4th International Conference
Qualitative Research in Communication
(QRC)
September 26th-27th, 2019
Bucharest, Romania

In its fourth iteration, QRC will explore qualitative research as an approach to social scientific investigation that enriches our understanding of communication and related social phenomena. It will provide a venue for discussing and reflecting upon theories and methods currently used in qualitative research in communication, as well as trends likely to impact the work being done in this field. The conference will focus on sharing and examining qualitative research methodologies, research topics, questions and applications, with a consistent emphasis on their potential and limitations as inquiry tools for the study of communication. **QRC is not, however, limited to methods, methodologies, or theoretical debates on methods; we welcome studies that focus on the results of qualitative research in communication and related fields.**

A primary goal of this conference is to provide a stimulating interdisciplinary environment for discussing current collaborations and planning future projects. QRC is an opportunity to exchange and expand ideas about the use of qualitative research in academic work.

We invite communication scholars and researchers, and their colleagues in the humanities and the social sciences to contribute papers that address the theoretical and methodological aspects of qualitative research, or empirical findings supported by qualitative methods and tools. Interdisciplinary studies using qualitative research in the following subfields are particularly welcome: **biographical research; cross cultural communication and ageing; communication mediated by technology**; **intergenerational communication; organizational communication and collaboration**; **social media**; **experimental methods and the art of communications;** and **applied communication**. The conference welcomes contributions from other areas of research in communication and related domains.

Papers accepted to this conference can be presented either within **one of the six panels** (see below), **or in the open sessions**. The six panels hosted this year by QRC are the following:

1. **Aging and Communication**

   Panel head: **Barbara Ratzenböck**, University of Graz, Austria

Two trends are currently about to change Western societies: population aging, and digitalization of communication. This panel investigates how one can study experiences of aging in the digital era. It invites participants to jointly explore different methodological approaches to researching the thematic area of aging and communication from a perspective inspired by the humanities and social sciences.

Topics can include, but are not limited to:

- Methodological reflections on research on aging and (digital) communication: advantages and disadvantages of different qualitative methods, multi-methods research, the role of communication technologies in the research process, the role of space and place in research, reflections on researcher-participant interactions in qualitative research, reflections on different ways of knowing and sharing (e.g. arts-based research and research-based art).
- Results of qualitative studies addressing the topic of aging and (digital) communication: this includes studies on the use of (digital) communication technologies by older adults as well as cultural representations of older adults in all kinds of media.

2. **Emotions in "Real" and "Virtual" Communication – The Hybrid Approach**
   Panel head: **Mira Moshe**, Ariel University, Israel

More and more attention has been given in recent years to hybrid models of social and political communication and behavior. The hybrid approach, also known as "cultural hybridity" (Bhabha, 2012; Burke, 2009), means creating an interpretive sphere that challenges the logical structure of traditional European culture in order to create a counter-narrative to the canonic one (Miller, 2015). Indeed, new 'hybrid' configurations are significant indicators of profound changes occurring as a result of information and communications technology (ICT) developments, media convergence, mobility, migration and multiculturalism. One consequence of such modifications may be the construction of an "in-between-ness" ambivalence in which a person is not entirely of a particular identity (Ang, 2005). Thus, investigating emotions in "real" and "virtual" communication via qualitative practices may refer, yet not limited to:

- Romantic relationships and intimacy: "old" emotions, "new" media - online vs. offline qualitative methods.
- Emotional disclosure: face-to-face interaction vs. mediated communication in Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp.
- The representation of emotions in the political life: exploring "fake news" impact on the "real" emotion sphere in an era of post-truth politics.
- Shame and shaming: qualitative analysis of shame, shaming, cyberbullying, the cyber mob etc.

- Emotion within spaces: emotional representation and symbolic intersection within urban spaces, i.e. street art, graffiti, stickers vs. the "space of flows", i.e., spatial investigation under traditional communication and ICT.

3. **Fake news and digital disinformation**

   Panel head: **Alina Bârgăoanu**, member of the High-Level Expert Group on Fake News and Digital Disinformation, European Commission; Dean of the College of Communication and Public Relations, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Romania.

The fake news phenomenon gained the spotlight during the 2016 U.S. presidential election and international attention has been drawn to the potential effects of digital disinformation ever since. While fabricating and circulating misleading content is not new, modern technologies, computational propaganda techniques, artificial intelligence, algorithms, and the use of trolls facilitate an alarming fake news proliferation rate (Glaser, 2017). Social media and the Internet allow almost anyone to become a content creator and propagate fake or biased content, even make it viral. While reliance on social media for news and information has risen, and distrust in the traditional news media has grown, the effects of digital disinformation became a focal point of interest.

As the political discourse has rapidly moved online to target a broader part of the electorate, preserving the democratic dialogue online and popularizing fact checking among the general public are mandatory stepping stones in addressing disinformation. The logic of selective exposure and the data-driven filtering of the information that is included in a user's social media news stream shape the perceptions of reality in the post-truth era and maintain online media consumers in their own filter bubbles or echo chambers (Smith, 2017), prone to biased and tight perspectives as well as easy victims to fake content. As disinformation became a troublesome force in the digital news media environment, with harsh consequences for democracy (Zengerle, 2016), European institutions, news organizations and tech companies have taken steps to tackle fake news production and disinformation. Given the challenges associated with detecting fake news and mitigating the effects, the panel seeks contributions that address the fake news phenomenon and look into ways to fight disinformation in the 21st century, increase social media utility for democratic discourse, expose disinformation effects in elections and provide media literacy tools.

Topics may focus on, but are not limited to:

- Disinformation, Misinformation, and Fakery;
- Fact-checking in a disinformation era;
- Democracy and digital disinformation;
- Digital algorithms;
- Effects of fake news in the digital era;
- From echo chambers and filter bubbles to personal choices;
- Countering online disinformation;
- Politically biased fake news;
- Computational propaganda;
- Media literacy;
- Hate speech in the new media landscape;
- Regulating big tech.

4. **Health Communication Approaches and Action Areas**
   Panel head: **Maria-Corina Barbaros**, "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iasi, Romania

This panel will provide a forum for debate and critical thinking regarding the impact of communication on healthcare delivery and health promotion. We encourage interdisciplinary dialogue between fields such as medicine, communication sciences, sociology, psychology, public health, and social marketing. We welcome both researchers' and practitioners' contributions in order to create a network for cooperation and development of health communication.
Topics may include:
- Patient-physician communication;
- Health literacy, strategies for health behavior change;
- Health communication (framing; campaigns; ethical problems, etc.);
- Health communication advocacy and policy-making;
- E- & digital health;
- Crisis and risk communication.

5. **Qualitative approaches in management**
   Panel head: **Marta Najda-Janoszka**, Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland

As the socio-economic landscape is becoming more and more networked, the atomic structure of the market is taken over by the system of interactive and ongoing relationships (Castells, 1996, 2000). Collaborative arrangements among organizations have become the hallmarks of the new millennium. However, although research on inter-organizational collaboration has been expanding across a wide range of disciplines, there are still many unanswered questions related to the dynamics of those formations and communicative processes that produce and reproduce collaborative relationships over time (Hardy, Phillips, & Lawrence, 2003). Aiming to expand the frontiers of research on inter-organizational communication this panel seeks contributions pertaining to the dynamic perspective of the issue.

6. **Qualitative methodologies in communication**
   Panel head: **Loredana Ivan**, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Romania

Qualitative research tends to become the dominant methodology in communication, and as such it could be considered a feature of the epistemology of communication. This kind of research has gained in depth, and it has proposed a phenomenological approach to reality (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011).
This panel will shed light upon the comprehensive character of qualitative research in communication, and on the phenomenological approach to reality which can inform the analysis of qualitative data. We invite participants who use qualitative methodologies in their current research projects to reflect

on the methodological challenges they face, and to discuss the advantages and limits of qualitative research in communication. The panel welcomes papers on the following – and related – topics:

- Challenges in planning and conducting qualitative research in communication;
- Qualitative data collection and analysis: the narratives of every life;
- Generalizability of findings when using qualitative data, and ways to advance theory in communication;
- Researchers and subjects, researchers as subjects;
- Stances and values in qualitative research.

Keynote speakers

- **Jane Vincent**, London School of Economics and Political Science, UK.
- **David Boromisza-Habashi**, University of Colorado Boulder, USA.
- **Divina Frau-Meigs**, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle - Paris 3, France.

Scientific committee

- Alina Bârgăoanu, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Romania;
- Bryan C. Taylor, University of Colorado Boulder, USA;
- Alexandru Cârlan, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Romania;
- Nicoleta Corbu, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Romania;
- Corina Buzoianu, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Romania;
- Alina Duduciuc, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Romania;
- Hasan Arslan, International Association of Social Science Research, Turkey;
- Marta Najda-Janoszka, Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland;
- Valeriu Frunzaru, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Romania;
- Loredana Ivan, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Romania;
- Remus Pricopie, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Romania;
- Loredana Radu, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Romania.

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Important deadlines
May 31st, 2019 – abstract submission;
July 31st, 2019 – notification of authors.

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Abstracts

The abstracts (max. 300 words followed by 3-5 **keywords**) should be submitted for review in MS Word format (.doc, .docx) via e-mail. Please use the abstract template availabe on the conference website at http://bit.ly/qrc2019. You should mention whether you are submitting the abstract for one of the six panels. Only one paper for each participant (as a first author) will be accepted. Abstracts will be submitted to the following e-mail address: qrc@comunicare.ro. The official language of the conference is English. The authors will receive confirmation via e-mail.

Publication

All conference papers are subject to a peer-review process. Selected papers will be published in the supporting journals **after being peer-reviewed** by the journals themselves:

- *Romanian Journal of Communication and Public Relations* (www.journalofcommunication.ro); indexed in: Scopus, EBSCO, Erih Plus, ProQuest, DOAJ, CEEOL, Index Copernicus, Cabell's Directories, and Genamics Journal Seek.
- *Journal of Media Research* (www.mrjournal.ro); indexed in: EBSCO, ProQuest, and CEEOL.
- *Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Innovation, JEMI* (www.jemi.edu.pl); indexed in: Web of Science Core Collection, EBSCO, Erih Plus, DOAJ, CEEOL, Index Copernicus, Cabell's, and Genamics Journal Seek.
- *International Journal of Contemporary Management* (http://www.ejournals.eu/ijcm/); indexed in Arianta, BazEkon, CEEOL, CEJSH, EBSCO, Erih Plus, and Index Copernicus.

Please note that only papers presented at the conference by one of the authors will be considered for publication in the supporting journals.

Conference fees

The conference fee is € 100/participant. The fee for PhD students is € 50. The fee includes conference attendance, conference bag, and refreshments during coffee breaks and lunch.

Conference venue

National University of Political Studies and Public Administration (NUPSPA/SNSPA), College of Communication and Public Relations, 30A Expozitiei Boulevard, Bucharest, Romania.

Organizing committee @ NUPSPA

- Corina Buzoianu
- Loredana Ivan
- Roberta Răducu
- George Tudorie

Partners
- National University of Political Studies and Public Administration (NUPSPA), Romania
- University of Colorado Boulder, USA
- Jagiellonian University, Poland
- Ariel University, Israel

Information & contact
Further information and updates regarding the conference will be available in due time on the conference website: http://bit.ly/qrc2019.
For details and inquires please e-mail us at: qrc@comunicare.ro.