

Call for Papers: Fake News, Bots and Trolls | DSAA 2020

By DSAA 2020

May 11, 2020

Fake news has become one of the main threats to our society. Although fake news is not a new phenomenon, the exponential growth of social media has offered an easy platform for its fast and wide propagation. The threat is even greater when fake news dissemination has a political or an ideological purpose, as it happens during electoral campaigns or during extreme events able to endanger political regimes, such as epidemics. Bots are commonly related to fake news spreading. They can artificially inflate the popularity of an opinion or a political candidate, as well as undermine the reputation of a targeted politician and hinder an opposing view, by repeatedly spamming contents produced by disinformation outlets. Other actors of misbehaviour in social media are trolls that offend people, dominate online discussions, and in general try to manipulate people's opinion by triggering hate and anger, with the aim of interfering with the regular public debate.

In this special session we would like the research community to share how the above problems need to be addressed from several interdisciplinary perspectives. Special emphasis will be on how news broadcasting corporations fact check claims by politicians, public figures, advocacy groups and institutions engaged in the public debate; how crowd signals in social media can be used to flag fake news; how online user activity fingerprints can be leveraged in order to detect a malicious use of social networks; how pieces of disinformation spread on social networks; how fake news broadcasters cooperate to conduct misinformation campaigns; how to design a semi-automated system that could trace and/or verify news shared online, helping journalists to identify disinformation.

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