

According to the article „Search engines and the production of academic knowledge” by G José van Dijck, when it comes to gaining knowledge on various topics, search engines became the most crucial tool in order to do so. Not only did it change the way we learn and read, but also this task has never been easier thanks to access to more sources than ever before. Search engines, such as Google Scholar in particular - which is mainly used by students - are co-producers of academic knowledge. It also helps to research various information with the standards of scientists and librarians. As the article argues, Google Scholar’s algorithm works on the basis of quantitative citation analysis, which shows us that Google Scholar is quite similar to Google Search, it ranks sources on the basis of popularity rather than being truthful.

Knowledge on the internet may be gained on various different topics. Social media became even a platform associating crime solving junkies, who try to solve out what happened to the victims, who killed them and what was the motive of the killer, all thanks to searching and finding clues. There are some studies, that show searching through the internet as a crucial part of solving crimes. Thanks to data from social platforms such as Facebook, Twitter or Google Plus, digital crime evidence can be searched and collected from them. Some information from such platforms can help the authorities get closer to crime case solving and thanks to this it is possible to manage with prevention process as well.

Not only does media and internet in general help society with criminal investigations, but also to police. Social media showed an evolved way to committing as well as solving crimes, creating opportunity for criminals to break the law. For criminal investigations, information from various accounts is relevant for the police. Even posts, searches from their phones, geolocations or photographs can help authorities catch the perpetrator of the act.

But police officers in the day and age of internet gained midfielders. The amount of crime junkies at this instant has risen thanks to various crime documentaries on streaming platforms. Professionals can envy their investigating abilities and follow their lead. Through searching on the internet - in particular search engines or social media - users can realize even more clues than the authorities. One of the examples, that search engine is the key to knowledge is the documentary „Don’t Fuck With Cats: Hunting an Internet Killer” on Netflix, that tells a story of one of Canada’s murderers, Luka Magnotta. The story is told from the perspective of the people responsible for the criminal’s arrest from the very start, but what’s surprising, they aren’t the police. They are crime junkies, who came onto the trail of a disturbing video on YouTube. Firstly, in 2010, a video onto Youtube titled *1 boy 2 kittens was uploaded*. The video presented someone in a hoodie, vacuuming two kittens in a bag until they died. The clip was found by crime junkies - Baudi and John and in order to find the man, they created the ‘Find the Kitten Vacuumer...for Great Justice’ Facebook group. Together they analyzed Luka’s video second by second. They even zoomed into the plug sockets on the wall, to find out where the killer was from, or even tried to hear the background noises and potentially heard languages. Thanks to search engines, people on the group were even able to find online sellers of blankets and vacuums seen in the video. Unfortunately, Luka posted another video *Bath-time LOL* showing the killing of with a broom another kitten, as well as *Python Christmas*, where another one was killed by a snake. Thanks to searching deeply on various platforms and finding clues, people from the Facebook group found out who’s the person on the videos - it was Luka Magnotta, whose location they found thanks to images, that he posted online. Unfortunately, the killer struck again and not killing another animal. He murdered Lin Jun, a student, whose last moments Luka posted online as well. Luka ran away from the country, but the police managed to catch him and arrest. It shows, that if it weren’t for those people from the group and their advanced searching skills, Luka wouldn’t have been caught.

The other case, when search engines played a role in finding clues about a crime, was a story showed in another docuseries on Netflix „Crime Scene: The Vanishing at the Cecil Hotel”. In

2013, Canadian student Elisa Lam checked into the Cecil Hotel in Los Angeles. She was last seen on a security footage from one of the hotel's elevators, in which she was moving around inside the elevator as if hiding, speaking and motioning as if there is someone else out of sight near the elevator, then holding the door open and pressing buttons. And after two weeks she was found dead in a water tank on a hotel roof, naked. This story sparked controversy on social media. People were desperate to know what happened to her and why she ended up on the rooftop. Online crime solving communities were searching who could be in the hotel during her stay and may be involved in her death. But finally, they found her Tumblr. In her blog posts, loneliness and depression was showing. Her tragic death was an accidental drowning, with bipolar disorder as a significant factor, which she suffered from according to her family.

It clearly shows, how crucial are search engines in our every day lives, from teaching students and helping them find sources for their paper, but also with finding clues in solving such serious crimes as murders. If it weren't for the search engines, knowledge wouldn't have been gained on such crucial topics.

Sources:

„Search engines and the production of academic knowledge” G. José van Dijck

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„ Don't Fuck With Cats: Hunting an Internet Killer”

„Crime Scene: The Vanishing at the Cecil Hotel”