



COMPARATIVE  
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ICA



## Call for papers - ICA Preconference

### Comparative Privacy and the Literacies of a Networked Age: A Critical Approach

Endorsed by the following ICA divisions: Communication & Technology Division, @Communication Law & Policy Division, Children Adolescents and Media and by the French Society of Information and Communication Sciences (SFSIC)

**Deadline for Extended Abstracts: January 31, 2022, 23:59 GMT**

**OFF-SITE** | Université de Haute-Alsace, UHA's Campus Fonderie - FSESJ (Faculté des Sciences Economiques Sociales et Juridiques), 16, rue de la Fonderie in Mulhouse

**Conference date : May 25 - 9:30 - 17:00 - 2022**

Jointly organized by CPRN (Comparative Privacy Research Network, <https://comparativeprivacy.org/>) in collaboration with CEJEM (Research Network on Youth and Media).

**Keywords:** privacy, privacy literacy, digital literacy, cross-cultural studies, comparative studies, media education

Digital mediation of everyday life (Couldry and Hepp, 2017) grows ever more pervasive. Many everyday actions, from shopping to chatting to entertainment or even political engagement, take place via increasingly ubiquitous digital technology, hinging on storing and calculating the traces of these actions. The capture of personal information and the datafication (Meijas and Couldry, 2019) of social behaviors are increasingly used for micro-targeting, predictive analytics, and generalized surveillance (Zuboff, 2019). In light of these developments, privacy has become an important object of study in various academic disciplines, including communication studies.

Whether conceptualizations view privacy as an end in itself or as a means to other ends such as autonomy and personal development (Rössler, 2005), they tend to focus on the protection of the intrinsic personality of an individual against potential intrusions. Such intrusions can come from fellow peers, but also from institutions, especially those with mediatizing power (e.g., the press, social media platforms) and, of course, the state. Privacy in digital environments is inherently collective and dependent on the behaviors of others and institutional practices (Marwick and boyd, 2014) and based on the continuous negotiation of

norms and rules for information disclosure and exchange (Petronio, 2002; Rey, 2012). Agency of the individual is limited by the vastness, interconnectedness, and opaqueness of data flows, and their subsequent capture and analysis (Baruh and Popescu, 2017).

In academic research, multiple literacies linked to digital media use coexist, like media literacy, social media literacy (Livingstone, 2014), algorithmic literacy (Dogruel et al., 2021), and data literacy (Pangrazio and Selwyn, 2018). Numerous studies on privacy have specifically focused on privacy literacy as a crucial factor that can help individuals to protect their privacy (e.g., Masur, 2020; Park, 2014; Trepte et al., 2015). Privacy literacy is here often conceptualized as an extension of media literacy, a concept with a rich history (Corroy, 2016; Bosler et al., 2021). Educators and scholars have focused on digital and media literacy as a tool to reduce disparities (Bosler, 2018), promote safer mediated interactions, and engage citizenry—especially as societies have increasingly moved online. Privacy literacy, as a dimension of the larger umbrella of digital and media literacies, has become a key component to autonomy and democracy in the information society and increasingly emerges as an important avenue of privacy research (Masur, 2020).

Conceptualizations of privacy literacy continue to be contested—especially when viewed from a global, comparative perspective. Conceptions of privacy, and by extension privacy literacy, hold deep cultural underpinnings (Wilhelm, 2021); yet, the multidimensionality and contextuality of privacy are still often underexplored in research that focuses on how privacy is valued, measured, and enacted. Some argue that privacy in itself is only an indicator for other endangered values and norms, and is simply representative of tactics to avoid them (van der Sloot, 2016). A comparative approach opens up new perspectives, beyond the Western history and understandings of privacy.

Despite its importance, *comparative* privacy literacy research is particularly challenging due to conceptual plurality and socio-technical developments. We ask to engage with this challenge. We seek to examine privacy literacy with a cross-cultural lens in order to illuminate potential blindspots regarding its conceptualization and operationalization, and to help guide research that will inform policymaking and empowerment efforts aimed at preserving autonomy and democracy in the digital age, including media education. Recent discussions around voluntary disconnection (Schwarzenegger & Lohmaier, 2021; Kaun, 2021; Lomborg & Ytre-Arne, 2021; Markham, 2021) and digital sobriety (Flipo, 2020) highlight the need to reframe the public privacy debate beyond best practice of device and platform manipulation. They call for drawing in the bigger picture and collective destinies linked to privacy conceptions, to better understand the link between individual politics and public policies. A comparative angle can help further understand local contexts and positions towards these issues to avoid both ethno- and technocentrism.

**Program:** Drawing on previous and ongoing conversations and collaborations, this preconference aims to attend to privacy literacy's critical comparative nature by bringing together scholars that examine the cultural, political, and otherwise contextualized aspects of privacy literacy. The ultimate goal is to enhance conversation in communication studies about the ways in which systematic comparative cross-cultural analyses of privacy literacy may be conceptualized, theorized, and operationalized in novel ways. This preconference will be organized in two parts: First, keynotes will provide inputs on the central issues and concepts involved such as privacy,

comparative research, and media literacy. Secondly, interactive sessions will focus on three main aspects of comparative privacy literacy research, namely: conceptualization, operationalization, and collaboration. These sessions will bring together competitively selected presentations followed by a discussion on the challenges of conceptualizing and operationalizing critical privacy literacy from a cross-cultural perspective. The presentation sessions will be followed by group activities where participants will discuss solutions to particular challenges. This final session will take the form of a guided discussion in the larger group that will build on the diversity of the group in order to consider new, future-oriented research questions and forge future collaborations.

**Submission:** This preconference invites unpublished, innovative papers focusing on, but not limited to:

- research on media/digital literacy and mediated communication, where knowledge or skills regarding privacy plays a role;
- empirical studies focusing on privacy literacy in a comparative fashion;
- current and new topics for literacies, including the digital ecology, sobriety, algorithmic and privacy literacies, as well as persistent areas of inequalities ;
- challenges and opportunities represented by comparative approaches to studying privacy from a literacy perspective;
- qualitative and/or quantitative methodological approaches to studying privacy and relevant literacies comparatively;
- challenges and opportunities represented by comparative approaches to studying privacy and related literacies;
- discussions of pertinent dimensions of comparative privacy research;
- explorations of potential antecedents, mediators, and outcomes of privacy-related perceptions, decision-making, and behavior;
- conceptualizations and interpretations of privacy and privacy outcomes in non-WEIRD (Western Educated Industrialized Rich Democratic) contexts.

Both early career and senior scholars are welcome.

### Organizers:

#### **Local team members France, Mulhouse, Université de Haute-Alsace (UHA)**

- **Sabine Bosler** is an assistant professor in information and communication sciences at UHA and has written her PhD thesis on comparative digital culture and media education in a french-german context and is currently contributing on developing comparative approaches in communication science.
- **Carsten Wilhelm** is associate professor in information and communication sciences at UHA and researches the use of digital media and digital culture comparatively in various projects. Co-founder of the CPRN Comparative Privacy Research Network with Kelly Quinn and Dmitry Epstein, he is currently co-coordinator of the French GENIC research group on ethics in Digital Research, and member of the AoIR ethics working group.

- **International team members**

- **Dmitry Epstein** is a researcher of internet governance and policy at Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel. For the past two years, he has been working on questions of digital privacy, focusing on comparative research across cultural and political boundaries.
- **Philipp K. Masur** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication Science at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Netherlands. His research focuses on privacy and self-disclosure, persuasion and social influence on social media, and communication and well-being.
- **Kelly Quinn** is a Clinical Associate Professor in the Department of Communication at the University of Illinois at Chicago, USA, has an interdisciplinary research focus on new media and how it intersects with such diverse areas as the life course, privacy, social capital, and friendship. Her recent studies have centered on the processes by which individuals conceptualize and navigate their privacy online.
- **Lemi Baruh** is an Associate Professor at the Department of Media and Visual Arts, Koc University (Turkey). Lemi does research in Communication and Media, focusing on surveillance and social psychology of privacy and disclosure.
- **Christoph Lutz** is an Associate Professor at the Department of Communication and Culture and at the Nordic Centre for Internet and Society, BI Norwegian Business School (Oslo). His research interests lie in the area of digital technologies and include social media, online participation, privacy and digital inequalities. In addition, Christoph is interested in digital labor, the sharing economy and social robots.

Keynote speakers will be announced on our website : <https://comparativeprivacy.org/>

## **SUBMISSION AND SELECTION PROCESS**

Authors should submit an extended abstract of 800 words (not including references, figures, and tables) to:

<https://easychair.org/my/conference?conf=cprn2022ica#>

**by January 31, 2022.**

The extended abstracts should include the main idea/argument, research questions, a short literature review and/or theoretical perspectives, information on methodology and empirical findings (if applicable). We welcome different approaches, including discussions of literature, concepts and theories, historical perspectives, and empirical analyses.

All submitted abstracts must include name, affiliation and contact details.

Decisions on acceptance of the extended abstracts will be made by **February 28, 2022.**

**Authors of accepted abstracts are expected to attend the preconference and present in person.**

**Date of the preconference: Wednesday, May 25th 2022 9:30am to 5:00pm**

**Location/Venue: Mulhouse, France (2h30 from Paris by high-speed train)**

(all registered participants will be provided with guidelines for travel to Mulhouse from Paris)

### **Registration Fee**

50 USD / for registered participants, speakers and attendees.

Fee includes: participation in the conference, buffets (finger food) and coffee.

The preconference is open to both ICA and non-ICA members. Attendees will need to create a profile to register.

### **Sponsorship / Division/Interest Group Affiliation**

This preconference has received endorsements from the ICA Communication and Technology, Communication Law and Policy and Children Adolescence and the Media divisions, as well as the French Society of Information and Communication Sciences (SFSIC).

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