Abstract
Social Science as Bricolage: Connection, Improvisation and Recycling

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Using the metaphor of cooking, an art and a practical process, I will talk about how the successful cook parallels the successful social scientist in their ways of finding the materials of finished product. After laying out some general principles, I will show a series of images focusing on persuasion through fear—that were “cooked” using these principles of induction.”

The general principles include things such as following rules (recipes), improvising from found objects (what’s in the refrigerator, market?), gendered practices.

Creativity is a process and an activity built from found objects—in the kitchen, the street or the archive. Ideally creativity can lead to new ideas, new processes and maybe even new dishes.

As an example, I will present a series of slides that depict the social ecology of fear in American political culture that I will show to illustrate the process in a more standard social science venue.

The slides though unrelated in time and space provide a recycled material object that speaks to the deep culture of American political process.