



ALEKSANDRA URMAN

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EMPLOYMENT

Postdoctoral researcher Social Computing Group (Department of Informatics) University of Zurich	<i>Since September 2020</i>
Postdoctoral researcher Institute of Communication and Media Studies University of Bern	<i>July 2020 - June 2021</i>
Research assistant Institute of Communication and Media Studies University of Bern	<i>June 2018 - June 2020</i>

EDUCATION

PhD (summa cum laude) Institute of Communication and Media Studies University of Bern <u>Dissertation Title: "Polarisation on Social Media in Different National Contexts"</u> Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Silke Adam; Second Reviewer: Prof. Dr. Peter Van Aelst	<i>June 2018- May 2020</i>
MA in Political Science Central European University, Budapest	<i>2016-2017</i>
BA in Asian Studies Higher School of Economics, Moscow	<i>2012-2016</i>

PUBLICATIONS

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

- Makhortykh, M., *Urman, A.*, Gil-Lopez T., Ulloa R. (Accepted, Forthcoming). **To track or not to track: Examining perceptions of online tracking for information behavior research.** Internet Research.
- Makhortykh, M., *Urman, A.*, Münch, F., Heldt, A., Dreyer, S., Kettemann, M. (Accepted, Forthcoming). **Never send a human to do a machine's job? A cross-platform analysis of policies, mechanisms, and practices of automated agent governance.** New Media and Society.
- Urman, A.*, Ho, J.C., Katz, S. (2021). **Analyzing protest mobilization on Telegram: the case of 2019 Anti-Extradition Bill movement in Hong Kong.** PLOS One. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0256675>
- Makhortykh, M., *Urman, A.*, Ulloa, R. (2021). **Hey, Google, is this what the Holocaust looked like? Auditing algorithmic curation of visual historical content on Web search engines.** First Monday. <https://dx.doi.org/10.5210/fm.v26i10.11562>
- Urman, A.*, Makhortykh, M., Ulloa, R. (2021). **The Matter of Chance: Auditing Web Search Results Related to the 2020 U. S. Presidential Primary Elections Across Six Search Engines.** Social Science Computer Review. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08944393211006863>
- Christner C., *Urman, A.*, Adam S., Maier M. (2021). **Automated Tracking Approaches for Studying Online Media Use: A Critical Review and Recommendations.** Communication Methods and Measures. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08944393211006863>
- Urman, A.*, Makhortykh, M. (2021). **There can be only one truth: Ideological segregation and online news communities in Ukraine.** Global Media and Communication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17427665211009930>

Urman, A., Katz S. (2020). **What they do in the shadows: examining the far-right networks on Telegram.** Information, Communication & Society. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2020.1803946>

Makhortykh, M., Urman, A., Ulloa, R. (2020). **How search engines disseminate information about the coronavirus and why they can do better.** Harvard Kennedy School Misinformation Review. <https://doi.org/10.37016/mr-2020-017>

Urman, A. (2020). **Context matters: political polarization on Twitter from a comparative perspective.** Media, Culture and Society. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443719876541>

Urman, A. (2019). **News Consumption of Russian Vkontakte Users: Polarization and News Avoidance.** International Journal Of Communication, 13, 25. <https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/11161>

OTHER PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Makhortykh, M., Urman, A., Ulloa, R. (2021). **Detecting race and gender bias in visual representation of AI on web search engines.** In L. Boratto, S. Faralli, M. Marras, G. Stilo (Eds.), *Advances in Bias and Fairness in Information Retrieval* (pp. 36–50). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-78818-6_5

Urman, A., Makhortykh, M., Ulloa, R. (2021). **Auditing source diversity bias in video search results using virtual agents.** Third Workshop on Fairness, Accountability, Transparency, Ethics and Society on the Web (FATES). Companion proceedings of the 2021 Web Conference. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3442442.3452306>

AWARDS, SCHOLARSHIPS AND FUNDING

Research Grant, An Overview of the Swiss Political Telegram User Communities and their Role in the Distribution of Toxic Speech, 46160CHF *June 2021-May 2022*

Co-PI Together with Stefan Katz
Federal Office of Communications, Switzerland

Research Grant, Algorithmic curation of (political) information and related biases, 2800CHF *2020*

Co-PI Together with Dr. Mykola Makhortykh
Förderverein Kommunikations-und Medienwissenschaft der Universität Bern

EuroCSS Datathon Challenge Winner *September 2019*

Together with Stefan Katz, Neal Tsur
The event took place at ETH Zurich

Full grant for participation in SICSS Bamberg *August 2019*

Alfred P. Sloan & Russell Sage Foundations

Top Student Paper Award, ICA *May 2019*

Political Communication Division of International Communication Association, ICA Annual Conference

CEU Master's Scholarship *2016-2017*

Covering tuition fees, housing and a monthly stipend of 50,000 HUF

Jaguar-Landrover Scholarship for Extracurricular Activities *Spring 2015*

Higher School of Economics & Jaguar-Landrover, Moscow

HSE Merit-based Scholarship, 100% of Tuition Fees *2012-2016*

Higher School of Economics, Moscow

TEACHING

Introduction to Computational Social Science with Applications in R. Co-instructor, course co-designer (together with Max Pellert); Fall Seminar in Computational Social Science, 1-week block course, GESIS (taught virtually due to COVID-19 pandemic).

Blame it on the internet? How the world wide web changed the world in three decades. Instructor, course designer; Spring Semester 2021, Undergraduate course, University of Bern (taught virtually due to COVID-19 pandemic).

Political Communication and the Internet. Instructor, course designer; Fall Semester 2019, Undergraduate course, University of Bern. Average teaching evaluation score: 4.75 out of 5.

Machine Learning for Social Science Research. Instructor, course designer; Fall Semester 2019, Undergraduate course, University of Bern. Average teaching evaluation score: 4.69 out of 5.

Introduction to R for Communication Research. Co-Instructor (with Dr. Ueli Reber, Dr. Tom Haeussler, Dr. Marlene Kammerer); Fall Semester 2019; 2020, Block course, University of Bern.

Social Media Analysis Using R. Instructor, course designer; Fall Semester 2018, Undergraduate course, University of Bern. Average teaching evaluation score: 4.2 out of 5.

FURTHER EDUCATION

Network Science Project Course ETH Zurich, Switzerland	<i>Spring 2020</i>
Network Modeling Course ETH Zurich, Switzerland	<i>Fall 2019</i>
Summer Institute in Computational Social Science University of Bamberg, Germany	<i>August 2019</i>
Text Mining with R University of Hohenheim, Germany	<i>June 2019</i>
Global Business Journalism Program Tsinghua University, China	<i>Fall 2017</i>
Exchange Program Kookmin University, South Korea	<i>Fall 2015</i>

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Conferences: ICA 2019, 2020, 2021; EuroCSS 2019, 2020; AoIR 2020; IC2S2 2019, 2021; Sunbelt 2020; DACH21 2020; Digital Societies 2019; FATES Workshop 2021; BIAS Workshop 2021. Full list of presentations is available upon request.

SUPERVISION EXPERIENCE

BS Thesis: "Empirical Analysis of the Recommendation Algorithm of TikTok" - Department of Informatics, University of Zurich (2021)

BS Thesis: "Measuring Differences in Rating Behaviours on Hotel Booking Websites by Demographics" - Department of Informatics, University of Zurich (2021)

BA Thesis: "Persuasion in Online Debates - A Study of the r/changemyview Subreddit" - Department of Social Sciences, University of Bern (2020)

SKILLS

Research methods:

Advanced knowledge, extensive experience: network analysis and modeling, quantitative text analysis, machine learning, web scraping, algorithm auditing.

Limited to medium experience and knowledge: data visualization, statistics, survey-based research, focus groups-based research, experiments for social science research.

Programming: R, basic Python.

Languages: Russian (native); English (fluent - C2, Cambridge Exams CPE Certificate); German (Goethe-Zertifikat B1), Spanish (DELE B1), French and Korean (intermediate).

EXTERNAL INVITED TALKS

The politicization of medical preprints online during the early stages of COVID-19 pandemic. July 2021, Guest Lecture at the "Behavioral Digital Trace Data in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic" Summer School, organized by the Social ComQuant Project, held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Russian Protests of 2021 on TikTok and Telegram. February 2021, Invited Speaker at the Virtual Event "Navalny and the Kremlin: Politics and Protest in Russia" co-hosted by the Harriman Institute at Columbia University and the New York University Jordan Center for the Advanced Study of Russia, the US

(Un)reliable and (un)interpretable narrators? How search engines represent COVID-19 via text and image search results. December 2020, Guest Lecture together with Dr. Mykola Makhortykh, University of Passau, Germany

Computational Methods for Social Science Research. November 2020, Guest Lecture, University of Fribourg, Switzerland

Auditing Algorithmic Content Curation Using Virtual Agents. November 2020, Guest Lecture together with Dr. Mykola Makhortykh and Dr. Roberto Ulloa, University of Koblenz-Landau, Germany

REVIEWER EXPERIENCE AND OTHER SERVICE

Ad-hoc reviewer for the following journals: Information, Communication and Society; Social Media and Society; New Media and Society; Journal of Information Technology and Politics; HKS Misinformation Review; Journal of Communication; International Journal of Communication; Communication Monographs; Social Science Computer Review; SAGE Open; Comunicar; Social Network Analysis and Mining.

I was a *program committee member* and a Datathon co-organizer at IC2S2 2021 (hosted by ETH Zurich).

I was a *Mittelbau Board* (a body representing early- and mid-career researchers) member at the Department of Social Sciences of the University of Bern in 2020-2021.

MEDIA COVERAGE

My research on far-right communities on Telegram has been covered by [Wired UK](#), [The Economist](#), [Le Temps](#) and [NZZ](#). My article about political polarization on Twitter was referenced by [FiveThirtyEight](#), and research on Telegram-based activity in Hong Kong during the Anti-ELAB protests of 2019 was mentioned in [The Washington Post](#).