



Research Talks

2020
winter
semester
11:30 a.m.



© Manfred Bobrowsky

Monday, 9 November 2020, 11:30–12:30

Conspiracy Theories in Times of Crises Methods and Results of an Online Survey

Jürgen Grimm

Conspiracy theories are usually associated with times of crisis and also during the Covid-19-pandemic, propaganda activities of prominent conspiracy theorists can be found to a larger extent. The question arises whether this corresponds to a greater susceptibility of the general public. In an online survey among young Austrian academics, a test “Affinity for Conspiracy Theories” was developed. The talk discusses test evaluation and changes brought about by the Corona crisis.



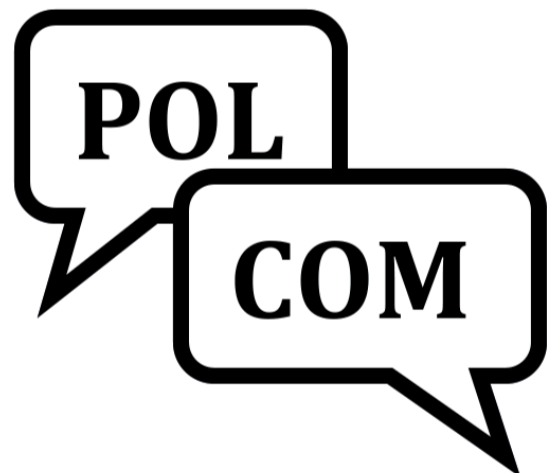
© Michaela Forrai

Monday, 9 November 2020, 11:30–12:30

Investigating Consequences on Public Mental Health and the Economy

Florian Arendt, Manina Mestas

The talk provides an overview of two studies: Study 1 relied on observational data reflecting the number of phone calls made to national crisis hotlines to investigate the impact of government restrictions as well as their later revocations on public mental health. Study 2 investigated the role of the news media regarding stock price crashes that occurred in March 2020 using from five continents. We tested whether there was a positive relationship between the amount of news coverage about COVID-19 and the extent of the stock price drop.



Monday, 30 November 2020, 11:30–12:30

Fighting the Infodemic: News Avoidance during the Corona Crisis

Loes Aldering, Sophie Lecheler, Svenja Schäfer

The COVID-19 pandemic is a time of insecurity, and many of us are eager for new information about infection rates, travel restrictions, and possible lockdown measures. This information comes predominantly from news media through a variety of channels. One increasingly observed mechanism is news avoidance, the effort to actively avoid news coverage independent of one’s knowledge of a particular issue. In a number of studies, we examine the occurrence, determinants, and consequences of news avoidance during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Monday, 30 November 2020, 11:30–12:30

Psychological Effects of (Digital) Media Use During the COVID-19 Crisis

Alice Binder, Ruta Kaskelvičiute, Kevin Koban, Jörg Matthes, Ariadne Neureiter, Selina Noetzel, Anja Stevic, Marlis Stubenvoll, Marina Thomas

Social contacts are crucial for information exchange as well as emotional support. During the peak of the COVID-19 crisis, however, individuals were not able to see many of their close and weak ties face-to-face. Against this background, we studied the psychological effects of (digital) media use during the peak of the crisis in several panel studies. Our findings suggest that (permanent) smartphone use has significant psychological effects, as for instance, on friendship satisfaction, anxiety, or infection efficacy.



© Claudia Koska

Monday, 14 December 2020, 11:30–12:30

Internal communication with employees during the COVID-19 pandemic

Sabine Einwiller, Neda Ninova-Solovykh, Christopher Ruppel, Julia Stranzl

Many organizations have been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. To master the resulting organizational crisis, support from employees, who had to adapt to often drastic changes in work routines, is crucial. The research by the CCom Research Group addresses the question, how internal corporate communication during the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic affects employees’ affective and cognitive responses and how it may help to foster employee support.

Monday, 14 December 2020, 11:30–12:30

Media and (Mis-)Information during the Pandemic

Noelle Lebernegg, Jakob Eberl, Hajo Boomgaarden

As early as in February 2020, the WHO lamented an “infodemic” associated with the current COVID-19 pandemic. But how did citizens actually get (mis-)informed? And, more generally, how did they perceive the role of journalism during the pandemic? We will answer these questions using openly accessible data from the interdisciplinary Austrian Corona Panel Project (ACPP). The data touches on a plethora of topics vital to the social, political, and economic understanding of the COVID-19 pandemic.

