Handbook of Community Sentiment
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For my colleagues and friends at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, past and present, who helped me become who I am today. Without you, this book is not possible

M.M.

Dedicated to my family

J.B.

To Jaclyn, Maelyn, and Callie. I always care what you guys think

J.C.
Acknowledgments

In a way, this book is the result of three “generations” of scholars’ shared interest in community sentiment. Jeremy published his article “Who Decides? Privileging Public Sentiment about Justice and the Substantive Law” in 2003. That article, along with Norman Finkel’s seminal book “Commonsense Justice: Jurors’ Notion of the Law” (2001), sparked Monica’s interest in including a section on community sentiment in her graduate course. Eventually, the notion of community sentiment took hold of that course and became a recurring theme. Students were drawn to the notion of if, when, and how the public’s sentiment shapes—and is shaped by—the law. As one of Monica’s students, Jared learned about community sentiment while taking Monica’s graduate course. He went on to design a dissertation which, among other things, measured how social cognitive processes change sentiment toward gay rights. This furthered Monica’s interest in community sentiment, and how it can be measured, changed, and interact with justice principles. Soon, the desire for a “one stop” book on community sentiment was born. A few dozen emails later, a book proposal was born.

As editors, we were fortunate enough to secure contributions from many fine scholars who study community sentiment in one form or another—on a variety of topics, using a variety of methodologies. Our thanks go to these chapter authors who made this book a reality. Our hope is that this book will provide an all-encompassing overview of community sentiment research that will help scholars in a variety of fields better understand community sentiment and its relationship with law.

Monica was on sabbatical for a portion of the development of this book and thus would like to thank the University of Nevada, Reno; the College of Liberal Arts; the department of Criminal Justice, the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program in Social Psychology; and all of her colleagues, family, and friends who were so supportive along the way.

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As with any project of this magnitude, it was a roller coaster ride. Through the twists and turns, the book took shape and was a fun adventure that gave us a good excuse to keep in touch. In all, this was a fun project to work on and an accomplishment that all the editors and chapter authors are proud to have produced. We hope readers have as positive sentiment about this book as we do!
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