

# JOINING FORCES TO PUT THE SPOTLIGHT ON FAKE NEWS

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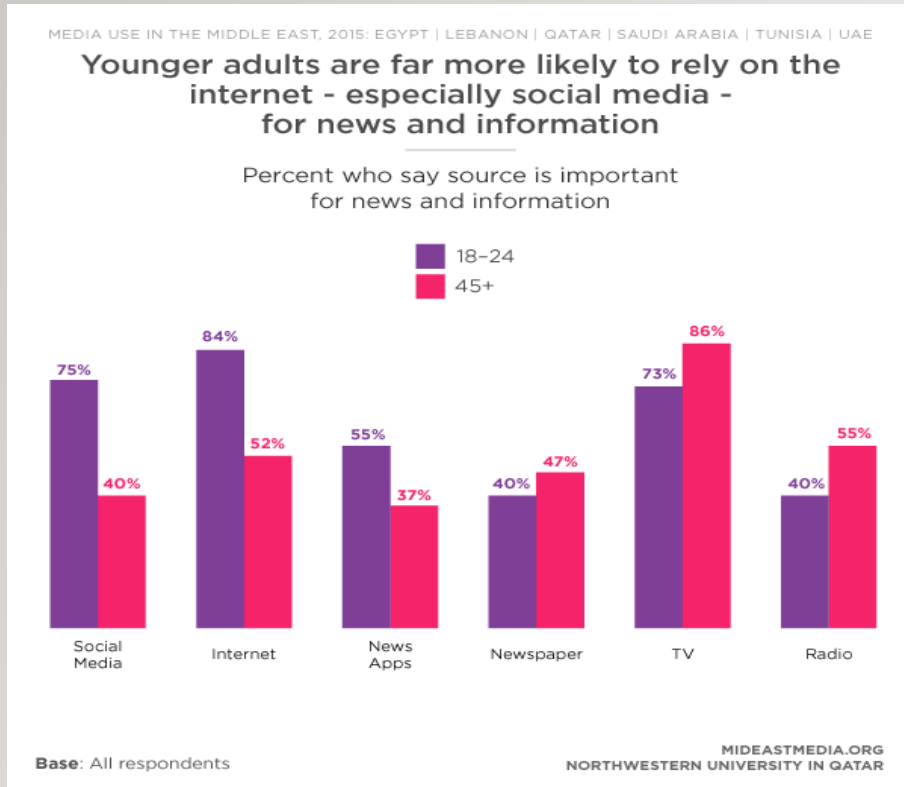
# HOW IT BEGAN

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- "What's all the fuss about fake news! A monkey can tell the difference between fake news and real news. It's so obvious. Plus if you're up-to-date you know what fake news is circulating." - G. M. (Political Science Student)
- Can you? Is it really so easy?

# WHAT NUMBERS REVEAL

According to 'Media Use in the Middle East' report 2016:



1 The percentage of internet users checking news online rises from

- 60% those with a primary education
- 76% for intermediate
- 82% for secondary
- 88% among the university educated

2 62% of internet users in the Arab world consider social media as an important source of news and information.

3 Younger adults are much more likely to rely on social media as an important source of news and information (75% 18-24 year olds vs. 40% 45 and older) and are more likely to consider it reliable (53% vs. 30%).

Internet and social media channels are the most used platform to get news and information

<http://www.qatar.northwestern.edu/docs/publications/research-media-use/2016-middle-east-media-use-report.pdf>

# WHICH ONE IS THE REAL FAKE NEWS THAT DUPED PEOPLE?

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- **Which is the real fake Trump story?**
- Donald Trump Announces He Will Make Singing National Anthem At Start Of Work Compulsory For All Government Employees
- Man Prohibited From Buying US Flag Because Store Owner Suspected He Would Burn It
- Trump Buys Bald Eagle For Oval Office
- Obama Signs Executive Order Banning National Anthem At All Sporting Events

Extracted verbatim from *The Guardian*, "Can you spot the 'real' fake news story? – quiz" 28 December 2016





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- Trump Buys Bald Eagle For Oval Office
- **Obama Signs Executive Order Banning National Anthem At All Sporting Events**

In the midst of a febrile election campaign, fake news publishers returned to a hoary old favourite

Extracted verbatim from *The Guardian*, "Can you spot the 'real' fake news story? – quiz" 28 December 2016



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- **Which of these religious freedom stories is the genuine whopper?**
- Target To Offer Free Holy Qur'an To Shoppers To Promote Religious Understanding
- Target To Discontinue Sales Of Holy Bible
- This one came from noted fake news site the National Report
- First Piece Of Archeological Evidence Emerges In Utah Proving Truth Of Book Of Mormon
- Pope Francis Says No To Women Priests Because They Would 'Fall In Love And Cry When Criticised'

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- **Which of these conspiracy-laced fake headlines caused a genuine stir?**
- Julian Assange Goes Missing; Government Now In Control Of wikileaks.com
- Edward Snowden's Email Hack Reveals Sexts Sent To Julian Assange
- CIA Claims Putin Had "Decisive" Influence On UK's Richmond By-Election
- The Tapes They'll Never Let You See: James Corden Hits Elderly Woman During Solange Knowles' Carpool Karaoke.

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- **Julian Assange Goes Missing; Government Now In Control Of wikileaks.com**

Fans of Assange were panicked by a series of strange tweets by Wikileaks. He later assured them he was fine

- Edward Snowden's Email Hack Reveals Sexts Sent To Julian Assange
- CIA Claims Putin Had "Decisive" Influence On UK's Richmond By-Election
- The Tapes They'll Never Let You See: James Corden Hits Elderly Woman During Solange Knowles' Carpool Karaoke.

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# REALITY

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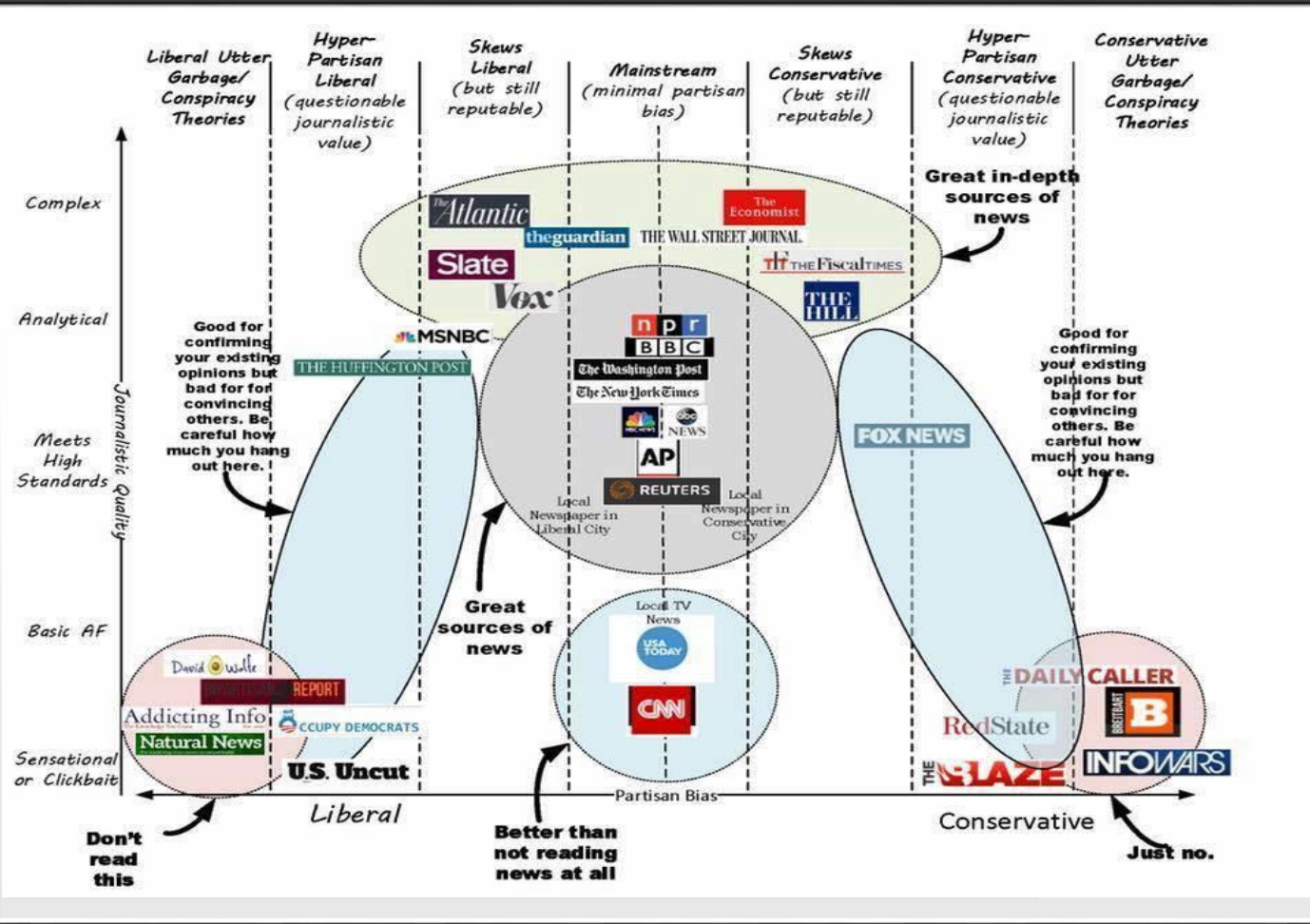
- After the quiz students realized that they weren't as "up-to-date" as they thought
- But what about identifying fake news? What could be done to increase information literacy and alert students to concerns surrounding fake news?

# ASSIGNMENT

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- Engl 204: Advanced Academic Writing
- Write an argumentative essay on the following broad topic: fake news (you will find a jpeg and 2 articles on Moodle under "Goodies" to get you started).
- Once you have selected your broad topic, you must come up with an appropriate narrowed down topic and clear argumentative thesis (claim).
- Do more research accordingly.
- Decide whether you need to write a classical argument or need to write a Rogerian argument.
- Make sure the argumentative essay is in APA style with complete in-text citation and a references page.

# THE JPEG



- Putting things in perspective
- Does being biased mean “fake news”?
- What is fake news?  
Importance of defining the term

Infographic from Imgur



# THE ARTICLES

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- **Giving them food for thought:**
- "*Fake News Fooling Millions!* Fabricated stories on social media are influencing major events like the presidential election. How can we separate fact from fiction?" by Carl Stoffers, *The New York Times: Upfront*, January 9, 2017.
- "Fake news: Too important to ignore" by Amol Rajan, *BBC*, 16 January 2017.

# THE COOPERATION

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- Beyond "being skeptical" and "verifying" what practical input can empower students?
- Long history of communication skills instructors having librarian led research sessions.
- Specific collaboration to join forces for this assignment.

# INFORMATION LITERACY

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- In our regular information literacy sessions, we teach students how to research credible, reliable and trustful information using library resources and databases.
- Due to the tsunami of online information, it is not enough to tell students to only use the library's databases. Students must learn how to evaluate sources they find including both print and online resources
- Helping students to become smarter evaluators of the information that flood into their life has become increasingly necessary in an era in which fake news is constant

# WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO IDENTIFY FAKE NEWS?

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People believe that it is easy to tell fake news from real news, but actually this is not.

A new **study** from **Stanford University**

- Asked more than 7,800 students from middle school through to college to evaluate online articles and news sources.
- **Majority of students** had **trouble** judging the **credibility of the news** they read.

<http://www.stanforddaily.com/2016/12/16/study-finds-students-unable-to-identify-fake-news/>

Recognizing fake news is a crucial first step in media literacy or news literacy.

So we joint effort to teach students how to become critical news consumers and to ensure students were appropriately equipped with the skills needed to differentiate fake news from real news



# LIBRARY SESSION

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To teach students how to differentiate between fake news and real news?

Prepared a short presentation including

- Few questions on News, Social media, and Fake news
- Tips to spot fake news
- Fact-Checking tools

In addition to these tips a checklist with several questions was developed. It was mainly adapted from

[‘Ten Questions for Fake News Detection from The News Literacy Project’](#)

# WHAT IS FAKE NEWS?

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There is no one-definition but we can say that fake news are fabricated stories that have no factual basis but are presented as news.

There are many types of fake news

- **Fake, false, bias, or regularly misleading websites**
- **Websites** that may **circulate potentially unreliable** information.
- **Websites which sometimes use clickbait-y** (catchy headlines ... readers click on the fake news)
- **Satire/comedy sites**, which can offer important critical commentary on politics and society, but have the potential to be shared as actual/literal news

Check you knowledge – Click on the photo and try to know the type of news



# WHAT MAKE A NEWS STORY FAKE?

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- Story can not be verified
- Can not be found somewhere else
- Play on your emotion
- Could be old news reposted on social media
- Come from fake news sites
- More



# HOW TO SPOT FAKE NEWS



## CONSIDER THE SOURCE

Click away from the story to investigate the site, its mission and its contact info.



## READ BEYOND

Headlines can be outrageous in an effort to get clicks. What's the whole story?



## CHECK THE AUTHOR

Do a quick search on the author. Are they credible? Are they real?



## SUPPORTING SOURCES?

Click on those links. Determine if the info given actually supports the story.



## CHECK THE DATE

Reposting old news stories doesn't mean they're relevant to current events.



## IS IT A JOKE?

If it is too outlandish, it might be satire. Research the site and author to be sure.



## CHECK YOUR BIASES

Consider if your own beliefs could affect your judgement.



## ASK THE EXPERTS

Ask a librarian, or consult a fact-checking site.

IFLA

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

# TIPS FOR ANALYZING NEWS SOURCES

- Avoid **websites** that **end in “lo”** These sites take pieces of accurate information and then package that information with other false or misleading “facts” (sometimes for the purposes of satire or comedy).
- Watch out for **websites that end in “.com.co”** as they are often fake versions of real news sources. e.g. ABCnews.com.co
- Watch out if **reputable news sites** are not also reporting on the story.
- Check the “**About Us**” tab on websites
- Look up the website on **fact-checking tools** for more information about the source.
- Bad web **design** and use of **ALL CAPS** can also be a sign that the source you're looking at should be verified
- If the story **play on your emotions**. it's probably a good idea to keep reading about the topic via other sources.
- **Read multiple sources** of information to get a variety of viewpoints and media frames

<https://www.ifla.org/publications/node/11174>








# FIGHT FAKE NEWS

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*Fake news destroy credibility and might seriously hurt*

- **Think before you share:** Read the whole piece of news before sharing
- **Verify the story using** fact-checking tools and lists such as: [Snopes](#), [FactCheck.org](#), [Opensecrets.org](#), [The Washington Post Fact-Checker](#), [LexisNexis](#) and [Google News](#), [The Daily Dot: Fake News Sites List](#) and [List of Fake and Parody News](#)
- **Evaluate your source using the [CRAAP test](#)**

	• Currency	The timeliness of the information.
	• Relevance	The importance of the information for your needs.
	• Authority	The source of the information.
	• Accuracy	The reliability, truthfulness, and correctness of the information.
	• Purpose	The reason the information exists.

Use the following questions to know if the text you are reading is a fake News

- Check your emotional reaction: are you angry, sad or happy?
- From where did you get this information?
  - A webpage on the Internet
  - Though Social Media channels
  - Sent to you from a friend
- Read headlines carefully and answer the following
  - Does it use extensive punctuation?
  - Is it all in capital letters?
  - Does it include unnecessary adjectives and details?
  - Is the heading vague compared to a real news which are usually very specific and factual?
  - Is the heading absurd or is the news absolutely impossible?
  - Does it include an element of social or political commentary?
- Does the news have a date? If yes, how recent is it?
- Who is the publisher or author?
  - Is it a well know publisher?
  - Is the publisher promoting a specific point of view?
  - Is there an author's name? If yes, who is the author? Is he or she a subject expert or a professional journalist?
  - Does the website have an 'About us' section. And if yes, does it mention that the news are satirical, humorous, etc.?
  - What is the ending of the website ULR? (.gov, .edu, etc.)
  - Does the website URL have a tilde ~ in it? "~" is frequently use in personal websites
  - Does the website URL end in ".lo" or ".com.co"? These are usually not authentic news sources.
- Does the news piece cite a variety of sources? If yes, what kinds of sources are cited? Are they reliable?
- Does the news piece include hyperlinks? If yes, do they link to related information? Are they broken links? Are they taken from another context?
- Is the news reported elsewhere? And if yes, is it reported in reputable sources?
- Is the news labeled in a fact-check tool like Snopes.com?

Adapted mainly from <http://www.thenewsliteracyproject.org/sites/default/files/GO-TenQuestionsForFakeNewsFINAL.pdf>

# CHECKLIST TO DETECT FAKE NEWS

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Check you knowledge

Use the checklist to compare these two Links

Which one do you think is true? Why or why not?

- 1 - [Eat This Not That: Shocking Facts About Farmed Salmon](#)
- 2 - [Washington State Department of Health: Farmed vs. Wild Salmon](#)

Retrieved from <http://liue.libguides.com/fakenews/checkup>

# TOPICS

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- Fake news did/didn't have an impact on the US elections (most popular!)
- Social media platforms should be central to eliminating fake news
- All news is ultimately fake news
- Fake news has been around for decades and hence is not a new phenomenon
- Fake news gives misleading nutritional advice that results in false hope for curing diseases
- Universities should be more involved in teaching students how to identify fake news
- And the list goes on: fake news and the war in Syria, fake news and Venezuelan politics, staged “social experiments” and “live footage” videos made solely to go viral...

# GUIDED PEER REVIEW

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- An opportunity for students:
  - to interact and discuss different aspects of fake news and its impact
  - to identify whether or not sources used in the essays were credible (reinforcing information literacy skills)



# STUDENT REACTIONS

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- “While I appreciate that fake news is topical, it didn’t interest me and I found the entire thing boring in comparison to the other assignments.”- J.C.
- “The fake news assignment did teach me about the other side of logical fallacies and the problem with news within modern politics and the world today.” S.A.
- “I have become fond of fact checking and double checking the validity of the sources of information due to the assignment about fake news.” –R.B.S.
- “It was eye opening. I now see what people share on social media in a different light and think before I share.” –S.S.
- “I enjoyed researching about fake news. It make me think about things I usually overlook.”- G.E.H.
- “I won’t forget the whole issue of fake news, I learned a lot about the subject and I am applying what I learned when I read news online.” – N.H.

# WHAT NEXT?

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- Algorithms that target the algorithms that spread fake news, software development and trained fact checking specialists...
- We should still empower students with key information literacy skills, especially given the abundance of fake news.
- In Fall 2017-2018, we plan to collaborate on another assignment focused on fake news that is tailored to the CLOs of Engl 102 (Enrichment in English) and the level of the students. Actual data will be collected.

# THANK YOU

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- Questions?