



Correction to : Truth as social practice in a digital era: iteration as persuasion

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Accepted: 21 July 2022 / Published online: 16 August 2022
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Correction: AI & SOCIETY

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00146-021-01306-w>

In the original published article was published with incorrect abstract text and missing references. The corrected abstract and missing reference is as follows:

Abstract.

Digital technologies have instrumentalized information in terms of its persuasive function. This article argues that we should approach truth and falsehood in the same way: not as properties or conditions attached to content, but as collective, performative, and above all persuasive phenomena. Truth/falsehood should be seen as social practices of collective iteration, with assessment focussed on their agency, the interests they serve, and systemic impacts. The article first surveys different ways multiple disciplines have noted the ineffectiveness, in a digital era, of simply countering falsehoods with facts. It shows how the problem of false belief produced by the integrated psychological and algorithmic human landscape we now inhabit combines individually-targeted actions with structural tendencies, both human and mechanical. Key is the persuasive agency of apparent consensus in a fractured environment that seems to be but is in fact no longer 'public'; the control of narratives, labels, and associations as a matter of live, time-sensitive contest, continuously on cusps; and strategies of negative cohesion and enemy-creation that depend on binary ways of seeing, in which the offer of identity and community powerfully cooperates with the structural affordances of algorithm-driven advertiser platforms towards silos and polarisation. In all these, long-established behavioural

strategies and patterns are being amplified by digital methods and affordances. Historical precedents and critical skills from the Arts and Humanities are therefore crucial resources to help the public counter what Silicon Valley since 1997 has called the 'persuasive technology'. The article advocates new popular understandings of a digitally-mediated public sphere as no longer a culture of discovery, where what matters is what exists, but a culture of iteration, where what matters is what gets repeated.

References:

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The original article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00146-021-01306-w>.

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