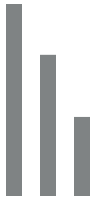# COM CRC
NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2018 ISSUE

BU

Boston University College of Communication

Research is an integral part of faculty and student activities at Boston University. Researchers at COM use the most advanced theory and methods to examine communication phenomena. Addressing both theoretical and applied problems through a range of quantitative and qualitative perspectives, faculty and students engage in the most cutting-edge developments in communication research that provide an extraordinarily fertile ground for innovation and science.

The Communication Research Center (CRC) was established in 1959 and reorganized in 1994. The CRC pioneered the use of television as a research tool, conducting systematic analyses on the effects of television on children and measuring political opinions and voting intentions. This early beginning led the CRC to develop a specialty in survey research methodology. The CRC recently updated a number of research tools such as the iMotions biometric research platform which allows faculty and students to examine physiological responses to media (e.g., websites, ads, television programs, and video games). Other recent additions include a virtual reality system which aids faculty and students to investigate issues related to psychological presence, empathy, and immersive storytelling.

Today, the CRC has 33 research fellows who specialize in topics including: media effects, emerging media, political communication, health communication, public relations, big data analytics, virtual reality, film and television studies, media and adolescents, international communication, and communication law. Several research faculty also serve as editors of competitive peer-reviewed journals.

In 2009, the CRC established the Communication Research Colloquium Series consisting of monthly research presentations that highlight current and original research of faculty in COM. This forum provides an intellectual exchange of ideas and perspectives, features scholarship in several methodological traditions, and fosters discussions among faculty and students about a variety of research topics in the field of communication.

In 2011, the Dr. Melvin L. DeFleur Distinguished Lecture Series was established. Each year two distinguished scholars from outside of the university are invited to share their outstanding scholarship, expertise, and experience with the BU community. In recognition of the pioneering and inspirational contributions of Dr. Melvin L. DeFleur to the field of mass communication research and his service as a venerable and inexhaustible member of the CRC, the faculty members named this series in his honor.

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LETTER FROM THE CO-DIRECTORS

Mina Tsay-Vogel, Ph.D.
CRC Co-Director

James Cummings, Ph.D.
CRC Co-Director

We had a very productive semester of onsite data collection in the CRC. For Spring 2018, 22 studies were conducted, recruiting participants from 24 different COM courses to participate in 820 study sessions.

In addition, we had two major updates in the CRC this semester. First, we would like to thank Jake Kassen, COM's Technical Operations Manager, for installing our new video recording system in B01A: Viewing Room. This unit can digitally record video and audio in two current spaces: B01B: Multipurpose Research Room and B02B: Naturalistic Research Area. We are deeply appreciative of his time and effort in not only setting up this customized recording system, but also his continued support in assisting faculty and students with successfully using it. Second, we extend our gratitude to Gary Santos, COM's Facilities Manager, for helping us install updated furniture, specifically new flexible tables and chairs, in B04E: Collaborative Research Area.

We are incredibly fortunate for our graduate student staff. We would like to thank our CRC Lab Managers, Jackie Rocheleau (M.S. student in Science Journalism), Bochao Sun (M.A. student in Emerging Media Studies), and Wenyu Zeng (M.A. student in Emerging Media Studies) for upkeeping the center and overseeing technology and facility reservations. In addition, we are grateful to our Events/Publicity Coordinator, Zoe Tan (M.A. student in Emerging Media Studies) for her help in promoting the news and accomplishments of the CRC research fellows and our lecture series. Moreover, we truly appreciate the continued efforts of our SONA Administrator, Minkuan Chen (M.A. student in Emerging Media Studies) who has managed the SONA system for our college since January of last year. Finally, we thank Mike Pan (M.A. student in Emerging Media Studies) for his work in gathering news and creating this spring's newsletter. We have been very lucky to have all of these graduate students onboard and are grateful for all their assistance in managing, coordinating, and promoting various research efforts and events this semester.

We hope everyone has a fantastic summer and look forward to all the exciting research in store in the next academic year!

TECHNOLOGY AND FACILITY UPDATES

New Video Recording System

We installed a new digital video recording system in B01A: Viewing Room. This unit can record video and audio in B01B: Multipurpose Research Room and B02B: Naturalistic Research Area. Recordings can be saved directly onto USB keys from the unit.

Furniture Upgrade in B04E: Collaborative Research Area

We installed new furniture in B04E: Collaborative Research Area which include 6 flexible tables and 16 rolling chairs. This update provides flexibility in group meeting arrangements and seating for faculty and students.

Google Faculty Research Award ($88,301)

Co-PI, Providing Real-time Content with Balanced Political Views (PI: Margrit Betke; Co-PI: Prakash Ishwar).

The goal of the project is to develop methods for news aggregators to ensure they present balanced real-time content representing diverse political perspectives to their users – not just left- and/or right-leaning content, but content that samples the full political landscape in the U.S. Dr. Lei Guo will be working with Dr. Margrit Betke from Computer Science and Dr. Prakash Ishwar from Electrical and Computer Engineering and students from different departments at BU including Kate Mays, a Ph.D. student of Emerging Media Studies.

Lei Guo, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor,
Emerging Media Studies

ICA Top Faculty Paper Award

Guo, L. (2018, May). The rise of non-official voices in China: Inter-media agenda setting in a controlled media environment. Paper to be presented at the 68th annual conference of the International Communication Association, Prague, Czech Republic.

Intermedia agenda-setting theory has been widely used to explain news dynamics in western democracies. The extent to which the effect takes place in authoritarian regimes remains a question. This study focuses on the online media ecology in contemporary China, a media environment that mixes the forces of government surveillance, market competition, and the push for independent news reporting. Specifically, the study examined how different types of online news influenced each other in covering the Two Sessions, China's biggest annual political event. In order to obtain a holistic view of Chinese online news, computational methods such as unsupervised and supervised machine learning were employed to analyze 33,875 articles from 291 online news sources in March 2017. Results showed that privately-owned, commercial news sites emerged as the agenda setter in China's online media landscape, indicating that non-official discourse may find its way to expand in the country's online public sphere.

DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES

Discovering Vulnerabilities in a Sociotechnical Society

danah boyd, Ph.D.

SPRING 2018

Data-driven and algorithmic systems increasingly underpin many decision-making systems, shaping where law enforcement are stationed and what news you are shown on social media. The design of these systems is inscribed with organizational and cultural values. Often, these systems depend on the behavior of everyday people, who may not act as expected. Meanwhile, adversarial actors also seek to manipulate the data upon which these systems are built for personal, political, and economic reasons. In this talk, danah boyd unpacked some of the unique cultural challenges presented by "big data" and machine learning, raising critical questions about fairness and accountability. She described how those who are manipulating media for lulz are discovering the attack surfaces of new technical systems and how their exploits may undermine many aspects of society that we hold dear. Above all, she argued that we need to develop more sophisticated ways of thinking about technology before jumping to hype and fear.

danah boyd, Ph.D.
Principal Researcher, Microsoft Research
Founder, Data & Society
Visiting Professor, New York University

COLLOQUIUM TALKS

Has the Time Come to Revise § 230 of the Communications Decency Act?

FEBRUARY 2018

In the 22 years since it was passed, § 230 of the Communications Decency Act, which gives providers of interactive computer services broad immunity from liability for content posted by third parties, has had a profound effect on the Internet. The Electronic Frontier Foundation calls it, "the most important law protecting Internet speech." Others, however, argue it encourages and enables extremely harmful speech including defamation, invasion of privacy, sex trafficking, revenge porn, online bullying, doxing, and death threats, leaving victims with little or no recourse. This has led to numerous efforts to reduce the immunity provided by § 230. Given the changes in the Internet since it was passed, is it time to revise § 230?

T. Barton Carter, J.D.
Professor of Communication and Law

Toxic News: Media Coverage of Pediatric Environmental Health & How Moms Respond

MARCH 2018

Now more than ever, the medical and scientific communities are concerned with how exposure to toxic chemicals in the environment – including pesticides and bisphenol A – impact the health of our children. Dr. Mello has been studying how the media presents these health risks to the public and how new and expectant moms, in particular, react. In this talk, she discussed how the media prioritizes certain risks over others, how it frames responsibility for protecting children from harm, and how those editorial choices impact mothers' attitudinal and behavioral responses.

Susan Mello, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Communication Studies, Northeastern University

68th ANNUAL ICA CONFERENCE
VOICES
Prague, Czech Republic
24-28 May 2018

Andersen, B., Hair, L., Groshek, J., Krishna, A., & Walker, D. (2018, May). Understanding and diagnosing antimicrobial resistance on social media: A year long overview of data and analytics. Paper to be presented at the 68th annual conference of the International Communication Association, Prague, Czech Republic.

Andersen, B., Chen, M., Wang, D., Zhang, Y., & Tsay-Vogel, M. (2018, May). Media-induced empowerment: Effects of episodic and thematic framing of hedonic and eudaimonic messages on viewers. Paper to be presented at the 68th annual conference of the International Communication Association, Prague, Czech Republic.

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Xie, X., **Zhang, Y.,** & Bo, X. (2018, May). The imbalance of online media platforms utilization at county level in China: Opportunities and challenges. To be presented at the 68th annual post-conference of the International Communication Association, Prague, Czech Republic.

Zhang, Y., & Vigil, T. (2018, May). Propaganda or persuasion: Mass entrepreneurship and innovation campaign in China. Paper to be presented at the 68th annual conference of the International Communication Association, Prague, Czech Republic.

CALL FOR PAPERS: PODCASTING, THE POPULAR, AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE

Deadline: September 1, 2018

Podcasting is a paradoxical medium. Its form and content are encoded with markers of the both the popular and the elite. On the one hand, it is a medium deeply embedded in the everyday practices of everyday people. We listen on the train, at the gym, or even on the job. It is frequently produced by avocational enthusiasts far removed from the elite spheres of media production culture. It is popular both in the sense that millions enjoy it and in its ability to so effectively blend into common activities. Yet at the same time podcasting often takes on the contours of elite discourse. The diversity of podcast offerings can yield highly specialized content requiring listeners to possess considerable expertise in esoteric subject matter. Political podcasts, in the hopes of differentiating themselves from more mainstream offerings, tend towards a wonkish focus that can be alienating and intentionally exclusionary to large groups of potentially interested listeners. Gunn and Brummett (2004) argue that the project of popular communication should be to foreclose the study of "elite culture" and privilege instead "the objects of everyday life." In podcasting we find elements of the everyday and the elite interacting constantly and with considerable success. This special issue of Popular Communication will consider the ways in which the podcasting medium negotiates and benefits from these tendencies towards simultaneous inclusivity and exclusivity.

To do so, articles in this issue will analyze elements of podcasting's brief but vibrant history, interrogating the medium's popular possibilities, revolutionary promises and moment-defining media texts. Arriving in the midst of increasing global political turbulence and offering a relatively inexpensive form of mass expression, podcasting significantly expanded a public sphere once dominated by opinion journalism, talk radio, and public affairs television. In this sense, it offered a popularization of public sphere elements long dominated by elite discourse. Perhaps most alluringly, podcasting has offered a mode of discursive media aimed at younger, pop culture-savvy listeners invested in both on-demand programs and political consciousness. But this newfound freedom and flexibility does not necessarily mean that the paradigms established by older media have been abolished or even meaningfully disrupted. It took little time, for example, for large corporations and other elite institutions to dominate mainstream podcast rankings, the most influential of which is hosted by the global megalith Apple. Furthermore, the logics of narrowcasting have driven numerous independent producers towards increasingly specific content, fracturing the public and perhaps obscuring some of the popular potential of the medium. Podcasting thus offers new opportunities for expression, but nonetheless replicates certain historically established patterns of media concentration and limitation. Specific research questions of interest to this special issue include but are not by any means limited to:

- How has the growth of podcasting both expanded and contracted the discursive possibilities for popular political media across the world?
- How do the histories of radio, regulation, and network distribution help to contextualize the popular dynamics of political podcasting?
- How do algorithms, rating systems, and other data structures impact the work of producers attempting to gain audiences for their political podcasts?
- How do podcasts fit into or defy traditions of progressive media?
- How do podcasts circulate globally and mediate debates over globalization, immigration,diaspora and other international concerns?
- How do podcasts embrace the blending of information and entertainment found elsewhere global political media?

The deadline for submissions is September 1, 2018.
Papers should be no longer than 7,000 words (all inclusive)
Papers should be submitted using ScholarOne at http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/hppc20/current
Full instructions for authors, including APA 6th Edition style guidelines, can be found at the same page.

Correspondence and questions about this call for papers can be directed to Matt Sienkiewicz (matt.sienkiewicz@bc.edu) and Deborah Jaramillo (dlj@bu.edu).

#NoFilter: Unmasking
Digital Engagement
& Real World Influence

June 21st, 2018
11:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Colloquium Room,
Photonics Center, 8 St. Mary's Street, 9F.
Boston, MA 02215

@EMSatBU   @DEMSatBU   @EMSatBU

#ScreentimeBU
Graduate Student Conference

site.bu.edu/demsconference

#SCREENTIMEBU2018

#ScreentimeBU is an annual academic conference in June put on by the graduate students from the Division of Emerging Media Studies at Boston University.

The #ScreentimeBU conference aims to provide an opportunity for researchers in the field of digital media and communication to exchange their attitudes, stances, and opinions on the heated issues haunting today's media landscape. By showcasing their insightful research, the scholars at the conference can inform people of the latest research accomplishments, communicate with colleagues on critical topics, as well as hint at future research directions in the communication fields.

This year, as another year identified by the thriving new media platforms and technologies along with doubts and scandals around online privacy, urges us as communication researchers to delve into the underlying mechanism of digital media, big data and how they have been influencing the real world. Following this, we are thrilled to introduce our theme of this year: #NoFilter: Unmasking Digital Engagement and Real World Influence.

For more information, please visit: sites.bu.edu/demsconference

PRESENTATIONS

Downes, E. (2018, July). From 'press secretary' to 'communications director' (and beyond): The evolution, over the last half century, of a title with gravitas describing Capitol Hill's public relations specialists. Paper to be presented at the International History of Public Relations Conference, Bournemouth University, England.

Andersen, B., Hair, L., Groshek, J., Krishna, A., & Walker, D. (2018, May). Understanding and diagnosing antimicrobial resistance on social media: A year long overview of data and analytics. Paper to be presented at the 68th annual conference of the International Communication Association, Prague, Czech Republic.

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Cahill, T. J. (2018, May). Dimensions of congruity in immersive virtual environments: A framework for the schematic processing of multimodal sensory cues. Paper to be presented at the conference of the International Society for Presence Researchers, Prague, Czech Republic.

Cummings, J. J., & Mays, K. (2018, May). Trait motivation as a predictor of online dating app behavior. Poster to be presented at the 68th annual conference of the International Communication Association, Prague, Czech Republic.

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Cummings, J. J., & Wertz, B. (2018, May). Technological predictors of social presence: A foundation for a meta-analytic review and empirical concept explication. Paper to be presented at the conference of the International Society for Presence Researchers, Prague, Czech Republic.

Donegan, J. (2018, May). The relationship between highbrow/lowbrow film viewership: A network analysis of European art cinema and paracinema. Paper to be presented at the 68th annual conference of the International Communication Association, Prague, Czech Republic.

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Upcoming (cont.)

Hair, L., & Cahill, T. J. (2018, May). Cognitive and emotional responses to visual and gender cues in video game livestreaming. Poster to be presented at the 68th annual conference of the International Communication Association, Prague, Czech Republic.

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Zhang, Y., & Vigil, T. (2018, May). Propaganda or persuasion: Mass entrepreneurship and innovation campaign in China. Paper to be presented at the 68th annual conference of the International Communication Association, Prague, Czech Republic.

Recent

Amazeen, M. A. (2018, April). Recognizing news in an era of content confusion. Simmons College Know News: Engaging with Mis- and Disinformation Symposium, Keynote Speaker. Boston, MA.

Cahill, T. J., Cutino, C., Forman, R., & Wang, Y. (2018, April). #GunControl: An analysis of hashtags used by political advocacy groups on Twitter. Presented at the 109th Annual Convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Pittsburgh, PA.

Cummings, J. J. (2018, April). Mainstreaming virtual reality: Creating and maintaining psychological presence. Presented at the AR/VR Festival, Boston University, Boston, MA.

Guo, L. (2018, April). The future of agenda-setting research in the digital age. Presented at Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY.

Jaramillo, D. L. (2018, April). The television code: Policing and containing an emerging medium, 1948-1952. Keynote Address at the Postwar Faculty Colloquium, University of North Texas.

Katz, J. E. (2018, April). The visual turn in mobile communication: Notes from the travel experience as seen through American eyes. Invited speaker, "Communication-culture-consciousness." 8th Visual Learning Conference, Budapest, Hungary.

Groshek, J. (2018, March). From dissertation to dissemination: Strategies for turning dusty dissertations into conference presentations, journal publications, and more. Featured speaker, Boston University Symposium on Doctoral Studies.

Howell, C. (2018, March). Welcome to the fempire: The national women's soccer league branding on Lifetime and Go90, Society for Cinema and Media Studies annual conference, Toronto, Canada.

Howell, C. (2018, March). Collecting and recollecting: Battlestar Galactica through video's varied technologies of memory, for the BU Cinema and Media Studies Program and Boston Cinema/Media Seminar.

Recent (cont.)

Jaramillo, D. L. (2018, March). 'The inherent artistic and highly individualistic nature of the work': Salary stabilization and talent compensation in the 1950s. Paper presented at Society for Cinema and Media Studies Conference, Toronto, Ontario, CA.

Katz, J. E. (2018, March). Emerging forms of life with social media and autonomous robots. Sorbonne Wittgenstein seminar, Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne Université, UFR de philosophie, Paris, France.

Katz, J. E. (2018, March). Social science and communication research findings that affect group competition and conflict. Dinner address to ambassadors of the Organization of Security Co-operation for Europe (OSCE), Vienna, Austria.

Krishna, A., Kim, S., Brodey, C., & Vibber, K.S. (2018, March). Treating Ivanka unfairly: Understanding the impact of presidential tweeting on publics' perceptions and intentions to boycott corporations. Paper presented at the annual International Public Relations Research Conference, Orlando, FL.

Downes, E. (2018, February). Fighting fake news: The latest on President Trump and Congress. Lasell College Graduate Communication Guest Lecture Series.

Amazeen, M.A. (2017, December). Content confusion in an era of fake news. Act4Impact Symposium, New York, New York.

Groshek, J. (2017, December). An (un)civil movement? How mobile phones and social media change discourse. Featured speaker, Boston University Race, Politics, and Social Media Symposium.

Groshek, J. (2017, December). The revolution will be streaming: How user agency, algorithms, and mobility are transforming media and reshaping media effects. Featured speaker, University of Minnesota.

Groshek, J. (2017, November). Healthy influencers? Social media use, misinformation, and health behaviour change. Featured speaker, Mobile and Electronic Health ARC's 2nd Annual Symposium.

Groshek, J. (2017, November). Helping populism win? Social media use, filter bubbles, and support for populist presidential candidates in the 2016 U.S. election campaign. Featured speaker, NULab/Shorenstein Center.

Groshek, J. (2017, October). Crafting your online scholarly persona. Featured speaker, Boston University Research, Office of the Provost.

Wertz, B., & Groshek, J. (2017, October). Emerging media, instability, and democracy: Examining the granger-causal relationships of 122 Countries from 1946 to 2014. Presented to the Association of Internet Researchers, Tartu, Estonia.

Amazeen, M. A. Quoted in the Daily Free Press, "3 Boston-area businesses pull ads from Fox News show after David Hogg comment," April 4, 2018. https://dailyfreepress.com/blog/2018/04/04/3-boston-area-businesses-pull-ads-from-fox-news-show-after-david-hogg-comment/

Groshek, J. Featured speaker on Story in the Public Square, Rhode Island Public Radio, March 17, 2018. https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=AlR_1b6KAfo

Amazeen, M. A. Quoted in the Christian Science Monitor, "Unilever's gambit reflects advertisers' role in cleaning digital 'swamp,'" February 16, 2018. https://www.csmonitor.com/Business/2018/0216/Unilever-s-gambit-reflects-advertisers-role-in-cleaning-digital-swamp

Amazeen, M. A. Quoted in OpenDemocracy, "The secrets of 'Black Ops' advertising. Who is paying for our news?" February 8, 2018. https://www.opendemocracy.net/james-cusick-crina-boros/blurred-lines-and-black-ops-disappearing-divide-between-uk-news-and-adverti

Amazeen, M. A. Quoted in Journalism Research News, "Only 1 in 10 recognized native advertising," February 8, 2018. http://journalismresearchnews.org/article-1-10-recognized-native-advertising/

Amazeen, M. A. "Content confusion in an era of fake news." Truthinadvertising.org, February 7, 2018.

Amazeen, M. A. Interviewed on Boston 25 News (with Eric Rasmussen) about thousands of Massachusetts IDs stolen to lobby FCC against net neutrality, December 12, 2017. http://www.fox25boston.com/news/25-investigates-thousands-of-mass-ids-stolen-to-lobby-for-more-expensive-internet/663060053

PUBLICATIONS

In Press

Groshek, J., Katz, J., Andersen, B., Cutino, C., & Zhong, Q. (in press). Media use and antimicrobial resistance misinformation and misuse: Survey evidence of information channels and fatalism in augmenting a global health threat. *Cogent Medicine*.

Halpern, D., Valenzuela, S., & Katz, J. E. (in press). When participation leads to misinformation: How using social media for news leads to misperceptions and sharing false claims. *New Media & Society*.

Kim, S., & Krishna, A. (in press). Unpacking public sentiment toward the government: How citizens' perceptions of government communication strategies impact public engagement, cynicism, and word-of-mouth behaviors in South Korea. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*.

Walsh, J., Andersen, B., Groshek, J., & Katz, J. E. (in press). Are you being served?: Communicating with power via mediated support channels. *Media and Communication*.

Walsh, J., Andersen, B., Katz, J., & Groshek, J. (in press). Personal power and agency when dealing with interactive voice response systems and alternative modalities. *Media and Communication*.

Wu, H. D. (in press). International coverage. In Tim P. Vos & Folker Hanusch (Eds.), *The International Encyclopedia of Journalism Studies*. Hobken, NJ: Wiley.

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