



**THE ART OF JUSTIFYING MASS MURDER:
A COMPARATIVE LINEAR MODEL
FOR DISINFORMATION IN THE CONDUCT OF GENOCIDES**

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Exercice Solo Flight

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“Never has our future been more unpredictable, never have we depended so much on political forces that cannot be trusted to follow the rules of common sense and self-interest – forces that look like sheer insanity, if judged by the standards of other centuries.”

Hannah Arendt, “The Origins of Totalitarianism,” 1950

INTRODUCTION

The art of disinformation is subtle but effective, as longstanding historical evidence suggests. For instance, Sun Tzu explains that convincing an adversary of giving up before having to take military action far supersedes the latter.¹ Disinformation theory can be interpreted as a two-fold approach: it requires concrete intelligence to be able to act upon, in addition to a measure of the impact to the psychological state of your adversary.² Concrete intelligence, as will be explained later, relies heavily on known facts about your target. It is, after all, rooted in reality but enhanced by misinformation. As Christopher Wylie suggests, “an information weapon has to be tailored according to multiple factors: language, culture, location, history, population diversity.” He quickly amplifies his statement with the notion that to “building a non-kinetic weapon designed for *perspecticide* – the active deconstruction and manipulation of popular perception – you first have to understand on a deep level what motivates people.”³ Coupled with malicious intent, disinformation is therefore a fearful force multiplier.

This paper seeks to analyze three questions surrounding the use of disinformation in the context of Genocides, specifically the Holocaust and the Rwandan Genocide. First, the associated research attempts to address how disinformation is generated, and the mechanisms by which it addresses a specific party view. Second, the paper aims to coherently identify how disinformation is weaponized to amount into violent actions. Third, I seek to understand the various identifiable elements that might pinpoint an

¹ Sun-tzu and Lionel Giles, *The Art of War* (Wilder Publications, 2008).

² This is an interpretation by the author based on the parallels that can be drawn between Disinformation and Deterrence Theory. Thomas Schelling, who coined the term “mutually assured destruction”, sought to explain that conflict and cooperation were often two sides of the same coin, but the balance of this coin had to be measured against the credibility of the threat and the impossible calculation of how effective your enemy could perceive that threat. In his work “The Strategy of Conflict”, he states that, in the absence of communication with the opposite party, the calculus associated with your decision making relies heavily on what you know of the other side. This translates directly into the usefulness of disinformation in conflicts of all scale. Thomas C. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict*, Harvard University Press (Harvard University Press; Oxford University Press, 1960),

<https://www.proquest.com/docview/59110563?parentSessionId=IdeqB0VJOjNqj0LNY4o6bcASYW7dfqP8A0rf1tt3rmE%3D&pq-origsite=summon&>

³ Christopher Wylie, *MINDF*CK: Cambridge Analytica and the Plot to Break America* (Random House, 2020), 48.

escalation into genocidal actions. These questions are supported by my central research hypothesis: genocidaires have historically leveraged disinformation in a campaign that can be represented by distinct but related layers, requiring deliberate and sequential escalation of violent rhetoric before the commencement of eliminationist violence and mass murder. I visually represent this escalation graphically by “The Genocidal Disinformation Pillar” (or simply Pillar for the remainder of this paper). This is an effort at capturing both the constituent parts and sequencing of actions in the information space that enable genocides to be perpetrated.

As the research supporting this theory is comparative in nature, the layers of the Pillar can possibly apply to all genocides, but therein lies the first limitation of the theory: the identification of genocides themselves will often prove contentious, and experts hardly even agree on the definition of the act. While there are other recognized examples of genocides, crimes supporting genocides, or crimes against humanity, both the Holocaust and Rwanda are well-known, researched, persecuted, and are generally uncontested by scholars as capstone events in genocidal history.⁴

As both examples have many primary sources in unfamiliar languages, secondary accounts, academic peer-reviewed journal articles, biographies, other comparative studies, and reputable websites were all leveraged to summarize and analyze the applicable facts necessary to support my key hypothesis.

⁴ Both examples are rooted in comparative genocide studies, as both have long legal and historical proofs of genocide. For instance, the Holocaust is the direct progenitor of the UN’s Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and Raphael Lemkin even coined the term “genocide” following the atrocities against the Jews leading up to and during WW2. Following Rwanda, the UN created the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, which also indicted 93 key individuals with counts of acts of genocide, war crimes, or crimes against humanity. While fringe minorities will always exist, both genocides are seemingly internationally recognized and have been the focus of numerous studies.

THE PILLAR

Genocidal Disinformation Pillar

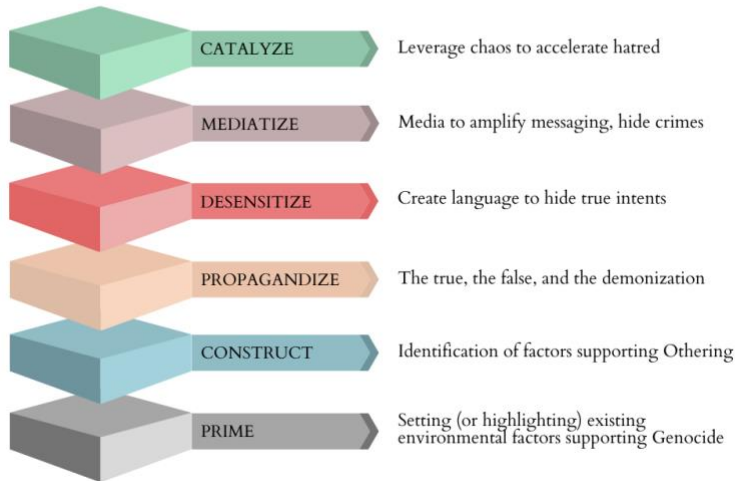


Figure 1 – The Genocidal Disinformation Pillar

The Pillar was designed with a simple goal: identify the major intersections between both examples of genocides highlighted above when considering how the information space was shaped and leveraged across the timeline of the crimes themselves. To discuss the Pillar, this paper will also leverage general theories of disinformation and genocides. Each section will introduce the layers and provide supporting facts on how it has been used in the past and how it can be used in future genocides. Elements of the Pillar will be described from the bottom up, as this is how it was conceived and is meant to be constructed. Notwithstanding the source material and genocidal focus used here, the Pillar could also likely apply to other crimes against humanity and crimes in the support of genocide, but this hypothesis has not yet been thoroughly tested and is beyond the scope of this paper.

PRIME

Many factors exist to create the conditions for genocide to occur. Specifically, this paper found four different intersections of societal factors that were common between both Nazi Germany and Rwanda: racist beliefs, economic instability, political turmoil, and group acceptance.

Racism has always been, and will likely remain, the most important factor in stoking genocidal actions or crimes against humanity. When looking at Europe prior to the Holocaust, anti-Semitism was deeply rooted into the fabric of societies, and was, according to Engel, "...not a cause of the Holocaust, but it was an essential precondition

for its occurrence.”⁵ Historically, in Christian doctrine and practice, political and social discourse, economic practices, popular culture, and high art, the repetitive and deliberate propagation of anti-Judaic stereotypes was both rampant and dominant. In the twentieth century prior to the rise of Nazism in Germany, the global economy severely contracted after the roaring twenties, forcing a rapid decline in living standards. The 19th and 20th centuries also featured a contest of ideologies and utopian projects, including extreme nationalism, socialism, communism, Soviet Bolshevism, and other extremist movements that were seen as a potential escape from the nightmare of the social and economic inequalities following WW I.

The rise of totalitarianism and the advent of the Nazi Party contributed greatly to the erosion of and eventual crackdown on independent civil society, opposition parties and movements, and independent institutions of governance. Factors such as "a cult of personality", suppression of dissidents and independent groups that could give rise to opposition, national information control, and a public will to wage war against specific groups were all key to creating an environment propitious to totalitarianism.⁶ There is also a consensus amongst scholars that the rise of the Nazi Party is undoubtedly related to the state of German affairs following the losses of WW I.⁷

Rwanda had a different social fabric than that of pre-WW II Germany, in that it was mostly composed of two distinct ethnic groups: the Tutsis, a minority social group racialized and selected as superior and thus favored by Belgian colonials until the peasant revolt; and the Hutus, which were the agricultural majority, deemed racially inferior and thus disadvantaged by colonial rule. After the Rwandan independence in 1962, this division along tribal lines gradually generated animosity and resentment among the Hutu leaders as they felt underrepresented. This disproportional rule of the Tutsis set a condition that Maureen Hiebert framed as “the antithesis of Robert Putnam’s ideal of civic engagement”.⁸ This ethnic divide, coupled with the colonial exit, had also given rise to a series of racial conflicts in the region, in what Adam Jones calls the “Genocide in

⁵ David Engel, *The Holocaust: The Third Reich and the Jews* (Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2021), 15.

⁶ Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism* (Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2007), 6; Hannah Arendt, *The Origins Of Totalitarianism* (Mariner Books, 1973), 305–6.

⁷ Richard J. Evans, *The Third Reich in Power* (Penguin, 2006), 19; Klaus Schwabe, ‘World War I and the Rise of Hitler’, *Diplomatic History* 38, no. 4 (2014): 864; Shanker Satyanath, Nico Voigtländer, and Hans-Joachim Voth, ‘Bowling for Fascism: Social Capital and the Rise of the Nazi Party’, *Journal of Political Economy* 125, no. 2 (April 2017): 520, <https://doi.org/10.1086/690949>.

⁸ Maureen S Hiebert, ‘Constructing Victims: Reconceptualizing Identity and the Genocidal Process’, n.d., 14–15; Robert D. Putnam, Robert Leonardi, and Raffaella Y. Nanetti, *Making Democracy Work*, 1994, <https://press.princeton.edu/books/paperback/9780691037387/making-democracy-work>. Robert Putnam et al., in their book “Making Democracy Work”, attempts to describe how political powers are laterally bound to the citizenry by a feeling of care and lack of the need for absolute power. In Rwanda, however, the balance of power between the Tutsi and Hutu came to an end following the exit of Belgium as a colonial power in Rwanda. Grégoire Kayibanda (a pro-western Hutu) took power as the 1st President of Rwanda in 1962 and was overthrown by Habyarimana during a military coup in 1973. The new totalitarian regime gave rise to Tutsi opposition, which turned violent during the first armed incursion by the RPF in October of 1990. The violence between the Hutu powers and the Tutsi insurrection can be interpreted as the shift in Habyarimana’s violent policies towards Tutsis and Hutu moderates.

Africa's Great Lakes region".⁹ The country had seen a decline in its economy, stemming from a global drop in commodity prices. As a mostly agrarian society, Rwanda relied heavily on exports. There was also a severe overpopulation issue in the country, further exacerbating the impacts of a reduced economy. This tension quickly devolved into a crisis affecting Hutus disproportionately, and the Tutsis were an easy target to blame their misfortune.

Commonly to both Nazi Germany and Rwanda, the will of ordinary people to persecute another group and commit genocide cannot be overlooked. This is best described by Maureen Hiebets, explaining that it exists because the majority of citizenry tends to accept what political leadership promotes with little interjection.¹⁰ Christopher Browning writes "the perpetrators of the Holocaust were not a small band of fanatics, but rather ordinary people who willingly participated in a genocidal project".¹¹ Browning's research reminds us that perpetrators are often willing agents, not automatons. Similarly to Arendt's "Banality of Evil", the ease with which Hutu perpetrators still speak of their actions indicates that, to many, what they did was simply work.¹² That banality, coupled with the racist undertones and socioeconomic issues at the time, points to the Prime layer as both the foundation and catalyst of genocides.

CONSTRUCT

The concept of the "Other" is as central to genocides and is much discussed and contested by philosophers.¹³ While various definitions could be presented, this paper instead focusses on the importance for genocidares to both embark on and publicize the path to othering. Othering generally involves the deliberate actions by one group to identify negative characteristics of another group as being intrinsically different or

⁹ 'Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction - 3rd Edition - Adam Jones - R', 470–73, accessed 10 January 2023, <https://www.routledge.com/Genocide-A-Comprehensive-Introduction/Jones/p/book/9781138823846>.

¹⁰ Hiebert, 'Constructing Victims: Reconceptualizing Identity and the Genocidal Process', 18.

¹¹ Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (HarperCollins, 1992), xi.

¹² Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season: The Killers in Rwanda Speak: A Report*, 1st American ed. (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005); Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (Viking Press, 1963). Arendt, in their study of Adolf Eichmann during his trial, points out that he was not evil nor sadistic – he was simply a disconnected if not efficient and thoughtless bureaucrat. His disconnection with the evilness of his act points to a shallowness in the connection he had with his work. While Arendt's work is not uncontested, it remains that Eichmann had been able to disconnect himself from the meaning of his work. Hatzfeld, in their interview with Hutu perpetrators, also reports on the many reasons why Hutus accepted to commit genocide. Broadly speaking, they landed in one of three camps: they feared for their lives, they relished at the pillaging and reaving, or they were mostly ambivalent. The concept of "going to work" is often discussed, as most perpetrators simply accepted that they had to do it. More about this euphemism will be provided under the Desensitize section below.

¹³ René Descartes, Simone de Beauvoir, John Stuart Mill, Martin Buber, Jean-Paul Sartre, Jean-François Lyotard, Jacques Derrida, Emmanuel Levinas, and Edmund Husserl (amongst various others) have all discussed the concept of the Other in their own respective theories. While the application of the interaction with the Other varies greatly, the usual definition of the term identifies the Other as being different and distinct from the Self and their internal definition of what makes them unique. The Other is fundamentally opposite of the Self, and this opposition can either create an innate desire to interact with them, or a paralyzing fear of what they can do, depending on the author.

opposite the former.¹⁴ In the context of genocides, this is commonly accompanied by hatred and dehumanization, as elaborated in the examples below.

The Nazis portrayed Jews as a threat to the German nation and civilization, using false information and conspiracy theories to dehumanize and vilify them. They both contributed to and supported racial science to justify their preposterous claims of inferior Jewish biology.¹⁵ Such debunked science was also incorporated into the education of children.¹⁶ Nazi propaganda, mostly developed by Joseph Goebbels and Adolf Hitler, also included negative stereotypes and caricatures of Jews.¹⁷ For example, they often argued that Jews had a propensity to carry diseases, and an undeterred willingness to control the financial world; this was augmented by the widespread use of themes surrounding the Aryan population as being vastly dominant.¹⁸ A classic example of this is the use of the term *Untermensch*, popularized in the 1942 writing *Der Untermensch* (The Subhuman) in 1942. This pamphlet takes an aggressive stance to glorify the Aryan race and to demonize the Jews (alongside those living mostly east of Germany) by drawing parallels to the Genghis Khan invasion of Europe to spool sentiments of patriotism and discrimination against those “sub-humans”.¹⁹

In Rwanda, othering was not as straightforward, but was nevertheless achieved. Alison Des Forges, in one of the earliest work on the genocide, states that “singling out most Tutsi was easy: the law required that all Rwandans be registered according to ethnic group”.²⁰ This reaffirms that the two tribes generally knew of who was part of which tribe without needing papers. What was difficult, they amplify, is that “shattering bonds between Hutu and Tutsi was not easy. For centuries they had shared a single language, a common history, the same ideas and cultural practices.”²¹ The hatred amongst both groups, however, had been stoked by the ongoing tribal animosity stemming from post-colonial independence in Rwanda, Congo, Uganda and Burundi.²² In Rwanda specifically, conflict in the early 1990s between the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and president Juvénal Habyarimana, and the 1992 address by Léon Mugesera, points to the popularization of the term “*inyenzi*” (cockroach) to refer to the Tutsi population (a speech that later, amongst other factors, earned him a Canadian conviction for Incitement to

¹⁴ Poul Rohleder, ‘Othering’, in *Encyclopedia of Critical Psychology*, ed. Thomas Teo (New York, NY: Springer, 2014), 1306–8, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-5583-7_414.

¹⁵ Eric Ehrenreich, *The Nazi Ancestral Proof: Genealogy, Racial Science, and the Final Solution* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 27–32, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=220616&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

¹⁶ Daniel Feldman, ‘Reading Poison: Science and Story in Nazi Children’s Propaganda’, *Children’s Literature in Education* 53, no. 2 (June 2022): 202, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10583-021-09454-9>.

¹⁷ Additional details on Nazi propaganda will be provided in a section below with the same name.

¹⁸ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins Of Totalitarianism*, 173.

¹⁹ Jupp Daehler, *Der Untermensch / The Underman in German and English* (Blurb, Incorporated, 2017).

²⁰ Alison Liebhafsky Des Forges, ‘Leave None to Tell the Story’: *Genocide in Rwanda* (New York : Paris: Human Rights Watch ; International Federation of Human Rights, 1999), 3.

²¹ Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 3; ‘Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction - 3rd Edition - Adam Jones - R’, 474.

²² ‘Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction - 3rd Edition - Adam Jones - R’, 470–73.

genocide).²³ This term was cultivated and used by all genocidaires following the speech, and is central to the othering campaign against Tutsis.

A few commonalities can be identified in both cases. Primarily, othering happens because of the racialization of existing divisions, regardless of their former ability to coexist prior. Both Nazis and Rwandans adopted racist political agendas with supporting discourses, and both leveraged the notion of a minority being less than human. Both cases also featured amplifying political figures (Goebbels in Germany, and Mugesera in Rwanda) who actively shaped hateful messaging. While these commonalities are certainly true in other cases, they should not be the limiting factors in identifying the process of othering; they can, however, provide indicators to Human Rights groups observing developing violent situations and prevent further escalation into genocidal actions.

On the topic of hatred, it is difficult to pinpoint how much hate is required to foment genocidal actions or thoughts. Hate, after all, is not easily quantifiable on a scale. There are however some theories to explain what is required to hate, such as Robert Sternberg's Triangle of Hate²⁴, or Susan Optow *et al's* Theory of Hating.²⁵ While both use different approaches, the results are not unlike one another: there is generally a community approach of "us vs. them", based on either perceived or historical inequality. There is also a generation of tangible negative speech and / or actions directed at those who are of lesser, inferior and deserving of their status. Based on the analysis of the two cases above, it is also safe to assume that propaganda also requires some form of hatred to be effective in a group setting, be it via the propaganda itself, or as force multiplied through fertile pre-existing conditions.

PROPAGANDIZE

This layer of the pillar is the building plate onto which disinformation campaigns achieve their full stride, and one that is necessary to the success of violent regimes.²⁶ Existing authors have already discussed the various effects of propaganda.²⁷ This section

²³ Cour suprême du Canada, 'Cour suprême du Canada - Renseignements sur les dossiers de la Cour - Recherche', 1 January 2001, 179, <https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/fr/item/2273/index.do>. The notion of euphemistic nomenclature will be addressed later in this paper as well, but the use of *inyenzi* was an important factor in the prosecution of Mugesera and his involvement in the Tutsi genocide.

²⁴ Robert J. Sternberg, 'A Duplex Theory of Hate: Development and Application to Terrorism, Massacres, and Genocide', *Review of General Psychology* 7, no. 3 (2003): 299–328.

²⁵ Susan Opatow and Sara McClelland, 'The Intensification of Hating: A Theory', *Social Justice Research* 20 (1 June 2007): 68–97, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11211-007-0033-0>.

²⁶ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins Of Totalitarianism*, 342–46. Arendt goes into details specifying how totalitarian regimes require propaganda to operate, because of the counter-totalitarian nature of democratic societies. Arendt furthers this claim by explaining that the need to rely on terror, psychological warfare and scientific facts are all key to propaganda campaigns. These claims are partially proven by the remainder of this section.

²⁷ Several authors have written extensively on the matter of propaganda. Most notably, Edward Bernays, Harold Lasswell, Walter Lippmann, and Jacques Ellul all have researched the causes and effects of

will therefore attempt to present some of the techniques used in the creation of propaganda as well as how it has enabled totalitarian governments to shape information campaigns. It will finally discuss how the balance of true and false information plays a major role in its conduct.

O'Shaughnessy postulates that, above all, propaganda held such primacy to the Nazi party that it was "not merely a means to an end but an end itself".²⁸ The Nazi government went so far as to appoint Joseph Goebbels as Minister of Propaganda; he subsequently developed several principles by which it should be leveraged.²⁹ Two noteworthy principles, however, stand out amongst the sum: it needs to evoke interest of a target audience, and its credibility should speak for itself through indisputable facts. To the Nazis, those indisputable facts came in two forms – when backed by evidential research, or when they could not be disproven.³⁰ Examples of this propaganda include the attribution of Typhus created by poor ghetto condition as a symptom of the propensity of Jews to carry diseases, and that of the mostly founded stereotype of the Jewish financier (albeit based on what Arendt called the Nazis' "relative political ignorance"³¹). These were meant to imply that Jews sought to control not only the economy but also the levers of power. Hitler also liked to amplify his hatred by referencing to the "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion", a recognized work of conspiracy and forgery; quoted in *Mein Kampf*, he states that the fact that other dispute its legitimacy only goes to confirm that it must be true.³²

In Rwanda, propaganda was similarly employed. For instance, most of the population (both Hutus and Tutsis) were severely affected by the series of attacks committed by the RPF in the early 1990s.³³ While there had been attempts at unifying both groups, those attacks offered propagandists in Rwanda a vessel by which they could

propaganda in political, societal, and legal frameworks. Others, such as Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky, are also quite popular in the field, but the various criticisms of their work have overshadowed their potential contribution to the field.

²⁸ Nicholas O'Shaughnessy, 'Selling Hitler: Propaganda and the Nazi Brand', *Journal of Public Affairs* 9, no. 1 (1 February 2009): 55–56.

²⁹ Leonard W. Doob, 'Goebbels' Principles of Propaganda', *Public Opinion Quarterly* 14, no. 3 (Fall 1950): 419–42, <https://doi.org/10.1086/266211>. In those principles, Goebbels describes the importance of well-researched and informed source materials and goes into length as to how to both leverage current affairs and counter adversarial propaganda theories.

³⁰ Doob, 'Goebbels' Principles of Propaganda', 428.

³¹ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins Of Totalitarianism*, 54.

³² Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (Hurst and Blackett, 1939), 240; 'Protocols of the Elders of Zion', accessed 23 March 2023, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/protocols-of-the-elders-of-zion>. The protocols were "first published in Russia in 1905 as an appendix to *The Great in the Small: The Coming of the Anti-Christ and the Rule of Satan on Earth*, by Russian writer and mystic Sergei Nilus." The protocols intend to demonize the Jews as anti-state and speculate on the secret plans they have to control the world.

³³ Adam Jones, *New Directions in Genocide Research* (London: Routledge, 2012), 257, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=444015&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

“magnif(y) the hatred and suspicion sown by Habyarimana and officials around him”.³⁴ The hatred for the Hutu was an easy source material for Rwandan propagandists, such as Mugesera; as students of Goebbels, they also believed in the creation of false events that could not be disputed, which became exploitable when exposed at the right time and place.³⁵ They however used a different approach to the balance of true and false: the “accusation in a mirror” was often employed by Rwandan Genocidaires, in which the propagandists would accuse the other side of crimes they were themselves guilty of, therefore justifying self-defence.³⁶ As an example, Mugesera often accused Tutsis of Nazi-like behaviour to justify their elimination. Indeed, he was himself an admirer of Hitler, with Nazi material being found at his home in 1994.³⁷

Both examples demonstrate a few major intersections. Primarily, there needs to be a tangible ethnic divide present to enable propaganda effectiveness. Propaganda also needs to rely on some truth to take effect (if only to provide legitimacy to the claims made), but truth is not as important as the inability to prove its provenance nor should it be outweighed by the false justifications of the perpetrators. Finally, a gradual increase of violent rhetoric under the guise of individuals with that specific purview is key to its effectiveness.

DESENSITIZE

In the information realm, the impact of language is easily camouflaged.³⁸ This layer of the Pillar postulates the importance of hiding the real meaning of words to allow for genocidal actions. Using fabricated language, genocidaires are enabled to spread messages of hate and actions supporting crimes against humanity. The topic of desensitization is therefore critical to permit the communication of atrocious crimes

³⁴ Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 48; Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers : Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2020), 190, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1949675&site=ehost-live&scope=site>. Mamdani discusses how Habyarimana had tried, prior to the RPF attacks, to unite both Tutsi and Hutu. In trying to include Tutsi as an ethnic group and not a race, his efforts were largely seen as ineffective. Hutu propagandists had to conduct strict racializing campaigns to dismantle any previous attempts at unification.

³⁵ Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 49. Of note, there are also striking parallels between Goebbels and Mugesera: the latter went so far as to creating the “Hutu Ten Commandments”, which mimic the Nazi approach of the Nazi-Sozi. ‘The Nazi-Sozi’, accessed 1 May 2023, <https://research.calvin.edu/german-propaganda-archive/nazi-sozi.htm>.

³⁶ Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 49; ‘ICTR - NAHIMANA, FERDINAND - BARAYAGWIZA, JEAN BOSCO - NGEZE, HASSAN: Judgment and Sentence’, 36, accessed 1 May 2023, <https://ucr.irmct.org/scasedocs/case/ICTR-99-52#eng>.

³⁷ Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 59. Des Forges is the only author to corroborate this fact, but many other examples of accusation in a mirror exist. Kenneth L. Marcus, in their paper specifically on Accusation in the Mirror, provides an extensive review of the concept and its application to Rwanda. Kenneth L. Marcus, ‘Accusation in a Mirror’, SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY, 2012), <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2020327>.

³⁸ ‘The Anatomy of “Fake News”’: Studying False Messages as Digital Objects - Ali Khan, Kathryn Brohman, Shamel Addas, 2022’, tbl. 1, accessed 1 May 2023, <https://journals-sagepub-com.cfc.idm.oclc.org/doi/full/10.1177/02683962211037693>. The ability of meaning to be hidden is the basis of disinformation theory, and the Table above provides a few noted examples of how this is achieved.

amongst those who may otherwise take ill to its ideas. While it could be easy to claim that genocidaires tend to demonstrate psychopathic tendencies, Donald Dutton et al. point to an agglomeration of facts that would suggest that the average perpetrator is not a psychopath.³⁹ In fact, Philippe Cotter also reiterates that perpetrators of mass violence tend to become so engrained in their dogmatic views, that the authoritarian personality traits common in Nazi soldiers gave rise to primarily ethnocentricity and prejudice, not psychopathy.⁴⁰ This section will therefore discuss the art of masking atrocities with the use of common language and deceptive and mundane expressions.

The progressive evolution of the use of Nazi euphemisms to describe horrific acts stands above much else. One only needs to read a cursory overview of the Holocaust to hear statements such as “The Final Solution to the Jewish Problem”.⁴¹ While rooted in truth from a Nazi perspective, the expression conceals the terrible notion of mass execution and genocide.⁴² Another disturbing example is the use of *Evakuierung* (evacuation or, in the right context, resettlement), a term used to pacify Jewish populations in ghettos to willingly embark on grueling transits to concentration camps. Other notable expressions are *sonderbehandlung* (special treatment / handling) to discuss mass killings, and *verschärfte vernehmung* (intense interrogation) for torture. In a recent study, Alexander Landry et al. established that language choices played a critical role in the dehumanization of Jews pre – and post – Holocaust, corroborating the above hypothesis that establishing deliberate language is key in enabling atrocities.⁴³

In Rwanda, the use of euphemisms was mostly denoted by hate speech and dehumanizing language across tribal lines. For example, Mahmood Mamdani states that it was common language for a very long time for Tutsis to praise the process of *kwihutura* or “shed Hutuness”⁴⁴. The daily act of killing Tutsis during the genocide, however, was often referred to as “work” by Hutu genocidaires⁴⁵. The reputation of the taller Tutsis led to the expression “cut down all the tall trees” or “bush clearing” to be

³⁹ Stephen Mihailides, Roslyn Galligan, and Glen Bates, ‘Reconceptualising Psychopathy’, *Journal of Forensic Psychology* 2, no. 2 (n.d.): 4–5, <https://doi.org/10.4172/2475-319X.1000120>; Donald Dutton, ‘The Psychology of Genocide, Massacres, and Extreme Violence: Why “Normal” People Come to Commit Atrocities’, 1 January 2007, 24.

⁴⁰ Philippe Cotter, ‘The Path to Extreme Violence: Nazism and Serial Killers’, *Frontiers in Behavioral Neuroscience* 3 (18 January 2010): 1–3, <https://doi.org/10.3389/neuro.08.061.2009>.

⁴¹ “‘Final Solution’: Overview”, accessed 21 March 2023, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/final-solution-overview>.

⁴² ‘Final Solution’. The Nazis did see the Final Solution as a legitimate solution to their perceived problems with the Jews. The expression itself is not the issue, but the meaning behind the words is nefarious beyond contempt.

⁴³ Alexander P. Landry, Ram I. Orr, and Kayla Mere, ‘Dehumanization and Mass Violence: A Study of Mental State Language in Nazi Propaganda (1927–1945)’, *PLoS ONE* 17, no. 11 (9 November 2022): 9–11, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0274957>.

⁴⁴ Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 70. This term was a by-product of colonialism; since Tutsis were generally afforded better opportunities for advancement and power, it was believed amongst many that, by accumulating wealth, lands, and influence, Hutus could be seen as socially acceptable amongst Tutsi. This is but one example of how language has likely deepened the schism between the tribes prior to the genocide.

⁴⁵ Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 6.

popularized, along with the previously discussed *inyenzi*.⁴⁶ As another example, the name of the paramilitary group *Interahamwe* means “those who attack / work / kill together” depending on the source, pointing to the deep connection with the euphemistic use of “work”. Akin to Nazis, the term “final war” was also leveraged to mean the complete elimination of Tutsis.⁴⁷

Both the use of euphemistic language and the dehumanization work in tandem, and this synergy is likely the goal of desensitization.⁴⁸ There is also a need to identify the criticality of language in the creation and use of disinformation which, at its base, is all about constructing and distributing false information. This layer, together with the previous one, create an environment where disinformation and euphemistic language become common place. Catharine Rankin et al., in their work revising the Thompson and Spencer’s model of characteristics of habituation, emphasize that low and repeated exposure to stimuli creates an environment propitious to rapid habituation.⁴⁹ By inference, if a genocidaires becomes habituated to the violent rhetoric of their government, they are less likely to oppose the postulated violent acts. This makes the creation of such language and its distribution critical to the “success” of the influence campaign, and further corroborates the Landry *et al.* study discussed above.

MEDIATIZE

Not unlike virology, the speed of transmission of hate messaging and othering to and through the infected group will directly influence how quickly acceptance will be achieved.⁵⁰ Regardless of the employed media, the natural barrier against the aggressor’s spread of the hate messages comes in the form of confrontation with both the affected party’s use of their counter-media strategies and the global perception of such an action. This natural immunity, however, can be overwhelmed, and the most successful genocidal campaigns have done it adeptly.

⁴⁶ Marguerite La Caze, ‘The Language of Violence: Chiasmic Encounters’, *Sophia* 55, no. 1 (April 2016): 124, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11841-016-0519-z>.

⁴⁷ Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 315.

⁴⁸ The ability to reduce someone (or a group) to sub-human status is no easy task. If accomplished, however, it can be easily compounded by the generation of actionable language that further reduces the meaning of atrocious acts. The tension created between both the language and the othering is therefore a force multiplier in the conduct of genocides, and a critical product of desensitization.

⁴⁹ Catharine H. Rankin et al., ‘Habituation Revisited: An Updated and Revised Description of the Behavioral Characteristics of Habituation’, *Neurobiology of Learning and Memory* 92, no. 2 (September 2009): 135–38, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nlm.2008.09.012>. Along with 14 other authors, Rankin revises the characteristics of the Habituation model by leaning on decades of psychological research (by both the original authors, co-authors of Rankin, and other psychologists) and adds another characteristic to the model. They conclude by discussing that, while the habituation itself is complex, the process by which we acquire habituation is quite simple.

⁵⁰ The transmissibility of a virus is normally represented by the reproduction rate known as R_0 . This rate indicates to what level an infector can reach potential new victims. In using that comparison, the higher the acceptance of hate speech, the likelier the “infected” has a chance of having a higher R_0 and infect others in their immediate surrounding.

The Nazis were experts at mediatizing their hate. Understanding the risk of counter-media messaging, Nazi leaders shut both Jewish and dissenting newspapers and radio stations very early in their campaign.⁵¹ Leveraging successful othering and propaganda strategies, they would lean on the socialist and communist methodologies of distribution of printed material to flood the streets with antisemitic newspapers (such as *Der Stürmer*), letters, and posters. Goebbels was also notorious for his use of radio broadcasts. Understanding the potential of reaching into the homes of millions, he commissioned the *Volksempfänger* (people's receiver) and the *Kleinempfänger* (small receiver). Both were affordable and subsidized radio systems that, by 1941, were in "nearly two-thirds of German households [and] Hitler a direct conduit into people's homes via the airwaves."⁵² Another means by which Goebbels controlled media messaging was via antisemitic films. For example, "*Jud Süß*" (Suss the Jew) is a wildly antisemitic and now illegal drama that portrays Jewish people as repulsive, treacherous sex predators, and lacking the intelligence to master the German language.⁵³ The Nazi party was equally famed for their public gatherings and mass addresses, the most famous of which were likely the repeating *Reichsparteitag* (Reich Party Congress, also known as the Nürnberg rallies). In these festivals of fascism and hate, hundreds of thousands party members, military officials, civilians, and media outlets (both domestic and international) would gather to report on and spread propaganda, demonstrating a strong and unified Nazi Germany.⁵⁴ These congresses culminated prior to the invasion of Poland but were key in solidifying the messaging of the Party and setting the conditions for the Holocaust⁵⁵.

Preconditions for the Rwandan genocide were slightly different: illiteracy was rampant and made printed media difficult to leverage.⁵⁶ While reading habits were unpopular, Rwandans still chose to rely on the printed newspaper *Kangura*. It would

⁵¹ 'The Press in the Third Reich', accessed 10 April 2023,

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-press-in-the-third-reich>.

⁵² 'Inside the Third Reich's Radio - IEEE Spectrum', accessed 28 March 2023,

<https://spectrum.ieee.org/inside-the-third-reichs-radio>.

⁵³ NA'AMA SHEFFI, 'Jews, Germans and the Representation of Jud Süß in Literature and Film', *Jewish Culture and History* 6, no. 2 (1 December 2003): 33–34,

<https://doi.org/10.1080/1462169X.2003.10512000>.

⁵⁴ An example of this unified Germany can be found in in Leni Riefenstahl's film "Triumph of the Will". While commissioned by Hitler himself, the actual movie was not about antisemitism, but more about the unity of the nation under a strong leadership. Riefenstahl has been criticized for their work on the movie, which was often described as a prime example of cinematic propaganda. Wajiha Raza Rizvi, 'Politics, Propaganda and Film Form: Battleship Potemkin (1925) and Triumph of the Will (1935)', *The Journal of International Communication* 20, no. 1 (2 January 2014): 77–86, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13216597.2013.879070>.

⁵⁵ 'Nurnberg Laws | Definition, Date, & Facts | Britannica', 11 March 2023,

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Nurnberg-Laws>. An example of how the congresses enabled the Holocaust is the creation and dissemination of the "Nürnberg Laws". Published during the 1935 *Reichsparteitag*, the "Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honour" essentially stripped Jews of their citizenship and rendered illegal the "marriage or sexual relations between Jews and "citizens of German or kindred blood."

⁵⁶ 'The Media and the Rwanda Genocide | IDRC - International Development Research Centre', 42, accessed 29 March 2023, <https://www.idrc.ca/en/book/media-and-rwanda-genocide>.

focus on the conspiracy of the Tutsis to control Africa and would leverage caricatures that even illiterates would be able to absorb.⁵⁷ On the radio side, the *Mouvement Républicain National pour la Démocratie et le Développement* (MRND), Habyarimana's political party, officially controlled Radio Rwanda (RR). The system was used for broadcasting mainly political discourse and propaganda. After the signing of the Arusha Accords, *Radio-Télévision Libre des Mille Collines* (RTLM) also began its operation.⁵⁸ Backed by many state officials, it was made more attractive to the population by hosting informal conversations on current affairs and broadcasting popular new music. It also reinforced the MRND official messaging, whilst at times taking a more aggressive tone against the Tutsis. Following the assassination of Habyarimana, both RR and RTLM began directing killings of Tutsis.⁵⁹ RTLM took a leading role in the broadcasting of dehumanization of Tutsis and killing efforts.⁶⁰ Rwandans were not as fond of large political gatherings, but some examples, such as indicated under the previous mentions of Mugesera and his 1992 speech, were proven pivotal in the inception of the massacre.

No media discussion would be complete without addressing how the world failed to react to either genocide. While polarization determines how the multiple sides of a conflict interact with distressing news, the success of a genocidal campaign is never complete without the failure of outside forces to act. It is possible that the exposure to such distressing news generates a cognitive dissonance, causing external observers to fail to act. Another source of failure to act may also be an overload of information. For instance, Peter Pomerantsev, in their book *This is not Propaganda*, recalls a discussion with Mary Ana McGlasson, in which they noted that access to information can paradoxically lead to a situation in which one cannot rationalize the knowledge, and will thus become paralyzed by it.⁶¹ Should genocidaires want to perpetrate their crimes at will, it may be easier to simply broadcast their euphemized intentions and actions and watch the ensuing confusion, rather than to try and hide its true meaning through complex influence campaigns. This theory, however, has not been tested against every genocide, and is unlikely to ever be proven given the number of intervening variables and context-specific conditions.

⁵⁷ 'The Media and the Rwanda Genocide | IDRC - International Development Research Centre', 333; 'Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction - 3rd Edition - Adam Jones - R', 477. Jones also discusses the publishing of the "Hutu Ten Commandments", which re-emphasized the need for Hutus to be firm in their belief of the inferior Tutsi.

⁵⁸ 'The Media and the Rwanda Genocide | IDRC - International Development Research Centre', 42–44. The Arusha Accords marked the recorded end of the RPF offensive against the MRND, although elements of both were unsatisfied with the contents, and prepared for further conflict.

⁵⁹ 'The Media and the Rwanda Genocide | IDRC - International Development Research Centre', 376.

⁶⁰ Rony Blum et al., "'Ethnic Cleansing' Bleaches the Atrocities of Genocide', *European Journal of Public Health* 18, no. 2 (April 2008): 205, <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/ckm011>.

⁶¹ *This Is Not Propaganda*, 2018, 139, <https://www.publicaffairsbooks.com/titles/peter-pomerantsev/this-is-not-propaganda/9781541762138/>.

CATALYZE

The path disinformation enables enroute to mass murder can coalesce with a catalytic event, which in turns accelerates the transition to physical violence. These catalytic events usually accelerate and deepen polarity, often playing into targeting someone's confirmation biases. Assuming all previous layers of the tower are in place, this final step is the logical precursor and pivot to actual planned violence. This process is also be demonstrated through Gregory Stanton's original model of the Eight Stages of genocide, in which polarization normally stems from "extremist(s) driv(ing) the group apart."⁶² Their point of view provides a few central key considerations: perpetrator moderates generally hold the key to prevention and are therefore first to fall; leaders of victim groups are the first adversarial targets; and retributive justice by way of violence is generally an enabler of perpetuated conflict.

Following the 1938 assassination of Ernst vom Rath (a German official in France), the Nazis leveraged their gathering to commemorate the 1923 Beer Hall Putsch to amp a rhetoric of Jewish conspiracy.⁶³ With hatred stoked and retributive justice invoked, Goebbels incited *Kristallnacht* (The Night of broken Glass). This terrible event saw violent riots by various Nazi groups to capture or destroy Jewish infrastructure, individuals, and religious symbols.⁶⁴ Throughout 9 – 10 November 1938, continued messaging of Jewish conspiracy and hate led to thousands of victims; hatred ran so high that the pogroms continued well past the order to stop.⁶⁵ In support of Stanton's model, it can also be surmised that the success of their prosecution was greatly enabled by the lack of progressives.⁶⁶ However, the lack of concrete or organized Jewish community response to *Kristallnacht* may point to a minor flaw in Stanton's observations, as there simply was little to no ability for those targeted to actions fight back. Additionally, the underwhelming response at the world stage following a slow and shaky economic recovery of the great depression translated into little support for Jewish refugees.⁶⁷

A key element of the precursor to violent polarization in Rwanda stemmed from the Arusha accords. The failed attempt to address the power sharing or monitoring by the international community was augmented by the absence of involvement of local African

⁶² Fred M. Shelley, *The World's Population: An Encyclopedia of Critical Issues, Crises, and Ever-Growing Countries* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2015), 378,
<https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=941338&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

⁶³ 'The Holocaust: Europe, the World, and the Jews, 1918-1945', 72–73, accessed 6 April 2023,
https://web-s-ebscohost-com.cfc.idm.oclc.org/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzMyNjcOTlfX0FO0?sid=48add43e-e1eb-4d1e-b2a6-797c57a2412f@redis&vid=0&format=EB&lpid=lp_72&rid=0.

⁶⁴ 'Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction - 3rd Edition - Adam Jones - R', 323; 'Kristallnacht', accessed 18 April 2023, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/kristallnacht>.

⁶⁵ 'The Holocaust: Europe, the World, and the Jews, 1918-1945', 74.

⁶⁶ 'Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction - 3rd Edition - Adam Jones - R', 323–25. This deduction was made since most Germans were either supportive or indifferent to the plight of the Jews.

⁶⁷ A key example of this lack of support stems from the Evian Conference, after which 31 out of 32 countries were unwilling to accept any more refugees. 'The Evian Conference', accessed 18 April 2023, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-evian-conference>.

authorities.⁶⁸ The catalytic event, however, was the Habyarimana assassination. As Scott Straus explains, immediately following the plane shooting, “[hard-liners in the military and ruling party] set out to eliminate their immediate political rivals, Hutu and Tutsi alike, and proceeded to advocate violence against Tutsi civilians.”⁶⁹ The same hard-liners were also easily able to overpower moderates in official governmental positions through violence.⁷⁰ The Rwandan use of radio broadcasts were pivotal in both signaling and initiating the violent behavior shortly after the attack. Indeed, radio played a major role in polarizing individuals prior to, during, and following the start of the Rwandan genocide.

By defining the group affected in the othering process as a national security threat, governments may be afforded the power to take exceptional action and remain unchecked. Both *Kristallnacht* and the Habyarimana assassination are key examples of catalytic events that cement polarization across party lines and form the pretext for violent rhetoric. This is a classic example of Selective Exposure: even in the presence of overwhelming evidence, one can lean on their confirmation biases to justify their points of view, rationalize what has happened, and excuse or support a violent and eliminationist response.⁷¹ Catalytic events, while not directly about disinformation itself, function as culmination points critically enabled by disinformation. Those events illustrate how polarity must be in place, such that a small spark can ignite a fire too terrible to contain.

CONCLUSION

Following the tragedy of the Holocaust, the international community recognized the dangers of disinformation and propaganda, culminating in the creation and publishing of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of genocide by the United Nations in 1948.⁷² Disinformation, however, has continued to play a critical role in the incitement and commitment of genocides and crimes against humanity above that of propaganda alone. For example, the Rohingyas of Myanmar are under duress stemming from a disinformation campaign involving the use of Facebook.⁷³ As this paper extrapolates on, the role of media is key to disinformation and genocide, and the role of social media needs to also be thoroughly scrutinized as the world relies on it more and

⁶⁸ Synopsis OECD, ‘The International Response to Conflict and Genocide: Lessons from the Rwanda Experience’, 56, accessed 4 April 2023, <https://www.oecd.org/countries/rwanda/3/>.

⁶⁹ Scott Straus, ‘What Is the Relationship between Hate Radio and Violence? Rethinking Rwanda’s “Radio Machete”’, 631, accessed 4 April 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032329207308181>.

⁷⁰ ‘What Led to the Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda?’, CMHR, accessed 4 April 2023, <https://humanrights.ca/story/what-led-genocide-against-tutsi-rwanda>; Study 2 OECD, ‘The International Response to Conflict and Genocide: Lessons from the Rwanda Experience’, 36.

⁷¹ Selective Exposure can be described as a situation where individuals tend to seek out information that confirms their existing beliefs and biases, while ignoring or rejecting information that contradicts them. Paige Williams, Margaret L. Kern, and Lea Waters, ‘Exploring Selective Exposure and Confirmation Bias as Processes Underlying Employee Work Happiness: An Intervention Study’, *Frontiers in Psychology* 7 (2016), <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00878>.

⁷² ‘United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect’, accessed 10 January 2023, <https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/genocide-convention.shtml>.

⁷³ Neema Hakim, ‘How Social Media Companies Could Be Complicit in Incitement to Genocide’, *Chicago Journal of International Law* 21, no. 1 (Summer 2020): 83–117.

more. Not only does it enable a transfer of information at unprecedented speed, but proprietary algorithms generate traffic in an extremist direction, amplifying selective exposure by the means of echo chambers and filter bubbles.⁷⁴ The ability to shape common narratives down to individuals is a unique trait that needs to be observed with caution. The impacts of the Cambridge Analytica scandal, for example, were felt across North America and Europe. The company sought to and by many accounts was effective in influencing political will by virtue of hardened disinformation campaigns supporting both Brexit and the Trump 2016 campaign.⁷⁵ While only related to general disinformation and not genocide, the ability of a small firm of experts to affect two G7 and Permanent Five powers by way of tailored social media tools is a grim reminder that technology can accelerate how individuals are influenced and results can be changed.

The use of language discussing genocidal prevention to justify violent aggression is also an important piece of disinformation theory in the fringes of this paper. The latest example of this lies with Russia's "Special military operation to de-Nazify Ukraine." To seek international recognition and stoke individual support, Russia's Putin has leveraged a false narrative of genocide against Russians in Ukraine to mobilize Russia's military into a conflict that, as of this writing, has little to no valid international support. A similar position can be found with the Cambodian genocide, where both the Vietnam-backed People's Republic of Kampuchea and Khmer Rouge utilized rhetoric of counter-genocidal actions to justify their violent actions against one-another.

The final addition might be the most important one: there should be an expectation that genocides will continue to be denied by the perpetrators. To this day, Turkey still has not recognized its part in the Armenian genocide, nor has Russia for the Holodomor. While thorough research supporting both exists, efforts to continue hiding crimes will persist, and it is the unfortunate role of activists, genocide scholars, and politicians alike to continue with their efforts in exposing the truth.⁷⁶

⁷⁴Both Echo Chambers and Filter Bubbles have become prominent concepts in the application of social media filter algorithms. Since most companies attempt to maximize revenue based on generated "click-interest", companies will often filter information appearing on one's "front page" to reflect material users have been known to peruse in the past. This can lead to situations where those users are exposed to predominant material enhancing their point of view intermixed with other messages (Echo Chambers), or to a systematic elimination of all material not directly linked to those interests (Filter Bubbles). Both are of significant concern and can lead to extreme polarization in the worst cases.

⁷⁵ Jim Isaak and Mina J. Hanna, 'User Data Privacy: Facebook, Cambridge Analytica, and Privacy Protection', *Computer* 51, no. 8 (August 2018): 57, <https://doi.org/10.1109/MC.2018.3191268>; Wylie, *Mindf*ck*, 18; Brian Tarran, 'What Can We Learn from the Facebook—Cambridge Analytica Scandal?', *Significance* 15, no. 3 (June 2018): 4–5, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1740-9713.2018.01139.x>.

⁷⁶ The concept of hiding genocides was thoroughly discussed by Alexander Laban Hinton et al. in *Hidden Genocides*. While there are many means by which groups hide genocides, the editors contend that the common trends center around power, knowledge, and memory. Akin to this denialism (especially by Russia) is what is commonly known as DARVO: deny, attack, and reverse victim and offender. The term has been coined by Jennifer Freyd; while generally applied to individuals and their actions relating to crimes they may have committed, Freyd states that the simple matter of actively denying one's guilt is

The Pillar offered here as a tool of analysis is not all-encompassing, nor has it been researched beyond its application in this paper to the Holocaust and Rwanda. The cursory information herein was meant to demonstrate how it can be applied, and to present some of the facts that corroborate disinformation as an important part of genocides. There may also be some justification to integrate this pillar with Stanton's Steps of genocide; there is a considerable cross-sectional relation between the two, and adapting Stanton's model may complete it with the few missing pieces addressing disinformation theory.

often the biggest tell-tale of their actual guilt. Alexander Laban Hinton, Douglas Irvin-Erickson, and Thomas La Pointe, 'Hidden Genocides: Power, Knowledge, Memory', *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 8, no. 3 (October 2014): 101–2, <https://doi.org/10.5038/1911-9933.8.3.9>; Jennifer J. Freyd, 'II. Violations of Power, Adaptive Blindness and Betrayal Trauma Theory', *Feminism & Psychology* 7, no. 1 (1 February 1997): 29, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353597071004>.

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