

Colombia Internacional

CALL FOR PAPERS

Special Issue

Information Disorder in Electoral Processes: Repertoires, Strategies, Radicalization, and Polarization in Global Information Ecosystems

Guest Editors:

Andrés Lombana Bermúdez — Pontificia Universidad Javeriana (Colombia) — andres.lombana@javeriana.edu.co

Juan Federico Pino Uribe — FLACSO (Ecuador) — jfpinofl@flacso.edu.ec

Carlos Rodríguez Pérez — Universidad de la Sabana (Colombia) — carlosrope@unisabana.edu.co

Reception of articles: January 15 – February 28, 2026

Presentation

Digital transformation has structurally reshaped contemporary information ecosystems, reconfiguring how political information is produced, circulated, and consumed. In this new environment, digital platforms—defined as large-scale technological infrastructures like Google, Meta, or X (formerly Twitter)—and social networks—characterized as relational spaces where content circulates among interconnected users—have increasingly replaced traditional media as the primary mediators in shaping political discourse. This shift has not only altered electoral processes; it has also affected how political identities are formed, how the interpretive frameworks of citizenship are defined, and how the boundaries between the public and the private are contested. Within this context, information disorder (ID)—understood as a phenomenon comprising disinformation (false information disseminated with the intent to deceive), misinformation (false information without the intent to deceive), and malinformation (true information shared with the purpose of causing harm)—has gained prominence (Wardle and Derakhshan 2017). These forms of ID erode democratic deliberation and intersect with repertoires of affective radicalization and expressions of

CALL FOR PAPERS

extremism. It is therefore time-sensitive to advance research on this topic from a comparative and interdisciplinary perspective.

The proliferation of information disorder (ID) in digital environments is linked to the logic of the “economy of emotions” (Van Dijck 2019), in which the visibility of content is determined not by its informational relevance or truthfulness but by its capacity to trigger intense affective responses such as fear, anger, or indignation. This algorithmic dynamic amplifies polarizing messages and fragments the public sphere into closed communities that reinforce biases. In this context, it is useful to distinguish between radicality and extremism: whereas radicality can express legitimate forms of ideological dissent, projects of social transformation, or spaces of political prefiguration (Cano 2016; Castro-Gómez 2020), extremism entails delegitimizing the other as a political subject and a willingness to justify violence in line with an exclusionary worldview (McCauley and Moskalenko 2017; Mudde 2019). The issue is not ideological intensity per se, but its instrumentalization through ID repertoires and emotional manipulation that turn political conflict into an existential threat. By fueling affective circuits of hostility and suspicion, these strategies can catalyze trajectories of radicalization that culminate in expressions of political extremism and symbolic or physical violence (Pino *et al.* 2024; Shin 2024).

The effects of information disorder (ID) on political radicalization are not speculative: recently, various episodes have laid bare its capacity to catalyze violent mobilizations that directly challenge the democratic order. The assault on the U.S. Capitol (2021) and the storming of Congress, the presidential palace, and the Supreme Court by supporters of Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil (2023) illustrate how narratives disseminated across digital networks can legitimize, for certain sectors, action against institutions deemed illegitimate. In these cases, ID functioned as a symbolic infrastructure for constructing a perception of existential threat and enabling grassroots mobilization under insurrectionary logics. Latin America represents a compelling setting for analyzing these dynamics, not only because of high political polarization and institutional fragility, but also due to the rapid penetration of digital platforms and weak regulation of the information environment. Nonetheless, these phenomena are not unique to the region, and understanding them requires a comparative lens that recognizes transnational patterns and local adaptations. Through an approach that

CALL FOR PAPERS

combines empirical analysis and theoretical reflection, this dossier seeks to examine how ID repertoires are configured, circulate, and are contested both in Latin America and in other democratic contexts.

In this context, information disorder is not only a dysfunction of the digital ecosystem but also a phenomenon that transforms contemporary ways of exercising citizenship. By altering the cognitive and affective frameworks through which political information is processed, it promotes the use of heuristic shortcuts—such as familiarity or emotion—that, in polarized environments, reinforce the credibility of distorted messages and fuel uncritical adherence to extreme narratives. Consequently, citizenship transforms into an unstable status, influenced by informational repertoires that facilitate both democratic critique and the violent repudiation of the institutional order. This dynamic accelerates the crisis of representation by weakening traditional intermediaries—parties, media outlets, and moderate leaders—and amplifying outsider figures who legitimize themselves as the emotional spokespeople for discontent.

In response to these challenges, the dossier calls for empirical and theoretical research with a comparative, interdisciplinary perspective, developed using diverse methodologies. To that end, four guiding thematic axes are proposed:

- **Repertoires of information disorder and their radicalizing potential.** Analysis of how manipulative narratives—including imposter content, conspiracy theories, and polarizing discourse—shape affective and cognitive climates that enable trajectories of radicalization.
- **Economy of emotions and dynamics of affective radicalization.** Study of the role of intensified emotionality in amplifying extreme messages, delegitimizing the political adversary, and eroding trust in institutions.
- **Artificial intelligence and automated ID.** Exploration of the impact of content automation, recommender systems, and generative models on the production of ID and the segmentation of the public sphere.

Colombia Internacional

CALL FOR PAPERS

- **Algorithmic segmentation, fragmented public opinion, and crisis of representation.** Research on how the architecture of digital platforms shapes personalized information environments, reinforces ideological bubbles, and affects the ties between citizenship, intermediation, and political representation.

In a scenario of democratic disaffection, affective polarization, and the transformation of citizenship, it is necessary to reflect on the traditional challenges that democracies face. By bringing together political communication, democratic theory, computational analysis, and cultural studies, this call seeks to open a space for reflection on the contours of contemporary political conflict and the strategies needed to rebuild a plural, well-informed public sphere.

References

Cano, Valentina. 2016. "Social Movements as a Response to the Weakening of Institutional Accountability in the Era of Globalization." Paper presented for the course SOC1620: Globalization and Social Conflict, taught by Benjamin Bradlow, Brown University, Providence, RI, May 10.

Lombana-Bermúdez, Andrés, Maryluz Vallejo Mejía, Liliana María Gómez Céspedes, and Juan Federico Pino Uribe. 2022. "Cámaras de eco, desinformación y campañas de desprestigio en Colombia: Un estudio de Twitter y las elecciones locales de Medellín en 2019." *Política y Gobierno* 29 (1): 1–30.
<https://www.politicaygobierno.cide.edu/index.php/pyg/article/view/1494>

McCauley, Clark, and Sophia Moskalenko. 2017. "Understanding Political Radicalization: The Two-Pyramids Model." *American Psychologist* 72 (3): 205–216.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000062>

Mudde, Cas. 2019. "The 2019 EU Elections: Moving the Center." *Journal of Democracy* 30 (4): 20–34. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2019.0066>

Pino Uribe, Juan Federico, and Andrea Marcela Cely. 2023. "The Little Red Book and the Case of Left-Wing Political Extremism in Colombia." In *The Palgrave Handbook of Left-Wing*

Colombia Internacional

CALL FOR PAPERS

Extremism, vol. 2, edited by José Pedro Zúquete, 101–121. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-36268-2_6

Pino Uribe, Juan Federico, Alejandra López-Aguilar, and Adolfo A. Abadía. 2024. “Nuevas derechas e izquierdas: una mirada a los desafíos democráticos y los valores en disputa en el siglo XXI.” *Desafíos* 36 (2): 1–27.
<https://revistas.urosario.edu.co/index.php/desafios/article/view/15124>

Shin, Doh-Shin. 2024. “Misinformation and Generative AI: How Users Construe Their Sense of Diagnostic Misinformation.” In *Artificial Misinformation: Exploring Human–Algorithm Interaction Online*, edited by Donghee Shin, 227–258. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-52569-8_10

van Dijk, Teun Adrianus. 1980. *Macrostructures: An Interdisciplinary Study of Global Structures in Discourse, Interaction, and Cognition*. London: Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429025532>

Wardle, Claire, and Hossein Derakhshan. 2017. Information Disorder: Toward an Interdisciplinary Framework for Research and Policymaking. Council of Europe Report DGI(2017)09. Strasbourg, France: Council of Europe. <https://edoc.coe.int/en/media/7495-information-disorder-toward-an-interdisciplinary-framework-for-research-and-policy-making.html>

Academic profiles:

Andrés Lombana Bermúdez is a professor in the Department of Communication at Pontificia Universidad Javeriana (Colombia), an associate researcher at the Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University, and holds a PhD in Media Studies from the University of Texas at Austin. His work explores the intersections among digital cultures, youth, civic technologies, and information justice, with an approach that brings together critical, ethnographic, and computational methodologies. He has been a fellow at the Youth and Media Lab of the Berkman Klein Center, and a consultant for UNESCO, governments, and NGOs. He is co-author of the book *The Digital Edge: How Black and Hispanic Youth are*

Colombia Internacional

CALL FOR PAPERS

Reimagining the Digital Divide, and has published chapters in *Global Debates in the Digital Humanities*, *Young People's Transitions Into Creative Work*, and *Pensar en movimiento: Cátedra Unesco de Comunicación*. His most recent articles have appeared in *Frontiers*, *Política y Gobierno*, *Palabra Clave*, *Journalism and Media*, and the *Journal of International Communication*. His current research addresses inequality in digital ecosystems and forms of exclusion in automated media environments. Contact: andresa.lombana@javeriana.edu.co

Juan Federico Pino Uribe is a full-time professor–researcher at FLACSO-Ecuador and holds a PhD in Political Science from Universidad de los Andes (Colombia). His research focuses on political radicalization, information disorder, subnational conflicts, and political ideologies, using a mixed and comparative methodological approach. Among his recent publications are: “#EcuadorBajoAtaque: information disorder and the diffusion of negative emotions on X during the 2024 security crisis” (*Dixit* 2024); “Homicides without Borders: the subnational transnationality of drug trafficking in Ecuador and Colombia” (*Revista Criminalidad* 2025); and “Beyond Left and Right: Patterns of Populist Attitudes in Latin America” (*Revista de Ciencia Política* 2024). He has also published in *Nationalities Papers* and *Desafíos*, exploring the rise of the new right and the dynamics of strategic bargaining in subnational elections. Contact: jfpinofl@flacso.edu.ec

Carlos Rodríguez Pérez is a professor in the Faculty of Communication at Universidad de La Sabana (Colombia) and head of the Department of Communication Management. He holds a PhD in Audiovisual Communication, Advertising, and Public Relations from Universidad Complutense de Madrid; a master's degree in Political and Institutional Communication from the University of Santiago de Compostela and the Ortega y Gasset University Research Institute (Spain); and a degree in Journalism and Audiovisual Communication from Universidad Carlos III de Madrid. He holds three accreditations awarded by ANECA (Spain) that attest to his teaching and research career. His research focuses on information disorder, fact-checking journalism, and the strategic management of intangibles in the public sector. He has published in international journals such as *Media and Communication*, *Journalism Practice*, *Revista de Comunicación*, *Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico*, and *Communication & Society*. In 2023, he was recognized as Reviewer of the

Colombia Internacional

CALL FOR PAPERS

Year by the *Miguel Hernández Communication Journal*. Contact:
carlosrope@unisabana.edu.co