

# Russia's Campaign To Influence U.S. Elections



# Don't fall for it !





# Military Operations

Strategic  
Operational  
Tactical







# Strategic Employment of National Power

**Resources**  
**Economic**

**Political**  
**Military**

**Psychological**  
**Informational**



# Who Is Behind It?

To Putin, ends justify the means

2016 - Russia spent \$millions distributing misleading & false info on social media to:

- Pit people against one another
- to doubt election systems & results
- Turn citizens against government

Create distrust, sow discord & generate chaos



# What are the Goals?

## Immediate

- Affect popularity of candidates
- Question election legitimacy
- Promote a desired outcome

## Mid-Term

- Turn us on ourselves
- Polarize political discourse
- Don't trust government

## Long-Term

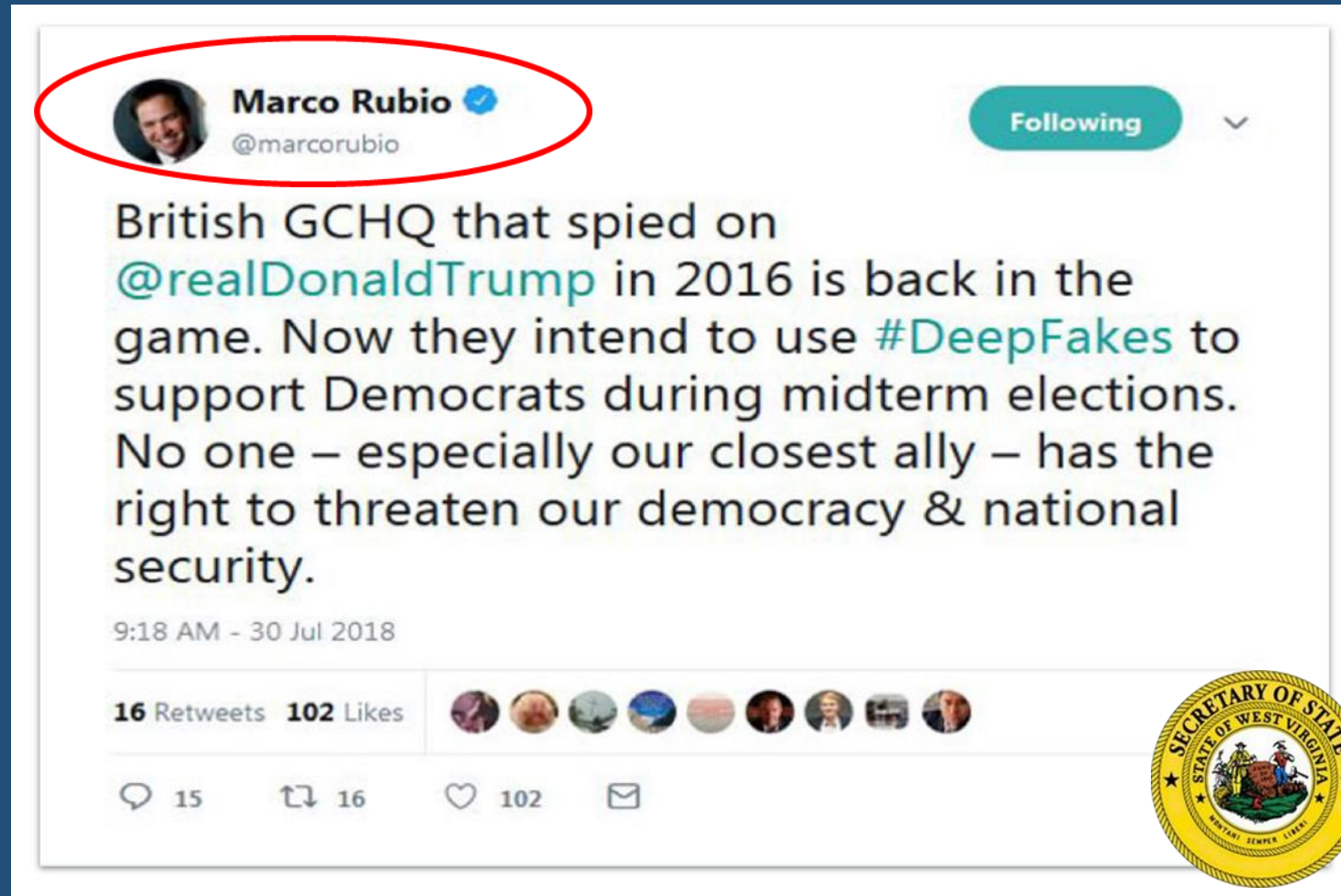
- Promote Russian interests
- Divide, Discredit, Distract the West
- Degrade NATO cohesiveness\*



# Degrade NATO Effectiveness

## Senator Rubio Hacked

Tries to divide U.S & U.K.  
Want us to turn on ourselves



# Subversion

## *Distractive Aggressive Activity*

- 85% **Russian foreign budget** (*15% espionage*)
  - Overt, Legitimate, Observable; not a crime!





# Why Are They Doing It?

Can't compete economically

Can't stand toe to toe militarily

Only hope: **bring U.S. down from the inside**

## ***Subversion Stages:***

### **1. Demoralize (15-20 yrs); attack:**

- ✓ Religion
- ✓ Education
- ✓ Employer/E'ee Rel'ns
- ✓ Social Norms
- ✓ Law & Order

### **2. Destabilize (2-5 yrs)**

- ✓ Economy
- ✓ Law & Order
- ✓ Media

### **3. Crisis: call for intervention**

### **4. Normalize New Corrupt System**

- *Stabilize by force*
- *Eliminate activists, no more use for "–liberators"*



# Transformative Commodities



*We've entered a new age*  
***The Information Age***



Today's Strategic Center of Gravity

# The Internet



# Russia's Operational Means

## Social Media Campaign





# How? Information Operations

**Propaganda is as old as war itself**

- **Scale is new**, given the internet
- Russia has **weaponized the internet**
- Russia “**Information Dominance**” vs US openness, security



**Intensified by Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

- Bad actors now run **mass influence campaigns**
- AI - **targets** people most vulnerable to manipulation



# “Great Game” Cyber Style

*Today's Clash of Civilizations Takes Place on Social Media*

- China's “Art of War” – win without fighting
- Russia's great chess tradition – win by out-smarting opponent

## Khrushchev

*“You Americans are so gullible. You won't accept Communism outright; but we'll feed you small doses of Socialism until you finally wake up & find you already have Communism. We shall conquer you without firing a shot!”*



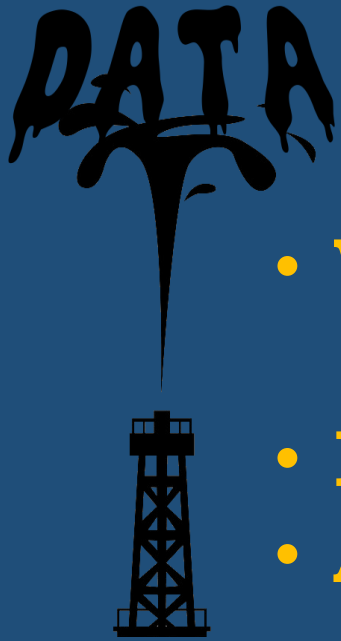
- America's “Spirit of ‘76” -- win on ideas, human freedom, liberal democracy
- North Korea, Iran/Terrorist Organizations also quite active
- Groundwork laid for foreign & domestic attacks



# The New “Great Game”

*Data is the new oil*

Clive Humby



- World powers now struggle for data superiority  
5G, AI, machine learning, quantum computing
- Data - economic, political, & military importance
- All data/information becomes strategic



# IoT, Blockchain, Bluetooth, Artificial Intelligence (AI)

*...the rising philosophy of the day, I'd say it is Dataism. David Brooks, NY Times*

- **Internet of Things (IoT)** – quantum leap in *available data*
  - *Involves our whole lives; Siri & Alexa are “listening in”*
- **Bluetooth** – everything connected => *data exchange*
- **Blockchain** - Unchangeable, permanent *data storage*
- **AI** - Unfathomable capacity to *retrieve/process data*

## Enhances “Dataism”

- **Big Data** – 50 Billion devices
- “Universe consists of *data flows*”
- Value determined by contribution to *data processing*





# AI, Algorithms, Bots

*AI is the new electricity*

Andrew Ng



- **AI turns data into actionable intelligence**
  - National Security, Economic Competitiveness, Scientific Discovery
- **AI allows micro-targeting to influence decision-making**
- **Algorithms – set rules to get directed jobs done**
- **Bots – “Web Robots” run tasks on internet, social media**
- **Data-driven social media is key to public opinion**
  - To Influence, Decide, Create, Communicate
  - Connection Between Markets & Citizens





# Bluetooth

Wireless connecting technology using radio waves to send data  
But, **does not directly connect to Internet** like cellular

## Vulnerabilities

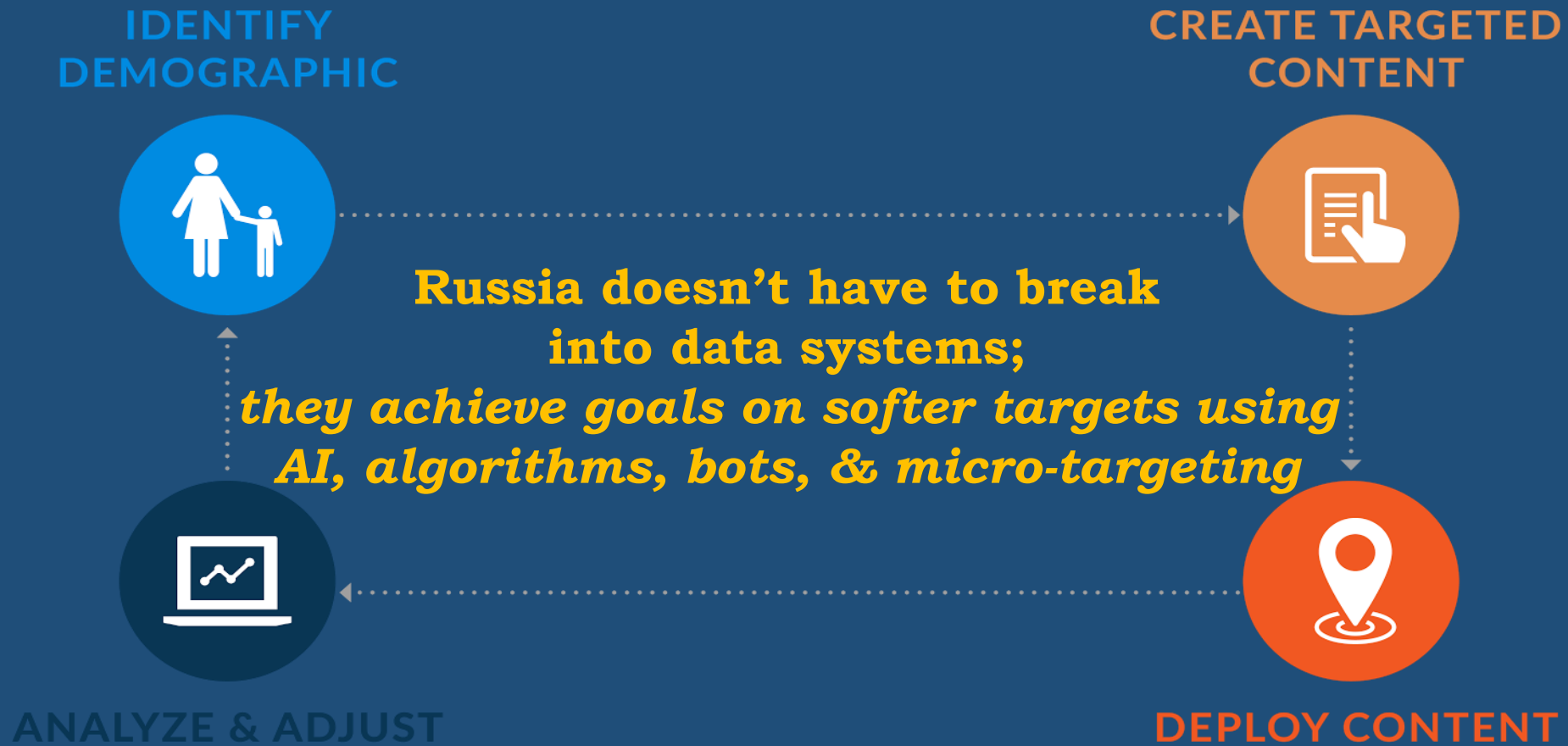
- **Bluejacking** - people can send unwanted messages to others
- **Bluesnarfing** - can access people's private information
- **Blueborne** - can allow attacker to install malware or steal credentials.

## Bluetooth Devices

- **Smartphones**
- **Tablets**
- **Appliances**
- **Health-tracking devices**
- **GPS trackers**
- **Headphones**
- **Cameras**
- **Televisions**
- **Automobiles**
- **Window and door locks**
- **Security systems**
- **HVAC Systems**



# How Does This Apply to Us?



# Using Our Strengths Against Us

Freedom is the American Spirit

2016 - Russia's meddling in U.S. elections *cost* < 1/2 *expense of a single fighter jet.*

## US Strengths = Freedoms

- Freedom of press
- Freedom of speech
- Freedom of religion
- Freedom of assembly

Russia has leveraged all of these  
via social media!





# Uses Human Emotions/Frailties

**Psychological factors used to get people to click...**

*Panic – “Your bank account is compromised. Verify your # ...”*

*Fear – “Your credit card shows irregular activity...”*

*Hope – “You have won...”*

*Charity – “You can help...”*

*Concern – “You do not have the latest upgrade...”*

*Security – “Your system has been compromised...”*

*Social need – “Join your friends...”*

*Esteem – “Be the first...”*



**Solution: Stop, Consider Options, Risk Analysis, Verify,  
then Act**



# The Power of Social Media

Total  
Population



7.5  
BILLION

Internet  
Users



3.9  
BILLION  
59%

Using social media, easy for Russia to:

- Reach millions w/ minimal costs
- Masquerade as your friend
- Exploit divisive/heated issues in U.S.
- Diminish front-runner, sow discord
- Incite opposition, protests
- Generate mistrust
- Push the fringes

Unique  
Mobile Users



5.1  
BILLION  
67%

Active Social  
Media Users



3  
BILLION  
40%



# 2016 Russian Social Media

Known false or misleading activity



Twitter: 10 Million Tweets



Instagram: 116,000 posts



Facebook: 61,000 posts



Additional Videos: 1,000+

10,178,000

→ = 28,000  
actions per day



# Russia Scanned All 50 States

> 20 had “extra penetrating measures”

## States Targeted According to DHS

- |                |                  |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1. Alabama     | 12. Minnesota    |
| 2. Alaska      | 13. North Dakota |
| 3. Arizona     | 14. Ohio         |
| 4. California  | 15. Oklahoma     |
| 5. Colorado    | 16. Oregon       |
| 6. Connecticut | 17. Pennsylvania |
| 7. Delaware    | 18. Texas        |
| 8. Florida     | 19. Virginia     |
| 9. Illinois    | 20. Washington   |
| 10. Iowa       | 21. Wisconsin    |
| 11. Maryland   |                  |



**Foreign  
Interference is  
EVERYWHERE**





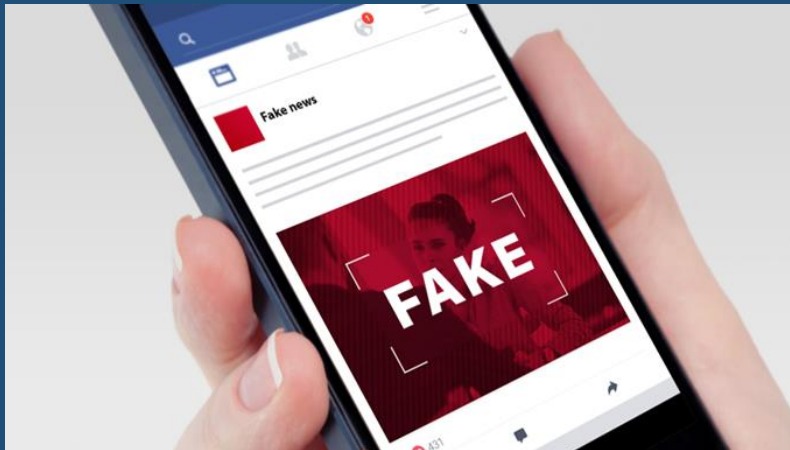
**Russia's  
Tactical  
Employment  
Focused on You!**



# Why YOU?

It starts with **YOU!** You are **1 of 4 billion** internet users.

- 18-24 - Social media presence is highest
- You're most likely to share posts
- High school seniors - newest generation of voters



- 2020 first-time voters – ***be educated & prepared!***

# Russia's Target - the American Spirit

## 5 Real World Examples



# 1 Disinformation

*Altered candidate's photo to manipulate public*

**Pro-Stacey Abrams**



**Anti-Stacey Abrams**





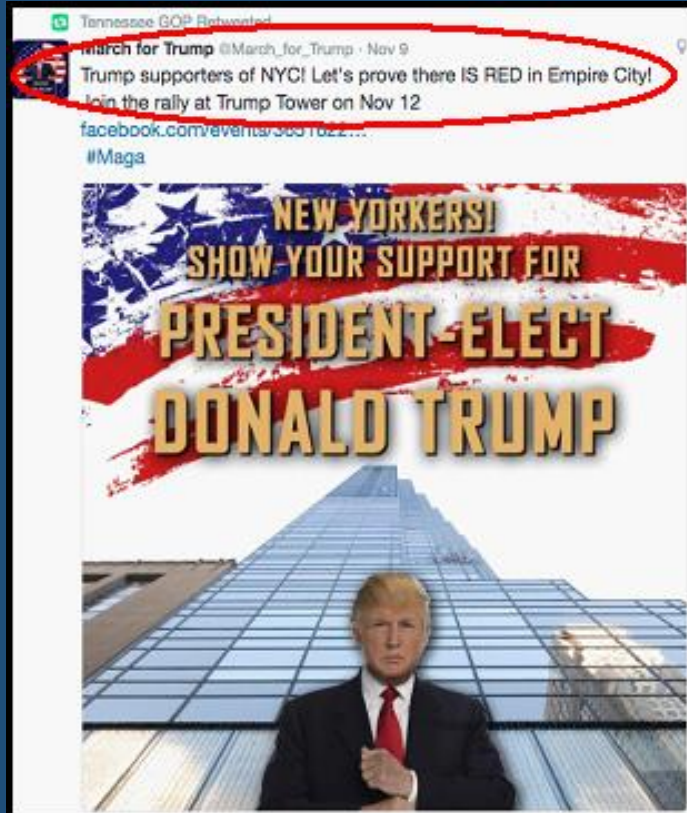
# 2

# Competing Rallies

New York

*Creation & promotion of competing protests*

## Pro-Trump Rally



## Anti-Trump Rally



Both on Nov 12,  
4 days after election!





# 3 Inciting Tensions

Texas

*Advertised competing protests at same location & date*

**Pro-Islam**

**Anti-Islam**



Both May 21  
in Houston



## 4

# Discouraging Voters

California

*Targeting Race*

Black Liberation Flag



**All out assault on African American voters using social media!**






# 5 Oppression

Colorado


*Social media ads that divide American society*

**Pro-Law Enforcement**

Suggested Page

**Back the Badge**  
Sponsored

Community of people who support our brave Police Officers.



**Back the Badge**  
Community  
111,113 people like this.

Like Page

**Anti-Law Enforcement**

**BM**  
Sponsored ·

Like Page

Two Black brothers were handcuffed by Colorado Springs police in a traffic stop for 'driving while Black'.



Colorado Springs Police Handcuff Two Black Brothers For No Given Reason | BM



# Other Major Foreign Cyber Adversaries of U.S.



**RUSSIA**  
IDEOLOGY

**IRAN**  
INTELLIGENCE  
&  
INFLUENCE

**CHINA**  
CORPORATE  
INTELLIGENCE  
& THEFT

**NORTH  
KOREA**  
RANSOMWARE  
FOR \$



# Deep Fakes

## *Now Extremely Hard to Spot*

- Super-imposing other peoples' faces onto real videos
- Anybody can be impersonated on social media
- Completely falsified videos, can be made to say anything



Real Barack Obama



Jordan Peele





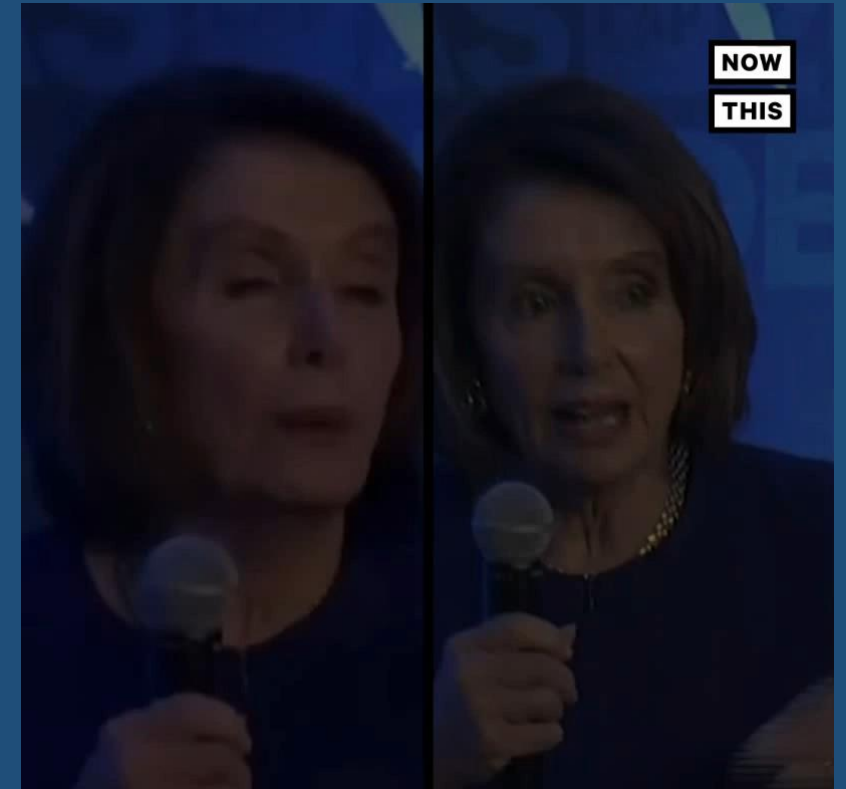
# Altered Videos

Real video is slowed down,  
sped up, etc. to alter perception

Unlike deep fakes, subject  
matter is not changed



**Facebook:** “We don’t have a policy that stipulates the information you post on Facebook must be true.”



# Misinformation vs Disinformation

- **Misinformation:** inaccurate info, regardless of intent
- **Disinformation:** deliberately misleading, incorrect, or biased info; manipulated narratives, facts, propaganda, spread w/ intent to deceive or mislead
  - Ex: deep fakes, altered or augmented videos, partial truths



*Appears “REAL”, but consists totally of “FAKES”*




# Misinformation Is Everywhere

## *AI Failure*

35m

France: Muslim girl "in search of love" plotted to blow up car packed with gas canisters near Notre Dame cathedral



France: Muslim girl "in search of love" plotted to blow up car packed with gas canisters near Notre Dame cathedral. It would be "Islamophobic" not to admire Ines Madani's wild romantic heart. After all, what says "love" more than blood spattered everywhere and [jihadwatch.org](#)

11m

I'll bet a Muslim set Notre Dame on fire [#NotreDame](#)

Breaking News Feed @pzf  
BREAKING NEWS: Huge fire reported at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, France.

0:10

3 2 8

14m

Replying to [redacted]



And Muslims just burned down Notre-Dame cathedral.

2

Muslims are setting historic Catholic Churches on fire all across France.

Most recently, Notre Dame Cathedral.

Where are the crusaders when you need them?



PowerPost

Follow @powerpost  
Get the Technology 202 Newsletter

PowerPost • Analysis

## The Technology 202: Notre Dame cathedral fire reveals tech companies' struggle to combat misinformation



YouTube's defenses against misinformation just backfired in a big way -- and ended up contributing to baseless speculation online that the Notre Dame cathedral fire resulted from a terrorist attack.





# Anyone Can Spread Misinformation



*Ian Bremmer: American Political Scientist, founder of Eurasia Group consulting firm in NY, DC, London*

# “Half-Truths”

Covington High School Students exploited by news & social media

There are  
always **two**  
sides to a  
story



1st reports  
made student  
appear as  
aggressor;  
yet, full video  
shows man with  
drum purposely  
confronted  
students



# **Nancy Pelosi**

## **on Fake News Smear Propaganda**

**Used by both sides; as shown**

**it appears she is advocating for “WRAP-UP SMEAR”  
In context, she says this is what Reps are doing to her.  
In either event, this is exactly what Russians are doing!**

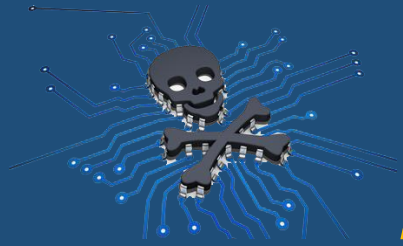


**NANCY PELOSI ON  
FAKE NEWS SMEAR PROPAGANGA**





# Russian Disinformation Methodology



*Disinformation is like a virus*

- Pick divisive issues (ex: race, religion)
- Plant fake news: specific area, or in 4 corners of world
- Use social media via legal purchase, hack, impersonation
- Boost original disinformation; plant 2nd report citing 1st fake
- Amplify conversation via extreme fringes (other Russian trolls!)
- Create controversy to get mainstream media coverage
- Organize protests to create disarray in the Western world



# Russia Wrap-Around Smear

## *Operation Infektion*

Infiltrated  
far more  
than just  
Facebook &  
Twitter

	English	Russian	German	French	Spanish	Ukrainian
Facebook						
Twitter						
Medium						
Reddit						
indybay.org						
homment.com						
change.org						
meinbezirk.at						
mein-suedhessen.de						
globedia.com						
mediavida.com						
beforeitsnews.com						
Livejournal						
cont.ws						
jeuxvideo.com						

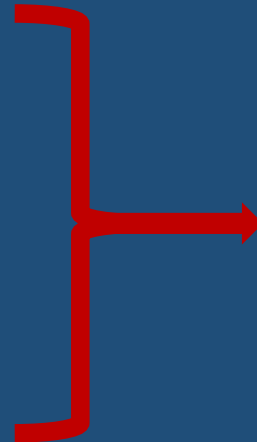
Targeted  
internet  
platforms  
across the  
world, posting  
in at least  
6 languages



# Taking Advantage of Chaos

## *Russia weaponizing breaking news*

- To bad actors, a crisis is an opportunity
  - In times of distress, people don't know what to believe
- Russian AI, Trolls, Bots
  - Programmed to act immediately upon strategic opportunities
- Opportunities for disinformation
  - Jeffery Epstein
  - Parkland, Florida Shooting
  - Ferguson, Missouri
  - Baltimore riots
  - Las Vegas mass shooting
  - Charlottesville



# Louisiana

## Chemical Plant Explosion Hoax

*Russian disinformation at work*

- Announced fake chemical plant explosion in Centerville, LA
- Purposely spread false information
  - AI distributed false text messages to Centerville residents
  - Used social media accounts to spread false stories
  - Impersonated news outlets to amplify fear
- Created hysteria
  - News stories claimed ISIS was to blame
  - Intended to cause panic & confusion





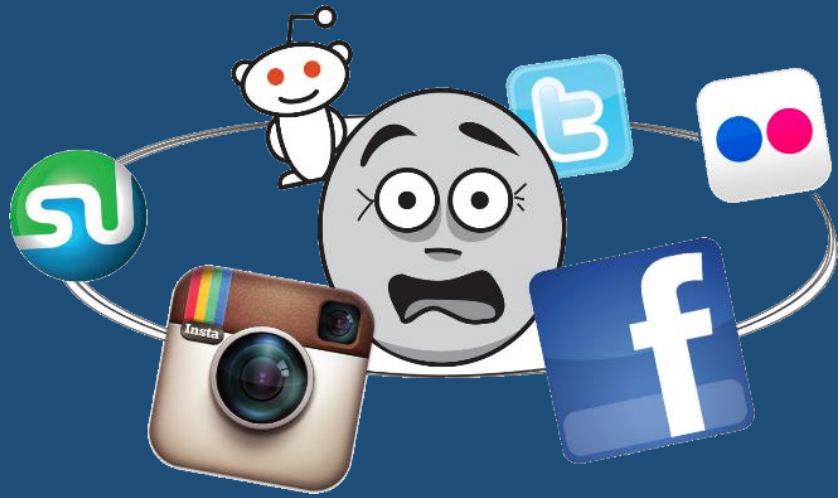
# Ransomware

## *funding nefarious activities*

- **Harrison County Courthouse: West Virginia**
  - Attack encrypted public records; City forced to pay ransom
  - Initially paid **\$1,500**; more payment was demanded
  - Takes weeks to recover, prevents access to vital information
- **North Korean cyber attacks**
  - Reported in 15 countries; raised as much as **2 billion**
  - \$ placed towards WMD
  - Will see more of this in future



# What Can You Do?





Protect

Detect

Correct



# 1<sup>ST</sup>

# First: Protect

- Be proactive; learn to spot fake news
  - Question validity of social media posts
  - Verify information using reputable sources to fact-check
- Protect yourself, your devices, & internet accounts:
  - Always use multi-factor authentication & complex passwords
  - Use a different password for every account
  - Think before you link, click or share anything questionable



# 1<sup>ST</sup>

# Protect

Examine the Web Link – *red flags*:

- A “5” in place of an “S”, or a “0” in place of an “o”
- An extension on a legitimate site

Watch for

- Misspelled words
- Awkward/improper language
- Jokes, parodies, etc. from satire/humor sources
- Shocking, exaggerated headlines

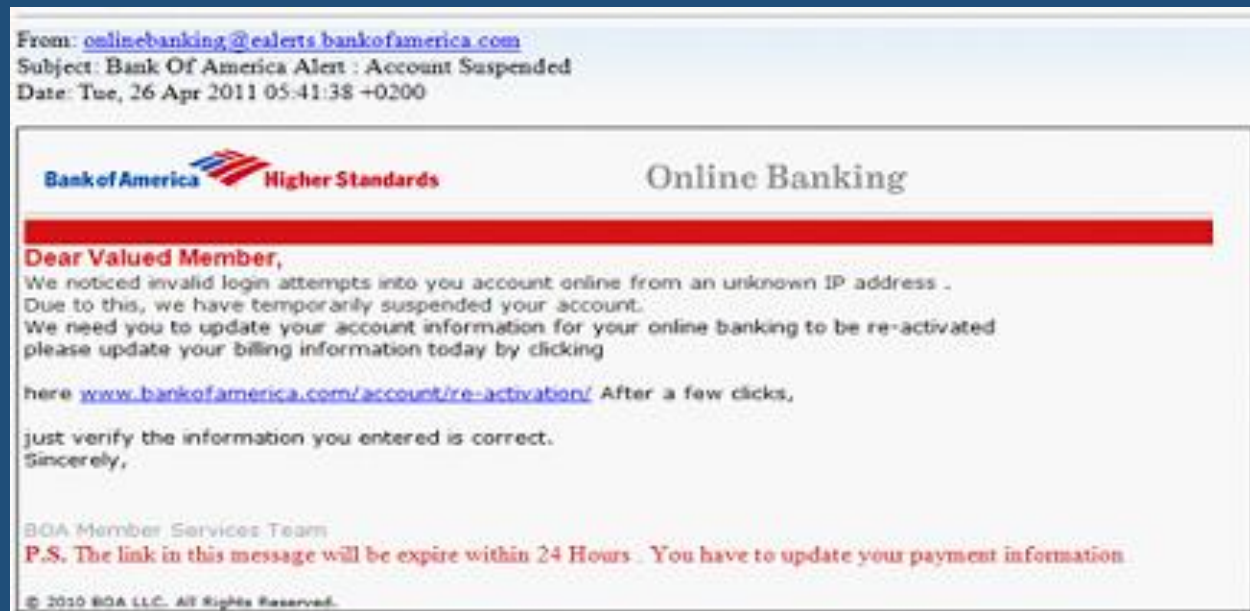
Check sources & evidence!



# 2<sup>ND</sup>

# Second: Detect

- Identify phishing attempts & website impersonation
- Read all unauthorized access notices or alerts (email, texts, etc.)
- Don't ignore suspicious activity
- Ransomware – locks all data, pay \$ to regain access



# 2<sup>ND</sup>

# Detect:

## *Some Fact-Checking Resources*

- **Opensecrets.org**
  - ✓ shows who receives \$ from Russia
- **Realorfake.org**
  - ✓ exposes fake news sites
- **Politifact.com**
  - ✓ fact checks US politics
- **Factcheck.org**
  - ✓ holds politicians accountable
- **Stopfake.org**
  - ✓ fact-check by Ukrainian profs & students
- **Polygraph.info**
  - ✓ fact check by Radio Free Europe, VOA
- **Sunlightfoundation.com**
  - ✓ nonprofit newsroom
- **Propublica.org**
  - ✓ nonprofit newsroom
- **Bellingcat.org**
  - ✓ distributed, collaborative investigating
- **WhatsApp**
  - ✓ new tip line for misinformation (India)





# 2<sup>ND</sup>

# Detect: Suspicious Emails

From: MS Settings Setup <[officialsetin@micromsn365officials.org.com](mailto:officialsetin@micromsn365officials.org.com)>  
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2018 7:47 PM  
To: Jackson County  
Subject: Reset Password In Process

This message was identified as a [phishing](#) scam.

## Microsoft Office Email365

### Your New Password Request

Your password reset is in process and your current password will expire shortly, the password reset link will be forward to the new alternative email submitted

**Ignore this email notification your request will takes effect shortly**

**If you did not request this password reset**  
Use Cancel Request button to cancel the password reset and keep your password unchanged

[Cancel Request](#)

**This action will take a brief period before this request takes effect**  
This is a mandatory communication about the service. To set communication preferences for other cases.

This message was sent from the email address is not monitored. Do not reply to this message.  
[Privacy](#) | [Legal Notices](#)

Microsoft Corporation  
600 Pine Street, Suite 352,  
Seattle,  
WA 98101, USA.

Mon 4/23/2018 1:48 PM

secure@access.info <[robmoore@compton.k12.ca.us](mailto:robmoore@compton.k12.ca.us)>  
validating dtackett@wvsos.gov

To: David Tackett

You forwarded this message on 4/23/2018 1:27 PM.  
Click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of some pictures in this message.

This message was identified as a [phishing](#) scam.

### Verify your email address

Your Office Premium E-mail has exceeded its mail-quota limit, and due for validation. In order to continue using your mailbox, you are advised to [validate your email here](#) within 24hrs. otherwise you be unable to receive and send message from [dtackett@wvsos.gov](mailto:dtackett@wvsos.gov)

[Right-click or tap...](#)

Sincerely,  
The Azure Active Directory Team

Microsoft Corporation | One Microsoft Way Redmond, WA 98052-6399

This message was sent from an unmonitored email address. Please do not reply to this message.

## Spear Phishing, Whaling

### Specific Targets/Credential Harvesting

*\*Source: actual emails received by West Virginia officials*



# 2<sup>ND</sup>

# Detect:

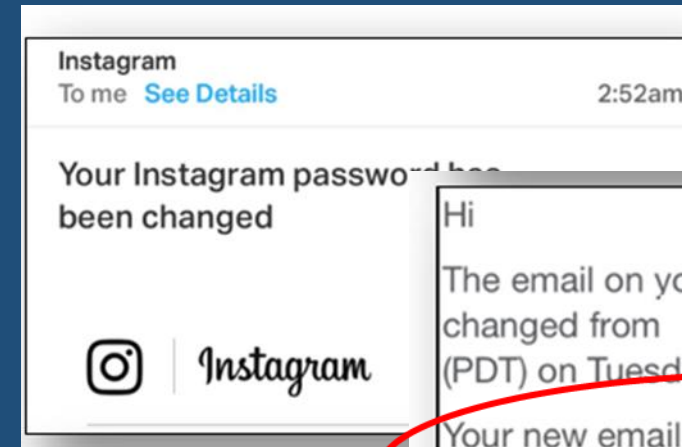
## *Anyone Can Be Hacked*

**U.S. Senator's campaign,  
national news**

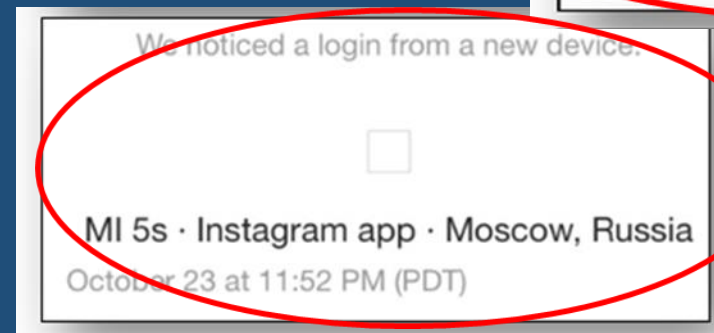
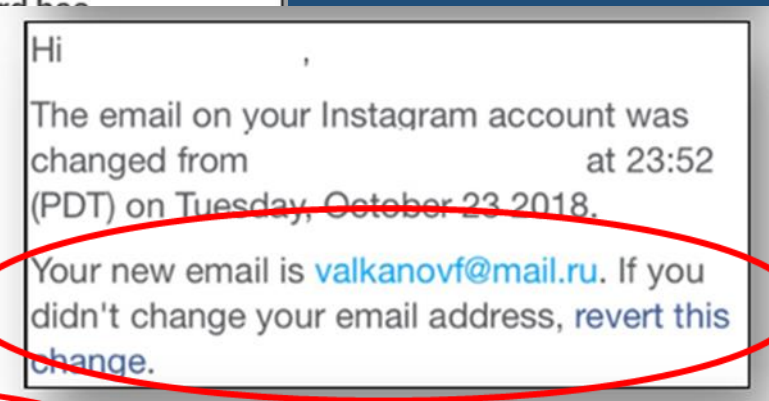


**Source: Washington Post**

**Personal social media compromised by Russia**



**HACKED**



# 3<sup>RD</sup>

## Third: Correct

**If you become a victim of a cyber incident:**

- Take screen shot with cell phone (for IT to use)
- Turn-off devices & disconnect from internet
- Change passwords to **ALL** accounts on a different device
- Report to internet/social media providers
- If asked for ransom (\$ or other value), report to police



**DISCONNECT**



# The Power of Fake News

Everybody Sees it, Not Everybody Knows it

- Pew: **23%** of adults shared a made-up news story
- Gets people to view news for “ammunition”
- To take what you believe, & believe it more. Moves people to fringes.
- Youth particularly targeted as vulnerable to misinformation
- Power of 1st impression: 60% continue to believe, even if corrected
- Bots & AI **micro-targeting** intensify effectiveness



# American Voting Machines

## **IMPORTANT FACT:**

**NO EVIDENCE** that **ANY** Votes Were Changed In A U.S. Election!

US voting machines are decentralized & maintained independently by ***each state***.

### **Voting machines:**

1. Are never connected to internet
2. Precincts managed independently by counties
3. Very difficult to hack; requires physical security breach
4. Produce paper ballots that are verified by each voter
5. Pre- & post-election audits ensure security & accuracy



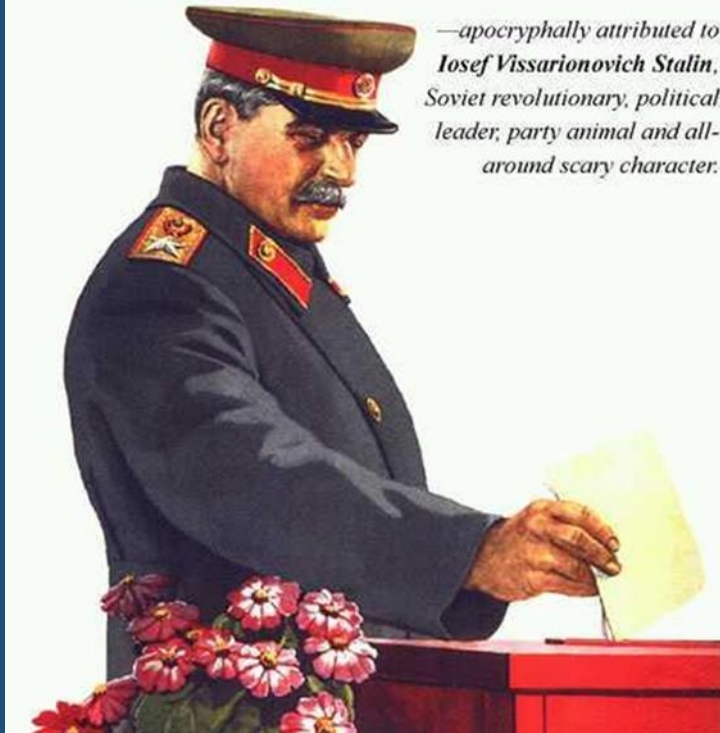


# Media's Vital Role:

## They're a Target Too!

### Today, it's who reports the votes!

"It's not who votes that counts.  
It's who counts the votes."



—apocryphally attributed to  
*Iosef Vissarionovich Stalin*,  
Soviet revolutionary, political  
leader, party animal and all-  
around scary character.

Former Soviet Dictator Joseph Stalin

### Food for thought

What if news agency is hacked & reports wrong winner?  
Can we trust reported outcomes today?  
Would public cry out for recount or new election?  
Would public question legitimacy of results?



# What's Going On?

*Marvin Gaye*

## 3-Dimensional Chess

1. **Body** = Equipment, Ballots, Poll Books (no problems) TRUTH
2. **Mind** = Process, Tabulation, Voter Registration, Reporting (some problems)
3. **Spirit** = American Psyche, Acceptance (real problems) TRUST

**This remains main vector of Russian attack**

*Need both Truth AND Trust*

**When we buy into  
“America has never been so divided”  
Russia wins!**





# IT STARTS WITH YOU

*“You can’t fix stupid” Ron White*

An Educated Public Protects Democracy (Ex: Face App)  
Be **Information Literate** - Rely on the Human Dimension  
Check sources; use **Trusted Sources** for critical info (elections!)  
Seek accuracy over speed  
Separate fact from opinion  
Verify, confirm  
Validate, authenticate

Don’t depend on technology to solve fake news  
There is no algorithm to eliminate misinformation

***You are our first line of defense!***



# Connecting the Dots

## Election Meddling to US Legislation

**Russian Election Meddling in Western Democracies**

*Sow discord in democratic processes*

**Divide America by Pushing Fringes**

*On-going social media effort to polarize America*

**What is Truth?**

*Government, Social media: both paralyzed*

**Social Media Self Regulate? US Government Legislate?**

*GDPR (individual owns) vs. US (market decides)*



# Conclusion

## Don't be a Russian Force Multiplier

- ✓ Stay alert: be conscious, aware & protect against false info.
  - Anticipate Russia's tactics; expose antics.
- ✓ Russia attacked minds/spirit;
  - no success attacking voting machines.
- ✓ Race with no finish line: must stay ahead of bad actors.





# REMEMBER

## Russia Attacked Our Minds & Spirit, Not Our Machines

Summary Video

Foreign & Russian Interference

# 2016

in American Elections Summary

Full Video

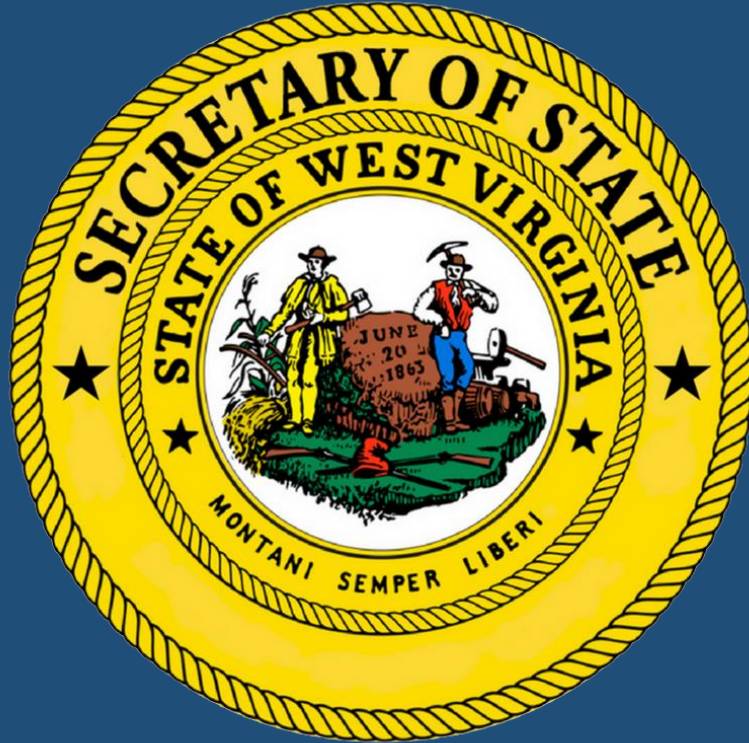
Foreign & Russian Interference

# 2016

in American Elections Full Video



# For more information, contact:



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