Threats to the information ecosystem

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Abstract

Social media and before them the Web have deeply transformed the information ecosystem, ushering us into a new era of civic engagement and innovation at a global scale. However, a number of worrisome trends threaten the foundations of these public platforms. Misinformation boosted by automated amplifiers (i.e., social bots) is an obvious example, but we are also witnessing to the rise of other negative `malinformation' trends, such as harassment, hate speech, and gender inequality. In this talk I will describe my contributions to understanding what is threatening the integrity of the modern digital information ecosystem, and reducing universal access to it. I will first describe one of the first large-scale, systematic