



MEDIA ¶ THE PUBLIC

Week 7
Misinformation
¶
Fact-checking

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How good are we dealing with misinformation?





Information disorder

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- Misinformation: Information that is false, but not created with the intention of causing harm.
- Disinformation: Information that is false and deliberately created to harm a person, social group, organization or country.
- Mal-information: Information that is based on reality, used to inflict harm on a person, organization or country.

Source: [Council of Europe report \(2017, p. 20\)](#)

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- “Fake news”: purposefully crafted, sensational, emotionally charged, misleading or totally fabricated information that mimics the form of mainstream news (Zimdars & McLeod, 2020)



Information disorder

INFORMATION DISORDER

FALSE

Mis-Information

*False Connection
Misleading Content*

HARMFUL

Dis-Information

*False Context
Imposter Content
Manipulated Content
Fabricated Content*

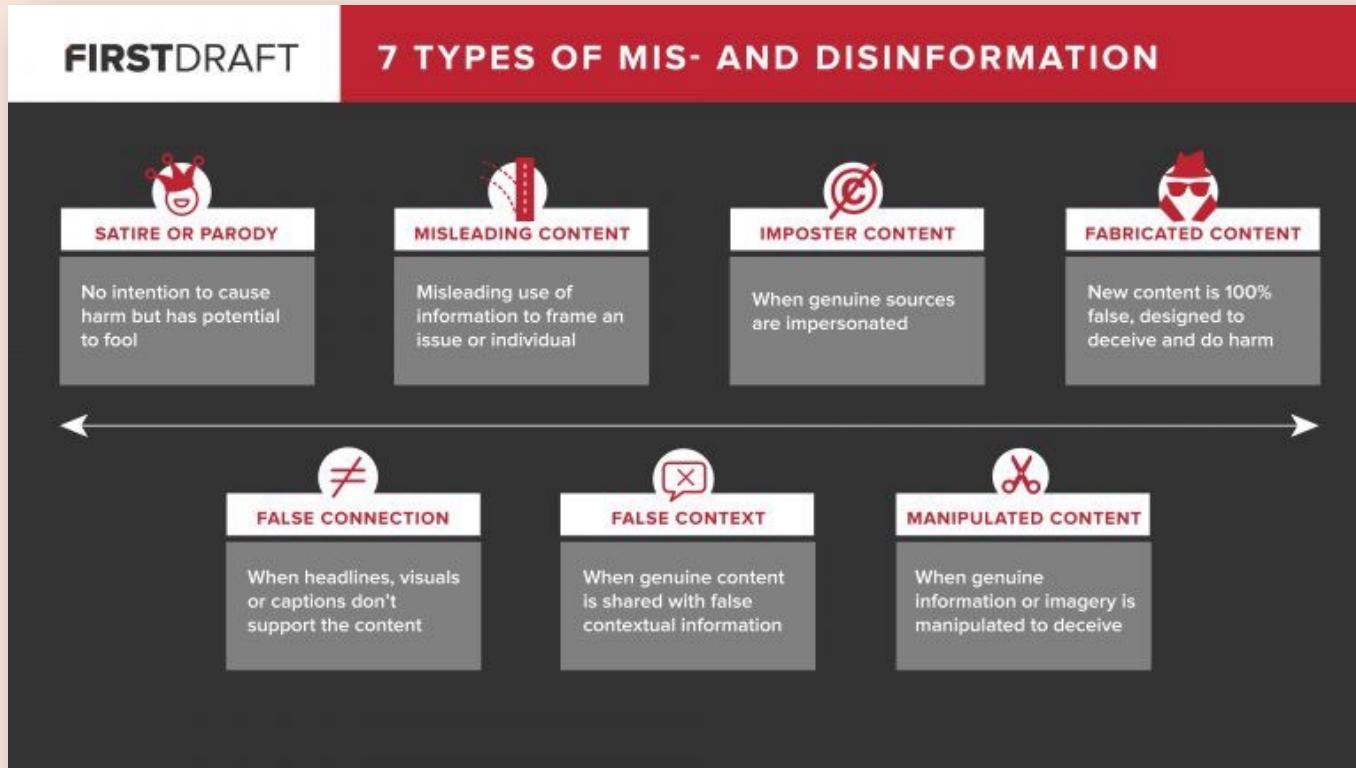
Mal-Information

*Leaks
Harassment
Hate speech*

Source: [Council of Europe report \(2017\)](#)



Typology of “inaccurate information” (Wardle, 2017)





Example: Satire or parody



Trump Sits Down Beside Fire With Quill And Ink For Evening Writing Out Tweets

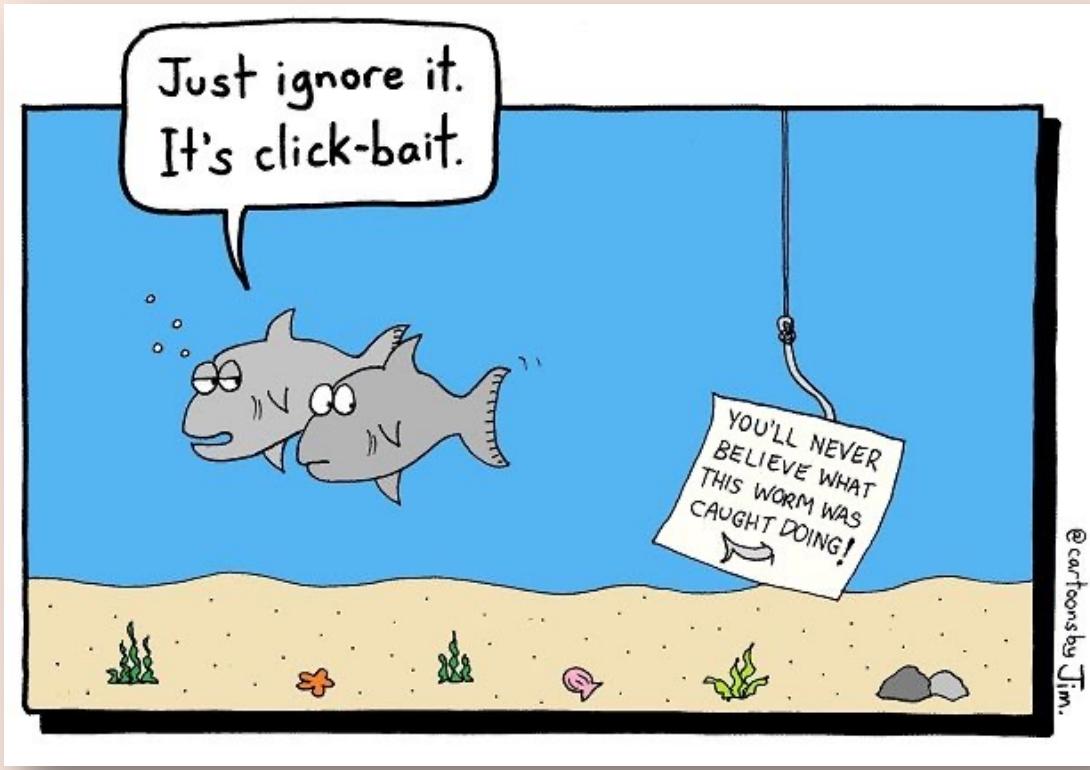


Blindfolded Clinton Invites Debate Coaches To Attack Her With Talking Points From All Sides

Source: The onion ([Trump](#); [Clinton](#))



Examples: False connection





Examples: False connection

+ • Clickbaity titles:

- 10 Reasons Why Noise Cancelling Headphones Are the Best
- 10 Things You Need to Do Before Buying a House
- Piggybacking: "Forbes Entrepreneur Shares X Tips..."
- This Is Why Business Owners are Investing in Bitcoin
- "This Is The Surprising Way Coronavirus Has Changed Travel Insurance"
- "This is how business owners are saving thousands on their taxes"
- "You Can Now Save Money with Y New Strategy"
- "The Last Flatiron You Will Ever Need"
- "'166 Photos You Won't Believe Are Not Photoshopped"
- "Why You Should Invest in NFT Now"
- 'SPREAD THIS: THE ELECTION POLLS ARE RIGGED ...'
-

The collage consists of four separate news snippets from BuzzFeed News, each featuring a large, bold, attention-grabbing headline:

- ALL NEWS ABOUT POLITICS**
ELECTIONS 2016 | POLITICS | USA NEWS
BREAKING NEWS
BREAKING: PROOF SURFACES THAT OBAMA WAS BORN IN KENYA – TRUMP WAS RIGHT ALL ALONG...
October 31, 2016 & admin
- Pope Francis Forbids Catholics From Voting For Hillary!**
Politics | Posted in POLITICAL NEWS
Pope Francis, who became Pope Benedict XVI in 2005 and served through 2013, recently sent a letter in 2004 forbidding Catholics from voting for anyone who promotes abortion or who exposes her fetus. The letter reads: 'The Church teaches that abortion or euthanasia is a grave sin.' The 85-year-old pontiff has since been replaced by Pope Francis.
- Robert De Niro Switches To Trump Shocks Hollywood**
Politics | Posted in POLITICAL NEWS
Robert De Niro, 72, has reportedly switched his political affiliation from Democrat to Republican, surprising many in the entertainment industry and his fans.
- Bill Clinton's S*x Tape Just Leaked (VIDEO)**
October 28, 2016 & admin
While the mainstream media continues to target Donald Trump for s*xual assault allegations, despite the fact that there is no evidence to support them, it [...]

Source: BuzzFeed news



Examples: Misleading content

FACTCHECK POSTS

Trump, Pence ‘Acid Wash’ Facts

By [Eugene Kiely](#)

Posted on September 8, 2016

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The FBI investigation into Hillary Clinton’s use of a private email system while secretary of state continues to be a rich source of attack lines for her opponents. But not all of them are accurate:

- Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump falsely claimed Clinton “acid washed” 33,000 personal emails to delete them, calling it “an expensive process.” The FBI said Clinton’s tech team used BleachBit, which is a free software program. It does not use chemicals.
- Mike Pence, Trump’s running mate, falsely claimed the FBI found “more than 15,000 additional emails dealing with national security.” The FBI recovered about 14,900 emails, but not all of them are work-related and only three contained classified information.



Example: False content

- + • Google reverse image search
- TinEye

Breaking: Trump sending Border Patrol agents to forcibly separate immigrant children from their families!!





Examples: Imposter content

- abcnews.com.co

The screenshot shows a news article from abcnews.com.co. The URL in the address bar is abcnews.com.co. The page title is "Obama Signs Executive Order Banning The Pledge Of Allegiance In Schools Nationwide - ABC News". The main headline is "Obama Signs Executive Order Banning The Pledge Of Allegiance In Schools Nationwide". Below the headline is a photo of several men in suits. A sidebar on the right features a red banner with the text "5 Must-See Places".

- abcnews.com

The screenshot shows a news article from abcnews.com. The URL in the address bar is abcnews.com. The page title is "President Biden announces new sanctions on Russia". The main headline is "President Biden announces new sanctions on Russia". Below the headline is a photo of President Biden speaking at a podium. A sidebar on the right lists various news stories.



Examples: Manipulated context

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Source: [Snopes](#)



Examples: Fabricated content

Pope Francis Shocks World, Endorses Donald Trump for President, Releases Statement

TOPICS: Pope Francis Endorses Donald Trump



Obama Signs Executive Order Banning The Pledge Of Allegiance In Schools Nationwide

By Jimmy Rustling, ABC News - November 11, 2016 47813 718

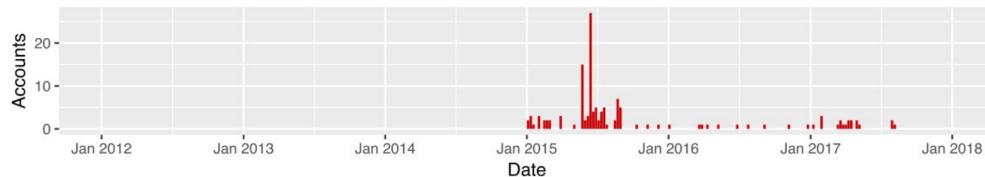
SHARE



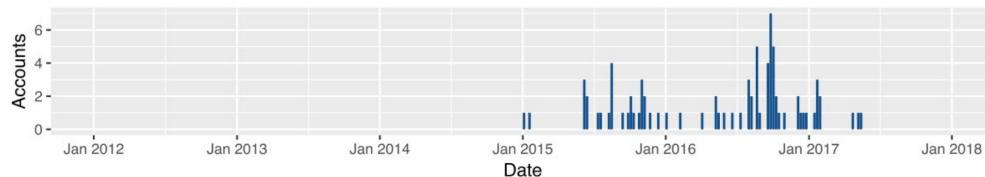


Examples of disinformation (information warfare)

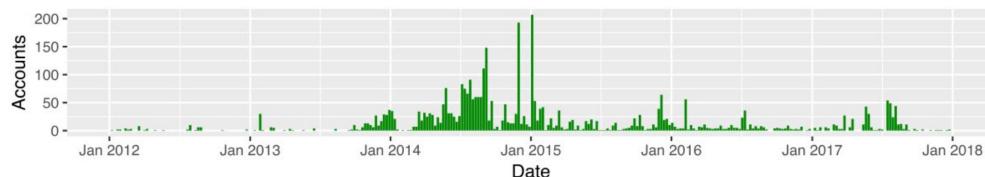
INSTAGRAM



FACEBOOK



TWITTER



Source: DiResta et al. (2019)



Examples of disinformation (information warfare)

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- Black culture, community, Black Lives Matter
- Blue Lives Matter, pro-police
- Anti-refugee, pro-immigration reform
- Texas culture, community, and pride
- Southern culture (Confederate history)
- Separatist movements and secession
- Muslim culture, community, and pride
- Christian culture, community, and pride
- LGBT culture, community, and pride
- Native American culture, community, and pride
- Meme and “red pill” culture
- Patriotism and Tea Party culture
- Liberal and feminist culture
- Veteran’s Issues
- Gun rights, pro-2nd Amendment
- Political Pro-Trump, anti-Clinton content
- Pro-Bernie Sanders and Jill Stein content
- Syria and ISIS, pro-Assad, anti-U.S. involvement
- Trust in media

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Fact-checking in the social media

Platform	Policies
<u>Facebook</u>	Facebook identifies misinformation after it goes viral and refers it to third party fact-checkers before applying a label. Punishments are threatened for repeat offenders.
<u>Twitter</u>	No comprehensive misinformation policies exist. Twitter will label or remove manipulated media, or anything intended to misinform or interfere with elections or other civic processes. Exceptions are made for key elected officials.
<u>YouTube</u>	YouTube provides information from third-party fact-checkers on specific searches. Specific videos are not fact-checked.
<u>Pinterest</u>	Pinterest says they will remove content from conspiracy theories, medical misinformation, election misinformation, and disinformation campaigns. Manipulated media will also be removed. The fact-checking process is not outlined.



Fact-checking in the social media

8:00

covid and ibuprofen

Independent fact check

Checked by FactCheck.org • 1 month ago
'No Evidence to Back COVID-19 Ibuprofen Concerns'

Claim: "Information from Vienna's laboratory studying COVID-19 say vast majority of people who died had ibuprofen/Advil in their system so do not take it!!"

Rating: False

The truth about coronavirus and ibuprofen
Nighttime News
5:16

A closer look at acetaminophen vs. ibuprofen
RHY Health
5:48

Doctors weigh in on ibuprofen impact on COVID-19
Daily Updates
4:27

Should people with COVID-19 take...

Home Explore Subscriptions Inbox Library

Google

sharks swimming in street houston

ALL IMAGES VIDEOS NEWS MAPS

Latest GIF HD Product Color Label

hurricane harvey flood shark attack

shark swimming in Houston flo... al.com

Houston Flooding Shark Swim... youtube.com

Jesse Michael Hurricane Harvey: That shark p... usatoday.com

Does this photograph show a shark swimming down a Houston street after Hurricane Harvey? snopes.com

Shark Swimming Down a High... snopes.com

Shark Swimming Flooded Street... newsmax.com

There are no sharks swimming ... politifact.com - Fact check

Believe it or not, this is a shark on the freeway in Houston, Texas. Hurricane Harvey

Situational Awareness: A sailin... sailingscuttibutt.com

People Are Sharing Photoshop... buzzfeednews.com



Sharing in a 15-second viral video and watching a four-meter great white shark swim past is a fairly tame experience

Politifact

Politifact | There are no sharks swimming in the streets of ...

Fact check from Politifact

Claim: Photo shows a shark swimming on a freeway in Houston.

Rated by Politifact: Pants on Fire

Images may be subject to copyright. Learn More

Related images

Proof Viral Hurricane Shark Pho... fstoppers.com

Sharks from a kayak | Sea kaya... seakayaking.wordpress.com

Situational Awareness: A sailin... sailingscuttibutt.com

People Are Sharing Photoshop... buzzfeednews.com



Fact-checking in the social media



A screenshot of a Twitter profile card for the account @birdwatch. The profile picture is a white bird's eye inside a blue speech bubble. The account is verified, indicated by a blue checkmark next to the handle. The bio reads: "Empowering people on Twitter to create a better-informed world." Below the bio, there is a link "Questions? Tweet/DM us." and the URL "birdwatch.twitter.com". At the bottom, it shows the account was created on January 25 and joined October 2020.

Birdwatch 
@birdwatch

Empowering people on Twitter to create a better-informed world.

Questions? Tweet/DM us.

 birdwatch.twitter.com  Born January 25  Joined October 2020

Meta's Third-Party Fact-Checking Program

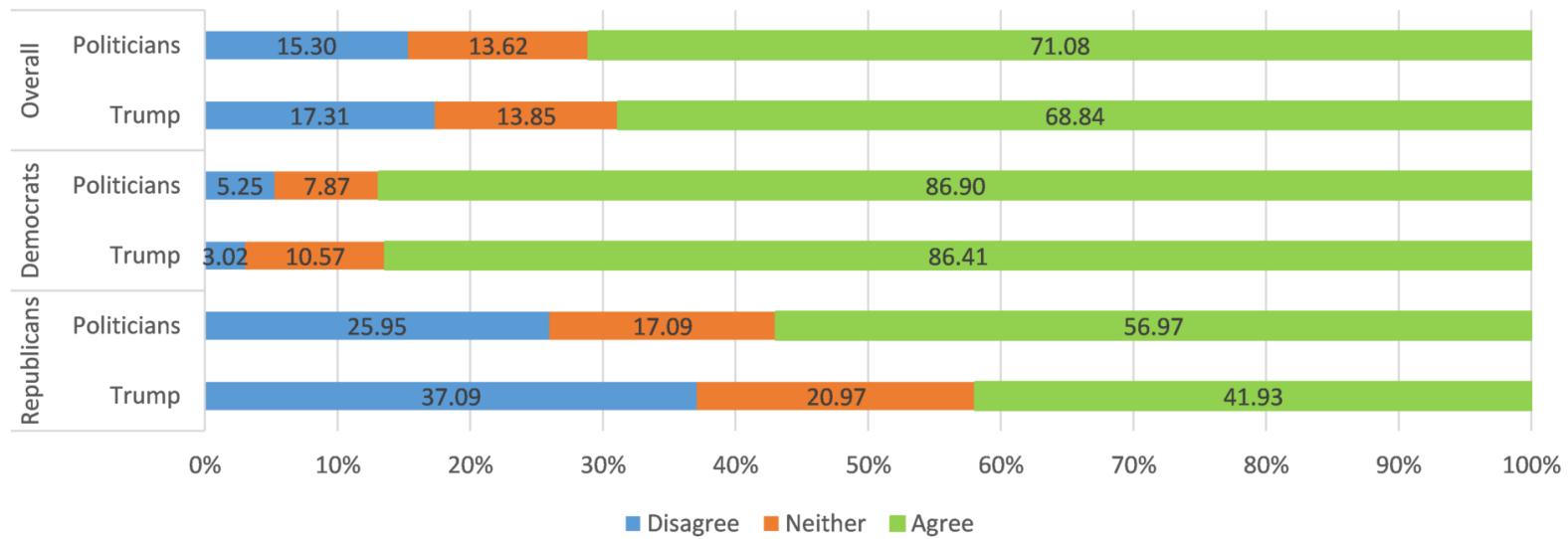
Working with independent, IFCN-certified fact-checkers who identify, review and rate viral misinformation across Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp.

[Get the guide](#)



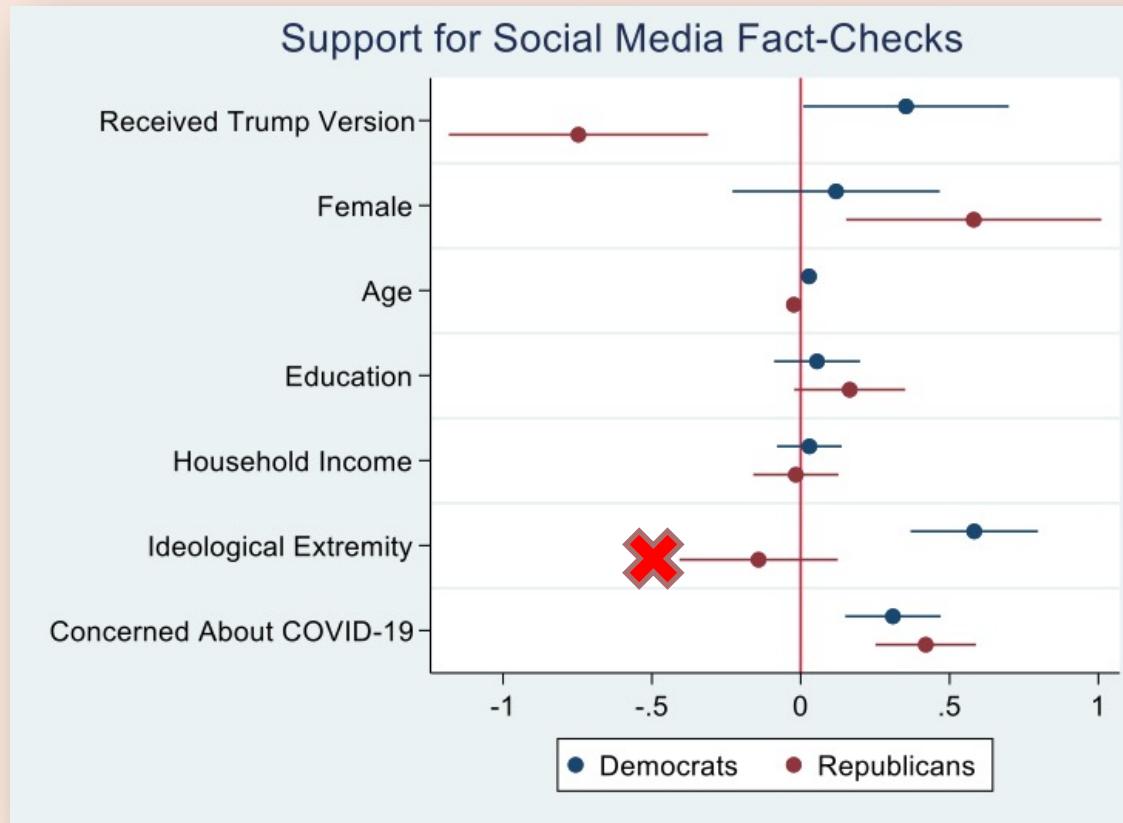
Support for fact-checking? (Rich et al., 2020)

Social media companies should provide fact-checks of statements from...
(in percents)





Support for fact-checking? (Rich et al., 2020)

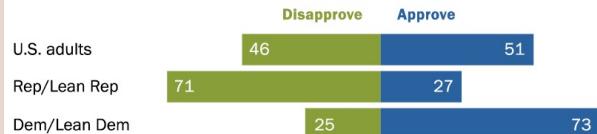




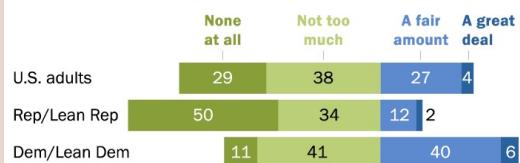
The partisan differences toward fact-checking? (Vogels et al., 2020)

Wide partisan differences in views about social media companies labeling posts from elected officials as misleading or inaccurate

% of U.S. adults who say they ___ of social media companies labeling posts on their platforms from elected officials as inaccurate or misleading



% of U.S. adults who say they have ___ (of) confidence in social media companies to determine which posts on their platforms should be labeled as inaccurate or misleading



Note: Strongly/somewhat approve or disapprove responses are combined. Those who did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 16-22, 2020.

"Most Americans Think Social Media Sites Censor Political Viewpoints"

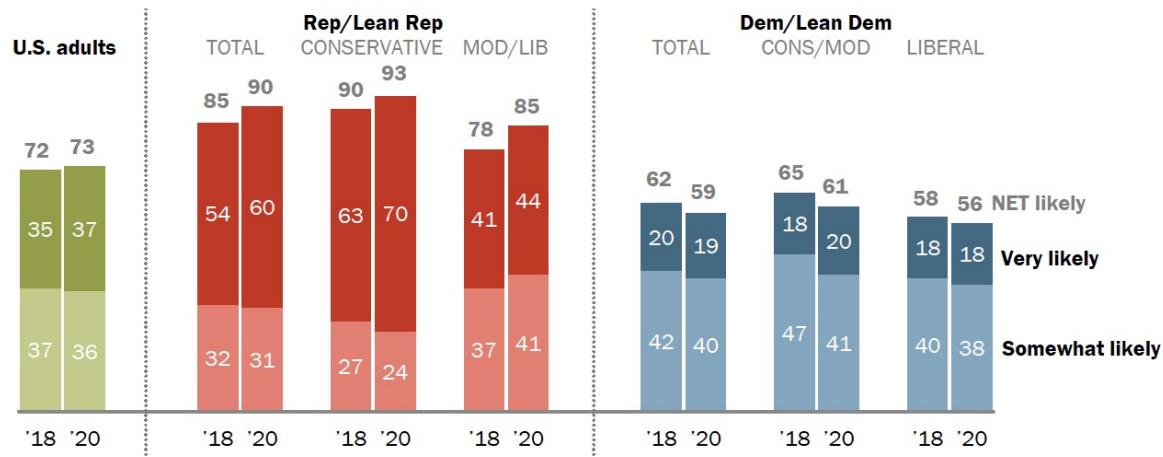


The partisan differences toward fact-checking? (Vogels et al., 2020)

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Majorities across parties say social media sites likely censor political views, but conservative Republicans stand out for thinking this is very likely

% of U.S. adults who say it is ___ that social media sites intentionally censor political viewpoints they find objectionable



Note: Those who did not give an answer or who gave other responses are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 16-22, 2020.

"Most Americans Think Social Media Sites Censor Political Viewpoints"



Fact-checking as gatekeeper (Dr. Brian Weeks)

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- Be skeptical!
 - Too good to be true!
 - If it elicits either extreme (positive or negative) emotions
- Read beyond the headline; Who created the story and why?
 - The author
 - The organization
 - The data it was published
 - The evidence
- Are other sources covering it?
- What's missing?
- Be aware of your (implicit) bias
- Make good use of the fact-checking website: Snopes, Factcheck.org, Politifact, and etc.

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Fact-checking as gatekeeper (Ognyanova, 2021)

SOCIAL CORRECTION EXPERIMENT

CORRECTION CONDITION

POLITICAL CONDITION

Condition	Story Type	Fact-Check Status	User Interaction	
CORRECTION CONDITION	Freshman Congressman	Caught on tape accepting money to back controversial new law	Disputed by Third Party Fact-Checkers	3 Friends have Marked This Story False
	Democratic Congressman	Caught on tape accepting money to back controversial new law	Disputed by Third Party Fact-Checkers	3 Friends have Marked This Story False
	Republican Congressman	Caught on tape accepting money to back controversial new law	Disputed by Third Party Fact-Checkers	3 Friends have Marked This Story False
POLITICAL CONDITION	Freshman Congressman	Caught on tape accepting money to back controversial new law	None	None
	Democratic Congressman	Caught on tape accepting money to back controversial new law	None	None
	Republican Congressman	Caught on tape accepting money to back controversial new law	None	None



Fact-checking as gatekeeper (Ognyanova, 2021)

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PERCEIVED ACCURACY BY CORRECTION TYPE



PERCEIVED ACCURACY BY MESSAGE TYPE



Reference

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