

The AGORA

Newsletter of the Rationality and Society Section of the American Sociological Association and the Research Committee 45 on Rational Choice of the International Sociological Association

Summer 2023



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From the Chair's Desk (ASA)

Neha Gondal



I hope you are all enjoying the end of the semester and the start of the summer! I would first like to thank section members for their hard work over the past year. First, a major thanks to Lucas Sage and Masayuki Kanai for their work on our Newsletters and the webpage. I would also like to thank our two paper award committees for their contributions to the section: The Best Graduate Student Paper Award comprising Minjae Kim, BK Lee, and Xi Song and the James S. Coleman Outstanding Article Award committee comprising Diego Leal, Katie Corcoran, and Jacob Dijkstra.

This leads me to some wonderful announcements. The winner of the 2023 James S. Coleman Outstanding Article Award is:

Kim, Minjae and Daniel DellaPosta. 2022. "The Fickle Crowd: Reinforcement and Contradiction of Quality Evaluations in Cultural Markets." *Organization Science* 33 (6): 2496–2518.

And the winner of the Best Graduate Student Paper Award is:

Chen-Shuo Hong, University of Massachusetts for his paper "Cultural Matching in Networks: A Combination of Machine Learning and Exponential Random Graph Models to Examine Homophily in Identity Performance."

We also have an honorable mention for this category, which goes to:

Michael Lachanski, University of Pennsylvania for

his paper, “The Demography of Job Instability: Evidence from the Postindustrial U.S., 1996–2019.”

I would also like to announce the results of the 2023 section elections:

Chair-Elect: Daniel DellaPosta, The Pennsylvania State University

Council Member: Masayuki Kanai, Senshu University

Student Representative: Manning Zhang, Brandeis University

Congratulations to the awardees and their representatives of the section! I would also like to thank all the candidates who agreed to run for office.

We have some exciting sessions planned for the upcoming ASA meetings in Philadelphia. First, we have a jointly sponsored session with Mathematical Sociology, ‘Mathematical and Computational Approaches to Agency and Social Networks,’ organized by Tony Paik. The session focuses on the interplay between agency and social networks through the use of mathematical concepts or computational techniques. Second, Fabien Accominotti is organizing ‘Situating Decision Making: New Sociological Directions.’ This session comprises papers exploring how new tools and data of computational social science help us to model decision-making behavior; how social networks and relations interact with cognitive and cultural mechanisms in shaping actors’ decisions; and how these dynamics play out in a wide range of empirical cases, from labor and product markets to political processes and life-course decisions. Finally, Maurice Bokanga and Kristen Tzoc are organizing our first section roundtable. While we did not receive many papers for that session, we hope that we will receive more papers in future years. Thanks to all the session organizers! The section’s business meeting is scheduled to occur on Saturday, August 19 at 11 am. This year, we are joining several sections in holding a joint reception, scheduled for Saturday, August 19, 6:30 to 9:30pm at Tir na nÓg Irish Pub. I hope to see many of you at our sessions, business meeting, and reception.

Finally, I want to close with an announcement regarding a change in our section’s title. You may recall from our business meeting last year and the previous AGORA newsletter that the section leadership has put forward a motion for a change in the section’s name. The motion was presented to the membership in the 2023 election, and I am happy to report that the change was approved by the section as well as ASA. In the near

future, the section will transition from the title of ‘Rationality and Society’ to ‘Decision-Making, Social Networks, and Society.’ I hope that this new title will better reflect the research agendas and scholarship of our section and help to invigorate membership. Please spread the news and encourage your colleagues and students to join the section.

Happy holidays!



2023 Rationality and Society James S. Coleman Outstanding Article Award

The Rationality and Society James S. Coleman Outstanding Article Award goes to:

Kim, Minjae and Daniel DellaPosta. 2022. “The Fickle Crowd: Reinforcement and Contradiction of Quality Evaluations in Cultural Markets.” *Organization Science* 33 (6): 2496–2518.

Committee members: Diego Leal (Chair), Katie Corcoran, and Jacob Dijkstra.

2023 Rationality and Society section award for Best Paper by a Graduate Student

The Rationality and Society Best Graduate Student Paper committee chose the following papers as winners (one as the award winner, the other as an honorable mention):

Winner: "Cultural Matching in Networks: A Combination of Machine Learning and Exponential Random Graph Models to Examine Homophily in Identity Performance" by Chen-Shuo Hong from University of Massachusetts

Honorable mention: "The Demography of Job Instability: Evidence from the Postindustrial U.S., 1996–2019" by Michael Lachanski from University of Pennsylvania

Committee members: Minjae Kim (Chair), BK Lee, and Xi Song.

The general objective of Research Committee 45 on Rational Choice is to advance the development of Rational Choice Theory. This includes its application to various explanatory problems across social science disciplines, its empirical test, its theoretical development and comparison with alternative approaches. The RC tries to achieve this general objective by promoting the international exchange of scientific information across disciplinary borders.

From the President's Desk

Jun Kobayashi



Dear RC45 community,

This should be my final message to you as an RC45 President. Challenged by an unprecedented pandemic, the last five years have been like an adventure for me.

The ISA Forum was postponed for one year and held fully online. The joint ASA pre-conference had to be repeatedly postponed but finally held in Los Angeles.

Now in the middle of 2023, the ISA World Congress is fast approaching in Melbourne, Australia. It is held in a hybrid form. About 3,000 onsite participants are expected with 1,000 online ones.

RC45 hosts 6 fascinating sessions with 23 papers from Monday to Thursday (Jun Kobayashi, Program coordinator). You can join online or onsite. See <https://isaconf.confex.com/isaconf/wc2023/meetingapp.cgi/Symposium/768>

634 Computational Social Science and Rational Choice

Session Organizer(s): Rense Corten, Yoshimichi Sato, Bas Hofstra, Hiroki Takikawa, Kazuto Misumi

635 Dynamics of Capitals and Social Inequality from the Rational Choice Perspective

Session Organizer(s): Masayuki Kanai

636 Evolution of Social Norms and Cooperation

Session Organizer(s): Andreas Diekmann

637 What makes sociology credible?

Session Organizer(s): Gianluca Manzo

639 RC45 Open Oral Session on Advances in Rational Choice Research

Session Organizer(s): Jun Kobayashi

640 Rational Choice and Unintended Consequences amid Social Crisis

Session Organizer(s): Naoki Sudo

Business meeting comes on Wednesday. Past activities are reported and future plans are discussed. You can also join online or onsite.

638 RC45 Business Meeting

Note that Masa and I plan RC45 group dinner after all the RC45 sessions—Thursday evening. The final session (Rational Choice and Unintended Consequences amid Social Crisis) ends by 19:20. Join us at a nearby restaurant. Details will be announced shortly.

On this occasion, let me look back on our 5-year activities.

Two issues a year (summer, winter/spring): Joint newsletters with ASA Rationality and Society section (Thanks to Wojtek, Lucas, and Masa, the editors).

February 2020: “Activities report for 2018–2019” to ISA secretariat. Masa and Jun.

February 2021: ISA Forum online. 6 oral sessions with 13 papers, 1 business meeting.

August 2022: 7th Joint ASA pre-conference in LA, with ASA Rationality and Society section, Math Soci section, and JAMS. 2 oral and 1 poster sessions with 16 papers. Kikuko Nagayoshi, Kazuhiro Kezuka, Jun Kobayashi, Richard Edward Gardner, and Gianluca Manzo, organizers.

February 2023: “Activities report for 2019–2022” to ISA secretariat. Masa and Jun.

April to June 2023: Board elections. Rense Corten, Electoral officer.

June to July 2023: ISA World Congress of Sociology Melbourne (hybrid). 6 oral sessions with 23 papers, 1 business meeting. Jun Kobayashi, Program coordinator.

After the coming business meeting, the new Board starts. The election process was implemented by Rense Corten, the Electoral Officer. Many thanks for his complex but indispensable efforts.

The new Board enjoys a nice mixture of fresh and veteran colleagues. I would heartily like to congratulate everyone who was elected.

Leaving from the Board are Masayuki Kanai, Rense

Corten, Michael Hechter, and Christine Horne. I can't thank them more for their long-term contributions to our community.

RC 45 has a rich, open, and transparent tradition. I really love it since I first met it in 1998 at the World Congress in Montreal. I have no doubt Gianluca, the new President, and the new Board will further enrich it.

Board election report

From the electoral officer: Rense Corten

Results:

President: Gianluca Manzo

Secretary/treasurer: Yoshimichi Sato

Board members: Xiaoguang Fan, Guillermina Jasso, Lucas Sage, Naoki Sudo, Rafael Wittek, and Tobias Wolbring.

According to the statutes, elections of the board are to be held every four years, which meant elections were due in 2023. In March 2023, I was appointed as Electoral Officer by the current board. In consultation with board, the procedure for the elections was as follows:

On March 17, the Electoral Officer distributed a call for nominations, to be submitted as on online form until April 15. After the nomination deadline, the Electoral Officer verified that the nominees were indeed members in good standing (as per the statutes) and willing to serve on the board on the position(s) for which they were nominated. On April 26, I distributed the ballot with the slate of candidates. The ballot was to be returned by e-mail. A reminder was

sent on May 26, and voting closed on May 31.

The candidates, as nominated by the members and after confirmation, were the following:

For the position of president (1 position): Gianluca Manzo.

For the position of secretary-treasurer (1 position): Lucas Sage, Naoki Sudo, and Yoshimichi Sato.

For the position of board member (6 positions): Xiaoguang Fan, Guillermina Jasso, Lucas Sage, Yoshimichi Sato, Naoki Sudo, Rafael Wittek, and Tobias Wolbring.

In total, there were 103 votes by 14 members. One vote was considered to be invalid, but this did not affect the results.

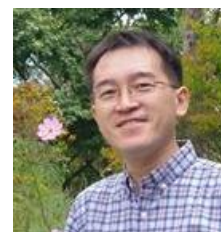
Overall, we look back at successful elections which went according to schedule, in line with the statutes, and with clear results.

Editors' note

In just a few days, the XX ISA World Congress of Sociology will commence, featuring an exciting program organized by RC45. We are eagerly anticipating the opportunity to explore the latest contributions of our members and to reconnect with everyone, whether in-person or online. (Lucas & Masa)



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