

AALS Dispute Resolution Section Works in Progress Conference

“Rethinking Individuality”

Our evolutionary history is one of transitions from the more simple to the more complex. From replicating molecules to genes to chromosomes to single-celled organisms to multi-cellularity to social groups to urbanization, at each transition, mechanisms developed to balance the collective good against the individual interests of the simpler structures below.

We now face the transition to what, at least for now, is the ultimately complex level of social organization - globalization, but are struggling to develop mechanisms supportive of the multi-cultural, multi-sovereign, multi-jurisdictional contexts which define some of our most pressing challenges.

In this work, we encourage a rethinking of our notions of individuality, the embracing of the power of social networks, and the implementation of simple individual actions that leverage our most ingrained tendencies to do good - for benefits that accrue at the largest scale.

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