Programme and Synopses ASCoR's Symposium "Measuring Media Exposure in Today's Abundant Media Landscape"

February 2025

1. *Opening*
   Theo Araujo (chair)
2. *Using the Book Media Exposure and Attention to Media and Communication. Solutions to Wicked Problems*
   Jessica T. Piotrowski
3. *What is Exposure Anyway*?
   Peter Neijens
4. *Measuring Media Exposure with Experience Sampling Methods (ESM): Advantages, Disadvantages, and Best Practices*
   Ine Beyens & Priska Breves
5. *Short But Still Valid: Validating Single-Item Measures for Key Communication Constructs for EMA Research*
   Susanne Baumgartner & Lara Wolfers
6. *Making Sense of Data Donations: Challenges in Multimedia and Data Integration*
   Felicia Loecherbach
7. *Personalized Advertising on Social Media: Opening the Black-box with Data Donation?*
   Joanna Strycharz

Break

8. *A "Multimodal" Approach to Political Media Exposure on Mobile Devices*
   Fabio Votta & Ernesto de León
9. *What Can We (Not) See with Eye Tracking?*
   Marthe Moller
10. *Measuring Affective Responses to News Consumption During Exposure*
    Delaney Peterson & Bert Bakker
11. *Assessing Relevance Using Neuroimaging: An Information Processing Approach to Media Exposure*
    Christin Scholz
12. *Media Exposure and Attention: What We Do Not (Yet) Measure*
    Irene van Driel
13. *Closing*

Synopses

What is Exposure Anyway? - Peter Neijens
Conceptual issues lie at the heart of the debate on media and communication exposure. We discuss in this presentation (1) different concepts related to medium contact, including arousal, and cognitive and affective responses, (2) platform-centric versus user-centric approaches, and (3) different types of metrics.

Measuring Media Exposure with Experience Sampling Methods (ESM): Advantages, Disadvantages, and Best Practices - Ine Beyens & Priska Breves
Experience Sampling Methods (ESM) are gaining popularity in communication research as a tool for assessing media exposure. This talk will explore when, why, and how to effectively use ESM in media measurement, highlighting both its advantages and limitations. It will also showcase recent communication research at ASCoR that has applied ESM to examine how social media users form parasocial relationships with both human and virtual influencers, as well as the impact of adolescents' social media use on their well-being.

Short But Still Valid: Validating Single-Item Measures for Key Communication Constructs for EMA Research - Susanne Baumgartner & Lara Wolfers
While the use of EMA in communication science has grown considerably, we lack validated measures that can be used in an EMA context. EMA requires short measures that are sensitive to situational contexts and capture within-person differences. We present a series of five studies that aimed at testing the validity of single-item measures for 15 key communication science constructs (with 21 sub concepts in total) that can be employed in EMA studies. Additionally, we introduce a validation procedure that can be used for future single-item validation studies.

Making Sense of Data Donations: Challenges in Multimedia and Data Integration – Felicia Loecherbach
Data donations increasingly extend beyond text, incorporating images, videos, and audio—yet handling these complex, unstructured formats remains a challenge. At the same time, researchers often seek to enrich donated datasets by linking them with platform metadata, surveys, or other digital trace data. This talk will explore the methodological and technical hurdles of working with multimedia data while also addressing the complexities of merging multiple data sources. Using examples from studies on TikTok and YouTube, some key strategies and challenges for managing large-scale, unstructured content will be highlighted, navigating the trade-offs between data richness and analytical feasibility.

Personalized Advertising on Social Media: Opening the Black-Box with Data Donation? – Joanna Strycharz
This presentation explores the suitability of social media data donation packages for advertising research, examining their potential to improve our understanding of personalized advertising. Additionally, it discusses the limitations of current data donation packages and proposes ways to enhance their usefulness for future advertising research.

A "Multimodal" Approach to Political Media Exposure on Mobile Devices– Fabio Votta & Ernesto de León
Current automated behavior-tracking tools face limitations, including reliance on platform-specific trackers that become obsolete, privacy concerns reducing compliance, and a focus on desktop browsers despite predominant mobile usage. We advocate for a mobile tracking approach using screen recording and OCR to analyze text locally on participants' devices. We hope to improve this tool with machine learning and local LLMs for the

detection of topics appearing on screen. This method overcomes desktop tracking flaws, captures both public and private content, and increases participant willingness. We are currently using it to measure political topic exposure across social media, messaging, and news apps, expanding its in-device analysis capabilities.

Measuring Affective Responses to News Consumption During Exposure - Delaney Peterson & Bert Bakker

Staying up to date with the news can come at an emotional cost. In this talk I discuss how to measure affective responses to news media through both a) self-report mannikins and b) psycho-physiological measures that capture two dimensions of the emotional experience: valence and arousal.

What Can We (Not) See with Eye Tracking? - Marthe Moller

With technologies constantly improving and software becoming increasingly user friendly, eye tracking has become a popular method for data collection in our field. High time for an update! How has eye tracking been applied by communication scholars so far? What can we measure with eye tracking and what does eye tracking not tell us? And how can we ensure proper use of eye trackers and solid reporting of eye tracking results? Taking you through an ongoing eye tracking study, this talk will address each of these questions and show you the status quo of eye tracking research in communication science!

Assessing Relevance Using Neuroimaging: An Information Processing Approach to Media Exposure - Christin Scholz

Taking an information processing approach to media exposure, our work relies on functional neuroimaging to assess physiological responses to media content that are related to observable media effects. Across multiple studies, we have operationalized different forms of content relevance (self- and social relevance) using real-time, unobtrusive neuroimaging assessments. Results show that these indicators serve as pre-cursors to media content effects as well as fruitful intervention targets. In this talk, I will describe this work as an example for the information processing approach to media exposure and highlight specific advantages and caveats.

Media Exposure and Attention: What We Do Not (Yet) Measure - Irene van Driel

Media exposure and attention are shaped by broader power structures that determine media content, engagement and access. In traditional media research we often do not take into account how such structural inequalities shape media interactions as well as influence our research design (sample, stimuli, demographics). For example, gender is often included as a control or moderator, but its underlying mechanisms in shaping media engagement are not always part of our theoretical explanations. By collaboratively rethinking assumptions and refining inclusive methodologies, media scientists can better capture the complex interplay between variables relating to social identity, media exposure and attention.