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EDITORIAL

Journal of Digital Media & Policy, Issue 11.2, June 2020

Petros Iosifidis

Welcome to issue 11.2 of our rebranded *Journal of Digital Media & Policy*. As I write this Editorial, I realise that these have been the most chaotic and disruptive work weeks any of us have probably experienced in academia and publishing houses (and not only). In the midst of online education, I have now participated in more Skype, Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Google Meets meetings than ever before. Yet it appears we are only at the start, in terms of the public health crisis but also the socio-economic transformations and the impacts of those on Higher Education, business, and us all as individuals. I have realised just how important physical social interaction is at this time as it is often taken for granted until it is constrained. It is vital that we keep in contact as an academic community. I want to believe that we will get out of the current crisis soon and will be stronger individually and collectively, provided we continue to work together and support one another. I trust that you and your family are safe and well and thank you for all you are doing to keep the *Journal of Digital Media & Policy* operational during this crisis. Special thanks are due to the Editorial Team and Board, our Production Manager and typesetters, the anonymous reviewers, the publisher, the contributors of the current issue, and of course to our readers.

The issue in hand features five main articles by prominent academics that examine a wide range of themes from a variety of research perspectives, theoretical aspects, and geographical contexts. We kick-off with a piece by Justin Schlosberg and Des Freedman titled 'Opening the gates: plurality regulation in a post digital world'. This forward looking article explores the fresh challenges and opportunities for drafting effective and 'future proof' policy for regulating media plurality, against the latest data on Britain's media ownership ecology, and in particular the context of the country's latest public interest test of the proposed merger between 21st Century Fox and Sky. It contributes to the current literature on merger and acquisition research by acknowledging that tech giants and digital intermediaries are by far a pluralising force and, therefore, regulatory interference is required to prevent concentrations at the level of wholesale newsgathering. In light of growing evidence that internet intermediaries are serving to consolidate rather than diversify the news offer in favour of incumbent and mostly legacy publishers, the article calls for bringing them under the umbrella of plurality regulation, particularly through the development of plurality standards for algorithm governance.

The next main article, written by Marko Ala-Fossi and titled 'Finland: Media welfare state in the digital era?', describes the special nature of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden) and their media systems under the prism of the concept of the media welfare state. This well-grounded submission is based on existing theoretical assumptions about the relationship between political and media systems, which typically claim that Nordic countries belong to the so-called 'welfare state model'. This model has traditionally been characterised by universally available communication systems, institutionalised editorial freedom, an extensive cultural policy for the media, and consensual policymaking and compromise between key stakeholders. Yet the author argues that gradual transition has taken place from the post-war welfare state model towards a competition state model, with the main trends being digitalisation, marketisation and globalisation. By adapting political economy and the theory of the transformation of capitalist states, the work concludes that Finland has deviated from the Nordic model and currently pays more attention to the welfare of the state and its competitiveness instead of the welfare of citizens. This can be attributed

to historical, political and economic perspectives, such as Finland's special geopolitical position, its more rapid and extensive transition to the competition state model, and the unique economic dependency on a single large mobile technology giant, Nokia.

Daniel Soto's third main article, titled 'Aggressive joint compression of DTV simulcast', deals with the complexities of implementing a complete simulcast on digital television (DTV), especially in cases where the network bandwidth is limited. While a typical solution might be to limit the number of duplicate programmes in the simulcast to an absolute minimum, such a practice slows down the migration to a new generation. This article highlights the reasons of such delay and puts forward workable suggestions for improving the efficiency of the simulcast and can therefore accelerate the transition period. In particular, it proposes two ways to improve the simulcast efficiency: one is to consider the linking of the services in both formats simulcasting the same programme as a single set, rather than as separate services. Here, it is possible to reduce the bandwidth required to broadcast a television programme in two different formats, for example, by sharing some parts, such as audio and other data. Another way is to adjust the compression parameters of video streams to minimize the footprint, thereby broadcasting an array of television programs in simulcast using the same space without entirely duplicating all sources. This would result in faster and less stressful transitions. The work concludes that for the next transition from HD (High Definition) to UHD (Ultra High Definition), it is feasible to apply the idea of sharing elements between services, in order to achieve a more efficient simulcast.

The fourth main article, titled 'Impacts of digital literacy and digital ecosystem on continuance intention to consume digital video through users' digital experience: Study from four countries in Southeast Asia', is co-authored by Hendy Kasim, Edi Abdurachman, Asnan Furinto and Wibowo Kosasih. The contributors of this piece rightly argue that digital literacy (DL) is a key factor in any digital service, and more broadly in any digital ecosystem. By focusing on four countries in Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines), a populous region with very different characteristics from that of the Western world, this research finds that users' digital experience is heavily impacting the provision and usage of the digital video service. However, the consequences of DL and digital ecosystem, although significant, are not the only factor in shaping the user experience. DL is an important part when it comes to the usage of media gadgets, including consuming contents, because it is related to the technical skills of the users in operating the media gadgets and the applications in which any contents are provided. The authors pay emphasis to the uniqueness of the region in terms of the demography, as the majority of the population are young and more attached to the digital services than the population in the Western hemisphere.

The fifth and final article, written by Daniel Vogler and Florian Meissner, and titled 'How users tweet about a cyber-attack: An explorative study using machine learning and social network analysis', addresses an interesting and topical issue: cybercrime. This has emerged as most businesses adapted the digital technology and has eventually become a growing threat for companies and customers alike. By investigating how widespread security issues are during a cyber-attack among Twitter users, this research explores the security breach at the US ticket sales company, Ticketfly, that compromised the information of around 26 million users. It found that although people in the US claim that they are concerned about their privacy online, they nevertheless do not act accordingly. In particular, the findings of this multi-method study reveal that users concerned about security issues are mostly part of competent and skilful sections of the population with advanced knowledge about cybersecurity. But since this study is based on a single case, the authors rightly acknowledge that further research should be conducted to compare cybersecurity awareness in different countries, either by looking at cases in similar cultural environments (for example, Europe) or different cultural contexts (for example, developing countries). The

concept of cybersecurity awareness is certainly affected by cultural variables and it is therefore imperative to compare concerns about privacy issues in various cultural contexts.

These articles are accompanied by a short report, written by Tom Ascott and titled 'Deepfakes pose a serious threat at every level'. The report deals with a currently hot debated issue: the appearance of deepfakes (or synthetic media) on social media networks, how they challenge democracy, and the ways this threat can be addressed. Finally, the issue features our usual book reviews section, which is organised by our Book Reviews Editor Alexa Scarlata.

Best wishes and stay safe!