# Characterizing Information Diets of Social Media Users

**Juhi Kulshrestha**, Muhammad Bilal Zafar, Lisette Espin Noboa, Krishna P. Gummadi, Saptarshi Ghosh

Max Planck Institute for Software Systems
Germany

Max
Planck
Institute
for
Software Systems

# Media studies

What information is being produced?

What are people consuming?

Is the coverage biased?

How are these media orgs influencing them?

**Media studies**

What information is being produced?

What are people consuming?

Is the coverage biased?

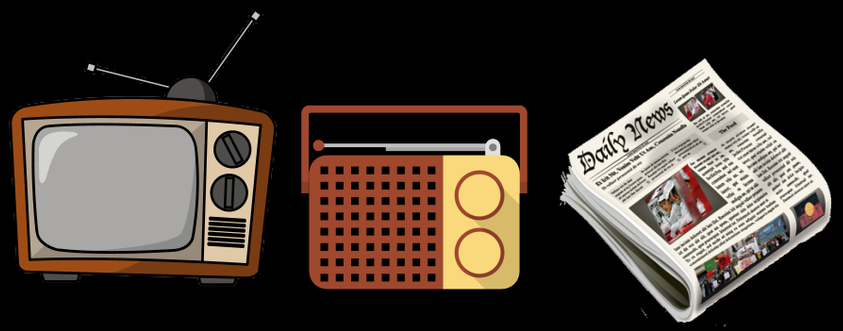
How are these channels influencing them?

# Media studies

Nearly half of the US internet users rely on Facebook to get political news rather than the local television.

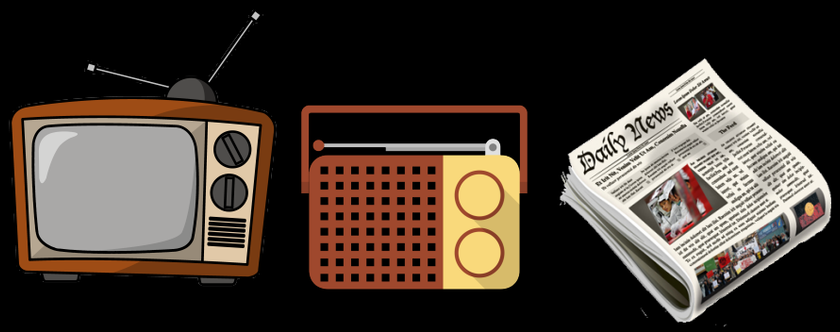
Pew Research Center

# Online social media




Few producers

Millions of users are producers & consumers




**Few producers**

**Team of editors**

**Millions of users are producers & consumers**

**Users post what they like**

**Few producers**

**Team of editors**

**Broadcast channels:**
Everyone receives the same information

**Millions of users are producers & consumers**

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**Few producers**

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Everyone receives the same information

**Millions of users are producers & consumers**

**Users post what they like**

**Personalized channels of information**

**Personalized recommendations**

# Information Diet

***Composition*** of information produced or consumed

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# Inferring Information Diets

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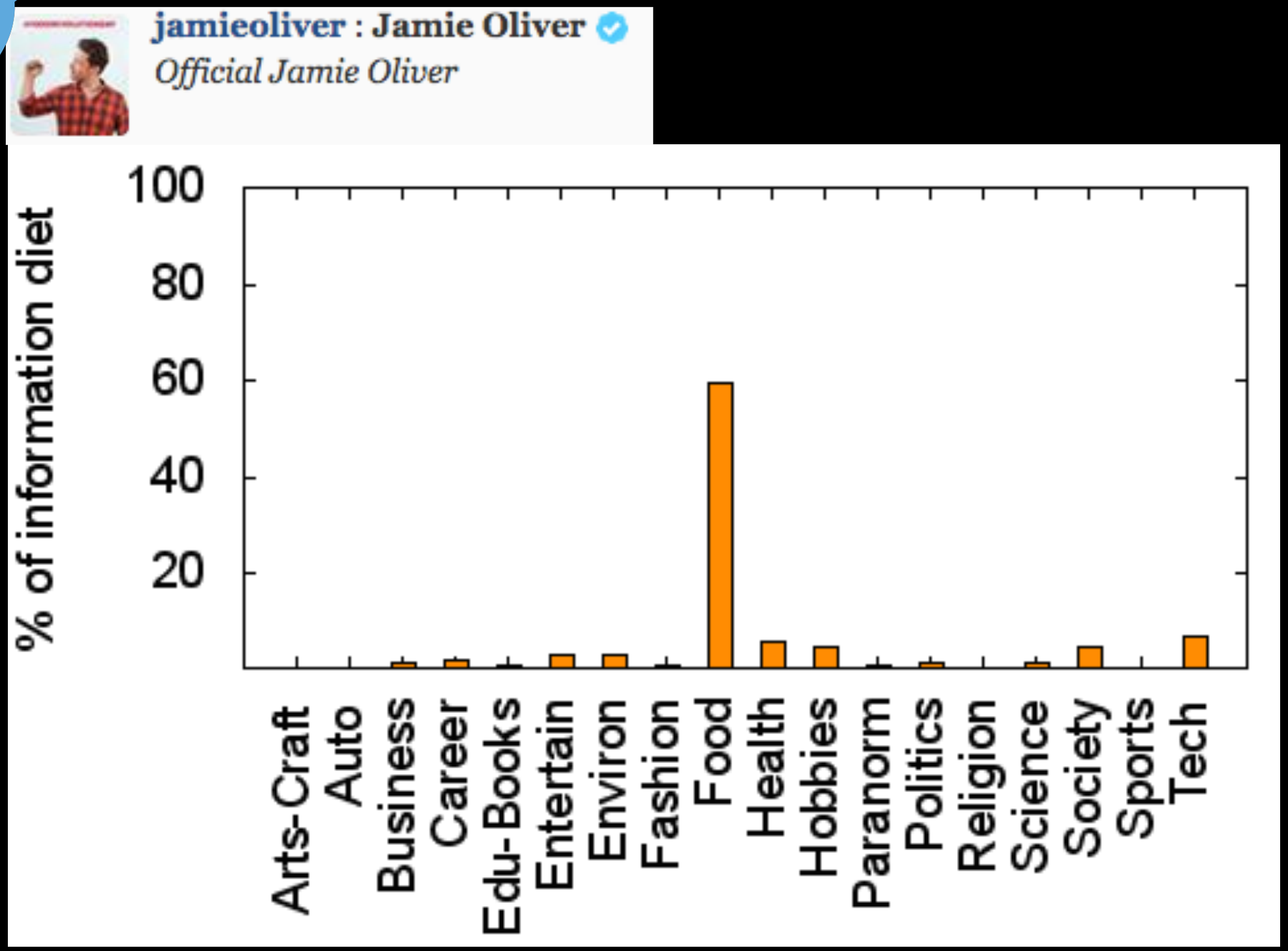

# What's in the paper?

**Production**

**Consumption**

**Recommendations**

## Production - Main Questions

- Do news organizations like NYTimes produce the same diet on social media as they do on broadcast mass media?

# Production : News orgs

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The New York Times

Late Edition

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MENAHEM KAHANA/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

Expecting the Unexpected

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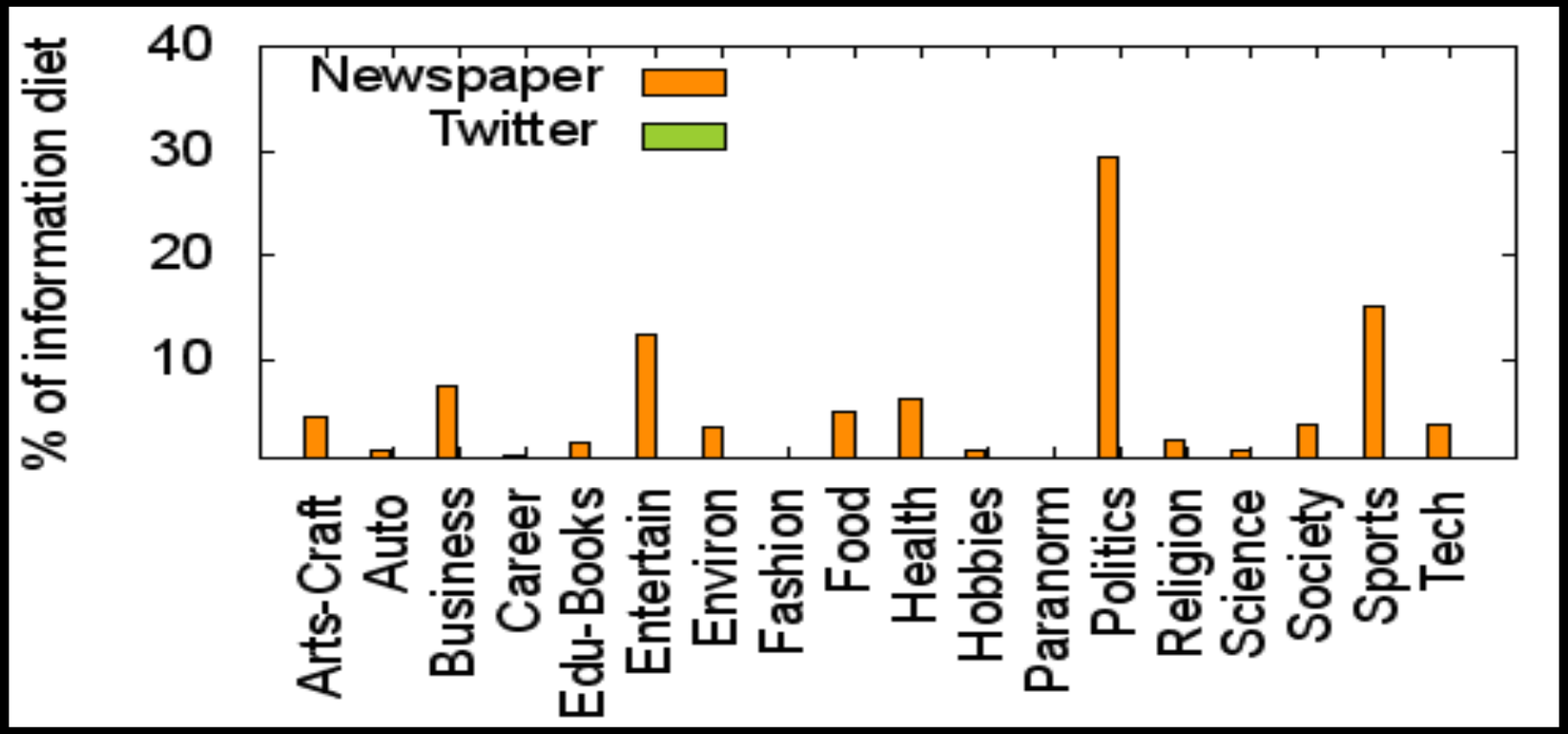

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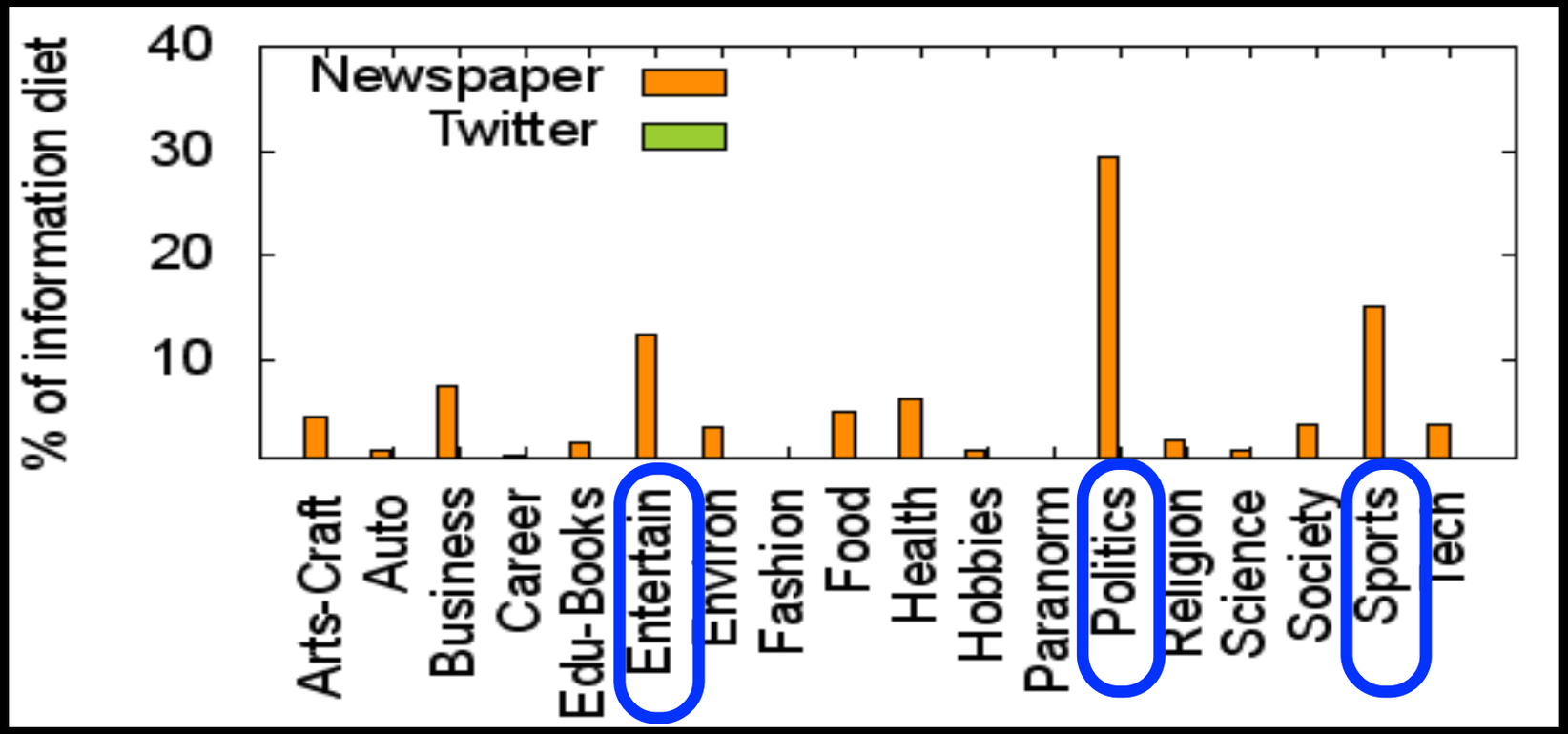

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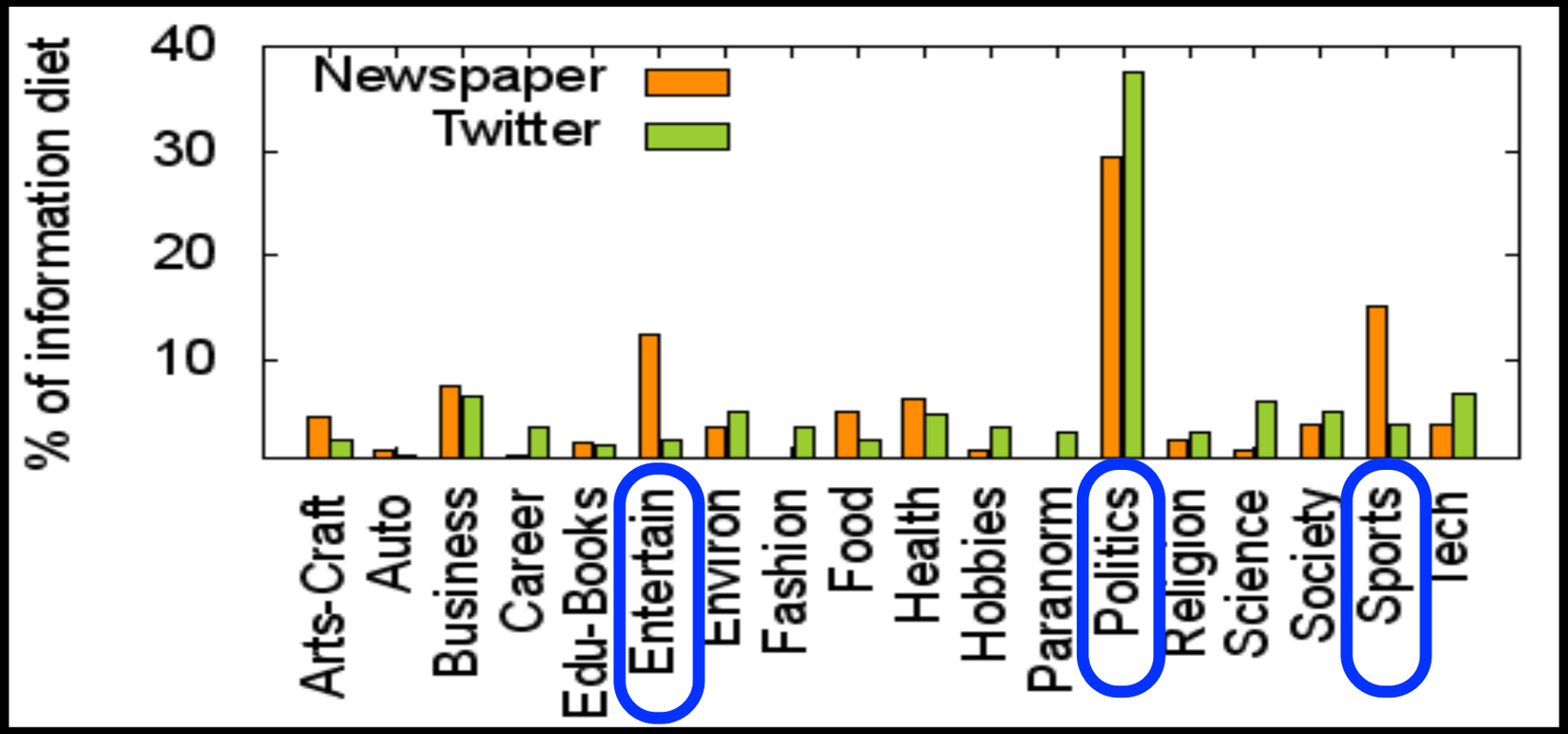

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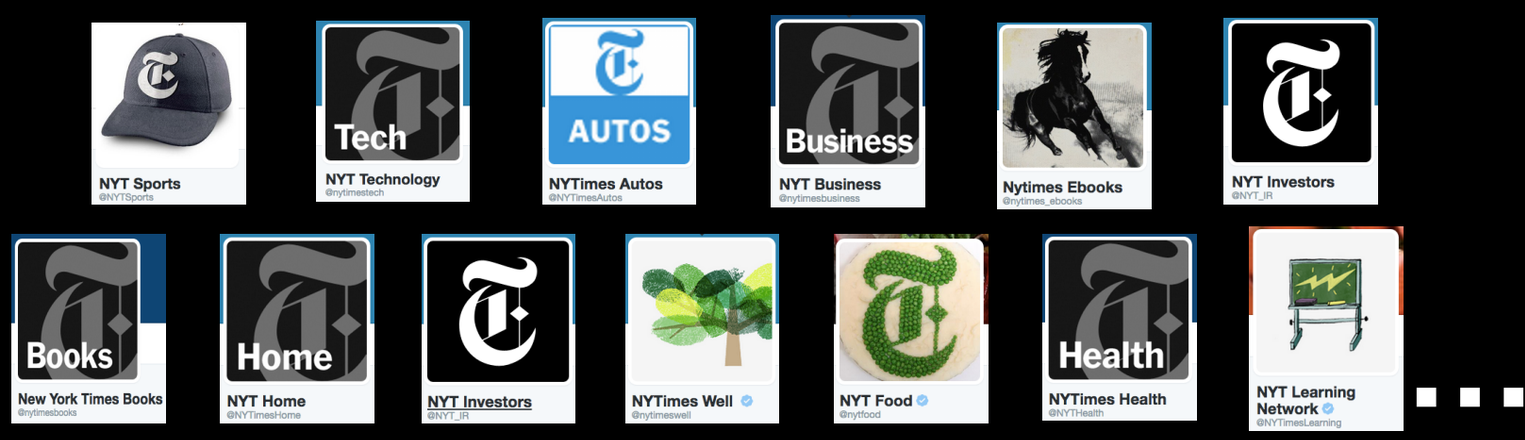

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**Multiple topic specific Twitter accounts**

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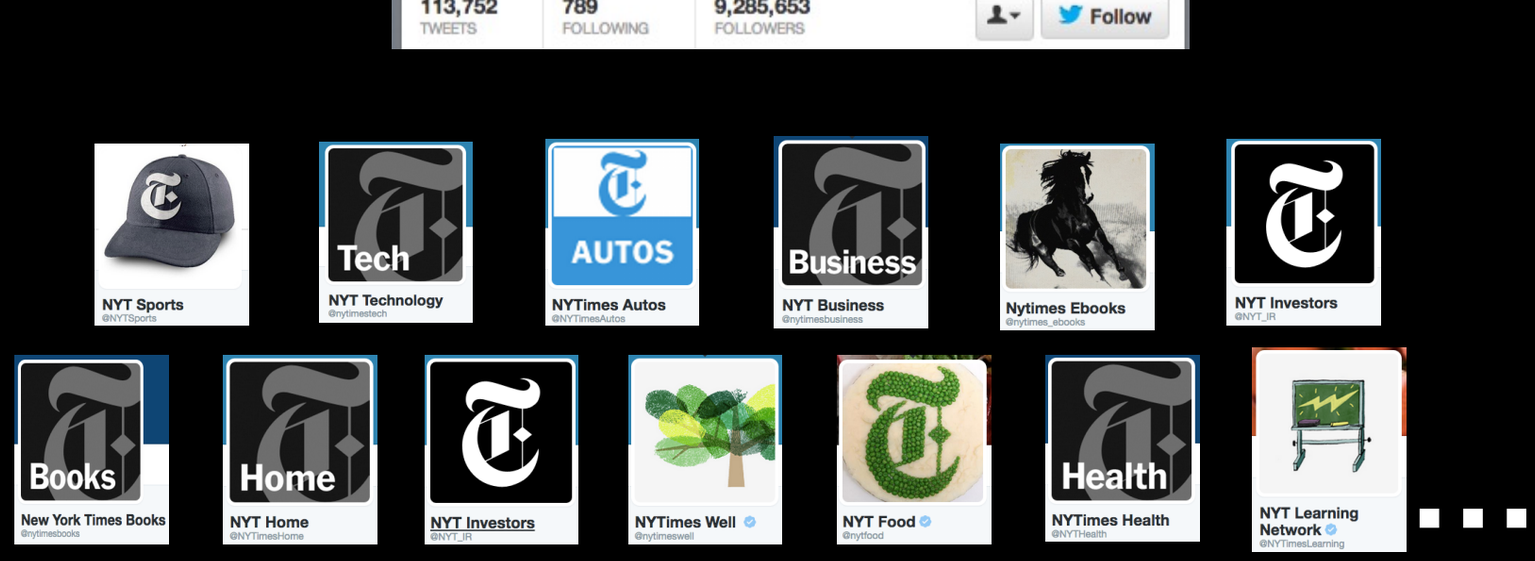
**Unbundling of information**




**Multiple topic specific Twitter accounts**

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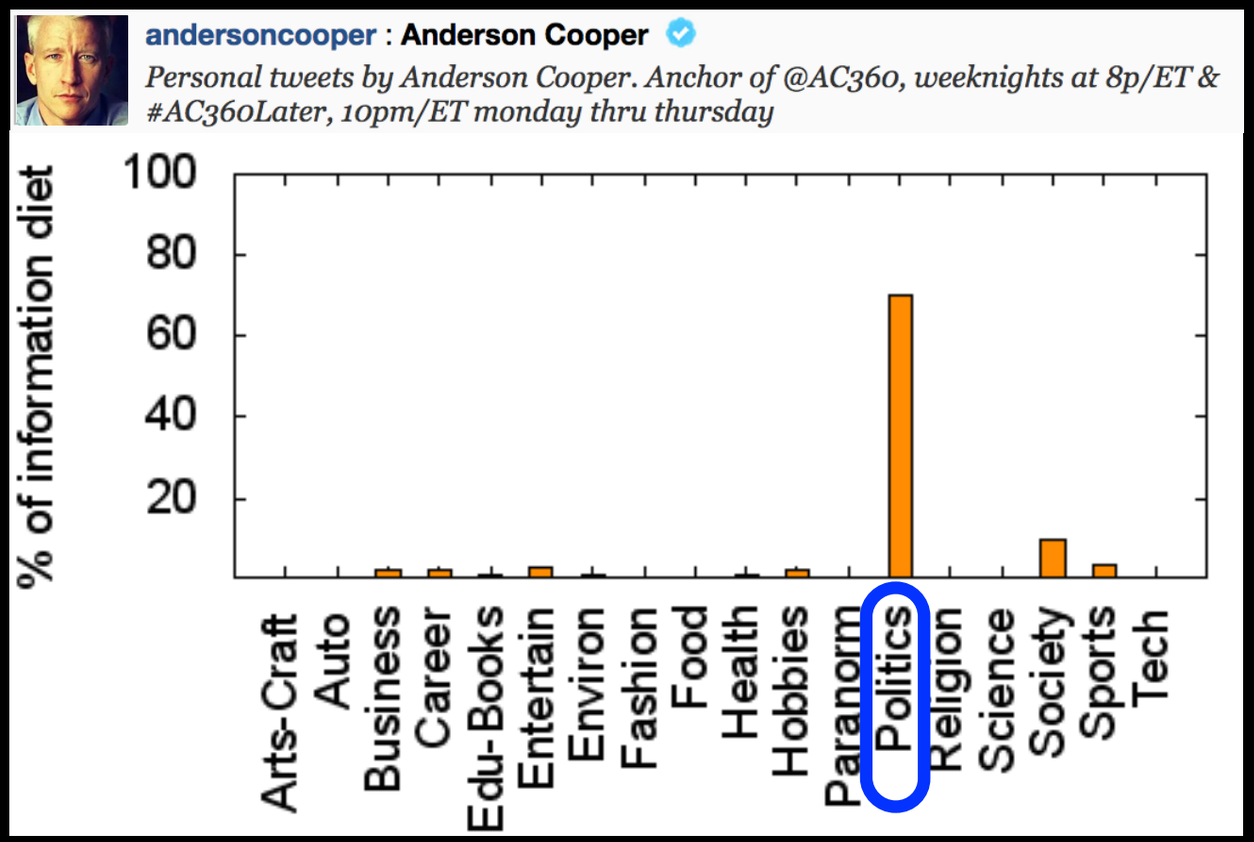
- What do the popular users on social media produce? Are they specialists or generalists?

# Diets of Popular Twitter users




**Anderson Cooper**

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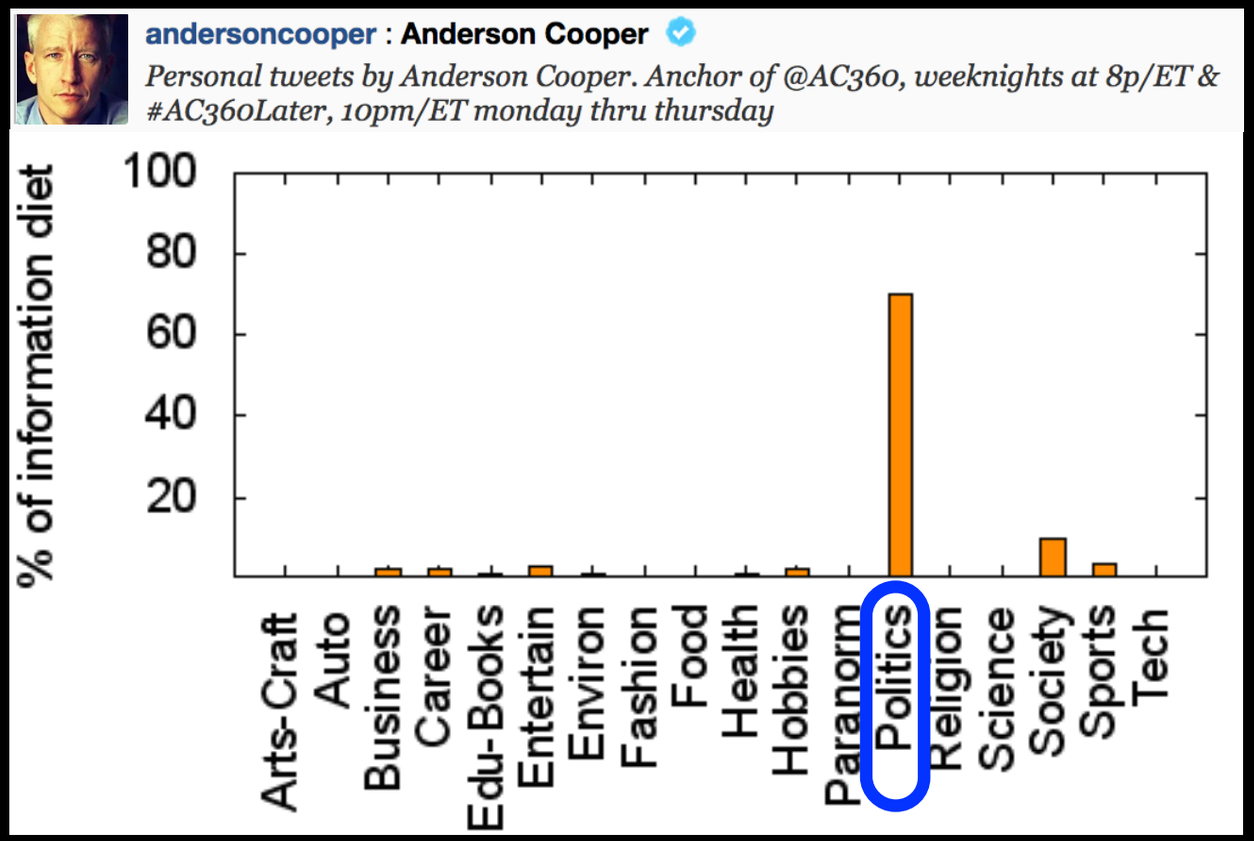


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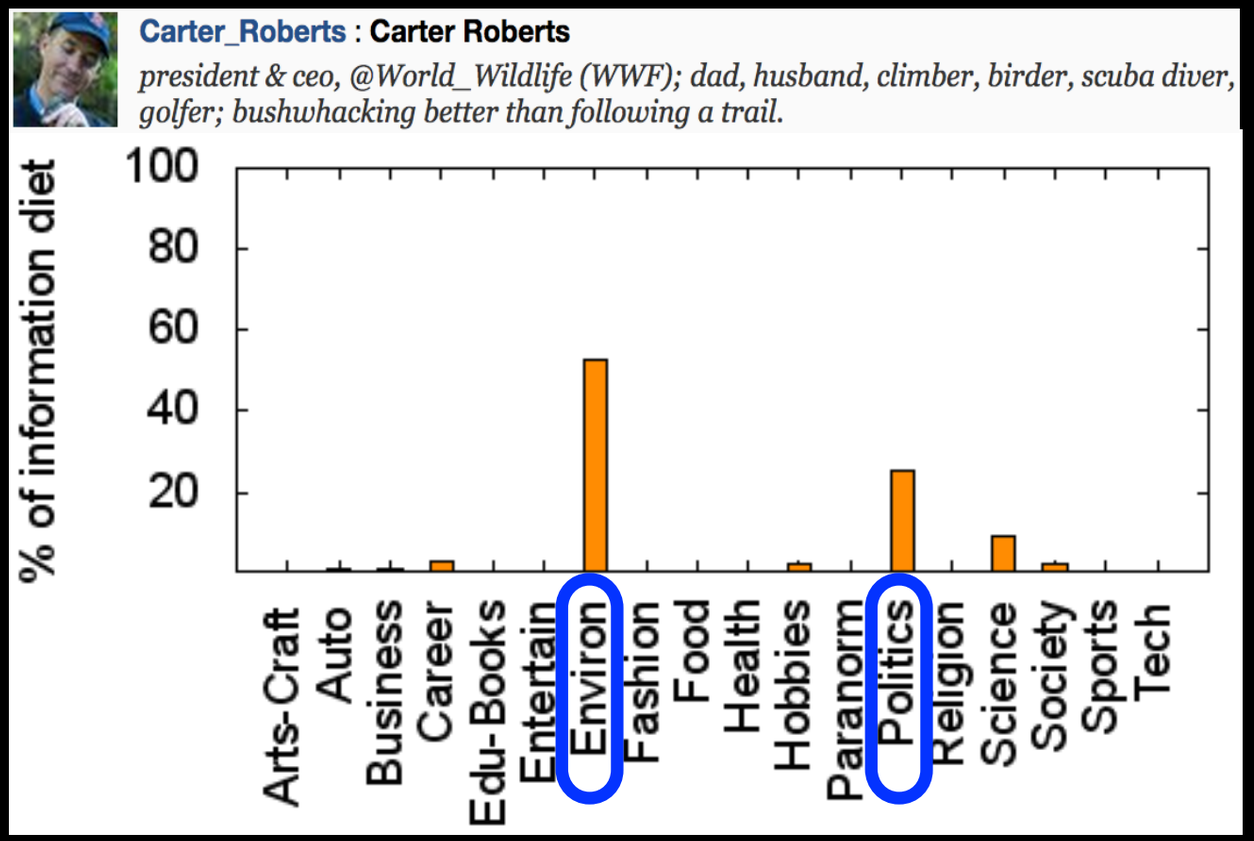


**Carter Roberts**

## Production - Takeaways

- Do news organizations like NYTimes produce the same diet on social media as they do on broadcast mass media?
  - Multiple accounts on Twitter - Unbundling of information
  - Very specialized production by each account
- What do the popular users on social media produce? Are they specialists or generalists?
  - Focus on one or two topics - specialized production

# What's in the paper?

**Production**

**Consumption**

**Recommendations**

## Consumption

- Do the social media users stitch together a balanced diet for themselves?

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- Do recommendations trap you in filter bubbles or do they add diversity?

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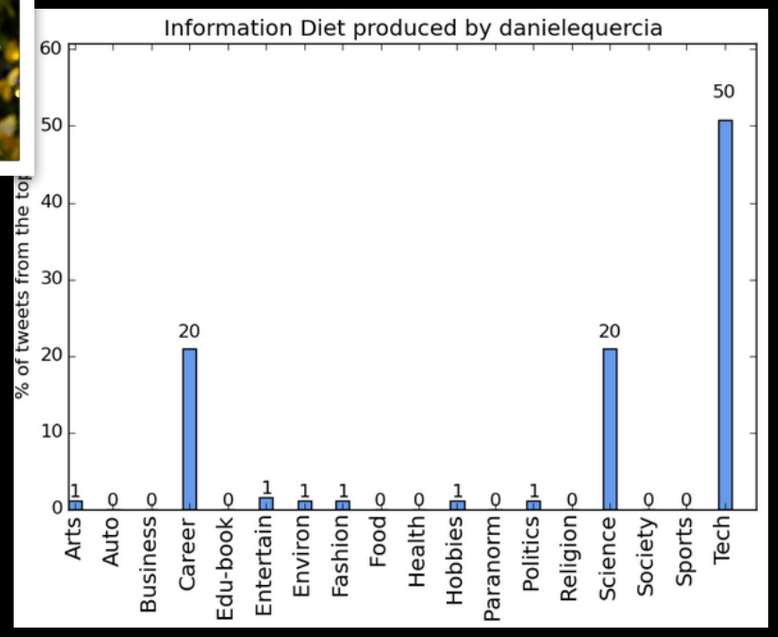
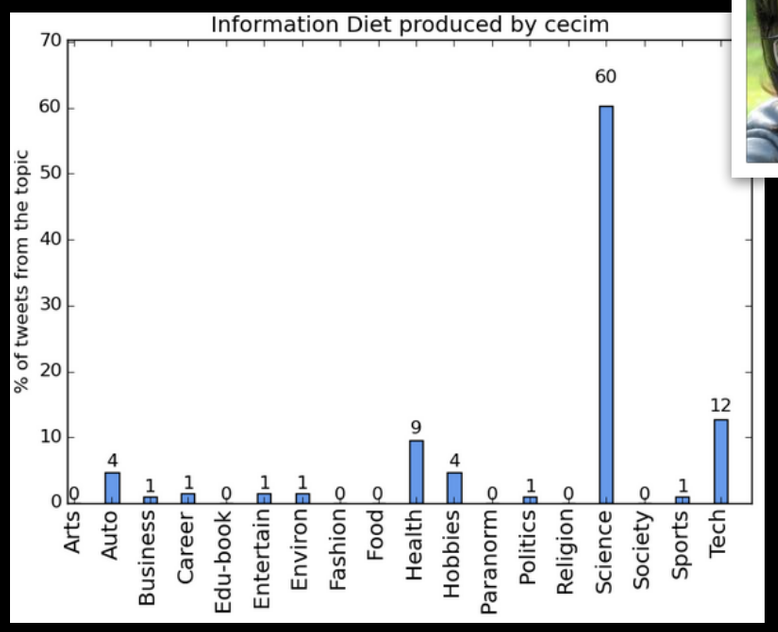
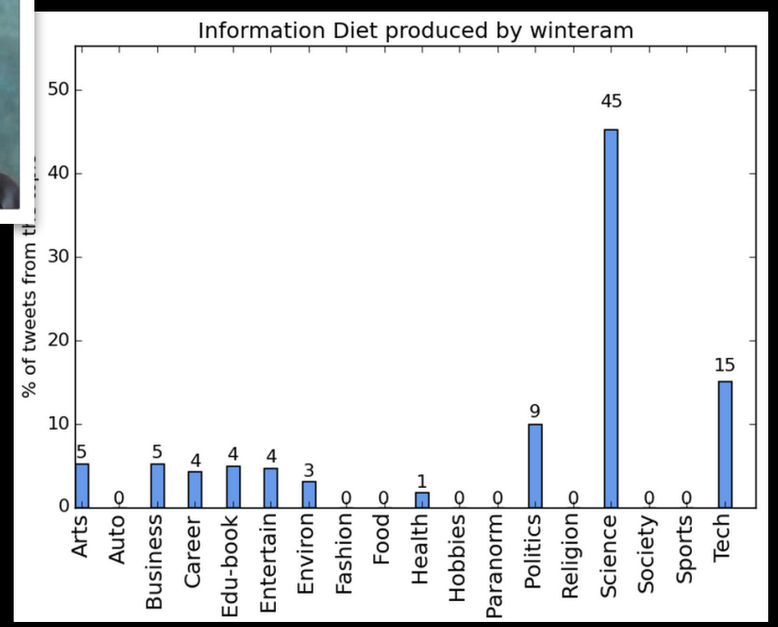
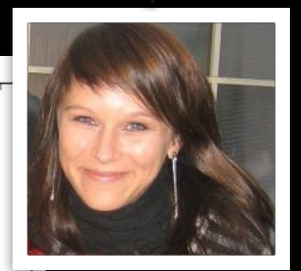
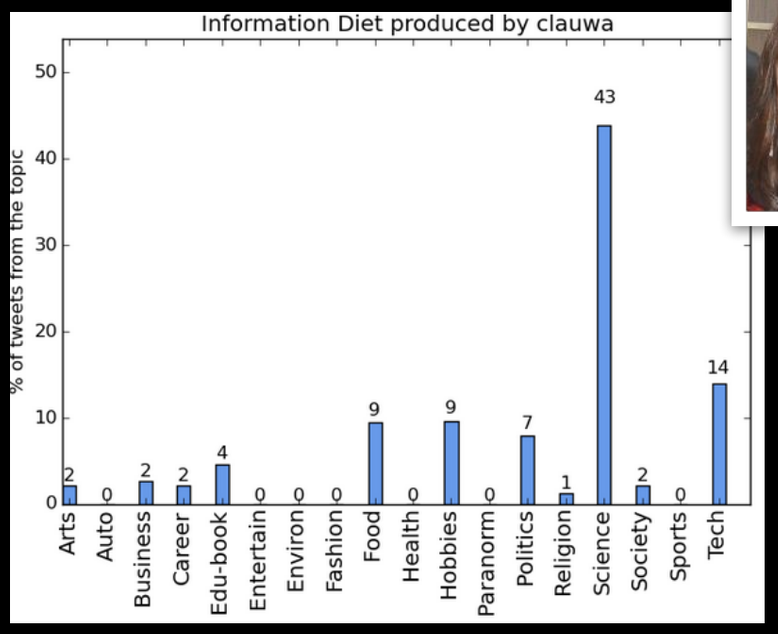
**Results on the poster!**







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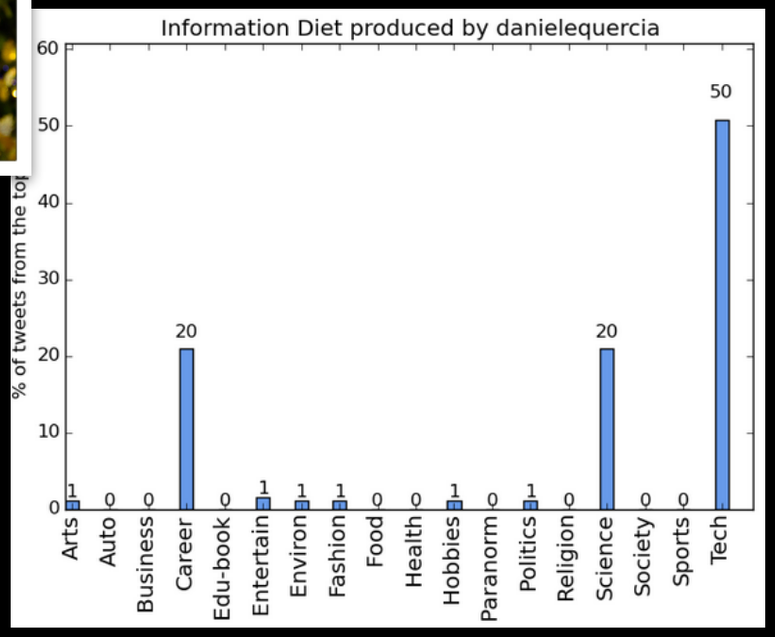

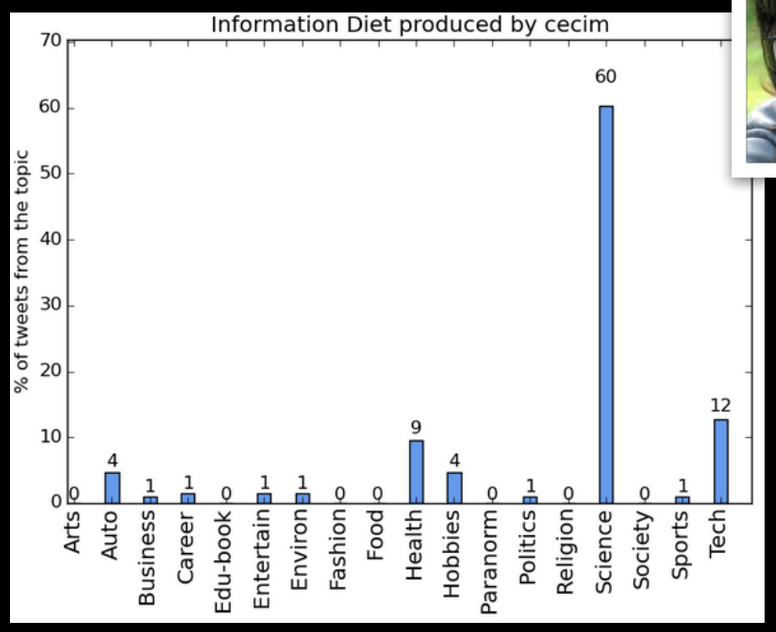

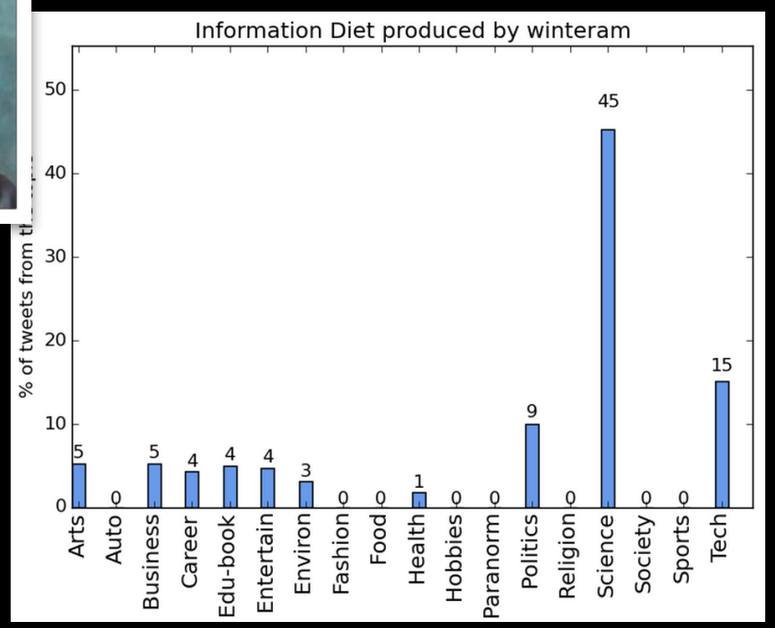


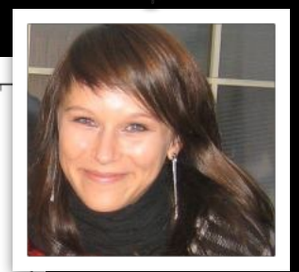

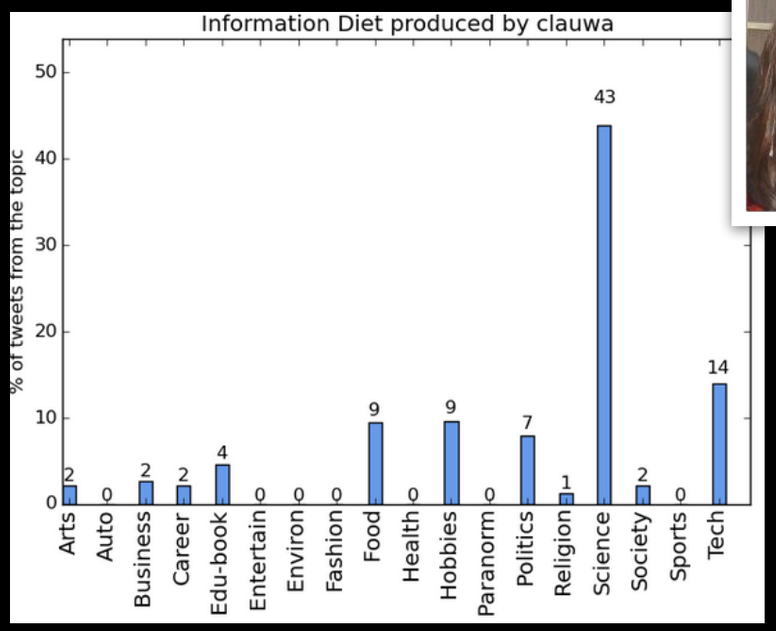


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# Thanks!