

A dark silhouette of a person's head and shoulders, wearing a hat, is positioned on the left side of the page. The person's face is in profile, looking towards the right. The silhouette is set against a light gray background.

Journalism & the Search for Truth

in an Age of Social Media

Implications of “fake news” and
internet trolling for democracy,
politics and citizen inclusion

April 24-25, 2017

The Castle
225 Bay State Rd.
Boston University
Boston, MA

Conference Schedule,
Speaker Biographies &
Abstracts

Agenda (Subject to change) as of April 19, 2017 6:30 AM

Journalism and the Search for Truth in an Age of Social Media

Boston University

The Castle, 275 Bay State Road, Boston, MA 02215

Monday April 24, 2017

9:00 AM Registration & coffee

9:30 AM Welcome and Introduction. James E. Katz & Dean Thomas E. Fiedler, Boston University

9:45 AM Panel 1: The journalistic crisis: The Fourth Estate, social media, and communicating the truth. *Panel chair: Chris Daly, Boston University*

- David Karpf, George Washington University
- Dominique Cardon, Sciences Po
- Craig T. Robertson, Michigan State University

11:00 Short break

11:15 AM Panel 2: Social responses to fake news: fears, trust, and knowledge. *Panel chair: Jessica Baldwin-Phillipi, Fordham University*

- Matt Carlson, St. Louis University
- Erik Bucy, Texas Tech University
- Sun Kyong “Sunny” Lee, University of Oklahoma

12:45 PM Lunch and **poster session**

- Josh Braun and Jessica Eklund, University of Massachusetts Amherst “Ad Tech Firms and the Monetization of Fake News”
- Jacob Nelson, Northwestern University, “Fake News is not the Real Problem”
- Joshua J. Weikert, Immaculata University, “Misunderstanding the News: Credibility and News Literacy Among Social Media Users”
- Giovanni Luca Ciampaglia, Indiana University TBD
- Julia Kamin, University of Michigan, “Motivations for sharing political information on social media”

1:45 PM Panel 3: Trolling, computer moderation, and algorithms. *Panel chair: Michael Schudson, Columbia University*

- Jo Ann Oravec, University of Wisconsin, White Water
- Nathaniel Matias, MIT
- Giovanni Luca Ciampaglia, Indiana University

3:15 Coffee Break

3:30 PM Panel 4: Perspectives on Truth, Knowing, and Communication. *Panel chair: Juliet Floyd, Boston University*

- Alex Couch, MIT
- Peppino Ortoleva, University of Turin
- Jacob Groshek, Boston University

5:00 PM Open discussion over appetizers & drinks

Tuesday April 25, 2017

9:00 AM Coffee & registration

9:30 AM Panel 5: Fake news in a historical and contemporary perspective. *Panel chair: Michelle Amazeen, Boston University*

- Julien Gorbach, University of Hawaii
- Emily Vraga/Leticia Bode, George Mason University
- Martin Glazier, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

11:00 Short break

11:15 PM Panel 6: Global perspectives: Similarities and novelties. *Panel chair: Michaël Vallee, Consulate of France in Boston*

- Daniel Halpern, Catholic University of Santiago
- Agnes Veszelszki, Corvinus University of Budapest

12:15 PM Lunch & informal discussion

1:15 PM Keynote Speaker. *Session chair: James E. Katz, Boston University*

- Keynote address: Michael Schudson, Columbia University

2:15 PM Short break

2:30 PM Panel 7: What it is meaning of the journalistic search for truth, and how do we move forward in an era of social media? *Panel chair: Ellen Cushman, Northeastern University*

- Jennifer Forestal, Stockton University
- Bruno Patino, Sciences Po
- Thomas E. Fiedler, Boston University

3:45 Concluding remarks: James E. Katz, Boston University

4:00 PM – 4:45 PM Reception and informal discussion

ABSTRACTS

Panel 1: The journalistic crisis: the fourth estate, social media, and communicating the truth

We All Stand Together or We All Fall Apart: on the need for an adversarial press in the age of Trump

David Karpf, George Washington University

What threats does the Trump administration pose to a free and independent press? How should we expect the norms and institutions that govern the relationship between the Executive Branch and the so-called "fourth estate" to change during the next few years, and how should journalists respond to these developments?

In this paper, I will offer a maximal case for the threat that the Donald Trump administration offers to established journalistic norms and procedures. The relationship between the executive branch and the media has always been premised upon a set of informal norms and shared understandings. Donald J. Trump proudly violates these norms. (for his supporters, this is a feature; For his critics, it is a flaw.) The evidence from Trump's campaign and from his first month in office suggests a hostile executive branch that shows little-to-no deference towards the essential-but-extra-constitutional role of the press in a healthy democracy.

The paper argues that, in the face of this aggressive assault on media organizations, American media institutions such as the White House Press Corps, the Reporter's Committee, and the Online News Association must take a more active, coordinating, and adversarial stance. Journalists are notoriously resistant to organizing and collective action. But if journalistic organizations do not formulate a plan for defending the role of journalism in American democracy, they will find themselves continually attacked and exploited, and their crucial role in maintaining a healthy democracy will be sacrificed.

The paper concludes by suggesting what a new, adversarial press might look like in the age of Trump.

Circulation of digital information: The case of fake news in the 2017 French presidential election

Dominique Cardon, Sciences Po with Tommaso Venturini (Inria) and Mathieu Jacomy (Sciences Po)

TBD

Are all search results created equal? An exploration of filter bubbles and source diversity in Google search results

Craig T. Robertson, Michigan State University and Elizabeth Dubois, University of Ottawa

A popular view is emerging that ‘fake news’ has been able to proliferate online because of the existence of echo chambers and filter bubbles on sites such as Facebook. Confirmation bias, and selective exposure combine in these close-knit, homogenous networks to produce an environment which aids the spreading of misinformation (Del Vicario et al., 2016).

The potential for filter bubbles to exist and have an impact on internet users – shaping their worldviews – also exists outside of social media. This paper seeks to explore the filter bubble hypothesis (Pariser, 2011) in the context of search engine results. Specifically, a small-scale experiment is conducted which tests whether partisan political searching can produce ideologically-tailored filter bubbles within Google search results.

The differences between search results for ‘partisan political users’ are compared, analysing list similarity and result re-ordering as well as the political orientation of search results. Further, results are coded for source and source type, exploring potential source biases in Google search results.

This experiment takes a social science approach to the exploration of search engine personalization where concepts of partisan and topical echo chambers are explored. Data provides insight into the mechanisms of Google search personalization. Data also provides a basis for the discussion of Google’s role as an important source of news and information for the public. Specifically, discussion seeks to address questions of search result diversity, transparency and responsibility when it comes to tailoring search results.

Panel 2: Social responses to fake news: fears, trust, and knowledge

Fake News as Informational Moral Panic

Matt Carlson, Saint Louis University

Much of the consternation surrounding the growing role of social media in the larger news ecosystem concerns the proliferation of fake news, usually defined as the fabrication of baseless stories intended to garner clicks and/or affect electoral outcomes. Apart from its material instantiation on social media sites, fake news has taken on an important symbolic dimension that needs to be explored more thoroughly. To this end, this paper approaches the condemnation of fake news as an “informational moral panic.” This concept builds from Stanley Cohen’s classic formulation of moral panics as public anxiety that a particular social threat will lead to declining standards as well as Alice Marwick’s specific “technopanic” framework for digital media. In the case of fake news, the anxiety is not so much directed toward a particular group, but aimed at the larger transformation of informational spaces made possible by social media.

Through public discourse surrounding fake news, the journalistic community has created a deviant other in fake news while supporting its own accounts as truthful and trustworthy. In this sense, fake news becomes a particular signifier that condenses broader concerns surrounding the eroding boundaries of traditional journalistic channels. The implications of this signification lie in the larger effort of define the terrain of authoritative news while creating a demonized other, suggesting the continued superiority of traditional journalistic modes as the appropriate gatekeepers of information for a democratic society. This paper tracks public discourse around fake news to examine the emergent narratives and definitions that are developing.

**Second Screening and Social Presence:
How User Agency Fosters Mutual Awareness and Mediates Political Evaluations**
Erik P. Bucy Texas Tech University

The emergence and widespread adoption of “second screening” and simultaneous online chat during televised or streamed presentations has become a cultural phenomenon, peaking at moments of national attention like presidential elections and debates, music performances, and major sporting events (Hockenson, 2013). While much academic research has considered the impact of large scale social media activity in the aggregate (Neuman et al., 2014; Papacharissi, 2015; Shah et al., 2015), less attention has been given to the psychological mechanisms involved in second screening—and to the evaluative consequences of interactive involvement on featured content. This study summarizes the results of two studies, the first conducted immediately after the 2008 U.S. presidential election and the second just before the 2016 election, in which users were placed in interactive political settings, then asked to chat or use continuous response measures during the presentation and evaluate the political figures depicted afterwards. Analysis of the 2008 data indicates that interactive engagement evokes a sense of social presence, which in turn mediates political evaluations irrespective of what users actually say about the content presented on screen. Analysis of the 2016 data tests the same model using dial test methodology as the interactive prompt rather than on-screen chat.

**The Effect of News Consumption via Social Media and News Information
Overload on the Perceptions of Journalism**

Sun Kyong Lee, Nathan J. Lindsey, & Kyun Soo Kim*, Department of Communication, University of Oklahoma, *Department of Communication, Chonnam National University

Given the widespread adoption of social media for sharing/accessing news, and the unprecedented, but pervasive role of “fake news” on social media during the recent election, this study analyzed the dynamic relationships among news access via social media (NASM), news information overload (NIO), news consumption patterns (i.e., news avoidance, selective exposure, and willingness to pay for news), and perceptions of journalism. The results of survey data analysis of American news consumers (N = 1002) indicated, NIO fully mediated the relationships between NASM and selective

exposure to news, and between NASM and news avoidance, whereas, NIO partially mediated the relationship between NASM and willingness to pay for quality news.

These results suggest frequent news access via social media seem to cause perception of information overload, which in turn leads to participants avoiding news altogether, or only exposing themselves to selective news sources (which could include fake sources).

The result also suggests news access via social media positively influences consumers' willingness to pay for news, and their perception of NIO partially contribute to that process as well. Given the number of paid news subscription increased after the fake news pandemic, this study's result is illuminating. Regarding journalistic norms, participants did not strongly agree with traditional norms such as objectivity and credibility of news when they accessed news on social media frequently. Those with more frequent NASM, felt more overloaded with news information, as well as, more strongly agreed with the idea of participatory journalism, as a newer form of journalistic norm. Finally, depending on the type of news consumption (i.e., news avoidance, selective exposure), perception of NIO influenced participants' opinions of journalistic norms and news quality distinctively. Implications of the research findings are discussed in relation to using social media as a main channel of accessing news as well as, the potentially adverse effects of selectively exposing oneself to "fake news" sources without the awareness of their falsehood.

Panel 3: Trolling, Computer Moderation, and Algorithms

Journalistic Coverage of Internet Trickery and Manipulation in Electioneering: Case Studies in Google Bombs, Wiki Wars, Domain Name-Jackings, Sockpuppets, and Other Fakery

Jo Ann Oravec, University of Wisconsin at Whitewater

This manuscript explores public policy and journalism-related concerns involving online information distortion and trickery in the contexts of civic interactions. Computer networking has afforded the means for election-related information to be manipulated by entities both internal and external to nations or localities, with various "cyber proxies" often involved. Some of the trickeries can be construed as mere pranks (put into motion by individuals more bored than partisan) while others take more serious forms. Social media have served to democratize political trickery and manipulation to some extent, providing capabilities for political gaming to those with fairly few financial and personnel resources. Conscientious online reputation management on the part of candidates can place considerable resource burdens on campaigns, however, as well as demoralize campaign staffs.

This manuscript analyzes recent case studies of the journalistic coverage of Google bombing, domain name-jacking, wiki-waring, sockpuppeting, and related phenomena, outlining how these political trickeries may have influenced the public perceptions of affected candidates as well as impacted the resource levels of the campaigns involved.

The collaborative and emergent nature of many of these political practices is often difficult to portray in journalistic coverage and is sometimes overlooked. Associating particular individuals or entities with any particular trickery or gaming incident is a critical step in some of the practices: credit can be self-assigned or assigned by others, with deception potentially involved in any type of assignment. The manuscript concludes with discourse on the problems of demonstrating to citizens that online communications associated with campaigns can be severely distorted and manipulated while encouraging them to seek out political information sources (including by professional journalists) in order to make sound electoral judgments.

Community Governance of Misinformation by Humans and Machines

Nathaniel Matias, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Media Lab

As online platforms shape the attention of billions of people, the public has come to expect platforms to deliver policy interventions to govern the spread of knowledge, news, and political speech. The demand for this power forces us to ask how to govern wisely and who should be responsible. In this talk, I share the results of an experiment in platform-independent governance of misinformation online. In this recent study, an online community with 15m+ subscribers tested the effect of encouraging fact checking on the algorithmic spread of unreliable news. Since the workings of platform algorithms are typically secret, interventions may unknowingly create feedback loops that increase rather than reduce the spread of misinformation. By using novel software, we were able to evaluate the effect of encouraging fact-checking on human and algorithm behavior. We discovered that by encouraging people to search for corroborating evidence, our "AI nudge" could reduce algorithmic spread of unreliable news over time while preserving individual liberties. When it comes to unreliable news, we can persuade algorithms to behave differently by nudging people to behave differently.

Giovanni Luca Ciampaglia, Indiana University

TBD

Panel 4: Perspectives on Truth, Knowing, and Communication

Alex Prescott-Couch, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

TBD

On the prehistory of fake news. Lessons from three classic authors

Peppino Ortoleva, University of Turin

The growth in the circulation of "news" that are not trustworthy, if not plainly fabricated, is clearly tied to some aspects of our contemporary media environment. They thrive in particular in a "region" of that environment that has been knowing a rapid and voracious growth, the grey area between orality and writing that is typical of social networks. But to explain fake news exclusively with reference to the most recent communication development could be shortsighted. Similar phenomena have been recurrent in the history of journalism and public opinion, and it may be interesting to compare what is

happening today with some moments of that history, and to try and see if we can recognize what we may call a “propulsion to false” as an aspect, a temptation, of the information professions as such, and a presence also in other areas of communication.

The first example is the growth of “canards” in XIXth Century Paris particularly in the early 1840s. The word included on the one hand the insertion in the pages of regular newspapers of consciously inflated news, on the other the creation of fake-news improvised sheets, which were diffused in ways parallel to those of regular newspapers, particularly through the work of newsboys. A last echo of that phenomenon is in the name of a famous French weekly, *Le canard enchaîné*, whose editorial line is in between satire and the revelation of news going against the power that be. In a famous passage in *Illusions perdues* Honoré de Balzac wrote: “Canards... is our word for a scrap of fiction told for true, put in to enliven the column of morning news when it is flat. We owe the discovery to Benjamin Franklin, the inventor of the lightning rod and the republic”. And he adds: “In journalism everything that is probable is true”. Balzac's point of view is that of the journalist, needing to attract readers also when there are few or none “real” news; and it is that of the entrepreneur, fishing for audience in every moment. But how do we explain the willingness of that audience to accept news which would later disappear or prove false? Even more, how do we explain its willingness to buy sheets, or anyway to read “news” which from their very face showed their dubious origins? In studying mass media we tend to overlook the changes in what we may call an “hunger for news”, which are difficult to understand in classic sociological terms.

A second interesting example is the spread of false news during major crises, which we can illustrate with a classic essay by historian Marc Bloch on the diffusion of *fausses nouvelles* (literally fake news) during the Great War in which he participated as an officer, published in 1921. Bloch isolated some strategic aspect of the hunger for news and of the development of what sociologist Tamotsu Shibutami would later call “improvised news”: the hunger for information tied both to disorientation and to the growing incredulity toward official communiqués, the socially widespread tendency to overinterpret, to search for signs everywhere, the re-emerging of entrenched myths and legends. Phenomena like these are ancient and not only in the form of oral legends (as subsequent history works have demonstrated) and we should consider that a prolonged situation of economic crisis is not necessarily much inferior to a war in creating demands and answers like the ones described by Bloch.

A third line is that which was alluded to by another historian, the American Richard Hofstadter, in another important essay *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* (1963). The term “style” is important: ““Style has more to do with the way in which ideas are believed than with the truth or falsity of their content”. In the development of first, Maccarthysm, later some political sects of the early Sixties Hofstadter reads a trend not necessarily tied by this or that political position. A tendency to interpret the world in terms of persecution by an enemy which is at the same time treacherous (that is, coming from inside and disguised under a “credible” figure) and satanic makes it possible to doubt every evidence and to believe every possible conspiracy theory. The paranoid style is not incoherent, actually it is much more coherent than real life. I does

not dislike facts, actually it tends to submerge you with an enormous amount of "fact", it loves them so much, Hofstadter adds, that occasionally it manufactures them, but in many other cases it reads them in ways that refuse any different interpretation. A "style" that before the recent vague of fake news has invaded also the realm of literary bestsellers.

The present can be interpreted as the point in which different historical tendencies meet. The three classic authors I have quoted should be read as threads that tend to weave together in the "new" phenomenon of fake news.

Jacob Groshek, Boston University

TBD

Panel 5: Fake news in a historical and contemporary perspective

Yesterday's "Chicago hoax" and today's "fake news"

Julien Gorbach at University of Hawaii

In the early 20th century, Chicago newspaper reporters distinguished themselves with a roguish and wild approach to journalism. The writer Ben Hecht immortalized this freewheeling ethos in *The Front Page*, his 1927 hit Broadway comedy, at a time when the American Society of Newspaper Editors was adopting a code of ethics to reign in the excesses of the press.

"Front Page journalism" was notorious for a number of reasons—not the least of which was the deaths of some 23 newsboys in a literal "circulation war" that turned bloody. But among the many transgressions was a penchant for hoaxes, or what we are now calling "fake news." While in previous decades journalists like Mark Twain and newspapers like the *New York Sun* had perpetrated hoaxes humorously, for literary effect, Chicago journalists transformed hoaxing into something else entirely. It was used to gain an edge on the competition, and the public was left altogether in the dark. An appetite for profit drove the proliferation of the Chicago hoax, just as it drives "fake news" today.

This study will explain the evolution and refinement of the Chicago hoax, and compare it to our contemporary fake news. It will also bring in the other misdeeds of Front Page journalism—break-ins, illegal wiretapping, impersonations of police officers, fake warrants and arrests, and last but hardly least, the circulation war—to argue that while the press has often been criticized for failing the public, providing distraction or turning a blind eye, its destructiveness can at times be far more aggressive and corrosive than that.

Using Authoritative Sources to Correct Health Misinformation in Social Media

Emily Vraga/Leticia Bode at George Mason University

Social media are often criticized as a space in which fact and fiction are difficult to disentangle, making the spread of misinformation on a range of political, health, and scientific issues more likely. Previous research suggests that two corrections – either from the Facebook algorithm or from other users providing a link to an expert source – can correct misinformation (Authors). This study builds on past research by testing both the number (one versus two corrections) and the source (another user versus the CDC) of corrective responses to misinformation about the causes of the Zika outbreak in the United States on a simulated Twitter feed. Among our participants – 1710 U.S. college students in the fall of 2016 – we found that a single correction from another user to a post containing misinformation about the causes of Zika is not sufficient to reduce misperceptions compared to a control with no misinformation (but also does not increase misperceptions, $p=.68$), while a single correction from the CDC significantly reduced misperceptions ($p=.05$). Moreover, when the CDC adds a second rebuttal to a user correction, it reduces misperceptions compared to the control ($p=.01$) or a single user correction ($p=.01$), but adding a user correction to the CDC correction does not further reduce misperceptions ($p=.83$). This suggests that people quite reasonably give more weight to the messages of institutions than those of other users. As a result, we recommend that expert organizations like the CDC immediately and personally rebut misinformation about health issues that emerge on social media.

Fake News and the Real World

Martin Glazier, UNC Chapel Hill Philosophy

We sometimes confront questions that seem unanswerable. Across a range of areas of thought, one sees the desire to deal with such questions by denying that they have objective answers. Who is the better poet, Virgil or Milton? Which is the right practice, cremation or burial? One feels some pull to say that these questions have no objective answers. Other cases fitting this pattern are found in the history of science and in contemporary philosophy.

The rise of fake news threatens to render many politically relevant questions unanswerable, at least by ordinary people. Did the pope endorse Trump? Did Clinton sell weapons to ISIS? Some widely shared apparent news stories say yes; others say no. If these questions become unanswerable, we can expect that people will feel pulled to deny that they have objective answers.

We might think no one could be tempted by such a denial. For even if someone is unsure whether Clinton sold weapons to ISIS, they must surely think it is a fact either that she did or that she didn't. But suppose that, in the style of Kellyanne Conway, one takes there to be "alternative facts" that are incompatible with the facts. One might then concede that there is a fact as to whether Clinton sold weapons to ISIS but continue to deny that the question whether she did has an objective answer.

This view can be rejected only by insisting on the existence of a real world and on a conception of facts as uniquely corresponding to that world. But it is just such a picture

that is threatened by the rise of fake news.

Panel 6: Global perspectives: Similarities and novelties

LINGUISTIC AND NON-LINGUISTIC ELEMENTS IN DETECTING (HUNGARIAN) FAKE NEWS: ‘ “HEADS UP!!! REALLY DANGEROUS TEA IS SOLD RIGHT OVER THE COUNTER! IT’S VERY POPULAR, YOU PROBABLY ALSO HAVE A PACKET IN THE KITCHEN BUT YOU SHOULD NEVER EVEN TRY IT!’

Ágnes Veszelszki, Corvinus University of Budapest

Throw it out or bring it back to the store immediately if you have bought one! It’s the most popular tea on supermarket shelves! Here’s the full heads-up message >>>>” This is an article headline from a Hungarian website, an obvious example of clickbait. The exaggerations and the uppercase letters used in the text are (or should be) clear signs of the deceptive nature of the article, still it was shared by many users on Facebook. What could be the reason for this? The presentation tries to answer the question by collecting the linguistic and non-linguistic characteristics of fake news. Linguistic characteristics include among others the exaggerating, sensational title, the eye-catching, tabloid-style text, the correct or incorrect use of terms, and the fake URLs imitating real websites (e.g. origoblog.hu vs. origo.hu); non-linguistic characteristics are expressive pictures often featuring celebrities, the use of all caps, excessive punctuation and spelling mistakes. The corpus was compiled using snowball sampling: manipulative news not originating from big news portals were collected from the social networking website Facebook. This time political and lifestyle type news were not distinguished. Concealed sites (i.e. sites containing news of better linguistic quality reached via non-suspicious links) can be problematic when selecting articles for the corpus, and this study also ignored the potential fake news of otherwise as trusted listed news portals (“alternative facts”).

The aim of the study is, on the one hand, to identify the characteristics of Hungarian fake news in comparison to English ones, and on the other hand, to elaborate a system of aspects which help identify fake news.

From belief in conspiracy theories to trust in others: which factors influence sharing fake news

Daniel Halpern, Catholic University of Santiago

Drawing on social-psychology and communication theories, we advance a theoretical model to explain which types of fake news are shared by social media users and which factors influence their decision to share this information with their contacts. For this purpose we surveyed a nationally representative sample of 850 Chileans with internet access. The results indicate that three groups of variables largely explain this phenomenon: 1) Personal and political-psychological factors such as belief in conspiracy theories, political ideology, the perceived efficacy of Internet use for news consumption, news attention, trust in others, education and gender; 2) Specific uses of internet and social media, such as use of social media for informational purposes, civic

and political activism in social media and time of exposition to social media; and 3) Belief in fake news and exposition to fake news in social media. Surprisingly, other aspects such as lying behaviors on social media and trust in information posted on social media were not significant predictors. Interestingly, the personal and political-psychological factors are much more relevant to explain this behavior than the specific uses of social media. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Keynote address

Belgium Invades Germany: Can Facts Survive Politics?

Michael Schudson, Columbia University

In February 50 years ago, Hannah Arendt published her essay on "Truth and Politics" and it bears a second look in our digital age. Arendt sought to defend "facts" against their enemy: politics. She did not believe facts could defend themselves but depended on "truth-tellers" able to stand outside politics and outside community. Adapting her analysis to the present, what forces can stand with "facts" in an era when historians, sociologists, and philosophers, not just politicians and demagogues, insist that facts are socially constructed? This talk argues for a pluralism of political power and a qualified deference to expert communities of knowledge.

Panel 7: What does it all mean and how do we move forward?

On Propaganda & Digital Publics

Jennifer Forestal, Stockton University

Drawing from Harold Lasswell's work on propaganda, as well as the debate between John Dewey and Walter Lippmann regarding the proper role of the democratic public, I argue that the proliferation of "fake news" during the 2016 election betrays more serious underlying problems with the ways that publics are organized with and by digital technologies. This problem is two-fold: (1) digital publics remain largely unfocused and "lost," with their members unable to effectively coordinate with one another; (2) information, particularly the news, can become decontextualized, warping the ways in which we understand what events and issues are significant, relevant, and/or legitimate items of public concern. As a result, it becomes much harder to critically evaluate and incorporate this information as part of the ongoing democratic processes of deliberation and decision-making.

In approaching the problem of the digital public, then—a problem that manifests in the spread of fake news—I make two suggestions for creators and users invested in using digital media for democratic ends. Rather than calling for more robust gatekeeping by traditional media sources, this paper instead suggests that we should first reflect on how to build spaces that focus public attention in support of collective social inquiry. More specifically, I suggest that we must recover the means of recontextualizing the news by

building digital technologies that provide avenues for “coordination and consecutiveness” (Dewey 1927). If, as Dewey tells us, “a thing is fully known only when it is published, shared, socially accessible,” (Dewey 1927), then it is up to us to ensure that the platforms on which we publish, share, and access information are built in ways that are fully supportive of the collective enterprise of democratic politics.

**Bruno Patino, Sciences Po
TBD**

Trump vs. The Media: Something old, something new
Dean Tom Fiedler, Boston University

Since the nation’s founding, presidents have endured many stormy relationships with the press. But has the advent of social media undermined the press’s watchdog role?

POSTER SESSION PRESENTERS

Josh Braun and Jessica Eklund, University of Massachusetts Amherst “Ad Tech Firms and the Monetization of Fake News”

Jacob Nelson, Northwestern University, “Fake News is not the Real Problem”

Joshua J. Weikert, Immaculata University, “Misunderstanding the News: Credibility and News Literacy Among Social Media Users”

Giovanni Luca Ciampaglia, Indiana University TBD

Julia Kamin, University of Michigan, “Motivations for sharing political information on social media”

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Leticia Bode (PhD University of Wisconsin) is an assistant professor in the Communication, Culture, and Technology master's program at Georgetown University. Her work lies at the intersection of communication, technology, and political behavior, emphasizing the role communication and information technologies may play in the acquisition and use of political information.

Erik Bucy is the Marshall and Sharleen Formby Regents Professor of Strategic Communication in the Department of Advertising at Texas Tech University. His research interests include analysis of nonverbal communication in political news, cognitive and emotional processing of televised leader displays, and user experiences with new communication technologies. He is the co-author of *Image Bite Politics: News and the Visual Framing of Elections* (Oxford, 2009), winner of two outstanding book awards, and editor of the *Sourcebook for Political Communication Research: Methods, Measures, and Analytical Techniques* (Routledge, 2011). Bucy is the editor of the peer-reviewed journal, *Politics and the Life Sciences*. Before arriving at Texas Tech, Dr. Bucy was vice president of research for the Los Angeles-based media consulting firm SmithGeiger, LLC. Prior to market research, Bucy was a tenured associate professor in the Department of Telecommunications at Indiana University, Bloomington. He has held visiting appointments at UCLA (Communication Studies), the University of Michigan (Communication Studies), and Dartmouth College (Government). He serves on the editorial boards of *Human Communication Research*, *The Information Society*, *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, and *JCMC: Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*.

Dominique Cardon is associate professor of sociology at Sciences Po/Médialab. He is working on the transformation of the public space and the uses of new technologies. He published different articles on the place of new technologies in the no-global movement, alternative media and on the process of bottom-up innovations in the numeric world. His recent research focuses on the analysis of the power of algorithms in the classification of digital information. His work seeks to articulate the sociology of science and technology with a sensitive approach to the transformations of contemporary social worlds in the field of information and culture. He is currently working on the social effects of the generalization of machine learning techniques in an ever-increasing number of situations of everyday life.

He published *La démocratie Internet* (Paris, Seuil/République des idées, 2010), (with Fabien Granjon), *Médiactivistes*, Paris, Presses de Science po, 2010, (with Antonio Casilli), *Qu'est-ce que le digital labor ?*, Paris, Ina Éditions, 2015, *A quoi rêvent les algorithmes*, Paris, Seuil, 2015. In english : "Deconstructing the algorithm: four types of digital information calculations", in Seyfert (Robert), Roberge (Jonathan), eds, *Algorithmic Cultures. Essays on meaning, performance and new technologies*, New York, Routledge, 2016, pp. 95-110.

Matt Carlson is associate professor of communication at Saint Louis University. He is author of *Journalistic Authority: Legitimizing News in the Digital Era*, which will be published in May by Columbia University Press. He is also author of *On the Condition of Anonymity: Unnamed Sources and the Battle for Journalism* (University of Illinois Press), and co-editor of *Boundaries of Journalism: Professionalism, Practices, and Participation* and *Journalists, Sources, and Credibility: New Perspectives*, both published by Routledge. In addition, he is the author of over forty journal articles and book chapters. His research examines the discursive struggles through which journalism comes to be defined and legitimated as a cultural practice, with a particular focus on the digital news environment.

Giovanni Luca Ciampaglia is an assistant research scientist at the Indiana University Network Science Institute (IUNI). His research interests are in the emerging disciplines of network science and computational social science, with a particular focus on information diffusion on the Internet and social media. At IUNI, he leads various efforts within the Social Network Science Hub.

His research has been covered in major news outlets, including the Wall Street Journal, the Economist, Wired, MIT Technology Review, NPR, and CBS News, to cite a few. He holds a Ph.D. in Informatics from the University of Lugano, Switzerland and a M.Sc. (Laurea) from Sapienza University of Rome, Italy.

Tom Fiedler began his tenure as dean of the College of Communication on June 1, 2008, following a distinguished career in journalism. After graduating from the US Merchant Marine Academy with a bachelor's in engineering, he earned a master's in journalism at COM. Later, he joined the Miami Herald, where he would work for more than 30 years, as an investigative reporter, a political columnist, the editorial page editor, and finally, the executive editor, from 2001 to 2007.

In 1988, Fiedler received the Society of Professional Journalists' top award for coverage of that year's presidential campaign highlighted by his reporting on Gary Hart's campaign-killing affair with a Miami model.

As the newspaper's executive editor, Fiedler was a stickler for journalism ethics, particularly after reporters working for the Herald's Spanish-language sister publication, El Nuevo Herald, were found to be on the payroll of a U.S. government-owned anti-Castro news service in 2006. Fiedler also pushed his reporters and editors to embrace the internet as a critical means of news delivery, rather than as just an appendage of the newspaper.

He has also embraced new media as a Visiting Murrow Lecturer and Goldsmith Fellow at Harvard University's Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics, and Public Policy, where he investigated the impact of the web on the presidential primary system and taught a graduate course on the intersection of media, politics and public policy. In addition, Fiedler co-directed a project, sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation and the Knight Foundation, exploring the future of journalism education.

In 2003, Fiedler received a COM Distinguished Alumni Award, and in 2005, the college presented him with the Hugo Shong Lifetime Achievement Award in Journalism. In 2006, he was elected a member of BU's Board of Overseers.

Juliet Floyd is Professor of Philosophy at Boston University. Her research focuses on the interplay between logic, mathematics, and philosophy in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, as well as current philosophical implications of emerging computational technologies. Having written largely on the history of twentieth century analytic philosophy, she has published on a diverse array of topics, including aesthetics, modernism, political philosophy, ordinary language philosophy, and American philosophy. She co-edited (with S. Shieh) *Future Pasts: The Analytic Tradition in Twentieth Century Philosophy* (Oxford University Press, 2001), (with J. E. Katz) *Philosophy of Emerging Media: Understanding, Appreciation, Application* (Oxford, 2016) and (with A. Bokulich) *Philosophical Aspects of the Legacy of Alan Turing: Turing 100* (Springer, 2017).

Jennifer Forestal, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Stockton University in Galloway, NJ. She specializes in political theory, studying the effects of digital technologies, software design, and physical architecture on democratic politics. She also studies civic engagement and education. She has a Ph.D. (2015) and M.A. (2011) in Political Science from Northwestern University and a B.A. (2009) in Political Science and Comparative Cultural Studies from The Ohio State University. Jennifer has published in peer-reviewed journals such as *American Political Science Review* as well as mainstream media outlets like *The Washington Post's Monkey Cage*. She currently teaches courses on political theory, American political thought, and feminist theory. Follow her on Twitter: @seejenspeak.

Martin Glazier

Martin Glazier is a postdoctoral fellow in philosophy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He holds a BA from Yale University and a PhD from New York University. His main interests within philosophy lie in metaphysics and the philosophy of science. Much of his work has focused on explanation and necessity. He is currently pursuing a project on the metaphysics of perspective.

Julien Gorbach is an assistant professor in the School of Communications at the University of Hawaii and a Boston native. He is a media historian who has written about the mythmaking of Lawrence of Arabia, and the news coverage of outlaw legends Bonnie and Clyde. His forthcoming book, *The Tough Jew: Ben Hecht*, is a biography of this Chicago crime reporter, Hollywood screenwriter and militant propagandist.

Prior to joining UH-M, he lived in New Orleans and was an assistant professor at Nicholls State University. He earned his doctorate at the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Journalism, and his master's in journalism from New York University. He received his bachelor's from Sarah Lawrence College, where he majored in literature.

Before becoming a professor, he was a newspaper reporter for 10 years in New York, Boston, New Mexico, Louisiana and Florida. As a freelancer, he published in the *Boston Globe*, the *Boston Phoenix*, *Time Out New York*, the *New Orleans Gambit*, the *San Francisco Bay Guardian* and other publications.

Jacob Groshek's research focuses on the democratic utility of communication technologies and the ways in which the structure, content and uses of online and mobile media may influence sociopolitical change. Additional research pursuits include applied econometric analyses, data mining and visualizing social media content. In that area, Dr. Groshek oversees a cloud-based software system, the **BU-TCAT**, which makes it possible for all BU faculty and students to study social media in big and small data approaches.

He has over 45 peer-reviewed publications since earning his PhD at Indiana University in 2008 under the supervision of Professor David H. Weaver. Dr. Groshek also sits on the editorial boards of *Communication Yearbook* and the *Journal of Information Technology and Politics* and regularly reviews for more than a dozen journals. He recently completed his term as head of the communication technology division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) and he has received top paper awards at the faculty and student levels in international competitions.

Dr. Groshek has previously held academic appointments at Iowa State University, Erasmus University Rotterdam (The Netherlands), the University of Melbourne (Australia), and was sponsored on a visiting scholarship at the Institute for Advanced Study in Toulouse, France. With his lovely wife, he is a proud father of two exuberant children.

Daniel Halpern is an assistant professor in the School of Communications at the Universidad Catolica de Chile (Catholic University of Chile) and Director of the think tank TrenDigital, where he studies, teaches and does consulting work on social media and strategic communication. His research focuses on methods and approaches for understanding the social consequences of communication technologies. He has published several papers about the role of social media in shaping interpersonal relationships, mediating social aspects such as civic participation, and affecting processes in learning with technology.

Dave Karpf is Associate Professor in the George Washington University School of Media & Public Affairs. He teaches and conducts research on strategic political communication and organized political campaigning in the digital age. Karpf is the author of two books: *The MoveOn Effect: The Unexpected Transformation of American Political Advocacy* (Oxford University Press, 2012) and *Analytic Activism: Digital Listening and the New Political Strategy* (Oxford University Press, 2016). His work has been published in several academic journals, and has also appeared in *The Nation*, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, and *Nonprofit Quarterly*. He blogs at Medium, Civicist, and ShoutingLoudly, and tweets as @davekarpf.

Sun Kyong (Sunny) Lee

Sunny's research interests are trifold: mobile communication, virtual team work, and ethnic social networks. First, she studies socio-cultural influences/consequences of communication technology uses particularly focusing on the area of mobile communication. Second, her research examines how virtual team members collaborate through using various communication technologies and how they make sense of their socio-technical work environment. Last, she is interested in studying immigrant social networking that is sustained by their communication media uses and how their networking influences intercultural development and civic engagement. Her future research will be a continuation and extension of the above three themes. She holds a PhD from Rutgers University and has published in journals such as *Studies in Communication | Media, Communication Research*, and *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*.

J. Nathan Matias is a Ph.D. candidate at the MIT Media Lab Center for Civic Media, an affiliate at the Berkman-Klein Center at Harvard, and founder of [CivilServant](#). He conducts independent, public interest research on flourishing, fair, and safe participation online. His recent work includes research on [online harassment prevention](#), [harassment reporting](#), [volunteer moderation online \(PDF\)](#), [behavior change toward equality \(PDF\)](#), and [online social movements](#).

Nathan has extensive experience in tech startups, nonprofits, and corporate research, including SwiftKey, Microsoft Research, and the Ministry of Stories. His creative work and research have been covered extensively by international press, and he has published data journalism and intellectual history in the Atlantic, Guardian, PBS, and Boston Magazine.

Peppino Ortoleva (b. Naples 1948) has been active for more than thirty years as a scholar, critic, curator, at the crossroads of history, media studies, TV and radio authoring, museums and exhibits.

He is currently full professor of Storia e teoria dei media at the Università di Torino. He is *correspondant étranger* for *Le temps des médias* and member of the board of OBS, the multilingual on line journal on communication. He is member of the International Committee of Maison des Sciences de la Communication, Paris, and acts as an advisor for the McLuhan Program of the University of Toronto. He participates now in an European project on addictions, with a research on web gambling and web pornography. His new book, *From Sex to Play*, is an analysis of the role of play and ludicity in contemporary society and its relations with the "sexualization of the world" typical of the Twentieth Century. Before that his most recent book, *Il secolo dei media. Riti abitudini mitologie* was published in January 2009 and won in the same year the Premio Castiglioncello per la Comunicazione, a highly respected award for studies in the field. He is now working on a book dedicated to the role of myth in the information age.

Jo Ann Oravec is a full professor in the College of Business and Economics at the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater in the Department of Information Technology and Supply Chain Management. She is also affiliated with the Robert F. and Jean E. Holtz Center for Science, Technology, & Society Studies, University of Wisconsin at Madison, as well as the Computer Sciences Department at UW-Madison (teaching artificial intelligence). She received her MBA, MS, MA, and PhD degrees at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. She taught computer information systems and public policy at Baruch College of the City University of New York; she also taught in the School of Business at UW-Madison as well as at Ball State University. She chaired the Privacy Council of the State of Wisconsin, the nation's first state-level council dealing with information technology and privacy issues. She has written books (including "Virtual Individuals, Virtual Groups: Human Dimensions of Groupware and Computer Networking," Cambridge University Press) and dozens of articles on futurism, film, artificial intelligence, disability, mental health, technological design, privacy, cybersecurity, managerial sciences, and public policy issues. She has worked for public television and developed software along with her academic ventures. She has held visiting fellow positions at both Cambridge and Oxford and was recently a featured speaker at conferences in Japan and Australia.

Bruno Patino, PhD, is Dean of Sciences Po School of Journalism in Paris. He began his career as a journalist for Le Monde in Chile, and since then has held top management positions in the media industry; for Le Monde (1999-2008), Radio France (2008-2010) and France Télévisions (2010-2015), where he was Director General, responsible for programs commissioning and digital operations.

He holds a Doctorate in Political Sciences, graduating from the IEP (Institute of Political Studies) in Paris and from the ESSEC Business School, and has a Master's degree in international relations from Johns Hopkins University.

He is the author of several books including *Pinochet s'en va* (published by IHEAL, 2000) about the transition to democracy in Chile, *Une presse sans Gutenberg* (published by Grasset, 2005) and *La Condition numérique* (published by Grasset, 2013) in collaboration with Jean-François Fogel.

Alex Prescott-Couch is a PhD candidate in the Department of Philosophy. His research focuses on issues at the intersection of philosophy of social science, ethics, and political philosophy. He also has interests in nineteenth and twentieth century German thought. At Harvard, he has taught courses in ethics, political philosophy, and philosophy of science. A graduate of Columbia University, he studied at the Humboldt University_t zu Berlin on a Graduate Fellowship from the German Academic Exchange Service.

Craig Robertson is a doctoral student and Research Assistant in the Quello Center at Michigan State University. He has a Master's in Communications (First Class Honors) from the Auckland University of Technology as well as a Bachelor of Laws and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Auckland. He has previously worked at the

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Michael Schudson is Professor of Journalism in the Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University with a courtesy appointment also in the Department of Sociology. He is Professor Emeritus at the University of California, San Diego. Schudson is the author of seven books and editor of three others concerning the history and sociology of the American news media, the history of U.S. citizenship and political participation, advertising, popular culture, book publishing, and cultural memory. These include *Discovering the News* (Basic Books, 1978), *The Good Citizen* (Free Press, 1998), *The Sociology of News* (W. W. Norton, 2003, 2011), *Why Democracies Need an Unlovable Press* (Polity Press, 2008) and *The Rise of the Right to Know* (2015, Harvard). He is co-author, with Leonard Downie, Jr., of a Columbia Journalism School-sponsored report on the future of news, *The Reconstruction of American Journalism* (2009). Schudson has received a Guggenheim Fellowship and a MacArthur Foundation "genius" fellowship.

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Emily K. Vraga is an assistant professor in the Department of Communication at George Mason University. Her research focuses on how individuals process news and information about contentious political, scientific, and health issues, particularly in response to disagreeable messages they encounter in digital media environments. She is especially interested in testing methods to limit biased processing, to correct misinformation, and to encourage attention to more diverse content online.