About the Classroom

Microphones
Only our presenters have microphone access.

Questions?
Type them in the Q&A box! There will be time at the end for questions.

Tech Issues?
Send a message through Q&A.
Welcome

Media Literacy Education in Libraries for Adult Audiences is made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services grant LG-13-19-0089-19.
About the Project

MEDIA LITERACY EDUCATION IN LIBRARIES FOR ADULT AUDIENCES
A project of the American Library Association
Today’s Presenter

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Architecture of the Internet

1. Introduction & Context
2. Big Ideas: Cookies & Algorithms
   a. Program Starters
3. Big Ideas: Filter Bubbles & Confirmation Bias
   a. Program Starters
4. Questions
Introduction

**Information literacy** “is the set of integrated abilities encompassing the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced and valued, and the use of information in creating new knowledge and participating ethically in communities of learning”

(Association of College and Research Libraries, 2015)

**Media literacy** “is the ability to access, analyze, and communicate information in a variety of forms, including print and non-print messages. Media literacy empowers people to be both critical thinkers and creative producers of an increasingly wide range of messages using image, language, and sound. It is the skillful application of literacy skills to media and technology messages”

(National Association for Media Literacy Education, 2001)

**Commonalities** = discovery, production, value, use, creation, analysis, evaluation
What’s Different In the Digital Age?

• Information overload
• New technologies to create and widely share information
• The conflict between speed and accuracy has escalated
• Technology makes it much easier to select only the information that supports our preexisting beliefs, reinforcing rather than challenging them
American adults spend over 11 hours per day listening to, watching, reading, or generally interacting with media.

Roughly eight-in-ten U.S. adults go online at least daily

% of U.S. adults who say they go online ...

Note: Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/07/25/americans-going-online-almost-constantly/
Architecture of the internet reveals how the digital environment functions and its impact on users.
Just for you!
Big Ideas
Cookies & Algorithms
Cookies

• Cookies: A small data file that a website stores on your computer to enable the site to “remember” useful information that you have previously browsing history on the site or sign-in information.
Program Starters: How Cookies Work

**Cookies 101:** Screen the YouTube video “Website Cookies Explained | The Guardian Animations” created by The Guardian, one of the UK’s most prominent independent daily news outlets. Then lead a discussion with patrons about how their activities are tracked online.
Algorithms

- Algorithms: A set of instructions to be followed, usually applied in computer code, to carry out a task. Algorithms drive content amplification, whether that's the next video on Youtube, ads on Facebook, or things you might like on Amazon or other shopping websites. Also, the algorithms serve a very specific economic purpose: keep you using the app or website in order to serve more ads.
Introduction to Information Literacy in the Age of Algorithms

Student experiences with news and information, and the need for change

Alison J. Head, Ph.D.
Barbara Fister
Margy MacMillan
WHAT! ARSENALS ON TOP
OH WAIT IT'S JUST IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

LOVE TOTTENHAM AND HATE ARSENAL

WHEN THAT ONE GUY SAYS HE SUPPORTS ARSENAL
1. Filtered search results
2. Targeted advertising
3. Differential pricing

Amazon Says It Puts Customers First. But Its Pricing Algorithm Doesn’t

Amazon bills itself as “Earth’s most customer-centric company.” Yet its algorithm is hiding the best deal from many customers.

by Julia Angwin and Surya Mattu, Sept. 20, 2016, 8 a.m. EDT
Summary. Data gathered on the web has vastly enhanced the capabilities of marketers. With people regularly sharing personal details online and internet cookies tracking every click, companies can now gain unprecedented insight into individual consumers and target them with tailored ads. But when this practice feels invasive to people, it can prompt a strong backlash.

With personalized ads, there’s a fine line between creepy and delightful.

If marketers avoid those tactics, use data judiciously, focus on increasing trust and transparency, and offer people control over their personal data, their ads are much more likely to be accepted by consumers and help raise interest in engaging with a company and its products.
How Recommendation Algorithms Run the World
“Today’s internet is ruled by algorithms. These mathematical creations determine what you see in your Facebook feed, what movies Netflix recommends to you, and what ads you see in your Gmail.”

Why are black women so
- angry
- loud
- mean
- attractive
- lazy
- annoying
- confident
- saasy
- insecure

Algorithms of Oppression
How Search Engines Reinforce Racism
Safiya Umoja Noble

Weapons of Math Destruction
How Big Data Increases Inequality and Threatens Democracy
Cathy O'Neil

Race After Technology
Ruha Benjamin
FAKE NEWS
(tip of the iceberg)

Big Data surveillance, Computational psychology, Psychographics, Automated engagement scripts, Emotional manipulation, Personality targeting, Dark post campaigns, Propaganda networks, Hyperbias, Bot Gestapos, Weaponized AI, Sentiment analysis, Algorithmic curation, Ideological matrices, Filter bubbles

Created by Doug Belshaw. Photos by mzp, CC BY-SA Wikimedia Commons
Table 1: What worries students about computer algorithms?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concerns about Algorithms</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. (P) Platforms “listening” across devices or platforms.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. (S) Algorithms &amp; automated decision-making reinforcing inequalities.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. (P) Platforms shaping individual content &amp; ads they see.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. (S) Online users not seeing the same reality.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. (S) The next generation.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. (P) Platforms selling personal data to third parties.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. (P) Permanence of data being collected about them.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. (S) Older generations using these technologies &amp; adapting to changes.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Count is based on concerns discussed per 16 student focus groups.  
(P = Personal concerns, S = Societal concerns)
Big Ideas

Filter Bubbles & Confirmation Bias
Filter Bubbles & Confirmation Bias

Filter bubbles: Intellectual isolation that results from information served primarily through search engines that filter results based on personalized data, creating a “bubble” that isolates the user from information that may not align with their existing viewpoints. This term was coined by Eli Pariser in 2011.

• Confirmation Bias: The tendency to prioritize information that confirms or aligns with one’s previous viewpoint and discount the opinions that do not.

• Echo Chamber: “Information can come from many different sources and perspectives. But when you’re only hearing the same perspectives and opinions over and over again, you may be in an echo chamber” (GCF Learn Free)
“So despite a plethora of diverse perspectives abounding in online digital networks, most individuals stop seeking content when they have found enough information to confirm the views that they are already prejudiced toward”.

Julie Frechette

‘Keeping media literacy critical during the post truth crisis over fake news’
Program Starter: Filter Bubbles
Algorithms, Privacy, Filter Bubbles

• What are the advantages and disadvantages of the personalization of search engines and websites?

• Have patrons do a topic search (using different search engines, such as DuckDuckGo, Google, etc.) and compare the results (just like Pariser). In what ways are the results different? The same?
Program Starter: TV & Privacy

Turn off
- microphone access
- advertising tracker

What else is listed in the privacy settings?
What your smart devices know (and share) about you
Program Starter: Who is Tracking You?

• Visit Your Ad Choices to run a diagnostic on your computer or phone to learn which marketing companies are tracking your online behavior.

• Ask patrons to read the section “Understand Your Choices” and decide what to do. Next, ask them to look up one of those marketing companies to find out more about them.

• Ask: what did you learn? Do you care if you are tracked by Google and other media companies? Why or why not? Do you understand the privacy implications of being tracked online?
Program Starter: Privacy & Your Data

• Screen the film “Terms and Conditions May Apply.”
• Use the discussion and activity guide on the Resources page to organize your program.
Algorithms, Privacy, Filter Bubbles

• What is your reaction to being tracked online? Do you care?

• Will you adjust your Internet behavior now that you know how your data is used? If yes, how?

• Do you think your online behavior should be as private as your offline behavior in your own home? Why or why not?
Resources


WHY CAN'T ARSENAL OPEN UP A RESTAURANT?
BECAUSE THEY HAVE NO SILVERWARE

EVEN I HATE ARSENAL

ARSENAI LOOKING FOR DEFENDERS IN THE TRANSFER WINDOW
Questions

@NatashaCaseyIRL
www.natashacasey.com
Upcoming Webinars

• **March 10:** Civics
• **April 7:** Media Landscape and Economics
• **April 14:** Media Engagement and Creation

Download a copy of the Practitioners’ Guide or register for an upcoming webinar at [programminglibrarian.org/medialiteracy](http://programminglibrarian.org/medialiteracy)
Thank you!

Questions? Email publicprograms@ala.org