

Call for Abstracts: Rethinking Privacy after this Pandemic. Interdisciplinary symposium September 15-16, 2022

The ways societies handled the COVID-19 pandemic from early 2020 on has shed light onto a topic that concerns us all: privacy. Having to use online meeting, learning and teaching software to be able to take part in social, school and work life, gave the providers of these services and products an even greater market power alongside with increased spying and surveillance opportunities into peoples' daily lives. Opting-out of using these tools became impossible. Using smartphones that are ubiquitous listening devices anyhow for governmental Corona tracing did raise many data protection concerns, leading in several countries to trying to build "privacy by design"-applications and take ethical issues into consideration.

Being forced to stay at home, not having a dedicated space for work, as "room of one's own", nor for leisure, not being able to choose freely with whom to spend one's free time, (intellectual) property rights of vaccines, rise of domestic violence, non-access to medical care and contraception for women etc. have put into focus questions of the privacy debate many people conceived of as discussed – or even solved – decades ago. This also holds for the different attempts of different cultures and states on how to deal with (state) surveillance and the more recent phenomenon of "surveillance capitalism".

Possible questions that can be discussed include, but are not limited to:

- What to do if the home all of a sudden gets certain attributes, that usually are typical for a "total institution", meaning sleep, play and work in the same space? Can algorithmic systems for the prevention of domestic violence help to protect children and women?
- How could the "imperative" to stay at home look like for those who don't have a physical roof above their head (homeless people and refugees)?
- How should the collaboration between states and private companies, e.g. for contact tracing, look like in times of "surveillance capitalism"? What to do if the "law is simply not up to protecting our rights in a digital environment" and in public-private relationships? How to take into account the attempt of the big tech companies "GAFAM" to be part of all spheres of daily life, which also has been pointed out as a constituent element of totalitarian systems? How to contain illegitimate power-asymmetries?
- How to foster digital and privacy literacy, when the digital divide prevents certain supposed "digital natives" from following their classes and the presumptive "digital immigrants" from getting a vaccination appointment?

- How to deal with technical “filter bubbles” in an “infodemic” when they are not only reflecting a personal choice but the bubble of misinformation to which they can lead might constitute a life threat to others, especially more vulnerable persons?

Aim of the Conference and Disciplines Involved

At this conference we will undertake an interdisciplinary reconsideration of privacy, asking how we do want our society to look like based on what we saw, experienced and hopefully learned from the current present and recent past. The concerned disciplines range from different cultural and language studies, law, media studies, philosophy, political theory, psychology, sociology and surveillance studies to computer science and beyond. Contributions from bioethics, health sciences, medicine, etc. or the humanitarian sector are also welcome. The idea is to suggest a *Manifesto for the Future of Privacy* that can be signed by the participants. An open access publication of the conference papers is planned. **Confirmed keynote speaker: Prof. Dr. Beate Rössler**, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Submission Details

Abstracts of around **1000 words** should be send to `privacy_symposium_2022[at]uni-bonn.de` in PDF-Format no later than April 20th, 2022 [sic! extended deadline!].

Key Dates

Extended deadline Call for Abstracts	April 20th, 2022 April 1st, 2022
Notification of acceptance	Beginning of May 2022
Conference	15th & 16th September 2022 22nd & 23rd September 2022

Practical information

The conference will take place at Bonn University. Travel and accommodation costs for speakers can be covered. Online participation will be made possible.

Conference organization:

Dr. Julia Maria Mönig, `moenig[at]uni-bonn.de`,
Center for Science and Thought, University of Bonn, Germany

Project Funding

The symposium is part of a project funded by a special grant program for research into societal/ social, legal and cultural impacts around the Covid-19 pandemic and related liberal arts research of the transdisciplinary research area (TRA) ‘Individuals, Institutions and Societies’ of the University of Bonn as part of the Excellence Strategy of the federal and state governments.