ECREA Postconference

Digital media and information disorders: Theorizing and investigating influence operations, impact and contextual factors

Where?
Hybrid format
In Aarhus:
Ada building (5342) – room 333 (track 1 and common sessions), IT-City Katrinebjerg
Nygaard building (5335) – room 091 (track 2), IT-City Katrinebjerg
Nygaard building (5335) – room 295 (common room), IT-City Katrinebjerg
Registration: Hopper building (5346) ground floor, IT-City Katrinebjerg
Virtual: Please register here

When?
Monday October 24th, 2022

Topic
During the pandemic we have experienced a hitherto unprecedented international focus on digital information disorders such as misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories both in policies and scientific contributions across research fields. With among others Lazarsfeld and Merton's (1948) work on propaganda, communication studies have a strong tradition in theorizing and methodologically operationalizing empirical studies on how mediated propaganda affects user behavior and attitudes with central notions such as influentials and opinion leaders. The notion of 'limited effect' has sparked a renewed heated debate on whether this transfers into weak/no effect or under what limited contextual conditions new forms of digital propaganda might actually have quite powerful effects. Digital media affects the distinction between mediated and unmediated life and collapses them into an 'onlife' that provides new theoretical and empirical contexts for effect and influence studies. Recent studies on digital social media influence have pointed to contextual (e.g. platform) factors to be central for the operationalization of communication-style influence (Malhotra & Galletta, 2003; Gruzd & Wellmann, 2014; Goggin & Petakovic, 2014) measured on different levels such as network visibility, in and outgroup social cues, rhetorical and emotional persuasion, and inauthentic behavior such as strategic communication overload, flagging and boosting from e.g. bots, sock puppets, junk news and click farms (Bastos & Mercea, 2019; Howard, 2020). This post-conference invites scholars from around the world and different disciplines to bring forward research focusing on theories and/or empirical studies on digital information disorders e.g., its complex conceptual and contested nature, its contextual factors and associated influence operations, effects and impacts and potential prevention strategies such as digital literacy, fact checking operations and other counter propaganda strategies. We welcome contributions from a variety of topics such as Covid-19, Russian-Ukrainian war, climate change, anti vaxxer social movements etc. The post-conference will furthermore focus on nations and regions as contextual factors.

This postconference is partly funded by EDMO that, together with its national or multinational hubs, aims at countering disinformation and analyzing the impact of disinformation on societies and democracies both at national and European level. The postconference is organized by DATALAB at Aarhus University, which is the academic research partner within EDMO and also leads NORDIS, the Nordic EDMO hub.

Structure & Provisional Program

The post-conference will be structured as two-track event taking place in Aarhus, whereas the sessions will be organized hybrid - virtually and in person - to allow for attendance from abroad. There will be one keynote, common sessions and common breaks for participants from both tracks to engage with each other.

Time	Session Track 1 (Ada 333)	Session Track 2 (Nygaard 091)
9:00-9:30	Registration at ground floor Hopper building (5346) Snacks at Ada 333	
9:30-9:40	Welcome & Introduction by Anja Bechmann	
9:45-11:15	Session 1A: Media & Platforms 1	Session 1B: Concepts & Context 1
11:20-12:00	Keynote by Axel Bruns	
12:00-13:00	Lunch Break (INCUBA)	
13:00 -14:00	Session 2: Ukraine & fact-checking	
14:05-15:35	Session 3A: Media & Platforms 2	Session 3B: Concepts & Context 2
15:35-15:50	Coffee Break	
15:50-17:20	Session 4: COVID-19	
17:20-17:30	Concluding Remarks by Anja Bechmann	
17:30-18:00	Reception with Drinks & Snacks	

Participants

The post-conference assembles international junior and senior researchers from various fields. The participants will be:

José Alarcón – U.N.E.D Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, Spanien
Daniel Angus - DMRC; Queensland University of Technology, Australia
Daniel Bach – Roskilde University, Denmark
Auksė Balčytienė - Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania
Anja Bechmann – Aarhus University, Denmark
Benedetta Brevini – Sydney University, Australia
Axel Bruns - DMRC; Queensland University of Technology, Australia
Kilian Buehling – Freie Universität Berlin, Germany
Marina Charquero-Ballester – Aarhus University, Denmark
Petra de Place Bak – Aarhus University, Denmark
Hossein Derakhshan – London School of Economics and Political Science, UK
Lorenzo Federico – LUISS, Italy
Hanna Gawel – Jagiellonian University, Poland
Sofya Glazunova – DMRC; Queensland University of Technology, Australia
Tuomas Heikkilä – University of Helsinki, Finland
Mathias Holm Tveen – Aarhus University, Denmark
Minna Horowitz – University of Helsinki, Finland
Ling-Yi Huang – Mid Sweden University, Sweden
Edward Hurcombe - DMRC; Queensland University of Technology, Australia
Sirkku Kotilainen – Tampere University, Finland
Rebecca Kyser – University of Illinois, US
Alexandre Leroux – Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium
Jakob Linaa Jensen – Aarhus University, Denmark
Grégoire Lits - UCLouvain Observatory for Research on Media and Journalism, Belgium
René Petersen – Aalborg University, Denmark
Mervi Pantti – University of Helsinki, Finland
Maximilian Schlüter – Aarhus University, Denmark
Guna Spurava – Tampere University, Finland
Phillip Stenmann Baun – Aarhus University, Denmark
Anna Sytnik - St. Petersburg State University, Russia
Alexei Tsinovoi – Aarhus University, Denmark
Jessica Walter – Aarhus University, Denmark
Zhiwei Wang – University of Edinburgh, UK

Virtual: Please register here

Detailed Program

Time (CEST)	
9:00-9:30	Registration at ground floor Hopper building (5346) Snacks at Ada 333
9:30-9:40	Welcome & Introduction by **Anja Bechmann** – Ada 333
9:45-11:15	**Session 1A – Track 1: Media & Platforms 1** – Ada 333 Presenters: **Edward Hurcombe:** "Coordinated Inauthentic Behavior": How Meta shapes the discussion of mis/disinformation on Facebook **Sofya Glazunova:** Conspiracy, Propaganda, or 'Fake News'? Understanding the Digital Public Response to RT Coverage of COVID-19 **Auksė Balčytienė:** Similar and different: Resilience to online disinformation in Finland and Lithuania
	Session 1B – Track 2: Concepts & Context 1 – Nygaard 091 Presenters: **Zhiwei Wang:** Being Chinese Online – Discursive (Re)production of Internet-Mediated Chinese National Identity **Aljosha Karim Schapals:** Responding to 'Fake News': Journalistic perceptions of and reactions to a delegitimising force **Hossein Derakhshan:** Disinfo Wars: a taxonomy of information warfare **José Alarcón:** Digital disorders versus The Generalized Other
11:20-12:00	Keynote by **Axel Bruns** – Ada 333
12:00-13:00	Lunch Break (INCUBA)
13:00 -14:00	**Session 2: Ukraine & fact-checking** – Ada 333 Presenters: **Jessica Walter:** Emotional responses to fact-checking in the Ukraine war: A cross-country comparison of social media content **Lorenzo Federico:** Network and semantic analysis of the dissemination of Italian fact-checking on Twitter **Hanna Gawel:** Birds of a feather boycott together – strength of temporary homophily cyber voice in social media in the time of unrest
14:05-15:35	**Session 3A – Track 1: Media & Platforms 2** – Ada 333 Presenters: **Alexei Tsinovoi:** In the eye of the Twitter storm: the topologies of online (in)visibility in the remediation of the 2019 Eurovision Song Contest **Daniel Bach:** What 4chan's reading of the Ukrainian war can teach us about far-right information disorders **Kilian Buehling:** Affording Deletion: Message ephemerality on Telegram and its implications for the research of conspiracist communities **Tuomas Heikkilä:** Covid-19 content moderation and platform accountability

	Session 3B – Track 2: Concepts & Context 2 – Nygaard 091 Presenters: **Jakob Linaa Jensen:** How digital feudalism creates information disorders **Guna Spurava:** Young people as empirical experts of research in the age of information crisis **Alexandre Leroux:** Distrust and contention - Bridging actors within a polarized mobilization space
15:35-15:50	Coffee Break
15:50-17:20	**Session 4: COVID-19** – Ada 333 Presenters: **Marina Charquero Ballester:** Public emotions in the Nordic Twitter during the second wave of the COVID-19 crisis **Grégoire Lits:** Anxiety, panic and (social) media effect during the pandemic. Insight from a multi-wave survey (2020-2022) in French-speaking Belgium **Rebecca Kyser:** Images as Tools of Information Disorders **Lingyi Huang:** Do you hear my voice? Different framings of COVID-19 children's vaccines between the mainstream media and social media in Taiwan
17:20-17:30	Concluding Remarks by **Anja Bechmann** – Ada 333
17:30-18:00	Reception with Drinks & Snacks – Ada 333

Note: presenters only; order within sessions can still change, all hybrid sessions

Keynote: Axel Bruns: The role of mainstream media as amplifiers of misinformation