



All-encompassing War: An Exploration of Information Disorder Countermeasures through Smooth and Striated Space

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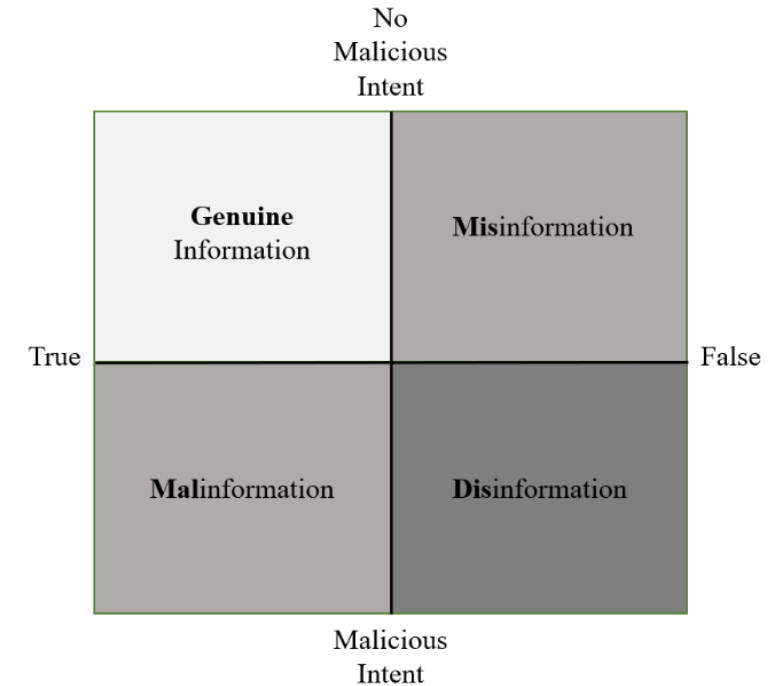
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Information Disorder and War

- Modern warfare is “hybrid”: coordinated across conventional and unconventional means.
 - Integrates digital, information warfare alongside “kinetic” warfare.
- Information warfare: use of “information disorder” (disinformation, malinformation) to serve political ends.
 - Social and Digital Media: enhances, affords targeting of civil society.
- Telecommunications, digital media professionals must contend with balance of democratic ideals and information warfare.
- *Many* perspectives on countering information disorder from many fields (e.g. military studies, communications, etc...)
- Vibrant thinking! But also overwhelming, difficult to synthesize theoretically...



Information Disorder arranged along axes of truth/falsity, malicious intent



Research Goal

- Contribute to a “unified strategic concept” (Hwang 2019) that bridges perspectives on countering information disorder, information warfare...
- **...by applying a theoretical framework of smoothness, striation, and nomadism to examine proposed and implemented Western countermeasures...**
- ...contextualized within the trajectory (past, present, future) of information disorder, information warfare, and hybrid warfare.



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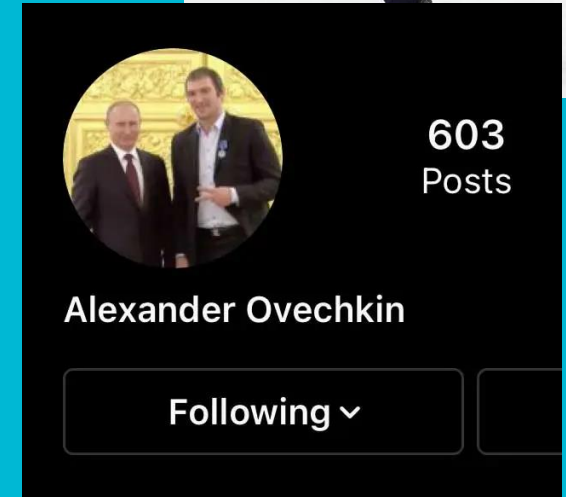
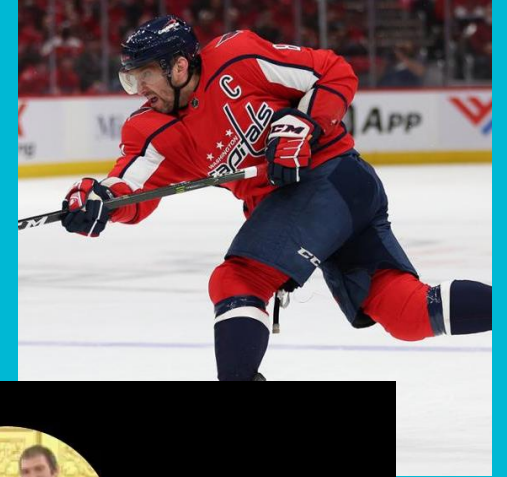
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History of Information Warfare (and trajectory to the digital)

- Asymmetrical warfare: practiced for centuries (Murray & Mansoor 2012)
- Soviet “active measures” in Cold War characterized asymmetrical warfare post-WWII. KGB (now FSB) well-respected, well-supported.
- Reagan Admin: established “Active Measures Working Group” (AMWG), whose final report revealed a “broader than the state” approach.

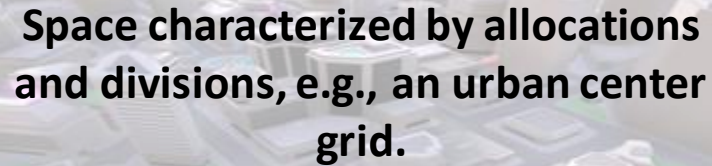
Digital Disinformation

- AMWG final report doesn't represent outside impact of the digital on access and amplification, including emergent advances.
 - Social and digital media *greatly* enhances span, reach of information disorder: societal sectors, platforms, and users.
 - Information disorder reflects truth about digital information: *it resists attempts to restrict its flow.*
- *Measures to counter information disorder must centralize information's desire to flow freely.*

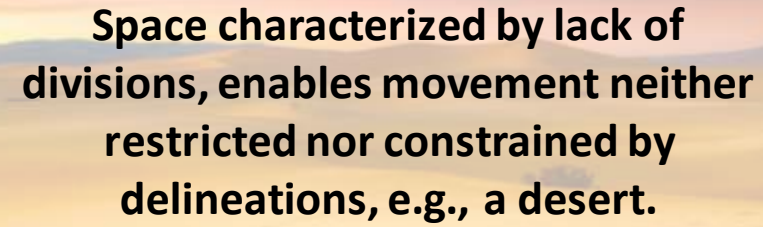


Striation and Smoothness in Digital Information Space

- Deleuze and Guattari characterizes spaces as exhibiting two natures:



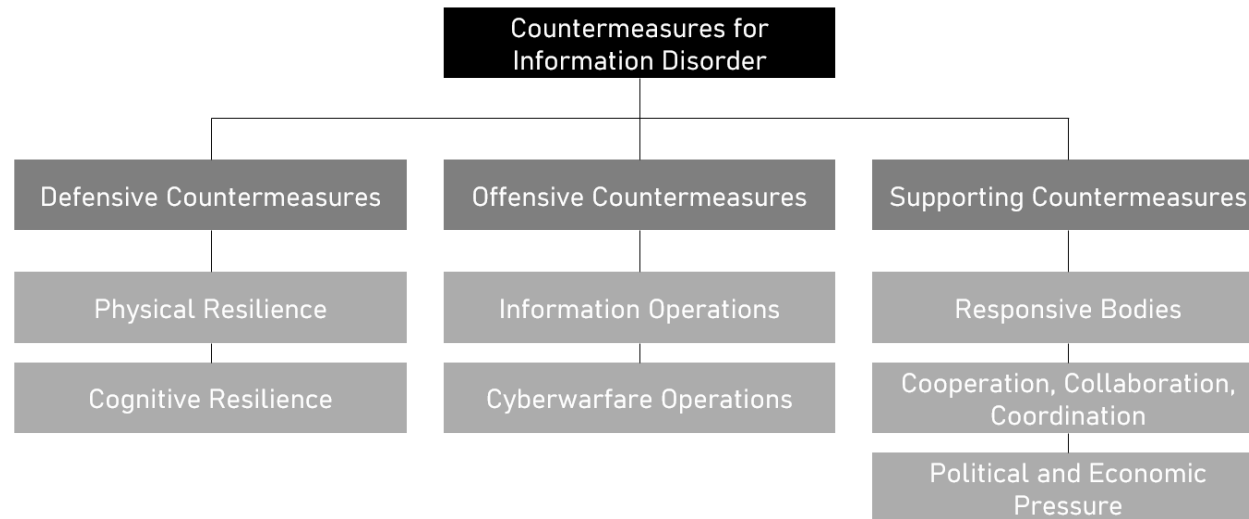
Space characterized by allocations and divisions, e.g., an urban center grid.



Space characterized by lack of divisions, enables movement neither restricted nor constrained by delineations, e.g., a desert.

- Cyberspace: smoothness and striation exist “in mixture” (Deleuze & Guattari 1987).
 - Striation: online communities, “information highways”.
 - Smoothness: information flow between user to user, server to server.
- Information disorder leverages striation/smoothness: targets particular communities (striation), spreads through a smooth information flow.
- ***Sensitizes us to the dynamic (smoothness/striation) that highlights how digital information disorder behaves and makes it hard to counter.***
 - Lens to analyze countermeasures to information disorder through their relationship with the smoothness/striation dynamic.

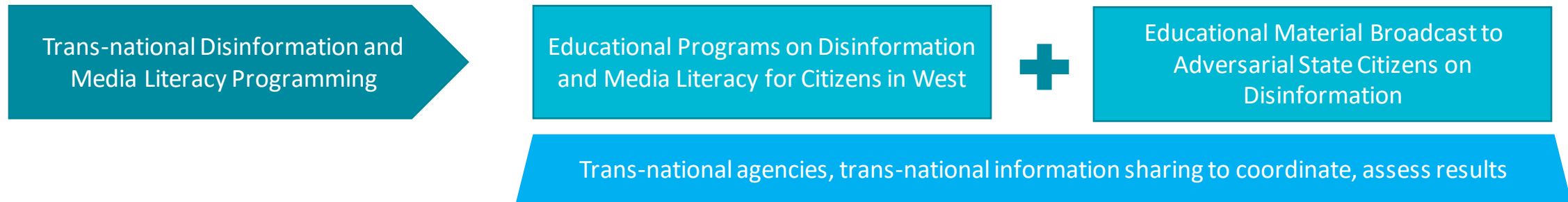
Analysis of Measures towards a Model of Information Disorder Countermeasures



- **Defensive:** defense of networks, information spaces, people
- **Offensive:** information built to reach citizens of adversarial nations; cyber-warfare operations targeting adversaries
- **Supporting:** governance bodies, collaboration among allies, political and economic pressure (indirect measures)

The Smoothness/Striation Dynamic (and what it suggests): Arguments

1. **Nomadic Impulse:** Current and Immediate Trends in Countermeasures reflect a “nomadic impulse” in information disorder.
2. **Countermeasure Span:** Current and immediate Trends reflect an opportunity for greater offensive-defensive coherence (“combined measures”)



3. **Societal Span:** Thinking beyond the Military-Security Apparatus (“whole-of-society”).

A State of All-Encompassing War

- Information disorder as a tool of information warfare, within a hybrid warfare frames of mind adopted by Western policymakers...
- ...combined with information disorder's *nomadic impulse* that *smoothens* the topology of war from traditional *striated* notions like frontlines...
- ...portends *a shift in the institution of war as no longer the domain of the state's military institutions on a new scale.*

“...while asymmetrical warfare is constitutive of multiple battlefronts arrayed throughout the spaces of adversaries, the “whole-of-society” shift that information warfare brings is moving towards such deep embeddedness so as to be something qualitatively distinct.

If war is everywhere, then war is nowhere. All are exposed to it and can (sometimes unwittingly) play an active role in the practice of warfare.

Thus, hybrid warfare, information’s central role in it, and information’s nomadic impulse (as indicative of information disorder) results in a battlefield so imbued into the fabric of society that it is indistinguishable from it. War becomes a way of life, rendered invisible by virtue of its ubiquity while simultaneously all-encompassing.”

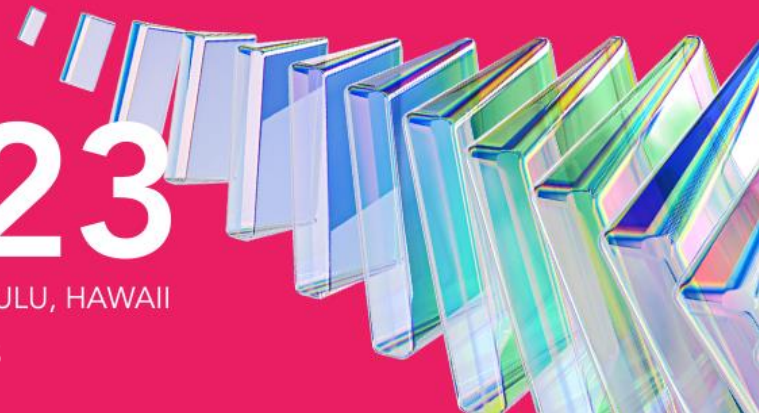


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Concluding Remarks

- Immediate consequences: greater coordination between state, civil, private sectors in information, unconventional warfare
 - E.g. Ukraine's resistance to Russia's 2022 invasion.
- Long-term: hard to tell but could be deep and far-reaching for societal construction.

How can we preserve democratic practices in civil society if it integrates into the state's war machine?

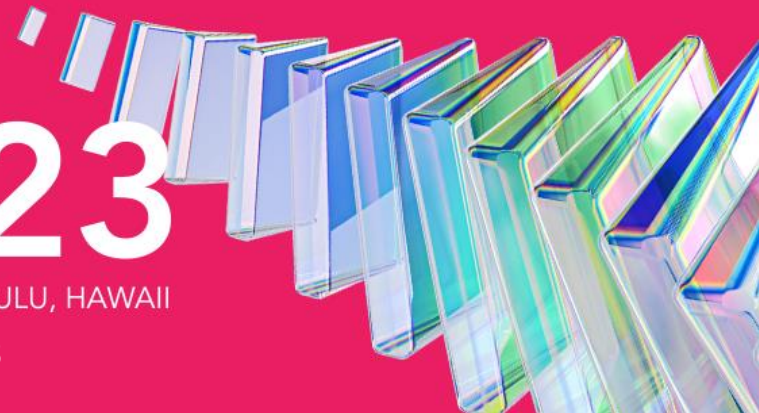


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