



RESEARCH EXCHANGE DAY (RED) 2
“Digitality and Normativity in Informal and Formal Learning Contexts”

A Digital Symposium on Zoom:

<https://fau.zoom.us/j/93231356249?pwd=cVISVTIYbExzeW91ZmlxcnZvQU0zdz09>

Meeting-ID: 932 3135 6249, Code: 258112

Wednesday, 6 April 2022			Program
CEST/Uppsala	Boston	London	
15:00	9:00	14:00	Welcome Introduction of the RTG research group and the project Q & A / Discussion
16:00	10:00	15:00	Keynote 1: “Notes from the Slow Field: Existential Time and Digital Normativity – Unruly Perspectives from Existential Media Studies” Amanda Lagerkvist, Uppsala University, Sweden Q & A / Discussion
17:00	11:00	16:00	Break
17:15	11:15	16:15	Keynote 2: “Leaning into Complexity: Dilemmas as a Crucial Feature of Digital Citizenship Education” Carrie James, Harvard University, USA Q & A / Discussion
18:15	12:15	17:15	Keynote 3: “Advancing digital citizenship education through the promotion of cyber-wisdom: Insights from adolescents and parents in the UK” Gianfranco Polizzi, Birmingham University, UK Q & A / Discussion
19:15	13:15	18:15	Farewell

Keynote Speakers



Professor Amanda Lagerkvist, Media and Communication Studies, founder of existential media studies. Her work explores digital-human vulnerabilities in light of existential philosophy, focusing empirically on death online, digital memories, and on increased automation of human life and the Earth. She heads the *BioMe* project which explores existential and ethical challenges of biometric AI within the human lifeworld. [More information](#)



Dr Carrie James is a Research Associate and Principal Investigator at Project Zero (PZ). A sociologist by training, her research explores young people's digital, moral, and civic lives. Over the past decade plus, Carrie has led research and educational initiatives focused on ethical issues in digital life, civic engagement and participatory politics in a connected age, and cross-cultural online learning experiences. Among others, Carrie co-directs the projects *Digital Dilemmas* and *Reimagining Digital Well-Being With and For Youth* with Emily Weinstein [More information](#)



Dr Gianfranco Polizzi works as a Research Fellow at the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues of the University of Birmingham, England, on the 'Cultivating Cyber-Phronesis' project. Prior to this, he completed his PhD at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) on the relationship between digital literacy and civic engagement, and at the same time worked as a Research Associate in the School of Education and Lifelong Learning at the University of East Anglia on a project exploring digital resilience among pre-teens. [More information](#)

Abstracts

Keynote 1: “Notes from the Slow Field: Digital Time, Normativity and Life on the Edge – an Introduction to Existential Media Studies”

Amanda Lagerkvist, Professor of Media and Communication Studies, Uppsala University, Sweden

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Our world is on edge. Or more specifically, our world is in what existential philosopher Karl Jaspers (1932/1970) called a limit situation constituted by a series of cataclysmic and entangled environmental, epidemiological, political, economic and technological crises: a time in which there are deep-seated ethico-political and existential stakes of media (Lagerkvist 2022). In a limit situation, as Jaspers stressed, humans are called upon both to slow down and to act, faced as they are with the most pressing questions concerning their values and priorities. Media technologies that sustain everyday life play powerful roles in the present digital limit situation (Lagerkvist 2020) but our paradigms for addressing them seem stuck in the past. We are in some ways in the dark. Introducing the key concepts, concerns and framework of existential media studies, this lecture suggests that we need to slow down to find our bearings. It offers a media theory of the limit situation (and invites limits in all their shapes and forms into theorizing media) through a reappraisal of Karl Jaspers’ existentialism and philosophy of communication. In suggesting that existential media have four properties (they ground us in being; throw us up into the air; speak to our shared vulnerability and deep relationality; and demand responsible action), I ultimately propose an existential ethics of carefully attending. I will maintain that we need to overturn the tyranny of speed and mindless quantification, ideals of limitlessness and detachment – also in our own midst. Importantly, learning from mourners (the coexisters) who lost everything, and placing them centrally for media studies, makes a difference since it requires and forges an art of practical wisdom (phronesis) (cf. Ess 2020) of carefully attending, waiting and listening (cf. Shahramed 2021). This is not a scholastic exercise, or something that applies to the practices or faults of someone else. It is instead the very task ahead in order for our field to move out to confront the unbearable intimacies of emergency (Mickey 2016) situated at the forefront of the digital limit situation.

Suggested reading:

- Lagerkvist, A. (2017). Existential media: Toward a theorization of digital thrownness. *new media & society*, 19(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444816649921>
- Lagerkvist, A. (2020). Digital limit situations: anticipatory media beyond ‘the new AI era’. *Journal of Digital Social Research*, 2(3), 16–41.

Keynote 2: Leaning into Complexity: Dilemmas as a Crucial Feature of Digital Citizenship Education

Dr Carrie James, Research Associate and Principal Investigator at Project Zero (PZ), Harvard University

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Dilemmas abound in networked life. If a friend asks for honest opinions on an anonymous app, is it okay to respond honestly – even if it might hurt their feelings? Is what people do or say in public is fair for others to record and post on social media? Is it okay for people to share violent videos online to call attention to what’s going on in the world, even if they might be triggering to certain audiences? Questions like these elude straightforward right or wrong answers and have implications for the content and pedagogies of digital citizenship education. In this talk, Carrie James will share key insights from her empirical research with adolescents and educators, discuss relevant concepts from literature in moral and cognitive education, and describe a core set of design principles for educating for digital life in all of its complexity.

Suggested reading:

- Weinstein, E. & James, C. (2021). “Leaning into Digital Dilemmas: How Educators’ Perspectives Can Inform New Civics Education.” *Teachers College Record*, 123(11). <https://www.tcrecord.org/Content.asp?ContentId=23887>
- James, C., Weinstein, E., & Mendoza, K. (2021). Teaching digital citizens in today’s world: Research and insights behind the Common Sense K–12 Digital Citizenship Curriculum (Version 2). San Francisco, CA: Common Sense Media. https://d1e2bohuyu2u2w9.cloudfront.net/education/sites/default/files/tlr_component/common_sense_education_digital_citizenship_research_backgrounder.pdf
- Weinstein, E. & James, C. (Forthcoming, 2022). “Conclusion: The Agency Argument” in *Behind Their Screens: What Teens Are Facing (and Adults Are Missing)*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Keynote 3: “Advancing digital citizenship education through the promotion of cyber-wisdom: Insights from adolescents and parents in the UK”

Dr Gianfranco Polizzi, Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, School of Education, University of Birmingham
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This paper focuses on the importance of approaching digital citizenship education (which relates to the teaching of how to use digital technologies responsibly within society) in ways that rely on the promotion of cyber-wisdom – i.e., the ability to do the right thing at the right time, when using digital technologies. After discussing the state of digital citizenship education in the UK, this paper draws on Aristotelian virtue ethics to frame the concept of cyber-wisdom in two ways: as a meta-virtue that co-ordinates how different virtues (e.g., compassion, honesty) may be deployed in the digital age, and as a multi-component construct that incorporates different elements. Then, this paper draws on insights from adolescents and parents on the basis of two surveys conducted in the UK. Key findings from the surveys show that not only do most adolescents (aged 13–16) use virtue ethical reasons to justify moral actions online, but they also prioritise wisdom over other virtues. Similarly, parents value wisdom as the most important quality for their children to show online, while also pursuing mediation strategies that align with virtue ethical principles. To conclude, these findings are discussed in the context of a school intervention that is currently being implemented by the Jubilee Centre (University of Birmingham) with a view to promoting and evaluating the effectiveness of a cyber-wisdom education programme.

Suggested reading:

- Harrison, T., & Polizzi, G. (2021). (In)civility and adolescents’ moral decision making online: Drawing on moral theory to advance digital citizenship education. *Education and Information Technologies*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-021-10710-0> (Open access)
- Polizzi, G. (2021). Internet users’ utopian/dystopian imaginaries of society in the digital age: Theorizing critical digital literacy and civic engagement. *New Media & Society*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448211018609> (Open access)
- Polizzi, G. (2020). Digital literacy and the national curriculum for England: Learning from how the experts engage with and evaluate online content. *Computers & Education*, 152, 103859. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2020.103859> (Open Access)