Title: Social influence in a world of King Oedipus

Abstract: How people influence each other is difficult to study in reality, but we might be able to learn some patterns of social influence by analyzing how this influence is represented in a society’s literature. We choose Greek plays and focus on Sophocles’ King Oedipus to ask how characters influence others’ opinions about the main questions of the play. We use topic modeling and expert judgment to define the main questions and determine how opinions of different characters change over time. We analyze the resulting networks of social influence to determine who affects whom and how. The same method could be used to analyze other classic and modern texts and learn more about patterns of social influence in different societies.

Mentor: Mirta Galesic; Simon Dedeo