

Viral Political Action

Topic Introduction

September, 2020

The Course

A combination of ideas and actions

Invited speakers with a range of analyses and techniques

Your projects

The challenge is translating a physical event into a virtual one

Readings: Facebook experiment



Viral

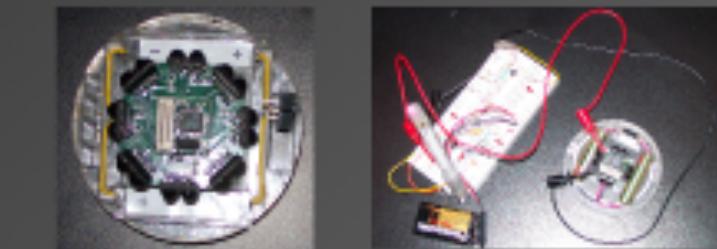
Grassroots
peer-to-peer
scalable
no a priori agreement

Smart Radios bypass Towers

- Disruption is in the eye of the beholder



Viral Communications, 2003



Viral Spaces



Viral Politics, 2012: Upstairs/downstairs

Fox

wsj

Three live channels plus digital

One newspaper one digital, channel

Graphics, Statistics, Production
teams (100's)

Graphics, Statistics, Production
teams (10's)

Satellite Trucks

iPhone app for 2000 reporters
records 45 seconds

Teleprompter

Skype; YouTube/Twitter/etc

Readings: Obama's Lost Army



Upstairs/Downstairs Production



Upstairs/Downstairs graphics



Upstairs/Downstairs Sets



Upstairs/Downstairs Social Media/Feedback

NA



Viral Politics, 2016: FiftyNifty

A “Challenge” to enlist a network to make calls in 50 states

Calls matter - they are hard

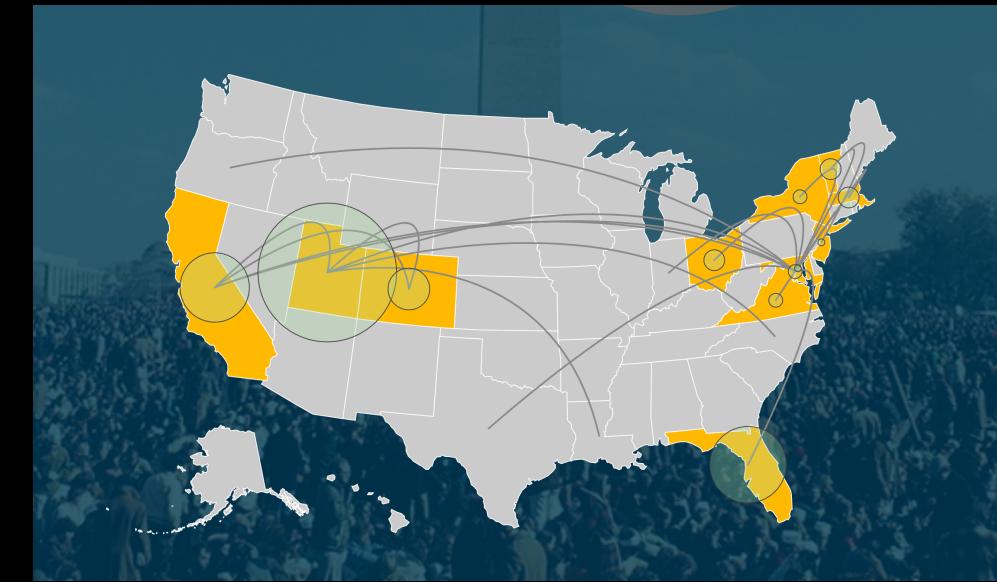
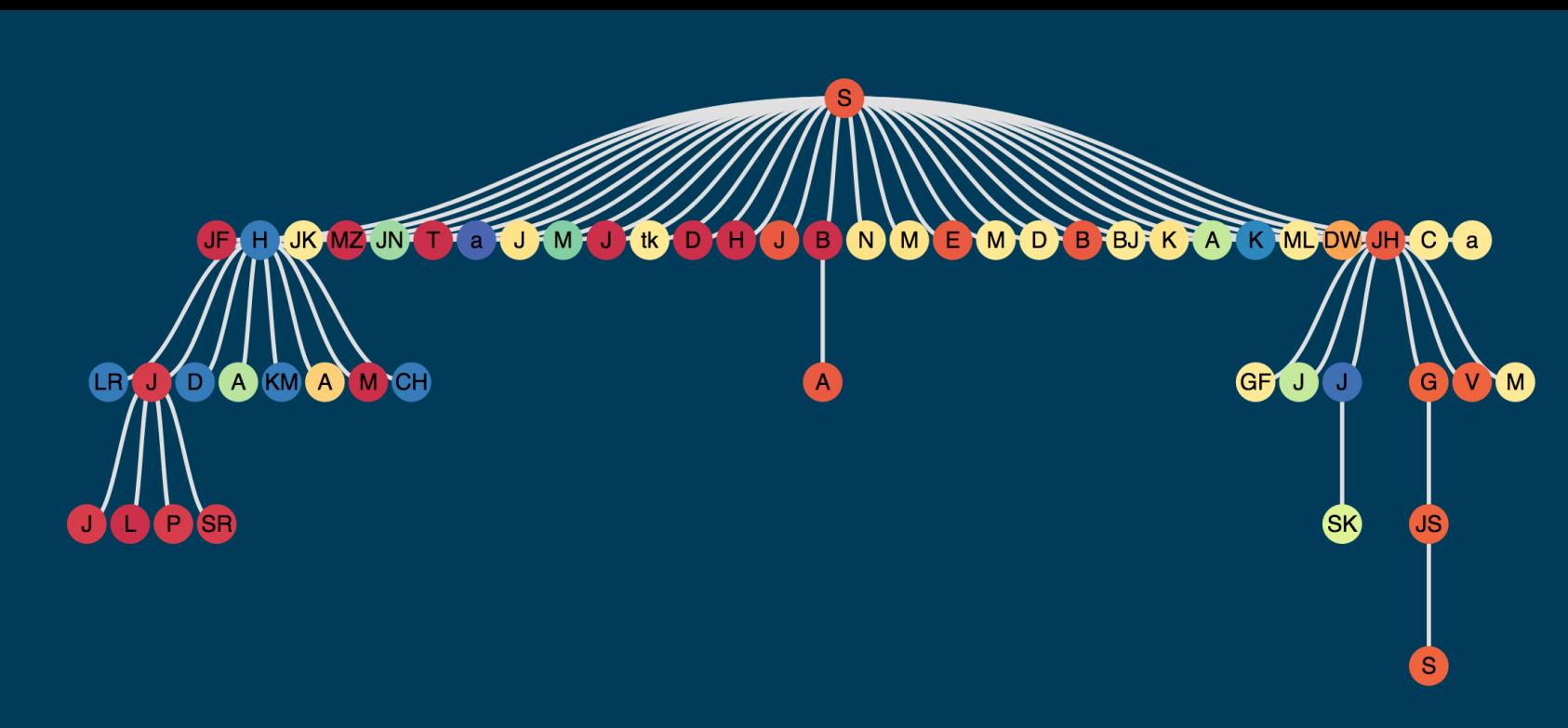
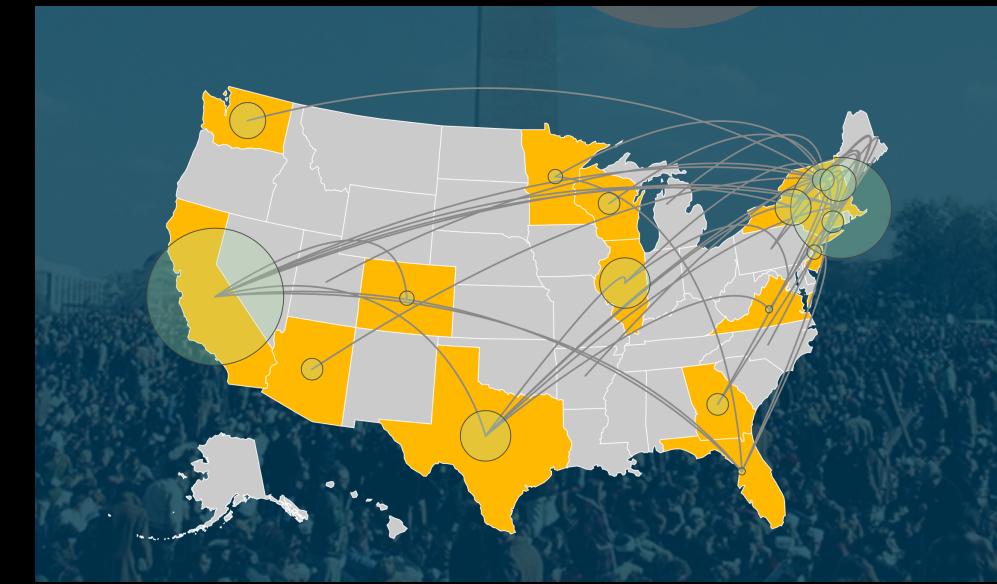
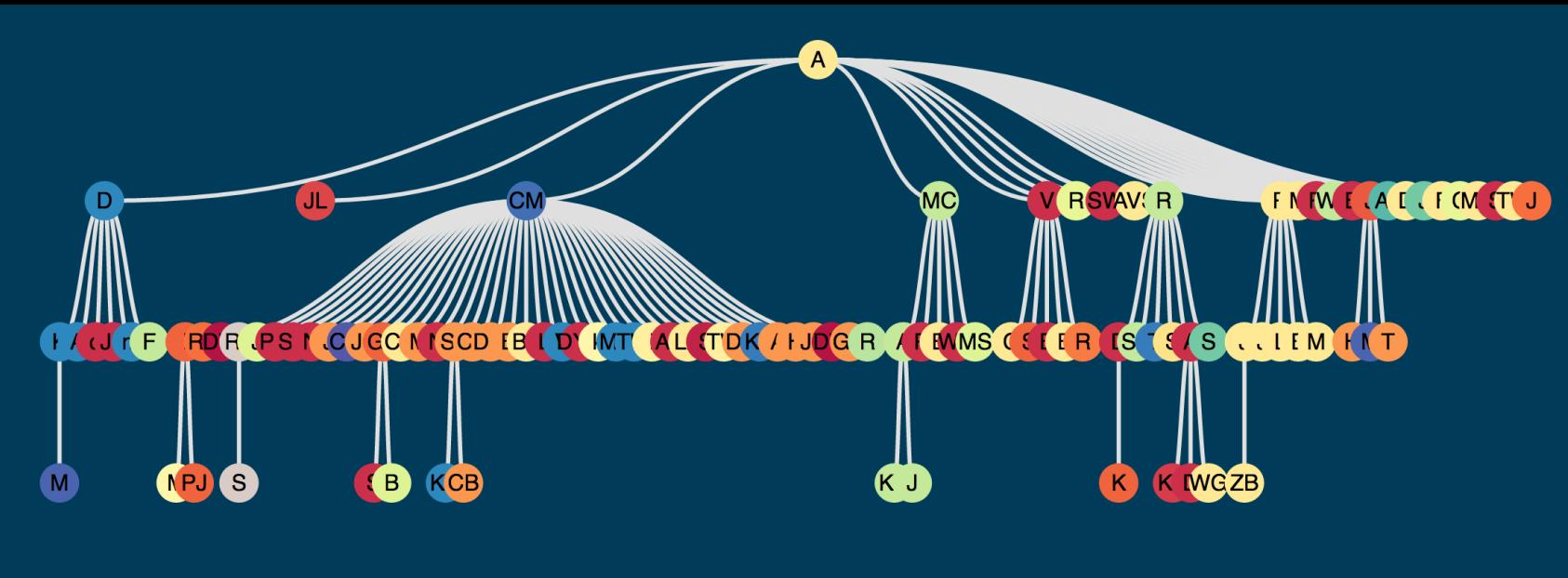
Networks matter - they are powerful

The screenshot shows the homepage of the FiftyNifty website. At the top, the word "FIFTY" is on the left and "NIFTY" is on the right, both in large red block letters with white outlines. Below them are four navigation links: "Home", "Your Profile", "Leaderboard", and "About". Under the "Home" link, there is a section with the heading "Call Congress now" in red, followed by the subtext "Real calls really matter." In the center, there is another section with the heading "Amplify your voice" in red, followed by the subtext "Build your network, spread the word." To the right, there is a section with the heading "Cover the country" in red, followed by the subtext "Reach 50 states." At the bottom of the page, there is a paragraph of text: "Join the Challenge: Reach 50 states to win. Enlist friends across the country. We'll speed dial for you. We'll help you prime your network. Three clicks and you're done. Track your progress."

Readings: Johnson Blog;
Network cascades (Optional)



Viral Politics, 2016: FiftyNifty



Readings: Influencers



DARPA Red Balloon, Shredder, Tag

5th December 2009

“Find 10 balloons, win \$40,000 “

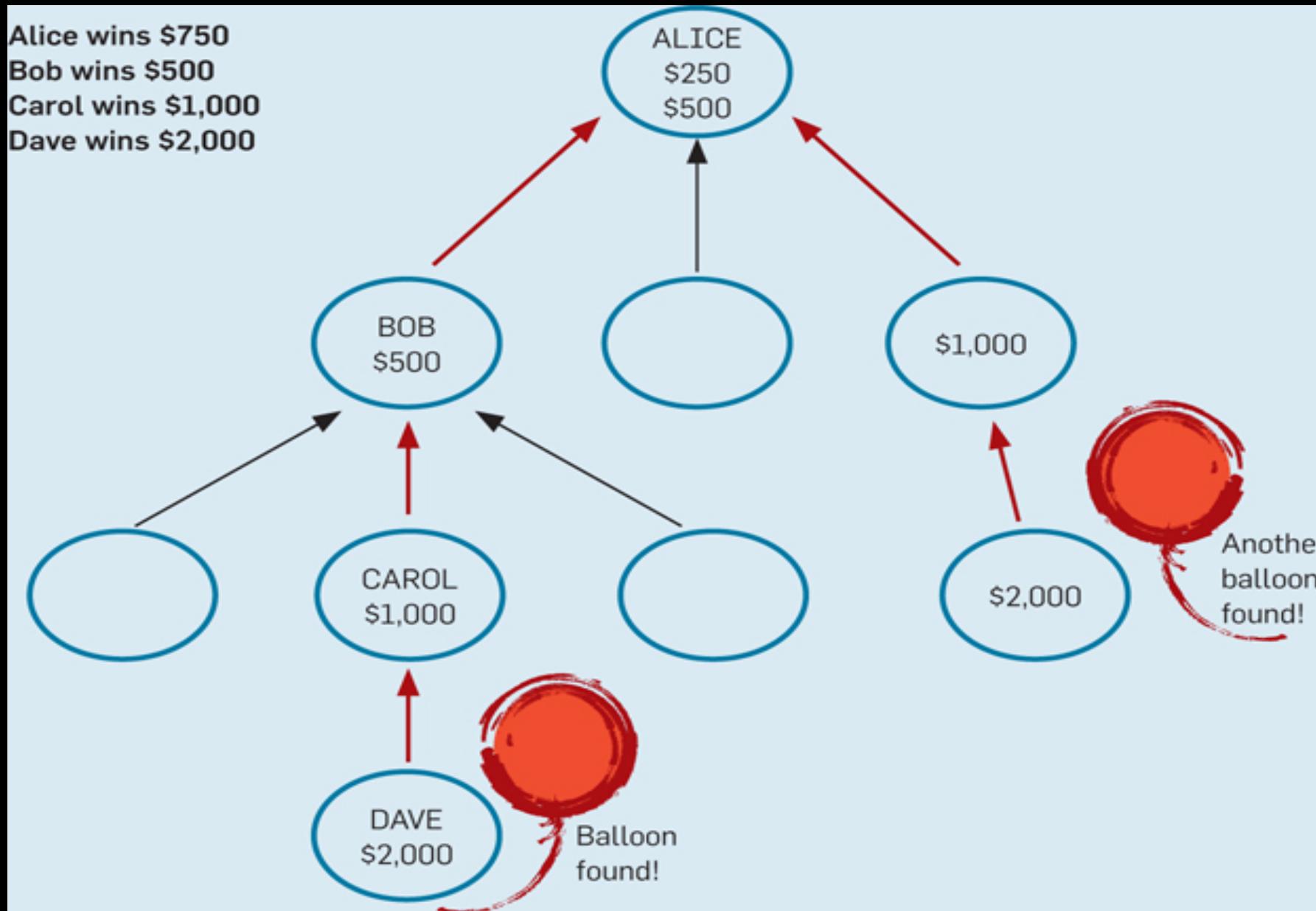
What is the role of the internet and social networking in real-time communication, wide-area team-building, and urgent mobilisation required to solve broad-scope, time-critical problems

Impossible by conventional intelligence.

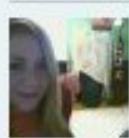


Readings: Red Balloon

DARPA Red Balloon, Shredder, Tag



DARPA Red Balloon, Shredder, Tag



Comment by [LittleDagny](#) on December 5, 2009 at 1:09pm

Other teams we need to infiltrate!!

<http://balloon.media.mit.edu/> - the MIT team

<http://ballooniinder.superrunnappy.com/doku.php>

<http://theredballoons.com/> - seems pretty dead-ish

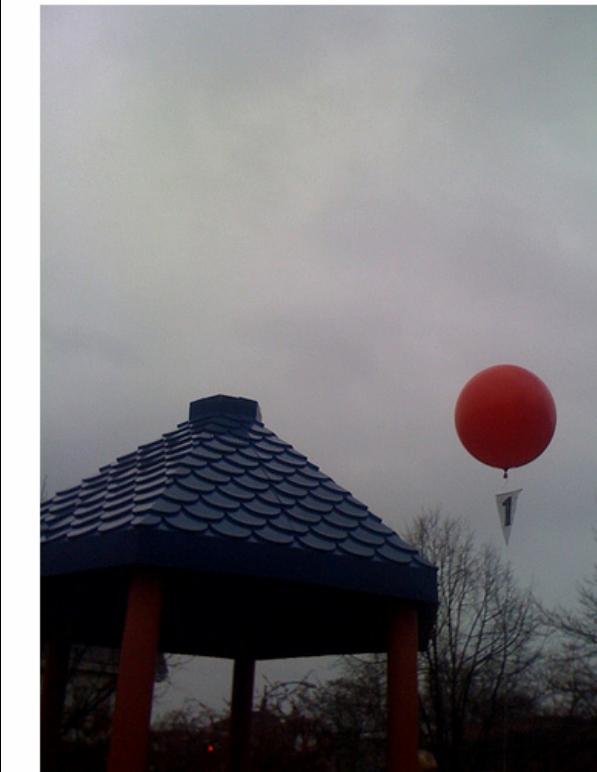
<http://www.darpaballoon.com/> - Stiff competition, they even have "outreach posts" for facebook, myspace, twitter, etc.

<http://www.ispyaredballoon.com/> - Georgia Tech's group



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Home The Tour Sign Up Explore ▾

someone else's balloon



Darpa red balloon challenge going on... a friend of mine in Boulder sent this pic to me... wow, hope they win!

We had a good time romping about and sending balloons up in Cambridge, Belmont, Somerville and some other places. We didn't have time to stick around and pretend to be DARPA employees, but once back home, we uploaded some photos from iphones with hacked exif data to modify the GPS coordinates.



DARPA Shredder

The screenshot shows the DARPA Shredder Challenge website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for Home, Rules, Download Puzzles, Submit Solutions, Forum, and FAQ. Below the navigation, a section titled "Download Puzzle Files" contains five entries, each representing a puzzle file:

- PUZZLE 1**: 28.8 MB, Estimated* download time: 3 minutes.
- PUZZLE 2**: 74.6 MB, Estimated* download time: 7 minutes.
- PUZZLE 3**: 91.0 MB, Estimated* download time: 8 minutes.
- PUZZLE 4**: 146 MB, Estimated* download time: 13 minutes.
- PUZZLE 5**: 419 MB, Estimated* download time: 38 minutes.

Below these entries, the total number of pieces for all puzzles is listed as **224, 373, 1115, 2340, 6068 pieces**.

On the right side of the page, there are two small images: one showing a stack of shredded documents and another showing a close-up of shredded paper.

Readings: Cebrian (optional)



DARPA Shredder

From: ucsd saboteur@hushmail.com

To: mcebrian@ucsd.edu

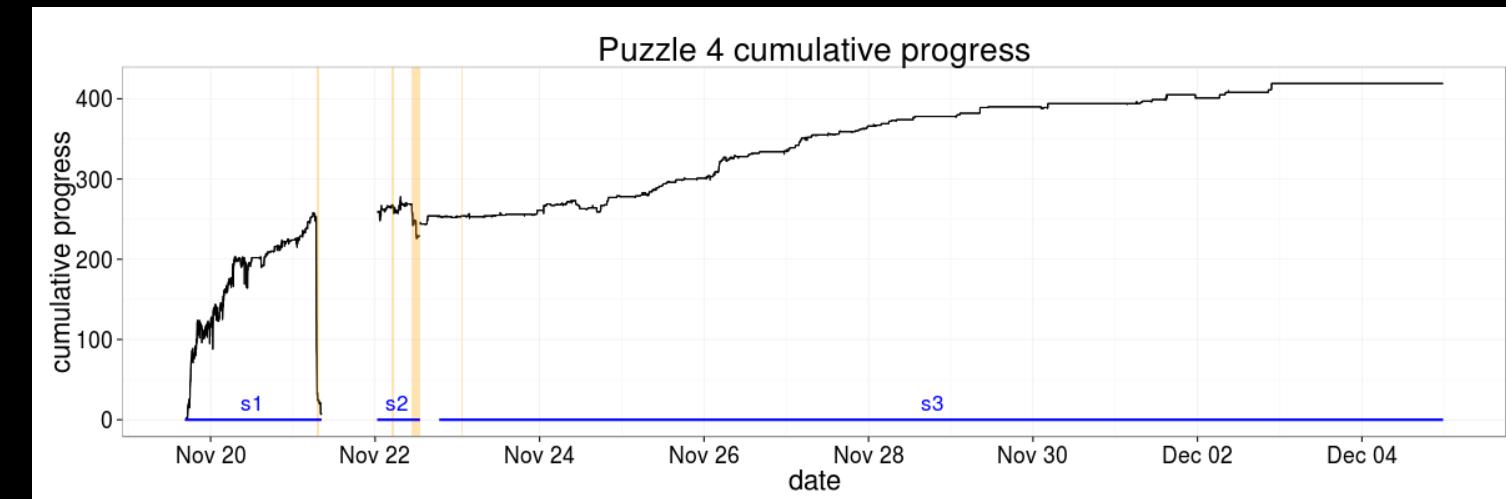
Date: Thu, Nov 24, 2011 at 4:20 AM

Subject: UCSD shredder challenge sabotage

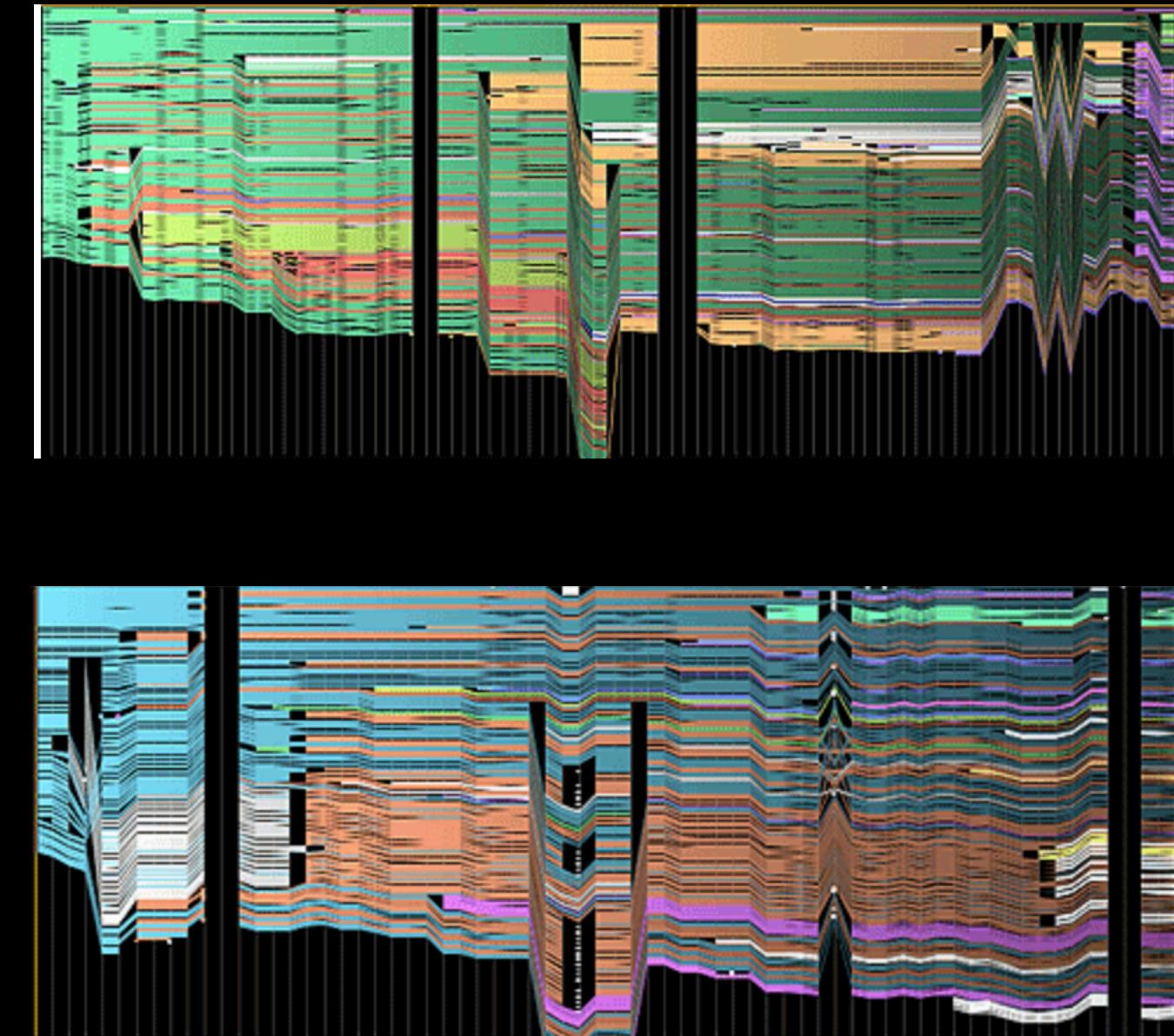
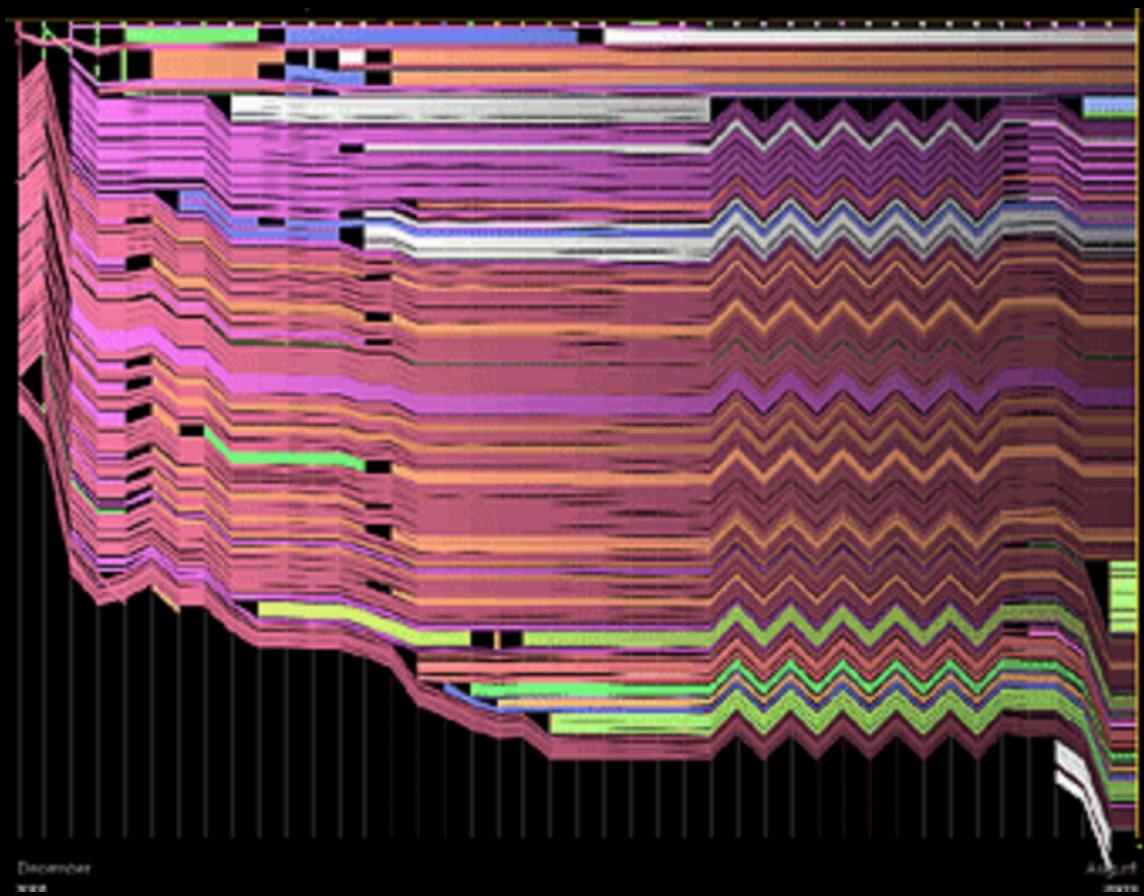
**I appreciate your acknowledging the cleverness of my exploitation of the weaknesses in your shredder challenge puzzle solving implementation.
But do you really think they were that smart?**

For **my first attack**, [...] moving all the pieces into a single pile. [...]

However, it seems all you did was lock the pieces together and ban my IP address.



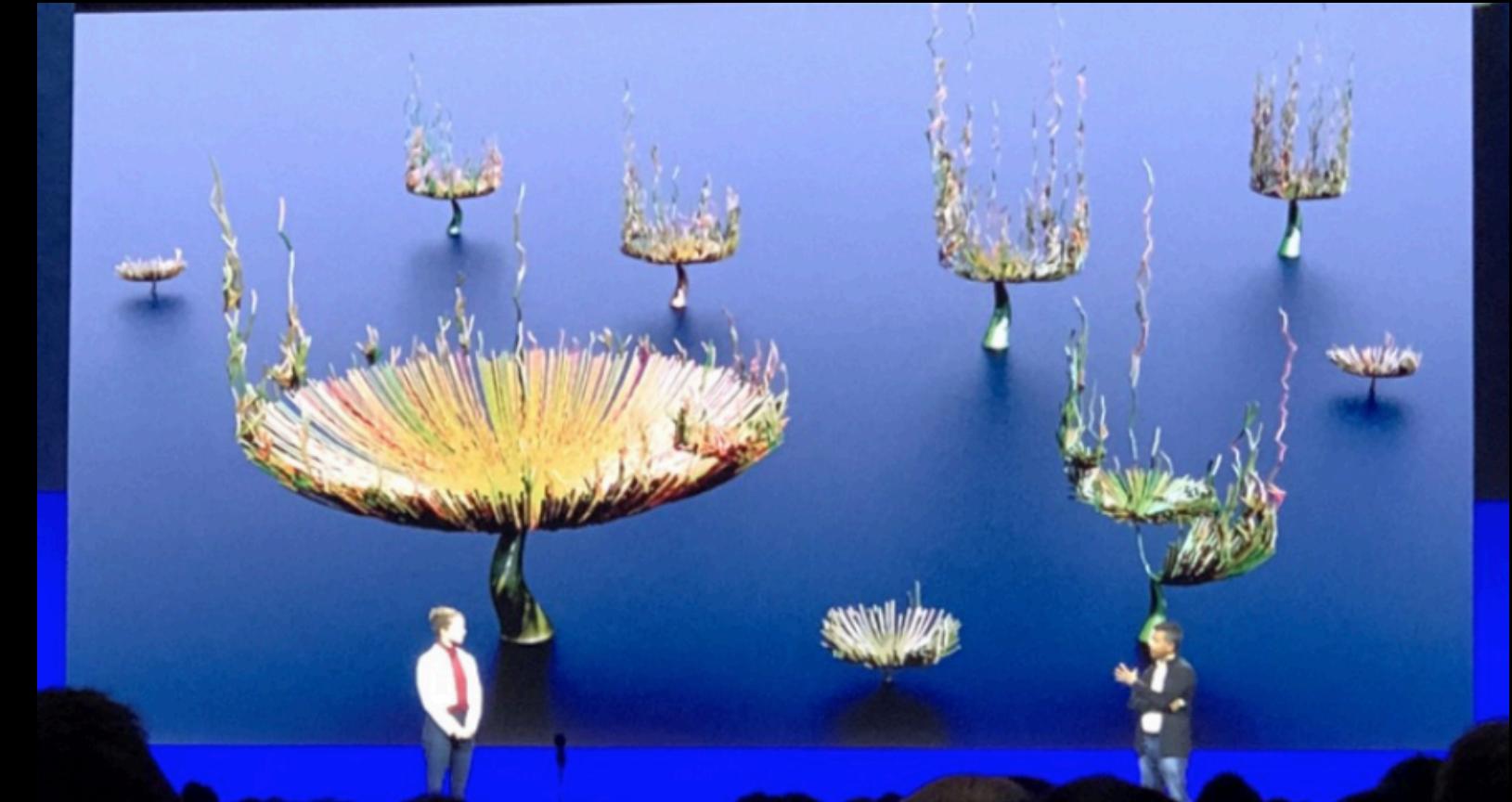
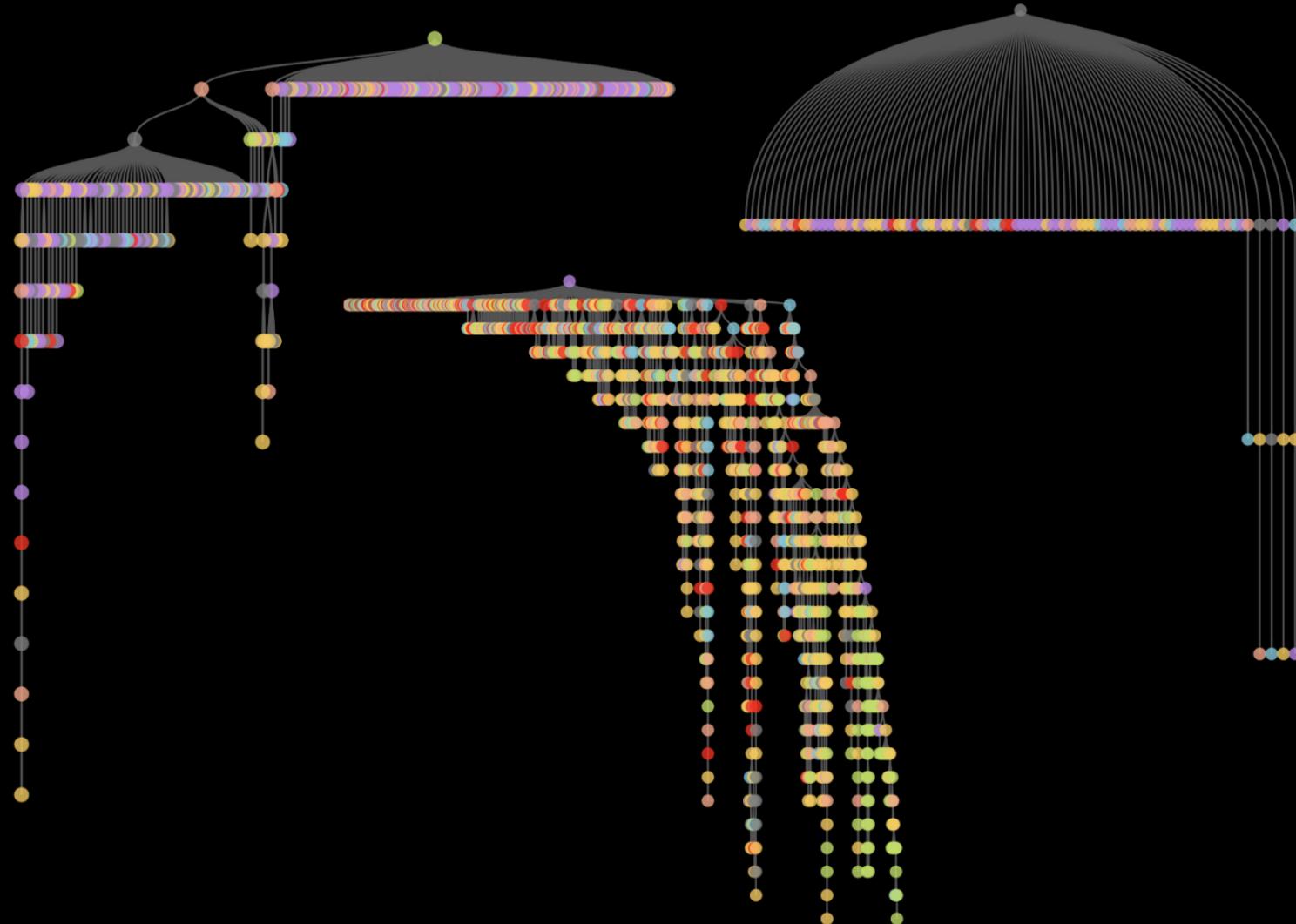
Wikipedia



Readings: History Flow, Viegas



Negative retweets



**Readings: Mendler, Media Lab,
Vosoughi (optional)**

Conclusion...

- A. The use of networked media platforms **flattens** the structure of society.
- B. This new structure allows for **better information spread and mobilization**.
- C. At the same time, the participatory nature of networked social media platforms **removes effective power (control) from society**: Whenever change tries to be implemented, **it is faced with counter-change mobilisation**.
- D. Crowdsourcing cannot overcome these blockages via **morally viable methods**.
- E. So on the one hand, we **CAN MOBILISE BETTER** (through social media), but we do not **HAVE ENOUGH POWER TO EXECUTE THE SOLUTION**.

Reprise: Cebrian



Conclusion...

- 1. You always need mass media.**
- 2. You can rally people, but your opponent does as well**
(Often using the very same platform you thought you could only benefit from.)
- 3. The hardest problems are the most vulnerable to attack.**
3.1. The most sophisticated operations you ask from the crowd, the most difficult to defend as sabotage becomes almost impossible to detect.
- 4. Security and freedom form complex, dynamical tradeoffs.**
4.1 The most challenging problems need freedom to find a solution.
- 5. Algorithmic solutions may find themselves in an (apparent) zero-sum game against a crowdsourced solution.**
(Luddites will rise again!)

Reprise: Cebrian



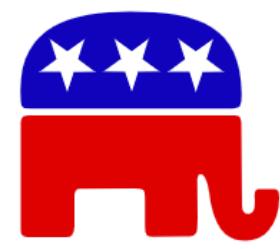
Newsmaker

Trust panel

Which values do you identify yourself with? Please select an option.



Liberal



Conservative

Please specify your trust in the following news sources:

I trust Al-Jazeera.

Strongly disagree Disagree Don't know Agree Strongly agree

I trust CNN.

Strongly disagree Disagree Don't know Agree Strongly agree

I trust Fox News.

Strongly disagree Disagree Don't know Agree Strongly agree

Select Topic

Choose a topic below to write your story:



Second night of unrest in Kenosha after US police shoot Black man



Media instantly pan GOP convention headlined by Trump and his son



Kellyanne Conway announces she's leaving the White House



Left-Wing Protesters Intimidate Diners in Charlotte



Police-involved shooting in Wisconsin prompts violent protest: report

Create your story!

Click on the left and right of story components to explore possible choices. Hit submit at the bottom when you are happy with your story.

Senate GOP hedges on attending Trump's convention amid coronavirus uptick

... - The dramatically scaled-down Republican National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina, will be closed to the press, a convention spokesperson and Republican official familiar with the plans tell CNN.

Reporters will not be allowed on site as RNC delegates vote to formally nominate President Donald Trump as the 2020 Republican presidential nominee, but the vote will be livestreamed, the Republican official said.

THE 2020 REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION: WHAT TO KNOW

"Given the health restrictions and limitations in place within the state of North Carolina, we are planning for the Charlotte activities to be closed press Friday, August 21 -- Monday, August 24," the RNC convention spokesperson said in a statement Saturday.

"We are happy to let you know if this changes, but we are working within the parameters set before us by state and local guidelines regarding the number of people who can attend events," the spokesperson said.

Submit

Readings: Anderton Thesis (opt)



Viral Communications
September 2020

Andrew Lippman

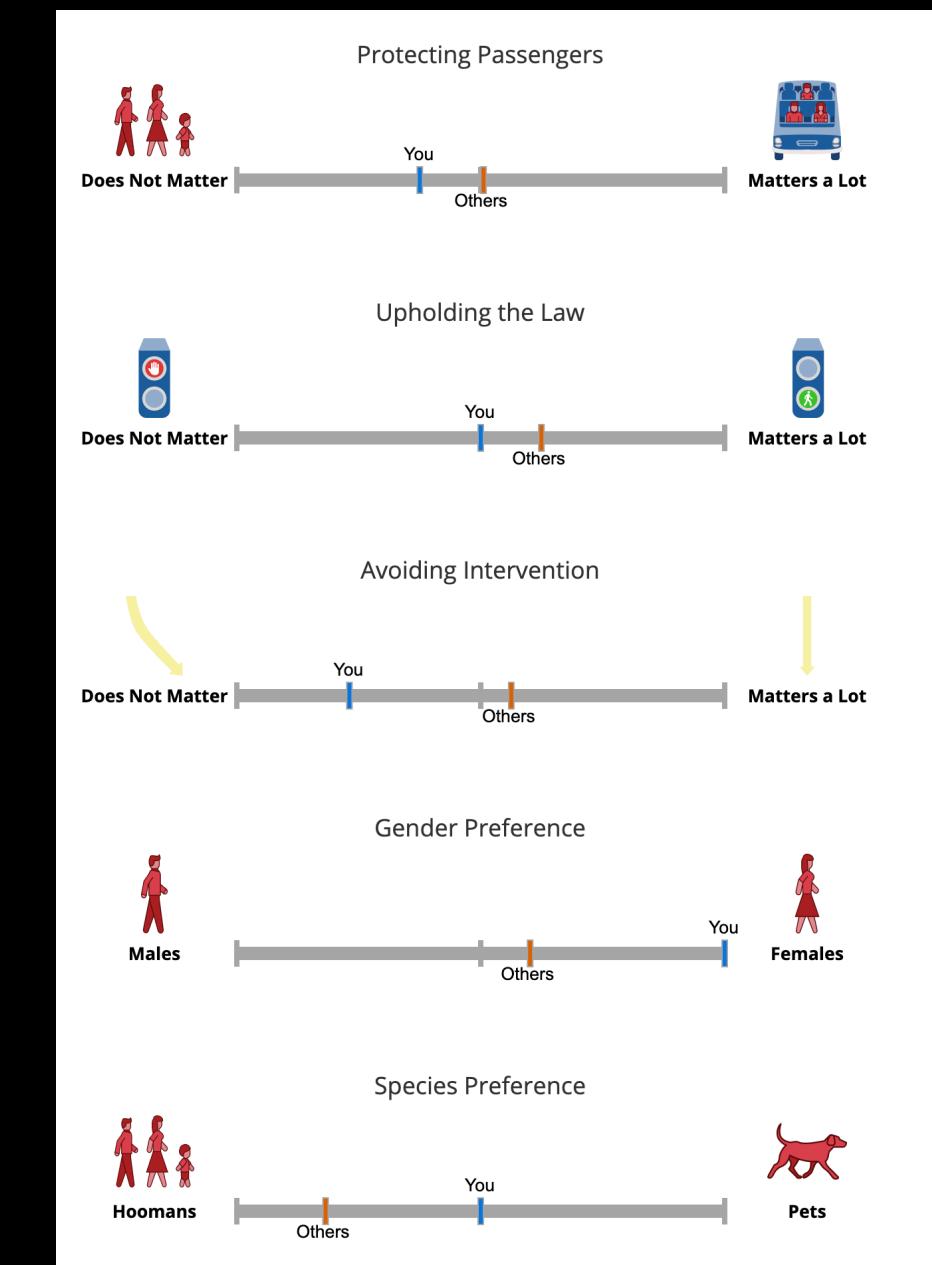
Moral Machine

What should the self-driving car do?

The image shows two side-by-side道德机器 (Moral Machine) scenarios. Both scenarios feature a blue self-driving car on a road with four lanes. In the left scenario, the car is heading towards five people tied to the road. A person in a red dress stands near a set of traffic lights, which are currently green. A large yellow arrow points to the right, indicating the car's path if it swerves. In the right scenario, the car is heading towards five people tied to the road. A person in a red dress stands near a set of traffic lights, which are currently green. A large yellow arrow points to the right, indicating the car's path if it swerves.

Show Description

Show Description



Readings: Rahwan



GifGif

ing hard to bring new
res to GifGif.
[GifGif](#) for updates.

GIFGIF

Search | Results | About

Which better expresses **satisfaction**? 



Info Share

Achievements Import | Export | Delete Your votes: 777 Analysis: Satisfaction Global votes: 2492759

Best  Worst 

ing hard to bring new
res to GifGif.
[GifGif](#) for updates.

GIFGIF

Search | Results | About

Ascending Descending Score Variance Animate On

- Amusement
- Anger
- Contempt
- Contentment
- Disgust
- Embarrassment
- Excitement
- Fear
- Guilt
- Happiness
- Pleasure
- Pride
- Relief
- Sadness
- Satisfaction
- Shame
- Surprise

#	Score
#1	Score: 0.879
#2	Score: 0.858
#3	Score: 0.843
#4	Score: 0.837
#5	Score: 0.832
#6	Score: 0.818
#7	Score: 0.817
#8	Score: 0.81
#9	Score: 0.794
#10	Score: 0.792
#11	Score: 0.776
#12	Score: 0.774
#13	Score: 0.774
#14	Score: 0.773
#15	Score: 0.772

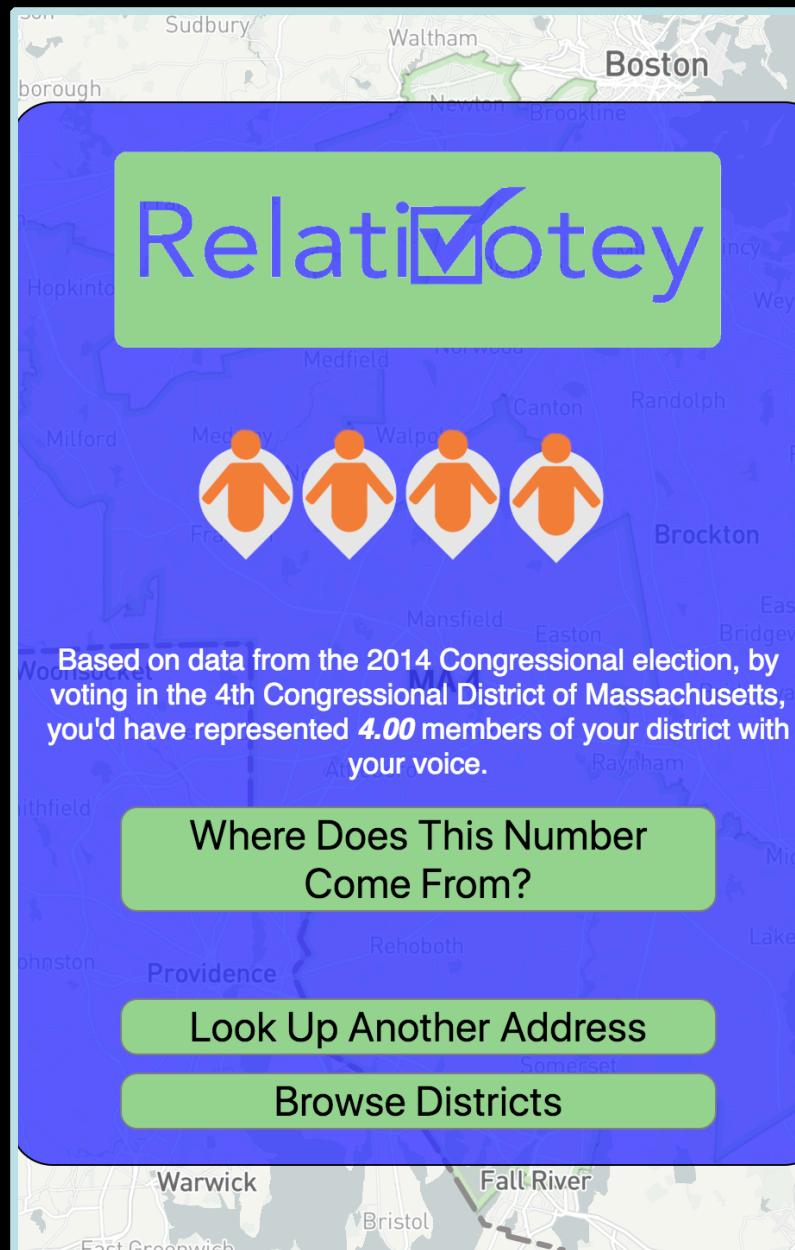
Next



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September 2020

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Organizing/Mobilizing



Additional Cebrian References of use

Time-Critical Social Mobilization. **Science** (2011)

Limits of Social Mobilization. **PNAS** (2013)

Crowdsourcing contest dilemma. **Nature Scientific Reports** (2014).

Reflecting on the DARPA Red Balloon Challenge. **Comm of the ACM** (2011)

Finding red balloons with split contracts: robustness to individuals' selfishness. **STOC** (2012)

Verification in referral based crowdsourcing. **PLOS ONE** (2012)

Bandit strategies in social search. **EPJ Data Science** (2016)

Targeted social mobilization in a global manhunt. **PLOS ONE** (2013)

Global Manhunt Pushes the Limits of Social Mobilization. **Computer** (2013)

Error & attack tolerance of collective problem solving. **EPJ Data Science** (2014)

Beyond Viral **Comm of the ACM** (2016)

