

Beyond detection: disinformation and the amplification of toxic content in the age of social media

Dear Colleagues,

The MDPI journal Information is inviting submissions for a Special Issue on “Beyond detection: disinformation and the amplification of toxic content in the age of social media”.

The increasing rise of disinformation and the amplification of toxic content (hate speech, polarization, harassment...) on social media initially created a momentum for fighting such information disorders, with fact-checkers and debunkers in the frontline. Increasingly a shift is occurring, intent on re-inventing digital spaces immune to toxic content, with developers of alternative tools and structures (using blockchain, OSINT, etc.). The role of social media has also undergone a lot of scrutiny, renewing the interest in social media analysis beyond Social Network Analysis (SNA), to include innovative methodologies to trace and monitor amplification phenomena, including via alternative social media. Such methods and tools point to solutions aimed at fostering sound digital spaces, safe from information disorders and opinion manipulation, intent on avoiding the amplification of toxic contents.

This Special Issue aims to provide presentations of the latest advances concerning social media analysis in the context of disinformation detection, platform design and mitigation of toxic content amplification. Articles using theoretical perspectives on the properties required for a digital environment to maintain sound information spaces are welcome, as are innovative perspectives suggesting means to dis-amplify toxic content. A special attention will be paid to critical analyses that consider the dysfunctional organisations of early social media platforms and open vistas on the design and implementation of information-sound spaces, their structures and the actors that promote them.

Topics of interest may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Social media and opinion mining
- Opinion dynamics
- Fake news amplification, detection and fact-checking solutions
- Innovative tools and techniques for detecting online disinformation
- Design of sound information systems and how they are proffered to users
- Embedded algorithmic bias and toxic content
- Shaping/reshaping sound information spaces
- Impacts of recommender systems (including AI systems) on digital spaces and social groups
- alternative social media infrastructure design

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Manuscript Submission Information

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Manuscripts can be submitted until the deadline. All submissions that pass pre-check are peer-reviewed. Accepted papers will be published continuously in the journal (as soon as accepted) and will be listed together on the special issue website. *Information* encourages authors to submit comprehensive "Articles" and "Reviews". For planned papers, a title and short abstract (about 100 words) can be sent to the Editorial Office for announcement on this website.

Submitted manuscripts should not have been published previously, nor be under consideration for publication elsewhere (except conference proceedings papers). All manuscripts are thoroughly refereed through a single-blind peer-review process. A guide for authors and other relevant information for submission of manuscripts is available on the Instructions for Authors page. *Information* is an international peer-reviewed open access monthly journal published by MDPI.

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Keywords

- social media analysis
- disinformation
- fake news
- amplification
- fact-checking
- toxic content
- dis-amplification
- detection tools and strategies