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In Other Words

In other words is an interactive art piece about the credibility of news sources. The piece is meant to be part of a public setting where one would expect to see news. For instance, it could be in the lobby of a library by a bulletin board, or it could be in a main hall of a common building at a university. The piece itself pulls the headlines of articles from the front page of the Fox News Politics website and presents them on a screen. The viewers can then edit a word from a headline from a nearby interface. The code has been made open source and hosted on [github](#)¹.

One main goal of *In other words* is to incorporate the idea of systems theory into the piece. *In other words* achieves this in four distinct parts: input, output, throughput and feedback. The input to the piece is at first the headlines being pulled directly from the fox news website itself. It's in a way, like an initial condition of a differential equation, and furthermore like a forcing function when new articles are published and updated to the piece. But the central concept of the piece is rooted in the ability of the viewer to alter the words in these headlines. The output of the piece is simply the headlines that are displayed to the screen.

The throughput of the piece is slightly more abstract. It is in how the viewer sees and reacts to the headlines and the fact that they are able to change them. This is where the context of the space the art piece is in becomes the most important factor of the piece's output. While each individual may react and interact uniquely with this piece, the demographic of the people who come into contact with it will certainly affect how the piece evolves over time. Finally, the feedback is in how the new words in the headlines change how people react to to them, and furthermore how they interact with them.

This type of news-altering artwork is not an entirely new idea. This art piece has some similarities to [gatt.org](#)². *gatt.org* was a fake news website made in protest to the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs. It imitated the aesthetic of a government website, but posted

articles ”denouncing human rights” and ”celebrating corporate profit (Net Art Anthology). One of the key differences between *gatt.org* and *In other words* is that *In other words* doesn’t focus on a specific political statement, but instead gives the audience the ability to make their own statement, although that is only one possible outcome.

Impeachment hearing testimony details Trump pursuit of Ukraine ‘investigations,’ as GOP decries ‘hearsay’
Impeachment witness urges Burisma probe, testifies to concern of Hunter Biden ‘conflict’
Clinton snubs Thatcher in ‘Gutsy Women’ book, says she didn’t make ‘positive difference’
Day One of public impeachment hearings puts pressure on moderate Dems
Pentagon watchdog declines to investigate Ukraine aid

Figure 1: Original headlines

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What would you like to replace in:
Impeachment hearing testimony details Trump pursuit of Ukraine ‘investigations,’
as GOP decries ‘hearsay’

Ukraine
What would you like to replace Ukraine with?

Crusty the Clown
What would you like to replace in:

Impeachment witness urges Burisma probe, testifies to concern of Hunter Biden ‘c
onflict’

■
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Figure 2: Interface prototype (via command line)

Impeachment hearing testimony details Trump pursuit of Crusty the Clown ‘investigations,’ as GOP decries ‘hearsay’
Impeachment witness urges Burisma probe, testifies to concern of Hunter Biden ‘conflict’
Clinton snubs Thatcher in ‘Gutsy Women’ book, says she didn’t make ‘positive difference’
Gosar fires back after Katie Hill rips his ‘Epstein’ tweets: You taught the country what a ‘throuple’ was
Day One of public impeachment hearings puts pressure

Figure 3: Altered headlines

Notes

1. The full address for the code for *In other words* is
<https://github.com/josiest/In-Other-Words>.

Works Cited

"Gatt.org." *Net Art Anthology*. anthology.rhizome.org/gatt-org. Accessed 13 November 2019.