Abstract

In the context of increasing technologicalization and the growing interconnectedness of our world through social media, this thesis aims to answer the question, why is disinformation not being sufficiently handled in the United States in the wake of the foreign meddling in the 2016 Presidential Elections, and what can and should be done about the threat? This master thesis therefore aims to delve into the inherent vulnerabilities in the U.S. societal fabric, and thus conduct an in-depth explanatory case study model analysis of what should be done to further combat and counteract disinformation and election meddling within the country. The author argues that disinformation and election meddling are not only a serious security threat, but are also not being properly handled as they are only being addressed technologically, and not through the realm of information, and societal resilience. This thesis therefore argues that strategic communication, which should be redefined and expanded in definition, should be used to combat disinformation campaigns to prevent further election meddling. The author posits that a two-level approach is best, one which aims to negate the negative disinformation campaigns through a single governmental body, while also addressing the root causes through education.