

# The Oxygen of Amplification | Data & Society

By Whitney Phillips

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*The Oxygen of Amplification: Better Practices for Reporting on Extremists, Antagonists, and Manipulators Online* draws on in-depth interviews by scholar Whitney Phillips to showcase **how news media was hijacked from 2016 to 2018 to amplify the messages of hate groups.**

Offering extremely candid comments from mainstream journalists, the report provides a snapshot of an industry caught between the pressure to deliver page views, the impulse to cover manipulators and “trolls,” and the disgust (expressed in interviewees’ own words) of accidentally propagating extremist ideology.

After reviewing common methods of “information laundering” of radical and racist messages through the press, Phillips uses journalists’ own words to propose a set of **editorial “better practices” intended to reduce manipulation and harm.**

As social and digital media are leveraged to reconfigure the information landscape, Phillips argues that this new domain requires journalists to take what they know about abuses of power and media manipulation in traditional information ecosystems; and apply and adapt that knowledge to networked actors, such as white nationalist networks online.

This work is the first practitioner-focused report from Data & Society’s Media Manipulation Initiative, which examines how groups use the participatory culture of the internet to turn the strengths of a free society into vulnerabilities.

Source: [The Oxygen of Amplification | Data & Society](#)