

Call for papers! “Information Pollution, Crimes, Harms, and Criminal Justice: Untangling the Nexus”

The *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research* (EJCPR) welcomes submissions to a new special issue on "Information pollution, Crimes, Harms, and Criminal Justice: Untangling the Nexus", which will be Guest-Edited by Fernando Miró Llinares (*Miguel Hernández University of Elche, Spain*) and Anita Lavorgna (*University of Bologna, Italy*).

Important Dates

- * The Guest Editors encourage prospective authors to submit extended abstracts for consideration by July 12th, 2024.
- * They may be sent to either anita.lavorgna@unibo.it or f.miro@crimina.es.
Manuscript submission deadline: **November 29th, 2024.**

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Information pollution is a broad umbrella term that encompasses misinformation (when false information is shared, but no harm is meant), disinformation (when false information is knowingly shared to cause harm), and malinformation (when genuine information is shared to cause harm) (Wardle and Derakhshan, 2017). While the malicious intent of polluted information might be difficult to prove, or might genuinely be missing, the social consequences can be very problematic.

Especially over the last decade, the phenomenon of information pollution has started to receive multidisciplinary attention, initially as a variant of information warfare, and then more recently – from a criminological perspective – as a distinguishing criminogenic and harming feature of life in cyberspace (e.g., Lavorgna, 2021; Miró-Llinares and Aguerri, 2023). Among other things, information pollution can sharpen existing socio-cultural divisions, make people more skeptical toward legitimate news, and propagate fraudulent or pseudoscientific views. As such, beyond enabling or facilitating diverse social harms, it can have a direct impact on a broad range of crimes both online and offline. And this information pollution can also target crime itself and can therefore impact the shaping of public opinion about it, constituting a new factor to take into account in the ecosystem of communication about crime and criminal justice that exists on social media.

Unfortunately, circulation of polluted information is difficult to prevent and counter: it can be very subtle, preying on people’s emotions and vulnerabilities via many digital platforms; both criminal law systems and platforms’ self-regulations are limited in this area, as any intervention touches the delicate equilibria needed to protect the right to freedom of opinion and expression; information pollution can also be hard to define, as it is influenced by cultural and discursive contexts.

Despite these difficulties, tackling information pollution is not a challenge we can afford to evade, and we believe that criminology – alongside or together with other disciplines – can

offer the perspectives and expertise vital for engaging in the debates that will inevitably shape substantial aspects of our societies in the coming years.

Through this special issue, we want to stimulate criminological thinking in this direction. We welcome mono-, inter-, and multidisciplinary articles addressing information pollution as a harming or criminogenic phenomenon, in both its online and offline manifestations; polluted information addressing wider issues such as public health, the environment, or politics; and polluted information addressing crime as well as polluted information that could affect the public's view of crime and thus on the criminal justice system itself.

About the Guest Editors

Fernando Miró Llinares is Full Professor of Criminal Law and Criminology and Chair of the Crímina Research Centre at the Miguel Hernández University of Elche, Spain. Fernando's research has focused on the relationship between technology, crime and criminal justice, mixing empirical and normative approaches.

Anita Lavorgna is Associate Professor in the Department of Political and Social Sciences at the University of Bologna, Italy. Anita's research pivots around cybercrimes and digital social harms, and is mostly based on interdisciplinary approaches.

Instructions

Submitted manuscripts must be original and must not be under consideration for publication elsewhere. All submissions should be made online to the *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research*. Manuscripts will be reviewed by independent referees, as per the journal's standard evaluation process. The editors will base their final decisions on the relevance to the special issue, technical quality, innovative content, and originality of research approaches and results. All submitted manuscripts must be fully compliant with the journal's [Submission guidelines \(this opens in a new tab\)](#).

Submissions should be uploaded via Editorial Manager (see <http://www.editorialmanager.com/crim>). To ensure your paper is considered for this special issue, reply "yes" when asked during submission whether it is intended for a special issue, and select the relevant title from the drop-down menu. You may also wish to mention the special issue in your cover letter. Extended abstracts should be submitted to one of the Guest Editors via email.

We look forward to receiving your submissions!

References

Lavorgna A (2021) *Social Harms in Pandemic Times. In Information Pollution as Social Harm: Investigating the Digital Drift of Medical Misinformation in a Time of Crisis*. Emerald.

Miró-Llinares F and Aguerri JC (2023) Misinformation about fake news: A systematic critical review of empirical studies on the phenomenon and its status as a 'threat'. *European Journal of Criminology* 20(1): 356-374.

Wardle C and Derakhshan H (2017) *Information disorder: Toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policymaking*. Vol. 27. Strasbourg: Council of Europe