This month's newsletter highlights the recent accomplishments of Drs. Thu Nguyen and Damon Centola, both of whom have shared their work at previous PRISM Health Symposia. Continue reading to see how they are advancing the field of social media and health.

Thu Nguyen, ScD, MSPH

Recent Grants

Dr. Nguyen, Assistant Professor at UCSF and PRISM steering committee member, was recently awarded her first R01 grant from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) for project entitled, "Risk and strength: determining the impact of area-level racial bias and protective factors on birth outcomes." Read below for the project summary.

New evidence points to the role of racial bias on birth weight disparities, but measures, methods, and findings are lacking to evaluate how racial bias influences infant birth weights. The study team will leverage online and social media data to capture trends in racial bias using machine learning models. The Specific Aims are to:

- Track and detect changes in area-level racial bias and identifying local and national race-related events during the study period.
- Determine the impact of changes in area-level racial bias on adverse birth outcomes and;
- Identify protective factors that may mitigate adverse birth outcomes.

Dr. Nguyen's study represents a critical advancement in the investigation of racial disparities in birth outcomes.

Recent Publications

Nguyen TT, Huang D, Michaels EK, Glymour MM, Allen AM, Nguyen QC. Evaluating associations between area-level Twitter-expressed negative racial sentiment, hate crimes, and residents' racial prejudice in the United

https://doi.org/10.1007/s40615-020-00894-5


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**Damon Centola, PhD**

**Recent Grants**

*[Dr. Centola](https://ndg.asc.upenn.edu)*, Professor at the University of Pennsylvania, is currently working on a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) funded project entitled, "Network Science to Improve Health Equity in Underserved Online Communities." This project is a study of social media networks and vaccine hesitancy in the African American community.

Details for his project can be found here: [https://ndg.asc.upenn.edu/experiments/vaccine-hesitancy/](https://ndg.asc.upenn.edu/experiments/vaccine-hesitancy/)

**Recent Publications**
How to create the change you want to see in the world using the paradigm-busting ideas in this "utterly fascinating" (Adam Grant) big-idea book.

Most of what we know about how ideas spread comes from bestselling authors who give us a compelling picture of a world, in which "influencers" are king, "sticky" ideas "go viral," and good behavior is "nudged" forward. The problem is that the world they describe is a world where information spreads, but beliefs and behaviors stay the same.

When it comes to lasting change in what we think or the way we live, the dynamics are different: beliefs and behaviors are not transmitted from person to person in the simple way that a virus is. The real story of social change is more complex. When we are exposed to a new idea, our social networks guide our responses in striking and surprising ways.

Drawing on deep-yet-accessible research and fascinating examples from the spread of coronavirus to the success of the Black Lives Matter movement, the failure of Google+, and the rise of political polarization, Change presents groundbreaking and paradigm-shifting new science for understanding what drives change, and how we can change the world around us.

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