

WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT

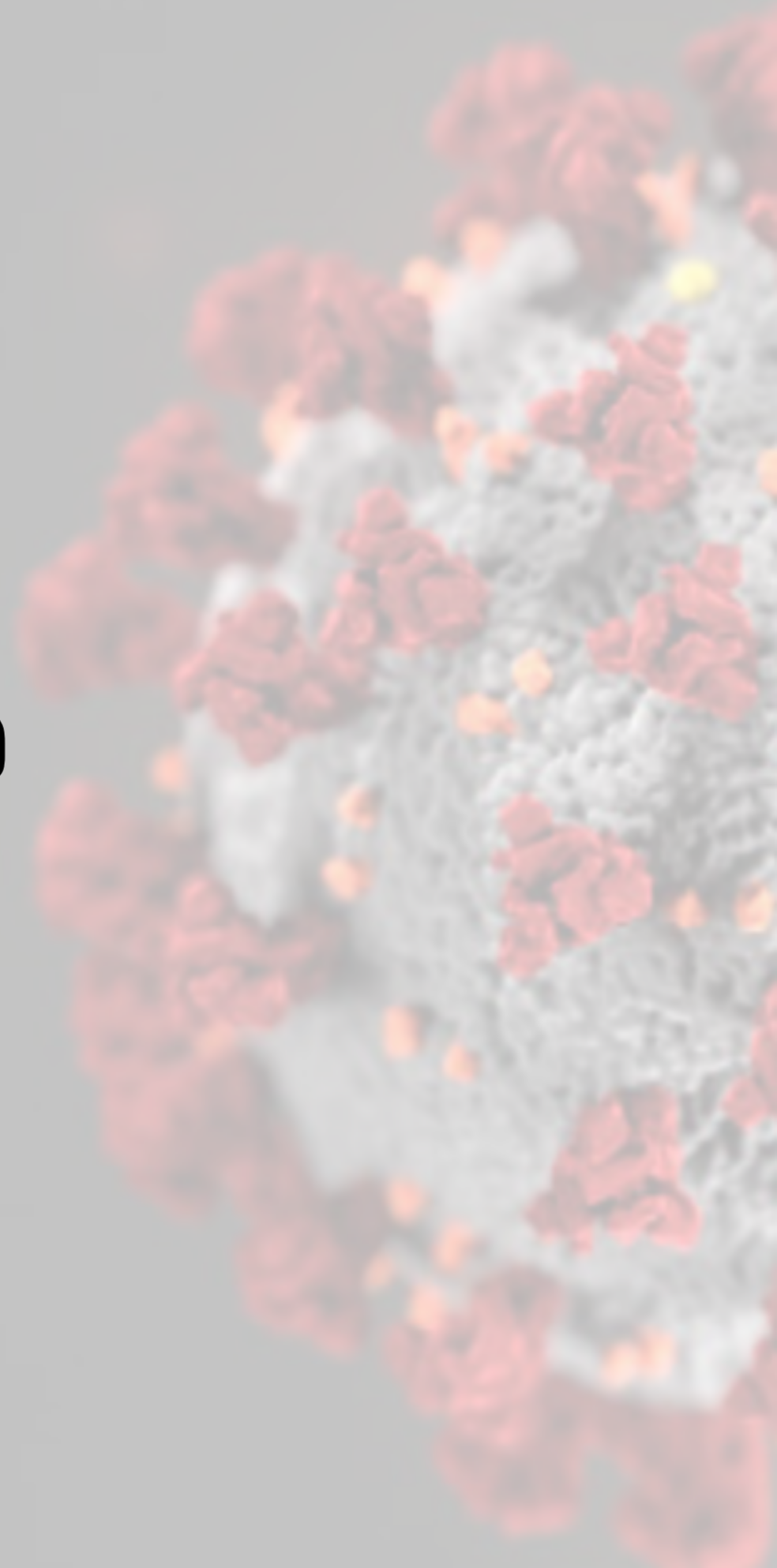


Jason Luther, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Writing Arts
Rowan University

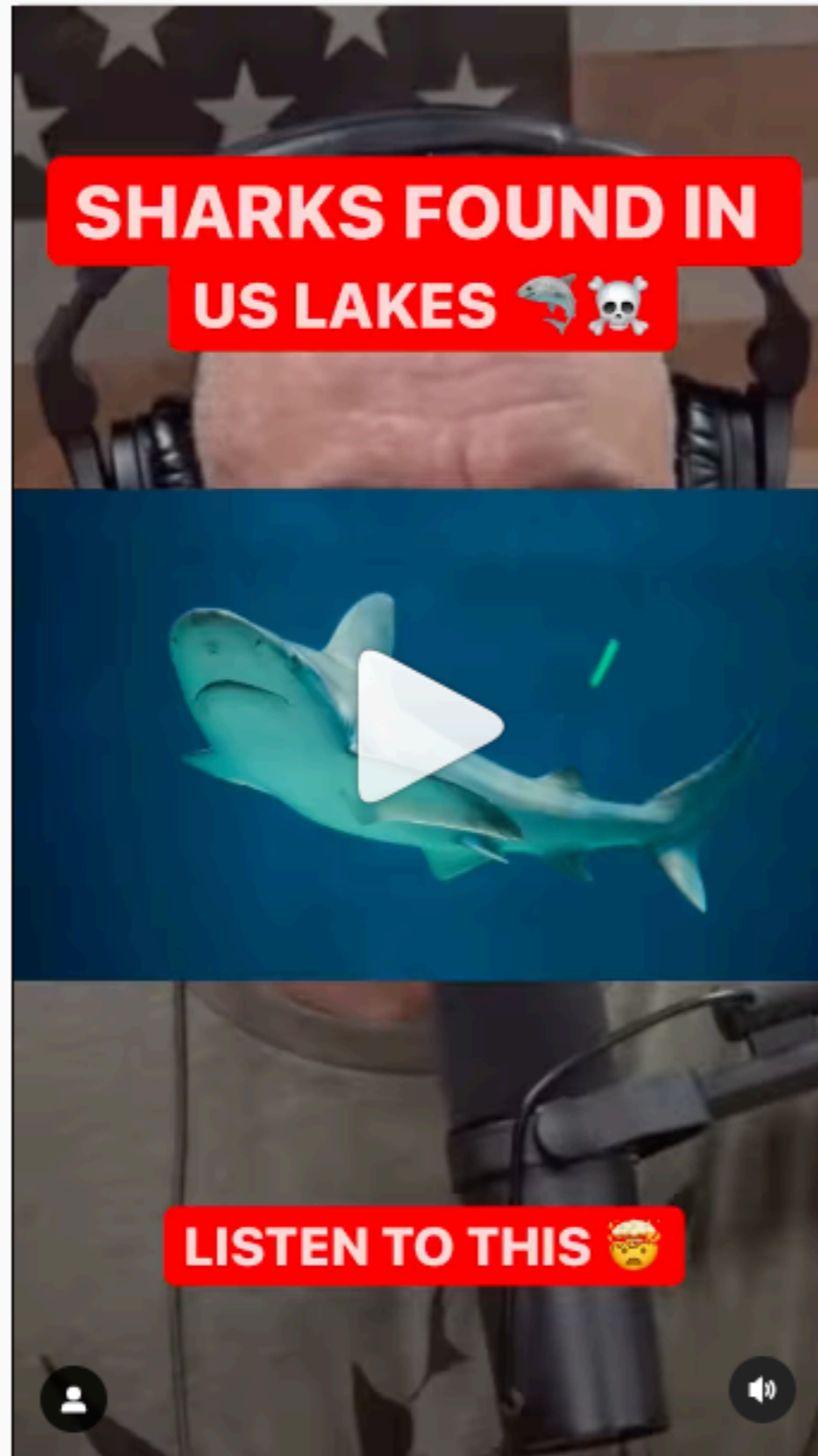
@jwluther
luther@rowan.edu

Slides: jasonluther.net/fakenews

Quiz:
Fake news or real news?
4 questions



1



jorgeheathen • [Follow](#)

Synthwave Goose • Blade Runner
2049



jorgeheathen Giant Bull sharks
found across the USA.

EPISODE with [@forrest.galante](#)

[#mystery](#) [#interesting](#) [#joerogan](#)
[#animals](#) [#animales](#) [#animal](#) [#nature](#)
[#sharks](#) [#water](#) [#sea](#) [#usa](#) [#us](#)
[#monsters](#) [#monster](#) [#sharkweek](#)

1w



thebarberit We're talking bull
sharks. No? So why keep showing
great whites...



1w 2,778 likes Reply

— View replies (50)



148,438 likes

JULY 27



Add a comment...

[Post](#)

2



John W. Rich (Fake Tech Exec)
@Cokedupoptions



Congratulations to the IRS on winning the \$846.3 million Mega Millions Jackpot!

≡ **Forbes**

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TAXES • EDITORS' PICK

Winner Of \$1.28 Billion Lottery Gets \$433.7 Million After Tax

Robert W. Wood

Senior Contributor ⓘ

I focus on taxes and litigation.

1:48 PM · Aug 2, 2022 · Twitter for Android

44.7K Retweets 4,798 Quote Tweets 362.1K Likes



3

Planned Parenthood Votes TV ad:

“Mehmet Oz is so extreme he wants to make abortion a crime in Pennsylvania.”



4

Senate speech, May 25, 2022:

“The leading cause of death among children is a firearm.”

LIVE

MASS SCHOOL SHOOTING IN UVALDE, TEXAS

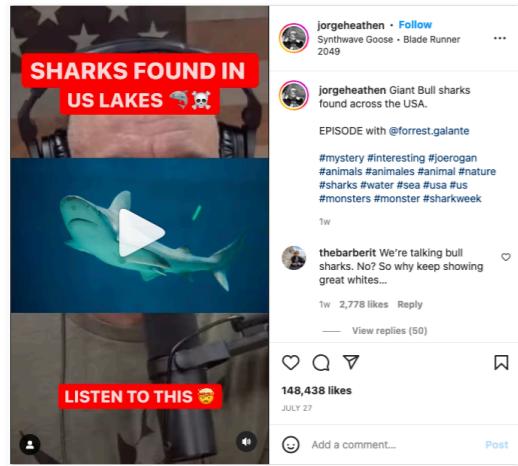
SEN. CHUCK SCHUMER
D-New York, Majority Leader

U.S. SENATE

C-SPAN2

Clip </> Embed + Add to Playlist ? Clipping Guide Share This Video

1



False
Source: Politifact
<https://bit.ly/3QueJ40>

“Experts told The Associated Press **there’s no documentation of bull sharks in the Great Lakes**. The myth also has been debunked by organizations such as the Shedd Aquarium (on Lake Michigan) and the Great Lakes Echo, produced by Michigan State University’s Knight Center for Environmental Journalism.”

2



False
Source: Politifact
<https://bit.ly/3QIFCao>

“The user appears to have based this assumption on a **mistaken calculation based on the headline and not on the content of the article itself**, which details how the lottery winnings get paid out and what taxes are owed.

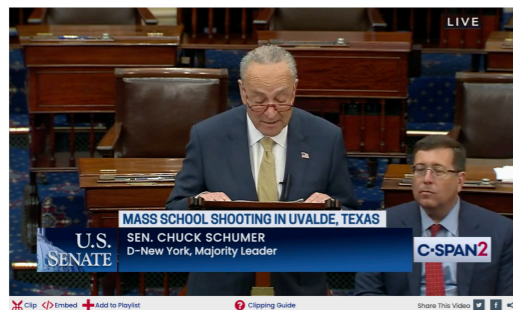
3



Half true
Source: Politifact
<https://bit.ly/3bKqHrj>

“While Oz has said that he supports restrictions, he’s been silent on the question of what criminal penalties, if any, should be applied to patients or doctors.”

4



Mostly true
Source: Politifact
<https://bit.ly/3dkdFBy>

“The CDC publishes data on the leading causes of death among different demographic groups, providing the most reliable data. In 2020, the leading cause of death among children ages one through 18 involved a firearm.”

“If infants are included, rankings of the leading causes of death for children up to age 18 change.”

ONLINE ⇒ IRL



Half of Republicans believe false accounts of deadly U.S. Capitol riot-Reuters/Ipsos poll

By James Oliphant, Chris Kahn

7 MIN READ

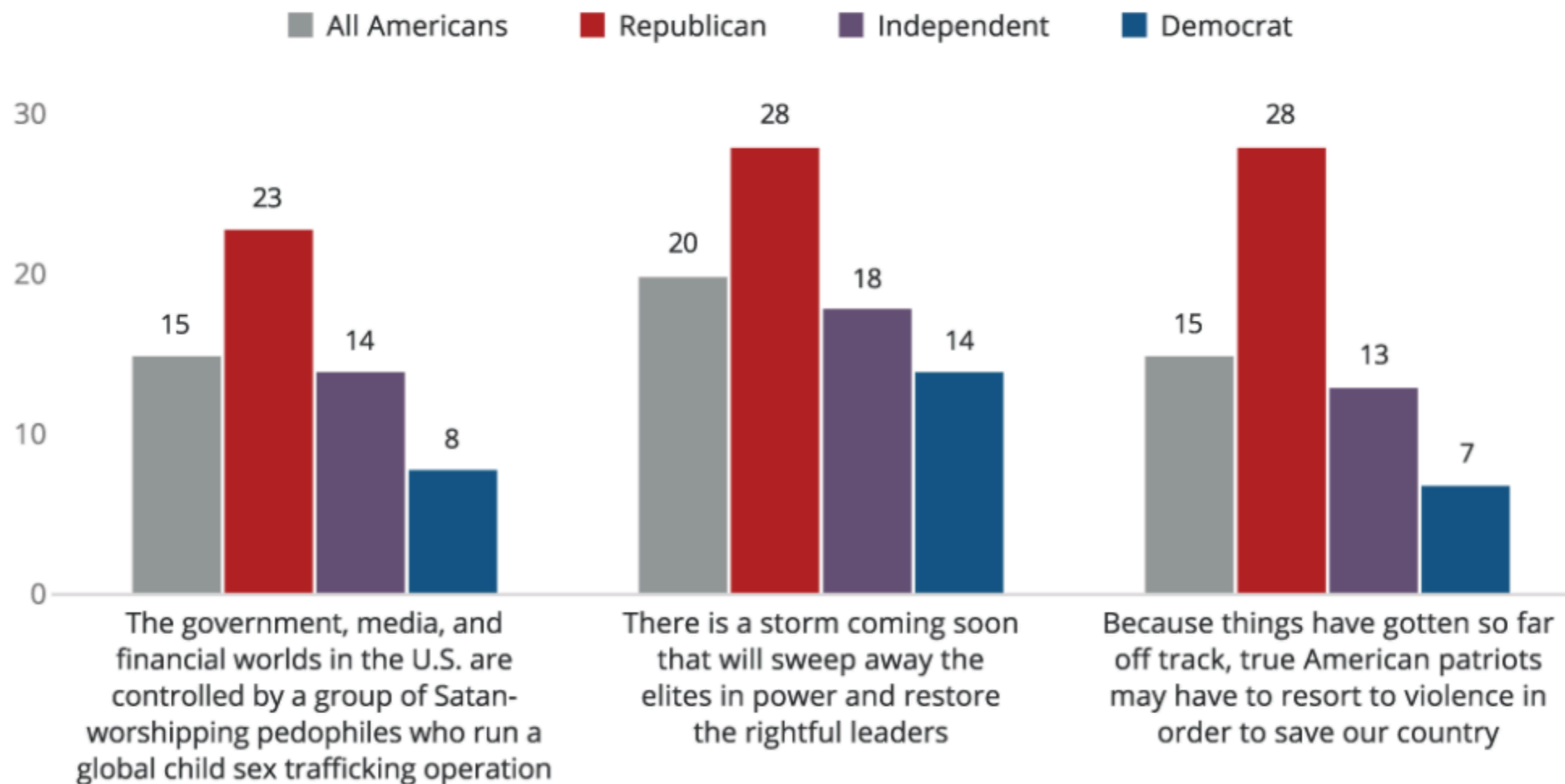


Six in 10 Republicans also believe the false claim put out by Trump that November's presidential election "was stolen" from him due to widespread voter fraud, and the same proportion of Republicans think he should run again in 2024, the March 30-31 poll showed.

Source: Reuters

FIGURE 1. QAnon Conspiracy Theories, by Party Affiliation

Percent who agree:



Source: PRRI-IFYC March 2021 Survey.

Source: Public Religion Research Institute

How a Trump-backed 'QAnon whack job' won with Democratic 'collusion'

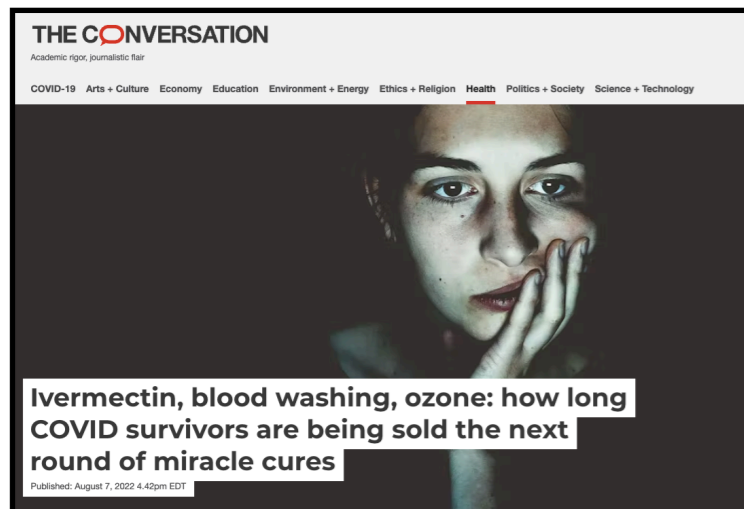
Republican Dan Cox won nomination for Maryland governor, but current governor says that was thanks to Democrats promoting extremist opponents they think will be easier prey



📷 Dan Cox shakes hands with a supporter on primary night in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Photograph: Kenneth K Lam/AP

In a midterm election year, Democrats have sought to boost pro-Trump Republicans in competitive states, placing the risky bet that as the January 6 committee remains in the headlines, extremists who support the former president's lie about electoral fraud in his 2020 defeat will prove unpalatable to voters.

In the last 2 weeks alone . . .

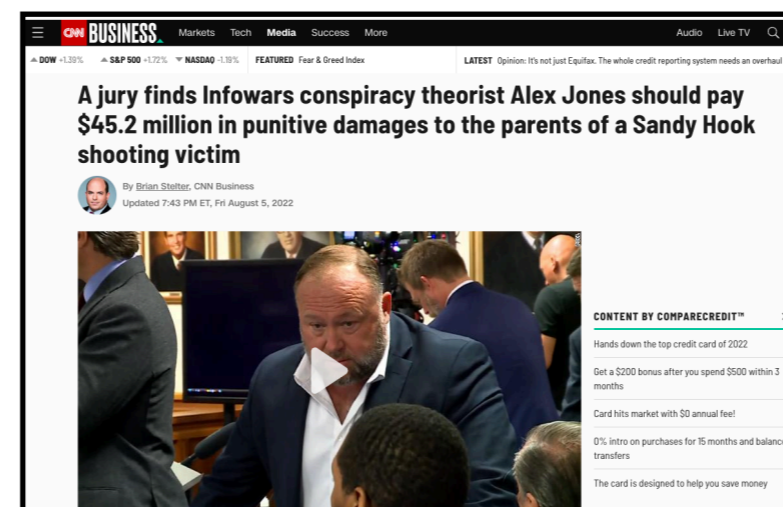


Hunting for Voter Fraud, Conspiracy Theorists Organize 'Stakeouts'

A nascent effort to surveil drop boxes for potential fraud is taking shape in at least 10 states, worrying election officials and law enforcement.



Dropping off a ballot during Arizona's primary election in Mesa in early August. Mobilization efforts to surveil boxes in several states target so-called ballot mules. Rebecca Noble for The New York Times





The Long and Brutal History of Fake News

Bogus news has been around a lot longer than real news. And it's left a lot of destruction behind.

By JACOB SOLL | December 18, 2016

HIDDEN BRAIN

A CONVERSATION ABOUT LIFE'S UNSEEN PATTERNS



Fake News: An Origin Story

June 25, 2018 · 9:00 PM ET



SHANKAR VEDANTAM



RHAINA COHEN



TARA BOYLE



27-Minute Listen

+ PLAYLIST

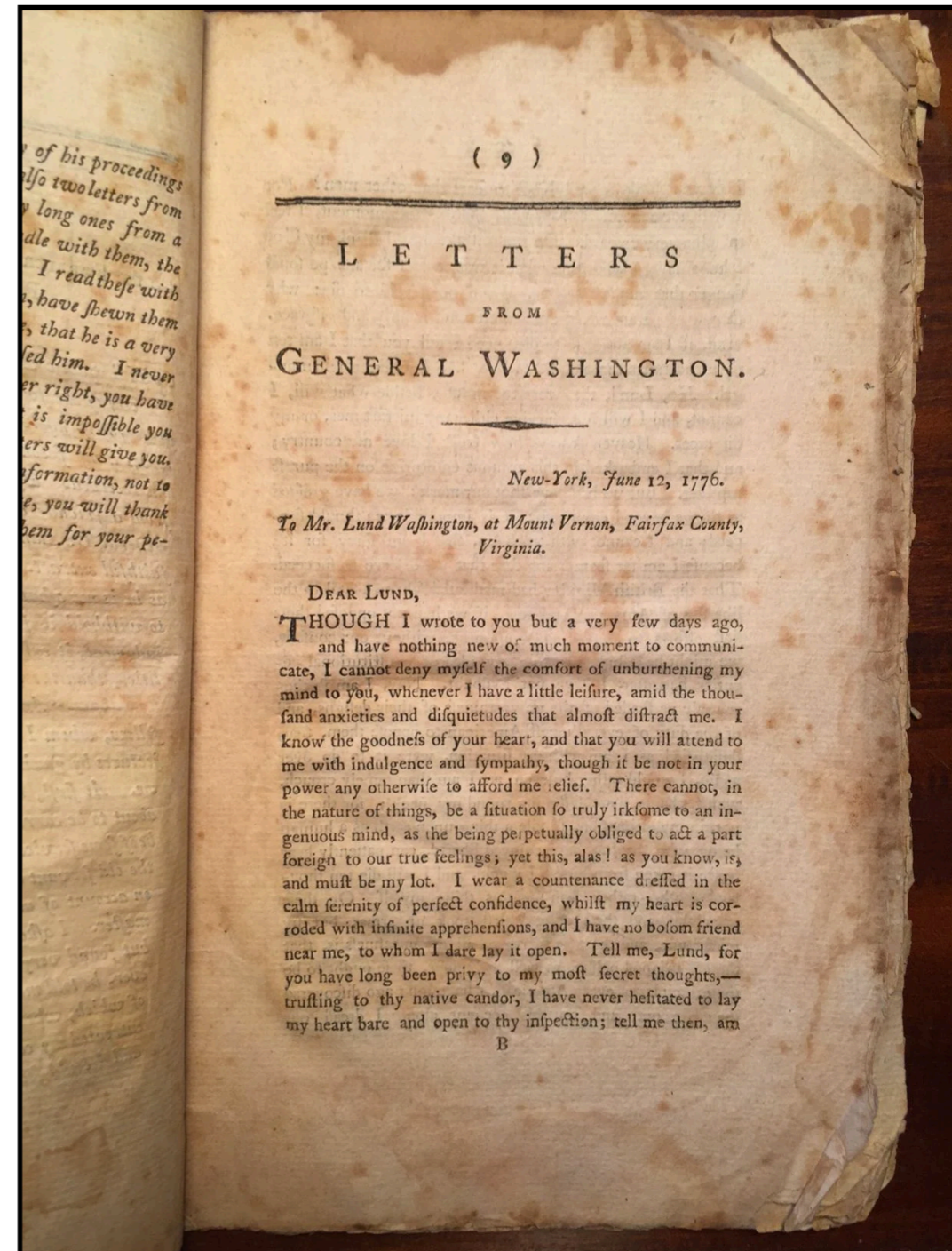
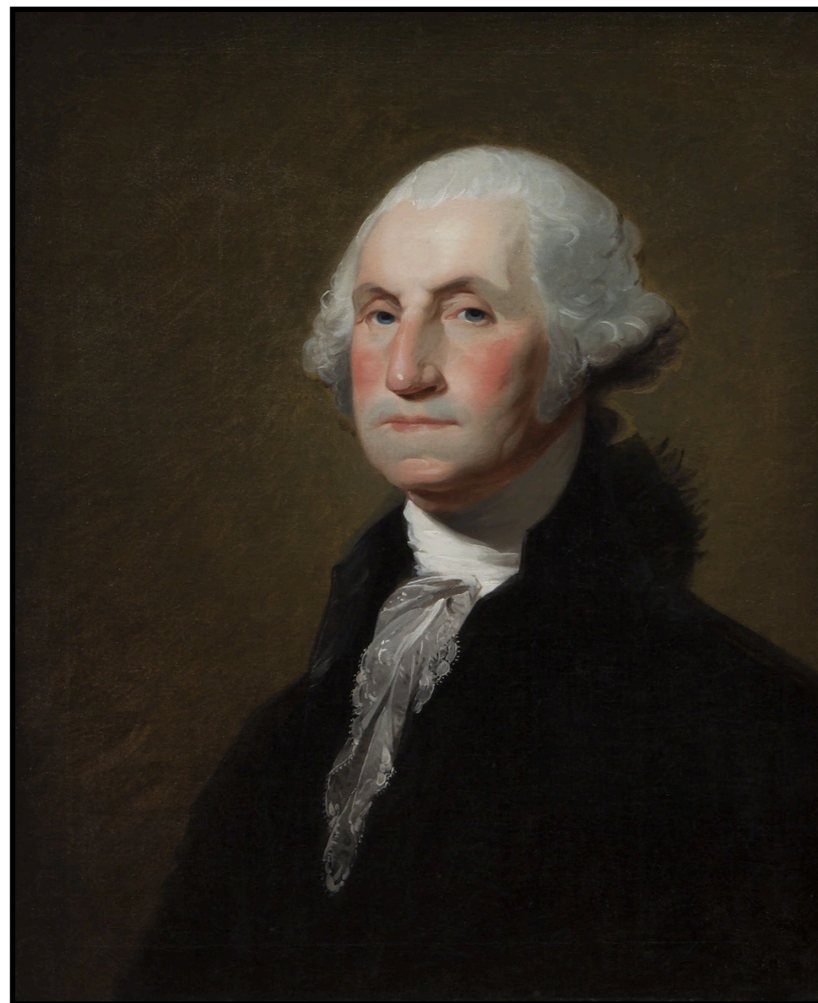


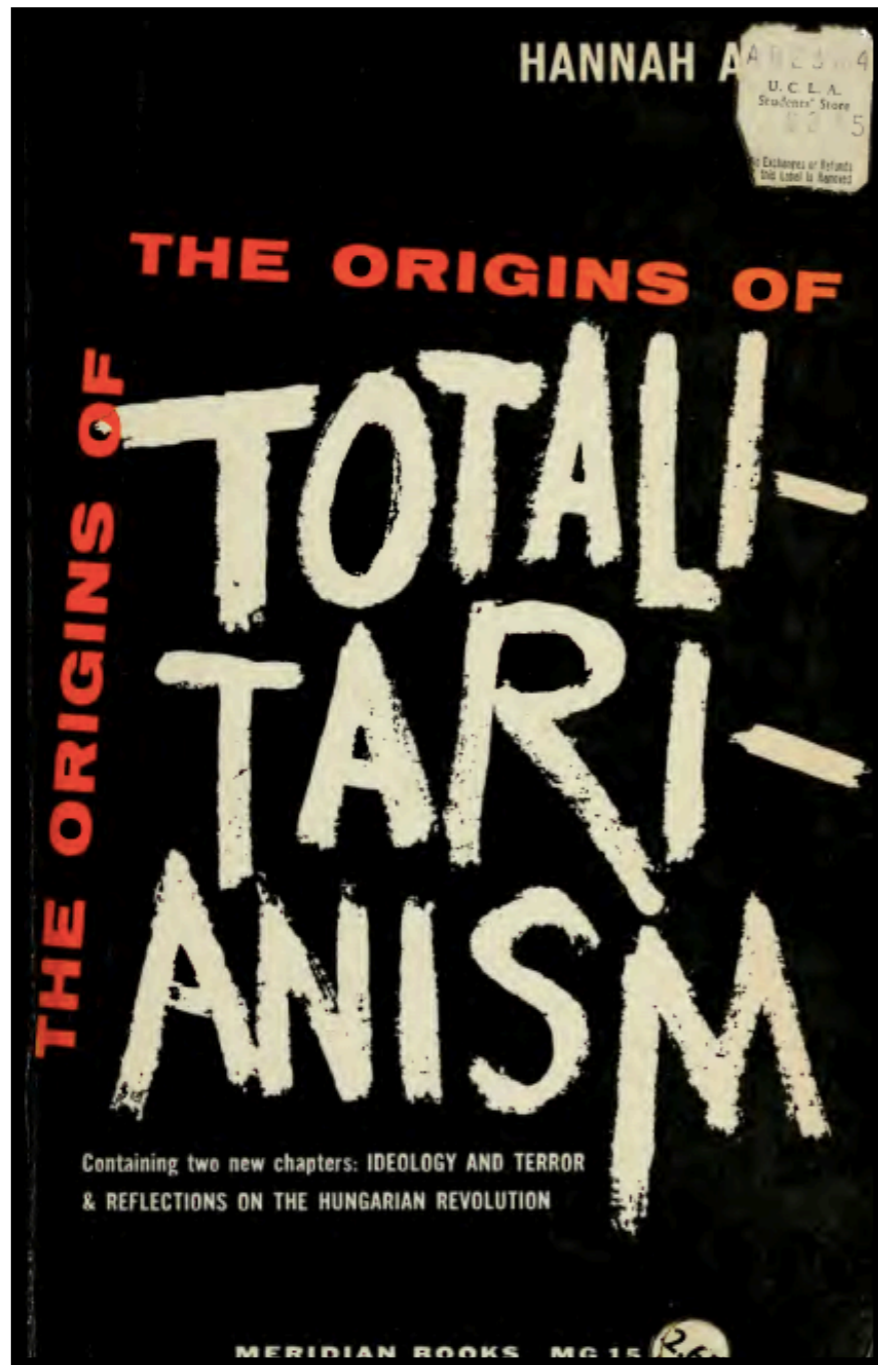
The fake news that haunted George Washington



By Gregory S. Schneider

April 10, 2017 at 8:00 a.m. EDT





“The ideal subject of totalitarian rule is not the convinced Nazi or the convinced Communist, but people for whom the distinction between fact and fiction (i.e. the reality of experience) and the distinction between true and false ... no longer exist.”

—Hannah Arendt, 1951

fake news

Muddled from the start

1

As a critique of “mainstream media”

2

As problematic content; different from “real news”

This Analysis Shows How Viral Fake Election News Stories Outperformed Real News On Facebook

A BuzzFeed News analysis found that top fake election news stories generated more total engagement on Facebook than top election stories from 19 major news outlets combined.



Craig Silverman

BuzzFeed Founding Editor, Canada

Posted on November 16, 2016, at 5:15 p.m. ET

[Tweet](#)
[Share](#)
[Copy](#)



BuzzFeed / Getty Images

Buzzfeed

**November 16, 2016
(13 days after the election)**



Tweets
35.3K

Following
45

Followers
33.7M

Likes
25

Moments
2

Donald J. Trump
@realDonaldTrump

TweetsTweets & repliesMedia

Donald J. Trump Retweeted

940 tweets foundOldest

1. Dec 10th 2016 - 9:11:49 AM EST
20k 61k Hide

Donald J. Trump
@realdonaldtrump

Reports by @CNN that I will be working on The Apprentice during my Presidency, even part time, are ridiculous & untrue - FAKE NEWS!

Dec 10th 2016 - 9:11:49 AM EST · Twitter for iPhone · [View on Twitter](#)

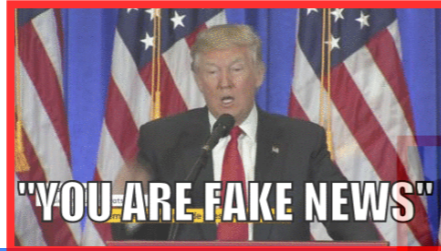
First mention of “fake news” from Trump on Twitter

December 10, 2016 (about a month after the election)

Donald J. Trump
@realDonaldTrump

Reports by @CNN that I will be working on The Apprentice during my Presidency, even part time, are ridiculous & untrue - FAKE NEWS!

Dec 10th 2016 - 9:11:49 AM EST · Twitter for iPhone · [View on Twitter](#)



Trump Hands Out 'Fake News Awards,' Sans the Red Carpet



Google Trends

Explore

fake news"
Search term

+ Compare

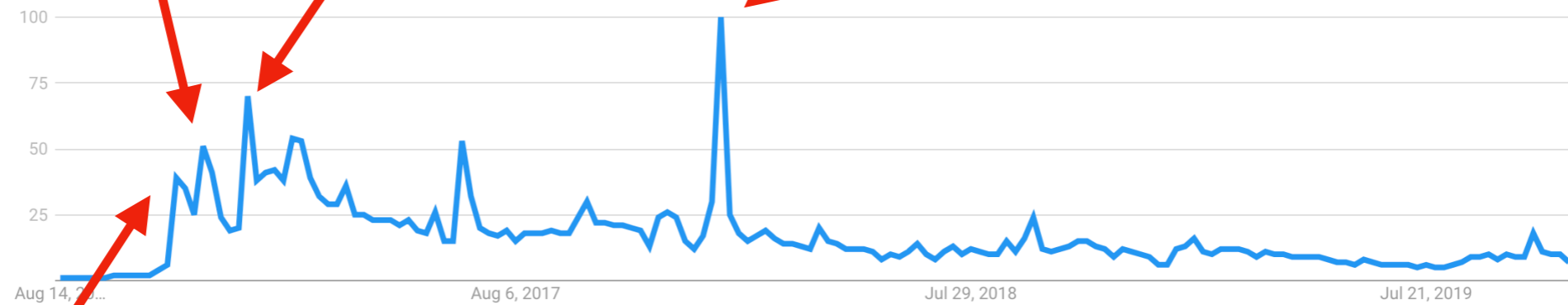
United States ▼

8/13/16 - 11/13/19 ▼

All categories ▼

Web Search ▼

Interest over time ?



BuzzFeed News This Analysis Shows How Viral Fake Election News Stories Outperformed Real News On Facebook

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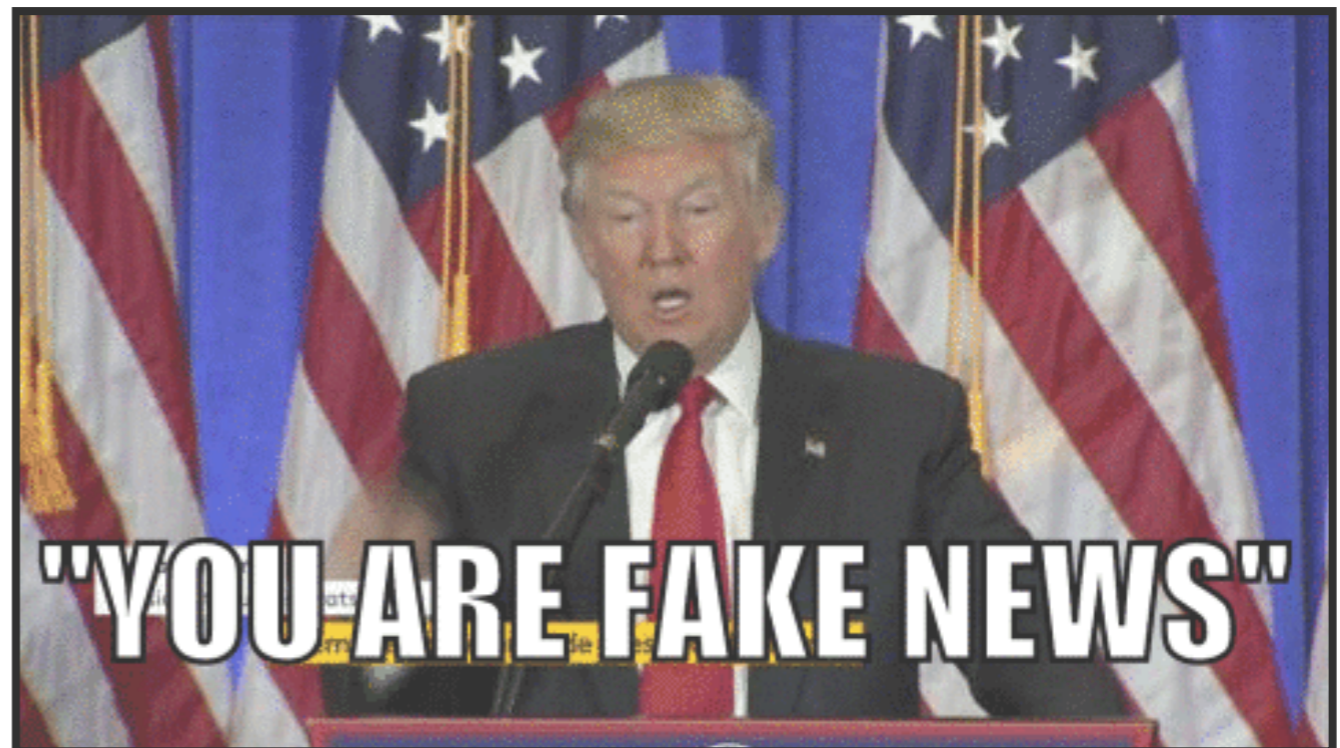
Tweet Share Copy

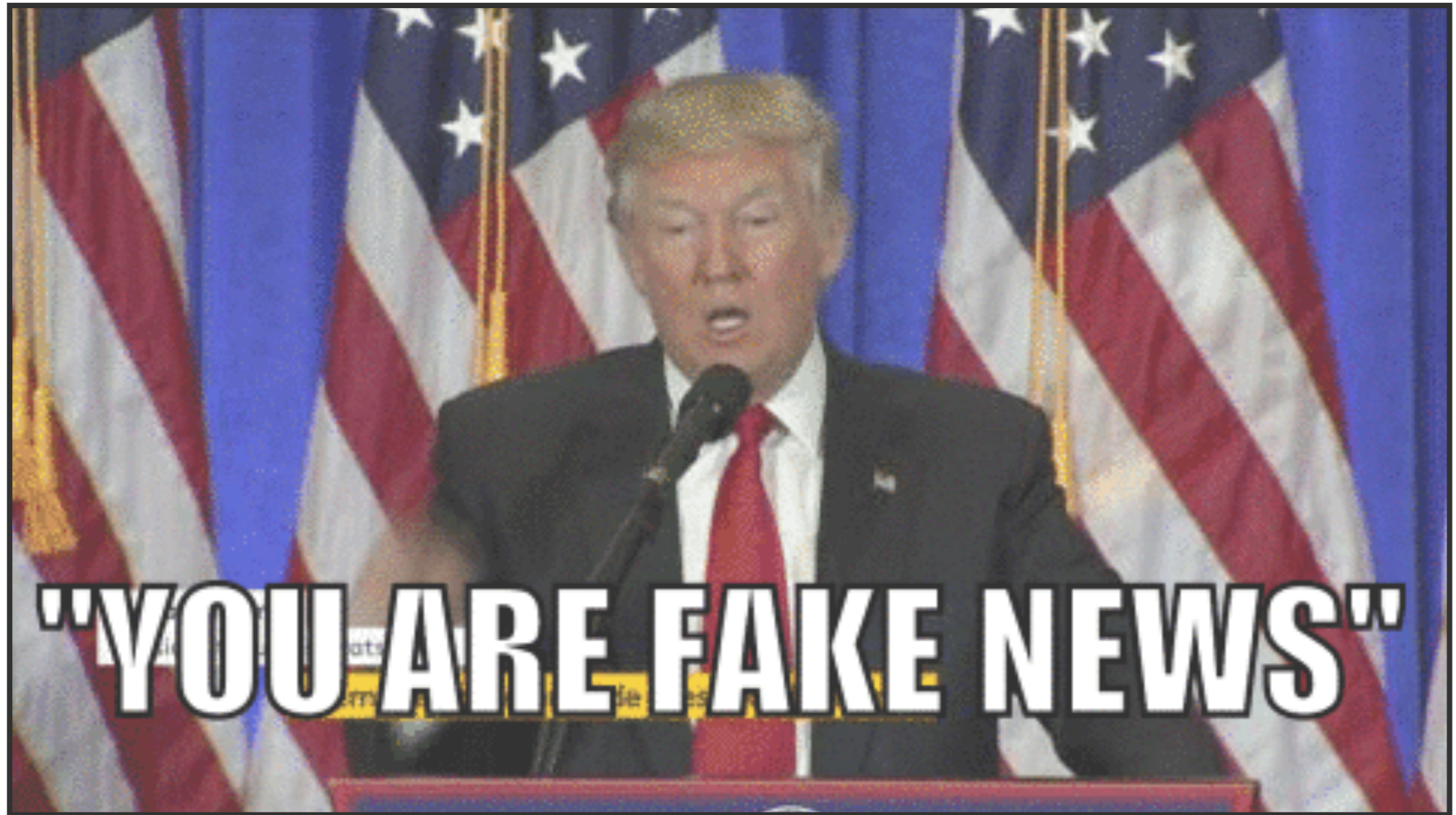


<https://trends.google.com/>

fake news as

1 critique of “mainstream media”





Trump calls CNN “fake news” at his first press conference since Election Day.

January 11, 2017 (9 days before inauguration)



So Biden is coughing and hacking and playing "fingers" with his mask, all over the place, and the Fake News doesn't want to even think about discussing it. "Journalism" has reached the all time low in history. Sadly, Lamestream knows this and doesn't even care!



Twitter has permanently suspended Trump's

🔍 "fake news"

searchbox: "fake news"

Clear All

Search tips

Retweet filters

Deleted filters

Date filters

Device filters

Export

940 tweets found

Latest

1. Jan 3rd 2021 - 10:11:48 AM EST
 35k  198k  Show

Something how Dr. Fauci is revered by the LameStream Media works for me and the Trump Administration, and I am in no way

[illegible]

fake news as

2 problematic content; as different from “real news”

information What is fake?

What is news?

propaganda

junk news

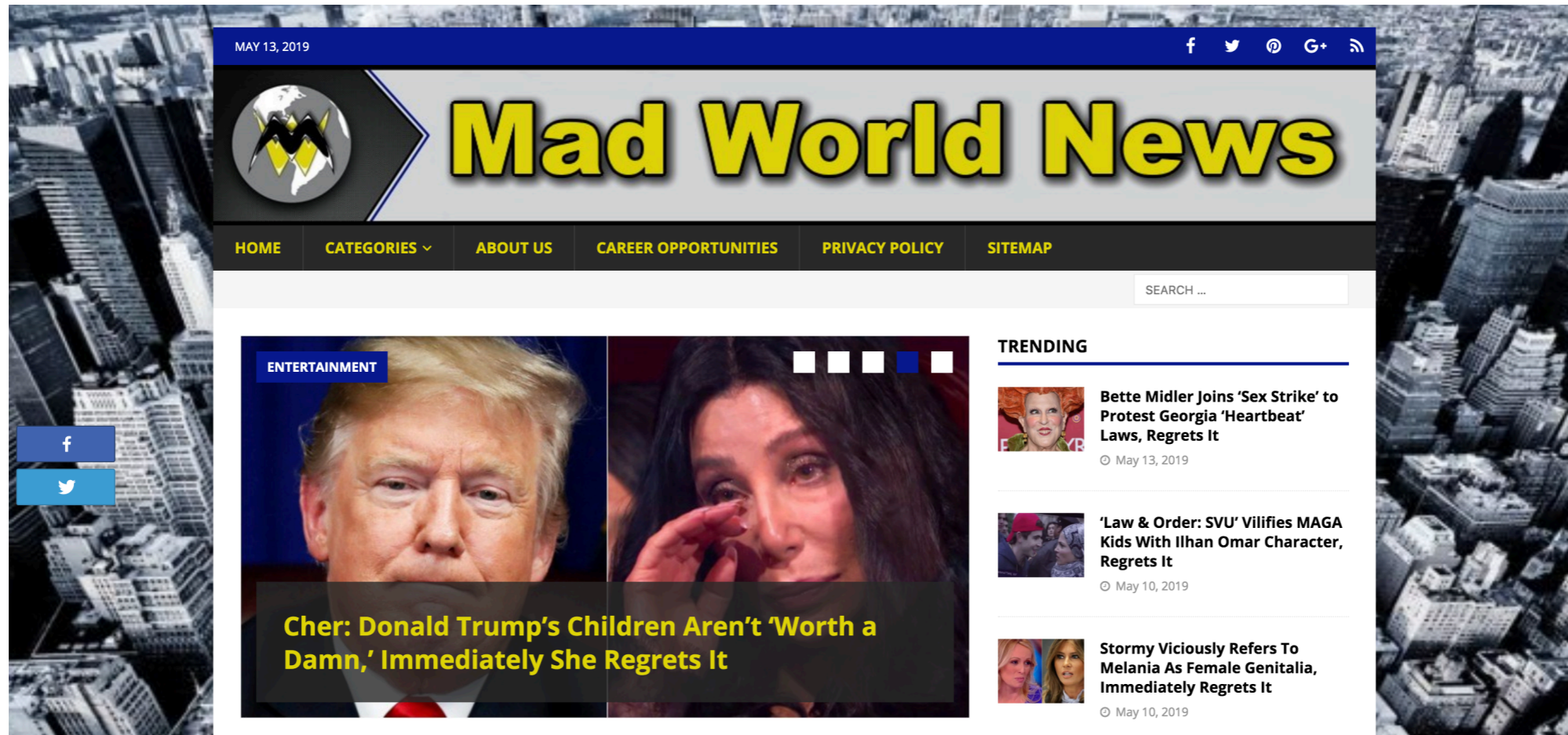
false news

misinformation

disinformation

**low-quality news
content**

2 problematic content; as different from “real news”



2 problematic content; as different from “real news”



The content on Mad World News expresses a personal opinion, advocates a point of view (e.g., on a social or political issue), or is self-promotional. For the purpose of fact-checking, it should be treated as such.

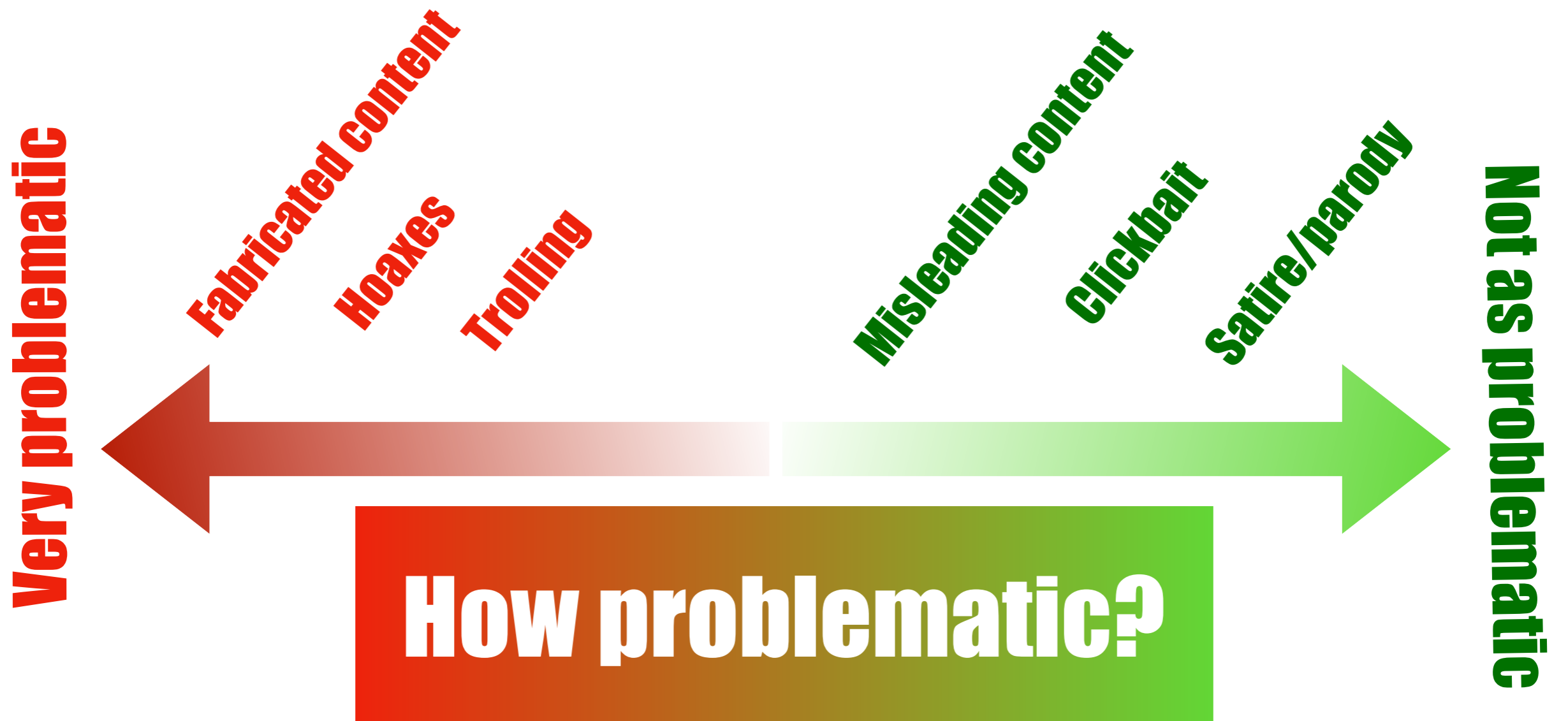
noted at the top.

The content on Mad World News expresses a personal opinion, advocates a point of view (e.g., on a social or political issue), or is self-promotional. For the purpose of fact-checking, it should be treated as such.


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Bette Midler is joining a “sex strike” to protest the new “heartbeat” law passed in the state of Georgia. Yes, that’s right, the 73-year-old Trump hater called on all the women in Georgia to join her and “stop having sex with men,” hoping this would upset the lawmakers. Many Hollywood

2 problematic content; as different from “real news”



2 problematic content; as different from “real news”

 **Chris Jeffrey**
10 hrs · 🌐

This is really REALLY BIG.
HUGE...

From the CDC...

70.6% of those testing positive wore masks ALWAYS.
3.9% of those testing positive wore masks NEVER

This means that people who wear masks, are actually "collecting" the virus in their masks.

The airborne particles are being absorbed into the Masks and staying on our faces rather than dissipating.

A clear indication there is a correlation to more infected people wearing masks than those who do not.

Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report

TABLE 1. (Continued) Characteristics of symptomatic adults ≥18 years who were outpatients in 11 academic health care facilities and who received positive and negative SARS-CoV-2 test results (N = 314)* — United States, July 1–29, 2020

Characteristic	Case patients (n = 154)	Control participants (n = 160)	P-value
Previous close contact with a person with known COVID-19 (n = 11)			
No	89 (57.8)	136 (85.5)	<0.01
Yes	65 (42.2)	23 (14.5)	
Relationship to close contact with known COVID-19 (n = 88)			
Family	33 (50.8)	5 (21.7)	<0.01
Friend	9 (13.8)	4 (17.4)	
Work colleague	11 (16.9)	6 (26.1)	
Other**	6 (9.2)	9 (34.6)	
Multiple	6 (9.2)	0 (0.0)	
Reported use of cloth face covering or mask 14 days before illness onset (n = 2)			
None	6 (1.9)	5 (3.1)	0.86
Rarely	6 (1.9)	6 (3.8)	
Sometimes	11 (7.2)	7 (4.4)	
Often	22 (14.4)	23 (14.5)	
Always	106 (70.4)	119 (74.2)	

* Respondents who completed the interview 14–23 days after their test date. Five participants had significant missingness for exposure questions and were removed from the analysis. Patients were randomly sampled from 11 academic health care systems that are part of the Influenza Vaccine Effectiveness in the Critically Ill Network with: University Medical Center, Springfield, Massachusetts; Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston, Massachusetts; University of Colorado School of Medicine, Aurora, Colorado; Hennepin County Medical Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota; Hennepin County Medical Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota; Salt Lake City, Utah; Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, Columbus, Ohio; Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center, Winston-Salem, North Carolina; Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Nashville, Tennessee; John Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, Maryland; Stanford University Medical Center, Palo Alto, California; University of Washington Medical Center, Seattle, Washington. Participating states include California, Colorado, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Utah, and Washington. ** Other race includes responses of Native American/Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, and other; these were combined because of small sample sizes.

† Reported at least one of the following underlying chronic medical conditions: cardiac condition, hypertension, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, immunodeficiency, psychiatric condition, diabetes, or obesity.

‡ Community exposure questions asked were "In the 14 days before feeling ill, how often did you?" with options of "shop for items (groceries, prescriptions, home goods, clothing, etc.)", "missing = 1", "have people visit you inside your home or go inside someone else's home where there were more than 10 people", "have people visit you inside your home or go inside someone else's home where there were 10 people or less", "go to church or a religious gathering/place of worship", "missing = 1", "go to a restaurant, cafe, bar, or any place designated by the restaurant including patio seating", "missing = 1", "go to a bar or coffee shop (indoor)", "missing = 2", "use public transportation (bus, subway, streetcar, train, etc.)", "missing = 1", "go to an office setting (other than for healthcare purposes)", "missing = 1", "go to a gym or fitness center", "missing = 1", and "go to a school or further (e.g., hair salon, nail salon, etc.)", "missing = 1". Response options were coded as none versus at least once in the 14 days prior to illness onset. Some participants had missing data for exposure questions.

§ Other includes patients of health care workers (1), patient of a restaurant (1), spouse of employee (1), day care teacher (1), member of a religious congregation (1), and unspecified (1).

👍👎🗨️ 352 69 comments 814 shares



ICS SPORTS LOCAL ENTERTAINMENT ONION GAMERS NETWORK OPINION VIDEO



Liberal Relieved He Never Has To Introspect Again After Assembling All The Correct Opinions

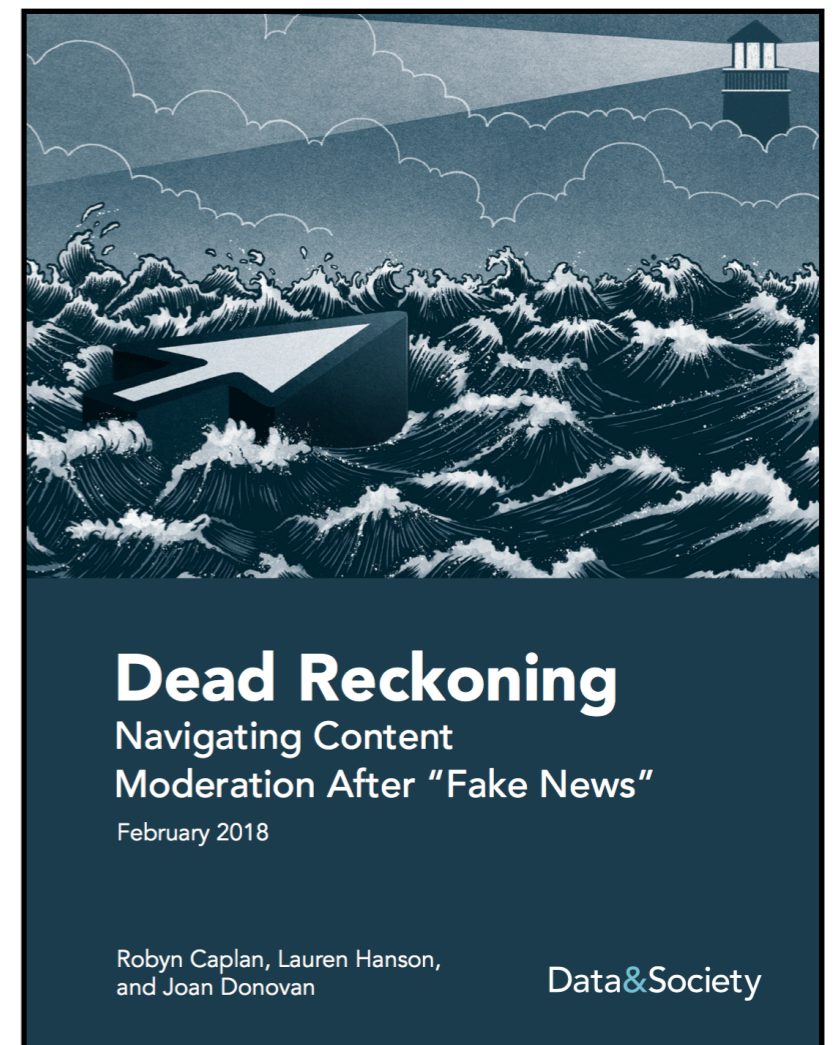
Very problematic

Not as problematic

How problematic?

fake news is

“...more than a widening of partisanship and the misleading use of social media to spread disinformation; it’s about the social sharing of trust, credibility, and evidence in the making of an informed citizenry.”



How do we address it?

1 Make structural changes

2 Empower users



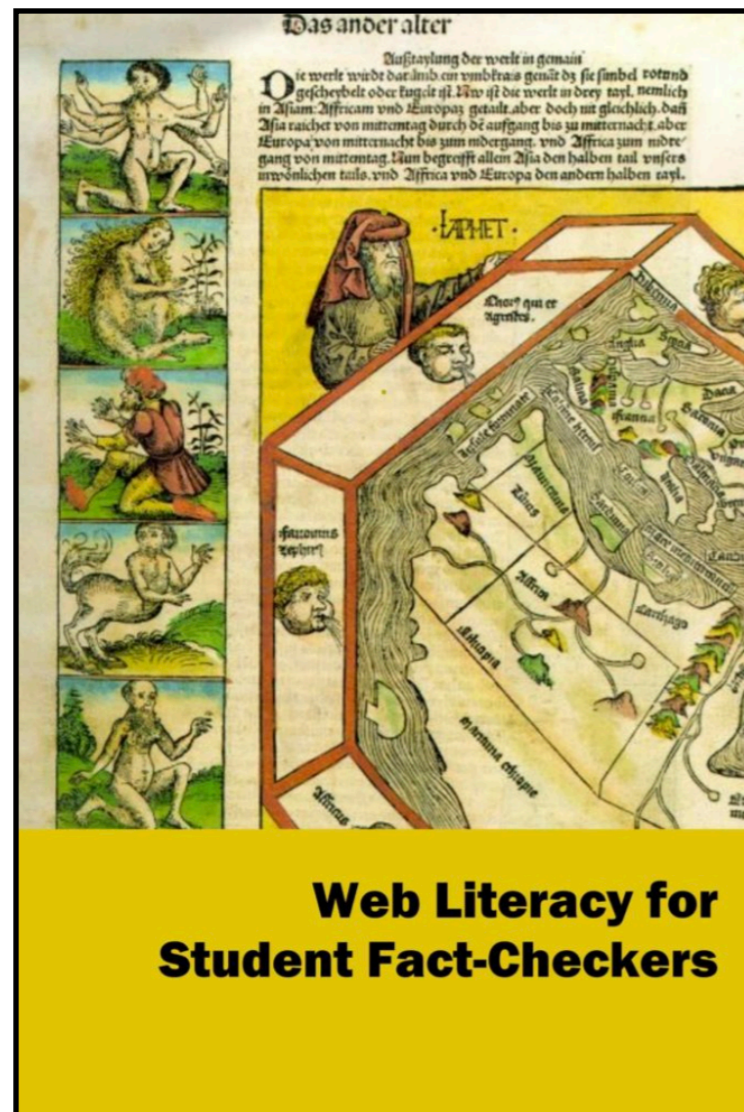
Empower users

(with **WEB** literacy)

1. Look for previous work

2. Go upstream

3. Read laterally



<https://webliteracy.pressbooks.com/>

By Mike Caulfield
Aka @holden

Facts

<simplest definition>

Claims about which there is

- **general agreement (consensus) by**
- **people in the know.**

Facts

- **Not all claims are statements of fact. Facts require consensus.**
- **Fact-checking begins by asking if a source of information is in a position to know (different from assessing “bias” — though that matters too).**
- **Facts are not the same thing as truth. However, facts help us assess truth and thus give important shape to our realities.**

1. Look for previous work

“When fact-checking a particular claim, quote, or article, the simplest thing you can do is to see if someone has already done the work for you.”



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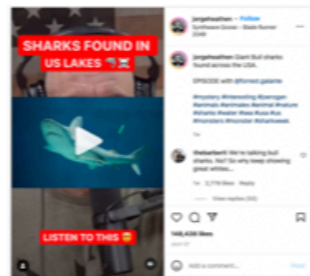


A Project of The Annenberg Public Policy Center

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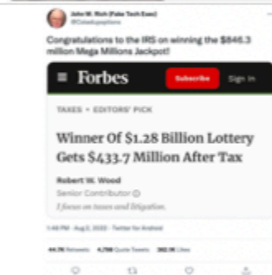
1



False
Source: Politifact
<https://bit.ly/3QueJ40>

"Experts told The Associated Press **there's no documentation of bull sharks in the Great Lakes**. The myth also has been debunked by organizations such as the Shedd Aquarium (on Lake Michigan) and the Great Lakes Echo, produced by Michigan State University's Knight Center for Environmental Journalism."

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<https://bit.ly/3QIFCao>

"The user appears to have based this assumption on a **mistaken calculation based on the headline and not on the content of the article itself**, which details how the lottery winnings get paid out and what taxes are owed."

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Source: Politifact
<https://bit.ly/3bKqHrj>

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<https://bit.ly/3dkdFBY>

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"If infants are included, rankings of the leading causes of death for children up to age 18 change."

2. Go upstream

“Most web content is not original. Get to the original source to understand the trustworthiness of the information.”



John W. Rich (Fake Tech Exec)
@Cokedupoptions

Congratulations to the IRS on winning the \$846.3 million Mega Millions Jackpot!

Forbes

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TAXES • EDITORS' PICK

Winner Of \$1.28 Billion Lottery Gets \$433.7 Million After Tax

Robert W. Wood
Senior Contributor ⓘ
I focus on taxes and litigation.

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44.8K Retweets 4,808 Quote Tweets 362.3K Likes



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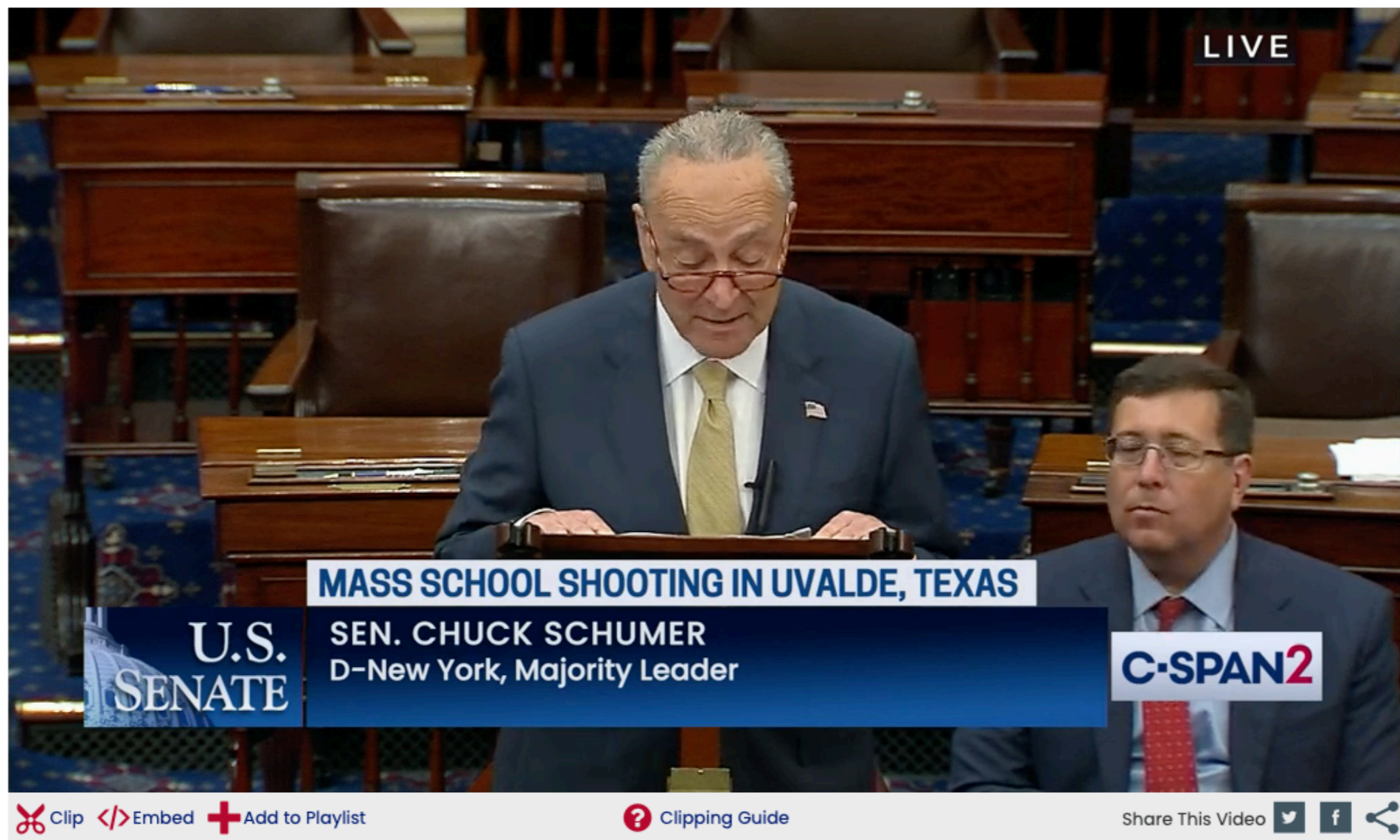
Jul 30, 2022, 04:37pm EDT

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Listen to article 5 minutes

2. Go upstream

“Most web content is not original. Get to the original source to understand the trustworthiness of the information.”



3. Read laterally

“Once you get to the source of a claim, read what other people say about the source (publication, author, etc.). The truth is in the network.”



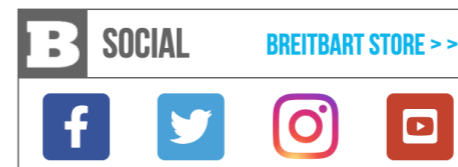
TRENDING: HUNTER BIDEN AMY CONEY BARRETT CHINA VIRUS DEMOCRAT CITY UNREST CHEAT-BY-MAIL BATTLE WOKE SPORTS

CARLSON: ‘WE HAVE MANDATORY CONSENSUS — MASKS ARE GOOD, ANYONE WHO QUESTIONS THE UTTER GOODNESS OF MASKS IS BAD’

f 200 EMAIL SHARE TWEET



by JEFF POOR | 14 Oct 2020



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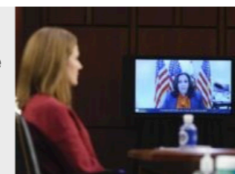
Radicals Post Online Guide to 'Disrupting' Trump's 'Attempted Coup'

0 comments



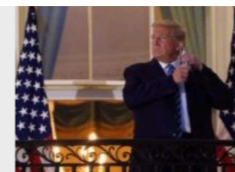
Fact Check: Kamala Harris Repeats False Claims on Barrett, Obamacare

0 comments



Trump Returns to the White House: Don't Let Coronavirus

0 comments

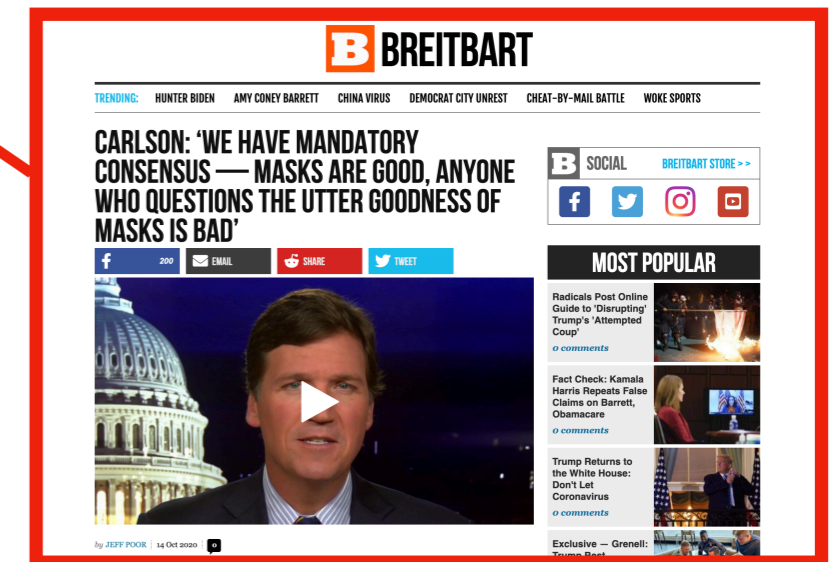


Exclusive — Grenell: Trump Best



AllSides™ Media Bias Chart

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far-right^[6]

misogynistic, xenophobic, and racist



Breitbart News

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

"Breitbart" redirects here. For other uses, see [Breitbart \(surname\)](#).

Breitbart News Network (known commonly as **Breitbart News**, **Breitbart** or **Breitbart.com**) is an American [far-right](#)^[6] syndicated news, opinion and commentary^{[7][8]} website founded in mid-2007 by [American conservative](#) commentator [Andrew Breitbart](#), who conceived it as "the *Huffington Post* of the right".^{[4][9][10]} Its journalists are widely considered to be ideologically driven, and some of its content has been called [misogynistic](#), [xenophobic](#), and [racist](#) by [liberals](#) and many traditional [conservatives](#) alike.^[11] The site has published a number of [conspiracy theories](#)^{[12][13]} and intentionally misleading stories.^{[14][15]}

Breitbart News aligned with the [alt-right](#) under the management of former executive chairman [Steve Bannon](#),^[16] who declared the website "the platform for the alt-right" in 2016.^[17] In 2016, Breitbart News became a virtual rallying spot for supporters of [Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign](#).^[11] The company's management, together with former staff member [Milo Yiannopoulos](#), solicited ideas for stories from, and worked to advance and market ideas of, [neo-Nazi](#) and [white supremacist](#) groups and individuals.^{[18][19]} After the election, more than 2,000 organizations removed Breitbart News from ad buys following [Internet activism](#) campaigns denouncing the site's controversial positions.^{[20][21][22][23]}

Breitbart News is headquartered in [Los Angeles](#), with bureaus in [Texas](#), [London](#), and [Jerusalem](#). Co-founder [Larry Solov](#) is the co-owner (along with Andrew Breitbart's widow Susie Breitbart and the [Mercer family](#))^[24] and CEO, while [Alex Marlow](#) is the [editor-in-chief](#), [Wynton Hall](#) is [managing editor](#),^[25] and [Joel Pollak](#)^[4] and [Peter Schweizer](#)^[26] are senior [editors-at-large](#).

Breitbart News Network



Screenshot [\[show\]](#)

Type of site	Politics News and opinion
Available in	English
Owner	Breitbart News Network, LLC ^[1]

ideologically driven,

has published a number of [conspiracy theories](#)^{[12][13]} and intentionally misleading stories.^{[14][15]}

**However, different users
have different levels of
digital readiness.**

Opinion

Personality Type, as well as Politics, Predicts Who Shares Fake News

Highly impulsive people who lean conservative are more likely to share false news stories. They have



November 12, 2021

INTERNET

COMMUNICATIONS

In short, we did not find that third-party fact-checker warnings were effective in reducing the spread of misinformation that is especially pronounced among LCCs. This result is worrying given that our research suggests that LCCs appear to be the primary drivers of the proliferation of fake news. Social media networks therefore need to find a different solution than just tagging stories with warning labels. Interventions based on the assumption that truth matters may be inadequate. Another option might involve social media companies monitoring fake news that has the potential to hurt others, such as misinformation related to vaccines and elections, and actively removing such content from their platform.

Digital readiness: The five groups along a spectrum from least ready to most ready

% of U.S. adults in each group

**Relatively
hesitant
52%**

14% The Unprepared

They have relatively lower levels of tech adoption and do not use the internet for learning, need help setting up new tech devices, and are not familiar with “ed tech” terms. The Unprepared do not have confidence in their computer skills and are not sure they can find trustworthy information online.

MORE LIKELY TO HAVE THESE
CHARACTERISTICS

Women
Ages 50 and older
Lower income households
Lower levels of formal education

5% Traditional Learners

They are active learners and have technology, but are not as likely to use the internet for pursuing learning and have concerns about whether to trust online information.

Women
Minorities
Age: 50 and older
Lower income households

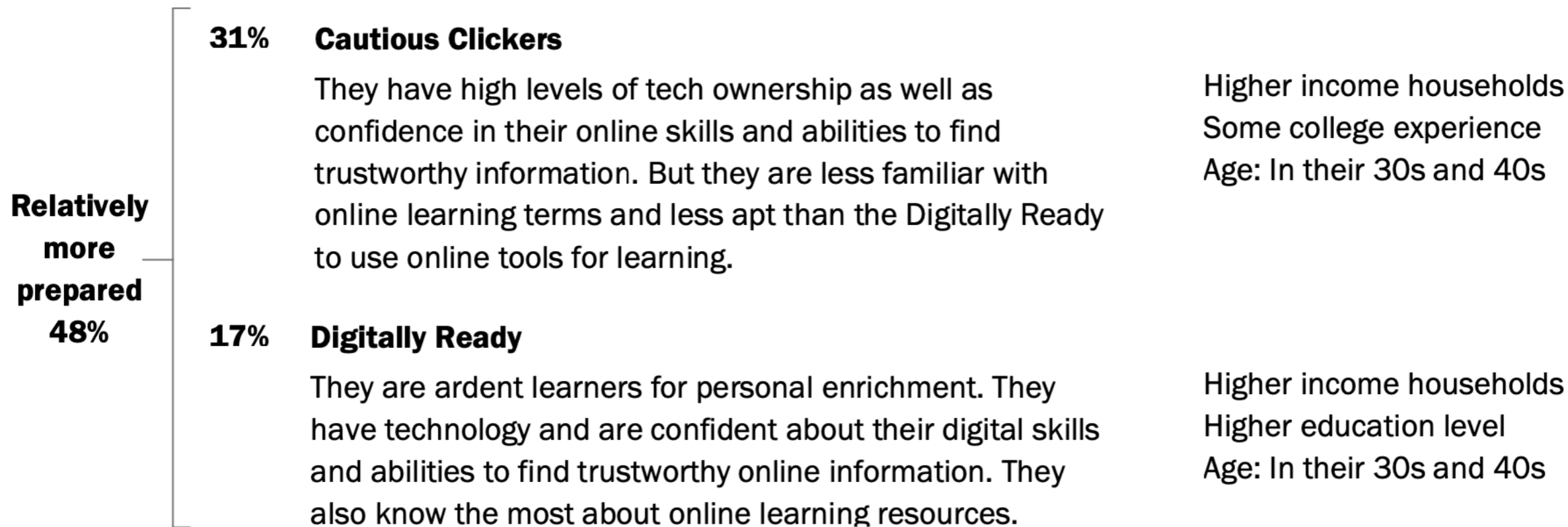
33% The Reluctant

They have higher levels of digital skills than The Unprepared, but they have low levels of awareness of new education technology concepts. This translates into relatively low use of the internet for learning.

Men
Age: 50 and older
Lower income households
Lower levels of formal education

Source: Survey conducted Oct. 13-Nov. 15, 2015.
“Digital Readiness Gaps”

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



Source: Survey conducted Oct. 13-Nov. 15, 2015.
“Digital Readiness Gaps”

BEHAVIOR | OPINION

Digital Literacy Doesn't Stop the Spread of Misinformation

Just because you can spot falsehoods doesn't mean you won't share them

By David Rand, Nathaniel Sirlin on July 15, 2022

[أعرض هذا باللغة العربية](#)

When we looked at the connection between digital literacy and the willingness to *share* false information with others through social media, however, the results were different. People who were more digitally literate were just as likely to say they'd share false articles as people who lacked digital literacy. Like the first finding, the (lack of) connection between digital literacy and sharing false news was not affected by political party affiliation or whether the topic was politics or the pandemic.

BEHAVIOR | OPINION

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wouldn't you be less likely to share falsehoods? A potential answer comes from prior work of ours on why people share misinformation. We found that although most people don't *want* to spread misinformation, social media is distracting: people are scrolling quickly, and their attention is drawn to social validation and other feedback, such as how many likes their posts will get. This means we often forget to even ask ourselves if a story is true or false when considering, however quickly, whether to share it.

Make structural changes

1. Professional fact-checking

2. Demonetizing bad content

3. Better content moderation

4. Regulation



Make structural changes

1. Professional fact-checking

Institutions: universities, news agencies, advocacy groups

FIRST DRAFT



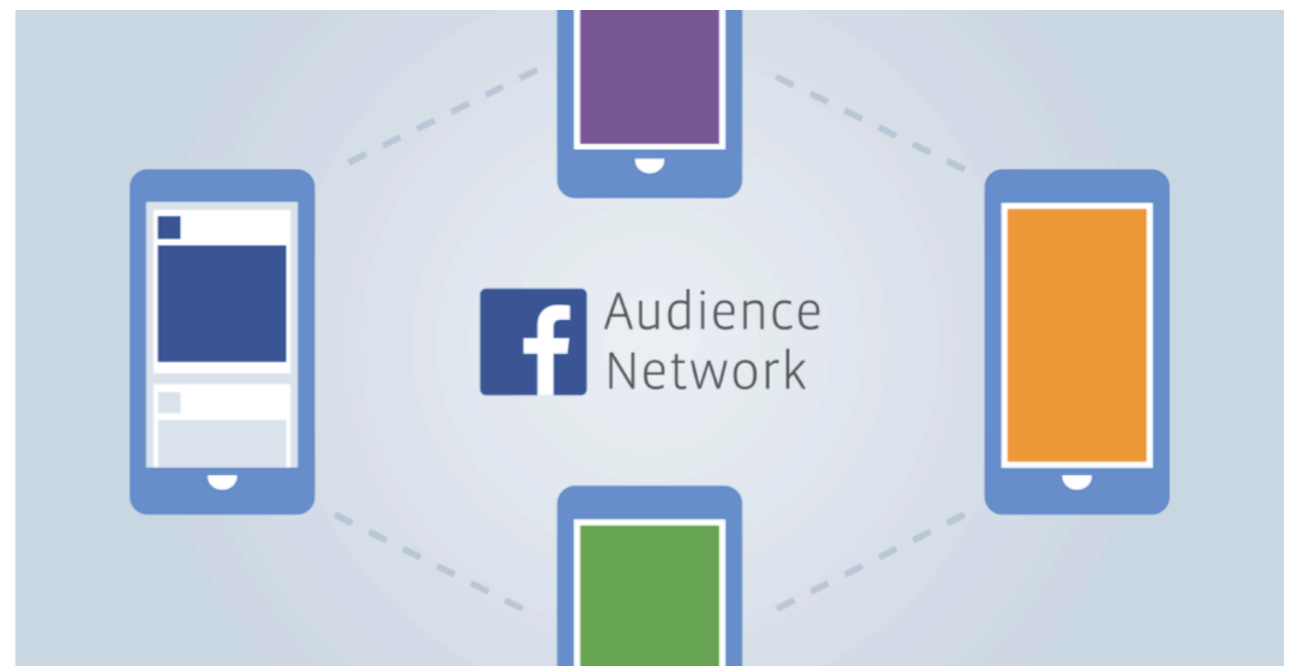
Don't be fooled by media bias and fake news.



Make structural changes

2. De-monetizing bad content

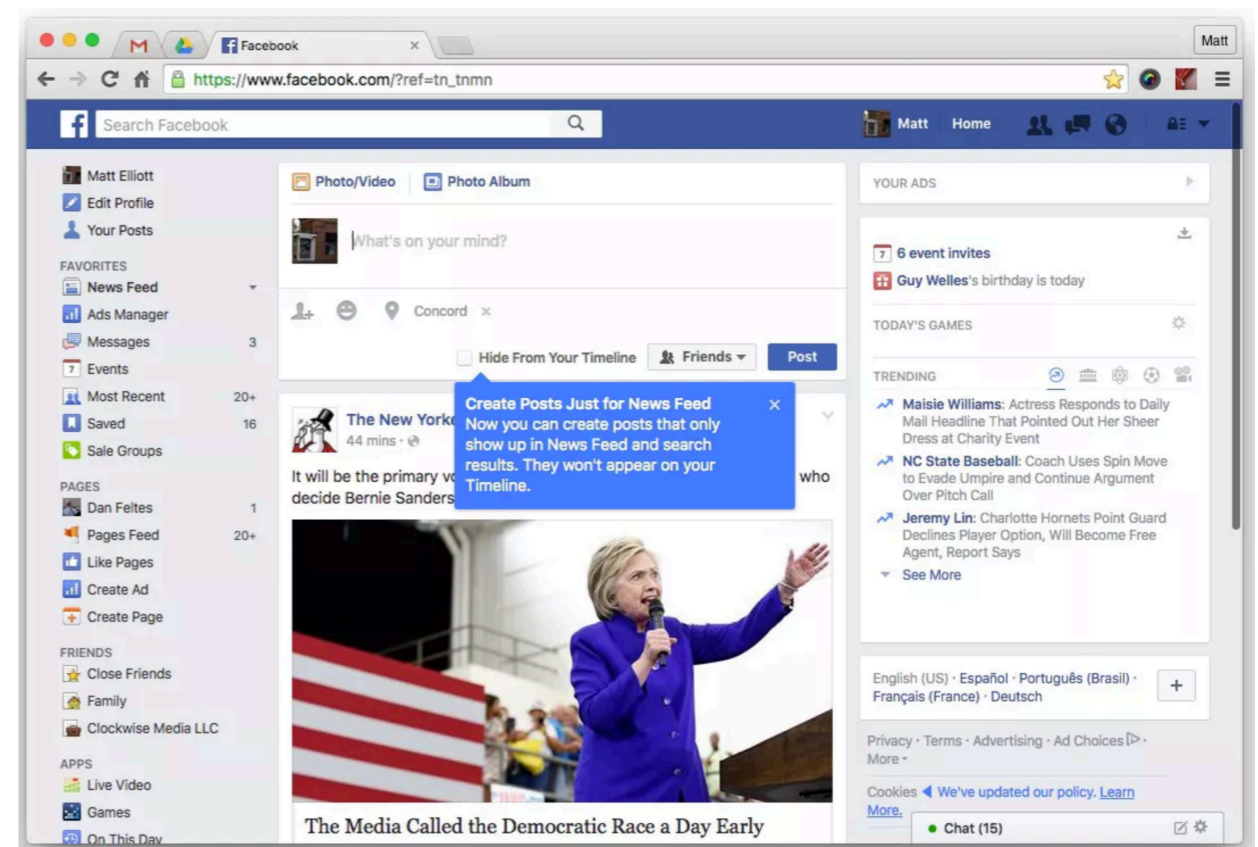
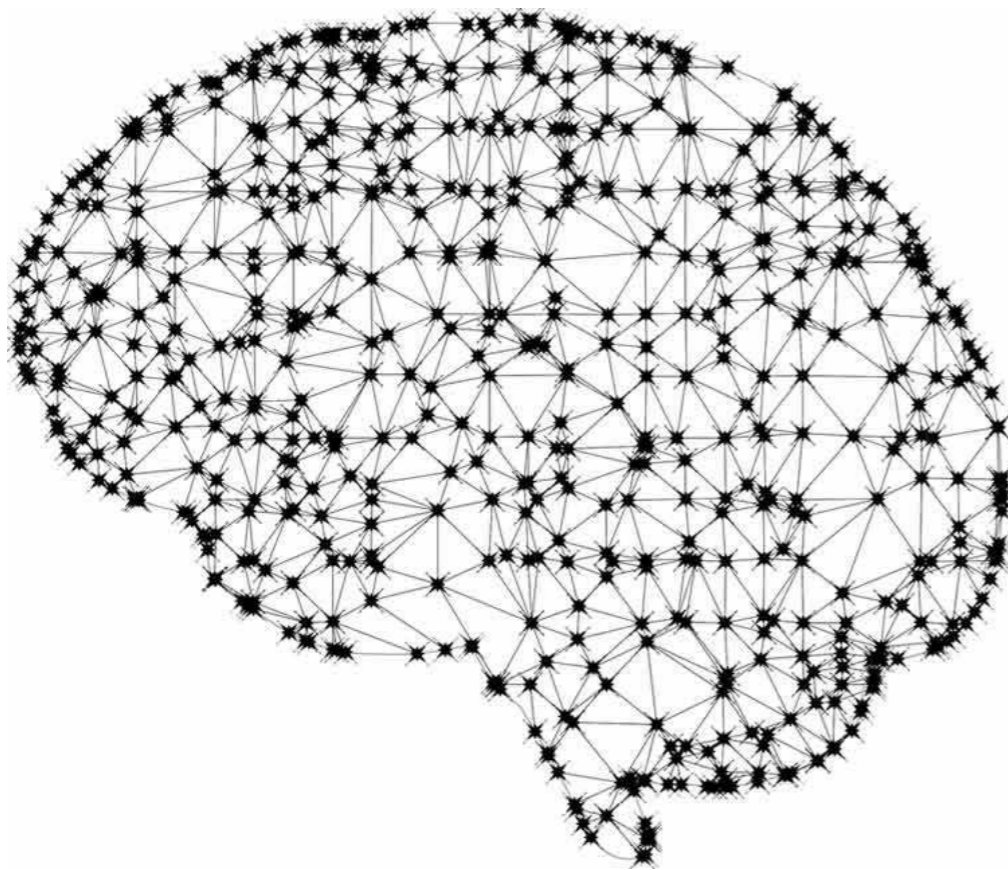
Institutions: platforms (Google, Facebook, Twitter, Amazon), government, advocacy groups



Make structural changes

3. Better content moderation

Institutions: platforms (Google, Facebook, Twitter, Amazon), tech companies



Make structural changes

4. Regulation

Institutions: government



What is the future of

fake news?

Deep fakes



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5,991,428 views

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BuzzFeedVideo ✓
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Resources for combating fake news

jasonluther.net/fakenews



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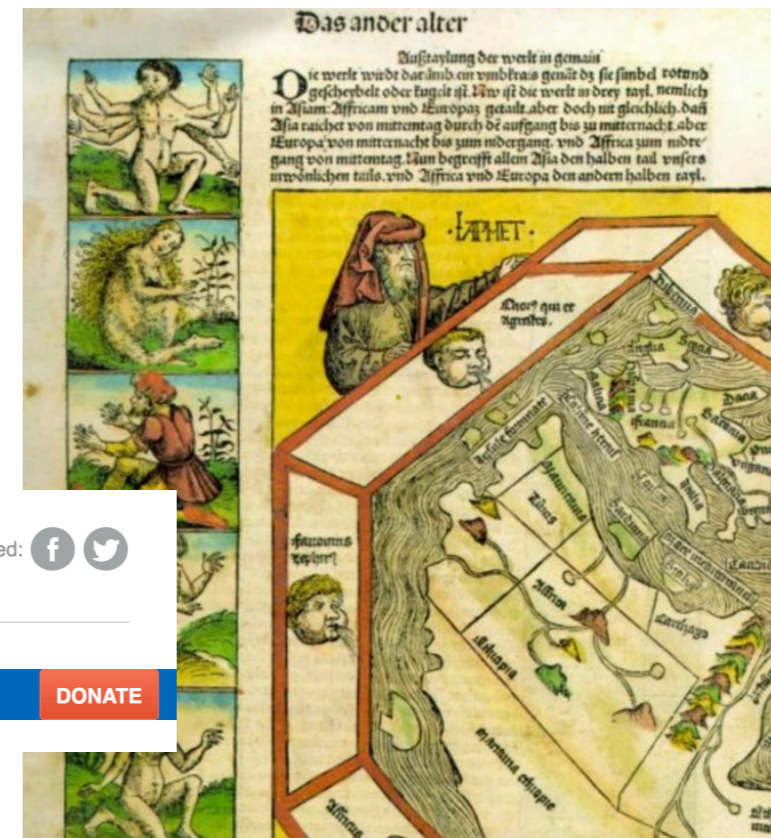
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**Web Literacy for
Student Fact-Checkers**