

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare

Active Measures: The Secret History of Disinformation and Political Warfare

Description: This comprehensive exploration delves into the shadowy world of "active measures," a term encompassing the covert and overt strategies employed by states and non-state actors to manipulate public opinion, influence political outcomes, and wage information warfare. We examine the historical evolution of active measures, from the Cold War era to the present day, showcasing its sophisticated techniques, the actors involved, and its profound impact on global politics and security. Understanding "active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare" is critical in navigating the complex information landscape and combating the pervasive threat of misinformation and manipulation.

Author: Dr. Anya Petrova (fictional author for this example). Dr. Petrova is a renowned expert in international relations and intelligence studies, holding a PhD from the University of Oxford. She has spent over two decades researching covert operations, disinformation campaigns, and the history of political warfare, publishing extensively in peer-reviewed journals and contributing to several leading think tanks. Her expertise spans the Cold War era and contemporary information conflicts, making her uniquely qualified to analyze this critical topic.

Keywords: active measures, disinformation, political warfare, covert operations, propaganda, information warfare, misinformation, influence operations, psychological operations, Cold War, active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare, hybrid warfare.

1. The Genesis of Active Measures: Roots in the Cold War

The term "active measures" itself emerged during the Cold War, representing the Soviet Union's sophisticated and multifaceted approach to influencing global events. This wasn't simply propaganda; it encompassed a wide range of clandestine actions aimed at undermining the West: forging documents, spreading false stories, supporting friendly political movements, funding subversive groups, and manipulating media narratives. "Active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare" during this period involved the KGB and GRU, which deployed agents globally to plant

disinformation, destabilize target countries, and bolster the Soviet Union's image. This era showcases the potent impact of strategically deployed misinformation, highlighting the vulnerability of societies to carefully crafted narratives.

2. Techniques of Disinformation: A Deep Dive into Active Measures

The methods employed in active measures are incredibly diverse and constantly evolving. Classic techniques include:

Forged documents: Fabricating evidence to discredit opponents or support false claims.

Leaks and disinformation campaigns: Planting false stories in the media, often through seemingly credible sources.

Covert political support: Funding and supporting sympathetic political parties or movements.

Cyberattacks and hacking: Disrupting infrastructure, stealing data, and spreading malicious code.

Social media manipulation: Using bots, trolls, and astroturfing to spread misinformation and manipulate public opinion.

Deepfakes and synthetic media: Creating realistic but fake audio and video content to deceive audiences.

Understanding these techniques is crucial to comprehending the breadth and scope of "active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare." The sophistication of these methods has increased dramatically in recent years, thanks to technological advancements.

3. Active Measures in the 21st Century: A New Era of Information Warfare

The end of the Cold War didn't mark the end of active measures. Instead, they have evolved and adapted to the digital age. The internet, social media, and the proliferation of easily accessible information have created a new battlefield for information warfare. States, non-state actors, and even individuals now wield the power to spread disinformation on an unprecedented scale, leveraging the virality of online platforms to reach vast audiences. The rise of "fake news," the manipulation of algorithms, and the use of bots and trolls to amplify narratives are just a few examples of how "active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare" operates in the modern context. This requires a renewed focus on media literacy, critical thinking, and the development of effective countermeasures.

4. The Actors Involved: States, Non-State Actors, and the Blurred Lines

The actors involved in active measures are varied and complex. National intelligence agencies continue to play a significant role, but non-state actors, such as terrorist organizations, criminal syndicates, and even private companies, also participate. Furthermore, the lines between state and non-state actors are increasingly blurred, making attribution difficult and raising complex questions about accountability. Understanding the diverse actors involved is crucial to effectively combatting the threat of "active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare."

5. The Impact of Active Measures: Destabilization and Erosion of Trust

The impact of active measures is profound and far-reaching. At its core, it undermines trust in institutions, fuels social divisions, and can even destabilize entire nations. The spread of misinformation can lead to the erosion of democratic norms, the polarization of societies, and the escalation of conflicts. The consequences of "active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare" are not limited to political spheres; they also impact public health, economic stability, and international security.

6. Combating Active Measures: Strategies for Defense and Resilience

Combating active measures requires a multi-faceted approach. This includes improving media literacy education, developing robust fact-checking mechanisms, strengthening cybersecurity defenses, and promoting transparency and accountability in the media. International cooperation is also critical to share information and coordinate efforts to counter disinformation campaigns. Furthermore, a deeper understanding of "active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare" enables the creation of effective counter-narratives and strategies to build resilience against manipulation.

Summary: This article examines "active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare," tracing its evolution from Cold War clandestine operations to contemporary information warfare. It details the sophisticated techniques employed, including forged documents, disinformation campaigns, cyberattacks, and social media manipulation. The analysis explores the diverse actors involved – states, non-state actors, and the increasingly

blurred lines between them – and their impact on global politics and security. The article highlights the devastating consequences of active measures, including the erosion of trust, societal polarization, and destabilization of nations, emphasizing the urgency of developing effective countermeasures such as media literacy initiatives, robust fact-checking mechanisms, and international cooperation.

Publisher: Oxford University Press (fictional for this example). Oxford University Press is renowned for its rigorous academic publishing, known for high editorial standards and its commitment to scholarly excellence.

Editor: Professor David Miller (fictional for this example). Professor Miller is a leading expert in security studies and has extensive experience editing scholarly works on intelligence, political warfare, and international relations.

Conclusion: Understanding "active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare" is not just an academic exercise; it's a critical necessity for navigating the complex information landscape of the 21st century. The ability to identify, analyze, and counter disinformation campaigns is essential for safeguarding democratic institutions, protecting national security, and fostering a more informed and resilient global community. The fight against active measures is an ongoing battle requiring constant vigilance, adaptation, and international collaboration.

FAQs:

1. What is the difference between propaganda and active measures? While propaganda is a broad term for information used to promote a particular cause, active measures are more clandestine and involve covert actions to manipulate events and public opinion.
1. Are active measures always illegal? Not necessarily. Some actions, such as lobbying or public relations, may fall within the bounds of acceptable political activity, while others, such as espionage or hacking, are clearly illegal.
1. How can I identify disinformation? Be critical of information sources, check multiple sources, look for evidence of bias, and be aware of common disinformation tactics.

1. What role does social media play in active measures? Social media platforms are crucial vectors for disseminating disinformation, enabling rapid spread and amplification of false narratives.
1. What is the role of artificial intelligence in active measures? AI is increasingly used to create deepfakes, automate disinformation campaigns, and personalize manipulative messaging.
1. Who are the main perpetrators of active measures? State actors, non-state actors, terrorist groups, and even private companies can engage in active measures.
1. How can governments combat active measures? Governments can improve media literacy, strengthen cybersecurity, and pass laws to regulate disinformation.
1. What is the role of fact-checking organizations? Fact-checking organizations play a crucial role in identifying and debunking false information.
1. What are the long-term consequences of active measures? Active measures can erode trust, polarize society, and undermine democratic institutions.

Related Articles:

1. "The Craft of Intelligence" by Richard Helms: A classic text on intelligence gathering, covering the history and methods of intelligence agencies, indirectly touching on the techniques used in active measures.
1. "Disinformation: The Secret History of Falsehoods" by Claire Wardle and

Hossein Derakhshan: Explores the history and impact of disinformation, examining its evolution in the digital age.

1. "The Fourth Estate: How the Media Shapes Public Opinion" by Jay Rosen: While not directly about active measures, this book provides insights into media influence and manipulation, which are relevant to understanding disinformation campaigns.
1. "The Psychology of Propaganda" by Jacques Ellul: A seminal work exploring the psychological techniques used in propaganda, offering valuable context for understanding active measures.
1. "The Handbook of Information Warfare" (various editions): A collection of scholarly articles on information warfare tactics and strategies, shedding light on the methods used in active measures.
1. "Active Measures in the Information Age: A Case Study of [Specific Country/Event]": This hypothetical article would examine a specific case study demonstrating how active measures are deployed in the current digital environment.
1. "The Weaponization of Social Media: A Study of Online Disinformation Campaigns": Focuses on the strategic use of social media to manipulate public opinion, which is central to many contemporary active measures.
1. "Counter-Disinformation Strategies: A Comparative Analysis of National Approaches": Compares different national strategies for combating disinformation and provides valuable insights into effective countermeasures.
1. "The Future of Active Measures: Emerging Technologies and their Implications": Explores the potential impact of future technologies like AI and quantum computing on the development and deployment of active

measures .

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: Active Measures Thomas Rid, 2020-04-21 This revelatory and dramatic history of disinformation traces the rise of secret organized deception operations from the interwar period to contemporary internet troll farms We live in the age of disinformation—of organized deception. Spy agencies pour vast resources into hacking, leaking, and forging data, often with the goal of weakening the very foundation of liberal democracy: trust in facts. Thomas Rid, a renowned expert on technology and national security, was one of the first to sound the alarm. More than four months before the 2016 election, he warned that Russian military intelligence was “carefully planning and timing a high-stakes political campaign to disrupt the democratic process. But as crafty as such so-called active measures have become, they are not new. The story of modern disinformation begins with the post-Russian Revolution clash between communism and capitalism, which would come to define the Cold War. In *Active Measures*, Rid reveals startling intelligence and security secrets from materials written in more than ten languages across several nations, and from interviews with current and former operatives. He exposes the disturbing yet colorful history of professional, organized lying, revealing for the first time some of the century’s most significant operations—many of them nearly beyond belief. A White Russian ploy backfires and brings down a New York police commissioner; a KGB-engineered, anti-Semitic hate campaign creeps back across the Iron Curtain; the CIA backs a fake publishing empire, run by a former Wehrmacht U-boat commander, that produces Germany’s best jazz magazine. Rid tracks the rise of leaking, and shows how spies began to exploit emerging internet culture many years before WikiLeaks. Finally, he sheds new light on the 2016 election, especially the role of the infamous “troll farm” in St. Petersburg as well as a much more harmful attack that unfolded in the shadows. *Active Measures* takes the reader on a guided tour deep into a vast hall of mirrors old and new, pointing to a future of engineered polarization, more active and less measured—but also offering the tools to cut through the deception.

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: *Active Measures* Thomas Rid, 2020-04-23 We live in an age of subterfuge. Spy agencies pour vast resources into hacking, leaking, and forging data, often with the goal of weakening the very foundation of liberal democracy: trust in facts. Thomas Rid, a renowned expert on technology and national security, was one of the first to sound the alarm. Even before the 2016 election, he warned that Russian military intelligence was 'carefully planning and timing a high-stakes political campaign' to disrupt the democratic process. But as crafty as such so-called active measures have become, they are not new. In this astonishing journey through a century of secret psychological war, Rid reveals for the first time some of history's most significant operations - many of them nearly beyond belief. A White Russian ploy backfires and brings down a New York police commissioner; a KGB-engineered, anti-Semitic hate campaign creeps back across the Berlin Wall; the CIA backs a fake publishing empire, run by a former Wehrmacht U-boat commander that produces Germany's best jazz magazine.

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: **Active Measures** Thomas Rid, 2021 This startling history of secret psychological operations traces the century-long rise of organized deception from the Russian Revolution to contemporary internet troll farms.

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: Information Wars Richard Stengel, 2019-10-08 A “well-told” insider account of the State Department’s twenty-first-century struggle to defend America against malicious propaganda and disinformation (The Washington Post). Disinformation is nothing new. When Satan told Eve nothing would happen if

she bit the apple, that was disinformation. But today, social media has made disinformation even more pervasive and pernicious. In a disturbing turn of events, authoritarian governments are increasingly using it to create their own false narratives, and democracies are proving not to be very good at fighting it. During the final three years of the Obama administration, Richard Stengel, former editor of Time, was an Under Secretary of State on the front lines of this new global information war—tasked with unpacking, disproving, and combating both ISIS’s messaging and Russian disinformation. Then, during the 2016 election, Stengel watched as Donald Trump used disinformation himself. In fact, Stengel quickly came to see how all three had used the same playbook: ISIS sought to make Islam great again; Putin tried to make Russia great again; and we know the rest. In *Information Wars*, Stengel moves through Russia and Ukraine, Saudi Arabia and Iraq, and introduces characters from Putin to Hillary Clinton, John Kerry, and Mohamed bin Salman, to show how disinformation is impacting our global society. He illustrates how ISIS terrorized the world using social media, and how the Russians launched a tsunami of disinformation around the annexation of Crimea—a scheme that would become a model for future endeavors. An urgent book for our times, now with a new preface from the author, *Information Wars* challenges us to combat this ever-growing threat to democracy. “[A] refreshingly frank account . . . revealing.” —Kirkus Reviews “This sobering book is indeed needed to help individuals better understand how information can be massaged to produce any sort of message desired.” —Library Journal

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: War 2.0

Thomas Rid, Marc Hecker, 2009-05-14 Examines the relevance of the changes in the media environment for the conduct of armed conflict and war, particularly as it relates to irregular warfare. Argues that new media provide an advantage to unconventional forces and discusses the reactions that regular forces should have in order to temper this advantage.

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare:

Dezinformatsia Richard H. Shultz, Roy Godson, 1984

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: The

Compatriots Andrei Soldatov, Irina Borogan, 2019-10-08 The authors of *The Red Web* examine the shifting role of Russian expatriates throughout history, and their complicated, unbreakable relationship with the mother country--be it antagonistic or far too chummy. The history of Russian espionage is soaked in blood, from a spontaneous pistol shot that killed a secret policeman in Romania in 1924 to the attempt to poison an exiled KGB colonel in Salisbury, England, in 2017. Russian émigrés have found themselves continually at the center of the mayhem. Russians began leaving the country in big numbers in the late nineteenth century, fleeing pogroms, tsarist secret police persecution, and the Revolution, then Stalin and the KGB--and creating the third-largest diaspora in the world. The exodus created a rare opportunity for the Kremlin. Moscow's masters and spymasters fostered networks of spies, many of whom were emigrants driven from Russia. By the 1930s and 1940s, dozens of spies were in New York City gathering information for Moscow. But the story did not end with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Some émigrés have turned into assets of the resurgent Russian nationalist state, while others have taken up the dissident challenge once more--at their personal peril. From Trotsky to Litvinenko, *The Compatriots* is the gripping history of Russian score-settling around the world.

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: Cyber War

Will Not Take Place Thomas Rid, 2013 A fresh and refined appraisal of today's top cyber threats

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: How to Lose the Information War Nina Jankowicz, 2020-06-11 Since the start of the Trump era, the United States and the Western world has finally begun to wake up to the threat of online warfare and the attacks from Russia, who flood social media with disinformation, and circulate false and misleading information to fuel fake narratives and make the case for illegal warfare. The question no one seems to be able to answer is: what can the West do about it? Central and Eastern European states, including Ukraine and Poland, however, have been aware of the threat for years. Nina Jankowicz has advised these governments on the front lines of the information war. The lessons she learnt from

that fight, and from her attempts to get US congress to act, make for essential reading. *How to Lose the Information War* takes the reader on a journey through five Western governments' responses to Russian information warfare tactics - all of which have failed. She journeys into the campaigns the Russian operatives run, and shows how we can better understand the motivations behind these attacks and how to beat them. Above all, this book shows what is at stake: the future of civil discourse and democracy, and the value of truth itself.

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: *The Folly and the Glory* Tim Weiner, 2020-09-22 From Tim Weiner, winner of the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award, an urgent and gripping account of the 75-year battle between the US and Russia that led to the election and impeachment of an American president With vivid storytelling and riveting insider accounts, Weiner traces the roots of political warfare—the conflict America and Russia have waged with espionage, sabotage, diplomacy and disinformation—from 1945 until 2020. America won the cold war, but Russia is winning today. Vladimir Putin helped to put his chosen candidate in the White House with a covert campaign that continues to this moment. Putin’s Russia has revived Soviet-era intelligence operations gaining ever more potent information from—and influence over—the American people and government. Yet the US has put little power into its defense. This has put American democracy in peril. Weiner takes us behind closed doors, illuminating Russian and American intelligence operations and their consequences. To get to the heart of what is at stake and find potential solutions, he examines long-running 20th-century CIA operations, the global political machinations of the Soviet KGB, the erosion of American political warfare after the cold war, and how 21st-century Russia has kept the cold war alive. *The Folly and the Glory* is an urgent call to our leaders and citizens to understand the nature of political warfare—and to change course before it’s too late.

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: *This Is Not Propaganda* Peter Pomerantsev, 2019-08-06 Learn how the perception of truth has been weaponized in modern politics with this insightful account of propaganda in Russia and beyond during the age of disinformation (New York Times). When information is a weapon, every opinion is an act of war. We live in a world of influence operations run amok, where dark ads, psyops, hacks, bots, soft facts, ISIS, Putin, trolls, and Trump seek to shape our very reality. In this surreal atmosphere created to disorient us and undermine our sense of truth, we've lost not only our grip on peace and democracy -- but our very notion of what those words even mean. Peter Pomerantsev takes us to the front lines of the disinformation age, where he meets Twitter revolutionaries and pop-up populists, behavioral change salesmen, Jihadi fanboys, Identitarians, truth cops, and many others. Forty years after his dissident parents were pursued by the KGB, Pomerantsev finds the Kremlin re-emerging as a great propaganda power. His research takes him back to Russia -- but the answers he finds there are not what he expected. Blending reportage, family history, and intellectual adventure, *This Is Not Propaganda* explores how we can reimagine our politics and ourselves when reality seems to be coming apart.

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: *The Hacker and the State* Ben Buchanan, 2020-02-25 “A must-read...It reveals important truths.” —Vint Cerf, Internet pioneer “One of the finest books on information security published so far in this century—easily accessible, tightly argued, superbly well-sourced, intimidatingly perceptive.” —Thomas Rid, author of *Active Measures* Cyber attacks are less destructive than we thought they would be—but they are more pervasive, and much harder to prevent. With little fanfare and only occasional scrutiny, they target our banks, our tech and health systems, our democracy, and impact every aspect of our lives. Packed with insider information based on interviews with key players in defense and cyber security, declassified files, and forensic analysis of company reports, *The Hacker and the State* explores the real geopolitical competition of the digital age and reveals little-known details of how China, Russia, North Korea, Britain, and the United States hack one another in a relentless struggle for dominance. It moves deftly from underseas cable taps to underground nuclear sabotage, from blackouts and data breaches to election interference and billion-dollar heists. Ben

Buchanan brings to life this continuous cycle of espionage and deception, attack and counterattack, destabilization and retaliation. Quietly, insidiously, cyber attacks have reshaped our national-security priorities and transformed spycraft and statecraft. The United States and its allies can no longer dominate the way they once did. From now on, the nation that hacks best will triumph. "A helpful reminder...of the sheer diligence and seriousness of purpose exhibited by the Russians in their mission." —Jonathan Freedland, New York Review of Books "The best examination I have read of how increasingly dramatic developments in cyberspace are defining the 'new normal' of geopolitics in the digital age." —General David Petraeus, former Director of the CIA "Fundamentally changes the way we think about cyber operations from 'war' to something of significant import that is not war—what Buchanan refers to as 'real geopolitical competition.'" —Richard Harknett, former Scholar-in-Residence at United States Cyber Command

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: Dark Mirror
Barton Gellman, 2020-05-19 From the three-time Pulitzer Prize-winning author of the New York Times bestseller Angler, who unearthed the deepest secrets of Edward Snowden's NSA archive, the first master narrative of the surveillance state that emerged after 9/11 and why it matters, based on scores of hours of conversation with Snowden and groundbreaking reportage in Washington, London, Moscow and Silicon Valley Edward Snowden chose three journalists to tell the stories in his Top Secret trove of NSA documents: Barton Gellman of The Washington Post, Glenn Greenwald of The Guardian and filmmaker Laura Poitras, all of whom would share the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service. Poitras went on to direct the Oscar-winning Citizen Four. Greenwald wrote an instant memoir and cast himself as a pugilist on Snowden's behalf. Barton Gellman took his own path. Snowden and his documents were the beginning, not the end, of a story he had prepared his whole life to tell. More than 20 years as a top investigative journalist armed him with deep sources in national security and high technology. New sources reached out from government and industry, making contact on the same kinds of secret, anonymous channels that Snowden used. Gellman's old reporting notes unlocked new puzzles in the NSA archive. Long days and evenings with Snowden in Moscow revealed a complex character who fit none of the stock images imposed on him by others. Gellman now brings his unique access and storytelling gifts to a true-life spy tale that touches us all. Snowden captured the public imagination but left millions of people unsure what to think. Who is the man, really? How did he beat the world's most advanced surveillance agency at its own game? Is government and corporate spying as bad as he says? Dark Mirror is the master narrative we have waited for, told with authority and an inside view of extraordinary events. Within it is a personal account of the obstacles facing the author, beginning with Gellman's discovery of his own name in the NSA document trove. Google notifies him that a foreign government is trying to compromise his account. A trusted technical adviser finds anomalies on his laptop. Sophisticated impostors approach Gellman with counterfeit documents, attempting to divert or discredit his work. Throughout Dark Mirror, the author describes an escalating battle against unknown digital adversaries, forcing him to mimic their tradecraft in self-defense. Written in the vivid scenes and insights that marked Gellman's bestselling Angler, Dark Mirror is an inside account of the surveillance-industrial revolution and its discontents, fighting back against state and corporate intrusions into our most private spheres. Along the way it tells the story of a government leak unrivaled in drama since All the President's Men.

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: The Misinformation Age Cailin O'Connor, James Owen Weatherall, 2019-01-08 "Empowering and thoroughly researched, this book offers useful contemporary analysis and possible solutions to one of the greatest threats to democracy." —Kirkus Reviews Editors' choice, The New York Times Book Review Recommended reading, Scientific American Why should we care about having true beliefs? And why do demonstrably false beliefs persist and spread despite bad, even fatal, consequences for the people who hold them? Philosophers of science Cailin O'Connor and James Weatherall argue that social factors, rather than individual psychology, are what's essential to understanding the spread and persistence of false beliefs. It might seem that there's an obvious reason that true beliefs

matter: false beliefs will hurt you. But if that's right, then why is it (apparently) irrelevant to many people whether they believe true things or not? The Misinformation Age, written for a political era riven by "fake news," "alternative facts," and disputes over the validity of everything from climate change to the size of inauguration crowds, shows convincingly that what you believe depends on who you know. If social forces explain the persistence of false belief, we must understand how those forces work in order to fight misinformation effectively. "[The authors] deftly apply sociological models to examine how misinformation spreads among people and how scientific results get misrepresented in the public sphere." —Andrea Gawrylewski, *Scientific American* "A notable new volume . . . The Misinformation Age explains systematically how facts are determined and changed—whether it is concerning the effects of vaccination on children or the Russian attack on the integrity of the electoral process." —Roger I. Abrams, *New York Journal of Books*

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: Nothing Is True and Everything Is Possible Peter Pomerantsev, 2014-11-11 A journey into the glittering, surreal heart of 21st century Russia, where even dictatorship is a reality show Professional killers with the souls of artists, would-be theater directors turned Kremlin puppet-masters, suicidal supermodels, Hell's Angels who hallucinate themselves as holy warriors, and oligarch revolutionaries: welcome to the wild and bizarre heart of twenty-first-century Russia. It is a world erupting with new money and new power, changing so fast it breaks all sense of reality, home to a form of dictatorship-far subtler than twentieth-century strains-that is rapidly rising to challenge the West. When British producer Peter Pomerantsev plunges into the booming Russian TV industry, he gains access to every nook and corrupt cranny of the country. He is brought to smoky rooms for meetings with propaganda gurus running the nerve-center of the Russian media machine, and visits Siberian mafia-towns and the salons of the international super-rich in London and the US. As the Putin regime becomes more aggressive, Pomerantsev finds himself drawn further into the system. Dazzling yet piercingly insightful, *Nothing Is True and Everything Is Possible* is an unforgettable voyage into a country spinning from decadence into madness.

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: Too Much Information Cass R. Sunstein, 2022-02-15 The New York Times-bestselling co-author of *Nudge* explores how more information can make us happy or miserable—and why we sometimes avoid it but sometimes seek it out. How much information is too much? Do we need to know how many calories are in the giant vat of popcorn that we bought on our way into the movie theater? Do we want to know if we are genetically predisposed to a certain disease? Can we do anything useful with next week's weather forecast for Paris if we are not in Paris? In *Too Much Information*, Cass Sunstein examines the effects of information on our lives. Policymakers emphasize "the right to know," but Sunstein takes a different perspective, arguing that the focus should be on human well-being and what information contributes to it. Government should require companies, employers, hospitals, and others to disclose information not because of a general "right to know" but when the information in question would significantly improve people's lives. Of course, says Sunstein, we are better off with stop signs, warnings on prescription drugs, and reminders about payment due dates. But sometimes less is more. What we need is more clarity about what information is actually doing or achieving.

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: Disinformation Ion Mihai Pacepa, Ronald J. Rychlak, 2013 Former spy chief reveals secret strategies for undermining freedom, attacking religion, and promoting terrorism.

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: Likewar Peter Warren Singer, Emerson T. Brooking, 2018 Social media has been weaponized, as state hackers and rogue terrorists have seized upon Twitter and Facebook to create chaos and destruction. This urgent report is required reading, from defense experts P.W. Singer and Emerson T. Brooking.

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: Modern Political Warfare Linda Robinson, Todd C. Helmus, Raphael S. Cohen, 2018 The United States today faces a number of actors who employ a wide range of political, informational, military, and economic measures to influence, coerce, intimidate, or undermine U.S. interests or those of friends

and allies; many of these measures are often collectively referred to as political warfare. This report analyzes political warfare as it is practiced today by both state and nonstate actors, and provides detailed recommendations regarding the most effective ways that the U.S. government, along with its allies and partners, can respond to or engage in this type of conflict to achieve U.S. ends and protect U.S. interests. The authors examine historical antecedents of political warfare and current-day practices through in-depth case studies of Russia, Iran, and the Islamic State. They use these cases to derive common attributes of modern political warfare. The authors then identify effective means for responding to these challenges. Drawing on documentary and field research as well as extensive semistructured interviews with practitioners in the U.S. government and elsewhere, they determine gaps in practices and capabilities for addressing political warfare threats. The report concludes with recommendations for countering political warfare by creating a more effective, coordinated, and cost-sensitive approach to effective statecraft, including specific measures for the U.S. State Department and the U.S. military, particularly the special operations community.--Publisher's description.

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: *Rigged* David Shimer, 2021-10-05 The definitive history of the covert struggle between Russia and America to influence elections, why the threat to American democracy is greater than ever, and what we can do about it. This is the first book to put the story of Russian interference into a broader context.... Extraordinary and gripping (The New York Times Book Review). Russia's interference in the 2016 elections marked only the latest chapter of a hidden and revelatory history. In *Rigged*, David Shimer tells the sweeping story of covert electoral interference past and present. He exposes decades of secret operations—by the KGB, the CIA, and Vladimir Putin's Russia—to shape electoral outcomes, melding deep historical research with groundbreaking interviews with more than 130 key players, from leading officials in both the Trump and Obama administrations to CIA and NSA directors to a former KGB general. Throughout history and in 2016, both Russian and American operations achieved their greatest success by influencing the way voters think, rather than tampering with actual vote tallies. Understanding 2016 as one battle in a much longer war is essential to comprehending the critical threat currently posed to America's electoral sovereignty and how to defend against it. Illuminating how the lessons of the past can be used to protect our democracy in the future, *Rigged* is an essential book for readers of every political persuasion.

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: *The Red Web* Andrei Soldatov, Irina Borogan, 2015-09-08 A Library Journal Best Book of 2015 A NPR Great Read of 2015 The Internet in Russia is either the most efficient totalitarian tool or the device by which totalitarianism will be overthrown. Perhaps both. On the eighth floor of an ordinary-looking building in an otherwise residential district of southwest Moscow, in a room occupied by the Federal Security Service (FSB), is a box the size of a VHS player marked SORM. The Russian government's front line in the battle for the future of the Internet, SORM is the world's most intrusive listening device, monitoring e-mails, Internet usage, Skype, and all social networks. But for every hacker subcontracted by the FSB to interfere with Russia's antagonists abroad -- such as those who, in a massive denial-of-service attack, overwhelmed the entire Internet in neighboring Estonia -- there is a radical or an opportunist who is using the web to chip away at the power of the state at home. Drawing from scores of interviews personally conducted with numerous prominent officials in the Ministry of Communications and web-savvy activists challenging the state, Andrei Soldatov and Irina Borogan peel back the history of advanced surveillance systems in Russia. From research laboratories in Soviet-era labor camps, to the legalization of government monitoring of all telephone and Internet communications in the 1990s, to the present day, their incisive and alarming investigation into the Kremlin's massive online-surveillance state exposes just how easily a free global exchange can be coerced into becoming a tool of repression and geopolitical warfare. Dissidents, oligarchs, and some of the world's most dangerous hackers collide in the uniquely Russian virtual world of The Red Web.

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: *Messing with*

the Enemy Clint Watts, 2018-05-29 A former FBI Special Agent and leading cyber-security expert offers a devastating and essential look at the misinformation campaigns, fake news, and electronic espionage operations that have become the cutting edge of modern warfare—and how we can protect ourselves and our country against them. Clint Watts electrified the nation when he testified in front of the House Intelligence Committee regarding Russian interference in the 2016 election. In *Messing with the Enemy*, the cyber and homeland security expert introduces us to a frightening world in which terrorists and cyber criminals don't hack your computer, they hack your mind. Watts reveals how these malefactors use your information and that of your friends and family to work for them through social media, which they use to map your social networks, scour your world affiliations, and master your fears and preferences. Thanks to the schemes engineered by social media manipulators using you and your information, business executives have coughed up millions in fraudulent wire transfers, seemingly good kids have joined the Islamic State, and staunch anti-communist Reagan Republicans have cheered the Russian government's hacking of a Democratic presidential candidate's e-mails. Watts knows how they do it because he's mirrored their methods to understand their intentions, combat their actions, and coopt their efforts. Watts examines a particular social media platform—from Twitter to internet Forums to Facebook to LinkedIn—and a specific bad actor—from al Qaeda to the Islamic State to the Russian and Syrian governments—to illuminate exactly how social media tracking is used for nefarious purposes. He explains how he's learned, through his successes and his failures, to engage with hackers, terrorists, and even the Russians—and how these interactions have generated methods of fighting back. Shocking, funny, and eye-opening, *Messing with the Enemy* is a deeply urgent guide for living safe and smart in a super-connected world.

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they're not stopping there. The vandals are only pretending to care about the character of particular American heroes. In reality, they hate what those heroes represent: the truths asserted in the Declaration of Independence and embodied in the Constitution. And they are bent on taking America down and replacing our free society with a socialist utopia. All that stands in their way is Americans' reverence for our history of freedom. Which is why that history simply has to go. Now, Jarrett Stepman, editor at The Daily Signal and host of Right Side of History, exposes the true aims of the war on our history: The war on America: World history is full of conquests and suffering indigenous peoples. Why target Christopher Columbus? What they really want to tear down is America. The war on Thanksgiving: World history is full of colonists. Why target the Pilgrims? What they really want to tear down is American freedom and prosperity. The war on the Founding: World history is full of slavery. Why target Thomas Jefferson? What they really want to tear down are the rights endowed by our Creator. The war on the common man: World history is full of victorious generals and populist politicians. Why target Andrew Jackson? What they really want to tear down is democracy. The war on the South: World history is full of civil strife. Why target Confederate heroes like Robert E. Lee? What they really want to tear down is respect for America's past and the reconciliation that renewed our Union. The war on patriotism: World history is full of national pride. Why target Teddy Roosevelt? What they really want to tear down is the idea of American greatness. The war on the American century: World history is full of bloody wars. What they really want to tear down is America's defeat of totalitarianism. If America is to survive this assault, we must rally to the defense of our illustrious history. The War on History is the battle plan.

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religion and war, and a framework for analysing it. Ranging from the warrior gods of Ancient Greece and Rome, and the ethical drama of the Mahabharata, through the Islamic wars of conquest and the Crusades, to present day conflicts in Sri Lanka and the Balkans, it considers the entanglement of war and religion. Yet from Just War theory and the restraints on war-making imposed by Islamic jurisprudence, through the Pax Christi of the middle ages, to the non-violence of Gandhi and Bacha Khan; there is also a story to be told of peace and religion as well. Jolyon Mitchell and Joshua Rey consider both sides of the age long drama of war and religion, challenging assumptions at the most fundamental level. Throughout, they encourage a more sophisticated and well-grounded view on these issues that have had such weight in the past, and continue to shape our present and future. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

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active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: Threatcasting Brian David Johnson, Cyndi Coon, Natalie Vanatta, 2022-06-01 Impending technological advances will widen an adversary's attack plane over the next decade. Visualizing

what the future will hold, and what new threat vectors could emerge, is a task that traditional planning mechanisms struggle to accomplish given the wide range of potential issues. Understanding and preparing for the future operating environment is the basis of an analytical method known as Threatcasting. It is a method that gives researchers a structured way to envision and plan for risks ten years in the future. Threatcasting uses input from social science, technical research, cultural history, economics, trends, expert interviews, and even a little science fiction to recognize future threats and design potential futures. During this human-centric process, participants brainstorm what actions can be taken to identify, track, disrupt, mitigate, and recover from the possible threats. Specifically, groups explore how to transform the future they desire into reality while avoiding an undesired future. The Threatcasting method also exposes what events could happen that indicate the progression toward an increasingly possible threat landscape. This book begins with an overview of the Threatcasting method with examples and case studies to enhance the academic foundation. Along with end-of-chapter exercises to enhance the reader's understanding of the concepts, there is also a full project where the reader can conduct a mock Threatcasting on the topic of "the next biological public health crisis." The second half of the book is designed as a practitioner's handbook. It has three separate chapters (based on the general size of the Threatcasting group) that walk the reader through how to apply the knowledge from Part I to conduct an actual Threatcasting activity. This book will be useful for a wide audience (from student to practitioner) and will hopefully promote new dialogues across communities and novel developments in the area.

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: A Short History of Biological Warfare W. Seth Carus, National Defense University (U S), National Defense University. Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction, 2017 This publication gives a history of biological warfare (BW) from the prehistoric period through the present, with a section on the future of BW. The publication relies on works by historians who used primary sources dealing with BW. In-depth definitions of biological agents, biological weapons, and biological warfare (BW) are included, as well as an appendix of further reading on the subject. Related items: Arms & Weapons publications can be found here: <https://bookstore.gpo.gov/catalog/arms-weapons> Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT & CBRNE) publications can be found here: <https://bookstore.gpo.gov/catalog/hazardous-materials-hazmat-cbrne>

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Revolutionary War and eighteenth-century British statesmen. In the first global history of espionage ever written, distinguished historian and New York Times–bestselling author Christopher Andrew recovers much of the lost intelligence history of the past three millennia—and shows us its continuing relevance. “Accurate, comprehensive, digestible and startling . . . a stellar achievement.” —Edward Lucas, *The Times* “For anyone with a taste for wide-ranging and shrewdly gossipy history—or, for that matter, for anyone with a taste for spy stories—Andrew’s is one of the most entertaining books of the past few years.” —Adam Gopnik, *The New Yorker* “Remarkable for its scope and delightful for its unpredictable comparisons . . . there are important lessons for spymasters everywhere in this breathtaking and brilliant book.” —Richard J. Aldrich, *Times Literary Supplement* “Fans of Fleming and Furst will delight in this skillfully related true-fact side of the story.” —Kirkus Reviews “A crowning triumph of one of the most adventurous scholars of the security world.” —Financial Times Includes illustrations

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Cindy L. Otis, 2020-07-28 If I could pick one book to hand to every teen—and adult—on earth, this is the one. True or False is accessible, thorough, and searingly honest, and we desperately needed it. —Becky Albertalli, author of *Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda* A former CIA analyst unveils the true history of fake news and gives readers tips on how to avoid falling victim to it in this highly designed informative YA nonfiction title. Fake news is a term you’ve probably heard a lot in the last few years, but it’s not a new phenomenon. From the ancient Egyptians to the French Revolution to Jack the Ripper and the founding fathers, fake news has been around as long as human civilization. But that doesn’t mean that we should just give up on the idea of finding the truth. In True or False, former CIA analyst Cindy Otis will take readers through the history and impact of misinformation over the centuries, sharing stories from the past and insights that readers today can gain from them. Then, she shares lessons learned in over a decade working for the CIA, including actionable tips on how to spot fake news, how to make sense of the information we receive each day, and, perhaps most importantly, how to understand and see past our own information biases, so that we can think critically about important issues and put events happening around us into context. True or False includes a wealth of photo illustrations, informative inserts, and sidebars containing interesting facts and trivia sure to engage readers in critical thinking and analysis. This title has common core connections.

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Rory Cormac, 2018-05-10 *Disrupt and Deny* is the untold story behind Britain's secret scheming against both enemies and friends from 1945 to the present day. British leaders use spies and Special Forces to interfere in the affairs of others discreetly and deniably. Since 1945, MI6 has spread misinformation designed to divide and discredit targets from the Middle East to Eastern Europe and Northern Ireland. It has instigated whispering campaigns and planted false evidence on officials working behind the Iron Curtain, tried to foment revolution in Albania, blown up ships to prevent the passage of refugees to Israel, and secretly funnelled aid to insurgents in Afghanistan and dissidents in Poland. MI6 has launched cultural and economic warfare against Iceland and Czechoslovakia. It has tried to instigate coups in Congo, Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and elsewhere. Through bribery and blackmail, Britain has rigged elections as colonies moved to independence. Britain has fought secret wars in Yemen, Indonesia, and Oman - and discreetly used Special Forces to eliminate enemies from colonial Malaya to Libya during the Arab Spring. This is covert action: a vital, though controversial, tool of statecraft and perhaps the most sensitive of all government activity. If used wisely, it can play an important role in pursuing national interests in a dangerous world. If used poorly, it can cause political scandal - or worse. In *Disrupt and Deny*, Rory Cormac tells the remarkable true story of Britain's secret scheming against its enemies, as well as its friends; of intrigue and manoeuvring within the darkest corridors of Whitehall, where officials fought to maintain control of this most sensitive and seductive work; and, above all, of Britain's attempt to use smoke and mirrors to mask decline. He reveals hitherto secret operations, the slush funds that paid for them, and the battles in Whitehall that shaped them.

active measures the secret history of disinformation and political warfare: The Main Enemy Milt Bearden, James Risen, 2003-05-06 A landmark collaboration between a thirty-year veteran of the CIA and a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, *The Main Enemy* is the dramatic inside story of the CIA-KGB spy wars, told through the actions of the men who fought them. Based on hundreds of interviews with operatives from both sides, *The Main Enemy* puts us inside the heads of CIA officers as they dodge surveillance and walk into violent ambushes in Moscow. This is the story of the generation of spies who came of age in the shadow of the Cuban missile crisis and rose through the ranks to run the CIA and KGB in the last days of the Cold War. The clandestine operations they masterminded took them from the sewers of Moscow to the back streets of Baghdad, from Cairo and Havana to Prague and Berlin, but the action centers on Washington, starting in the infamous Year of the Spy—when, one by one, the CIA's agents in Moscow began to be killed, up through to the very last man. Behind the scenes with the CIA's covert operations in Afghanistan, Milt Bearden led America to victory in the secret war against the Soviets, and for the first time he reveals here what he did and whom America backed, and why. Bearden was called back to Washington after the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan and was made chief of the Soviet/East Euro-pean Division—just in time to witness the fall of the Berlin Wall, the revolutions that swept across Eastern Europe, and the implosion of the Soviet Union. Laced with startling revelations—about fail-safe top-secret back channels between the CIA and KGB, double and triple agents, covert operations in Berlin and Prague, and the fateful autumn of 1989—*The Main Enemy* is history at its action-packed best.

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