



Mediated Communication, Public Opinion and Society Section

Abstracts of papers accepted for presentation in the Online Conference Papers of the
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News Consumption Habits and Perception of Fake News: A Survey of Post-Millennials

Authors

Niaz Ahmed - Professor Emeritus, Saint Cloud State University, Minnesota

Abstract

In recent years, smartphone and social media usage has grown exponentially among the general public and specifically within the post-millennials or generation Z (Statista, 2015).

The Generation Z is the demographic cohort born during the mid-1990s to mid-2000s (Seemiller & Grace, 2016; Wood, 2013), and is the first cohort to have smartphones, social media, and other technologies readily available at a young age.

Although a significant amount of research has been done in the recent past about the use of social media among Generation X and Y, insufficient research exists about post-millennials' news consumption habit and perception of fake news as it relates to the social media. A 2015 study by Mitchell and Gottfried found that 61% of millennials get their political news on Facebook, while 51% of Gen Xers get political news on Facebook. Rosengard, Tucker-McLaughlin, and Brown (2014) found that students who are exposed to news on social media, often rely on other internet sources to confirm it. A 2016 study revealed that majority of college students gets breaking news from Twitter initially, which leads them to get more information from websites of traditional news organizations (Tandoc & Johnson).

Since the digital world is changing rapidly every year, it is important to track its usage and impacts on an ongoing basis for detecting any trends and correlations, and for identifying significant implications. The present study attempts to contribute to the evolving knowledge by examining the implications of post-millennials' news consumption habits and perception of fake news.

This study examined post-millennials' news consumption habits and perception of fake news in social media. A survey was completed by a non-random sample of 415 students at State University of New York in Oneonta during the academic year 2017-2018. The results revealed that more than half of post-millennials accessed various social media several times a day, while nearly 1 in 5 admitted accessing social media every hour of the day. As for the amount of time devoted to social media, nearly one-third of the students admitted using social media for 7-10 hours per day, and slightly less than one-third of the students spent 5-6 hours per day on social media.

With regard to news consumption habits of post-millennials, data analysis revealed that 9 in 10 students used their smartphones to check the news online, and most students used multiple sources of news. About fourth-fifths of the students obtained their news from online newspapers and magazines, while three-fifths of them also used social media for obtaining news. As for the amount of time devoted to consuming news, fourth-fifths of the students indicated that they spent 1-2 hours

in a typical day for news consumption. In terms of exposure to fake news, 9 in 10 students indicated that they had seen some news on social media that turned out to be fake news.

These findings may have significant implications for social media as they plan to counter the proliferation of fake news on their platforms.

Submission ID

66

Theorizing Chinese digital vigilantism: the mediated hybrid participatory surveillance and the collapse of contexts and fields

Authors

Qian Huang - Erasmus University Rotterdam

Abstract

Digital vigilantism is the phenomenon of citizens weaponizing online visibility to retaliate against an individual when they are collectively offended by his/her offensive conduct or speech (Trottier, 2017). It is a common phenomenon on the Chinese Internet, with targets including rival fans, animal abusers, sex offenders, corrupt government officials, as well as unpatriotic civilians and celebrities. Previous research on this topic mostly focuses on the empirical implication of these cases, and do not provide sufficient theoretical explanation on the phenomenon. Therefore, by examining high-profile cases of digital vigilantism in China and discussing relevant theories and concepts, this paper intends to theorize digital vigilantism in China and its influence on Chinese society.

This paper firstly argues that in the Chinese context, this phenomenon should be understood through the lens of surveillance. DV is a mediated hybrid participatory surveillance that bridges different types of surveillance in various aspects. In the process of information gathering, DV participants conduct both face-to-face and file-based surveillance, After the information collected, DV participants attack both the dividual and individual of the target. Such surveillance also differs from other traditional surveillance because the scrutiny and exclusion happen simultaneously in DV incidents, which merges the process and result of surveillance.

The paper further discusses how this form of surveillance is complicated by the ubiquitous state power of the Chinese government. Firstly, the government's tight control over Internet infrastructures and law establishments makes Chinese DV activities mostly unorganized. Also, effective governmental propaganda on social values and norms makes many Chinese DV incidents align with the state's interest. Empirical DV cases also demonstrate the government's effort to co-op this phenomenon, which makes Chinese DV participants tend to seek support from institutional power, which is especially typical in anti-corruption cases and cases targeting unpatriotic citizens.

A detailed theoretical analysis of the implication of normalizing such surveillance in China is provided lastly. The social implication of DV should be understood in two-fold. On the micro-level, it leads to context collapse (boyd, 2010) of punishment. The punishment imposed on the DV target is not limited in a specific context of his/her social life; instead, it transcends the boundaries and contexts of online-offline, work-life, public-private, etc. Meanwhile, on the macro-level, it leads to the collapse of autonomous fields of various social activities (Bourdieu, 1993) and the expanding impact of social capital. The logic of different fields is increasingly impacted by a combined force of (social) media logic, populist justice, and political power. The platform economy also boosts the possibility, intensifies the desire, and increases the impact of transforming social capital into other capital (e.g. economic, cultural, symbolic).

Submission ID

353

Social media and anti-incineration mobilization: Evidence from WeChat

Authors

Xixi Zhang - University of Montreal

Abstract

From the Arab Spring to the Me Too Movement, social media has shown tremendous power to mobilize collective actions in democratic and authoritarian countries. China has the world's largest and most active social network market (Statista, 2019). An emergent online discursive space in China has therefore aroused more and more attention. In current literature, social media platforms' role in is an imperative topic embedded in both new media studies and social movement studies. Despite previous research has proven the implications of social media (for example Facebook, Twitter, and Microblog) for empowerment, few scholars have paid attention to social mobilization initiated through WeChat, which has become the most popular social media application in China. To provide insight into the role of social media in protest mobilization, I focus on anti-incineration campaigns based on WeChat platform and attempt to explore whether and to what extent can WeChat provide an opportunity for Chinese activists to enable them to challenge the established order in incineration field (Fligstein and McAdam, 2011, 2012)? To answer this question, I identified 12 anti-incineration subscription accounts and exported 556 texts related to waste incineration posted on these accounts. Based on discourse analysis approach, Nvivo was applied to code and examine these anti-incineration posts. Emphasizing structure and agency (Giddens, 1984), my study focuses on two concerns: objective technical conditions and subjective construction process of online anti-incineration mobilization. In this contribution, the first axis presents the efficiency and interactivity of WeChat as a horizontal communication tool. WeChat creates a space

for user-generated content in which operators of subscription accounts are allowed to send posts directly to subscribers. Platform architecture of WeChat also provides point-to-point (through “Send to Chat”), point-to-multipoint (by “Send to Group Chat”), and scattershot (via “Share with All in Moment”) dissemination services. Given the high-intensity use, WeChat serves a good tool that enables activists to construct an online community of protest. The second axis shows the social construction process of waste incineration issue. Juristic rhetoric, scientific rhetoric, and ecological rhetoric are widely used and considered as discursive opportunity structures. Diagnostic framing (Snow and Benford, 1988, 1992) mainly refers to technical defects, environmental risks, illegal land acquisition, the lack of information, and insufficient public participation. Accordingly, prognostic framing (Snow and Benford, 1988, 1992) involves technology upgrade, monitor and management, relocation of incineration plants, information disclosure, public participation, and other policy changes. In sum, this study provides empirical evidence to enrich existing understanding of the formative role of social media in disseminating controversial topics and methods used by activists to present controversies.

Submission ID

574

A behavioral study of how context and motivation influence fitness mobile application user experience

Authors

Shuang Liang - Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications

Lichao Xiu - Beijing Normal University

Guoming Yu - Beijing Normal University

Abstract

With the rapid development of mobile Internet in recent years, fitness mobile application has become an effective tool for facilitating physiological data collection and administration for health and wellness purpose. Most of fitness mobile applications present users with functionalities centered on exercise guidance, data record, exercise information search and social community. User experience (UX) is a concept to reflect the level of satisfaction or perception of users with a product, content, system, or service. In order to keep users' continuance use intention and media use benefit, how to improve users' experience when they use fitness mobile applications should be well discussed. This research sheds light on the factors, especially use context and user motivation, that explain user experience of fitness mobile application. To that end, 66 participants were divided into three groups according to a 7-point scale for measuring motivation: self-regulatory motives (SrM) group ($N = 22$), enjoyment motives (EM) group ($N = 23$), and social motives (SM) group ($N = 21$). Each participant was required to use a certain fitness mobile application Keep in both public context condition and privacy context condition. Two-way repeated Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was

performed against data collected from experiment in two different context conditions and the result indicated that all groups of participants showed higher levels of perceived usability and perceived ease of use in public context, especially on exercise-GPS function. There is no significant effect of user motivation on perceived usability nor perceived ease of use.

Submission ID

739

Constructing structures of desire: Chinese gay men's dating app use in a polymedia environment

Authors

Shangwei Wu - Erasmus University Rotterdam

Daniel Trottier - Erasmus University Rotterdam

Abstract

Mobile dating apps are popular among Chinese gay men. While local apps like Blued and Aloha dominate the Chinese market, foreign apps like Grindr have also found their way to metropolitan Chinese gay men. In such a polymedia environment (Madianou, 2014), how gay users differentiate these apps and prioritize them for different communicative purposes remains to be studied. A prior study shows that gay users often Grindr for immediate hook-ups, while they expect "serious" dating on Tinder (MacKee, 2016). This means that users' practices are highly structured, as these structures are shaped by the apps.

Drawing from sexual fields theory (Green, 2008), we frame these structures as "structures of desire". Based on 51 interviews with urban Chinese gay men, we explore the structures of desires and discuss how they are shaped by dating apps, whose affordances are shaped by local internet regulations and marketing strategies. We specifically examine three apps: Blued, Aloha, and Grindr. (1) Blued presents a range of nearby users' profiles in descending order of geographic proximity, affording immediate hook-ups. It has the largest user base and connects people from different social strata. Therefore, Blued users are often perceived to be of "low quality" by urban middle-class gay men. (2) Aloha is similar to Tinder, as users need to swipe left or right on the profile to signal the dis/interest in establishing a connection. Aloha also allows users to post pictorial/textual statuses and to follow others without getting a match. If one clicks on another user's profile, the interface will present a grid of pictures posted by that user. In consequence, Aloha is popular among those who have a higher level of media literacy and are capable of presenting their lives through carefully edited photos. According to the participants, the match mechanism acts as a speed bump which slows down the process of hooking up. Thus, Aloha is less used for immediate casual sex. (3) Grindr has a small user base because of China's internet regulations. Grindr users are mainly Chinese gay men who have studied or traveled abroad, foreign students and expatriates living in

China, and foreign travelers. It is thus perceived as a venue for those who have a racial preference for non-Chinese men or those who want to connect with middle/upper class Chinese gay men who have overseas experience. Overall, our findings suggest that the dating app scene in China is rather pluralized, with local/global tensions between global mobility and nation-bounded media landscape co-existing alongside local/local tensions across social strata.

Author Biographies

Shangwei Wu is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Media and Communication at Erasmus University Rotterdam. He researches dating apps and Chinese gay men's social relationships.

Daniel Trottier is an Associate Professor of Global Digital Media in the Department of Media and Communication at Erasmus University Rotterdam. His current research considers the use of digital media for the purposes of scrutiny, denunciation, and shaming.

Address: Woudestein, Van der Goot building, M8-16, P.O. Box 1738, NL-3000 DR Rotterdam, the Netherlands

Email: wu@eshcc.eur.nl; trottier@eshcc.eur.nl

Submission ID

959

Civil Society, Journalism and Peace Negotiations in Cyprus

Authors

Sanem Sahin - University of Lincoln

Abstract

In conflict societies, civil society is an important player in peace efforts. They have the local knowledge, networks and cultural understanding that is important for peace processes and reconciliation efforts. Involving civil society groups in peace negotiations can improve legitimacy and public ownership of a peace agreement, which would also intensify its effectiveness and durability. Yet, most of the time they are not included in the process.

The situation in Cyprus is no different. The ongoing peace process in Cyprus, home to one of the world's most intractable conflicts, has been led by elites. Cyprus has been divided since 1974 as a result of an ethno-nationalist conflict between Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot communities. The search for a peaceful settlement is still ongoing with little success. It is political elite that determines and conducts the negotiations between the sides. Civil society is not included in these negotiations despite various projects showing the importance of its participation in the ongoing efforts. So far, political elite has been effectively using the media to shape and communicate the discourses on conflict and peace in a top-down way. This paper explores whether civil society, using the news media, can challenge these elite discourses and communicate its own needs and demands in a bottom-up way.

The paper is based on semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with civil society representatives and journalists from Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot communities conducted between November 2019 and January 2020. The interviews inquired about the relationship between journalists and civil society organisations to understand how they interact with each other and the impact of this relationship on civil society's efforts in the transformation of the conflict. The paper first looks at the development of civil society in both sides of Cyprus and their efforts in peacebuilding so far. Then it studies their relationship with journalism to find out how they could use journalism to publicise their views and efforts on the settlement of the Cyprus problem.

The findings show that although new media technologies have provided civil society groups with new opportunities and platforms to challenge the dominant discourses on the conflict and its resolution, they have not replaced the mainstream news media. They have just complemented them. The mainstream news media and journalists are still key for civil society to reach the general public and elites to publicise their views. Yet, the news media structures, journalistic routines and the national context in which they are embedded limit the possibility of these organisation changing or challenging the dominant discourse through news.

Submission ID

985

Positivity norm of emotion expression on SNS and psychological well-being

Authors

Lihong Quan - Dept. of Media & Comm. Studies, Sungkyunkwan Univ., Seoul

Mihye Seo - Dept. of Media & Comm. Studies, Sungkyunkwan Univ., Seoul

Abstract

People express both positive and negative emotions on social networking services (SNSs), however, with a preference towards positive emotions (Lin, Tov, & Qiu, 2014). This preference may be due to the positivity norm that has been formed in online social networking environments (Waterloo, Baumgartner, Peter, & Valkenburg, 2018). If there is a positivity norm on SNS, then how does it affect users' emotion expression on SNS and psychological well-being? To explore the behavioral and psychological outcome of the positivity norm, this study examines how perceived positivity norm affects users' emotion expression and psychological well-being. In addition, receiving positive responses has been pointed to mediate the relationship between self-disclosure and psychological well-being (e.g., Liu & Brown, 2014). Therefore, this study also tests whether the association between emotion expression on SNS and psychological well-being will be mediated by received positive responses.

The results of the structural equation modeling analysis of an online survey data of Instagram users ($N = 503$) confirmed that participants perceived positive emotions more appropriate than negative emotions. This positivity norm encouraged positive emotion expression but suppressed the negative emotion expression on Instagram. Moreover, positive emotion expression was positively associated with life satisfaction, and this association was also mediated by received positive feedback. On the other hand, the relationship between negative emotion expression and life satisfaction was only mediated by received positive feedback. These results suggested that people can generally obtain psychological benefits from expressing positive emotion on Instagram and increase subjective well-being through receiving positive feedbacks while expressing positive and negative emotions.

Then, can people increase their subjective well-being by simply expressing their positive emotions on SNS no matter how they feel in real life? Our further exploration revealed that the actual experience of positive and negative emotions moderated the relationships between emotional expression on SNS and psychological well-being. Multiple group analyses showed that only people who experienced more positive emotions or less negative emotions obtained psychological benefits from expressing positive emotions on Instagram. However, people who experienced fewer positive emotions or more negative emotions could not increase life satisfaction by expressing positive emotions on Instagram. On the other hand, only people who experienced negative emotions more often improved their subjective well-being by expressing negative emotions on Instagram. These results suggested that honest emotion expression on SNS benefits users' psychological well-being, especially for those people who often experience negative emotions in real life. Besides, receiving positive feedback is crucial for obtaining benefits from the emotional expression on SNS.

Lin, H., Tov, W., & Qiu, L. (2014). Emotional disclosure on social networking sites: The role of network structure and psychological needs. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 41, 342-350.

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Waterloo, S. F., Baumgartner, S. E., Peter, J., & Valkenburg, P. M. (2018). Norms of online expressions of emotion: Comparing Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp. *new media & society*, 20, 1813-1831.

Submission ID

1010

Ritual-Based National Identity and Urban Space Construction — A Case Study on Geographic Microblogs of Beijing's Tiananmen Square

Authors

Jingxi Chen - Beijing Jia

Panyu Zhang - Beijing JiaoTong University

Hui Wu - Beijing JiaoTong University

Abstract

The advent of location-based service (LBS) and its incorporation into social media services allow connections to progress from merely between individuals to connections between individuals and urban spaces. However, as the heart of China, the public conversation around the area of Tian'an Men Square through social media hasn't been analyzed closely enough. The purpose of this study is to examine how the individuals reconstruct the urban physical environment within the local cultural context through their location-based microbloggings. Geographic microblogs had been collected through Sina Weibo platforms in the year 2019. This geographic case study chose Tian'an Men Square as the center and its around area within 5 kilometers. This urban environment represents the political, cultural and commercial center in Beijing, and this area is populated with both local residents and tourists. Discourse analysis, including the semiotics analysis has been used to analyze the text and the images of the microblogs. In-depth interviews had been taken with the microbloggers from both of the platforms.

Submission ID

1195

Chinese Media and U.S.-China Trade War

Authors

Peiqin Chen - Shanghai International Studies University

Ke Guo - Shanghai International Studies University

Louisa Ha - Bowling Green State University

Nan Lyu - Shanghai International Studies University

Abstract

The U.S.-China trade war, which started in 2018 and escalated for almost two years, has been the major dispute between the United States and China. Some observers think this could be the start of a new Cold War between the United States and China.

Research about Chinese media found that commercialization and fast development of media technology brought about dramatic increases in the size and diversity in media news coverage since the 1990s. Nowadays China's mainstream media has not only been commercialized, but is going to the new media as well with major news stories posted to WeChat accounts or news apps.

This study explores how Chinese mainstream media covers the US-China trade war by conducting a content analysis on traditional media as well as new media. The frames of US-China trade war stories from three major Chinese Party media, CCTV, the largest official TV platform in China and the WeChat accounts of the *People's Daily*, the *Global Times* were analyzed and compared with a

more market-driven news app, *The Paper*, to test if it covers the US-China trade conflicts in a different way from Party media. Because the media we chose for this study varies from the official traditional media, CCTV, to WeChat accounts of traditional mainstream new media and native digital news brands such as the *Paper*, we also measure how mainstream traditional media differ from the mainstream new media and how the mainstream new media compete in the market with native digital media like the *Paper*. We follow the widely used five common frames in international news put forward by Samekto and Valkenberg in their paper published in 2000. We also measure if there are competing frames in news stories because it is considered that an objective and fair reporting should contain competing frames.

Our results show that the four media outlets present the U.S.-China trade war more in the frames of economic consequences and conflicts. Despite the fact that the Chinese government condemned the U.S. administration for protectionism, bullying and improper practices, most Chinese media present the U.S.-China trade conflicts in economic rather than political frames.

While Chinese media share much in common in focusing on the frame of economic consequences and relying heavily on elite sources, significant differences exist between the four media outlets we chose. Two party newspapers, *the People's Daily* and *the Global Times* attribute responsibilities to the US and focus very much on the conflict, but CCTV, the most official party media, and *the Paper*, the commercial oriented media outlet, did not attribute the responsibility to the U.S.. The market-oriented news app *The Paper* presents the U.S.-China trade conflict in the most neutral and non-partisan manner, while *People's Daily* and *Global Times* are more partisan and more nationalistic.

Submission ID

1358

Reciprocal agenda setting in Chinese network society: a case study of Dr. Li Wenliang during Coronavirus Epidemic

Authors

Sai Liu - Hong Kong Baptist University

Abstract

This paper investigates the interaction between digital media and legacy media in Chinese network society. By extending agenda setting theory to both sphere of legacy media and citizen-dominated digital media, the paper chooses to study how the tension between new media and legacy media challenge the policy making in the current Chinese society. In particular, we choose the case of Dr. Li Wenliang, who was labeled as whistleblower by the legacy media and hero by the netizens during Novel Coronavirus epidemic in China, and investigate the conflict, interaction and compatibility relationship between the legacy media and citizen-dominated digital media in this case. In this paper, we adapt text analysis and experiment as the methods to identify different

phrases of the two spheres' agenda tensions and their transferring process into public agenda. We found the fact that the implication of the composite force of legacy media and citizen-dominated digital media on the public agenda permeates through not only in the audience's cognition, but also in their attitude and behavior. The findings reveal what we call reciprocal agenda between the two spheres. The findings do not only extend our understanding of agenda setting theory, but also contribute to our knowledge of the unique Chinese society and culture in a digital age, reexamine the role of Chinese netizens in promoting the public agenda, and the relationship between the state, the audience and the media. They also coin the point of the blurring boundary between online and offline worlds in a network society, which we abandon to use as a binary framework in this study.

Submission ID

1363

Cross-cultural adjustment of Chinese expatriates to Pakistan: Investigating the role of social support as a moderator

Authors

Muhammad Noman - School of Journalism and mass communication, Wuhan University, Wuhan 430072, China

Abstract

Emerging economies and geopolitical landscaping are changing the demographic dynamics across the globe. As people are moving across the borders for many reasons, including better academic and job opportunities, indeed, China has become one of the fascinating destinations to attract global community in 21st century. Being the second largest economy, at the same time, China is extending its markets across the globe since President Xi's announced the mega strategic plan, Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), in 2013. This going out policy is going to connect Europe, Africa and Asia through roads, railways and maritime routes infrastructures (Ahmad 2016) by signing bilateral and multilateral cooperation. China's massive investment in global markets (Jackson and Horwitz 2017; Buckley, Clegg et al. 2018) has provided the opportunities to Chinese expatriates to move across borders to manage different projects in different regions (Zhang & Fan, 2014; Cooke et al., 2017). In China-Pakistan bilateral context, the two countries are celebrating its long friendship despite of its cultural and ideological differences but this cross-border flow between the countries has raised significant questions of adjustment of Chinese expats in Pakistan, being more conservative and religious bound cultural values. This paper is, indeed, an effort to address the Chinese expats cross-cultural adjustment to Pakistan. In that backdrop, this study is investigating the role of social support (emotional, informational, instrumental and appraisal) on Chinese expatriates' adjustment experiences to Pakistan by applying the social capital theory. The study has used qualitative approach to analyze the semi-structured in-depth interviews, through MAXQDA 18, of Chinese expatriates working in Pakistan in telecommunication and manufacturing sectors. The results

indicate that Chinese expatriates have faced many challenges while adjusting to their host society, but cordial government-to-government relations, social support of the host country's nationals (colleagues and friends) helped them in the adjustment process. The results conclude that Chinese expatriates' adjustment is a multi-stage mechanism and social support is one of the significant mechanisms through which they can adjust in the international environment. The study suggests that host organizations should promote the strengthening of the relationship between expatriates and local people.

Submission ID

1773

To be (online) or not to be? Is that a question? Exploring new media strategies of the Israeli intelligence services

Authors

Clila Magen - Bar Ilan University, School of Communication

Ruth Avidar - Yezreel Valley College

Abstract

Throughout their existence, the Israeli intelligence services have maintained a very high degree of secrecy, even though behind the scenes informal connections with journalists for the sake of various organizational objectives always took place to some extent. Since the start of the 21st century, these organizations have faced an unfamiliar challenge: should they embrace and take an active part in new media to achieve their goals, and if so, how to accomplish this? Existing research focuses mainly on the operative dimension of new media in intelligence services (Big Data, SOCINT-Social Intelligence, open-source intelligence). There is an overall dearth of research within security studies addressing new media use by Western intelligence services from the standpoint of strategic communication and public relations. This has been an ongoing issue for the past two decades and will continue to accompany these organizations for a long time; surprisingly, the research in this area is extremely sparse.

In this study, we examine the nature and scope of the adoption of new media tools by two Israeli intelligence services (Mossad and ISA). We offer a typology of the main functions that these methods fulfill in the services. The research design includes both quantitative and qualitative methods, with the study's corpus including written and visual texts from the following platforms: the organizations' websites, Facebook, Blogs, and YouTube channel. For the purpose of triangulation, data were retrieved from printed newspapers, online news websites, and professional journals in which the subject of new media tool adoption by intelligence services was discussed. This enabled us to learn about technical aspects (at what pace the organizations adopted the various platforms when the major improvements and updates were made), as well as more essential aspects (what was the rationale behind the move, etc.).

The findings demonstrate that the most important and prominent function of these organizations' new media utilization has been the *recruitment of manpower*. In fact, it seems that this was the main motivation pushing the ISA and the Mossad to create their websites, to establish a Facebook page, and to use their YouTube channel for "marketing" the organizations to potential personnel. Other functions that were identified, though much less central, were *creation of an online historical national heritage, reputational management*, and finally *internal solidarity and commemoration*.

Interestingly, there is a wide gap between the technical and practical aspects of new media utilization. On the one hand, the organizations established several online platforms. On the other hand, these have been used very sparingly. Throughout 2019, only 42 posts were posted by the ISA and only 31 by the Mossad. In addition, these organizations have tended to use new media tools in a "monologist" fashion, avoiding dialogic communication that reflects the basic set of characteristics of these platforms. Strategically, the services have stuck to traditional perceptions in which the less the public knows about them the better.

Submission ID

1848

The investigation of the emergence and development of the computer and its consequences in the perspective of the mediatization approach

Authors

Friedrich Krotz - ZeMKI, University of Bremen

Abstract

The mediatization approach deals empirically and theoretically with the current as well as the historical development of the media and with the related changes in everyday life, culture and society. Following Stuart Hall (quoted after Procter, 2004), research on mediatization may be understood to aim at a practical intervention of civil society in development. Phenomena and processes at the micro, meso and macro levels are called mediatized if they cannot be explained or understood without taking the media into account (Krotz 2017). With regard to digitization, research on mediatization is accordingly interested in reconstructing today's communicative practices and their framework conditions in their emergence and development and thus understanding digitization on the basis of how it came about.

The starting point of a mediatization-theoretical approach to the analysis of today's digitization is therefore the analysis of its technological basis, namely the computer as a symbol-processing apparatus, and the question of how its conditions of origin affect the significance of digitization today. The emergence, development, and distribution of the computer and computer-based

techniques can be described in five phases on the basis of existing social science studies (e.g., empirical studies and historical analyses according to Friedman 2005):

Its invention as a data-processing machine in the context of a capitalist division of intellectual labor by Charles Babbage around 1830,

its technical realization by Konrad Zuse as well as Howard Aiken and IBM from 1930 onwards and the emergence of a mainframe culture,

a first dissemination push through the construction of home and personal computers

a second ultimate dissemination through the internet and the transformation of its use into a communication apparatus, together with a commercialization of the internet,

an increasing penetration of all analogue technology as well as an increasing interference of computers in all forms of human life and the upcoming of computer controlled infrastructure of symbol operations.

The lecture will trace this development and draw conclusions about the social and cultural development of the forms of human coexistence in the context of the growing presence and importance of the computer. It can be shown that the division of labor already envisaged by Babbage still today defines people as data producers and companies as data processors. New communicative potentials of such diversity are emerging, but their use takes place under conditions of comprehensive dependence on and massive influence by the newly emerging global companies such as Amazon and Apple, Facebook, Google, Uber and others. The new power structures thus emerging have a comprehensive impact on the conditions of human life, for example on journalism and democracy, but also on the way how people deal with each other. This raises the question of how these developments can be influenced in a way that is compatible with democracy.

Literature

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Submission ID

1875

Bot visibility and authenticity: Building mediated conversations for inclusion

Authors

Jonathon Hutchinson - University of Sydney

Felix Münch - Leibniz Institute for Media Research | Hans Bredow Institute

Venessa Paech - University of Sydney

Abstract

Bots are automated applications that create and distribute content across social media applications (Ford & Hutchinson, 2019). Lokot and Diakopoulos (2015, p.683) suggest bots within the news environment are those that are “automated accounts that participate in news and information dissemination on social networking platforms”. Regardless of the social or information arena in which bots operate, they contribute to our algorithmic lifestyles: ‘the sorting, classifying, and hierarchizing of people, places, objects and ideas’ (Striphas, 2015, p.395). In this frame, bots are more than merely conversation starters, but are instead relationship creators between users across their information platforms, that also have the potential to significantly skew a discourse by impacting content visibility. As one example within this emerging field of literature, Liu (2019) found that one-third of user-generated content on Twitter is bot-created to manipulate consumer sentiment about brands, with rich media tweets (e.g. video and images). Alternatively, bots can potentially strengthen social media conversations (Rathnayake and Suthers, 2019): through inclusiveness, respect and reciprocity. The impact of these sorts of revelations strengthen claims to incorporate more user/creator-influence on automated media production processes, for example through human/machine relationships as demonstrated by bots. As Jones (2015) argues, there needs to be a stronger relationship between humans and bots for positive relationship building: one that enables bots to operate in useful ways without compounding our current communication dilemmas such as disinformation, the rise of hate-speech and the production of banal content.

Developing new and open methods that combine humanities, social science and data science to understand the proliferation of social bots is crucial for a vast number of scholars working in the communication field. This is especially critical for those researching cultural production, news and journalism, and those scholars concerned with the role information communication technologies play within the human communication process.

This paper performs three functions. First, we highlight a new methodological approach to identifying bots in social media to highlight automated social media conversation within the macrostructure of a national or language-based Twittersphere. Second, we compare the Twitterspheres of Australia and Germany to highlight the most likely areas where bot automation occurs. Third, we map and measure the impact this automation has on particular Twitter arenas, for example the comparisons between German and Australian YouTuber and marketing Twitter conversations. Finally, we highlight potential areas and practices where bot-automation across

social media can be strengthened for social good conversation such as inclusiveness, respect and reciprocity.

Submission ID

1893

The Influences of Family Communication Patterns on Undergraduate-Family Contacts

Authors

Yating Yang - Renmin University of China

Abstract

Going to college leads to a natural separation for individuals from their families. This is a period when students adjust themselves to meet the academic, social and personal-emotional needs and become more mature both physically and psychologically. And family communication patterns have been proved to affect ones' college adaptation. On the one hand, Those from high communication-oriented families perform better than others contingent on their stronger communication competence; on the other hand, suitable family attachment with emotional support is also helpful. And this study aims to examine the relationship between family communication patterns and undergraduates' family contact.

The survey was administered twice, once in December, 2019 and the second in February, 2020. I collected 52 questionnaires for the former study and 198 questionnaires for the latter one. With the inventory of Revised Family Communication Patterns (RFCP), both studies require participants to measure their family communication patterns before and during college, as well as the frequency to contact their family. While the former one includes the members living together and the latter one includes the frequency of returning home, the results of the two are consistent.

One of the main findings is that while communication orientation relates to family contacts significantly, conformity orientation has little relationship with family connection in college. Two studies reveal that a higher level of communication-oriented environment contributes to more family contacts and more use of long-distance communication methods, such as cellphone and Wechat. However, the negative correlation between conformity orientation and contact is significant only in the second study at the confidence level of 90%. Besides, the family communication patterns during college are equal to the ones before college.

Generally, this paper concludes that undergraduates' contacts with their families are related to ones' family communication patterns, especially to the communication orientation. The conclusion also emphasizes the differences between communication orientation and conformity orientation, which indicates that different from communication orientation the influences of conformity orientation would reduce after leaving home to college. And thus, it is recommended that future research takes

care of the conformity orientation especially when it comes to the change of life stage, physical distance and personal socialization.

Submission ID

1930

ON the communication system of everything and its theoretical paradigm

Authors

jidong li - Comm

Abstract

The rapid development of 5G, Internet of things, artificial intelligence and big data technology is promoting media convergence in a wider space and time, forming an era of connectivity in which everything is media and everywhere is communication. The media industry is increasingly integrated with computers, information industry and even entertainment industry and agriculture etc., which requires a rethinking of media, content and even communication. Meanwhile, Tencent opened up a new way of content communication in the era of connectivity, and built the communication ecology of all media, which is in urgent need of theoretical thinking. Media evolution is the core of communication reform. Since mass communication, media has gone through the evolution process from tangible to intangible, professional equipment to media of everything, and from segmentation to integration. Now, the era of media of everything is coming. So at the first this paper is to consider the historical development of the transmission of all things, to clarify the connotation of the transmission of all things; The second is to explore the communication ecology, industrial pattern and information communication order based on physical media. The last is to discuss the theoretical concept of the dissemination of all things and improve the theoretical system of communication.

Submission ID

1959

“If I Were the Attractive Celebrity”: How Self-celebrity

Deepfaked Video Exposure Impact Young Women's Body Image

Authors

Fuzhong Wu - SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND

Zheng Zhang - School of Journalism and Communication, Tsinghua University

Abstract

Body image refers to people's mental picture of their physical appearance. Body image disturbance (BID) has become a widespread problem among young women and is implicated in low self-esteem and eating disorders. Media portrayals of unrealistically idealized images (e.g. super slender models and attractive celebrities) are accepted as the most powerful trigger and disseminator of young women's BID.

However, with the introduction of deepfake technology which enables image synthesis between two different individuals, ordinary people can become part of the perfect image and virtually own the idealized bodies instead of being purely passive viewers. ZAO, an entertainment and apparel app enabled by deepfake technology, became the most downloaded app in China in August 2019. With the help of generative neural network, users can replace the celebrity's face with their own as if they became the celebrities on the screen. Among all the source videos, one category hash-tagged #演女神# (#Act Goddess#, which means portraying extremely attractive female celebrities in Chinese) have received thousands of views and clicks. An emerging question is how young women will evaluate their appearance after exposure to the deepfaked self? This pilot study aims to investigate the impact of self-celebrity deepfaked video (SCDV) exposure on young women's body image.

We proposed two competitive hypotheses. On the one hand, the SCDV which places one's own face with the body of the celebrities should lead to cognitive dissonance and prime the social comparison process, which will result in self-depreciation. On the other hand, the SCDV will also visualize an "attractive possible self" and create chances for fantasy of becoming more attractive, which may enhance viewers' body satisfaction.

Through a between-subjects experiment with 128 young women aged between 18 and 31. We suggested that compared to purely celebrity video (PCV) exposure, SCDV exposure produced higher body satisfaction, $F(1,125) = 12.503$, $p = 0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.091$, and perception of appearance-improving potential served as the mediator (effect=0.058, SE=0.025, CI_{95%} [0.017, 0.118]). Furthermore, participants' body satisfaction was increased by SCDV exposure ($t = -2.083$, $p = 0.041$) but decreased by PCV exposure ($t = 3.26$, $p = 0.002$).

Results indicate that compared to PCV exposure, SCSV exposure functions as an inspiration rather than a threat for young women's body image. One established explanation is that they will clearly perceive their potential to achieve a more attractive self through trying on different face shapes, hair styles, bodies and outfits that originally belonged to upward others.

This study is among the first to investigate the social impact of deepfake technology and the first to examine the effect of SCDV exposure on young women's body image. It reveals the positive role of deepfake technology in entertainment and apparel app use. Considering the prevalence of BID among young women and commercial development of deepfake technology, such kind of mobile application may serve as a daily intervention technique for body dissatisfaction and low appearance self-esteem. Besides, this study also contributes the understanding of the self-enhancement effect and the notion of "malleable self" in the context of the avatar-based media.

Submission ID

2022

Patterns of Health Misinformation on YouTube : An Analysis of the Coronavirus Outbreak

Authors

SeongIn Choi - Seoul National University

Nisha Rani - Amity School of Communication

Rosa Arroyo - Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

Nelly Marina - Tecnológico de Monterrey

Abstract

The Coronavirus outbreak has caused yet another massive wave of misinformation. Social media platforms are flooded with fake origin ideas, health tips & ways of treating the deadly disease. Several YouTubers are cashing in on people's vulnerability simply to get some views and subscribers. 'The Atlantis Report', a YouTube channel in one of their videos depicted Coronavirus as a bioweapon developed by the US to attack China. Another YouTuber, Ronald Daquipil, posted a video recorded by a Chinese nurse saying that 90,000 people have been infected by the virus in China alone, but the information doesn't match the official data. The video has been viewed more than 850,000 times.

Post-truth according to the Oxford Dictionaries are those "circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion that appeals to emotional personal belief." (Oxford Dictionary, 2016) Although the term is not new since disinformation and false news have existed since ancient times, the visibility that socio-digital networks have given it allows nowadays the development of patterns of social behavior that accentuate the possibilities that the "context" or the "circumstances" of the post-truth era give to the propagation of fake news and, as a consequence, also to the manipulation and distortion of information. Michiko Kakutani (2018) in her book entitled *The Death of Truth*, points out that we are witnessing the fall of reason, while the American Lee McIntyre (2018) in *Post-Truth* refers to the cognitive biases that cloud reason and result in the breeding ground that together with the speed and visibility of networks, promote post-truth.

YouTube, as an important social platform, has become one of the networks where the proliferation of fake news and even 'deep' fake news takes place. YouTube provides unlimited space for organizations and individuals to produce and upload videos, and this has resulted in an expansive creation and distribution of fake news. As YouTube's recommendation algorithm suggests personalized content to individuals based on their past viewing behaviors, those who view misleading videos on YouTube are more likely to watch similar type of videos.

Based on this assumption, this research questions how YouTube videos on health issues, especially on that of the recent Coronavirus outbreak, are connected in terms of sources and tone, and how the connection affects viewer responses. The following research questions are suggested:

- What are the sources and tone of YouTube videos on the Coronavirus outbreak? Is there a relation between the type of sources and the tone of the videos?
- How does YouTube's recommendation connect the videos about the outbreak in terms of sources and tones?
- Is there a relation between the network characteristics and viewer responses including number of views, number of likes, and number of dislikes?

This research uses the YouTube Data Tools (provided by the Digital Methods Initiative group) to collect data based on search query. Using the data, text and network analysis will be conducted to observe the overall connection of the videos, and how the network affects viewer response.

Submission ID

2128

Evaluating the Effect of Nationalism and National Identity on Perceived Information Credibility of Sports News between Chinese and Americans

Authors

Yin Wu - University of Wisconsin-Madison

Abstract

How citizens perceive the credibility of news is increasingly important around the globe, however, there is a lack of comparative studies between nations. National identity and patriotism are important values to interfere with how people trust foreign news. Thus, we are interested in how national identity and patriotism impact readers' perception of news credibility. Applying the theory of hostile media phenomenon, we intend to compare perceived news credibility on friendly and unfriendly news coverage among Chinese and American audiences. We chose these nations because their cultural discrepancies (collective vs. individualist culture) could generate different levels of trust in media institutions overall.

This study applies a 2 (news source: China and U.S.) by 2 (favorability: favorable and unfavorable comments) experimental design. Participants are told that they will read an article from a major Chinese or U.S. press and randomly assigned to one of the following articles with comments: 1) favorable to China, 2) unfavorable to China, 3) favorable to the U.S., or 4) unfavorable to U.S.

Participants will read an article about the recent dispute about a controversial tweet by NBA Rocket general manager Daryl Morey supporting the recent Hong Kong movement, which caused

enormous opposition and boycott from Chinese fans. Then Brooklyn Nets manager Joe Tsai openly supported the Chinese fans, which also caused opposition from U.S. fans. This case is controversial with abundant discussion about the values of nationality and freedom of speech.

Independent variables include citizens' self-confidence in fact-checking, issue involvement, perceived media bias by nation, national identity, patriotism, and issue partisanship. Dependent variables include perceived news credibility and news seeking and sharing behaviors. The sample of participants is approximately 400 respectively in China and the U.S. and will be recruited cross-nationally. The paper will be finished in mid-April as part of a big university project.

Submission ID

2518

From Media Power to People's Power: A Systematic Literature Review on the Reverse Agenda-Setting Effect of Political Discussions on Social Media

Authors

Yiyang Zhang - Boston University

Abstract

While the traditional agenda-setting theory describes how the salience of a given issue transfers from news media to the publics (McCombs & Shaw, 1972), the emergence of social media in recent years also arouses discussions on how the agenda-setting power is shifting from traditional news organizations to the ordinary people. Earlier communication scholars stressed "media power," which is the non-coercive bargaining power that media have to influence key actors in the society, and regarded audiences as passive receivers of the frames set by news media (Couldry & Curran, 2003). The low entry-threshold and interactive nature of social media enable the once salient mass to actively voice themselves and to reversely have more control over the larger discourse, which leads to accumulating literature that is calling for the new theorization of the "people's power."

On the other hand, while many are celebrating the democratization effect of the more equalized platforms (e.g., Yang, 2009), some are also expressing concerns on "slacktivism," blaming social media for over-simplifying social movements and reducing offline political participation (e.g., Shirky, 2011). This paper aims to fill the gap between the two contesting schools by revealing the growing evidence on the real-life impact of the words posted on social media.

With the abundance of relevant literature, we also notice a lack of consistency in the terminology used. For instance, some scholars define political discussion on social media as a type of emerging media content (Harder et al., 2017) while others regard it as users' expressive behaviors (Russell Neuman et al., 2014). Some treat social media discussion in a holistic way whereas others differentiate the types of accounts. Also, the terms referring to the agenda-setting power of social

media discussion are messy (e.g., intermedia agenda-setting in Harder et al. (2017), social media power in Freelon et al. (2016) and agenda trending in Groshek and Groshek (2013)), which requires systematic comparison and explication.

Drawing from the framework of connective action (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013), this systematic literature review looks at how that scattered political discussion on social media can produce a detectable and quantifiable impact on news and policy agenda, which may shift the discourse and result in concrete social changes. The PRISMA protocol will be adopted to ensure an exhaustive and unbiased systematic literature review process (Moher et al., 2009). A series of keywords will be used to search in the databases for empirical academic papers published (1) from 2010 to 2020, (2) in English, and (3) on peer-reviewed academic journals. By synthesizing and analyzing the screened papers both quantitatively and qualitatively, the objectives are to answer:

1. What are the distributions of (1) publishing years, (2) publishing location; (3) field of study?
2. What (1) theories and (2) research methods are used?
3. How are political discussion on social media and the agenda-setting power (1) conceptualized and (2) measured?
4. What is the direction of the agenda-setting relationships revealed?
5. What are the factors that influence the agenda-setting power of political discussion on social media?

Submission ID

2591

Segmentation in the Communication of the GM Issue: Semantics and Social Network Analysis of Government Websites

Authors

Zhuoying Zeng - School of Journalism and Communication , Omnicom Building, Tsinghua University

Jia Dai - School of Journalism and Communication , Room 226, Omnicom Building, Tsinghua University

Abstract

Genetically modified (GM) technology has become widely controversial in recent years, raising risk concerns about food safety, public health, economic development and even national security. Due to the uncertainty of GM risk and the cognition difficulty of GM knowledge, governments' communication plays a key role in shaping publics' understanding of the technology and attitude towards GM-relevant issues.

In China, where the coordination between various levels of government and functional departments in policy formulation and implementation is usually difficult due to the conflicts of interest and information imbalance among them (Edler & Kuhlmann, 2008), governments' efforts in improving communication and management of GM had little success (Gao, Xu, Huang, Guo, & Luo, 2017).

This study aims to unravel the question of GM communication in particular, and science communication in general: what makes the governments' communication strategy so ineffective? Applying Dryzek (2005) and Bets (2010) environmental discourses, we used semantic analysis and social network analysis to analyze the GM communication through official websites at different levels (central and local) from January 1, 2001 through December 31, 2017. Specific research questions focused on government discourse patterns and structural networks of government actors formed around the GM communication.

It is found that the content issued by the central ministries and commissions is quite homogeneous yet segmented, dominantly emphasizing rationalism of GM economy and ecological modernization, but rarely mentioning about administrative rationalism and sustainable development. In contrast, local governments' communication not only has a more balanced distribution in terms of discourse type, but also integrates multiple discourse types.

In addition, the results of social network analysis show that the status of central ministries and local governments in the network structure is significantly different. The central ministries and commissions were dominant in the social networks of the issue, demonstrating high in-degree and out-degree in relation to others; The ministries are closely linked internally, but the links with many local governments are relatively weak, showing the segmentation in the vertical governance.

Meanwhile, local governments are not evenly balanced regarding in-degree and out-degree, signifying imbalanced status in the network. In general, the provinces with a high in-degree tend to have high out-degree as well, signifying that the key participants are mostly active two-way communicators and stable participants in the construction of the issue network. In the meantime, some other local governments were fairly marginalized.

Based on the research findings, this study made suggestions on how to promote government communication by transcending homogeneous discourses and bridging segmentations. In terms of vertical communication, the central government needs to weaken the command and control authority, and incorporate the unique local interests through communication, rather than simply issuing government orders. In terms of horizontal communication, the central government should adopt more cross-departmental strategies to modify the isolated management, and encourage multiple stakeholders to join the communication network of the GM issue, to form scientific consensus and solve problems.

Submission ID

2723

Social media as third places? Plea for a (re)definition of social spaces and places.

Authors

Ely Lüthi - Università della Svizzera italiana

Abstract

In 1982, Ramon Oldenburg and Dennis Brissett coined the term *third places*, referring to all physical places that are neither home nor work where people meet and enjoy each other's company. Widely developed in the following years by Ray Oldenburg (1999, p. 20-40), this concept englobes various types of social places having the "capacity to serve the human need for communion", and which all have eight characteristics in common: "neutral ground", "leveler", "conversation [as] the main activity", "accessibility and accommodation", "regulars", "low profile", "playful mood", and "home away from home".

Recently, technological and social changes extensively challenged the concept of *third places*. With the diffusion of Internet and the Web, many new *online social spaces* were created, each with different characteristics and features fulfilling a great variety of socialising needs. Various researchers have therefore discussed some of these *online spaces* through the lens of Oldenburg's theory (1999), with different conclusions and ambiguities regarding whether or in which circumstances these *online spaces* can be considered as *third places*.

Investigating whether this concept can also explain newer social spaces is indeed important, since "old" concepts and theories remain in many cases helpful and keep their explanatory power even in new environments, which not necessarily need new concepts to be defined. Therefore, the concept of *third places* should not be given up too quickly, as it might enable comparisons over long time periods.

Aim of this paper is to address these ambiguities and empirically examine whether the concept of *third places* can fruitfully be applied to describe social media. For doing so, an online survey was conducted, which consisted of 23 questions ranging from general uses of *social media* to socialising practices, as well as the role of *physical places* as socialising settings.

Oldenburg's eight characteristics (1999) have been introduced to the 264 survey's participants, which had to indicate how well each characteristic also described social media. It emerged that five *third places*' characteristics have been identified in social media, though with quite different levels of agreements (*neutral ground* 58%, *leveler* 42%, *accessibility and accommodation* 61%, *regulars* 80%, *low profile* 38%), while three of them were not identified (*conversation as the main activity* 35%, *playful mood* 20%, *home away from home* 25%).

Participants perceived *physical social places* (i.e. *third places*) and *social media*, though possessing some similarities, as significantly different in their forms, visual characteristics, users and usages.

Higher value was attributed to *physical* forms of socialisation, while *online* ones were considered more as a complementary form.

Consequently, I sustain that the concept of *third places* as described by Oldenburg (1999) can neither fully comprise nor describe social media, their users and the social practices that occur in them. The need for a new concept dedicated exclusively to the definition of social media is suggested, which I propose to define as *fourth places*, i.e. online spaces offering socialising opportunities which cannot be found at home nor at work, and which are significantly different from the possibilities offered in *physical places* (i.e. *third places*).

Submission ID

2767

Sardines against Salvini: Moderation and Polarization on Facebook's Protest Groups

Authors

Lorenzo Coretti - The American University of Rome

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to address the interplay between moderation and polarization in protest groups on Facebook. The study emphasises how Facebook's rules and protocols affect the daily activities of administrators and moderators, in turn impacting organization, mobilization levels and collective identity of networked movements.

To this purpose, the paper analyses the case study of the Sardines' movement, a wave of Facebook-planned peaceful mobilization that protested against the political rhetoric of right-wing party 'Lega' leader Matteo Salvini on his social media channels. The name "Sardines" comes from the expression "packed as sardines in a can," to highlight the need for mobilization in the squares and to underline the strength of citizens when organised in groups.

The Sardines planned a series of rallies starting in November 2019, spreading everywhere throughout Italy from the region of Emilia Romagna, where the movement was born, and where a crucial regional election eventually saw Salvini's party failing to win on January 26th.

The movement's objectives are summarized in six main points announced in December 2019. Sardines deplore politicians who shun official institutional activities in favour of "permanent electoral campaigns," and ask them to communicate only through institutional channels. Furthermore, the movement asks for both "economic and communicative" transparency for what concerns how politicians use social media. It urges the "world of information" to protect the "truth," and the realm of politics to abandon any form of violence, be it physical or verbal. Finally, it asks

the overhaul of the oppressive policies against migrants enacted by Salvini in 2019 and never repealed by the current centre-left coalition government.

In this short time span, the movement has gathered a significant momentum across the country but also encountered internal factionalism, schisms, and suffered verbal attacks from other political groups. At the time of writing, the movement seems to be already in decline.

This paper aims to explore the dynamics that contributed to this sudden decline by focusing on the increased levels of polarization on the movement's Facebook Groups and on the role played by administrators and moderators in steering online communication and excluding the most inflamed comments among both supporters and detractors of the movement's instances. It also explores the contradictions between the movement's ideals of peaceful and respectful expression and the actual user verbal behaviour against political adversaries on Facebook. Finally, the study suggests that Facebook, far from being a neutral space for interaction, exacerbated the process of deterioration through its very functionality, rules and protocols. Methodologically, it relies on a set of in-depth semi-structured interviews with the moderators of the movement's Facebook Groups and a qualitative content analysis of online interaction on the same platform.

Submission ID

2916

Incongruous concerto: A Media Spectacle Study on Chinese Public Communication during the Spread of the Novel Coronavirus Pneumonia

Authors

Ruikai Yu - Communication University of China

Haodong She - Communication University of China

Ruiling Cao - Communication University of China

Abstract

The novel coronavirus pneumonia (COVID-19) has kicked off a storm of public opinion in China since its outbreak in Wuhan in late December 2019. During this special period, the joint aim of all the media and transmission channels is to help to control the spread of pneumonia, arise individual's awareness and at the same time, avoid panic around the society. Through the interaction and division of work, media of different levels are supposed to wield their influence over different groups of audience, thus forming a consolidated public opinion environment. However, the information provided by various media is quite different, even opposite. Because of advertising the misjudgment made by some local officials at the beginning of the epidemic, some official media have damaged their credibility to some extent.

On the other hand, self-media and individual netizens as communicators have proven their prominence in information disseminating and fact-checking and provided timely and valuable information for other people. With the aid of the Chinese social media network, self-media and individual communicators reinforce their status and play their decisive roles in the discussion of public affairs. It was a screenshot of WeChat group chatting that made the novel coronavirus noticed by the public. However, some fake news and stories spread by self-media have also aroused public panic and anxiety inevitably.

In summary, the media spectacle in this period is the concentrated expression of the unique characteristics of the Chinese communication system. So, this paper adopts the method of media spectacle study to analyze the multi-layered public communication system rapidly established in China during the spread of novel coronavirus pneumonia. After sorting out the media materials, we carry out case studies of significant events at each stage, to further study its entire media landscape and the ideology embedded, using research methods of content analysis and knowledge archeology accordingly. Furthermore, by analyzing government and ordinary people in the field of public opinion, this paper will study the reconstruction of the interaction system between official and non-governmental individuals in the face of emergency and analyze the characteristics and contributions of different kinds of media.

Based on the existing peer research on the communication paradigm of significant and unexpected events in China, this study combines the review of media history and the new development in the digital age. It will touch on new media and self-media which are rarely noticed in previous studies. Hopefully, this study will respond to the concerns of the international community and provide ideas for future studies.

Submission ID

3045

The Transformation of the System of Scientific Journals on Mass Communication Under the Influence of Open Access

Authors

Nataliia Trishchenko - Lomonosov Moscow State University

Abstract

Since 2020 open access (OA) officially turns into the mainstream of academic publishing. The subject of open access is conceptually developed in the context of the OA2020 initiative, international documents, reports (Finch, 2013), and programs (Horizon 2020, OA2020), which are used by EU countries to create strategies for the development of open science. A separate corpus of materials is devoted to the effect of open access on the citation, the diffusion of scientific articles (McKiernan et al., 2016), the status of OA-articles (Piwowar et al., 2018), business models (Polydoratou & Schimmer, 2010), alternative metrics of scientific articles (Wang et al., 2015), and

the visibility (maybe “accessibility” is better?) of articles outside the scientific community (Teplitskiy, 2016).

The most common approaches to studying the transformation of the specific parts of the academic journals system are related to the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and are focused on a particular area of research, e.g.: library science (Stephen & Balamurugan, 2015; Pujar, 2014), chemistry (Nisha, Ahmad, 2014), agriculture (Murili, 2018), religion (Loan et al., 2018), etc. Another corpus of materials is aimed to track the development process and the current state of open science in various countries, including Iran (Noruzi, 2007), China (Chen & Ren, 2008), India (Sahoo et al., 2017), and different African ones (Ezema & Onyancha, 2017). Mass media and communication journals have not received much attention (Husain & Nazim, 2013).

In the current study a comparative analysis of the citation counts, usage and alternative metrics was carried out for the articles published in 32 scientific journals indexed in Web of Science and Scopus. 17 expert interviews were conducted with the representatives of various organizations, including libraries, publishers and NGOs. DOAJ data and sites of 181 publications were considered, and a survey with representatives of 66 journals was conducted. In addition, data from WoS and Scopus for 86 subscription journals in the *Communication* category was collected, and their official sites were studied in accordance with the criteria used to analyze journals from the DOAJ database.

The results of the study have showed that the trends of scientific journal markets are similar to those in any other media sector: the decline of the printed press and the arrival of platforms. The transformation, triggered by the transition to the open access paradigm, resulted in a gradual reorientation of scientific journals from the b2b model (institutional sales) to the b2c model (empowering the user). The spread of the open access model contributes to the expansion of the linguistic and geographical diversity of scientific journals on mass communication compared to the segment of the traditional subscription journals, that are published mainly in English primarily by American and British publishers. Other alternatives to traditional journals are new forms of scientific media (mega journals, OA-platforms with open peer review, etc.), but they have not become a significant part of the system in the field of mass communication yet.

Submission ID

3257

Are Newsjunkies Good at Geopolitical Forecasting? Intrinsic Need For Orientation as a Predictor of Political and Economic Forecasting Accuracy

Authors

Justin Martin - Northwestern University in Qatar

Fouad Hassan - Qatar Foundation

Abstract

Are there benefits or drawbacks to being a "newsjunkie"? Tetlock (2015) found that geopolitical forecasters who consume more news about a projection they are making, and update their forecasts based on that news, are more accurate. More recently, Author (2019) developed and validated a measure assessing a newsjunkie characteristic: an intrinsic motivation to keep up with news about current events (an Intrinsic Need For Orientation, or *INFO*). The four-item index was reliable among nationally representative samples in multiple countries and multiple languages.

Need for orientation has been researched, though it was measured as either a product of strength of political party association and uncertainty about an upcoming election, or as an interest in getting news about a specific subject—not as a general, intrinsic desire to follow news—and the *INFO* scale addresses these shortcomings. Prior research positioned need for orientation in the context of second-level agenda setting. The *INFO* scale also returns need for orientation to the uses-and-gratifications framework.

Method

The current study examined whether Intrinsic Need For Orientation—"The motivation to routinely and frequently seek and consume news, for the positive emotions of feeling informed and to avoid negative emotions of feeling behind"—among a nationally representative sample of US respondents (N=2,017, data collected by The Harris Poll, December 2019), and used it to predict accuracy on five political/economic forecasting questions, while controlling for news consumption, need for cognition, and demographic factors.

INFO. Index of five-point agree/disagree items ($\alpha=.84$): 1)"When I have down time, I check news or news headlines"; 2)"One of the first things I do each day is check the news"; 3)"I feel discomfort when I don't know what's going on in the world"; 4)"Keeping up with the news makes me feel more connected to other people."

Forecasting questions. Respondents assigned a 0-to-100 probability to five future outcomes: a) The UK would leave the EU by Feb. 1, 2020; b) The San Francisco 49ers, or the New England Patriots, or the Baltimore Ravens, or some other team would win the Feb. 2, 2020 Super Bowl; c) The US and China would sign a trade agreement before March 1, 2020; d) US Democrats will nominate a woman for president; e) The US unemployment rate will reach or exceed 3.9% at any point prior to June 1, 2020.

Results and Discussion

The first three forecasting questions are answered. Results for the remaining questions—unemployment by June 1 and a female Democratic presidential nominee—have been calculated on the assumptions, respectively, that US unemployment remains below 3.9% and that a woman is not the Democratic nominee.

For three of the questions (Trade; Unemployment; Female nominee), *INFO* was *negatively* associated with accuracy, after controlling for news consumption, need for cognition, and demographic variables. Newsjunkies were worse forecasters than people with a weak *INFO*. Implications for research on *INFO* and on forecasting accuracy are discussed.

(Unemployment and nominee results will be amended prior to conference if outcomes differ)

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Submission ID

3259

How is European identity framed and constructed in post-crisis Greece?

Authors

Katerina Diamantaki - Dere-TheAmerican College of Greece

Dionysios Panos - Cyprus University of Technology

Abstract

Building a meaningful European identity that is accessible to the general public has been one of the most critical and challenging tasks currently facing the European Union. Indeed, without such an identity, the very project of European integration becomes unsustainable and delegitimized. Being less rigid and weaker than "national identity", European identity or Europeanness mostly denotes a sense of belonging to a group and is conceived to be a meaningful category of attribution (Patel, 2013), however, remains a secondary identity marker (Hirschhausen & Patel, 2010). What is important to note is that the European political identity is unavoidably embedded in national identities and works on the level of national understandings, many of which are formed and produced by the media. Relevant research provides ample evidence that media discourse and its degree of Europeanization is a major practice that both shapes and reflects European identity (Semetko, De Vreese & Peter, 2000; Van Os, 2005; Kandyla & De Vreese, 2011; Clement, 2015). Greek identity, as well as Greek politics, has often been underlined by an East-West tension, which is expressed in a number of ways that position modern Greece as part of but not in Europe (Triandafyllidou 2002). Over the last 10 years, Greek national and European identity has been

further challenged by the country's financial crisis, the entry of Greece into the IMF and EFSM mechanisms, the processes of European integration and the lingering issue of migration. This research paper is based on a frame and content analysis (both inductive and deductive) of a corpus of 265 EU- and Greek crisis-related media articles selected from the 10 most prominent, non-tabloid Greek news outlets, over a period of two years (2018-2019), in the aftermath of the "Greek crisis" (a period marked by the ending of the bailout program, the restabilization of Greek economy, but also the lingering problem of migration). Our aim has been to identify the core themes that dominate Greek media discourse related to the EU and the European identity of Greece, and how these representations may facilitate, consolidate, hinder or challenge the formation of European identities, thus identifying at the same time the criteria and understandings that shape citizens' perceptions of their relationship with the EU and their European consciousness.

Submission ID

3311

Between Agents, Bots and Robotic Companions: The Challenge of Human Interaction and Social Relation in Times of Digital Networks and Data-Driven Communication

Authors

Christine Linke - Hochschule Wismar University of Applied Sciences Technology, Business and Design

Abstract

Human interaction and social relationships have been an important issue and a challenge for people in everyday life and for social scientist and communication scholars to understand. In times of digital networks and data-driven communication, it seems even more complex and difficult to understand. Research has been focusing on either human relationships or the relation between humans and technology respectively information and communication technologies. The complex mediated environments we live in nowadays ask for an approach that is combining and integrating these two perspectives. In order to develop a conceptual framework that enables an integrative analysis, this contribution is combining theoretical concepts from communication sociology and social psychology. The focus is set on the enlargement and enrichment of interaction possibilities in mediated and networked everyday life. It is asked, in how far communication via and with digital agents, robotic entities and data driven services challenge our concepts of human communication, reciprocity and relating. On the other hand, the framework highlight aspects like situative absence and social isolations in digitalized live worlds. Hereby also, recent debates about privacy, surveillance capitalism (Zuboff 2019) and the commercialization of intimacy (Illouz 2018) are reflected.

Submission ID

3449

Human-Robot Interaction on Building the Wall Discourse

Authors

Mina Momeni - Ryerson University

Abstract

The use of social media impacts individual and group participation in political activism. Social networking sites offer some affordances that can be employed by political activists to communicate with each other, mobilize movements, and disseminate information to increase public awareness about social issues. Consequently, the affordances of social media have played a major role in increasing citizen participation in political discourses all around the world (Gleason, 2013; Halpern & Gibbs, 2012; Hayes, Carr & Wohn, 2016; Lawrence, Molyneux, Coddington, & Holton, 2014). However, online political activism can be influenced by software robots which can interact with individuals on social media to emulate their behavior and influence their political opinion. For example, Bessi & Ferrara (2016) collected and analyzed 20 million tweets generated by approximately 2.8 million different users between 16 September and 21 October 2016 associated with the 2016 U.S. presidential election; they estimated that about 400,000 bots — “nearly 15 percent of the total population under study” — were engaged in the political discussion about the presidential election. Therefore, it can be said that the existence of social bots can affect the social media landscape, influence democratic political discussion and ultimately alter public opinion; with this in mind, further study is required to expand our knowledge and understanding of social bots’ effects.

This study makes use of the theory of affordances to explore how the affordances of social media have been effectively used by individuals in their political activism, how social robots affect the social media landscape and users’ public opinions, and how various social media affordances shape debate networks and influence discussion. To do so, this study will use the case study of ‘building the wall’ to analyze social bots’ functionality and their interaction on social media to demonstrate how they can affect human political communication. This study has collected the tweets from January 2019, when the topic of building or not building the wall between the United States and Mexico was at the center of public attention, that contain the hashtag #BuildTheWall. The tweets were collected via Sysomos, a social research platform that provides search and data collection for billions of online conversations, including Twitter. This study also uses Botometer, which is an open access software, to identify spam accounts and explores their interaction on Twitter to examine how many spam accounts participated in ‘building the wall’ discourse.

Increasing public awareness about bots' activities can be beneficial for social media's active users since this knowledge can assist them in understanding how to react to content published on these platforms; it is also valuable for those who are not using these platforms simply because if bots stay unrecognizable, blending themselves in with human users, gaining more power to affect public opinion and eventually influencing public decision-making, the results will also impact those who are not using these platforms.

Submission ID

3460

Sexual narratives, power in disguises and an African female redemptive voice: Facebook as a space for contesting and resisting the male as the Other

Authors

Andy Ofori-Birikorang - University of Education, Winneba

Abstract

This study investigates how African women, in the context of #MeToo era, are using confessional sexual narratives on Facebook to interrogate and contest male consumptive heterosexual desires as criminal imposition and how the women recreate the male and their sexual urges and desires as the demonic Other. It also explores women's use of Facebook as prophetic redemptive voices to subvert male power and empower other women. The study seeks to understand the power embedded in such explicit confessional sexual narratives and how such power is wielded in disguise by a narrator-victim as an emancipatory tool to free herself and other women from the psychological burden of post-rape trauma. Based on two lengthy purposively selected Facebook posts of a young female Ghanaian-born College professor based in Canada, the study interrogates the narratives through an ethnographic content analysis approach using critical theory as the framework of analysis. The paper reveals that, through the lens of power, provocation, desire and resistance, the narratives open, to African women, the gates of the discourse of resistance and contestation and breaks the African cultural taboo that imposes a culture of non-disclosure on sex, sexualities and sexual encounters. The analysis further contends that the narratives represent a transgression of the taboos on sexuality and unleashes unto the African cultural patriarchal space a new empowered female protagonist wielding power disguised as contestation, resistance, condemnation of the male sexual hegemonic desire but deployed, primarily, through a self-touting of her new social-economic positioning within the social strata. The study, again, contends that the narratives indicate a new line of revolutionary zeal in the African woman and provides a prophetic redemptive voice to current generation of feminists. The narratives also emerge as a discourse of provocation and emancipation that seems to terrorize and instill panic in the male- the Other, and further seeks to eradicate fear in victims of rape and male sexual impositions seeking confessional spaces to purge their grief and

trauma. The study concludes that the explicit confessional sexual narratives present an unexplored terrain for interrogating the power African women are beginning to wield on social media as a fertile ground for sowing seeds of empowerment and resistance to male domination.

Submission ID

3489

Multiple expressions and social consensus in internet public events: Frame analysis in the public opinion of Yuhuan case

Authors

Tiance Dong - Chongqing University

Liu Yang - Chongqing University

Yanrong Chen - Chongqing University

Abstract

Nowadays, with the deepening of social transformation, public events that triggered by Internet have emerged one after another- Because of the empowerment of Internet and technology, citizens are able to have more opportunities to express their opinions. While, how to guide the public to social consensus was a question that deserves our attention.

By examining a prominent case of Yu Huan case, who killed a Gray-market lender who tended to abuse his mother in front him, this study applied computer-mediated framing analysis to analyze the public opinion of Yu Huan case. Guided by the frame definition of Entman and the seven discourse rhetorical devices of metaphor, story, tradition, slogan, symbol, analogy and judgments, this paper refined the following subframes under the functional frames of Issue define, Responsibility and Solution:

Issue define: 1. Filial duty; 2. destroying ethical rules; 3. Undutiful official, 4. Officials and bandits' collusion; 5. excessive sentencing, 6. over-defense; 7. Innocence.

Responsibility: 1. the Gray-market lender; 2. Public security; 3. Local government; 4. Justice institution.

Solution: 1. Considering both emotions and law; 2. Kill the loan lender; 3. Providing security insurance; 4. Retrial; 5. Comprehensive consideration.

Through frame analysis of the online public opinion in Yu Huan case, this study finds that multiple expressions and interactive conversations of public events work together in playing a constructive role in reaching social consensus on public issue in the digital space.

By analyzing a gradually changing process of public opinion from more obvious irrational to rational expressions on the dimensions of ethics, public rights and law, and finally, it has reached a social consensus on the sentence of Yuhuan case. This study indicating that the online public

opinion process of Yu Huan has contributed in constructing the digital space in China, and consequently might promote progress of democracy and lawsuit construction in contemporary China.

Specifically, we have drawn three conclusions: firstly, today's Internet public events in China are expressed through a process of multiple expression in public opinion, in which the correctness and fallacy coexist; Secondly, To ensure the management of online public opinion, it is very important for the subject of issue liability to respond social concerns of the public and solve the urgent offline problems; last but not least, Media should be responsible to both public opinion guidance and supervision so as to form social consensus by rational discussions.

Submission ID

3502

Breaking news events in the Twittersphere

Authors

Eileen Hudson - Universidad del Desarrollo

Amaranta Alfaro - Universidad del Desarrollo

Abstract

Twitter's interaction between media outlets and their communities shook Chilean public opinion on November 14th, 2018 when a Mapuche leader, Camilo Catrillanca (24), was killed by a shot in the back of his neck during a police raid conducted by a special unit of policemen -known as Comando Jungla (in English Jungle Commando)- in an operation carried out in the South of Chile. This led to a social crisis in the country, which manifested itself in a wave of attacks such as burning of buildings, churches and vehicles, as well as barricades in downtown neighborhoods.

Catrillanca's death became the most dramatic and relevant news event of mid-November and the following days of 2018, not only on the mainstream media, but also on Twitter and other social media platforms. Since Twitter is a rich and powerful source of information and opinions, and is increasingly becoming the place to understand public discourse (Munjal, et al., 2018; Schmidt, 2014; Kwak, et al., 2010; Pak & Paroubek, 2010; Java et al., 2007) this study will seek to unpack, the features and evolution of the media coverage on Catrillanca's death, as a breaking news event where the whole story is not known yet, analyzing the Twitter communication of a news outlet sample during the first 30 hours after the scoop was released.

Considering the high levels of concentration in the Chilean media and an online news ecosystem lacking diversity in terms of coverage and topics covered, and the apparent influence of the ownership over the editorial policies (Elejalde, et al, 2018; Godoy & Gronemeyer, 2012:13), social media could play an important role in balancing this situation, given that it has been established that social network users are exposed to a greater number of news sources (Conover et al., 2011). Social

networks have become a platform with a significant impact on the process of framing and constructing public discourse (Aruguete & Calvo, 2018; Lee et al., 2016).

This project approached the phenomenon of opinion formation and citizen engagement from the comments of consumers of media news via Twitter, especially on the Mapuche issue and conflict in Chile. For this we understood opinion as the private state of any person by which he/she can express their personal emotions, ideas, assessments, judgments and evaluation about a specific topic (Mewari, et al., 2015).

This is an observational, mixed cross-sectional case study (Yin, 2013; Blatter, 2008). First, we provide a selection criterion that define the media outlets to be considered, as well as the unit of analysis, to eventually build the Twitter corpus to study. Second, we provide a descriptive analysis to identify how much attention media outlets paid to the target event. Third, we performed a correlational study in order to identify differences in the level of coverage about the death of Camilo Catrillanca by accounts tweeting intensity and number of followers.

Submission ID

3506

Dramatization of Mediated Brand Communication: Exploring Storytelling Strategies of Sponsored Content on WeChat Public Accounts (WPAs)

Authors

Xiaying, Richard Xu - Beijing Normal University-Hong Kong Baptist University United International College

Mengmeng Zhao - School of Communication, The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong

Abstract

With the Social Internet of Things (SIoT), brand communication has turned observably social worldwide. *WeChat*, one of the leading social networks in China, had over 1.15 billion monthly active users as of Q2 2019 (Statista, 2020). Internet celebrities and KOLs produce contents on their *WeChat Public Accounts (WPAs)* (equivalent to *Facebook Pages*), attracting a great amount of followers and sponsors. However, studies on sponsored content are largely based on Western media platforms (Voorveld et al. 2018; Smith, 2017). As China has become the world's largest emerging market, understanding how Chinese consumers process online information is indispensable for international brand communicators.

The sponsored content on *WPAs* has created a phenomenal revolution in the field of mediated communication. Instead of indicating “paid” or “sponsored” in the article, Chinese *WPA* authors apply “plot twist” – a literary technique that introduces a radical direction change or unexpected

outcome of the story – to disclose the sponsorship: The narrative starts with an ordinary or irrelevant story; as the story towards the end, the sponsorship suddenly emerges.

This “seamless transition” exhibits playfulness while often generates controversy among readers: Some praise its innovativeness, while some feel betrayed. Although this phenomenon has gone viral among over one billion *WeChat* users, the types of disclosing strategies, the rationales behind the strategies and their effectiveness still lack attention from academia.

This study features a genre and content analysis of 200 recent pieces of sponsored content from 12 most popular *WPAs*, which wield more influence than other accounts. Referencing to Frow’s (2015) genre theory, we identified three strategies of sponsorship disclosure:

- Problem-solution narrative: the sponsored product/service is disclosed as a solution for a problem;
- Analogy narrative: the sponsored product/service and the story character or plot share common characteristics (e.g. the article begins with a story about a famous actor, such as Brad Pitt, emphasizing the masculinity, then ends with a sportscar)
- Associative narrative: the sponsored product/service and the story are logically associated but not necessarily related, creating a sense of surprise and playfulness (e.g. the article begins with wedding photography tips, but ends with a jewelry brand – conveying the messages that great photos cannot be without the inclusion of those jewelry)

Elaborated analyses with examples are provided. Furthermore, the characteristics of *WPAs* (e.g. the KOL’s expertise, the number of followers), the characteristics of sponsors (e.g. brand type, product type), and readers’ responses (e.g. the number of reads, attitude towards the content) are coded, aiming to understand the relationship between different strategies and their effectiveness by statistical analyses.

The study represents the first investigation into the storytelling strategies of *WeChat*’s sponsored article, emphasizing the importance of information cues and storytelling, contributing to the research stream of the genres of branded content strategies and their effectiveness, providing valuable insights to both communication researchers and brand communicators.

Submission ID

3631

The digital city: Datafication, georeferential media and consequences for theorizing the public sphere

Authors

Paula Nitschke - University of Augsburg

Jeffrey Wimmer - University of Augsburg

Abstract

Success or failure of social integration is negotiated in the everyday life. Particularly in urban areas, groups with different economic, social and cultural status come together. The urban space and the urban public are therefore of particular importance for social integration. At the same time, an ongoing penetration of urban space with digital media technologies can be observed, so that the integration of cameras, sensors, WLAN networks and equipment for collecting data in the urban environment has become the norm (Kitchin 2014). Through buzzwords such as Smart City or Internet of Things, the digitalization of cities has found its way into public discourse, but is also increasingly being explored in various scientific disciplines such as human geography (Ash et al. 2018, Cardullo et al. 2019, Kitchin et al. 2018) or critical urban research (Bauriedl & Stüver 2018, Townsend, 2013). In communication studies, a systematic study of the digital city is still pending. Although there is work on the specifics of the urban public sphere or the city as a place of media communalization, the interweaving of cities and media technologies has not yet found its place on the research agenda. The proposed paper takes off at this point and aims at developing a framework that is able to theorize the relationship between the city, digitalization and the public sphere.

We will first explain the relevance of our research and introduce the concept of georeferential digital media, which is important to understand the digitalization of cities. Subsequently, we will review literature from communication studies and other disciplines (critical sociology, human geography, critical data studies). We show that media are traditionally understood in communication studies as being constitutive for the public sphere and the public sphere, in turn as a necessary condition for social integration, through the provision and processing of topics. In addition to this explicit focus on topics, many theories of the public sphere also have a - mostly implicit - geographical reference to space. If the city is considered as an object of research, this implicit spatial reference becomes explicit. We will systematically compare different concepts of media and theories of public spheres with regard to their statements on the relationship between media, locality and integration. We will also show how current phenomena such as the penetration of cities by media technologies makes it necessary to extend the traditional concept of (mass) media traditionally used in theories of the public sphere.

Submission ID

3641

Masculine arenas, marginalized women and public discourse:

Gendering morning talk shows on radio in Ghana

Authors

Ama Boatemaa Ofori-Birikorang - University of Education, Winneba

Abstract

In more than two decades, radio has proliferated in Ghana from a few tens to over three hundred and fifty stations across the nation. Radio, as the medium of mass communication, has become the

major means of participating in the political and socio-cultural public discourses by majority of the populace in the country. This study investigates morning talk shows on radio in Ghana as a forum where public discourses are forged on daily basis to the extent of gendering the discussions on public issues and institutionalizing gender narratives and roles in Ghana. Using qualitative content analysis, the study purposively selected four leading radio stations in Ghana for the study. Several hours of the morning talk shows in audio format from the four radio talk shows were recorded over a cumulative ninety-day period. The recordings were transcribed, coded and analysed to: first, investigate the dominant characters, in terms of gender, that appear on the morning talk shows; second, to investigate the major issues discussed on the morning talk shows and, as well, examine the degree of participation of men and women in the discussions; and third, to examine the implications of the issues discussed on gender discourses in Ghana. Using the masculinity and gender theories as points of analysis and interpretations, the study found that morning talk shows on radio in Ghana are highly gendered to favor men as the dominant discussants to the point of excluding women. More importantly, whether as guests, panelists or phone-in callers, men were allotted more time to participate than women. Again, issues discussed were so gendered to exclude majority of women from actively participating in the talk shows. The study concludes that morning talk shows on radio in Ghana have become arenas where masculinity and its accompanying performances and practices are introduced, forged, and disseminated in ways that co-opt the Ghanaian populace into the masculinity ideology and, especially, marginalize women's views, perspectives, performances, and ways of acting. The study contends that journalists should be trained and oriented to use a more inclusive gender-mainstreamed approaches to engage public discourses on morning talk shows on radio in Ghana.

Submission ID

3649

‘Why aren’t you married? The same reason you are not dead, it’s not my time’: Social Media and Hate Speech on Female Celebrities in Ghana

Authors

Christiana Hammond - University of Education Winneba

Naa Korkor Leeyoo Watson-Nortey - University of Education Winneba

Abstract

Celebrities account for a large subsection of social media users as they interact directly with their fans through the different forms of the mediated communication provided by the social media. These fans in their attempt to be more engaging, sometimes, venture into realms of using Hate Speech with the intention to inflict harm or discomfort their celebrity audiences, particularly, the female gender. In recent times in Ghana, some female unmarried celebrities have endured the

pervasive use of aggressive and hostile messages on their Instagram and Facebook pages purported to cast insinuations on their singlehood. This cyberethnographic study is aimed at content analysing the rhetoric of Hate Speeches and identify the nature and degree of pervasiveness of this form of communication which discriminates the female gender identity and bordering on ‘*why they are still not married*’. The paper also examines perspectives of selected female celebrities who have endured these negative experiences of cyberbullying on adoptive strategies for responding to such stereotypes in terms of *Comments* and *Likes* and their implications on their profession and/or personality. Grounded in Willard’s indicators of cyberbullying and Cohen and Felson’s components of routine activity theory (RAT), the data was thematically analysed, and the findings indicate that the perceived stardom of the female celebrity is a motivation for cyber stalking, denigration, objectification and commodification of the female gender. Also, celebrities respond to the perpetrators of hate speech by blocking, using fake screen names for rebuttal, adopting an aggressive persona among others. This study contributes to literature in the area of studies on gender stereotyping through hate speech on social media (i.e. words, images, emojis or videos). It recommends efforts at stringent laws on social media usage and a focus on ensuring cybersecurity.

Keywords: Hate Speech, Celebrity status, cyberbullying, Rhetoric, hate speech

Submission ID

3687

Motivations for the use of Tinder: the relevance of turning points.

Authors

Rita Sepúlveda - Iscte - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa; CIES_Iscte - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa

Jorge Vieira - Iscte - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa; CIES_Iscte - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa

Abstract

Among the considerable amount of available applications (apps) for smartphones, those specific concerning online dating have received a great deal of attention by the media and academia. Scientific research has focused on varied subjects, such as self-presentation and authenticity (Ward, 2016; Duguay, 2016; Vieira & Sepúlveda, 2017), motivations for use (Timmermans & De Caluwé, 2017; Ranzini & Lutz, 2017) or user experiences (David & Cambre, 2016).

However, in order to understand and contextualize usage motivations and patterns but also assigned meanings and the relationship of users with such apps, it is important to place such apps among user life trajectories, identifying the events that could contribute to its download and use.

Theoretically, this work is based on the articulation of uses and gratification theory (Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch, 1973; Palmgreen, Wenner & Rosengren, 1985; Rubin, 1994; Ruggiero, 2000) with life course studies, focusing specifically on the concept of turning points (Rönka, Oravala, and Pulkkinen, 2003; Teruya and Hser, 2010; Nico, 2016) in order to identify their motivations and key pivotal points driving them to online dating apps use.

A qualitative methodological approach was taken, carrying out semi structured interviews for data collection. The sample was composed by 27 Portuguese Tinder users, ages from 19 to 54 years old, 15 participants identified themselves as masculine, 12 as feminine. Of all 24 participants identified themselves as heterosexual, 2 as bisexual and 1 as homosexual.

Content analysis of the interviews allowed to identify a set of key motivations for Tinder, such as: socializing, having a relationship, and knowing someone to have sex with. It should be noted that the users' motivations were not stalled, static and one-dimensional. Variables such as the phase of life and their experiences, events and their self-perception influenced the use and contextualized the motivations. Dialectically, the use of the app itself and its results, more or less gratifying, produced effects on uses, as pointed out by the uses and gratification theory.

As main findings, regardless of the nature and motivations gratifications, the use of the app was contextualized by a set of turning points in different domains of life, which included: the end of a relationship (separation or divorce), unrelatedly of its duration and commitment, changes in work (rules, new job, type of job) or school (university enrollment or in an exchange program) that could result in a residential shift, but also events that occurred among friendship groups (recompositions, parenthood, new relationships). Only with such life changes Tinder use was justified and normalized, even among those interviewees already knowing the application existed.

Through the interviews it was possible to testify that individual biographies and their associated perceptions were fundamental to contextualize the motivations that led to the use of the app. Even if there were common turning points among participants, the motivations for use are only fully understandable with a biographical contextualization approach.

Submission ID

3733

Bot or Not? Algorithm-driven Public Opinion During the Global Coronavirus Crisis

Authors

Zening Duan - School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Jianing Li - School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Abstract

The concern over manipulation of vox populi in the digital and algorithmic communication environment has motivated burgeoning research on understanding how bots grow into an emerging power in shaping public opinion and blurring civic conversation. While the influence of bots has received considerable attention in the context of political communication, very few studies examine bots in the public health contexts, especially in epidemics where the urgency and accuracy of information are at high stakes and where the risk travels beyond national borders and affects global communities. In this study, we examine the scope and patterns of influence of Twitter bots during the outbreak of coronavirus in 2019-2020.

We first ask: What is the scope of bot-generated information in the Twitter discourse on coronavirus outbreak (RQ1)? Further, we ask: what are the distinctive behavioral patterns (RQ2), topical focuses (RQ3), and network features (RQ4) of Twitter bots, compared to human accounts? How do these behavioral patterns, topical focuses and network features change overtime (RQ5)? Finally, we ask: How much does the salience of topics discussed by Twitter bots influence salience of topics discussed by (a) human accounts and (b) mainstream media (RQ6)?

This analysis focused on English-only content generated by human and bot-like accounts center around the topic of coronavirus outbreak on Twitter. Tweets published from December 1st to the end of February are collected.

Two cutting-edge bot detection systems, Botometer and tweetbotornot, are applied to differentiate bot-like accounts from human accounts based on our tweet dataset. For those accounts with an assigned bot score higher than a threshold value will be labeled as a bot account. Topic modeling techniques are used to discover the hidden topics embedded in tweets generated by humans and bots. Network analyses are employed to discover features of networks Twitter bots are embedded in. Time series analysis are used to examine the longitudinal patterns of Twitter bots' behavioral patterns and topical focuses, as well as the relationship between topics discussed by bots, human accounts and mainstream media.

We initially found that bots have distinct behavior patterns in tweeting with coronavirus-related hashtags, for instance, generating a large proportion of commercial ads and pornographic contents but a less public health-related discussion. Besides, some political-oriented hashtags (e.g., #Chinalies, # Chinazivirus) were partially driven by bots. This phenomenon shows an implication of a potential spill-over effect on the political conversation of which goes beyond the original focus on public health issues. Further findings and limitations were also included at the end of our study.

Submission ID

4002