

RICCARDO PRONZATO, PhD
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About

Currently a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Bologna. I hold a Ph.D. with honours from IULM University (Milan, Italy) and I was a Visiting Fellow at the University of Cambridge and a Visiting PhD scholar at RMIT University (Melbourne, Australia).

My research is mainly situated within the field of Critical Algorithm Studies and digital sociology. I focus on the production of algorithmic media, how individuals relate with digital technologies, and the social implications of algorithms and AI-based systems. Moreover, I adopt the framework of critical pedagogy to explore innovative research and teaching methodologies to promote critical data literacy.

Recently, I've been collaborating on projects in healthcare aimed at co-designing AI-powered technologies for dementia caregivers and exploring the implementation of AI in clinical practice.

As an early career researcher, I have established a robust publication record, with articles in top-tier journals, such as *Big Data & Society*, *Convergence* and *Social Science & Medicine*, and I have presented my interdisciplinary scholarship at several international conferences. Moreover, I have a strong teaching experience in different institutions, designing and co-leading courses, delivering lectures, and facilitating workshops.

Academic appointments

- Apr 2023 - present: *Postdoctoral Research Fellow*, University of Bologna (Bologna, Italy)
(Project "AGE-IT: Ageing well in an ageing society", funded by Next Generation EU - Italian PNRR, National Recovery and Resilience Plan)
- Oct 2023 – Sep 2024: *Lecturer* (non-permanent), Catholic University of the Sacred Heart (Piacenza, Italy)
- Nov 2019 - Jun 2023: *PhD Candidate*, IULM University (Milan, Italy)
- Mar 2020 - Feb 2022: *Lecturer* (non-permanent), SAE Institute (Milan, Italy)
- Sep 2018 – Oct 2019: *Teaching Assistant*, IULM University (Milan, Italy)

Visiting periods

- Oct 2024 – Dec 2024: *Visiting Fellow*, Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CRASSH), University of Cambridge (Cambridge, UK)
- Sep 2022 - Nov 2022: *Visiting PhD Scholar*, Digital Ethnography Research Centre (DERC), RMIT University (Melbourne, Australia)

Education

- Nov 2019 – Jun 2023: PhD. *Communication, Markets and Society*, IULM University (Milan, Italy)
(*Excellent with Honours – Eccellente con lode e auspicio pubblicazione*)
- Sep 2016 – Sep 2018: MSc. *Sociology and Social Research*, University of Trento (Trento, Italy)
(*Summa cum laude – 110/110 e lode*)
- Sep 2017 – Feb 2018: Erasmus+ exchange, Maastricht University - Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Maastricht, Netherlands)
- May 2016 – Oct 2017: Master, *Global Marketing, Communication & Made in Italy*, Italy-USA Foundation (online)

- Sep 2007 – Jul 2016: Master of Music, *Classical guitar*, Conservatory of music “Giuseppe Verdi” (Turin, Italy)
(10-year master’s programme, 8.5/10)
- Sep 2012 – Nov 2015: BA. *Communication, Media and Advertising*, IULM University (Milan, Italy)
(*Summa cum laude* – 110/110 e lode)

Teaching experience

- “Elements and methods of sociology”, Catholic University (Piacenza), *Fixed-term lecturer* (w/ L. Lombi), Sep 2023 – Sep 2024.
- “Digital communication”, IULM University (Milan), *Guest lecturer and co-course leader* (w/ M. Bittanti), Feb 2024 – Sep 2024.
- “PhD Digital Humanities”, Pegaso University (online), *Guest lecturer*, 16 May 2024.
- “PhD Sociology and social research”, University of Bologna (Forlì), *Guest lecturer*, 29 Apr 2024.
- “Digital communication”, IULM University (Milan), *Guest lecturer and co-course leader* (w/ M. Bittanti), Feb 2023 – Sep 2023.
- “Social change in the digital age”, IULM University, *Teaching assistant* (w/ M. Bittanti), Sep 2019 - Sep 2023.
- “Social research methods”, IULM University, *Teaching assistant* (w/ G. Di Fraia), Sep 2018 - Feb 2023.
- “Sociology of Communication”, University of Siena, *Guest lecturer* (w/ T. Bonini), 13-14 Mar 2023.
- “Sociology of Communication”, University of Siena, *Guest lecturer* (w/ T. Bonini), 14 Mar 2022.
- “History of contemporary music”, SAE Institute (Milan), *Fixed-term lecturer and Course leader*, Mar 2021 - Jan 2022.
- “Music Business”, SAE Institute, *Guest lecturer* (w/ A. Micalizzi); Mar 2020 - Mar 2021.
- “Digital Communication”, CEU Universidad Cardinal Herrera (Valencia), *Guest lecturer*, 2-6 Mar 2020.

Publications: Book

- Pronzato, R. (2024). *Algoritmi, strutture e agire sociale: Un’analisi sociologica* [Algorithms, structures and social action: A sociological analysis]. Milan, Italy: FrancoAngeli. Available OA at: <https://series.francoangeli.it/index.php/oa/catalog/book/1225>

Publications: Peer-reviewed journal articles and conference proceedings

- Pronzato, R., & Gibin, M. (2025). L’impatto dell’IA e dell’Automated Decision-making sulle relazioni di cura. Nuove sfide per la sociologia della salute. *Studi di Sociologia*, 1, 61-74.
DOI: [10.26350/000309_000215](https://doi.org/10.26350/000309_000215) *
- Moretti, V., & Pronzato, R. (2024). The emotional ambiguities of healthcare professionals’ platform experiences. *Social Science & Medicine*, 357, 117185. DOI: [10.1016/j.socscimed.2024.117185](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2024.117185) * 5
- Pronzato, R. (2024). Enacting algorithms through encoding and decoding practices. *Italian Sociological Review*, 14(10S), 531-552. DOI: [10.13136/isr.v14i10S.739](https://doi.org/10.13136/isr.v14i10S.739) *
- Markham, A. N. & Pronzato, R. (2023). A Critical (theory) data literacy: Tales from the field. *Information and Learning Science*, 125(5/6), 293-320. DOI: [10.1108/ILS-06-2023-0087](https://doi.org/10.1108/ILS-06-2023-0087) 5
- Pronzato, R. (2023). Algorithms and hegemony in the workplace: Negotiating design and values in an Italian television platform. *Big Data & Society*, 10(1), 20539517231182393.
DOI: [10.1177/20539517231182393](https://doi.org/10.1177/20539517231182393) * 5
- Pronzato, R., & Markham, A. (2023). Returning to critical pedagogy in a world of datafication. *Convergence*, 29(1), 97-115. DOI: [10.1177/13548565221148108](https://doi.org/10.1177/13548565221148108) * 5
- Risi, E., Pronzato, R. & Di Fraia, G. (2022). Memes as socio-narrative representations of COVID-19. Themes, protagonists, and narratives of the pandemic memes in Italy. *Mediascapes journal*, 20(2), 26-46. Available at: mediascapes/article/view/18038 *

- Pronzato, R. & Risi, E. (2022). Reframing everyday life. Implications of social distancing in Italy. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 42(3/4), 348-368.
DOI: [10.1108/IJSSP-07-2020-0350](https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSSP-07-2020-0350) * δ
- Risi, E. & Pronzato, R. (2021). Smartworking is not so smart. Always-on lives and the dark side of platformization. *Work Organisation, Labour and Globalisation*, 15(1), 107-125.
DOI: [10.13169/workorglaboglob.15.1.0107](https://doi.org/10.13169/workorglaboglob.15.1.0107)
- Raffa, M. & Pronzato, R. (2021). The algorithmic imaginary of cultural producers. Towards platform optimized music? *H-ermes. Journal of Communication*, 19, 293-321.
DOI: [10.1285/i22840753n19p293](https://doi.org/10.1285/i22840753n19p293) *
- Risi, E., Pronzato, R., & Di Fraia, G. (2021). Everything is inside the home: the boundaries of home confinement during the Italian lockdown. *European Societies*, 23(S1), S464-S477.
DOI: [10.1080/14616696.2020.1828977](https://doi.org/10.1080/14616696.2020.1828977) * δ
- Pronzato, R. (2021). Critical pedagogy as a practice of resistance to algorithms. *AoIR Selected Papers of Internet Research*, October 2021 (online). DOI: [10.5210/spir.v2021i0.12018](https://doi.org/10.5210/spir.v2021i0.12018)
- Herman, A., Luka, M.E., Markham, A., Dilkes, D., Pronzato, R., Sarawatay, D., Carlson, R., Stirling, F. (2021). Collaborating at Microscopic and Massive Scales: The Challenge and Value of Covid Isolation for Critical Internet Studies. *AoIR Selected Papers of Internet Research*, October 2021 (online). DOI: [10.5210/spir.v2021i0.12116](https://doi.org/10.5210/spir.v2021i0.12116)
- Risi, E., Bonini, T. & Pronzato, R. (2020). Algorithmic media in everyday life. An experience with auto-ethnographic student diaries. *Etnografia e ricerca qualitativa*, 13(3), 407-422.
DOI: [10.3240/99552](https://doi.org/10.3240/99552) *
- Risi, E., Pronzato, R. & Di Fraia, G. (2020). Living and working confined at home. Boundaries and platforms during the lockdown. *Journal of Cultural Analysis and Social Change*, 5(2), 1-4.
DOI: [10.20897/jcasc/9253](https://doi.org/10.20897/jcasc/9253)
- Risi, E., & Pronzato, R. (2020). Nuances, boundaries and subjects of the fear in the city. Women's experiences in Milan. *Lo Squaderno*, 57(3), 17-21.
Available at: <http://www.losquaderno.net/?cat=193>
- Di Fraia, G., Risi, E., & Pronzato, R. (2019). Socio-Narrative Representations of Immigrants by Italian Young People. *Italian Journal of Sociology of Education*, 11(2), 126-146.
DOI: [10.14658/pupi-ijse-2019-2-7](https://doi.org/10.14658/pupi-ijse-2019-2-7) *

δ = Q1 journal, double blind peer-review.

* = Journal recognised as an A class journal by ANVUR (Italian National Agency Evaluating the University and Research Systems).

Publications: Book chapters

- Pronzato, R., & Raffa, M. (in press). Playlistable sounds. Music producers and platform optimization. In C. Anderton, M. James, D. Nordgård and S. Pisfil, *The Intellect Handbook of Global Music Industries*. Bristol, UK: Intellect.
- Pronzato, R. & Risi, E. (2023). 7 Amici per 7 Giorni. Uno studio sulle tracce digitali dei prod(users). In E. Risi and A. Gandini, *Tracce digitali e ricerca sociologica. Riflessioni ed esperienze di sociologia digitale* (pp. 85-104). Milan, Italy: FrancoAngeli.
- Risi, E., & Pronzato, R. (2022). Algorithmic prosumers. In E. Risi, M. Briziarelli and E. Armano (eds.), *Digital Platforms and Algorithmic Self. Theory, Experiences, Resistance and Counter Cooperation* (pp. 149-165). London, UK: Westminster University Press.
- Pronzato, R. (2022). Smart working e piattaforme digitali. Tra le esperienze dei lavoratori, le sfide aziendali e i compiti dello stato. In F. Massara and M. Polesana, *Rapporto IULM 2022 Sulla Comunicazione D'impresa* (pp. 68-89). Milan, Italy: FrancoAngeli.
- Risi, E., & Pronzato, R. (2022). Back to practices and narratives. Auto-ethnography as a practice of access to data and algorithms. In G. Punziano and A. Delli Paoli (eds.), *Handbook of Research on Advanced Research Methodologies for a Digital Society* (pp. 265-279). IGI Global.
- Pronzato, R. (2019). L'approccio socio-cognitivo per studiare la percezione del rischio e l'attenzione al pericolo. Cos'è in frame? In G. Di Fraia (ed.), *Per una città senza paura. Esperienze e vissuti femminili a Milano* (pp. 15-29). Verona, Italy: Ombrecorte.

Publications: Book review essay

- Pronzato, R. (2024). Algorithms of resistance: the everyday fight against platform power: by Tiziano Bonini and Emiliano Treré, Cambridge, MA, The MIT Press, 2024. *Information, Communication & Society*, 1-2. DOI: [10.1080/1369118X.2024.2388092](https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2024.2388092)

Conference presentations

- “Enacting co-design, re-politicising co-design. A critical lens on eHealth interventions”. *Ageing in the digital era Conference*, University of Milano Bicocca, 20-21 February 2025.
- “Drawing Emotions. Il lavoro emotivo dei professionisti sanitari in una prospettiva di corso di vita” (w/ A. Plava). *Midterm Italian Sociological Association (AIS) Conference - Sociology of Health and Medicine Section*, Forlì, Italy, 16-17 January 2025.
- “For a digital sociology of praxis: Critical pedagogy in the platform society”, *TWG MLCC ECREA24 Post-Conference Webinar*, 22 October 2024 [online].
- “Drawing emotions. Esplorando il lavoro emotivo dei professionisti sanitari” (w/ A. Plava). *Midterm Italian Sociological Association (AIS) Conference*, Lecce, Italy, 18-20 September 2024.
- “Co-design and the enactment of digital technologies: a theoretical perspective on eHealth interventions”. *Spoke5 Conference*, University of Molise, Termoli, Italy, 11-13 September 2024.
- “Enacting algorithmic technologies in the co-design of eHealth interventions”. *16th European Sociological Association (ESA) Conference*, Porto, Portugal, 27-30 August 2024.
- “Enacting AI/ML-based systems in the co-design of eHealth interventions”. *European Association for the Study of Science and Technology and the Society for Social Studies of Science (EASST/4S) Conference*, Amsterdam, Netherlands, 16-19 July 2024.
- “Enacting algorithmic technologies in the co-design of eHealth interventions”. *20th Biennial European Society of Health and Medical Sociology (ESHMS) conference 2024*, Antwerp, Belgium, 3-5 July 2024.
- “Per una sociologia della praxis. Pedagogia critica e contro-egemonia nella società delle piattaforme”. *Incontro Giovani Sociologia per la Persona di Pontignano 2024*. Pontignano, Siena, Italy, 27-29 June 2024.
- “Enacting algorithmic technologies in the co-design of eHealth interventions” [Poster presentation]. *General Meeting Age-It*, Ca’ Foscari University, Venice, Italy, 20-22 May 2024.
- “L’impatto dell’IA e dell’Automated Decision-making sulle relazioni di cura. Nuove sfide per la sociologia della salute” (w/ M. Gibin). *60 anni di Studi di Sociologia. Persona, società, futuro*. Catholic University, Milan, Italy, 24 November 2023.
- “Addressing digital inclusion in the co-design of an e-learning platforms for home caregivers” (w/ V. Moretti et al.). *Digital Inclusion Policy and Research Conference*, University of Liverpool, UK, 20-21 September 2023 [online].
- “The reproduction of hegemony in youth’s everyday platform engagements”. *V-Data Conference*, University of Pavia, Italy, 7-8 September 2023.
- “Mapping at the nexus of massive and microscopic sensemaking” (w/ A. Markham). *Royal Geographical Society International Conference*, Society and Imperial College London, UK, 30 August - 1 September 2023 [online].
- “Seizing existence. How algorithms shape temporal experience”. *LSE Media Futures conference*, London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK. 15-16 June 2023.
- “Enacting algorithms through encoding and decoding practices”. *IV International Conference ILIS*, VSFS University, Prague, Czech Republic, 8-9 June 2023.
- “Critical pedagogy for a more aware citizenship and public opinion”. *Algocount conference. Everyday Algorithms*, Museum of Science and Technology “Leonardo da Vinci”, Milan, Italy, 7 July 2022.
- “When music is platform-optimised. Investigating the relationship between music producers and streaming platforms” (with M. Raffa). *Internet Musicking. Popular Music and Online Culture Conference*, Cork University, Ireland, 20-21 May 2022 [online].
- “Critical pedagogy as a practice of resistance to algorithms”. *22nd Annual Conference of the Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR) Conference*, October 2021 [online].

- “Collaborating at Microscopic and Massive Scales: The Challenge and Value of Covid Isolation for Critical Internet Studies” (Panel) (w/ A. Herman et al.). *22nd Annual Conference of the Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR) Conference*, October 2021 [online].
- “Agency in the age of Datafication”. *15th European Sociological Association (ESA) Conference*, Barcelona, Spain, 2 September 2021 [online].
- “Music-making after the pandemic: algorithmic imaginaries and increased cultural optimization” (w/ M. Raffa). *CMCI Emerging Voices Conference*, King’s College, London, UK, 1-2 July 2021 [online].
- “Algorithmic prod-users. An empirical research on young users’ generated contents on Facebook and Instagram” (w/ E. Risi). *What People Leave Behind, International Conference*, 15-16 June 2021.
- “Back to practices and narratives. Auto-ethnography as a practice of access to data and algorithms” (with E. Risi and T. Bonini). *II International Conference ILIS*, University of Salerno, Italy, 25-26 November 2020.
- “Vite datificate e frammenti del sé online” (w/ E. Risi and G. Di Fraia). *SISCC conference*, Catholic University, Milan, Italy, 4-5 July 2019.
- “Politics on Instagram. Italy during the 2019 European Elections campaign” (w/ G. Di Fraia). *PIC-AIS conference*, University of Bologna, Italy, 13-15 June 2019.

Recent Workshops (competitively selected as participant or facilitator)

- “Platform Ecology” (presenter), IULM University, Milan, 16 April 2024.
- “Theorising Media and time” (presenter). *EASA workshop*, University of Copenhagen, Denmark, 9-10 November 2023.
- “Data Reflectivity: New Pathways in Bridging Datafication and User Studies” (presenter, w/ A. Markham). *ECREA workshop*, Lusofona University, Porto, 12-13 September 2023.
- “Mapping the Moods of the City.” *PlaceLab Workshop* (research assistant for A. Markham), PlaceLab-RMIT University, Brunswick and Melbourne, Australia, September-October 2022

Invited speaker

- “Artificial intelligence as an object of sociological inquiry, with special focus on the field of health”, Training course for secondary school teachers, PRIN project AiGedi, University of Pisa, online, 27 March 2025.
- “Intelligenza artificiale, oltre l’hype. Produzione e implicazioni”, Exprivia Group Kickoff, Villa Borghi, 13-15 March 2025.
- “Oltre l’hype. L’Intelligenza Artificiale come oggetto d’indagine sociologica”, Scientific Culture Week for Agrigento Capital of Culture 2025, Agrigento, 22 February 2025.
- “Re-politicising the co-design of eHealth interventions”, MCTD Open Lab, Minderoo Centre for Technology and Democracy, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, 2 December 2024.
- “Critical pedagogy as an action-research framework in a world of datafication”. Research Practice Seminar, Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, 31 October 2024.
- “The use of Situational mapping in students’ autoethnographic diaries”. Presentation for TRAVIS (Trust and Visuality: Everyday Digital Practice) team, Tallinn University, online, 2 May 2024.

Exhibitions

- “Platform Lands. Mapping Platform Experience”. Digital Ethnography Research Centre, RMIT University, Melbourne Australia, 24 October – 30 November 2022.

Skills

- Expertise in the use of **mixed qualitative methods**: multi-sited ethnography, participant observation, autoethnographic diaries, speculative mapping, discourse, thematic and content analysis.
- Strong **theoretical knowledge** in the realms of digital sociology, critical algorithm studies, media theory, interpretive sociology, cultural industry practices, cultural studies, and related fields.
- Strong **teaching expertise**, both in English and Italian, in undergraduate courses about digital media, media and cultural theory, social research methods, history of contemporary music, among others.
- In-depth knowledge of how to **design new courses**, to implement **critical pedagogy** initiatives and ability to **disseminate research results** beyond academia, through public initiatives and exhibitions.
- Strong understanding of **quantitative methods** and **digital methods**.
- Competent user of **research software programs**, such as **ATLAS.ti**, and **Microsoft Office**.
- Strong in **academic writing** and critical analysing, editing, and reviewing skills.
- **Journalistic writing skills**: capacity to prepare articles for magazines and newspapers.

Academic Association Membership

- AIS – Italian Sociological Association
- AOIR - Association of Internet Researchers
- EASA – European Association of Social Anthropologists
- EASST - European Association for the Study of Science and Technology
- ESA – European Sociological Association
- ECREA - European Communication Research and Education Association
- ESHMS – European Society for Health and Medical Sociology

Reviewer

- Information, Communication & Society (1468-4462)
- Marketing Theory (1470-5931)
- International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy (0144-333X)
- Digital Culture and Education (1836-8301)
- The Lab's Quarterly (2035-5548)
- Mediascapes (2282-2542)
- Im@go. A Journal of the Social Imaginary (2281-8138)
- LoSquaderno (1973-9141)

Languages

- Italian: Native speaker
- English: Level C1 (IELTS Certificate, overall band 7.0)

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