



Media Futures Conference

London School of Economics, 15-16 June 2023



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Time	Event	Room
09:00-10:00	REGISTRATION Thursday 16 June	*CKK.LG
10:00-11:20	<p>PLENARY 1: Remembering Mediapolis: Media Morality and Disrupted Futures</p> <p>Miriyam Aouragh, <i>University of Westminster, UK</i> Nick Couldry, <i>London School of Economics, UK</i> Jonathan Corpus Ong, <i>University of Massachusetts - Amherst, USA</i> Chair: Myria Georgiou, <i>London School of Economics, UK</i></p>	*CKK.LG.08 (Sheikh Zayed Theatre)
11:30-13:00	SESSION 1	
	<p><u>Authoritarianism and Resistance Online</u> Chair: Zifeng Chen, London School of Economics, UK</p> <p>Subverting Subversion: Strategies taken by Authoritarian Governments to Undermine Public Participation on New Media Platforms <u>Rutendo Nyaku</u> <i>University of Cape Town, South Africa</i></p> <p>Social media has become a strong platform for civic engagement in states marked by authoritarianism, censorship, and violent repression. Some of the reasons for the freedoms offered by social media are that: (a) It transcends juridical borders; (b) Provides anonymity; (c) It has low barriers to entry. To this end, major political shifts have resulted from civil society engagement on social media. However, the freedoms afforded by social media are under</p>	PAR.LG.03

threat from state encroachment.

This paper examines how states capture, co-opt and produce new forms of repression that undermine civic engagement on social media. Through an examination of social media-based social movements and political comedy in Zimbabwe, this paper argues that in this era of social media-based civil engagements; authoritarian states undermine possibilities for democratised public spheres by co-opting campaigns, placing the right to privacy under state control; and (re)subverting content that is created by political comedians and civil society activists. This paper aims to shed light on the ways that states are adapting to new freedoms produced by social media.

**Can Digital Sovereignty Overcome
Authoritarianism? Digital-Native Innovation
and Investigative Journalism in the MENA
Region**

Wafa Khalfan

University of Sharjah, UAE

A decade after the so-called Arab Spring, scholarly attention is still relatively invested in journalism within the region, negotiating the redlines and digital practices (Jamil, 2022; Pintak, 2022). In addition to this, many digital-native independent news organisations in the MENA region were established around or after the Arab Spring, as my study documents. Previous research highlighted links between crises, investigative journalism, and innovation (Konow-Lund et al., 2019) situating media labs as an emerging global phenomenon (Mills & Wagemans, 2021).

This study covers ten digital-native independent news organisations which are representative of different geographical areas within the MENA region such as the Levantine, the Gulf, North Africa, and Eastern Africa. Most of these organisations follow a trans-national editorial focus across different Arabic speaking countries, in addition to translating their content to other languages such as English, French, Kurdish, or Persian. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with digital and editorial managers.

Between digital innovation for collaboration, visualisation, or monetisation; the process of

investigative journalism is reshaped. I argue in this paper that there is a correlation between the ability of digital-native organisations in the MENA region to develop digital tools in-house, and their capacity for conducting quality investigative journalism. Due to the monetary sanctions in the region and the need for specific regional adaptations and multilingual support, these digital tools may also lead to reducing dependency on Big Tech such as Google and Facebook. Findings inform the ongoing scholarly dialogues about diffusion of digital practices in the Global South (Kunert et al., 2022).

Mainstreaming/Pariating Radical Right Political Parties: The Brussels Press Corps and the 2022 Italian Election

Kait Bolongaro

Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium

This paper develops a conceptual framework for understanding the relationship between Europe's populist radical right political parties (PRRPs) and the Brussels Press Corps, through the lens of the media's impact on the process of mainstreaming/pariating of these parties.

Firstly, the paper draws on research about what has been called the 'mainstreaming' (Brown & Mondon, 2021; Buarque, 2021; Mondon & Winter, 2020) and the 'pariating' (Van Spanje & Van Der Brug, 2007) of the far right to develop the framework. It focuses on the role that media plays in casting PRRPs as either legitimate, and as such, mainstream, or as illegitimate, a pariah (Moffitt, 2021; Murphy & Devine, 2020; Schmidt, 2020).

Secondly, it builds on literature examining the role of media in boundary maintenance between the mainstream and the fringe, and the acceptable and the unacceptable within a democracy. This paper primarily considers Hallin (1986)'s notion of different 'spheres' of coverage, particularly his argument about what he calls the 'sphere of deviance' when journalists leave aside the typically objective stance to condemn or exclude what they consider deviant political actors who reject and challenge the political consensus of appropriateness.

Then, it applies this framework to articles from the Brussels Press Corps about the Italian General Election in 2022, focusing on coverage of two candidates and their political parties: Matteo Salvini and the Lega, as well as Giorgia Meloni and the Brothers of Italy. The qualitative content identifies patterns in their coverage, specifically on the terms used to describe PRRPs and the themes that emerge from the texts. The research aims to provide insight into the role of EU correspondents in mainstreaming/pariahing PRRPs in Europe, and the power it wields over the narrative surrounding them and their inclusion and/or exclusion in the European political sphere.

Deeper Fakes: The Future of Information Warfare

Hossein Derakhshan

London School of Economics, UK

The three ideal types of bad-information within the information disorder model (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017) are comprised of misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation based on two variables: falseness of the information and the intention of their creators to harm.

Drawing on a recent case of the suspicious murder of a young Iranian woman, Nika Shakarami, during the 2022 protests, this article proposes a conceptual definition of what is known as 'deep fake' as the combination of the disinformation (false information created with intent to harm) and malinformation (genuine information created with intent to harm).

The case is about how the Iranian state television tried to turn the murder of Nika by the aggressive anti-riot police into a suicide case through various information operations, including a combination of real and fabricated CCTV footage.

“Family is Our Red Line”: A Review of the Anti-LGBT Demonstrations Across Turkey

Alara Nazlı Yılmaz

Marmara University, Turkey

This paper will analyse the ongoing online campaign processes of five early Anti-LGBT

	<p>demonstrations under the name 'Büyük Aile Buluşması' (Big Family Meeting) across Turkey. By the time this abstract is written, four of the demonstrations had already taken place, and the fifth was held on 6th November 2022. According to SPoD (Social Policies, Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation Studies Association) LGBTI+ Hotline records, applications for discrimination and violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity increased by 240 percent in a year. The study aims to highlight the relationship between the rising authoritarianism and conservatism, and the increasing violence that the queer people in Turkey endure in their daily lives.</p> <p>It is observed that Twitter is the online public sphere where the hate discourse is circulating and the organizers have to design their hate rhetoric. Therefore, tweets that were shared under the hashtags “#LGBTDayatması” (#LGBTInposition), “#AilenSaldırıAltında” (#YourFamilyisUnderAttack), “#SapkınlığaDurDe” (#SayNotoHeresy), “#AileniKoru” (#ProtectYourFamily) and “#LGBTSapkınlıktır” (#LGBTisHeresy) will be categorized into sections according to their discriminatory discourse strategy typologies. After the categorization, comparative critical discourse and content analysis will be conducted with the outputs and the current discourse of the government and the state.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Media, Self and Visions of Work</u> Chair: Shani Orgad, London School of Economics, UK</p> <p><u>Passion and Serialised Unemployment</u> <u>Renyi Hong</u> <i>National University of Singapore, Singapore</i></p> <p>Unemployment since the 2000s has steadily shifted to a model of seriality, a state where workers must expect to be unemployed several times over their lifetimes and with longer durations experienced in each unemployment cycle. My talk discusses the impact of serialized unemployment and its influence on the affect of passion. Drawing from different kinds of career guidance literature and the confessional genre of YouTube layoff videos, I demonstrate how passion is increasingly mobilized as a modality for resilience, a way for the serially</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">*CKK.LG.01 (Wolfson Theatre)</p>

unemployed to persist in a brutal marketplace by presenting themselves as undamaged.

Passion is useful for several reasons. First, as an energetic affect, passion is assumed to be an effective driver for tenacity and positivity, allowing the unemployed to carry on despite repeated instances of disappointment and humiliation. Second, passion is imagined to spur competitiveness, facilitating networking opportunities and a display of authenticity through the identification of similar interests. Third, passion screens the damaging conditions of unemployment, repressing it behind visualization techniques, conditioned bodily moves, and the loving embrace of family members and friends. In this sense, passion is not just cultivated by the unemployed subject. Rather, society becomes gelled through passion, structured by its requirement in the face of serialized unemployment. Networking sessions are organized under the banner of “interests”; gurus teach ways to connect fist pumps to psychological states of resilience; family and friends are coaxed and coerced to be pillars for support while the unemployed recover their passions.

C-suite Ambitions: Diasporic Lessons on Gender, Success, and Work-Life Balance

Radha Hegde

New York University, USA

Who has the license to dream? How do the aspirational goals of skilled immigrants and the labour demands of neoliberal capitalism intersect with the politics of race, class and gender? This presentation will focus on neoliberal narratives of resilience, transformation and confidence (Orgad and Gill, 2022) that frame the accomplishments of Indira Nooyi, the South Asian businesswoman who made it to highest echelons of American industry and ascended to positions long held only by white men. Media narratives describe Nooyi as an embodiment of the American dream and proof that ambitions can be realized through hard work and family values. Nooyi herself admits that life in the C-Suite involved a constant juggling of career and family demands, a struggle filled with tough choices and trade-offs. Nooyi's life and experiences have become synonymous with both immigrant success

and the shattering of the glass ceiling. After the recent publication of her memoir, Nooyi has received intense global media attention and has been portrayed as an inspiration, a model leader who has successfully found the mantra for the elusive work- life balance. Her success story is being distilled and circulated on social media as lessons in leadership from a woman who conquered the three strikes against her of being an immigrant, woman and a woman of colour.

Drawing on analysis of Nooyi's memoir and media interviews, this paper identifies and interrogates three central tropes of the aspirational 'high-skilled' migrant worker: the 1) the ambitious gendered subject of neoliberal capitalism; 2) assimilationist narratives and the telos of modernity that frame corporate success for women; 3) diasporic recuperation of tradition and family values in the management of work-life balance.

By, For, With Women? On the Feminist Politics and Potentialities of 'Wellness' Entrepreneurship

Rachel O'Neill

London School of Economics, UK

Over the last decade, the figure of the wellness entrepreneur – a stylish young woman whose varied business pursuits seek to promote 'healthy living' – has enjoyed something of a spotlight in the UK media, held up by women's magazines and business journals alike as an exemplar of feminine success. In the accounts these women themselves give and in their wider media representation, wellness entrepreneurship is very much made to accord with a gendered and generational imperative to 'do what you love' (Tokumitsu, 2014). Where existing feminist analyses of 'passionate work' rightly foreground how the elevation of such an affective investment in one's work enacts a kind of "labour reform by stealth" (McRobbie, 2016, p. 13), in this paper I want to complicate the concomitant assertion that such work is "inherently individualistic and conservative" (McRobbie, 2016, p. 107). Drawing on interviews with established and aspiring wellness entrepreneurs undertaken as part of a larger ethnographic project, I highlight how an

impulse towards collectivity and communality underwrites my participants' attempts to forge careers in this setting. Crucial in this regard is the widespread and seemingly unassailable belief that the wellness industry is a space created by and curated for women, one in which women can work together and succeed on their own terms. Considering the extent to which wellness entrepreneurship functions as both an individual and collective endeavour, this paper grapples with the feminist politics and potentialities of wellness entrepreneurship, situating its analysis within the continuing aftermath of feminism (McRobbie, 2009) amid an era marked by new feminist visibilities (Gill, 2016) and discourses of female empowerment (Banet-Weiser, 2018).

Posting Vulnerability on LinkedIn

Shani Orgad

London School of Economics, UK

Across sectors, professions, and employee levels, workers are encouraged to engage in strategic self-promotion. Situated in neoliberal regimes of self-governance, self-branding on digital spaces has become compulsory for both job aspirants and the gainfully employed (Scolere, Pruchniewska, and Duffy, 2018; Gershon, 2017; Vallas & Christin, 2018). The professional employment-oriented platform LinkedIn is one such space in the digital reputation economy, where users engage in self-promotion, presenting their polished, skilled, confident, 'best' professional selves.

However, more recently, users on the platform have been increasingly publishing accounts highlighting their vulnerabilities, failures and difficulties—a trend that achieved notable prominence in the wake of Covid-19 and the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd, and is part of a wider cultural 'vulnerability turn' (Orgad and Gill, 2022). For instance, it has become quite common for LinkedIn users to publicise accounts of personal hurt and difficulties experienced in the workplace, including mental health problems and traumatic experiences related to racism, abuse, depression, and burnout. Whereas previously, working around the clock was glorified, advocated as a feature of the ideal professional subject, now, trending on the platform

	<p>are posts that question and push against the 'always-on' taxing work cultures. These posts highlight the personal injuries caused by toxic work cultures and call for a refusal to put up with its injurious demands.</p> <p>Drawing on an analysis of LinkedIn posts that deviate from the familiar tropes of platform self-promotion, this paper examines the emergence of vulnerability on the professional digital platform. I discuss the ways in which such articulations of vulnerability concurrently feed into and disrupt neoliberal narratives of work and self, at a moment of acute insecurity, uncertainty and precarity.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>National Public Spheres and New Media Agendas</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair: Berfin Emre, London College of Communication, UK</p> <p>The Historical Understanding of Ukrainian Information Management in the Face of the Russian War</p> <p><u>Göran Bolin</u> <i>Södertörn University, Sweden</i></p> <p>During our decades-long research about information management and meaning-making in Ukraine, one of our main takeaways has been the unorthodox organizational forms the country has adopted. Over this decade we have witnessed how branding professionals have cooperated with civil society organizations and NGOs and governmental actors to manage the image of Ukraine towards external and domestic audiences alike. This flexible organizational structure, with blurred boundaries between state, civil society, and market actors, became instrumental in forming the international image of Ukraine during tumultuous times. This was evident, not least in the following aggression from Russia through the annexation of Crimea and the war activities in Donetsk and Luhansk in Eastern Ukraine (Bolin & Ståhlberg 2022, forthcoming 2023). In the wake of the full-scale invasion that Russia embarked upon in late February 2022, we can again see these ties reactivated. The machinery for meaning and information management now provides world audiences with information about the war effectively communicated</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MAR.2.08</p>

from the Ukrainian point of view. In the paper we will first describe the orchestration of communication in the wake of the Euromaidan revolution, how it was formed during a few months in late 2013 and early 2014, and how it produced a network of relations that proved very effective in countering competing images and ways of discursively trying to describe the nature of Ukraine. Secondly, we will discuss some examples of how these networks have become reactivated and intensified since the Russian escalation of the war in February 2022. We will end the paper with some more general reflections on how a historical approach is beneficial for understanding present conditions.

Starlink over Ukraine: The Janus Face of Technology Philanthropy

Lukas J. Meier

University of Cambridge, UK

When Russian forces began attacking Ukrainian communication infrastructures in February 2022, the country's government turned to Elon Musk for support. SpaceX's 'Starlink', a constellation of low-orbit satellites that provide broadband internet connectivity, was thereafter activated over Ukraine. The technology has since been crucial for military communication, for civil internet access, and for both mainstream and social media reporting from the war zone.

In October, following a rebuke from Ukrainian officials for proposing a peace plan that included ceding territory to Russia, Musk warned on Twitter that his company SpaceX could not fund satellite access for Ukraine indefinitely. Musk also announced that Starlink would not be activated over Crimea to support possible Ukrainian counter-attacks to reclaim the peninsula, thereby indirectly exerting substantial geopolitical influence without any mandate.

On the basis of this topical example, I shall explore the double-edged nature of philanthropic support of communication infrastructures: Musk's satellites have been decisive in Ukraine's ability to fight the Russian invasion; simultaneously, however, military and civil operations have become so reliant on the technology that they no longer function smoothly without it – a path dependency has formed. The country now finds itself in a position in which a

single, not democratically legitimised non-state actor effectively controls large parts of the nation's communication infrastructure.

I shall analyse the tension between technology philanthropy, digital sovereignty, and democratic participation. I will pay special attention to the role that media have played in this conflict – and will likely continue to be playing in the future: introducing a novel technology at the very focal point of international attention is a major PR stunt, and it is no coincidence that the dispute between the Ukrainian administration and Musk is taking place publicly on Twitter.

Scrutinising Transparency in Philanthropic Funding of Independent Media from African and Latin America

Dolors Palau-Sampio

Universitat de València, Spain

Media from around the world have received philanthropic funding from international foundations in the last decade, almost eight billion dollars between 2009 and 2021 (Media Impact Funders database, MIF, 2022). Although not only in countries in development neither to fund new independent media –the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, i.e., focus in Europe on traditional Western media–, foreign aid investment has ensured the survival of a critical and independent media ecosystem in the Global South (Schiffrin, 2017; Ingram, 2019). Despite the increasing weight gained by the philanthropic funding of journalism, it has received little scholarly attention (Brownlee, 2017; Moyo, 2021). Some research, however, suggests the need to examine the role of foreign aid (Paterson, Gadzekpo & Wasserman, 2018) and scrutinise to what extent it has affected media sector (Salter, 2002; Feldman, 2007; Wasserman, Gadzekpo & Paterson, 2019), changing the role and contribution of journalism in society (Scott, Bunce & Wright, 2019).

The aim of this paper is to analyse the transparency criteria regarding philanthropic funding of 30 online media and organisations from Latin America and Africa devoted to investigative and human rights journalism, selected among the largest recipients (MIF database, 2022). By relying on cross-checking data, the research followed three steps: firstly, we

obtained information from the media websites to identify the amount and kind of details offered; secondly, we compared it with the information provided by the Media Impact Funders database; and thirdly, we checked it with the databases of the foundations mentioned in the previous sources.

Preliminary conclusions show different degrees of opacity, even though media focus on investigative journalism. On the one hand, some media do not identify their funders or provide incomplete or outdated information. On the other hand, philanthropic donors scarcely show the last years of activity or do not do at all. Finally, some receivers also act as funders for other projects, which represents a drawback to track donations.

Norway's Film Financing Schemes and their Potential Influences on Social Issue

Documentary Films

Amir Bashti Monfared

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Volda University College, Norway*

Documentary film industry is greatly dependent on funds and subsidies provided by public organizations and cultural institutions around the world. Nash & Corner (2016) argue that while conventional sources like television funds have declined over the past three decades, the industry has explored other possible resources such as funds provided by private sector, NGOs, and more importantly public subsidies. Alongside other reasons, the shift from a more TV-dependent industry to a diversified production environment has, in turn, caused the emergence of what is called Strategic Impact Documentaries -documentaries aiming to achieve specific social change. This has arguably affected other dimensions of the documentary because as opposed to larger professional networks in creative industries such as fiction film, the documentary industry holds a more vulnerable position in getting influenced by various guiding forces ranging from discourses in the public sphere to agenda set by formal institutions and fund providers.

Economic geography of the documentary film industry suggests the significance of Norwegian subsidies -including several public funds offered by Norwegian Film Institute as well as the private fund

	<p>offered by Fritt Ord Foundation - for transnational co-productions. Initially, this article will provide a brief account as to how the funds have evolved over time. Subsequently, relying on empirical data obtained from the institutions, the article suggests some tendencies in funding social issue documentaries. The main research question which this article sets out to answer is ‘whether Norwegian funds have prioritized social issue documentaries and to what extent and how this has occurred?’ Drawing on the perspectives of the industry practitioners, in-depth interviews will be conducted with both international and Norwegian co-producers, as well as film curators of two major European documentary film festivals (IDFA & CPH:DOX), and the data will be analyzed through the optics of institutional theories.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Media Pasts and Presents</u> Chair: Nancy Thumim, University of Leeds, UK</p> <p>At the Still Point of the Turning World: The Cultural Memory of ‘Old Media’ <u>Paul Frosh</u> <i>Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel</i></p> <p>Two facts about so-called ‘old media’ seem to hold true. First, most have outlasted the forecasts of their imminent deaths proclaimed in the 1990s and early 2000s. Second, their survival and flourishing depend upon their digital remediation: they endure, in part, thanks to the simulative capacities of the computer as a ‘metamedium’. This paper proposes a third facet to the persistence of old-media: that they offer forms of ontological orientation and communicative stability which help to navigate the relentless volatility and precariousness of contemporary life-worlds. Beyond its expression in overt phenomena of ‘technonostalgia’ (van der Heijden, 2015), the cultural memory of media provides anchorage for experiencing and acting in deeply mediatized societies.</p> <p>Focusing on photography, the paper argues that cultural memory is the framework through which the medium endures and expands. This persistence and expansion draw on ‘mimetic archives’ (Mazzeralla 2017), dynamic sets of historically sedimented knowledge-practices and replicative</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MAR.2.10</p>

energies which feed the recollection and articulation of photography across diverse domains - including in digital environments (such as virtual worlds) where photography, technically speaking, should not exist. Photography's mimetic archives do more than preserve the medium's legibility to users: they mobilize constellations of worldviews, aesthetic schemas, social values and behavioural scripts that were connected to photography in the past, repurposing 'photographic' attributes for digital contexts. Such constellations are: evidentiary (photography is supposed to produce visible evidence of the world); spectacular (photography designates the world as picturable before an external gaze); temporal (photography realigns temporal experience); expressive (photography distributes representational capabilities to varied populations); and ethical (photography generates encounters with strangers who are made newly visible). The cultural memory of media such as photography thus perpetuates earlier protocols for representing and relating to the world, reanimating them in order to stabilize present conditions, and adapting them as frameworks for future imaginaries.

Politics of Interruption: The Problems and Potential of Presentism

Olivier Driessens

University of Copenhagen, Denmark

For many activists and critical scholars, the future is the horizon for emancipation and justice. This can produce shared goals and inspire imaginaries but it is also prone to what Berlant (2011) called cruel optimism, while it risks producing further immobilisation as it often loses out against (harmful) short-termism (Caney 2019). Therefore, this paper joins earlier calls for recalibrating our horizon to the present and opting for generative politics of presentism (e.g. Evinson 2021). I will use this framework to critique politics of visibility and call for politics of attention instead.

Favouring politics of presentism might seem at odds with the largely negative connotation that presentism has in media and communication studies. It signals the field's obsession with what is

new and with (accelerating) change as well as its strong preoccupation with the present as a sinking hole that has swallowed the past and the future. This led to criticisms of being ahistorical and neglecting continuities (e.g. Driessens, in print).

In contrast, politics of presentism stands for achieving change in the here and now without much regard for what might happen in the future. Instead of the present eyeing the future, the future is pulled into the present (Evinson 2021). Its strategies include sabotage and interruption, thereby breaking historical continuity. Translated to media and communication studies, I will argue that politics of visibility is presentist, as it adds to the incessant communication stream where information is mute and in constant need of renewal (cf. Dean's [2009] communicative capitalism). Too often attention is assumed, while algorithmic filtering and audience fragmentation have further broken the visibility-attention chain. Instead, politics of attention (as a politics of presentism) targets the interruption and suspension of the information stream to enable the capture and redirection of individual and collective attention necessary for change, recognition and justice.

Platformed Racism and the Spectacle of 'Blackness'

Suzanne Temwa Gondwe Harris

London School of Economics, UK

In Stuart's Hall (1997: 225) chapter titled 'The Spectacle of the 'Other'', he questions "have the repertoires of representation around 'difference' and 'otherness' changed, or do earlier traces remain intact in contemporary society?". This important dimension of time is central to this research which aims to focus on the continued exploitation, commodification and monitorisation of Black bodies by (non-governmental organisations (NGOs), through the historical construction of Blackness online and the mediating influences of popular culture created by social media. As NGOs compete in a crowded mediated space, the pervasive "media logic", to borrow Cottle and Nolan's (2007) terminology, suggests that NGOs and contemporary humanitarian communications

are increasingly subject to corporate marketing techniques to attract audiences and maintain the colonial matrix of power. By examining the legacy of coloniality through the visual production of Blackness on social media within this competitive media ecology, the research also utilises Matamoros-Fernández's (2017) concept of "platformed racism" to look into the historical legacy of the white NGO spectator gaze and the influence this has had on shaping the repertoires of representation, and the discursive practices that reinforce racist stereotypes.

The Problem of Reflecting on the Present; If Solved, Can it Help us Predict a Better Future?

Tom Kissock

University of Cambridge, UK

This paper explores various claims about the future through some unlikely dimensions. It argues that a lack of reflection in the 'present' seemingly leads to uncreative claims about our future. It historicises how some media production during the digital decades led to western society from the global north demonstrating a lack of creative imagination surrounding futures. Yet, subsequently champions the technological affordances of Indigenous communities from the global south demonstrating creative ways to address the future and tackle existential threats. By empirically connecting the cases of Orange Moblie's convenient claim that "The Future is bright, the future's Orange", Stefan Zweig's flawed haunting postulation of "Brazil being the land of the Future", and current assertions of 'The Future being Indigenous' by APIB (The Articulation of Indigenous Peoples in Brazil); this paper illustrates a normative argument of how we should be practicing the art of reflection in the present to critically analyse predictions about our future. Yet, to practise reflection, the paper problematises the idea of disconnecting from the false urgency paradigm that encapsulates a new trend of social media platforms that focus on live ephemeral content like Tik Tok. In other words, if the content is synchronising and ephemeral how can we practice reflection? In turn, if digital platforms are part of an attention economy and actively minimizing space in their user designs for our reflections (instead focusing on entertainment

	<p>and urgency), can we ever trust our immediate claims about the future? Also, with the implementation of platform ‘realtimeness’ in algorithmic sorting(1) and digital community iterations(2), are these claims even truly ours?</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Humans of the Digital Society</u> Chair: Jun Yu, OECD/National University of Singapore</p> <p>Experimenting with the Future: The Life Cycle of Pioneer Communities <u>Andreas Hepp</u> <i>University of Bremen, ZeMKI, Germany</i></p> <p>Research typically considers “corporate actors” such as large tech companies or government agencies as “drivers” of deep mediatization, that is, the transformation of societies by constantly changing digital media and infrastructures. This paper aims to focus on another relevant group of “collective actors”: pioneer communities. They can be described as groups of people who perform a forerunner role within a certain domain, act as “intermediaries” (Bourdieu 2010) between different areas of society (technology development, everyday use, technology journalism, politics, etc.), experiment in their practices and develop ideas of possible, technology-related futures. One historical example is the Whole Earth Network (Turner 2006), which was central to the emergence of Wired magazine. More recent examples of pioneer communities are the Maker movement (whose members are oriented towards developing new (media) technologies and tinkering with existing ones), the Quantified Self movement (whose members are oriented towards tracking and self-development) or the Hacks/Hackers movement (whose members are oriented towards innovative forms of journalism).</p> <p>This paper discusses the life cycle of pioneer communities, starting with their formation, when they emerged from the context of other technology-related communities, through their peak phase, whereupon they receive media attention, to their final phase, a stage in their development that is often accompanied by “becoming everyday” as their experimentation is absorbed into quotidian practices. It is argued that pioneer communities have the ability to structure horizons by sounding</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MAR.1.09</p>

out the possibility of change and by catalyzing translation processes, which means, on the one hand, the translation of ideas between different social domains and, on the other, the transmission of the purely experimental. But what futures are imagined for these pioneer communities in detail? Based on an empirical study with more than 250 interviews and many observations of events and spaces, an answer to these questions is given.

Empowering or Disempowering? An Exploratory Study of Mobile Phone uUsage Outcomes among Illiterate Working Women in India

Manjula Venkataraghavan and Shruthi V Shetty
Manipal Institute of Communication, MAHE, India

India like most developing countries have been very optimistic about the use of ICTs such as mobile phones for development. With increased connectivity and increasing users from across ages, gender and income, this technology seems to have overcome economic and geographical barriers. Studies have examined the potential of this technology to better lives and livelihoods, though more is required from across globe, examining it from varied perspectives including gender, social capital and prospects of empowerment. On the same lines, there is a dearth of studies that have looked into the use of this technology by poor, illiterate women and the effect of this technology, both positive & negative, on their lives and livelihood. Hence this study focused its research on semi-urban women, working as maids or cooks in households in a small campus town located in the southern state of Karnataka, India. The main aim of this study was to analyse the outcomes of mobile phone usage among them.

This exploratory study employed a qualitative approach using in-depth interviews and the resultant data was subjected to a thematic analysis. Findings from this study may inform government policies and interventions specifically targeting this vulnerable group.

Ageing Successfully: Representations of Women's Ageing in Lifestyle Shows in Thailand

Kullanit Nitiwarangkul
City University of London, UK

Feminist scholars, such as Sontag (1972), have long argued that women face a 'double standard' in ageing, in which their ageing is regarded as less acceptable than men's, because it is often associated with bodily decline and negative life transitions e.g. in relationships and socioeconomic status. My presentation explores the discourses of successful ageing through the exploration of the mediated representations of women in their 60s in Thailand. Thailand is currently ranked the third most rapidly ageing population in the world and the majority of this population is female. Such population is likely to be continuously on the rise in the future. Nevertheless, there is still little research in this area.

This presentation explores the representation and reinforcement of various gendered social expectations of what a woman's successful ageing life should be like through an analysis of two lifestyle programmes in Thailand. The analysis demonstrates that such representations promote neoliberal discourses around self-care, self-reliance, activeness and wealth accumulation (Marshall, 2018). It also sheds light on unique Thai cultural values, such as on the maintenance of familial relations and the moral obligations of care that need to be provided to elderly family members. Such media discourses may in turn shape and construct narratives of 'dominant' and 'marginalized' age and gender identities for older women in Thailand, which to some extent, reflect the policy discourses on what a 'good' senior citizen should be. This media analysis is part of my overall research on the socio-cultural meanings of ageing and the experiences and perspectives of Thai elderly women on ageing.

Everyday Life and Women's Communicational Practices in Argentina: Notes Towards a Politics of Listening for Gender Justice
Florencia Enghel
Jönköping University, Sweden

In this presentation I will introduce findings from a research project that investigates the everyday

	<p>communicative practices of Argentinian women for gender justice in the context of neoliberal capitalism, digital(ized) citizenship and the COVID-19 pandemic. Via a qualitative approach and a multi-method design, the project focuses on the micro(-techno?) politics of women's everyday activism. Drawing on data from an online survey and semi-structured interviews conducted with women in Argentina in 2021-2022, I will show how they attempt to get the State's attention as they go about their everyday lives in the face of inequality, gender violence and other dysfunctional or broken elements of democracy that affect them disproportionately. Based on this data-driven empirical characterization and engaging existing definitions of a politics of listening (Bickford, 1996; Bassel, 2007; Han, 2022), I will then analyze the perceived efficacy or inefficacy of Argentinian women's communicative strategies aimed at the State. In which ways, and to which extent, do these strategies lead to the democratic justice being claimed by getting government agencies at various levels (national, provincial, municipal) to listen? From the perspective of gender justice (Goetz, 2007), I define listening for the purpose of my analysis not merely as the discursive acknowledgment of women's claims (or other symbolic actions with a similar aim) typical of government officers at various scales of governance, but as the concrete steps actually taken by government agencies to redress specific forms of injustice (Rodríguez, 2019; Kay, 2020; McRobbie, 2020).</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Nonhuman Intelligence</u> Chair: Ludmilla Lupinacci, School of Media, University of Sussex, UK</p> <p>Drones, Citizens and the (Re)Appropriation of the Airspace <u>Gaia Casagrande</u> <i>University of Milan, Italy</i></p> <p>This paper aims to explore the link between drone technology and civic participation. Here, the commercial drone is considered as a medium,</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PAR.1.02</p>

unconventionally used for supporting activists' claims and, in doing so, re-appraising the airspace for collective purposes.

This research will first move to deepen the idea of air space as part of the public space, in which different social actors negotiate power relations, also through mobile technologies and devices such as commercial drones. Indeed, the theoretical premise is that drones contribute to the design and production of airspace, as well as induce certain attitudes and behaviors of those who operate and experience them.

Therefore, this assumption will be examined through the analysis of the case study, which concerns the grassroots activities and environmental mobilizations around the naturalistic area of "Bullicante Lake", an artificial lake that rises among a dismissed urban district of the city of Rome, in Italy. Here, Lake Bullicante's activists want to protect the biodiversity of the area, creating an environmental asset of public benefit, by using different strategies in order to gain support for their cause in public opinion. Among them, there is also the use of images from above, such as satellite images collected from web mapping services, such as Google Maps; photos and videos created with smartphones from rooftop buildings; photos and video footage captured with the drone.

The preliminary findings suggest that, on the one hand, the activists managed to use drone technology in order to support their cause, thus enabling a process of re-appropriation of the airspace for collective purposes. On the other hand, however, the use of commercial drones in public and social spaces remains problematic, especially for privacy and safety issues.

Missing in Data: Exploring Ageism in Digital Technologies Research

Jane Vincent

London School of Economics, UK

As media scholars we pride ourselves in the scope of our studies: our inclusivity, explorations into everyday lives, contributions to policy making and new knowledge. However, we should be much less proud of the consistently ageist approach that pervades some fields of research resulting in large cohorts of society being excluded because of

their age. Digital technologies are an integral part of daily life for all ages. The smartphone is possibly the most inclusive digital technology in use globally with similarities of social practices spanning age and culture, interwoven into multigeneration families, friendship groups, work, education, child care and more. Yet, although the age of adults involved in similar life events can differ across 8 decades the preference is to study only those in their 20s and 30s, or in broader studies to include four decades of oldest adults in one cohort. In this paper I explore why oldest UK adults (60 and older) are missing in digital technologies research. The problem appears to be widespread and institutionalised across research organisations within and beyond academia driven largely by legacy practices and age prejudice. These bold claims are explored within the theoretical frame of the circuit of culture and draw on extant literature to examine issues including perceived difficulty in recruitment and sampling methods; size & manageability of data; budget limitations and the perception that little will be added by including the oldest in studies. The paper offers recommendations for change including revision of ethics approvals, reviewing legacy data and exploring life stage and life event research towards a more age inclusive approach.

Self-Regulation of Artificial Intelligence as a Directing Alternative for the Due Use of Automated Decisions and Bias Control

Isabelle Brito Bezerra Mendes and João Araújo Monteiro Neto

Universidade de Fortaleza - UNIFOR, Brazil

Artificial intelligence has been widely used in several sectors and social activities, optimizing the processes, and enabling a better human quality of life. In counterpart this technological presence creates a series of new social issues that the law still does not regulate efficiently. Especially regarding to automated decisions, their rules of use are not fully established, much less standardized across countries, which has generated some legal uncertainty, such as several questions about the ethics and reliability of these mechanisms. However, it is not always possible for the law to encompass all changes coming from technology in

daily life in a linear and timely manner, since they are often so fast and abrupt that even the existing law is already obsolete. Facing this, the state normative alteration process does not supply the new demands presented in a timely and proportionate manner.

This paper aims to analyze the feasibility of using self-regulation as a viable alternative for the regulation and effective supervision of digital demands, and relieving the State claims in this regard. In this context, there will be a greater participation of sectors and private bodies that have expertise in the subjects dealt with that can better guide good practices and necessary standards, improving the quality of regulation. Furthermore, the compliance process also appears to be more effective.

Therefore, the work, seeks to contribute, with the proposition of adherence to self-regulation as a mechanism that facilitates the regulation of AI and which guiding elements must be included in the self-regulation process so that it can balance the protection of human rights with the promotion of technological development.

Methodologically, this paper proposes a socio-legal bibliographic analysis, with the aim of understanding the social and legal repercussions of the study - which will be done by reading books, articles, publications, magazines and periodicals.

Contextualising Bodycam Video, Social Media Participation, and Corporeal Documentary

Cáit Murphy

Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

This paper forms part of my ongoing PhD research focus on touch and corporeality in film and social media. Here, I look at bodycam video on social media as a visceral form of corporeal and documentary narrative through online community viewing and participation. Since the 2010s, the rollout of bodycams for the military and police-civilian interaction surveillance in several countries has prompted serious legal and social scrutiny of recorded violence, policing power, and civilian safety and privacy. Much of the scholarship and fieldwork analysis of bodycam video takes legal or behavioural approaches (Newell 2021), but as an increasingly visible moving image practice, it also

	<p>invites film and screen studies analysis. This cinematographic embodiment technology prompts questions about its phenomenology (Gilmore 2022; Bégin 2016; Sobchack 2004); online spectatorship; its complex ties with documentary practices like Dziga Vertov’s “kino-pravda,” cinema verité, GoPro filmmaking; as well as the emotional, affective registers of “body genres” melodrama and horror (Williams 1991) and online “gore” video (Tait 2008). I investigate bodycam video on sites like YouTube and TikTok, and audiences’ efforts to act or seek social justice for victims, demonstrated through comments, articles, and even “digital sleuthing” in the Gabby Petito murder case, which implicated police bodycam video analysis and online community criticism of police negligence and misogyny (The Guardian 2021; The New York Times 2021; Aguilar 2021). I argue that the camera’s hegemonic gaze and the durational temporality of the prolonged long take contributes to the unnerving surveillance quality and tantalisingly embodied passing-of-time; that online bodycam video is a form of corporeal documentary media that resonates with the viewer’s sense of endangered and endangering physicality; and, that while contextualised by existing film genres and practices, bodycam video is uniquely framed by the crucial storytelling function of contemporary social media participation.</p>	
13:00-14:00	LUNCH	*CKK (Outside Wolfson Theatre)
14:00 - 15:30	SESSION 2	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Digital Media and Feminism: Friends or Enemies</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair: Ruhi Kahn, London School of Economics, UK</p> <p>Believability, Sexual Violence, and the Digitisation of Doubt <u>Sarah Banet-Weiser and Kathryn Claire Higgins</u> <i>Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania, USA</i></p> <p>The question of whether and when women and other marginalized subjects ought to be believed when they speak out about sexual assault is a topic</p>	*CKK.LG.01 (Wolfson Theatre)

of heated cultural anxiety and contention. This paper proposes that a mediated economy of believability is the context for contemporary struggles over the truths of sexual violence and considers the implications of this economy for the future of sexual justice. One of the most concrete changes brought about by the #MeToo movement is that it has created a new public appetite for stories about sexual violence-based harms—an appetite that has been readily seized upon by Hollywood and the press, a growing market for anti-sexual violence products and services, and a renewed investment in digital media as a space where women can speak and be believed. In this paper, we evaluate this contemporary context through the lens of what we call the ‘digitization of doubt’. The market for anti-sexual violence that has emerged in the aftermath of #MeToo is one that suggests that if only women can furnish more and better evidence of their assaults (photographs, videos, screenshots, and other ‘corroborating’ digital artifacts) then they will prevail in bids for believability, both in the court of public opinion and potentially in courts of law. At the core of this narrative are struggles about how, whether, and when different forms of digital evidence ought to bolster believability—especially now that such evidence can be freely circulated online, and highly public bids for belief made without arbitration or intervention by the state. Within the context of contemporary examples, we test these assumptions by tracking what actually happens to and with these artifacts in mediated struggles over believability, and how their evidentiary value—that is, their status as evidence—continues to be shaped by familiar structures of power.

Media Futures of Consent, or Consent Was Deception All Along?

Sarah Cefai

Goldsmiths, University of London, UK

Recent years have seen the proliferation of consent in what’s been termed the ‘consent moment’ (Fischel 2019) or ‘consent culture’ (Angel 2021). Interested too in the widespread uptake of consent as an everyday vocabulary of sexual encounter, as well as a dominant lexicon of sexual injustice, this paper takes a different tact. Consent has its origins in Western political philosophy, prior to developing

legal status through contract law. While the socio-legal concept of sexual consent comes out of a cultural formation of feminist jurisprudence. More recently, regulatory and academic responses to the crisis over datafication and the powers wrought by technological corporations have adopted the language of consent as a bulwark to concerns over privacy and surveillance. This can be seen in resulting legislation, such as the GDPR, that produce contexts in which people are asked to consent all the time, but in ways that cannot be made meaningful to those consenting. Or, at least, the meaning of consent in these contexts cannot be easily understood.

This paper considers how the perfunctory nature of digital consent draws on a longer history of consent as a media concept, seen plainly in Noam Chomsky's formative work on the manufacturing of consent. Indeed, the convergence of consent as media logic and misogynistic device can be tracked through Rachel O'Neill's play on the 'manufacturing [of] consent' (2018) in the online seduction industry. By linking consent to deception, such reflections challenge us to think the role of deception in relation to the proliferation of consent in future years. Whereas consent presumes a futurity, but whose meaning can only be interpreted retroactively, deception discloses a relation of cause and effect and a narrative arc from the outset. This paper wages that what's at stake in the media futurity of consent is the gendered obscuring of deception, and as such, deception, there all along, should undergo a more prominent feminist rearticulation.

**Digital Feminist Activism and Practices of
Monetisation: Passion, Neoliberalism, and
Subjectivity**

Christina Scharff

King's College London, UK

This presentation explores the politics of digital feminist activism by drawing on 30 qualitative in-depth interviews with feminist activists who are mainly, though not exclusively, politically active online. By documenting and analysing the different ways in which digital feminist activism can be monetised, the presentation shows that the promise

and potential to generate income is at activists' fingertips. As the presentation argues, the monetisation of digital feminist activism goes beyond the application of market principles to political protest movements. When activism is monetised, activists' emotional investments and passion become mobilised and tied to income generation. At the same time, and through emphases on self-branding and 'authenticity', activists' selves are formed and rearranged in line with neoliberal values of entrepreneurialism and market competition. As such, the presentation argues that neoliberal rationality structures digital feminist activism in at least three ways: 1) by contemplating or engaging in practices of monetisation, activists apply a market-logic to their activism; 2) by mobilising emotional investments and passion in the context of monetising feminist activism, neoliberalism operates at the level of affect; 3) through the emphasis on self-branding and 'authenticity', activists performatively produce neoliberal subjectivities.

Metavoicing, Informational, and Partisan Messaging: A Study of Social Media Uses by South Africa's Female Politicians

Trust Matsilele

Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa

This study investigates the patterns in frequency and purpose of social media use by selected South African female politicians. Drawing on female politicians from the country's three biggest political parties as represented in the country's National Assembly: the governing African National Congress (ANC), the official opposition Democratic Alliance (DA), and the left-leaning outfit, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), the study employs the digital public sphere framework to undertake a triangulated study which incorporates qualitative and quantitative content analysis of six hundred Twitter posts by six female politicians to discuss their adoption and use of social media as a political communication tool in a predominantly male-dominated political landscape. In the study, we find that as part of the governing party, the ANC politicians use social media for informational purposes on activities of the government and

	<p>government portfolios. Meanwhile, the DA political actors use social media mainly to critique the governing party, profiling its failures and highlighting how it would do things differently if it governed. The EFF politicians, on the other hand, are observed to use social media to profile party activities. Our study shows that female politicians still rely on metavoicing to communicate with their constituencies instead of constructing their messages. The study also shows that female politicians, especially those in government, use the digital public sphere in the same way they deployed traditional media, such as broadcasting information.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>What is News Now For?</u> Chair: Dina Matar, SOAS University of London, UK</p> <p>A gathering with fire — Exploring the Audience Reception of Internet Memes about Belfast Riots <u>Martin Lundqvist</u> <i>Lund University, Sweden</i></p> <p>This study seeks to shed light upon how audiences receive internet memes (henceforth: memes) about political violence in contemporary Belfast. The large-scale riots of April 2021 and December 2012 serve as its primary case studies. Analysing how people read memes about these riots enables one to grasp how they – in their everyday lives – position themselves politically vis-à-vis the political violence of the past (i.e., ‘The Troubles’) and its re-eruption in the present (as riots). Understanding memes along these lines thus treats them as discursive practices: an analytical point of view which previous communication research has firmly established. While much has already been said about the discursive power of memes, significantly less has been said about how they are received by their audiences. This is a somewhat serious shortcoming, as we are then limited to reading the memes as discourses and lack an understanding of how they are decoded in everyday life. Indeed, previous studies have mostly dabbled in the notion of an ‘intended audience’ (and its assumed reading of the memes in line with discourses) rather than talking to the people who inhabit the political context of the memes. In order to address this research gap, I conduct semi-structured interviews with</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PAR.LG.03</p>

interlocutors in Belfast; asking them for their take on memes about riots in the city. As memes are inherently polysemic, this will help elucidate the extent to which there is a red thread running from the discourses of the memes to the meaning(s) made by their audiences. In essence: to what extent – and how – do people read the memes differently from what a discourse analytical approach would have assumed? To answer this question, I contrast and compare the findings of previous work on the discourses of memes about political violence in Belfast with the views expressed by my interlocutors.

Emoting, Imagining, Engaging: The Many Democratic Functions of News

Imke Henkel and Tim Markham

Birkbeck, University of London, UK

This paper investigates the function of news beyond the prevailing liberal model (Ryfe, 2020). The dominant scholarly and indeed popular view of news still assumes that news' function in democracy is to provide accurate information that enables citizens to participate in politics on the basis of well-informed rational decisions (Habermas, 1962; 2006). This paper builds, instead, on emerging research into a more complex functionality of news. Such studies contend that news engages beyond the structured expression of opinion or information (Papacharissi, 2015); reports, performs, and elicits emotions (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2019); acts as moral educator and cultivates "cosmopolitan sensibilities" (Chouliaraki, 2008, 831); or evokes imagined identities revealing as much about the reporter who "draws" a picture of the object as about the object itself (Chernobrov, 2019).

As a case study, we analyse news websites during the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic was chosen because it affords a well-defined and shared focus on a common experience. In addition, Covid-19 poses a tough test for democracy's ability to respond (Greer et al., 2020; Karabulut et al., 2021) and consequently to news' role in a challenged democracy. Furthermore, our study focusses on so-called "quality" news outlets because these are generally perceived to be more trustworthy and

more accurate, escaping the ills of news in digitised high-fractured news environments to present a positive model (e.g., Cushion, 2022; Toff et al., 2021).

We collected the top four news stories from twelve news websites in the UK and in Germany between 26 April and 2 May 2020 and between 3 and 9 February 2021 (N=1,344). We coded these texts applying a grounded approach (Urquhart, 2013) and using the coding software Nvivo. We find that news perform a wide range of democratically relevant functions beyond providing information: from constructing normality to engaging audiences, from imagining the future to critical self-reference.

TikTok and Political Narrative Building in Pakistan

Gulalai Khan

*Lahore University of Management Sciences,
Pakistan*

Unlike other parts of the world, Tiktok till a few years ago was not the preferred application of the educated class of Pakistan. It was an app used by the lowest-income or lower-middle, mostly rural uneducated population. Of late, Tiktok has led the narrative building for one of Pakistan's top political parties with top tiktokers meeting the Prime Minister to influence public opinion on key issues of national importance. Many commentators believe that TikTok trends have replaced Twitter trends as a measure of political popularity in Pakistan. A comparatively understudied phenomenon at the moment, this paper will explore how TikTok is helping build political narratives in Pakistan, the usage patterns and the shift from disdain for the class and even morality of those on the app to actually utilising them as paid influencers to drive the popular political narrative for some of Pakistan's most famous political leaders.

The paper will explore the Tiktok phenomenon in Pakistan with a specific focus on political narrative building and will use a qualitative approach with focus groups, individual interviews and an analysis of the tiktok timelines (and associated trends) of two top political figures of Pakistan over a specific period of 3 months (April-June 2022). This is an important timeline in the political events of Pakistan

where a popular prime minister was ousted through a vote of no-confidence and a social media storm ensued with Tiktok leading with trends across Pakistan's urban and rural settings. The paper aims to explore and analyse how the app has changed the political narrative building and gained prominence in a country where it was initially looked down upon as an application used only by the lower class with thoughtless messaging and crass visuals. Is this the Future Media that will influence politics for Pakistan?

Environmental Communication 3.0: Digital Activism to Encourage Environmental Coverage's Readership and Readers' Environmental Awareness

Durrotul Mas'udah

Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University, Indonesia

While previous studies on digital activism and environmental communication have primarily explored the role of digital media in environmental activism, the present study highlights a digital activism conducted by an Indonesian-based non-governmental organization named Remotivi to encourage the readership of environmental coverage and readers' environmental awareness. The digital activism invites social media users to participate in #1Hari1IsuLingkungan (one day one environmental issue) challenge. Participants of the challenge are required to read at least one environmental coverage per day during one month period on 1 – 30 November 2022. They have to screenshot the coverage articles that they read, post them on Instagram or Twitter, and add their opinions regarding the coverage. The NGO promises to give a present to participants who successfully complete the challenge.

The present study aims to analyse the collaboration between the NGO as the initiator of the digital activism, the social media users as the participants, and journalists as the producers of the environmental coverage. The analysis will focus on the process and the result of the digital activism. It will be carried out in a two-steps method. Using simple text mining techniques, the first step is analysing the thematic segmentation of the coverage read and posted by the participants, as

	<p>well as of the participants' opinions regarding the coverage. Data regarding the number of participants, the number of coverage posted on Instagram and Twitter will also be collected in this step. The second step includes in-depth interviews with the NGO's managers, the selected participants, and the selected journalists whose coverage is mostly read by the participants. The interview will focus on exploring their motivation, perception, and impression regarding the digital activism. The study is expected to raise public awareness and understanding on emerging collaborative models of environmental communication in the digital space.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Mediation and Political Violence</u> Chair: Shakuntala Banaji, London School of Economics, UK</p> <p>Murder by Morality: A Gendered Perspective on Symbolic Violence <u>Cristina Moreno-Almeida</u> <i>Queen Mary University of London, UK</i></p> <p>This paper considers the role of gender and morality in violent state practices that seek to incite fear in journalists through the threat of public shame. It explores the selective use of traditional moral codes and the #metoo movement in Morocco as weapon to silence journalists reporting on oppositional movements. Within the last five years, several known male journalists reporting against the state such as Omar Radi and Souleiman Raisuni have been jailed accused of rape and sexual assault respectively. Simultaneously, journalist Hajar Raisuni, connected to the leading Islamist party and reporting on the Hirak Rif Movement protests was incarcerated for an alleged abortion. Through these cases, this paper considers how rather than through direct censure, the deep state instrumentalizes global women's movements such as the #metoo at the same time as it appeals to conservative mores and laws in place that forbid extramarital sexual relations and abortion to launch attacks on independent journalists. Through these symbolic forms of gendered violence, the state silences journalists reporting on anti-governmental protests and other important issues, as well as claiming to do so as a response to progressing in feminists</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MAR.2.10</p>

demands. The result is a double moral that serves to kill the reputation and consequently the work of rebellious journalists on the backs of women's rights and feminists demands.

Active Citizenship: The (Un)Justification of Mediated Protest Violence

Limichi Okamoto

London School of Economics, UK

The 2019 protests in Hong Kong became the most long-lasting and violent protest movement in post-handover Hong Kong history. Embroiled in highly-mediated cycles of violence between anti-government protesters and the police force, the movement's goals quickly expanded from the withdrawal of an anti-extradition bill to the investigation of police conduct and the installation of democratic rights and institutions. This paper examines how the production, circulation, and reception of mediated protest violence reflect and refract citizens' judgements regarding the (un)justification of protest claims and acts, in particular by understanding the discursive articulations of violence, between and within citizen-produced media representations and individual psychological (un)justifications of protest violence. Through a mixed-methodological approach, this paper explores the dynamic between cultural notions of violence and the subjectivity of individual justifications, in terms of how and whose rights are being claimed for in protest, and what social groups are being excluded from fetishised ideals of governance and participation. As such, it analyses violence as the relational claims and material consequences of protest acts, and as 'acts of citizenship' that challenge yet mirror existing arrangements and norms, thereby delineating how postcolonial histories configure hierarchical relations of belonging and positionings of particular protest acts at both the levels of media and individual subjectivity.

Rightwing Sisterhood - The Everyday Politics of Violence of Zionist Settler Women in Palestine

Akanksha Mehta

Goldsmiths, University of London, UK

In this intervention, I draw upon long-term research conducted on Zionist women's politics in Palestine to think through the gendering of settler colonial violence and the continuities of liberal and 'right-wing' politics. By focusing on Zionist women's mobilisations with regards to pedagogy and education, 'charity' and 'community work', networks of friendship and sociality, and different forms of violence, I highlight the importance of the 'everyday' in drawing histories and trajectories of Israeli settler colonial and state violence and understanding its transnational connections. Based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted with Zionist settler women in an organisation called 'Women in Green', I present narratives that allow us to understand the violence of occupation and the state as the violence of settler colonialism and situate the role of women's politics at the centre of it.

Politics of Media Coverage in Times of Conflict: The Case on Northern Nigeria

Husseina Ahmed

London School of Economics, UK

The Boko Haram insurgency is by any measure a highly mediatized spectacle, both nationally and internationally. The insurgency along with the kidnapping of the 250 school girls from their school, which birthed the #BringBackOurGirl campaign, has put an unprecedented spotlight on the lives of northern Nigerian women, especially those who have been victims of the insurgency. This paper discusses the ways in which these women who have been victims of the insurgency negotiate and imagine their identities (i.e. the civic self) by examining their relationship to the media coverage of the insurgency, the factors that shape their engagement with the news (disinformation, lack of accurate reporting and low levels of trust) and the ways in which they respond to representations of themselves, through their encounters with others, whose perceptions of them are shaped through the coverage of the insurgency.

(Un)civil Mediations: Disinformation, Violence and Trauma in 'Othered' Lives

Shakuntala Banaji

London School of Economics, UK

	<p>Theorisations of disinformation, hate and trolling often link them to the affordances of new and emerging technologies. Imagined solutions are based on artificial intelligence moderation systems or media literacy and sometimes a combination of the two. This short paper highlights the affective and experiential dimensions of living with and producing mediated political violence — in particular by asking how those who receive and produce it, imagine and understand its political and psychic effects. Moving between historical accounts of resistance to mediated hate and it’s political repercussions in public policy and phenomenological accounts of traumatic political disenfranchisement or silencing, the paper delineates the terrible dilemmas that face recipients of hate who wish to claim full right public speech for themselves and their communities.</p> <p>Communication, Violence and Minoritarian Affect <u>Fatma Matin Khan</u> <i>London School of Economics, UK</i></p> <p>The popularity of Hindu nationalism in India has accompanied a rise in incidents of collective violence against minority Muslims who are characterised as the 'enemy within' the cohesive national whole. Enacting, editing, justifying, viewing and circulating mediated visuals of such violence is connected to the practice of a currently dominant form of majoritarian citizenship. Based on ethnographic fieldwork in India, this paper understands the role of media and communication in the formation, suppression, contestation, performance and remaking of minoritised civic subjectivities. Tracing the affective media and communicative practices and everyday navigations of those who identify with the victim in such mediated visuals as the 'Self', I explore how these practices intersect with more ordinary forms of discrimination to transform notions of belonging in relation to the community, the state and the nation.</p>	
	<p align="center"><u>Imagining Data Futures</u> Chair: Jean-Christophe Plantin, London School of Economics, UK</p>	<p align="center">MAR.2.08</p>

Data (sets) for the Future? Towards a Theoretical Understanding of Synthetic Data

Tanja Wiehn

University of Copenhagen, Denmark

Synthetic data is an emerging field in data science. This growing interest stems from well-known issues with data from real-world systems: gender and racial bias in data sets, data shortage and concerns about privacy. Unlike organic data, synthetic data is generated in algorithmic models, characterized as an alternative to manually collected and processed data. It can be created as a novel output by systems of artificial intelligence, such as GANs (General Adversarial Networks) or generated in fully simulated digital worlds (Nikolenko, 2021; Steinhoff, 2022).

In light of the call for papers, this contribution engages with the emerging field of synthetic data as a powerful technology of media futures. The central questions of this paper are: How will the emergence of synthetic data effect the politics of future imaginaries? How can the distinction between synthetic and organic data theoretically be characterized? The empirical work of this paper is based on fieldwork and expert interviews with data scientists. Theoretically, the paper draws on critical data studies and feminist theory and critique of techno-determinism (Amoore 2020; D'Ignazio & Klein 2020; Thylstrup 2022).

Synthetic data is praised as cost-effective and nearly indistinguishable from organic data. Dangers of synthetic data in the form of deep fakes are already at the forefront of everyday media usage (Meikle 2022). Moreover, it holds the promise to complete data sets for the sake of better AI models. The building of synthetic data sets in artistic research practices demonstrates cases for its purpose for social justice ("VFrame", Harvey 2022). Concluding, the paper aims to engage with a nuanced discussion of synthetic data's impact on media futures to re-think binaries of dystopia and utopia, as well as synthetic and organic.

"Things Just Hit Differently": The Sensitised Audience and the Future of Media Use

Andre Cavalcante

University of Virginia, USA

In talking about his experiences with media during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic Dylan, a 24-year-old Korean American man, said: “Things just hit differently.” It was a sentiment I had heard repeated over and over again during my interviews. From July 2020 to December 2020, I conducted 46 individual, in-depth interviews with a diverse group of Americans exploring their everyday media use during the pandemic. Across my interviews, participants repeatedly talked about how they felt more “emotional,” “intense,” “fearful,” “unhinged,” and “anxious.” Although they evidenced a diverse range of emotions and responses to the pandemic, what connected all the participants in my study was the fact that they were profoundly sensitized by the historic events unfolding around them.

Along these lines, this paper analyzes what I call the “sensitized audience.” I first define and theorize the concept of the sensitized audience, arguing that this is an audience that feels hyper-emotional, opened-up, and raw. Their affective capacities are heightened, and the border between their sense of self and the outside world breaks down and feels more porous. They struggle to maintain a hold on their ontological security. As a result, the sensitized audience’s relationship to media changes. The question of what to read, watch, or listen to becomes ever more important, urgent, and problematic. The stakes of media consumption are simply higher and carry a stronger electric charge.

I conclude my paper by arguing that the sensitized audience is a harbinger of the future. The future audience is one that will be continually sensitized by global shocks and disruptions. As scholars from across academic disciplines have warned, global crises fueled by climate change, globalization, economic insecurity, and political instability are likely to increase in number and frequency. As the world gets more volatile, opportunities for being sensitized will only grow and I argue that “the sensitized audience” gives us a critical vocabulary for talking about this emerging reality.

Identity and the Metaverse: Interrogating the Idea of Identity in Past and Contemporary Futures

Asher Kessler and Solomon Katachie
London School of Economics, UK

In 2021, Meta set out a bold vision of the future: the metaverse. This paper will use a genealogical approach to critically interrogate one troubling aspect of this contemporary future: how the idea of identity is treated.

The metaverse is promised to free us from the constraints of distance and “the laws of nature”. More than this, the metaverse promises people total control of their identity markers, whether that is by escaping the baggage of the human form, or just certain aspects of it. As one Meta advert announces, the binary systems of racial identity will be “erased” and replaced with a new reality in which there is “just a gradient of identity”.

This paper will examine a lineage of sociotechnical imaginaries in Western computer culture. In the late 1990s, one such imaginary was the cyberspace, which was promised to be a place where: ‘There is no race. There are no genders. There is no age, no age. There are no infirmities. There are only minds, only minds. Utopia? No. No. The Internet.’

Another sociotechnical imaginary was expressed in the 1968 Whole Earth Catalog. In the catalog old identities were replaced by a new all-encompassing identity of transformed consciousness, total agency, and a God-like power over body and land.

By exploring two previous sociotechnical imaginaries, this article examines how the construction of identity in Meta’s depiction of the metaverse is permeated with norms and ideals inherited from previous technological visions of the future. Further, this paper will argue that by focusing on the treatment of identity in past futures, we can prepare for interrogating and contesting our contemporary visions of the future.

**The Social Function of Data Co-operatives:
Making Community in the Data Economy**

Alejandro Alvarado Rojas

*University of Southern California, Annenberg
School for Communication and Journalism, USA*

Data co-operativism is emerging as an alternative data governance model to counter the dominant platform capitalist system (Srnicek, 2017). This

	<p>alternative model reshapes social and technical relations to change the value of personal data from a market commodity to a communal good (Hardjono & Pentland, 2019). As such, communal data governance has implications for conceptualizing data sovereignty and economic sustainability that foster conditions for individuals and their communities to decide on the management processes of their personal data (Calzada, 2021). However, research on how data mediates community formation conducive to communal governance is scant (Ho & Chuang, 2019; Gibson-Graham, 2013). In this study, I investigate the formation of data sharing communities in data-cooperatives through the lens of communities of practice (Wegner, 1998). Empirically, I take the case of Open Humans, a data co-operative for personal data management for research and self-exploration, to conduct a content analysis of the data sharing practices related to communal governance, assessment of the impact, risks, and benefits of data sharing, and discussions on data self-exploration and discovery. Expected findings can enrich our understanding of data's social function in informing co-operative platform design, notions of data sovereignty, and non-commodifiable data communities.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Imagining Queer Futures Chair: Łukasz Szulc, University of Manchester, UK</p> <p>Queer Media Futures: Messy Entanglements of Anti-LGBTIQ Mobilisation in Digital Media <u>Yener Bayramođlu</u> <i>Manchester Metropolitan University, UK</i></p> <p>The future is a contentious issue within queer media studies. While some scholars view futurity as inextricably entangled with heteronormative neoliberal reproduction, and therefore argue that projects geared towards creating better futures are pointless, others underline the importance of investing in what could become an empowering future for queers who experience the here and now as toxic. The power of media representations, technologies, and practices has been highlighted in scholarship on queer futures, yet most studies have focused on queer media struggles within the Global</p>	MAR.1.09

North. I would like to shift attention to Turkey, which unsettles any supposed Global North/South binary, to explore interconnections and contestations between different visions of the future.

I will focus on a case study of discussions in social media about Turkey's first ever anti-LGBTIQ demonstration, which took place in Istanbul in September 2022. Drawing on images and texts circulated on Twitter before, during, and after the demonstration, I will demonstrate how media were used to invoke the spectre of a fear-inducing queer and digital future. Demonstrators and Twitter users expressed their hate against LGBTIQ persons by discursively constructing queerness as part of a digitally connected and globalized world threatening the future of the Muslim nuclear family. Given the recent explosion of queer visibility on digital platforms, online queer activism, and openly queer content available via online streaming platforms, the demonstration and expressions can be seen, at least in part, as a backlash against the lack of heteronormative regulation of digital media. I argue that although actors engaged in anti-LGBTIQ mobilisation refer to "Turkishness", "Islam", and "Non-Westernness" to claim their voices are authentically "home-grown", they import anti-queer sentiments, imagery, and strategies not only from "the West" but also from places with overtly anti-LGBTIQ policies such as Russia, where queer (digital) activism is extremely dangerous.

"How It Started...How It's Going": LGBTQ+ Televisual Representations and the Horizon of Critique

Ben Aslinger

Bentley University, USA

Representational politics have been co opted by neoliberal elites. Diversity, equity, and inclusion has become a mantra for transnational corporations. Marketers tell us that increased diversity will come quickly, as corporations seek to woo Gen Z. The same techniques of humor that have been developed by marginalized communities have been taken up by the far right. The quantitative measurements of broadcast, cable, and streaming diversity by watchdog organizations reinforce the logic of "plastic representation" (Warner 2017). The

era of “peak TV” has rendered audience sizes miniscule, making it harder than ever to justify our critiques in terms of possible effects. Discourses of positive and negative representations still remain supreme in many of our classrooms and popular discourses about media.

In this perhaps dispiriting time to analyze representations in an era of co-optation and ubiquity, how do we rethink the horizon of critique? This paper looks at an unlikely source of possible inspiration, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation “Where We are on TV” reports from 2006 through the present. I juxtapose these documents generated by an organization that is an industry-civil society hybrid with the ongoing theoretical literature on how and why we “read,” including the utility of “paranoid” and reparative readings (Sedgwick), Lisa Henderson’s construction of queer relay (2013), and Rita Felski’s work in querying the purposes and orientations of textual and discursive analysis in *The Limits of Critique* (2015). What might be read as GLAAD’s work of plastic representational advocacy might also be read collectively across the 17 years as work to address a growing number of particularities in terms of the language and categories of gender and sexual identity, grapple with and assert the ongoing relevance of representational critique, and find and explore the aporias in representations and the narratives that still need to be told.

Between Assimilation and Resistance: A Queer Marxist Analysis of Visibility Politics

Shreeta Lakhani

School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, UK

A monochrome image of what appears to be two black lesbian women and their children sitting looking bored appears on my TV screen. “Are you good? Or are you good to go?” the narrator asks as the song Good Life by Inner City and Kevin Saunderson begins to play, suddenly transitioning away from the black and white image. The atmosphere transforms into one of excitement as the family dress into ‘fun-looking’ pyjamas and get ready for a movie night in the garden using Argos’s latest outdoor furniture range. The summer 2020 Argos advert sells the idea that any dull boring day

can be transformed into a 'fun' and 'pleasurable' one with a bit of 'imagination' and a few Argos products. The thirty-six-second advert garnered a lot of controversy on social media. Discussions ranged from queer of colours applauding Argos for their land-mark representation to others threatening to report the advert to Ofcom (the UK's broadcasting watchdog) for a 'misrepresentation' of Britain (Milton 2020). Responding to the backlash and threats, the company tweeted that it was "proud to represent a diverse and inclusive Britain" with an accompanying picture that read "Argos is for everyone" (Milton 2020).

While, Argos was one of the few companies to have presented a non-heterosexual Black family household in its advert, it isn't the only one. Over the last few years racialised queer identity has become more visible in the arts, on social media, in the entertainment sector, and in product advertising. The list of commercial films, brand collaborations and video productions based on queer subjectivity grows. The rise of queer visibility in dominant culture has led Hennessey (1994) to argue that queer subjectivity, including racialised queer sexuality, is the new 'hot commodity'. The cultural and marketing industries rely on a narrative that suggests that queer people deserve fair treatment for their humanity because they are 'similar' to those inhabiting the dominant culture (as we saw in the Argos response). Using a queer Marxist lens to explore the inclusion of racialised queer subjects within the economy will provide a space to think through the existing contradictions within this process. That is, these attempts to overcome inequality via identity based visibility politics and appeals to tolerance and sameness and inclusion within the state and economy mirror rather than subvert the "complex interplay between binary logic and analogy" (Joseph, 2002a,: 272).

This presentation explores the affects of such increased visibility, and argues this troubles the idea that queer identity and subcultures are inherently and always anti-normative. I argue that increased queer visibility has co-opted queer ideas of trouble-making and pleasure-as-resistance to expand the leisure and culture industry to include queer lifestyles. The marketisation of emotions,

predominantly 'happiness,' 'pleasure' and the 'pursuit of the good life' have been vital in this process. Ultimately, altering the way queer identity is understood and performed in London.

The Transitory Spaces of Black Queer Gaming: Spirituality and the Practice of Death in Spiritfarer (2020)

Keisha Bruce

University College London, UK

What can Black queer gaming practices teach us about the transitory spaces between virtuality, spirituality, and reality? In what ways does feeling structure Black queer orientations and disidentifications within virtual worlds and by extension our home worlds? Writing myself into this paper, I tend to these questions.

In this article I engage a Black feminist queer reading of the Indie game Spiritfarer to consider what a queer reconfiguration of the game offers conversations on transitory spaces, life and death. I argue that Spiritfarer offers a space for us to intimately sit, both physically and virtually, literally and figuratively, with our feelings of grief and love as we create our own transitory "homeplace" centred around spiritual acts of care after death (hooks 1990). It also presents a virtual space for us to "rehearse our feelings" and responses to the fleeting and interconnected nature of Black queer life and death (Anable 2018). Beginning with, but then journeying away from theories and perspectives on Black social death (Walcott 2021; Avilez 2020; Sharpe 2016), I argue that Spiritfarer exemplifies an "afro-optimistic digital culture" whereby playing with death allows for an intimate self-led exploration of spirituality, community repair, and love (Brock 2020). Methodologically, I combine autoethnographical accounts of my own game play, with a queer reading of the game's narrative to offer a personal insight into a queer Black domestic gaming practice. In doing so, I illustrate that video games, which are not necessarily Black and/or queer, can have a Black queer use (Gray 2020; Ahmed 2019; Ruberg 2019; Gray 2018).

During a global state of emergency where Black trans death is increasingly visible and illness is

	inevitable, this article illustrates how Black queer gaming practices invite us to engage in hospitality and mutual loving as a practice of spiritual freedom and repair.	
15:30-16:00	COFFEE BREAK	*CKK (Outside Wolfson Theatre)
16:00-17:30	SESSION 3	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Violence and Truth</u></p> <p>Chair: Lisa Derand, London School of Economics, UK</p> <p>‘Anon is a Woman’: Speculating on the Future of Anonymity Affordances in Feminist Online Media Activism against Sexual Violence</p> <p><u>Sophie Whitehead</u> <i>King’s College London, UK</i></p> <p>First-person accounts about sexual violence can be and often are contested (Alcoff, 2018) and there are unjust patterns in who is deemed worthy of belief and who is not when it comes to reporting an experience (Banet-Weiser & Higgins, 2022). As a result, the affordance of anonymity has been an important part of the online media landscape for sexual violence survivors in recent years, allowing them to ‘speak out’ and establish peer-to-peer networks of support and witnessing (Loney-Howes, 2020) while assuaging some of the risks associated with reporting through institutional mechanisms and criminal justice systems. This paper interrogates anonymity’s role in feminist online media activist practices since #MeToo and asks what anonymity’s future in this context might look like. What can we glean about the relationship between anonymity and identity from platforms like ‘Everyone’s Invited’ and resources like the ‘Shitty Men in Media’ spreadsheet? How might we move towards an imagined future where a survivors’ identity does not impact her believability? And can anonymity and intersectionality ever be compatible in feminist activist media practices? This paper poses these questions to speculate on what the future of anonymity affordances might look like for feminist online media activism against sexual violence — both in terms of its possibilities, and its pitfalls.</p>	PAR.LG.03

Social Media against Sexual Violence in Vietnam since the #MeToo Movement

Nhung Dinh

Dublin City University, Ireland

The international #MeToo movement came to Vietnam in early 2018, starting with a series of Facebook allegations from sexual assault victims and supporters. Although multiple accusations fell into oblivion, the incidents created a public sphere on social media to discuss the severe situation of sexual violence in the country: 87% of Vietnamese women and girls have experienced sexual harassment in public places (ActionAid, 2014). In such a deep-rooted patriarchal country like Vietnam, talking about sex is commonly prohibited. Female sexual violence victims making their allegations on social media have to face tremendous pressure, one way or another. So what motivated them to overcome their fear and speak out against sexual violence in public space? To what extent female victims made their allegations online instead of reporting them to law enforcement?

This research aims to study the Facebook public sphere regarding sexual violence against women in Vietnam. Based on the Symbolic Power (Bourdieu, 1982) framework, the study will investigate (1) how social media enabled a public sphere for female sexual violence, (2) the roles of different stakeholders in this virtual shared space, and (3) the social and political changes made under the impacts of that virtual public discussion in Vietnam. In terms of the data gathering methods, we would conduct (a) in-depth interviews with sexual violence victims and feminism activists, (b) content analysis of the Facebook posts related to sexual violence since the #MeToo movement and the legal regulation documents in that regard, and (c) online survey targeting public opinion on the matter.

Digitally Mediated Practices to Recount Femicide

Saide Mobayed Vega

University of Cambridge, UK

Femicide is broadly defined as the gender-related killing of women and girls. Documenting,

measuring, and querying the scope of femicide has been vital for its attention and prevention. Yet official femicide data produced by governments or international organisations have historically been incomplete, missing or completely lacking. Angered by a paucity of official data, citizens worldwide use digital tools, and technologies to account for what has been labelled as 'missing data' or 'counter data' against femicide. This paper offers a novel methodological approach to investigate digitally mediated data practices against femicide in Mexico. Based on a relational account-ability approach which draws on André Brock's (2018; 2020) critical technocultural discourse analysis (CTDA) and feminist autoethnography, I examine the discursive potency of four digital interfaces that document femicide in Mexico produced by civil society, the digital maps [Yo Te Nombro](#) and [Ellas Tienen Nombre](#), the digital memorial [Ecos del Desierto](#), and the Instagram account [No Estamos Todas](#). By querying my engagement with these interfaces, I account for, situate in, and attend to how femicide data ripple across the digital space. The main empirical findings suggest that, rather than counting or quantifying, digitally mediated practices recount femicide insofar as they are deliberately archival, inherently situated, and unpredictably related.

Assembling the 'Fourth Frontier' on TikTok: Speed, Truth, and the Russian-Ukrainian War

Yuting He

University of Cambridge, UK

Dromology, the study of speed, has been a marginalized topic in international relations. Starting from the works of Virilio and Der Derian, this research intends to interrogate speed and its impact on international relations using the case of the TikTok War in the 2022 Russian-Ukrainian war. This research adopts the Virilio-Derianian framework of dromology and interrogates the effects of techno-driven accelerations on international relations. Recognized that Der Derian's poststructural approach ignored the contributions of material actants to the making of realities, this research considers the new materialist thinking of assemblage as compensation. This research will go beyond poststructuralism's

	<p>limitations and develop the assemblage-based discourse analysis for doing dromological research. By analyzing actants including TikTok's algorithms and interfaces, the governments of Ukraine and Russia, TikTokers, media commentators and academics, this research identifies that speed, which exists in the form of TikTok, is arguably more fluid, personalized, and de-centralized, thus possess the ability to challenge international relations in the discipline level as well as in the practical level. This research finds that truth has been put in crisis together with the deconstruction of grand narratives. Traditional boundaries between inside/outside, wartime/everyday life and combatant/civilian are blurred. And lastly, the fourth front as a new battlefield will propose challenges to the former ways of dealing with international conflicts and doing international politics.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Assembling Publics</u> Chair: Peter Lunt, University of Leicester, UK</p> <p>Do Generic Visuals in the News Assemble Publics? Trust, Credibility and the Future of News Imagery <u>C.W. Anderston, Giorgia Aiello, Helen Kennedy and Ariel Chen</u> <i>University of Leeds, UK; University of Sheffield, UK</i></p> <p>'Generic visuals' – images like stock photos and simple data visualizations, which have standardized formats and appearances – circulate with increasing frequency in the news media. Despite our increasing exposure to generic visuals, very little is known about the role that they play in relation to the assembling of publics. Research into visuals in the news has tended to focus on iconic photos or award-winning visualizations, and analyses of visual news media are therefore primarily studies of the spectacular. As a result, the mass of mundane images that surrounds us daily remains unacknowledged and under-researched.</p> <p>This presentation reports on AHRC-funded research which investigated the role that generic visuals play in 'assembling publics', that is, in bringing groups of people together around shared</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MAR.2.10</p>

interests and concerns, activating citizens to care (or not) about particular issues, making possible (or not) various forms of engagement, including democratic decision-making, and in spreading or inhibiting the spread of disinformation. In other words, by researching multiple aspects of the 'circuit of culture' (Du Gay et al 1997), including the production, use and dissemination of generic visuals, their semiotic characteristics and design function, and audience engagement with them, we have explored whether generic visuals 'assemble publics' in the ways that other aspects of news media and political communication are said to.

Our presentation synthesizes findings across the different strands of our research, highlighting how producers and audiences feel about this imagery as well as the 'work' that generic visuals do (or do not do) to assemble publics. Responding to the theme of this conference, we speculate on the role of genericity in the future of news imagery, particularly in relation to producer and audience participants' concerns with questions of trust and credibility as they produce, use or consume generic visuals.

Public Media, Public Voice

Giles Moss and Lee Edwards

University of Leeds, UK; London School of Economics and Political Science, UK

How can publics have a greater say over the shape of their media environments? If markets promise choice, public media appeal to voice, claiming to reflect public concerns not captured by market transactions alone. Yet there is lack of empirical research that investigates how members of the public perceive the accountability of public media and the opportunities for voice they provide. In this article, we explore these questions through an analysis of contributions to an Online Citizens' Assembly on the future of public service broadcasting in the UK. We find there is something uniquely valuable about public media for public voice. Where private commercial media was perceived by participants as closing space for voice down, media marked out as public do generate expectations of greater transparency, accountability, and responsiveness. However, the fact public media generates these expectations

does not mean they are fulfilled in practice. We describe problems with the public accountability and responsiveness of public media, and how participants in the assembly felt entitled to better opportunities to scrutinize and contribute to decisions about the future of public media. This raises a final problem. A shared concern such as public media inevitably generates different and sometimes conflicting views. How can these different views be negotiated and balanced, such that an agreement or compromise is reached? How can a credible collective voice be constructed? We argue that contributions to the Citizens' Assembly remind us of the importance of deliberative modes of engagement in giving form to public voice.

The Birth of British Public Opinion: Forged in Three Crises

Nick Anstead

London School of Economics and Political Science, UK

Political science literature has provided a detailed history of the development of representative sample opinion polling in 1930s America. However, the role of public opinion in political discourse before the advent of polling is much less studied.

This paper aims to fill that gap. Using the Gale historic newspaper archive, it examines more than 20,000 newspaper articles referencing public opinion published in the first half of the 19th century, analysing them with a computer-assisted text analysis method. This period is selected because it sees a significant and consistent increase in printed discussion about public opinion.

In particular, this paper identifies three political crisis that galvanised discussions of public opinion. These were:

1. The post-French Revolution crisis.
2. The post-Napoleonic War crisis.
3. The Reform Crisis.

It will be argued that, taken in turn and each in distinctive ways, each of these crises plays a role in integrating discussions of public opinion into wider political discourse.

	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Embedded Media</u></p> <p>Chair: Alison Powell, London School of Economics, UK</p> <p>The Glitch, Uncanniness, and a Dizziness of Freedom: Articulating (a Future for) Media Studies</p> <p><u>Mark Deuze</u> <i>University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands</i></p> <p>Although media studies is among the most popular disciplines, as a field it struggles to articulate what it is – even what it is about. While such openness can be a benefit to academic work, it also poses challenges at a time when people worry about a parallel pandemic and infodemic, hybrid warfare, surveillance capitalism, and a host of social issues related to problematic media use.</p> <p>Media scholars and scholarship are largely absent from civic debates and policy circles – it almost seems as if no one cares what we know. It may be precisely the lack of a confident narrative that contributes to the fact that we do not have a seat at the table where the public agenda is set.</p> <p>The contemporary context of life lived in, rather than with media offers another challenge: finding ways to effectively study media when everything is mediated. While media studies arguably should have an answer to the question of how to study (the) media, the disappearance of its object of study into an all-encompassing digital environment prohibits easy solutions.</p> <p>In other words, media studies both has and lacks a manifest voice in debates about (the) media. This conundrum gets addressed using a genealogical assessment of the field as distinct from other academic disciplines that consider (the) media. While scholars working in any other area tend to see media as something that happens to people, in media studies we consider how people make worlds happen in and through media.</p> <p>From this vantage point, three interventions from the wealth of media and (mass) communication research are taken as starting points for our</p>	<p>MAR.2.08</p>

engagement with the world: deliberately utilizing errors and failures of media (glitches), exploring instances of discomfort and unfamiliarity because of media (uncanniness), and radically imagining different futures (the dizziness of freedom).

From “Information Society” to “Embedded Society”: A Fundamental Shift in Historiography?

Jonas Andersson Schwarz
Södertörn University, Sweden

I explore the different historiographic outcomes that arise, once one stops to think of the “information society” as based on late 20th C notions of transmission (Shannon) and instead think of it as a set of cybernetic systems.

The notion of information as linear and decomposable into discrete units is a building block in many notions of communication and knowledge that have become normative in contemporary society. However, this notion can be contrasted by other ways of conceptualising communication and knowledge.

I start from a political-economic critique: Discourses about digitisation circa Y2K were all too one-sidedly oriented towards copyable objects in themselves. Far too little attention was paid to the built environments in which the objects circulate and are made operable – and the possibility of exclusive control and surveillance that arises when such systems are made proprietary. Arguably, this discourse emerged in lockstep with the popularisation of the home computer, up to what can be called a macroeconomic and systemic turning point in 2007–2009 when the internet coalesced into its current oligopolistic form (Hindman 2018).

From a foundational ontological assumption of digitalisation as discrete data, embodied in duplicable artefacts – to a notion of situatedness and embeddedness in cybernetic systems, with its attendant notions of convenience, superabundance, compliance, fatigue, and complacency: This turn is extensively covered by literature, with numerous accounts that conceive of

digitalisation in such a way. The question is, however, how impactful such accounts have actually been, in more public-facing discourse and policymaking.

Lamentably, the early conceptualisation seems to have allowed cyberlibertarianism to grow out of its protean forms (e.g., Dale Davidson & Rees-Mogg 1997) into more recent patrician forms (e.g., Thiel & Masters 2014). I trace a historical genealogy between protean information libertarianism (Hayek; Drucker; Romer; Stallman; etc.) to the more rentier-dominated oligarchy we see today.

Throwing the Baby Out with the Bath Water? AI censorship and Democratic Discourse

Dayei Oh and John Downey

University of Helsinki, Finland; Loughborough University, UK

Algorithmic censorship, powered by artificial intelligence, is becoming a common practice employed by many social media and other Web 2.0 companies to regulate 'toxic' discourse in digital public spheres. This has attracted critique of AI censorship from a variety of theoretical positions, including from a Foucauldian perspective. However, while we are sympathetic to the critiques of AI censorship, we problematise the Foucauldian framework due to its anti-normative nature, being unable to suggest prescriptive alternatives to current practices. This paper aims to provide a more nuanced critique of AI censorship by adopting Chantal Mouffe's theories of radical pluralism and agonistic democracy to acknowledge the ethico-political justification of limits to pluralism through AI censorship but also to criticise the current operations of existing AIs. This analysis shows that the current AI censorship does not perform in accordance with the norms of radical pluralism namely to censor antagonistic voices while promoting radical pluralism and agonistic engagements. Current AI censorship such as Google's Perspective API detects agonistic voices as more 'toxic' than antagonistic voices. We argue that AI censorship must be able to differentiate agonistic and antagonistic expressions and rightly censor the latter only. If AI censorship is unable to differentiate the two, it raises a fundamental

question of whether to use AI censorship at all.

The Future of Podcast in Vietnam - When the Young People's Voices are being Heard

Anh Dinh-Hong

University of the Arts London, UK

Even though they are personal secrets and concerns, the podcasters' honest experiences can easily reach listeners' sympathy. Not too short to rush and not too long to waste anyone's time, podcasts with a variety of topics and different forms of expression are getting used to the public." Based on the in-depth interviews with 30 podcast experts, this research explores the future of podcast in Vietnam, indicating the significant growth and reasons why podcast has gained so much popularity in this Global South country in recent years. As of March 2022, there are over 2900 channels and over 76,000 podcast episodes distributed across 124 different genres in Vietnam (RSS Feed, 2022). The channel and episode metrics tend to increase steadily every day, showing that more and more podcasters are accessing and sharing information on this audio platform. It is positive about the growth of the audio-based content industry in this nation, due to the widespread spread of smartphones and good Internet access. A number of professionals have stated that this medium has a lot of untapped potential in this country, whether it's to entertain, stir debate, or inform. The growing popularity of smart speakers, on-demand audio platforms and high-tech audio systems for cars has resulted in a huge increase in the number of podcast listeners across the country (Luong, 2020). Because of the closeness, simplicity, and ease of operation, podcast makes the voices of the insiders come closer to listeners in a "rough" and sincere approach. The topic is also specialized for each target group. "If you follow a podcast, you really like the portrayal of the host and the guest's characters, not because they are well-known people." "Young people's voices are being heard. The transmission of information through the voice is easy to make people feel comfortable and emotional, like a whisper conversation – something that many people need in a busy and stressful life nowadays.

Utopian and Dystopian Digital Futures

Chair: Ellen Helsper, London School of Economics, UK

PAR.1.02

Cyborgs & Sentient Machine Cults: Imagining Inclusive Technological Futures Through Board Game Co-Design

Adriaan Odendaal and Karla Zavala Barreda
Erasmus University Rotterdam; University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

During the past decade, the softwarization of society has been exacerbated by powerful and pervasive algorithmic decision-making technologies that have come to influence everything from our retail habits to employment opportunities. Yet the public has almost no influence over how, by who, or for whose benefit these technologies are created – nor what kind of futures they consequently engender.

In response to this unfolding socio-technical context, in 2021 we conducted a series of experimental co-design workshops that brought diverse groups of participants together to create a board game about cyborgs and Sentient Machine Cults. This project aimed to use the game co-design process itself as a provocative platform through which to collectively construct design imaginaries and ideate pathways towards more inclusive and fair technological futures.

By reflecting on the way in which we structured the project and constituent workshops, as well as the outcomes of these workshops, this paper discusses key methodological affordances of board game co-design as a critical design practice through which to interrogate and explore questions about inclusivity and technology. Through using reflective practice as method of analysis, we examine: 1) how the project's theoretical framing and co-design structure facilitated critical reflection on emergent algorithmic technologies; 2) how these reflections were uniquely explored through constructing procedural game mechanics and rules; and 3) how the game co-design process opened spaces for consequent design imaginaries to emerge.

Through presenting our project and findings, we aim to contribute to the discussion of Media Futures with

unique methodological insights that can be useful to designers, practitioners, institutions, researchers, as well as activists interested in promoting and pursuing pathways towards co-creating more inclusive technological futures.

Platform Activists: Reshaping Global Popular Culture from the South

Jaana Serres

Oxford University, UK

Everyone deserves access... Everyone deserves Spotify,” asserts Nigerian pop star Burna Boy in the ad celebrating the platform’s launch in 85 new markets in 2021. Since the mid-2000s, the intense circulation of African cultural forms has fueled a new pan-Africanism founded on the mobilization of digital platforms, with the ubiquitous #AfricaToTheWorld slogan expressing the popular aspirations invested into this commercial process. Online campaigns allow ideas, sounds, and images to reach spaces associated with power in global capitalist hierarchies when mobility itself is increasingly criminalized. While academic literature commonly denounces the corporate takeover, or recolonization, of African cultural industries associated with platformisation, stakeholders are increasingly constructing platforms as vehicles to be seized upon for particular political aims. Moving beyond the academic focus on the reproduction of hegemonies through algorithmic bias, this presentation will foreground the activists from the Global South who deploy decolonial agency in hijacking platforms’ capitalist infrastructure to redirect flows of sounds, meaning, and capital. While research on online communities and taste formation has overwhelmingly focused on users/content creators, due—in part—to accessibility, this presentation will bring the perspective of platform insiders. Challenging algorithms’ implied neutrality, tech employees from the Global South are indeed outspoken about platforms’ “editorial capacity” and how they intend to deploy this capacity to act upon cultural consumption rather than simply mediating it. Spotify’s Head of Music for Sub-Saharan Africa Phiona Okumu asserts: “Spotify is as much a tech-driven company as it is a cultural champion.” Leveraging access I built during my doctoral

research on the global Nigerian music boom, my current research uses ethnography to examine how the construction of markets and identity are inflected by the values and actions of diverse platform professionals, as they seek to shape the design and evolution of influential algorithmic systems to foreground individual and cultural agency. The presentation will offer preliminary insights into these decolonial efforts.

The Technopolitics of Loneliness: Imagining the Post-Human Communication Condition

Sander De Ridder

University of Antwerp, Belgium

Loneliness, often understood as a “modern epidemic” in the West, has gained much political interest. Technological solutions have become a major priority for governments in attempting to “manage” the financial costs of this epidemic. Artificial companions (e.g., voice assistants and social robots) are increasingly being seen as therapeutical “solutions” against loneliness and social isolation. The expected acceleration of the “loneliness epidemic” in the coming years, mainly driven by the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic (Baarck et al., 2021; Clair et al., 2021) will be a critical moment for further scientific, technological, and commercial development as well as government investments in artificial companions (Hertz, 2021); they are likely to be more broadly adopted by the general population in the coming decade (Ananto & Young, 2021).

Drawing on an analysis of commercial, computational, and scientific discourses, I study promises that are being made about technological advancements in the (future) development of artificial companions to mitigate loneliness. Therefore, I draw on insights from science and technology studies, the study of emotions in critical theory, and the work of hermeneutic phenomenologists. My analysis includes, among others, an analysis of Amazon’s corporate blog about the virtual assistant Alexa, and the adoption of the social robot Vector produced by Anki.

My contribution aims to imagine what I conceptualize as the post-human communication condition; it refers to a historical marker of our condition where communication no longer uniquely

takes place between humans (anthropomorphic conceptualization of communication), but also between humans and machines. Theorizing the condition of post-human communication is urgently needed. First, to navigate the accelerating technological developments in human-machine communication. Second, to survey what communication is becoming, and what it should or should not become in the future.

Choose Your Own Apocalypse

Scotty McQueen

Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

Apocalypticism, once the domain of religious eschatology, is now firmly entrenched in the Zeitgeist. The causes of the imagined apocalypse are many and varied, ranging from plausible to fantastic. Yet, as digital platforms enable the spread of conspiracy narratives, the lines between imaginary apocalypses (zombies/robots) and actual crises (pandemic/algorithmic) have become increasingly blurred in the popular imagination. Despite the fact that zombies and sentient robots are not real, the potential for a zombie or A.I. apocalypse is becoming increasingly hyperreal. Meanwhile, alternate-reality apocalypse survivalism – both sincere and ironic – has become a popular activity in everyday life.

In this paper, I will explore the darker themes implicit within the apocalyptic imaginary as it pertains to those deemed less-than-human – from the slavery of robots to the genocide of zombies – and map how these themes may be deconstructed and reconstructed in order to guide ethical and data-supported narratives. I will discuss my web-series entitled 'The Art of the Apocalypse: From A.I. to Zombie,' in which I LARP (Live Action Role Play) as an alternate-reality apocalypse survivalist in order to gamify apocalypticism toward socially productive ends. This web-series is part of my doctoral creative arts practice research in which I build on 'the poetics of debunking,' proposed by the Wu Ming Foundation and endorsed by Henry Jenkins (2018). Rather than challenge counterfactual narratives with facts or logic, I appropriate conspiracist/survivalist aesthetics in order to subvert the premises of conspiracy and post-

	<p>apocalyptic narratives.</p> <p>In taking a postmodern approach to the post-apocalypse, I aim to resist the “infocalypse” of digital disinformation; to interrogate the entangled relationship between critical theory (as a means to unravel cultural myths) and conspiracy theory (as a means to bind them); and to take advantage of digital platforms to provide real-life preparatory strategies for the collapse or ascendance of digital technologies.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Participatory Realities in Digital Times</u> Chair: Rafal Zaborowski, King’s College London, UK</p> <p>The Queer Trick: Cruising as Method for Adventurous, Aroused and Agitated Researchers <u>Łukasz Szulc</u> <i>University of Manchester, UK</i></p> <p>Traditionally, media researchers have been employing well-established, mostly quantitative, social science methods that require an objective, systematic and comprehensive analysis. This often has resulted in what Donna Haraway called the god trick, a pretence of seeing everything from nowhere. While cultural and critical media studies—which employ qualitative methods and interpretivist epistemologies—have earned more respect in contemporary media scholarship, they continue to be judged by similar, even if adapted, standards of what ‘good research’ should look like. Moreover, with the increasing rise of big data analytics, they have been arguably further marginalized as studies of allegedly less rich small data. In this paper, I challenge the established quantitative as well as qualitative methodologies in media research by proposing cruising as method. Cruising is a queer tradition of wandering around to find sexual connections. It is driven by desires and involves feeling adventurous and aroused but also agitated. Translating this practice into a research method, cruising is about following what attracts us in data rather than conducting any sort of structured analysis. It is about slowing down and hanging around with the hope of running into something that may prove risky, but what feels good. It is not about fixing gaze but throwing glances, the queer trick. I</p>	<p>MAR.1.09</p>

will discuss the prospects and limits of cruising as method in relation to my recent project with Polish LGBTQs in the UK, which included 767 survey responses and 30 in-depth interviews. This paper is a work in progress as I have just started cruising the data on how my participants use digital dating services. I will discuss the new insights we can gain when we withstand the positivist pressures of objectivity, systematization and completeness, and make coding less about looking for recurring patterns and more about succumbing to researchers' temptations.

Cultural Imaginaries from Social Matrices to Cities of Refuge: 20 Years of Transdisciplinary Collaboration

Giles Lane, Zoetanya Sujon and Frederik Lesage
Proboscis, UK; London College of Communication, UK; University of the Arts London, UK; Simon Fraser University, Canada

In April 2001 a workshop at the Royal College of Art launched new collaborative and transdisciplinary project – SoMa, the social matrices think tank for culture – bringing together creatives and social scientists to explore the role of culture, creativity and social science, especially with regard to emerging technologies and social change. Our aim was to stimulate new kinds of collaborations through creative projects. This richly generative partnership opened up new lines of enquiry for a series of innovative cultural projects. This paper examines the value of these collaborations and what it has meant for researchers and practitioners alike: the insights and impact that have emerged, the new practices and methods that arisen, the perspectives and expectations that have been shaped. Engaging a reflexive approach, this paper provides an overview of what have we learned from each other and how this has influenced our work. We ask to what extent have the outcomes of the projects influenced and affected the wider fields of research and creative practice? How have communities and other grassroots participants benefited from these collaborations?

SoMa, originally the product of a series of conversations between Professor Roger Silverstone of MEDIA@LSE and Giles Lane,

founder and director of non profit creative studio, Proboscis, and Research Fellow in Communications at the RCA, generated numerous projects. These include: “Private Reveries, Public Spaces”; “Landscape and Identity, Language & Territory”; “Urban Tapestries”, “Social Tapestries”, “Sensory Threads”, “bookleeter”, “City of Refuge” & “ySkills”. Each of these generated opportunities for the value of such transdisciplinary collaboration to evolve and flow, stimulating rich dialogues as well as innovative practices and outcomes. This paper offers a contemporary and reflective history for examining and thinking through research innovations around cultural media imaginaries.

**Technicians-Centered Metaverse or not?
Pioneering Examination for Tech-Mediated
Practices in China**

Yupei Zhao and Wanyan Wu
Zhejiang University, China

Empowered by the ongoing technological advances— virtual reality, extended reality and mixed reality, individuals interact and live with technology sensually emotionally, and intellectually much more deeply than ever before. For this reason, it is necessary to in-depth understand those who design, operate, and evaluate interactive systems while they are the pioneers shaping the future outlook of metaverse by building its underlying tech-mediated logic to some extent. By employing the pragmatism of philosophers of experience, this study interrogates the technological-driven life imagination and technological-stimulated cultural consequences of Metaverse from the perspective of technical practitioners and operational staff.

This study employs the walkthrough method to critically and systematically engage with several so-called metaverse applications, mixed with 30 semi-structured interviews with technical practitioner and operationists respectively from pioneering technical companies in China. This study found a) the processing of technological-driven life imagination much relies on the degree of sensual authenticity, mental immersion and fluent human-computer interaction, which are claimed as the most important factors in the construction of metaverse, particularly the integration of actual and virtual world; b)

technological-stimulated cultural consequences might vary on account of inconsistency sometimes even ambivalence practiced by these technical practitioners and operational staff. They hold a modernist tendency to characterize metaverse-related technologies as value-neutral (e.g., individual autonomy, self-development, and a value-free marketplace for the expression of ideas) which actually were inextricably linked to their subjective experiences, in other words, they are commercially driven by an unconscious self who underscores their designs for the customers.

All in all, metaverse is conceived as full of possibilities in digital marketing and leading media conglomerates, innovative digital governance as well as new 'survival' as daily practice for individuals. However, we take ethnical concerns while those pioneers assert no explicit risks have at this early stage to human beings. This kind of 'neglects' invites more attention to chase by empirical evidence and theoretical reflections that help reaffirm the importance of accounting for the human in technology, thus showing that humanism still provides powerful theoretical and methodological tools to interrogate and better comprehend ongoing metaverse transformations. Meanwhile, this study also sheds light on the call for philanthropic support in the new sites metaverse for digital rights, tech ethics, platform accountability against the backdrop of increased attempts to rein in the power and influence of 'Big Tech'.

Re-Imagining the Future of Participatory Culture: A Case of Reddit's Networked COVID-19 Conspiracy Communities

Zichen Jess Hu

London School of Economics, UK

Through a networked and genealogical lens, this research investigates the politics of the imagined future in COVID-19-related conspiracy theories and what that means for participatory culture and civic engagement. On the one hand, the rise of populist politics is claimed to have catalysed conspiracy theories, echoing Hofstadter's (1996) criticism of the 'paranoid style' of politics by the 'irrational mass'. On the other hand, vaccinations and other public health measures have long been controversial for their biopolitical implications for

	<p>governance. Conspiracy theories are pastiches of the hegemonic overthrow of the power asymmetry embedded in knowledge production and validation.</p> <p>Reddit is chosen for its controversial participatory culture between authenticity and toxicity, given the platform's less regulated and community-based character and pseudonymity. The platform logic represents a throwback to the techno-utopian imaginary of political participation. The methodological design is two-fold: First, leveraging Social Network Analysis, this project investigates how conspiracy theories travel through different Reddit communities and bind them together as a response to the aftermath of the pandemic, and how embedded sociopolitical tension and collective memories are revitalised and recycled by the conspiracy theories in depicting an inescapably dystopian future. Second, this project positions the seemingly 'modern' phenomenon of COVID-19-related conspiracy theories in the genealogy of power struggles surrounding knowledge production about science and technology, and reflects on the role of social media as an intrusion into knowledge production. Based on the empirical investigation, this research aims to contextualise the prima facie 'populist' and 'anti-science' sentiments in an interaction with the collective memories of scandals and crisis and established ideational traditions. Conspiracy theories offer a critical ground for producing new theoretical frameworks that recognise the pasts in relation to the political present and future, and revisit the much-celebrated techno-utopian participatory culture in civic engagement and Habermas's public sphere ideal.</p>	
18:30-23:00	Reception and Conference Party	Sway Bar, 61-65 Great Queen Street WC2B 5BZ
		*CKK previously New Academic Building (NAB)

Time	Event	Room
09:00-10:00	REGISTRATION Friday 16 June	*CKK.LG
10:00-11:20	<p>PLENARY 2: Imagining New Realities: A 21st Century Take on Justice</p> <p>Lina Dencik, <i>Cardiff University, UK</i> Yasmin El-Rifae, <i>UK/Egypt</i> Seeta Peña Gangadharan, <i>London School of Economics, UK</i> Chair: Omar Al-Ghazzi, <i>London School of Economics, UK</i></p>	*CKK.LG.08 (Sheikh Zayed Theatre)
11:30-13:00	SESSION 4	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Voice and Rights</u> Chair: Ruth Garland, Goldsmiths University, UK</p> <p>Mediation of a Culinary Legacy: Forms, Aesthetics and Signification of Media Practices of Dalit Food Culture in India <u>Rupali Sehgal and Priyanka Srivastava</u> <i>Jawaharlal Nehru University, India</i></p> <p>This paper aims to flesh out the role of media in mediating narratives on politics of caste-oriented cultural contestations through the representation of discourse of food and caste in India. It examines the socially constructed category of Dalit foods on various media platforms and analyses the ability of media in framing and composing a ‘collective memory’ of foodways associated with the Dalit community in India. The relevance of this study lies</p>	PAR.LG.03

in the exploration of the role of media as 'sites of memory' in building a culinary heritage for a community that has historically been forced to live at the bottom of India's social pyramid. It further analyses the mediating properties of various media platforms in narrativizing histories of caste-related oppression, resistance and struggles through the lens of food which in the Indian context is intimately and strongly associated with notions of caste, purity, and pollution (Guru 2009, Thorat and Lee 2005). In the above context, it is crucial to remember that any investigation of the fashioning of the 'heritage' of Dalit food is inadequate without a study of the design architecture and the information system that media platforms utilise. Thus, memory and legacy are brewed not only through the chosen ingredients of sight, smell and taste of the food items themselves but also through the framing and affective devices enabled by the ecosystem of a particular media platform. For this reason, the imaginative and discursive investment by the community in the Dalit food heritage documented in the print media platforms are identifiably distinct from those on the web. What remains common, though, is the urge to enunciate its present and future trajectories of selfhood without losing its iterations in its past.

The study employs qualitative content analyses of print cookbooks and various digital media platforms for the study of the political economy of memory creation and elements of construction of identity via the represented culinary cultures of a community as drawn from the dialectic relationship between memory and forgetting at the hands of media.

Rewriting Narratives about Disability on Social Media: (Self-)Representation, Digital Visibility, and Marginalised Identity

Filippo Trevisan and Manuela Farinosi

American University, USA; University of Udine, Italy

This paper sheds light on the nexus of social media and traditionally marginalized identities by examining the phenomenon of disabled Instagram influencers. In recent years, disability representations in media, culture, and public discourse have increasingly moved away from stigmatizing stereotypes. Grassroots activists have

worked hard to offer counter-narratives and change media portrayals of disabled people. Disabled influencers have emerged as new voices in this landscape but, so far, exploration of their work has been extremely limited. This study aims to fill this gap by addressing issues of voice, stigma, and (online) visibility. In particular, we ask: How do disabled influencers represent themselves? Is disability part of their “brand” and do they act as disability rights advocates? How do they navigate relationships with potential partners? Through extensive online ethnography and a review of relevant news reports, we selected 15 disabled women beauty influencers from various countries with different audience size and engagement rates who seek to address global audiences posting in English. We then analyzed the visual and textual content of the Instagram posts (N=1,529) they published over the course of one year (July 2021 – June 2022) both quantitatively and qualitatively, as well as their bio information. Preliminary insights suggest that disability is central to the (self-)representation of these influencers, being regularly visible in photos and mentioned explicitly in nearly two thirds of posts, as well as 75% of bios. At the same time, disability is usually intertwined with themes of fashion, lifestyle, women’s empowerment, and other issues related to marginalized communities. Few posts (<8%) are explicitly sponsored. This complex picture challenges conventional disability imagery and helps us begin to theorize the convergence of visibility, traditionally stigmatized identities, and intersectionality on platforms like Instagram, as well as the tensions that lie therein.

Abua Dishom, Abua Raaj': Tribal Youth and Collective Identity Assertion on Social - Media
Nandini Tank

National Institute of Technology Rourkela, India

Despite digital inequalities in India, it is crucial to acknowledge that social media platforms have played a significant role in revitalizing tribal identity among the youth. The sense of belongingness that media provides encourages the youth to engage in political protests, assert their cultural identity, fight against stereotypes and prejudices, and participate in democratic activities. The slogan 'Abua Dishom,

Abua Raaj' translates as 'My Country, My Rule' has surfaced over the social media as a new wave of socio-political and cultural protest by tribal youth to protect their identity. This article addresses three major sub-topics, first, it unveils the threat, fear, and grievances tribal youth face toward their identity. Second, how social media renders them a space for personal and collective identity assertion, and third, social media as a platform to share, preserve, and archive socio-cultural knowledge of the tribe. The study gathers its data from semi-structured interviews and social media observations of 50 Santhal youth of Jharkhand, India. It analyzes YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook posts that discuss the socio-cultural identity of the Santhal community. The results reveal that the affordance these social media platforms provide allows the youth to react, share, and participate in discussions that challenge and contest the established media that fail to represent the marginalized communities in India. Moreover, it mobilizes the youth for political participation and encourages them to document and store cultural knowledge for future generations.

**News Media Roles Influencing Protest
Mobilisation: How Media Perform their Roles in
Interaction with Activists**

Mark Badham

*Leeds Business School, Leeds Beckett University,
UK*

Social movement studies have examined the complex relationship between activists and mainstream news media and the power asymmetry prevalent in this relationship. Resource mobilization and political process studies in social movement literature frequently and yet loosely refer to the role of the news media in social movement communication processes, but they have not specifically and systematically addressed the media's role (or roles) in mobilizations. What is missing is a nuanced understanding of how social movements can mobilize their constituencies through the news media.

This paper introduces media role theory in mass communication and journalism literature into scholarship about social movement-media interaction to build a theoretical framework showing how two media roles of conduit and political actor

	<p>shape the way mainstream news media in Western democratic societies interact with social movements, particularly activists. This framework shows how these two roles empower certain actors' voices to be present and dominate news reports. This study presents the 2012-2015 Blockupy protests against the austerity measures of the European Central Bank (ECB) as a critical case study. Undertaking a systematic analysis of the three-year interaction between the activist group Blockupy and the news media, the empirical data used in this study includes 77 news media texts from English-language newspapers based in Europe, the UK and the USA. The media's conduit and political actor roles are identified within these texts using key indicators of media roles drawn from journalism role studies and mass communication studies.</p> <p>The analysis examines, illustrates and elaborates how the media's conduit and political actor roles shaped media interaction with activists in this case. This study sheds new light on ways in which news media as organizations participate in and influence mass communication processes involving elite institutional actors (i.e., the ECB) and marginalized actors (i.e., Blockupy) symbolically contesting a target organization's controversial activity.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Representing and Protesting</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair: Bart Cammaerts, London School of Economics, UK</p> <p>The Right to Protest during the Pandemic: The Television Coverage of Four Demonstrations in the UK</p> <p><u>Cesar Jimenez-Martinez and Brooks DeCillia</u> <i>Cardiff University, UK; Mount Royal University, Canada</i></p> <p>Protests are generally recognised as a democratic right across many societies, but only if they are conducted peacefully (Murdie & Purser, 2017). Significantly, although many governments around the world claim to respect and even protect this right, they have narrowed the scope of what 'peaceful protest' means (Doran, 2017). In the UK for example, recent legislation has further criminalised demonstrations under the excuse that</p>	MAR.2.08

they can become 'serious disruptions' to ordinary citizens. This new public order bill emerged just after a period in which, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the rights to publicly assemble were severely limited.

Our paper focusses on these discussions by looking at the television coverage of four types of protests that happened in the UK when the Covid-19 restrictions were still in place: the vigil for Sarah Everard, Black Lives Matter, Kill the Bill and the Anti-Lockdown protests. We have chosen television due to the scarcity of studies about protests in this medium, even though it remains highly important in the digital age (Wouters, 2015). We observed that, although journalists generally communicated the grievances of people taking to the streets, they put different emphases depending on the type of protest. Hence, while stories of police abuse were more present in the vigil for Sarah Everard, riot and crime were predominant for Black Lives Matter. Relatedly, when Covid-19 was mentioned in news stories, protesters were usually depicted as lawbreakers, with little space for discussion about the restrictive nature of legislations. By studying the coverage of these recent episodes of unrest, we seek to make an important contribution to the field. We move beyond the oft-cited 'protest paradigm' in order to examine how news media represent the right to express dissent and contribute to shape what 'peaceful' and lawful protest means.

Mapping the Practice of Loyal Facilitator Role in Authoritarian Countries. A Study of Journalistic Role Performance in Arab Countries

Nagwa Fahmy and Maha Attia

Zayed University; Ajman University, UAE

The media landscape in Arab countries is usually described as subordinate to their authoritarian governments, and according to Lewis and Al-Nashami (2019), Arab journalists privilege stability and respect for authority in their news coverage.

Therefore, examining the loyal facilitator role in different Arab countries will shed light on distinctive aspects of this journalistic practice.

The journalistic role performance approach enables the observation of journalistic practices and news

production within a restricted political and social context of harsh state control of the media ecosystem. Mellado (2015) mentioned six leading independent journalistic roles: the interventionist, watchdog, loyal facilitator, service, civic, and infotainment roles.

This paper will investigate the loyal facilitator role in different MENA countries based on this theoretical approach. Assessing the performance of the loyal-facilitator role depends on the presence of one or more of nine indicators: defence/support activities, defence/support policies, positive image of the political elite, positive image of the economic elite, emphasis on progress/success, comparison to other countries, focus on national triumphs, promotion of the country's image, and patriotism (Humanes et al., 2021).

Previous research suggests that all journalistic roles are combined simultaneously in news stories. Accordingly, the loyal facilitator role could be allied with interventionism; a more propagandist role performance will emerge (Humanes et al., 2021).

To investigate loyal facilitator journalistic roles as reflected in the news content, this study examines data obtained from a content analysis of 13302 news stories published in 49 major newspaper, television, radio and online news outlets in 5 Arab countries (Egypt, Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar and UAE), during 2020 as part of the Second Wave of the Journalistic Role Performance Project. (Details of the methodology)

We will analyze loyal facilitator role variation across five Arab countries. These countries represent a diversity of journalistic role performance, media systems, and economic and sociopolitical contexts.

Challenges for Freedom of Expression on Internet in Contexts of Social Crisis: The Case of Chile (2019-2022)

Patricia Peña

University of Chile, Chile

The paper describes the state of freedom of expression in Chile in the context of the crisis that began with the "social outbreak" (estallido social) of October 2019, based on an analysis of primary and secondary data that includes complaints from platform users, work legislature and judgments of the courts of justice. Among the main problems

detected, we identify situations of algorithmic censorship (García, Sáez y Peña, 2021) and courts of justice that operate as moderators of internet content in cases of libel and slander.

While this has happened, within a long history of bills that have been presented but none enacted, during 2021 a group of senators presented a bill to regulate digital platforms. The project received criticism at the national and international level for various reasons, but which can be summed up in a poor understanding of the problem and possible solutions (Garay, 2022; Observacom-FES, 2022) within the debate on freedom of expression and regulation in Latin America (Becerra and Waisbord, 2021).

The main conclusions refer to the dissociation between the experiences of violations of freedom of expression suffered by platform users in this context of conflict, and the issues of concern about freedom of expression on the Internet, both in parliamentary initiatives as in the judgments of the courts of justice.

This article is the result of a process of monitoring the state of freedom of expression in Chile since the "social outbreak" (estallido social) together with Jarvier García and Chiara Sáez.

Contested Histories: Digital Nationalism, mythmaking, and the Controversy of #boycottbollywood

Ramna Walia

FLAME University, India

In what has been termed an era of “chest-thumping nationalism,” “bloodthirsty jingoism”, and “heightened propaganda,” since Narendra Modi’s election win in 2014, India’s leading commercial entertainment industry in Mumbai, globally known as “Bollywood,” has been at the forefront of a culture war—from lending increasing visibility and valorisation of a collective Hindu nationalist identity in films like Panipat, Padmavat, Uri, etc. to facing social media boycotts of its biggest stars like Shah Rukh Khan, Aamir Khan, and Kareena Kapoor Khan for their “anti-national” views.

In this paper, I juxtapose the fictionalized collective memory of the Hind or the nation in the new nationalist historical film genre and its intersection

	<p>with the state machinery, fringe political groups, and the discursive event of the “controversy”. The recent surge in the nationalist historical has generated anxieties—from the liberal perspective, these films have displaced the “colonial other” with the “Muslim other.” On the other hand, historians disparage the acerbic consumerism in Bombay cinema’s mega-canvas, IMAX cinematic experience that fictionalises historical narratives into a myth-making enterprise. The excess of the genre (historical) and the excess of the industrial mode of production (commercial Bombay cinema) thus produce a mosaic of pop culture histories as well as regional politics, regional histories, and the familial- all intersect and sometimes counter with the overarching burden of “original” narratives.</p> <p>Using the film, Padmavat (2019) I show that the ‘controversy’ of the film reveals an interpolating taxonomy of identity that intersects with multiple literary sources, kinship networks, and complex caste alliances and argue that despite the apparent allegiance of the nationalist historical film with State ideology, the numerous claims to authenticity reveal the inherent turbulence of building and claiming (national) identities.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Variety of Platforms</u> Chair: Alison Powell, London School of Economics, UK</p> <p>Examining the Construction of Women's Online Literary Spaces through Keywords <u>Miqi Liu</u> <i>University of Leeds, UK</i></p> <p>This paper is an empirical study of the largest by-women-for-women literature platform in China, Jinjiang Literature City (Jinjiang hereafter), home to more than five million grassroots-produced fiction titles. Like most Internet Content Providers (ICPs) in China, literary platforms are seen as having a Janus-faced nature, mediating conflicting values between state mainstream and community subculture. Jinjiang has been frequently blacklisted, suspended and punished in such censorship campaigns for ‘distributing obscene and pornographic content’. With Scott’s (1990) lens of ‘hidden transcripts’, I critically analyse Jinjiang’s</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PAR.2.03</p>

intermediary role in the state-platform-community entanglement.

Hidden transcript is a term used to characterise 'discourse that takes place "offstage", beyond the direct observation by powerholders' (Scott, 1990, p. 4), not limiting itself to only speech acts but including a whole range of practices. I critically compare Jinjiang's offstage discourse in the face of state interventions -- its communications with users via forum posts or messages, the administrator's social media posts, the implementation of state policies -- against what appears in the public transcripts, namely its pronounced policies and official statements, and identify patterns of confirmation, contradiction, and inflexion. By focusing on and unpacking the discrepancies between the platform's public and hidden transcript, I argue for the reconceptualisation of platforms in politically-contested contexts as beyond simply being a space where negotiations, interactions and resistance take place, but actively serving as custodians of the values of their user community.

Data Work and Coloniality in Latin America

Julian Posada

Yale University, USA

In recent years, historical labour informality in Latin America and the political and economic crisis that has impacted Venezuela have served as the ideal ground for emerging digital platforms that outsource data production for artificial intelligence to the region. The companies employ underpaid freelancers who generate, annotate, and verify data from their homes, a process that I call "data work." This population comprises young and educated individuals, including entire families who depend on this essential income in US dollars. In this presentation, I argue that outsourcing data production in Latin America exemplifies how this technology relies on exploiting precarized workers and the imposition of particular worldviews on data and algorithms. Platforms target vulnerable populations with little option but to accept low wages and arbitrary working policies to benefit companies. At the same time, as a meaning-making process, data production requires categorizing data according to labels predefined by clients with no

input from workers. Those who do not comply are “deactivated” by the companies. Latin American decolonial thinking provides a framework to analyze this situation within the historical relations that have characterized the presence of foreign entities in the region (from empires to capitalist corporations) that cement their extractivist endeavours by imposing their worldviews and forms of knowledge to reproduce power imbalances and existing social inequalities. This paper concludes by questioning if data-informed technologies like AI can be created not through extraction and imposition but by incorporating a plurality of voices and giving back to the communities that participate in their development.

Integrative Ethics for Tech-Media Industry

Katalin Feher

University of Public Service, Hungary

The first media sections started to appear at the leading business AI conferences in 2022. This trend predicts an intensively growing investment direction in the tech-media industry after hypes like in HealthTech or robotics. However, uncertainties determine this emerging field at least as much as the already available developments.

According to our preliminary study interviewing powerful actors, AI-driven recommendation systems or personalization services are promising and highly preferred for investments. In contrast, AI-powered social and mainstream media assume much higher risks, especially in the case of the influence of human behavior. Therefore, a significant proportion of powerful actors do not necessarily trust a technology-driven future today even if they invest in AI media technology (Feher & Veres 2022). Misleading information, synthetic media and privacy boundaries (Feher 2021, Kaur et al., 2020) refer to human-machine convergence where human are looking for trust factors, while the machines are already developing themselves. Social constructs started to be rewritten by data-driven info-communication process (Barassi, 2020) and deep mediatization (Hepp 2021) resulting in a ubiquitous, algorithm-driven, and cross-industry media platformisation (Feher, Katona 2021). The key dynamics are balancing between authentic and

misleading information.

Our related work-in-progress study proposes a redefined media ethics in this context, based on expertise qualitative research. Media have become a production-distribution-moderation roadmap or machine (Chen & Chekam 2021). The ethical goals are changing accordingly. Developments in virtual, augmented and metaverse media future work with buoyancy forces such as bias mitigation, credibility or accountability. Thus, media ethics is not a narrower circle of philosophical ethics anymore. AI media ethics is increasingly expanding for different industries and penetrating them. The proposal is integrative media ethics where the concept of responsible AI competes with human-centered normative ethics.

Platformed Audiovisualities on the Strategies by the Female Independent Musicians of Porto Alegre

Belisa Zoehler Giorgis and Tiago Ricciardi Correa Lopes

Unisinos University, Brazil

This paper discusses insights of a research regarding the platformed audiovisualities on the strategies by the female independent musicians of Porto Alegre (Brazil) during the Covid-19 pandemic. Existing research discuss platformisation (Djick et al., 2018), the do-it-yourself ethos in the independent music scenes (Bennett et al., 2021), and gender and intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989).

Based on qualitative research grounded by the cartographic method (Canevacci, 1997), we mapped female instrumentalists who compose and sing, and released music products during the pandemic.

Analysis on their audiovisual strategies indicate two relational tendencies: 1) the narrative built on the divulgation steps; and 2) the network articulated with the audience and other musicians. They are visible across their videos with new creations, teasers, releases, their details and gratefulness for support, which increased the musicians' popularity. These tendencies are constellations (Canevacci, 1997), empirical data connected and edited in an

	<p>interpretative process which holds the knowledge's luminous sense. Therefore, they show that the musicians, when actualising the audiovisualities, being women and into practices of resistance, might have also actualised the do-it-yourself ethos in the independent music scene of Porto Alegre.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Global Journalism</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair: Terhi Rantanen, London School of Economics, UK</p> <p>Temporal Framing and News Coverage of the Climate Crisis</p> <p><u>Dan Rowe</u> <i>Humber College, Canada</i></p> <p>News coverage of the climate crisis has changed over the years – such as the increased use of the phrase “the climate crisis” – to adjust to the unique scope and shape of the story. The temporal elements of the climate crisis provide a particular challenge for most news outlets, which have long centred immediacy and even primacy in reporting on stories as part of what makes them stand out from their journalistic competitors. At the same time, temporal framing is an integral part of the way politicians, governments, corporations, and others directly involved in public discourse around the climate crisis communicate with the public. This paper explores how Canadian news outlets covering COP26 dealt with temporal frames employed during the conference and how this framing shaped their news coverage.</p> <p>Rethinking A New Model for the Rights of the Citizen Journalism in War Conditions: The Case of Syrian Civil War</p> <p><u>Mustafa Emre Köksalan and Mohammed Hardan</u> <i>Gaziantep University, Turkey</i></p> <p>The citizen journalism seems to gain importance in the last decade within and after the critical conflicts such as Arab Spring, Syrian Civil War, and lastly the Russian invasion in Ukraine. The new media and information/communication technologies has surely a big role in this development by giving the ordinary people the opportunity to collect direct information inside the conflict and share it with the world. Even though, in the early years of citizen journalism, the</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MAR.1.09</p>

reliability of citizen or user-generated content raises some concerns about news production values, after the professionals started to leave the field because of the economic and security related concerns, it has become more vital for the international public to achieve the reliable -or even mostly any kind of- news which is more and more dependent on the information that the citizen journalists produced. But also, while they are trying to make their voices heard – mostly in order to provide an urgent solution to struggles for life- the citizen war journalists had to face some critical issues such as undefined professional rights, economical abuse of news media institutions. Departing from these facts, this presentation aims to interrogate the citizen journalism in Syrian civil war conditions, by focusing on the struggles that the Syrian citizen journalist experiences especially in terms of new developing journalism rights. With the qualitative data collected from the semi-structured in depth-interviews (23 Syrian citizen journalist and 4 professional journalists) and their thematical and political economic analyses, we try to offer an emic insight to the critical issues that the citizen journalist experience in war conditions, in order to start a discussion for concrete definitions of citizen journalism rights along with its ethics.

Political Visits Come with Conflicts: A Visual Discourse Analysis of Taiwan Strait Crises in 1996 and 2022

Chunghui Chuang

University of Leeds, UK

The relationship between China and Taiwan has been getting intense in recent years. While Taiwanese politics visited the US, or vice versa, China launched military exercises as a discourse to dialogue with Taiwan, provoking conflicts that now are known as the Taiwan Strait Crises. This article aims to inspect, through visual analysis, how Taiwanese media constructed the conflicts which arise from political visits.

This investigation compares the Third Taiwan Strait Crisis (the time after Teng-hui Lee, the President of the Republic of China visited the US on June 1995) and the Fourth Taiwan Strait Crisis (the time Nancy Pelosi, the speaker of the United States House of

Representatives visited Taiwan in 2-3 August 2022) by analyzing press photographs in the period of the Third (1995/7/21-11/23 & 1996/3/8-25) and the Fourth (2022/8/2-10) in two Taiwan primary, yet opposite stances, newspapers, the Liberty Times (in support of the DPP party) and United Daily News (in support of the KMT party).

This research examined questions that are less mentioned in international relations fields: What visual elements are chosen by the Taiwan media to construct conflicts? In nearly 30 years, what is the transformation of the symbol of the Taiwan Strait Crises? How does Taiwan media resymbolize political messages of military exercises launched by China? It is also expected to demonstrate what political values and issues such as democracy/authoritarianism, unify/independence and wars/peace are hidden in visual objects under the context of political visits and how values and issues changed within three decades.

Digital Authoritarianism and Egyptian Journalists/Activists' Resistance to Governmental Internet Censorship

Rasha El-Ibiary

Future University, Egypt

As the Egyptian government has blocked over 500 websites with content deemed objectionable since 2017 (Freedom of Thought and Expression, 2022), using the concept of Digital Authoritarianism, this research analyses how journalists/activists, owners and managers of blocked websites use various mechanisms to resist the blocking.

Since approving and implementing the Anti-Cyber and Information Technology Crimes Law and the Media Regulation Law in 2018, the Egyptian government can now regulate and restrict online freedom of expression. The Supreme Council for Media Regulations has the power to put citizens with more than 5,000 followers on social media under state supervision, blocking or suspending their accounts (Muslim, 2019). These laws legalize the blocking of 549 websites in Egypt, including news/media outlets, representing 62% of blocked websites, human rights groups, political sites, and

services for circumventing censorship (Janssen, 2021).

Conducting in-depth interviews with Egyptian journalists/activists, owners and managers of blocked websites, this research aims to find out (1) how they resist governmental censorship, as a counter activism mechanism, using social media and circumvention tools to bypass the blocking; (2) what are the business models they use to adopt to the financial problems they face as a result of the blocking; and (3) their vision for the current status and future of media activism in Egypt.

Media Capture Strategies in an Islamic Authoritarian Context: The Case of the Taliban

Faisal Karimi

San Jose State University, USA

This paper explores the Taliban government's media capture strategies since retaking the country on August 15, 2021 and how journalists and media outlets have responded to these strategies. In particular, it focuses on the Taliban government's approach to the media, given recent political transformation in Afghanistan and the religious and political ideologies of the Taliban regime. Qualitative mixed methods were employed for this research, including online, semi-structured, in-depth interviews and document analysis. Interviews allowed for a deeper investigation into the experience of journalists under what could be identified as the Taliban's media capture strategies. Thirty key media informants at the national level were recruited for in-depth interviews by applying a purposive sampling technique. In addition, document analysis allowed for the detailed consideration of relevant Taliban policies and records. Thematic coding was employed in the analysis of qualitative data using Nvivo 12 (software). Six media capture strategy emerged from the analysis of media directors and journalists interviews and relevant formal documents from the Taliban regime: (1) Regulatory interference, (2) Criminal prosecution of journalists, (3) Suppression of journalists, (4) Financial pressures on media outlets, (5) Developing media ownership, and (6) Limiting information flows. Furthermore, this study finds that the Afghan media community, including

	<p>the media outlets, journalists, and media unions, employed four tolerance strategies in response to the media capture strategy of the Taliban government: (1) Self-imposed censorship, (2) Low resistance, (3) Stopping controversial content, and (4) Advocacy campaigns. These findings contribute to existing knowledge and literature on media capture frameworks, and how to apply them to understand media control in the context of an authoritarian Islamic state.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Digital Border</u> Chair: Solomon Katachie, London School of Economics, UK</p> <p>The Digital Border and its Symbolic and Territorial Assemblages <u>Lilie Chouliaraki and Myria Georgiou</u> <i>London School of Economics, UK</i></p> <p>How do digital infrastructures control transnational mobility and the lives of migrants during and after they cross boundaries? And how do digital media shape imaginaries of transnational mobility as a crisis and of migrants as people who need to be feared or pitied? In this presentation, we argue that western governance of migration is now enacted through a technologized border that divides Us/Them and inside/outside. This is the digital border, which is performed both territorially and symbolically. We thus argue for a holistic approach to communication and migration, showing how intersecting technologies and imaginaries of transnational mobility turn the border into a multi-nodal site of platforms, actors, connections, voices and values. We draw on empirical insights from across Europe, collected through our research on the digital border over seven-year (2015-2022).</p> <p>Digital Border Regimes: Racialisation and Resistance to States of Exception <u>Nicos Trimikliniotis</u> <i>University of Nicosia, Cyprus</i></p> <p>This paper discusses how digital bordering contributes to the making and resisting to the suspension of the rule of law at Europe's borders, and how digitization of transnational mobility control reflects political, social, and spatial logics of western</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MAR.2.10</p>

migration policies. It examines the processes of transformation of the European border regime in the specific context of the South-Eastern European border zone, drawing on empirical work. It conceptualizes the bordering as a contested terrain of struggle: digitalities have proliferated spaces for this terrain. On the one hand, states utilizing new technologies attempt to extend regimes of exceptions and derogations. On the other, migrants, refugees, and activists in their struggles for survival transform and generate the daily practice of realising the mobile commons via acts of resistance and social spaces. In the post-pandemic context, particularly after the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the trade war that followed, the migration/asylum dissensus in Europe and beyond is becoming more central in an ever more polarized and crisis-ridden European order which has seen a strengthening of the racialized politics of hatred. Migration is increasingly securitized and weaponized in international politics in the EU with its' neighbours depicted as 'hybrid warfare' and 'invasion of non-combatants'. Digitalities become even more important in this context in the surveillance and spread of fear and moral panic, but also in documenting and claiming human rights abuses and violations such as push-backs and other violent border control practices. Migration as a mass population movement is made up of many aspects which can work in parallel, sometimes in contradiction, and symbiotically at other times. It has a dual function as both part of 'the order of things' (i.e. metaphors of 'safety valve') and a part of war (broadly defined) as well as part of disorder, as it causes turbulence, and trouble and can unsettle societies, setting in motion transformation processes whose direction and extent are often difficult to predict. There are systemic factors that constantly generate restrictions to rights, barriers, borders, and fortresses. The movement of populations causes constant turbulence and disruption of order; it alters social relations as the encounters between people cause uncharted transformations. The encounters between migrants and others unleash processes that are uncharted, unrated, and uncertain.

Technologies of Surveillance and Digital Border Regimes: Are Alternative Frameworks Possible?

Sara Marino

London College of Communication, University of the Arts, London UK

This presentation critically investigates the datafication and digitisation of Europe's migration regime and asks whether alternative uses of digital border technologies can be imagined. I begin by identifying borders as institutions of power, as mechanisms of identity formation and as performative spaces. Here, I dissect the transformation of Europe into an ambiguous geo-political space where different actors (border authorities, private enterprises, and humanitarian agencies) capitalise on the power of technologies to deliver faster and more efficient responses to human displacement, and question their impact on the migrant body. I argue that digital borders should be conceptualized as performative spaces where more productive and less discriminatory uses of technologies can be re-imagined. I will conclude my presentation by introducing the notion of 'mindful filtering' as a practical set of mitigation strategies and recommendations for more ethical uses of technologies in refugee contexts.

Filtering as a Cultural Technique. A Media History of Borders

Philipp Seuferling

London School of Economics, UK

This paper departs from the *longue durée* of bordering being intrinsically enabled by media technology. Extrapolating from media histories of bordering, I tentatively conceptualize filtering as a cultural technique (Siegert, 2015). Borders, envisioned as machines of decision-making, open a wider prism of media history: how difference is produced, administrated, and governed, and how media technologies and techniques of telling apart materialize political operations of filtering. The border is a medium itself, filtering between a presumed inside and outside, desired and undesired. A complex assemblage of media technologies constitutes this filter. Yet, beyond operations of filtering humans across territories, filtering arguably implicates a rarely scrutinized operation at the very core of the media concept per se, and of many media technologies central to

	<p>contemporary culture.</p> <p>I briefly draw on local histories of border build-up – the administration for Huguenot refugees in Europe (1600s/1700s), transatlantic migration infrastructures (1800s/1900s), and contemporary instantiations of “smart” borders – to demonstrate how situated histories of media technology ever again construct the sizes and shapes of filters through which migrants are produced and processed. Ultimately, these shapes and sizes of the filter are the productive locus of politics – a filter politics discussed elsewhere, all-encompassing in contemporary media culture: in “filter-bubble”-anxieties undermining democracy through polarization and fragmentation; in AI producing bias, distortion, discriminatory decisions and representations; in automated decision-making filtering qualified from unqualified receivers of public and private services; in content moderation deciding if posts can stand online or not; or in photo, sound and voice filters on social media apps. Filter politics ambiguously range from useful reduction of complexity, carefully delivering the needed signal over destructive noise, to filters being fascist technologies of discrimination and elimination of “noisy” elements, undesired, unneeded. A borderless world is almost as unimaginable as a filterless world. Therefore, the concept deserves critical attention.</p>	
	<p><u>Media Children, Mediated Families</u> Chair: Panayiota Tsatsou, University of Leicester, UK</p> <p>Anticipating Algorithms: Experiencing the Datafication of Parenthood <u>Ranjana Das</u> <i>University of Surrey, UK</i></p> <p>This paper locates itself within a growing stream of interest in bottom-up, lived experiences of user cultures around algorithmic shaping, punctuation and even interruptions in everyday life. The paper draws upon original, empirical research conducted with parents, of children aged 0 to 18, grasping numerous moments of transition and change, as it queries parents’ lived experiences of the datafication of parenthood. Conceptually, the work</p>	<p>*CKK.LG.01 (Wolfson Theatre)</p>

draws upon a long line of interest in peoples experiences with interfaces (Livingstone, 2011) - connecting the burgeoning recent strand of interest in algorithmic user cultures (Siles, 2022; Lomborg & Kapsch, 2019; Bucher, 2018; Ytre-Arne & Moe, 2021), and communicative agency (Ytre-Arne and Das, 2021) through developments in critical data and algorithmic literacies (Fotopoulou, 2018; Pangrazil & Selwyn, 2019), right up to theorisations of people's interpretive repertoires and resources within audience and reception theory (Eco, 1981; Iser, 1974). Likewise, the project draws upon work in the sociology of parenthood including intensive parenthood (Harman and Cappalini, 2019) and the mediated experience of parenting in digital societies (Livingstone and Blum-Ross, 2020). The data – collected from multi method fieldwork including interviews, emails and online discussions - pays attention to an array of algorithmic punctuations - from the most mundane, even banal algorithmic shaping of play or leisure, to more complex and intricate experiences of algorithmic shaping of parenthood amidst turbulence, crucible moments (Das et al, 2022) and strife. It is from this array of data and many decades of conceptualising user cultures, that the project draws its focus on “-anticipating” algorithms – as it works through parents feelings, ambiguities, hopes, anxieties, agency and action – in working with, within and sometimes against – algorithmic structures in the course of everyday parenthood. Overall, the paper draws upon empirical findings to argue that contemporary parenthood and its (unequal, and diverse) structural conditions - shape how algorithms in daily life are foreseen, understood, anticipated and played with, and that parents' algorithmic anticipations shift the very conditions of parenthood in ways which both rehearse and reject the familiar in a multiplicity of ways.

Datified School: A Cross-National Analysis of Educational Policies

Saemi Jung

Simon Fraser University, Canada

The potential costs of datafication and dataveillance (Williamson, 2015; Yu & Couldry, 2019) in the education sector in relation to privacy and autonomy of students, teachers and parents are increasingly

examined in critical educational scholarship, audience studies, and media and communication studies (Manolev et al., 2018; Banville & Sugg, 2021; Selwyn et al., 2021). Yet what is often overlooked in these discourses are the ways this model of the “datafied school” (Lewis & Hartong, 2021; Henne & Gstrein, 2022), a contemporary data-driven educational infrastructure, is disseminated and how it is supported by policymakers across the world. To fully understand this dimension of policies that shape and transform societies at the transnational level, this paper employs a multimodal critical discourse analysis of educational policy texts and audio-visual data of two digitally advanced regions, the EU and South Korea. With a fresh lens of cross-national comparative analysis, this paper fills gaps in the predominantly Western-centric scholarship and broadens understanding of the rhetoric and discourses of policies in different regions (Van den Bulck et al., 2019). This paper suggests ideologies embedded in policies perform the following key social functions: 1) providing a discursive framing of education as a neoliberal capital enhancement, 2) extending postcolonial globalization and xenocentrism, and 3) influencing the already vulnerable state of education through techno-centric ideals. These ideologies intertwine to advance a neoliberal logic which amplifies the datafied school, a new model of education that conflicts with public values and democracy.

Trends and Issues in Digital Media Practices of Families with Young Children in India

Sowparnika Pavan Kumar Attavar

Manipal Institute of Communication, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, India

India is the second-largest mobile market globally. 96.3% of India’s population aged 16-64 use a smartphone and spend 6 hours 36 minutes on the internet. Evidence tells that young children in India are immersed in practices relating to popular culture, media, and new technologies from birth. Nevertheless, information about the prevailing digital media environment in Indian families, children’s digital media use within such environments, and the resulting experiences shaped by multiple social, economic, and cultural

factors which vary significantly from one family to another are missing.

Therefore, this study proposes to explore digital media cultures prevalent among 5-10-year-old children in Indian families. Using the ecocultural framework, Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Model, and Roger Silverstone's Domestication Theory, the study will focus on the sociocultural contexts, including the microsystems and macrosystems that contribute to young children's digital media use in Indian homes. Using in-depth interviews with parents, parents' diaries, home digital media maps, and interaction and games with children, this study will explore the digital media cultures of ten families with 5-10-year-old children in the City Municipality limits of the Udupi District in Karnataka, India.

Some of the questions guiding this research are: why, how, and in what specific contexts do Indian children use digital media? What are the consequences and resulting experiences of children's digital media use on children and their families? How are children's ecological systems contributing to children's digital media cultures? How are these cultures unique and distinct?

We believe a context-specific examination of the digital media environments in Indian families is essential to understand the distinct digital media cultures being formed and practiced in Indian families with young children and to develop resources and policies to support such families.

A Double-Edged Sword: Rights of the Children vs Reporting of Violence Against Children by Media; A 21st Century Sri Lankan Case Study
Shiromi Samarakoon, Jerome Cooray and Malith De Silva

Human Wing International Skills Academy; Donum Chapters; University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

While United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child was enshrined three decades ago, and Sri Lanka had ratified the same in 1991, the topic "rights of the children" still stirs hot debate across Sri Lanka's social and governance structures including media. Even in the 21st Century, Sri Lankan media

have seem not to find a commonly agreed ethics framework on how to respect the rights of the children, and more importantly how to report violence against children on their publication platforms, be it offline or online.

It is the above case that the authors of this paper have come to investigate, through a qualitative discourse analysis into the language and terms used by the local Sinhala, Tamil and English media outlets when they report cases / incidents of violence against children taking place in Sri Lanka during the past five years since 2017.

What is being observed is that, even into the second decade of the 21st Century, Sri Lankan media outlets in their claim to freedom of expression, have often disregard the rights of the children. Furthermore, in their reporting patterns they have neglected two key principles relating to children: the principle of “best interest of the child” and the principle of “no harm”. This has led to a revictimization of children who have either survived or perished due to the violence they had to endure.

While there has been activism on the part of interest groups such as child rights organizations, social activists, and non-governmental organizations against unethical media reporting of violence against children, there is strong opposition on the part of media organizations that regulation might lead to draconian laws against media freedom.

Young People’s Socio-Technical Environments: Peers, Parents and Media Shaping ICT Skills, Mastery and Diversity
Ellen Helsper, Elisabeth Staksrud and Renae Loh
London School of Economics, UK; University of Oslo, Norway; Social Cultural Diversity. Radboud University, Nijmegen, The Netherlands

A swath of work highlights that digital skill divides often occur along familiar demographic lines of socio-economic status (SES) and gender, even among youth who grew up in the digital age (Helsper, 2020; Scherer & Siddiq, 2019; Siddiq & Scherer, 2019). However, how these socio-digital skill divides come about remains rather murky territory. Social stratification scholarship would point to social reproduction as an explanation, where

	<p>youths of different SES background and gender grow up in different home environments and receive different (amounts of) resources, which in turn lead to differences in outcomes – such as skills (Hollingworth et al., 2011; Notten & Kraaykamp, 2009). Media and communications scholarship specifies this further to refer to the socio-technical environment, which consists of technical resources – in terms of access to digital devices, and social support – from significant others such as parents through parenting and peers through peer influence (Courtois & Verdegem, 2016; Helsper, 2017). In this paper we pose the question: To what extent do socio-technical environments mediate family background and gender influences on digital skills?</p> <p>This paper makes a contribution by grounding itself in an interdisciplinary approach integrating insights from both social stratification and media and communications literature. In addition, by investigating the socio-technical environment, and elaborating on parental and peer influence, we better capture the landscape in which youths develop their ICT skills. In considering technical access and sources of social influence, we move beyond using the technological-deterministic view of technical access being the sole prerequisite to skill development. By considering both parents and peers as sources of social influence, we move beyond seeing parents as the sole source of social influence and acknowledge the key role peers play in youths’ digital skill development, particularly given the embeddedness of digital youth culture in their lives (Loh & Lim, 2019).</p>	
13:00-14:00	LUNCH	*CKK (Outside Wolfson Theatre)
14:00 - 15:30	SESSION 5	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Global Audiences and Counter-Practices</u> Chair: Simidele Dosekun, London School of Economics, UK</p> <p>Soft Life: Analysing the Online Carefree Aesthetics of Young Black Femmes in South Africa <u>Ijeoma Opara</u></p>	MAR.2.08

Stellenbosch University, South Africa

Social media content under the hashtag '#SoftLife' shows many diasporic black femmes on holiday, doing their hair, shopping, on expensive dates, and generally engaging in activities associated with luxury and relaxation. Moralised discourse often situates Soft Life as an act of defiance to socio-economic expectations placed on black femme labour while also functioning as a reproduction of postfeminist fantasies. Furthermore, the predominant discourse on care-free aesthetics within academia contains dated conceptualisations of digitised black femme subjectivities in the Global South. By using a predicated method of triangulation (Ubuntu feminism, Audre Lorde's conceptualisation of the erotic and cyber ethnography), this paper will investigate Millennial and Gen-Z black femme identification with the concept 'Soft Life' by analysing the reimagining of care-free aesthetics in the South African context. In this paper, I will explore the origins of Soft Life, the implications of care-free aesthetics with the digital production of symbolic power, and how this plays out in the South African context amongst young black femmes on Instagram and Twitter. I hypothesise that Soft Life, as a multiplicitious concept, functions as a path for digitised self-actualisation for a marginalised group whilst simultaneously reproducing limited neoliberal aspirations of freedom and power.

E-Migrant Women Entrepreneurs: Mobile Money Apps, Transnational Communication and the Maintenance of Social Practices

Ireoluwa Deborah Aderibigbe

University of Cape Town, South Africa

Mobile money apps facilitate the maintenance of interpersonal relationships and transnational communication practices among migrant women entrepreneurs. Mobile money apps such as MamaMoney, MoneyTrans and Mukuru are a form of communication that is relevant and beneficial to the unbanked migrant women entrepreneurs in South Africa. The research question was: how do mobile money apps facilitate the maintenance of interpersonal relationships and transnational communication practices among migrant women

entrepreneurs? The methodology was informed by a feminist qualitative approach to three focus group discussions with fifteen participants from Nigeria, Zimbabwe and DRC. A thematic analysis of transcriptions of focus group discussions was conducted and two broad themes were identified. The first broad theme explores communicative dimensions of money transfer through mobile money apps by migrant women entrepreneurs, particularly in their roles as mothers, daughters, sisters and friends in the diaspora. The second broad theme is the use of mobile money apps to solicit emergency funds and financial support during the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings indicate that mobile money apps have reshaped the communication practices of migrant women entrepreneurs by enhancing interpersonal communication and facilitating social practices. Theoretical frameworks used in this paper are reverse remittances (Mazzucato, 2011), networked individualism (Raine and Wellman, 2012) and polymedia (Madianou and Miller, 2013). Reverse remittances highlights reciprocal bonds of social saving when eMWEs used mobile money apps to solicit financial help and emergency relief when they were unable to work due to the COVID19 outbreak in South Africa. Networked individualism in modern African societies is used in this study to understand how mobile money apps have afforded eMWEs with personal communication channels concerning money. Polymedia explains how eMWEs use mobile money apps in conjunction with the complementary affordances of other platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram and Facebook, which compensate for the limitations of mobile money apps.

Criticising the West During COVID-19: A Discourse Analysis of Chinese Netizens' Critiques of the 'White Left'

Kristy Bryant

University of Oxford, UK

With growing cross-border news consumption across Chinese social media platforms, netizens are more exposed to global affairs and discussions. With this exposure, internet users are increasingly engaged with, and able to construct their own opinions about, current affairs. Amid the

ongoing tensions between China and the United States in particular, social media research provides a unique insight into grassroots perspectives and popular sentiments that differ from the far more widely studied top-down discourses from the Chinese state. The development of the anti-baizuo (白左) discourse, literally translating to “white left”, provides a unique insight into anti-Western perspectives from the grassroots as it permits China scholars to explore a less, if not mis-, understood Chinese gaze toward the West. By conducting discourse analysis on a collection of sixty-four posts on Sina Weibo, this paper explores how users adopt the neologism in their posts about Western democracies’ management of COVID-19. This paper explores the usage of baizuo in netizens’ critiques of the West’s mishandling of the pandemic and, in doing so, demonstrates how non-state actors reconstruct nationalist discourses through their own engagement with trending news stories. This contribution seeks to achieve three aims: (i) shed light on anti-Western sentiments in the Chinese cyberspace; (ii) provide an insight into netizens’ self-reflections through their construction of the Other; (iii) serve as an example that scholars can approach their study of an area or nation-state without playing into the toxic rhetoric that portray societies as monolithic wholes.

Retaining Filter Bubbles: Exploring Gay Men’s Algorithmic Folk Theories on Zhihu

Longxuan Zhao

East China Normal University, China; London School of Economics and Political Science, UK

The hazards caused by filter bubbles, such as the singularity of information sources and the polarisation of viewpoints, have been extensively identified by scholars (e.g., Gillespie, 2014; Pariser, 2011; Sunstein, 2006). However, as Hargittai et al. (2020) criticise, algorithmic knowledge and theories always come from the mainstream community and American society, what about others? Thus, also inspired by the conceptual framework of algorithmic folk theories proposed by Eslami et al. (2015), this study aims to explore how Chinese gay men perceive platform algorithms. Through recruiting 16 gay men from Zhihu, a Chinese question-answering platform, and conducting a two-cycle coding

thematic analysis (Saldaña, 2015), this study finds two overarching themes: (1) the algorithm as evictor, supported by the users' folk theories of sidelining, disorganising, and defaming; (2) the algorithm as protector, supported by the users' folk theories of shielding, recognising, and exclusive associations. Beyond echoing previous studies that gay men have been suffering from algorithmic-driven marginalisation and minoritisation (e.g., Simpson & Semaan, 2021), specifically, this study suggests some gay men believe that filter bubbles have been protecting them. When amid severe censorship and potential dangers, as DeVito et al. (2018: 18) indicate, LGBT+ users 'consider not just affordances, but also their perceptions of how safe spaces are for LGBT+ identities.' Thus, based on the empirical data, this study argues that the call to break through filter bubbles (e.g., Bozdog & Van Den Hoven, 2015) is (hetero)normative, with the assumption that users want to be accessible and visible to all, accentuating diverse information but ignoring diverse identities. Arguably, filter bubbles can, or rather should, be retained in certain cultural contexts, for certain people.

Facts! Why News is Irrelevant to Young Audiences

Stina Bengtsson

Södertörn University, Sweden

Young people are abandoning news to the benefit of other media formats, something which is often seen as a threat to public debate, the public sphere and to contemporary democracy. We know from earlier research that "news-avoiders" – people who regularly consume little news – avoid news because of the overload of news; a quantitative explanation of why, particularly young, people chose not to pay attention to news. Digital media has multiplied the amount of news available in the world it is argued, and if only there was less news in the world, people would find them more worthwhile paying attention to. But digital media has not only transformed the amount of news and information in the world, but also how that information is produced, distributed, practiced and perceived. Based on a qualitative, phenomenological, study of young adults (18-26 years old) conducted in Sweden between 2019-2021 this presentation proposes that news provided

	<p>via digital and, mainly, social media, is perceived by young adults as facts, rather than anything else, and are as such regarded irrelevant, meaningless, and boring. The results show that even though most of the young Swedish adults in the study believe in facts, and find them to some extent important, they also see facts as not exclusive, often useless from an everyday life perspective, and too specific to be meaningful. These results are discussed from varied theoretical perspectives, and in light of historic and contemporary explanations.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Exploiting Life Through Media</u> Chair: Tim Markham, Birkbeck, University of London, UK</p> <p>Seizing Existence. How Algorithms Shape Temporal Experience <u>Riccardo Pronzato</u> <i>The University Institute for Modern Languages (IULM), Italy</i></p> <p>Drawing on 40 auto-ethnographic diaries, prepared according to a critical pedagogy approach (A.N. Markham, 2019; 2020), this article analyses how young individuals interpret time in and through digital platforms and the ways in which these technologies contribute to shape their temporal experience. Results highlight patterns of heavy consumption to suppress boredom and feelings of sadness, frustration, inadequacy, and anxiety arising from the impression of having wasted time instead of being productive.</p> <p>Within this scenario, I argue that that time is conceived by participants in a typical, individualistic, commodifying, Western manner (Wajcman, 2019), and that, while digital platforms promise to help individuals optimize their temporal experience, these technologies rather act as captivating infrastructures (Dieter and Gauthier, 2019; Seaver, 2019), which construct human temporal experience in order to make it suitable for colonialist extractive practices (Couldry and Mejias, 2019). This grab (Senft, 2008) of time by tech corporations is enabled by gamification features (Ytre-Arne et al., 2020) and the algorithmic production of a “right time” (Bucher, 2020), within socio-technical recursive loops</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PAR.2.03</p>

(Airoldi, 2022).

Then, I draw on relational theories of sociality (A.N. Markham, 2021) and on an existentialist ontological framework (Thiele, 1997; T. Markham, 2020), to discuss the implications of the algorithmic construction of time for practices of digital selfing (Butler, 1997; T. Markham, 2020), and perceptions of ontological security (A.N. Markham, 2021). If, as argued by Lagerkvist (2017: 97), we are necessarily “thrown into our digital human existence”, how can we become “at home in not being at home” (Heidegger, 1942; Thiele, 1997) today? Which kind of wandering in time is possible when our time and environment are continuously enabled and colonially seized (Nanni, 2012; Barassi, 2020) by platforms? Ethical and political implications for future research and the construction of more just futures are discussed.

‘Smart’ Capital and the Spectre of Digital Dispossession: A Critical Enquiry into the Datafication of Accumulation by Dispossession

Aishik Saha

Jadavpur University, India

While large parts of the world continue to struggle with the effects of the pandemic, the question of work and labour in the post-pandemic are being deeply pondered upon. The demarcations that emerge out of this juncture leads to a bifurcation of labour into ‘essential workers’, who are pushed into precarity from the threat of disease and contractual uncertainty in employment, and those who ‘work-from-home’. While geo-spatial segregation of these distinctions are contingent upon the specific relation of the nature of work with datafication, we are impelled to ponder upon the role that the accumulation of surplus ‘digital labour’ plays in this process. More specifically we must ask, what role does ‘digital labour’ play in the datafication and datafied reorganization of work and workplaces? The inadequateness of ‘Data Colonialism’ as a theoretical tool that accounts for the historical-materialist and dialectical roots of extraction and accumulation of user-data requires a retheorization of the process. In this paper, I shall examine the ontological inadequacies of the metaphors of colonialism, and its extractivist logic, being transposed and mapped onto the studies of

datafication. Following this I shall explore 'digital dispossession' as a convergence of Digital Capitalism and the neoliberal reorganization of digitized social labour, alongside its necropolitical implications. Drawing upon David Harvey's theorization of 'Accumulation by Dispossession', I argue for a classical Marxist interpretation of datafication as new reorganization of capitalist accumulation that acts and appropriates surplus generated by prosumers through the unpaid and discursive digital labour performed on digital platforms.

Smart Homes for Smart People? Crafting Stories for Machine-Assisted Domestic Lives Outside of the Industry Blueprint

Christian Pentzold

Leipzig University, Germany

Who is to live in the smart home? In a multi-billion market, most visions of future machine-assisted domestic life built around powerful ICTs are reduced to nuclear, well-to-do families seeking comfort, security, and efficiency in their detached house (Lupton et al., 2021). Such limited view ignores the diversity of social constellations, the myriad ways of cohabitation and togetherness, and changing ICT use. For many, the smart home thus remains an uninhabitable and abstract place and begs the question of how to envision alternative forms of technology-rich media homes.

In our talk, we present a method of participatory story making and interrogate the practicalities of such creative endeavor. We build on experiences and procedures from speculative design and co-design ventures (Lindley & Coulton, 2015; Sanders & Stappers, 2008) as well as work in the rich field of human-computer interaction. Based on a dozen workshop sessions with a variety of people of different age and socio-economic background, we use the talk to discuss two pertinent issues around the methodical scaffoldings and articulation work that helped participants to step outside of the industry blueprint and imagine media futures. This ties in with two of the research themes identified in the call, namely, Histories and Futures and Media, Participation and Politics.

For one, participants usually felt overwhelmed by the imperative invitation to 'just be creative' with no guidance or stimulus. In fact, rather than unleashing their creativity, blue sky conceptions left participants unimaginative or resorting to the commercial schemes at-hand. Hence, a core task of the workshop convenors was to facilitate future thinking with the help of methodical scaffoldings that took the form of cards, stimulating questions, story templates, and procedural advice which were materialized with board game-like canvasses. What is more, crafting narratives out of the accounts that would place the visions in cogent, tellable scenarios along story arcs was predicated on the articulation work of the organizers. Drawing on Star and Strauss's (1999) work, we conclude by discussing the implications of these intense efforts to build meaning, support smooth interaction, and foster alternative future imaginations.

Are Networks Markets? Exploring Alternatives for Search and Recommendation in Network Science

Carina Albrecht

Simon Fraser University, Canada

Network science is a discipline widely used by software developers and data scientists to build and maintain the algorithmic models that shape the search and recommendation engines on the internet. This paper will investigate network science as the "science of neoliberal connections" (Chun, 2018) by exploring network thinking for search and recommendation engines and its relation to economic thought. Through asking the question "are networks markets?" I aim to explore alternative ways of imagining networks. According to acclaimed network scientist Albert-László Barabási, network scientists have been learning to "map our interconnectivity" and have discovered that the complex networks that surround us are governed and structured by "amazingly simple and far-reaching natural laws" (Barabási, 2003, p. 5-7). These discursive points reveal an assumption that networks of information and knowledge weaved on the internet are "natural" formations rather than a result of specific capital interests. I argue that networks in network science are imagined mainly in terms of resource exchange, thereby evoking a

particular reduced idea of relationality that forecloses other possibilities for analysis and design. In addition, I will explore how different layers of reducing relation to resource and information exchange (or data exchange) inside network science as a discipline makes it the perfect candidate to be adopted as a tool to build infrastructure for market relations and resource exchange. Given this suitability, other modes of relationality might be excluded and forgotten. Further, this paper seeks to answer the following questions: are there alternative ways of imagining search engines and recommendation systems that are non-market-based? If so, how are they different? How are they used? How would they inform different paths for search and recommendation on digital platforms?

Treating Social Media Intermediaries as 'Publishers': Does it Settle the Unsettled Woe?

Kartik Agarwal

National Law University, Jodhpur, India

Social media intermediaries [hereinafter “SMIs”] have gained a significant position in our lives today. They facilitate the exchange of opinions and therefore, are often touted as the modern public square of the 21st century. The glaring misuse of SMIs as a conduit for hate speech, fake news, and violent threats is an undeniable fact now. To exercise a check over such misuse, the Indian government attempted to confer intermediaries with the power to decide the legitimacy of speech. However, the move was backlashed and resulted in the adoption of abstruse and unreasonable methods by SMIs to treat the content hosted by them. To rein in the misuse of such discretionary powers, a recommendation has been made by the Joint Parliamentary Committee in India to classify SMIs as ‘publishers’. Though the recommendation was later withdrawn, it posed a significant question that if it was a step in the right direction. The paper answers it in negative as it increases SMIs liability and endangers free speech by encouraging over-removal of content. The paper offers a comprehensive picture of the development in this sphere in the USA, Germany, and France, with a special focus on the recent Digital Services Act in the EU. Unsurprisingly, none of them provides an

	<p>omniscient package for all the problems users face online, as some end up giving complete liberty to SMIs to decide the legitimacy of speech and some pushing SMIs to resort to over-removal of content by foisting exorbitantly high financial obligation over them. By examining the jurisprudence on the regulation of SMIs in India and the abovementioned jurisdictions, this paper discusses the middle ground that could be adopted by the governments to strike a balance between these extreme ends and fulfill their positive obligation to safeguard freedom of expression.</p>	
	<p><u>Mediated Violence: Rights and Erasures</u> Chair: Bart Cammaerts, London School of Economics, UK</p> <p>Indian Police in Popular Media: Colonial and Postcolonial Perspectives <u>Ankita Gandhi and Surabhi Singh</u> <i>Jindal Global Law School, India; Humboldt University of Berlin, Germany</i></p> <p>Two competing and contradictory narratives have simultaneously defined contemporary Indian police forces, according to noted criminologist Beatrice Jauregui. The first she calls ‘hyper-empowerment’ where the police are accused of endemic violence and brutality; she terms the second ‘disempowerment’, hinting at how the police is essentially an agent for those exercising social and political clout. Indian laws regulating the police, most of them drafted by the British, also reflect these phenomena. The ‘hyper-empowerment’ of Indian police is ubiquitous in popular Indian cinema and TV shows, with most commercially successful movies/shows riding on the antics of a hyper masculine reverential police figure, who beats the oppressor and protects the weak, irrespective of due process. Few commercial films/shows have focused on the disempowerment of the Indian police and its scrutiny of disadvantaged minorities, since it is a more complex and politically sensitive topic. From amongst these, we have selected two Hindi films Ardh Satya and Soni, and one Hindi web series Paatal Lok, all of which focus on this simultaneous empowerment and disempowerment of the Indian police and the implications it has on groups that</p>	<p>PAR.LG.03</p>

have continued to be marginalised because of colonial-era stereotypes.

There is currently some scholarship on the history, organisation, and role of the police in pre- and post-Independence India. There is also scholarship that links what ails the police in India today with its colonial past, including works that analyse why some communities continue to be stereotypically considered inherently criminal and surveilled in excess. However, not much theoretical research combines all of these elements to create a comprehensive connection between the colonial remnants in administration and prejudicial attitudes towards minorities. We will attempt to plug this gap in scholarship by explaining hyper-empowerment and disempowerment through the aforementioned films and webseries and relate it to the Indian police's colonial past and neo-colonial present.

Online Conservative Religious Activism and its Political Implications

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Mexico*

This work addresses the participation in socio-digital networks of conservative religious activism in Mexico. Specifically on Twitter. We analyze hashtags such as #MexicoEsProvida, #Provida y #MeLateElCorazón, with a Systemic Functional Linguistics approach (Halliday, 1978), to explore the participation of the “new conservatives”, the construction of their communal identity, and the evaluations they build in their posts to characterize the discursive practices they carry out.

These social actors make use of the digital space to promote their worldview and take a stance on the feminist and LGBT community agenda on issues related to sexual and reproductive rights.

According to Mujica (2010), the democratization process of the last thirty years has produced a cracking of the correlation of power between church and state, so conservatives are forced to devise new ways to penetrate the field of politics, for example, through activism.

This group has been active in the public sphere in responding to debates about the legal interruption of pregnancy, not only in Mexico but also in different

countries around the world.

The discourse that promotes conservative religious activism in postmodernity is based on the “defense of life”, which is why they name themselves "prolife" (provida).

These groups and their ideas are not limited to civil activism but try to penetrate formal political institutions and networks of economic power. This becomes alarming because it is through the instruments of democracy and from their “defense of life” discourse, that conservative groups build mechanisms to regulate bodies, question rights and exercise control mechanisms.

The Weaponisation of ‘Woke’ | An Analysis of Canadian Parliamentary Discourse

Patrick McCurdy and Kaitlin Clarke

University of Ottawa, Canada

This paper takes an active interest in the rise of populist right-wing politics and political discourse in Canada and the subsequent vilification of social justice struggles, including anti-racism, anti-sexism, and pro-LGBTQ rights. Extending Cammaerts’ (2022) study of the UK’s ‘anti-woke culture war’, this paper examines how ‘woke,’ ‘culture war,’ and ‘cancel culture’ have been used by federal-level Canadian politicians in debates and statements made within the House of Commons. The paper’s corpus is constructed from keyword searches in the Hansard, Canada’s transcript for parliamentary debates (n=50) and is analyzed using a qualitative, critical discourse approach drawing from scholarship, including Laclau and Mouffe (1985), Reisigl and Wodak (2001), and van Dijk (1998). The analysis is supplemented with a focused literature review and analysis of select Canadian media and opinion pieces which, collectively, chart and contextualize the mainstreaming of an extreme-right ideology in Canadian politics.

Social Media, Stereotyping and War Legacy

Sanja Vico

University of Exeter, UK

Social media provide new spaces for addressing war-time atrocities, but we have little understanding of how visibility to broader audiences, both domestic and international, may impact on the process of acknowledgement of human rights violations

	<p>committed by an in-group. Drawing on the theories of the international society that investigate stigmatisation of norm-violating states, and trace how individuals internalise this stigma, this study interrogates how the perception of being negatively stereotyped by foreign audiences ('international society') based on ethnic identity because of one's country's war conduct affects acknowledgement of ingroup responsibility for war crimes. To this end, this paper analyses social media and face-to-face interactions in Serbia regarding #sedamhiljada initiative, launched by a Serbian journalist to pay tribute to the victims of Srebrenica. Using discourse analysis applied to Twitter and Facebook data, and to textual data collected through focus groups, I find the fear of being negatively stereotyped based on ethnic identity impedes the acknowledgement of war crimes because of a perceived threat to one's reputation on an international level. This is particularly pronounced on social media because of the exposure to foreign audiences as moral arbitrators. Consequently, people are less willing to acknowledge ingroup responsibility for war crimes on social media than in face-to-face interactions. By this, the paper also shows how social media affordances, such as visibility, are relational.</p>	
	<p><u>Digital Migration and Post-Humanitarianism</u> Chair: Maria Kyriakidou, Cardiff University, UK</p> <p><u>Rethinking Borders and/as Promotion</u> <u>Lee Edwards</u> <i>London School of Economics, UK</i></p> <p>Promotional practices parallel many practices constitutive of contemporary bordering. For example, promotion is based on the premise of sorting and stratifying audiences in terms of who is and is not of interest to the promoter (usually an organisation) (Munshi & Kurian, 2005); it facilitates the extraction and exploitation of resources by global capital, based on uneven mobilities that fix some people in place while others are encouraged to move with ease (Dutta & Pal, 2011; Dutta & Elers, 2020); and it depends on surveillance, tracking audience behaviours on and offline in order to locate and target them with communication, or to define them as promotionally barren, without utility (Turow, 2017). In these and other ways, promotion</p>	<p>MAR.1.10</p>

is aligned with bordering practices as a tool that defines who and what matters, a form of conditional recognition with important consequences for inclusion (Georgiou, 2019).

In this paper, I argue that this neat fit allows promotion and borders to exist in a recursive, mutually beneficial relationship. Empirically, for example, promotional campaigns designed to deter would-be migrants, extend borders spatially and temporally (Vanderhurst, 2022). But borders are also turned into promotional opportunities when bordering practices are leveraged discursively by 'committed' governments preventing migration 'invasions' (Braverman, 2022), or when companies servicing borders discursively construct them as markets and opportunities for growth and transformation (Accenture, 2022). Thus, borders can act as promotional objects, just as promotion can enact bordering.

I suggest that analysing borders-as-promotion, not only borders-and-promotion, offers a new way of thinking about bordering power as a form of promotional power, dependent not only on physical barriers, but also on mechanisms associated with successful promotion: discursive visibility, circulation, and attention. I argue that these attributes facilitate the existence of borders as global imaginaries that justify their material enactment, and thereby also facilitate the violence associated with their implementation. I conclude by proposing that recent theorisations of borders beyond physical space, into digital realms, could be further extended by recognising the intimate relationship between borders and/as promotion, that characterises the empirical reality of contemporary bordering power.

'Virtuous' Virtual Reality on Displacement and Post-Humanitarianism: A Conjunctural Analysis

Moé Suzuki

University of East Anglia, UK

The United Nations, non-governmental organisations, and technology companies have enthusiastically adopted virtual reality (VR) technology as a transformative tool that facilitates

connections between people, generates empathy towards refugees, and spurs people in the Global North to take action on the issue of displacement. According to the 'VR Nonfiction: A Mediography' database, the number of VR nonfiction titles released between 2012 and 2018 has been increasing steadily, with a marked increase from 2015 when commercial VR headsets became more widely available. Among this growing corpus, "the refugee VR documentary" is "one paradigmatic genre" of what Lisa Nakamura (2020, p.48) calls 'virtuous VR'. This term refers to VR experiences that have emerged alongside the increasing commercial availability of VR technology since the mid-2010s, which offer a techno-utopian framing of the technology itself as being good, compassionate, and connecting.

This paper analyses the emergence of virtuous VR on displacement since the mid-2010s as a post-humanitarian response to the 2014 'US immigration crisis' and the 2015 'European refugee crisis'. I discuss two ways in which virtuous VR on displacement are post-humanitarian (Chouliaraki 2013): its embodied, experiential characteristic that further strengthens the self-oriented morality centred on the feelings of the audience in the Global North; and the way in which virtuous VR reinforces experiential knowledge as a path to 'truth' at the expense of a deeper and necessary engagement with the political issue of displacement. I also consider how this reflects the current conjuncture characterised by increasing income inequalities and precarity, and racist and colonial border violence and a global system of (im)mobility.

Metaverse Cultures and the Production of Migration

Saskia Witteborn

*The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK),
China*

Using the concept of socio-technological imaginaries as a point of departure (Balsamo, 2011; Markham, 2021), the paper illustrates how gaming in digitally connected worlds, also referred to as the "metaverse," co-creates values and beliefs which shape imaginaries about mobility and migration. The geopolitical focus of the study is the Philippines,

as an example of a country with a highly mobile population (Kang & Latoja, 2022) and a play-to-earn gaming community (Heide, 2021). By examining the premises driving mobility imaginaries in and around digital gaming realities, the study points to specific physical and digital mobility practices by participants, their critique by those participants as well as social media discourses through which mentioned premises are actualized. The paper further identifies the economic and political actors co-creating mobility imaginaries, who is excluded, and why. Studying movement into and within digital environments is an iteration of other conceptual approaches to migration and media studies and the practices that shape migration, including digital borders, the digitization and datafication of migration, and resistance to those practices and processes (e.g., Chouliaraki & Georgiou, 2022; Witteborn, 2022). Overall, the paper adds to existing research by examining how digital culture and its socioeconomic moorings give particular movement and migration narratives discursive and material force. The paper also highlights the implications for digital (gaming) culture and its members in ascending economies. Data materials include personal interviews with young people in the Philippines and the analysis of social media discourses on platforms like Discord and Twitter. The research is supported by a Direct Grant from The Chinese University of Hong Kong (Project Code: 4052282).

VR as Empathy Machine: VR Innovation & Post-Humanitarianism

Sandra Ponzanesi

Utrecht University, The Netherlands

Social media provide new spaces for addressing war-time atrocities, but we have little understanding of how visibility to broader audiences, both domestic and international, may impact on the process of acknowledgement of human rights violations committed by an in-group. Drawing on the theories of the international society that investigate stigmatisation of norm-violating states, and trace how individuals internalise this stigma, this study interrogates how the perception of being negatively stereotyped by foreign audiences ('international society') based on ethnic identity because of one's

	<p>country's war conduct affects acknowledgement of ingroup responsibility for war crimes. To this end, this paper analyses social media and face-to-face interactions in Serbia regarding #sedamhiljada initiative, launched by a Serbian journalist to pay tribute to the victims of Srebrenica. Using discourse analysis applied to Twitter and Facebook data, and to textual data collected through focus groups, I find the fear of being negatively stereotyped based on ethnic identity impedes the acknowledgement of war crimes because of a perceived threat to one's reputation on an international level. This is particularly pronounced on social media because of the exposure to foreign audiences as moral arbitrators. Consequently, people are less willing to acknowledge ingroup responsibility for war crimes on social media than in face-to-face interactions. By this, the paper also shows how social media affordances, such as visibility, are relational.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Politics and Policies of Justice</u> Chair: Wendy Willems, London School of Economics, UK</p> <p>Reparative Justice (and the Case for Affirmative Action) in Creative and Cultural Industries <u>Anamik Saha</u> <i>University of Leeds, UK</i></p> <p>In recent years there has been a growing body of work that has critiqued the mobilisation of 'diversity' in media and cultural industries. According to these accounts diversity how the dominant culture extracts economic value from racial Others, in order to produce sales, or accumulate brand value. These critics argue that far from a progressive force, diversity is a form of governance that ensures that racial hierarchies remain in place while appearing to meet the demands of minoritised groups. Certainly, despite the emphasis on diversity, in the UK at least, there has been little evidence to show an increase in participation from racially marginalised groups in the cultural industries.</p> <p>It is against this context that this paper argues for replacing 'diversity' with a language of reparative justice. Firstly, it makes a distinction between</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MAR.2.10</p>

'reparations' as compensation, and 'reparation' as repair. It is this latter, broader notion of reparation that underpins the paper's notion of reparative justice. Secondly it focuses on the role of media in a reparative justice programme. It is argued that media play a key role in providing the platforms for a range of different aesthetic, cultural and political interventions that explore how legacies of empire shape the present and the experiences of the ancestors of colonialism and slavery. Thirdly, the paper provides concrete examples of the types of radical policies that come with a reparative politics framing, including a case for affirmative action.

The Social Media and the Voice of the Voiceless

Chandrakant Kamble

Symbiosis International University, India

This paper explores how Dalits' issues are elevated through social media as a voice of the voiceless due to inadequate Dalit representation in the mainstream Indian media industry. It argues that the under-representation of Dalits in Indian mainstream media leads to the exclusion of news on Dalits. Dalits are those who are beneath the entire caste system – and are therefore literally 'outcaste' as well as former 'untouchable' – call themselves 'Dalits'. Dalits comprise a significant percentage of the Indian population, but they are still deliberately neglected by the sociocultural, ecopolitical, and mass media realms. This paper explores the attitude of mass media towards Dalits and their issues in India and the social media initiated by intellectual Dalits as an alternative to the mainstream media. Social media as a communication tool has some advantages over traditional media because of its ability to bridge the gap between the privileged and the less privileged. The study examines how social media gave voice to the voiceless in subaltern Dalits in India.

The study focused on how functioning social media like YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Telegram are used in the campaign for change among the Dalits in India. Dalits are using social media platforms to produce their identity or dignity with social justice. From thousands of years, resourceless and oppressed Dalit communities have achieved weapons as a

medium of expression to tell their plague trauma stories. The new Dalit generation is using these popular social media platforms to ask questions about cast based discrimination in democratic republic India in the digital era. Dalits are showing abilities, fighting for rights, and social and digital inequalities.

When Digital Comes First and Citizenship Second: The Case of Dutch Low-literate (Digital) Citizens

Alexander Smit

University of Groningen, The Netherlands

This article analyzes how Dutch governmental actors conceptualize digital citizenship in policy and education relating to digital inclusion, and contrast this with how low-literate citizens understand and appropriate their own versions of digital citizenship in line with their situated lived experiences of everyday participatory actions. We explore the tensions between these two perspectives to nuance and reconceptualize the notion of digital citizenship in relation to low-literacy. Due to the digitization of elementary societal activities, such as online banking, e-governmental services and more, disadvantaged subgroups run the risk of being excluded on the premise of multidimensional inequalities, even more when societies transition towards a digital-by-default state. To develop a bottom-up understanding of digital citizenship, we build on participant observations and semi-structured interviews with 41 low-literate adults in four libraries, a community center, and a school for adult education, to explore the practical issues raised when normative ideals of digital citizenship are built upon frames of reference where citizens possess basic linguistic skills. We explore what digital citizenship means for low-literate citizens that do not possess basic (digital) literacies to make use of digitally mediated societies, and propose to reconsider digital citizenship in light of low-(digital) literacy, centering what low-literate citizens deem valuable in bridging the digital-divide. This provides more insight into the impact of digitalization within everyday lives of low-(digital) literate publics, and the practical issues of articulating digital citizenship as an individual responsibility to participate. Hence, we argue that digital citizenship cannot be

understood as a 'one size fits all' term, and needs to be rethought in light of the needs and difficulties of low-literate publics, centering civic values and the diversity of participation within their situated contexts to foster a more inclusive and holistic conceptualization of digital citizenship.

Imagining the Future for Us: How Big Tech and the WEF are Conceptualising the Future of Free Speech

Michael Nevradakis

College Year in Athens, Greece

The continued growth in prominence of social media platforms as forums of public and political discourse, as well as the promised technological innovation—such as the metaverse, artificial intelligence, augmented reality, virtual reality, and the internet of things—that will mark the next generation of these platforms, leads to questions about the continued evolution of free speech and public discourse in the public sphere and society more broadly. Such questions, as well as conceptualizations of what the 'future' of free speech might look like and how it may be governed, have become a prominent topic of discussion for global actors, particularly in the context of meetings of the World Economic Forum, the Athens Democracy Forum, and other such settings. Such forums, however, are closed and exclusive—with the debate restricted to major private-sector and government actors, with little to no feedback from or interaction with the public. This, in turn, raises questions about the extent to which key decisions that will crucially influence the governance and regulation of free speech in the future on social media platforms and in burgeoning virtual spaces such as the metaverse, will reflect the interests of industry and government actors, instead of society more broadly, and to what extent principles of free speech that we have, until now, taken for granted in open and democratic societies may come under threat. For instance, WEF discussions of how the metaverse may be governed in the future have cited, as a potential model to follow, governance structures currently in place on social media platforms, such as Facebook's Oversight Board, whose operation and practices have been fraught with controversy. This paper will examine the

discussions that are taking place within entities such as the WEF and their potential implications for free speech and online speech in the future.

How Requisite Resilience Inhibits Recognition for Refugee Voices

Diana Kreemers

University of New South Wales (UNSW) Sydney, Australia

The mis- and non-representation of refugee and asylum seeker voices in Western mainstream media coverage on forced migration negatively impacts social and democratic justice for forced migrants. In this paper, I ask how frameworks for interpretation for institutional listening determine the democratic potential of mediated voices of forced migrants. Through a repertoire analysis of mediated forced migrant voices across the domains of media, government-supported resettlement, and refugee advocacy and activism, I demonstrate how alternative representations of refugees and asylum seekers solidify rather than challenges unjust representations.

'Resilience' in benevolent narratives on the resettlement of forced migrants employed by Western governments, media, and advocacy and support services functions as an imperative for forced migrants to imagine their futures in post-colonial neoliberal societies. Recognition of forced migrants' self-determined voice and political agency is limited by (post)colonial, nationalist, and neoliberalist conceptions of immigration and multiculturalism. Discourses of 'resilience' determine attitudes, expressions, and trajectories that become requisite for institutional recognition of forced migrants' voice.

Within resettlement narratives of strength, perseverance, and hope, 'requisite resilience' curtails imaginaries about what forced migrants might become, and how they can express political agency. Rather than promoting self-determined voice, 'requisite resilience' functions to marginalise and depoliticise forced migrants' voice in mediated public and policymaking debates, which limits opportunities for political participation, and for public and political solidarity. In this paper, I propose a shift

	<p>in the conversation on forced migration that goes beyond 'requisite resilience' as the imperative of future media representations and institutional listening practices.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Imagining Media Past and Future</u> Chair: Dylan Mulvin, London School of Economics, UK</p> <p>The Time of the State: Arrested Futurity in Lebanese Media <u>Omar Al-Ghazzi</u> <i>London School of Economics, UK</i></p> <p>Part of a larger project on the politics of temporality in Arab media, this paper focuses on the future as a state narrative in Lebanon. While much of the literature about the country is dominated by unpacking memory culture in the shadow of a weak state, this paper shifts attention to the place of the future in hegemonic media discourse that reproduces elite control. I show how the Lebanese state influence on broadcast media push for strategic imaginings of the future through 1) promoting a vision of a bright future and renewed Lebanese exceptionalism; 2) promoting the banking sector as the safeguard of Lebanon's future prosperity; 3) threatening citizens that any vision of future change would take them back in time to warfare. Drawing on interviews with artists, and an analysis of news articles, TV channels' promotional clips, advertisements of banks and televised interviews with "psychics" since the 1990s, I make the case that the state's media tactics of control in post-war Lebanon are about regulating the breadth of the future in the national imaginary— what I call arrested futurity. Beyond Lebanon, the paper rethinks how the state is encountered through media and centres the future as a productive, and often-neglected, space for political and cultural analysis.</p> <p>Governing the AIR: Radio and Cultural Citizenship in Postcolonial India <u>Anirban Mukhopadhyay</u> <i>University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA</i></p> <p>In the immediate aftermath of colonial rule, an overhaul of broadcasting policies was undertaken</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">*CKK.LG.01 (Wolfson Theatre)</p>

by the postcolonial Indian state. India inherited the colonial infrastructure of Radio and Telegraph, and the lawmakers of independent India saw radio as an important tool to be used not just for disseminating news and entertainment but to shape the national consciousness of a newly independent nation. Hence, the All India Radio (AIR) network was seen as a potent tool for producing a "cultured" citizenry. In 1952 B V Keskar, the first Information and Broadcasting Minister of India went so far as to unofficially ban popular film music on AIR stations to improve listeners' taste. In this paper, I analyze how broadcasting policies were entangled with the politics of producing ideals of citizenship in postcolonial India. Focusing on the radio in 1950-2000, I argue that the policymakers in India saw radio as a "citizen machine" (McCarthy, 2010), and broadcasting policies became an integral part of the attempt to produce cultural nationalism. My analysis relies upon archival material, lists of radio programming, and newspaper clips to fathom how All India Radio (AIR) evolved as a potent tool for producing a "cultured" citizenry in the newly formed nation-state. Examining how the policy infrastructure was intended to produce a space of national consciousness and how it led to resistance from the radio listeners provide essential clues to politics of disciplining communicative networks, cultural space, and the (re) imagining of the "Nation." In the present-day nexus between digital media and neoliberal governance, the role of radio is hardly diminished in the Indian national space. This paper emphasizes that historicizing the framing of broadcasting policies is necessary to (re)imagine the workings of future media systems.

The Future will be Captured: 'Reality Capture' of Digital Humans and Racial Capitalism

Aleena Chia

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Reality is being captured to automate the labour of creating 3D worlds and representations of humans within them. Photogrammetry is a technique that matches up points of interest across multiple scans of a physical object, compositing these scans to form a 3D mesh that can be computationally manipulated. Seen as more efficient than 3D modelling using wireframes and polygon meshes,

photogrammetry is a 'Reality Capture' technique extending from objects to 3D scanning of humans. Massive libraries of human features, textures, and even movements are being quantised, synthesised, and rendered using Real-Time 3D (RT3D) software. RT3D engines such as Unreal – known for videogame production – extend their tools to create 'Digital Humans' for immersive and interactive content creation in advertising, animation, architecture, and beyond. On the one hand, reality capture's transnational division of labour – Eastern European toolmakers and Chinese, Indian, and South American asset and scanning artists – lays the infrastructure of RT3D content according to racial capitalism's (Lowe 2015) differential valuations of labour, resources, and markets. On the other hand, Digital Human tools encode prescriptive forms of graphical realism that quantize human bodies in ways that echo the racial science of physiognomy (Phillips 2020). For example, Unreal's (2021) Digital Human tool boasts that 'the scan data is the closest thing you'll get to a ground truth for the subject in 3D'. In this context, the slogan of 'high-fidelity digital humans' goes beyond the criterion of high polygon count to connote phenotypical precision and epidermal variation. Constraints are locked to 'ensure accuracy' in creating 'physically plausible MetaHumans'. These constraints are not just anatomical but racial. Drawing on textual analysis of promotional and technical documentation and app walkthrough of the Unreal Engine's reality capture techniques, this paper analyses the interplay between race and realism from scan to rig in digital human tools.

Communities, Governance, Conspiracies and Careers: Imaginaries that drive creators from Web2 to Web3

Indrek Ibrus, Madis Järvekülg and Ulrike Rohn
Tallinn University, Estonia

In this paper we investigate what are the imaginaries why some of the creators of audiovisual content have started to seek out emerging blockchain based alternatives to YouTube or Twitch. We analyse more closely Odysee and Theta.tv protocols.

Existing literature has explicated the frustrations of creators with platform power that regularly harms

their sense of security and fairness. Against this backdrop the question that emerges is what are the potentials of the emergent internet decentralisation technologies such as blockchains? Could they enable also new kinds of financial relationships between creators and viewers that are not built on data trade on users and on advertising as the main source of income for creators? While some of these alternative video-sharing platforms have been rightfully framed as sanctuaries for the producers of conspiracy theories and other types of harmful content, we also see that these environments are used systematically to play around with novel visions of governance, creator careers, and community as part of the future Internet conceptualized as “Web3”. We examine this potential critically through three interrelated themes that emerged from the interviews with the creators: governance, career, and community.

We carried out 40 semi-structured interviews (average length 1 hour) with video content creators from around the world. Additionally, we drew on secondary materials such as pertinent newspaper articles, observations from studying the platforms and their Discord feeds, their white papers, and AMA sessions and interviews with the founders and developers. Preliminary results indicate that perhaps characteristically to early stage internet communities, creators are mostly driven by these dedicated communities, their intimacies and mutual support practices. Yet, creators are also frustrated by frequent policy changes and by the fluxuations in cryptocurrency markets that turn their work precarious, shaping their imaginaries towards uncertainty.

RISE OF THE META—SELF / Face Capture, AR & Platform Art Practices on Social Media

Nicola Bozzi

King's College London, UK

This presentation discusses the emergent format of AR face filters and its implications in terms of the performance of the digital self and the definition of AI-driven art on social media. In particular, I will focus on the convergence of two Facebook-owned platforms: Instagram (where filters are mostly shared) and Spark AR (where they are created). Face filters are important because they constitute a

	<p>key area of negotiation between users and digital subjects (Goriunova, 2019), but they also represent a critical strategic element within corporate investment in facial recognition, AI and AR, such as Facebook’s recent rebranding as Meta.</p> <p>The establishment of such an immersive socio-technical environment is worthy of critical inquiry for two reasons. The first is sociological: platforms like Facebook and Instagram are known to commodify user identities in several ways (Lim, 2020) and negatively impact self-image, especially for young women (Gayle, 2021); more generally, corporate platforms have a notoriously prescriptive attitude, pushing participatory ‘engagement’ as normative social behaviour (Docherty, 2020). The second reason is cultural: platforms promote AI and AR applications as creative and even artistic tools, with Facebook explicitly framing filter creators as artists and collaborating with institutions like Tate Modern. While much of so-called “AI art” is developed alongside big tech companies and is effectively already “platform art” (Zylinska, 2020), it remains crucial to investigate the everyday and artistic aestheticization of these technologies at the intersection of their strategic corporate promotion and potential socio-cultural impact.</p> <p>How is the socio-technical environment delineated through the convergence of AI and AR shaping the development of facial capture as a mediation of the self?</p> <p>What type of new cultural forms emerge from face capture-powered platform art, and how are these tools used critically?</p> <p>My presentation will try to suggest answers to these questions by combining interface and cultural critique.</p>	
15:30-16:00	COFFEE BREAK	*CKK (Outside Wolfson Theatre)
16:00-17:20	CLOSING PLENARY - PLENARY 3: Contentious Trajectories: Future Paths for Media and Communications	*CKK.LG.08 (Sheikh Zayed Theatre)
		*CKK previously New Academic Building (NAB)