

Editorial

Introduction

As the incoming Editor-in-Chief it is my great pleasure to present you with this latest edition of *Information Polity. The International Journal of Government and Democracy in the Information Age*. For what is still a new journal in an emerging interdisciplinary area of study, we have an important contribution to make to better understand and explain new technology-enabled forms of government, governing and democratic practice that are sought or experienced throughout the world. This edition is another excellent example of how contributors to this journal are at the forefront of scholarly contribution and thought leadership in this emerging area.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our esteemed academic colleague and former Editor-in-Chief, Honorary Editor John Taylor, for his excellent leadership and efforts to establish *Information Polity* as one of the finest academic journals in our field to date. My intention is to build on this strong tradition of publishing journal articles of robust academic quality and with an actively engaging, influential role in debates on government and democracy in the information age.

I also would like to introduce you to our new *Information Polity Editorial Board Members*, many of whom are renowned scholars in our field. I very much look forward to collaborating with them and the wider scholarly and practitioners' community to further strengthen the very prominent and influential role of *Information Polity* in worldwide debates on the deepening significance of Information and Communication technologies (ICTs) for all polities.

Furthermore, as new ICT-enabled forms of government, governing and democratic practice can be observed around the world and including online, we have extended the role of the *Information Polity Reviews Editor*, which is being undertaken successfully by Dr Karl Löfgren. This extended role not only includes book reviews, but also social media reviews, reviews of research reports and strategy documents, expert opinion pieces, short research notes, well-researched case studies and country reports. For those of you who would like to make a contribution to this particular section of the journal, please do get in touch with Dr Löfgren.

As you are aware, the success of an international journal heavily relies on an active community of contributors, reviewers and readers, who, in times where journal citations and rankings have become important measurement tools of research quality, are critical enablers of a journal's long-term scholarly recognition. I therefore strongly encourage you all to keep up your active engagement with *Information Polity*, including submitting your excellent papers and review contributions, and help me in ensuring that this journal continues to receive the high international recognition it deserves.

Papers in Information Polity, Volume 21 (2)

This current edition contains five substantive papers and a book review. The first of these papers, entitled "The informational logics of liberal democracy. Making sense of the nudging agenda", is written

by Anders Esmark from Copenhagen University. Drawing attention to the fact that a more comprehensive analysis of the new governance paradigm in the information age requires an increased focus on the political logic to define the role of information and the use of media technology within the political system itself, Esmark develops the concept of 'informational logic' and blends it effectively with that of 'political logic'. More specifically, he argues that the current rise of this new governance paradigm is based on a political logic of 'nudging', where the political nudging agenda advances a form of governmental intervention based on the management of informational flows and the assembly of hybrid media systems in the construction of guiding, or even emancipating, choice architecture for its democratic citizens. Esmark's rich analysis of nudging convincingly demonstrates that, instead of using the widespread assumption that the informational logic is colonizing the political system, a closer look is needed at both old and new forms of political rationality about the role of information and the use of media technology. This is a very fine piece of work to which scholars will want to return in coming years.

The second paper in this edition is also from Denmark and takes us to the application of robot technology in public service provision. Entitled "Robots conquering local government services: a case study of eldercare in Denmark", Jeppe Agger Nielsen, Kim Normann Andersen and Anne Sigh provide us with in-depth empirical insights from a qualitative case study of the implementation and use of robot vacuum cleaners in eldercare provided in the Danish municipality of Billund. Although robots are increasingly being adopted in the public sector with high expectations about the transformational potential of labour-intensive public service provision, there is little empirical knowledge thus far about the actual impact of robots on work processes carried out at the frontline of public sector organisations and how frontline staff and clients react towards robots. Nielsen et al. demonstrate in this case study how robots have considerable interpretive flexibility between key stakeholders in eldercare, with observed variations in the perceived nature of technology, technology strategy, and technology use.

Next in this edition is the paper "The diffusion of civic technology and open government in the United States" authored by John McNutt, Jonathan Justice, James Melitski, Michael Ahn, Shariq Siddiqui, David Carter and Angela Kline. In conceptualising and empirically exploring an emerging set of combined practices that proponents assert has the potential to remake and reshape the relationship between local government organisations and communities, McNutt et al. look at achievements to date around the adoption and diffusion of civic technology innovations amongst local governments in the United States. Based on content analysis of municipal websites and secondary data analysis, their research compares 113 U.S. city governments recognised for their exemplary fiscal year 2012 popular annual financial reports with 49 municipalities in the U.S. state of Delaware. The research findings suggest that a long term commitment to citizen involvement in open government data and the size of the community are important predictors of civic technology adoption.

The fourth article in this edition presents the research findings of an explorative study into changes in the adoption and use of social media by police departments in the United States. In the paper "Pursuing the promises of social media? Changes in adoption and usage of social media by the top 10 U.S. police departments", Mariglynn Edlins and Lori Rainard build on previous work where social media use by the top 10 municipal U.S. police departments was only measured and analysed at one point in time. In this contribution, they explore if and how social media use by U.S. police departments is or might be changing over time. To do this, Edlins and Rainard examine between two points in time what, if any, changes have occurred in the police departments' use of social media, their use of it for interaction, as well as their use of the platforms for dialogic communication. Their research findings suggest that there is change, yet the change is slow and not always in the direction of the promised benefits of social media use.

Finally in this edition, Laura Alcaide Muñoz, Manuel Pedro Rodríguez Bolívar and Antonio López Hernández from the University of Granada in Spain present the findings from an exploratory study into inconsistencies in current knowledge about the determinants for more and better disclosure of financial information in the public sector. Entitled “Financial incentives and open government: a meta-analysis”, this paper used a meta-analysis through the application of statistical methods to existing studies in this field in order to analyse the financial determinants that have often been considered by researchers; the influence that a particular channel (online or paper-based) through which governments publish their financial reports has on these financial determinants and their relationship with financial disclosures; and the conditions under which the various research investigations have been undertaken, which might have affected the conclusions of these investigations (so-called ‘moderating effects’). The authors demonstrate the existence of a statistically significant relationship between financial variables and the disclosure of public financial information. Moreover, consistent with institutional theory, the findings indicate that public managers may have different attitudes towards the disclosure of public financial information.

Miriam Lips, June 2016