

# THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

## Worksheet for Clint Watts | Surviving in a World of Fake News (Episode 172)

While the Internet's been around for a while now, does it seem like it's just recently become a force powerful enough to sow real-life division among friends and family in a way that beats Thanksgiving dinners, baseball games, and Black Friday sales -- combined? It's not just your imagination, and it's not an accident -- it's by design.

**In [this episode](#)**, [\*Messing with the Enemy: Surviving in a Social Media World of Hackers, Terrorists, Russians, and Fake News\*](#) author Clint Watts 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.

# THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

---

## Russian to Conclusions?

Clint has worked in some capacity with the US government for decades, and claims he has never seen Americans work on behalf of the government to influence the outcome of a foreign election to the calculated effect that the Russians worked to subvert the 2016 US presidential election.

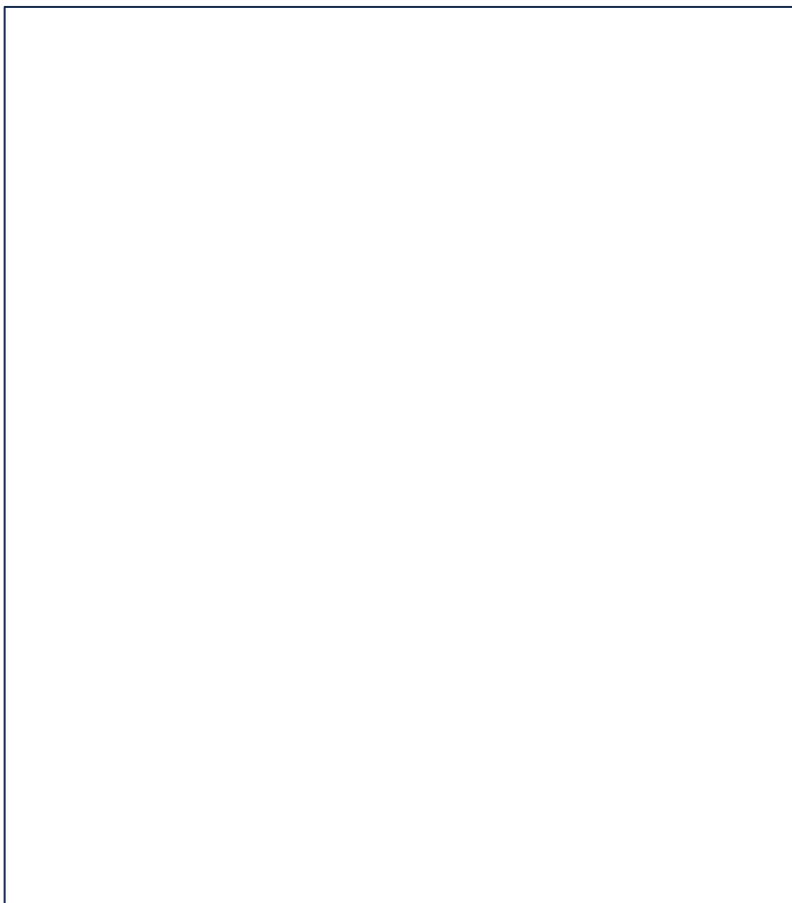
"I've never seen Americans hack thousands of innocent Russians or any country, spill their secrets out timed in order to win the election by advancing it through bogus social media accounts that look like and talk like Russian people for candidates that we have picked along with the propaganda outlet that is pumping information into their population," says Clint. "I've not seen that."

Even though there's evidence from multiple sources proving Russians deliberately interfered in the 2016 election (though the jury is still out as to how much people now in our own government had to do with this interference), a lot of people are constantly telling me I should just drop it -- arguing that there's a moral equivalency because America "does the same thing to everybody else."

# THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

---

No matter how you feel about the *results* of the 2016 election, how do you feel about a foreign power with interests in contrast to those of the United States using social media to subvert the election's outcome? After listening to this episode, do you find the scenario far-fetched, or are you alarmed at how easy it is to utilize social media as a way to manipulate people against their own interests?



# THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

---

## Engaging Through CRIME

When Clint engages with a terrorist, he doesn't expect them to suddenly see his side of things and seek to atone for a lifetime dedicated to terrorism. Instead, he seeks to tell their story with the acronym of CRIME in mind, which stands for: Compromise, Revenge, Ideology, Money, Ego.

"You line those up and you say, 'What motivates this person?'" says Clint. When trying to get an American-born terrorist who had fallen out of favor with his Jihadist group to turn himself in, he turned to Twitter and appealed to his senses of compromise (he was on the run), revenge (against his former group), and ego (he only wanted people to talk about him).

"I would write up summaries of his stories and I would hit on those things," says Clint. "I recognized, 'Okay, I'll stay in these lanes, and then I'll find common ground.'" Common ground included: they were both American, they both played soccer, and they liked the same kinds of foods. "Once you build some sort of rapport...now you can start talking about [more important issues] like 'Why do you want to be a terrorist?' without him immediately thinking he's under attack and he has to defend his position -- which is basically all political conversations we see now!"

# THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

---

If you're like most of us, you probably won't ever be in a position to talk down a terrorist. But how might you use the CRIME formula to gain rapport with someone on the other side of the political (or other socially polarizing) spectrum and have a meaningful discussion? This week, try to reach out to someone on social media and see how far the engagement goes. In contrast, consider how effective the CRIME formula might be used by someone else to engage with you and jot your thoughts down here.

# THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

---

## Four Themes of Active Measures

Clint describes what he calls preference bubbles -- how we steer the content we see and don't see on social media: "It's really about your preference...you are choosing -- over and over and over -- things that you like. The system is designed to give you more of what you like. And you're blocking out that which you don't like, which...puts you in alternative realities. So you have shared perception, but not shared reality.

"Whether you're a terrorist, or a Russian disinfo [agent], or a mass manipulator like we'll see going into the 2020 election, you want to inculcate your audience in a world that you control based on what they believe is their own choice."

So how does Russia use our own preference bubbles to manipulate us and turn a little crack of disagreement into a huge chasm of divisiveness? Clint says the strategy is derived from four themes that date back to the Soviet-era Active Measures playbook used during the Cold War.

# THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

---

**Calamitous Messaging:** "If you incite fear into an audience base, they will then go to you as an information source because they want to know, 'Am I safe? Is this true?' Right behind it, whatever you deliver -- even if it's falsehood -- is more likely to be believed."

**Financial Messaging:** "Attacking a US company with a falsehood. Making you not believe in goods. One of the failed ones from the Twitter trolls is 'Walmart turkeys are injected with poison!'"

**Social Messaging:** "You pick any cleavage that's ethnic, religious, social -- second amendment, gun rights, police violence...and you get into those audiences by sharing and repeating stories...if you want to infiltrate an audience, you retweet or repeat 80 percent of what they're saying."

**Political Messaging:** "[In an election year] you start pushing people toward your preferred candidate in each of those spaces -- whether it's left or right..."

After a few cycles of using these strategies to pit people against each other, you just stand back and let them do the work for you.

# THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

---

**If you've had a presence on social media (like most of us in the 21st century), think back on the past few years and honestly answer this: Do you believe your preference bubble has been influenced in some way at the direction of someone operating against your interests? If so, can you identify which of the four above themes most effectively pushed your buttons? Does knowing this help insulate you against future intrusion?**



# THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

---

## The Death of Expertise

The Death of Expertise, so named after [the book of the same name by Tom Nichols](#), "is the belief in these circles that anybody with an Internet connection is as smart as everybody else regardless of what their experience, academic credentials, or life achievements are," says Clint. "Go to any kid today and you're like, 'Hey, how do you do this thing?' 'Oh, I can do that. I can take a heart out.' or 'I can start a car.' 'Have you ever done it?' 'No, but it's on YouTube or Google. I can figure it out.'"

On the face of it, this can-do attitude seems preferable to the defeatist can't-do alternative, but it also leads to a disconnection from real sources of knowledge. "A lot of bad information can get pushed very quickly," says Clint.

# THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

---

**Have you ever gotten in an argument with someone on the Internet over their opinion about something with which you're actually qualified or experienced to handle? On the other side of it, have you ever formed an opinion around something you read on the Internet and then engaged in an argument with someone who has actual experience with the subject of that opinion? In hindsight, do you believe your reaction was socially engineered by outside forces?**



*Full show notes and resources for this episode [can be found here.](#)*

# THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

---

## About



Join us as we get deep into the untapped wisdom of the world's top performers -- from legendary creators to intelligence operatives, iconoclastic writers to visionary change-makers.

We deconstruct the playbooks of the most successful people on earth -- and learn new strategies, perspectives, and insights you can't find anywhere else. Then, take these valuable insights into your own life and live what you listen.

# THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

[support@jordanharbinger.com](mailto:support@jordanharbinger.com)

# THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW



Share This With  
Your Friends!



[Share This](#)