

THE RESISTANCE AGAINST ALGORITHM MONOPOLIES

Claudio Agosti @_vecna, Namur, 2019-10-31



**Tracking
Exposed**

Knowledge is freedom



Extended
and
Refined

KNUTH

The Art of Computer Programming

Combinatorial Algorithms, Part 1

VOLUME
4A



Updated
and
Revised

KNUTH

The Art of Computer Programming

Sorting and Searching

VOLUME
3
Second Edition



Updated
and
Revised

KNUTH

The Art of Computer Programming

Seminumerical Algorithms

VOLUME
2
Third Edition



Updated
and
Revised

KNUTH

The Art of Computer Programming

Fundamental Algorithms

VOLUME
1
Third Edition



● Artificial intelligence
Search term

● Algorithms
Search term

+ Add comparison

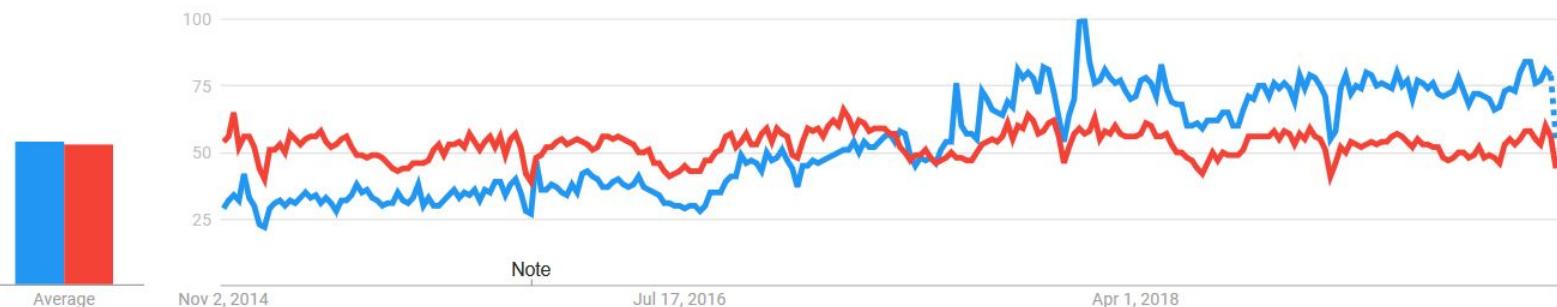
Worldwide ▾

Past 5 years ▾

All categories ▾

Web Search ▾

Interest over time





The Economist

MAY 6TH-12TH 2017

The world's most valuable resource

Data and the new rules
of competition

Crunch time in France

Ten years on: banking after the crisis

South Korea's unfinished revolution

Biology, but without the cells

“Which data do they take?”

- the classic, *and completely fair*, question



We don't know what *personal data* means!



We don't know what *personal data* means!

1. What we give

- a. Helps other find us
- b. We can lie!
- c. We can be creative

Claudio Agosti



Claudio Agosti

Director, R&D at tracking.exposed

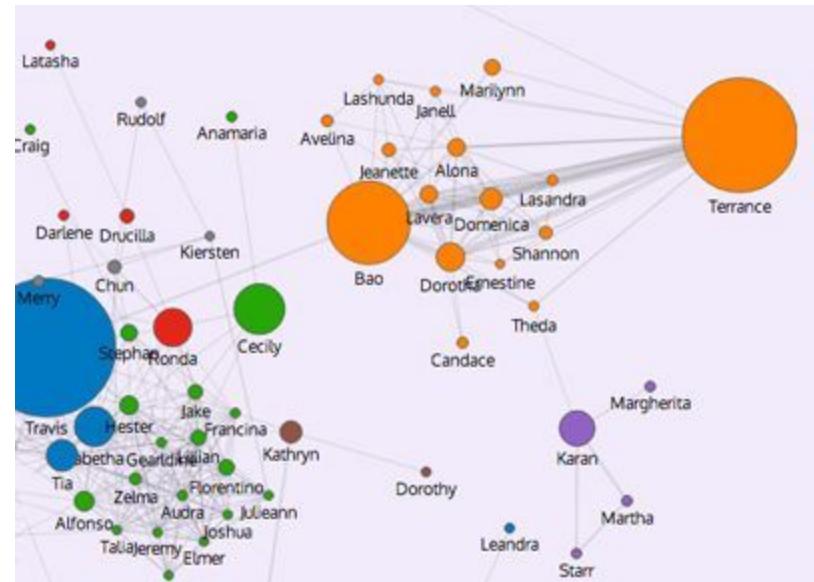
Italy · [500+ connections](#) · [Contact info](#)



We don't know what *personal data* means!

1. What we give 2. What is observed

- a. Visited pages
- b. Who you speak with
- c. Who you tag
- d. Who tags you
- e. Which objects in pictures
- f. Who comments..



We don't know what *personal data* means!

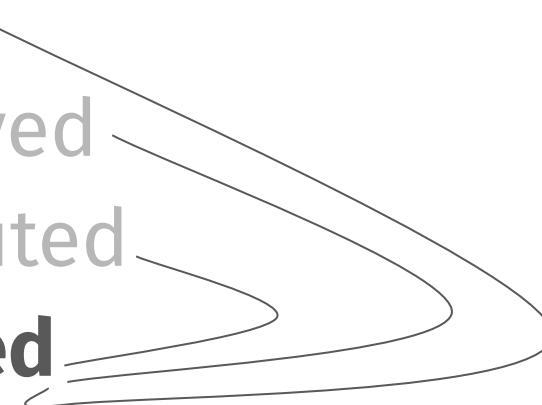
1. What we give
2. What is observed
3. **What is attributed**

95% Programmer
80% Italian Native
60% English reader
100% Migrant
60% Single
70% income class X
80% Spanish speaker
...



We don't know what *personal data* means!

1. What we give
2. What is observed
3. What is attributed
4. What is **inferred**



<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/mar/28/all-the-data-facebook-google-has-on-you-privacy>

<https://www.uncomputing.org/?p=1983>

GDPR: we can ask back all our personal data, but

1. What we give
2. What is observed

3. What is attributed
4. What is inferred

Some awareness

No clue

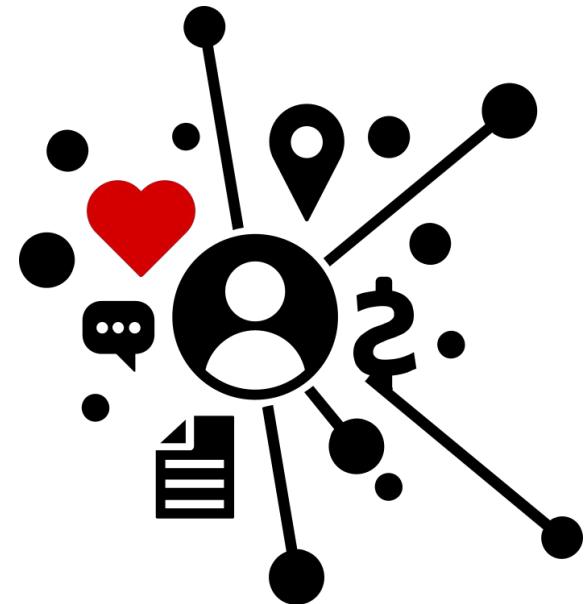


Personal data is one of the key protection

Every form of customer discrimination pass through the analysis of their profiles, more the customers successfully protect these data, and less the company might apply predictive algorithms.

GDPR, article 22: “*The data subject shall have the right not to be subject to a decision based solely on automated processing, including profiling, which produces legal effects concerning him or her or similarly significantly affects him or her. **”

* do not apply if consent is given.



What is algorithm unfairness?

Riders often experience undue punishment when the platforms' algorithmic management systems fail to accurately model the complex realities of on-demand food delivery

- **Order Assignment Algorithms:** Order assignment is largely determined by a rider's live geolocation
- **Dynamic Pricing Algorithms:** These algorithms determine the amount of money a rider receives for delivering an order
- **Shift Booking Algorithms:** Deliveroo requires riders to book or reserve hour-long shifts in order to work, whereas Uber allows riders to go online anytime



<https://www.infobae.com/sociedad/2019/10/05/la-historia-detras-de-la-foto-viral-sobre-la-mama-repartidora-de-pedidosya/>

Thesis and Blogpost by Emma Knight:

<https://www.emmakknight.com/exploring-algorithmic-management>

False dichotomies

- If a better service arise, people will move there.
- If you don't like to be on Facebook, just don't use it.



A small commentary on October 2019 events



Mozilla unveils 28 horror stories about YouTube's recommendation algorithm



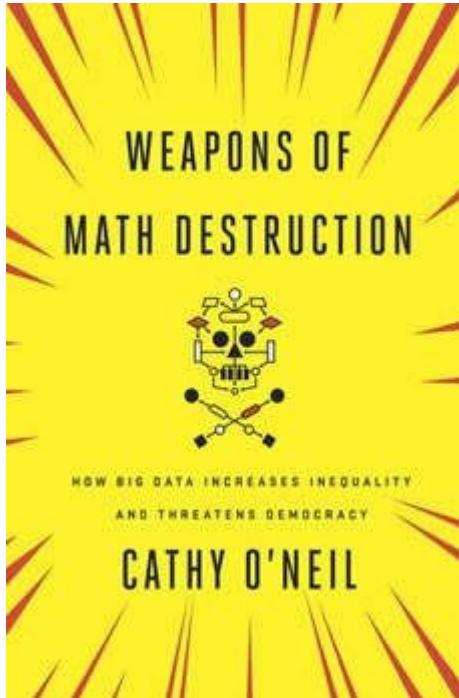
by MÅR MÅSSON MAACK — 15 days ago in GOOGLE



What if algorithms did the hiring at Fox News?

By Cathy O'Neil

May 26, 2017, 6:30 a.m. EDT



Algorithms Can Be Racist, But At Least They Can Be Fixed



KEVIN DRUM
Political Blogger
[Bio](#) | [Follow](#)



Octavio Jones | Times/Tampa Bay Times via ZUMA



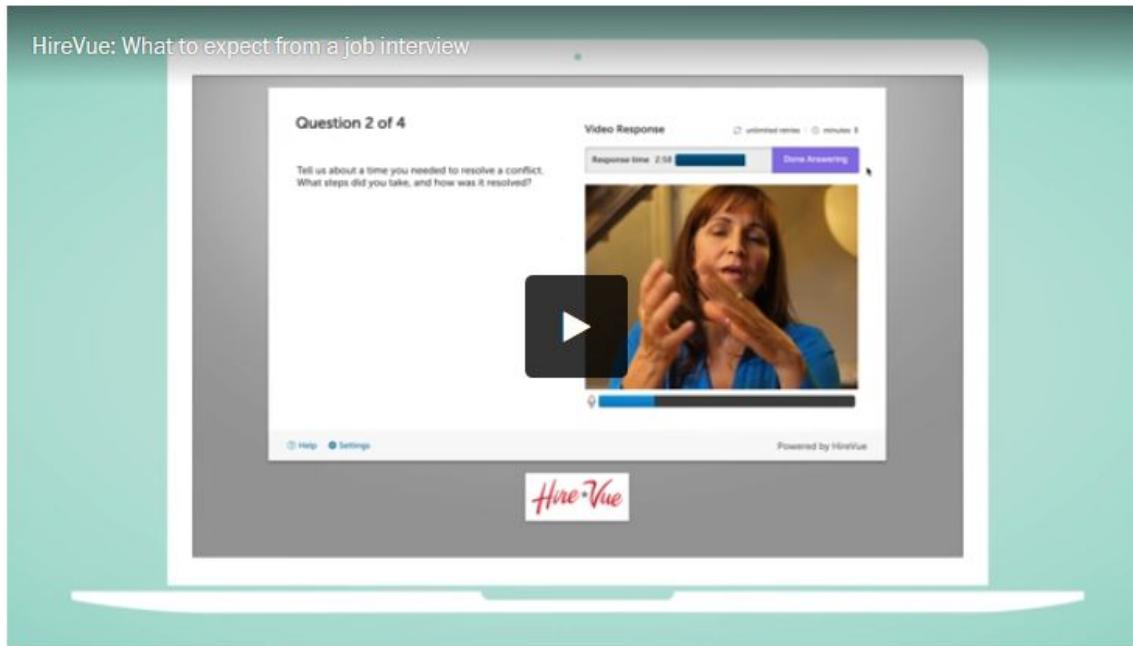
Digital dystopia: how algorithms punish the poor



Motka Manjhi paid the ultimate price when the computer glitched and his thumbprint – his key into Aadhaar – went unrecognised. His subsistence rations were stopped, he was forced to skip meals and he grew thin. On 22 May, he collapsed outside his home and died.

A face-scanning algorithm increasingly decides whether you deserve the job

HireVue claims it uses artificial intelligence to decide who's best for a job. Outside experts call it 'profoundly disturbing.'



This video by HireVue explains the tech firm's artificial intelligence-driven assessments for potential job candidates. (HireVue)

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez grilled Zuckerberg on Facebook's controversial ad policies, and he struggled to answer her questions

Lauren Fries Oct 23, 2019, 11:49 PM



A step back in 2016



A step back in 2016

- AD & **misinformation**



Army of Jesus
Sponsored · 3 likes

Like Page

Today Americans are able to elect a president with godly moral principles. Hillary is a Satan, and her crimes and lies had proved just how evil she is. And even though Donald Trump isn't a saint by any means, he's at least an honest man and he cares deeply for this country. My vote goes for him!

SATAN: IF I WIN CLINTON WINS!
JESUS: NOT IF I CAN HELP IT!

PRESS 'LIKE' TO HELP JESUS WIN!

97 Reactions · 15 Comments · 29 Shares

Like Comment Share

A step back in 2008

- AD&**information**

POLITICS

Exclusive: How Democrats Won The Data War In 2008

MARC AMBINDER OCT 5, 2009

Part one in a three-part series: *the 2008 Data Wars, Re-examined*. Later today:

Catalist's after action report, posted in full. Tomorrow: Inside the Service Employees International Union's sophisticated targeting.

Beware the Smart Campaign



Zeynep Tufekci NOV. 16, 2012



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“I'm changing the goal I give our product teams from focusing on helping you find relevant content to helping you have more meaningful social interactions”

January 11, 2018

Bringing People Closer Together



"I'm changing the goal I give our product teams from focusing on helping you find relevant content to helping you have more meaningful social interactions"

January 11, 2018

Bringing People Closer Together



Facebook told advertisers it can identify teens feeling 'insecure' and 'worthless'

Leaked documents said to describe how the social network shares psychological insights on young people with advertisers



Facebook allowed advertisers to target 'Jew haters'

Embarrassing discovery that Facebook let advertisers target users interested in antisemitic topics comes as the social network's ad practices are under scrutiny

• **Opinion: Why does Facebook allow advertisers to target 'Jew haters'?**

“I’m changing the goal I give our product teams from focusing on helping you find relevant content to helping you have more meaningful social interactions”

January 11, 2018

Bringing People Closer Together



Facebook isn't free speech, it's algorithmic amplification optimized for outrage

Jon Evans @rezendi / 3:00 pm CEST • October 20, 2019

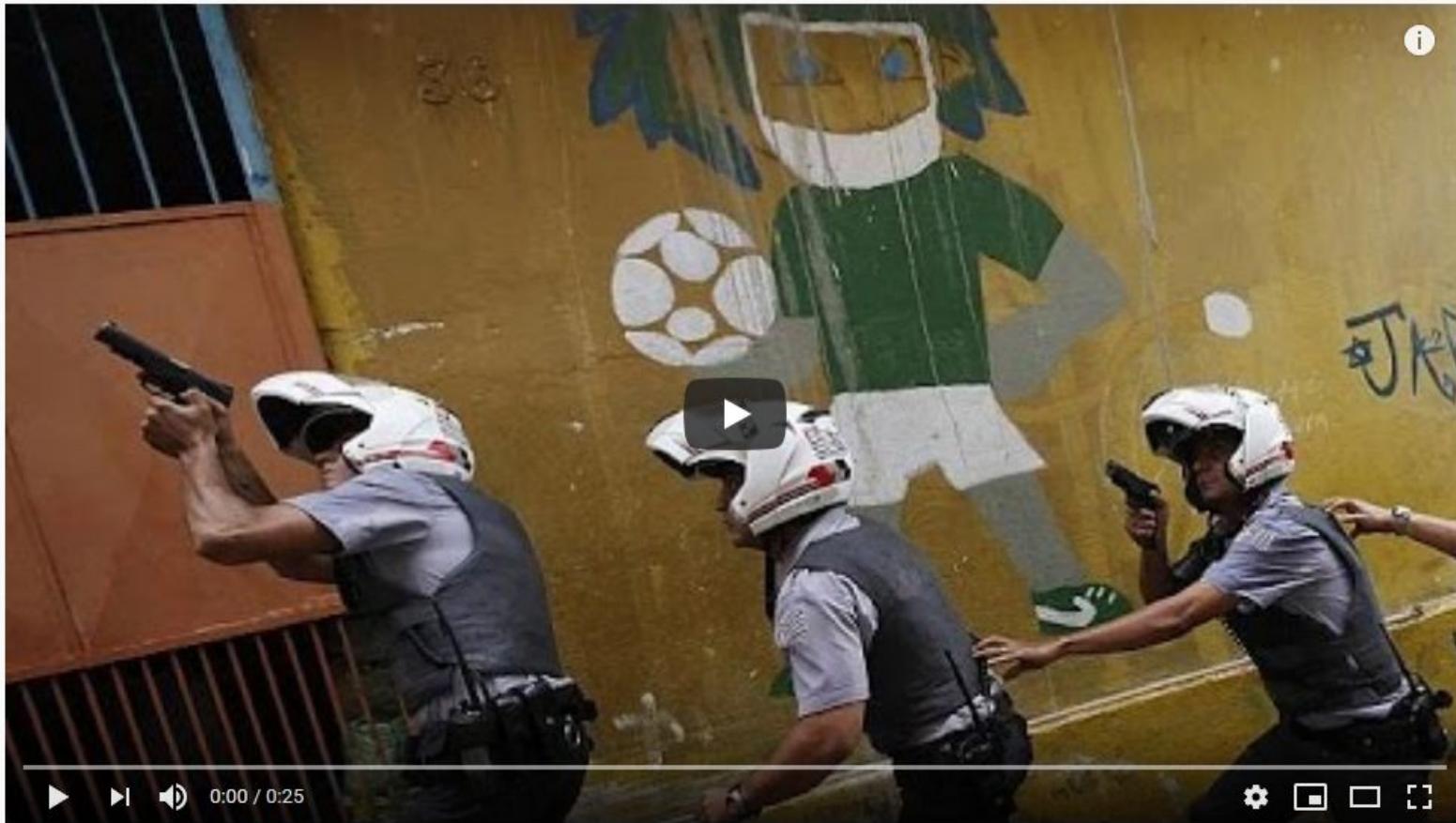
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This week Mark Zuckerberg gave a [speech](#) in which he extolled “giving everyone a voice” and fighting “to uphold a wide a definition of freedom of expression as possible.” That sounds great, of course! Freedom of expression is a cornerstone, if not the cornerstone, of liberal democracy. Who could be opposed to that?

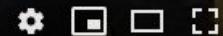
A personalization algorithm
can easily take the shape of
an oppression tool.

It imposes on you, values you
might not care about, and
you don't retain any agency.

i



▶ ▶ 🔍 0:00 / 0:25



Italian tourist killed after GPS system leads him into Rio favela

15,880 views • Dec 10, 2016

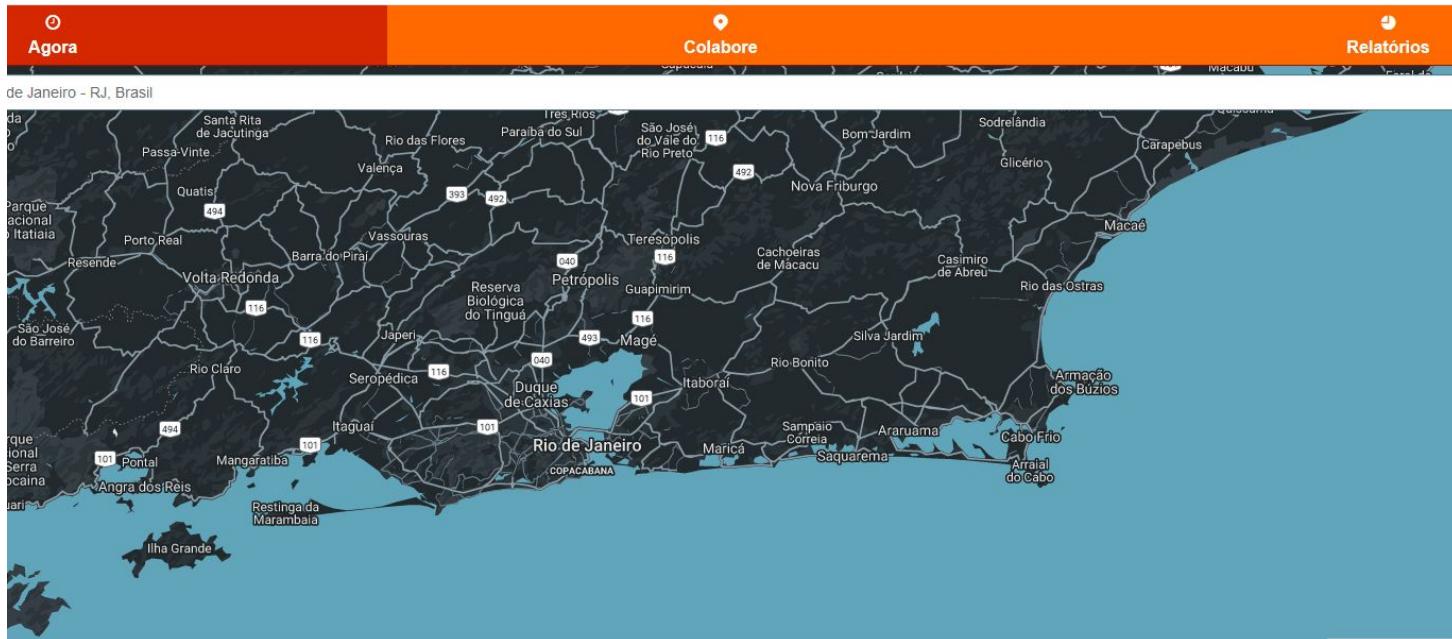
15

15

SHARE

SAVE

...



NOTIFICAÇÕES DE TIROTEIOS E DISPAROS DE ARMAS DE FOGO PUBLICADAS NO FOGO CRUZADO



Tiroteio com vítimas fatais



Tiroteio com feridos



Tiroteio sem vítimas



Múltiplos tiroteios no local

O mapa apresenta as notificações dos últimos 7 dias, para visualizar um período diferente, utilize os filtros.

YouTube

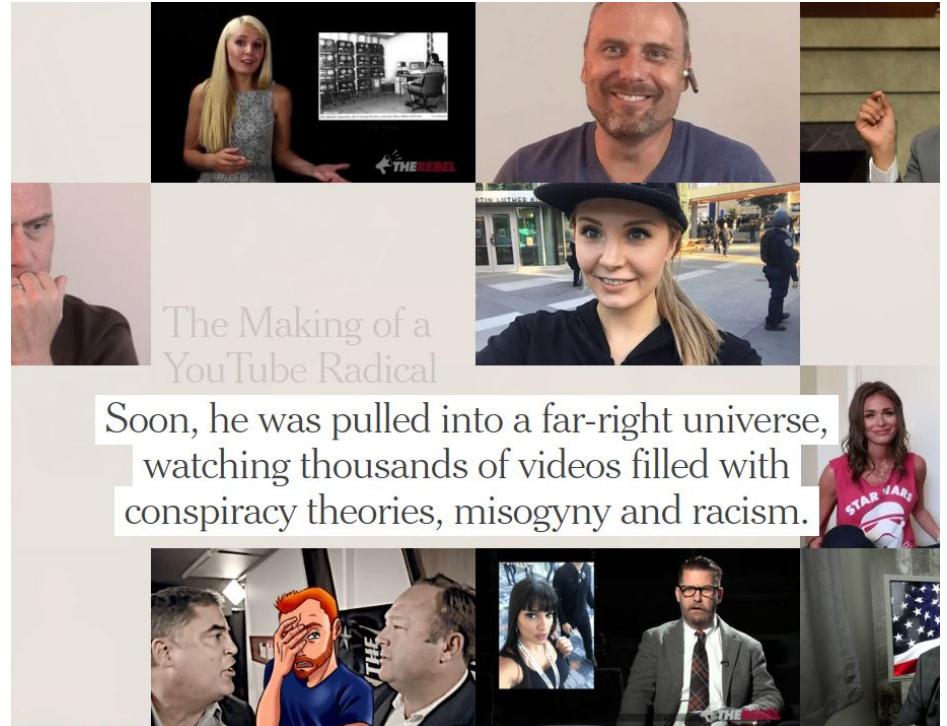
The New York Times

THE INTERPRETER

How YouTube Radicalized Brazil



Matheus Dominguez, who said YouTube was crucial to shifting his political views to the far right, recording a YouTube video in Niterói, Brazil. Dado Galdieri for The New York Times



The Making of a YouTube Radical

Soon, he was pulled into a far-right universe, watching thousands of videos filled with conspiracy theories, misogyny and racism.

Personalization algorithms can be analyzed only with multiple points of observations.



YouTube DE

seawatch 3

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SEA WATCH 3: Rettungsschiff beschlagnahmt - Kapitän droht lange Haft

WELT Nachrichtensender • 11K views • 1 day ago

Das Schiff der deutschen Hilfsorganisation Sea-Watch ist nach dem unerlaubten Anlegen im Hafen der italienischen Insel ...

New

Wer Menschenleben rettet, ist kein Verbrecher! Lasst uns die Seenotretter retten!!

janboehm • 175K views • 19 hours ago

HIER SPENDEN: <http://www.leetchi.com/de/c/wpV8ag0r> Hey Leute, hier schreiben ...

New

Einheimische von Lampedusa reagieren auf die Ankunft der "Sea-Watch 3"

RT Deutsch • 784 views • 2 hours ago

Die Migranten vom Sea-Watch-Rettungsschiff wurden am Samstag im Flüchtlingszentrum von Lampedusa untergebracht, nachdem sie ...

New CC

Sea Watch 3 attracca a Lampedusa, Sperona Motovedetta gdf Carola Rackete arrestata

NNMAGAZINE TV CHANNEL • 9.6K views • 23 hours ago

Il video è di proprietà di NNMAGAZINE qualsiasi riproduzione INTERA oppure PARZIALE, verrà segnalata immediatamente a ...

New

La Sea Watch scontra la motovedetta della Gdf sulla banchina di Lampedusa

Vista Agenzia Televisiva Nazionale • 70K views • 1 day ago

(Agenzia Vista) Lampedusa, 29 giugno 2019 Sono arrivati applausi e fischi da parte dei presenti a Lampedusa nella banchina ...

New

L'arresto di Carola Rackete - Sea Watch 3

Salutame a Socrate • 24K views • 1 day ago

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New

Sea Watch 3 sbarca a Lampedusa, arrestata la comandante Carola Rackete: ecco perché

Fanpage.it • 184K views • 1 day ago

Arrestata dalla guardia di finanza a Lampedusa la comandante della nave Sea Watch 3: l'imbarcazione è approdata nella notte ...

New



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New CC



La Sea Watch scontra la motovedetta della Gdf sulla banchina di Lampedusa
Vista Agenzia Televiva Nazionale • 71K views • 1 day ago

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New



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faz • 15K views • 1 day ago

Die „Sea-Watch 3“ hat trotz eines Verbots der italienischen Regierung im Hafen von Lampedusa angelegt. Dort angekommen ...

New



I negrieri della Sea Watch 3
Matteo Brandi • 17K views • 3 days ago

La ONG tedesca entra forzatamente in acque territoriali italiane nonostante i divieti. Siamo di fronte a negrieri che vogliono agire ...

New





Home



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FILTER



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New

2:25



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New

5:51



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RT Deutsch • 784 views • 2 hours ago

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New CC

2:15



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NNMAGAZINE TV CHANNEL • 9.6K views • 23 hours ago

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New

6:00



La Sea Watch scontra la motovedetta della Gdf sulla banchina di Lampedusa
Vista Agenzia Televiva Nazionale • 70K views • 1 day ago

(Agenzia Vista) Lampedusa, 29 giugno 2019 Sono arrivate applausi e fischi da parte dei presenti a Lampedusa nella banchina ...

New

2:00



L'arresto di Carola Rackete - Sea Watch 3
Salutame a Socrate • 24K views • 1 day ago

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New

2:00



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Fanpage.it • 184K views • 1 day ago

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New

1:38



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WELT Nachrichtensender • 11K views • 1 day ago

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1:38



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1:33



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New

8:21



We compare the recommended videos

Suggestion ..	coleslaw-honeydew-parsnip 2019-02-20 16:41:46.478	Watcher / Saving Time collards-icecream-peach 2019-02-22 11:01:02.982	guava-sandwich-cobbler 2019-03-05 22:23:29.33
1	Trade: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (..	Mexican Elections: Last Week Tonight with J..	Gene Editing: Last Week Tonight with John O..
2	Trade: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (..	Trade: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (..	Michael Cohen Testifies to Congress About T..
3	Vaccines: Last Week Tonight with John Olive..	Одеса трамвай (Centrum), 13.-15.09.2018	Mexican Elections: Last Week Tonight with J..
4	J.S.Bach - French Suites	Aliens - The Ultimate Action Film	Tobacco: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver..
5	Georg Friedrich Handel Concerti Grossi Op 6 ..	STREIT MIT STAIGER - über Böhmermann, Hi..	Sinclair Broadcast Group: Last Week Tonight..
6	COLDPLAY - MIX (2016) - PART 1 [[LAS 10 ..	Far Cry: New Dawn, Apex Legends, Anno 180..	Dalai Lama: Last Week Tonight with John Oli..
7	How Thomas Friedman and Yuval Noah Hara..	Bedingungsloses Grundeinkommen - Ein Erfa..	Michael Cohen to Congress: Trump Is a Racis..
8	Trump vs. The World: Last Week Tonight wit..	Trump Undercuts His National Emergency D..	Jordan Peterson Destroys Q&A 25 February..
9	Retirement Plans: Last Week Tonight with J..	PLAYBOYS - Będę Twoim King Kongiem (DJ S..	Opioids: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver ..
10	Multilevel Marketing: Last Week Tonight wit..	Paweł Dudek - Kawa (Official Video) HD	Ivanka & Jared: Last Week Tonight with John..
11	Ivanka & Jared: Last Week Tonight with John..	Top 10 People Banned from Saturday Night L..	Sex Education: Last Week Tonight with John ..
12	Trump vs. Truth: Last Week Tonight with Joh..	Artikel 13 Axel Voss nennt YouTuber Lügner..	Auto Lending: Last Week Tonight with John ..
13	Stupid Watergate: Last Week Tonight with J..	Confederacy: Last Week Tonight with John O..	Nuclear Weapons: Last Week Tonight with J..
14	Coal: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (H..	Principles of Language Learning with Lydia ..	Doping: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (..
15	The Trump Presidency: Last Week Tonight wi..	Have Fun in Pjöngjang Doku ARTE	Astroturfing: Last Week Tonight with John O..
16	Brett Kavanaugh: Last Week Tonight with Jo..	Trade: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (..	Brexit III: Last Week Tonight with John Olive..
17	Gene Editing: Last Week Tonight with John O..	Saudi Arabia + Censorship In China Patriot ..	Journalism: Last Week Tonight with John Oli..
18	Dalai Lama: Last Week Tonight with John Oli..	Honest Trailers - The Oscars (2019)	Vaccines: Last Week Tonight with John Olive..
19	Drain the Swamp: Last Week Tonight with Jo..	Vaccines: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver..	Nuclear Waste: Last Week Tonight with John..
20	Tobacco: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver..	NRA TV: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver..	Student Loans Patriot Act with Hasan Minh..



How to run a test?

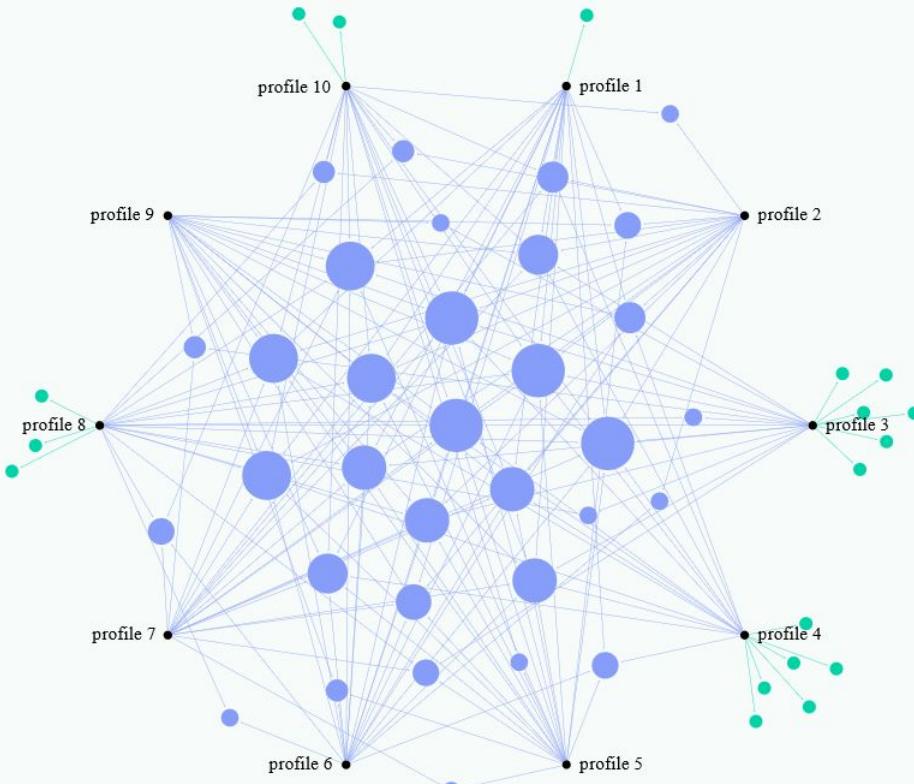
1. We had 10-12 students
2. A special tool develop by
<https://tracking.exposed>
3. (And we'll replicate tomorrow)



We call a browser **clean**
when no tracking agent are
present there



10 different students using their computers, open the same video at the same time. Here we compare the 20 related videos suggested



Legend

● Suggested only to one

● Suggested to more than one

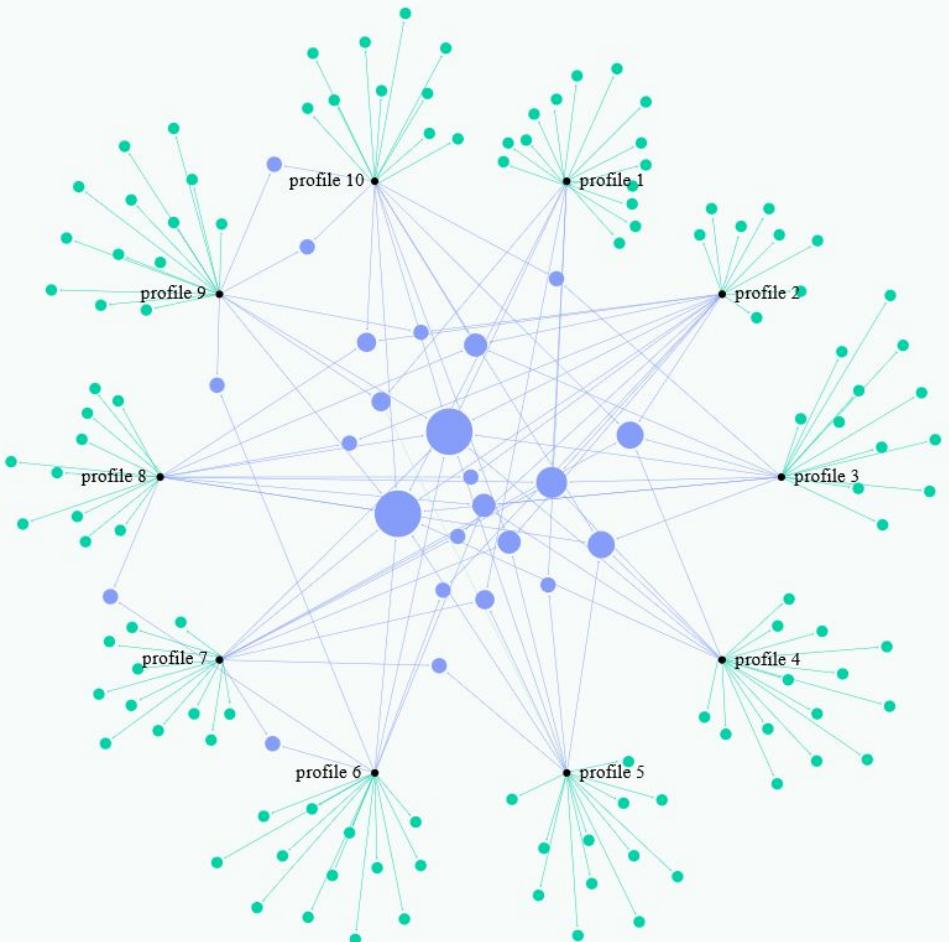
○ Number of occurrences

● User

What's the opposite of a
clean browser?

Dirty browsers: the one you
use daily!

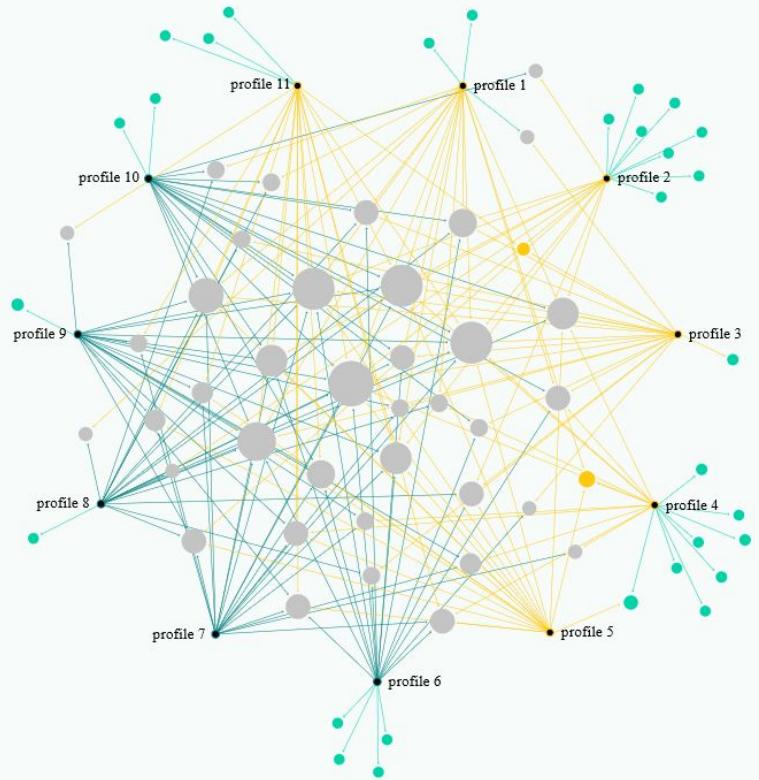




It is visually clear how the data points linked to the profiles cause personalized suggestions.

We have a starting point, we
have an end: let's play with
variables!





(clean browsers)
Green watch video A*
Yellow watch video B*

Then they watch the
same video, and we
compare the 20 related.

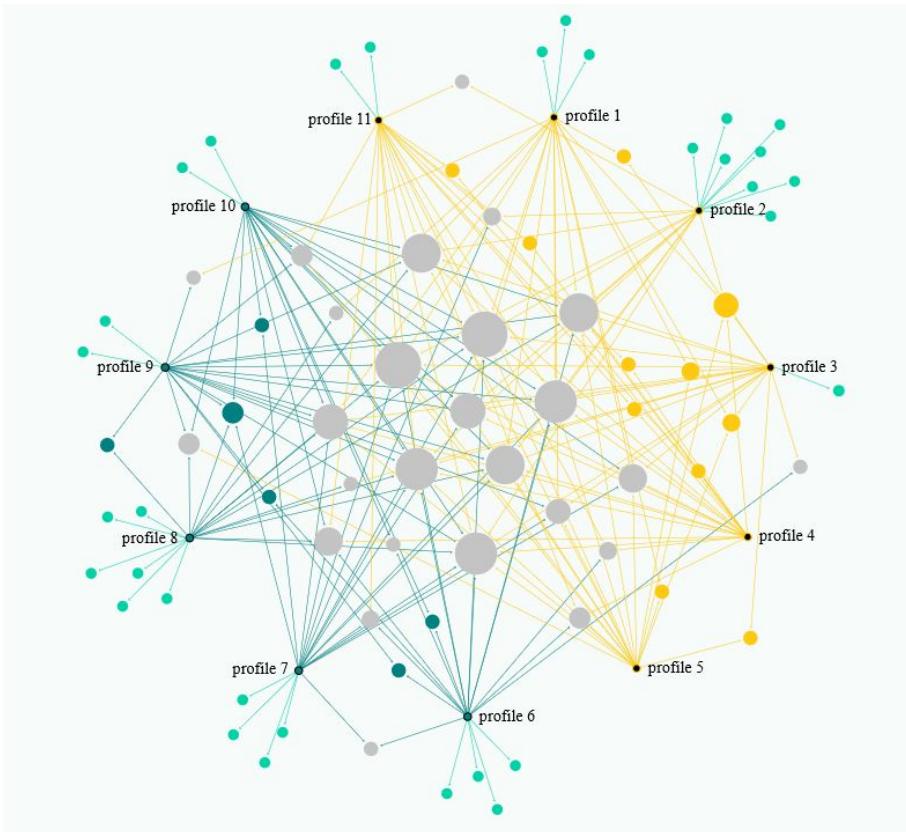
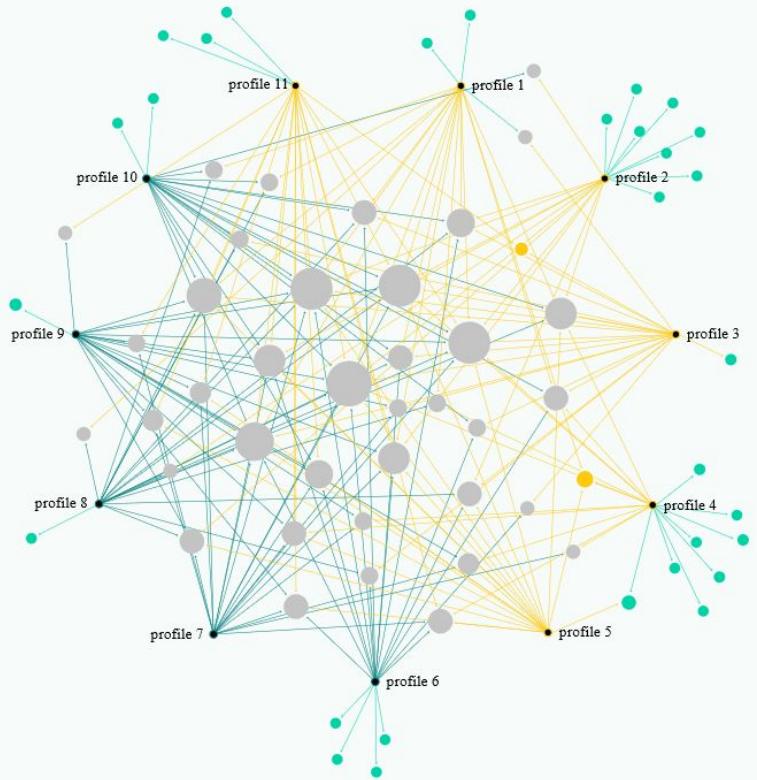
*for 20 seconds

We clean again the browsers

We did a very similar test.

video A and B, for 2 minutes



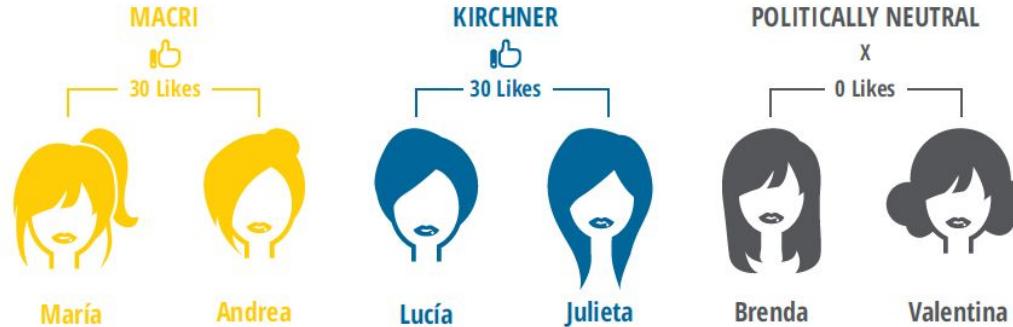


We did a similar test with Facebook

(...and published four papers about this)



- We begin analyzing *what facebook was sending* to people
- Algorithm has impact h24/365, but we focus on electoral campaign and *critical times*.



**What emerge in
your timeline is
only a fraction of
what you might be
originally
interested**

Hidden from all 6 profiles

9,532 posts

Seen by Andrea (M)
& Lucía (K)

640 posts

Seen by Andrea (M)
but not by Lucía (K)

552 posts

Seen by others but
not by Andrea (M)
or Lucía (K)

450 posts

Seen by Lucía (K)
but not by Andrea
(M)

429 posts

The public square as seen by Facebook

The public square
as seen by each of
our users

**What emerge in
your timeline is
only a fraction of
what you might be
originally
interested**

**But this was not
so new** 

Experimental evidence of massive-scale emotional contagion through social networks

Adam D. I. Kramer, Jamie E. Guillory, and Jeffrey T. Hancock

PNAS June 17, 2014 111 (24) 8788-8790; published ahead of print June 2, 2014 <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1320040111>

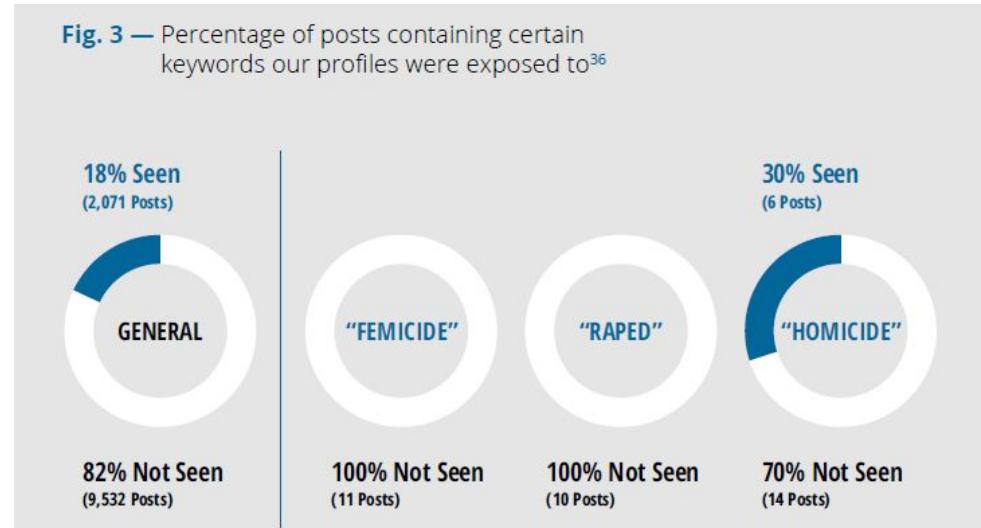
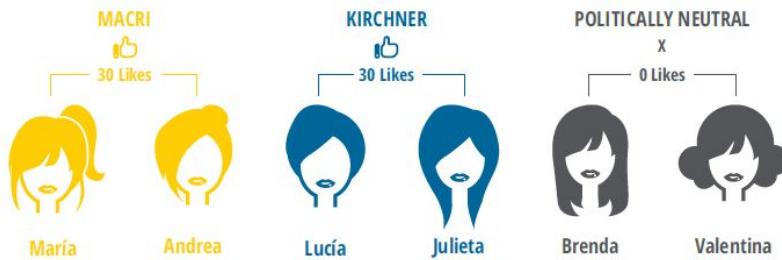
Edited by Susan T. Fiske, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, and approved March 25, 2014 (received for review October 23, 2013)

This article has corrections. Please see:

Editorial Expression of Concern: Experimental evidence of massivescale emotional cont
agion through social networks



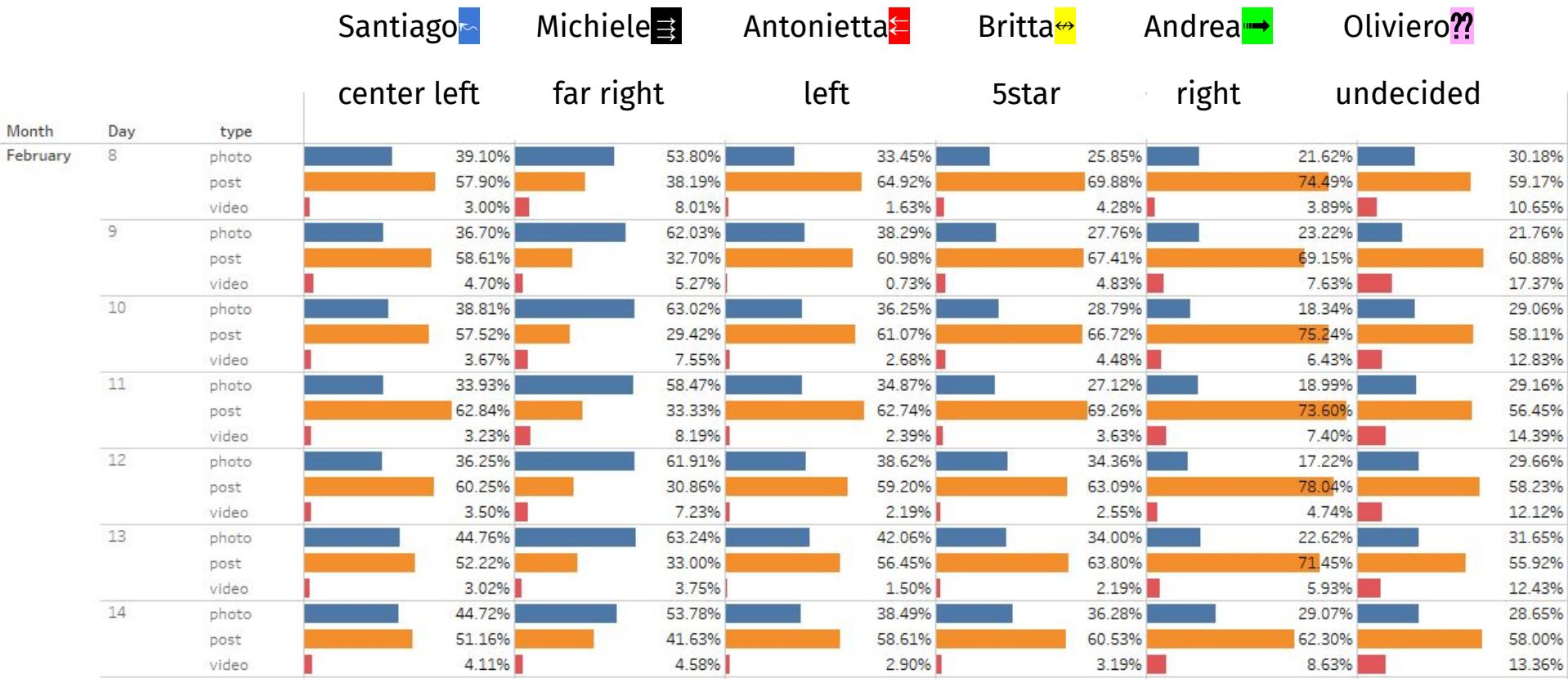
Algorithm analysis by difference



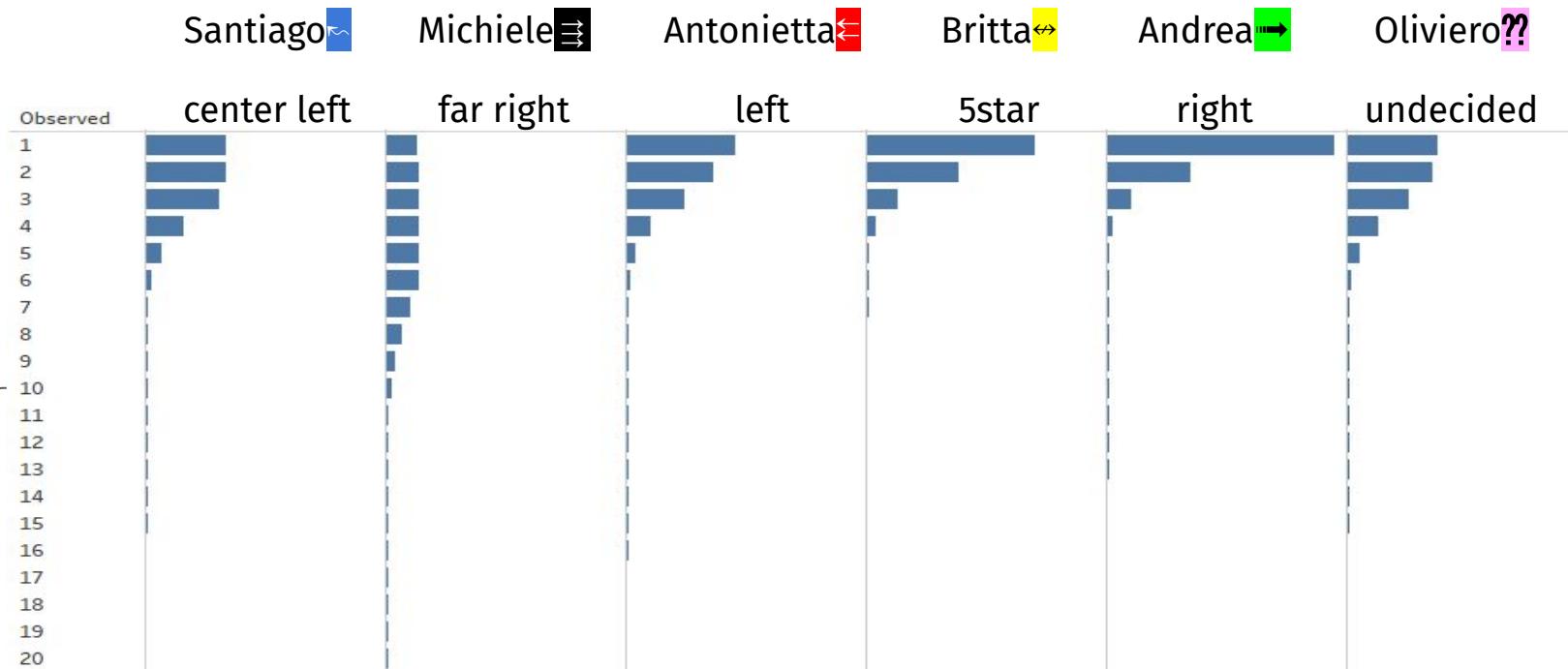
THE INVISIBLE CURATION OF CONTENT: Facebook's News Feed and our Information Diets

<https://webfoundation.org/research/the-invisible-curation-of-content-facesbooks-news-feed-and-our-information-diets>

Algorithm analysis by comparison



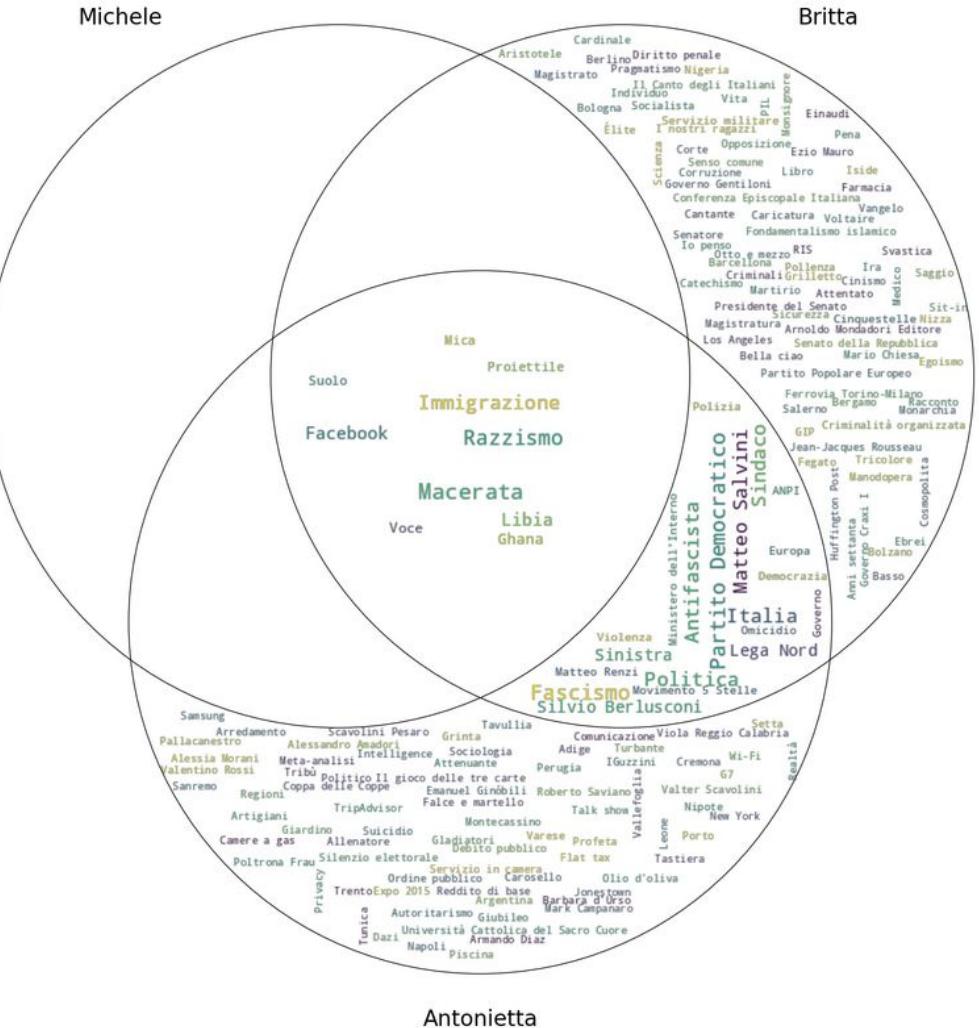
The repetition of the same post



Number of times the same post has been observed.
repeated by Facebook despite fresh content available

Filter bubble

might be an
imprecise term,
but...



Antonietta



Reality Check

Understanding the topics Facebook chooses to show you



Cantaloupe Lemon Shortbread

@cantaloupe-lemon-shortbread [i](#)

Overview

Timeline

All Types

Organic

Advertisements

Date

Author

Type

Original

October 30, 2019

Topics

- 3 Federation of Northern Syria – Rojava
- 3 Kurdish
- 1 Tamarack
- 1 Feminist
- 1 Democracy

Ryan Rising [Advertisement]

The Emergency Committee for Rojava and Tamarack are pleased to present a report by journalist and author Debbie Bookchin, who has recently returned from the autonomous Kurdish-led region known as Rojava. She will talk about why it is critical to defend this feminist, ecological, democratic project from the ongoing onslaught by Turkey and its jihadi allies as well as the Syrian regime, and how ideas of social ecology have influenced the Kurdish freedom movement. This report is part of the speaking tour that ECR envisions as a step towards building a nationwide network to support Rojava and the Kurdish movement at a time when they are in grave danger.

Seen once

[See Original](#)

Topics

- 2 Conversation
- 2 Dating coach
- 1 Going Live!
- 1 Online dating service

Alyssa Morin

Going live on Wednesday, 2 pm, with special guest, my gal pal Lindsay Chrisler! We're going to talk about how and when to bring your sexuality into online dating.

Seen once

[See Original](#)

“Accountable, Fair, Transparent, Explainable”

Because of the reputational and political backlash after the 2016 elections interference, Facebook, among the others, has been more closely kept accountable.



The screenshot shows the European Commission Press Release Database interface. At the top left is the European Commission logo, which consists of a blue square with twelve yellow stars in a circle, flanked by two stylized grey wavy lines. To the right of the logo, the text "EUROPEAN COMMISSION" is written in a large, bold, blue sans-serif font. Below this, a dark blue horizontal bar contains the text "Press Release Database" in white. Underneath the main title, there is a breadcrumb navigation bar with the text "European Commission > Press releases database > Press Release details". At the bottom right of the page, there are two links: "Back to the search results" with a left arrow icon, and "Expand" with a square icon containing a plus sign. The main content area below the header is currently empty, showing only a thin horizontal line.

Code of practice against disinformation: Commission takes note of the progress made by online platforms and urges them to step up their efforts

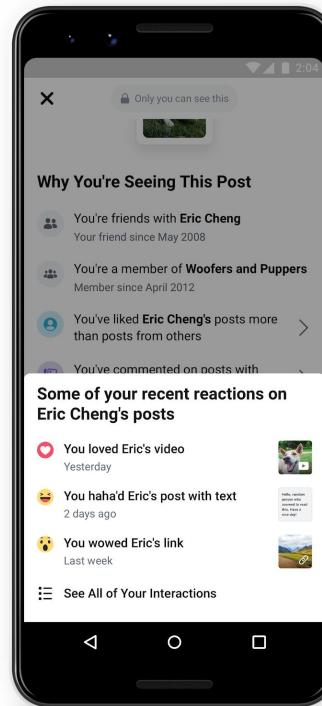
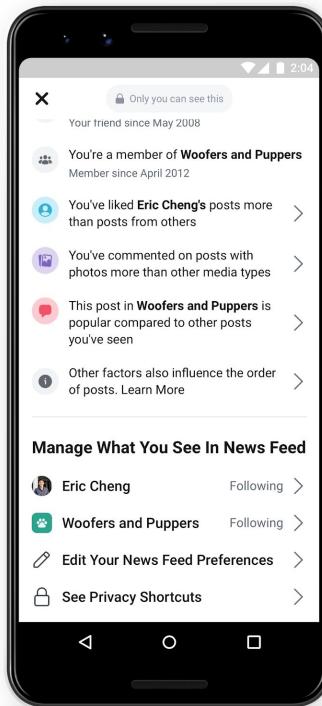
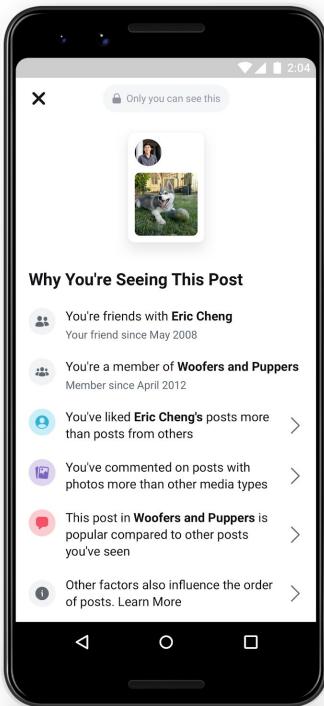
Brussels, 20 March 2019

“Accountable, Fair, Transparent, Explainable”

From: [REDACTED] (JUST)
To: [REDACTED] (COMM-MADRID); MOOZOVA Irena (JUST)
Cc: [REDACTED] (JUST); [REDACTED] (JUST); [REDACTED] (JUST);
[REDACTED] (JUST); JUST D3; [REDACTED] (JUST); [REDACTED] (JUST)
Subject: FLASH: meeting CAB Jourova and FB on changes being made to FB's newsfeed 2/4/19
Date: mercredi 3 avril 2019 09:14:13

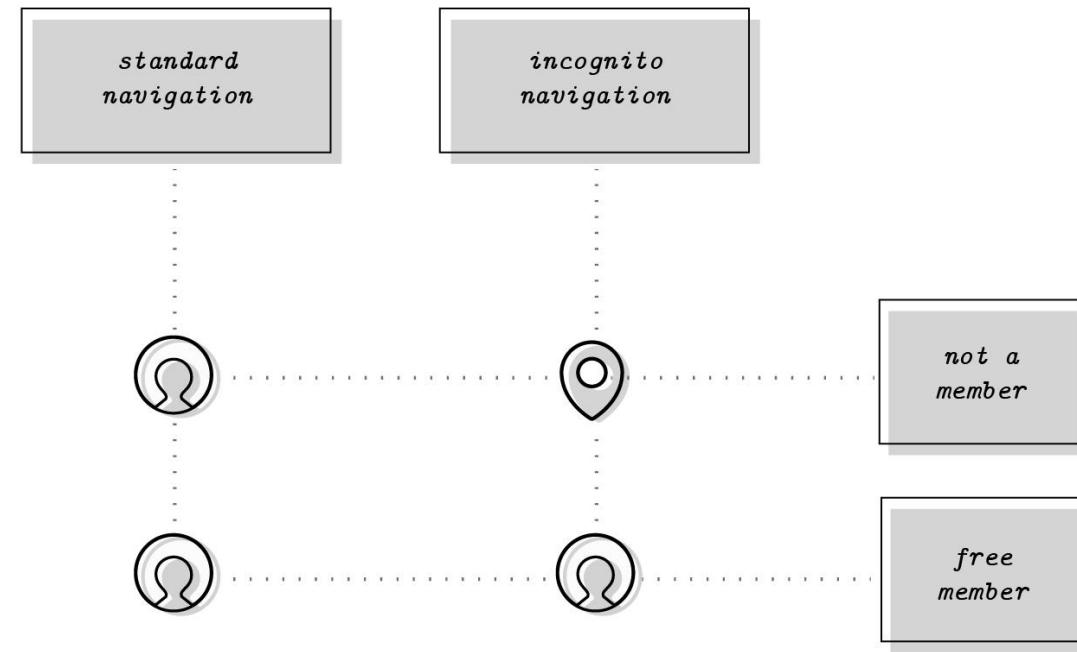
Daniel Braun (CAB Jourova) and [REDACTED] met with Thomas Myrup Kristensen and Cecilia Zappala (Facebook Brussels), and John Hegman (Facebook VP Newsfeed), to discuss changes being made to Facebook's newsfeed intended to increase transparency and help users understand and control what they see.

The tool: Why am I seeing this?



Algorithms are everywhere ;)





individual personalization



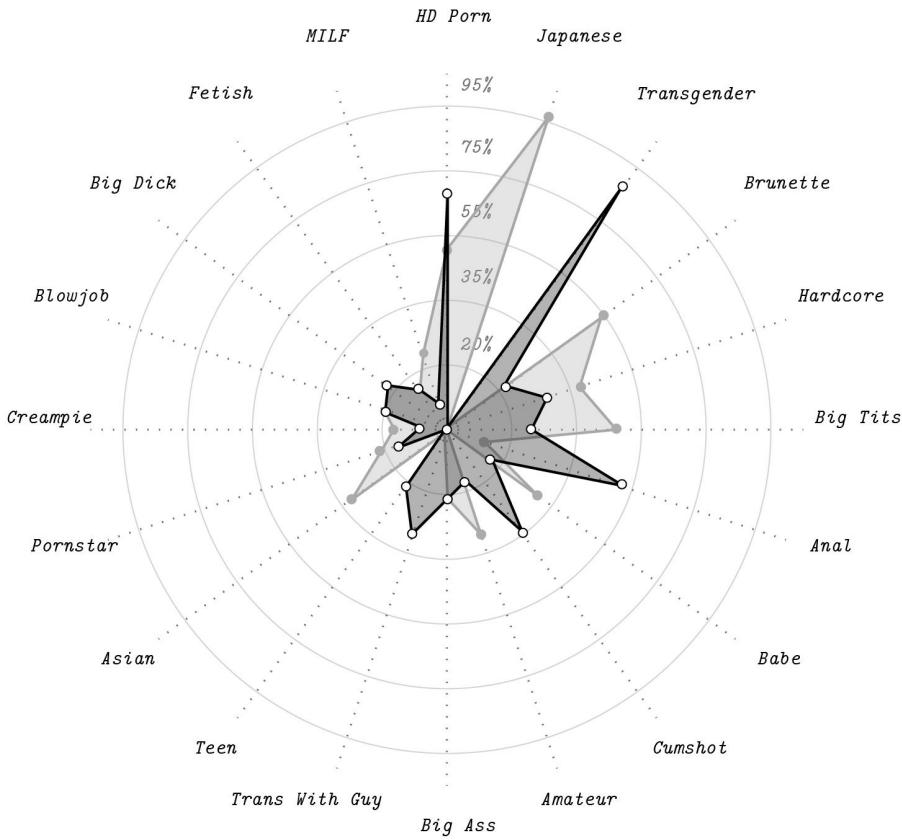
geographical personalization

Credits: Giulia Corona

By comparing
personalized
experience you
realize how
algorithms treat each
of us differently.

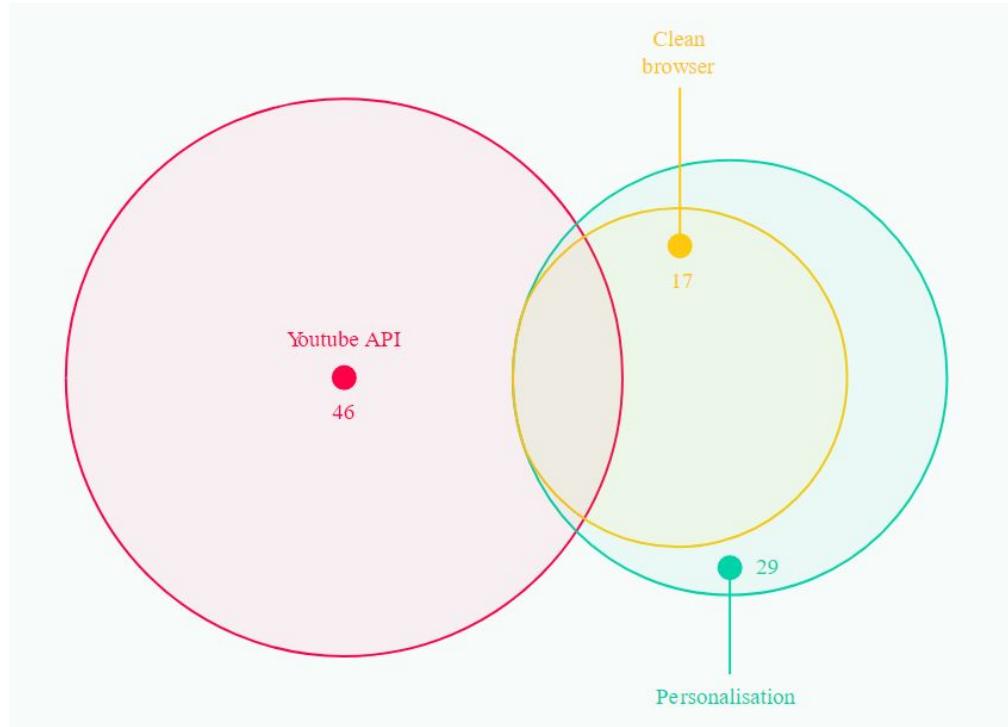
That's why we have
to **passively scrape**

—● user J
—○ user T



Really, you can't trust corporations

That's why we have
to **passively scrape**



- political ads
- “transparency”
- collaboration with researchers

simpy PR

That's why we have
to **passively scrape**



we passively scrape



...and reuse **some
data in the public
interest!**



Zuckless News

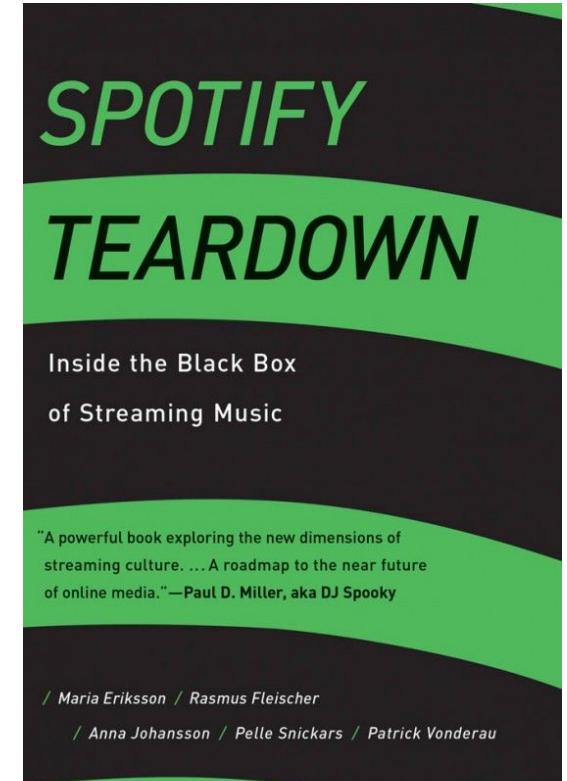
Create and read custom news feeds
based on topics without the Zuck

we passively scrape



**But companies don't
like it**

-_(ツ)_/-



f Facebook Moves to Block Ad Transparency Tools — Including Ours

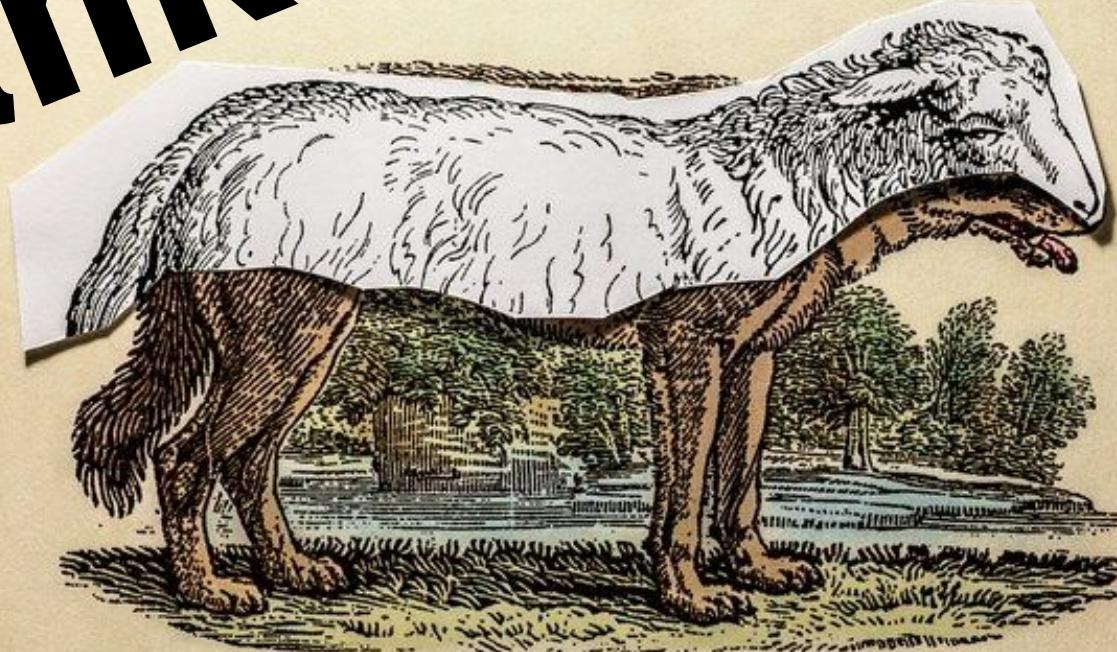
<https://tracking.exposed>



OUR VISION

We fight for a web that is home
for many, not property of the
few!

Thanks!



— *Fig.1. The Internet* —