

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
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Call for Papers for a Special Issue of *The International Journal of Press/Politics*

“Youth, News, and Democratic Engagement”

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Citizens’ political engagement is essential for the well-functioning of democracies. From boycotting products and signing petitions to discussing politics, attending demonstrations, and voting, citizens’ political engagement shapes our societies. In order for such engagement to take place, people need information that can mobilize them. For a long time, the news media was the key source in this regard. As a natural consequence exposure to news and political information in the media is a well-known forerunner for democratic engagement.

The relationship between news exposure and democratic engagement is constantly evolving, however. In today’s hybrid media system, people get information about politics and society from various sources and on many different platforms. In the contemporary media environment an endless list of information sources, including legacy news outlets, alternative news sites, politicians, and interest organizations, are therefore competing for people’s attention. Exposure to political information can take place on traditional platforms, like television or newspapers, or on new digital platforms, such as social media sites or other private online platforms. Not all information is equally reliable, and mis- and disinformation is part of the information ecosystem. At the same time, new forms of political participation are also emerging, especially online where people, for example, can discuss politics or contact politicians without much investment.

When examining the consequences of such changes it is relevant to focus on *young* people. Young people grow up with and get socialized into a political world full of new information and engagement possibilities. As such, young people are to an increasing extent turning their backs to traditional legacy news outlets and getting political information on social media sites. At the same time, they are engaging in new forms of political participation. Young people can thus be seen as first movers—both when it comes to news ways of getting political information and new ways of engaging in politics.

In parallel, broader societal tendencies make young people especially interesting to study in this regard. Across Western societies, as seen with examples like the election of President Trump, Brexit, and the battle against climate change, the combination of changing demography and differential levels of political participation across age groups mean that younger generations are experiencing that older generations are deciding their future. Often these decisions are characterized by increasing support for authoritarian populists and redistributive policies that massively disadvantage the youth.

The developments described above call for new research examining young people's exposure to news and their democratic engagement. Despite the high relevance of this relationship in contemporary societies, we know relatively little of how changes in the media and political environments are affecting the relationship between news exposure and democratic engagement for young people. How do young people engage with news and politics, and is their democratic engagement able to generate the change they hope for and in which way?

Against this backdrop, this special issue invites original research that fits the theme "**Youth, News, and Democratic Engagement**". The invitation is open for any methodological tradition, seeks international contributions from across the globe, and is especially welcoming comparative work drawing attention to how contextual differences influence the relationships under consideration.

Possible topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Comparative differences and similarities in young people's news consumption patterns across the world
- What kind of political information are young people engaging with and with what democratic consequences?
- Young people's news avoidance and news snacking
- Young people's exposure to news on social media sites and its consequences for political knowledge and participation
- Political socialization in a new and hybrid media environment
- How does young people's (digital) media literacy enable them to engage with news in today's media environment with varying quality of political information?
- Young people's political discussions in networked (online) settings
- How young people's democratic engagement is affecting and affected by the norms of political discussion (civility, trolling, etc) and the quality of news?
- Whether and how generational conflict between younger and older citizens is articulated on digital media
- Novel news products and their relation with young people's democratic engagement

Submission Information

Manuscript submissions for this special issue are due on 1 February 2021.

Please submit your work through our online submission portal

(<https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ijpp>) and ensure that the first line of the cover letter states: "Manuscript to be considered for the special issue on Youth, News, and Democratic Engagement". Manuscripts should follow the IJPP submission guidelines

(<https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/journal/international-journal-presspolitics#submission-guidelines>). Submissions will be subject to a double-blind peer review process and must not have been published, accepted for publication, or under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Please note that, to ensure consistency, submissions will only be considered for peer review after the 1 February 2021 deadline has passed.

Authors interested in submitting their work are encouraged to contact Kim Andersen (kand@journalism.sdu.dk) with questions.

Timeline and Workshop information

As part of the process towards this special issue, we will hold an online international workshop with the possibility to opt-in for physical attendance at the University of Southern Denmark, the current situation permitting. The workshop will be held 19-20 November 2020 and will be a venue for feedback and discussion prior to formal paper submissions. The workshop is fully funded. We will reserve funding to work with scholars whose first language is not English.

- Abstract submission for workshop: 1 September 2020 – send an abstract of maximum 500 words by email to Kim Andersen (kand@journalism.sdu.dk)
- Notification of workshop acceptance: 8 September 2020
- Workshop (with draft papers): 19-20 November 2020
- Submission of full papers to IJPP Special Issue: 1 February 2021 (also open to papers not presented at the workshop)
- Revisions and resubmission: August 2021
- Online publication: January 2022
- Print publication: April 2022 (issue 2-2022)