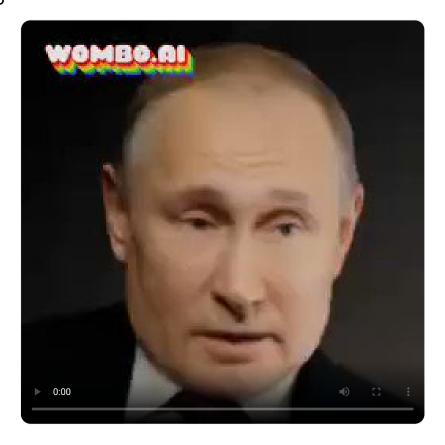


In today's <u>#vatnik</u> soup I'll discuss different content types used for disinformation and propaganda. Narratives can be made much more powerful when the stories are supported by several types of media. A simple example of this is a news story that is complemented with images.

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Some medias are extremely simple to produce, whereas others require extensive skill set ranging from video editing to highly sophisticated AI algorithms.

I'll introduce them briefly, starting with the simplest one.

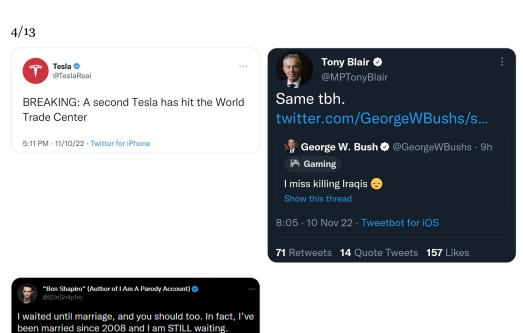
1) Short-form text: This could be a FB/IG post or a tweet without any additional context. People often use excerpts from speeches that are taken out of context or just tell outright lies.

Fake tweets can also be factored with various online generators.

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After Elon introduced the blue check mark there were (and still are) various fake and parody accounts posting silly and not-so-silly tweets.



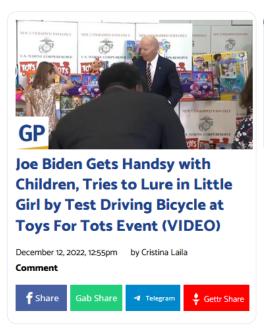
2) Audio:Audio editing is a pretty straightforward procedure and can be done with free editing apps such Audacity.I consider audio being the weakest medium for disinformation, as people often lack the attention span to listen to long conversations without visual information.

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3) Fake news articles: These articles have been a staple of disinfo scene since the early 2000s. Blogs such as InfoWars,Gateway Pundit,Natural News & Grayzone are so called "super spreaders" of disinfo, and they are often the starting points for successful disinfo campaings.

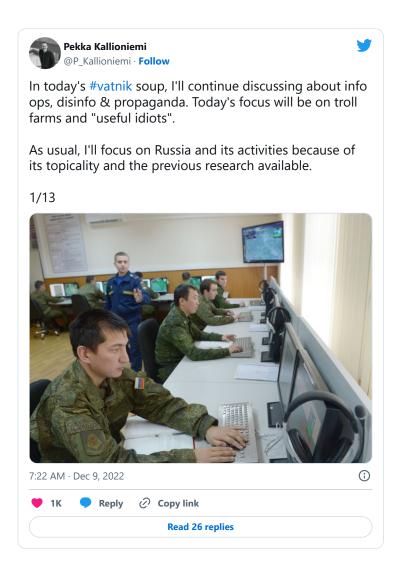








Disinfo spreaders often claim columns and/or opinions as news and spread them as such. After their publishing, fake news are then spread by troll farms and useful idiots which makes the whole process seem organic:

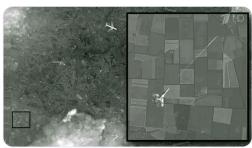


4) Photos:Photos can work on their own or they can be used to complement short-form text or fake news articles. Photo editing can be extremely simple, like for example flipping the image to appear different, or extremely complex, for example when detailed information like...

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... swastikas or nazi flags are edited to the image. Debunking of fake images has been ineffective, as these fakes are still making rounds years after they were debunked.

Another common tactic is to simply change the context of the image:  $\dots$ 



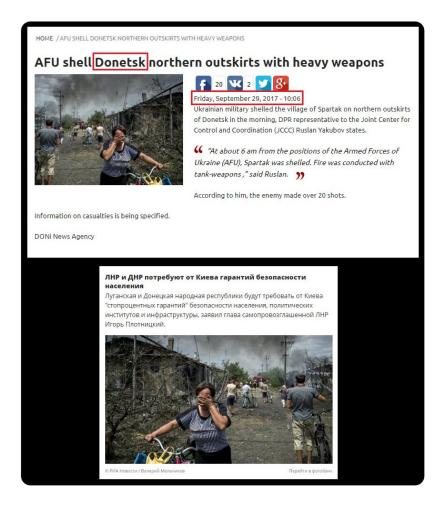




... if it has Russian nazis, just claim that they are actually Ukrainian. Military photos from Ukraine or Syria from 2014-2016 are often re-shared with a different context.

Here's a good article on different photo manipulation techniques:

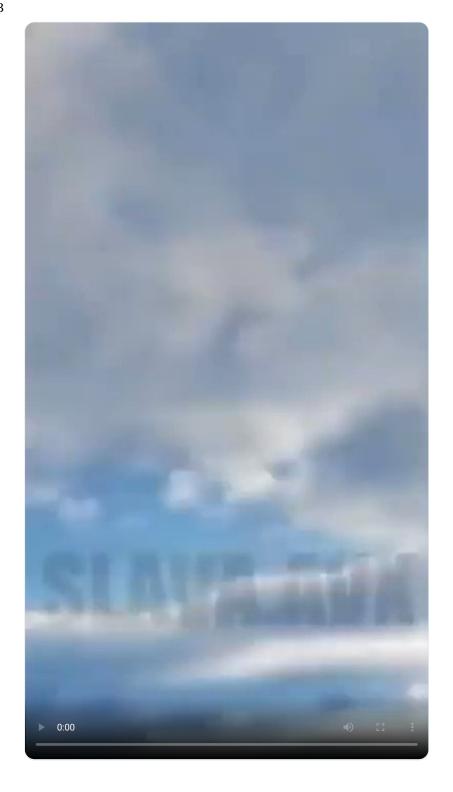




5) Videos: Fake videos are extremely powerful disinfo tool out there - based on a study by Sundar et al. (2021) almost 60% of participants considered the fake video they saw to be real and 80% would've shared it to their peers on social media.

https://doi.org/10.1093/jcmc/zmab010

At the beginning of the conflict, the information coming from the battlefields was scarce, thus several attempts at producing fake videos were made. In March and April, several fake videos from video games appeared online. The video below (with added audio) is one of those.



## Twitter removed the last part:

In the near future, most videos will be produced with deepfake technologies. In deepfakes, actors appearing in videos can be replaced with others. One example of this was the fake video where Zelenskyy urged his countrymen to surrender.

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