

COMMUNICATING COVID-19

This page intentionally left blank

COMMUNICATING COVID-19

Everyday Life, Digital
Capitalism, and Conspiracy
Theories in Pandemic Times

BY

CHRISTIAN FUCHS

University of Westminster, UK



emerald
PUBLISHING

United Kingdom – North America – Japan – India
Malaysia – China

Emerald Publishing Limited
Howard House, Wagon Lane, Bingley BD16 1WA, UK

First edition 2021

Copyright © 2021 Christian Fuchs
Published under exclusive licence by Emerald Publishing Limited

Reprints and permissions service

Contact: permissions@emeraldinsight.com

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without either the prior written permission of the publisher or a licence permitting restricted copying issued in the UK by The Copyright Licensing Agency and in the USA by The Copyright Clearance Center. Any opinions expressed in the chapters are those of the authors. Whilst Emerald makes every effort to ensure the quality and accuracy of its content, Emerald makes no representation implied or otherwise, as to the chapters' suitability and application and disclaims any warranties, express or implied, to their use.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-80117-723-8 (Print)

ISBN: 978-1-80117-720-7 (Online)

ISBN: 978-1-80117-722-1 (Epub)



ISOQAR

REGISTERED

Certificate Number 1985
ISO 14001

ISOQAR certified
Management System,
awarded to Emerald
for adherence to
Environmental
standard
ISO 14001:2004.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

CONTENTS

<i>List of Tables</i>	vii
<i>List of Figures</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgement</i>	xi
1. Introduction: Pandemic Times	1
2. Everyday Life and Everyday Communication in Coronavirus Capitalism	17
3. Conspiracy Theories as Ideology	63
4. Bill Gates Conspiracy Theories as Ideology in the Context of the COVID-19 Crisis	91
5. Users' Reactions to COVID-19 Conspiracy Theories on Social Media	145
6. Donald Trump and COVID-19 on Twitter	191
7. Conclusion: Digital Communication in Pandemic Times and Commontopia as the Potential Future of Communication and Society	263
<i>Bibliography</i>	283
<i>Index</i>	309

This page intentionally left blank

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1.	COVID-19 Infection and Death Statistics.	3
Table 2.1.	David Harvey's (2005b) Typology of Social Space.	20
Table 2.2.	Social Space in the Coronavirus Crisis.	21
Table 2.3.	Lefebvre's Distinction Between the Lived and the Living.	22
Table 2.4.	Five Types of the Means of Communication.	25
Table 4.1.	Sampling of Relevant Artefacts.	95
Table 5.1.	Data Sources Used in the Conducted Empirical Research.	149
Table 5.2.	The Coding Scheme Utilised in the Conducted Research.	156
Table 5.3.	descriptive Statistics of the Analysed Dataset.	161
Table 5.4.	Named Enemies in the Use of the Friend/Enemy Scheme; Total Number of Postings Using the Friend Enemy Scheme: N = 452, Listed are all Persons and Groups That in Total had More Than Ten Mentions.	162

Table 5.5.	The Ideological Square Model, Own Visualisation Based on van Dijk (1998, 267).	166
Table 6.1.	Exit Polls in the 2016 and 2020 US Presidential Elections Showing the Share of Voters Who Fall Into a Specific Category.	199
Table 6.2.	Sample of 19 Trump Tweets About COVID-19, Accessed on 19 December 2020, Numbers Are Given in Thousands.	205
Table 6.3.	Share of Weekly Deaths due to COVID-19, Pneumonia and Influenza in the United States, 2020.	242

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1.	Everyday Life and Everyday Communication.	23
Figure 2.2.	Everyday Life and Everyday Communication in the Coronavirus Crisis.	26
Figure 3.1.	Breitbart's Spreading of Rush Limbaugh's COVID-19 Conspiracy Theory on Social Media, https://www.facebook.com/Breitbart/posts/rush-limbaugh-it-looks-like-the-coronavirus-is-being-weaponized-as-yet-another-10164646988865354/ , Accessed on 28 March 2020.	83
Figure 6.1.	A Tweet by Donald Trump Containing Fabricated.	195
Figure 6.2.	Election Fraud Conspiracy Theory Tweets by Donald Trump.	197

This page intentionally left blank

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Earlier versions of Chapter 2 and Chapter 3's Section 3.3 have been previously published as a journal article that has been reproduced and built upon with kind permission of the journal *tripleC* (<http://www.triple-c.at>). Original source: Fuchs, C. (2020). Everyday life and everyday communication in coronavirus capitalism. *tripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique*, 18(1), 375–399. <https://doi.org/10.31269/triplec.v18i1.1167>