



Yearly report of the Digital Culture and Communication section (2015)

1. Midterm Section event: Salzburg 2015

The Digital Culture and Communication Section in ECREA hosted a workshop on “Standards, Disruptions and Values in Digital Culture and Communication” at the University of Salzburg, 26-28 November 2015. The workshop was organized with the ICT&S Center | University of Salzburg Center for Advanced Studies and Research in Information and Communication Technologies & Society and partnered with the Centre for Research on Media Innovations (CeRMI) at the University of Oslo.

There were 8 panels that run in two days, the business meeting and a closing session. Prof Helen Kennedy (University of Sheffield) and Prof Charles Ess (University of Oslo) were keynote speakers. There was no YECREA event planned (see below). In total we had 36 registrations prior to the beginning of the workshop. Given that we are the biggest section in ECREA (currently 403 members), participation in this workshop was low, as well as the response to the CFP (see below). Although participation (in terms of registration) in the workshop was not very high, it was very similar in numbers to our previous workshop in Bonn. Normally, our workshops are reduced, and that is not necessarily negative. This year we had a low reaction to our call for papers at the beginning. That was probably due to a lack of synthesis and explanation in the call (negotiated with our partners in Salzburg) and was corrected in a second round, extending the call and improving participation slightly. Another factor that maybe we didn't consider at the beginning is that Salzburg is a quite expensive city, which makes difficult to attend to young scholars. This interpretation aims to add a critical thought, to be considered in next events.

Call for Papers

In digital culture and communication, with the pervasiveness that characterizes online media, standards and values are contested, whereas well-established paths in the production and circulation of information have been newly arranged or abandoned altogether. Technical and social standards are consistent, formal and informal norms, values or conventions of doing, operating, producing, and/or performing. As the basis of technical transmission, standards in media allow transferability and interoperability, reduce complexity, and facilitate communication across formats, platforms and boundaries. As a consequence of transformations and re-orientations that continuously happen in almost all fields of the media, new technological standards, ethical codes, narrative and visual tropes are being produced.

It is therefore crucial to critically evaluate the relationship between standards and values in their social, political, technological and creative dimensions. Who has the power to define, develop and implement standards? Which values are attached to standardization processes in creative industries and how are they related to copyright and patents in technological development? Are peer-production, open-access publishing and free-culture movements different kinds of markets or disruptions to existing models of markets? What is the relationship between technological standardization and cultural diversity?

This workshop aims to address such questions. We welcome papers on the following issues and topics:

- Technical and social standards in digital media: How do technical standards evolve in the media industry and how are they implemented? What kind of values shape this process? What modes of interventions exist (e.g. between players like platform operators and users?)
- Visual and narrative standards and disruptions in digital culture: How are visual standards and codes built and how do they influence the comprehension of data? How do visual media and



- narratives introduce new canons in forms such such as remix, memes or selfies?
- Professional and ethical standards in digital contexts: Who is responsible of implementing professional ethical standards? Are there emerging frameworks? How do ethical codes inform digital culture research? How do big data contribute or condition these developments?

Please send your abstracts (max. 400 words) by **May 25, 2015** to ecreadigitalculture@gmail.com.

We are looking forward to your submissions.

The DCC Management Team

Gemma San Cornelio, Aristeia Fotopoulou, Christoph Raetzsch

2. YECREA Representative

After the ECC 2014, M. José Estables filled the candidacy of the YECREA position. During the first year of tenure, M. José did not respond well to the needs of the section, especially in regards to the organization of an activity for young scholars in the Salzburg workshop. During the Salzburg workshop in November 2015, another candidate, Sander de Ridder (University of Ghent), showed enthusiasm and wanted to get involved in the section. After communication with Christian Schwarzenegger (YECREA), it was decided that the position is offered to Sander, and he has been appointed as additional representative in the section.

3. Business Meeting

During the Business meeting in Salzburg we discussed the distinctiveness of the section as well as future activities. Participants in the meeting reflected on the workshop theme *Standards, Values and Disruptions*, and how it turned out to be a good provocation.

There was discussion about the future ECREA event in Prague, in 2016, and about the focus of the section. Social media is a thematic that pertains many ECREA sections and it was voiced how this is not necessarily a cutting edge development any more. Many discussants stated that the Section should maintain its cutting edge focus – currently around datafication & society – while at the same time maintaining its critical stance to all things that relate to digital culture and communication. Publications were also discussed, with the possibility of a special issue or an edited volume as the most appropriate output.

Prof Helen Kennedy has offered to host the next DCC Workshop at the University of Sheffield.

4. Social Media

The Section blog has done very well in generating content this year. It has published interviews with the two keynotes of the Salzburg workshop, and one with Stefania Milan. Anne Mollen (University of Bremen, Germany) has been appointed Communications Officer after the ECC Lisbon 2014. Anne Mollen, together with Christoph Raetzsch, are doing a great job with the section blog. We are also considering a more robust presence across platforms.

5. Next steps: ECC Prague 2016



Aristea Fotopoulou (Vice Chair) has volunteered to act as Section Programme Chair for the ECC 2016. She is responsible for nominating reviewers and making sure that things run smoothly till then. There will be elections in Prague as Gemma San Cornelio has accomplished her period in the management team, so she will be stepping down as chair.

In February 2016, the Digital Culture and Communication Section had 756 members.