

ABSTRACTS

1: Racist & Right-Wing Discourse

Racism on Social Media: A Critical Review of Methodological Challenges

Johan Farkas, Malmö University

Social media platforms have altered how social interactions take place online. This new era of user practices, micro-communication cultures, bots, and an increasing algorithmic shaping of sociability, opens up new research endeavours to understand how racism articulates on social media platforms. Research points to the need of studying racism and other forms of systemic oppression as the result of user practices and technological mediation. In the realm of social media, key technological features - such as anonymity, interactivity, connectivity and datafication - are tactically exploited to create new modalities of 'platformed racism'. However, access to data is gradually becoming scarce, as platforms increasingly close off their Application Programming Interfaces (APIs), while new opaque platforms, such as WhatsApp and WeChat, pose challenges for empirical research. This article presents a literature review of 113 scholarly articles on racism and social media published between 2014 and 2018, collected through Google Scholar and Web of Science (of an initial sample of 270 articles). The article first examines the geographical scope and overall methodologies described in the literature. Secondly, the article presents an in-depth analysis of the methodological and ethical challenges of studying racism on social media. Based on this analysis, the article critically discusses the overall limitations of the field, possibilities of overcoming these as well as future problems posed by increasing opacity and social media companies' questionable arrangements to collaborate and support research.

Why talking about "fake news" misses the point? The sources, topics, and news-sharing patterns of radical right media in Europe.

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The current paper argues that critical digital media research should take into account the ultimately ideological nature of the discourse on "fake news" and move beyond it to reveal the empirical reality that it has obscured so far. We focus explicitly on the political profile of media and perform an in-depth empirical analysis of the sources, topics, and social media sharing patterns of ten popular radical right news websites in Europe: the transnational Voice of Europe, Epoch Times, Jouwatch, Politically Incorrect News in Germany, Il Primato Nazionale, Secolo d'Italia and VoxNews in Italy, Westminster, Order-Order and PoliticalUK in the UK. Little empirical evidence is found to support the narrative of "fake news" often associated with these media. On the

contrary, national news agencies and local media feature as prominent news sources. In addition, radical right media share each other's news to produce a greater output of content despite budget constraints. Ultimately, radical right media online are defined not so much by the sharing of "fake" (false) news, but rather by the fact that 1) they often select and focus on a narrow set of topics (such as immigration and crime) 2) they frame these topics in strongly biased ways; 3) they share each other's content extensively. Thus, classical media theories on agenda setting and framing are much more helpful in understanding current transformations in digital media than the techno-deterministic dystopias of "fake news" spread by trolls and bots. Only if we investigate carefully the mechanisms and operations of online radical right media can we start thinking of adequate alternatives. Because it is precisely political alternatives and not technological solutions to "fake news" that we need.

The importance of influential actors' platform usage patterns in (re)producing Swedish far-right discourse on Twitter.

Mathilda Åkerlund, DIGSUM, Umeå University

Using a combination of descriptive statistics, sentiment analysis and close readings of a collection of 74,336 Swedish tweets, this paper explores the platform usage patterns of users who are influential in a Swedish far-right discourse on Twitter. Specifically, it focuses on influential users' usage of platform functions, and on their language use. The analysis shows that influential users have a narrow focus in terms of the content they post and how they profile themselves. They are highly active, have more followers and produce more original content than other users. Surprisingly, while previous research has found that emotionally charged tweets are retweeted more and that highly popular and influential Twitter users tend to express more emotion while tweeting, influential users in this dataset often posted far-right content concealed as neutral, factual statements. This use of seemingly neutral language creates an inclusive far-right context as well as facilitates more overtly hateful interpretations.

2: Digital Labour (A)

Labour Process Theory and the Automation of Machine Learning Labour.

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This paper argues for the relevance of labour process theory (LPT) to the study of digital media, but also points out a significant difficulty. LPT has rarely been applied to software production, and as far as I know, never to artificial intelligence (AI) production. I first briefly describe the LPT approach, its detailed empirical study of the workplace and production processes and its central focus on the deskilling and automation of labour by

capital. I discuss how its adherents have disagreed over the nature of software work and whether it might be inherently exempt from deskilling and automation due to its high-skill, social type of labour—a position also held by post-operaist and cognitive capitalism theorists.

My argument proceeds by outlining the labour process for the production of the contemporary form of AI called machine learning (ML). I then show how high skill work in ML production is already being automated in three areas. ML is now widely recognized as leading a new wave of workplace automation, but the automation of the production of ML itself (AutoML) or “the automation of automating automation” (Mayo 2016) has barely been discussed. I argue that ML work is evidently not immune to deskilling and automation. Based on interviews conducted with ML workers, I show that some actually desire increased automation in their work and have the capacities to create and deploy AutoML themselves. Said one interviewee: “If you’re doing the same thing for more than six months and not automating it – you’re doing something wrong”. This situation does not easily fit into critical theoretical frameworks such as LPT in which the worker and automation are positioned as antipodal. I conclude by considering the prospects of workers automating their own work and what this means for LPT.

The Maker Movement and the Politics of Invention.

Stefano Mazzilli-Daechsel, School of Public Policy, Sociology, and Social Research, University of Kent

The maker movement consists of people collaborating in digital and physical spaces to design and make their own electronics. Based on my doctoral research of several European makerspaces, this paper discusses the ways in which makers practice a different politics of invention. I start by defining a politics of invention as the dynamics between human and technological capacities, as well as the distribution of those capacities. Next, I assess the hegemonic politics of invention operating under the material conditions of contemporary capitalism. Following the philosopher Bernard Stiegler, I argue that this dominant politics of invention is defined by a tendency of proletarianization. Whereas Stiegler defines proletarianization as a loss of human knowledge and skill to technology, I understand proletarianization to be a diminished ability to formulate political and social problems that can be attributed to a pervasive technological illiteracy in our societies. The maker movement offers a way out of this predicament by fostering a critical and active relationship to technology that encourages people to move beyond their familiar roles of consumers and users. Still, I argue that the movement currently suffers from some organizational and strategic issues that have limited its impact on the prevailing politics of invention.

“I guess I can’t call you beautiful bastards anymore”: YouTube Monetization, Censorship, & Platform/Labor Relations.

Nicole E. Weber, Media Studies, Rutgers University

On April 3, 2018 Nasim Aghdam entered YouTube company headquarters and began shooting. Wounding three people before taking her own life, Aghdam’s actions were reportedly in response to feeling wrongly censored and subsequently de-monetized on the platform (Meyer, 2018). Beginning in 2016—and accelerating following the 2017 “Adpocalypse”—YouTube has rolled out multiple changes to the platform’s algorithms, monetization, and policies for content standards. In the wake of these changes, major tensions and anxieties between content creators and YouTube have increasingly become more visible (Weiss, 2017). Analyzing testimonies from content creators about their relationships with YouTube and the platform in light of previous scholarship on social network exploitation (Andrejevic, 2011; Cohen, 2015), theories of immaterial labor (Cote & Pybus, 2007; Terranova, 2000; Lazzarato, 1996), and examinations of other social media production cultures (Chen, 2014; Marwick, 2013), this study aims to develop a fuller picture of the tensions between platform and producer. I suggest that an exploration of these tensions and anxieties will not only help us more deeply understand the relationship between content creators and platforms, but will also provide better context for the event of April 3rd. If we read Aghdam’s actions as not isolated but rather as a moment of rupture produced through these platform tensions and anxieties, we see the very real and increasingly intensifying implications of the control platforms have over creators’ production. Ultimately, I consider the future of platformed labor relations if platforms and the companies that produce them continue to remain unregulated moving forward.

‘Digital Passionees’ - Literary Review Blogs between Fan Culture, Literary Criticism and Unwaged Digital Labour.

Kristina Petzold, University of Hildesheim

What people mean by ‘labour’ is subject to constant historical change. In times of digitization, we face a new technological era that is transforming the current paradigm of (waged) labour. Early models of new and hybrid forms of digital labour such as the ‘prosumer’ or the ‘digital bohemien’ have not at all fulfilled the hopes of increased independency and participation. Instead, we see how neoliberal principles – such as self-optimization and exploitation – increase within the sphere of digital media. The proposed paper therefore asks, where in digital media “work” (Arbeit) is done and who claims, reclaims or rejects the term for which reasons. The data base derives from the presenter’s dissertation project, which takes a closer look at german-speaking literary review blogs with the aim of identifying rules of discourse, according to which convergences between blogging, fandom, literary criticism and labor are established by different discourse participants. The paper discusses some results of my

discourse analysis and show how these categories are on a deeper discursive level connected to more subjective terms and interpretative schemes (*Deutungsmuster*) such as passion, profession, affirmation and criticism. The paper will also argue that those patterns and their specific subjectifications are used strategically within the field of the digital literature market to generate e.g. symbolic capital – but also as forms of appropriation and evocation.

3: Democracy & Code

Hacked Democracy: the case of the presidential election of 2018 in Brazil.

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Expanding our research on the notion of hacked democracy, the objective of this paper is to take into consideration the case of the presidential elections of 2018 in Brazil. We explore the relations between technology, social media, mainstream media, fake news and the public perception aiming to further understand its impacts on political relations and political procedures – such as the electoral process. We guide our investigation with the question: Has hacking become a constitutive element in politics? In this second reflection upon such inquire, resuming our first paper on the matter, we consider hacking in its broader sense, meaning the interference in a given structure (whether it is an object, a system, etc.) to obtain purposes or performances that were not originally designed in it. In this perspective, the notion of hacked democracy refers to the idea of a democracy which procedures and purposes are constantly susceptible to interference both internal and external. The final purpose of our research – which is in its initial grounds – is the reflection on the classical philosophical problem of political obligation and its relative questions such as the case of the legitimacy of power and also the legitimacy of resistance in a contemporary fashion. If hacking has become a constitutive element of our political relations and procedures, is it still possible to claim legitimacy to governments? Is it legit to resist?

Comment Purification: Young liberals' tactic of trolling and algorithmic manipulation as a new form of online resistance in South Korea.

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In South Korea, a phenomenon called “comment purification” has become a part of a culture in Korean online communities that express support for the leftist president, Moon Jae-in. Calling themselves the “Moon Badgers”, participants carry out collective actions to “purify” negative news articles by posting massive amount of comments. Comment purification involves trolling conservative journalists and altering the visibility

of comments by manipulating the algorithm of Korea's major search engine platform's (Naver) news comment section. Their attack is complicated by their pro-social and democratic goals to bring changes to the “corrupted” information ecosystem.

Conducting textual analysis of three online communities, this article argues that comment purification, a transgressive use of digital media combining trolling and algorithmic manipulation, is a new form of activism for Moon Badgers. Moon Badgers were manipulating Naver's algorithm as a resistance, thinking that the platform's political bias had allowed far-right bots to prevail. To fight against the platform, Moon Badgers studied algorithmic logic of Naver and organized collective tactics to attack it. I identify three main tactics: manipulating the comment section's upvote and downvote system, modifying comments' content to gain algorithmic traction, and using separate apps to time their action. This article presents the case of comment purification to understand practices of algorithm: how Moon Badgers perceive platform's algorithm as their enemy, how they manipulate the algorithm while escaping policing, and how they appropriate the curatorial logic to achieve their social goals. I argue that focusing on algorithmic practices help understand lived realities of digital media.

Technopolitics of visibility: Facebook News Feed algorithms during the 2018 Mexican presidential elections.

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Most of the critical approaches to Facebook in social sciences and humanities address the exchanges of practices and capital taking place over or around the platform, but there are still few empirical studies attending to Facebook News Feed algorithms and their patterns of visibility: which news can be seen (or not) in the interface of each user, according to their personal interests and data collected by Facebook. The proposed paper consists in research findings obtained after tracking (with consensus) 19 Facebook News Feeds of followers of different candidates during the last Mexican presidential campaigns. After 52 days of observation, it was discovered that Facebook's content selection algorithms acted differently in each case, depending on the candidate detected by them. The posts, images, videos, interactions and ads, as well as the suggested pages, groups and friends, figured a distinct narrative of the elections for every user, showing how Facebook's filter bubbles perform multiple political imaginaries to engage and polarize all parties' sympathizers. On the other hand, some “neutral” News Feeds —of people who followed all candidates or none of them— showed the preeminence of one of the candidates related to the voting tendencies of closest Facebook friends, or the popularity of a certain party in the nearest location to a certain user. All this allows to conclude Facebook's interference in electoral processes is preponderant, as long it contributes to what Jacques

Ranciere defined as “the political distribution of the sensible”: distinctions between reality and the mediatic (digitized) perception of an event.

Coded Ideology: Finance Algorithms and Neoliberalism

Tyler Wayne DeAtley, North Carolina State University

Global stock exchanges are increasingly relying on algorithms, most notably high-frequency trading (HTC) to carry out daily trading (Thompson, 2016). On several notable occasions over the last 9 years, such as the Flash Crash of 2010 and the Knight Capital incident in 2012, these algorithms have caused significant market disruptions. Institutions of late/communicative capitalism have positioned algorithms as purveyors of objective truth and even as the utopian future (Dean, 2009; Gaudin, 2014; Kemp, 2017; Sydell, 2012). Algorithms, and software broadly, are not entities of objective knowledge, but are deeply cultural (Golumbia, 2009) and exist to serve class interest (Dumitricia, 2016). Algorithms become a powerful tools of control (Deleuze, 1992). However, these incidents of market disruption allow for an examination of that ideological positioning, and hopefully a moment to subvert and undermine that hegemonic positioning. Using the Flash Crisis of 2010 as a case to study and tracing the history and development of HTC, I argue that algorithms have been and continue to be positioned as neoliberal ideological mechanisms that grant the status of ‘objective truth’ in order to further neoliberalism’s hegemonic control. However, this crisis also reveals the ideological apparatus surrounding algorithms. This reveling moment allows for resistance and subversion of neoliberalism hegemony. Yet these moments of disruptions/crisis are also moments that ideological apparatuses can be further reinforced the logics of crisis (Chun, 2015). I close on a call to imagine and define sets of problems, and then design code that operates to solve those defined problems.

4: Technology, Ideology & Subjectivity

Algorithmic Interpellation

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Despite their rapidly increasing presence in our lives, our understanding of where and how algorithms are used, as well as their material effects, remains at a minimum. To be fair, algorithms are a technical and therefore unsurprisingly intimidating topic, and just what an algorithm is is not immediately obvious to many, if not most, people. Even among those who think they have a sense of what an algorithm is, it is still hard to define. As Tarleton Gillespie (2016) notes, as social scientists, “[w]e find ourselves more ready to proclaim the impact of algorithms than to say what they are” (18). With this in mind, and in light of the pervasiveness of algorithms in

contemporary society, we have set out to clarify the operations of algorithms through the use of Louis Althusser’s theory of ideology, and in particular his concept of interpellation. It is our main contention that algorithms operate as mechanisms of capitalist interpellation and that a proper understanding of algorithms must appreciate this aspect of their workings. The argument will proceed as follows: first, we will offer a brief, and, admittedly incomplete, overview of the ways in which other scholars have conceptualized algorithms. Second, we will examine Althusser’s theory of ideology, and, as his theory is a complicated one, we will discuss it in some detail. Finally, we will apply Althusser’s theory to the operations of algorithms, considering how an algorithm is well understood as a mechanism that “gives us a name.

Subjectivities of Search

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Leuphana University (Digital Cultures Research Lab)

“By typing in a few keywords, search engines power the information economy (Stark 2009:1) with human-machine configurations enabling the ‘invisibility management’ of users, whilst extracting data ad infinitum. Moreover, it is through (search) habits that users become more like their machines (Chun 2016). Louis Althusser (1970, 2008) argued that the on-going process of interpellation transforms individuals into subjects, culturally constructing identity through ideology. Nowadays technological infrastructures such as network layers and protocols regulate various forms of address. The subject (or user) has become the site of data collection as well as being constantly evaluated by algorithms and ‘technology, or standards, precede meaning, and enable it – similarly to how they enable the being of the subject’ (Siegert 1999). My PhD ‘Re:search - the Personalised Subject vs. the Anonymous User’, examines the effects, implications and consequences of how search engines organise users. By drawing on a ‘critical ethnography of the self’, I gathered data and analysed the results through images with my method ‘data visualisation as transcription’. The analysis attempts to shed light on Google’s ‘logic of data accumulation’ that creates ‘personalised subjects’ along with developing alternative methods for seeking knowledge through human agency, such as with the anonymity browser Tor (The Onion Router). The thesis proposes that instead of ‘organising the world’s information’, advertising companies (Google) disguised as search engines turn the self into selves, producing prediction products in an era of ‘surveillance capitalism’(Zuboff 2015). Ultimately, the research shows how the online habit of querying shapes and organises users, simultaneously producing various (digital) subjectivities en route.”

Cool Refusal: Rejecting Digital Technology in Late Capitalism.

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This paper explores the notions of online disconnection and media refusal in the context of cool capitalism (McGuigan, 2009), which constitutes the front region of neoliberal culture. It argues that the transition from the organized capitalism to the global neoliberal capitalism can be understood in terms of the changing role between technology and society and shifting relationship between humans and technology. In this context, technology receives an important status framed by the techno-rational and techno-deterministic discourse supporting an understanding of technology not only as beneficial, but also inevitable and desired. This paper aims to contribute to the body of research that makes an attempt to understand online disconnection and media refusal as an inherent element of media (dis)engagement in the digital age. It proposes the notion of the logic of cool refusal which is incorporated in the capitalist modus operandi. The logic encompasses three main aspects, including lifestyle choices, workplace strategies and consumption patterns. I argue that in a similar manner as the notion of cool became incorporated into everyday life and capitalist mainstream, also cool refusal is an ideology not necessarily about resistance, but rather one which defines culturally and historically specific moment of individual coping in the era of hyperconnectivity.

Digital Resistances: Subtexts of the techno-utopia on five paths.

Carlos Alberto García Méndez, National Autonomous University of Mexico, Political and Social Sciences Faculty

The techno-utopia represents a sum of optimistic visions related to technology and its possibilities to reshape our everyday life. While Digitality gains more space and pretends to become the solution of humanity problems, there are small actions to resist this hyper-technological age. Human beings are exposed to communication and information technologies in ways and quantities never seen before. In this logic, we are data, single bits trapped by their own informational societies (Cheney-Lippold, 2017).

For example, there are more mobile connections (close to 8.485 billion) in the world than total global population: 7.6 billion (Hootsuite, 2018). Our life is being affected by screens, codes, algorithms, virtual social networks, Artificial Intelligence... However, there are people facing this digital age with different attitude. The aim of this research is to show five of the main vectors of digital resistance that we can find in multiple scenarios such as:

- A. Self-digital disconnection,
- B. Legal battles,
- C. Paradox (technology to resist technology),

- D. Nostalgia as a resistance,
- E. Fear as a resistance.

Even though this is an ongoing work, it is important to say that many data collection techniques have been employed, for instance: in-depth interviews, documental research, ethnographies and observation of digital consumption. The analysis stage works with Political Economy of Communication approaches, in order to go deeper in the relations between online and offline interactions. In this sense, it is important to point out the relevant critical character of this research.

5: Digital Labour (B)

Digital labor as surplus labor: Turkey's celebrities' mandatory visibilities on social media.

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Drawing particularly upon Fuchs's body of work on the notion of digital labor, this paper is intended to provide a critical overview of Turkey's celebrities' digital strategies for co-opting with and/or confronting Erdogan's neoliberal (and competitive) authoritarian regime, within whose growing autocracy, mass surveillance of online sphere has come to be normalized in the last years. The paper observes that overt uses of social media in the so-called 'New Turkey' may have unexpected consequences which range from subvention to prosecution (by the regime) and from embracement to condemnation (by pro-/anti-Erdoganists). It is argued that within such an affectively charged slippery conjuncture (within which 'everybody has to have an opinion'), it has turned into an obligation for the celebrities to virtually show off their political position-takings for the sake of reinforcing and/or maintaining their social positions within their respective fields. Accordingly, celebrities' representational digital labor can be perceived as a type of surplus labor which has turned into a necessity for the preservation of their symbolic power which is constantly at stake. [The researcher's reflexivity makes the researcher critically engage with the paper's framework and seek feedback especially on two issues: a) If the researcher aims to resist leaning heavily towards Bourdieusian genetic structuralism, might this theoretical framework have anything to learn from Couldry and Hepp's recent take on the 'mediated construction of reality' –in other words, from Elias's process sociology as well as from Berger and Luckmann's social constructionism? b) If the researcher intends to avoid relying solely upon the strategy of quote mining on social media, how it would be possible for the researcher to look for and work with reliable data and to develop a methodological framework which will be systematically convenient for the research's relational and processual approach?]

(Re)Branding the Self as a Form of Labour: Entrepreneurial subjectivity and the culture of surveillance in YouTube's creator community

Trenton James Lee, University of Westminster

Digital influencers have appeared as a new form of “micro-celebrity” with the arrival of digital media platforms, and they can be characterised as an emerging class of digital marketing workers. This set of workers earn their wages through earning a share of a platform’s advertising revenue, making brand deals, creating and selling self-branded merchandise, receiving paid subscriptions from their followers, and other creative monetary channels. They work “in partnership” with the digital media platforms (e.g. Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, etc) they use to produce and circulate their curated, digital personas. This group of workers can be distinguished by a unique set of precarious working conditions which simultaneously exploit and empower the digital creative worker. Drawing on Christina Scharff’s (2017) contours of entrepreneurial subjectivity, which she argues that under regimes of neoliberal ideology the human subject constructs their self as a business. My doctoral research is exploring how YouTube creators experience the production and circulation of their personas online and what motivates them to do so. Recently, YouTube creators have started speaking out about how this process effects their mental health, and this research aims to provide information on how creators are dealing with such effects. To do so, I am conducting a digital ethnographic study which engages my participants in a critical conversations about their experiences in the creator community to help shed light on how placing their social relationships within the parameters of neoliberal market economics effects the way they related and identify with others.

Made in Prison – Tracing the Role of Prisons Labor for Media Infrastructures.

Anne Kaun & Fredrik Stiernstedt, Södertörn University

The main starting point for the presentation is the idea that prisons are not confined places removed from the rest of society that constitute fundamentally different social realities. To the very contrary, for society heterotopian places like prisons are essential (Foucault, 1967/1986) and they offer insights into general social processes (Goffman, 1961). We argue that prisons and prison work have been essential for the development of media infrastructures and media distribution and that these processes are crucial to understand how the mundanity of infrastructure relates to larger operations of power and authority. The study of infrastructures has a long history and recently gained a renewed interest especially in media and communication studies with a focus on material aspects that underpin our media systems exploring for example the role of media houses’ architecture in the construction of symbolic power (Riegert, Ericson & Åker, 2010), the role of satellite systems for global media events (Evans & Lundgren, 2017; Parks, 2005), and lately also undersea

cables’ (Starosielski, 2015) and data centers’ (Hogan, 2015; Stiernstedt & Jakobsson 2010; Velkova, 2016) role for sustaining the internet and digital culture. These studies focus exclusively on infrastructures designed for the purposes of storage, processing and dissemination of information as well as communication and rarely consider other important social institutions that have implications for media and communication infrastructures. The presentation contributes to this growing field by arguing that prisons have historically been crucial for the development, construction, maintenance and repair of media and communication infrastructures despite not being media institutions as such. For example, prison labor has been essential in setting up communication systems of telegraphy; prisoners have in various ways contributed to the printing industry, the postal system, television as well as radio, and more pervasively prisoners are subjects to testing (digital) surveillance technology before it is being spread more widely in society (Bernhard, 2017). All these contributions have emerged as free or almost free labor and have rarely been acknowledged as a form of media work contributing to the general media and communication infrastructures substantiating society in general. Empirically, the presentation draws on archival material tracing prisoners’ work related to media infrastructures since the inception of the modern prison. It combines this material with observations and interviews in contemporary prisons as well as prison security exhibitions where the most current technologies are presented and negotiated. Our starting point is the Swedish context, but we follow the transnational character of media and prison technologies and hence have a broader empirical scope. The proposed presentation, hence, engages with an institution that is rarely considered as actively contributing to the infrastructures for production, dissemination, and circulation of media and in that sense considerably broadens the scope of critical studies of digital media technologies, both empirically and theoretically.

Relational Labor and Job Insecurity. Online self – branding practices among Millennial journalists.

Gaia Casagrande, Department of Communication and Social Research, La Sapienza University of Rome

The research proposal will try to investigate the relational labour embedded in online self-branding practices on SNS. The target will be Millennial professionals in journalistic and editorial industries, who often have to face precarious – work condition. Starting from the techno – commercial nature of platforms (van Dijck J.; Poell T., 2015), which produces sense of individual Self through datafication of symbolic materials, I will focus on the concepts of affective intensity (Lindgren S., 2017) and relational labour (Baym N. K., 2015). Indeed, the main research hypothesis is that relational labour is produced by platform design and algorithms, as well as job insecurity. Consequently, the second research hypothesis is that it causes an emotional dissonance between the online self – narrative and the

experienced precarious condition. The literature review will refer mostly to cultural and media studies critical approach and I will use the qualitative research method. I will conduct semi-structured interviews from ten to fifteen Millennial professionals in journalistic and editorial industries. More in detail, the subjects will be clustered in three sets: five people will be freelance with a work contract; five people will be freelance without any work contract (entrepreneurs); from three to five people will be employed in news organizations. In order to obtain a comparative perspective, the participants will be from Italy and one or more European country.

6: Knowledge, Fake news & Epistemology

Images-Substitutes and Visual Fake History: Historical Images of Atrocity of the Ukrainian Famine 1932-1933 on Social Media.

Ekatherina Zhukova, University of Copenhagen, Department of Media, Cognition, and Communication

This article is concerned with how pre-Internet historical images of atrocity are used on social media today. It looks at historical images of atrocity as content generated by social media users in the era of post-truth, fake news, and right-wing ideologies. Combining scholarship in cultural sociology, media and communications, and history, two concepts are introduced – image-substitute and visual fake history. Image-substitute is defined as an image of a historical event from a particular period of time and place which is used to represent a historical tragedy from a different decade and geographical location. Visual fake history is conceptualised as a misrepresentation of past conflicts, wars, and famines through reliance on historical images as images-substitutes and accompanying them narratives within social media logic. These concepts are developed on an empirical example of images of the Ukrainian famine of 1932-1933 circulated on Instagram under #holodomor between 2012-2018. The essay shows that around 50% of circulated images on social media were images-substitutes. They consisted of images from other Soviet famines, Holocaust images, and images of South Asian famines. It is shown that visual fake history became possible through aesthetic expressionism of images-substitutes embedded in anti-communist and anti-Semitic narratives, articulated in superimposed text, captions, and comments by social media users on Instagram. The article therefore argues that today's digital media has failed to represent reality and to act as evidence for historical events.

Manufacturing Social Media Bias? Searching for Climate Change, Climate Engineering and 'Chemtrails' on YouTube.

Joachim Allgaier, Chair of Society and Technology, HumTec, RWTH Aachen University

The online video-sharing website YouTube is extremely popular, also as tool for science, technology and research

information. However, so far only little is known about the use of online video-sharing from a science communication point of view. Various studies have pointed out that 'extreme' political and ideological positions and conspiracy theories are favourably presented and positioned by YouTube's recommendation algorithms. However, only very little is known about what kind of information users will find when they are searching for information about science, technology and research on YouTube. This contribution presents results from an exploratory research project that investigates whether videos found on YouTube adhere or challenge scientific consensus views. A case study approach was set up to search for and analyse 200 videos about climate and climate modification topics, which are contested topics in online media. The online anonymization tool Tor has been used for the randomization of the sample and to avoid personalization of the results. 107 of the videos in the sample supported a worldview that is opposing scientific consensus views. Climate and other scientists are discussing climate topics with deniers of climate change in 4 videos in the sample, and 89 videos are supporting scientific consensus views. Videos supporting the scientific mainstream view received slightly more views than those opposing the mainstream scientific position. The research presented is particularly interested in finding out more about social media biases and distortions and in critically analysing them. For instance, possible attempts and strategies to 'occupy' particular search terms and its possible consequences are discussed and of special importance in this context.

The Socio-psychology of Online Culture in Turkey: Democratisation or Polarisation?

Ekmel Gecer, Sakarya University

The increasing usage of social media in Turkey and its crucial role in providing new courses for a freer form of self-expression or them to be the platforms for an easier political surveillance and dividing the public sphere need to be systematically analysed in many angles. While the usage of social media seems to be the way to get rid of political pressures etc. the online culture also claimed to be too polarising, platforms where social bullying increasingly conducted and the discourse "you are either with us or with the terrorists" typically created. Therefore, my paper, based on practical usage of twitter and content analysis of 50 accounts from diverse political and ethnic backgrounds, aims to demonstrate the role of social media courses especially twitter, (a) in the Turkish democratisation, (b) how they changed the nature of public spheres, (c) how social media caused to question freedom of expression/the press in local terms, (d) and if the new media trends close or deepen the social and psychological distance.

7: Critical Perspectives (A)

Theorising social media as a patriarchal institution.

Jessica Megarry, School of Social and Political Sciences,
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Despite an increased academic focus on the shape and implications of online power relations (see Fuchs, 2014, Lovink & Rossiter 2018), there is currently a noticeable lack of critical theory that considers how strategies of male dominance on social media platforms are influencing contemporary feminist activism (Megarry, 2014; 2018). The alliance between social media and the values of neoliberal capitalism is an uncomfortable one for feminism (Jarrett, 2016; Yeatman, 2014), yet, nonetheless, feminist social movement scholars have largely approached women's digital activism through a celebratory lens, with most research concentrated on plotting women's activist networks, tracking hashtagging practices, and championing the new opportunities now available to women to challenge the social and political order (see Shaw, 2012, Crossley, 2017). This is surprising given that feminist theory has historically been based on a sustained critique of the social institutions dominance and an analysis of how they function to perpetuate women's social subordination to men. Bringing critical internet studies into conversation with critical geography studies, this paper advances a critical feminist analysis of women's digital organising, and theorises how women's use of social media for feminism provides men with unique opportunities for not only abusing women, but also for surveilling their political consciousness and perpetuating patriarchy. The paper highlights how the autonomous organising spaces of the Women's Liberation movement contributed to the growth of feminism in that particular historical moment, and, in doing so, it aims to open up new ways of thinking about the limitations of using social media for feminist organising.

Gossip as algorithmic knowledge production.

Sophie Bishop, University of East London

Algorithmic recommendation systems are methodologies used by social media platforms to determine content 'relevancy'. Such proprietary systems have been defined as "black boxed", relating to the opacity of how they work, and how they organise information, politics, news and culture (Pasquale, 2015). However, an emerging body of work questions the usefulness of the black box metaphor, drawing attention to the myriad processes deployed by everyday users to understand algorithmic systems (Bucher, 2017; Eslami et al., 2016; Seaver, 2017). This paper argues that developing theories about how algorithms work is particularly essential for creative practitioners, who depend on social media platforms to promote their content. In this vein I examine the algorithmic knowledge-sharing practices utilized by beauty vloggers (video bloggers) in the UK. Through crowd sourcing, discussion groups and ad-hoc experiments,

beauty vloggers work to fill in platforms' informational silos, particularly during moments of algorithmic volatility. They piece together information, share experiences, and conduct experiments to understand how algorithmic changes affect their visibility and community. This paper has two central arguments: firstly, algorithmic conjecture is a significant form of labour, underwritten by uncertainty and anxiety. Secondly, data-generation processes are often dismissed when undertaken by women, particularly those who work in feminised genres. In this vein I resurface feminist arguments on valuing gossip as epistemology (Adkins, 2002; McRobbie, 1982). These works to centralise how narrative and testimony are meaningful processes of knowledge production. They allow us to take seriously the work that is undertaken by women in enlightening the algorithmic processes we encounter every day.

Eroding digital capitalism: Towards postcapitalist data futures.

Vassilis Charitsis, Department of Social Sciences,
University of Helsinki

The Cambridge Analytica story has played an important role in raising the public interest on the (mis) use of personal information by digital powerhouses like Facebook. Yet, the fact that it has been framed as a scandal poses the risk of reducing it to a singular isolated failure, or even abuse, of the system, obscuring thus the systemic nature of the problem. In fact, as critical scholars have long pointed out digital capitalism relies and thrives precisely on the appropriation and exploitation of user-generated data, which perpetuates socioeconomic inequalities, legitimises surveillance practices and the loss of privacy and renders human life a resource for economic value creation and extraction through the commodification of data. As data attains such a prominent position in the unrelenting expansion of contemporary capitalism that it has been characterized as the new oil, any discussions about the possibility of a postcapitalist horizon need to address the political dimensions of data use and governance. Focusing on this issue, the present paper presents an empirical investigation of three different projects (Decode, Indinet, Mastodon) that aim at developing practical alternatives that go against the logic of capturing and commodifying users' data. It draws on the work of Erik Olin Wright to analyse the potentiality and viability of developing digital real utopias that will contest and erode the hegemony of digital capitalism.

8: Critical Perspectives (B)

China's mobile revolution: economic reform, mobile wave and Internet social networks.

Meng Liang, University College London

This paper investigates the history of Internet social network development in China in the context of the economic reform. I trace the broad picture of the historical change in the Chinese political economic fabric, and link them with the reform in telecommunication industry and the development of Internet industries. I shall use the term “post-socialism” to refer to the post-1978 economic and political fabric in general, but also look into the details in the change in the general economic and political fabrics, the telecommunication industries and the interaction between them. It argues that liberalization wave started from the opening up and reform policy in 1978 largely pushed the telecommunication sectors in China to absorb the new technology and launched the mobile wave. Later, this reform and liberalized telecommunication industry also became the foundation of the Internet social network in China. Besides, this dissertation involves a large amount of history of Tencent—how the business model of Tencent is gradually built up based on mobile phones within the economic and political context, and in return, the new form of capital accumulation based on this social network thrives.

Microinsurance instruments in the digital area

Yannick Perticone, University of Lausanne, Institute of Political, Historical and International Studies (IEPHI)

Digital microinsurance is becoming a major tool among the financial instruments of international development, as it provides an increasing number of services to low-income individuals through digitized devices. With the expansion of mobile phones in developing countries, the insurance industry, in partnership with international development organizations, is developing digital platforms to ensure business relationships with their customers and create new economic ties with individuals previously excluded by the high cost access of the mainstream insurance sector. Such recent shift raises two broader questions: Why are insurance companies, with the support of key international development actors, interested in consumers previously deemed too risky for the market? And what are the power relations resulting from the implementation and materialization of digital platforms for microinsurance? Most existing studies focus on digital technologies as instruments linked to broader development goals enabling low-income people to thrive and improve their economic and social situation. In contrast, critical approaches emphasize that digital technologies reinforce pre-existing social inequalities and discriminations, and exercise further disciplinary power on individuals. However, critical approaches in international political economy (IPE) have not put much emphasis on the power relations at stake in the role of digital platforms as such in the creation of new markets. My thesis project draws from the “old” institutionalist approach and the sociology of translation to disentangle how digital platforms embody a distinct way to create

markets and stress the sociotechnical infrastructure supporting the digitalisation of microinsurance services.

eHRM and (Post)Human Perfectibility

Sarah Ryer, School of Business and Management, Queen Mary University of London

A dominant discourse in the present era is the assertion and promotion of an individual's capacity for constant (and limitless) development and improvement. This is especially prominent within the managerial context, particularly in regard to Human Resource Management (HRM), a discipline founded upon a theorisation of the employee as a human resource — an asset — that needs to be made to grow, adapt, and supply a continual return on investment. Moreover, the increased application of information technology to the HRM field — giving rise to a new subfield of ‘electronic’ HRM (eHRM) — assures an expansion of HRM's capabilities to collect, monitor, measure, and aggregate employee ‘human capital’ metrics. An overarching aim of my research is thus a problematisation of this notion of human perfectibility, exploring its role in the production of power and subjection, at the site of HR e-Learning software. Adopting a critical posthuman perspective (e.g., Braidotti, 2013), the focus is aimed at the organisational software infrastructure, in which the human subject is immersed, fragmented, and re/constructed within the datafied organisation. This paper will provide a brief introduction to the research and discuss the methodological approaches involved in critically studying HR software and its role in the production of subjectivity in the contemporary workplace, applying the philosophy and techniques from the field of Software Studies (e.g., Fuller, 2003, 2008; Kitchin & Dodge, 2011; Manovich, 2013).

9: States, Conflicts & Political Communication

The Gathering Storm?: State interference, Social Media, and the Threats to Free Expression on Digital Spaces in Africa.

Kobina Ano Bedu-Addo, CAMRI, University of Westminster

Mass availability of ipads, lap tops, smart phones, and relatively lower costs of wifi internet access, have resulted in a growth in the use of social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram and Facebook, in many African countries, by, especially, a growing literate, urbanised and globalised youth. These digital spaces have become the avenues for cultural, civic, entertainment and political discourses by the ordinary citizen, who can now by-pass the mainstream media, to engage in a much more direct expression of their views, and concerns, or mobilise around an issue. The digital spaces afforded by social media, for example, became a decisive ground for opposition supporters to thwart attempts at symbolic annihilation of their presidential candidate by government communicators during Ghana's December

2016 general elections. What this phenomena, and other examples from the continent demonstrate, is the empowering capacities digital media afford ordinary citizens to tell their own stories, unmediated, especially within the African context where information flow and free expression in the mainstream media have long been suppressed or controlled by governments using a range of methods. Some African governments have now taken notice of the mobilising power of social media, and are finding ways to neutralise this power ordinary citizens have on digital spaces. Over the past few years since the aftermath of the Arab Spring, over 10 African governments have either cut off access to the internet, or come up with other measures to make citizen's access to the internet difficult. This paper utilizes three cases from Sub-Saharan African countries- Tanzania, Uganda, and Cameroon to highlight this phenomenon of state blocking of internet access and other measures that makes it difficult for the ordinary citizen to have access to cyberspace. It is also to illustrate the susceptibility of social media to authoritarian government control to deny citizens of digital spaces for cultural, political and civic expression and mobilization. The paper then discusses the questions these raise for a theoretical and methodological understanding of this proclivity in Africa.

Neoliberal ideology of the Internet in China: a critical discourse analysis of the Chinese ruling class' discourses.

Yuqi Na, CAMRI, University of Westminster

This paper aims to focus on the critique of ideology of the Internet in China. It addresses the critical question of what types of neoliberal ideology reflect, shape and influence the development of the Internet in China and what are their discursive components. Ideology is understood in this thesis as deriving from economic structures or political conflicts in reality and serving the interests of the ruling class by reproducing the current power relations or disguising real conflicts. This paper focuses on one type of the main ideologies exist in Chinese society: neoliberalism. This paper investigates discourses from the Chinese ruling class with the help of critical discourse analysis. It analyses government documents, speeches from President Xi Jinping, and discursive events from CEOs from Baidu, Alibaba and Tencent, the three Internet oligopolies in China. It then critically examines what types of discursive features, augmentation strategies are used by the Chinese ruling class to promote the neoliberal development of the Internet in China. Overall, this paper discusses neoliberal ideological discourses from the Chinese ruling class from three aspects: how does the ruling class promote commercial data collection from users, how does it legitimate oligopolies, and how does it call for deregulation. Through a typology and a political economic analysis of the real situation of the Internet in China, this paper shows how do the neoliberal discourses disguise or partially represent the reality of the Internet in China thus serve its own class interests.

Articulating terror: the expanded discourse of terrorism through hashtag co-occurrence.

Moa Eriksson Krutrök, DIGSUM, Umeå University

This paper explores how terror attacks are rendered discursively meaningful on social media through the concurrent use and reiteration of terror hashtags, that were created following previous incidents of terror. The article focuses on twelve terror attacks in Europe in 2015-2017 and their relating hashtags on Twitter, in order to see how various combinations of these were re-used and co-articulated in tweets posted in relation to subsequent attacks. Through social network analysis of co-occurring hashtags in about 3 million tweets, in combination with close readings of a smaller sample, this study aims to analyse both the networks of hashtags in relation to terror attacks as well as the discursive process of hashtag co-articulation. The study shows that the patterns by which attack hashtags are re-used and co-articulated depend on both temporal and contextual differences.

10: Theoretical & Methodological Challenges

What Does the Concept of "Sovereignty" Mean in Digital, Network and Technological Sovereignty?

Sophie Toupin, McGill University

This paper aims at examining the notion of 'sovereignty' as it applies to 'the digital'. The concept of sovereignty has increasingly been used in recent years to describe various forms of independence, control and autonomy over digital infrastructures, technologies, social media and content. I review the literature which explicitly addresses the notion of sovereignty in relation to digital technologies and infrastructures. I focus mainly on scholarly literature, but I also integrate journalistic and activist writings to provide a broader perspective on the subject. After briefly reviewing the notion of sovereignty as it was classically conceived, I discuss six different ways in which "technological or digital sovereignty" has been conceptualized or interpreted. My analysis shows that while the notion is generally used to assert some form of collective control on digital content and/or infrastructures, the precise interpretation, subject, meanings and definitions of sovereignty can significantly differ from one stakeholder group to another.

Using digital methods and participant observation: a critical approach to the communication research.

Ana Lúcia Nunes de Sousa, Institute of of Educational Technology for Health, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro

Today, the Internet is seen as a broad field of scientific research and production. The databases generated in the virtual world can be explored to analyze complex social and cultural phenomena. Thus, in recent years, studies that use digital tools such as methodologies and research

techniques have increased considerably. This has also generated innumerable criticisms and a great scientific debate about its validity (Bollier, 2010, Couldry and Powell, 2014, Fuchs and Sandoval, 2014, Manovich, 2012, Mahrt, Merja and Scharrow, Michael, 2013, Boyd and Crawford, 2012). For these reasons, many researchers are questioning whether more data really means more knowledge. In many contexts, a local knowledge can say more and answer improves research inquiries than a countless number of data (Bollier, David, 2010, Mahrt, Merja and Scharrow, Michael, 2013, King & Lowe, 2003, Schrodt, 2010). Lev Manovich (2012) and Hooper (2011) suggest that big data should be used in combination with other techniques, such as ethnography. In this work, we analyze - from a critical perspective - the state of the art of digital methods and techniques for communication studies to land in a case study of a research conducted between 2013-2017, combining digital methods and participant observation for the study of video activism in social networks in the Brazilian context.

A backstage tour of Wikipedia in Critical Discourse Studies - how to avoid the big data trap.

Susanne Kopf, WU Vienna, English Business communication

This contribution addresses how Wikipedia and Wikipedia data can be studied from a critical perspective. Specifically, it focuses on Wikipedia talk pages (TP), i.e. the discussion pages accompanying Wikipedia's encyclopaedic articles. In addition to discussing central features of Wikipedia TPs and their implications for critical study of the platform, this paper sketches a methodological approach to TP data that allows the inclusion of substantial data sets without sacrificing in-depth qualitative study. Although various scholars have addressed aspects of digital discourse and social media in Critical Research and in Critical Discourse Studies specifically (e.g. Fuchs, 2014; KhosraviNik & Unger, 2016), Wikipedia and Wikipedia data remain underresearched in these areas – an issues that this study seeks to redress. First, this paper explores the societal significance of Wikipedia and Wikipedia TP specifically, i.e. TPs may function as transnational public spheres. Second, Wikipedia's idiosyncrasies, technological affordances and resulting implications for data sampling/treatment are discussed. Building on this, I then outline a methodological approach to TP data that permits taking into account sizable bodies of data without impeding depth of analysis. This study adds two aspects to the critical study of Wikipedia: First, by exploring Wikipedia TP's societal role, this study establishes Wikipedia as more than mere data repository and, what is more, adds a dimensions of meaning to any findings from possible future studies of TPs. Second, this study counters the widespread practice of Wikipedia big data mining and, instead, outlines a more qualitatively-oriented method of studying substantial bodies of Wikipedia data.

11: Activism, Creativity & Dissent

Big Brother is Watching You: Communicating dissent under state surveillance in the age of micro-celebrity.

Ozlem Demirkol, Winchester School of Art, University of Southampton

In the past decade in Turkey, as dissent has been gradually excluded from public spaces and traditional media (Waldman and Caliskan, 2017), many have turned to social media to get information. Government's control over mass media became even more visible during the 2018 Presidential Elections; the opposition parties had to take on various social media strategies to overcome the media blackout on their rallies and campaign events (Lerner, 2018). Despite the significance of digital platforms for the dissidents in countries with state-controlled media (Kavanaugh et al., 2016), due to the linguistic and cultural barriers that limit access to these Twitterspheres, research rarely addresses the use of these platforms for dissident communication outside of large-scale protests. In these media environments, where dissidents employ self-censorship to avoid prosecution, researchers need to go beyond the methodologies that hinge on hashtags and keywords when analysing discourse. In addition, growing distrust to authorities (Tufekci, 2018) renders the traditional political opinion leaders (parties, government officials, NGOs) less resourceful in analysing dissident narratives. With this in mind, several studies have documented the emergence of non-traditional actors as drivers of political discussions on Twitter (Sanjari and Khazraee, 2014; Freelon and Karpf, 2015; Vicari 2017) utilising their large following to command public attention (Tufekci, 2013). Yet, there is a lack of reflection on the ways these accounts are contributing to the political discourse on Twitter especially in Non-English networks. Through a qualitative analysis of 100 micro-celebrity accounts during 2018 Turkish Presidential Elections, this paper aims to provide insight into the ways political events are moderated, reinterpreted and negotiated through micro-celebrity discourses on Twitter in repressive regimes.

Digital cultural production in a neoliberal authoritarian regime: The Case Study of Morocco.

Cristina Moreno Almeida, Department of Digital Humanities, King's College London

Cultural artefacts produced and disseminated online by artists living under neoliberal authoritarian regimes need to be understood as part of local and global politics, economy and culture. In these contexts, while digital media is, in principle, not directly controlled by the state, traditional media despite its liberalisation is de facto dominated by the state. In Morocco, while television, radio and newspapers have remained as effective gatekeepers of any content deemed socially and politically unacceptable, digital and social media has allowed for the dissemination of more and more diverse cultural production. Critical

with utopian perspectives on the effect of digital media in the Arab region, my research looks at contemporary Moroccan online cultural production to examine how digital media is affecting (or not) artists' creativity. I critically analyse comics, animated cartoons, animation, memes and songs in search for narratives that engage with or stand against cultural production found offline. Questions that emerge from these artefacts problematize the idea of artists and authorship (do artists prefer to remain anonymous in fear of repercussions?); social and political boundaries (which are the lines artists cannot or will not cross?); identities and representation (who do artists talk about and how are they represented?). In this regard, the emerging discourses are significant in understanding the role digital media plays in contesting or supporting the liberal projects involved in the consolidation of an authoritarian rule. Furthermore, methodologically, this study interrogates how an easy access to digital media (as opposed to ethnographic work) may influence the results of the research.

Digital (Social Movement) Scenes

Philip K. Creswell, Uppsala University

In this paper, I expand the concept of a social movement scene by applying it to the context of digital activism. Research and theory about digital activism are broadly split into two camps: crowd-based models of activism structured and organized by networked communication; and models which theorize the importance of groups of activists and media ecologies. These two camps are often split methodologically between large-N network analyses and ethnographies, respectively, and often treated as non-overlapping magisteria. I argue that they are part of a single model. I offer, therefore, a way to conceptually bridge these two research trajectories: digital scenes. I define scenes as networks of people and places with overarching (sub)cultural intersubjectivity and localized idiocultural performances. I exemplify how researchers can use this analytically by applying it to the difficult-to-define, but rather 'purely' digital phenomenon of Anonymous. Understanding Anonymous as a scene clarifies Anonymous as a case and emphasizes the role of prefiguration, social relays and personal contacts for understanding digital activism. Finally, I conclude that scenes are useful because they are a scalable analytical tool that can help researchers focus on relations within and between movements, bridging micro-analysis of unique movement groups with overarching sociocultural formations.

12: Children & Commercial Communication

Exploring rural and urban children's practices with, and negotiation of, digital technology in Nigeria.

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This study investigates rural and urban 13- to 18-year old children's digital lifeworlds from a specifically Nigerian, and broadly African perspective. While children's digital lifeworlds and practices with technology in the global North arena is well researched and documented, research focusing on their counterparts, particularly pre-teens' and adolescents' digital practices and participation in Africa is still largely scant and inadequate; and the field underdeveloped. It is becoming increasingly evident that children live in a media-saturated and 'technologized world'; therefore, questions of media socialisation and the extent and nature of the adoption and appropriation of digital technology remain a pivotal focus of research. Privileging the use of mixed-methods approach, this study conducted 16 focus group discussions with 175 participants, and survey of 380 respondents in public and private schools sampled across Nigeria's major geopolitical zones. Supported by the new sociology of childhood research tradition (child-centred approach) and the domestication framework, the study unpacks the ways in which Nigerian children constitute their digital lives, their perceptions of and outcomes with technology, as well as how they negotiate power relations with institutional actors and stakeholders such as parents, guardians, and teachers. This study contributes an important dimension to children's digital practices, especially as there exists a resonant paucity of and apathy towards research and scholarship in children and media studies in the continent. Among other things, the study recommends government's, schools' and families' intervention in extending Nigerian children's opportunities and rights in the digital age by rethinking the precarious subjective-subordinate and marginalised position of children in Africa.

Unboxing Toy Unboxing: Interrogating the Creator Culture Exciting the Digital Child.

Jarrold Walczel, Digital Media Research Centre, Queensland University of Technology (QUT)

My research examines the networked visual culture of US-based creators who make toy unboxing videos for children on YouTube (see Marsh, 2015 and Craig and Cunningham, 2017). In order to study the digital realities of these creators, their ability to capture the attention economy of children, and the misconceptions written about their lives and practices, this research has conducted over 20 semi-structured in-person long interviews (McCracken, 1988) with these creators in their homes and/or studios. Concurrently, my study situates these creators' individual production practices against the shared genre conventions of toy unboxing videos by classifying them as digital media texts and conducting post-structuralist textual analyses of the videos (McKee, 2003), thereby determining likely readings, uses, and gratifications of these videos by the children and families who view them. These video texts and the creators who make them are also situated within the YouTube platform and YouTube Kids application environments that they are dependent upon (Nieborg and Poell, 2018) by my walking

through the expected environments of use, interrogating the platform affordances that prompt creation and consumption, and surveying the algorithmically suggested videos linked to individual videos and channels (Light, Burgess, and Duguay, 2018). This mixed methodological approach pragmatically draws from actor-network theory (Latour, 2005) to better understand the tensions and social struggles between child viewers, parental worries, suburban content creators, toy companies prompting sponsorship, platform governance, and blackbox algorithms. By studying this phenomena in this way, we may better understand the implications of this moment in children's culture and the long term impacts it may have on Western society.

It feels real - Manifestation and creation of authenticity in online music brand building and communication

Jessica Edlom, Karlstad university, Institution of geography, media and communication

The question of what is real in social media is highly relevant today. Authenticity is a key concept that is used in many different aspects, as something that comes across as being trustworthy, but also as a strategic tool in order to create relationships with the audience and a "feeling of true" (Aaker, 2006). This paper examines how authenticity is manifested and created, if it is created, on social platforms of the music industry, regarding music brands. This industry is highly branded, commercial but also heterogeneous, but the communication on digital platforms is getting more alike, regardless of level of independence, artistic integrity and professionalism. Building on the concepts of perceived and mediated authenticity (Holt, K. (2016), focusing on how authenticity comes across and is created in media, as well as artistic and commercial authenticity (Jones, C, Anand, N. Alvarez J. L, 2005), the study tries to understand its underlying attitudes and motivators. Methodologically the study is based on interviews with stakeholders at all levels of the Scandinavian music industry. Results from this study show that there is a difference in how authenticity is defined and created in social media, relating to the level of independence, artistic integrity and professionalism. Authenticity is defined as something "real" and important (for example artists "'talking'" in their own voice in social media), or as a strategic and calculated tool in order to build brand images. How does this affect the music industry, the audience and the social platforms in the long run?

13: Transformations & Challenges for Democracy

Mapping Social Media Research in 'Post-Truth Politics' of Indonesia.

Masduki, Ludwig Maximilians University of Munich, Germany

This article discusses trends of research on the intersection of social media and political communication in the contemporary 'digital politics' of Indonesia. Why Indonesia? The number of social media users in Indonesia has surpassed 130 million in 2018, and this made the country labelled as the Twitter/Facebook nation. During the last decade, academic investigations on the issue of social media in the democratic process showed a striking increase. In their qualitative and quantitative studies, Scholars have pointed out the use of social media that has changed the face of the Indonesian politics (e.g., Nugroho & Syarif, 2012; Johansson, 2016; Brajawidadga, 2016; Tapsell, 2017), changed media habit of Muslim societies in the Muslim majority country when practicing their faith as well as their political orientation (Slama, 2018). Driven by the utilization of volunteers or buzzers, the extensive use of social media produces big data of media and political habits in one side and exemplifies the misleads contestation of rational versus racist voters, increasing polarization among citizen on the other (Gazali, 2014; Lim 2017). In this paper, some key questions are examined: what are the favorite topics chosen by investigators? What is the common method used for their studies? To what extent the studies critically contest the mutual shaping between users and algorithms in the big data environment of Indonesia in comparing with other twitter/facebook nations. Drawing from extensive survey on the past academic works, I noticed a lack of critical exercise over the overload big data in post-truth politics of Indonesia."

A Comparative Study of the U.S. and Chinese online expression via Social Media in the context of Terrorism.

Yuanyuan Wei, Monde Anglophone, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle-Paris 3

This paper presents a comparative empirical case study of news coverage on terrorism on different social media platforms (Twitter and its counterpart in China--Weibo). The study investigates how the news coverage on two terror attacks, the Orlando nightclub shooting in June 2016 in the USA and the Kunming train station attack in March 2014 in China, are structured and framed differently on Twitter and Weibo. Four groups of social media actors are identified---the US media and institutional actors (group1), their counterpart in China (group2), the US Twitter ordinary users (group3), and China Weibo ordinary users(group4). Twitter and Weibo data of the four groups are collected during two terrorist events. Content analysis combines discourse analysis are used to examine the similarities and differences of the four groups' narratives of terrorism. Group 1 and 2 show distinct differences in terrorist news framing on the same event. Group 1 and 3, and group 2 and 4, illustrate different modes of interaction between media and audience. Group 3 and 4 demonstrate divergent practices of online expression, for example, Weibo users focus more on emotive expression other than political and social aspects, while Twitter users focus more on

counterterrorism, religion, national security, and human rights. Based on data analysis, reasons for these deviations between U.S. and China are discussed from aspects of media system, national policies and cultural differences. Thus, this interdisciplinary research, which entails comparative research with cross-national case studies, applies empirical contributions to communication scholarships and online communication of terrorism.

'How Foreign Media Fix Nigerian Elections through Digital Media manipulation of Political Communication'

Robert Madu, Department of Mass Communication Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu, Nigeria

This study aims to investigate the possible case of manipulation of Nigerian electoral processes mainly by imploring political communication strategies through the new media and with the intent to fix the electoral outcome in favour of pre-determined candidates. The centre-piece of this thesis was the revelation by Mr. Christopher Wylie before the British parliament that Cambridge Analytica swiped the data of more than fifty million face book users in order to fix elections in many countries including Nigeria. The revelation include the specific strategies employed by Cambridge Analytica in order to achieve the stated objective and such strategies involve, one, hacking of President Buhari's emails in order to access his medical and personal records and use such records to build a campaign case against Buhari's candidature. Second, broadcast of videos purportedly designed to smear President Buhari's image and brand him as a core Jihadist whose major political economy agendum for Nigeria is religious extremism or subtly referred to as Islamization of the entire country. Third, Cambridge Analytica was said to have organized and funded anti-election rallies within President Buhari's stronghold so as to discourage voters sympathetic to President Buhari's political cause. Also, former President Goodluck Jonathan of Nigeria (President Buhari's opponent) complained that he was rigged out of office by then American President. Barrack Obama through AKPD political communication that convinced the western establishment and Nigerian elites that he (former President Goodluck Jonathan) was weak and corrupt to govern Nigeria. Therefore, it could be possible that foreign media powers working for their respective interests meddled on Nigerian elections by employing their superficial media muscles coded with strategic communication plans through new media networks that are becoming so effective for public communication in Nigeria. Survey sampling and interview methods will be utilized for this study.

Media, criticality and institutions.

Göran Svensson, Department of Informatics and Media, Uppsala University

This presentation develops an argument that critical studies of digital and social media would merit from a

closer focus on how critique and institutions are intertwined. Digital media offers new possibilities for the practice and institutionalization of critique/criticism in different forms and settings. Social media is one setting where such forms are developed and used. On the other hand critique and contestation of institutions and institutional orders have a potential to shape such orders. By studying the institutions of critique, the critique of institutions and their mediation a new approach towards critical studies of media can be identified. Using this approach critical studies of the media and media as critical agency for change can be investigated. It also acknowledge different forms of critique and varieties of expressing it and the concept criticality take on a central role. It is finally suggested that the ideas presented here - linking media, critique and institutions - is part of a wider interest among scholars in social science and the humanities, to see critique in new light and an emerging turn towards criticality. The research is done as part of the network Digital Institutionalization at the Department of Informatics and Media, Uppsala University. It also builds upon work in the dissertation *Understanding Media Criticism* (Svensson 2015).

14: New Genres in Political Communication

Political theory and method for incivility research: Agonism, computational text mining and abortion discussions.

Dayei Oh, Online Civic Culture CDT, Loughborough University

The prevalence of incivility in contemporary politics is gaining increasing attention in academia. Part of the reason for this is that digital and social media technologies have made incivility and uncivil content both more apparent and abundant. The burgeoning scholarship on political incivility establishes two significant conceptualisations of incivility: 1) as interpersonal rudeness and 2) as violations of democratic norms, especially regarding deliberation, mutual respect and Kantian morality (Coe et al., 2014; Muddiman, 2017; Papacharissi, 2004; Rossini, forthcoming; Stryker et al., 2016). However, what is deemed uncivil in political debates depends on the nature of hegemony and power relations in a given society. Therefore, incivility research requires a more radical conceptualisation which acknowledges the hegemonic and antagonistic nature of the political. Reflecting on a case study of incivility in abortion discussions online in Ireland and South Korea, this paper suggests two things. Firstly, it argues that political incivility is better understood through antagonistic political theories (e.g. Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Mouffe, 2000). Secondly, it provides two categories (interpersonal rudeness and political incivility) and seven subcategories (name-calling, aspersion, pejorative for speech in interpersonal rudeness; extreme exclusion, misrecognition, incitement to violence, and a threat to the liberal system in political incivility) to translate the theoretical concept of incivility into more measurable

entities. Lastly, this paper introduces computational text mining methods using the EMOTIVE system to automate social media data collection and semantic analysis of incivility (Sykora et al., 2013).

Metalanguaging as resistance: The socially-mediated rejection of public apologies in the wake of #MeToo.

Peter Wikström, Department of Language, Literature and Intercultural Studies, Karlstad University

The aim of this paper is to investigate how local negotiations of linguistic normativity form part of a structure of civic engagement or political participation in today's socially mediated publics. The public apology is a discursive genre that has received much folk linguistic attention in public debate (e.g., Ancarno, 2015), especially in the wake of the #MeToo movement of 2017–2018. Several prominent examples of such public apologies have been characterized as empty apologies, pseudo apologies, or, simply, "non-apologies" (cf. Kampf, 2009). This paper presents a case study for a larger project focusing on metapragmatic negotiations and contestations in the reception of public apologies as non-apologies in social media spaces. While the larger project will mainly focus on post-#MeToo cases, this paper addresses a prominent 'portal case,' namely Donald Trump's "Pussygate" apology video, published in October of 2016 on Trump's Facebook page. The paper presents analyses of Twitter posts and conversations about this apology video from the days immediately following its release, with a microanalytic (Giles et al., 2015) focus on how metalinguistic notions of real versus non-apologies are articulated in informal public discourse. Negotiations of the Trump video's merits as an apology are rarely only that, but rather tend to be interwoven with affectively charged ideological positionings – in relation to party politics, progressivism, feminism, and more. Through articulating notions such as non-apology, social media interactants are in effect practicing a kind of layperson's critical discourse analysis.

Aesthetics by Algorithms: Sovereignty and Disappearance in Palestine.

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As algorithms increasingly participate into the making of sovereignty at different levels – from financial trends to electoral outcomes – they also operate by producing visual forms and digital configurations of power. Specifically to the context of Israel/Palestine, they create new ways of visualizing the colonial space. There, sovereignty is re-modulated through an aesthetics by algorithms that manifests operationally with mechanisms of erasure and disappearance. On the one hand, this occurs through censorship of Palestinian users' online contents as a direct and explicit form of policing. On the other, the hyper-

visible symbols of colonial power (separation wall, checkpoints, refugee camps, etc.) undergo progressive erasure from digital representations (maps, web platforms, apps, etc.). This chapter introduces the concept of 'aesthetics by algorithms' as a new canon and form of ordering that participates in the making of the sovereign. Along these lines, this article discusses the 'concealing' dimension of algorithms by asking the following questions: 1) To what extent does aesthetics by algorithms organize and shape state ideology and sovereignty? 2) How does it reinforce inequality, segregation and a logic of dominance? In answering these questions, this article discusses the aesthetic dimension of algorithms in social media, social networks, navigation and gaming apps, as well as online services.

15: Surveillance

Critically Examining Automation through Digital Advertising.

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This paper outlines a method that draws on the digital advertising industry to approach the growing role of automation in social media platforms. Studies of social media are increasingly interrogating the political economy of operating platforms that rely on surveillance based advertising and staffing via exploitative labour practices. Scholars have noted that the incredible growth and profitability of social media platforms has been increased by their ability to collect, refine and harness user data at industrial scales — a growth foreshadowed in earlier critical works (Gandy Jr, 1993; Andrejevic, 2007). The regulatory landscape is shifting, with consumer protection legislation such as General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in the EU, and possible market intervention, such as the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's current Digital Platforms Inquiry but businesses are still working on a premise of continuous expansion and limitless supply of audience attention and data (Cohen, 2017). As critical scholars we need useful approaches to understanding the algorithms and automated processes to which platforms are now turning. One possible way academics can critically explore these systems is through their primary revenue: digital advertising. Advertisers have long understood the platform business of converting attention into advertising revenue and helped shape the increasing automation of targeted advertising. Advertisers' knowledge and practices can be examined through study of advertising platforms and trade press materials as well as speaking to advertising workers. By approaching social media platforms through the advertising platforms that serve ads and the knowledge of advertising professionals, scholars can get insights into the automated advertising processes that fund them.

Computational dependency, from police to politics.

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Initial debate on mass surveillance have centered on questions of privacy and data protection, overlooking the larger social, political and economic questions surrounding the integration of surveillance platforms across government, business and civil society (Dencik et al, 2016). I will use data driven policing in Europe to illustrate how growing power asymmetries and increased dependency on surveillance platforms are constructing new data classes which lead to new structural injustices in society. This article situates data driven policing within the ideology of datafication (van Dijk, 2014), its political and economic drivers (Zuboff, 2015), and build on Andrejevic (2014) notion of data classes to create a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between target communities, law enforcement and surveillance platforms. Questioning how the implementation of predictive police platforms and reliance on commercial vendors are reinforcing and obscuring social injustices. Based on in-depth interviews with a range of police employees, technologist and oversight activist I argue that it is crucial to move critiquing specific data driven policing systems beyond issues related to privacy, data protection and discrimination or questions of effectiveness and efficiency. The belief in the ability of data to predict does not come out of thin air, it should be questioned in light of a broader perspective of economic interests of an industry. Where the agendas of those who stand to gain the most dominate. In this paper I propose that those whose interest dominate the investment and inclusion of data driven technologies should be considered as one data class.

Milkshake Duck: Nonsecurity Uses of Surveillance in the Digital Age.

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The internet has its way of making and unmaking heroes or celebrities online. Through a critical visual and textual analysis, this article examines the notion of the Milkshake Duck as facilitated by surveillance through the lens of Mark Andrejevic's theory of the Digital Enclosure (2007a; 2007b). The term Milkshake Duck "denotes someone who gains widespread positive attention, only to be suddenly criticised when new information is made public" (BBC News, 2018; Tait, 2018) about them. Four relevant case studies (Kony 2012, Ken Bone, Chewbacca Mum, and Keaton Jones) are examined. I discuss online surveillance of citizens by government and corporate entities, but the article focuses more on citizens surveilling other citizens online. The article also addresses the later because the current literature available hardly discusses citizens surveilling citizens, and it is equally important to address this phenomenon as well. I argue that if we are to retain the original conception of the Internet, which is the promise of freedom without restrictions. We must continuously explore ways to think about privacy, by not

only reducing the constraints imposed on users (Benkler, 2016) but also reimagining means that data is collected, stored, shared, and accessed. What the current article offers to the existing body of research is a consideration for nonsecurity uses of surveillance, as Rice, (2017) suggests. I explore surveillance through the lens of consumers of technology, not state actors or corporations. I explore surveillance as a cyber disciplining tool for internet users who crown and dethrone internet stars or celebrities.

Political Surveillance with Consent? Voter Data Collection and Microtargeting in Swedish Political Parties

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While governmental surveillance (also called "hard surveillance") has been given attention both with regard to how it is done and how people respond to it – primarily from a social science or legal perspective – less attention has been given to "soft surveillance" (Marx 2005). It is when we seemingly voluntarily give away information, and used and conducted primarily by commercial and noncommercial actors (such as businesses, NGOs, interest groups, researchers, political parties and fellow citizens). This study provides insights obtained from semi-structured and in-depth interviews views with political operatives involved in microtargeting and voter data collection in three political parties represented in the Swedish parliament. Among the themes explored in this paper are how the work with soft surveillance is conditioned by organizational culture, resources, infrastructure, judiciary factors and election system. Furthermore the paper discusses how the development of soft surveillance is changing the ways not only the ways election campaigns are conducted but also how the political parties operate and the whole democratic system.

16: Place, Mobilization & Movements

The Cultural Production of Climate Futures: Critical Analysis of Audience Interpretations and Interactions with Promotional Videos on YouTube.

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Climate change is one of the most urgent challenges we currently face and our failure to enact the major transformations needed decarbonize society raises questions about political leadership. However, the lack of political action also reflects on our societal values and a widespread lack of public concern about tackling climate change. This absence of public outrage has led to claims that the climate crisis is also a crisis of the imagination and that there is a need for research on the influence of imaginative processes in building societal engagement with climate responses. My research responds to this challenge by analysing the formation of climate imaginaries in promotional videos about climate

responses on YouTube. I argue that these cultural productions are highly persuasive and widely accessible forms of digital storytelling that embed particular visions of climate futures. Furthermore, digital content produced by creative professionals is an overlooked influence on our collective imaginative capacity. Therefore, this content urgently requires critical media analysis to shed light on audience interpretations and new patterns of media use. By illustrating the ways in which possible futures are re-imagined in YouTube promotional videos and showing how this influences possibilities for citizen action in the here and now, I hope to provide the first detailed analysis of the kinds of futures that are being constructed by creative professionals on one of the most visited social media platforms. This is highly significant because greater understanding of how creative professionals are designing the imaginative processes that shape climate imaginaries is crucial to attempts to create a just transition.

Resisting co-optation: a challenge to communicative capitalism?

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This paper aims to contribute to theorising the ways in which power operates in communicative capitalism. It examines a case study of an Italian patients' social media movement based on a medical discovery that challenges the existing medical orthodoxy (Kuhn, 1996) about the causes of the chronic disease, Multiple Sclerosis (MS). By offering alternative treatment options, the discovery also threatens the drug companies that profit from MS. Based on auto-ethnography (Balsiger and Lambelet, 2014:144-146), and 60 semi-structured interviews (Gunter, 2000; Berger, 2011) of the movement's activists (Della Ratta and Valeriani, 2012; Della Porta, 2014), this paper examines how the Italian national MS associations reacted to the medical discovery using a strategy of co-optation, which permitted the medical establishment to maintain the status quo. Using commodification theory (Marx, 1976; Mosco 2009; Hardy 2014) to shed light on the mechanisms behind the production of the medical establishment's "message", this paper posits, in line with the activists' views, that the traditional actors involved in treating MS are in some way commodified to corporate power's interest in refuting the medical discovery. The paper examines whether the formalised network of legally-recognised societies that arose out of the social media activities of the patient movement (Gerbaudo, 2012; Van Dijck, 2013; Fuchs, 2014; Meikle, 2016;), may be characterised as a challenge to communicative capitalism, resisting co-optation.

The paper concludes by contrasting this case study to the one put forward by Dean (2005) applying the concepts of "no response", "fantasy of abundance", "participation" and "wholeness".

GPS sásta/GPS collar - Use of New Technology in Reindeer Husbandry against a Background of Economic and Ecological Change in Sápmi., Network and Technological Sovereignty?

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Winter time is referred to as the bottleneck for the reindeer husbandry. The combined effects of industrial activities, forestry, etc. result in hard pressure on reindeer herding. In recent years there has also been a change in the weather so the winters have fluctuated between cold and warm periods which has resulted in poorer snow conditions. The reindeer are becoming more mobile, instead of grazing in one area, because of the disturbances. To gain more control over the reindeer herders have incorporated a new tool; the GPS-collar. The transmitters generate the reindeer movement data, which is sent to the reindeer herders via satellite or telephone. Today the reindeer herders go in and study where the reindeer are before heading out to the winter grazing area. Being able to see the reindeers' movements gives a feeling of security and control. The feeling of control over the reindeer can quickly be replaced by uncertainty and concern when the reindeer leave the winter grazing area, go to dense predator areas or are not moving for a long time, indicating that they are dead. The GPS collar also enables herders to talk about the reindeer flows in communication with to external actors. In discussions with stakeholders, it is important for the Sámi community to be able to visualize and communicate reindeer husbandry's use of the area. Here, the GPS maps become an important tool with power.