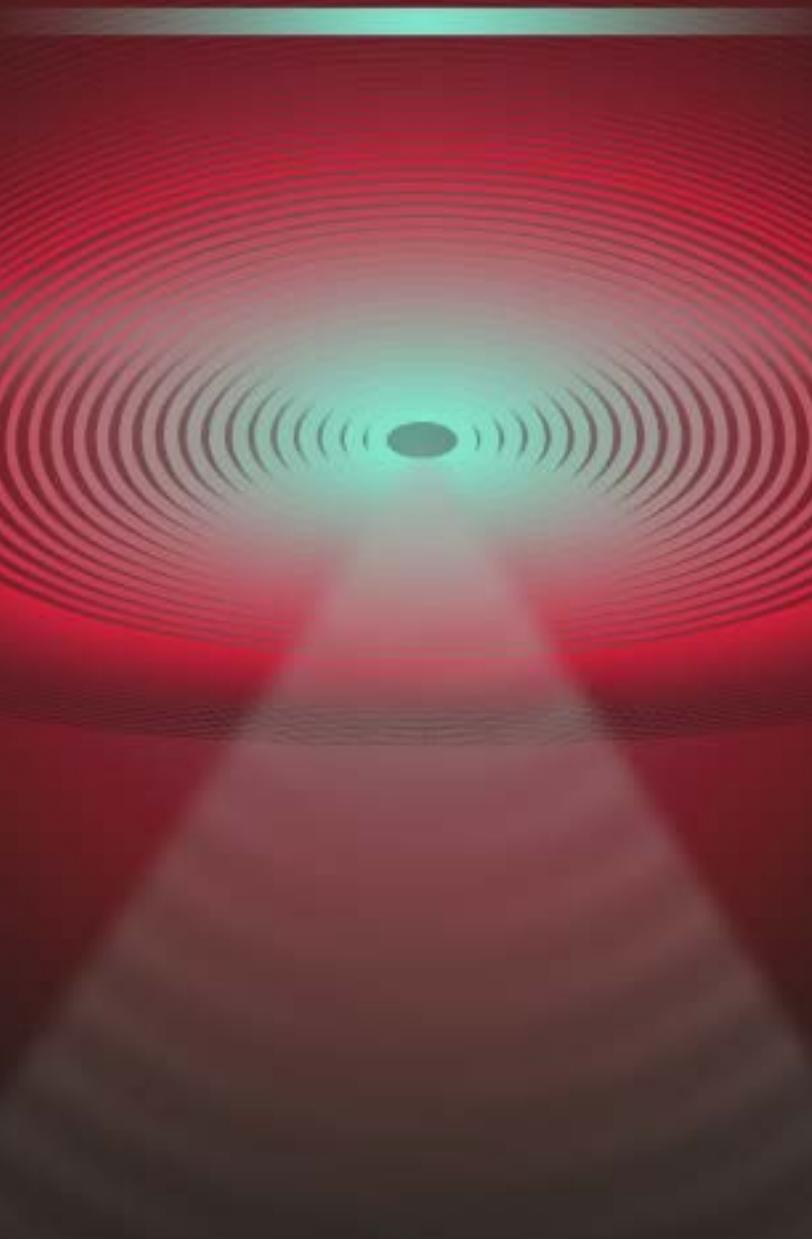


(SUPER)NATURAL

COMMUNICATION GRADUATE CAUCUS 17TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

CONFERENCE PROGRAM



FEBURARY 28–MARCH 1, 2022
VIRUTAL SYNCHRONOUS
CARLETON UNIVERSITY

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22	Thank you

BEYOND THIS PAGE LIES THE PROCEEDINGS FOR THE 17TH ANNUAL COMMUNICATION GRADUATE CAUCUS CONFERENCE.

WELCOME TO (SUPER)NATURAL!

As settlers, we committee members would first like to acknowledge that the land on which we mobilize and Carleton University mobilizes is the traditional unceded and unsundered territory of the Algonquin Anishnaabeg People. The Algonquin peoples have been the custodians of these lands and waters since time immemorial. As this is a virtual event, we also recognize that all who meet in this digital space live and work across Turtle Island, inhabiting traditional territories of Inuit, Métis, and First Nations Peoples. We are grateful to be gathering with you all from this place.

As this conference has become a staple of our program, both for students and faculty alike, we have become more committed than ever in cultivating engaging and interesting presentations. While last year's theme sought to aid in our collective adjustment to ever-online and distanced life, we wanted to cultivate and encourage a space for unorthodox and melodramatic academia to flourish. As we conceived of themes over the summer, and with our worlds returning to what they had once been, we watched as this re-emergence was torn away by powers beyond our control. Something seemingly supernatural has been gripping all of us so tightly in its grasp. Thus we came to this theme: a means for us to break from our forced path and to re-evaluate the world around us. We cheered as we received such wildly varied submissions, all of which were so thoroughly diverse. We have cultivated our panels into perhaps initially unorthodox pairings, but ones we feel share at their very core the same themes. In bringing together so many brilliant emerging academics, the Conference Committee was steadfast to not force attendees to choose one panel over another: with no concurrent panels every panelist and every submission can be seen and heard.

MESSAGE FROM THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

(Super)Natural would not have been possible without the support of Dr. Sheryl Hamilton, Dr. Miranda Brady, Dr. Joshua Greenberg, and Dr. Dwayne Winseck, as well as CGC Queens Sarah MacLean and Kate Fedchun. We are grateful to Carleton's School of Journalism and Communication, the Graduate Student's Association, the Canadian Communication Association, the Canadian Journal of Communication, and Carleton's Faculty of Public Affairs for their support and contributions to this year's proceedings. Thank you to our panelists, for graciously sharing their research with us. We are eternally thankful for the many moderators and volunteers who have so generously given their time both in preparation of and during the conference. We want to extend our heartfelt thanks to our graphic designer, Yiyi Jiao, for her work and dedication in giving our vision material form, and Kit Chokly, for their last minute intervention to save the conference committee from a crisis at the eleventh hour. Join us in celebrating Dr. Armond R. Towns joining the Communication Department and thank him for chairing our special roundtable event. Finally, the Conference Committee wishes to welcome and thank our Keynote Speakers, Dr. Susana Vargas Cervantes and Professor Emily Pelstring.

Thank you, our beloved attendees for making this conference worthwhile. We hope that you enjoy the proceedings, that your excitement matches our own and that we all come away from (Super)Natural with a burning wish to feed our melodramatic academic desires.

Shanice Bernicky, Justine Routhier, Maria-Antonia Urso, Alex Milton

2021-2022 CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE

2021–2022

COMMUNICATION GRADUATE CAUCUS

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SARAH SAMWELL

CUPE 4600 STEWARD

ANNA THEUS

GSA REPRESENTATIVE

HANDE UZ ÖZCAN

GSA REPRESENTATIVE

CLAUDIA GLEASON

MAI REPRESENTATIVE

ZOOM INSTRUCTIONS

FOR THE ZOOM LINK, PLEASE REGISTER HERE:

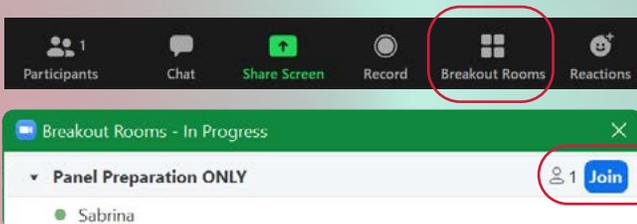
[HTTPS://WWW.EVENTBRITE.CA/E/SUPERNATURAL-CONFERENCE-TICKETS-256099128387](https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/supernatural-conference-tickets-256099128387)

The 17th Annual Communication Graduate Caucus Conference, (Super)Natural, is an online, synchronous event. The Conference will be held over Zoom ([register here](#)).

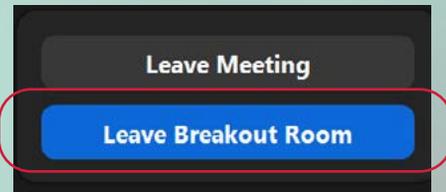
Our conference will be divided into the main call and several breakout rooms; they will be as follows:

- ★ **The Main Call** will be where all panels take place;
- ★ **Panel Preparation ONLY** is reserved for panelists and moderators in preparation a few minutes prior to their respective sections. We ask that you respect this space and only join when/if you are a panelist or moderator and only when is it appropriate for you to do so;
- ★ **The Tables** exist to casually chat, to continue discussion after a panel has ended, and/or to network. These rooms will be available throughout the day, please make use of them to your benefit or pleasure.

To enable the open-ended breakout room design and facilitate the use of the Tables, attendees can move at will from room to room. To do so, select the **breakout room icon** in the bottom toolbar and click **Join** on the room of your choosing.

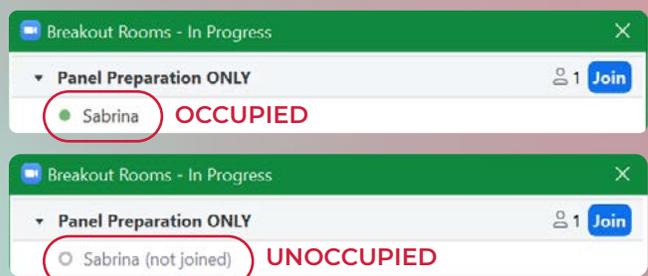


When leaving breakout room like a **Table**, ensure you are leaving the **Breakout Room** rather than the **Meeting**.



While you are free to move throughout the Zoom uninhibited (while respecting **Panel Preparation ONLY**), please note the following issue:

- ★ When moving from **Table** or **Panel Preparation ONLY** back to the main call, Zoom will still list attendees as in their most recent breakout room. This means that **Tables** may look occupied but otherwise be empty.
- ★ If an attendee's name has a green dot next to their name and if the text (**Not Joined**) does not follow their name, they *are* actually in the room.



The Zoom call may close briefly over the lunch period as ownership is transferred between organizers.

Should there be any issues, please direct message to any of the following individuals in the Zoom call: Shanice Bernicky, Justine Routhier, Maria-Antonia Urso, and Alex Milton. Otherwise, emails may be sent to cgcconference2022@gmail.com

KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS



DR. SUSANA VARGAS CERVANTES

Susana Vargas Cervantes writes, researches and teaches. Her research mines the connections between gender, sexuality, class and skin tonalities to reconceptualize pigmentocracy. She is the author of the book *The Little Old Lady Killer: The Sensationalized Crimes of Mexico's First Female Serial Killer* (NYU Press, 2019) and *Mujercitos* (Editorial RM, 2015). After a Fulbright Visiting Fellowship at Columbia University, she joined Carleton University as an Assistant Professor in Communication and Media Studies.



PROFESSOR EMILY PELSTRING

Emily Pelstring is an artist and filmmaker, and is faculty in the Department of Film and Media at Queen's University in Katarokwi/Kingston, Ontario, Canada. Emily's artistic research comes out of a desire to challenge normative ways of thinking about technological development by bringing antique media into contact with contemporary images. Her work takes interest in the material contingency of the cinematic spectacle, the evolution and cultural perception of various media forms, and the intersections of science and magic. These inquiries have been supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Canada Council for the Arts, and the Ontario Arts Council, and the results have been exhibited in museums, galleries, and DIY spaces. As an independent filmmaker working with animation techniques for 16mm film and vintage analog video, she has directed many music videos and short films which have screened in festivals around the world. In addition to her solo work, Emily is engaged in ongoing artistic collaborations with Jessica Mensch and Katherine Kline, her "sister-crones" in the trio The Powers. Their most recent collaboration, [Sistership TV](#), was a web-based variety show that gathered numerous collaborators and guests to explore themes like human-animal communication, telepresence, hysteria, and witchcraft. Emily was also a core organizer of an international symposium called [The Witch Institute](#) at Queen's University, which brought together scholars, artists, and practitioners to explore the meaning and impact of current media representations of the witch.

ROUNDTABLE THE GHOSTS OF COMMUNICATION'S PAST

As we work towards better research practices, we are confronted with an ongoing dilemma: How do we address the problematic scholars foundational to Communication studies?

These “ghosts” of Communication haunt contemporary research. Their theories define our understanding of media and technology, but much of their discourse and ideologies are antithetical to inclusive scholarship. Are there responsible ways to engage with these scholars? Or should we exclude their concepts from our research? What does that mean for the field of Communication studies?

Facilitated by Dr. Armond R. Towns, this roundtable brings together Carleton faculty and graduate students to discuss these questions and more.

HOST

DR. ARMOND R. TOWNS



Armond R. Towns's work brings together Black studies, cultural studies, and media philosophy. His book, *On Black Media Philosophy*, has recently been published with the University of California Press. In it, he examines a variety of topics, from the work of Charles Darwin to the narratives of enslaved people on the Underground Railroad to the speeches and writings of the Black Panther Party to digital animations of police violence. Currently, Dr. Towns is developing a project on the relationship between the history of communication studies and the history of Black studies, focusing specifically on the development of both fields in U.S. and Canada.

WITH GUEST PARTICIPANTS

DR. SANDRA ROBINSON

Dr. Robinson is an Assistant Professor in Carleton's Communication and Media Studies program. She is the co-author of *Law's Expression: Communication, Law and Media in Canada*.

DR. LIAM COLE YOUNG

Dr. Young is an Assistant Professor in Carleton's Communication and Media Studies program. He is the author of *List Cultures: Knowledge and Poetics from Mesopotamia to BuzzFeed*.

MILES KENYON

Miles is a second year MA student in Carleton University's Communications Department, whose research focuses on surveillance of queer communities. A former journalist, he currently works for the University of Toronto's Citizen Lab.

HANDE UZ ÖZCAN

Hande is a PhD student whose research focuses on participatory politics on social media in authoritarian countries,

DAY 1

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28

PANELS

TIME

SESSION

9:00

OPENING REMARKS
Dr. Joshua Greenberg

9:15–10:45

OPENING KEYNOTE
Dr. Susana Vargas Cervantes

10:55–11:55

PANEL 1
Identity Building & Control

12:05–1:05

PANEL 2
Sound & Immortalization

1:40–2:40

PANEL 3
Media & Representation

2:50–3:50

PANEL 4
Ritual & Collectivization

4:00–5:00

PANEL 5
Hauntology & Temporality

5:10–6:30

ROUNDTABLE
Dr. Armond R. Towns & Guests

DAY 2 TUESDAY, MARCH 1

PANELS

TIME	SESSION
9:00–10:00	PANEL 6 Symbiosis
10:10–11:10	PANEL 7 Fact & Fiction
11:20–12:20	PANEL 8 Religion & the Cosmos
1:30–2:30	Undergraduate Panel
2:40–3:40	PANEL 9 Economy & Technology
4:00–5:30	CLOSING KEYNOTE Professor Emily Pelstring
5:30–5:45	CLOSING REMARKS President Sarah MacLean
7:00	Social Night

PANEL 1 IDENTITY BUILDING

Monday,
February 28
10:55–11:55

& CONTROL

WITH CHAIR DR. MELODIE CARDIN

SALENA WIENER

ASTARTE AS THE NATURAL FEMININE IN BYRON'S *MANFRED*

In my essay, “Astarte as the Natural Feminine in Byron’s *Manfred*,” I combine and extend scholarship from scholars such as Caroline Franklin and Andrew Hubbell to propose that thinking of Astarte, Manfred’s lost beloved who haunts, as a ‘natural feminine’ figure with whom Manfred attempts, though fails, to completely dominate, offers further insight into Byron’s engagement with nature as a male Romantic poet. Manfred aspires to harness Astarte’s supernatural power as a means to dominate the natural world. Where typical patriarchal representations of the natural feminine would have nature and women be passive, inert, dead vessels subject to male domination (as Carolyn Merchant asserts in *The Death of Nature*), I argue that Manfred’s failure to dominate Astarte as a figure for both the natural world and the feminine shows Byron acknowledging female and ecological agency in their relation to man.

EMMA FRANCIS

DISIDENTIFYING WITH THE ‘SUPERCRIP’: A THEORETICAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL INQUIRY

Having taken an interest in Critical Disability Studies throughout my undergraduate degree, and now as a master’s student, my exposure to the term “supercrip” has largely centered around condemnation. While the supercrip has and should be rigorously critiqued, it is important to acknowledge such depictions exist, continue to be reproduced, and in-turn have been leveraged by disabled audiences as a form of strategic disidentification (Muñoz, 1999). In borrowing—and weaving together insights—from Queer Theory, Media Studies, Visual Culture, Affect Theory, and Critical Disability Studies, I explore existing, emerging, and imagined frameworks for better understanding nuanced disability identity construction processes. Of relevance to the present conference’s theme is what I have perceived as a privileging of identification in media studies. Instead, I consider alternative approaches to studies of audience engagement with visual

media, including “resonance” as theorized by Paasonen (2011). In discussing past theoretical canons, I examine limitations that haunt this field of research, and argue broader application of an affective, corporeal self-inquiry may be an interesting and additional site of discovery within the field of disability and media. Wondering about (see Titchkosky, 2011), and in-turn questioning, dominant ways of knowing within the academy may lead to generative, flexible possibilities.

KIT CHOKLY

“TODAY’S GENDER IS...” EXAMINING ALGORITHMIC GENDER IDENTITY AS PLAYFUL (NON)SENSE ON TWITTER

Twitter affords users the ability to engage in identity play through affective user interactions against the backdrop of culture (Papacharissi, 2012). Can a Twitterbot do the same? Taking up Genderbot (@genderoftheday) as a case study, I argue in this presentation that Genderbot uses affective (non)sense to perform gender as a form of collective play that pushes back against the linguistic constraints of cisnormativity online. I explore how the regular “genders” produced by Genderbot’s algorithms (such as “the sound of a dial-up modem” and “the smell of basement and jasmine,” [@genderoftheday, 2021]) are not attempts to ridicule the possibility of gender existing outside of the male/female binary. Instead, they are an infelicitous performance of gender that is better conceptualized as play (Jayemanne, 2017). By relying on affective, sensory terms to create (non)sense—not a complete lack of meaning, but the way that “texts make meaning differently than our expectations of sense normally allow” (Rieke, 1992, p. 4)—Genderbot establishes playfully performative “genders” outside the limits of normative gender discourse. In so doing, this approach conceptualizes trans media like Genderbot as powerfully creative, affective, and playful.

PANEL 2 SOUND & IMMORTALIZATION

Monday,
February 28
12:05–1:05

WITH CHAIR DR. VINCENT ANDRISANI

JEFF DONISON

SONIC GHOSTS: REPURPOSING HISTORICAL AUDIO IN PODCASTING TO HAUNT AND HEAL

Podcasting has been theorized as a repurposed digital form of radio broadcasting in the 21st century. Part of podcasting's repurposing includes the (re)introduction of historical sound texts recorded through various technologies (e.g. cameras, phones, radio, voice recorders). Podcasters use historical sound texts to transport voices of the past that may not be heard in-person anymore, especially voices representing marginalized communities. Consequently, historical sound texts are used to contextualize modern effects of colonization by providing oral testimonies of people and their communities directly affected. Podcasting therefore becomes a self-representative medium for marginalized voices of the past to haunt the current political landscape in Canada and move towards healing for affected communities. In alignment with the conference theme "(Super)Natural," this paper presentation addresses how historical sound texts and oral histories repurposed through podcasting become hypothetical "ghosts." Sound texts as ghosts perform a dual function of contextualizing histories from the marginalized perspectives of people who lived them and influencing our understandings of such historical effects in present day Canada. This paper presentation identifies how podcasting can help audiences listen to people whose voices have been trapped in old media recordings or who have passed away. Podcast examples include *Seat at the Table*, *Kiwew*, and *Missing and Murdered*.

SARA BIMO

MY VOICE BRINGS MESSAGES FROM ANOTHER WORLD: HOW ISO-POLYPHONIC MUSIC COMMUNICATES ACROSS TIME

How can we communicate with our long dead ancestors? How do they haunt us, and how do they shape our identities and lives? This project probes at these questions through an examination of Albanian iso-polyphonic music from a perspective rooted in affect theory and body studies. Via a series of case studies examining the characteristics of Albanian iso-polyphony (from its origins, to its formal musical structure, to the norms of its performance), I put forth that this musical tradition is a form of intergenerational communication that eschews representational modes of knowledge transmission across time in favour of communicating sensorially, via embodied affective transfer. As a musical form that is sung without instrumental accompaniment and transmitted orally from generation to generation, Albanian iso-polyphony traditionally lacks any form of representational notation. In addition, stylistically, it under-emphasises the importance of representational lyrics, and instead transmits cultural knowledge through harmonies, dissonances, and resonances produced by the interweaving voices of the performers. By focusing on these affective sensory aspects, iso-polyphonic music induces in audience members bodily responses which directly communicate sensations, and emotions from the distant past; the voice becomes a medium which bridges the gap between past and present. In this way, the iso-polyphonic tradition presents an example of lived, embodied history which exists outside of Western traditions that value the written word as the foremost conveyor of knowledge.

This project puts forth an understanding of the singing voice as a kind of communication technology that operates on a plane beyond language and signification: voices as mediums that are capable of transmitting knowledge from entities beyond the grave via affective transfer.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

PANEL 2 SOUND & IMMORTALIZATION

Monday,
February 28
12:05–1:05

(CONTINUED)

KATHRYN FEDCHUN

OXENFREE AND THE RADIO: AFFECTIVE CONNECTION TO THE BELLOWING GHOSTS OF OUR FRAUGHT PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

The radio is a medium through which we can communicate with individuals beyond our perception. *Oxenfree* (Night School Studio, 2016) is a supernatural video game in which you play as a teenage girl named Alex on a fictional military base called Edwards Island. A significant game mechanic in *Oxenfree* is a radio that the main character can tune to many different stations. The military has historically used radio signals to communicate, and *Oxenfree* illustrates this history—Edwards Island was a World War II military base where a fictional submarine called the USS Kanaloa sunk and 97 people died. In *Oxenfree*, on certain radio frequencies, you can learn about the history of the island, hear the voices of the dead, or communicate with friends. By conducting a close reading of specific moments in *Oxenfree*, I illustrate how the radio literally and figuratively opened doors in the way we communicate. Using John Durham Peters' comparison of the radio signal "to telepathy, seances, and angelic visitations" (1999, p. 206) and affect theory, I argue that *Oxenfree* can be interpreted as a video game that emphasizes affective connection to the bellowing ghosts of our fraught past, present, and future through technology.

PANEL 3 MEDIA & REPRESENTATION

Monday,
February 28
1:40–2:40

WITH CHAIR DR. MERLYNA LIM

JENNA KARDAL

CHILDREN'S PRIVACY DISCOURSES IN YOUTUBE APOLOGY VIDEOS

Microcelebrity parents face a challenging balance between protecting their children from digital harm while also maintaining their digital brand. Often times these parents must issue a public apology when fans of the YouTube channel perceive harmful parenting or sharing practices. These apologies often emerge as a video and offer an interesting combination of discussions centered around privacy, parenting, celebrity, and child exploitation, which often stirs up more controversy rather than settling it. Myka Stauffer and DaddyOFive are two such YouTubers that have amassed large followings prior to the deletion of their YouTube channels after facing fan backlash and controversy as a result of their YouTube celebrityhood. I have employed discourse as both my methodology as well as my theoretical perspective in order to understand not only how the microcelebrity navigates issues of privacy and exploitation in their apology videos, but also how viewers receive the apology. I have analysed both the apology videos as well as the comments sections of four videos from Myka Stauffer and DaddyOFive. Initial backlash from viewers of the microcelebrity identifies behaviour and parenting that may be harmful to their children and result in an attempt at reconciliation and accountability from the microcelebrity. These attempts are generally unsuccessful; however, they do open up discussion about how the balance of sharing one's life and protecting one's child should be navigated, especially if they are necessarily a role model.

CALLI NAISH

IS OUR HEALTH DOUBLE HELICAL: EXPLORING CANADIAN NEWS COVERAGE OF GENOMIC RESEARCH

Understanding genetics is complicated and yet innately personal. We are asked constantly to fill out forms listing known diseases in our immediate family, we are bombarded with ads for take-home genetic tests that will reveal our hidden hereditary secrets and we are faced near daily, with news

about health, genomics, gene therapy, and a host of related social and medical concerns. As we are asked to make sense of our place in an increasingly data driven and geneticized world it is important to consider how this fascination with genomics in health is framed and disseminated to the public, especially when there are increasing cries to educate public audiences. Ultimately, mainstream media has the potential to influence public opinion surrounding the application of genomics in health and health research, and this influence over public opinion compounds in importance as science and health information become increasingly fractured through the digital landscape of new media. This research paper explores how Canadian news has discussed genomics regarding healthcare and considers the underlying frames and ideologies that are working within news coverage of this issue.

CLAUDIA GLEASON

#NOTALLMEN, BUT ENOUGH: THE DEFENCE OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE ON TIKTOK

In the wake of the kidnap and murder of Sarah Everard in March 2021, women across the United Kingdom took to social media, particularly TikTok, to share their own fears and accounts of assault and street harassment in solidarity and in demand for change. In considering the 2021 theme of (Super)Natural, this research seeks to consider the representations of identities and bodies, particularly of women, as they are both treated in public spaces and discussed in online ones while noting the counter-narratives, power structures and self-defence tactics that reveal themselves when women finally name their monsters. In a global response to this second wave of #MeToo-like activism, the counter-hashtag 'NotAllMen' began trending in defence of what was christened 'an attack on men'. In defending their intentions, users of #NotAllMen unknowingly self-identified the dominant power struggles and social inequity they perpetuate in a patriarchal society that prioritizes self-preservation over lived experiences. This project explores recurring thematic narratives on TikTok, particularly users' intense desire to create an explicit divide between the 'good' men and the 'bad' men, thereby absolving the 'good' from conversations of gender-based violence.

PANEL 4 RITUAL & COLLECTIVIZATION

Monday,
February 28
2:50–3:50

WITH CHAIR DR. SHERYL HAMILTON

ANA BILOKIN

**DRAWING CONNECTIONS FROM BEYOND:
EXPLORING THE TAROT AS A TOOL FOR
ACADEMIC (SELF-)REFLECTION**

The tarot is a tool that has, since the 15th century, transformed from a card game into a widespread divination practice. It functions through the use of archetypes and symbolic imagery, which have been the focus of much research into the subject. While being primarily rooted in European traditions, its imagery and meanings have since been remixed and reimagined to reflect a wider variety of voices and experiences. Contemporary decks such as the Next World Tarot by Cristy C. Road are framed as tools for personal and collective liberation.

Using this deck I explore questions regarding the liberatory potential of my academic practices while also asking: how does tarot function as a medium for answering questions? What does it mean to look beyond yourself for guidance in an academic setting? I focus not just on the appearance of the tarot but examine it as a practice and potential research method. As such, I frame the tarot not as a tool for communicating with spirits, but as a way of accessing intuition and the subconscious that offers new perspectives to familiar questions, while keeping in mind its esoteric history.

Through a series of tarot readings I will put the cards in dialogue with the theories and texts that underlie my academic research, drawing on work by scholars such as Donna Haraway and Anna Tsing who explore the assemblages and entanglements that constitute contemporary multispecies living. I will explore the blurring of boundaries embedded in these texts through the “boundary object” of the tarot and vice versa to see what I can learn about the process of asking and answering questions and what the “super” can teach about the “natural.”

TONY BRAVE

**DREAMS DIFFUSED: INDIGENOUS CEREMONY,
BLOODBORNE, AND FINDING ONE’S PLACE IN
THE WAKING WORLD**

Bloodborne (FromSoftware 2015) is a Japanese horror video game in which the player-character is imprisoned in a recurring nightmare known as the “Hunter’s dream,” wherein they must hunt down local inhabitants infected with a lycanthropy-causing disease. Not until the player collects enough “Insight,” an in-game collectible that causes “madness,” are they able to see and interact with the cosmic horrors lurking behind the game’s dark Gothic veneer—allowing them to begin making sense of the nature of the dream within which they find themselves.

While game studies scholarship has tended to examine *Bloodborne* through its fan labor, or the developer’s innovative utilization of game mechanics and narrative design, I propose to analyze *Bloodborne* through an Indigenous studies lens of ceremony, as a “traditional technology” as articulated by Vine Deloria, Jr. in *Power and Place* (2001). In Indigenous contexts, Deloria’s notion of “traditional technology” has the deceptively simple aim of “establishing [personal] relationships with the larger cosmic rhythms and following them” (Deloria 58). Underexamined by contemporary game studies, this formal notion of ceremony allows us to understand games as a medium of cosmic communion. Bringing an Indigenous studies ceremonial framework to *Bloodborne*, I will explore the parallels between the Hunter’s Dream and the American Dream, examining how both games and the promise of a better life motivate and captivate players and citizens alike. In doing so, the notion of ceremony makes perceptible the ways in which games contain both the revolutionary potential of traditional ceremonial practices, as well as how they can reify the settler-colonial dream of freedom and equality on lands uncontested by Indigenous peoples.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

PANEL 4 RITUAL & COLLECTIVIZATION

Monday,
February 28
2:50–3:50

(CONTINUED)

EMILY ENHORNING

ETHEREAL INTERRUPTIONS: FROM MODERN SPIRITUALISM TO GLITCH

A glitch is an error; an error is an interruption. Building on earlier cyberfeminist thought that imagines the internet as a vessel through which to “electronically evacuate the body”, Legacy Russel’s Glitch Manifesto proposes “glitch” as an online strategy of noncompliance that interrupts the gendered scripts performed “AFK” (away from keyboard). Contingent on digital technology, glitch- (and cyber-) feminisms leverage the possibilities of online “disembodiment” in order to question and rethink the production of gender more broadly. I am curious about pre-internet movements towards digital “disembodiment”, and the ways in which these ambitions transcend any singular technology. Proposing a lineage, this presentation looks back to the introduction of the telegraph, the popular anxiety around “disembodied communication” that accompanied it, and the ways in which “mediumistic” women leveraged this anxiety to drive the Modern Spiritualist movement. In their knowing use of knocks and raps to voice political messages, gain capital, and occupy space in-between the material realities of patriarchy and a more abstract, unknowable world beyond it, I tie the women of the Modern Spiritualist movement to Legacy Russell’s concept of glitch feminism, and propose the Spiritualist women’s appropriation of mediumship as an original glitch.

PANEL 5 HAUNTOLOGY & TEMPORALITY

Monday,
February 28
4:00–5:00

WITH CHAIR DR. EMILY HILTZ

VICTORIA FLEMING

HAUNTING LOST FUTURES:
THE CRISIS OF SPACE AND TIME UNDER
NEOLIBERALISM IN *SUPPORT THE GIRLS*

Andrew Bujalski's film, *Support the Girls*, offers insight into the frayed social bonds dominated by a neoliberalist ethos over the last forty years. These frayed bonds are indicative of the spatial-temporal suspension that's come to shape our lives under neoliberalism. Trapped in the unstable yet perpetual present, haunted by the stabilizing dreams of the past, while simultaneously mourning our lost futures; we feel concurrently stuck in our seemingly immovable present and yet affectively bound to the belief that, perhaps, things will change this time as we continue engaging with the very objects and systems perpetuating our malaise, alienation, and precarity. In this essay, I argue that *Support the Girls* represents the temporal and spatial disjuncture characterizing post-modernism and the age of neoliberalism. *Support the Girls* reflects the impasse marred by affective relations of cruel optimism as conceptualized by theorist Lauren Berlant that marks our temporal present; while the characters continue occupying the non-places defining Mark Fisher's notion of hauntology and the slow cancellation of the future. As illustrated in *Support the Girls*, this temporal and spatial dispossession defining late capitalism has stripped Lisa (played by Regina Hall), the general manager of a local Hooters-esque restaurant and sports bar called Double Whammies, and the cabal of girls she manages, of any material relations of collective solidarity, replacing these collective bonds with empathy as a form of conflict resolution.

FRÉDÉRIC DION & JACINTHE DUPUIS

HAUNTOLOGY, FAMILIAL TIES
AND SELF-ORGANIZATION

In this paper, we consider Matte and Bencherki's (2019) proposition of an hauntological approach to organizational ethnography in order to understand the organizing agency of a number of landmarks dispersed in the landscape of a medium-sized Quebec town by one of its late mayors. A hauntological approach to organizing means putting an emphasis on the submissive, yet essential, role different actors have when serving as mediums of an organization's existence. It means pivoting to the inverse of what is usually focussed upon in organizational studies (the diverse agencies that need to come together in order to create organization [Abdelnour et al., 2017]) and tend instead to the passivity – or simply “passion” (Cooren, 2010) – that these agencies need to meet in some “other” thing, animated or not, for their existence to be prolonged through mediation (Latour, 2007). The originality of this paper is that we will examine this double-sided process of organizing not as it happens among a collective, be it a formal or partial organization (Ahrne and Brunnsen, 2019), but as it happen(ed) through an individual's own experience of those landmarks and transformed their intimate relationship with the late person whose name or memory those landmarks now bear. We therefore intend to play on the lexical proximity of organizational communication's notion of dis/organization (Vasquez et al., 2020) with social work's own technicized notion of self or behavioural dis/organization (Harper and Dorvil, 2013).

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PANEL 5 HAUNTOLOGY &

Monday,
February 28
4:00–5:00

TEMPORALITY

(CONTINUED)

SHOSHANA ROSA COHEN

**I WILL ALWAYS COME BACK TO LIFE:
(RE)GENERATIONS AFTER GENOCIDE**

My research describes how Jewish culture encourages the passing-on of identities of previous generations. Jewish holidays and beliefs emphasize the continuity of Jewish identity, creating a story of eternal survival and rebirth from ashes. Named for a nine-year-old victim of Auschwitz, I consider “supernatural” a good description of the challenges of living within an identity defined by loss and trauma, and my inability to separate my own sense of self from the identity of the girl whose name I bear. There is a supernatural entanglement between the living and the dead as identities—names, traits, looks, habits—are passed along from generation to generation, often as our only surviving family inheritance. The descendants of survivors are called upon to become living memorials to victims and the voice of those who were silenced. By threading Jewish culture and history through the ideas of communication theorists, it is possible to begin to put words to a cultural process that would otherwise be indescribable and intangible: Carey’s ideas about communication as ritual; Mattern’s thoughts on infrastructure and scaffolding; Browne’s description of surveillance and counter-surveillance; all of which help to describe Jewish experience and the mechanisms developed to cope through persecution and and genocide.

PANEL 6

Tuesday,
March 1
9:00–10:00

SYMBIOSIS

WITH CHAIR DR. IRENA KNEZEVIC

OLA SIEBERT

“INTRACTIONS”: BETWEEN THE FUTURE AND THE PAST, BETWEEN REASON AND EMOTION, BETWEEN FEMININITY AND MASCULINITY. FOR AN ALTERNATIVE (FUTURE) HISTORY OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.

In the context of my doctoral thesis, I want to contribute to overcoming the existing dualisms within artificial intelligence while bringing the latter together with nostalgia studies which—at first glance—may seem to be an oxymoron. Since Alan Turing’s “imitation game,” the imagination surrounding artificial intelligence (AI) has oscillated between two different postures (Turing, 1950). Nourished for a long time by literature and science-fiction films, we see the emergence of narratives and myths in which humanity is threatened by malevolent machines with a supreme physical appearance and superhuman intelligence (as in James Cameron’s *Terminator*). At the same time, there are also representations of fictional operational systems that are “like us”; that is, they have flaws, experience problems or heartache (e.g. in Spike Lee’s *Her*). Elish and boyd (2018) speak of AI as a technology that lies somewhere between reality and fantasy. The capabilities of AI presented especially in fictional media productions (films, literature etc.) are always overestimated in comparison to reality (Collins 2018). The imaginary then

rotates between two binary representations of AI, which no longer correspond to the complexity of the contemporary world. While in the academic and scientific world this binarity is already known and studied (e.g. Natale 2021; Dihal 2020), experts approach the AI imaginary mainly in relation to science-fiction media productions (e.g. Dihal 2019; Larson 2008; Geraci 2007) and a mostly male universe (Ensmenger 2015; Haynes 2003). In contrast, there is little literature that explores the relationship between emotion (such as a nostalgic longing for the future) and cybernetics and that tells the story of this relationship from a feminist and neo-materialist perspective. In other words, it is an original gender studies approach to AI with more feminine characteristics (Kristeva 1989), still largely marginalised or stereotyped in the male world of cybernetics. In my thesis, I then propose to go beyond dualisms between human and machine, reason and emotion, past and future, femininity and masculinity, and explore their balanced relationships, “intra-actions”: “‘intra’ emphasizing that at least two agents must be involved, each bringing the other into existence simultaneously through their intraactions.” (Hayles 2017; 68). By linking nostalgia studies with AI, I am trying to tell the story with multiple alternative ending, fluid gender identities and different selves, co-existing in non-linear temporalities.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

PANEL 6

Tuesday,
March 1
9:00–10:00

SYMBIOSIS

(CONTINUED)

MARIA SIMMONS

RAT, PLASTIC, WOOD

“Rat, Plastic, Wood” examines the relationship of the natural world in terms of metabolic ways of being, focusing specifically on lichen. Through the online presentation of this research paper and an accompanying body of artwork, manifestations of interspecies intra-action and natural forms of contamination-as-collaboration are explored. Taking direction from the artmaking process, I have chosen to approach the writing of this research paper in a hybrid manner, combining the conventional essay with moments of irregularity—dialogue, manifesto, material and dialogical lists, recipes—forms of writing that resist conformity. In this way, the paper not only supports the work, but occupies the same conceptual and aesthetic space. I will be drawing from feminist theorist Karen Barad in exploring the concept of lichenization, using the theory of intra-action to decentralize the human and refocus our understanding of relationship-based living. Concepts of contamination-as-collaboration will be based on work from philosopher Alexis Shotwell and anthropologist Anna Tsing. These concepts will provide a framework for understanding my approach to developing artwork. I will present these ideas and explain the importance of hybrid artistic methodologies that guide my artistic outcomes.

The three sections: Rat, Plastic, and Wood which form the exhibition title structure the paper: Rat introduces the exhibition and sets a conceptual framework for the artwork, Plastic speaks to the theoretical dimensions of the work, in particular, the Capitalocene and the need for transformative metabolization, and Wood concludes by discussing my materials, methodologies and process. That said, although these divisions exist, be prepared for cross-contamination.

CORI VOLFFSON

“WHO IS THE QUEER COWBOY AND WHAT DO THEY RANCH?: THE ARCHETYPE OF THE GAY COWBOY AS A SITE OF CONTESTATION

When k.d. Lang appeared in a PETA commercial, she revealed to the world—and, crucially, to her cattle ranching hometown of Conort, Alberta—that she was a vegetarian. In reaction, the town sign, which proudly announced her being from there, was defaced with a homophobic slur. In this transgression Lang simultaneously embodied two challenges to a culture built on the cattle industry and its associated aspects (eg. the cowboy, masculinity, ruggedness); queerness and vegetarianism. But the queer cowboy was not newly embodied in this moment, it is a potent image seen throughout form and genre. Further, queerness and an avoidance of meat consumption have become linked via a naturalization of an association between meat and masculinity. My conference presentation will provide a discourse analysis across media to ask; who is the queer cowboy and what do they ranch? I will engage in the themes of the conference by questioning the naturalization of gender and sexuality within food practice and by the presentation of the practice of Queering food as a potential (Super)Natural food future.

PANEL 7

Tuesday,
March 1
10:10–11:10

FACT & FICTION

WITH CHAIR TAMARA BANBURY

AMY LEBLANC

**“THE PERSONS THAT COME AGAIN”:
CAPITAL, IMAGINATION, AND VAMPIRES
IN THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY**

This paper focuses on Dom Augustin Calmet’s “A Dissertation Concerning Vampires or other Spectres which appear in Hungary, Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia” to examine how vampiric superstition operated in the eighteenth-century and how it may have intersected with the social, financial, and community-based realities of England at the time. My argument (that Calmet’s work can be read through a lens of imagination as well as fact versus fiction to notice moments where economic tropes appear in Dissertations in ways that have modern relevance and application) will rely particularly on Robert Mitchell and Mary Poovey’s analyses to situate Calmet’s text within a theoretical debate about supposed dichotomies including ‘fact/fiction,’ ‘imaginary/real,’ ‘fantasy/reality,’ and ‘collective/individual’ among others. Mitchell is inclined to investigate the changing notions of collective imagination, whereas Poovey favors the examination of value in narratives by placing them along what she calls the fact/fiction continuum. I also perform a Marxist reading of the vampire figure using Marx’s M-C-M and M-C-M’ equations. Finally, I connect my analysis of Dissertations to twenty-first century media production with Mike Flanagan’s latest Netflix series, *Midnight Mass*, to show how this figure remains compelling across centuries.

MATTY PETERS

**SLENDERMAN AND THE SUBJECTS’ POSSESSION
OF THE BODY: A LOOK AT THE BIRTH OF
SLENDERMAN, AND THE IMPLICATIONS
OF SUBJECTS AS A MESHWORK OF
PROBABILITY CONSTRAINTS**

What, or who, is Slenderman? Many stories have been told about this ‘substanceless-form’ ‘subject’ over the internet, but the actual history of the production of Slenderman requires an understanding of language, discourse, and the internet (among others) as a Meshwork of Probability Constraints. I will approach the isomorphic transformation of Slenderman from an emergent property into

a full-fledged substanceless-form due to the over-lapping linguistic, discursive, and virtual conditions, which caused Slenderman to go from a story to a haunting subject moving through space without matter. In other words, I will approach the combined conditions of the virtual becoming-homogenous, linguistic pidginization, and the discursive hierarchizing regarding practices of knowing and (meme)icry. Additionally, I will then explore the implications this has on subject formation, specifically revisiting Althusser, to identify subjects as emergent properties territorialized before the isomorphic transformation occurs to external property. In other words, Slenderman is more than just a ghost story told online, but a ghost birthed before us, and one that shows the secret of all our taken-for-granted ‘possessions of the body’.

SARINA MCGILLIVRAY

**BEWITCHED AS QUEER ALLEGORY: DECODING
QUEERNESS, QUEER TEMPORALITY ON TV, AND
CONTEXTUALIZING THE CLOSETED**

Bewitched (1964) is a TV show which follows Samantha Stephens’ negotiation between the mortal world and her immortal origins in the world of witchcraft, when she chooses to marry a mortal man—Darrin. I read the show through a queer lens, where Samantha is considered ‘in the closet’ as a witch in the mortal world. Other characters and actors—Dick Sargent as Darrin Stephens and Paul Lynde as Uncle Arthur—can also be read using queer theory, to situate their “performances of straightness.” I argue that *Bewitched* acts as queer allegory where witchcraft is a metaphor for queerness and mortality symbolizes heteronormativity. Performing a close reading of the three characters, and the actors behind them, allows for a new, queer, understanding of the “performance of heterosexuality.” Further, by contextualizing the show in its’ time (the 1960s/1970s), another layer of metaphor is created. My work demonstrates how this particular cultural artefact represents queer identities as something supernatural. Analyzing a show from the 1960s/1970s situates our understanding of more contemporary representations of queerness on TV, and how these depictions negotiate between heteronormative ideals and the larger canon of queer representations on TV.

PANEL 8 RELIGION & THE COSMOS

Tuesday,
March 1
11:20–12:20

WITH CHAIR DR. HANNAH DICK

JENNY KLIEVER

RELIGIOUS FRAMEWORKS FOR COMMUNICATING SCIENCE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE 1980 COSMOS AND THE 2020 REMAKE

Science is often considered secular and therefore different from the sacred, religious, or mythical. This idea, which emerged during the Enlightenment era in the 17th and 18th centuries, often leads science communicators to aim for neutrality when presenting science to the public. Especially now, at a time where science is politicized and mistrusted, there is a push to present clear and accurate information. Drawing on Stuart Hall's (1997) theory of representation, Clifford Geertz' (1966) definition of religion, and the work by Sanne Dokter-Mersch (2020) and Michael A. Rappenglück (2014) on mythologies, I perform a critical textual analysis of Carl Sagan's *Cosmos: A Personal Voyage* and Neil deGrasse Tyson's *Cosmos: Possible Worlds*. I argue that, despite a 40-year difference between the series, both versions present the so-called "Cosmic Ocean" and "Cosmic Calendar" as a framework for explaining the latest science—two potent images that not only excel as engagement techniques but are also riddled with religious content. Come with me on a journey through the cosmos to explore the blurry lines between religion and science, to challenge the notion of the secular, and to find the religious in places you never thought to look.

CATHERINE VAN REENEN

SPIRITUAL TAXONOMY AS MEDIA THEORY/ MEDIA THEORY AS SPIRITUAL TAXONOMY

Drawing on Marx's notion of 'spiritual taxonomies' to describe the classificatory discourses that define and order suprahuman agencies (2016), this paper takes up three examples of divine classification systems from western history in order to examine the ways in which these spiritual taxonomies hinge on implicit theories of mediation: Porphyry of Tyre's third-century hierarchy of gods and daemons; Samuel Quiccheberg's

sixteenth-century classification system for a collection of natural and artificial wonders; and Thomas Glendenning Hamilton's twentieth-century taxonomy of teleplasm which he developed in the course of his experiments with spirit communication. While these examples are temporally and conceptually disparate, they each reveal how suprahuman agencies have long played a role in our understanding of media and mediation (and vice versa), and thus point to the study of western esotericism, religion, and the paranormal as rich sources for reflexive critiques of our current theoretical models. In this regard, this paper will contribute to the conference's aim to contend with how past theories of communication continue to "haunt" our fields.

MARIA-ANTONIA URSO

HUBBLE SPACE VISUALS: THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE COSMIC REEF

In 2020, the Hubble Space Telescope celebrated its thirtieth anniversary with a collection of pictures composited into a tapestry nicknamed the Cosmic Reef (NASA, 2020). The image is stunning, as many of Hubble's observations are, because they are constructed with the primary goal of aesthetics as part of the Hubble Outreach Program. These images function as both art projects and scientific visualizations, meant to simultaneously convey information to the public and generate continued interest in space exploration (Mutchler, 2020). Zolt Levay (2018), retired Principal Science Visuals Developer in the Office of Public Outreach, writes: "The most common question we get asked about Hubble images is, 'are the colors real?'" (para. 1). This question of authenticity is prevalent amongst scientific visuals, as the discourse around scientific discoveries gravitate towards discussion of accuracy and realism, especially for images that have been manipulated to display various data (Cromey, 2010; Frow, 2014; Kemp, 2014). The presentation looks at the aestheticization and manipulation of scientific visuals, and whether that renders them "inauthentic" using the Hubble Space Telescope thirtieth anniversary image as a case study.

PANEL 9 ECONOMY & TECHNOLOGY

Tuesday,
March 1
2:40–3:40

WITH CHAIR DR. DWAYNE WINSECK

CATHERINE JEFFERY

RISING MARKETS: ROBO-ADVISORS AND THE ECONOMIC IMAGINATION

This presentation examines the ways that personal investing apps called robo-advisors contribute to imaginations about financial markets. Available as easy-to-use mobile apps with low fees, robo-advisors automatically manage a user's investments. These tools are part of what scholars call the financialization of everyday life, a process that has unfolded over the past few decades where finance plays an increasingly important role in the lives of ordinary individuals. As they loop more people into global stock markets, robo-advisors also communicate specific lessons about finance to their users, promoting and naturalizing common financial assumptions—such as that stock indices rise over the long term or that risk should be managed through diversification. Building from scholarship on the construction of economic models, the power of data visualizations, and studies of mobile applications, this presentation explores these taken-for-granted principles using the walkthrough method, highlighting how they manifest in two popular Canadian robo-advisors: CI Direct Investing and Wealthsimple Invest. Although the discipline of liberal economics has solidified widely accepted theories about markets, contention around such models needs to be reinvented through public debate.

RORY SHARP

PARANOID INFRASTRUCTURES: THE POLITICAL ECOLOGY OF 5G

Drawing from feminist approaches to science and technology studies, political ecology and new materialism, this presentation, "Paranoid Infrastructures: The Political Ecology of 5G," assesses resistance to 5G as an emergent form of social struggle attuned to a post-truth political landscape. Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, conspiracy theories about the relationship between the novel coronavirus and fifth generation wireless network technology (5G) have driven the sabotage of critical infrastructure. Fears of 5G precede the pandemic, extending from a long

history of misinformation about electromagnetic field (EMF) radiation. Regardless of their veracity, resistance to 5G is based on actionable theories about the relationship between the human body and its surrounding ecology. Driven by a paranoid affect straddling the line between the sublime and the uncanny, the sabotage of perceived 5G infrastructure demonstrates a nascent understanding of these sites as chokepoints of political power. Far from justifying these actions, this presentation argues that they are vital to understanding the precarious place of infrastructure in the 21st Century. By studying cases of sabotage that are simultaneously irrational and effective, 5G shows the centrality of partial knowledge to shared political decision making.

SIMON VODREY

COMMERCIAL MARKETERS, POLITICAL MARKETERS, & THE DARK SIDE OF MICROTARGETING

I examine the extent to which the flow of influence and innovation between commercial and political marketers is bidirectional and therefore could be seen as indicative of a two-way street with bidirectional interplay between commercial and political marketers rather than as a one-way street with one-way traffic from commercial to political marketers. The example I use to investigate this subject matter is tribal marketing.

My analysis proceeds accordingly: First, I establish the basics of tribal marketing. Second, relying upon the results from over thirty in-depth elite interviews with political marketers, market researchers, political researchers, pollsters and commercial marketers, I examine how tribal marketing is becoming a more recognizable, commonplace and effective way of marketing and how political marketers who are more familiar with this practice are better at building and mobilizing tribes than are commercial marketers. In doing so, I also shine light upon the dark side of targeting, noting how targeting itself is a practice which is anything but transparent in nature due to the secrecy with which most commercial and political marketers alike ply their craft.

UNDERGRADUATE PANEL

Tuesday, March 1
1:30–2:30

WITH CHAIR DR. MIRANDA BRADY

EMMA JOHNSTON

THE RISKS OF ONLINE SELF-DIAGNOSIS

This past June, I began feeling sick with symptoms that progressively worsened. To my judgment, these symptoms did not seem to be severe and I was self-diagnosing myself using the Internet. I unfortunately caused myself greater harm because I only went to seek professional help two days after the symptoms began, and I was diagnosed with missed appendicitis. In discussions of online self-diagnosis, most individuals maintain the position that the Internet is a great space to obtain access to medical information and to have the ability to research specific ailments for the purpose of self-education and patient empowerment. However, others point out the dangers and possible risks that could be detrimental to their health, especially given how easily accessible unfiltered health information is online, especially on platforms like Google and TikTok. In this presentation, I argue issues of credibility, health literacy, and misdiagnoses are prominent within this health communication problem and access to unfiltered medical information can pose significant risks. The trend of online self-diagnosis can negatively influence patient health and well-being by creating anxieties and increasing the burden on health care services. I conclude that online self-diagnosing becomes an issue when the purpose of online self-diagnosis is used to fully substitute seeking professional medical advice.

MATTHEW SHAW

'GIRLS' VS GEEKS – AN EXAMINATION OF GEEK MASCULINITY IN 'VALORANT'

Gaming culture has traditionally been explored through studies of representation; however, limited research has examined players' personal experiences whilst interacting with the gaming community. The core objective of this research is to help raise awareness of the negative masculine themes and behaviours that exist within these communities that work to exclude and denigrate women identifying players. The popular online game 'Valorant' is used as a case study, in order to better understand community interactions within recently developed mainstream games. This research explores Valorant's gaming community using a two-pronged approach. First, an open coding of Valorant's official subreddit will be performed and dominant frames will be identified. Second, interviews with women identifying gamers of the Valorant community will take place, and key themes related to player experience will be noted. A combined analysis of these two areas will seek to identify prevailing, overarching themes. By identifying these themes, this research seeks to facilitate critical discourse within the gaming community and serve as a call to action for the improved implementation of harassment policies and prevention tools.

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Thank you, our beloved attendees for making this conference worthwhile. We hope that you enjoy the proceedings, that your excitement matches our own, and that we all come away from (Super)Natural with a burning wish to feed our melodramatic desires.

A special thank you to our sponsors for making this year's CGC Conference possible: Carleton's School of Journalism and Communication; Carleton's Faculty Public of Affairs; Carleton's Graduate Student Association; The Canadian Journal of Communication; and The Canadian Communication Association.

Shanice Bernicky, Justine Routhier,
Maria-Antonia Urso, Alex Milton
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