BSA Media Study Group

Call for Papers

Media in a Scandalous Age

10th December 2025, free online event

A continuous process of 'scandalisation' is defining our modern times. This includes both an observed growth in media scandals alongside an argued reduction in these scandals' overall potency and impacts (von Sikorski and Kubin 2022). Adapting, subsequently, are the factors that underpin the character and content of emerging scandals (Thompson 2000), including those of changing political norms and cultures (Hendrix and Haller 2023), changing media professional contexts and economics (Mancini 2018) and the recognised growth and use of media technologies (Zulli 2020). Some of these emerging scandals are developing beyond national borders (Tumber and Waisbord 2019), while others are reflecting particular national contexts and related cultural and historical complexities (Prusa 2024). In recognising such developments, this event seeks to take stock of what we know about the functioning of the media in scandalous times. It aims to explore recent media scandals and observe the different forms they adopt, the media and its related affordances in which they appear, alongside the marked temporal process by which scandals develop. Analysed, also, will be the whistleblowers and interested actors that help to make visible various scandalous revelations. Acknowledged, in turn, will be the media practitioners – some traditional and some new - and their differentiated practices which define the process of producing media scandals from emerging revelations. Finally, while recognising the activation events and scandal hype that appear in different media and across hybrid media systems, the event seeks to look at the impacts of mediated scandals, including their influence (or lack of) on the reputations of the people and institutions directly involved alongside the potential longer-term changes to relevant policy and governance.

This **FREE ONLINE** event welcomes 20-minute papers that will explore the media in a scandalous age. Relevant themes will include, but will not be limited to, the following:

- New forms of media scandal and scandalisation
- Scandal and media instrumentalism
- Whistleblowers, interested actors and media scandal
- Changing forms of media scandal content
- New activation events and scandal hype
- Changing political contexts and media scandal
- Technologically-informed media scandals
- Media practitioners, practices, and the process of scandal making
- Scandal represented in hybrid media systems
- Scandal impacts (…on people, institutions, policy, and governance etc.,)

Abstract submission

Please send 250 word abstracts, including name and institutional affiliation, for 20 minute papers to Julian Matthews jpm29@leicester.ac.uk

Deadline for submissions 21st November 2025