Empowering the Digital Citizen: Fireside Chats on Meaningful Digital Participation, Co-Designing Content Policies, Building Safety and Trust Features Online

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RightsCon 2023

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Misinformation Village

CODING FOR CHAOS, ESTABLISHING TACTICS, TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES FOR RED-TEAMING DEMOCRACY

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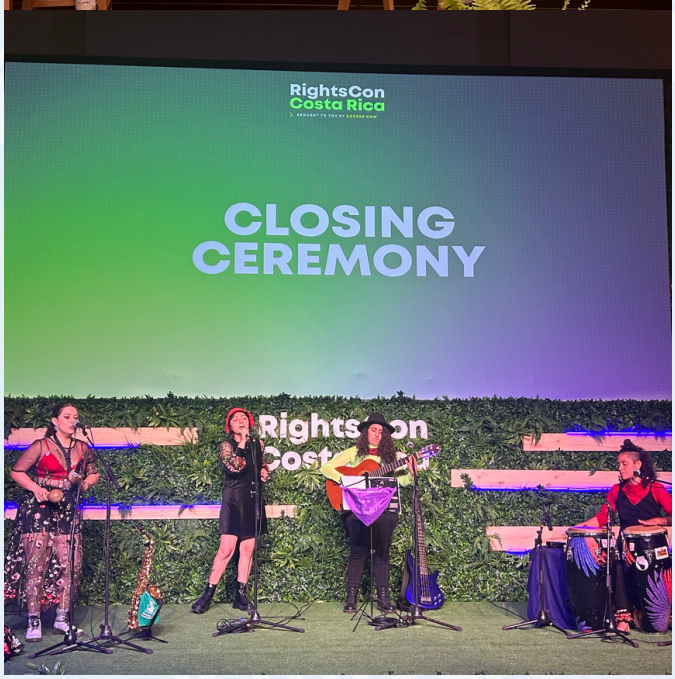

Forward

Reflecting on this recently concluded conference, I am struck by the depth and breadth of discussions that ensued. The confluence of technology, democracy, and civil society experts created a rich tapestry of dialogue, underpinned by a collective goal - promoting accountability, bridging policy-tech gaps, and tackling disinformation. Understanding the digital future, exploring power dynamics, and recognizing the critical role of civil society, we delved into the heart of our technologically-charged democracy.

The discussion on online gender-based violence and its crippling impact on women's political participation was enlightening and called for urgent, tangible solutions. The evolution of the internet, especially during the pandemic, further underscored the importance of improved multi-stakeholder participation in internet governance. As we navigated discussions around tech monopolies, algorithmic bias, and the human right to internet access, we concluded that the need for diverse, inclusive perspectives is now an imperative. This conference reaffirmed my belief in collaboration and accountability mechanisms as key to a digital future where disinformation is no longer a threat to democracy, and societal progress is nurtured.

Finally, I would like to thank Donna L. and Zaid A. who have contributed to this report and other previous reports and conferences of the Misinformation Village and other conference editions since 2020.

Ahmed X. Medien Village Chair, Principal Organizer

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Executive Summary

The Misinformation Village held a satellite event, at RightsCon 2023, called "Empowering the Digital Citizen: Fireside Chats on Meaningful Digital Participation, Co-Designing Content Policies, Building Safety and Trust Features Online." RightsCon is a global digital rights conference known for its focus on human rights in the digital age. It draws activists, business leaders, policymakers, tech experts, and journalists from around the world. This year, it took place in San José, Costa Rica from June 6 to June 8, 2023.

At the Misinformation Village event, eight discussions and panels featured over 20 speakers. These sessions covered internet, information and data governance topics, including technology, democracy, disinformation, and the important role of civil society. Speakers highlighted the need for awareness, education, and solid independent research to tackle disinformation and defend democratic values in our digital world.

These discussions also pointed to the need for collaboration across different departments within tech companies and outward for open access to data and impactful research on the subject of influence campaigns, media narratives and safeguarding the integrity of elections. Other key topics included the potential role of AI in spreading false information, the need to preserve media stories, and the rules that govern the internet. The event also looked at how civil society can engage more effectively, how to regulate big tech platforms, and the impact of digital authoritarianism and online gender-based violence on connectedness and meaningful digital participation.

The event concluded that it's important for all kinds of people and communities around the world to have a say in shaping our digital future. It emphasized the need for everyone to work together, with transparency and accountability, to protect democracy in the digital age. This satellite event, as part of the larger RightsCon event, played a significant role in promoting discussions and actions on preserving human rights in our digital world.

Introduction

The Misinformation Village conference tackled key issues emerging from our ever-interconnected digital world. The conference focused on issues like misinformation, the creation of digital ethical norms, tech-facilitated gender violence, and stronger internet governance. The objective was to transform these abstract debates into actionable solutions that can have a real impact on society.

Misinformation has emerged as a central issue in the digital age. While the internet is the medium for connectivity and free speech, it is also used as a platform for disinformation campaigns that are threatening societal unity and even inciting violence. There is also a rising trend of gender-based violence online, hate speech and illiberal misuse of platform affordances and social networking features to coordinate inauthentic influence campaigns and corrupt the democratic public discourse. In tandem, the call for transparent and accountable internet governance is louder than ever, with particular emphasis on curtailing the unchecked influence of tech monopoles.

The Misinformation Village conferences strive to make the internet a powerful tool for good, defending human rights and liberties. The key to this is effective communication and storytelling, transforming complex digital dilemmas into relatable narratives that can invite more people into the conversation. One of our key emphases, in parallel, is to also develop a knowledge and research hub for information “nightmare” scenarios or “fictional” intelligence (FICINT). Our focus on red-teaming democracy is for the proactive identification and mitigation of potential vulnerabilities within democratic systems and strengthening the resilience and integrity of democratic institutions.

The value of this conference is immense. We are creating a platform for engaging with complex digital issues and finding solutions that foster democratic norms and societal resilience. Forums like the Misinformation Village are crucial in understanding and navigating the intricate relationship between society and technology, setting the stage for a more resilient and democratic digital future.

Goals and Objectives

The Misinformation Village conferences are innovative spaces that promote interdisciplinary dialogue on misinformation and the digital future. This conference unites diverse professionals—from grassroots activists to trust and safety experts, internet policy professionals, and oversight bodies—all under one roof. We aspire to create a vibrant, intellectual hub fostering a comprehensive exploration of misinformation and digital integrity.

Our core focus is understanding the genesis or cyle and impact of mis and dis-information and malinformation (MDM) and outlaying the strats within organizations and systems with offensive capabilities to cause harm and subvert liberal democracies. We employ real-life stories to highlight the urgent relevance of this issue and its pervasive effects on societies. To tackle mis and disinformation effectively, we explore digital threats to marginalized communities and examine harmful policies within digital spaces. This broad perspective allows us to approach misinformation from various angles, ensuring a comprehensive understanding.

We believe in the power of insightful reflections on the digital future. Our conference invites thoughtful insights on the internet's evolution and strategies needed to cultivate a socially conscious, sustainable digital ecosystem. Additionally, we champion diversity and inclusivity, acknowledging their indispensable role in shaping a fair digital landscape.

More than merely highlighting challenges, our conference inspires action against them. We are committed to translating shared knowledge into tangible initiatives. Our goal is to encourage collective action that holds tech giants accountable and effectively combats disinformation.

The Misinformation Village conference is not just an event; it's a groundbreaking platform bridging diverse fields. Our mission is to equip participants with the tools and knowledge to counter misinformation, thus promoting a transparent, accountable, and inclusive digital landscape.

Foster a shared lexicon

We aim to develop a common language identifying, addressing and counter mis- and disinformation through applied research, tabletop exercises and expert insights

Initiate and support open-source and open-framework research projects

We encourage the transformation of conference insights into practical, open-source projects within an open-science framework.

Promote cross-domain collaborations

Our structured networking sessions instigate collaborations, breaking professional boundaries.

Highlight diverse narratives:

We ensure the inclusion of underrepresented voices and experiences in misinformation dialogue.

Develop practical strategies

Our working groups create actionable strategies against misinformation, aiming for real-world implementations.

Event Speakers

Ahmed X. Medien
Village and Conference Chair

Session 1
Jeff Allen, Sahar Massachi,
Integrity Institute

Session 2
Pamela San Martin, Holly Richards,
(Meta) Oversight Board

Session 3
Paulina Ibarra (Fundacion Multitudes),
Ixchel Aguirre (Luchadoras)
Theodora Skeadas (National Democratic Institute, Consultant)

Session 4
Swati Punia (Centre for Communication Governance at National Law University Delhi)
Adam Peake (ICANN)

Session 5
Jennifer Halweil (Beyond Lab)

Session 6
Theodora Skeadas, Sarah Amos, Nichole Sessego, Rebecca Thein, Liz Mori Tornheim, Integrity Institute Members

Session 7
Alexandra Esenler (Open Archive),
Giovanna Fleck (Global Voices)

Session 8
Maia Mazurkiewicz (Alliance4Europe),
Hallie Stern (Disarm Foundation)

Conference Proceedings

1 Session 1

Title: Advocating for a Social Internet
Speakers: Jeff Allen, Sahar Massachi

The Integrity Institute fosters an integrity-focused, research-based community. Its members bring a plethora of experiences such as optimizing algorithms, implementing content moderation strategies, and executing election integrity projects. The Institute, driven by collective wisdom rather than individual perspectives, spotlights the complexities surrounding misinformation, stressing the importance of the language used in these discussions, particularly the terms 'misinformation' and 'disinformation'.

The mission of the Integrity Institute is to develop a community of experts, nurture shared knowledge, and extend this knowledge to the world at large. They provide support to other companies, particularly during elections, by establishing best practices and advocating for platform accountability. Guided by their independence, which enables them to offer unbiased recommendations, and their collective expertise, the Institute stands as a crucial resource in combating misinformation.

Their work involves bridging technology and policy, interacting with policymakers, and understanding power dynamics within technology companies. They strive to prepare for the future of digital landscapes and engage in proactive discussions about digital integrity. They explore varied themes such as misconceptions about tech workers, the role of civil society within company dynamics, and case studies from diverse regions like Brazil in their routine discourse.

Discussion Summary

1. Role and mission of the organization: Development of a community of experts, cultivation of shared knowledge, and extension of this knowledge to the wider world.
2. Vision for the Integrity Institute: Shift from individual viewpoints to collective knowledge, transforming the Institute into a community-focused organization.
3. Work and Role of the Integrity Institute: Building a community of experts, developing shared knowledge, extending this to the world, and assisting companies with best practices and platform accountability.
4. Importance of Institute's Independence and Expertise: Ensuring unbiased recommendations and developing helpful resources.
5. Concerns about digital future: Discussion on building a bridge between tech and policy, power dynamics within tech companies, and future interactions with policymakers.
6. Encouraging engagement: Stressed the importance of conferences and forums in fostering dialogues about the digital future.
7. Support during elections: Highlighted organization's role in assisting other companies with best practices and platform accountability, particularly during elections.
8. Digital landscape concerns: The need for bridging technology and policy, interacting with policymakers, and understanding power dynamics within technology companies.

2 Session 2

Title: Finding Common Ground: A Human Rights Approach
Speakers: Pamela San Martin, Holly Richards

Pamela San Martin and Holly Richards kicked off the session by emphasizing the role of Oversight Boards in regulating social media platforms. They highlighted the necessity of nurturing dialogues that encapsulate diverse perspectives. They discussed the background and role of a new Board member, detailing their strong foothold in human rights and electoral work. Driven by a passion for protecting individuals' rights, they see the Board as an essential aspect of governance.

The core discussion revolved around the Oversight Board's function and viewpoint. The Board operates in synergy with social media platforms, with a central focus on user protection. It strives to mitigate the unintended fallout that may stem from certain decisions taken by social media platforms, especially during high-profile events.

The discussion underscored the complexities of rule application and the significance of context, advocating for a consistent and equitable approach across various regions. An integral aspect of the decision-making process involves understanding the socio-political and digital context, including the interpretation of local phrases and the effects of coordinated authentic behavior.

The conversation also touched on the challenges surrounding Facebook's nudity policy, particularly its impact on marginalized communities. There was a discussion around the disparities in information access across different regions, highlighting the urgency for independent oversight.

The Board collaborates with a wide array of stakeholders, including digital rights and human rights organizations, as well as researchers. Public comments and local expertise are considered invaluable in understanding context-specific issues.

Looking towards the future, the potential differences between the Board and social media platforms were acknowledged. As a closing note, the session expressed interest in exploring the impacts of disinformation on behaviors and operations, referencing a framework for analyzing actions led by specific actors. This reflected the session's key message - the crucial role of Oversight Boards in ensuring accountability and transparency within social media platforms.

Key Ideas Discussed

1. Role of Oversight Boards in regulating social media platforms
2. Importance of diverse dialogue in decision-making
3. Challenges of rule application across diverse regions
4. The need for understanding socio-political and digital contexts
5. Challenges surrounding Facebook's nudity policy
6. Disparities in information access across regions
7. Collaboration with stakeholders and digital citizens
8. The role of civil society in demanding accountability
9. Impacts of disinformation on behaviors and operations.

3 Session 3

Title: Interventions to Address Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based violence, from Ideation to Implementation
Speakers: Paulina Ibarra, Ixchel Aguirre, Theodora Skeadas

The session, led by speakers Paulina Ibarra, Ixchel Aguirre, and Theodora Skeadas, started with a discussion around the pressing issue of online gender-based violence and its harmful effects on women's political participation. The speakers drew from their extensive expertise in the field to discuss the normalization of gender-targeted political disinformation, particularly focusing on the experiences of women parliamentarians in Chile. The conversation also revolved around the way such violence erodes democratic resilience and deters women's political engagement, further shining a light on the malicious foreign influence that specifically targets women and indigenous communities through disinformation campaigns.

In the combat against online gender-based violence, a trans-feminist organization, Luchadoras, has emerged as a pivotal player. Luchadoras, devoted to safeguarding digital, human, and gender rights, has initiated a support line that has addressed nearly 1800 digital violence cases in the past three years. The organization has also formulated a typology of digital aggression against women, which is regularly updated to reflect the ever-evolving digital landscape. Their initiatives span grassroots work with communities, extensive research, and resource provision for those at risk. A particular focus of the discussion was the understanding of legislation against harmful image dissemination in Mexico.

The session also underscored the importance of progressing from just measuring the problem to the actual implementation of practical solutions. Valuable insights from a study on civil society interventions against online gender-based violence were shared, highlighting the instrumental roles of transparency, curation, and policy. The potential business cases for addressing the issue, including the enhancement of democratic processes, were also scrutinized.
The session underlined the necessity for locally considerate solutions, co-regulation of social media platforms, and the deployment of inclusive artificial intelligence to tackle online gender-based violence. Regulatory measures that oversee electoral processes and social media advertisements were identified as potential strategies to combat disinformation campaigns.

Key Ideas Discussed

1. The issue of online gender-based violence and its impact on women's political participation.
2. The role of Luchadoras in combating online gender-based violence.
3. The development of a typology of digital aggression against women by Lucia Doris.
4. The importance of understanding legislation against harmful image dissemination in Mexico.
5. The necessity for locally considerate solutions, co-regulation of social media platforms, and inclusive artificial intelligence.
6. The potential of regulatory measures overseeing electoral processes and social media advertisements in countering disinformation campaigns.
7. The crucial need for active engagement from all stakeholders to address online gender-based violence.

4 Session 4

Title: Building Bridges: Achieving an Open, Inclusive, Accountable, and Transparent Internet
Speakers: Swati Punia, Adam Peake

The discussion, led by Swati Punia and Adam Peake, launched with a reflection on the evolution and growing importance of the internet, particularly in light of the ongoing pandemic. The speakers underscored the necessity for enhancing multi-stakeholder participation in internet governance. They expressed concern over the declining engagement of civil society and identified achieving consistency in policy advocacy as a rising challenge, given the continuous expansion of the internet.

The conversation strongly emphasized the importance of multi-stakeholder participation. Observing a decline in civil society's engagement within UN contexts, the speakers voiced the need for governments to be held accountable to support multi-stakeholder processes. The vital role of civil society in global processes, such as the global digital compact, was brought to light.

The discussion then veered toward the challenges faced by civil society organizations in the Global South. Solutions like hybrid working and local Internet Governance Forums were proposed. ICANN's efforts to enhance inclusivity, specifically through enabling access to domain names in various scripts, were applauded.

While acknowledging the need for government involvement in internet governance, the speakers warned about potential misuse. Organizations like ICANN were credited with playing a crucial role in maintaining order, security, and diversity in the digital space.

The session concluded with deliberations on how to measure civil society's impact and the need to reevaluate approaches when necessary. The speakers advocated for civil society's active involvement in initiatives such as the Global Digital Compact. Addressing DNS abuse within ICANN was acknowledged as complex, yet the speakers highlighted new contract arrangements aimed at preventing misuse. The conversation concluded on a forward-looking note, with an urgent call for improved participation mechanisms in the field of internet governance.

Key Ideas Discussed

1. The importance of multi-stakeholder participation in internet governance.
2. The decline in civil society's engagement within UN contexts.
3. The need for government accountability in supporting multi-stakeholder processes.
4. The crucial role of civil society in global processes like the global digital compact.
5. The importance of constitutional values and democratic principles expertise.
6. The challenges faced by civil society organizations in the Global South.
7. The proposal for solutions like hybrid working and local Internet Governance Forums.
8. The commendation of ICANN's efforts to increase inclusivity through domain name accessibility.
9. The potential misuse of internet governance by governments.
10. The need to measure civil society's impact and reevaluate approaches when necessary.
11. The importance of addressing DNS abuse within ICANN and the new contract arrangements aimed at preventing misuse.
12. An urgent call for improved participation mechanisms in internet governance.

5

Session 5

Title: Rebuilding Trust in Innovation: Pioneering Socially Conscious and Sustainable Digital Ecosystems with AI, Web3, and Media Innovations
Speakers: Jennifer Halweil, Hallie Stern

Jennifer Halweil and Hallie Stern initiated the discussion by addressing the challenges faced by women-led ventures and the progress in achieving representational parity. They made a strong case for equitable representation, compensation, and credit for internet users, underscoring the need to avoid codifying biases in AI and addressing the perpetuation of bias and outrage culture through advertising.

The dialogue then shifted towards advocacy for internet access as a human right, expressing concerns about misinformation and the need for better guardrails. The speakers addressed the existence of monopolies in technology industries and the underrepresentation in AI fields, echoing a call for legislation to ensure diversity and inclusiveness.

An intriguing part of the session was the presentation of a research project on manipulating online algorithms. The speakers emphasized the importance of understanding vulnerabilities and developing protective strategies in this digital era. Furthermore, they explored the potential implementation of retina scanning as online identification, addressing concerns about accessibility and equity.

The session drew to a close with a potent appeal for robust antitrust laws, grounded in historical context. The speakers critiqued the implicit bias and stereotypes prevalent in user interactions on platforms like Facebook, underlining the need for bias reduction and criticizing the notion of "tokenomics." The session wrapped up with a pointed focus on the necessity for government and regulatory intervention to establish rules around tech monopolies, inclusivity, and diversity.

Key Ideas Discussed

1. Challenges faced by women-led ventures and progress in achieving representational parity.
2. The need to avoid codifying biases in AI and to counteract the perpetuation of bias and outrage culture through advertising.
3. Advocacy for internet access as a human right and concerns about misinformation.
4. The existence of monopolies in technology industries and the call for legislation to ensure diversity and inclusiveness.
5. The potential of retina scanning as online identification and the concerns surrounding accessibility and equity.
6. The appeal for robust antitrust laws and the critique of implicit bias in user interactions on platforms like Facebook.
7. The necessity for government and regulatory intervention to set rules around tech monopolies, inclusivity, and diversity.

6 Session 6

Title: Building Competencies for Civic Integrity Professionals: Strengthening Advisory Relationships In and Out of Tech Platforms
Speakers: Theodora Skeadas, Sarah Amos, Nichole Sessego, Rebecca Thein, Liz Mori Tornheim, Talha Baig

The session started with an enlightening discussion about the concept of "civic integrity", which the panel described as extending beyond elections to include the maintenance of legitimacy during civic events and crisis management. The panel shared anecdotes about sudden staff reductions during crucial election support periods, leading to a broader discourse on the implications of tech layoffs for independent research and election assistance. This conversation raised concerns about how constraints on API access from some social platforms might hamper independent research.

The panel then delved into AI's role in creating and disseminating misinformation, underlining the crucial need for human expertise to counteract emerging threats. They underscored the irreplaceable value of human personnel in operationalizing policy.

The session provided an in-depth exploration of the nuances within the tech industry, with a focus on the importance of 'civic integrity' and the implications of tech layoffs on independent research. A variety of critical themes were scrutinized, including the essential role of operations teams in resolving tech industry issues and the human-intensive nature of these operations. The panel stressed the value of cross-departmental collaboration during company reshuffles and discussed strategies for bridging knowledge gaps in an election context, such as condensing information for more accurate content detection and establishing partnerships.

Moreover, they emphasized the influence of external stakeholders in shaping product interventions, policies, and processes. The panelists shared personal experiences and future expectations outside of Twitter, questioning tech companies' motivations amidst macroeconomic conditions and financial incentives. They raised serious concerns about tech layoffs and the need to counter gender disinformation. They also underscored the importance of transparency within tech companies and called for legislation and regulation to enforce it.

The session concluded with a powerful call for robust antitrust regulation and breaking up monopolies, highlighting the critical role of advocacy and regulatory efforts.

Key Ideas Discussed

1. The role of AI in the creation and dissemination of misinformation and the importance of human expertise to counteract emerging threats.
2. The irreplaceable value of human personnel in operationalizing policy.
3. The critical role of operations teams in resolving tech industry issues and the human-intensive nature of these operations.
4. The importance of cross-departmental collaboration during company reshuffles.
5. Strategies for bridging knowledge gaps in an election context, such as condensing information for more precise content detection and establishing partnerships.
6. The influence of external stakeholders in shaping product interventions, policies, and processes.
7. The need for transparency within tech companies and the necessity of legislation and regulation to enforce it.
8. The crucial role of robust antitrust regulation and advocacy efforts.

7

Session 7

Title: Ethical Reporting and Networked Authoritarianism: A Fireside Chat with Giovanna Fleck and Alex Esenler
Speakers: Alex Esenler, Giovanna Fleck

The session began with an exploration of narratives and their potential for spreading misinformation. The speakers, Alex Esenler and Giovanna Fleck, emphasized the importance of context and local knowledge in dissecting such narratives. Drawing from their professional experiences, they shed light on the work conducted by Open Archive in preserving and fact-checking various forms of media. They underscored the fundamental pillars of ethical journalism, civically-minded reporting, and transparency.

As the conversation progressed, Esenler and Fleck delved into the challenges that come with partnerships with large social media organizations, especially highlighting the limitations of Facebook's self-regulation. They also drew attention to the detrimental effect of digital authoritarianism on freedom of expression and the free press. They explained how misinformation can be weaponized to uphold authoritarian regimes and emphasized the demanding nature of continuous monitoring and analysis of civic events and potential crises. The conversation underlined the need for robust resources, effective partnerships, and a well-structured organization.

The speakers highlighted the positive impacts of the Civic Media Observatory and the need to mitigate negativity while promoting positive narratives. They also touched on the complexity of tracking private social media group conversations and the value of qualitative research and investigative journalism.

Key Ideas Discussed

1. The potential of narratives for misinformation and the importance of context and local knowledge in dissecting these narratives.
2. The role of Open Archive in preserving and fact-checking various forms of media and the significance of ethical journalism, civically-minded reporting, and transparency.
3. The challenges associated with partnerships with large social media organizations due to their limited self-regulation.
4. The adverse impact of digital authoritarianism on freedom of expression and the free press, and how misinformation can be weaponized to uphold authoritarian regimes.
5. The demanding nature of continuous monitoring and analysis of civic events and potential crises, highlighting the need for robust resources, partnerships, and an effective organizational structure.
6. The importance of replacing outdated models with improved ones, learning from successful examples, and fostering a hopeful future.
7. The positive impacts of the Civic Media Observatory and the need to promote positive narratives.
8. The complexity of tracking private social media group conversations and the value of qualitative research and investigative journalism.

8 Session 8

Title: Beyond the Ballot Box: Navigating the Data Ecosystem and Safeguarding Elections Amid Political Uncertainty
Speakers: Maia Mazurkiewicz, Hallie Stern

The session began with speakers Maia Mazurkiewicz and Hallie Stern highlighting the interconnectedness of global issues, using the theme of election integrity as a backdrop. They shared personal experiences related to their transition from communism and their work in democracy-related roles. They discussed struggles for democracy and freedom in countries such as Ukraine and Belarus, emphasizing the escalating issue of disinformation, including the role of digital platforms and the repackaging of age-old narratives such as the 1980s conspiracy theory "Operation INFEKTION".

The conversation moved on to explore the vulnerability of refugee communities to disinformation due to their heavy reliance on digital platforms and subsequent data exploitation. The speakers shared personal experiences of visiting war-torn Ukraine and discussed family histories and the perceived lack of action against aggressors. The session then turned to the work of Alliances for Europe and shifts in the narrative portrayal of refugees over time. They dissected the perception and impact of disinformation, debunking the common belief in immunity and highlighting its universal nature.

The discussion transitioned to techniques employed in the propagation of disinformation, focusing on the influence of algorithms and the amplifying role of tech platforms. The speakers analyzed the impact of disinformation on elections and its potential manipulation of voting patterns. Towards the end of the session, the speakers outlined countermeasures to disinformation, emphasizing the importance of understanding human behavior and applying technical knowledge. They highlighted the need for dynamic frameworks and collective efforts to tackle this issue effectively. The session concluded with an illustration of the application of countermeasures using the Disarm Framework and a cybersecurity framework, ISOC. These tools facilitated information sharing and encouraged collaboration. The session underscored the themes of cyber threats, global disinformation spread, the significance of media literacy education, and the crucial role of data, algorithms, and regulation in managing disinformation.

Key Ideas Discussed

1. Disinformation as a universal issue, particularly affecting vulnerable communities such as refugees.
2. The role of personal experiences and historical context in understanding and combatting disinformation.
3. Shifts in the narrative portrayal of refugees over time and the subsequent impact on public sentiment.
4. The influence of algorithms and tech platforms in spreading disinformation and their impact on democratic processes, such as elections.
5. The need for countermeasures that combine an understanding of human behavior, technical knowledge, and collective effort.
6. The application of the Disarm Framework and the ISOC cybersecurity framework in combatting disinformation.
7. The importance of media literacy education and the crucial role of data, algorithms, and regulation in managing disinformation.

Key Takeaways

The Misinformation Village provided a vibrant and intellectually stimulating platform for an array of professionals and thought leaders to dissect, debate, and deliberate on the pressing challenges of our digital age. Here, we encapsulate the essence of the discussions, reflecting on key themes and insights that resonated throughout the conference.

1- Collective Internet Ethics:
The conference underscored the criticality of a collective and ethical and equitable governance approach towards the digital world. It emphasized that shared knowledge and collaborative efforts between the tech and policy sectors are key to addressing complex issues like misinformation.

2- Human Rights and Digital Inclusion:
A strong call was made for consistent, fair, and contextually relevant digital decision-making. The need for unbiased oversight was stressed, particularly with regard to the impacts of social media policies on marginalized communities.

3- Addressing Digital Gender-Based Violence:
The discussions drew attention to the necessity of practical solutions to combat online gender-based violence. Praise was given to grassroots initiatives that provide resources and advocacy for the victims of such violence.

4- Transparent and Accountable Internet:
The importance of broad stakeholder participation in internet governance was highlighted, as was the necessity for the re-engagement of civil society in global digital contexts. Digital inclusivity, order, security, and diversity emerged as key themes.

5- Trust in Technological Innovation:
The conference spotlighted the importance of diversity in tech, strong antitrust laws, and transparency in digital identity algorithms. The need to support inclusive content was also strongly emphasized.

6- Digital Authoritarianism:
The discussions brought attention to the challenges posed by digital authoritarianism and the role of fact-checking and media preservation.

7- Safeguarding Democratic Processes:
The vulnerability of specific communities to disinformation, the role of education in combating mis- and disinformation, and the necessity for proactive regulations and enforcement of data privacy rights were underscored.

The conference revealed the deep interconnections between these themes, underscoring the need for a comprehensive, multifaceted approach to misinformation. It demonstrated the urgency of real-time monitoring, effective regulation, and collective action to maintain transparency and accountability. It stressed the importance of evolving alongside the rapid growth of digital data and using an open-science framework for knowledge sharing.

The Misinformation Village is an intellectual village square - a space where experts and stakeholders can unite in their pursuit of solutions. Our shared insights will light the path as we strive to combat misinformation, uphold digital integrity, and shape a more equitable digital future.

Recommendations

At the Misinformation Village, we advocate for the significant insights and actions gleaned from our convenings for future research, policy change, and collective action. Recognizing the pivotal role of independent oversight in holding social media platforms accountable, we endorse the continuance and enhancement of such initiatives.

The Misinformation Village recommends a strengthened focus on the structures and systems that facilitate the spread of misinformation. This entails delving into the complexities of terms such as "misinformation" and "disinformation". By doing so, we can develop a nuanced understanding of these issues and address the root causes of false information spread.

The Misinformation Village calls for urgent attention to online gender-based violence. Comprehensive strategies that involve governments, tech companies, and civil society organizations are needed to combat this issue. Such strategies should include educational programs, support services, and strong protective policies against online harassment and abuse.

At the Misinformation Village, we are dedicated to leading this change and combating misinformation together through these following actions:

1 - Develop Common Understanding and Terminology:
To combat the challenges of misinformation, researchers, policymakers, and industry stakeholders should collaborate to develop a shared understanding and terminology surrounding misinformation and disinformation. This understanding will inform the creation of effective strategies and policies.

2- Establish Collaborative Partnerships: Building robust partnerships between tech companies, policymakers, and civil society organizations is essential. Such partnerships can foster a collaborative approach to effectively address the widespread issues of misinformation and disinformation

3 - Implement Comprehensive Strategies Against Online Gender-Based Violence:
Governments, tech companies, and civil society organizations should collaboratively develop comprehensive strategies to tackle online gender-based violence. This should include the provision of educational programs, support services, and robust policies to protect individuals from online harassment and abuse.

4- Promote Multi-Stakeholder Engagement in Internet Governance:
Encourage greater participation from civil society, particularly from underrepresented regions, in internet governance processes. Governments and international organizations should provide capacity-building opportunities to ensure a diverse and inclusive representation in these forums.

Next Steps: Misinformation Village @ DEFCON 31... and Beyond

The Misinformation Village is a unique platform that encourages open-knowledge frameworks, inviting experts from a multitude of disciplines to present their innovative ideas and research.

Our mission at the Misinformation Village is to harness the power of applied research in the fields of information security, adversarial AI, computational linguistics, fact-checking, and legal frameworks to counter the widespread threats of disinformation and misinformation. We aim to convert advanced research into practical, actionable strategies that can effectively mitigate the risks in the evolving digital landscape. We commit to maintaining a strong presence at open-source science conferences, collaborating with a broad spectrum of experts and stakeholders, and sharing our knowledge openly.

This allows us to foster innovation, build upon collective intelligence, and continuously advance the fight against disinformation in a truly collaborative and accessible manner. Our end goal is to safeguard information integrity, uphold civic security, and protect our digital societies from the adverse effects of misinformation and disinformation.

How to support the Misinformation Village?

You can support the Misinformation Village through a philanthropic donation to continue to organize events and conferences. You can also directly partner with the Misinformation Village to conduct applied research and multi-stakeholders workshops and meetings. Write to us at info@misinfovillage.org.

The Misinformation Village at DEFCON 2023 aims to address the growing threats of disinformation and misinformation by bridging the gaps between information technology, information security, and the complex domain of online influence campaigns. Scheduled to run from August 11th to 13th, the event is structured as a red/blue team exercise, inviting participants to contribute as 'incident/harm creators' or 'response and counter-offensive actors.

The event will cover themes including information integrity, civic integrity, cryptography and decentralized protocols for building trust in digital media, transparency and accountability in content moderation, cross-sector partnerships for skill building, and legal frameworks concerning data privacy, security, and freedom of speech. Proposals for talks are invited and can cover security risk assessments, mapping ecosystem actors, evaluating asset allocation and response effectiveness, and many more related topics.

The Misinformation Village is a unique platform that encourages open-knowledge frameworks, inviting experts from a multitude of disciplines to present their innovative ideas and research.

Read more about our programme here:
https//misinfovillage.org

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