

About Play Darkly

Play Darkly is a research-led creative practice focused on information failure, networked harm, and systems under pressure. The site is located at: <https://playdarkly.com>

What this work is about

I study how information systems fail, and how those failures can produce real-world harm. My work examines the conditions under which networks stop preserving evidence, chronology, and verification, and begin rewarding affect, urgency, and circulation instead.

These failures are often discussed under separate headings: misinformation, harassment, moral panic, algorithmic amplification, reputational contagion, extremist drift, and networked abuse. I approach them as related expressions of the same underlying structural problem.

Why this is a white space field

These domains are usually studied in fragments, with different vocabularies and different institutional boundaries. That separation makes it harder to see the common mechanics that connect them.

My work focuses on those shared mechanics: suppression of audit, breakdown of provenance, contamination of evidence, loss of chronology, and retention rules that preserve signal while excluding repair. The aim is to build a portable framework that can identify these failure modes across platforms, institutions, and advocacy environments.

Current direction

The current project is to formalize information failure as an engineering, governance, and public-safety problem. The goal is to develop concepts, tests, and structural descriptions that help identify when a network is shifting from truth-seeking to

throughput preservation, and from corrective discourse into coercive escalation.

This work is being developed through essays, formal notes, and longer research structures.

Conclusions so far

- Networks do not need covert centralized control to behave destructively. Selection pressure is often sufficient.
- When affect-rich circulation outruns evidentiary repair, correction becomes difficult to perceive from inside the system.
- A network can continue to describe itself in ethical terms while functionally suppressing audit.
- Information failure can operate as a precursor condition for networked coercion and violence.

Creative practice

Play Darkly also produces music, visual work, and 3D interactive projects. That work operates downstream of the research rather than as a separate expressive stream. The research defines the primary questions. The creative work develops under the same constraints and serves the same inquiry in visual, sonic, and interactive form.

Play Darkly

Independent researcher and creative practitioner working across systems analysis, writing, sound, visual form, and 3D interactive media.