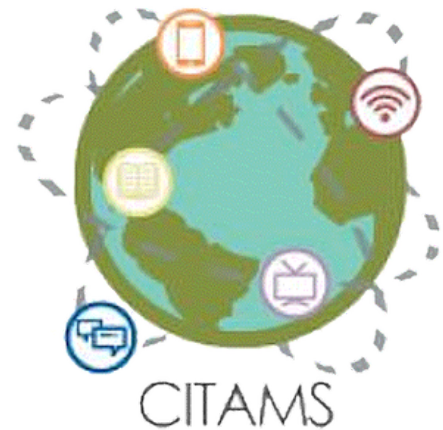


Communication, Information Technologies, and Media Sociology section of the ASA



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Helpful Links

[CITAMS Homepage](#)
[CITAMS ASA Section Page](#)

Newsletter Editors

Irissa Cisternino, Webster University
Iris Pinzon Arteaga, University at Albany
Erykah Benson, University of Michigan

Letter from the Chair: Dhiraj Murthy

Dear CITAMS members,

Much has changed since last year's newsletter, but one thing has remained constant: the continuing importance of the work we do as scholars of communication, information technologies, media, and society. As I mentioned when I took over as chair at last year's business meeting, I believe that questions about artificial intelligence, platform power, digital inequality, media ecosystems, labor and technology, misinformation, public sociology, and democratic life are now central not only to sociology, but to public debate more broadly.



CITAMS remains a vital intellectual home for scholars asking these questions. Our section continues to bring together theoretically rich, methodologically diverse, and publicly engaged work that helps sociology understand how technologies and media shape social life — and how social life, in turn, shapes technological systems.

As I write to you in my final message as Chair, I want to begin by thanking our current governance team for their service to the section: Neal Caren, Chair-Elect (and who will be steering the ship from now!); Celeste Campos-Castillo, Past Chair; Hannah Waight, Secretary/Treasurer; Council Members Bibi Reisdorf, Chao Yu, Muyang Li, and Julia Ticona; and members of the Nominations Committee, John D. Boy, Zhifan Luo, and Benjamin Shestakofsky. I am extremely grateful for their time, guidance, and commitment to sustaining CITAMS as a vibrant and welcoming section.

I also want to thank Celeste Campos-Castillo not only for her leadership as Chair last year, but her support throughout this year when I ran into uncharted territory!

I am also delighted to share the results of the 2026 CITAMS election. Please join me in congratulating our newly elected section leaders:

- Chair-Elect: Gül Seçkin
- Council Members: Zoe Zhao and Chuncheng Liu
- Nominating Committee: Di Di

This year's ASA Annual Meeting programming showcased the breadth and urgency of CITAMS scholarship. Our CITAMS sessions included "Platformed Belonging: Identity, Visibility, and Exclusion in Digital Spaces" and "Labor and Technology: Platforms, AI, and Inequalities."

Letter from the Chair: Dhiraj Murthy

These sessions foregrounded the ways digital infrastructures organize work, identity, visibility, inequality, and belonging. Our open-call paper session, “Media Ecosystems and the Diffusion of Contested Ideas,” examined how political beliefs, conspiracy theories, and ideological narratives circulate through platform architectures, media infrastructures, and movement-media relationships. The session demonstrated CITAMS’ distinctive contribution to sociology: connecting media, communication, technology, politics, culture, and institutional power. Our timely sessions: “Digital Inequalities 3.0: New Problems and New Approaches,” “Digital (Un)Democracy: AI, Media, and the New Political Order,” and “Disrupting Big Tech: Sociology’s Role in Interrogating AI and Social Media” showed how CITAMS scholars are helping sociology grapple with some of the most consequential transformations of our time: from AI and digital governance to platform accountability, democratic disruption, and new forms of inequality.

We also gathered for a Joint Reception with the Economic Sociology and the Consumers and Consumption sections. This reception reflected many of the productive intersections between our fields, which includes platform economies, digital markets, consumption infrastructures, AI, labor, culture, media, and inequality. It was wonderful to reconnect with colleagues, meet new members, and celebrate the vitality of our shared intellectual community.

Finally, I want to thank everyone who contributed to the section this year: our officers, council members, nominations committee, award committee chairs and members, newsletter editors (Irissa Cisternino and Iris Pinzon Arteaga), graduate student representative (Jenny Bae), social media chair (Yifan Liu), session organizers, presiders, discussants, presenters, and all those who continue to make CITAMS such an intellectually exciting and collegial home. Sections thrive because members give their time, energy, and ideas. CITAMS is fortunate to have so many members who do just that!!!

Best,

Dhiraj Murthy

Chair, Communication, Information Technologies, and Media Sociology Section
American Sociological Association

Call for CITAMS Newsletter Editors

Introducing our New Newsletter Editor!

We have a new addition to the CITAMS newsletter team!

Erykah Benson, University of Michigan

Hi everyone! My name is Erykah; I'm a Doctoral Candidate in the University of Michigan Department of Sociology. I research the racial politics of digital technologies, with a focus on labor, well-being, and pathways for repair. My dissertation examines how Black social impact entrepreneurs (educators, artists, and health workers) use digital technologies to navigate platform capitalism and shape their work. I'm broadly interested in research about work and platform capitalism.

I'm so excited to work with this fabulous team!

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Get Involved with the CITAMS Community!

Join the Newsletter Editorial Team!

Are you looking to become more active in the CITAMS community? Here's your chance! We are seeking enthusiastic individuals to join the CITAMS newsletter editorial team for the 2026-27 academic year and beyond.

Being a part of the editorial team is a fantastic opportunity to learn about the work of your peers, network, and engage with the broader CITAMS community. A modest stipend is available. If you're interested, please reach out to Iris Aleida Pinzon-Arteaga at ipinzonarteaga@albany.edu or Irissa Cisternino at irissacisternino@webster.edu for more information.

Election and Award Winner Announcements

2026-2027 CITAMS Council Election Results

We are pleased to announce the incoming CITAMS council. Congratulations to our incoming council members and thank you to all of the applicants.

Chair-Elect

Gül Seçkin
University of North Texas



Secretary/Treasurer

Hannah Waight
University of Oregon



Councilmembers

Zoe Zhao

Chuncheng Liu

Nominations Committee

Di Di
University of Pennsylvania



CITAMS Award Winner Announcements

BEST PAPER AWARD

Jun Fang, 2024. "The Culture of Censorship: State Intervention and Complicit Creativity in Global Film Production", *American Sociological Review* 89(3)

How does state censorship shape global creative production? To explore the merger of art and the state in a global context, I adopt a micro-sociological approach to examine the culture of censorship and reconceptualize censorship as an ongoing, social process. Based on participant observation within a global film studio and interviews with industry insiders in Beijing and Los Angeles, I investigate how global cultural producers navigate China's rigid film censorship system. My analysis reveals how China's state censors use multistage gatekeeping and intermediated censorship to infiltrate the creative process and exert global influence. I then show how informality transforms these organizational procedures into a relational process that is hard to trace. In this, studio executives and filmmakers are induced to engage in complicit creativity, seeking creative negotiations through working with, rather than against, the state; specifically, they practice concession, reconfiguration, and collusion. These processes anchor a culture of censorship characterized by the symbiotic relationship between censors and creators, epitomizing a dynamic dance between everyday state power and everyday resistance. This relational model of censorship provides useful analytic scaffolding, extending our knowledge of the inner workings and consequences of state intervention in the new global cultural economy.

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Jan Gerrit Voelkel et al., 2024. "Megastudy Testing 25 Treatments to Reduce Antidemocratic Attitudes and Partisan Animosity" *Science* 386 (6719) doi: 10.1126/science.adh4764

Scholars warn that partisan divisions in the mass public threaten the health of American democracy. We conducted a megastudy (n = 32,059 participants) testing 25 treatments designed by academics and practitioners to reduce Americans' partisan animosity and antidemocratic attitudes. We find that many treatments reduced partisan animosity, most strongly by highlighting relatable sympathetic individuals with different political beliefs or by emphasizing common identities shared by rival partisans. We also identify several treatments that reduced support for undemocratic practices—most strongly by correcting misperceptions of rival partisans' views or highlighting the threat of democratic collapse—which shows that antidemocratic attitudes are not intractable. Taken together, the study's findings identify promising general strategies for reducing partisan division and improving democratic attitudes, shedding theoretical light on challenges facing American democracy.

BEST BOOK AWARD

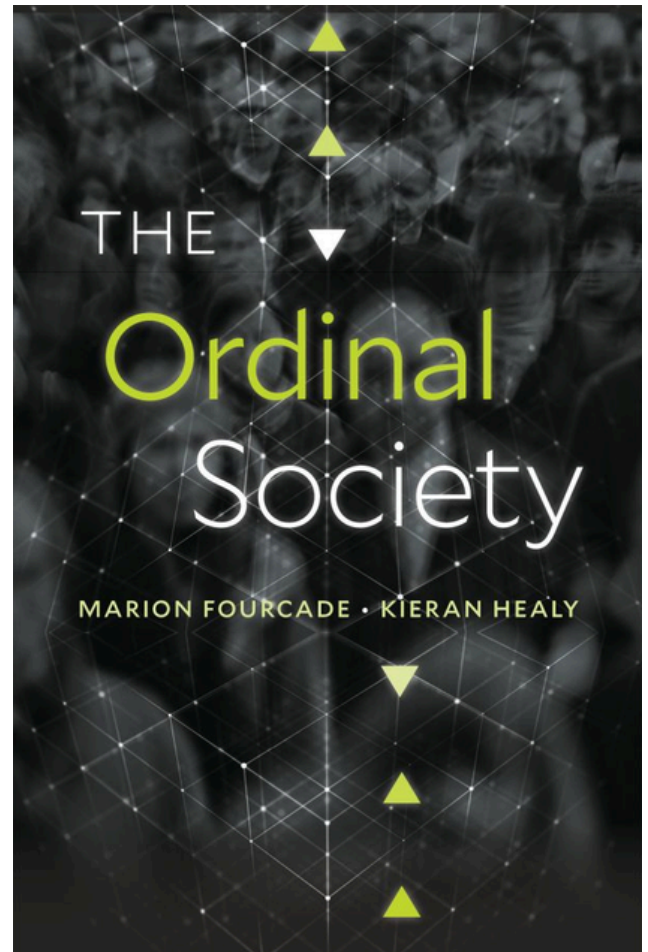
Marion Fourcade and Kieran Healy, *The Ordinal Society*

A sweeping critique of how digital capitalism is reformatting our world.

We now live in an “ordinal society.” Nearly every aspect of our lives is measured, ranked, and processed into discrete, standardized units of digital information. Marion Fourcade and Kieran Healy argue that technologies of information management, fueled by the abundance of personal data and the infrastructure of the internet, transform how we relate to ourselves and to each other through the market, the public sphere, and the state.

The personal data we give in exchange for convenient tools like Gmail and Instagram provides the raw material for predictions about everything from our purchasing power to our character. *The Ordinal Society* shows how these algorithmic predictions influence people’s life chances and generate new forms of capital and social expectation: nobody wants to ride with an unrated cab driver anymore or rent to a tenant without a risk score. As members of this society embrace ranking and measurement in their daily lives, new forms of social competition and moral judgment arise. Familiar structures of social advantage are recycled into measures of merit that produce insidious kinds of social inequality.

While we obsess over order and difference—and the logic of ordinality digs deeper into our behaviors, bodies, and minds—what will hold us together? Fourcade and Healy warn that, even though algorithms and systems of rationalized calculation have inspired backlash, they are also appealing in ways that make them hard to relinquish.



CITAMS Award Winner Announcements

BEST STUDENT PAPER AWARD

Jacob Hood, “Disconnected, Interrupted, Tied in Knots”: Communicative Capture in U.S. Prisons

Extensive research shows how the state deprives captives of social interaction across prison walls as a form of punishment. However, little is known about the function of expanded communication access through reforms such as reduced-cost phone calls and “free” digital tablets in U.S. prisons. Drawing on interviews with formerly imprisoned men and loved ones of currently imprisoned men in New York state prisons, this article argues that prisons do not solely deprive captives of communication: they simultaneously facilitate communication across walls as a form of social control—a process termed “communicative capture.” Through prison communication technologies such as phones, tablets, and letters, the state provides necessary, intimate connection while expanding control over the labor sustaining captives and their communities. Prisons carry out communicative capture through overlapping mechanisms of surveillance, resource extraction, and pacification, which interlock to regulate the labor of social reproduction. The findings reveal the contradictions of social reproduction in the context of imprisonment, where the state simultaneously restricts and facilitates life-saving communication to sustain captive populations and reproduce the prison regime.

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CITAMS Award Winner Announcements

CAREER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Anabel Quan-Haase, University of Western Ontario

PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY AWARD

Alex Hanna, Distributed AI Research Institute

Recent Work from CITAMS Members

ARTICLE PUBLICATIONS

“Films as a Tool for Climate Education: A Quasi- Experimental Intervention amongst Middle School Children from the Indian Himalayan Region” in *Australian Journal of Environmental Education*

By Krishna Kharwar, Pradeep Nair, Deepak Kumar Vaishnav, Akriti Bansal, Lauren Dagon Amoss

The study investigates the potential role that films may play in raising awareness and motivation to act for climate change mitigation. The study was conducted amongst middle school children based in Kangra District of Himachal Pradesh, India (n = 135). The selected students were classified into higher and lower exposure groups based on their level of exposure to climate vulnerabilities. All the participants were given an educational intervention through a short film designed to enhance the student’s understanding of climate change issues. Data were analysed using GLMM with fixed effects of time, exposure and their interaction. Knowledge increased significantly from pre- to post-test on all items (McNemar’s tests, all $p < 0.001$). Although both groups improved, gains were consistently larger in the high-exposure group. Model-predicted probabilities rose from 38.1%→52.5% in the lower-exposure group and from 33.1%→69.3% in the high-exposure group, a statistically significant 21.8 percentage-point greater gain for high-exposure students. The study demonstrates that film-based interventions have significantly improved climate knowledge among the middle-school students, with larger gains observed in those with higher lived exposure to climate vulnerabilities.

DOI: [doi:10.1017/aee.2026.10187](https://doi.org/10.1017/aee.2026.10187)

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“Use-by-Proxy in Later Life: A Qualitative Study with Internet Users and Nonusers. ” in *International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction*

By Jerneja Laznik, Bianca C Reisdorf, Andraž Petrovčič, Simona Hvalič-Touzery

Increasing digitalization presents challenges for many people, especially older adults, who often have limited internet skills and engage in fewer online activities or are simply nonusers. Many therefore rely on use-by-proxy – indirect internet use through others. Drawing on the Model of Internet Engagement and on Resources and Appropriation Theory, this qualitative study examines factors that shape use-by-proxy among older internet users and nonusers. We identified six groups of factors that affect engagement in use-by-proxy: personal categories, positional categories, social resources, perceptions and motivations, internet proficiency, and social and cultural environment. Societal and personal expectations related to internet use create feelings of pressure and exclusion, which are compounded by media portrayals and stereotypes that reinforce perceptions of older adults lacking digital skills. Older adults did not constitute a homogeneous group disinterested in the internet but instead exhibited varying levels of awareness and engagement and need support tailored to their specific circumstances.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10447318.2025.2577782>

ARTICLE PUBLICATIONS

“Cyberzombies and the Afterlife of Thought: Dead Labor, AI, and the Necropolis of Capital” in *Fast Capitalism*

By Craig Van Pelt

This essay presents a novel Marxist theory of artificial intelligence (AI) as the latest expansive form of dead labor. Drawing on Marx’s *Grundrisse* (1993 [1973]), I argue that modern AI systems function as cyberzombies: digital entities animated by appropriated dead cognitive labor. This dead cognitive labor operates as seemingly autonomous machine cognition, reproducing the core feature of capital: the domination of living labor by accumulated past labor. These cyberzombies accelerate the widening cognitive rift—the structural separation between communities that supply resources for AI to function and the actors who accumulate the resulting knowledge. The essay concludes that cyberzombies reveal an unsettling frontier of alienation: by automating dead labor, AI privatizes the afterlife of human thought within corporate infrastructures.

DOI: 10.32855/1930-014X.1504

Available at: <https://mavmatrix.uta.edu/fastcapitalism/vol23/iss1/4>

Conference Proceedings

“First-Level Digital Divides Matter: The Importance of Quality of Access and the Digital Divide in Predicting Internet Use” in *Proceedings of the 59th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*

By Grant Blank, Bianca C Reisdorf

Recent research has examined the reliability and quality of internet access (“under-connectedness”) separately from digital divide issues. This paper examines the relationship between under-connectedness and the digital divide, as well as their impact on internet use. We use the Internet and Computer Use supplement to the 2023 Current Population Survey (CPS) to obtain a representative sample of the U.S. population. We find that digital divide measures are more important than under-connectedness in predicting variety of internet use. This is true both for the population as a whole and for lower-income respondents. Our results indicate that even in countries with near-saturation levels of internet use, first-level digital divides concerning internet and device access continue to play a critical role in people’s internet usage, and these divides need to be considered in digital inequality research, which has largely ignored them in recent years.

DOI: [10.32855/1930-014X.1504](https://doi.org/10.32855/1930-014X.1504)

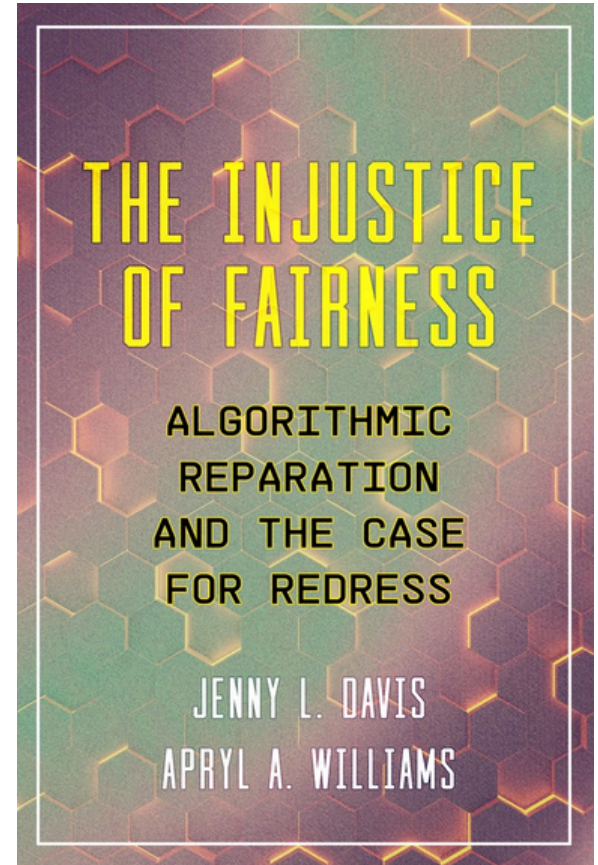
BOOK PUBLICATIONS

The Injustice of Fairness: Algorithmic Reparation and the Case for Redress

By Jenny L. Davis and Apryl Williams

The Injustice of Fairness shifts the foundation of algorithmic ethics, displacing “fairness” with repair and redress. A substantial and growing field, algorithmic ethics aims to mitigate harms and realize social good. The fairness paradigm dominates this field across AI, machine learning, and other data-driven domains. So far, efforts toward fairness have been unsuccessful, with algorithmic harms that propagate and persist. Jenny L. Davis and Apryl A. Williams explain why algorithmic fairness perpetually fails and present “algorithmic reparation” in its place.

The stakes are high because algorithms are everywhere—from law to love, healthcare to housing, education to media, and beyond. More than lines of code or mathematical operations, algorithms carry history, configure the present, and are actively shaping the future. Set against a backdrop of societal instability and technological transformation, The Injustice of Fairness offers a careful critique, original framework, and blueprint for social change with algorithms as entry points and levers.



<https://www.ucpress.edu/books/the-injustice-of-fairness/paper>

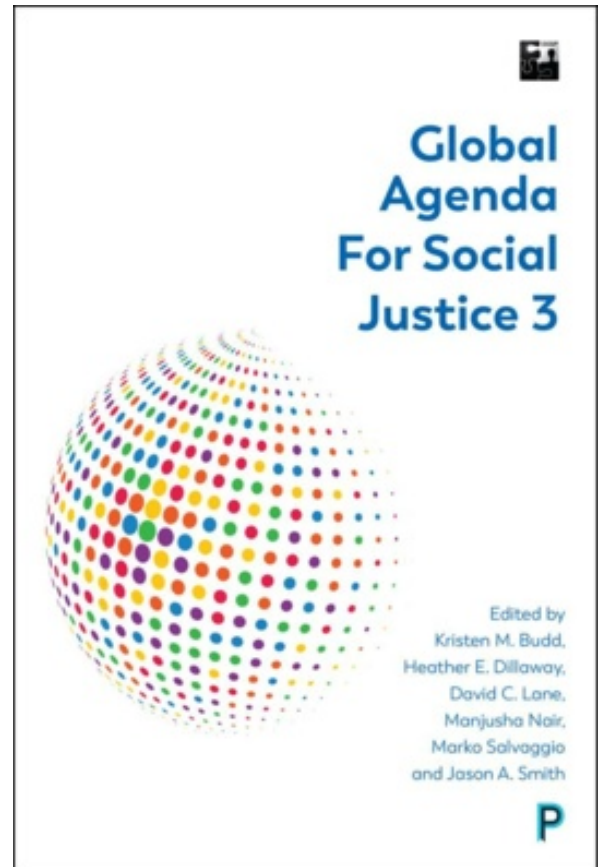
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Global Agenda for Social Justice 3

By Kristen M. Budd, Heather E. Dillaway, David C. Lane, Manjusha Nair, Marko Salvaggio and Jason A. Smith (eds)

The Global Agenda for Social Justice 3 provides accessible insights into some of the most pressing social problems and proposes public policy responses to those problems. Written by a highly respected team of authors brought together by the Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP), the book offers recommendations for action by elected officials, policy makers, and the public regarding key issues for social justice. Chapters include discussion of social problems related to period poverty, climate justice, algorithmic bias, labor rights, and global inequality. The book will be of interest to scholars, practitioners, advocates, and students interested in public sociology, the study of social problems, and the pursuit of social justice.

<https://policy.bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/global-agenda-for-social-justice-3>



BOOK PUBLICATIONS

Outsourcing Surveillance: Online Opinion Management in China

By Lynette Ong, Huihua Nie, and Jesslene Lee

The digital age has afforded autocrats new technologies of control, allowing them to co-opt, pre-empt and repress dissent. But, what if they lack the technical capacity to access digital tools of control? In what ways have digital technologies altered the way autocratic governments conduct statecraft? Based on an analysis of more than 3,000 public procurement documents, and a dozen elite interviews with various stakeholders, we found that the Chinese state has outsourced various functions of online surveillance to private and for-profit arms of state-owned corporations. We found that outsourcing surveillance is intended to augment state technical capacity to moderate and fine-tune the conduct of digital repression. Outsourcing digital repression opens a Pandora's box of state-business collaborations. This Element contributes to the literature on outsourcing repression, state-business relations, and conduct of digital statecraft.

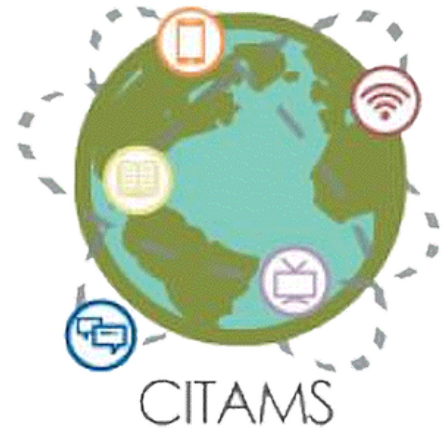
OPEN ACCESS

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/elements/outsourcing-surveillance/BD130FEAA4BB7F3B1ED2608442763C41#element>



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Communication, Information Technologies, and Media Sociology section of the ASA



Do you want something included in the Fall newsletter?

We are accepting the following submissions through the linked google forms:

- [Recent work](#)
- [Conferences and CPFs information](#):
- [Job posts](#)

If you would like to include any other information such as...

- Summaries of conferences, preconferences, workshops
- Other events related to CITAMS

Please feel free to email Erykah Benson (erykahb@umich.edu), Iris Pinzon Arteaga (ipinzonarteaga@albany.edu) or Irissa Cisternino (irissacisternino@webster.edu).