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Public attention, social media, and the Edward Snowden saga
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Abstract
Although prior research indicated the power of social media in drawing attention to particular issues, little research explored precise patterns by which an issue sustains its salience in mediated social platforms. We dissected the issue-attention cycle of Snowden revelations over a one-year period. We tackled this, using real-time large-scale Twitter data, and found that social media attention varied dramatically over time by the specificities of issue. Volumes of attention associated with — instead of being independent from — traditional media mention of the issues. Directions for future studies as well as implications for using social media for civil rights issues are addressed.

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