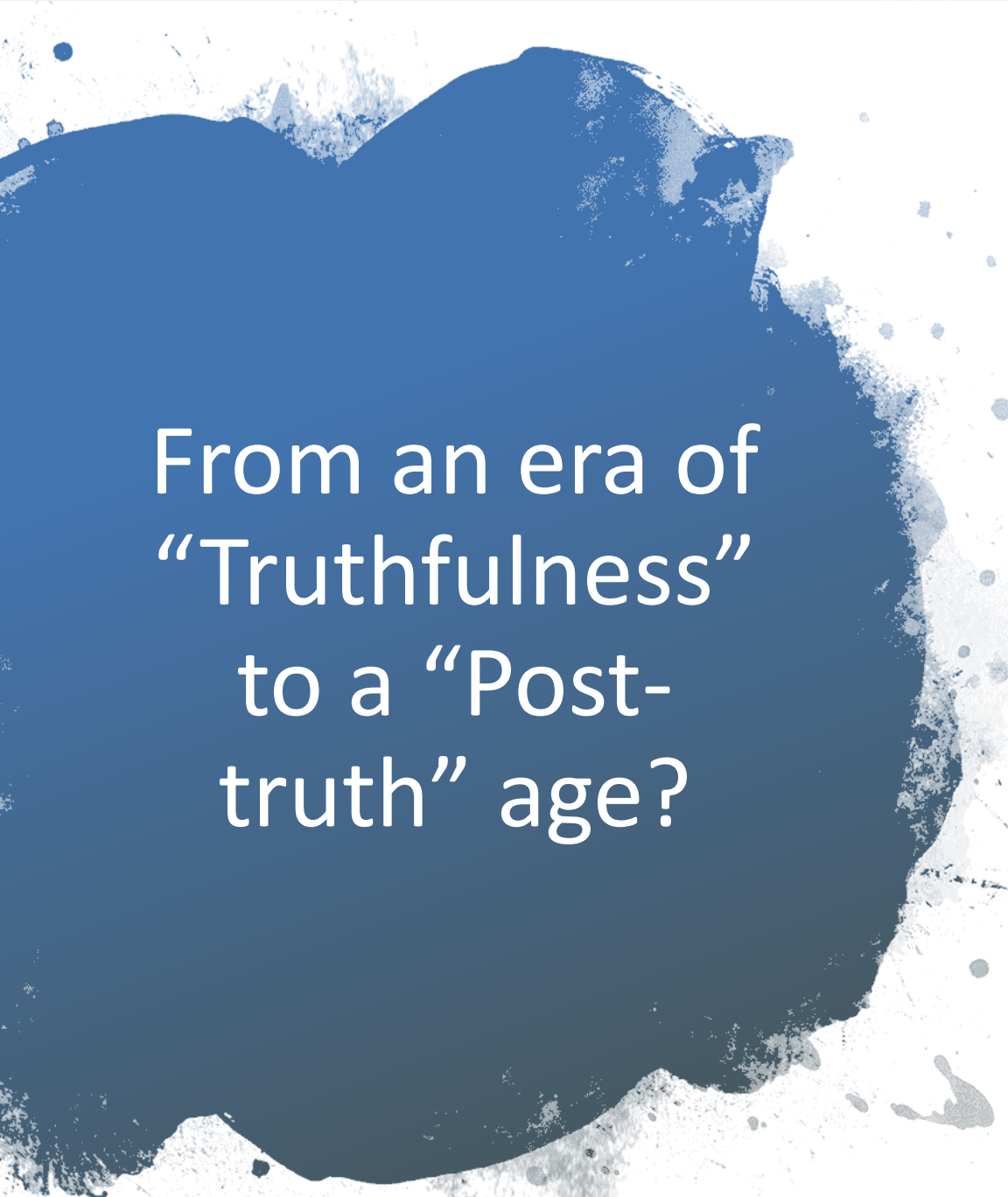


A dark, irregular ink blot with white text on a white background. The blot is roughly circular with jagged, splattered edges. The text is centered within the blot.

The Post Truth Age

Some starting points.



From an era of “Truthfulness” to a “Post- truth” age?

- Oxford Dictionaries selected “post-truth” as 2016's international word of the year.
- The dictionary defines “post-truth” as “relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief.”
- ‘Alternative facts’
<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/kellyanne-conway-sean-spicer-alternative-facts-lies-press-briefing-donald-trump-administration-a7540441.html>

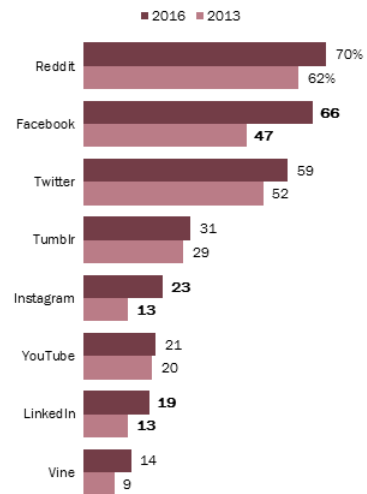
'Alternative facts'



Growth of on-line news

Growth in use of social media for news

% of users of each social networking site who get news there

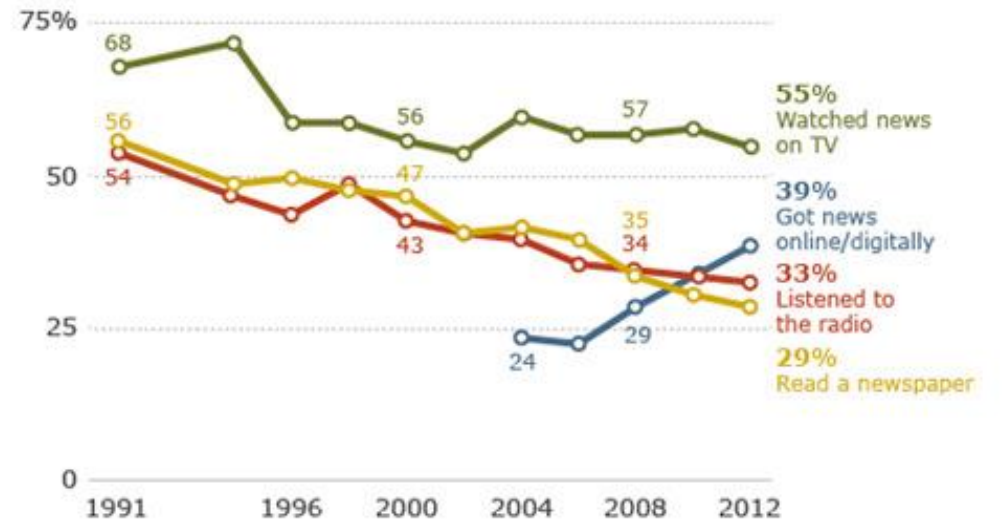


Note: Statistically significant differences in **bold**.
Source: Survey conducted Jan. 12-Feb. 8, 2016.
News Use Across Social Media Platforms 2016

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

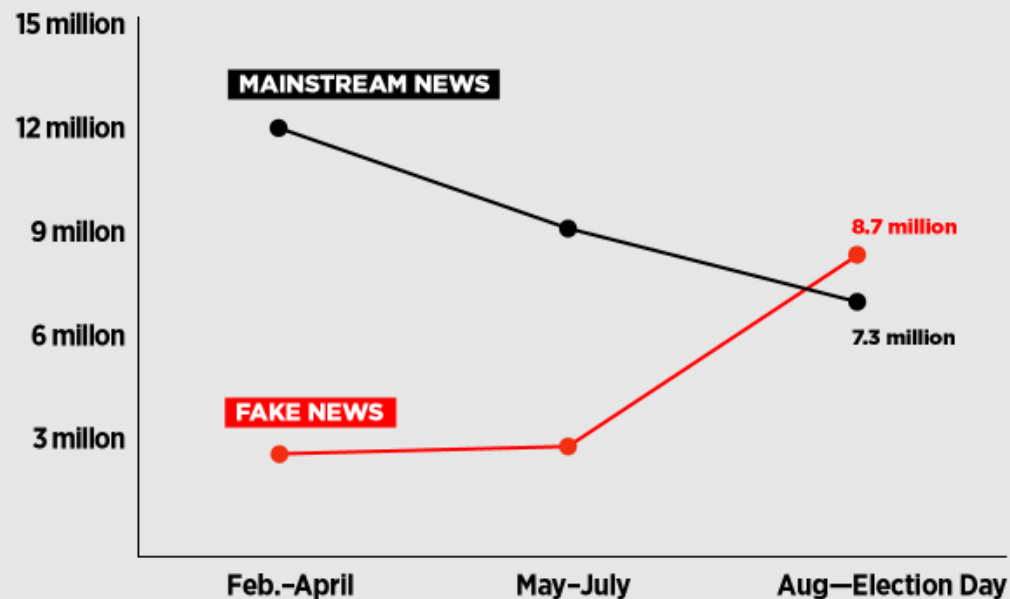
Digital News Surpasses Newspapers, Radio

Where did you get news yesterday?



Fake News & Digital Literacy

Total Facebook Engagements for Top 20 Election Stories



- Fake news spread through social media platforms was far bigger and more influential than previously thought. One study suggests “top fake election news stories generated more total engagement on Facebook than top election stories from 19 major news outlets combined.”



Fake News: Institutionalized and “Weaponized”

- “Where hoaxes before were shared by your great-aunt who didn’t understand the internet, **the misinformation that circulates online is now being reinforced by political campaigns, by political candidates or by amorphous groups of tweeters working around the campaigns,**” said Caitlin Dewey, a reporter at The Washington Post who once wrote a column called “What Was Fake on the Internet This Week.”

Ms. Dewey’s column began in 2014, but by the end of the year, she decided to hang up her fact-checking hat because she had doubts that she was convincing anyone.

Clay Shirky – Trump’s Victory

- From about the early 1980s until the very recent past, it was usually considered unwise for politicians to court views deemed by most of society to be out of the mainstream, things like overt calls to racial bias.
- “White ethnonationalism was kept at bay because of pluralistic ignorance,” **Clay Shirky**, a professor at New York University commented “Every person who was sitting in their basement yelling at the TV about immigrants or was willing to say white Christians were more American than other kinds of Americans — they didn’t know how many others shared their views.”
- Thanks to the internet, now each person with once-maligned views can see that he’s not alone. And when these people find one another, they can do things — create memes, publications and entire online worlds that bolster their worldview, and then break into the mainstream. The groups also become ready targets for political figures like Mr. Trump, who recognize their energy and enthusiasm and tap into it for real-world victories.



Bot Swarms Guide Opinion

- Some evidence is emerging (see following slides) that automated AI Twitter “swarms” or “comment-bots” whenever topics like climate change, gun control, or other hot-button issues come up?
- .
- In a way these echo fabricated letters to the editor, astroturf groups, and other strategies from the past. However, at present, they are harder to identify and track.

Business

How the Bot-y Politic Influenced This Election

Nearly 20 percent of all election-related tweets come from an army of influential robots.

by Nanette Byrnes November 8, 2016



If your political conversations on social media seem mechanical and predictable, it might be because you are debating with a robot.



A **study** published the day before the election found an estimated 400,000 bots operating on Twitter that were tweeting—and being retweeted—at a remarkable pace, generating nearly 20 percent of all election-related messages.



Besides being numerous, these bots are also quite influential, and

This researcher programmed bots to fight racism on Twitter. It worked.

- Critic
- So

By Kevin Munger November 17



Rasheed [redacted]
@Rasheed [redacted]

@ [redacted] Hey man, just remember that there are real people who are hurt when you harass them with that kind of language

Example of message designed to remind harassers of the humanity of their victims and to reconsider the norms of online behavior. (Screen shot from Twitter by Kevin Munger/TMC)

Most Read

- 1 SNL 'Bubbl... in denial ov
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- 4 Christie re... falling out... back on th
- 5 Hillary Clin... controvers... information... thumb driv




Jimmy Wales

Read this article from the Guardian (3/2/17) by Jimmy Wales (Founder of Wikipedia)

- Make notes on the issues and problems he identifies and solutions he proposes.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/feb/03/online-transparency-fake-news-internet>



Is Facebook going deal with fake news

Facebook is 'taking steps' to prevent the spread of fake news and hoaxes on the platform with a mix of user engagement, third-party fact checkers, user-experience design, and disrupting financial incentives. However:

1. Spotting fake news can be problematic anyway.
2. How do fact checkers get paid?
3. Click bait can be hard to distinguish from something genuinely worth sharing.
4. Apparently facebook will not "integrate or display ads in apps or sites containing content that is illegal, misleading, or deceptive," but facebook relies on shareable content on their news.

Facebook's role in Brexit — and the threat to democracy | Carole Cadwalladr

