



Pekka Kallioniemi @P_Kallioniemi

Apr 20 · 21 tweets · [P_Kallioniemi/status/1649079901570363394](#)

In today's [#vatniksoup](#), I'll talk about a phenomenon called information laundering. It refers to an activity where false or deceitful information is legitimized through a network of intermediaries, such as fake news blogs and/or social media networks.

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When for example the Kremlin wants to spread a narrative, they spread it through various channels to legitimize it. As basically no one trusts the Russian TASS anymore, Russian propagandists must get creative and use various backchannels to legitimize the information...

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...in order to inject into the mainstream. To do this, they'll have to "pass the information" around some other news outlets, preferably that the people (at least some) trusts. The groundwork for these outlets has been created a long time ago - for example a well-known...

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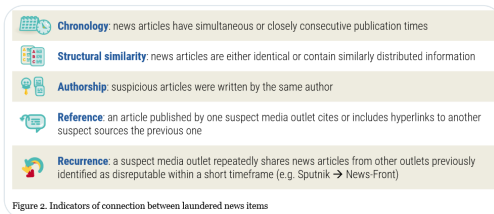


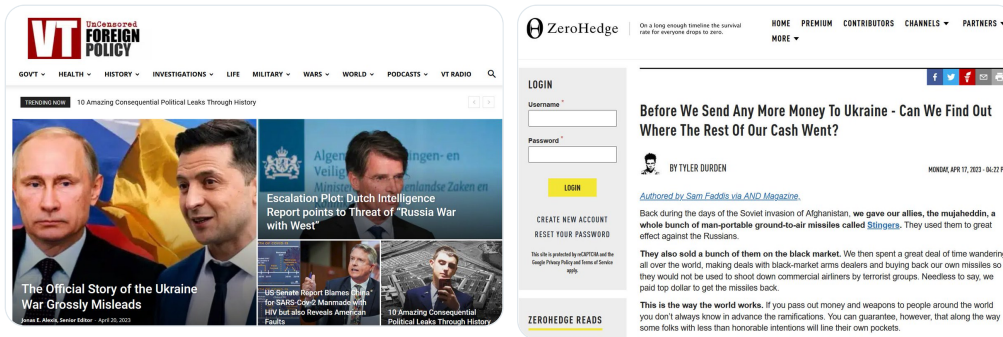
Figure 2. Indicators of connection between laundered news items



Figure 1. Information Laundering techniques

...conspiracy theory website, Veteran's Today, was established already back in 2003, and the pro-Kremlin financial blog and "news aggregator" Zero Hedge was launched in 2009. Some of these may have even started as a legitimate info sources, but at some point they...

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...turned into information laundering platforms. Also, many of the Facebook groups that were later exposed to be troll farms were established already around 2013.



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Like money launderers who use shell companies, info launderers rely on certain social media accounts or fake news blogs that can then mask the original source and its intent.

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Social media can also help with the legitimisation process, as people often perceive stories that are liked and shared as something important. In addition, a study has shown that fake news tends to spread much, much faster than factual news.

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PBS NEWS HOUR

Menu

https://www.pbs.org/news/

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By –
Larry Greenemeier,
Scientific American

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Share

False news travels 6 times faster on Twitter than truthful news

Science Mar 9, 2018 9:51 AM EDT

Troll farms can also be used to spread these messages even faster, and since Elon's takeover, these farms have regained their power to spread disinfo on Twitter. Both Russia & the CCP also use diplomat and embassy accounts actively to spread disinformation and false narratives. 8/20



Social media platforms can also be the original source which is then spread throughout the fake news blogs. For example photoshopped images (Ukrainians with Nazi flags, doctored documents, etc.) or old videos with wrong context often start spreading on social media, ...

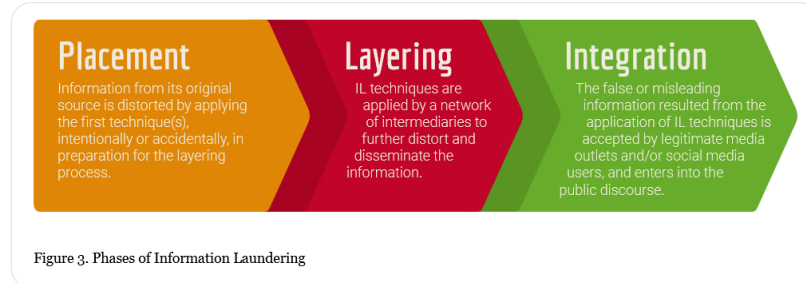
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...after which the fake news blogs publish articles on them, hoping for the mainstream to take the bait.

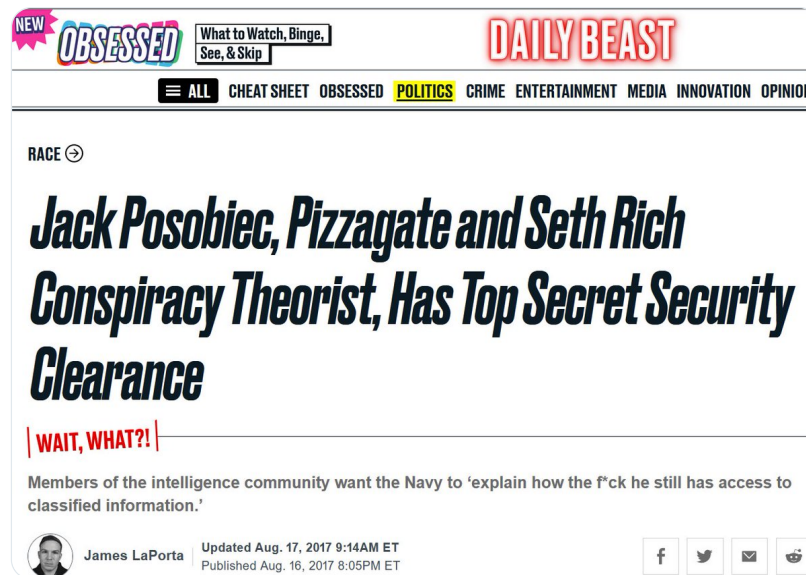
The goal with all this is to "layer" the disinformation so, that it spreads from its point of origin to more credible sources.

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This credibility can then be increased with reposts, likes and shares on social media. For example, the hacked Podesta e-mails in 2016 were spread through various middle-men, including WikiLeaks. These seemingly authentic platforms provided credibility and the ...

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...hack-and-leak operation wasn't immediately identified as a Russian intelligence operation. The illusion of legitimacy of fake news blogs and/or individual "journalists" can also be increased by awards and nominations. One example of this is the "Serena Shim Award for...

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...Uncompromised Integrity in Journalism", that's been awarded to totalitarian regime bootlickers like Max Blumenthal, Aaron Maté and Jackson "Z" Hinkle.

Both Russia and China also like to use Western public figures to propagate their agenda and strengthen it in their own..13/20



A screenshot of a Facebook post by Jackson Hinkle. The post features a profile picture of Hinkle, his name, and a 'Follow' button. The main text of the post is a celebratory announcement about receiving the Serena Shim Award for Uncompromised Integrity in Journalism. Below the text is a photograph of Hinkle smiling and holding a framed award certificate. The certificate features a laureate's portrait and the text 'LAUREATE SERENA SHIM AWARD FOR UNCOMPROMISED INTEGRITY IN JOURNALISM'. At the bottom of the post, there are engagement icons for likes and comments, showing 19 likes and 1 comment. A comment input field is visible at the very bottom.

← ⋮

 **Jackson Hinkle** · 3rd+
Host at The Dive With Jackson ...
1yr · 🌐 [+ Follow](#)

Very proud to announce that I am the recipient of the Serena Shim Award for Uncompromised Integrity In Journalism. Thank you to everyone who has supported my work. I am honored to be recognized amongst a pool of inspiring voices who have been a huge influence on my anti-imperialist worldview.



👍👏❤️ 19 1 comment · 1 repost

 Leave your thoughts here... [@](#) [Post](#)

...news outlets. Outlets like TASS and Global Times often interview MEP's like Clare Daly, Mick Wallace or Maximilian Krah to promote their ideology, for example in case of genocide denial in Xinjiang or in Ukraine.

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One example of relatively successful information laundering was the "secret bioweapons labs in Ukraine" hoax. The bioweapons lab theory (re-)surfaced on the same day when Russia started its invasion in Ukraine, and it was initially suggested by QAnon podcast host Jacob...

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..."RedPill78" Creech from the US. He claimed that the Russians only bombed the locations of these bioweapons labs, and that this was the reason for the invasion. Three days later the story was tweeted out by the Russian Embassy in Bosnia and Herzegovina and from there...

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The screenshot shows a news article from WNCB News. The headline is "Meet the DC-Area Wine Bar Manager Who Started the Ukraine Biolabs Conspiracy Theory". Below the headline, there is a quote: "YOU GUYS TUCKER'S OPENING STATEMENT IS THE BIOLABS STORY. HOLY SHIT WE FUCKING DID IT." The article is by David Gilbert, dated April 12, 2022, at 3:49pm. There are social media sharing options for Facebook, Twitter, and Email. A "Listen to this article" button is also present. The main image shows a man in a suit speaking in front of a blue background with the US Capitol dome. To the right, there is a "MORE LIKE THIS" section with a preview of another article titled "The Far Right is Calling for the Execution of Teachers and Doctors" by Anya Zoladzinski, David Gilbert, dated 02.22.23.

...it quickly spread to fake news blogs and eventually to the mainstream media. It was even discussed on Tucker Carlson on many occasions and Russia's UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia repeated the allegations.

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The screenshot shows a page from the United Nations website. The header includes the United Nations logo and the text "United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases". Below the header is a navigation menu with options: Home, Secretary-General, General Assembly, Security Council, Economic and Social Council, and International Law. The main content area is titled "MEETINGS COVERAGE SECURITY COUNCIL". The specific meeting is identified as "9171ST MEETING (PM)" on "27 OCTOBER 2022" (SC/15084). The headline of the article is "United Nations Not Aware of Any Biological Weapons Programmes in Ukraine, Senior Disarmament Affairs Official Tells Security Council". The sub-headline is "Delegate Says Actions by Russian Federation Risk Undermining Essential Multilateral Disarmament, Non-proliferation Instruments". The first sentence of the article reads: "Speakers in the Security Council warned today against using disarmament and non-proliferation instruments to undermine multilateral cooperation, as the Russian Federation accused Ukraine and the United States of..."

But information laundering isn't limited just to news blogs - it is often used in academia, too. The information laundered through these "scientific journals" is often outright propaganda camouflaged as research. Especially Alexander Dugin has been active in establishing...

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...credibility for pro-Kremlin narratives in academia. Once published, these propaganda pieces can be used to counter publications of Western academia (which to be fair, can also be straight up propaganda).

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To conclude: information laundering is relatively effective method of injecting disinformation and propaganda into the mainstream, and it's yet another form of hybrid warfare in which Russia and China have been forerunners for a good decade.

BTW, do follow [@Shayan86!](#)

20/20

14. Finland is opposed to EU sanctions against Russia.	Finnish President Sauli Niinistö's speech to the <i>YES Forum</i> in Ukraine was used by Russian-language media to discredit the effectiveness of the EU sanctions against Russia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Woozle effect; misappropriation; misleading headline; disinformation. 	<p>Total media involved: 24</p> <p>75% pro-Kremlin media. No domestic media was involved. Language: Russian.</p>	Anti-NATO/ anti-EU, and undermining EU sanctions.
15. <i>Trident Juncture</i> 2018 military exercise: close ties between NATO, Finland and Sweden.	Russian-language media used comments from the Spokesperson of the Russian MFA Maria Zakharova to legitimise and denounce NATO's and the US' attempt to bring Finland and Sweden closer to the Alliance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Woozle effect; misleading headline; misappropriation. 	<p>Total media involved: 10</p> <p>50% pro-Kremlin media, 30% Kremlin-official media. No domestic media were involved. Main language: Russian.</p>	Anti-NATO/ anti-EU, undermining NATO military exercises.
16. New Union of Journalists established in Finland.	A Union of Journalists for alternative media was registered in Finland, with a URL imitating the well-established Union of Journalists' URL in order to deceive audiences. The story and reactions were laundered and disseminated by domestic pro-Kremlin media and proxies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potemkin village; woozle effect; misappropriation; disinformation; misleading headline. 	<p>Total media involved: 4</p> <p>Purely domestic story disseminated in Finnish language by domestic pro-Kremlin media and proxies.</p>	Anti-EU.

Source: <https://stratcomcoe.org/publications/information-laundering-in-the-nordic-baltic-region/26>

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In today's [#vatniksoup](#) and another edition of "You pronounced this nonsense, not me", I'll go through some of the most common pro-Russian claims and tropes. I have discussed these in previous soups, but I feel like this type of general collection would be a helpful resource.
1/23



12:23 PM · Mar 10, 2023



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Troll farms:

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In today's [#vatnik](#) soup, I'll continue discussing about info ops, disinfo & propaganda. Today's focus will be on troll farms and "useful idiots".

As usual, I'll focus on Russia and its activities because of its topicality and the previous research available.

1/13





7:22 AM · Dec 9, 2022



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Russiagate:



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In today's #vatnik soup, I'll talk about Russiagate and the Russian interference in the 2016 US elections. Twitter Files by @mtaibbi and The Grayzone blogger @aaronjmate have often suggested that the Russians had no effect on the election, which simply isn't true.

1/17

WANTED BY THE FBI

CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT AN OFFENSE AGAINST THE UNITED STATES; FALSE REGISTRATION OF A DOMAIN NAME; AGGRAVATED IDENTITY THEFT; CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT MONEY LAUNDERING

RUSSIAN INTERFERENCE IN 2016 U.S. ELECTIONS

<small>Boris Alekseyevich Antonov</small>	<small>Dmitriy Sergeyeovich Badin</small>	<small>Anatoliy Sergeyeovich Kovaliev</small>	<small>Nikolay Yuryevich Kozachek</small>	<small>Aleksey Viktorovich Lukashev</small>	<small>Artem Andreyevich Malyshev</small>
<small>Sergey Aleksandrovich Morgachev</small>	<small>Aleksandr Vladimirovich Osadchuk</small>	<small>Aleksey Aleksandrovich Potemkin</small>	<small>Ivan Sergeyeovich Yermakov</small>	<small>Pavel Vyacheslavovich Yershov</small>	

DETAILS

On July 13, 2018, a federal grand jury sitting in the District of Columbia returned an indictment against 12 Russian military intelligence officers for their alleged roles in interfering with the 2016 United States (U.S.) elections. The indictment charges 11 defendants, Boris Alekseyevich Antonov, Dmitriy Sergeyeovich Badin, Nikolay Yuryevich Kozachek, Aleksey Viktorovich Lukashev, Artem Andreyevich Malyshev, Sergey Aleksandrovich Morgachev, Aleksandr Vladimirovich Osadchuk, Aleksey Aleksandrovich Potemkin, Ivan Sergeyeovich Yermakov, Pavel Vyacheslavovich Yershov, and Viktor Borisovich Netyksho, with a computer hacking conspiracy involving gaining unauthorized access into the computers of U.S. persons and entities involved in the 2016 U.S. presidential election, stealing documents from those computers, and staging releases of the stolen documents to interfere with the 2016 U.S. presidential election. The indictment also charges these defendants with aggravated identity theft, false registration of a domain name, and conspiracy to commit money laundering. Two defendants.

11:53 AM · Jan 24, 2023



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Manipulation:



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In today's #vatnik soup I'll continue talking about troll farms and social media manipulation, extending the topic to other social media platforms, too.

Our social media space is constantly manipulated by paid

actors whose goal is to control the online narratives.

1/10



7:44 AM · Dec 20, 2022



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