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The Use of Disinformation as a Political Weapon

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The Use of Disinformation as a Political Weapon



PRESENTER:
Rachael Arlet

BACKGROUND

Disinformation has the ability to cause a lot of harm. It is often times used by nations as a political weapon to cause harm to other nations. Propaganda is a form of disinformation that nations use, not to be confused with public diplomacy. Disinformation is defined as “all forms of false, inaccurate, or misleading information designed, presented and promoted to intentionally cause public harm or for profit” (Disinformation, 2018, p. 3).

METHODS

1. Define disinformation by using Kuo and Marwick’s definition of disinformation.
2. Analyze a case study concerning American disinformation against the Soviet Union during the Cold War
3. Analyze how disinformation is used as weapon
4. Use Mull and Wallin’s definitions of propaganda and public diplomacy to analyze the differences between the two and the importance

Disinformation is used as a political weapon by nations to further their agendas against others.

Propaganda	Public Diplomacy
Selective of truth	Based on truth
Rarely two-way	Often two-way
Listens in order to target	Listens in order to learn
Intended only to influence target	Can influence the originator
Tight agenda	Flexible agenda
Assumes others are wrong	Tends to be respectful of other
Closed	Open

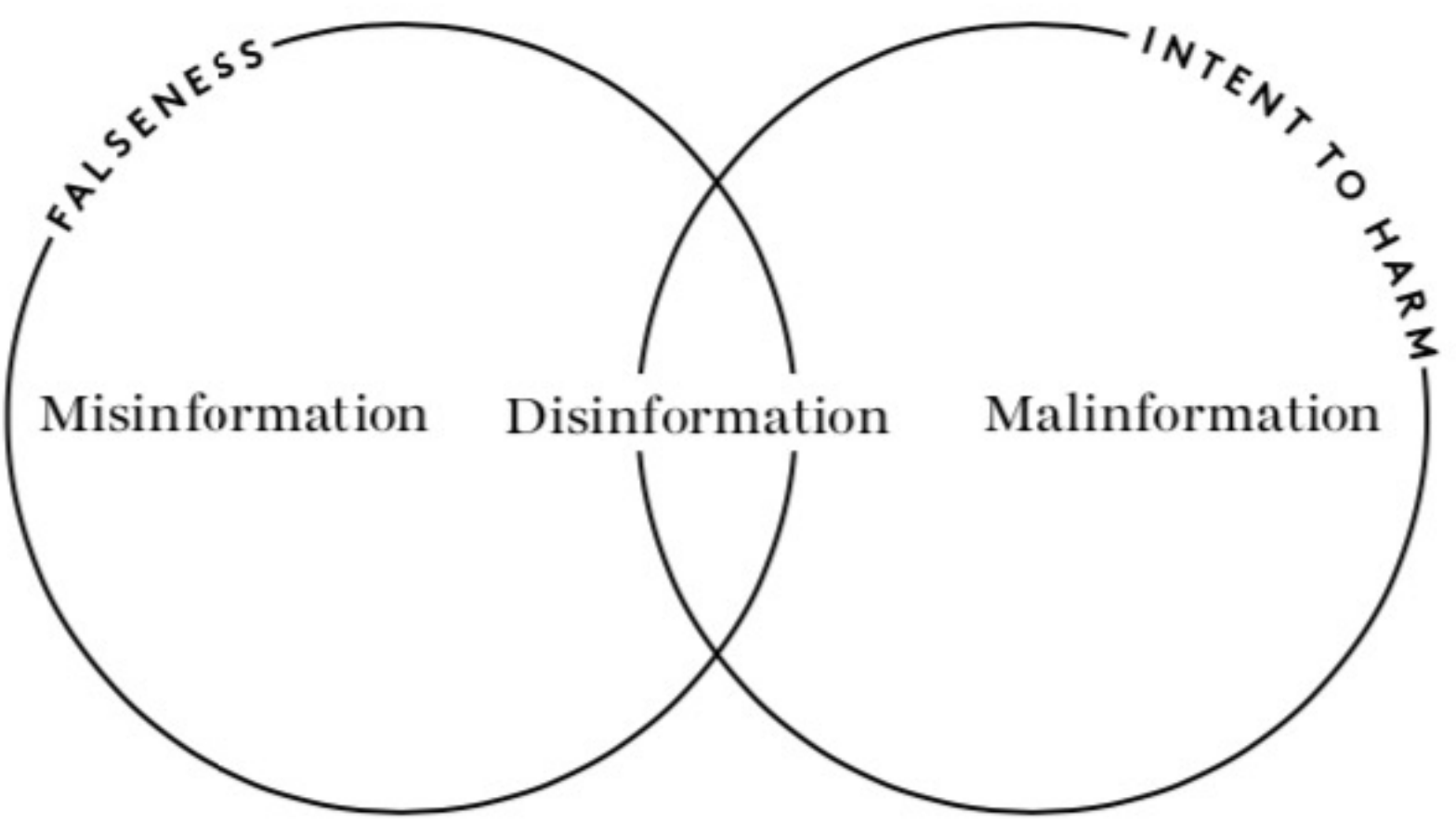
Mull, Christian, and Matthew Wallin. “Propaganda: A Tool of Strategic Influence.” American Security Project, 2013. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep06038>.



Scan for a list of references

Results

Disinformation can be very dangerous and cause a lot of harm, which is why nations will use it as a weapon. Propaganda is a subset of disinformation that is used, which is different from public diplomacy (Mull and Wallin 2013). It is important to differentiate between propaganda and public diplomacy when analyzing disinformation as a political weapon.



Wardle, Claire. “Understanding Information Disorder.” First Draft, September 22, 2020. <https://firstdraftnews.org/long-form-article/understanding-information-disorder/>.

10 TYPES OF MIS- AND DISINFORMATION

- FALSE CONNECTION**: When headlines, visuals or captions don't support the content
- FALSE CONTEXT**: When genuine content is shared with false contextual information
- MANIPULATED CONTENT**: When genuine information or imagery is manipulated to deceive
- SATIRE OR PARODY**: No intention to cause harm but has potential to fool
- MISLEADING CONTENT**: Misleading use of information to frame an issue or individual
- IMPOSTER CONTENT**: When genuine sources are impersonated
- FABRICATED CONTENT**: Content that is 100% false, designed to deceive and do harm
- PROPAGANDA**: When content is used to manage attitudes, values and knowledge
- SPONSORED CONTENT**: Advertising or PR disguised as editorial content
- ERROR**: When established news organisations make mistakes while reporting

STOP THE SPREAD OF MISINFORMATION. THINK BEFORE YOU SHARE, REACT OR RESPOND.

GROUNDVIEWS
Journalists for citizens

“Infographic: 10 Types of MIS and Disinformation.” Groundviews, May 12, 2018. <https://groundviews.org/2018/05/12/infographic-10-types-of-mis-and-disinformation/>.