

# SOCIAL MEDIA AS STORYTELLER

WHAT SCIENCE COMMUNICATORS CAN  
LEARN FROM MEDIA'S MOST VIRAL VEHICLE

KIRK OLSON, SVP STRATEGY,  
WHY GROUP, HORIZON MEDIA

September 2019



# WHAT WE DID

- Social listening to gather data across social media platforms, blogs, forums, news sites, and anywhere else online conversation is happening
- Explored three recent and relevant topics grounded in science
  - Climate change
  - Gun violence and mental health
  - EHT black hole imaging

# THINGS TO KNOW

- Open web social listening generates a lot of numbers that must be analyzed with care
- Social listening technologies are sophisticated yet imperfect tools for interpreting human meaning
- Think of the results as quantitative data that direct us toward qualitative meaning and implications

# SOCIAL MEDIA IS ...

- Home of the “continuous scroll”
- Increasingly a visual medium
- A medium driven by “the people” more than professionals
- A medium where simple, succinct storytelling is a must

# STRONG STORIES HAVE ...

- Strong hooks
- Clear and meaningful stakes
- Heroes and villains
- An understood goal or objective
- Paths to resolution





**CLIMATE CHANGE**

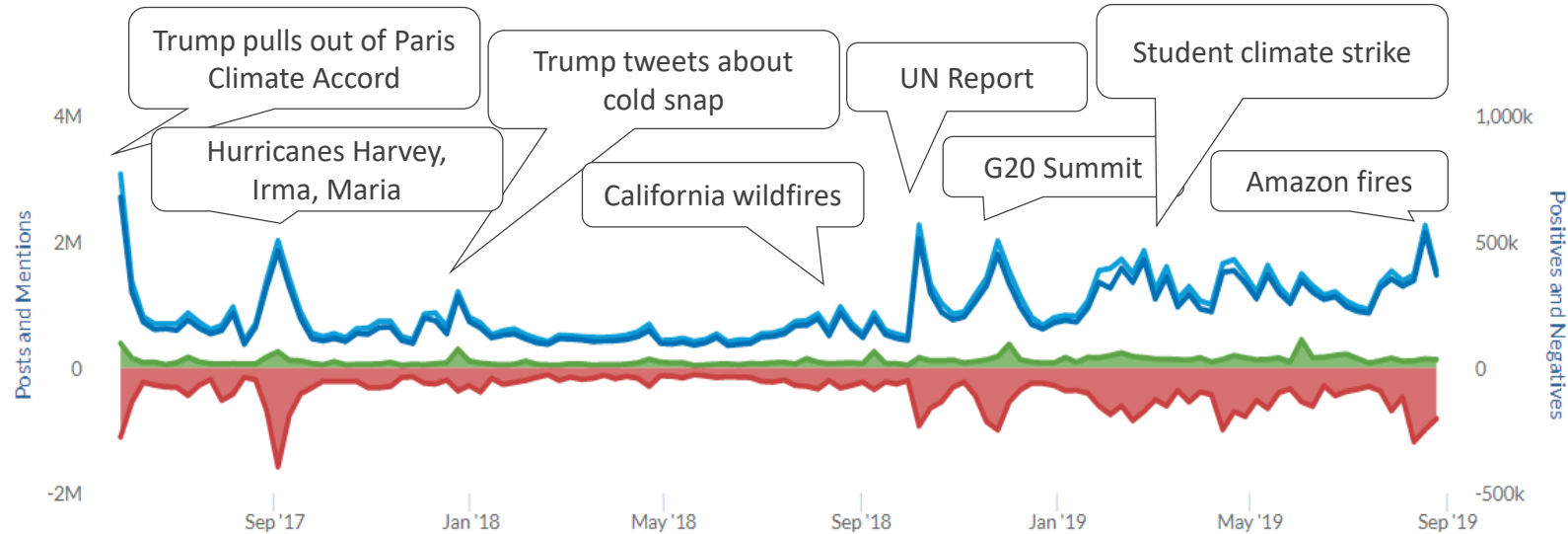
# SOCIAL MEDIA DISCUSSION OF CLIMATE CHANGE IS HEAVILY POLARIZED

## WHILE SCIENTISTS ARE PART OF IT, NON-SCIENTISTS ARE SHOUTING MORE LOUDLY

CONVERSATION VOLUME:

112,293,500 MENTIONS 6/2017 – 9/2019

TOP 10 DOMAINS



	82,379,490
<b>tumblr.</b>	15,543,300
<b>reddit</b>	7,156,230
<b>BREITBART</b>	283,251
<b>THE HILL</b>	179,103
	95,469*
<b>DAILY CALLER</b>	74,692
<b>USMessageBoard</b>	57,860
<b>Medium</b>	51,022
<b>topix</b>	47,077

ATTRIBUTES

EMOTIONS

BEHAVIORS

TOP 5 PROFESSIONS\*\*

make planet increasingly uninhabitable  
destroy planet  
cause climate change crisis  
make natural disaster worse  
result in death  
**hoax**  
update  
no political issue  
no partisan issue  
end racism  
kill people  
no problem  
natural disaster  
worsen wrong  
real thing  
solution  
important issue  
kill us  
public health  
solve racism  
education  
affect species  
unseasonably warm weather  
tackle climate change  
no threat  
cost  
harsh reality  
claim home  
no hoax  
claim life  
healthier choice  
invest  
effect  
concern  
cause  
effect  
no issue  
thanos  
catastrophic  
death of animal  
too expensive  
suffer from severe effect  
people outside of America

greatest mass extinction  
care about  
vulnerable threat  
worst  
danger  
overwhelm  
how scary  
important  
crisis  
scared  
fuck  
interest  
good thing  
right  
love  
suck  
great  
worry  
concerned  
scam  
enjoy  
proud  
natural  
bad  
like  
best  
pump  
alarm  
not blame  
joke  
problem  
natural disaster  
massive downside  
worst effect  
greatest challenge

man-made climate change  
existential threat  
fight against  
refuse  
threat  
deny  
stop  
avoid  
not cause  
not use  
blame  
catastrophic climate change  
global threat  
twin threat  
recommend  
release  
reject  
debate  
not stop  
victim  
ban  
need  
dismiss  
start  
want  
cancel  
sue  
address  
watch  
deserve  
attend  
cannot wait  
real threat  
not act on  
shift  
praise  
approve  
not want  
cannot wait  
real threat  
not act on  
shift  
praise  
approve

Professions	Posts ▾	Index
Creative Arts	41%	0.88
Science and Research	13%	2.46
Education	12%	1.43
Student	8%	1.03
Journalism	6%	1.2



# MANY POPULAR POSTS FOCUS ON STRONG POSITIONS AND POLEMICS

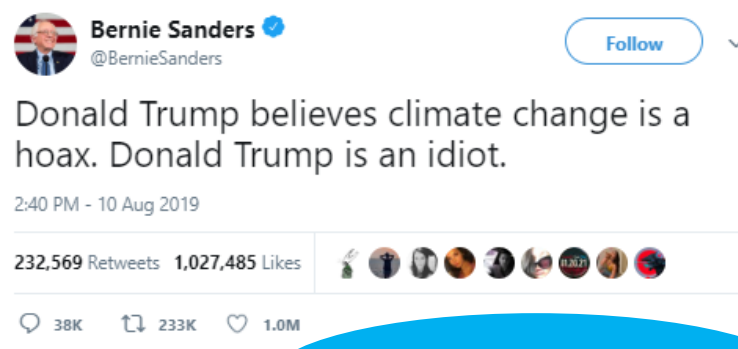
## A SIMPLE POST EMPHASIZING PATHS TO RESOLUTION GETS A HIGH SHARE RATE

TECH ENTREPRENEUR: 28 M Followers



IMPS = 209 M  
RT RATE = .8%

POLITICIAN: 9.6 M Followers



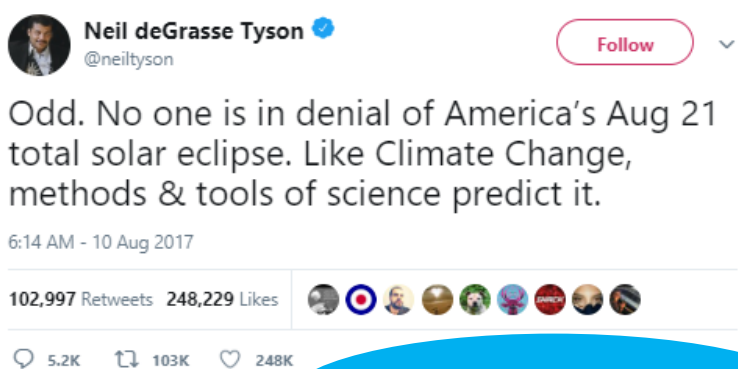
IMPS = 162 M  
RT RATE = 2.4%

UNSPECIFIED: 1,151 Followers



IMPS = 91.2 M  
RT RATE = 11,468%

ASTROPHYSICIST: 13.4 M Followers



IMPS = 97.4 M  
RT RATE = 0.8%

RAPPER: 2.8 M Followers



IMPS = 108 M  
RT RATE = 4.6%



# THE MOST SHARED IMAGES AND VIDEOS OFTEN GET GRAPHIC

## LESS INCENDIARY POSTS THAT FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS ALSO GET ATTENTION

UNSPECIFIED:

1,297 Followers



@jhw229

Follow

Polar bears are starting to practice cannibalism. Mothers are eating their own cubs because of drastic climate change which is resulting in no food to hunt, yet y'all worried about Khloe Kardashian being cheated on. The human race is sad



**IMPS = 83.6 M**  
**RT RATE = 13,355%**

6:48 PM - 3 Mar 2019

173,223 Retweets 250,658 Likes



UNSPECIFIED:

12 K Followers



Luc  
@ellkay\_

Follow

China is constructing a 'Forest City' that will eat its own toxic smog using one million plants & 40,000 trees to combat global warming. Wow



**IMPS = 76.9 M**  
**RT RATE = 460%**

4:32 AM - 27 Jul 2017

55,184 Retweets 134,214 Likes



ACTIVIST:

273 K Followers



StanceGrounded  
@SJPeace\_

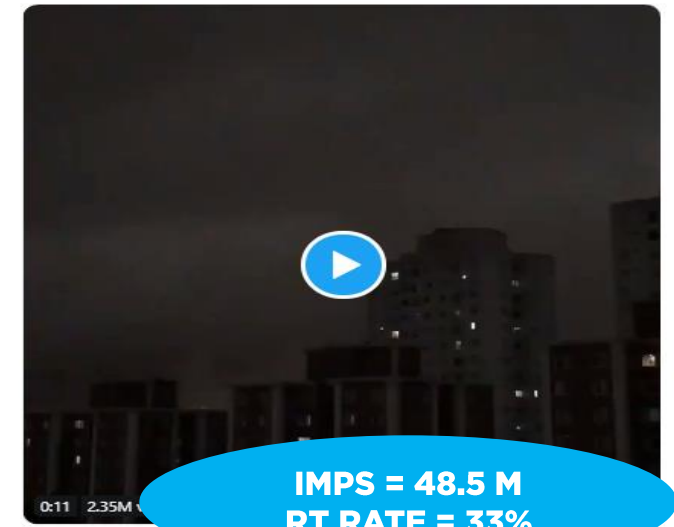
Follow

This is the sky of the biggest city in the country of Brazil, São Paulo at 2-3 P.M.

The smoke of the burning Amazon Rainforest has covered it entirely.

OUR PLANET IS DETERIORATING BEFORE OUR EYES AS A RESULT OF CLIMATE CHANGE!

THIS IS FRIGHTENING!



**IMPS = 48.5 M**  
**RT RATE = 33%**

9:22 AM - 20 Aug 2019


89,378 Retweets 121,427 Likes



# SCIENTIFIC ORGANIZATIONS ARE CATCHING ON

## A SIMPLE MESSAGE WITH CLEAR VISUALS GETS THE BEST REACH x SHARE RATE

THINK TANK: 97.8 K Followers

 **Richard Dawkins Foundation for Reason and Science** @rdfrs [Follow](#)

Climate change is real.  
Evolution is true.  
Vaccines save lives.

\ (•◡•) /  
---  
| |


2:30 AM - 18 Oct 2018

10,373 Retweets 28,410 Likes


323 10K 28K

IMPS = 2.7 M  
RT RATE = 11%

GOVERNMENT ORG: 85.1 K Followers

 **NOAA Climate.gov** @NOAAClimate [Follow](#)

Winter storms don't prove that global warming isn't happening.  
[climate.gov/news-features/](https://climate.gov/news-features/) ...



7:00 AM - 29 Jan 2019

15,533 Retweets 31,923 Likes

1.3K 16K 32K

IMPS = 144 M  
RT RATE = 18%

POLITICAL ACTION GROUP: 14.2 K Followers

 **314action** @314action [Follow](#)

Bill Nye's now the climate change guy, and he's FURIOUS.  
How do grown adults not realize this is a crisis?!? The planet's on FIRE and the HIGHEST atmospheric levels of CO2 in ALL of human existence were just detected!  
Demand action on climate change now:



Add Your Name  
[secure.314action.org](https://secure.314action.org)

3:30 PM - 4 Jun 2019

6,883 Retweets 18,574 Likes

2.7K 6.9K 19K

IMPS = 12.8 M  
RT RATE = 49%



# SCIENTISTS WHO KEEP IT SIMPLE GET THE MOST ATTENTION

## MAKING THE STAKES SIMPLE AND VISUAL INSPIRES THE MOST SHARING

SCIENTIST/INVENTOR: 59 K Followers



Dr. Shiva Ayyadurai, MIT PhD. Inv...  
@va\_shiva

Follow

Climate Change is the biggest hoax created to impose carbon tax to extract more money from the American Worker. Why? Corruption is SO BAD we can't afford 21st Century infrastructure. So they create a bogus threat so we pay more money & feel good about funding more corruption.

6:49 PM - 31 Jul 2019

4,959 Retweets 10,397 Likes



2.1K 5.0K 10K

IMPS = 47 M  
RT RATE = 8%

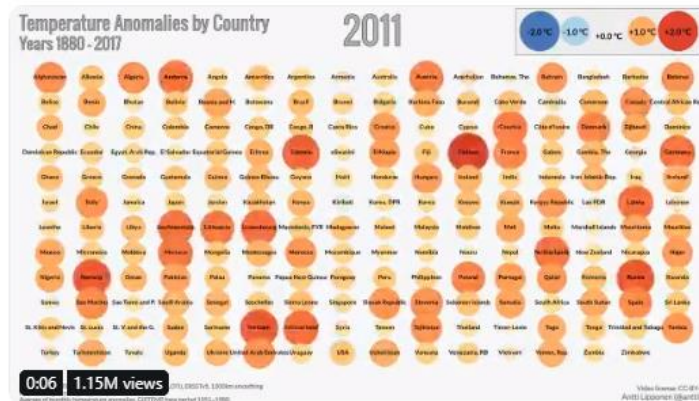
CLIMATE SCIENTIST: 9,785 Followers



Antti Lipponen  
@anttilip

Follow

#Temperature anomalies 1880-2017 by country 🌡️. No matter how you visualize it, it looks scary! #GISTEMP #dataviz #climatechange #globalwarming  
Download / watch hi-res 🎬:  
flic.kr/p/293M1oa



6:15 AM - 25 Aug 2018

19,759 Retweets 18,959 Likes



287 20K 19K

IMPS = 21.4 M  
RT RATE = 202%

PHYSICIST 13.6 K Followers

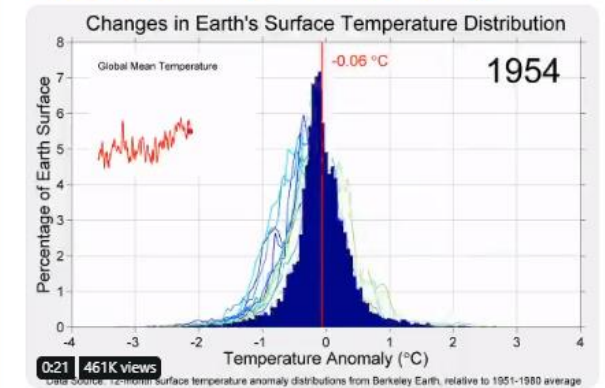


Robert Rohde  
@RARohde

Follow

Animation showing how the distribution over Earth's surface of annual average temperature anomalies has been shifting due to global warming since 1850.

#GlobalWarming #ClimateChange



4:00 AM - 29 Mar 2019

8,760 Retweets 12,686 Likes



280 8.8K 13K

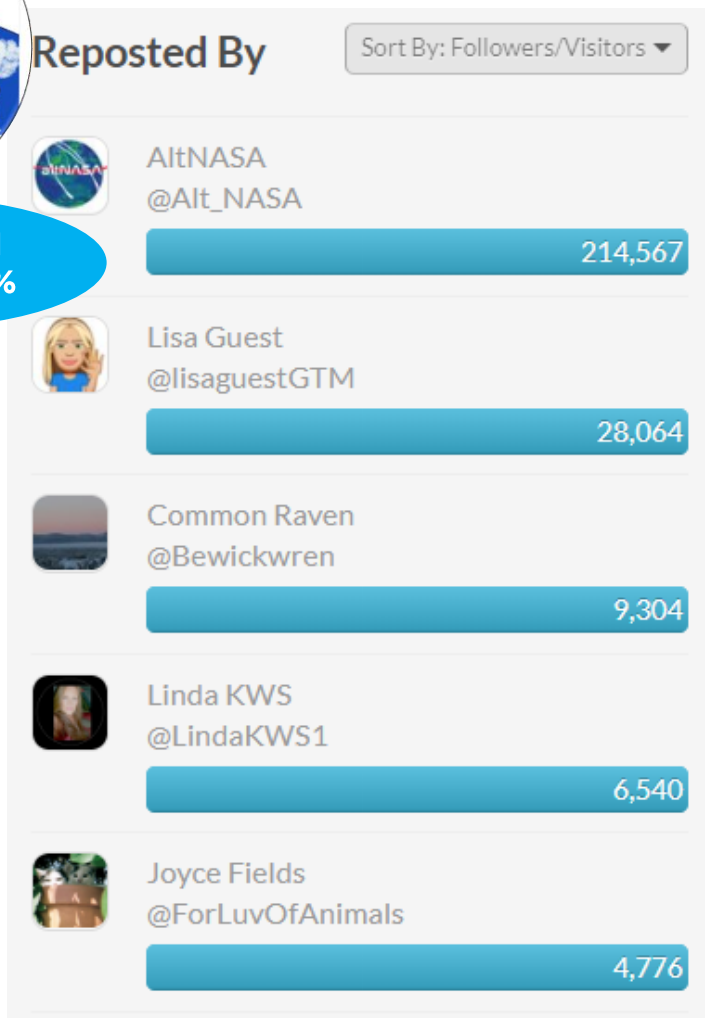
IMPS = 3.5 M  
RT RATE = 65%

# A BIG NEWS PICKUP GAVE A SUBSTANTIAL BOOST TO THE NOAA POST

## REACH STAYED HEAVILY CONCENTRATED IN THE USA



IMPS = 144 M  
RT RATE = 18%



### Federal agency after Trump tweet: Winter storms don't disprove climate change

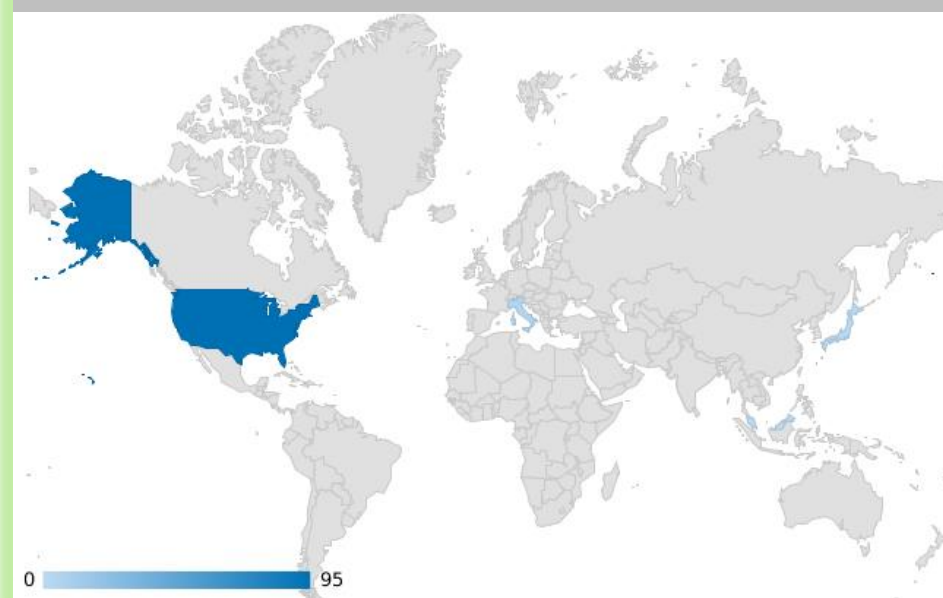
BY TIMOTHY CAMA - 01/29/19 12:27 PM EST

549 COMMENTS

3,572 SHARES



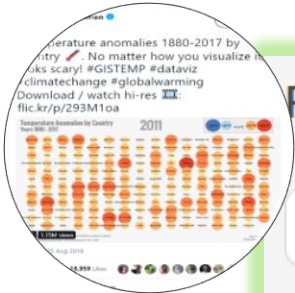
### GEOGRAPHICAL SPREAD: % OF POSTS



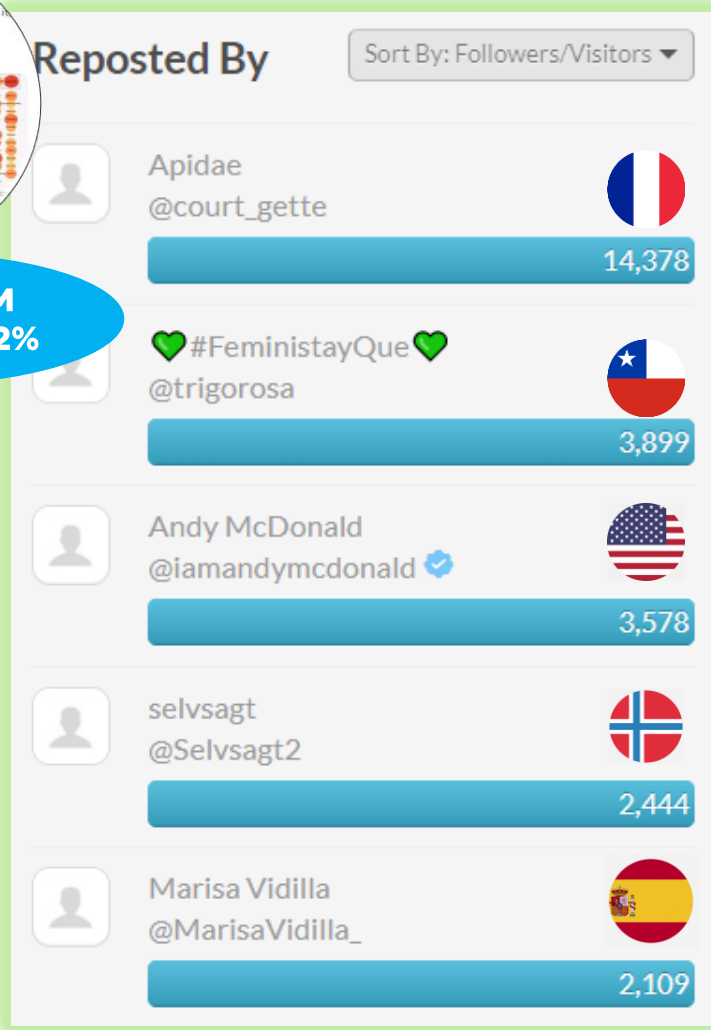


# THE POST FROM A FINNISH CLIMATE SCIENTIST GAINED GLOBAL TRACTION

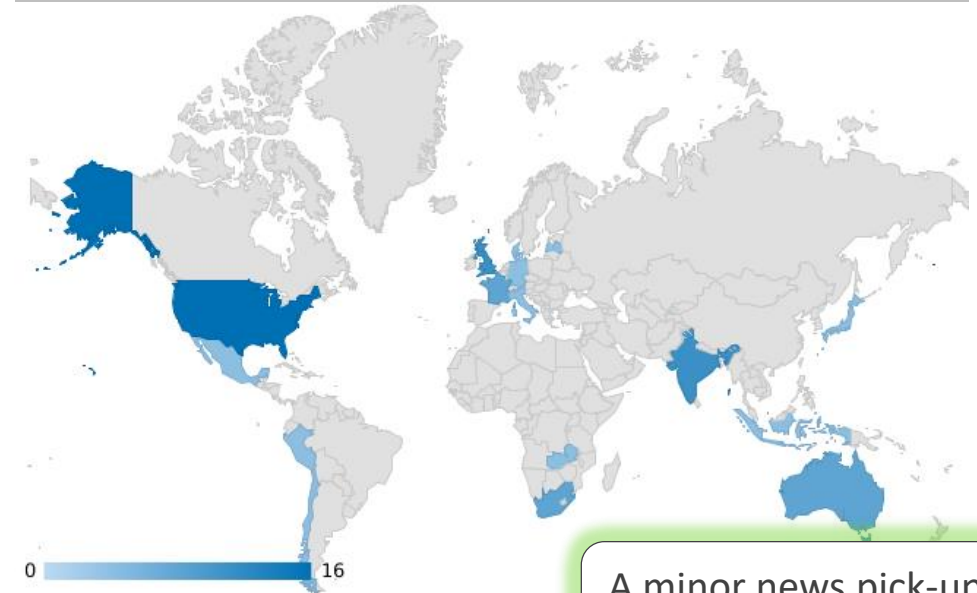
## ORDINARY PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES DID THE HEAVY LIFTING



IMPS = 21.4 M  
RT RATE = 202%



GEOGRAPHICAL SPREAD: % OF POSTS



A minor news pick-up gave it a small boost







# **GUN VIOLENCE & MENTAL HEALTH**

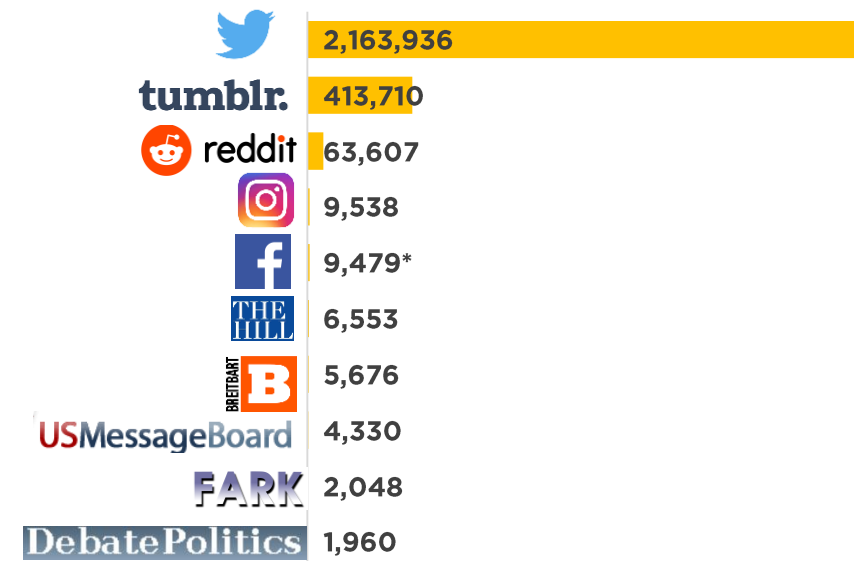
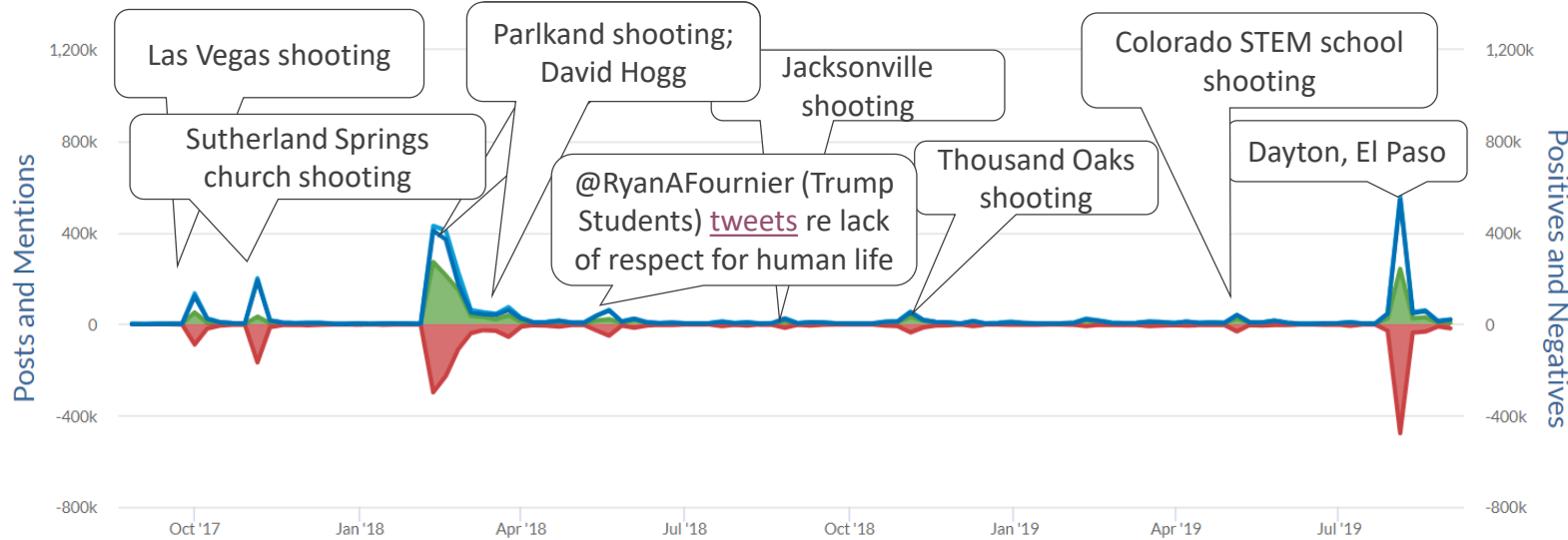


**DISCUSSION OF GUN VIOLENCE & MENTAL HEALTH FOLLOWS SAME PATTERNS**  
POLARIZATION IS EXTREME AND NON-SCIENTISTS DOMINATE

## CONVERSATION VOLUME:

3,238,944 MENTIONS 9/2017-8/2019

## TOP 10 DOMAINS

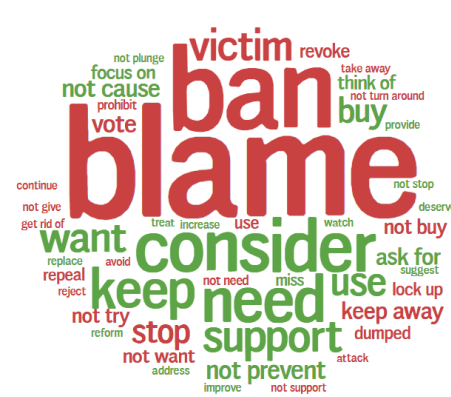


## ATTRIBUTES

## EMOTIONS

## BEHAVIORS

## TOP 5 PROFESSIONS\*\*





Professions	Posts ▾	Index
Creative Arts	45%	0.98
Education	13%	1.46
Student	8%	0.97
Science and Research	8%	1.45
Health and Medicine	6%	2.09

# POPULAR POSTS ARE EVEN MORE STRIDENT AND POLARIZED

## CREDENTIALS PLUS PERSONAL EMOTION GOT A STRONG REACH x SHARE RATE

ARTIST: 398.3K Followers

 **jaboukie?**   
@jaboukie

us: better gun control  
gov: this is a mental health issue  
us: better mental health care  
gov:  
us: ???  
\*two mass shootings later\*  
gov: hey sorry i was in the shower

2:48 PM · Nov 6, 2017 · Twitter for iPhone

48.1K Retweets 163.2K Likes

**IMPS = 33 M**  
**RT RATE = 12%**

AIRMAN: 1,144 Followers

 **tocci**  
@TAYLORTOCCI

It's a gun CONTROL, not a gun BAN. you can keep your pink glock with camo trim after passing multiple background checks and a mental health evaluation, so calm your country ass down Sydney

 **Sydney**  @SydManning15 · Feb 14, 2018  
Aren't drugs illegal? Don't people still find a way to get them? Isn't drinking under the age of 21 still illegal? Do people still find a way to get alcohol?? TAKING GUNS AWAY IS NOT GOING TO STOP SOMEONE FROM KILLING. It is not the guns people IT IS THE SHOOTER!!!!  
[Show this thread](#)

11:06 PM · Feb 17, 2018 from Hampton, VA · Twitter

38.5K Retweets 102.1K Likes

**IMPS = 31 M**  
**RT RATE = 3,365%**


PRESIDENT: 63.8 M Followers

 **Donald J. Trump**   
@realDonaldTrump


I will be strongly pushing Comprehensive Background Checks with an emphasis on Mental Health. Raise age to 21 and end sale of Bump Stocks! Congress is in a mood to finally do something on this issue - I hope!

8:13 AM · Feb 22, 2018 · Twitter for iPhone

33.7K Retweets 175.9K Likes



 **Denise** @walk2free · May 8, 2018  
Replying to @realDonaldTrump and @Alyssa\_Milano  
You gonna raise military entry age to 21 too? If they can go to war at 18 why can't they buy a personal firearm at 18? Makes zero sense.  
[#2A](#) [#ShallNotBelInfringed](#)

49 15 167



 **Jimmy Rickards** @rickards\_james · Feb 27, 2018  
Replying to @realDonaldTrump  
Raising the age to 21 is not a good idea. That's going to be a big negative impact on the law abiding hunting community

**IMPS = 548.8 M**  
**RT RATE = 5%**

PSYCHOLOGIST: 41.4K Followers

 **Nelba Márquez-Greene, LMFT**   
@Nelba\_MG

Mental illness is global. Mass shootings are American. Signed, a licensed mental health clinician and bereaved parent.

 **Tomi Lahren**  @TomiLahren · Feb 14, 2018  
Can the Left let the families grieve for even 24 hours before they push their anti-gun and anti-gunowner agenda? My goodness. This isn't about a gun it's about another lunatic. [#FloridaShooting](#)

4:35 AM · Feb 15, 2018 · Twitter for iPhone

35.1K Retweets 111.9K Likes

**IMPS = 43.4 M**  
**RT RATE = 84.7%**

ARTIST: 241K Followers

 **Mrs. Betty Bowers**  
@BettyBowers

USA: It's a mental health issue.

WORLD: We have those. We don't have mass shootings.

USA: Then it's a video game issue.

WORLD: We have those. We don't have mass shootings.

USA: It's very complex.

WORLD: No, it's gun laws.

USA: Prayer in school?

WORLD: God, you're stupid.

6:23 PM · Aug 4, 2019 · Twitter Web App

32.4K Retweets 103.8K Likes

**IMPS = 30 M**  
**RT RATE = 13%**



# POLARIZING COMMENTARY INSPIRES LIMITED SHARING

## ONE-SIDED APPEALS LEAD TO CIRCUMSCRIBED AMPLIFICATION IN PEOPLES' "BUBBLES"

POLITICIAN:

783K Followers



Rep. Joe Kennedy III  
@RepJoeKennedy

On May 4, 2017, all of these men gleefully celebrated passing a bill that would have taken mental health care from millions of Americans. Today, these same men blamed mental illness for gun violence.



IMPS = 77 M  
RT RATE = 9%

AUTHOR:

158.5K Followers



Andrew Pollack  
@AndrewPollackFL

Kids walk out of the STEM vigil because it was politicized by Democrats.

These students know the gun control debate is BS and mental health is the real issue.

I am proud of these kids for realizing the right issues!  
#FixIt



12:24 PM · May 9, 2019 · Twitter for iPhone

12.8K Retweets 38.5K Likes

IMPS = 29 M  
RT RATE = 8%

JOURNALIST:

786K Followers



David Frum  
@davidfrum

Mental illness, not uniquely American.  
Male sexual entitlement, not uniquely American.  
Schools with doors, not uniquely American.  
Regularly recurring mass shootings OTOH ...  
Yes, it's the guns. Me yesterday in @TheAtlantic



It's the Guns

The outrage after Parkland set off a moral reckoning and awakening—there's a simple explanation for school shootings.  
theatlantic.com

8:22 AM · May 20, 2018 · TweetDeck

9.4K Retweets 24.7K Likes

IMPS = 48.5 M  
RT RATE = 1%

# SCIENTIFIC ORGS AVOID POLARIZING RHETORIC, BUT TO WEAK EFFECT

## PULL QUOTES SHARE LIMITED FACTS AND MAKE PEOPLE CLICK THROUGH

MEDICAL ASSOCIATION: 137 K Followers



American Psychological Association  
@APA

"Routinely blaming mass shootings on mental illness is unfounded & stigmatizing. Research has shown that only a very small percentage of violent acts are committed by people who are diagnosed with, or in treatment for, mental illness."

American Psychological Association @APA · Aug 4

As our nation tries to process the unthinkable yet again, it is clearer than ever that we are facing a public health crisis of gun violence & we must focus on finding evidence-based solutions to address it.

Full statement, APA President @TigerBingham: [on.apa.org/2KrWr2J](https://on.apa.org/2KrWr2J)



10:45 AM · Aug 5, 2019 · Twitter Web App

1.2K Retweets 1.6K Likes

IMPS = 1.6M  
RT RATE = 0.1%

HOSPITAL: 440 K Followers



JHU Public Health  
@JohnsHopkinsSPH

"Mental illness is a strong risk factor for firearm suicide, which accounts for the majority of gun deaths."



Perspective | Five myths about gun violence  
[washingtonpost.com](https://www.washingtonpost.com)

10:11 AM · Oct 15, 2017 · HeyOrca

28 Retweets 24 Likes



Play Hockey Big 🏒🏆 @a21beec6ae7f450 · Oct 15, 2017

Replying to @JohnsHopkinsSPH  
And has anyone considered our country's mental health since 45 took office??

IMPS = 1.3 M  
RT RATE = <1%

MEDICAL ASSOCIATION: 695 M Followers



AMA  
@AmerMedicalAssn

"So that everyone is clear: Mass shootings do not equate to mental illness, do not equate to a problem with mental illness," @PatriceHarrisMD said Thursday at the annual @NABJ convention.



AMA President: Don't Equate Mental Illness With Mass Shootings  
The first African American female president of the American Medical Association says gun violence in the U.S. is a complex problem in need of a comprehensive ...  
[usnews.com](https://www.usnews.com)

11:00 AM · Aug 10, 2019 · Sprinklr

465 Retweets 734 Likes



Leah @Leelee5510412 · Aug 10

Replying to @AmerMedicalAssn @PatriceHarrisMD and @NABJ  
Couldn't disagree more.



Emily Brunner, MD @DrEmilyBrunner · Aug 10

Replying to @AmerMedicalAssn @PatriceHarrisMD and @NABJ  
Very glad the @ama is speaking out on behalf of those with mental health issues. Enough stigma is faced without being held responsible for hatred. @PatriceHarrisMD thank you.

IMPS = 2.9 M  
RT RATE = <1%



# SOCIAL SCIENTISTS GIVE TOO MUCH OR TOO LITTLE INFORMATION

## UNINSPIRING CHARTS AND FAMILIAR ARGUMENTS FAIL TO ENERGIZE

PSYCHOLOGIST: 261.8 K Followers



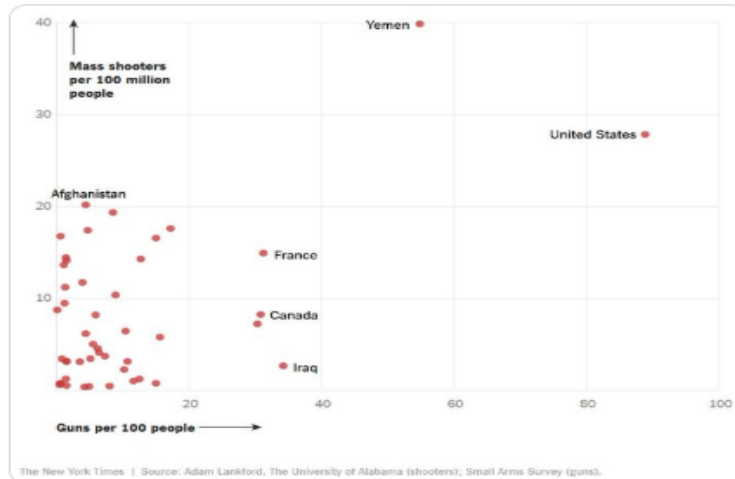
Adam Grant  
@AdamMGrant

The rate of mass shootings is not a function of mental health problems, video games, racial diversity, or violence and crime.

It's a function of access to guns.

And 130 studies across 10 countries show that gun safety legislation reduces deaths.

[nytimes.com/2017/11/07/wor...](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/07/wor...)



8:08 AM · Aug 5, 2019 · Twitter Web App

1.3K Retweets 2.7K Likes

IMPS = 1.6 M  
RT RATE = 0.5%

POLITICAL SCIENTIST: 436.9 K Followers



ian bremmer  
@ianbremmer

Other countries have video games.  
And economic inequality.  
And mental illness.  
And racism.

Only the US has the assault weapons. Start there.

9:16 PM · Aug 4, 2019 · Twitter for iPhone

1.1K Retweets 3.6K Likes

IMPS = 1.1 M  
RT RATE = <1%

POLITICAL SCIENTIST 197.2 K Followers



Brian Klaas  
@brianklaas

No other rich country other than the United States has routine mass shootings and such a staggeringly high number of gun deaths. This is a uniquely American problem. Other countries have video games and mental illness. It's the gun laws.



Opinion | The world thinks America's gun laws are crazy — and they're right  
Every other rich country on the planet has figured out how to reduce gun violence.  
[washingtonpost.com](https://www.washingtonpost.com)

7:44 PM · Aug 31, 2019 · Twitter for iPhone

532 Retweets 1.4K Likes

IMPS = 7.8 M  
RT RATE = <1%

# REACHING INFLUENCERS WITH LARGE FOLLOWER COUNTS HELPS APA POST FLOUNDERED, BUT A POST WITH CREDENTIALS + EMOTION CAUGHT ON



**IMPS = 1.6M**  
**RT RATE = 0.1%**

	JE Snowden @JESnowden ✓	26,635
	Matt Lanza @mattlanza ✓	19,474
	AP Psychology Review @Psych_Review	12,894
	Celia Llopis-Jepsen @Celia_LJ	8,348
	GP @GPWriter	6,600



**IMPS = 43.4 M**  
**RT RATE = 84.7%**

	Heather B. Armstrong @dooce ✓	1,500,863
	The Gay Burn Book @SouthernHomo	110,737
	Khary Penebaker @kharyp ✓	71,342
	Bombshell Boyfriend @BombshellBf	52,161
	Benjamin Dixon @BenjaminPDixon	36,373





**EHT BLACK HOLE IMAGE**

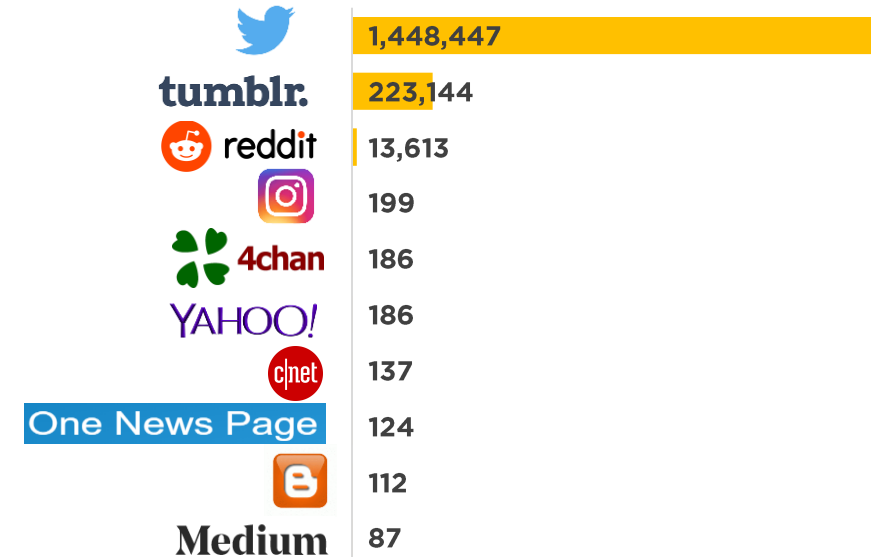
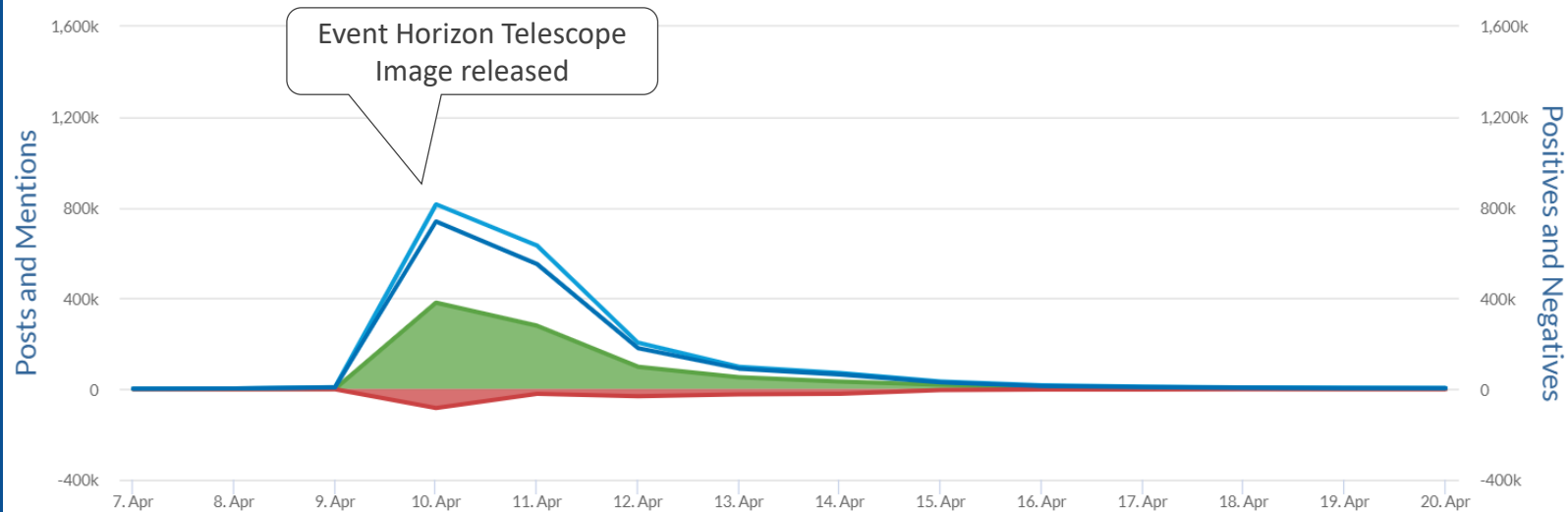
## SOCIAL MEDIA FELL FOR THE FIRST IMAGE OF A BLACK HOLE

### THE MEDIUM IS MADE FOR UPBEAT, FAST AND FLASHY STORIES

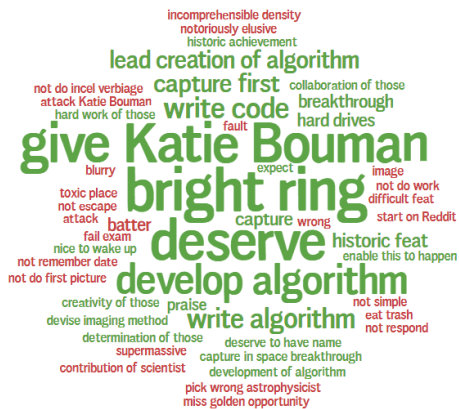
## CONVERSATION VOLUME:

1,917,789 MENTIONS 4/7/2019-4/20/2019

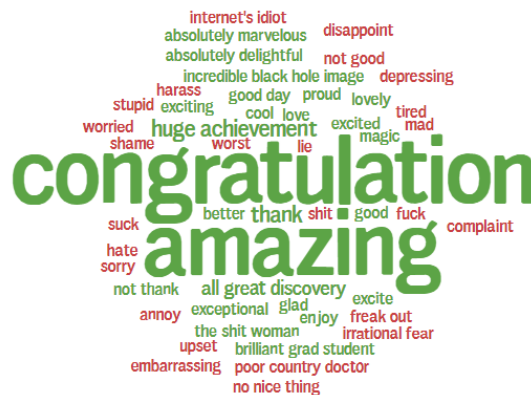
## TOP 10 DOMAINS



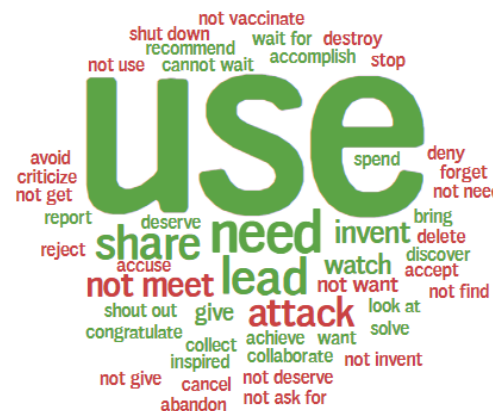
## ATTRIBUTES



## EMOTIONS



## BEHAVIORS



## TOP 5 PROFESSIONS\*\*

Professions	Posts ▾	Index
Creative Arts	40%	0.88
Student	14%	1.62
Science and Research	13%	2.43
Technology	12%	2.14
Education	11%	1.35

# IT WAS A STORY WITH A CLEAR GOAL, HERO, AND OUTCOME

## CONNECTION TO A CURRENT SOCIAL ISSUE GAVE AN EXTRA REASON TO SHARE

DEVELOPER:

32.3 K Followers



Ben Halpern  
@bendhalpern

1969: Margaret Hamilton alongside the code that got us to the moon  
2019: Katie Bouman alongside the data that got us to the black hole



4:11 PM · Apr 10, 2019 · Twitter Web Client

166.3K Retweets 430.4K Likes

**IMPS = 118 M**  
**RT RATE = 515%**

ACTOR/PRODUCER: 19.4K Followers



Tamy Emma Pepin  
@TamyEmmaPepin

Congratulations to Katie Bouman to whom we owe the first photograph of a black hole ever. Not seeing her name circulate nearly enough in the press.

Amazing work. And here's to more women in science (getting their credit and being remembered in history)



12:27 PM · Apr 10, 2019 · Twitter for iPhone

152.5K Retweets 348.4K Likes

**IMPS = 194 M**  
**RT RATE = 786%**

TECH ENTREPRENEUR:

14.9K Followers

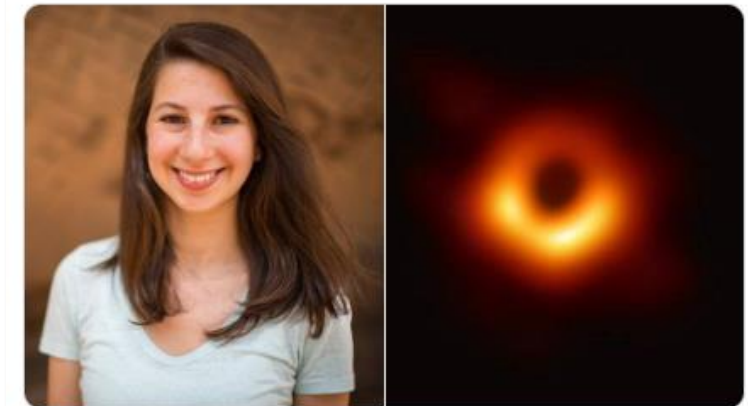


Jen Zhu  
@jenzhuscott

Her name is Katie Bouman, an MIT graduate.

3 years ago she led the creation of a new algorithm to produce the first-ever image of a black hole we are seeing today.

#BlackHole #EventHorizonTelescope



10:39 AM · Apr 10, 2019 · Twitter for iPhone

80.2K Retweets 237.4K Likes

**IMPS = 57 M**  
**RT RATE = 538%**

# SCIENTIFIC ORGANIZATIONS QUICKLY PICKED UP THE PLOT

## THE SIMPLEST, MOST VISUAL STORY PERFORMED BEST

UNIVERSITY:

109.4 K Followers



MIT CSAIL  
@MIT\_CSAIL

Left: MIT computer scientist Katie Bouman w/stacks of hard drives of black hole image data.

Right: MIT computer scientist Margaret Hamilton w/the code she wrote that helped put a man on the moon.

(image credit @floragraham)

#EHTblackhole #BlackHoleDay #BlackHole



11:58 AM · Apr 10, 2019 · TweetDeck

65.6K Retweets 146.9K Likes

IMPS = 72M  
RT RATE = 60%

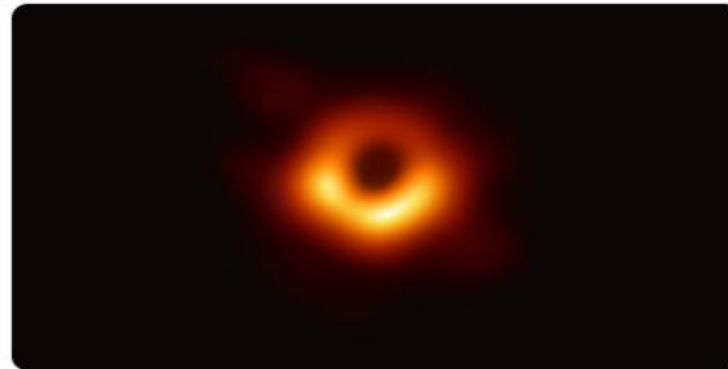
EVENT HORIZON:

60.2 K Followers



Event Horizon 'Scope  
@ehtlescope

Scientists have obtained the first image of a black hole, using Event Horizon Telescope observations of the center of the galaxy M87. The image shows a bright ring formed as light bends in the intense gravity around a black hole that is 6.5 billion times more massive than the Sun



9:08 AM · Apr 10, 2019 · Twitter Web Client

64.9K Retweets 127.5K Likes

IMPS = 57 M  
RT RATE = 108%

GOVT AGENCY:

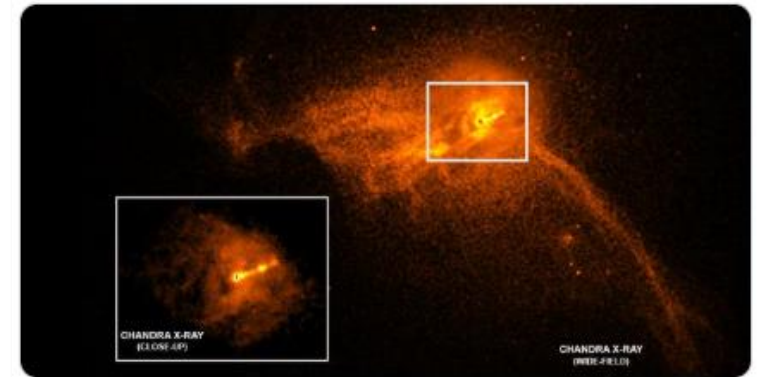
32.6 M Followers



NASA  
@NASA

In a historic feat by @EHTelescope & @NSF, a black hole image has been captured for the 1st time. Several of our missions observed the same black hole using different light wavelengths and collected data to understand the black hole's environment. Details:

[go.nasa.gov/2Uwj1PF](https://go.nasa.gov/2Uwj1PF)



9:45 AM · Apr 10, 2019 · Sprinklr

21.1K Retweets 38.2K Likes

IMPS = 24.8 M  
RT RATE = <1%



# MOST SCIENTISTS REPEATED THE MAIN STORY ELEMENTS

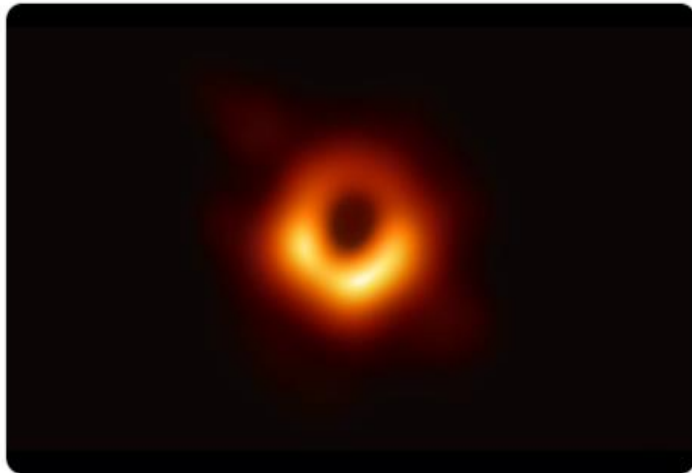
## ONE SIEZED THE OPPORTUNITY TO SQUASH CRITICS

ASTROPHYSICIST: 325.8K Followers



Katie Mack  
@AstroKatie

First ever direct image of a black hole! The supermassive black hole in the galaxy M87 -- 6.5 billion times as massive as the Sun! #EHT #BlackHole The image is better than I expected!



9:11 AM · Apr 10, 2019 · Twitter Web Client

7.6K Retweets 20.8K Likes

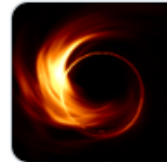
IMPS = 5.9 M  
RT RATE = 2%

ASTROPHYSICIST: 34.5 K Followers



Andrew Chael  
@thisgreyspirit

(1/7) So apparently some (I hope very few) people online are using the fact that I am the primary developer of the eht-imaging software library ([github.com/achael/eht-ima...](https://github.com/achael/eht-imaging)) to launch awful and sexist attacks on my colleague and friend Katie Bouman. Stop.



achael/eht-imaging  
Imaging, analysis, and simulation software for radio interferometry - achael/eht-imaging  
[github.com](https://github.com)

9:48 PM · Apr 11, 2019 · Twitter Web Client

35.4K Retweets 90.6K Likes

IMPS = 44 M  
RT RATE = 102%

ASTRONAUT 2.4 M Followers



Chris Hadfield  
@Cmdr\_Hadfield

Maelstrom at the gates of Hell. First-ever image of a black hole, wider than our whole solar system. Einstein, we rejoice in your brilliance.



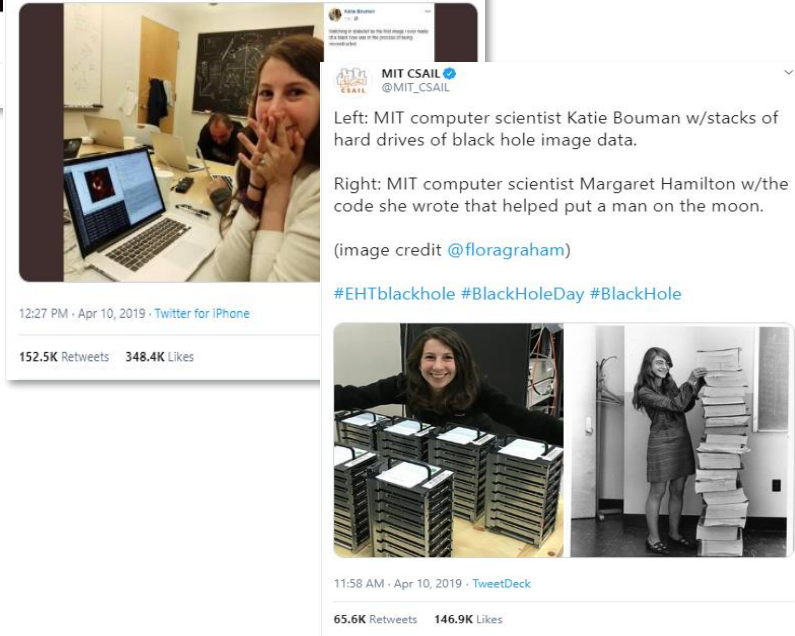
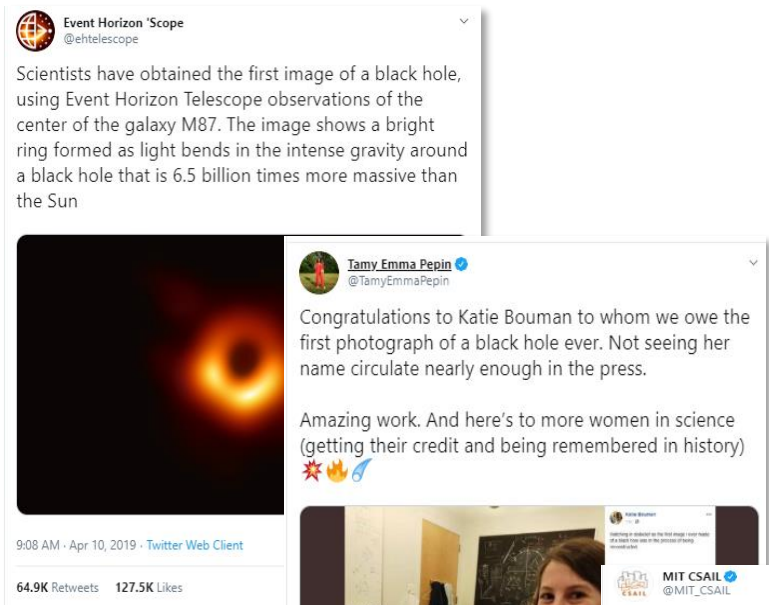
9:18 AM · Apr 10, 2019 · Twitter for Android

3.8K Retweets 15K Likes

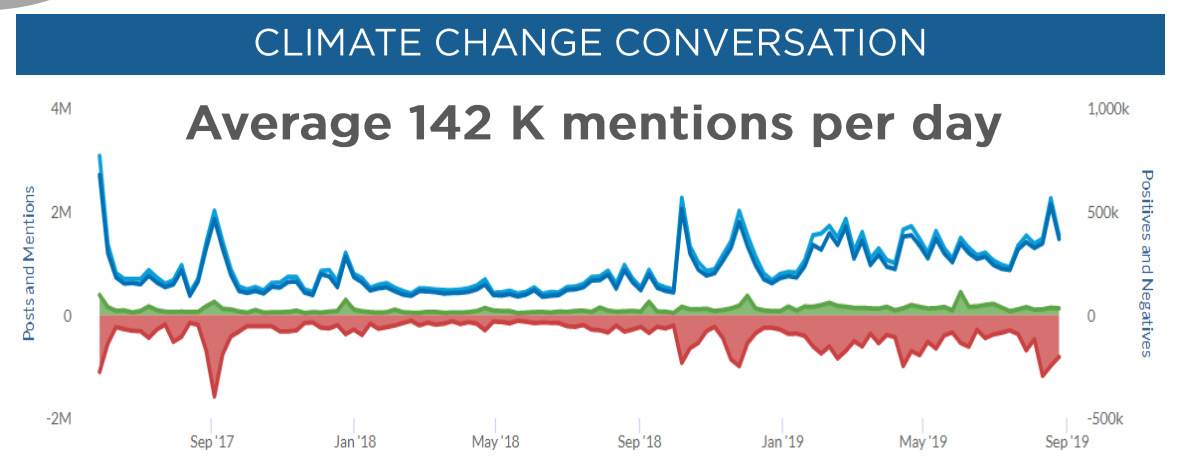
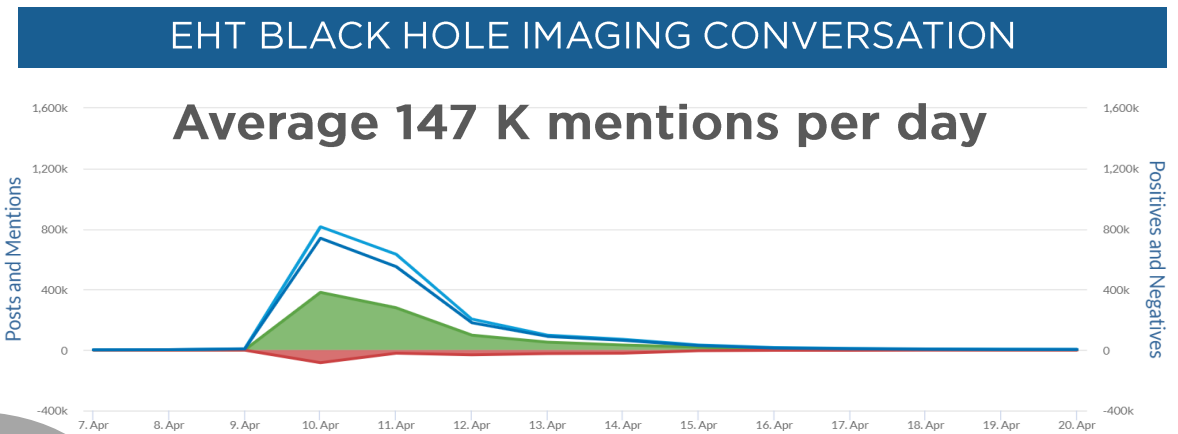
IMPS = 3.2 M  
RT RATE = <1%

# TELLING A SIMPLE STORY PAID OFF IN SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

## A GOAL ACHIEVED, A CLEAR HERO, AND TIES TO SOCIAL PROGRESS



VS.



# KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Break through the continuous scroll with strong hooks
  - It doesn't have to be controversial, polemical, or strident
  - It must be simple and its best if its visual
- Make them care by communicating clear and meaningful stakes
  - Why it matters needs to be clear from the outset
  - Don't bury the "so what" or the best details in a click through
- Try to cast heroes and/or villains for people to root for/against
  - This may be difficult, but remember they don't have to be people
- Ensure the goal or objective is stated as overtly as possible
  - people respond most energetically to potential actions and solutions
- Give them paths to resolution
  - Even where resolution is hard to see, they need believe it's possible



# THANK YOU

KIRK OLSON, SVP STRATEGY,  
WHY GROUP, HORIZON MEDIA

[kolson@horizonmedia.com](mailto:kolson@horizonmedia.com)  
212.220.7404

