

PAUL E. SMALDINO

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2024- **Professor**, Cognitive and Information Sciences, University of California, Merced
2022- **External Professor**, Santa Fe Institute
2021-2023 **Research Affiliate**, Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford University
2020-2024 **Associate Professor**, Cognitive and Information Sciences, University of California, Merced
2016-2020 **Assistant Professor**, Cognitive and Information Sciences, University of California, Merced
2015-2016 **Lecturer**, Department of Psychology, University of California, Davis
2015-2016 **Postdoctoral Scholar**, Departments of Political Science and Computer Science, University of California, Davis. Advisors: Zeev Maoz and Raissa D'Souza
2014-2015 **Postdoctoral Scholar**, Department of Anthropology, University of California, Davis
Advisor: Richard McElreath
2011-2014 **Postdoctoral Fellow**, Center for Advanced Modeling in the Social, Behavioral, and Health Sciences, Johns Hopkins University. Advisor: Joshua Epstein
2005-2007 **Research Associate**, Departments of Psychology and Neural Science, New York University

EDUCATION

- 2011 Ph.D., Psychology (Psychobiology). University of California, Davis. Advisor: Jeff Schank
2007 M.A., Psychology. New School for Social Research, New York, NY
2002 B.A., Physics. Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT

PUBLICATIONS (PDFs at <http://smaldino.com/wp/publications>)

BOOKS

- Smaldino PE**, Beheim BA (under contract) *Mathematical foundations of cultural evolution*. Princeton University Press.
Smaldino PE (2023) *Modeling social behavior: Mathematical and agent-based models of social dynamics and cultural evolution*. Princeton University Press.

PREPRINTS & WORKING PAPERS

- Hickey D, Schmitz M, Fessler D, **Smaldino PE**, Muric G, Burghardt K. Hostile counterspeech drives users from hate Subreddits. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2405.18374>
Pérez Velilla A, Beheim B, **Smaldino PE**. The development of risk attitudes and their cultural transmission. <https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/9yjes>
Holding T, **Smaldino PE**, Brand CO. Analogies evolve by increasing transmission fidelity in the communication of complex information. <https://osf.io/preprints/psyarxiv/aqc5f>
Aswamenakul C, Marghetis T, **Smaldino PE**. Speed-quality tradeoffs shape the structure of decision-making collectives. <https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/bxew4>
Gabriel N, Bell AV, **Smaldino PE**. The evolution of identity signals for coordination in diverse societies. https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/w246t_v1

SCHOLARLY PUBLICATIONS

- Smaldino PE** (in press) A functionalist account of social identity. In: W Wagner & C Moya (Eds.), *Culture, identity, and essentialism in intergroup relations*. Springer-Nature.
- Dunivin ZO, **Smaldino PE** (2025) User control of search algorithms would improve science. *Nature Human Behaviour*.
- Steiglechner P, **Smaldino PE**, Merico A (2025) How opinion variation among in-groups can skew perceptions of ideological polarization. *PNAS Nexus* 4(7): pgaf184.
- Pérez Velilla A, **Smaldino PE** (in press) Risk, learning, and culture. In: G Geher, AC Gallup, & S Karthikeyan (Eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Evolutionary Psychology*. Oxford University Press.
- Pérez Velilla A, **Smaldino PE** (in press) The adaptive role of peer culture is shaped by risk landscapes [commentary on Lew-Levy & Amir]. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*.
- Morgan TJH, **Smaldino PE** (2025) Author-paid publication fees corrupt science and should be abandoned. *Science and Public Policy*, scaf026.
- Smaldino PE**, Russell A, Zefferman MR, Donath J, Foster JG, Guilbeault D, Hilbert M, Hobson EA, Lerman K, Miton H, Moser C, Lasser J, Schmer-Galunder S, Shapiro JN, Zhong Q, Patt D (2025) Information architectures: A framework for understanding socio-technical systems. *npj Complexity* 2: 13.
- Bryant GA, **Smaldino PE** (2025) The cultural evolution of musical distortion (and other norms of mixed appeal). *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B* 380: 20240014.
- Smaldino PE**, Pérez Velilla A (2025) The evolution of similarity-biased social learning. *Evolutionary Human Sciences* 7: e4.
- Dunivin ZO, **Smaldino PE** (in press) Dynamics of covert identity signaling: Modeling the emergence and extinction of identity signals. *Psychological Review*.
- Smaldino PE**, Jones JH (in press) Formal models in evolutionary research. In: B Rawlings, L Lidborg, L Boothroyd, S Lew-Levy, Y Birch, R Sear (Eds.), *Evolution, culture, and human behaviour*. Cambridge University Press.
- Smaldino PE** (2025) Societies have functions for individuals and collectives [commentary on Moffett]. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 48: e71.
- Zefferman MR, **Smaldino PE** (2024) Historical myths define group boundaries: A mathematical sketch and evidence from Ukraine [commentary on Sijlmassi et al]. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 47: e196.
- Smaldino PE** (2024) Signaling. In: MC Frank & A Majid (Eds.), *The Open Encyclopedia of Cognitive Science*. MIT Press.
- Burghardt GM, Pellis SM, Schank JC, **Smaldino PE**, Vanderschuren LJM, Palagi E (2024) Animal play and evolution: Seven timely research questions about enigmatic phenomena. *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews* 160: 105617.
- Steiglechner P, Keijzer MA, **Smaldino PE**, Moser D, Merico A (2024) Noise and opinion dynamics: How ambiguity promotes pro-majority consensus in the presence of confirmation bias. *Royal Society Open Science* 11: 231071.
- Tiokhin L, Lakens D, **Smaldino PE**, Panchanathan K (2024) Shifting the level of selection in science. *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 19(6): 908–920.

- Smaldino PE**, Moser C, Pérez Velilla A, Werling M (2024) Maintaining transient diversity is a general principle for improving collective problem solving. *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 19(2): 454–464.
- Garg K, **Smaldino PE**, Kello CT (2024) Evolution of explorative and exploitative search strategies in collective foraging. *Collective Intelligence* 3(1).
- Safarzynska K, **Smaldino PE** (2024) Reducing global inequality increases local cooperation: A simple model of group selection with a global externality. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B* 379: 20220267.
- Smaldino PE** (2024) The miss of the framework [commentary on Almaatouq et al]. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 47: e59.
- Moser C, **Smaldino PE** (2023) Innovation-facilitating networks create inequality. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B* 290: 20232281.
- Steiglechner P, **Smaldino PE**, Moser D, Merico A (2023) Social identity bias and communication network clustering interact to shape patterns of opinion dynamics. *Journal of the Royal Society Interface* 20: 20230372.
- Niehorster-Cook L, Marghetis T, **Smaldino PE** (2023) Rational agents vote under uncertainty. In *Proceedings of the 2023 Conference of the Computational Social Science Society of the Americas*. Springer.
- Smaldino PE**, Pietraszewski D, Wertz AE (2023) On the problems solved by cognitive processes. *Cognitive Science* 47: e13297.
- Boroomand A, **Smaldino PE** (2023) Superiority bias and communication noise can enhance collective problem solving. *Journal of Artificial Societies and Social Simulation* 26(3): 14.
- Turner MA, Moya C, **Smaldino PE**, Jones JH (2023) The form of uncertainty affects selection for social learning. *Evolutionary Human Sciences* 5: E20.
- Galesic M, Barkoczi D, Berdahl A, Biro D, Carbone G, Giannoccaro I, Goldstone R, Gonzalez C, Kandler A, Kao A, Kendal R, Kline M, Lee E, Massari GF, Mesoudi A, Olsson H, Pescetelli N, Sloman S, **Smaldino PE**, Stein DL (2023) Beyond collective intelligence: Collective adaptation. *Journal of the Royal Society Interface* 20: 20220736.
- Hickey D, Schmitz M, Fessler D, **Smaldino PE**, Burghardt K (2023) Auditing Elon Musk's impact on hate speech and bots. *Proceedings of the International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media* 17(1): 1133–1137.
- Powell M, Kim AD, **Smaldino PE** (2023) Hashtags as signals of political identity: #BlackLivesMatter and #AllLivesMatter. *PLOS ONE* 18(6): e0286524.
- Kohrt F, **Smaldino PE**, McElreath R, Schönbrodt F (2023) Replication of the natural selection of bad science. *Royal Society Open Science* 10: 221306.
- Wu J, O'Connor C, **Smaldino PE** (2023) The cultural evolution of science. In: J Tehrani, J Kendal, & R Kendal (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Cultural Evolution*. Oxford University Press.
- Frankenhuis WE, Panchanathan K, **Smaldino PE** (2023) Strategic ambiguity in the social sciences. *Social Psychological Bulletin* 18: e9923.
- Smaldino PE**, O'Connor C (2022) Interdisciplinarity can aid the spread of better methods between scientific communities. *Collective Intelligence* 1(2).
- Falandays JB, **Smaldino PE** (2022) The emergence of cultural attractors: How dynamic populations of learners achieve collective cognitive alignment. *Cognitive Science* 46: e13183.

- Moser C, **Smaldino PE** (2022) Organizational development as generative entrenchment. *Entropy* 24(7): 879.
- Turner MA, Moya C, **Smaldino PE**, Jones JH (2022) Some forms of uncertainty may suppress the evolution of social learning. In *Proceedings of the 44th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.
- Sutton A, Almquist Z, Hazel A, Kline M, **Smaldino P**, Moya C, Jones JH (2022) Adherence to mask-wearing and trust in government: A Bayesian hierarchical analysis of COVID-19 social behavior in the United States. In *Proceedings of the Population Association of America 2022*: 90-3.
- Garg K, Kello CT, **Smaldino PE** (2022). Individual exploration and selective social learning: Balancing exploration-exploitation trade-offs in collective foraging. *Journal of the Royal Society Interface* 19: 20210915.
- van der Does T, Galesic M, Dunivin ZO, **Smaldino PE** (2022) Strategic identity signaling in heterogeneous networks. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 119: e2117898119.
- Pisor A, Basurto X, Douglass KG, Mach KJ, Ready E, Tylianakis JM, Hazel MA, Kline MA, Kramer KL, Lansing S, Moritz M, **Smaldino PE**, Thornton TF, Jones JH (2022) Effective climate-change adaptation means supporting community autonomy. *Nature Climate Change* 12: 213–215.
- Smaldino PE** (2022) Models of identity signaling. *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 31: 231–237.
- Smaldino PE**, Turner MA (2022) Covert signaling is an adaptive communication strategy in diverse populations. *Psychological Review* 129: 812–829.
- Peréz Velilla A, Moser CJ, **Smaldino PE** (2022) Hidden clusters beyond ethnic boundaries [commentary on Uchiyama et al.]. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 45: e178.
- Turner MA, **Smaldino PE** (2022) Mechanistic modeling for the masses [commentary on Yarkoni]. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 45: e33.
- Smaldino PE** (2022) Five models of science, illustrating how selection shapes methods. In G Ramsey & A De Block (Eds.), *The dynamics of science: Computational frontiers in history and philosophy of science*. University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Boroomand A, **Smaldino PE** (2021) Hard work, risk, and diversity in a model of collective problem solving. *Journal of Artificial Societies and Social Simulation* 24(4): 10.
- McDiarmid AD, Tullett AM, Whitt CM, Vazire S, **Smaldino PE**, Stephens EE (2021) Psychologists update their beliefs about effect sizes after replication studies. *Nature Human Behaviour* 5: 1663–1673.
- Moser C, Ackerman J, Dayer A, Proksch S, **Smaldino PE** (2021) Why don't cockatoos have war songs? [commentary on Mehr et al. and Savage et al.] *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 44: e108.
- Falandays JB, **Smaldino PE**. (2021) The emergence of cultural attractors: An agent-based model of collective cognitive alignment. In *Proceedings of the 43rd Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.
Winner of the Marr Prize for best student paper
- Smaldino PE**, Jones JH (2021) Coupled dynamics of behaviour and disease contagion among antagonistic groups. *Evolutionary Human Sciences* 3: E28.
- Brand CO, Mesoudi A, **Smaldino PE** (2021) Analogy as a catalyst for cumulative cultural evolution. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 25: 450–461.
- Yarkoni T, Eckles D, Heathers JAJ, Levenstein MC, **Smaldino PE**, Lane J (2021) Enhancing and accelerating social science via automation: Challenges and opportunities. *Harvard Data Science Review*.
<https://doi.org/10.1162/99608f92.df2262f5>

- Smaldino PE** (2020) How to build a strong theoretical foundation. *Psychological Inquiry* 31: 297–301.
- Moya C, Cruz y Celis P, Kline MA, **Smaldino PE** (2020) Dynamics of behavior change in the COVID world. *American Journal of Human Biology* 32: e23485.
- Smaldino PE** (2020) How to translate a verbal theory into a formal model. *Social Psychology* 51: 207–218.
- Smaldino PE** (2020) Evolutionary social science needs programmatic training in how models work. *Evolution and Human Behavior* 41: 460–461.
- Turner MA, **Smaldino PE**. (2020) Stubborn extremism as a potential pathway to group polarization. In *Proceedings of the 42st Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.
- Zefferman MR, **Smaldino PE** (2020) Integrating models of cognition and culture will require a bit more math [commentary on Veissière et al]. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 43: e90, 54–55.
- Lukaszewski A, Gurven M, von Rueden C, **Smaldino PE**. (2020) Toward integration of the niche diversity hypothesis with other explanations for personality covariation: Reply to Međedović's (2019) commentary on Lukaszewski et al. (2017). *Social Psychological and Personality Science* 11: 574–576.
- Smaldino PE** (2019) Better methods can't make up for mediocre theory. *Nature* 575: 9.
- Smaldino PE**, Lukaszewski A, von Rueden C, Gurven M (2019) Niche diversity can explain cross-cultural differences in personality structure. *Nature Human Behaviour* 3: 1276–1283.
- Smaldino PE**, Palagi E, Burghardt GM, Pellis SM (2019) The evolution of two types of play. *Behavioral Ecology* 30: 1388–1397.
- Smaldino PE** (2019) A modeling approach that integrates individual behavior, social networks, and cross-cultural variation. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 23: 818–820.
- Smaldino PE**, Spivey MJ (2019) Mills made of grist, and other interesting ideas in need of clarification [commentary on C Heyes]. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 42: e182.
- Hilbert M, Barnett G, Blumenstock J, Contractor N, Diesner J, Frey S, González-Bailón S, Lamberson PJ, Pan J, Peng TQ, Shen C, **Smaldino PE**, van Atteveldt W, Waldherr A, Zhan J, Zhu JJH (2019) Computational communication science: A methodological catalyzer for a maturing discipline. *International Journal of Communication* 13: 3912–3934.
- Smaldino PE** (2019) The evolution of the social self: Multidimensionality of social identity solves the coordination problems of a society. In AC Love & WC Wimsatt (Eds.), *Beyond the meme: Development and structure in cultural evolution* (pp. 445–469). University of Minnesota Press.
- Smaldino PE**, Turner MA, Contreras Kallens PA (2019) Open science and modified funding lotteries can impede the natural selection of bad science. *Royal Society Open Science* 6: 190194.
- Smaldino PE** (2019) Social identity and cooperation in cultural evolution. *Behavioural Processes* 161: 108–116.
- Turner MA, **Smaldino PE** (2018) Paths to polarization: How extreme views, miscommunication, and random chance drive opinion dynamics. *Complexity* 2018: 2740959.
- Contreras Kallens P, Dale R, **Smaldino PE** (2018) Cultural evolution of categorization. *Cognitive Systems Research* 52: 765–774.
- Smaldino PE**, Aplin LM, Farine DR (2018) Sigmoidal acquisition curves are good indicators of conformist transmission. *Scientific Reports* 8: 14015.
- Smaldino PE** (2018) Modeling the evolution of strategies for learning and decision making. *Evolutionary Behavioral Sciences* 12: 173–176.

- Smaldino PE**, Flamson TJ, McElreath R (2018) The evolution of covert signaling. *Scientific Reports* 8: 4905.
- Smaldino PE**, D'Souza R, Maoz Z (2018) Resilience by structural entrenchment: Dynamics of single-layer and multiplex networks following sudden changes to tie costs. *Network Science* 6: 157–175.
- Marriott C, Borg JM, Andras P, **Smaldino PE** (2018) Social learning and cultural evolution in artificial life. *Artificial Life* 24: 5–9.
- Smaldino PE**, Janssen MA, Hillis V, Bednar J (2017) Adoption as a social marker: Innovation diffusion with outgroup aversion. *Journal of Mathematical Sociology* 41: 26–45.
- Waring TM, Goff SH, **Smaldino PE** (2017) The coevolution of economic institutions and sustainable consumption via cultural group selection. *Ecological Economics* 131: 524–532.
- Smaldino PE** (2017) Models are stupid, and we need more of them. In R Vallacher, SJ Read, & A Nowak (Eds.), *Computational social psychology* (pp. 311–331). New York: Psychology Press.
- Smaldino PE**, McElreath R (2016) The natural selection of bad science. *Royal Society Open Science* 3: 160384.
- Makowsky MD, **Smaldino PE** (2016) The evolution of power and the divergence of cooperative norms. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 126: 75–88.
- Richerson PJ, Baldini R, Bell A, Demps K, Frost K, Hillis V, Mathew S, Newton EK, Naar N, Newson L, Ross C, **Smaldino PE**, Waring TM, Zefferman MR (2016) Cultural group selection plays an essential role in explaining human cooperation: A sketch of the evidence [target article]. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 39: e30.
- Smaldino PE** (2016) Not even wrong: Imprecision perpetuates the illusion of understanding at the cost of actual understanding [commentary on RF Baumeister et al]. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 39: e137.
- Smaldino PE** (2016) It's all connected, man. A review of César Hidalgo's *Why Information Grows: The Evolution of Order, from Atoms to Economies*. *Clodynamics* 7: 175–180.
- Smaldino PE**, Calanchini J, Pickett CL (2015) Theory development with agent-based models. *Organizational Psychology Review* 5(4): 300–317.
- McElreath R, **Smaldino PE** (2015) Replication, communication, and the population dynamics of scientific discovery. *PLOS ONE* 10(8): e0136088.
- Schank JC, **Smaldino PE**, Miller ML (2015) Evolution of fairness in the dictator game by multilevel selection. *Journal of Theoretical Biology* 382: 64–73.
- Waring TM, Kline MA, Brooks JS, Goff SH, Gowdy JM, Janssen MA, **Smaldino PE**, Jacquet J (2015) A multi-level evolutionary framework for sustainability analysis. *Ecology and Society* 20(2): 34.
- Smaldino PE**, Epstein JM (2015) Social conformity despite individual preferences for distinctiveness. *Royal Society Open Science* 2: 140437.
- Klein EY, Chelen J, Makowsky MD, **Smaldino PE** (2015) The need for more integrated epidemic modeling, with emphasis on antibiotic resistance. In R Melnik (Ed.), *Mathematical and computational modeling: With applications in the natural and social sciences, engineering, and the arts* (pp. 121–134). New York: Wiley.
- Smaldino PE**, Newton EK (2015) Teaching as an exaptation [commentary on MA Kline]. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 38: e66.
- Smaldino PE** (2014) The cultural evolution of emergent group-level traits [target article]. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 37(3): 243–295.
- Smaldino PE**, Lubell M (2014) Institutions and cooperation in an ecology of games. *Artificial Life* 20: 207–221.

- Smaldino PE**, Newson L (2014) Parent-offspring conflict in mate choice: A commentary on the study by van den Berg, Fawcett, Buunk, and Weissing. *Evolution and Human Behavior* 35: 155–157.
- Smaldino PE**, Waring TM (2014) Let the social sciences evolve [commentary on DS Wilson et al]. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 37(4): 43.
- Smaldino PE**, Newson L, Schank JC, Richerson PJ (2013) Simulating the evolution of the human family: Cooperative breeding increases in harsh environments. *PLOS ONE* 8(11): e80753.
- Smaldino PE** (2013) Cooperation in harsh environments and the emergence of spatial patterns. *Chaos, Solitons & Fractals* 56: 6–12.
- Smaldino PE**, Schank JC, McElreath R (2013) Increased costs of cooperation help cooperators in the long run. *The American Naturalist* 181: 451–463.
- Smaldino, PE** (2013) Measures of individual uncertainty for ecological models: Variance and entropy. *Ecological Modelling* 254: 50–53.
- Smaldino PE**, Richerson PJ (2013) Human cumulative cultural evolution as a form of distributed computation. In P Michelucci (Ed.), *Handbook of human computation* (pp. 979–992). New York: Springer.
- Smaldino PE** (2013) Book review of ‘Complex human dynamics: From minds to societies,’ edited by A Nowak, K Winkowska-Nowak, D Brée. *Journal of Artificial Societies and Social Simulation* 16(14).
- Smaldino PE**, Pickett CL, Sherman JW, Schank JC (2012) An agent-based model of social identity dynamics. *Journal of Artificial Societies and Social Simulation* 15(4): 7.
- Smaldino PE**, Schank JC (2012) Movement patterns, social dynamics, and the evolution of cooperation. *Theoretical Population Biology* 82: 48–58.
- Smaldino PE**, Richerson PJ (2012) The origins of options. *Frontiers in Neuroscience* 6: 50.
- Smaldino PE**, Schank JC (2012) Human mate choice is a complex system. *Complexity* 17(5): 11–22.
- Smaldino PE**, Schank JC (2012) Invariants of human emotion [commentary on KA Lindquist et al]. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 35: 164.
- Smaldino PE**, Lubell M (2011) An institutional mechanism for assortment in an ecology of games. *PLOS ONE* 6(8): e23019.
- Pickett CL, **Smaldino PE**, Sherman JW, Schank JC (2011) Agent-based modeling as a tool for studying social identity processes: The case of optimal distinctiveness theory. In RM Kramer, GJ Leonardelli, & RW Livingston (Eds.), *Social cognition, social identity, and intergroup relations: A festschrift in honor of Marilyn Brewer* (pp. 127–143). New York: Psychology Press.
- Blümel R, **Smaldino PE** (1999) Induction accelerator for crystalline beams. *Physics Letters A* 260: 495–501.

POPULAR PRESS AND GUEST BLOGGING

- Frankenhuis W, Panchanathan K, **Smaldino P** (2021, May 11) Strategic ambiguity or unknown unknowns? *Medium*. <https://leonidtiokhin.medium.com/strategic-ambiguity-or-unknown-unknowns-fe1596e887f3>
- Tiokhin L, Panchanathan K, **Smaldino P**, Lakens D (2021, April 20) Why indirect contributions matter for science and scientists. *Medium*. <https://leonidtiokhin.medium.com/why-indirect-contributions-matter-for-science-and-scientists-6c9bf827bc7d>

Smaldino PE (2019, Sep 16) Social complexity and personality. *Nature: Behind the Paper*.
<https://socialsciences.nature.com/users/302255-paul-smaldino/posts/53720-social-complexity-and-personality>

Smaldino PE (2017, Nov 29) On preprints. *Academic Life Histories*.
<http://academiclifehistories.weebly.com/blog/on-preprints>

Smaldino PE (2016, Sep 20) Why isn't science better? Look at career incentives. *The Conversation*.
<http://theconversation.com/why-isnt-science-better-look-at-career-incentives-65619>

Smaldino PE (2016, Aug 15) Bad science evolves. Stopping it means changing institutional selection pressures. *SPSP Character & Context Blog*. <http://spsp.org/news-center/blog/bad-science-evolves>

SELECTED MEDIA COVERAGE

REVIEWS OF MODELING SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

Human Ethology (June, 2025)

Contemporary Sociology (March, 2025)

Quarterly Review of Biology (December, 2024)

Journal of Economic Literature (2024)

SFI Parallax: New book offers thoughtful approach to modeling complex social systems (March 20, 2024)

Statistical Modeling, Causal Inference, & Social Science: "Modeling Social Behavior": Paul Smaldino's cool new textbook on agent-based modeling (October 24, 2023)

ARTICLES

EurekaAlert: Opinions within inner circles influence perception of social division (July 8, 2025)

NY Times: Twitter barred them. What Happened When Elon Musk Brought Them Back? (October 12, 2024)

Everything Hertz: A race to the bottom (September 5, 2024)

Wired: Twitter really is worse than ever (May 3, 2023)

LA Times: One billionaire owner, twice the hate: Twitter hate speech surged with Musk (April 27, 2023)

New Stateman: If Elon Musk thinks running Twitter has been painful, he should try using it (April 13, 2023)

SIAM News: Signaling identity and changing perceptions with hashtags (February 8, 2023)

Aeon: Personality is not only about who but also where you are (December 20, 2019)

Science Daily: Differences in personality structure among humans (September 16, 2019)

Coffee Break: Why bad science spreads (August 25, 2019)

Ars Technica: The replication crisis may also be a theory crisis (February 16, 2019)

Nature: The mathematics of science's broken reward system (November 16, 2016)

The Economist: Why bad science persists (September 24, 2016)

Pacific Standard: Where does bad science come from (September 23, 2016)

The Atlantic: The inevitable evolution of bad science (September 21, 2016)

Times Higher Education: 'Bad science' spreads through natural selection (September 21, 2016)

BBC World Service: Why bad science is rewarded (September 21, 2016)

The Guardian: Cut-throat academia leads to 'natural selection of bad science' (September 20, 2016)

Vox: The 7 biggest problems facing science (September 7, 2016)

New Scientist: Evolutionary forces are causing a boom in bad science (July 8, 2016)

Statistical Modeling, Causal Inference, & Social Science: "The natural selection of bad science" (June 1, 2016)

Sydney Morning Herald: The hipster formula revealed (June 18, 2015)

Daily Mail: Why all hipsters look the same (March 10, 2015)

Pacific Standard: Can rebellion breed conformity (March 6, 2015)

Discover: Math explains why hipsters all look the same (March 4, 2015)

PODCAST INTERVIEWS

Simplifying Complexity: How cultural evolution shapes us (March 17/31, 2025)

Origins: Social identities, collective intelligence, and an ambling open life (January 28, 2025)

The Dissenter: Modeling social behavior (October 18, 2024)

Converging Dialogues: Modeling social behavior (January 31, 2024)
BJKS: Modeling social behavior (October 6, 2023)
Complexity: Problems with value metrics & governance at scale, with C. Thi Nguyen (February 8, 2023)
Game Changer: What Twitter can teach us about identity signaling (February 15, 2022)
BJKS: Cubist chickens, formal models, and the psychology curriculum (January 8, 2021)

RESEARCH GRANTS

2025	<i>Modeling Media-Policy Feedback Dynamics</i> . Center for Analytic Political Engagement, UC Merced. PI; \$3,000.
2024	<i>Building a Science of Cultural Evolution for the 21st Century</i> . John Templeton Foundation. PI; \$258,992.
2024	<i>Understanding the Cultural Evolution of Risk Preferences</i> . Center for Analytic Political Engagement, UC Merced. PI; \$1,500.
2024	<i>Environmental Instability and the Utility of Prestige-Biased v. Conformist Social Learning</i> . Center for Analytic Political Engagement, UC Merced. PI; \$1,500.
2023	<i>How Effective Media Propaganda Works in Social Networks</i> . Center for Analytic Political Engagement, UC Merced. PI; \$1,000.
2023	<i>Building the Group Identity Concept from the Ground Up</i> . NSF. PI (w/ Adrian Bell); \$424,978.
2023	<i>How Effective Media Propaganda Works in Social Networks</i> . UC Merced Center for Analytic Political Engagement. PI; \$500.
2021	<i>Exploring Information Architectures (IAs) as Sociotechnical Competitions</i> . Templeton World Charity. PI; \$234,000.
2020	<i>RAPID: Coupled Contagion, Behavior-Change, and the Dynamics of Pro- and Anti-Social Behavior During the COVID-19 Pandemic</i> . NSF. Co-PI (PI: James Holland Jones, Stanford); \$197,622.
2020	<i>Hiding Radical Speech in Plain Sight: Covert Identity Signaling on Social Media</i> . Army Research Office. PI; \$299,577.
2019	<i>Models of Social Dynamics: An Introductory Module</i> . John Templeton Foundation. PI; \$6,519.
2019	<i>The Evolution of Identity: The Roles of Culture and Context</i> . Hellman Faculty Fellows Grant, University of California, Merced. PI; \$25,000.
2017	<i>Models of Selection in Scientific Ecosystems</i> . DARPA. PI; \$115,302.

INVITED WORKSHOP AND WORKING GROUP PARTICIPATION

Cultural Evolution Meets Organizational Theory II. London School of Economics (September 2025)
 Building a Science of Cultural Evolution for the 21st Century (**organizer**). Santa Fe Institute (May 2025)
 Social Aspects of Science and Innovation Workshop. University of Missouri (March 2025)
 Cultural Evolution Meets Organizational Theory. Stanford University (August 2024)
 Interdisciplinary Workshop on Identity and Politics. Institute for Advanced Study, Toulouse (May 2024)
 Modeling Care. Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford University (April 2024)
 Advances in the Genetic Architecture of Complex Human Traits. National Human Genome Research Institute (November 2023)
 Accelerating Science: Risks, Incentives and Rewards. Santa Fe Institute (October 2023)
 Collective Adaptation in a Turbulent World. Santa Fe Institute (September 2023)
 Adaptation and Innovation for Sustainable Societies Conference. Stanford University (May 2023)
 Information Architectures as Sociotechnical Competitions (**organizer**). Santa Fe Institute (May 2023)
 Augmented Intelligence Workshop. Virtual (September 2022)
 A New Synthesis for the Science of Science. Santa Fe Institute (May 2022)

Computational Social Science Synergy Retreat (**keynote**). UC Davis (April 2022)
 Constructing and Deconstructing Collectives: Signals to Space and Society. Santa Fe Institute (January 2022)
 NSF Predictive Intelligence for Pandemic Prevention “Human” Workshop (March 2021)
 Adaptation, Optimality, and Risk Management: What Do the Human Evolutionary Sciences and the Climate Sciences Have to Offer Each Other? SESYNC (September 2021)
 Model-Based Research and Reproducibility Workshop. Center for Open Science (February 2020)
 Metascience Symposium. Stanford University (September 2019)
 Cultural Evolution Symposium. University of Pennsylvania (May 2019)
 The Role of Information in Complex Conflict. Santa Fe Institute (February 2019)
 Research Quality & Design Symposium: Public Trust In Science, UC Davis, January 2019
 Technical Exchange on Complex Social Systems. Center for Open Science (August 2018)
 Understanding the Mechanisms and Evolution of Play. Konrad Lorenz Institute (July 2018)
 Integrating Different Perspectives on Social Learning. Santa Fe Institute (April 2018)
 Re-Computing the Social Sciences. University of California, Davis (May 2017)
 Beyond the Meme: Articulating Dynamic Structures in Cultural Evolution. Univ of Minnesota (October 2014)
 Human Computation Roadmap Summit. Woodrow Wilson Center, Washington, DC (June 2014)
 Evolution of Sustainability Working Group. National Institute for Mathematical and Biological Synthesis (NIMBioS), University of Tennessee (March 2014, November 2014)
 Evolutionary Approaches to Sustainability and Social-Ecological Systems: A Catalyst Workshop. University of Maine, Schoodic Education and Research Center (May 2013)
 Simulating Cultural Evolution Retreat. University of Maine (February 2013)
 Epistemology Think Tank: New Measures for Models. MIDAS Center, University of Pittsburgh (May 2011)

PRESENTATIONS (videos at <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqyCiWK61Vyea3rQ68DCkvwVEPxGAtvoP>)

INVITED TALKS

Digital Democracy Centre, Southern Denmark University, September 2025
 Interacting Minds Centre, Aarhus University, September 2025
 Complex Systems Seminar, Portland State University, May 2025
 Quantitative Social Science Group, Dartmouth College, January 2025
 Systems Dynamics Group, MIT Sloan School of Management, October 2024
 Department of Anthropology, UC Davis, October 2024
 Institute for Advanced Study, Toulouse, France, May 2024
 Department of Sociology, Duke University, April 2024
 Panel on Complex Systems, College of Engineering, UC Davis, February 2024
 Department of Psychology, Université Clermont Auvergne (remote), February 2024
 Cognitive Development Center, Central European University (remote), April 2023
 Center for Interdisciplinary Digital Sciences, TU Dresden, September 2022
 UM6P School of Collective Intelligence (remote), March 2022
 ReproducibiliTea, McMaster University (remote), March 2022
 Santa Fe Institute, August 2021
 Simulations of Scientific Inquiry Group, Eindhoven University of Technology (remote), May 2021
 Computational Demography Working Group, University of Washington (remote), May 2021
 Netherlands Institute of Advanced Study, University of Amsterdam (remote), March 2021
 ReproducibiliTea journal club, University College London (remote), March 2021
 Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm University (remote), March 2021
 Center for Behavior, Evolution, and Culture, UCLA, February 2021
 Department of Developmental Psychology, Utrecht University (remote), December 2020
 Social, Decision, and Organizational Sciences Program, University of Maryland (remote), November 2020
 National Institute for Mathematical and Biological Synthesis, University of Tennessee (remote), October 2020
 Department of Archaeology, University of Cambridge (remote), June 2020
 Centre for Culture and Evolution, Brunel University London (remote), June 2020
 Department of Communication, UC Davis (remote), May 2020
 Center for Social, Cognitive, and Affective Neuroscience, University of Glasgow (remote), May 2020

Cognition and Language Workshop, Stanford University, February 2020
 Department of Environmental Science and Policy, UC Davis, November 2019
 Department of Psychology, UC Davis, November 2019
 Santa Fe Institute, July 2019
 School of Human Evolution and Social Change, Arizona State University, November 2018
 Department of Anthropology, University of Missouri, September 2018
 Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig, Germany, August 2018
 Department of Earth System Science, Stanford University, January 2018
 Te Pūnaha Matatini, Auckland, New Zealand, December 2016
 Department of Biochemistry, Otago University, Dunedin, New Zealand, December 2016
 Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, University of Auckland, New Zealand, December 2016
 Institute of Natural and Mathematical Sciences, Massey University, Auckland, New Zealand, December 2016
 Social Dynamics and Complexity Group, University of California, Irvine, November 2016
 Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig, Germany, October 2016
 Institute for Advanced Study, Toulouse, France, May 2016
 Center for Behavior, Evolution, and Culture, UCLA, February 2016
 Department of Psychology, UC Davis, December 2015
 Department of Communication, UC Davis, May 2015
 Berkeley Institute for Data Science, UC Berkeley, April 2015.
 Santa Fe Institute, December 2013
 Center for the Study of Complex Systems, University of Michigan, November 2013
 National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center (SESYNC), University of Maryland, October 2013
 School of Human Evolution and Social Change, Arizona State University, February 2013
 Computational Biology Group, National Institutes of Health, December 2012
 Department of Emergency Medicine, Johns Hopkins University, April 2011
 Department of Physics, University of California, Davis, November 2010
 Department of Environmental Science and Policy, University of California, Davis, April 2010

CONFERENCE TALKS AND KEYNOTES

Society for Personality and Social Psychology Meeting, Pre-conference on Historical Psychology (**keynote**).
 Denver, CO. February 2025.
 Conference of the Italian Society of Transport Economics and Logistics (**keynote**). Milan, Italy. September 2024.
 Computational Social Science Society of the Americas (**invited speaker**). Santa Fe, NM. October 2023.
 California Workshop on Evolutionary Social Science (**organizer**). Merced, CA. May 2023.
 The End of Enlightenment? (**panel discussant**) Los Angeles, CA. March 2023.
 Cultural Evolution Society Meeting. Aarhus, Denmark. September 2022.
 Social Simulation Conference (**keynote**). Milan, Italy. September 2022.
 NeurIPS Pre-registration Workshop (**keynote**). Remote only. December 2021.
 Cultural Evolution Society Meeting. Sapporo, Japan (remote). June 2021.
 American Anthropological Association Meeting. San Jose, CA. November 2018.
 Cultural Evolution Society Meeting. Tempe, AZ. October 2018.
 California Workshop on Evolutionary Social Science. Santa Barbara, CA. May 2018.
 Cultural Evolution Society Meeting. Jena, Germany. September 2017.
 Human Behavior and Evolution Society Meeting. Boise, ID. May 2017.
 The Science of Evolution and the Evolution of the Sciences. Institute of Philosophy, KU Leuven, Belgium.
 October 2016.
 Conference on Complex Systems (*****starred talk**). Tempe, AZ. October 2015.
 Cultural Evolution of Technology (CCS satellite workshop). Tempe, AZ. October 2015.
 Society for Experimental Social Psychology Conference. Denver, CO. September 2015.
 International Society for the History, Philosophy, and Social Science of Biology Meeting. Montreal, Canada.
 July 2015.
 Human Behavior and Evolution Society Meeting. Columbia, MO. May 2015.
 Society for Personality and Social Psychology Meeting, Pre-conference on Dynamical Systems and
 Computational Modeling. Long Beach, CA. February 2015.

Society for Personality and Social Psychology Meeting, Pre-conference on Dynamical Systems and Computational Modeling. Austin, TX. February 2014.
 European Human Behaviour and Evolution Association Conference. Amsterdam, Netherlands. March 2013.
 Society for Personality and Social Psychology Meeting, Pre-conference on Dynamical Systems and Computational Modeling. New Orleans, LA. January 2013.
 International Conference for Complex Systems. Boston, MA. June 2011.
 European Human Behaviour and Evolution Association Conference. Geißen, Germany. March 2011.
 Midwest Political Science Association Conference. Chicago, IL. March 2011.
 Regional Graduate Student Conference on Animal Behavior, Davis, CA. February 2009.

TEACHING AND MENTORING

Postdoctoral Supervision

Nathan Gabriel (UC Merced)	2023–2025
Matthew Turner (co-supervisor at Stanford)	2021–2022
Thomas Flamson (UC Merced)	2016–2017

Graduate Student Advising (chair)

Benjamin Fried, Cognitive and Information Sciences	2024–
Chanuwas Aswamenakul (co-chair), Cognitive and Information Sciences	2021–
Leo Niehorster-Cook (co-chair), Cognitive and Information Sciences	2021–
Alejandro Pérez Velilla, Cognitive and Information Sciences	2020–
Cody Moser, Cognitive and Information Sciences	2020–2025
Amin Boroomand, Quantitative and Systems Biology	2018–2022
Matthew Turner, Cognitive and Information Sciences	2017–2021

Graduate Student Advising (other, internal)

Ellis Cain (committee member), Cognitive and Information Sciences, UC Merced	current
Rebecca Sullivan (committee member), Cognitive and Information Sciences, UC Merced	current
Christopher Bernal (committee member), Management of Complex Systems, UC Merced	current
Tony Hua (committee member), Economics, UC Merced	current
Sean Lyon (committee member), Quantitative and Systems Biology, UC Merced	2024–2025
Tyrome Sweet (committee member), Quantitative and Systems Biology, UC Merced	2018–2022
Taran Rallings (committee member), Quantitative and Systems Biology, UC Merced	2018–2022
Jordan Ackerman (committee member), Cognitive and Information Sciences, UC Merced	2016–2022
Ketika Garg (committee member), Cognitive and Information Sciences, UC Merced	2017–2022
Ben Falandays (committee member), Cognitive and Information Sciences, UC Merced	2017–2022
Daniel Schloesser (committee member), Cognitive and Information Sciences, UC Merced	2017–2021

Graduate Student Advising (other, external)

Maria Pykälä (committee member), Management, University of Lausanne	2025–
Madeleine Ammar (committee member), Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology	2024–
Hossein Sabzian Papi (committee member), Ecology & Environmental Sciences, Univ of Maine	2023–2025
Peter Steiglechner (committee member), Computational Sociology, Constructor University	2021–2024
Sydney Wood (external committee member), Psychology, UC Davis	2020–2024
Qiankun Zhong (external committee member), Communication, UC Davis	2021–2023
Mikkel Werling (committee member, M.S.), Cognitive Science, Aarhus University	2021–2022
Matt Miller (committee member), Psychology, UC Davis	2017–2019

Visiting Scholar Hosting

Augusto Dalla Ragione, PhD student, Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology	Fall 2024
Jose Segovia Martin, Assistant Professor, UM6P School of Collective Intelligence, CNRS	Spring 2024
Peter Steiglechner, PhD student, Physics and Earth Sciences, Constructor University	Spring 2023
Mikkel Werling, MS student, Cognitive Science, Aarhus University	Spring 2022

Instructor

Cultural Evolution (undergraduate), UC Merced	Fall 2024
Cultural Evolution (graduate), UC Merced	Fall 2017, Spring 2024
Modeling Social Behavior (graduate), UC Merced	Spring 2017, 2019, 2021, 2023, 2025
Modeling Social Behavior (undergraduate), UC Merced	Spring 2017, 2019, 2022, 2024
Introduction to Cognitive Science, UC Merced	Spring 2018, 2020, Fall 2023
Minds, Technology, & Society (graduate), UC Merced	Spring 2018, 2025
Introduction to Biological Psychology, UC Davis	Summer 2015
Agent-Based Modeling, UC Davis	Fall 2010

Extra-mural Instructor

Introduction to Agent-Based Modeling and Model-Based Thinking, ICPSR Summer Program	Summer 2025
Theoretical Modeling for the Social and Behavioral Sciences, ICPSR Summer Program	Summer 2024
Lecturer, Complexity Interactive, Santa Fe Institute	Fall 2023
Lecturer, Complex Systems Summer School, Santa Fe Institute	Summer 2022
Introduction to Agent-Based Modeling, CodeHorizons	2021–present
Models of Social Dynamics (http://www.dysoc.org/cesmodules/social_dynamics_module/)	2020
Workshop on Agent-Based Modeling, SIPS Conference, Grand Rapids, MI	June 2018
Workshop on Agent-Based Modeling, Eindhoven University of Technology, Netherlands	September 2017
Computational Modeling of Social Behavior (graduate level), Aarhus University, Denmark	August 2017

Guest Lecturer

‘Computational Social Science.’ Models of Group Decisions and Social Choice, Nueva School	Spring 2023
‘Some models of science.’ History, Philosophy, and Practice of Science, UC Merced	Fall 2019, 2022
‘Agent-based modeling.’ Foundations of Cognitive Science II, UC Merced	Spring 2020–2025
‘Agent-based modeling.’ Intelligent Adaptive Systems, UC Merced	Spring 2018, 2019
‘Cumulative cultural evolution.’ Intelligent Adaptive Systems, UC Merced	Fall 2018
‘Reciprocity’ & ‘Multilevel selection.’ Fundamentals of Animal Behavior, UC Davis	Winter 2016
‘False positives, replication, and bias.’ Industrial Organization and Energy, UC Davis	Spring 2015
‘Game theory.’ Graduate Seminar on Evolutionary Genomics, NIH	Fall 2012
‘Design of agent-based models.’ Modeling Sustainability, University of Maine, Orono	Fall 2011, Fall 2013

Reading Groups (informal graduate seminars)

<i>Statistical Rethinking</i> (2 nd ed) by Richard McElreath	Fall 2022
<i>Culture and the Evolutionary Process</i> by Robert Boyd & Peter J. Richerson	Spring 2022

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

REVIEWER:

Journals: *Adaptive Behavior* • *American Naturalist* • *Artificial Life* • *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* • *Behavioural Processes* • *Biology & Philosophy* • *BMC Evolutionary Biology* • *Clodynamics* • *Cognition* • *Cognitive Science* • *Cognitive Systems Research* • *Computational Economics* • *Current Anthropology* • *Ecological Psychology* • *Ecology and Society* • *eLife* • *European Journal of Personality* • *Europhysics Letters* • *Evolution* • *Evolution: Education and Outreach* • *Evolution and Human Behavior* • *Evolutionary Anthropology* • *Evolutionary Behavioral Sciences* • *Evolutionary Human Sciences* • *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience* • *Games* • *Human Nature* • *Journal of Artificial Societies and Social Simulation* • *Journal of Communication* • *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization* • *Journal of Mathematical Sociology* • *Journal of Politics* • *Journal of Research in Personality* • *Journal of the Royal Society Interface* • *Journal of Theoretical Biology* • *Nature* • *Nature Communications* • *Nature Human Behaviour* • *npj Complexity* • *Perspectives on Psychological Science* • *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B* • *Philosophy of Science* • *PLOS Computational Biology* • *PLOS ONE* • *PNAS* • *PNAS Nexus* • *Proceedings of the Royal Society B* • *Psychological Review* • *Royal Society*

Open Science • Science Advances • Scientific Reports • Social Cognition • Society & Natural Resources • Studies in History and Philosophy of Science • Theoretical Population Biology • Trends in Cognitive Sciences

Book Publishers: *Oxford University Press, Princeton University Press, SAGE Books*

Conferences: *ALife 2016 • CogSci 2017, 2019 • Cultural Evolution Society 2018*

Funders: *National Science Foundation {Cultural Anthropology, SciSIP, Human Networks and Data Science, Social Psychology} • Swiss National Science Foundation • Army Research Office • European Research Council • Cultural Evolution Society • John Templeton Foundation • Leakey Foundation • Santa Fe Institute*

OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICE:

Program Committee. Social Learning and Cultural Evolution Workshop, ALIFE '16, Cancun, Mexico (July 2016)
Program Committee. Graduate Workshop on Multiplex Social Networks, UC Davis (April 2016)
Program Committee. Graduate Workshop on Agent-Based Modeling, Johns Hopkins University (July 2014)
Organizing Committee. 2nd annual Cultural Evolution Society Meeting, Tempe, AZ (Fall 2018)
Publication Committee. Cultural Evolution Society (Fall 2017–2019)
External Reviewer. Organized Research Unit at UC Irvine (Spring 2021)
Faculty Organizer. California Workshop on Evolutionary Social Science (May 2023)

UNIVERSITY SERVICE:

Faculty Search Committee. Center for Advanced Modeling, Johns Hopkins University (2012, 2013)
Course Development: Agent-Based Modeling (undergraduate), UC Merced (Spring 2017)
Course Development: Modeling Social Behavior (graduate), UC Merced (Spring 2017)
Ad hoc Faculty Appointment Committee, UC Merced (Spring 2017)
Committee on Research Computing, UC Merced (2017–2020)
Faculty Advisor. Data and Analytical Science User Group, UC Merced (2017–2022)
Faculty Search Committee. Cognitive & Information Sciences, UC Merced (2017–2018)
UC Merced campus rep. California Workshop on Evolutionary Social Science (2018–2021)
Faculty Search Committee. Cognitive & Information Sciences, UC Merced (2018–2019)
Faculty Merit Review Committee. Cognitive & Information Sciences, UC Merced (2018–2019)
Communications Committee. Cognitive & Information Sciences, UC Merced (2017–2020)
Distinguished Cognitive Scientist Award Committee. CIS, UC Merced (2018–present)
Committee to create a Master's Degree in Cognitive & Information Science. UC Merced (2018–2020)
Gallo School Planning Committee, UC Merced (2020–2021)
Education Policy Committee. Cognitive & Information Sciences, UC Merced (2023–present)
Admissions Committee. Cognitive & Information Sciences, UC Merced (2023–present)
Graduate Group Chair. Cognitive & Information Sciences, UC Merced (2020–2023)
Graduate Group Vice Chair. Cognitive & Information Sciences, UC Merced (Fall 2024)

LANGUAGES

Natural: English (native), Italian (decent)

Computer: *Expert:* Java, R, NetLogo, MATLAB, Mathematica, LaTeX;
Intermediate: Python, Julia