

# Data and Society

## The Data-driven World – Lecture 2

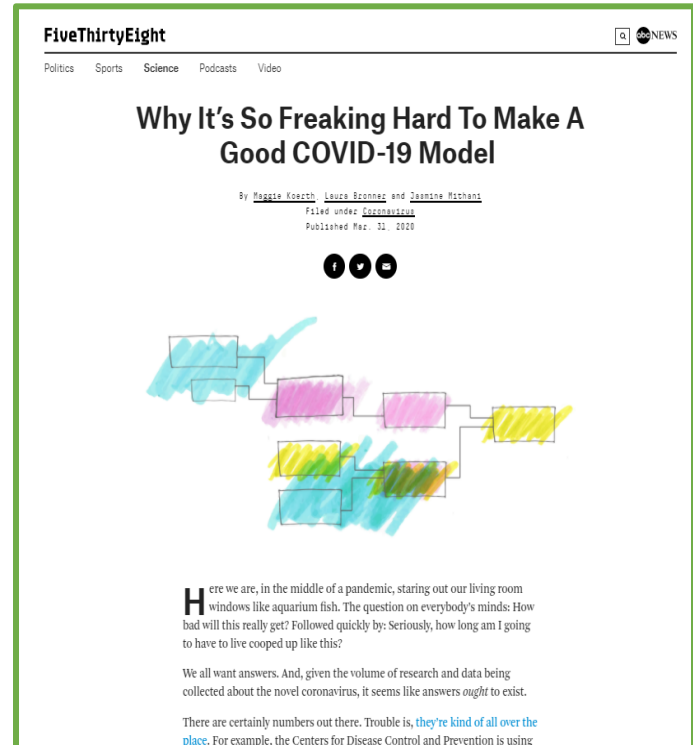
1/28/21

# Today (1/28/21)

- Personal Essay Assignment and Instructions
- Lecture 2 /Discussion
- Model Presentation

# Reading for 2/1/21

- Read this article for the 2/1 class discussion.
- “Why It’s So Freaking Hard to Make a Good COVID-19 Model”, 538
- <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-its-so-freaking-hard-to-make-a-good-covid-19-model/>, on class website



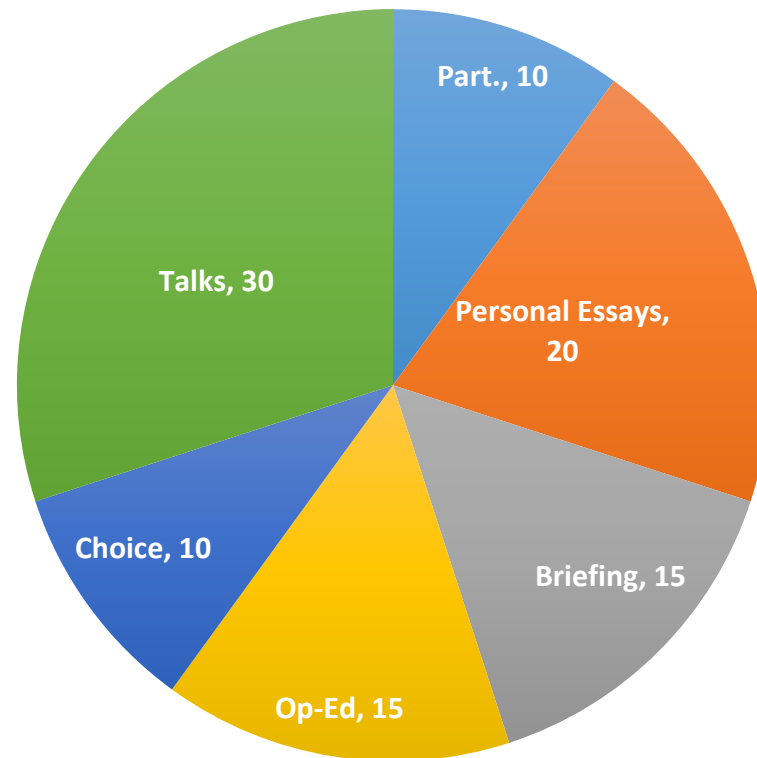
Date	Topic	Speaker	Date	Topic	Speaker
1-25	Introduction	Fran	1-28	The Data-driven World	Fran
2-1	Data and COVID-19	Fran	2-4	Data and Privacy -- Intro	Fran
2-8	Data and Privacy – Differential Privacy	Fran	2-11	Data and Privacy – Anonymity	Fran
2-15	NO CLASS / PRESIDENT’S DAY		2-18	Data and Privacy – Law	Ben Wizner
2-22	Digital rights in the EU and China	Fran	2-25	Data and Discrimination 1	Fran
3-1	Data and Discrimination 2	Fran	3-4	Data and Elections 1	Fran
3-8	Data and Elections 2	Fran	3-11	NO CLASS / WRITING DAY	
3-15	Data and Astronomy	Alyssa Goodman	3-18	Data Science	Fran
3-22	Digital Humanities	Brett Bobley	3-25	Data Stewardship and Preservation	Fran
3-29	Data and the IoT	Fran	4-1	Data and Smart Farms	Rich Wolski
4-5	Data and Self-Driving Cars	Fran	4-8	Data and Ethics 1	Fran
4-12	Data and Ethics 2	Fran	4-15	Cybersecurity	Fran
4-19	Data and Dating	Fran	4-22	Data and Social Media	Fran
4-26	Tech in the News	Fran	4-29	Wrap-up / Discussion	Fran
5-3	NO CLASS				

# Writing Assignment – Personal Essay 1



# Grading – Personal Essay (2 of these, 10 points each)

## Grade Distribution



# Personal Essay: You and the Pandemic

- 450-525 words / 11 point font / 10 points
- Send .docx to [bermaf@rpi.edu](mailto:bermaf@rpi.edu) before/by **Sunday, February 7 at midnight.**

- TOPIC: **The Pandemic and You**

Choose one of the topics below and tell a story that you're comfortable sharing. (Only Fran will read this).

## Pick 1:

- **What is the best thing that's happened to you because of the pandemic**

*or*

- **What is the worst thing that's happened to you because of the pandemic**

# Writing Personal Narratives / Storytelling

- **GOAL:** Tell your audience (Fran/general public) an interesting (true) story on the assigned topic
- **PURPOSE:** Personal essays explore a **specific experience** and tell the story from **your point of view**. They may illustrate how a personal conflict, event, or experience left a lasting impression or how it changed your views or perspective.
- **TONE:** Can be more conversational than formal writing but should **establish you as an articulate and credible individual**.
- **FORMAT:**
  - **Introduction** -- Grab the reader and summarize your points
  - **Body** – main text that tells the story / provides information / explains and supports your points
  - **Conclusion** – may include a lesson, message, moral, take-away



# Tips and Grading Rubric for Personal Narratives

## TIPS

- Create an **outline** of the piece (don't turn this in) before you write with the main points.
- Do **more than one draft** before turning your piece in.
- **Spell and grammar check** your piece
- Relevant statistics or facts should be cited and included as endnotes.
- Resources for writing personal essays:
  - <https://www.thoughtco.com/write-the-perfect-personal-essay-3858745>
  - <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/how-to-write-a-personal-essay>

## • GRADING RUBRICK

(10 points total)

### • 5 points – content

- Is the story compelling?
- Does the content comply to the personal essay format?

### • 5 points – writing

- Is there a clear tone and narrative?
- Is it well-written (English, grammar, spelling, flow)?

# Lecture 2 – The Data-driven World

## Modeling the World on the Internet

- ***Your world* represented by the Internet**
  - Recommender systems
  - Filter bubbles and echo chambers
- ***You* represented on the Internet**
  - Profiles and collected data
  - Inferred data
- **Impacts of engaging in a modeled reality**

# Everything is a representation on the Internet

- **How does the Internet model your world?**

- What you see on the Internet depends on who it perceives you to be
- What you see on the Internet is optimized, often to maximize your value as a product

- **How does the Internet model you?**

- You on the Internet = your profile
- Profiles developed from collected data, acquired data, inferred data
- Information may be out of context, incorrect, irrelevant, not managed by humans

# Recommender Systems

- **Recommender systems** provide users with personalized product and information offerings based on perceived user preferences
  - Custom suggestions based on user characteristics and past behavior
  - *Self-reinforcing*; can narrow exposure, exacerbate degenerative feedback loops
  - Recommender systems used by a variety of services: Netflix, Amazon, Spotify, YouTube, Facebook, on-line dating sites, etc.
- **Algorithmic issue:** How to tailor outcomes but broaden exposure?
- **Social issue:** How do user's interests evolve in the presence of recommender systems?
  - **User interests may degenerate based on internal dynamics, recommender systems can slow down or accelerate this process**

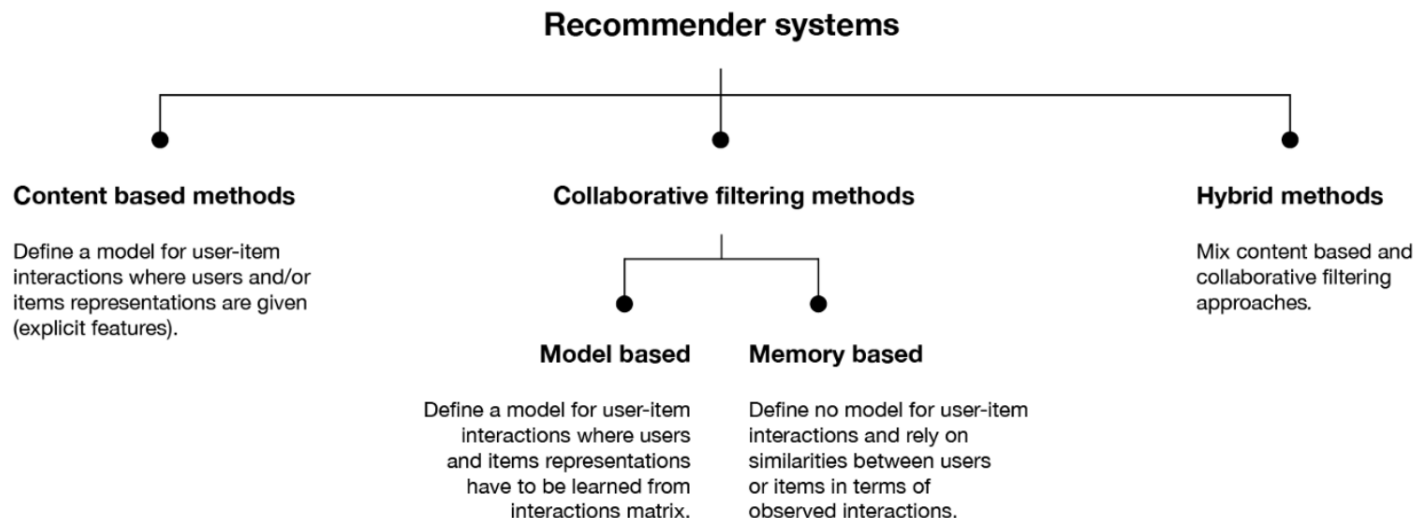
# Recommender system methods

## • Collaborative filtering methods

- New recommendations based solely on past interactions (no additional information needed)
- Can be used to detect similar users and/or similar items
- May or may not utilize a model (memory-based vs. model-based)
- Drawback: “cold start problem”

## • Content-based filtering methods

- New recommendations based on past interactions and additional information
- User information parametrizes a model of preferences

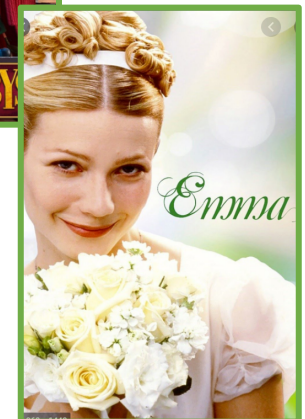


# Recommender systems provide both convenience and a limiting “nudge” to the user

- **“Nudge”** (behavioral science) – use of positive reinforcement and indirect suggestions as ways to influence the behavior and decision making of groups and individuals (e.g. putting fruit at eye level)
  - Nudges alter people’s behavior in a predictable way without forbidding any options or changing their economic incentives
- **Parameters that can be varied in recommender systems**
  - Items shown to the user
  - Number of times an item is shown to the user
  - Size of pool of potential items
  - Accuracy / inaccuracy of predictions (amount of noise)
- **Ways to avoid degeneracy in recommender systems (results from DeepMind research simulations):**
  - Show items only finitely many times.
  - Grow the candidate pool of items shown to the user
- **Note that users typically want a good recommender system but not a quickly degenerating one ....**

# Netflix and data – a competitive advantage

- Netflix has a 90 second window to help users before they leave the platform for another service
- Algorithms produce \$1B in revenue from customer retention
- 80% Netflix views come from recommendations
- Recommendation infrastructure:
  - 1300 clusters based on user's viewing preferences
  - 2K taste groups
  - 7K shows and movies in the catalogue
  - Recommender systems use AI and machine learning to develop customized suggestions



# Netflix Recommender System

- **Data Netflix collects /acquires to characterize each user**
  - Viewer interactions with Netflix services like viewer ratings, viewing history, etc.
  - Time of day, days of the week, location, device, etc. where a viewer watches (**public info**)
  - IP address (from **device**)
  - How long you've watched a show
  - Interactions with customer service
  - Web history (cookies, web beacons, advertising identifiers -- from **browser**)
  - Supplemental information such as demographic data, interest-based data , Internet browsing behavior (from **third parties**)
  - Name, email, payment method, telephone number, content rating, reviews (**user** provided)
- **Netflix uses your data**
  - To bucket you into a **Taste Community**
  - To parametrize its **recommender system**
  - To **optimize audio and video** encoding and adaptive bitrate selection
  - To figure out what **artwork** to show you
  - To parametrize **user models** for company purchases and creative projects
  - To guide **advertising spend, advertising creative, and channel mix** to identify new subscribers
- **Netflix shares data "for limited purposes"** with service providers, third-party companies tied to promotional offers with Netflix and law enforcement (upon request)
- **Netflix doesn't sell member information**, ads to other companies or have third party developers providing applications on the platform

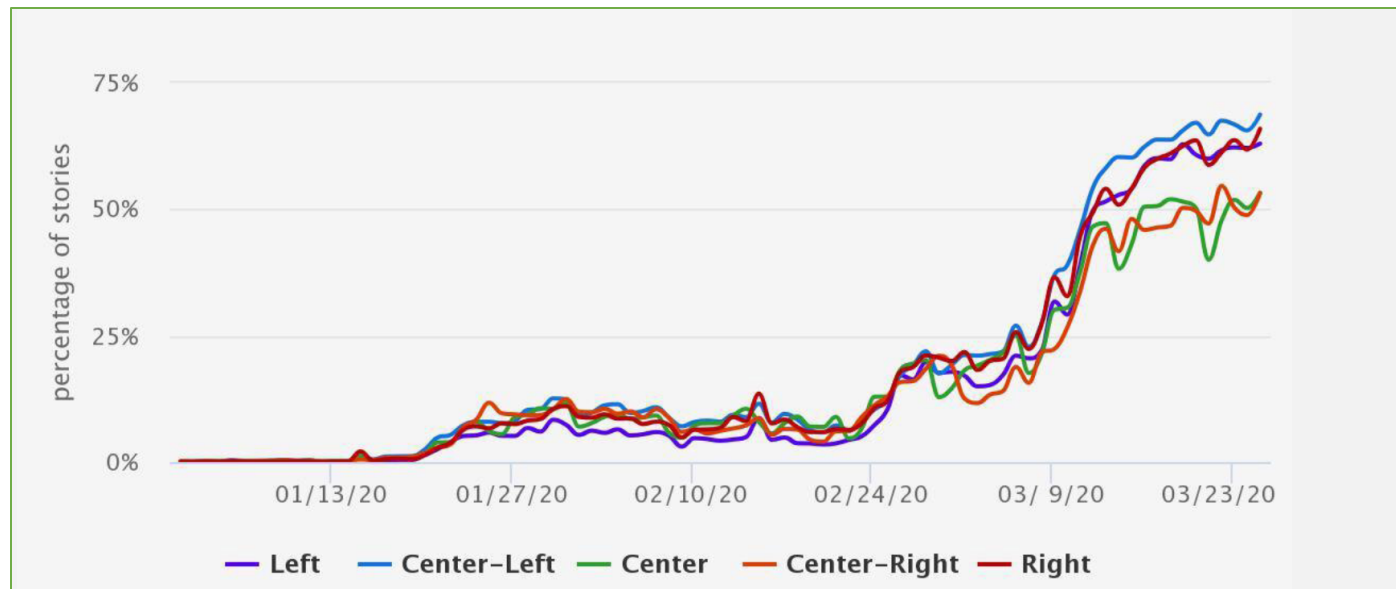


# Ways the Internet limits your world – Filter bubbles and echo chambers

- **Echo chamber:** effect of a user's interest being positively or negatively reinforced by repeated exposure to a certain item or category of items
- **Filter bubble:** when a user encounters only information and opinions that conform to and reinforce their own beliefs
- Filter bubbles and echo chambers limit the world represented to you on the Internet. **Do they limit your world view or conveniently target useful information?**

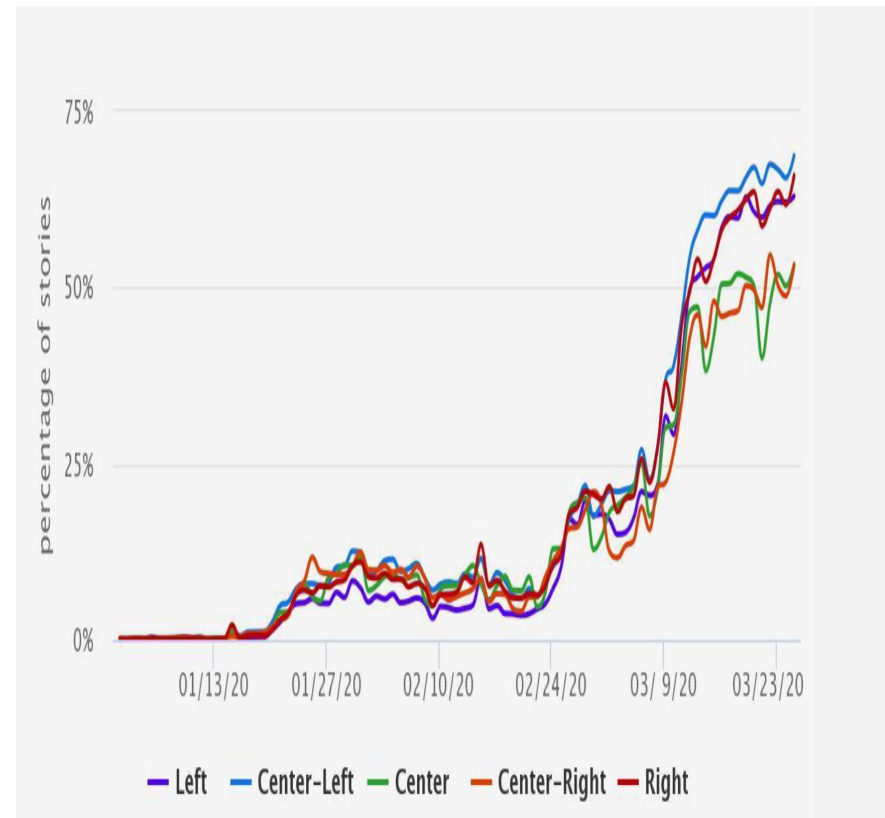
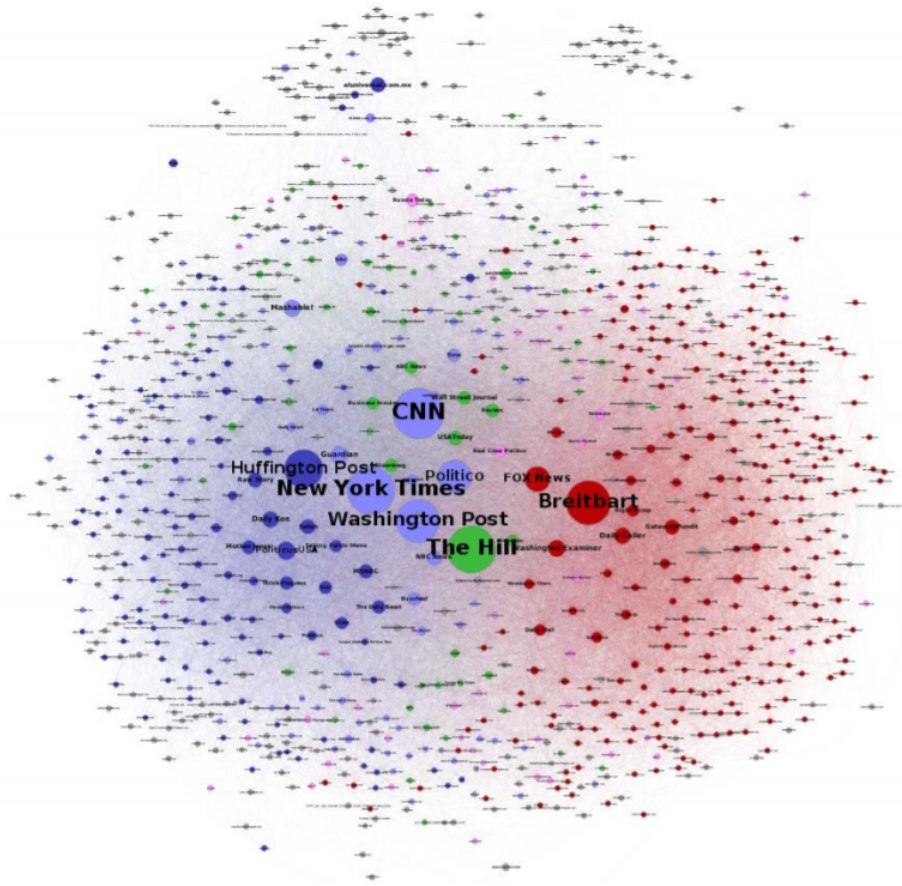
# What's newsworthy?

- **Media chooses what you will see.** When there are less choices, we are seeing “*agenda compression*” and news homogeneity.
- U.S. Media Collection – percent of stories in 32 popular publications from Media Cloud mentioning “coronavirus or COVID or Wuhan”: 1/1/20-3/25/20



# What bias does your news source have?

**Classification:** Faris, Robert M., Hal Roberts, Bruce Etling, Nikki Bourassa, Ethan Zuckerman, and Yochai Benkler. 2017. Partisanship, Propaganda, and Disinformation: Online Media and the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election. Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society Research Paper.



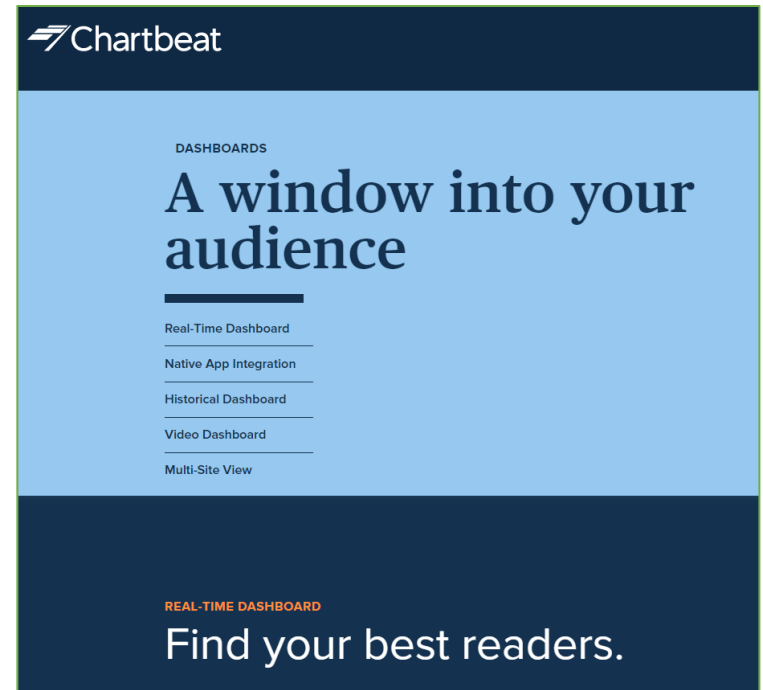
Stories mentioning “coronavirus or COVID or Wuhan”: 1/1/20-3/25/20

# The diversity of stories in the news is falling in general; big stories contribute

Focus	Before	Later
<b>The President</b>	Obama presidency: 1 in 10 stories	Trump Presidency: 1 in 4 Stories
<b>Sports</b>	7% of the stories in 2014	5.2% of the stories in 2019
<b>Protest, Black Lives Matter, uprising stories</b>	Before Michael Brown's killing: 7.4%	After Michael Brown's killing: 11.3%
	1 week after George Floyd's killing: 21.5%	2 weeks after George Floyd's killing: 32.7%
	Just after Breonna Taylor's killing: Less	After George Floyd's death: More (currently roughly 2.5%)

# How does the media decide what to cover?

- **Chartbeat** documents what readers will click on
- Social media platforms play an important role
  - Algorithms govern which stories Facebook and other social media platforms amplify
- Provocative stories more likely to provoke comments than information stories (e.g. politics, personal health decisions)



*Chartbeat provides information on users and uptake*

# Other factors also influence what you see

- Tough economics:
  - fewer reporters producing less content; key local stories go unreported
  - Consolidation of news sources
- High visibility media events shape subsequent media coverage

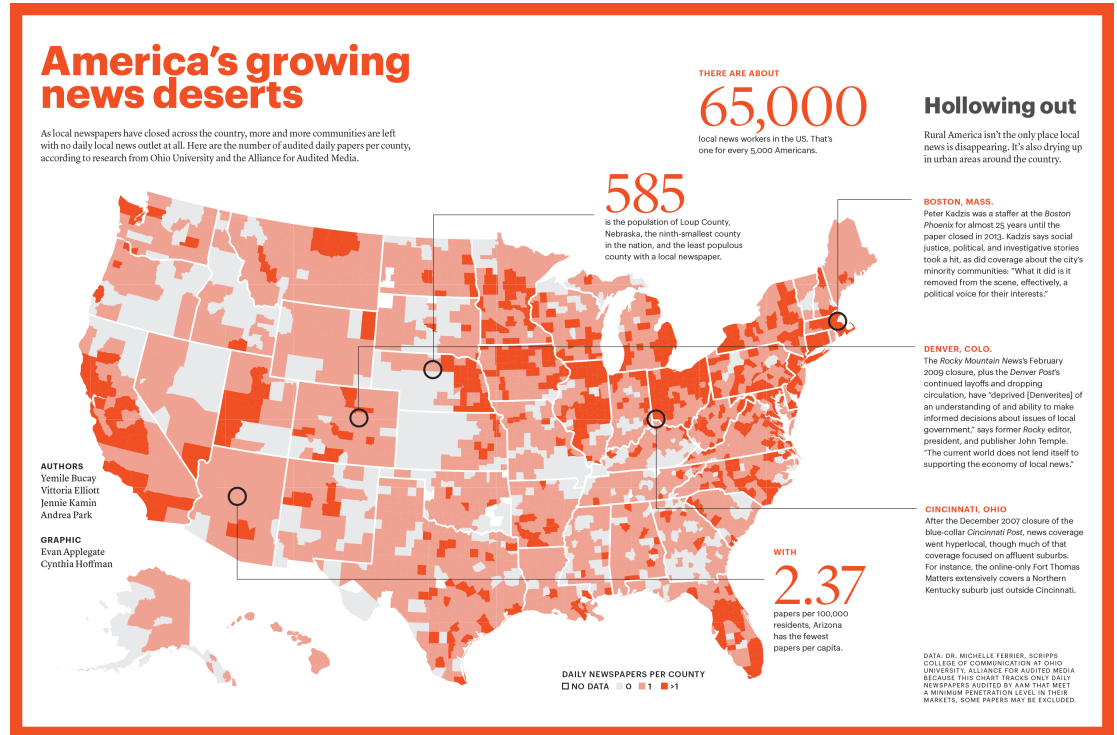


Image: <https://billmoyers.com/story/media-consolidation-should-anyone-care/>

# Media Cloud: Structuring the Data

- **Media Cloud provides open source platform** with tools for audience analysis
  - *Explorer*: analysis of how digital news media covers your topic of interest
  - *Topic Mapper*: User topic-generator for a deeper dive into issues.
  - *Source Manager*: DB of print, broadcast and digital news collections
- Stories indexed from tens of thousands of publications and adds metadata to each story to assist media researchers
- Platform organizes data by topic – 400+ topical bins
- **Most popular stories trending to fewer bins**
  - 2013: 37 most popular bins contained 50% of the stories
  - 2019: 24 most popular bins contained 50% of the stories
  - 2020: 14 most popular bins contained 50% of the stories (so far) [includes public health, disease]

# Media compression and news diversity

- **Is media agenda compression bad?**

- Harder for a novel stories to break through dominance that Trump and coronavirus have on media agenda in 2020
- Stories that break through must be really big: Michael Brown's killing in Ferguson, BLM, protests
- Creating an echo chamber effect

- **Promoting more diverse news**

- News outlets should regularly monitor the diversity of topics in their new coverage

- What should their objectives be? Focusing primarily on Chartbeat-type analysis prioritizes popularity and diminishes diversity

- **Chicken and egg problem / shared responsibility?**

- News outlets have to find a way to maintain a viable business model with more diverse content
- Audiences need to proactively read more widely



# Lecture 2 Resources 1

- **“Introduction to Recommender Systems”**, <https://towardsdatascience.com/introduction-to-recommender-systems-6c66cf15ada>. *Description of recommender systems and algorithmic approaches to recommendations*
- **“Degenerate Feedback Loops in Recommender Systems”**, <https://arxiv.org/pdf/1902.10730.pdf>. *Mathematical modeling of the role of user dynamics and the behavior of Recommender systems, focusing on system degeneracy (feedback loops and filter bubbles).*
- **“Nudge Theory”**, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nudge\\_theory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nudge_theory). *Description/discussion of nudging from a behavioral science perspective.*
- **“How Netflix’s Recommendation System works?”**, [https://medium.com/@springboard\\_ind/how-netflixs-recommendation-engine-works-bd1ee381bf81](https://medium.com/@springboard_ind/how-netflixs-recommendation-engine-works-bd1ee381bf81). *General information about Netflix Recommender system.*
- **“How to see everything Netflix knows about you,”** <https://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/columnist/saltzman/2018/04/17/you-can-see-what-netflix-knows-you-but-you-cant-download/510782002/>. *Detail on the data collected and used by Netflix.*

## Lecture 2 Resources 2

- **“The Amazing Disappearing Election,”** The Atlantic, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2020/08/why-news-sounds-same/615070/>
- **Media Cloud Blog,** <https://mediacloud.org/news/2020/4/3/coverage-of-covid-19-and-political-partisanship-comparing-across-nations>
- **Partisanship, Propaganda, and Disinformation: Online Media and the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election,** [https://dash.harvard.edu/bitstream/handle/1/33759251/2017-08\\_electionReport\\_0.pdf](https://dash.harvard.edu/bitstream/handle/1/33759251/2017-08_electionReport_0.pdf)
- **Chartbeat website:** <https://chartbeat.com/products/dashboards/>
- **Media Cloud website:** <https://mediacloud.org/>
- **How Media Consolidation Threatens Democracy: 857 Channels (and Nothing On),** <https://billmoyers.com/story/media-consolidation-should-anyone-care/>

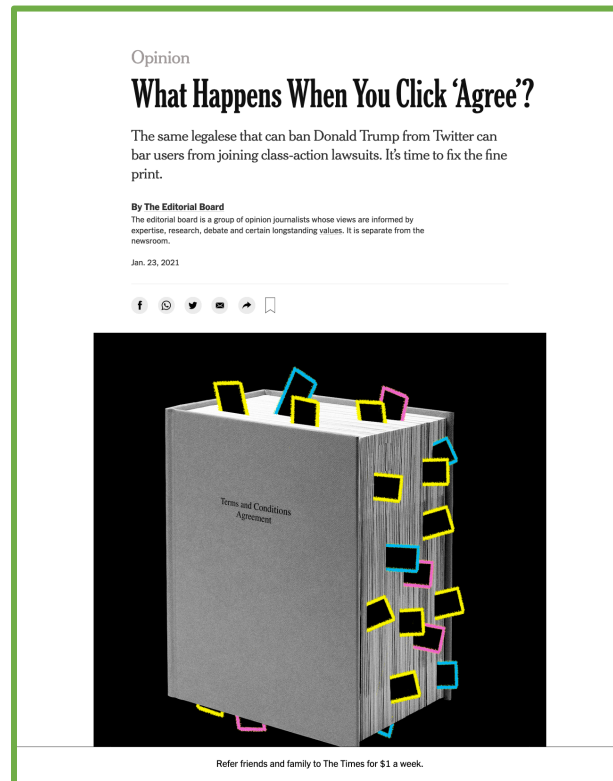
# Model Presentation



# What happens when you click agree?

New York Times

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/23/opinion/sunday/online-terms-of-service.html?referringSource=articleShare>

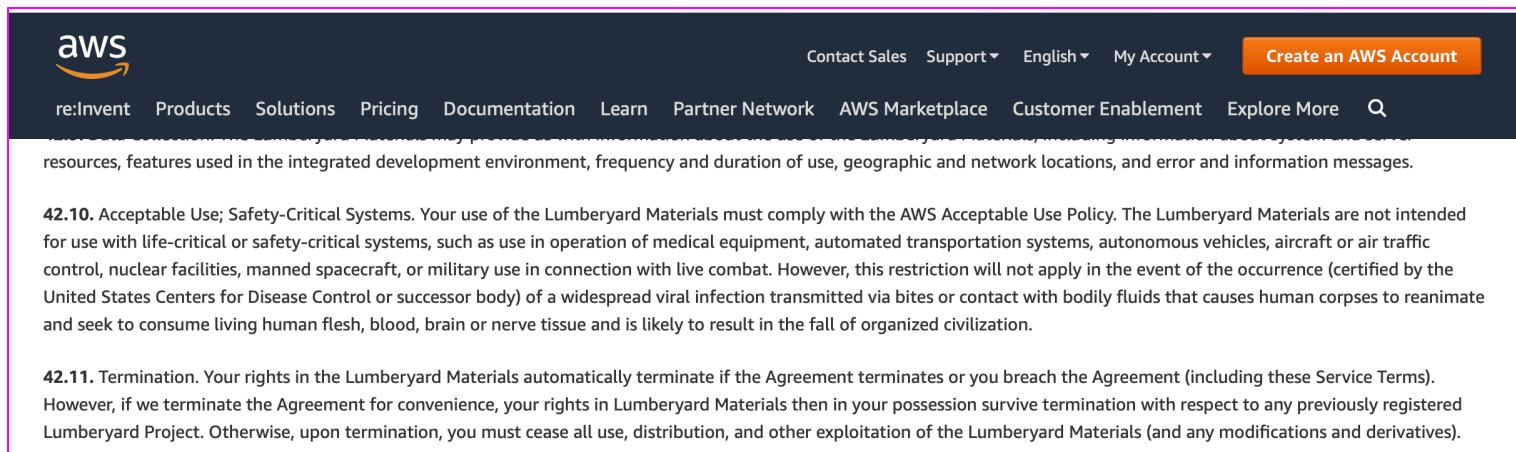


# Terms of Service tell you under what conditions you may use a product or service

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such list. You also agree that you will not use these products for any purposes prohibited by United States law, including, without limitation, the development, design, manufacture, or production of nuclear, missile, or chemical or biological weapons.

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resources, features used in the integrated development environment, frequency and duration of use, geographic and network locations, and error and information messages.

**42.10. Acceptable Use; Safety-Critical Systems.** Your use of the Lumberyard Materials must comply with the AWS Acceptable Use Policy. The Lumberyard Materials are not intended for use with life-critical or safety-critical systems, such as use in operation of medical equipment, automated transportation systems, autonomous vehicles, aircraft or air traffic control, nuclear facilities, manned spacecraft, or military use in connection with live combat. However, this restriction will not apply in the event of the occurrence (certified by the United States Centers for Disease Control or successor body) of a widespread viral infection transmitted via bites or contact with bodily fluids that causes human corpses to reanimate and seek to consume living human flesh, blood, brain or nerve tissue and is likely to result in the fall of organized civilization.

**42.11. Termination.** Your rights in the Lumberyard Materials automatically terminate if the Agreement terminates or you breach the Agreement (including these Service Terms). However, if we terminate the Agreement for convenience, your rights in Lumberyard Materials then in your possession survive termination with respect to any previously registered Lumberyard Project. Otherwise, upon termination, you must cease all use, distribution, and other exploitation of the Lumberyard Materials (and any modifications and derivatives).

Amazon Terms of Service allows Cloud Computing to be used in a zombie apocalypse

# They can give companies permission to share or sell your data and/or restrict your rights

## Match.com (Match, OK Cupid, Tinder, etc.) shares information

- With other users
- With service providers and partners
- With other Match Group businesses
- For corporate transactions (including restructuring, mergers, acquisitions)
- When required by law
- To enforce legal rights
- With your consent or at your request

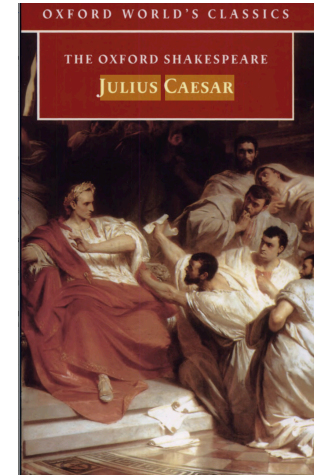
*“We may also share this information with other Match Group companies and third parties (notably advertisers) to develop and deliver targeted advertising on our services and on websites or applications of third parties, and to analyze and report on advertising you see. We may combine this information with additional non-personal information or personal information in hashed, non-human readable form collected from other sources.”*

## AT&T Wireless Arbitration Clause:

- *“This agreement requires the use of arbitration on an individual basis to resolve disputes, rather than jury trials or class actions, and also limits the remedies available to you in the event of a dispute.”*

# The balance of power between consumers and tech companies is skewed

- Consumers are outgunned ...
  - Terms and conditions can stretch to 20,000 words
  - Terms are opaque and explanations filled with legalese
  - Studies estimate that understanding
  - Terms and Conditions may require 14 years of education and would require 76+ workdays for tech companies.
- The burden is on consumers
  - Products and services are often “take it or leave it”



[https://www.google.com/books/editio n/Julius\\_Caesar/Soh9UValqRMC?hl=en &gbpv=1&dq=Julius+Caesar+play&prin tsec=frontcover](https://www.google.com/books/editio n/Julius_Caesar/Soh9UValqRMC?hl=en &gbpv=1&dq=Julius+Caesar+play&prin tsec=frontcover)

# Sparsity of legislation allows companies to insert provisions for the company's benefit, potentially at the consumers' expense

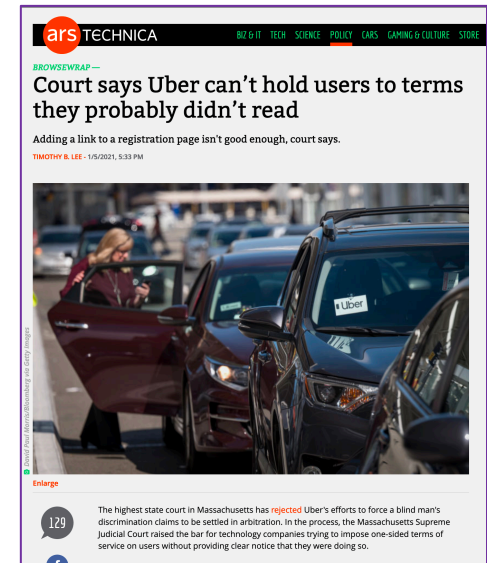
- **Instagram** and **Twitter** can read your private messages.
- **Indeed**, **LinkedIn** and **YouTube** can keep data you've deleted.
- **Craigslist** can take credit for your content.
- **BBC**, **The Guardian**, **Indiegogo**, **Healthline**, **Adobe**, **Reddit**, **Zillow**, **Bose**, **Discord**, etc., etc. use your personal data to employ targeted third-party advertising
- **DoorDash** and **Lyft** ask users to agree that they are not delivery or transportation businesses (sheltering them from liability and allowing them to consider their drivers to be contractors)



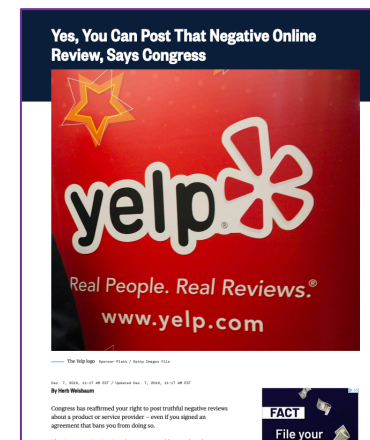


# Where is the law?

- Online contracts date to when software was sold in a box
  - Terms of service were considered agreed to when customers opened the “shrink wrap”
  - 1996 ruling upholds this notion, giving tech companies latitude to make terms and conditions hard to fathom or hard to find
- Things are starting to change:
  - Congress has prohibited companies from barring negative reviews
  - Senator Brown (D-Ohio) has introduced the *Data Accountability and Transparency Act* to Congress, which restricts collection and sharing of personal data
  - Other bills in Congress would allow stronger consumer protections and data privacy



<https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2021/01/court-says-uber-cant-hold-users-to-terms-they-probably-didnt-read/>



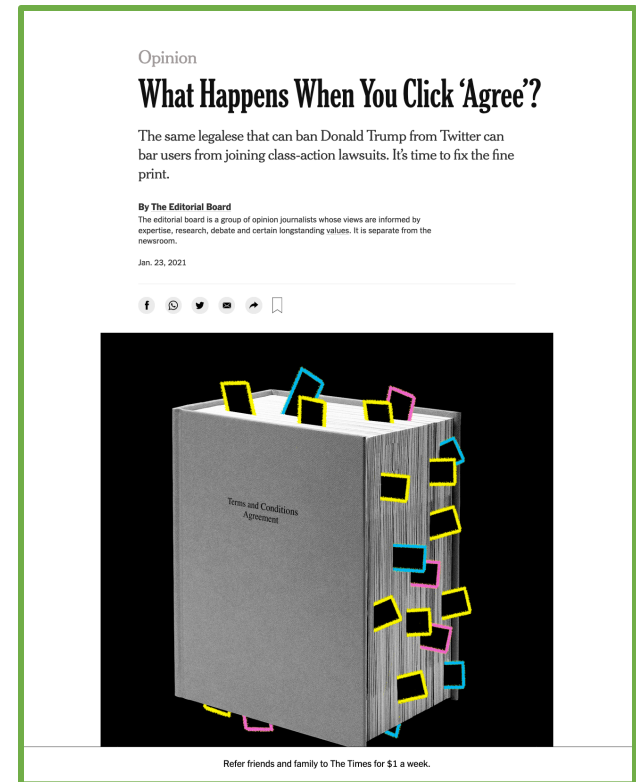
<https://www.nbcnews.com/business/consumer/yes-you-can-post-negative-online-review-says-congress-n693001>

# What more should be done?

- New legislation is needed to create rules that require greater transparency around changes to companies' terms of service and clearer means by which customers agree to them:
  - Explanations in plain English
  - Make clear when policies change and what the changes are
  - Gear Terms and Conditions to the audience (children, general public, etc.)
  - Disclose the rules at regular intervals
  - Prohibition of automatic contract updates without user agreement
- Explore U.S. policy akin to EU's General Data Protection Regulation “no take it or leave it” policy [A data controller may not refuse service to users who decline consent to processing that is not strictly necessary in order to use the service. (**Article 7(4)**)]

# The article needs to go father ... Beyond better Terms and Conditions, Consumer protections are needed

- **Improving Terms and Conditions partially kicks the can down the road**
- Protections (not just understanding) needed for many of the things tech consumers find so egregious:
  - Lack of control with respect to the collection, use, deletion, sharing and sale of personal data
  - No options to “take it or leave it” policies for services and products that have become critical digital infrastructure
  - Limits on remediation options



# References

- **“What happens when you click agree?”** New York Times  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/23/opinion/sunday/online-terms-of-service.html?referringSource=articleShare>
- **Amazon Terms of Service**, <https://aws.amazon.com/service-terms/>
- **Apple Licensed Application End User License Agreement**,  
<https://www.apple.com/legal/internet-services/itunes/dev/stdeula/>
- **Match.com Terms and Conditions**,  
<https://www.match.com/registration/privacystatement.aspx#Section6>
- **AT&T Wireless Customer Agreement**,  
<https://www.att.com/legal/terms.wirelessCustomerAgreement-list.html>
- **Cases**, <https://edit.tosdr.org/cases>
- **GDPR**, Wikipedia,  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General\\_Data\\_Protection\\_Regulation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General_Data_Protection_Regulation)

# Annotated Presentation (Don't present like this!)



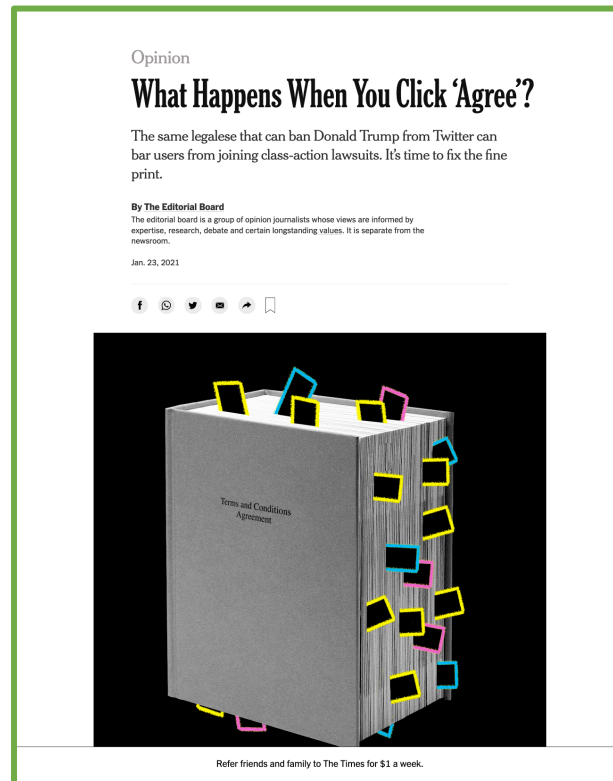
# References

- **“What happens when you click agree?”** New York Times  
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- **Amazon Terms of Service**, <https://aws.amazon.com/service-terms/>
- **Apple Licensed Application End User License Agreement**,  
<https://www.apple.com/legal/internet-services/itunes/dev/stdeula/>
- **Match.com Terms and Conditions**,  
<https://www.match.com/registration/privacystatement.aspx#Section6>
- **AT&T Wireless Customer Agreement**,  
<https://www.att.com/legal/terms.wirelessCustomerAgreement-list.html>
- **Cases**, <https://edit.tosdr.org/cases>
- **GDPR**, Wikipedia,  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General\\_Data\\_Protection\\_Regulation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General_Data_Protection_Regulation)
- (Fran’s opinion)

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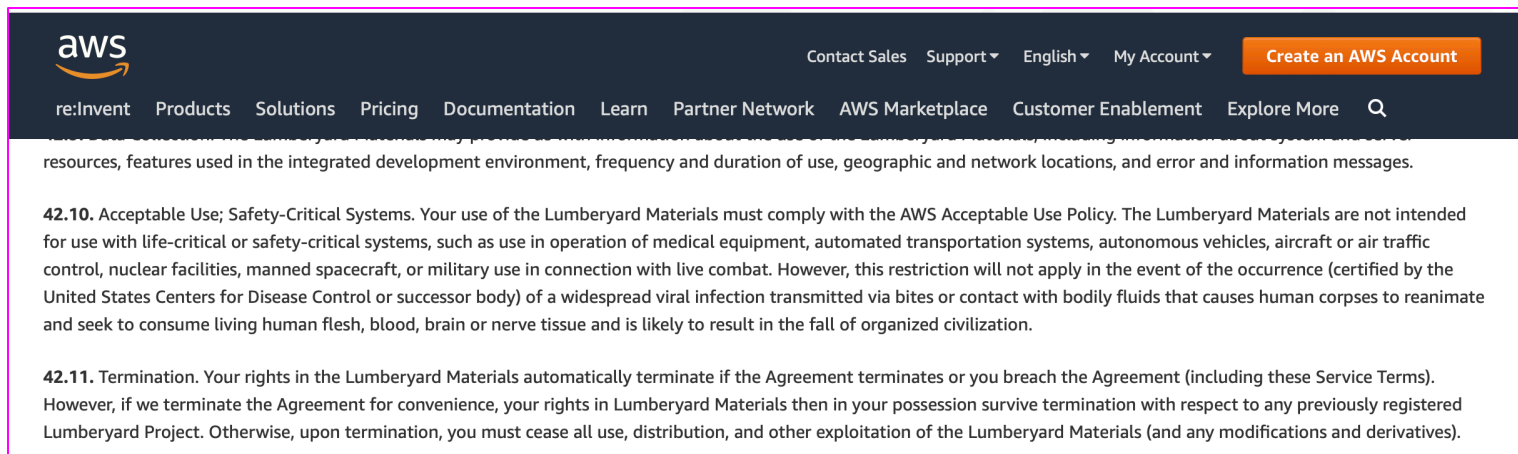


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resources, features used in the integrated development environment, frequency and duration of use, geographic and network locations, and error and information messages.

**42.10. Acceptable Use; Safety-Critical Systems.** Your use of the Lumberyard Materials must comply with the AWS Acceptable Use Policy. The Lumberyard Materials are not intended for use with life-critical or safety-critical systems, such as use in operation of medical equipment, automated transportation systems, autonomous vehicles, aircraft or air traffic control, nuclear facilities, manned spacecraft, or military use in connection with live combat. However, this restriction will not apply in the event of the occurrence (certified by the United States Centers for Disease Control or successor body) of a widespread viral infection transmitted via bites or contact with bodily fluids that causes human corpses to reanimate and seek to consume living human flesh, blood, brain or nerve tissue and is likely to result in the fall of organized civilization.

**42.11. Termination.** Your rights in the Lumberyard Materials automatically terminate if the Agreement terminates or you breach the Agreement (including these Service Terms). However, if we terminate the Agreement for convenience, your rights in Lumberyard Materials then in your possession survive termination with respect to any previously registered Lumberyard Project. Otherwise, upon termination, you must cease all use, distribution, and other exploitation of the Lumberyard Materials (and any modifications and derivatives).

Amazon Terms of Service allows Cloud Computing to be used in a zombie apocalypse



# They can give companies permission to share or sell your data and/or restrict your rights

## Match.com (Match, OK Cupid, Tinder, etc.) shares information

- With other users
- With service providers and partners
- With other Match Group businesses
- For corporate transactions (including restructuring, mergers, acquisitions)
- When required by law
- To enforce legal rights
- With your consent or at your request

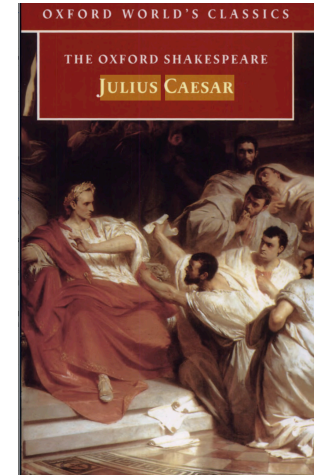
*“We may also share this information with other Match Group companies and third parties (notably advertisers) to develop and deliver targeted advertising on our services and on websites or applications of third parties, and to analyze and report on advertising you see. We may combine this information with additional non-personal information or personal information in hashed, non-human readable form collected from other sources.”*

## AT&T Wireless Arbitration Clause:

- *“This agreement requires the use of arbitration on an individual basis to resolve disputes, rather than jury trials or class actions, and also limits the remedies available to you in the event of a dispute.”*

# The balance of power between consumers and tech companies is skewed

- Consumers are outgunned ...
  - Terms and conditions can stretch to 20,000 words
  - Terms are opaque and explanations filled with legalese
  - Studies estimate that understanding
  - Terms and Conditions may require 14 years of education and would require 76+ workdays for tech companies.
- The burden is on consumers
  - Products and services are often “take it or leave it”



[https://www.google.com/books/editio n/Julius\\_Caesar/Soh9UValqRMC?hl=en &gbpv=1&dq=Julius+Caesar+play&prin tsec=frontcover](https://www.google.com/books/editio n/Julius_Caesar/Soh9UValqRMC?hl=en &gbpv=1&dq=Julius+Caesar+play&prin tsec=frontcover)

# Sparsity of legislation allows companies to insert provisions for the company's benefit, potentially at the consumers' expense

- **Instagram** and **Twitter** can read your private messages.
- **Indeed**, **LinkedIn** and **YouTube** can keep data you've deleted.
- **Craigslist** can take credit for your content.
- **BBC**, **The Guardian**, **Indiegogo**, **Healthline**, **Adobe**, **Reddit**, **Zillow**, **Bose**, **Discord**, etc., etc. use your personal data to employ targeted third-party advertising
- **DoorDash** and **Lyft** ask users to agree that they are not delivery or transportation businesses (sheltering them from liability and allowing them to consider their drivers to be contractors)

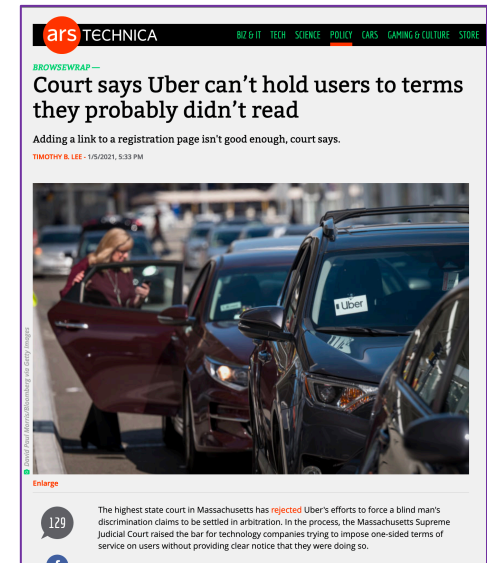


craigslist

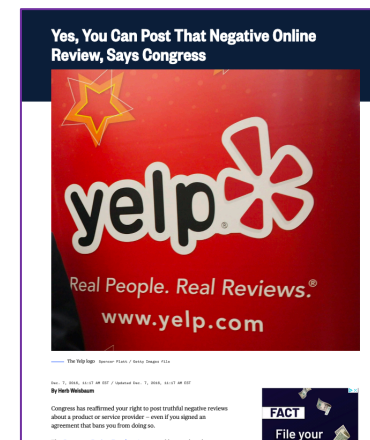


# Where is the law?

- Online contracts date to when software was sold in a box
  - Terms of service were considered agreed to when customers opened the “shrink wrap”
  - 1996 ruling upholds this notion, giving tech companies latitude to make terms and conditions hard to fathom or hard to find
- Things are starting to change:
  - Congress has prohibited companies from barring negative reviews
  - Senator Brown (D-Ohio) has introduced the *Data Accountability and Transparency Act* to Congress, which restricts collection and sharing of personal data
  - Other bills in Congress would allow stronger consumer protections and data privacy



<https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2021/01/court-says-uber-cant-hold-users-to-terms-they-probably-didnt-read/>



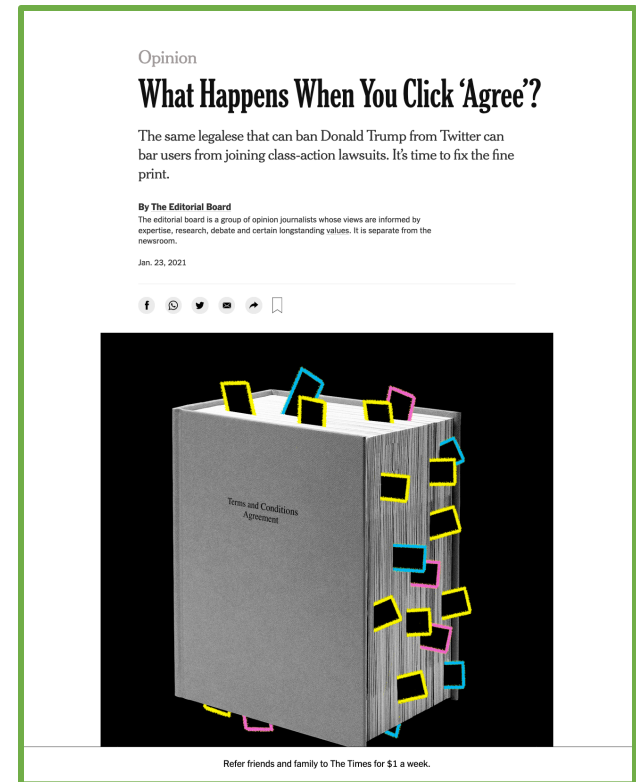
<https://www.nbcnews.com/business/consumer/yes-you-can-post-negative-online-review-says-congress-n693001>

# What more should be done?

- New legislation is needed to create rules that require greater transparency around changes to companies' terms of service and clearer means by which customers agree to them:
  - Explanations in plain English
  - Make clear when policies change and what the changes are
  - Gear Terms and Conditions to the audience (children, general public, etc.)
  - Disclose the rules at regular intervals
  - Prohibition of automatic contract updates without user agreement
- Explore U.S. policy akin to EU's General Data Protection Regulation “no take it or leave it” policy [A data controller may not refuse service to users who decline consent to processing that is not strictly necessary in order to use the service. (**Article 7(4)**)]

# The article needs to go father ... Beyond better Terms and Conditions, Consumer protections are needed

- Improving Terms and Conditions partially kicks the can down the road
- Protections (not just understanding) needed for many of the things tech consumers find so egregious:
  - Lack of control with respect to the collection, use, deletion, sharing and sale of personal data
  - No options to “take it or leave it” policies for services and products that have become critical digital infrastructure
  - Limits on remediation options



# References

- **“What happens when you click agree?”** New York Times  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/23/opinion/sunday/online-terms-of-service.html?referringSource=articleShare>
- **Amazon Terms of Service**, <https://aws.amazon.com/service-terms/>
- **Apple Licensed Application End User License Agreement**,  
<https://www.apple.com/legal/internet-services/itunes/dev/stdeula/>
- **Match.com Terms and Conditions**,  
<https://www.match.com/registration/privacystatement.aspx#Section6>
- **AT&T Wireless Customer Agreement**,  
<https://www.att.com/legal/terms.wirelessCustomerAgreement-list.html>
- **Cases**, <https://edit.tosdr.org/cases>
- **GDPR**, Wikipedia,  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General\\_Data\\_Protection\\_Regulation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General_Data_Protection_Regulation)

# Presentation structure and grading





# Presentation components and grading metrics

## Presentation components (10 minutes presentation + 5 minutes Q&A):

- **Summary and main points**
  - What is the article about?
  - What are the main points/questions/issues described of the article?
- **What are the data issues?**
  - How is data used to support the article's point of view?
- **Discussion**
  - What questions/issues arise from reading this article?

**Note: You may need to read additional publications, websites for your presentations**

## Presentation Grading Metrics :

### Talk (5 pts):

- Is the presentation compelling?
- Does the presentation tell an interesting story?
- Did the speaker use the timeframe effectively?

### Visuals (4 pts):

- Are the slides well-organized and informative?
- Do the slides help tell the story?
- Are the slides visually interesting?
- Is the font readable, are images used to help convey the points, etc.?

### Content (4 pts):

- Does the speaker understand the topic?
- Has the speaker leveraged appropriate additional materials as needed to support their presentation?

### Q&A (2 pts):

- Is the speaker well prepared for questions? Can they respond to them articulately?

# More about presentations

## Do 2 of these, 15 points each

- *You are responsible for ensuring that you sign up for 2 during the semester*
- Presentation articles will be given in class and can be found on the class website
- Send your slides as a .pdf attachment (please include your name) to [bermaf@rpi.edu](mailto:bermaf@rpi.edu) **15 minutes before the beginning of the class** in which you will present.

## TIPS:

- **Practice your presentation. Use this as an opportunity to become a better public speaker**
- DO NOT SPEND MOST OF THE TALK READING YOUR NOTES
- Talk so your audience can hear you. Engage with your audience
- Be prepared for questions and have an intelligent form of “I don’t know”
- Use visuals and text to make your slides interesting. Don’t make the font too small.

# Your Turn!

## • Presentations for February 1

- **“The swiss cheese model of pandemic defense”**, New York Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/05/health/coronavirus-swiss-cheese-infection-mackay.html> (Isaac L.)
- **“The architecture of mass vaccine distribution,”** Bloomberg CityLab, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2021-01-22/the-architecture-of-covid-vaccine-distribution> (Adam M.)

## • Presentations for February 4

- **‘Are vaccine providers selling your health data? There’s not much stopping them.’**, Vox, <https://www.vox.com/recode/22251118/vaccine-health-data-privacy-laws-philadelphia> (Hannah L.)
- **“WHO plans privacy, security rules for COVID-19 vaccine certificates,”** Wall Street Journal, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/who-plans-privacy-security-rules-for-covid-19-vaccine-certificates-11610706601> (Justin O.)

## • Presentations for February 8

- **“Changes to the census could make small towns disappear,”** New York Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/02/06/opinion/census-algorithm-privacy.html> (Liam M.)
- **“Can a set of equations keep U.S. census data private?”** Science, <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2019/01/can-set-equations-keep-us-census-data-private> (Davis E.)

## • Presentations for February 11

- **“We’re banning facial recognition. We’re missing the point.”** New York Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/20/opinion/facial-recognition-ban-privacy.html> (Josh M.)
- **“This site published every face from Parler’s Capitol riot videos”,** Wired, <https://www.wired.com/story/faces-of-the-riot-capitol-insurrection-facial-recognition/> (Nate S.)