Recognizing Injustice in the Digital Public Sphere (RECIND)
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Today, the internet plays a major role in the articulation of wrongs and the recognition of injustice. Issues like sexual harassment and discrimination have been brought to the fore in an unprecedented way through social media. This is not only an important societal development, but a philosophical one, transforming fundamental political concepts, most notably that of the "public sphere". Drawing on my previous work, alongside feminist philosophies of vulnerability and the philosophy of technology, RECIND will analyse the forms of agency and community that emerge online. It will investigate the different understandings of belonging, beyond the concept of citizenship. Finally, RECIND will consider the importance of the public recognition of injustice, considering how norms of accountability, justice and anonymity are negotiated online. Drawing on my experience in the digital humanities, this will be supported through a series of case studies from major hashtags and forums.

The primary research question of this project is: **How does the digital public sphere make possible the recognition of injustice?**

To address this question, the project has three overlapping research objectives:

(1) Reconceive the public sphere through vulnerability and recognition
(2) Consider the role of new forms of community and belonging that emerge online and their relation to recognition and social epistemology.
(3) Investigate the role of contestation and norms in the public recognition of injustice.

Vulnerability & The Public Sphere: RECIND will draw on feminist philosophies of vulnerability to re-think the agent of the public sphere. These accounts understand individuals as fundamentally relational, where our sense of self and personal identity are intimately bound up with our relationship to others. The importance of this will be elaborated through two case studies: #JeSuisCharlie and #MeToo. The latter will direct our attention to solidarity around sexual harassment. These case studies will underscore the importance of expressions of vulnerability in the digital public sphere**.**

      Recognition & Communities: Our current categories, including "the citizen", fail to capture the forms of belonging and attachment spread across different networks and transnational groups. RECIND argues that belonging now needs to be conceived of as dispersed and distributed and that vulnerability can help frame this discussion. This research objective will be tied to case studies of disability activism online, #MonPrivilègeHandiPréféré and #CripTheVote. I will demonstrate that the digital public sphere enables new collectives to emerge that otherwise would have limited access to public representation. Equally, I will argue that these also represent new *forms* of community, founded not on positive characteristics but shared experiences of vulnerability.

      Contestation, Norms and Public Recognition: RECIND will will argue that it is in publicly contesting prior norms that these digital communities can enable the recognition of injustice in the public sphere. Norms around anonymity, accountability and popular justice will be analysed through the prism of racial discrimination and online anti-racist forums. Drawing on theories of agonism, alongside postcolonial thought, RECIND will argue that the recognition of injustice should be seen as a fundamentally democratic value and how such contestation can play a central democratic function. From this perspective, RECIND proposes that the digital public sphere presents a new space for the recognition of injustice and makes possible increased agency for new online communities

      Impact & Significance: This work can help us rethink contemporary democratic institutions and the relationship between the internet, especially social media, and how our elections and democratic life operate. It will also develop a new methodology that brings philosophy into contact with digital sociology, via a series of contemporary case studies. This work will therefore help guide policies around social media regulation, as well as produce a substantial monograph and several academic articles.