



## From the President

Allison Marie Loconto  
President, RC40  
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As we wind down 2017, I want to take a moment to reflect upon what some have termed a 'crisis' in French Sociology. This summer and fall have seen a whirlwind of articles in academic, but mostly in mainstream press that see sociologists debating each other over the value of the discipline.<sup>1</sup> There are two core arguments that have been unfolding and are intimately intertwined. First, there is the age-old debate between Weber and Durkheim over an individualist vs. holistic approach to understanding social phenomena, which in this current debate has been labelled 'analytical' vs. 'critical' approaches to studying societies. The most recent critique comes from Weberian sociologists who have taken affinity with neurobiology and cognitive sciences and argue that we should take lessons from these sciences so to better understand – in an objective manner – the rise in terrorism and populism that we have seen over the past few years. At the same time, Durkheimian inspired sociologists are attacking the critical approach saying that critical sociologists fail to stimulate deep reflections about society today because they have lost touch with the sociological imagination (such as the historicisation of social justice and the role of the State) and the role of sociologists in society (as scientists and not as activists). Both critiques point to the second debate which unfolded this summer at the French Sociological Association meetings, which pitted tenured sociologists against the large number of precariously employed sociologists. Here, the concern is indeed the devaluing of sociology as a discipline itself and the fact that there simply are not enough permanent positions in France for all of the PhDs in sociology that graduate every year. This debate was spurred by the 'declassification' of 4 'critical' sociologists from the 2017 recruitment process within the CNRS (National Centre for Scientific Research), which was seen by some to be a political move against a specific vision of the discipline. Within the halls of sociology departments and research institutes, sociologists have been asking themselves if rendering public these internal debates will do more harm than good for a discipline already under attack, or if public debate about this particular type of science might revitalize the discipline.

At the ESRS meeting this summer in Krakow, Poland – RC40 members also debated these types of tensions in the discipline – but in the context of some of the long-term research questions of the group: the alterity of alternative food and agriculture movements and the need for a new vocabulary to explain the hybridity that we are seeing emerge in recent years. This year, the RC40 mini-conference hosted 20 papers by engaged sociologists and civil society actors – with the intent of better understanding social phenomena in agri-food by listening more empathetically to the actors themselves. This has been a tradition in RC40 and is an approach that we are very proud of – because of the rich understandings we

are able to achieve as we study agri-food systems. The discussions focused on diversity and on breaking down some of the dichotomies (false binaries?) in both the theories and practices of alternative agrifood movements. From the RC40 perspective, there is a role for sociologists alongside activists in society and the recognition that we are not only distant analysts of social events is what drives us to dig deeper to put social change into perspective and to equip future sociologists with all of the methodological approaches that can support sociological imaginations and social change.

In support of this work, we have been busy within RC40 to improve our presence around the world and academically. As you can read in the dedicated sections of this newsletter, we have a number of exciting new developments this autumn.

1) We have successfully recruited a new editorial team who will be taking over the editorial work for RC40's journal in January 2018. The International Journal for the Sociology of Agriculture and Food (IJSAF) will be led by Ray Jussaume (Michigan State University) with Claire Marris (City, University of London) and Katerina Psarikidou (Lancaster University). On behalf of the entire RC40 Executive Committee, we want to welcome the incoming editorial team. We also want to thank wholeheartedly the outgoing team – led by Mara Miele (Cardiff University), Vaughan Higgins (Charles Sturt University) and Farshad Araghi (Florida Atlantic University) – for their dedication and hard work over the past 10 years.

2) We also approved the very first RC40 Summer Institute for young sociologists, which will be held next summer in Toronto just before the ISA World Congress. It will focus on: ***Metrics of sustainability: Critical studies of sites, practices, and performances of accountability in environmental governance.*** Make sure you read the call for applications – as it closes on 31 January – and tell your colleagues and students about it!

3) RC40 will shortly have a webpage all of its own where you can find information about the journal, regional events and other RC40 resources and activities. Keep reading the RC40 listserv to learn where to find it when it comes online.

4) Finally, we will be holding elections for RC40 leadership positions for the next four-year term (2018-2022). The open positions are President, Secretary/Treasurer and 4 Executive Board members. Please consider nominating yourself or colleagues for one of these very exciting positions. We have started on a good process of expansion and renewal these past four years and we hope to keep up the momentum in the next four.

- a. If you are interested, please contact Maki Hatanaka or any other member of the current Board to learn more about the process. The official election process will be announced in early January.



# From the New Editor-in-Chief of IJSAF

Raymond A. Jussaume Jr.  
Michigan State University

As noted elsewhere in this newsletter, beginning on January 1, 2018, I will assume the responsibilities associated with the position of Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture & Food. I am both honored and humbled by this appointment and very much appreciate the confidence that the RC-40 Board has shown in me.

I am also pleased to notify the RC-40 membership that Dr. Aikaterini Psarikidou of Lancaster University and Dr. Claire Marris of City, University of London have graciously agreed to serve as co-Associate Editors of the Journal. I look forward with them to ensuring that the highest quality standards for the journal are met. One of our first tasks will be to form an



A primary goal that we all share is for Journal to become connected with a major publisher. To accomplish this, the Journal must publish a minimum of four issues a year and be formally assigned an IMPACT factor. The overriding objective of my four year term as chief editor will be to achieve this goal.

Thanks to the leadership of the previous editorial team, the Journal is poised to publish three issues in 2018. With all of your help, I am confident that we can not only publish four issues a year on a regular basis, but do so in a way the captures the breadth of our intellectual interests. I firmly believe that the Journal should be an international leader in disseminating integrated social science research on the processes of change connected to the global agri-food system, from farm to plate and everything in between. This should include, but not be limited to, manuscripts that have an agricultural/development focus as well as on a variety of food issues, including food security and food safety. I also believe that we should maintain our openness to manuscripts that reflect integrated social science perspectives.

While I know that Drs. Psarikidou and Marris share this vision and are committed to working with me to achieve our goal, this vision will only be achievable if it represents the interests and efforts of all of you. With this message, I would like to ask each and every one of you for your support, be it in the form of submitting or reviewing manuscripts. I would also hope that you will not be restrained in offering your suggestions for maintaining the excellence of the International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture & Food.

Sincerely,

Raymond A. Jussaume Jr.  
Michigan State University  
jussaume@msu.edu

# Call for Applications

## 2018 Summer Institute on Critical Studies of Environmental Governance

*Metrics of sustainability: Critical studies of sites, practices, and performances of accountability in environmental governance*

Toronto, Canada July 12-16, 2018

Applications are currently being accepted for the **Summer Institute on Critical Studies of Environmental Governance** to be held at the University of Toronto July 12-16, 2018. We welcome applications from advanced doctoral students (i.e., advanced to candidacy, completed data collection, and actively writing) and junior scholars who received a Ph.D. after May 2015 working in the social sciences, law, humanities, and other relevant disciplines. The Institute will reimburse travel expenses up to \$1200 (USD) and cover food and lodging for successful applicants.

**2018 Theme: “Metrics of sustainability: Critical studies of sites, practices, and performances of accountability in environmental governance.”**

Addressing global environmental change and advancing the sustainability of variously scaled processes, organizations, and territories involves diverse approaches to social regulation. We identify accountability mechanisms, and the underlying metrics and assessment protocols, to be important sites of critical analysis.

Environmental metrics, indices and standards of various kinds are central to the advancement of regulatory objectives. Moreover, they can be a resource for democratic accountability. But in addition, metrics can be instruments of authoritarian discipline at a distance and may give rise to or augment social and ecological problems. While metrics may serve as vital feedbacks that allow for functional coupling of social and ecological systems, metrics may also obscure ecological knowledge, disguise uncertainties, impede alternative problem definitions, and advance an empty performance of engagement in environmental management. It is often said “You cannot manage what you do not measure.” There may be some truth in this aphorism, but as we try to make sense of the politics of sustainability, it is worthwhile to consider the possibility that increasingly sophisticated, integrated and elaborate measurements and performances of accountability may substitute for or distract attention from substantive engagement in sustainable transitions. On this basis, relationships between assessment, accountability and the (re)distribution of rights, responsibilities, and risks merits attention.

The 2018 Summer Institute aims to realize emerging topical, theoretical, and methodological synergies pertaining to critical studies of environmental metrics and accountability, with emphasis on sharing insights among a mix of established and junior scholars. We welcome research grounded in a wide variety of disciplines and socioecological problems. We are

committed to substantive engagement with environmental regulation and governance through a variety of disciplinary lenses aimed at revealing the ways in which the establishment of metrics and accountability regimes can induce complex and unforeseen socio-ecological responses. Our aim is to understand the promulgation of metrics and accountability as dynamic forms of governmentality, and to support junior scholars in the development of this multi-faceted area of scholarship and policy analysis.

### **Workshop Objectives**

In a workshop held over the course of five days and through a mix of feedback on pre-circulated papers, intensive discussions, keynote lectures, and interactive excursions, participants will have the opportunity to develop their own work and acquire new skills in a rigorous, collegial, and interdisciplinary setting. Successful applicants (up to 14) will feature topical research programs with broad empirical and theoretical originality. The workshop will stimulate vibrant and unexpected cross-disciplinary exchange among scholars whose research is situated in varying regional settings and targeting environmental sustainability metrics and standards promulgated in a variety of historical contexts. To be clear, applications are welcome from all world regions representing the full range of environmental governance concerns.

A second goal of the Summer Institute is to produce an edited scholarly volume or special issue(s) of an academic journal. To that end, successful applicants will be expected to submit a 6000-word draft of a solo-authored unpublished paper by June 1, 2018. The workshop will serve, in part, to stimulate further development of submitted papers for inclusion in the eventual publication(s). All working papers will be pre-circulated to participants in advance of the workshop to stimulate ideas, foster synergies, and enhance the quality of feedback participants will receive on their own work.

By design, the end of the workshop coincides with the opening of the International Sociological Association (ISA) World Congress in Toronto. Analysis of metrics and accountability applied to environmental governance is represented in Congress program, and we aim to carry ideas and energy from the workshop into the Congress. There is no expectation that participants in the Workshop will attend the Congress, but we highlight this opportunity.

### **Application Process**

Applications are due no later than midnight (EST) on January 31, 2018. Applicants should send a single pdf to: [envgov2018@cornell.edu](mailto:envgov2018@cornell.edu) that includes:

- a cover letter (1-2 pp. single-spaced)
- a 300-word abstract of an unpublished paper that the applicant proposes to contribute to the workshop
- a current CV
- a solo authored writing sample (max. one journal length article).

Each applicant should arrange for a letter of recommendation from an academic advisor to be sent directly to [envgov2018@cornell.edu](mailto:envgov2018@cornell.edu).

Successful applicants will be notified by February 28th, 2018. Participants from outside of Canada will be responsible for securing their own visa and related documentation. Please note that accepted applicants are expected to attend the entirety of the workshop.

**Organizers:** This year's Summer Institute is coordinated by Allison Loconto (Interdisciplinary Laboratory for Science, Innovation and Society, INRA-Paris, [allison-marie.loconto@inra.fr](mailto:allison-marie.loconto@inra.fr)), Scott Prudham (Geography, University of Toronto, [scott.prudham@utoronto.ca](mailto:scott.prudham@utoronto.ca)) and Steven Wolf (Natural Resources, Cornell University, [saw44@cornell.edu](mailto:saw44@cornell.edu)). Questions regarding the workshop should be directed to one of the organizers.

**Sponsors:** Cornell University, Mario Einaudi Center for Environmental Studies and Institute for Social Sciences; University of Toronto, School of the Environment, School of Graduate Studies and Munk School of Global Affairs; Earth System Governance Project *Task Force on Accountability in Global Environmental Governance*; *Research Group on Sociology of Agrifood (RC40)*, *International Sociological Association*; *Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique (INRA)* and the *French Institute for Research, Innovation and Society (IFRIS)*.

## XIX ISA WORLD CONGRESS OF SOCIOLOGY

Toronto, Canada | July 15-21, 2018 | Metro Toronto Convention Center



**CALL FOR ABSTRACTS**  
April 25 - Sept 30, 2017

XIX ISA World Congress of Sociology will be in Toronto in July 2018. RC40 will (co)sponsor 9 sessions that include:

- Agriculture Justice: A New Frontier of Collective and Intersectional Battle
- Assessing Effect of Demonetization on Agriculture of Small Farmers in India and the Other Third World Countries
- Food Regime Analysis in an Asian Context
- Food Sovereignty and Land Grabbing
- Metrics in Environmental Governance: Toward a Critical Analysis of Accountability
- Neoliberal Agriculture and Distress Peasants: Why They Commit Suicide
- Prosumers and Social Innovation in Alternative Food Networks
- Techno-Politics in Agriculture and Food Under (and After?) Capitalism
- The Role and Significance of Geographical Indication As a Tool for the Development and Democratization of Agri-Food

If you need a formal letter of acceptance from a Session Organizer, please contact Maki Hatanaka (RC40 Secretary) at: [maki.hatanaka@shsu.edu](mailto:maki.hatanaka@shsu.edu).

**Note that we will hold the RC40 business meeting during the Congress. The detailed schedule will be announced when the time gets closer. Please make sure to come and attend the business meeting!**

## BOOKS Recently Published by RC40 Members

**Bonanno, Alessandro. 2017. *The Legitimation Crisis of Neoliberalism: The State, Will-Formation, and Resistance*. Palgrave Macmillan.**

This book proposes a theory of the legitimation crisis of neoliberalism. Through analyses of the legitimation crisis of regulated capitalism and the characteristics and theories of neoliberalism, the author contends that neoliberalism is affected by crises of system and social integration. The crisis of system integration refers to the inability of market mechanisms to address problems of capital accumulation and social stability. The crisis of social integration refers to the unmet promises of economic growth and social well-being. While attempts to address these crises are carried out through state intervention, crisis resolutions are inadequate due to the limits of the free market system and current state forms. Alessandro Bonanno contends that, as ideological and material forms of legitimation are inadequate, and processes of capital accumulation are sluggish and resistance weak, change is necessary. He outlines how this change will be controlled by corporate actors, minimally address the demands of subordinate groups, and marginally alter existing conditions.

**Bonanno, Alessandro and Steven A. Wolf. 2018. (Ed.). *Resistance to the Neoliberal Agri-Food Regime: A Critical Analysis*. Routledge.**

This volume explores the contents, forms, and actors that characterize current opposition to the corporate neoliberal agri-food regime. Designed to generate a coherent, informed and updated analysis of resistance in agri-food, empirical and theoretical contributions analyze the relationship between expressions of the neoliberal corporate system and various projects of opposition.

Contributions included in the volume probe established forms and rationales of resistance including civic agriculture, consumer- and community-based initiatives, labor, cooperative and gender-based protest, struggles in opposition to land grabbing and mobilization of environmental science and ecological resistance. The core contribution of the volume is to theorize and to empirically assess the limits and contradictions that characterize these forms of resistance. In particular, the hegemonic role of the neoliberal ideology and the ways in which it has 'captured' processes of resistance are illustrated. Through the exploration of the tension between legitimate calls for emancipation and the dominant power of Neoliberalism, the book contributes to the ongoing debate on the strengths and limits of Neoliberalism in agri-food. It also engages critically with the outputs and potential outcomes of established and emerging resistance movements, practices, and concepts.

**Ermann, Ulrich, Ernst Langthaler, Marianne Penker, and Markus Schermer. 2017. *Agro-Food Studies: Eine Einführung*.**

Die Agro-Food Studies setzen sich integrativ und kritisch mit der Produktion und dem Konsum von Nahrung auseinander. Der Band behandelt die Spannungsfelder Tradition und Moderne, Globalisierung und Regionalisierung, Gesellschaft und Umwelt, Natur und Technik, Kopf und Bauch, Mangel und Überfluss, Verbindendes und Trennendes sowie Stabilität und Veränderung.

Die interdisziplinäre Einführung richtet sich vor allem an Studierende und Akteure der Zivilgesellschaft.

**Margulis, Matias E. 2017. (Ed.). *The Global Political Economy of Raúl Prebisch* Routledge**

*The Global Political Economy of Raúl Prebisch* offers an original analysis of global political economy by examining it through the ideas, agency and influence of one of its most important thinkers, leaders and personalities. Prebisch's ground-breaking ideas as an economist – the terms-of-trade thesis and the economic case for state-led industrialization – changed the world and guided economic policy across the global South. As the head of two UN bodies – the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and later the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) – he was at the frontline of key North–South political struggles for a fairer global distribution of wealth and the regulation of transnational corporations.

Prebisch increasingly came to view political power, not just economic capabilities, as pivotal to shaping the institutions and rules of the world economy. This book contextualizes his ideas, exploring how they were used and their relevance to contemporary issues. The neoliberal turn in economics in North America, Western Europe and across the global South led to an active discrediting of Prebisch's theories and this volume offers an important corrective, reintroducing current and future generations of scholars and students to this important body of work and allowing a richer understanding of past and ongoing political struggles.

**Marsden, Terry. 2017. *Agri-Food and Rural Development: Sustainable Place-Making*. Bloomsbury Academic.**

The agri-food and rural development world has experienced significant changes in recent years. The evolution towards globalized and highly complex food supply systems has been accompanied by growing competition, reduced state subsidies as well as concerns about quality, output and the environment. At the beginning of the 21st century, the agri-food industry is urgently searching for new solutions.

Exploring these recent developments, *Agri-Food and Rural Development* highlights the latest research on understanding and promoting sustainable food systems. Featuring a range of international case studies, it investigates different models of rural development for food production, examines the implications for a sustainable future, analyzes future challenges, and suggests new strategies for future agri-food development in a world fast exceeding its resources.

An ambitious new study written by a leading authority in the field, this book offers a vital new perspective on this important debate and is destined to become a landmark text for students, scholars and policy-makers in food studies, agriculture, rural sociology, and geography.



## Upcoming Events

### **XIX ISA World Congress of Sociology**

Power, Violence and Justice: Reflections, Responses and Responsibilities

**July 15-21, 2018**

Toronto, Canada

<http://www.isa-sociology.org/en/conferences/world-congress/toronto-2018/>

### **13th Annual Assembly of the Canadian Association of Food Studies**

Gathering Diversities

**May 27-29, 2018**

Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada

<http://cafs.landfood.ubc.ca/en/>

Abstract submission deadline: January 15, 2018

### **Joint Annual Meeting of Agriculture, Food & Human Values Society and Association for the Study of Food and Society**

The Agroecological Prospect: The Politics of Integrating Food and Farming with Values and the Land

**June 13-16, 2018**

University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, Wisconsin, USA

<https://afhv2018.wiscweb.wisc.edu/>

Abstract submission deadline: February 15, 2018

### **European Association for the Study of Science and Technology (EASST)**

Making Science, Technology, and Society Together

**July 25-28, 2018**

Lancaster University, Lancaster UK

<https://easst2018.easst.net/>

Abstract submission deadline: February 2, 2018

### **Rural Sociological Society**

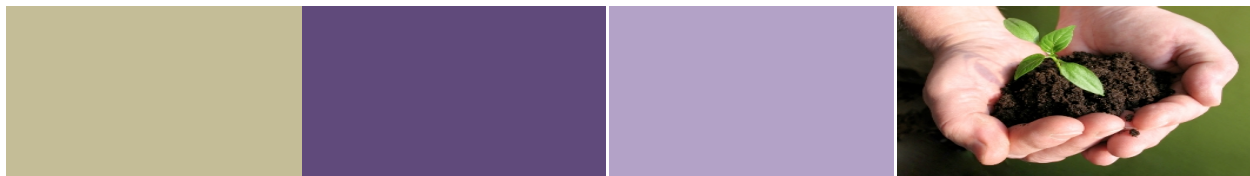
Science in Society, Society in Science: Toward a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Model for Social Scientific Research

**July 26-29, 2018**

Portland, Oregon, USA

<https://rss.memberclicks.net/annual-meeting-home-page>

Abstract submission deadlines: February 1, 2018



## RC40 Executive Council (2014-2018)

| Office                          | Officer                          | Organizational Affiliation                   | Email                                  |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>President</b>                | Allison Loconto                  | National Institute for Agricultural Research | amloconto@versailles.inra.fr           |
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### From the Secretary

Maki Hatanaka ([maki.hatanaka@shsu.edu](mailto:maki.hatanaka@shsu.edu))

#### [1] About the Listserv of the RC-40:

Beginning fall 2014, RC40 has established its listserv using the Yahoo Groups. We hope to use this listserv to enhance communication and interaction among the RC40 members.

#### List Logistics:

- To join the RC40 listserv, send your message to: [maki.hatanaka@shsu.edu](mailto:maki.hatanaka@shsu.edu)
- To post messages to the list membership, send your message to: [rc40\\_food\\_and\\_ag\\_soc@yahoo.com](mailto:rc40_food_and_ag_soc@yahoo.com).

#### [2] About the membership fee:

Membership to the International Sociological Association (ISA) and RC40 covers a four year period. To apply for membership and see the fee structure, please go to [http://www.isa-sociology.org/memb\\_i/index.htm](http://www.isa-sociology.org/memb_i/index.htm).

Agriculture and Food is published twice a year by the International Sociological Association, Research Committee on Agriculture and Food.

For more information contact:

Editor: Maki Hatanaka,  
RC40 Secretary/Treasurer  
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Volume 11, Number 2, December 2017