Fachbereich 9 - Medienstudiengänge
Department 9 - Media Courses

Kommentar zur Lehrveranstaltung im SoSe 2024
Description of seminars

Veranstalter*in: Vasilisa Kuznetsova
Lecturer:

Titel (dt.):

Titel (engl.):
(immer
angeben)   Social Media and Social Bots: The Art of Manipulation in the Digital Age

Beschreibung:
Description:

Once considered the embodiment of freedom of speech, social media platforms nowadays are saturated with misleading and manipulative information. With the help of social bots — programmed web robots designed to perform automated tasks on social media — malicious activity can take place on a massive scale. Given that some bots are specifically created to infiltrate political discourses, manipulate public opinion and potentially impact democratic outcomes, the use of bots by public and political actors has become a significant concern in society. However, not all who are bots are evil. Social bots can also be deployed to improve controversial political discourses, resist online harassment, or enhance democratic governance and its transparency.

The objective of this seminar is to gain a comprehensive overview of social bots and the various ways in which they are used, whether to spread misinformation and manipulate public opinion or to positively intervene in public discourses through counter speech. The seminar provides insights into a range of topics related to social media bots and platform manipulation, including misinformation, algorithms, artificial intelligence, computational propaganda, platform governance. In conjunction with communication theories such as agenda-setting and discursive power, students will develop an understanding of the role social bots might play in shaping public life. As part of the seminar students have to complete different kinds of research-oriented assignments as well as engage in discussions and interactive tasks in class based on weekly readings.

Literatur:
Literature:

Assenmacher, D., Clever, L., Frischlich, L., Quandt, T., Trautmann, H., & Grimme, C. (2020). Demystifying social bots: On the intelligence of automated social media actors. *Social Media+ Society*, *6*(3), 2056305120939264.

Gorwa, R., & Guilbeault, D. (2020). Unpacking the social media bot: A typology to guide research and policy. *Policy & Internet*, *12*(2), 225-248.

Grimme, C., Pohl, J., Cresci, S., Lüling, R., & Preuss, M. (2022, October). New automation for social bots: From trivial behavior to AI-powered communication. In *Multidisciplinary International Symposium on Disinformation in Open Online Media* (pp. 79-99). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

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Shu, K., Wang, S., Lee, D., & Liu, H. (2020). *Disinformation, misinformation, and fake news in social media*. Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Woolley, S. C. (2020). Bots and computational propaganda: Automation for communication and control. *Social Media and Democracy. The state of the field, prospects for reform*, 89-110.

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