(!) – this is an UPDATE of the CfP for DNC6 –13/09/2024 – updates marked in red (!)

DNC6 (6th DiscourseNet Congress) – Discourse and the imaginaries of past, present and future societies: media and representations of (inter)national (dis)orders

Website: https://discourseanalysis.net/DNC6

Contact: contactdnc6@gmail.com

Location: ULB (Université Libre de Bruxelles), Brussels

Date: July 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th , 2025

Language policy:

DiscourseNet is a multilingual association. At DNC6 we welcome contributions in the following languages: French, English, Spanish, and Portuguese.

We highly recommend providing a visual aid in English if you decide to present in Spanish or Portuguese. This is likely to facilitate interaction in multilingual panels.

Topic:

Discourse and the imaginaries of present and future societies: media and representations of (inter)national (dis)orders)

CfP

The 6th DiscourseNet Congress (DNC6) focuses on the **discursive construction of social and political imaginaries**. It offers a forum to discuss how social actors imagine and articulate past, present and future societies in a world marked by multiple and overlapping crises.

DNC6 welcomes **contributions** of authors who **explore ontological, theoretical, and methodological aspects of imaginaries** that may (re)shape our societies. We also welcome analyses and case studies of specific imaginaries circulating in our mediatized societies. These may focus on linguistic, textual, narrative, visual, multimodal, and/or ideological articulations of social and political imaginaries.

This conference **is open to discourse scholars** from all disciplines, **as well as to other scholars in the humanities and social sciences** working on (aspects of) the imaginaries that allow us to make sense of and shape our realities. DNC6 offers **an interdisciplinary forum** for discussing imaginaries and the discursive construction of old and new (inter)national (dis)orders.

A **non-exhaustive list of questions that may be addressed** at this event is provided below:

- How are past, present, and future societies imagined in debates over culture, education, migration, economy, climate change, AI and/or robotics?
- What are the building blocks of populist, neoliberal, environmentalist, radically democratic, reactionary and/or post-humanist imaginaries? How do these evolve?
- What role do media play in the production, distribution, and consumption of imaginaries? How do media impact on the articulation of imaginaries?
- How do media figure with(in) discursive imaginaries of past, present and future societies? What socio-technical imaginaries inform existing and future mediascapes?
- How can one operationalize discourse analytical approaches, concepts, and methods to investigate cultural, social, political and/or environmental imaginaries.
- How are imaginaries of past, present and future expressed in different media types and genres?
- How can we identify imaginaries in works of fiction, non-fiction, and science fiction? What are their characteristics and how do they evolve over time?
- How do discursively constructed imaginaries inform social identities and subjectivities? How do they impact on past, present, and future notions of citizenship?

DNC6 invites scholars to submit papers that may enrich our understanding of social and political imaginaries, through **explicit theoretical discussions *and/or*** through **relevant case studies and discourse studies**.

Concepts of the 'imaginary' have so far occupied a relatively marginal position in the field of discourse studies. While the notion is not absent in (critical) discourse studies, other meta-concepts such as narrative, ideology, hegemony tend to be used more frequently.

The concept of the imaginary currently figures more prominently in sociology, political philosophy, psychoanalysis, and media studies. In these disciplines we find competing and overlapping notions of the imaginary that merit discourse theoretical and analytical attention.

What place can we give to the concept of the imaginary in the field of discourse studies? What concepts and methods can discourse scholars offer to investigate social and political imaginaries? DNC6 invites discourse scholars to present relevant research and/or explicit reflections on such matters.

The imaginary has been conceptualized in a variety of ways. Imaginaries have been thought of as background horizons providing tacit and pre-reflective social meanings that prefigure the way subjects relate to themselves and to the world. They have been treated as images of self and society that infuse reality with imaginary significations. Authors have also drawn attention to the interpretive functions of imaginaries.

Imaginaries play a key role in fictional and non-fictional types of discourse. They also play a

role in the construction of social identities and ideologies. Psychoanalysis has stressed the importance of the imaginary in constituting subjects and subjectivity. The imaginary has been theorized in relation to ideology, as well as in relation to specific ideologies such as nationalism.

Concepts of the imaginary may help us to understand how social actors construct discourses of social (dis)order. Empirical studies have focused on topics as varied as the way scientists imagine the future of climate change, the construction of plans for the future of urban environments, migration, cyber- and energy security, university education, and so on.

We only started to scratch the surface of the literature on social and political imaginaries here. DNC6 invites scholars from all subfields of the transdisciplinary field of (critical) discourse studies to submit papers and to explore what lies under the tip of the iceberg. We also explicitly welcome scholars from other disciplines and perspectives in the humanities and social sciences:

- Media studies
- Communication sciences
- Political sciences
- International relations
- History
- Ideology studies
- Semiotics
- Linguistics
- Post-foundational social research
- Critical fantasy studies
- Sociology of knowledge
- Cultural studies
- Audience and reception studies
- Governmentality studies
- Strategic narrative studies
- Journalism studies
- Populism studies
- (Social) media studies
- Visual culture
- Future studies
- Gender studies
- Development studies
- Post- and De   colonial studies
- Environmental studies
- …

Important dates

- Deadline paper proposals: February 28th 2025
- Letter of acceptance or refusal: March 7th 2025
- Deadline registration: April 31st 2025 (authors of papers need to be paying DN members)

Registration and payment

After your abstract has been accepted, please **follow these three simple steps**:

(1) Sign up to the DiscourseNet website (create an account for free)
(2) Pay a one-time two-year DN membership fee: 60 euros (or pay the annual fee of 30 euros two years).
(3) Register for the conference. The registration link will be sent to you along with the letter of acceptance, on March 7th 2025.

The congress is **free of charge**, **_but_** participants and authors must be fee-paying member of the DiscourseNet Association.

A **regular two-year membership** of the DiscourseNet Association **costs €60** (30 euro/year with automatic annual renewal).

We invite **members with institutional funding** sources to opt for the solidarity membership of **€60 per year/ €120 for two years**.

An **exception concerning the DN membership fees** is made for non-presenting participants of the host institutions (ULB, UCLouvain and the University of Valencia).

Without an active membership of the DN association, you will not be allowed to present. Click here for payment instructions.

The congress is open to non-presenting participants on condition that they follow the same steps and pay the DN subscription fee.

Guidelines for abstracts

Please send in an abstract of 250 words (excluding title and bibliography) before February 28th 2025 via this link. Abstracts may be submitted in English French, Spanish and Portuguese.

Important: when uploading an abstracts that is part of a panel proposal, authors need to indicate the name of the relevant panel. This is necessary for the scheduling of the conference program.

Panel proposals

It is possible to organize panels at DNC6. If you wish to organize a panel, please send an email message to contactdnc6@gmail.com before February 1st 2025. Our team will respond as fast as possible to approve or reject your proposal.

Panel proposals include: (1) the name of the panel organizer; (2) the title of the panel; (3) an abstract of 250 words; and (4) a provisional list of panel contributors. A panel proposal needs to include at least four names of panel contributors (including the panel organizer).

Important (!): emails with panel proposals should *not* include individual abstracts of panel contributors. All abstracts – including those of panel contributions – need to be sent in individually and will be evaluated on an individual basis.

Confirmed keynote speakers

We now have two confirmed keynote speakers. A third speakers will be announced soon.

- ➤ **Annette Knaut** (Augsburg University) is a cultural scientist and sociologist. She is currently working on her 'Habilitation' at Augsburg University, Germany. In this work Annette develops a new imaginary of public spaces, called Transcultural Public Spheres, by re-reading and counter-reading common social science concepts of publics and spaces with postcolonial literature. Annette is engaged in different research networks of post- and decolonial thinking as well as discourse studies. Her research lies at the intersection of social science theory, discourse research, gender studies, as well as cultural and postcolonial studies.

- ➤ **Alister Miskimmon** is Professor of International Relations at Queen's University Belfast. His research focuses on strategic narratives and International Relations. He has published two books on these themes with Ben O'Loughlin and Laura Roselle entitled, *Strategic Narratives: Communication Power and the New World Order* (2013) and *Forging the World: Strategic Narratives in International Relations* (2017).

- ➤ **Michał Krzyżanowski** is the Chair in Media & Communications at Uppsala University, where he is also Deputy Head of School of Informatics & Media and Director of Research at the Centre for Multidisciplinary Studies of Racism. He is known internationally for his interdisciplinary work on critical discourse studies of communication, media and social change with special focus on discourses and imaginaries of crisis, inequality, discrimination and exclusion. Michał is editor in chief of the Journal of Language & Politics, one of the leading journals in discourse studies. See also: https://www.uu.se/en/contact-and-organisation/staff?query=N20-1042 .

Organizing committee:

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Organizing institutions

ULB / ReSIC (Centre de Recherche en Information et Communication)
UCLouvain Saint-Louis Bruxelles / Engage - Research Center for Publicness in Contemporary Communication
Universitat do València
DiscourseNet: International Association for Discourse Studies