

# Aleesha Joy Rodriguez (she/they)

Aleesha is an experienced researcher in the fields of digital media communication and Science and Technology Studies (STS). They will soon submit their PhD for external examination, which was conducted at the Digital Media Research Centre (DMRC) at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in Brisbane, Australia. In her PhD research, Aleesha applies STS approaches to map the key events, actors, and issues raised by publics on social media about Tesla's (big) battery—an object co-constituted through social media publics—and explores the meaning and outcomes of this speculative technology. Aleesha's broader research agenda examines public communication on digital platforms, such as TikTok and Reddit, to explore the ways in which people and technology, mutually and dynamically, shape each other. Aleesha's research has been published in *International Journal of Communication* and *Social Media + Society*.

## Education

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Anticipated completion by February 2022	<b>PhD</b> Digital Media Research Centre (DMRC), Queensland University of Technology (QUT). Dissertation: <i>A controversy analysis of Tesla's (big) battery in Australia</i> . Supervisors: Associate Professor Peta Mitchell and Dr Ariadna Matamoros-Fernández
<b>2016</b>	<b>Bachelor of Arts (Honours I)</b> Majoring in Sociology. University of Queensland
<b>2015</b>	<b>Diploma of Arts</b> Majoring in Sociology. University of Queensland
<b>2012</b>	<b>Bachelor of Arts</b> Majoring in History/Ancient History and Studies of Religion. University of Queensland

## Peer-reviewed publications

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Graham, T. & **Rodriguez, A.** (2021). The sociomateriality of rating and ranking devices on social media: A case study of Reddit's voting practices. *Social Media + Society*, 7(3), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/205630512111047667>

Kaye, D.B.V., **Rodriguez, A.**, Langton, K., Wikström, P. (2021). You made this? I made this: Practices of authorship and attribution on TikTok. *International Journal of Communication*, 15, 3195–3215. <https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/14544>

Matamoros-Fernández, A., **Rodriguez, A.**, & Wikström, P. (In progress). The limits of jokes during times of crisis: Examining “digital yellowface” and other memetic trends on TikTok as content that harms. To be submitted to *Media and Communication, Special Issue: Impact of Social Media on Social Cohesion*.

**Rodriguez, A.**, Kaye, D.B.V., Hourigan, A., Miles, P., & Dezuanni, M. (In progress). TikTok and digital media literacies: Exploring short-form video for storytelling in the classroom. To be submitted to *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*.

## Book Reviews

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**Rodriguez, A.** (2021). Book Review: How green is your smartphone? *Media International Australia*, 179(1), 150-151. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1329878X211010869>

## Conferences

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### *Refereed conference proceedings*

**Rodriguez, A.** (2021). Technological agnosticism and climate change: Platform culture on technology forum Whirlpool. Presented at AoIR 2021: *The 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference of the Association of Internet Researchers*. Virtual Event: AoIR. Retrieved from <http://spir.aoir.org> (Watch here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7NHGIyynTac>).

**Rodriguez, A., Kaye, D.B.V., & Wikström, P.** (2020). Does anyone know who made this?: Commenting culture on TikTok. Presented at *AoIR 2020: The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference of the Association of Internet Researchers*. Virtual Event: AoIR. Retrieved from <http://spir.aoir.org>.

Kaye, D.B.V., **Rodriguez, A.**, & Wikström, P. (2020). You made this? I made this: Culture of (mis)attribution on TikTok. Presented at *AoIR 2020: The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference of the Association of Internet Researchers*. Virtual Event: AoIR. Retrieved from <http://spir.aoir.org>.

Foth, M., Light, A., Heitlinger, S., & **Rodriguez, A.** (2018). Methods to study gaps: The ethics of the invisible. At *4S – Society for Social Studies of Science Annual Conference*, 29 August–1 September, Sydney, New South Wales.

### *Refereed conference presentations (no proceedings)*

Kaye, D.B.V., **Rodriguez, A.**, Miles, P., Dezuanni, M., & Hourigan, A. (2021). Teaching with TikTok: A storytelling approach for creative digital pedagogies. Presented at the Connected Learning Summit, July 7-30, Virtual event.

**Rodriguez, A.** (2021). Batteries With(out) Scale. Presented at the Nordic Science and Technology Studies (NOSTS) conference, May 20-21, Virtual event & at the Copenhagen Business School, Copenhagen, Denmark.

**Rodriguez, A. & Kaye, D.B.V.** (2020). Leave a like if I'm on your #FYP: TikTok's (shared) algorithmically curated content. At *Digital Intimacies 6: Connection in Crisis*, 7-9 December, Sydney, New South Wales.

**Rodriguez, A.** (2019). Do you (dis)trust your battery? Experimental session. Presented at *AoIR 2019: The 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Association of Internet Researchers*, "Trust in the System", 2-5 October 2019, Brisbane, Queensland.

**Rodriguez, A.** (2018). The Tesla battery and our appetite for energy. At the *New Economy Network Australia 2018 Annual Conference*, "Strengthening the New Economy for the Common Good", 19–21 October 2018, Melbourne, Victoria.

**Rodriguez, A.** (2017). If crowdfunding is so great, why do environmental project fails?  
*At The Australian Sociological Association Annual Conference, 27–30 November 2017, The University of Western Australia, Perth, Western Australia.*

### **Invited talks, panels, & workshops**

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<b>Facilitator</b>	Storytelling with TikTok, a workshop with 150 year 7 students (February 2021).
<b>Moderator</b>	TikTok & Youth Cultures in the Age of COVID-19—Online <a href="https://tiktokcultures.com/covid-19-event/">https://tiktokcultures.com/covid-19-event/</a> (March 2021).
<b>Speaker</b>	Australian Media Literacy Research Symposium Video: <a href="https://youtu.be/QxqHuDtpvOY">https://youtu.be/QxqHuDtpvOY</a> (April 2021).
<b>Panellist</b>	The <i>Australian Teachers of Media</i> (ATOM) Queensland—Virtual Conference (October 2020).
<b>Guest lecturer</b>	CCB303 <i>Digital Media Projects</i> , QUT. Talk title: Methods to study misattribution on TikTok. (August 2020 & 2021).
<b>Speaker</b>	<i>Intellectual Property and Sustainable Development Symposium</i> , 6 September, QUT. Talk title: The Tesla battery: Energy justice or just business as usual? (September 2018).

### **Public talks, media, and publications**

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<b>Speaker</b>	TEDxQUT: Innovate, Activate, Motivate Brisbane, Queensland (26 October 2019). Talk title: <i>The energy solution – it’s in your hands!</i> Video: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vRP1m3X5lbc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vRP1m3X5lbc</a>
<b>Interviewed</b>	ABC Brisbane with Kate O’Toole, Sunday Mornings, 26 April 2020 [Radio]. Talk: TikTok use during COVID-19
<b>Featured</b>	QUT’s Master of Digital Communication advertisement, 21 May 2019. Video: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MM_HTT9thw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MM_HTT9thw</a>
<b>Author</b>	<i>Happy birthday SA’s big battery and many happy returns of your recyclable parts</i> , in <i>The Conversation</i> (30 November 2018). Access: <a href="https://theconversation.com/happy-birthday-sas-big-battery-and-many-happy-returns-of-your-recyclable-parts-105739">https://theconversation.com/happy-birthday-sas-big-battery-and-many-happy-returns-of-your-recyclable-parts-105739</a>

### **Grants & Scholarships**

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<b>2018-2021</b>	Awarded a competitive Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Domestic Stipend Scholarship
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### **Employment**

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<b>October-present</b>	<b>Unit Coordinator &amp; Lecturer</b> —CCN108: Social Media Strategy Project (Postgraduate Unit)
<b>May-June 2021</b>	<b>Co-Lecturer</b> —CCN206: Communicating with Bots (Postgraduate Unit)
<b>Feburary-June-2021</b>	<b>Co-Unit Coordinator &amp; Lecturer</b> —CCB202: Social Media, Self & Society (Undergraduate Unit) <b>Student testimonial:</b> <i>Aleesha you are simply incredible as a coordinator and tutor because you care, are enthusiastic, friendly, approachable and always willing</i>

*to help us learn in anyway. Your passion for what you teach is clearly conveyed and because of that it transfers to us.*

**February-June-2020**

**Tutor**—CCB202: Social Media, Self & Society (Undergraduate Unit)

**Student testimonial:**

*Aleesha was always kind and smiling and had a great attitude! She welcomed all ideas with open arms and made us all feel free to express our opinions without judgment.*

**February-June-2019**

**Tutor**—(Undergraduate Units)  
CCB202: Social Media, Self and Society  
KKB105: Inquiry in Media and Communication

**March 2019-present**

**Research Assistant**—Digital Media Research Centre, QUT.

- Project: Communicating scientific uncertainty during COVID-19
- Project: Exploring digital yellowface on TikTok
- Project: Rating and ranking devices on Reddit

**October 2013-January 2017**

**Mac and iOS technician**—Apple Retail, Chermside.  
A customer-focused role that also involved problem-solving & repairing devices.

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**Training**

**July 2021**

**Mental Health First Aid Training**

**March 2019**

**Teaching Advantage Program**  
by QUT Academy of Learning and Teaching

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**Achievements**

**2021**

**Grant winner** (\$50,000) at the ClimateLaunchpad Australian National Final for start-up Whirl. Awarded thanks to the Australian Red Cross initiative Humanitech and the Telstra Foundation. Read here: <https://climate-kic.org.au/2021/08/27/top-3-cleantech-startups-in-australia-named/>

**2020**

**Finalist and Special Mention**, QUT's 3MT Finals.  
Video: <https://youtu.be/RCrHpb777cg>

**2018**

**Young Social Pioneer**—Foundation for Young Australians (<https://fya.org.au/>)

**2017**

**Fellow & Scholarship recipient**—The UnSchool of Disruptive Design Emerging Leaders Fellowship, San Francisco (<https://www.unschools.co/>)

**2017**

**John Western Sociology Prize**—The University of Queensland  
Awarded with the highest result in the honours thesis and coursework component.

**2016**

**Winner** of the Honours 3MT competition and selected as the People's Choice—The University of Queensland

**2008**

**Winner**—Queensland Young Volunteer awards.

## Service

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- October 2020-present**      **APAC Founding Member**—TikTok Cultures Research Network. (<https://tiktokcultures.com/>)
- October 2020-present**      **Head of Market Research and Customer Experience—Whirl**  
Whirl is a female-founded digital platform that empowers customers to build confidence in new clean technologies (starting with electric cars and their chargers). Whirl is building a peer network to help customers navigate the complex learning and purchasing processes without sales pressure. We provide learning materials, chat sessions with real-world EV owners, and EV test-drives in local communities. (<https://www.giveitawhirl.co/>).
- October 2019-present**      **Authentic Relating Facilitator**—Authentic Relating is a practice that aims to build interpersonal communication skills and empathy. Authentic Relating workshops involve a series of games and activities that may involve speaking, asking questions, physical movement, meditation, or some combination of these.
- March 2021**      **Ambassador**—Deputy Vice Chancellor of Research (DVCR) Graduate Research, QUT.  
An honorary role which entails connecting High School students with a richer and contemporary understanding of research and career pathways.
- June 2020-February 2021**      **Founder and President** of the first, *Creative Industries Higher Degree Research Society*, at QUT.  
Through peer-support and peer-leadership the CI HDR Society provides the “social glue” that cultivates connection between and support for Higher Degree by Research students associated with the Schools of Communication, Creative Practice, and Design, at QUT.
- March 2019-December 2020**      **Postgraduate Representative** on the Academic Board for the Creative Industries Faculty, QUT.
- July 2017-September 2019**      **Schools Mentor**—Australian Youth Climate Coalition (AYCC)  
As a Schools Mentor part of AYCC's *Switched on Schools* and *Repower Campaign*, I designed and facilitated workshops with high schools in South-East Queensland—teaching them about climate justice and empowering them with the tools to create youth lead campaigns in their local school communities.

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## Peer reviewer (conferences)

- Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR)
- The Australia Sociological Association

## Research Software and Digital Tools Experience

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### *Digital data collection tools*

- University of Amsterdam Digital Methods Institute tools:
  - YouTube Data tools (<https://tools.digitalmethods.net/netvizz/youtube/>)
- NVivo web scraper
- Internet Archive's Wayback Machine (<https://archive.org/web/>)
- DataMiner (<https://dataminer.io/>)
- Crowdtangle (<https://www.crowdtangle.com/>)

### *Data analysis software*

1. Quantitative analysis
  - Tableau – big data cleaning, sorting, and analysis
  - Excel
  - R Studio
  - Cognito Forms (<https://www.cognitofrms.com/>)
2. Qualitative analysis
  - NVivo
3. Social network analysis
  - Gephi (<https://gephi.org/>)
4. Data visualisation
  - Kumu (<https://kumu.io/>)
  - RawGraphs (<https://rawgraphs.io/>)