

# Critical Media Literacy in Times of Misinformation

**Prof. Dr. Jeffrey Wimmer**

**April 19th**

**Bifeb, Wolfgangsee, Austria**

# Transformation of Media and Society



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**Jason Gay** ✓  
@jasongay



Following

There's a guy in this coffee shop sitting at a table, n drinking



**Noah Smith**  
@Noahpinion

Folgen

RETWEETS 28,377

F/ 2

5:35 AM - 22 Se

15 years ago, the internet was an escape from the real world. Now, the real world is an escape from the internet.

15:46 - 28. Aug. 2017

78.986 Retweets 171.841 „Gefällt mir“-Angaben



695



79 Tsd.



172 Tsd.



“We are creating a world where anyone, anywhere may express his or her beliefs, no matter how singular, without fear of being coerced into silence or conformity.”

JOHN PERRY BARLOW  
A DECLARATION OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF CYBERSPACE

<https://twitter.com/eff/status/961784821243551744>





**Uber**

The world's largest  
taxi company, owns  
no vehicles.

The world's most  
popular media owner,  
creates no content.

**Facebook**

**Alibaba**

The most valuable  
retailer, has no inventory.

The world's largest  
accommodation provider,  
owns no real estate.

**Airbnb**

**Something interesting is happening.**

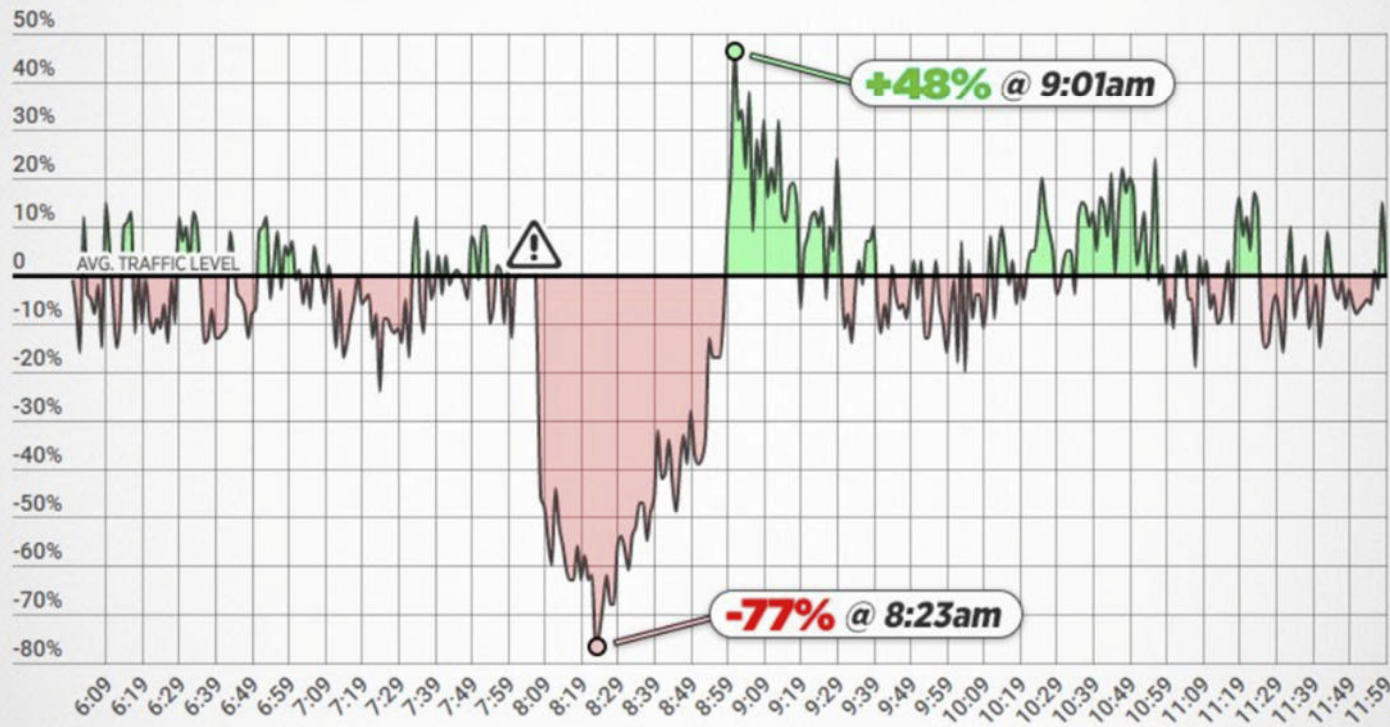
TOM GOODWIN

Pornhub



## Hawaii Missile Alert Traffic Change

Percent change in Hawaii pageviews compared to an average Saturday



January 13, 2018



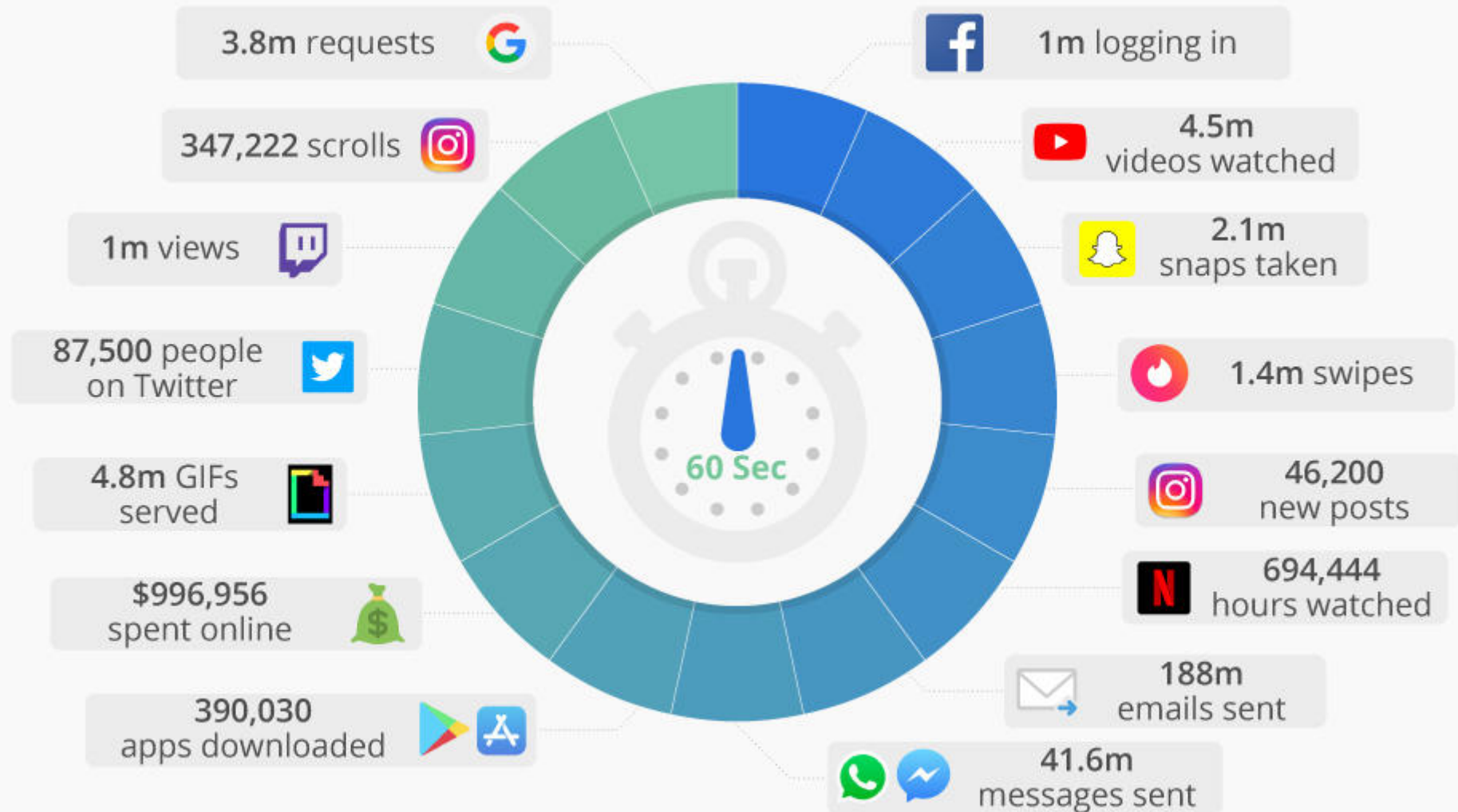
Incoming Missile Alert Issued: -8:07am  
False Alarm Statement Issued: -8:45am

pornhub.com/insights

<https://boingboing.net/2018/01/18/pornhub-shares-hawaii-nuke-sca.html>

# A Minute on the Internet in 2019

Estimated data created on the internet in one minute



@StatistaCharts Sources: Lori Lewis & Officially Chad via Visual Capitalist

**Der Reichstag  
in Flammen!**

**Von Kommunisten in Brand gesteckt!**







- Trump: „Just had a very successful presidential election. Now professional protesters, incited by the media, are protesting. Very unfair!“
- Source: <http://www.infosperber.ch/Artikel/Medien/Wie-sich-eine-Luge-trotz-Dementi-rasant-verbreitet>

# What is Critical Media Literacy?

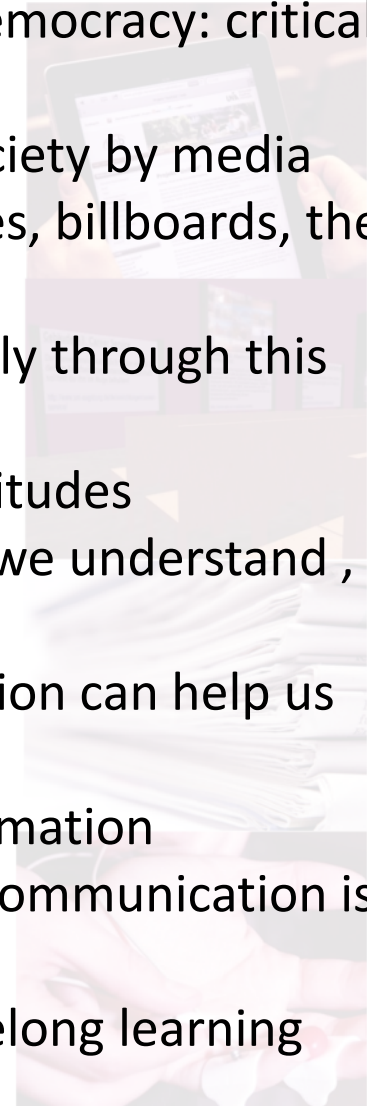


- Media literacy is the ability to sift through and analyze the messages that inform, entertain and sell to us every day.
- It's the ability to bring critical thinking skills to bear on all media (from music videos and Web environments to product placement in films and virtual displays)
- about what's there, and noticing what's not there.
- And it's the instinct to question what lies behind media productions— the motives, the money, the values and the ownership— and to be aware of how these factors influence content.

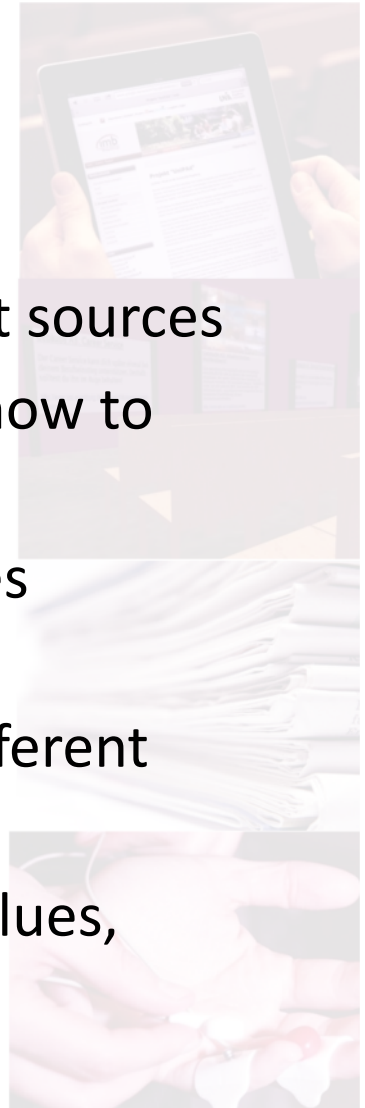
## Why is Critical Media Literacy important?



1. The influence of media in our central democratic process:
  - We need 2 prominent skills to be engaged citizens of a democracy: critical thinking and self-expression
2. The high rate of media consumption and the saturation of society by media
  - Videogames, TV, pop music, radio, newspapers, magazines, billboards, the internet, even T-shirts)
  - Media literacy teaches the skills we need to navigate safely through this sea of images and messages for all our lives
3. The media's influence on shaping perceptions, beliefs and attitudes
  - Media experiences exert a significant impact on the way we understand , interpret and act on our world
  - By helping us understand those influences, media education can help us separate from our dependencies on them
4. The increasing importance of visual communication and information
  - learning how to “read” the multi layers of image- based communication is a necessity
5. The importance of information in society and the need for lifelong learning

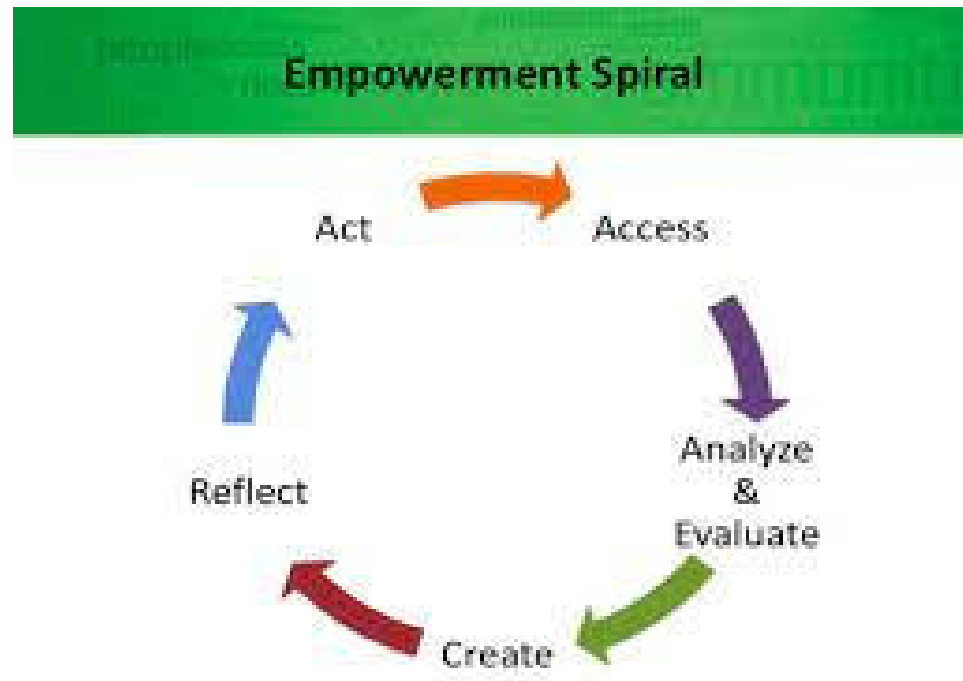


- Uses media wisely and effectively
- Engages in critical thinking when evaluating media messages
- Evaluates the credibility of information from different sources
- Understands the power of visual images and knows how to “read” them
- Is aware of a diverse cultural universe and appreciates multiple perspectives (multi-voicedness)
- Expresses him/herself clearly and creatively using different forms of media
- Recognizes media’s influence on beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviors and the democratic process.





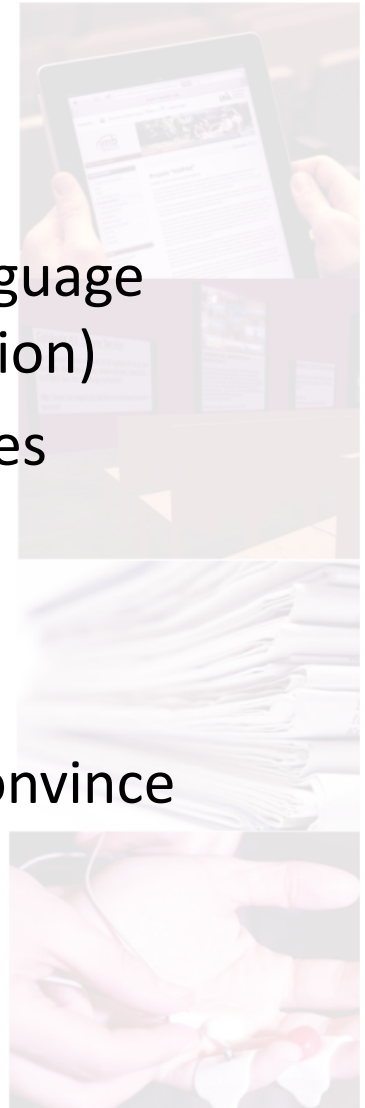
Based on the work of Paulo Freire  
Also known as action-learning: breaking complex concepts  
into learning steps:



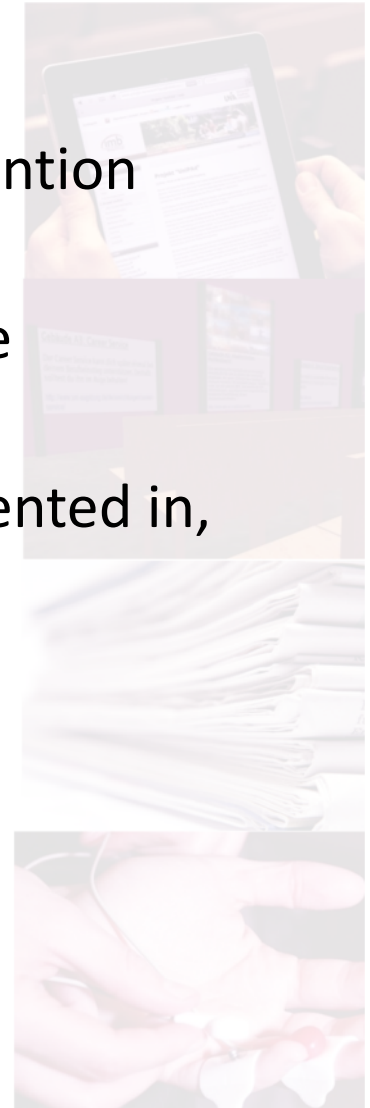
# Five core concepts in media literacy



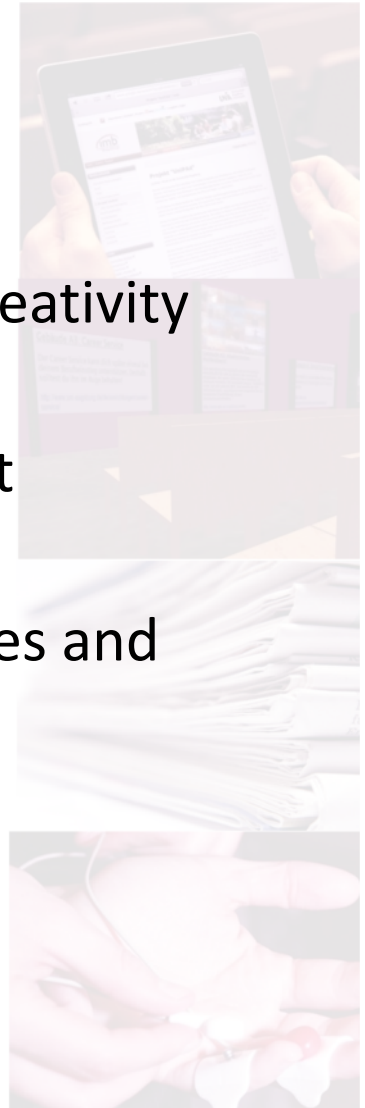
- All media messages are ‘constructed’ (authorship/constructedness)
- Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules (format and techniques of production)
- Different people experience the same media messages differently (audience)
- Media have embedded values and points of views (content/message)
- Most media messages are organized to gain profit, convince and/or power (purpose/motive)



- Who created this message? (authorship/sender)
- What creative techniques are used to attract my attention (format/creative strategies for reality construction)
- How might different people understand this message differently? (audience/receiver)
- What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message? (content)
- Why is this message being sent? (purpose)



- What am I authoring?
- Does my message reflect understanding in format, creativity and technology?
- Is my message engaging and compelling for my target audience?
- Have I clearly and consistently framed values, lifestyles and points of view in my content?
- Have I communicated my purpose effectively?





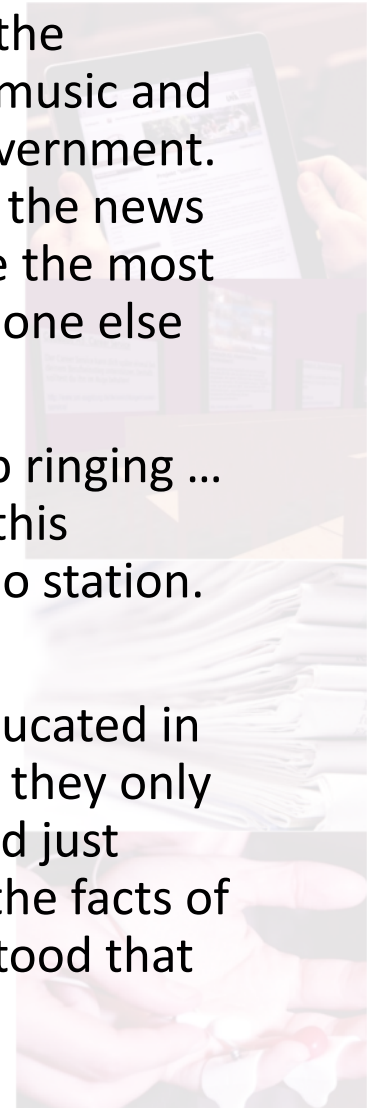
## “Don’t trust anyone, not even us.” (B92)



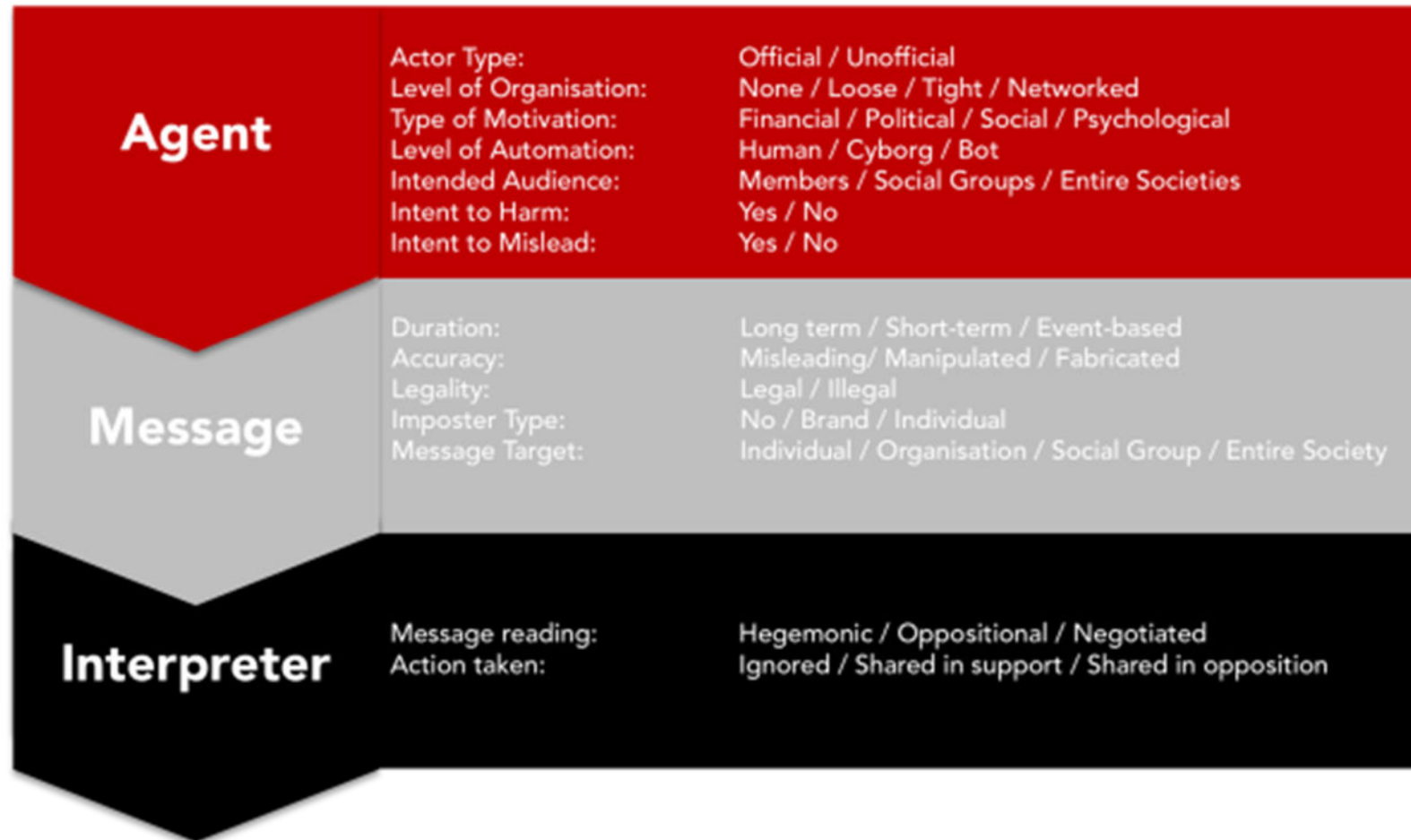
“We decided to do a one-day complete change and broadcast as if the government was making the program. ... We replaced all the usual music and voices on the radio, and the news that we wrote was totally pro-government. But if you were listening carefully, it was absolutely detectable that the news was fake. So for example, we had the leader of the opposition write the most disgusting commentary of his own political party, and we had someone else read it on air.”

“The reaction was really stunning. Phones in the studio did not stop ringing ... we taped all the calls ... what was coming out of them was literally this incredible violence: ‘We will come over there. We will level the radio station. You stole our only hope.’”

“We had taken pride in the fact that our listeners were the most educated in the country—you know, academics, intellectuals, and everything. If they only had listened a little more carefully to what the news was. If they had just been listening carefully, if they would literally have just listened to the facts of the messages that were in the broadcasts, they would have understood that the program was fake, but actually nobody did.”



# Analysis of „Information disorder“ (Wardle/Derakshan 2017)



**Many thanks!**

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