

The AGORA

Newsletter of the *Decision-Making, Social Networks, and Society* Section of the American Sociological Association and the Research Committee 45 on *Micro-Macro Modelling* of the International Sociological Association

July 2025



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The purpose of the Section is to encourage and enhance research, teaching and other professional concerns relating to the scope and limits of explaining macroscopic patterns like social inequalities, segregation, opinion polarization, or diffusion processes resulting from the complex interplay of decision-making processes and social network dynamics. The Section seeks to promote communication, collaboration, and consultation among scholars using formal and computational models, social network analysis, survey data, digital traces, and/or experimental design to investigate micro-macro linkages.

From the Chair's Desk (ASA)

Daniel DellaPosta



Dear colleagues,

I know that this year has been a challenging one for scholars. Amidst any hardship and turmoil you may have faced or might still be facing, we continue to be grateful for your participation in our scholarly community of the Section on Decision-Making, Social Networks, and Society. In the previous edition of AGORA, I reported on the substantial increase in membership in our section over the past two years. I'm happy to say that this rise has only continued since then. This section has always been a vibrant and intellectually robust group; it is truly exciting for it to now also be a rapidly growing one.

Most of all, we are excited to see many of you at the ASA annual meeting in Chicago! We have three exciting sessions planned. They will all take place in the morning and early afternoon on Tuesday, so hopefully you can plan to attend as many as possible and see some of the great new work being done by scholars in or adjacent to the section. Even before that, you are all invited to attend our section reception on Monday evening; this will take place offsite, with more details on time and place coming via section email announcements.

The section sessions will kick off bright and early at 8 am on Tuesday 8/12 with a great session on "Big Problems, Middle-Range Theories" organized by Fedor Dokshin. This session brings together an intellectually diverse set of papers reflective of the broad and boundary-spanning interests of our section. You'll see presentations on topics as different as microfinance in Mexico, the 2019 Hong Kong protests, and health disparities, just to name a few.

At 10 am, we'll have a special invited panel on "Innovative Interventions" featuring presentations from scholars working at the cutting-edge of research studying experimental and other interventions and their effects on decision-making and social behavior. We're really excited to have Maria Abascal (New York University), Austin van Loon (MIT), and Lauren Valentino (UNC-Chapel Hill) as our invited panelists for this session. That session will be immediately followed at 11 am by our section business meeting, where you can learn more about the state of the section and see the presentation of this year's awards.

Finally, we will have a paper session on "Networks, Inequality, and Social Integration" taking place at noon and organized by Linda Zhao. This will definitely be one that section members will not want to miss, featuring papers about elite fragmentation, adolescent peer groups, music industry brokerage, immigrant integration, and the relational consequences of institutional interventions.

After the annual meeting, I will be closing out my time as section chair and handing over the reins to chair-elect Fabien Accominotti. Thank you all again for continuing to support the section through your membership, participation, and service. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Chicago. In the meantime,

please do not hesitate to reach out to me at djd78@psu.edu with any ideas you have for how we can continue to serve our members.

Sincerely,



Daniel DellaPosta
Associate Professor of Sociology and Social Data Analytics
Pennsylvania State University

Award Announcement from the Decision-Making, Social Networks, and Society Section



Decision-Making, Social Networks, and Society Section's James S. Coleman Outstanding **Article** Award

Total nr of submissions: 30

The committee was blown away by the pool and decided to give 2 awards and one honorable mention.

Co-Winner

Duxbury, Scott W. "Collaborating on the Carceral State: Political Elite Polarization and the Expansion of Federal Crime Legislation Networks, 1979 to 2005." *American Sociological Review* 89.4 (2024): 650-683.

Duxbury (2024) examines how federal legislators collaborated on crime policy during the expansion of mass incarceration, focusing on the period between 1979 and 2005. The article tackles a compelling puzzle: what enabled the surge in criminal lawmaking even as growing elite polarization made collaboration more challenging? Through a longitudinal network analysis of federal crime legislation co-sponsorships, this study demonstrates that as polarization increased, legislators increasingly relied on reciprocal action and prior

collaboration to guide their co-sponsorship decisions and establish the trust necessary for collective action. This network dependence helped bills advance but also rendered Congress less responsive to shifts in violent crime rates. The committee was particularly impressed by how this research links macro-level policy changes to micro-level processes, and by the article's creative yet careful measurement strategy that leverages machine learning. By integrating social exchange theory with advanced network methods, Duxbury provides a compelling account of what enables and constrains collective decision-making in polarized environments.

Co-Winner

Zhao, Linda. "From superdiversity to consolidation: Implications of structural intersectionality for interethnic friendships." *American Journal of Sociology* 128.4 (2023): 1114-1157.

In this article Zhao highlights the importance of consolidation, the correlation of individual attributes at the level of social settings such as villages, associations, or classrooms, for social integration. Based on data from 503 classrooms in 4 different countries and exponential random graph models the paper reveals that interethnic friendships are less common in classrooms where socio-economic and ethnicity are highly correlated (i.e. are more consolidated), and that this relationship exists net of general ethnicity and socio-economic effects measured at the individual level. The jury praised the paper for being both theoretically refined as well as having important implications for the study and advancement of equality. On a theoretical level, Zhao advances scholarship by forging a strong connection between literatures on intersectionality, social boundaries and social structure. Whereas the latter is strong on measurement, the former two draw attention to joined compositional effects of multiple social attributes. Together these literatures allow us to rethink how socio-economic status and ethnic background influence social cohesion by demonstrating how the effect of one is contingent on the other at the meso-level. This finding also has real-life implications in its suggestion that high-consolidation contexts in and of itself amplify social segregation by making social boundaries shine more brightly.

Honorable mention

Huang, P., & Butts, C. T. (2023). Rooted America:

immobility and segregation of the intercounty migration network. *American Sociological Review*, 88(6), 1031-1065.

In this article, Huang and Butts question whether patterns of internal migration in the United States reflect the popular narrative that the country is a “land of mobility” or provide evidence for a “rooted America.” By adopting a social network approach, they identify how various factors related to demographics, economics, politics, geography, and network structures shaped flows of migration between US counties from 2011-2015. Their findings indicate that the network of internal US migration is defined by segmented mobility, with fewer people moving between counties with dissimilar political contexts, rates of urbanization, and racial/ethnic composition. This article exemplifies how computational tools can be applied to address questions about decision-making processes. The committee was particularly impressed by the study’s application of cutting-edge network methods to address pressing questions about social phenomena of interest to sociologists from various subfields.

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Committee Chair: Robert Braun; Members: Cassie McMillan, Simone Zhang

Decision-Making, Social Networks, and Society Award for Best Paper by a **Graduate Student**

This year’s DMSNS section’s Outstanding Recent Graduate Student Paper Award goes to Megan Kang (Princeton) for her article “Becoming a Shooter.” Kang’s paper is a richly textured ethnographic study that deepens our understanding of the social dynamics surrounding illegal gun carrying in high-violence urban neighborhoods. Drawing on 18 months of immersive fieldwork and interviews with youth in Chicago, the paper explores how firearms are not only tools of violence but also socially meaningful objects that shape identities, relationships, and reputations. The study traces the transformation of gun carrying from an individual decision into a durable social identity: the “shooter”. It stands out for its in-depth ethnographic insights, is well-written, and addresses an issue of urgent relevance.

Congratulations, Megan! The committee read numerous excellent papers this year, and we thank everyone who nominated a paper for the award.

Committee Chair: Ashley Harrell; Members: Peng Huang, Benjamin Rosche

The scientific project of the Research Committee 45 on 'Micro-Macro modelling' is to advance the development of explanatory models connecting the micro and macro levels of social life. This includes the theoretical design of these models as well as the hard work needed to connect them to empirical data. At the micro-level, the Committee is especially interested in the study of decision-making mechanisms as well as in the analysis of the complex ways in which actors' behaviours are shaped by their embeddedness in social networks. At the macro-level, the committee is open to investigations including a large variety of substantive phenomena among which distributional inequality, segregation patterns, opinion polarization, norm evolutions, diffusion dynamics or long-term historical processes. Although the Committee is especially interested in cutting-edge statistical, computational and experimental techniques to build and test micro-macro mechanism-oriented models, qualitative and quantitative perspectives are both welcome as long as the chosen method and type of data are at the service of the analysis of mechanisms underlying micro-macro dynamics.

From the President's Desk

Gianluca Manzo



Dear colleagues,

This seems like an exciting time for our Research Committee! First of all, we have now officially transitioned to the new name, i.e. "Micro-macro Modelling", and to a reshaped set of objectives. You can

also see the new description in the frame above. This is the result of the large consultation that we initiated in January 2024 as to the reasons of our low membership, and of the consequent formal process through ISA rules that we needed to require the changes we collectively agreed upon. Both ISA Research Coordinating Committee (RCC) and, then, ISA Executive Committee (EC) approved our request. They notified their decision to me on April 10, 2025. As a consequence, the new names, logo and objectives were implemented by ISA, early June, on the RC's webpage. I invite you to consult and circulate it through your academic networks: [link](#).

Only one formal step remains to be done: the implementation of these changes within the RC's statutes. The formal vote for this to happen took place during the business meeting in Rabat on July 10. The vote was unanimously favorable, and I am confident that ISA will implement this last modification soon.

Our activities at the Rabat forum that took place from the 7th to the 10th of July are a second source of excitement for our community. Thanks to many RC's members (in parenthesis, below), we were finally able to sustain, in addition to the business meeting, the following set of ten thematic sessions:

1. Educational Workshop: How to Teach Students about Social Polarisation? (Agata KOMENDANT-BRODOWSKA & Natalia SOKOLOVSKA)
2. Empirical Applications of Decision-Making Models (Masayuki KANAI, Jun KOBAYASHI & Vincent BUSKENS)
3. Theoretical and Methodological Developments in Cognitive Sociology: Dual Processes and Framing (Clemens KRONEBERG & Andreas TUTIC)
4. Social Capital and Social Mechanisms (Kazuto MISUMI)
5. What Is Social about Pro-Social Behaviour? Norms, Frames, Networks and Social Identity (Filippo BARBERA, Renzo CARRIERO & Sara ROMANO)
6. Social Networks, Social Trust, and Pro-Social Activities (Naoki SUDO)
7. Personal or Egocentric Networks in Sociological Research (Raffaele VACCA & Viviana AMATI)

8. Micro-Macro Explanations with Data Driven Agent-Based Models (Lucas SAGE, Marijn KEIJZER, Federico BIANCHI & Andreas FLACHE)
9. Harnessing (Generative) AI for the Study of Decision Making and Social Processes (Ana MACANOVIC)
10. Open Science and Improving Credibility of Sociological Research (Ozan AKSOY)
(Session Endorsed by the European Academy of Sociology)

The full set of 37 papers (and corresponding 77 co-authors) that were presented and discussed during these sessions can be found on pp. 424-427 of Rabat forum's program book ([link](#)).

It is fair to say that all sessions were well attended (with attendance varying from 10-15 for the smallest sessions to 25-30 for the largest one, my on-site rough count!), many of them having been attended also by colleagues who were not RC45 members (which was also the case for the business meeting). By also considering that various presenters were not members of our RC45, I do believe that we can be satisfied of what actually was the first big event of this term.

It must be said, however, that there is room for progression. The number of papers finally presented was indeed almost half of the number of papers accepted. We clearly have to think about how we can improve our practices as program coordinator, sessions' organizers and chairs to reduce such a paper loss between the acceptance and registration phases.

The trend in membership is the third reasons to be happy about our research committee. Compared to October 2023, when ISA officially put us under probation, and asked us to push membership above the bar of 50 by October 2025 not to be demoted from a "research committee" to a "thematic group", we have been capable to move from 38 members to 63, early July 2025. This is an overall increase of about 92%. More particularly, regular members have increased from 31 to 46, life members from 4 to 6, and student members from 3 to 11. ISA recognized our efforts. On April 10, ISA vice-president for research Allison Loconto wrote the following: "(...) we can also see about closing this period of being 'at risk'. Well done!"

While we should all be proud of these positive trends, I invite all of you to continue to spread the word about our research committee and its new objectives and enlarged focus. Membership must be understood as a flow, not as a stock. By the end of the year, for instance, the membership of 10 of us will expire; without attracting new members, we may quickly get close again to the fatidic threshold of 50.

Aware of this danger, it is reassuring and encouraging that many proposals were discussed at the business meeting in Rabat to consolidate our attractiveness. In particular, we envisioned 1. to make publicly available the list of section's members to signal the high-quality and the diversity of our community to potential new members; 2. To reserve annually a quota of our finances to offer free RC45 membership to PhD students and early-career colleagues who may have the project to become ISA members; 3. To redesign the content and the rules of the paper prize that the RC45 was used to award PhD candidates; 4. To create an offer for an on-line research seminar that could help to create continuity in the activities of our community within the term, in particular between the forum and the world congress.

These proposals certainly testify the current enthusiasm that many of us seem to nourish about the new Micro-Macro Modelling group; they require however time and energy to be implemented. Anyone who would like to volunteer to help with putting these ideas in practice, or may have other suggestions for actions, is warmly invited to write to me.

With the wish, and the hope, that this positive dynamic continues to grow, I wish you a relaxing and inspiring summer break!

Sincerely,

Gianluca Manzo

Gianluca MANZO
Professor of sociology
Sorbonne University
EAS (European Academy of Sociology) Fellow

Expand Your Academic Network with ISA RC45

Joining the ISA RC45 community has numerous benefits, including access to journals and publications. What's more, with ISA membership, you won't have to worry about renewing your membership every year as it covers four calendar years. If you are a part of the ASA section on Decision-Making, Social Networks, and Society, we encourage you to join ISA RC45, our sister community.

ISA [Membership fees](#)

Regular Member: \$309 for 4 years (just \$77/year)

Student: \$149 for 4 years (only \$37/year)

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Conferences and Workshops

7th Annual Conference on Experimental Sociology, [link](#)

Dates: August 27-29, 2025

Venue: Leipzig University

7th Workshop on Experiments in social-science research [link](#)

Dates: September 18-19, 2025

Venue: HUN-REN Centre for Economic and
Regional Studies - Budapest

Recent Publications of Interest

Articles:

Gelastopoulos, Alexandros, Lucas Sage, and Arnout
Van De Rijt. "Reinforcement generates systematic
differences without heterogeneity." *Proceedings of
the National Academy of Sciences* 122.23 (2025):
e2408163122.

<https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2408163122>.

Müge Simsek, Arnout van de Rijt, and Mathijs de
Vaan. 2024. "Do Grant Proposal Texts Matter for
Funding Decisions? A Field
Experiment." *Scientometrics* 29(5): 2521-2532.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-024-04968-7>.

Jonas Stein, Marc Keuschnigg, and Arnout van de Rijt.
2024. "Partisan Belief in New Misinformation is
Resistant to Accuracy Incentives." *PNAS
Nexus* 3(11): pgae506.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/pnasnexus/pgae506>

Jasso, Guillermina. 2025. "Advancing Knowledge
in the Spirit of Fararo: Generativity and
Unification." *Journal of Mathematical Sociology*.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0022250X.2024.2423944>.

Jasso, Guillermina. 2025. "Certainty, Unity, and
Tolerance." *Theory and Society* 54(1):29-
33. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11186-025-09594-7>.

Barrera, D., Romanò, S., & Bocca, G. (2024). "Effects
of frames and incentives on prosociality in the lab.
Comparing abstract and realistic
scenarios." *Rationality and Society*, 37(2), 170-
200. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10434631241307528> (Original work published 2025).

Awards

Guillermina Jasso won the 2025 ISJR Lifetime
Achievement Award given biennially by the
International Society for Justice Research
(ISJR). Jasso is the first sociologist to win the
award. In July 2025 she will deliver the Award Lecture
at the ISJR biennial conference in Seattle, Washington.
[International Society for Justice Research](#)

Editors' note

As we reach the summer break, it's encouraging to see
the momentum both communities have built this year.
The ASA section's continued growth as well as the
quality of the papers awarded, and the ISA community's
successful navigation from probationary status—
marked by the well-attended Rabat sessions—signal
that our scientific approach to sociology, our theoretical
interests, our methods, are relevant, have resonance and
remain vibrant.

As many of you prepare for well-deserved holidays, we
hope you'll find time for both rest and that these months
bring intellectual refreshment. Remember that academic
community building requires ongoing effort from all of
us. Whether you're organizing conferences or
workshops, or publishing new papers, or have any other
developments that might interest the community, we
encourage you to share it with your colleagues through
Agora. We're also always open to suggestions about
how we might evolve the newsletter itself—fresh ideas
for content or format are welcome. The winter issue will
be richer for whatever insights and progress emerge
from your summer endeavors.



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