

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). 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.
- “Theories of Digital Society”, *Guest lecturer* (w/ V. Moretti), 5 Nov 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.
- “Media Sociology”, University of Milan, *Guest lecturer* (w/ S. Splendore), 20 Oct 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.org/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) * ⚡
- 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) * ⚡
- 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) *

⚡ = 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)

- “Youth perspectives on digital media” (presenter), Institute for Research on Digital Literacy, York University, Toronto, online, 22 April 2025.
- “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.
- “Your Data Body” (presenter), University of Siena, Siena, 14 March 2024.
- “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)
- New Media & Society (1461-4448)
- 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)
- Studi di Sociologia (1827-7896)
- LoSquaderno (1973-9141)

Languages

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

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