

Misinformation

What to Know

Misinformation is false or incorrect information that is spread intentionally or unintentionally.

Disinformation is false information spread deliberately to deceive.

The key difference between the two has most to do with whether the author has the *intent* to deceive the reader. Both, however, are important for us to be able to identify, as they equally contribute to the *fake news* phenomenon that continues to lead media consumers astray from the truth. Being able to understand the different types of disinformation and misinformation will allow us to view media with a critical eye, ensuring that what we consume and share is factual.

Types of Misinformation

Satire or parody

To imitate or make fun of original news events, with no intent to deceive the reader.



Imposter content

When genuine sources are imitated.

www.abcnews.com vs. www.abcnews.com.co



Manipulated content

When real information/images are manipulated to deceive the reader.

Fabricated content

Fake content intended to deceive the reader.

False connection

When headlines, images, or captions don't accurately connect to the content or main story.

Keep an Eye Out For

1. Websites with odd domain names. For example, sites that end in ".com.co" are often examples of imposter content.
2. News stories that aren't also being reported on well-known reputable sites. There should typically be more than one news source reporting on a topic or headline.
3. Stories that may invoke extreme emotions! It's a sign you should probably verify sources to make sure it isn't fabricated or manipulated content.

Key Vocabulary

Fake news: Sources that entirely fabricate information, disseminate deceptive content, or grossly distort actual news reports.

Satire: Sources that use humor, irony, exaggeration, ridicule, and false information to comment on current events.

Extreme bias: Sources that come from a particular point of view and may rely on propaganda, decontextualized information, and opinions distorted as facts.

Rumor mill: Sources that traffic in rumors, gossip, innuendo, and unverified claims.

Intent: To do something with purpose.

Hate news: Sources that actively promote racism, misogyny, homophobia, and other forms of discrimination.

Clickbait: The use of attention-grabbing headlines and outrageous claims to lure readers into clicking on what would normally be uninteresting content; clickbait is a digital-marketing technique that helps produce higher interest, clickthroughs, and shares.