

## **Political Studies Association Media and Politics Group Annual Conference**

**Centre for Research on Communities and Cultures  
School of Creative Arts and Industries  
Canterbury Christ Church University**

**15-16 December 2021**

**Location: Online**

**Conference Theme: ‘Standing Together? Communities, Media and Politics’**

### **Keynote Speakers:**

**Professor Karin Wahl-Jorgensen (Cardiff University)**

**Professor Claire Wallace (University of Aberdeen)**

Whether it denotes a city ‘standing together’ against terrorism, people reacting to racist acts, residents of a neighbourhood organising support mechanisms in the context of the pandemic, migrants setting up a new life away from their home countries, or protest groups attempting to effect some social change, the term ‘community’ has become a fitting notion to describe these and many other (literal or symbolic) gatherings of people.

A community can be defined by many characteristics, such as its context, its purpose or its identity. However, regardless of their particular features, communities are underpinned by one element that defines them and the social relations that exist within and around them: the community’s relations to power. Despite the traditional views of community as places of harmony and solidarity, tensions and disputes are rife within any social group, while individualism, self-interests, poverty, violence and fear remain a reality. Wherever there are social relations and interdependencies, there are also power imbalances that contribute to the emergence of divisions within the social fabric.

One of the social resources on which power is based is the privileged access to political discourse and communication. Despite the burgeoning literature that has examined the possibilities that social media provide for communities to challenge the trends imposed by mainstream media, there is a pervading need to uncover the complex and often subtle ways in which hegemonic power relations are discursively produced, and to examine the social, cultural or political wrongs that they sustain.

This conference will facilitate a space for thinking critically about the concept of communities and how it is used in political discourse and political communication in the digital and (post)pandemic context. Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Political discourses about and by communities
- Communities in political communication
- News and journalistic practices
- Communities and the pandemic
- Marginalised communities
- Communities of protest and resistance
- Online communities
- Migrant communities and (post)colonial discourse
- Communities and the past (heritage, memory, socio-political legacies)
- Community, discourse and context
- Community representation and self-representation

- How specific communities use and create media
- Post-truth, discourse and community
- Social media and communities
- Hybrid media systems and communities

While the main theme of this conference is Communities, the **Media and Politics Group operates an open and inclusive policy, and papers dealing with any aspect of media and politics are welcomed.** This may include areas of political communication and journalism, but also includes a broader view of the political within such areas as online media, television, cinema and media arts, both factual and fictional. In addition to academic research, the conference will also welcome practice-based work in art, film and performance related to the area of media and politics.

### **Deadlines and submission process:**

- **Tuesday, 14 September 2021:** Deadline for abstract submission. Please send abstract proposals for 15-minute papers to [ruth.sanz-sabido@canterbury.ac.uk](mailto:ruth.sanz-sabido@canterbury.ac.uk). These should include the following: title and name, institutional affiliation and address, and email address, together with a paper title and abstract of no more than 250 words. Proposers should also indicate whether they are current postgraduate students.
- Friday, 1 October 2021: Paper proposers notified of decision by conference committee. Conference registration opens. Details of online registration to follow: £20 conference registration fee for both PSA members and non-members; £10 for students/ precariously employed.
- Monday, 8 November 2021: Deadline for presenters to register.
- Friday, 12 November 2021: Draft programme released.
- Wednesday, 15-16 December 2021: Conference dates.

### **About the PSA, conference prizes and financial support**

The Political Studies Association is the UK's leading association in the study and research of politics. The [Media & Politics Group](#) is one of the Political Studies Association's larger specialist groups.

The MPG is a welcoming and inclusive group. The conference welcomes contributions from both members and non-members of the Political Studies Association and of the Media & Politics Group.

#### *James Thomas Memorial Prize*

Full papers of a maximum of 2000 words submitted by postgraduate students will be entered into the James Thomas Memorial Prize. This annual award is presented to the most outstanding paper by a postgraduate student at the Media & Politics Group Annual Conference. Postgraduate students wishing to be considered for the prize should please note this in their submission. Please send full papers to Emily Harmer: [e.harmer@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:e.harmer@liverpool.ac.uk) by 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021.

The Media & Politics Group has some funds to support postgraduate student participation in this event. Postgraduate students interested in applying for a conference fee waiver should please note this in their submission.