

5th ESTIDIA Conference

Hybrid Dialogues: Transcending Binary Thinking and Moving Away from Societal Polarizations
19-21 September 2019, University of Naples L'Orientale, Italy

PANEL DISCUSSION

Global Discourses (and Counter-Discourses) of Hostility in the Social Media Age

Organizer: Dr. Eleonora Esposito (University of Navarra)

We invite submission of abstracts for a panel entitled *Global Discourses (and Counter-Discourses) of Hostility in the Social Media Age*, to be proposed as part of the **ESTIDIA** (European Society for Transcultural and Interdisciplinary Dialogue) Conference, to be held on **19-21 September 2019** at the **University of Naples L'Orientale, Italy**.

The fast-emerging technologies of the participatory web have transformed the way we communicate, explore and connect to the world forever. The new range of indigenous genres, contents and practices, situated at the intersection of mass and interpersonal communication, fosters the pursuit of personal interests in a shared scenario as well as the creation and maintenance of global relations that validate and support identities and behaviours. Not simply grounded in the incessant sharing of information content, the social media communication paradigm is characterized by a limitless potential for *ordinary* (rather than *élite*) media performance, with an ever-growing number of *bottom-up* discourse formations and disseminations.

Unfortunately, one of the most significant and complex drawbacks of this unprecedented proliferation of user-generated content is the acutely increasing incidence of *cyber-hate*. Hostility is a complex social, cultural and psychological phenomenon: motives behind people's hate are various, different and often obscure, and the fluid nature of the cybersphere adds to further complicate an already thorny matter. In fact, the very global, immediate and interactive nature of the social media communication paradigm has somehow contributed to make the participatory web a breeding ground for the expression and dissemination of a range of exclusionary, intolerant, and extremist discourses, practices and beliefs.

In light of the above, the proposed panel invites a selected number of scholars from across the world to discuss the latest empirical findings, methodologies and theoretical frameworks to understand the phenomenon of online hostility. The panel will represent an arena to share and discuss insights on how embedded social and power relations are organized through digital technologies and how the phenomenon of online hostility is impacting on equality and participation in the cybersphere.

At the same time, while the topics of online hostility, disinformation and extremism have been receiving growing attention throughout recent years, the potential of counter-voices on the part of individual actors and communities has not been taken into equal scholarly consideration. This panel aims at providing room also for research on the many emerging counter-discourses and grassroots counter-measures against hateful and exclusionary behaviours in the cybersphere.

Comparative studies across different languages, socio-political contexts and social media platforms are particularly welcome. Possible topics include, but are by no means limited to, the following aspects:

- **Online Hostility as an Intersectional Phenomenon**

The intertwined impact of socioculturally constructed categorizations in digital exclusionary and abusive behaviours, such as:

- Gender / Sexual Orientation
- Race / Ethnicity / Religion
- Class
- Age / Generation
- Dis/ability

- **Counter-Discourses to Online Hostility**

- Online Communities of Resistance, Resilience and Solidarity
- Grassroot Initiatives for Awareness, Education and Prevention
- Feminist Community-building and Digitalism
- Hashtag Activism (e.g. #MeToo; #ShoutYourAbortion; #TakeAKnee; #WhyIStayed...)

- **Online Misogyny and Technology-Facilitated Sexual Violence**

- Discursive Strategies and Rhetorical Devices of Online Misogyny
- Image-Based Harassment and Visual Misogyny
- Digitally-mediated Rape Culture
- Misogyny against Women in Political or Institutional Roles
- The Manosphere (e.g. Redpill Philosophy; Incel Communities; Toxic Masculinities...)

- **Theoretical Models and Methodological Approaches**

- Collection and Storage of Data
- Software and Tools for Data Collection and Analysis
- Small and Big Data
- Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed-Method Approaches
- Discourse-based and Ethnographic Approaches
- Opinion Mining & Sentiment Analysis
- Social Network Analysis
- Ethics Issues

Abstracts are to be sent as MS Word attachment to the Panel Organizer: onlinehostility@gmail.com

All abstracts should include the name, institutional affiliation and email address of the author(s), the paper title, and four-five keywords. The abstract should be approximately **500 words** in length (excluding references). All abstracts will be peer-reviewed according to the following criteria: originality and/or importance of topic; clarity of research question and purpose; data sources; theoretical approach; analytical focus; relevance of findings if already available.

Submissions are due by 1 April 2019. Notification of acceptance to the panel will be sent by 15 April 2019.

We encourage abstract submissions from **Early-Career Researchers**, including postgraduate research students and postdoctoral researchers.

All accepted papers to the conference (following editorial review) will be included in the conference **proceedings** published in International Journal of Cross-Cultural Studies and Environmental Communication (ISSN 2285 – 3324). It is also intended that papers accepted to the panel are collected in a thematically arranged **volume** to be submitted to an international publisher.

For more information on the panel or the conference, please contact the Panel Organizer or visit the conference website: <http://www.estidia.eu>