

## **ECREA TWG: Mediated Suffering**

2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Report, January 2020

The ECREA Mediated Suffering TWG was proposed in February 2018, and approved by ECREA in June 2018. Its formal objectives and modus operandi are available on the ECREA website as well as on the group's website. You can find information about the group here <https://www.ecrea.eu/Ethics-of-Mediated-Suffering>.

The management team for the year 2019 remains the same as last year: Lilie Chouliaraki (London School of Economics) as Chair and Mette Mortensen (Copenhagen University) and Maria Kyriakidou (Cardiff University) as vice-chairs. Richard Stupart (London School of Economics) is the YECREA representative. He anticipates working with research students to stimulate and support their participation in the TWG activities.

As of January 2019, the group consists of 51 registered members.

### **Objectives TWG**

- Communication and community-building for researchers with shared interests in the mediation of vulnerability (whether bodily suffering, mental health, chronic injustices, human or animal suffering, climate and environmental crisis)
- Dialogue within and across disciplines with an interest in questions of vulnerability and mediation across platforms (mass, social media) genres (disaster news, conflict reporting, photojournalism, humanitarianism and human rights, for instance)
- A supportive environment for researchers across fields

### **Activities and achievements to date**

In 2018, the ECREA TWG MS management group sought to officially launch the TWG at the Lugano Conference October 31-November 3, 2018, with a high-profile panel on *'Witnessing across media: from 19th century x-rays to twitter'* with presentations by Barbie Zelizer, Robin Wagner-Pacifici, Bruce Williams and Andrea Press, Zeynep Gursel, and Lilie Chouliaraki (conference programme available here: <https://www.ecrea2018lugano.eu/preliminary-programme/>). Despite the fact that, unfortunately, due to a series of unforeseen circumstances, the panel was not realised, the Group continued to finding ways to foster interactivity within the scholarly community, and make the group publicly visible.

On June 7th, 2019 the group hosted a gap-year Symposium on "The Politics of bordering: subjectivities, technologies, media", at the London School of Economics and Political Science. The Symposium reflected on the changing politics and power relations of the border, four years after the migration 'crisis' and consisted on two panels on "social media and sexual identity" and on "technology and civic action in the city" as key sites of political struggle over migrants' safety, voice and recognition. It was keynoted by Nikolas Mai Mobile, author of "Mobile Orientations. An intimate autoethnography of migration, sex work and humanitarian borders" and hosted an international cohort of scholars.

In 2020, prior to the ECREA Conference in Braga, the Group will be hosting a panel-based local event on “Humanitarian Communication”, in March 2020, with scholars invited from across Europe at the Copenhagen Business School. It will also

In view of the 2020 conference, the group is working on

- updating its ECREA website and the online database of CYM members to map out contact details, research interests and expertise, as well as
- activating further its Facebook group for members to share preliminary findings, updates about recent publications, seek a roommate for a conference, share pictures or videos of recent activities and events, etc.

### **Future activities**

Following the ECREA 2020 conference, the TWG CYM will be arranging two gap year conferences.

The first, entitled ‘Digital witnessing in conflict zones: Changing paradigms of conflict reporting’, will be held at the University of Copenhagen in autumn 2020. The second, entitled “Victimhood in the 21<sup>st</sup> century” will be held at the London School of Economics, in Spring 2021.