Understanding Today's Media Environment

MOOC Week 2
“Yes, the info in the blogs is bad, false, and misleading but the rationale is that 'if it gets the people to click on it and engage, then use it.’
1 publisher. 7 days. 11 platforms. 2,814 posts.
Algorithmic Filtering

Facebook Trending: Platform Suppresses News Topics From Conservative Media, Report Says

Phil Robertson: 'Duck Dynasty' Star Comments on Transgender Bathroom Issue

Nickelback: Band Is Viewed More Favorably Than Donald Trump, Poll Shows

Queen Elizabeth: Video Shows British Monarch Referring to Chinese Officials as 'Very Rude'

Jon Stewart: Former Talk Show Host Calls Donald Trump a 'Man Baby'

Worldwide Trends - Change

#FelizDiaDeLaMujer
Happy International Women's Day
#TheBiggestLies
#CiteMulheresLindas
#IWD
#101FrasesTípicasDeLasMujeres
20 Stunning Responsive WordPress Themes
Chávez
Getitz
Maduro

Google News

Social media companies ignoring Israel's warnings 'unacceptable'

Car crash brings down hotel in India, killing 10

Flood 'likely' across UK with weather warnings issued for Bank Holiday downpours
Facebook

“Population-wise, it’s larger than any single country; in fact, it’s bigger than any continent besides Asia. At 2 billion members, ‘monthly active Facebook users’ is the single largest non-biologically sorted group of people on the planet after “Christians” — and, growing consistently at around 17 percent year on year. Outside China, where Facebook has been banned since 2009, one in every five minutes on the internet is spent on Facebook; in countries with only recently high rates of internet connectivity, like Myanmar and Kenya, Facebook is, for all intents and purposes, the whole internet.

—Max Read, New York Magazine
Summary

• The shift in distribution from media companies to platforms and networks is a massive disruption.

• Our current media environment is democratized, blessed/cursed with abundance, and global.

• The capture and monetization of attention has never been more competitive, or more prone to manipulation and extremes.

• Journalists must navigate all of this to do our jobs, and we must factor it into how we do our reporting.
Let’s Talk About Misinformation
It comes in many forms, with many motivations.
Credit: Claire Wardle, First Draft
It’s global.
Hyperpartisan Sites And Facebook Pages Are Publishing False Stories And Conspiracy Theories About Angela Merkel

Top-performing Merkel stories in both English and German are dominated by a string of highly critical, and often misleading, articles and headlines from websites that consistently publish fake news and conspiracy theories.

This Unemployed Guy Made Japanese Fake News And Ended Up Losing A Bunch Of Money

“I’m really sorry, this whole thing got out of hand,” the Japanese man told BuzzFeed News.

posted on Feb. 8, 2017, at 5:16 p.m.

Italy’s Most Popular Political Party Is Leading Europe In Fake News And Kremlin Propaganda

The Five Star Movement controls a network of official sites and supposedly independent news outlets that spread misinformation across the internet.

posted on Nov. 29, 2016, at 9:46 a.m.
Internet Trolls Are Using Facebook To Target Myanmar’s Muslims

Some Burmese government officials and extremist groups are using fabricated news to advance their political goals and downplay harassment of Muslims.

posted on Mar. 18, 2017, at 10:06 a.m.

Megha Rajagopalan
BuzzFeed News Reporter

Reporting From
Yangon, Myanmar
It feeds off polarization and human bias.
“You realize that people believe a lot of things online. So we use that to our advantage.”
Exploits Two Key Human Behaviors

“[W]e humans quickly develop an irrational loyalty to our beliefs, and work hard to find evidence that supports those opinions and to discredit, discount or avoid information that does not.”

It exploits networks and algorithmic filtering.
Steve Bryant
@stevebryant

Whoever has the most people, and activates them the most effectively, determines what truth is.

Tizzy Canucci @TizzyCanucci
@jdlasica and already the fake newser is calling Snopes fake news.

9:17 PM - 26 Dec 2016
It’s a profitable international business.
American President Donald J. Trump

16 hrs ·

Clint Eastwood says: “All American liberals are the idiots and enemies of America” Do you support Clint?

Clint Eastwood says: “All American liberals are the idiots and enemies of America” Do you support Clint? - True Trumpers

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[Poll]
YES
NO

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Homeowners Register to Receive $4,240 Before It Ends

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Megyn Kelly Accuses Ex Of Cheating On Her While On Air

Sasha Obama's Net Worth is Going to Make Heads Spin

If You're a Homeowner, Get a Free $4,250 from Congress

Type in Your Name (or Anyone's), This Site is Addicting

HOLD BIG BANKS ACCOUNTABLE
Creators of it often target the media.
Never Mind The Russians, Meet The Bot King Who Helps Trump Win Twitter

"It's All Us, Not Russians. And We're Not Going To Stop"

Posted on April 5, 2017, at 1:01 a.m.

Joseph Bernstein
BuzzFeed News Reporter
“Most of this is contrived to force outrage and trigger new MSM journos to cover shit because they buy the meme. They should have already figured this out and stopped covering us.”

–Microchip
Summary

• A democratized media world means more misinformation.

• Our media environment rewards the most extreme or attention-capturing messages.

• There is a business model for misinformation.

• Journalists must understand the forces behind the creation and propagation of misinformation — and engage/expose them to help serve the public.
“Technologies designed to increase our control over our attention will sometimes have the very opposite effect. They open us up to a stream of instinctive selections, and tiny rewards, the sum of which may be no reward at all.”

—Tim Wu, *The Attention Merchants*
"It is one of the most significant economic changes of this century that the service of rendering attention has overtaken all other production factors in economic importance."
What the Macedonians Teach Us

• The media playing field has been leveled in some ways, and tilted in others.

• Competition for attention in a platform world creates surprising winners — sometimes it’s the people most willing to bend or break the rules.

• Information outsourcing is well underway.

• Our current media environment is more easy to manipulate than ever before in human history.