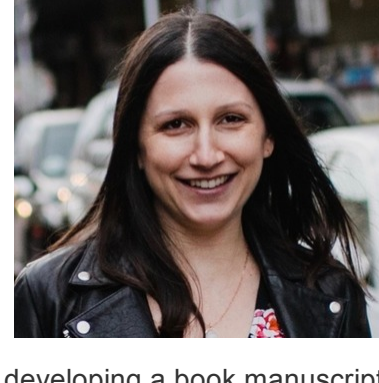




INTRODUCING THE 2020-2021 CDCS POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS

The Center on Digital Culture and Society (CDCS) at the Annenberg School for Communication is pleased to welcome its 2020-2021 cohort of postdoctoral research fellows. Annenberg alumni Emily Hund and Natacha Yazbeck bring unique research agendas that promise to take the center's focus on digital culture and society in new and exciting directions.



Emily Hund received her PhD in communication from the Annenberg School in 2019. Her research interests include social media, consumer culture, and technology and creative industries. Her work focuses on social media influencers, particularly on Instagram, and has been published in the *International Journal of Communication, Social Media + Society*, and *Communication, Culture & Critique*. Dr. Hund's writing and commentary has also appeared in outlets such as *The Atlantic, The New York Times*, and *Wired*. During the CDCS postdoctoral fellowship, she is

developing a book manuscript about the rise and ramifications of the influencer economy.

Natacha Yazbeck is a multimedia journalist and researcher focusing on race, rights and invisible structures of discrimination that have survived the digital transition in journalism, the impact of digitization on narratives around war and protest and the interplay between social media platforms, trauma and memory. Her work has been published by Penguin, Polity, *Memory Studies*, and Getty Images. A former Middle East correspondent, she covered conflict, politics and society in Lebanon, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Yemen for close to a decade for Agence France-Presse (AFP). She holds a PhD in Communication from the Annenberg School, an M.A. in



Communication from Annenberg, and an MA in Sociology from the American University of Beirut. In addition to her research, Dr. Yazbeck will manage CDCS' events and programming during her fellowship.

Farewell to Our Inaugural Postdoctoral Fellows: A Letter from Director Guobin Yang

It's with bitter-sweet feelings to say good-bye to CDCS' three inaugural post-doctoral fellows, **Rosemary Clark-Parsons**, **Jasmine Erdener**, and **Elisabetta Ferrari**, who have completed their fellowships and are moving on to new adventures. Seeing them off at this particular moment is especially difficult. They have not only made CDCS' first year a productive and rewarding one. With their extraordinary talents, kindness, and dedication to scholarship and social justice, they made it utterly unforgettable. I will miss them dearly. The good news is that they will continue to be CDCS research affiliates and wherever they go, they will be part of our extended family. Betty is moving to Ann Arbor (literally today) to start a post-doctoral fellowship at the Digital Studies Institute at the University of Michigan. Jasmine will be starting a tenure-track job next month in the Department of Media and Visual Arts at Koç University, Istanbul, where she looks forward to spending more time with her father. Rosie will be moving to the School of Social Policy and Practice at Penn, where she will be a Program Manager at the Center for Social Impact Strategy as of September 1. Thank you all! Special thanks to Rosie for running the CDCS office and the launching symposium – probably one of the first entirely virtual conferences around. I wish everyone good health and all the joy and success in the world!

– Guobin



CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

Narratives of COVID-19 in China and the World: Technology, Society, and Nations

As COVID-19 spreads across the globe and poses multiple crises to nations and humanity, our previous assumptions of community, mobility, personhood, and even society itself are called into question. Widespread border closure and travel disruptions have rendered conventional forms of sociality difficult. Lockdown, social distancing and work-from-home orders have affected different social groups in vastly different ways, with clear adverse impact on women, racial minorities, and the working poor. Pandemic narratives proliferate on social media and news networks. Individuals in different world regions articulate different if not conflictual meanings of self, community, justice, and the nation in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. Political elites in some nations propagate narratives of virus nationalism and populism and violently exclude and stigmatize certain social groups.

In a world troubled by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative for researchers to rework our theoretical assumptions and frameworks as we embark on new empirical and theoretical inquiries. The Center on Digital Culture and Society at the University of Pennsylvania seeks to bring together a group of scholars for an interdisciplinary workshop to examine these important issues and explore new research agendas. We particularly welcome empirical research which takes historical, critical, cultural, and political-economic approaches to the study of the following topics:

- New and radical practices and visions of technologies in the COVID-19 pandemic
- Changing narratives of borders, communities, and mobility
- The resurgence of racism and right-wing nationalism
- Gender and the crisis of social reproduction
- Evolving patterns of media/tech activism and surveillance, and their implications for future social movements
- Narratives of identity, solidarity, emotions, personhood, social justice, and nationalism
- Artificial intelligence, automation, and other technologies in economic, political and social processes
- Comparative studies of risks, vulnerabilities, and pandemic narratives across time and space

Please submit extended paper abstracts of 500-800 words to cdcs@asc.upenn.edu before September 1, 2020 with "COVID Workshop" in the subject line. The authors of accepted proposals will be invited to present the full paper at a workshop on March 19, 2021 hosted by the Center on Digital Culture and Society. Depending on the pandemic situation, the workshop may be virtual or in-person. If in-person, the workshop will be held at the University of Pennsylvania and organizers will cover the invited authors' travel and accommodation. If the workshop is held virtually, organizers will pay an honorarium to invited speakers. Presented papers will be published in a special journal issue and/or as an edited book. The workshop will be co-sponsored by the Center for the Study of Contemporary China at the University of Pennsylvania.

FALL 2020 EVENTS

*All Fall 2020 events will take place virtually.

Links to RSVP are forthcoming.

Information on how to join our virtual events will be sent to those who RSVP.*

October 26, 2020, 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

"Public Assembly via Affective Technologies: Like Buttons, Sentiment Analysis, and the Transmission of Positive Energy"

CDCS Workshop with [Angela Xiao Wu](#), New York University
Cospponsored with the Center for the Study of Contemporary China

November 9, 2020, 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

"The Charisma Machine: The Life, Death, and Legacy of One Laptop per Child"

CDCS Workshop with [Morgan Ames](#), University of California, Berkeley
Cospponsored with Department of Informatics Science at Drexel University's College of Computing & Informatics (CCI) at Drexel University

November 11, 2020, 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

"Technologies of Speculation: The Limits of Knowledge in a Data-Driven Society"

Book Talk with [Sun-Ha Hong](#), Simon Fraser University
Cospponsored with the Center for Media at Risk

The Center on Digital Culture and Society at the Annenberg School at Penn supports critical, interdisciplinary scholarship and dialogue on all aspects of digital culture, technology, and society.

To stay up to date on CDCS news and events, follow us on [Twitter](#) and subscribe to our [mailing list](#).



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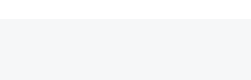
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Director: [Guobin Yang](#)

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