U.S. Media & Consumerism

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ISSS Political Webinar

October 20, 2020
Misinformation on Social Media Comes in Many Forms

1. “Fake news”
2. Manipulated video & audio (Deep fakes)
3. Hoaxes or conspiracy theories
4. Political ads
Who Spreads Misinformation on Social Media?

1. Foreign govts & organizations
2. Domestic partisan political actors
3. Click bait commercial outlets
4. Social Media networks
5. Social Media users...all of us!)
How to Avoid Spreading Misinformation on Social Media

1. Think before you share
   • Consider the source(s)
   • Check the author
   • Be alert for click bait headlines
   • Check the publish date & time
   • Be wary of shocking quotes & photos

2. Be aware of your biases

3. Consult a fact-checking site

4. Use common sense & be skeptical
Third-party Fact Checkers

1. https://www.factcheck.org/
2. https://www.politifact.com/
Additional Resources

1. First Draft
   https://firstdraftnews.org/

2. A 90 minute fact-checking course for college students
   https://www.poynter.org/shop/fact-checking/handson-factchecking/
ISSS POLITICAL WEBINAR SERIES

"Understanding US Media & Consumerism"
Researching to find accurate information

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October 20, 2020
BACKGROUND ON OBLIGATION TO TRUTH VS. “FAKE NEWS”

• **There are no laws that prevent newscasters from not telling the truth or distorting the truth.**

• “News distortion policy” by the FCC (c. 1949; first call to action and define, 1969) has never been adopted, thus, no “law, rule, or regulation” to prevent falsehoods or intentional, direct or indirect bias that can and does influence capital and political gains.

• **News is considered “entertainment.”**
HOW CAN WE TRUST WHAT WE READ AND HEAR?

WHERE CAN WE FIND REPUTABLE INFORMATION & RESEARCH?
PERCEPTION ➔ RECEPTION/RESPONSE

FOR CRITICAL READING, CRITICAL LISTENING, & CRITICAL THINKING

MEDIA, INFORMATION, & RESEARCH

• Trust/Credibility (Ethos)

• Logic/Reason + Proof (Logos)

• Values & Emotion (Pathos + Psyche)

• Timing (Kairos)
EVALUATING INFORMATION: ALL ELEMENTS FEED EACH OTHER

- Currency
- Relevance
- Authority
- Accuracy
- Purpose

Does currency (When?) of the document contribute to its relevance (Why? How?) and support the purpose (Why? What?) of your research?

Does the authority (Who? What? Where from?) of the author and publication inspire confidence in the content’s accuracy (When? What? Where from?) and timely relevance to the topic at hand and how does all of this lend to the purpose of this document?
Publication Types & Reputation Inspire Trust/Credibility

**Popular Press**
- For general public (press for populous)
- Publication cycle: daily/weekly/monthly
- Reading level:
  - Lowest ➔ 5th to 6th grade
  - Highest ➔ 9th or 10th grade
- Plain speech
- Sources often not fully cited (Difficulty of findability/location)

**Academic/Scholarly**
- For students, experts, academicians, scientists
- Nonstandard Publication cycle: Monthly/quarterly/biannually/annually/irregular
- Reading level:
  - Higher education
- Specialized subject/discipline language & jargon
- Sources **always** cited & provide for author credentials
Research! Learning process takes time.

Who can you call? → Your librarians!