

COMMUNICATIONS

The European Journal of Communication Research

Call for abstracts – Special Issue

Online hate speech: a European perspective

Although there is no universally agreed upon definition, online hate speech is often described as any form of web-based communication that disparages a person or a group on the basis of characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or religion. Online hate speech can take many different forms: from racist comments on news sites, to anti-semitic memes spread via social networking sites or misogynistic or homophobic actions in games. It may also vary in severity and whether it is considered legal (but harmful) or illegal.

For this Special Issue of *Communications: The European Journal of Communication Research* **we are seeking for original articles that build on theories in communication science or related fields in the social sciences, and take a European perspective** (e.g. by reporting the findings of a comparative study, by paying attention to a unique “case-study” within that broader European context, or by illustrating the relevance of the research findings for European policies, practices, and interventions). Proposals can present empirical data drawn from a wide range of scientific methods (e.g., qualitative and/or quantitative approaches) or be systematic/scoping reviews of extant literature.

The following topics will be given full consideration (though other topics will also be considered):

- a) Who are the *senders* of online hate speech - (news) media, politicians, celebrities, social influencers...or “average” users?, What internal states (emotions, cognitions, motivations) or external forces (e.g. structural incentives, exposure to hateful comments of others) drive their behaviors?, How does online hate spread?,....
- b) What are the *platforms* that are being used for online hate speech? How do technological features “afford” users to produce and disseminate online hate speech? How do platform algorithms contribute to the spread of online hate speech?
- c) What characterizes online hate speech *messages*? What is their content and form (visual, textual,...)? How is humor being (mis)used in online hate speech? What differentiates online hate speech from “online incivility”, “dangerous speech”, “cyberbullying”, “flaming”, etcetera.

- d) What are the characteristics of different receivers of online hate speech? How do victims and bystanders decode hate speech messages? How do they react to and cope with online hate speech? What does (individual/collective) resistance against online hate speech look like?
- e) What is the *impact* of engaging in and being exposed to online hate speech: on the individual level, the (inter-)group level, and the societal level?
- f) What type of communication interventions (i.e. counter narratives, media literacy interventions, reflective interfaces, victim support systems,...) can be used to prevent or deal with (the negative impact of) online hate speech (apart from, or in combination with, for instance, legal solutions). How can insights from social scientific theory inform the development of technological solutions such as automatic detection systems? How to design online platforms that promote safe spaces and respectful communication?

Timing for this special issue:

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| March 30, 2023 | Deadline for the submission of abstracts (400 words) |
| Mid April 2023 | Feedback on abstract - Invitation to submit a full paper |
| August 31 2023 | Submission deadline for full papers |
| Mid November 2023 | Reviews and decision (accept/revise/reject) |
| End of February 2023 | Submission deadline for revised versions |
| April 2024 | Final versions ready |
| September 2024 | Publication Special Issue |

The abstracts should be submitted via e-mail to the Special Issue Editors Heidi Vandebosch and Tobias Rothmund by March 30th, 2023.

Questions?

Contact the Editorial Office at ejcr@uni-bremen.de

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