

Media Literacy Education for Adult Audiences: Navigating the Attention Economy

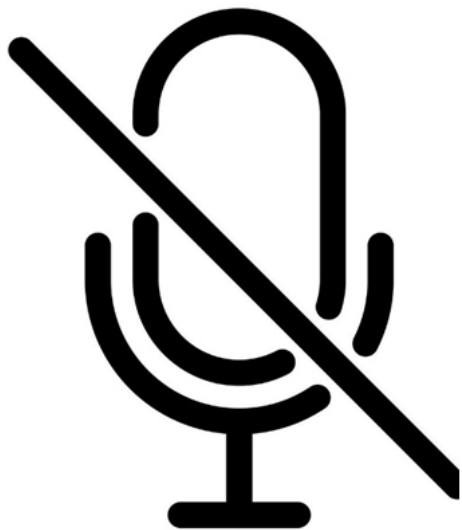
Anna Kozłowska-Barrios, Associate Professor,
Reference and Liaison Librarian, Honors College
Instructor, and Fellow (University of Illinois Chicago)

Monya Tomlinson, reference librarian and
undergraduate success facilitator (Atlanta University
Center Robert W. Woodruff Library)

Announcements

- Today's webinar is a presentation of ALA's Public Programs Office and is the fourth session of five in our *Media Literacy Education for Adult Audiences: Architecture of the Internet* webinar series.
- This project was made possible by the Institute of Museum and Library Services grant number LG-13-19-0089-19.
- Please visit ProgrammingLibrarian.org for program ideas and more free webinars.





Only the presenter has **microphone** access. Enable captions by clicking on “Show captions”.



Use the **Q&A** to ask questions of the presenter or ALA staff. (This includes technical questions.)



Use the **CHAT** to talk with your peers.

One-on-one virtual conversations

- Email Joanna Laursen Brucker at joannalb@knology.org if you are interested in participating!



Today's Presenters:



Dr. Anna Kozłowska-Barrios

University of Illinois Chicago



Monya Tomlinson

Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library

**What takes up the most of your
time?**

**How much time per day do Americans spend with
digital media?**

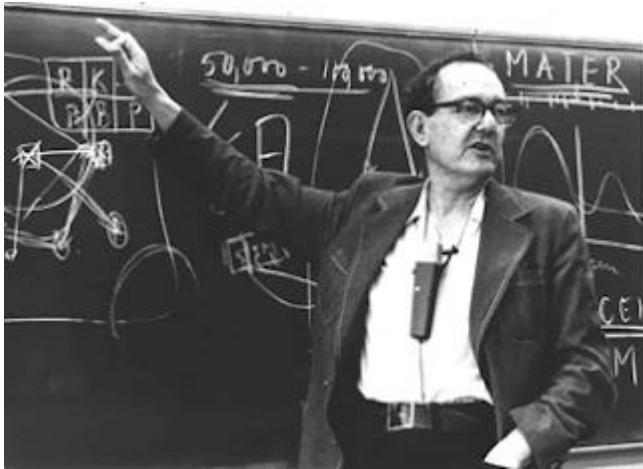
Agenda:

- What is the attention economy
- How is it used in advertising
- What impact it has on our well-being
- How can we educate library users about the attention economy

What is the attention economy?

The concept of attention economy emerged in the 1970s from the work of Herbert A. Simon in response to fears of information overload. Simon viewed attention as a scarce resource in an information-rich world. In recent years, the concept has become more popular, particularly as more social media networks compete for our attention by providing content through customized recommendations, subscriptions, “like” buttons, following, friending, and other methods intended to keep us attached to our screens.

Herbert A. Simon 1916-2001



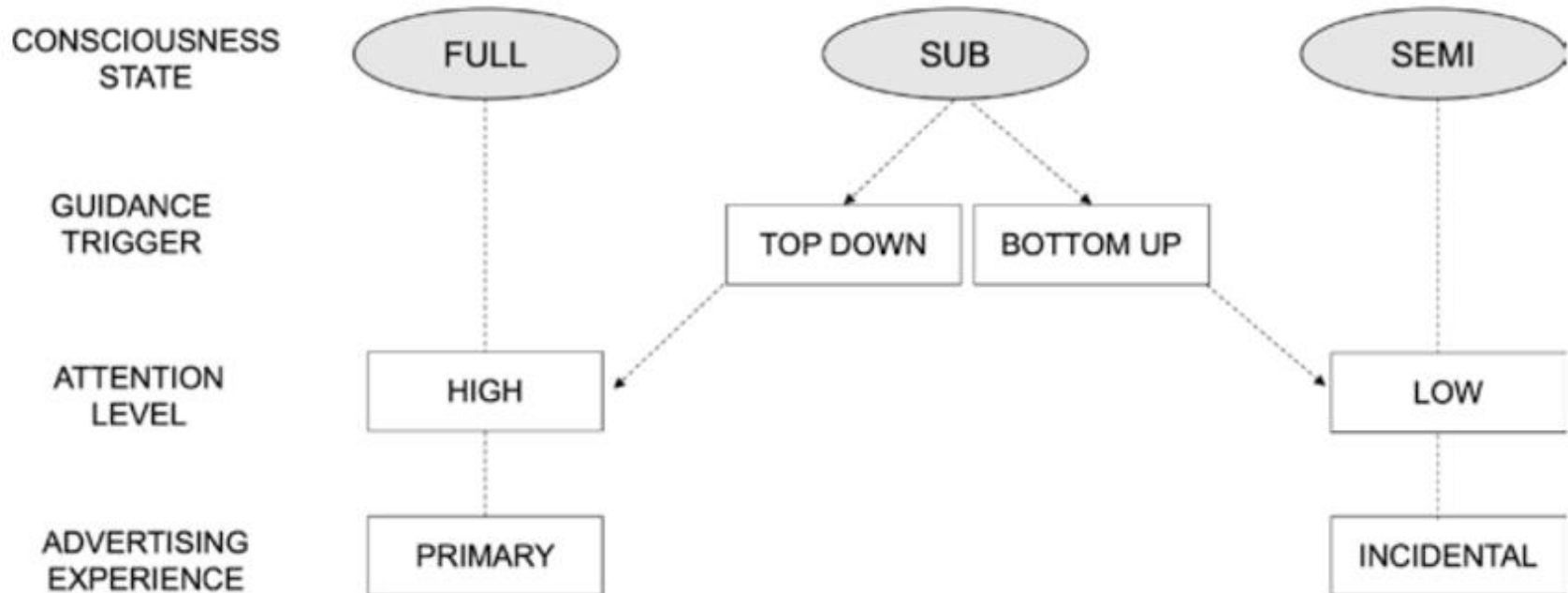
“In an information-rich world, the wealth of information means a dearth of something else: a scarcity of whatever it is that information consumes. What information consumes is rather obvious: it consumes the attention of its recipients. Hence a wealth of information creates a poverty of attention.”

Designing Organizations for an Information-Rich World' in Martin Greenberger (ed.)
Computers, Communications, and the Public Interest (1971)



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Nelson-Field and Ewens Advertising Attention Processing



Attention Economy and Advertising



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Attention Economy and Mental Health

- Linked to depression and anxiety
- Body dysmorphia
- Social comparison
- Political polarization
- Addiction

Anna Lembke SeeSaw Analogy



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What should we do?

1. Media and Information Literacy
protectionist view
2. Media and Information Literacy
empowering view



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Contact Me

Email:

akozlows@uic.edu

Linked

www.linkedin.com/in/anna-kozłowska-barrios

References

BER Staff. Paying attention: The attention economy. Retrieved from <https://econreview.studentorg.berkeley.edu/paying-attention-the-attention-economy/>

I SAID. Truman Show advertisements. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/18jl1Wr5TRw?si=dCIPeAzzhtzdiPNP>

Lembke, Anna. *Dopamine nation: Finding balance in the age of indulgence*. Penguin, 2021.

Nelson-Field, Karen. *The attention economy and how media works: Simple truths for marketers*. Springer Nature, 2020.

Schlage, Tobias and Brent Forrest. *Like and follow*. CGMeetup. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/ioaY1z2trx4?si=-U04Tv4a-mIvo85m>

Algorithms



Server room of BalticServers/17 March 2013. WikiMedia Commons.
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Algorithm Design

- Objective Setting
- Data Collection
- Modeling and Training
- Testing and Adjustment
- Continuous Optimization

Ranked...based on what?

- How often it's linked to by others
- User location information
- Search history



Created by RULI
from Noun Project

They Feed on Our Attention



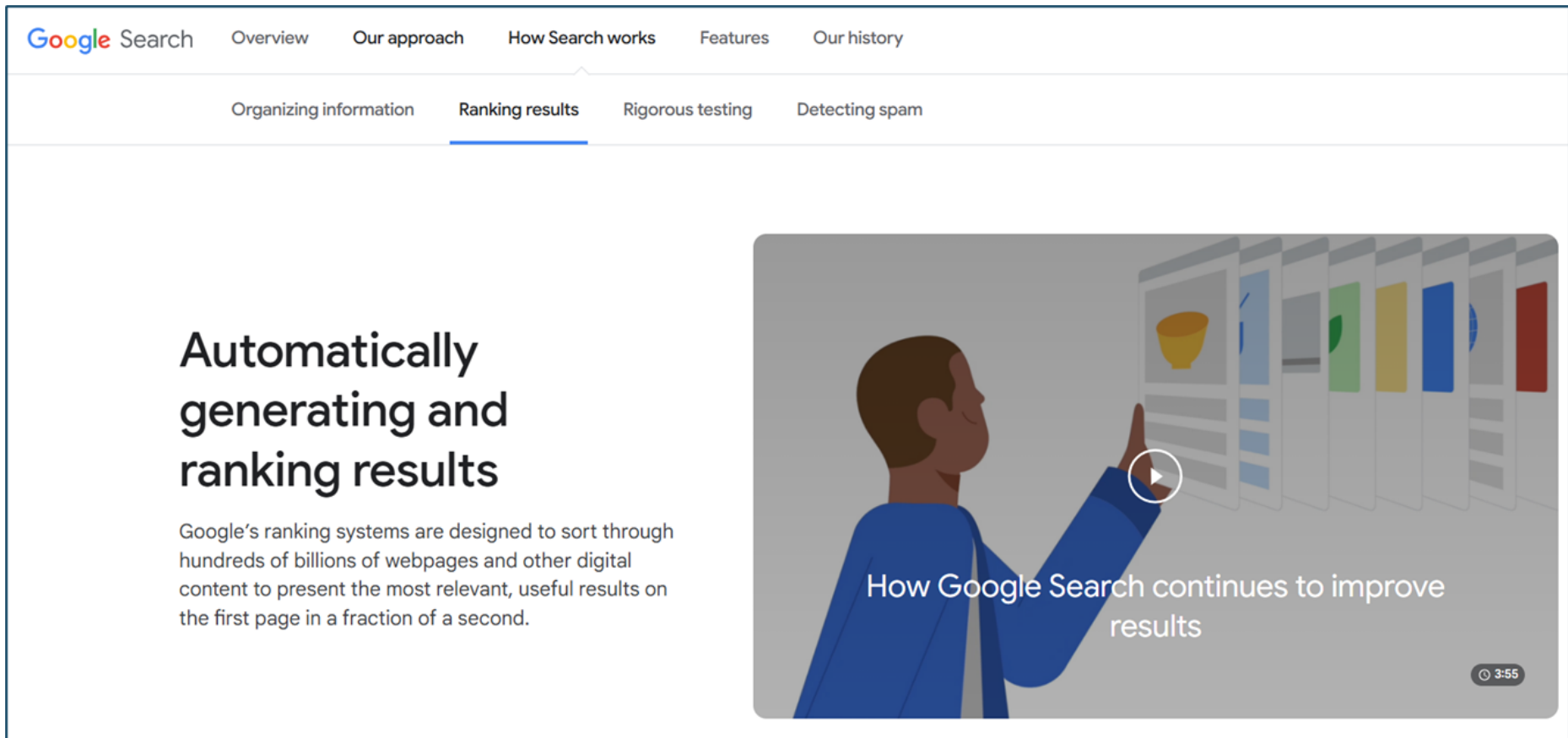
Created by Reion
from Noun Project

- Data Collection
- Personalized Recommendations
- Exploitation of Psychology
- Optimizing Engagement
- Infinite Scrolling and Autoplay
- FOMO (Fear of Missing Out)

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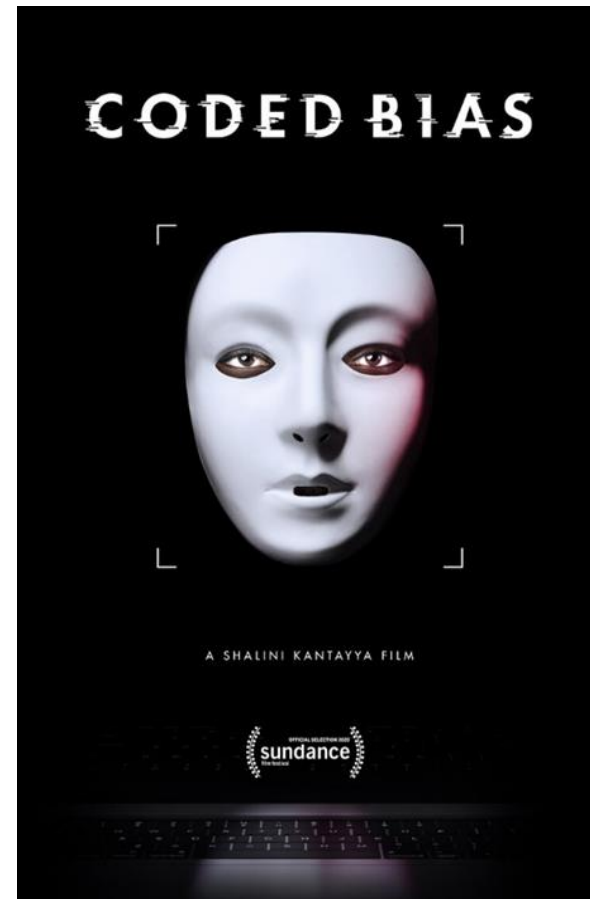
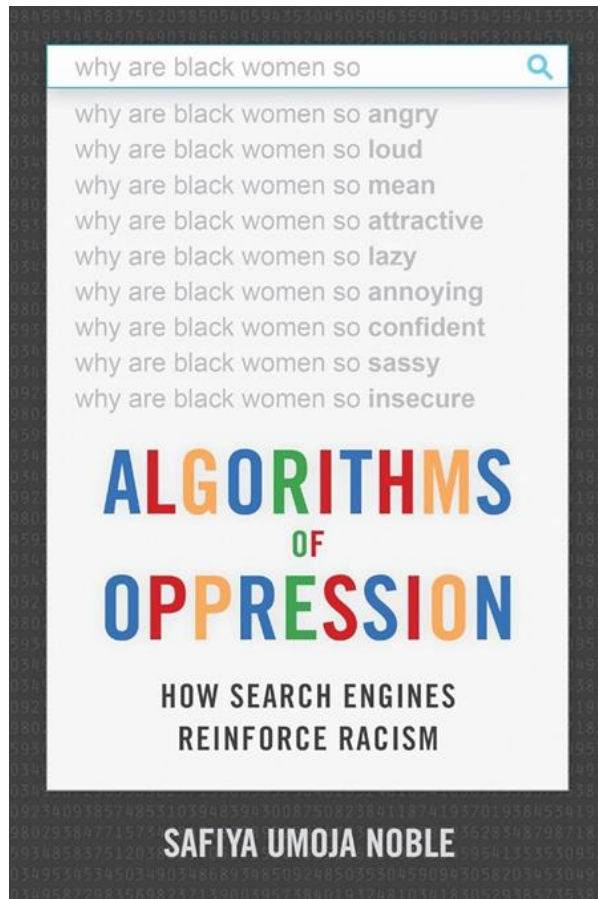
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“Google It”



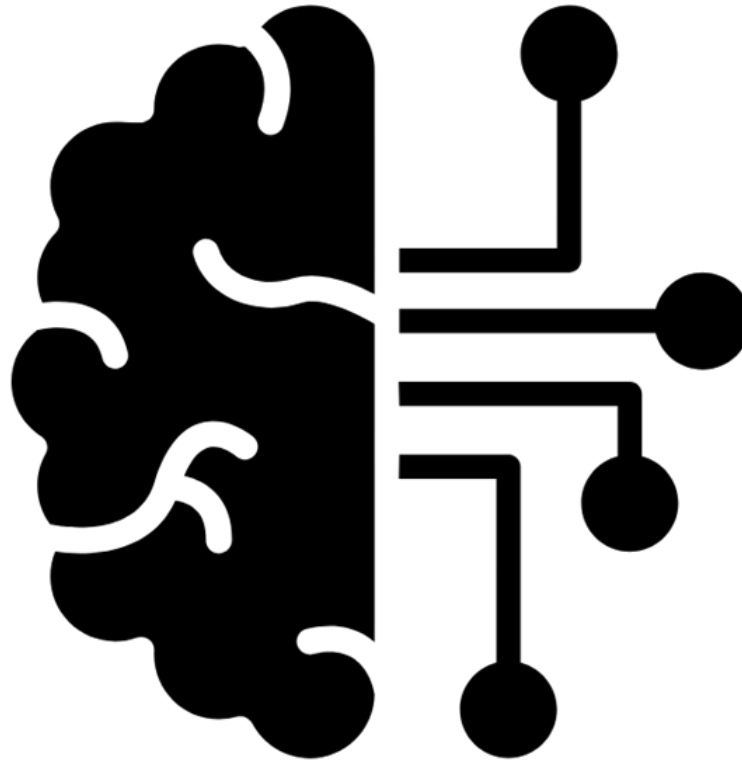
Screenshot of the website that explains Google's page rank algorithm, Page Rank (PR), taken 11.11.2024

The Question of Neutrality



Book covers and film poster from author and producer websites, 2024

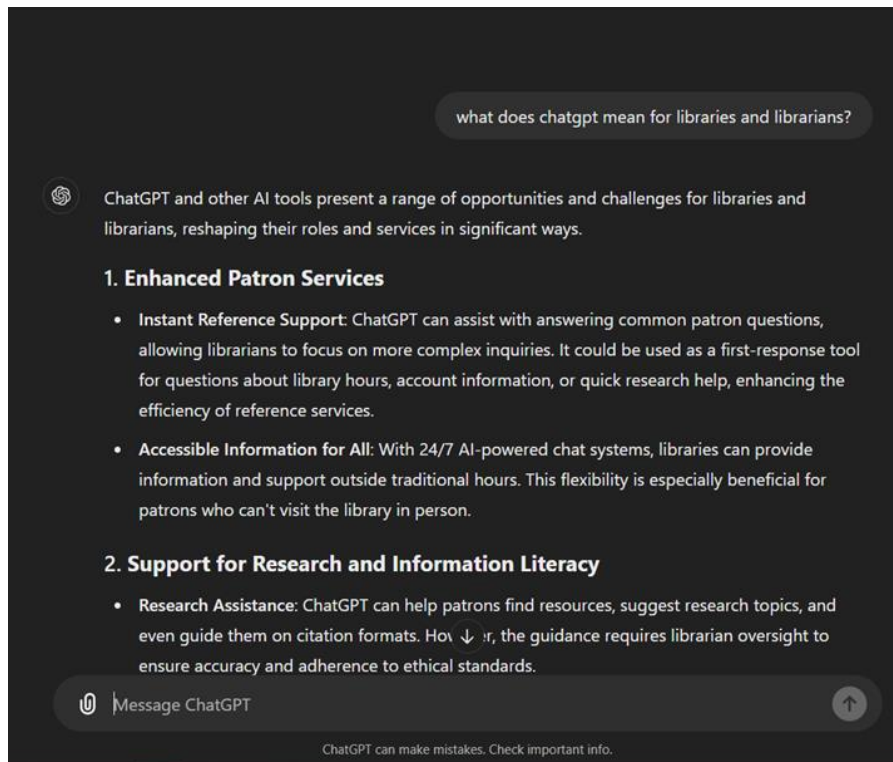
A.I. is Here



Created by HAMEL KHALED
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What Does It Mean?



- Quality of information is paramount
- Watch for bias
- Protect privacy
- Watch for IP issues

Screenshot of answer for ChatGPT query, “What does chatgpt mean for libraries and librarians?”, 2024

Q/A Discussion



Please join us for the rest of the series!

Media Literacy Education for Adult Audiences: Free Webinar Series

ALA Public Programs Office

Sep 16, 2024

What determines the information that shows up in online search results? Why do results vary from person to person when the same search terms are used? Why do vacation ads appear across different websites after searching for a travel agent? The answers to these questions point to a set of structures that affect the information we all see and find online.

Join us for the Media Literacy Education for Adult Audiences: Architecture of the Internet webinar series, a five-part series that will focus on shedding light on the often-overlooked aspects of the internet that

<https://bit.ly/media-lit-series>

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