

Call for Papers

Comparative Approaches To Studying Privacy: Opening Up New Perspectives

Special Issue of [Social Media + Society](#)

Abstracts due November 15, 2022

Full papers due June 15, 2023

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, sociology, computer science, information systems, and law.

Conceptualizations of privacy continue to be contested—especially when viewed from a global, comparative perspective. Privacy holds deep socio-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 (Masur et al., 2021). Further, 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). A comparative approach opens up new perspectives, beyond the Western history and understandings of privacy, it can help further understand local contexts and to avoid both ethno- and technocentrism.

Despite its importance, *comparative* privacy research is particularly challenging due to conceptual plurality and socio-technical developments. We ask to engage with this

challenge. We seek to examine privacy through a comparative 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 those directed toward privacy literacy and education.

This special issue invites unpublished, innovative papers focusing on, but not limited to:

- discussions of pertinent dimensions of comparative privacy research;
- theoretical and conceptual work on comparative privacy, including the extension of established privacy theories to a comparative scope and the development of new comparative privacy theory;
- challenges and opportunities of comparative approaches to studying privacy and related literacies;
- conceptualizations and interpretations of privacy in non-WEIRD (Western Educated Industrialized Rich Democratic) contexts;
- comparative explorations of antecedents, mediators, and outcomes of privacy-related perceptions and behavior;
- emerging topics in privacy literacies, including the digital ecology, voluntary disconnection, algorithmic and data literacies;
- inequalities in surveillance, privacy perceptions and behaviors, and/or privacy as a new marker of status viewed from a comparative angle;
- qualitative and/or quantitative methodological approaches to studying privacy and relevant literacies comparatively;
- research on privacy-related policies and strategies from a comparative perspective;
- case studies of privacy cultures across different contexts such as healthcare, education and politics;
- comparative studies of discourses about privacy and data protection.

Editors:

- **Carsten Wilhelm** is an Associate Professor in information and communication sciences at UHA (CRESAT) 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.
- **Dmitry Epstein** is an Assistant Professor of public policy and communication at Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel. He studies internet governance, information policy, and cybersecurity. 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, media literacy, 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. She has an interdisciplinary research focus on new media and its intersection with the life course and aging, privacy, social

capital, and friendship. Recently, her 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.

SUBMISSION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Authors should submit an extended abstract of 800 words (not including references, figures, and tables) to <http://tiny.cc/CASP2024> by **November 15, 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 **January 31, 2023**.

Authors of accepted abstracts are expected to submit full manuscripts by **June 15, 2023**. All submissions will undergo double blinded peer review.

Planned publication **2024**.

If you have any questions, please contact the editorial team at:
casp2024@comparativeprivacy.org

About the Comparative Privacy Network (CPRN)

The Comparative Privacy Research Network (CPRN) consists of an international group of privacy experts that is dedicated to the comparative study of privacy. All six editors of this special issue are members of CPRN, with Dmitry Epstein, Philipp K. Masur, Kelly Quinn, and Carsten Wilhelm being the founding members and Lemi Baruh and Christoph Lutz joining in 2020. CPRN was born out of a series of independent studies around the world and conversations that occurred in venues such as the International Communication Association. The goal is to create a sustainable framework for comparative privacy research, to build and engage an active community in comparative privacy research, and to advance the empirical study of privacy from a comparative angle.

More information is available on the CPRN website: <https://comparativeprivacy.org/>

About Social Media + Society

Established in 2015, **Social Media + Society** is a peer-reviewed, open access journal that focuses on advancing the understanding of social media and its impact on societies past, present and future. The journal is published by SAGE and the editor-in-chief is Prof. Zizi Papacharissi (University of Illinois, Chicago). The journal has an impact factor of 4.64 (5-year impact factor 5.77) and is ranked 14/94 in communication, getting 2.5 million full text reads per year.

More information is available on the journal website:

<https://journals.sagepub.com/home/sms>

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