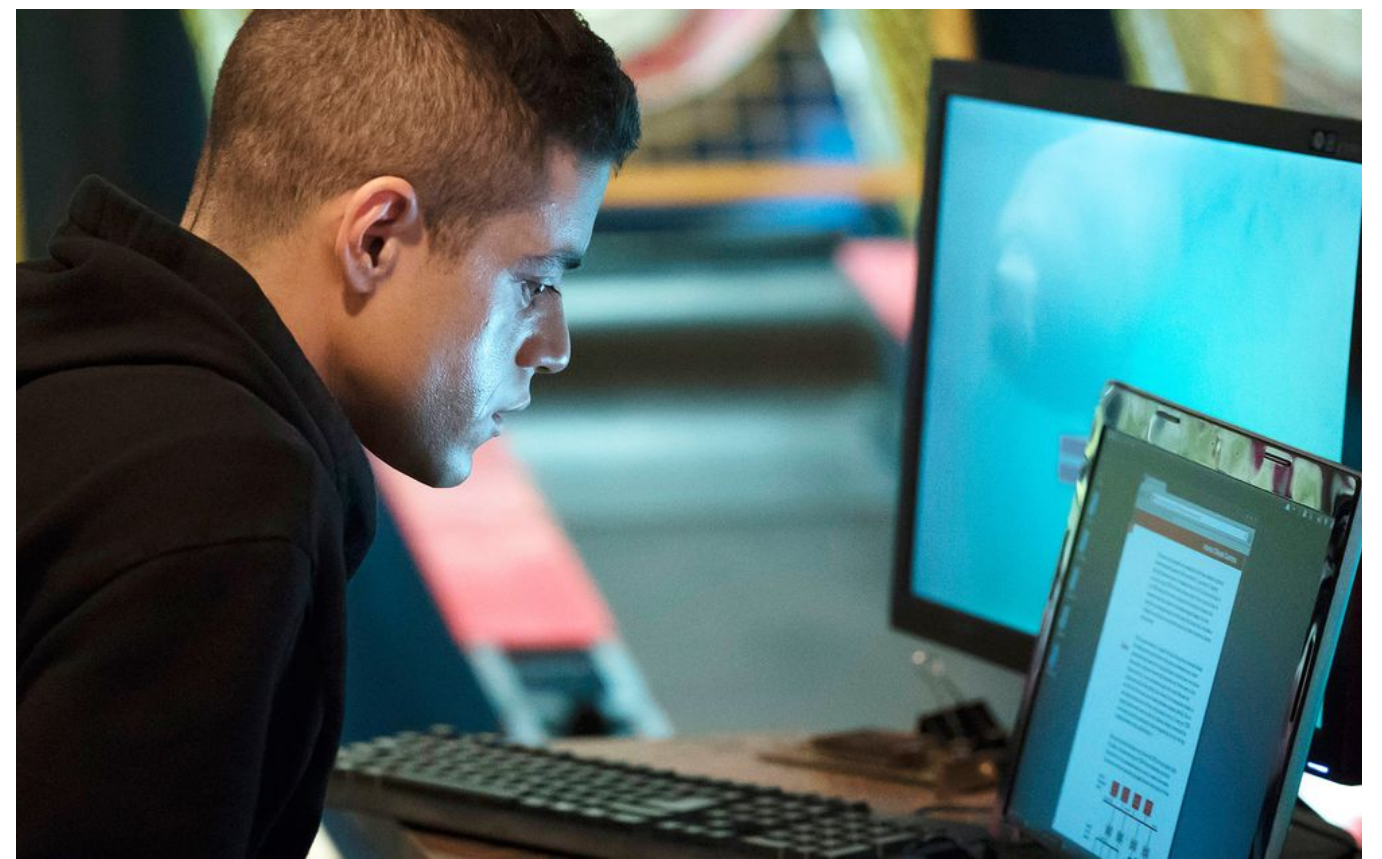


EXAMINING CYBERSECURITY IMAGINARIES THROUGH FICTION

BACKGROUND

FICTION AND ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA HAS THE POWER TO SHAPE HOW AUDIENCES PERCEIVE CERTAIN ISSUES. FOR MANY, EXPOSURE TO CYBERSECURITY IN FICTION ACTS AS AN INFORMAL EDUCATION (ACCURATE OR NOT) THAT INFLUENCES HOW THEY ENGAGE AND INTERACT WITH THE SUBJECT.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND HOW AUDIENCES CONSTRUCT IMAGINARIES BASED ON FICTIONAL PORTRAYALS OF CYBERSECURITY AND HOW ACCURATE THESE IMAGINARIES ARE.



RAMI MALEK PORTRAYS HACKER ELLIOT ALDERSON IN THE US TV DRAMA MR. ROBOT (2015-19)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

HOW HAVE PORTRAYALS OF CYBERSECURITY IN FICTION CHANGED ACROSS TIME?

HOW HAVE THESE PORTRAYALS CONTRIBUTED TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF IMAGINARIES?

HOW TECHNICALLY ACCURATE ARE THESE PORTRAYALS? WHAT DOES THEIR ACCURACY/LACK OF ACCURACY TELL US?

WHAT DO AUDIENCES LEARN ABOUT CYBERSECURITY WHEN THEY LOOK AT FICTION?

METHODOLOGY

- CONDUCT A NARRATIVE ANALYSIS ON A BROAD RANGE OF POPULAR FICTION (TV SERIES, FILMS, NOVELS) FEATURING CYBERSECURITY
- IDENTIFY KEY THEMES AND HOW PEOPLE CONSTRUCT MEANINGS BASED ON THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE PRESENTED NARRATIVES
- STUDY OF TECHNICAL ACCURACY, IN TERMS OF THE ACTUAL TECHNIQUES AND EXPLOITS SHOWN, JARGON USED, AND HOW REALISTIC CERTAIN ATTACKS OR OUTCOMES ARE
- CHRONOLOGICAL STUDY TO MAP HOW IMAGINARIES HAVE CHANGED OVER TIME

OUTCOMES

EXAGGERATED/INACCURATE PORTRAYALS (E.G. A DISPROPORTIONATE FOCUS ON CYBERTERRORIST ATTACKS) MAY INCREASE PUBLIC ANXIETY OR CONTRIBUTE TO FALSE IMAGINARIES OF CURRENT EVENTS. THIS COULD RESULT IN A SHIFT IN SOCIETAL BELIEFS, POTENTIALLY REFLECTED IN INDUSTRY OR GOVERNMENT POLICIES. THEREFORE IT IS VITAL TO UNDERSTAND HOW AUDIENCES LEARN ABOUT CYBERSECURITY.

THE OUTCOMES OF THIS WORK COULD BE USED TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE EDUCATION AND FOR ENSURING FICTION-MAKERS PRESENT AN ACCURATE DEPICTION OF CYBERSECURITY.