

Popular Communication Division – Pre Conference Proposal for the 2017 ICA Conference, San Diego

Populism, Post-Truth Politics and Participatory Culture: Interventions in the Intersection of Popular and Political Communication

ICA Preconference, by the Popular Communication Division, sponsored by the Centre for Participatory Culture, University of Huddersfield

24th and 25th May 2017, San Diego, CA.

Organizers: Cornel Sandvoss and Stephen Harrington

Background and Aims:

From Donald Trump's surprise victory in the 2016 US presidential election and the successful Brexit campaign in Britain, via the rise of far right populist parties across Europe to new Left movements across Southern Europe or Corbynism in the UK, representative democracies in Europe and the US are currently being confronted with dramatic and rapid transformations to the substance of political discourse, frequently summarised as 'post-truth politics'. Rapidly accelerating over the past two years, many of these changes to politics, political movements, political campaigning and political debate have been observed and explored in the field of communication studies focusing on its early manifestations such as the Tea Party as much as progressive grass root movements over the past decades. This preconference draws on the rich body of work in the study of new political formations, political campaigning, the changing nature of political discourse, the eroding boundaries between political and popular communication and between popular entertainment and popular and populist politics in the field of media and communication studies over this period, and aims to provide a forum for the presentation of current research on the rapid rise of political populism, political movements and post-truth politics in 2016 in different national and international contexts and thus to provide comparative perspectives on transformations of political discourse, participation and electoral behaviour.

The preconference will foster a dialogue between scholars working within different conceptual and methodological traditions in order to advance interdisciplinary debates and approaches to the study of contemporary popular and populist politics; building on this analysis the preconference concludes with reflections on how this analysis can and ought to translate into interventions on behalf of communication scholars in the political process and its communicative infrastructure.

Themes:

The rise of new political movements and campaigns, including but not limited to the rise of far-right and post-truth populism, are distinctly multi-factorial. In exploring their premises and consequences we distinguish between media intrinsic and extrinsic factors. While the preconference will focus on media intrinsic factors that are closely associated with changes in political discourse as a result of a.) technological change including processes of digitisation and media convergence, b.) transformations of media ownership and (broadcast) market deregulation and c.) the proliferation of forms of participation

and textual production among media users and audiences, it also acknowledges the wider economic, social, cultural and political factors that have informed and driven these transformations. The preconference therefore examines the interplay between media intrinsic and extrinsic factors in the rise of popular and populist movements. We thus invite contributions to a range of related fields of research including:

- Media, politics and trust
- Citizen journalism and political participation
- Perception on (news) media among media users
- The crisis of political journalism
- The role of comedy and other forms of entertainment in political discourse
- Infotainment and political discourse
- Social movements, protest and digital media
- Social media and the public sphere
- The affective and emotional qualities of political support and voting
- Fans of politicians as well as campaigns and movements as fan cultures
- Political discourse, Othering and anti-fandom
- Further communication research pertinent to understanding populism and post-truth politics

Participants are invited to examine cases and phenomena from across the world, including, but not limited to:

- The 2016 US election campaign
- Far right populism including movements such as the Tea Party, UK Leave campaign, Fidesz, Front National, UKIP, AfD, PiS and FPÖ.
- Movements against neo-liberalism and austerity including Bernie Sanders's 2016 campaign, Syriza, Podemos and Momentum.
- Forms of civic action and political interventions by media users and audiences across the political spectrum as well as within realms of entertainment.

We invite submissions to any of the above themes and topics in the following formats:

Full Research Papers

We welcome paper submissions on any research of empirical, conceptual and methodological relevance to the preconference theme. Given the preconference's topical nature, submissions of current and ongoing research are highly encouraged. Paper proposals should be supported by an extended abstract of up to 800 words outlining the paper's background, rationale, methodology and indicative findings (if available). Paper presentations will be between 15 and 20 minutes

Position Papers

We also invite submissions of shorter position papers (10 minutes). Position papers should be based on emerging and developing research and will offer an opportunity to present and reflect on new and innovative conceptual, methodological and empirical approaches.

Proposals for position papers should be based on an abstract of up to 500 words.

Panel Proposals

Panel proposals should aim to focus on a particular theme or aspect of populism, post-truth politics or political participation across different case studies, or instead examine a given case study through a range of approaches and themes.

Panels should feature between three and six papers. Proposals should include the following:

1. A 400-word abstract including a rationale for the panel.
2. A 150-word abstract for each of the papers on the panel followed by a brief (100 word) description of each panelist's background and qualifications regarding the proposed topic.
3. A 75-word description of the panel for the conference program.

Mediated / Alternative Submission Formats

We also encourage scholars and practitioners in the field to submit related research outputs in any format (both academic and artistic in formats such as, but not limited to, written, visual, sonic, audio, video, hypertext,) to be featured on preconference website, in situ or as part of the programme.

All proposals for contributions to the preconference should be submitted online at <https://goo.gl/FcdSjZ>. For any further questions on the submission process please contact Cornel Sandvoss at c.sandvoss@hud.ac.uk.

The proposal submission deadline is midnight (GMT) on 31st December 2016.

We will support dissemination of the preconference through a digital dissemination strategy including live streaming.