

CALL FOR PAPERS
Global Perspectives on Populism and the Media

ICA Pre-Conference at Central European University, Budapest
May 22-23, 2018

The study of populism has never been more important than today in light of recent social, political and economic tumult, and developments in transnational media cultures. Across the world there have been numerous populist backlashes against elected governments and their policies. The emergent concerns of citizens about, for example, immigration and economic austerity have been exploited by a range of political opportunists, many with access to media resources. A proliferation of digital and social media is in some countries providing new cultural spaces for these actors to disseminate their messages and gain mainstream media attention. In addition, established political communicators are not immune to the populist impulse. Some mainstream political parties and politicians, for example, have adopted populist rhetoric in order to ensure electoral support, and some mainstream media organizations, facing increasing commercial competition, have pandered to populist political agendas. While populist politics is a well-documented feature of modern political culture, and sometimes meets not only with critique but with praise for challenging ossified practices and values of pragmatic democratic politics, the communicative aspects of populism have been underexplored or ignored. Moreover, populist movements are often analyzed with a particular focus on European and American right-wing movements. But populist movements and upheavals have appeared from the Philippines to India to Turkey to Russia. At the same time, variations of populism have arisen on both the right and the left (and in-between) and have surfaced in a variety of political systems and traditions.

This pre-conference aims to introduce global perspectives on the study of media, communication and populism, welcoming conceptually innovative submissions that examine populist communication and culture from all around the world. Recognizing the location of the preconference, the Hungarian capital of Budapest, the conference will also dedicate an open-to-the public panel to the rise of populism in East-Central Europe. The venue of the conference, Central European University, is rich in symbolism, as this university has recently been attacked by the populist government of Hungary. This symbolism will hopefully add to the liveliness of the discussions, which we expect to be relevant to academics in a diverse set of disciplines and fields (communication studies, sociology, political science, cultural studies, history, among others) and to non-academics as well.

The pre-conference also aims to be inclusive in perspectives and methodologies. As John B. Judis, author of *The Populist Explosion*, recently argued, political scientists often make the mistake of focusing on a restrictive definition of populism. In contrast, our aim is to analyze populism's manifestations and connections to media and communication in the broadest possible sense.

Relevant communicative processes of populism may include studies of populist symbols, music, time and memory, political advertising campaigns, social media groups, protest cultures, the narration of political myths, mass media attitudes, the relation of populism to media ownership patterns, among others. We particularly welcome unorthodox approaches, ambitious social theories, and debunking of popular myths in relations to populism and communication.

Confirmed Keynote Speakers

Professor Michael Ignatieff, President and Rector, Central European University

Professor Srirupa Roy, University of Göttingen

Professor Michael Schudson, Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University

Submission Process

We invite scholars to submit abstracts (maximum 500 words) of theoretical and empirical research papers.

The submissions should be emailed to the pre-conference organizers at GMSNConference@lboro.ac.uk no later than 15th December 2017.

Authors will be informed of acceptance/rejection decisions no later than 30th January 2018.

Accepted abstracts will be posted to the pre-conference website in advance of the event.

Please direct questions on submissions or any aspect of the pre-conference to GMSNConference@lboro.ac.uk

Registration

All speakers and attendees must register and pay the pre-conference fee. Participation fee (including coffee breaks and lunch buffet) is €50 for presenters and non-presenters. Information on local hotels in Budapest and travel information will be available at <http://www.gmsnetwork.net> shortly.

To register for this pre-conference, participants need to go to www.icaheadq.org and register online as part of their main ICA conference registration, or as a stand-alone registration.

Organizers

Julia Sonnevend (The New School for Social Research, USA), Emily Keightley, James Stanyer, Vaclav Stetka (Loughborough University, UK), Aswin Punathambekar (University of Michigan, USA), Marius Dragomir, Eva Bogner (Central European University, Hungary). The pre-conference is co-sponsored by the Political Communication, Journalism Studies and Philosophy, Theory & Critique divisions of the International Communication Association and by *Media, Culture & Society*.