

Fact Checking

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News sites often contain a mix of news & opinion

BREAKING

***Trump Asks Pompeo to Cancel
North Korea Trip, Acknowledging
Diplomacy Has Stalled***

NEWS ANALYSIS

***Why Manafort and Cohen
Thought They'd Get Away With It***

It shouldn't take a special counsel to uncover white-collar crimes, but it does.

Opinion

**Medical School Should Be
Free, but Not for Everyone**

Cover tuition only for those doctors who agree to go where they are needed most.

**What it's Like to Intern at The New
York Times**

Bias

News may be biased:


- AllSides - <https://www.allsides.com/unbiased-balanced-news>
- Red Feed / Blue Feed - <http://graphics.wsj.com/blue-feed-red-feed/>

We also need to be aware of our own bias:

- **Confirmation Bias** - “Once we have formed a view, we embrace information that confirms that view while ignoring, or rejecting, information that casts doubt on it.” -*Psychology Today**
- **Filter Bubbles** - we may not be receiving balanced coverage if we get our news through search engines or social media

* Heshmat, S., Ph.D. (2015, April 23). What Is Confirmation Bias? Retrieved August 24, 2018, from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/science-choice/201504/what-is-confirmation-bias>

Sometimes articles aren't only factual (or true at all)

News	Analysis	Opinion	Artificial News
<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Presents facts-What happened-Any opinions are quoted directly with a source-Author's voice is neutral <p>Ex. "Colleges and Universities Woo Once-Overlooked Transfer Students." (NYT)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Presents facts that are analyzed by an expert author-Expert presents conclusions (opinions) based on evidence-Tries to explain why something happened <p>Ex. "Contrary to What Everyone Thinks, College Costs Less These Days." (Forbes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-A non-expert stating their views on a topic or event-May contain opinion language expressing judgement: should / shouldn't, need to, important, best, worst <p>Ex. Public colleges and universities should lower student fees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Propaganda-Intentionally misleading-Hoaxes or satire-Not based on evidence-Uses emotionally charged language-May promote an agenda (political, social) <p>Ex.</p> 

**SATIRE OR PARODY**

No intention to cause harm but has potential to fool

**MISLEADING CONTENT**

Misleading use of information to frame an issue or individual

**IMPOSTER CONTENT**

When genuine sources are impersonated

**FABRICATED CONTENT**

New content is 100% false, designed to deceive and do harm

**FALSE CONNECTION**

When headlines, visuals or captions don't support the content

**FALSE CONTEXT**

When genuine content is shared with false contextual information

**MANIPULATED CONTENT**

When genuine information or imagery is manipulated to deceive

How do tell if an article is accurate / real?

1. Check for previous fact checking

- Are there sources listed and linked?
- Can the article be disproven using a site like [Snopes](#), [Politifact](#), or [FactCheck.org](#)?
- Can you find the main idea or headline in another news source that your know is reputable? If it is a real, there should be many articles on the main idea when you do a quick search.



For this meme, I typed the first line of text into Politifact.

Result - mostly false

How do tell if an article is accurate?

2. Go upstream to the source

- a. Follow the links or sources and see if they are accurate.
- b. You may need to complete this process several times to get to the original source.
- c. <https://www.dailywire.com/news/35074/poll-only-quarter-democrats-want-abolish-ice-emily-zanotti>

3. Read laterally

- a. Find out about your source by doing checks online.
 - i. Sometimes sites have URLs that are close to legitimate news URLs to intentional fool you - like abcnews.com.co (an artificial news site)
- b. Do a Google search for your site by eliminating links on the site itself
 - i. For example, to search First Draft News (the source of the mis/disinformation graphic), you would search: firstdraftnews.org -site:firstdraftnews.org
 - ii. Another example - Baltimore Gazette
- c. Use WHOIS for smaller sites or groups (<https://whois.icann.org/>)
- d. Use the Wayback machine to check a site's history (<https://archive.org/web/>)

When in doubt...

- Read the news with a critical eye - especially when you get your news from social media.
- Read widely - do not rely on only one source for your news.
- If you feel a strong emotional reaction to a story, post, or meme, stop and take a step back - it's likely to be artificial news.
- Check yourself for confirmation bias.
- If you think critically about a source and follow the fact-checking steps, and you still aren't sure about its credibility, don't share or repost.
- If you know it is false, don't repost - even to refute it.

Let's try it out

- Team up with one or two other students.
- Choose an article or post that you've seen shared online.
- Follow the fact checking process using your worksheet.
- Share your findings with the class.

If you want to explore this topic more in depth, check out *Web Literacy for Student Fact-Checkers* by Mike Caulfield <https://webliteracy.pressbooks.com/> (ebook available free online)

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