RC51 Newsletter 36
Hello friends,

In this issue, we have gathered information concerning the election of the RC51 Board 2018-2022 and the ICSC2019: 15th International Conference of Sociocybernetics, among other announcements and current calls for papers. Do not forget to apply and please keep sending us your contributions!

Juan Carlos Barrón and Jorge Cardiel
jbarronp@unam.mx
mfcardiels@gmail.com
AND THE WALTER BUCKLEY MEMORIAL AWARD 2018 GOES TO…

As every year, a committee of RC51 members carefully followed all presentations delivered during the 2018 RC51 Sessions within the XIX ISA World Congress of Sociology in Toronto and picked one.

Congratulations to the winners of the Walter Buckley Memorial Award on Excellence in presenting Sociocybernetics 2018: Ksenia Sidorova, Francia Peniche and Astrid K. Rivero for their presentation Languaging to trigger change: second-order intercultural conversations with urban youth of Maya descent.

Complexity Sciences
Theoretical and Empirical Approaches to Social Action

Editor(s):
Manuel Lisboa, Dalila Cerejo

Contributors:
Bernard Scott, Margarita Maass, Leandro Aramburu, Santiago Boira, Ana Ferreira, Manuel Lisboa, María Del Castillo, Chaime Marcuello-Servós, Dalila Cerejo, Bernd Hornung, José António Amozurrutia;

Recent world events have forced us to develop new scientific approaches to address social dynamics currently on the verge of rupture. Social problems and drastic changes like the refugee crisis, Brexit, the recent global economic crisis, social uprisings, forced governmental collapses, and increasing inequalities have alerted social scientists to new forms of individual and collective interactions. Researchers are now struggling to develop innovative methodologies to address the current complexity of the social world. Sociocybernetics embraces this challenge by addressing the complexity of social phenomena and processes through the integration of micro-, meso- and macro-levels of analysis. Focusing on a variety of social scenarios, this book addresses the interaction between multiple systems, using theoretical and methodological sociocybernetic approaches.

Hardback
Date of Publication: 01/06/2018
Pages / Size: 203 / A5
Price: £61.99

https://www.cambridgescholars.com/download/sample/64567
Dear RC51 Members!

According to our statutes the election of the RC51 Board 2018-2022 is now due. As a result of the call and the work of the Nominating Committee you will find the following excellent candidates in the voting sheet.

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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Approve (please mark with “x”)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Patricia E. Almaguer Kalixto (SPAIN)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice-President</td>
<td>Raija Koskinen (FINLAND)</td>
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<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Manuel Meza Cuervo (MEXICO)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Saburo Akahori (JAPAN)</td>
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Note: Voluntary positions (Non elected) such as Website Editor, JoS and Newsletter editor will be defined by the new elected board.

Below you will find a CV and a Statement of Intend of each candidate.

If you are a member in good standing (i.e. paid fees) both of the ISA and RC51 please send this voting sheet duly filled out by e-mail to the members of the Nominating Committee: Chaime Marcuello-Servós chaime@unizar.es, Eva Buchinger eva.buchinger@ait.ac.at, Bernd Hornung, hornungrc51@aol.com by the 20th of November 2018

The THREE recipients of your mail, none of whom is a candidate himself, will maintain confidentiality and make sure that no vote gets lost and all will be counted correctly.

The election results will be announced November 25th, 2014.

Best wishes,

RC51 Nominating Elections Committee
Candidates for the RC51 Board Election – Period 2018-2022

Candidature of Patricia E. Almaguer Kalixto for the position of "President"

Universidad de Zaragoza (Spain), almaguer@unizar.es

Statement:

My service as RC51 secretary (2014-2018) has been a rewarding experience. It has also enabled me to see from a close perspective, the challenges that our RC51 face in the near future: (1) maintain engagement within ISA, (2) consolidate our membership, and (3) spread our academic work within other Social Sciences audiences. Still we have to work more on promoting more Sociocybernetics, to deepen and share the knowledge of our current members and attract more of those who are willing to engage with Second order cybernetics. This may be also, but not exclusively, within the ISA membership. If elected, I hope to reach those aims working close with the new Board but also with members willing to engage to maintain RC51 active and healthy.

Brief CV:

Mres and PhD in Development Studies at the University of East Anglia, UK. She is a professor at the Department of Psychology and Sociology of the University of Zaragoza (Spain) where she teaches undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Her main lines of research and professional action are: complex social systems, interdisciplinary research, social impact assessment, participatory research methodologies, innovation processes and local development. She has carried out research projects on evaluation of the social impact of projects, participatory evaluations, community development, analysis of networks and resources shared in the third sector. Her main publications and participations in international conferences deal with the application of the theory of complex systems for the analysis of contemporary issues at different scales: from cooperation to development, to issues of governance, social capital, social networks and local development.

ISA PARTICIPATION

- From 2014-2018 Secretary of the RC51 Board
- 2018 Chair of the election Committee ISA Elections 2018
- From 2010-2014 Newsletter editor of the RC51 (Volunteer position)
- Paper presentation in every Conference since 2010.
- Conference collaboration as program coordinator, chair of abstract committee, conference co-organizer.
Candidature of Raija Koskinen for the position of “Vice-President”

Statement

As a theoretically oriented practitioner, I wish to find a more active role in this committee, even though I'm still in early stage of getting a deeper insight for sociocybernetics. In the future activities of RC51, I could utilize my current roles and connections to organize educational activities to provide sociocybernetic understanding to new audiences. Digital learning environments, for example, open up new possibilities for this. In case elected for a vice-president, I could also contribute in organizing one of the future annual events of the research committee in Finland, one of the Nordic countries.

BRIEF CV

Raija Koskinen works as a full time senior lecturer in HAMK, Häme University of Applied Sciences in Finland. In addition to teaching, her work involves many responsibilities in both national and international RDI -activities. She has circa 30 years of working experience from the practical field of social work in Finland: client work, managerial and expert roles. As an experienced professional, she also serves as an expert member in matters of child protection, adoption and services for mentally disabled in the Administrative Courts of Helsinki and Hämeenlinna, Finland.

Koskinen is a sociologist, Master of Social Sciences, from the University of Helsinki, Finland. She is also a certified teacher. During her career, she has acquired training in social services, entrepreneurship, management and professional supervision. Since 2011, she has worked with her PhD studies in social work in the University of Helsinki. Her research focuses on the ways technology is involved in welfare state systems and practices. Her dissertation work involves collaboration as a visiting researcher in the National Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland. She has published in her areas of expertise in Finnish, Swedish and English.
Candidature of Manuel Meza Cuervo for the position of “Secretary”

Statement

As a member of RC51, I understand the potential and power of Sociocybernetics to approach and establish methodologies to tackle some of the world’s biggest challenges, such as climate change and migration. That is why, if I am elected Secretary, I will work to 1) Promote Sociocybernetics’ theories to analyze and solve complex social problems, 2) Reinforce the Sociocybernetics research and use through seminars, master classes, and online tutorials, and 3) Strengthen the Sociocybernetics community by encouraging the enrollment of new members of RC51 and developing internal communication tools. I am convinced these actions will increase the theoretical and applied research of Sociocybernetics.

Brief CV

Ph.D. candidate in Political Sciences at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), Master in Cultural Management and Cultural Development with a specialty in Education. He is the Director of Bears & Guts Consulting and a Partner Researcher at Interdisciplinary Institute on Human Ecology and Sustainability (INTRHERS). He has experience teaching at secondary and tertiary level. His main line of research and professional action is the use of technologies of knowledge, communication, and information to solve complex social problems such as climate change challenges, education, social and cultural development. His main publications and participation in international conferences explore the use of a Sociocybernetics approach to deal with these problems.
Candidature of Saburo Akahori for the position of “Treasurer”

Tokyo Woman's Christian University (Japan), akahori@lab.twcu.ac.jp

Statement

I have been Treasurer of the RC51 in the Board 2014-2018. I have actively been involved in RC51 in recent years and by participating in the board I hope to promote our activities and introduce them to Japan and East Asian countries. I had been a treasurer of the Japan Association for Social and Economic Systems Studies (JASESS) from FY2009 to FY2012 so I believe I can contribute to RC51 as a treasurer again.

Brief CV:

Saburo AKAHORI is an associate professor in the Department of Sociology at Tokyo Woman's Christian University where he teaches Introduction to Sociology, History of Sociology, Social Research and so on. He is a graduate of the University of Tokyo and had received Ph.D degree in Sociology from the university in 2003. He is currently focusing on sociological theory and history of sociology, especially sociological systems theory. He is one of translators of Japanese version of *Die Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft* and *Gesellschaftsstruktur und Semantik* written by Niklas Luhmann, published by Hosei University Press, Tokyo. His CV is available at http://homepage1.nifty.com/s-akahori/index.html

RC51 experience

Since 2010 Saburo Akahori has been a member of RC51. He was involved in the design and organization of RC51 sessions in the course of the ISA World Congress in Yokohama 2014. He has been Treasurer of the RC51 from 2014-2018.
ICSC2019: 15th International Conference of Sociocybernetics

Area Scientifico-Didattica Paolo Volponi, Università di Urbino Carlo Bo

Urbino, Italy, June 25-29, 2019

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<tr>
<td>Submission link</td>
<td><a href="https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=rc51-icsc2019">https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=rc51-icsc2019</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Abstract registration deadline</td>
<td>February 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submission deadline</td>
<td>February 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notification of acceptance</td>
<td>March 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference registration</td>
<td>May 24, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full paper (to be considered for JoS special issue)</td>
<td>June 1, 2019</td>
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15th International Conference Of Sociocybernetics
Urbino, Italy 25-29 June 2019
“Dark Ages 2.0”: Social Media And Their Impact

In 2009 the ISA Research Committee 51 on Sociocybernetics hosted its annual conference in Urbino. The topic of the conference was the impact of the, then emerging, social media technologies on society. In the call, the “web 2.0” turn was explicitly associated to the advent of the printing press. The title of the conference was Modernity 2.0: emerging social media technologies and their impact. Along the line of visionary founding fathers of cybernetics and systems theory, the call solicited interdisciplinary contribution to explore the possibilities and tackling the challenges of a “new extraordinary change that we can barely describe today”.

A decade later, having witnessed the first impact of social media on society, it is about time to call for a new sociocybernetic forum to reflect on what we learned so far and the future perspectives.
The anticipated disruptive potentials of digital and social media unleashed on our society but the outcomes appear to be darker than what envisioned by scholars ten years ago. The entire industry is heavily concentrated in the hands of few organizations (Facebook, Google, Amazon, Apple and Microsoft). Our mediated private and public conversations increasingly take place on powerful platforms owned by private organizations that, in a classic feedback loop, leverage these data to target advertisements tailored to our tastes and preferences. Contents on these platforms are sorted and filtered by proprietary algorithms that prioritize most engaging contents. Traffic to news source is increasingly driven by these algorithms and so are their revenues. For the first time in history, a handful of global private organizations are more powerful and rich than an entire country. At the same time, their management appears unable to address problematic issues such as misinformation and disinformation spreading rampant on social media platforms and messaging apps. The goal of making the “world more open and connected” comes with unintended consequences. Billions of people interacting in an unprecedented complex mediated digital environment proved to be hard to govern even for the owner of the platform itself.

Once again, the original issues of steering and controlling at the roots of cybernetics seems to be a core concept to understand a society where human beings increasingly interact through and with machines. The dialectic between control of this platforms (and lack of thereof) is central to face some of the main challenges of contemporary society. The exploitation of behaviours and individual choices, of contents generated and shared by users feed the algorithms and create the internal order. And, at the same time, the variety produced by individuals is used to increase the internal complexity of the system itself. Visible permanent public conversations and interactions are increasingly scrutinized and analyzed to get a real time pulse of the public opinion. As a result, these real time quantified attention indicators become a target worth to be hacked through unauthentic users and behaviours aimed at inflating likes, shares and reaches of certain contents and ideas. In a quintessential exemplification of the effects of self-observation in social systems, the public opinion observed through the distorted mirror of social media affects citizen opinions and behaviors. The whole misinformation and disinformation issue filed under the “fake news” label calls into account the role played by the observer and the divisiveness, pointed out by Heinz von Foerster, brought by those claiming to speak the Truth. Claude Shannon’s original concept of information as a function of the probabilities help to explain why made up news tend to travel fast and spread quicker than legitimate news stories. Furthermore, Luhmann’s description of the codes that differentiate functional systems in modern society supports the idea of a co-existence of multiple different perspective that goes beyond the distinction between true and false (or the domain of the system of science). The goal of this conference is therefore to bring scholars together to explore, within a sociocybernetic approach, the issues at stake.
Possible topics should include, but are not limited to:

1. Sociocybernetics governance of social media platforms;
2. Participatory democracy;
3. Local issues with respect to a particular geographical region, political entity or cultural or ethnic group;
4. Global issues affecting all mankind in the 21st century;
5. Emerging technologies and the link between micro, meso, macro levels of individual actors and social institutions, respectively;
6. Social systems and economic models of the web;
7. Participation on the web (politics, business and entertainment);
8. Culture, knowledge and social impact of the Artificial Intelligence as a commodity;
9. Cyberculture, knowledge and local communities;
10. Algorithms accountability;
11. Media literacy and how it may backfire;
12. The public/private distinction on the Internet;
13. Internet subcultures;

Proposals (also including innovative formats that goes beyond traditional papers) with an orientation to sociocybernetics addressing other topics (conceptual, methodological, practical) are also welcomed.

Submission Guidelines

Abstracts should be sent in English. Please submit an Abstract of 200-300 words together with an Extended abstract of 750-1000 words (excluding references) for review purposes. The former will be published in the RC51 Newsletter, included in the abstracts booklet made available to conference participants and published as part of the conference programme on the RC51 website.

Important dates

- February 1, 2019: Detailed abstract
- March 1, 2019: Notification of acceptance
- May 24, 2019: Registration
- June 1: Full paper (to be considered for JoS special issue)

Conference fee

- ISA RC51 non members: € 150
- RC51 associate members (non ISA): € 50
- RC51 regular member in good standing: No fee

In special cases (e.g. graduate students) exemption can be granted upon request.
Committees

Program Committee

- Fabio GIGLIETTO, University of Urbino Carlo Bo (Chair)
- Patricia E. ALMAGUER, University of Zaragoza
- Juan Carlos BARRÓN - National Autonomous University of Mexico
- Giovanni BOCCIA ARTIERI, University of Urbino Carlo Bo
- Laura GEMINI, University of Urbino Carlo Bo
- Luca ROSSI, IT University of Copenhagen
- Toru TAKAHASHI, Chuo University

Organizing committee

- Stefano BRILLI, IUAV University of Venice
- Giada MARINO, University of Urbino Carlo Bo
- Manolo FARCI, University of Urbino Carlo Bo
- Nicola RIGHETTI, University of Urbino Carlo Bo

Publication

Selected authors will be invited to submit their work for a special issue of the Journal of Sociocybernetics.

Venue and accommodation

The 15th International Conference of Sociocybernetics will take place in the historical building of Palazzo Volponi and will be hosted by the Department of Communication Sciences, Humanities and International Studies: History, Cultures, Languages, Literatures, Arts, Media of the University of Urbino Carlo Bo.

Urbino is a walled city in the Marche region in Italy, a World Heritage Site notable for a remarkable historical legacy of independent Renaissance culture, especially under the patronage of Federico da Montefeltro, duke of Urbino from 1444 to 1482. The town, nestled on a high sloping hillside, retains much of its picturesque medieval aspect. Urbino is located in the middle of the Apennines, 30 km from the Adriatic coast. The town can be reached directly only by car or bus, not by train.

Contact

All questions about submissions should be emailed to fabio.giglietto+ICSC2019@uniurb.it.
CFP | Futures of Media: Shifting spheres @Kybernetes [SCI .980, Scopus, ABS*]. Deadline: 15 March 2019.

There are currently three predominantly English-language Niklas Luhmann groups on Facebook:

Niklas Luhmann (432 members, Admins: Sebastian L. Kinne, Steffen Roth): https://www.facebook.com/groups/28340609864/
Niklas Luhmann Group (526 members, Admin: Carlton Clark): https://www.facebook.com/groups/401792110173090/ 

As an admin of one and a regular contributor to all three groups, I do not see much added value of maintaining three groups on one and the same topic. Member populations and post contents are very similar. A merger of these three groups into one with a designation such as "Niklas Luhmann Groups" (in plural) would help avoid cross-postings to always the same people and facilitate communication across the entire community. Right? Then let us do it ...

Loet Leydesdorff shared a link. 

October 5

Dear colleagues,

Please, note that our paper entitled "Toward a Calculus of Redundancy: Signification, Codification, and Anticipation in Cultural Evolution." Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology, 69(10), 1181-1192 (co-authored with Mark Johnson and Inga Ivanova). is now available at https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.24052 (Open Access).

Best,
Loet
JOIN THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE 51 ON SOCIOCYBERNETICS

https://www.facebook.com/groups/ISARC51Sociocybernetics/