Measuring and Mitigating the Impact of Platform Algorithms and Policies on Online Radicalization

PPC Summer Scholar-in-Residence Proposal for June 1 - 26, 2020

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Abstract: Over the past decade, the shortcomings of internal policies and proprietary algorithms employed by online platforms have become apparent. These platforms can be exploited for the purpose of sowing dissent, injecting instability into our social structures, and facilitating new recruiting pipelines for extremist and violent communities. Accordingly, there is an urgent need to develop scalable methodologies to measure and mitigate the impact of platform algorithms and policies on the online radicalization process and to use empirical evidence to suggest policies that governing bodies can adopt to guide and regulate the practices of social platforms. The overall objective of this project is to understand how current regulations, internal policies, and algorithm deployments facilitate the promotion and adoption of extremist ideologies and develop interventions to mitigate their impact. Our central hypothesis is that the current policies and algorithms employed by Internet authorities and governing bodies, Internet platforms, and offline media are actively being used to facilitate online radicalization and that scalable user-level interventions are possible to mitigate the impacts of such actions. The rationale underlying the proposed research is that once user-level interventions have been demonstrated to be effective at curbing the spread of extremist discourse without harming economic incentives, online platforms will be more willing to adopt platform-wide policies and interventions to prevent mass manipulation of their users. These interventions and policy proposals are expected to have a positive impact on the development and deployment of algorithms and policies which promote civil discourse and inclusiveness.

Project Summary

Over the past decade, the shortcomings of internal policies and proprietary algorithms employed by online platforms have become apparent – social platforms have become rife with hateful and violent speech despite efforts to moderate discourse [2-7], platforms using algorithmic personalization have been found to enforce filter bubbles [8-10] which can lead to real-world consequences [11-12], platforms with unhelpfully broad content policies have discriminated against and silenced minority communities [13-14], and the Internet as a whole is reeling from the high prevalence of disinformation and misinformation [15-19]. These developments have enabled platforms to be exploited for the purpose of sowing dissent, injecting instability into our social structures, and facilitating new recruiting pipelines for extremist and violent communities. At the heart of the problem is our lack of understanding of how internal policies and proprietary algorithmic systems geared to maximize user interaction might be exploited to encourage the adoption of extremist or radical ideologies. Accordingly, there is an *urgent need* (1) to develop scalable methodologies to measure *and* mitigate the impact of platform algorithms and policies on the online radicalization process and (2) to use empirical evidence to suggest policies that governing bodies can adopt to guide and regulate the practices of social platforms. Not meeting these needs will allow the Internet and popular online platforms to continue contributing to the promotion and adoption of extremist and violent ideologies which pose a threat to the stability of our social structures.

Our *long-term goal* is to facilitate the deployment of algorithms and policies which promote civil discourse and inclusiveness while simultaneously achieving social platforms' intended economic goals of increased user interaction and creativity. The *overall objective* of this project is to understand how current regulations, platform policies, and algorithm deployments facilitate the promotion and adoption of extremist ideologies and develop interventions to mitigate their impact. Our *central hypothesis* is that: (1) the current policies and algorithms employed by Internet authorities and governing bodies (e.g., ICANN, national governments), Internet platforms (e.g., YouTube, Facebook, Reddit, 4chan), and offline media (e.g., mainstream television and radio) are actively being used to facilitate online radicalization and (2) scalable user-level interventions are possible to mitigate the impacts of such actions. This hypothesis was formulated, in part, on the basis of our own preliminary and other previous work which: (1) shows evidence of proprietary algorithms and policies being manipulated to promote extremist ideologies and (2) that the exploitation of these vulnerabilities and their impact on specific users can often be predicted ahead of time – suggesting room for proactive user-level interventions and governing body regulations that can mitigate the impact of their exploitation. The *rationale* underlying the proposed research is that, once the effectiveness of user-level interventions has been demonstrated to be effective at curbing the spread of extremist discourse without harming economic incentives, online platforms will be more willing to adopt platform-wide policies and interventions to prevent mass manipulation of their users.

We plan to attain the overall objective of this proposal by pursuing the following specific aims:

1. **Modeling radicalization and deradicalization processes in online forums.** Our *working hypothesis* is that by using the criteria laid out by law enforcement and threat assessment research, we can identify extremist users of online forums and using their public forum interaction histories, develop reasonably accurate models of their radicalization (and, if available,

their subsequent deradicalization). Such a model will allow us to understand what types of content and interactions are effective at radicalizing and deradicalizing extremists online.

2. **Developing methodologies to measure and curb radicalization caused by algorithmic personalization.** Our *working hypothesis* is that current methodologies are not effective at accurately identifying the promotion of extremist content by personalization algorithms and that methodologies need to account for the impact of a variety of factors such as: prior user-platform interaction metrics, off-platform history, and method of platform usage. Combining our comprehensive measurement methodologies, which incorporate these features, with our understanding of the online radicalization process (obtained in Aim 1) will suggest interventions to reduce the possibility of radicalization due to algorithmic personalization. Further, by actively monitoring the behavior of users of our preliminary tools, we can theorize the impact of similar platform-wide policies on user-interaction and economic metrics.

3. **Measuring and curbing the incidence of cybersquatting-based disinformation spread.** Our *working hypothesis* is that cybersquatters are actively leveraging existing trust in mainstream media brands to spread disinformation (e.g., cbsnews.com.co was actively used to spread political and extremist propaganda during the 2016 US Presidential elections by leveraging the Facebook platform). By developing mechanisms to identify and report the occurrences of such squatting to end-users and media brands, we can reduce their influence on end-users.

4. **Modeling narrative flows using provenance graphs to curb mainstream media's amplification of extremist narratives.** Our *working hypothesis* is that provenance graphs can be used to model the flow of narratives across online platforms and into the mainstream media. We anticipate the development of tools which are able to visualize these graphs will allow journalists and the public to be more informed on the origins of specific narratives associated with extremist ideologies (e.g., the framing of ‘migrant caravans’ of immigrants originated on the 4chan discussion board before being amplified by mainstream media outlets), therefore promoting more educated consumption of narratives.

The proposed research is *creative and original* because it employs a holistic approach to measure and mitigate the impact of proprietary algorithms, internal policies, and governing body regulations on user radicalization by (1) considering discussion board moderation, personalization systems, cybersquatting, and information flows from online to offline mainstream media; and (2) focusing on the development of effective and economically viable user-level interventions and governing body policy proposals. Regarding *expected outcomes*, in addition to developing models and methodologies to measure, understand, and mitigate the role of platform algorithms and policies on the spread of extremist ideologies, we anticipate releasing several ready-to-deploy tools (e.g., as browser extensions), usable by users of popular online platforms, aimed at reducing the spread of extremist content without compromising economic incentives for online platforms (e.g., by not resorting to content censorship). These outcomes are expected to have a *positive impact* on the development and deployment of algorithms and policies which promote civil discourse and inclusiveness.

Relevant Prior Work and Value of Collaboration

Professors Nithyanand and Ekdale currently lead an interdisciplinary research group dedicated to the study of social media algorithms. The Algorithms and Social Media research group, which is supported by the Obermann Center and the Moeller Research Lab at the University of Iowa, is composed of faculty and graduate students at the University of Iowa, Penn State University, and Gonzaga University. The group's first research study, "Measuring Political Personalization of Google News Search," was presented at the 2019 World Wide Web Conference (WWW'19) [19], and it has an additional manuscript currently under review at *New Media & Society*, the top journal in media and communication studies [20].

Both Nithyanand and Ekdale have published extensively in their respective fields on the subject of digital and social media. Nithyanand's research agenda is focused on developing measurement methodologies to uncover the workings of opaque Internet ecosystems. He has published research on methodologies to uncover online discrimination, privacy-compromising tactics, and online censorship by technology corporations and state governments. Ekdale's research agenda is focused on studying digital media culture from a global perspective. He has published research on a variety of digital media producers (e.g., bloggers, journalists, filmmakers, social media influencers, and more) working in a number of different national contexts (e.g., United States, Kenya, Haiti, and Indonesia).

Although we regularly collaborate as leaders of the Algorithms and Social Media working group, the proposed research project is much larger and more ambitious than any of our previous work. In order to submit a competitive grant proposal, we need to have dedicated time and space to work together on designing the research study and writing the grant proposal. The PPC's Summer Scholar-in-Residence program would provide an incredible opportunity to strengthen our collaborative relationship.

Project Deliverables and Timeline

Our primary goal for the Summer Scholar-in-Residence program is to develop a proposal for submission to the National Science Foundation's Cyber-Human Systems program (NSF: CISE: IIS: CHS). Because the final grant proposal is due in September 2020, we want to have a full draft written by the end of June so we can (1) hire an external copy editor to assist with revisions and (2) share the draft with senior colleagues at peer universities who have volunteered to review and provide feedback on the grant proposal. In August, we will make final revisions to the proposal in time for the September submission deadline.

If awarded an NSF grant, we will begin data collection immediately. Following data collection and analysis, we will compose manuscripts highlighting our methodologies and findings for conference and journal submission. Potential venues for publishing these manuscripts include the Web Conference (WWW), the Internet Measurement Conference (IMC), the Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW), the International Conference on Web and Social Media (ICWSM), International Communication Association (ICA), *New Media & Society*; *Information, Communication & Society*; and *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication*. We will also share our results with elected officials and relevant policy makers at Internet governing bodies.

References

[1] Mozilla Foundation. Internet health. https://foundation.mozilla.org/en/internet-health/, January 2020.

[2] Atte Oksanen, James Hawdon, Emma Holkeri, Matti N¨asi, and Pekka R¨as¨anen. Exposure to Online Hate Among Young Social Media Users. Sociological Studies of Children & Youth, 18(1):253–273, 2014.

[3] Mainack Mondal, Leandro Ara´ujo Silva, and Fabr´ıcio Benevenuto. A Measurement Study of Hate Speech in Social Media. In Proceedings of the 28th ACM Conference on Hypertext and Social Media, HT '17, pages 85–94, New York, NY, USA, 2017. ACM.

[4] James Hawdon, Atte Oksanen, and Pekka R¨as¨anen. Victims of Online Hate Groups: American Youth's Exposure to Online Hate Speech. The Causes and Consequences of Group Violence: From Bullies to Terrorists, pages 165–182, 2014.

[5] Rishab Nithyanand, Brian Schaffner, and Phillipa Gill. Online Political Discourse in the Trump Era. arXiv preprint arXiv:1711.05303, 2017.

[6] Ted Grover and Gloria Mark. Detecting Potential Warning Behaviors of Ideological Radicalization in an Alt-Right Subreddit. Proceedings of the International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media, 13(01):193–204, Jul. 2019.

[7] Koustuv Saha, Eshwar Chandrasekharan, and Munmun De Choudhury. Prevalence and Psychological Effects of Hateful Speech in Online College Communities. In Proceedings of the 10th ACM Conference on Web Science, WebSci '19, pages 255–264, New York, NY, USA, 2019. ACM.

[8] Seth Flaxman, Sharad Goel, and Justin M. Rao. Filter Bubbles, Echo Chambers, and Online News Consumption. Public Opinion Quarterly, 80(S1):298–320, 03 2016.

[9] Eytan Bakshy, Solomon Messing, and Lada A. Adamic. Exposure to Ideologically Diverse News and Opinion on Facebook. Science, 348(6239):1130–1132, 2015.

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[11] Robert Epstein and Ronald E Robertson. The search engine manipulation effect (seme) and its possible impact on the outcomes of elections. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 112(33):E4512–E4521, 2015.

[12] Robert Epstein and Ronald E Robertson. Democracy at Risk: Manipulating Search Rankings Can Shift Voters Preferences Substantially Without Their Awareness. In 25th annual meeting of the Association for Psychological Science, 2013.

[13] Rachel Frazin. LGBT Video Creators Sue YouTube Over Alleged Discrimination. https://thehill.com/policy/technology/technology/457651-lgbt-video-creators-sue-youtube-over-alleged-discrimination. Accessed: 2019-09-27.

[14] Elizabeth A. McConnell, Antonia Clifford, Aaron K. Korpak, Gregory Phillips, and Michelle Birkett. Identity, victimization, and support: Facebook experiences and mental health among LGBTQ youth. Computers in Human Behavior, 76:237 – 244, 2017.

[15] Michela Del Vicario, Alessandro Bessi, Fabiana Zollo, Fabio Petroni, Antonio Scala, Guido Caldarelli, H. Eugene Stanley, and Walter Quattrociocchi. The Spreading of Misinformation Online. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 113(3):554–559, 2016.

[16] Soroush Vosoughi, Deb Roy, and Sinan Aral. The Spread of True and False News Online. Science, 359(6380):1146– 1151, 2018.

[17] Alice Marwick and Rebecca Lewis. Media Manipulation and Disinformation Online. https://datasociety.net/pubs/oh/DataAndSociety_MediaManipulationAndDisinformationOnline.pdf, 2017. Accessed: 2019-09-27.

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[19] Robert Faris, Hal Roberts, Bruce Etling, Nikki Bourassa, Ethan Zuckerman, and Yochai Benkler. Partisanship, Propaganda, and Disinformation: Online Media and the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3019414, 2017. Accessed: 2019-09-28.

[20] Huyen Le, Raven Maragh, Brian Ekdale, Andrew High, Timothy Havens & Zubair Shafiq. (2019). Measuring political personalization of Google News search. In Proceedings of the 2019 World Wide Web Conference (WWW'19) (pp. 2957–2963). San Francisco, CA. doi: 10.1145/3308558.3312504.

[21] Raven Maragh, Ryan Stoldt, Brian Ekdale, Andrew High & Timothy Havens. (under review). Studying race and algorithms: An interdisciplinary perspective. Under review at *New Media & Society*.

RISHAB NITHYANAND

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The University of Iowa

RESEARCH INTERESTS

My research focuses bringing transparency to the online ecosystems which impact our sociopolitical realities. Specifically, my work seeks to discover and circumvent the entities involved in facilitating online tracking, manipulation, surveillance, and censorship of Internet users.

EDUCATION

PhD	Computer Science, Stony Brook University	2017
MS	Computer Science, University of California at Irvine	2010
BTech	Computer Science and Engineering, SRM University	2008

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL HISTORY

Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Science, The University of Iowa	2018 – current
Ford-Mozilla Fellow, Data & Society Research Institute	2017 – 2018
Visiting Researcher, International Computer Science Institute	2015 – 2016

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

[C1] Cook, J., Nithyanand, R., Shafiq, Z. (2020) Inferring Tracker-Advertiser Relationships in the Online Advertising Ecosystem using Header Bidding. *Proceedings of Privacy Enhancing Technologies Symposium (**PETS 2020**)*. (Accepted/To appear)

[C2] Ahmad, S., Dar, D., Vallina-Rodriguez, N., Zaffar, F, Nithyanand, R. (2020). Apophanies or Epiphanies? How Crawlers Can Impact Our Understanding of the Web. *Proceedings of The Web Conference (**WWW 2020**)*. (Accepted/To appear)

[C3] Pouryousef, S., Dar, D., Ahmad, S., Gill, P, Nithyanand, R. (2020). Extortion or Expansion? An investigation into the costs and consequences of ICANN's gTLD experiments. *Proceedings of Passive and Active Measurement Conference (**PAM 2020**)*. (Accepted/To appear)

[C4] Razaghpanah, A., Nithyanand, R., Vallina-Rodriguez, N., Sundaresan, S., Allman, M., Kreibich, C., Gill, P. (2018). Apps, Trackers, Privacy, and Regulators: A Global Study of the Mobile Tracking Ecosystem. *Proceedings of the 25th Annual Network and Distributed System Security Symposium (**NDSS 2018**)*. http://wp.internetsociety.org/ndss/wp-content/uploads/sites/25/2018/02/ndss2018_05B-3_Razaghpanah_paper.pdf

[C5] Cho, S., Nithyanand, R., Razaghpanah, A., Gill, P. (2017). A Churn for the Better: Localizing Censorship using Network-level Path Churn and Network Tomography. *Proceedings of the 13th International Conference on emerging Networking EXperiments and Technologies (**CoNEXT 2017**)*. https://doi.org/10.1145/3143361.3143386

[C6] Singh, R., Nithyanand, R., Afroz, S., Pearce, P., Tschantz, M. C., Gill, P., Paxson, V. (2017). Characterizing the Nature and Dynamics of Tor Exit Blocking. *Proceedings of the 26th USENIX Security Symposium (**USENIX Security 2017**).* https://www.usenix.org/conference/usenixsecurity17/technical-sessions/presentation/singh

SELECTED FUNDING, HONORS, AND AWARDS

CLAS-IIAI Pilot Grant, *University of Iowa,* Amount: $25K	2020
Faculty Research Award, *Google Research,* Amount: $42K	2019
Open Web Fellow, *Ford Foundation and Mozilla,* Amount: $60K	2017
Senior Emerging Technology Fellow, *Open Technology Fund,* Amount: $55K	2016
Franklin Antonio Scholarship, *Qualcomm Research,* Amount: $17K	2014

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Program committees

USENIX Security	2021
Privacy Enhancing Technologies Symposium (PETS)	2021
USENIX Symposium on Networked Systems Design and Implementation (NSDI)	2021
Privacy Enhancing Technologies Symposium (PETS)	2020
USENIX Symposium on Research in Attacks Intrusions and Defenses (RAID)	2019
USENIX Workshop on Free and Open Communication on the Internet (FOCI)	2019
ACM Workshop on Privacy in the Electronic Society (WPES)	2019

Panels

"Privacy and ethics" at Department of Computer Science at UIowa	2020
"Privacy and ethics" at The University of Iowa Teaching with the Library	2019
"Privacy and ethics" at Department of Computer Science at UIowa	2019
"Data privacy online" at Barnard College of Columbia University	2018

SELECTED MEDIA COVERAGE

The Hill: "Reddit enlists users to combat coronavirus misinformation"	2020
Mother Jones: "Anti-Muslim Hate Has Been Rampant on Reddit Since the NZ Shooting"	2019
Mother Jones: "Users of a Major Online Trump Hub Expect They'll Be Kicked off Reddit—and They Don't Know Where to Go"	2019
El Pais: "Descenso en cinco clics a la madriguera del supremacismo en YouTube"	2019
Mother Jones: "Why Reddit Is Losing Its Battle with Online Hate"	2019
Mother Jones: "How Fascist Sympathizers Hijacked Reddit's Libertarian Hangout"	2018
Inside Science: "Battling Online Bots, Trolls and People"	2018
CNET: "Reddit: Russian propaganda spread on our site before 2016 election"	2018
New Scientist: "Politics chat on Reddit reads like it was written by 6-year-olds"	2017
CBS News: "Reddit was misinformation hotspot in 2016 election, study says"	2017
Vox: "As politicians become less civil, so does the internet"	2017

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ACADEMIC POSITIONS

School of Journalism & Mass Communication, University of Iowa
Associate Professor, 2018–Present.
Assistant Professor, 2011–2018.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Mass Communication, 2011
University of Wisconsin-Madison

M.A. in Communication Studies, 2005
Northern Illinois University

B.A. in Speech Communication and Computer Science/Mathematics, 2000
Augustana College, Rock Island, IL

SELECTED HONORS & AWARDS

Research Funding

Iowa Initiative for Artificial Intelligence. (Award amount: $8,500 equivalent support via 8 weeks of IIAI consultant support at 25% effort). 2019. *Awarded.*

U.S. Department of Defense Minerva Research Initiative. (Amount requested: $1,063,261). 2019. *Under review.*

Research Honors

Fellow-in-Residence, Obermann Center for Advanced Studies, Spring 2020.
Third Place, Open Competition, AEJMC Newspaper and Online News Division, 2017.
African Journalism Studies Top Paper Award, AEJMC International Communication Division, 2016.
Second Place Poster Award, AEJMC Cultural and Critical Studies Division, 2012.

Research/Travel Awards

UI International Programs Summer Research Fellowship, 2020. (*deferred to 2021 due to COVID-19*)
UI International Programs International Travel Award, 2012, 2015, 2018, 2019.

SELECTED ARTICLES IN REFEREED JOURNALS

Wellman, M., Tully, M., Stoldt, R., & **Ekdale, B.** (2020). Ethics of authenticity: Influencers and the production of sponsored content. *Journal of Media Ethics*. Advanced online publication.

Ekdale, B. (2020). Reppin' the nation, reppin' themselves: Nation branding and self-branding in the Kenyan music video industry. *Journal of African Media Studies, 12*(1), 75-88.

Ekdale, B., & Tully, M. (2019). African elections as a testing ground: Comparing coverage of Cambridge Analytica in Nigerian and Kenyan newspapers. *African Journalism Studies.* Advanced online publication.

Le, H., Maragh, R., **Ekdale, B.**, High, A., Havens, T., & Shafiq, Z. (2019). Measuring political personalization of Google News search. In *Proceedings of the 2019 World Wide Web Conference (WWW'19) (pp. 2957–2963). San Francisco, CA.*

Stoldt, R., Wellman, M., **Ekdale, B.**, & Tully, M. (2019). Professionalizing and profiting: The rise of intermediaries in the social media influencer industry. *Social Media + Society, 5*(1), 1–11.

Carpenter, J. C., & **Ekdale, B**. (2019). Service at the intersection of journalism, language and the global imaginary: Indonesia's English-language press. *Journalism Studies, 20*(1), 136–155.

Ekdale, B. (2018). Global frictions and the production of locality in Kenya's music video industry. *Media, Culture & Society*, *40*(2), 211-227.

Tully, M., Harmsen, S., Singer, J. B., & **Ekdale, B.** (2017). Case study shows disconnect on civic journalism's role. *Newspaper Research Journal, 38*(4), 484–496.

Krajewski, J., & **Ekdale, B**. (2017). Constructing cholera: CNN iReport, the Haitian cholera epidemic, and the limits of citizen journalism. *Journalism Practice, 11*(2-3), 229–246.

Ekdale, B., & Tuwei, D. (2016). Ironic encounters: Post-humanitarian storytelling in slum tourist media. *Communication, Culture & Critique, 9*(1), 49–67.

Ekdale, B., Singer, J. B., Tully, M., & Harmsen, S. (2015). Making change: Diffusion of technological, relational, and cultural innovation in the newsroom. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, 92*(4), 938–958.

Ekdale, B., Tully, M., Harmsen, S., & Singer, J. B. (2015). Newswork within a culture of job insecurity: Producing news amidst organizational and industry uncertainty. *Journalism Practice, 9*(3), 383–398.

Tully, M., & **Ekdale, B.** (2014). Sites of playful engagement: Twitter hashtags as spaces of leisure and development in Kenya. *Information Technologies & International Development, 10*(3), 67–82.

Ekdale, B. (2014). Slum discourse, media representations and *maisha mtaani* in Kibera, Kenya. *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies, 35*(1), 92–108.

Ekdale, B. (2014). "I wish they knew that we are doing this for them": Participation and resistance in African community journalism. *Journalism Practice, 8*(2), 181–196.

Ekdale, B., & Tully, M. (2014). Makmende Amerudi: Kenya's collective reimagining as a meme of aspiration. *Critical Studies in Media Communication, 31*(4), 283–298.

Tully, M., & **Ekdale, B.** (2014). *The Team* online: Entertainment-education, social media, and cocreated narratives. *Television & New Media, 15*(2), 139–156.

Thorson, K., Driscoll, K., **Ekdale, B.**, Edgerly, S., Thompson, L. G., Schrock, A., Swartz, L., Vraga, E. K., & Wells, C. (2013). YouTube, Twitter and the Occupy movement: Connecting content and circulation practices. *Information, Communication & Society, 16*(3), 421–451.

Ekdale, B. (2013). Negotiating the researcher: Interstitial, appropriated, and digital identities in media production ethnography. *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture, 9*(3), 7–26.

Thorson, K., Vraga, E., & **Ekdale, B.** (2010). Credibility in context: How uncivil online commentary affects news credibility. *Mass Communication and Society, 13*(3), 289–313.

Thorson, K., **Ekdale, B.**, Borah, P., Namkoong, K., & Shah, C. (2010). YouTube and Proposition 8: A case study in video activism. *Information, Communication & Society, 13*(3), 325–349.

Ekdale, B., Namkoong, K., Fung, T. K. F., & Perlmutter, D. D. (2010). Why blog? (then and now): Exploring the motivations for blogging by popular American political bloggers. *New Media & Society, 12*(2), 217–234.

Fair, J. E., Tully, M., **Ekdale, B.**, & Asante, R. K. B. (2009). Crafting lifestyles in urban Africa: Young Ghanaians in the world of online friendship. *Africa Today*, *55*(4), 29–49.

SELECTED CHAPTERS IN EDITED COLLECTIONS

Ekdale, B. (2019). Enemy collaborators: Social imaginaries, global frictions, and a gay rights music video in Kenya. In M. Dwyer & T. Molony (Eds.), *Social Media and Politics in Africa: Democracy, Censorship and Security* (pp. 84-104). London: ZED Books.

Ekdale, B. (2013). Telling whose stories? Reexamining author agency in participatory media in the slums of Nairobi. In J. Gray & D. Johnson (Eds.), *A Companion to Media Authorship* (pp. 158–180). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Ekdale, B. (2011). Media activism, youth culture and human rights campaigns for the MTV generation. In B. Musa & J. Domatob (Eds.), *Communication, Culture, and Human Rights in Africa* (pp. 133–152). Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

SELECTED MANUSCRIPTS IN PROGRESS

Ekdale, B. (accepted pending revisions). Engaging the academy: Confronting Eurocentrism in journalism studies. Invited chapter for forthcoming edited book *Journalism research matters: (And how yours can too)*, V. Belair-Gagnon, M. Carlson, & N. Usher (eds.).

Maragh, R., Stoldt, R., **Ekdale, B.**, High, A., & Havens, T. (under review). Studying race and algorithms: An interdisciplinary perspective. Under review at *New Media & Society*.

RESEARCH GROUPS

Algorithms and Social Media, Obermann Center Working Group & Moeller Lab Working Group, University of Iowa. 2015–Present.

Global Media Studies, Obermann Center Working Group & Moeller Lab Working Group, University of Iowa. 2019–Present.

Social Media and Democracy, University of Wisconsin-Madison. 2006–2009.