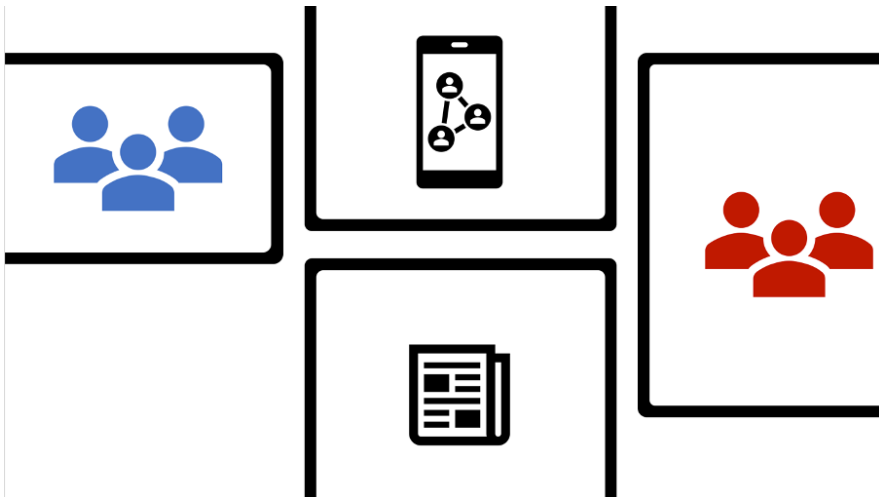


International Journal of Communication **Publishes a Special Section on** **The Role of Media on Political Polarization**



As political polarization emerges across societies, are news platforms and social media sites to blame?

Guest-edited by Christian von Sikorski and Emily Kubin, this ***Special Section on the Role of Media in Political Polarization*** aims to provide a deeper understanding regarding the complex relationship between media (i.e., traditional and social media) and political polarization (with a special focus on affective polarization). Here we bring together leading scholars from the fields of communication research, political science, and psychology to understand how media and affective polarization relate to one another.

The authors present diverse perspectives in understanding when media exacerbates affective division, when media are unrelated to affective polarization, and the situations where media can depolarize viewers. Authors consider these questions in both traditional media settings (e.g., news media) and social media contexts (e.g., Facebook). The conclusions drawn by the authors highlight how there is not a simple answer regarding whether the media are (at least in part) to blame for rising political polarization. For example, one must consider the media content, how people interact with media, their (mis)perceptions of society at large, and how the media shape users' real-world

behaviors. Further, some authors grapple with how media can reduce political division—exploring whether attitudes expressed by others within online forums, and inoculation against the perceived reliability of polarizing content, can reduce affective polarization. Taken together, these contributions highlight the need for nuanced understandings of how media relate to political polarization.

We invite you to read these articles that published in the ***International Journal of Communication*** on August 15, 2023. Please log into ijoc.org to read the papers of interest. We look forward to your feedback!

[The Complex Relationship Between Media and Political Polarization: Understanding How the Media Can Affectively \(De\)Polarize Citizens—Introduction](#)

Emily Kubin, Christian von Sikorski

[The Way We Use Social Media Matters: A Panel Study on Passive Versus Active Political Social Media Use and Affective Polarization](#)

Jörg Matthes, Andreas Nanz, Ruta Kaskelvičiute, Franz Reiter, Isabelle Freiling, Ariadne Neureiter, Marlis Stubenvoll, Sebastian E. Sherrah, Sarah Juricek, Atika Aisyarahmi Munzir, Iara Noronha

[Mediatized Campaign Attacks Fuel Affective Polarization if Perceived as Negative: Experimental Evidence With American Voters](#)

Alessandro Nai, Jürgen Maier

[When We Have to Get Along: Depolarizing Impacts of Cross-Cutting Social Media](#)

Daniel J. Sude, Silvia Knobloch-Westerwick

[Inoculation Can Reduce the Perceived Reliability of Polarizing Social Media Content](#)

Isobel Harrop, Jon Roozenbeek, Jens Koed Madsen, Sander van der Linden

[The SPIR Framework of Social Media and Polarization: Exploring the Role of Selection, Platform Design, Incentives, and Real-World Context](#)

Elizabeth Harris, Steve Rathje, Claire E. Robertson, Jay J. Van Bavel

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