

# The AGORA

Newsletter of the Rationality and Society Section of the American Sociological Association and the Research Committee on Rational Choice of the International Sociological Association

Summer 2008

---

## ASA Section Officers

2007-2008

### Chair

**Trond Petersen**

**University of California-Berkeley**

### Chair-Elect

**Brent Simpson**

**University of South Carolina**

### Past Chair

**Edgar Kiser**

**University of Washington**

### Secretary-Treasurer

**Howard T. Welser**

**Cornell University**

### Council Members

**Andreas Flache**

**University of Groningen**

**Jane Sell**

**Texas A&M University**



## From the Section Chair's Desk

Trond Petersen

[trond@berkeley.edu](mailto:trond@berkeley.edu)

---

We are looking forward to an energetic and thought provoking ASA meeting this coming August. Mark your calendars for our section day--August 3rd. On page 3 of this newsletter, you will find a listing for the activities of the section. Of particular importance and as a demonstration of the vitality of our section, I would especially like to urge everyone to attend our business meeting at 5:30. Immediately after this meeting we will have our reception, held jointly with the Mathematical Sociology section, from 6:30 to 8:10 in the Hilton Boston Back Bay.

On the next page, you will find an message and invitation from Mitch Sato, the President of The International Sociological Association, RC45, Rational Choice. This invitation is an attractive one that can promote more research and teaching connections. Such issues will be further discussed at our business meeting.

See you in Boston!

---

## Officers of the ISA, RC45

### President

**Yoshimichi Sato**  
Tohoku University

### Board Members

**Kazuto Misumi**  
Kyushu University

**Antonio M. Chiesi**  
University of Milano

**Dianne Payne**  
University of College Dublin

**Hanno Scholtz**  
University of Zurich

**Rafael Wittek**  
University of Groningen

**Lynne Zucker**  
UCLA

### Newsletter Editor

**Martin Abraham**

## Yoshimichi Sato Tohoku University

### Message from the President of the Research Committee: Bridging Social Capital in the Enhancement of Rational Choice Theory



On behalf of Research Committee on Rational Choice (RC45) of the ISA I would like to take this opportunity to introduce its current board members. They are Kazuto Misumi (Japan), Antonio M. Chiesi (Italy), Diane Payne (Ireland), Hanno Scholtz (Switzerland), Rafael Wittek (The Netherlands), Lynne Zucker (U.S.A.), and Yoshimichi Sato (Japan). Martin Abraham (Germany) is co-editor of AGORA, although he is not a board member. RC45 is proud of its diversified membership as reflected in the countries of the board members and has been active in co-sponsoring international conferences with local research institutes. Recent conferences were held in Leipzig in Germany, Fukuoka in Japan, Groningen in the Netherlands, and Zurich in Switzerland. In addition, it will organize some sessions at the First ISA Forum of Sociology in Barcelona this September.

Some members of RC45, including me, are also members of the Section on Rationality and Society of the ASA. They would serve as a bridge between the two research communities. Both of them are small groups, but international linkages between them would enhance their presence in the ISA and the ASA. As a measure to do that, I have been talking with Edgar Kiser, Trond Petersen, and Brent Simpson about the possibility of cosponsoring a joint mini-conference on rational choice just after the ASA annual meeting in 2009. Ed Lawler, Thomas Voss, and Satoshi Kanazawa co-organized a wonderful ASA-ISA joint mini-conference on rational choice theory on the last day of the ASA meeting in Washington, DC in 2000. The 2009 mini-conference, if realized, would be another opportunity for the two research communities to know more about each other.

I am devoted to working as a liaison between RC45 and the Section on Rationality and Society. And your excellent research activities in them are the key to our success in large-scaled academic associations. I trust you would not become a free rider, because, as Olson pointed out, small groups can prevent free riding.

ASA Section Day is August 3

**361. Regular Session. Rational Choice: Theoretical Extensions**

Hilton Boston Back Bay

Session Organizer: Pamela E. Oliver, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Presider: James D. Montgomery, University of Wisconsin-Madison

A Minimal Theory of Action: Towards a Sociological Perspective on Formal Microfoundations. [Dirk-Hinrich Haar, University of Cambridge](#)

When Survival by Innovation is Confused with Innovators among Survivors: Causes of Institutionalization and Deinstitutionalization. [Jeong-han Kang, Cornell University](#)

Conflicting Cognitions or Interests: Explaining Attitudes of Opponents to Organizational Change. [Timo Johannes Septer and Jacob Dijkstra, University of Groningen](#)

Private Enterprises in Transitional China: A Game Theoretical Explanation of the Rise and Fall of "Red Hat". [Yujun Wang, Cornell University](#)

Discussant: [James D. Montgomery, University of Wisconsin-Madison](#)

**418. Section on Rationality and Society Paper Session. Rational Choice Theory: Developments and New Challenges**

Hilton Boston Back Bay

Session Organizer: Trond Petersen, University of California-Berkeley

Signaling Trustworthiness: Evidence from Lab Experiments. [Andreas Diekmann and Wojtek Przepiorka, ETH Zurich](#)

Structure, Information and Rationality. [David Willer, Pamela E. Emanuelson and Marcel Van Assen, University of South Carolina](#)

The Role of Education and Social Trust for Choices of Health Resources. [R. F. Valeeva, Utrecht University](#)

Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? [Axel Franzen and Sonja Pointner, University of Cologne](#)



**454. Section on Rationality and Society Invited Session. Rational Choice: The Challenge from Cognitive Psychology and Business Meeting**

Hilton Boston Back Bay

Session Organizer: Trond Petersen, University of California-Berkeley

5:30 PM

Section on Rationality and Society Business Meeting -- Hilton Boston Back Bay

6:30-8:10 PM

Reception with Mathematical Sociology--Hilton Boston Back Bay

