

Disruption and Its Discontents: Ethics, Politics, and Epistemology of Disruptive Technology

A two-day symposium hosted by Academic Writing Lab (AWL) and Dept. Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), IIT-Delhi

August 19-20, 2022

The internet, social media, artificial intelligence, Internet of Things, have all been labeled as disruptive technologies. By using computer systems to perform tasks that usually require human understanding, these technologies disrupt our ways of being and functioning in the world, the ways we interact with it, and come to know it and form beliefs. On one hand these technologies come with the promise of emancipation due to its potential economic impact, on the other it comes with new and unexpected challenges due to its capacity to disrupt. As our lives come to be organized around technology, it is not surprising that whenever new technology enters our lives, it affects the social arrangements around which we build our lives. This necessitates a critical inquiry into digitalization and the kind of reorientation in the social world it brings with it. Technological development is a social process, which is not always autonomous, but rather dependent upon the interplay of socio-political forces and institutions in society. Disruptive technologies do not operate in a vacuum, they occur and re-occurs in a social setting, and certain elements of technological change can be more or less disruptive.

Discontent is a common response to disruption and is generated by the same processes that generate disruption. Sometimes it is transitional when social norms and the social order adjusts to the pace of technology. But often it is more fundamental when it not only raises ethical and moral questions based on value alignment, but also epistemic questions about how we come to know and understand the world. Similarly, discontent is expressed over distributive questions such as control over resources and distribution of burden and benefits of disruption. Discontent is expressed sometimes as a form of disrupting the progress of technology, but at times it is expressed as dissent that is critical of its consequences, and at times as disagreement that challenges the orientation of the technology in the world.

This CFP addresses some of the intellectual prerequisites for critical engagement with digital disruptions and the spaces of discontents within its ambit. It looks into themes such as social media platforms response to its democratic discontents, the pedagogical implications of algorithmic knowledge and the virtual self, ethics of digital identities, as well as the impact of digitalization on academic professions, but is not limited to them. Instead, we encourage authors to tease out the philosophical underpinning of the digital space embracing its nuanced interplay with discontent, insulating a deeply involved exploration of the epistemologies of disruptive technology.

In this conference, we will explore the ethics, politics, and the epistemology of disruptive technology. Potential contributions can focus on the disruption, or the discontent caused by technology. Topics of interest include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Communication technologies toward freedom and democracy
- Epistemology of disruptive technology
- Artificial Intelligence as a challenge to ethics of work culture
- Idea of revolution in the digital age
- Discontent and the digital
- Digital and the question of Power
- Algorithmic knowledge and art of prediction
- Ethics of Digital identities
- Ethics of Digital Dissent
- Digital and the idea of the public

Submission to the colloquium can be made either as a panel or as individual papers.

Panel Proposal

A panel proposal will ideally include 3 papers (for a two-hour slot) with a **500-word** summary of the panel and **750–1000-word** abstracts for each proposed paper in the panel. This should be sent as a single PDF file.

Paper Proposal

An individual paper proposal should include an extended abstract of **500** words for a 30-minute slot (20 minutes presentation and 10 minutes discussion) by **July 10, 2022**. Notification of acceptance will be sent out by the end of **July 20, 2022**. The selected participants will be requested to send a 2000-word short paper by **August 5, 2022**.

Graduate Student Workshop Session

This session shall focus on critical discussions around the topics, panels, and ideas presented in the symposium. The aim is to inculcate dialogues and conversations based on the interesting and relevant concepts, which require more exploration. We invite students, scholars, professionals across all fields of life to apply if they are interested in in-dept critical discussions on the theme. Selected participants will get a chance to interact with the invited speakers and are expected to produce a short report which will be published with due credit on the AWL blog. Please note, the minimum educational qualification to apply is a post graduate degree. To apply, please send a 150 words statement of intent indicating why you are a suitable candidate for the workshop session as a single PDF file attachment.

The current theme of the symposium builds upon the inaugural symposium on “Crisis of Truth: The digital era and the future of knowledge” held on 27- 28 August 2021. We insist on continuing our discussions along these lines, integrating newer threads of theories and concepts on the framework digital technologies and society. Selected papers from the symposium will then be invited to submit their final papers for consideration for publication in a major journal or with a reputed publisher. The symposium will be held at the **Department of Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, Delhi (IIIT-Delhi), India.** Given the circumstances, most likely we will host it in the hybrid model.

Please send your panel/paper/workshop session proposal as an attachment prepared for blind review to awl@iiitd.ac.in and binoj@iiitd.ac.in.