

# Alexandros Efstratiou

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## Profile

I am a Postdoctoral Scholar at the University of Washington's Center for an Informed Public. My research focuses on polarization especially on social media, and has been published in top-tier conferences like ACM WWW, ACM CSCW and AAAI ICWSM. In my current research agenda, I analyze how polarization and people's understanding of reality relates to cultural and informational environments.

## Education

**University College London (UCL), Department of Computer Science** **London, UK**  
*PhD Computational Social Science (Center for Doctoral Training in Cybersecurity)* *Sept 2020 – Oct 2024*

### Thesis title:

*Polarisation Dynamics and Emergent Information-Seeking Behaviours on Social Media*

Examples of methods used:

- ▷ Machine learning classification (node classification using Graph Convolutional Networks, etc.)
- ▷ Community detection in online networks (Louvain algorithm, cluster analysis, etc.)
- ▷ User/community matching based on similarity metrics (cosine, Mahalanobis distance, etc.)
- ▷ Natural language processing (text classification, sentiment analysis, topic extraction, named entity recognition, etc.)
- ▷ Advanced statistical analysis (mixed-effects regression, structural equation modeling, etc.)
- ▷ Probability estimation and simulation (Markov Chains, binomial regression, etc.)
- ▷ Surveys, behavioral Randomized Controlled Trials (RCTs), and intervention testing

Advisors: Professor Emiliano De Cristofaro and Dr Tristan Caulfield.

**Durham University, Department of Psychology** **Durham, UK**  
*MSc Behavioural Science, Distinction (79.20)/GPA 4.27* *Sept 2019 – Sept 2020*

Cohort top performer

**University of East Anglia (UEA), School of Psychology** **Norwich, UK**  
*BSc Psychology, First Class Honours (78.85)/GPA 4.25* *Sept 2016 – July 2019*

Cohort top performer

## Employment

**University of Washington, Information School** **Seattle, WA**  
*Postdoctoral Scholar (Center for an Informed Public)* *Jan 2025 –*

Supervisors: Dr Martin Saveski and Dr Emma Spiro.

## Grants and Funding

**CIP Innovation Fund** **\$21,000**  
*"Politicization and Polarization in Entertainment Media", Principal Investigator* *2025-2026*

## Publications

- ▷ Duskin, K., Schafer, J., **Efstratiou, A.**, West, J. D., & Spiro, E. S. (2026). The Role of Follow Networks and Twitter's Content Recommender on Partisan Skew and Rumor Exposure during the 2022 U.S. Midterm Election. Forthcoming in *The 20th International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media (ICWSM '26)*.
- ▷ **Efstratiou, A.** (2025). On YouTube Search API Use in Research. Forthcoming in *ACM Internet Measurement Conference (IMC '25)*.
- ▷ **Efstratiou, A.**, Efstratiou, M., Yudhoatmojo, S., Blackburn, J., & De Cristofaro, E. (2024). "Here's Your Evidence": False Consensus in Public Twitter Discussions of COVID-19 Science. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction (CSCW '24)*.
- ▷ **Efstratiou, A.** (2024). Deliberate Exposure to Opposing Views and its Association with Behavior and Rewards

- on Political Communities. *In Proceedings of the ACM Web Conference 2024 (WWW '24)*.
- ▷ **Efstratiou, A.**, Blackburn, J., Caulfield, T., Stringhini, G., Zannettou, S., & De Cristofaro, E. (2023). Non-polar Opposites: Analyzing the Relationship between Echo Chambers and Hostile Intergroup Interactions on Reddit. *In the 17th International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media (ICWSM '23)*.
  - ▷ **Efstratiou, A.**, & De Cristofaro, E. (2022). Adherence to Misinformation on Social Media Through Socio-Cognitive and Group-Based Processes. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction (CSCW '22)*.
  - ▷ \*Hughes, J. P., **Efstratiou, A.**, Komer, S., Baxter, L., Vasiljevic, M., & Leite, A. C. (2022). The Impact of Risk Perceptions and Belief in Conspiracy Theories on COVID-19 Pandemic-Related Behaviours. *PLoS One*, 17(2), e0263716.

\*Joint first author.

## Invited Research Talks and Conference Talks

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- ▷ **Oxford Internet Institute 2024:** From tribes to tropes: Network polarisation and false consensus around COVID-19 science (invited research talk).
- ▷ **Stanford University Scientists Speak Up 2024:** Panel on Misrepresenting Science (panelist).
- ▷ **CSCW 2024:** "Here's your evidence": False consensus in public Twitter discussions of COVID-19 science (conference talk).
- ▷ **UCL Information Security Research Group 2024:** What I see is all that's real: The dynamics of polarization and misinformation on social media platforms (invited research talk).
- ▷ **UCR LOGOS group 2024:** Uncovering a false consensus in public Twitter discussions of COVID-19 science (invited research talk).
- ▷ **ICWSM 2023:** Non-polar opposites: Analyzing the relationship between echo chambers and hostile intergroup interactions on Reddit (conference talk).
- ▷ **GESIS 2023:** Non-polar opposites: An examination of the interplay between echo chambers and hostile intergroup interactions online (invited research talk).
- ▷ **CSCW 2022:** Adherence to misinformation on social media through socio-cognitive and group-based processes (conference talk).
- ▷ **Academy of Management Annual Meeting 2021:** The leadership oversight bias in justice and hypocrisy evaluations of organisational diversity practices (conference talk).

## Teaching

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- ▷ Teaching assistant: Cybersafety and Online Harms (MSc Course), UCL, Spring 2023-24
- ▷ Guest lecturer: Cybersafety and Online Harms (MSc Course), UCL, Spring 2023-24
- ▷ Teaching assistant: People and Security (MSc Course), UCL, Fall 2023-24
- ▷ Teaching assistant: Probability, Statistics, & Modeling (BSc Course), UCL, Fall 2023-24
- ▷ Teaching assistant: Evidence for Decision-Making (MPA Course), UCL, Fall 2022-23
- ▷ Guest lecturer: Evidence for Decision-Making (MPA Course), UCL, Fall 2022-23
- ▷ Guest lecturer: Social Cognition (BSc Course), Durham University, Spring 2019-20

## Service

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- ▷ Program Committee: ICWSM 2023-2026
- ▷ Reviewer: ICWSM 2022-2026, PLoS One, CSCW 2023-2025, CHI 2024-2025, CCS 2024, DIS 2024, CogSci 2023, EPJ Data Science, S&P 2023, WWW 2023, NDSS 2023, IMC 2022

## Research Affiliations

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**eScience Institute, UW**  
Data Science Postdoctoral Fellow

**Seattle, WA**  
2025 –

<b>Security and Privacy Advanced Lab, UCR/UCL</b> <i>Doctoral Student</i>	<b>Riverside, CA/London, UK</b> 2023 – 2024
<b>Digital Speech Lab, UCL</b> <i>Research Associate</i>	<b>London, UK</b> 2023 – 2024
<b>National Research Centre on Privacy, Harm Reduction and Adversarial Influence Online</b> <i>Doctoral Researcher</i>	<b>UK</b> 2020 – 2024
<b>International Data-driven Research for Advanced Modeling and Analysis (iDRAMA)</b> <i>Doctoral Researcher</i>	<b>Intl.</b> 2020 – 2024
<b>Information Security Research Group (ISec), UCL</b> <i>Doctoral Student</i>	<b>London, UK</b> 2020 – 2024

## Media Contributions

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<b>Tech Policy Press</b> <i>Scientists Respond to FTC Inquiry into Tech Censorship (<a href="#">link</a>)</i>	Mar 25, 2025
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## Other experience

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<b>Fact-Check Cyprus (Part of CUT Social Computing Research Center)</b> <i>Fact-checker; FCC is an official EDMO member and IFCN signatory.</i>	<b>Limassol, Cyprus (remote)</b> 2021 – 2024
<b>Ogilvy UK</b> <i>Behavioural Science Practice Intern</i>	<b>London, UK</b> July 2019
<b>UEA School of Psychology</b> <i>Research Intern</i>	<b>Norwich, UK</b> June 2018 – July 2018

## Awards & Honors

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- ▷ ICWSM 2025 Best Reviewers
- ▷ UCL EPSRC Doctoral Training Program Research Studentship
- ▷ Kurt Lewin prize as top performer in the 2019-2020 MSc Behavioural Science cohort, Durham University.
- ▷ British Psychological Society Prize for Outstanding Undergraduate Degree Performance as top performer of the BSc Psychology cohort at UEA in all three years of study.
- ▷ UEA School of Psychology prize for best undergraduate dissertation (overall) and best undergraduate dissertation (quantitative).