶⁴ James Walker, interview by Sara Clark, June 11, 2014, transcript, “Coming Together.”

⁶⁵ E. Ostrom, “Beyond Markets and States: Polycentric Governance of Complex Economic Systems” (prize lecture, The Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, Aula Mana, Stockholm University, December 8, 2009), https://www.nobelprize.org/uploads/2018/06/ostrom_lecture.pdf.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*; According to Lin, “A major advantage of studies conducted in an experimental lab or in field experiments is that the researcher designs the microsetting in which the experiment is conducted.”

returning home, Lin distributed her half of the \$1.4 million prize to the IU Foundation, Tocqueville Endowment, bringing she and Vincent's lifetime giving to well over \$2 million.⁶⁷

In the summer months leading up to receiving the Nobel, Lin worked to finalize her book project with Amy Poteete and Marco Janssen, *Working Together: Collective Action, The Commons, and Multiple Methods in Practice*.⁶⁸ This project discussed "how individual case studies, meta-analyses of multiple cases, large-scale comparative field-based research, formal theory, experimental research, and new methods for combining theory and agent-based models have improved understanding of collective-action theory as applied to the study of common-pool resources."⁶⁹ *Working Together* was published in 2010, and though it is known within Workshop circles, one wonders how its reach was limited by Lin's commitments as a new Nobelist. In an interview not long after receiving the Nobel, Lin said she was relieved to receive the prize: "As a person who does interdisciplinary work, I didn't fit anywhere. I was relieved that after all these years of struggle someone really thought it did add up."⁷⁰ With her co-authors, Lin inhabits an activist tone, hoping to impart change in the way research is conducted within and across disciplines: "we hope very much to tear down some of the artificial walls that separate the users of diverse methods even within a single discipline, let alone across disciplinary boundaries."⁷¹

Travel dominated Lin's calendar after she received the Nobel; from early 2010 to early 2012 Lin traveled to the Bahamas, China, France, India, Germany, Korea, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and

⁶⁷ "Elinor Ostrom: Nobel Laureate," *The College: Indiana University's Commitment to Arts and Sciences* 32, no. 2 (2009): 7.

⁶⁸ Amy R. Poteete, Marco Janssen, and Elinor Ostrom, *Working Together: Collective Action, the Commons, and Multiple Methods in Practice* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010).

⁶⁹ E. Ostrom, "A Long Polycentric Journey," 17.

⁷⁰ Fran Korten, "Common(s) Sense Wins One," *Yes!* 53 (Spring 2010): 13.

⁷¹ E. Ostrom, "A Long Polycentric Journey," 17.

throughout the United States.⁷² Along the way, she met government officials and policy makers, delivered keynote addresses, gave interviews to members of the press, received honorary degrees, visited old friends, was inspired by young scholars, and documented her observations, future ideas, memories, and the names of people she met. In early January 2011, around the time of a doctor's visit, Lin noted her increasing blood pressure, dizziness, and swelling in her legs; just after these symptoms she asked, "Should I go to India?"⁷³ The question, posed only to the empty page, speaks of the type of uncertainty and isolation illness can bring. Was Lin scared, frustrated, or just solving the problem presented? Perhaps, she wished for quick resolution; she had much more to do. To date, Lin had almost exclusively attended to Vincent's health, not her own; by then Vincent received in-home nursing care, a great help to Lin during her extended travel schedule. In late 2011, Lin was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and began chemotherapy treatment in early 2012.⁷⁴ Determined to "fight it" and maintain her intensive travel plans, Lin scheduled treatment around major trips.⁷⁵

In April 2012, *Time* magazine named Lin to their list of the world's 100 most influential people.⁷⁶

Planning for the Future

Britain's Chief Science Advisor Sir David A. King's claim in early 2004 that "climate change is the most severe problem that we are facing today—more serious even than the threat of terrorism," struck fear as the Global War on Terrorism that began under President George W.

⁷² See boxes 125 and 172, Elinor Ostrom Papers for correspondence and "Trip Logs" from 2009-2012.

⁷³ E. Ostrom, [ca. February 2011], notebook, box 176, Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁷⁴ E. Ostrom to "Vincent and everyone on Lampkins Ridge," 1 March 2012 box 116, folder "Correspondence-From EO 2010, Sep.-2012, May," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁷⁵ Connie Clark, Daniel Clark, Sheila McGinnis, and Mike McGinnis interviewed by Sara Clark, April 7, 2014, Bloomington, IN.

⁷⁶ Robert Johnson, "Elinor Ostrom," in "The 100 Most Influential People in the World," *Time* (April 30, 2012).

Bush was still beginning.⁷⁷ Lin always distrusted panaceas, and climate change was no exception: “The notion that there is a single panacea that has to be imposed from the outside is wrong.” For Lin and those in her affiliated research network, climate change was, according to climate scientist Dale Jamieson, “the world’s largest collective action problem.”⁷⁸ Lin had long been interested in climate change, especially the ways individual preventative actions related to government policies. In the early 1990s, Lin attended a meeting on Climate Change and Global Security at the Argonne National Laboratory outside Chicago.⁷⁹ Meetings like this allowed her to network with other scholars ahead of the signing of the Kyoto Protocol in 1997, which aimed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions worldwide by 2012.

Lin was an established contributor to the climate change research community and recent Nobel Prize recipient when the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Committee met again in Copenhagen in 2009, extending the Kyoto Protocol with the non-binding Copenhagen Accord.⁸⁰ Lin argued for the urgency of global warming as a problem requiring more than top-down solutions: “We need to take a polycentric approach because if we sit around and wait for international leaders to make this decision, we’re going to be waiting far too long. This isn’t something that can wait.”⁸¹ The problems of climate change presented an ultimate interdisciplinary challenge, one that no single discipline could independently resolve, and one that Lin felt equipped to influence: “We need to recognize the multiple scales of problems that

⁷⁷ David A. King, “Climate Change Science: Adapt, Mitigate, or Ignore?” *Science* 303, no. 5655 (January 9, 2004): 176–77, <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1094329>.

⁷⁸ Dale Jamieson is the author of *Reason in a Dark Time: Why the Struggle Against Climate Change Failed—and What It Means for Our Future* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014). E. Ostrom, “In Need of a Sea Change,” interview by Elizabeth Svoboda, *Science & Spirit* (July/August 2004).

⁷⁹ E. Ostrom to Marvin Soroos, 15 May 1991, box 136, folder “Conference on Security and Global [Climate] Change, Argonne National Laboratory, Chicago, IL, May 8-10, 1991,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁸⁰ See for example E. Ostrom, “A Polycentric Approach for Coping with Climate Change” (World Bank, October 2009), <https://doi-org.proxyiu.uits.iu.edu/10.1596/1813-9450-5095>; E. Ostrom, “Beyond Markets and States: Polycentric Governance of Complex Economic Systems,” *Transnational Corporations Review* 2, no. 2 (2010): 1–12.

⁸¹ Mattea Kramer and Heidi Fieselmann, “Finding Local Solutions: A Conversation with 2009 Nobel Laureate Elinor Ostrom,” *Women’s Policy Journal of Harvard* 7 (2009-2010): 58.

have been labeled as just global. We need global solutions, no question about it, but that's not all we need."⁸² With the weight of the Nobel Prize now behind her statements, her voice sounded even louder when directed toward the problems of global warming and climate change, and after the struggle of global leaders to agree at the 2009 UN Climate Change Convention in Copenhagen Lin was not satisfied: "I was disappointed. I think everyone was. I wasn't surprised, but I was disappointed. I had hope."⁸³

For Lin, the problems of climate change required people around the world to make drastic changes to everyday living and to reconsider their definitions of success. "Some of our mentality about what it means to have a good life is, I think, not going to help us in the next 50 years," Lin said in an interview published not long after Sir David King's grave warning about climate change. She continued: "We have to think through how to choose a meaningful life where we're helping one another in ways that really help the Earth."⁸⁴ And as was always the case, Lin saw no divide between the personal and the professional; climate change was an ultimate problem that required all the attention she could muster.

During one of the last trips Lin and Vincent made together to Manitoulin Island in late summer 2004, Lin wrote to her chosen family at the Workshop, "Hard to fathom how fast time goes by in this lovely secluded spot of ours on the South shore of the Manitoulin."⁸⁵ Lin Ostrom died on Tuesday, June 12, 2012, at 78 from pancreatic cancer in Bloomington, Indiana. In the days immediately preceding her death she continued to discuss ongoing research and edited a

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ "Working Together: A Q&A with Elinor Ostrom," *IU Research & Creative Activity* 32 no. 2: 8.

⁸⁴ Fran Korten, "Common(s) Sense Wins One," 15.

⁸⁵ E. Ostrom and V. Ostrom (with Barbara Allen) to "Workshoppers," 17 July 2004, box 178, folder "Workshop-Correspondence Post Cards (49 items)," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

student's dissertation at the hospital.⁸⁶ Vincent Ostrom, her partner of nearly five decades, died 17 days later. He was 92.

⁸⁶ Connie Clark, Daniel Clark, Sheila McGinnis, and Mike McGinnis interviewed by Sara Clark, April 7, 2014, Bloomington, IN.

Conclusion

Recognition by the Economic Sciences Nobel Committee in 2009 finally gave Lin a bit of peace with her interdisciplinary practice: “As a person who does interdisciplinary work, I didn’t fit in anywhere. I was relieved that, after all these years of struggle, someone really thought it did add up.”¹ Some will remember Lin for her contributions as a field researcher, others for her part in developing the Workshop and collaborative research networks, others for her use of laboratory methods, others as a collector of local arts and crafts (particularly Native American ones), others as a teacher, others as a philanthropist, and others as an administrator and entrepreneur. Lin integrated knowledge and brought together diverse thinkers; this was her interdisciplinary practice, to combine formerly separate knowledge production processes, to cross-communicate, delivering results not previously possible by recognizing the benefits and facilitating cross-pollination of disciplinary advances and methodological innovations. Lin did not claim expertise in multiple fields—though she continued to acquire disciplinary skills, like learning mathematical economics, outside of her original graduate training throughout her professional career.² In her resolve never to be done learning she found her greatest weapon. Instead, Lin’s scholarship brought together disciplinary experts to understand problems—often involving questions about how humans interact with limited resources—that necessarily benefitted from forging intricate interconnections among disciplines, especially integrating methods.

To produce these results, Lin made choices that structured her life in ways that challenged boundaries between personal and professional. As I will demonstrate in this chapter, her interdisciplinary approach can be helpfully characterized by examining her tireless work

¹ Fran Korten, “Common(s) Sense Wins One,” *Yes!* 53 (Spring 2010).

² E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 21 April 1982, box 174, folder “EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1977-1982,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

ethic; commitments to artisanship, contestation, and collaboration; and her openness to multiple solutions to complex problems. The blurred boundaries between Lin's personal and professional life should not be classified as a symptom of what ailed her but instead as an emblem of a methodology she developed and applied throughout her life. Not only are Lin's contributions significant because of the ways in which she challenged the conceptual borders of economic analysis but also because her methodology for living provides an alternate model for organizing knowledge, an interdisciplinary model. Through biography, this analysis ultimately seeks to answer: How did Lin develop and understand interdisciplinarity as a methodology for living?

The accomplishments of her students and the foundation Lin created for anticipated future scholarship brought Lin the most pride later in life. Together with her husband and intellectual partner Vincent, Lin co-founded Indiana University's Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis in 1973, later renamed the Ostrom Workshop in their honor. Their career-long intellectual home expanded in 1999 when Lin founded a sister research center, the Center for Behavior, Institutions and the Environment at Arizona State University (ASU).³ The reach of she and Vincent's impact can also be measured financially; not including interest from the endowment they created, together their lifetime giving to IU Foundation via the Tocqueville Endowment—which funded student and professional research efforts through the Workshop—totaled more than \$2 million.⁴

While the scope of Lin's scholarly impact is not limited to IU, the reputation of IU continues to benefit from their creation of an interdisciplinary structure, the Ostroms' intellectual legacies, and the global scholarly network founded at the Ostrom Workshop that brought

³ The ASU center was originally named the Center for the Study of Institutional Diversity, and is now directed by Marco Janssen.

⁴ "Elinor Ostrom: Nobel Laureate," *The College: Indiana University's Commitment to Arts and Sciences* 32, no. 2 (2009): 7.

together diverse scholars to develop the Bloomington School of Political Economy—geographically based in Bloomington, Indiana. Recognized in 1988 as a school of thought led by the Ostroms, the Bloomington school signified work by Indiana University scholars should be compared to those at the Rochester school of political science led by William Riker and the Virginia school of political economy led by James Buchanan and Gordon Tullock.⁵

Lin's relationship with her husband Vincent represents the ways in which she integrated personal and professional. Because they were partnered intellectually and through marriage, categorizing aspects of their relationship as only personal or only professional is limiting. When they authored scholarly publications together, were they not also loving life partners?⁶ As intellectual counterparts and lovers, they disagreed and supported one another about matters of career and of heart. When Vincent requested in 1964 that his new office at IU have enough space for a desk for his wife—"for some of the work we shall be doing together"—he shared their personal relationship while also publicly advocating for her career as a female academic in a male-dominated field.⁷ Through their shared hobby of building furniture, they learned to incorporate ideas about craft and artistry that they then incorporated into their scholarship and design of the Workshop; to them, academics should be craftspeople. Workshopper Jimmy Walker laughed recalling, "As Lin said in making the furniture, she was the sander."⁸ Vincent's

⁵ William C. Mitchell, "Virginia, Rochester, and Bloomington: Twenty-Five Years of Public Choice and Political Science," *Public Choice* 56, no. 2 (1988), 101.

⁶ See, for example, V. Ostrom and E. Ostrom, "Public Choice: A Different Approach to the Study of Public Administration," *Public Administration Review*, 1971, 203–216; E. Ostrom and V. Ostrom, "A Theory for Institutional Analysis of Common Pool Problems," in *Managing the Commons*, ed. Garrett Hardin and John Baden (New York: W.H. Freeman and Company, 1977), 157–72; V. Ostrom and E. Ostrom, *Public Goods and Public Choices* (Indiana University, Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, 1978); E. Ostrom and V. Ostrom, "The Quest for Meaning in Public Choice," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 63, no. 1 (2004): 105–147.

⁷ V. Ostrom to Walter H.C. Laves, 31 July 1964, box 281, folder "Personnel Files Indiana University Dept. of Government Position," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁸ James Walker, interview by Sara Clark, 11 June 2014, transcript, "Coming Together."

impact on Lin, and vice-versa, is most accurately represented as simultaneously important for each partner on multiple fronts.

Though the Bloomington School received its name more than twenty years prior, Lin's Nobel sparked interest among the Ostroms' Workshop colleagues and students to begin documenting its history and impact. These researchers share the goal to explore the value of Lin's (and in many cases, the cross-pollination of her academic work with Vincent's) broad-reaching contributions; however, review of their various perspectives shows few attempts to identify connections among research, teaching, relationships, hobbies, and other aspects of life. Though Barb Allen released only clips of her forthcoming documentary film about Lin and Vincent, the film promises to foreground the couple's relationship as central to their impact and seems most similar to this study's approach: "I think of Lin and Vincent's work and lives as a love story that became a global gift. Over their half-century relationship, they built an enduring, loving marriage; an influential intellectual partnership; and a wide-ranging movement of people dedicated—as the Ostroms were—to addressing the enormous problems that plague human societies...."⁹

Perhaps because of the cross-disciplinary breadth of Lin's research contributions—no single scholar may be as uniquely qualified to document the intersections of Lin's research as she was to conduct it. Her extended network included academicians, students, and friends who now share the endeavor to create a collective account across multiple publications of her intellectual legacy.¹⁰ Uniquely, Vlad Tarko framed his recent contribution as an intellectual

⁹ Barbara Allen, "Actual World Possible Future: A Documentary about the Lives and Work of Elinor and Vincent Ostrom." Accessed September 3, 2018, <http://ostromsthemovie.tumblr.com>.

¹⁰ Boettke, Peter, Liya Palagashvili, and Jayme Lemke. "Riding in Cars with Boys: Elinor (December 2013): 407–25. doi:10.1017/S1744137413000118; Juan Camilo Cardenas and Rajiv Sethi, "Elinor Ostrom: Fighting the Tragedy of the Commons," *Books and Ideas* 12 (September 2016), ISSN: 2105-3030, <http://www.booksandideas.net/Elinor-Ostrom-Fighting-the-Tragedy-of-the-Commons.html>; Ben Ramalingam,

biography.¹¹ Still others within the Ostroms' network jointly authored texts to extend their mentors' approaches to help answer the next generation's questions.¹² Lin and Vincent continue to inspire new research, as evidenced by citations of their publications, the impact of their students, and the continued strength of the Workshop.

“Conversations on Complexity: A Tribute to Elinor Ostrom,” *Aid on the Edge of Chaos*. Accessed April 26, 2015, <http://aidontheedge.info/2012/08/16/conversations-on-complexity-a-tribute-to-elinor-ostrom/>.

¹¹ Vlad Tarko, *Elinor Ostrom: An Intellectual Biography* (London; New York: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2016).

¹² V. Ostrom et al., *Elinor Ostrom and the Bloomington School of Political Economy: Policy Applications and Extensions*, ed. Daniel H. Cole and Michael D. McGinnis (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2018); Filippo Sabetti and Dario Castiglione, *Institutional Diversity in Self-Governing Societies: The Bloomington School and Beyond* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017); Daniel H. Cole and Michael McGinnis, eds. *Elinor Ostrom and the Bloomington School of Political Economy: Polycentricity in Public Administration and Political Science*. (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014); Jayme Lemke and Vlad Tarko, eds. *Elinor Ostrom and the Bloomington School: Building a New Approach to Policy and the Social Sciences* (Columbia University Press, forthcoming).

Academic Accolades

Lin remains most widely recognized for her mixed-methods research examining common pool resources—resources with porous boundaries making it difficult to exclude users like fisheries, forests, and water. However, Lin’s research also included the study of public goods and services like policing and later in her career, the interactions between humans and their ecosystems involving natural resources problems like climate change. In a 1997 grant progress report to the National Science Foundation written by Lin and her collaborator Emilio Moran, they characterized her research broadly: “Since 1965, she has pursued an active research program linking institutional arrangements at a local, regional, and national level to the actions of individuals and their outcomes.”¹³ The notion that “‘governance’ has a much broader scope than activities of governments” influenced Lin throughout her career.¹⁴

Lin’s academic efforts earned recognition and research grants from some of the most prestigious US institutions: Numerous universities awarded her honorary doctoral degrees and more than 30 research grants, most from the Ford Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, National Science Foundation, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, US AID, and US Department of Justice. Lin authored 16 books and edited 17 collaborative volumes; she published most frequently with collaborators, and as with other aspects of her life, this record is indicative of her preference for working in teams. She served as President of the Public Choice Society (1982-84), the Midwest Political Science Association (1984-85), the International Association for the Study of Common Property (1990-91), and the American Political Science Association (1996-97). As her prominence rose with the publication of *Governing the Commons* in 1990—her first

¹³ Emilio Moran and E. Ostrom, “Progress Report to the National Science Foundation,” report, 1 Feb. 1997, box 84, folder “Annual Reports,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁴ Michael McGinnis, “Elinor Ostrom: A Career in Institutional Analysis,” *PS: Political Science & Politics*, December 1996, 737.

independently authored book—the American Academy of Arts and Sciences recognized Lin as a fellow in 1991, then as a member of the National Academy of Sciences in 2001, as a member of the American Philosophical Society in 2006, and in 2009, the American Academy of Political and Social Science named her as a fellow. Lin continued to grow in prominence by receiving the John Skytte Prize in Political Science in 1999, and less than a decade later, by receiving the William H. Riker Prize in Political Science from the University of Rochester in 2008. In 2009, the Nobel Committee named Lin the co-recipient of the *Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel* with Oliver Williamson.

An outsider to political science and economics examining her scholarly record might perceive these awards and prizes as a pipeline leading to inevitable recognition by the Committee for the Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel; this was not the case. Her accolades were well known by her peers long before the general public noticed her achievements.¹⁵ She worked closely with other Nobel economist like Vernon Smith and Reinhard Selton, but Lin’s Nobel surprised many because of her perceived identity as a political scientist. After all, Lin trained as a political scientist and not as an economist during graduate school, and the secondary and higher education system limited Lin’s access to the math courses required for acceptance into graduate economics education. UCLA’s Department of Economics denied Lin entrance as a graduate student because she had not completed advanced math courses; though Lin graduated college with a degree in political science, faculty members first told her “Girls who received good grades in college” in the 1950s would only find careers as teachers.¹⁶

¹⁵ “The World’s 100 Most Influential People: 2012” *Time*, April 18, 2012. See also Sydney Murray, “Prime Time: IU Professor Elinor Ostrom follow up Nobel Prize on Time magazine’s Top 100,” *Indiana Daily Student*, April 25, 2012, newspaper clipping, box 179, folder “Writings-EO-Writings about EO 2012,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

¹⁶ E. Ostrom, “Learning from the Field,” in *Elinor Ostrom and the Bloomington School of Political Economy: A Framework for Policy Analysis*, ed. Daniel H. Cole and Michael D. McGinnis, vol. 3 (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017), 390.

With women facing a narrow path for graduate education in math and science fields, Lin and her female counterparts were unlikely to earn influential positions in economics. Between 1947-48 and 1960-61, a total of 3,079 graduates of US universities earned doctorate degrees in economics. Of these degree earners, just 154—or 5 percent—were women.¹⁷ Instead, Lin graduated with a Ph.D. in political science from UCLA in 1965, and became a Visiting Assistant Professor in IU’s Department of Government the next academic year. Though Lin’s cohort at UCLA included a few other women, very few women possessed advanced training in economics or political science needed to serve as mentors to upcoming female colleagues. In 1956-58, only 20 women (4.78 percent of the subfield) in the United States worked full-time in the “social sciences (esp. economics),” though female graduate students might have looked to women working in research associate positions for mentorship.¹⁸ In other words, women social scientists routinely occupied supporting roles, despite equal qualification. By 1970, the number of women economists increased to 812, but their overall footprint only made up 6.07 percent of all economists.¹⁹

Composing An Interdisciplinary Life²⁰

Lin did not set out to become a world-class political economist and she did not identify as a champion for interdisciplinarity; the problems at hand and her genuine enthusiasm for inquiry drove her. Commitment to the hard work needed to facilitate interdisciplinary research verified through artisanship, contestation, and collaboration propelled Lin’s approach. Further, her openness to multiple solutions to complex problems solidified her methodology. Together these commitments suggest four tenets for interdisciplinary living and in turn, illustrate the approach

¹⁷ Margaret W. Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Before Affirmative Action, 1940-1972* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 84.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 101-102.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 100-103.

²⁰ Mary Catherine Bateson, *Composing a Life* (New York: Grove Press, 1989).

Lin developed over a lifetime. These tenets are overlapping, personal, and non-exhaustive. However, they attempt to give shape to a methodology that has defied adequate definition because of its boundary breaking, dynamic nature. As elucidated by Lin's life, interdisciplinarity can flow between personal and professional.

I. Hard Work

Expressions like, “never take work home” and “leave the office at the office” broadcasted the western notion of separation between personal and professional life that took root in the second half of the twentieth century. For Lin, finding balance between these divisions did not resonate. Her colleagues remember her exuberance and tireless pursuit of answers to complex, everyday problems. Mansee Bal, a friend and student, captured Lin's delight for living: “I guess if somebody asks in the middle of the night, ‘Let's do this, let's go and count the trees,’ she would just be ready to go. That's how I feel: That's how she reflects, that she's just ready to work.”²¹ This is not to say there were no negative consequences to her lack of work-life boundaries. Lin woke up very early in the morning often sending emails at all hours. To manage her fatigue she took “cat naps” in her office on campus.²² Hard work is not unique to interdisciplinary practice but it is essential. Many types of academic research might be characterized by strenuous labor. What made Lin's hard work distinctively linked to her interdisciplinary practice are the extra steps she willingly navigated to facilitate interdisciplinarity. Lin honed an exhaustive work ethic during her childhood and early adulthood and ultimately aimed these skills toward communicating with clear definitions of terms across knowledge borders.

²¹ Mansee Bal, interview by Sara Clark, June 21, 2014, transcript, “Coming Together.”

²² Catherine Tucker, interview by Catherine Guerro, July 9, 2014, transcript, “Coming Together.”

Traces of how Lin organized her life in adulthood—around the pursuit of ideas through exhaustive efforts—can be found in her childhood. Lin was born during the Great Depression in 1933 and grew up on the edge of affluent Beverly Hills, California. Her parents, Leah and Adrian Awan—neither of whom had more than a high school education—divorced but both remained active in their daughter’s life. Lin watched (and acted in) Los Angeles area theater productions with her father, a producer and set designer, but lived primarily with her mother, who taught her to grow her own food in their home garden: “Now I must confess that the long, hot August days that I spent canning peaches and apricots are not my favorite memories of my childhood, but I certainly learned a lot about the household economics of a poor family—long before I studied these problems in developing economies.”²³ Lin further developed communication skills by participating in high school debate and continued to garden throughout her life. While these skills and experiences shaped her personality and helped her to develop mental toughness, exposure to college-bound teens at Beverly Hills High School—who regularly exercised social and cultural capital along with economic wealth toward entering higher education—allowed Lin to normalize college attendance.²⁴ Even though her parents did not see the need for Lin to complete college or provide financial support, Lin described her choice to attend UCLA as just wanting to “keep up” with her high school friends.²⁵

Lin worked thirty to forty hours a week to pay tuition at UCLA, where she graduated with a degree in political science in 1954.²⁶ As a professor years later, Lin reflected on working her way through college in a recommendation she made on behalf of Edna Bryan-Cummins—

²³ E. Ostrom, “Learning from the Field,” in *Elinor Ostrom and the Bloomington School of Political Economy: A Framework for Policy Analysis*, ed. Daniel H. Cole and Michael D. McGinnis, vol. 3 (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017), 389.

²⁴ “Elinor Ostrom - Biographical,” The Nobel Prize, accessed October 31, 2013, http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/economic-sciences/laureates/2009/ostrom-bio.html.

²⁵ E. Ostrom, “Learning from the Field,” 389.

²⁶ E. Ostrom, interview by Kristen Monroe, [ca. 2000], transcript, box 178, folder “Publicity-Interviews Given Transcript Nov. 6, 2000,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

then a secretary at the Workshop applying to IU's law school: "As a person who put herself through college by typing, I can testify that it is not always easy to read for understanding while typing."²⁷ Lin worked hard and expected the same from her team; having experienced all levels of employment—from typist to leading academician—and rejection by UCLA economics faculty during her own graduate admissions process, Lin endured.²⁸ In adulthood, Lin's patience and persistence characterized her resistance; she played the long game, recognizing her incremental efforts would add up.

Genuine curiosity and an unbroken commitment to identifying the method (and in most cases, combinations of methods) that pointed toward understanding of complex real world problems and their possible solutions motivated Lin. Her studies of metropolitan police performance conducted in the 1970s and 1980s were an early symbol of her ability to integrate multiple methods for decades to come. Lin and her students carefully crafted questionnaires to guide thousands of interviews gauging attitudes toward police in multiple cities, conducted detailed observations by riding alongside on-duty police officers, and mailed thousands of surveys, producing a stream of qualitative and quantitative data to analyze and synthesize.²⁹ Hard work for Lin meant commitment to large scale, longitudinal studies over many years and willingness to mediate cross-expertise communication difficulties that could have derailed projects. It also meant cultivating the strength to lead: "I must confess that I was a little nervous myself the first day we went out," Lin divulged in a letter to her mother in 1970 just after she and her students began conducting interviews with citizens about police services in downtown

²⁷ E. Ostrom to Admissions Committee, 2 June 1975, box 267, folder "E.O. General Correspondence Material related to Job Openings & Recommendations," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

²⁸ Elinor Ostrom, "A Long Polycentric Journey," *Annual Review of Political Science* 13, no. 1 (2010): 3, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.090808.123259>.

²⁹ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 17 April 1970, box 174, folder "EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1968-1976," Elinor Ostrom Papers; E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 9 February 1972, box 174, folder "EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1968-1976," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

Indianapolis.³⁰ Lin sometimes felt overwhelmed: “I have four separate research projects going on and at times I could scream with the frustration of having too much to do.”³¹ However, her hands were never idle; she also crocheted, sewed, gardened, hiked, and completed other home projects with Vincent.³²

II. Artisanship and Contestation

Over four decades Lin and Vincent shaped the Workshop around a structure of citizen as artisan and used contestation to further their intellectual mission to “understand patterns of organization in multiple environments using the tools of comparative institutional analysis and development.”³³ Lin and Vincent saw themselves as co-artisans in their direction of the Workshop—an enterprise they viewed as the craft they skillfully fashioned with the help of their peers, students, and Workshop staff. These shared identities were tied to how they viewed knowledge production: “The term ‘workshop’ was chosen on a presumption that scholarship is a form of artisanship that is best pursued in a circumstance that involves collaboration where individuals of varied experiences contribute to and learn from one another.”³⁴ Lin and Vincent also exercised their commitment to artisanship outside of the Workshop through a shared interest in making furniture—collaborating with a local Indiana master cabinetmaker—and building a primitive cabin on Manitoulin Island, Canada, where they worked during the summers for more

³⁰ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 17 April 1970.

³¹ E. Ostrom and V. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 5 December 1971, box 174, folder “EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1968-1976,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³² E. Ostrom and V. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 5 March 1973, box 174, folder “EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1968-1976,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³³ Pamela Jagger, Jacqui Bauer, and James Walker, “Artisans of Political Theory and Empirical Inquiry: Thirty-Five Years of Scholarship at the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis” (Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, 2009), 1.

³⁴ E. Ostrom and V. Ostrom, “General Introduction [to the Workshop],” [c. 1985], box 372, folder “Workshop Enterprise,” Elinor Ostrom Papers; see also V. Ostrom. “Artisanship and Artifact.” *Public Administration Review* 40, no. 4 (1980): 309–10.

than thirty years. They supported other artisans financially by collecting nearly 300 works of art and artifacts, many created by Ojibwe artists local to Manitoulin.³⁵

Lin characterized her marriage with Vincent more than four decades later as “enriching and strengthening.” His IU colleagues, however, recognized Vincent for his gruffness and unrestrained debate style. “Vince is a tough son of a gun,” commented Lin. “I think that this is a hard thing to learn in marriage, to fight back and not take it personally,” she continued.³⁶ In Vincent, Lin found an intellectual partner she admired and someone with whom she could verbally spar. In 1990, Lin dedicated what would become her most widely recognized publication, *Governing the Commons*, “To Vincent: For his love and contestation.”³⁷ For those in the Ostroms’ close network of peers, students, visiting scholars, friends, and staff around their Workshop, contestation became a shared method for intellectual discovery early on. “And by contestation they meant intense engagement in discussion but actually in a respectful way and actually listening to what the other was saying. And so it’s really engagement,” explained the Ostroms’ friend and colleague Michael McGinnis.³⁸ Like athletes who committed to regular exercise regimens, Lin and Vincent committed to stretching their minds, pushing through any pain as essential to their intellectual growth.

About their dynamic, Vincent said, “Without Lin’s complimentary interests my work would have ground to a halt many years ago.”³⁹ While Vincent was known for his interest in theory, Lin complemented his work through her application of public choice theory to studying situations when humans had limited resources. She conducted field studies using interview and

³⁵ See Indiana University Mathers Museum of World Cultures Elinor and Vincent Ostrom Collection.

³⁶ E. Ostrom, interview by Kristen Monroe, [ca. 2000], transcript, box 178, folder “Publicity-Interviews Given Transcript Nov. 6, 2000,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

³⁷ E. Ostrom, *Governing the Commons*.

³⁸ Michael McGinnis, interview by Sara Clark, June 10, 2014, transcript, “Coming Together.”

³⁹ Minoti Chakravarty, “Vincent and Elinor Ostrom: Intellectual Entrepreneurs in the Political Sciences,” *Polycentric Circles* 6 no. 1 (December 1999), box 380, folder “Workshop-Miscellaneous Polycentric Circles, 1998-2004,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

survey methods to understand human interactions, used game theory to predict human behavior, and considered how global communities developed arrangements to govern limited resources and how these arrangements are shaped by culture and environment. Through their exchanges—each having distinctive, yet well-matched academic strengths—they learned and modeled disagreement as a means for identifying innovative solutions to problems.

The interdisciplinary approach Lin developed with Vincent through their Workshop depended on contestation. David Swindell, an alumnus of the Ostrom Workshop, recalled the intellectual and personal model he observed in Lin and Vincent’s partnership: “there were tender moments that were really interesting to see and understand that you could have great disagreements, really intense disagreements and that does not define the relationship at all. In fact, it can strengthen the relationship.”⁴⁰ Workshoppers participating as students, staff, peers or visitors practiced contestation as a way of doing business, a key process of knowledge production at the Bloomington School.

Though Lin eventually received broad financial backing to study police performance in major United States cities, her initial findings based on Indianapolis research were harshly received by skeptical establishment scholars unwilling to trust citizen survey data over traditional quantitative metrics: “we received considerable criticism when we presented papers at professional meetings about our reliance on survey data, rather than official crime data, as measure of performance.”⁴¹ Practicing contestation in the Workshop prepared Lin prepared for the challenge of gaining the trust of her peers. In response to “skepticism about citizen capacity to measure performance,” Lin and a team of scholars associated with the Workshop developed

⁴⁰ David Swindell, interview by Joseph Stahlman, June 21, 2014, transcript, “Coming Together.”

⁴¹ E. Ostrom, “Learning from the Field,” in *Elinor Ostrom and the Bloomington School of Political Economy: A Framework for Policy Analysis*, ed. Daniel H. Cole and Michael D. McGinnis, vol. 3 (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017), 397.

the Measurement Project.⁴² In order to establish the credibility of their citizen respondents, the team developed a method for measuring street brightness using a light meter and similarly, one for measuring road roughness, a “roughometer.” This device could be dragged behind a vehicle, producing a graph of the roughness of neighborhood streets, including measuring the depth of potholes. Comparing citizen observations with those of the light meter and roughometer, gave support to the notion that “citizens could give [them] reasonable evaluations of public services.”⁴³ Her patience and persistence were supported by contestation with Vincent and other Workshoppers. Lin sought active engagement with ideas and with people and not disagreement. Through contestation Lin created community and collaboration.

III. Collaboration

Collaboration to Lin meant most importantly to give full consideration to others, to assemble teams of globally and disciplinarily diverse thinkers, and to create structures that facilitated teamwork. In all of these efforts, Lin also communed with others by developing personal connections, offering trust, and by sharing her personality. The Workshop has been called an institution and a network; it is a physical location and a set of ideas that work to assemble a global community of scholars.⁴⁴ In the year after she received the Nobel, Lin remarked on the importance of the unique organizational structure of the Workshop to her success saying, “We have a different style of organizing. It is an interdisciplinary center—we have graduate students, visiting scholars, and faculty working together. I never would have won the Nobel but for being part of that enterprise.”⁴⁵ The boundaries of the Workshop research were fluid, flowing between the physical walls of the Workshop building, the Ostroms’ home in

⁴² Ibid., 398.

⁴³ E. Ostrom, “Learning from the Field,” 398.

⁴⁴ Paul Dragos Aligica, interview by Joseph Stahlman, 18 June 2014, transcript, “Coming Together.”

⁴⁵ Fran Korten, “Elinor Ostrom Wins Nobel for Common(s) Sense,” *Yes! Magazine*, Spring 2010, <https://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/america-the-remix/elinor-ostrom-wins-nobel-for-common-s-sense>.

Bloomington, and carried with those who identified as Workshoppers. On a typical occasion for those associated with Workshop research, dinner at the Ostroms' rural Bloomington home brought the community together: "This next weekend I will have the entire crew of people who went to St. Louis here to the house for a hike and a early supper."⁴⁶ Other structures for scholarly exchange and community for Workshoppers included regular colloquia presentations by local and visiting scholars, opportunities for long- or short-term visiting scholar positions, internal publications support, and financial backing for small- and large-scale research programs for junior and senior scholars. Beginning in 1994 Workshoppers gathered at Indiana University every five years for WOW, a Workshop on the Ostrom Workshop. Like a family reunion, the conference held every five years creates physical stability for this otherwise geographically disparate group.

Two residencies at Bielefeld University's Center for Interdisciplinary Research, helped to shape the development of the approach to interdisciplinary collaboration that Lin refined with Vincent at their Workshop. Studying at the Center—locally as ZiF (Zentrum für interdisziplinäre Forschung)—at Bielefeld University in Germany gave Lin awareness of a successful institutional arrangement that could help to facilitate interdisciplinarity. In 1981, she joined Vincent to participate in a research group on "Guidance, Control, and Performance Evaluation in the Public Sector," and she returned again on her own in 1988 to join one of her mentor's Reinhard Selton to study "Game Theory and the Behavior Sciences." "This was an important event in both of our intellectual journeys," Lin said of these experiences decades later.⁴⁷ As part of a group of elite scholars from across the social sciences living and working together in Bielefeld, the

⁴⁶ E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 10 April 1972, box 174, folder "EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1968-1976," Elinor Ostrom Papers; E. Ostrom to Leah Awan, 23 October 1972, box 174, folder "EO-Correspondence Awan, Leah 1968-1976," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁴⁷ E. Ostrom, "A Long Polycentric Journey," 11.

Ostroms recognized the potential for interdisciplinary research to be facilitated through its environs. The structure provided by the research group and regular presentations allowed for intersections across disciplines to emerge.⁴⁸ More important than learning German during her stays at ZiF, Lin participated in interdisciplinary communication by identifying and defining terms relevant to their research group's inquiry. Their skills in contestation allowed Lin and Vincent to bridge the biggest obstacle of understanding "the way colleagues from different disciplines *think*—their assumptions; concepts; categories; methods of discerning, evaluating, and reporting 'truth'; and styles of arguing—their disciplinary cultures and habits of mind."⁴⁹ Lin and Vincent put these tools into action as they planned their Workshop, including refocusing globally to prioritize a comparative research program.⁵⁰

As a team member and leader, Lin brought people together but also relished in the details of group exchange. Lin recognized the importance of trust to the success of her collaborations. "In small to medium-sized groups, it's really important. In the lab, the face-to-face communication builds trust, agreements, coordination. Without it, you don't go anywhere," she stated in an interview in 2010.⁵¹ In a memo typical of the way she synthesized research developments and communication through detailed written reflection Lin wrote, "David's comments reverberated in my head all day Sunday as Vincent and I madly tried to get started with some of our packing and planning for our trip to Poland. I thought I would try to write out some of my reflections this morning while they were still fresh." The Saturday prior in April

⁴⁸ Sabine Maasen, "Introducing Interdisciplinarity: Irresistible Infliction? The Example of a Research Group at the Center for Interdisciplinary Research (ZiF), Bielefeld, Germany," in *Practicing Interdisciplinarity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 176.

⁴⁹ Myra Strober, *Interdisciplinary Conversations: Challenging Habits of Thought* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 4.

⁵⁰ V. Ostrom and E. Ostrom to John Lombardi and Morton Lowengrub, "Ten-Year Prospectus for the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis," c. 1 January 1986, box. 383, folder "Addl. Acc.-Jan. 2014-Writings-VO-Notes-1989; VO on the Workshop," Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁵¹ "Working Together: A Q&A with Elinor Ostrom," *IU Research & Creative Activity* 32 no. 2: 6-9.

1986 Lin met with colleagues David Feeny, Hartmut Picht, Peter Bogason, and Susan Wynne to discuss forms for coding pool resources. Those around her took note: “She always focuses on content, is generous in providing feedback and collaboration, and is constantly innovative and explores new approaches.”⁵²

Lin practiced collaboration as an instructor in traditional classroom settings, as well as by involving students in long-term research projects. Her teaching philosophy centered on learning as a co-productive process. “She expected you to be a co-producer of knowledge. This concept of coproduction is important...in order for something to be produced the consumer of that product or service has to participate in the production process,” stated former student Paul Dragos Aligica, now a Senior Research Fellow at the F. A. Hayek Program for Advanced Study in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics at the well-known Mercatus Center at George Mason University. “You can’t generate education and learning with people that don’t want to participate in the process of learning and being educated, right?” he continued.⁵³

IV. Openness to Multiple Solutions

Lin’s willingness to pursue divergent methods, to contemplate diverse ways of thinking, and to consider multiple solutions to complex problems connected her life in and out of the classroom. The two most important theoretical foundations for her work were the theory of polycentricity, developed by Vincent with Charlie Tiebout and Robert Warren, and the theory of bounded rationality, developed by 1978 recipient of the Nobel Prize in Economics, Herbert Simon.⁵⁴ Polycentricity, “literally meaning ‘having more than one center,’ was adopted by the

⁵² Sarah Auffret, “Collective Action, Singular Accomplishment: ASU Magazine Interviews 2009 Nobel Laureate Elinor Ostrom,” box 115, folder “Writings-EO-Publicity-Writings about EO 2010,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁵³ Paul Dragos Aligica, interview by Joseph Stahlman, 18 June 2014, transcript, “Coming Together.”

⁵⁴ V. Ostrom, Charles M. Tiebout, and Robert Warren, “The Organization of Government in Metropolitan Areas: A Theoretical Inquiry,” *American Political Science Review* 55, no. 4 (1961): 831–842; V. Ostrom, “Polycentricity (Part 1),” in *Polycentricity and Local Public Economies*, ed. Michael McGinnis (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 52–74; V. Ostrom, “Polycentricity (Part 2),” in *Polycentricity and Local Public Economies*,

Ostroms to describe situations in which authority and decision making are shared among a number of people or organizations” and remains the most relevant to Lin’s interdisciplinary practice.⁵⁵ Her willingness to consider options beyond the market or a hierarchical approach to governance made her exceptional; through the findings of field research early in her career, Lin could see these were not the only possible solutions.⁵⁶ “Basically, I believe that solving problems related to the long-term sustainability of common-pool resources and the efficient provision of public goods is difficult but not impossible,” Lin summarized.⁵⁷ For Lin, there were “all sorts of ways of organizing at multiple scales, not only big or only small,” a polycentric approach.⁵⁸

Interdisciplinarity is easy to comprehend once polycentric governance is understood. The decentralized approach to governance that Lin often studied echoed the institutional arrangements she developed with the Workshop and later at ASU through Center for the Study of Institutional Analysis (renamed the Center for the Study of Institutional Diversity). Like the systems she and Vincent studied outside the university, both enterprises offered polycentric structures by providing an alternate center for organizing outside of the department, discipline-based system. Governance within the university might come from one’s “home” department, the university president, or any number of workshops. The Center at ASU was established in 2006 “to provide transdisciplinary research and educational environment in which to perform institutional analysis of social-ecological systems.”⁵⁹ This use of “transdisciplinarity” may have signaled a move beyond disciplines, but it is also no coincidence that these changes coincided

ed. Michael McGinnis (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 119–38; Herbert A. Simon, *Models of Man, Social and Rational* (New York: Wiley, 1957).

⁵⁵ Barbara Allen, “The Story of Vincent and Elinor Ostrom,” interview by Jay Walljasper, *On the Commons*, January 10, 2014, <http://www.onthecommons.org/magazine/story-vincent-and-elinor-ostrom>.

⁵⁶ E. Ostrom, “Learning from the Field,” 407.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ “Working Together: A Q&A with Elinor Ostrom,” *IU Research & Creative Activity*, 2009: 6-9.

⁵⁹ Marco A. Janssen, “Director’s Message,” Center for Behavior, Institutions and the Environment, accessed October 21, 2018, <https://cbie.asu.edu/directors-message>.

with new ASU President Michael Crow’s advocacy for reforming the American research university “as a complex and adaptive comprehensive knowledge enterprise committed to discovery, creativity, and innovation, accessible to the broadest possible demographic, socioeconomically as well as intellectually.”⁶⁰ It is unknown if Lin was party to this rhetorical shift, but at the very least, her interdisciplinary approach and the research structure she brought from IU to ASU served as a precursor to this change.

As awareness increased of Lin’s response to Garrett Hardin’s “tragedy of the commons” thesis—that individuals will act in their own self interest leading to shared resource depletion—confusion also arose.⁶¹ Lin argued there were alternate solutions to the commons-dilemma. In studying Lin’s findings, one must inevitably conclude that situational details are important; “some individuals organize themselves to govern and manage [common pool resources] and others do not.”⁶² A motto Lin’s students knew well suggested: There are “no panaceas” or single solutions to complex problems. “Policy analysts who would recommend a single prescription for commons problems have paid little attention to how diverse institutional arrangements operate in practice,” wrote Lin in her introduction to *Governing*.⁶³ However, Lin’s ability to see and prove multiple solutions for commons resource management where others had only seen a single option caused controversy. In an academic conversation focused on centralization and privatization, Lin’s multiple solutions pushed a new paradigm: “People say I disproved him, and I come back and say ‘No, that’s not right. I’ve not disproved him. I’ve shown that his assertion

⁶⁰ Michael M. Crow and William B. Dabars, *Designing the New American University* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015), 8.

⁶¹ Garrett Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons,” *Science* 162, no. 3859 (December 13, 1968): 1244, doi:10.1126/science.162.3859.1243.

⁶² E. Ostrom, *Governing the Commons*, 27.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 21-22.

that common property will always be degraded is wrong.’’ ‘‘It’s just that he went too far. He said people could never manage the commons well,’’ Lin continued.⁶⁴

One outgrowth of Lin’s research program—supported by her entrepreneurial instincts— included her ability to create collaborative research networks that aligned interdisciplinary research scholars. Lin fostered an interdisciplinary practice in her work and the work of others that facilitated cross-disciplinary communication through standardized data collection protocols like the International Forestry Resources and Institutions (IFRI) program established in 1992. By 2010, IFRI protocols could be found in use in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Guatemala, Mexico, Bolivia, Colombia, Nepal, India, Thailand, Ethiopia, and China. Like her other collaborative efforts, its success not only depended upon assembling diverse disciplinary perspectives but also capitalizing on the diverse methodological expertise the represented disciplines offered. IFRI, for example, included ‘‘doing careful research on both the social and ecological aspects of how governance affects forests.’’⁶⁵ Her Social Ecological (SES) Framework was a hallmark interdisciplinary result, an integration of concepts allowing for broader analysis across the interactions of humans and their physical environments.⁶⁶ Ultimately products of these research efforts offered ways to manage the complexity of human behavior and to document our diverse institutional arrangements so that human behavior might more accurately be understood, rather than by applying oversimplified metaphors.

⁶⁴ Fran Korten, ‘‘Common(s) Sense Wins One,’’ *Yes!* 53 (Spring 2010).

⁶⁵ ‘‘Working Together: A Q&A with Elinor Ostrom,’’ *IU Research & Creative Activity* 32 no. 2: 6-9.

⁶⁶ For background on the SES Framework see Harini Nagendra and E. Ostrom, ‘‘Applying the Social-Ecological System Framework to the Diagnosis of Urban Lake Commons in Bangalore, India,’’ *Ecology and Society* 19, no. 2 (2014); Michael D. McGinnis and E. Ostrom, ‘‘Social-Ecological System Framework: Initial Changes and Continuing Challenges,’’ *Ecology and Society* 19, no. 2 (2014); John M. Anderies, Marco A. Janssen, and E. Ostrom, ‘‘A Framework to Analyze the Robustness of Social-Ecological Systems from an Institutional Perspective,’’ *Ecology and Society* 9, no. 1 (2004).

Conclusion

When asked about the challenge of finding a place to do the kind of interdisciplinary research she wanted to do, Lin replied simply, “Yes, it’s always been difficult.”⁶⁷ Lin, with Vincent, created places to practice interdisciplinarity across a global intellectual community in all of their partnerships and especially through their Workshop. “Finding a home for cross-disciplinary work is never easy in the highly compartmentalized and narrowly turf-conscious environment of the contemporary American university,” observed their dear friend and colleague Mike McGinnis.⁶⁸ McGinnis and many others found a home for this unique practice at the Workshop and in the networked community that extended beyond its walls.

⁶⁷ Sarah Auffret, “Collective Action, Singular Accomplishment: ASU Magazine Interviews 2009 Nobel Laureate Elinor Ostrom,” box 115, folder “Writings-EO-Publicity-Writings about EO 2010,” Elinor Ostrom Papers.

⁶⁸ Michael McGinnis, “Elinor Ostrom: A Career in Institutional Analysis,” *PS: Political Science & Politics*, December 1996, 738.

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- Wynkoop, Mary Ann. *Dissent in the Heartland: The Sixties at Indiana University*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002.

Curriculum Vitae
Sara C. Clark
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EDUCATION

Ph.D. History, Philosophy, and Policy in Education with a concentration in History of Education, April 2019
Indiana University, Bloomington, IN

Dissertation title: "Elinor Ostrom: A Biography of Interdisciplinary Life"

Committee: Dionne Danns, Jason Baird Jackson, Andrea Walton (Chair), Donald Warren

M.S. History and Philosophy of Education (2013)

Indiana University, Bloomington, IN

B.A. Interdisciplinary Studies - American Studies (2011)

Truman State University, Kirksville, MO, summa cum laude

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Intern, The Learning Center

Government Accountability Office, Washington, DC (October 2018-May 2019)

- Conduct evaluation of New Manager Leadership Development Program by providing research design, project management, data collection, and qualitative and quantitative analysis of course feedback surveys.
- Write script, moderate, and complete content analysis of 10 focus groups with federal agency managers.
- Teach leadership development training to analysts, auditors, and operations staff.
- Provide instructional methods consultation for new analyst curriculum, including courses in research methodology.

Professional Development Coordinator

Covington & Burling, LLP, Washington, DC (September 2017-September 2018)

- Delivered Firm and practice specific training to more than 1000 attorneys in 12 international offices by managing all program logistics including consultant management, scheduling, registration, materials, conference facilities, technology, and financial records.
- Acted as liaison for training throughout the Firm, as well as all internal presenters and outside consultants and vendors, including producing annual Course Catalog.
- Ensured firm-sponsored programs comply with state continuing legal education (CLE) requirements, including facilitating first successful CLE completion in Dubai office.
- Served as learning management system administrator.

Research Associate, Mathers Museum of World Cultures

Indiana University, Bloomington, IN (2016-2019)

- Serve as non-IU faculty appointed to contribute expertise to the museum, partner in projects, and work as part of the museum's global research community.
- This is a 3-year term appointment.

Associate Instructor, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

Indiana University, Bloomington, IN (Spring 2017)

- Taught History of American Education, an asynchronous online graduate course designed for master's students in Educational Leadership focusing on historical analysis of colonial through 20th century school policy development.

Associate Instructor, Student Academic Center

Indiana University, Bloomington, IN (August 2015- May 2016)

- Taught Introduction to Campus Resources, an undergraduate 8-week introduction to campus life for first-year students (primarily 21st Century Scholars) with a focus on identity development and academic skills.

- Taught Culture of College, a semester-length course designed to support students placed on academic probation, including mentoring/co-teaching two undergraduate peer instructors.

Associate Instructor, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
Indiana University, Bloomington, IN (2014-2015)

- Taught Introduction to Educational Thought, an undergraduate writing-intensive course for pre-service teachers and education policy minors that introduces philosophy of education from classical to modern thinkers.

Oral History Researcher/Project Manager, Center for the Study of History and Memory
Indiana University, Bloomington, IN (Summer 2014)

- Provided project management for College of Arts and Sciences grant-funded research project “Coming Together: An Oral History of the Ostrows and their Scholarly Impact on Problem Solving” (30+ interviews recorded and transcribed).
- Recruited, hired, trained, and supervised advanced interdisciplinary graduate student team.
- Conducted, transcribed, and archived oral history interviews.

Co-Founder and Co-Curator/Editor, *Education’s Histories* (November 2013-present)

- Develop *Education’s Histories*, an open access peer-reviewed online journal, focused on methods and innovations in the history of education field.
- Collaborate to edit, facilitate peer review, manage web content, and layout longform PDF articles. Visit <http://www.educationshistories.org/> for more information.
- Note: *Education’s Histories* is permanently archived with ScholarWorks at University of Montana (<http://scholarworks.umt.edu/eduhist/>) and accessible via Google Scholar.

Graduate Assistant, Foundations of Education Program
Indiana University, Bloomington, IN (2013-2014, academic year)

- Assist with program evaluation of Master’s program in International and Comparative Education.

Associate Instructor, Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
Indiana University, Bloomington, IN (Spring 2013)

- Taught Education and American Culture, an undergraduate writing-intensive course for pre-service teachers that focuses on history, policy, and comparative education, primarily in the United States.

Graduate Assistant, Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
Indiana University, Bloomington, IN (Fall 2012)

- Organized and distributed weekly departmental newsletters.
- Completed educational research and gathered data to determine enrollment and course offerings.

Graduate Research Assistant, German Ridge Heritage Project, *Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology*
Indiana University, Bloomington, IN (Summer 2012)

- Assisted with teaching and logistics of historic archaeological field school through combination of onsite field instruction, classroom lectures, and creation of student handbook.
- Conducted oral history interviews and archival research.
- Recruited community volunteers, presented orientation session for employees, students, and local community, and coordinated television, newspaper, and radio promotional interviews.

Teaching Assistant, Office of Interdisciplinary Studies
Truman State University, Kirksville, MO (Fall 2010)

- Team-taught IDS175: Introduction to Interdisciplinary Studies, a writing-intensive course for students in a self-designed degree program.

HONORS

School of Education Fellow, Indiana University, 2011-2015
Summa Cum Laude (valedictorian), Truman State University, 2011
President's Leadership Scholarship, Truman State University, 2007-2011

PUBLICATIONS

Book Chapters

Clark, Sara. "Elinor Ostrom: On Interdisciplinary Living," in *Andrea Walton, editor. Women at Indiana University: Views of the Past and the Future (forthcoming Indiana University Press)*.

Refereed Articles and Reviews

Clark, Sara. A review of *The 4-H Harvest: Sexuality and the State in Rural America* by Gabriel N. Rosenberg. *History of Education Quarterly* 56, no. 3 (August 1, 2016): 508-11.

Clark, Sara. "Remembering in Order to Forget." *Education's Histories*, July 30, 2015.
<http://www.educationshistories.org/remembering-forget/>.

Clark, Sara. "Envisioning Schoolhouse Nostalgia and the Pastoral Retreat: A Rural Landscape Approach to Educational History." *American Educational History Journal* 41, no. 2 (2014): 269-280.

Clark, Sara and Abigail Gundlach-Graham. Review of *Civic Learning through Agricultural Improvement* by Glenn Lauzon. *American Educational History Journal* 41, no. 1 (2014): 255-266.

Clark, Sara. "On Again, Off Again: A Historical Look at the Role of Eugenics in Margaret Sanger's Campaign for Birth Control." *The Apprentice Historian* 14 (2008): 21-34.

Public Scholarship

Clark, Sara and Adrea Lawrence. "A Methods Guide to HES 2015." *Education's Histories*, October 28, 2015.
<http://www.educationshistories.org/hes-2015-methods-guide/>.

Clark, Sara. "A Methodology Guide to the 2014 History of Education Society Meeting." *Education's Histories*, October 19, 2014. <http://www.educationshistories.org/methodology-guide-2014-history-education-society-meeting/>.

Clark, Sara and Adrea Lawrence. "Tool Review: Working in WordPress and InDesign, A Conversation." *Education's Histories*, July 24, 2014. <http://www.educationshistories.org/tool-review-indesign-wordpress/>.

Clark, Sara. "Summer at Ravenscroft: How Puzzle Building Can Help You On Site!" *Dig Magazine* (February 2011): 20-21.

Exhibitions

Berry, Dorothy, **Sara Clark**, Brian Forist, and Matthew Strandmark. "Ojibwe Public Art: Ostrom Private Lives." Digital Exhibition at Mathers Museum of World Cultures, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN.
<http://dlib.indiana.edu/omeka/mathers/exhibits/show/ojibwe-public-art--ostrom-priv>.

Berry, Dorothy, **Sara Clark**, and Brian Forist. "Ojibwe Public Art: Ostrom Private Lives." Exhibition at Mathers Museum of World Cultures, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN. Spring 2014.

Clark, Sara. "Model Rural Educators: John R. Kirk and Marie Turner Harvey." Exhibition at Ruth W. Towne Museum and Visitor's Center, Truman State University, Kirksville, MO. 2011-2013.

Refereed Conference Presentations

Clark, Sara and Adrea Lawrence. "Digital Peer-Review: Establishing Best Practices and Academic Standards." Organization of American Historians Annual Conference, Sacramento, CA, 12-14 April 2018.

Clark, Sara. "Dissertation Research in Digital: The Ostrom Case." Presentation at History of Education Society Annual Conference, Saint Louis, MO, 5-8 November 2015.

Clark, Sara. "Here We Are: A Preliminary Collective Educational Life History of the Female Academic." Presentation at History of Education Society Annual Conference, Indianapolis, IN, 6-9 November 2014.

Clark, Sara. "Educating Elinor: An Early Educational History of Elinor Ostrom." Presentation at Organization of Educational Historians Annual Conference, Chicago, IL, 26-27 September 2014.

Clark, Sara. "Life After Teardown: A Discussion and Case Study of Omeka Content Management System for Digital Exhibition." Presentation at Association of Indiana Museums Annual Conference, Indianapolis, IN, 21-22 September 2014.

Clark, Sara. "Schoolhouse Nostalgia and the Pastoral Retreat: A Rural Landscape Approach to Educational History." Presentation at Organization of Educational Historians Annual Conference, Chicago, IL, 4-5 October 2014.

Clark, Sara. "Learning to Live on the Ridge: A Local History of German Ridge, Indiana." Presentation at History of Education Society Annual Conference, Seattle, WA, 1-4 November 2012.

Clark, Sara. "A Classroom History of Country Teachers: A Historiographical Review of Rural Education, Teachers, and Classroom Spaces." Presentation at Southern History of Education Society Annual Conference, Tallahassee, FL, 8-10 March 2012.

Clark, Sara. "Graduate Student Archival Research Session: Chicago Public Schools." Presentation at History of Education Society Annual Conference, Chicago, IL, 3-6 November 2011.

Invited Presentations

Clark, Sara and Adrea Lawrence. "Collaboration as Students and Scholars in the Digital Age: Writing, Pedagogy, and Publication." Presentation at History of Education Society Annual Conference, Indianapolis, IN, 6-9 November 2014. [Invited by Society Graduate Student Committee]

RESEARCH

Grants Received

Bodnar, John (PI). *Coming Together: An Oral History of the Ostroms and their Scholarly Impact on Problem Solving*. College of Arts and Sciences, Ostrom Grants Program, Indiana University, Bloomington, 2013-2014. (\$8,000 from College of Arts and Sciences; \$1,500 in additional support raised)

- Initiated grant and served as a lead writer

Truman Summer Undergraduate Research Grant. *Missouri's African American Historic Sites: Research and Field Study*. Office of Student Research, TruScholars Summer Undergraduate Research Program. Truman State University, Kirksville, MO, 2010. (\$3,000)

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

IU School of Education, Faculty and Budgetary Affairs Committee, student representative, 2014-2015.

IU School of Education, "Speak Up and Listen: A Panel Conversation on How Educators Negotiate Equity in Education (Gender, Sexuality, Race, Class, Age, Religion)", panel organizer, Fall 2013

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

American Educational History Journal, Editorial Review Board, 2014-2017.

Organization of Educational Historians, proposal reviewer, 2013-2017.

History of Education Society, Graduate Student Committee, 2012-2014.