

# HAP Barry Bardoe 9Jul20

Fri, 7/10 9:38AM 52:35

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

people, question, information, corporate interests, warfare, disinformation, hear, manipulate, talking, narrative, absolutely, good, bit, corporate, group, values, worldview, point, journalist, explicit

## SPEAKERS

Barry Bardoe, Molly Knight

- M** Molly Knight 00:06  
Tonight I'm going to welcome Barry Bardoe, and he's an information warfare specialist. And I'm very excited about this, because I don't know a lot about the topic. But what he's mentioned to me last Tuesday, when we had a little chat it's really made me think about how we dealt information and what we're expected to do with it as a community and how it affects our lives. So welcome, Barry, thank you so much for joining us tonight. Could we start off by you telling us a bit about yourself and how you came to get into this profession?
- B** Barry Bardoe 00:50  
Yeah, absolutely. I'll start off by a little disclaimer that anything I talk about tonight is very much my own personal views the results are my own personal research. And I'm not speaking on behalf of any person I've ever worked for anything like that. And we will talk about purely public domain examples. But I suppose the term information warfare is fairly loaded. So I'm gonna start with the definition of that, which will explain a little bit about what I do and what my background is. According to Dan Kuehl from the National Defense University in the US, information warfare is if I might look at my notes, conflict or struggle between two or more groups in the information environment. So I got involved with and that can take in a big range of things from you know, PR to marketing to disinformation. I've been involved many, many years ago in marketing and PR and professional writing

and analysis and all those sorts of things and have since worked for governments, military, political and private concerns.

**M** Molly Knight 01:53  
So a broad range of experience there,

**B** Barry Bardoe 01:56  
yeah, yeah, there is and I maintain a fairly broad palette. I'm currently Doing postgraduate research. And I've written a book called "The Secrets of How You're Being Manipulated And the Power to Fight Back". It's not out yet, but that will hopefully step people through. So if at the end of this anyone's still a bit confused or whatever, there's, there's other things I can go and read, because it's a lot to get your mind around.

**M** Molly Knight 02:20  
All right, thank you. Um, let's start with what is information warfare, and why is it so important that people know about it and what effects it can have?

**B** Barry Bardoe 02:32  
Yeah, that's an excellent question. And the term warfare is so loaded, isn't it, but you hear it, particularly, you know, in the corporate, we will know about conventional warfare, but you hear about it a lot in the corporate context, people talking about quite warfare related analogies and how they go about things. And basically, we live in an age where there's more information, more information sources, more information platforms, I think something like 90% of the data in the world now popped up in the last 10 years. So we're being deluged with information that is being used to achieve changes to policy, people's attitudes, etc, etc. And it really is warfare in the sense that you can use it in the military context, obviously, but corporates and private interests and various other non state actors, as I like to say, use this very, very effectively.

**M** Molly Knight 03:27  
Hmm. So well, who does use it? That would affect me, for instance, or someone watching? How would it be used in the context of just everyday life for for people?

B

Barry Bardoe 03:40

All right, well, I am I'm trying to popularize a variation, which I call ambient warfare. And what I mean by that is not just information but the entire lived environment. And I'll put it to you that every single decision that people are currently making is the result of th at ubiquitous environment that we inhabit all these different information sources. And there are people who are very good at this job out there who are making sure that policy, the media and mainstream opinion fall in step with their particular goals, and they can be very varied.

M

Molly Knight 04:17

So, does that mean that the media are told what they can tell the public? I mean, is it that controlled?

B

Barry Bardoe 04:28

Look, I sincerely I mean, that's a very, very explicit analysis. No, that does. I think there's times when journalists will tell you look I was told to back off from particular topic, whatever, but it's far more subtle. It's far more nuanced. And it has to do with shaping an entire worldview. So, you know, some journalists have a worldview that they've grown up with, which has been shaped which in turn can be leveraged for particular users names, a lot of times I'm sure they are they're not conscious of it, or the big problem these days with the speed of the turnover of information is they just don't have time for in depth journalism anymore. It's a real problem. And to finish that point, you've got to remember that media outlets are generally businesses. They don't want to piss off, you know, their various different corporate interests, I suppose. So they could be a little bit careful. There's some things where they can be merciless. And there's other things where I know I know from being in industry a long time you got to be a bit cautious.

M

Molly Knight 05:34

And you You did mention the use of neuroscience when we had a chat the other night. Can you tell me where that fits into this?

B

Barry Bardoe 05:45

Yeah, look, if I could j ust do a quick bit of history. This whole toolkit goes back was probably perfected by Dr. Joseph Goebbels in National Socialist Germany in the 30s. And he he took his cues from British propaganda in the first world war but he also went to

corporate America. And he saw how they use catchy slogans to influence and make sure people buy their products or have certain attitudes and values. So I'm gonna ask you a question in turn. Why do women shave their armpits? People don't think about that. But in the early part of the 20th century, a certain company that is ubiquitous with shaving products, started a campaign using the media of the day to shame women into shaving, and within 20 years have doubled their market share and 90% of women in western countries were shaving under their armpit, they never used to do that. That was the first really successful corporate information and marketing campaign and it's changed societal values. So if you look at that, I think that was done with print media. You have to think now about what they've got, and how they can change an entire set of cultural assumptions.

M

Molly Knight 07:06

That's that's quite scary when you look at it like that. Because, yeah, I mean, a whole society can be manipulated.

B

Barry Bardoe 07:14

Yeah. And Goebbels realized that he had some he had the new media of the day he had radio and film. And he wanted everybody, and this should shock people a little bit, but he wanted everybody to have a cheap radio. Now, can you think of something else now, that is pretty much the single point of information for absolutely everybody in society. By controlling the point of information, you control the narrative, but the neuroscience thing he realized very early on, there's a thing called cognitive ease. And it's very, very simple. You can be as intelligent as you like. But if you hear something repeated again and again, by an authoritative source, you begin to believe it even if it's completely illogical or against Your values or whatever, and it actually bypasses critical thinking and it's it's a well established tactic. So his thing was, you have an authoritative source and you repeat it again and again and again. And, you know, Europe's most progressive country will suddenly go, hey, let's follow a genocidal maniac to oblivion, you know, it makes people do crazy illogical things.

M

Molly Knight 08:21

Hmm. Yeah, okay. Um, so if repeated messages which we get from our iPhone, from television, and so on, it's it's almost like, could I use the word brainwashing?

B

Barry Bardoe 08:41

Yeah, why not? That's exactly what it is. Absolutely.

M

Molly Knight 08:46

So we're all a mob of brainwashed people running around, jumping up and down about things that may or may not be true.

B

Barry Bardoe 08:56

Worse than that on people who are very, very good at this job in the corporate world, will find things that we normal, nice, reasonable people would consider good. And they will piggyback their agenda on the on the back of that. So you'll be accepting something most people would accept as being a good thing. But their agenda is embedded within that. So it achieves an end that suits their purposes, whilst making you feel good about your values, that's the trick.

M

Molly Knight 09:28

Okay, can you do you have an example of what that would look like?

B

Barry Bardoe 09:37

Pretty much anything you can think of. I mean, I would put it to you that most people understand what's meant by the term big Australia. That is, you know, high immigration figures, all that sort of stuff. Most good, reasonable people, like the idea of diversity. They like the idea of inclusiveness. I like the idea of Australia, participating in world culture. But I put it to you And I think the age newspaper ran quite a good article on this recently that the development lobby has leveraged off this to create huge demand for their services. So that we now have basically an infrastructure based economy one in 11 jobs are based in construction. It's great for creating jobs, etc. But it also means because there's so much demand, they can bump up the prices as much as they like. So we now have the highest house prices of any western country. I'm not saying that that's necessarily completely a cohesive and deliberate thing. But it suits a different agenda. That's an example. There's plenty more.

M

Molly Knight 10:39

Mm hmm. Okay, yeah. So corporations use it. Politicians use this as well.

B

Barry Bardoe 10:49

Oh, yes. But I think there's varying degrees of expertise. I mean, I'll give you a really good example. You know, one of the masters as we've seen, I mean, who would have thought that a reality TV star could become a president, but anyway seems to have done it. And he gave a speech where Donald Trump gave a speech where he had done a debate, I think it was in the Republican, you know, lead off to choosing their candidate. And he said, something along the lines of how he'd won the debate, I think 11 times in 17 seconds. And even someone like me, who's you know, fairly used to this sort of stuff at the end was associating when Trump when Trump it's that simple sometimes that if you hear something again, and again, you sort of walk away, going oh yeah I think he won that, you know, but it's generally much more subtle. And it works a lot better if you approach it from a whole lot of different angles. Like if you have a whole lot of different information platforms, saying the similar-ish thing. You start to just accept it and you have to really take a step back and go, is that actually what I believe or is true or whatever?

M

Molly Knight 11:57

Yeah, um, I mean, I'm finding it very difficult. to decipher truth from fiction in a lot of what's happening today like, if we can talk about the the lockdowns and

B

Barry Bardoe 12:09

yeah.

M

Molly Knight 12:09

The the Yeah. it to me None of this makes sense because I don't see pandemic numbers happening. Not to say it's not a real virus and it's not happening. But the way everybody is just simply falling into line and a very few people are questioning and everybody's, you know, got their masks and they're staying home. They're doing what they're told without question. And to me, I just think, how does a whole huge society behave that way? Why does that happen?

B

Barry Bardoe 12:45

That's a really interesting question that speaks to the power of this. And I'll put a disclaimer in front of this. Like you I'm not suggesting that's not a thing. And I'm not suggesting that, you know, you shouldn't behave responsibly or any of those sorts of things. Let's just talk about the mechanism rather than the actual thing itself. I had a

conversation with a colleague, I think the end of last year, and we're just sort of talking about how long would it take to change society beyond recognition, if you set yourself the goal of doing it. And in National Socialist Germany, I think "Triumph of the Will" was filmed in 1934 they only had a year, and by the end of the year, so it was unrecognizable to what it proceeded. So that was an amazing job back then with the technology of the day. But as you see, we have now all decided on a very different way of living or accepted a very different way of living, based upon the effective authority figures have come out said this is how it is and everybody in the media and everybody has basically agreed. Now whether that's right or wrong, is not what I'm gonna debate. It's just a matter. You can see these mechanisms when it comes from enough angles, people will accept it. That's the extent of my point.

M

Molly Knight 13:55

Huh? Okay. So yeah, well, from a corporate perspective then if you're wanting to sell a product, it must be quite easy actually, a bit of advertising repeated advertising because I mean, I know we don't watch much commercial television, but we do watch the football. And there's every time there's an ad, it's the same ad, the same ad, it's the same ad. And I guess that's a part of it, isn't it?

B

Barry Bardoe 14:24

That these days is almost a smokescreen because we're very, very used to identifying explicit advertising. And most consumers are pretty exhausted by it. But they do it so that you can see. So you can almost say to yourself, hey, I'm not being tricked, I can spot the advertising, what influences you are subtle things embedded in the overall information landscape. Like for example, I had a client corporate client years ago, and we set up countless authoritative looking websites. which had discussion of things which in turn would lead towards their desired outcome. And there's an example of an election where there's a site that sort of asked you all these questions and told you which party most closely aligned with your values. And coincidentally or not. This same party was always the result. I can't think of the exact example but things like that which funnel from multiple sources. So you go I'm too smart I don't fall for advertising, but meanwhile, your entire landscape of information has been tampered with.

M

Molly Knight 15:35

So well manipulation isn't it? It's, it's almost hypnotic, really, isn't it? You you come to a point of belief, even if you don't believe it.

B

Barry Bardoe 15:49

Absolutely. And it is very, very powerful. And the other thing that's very, very powerful by cognitive ease is incredible. You know, if you if you do that effectively, it is amazing. You get the smartest people on earth. And they'll be believing a slogan. Absolutely. And that becomes their values. But a really good example, you know, when you think of in an out group theory, if you utilize that properly, if you make the in group fearful, and you have a credible out group, and you project all that fear onto them, it enhances the in group narrative exponentially. And anyone who's really good at this needs an out group, they need a little group that you can vilify and make to look stupid and hated. And that massively increases the power of their narrative. And just to quickly go back to 1930s, Germany, you know, there was in the 30s there were Jewish Germans who had fought loyally in the First World War and had iron crosses and things like that. And here they are being herded into camps and they're obviously thinking how could this possibly be happening? And from a logical point of view, they could not pose any security threat to Germany whatsoever they were loyal Germans through and through and this is happening and, you know, people couldn't get their minds around it. And to think that we are suddenly immune from that would be very naive.

M

Molly Knight 17:09

So you see that happening now in a communal way a community?

B

Barry Bardoe 17:17

Yeah, and look, I would refrain from saying that it's a big mistake is to see these things as monoliths, like, you know, one particular entity is controlling the whole narrative. There's lots of competing narratives. And there's lots of you know, group dynamics, so it can get it's very messy. The whole environment is extremely messy.

M

Molly Knight 17:38

Hmm. So who sits at the top of all this? I guess in a corporate world, it's the boss. And in a government world, it's the ministers but I me an, I guess I'm confused as to how it, how who decides what it is and where it goes? That's probably sounds a bit silly question. But sorry.

B

Barry Bardoe 18:07

Well, I think it very much depends on who you're talking about. Because if you're talking



about a corporate entity, I know from experience that often the marketing department like I know, one, cutting edge marketing concern that do predictive marketing and stuff you wouldn't believe like they know what you're going to do before you even decided, it's absolutely incredible. And they will work for different clients and the client might go, it might be as simple as we want them to buy a product, or it might be we want them in general to, you know, except this range of things. Or it might be something far more nebulous, but the client will drive it. And in my experience in some of the corporate entities, the marketing department say the science department, the law department, they're not necessarily on the same page at all, you know, so it's not it's not as simple as a person decides and then it all unfolds. It can be very messy and complicated.

M

Molly Knight 18:59

Huh, gosh, It's um, I mean, I guess I feel just for myself, I feel like I've just been conned my whole life. You know, I'm nearly 70. And I sort of think, what decisions have I made that have actually been, my decisions?

B

Barry Bardoe 19:18

Yeah, well, that's a very good question. And it's a really good exercise for the viewers tonight to take a step back. And I defy you to come up with what you think is your most heart held value and belief and ask yourself that question. And look, it could be that you've been a bit manipulated into a point of view that nonetheless is a really good, valid, wholesome position to be in. I mean, you know, there's people who market renewable energy in a fairly manipulative manner. All advertising manipulates to some degree, you know, your desire to do good can be a source of manipulation as well. But it's a really interesting exercise to step back and go, you know, what do I believe? And where did that idea come from?

M

Molly Knight 20:05

Yeah, because you'd have also obviously, your, your family history, what you grew up with and the values they had that you continue on with. And then you've got all the external factors that add to that. So it's very complex, isn't it? How we end up where we are?

B

Barry Bardoe 20:22

Yeah, I think, you know, leftist, philosopher Louis Althusser talked about how he doesn't he never really thought he had any real original scope for your own thinking it was either the state or what you've described your cultural environment informed what you thought

pretty much all the time and you have to really consciously deconstruct that and step back and analyze your your position because there are millions of competing interests trying to guide people in certain directions and the really explicit stuff like you know, stay at home, blah, blah, blah. I think most people can see that that's explicit. But there's a million more subtle things in a million different topic areas. And there's, there's groups like, you know, in the US election like the alt right, who were incredibly good at co-opting the mainstream narrative and turning it back on itself. And they use counterintuitive things like that a little cartoon frog. And the more the mainstream didn't understand it, the more it reinforced the narrative that the mainstream is out of touch, and doesn't really get things anymore and mainstream media is obsolete. And there's one very mainstream journalist who made the mistake of tweeting, you know, what's going on with Pepe the Frog what is this, and straight off was just ridiculed beyond belief by thousands of people on the internet because he obviously didn't get it. And the whole point is, it's not something to be got. And that's the counterintuitive thing. If you put things out there that people struggle to understand then straight off, you know, you're making the mainstream look silly. So that was a tactic they use that was very counterintuitive, but very, very effective. So it doesn't have to be just, you know, mindless repetition of slogans, although that does work.

M

Molly Knight 22:06

Mm hmm. Okay, so what are the implications for us as a society where discussions on certain topics are considered dangerous? How does the techniques of the the neuro science or the bypassing critical thinking, how does that fit in with well, topics that we really aren't meant to discuss?

B

Barry Bardoe 22:35

Yeah, look there's certain topics and I'm sure we both know what we're alluding to. But there are a range of topics now, where if you were to bring them up and just request a rational discussion about them, you'll be horrendously vilified. And once again to go back to 1930s thing you can imagine some German Jew with his Iron Cross saying, Hey, you know, I want to participate in the social narrative and suddenly you just, you're the worst person on earth through no fault of your own. And I think you'll find that most of those things are very, very deliberate information warfare campaigns, which are designed to create an out group that everybody else can fear and hate, and thus increase their narrative. And they spend a lot of time discrediting people who might interrupt that, that process?

M

Molly Knight 23:24

Hmm. So it becomes it becomes an agenda to focus on for certain groups that I suppose that have a vested interest in a certain outcome.

B

Barry Bardoe 23:36

Yeah, absolutely. And look, wherever there's billions of dollars involved you can bet some of this is going on. And there's, you know, so many different examples. I mean, ISIS have been brilliant at appending, the dominant Western narrative, not on the battlefield so much, but certainly in the internet, you know, they've done an amazing job. And what people don't see is, you know, they, they hear about the violent stuff they upload but they upload a lot of other stuff. That's very, very clever that really questions, you know, the West's moral superiority. So there's that sort of side of it, you can do really, really cleverly, but the corporate interests try to control the information environment as much as possible. So they control the first page of a Google search and therefore 95% of searches. If people are contrarians, if they're really well credentialed people, they'll destroy the credibility of their qualifications. Even absurd things for an entire university is, you know, supposedly not valid because a particular academic questions their point of view, these sorts of techniques, it's not just one thing. It's it's very complicated and they're very, very good as I described, at setting up seemingly authoritative bodies and websites and advocacy groups, which are really just fronts. And yeah, there's there's some fantastic information about that. So when you do a search, and you find these websites that sort of seemed to very solidly support a particular thing often it's just you know, it's just informational. It's just a front.

M

Molly Knight 25:04

So, but you'd have no way of knowing that, would you? So you could go on believing everything that's on that website.

B

Barry Bardoe 25:13

American journalist Cheryl Atkinson talks about astroturfing, which is the creation of a completely believable, but fake grassroots movement to give the idea, this ubiquitous support for certain things. And of course, you know, she picks on our good friends in the pharmaceutical industry with that, but she's actually listed a whole bunch of websites, which she believes are astroturfing websites. And, you know, she's come out she's done a lot of research on it and whether or not she's spot on with all of them. I think there's certainly an awful lot. Hmm. It's hard, like you said, it'd be impossible to nail down all of them. But if you can maintain that first page of a Google search you pretty much own the

inflammation landscape. And that's a pretty incredible sword.

**M** Molly Knight 25:57  
Yeah, it is, isn't it? we all rely on Mr Google or Dr. Google,

**B** Barry Bardoe 26:04  
they're not meant to do that.

**M** Molly Knight 26:08  
People do it.

**B** Barry Bardoe 26:09  
Oh, of course,

**M** Molly Knight 26:10  
Barry, I've had friends say trust the experts, the majority experts. And if any expert deviates from the dominant narrative, ignore them. And questioning majority experts is foolish and narcissistic. So what makes someone give away their critical thinking?

**B** Barry Bardoe 26:32  
Yeah, this trust the majority is a really interesting idea. Because, once again, if you're very good at astroturfing, you can create the illusion of a majority relatively easily. You have to also look at several different factors. Firstly, are people financially benefiting? Are they in a situation where their career is in some way likely to be compromised by deviating and then if someone does deviate? Do they have anything to gain are they well credentialed, and most often if they've got a lot to lose, that may not mean that what they're saying is necessarily true, but it does add a bit of gravitas to it. So you need to look at those factors because now people talk about scientific consensus. Well, Albert Einstein got a letter from 100 colleagues saying back off relativity theory, it's insane and crazy, making us look stupid. Science, you know, particularly, it's not about consensus, it is about more often than not individuals making innovative, new look at things. And it's amazing how many things are predicated upon assumptions that we now take as being, you know, empirically tested now are actually assumptions and without getting controversial, I mean, archaeology for a long, long time, and that's part of my background, was pushing this

idea that glaciers pushed deposits up mountains, which explains why you would say have fish skeletons and you know, on top of mountain in a certain time period or whatever, because archaeologists wanted to be scientific. They didn't want to buy into what they saw as a biblical religious narrative with this idea of a flood and all that stuff. And glacierologists will tell you glaciers behave very differently. But 450 years that was the orthodoxy, and no one tested it. I can think of other orthodoxies that nobody tests.

M

Molly Knight 28:23

Yeah, absolutely. All right. So what's the difference between someone who questions dominant narratives? And one who doesn't?

B

Barry Bardoe 28:38

Threw me with that question, because it's, it's a good question, but I guess it's just do you want to have an individual worldview and be prepared to be wrong, and all of the stuff that goes with it, or do you just want to go along with what you're told to do? And if you had utter faith that every single aspect of policy and regulation and corporate interests, were all acting in your best interest. That would be fine. If you doubt that. You should start doing a bit of questioning. Yeah.

M

Molly Knight 29:12

Okay. So yeah. And I think what I see I certainly see a lot more people now. I call it awake because they're questioning what's going on. And certainly, the trust of governments is less than it used to be. We question their motives of why they do things now. So I guess that there's probably, I think a lot more people starting to wake up and question things. So is part of the strategy to manipulate people so they can, like unwittingly go and manipulate their own family. So you know, So we carry it on. We carry on whatever it is,

B

Barry Bardoe 30:08

It's I think, you know, who was it, Lenin, who coined the term "useful idiots". And in marketing, like in corporate marketing, if you can make someone go and do the marketing for you and not pay them, that's a better outcome. And a useful idiot idea is you create a mindset where people accept your values and assumptions, and then they go and do all the hard work for you. And that's why it's so hard to prove explicit connections with some of this stuff, because people are doing it for free off their own bat. And that's what to me is, you know, is quite incredible. And just to cover off on that thing with politicians before I would say that, you know, my experience of politicians is there's

undoubtedly some great ones out there that are in it for the right reasons. It is the hardest job on earth and you've got to be an expert at absolutely everything. You are reliant upon the people advising you and they do get it wrong. And I think now there's, you know, we expect our politicians to be perfect. And part of the thing they're dealing with is a feedback loop with social media where, you know, people are so hysterical about things and so unthinking, and in turn, politicians are put in a really tricky situation where they've got to be seen to be doing something. And I don't know, I think I think it all feeds, it's, it's reaching a sort of critical mass of all feeding off each other so quickly, that it's really, really hard to take the time you need to step back and go, this is good policy or, you know, this piece of research requires another week. because everything's turning over in such quick timings. Yeah, it's very confusing times. And

M

Molly Knight 31:53

it is a confusing timing right now. It's, I mean, we're in times that are changing. Every day, and we'll probably never quite go back to what we had before. Whether that's good or bad. We won't know until we move through it, but I think that this is the most confusing time I've certainly ever seen in my lifetime. And and it's quite unsettling, I guess is is a word. I would think what we're living through now and I think people are wanting directive they're wanting security, they want to know they'll be okay. And

B

Barry Bardoe 32:42

but that's not life is it

M

Molly Knight 32:45

not life, that's not life

B

Barry Bardoe 32:47

I think you make a really good point there that part of the problem. You see this on social media is people now have an almost, I mean, I was talking to my doctor the other day about all of this and he said, You know, people now you know, have this expectation. They'll be completely safe all the time. And everything's about managing risk. Like, you know, 400 people died in the last year in Victoria on the roads or something like that. Don't quote me on that, but a lot. And, you know, when you go on the roads, you are managing risk. Everything you do is about risk. And we'll all die and all those sorts of things. But I think now there's this expectation. And a lot of these, particularly corporate interests, really push this idea that, you know, we'll offer you complete assurance and

safety and you won't have to do anything, it can be lazy, and we'll take care of it all. That culture is a real problem. The other thing is disinformation. Now, if you really good information warfare, and you want to discredit people who are causing you trouble, you'll chuck disinformation in there that by association will make them look ridiculous. And that's the problem too a lot of people who as you put it as are sort of waking up and starting to also go well if I have been lied to about this, then we've been lied to about every other thing. good information warfare has quite a lot of truth in it. So you have truth, but then you put yourself agendas in amongst the truth. So discerning all of that, you know, I implore people to really critically think about what they're accepting during the waking up process as well.

M

Molly Knight 34:13

Hmm, it's really tricky. It's, it's really tricky, isn't it.

B

Barry Bardoe 34:18

Yeah, well there's some, if money's involved, if billions of dollars are involved, you can bet that somebody is pretty keen to continue making that kind of money. If something, you know, my experience, certainly is when people come up with complex conspiracies involving agencies from all these different countries. I, you know, I really, I can't buy into that because I know that I don't want to disparage any government agency, but it is complicated coordinating things on a much lower level, let alone that. And these days, as Edward Snowden showed, just some, you know, all you need is a memory stick and you lose security. So the more people got involved, the harder it is, so Have something really, really complicated that doesn't have any sort of real logical imperative is very, very difficult, I would imagine these days, but when there's billions of dollars involved, and you've got a really good marketing department and really good lawyers, you just keep at it and spend the money and reap the results I think

M

Molly Knight 35:20

Yes, and make people want what you're going to give them.

B

Barry Bardoe 35:24

Yeah, even if it's not good for them, and even if it makes no logical sense, and particularly get them fearful. Fear is a fantastic motivator and you know, once again, going to the present situation, people are beside themselves with fear and, you know, realistically for the average person, they don't need to be that fearful. By all means, do you know

whatever they perceive the right thing to be but you know, that they don't need to be beside themselves sick with fear. I know people now who are probably going to wind up very ill. Because moment by moment they're terrified of what's going on? Yeah.

M

Molly Knight 36:00

Yeah, I agree and quite paranoid with it they, you know, wiping their hands every second and yeah, it's some theories of great controller, I think. Yeah. Can I? Yeah. Yeah. Can I ask you, Barry? What are your thoughts on social media farms? What does that mean to you?

B

Barry Bardoe 36:26

Social media. I

M

Molly Knight 36:27

thought this is a question from a viewer social media farms. I have

B

Barry Bardoe 36:34

heard that I would need to clarify the terms. So I could guess what they mean. But I'd need a bit more information for it I think.

M

Molly Knight 36:42

Okay. No, well, I haven't heard of it, but social media farms. Okay. send another message. whoever sent that in. We'll see if we can clear it up.

B

Barry Bardoe 36:53

just clarify your terms of reference because I don't want to talk about something we're not 100% clear what you mean by that. Heard that expression, but yeah, get him to clarify. Okay. All right.

M

Molly Knight 37:05

Okay. Another one is are there any tips to empower us to discern the fake news or information from the truth? Well, that's what we've been talking about. Do you have any tips that would allow us more easily? To Yeah, what's true?



B

Barry Bardoe 37:24

I would. I think verification is the challenge of our times as Sharryl Attkisson said, it is the biggest challenge and in my book, which will be out soon, I will step you through it. It's not easy. I don't pretend as much. But the first step is to see if there is something to be gained from particular thing, particularly financial gain. If you get a bunch of people, like one of the big problems of our times is key opinion leaders. They are people who have authority, who stand to benefit from a particular thing who speak very highly of it in public again and again, because they are well credentialed and are smart people and well qualified, they are believed and I think as Tom Jefferson The Cochrane Collaboration wrote an article about it in the conversation a while back he said the problem is that they get undue influence and they form a, you know, relationship with marketing where their career benefits and then they say the thing that the market is wanting it builds upon itself. So if it's someone like you suspect of being like that it has personal gain, obviously, you need to question that. You need to go back to primary sources. People need to stop being lazy, they need to stop reading one sentence and jumping to conclusions, they need to look and see if something is clearly disinformation. You know, like if something is has no real point to it, other than to make an issue unnecessarily complex or it involves a theory that is unprovable. You know, put put your attention where you can actually establish facts. Don't just got the first four pages of first 12 entries on Google, you know, things like that, and it doesn't hurt to study a little bit of academic research techniques whilst realising that academia also has very, very high levels of self censorship, I suppose you could say diplomatically.

M

Molly Knight 39:13

Hmm, okay. Okay. All right. They're good tips. So, I just want to ask you about your book, when when would that be likely to come out? Because I'm finding this a very interesting topic and I don't know a lot about it personally. But I would certainly like to know more and be able to be a little more discerning in in how I make how I make not, well, yeah my beliefs or my my choices around what I'm hearing to find the truth. So tell me when is this book coming?

B

Barry Bardoe 39:54

I've finished the draft of it, and I was going to go through conventional publishing, but I've decided to do what about online because that's the spirit of the age. And yeah, I'm hoping the second, the last quarter of the year should be before the end of the year, hopefully if all things go to plan. And maybe we can catch up again and sort of talk about it when it is available. Yeah, that would be good enough. I've written it in a way where a completely non expert person can step through it, see the history of it, how it works, and then give

them a toolkit so that they can go away and have a chance.

M

Molly Knight 40:32

Yeah, I'd like a chance. I definitely like a chance because this sounds like you're talking about from the 1930s. I mean, this isn't new. This is something that's obviously being used well, close to 100 years to manipulate the populace. Really.

B

Barry Bardoe 40:49

I would suggest you that 5000 years ago, someone was writing on a papyrus that Rameses the Second is not a god. This stuff's been going on a very long time. And like I said, you know that National Socialists in Germany, they got the accused of British propaganda in world war one and this this instances of propaganda throughout history. The difference now is you've got a deluge of information from so many different sources. And you've got people who have spent a lot of time studying the neuroscience behind it. So it's much more nuanced. It's much more clever. It's much more ambient.

M

Molly Knight 41:23

Okay, okay. Yeah. All right. Barry, I've just had information from this person that said, the farms are a number of fake social media accounts promoting an agenda by distributing fake news.

B

Barry Bardoe 41:40

Yeah, absolutely. And there's probably different terminology I might use for that, that falls under astroturfing. And I it's more than a thing I mean, one of my triumphs for a corporate client was getting a journalist to plagiarize some material that I put in an authoritative sounding website. pass it off as being authoritative material. And it was you know, it was just copy. And you see that happening all the time. And the more support is seen for a particular position from the more, you know, diverse range of platforms, the most important seems to have. So if you get on social media and you think everybody supports this particular thing you get on Google, you see, first 12 entries are all supporting it. 99% of people are likely to go well, this has ubiquitous support. It's really, you know, the battle for that first page on Google and social and social media is it is it is literally warfare. You know, it is people there's a lot of articles now people talking about the weaponization of social media and memes and depending on your perspective, you know, people either right or wrong, but there's there's trillions of fake grassroots things going on in social media, which even you know makes it even more complicated. So yeah, I thought that's

what they were getting at. Yeah. Yeah.

M

Molly Knight 43:06

It's it's enormously complex. And I don't know, I guess I feel a bit. Had. I've been had all these years.

B

Barry Bardoe 43:19

Yeah, absolutely. And the thing I'd exhort people to is, it's okay to be wrong. There's a few things where I look back, you know, maybe an article wrote 456 10 years ago, I'll go or I cringe, you know, I've changed my perspective. I've got new information. That's totally cool. I think what this what they exploit is people who are inflexible, like once you got someone on board, they just won't incorporate a new idea or new information. And that's a very interesting human foible. Can I just quickly talk about I reckon the best slogan I've heard for a long, long time, make America great again. Now that is brilliant because humans have a natural desire to romanticize the past, which is why folk music exists, you know, the past was always better. So he's not only tuned in on this American desire to be great, but he also tuned in on this whole romanticization of this mythical past that probably never existed in the first place. But that's, you know, regardless of what you think of the President, that is genius sloganeering. And corporate interests are incredibly good at these four or five letter words, slogans that just resonate with people, you know, and that becomes their belief and their worldview. That's, that's genius when you achieve something like that. Mm hmm.

M

Molly Knight 44:44

It is. Yeah. And I guess, just going back to the last point is that if you see like on Google, the first 12 points all say the same thing, the first twelve little sites and I think people want to be part of a tribe they want to be in the accepted the in group. So from that perspective, maybe it's even easier to manipulate or to get people to think in a certain way because they want to be accepted.

B

Barry Bardoe 45:19

Absolutely. And that's the in out group theory stuff. And people love to be part of that. You'll notice something like, regardless what you think of, you know, some of these topic areas, you will notice that often you'll hear a statistic like 97%, you know, agree with a particular thing. You hear that figure or high 90s a lot. Now the idea behind that is it shows an overwhelming majority support for something, but it gives a little pressure valve

for those few naughty people who disagree. So if someone comes up is well credentialed, we disagreed and go, Oh, they're just part of that tiny percentage and you've explained them away really quickly and easily while still holding the majority perspective. If you were to claim 100% the second someone to send to look stupid. So you notice a lot of the time on an issue. There'll be this claim of, you know, 90 plus percent of people.

M

Molly Knight 46:10

Yeah. I have seen that. Yeah, that's interesting.

B

Barry Bardoe 46:14

Quite deliberate though.

M

Molly Knight 46:16

deliberate? Yeah. manipulative? Yeah. Yeah. Okay. I'm sorry. Just another question coming in. Yeah. Well, again, just saying how they're so distressed that they feel that there's, you know, so much disinformation out there that they've not necessarily made a good choice around their stance. So but you know, you said you can be wrong, it's okay to be wrong, get new information and see where it sits for you. isn't it, look deeper. Dig deeper into things

B

Barry Bardoe 46:59

Yeah. I think that goes back to what we were talking about before that there is an expectation now that you'll be perfectly safe and you'll be perfectly protected all the time. And life is about challenges, mistakes, things not turning out the way you want. And you know someone, one of those, you know, very successful people, I forget who it was said that, you know, success is built upon multiple mistakes that you've learned from. So if you've got the humility to turn around and go on in the light of this better credentialed information from someone who's you know, not in the pay or whoever or what it whatever your perspective is, if you have the humility that then go this information is probably of higher quality than what I previously was buying into. That's all part of progressing but I don't think there's a single person in the world who would have a completely clean slate for perfect information because it's not out there anymore. And I don't know who would and I think even people at the top of corporations are getting disinformation from other corporations and you know, certainly out in, you know, the situation with, you know, groups like ISIS or the alt right or any of those. They're feeding so much disinformation in there and various governments are and it's an absolute quagmire. And I think I read

recently, I think, you know, the Pentagon's fielding 800 cyber attacks a week and a deluge of information that may or may not be reliable that they have to sift through, and that's overwhelming. So it is very, very hard. And I think people have to release this idea that they're going to have this completely pure, uncluttered worldview. It will be evolving all the time. And I think you have to have that attitude. It's always a work in progress.

M

Molly Knight 48:40

Mm hmm. Yeah. It's a good way to look at it. I've just got another question. Have you heard of nesara? I gesara, I'm not sure if that's how it's pronounced nesara / gesara. And is there any truth to it? Do you know what I'm talking about, because I haven't heard of it?

B

Barry Bardoe 49:02

Oh, no, no, you got me on that one. There's a lot of very arcane stuff out there I was in the company of someone who's hitting me with a lot of this stuff the other day. And part of me is thinking, Oh, this is disinformation, the other parts thinking I need to go and check on some of this stuff. I don't profess to be across, you know, every sort of issue on the internet, but I am, you know, very familiar with how you get an agenda accepted.

M

Molly Knight 49:29

Hmm, okay. Yeah, it's really interesting. I'd certainly like to learn more about it. That's for sure. It's quite fascinating. Um, okay, Barry, is there any last little message you can give to our viewers?

B

Barry Bardoe 49:44

Um, yeah, I suppose just to reiterate that last point. Don't give up. Embrace verification as much as you can, as difficult as that is now. Be, you know, rationally skeptical Whilst open minded, there's a lovely balance there. And you know, any advance in science is always, you know, trod that line. And be humble, you know? And if don't, I think there's a lot of people in the conspiracy theory world who it's almost like an arms race they become special because they propose something more outlandish than the next person. Don't be that guy. Be the person who actually goes well, perhaps this isn't right or this is and have that humility. And yeah, yeah, understand that the mainstream news is best described as news entertainment. So there will be truth in there. There'll be stuff that's inflamed. There'll be stuff that's editorial lots and lots of sport, you know. Remain remain open minded but critical.



Molly Knight 50:50

okay, remain open minded but critical. I like that. Thank you. Barry, thank you for joining us tonight. I really enjoyed the talk. And I hope we can do this again because I think you've got probably a lot more to share. And perhaps as we get closer to your book being available, we could we could have another discussion.



Barry Bardoe 51:09

Yeah, look, I'd love that. And I think as you say, there's so much to cover, that it would be really good to refer people to say look, this of, you know, here's this document that's written in very, very simple, easy to understand terms, it'll step you through it a little bit more, because there's so much more to cover. Having said that, just to finish, there's lots and lots of good stuff out there and, you know, just do a search for it, or information warfare and, you know, see what comes up and read about some of the tactics that are being used and you know, certainly the the corporate world that you know, is astonishing in terms of, particularly using predictive marketing and things like that, where you're using vast amounts of data to form predictive models of consumer behavior. That's the cutting edge. Knowing what people are going to do before they've actually decided to do it. It's incredible.



Molly Knight 51:57

scary, I think Okay, Barry, thank you so much. I truly appreciate your time and the information that you've shared with us. And I look forward to your book coming out.



Barry Bardoe 52:11

Okay, it's been a pleasure. Thank you.



Molly Knight 52:13

Thanks Barry good night. Bye