

# The CounterBalance Seminar Series

Santa Fe Institute | Applied Complexity

## The CounterBalance Series – Virtual Seminars

The Santa Fe Institute's CounterBalance is a new applied seminar series on cyberhate, misinformation, social polarization, counterspeech and other applied aspects of belief dynamics. The intention of these meetings is two-fold. First, these seminars will provide a clearinghouse for practitioners, policy makers, and scholarly researchers to share and discuss new insights from these interdependent areas. Second, these seminars will provide an opportunity to contextualize these new insights within a broader understanding of dynamic complex adaptive systems.

These 90-minute seminars will take place virtually and will usually be on the last Wednesday of the month. Each session will include two 15-minute presentations on recent academic work in the field, practitioner perspectives, and time for discussion among attendees. [Join us on Slack](#) for updates, opportunities, and further discussions!



### Santa Fe Institute

Miller Campus  
9 Eddy Rd  
Santa Fe, NM 87506

## The series continues with the following sessions:

Session 8 – June 30th, 2021, 9am US MDT – Experiments in Online Discourse  
with [Amalia Álvarez-Benjumea](#) & [Marc Ziegele](#)

### Session 8 – June 30th, 2021 – Experiments in Online Discourse

**9:00am** US MDT – Presentation 1  
Amalia Álvarez-Benjumea (See next page for speaker bio)  
*Experiments in Online Environments*

This talk includes ideas laid out in optional readings [here](#) and [here](#).

**9:15am** US MDT – Q & A on Presentation 1

**9:30am** US MDT – Presentation 2  
Marc Ziegele (See next page for speaker bio)  
*Effects of Incivility, Hate Speech, and Counter Speech in Online Comment Sections*

**9:45am** US MDT – Q & A on Presentation 2

**10:00am** US MDT – Small Group Discussion

**10:15am** US MDT – Closing Discussion

**10:30am** US MDT – Adjourn

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## Speaker Biographies



**Amalia Álvarez-Benjumea** is a senior research fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Research on Collective Goods in Germany. She works on the effect of social norms on the expression of prejudice, particularly online hate speech. She conducts experiments to test the causal effect of specific interventions, such as censoring hate content or counterspeech in online hate. She has also studied the impact of terrorist attacks on xenophobic speech in online discussions. She holds a Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Cologne in Germany.



**Marc Ziegele** (PhD, University of Mainz) is an assistant professor at the Department of Social Sciences at the Heinrich Heine University Dusseldorf. He is also head of the project “Deliberative Discussions in the Social Web” funded by the Ministry of Culture and Science of North Rhine-Westphalia. His current research interests include online journalism, online deliberation, user comments, and the development and application of computational methods with a particular focus on how journalistic and citizen moderation can increase the civility and the deliberative quality of online discussions on news websites and social media platforms.

## Previous CounterBalance Seminars

### Session 1 – September 30th, 2020 – Counterspeech

Presentations by [Joshua Garland](#) & [Lena Frischlich](#)

Optional readings for Joshua’s presentation can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

Optional readings for Lena’s presentation can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

### Session 2 – October 28th, 2020 – Hate and Extremism Online

Presentations by [Morteza Dehghani](#), [Neil Johnson](#), [Rhys Leahy](#), & [Nicolás Velasquez](#)

Optional reading for Morteza’s presentation can be found [here](#).

Optional readings for the Johnson Lab’s presentation can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

### Session 3 – November 18th, 2020 – The Role of Bots

Presentations by [Fil Menczer](#) & [Ziqi Zhang](#)

Optional readings for Fil’s presentation can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

Optional reading for Ziqi’s presentation can be found [here](#).

### Session 4 – January 27th, 2021 – Misinformation

Presentations by [Carl Bergstrom](#) & [Stephan Lewandowsky](#)

Optional reading for Stephan’s presentation can be found [here](#).

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## Previous CounterBalance Seminars (continued)

### Session 5 – February 24th, 2021 – Deradicalization

Presentation by [Nafees Hamid](#)

Optional reading for Nafees' talk can be found [here](#).

### Session 6 – March 31st, 2021 – Curbing Hate

Presentations by [Susan Benesch](#) & [Cathy Buerger](#)

Optional reading for Susan's talk can be found [here](#).

Optional reading for Cathy's talk can be found [here](#).

### Session 7 – May 26th, 2021– Real World Extremist Ideologies

Presentations by [Simon DeDeo](#) & [Lydia Wilson](#)

Optional material for Simon's talk can be found [here](#), or in this [podcast](#).

If you have suggestions about individuals who should be included in these sessions, the structure of these sessions, or research to highlight in future sessions, please email us at [counter@santafe.edu](mailto:counter@santafe.edu) or [reach us on Slack](#).

## Funding Opportunity

See this [call for Letters of Inquiry](#) from the Russell Sage Foundation, especially for those who are researching mass mobilization against systemic discrimination or the nature of public opinion.

Please email [counter@santafe.edu](mailto:counter@santafe.edu) or [reach us on Slack](#) if you know of other funding opportunities that should be highlighted for this audience.

## About SFI

Located on a mountaintop at the edge of New Mexico's 400-year old capital city, the Santa Fe Institute (SFI) sits at the center of the Complexity Science universe. A small resident faculty and staff facilitate collaboration among artists, writers, leaders, and more than 100 external faculty from the world's best universities.

SFI has been deeply involved with the development of several key aspects of complex systems science, including agent-based modeling, evolutionary computation, machine learning, scaling theories, collective intelligence, complexity economics, and network analysis.

The Santa Fe Institute is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3), independent research and education center founded in 1984.