What happens when the "truth" is crowd-sourced?

A study of the effects of fact-checkers

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Motivation: the age of fact-checking

Why do we need fact-checkers?

Donald Trump

310 total fact-checks
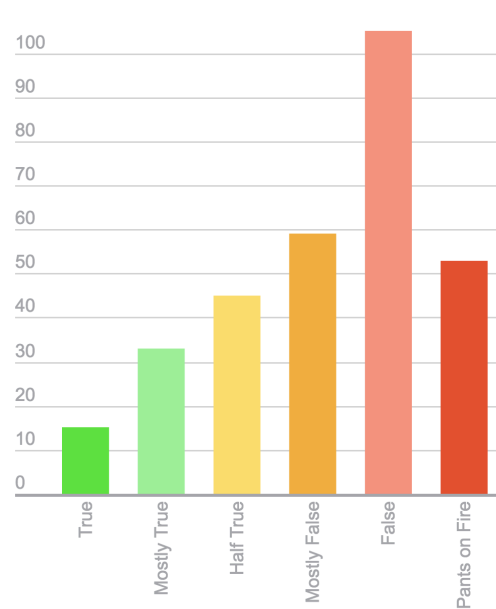
Hillary Clinton

196 total fact-checks

http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/article/2016/nov/01/truth-check-clinton-and-trump-truth-o-meter-1-week/
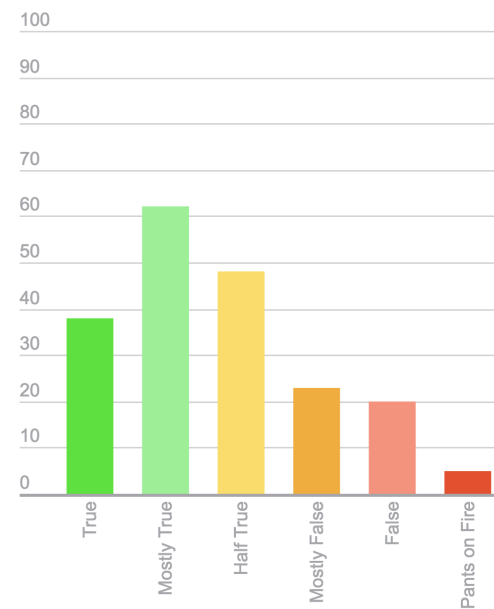
Content creation Vs. Content evaluation

- Online platforms and social media *facilitate* and *accelerate* information diffusion (Cooper and Zmud 1990)

- Network structure can influence the spread (mis)information (Tambuscio, Ruffo, Flammini, Menczer 2015)

- Consumer behavior in the presence of information quality cues (Dellarocas 2003)
    - Fact checkers act as a filter to evaluate claims (Graves et al. 2015)

- Gap: Explosive popularity despite little research attesting their efficacy in shaping public opinion/intentions/behavior

Early evidence:
Exploiting 'fact check' tag in Google News

Early evidence:
Following Google News for 10 days

- 1200 story boxes with label 'fact-check'

- Stories with the label had 45% (***) more shares in social media
  - after controlling for source (i.e. newspaper) and text characteristics (i.e. word-length, topic)

- Suggesting that consumers actually value the label

Questions:

1. Under what conditions do fact checker sites *influence* consumers?
2. What *moderates* this effect?

Potential moderators

- Characteristics and motivations of the speaker
  - *Marketing: Chan and Sengupta (2010)*
- Characteristics and cost of deception
  - *Economics: Gneezy (2005)*
- Focus on appearance
  - *Objectification:* Heflick (2010)

Gender	Race	Focus on appearance

Statement	Outcomes

Degree of truth (lie)
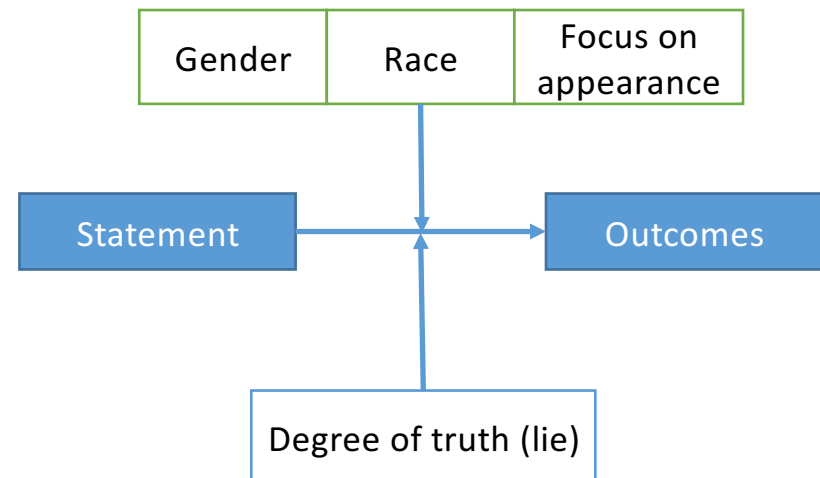
Next:
Test gender and truth-level in the lab

A for pay lab experiment with IU Undergrads

2x3x2 Design

- Gender: Male vs. Female (2)

- Politifact Grade: False, Half true, True (3)

- Focus on appearance

- ~500 undergrads recruited for pay

Appearance

Politifact Grade

Gender

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Says Hillary Clinton "wants to let people just pour in. You could have 650 million people pour in and we do nothing about it. Think of it. That's what could happen. You triple the size of our country in one week."
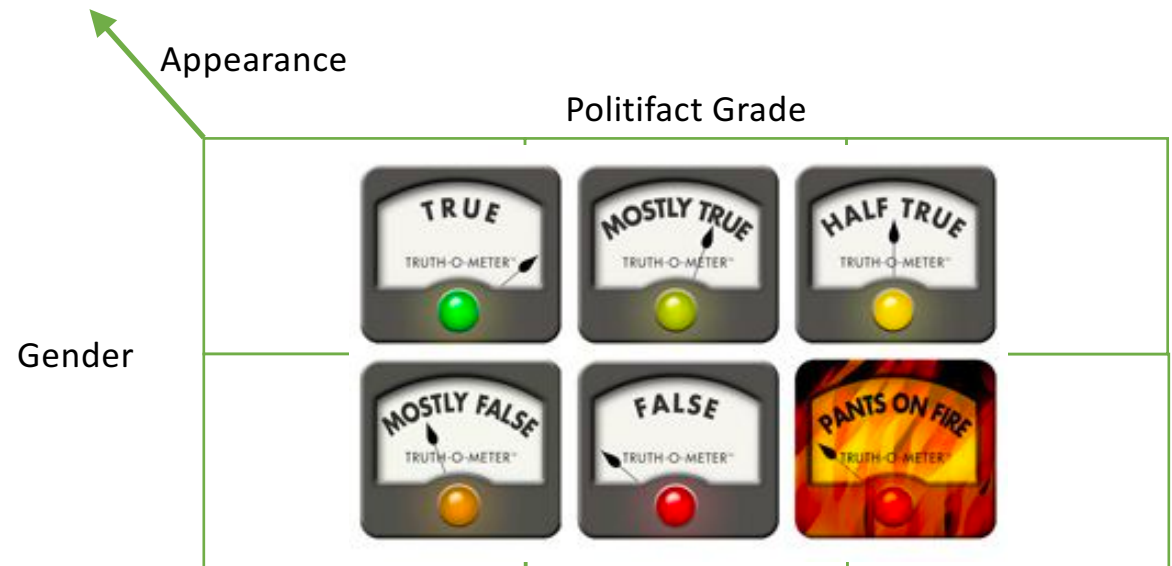
— *Donald Trump on Sunday, October 30th, 2016 in a campaign rally in Albuquerque*

Pants on Fire! Trump says Clinton would let 650 million people into the U.S., in one week

By *Miriam Valverde on Monday, October 31st, 2016 at 3:45 p.m.*

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Subjects: Homeland Security, Immigration

Sources:

CBS News, Trump says Clinton could let 650 million new immigrants into U.S., Oct. 31, 2016

Email exchange, Hillary Clinton campaign, Oct. 31, 2016

Email exchange, Donald Trump campaign, Oct. 31, 2016

Hillary Clinton campaign website, immigration reform

U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. and World Population Clock

Migration Policy Institute, Largest U.S. Immigrant Groups over Time, 1960-Present

Migration Policy Institute, U.S. Immigration Trends

Migration Policy Institute, Frequently Requested Statistics on Immigrants and Immigration in the United States

Outcomes:

- The stereotype content model (SCM; Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2007; Fiske et al., 2002)
  - Positive perceptions of humanity: Warm, competence and morality

- What other outcomes should we measure?
  - Affect
  - Credibility
  - Attitudes
  - Feelings
  - Influence
  - Persuasion

Results expected

Warm, morality, and Competence
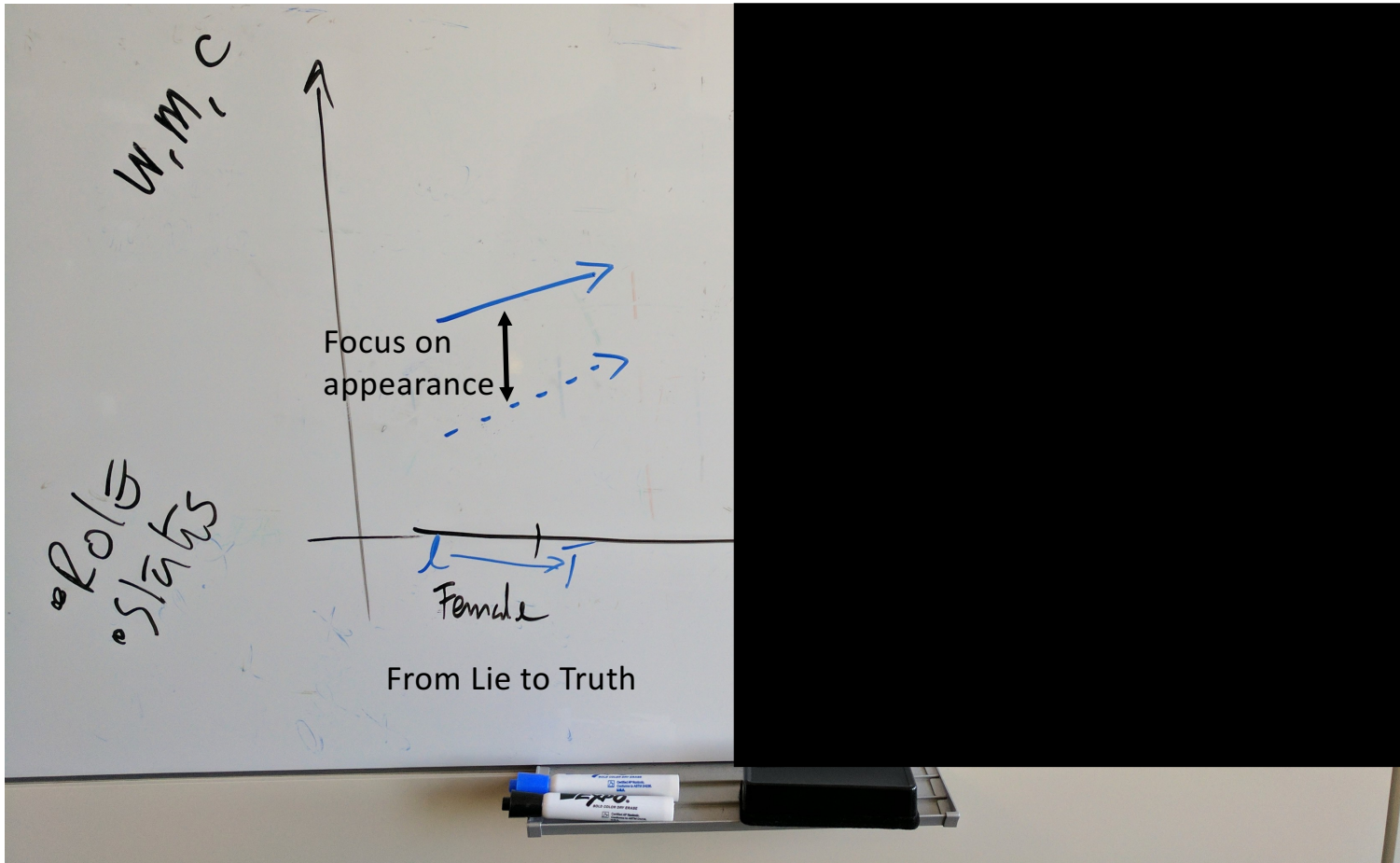
Other directions

- Motivations:
  - Occupation: Are politicians are expected to lie but not journalists?
  - Partisanship: Do I discount the lies (truth) depending on my affiliations?

- Status:
  - High Vs. Low

Thank you

Please do reach out if you want to talk more (or just have coffee)

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