Call for Submissions

Social Media, Algorithms, News, and Public Engagements in the Asia-Pacific and Beyond
ICA Preconference, May 21, 2020
Gold Coast, Australia

Two sets of technological advances—the advent of social media and the proliferation of algorithms—are now shaping not only how information in a society is gathered, disseminated, received, and utilized, but also how we understand facts, factuality, and truths, how we are related to one another in public and as publics, and how we devise and engage in civic activities. What technology-driven innovations are emerging in the production and circulation of news? How are platforms affecting the circulation and composition of public information, including news? How might these technology-based changes be contributing to the rise of the discourse of “post-truth” and the emergence of varieties of publics? How are technological advances utilized to combat “fake news” and its dissemination? How are they deployed to innovate civic practices, ranging from the everyday to contentious engagements? In the midst of all the changes and challenges, how may we understand the challenges and possibilities of the familiar models of publics in democratic theories, namely publics who are expected to be informed, participatory, deliberative, and/or empowered?

This pre-conference invites submissions of extended paper and panel proposals that examine various aspects of social media and algorithms in connection to the changing practices in news production and circulation as well as in public engagements. We hope to focus in particular on the Asia-Pacific region, but will also welcome studies of other world regions. Possible paper topics may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- News and news making on social media platforms
- Algorithmic curation of news and fragmentation of the public
- Automated journalism in reporting contentious debates and/or protests
- Using social media in producing news for civic engagement
- Application of data science in news curation for social media
- Visualizing data in news reporting of public issues and debates
- Contestations over objectivity, factuality, and the cultural authority of journalism
- Algorithmic curation and the creation of echo chambers
- Algorithmically curated information environments and the rises of nativism, xenophobic nationalism, authoritarianism
- AI and social media in fact checking
- AI-assisted or AI-enabled authoritarian demagoguery
- Social media, AI, and counter-cultural practices
Social media and innovations in collective action

Proposal Submission:
1. Your submission(s) should be WORD or PDF documents of extended proposals (1,000 words for paper and 2,000 words with specifics on each participant and his/her thesis for panel) in APA format.
2. Your submissions should include a separate title page that contains the title, name(s) of the author(s), affiliation of each author, and the full contact information of each author.
3. For full consideration, your proposal with a separate title page in WORD or PDF documents should be submitted to CAP2020@163.com by November 30, 2019.
4. All submissions will be reviewed by a group of scholars selected by the pre-conference organizers. All papers will be reviewed and selected in a blind review process. They will select the ones to be included at the pre-conference. Authors will be notified of the review and selection results by December 20, 2019.
5. At the conclusion of the pre-conference, the Editors of the journal, Communication and the Public, will solicit selected papers and panel proposals for publication in a special issue.
6. Questions regarding the preconference, contact: zhongdangpan@wisc.edu. Questions regarding the submission, contact panpanjiang@zju.edu.cn.

The preconference is organized by the College of Media and International Culture at Zhejiang University, in collaboration with the Department of Communication Arts at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania.