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# Fake News, Political Narrative, & Social Media: A Structuration Approach

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**Fake News, Political Narrative, & Social Media: A Structuration Approach**

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PIM 75

*A Course-Linked Capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Arts in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation at SIT Graduate Institute in Brattleboro, Vermont, USA*

Adviser: Tatsushi Arai

April 7, 2018

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Date: April 7, 2018

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## Table of Contents

<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Literature Review</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Inquiry Design &amp; Methodology</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Validity Concerns .....	13
<b>Findings &amp; Data Sets</b> .....	<b>15</b>
Political Narratives and the Deep Story.....	15
Content Analysis Data Set: Fake News & Political Narratives .....	19
Facebook Activity Data Set: Fake News & Influence on Readership .....	23
Questionnaire Responses Data Set.....	28
<b>Discussion</b> .....	<b>37</b>
<b>Conclusion &amp; Recommendations for the Future</b> .....	<b>42</b>
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	<b>39</b>
Bibliography: Fake News Articles.....	45
<b>Appendices</b> .....	<b>49</b>
Appendix 1: Fake News Comments with Codifications.....	49
Appendix 2: Introduction/Consent Letter .....	67
Appendix 3: Facebook Questionnaire with Answers .....	68

### **Abstract**

This research aims to unveil a connection between fake news distribution, readership demand, and social media networks, in this case, Facebook. In this research, fake news is defined as “content that is deliberately false and published on websites that mimic traditional news websites (Johnson and Kelling 2017, p3)”. It is argued that fake news content is not produced at random, but is tailored to particular political demographics and narratives. Exposure to such media not only validates ideological positions, it polarizes political beliefs. Furthermore, Facebook not only acts as an effective distribution medium, but allows individual users to skip structural filters in information sharing, thus creating a more nebulous and less rigid relationship between structures and actors in society.

The methodology is multi-disciplinary and includes the creation of two political narratives, which are then utilized in a content analysis with four fake news articles. Facebook comment sections underneath these articles are also studied to assess a positive or negative impact on readers' political beliefs. Finally, user beliefs about fake news and Facebook are assessed via a twenty-two question questionnaire. Distributed via Facebook, this questionnaire measures user opinion about the commonality of fake news, levels of media trust & fake news impact, and structural links between narrative, news, and Facebook as a platform.

## Introduction

The impetus for performing research on fake news arose from my own personal experiences during the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Having just begun the practicum portion of my Master's Degree, I returned to my hometown of Dayton, Ohio to search for relevant internship/work experience. During that time I took two temporary positions to support myself and supplement my income; first as a truck loader for United Parcel Service, then as a City Carrier Assistant with the U.S. Postal Service.

In both work environments, I found myself out my depth socially and politically. At UPS, the people I worked alongside were hard-working, low-paid, and had similar views of the world. They seemed to have a general disdain for politics and were more concerned with how they could get upgraded to full-time work status than discussing political platforms. When I did hear political speech, it was all in support of then-presidential candidate Donald Trump. The reigning belief seemed to be that there needed to be a real, radical change in how the world was structured and that Trump was the person to do it. And at the end of my work shift, despite my education, politics, and strong opinions, I honestly felt too tired and outnumbered to argue. I could only listen. I was confused as to where their 'misguided' beliefs came from; how could they so grossly conflict with my own?

Working for the United States Postal service was similar. The election was now in full swing and I had just completed my employment training. Delivering mail all over the city, I found myself shocked by the amount of Trump posters I saw on people's lawns, and the contents of people's opinions. It seemed every person I passed had an opinion, liberal or conservative, and they felt morally obligated to share it with me. I had never been heavily immersed in American political battles and I found it difficult to reconcile the supposed facts cited to me from various political spectrums. Not only did they not align with my education, experiences, and perceptions

of the world, at times they seemingly were not even in the same universe. I came to the sobering professional realization that, as a budding future Peacebuilder, I couldn't even understand the narratives and conflicts of my hometown, much less an international stage.

Political polarization had even affected my family. One particular evening, my sister's husband, unable to hold his tongue at the table, decided to regale us with a tale of \$1 Billion worth of coffins, owned by FEMA for the purpose of housing dead bodies after the government releases a virus meant to deal with overpopulation. Throughout the course of the evening, I attempted to disprove a multitude of seemingly outlandish conspiracy theories, each argument leading to an exchange of 'facts' that neither side of the table would accept as legitimate.

It occurred to me that for all intents and purposes, he and I were each approaching the conversation as being informed persons listening to the misinformed. His facts contradicted my facts, and there was a surprising lack of common ground to be found, as we could not even agree what had happened, much less how something should be interpreted. This revelation, along with the rocket-like rise in prevalence and notoriety of fake news articles shared via social media (and the subsequent discussions Facebook users were having in the comments section of the articles) imparted upon me the desire to look more closely into how social media and fake news link into the creation of our belief structures and worldviews.

The importance of this research is evident from the controversy of the 2016 Presidential election, wherein fake news was claimed as a prime influencer of public opinion, and a blatant source for revenue creation and the spread of manipulative political disinformation. Though the controversy of the election has largely abated, there still remain fundamental questions as to the legitimacy and reliability of information disseminated via social networks. With billions of users worldwide, social media now has the power to influence public opinion and perceptions by

acting as a distributor of news. Facebook itself can act as a non-moderated forum for the spread of unverified, biased, or completely fabricated news, facts, and more. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the relationships between news, social media network, and user, as well as understanding how one influences the other.

The primary aim of this research document is to explore the relationship between fake news content spread on Facebook and the political beliefs/narratives held by Facebook users. Fake news article content will be compared to political narrative descriptions in order to show that fake news media is not a random phenomenon, but a media type that targets specific political demographics. Analysis of Facebook users' comments on these articles will yield evidence of impact on individual beliefs, and by extension, will yield evidence of political polarization. Analysis of Facebook user survey data will aid in the creation of a firm understanding of Facebook's role in the distribution of fake news, how it enhances access to readers, and removes obstacles to publishing content. This will then be interpreted through a theoretical lens to clearly describe the process of fake news dissemination, user interaction, and the creation of political beliefs through Facebook as a platform.

This research document is composed of several parts. Following this introduction, a literature review section will set the stage for the research conducted by providing a relevant background and base knowledge of facts and theories utilized for this research. An inquiry design & methodology section will describe research procedure in detail, and will establish the exact research questions guiding the inquiry. A findings and data sets section will build an outline of data collected in order of: 1) personal narratives, 2) fake news article content comparison to personal narratives, 3) impact analysis from Facebook user comments on fake news articles, and 4) Facebook survey results about users' reactions to fake news on social

media. The discussion section will analyze results, note trends, and directly address the research questions posited in the methodology section.

### **Literature Review**

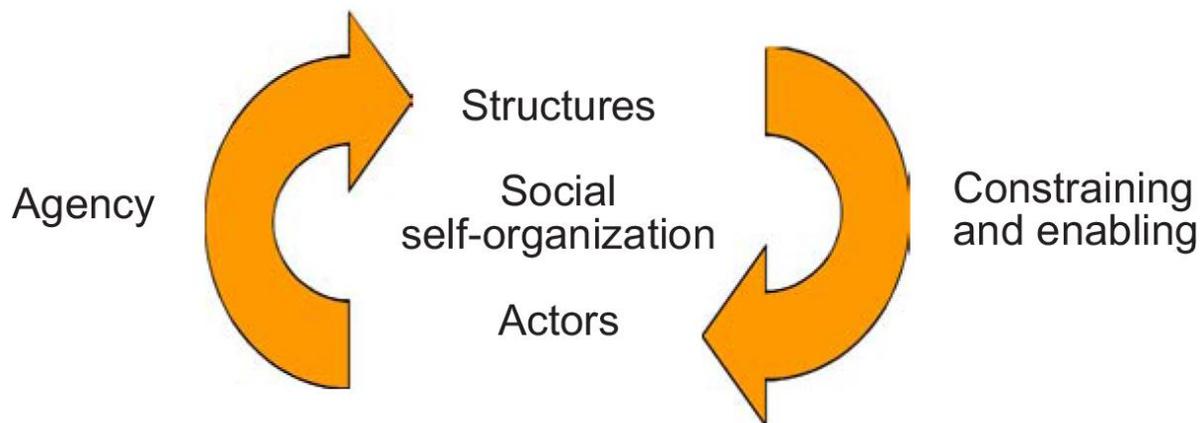
Before diving into the complexities of Facebook, fake news, methods of dispersal, creation, demand, influence, and more, it becomes important to establish a theoretical framework as to the bindings and workings of social systems. Structuration Theory, created by Anthony Giddens (1984), posits that societal structure is actually a set of codes of behavior and knowledge that influence the behavior of individuals and collectives. These structures can be weakened or strengthened based on individual or collective actions, and can be done radically or incrementally. In this theory, society exists as an interwoven process wherein individual and collective actions create/modify structures, and structures create knowledge, beliefs, and rules to influence acceptable action by individuals (Lewis & Suchan, p.301-302).

Structuration theory argues that social action is the product of social resources (the amount of people in society that can be mobilized or influenced) and that such action not only creates social structure and rules, but that the resulting structure affects the methods and abilities of future social change and the access to social resources. Thus, structure is not only the final product of social action, but also the framework by which social action occurs (Fuchs 2002, p. 3). “In short, people’s actions reproduce structures, and simultaneously, are guided by them. (Lewis & Suchan, p.301).”

Structuration Theory seems to apply well to the study of fake news, social media, and fake news readers. For instance, structuration sees power, or transformative capacity, as the ability to expend and gather resource for the purposes of changing a social system. Power is exerted upon society via social actions. Actors commit these actions within the confines of structure, and these actions, in turn, affect the structure and how power is utilized in future

action. Certain institutions exist as a part of structure; these are continuous, recurring, and they permeate society through both space and time. Examples may include governments, social/financial institutions, religious affiliations, community organizations, and more (Mumme & Grundy-Warr p. 972-973). For the sake of this research, the definition will be extended to cover social media networks. Please see Figure 1 below for a chart illustrating this concept.

Figure 1: Visual Representation of Structuration Theory



(Fuchs 2002, p. 14)

The advent of social media created a new paradigm in how people absorb, find, and share news. An online network with highly accessible publishing systems, social media networks allow the general public to access, generate, edit, share, and interact with news in real-time (Sharma and Baoku 2012, p.2-3). In recent years, social media networks have emerged as change agents, networks for promoting political participation, communicating, mobilizing, and sharing poignant messages across interconnected friend and acquaintanceship networks. In both size and influence, social networking sites have become important tools in creating social change. For example, Facebook, as of August 2017, had over two billion users worldwide, and recent studies found that up to 61 percent of millennials get their political information from Facebook (Kamau 2017, p. 128). Kamau notes the scope social media in modern society by saying “social media

now permeate[s] every aspect of society from politics, work, communication habits, news consumption, to dating, among others (2017, p.131).” With such a large user base and such a high integration into the lives of its users, social media can be a particularly hazardous forum wherein fake news or other forms of false information can spread and cause social discord.

Fake news, as a term, first entered public consciousness during the 2016 presidential election in the United States. Though used in a variety of contexts, an apt definition for fake news is “content that is deliberately false and published on websites that mimic traditional news websites (Johnson and Kelling 2017, p3).” Such deceptions can be a simple creation of content from thin air, or can be a complex manipulation of context and content designed to skew the original meaning of a real news piece. This can be done for many reasons, including, but not limited to: deception, profit, education, fraud, to show discontent, to change historical narrative, or to show alternative political opinions (Rashed et al 2012, p.1071-1072).

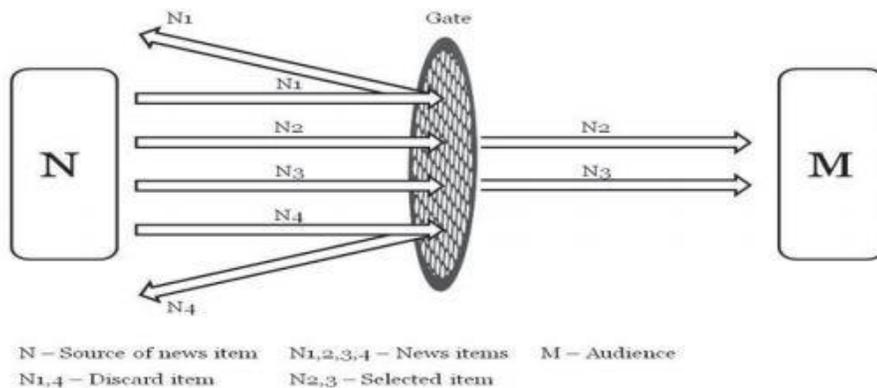
Fake news’ spread over social media outlets such as Facebook have been well-documented, especially during the US 2016 presidential election. Some commentators go so far as to assert that the outcome of the presidential election would have been different if not for fake news. They base this assertion off the fact that popular fake news stories were more widely shared on Facebook than most stories coming from traditional and professional journalism. Furthermore, many people who see fake news articles report that they believe the articles’ contents, and finally, that the most widely shared and popular Fake News stories favored Donald Trump over Hillary Clinton (Allcott and Gentzkow 2017, p. 212)

The outcome and perceived legitimacy of the presidential election is outside the scope of this inquiry, and will not be directly touched upon. However, it is fact that social media can act as a conduit for the generation and dispersal of fake news, which can affect beliefs and

behavioral patterns. Facebook users are able to perform a variety of activities like sharing, commenting, and posting; general participation is done in real-time exposure and dialogue around current events - fake or otherwise – has immediate impact. These actions have the ability to reach and mobilize large readerships, rallying them for a specific idea, cause, or agenda (Kamau 2017, p.131).

Such a massive network of persons bonded together creates a powerful, nearly unregulated, distribution network for the flow of information. Historically, journalists have acted as gatekeepers of information for public consumption, ensuring accuracy and relevance so that people could make informed decisions about the world around them (Johnson & Kelling 2017, p.3). Gate-keeping has traditionally been an essential media responsibility, and has occurred at all levels of media institutions. Whether a journalist deciding what to write, a publisher deciding what to publish, or even an individual deciding content of personal emails/blog posts, the prime purpose of gate keeping is to filter out irrelevant or inaccurate content (Shabir et al. 2015, p. 591). Please see Figure 2 below for a visual representation of this process.

Figure 2: Visual Representation of Gatekeeping Theory



**Gate Keeping Theory**

(Shabir et al. 2015, p.591)

With this burden comes profound ethical requirements. Facebook, claiming itself as a technology company, not a news agency, “plays a role similar to that of a news editor, though

without an editor's responsibility to verify the information (Johnson & Kelling 2017, p.3)." Such an environment allows for users to anonymously publish content with no mechanisms to check the authenticity of their claims, and no consequences for the harm that may be caused (Rashed et al 2012, p. 1070)." This further enables individuals to go around media gatekeeping, giving ordinary citizens direct capacity to reach large audiences with a minimal expenditure of effort and funding (Kamau 2017, p.131).

A result of this lack of media gatekeeping is that fake news can have an immediate and harmful effect on society. It creates readers with less accurate beliefs about local and world events. These inaccurate beliefs, polarized and cemented over time, make it difficult to interact with the outside world, lessening the chance of finding common frames of reference and lessening the ability to participate in political or social dialogue. These inaccurate or alternative beliefs may erode trust in legitimate news outlets, making it more of a challenge to tell the difference between fake news and verified news. Finally, heightened demand for fake news may even lessen demand for, and revenue to support, independent, ethical, and factual reporting outlets (Allcott & Gentzkow 2017, p.219).

### **Inquiry Design & Methodology**

This study proceeds with a pragmatic approach to explore the relationship between 'fake news' and audiences through inductive research. For the sake of scope, this inquiry was confined to media disbursed via a single social media platform, Facebook. I am conscious of my own situated knowledge, which I have obtained as a recipient of news, and as an avid user of Facebook. I am also conscious of my own left-leaning political beliefs and have been careful to ensure my research and methodology promotes the creation of a well-rounded and non-partisan document. My research questions are as follows:

1. Does the existence of far-left or far-right narratives create a demand for fake news?
2. How does fake news affect political and social narratives?
- 3. What role does Facebook have in the production, demand, and dispersal of fake news, and how does it affect political polarization?**
4. How can Structuration Theory aid in understanding Facebook's role in the production of fake news and its effects on political polarization?

For the sake of scope, inquiry focus is primarily on the third question, with the other three questions being addressed in a more tertiary manner. I employ a mixed methodology dealing with both quantitative and qualitative data, wherein I attempt to answer the questions above by placing actors and structures within the Structuration framework provided above. My data collection methods followed three basic forms, designed so that each data collector should act as support and scaffolding for the following datasets.

The three forms are as follows:

1. Narrative Creation and Article Content Analysis

I began my inquiry by finding two distinctly different political narratives, one conservative leaning, and one liberal leaning. I then compared the content of these narratives to examples of fake news stories, in the belief that fake news articles were not created at random, but were tailored for a particular narrative demographic. In their book, *The Practice of Qualitative Research*, Hesse-Biber & Leavy (2011) note that content analysis can be used to effectively study representations of current or historical events, particularly those in mass media. Analyzed content can be used to compare coverage, information presented, and to answer content-driven research questions (p.228-229). In this particular case the aim was to effectively study events that

did not happen, and to answer the question: for whom were these articles created, and how well were they crafted for their audience(s)?

## 2. Case studies on narratives and media stories using Facebook Engagement

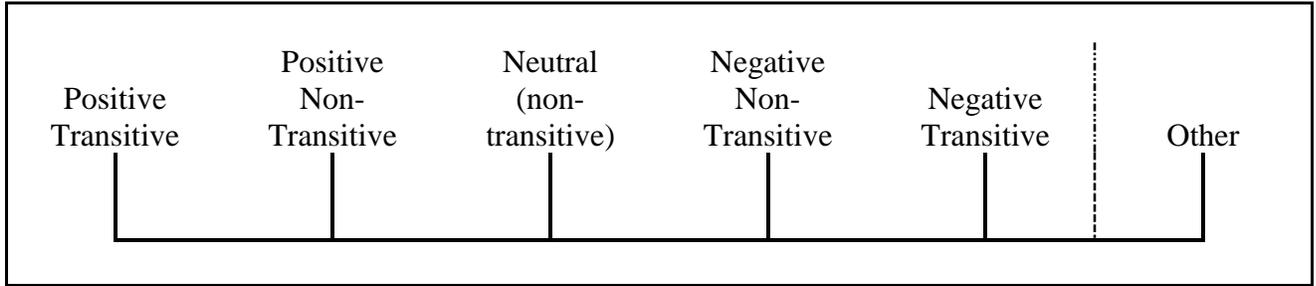
Building from the data above, my analysis focused on codifying and measuring how people reacted to or were influenced by fake news stories. Utilizing the same articles, whose content I compared to my fabricated political narratives, I further began to examine public facing information such as likes, shares, and comments. Luckily, the website Buzzfeed.com publicly lists the total amount of shares, likes, and reactions to these particular news articles (Silverman 2016). I, however, was also interested in the content of the comments and reactions to these articles.

I thus attempted to measure an article's impact by codifying Facebook user comments along a spectrum of *positive transitive* (agreed with story and noted something to show further influence on world view), *positive non transitive* (agreed with article, but no sign of further narrative creation), *negative transitive* (disagreed with article, and noted further polarization away from topic), *negative non transitive* (disagreed with article, but did not show polarizing speech), *neutral non – transitive* (no opinion/polarization shown), and *other* (unrelated/unable to codify). Utilizing this frame, I established a mean figure of support or non-support for a given article. A visual representation of this classification scheme can be seen in Figure 3: Facebook Comment Impact Codification Spectrum.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Figure 3: Facebook Comment Impact Codification Spectrum – p.12

Figure 3: Facebook Comment Impact Codification Spectrum



3. Questionnaire:

Thirdly and finally, I wanted to ascertain user opinions about the frequency, impact, and demand for fake news, and their own reactions when they encounter what they believe to be fake news on social media. I sought to obtain this information through the distribution of a 22 question survey, which I created through the website Survey Monkey, and distributed via my own Facebook social and professional networks<sup>2</sup>. For added variety, I temporarily joined and distributed my questionnaire in various political debate forums, looking for those with high memberships and diverse participants. I asked respondents to complete and share the questionnaire in hopes of a snowball effect, wherein the questionnaire would spread to various friend and association groups. In total, I received 89 responses within one week. I closed the survey after one week due to response stagnation, and because I felt I had a sufficient size sample for analysis.

Analysis focused on gaining a quantitative understanding of the commonality of fake news, the importance of fake news as a social concern, understanding how people react to fake news, and their ability to identify fake news. Percentages of responses were obtained and analyzed to see if numerically, a mixed population’s experience with fake news and Facebook

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 3: Facebook Questionnaire with Answers

supports or disproves an application of a structuration model to understanding the rise of fake news.

### **Possible Validity Issues**

There are three primary challenges to the validity of this research. Though I have attempted to mitigate any negative effects these challenges would have had on data validity, I suggest they be kept in mind throughout the Data Findings and Discussions sections of this research

#### 1. Limitations of Survey Sample

Though I dispersed the questionnaire over Facebook, which boasts a wide user base encompassing many demographics in terms of age, race, gender, and political affiliation, there was no guarantee that the sampling would not be overly skewed towards one demographic over another. In my literature review, it became known to me that one of the effects of social media can be the creation of political/social bubbles, wherein your friend or group connections generally promote or reinforce your own worldviews (Johnson & Kelling 2017, p. 12). Also, I could not guarantee my questionnaire would be shared or filled out by Facebook users. I was at the mercy of how others spend their spare time, and in this case, my positionality could literally have affected the scope of my research data.

Such a challenge dictated a need to be introspective about my own beliefs and to devise a methodology to ensure I was reaching target audiences outside of my own bubble of friends and associates. Thus, I sought out a variety of larger membership groups (both political and social in nature) in order to increase the variety and size in my possible populations of sampling.

Despite my best efforts, data collection was slightly skewed in demographics, with over 65% percent of recipients being female, over 80% being in possession of a university or higher

education, and 70% being non-Hispanic/White ethnicity. Respondents tended to be liberal leaning, with only 8 of 89 persons listing themselves as ‘conservative’ or ‘very conservative’.

## 2. Prejudice towards Fake News

Due to my own political and educational backgrounds, I see fake news in a negative light, and therefore could easily alienate potential sampling of groups or individuals who choose to partake in this research. If I am attempting to treat fake news as a medium with a target audience, demand, and narrative-based value for certain demographics, then I must treat it with a base level of respect and objectivity.

This particular challenge necessitated the need to be aware of my questionnaire’s wording and content to ensure that I am not creating a design bias towards fake news. I have attempted to give a compelling, but fair argument in my literature review.

## 3. Stereotyping and the Limitations of Narrative Creation

Though this research, and its author, set out to create two distinct narratives, one conservative in nature, the other progressive, it is essential to understand that these are merely two extremes on a political and social spectrum that is not always linear, and is often multi-layered in its intersectionality between race, gender, economic status, political views, and more. While the creation of certain narratives may aid in research to assess markets and create comparisons with fake news themes, it can, if not presented correctly, result in the creation of straw-man stereotypes that not only insult others, but also weaken research legitimacy.

This particular challenge stressed the need to be open about the reasoning for why I chose to establish certain narrative types, and to explicitly note that these narratives are for the purpose of research and comparison and are not meant to be ironclad identifiers of various socio-political movements. For that reason, the narrative sections themselves contain disclaimers to ensure that

anyone viewing this research will understand these are myriad parts of the American narratives that were chosen for ease of comparability and scope

### **Findings & Data Sets**

Finding and Data Sets is comprised of four distinct sections. The first, Political Narrative and the Deep Story, set forth two distinct political narratives, one liberal in nature, and one conservative. These narratives create a basis for comparison and content analysis and deep understanding of the deep emotions and beliefs contained in individual narratives. The second, Content Analysis Data Set: Fake News & Political Narratives, shows direct analyses of fake news article content, and describes how its composition appeals to and markets these political narratives. The third section, Facebook Activity Data Set: Fake News & Influence on Readership, measures the impact reading these articles (or for some persons simply the headline) has on Facebook users' beliefs. Finally, the Questionnaire Responses Data Set shows how users react to Facebook news when they encounter it, and measures the size and scope of fake news in individuals' use of social media.

### **Political Narratives and the Deep Story**

For the sake of understanding fake news content and its readership demographics, it becomes important to research and create two broad political narratives, one liberal, and one conservative. These narratives have been created from existing political literature, and aim to create an in-depth narrative that fake news writer may try to target with biased or false articles. Rather than attempt to simply list a range of beliefs considered to be conservative or liberal, it is more helpful to provide a narrative that is rich in feeling and symbol; a deep story. Later, these deep stories will be compared to actual fake news articles to ascertain if the content of those articles align vindicate or ignore these narratives.

Arlie Russell Hochschild aptly posits the existence of a deep story, that is, a narrative that exists beneath stated beliefs, political affiliations, and individual perceptions of true or false. The deep story is comprised of the feelings and symbols and shared experiences that make up the core of a group identity. Hochschild (2016) states that the deep story “permits those on both sides of the political spectrum to stand back and explore the *subjective prism* through which the part on the other side sees the world. And I don’t believe we understand anyone’s politics, right or left, without it. For we all have a deep story (p. 135).”

#### Narrative 1 – The American Right: Waiting in Line for the American Dream

***DISCLAIMER:*** *This narrative is not all-encompassing. It has been created for research comparison and is limited. It does not attempt to touch the rich intersectionality and spectrum of American socio-political narratives or movements.*

Continuing with a concrete study of the American Conservative Right, Hochschild "constructed this deep story to represent – in a metaphorical form – the hopes, fears, pride, shame, resentment, and anxiety in the lives of those I talked with (2016, p. 135).” In her book, *Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right*, Hochschild uses the metaphor of waiting in line to describe the narrative of the American conservative. Imagine yourself waiting in line for access to the American dream; you, a white Christian from a somewhat aging demographic quietly wait in line, weary from a life of hard work, but soon due your rewards. Other people stand behind you in line, for example people of color or the uneducated. You sympathize with their troubles, but you've worked hard and suffered for your place in line, you deserve your rewards. However, it seems the line is not moving; you're making less money than before; you're being told your religious, social, and political views are outdated.

You wait in line and work for your place in society, but the line is moving and changing without your consent (Hochschild 2016, p. 136-137).

Everywhere you look now you see your position under attack. Those people once behind you in line are being waved ahead of you at the behest of the government. There are no jobs to replace the positions you once had, but affirmative action and welfare gives those behind you the chance to cut in line. “These opportunities you’d have loved to have had in your day – and either you should’ve had them when you were young, or the young shouldn’t have them now. It’s not fair (Hochschild 2016, p. 137).”

You’ve lost your place in the world. You look to your profession for validation, but wages and hours have gone down and the cost of living has up. You’re sick of complaints of racism and sexism from mainstream media, while at the same time you are portrayed as stupid, bigoted, and lazy. Every day it becomes harder for you to have a voice, and your identity is under attack. If you’re proud to be white, you’re racist, proud to be male - sexist, proud to be Christian - zealot. You are old and wise, but people only care about the young. Your demographic is shrinking, but no one cares. Those who were once behind you in line now brazenly cut in front of you, while your shouts of fairness are mocked and ignored. “Working class whites are now regularly portrayed as moronic, while blacks are often hyper-articulate, street smart, and rich (Hochschild 2016, p 144).”

Conservative elements feel betrayed by the government and media, and look to the free market for solace. For you, the real conflict is not against the rich or the factories, but rather against the lazy people at welfare office who refuse to work. You want an honest pay for an honest day's work, and you do not want to lose that pay to taxes that pay for someone else to sit at home all day. The Federal Government, immigrants, and welfare families are skipping places

in line; they do not work for what they have. They steal it from you (Hochschild 2016, p. 148-151).

### Narrative 2 – The American Left: Certain of the Moral High Ground

**DISCLAIMER:** *This is narrative is not all-encompassing. It has been created for research comparison and is limited. It does not attempt to touch the rich intersectionality and spectrum of American socio-political narratives/movements.*

Vox Magazine’s Emmitt Rensin, in his article *The smug style in American liberalism*, paints a picture of the American liberal as having an ideology that is “predicated on the belief that American life is not divided by moral difference or policy divergence — not really — but by the failure of half the country to know what’s good for them (2016).” Rensin continues to define liberals as a two-layered movement, its supporters comprised of immigrants, persons of color, the disenfranchised, and the professionals and elites.

As a liberal, he posits, there are things you know and take to be unchallengeable truths. Liberal know more, and you recognize each other through your knowing. You know that rural poor voters vote against their own interest. You know that you are more likely to shoot yourself with a gun than an intruder, and that gun ownership should be limited. You know that those who disagree with your view of the world are mistaken; they’ve been lied to and tricked and cannot think for themselves anymore. Why else would they abandon you in your righteous fight for inclusion, social welfare, and equality? Do they not know that you know what is best? (Rensin 2016)

Thomas Edsall expands on these principles, noting that they are populated by ideals of universal freedom, promotion of diversity and multiculturalism, maintenance of separate lifestyles, free speech (even if considered pornographic or profane), and restriction of

government ability to intervene in moral choices (2017). Business Insider's Josh Burro adds to the narrative by noting that liberals support immigrants' rights, favor legalizing marijuana, and oppose forcing transgender individuals to conform to an outdated male-female bathroom division. Despite their knowledge of right and wrong, liberals do not understand why more people do not vote in line with their beliefs, and the why the majority of lower middle-class voters vote conservative. "Democrats believe their economic agenda should appeal to people with lower incomes, yet income has become a poor predictor of partisan alignment. Democrats' substantial inroads with upscale suburban voters have been more than offset by the loss of voters down the income spectrum, most of whom did not finish college (Barro 2017)."

### **Content Analysis Data Set: Fake News & Political Narratives**

This section analyzes four different fake news articles' content and create a comparison with the above political narratives. An attempt is made establish whether or not the articles' contents is congruent with one of the narrative types above. The below fake news articles were chosen from BuzzFeed.com's *Here Are 50 Of The Biggest Fake News Hits On Facebook From 2016* (Silverman 2016) and *Here Are 50 Of The Biggest Fake News Hits On Facebook From 2017* (Silverman, Lytvynenko, & Pham 2017). The websites not only included the article titles, but data about Facebook user likes and shares.

#### Text Analysis 1: "Obama Sign Executive Order Banning the Pledge Of Allegiance In Schools Nationwide"

Distributed around the time period of the 2016 U.S. presidential election, *Obama Signs Executive Order Banning The Pledge of Allegiance In Schools Nationwide* was created on fake news site abcnews.com.co in an attempt to falsely portray itself as mainstream media outlet ABC News. The article claims that then President Barack Obama signed an executive order making it

illegal for schoolchildren to recite the Pledge of Allegiance, and that infractions could be punished by a \$10,000 fine or one year in prison. Reasons for the supposed ban are that it is not inclusive of non-Christian faiths and that reciting the pledge on a daily basis is “contrary to America’s deepest values (“Obama Sign Executive Order Banning The Pledge Of Allegiance In Schools Nationwide” 2016).”

Analysis of article content and comparison to the above narrative shows that this particular article was written to incense and inflame conservative audiences. The fake executive order is presented not only as a blatant attack on Christian morals, it is also shown as a massive overstepping of government authority. Through fake interviews in the article, Obama is negatively referred to as a Muslim, the creator of ISIS, and a man who wants to weaken the youth of America. Furthermore, Obama supporters are shown to be atheists who accuse Christians of indoctrinating youth. Obama is referred to as an “illegitimate Muslim traitor”, and his action is seen as irreversible and authoritarian (“Obama Sign Executive Order Banning The Pledge Of Allegiance In Schools Nationwide” 2016).

#### Text Analysis 2: “Pope Francis Shocks World, Endorses Donald Trump For President, Releases Statement”

Distributed around the time period of the 2016 presidential election, *Pope Francis Shocks World, Endorses Donald Trump For President, Releases Statement* was created on fake news site wtoe5news.com, in an attempt to falsely portray itself as a local news outlet. The article claims that Pope Francis had made the previously unheard of decision to endorse a U.S. presidential candidate, in this case, Donald Trump. The Pope cites his incredulity at the FBI’s lack of prosecution of Hillary Clinton as a primary cause of his decision to support Trump. He

further claims that the American government is corrupt and does not work (Pope Francis Shocks World, Endorses Donald Trump For President, Releases Statement” 2016).

Analysis of article content and comparison to the above narrative shows that this particular article is being written to resonate with conservative audiences, and to influence them to support Trump in the U.S. presidential election. Common themes include: Christianity (in this case the use of a leading religious authority) and the vindication of the belief that the U.S. government is corrupt, broken, and betraying the interests of its people. Therefore, it must be brought down and a new type of candidate must be selected. In the article, the Pope supposedly stated “I feel that voting against the powerful political forces that have corrupted the entire American federal government is the only option for a nation that desires a government that is truly for the people, and by the people (Pope Francis Shocks World, Endorses Donald Trump For President, Releases Statement” 2016). The message is clear, if not heavy-handed.

Text Analysis 3: “Man Arrested After Police Find 19 White Female Bodies In Freezers With ‘Black Lives Matter’ Carved Into Skin”

Distributed in July 2016, *Man Arrested After Police Find 19 White Female Bodies In Freezers With “Black Lives Matter” Carved Into Skin* was posted on fake news site Empire Herald, a website rife with fake news stories. In this article, police responding to a call of suspicious activity found an African-American male resident in possession of 19 female bodies in his body, and one living kidnapping victim. Under the influence of drugs and living with his grandmother, the man had bloody saws in his kitchen and multiple coolers in his basement to contain the bodies. The bodies had been beheaded, and the words "Black Lives Matter" had been carved into the victims' foreheads (“Man Arrested After Police Find 19 White Female Bodies In Freezers With “Black Lives Matter” Carved Into Skin” 2016).

Analysis of article content and comparison to the above narrative shows that this particular article is being written to incense and inflame conservative audiences, particularly white conservative audiences. The murderer is a modern-day racist stereotype: the unemployed, drug addicted black man who lives with his mother (in this case grandmother) and preys on helpless white women. It's racist, sexist, and strikes fear into the heart of white rural populations. Further incendiary is the words "Black Lives Matter" carved into their heads. Black Lives Matter, as a movement, stands against white-supremacy and is often vocal of aggressions (both macro and micro) committed against persons of color. They are in some cases considered an ideological opposite of right conservative movements.

#### Text Analysis 4: "Trump Orders the Execution of Five Turkeys Pardoned by Obama"

Distributed in January 2017, *Trump Orders the Execution of Five Turkeys Pardoned by Obama* was posted on fake news site [realnews.righnow.com](http://realnews.righnow.com). The article posits that President Trump decided to undo the damaging and flawed policies of the Obama administration. One of the mistakes of the last administration was, apparently, the pardoning of 16 turkeys, a time-honored tradition occurring every Thanksgiving day. " After reviewing the decisions made by the previous administration, President Trump has determined that a number of turkey pardons issued by Barack Obama were done so in a manner that was both deceitful and hazardous to the American people ("Trump Orders the Execution of Five Turkeys Pardoned by Obama" 2016).

Analysis of article content and comparison to the above narrative shows that this particular article is being used to incense and entertain liberal audiences, who find Trump's policies and positions to be ridiculous in nature. A mockery of the President Trump's propensity to blame former administrations for his own lack of success, the article sheds a joking light of distrust onto the actions of the past president and his pardoning of these turkeys. "There are a lot

of questions we don't have the answers to. Were they connected to radical Islamic terrorism? Black Lives Matter extremists? We can't be sure... All we know is they were sentenced to death and Obama took it upon himself to meddle in the independent judicial process. ("Trump Orders the Execution of Five Turkeys Pardoned by Obama" 2016)"

### **Facebook Activity Data Set: Fake News & Influence on Readership<sup>3</sup>**

As the above article analyses seem to suggest a link between fake news authorship and readership. Articles are being drafted with particular narratives and demographics in mind, and not at random. Thus, the next important measurement is that of impact on the reader. Utilizing the classification system outlined in the methodology section of this paper<sup>4</sup>, I classified Facebook user comments on the basis of belief in the content, and on indicators of that belief polarizing further. Positive Transitive shows not only agreement with the subject matter, but that the subject matter is further adjusting a worldview. Positive shows merely general agreement, but lacks severity of reaction and further comment to establish worldview. Neutral is often defined by questioning if the article is true. Negative shows general disagreement, and Negative Transitive shows extreme disagreement coupled with a changing world view, usually a polarization that readers must be uninformed if they can believe the content. Other content contains unrelated emoticons or tagging of friends to read the article. Analysis of comment content will create a concrete measure of just how much impact fake news has the on Facebook users who come into contact with it.

***DISCLAIMER:** This section includes individual Facebook user comments. They are intended to illustrate respondent opinions in as honest a manner as possible. Language may be*

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<sup>3</sup> Appendix 1: Fake News Comments with Codifications

<sup>4</sup> Figure 3: Facebook Comment Impact Codification Spectrum – p.12

*inflammatory. Grammatical/Spelling mistakes have been left to preserve the commentary’s original meaning(s).*

Influence Analysis 1: “Obama Sign Executive Order Banning The Pledge Of Allegiance In Schools Nationwide”

Obama Signs Executive Order Banning The Pledge Of Allegiance In Schools Nationwide							
	Positive Transitive	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Negative Transitive	Other	Total
# of Comments	38	26	2	22	10	2	100
Percentage	38.00%	26.00%	2.00%	22.00%	10.00%	2.00%	

Buzzfeed.com notes this article as having 2,177,000 total shares, comments, and reactions on Facebook (Silverman 2016). A sampling of 100 publicly published comments was taken from below the article and the results yielded that 38% of those who commented under the article were influenced in support of conservative based narratives, while 10% were influenced away from those narratives. 26% agreed with the content, and 22% disagreed with the content. In this particular instance of fake news, a majority of commenters, 64%, showed agreement with the ideas and beliefs posited in the article. One respondent, whose comment was labeled *positive transitive*, wrote “The sooner we get him out of the White House the better for our country! Let’s don’t bring in his pal Hil[ary Clinton] as I believe she would make things worse for America. They want us to forget everything our country stands for and all the men and women who made it possible for us to have this great nation!” Another respondent, labeled *negative transitive*, wrote “It is sad to me... I immediately knew this was ludicrous and not true. Figured there would be many who jump on this train!”

Influence Analysis 2: “Pope Francis Shocks World, Endorses Donald Trump For President, Releases Statement”

Pope Francis Shocks World, Endorses Donald Trump For President, Releases Statement							
	Positive Transitive	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Negative Transitive	Other	Total
# of Comments	13	37	12	11	1	2	76
Percentage	17.11%	48.68%	15.79%	14.47%	1.32%	2.63%	

Buzzfeed.com notes this article as having 961,000 total shares, comments, and reactions on Facebook (Silverman 2016). A sampling of 76 publicly published comments was taken from below the article and the results yielded that 17.11% of those who commented under the article were influenced in support of conservative based narratives, while 1.32% were influenced away from those narratives. 48.68% agreed with the content, and 14.47% disagreed with the content. In this particular instance of fake news, a majority of commenters, 65.79%, showed agreement with the ideas and beliefs posited in the article. One respondent, whose comment was labeled *positive transitive*, wrote "Didn't see that one coming! Bet we hear NOTHING about that on tv. Unless we watch OANN! [One America News Network]" Another respondent, the lone *negative transitive*, wrote “So many people are just plain ignorant! They jump on someone’s bandwagon and off they go, with violent protests, etc. They have NEVER listened to Trump for themselves and have just become Hilary’s puppets...”

Influence Analysis 3: “Man Arrested After Police Find 19 White Female Bodies In Freezers With “Black Lives Matter” Carved Into Skin”

Police Find 19 White Female Bodies In Freezers With "Black Lives Matter" Carved Into Skin							
	Positive Transitive	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Negative Transitive	Other	Total
# of Comments	27	19	18	24	10	2	100
Percentage	27.00%	19.00%	18.00%	24.00%	10.00%	2.00%	

Buzzfeed.com notes this article as having 525,000 total shares, comments, and reactions on Facebook (Silverman 2016). A sampling of 100 publicly published comments was taken from below the article and the results yielded that 27% of those who commented under the article were influenced in support of conservative based narratives, while 10% were influenced away from those narratives. 19% agreed with the general content, and 18% disagreed with the content. In this particular instance of fake news, a minority of commenters (but still significant amount), 46%, showed agreement with the ideas and beliefs posited in the article. One respondent, whose comment was labeled *positive transitive*, wrote "More of the insanity of the Black Lives Matter movement. When will they understand that black lives don't matter any more than white lives. They are a racially motivated terrorist organization whose only agenda is to create violence..." Another respondent, labeled *negative transitive*, wrote "The racist hatred in some of you is amazing. This is not true and you really need to check your moral values."

Influence Analysis 4: "Trump Orders the Execution of Five Turkeys Pardoned by Obama"

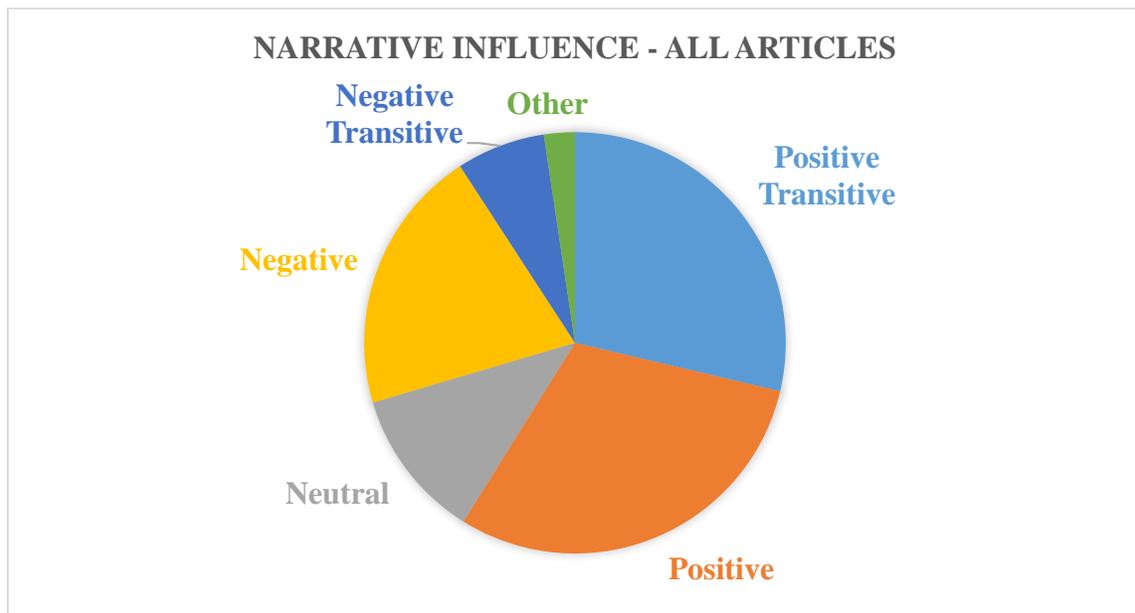
President Trump Orders the Execution of Five Turkeys Pardoned by Obama							
	Positive Transitive	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Negative Transitive	Other	Total
# of Comments	19	20	7	12	2	2	62
Percentage	30.65%	32.26%	11.29%	19.35%	3.23%	3.23%	

Buzzfeed.com notes this article as having 914,429 total shares, comments, and reactions on Facebook (Silverman, Lytvynenko, & Pham 2017). A sampling of 62 publicly published comments was taken from below the article and the results yielded that 30.65% of those who commented under the article were influenced in support of liberal based narratives, while 3.23% were influenced away from those narratives. 32.26% agreed with the general content, and 19.35% disagreed with the content. In this particular instance of fake news, a majority of commenters, 62.90%, showed agreement with the ideas and beliefs posited in the

article. One respondent, whose comment was labeled *positive transitive*, wrote “This is proof that Mr. Trump is trying to get rid of anything President Obama has done, proving how jealous he is of the true best President ever. Sorry Donald you can never be anywhere near the man you are so jealous of.’ Another respondent, labeled *negative transitive*, wrote “Humor is good considering what we as Americans are dealing with every day that POS is still in the Whitehouse.! I am afraid if trump sees this he will actually have those Turkeys killed.”

Influence Analysis: Cumulative Influence

Figure 4: Pie Chart Showing Cumulative Influence for All Four Fake News Articles



	Positive Transitive	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Negative Transitive	Other	Total
# of Comments	97	102	39	69	23	8	338
Percentage	28.70%	30.18%	11.54%	20.41%	6.80%	2.37%	

Combining respondent numbers for all four articles, it becomes apparent that the majority of those who comment on fake news articles believe the content of what they are reading, even if some comments it becomes apparent that respondents have read no further than the article’s

headline. With a total of 4,577, 429 shares, reactions, and comments, these articles together have, in theory, affected the opinions of nearly 29% of their readership, with another 30% agreeing with the content in general. 11.54% of commentators were labeled as *neutral*, usually asking if the article was true or not. 20% of commentators did not believe the content, while nearly 7% were influenced negatively against the content of the text and were certain of the idiocy of those who wrote positive comments. A negligible 2.37% of respondents tagged friends or posted unrelated emoticon images and were thus labeled as *other*.

### **Questionnaire Responses Data Set<sup>5</sup>**

A 22 question survey was sent out via Facebook networks and circulated for one week. In that time, it amassed 89 responses. After that time the survey was closed due to response stagnation, and the fact that a sufficient sample size had been gathered for analysis. The structure and design of the questionnaire were set to measure perceived commonality of fake news, perceived effects of fake news, and see if users perceive a structural link between fake news, political narratives, and Facebook as a social platform. For that reason, data sets and analysis follow in those categories.

***DISCLAIMER:** This selection includes individual survey respondent comments. They are intended to illustrate respondent opinions in as honest a manner as possible. Language may be inflammatory. Grammatical/Spelling mistakes have been left as to preserve the original meaning of the commentary.*

### Demographics

Age demographics found most respondents to be between 24 and 54 years of age. 42.7% of respondents listed themselves as between the ages of 24 and 35, with another 33.71% listing

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix 3: Facebook Questionnaire with Answers

themselves as between 36 and 54 years of age. 14.61% of respondents were aged 55+, 7.87% were between 18 and 23 years of age, and one person preferred not to disclose. Persons under the age of 18 were not allowed to fill out the questionnaire due to concerns over legal consent and possible vulnerability.

Gender demographics skewed female, with about 2/3 of respondents (66.17%) identifying as female, and 31% male. 2 persons (2.25%) listed themselves as Androgynous, and 1 person (1.12%) preferred not to disclose. Other options were offered, but gained zero responses.

Ethnic composition was overwhelming White/Caucasian (74.16% of respondents), followed by African – American/Black at 5.62%. 1.12% of respondents chose Latinx/Hispanic, 2.25% preferred not to disclose. 1 respondent identified as Native American, and 5 persons (5.61%) identified as some form of Asian (the questionnaire broke Asian down into 3 fields “East Asian”, “South Asian”, and “Southeast Asian”). 10.11% of respondents labeled themselves as biracial, with responses ranging from “Biracial” to “Mexican/Irish/Native American”.

Education levels were highly skewed towards upper education, with over 84% of respondents possessing a Bachelor’s Degree or higher. 44.94% of respondents had Bachelor’s Degrees, with another 39.33% of respondents having Master’s Degree, and an additional 5% of recipients listing themselves as having PhDs. or above. 6.74% of respondents only completed high school, 1.14% preferred not to disclose, and 1.14% listed themselves as other (working on an associate’s degree).

Political viewpoints were more liberal than conservative with Liberal (41.18%) and Very Liberal (21.57%) viewpoints totaling 62.75% of respondents. Conservative (6.86% - 7 persons) and Very Conservative (0.98% - 1 person), in contrast, accumulated 7.84% of respondents. 29.41% of respondents identified as Independent. Additional comments to the survey showed

either an aversion to the labeling system of Liberal and Conservative, or an aversion to the U.S. two-party system. One commenter noted, "Mostly I try to ignore politics and news because it's disheartening and pointless. Voting only divides the two-party system and fails to result in anything but more suffering. You have 2 choices, vote one of two parties' endorsed candidates regardless of how terrible they are, or throw your vote away by voting your heart (writing in) and let the opponent's party win. It's disgusting and I really feel like there's no point in trying anymore."

Survey participants primarily were current residents of the United States, with 89.89% claiming to reside in the U.S. at this point in the time. The remaining 10.11% note residency in Japan, Korea, Kazakhstan, Jordan, UK, Burma, Australia, Senegal, and Spain.

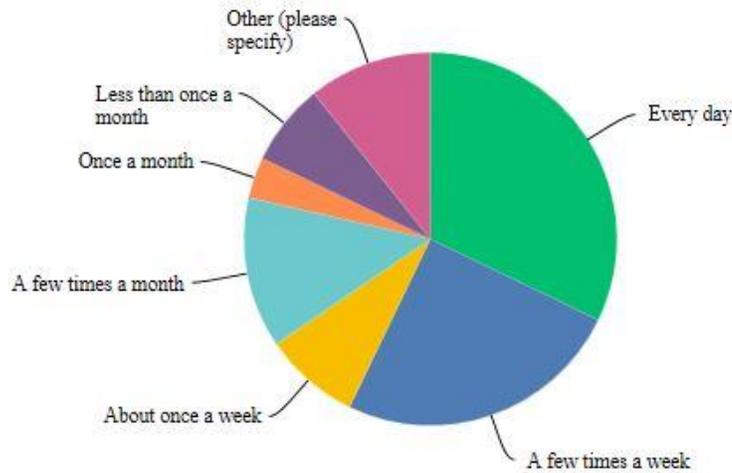
Despite active attempts to engage a broad variety of populations in this survey, statistics show the average respondent to be an educated white female from the United States in her mid-20s to mid-30s. She would have had a university education, and would be considered a Liberal in terms of political association.

Commonality of Fake News

Figure 5: Commonality of Fake News (84 Respondents)

How commonly do you see “Fake News” in Facebook?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 5



Eighty-four respondents found that fake news is a common occurrence on Facebook, with 27 respondents (31.14%) seeing fake news articles every day, and 21 respondents (25%) seeing fake news a few times a week. 7 respondents (8.33%) see fake news about once a week, while 11 respondents (13.10%) see fake news a few times a month. 3 respondents (3.57%) see fake news once a month, and 6 respondents (7.14%) see fake news less than once a month. 9 participants (10.71%) listed themselves as *Other*. Comments in the *Other* field ranged from “I have never seen it as I did not pay attention to fake news in Facebook.” to “I’m not sure how often I see it because I don’t check the sources of every article that comes up in my newsfeed.”

Respondents identified multiple types of formats that fake news content can take. Of the 84 respondents, 80.95% have witnessed news articles as a source of fake content. 72% have encountered memes/captioned photos, 64.29% have witnessed videos, 51.19% have encountered blogs, and 46.3% have witnessed fake news directly from a text of someone’s personal Facebook

status. 5.95% of respondents (5 people) have stated that they have not seen fake news of any kind on Facebook.

Respondents identified a distinct difference between fake news and so-called 'mainstream media'. A significant majority of respondents defined fake news with notes that it contains bias, lies, and falsehoods. Other notes included a lack of thorough research, an attempt to imitate legitimate journalism, and fictitious or misleading. It has also been noted as a reflexive way of dismissing news one does not agree with. Mainstream Media, on the other hand, was noted by a majority of respondents with the following description: "Mainstream media refers to reputable news organizations that meet journalistic standards. Typically these are organizations that are recognizable to the average person. (E.G. Fox, NBC, CBS, ABC, CNN, New York Times)."

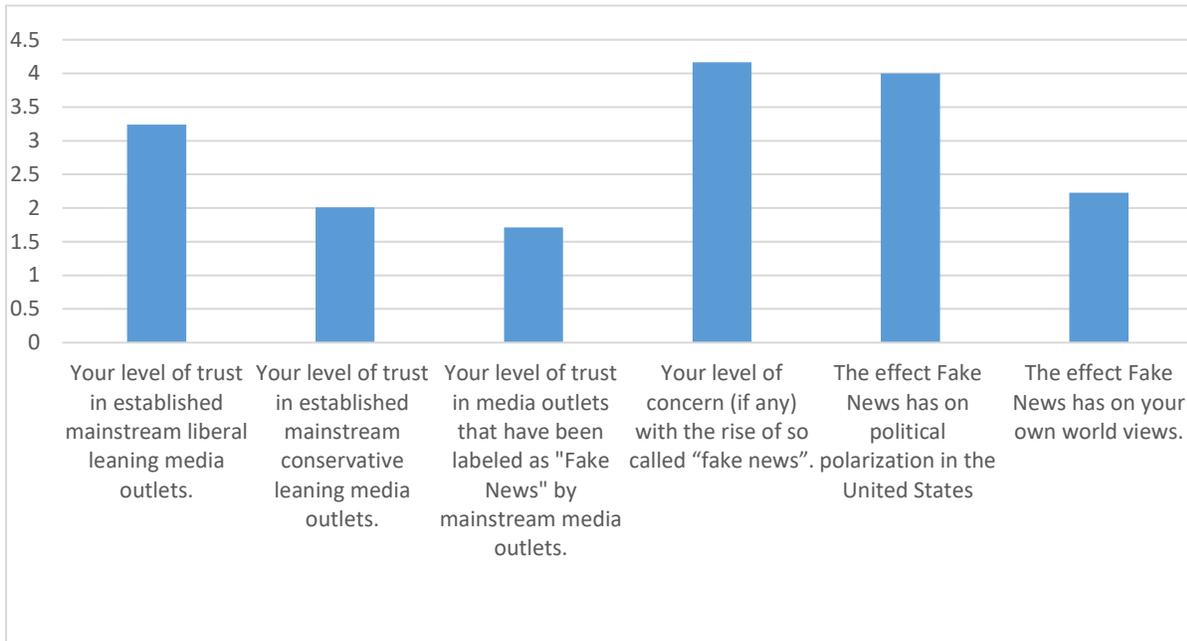
When asked how easily they could identify fake news, 17.8% of respondents said they could identify fake news very easily, and 36.9% said they could do so somewhat easily. 4.76% said it is somewhat difficult to identify fake news, and 3.57% admitted that it was very difficult to identify fake news. 35.71% of respondents indicated that their ability to tell the credibility of an article was largely dependent on the article itself. One person, listed under *Other*, noted that if an article "sounded too good to be true" it was liberal news, and if it "sounded whack" it was conservative fake news.

When asked what they would look for when attempting to discern the credibility of a news story, the average respondent replied that the source and their reputation was the most valid indicator of reputability. They also note the importance of "Googling it" to see who else is sharing or distributing the information, and to check for bias. Finally, they note the use of personal judgment and "does it sound too outlandish?"

Media Trust & Fake News Impact

Respondents, when asked to rate their levels of trust in various media outlet types, and to measure their concern (or lack thereof) from 1 to 5, provided the following results:

Figure 6 : Respondent Rating Averages on a Scale of 1 (Lowest) to 5 (Highest)



The above sets show that as a whole, respondents trust mainstream media sources far more than those considered fake news, and that liberal mainstream media is seen with higher trust than conservative (this is not surprising given earlier demographic information. There is an extremely high level of concern with the rise and existence of fake news, and the general belief that fake news has a significant effect on political polarization in the United States. However, it is interesting to note that respondents do not consider fake news as having a significant effect on their own personal world views. Asked for commentary on their trust of fake news and mainstream media sources, respondents have a variety of answers. One respondent, for example, noted, "I'm more inclined to trust certain news organizations based on my beliefs. I'm also inclined to trust the sources if all news corporations are reporting the same information. When

there is a difference in information, I will become skeptical.” Another written opinion stated, “I tend to trust local newspapers and NPR among a few others.”

Considering the number of respondents who noted some level of difficulty in identifying fake news was around 44% (35.71% - depends on the article, 4.76% - somewhat difficult, 3.57% - very difficult), the above perceived lack of effect on personal world views seems to be indicative of a lack of awareness in how exposure to fake news can change personal beliefs. This, coupled with the many forms in which fake news exists on social media, suggests that fake news permeates media for more deeply than the average Facebook user can differentiate and that the average user both dismisses and is affected by, various fake news types.

#### Structural Links between Narrative, News, and Facebook Platform?

A majority of respondents believe that media is overly commercialized, and that making a profit is a higher priority than unbiased reporting, with 61.9% of respondents directly stating they believe this to be fact. 22.62% believed that media may be overly commercialized, and a paltry 5.95% indicated that they did not think media would put profit before integrity. 4.76% stated that they simply did not know, and another 4.76% listed themselves as *Other*. The *Other* held commentary overwhelming noting that in their opinion over commercialization depended heavily on the exact media outlet/source.

Respondents note multiple reasons for the creation of fake news. 88.10% of survey takers believe that fake news is created to influence public opinions and beliefs. Another 52.38% believe that fake news is being created to satisfy market demand and to earn a profit, while 4.76% claim that they have no idea why fake news is created and distributed. 27.38% of respondents noted *Other* reasons for the creation of fake news. These range from “to add some

levity and humor to perplexing topics” to “Distort truth to build a narrative; play to a base of support; affect polling data”.

Respondents believe the most common reason for the creation of fake news is socio-political in nature, with 76.19% of survey takers citing the influence of public opinion as the key reason for fake news creation. Another 19.05% believe fake news creation to be driven by profit and advertising revenues, while zero respondents believe humor or satire to be the primary purpose of fake news. Four persons (4.76%) cited their views as *Other*, though comments revealed all of these to fall into the above classification groups. One particularly potent comment was written as follows: “...Simple Fake News is probably more about entertainment and different types of "trolling." More complicated Fake News, while potentially profitable, is probably most driven actors trying to influence political/social opinion. So, by sheer volume, I suspect entertainment is the most common reason for its creation. However, the Fake News using different websites, which have a more permanent presence than memes are likely used more to influence...”

When exposed to fake news on Facebook, the most common user action is to ignore the article (71.43% of respondents), followed by reading the article (29.76% of respondents), then marking as spam or inappropriate content in violation of Facebook standards (27.38%). 23.81% of respondents would show their disagreement in the commentary, while 3.57% would show their agreement of article content in the commentary. 13.10% of respondents would share the article with a notice that it is fake news, while 4.76% would share with a notice of support for alternative news. 2.38% of survey respondents indicated that they would like the article, and 11.90% of respondents cited *Other* as a course of action. *Other*, in this case, contained alternate

actions ranging from “usually fly into a rage and have to close my social media” to “I have never attended to fake news in Facebook”.

When someone a respondent knows posts what is perceived as fake news on Facebook, respondents most common action is to ignore the post and simply do nothing (57.14%). 46.43% of survey takers would dispute the article's credibility, and 42.86% would provide a link to an alternate website debunking the fake article. 17.86% of survey respondents would unfriend the person who posted the article, 8.33% would block the person, and 3.57% would insult the person. 19.05% of respondents listed *Other*, with alternate actions ranging from "unfollow" (remaining friends, but no longer having that person's posts show up in your news feed) to "maybe make a humorous comment".

Survey respondents believe that Facebook should be held responsible for the spread of fake news spread on its platform, but that the reader or Facebook user ultimately has to most power in stopping the rise of fake news. Out of 84 respondents, 42.86% believe that Facebook should be held accountable for content published on its platform, while 23.81% believe this should not be the case. 9.52% are undecided, and 5.95% list their answer as *Other*, with commentary following the theme that individual users should be accountable for their beliefs and lack of world knowledge. This runs in line with user statistics that state 53.57% of survey respondents believe the reader has the most power in continuing the spread of or stopping the spread of fake news. 22.62% believe the creators of fake news content should simply stop production. 17.86% of respondents believe that Facebook as a network has the power to curb the spread of fake news on its platform. 5.95% responded as *Other*, with responses ranging from “I don't know” to “Schools, parents, etc! Fake news wouldn't be so prevalent (and appealing!) if people more easily critiqued what they read...”

## Discussion

Data trends reveal direct answers to the research questions presented in the methodology section of this work. As a result of a mixed methodology, there exists both qualitative and quantitative data to justify interpretations of findings.

### Does the existence of far-left and far-right narratives create a demand for Fake News?

Though it is difficult to ascertain the exact purpose for which a particular entity creates fake news, survey respondents seem overwhelming in their assertions that fake news is created, not as a tool of entertainment or satire, but as a way of influencing people's beliefs and views of the world, with 88% listing it as a possible reason for fake news creation, and 76% listing it as the most common reason for the fake news creation. A lesser 53% of respondents cited fulfilling market demand/earning profit as a possible reason for fake news creation. It is also important to note that advertising revenue and influence are not incompatible concepts; and if they are the motivating factors for fake news creation, it stands to reason that any marketer would have a readership demographic in mind for its content.

Narrative creation and following textual comparisons with fake news articles reveal that fake news article content is strongly in agreement with beliefs from strong conservative and liberal narratives. While not direct proof of intent to market to those demographics, the heavy-handed use to racist, sexist, religious and politically inflammatory content does certainly attract particular types of readerships. This does not mean to say certain political narratives are sexist or racist, merely that sex, race, and religious identity are core and emotional components of any human identity, and therefore these topics can be politically salient and attract readers. Out of the four articles examined, three held strong contextual cues that vindicate or enflame conservative

narrative-based beliefs, and the fourth held strong contextual cues that vindicate and enflame liberal based beliefs.

In this case the data appears to show that fake news is created for its audiences, and that content is sensational in nature, further bolstering readers opinions and reactions. Analyses of article content shows an extremely strong connection to certain political narratives; and comments show that the content not only resonates with readers, but also affects their core belief structures. This creates a stronger market demographic to increase demand of content that mirrors their beliefs, however fake this content may be.

#### How does Fake News affect socio-political narratives?

Fake news appears to have a polarizing effect on political and social narratives, particularly those considered outside of mainstream belief structures. Impact analysis revealed that for every article, a majority of respondents showed positive reactions to content, meaning that to some extent a false worldview was being reinforced. A small, but still serious percentage (for all four articles combined, an average of 28%) showed change in belief structure as a result of article contents. Though the majority of people who do not agree with an article on Facebook simply ignore it (57% of survey respondents), the cumulative measure of 4,577, 429 shares, reactions, and comments is quite high. Especially considering that these figures are not able to include those persons who read, or skimmed, the article but did not on actively participate in discussion.

Survey results show that on a 1-5 spectrum, “the effect fake News has on political polarization in the United States” received a cumulative average of 4, a very high number. One respondent wrote “All fake news does is feed an existing market. Fake news is a reflector, not a director”, while another noted “Fake news tends to be facile and provocative, so people

consuming it without employing any critical thinking are becoming more emotionally charged and entrenched in their sides, even though the information is false. It often intends to demonize the other side.”

In this case it is important to note that while survey respondents tended to be highly educated and liberal in political view, similar demographic information is not available for those who commented under the fake news articles. Survey respondent answers may not be in line with the beliefs of those who chose to comment on fake news articles. In any case, the data shows that exposure to fake news articles does have an effect on certain persons’ political views, and that liberal segments of society consider fake news to have a high influence on political divides in the United States.

What role does Facebook have in the production, demand, and dispersal of Fake News, and how does it affect political polarization?

Kamau (2017) notes that Facebook exists as a perfect platform for the dispersal and generation of fake news as user can create fake news, share fake news, comment on fake news, and participate in dialogue about fake news instantaneously. Large readerships can be reached with zero expenditure of funds and rallied for a specific purpose (p. 191). A result of this seems to be a continuous flow of fake news content, with over 32% of survey respondents being exposed to fake news on a daily basis via Facebook, and another 25% exposed multiple times a week. Taking forms like articles, blogs, videos, memes, personal statuses, and comments, fake news permeates Facebook to the point that 42.86% of 84 survey respondents noted the belief that Facebook should be held responsible for content published on its platform.

17.86% of survey respondents believe Facebook to be the most powerful agent in stopping the spread of fake news through disallowing of fake content. 53.57% believe the reader

is at fault for creating demand, and if they educate themselves more, fake news demand and production will drop.

How can Structuration Theory aid in understanding Facebook's role in the production of fake news and its effects on political polarization?

Structuration Theory posits that social patterns are followed and reinforced by individual actors who exist within a larger structural framework. This structure defines the rules, systems, and social patterns of society. Actors have the ability to come together and create structural change if they wish, though their actions and methods of change are ultimately done within the bounds of the larger structure. Thus, structuration theory outlines a social order, where “in and through their activities agents reproduce the conditions that make these activities possible (Fuchs 2002, p.14).”

As seen in prior research questions, it has been established that there are demographics targeted by fake news producers, and that fake news not only markets, but builds, a readership demographic. With Facebook these producers have open access to markets, very little operating costs, and almost no filter or gatekeeper to control the amount, type, or accuracy of information published. Thus, Facebook exists as a direct pipeline between structure and actor, allowing for single actors to quickly spread information, mobilize support, and change societal structure, while at the same bypassing limitations such as wealth, media outlet control of content, etc.

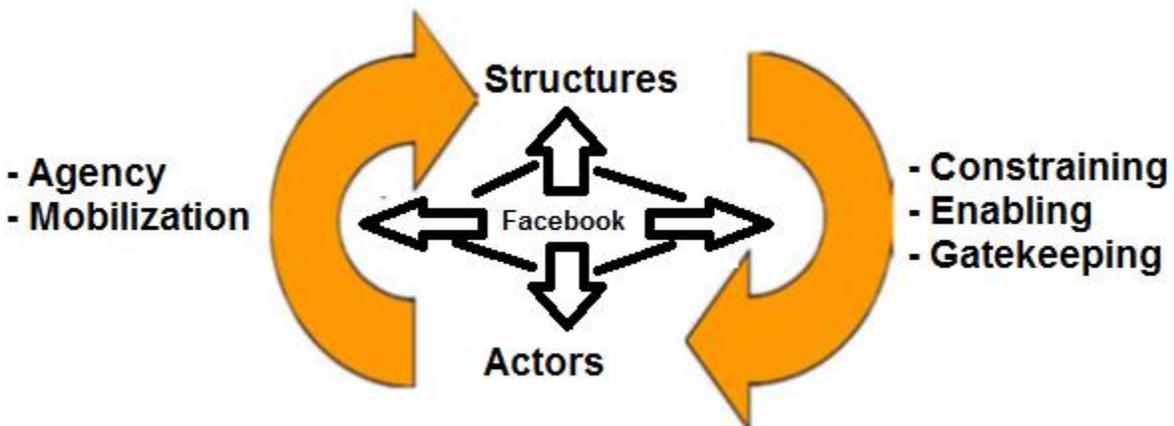
This does not mean to say that Facebook use makes an actor immune to structural limitations on behavior. This merely notes that, like society itself, Facebook exists as structural entity comprised of billions of users. Facebook simultaneously exists as digital binding link between actor and structure, and the sum total of the interactions, values, emotions, and relationships users have with each other and the communities within which they live. In this

case, Facebook exists in all aspects of Giddens Theory, and acts as a sort of internal webbing to solidify and tighten the relationship between societal actors and structure. A meta-structure in itself, Facebook not only exists within the larger societal framework that Giddens Theory posits, but recreates this structure on a digital platform which allows a much more tightly bound and less restrictive social order.

Fuchs (2002) argues that within Structuration Theory “society is a complex, self-organizing system. This suggests that the foundational problem of sociology of how structures and actions as well as society and the human being are related should not be resolved in a determinist manner... science of self-organization suggests a dialectic of structures and actions, (social) system and human being (p.15).” In much the same way, Facebook finds itself shaped by, and sometimes at odds with, the behaviors, interactions, and values of its users. In a another fashion, Facebook exists as a company, with stocks, legal obligations, and a responsibility to protect its users and stakeholders; it’s values and behavior as a company are influenced by currently existing societal rules and norms.

Taking the above into consideration, I would suggest that Facebook, and its role in societal relationships, be shown as follows:

Figure 7: Facebook as a Concept Explained by Giddens Theory



In the above figure, Facebook is shown to be something of a nebulous web connecting social systems and actors directly, and allowing alternative routes towards social change. Certain structural limitations on behavior, such as flow of information and lack of resources/wealth are now able to be partially or completely bypassed as Facebook merely requires an internet connection and email address to plug in and have access to social resources. In that same vein, agency and user mobilization for change become far easier to apply, making change processes faster, more common, and more accessible for populations in need.

### **Conclusion & Recommendations for the Future**

This paper aimed to explore the many facets of fake news distribution, readership demand, and Facebook. Research suggests that Facebook is an effective, low cost dispersal system for fake news creators in that it allows individual users to skip structural filters in information sharing, thus creating a more nebulous and less rigid relationship between structures and actors in society. Research has further shown that fake news article content is created to target particular political narratives, and that fake news informs, furthers, and validates extreme opinions, causing political polarization. Comment analysis shows distinct sliding, even when some comments reveal that the writer did not read the fake news article in its entirety; simply the headline was enough to reinforce an alternative world view.

While the findings are not a ‘smoking gun’ by any means, they provide an insight into the relationship between fake news producers, fake news readers, and Facebook itself as a tightly bound social delivery system permeating both society as a structure, and the individual actors who make up society. Many respondents noted high frequency of fake news, a wide variety of the forms fake news take, and note Facebook as being directly responsible for content spread on its platform due to lack of accuracy checking and publisher verification. It is important to note

that in both raw data and commentary, respondents commonly blame the fake news readerships for believing the content of fake articles. Along with their blame of fake news audiences and beliefs that fake news creates political polarization, a majority of respondents judged fake news' impact on their own world views at an average rating of 2.25 out of 5. Among respondent comments, there appears to be a not insignificant trend towards seeking better news sources and utilizing their own agency in filtering information. For many, this seems to not only be something they personally strive for on Facebook, but expect others to do as well.

Giddens Theory helps to show that Facebook does not merely exist as a social network and data distribution platform; in many cases it also acts as a social meta-chasm that both exists within, and overlays the relationships between individual and society. It allows alternate routes toward societal change, and allows for easy mobilization of social capital. In the case of fake news, there becomes an obvious abuse of the system, and a direct effect on both individual beliefs and societal structure.

Recommendations for the future follow the creation of educational frameworks aimed at fake news literacy and cross-political understanding. Though Facebook, as a structure, should be held accountable in some capacity for its dispersal of fake content and forced to better regulate posts' accuracy and legitimacy, it is ultimately up to the reader to judge validity and accuracy, and to strive to broaden their ideological bubbles. Just as Facebook can be a place of ideological bubbles and false facts, it can also be a dispersal network for educational systems and cross political dialogues.

In my own personal experience, I found the process of creating conservative and liberal narratives quite educating and liberating, as I was forced to examine my own views of the world from another person's negative lens. There were times where I was physically angered at having

my beliefs treated as wildly uninformed, and other times where I was forced to admit to myself the ludicrous nature of certain assumptions underlying my belief structures. Fake news content is similarly transformative, outrageous and divisive; it moves readers' viewpoints to extremes and removes cross-group connections. The only real way to fight its effects are to encourage people to attempt to bridge gaps and find common groups. One respondent fittingly sums up the problem of fake news as "Fake news wouldn't be so prevalent (and appealing!). If people more easily critiqued what they read. Also, I really think that one of the main reasons that fake news is so compelling is that it induces intense feelings (outrage, horror, contempt) which, when shared with others, creates a feeling of connection."

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**Appendix 1: Fake News Comments with Codifications**

<b>President Trump Orders Execution of Five Turkeys Pardoned by Obama</b>		
<b>#</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Rating</b>
1	He probably would chop off... or have someone else... a Turey's head on the front lawn of the WH.	Negative
2	Of course he did that is because he is a coward	Positive
3	He is just a sick vile man! I could say something but I wont cause I'm better than he is!	Positive Transitive
4	Anything to reverse an Obama tradition	Positive Transitive
5	#45 is a sick clown	Other
6	Shame Trump wasn't one of the turkeys	Negative

7	He is a sick hateful man!!!!	Positive Transitive
8	Asshole!	Positive Transitive
9	Trump is the craziest idiot on this planet!! Really?! He is doing this because he hates trump??!! How stupid is he? And he is number 45!! What a Shame!!	Positive Transitive
10	Make it six turkeys, you're corpulent and fleshy.	Positive
11	This petty man, proves the world righ. That there's a loose screwed moron "reigning in the White House!	Positive Transitive
12	What a pompous, ignorant, dotard.	Positive
13	Not funny!	Negative
14	Sadly probably the truth	Neutral
15	Stupid idiot	Positive
16	Sure he does that is just one more thing? Trup is doing to show his hate for Obama. Haha this has to be a fake post. Surely Trump would not do that, and if he does it will only prove he is insane.	Neutral
17	I hope everybody realizes that this is SATIRE, right!...not that trump isn't up to doing it... he just hasn't yet!	Negative
18	"Dick of the Day"	Neutral
19	Filthy Creep	Positive
20	OMG this has to be fake, event Trump could not be that stupid!!	Negative
21	:(	Neutral
22	Instead of giving them to charity, he gives them to family members	Positive
23	Take back his pardon of racist	Positive
24	trump is a hateful, vindictive idiotic moron	Positive
25	SORRY THIS IS NOT HUMOROUS	Negative
26	He wants them executed because Obam pardoned them. Trump wants to do undo everything Obama did.	Positive Transitive
27	Of course, he doesn't like animals. He has to undue whatever obam did he is obsessed.	Positive Transitive
28	How about a trump execution! If you want to execute turkeys, we have the same right!	Positive Transitive
29	He is one sick sonofabitch!!!	Positive Transitive
30	Trump is very sick how can you hate a person sp just because the color of their skin shame on you trump	Positive Transitive
31	What a viscous, vindictive moron! So jealous of someone he can never be.	Positive Transitive
32	What a dickwad Trump is!	Positive

33	This is proof that Mr. Trump is trying to get rid of anything President Obama has done, proving how jealous he is of the "true best President ever. Sorry Donald you can never be anywhere near the man you are so jealous of.	Positive Transitive
34	What is wrong with the maniac?	Positive
35	If they do, throw their heads inside his BEDROOM or on the FRONT LAWN! He is a sick person just to get back at PRESIDENT OBAMA!!	Positive Transitive
36	He hate Obama cause he is smart. He should have stay in school to bad for him.	Positive
37	If this is true, it speaks volumes about 45...not about one, it's about all.	Neutral
38	Hmmmmmm. No pardons this year.	Positive
39	You got to be kidding!!!	Positive Transitive
40	MAN IS SICK!	Positive
41	Cute	Negative
42	I hope Trump chokes on his turkey.	Positive
43	Trump you're a very I'll person and you actually need medication ! Seek help	Positive Transitive
44	Commie prikfuk!	Positive Transitive
45	FIGURES THE OLD BIRD WOULD DO THAT HE'S SO JEALOUS	Positive
46	What a sick individual	Positive
47	He would piece of crap	Positive
48	We need to get rid of the "turkey" in the White House!	Positive
49	When will 45 be executed?	Positive
50	This is a joke right?	Negative
51	Unreal	Negative
52	Humor is good considering what we as Americans are dealing with every day that POS is still in the Whitehouse. I am afraid if trump sees this he will actually have those other turkeys killed	Negative Transitive
53	real funny... lets all laugh when your on your death bed.. Discusting pile of garbage. I love and miss you Mr. Obama.	Negative
54	Miss you President Obama!!!	Other
55	Love it!!	Neutral
56	Very Funny!	Neutral
57	This is a joke, right?	Neutral
58	Wouldn't surprise me	Neutral
59	How low he has sunk!	Positive

60	Low class. Ignorant. Jacka..! Impeach now!	Positive Transitive
61	Trump is so very jealous of what a great president Obama was, that he does not realize how stupid and comical he appears. His totally ready to be institutionalized!	Positive Transitive
62	Please let this be "FAKE" news!!	Neutral

<b>Pope Francis Shocks World, Endorses Donald Trump for President, Releases Statement</b>		
<b>#</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Rating</b>
1	...now I think pope is smart!	Positive
2	God knows!	Positive
3	Check Snopes.com... says this is false	Negative
4	I AM SORRY THAT THIS IS A HOAX!	Negative
5	A lot of catholics will listen and vote Trump...Nice	Positive Transitive
6	(photo of trump and hillary clinton)	Neutral
7	I LIKE THE IDEA OF TAKING A PIC OF YOUR BALLOT, THIS WAY WE CAN KEEP TRACK OF THE VOTES GOING FOR TRUMP...WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING TO KEEP THIS ELECTION FROM FRAUD. IT I SO EASY NOW OF DAYS TO CHANGE SOMEONES VOTE...TAKE A PIC..	Neutral
8	you guys are very funny, this pope is not even a Christian and stop turning this election into a Messianic endeavor.. None of you know what GOD is thinking ok? Just support Trump for the man and he will win because of your efforts, get your kids of voting age to register and go together to vote and take a picture of your ballot if you can... GOD bless you all	Positive Transitive
9	Praying...God Bless America!!	Positive
10	(Photo - GO TRUMP)	Positive
11	I looked this up. It is not true.	Negative
12	Get out and vot Trump to make America great again	Positivie
13	(tagged friend)	Neutral
14	GOD HAS SPOKEN VIA THE VATICAN. THANK YOU POPE FRANCIS. GOD BLESS AMERICA TRUMP and the AMERICAN PEOPLE...	Positive Transitive
15	Love it love it love it	Neutral
16	I don't like the sound of this one - not one bit - it's got to be a hoax. Most people are well aware of Mr. Pope's leanings toward the new world order!	Negative

17	thank you Pope Francis for have this courage to speak the truth and move towards a resolution for America. Your words do mean a lot to Christians in America	Positive Transitive
18	So many people are just plain ignorant! They jump on someone's bandwagon and off they go, with violent protests, etc. they have NEVER listened to Trump for themselves and have just become Clintons puppets. They have never looked into how evil lying...	Negative Transitive
19	didn't see that one coming, but glad he did	Positive
20	Catholics distrust muslim as much as the American people	Positive
21	Everyone need to get out ther and vote for Donald Trump and Mike Pence!	Positive
22	He took so long to endorse..	Positive
23	That would scare me, I would stay away from that idiot	Positive
24	Please Bless Mr. Trump!!	Positive
25	Funny this page doesn't get in to American policeys...	Positive
26	(Black image)	Neutral
27	Truly inspired against corruption and deciet?	Negative
28	Go Pope GOD BLESS YOU KEEP YOU SAFE	Positive
29	He woke up on the right side of the bed?	Positive
30	Bless all the people with a beautiful Heart and stay close to Donald J. Trump Trump to save him from Evil.... America need Donald J Trump for president 2016	Positive Transitive
31	It's almost like Hillary endorsing Trump. LOL	Neutral
32	I'll wait to see this on msm.	Negative
33	I've been waiting for GOD to come through for We The People and now I see the light!!! Thank you Pope Francis you have restored by faith in you and God has found another voice to speak out for The True Christianity that we need to spread accross the Universe!!! God Bless Pope Francis, God Bless Trump God Bless We The People and God Bless AMERICA!!!	Positive Transitive
34	Mille grazie!	Positive
35	You liberals are funny. As long as he was going along with all your crazy ideas, he was a good Pope. Now that he is actually standing up for Christianity, he is terrible. I have not really cared for this pope,,because of him being to political.	Positive Transitive

36	Who cares what he thinks. So out of touch with the real world.	Positive
37	supposedly not true, back in July, but sure would be nice if it was true! We need the Pope as well as the rest of the God Loving People of this Country pulling for President Donald Trump	Negative
38	i like Trump but could care less about THIS pope	Neutral
39	NOT A GOD PICKED LEADER MAN PICKED.	Positive
40	Don't rely on him to send a spiriual messages for anybody when he does nothing to protect little innocent boys.. Humans are a life and should be protected. Votes are a material thing. Don't mix your getting on your knees and he pop with the election.	Positive Transitive
41	I'm not buying this. He's working his way into Trump's soul and to make him think things different. This pope is not for real.	Negative
42	No! Don't believe it. He sounded more ati-Trump not long ago.	Negative
43	Take the endorsement. Get more of them. We're in a race.	Positive
44	HOPE	Neutral
45	Didn't see that one coming! Bet we hear NOTHING about that on tv. Unless we watch OANN.!	Positive Transitive
46	What a surprise?	Neutral
47	GOOOOOOOOOO DONALD GOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO	Positive
48	Let us continue to Pray	Positive
49	Long over due	Positive
50	About time!	Positive
51	For once he does something right!!!!	Positive
52	I thought the Pope's statement was very reasonable, speaking his mind, saying that the US elections were important to all the world, and that the rule of law was something that all should support. He didn't try to convert anyone or beat them	Positive Transitive
53	Another smokin mirrors	Neutral
54	pope just delivered the nails	Positive
55	Why is the pope interfering with our political process?	Positive Transitive

56	If the American people Loves our country and wants it to thrive ,they will vote for Donald Trump ..He will bring our jobs back and the wages will be good ..The children will get a good education ..and the faith & Bible teachings will not be taken out of...	Neutral
57	Good, although...what does it matter what he says....Not !	Positive
58	A copy of the Pope's endorsement Must be sent to Congress advising "a Holy Man, thousands of miles away, knows what REAL Americans have been yelling at Congress for the past almost 8 years... WE no longer have a Government "Of the People", we have let...	Positive Transitive
59	God must have opener his eyes	Positive
60	The Democrats have given America only one thing after all their promises. They have given the Country and mostly the black community, Abortion on Demand! Last year for the first time ever Abortion death surpassed actual births in the black community....	Neutral
61	god bless pop francis amen	Positive
62	Good that he has, but just shows his lack of understand of all thing Muslim and those appeasing them.	Positive
63	Pope Francis.....nah!!!! I don't believe it.....really....I need confirmation on this one...	Negative
64	<a href="http://www.snopes.com/pope-francis-donald-trumpendorsement/">http://www.snopes.com/pope-francis-donald-trumpendorsement/</a>	Negative
65	AMEN.	Positive
66	This is scary folks. This is the leader of the globalist agenda.	Positive Transitive
67	Not sure about the pope. He needs to stay out of American politics	Positive
68	Praise to our Father! Thank You for his total support!	Positive
69	TRUMP/PENCE 2016/2020	Other
70	Yes, absolutely (prayers)	Positive
71	I just pray that Trump is the man he says he is and there is no hidden agenda for fame.	Positive
72	Yes! Amen!!!!	Positive

73	Go figure	Positive
74	The Pope needs to build another wall & not worry about US.	Positive
75	Hopefully, this will encourage Catholics.....to vote, TRUMP.	Positive
76	TRUMP SHOULD NOT TRUST HIM HE IS MUSLIMS DOG	Other

<b>Police Find 19 White Female Bodies In Freezers With "Black Lives Matter" Carved Into Skin</b>		
<b>#</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Rating</b>
1	This is all bull shit if it were true Fox Nonews would be all over it 7/24	Negative
2	Shopes shows this as fake. Check up on stuff people.	Negative
3	Can 19 bodies fit in a freezer? This can't be true. Gotta be a hoax.	Negative
4	The racist hatred in some of you is amazing. This story is not true and you really need to check your moral values.	Negative Transitive
5	Shows how evil black lives matter really is	Positive Transitive
6	Sick	Positive
7	I will not jump to any conclusions until I find out whether this fact or fiction...I am sick and tired of stupid people jumping to conclusions before the real story is out and you have cold hard facts....	Neutral
8	Why don't they just call themselves the black panthers same thing	Positive
9	I don't know if this is true or false but what is real is the hate from these post, but what I don't get is how much of coward people are day what you mean, do I think 19 white women was kill at one time hell NO, but some would say anything to start hate talk between black & white people do bad things on both sides but it is time to come together and stop the madness	Neutral
10	Racist false story	Negative

11	This Post is designed to Start Race War! Could it Happen? If our Justice Department wasn't so biased in their opinions they would find the criminals that did this with the FBI, and prosecute them. No Chance of that with this Administration.	Negative Transitive
12	It's not a true story	Negative
13	I'm calling bullshit on this story!!!	Negative
14	Bullshit	Negative
15	Did you know that black lives matter is backed by George Sorrows and Hillary Clinton . This is true fact	Positive Transitive
16	If people could just wake up and realize what's really going on. You may not believe this but the government is doing this . It's to get they're one world order in full swing by	Positive Transitive
17	Fake	Negative
18	Hoax Alert! Police DID NOT Find 19 White Female Bodies In Freezers With 'Black Lives Matter' Carved Into Skin	Negative
19	Total BULLSHIT story! Stop believing everything you read! Take the time to see if the story is credible before you morons post your hateful rhetoric! FUCKTARDS	Negative Transitive
20	This story would have been on the news if in fact it were true.	Negative
21	I call bs	Neg
22	More of the insanity of the Black Lives Matter movement. When will they understand that black lives don't matter any more than any other lives. They are a racially motivated terrorist organization whose only agenda is to create violence wherever they ...	Positive Transitive
23	I call bullcrap	Negative
24	BLM cryptkeeper ?.. good Lord !	Positive

25	This has to be a hoax, otherwise it would be plastered all over the news right now. It hasn't even made its way to yahoo news yet, so don't believe it. And, all the misspellings in the article further convince me that it is an amateurish prank; not the work of a professional journalist. Don't be gullible!	Negative Transitive
26	BLM is organized crime, backed by Obama and funded through the Democrat Party. Hillary won't be the only one going to jail when Trump becomes President.	Positive Transitive
27	where is Obayme and the national networks now?	Positive
28	(another user tagged)	Neutral
29	Stop posting fake shit making people hate one and another. Smh. <a href="http://www.snopes.com/bodies-blm-carved-skin/">http://www.snopes.com/bodies-blm-carved-skin/</a>	Negative
30	So why is the animal still alive	Positive
31	If this is real, these people should be eliminated no questions.	Neutral
32	blm are getting away with murder and we can't even touch them because we will be called racist	Positive Transitive
33	wtf	Neutral
34	I call bullshit on that. Where was Hillary and Trump	Negative
35	Wow sick pups	Positive
36	If this is true, it seems like a set-up to me.	Negative
37	First off, I do not believe that 19 bodies could fit into that freezer. But nothing surprises me any more.	Negative
38	If you read the comments you can clearly see racism ..if its a fake story the kkk put this up ..think about it black people don't do shit like this thus is the work of the devil blond hair blue eyes thus is not your country if your not native American .stop telling black people to go back to Africa when you need to go back to your caves	Other
39	No doubt BLM is a terrorist group. But I don't believe this is true.	Negative
40	Label blm as a terrorist group so we can shoot em... That will get rid of em	Positive Transitive

41	I hope they find the sobs and they get the death penalty!	Positive Transitive
42	is this TRUE???	Neutral
43	It's amazing how now that " Black lives matter" white lives don't. I don't support any group that is racially motivated we're all one nation under God and that's the way I wished everyone seen it it's not the for of a, persons skin that makes them a bad ...	Positive Transitive
44	Prayers for the victims families. My hope he'll get the death penalty and for it to happen very soon	Positive
45	This crap needs to stop!!! You say you want respect but you don't give any actions speak louder than words!!!	Positive Transitive
46	They are street trash terrorists. It's time to start arresting these thugs.	Positive Transitive
47	Why didn't(t this come out on news? These young women's lives matter	Positive Transitive
48	If this was the work of BLM, then they should face justice, but if this is a nut who don't belong to BLM then he should face justice also for spreading hate do they have proof that BLM did this or someone else, I could have said The KKK did this	Positive Transitive
49	And just why isn't this in the news ??? Hhhmm	Positive Transitive
50	HOAX....FAKE....DID NOT HAPPEN!!!!	Negative Transitive
51	Well atleast we know blacks like white meat instead of dark...lol...Finger lickin good	Positive Transitive
52	Where's NBC	Positive
53	Fuckin pussy takin it out on women	Positive
54	It would have to have been a VERY LARGE freezer to hold 19 people inside.....really! I hope it's all a made up lie, although it's horrid!	Neutral
55	I'm done with this post.'God Bless America'...really! Race bait crap!! 19 white females in a freezer...musta been little people females. Should be ashamed to have God, Bless, or America as the name of this garbage!!	Negative Transitive

56	Yeah and they complain that they're oppressed. FUCK BLM	Positive Transitive
57	If this is true and it was BLM.DOJ WILL PROBABLY GIVE THEM SOME KIND OF AWARDS	Neutral
58	They are going to wake the beast!	Positive Transitive
59	Well guess what white lives matter too we shouldn't be doing the black lives matter thing yea they matter they matter just as much as any race so we shouldn't kill or hurt anyone	Positive Transitive
60	So sad that this is happening anywhere	Positive
61	It's time for a public hanging for Obama and these lowlifes stinking up America.	Positive Transitive
62	Kill these black bastards!!	Positive Transitive
63	this is what DC wants because they think only black lives matter	Positive
64	It's a hoax, the original story came from now8news and they are not a real news outlet	Negative
65	This is worse than ANYTHING Trump could ever say!!!!	Neutral
66	Hoax	Negative
67	People actually believe this lmao	Negative
68	Is this story fact or fiction? Who wrote this story ? I can't imagine mainstream would not be covering this	Neutral
69	I love that people are just ripping into the BLM movement when this IS A HOAX, maybe if people would actually look up instances like this, to truly find out if hoax/not.....	Negative Transitive
70	This story has been confirmed to be a fake.	Negative
71	*general outrage*	Neutral
72	Sick, vile and evil!	Positive
73	(tagged user)	Neutral
74	This is pure hate crime whether individual or group and must be treated as such. . Maybe those supporting BLM better change their minds. HATE LEADS TO HATE.	Positive Transitive
75	<a href="http://www.snopes.com/bodies-blm-carved-skin/">http://www.snopes.com/bodies-blm-carved-skin/</a>	Negative
76	Excuse me, the power was off but a light was on in the kitchen?	Neutral
77	It's all fake everyone	Negative
78	Sick bastards	Positive

79	Or a slick serial killer.	Positive
80	A fucking shit from blm	Positive
81	YOU NEED TO GO AFTER HILLARY AND OBAMA THEY ARE THE ASS HOLES GIVING THEM THE MONEY TO DO THIS.	Positive Transitive
82	<a href="http://hoax-alert.leadstories.com/593604-police-didnot...">http://hoax-alert.leadstories.com/593604-police-didnot...</a>	Negative
83	False! Social media, stop believing they telling you, they have a agenda!! Wow!!	Negative Transitive
84	Pop, didn't make him do this, he is a sick bastard that has been killing for years.	Positive
85	Where are all the protestersNow!!!!'	Positive Transitive
86	THIS IS FALSE INFORMATION MADE UP TO PERPETUATE HATE-----PLEASE BE RESPONSIBLE AND CHECK YOU FACTS ON SNOPEs BEFORE RELEASING IT TO THE PUBLIC TO STIR UP MORE HATE-----BE RESPONSIBLE, DO WE REALLY NEED MORE HATE?	Negative Transitive
87	OMG people are crazy on PvP. Who knows how long this is going on?	Positive
88	This is the kind of asshole that we know he did these heinous crime. Why waste time and money on this human garbage. Publicly hang him . 7 billion people on the planet. We don't need killers with us.	Positive Transitive
89	home grown terroist --barry's boys	Positive
90	He will probably be invited to the white house	Positive Transitive
91	(user tagged)	Neutral
92	Who raised these people? I wonder if their parents are proud or disgusted?	Positive
93	I hope this is fake	Neutral
94	Not sure about truth of this post would be all over news if true.	Negative
95	Please research these things before posting them!	Negative
96	This is a hoax!	Negative
97	Can you just imagine if it was black women found with white lives matter carved into them?	Positive Transitive

98	Black or white or what why not just A.eri	Neutral
99	THIS BETTER BE BULLSHIT!!!	Neutral
100	This guy should be executed in front of all BLM thugs and let them know this won't be tolerated.	Positive Transitive

<b>Obama Signs Executive Order Banning The Pledge of Allegiance In Schools Nationwide</b>		
<b>#</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Rating</b>
1	This is not legit. look at the URL	Negative
2	If Hillary wins, this is a good thing! A pledge is a pledge to her and that will never happen!	Positive Transitive
3	Look at this picture I didn't know so many people could look stupid at the same time	Other
4	We will pray for God to take us out of this world !!!!	Positive Transitive
5	Totally bogus	Negative
6	Unamerican	Positive Transitive
7	It is a fake news site.	Negative
8	DICK	Positive
9	Hes such an a...hole	Positive
10	If this is true Obama is striving to damage the U.S.A. he is releasing drug offenders back to the streets and terrorists back to the battle field. I will be glad when Obama is just a bad memory.	Positive Transitive
11	Obama is a trator	Positive
12	Takes god out of everything dosent that tell you a lot	Positive Transitive
13	THIS IS "NOT" TRUE !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!	Negative
14	An executive order is NOT law.	Negative Transitive
15	I was in a school the other day. While the pledge of allegiance started. There was some Mexican women in the room. They didn't not only not put their hand over heart. But they turned their back toward the Flag. This really upset me. They use our taxes to send their kids to our schools. I'm right . To our schools. But can't face our flag. This is Hillary and Obama that are destroying Our Nation.	Positive Transitive
16	How awful now what are they going To pledge to	Positive Transitive

17	My Grandsons don't say the PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE in their school. and are not taught American Hstory or WA State history. I preach it to them every time we are together.	Positive Transitive
18	Not true story!	Negative
19	Don't they hang people for treason?	Positive Transitive
20	He can ban all he wants to, but enforcing if is going to be a big problem.	Positive Transitive
21	Remember, everything Obama does with his pen can be undone by the pen of the next president.	Positive
22	Contact your schools and see if this isn't a lie!	Neutral
23	He has done what he could to tear this Country apart and to promote racism, to ignore the Constitution, to allow terrorist to enter our land, and to do away with Christianity. He is a real true Apostate and will not stop.	Positive Transitive
24	Fake	Negative
25	What is wrong and sick with these demos.	Positive Transitive
26	<a href="http://www.huffingtonpost.com/.../obama-pledge-of...">http://www.huffingtonpost.com/.../obama-pledge-of...</a>	Negative
27	<a href="http://jacksonville.com/.../fact-check-no-obama-has-">http://jacksonville.com/.../fact-check-no-obama-has-</a>	Negative
28	Remember all there faces!	Positive
29	Commie Moron	Neutral
30	NOT TRUE, CHECK FOR FACTS.	Negative
31	Lies, lies, lies. Stop posting this nonsense	Negative
32	SHITTTT	Negative
33	Treason!!	Positive Transitive
34	TRAITOR	Positive Transitive
35	What a shame	Positive
36	Obama you are sick in the head, what are you trying to do make yourself feel big because you know that you will be gone in two months Why do you hate the Flag of the United States of America?.	Positive Transitive
37	It's amazing how so many people are so gullible. This is a fake story that was discounted a long time ago - <a href="http://www.snopes.com/pledge-of-allegiance-ban/">http://www.snopes.com/pledge-of-allegiance-ban/</a>	Negative Transitive
38	Not true!!!	Negative

39	What are they smiling about. Oh The wonderful Obama Care. Not!	Positive Transitive
40	He is a disgrace and his daughters should be totally embarrassed and ashamed of their father. I feel sorry for them!	Positive Transitive
41	DEMS laugh it up after destroying another icon of American culture, the Pledge of Allegiance!	Positive Transitive
42	I can't believe they are all smileing about this	Positive Transitive
43	Screw him hes a low life	Positive
44	AND SOME PEOPLE WANT MORE OF THIS. GOD HELP US !!!!!!!!!!!	Positive Transitive
45	Treason, & should be prosecuted for it	Positive Transitive
46	This is garbage!	Negative Transitive
47	everyone of the ones smiling need to go	Positive
48	Deport him BACK TO HELL	Positive Transitive
49	How can this be good in any way? Reverse it Mr. Trump.	Positive Transitive
50	They all need to be FIRED	Positive
51	This is a shame.	Positive
52	<a href="http://www.snopes.com/search/...">http://www.snopes.com/search/...</a>	Negative
53	Hes a dumb asd	Positive
54	Fake news.	Negative
55	NOT true.	Negative
56	If this is true, he should be impeached immediately and arrested. He has no constitutional right to do this. This man is despicable.	Positive Transitive
57	This is an absolute lie. Google it.	Negative
58	It would be a shame, but it is a hoax. Check your posts!!!	Negative Transitive
59	He is evil and he hates the USA!	Positive Transitive
60	It is sad to me..I immediately knew this was ludicrous, and not true. Figured there would be many who would jump on this train!	Negative Transitive
61	i pray its not true	Negative
62	A fake ABC site. Looks real.	Negative
63	What a Bunch of LOSERS...Go Back To Useless....	Positive Transitive
64	Impossible to believe ! Hillary will do the same thing	Positive Transitive

65	SOUNDS LIKE TREASON TO ME.	Positive Transitive
66	if this is true and they are all smiling , what kind of Americans are they?	Positive Transitive
67	This is not true; look at factcheck.org. It originated from a satirical article posted last month by a fake news website under the headline “Obama Signs Executive Order Banning The Pledge Of Allegiance In Schools Nationwide.” The site is designed to look like ABC News, but uses the URL “abcnews.com.co,” the first tip-off that this isn’t a legitimate news site.	Negative Transitive
68	Totally Wrong.	Negative
69	Is this a joke, just like our current president?	Positive
70	Not American for sure!	Positive
71	I still say we should hang him until he is "dead dead dead" -- a true traitor's death!	Positive Transitive
72	IF I STILL HAD KIDS IN SCHOOL THEY WOULD STILL SAY THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE BECAUSE THEY ARE AMERICANS !!!!!	Positive Transitive
73	He doesnt have the power to do that!!!!	Positive Transitive
74	Is this true? Ugh!	Positive
75	Traitor!!!!	Positive
76	Again not true.	Neg
77	Yes it is and everyone of them needs removed from office.Trump 2016	Positive
78	Arrest him for Treason.... This is CRAZY!!!	Positive Transitive
79	I want the people of the United States to look at all our official smiling while Obama is trying to stop the Pledge of Allegiance in our school's. We can't let this happen I wand my kids and Grandkids to be taught about God and Country to respect what our family and friends have fault and died to keep. We will Pledge Allegiance to our flags. Amen	Positive Transitive
80	It's so hard to read anything because of all the Ad's blocking the subject.	Other
81	After how many years? Unreal	Positive

82	Well, another meaningless accomplishment for his admin. So far he has the failed Obamacare and this in his cap. Oh yeah and he is making it harder and harder for Middle Class Americans by pandering to illegals and special interest groups. Way to go!	Positive Transitive
83	Sad, that someone would even think of such a thing	Positive
84	I think we are seeing the one of the final shoes dropping in the Obama administration's plans to defeat liberty in America! This is a very sad day! A day for every red blooded American to determine that this battle can only be at the polls as we elect Donald J. Trump, president! The only candidate in years with a will strong enough to "Make America Great Again!"	Positive Transitive
85	He's showing his true self and Hillary right behind along with alot of stupid greedy, lazy Americans !You can put the truth in their face and they don't know the difference!	Positive Transitive
86	The sooner we get him out of the White House the better for our country! Let's don't bring in his pal Hil as I believe she would make things worse for America. They want us to forget everything our country stands for and all the men and women who made it possible for us to have this great nation!	Positive Transitive
87	SNOPEs says this one is FALSE, folks. Do yourselves a favor and double check before you spread such bunk!	Negative Transitive
88	Obama Muslim and Traitor	Positive
89	This is made up folks.	Negative
90	Trump hater fans believe anything that is set up by his campaign. FACT CHECK: GET OVER IT. THIS IS NOT TRUE.	Negative Transitive
91	See how people believe things just because a headline is posted on the internet , without even checking out if it's real or not. Come on people do something more than read the internet.	Negative Transitive
92	It better not be true! Come Lord Jesus!	Positive

93	Very SAD	Positive
94	i hate that he did it but we do have separtion of church and state,the line one nation under god9*(SOMETHING I AGRE WITH)WAS WAS ADDED IN TH E FIFTES GAVE HIM THE LOOPGOLE TO DO IT .SAD.	Positive
95	Wake up AMERICANS!!!!	Positive
96	It was real! and vetod by congress	Positive
97	Sure sounds like treason to me!!	Positive
98	Not possible. It is a hoax.	Negative
99	He's the product of ignorant America, which ignorant America will elect Hillary this time and secure our non existence like all other super powers. Wake up morons, we will bow with Hillary, or rise up with Trump leadership. Period	Positive Transitive
100	No way! This can't be true	Negative



## Appendix 2: Introduction/Consent Letter

1 Kipling Road, PO Box 676, Brattleboro, Vermont 05302-0676 USA  
+1-937-581-7472 | [adam.housh@mail.sit.edu](mailto:adam.housh@mail.sit.edu) | [www.linkedin.com/in/housh8](http://www.linkedin.com/in/housh8)

February 9, 2018

Re: Introduction/Consent Letter

Prospective Participants:

The purpose of my exploration is to study the Fake News and its demand, dispersal, and effects via social media platforms, in this case Facebook. Through the use of general research, case studies of articles shared on Facebook, an analysis of Facebook user behavior on such articles (do people comment, share, like, etc.), and finally, surveying Facebook Users for their opinions, my study will illustrate a holistic picture of the relationships existing between Fake News, Facebook, and Facebook users.

Participants will be asked to aid in data collection by filling out an anonymous surveys via the website SurveyMonkey.com. All data will be kept confidential at all times, despite the fact that personally identifiable information will not be collected, therefore there is no risk of individual responses/personal information being shared.

There are no risks to participants in this study. This study is non-controversial in nature and is for academic use only. All information will be kept strictly confidential, and only general demographic information is collected. Possible benefits include a better understanding of the relationships between Fake News, Social Media Networks, and Users/Readers.

By filling out this survey, you consent to having your answers recorded and analyzed for general research purposes. Personal information will not be collected. Participation is completely voluntary; Participants may choose to withdraw at any point during the research process (Simply close your browser and delete your cookies/browser history). There are no negative ramifications of any kind for withdrawal.

I thank you for your time and contributions to the betterment of my academic research. If you would like to view the results of my research, feel free to search by my last name in SIT Graduate Institute's Capstone Collection at <http://digitalcollections.sit.edu/capstones/>.

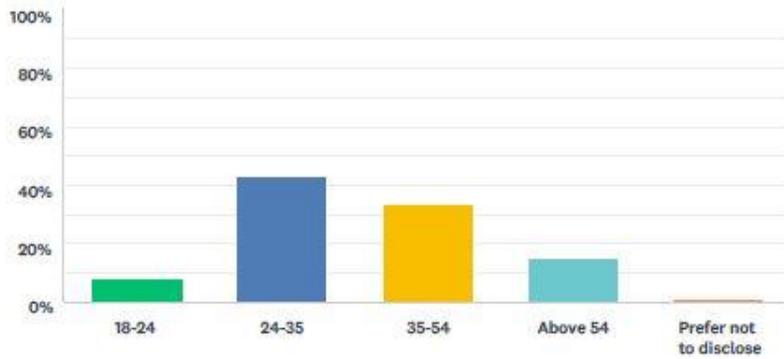
Warmest regards,

Adam Housh  
Researcher  
SIT Graduate Institute

### Appendix 3: Facebook Questionnaire with Answers

#### Q1 Which age group do you belong to?

Answered: 89 Skipped: 0

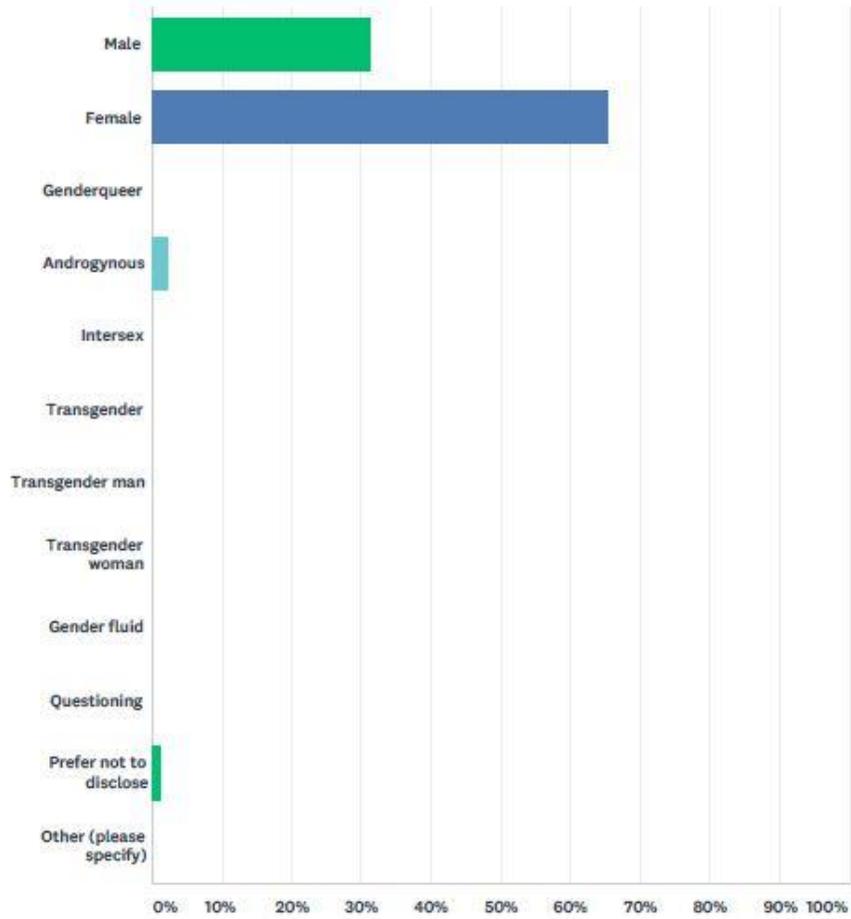


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
18-24	7.87%	7
24-35	42.70%	38
35-54	33.71%	30
Above 54	14.61%	13
Prefer not to disclose	1.12%	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>89</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

### Q2 What is your gender?

Answered: 89 Skipped: 0



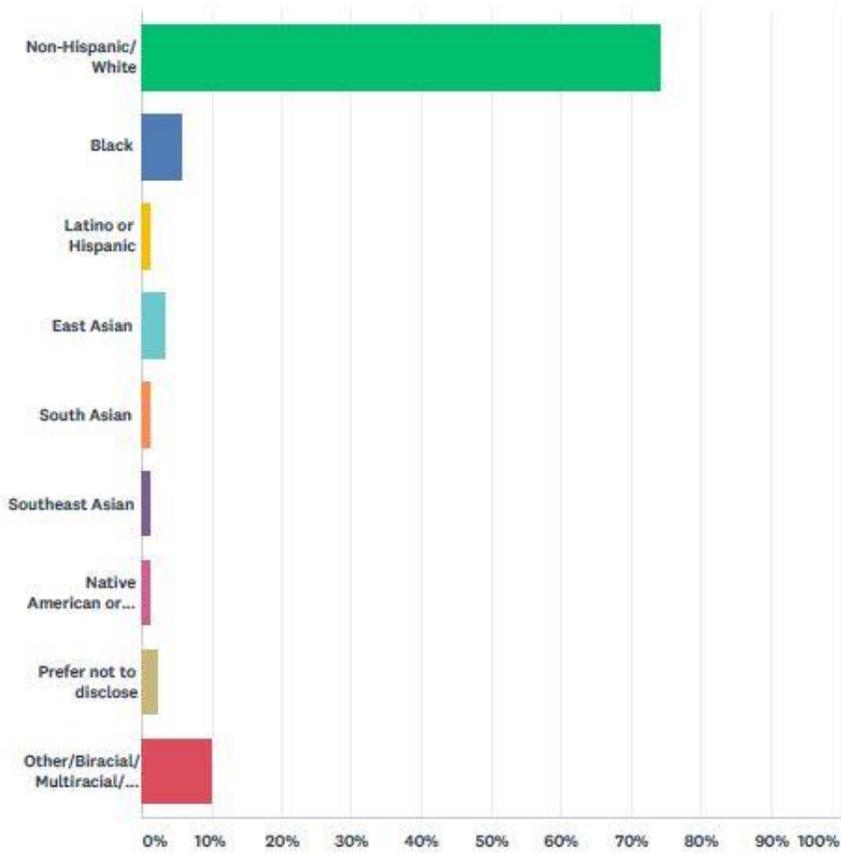
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	31.46%	28
Female	65.17%	58
Genderqueer	0.00%	0
Androgynous	2.25%	2
Intersex	0.00%	0
Transgender	0.00%	0
Transgender man	0.00%	0
Transgender woman	0.00%	0

Gender fluid	0.00%	0
Questioning	0.00%	0
Prefer not to disclose	1.12%	1
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>89</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

### Q3 Which ethnic group do you belong to?

Answered: 89 Skipped: 0

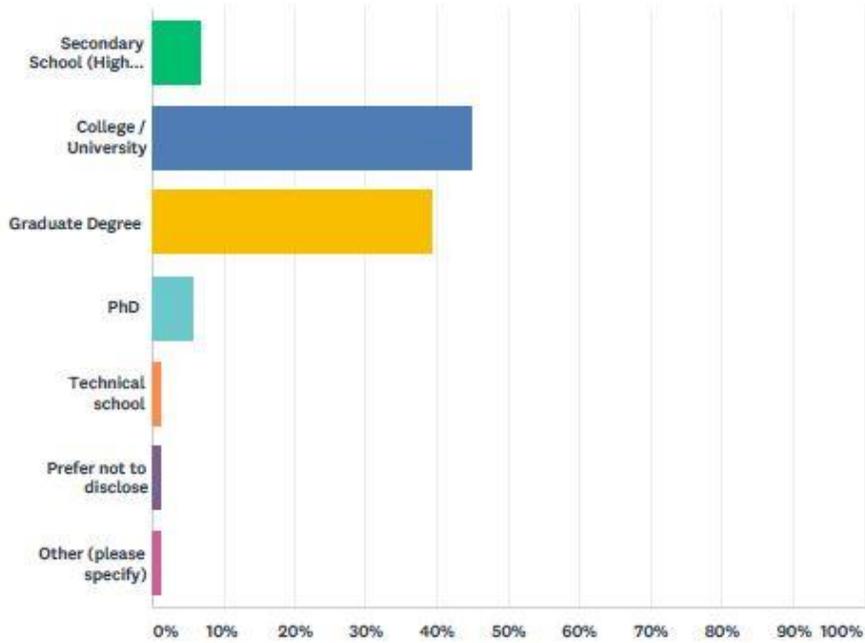


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Non-Hispanic/ White	74.16%	66
Black	5.62%	5
Latino or Hispanic	1.12%	1
East Asian	3.37%	3
South Asian	1.12%	1
Southeast Asian	1.12%	1
Native American or Alaskan native	1.12%	1
Prefer not to disclose	2.25%	2
Other/Biracial/Multiracial/Please Specify	10.11%	9
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>89</b>

#	OTHER/BIRACIAL/MULTIRACIAL/PLEASE SPECIFY	DATE
1	white(mostly german/irish/scot)/native american	2/26/2018 4:00 PM
2	Native Hawaiian	2/26/2018 3:17 PM
3	Mexican/Jamaican	2/26/2018 1:43 AM
4	European, Chicano, Asian	2/25/2018 6:06 AM
5	Mexican/Irish/Native American	2/24/2018 11:20 PM
6	Non-American but White.	2/24/2018 11:19 PM
7	White and Native American	2/24/2018 10:56 PM
8	Biracial	2/24/2018 8:39 PM
9	central asian	2/24/2018 8:00 PM

### Q4 What is your highest level of education?

Answered: 89 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Secondary School (High School)/GED	6.74% 6
College / University	44.94% 40
Graduate Degree	39.33% 35
PhD	5.62% 5
Technical school	1.12% 1
Prefer not to disclose	1.12% 1
Other (please specify)	1.12% 1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>89</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	currently in college will graduate with associate in 2019	2/26/2018 4:00 PM

## Q5 In a few sentences, can you please explain what “fake news” means to you?

Answered: 89 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Anything satire like The Onion	2/28/2018 6:06 PM
2	People make stories and edit photos	2/28/2018 12:38 PM
3	Skewed/altered or made up stories about events that are currently happening. They are generally made to provide material for people looking for “sources” to support a specific agenda or argument. Generally from uncredited news/blog sources	2/28/2018 12:03 PM
4	It is news that has no basis of truth. It is usually shared on social media platforms like Facebook. Fake news is usually meant to sow divisions among people.	2/27/2018 1:24 PM
5	News that is made up and based on opinions rather than truth.	2/27/2018 7:49 AM
6	Content that includes at least erroneous facts as its subject matter. At worse, outright lies as content. Created with malicious intent in order to manipulate the target audience.	2/26/2018 9:37 PM
7	No valid sources based on facts - opinion and emotion based articles - not peer reviewed - BIASED	2/26/2018 6:10 PM
8	News geared towards brain-dead Republicans who will believe anything to support their conspiracy theories and to push their way of life onto others.	2/26/2018 4:00 PM
9	False or misleading information.	2/26/2018 3:17 PM
10	I think of fake news as fairly obvious propaganda, click-bait headlines, etc.	2/26/2018 11:27 AM
11	I think fake news is about information available to the public that is not recognized true by those who are attending to its validity.	2/26/2018 7:51 AM
12	News that is not based on facts	2/26/2018 1:43 AM
13	Un-researched information spread with a political intention masquerading as truth and information from a viable news source.	2/25/2018 11:54 PM
14	Bots and agencies making broad statements meant to target vulnerable groups mentality, usually a smear campaign to flip public opinion on groups either far to one side or in the middle and easily swayed. “fake news” is also a term used as fake news itself, when you say the statement against a publication/opinion you disagree with is fake news to discredit (without yourself checking sources or facts).	2/25/2018 5:55 PM
15	Misleading headlines, negative adjectives, errors of omission, reporting opinions as fact, pursuing an agenda, coloring a story instead of presenting facts.	2/25/2018 5:53 PM
16	Inaccurate, false information created with the intent to be shared/spread to perpetuate the false narrative.	2/25/2018 5:52 PM
17	Fake news is MSM pushing a news story one angle or another to get viewers to sway one way or the other on a topic.	2/25/2018 4:03 PM
18	Fake news is (1) information that is written in such a way that it changes the true meaning of the information. Misinformation. (2) False information.	2/25/2018 2:53 PM
19	“Fake news” is designed to ignite a charge at an intended subject. Content is produced through unreliable and biased sources.	2/25/2018 2:37 PM
20	News that are disposed on the media, that have altered partly the reality or are not true/ are invented	2/25/2018 1:21 PM
21	Follow ups to real current events that look like they come from legitimate sources, but are invented in order to spread misinformation or flame biases.	2/25/2018 12:40 PM

22	Political propaganda or something meant to cause an emotional response that has little basis in the truth.	2/25/2018 12:26 PM
23	The facts and truths are not revealed and they are edited to serve the government	2/25/2018 12:19 PM
24	Fake news is information disseminated to the general populace in order to intentionally sway public perception and/or convolute an issue for political gain.	2/25/2018 11:39 AM
25	Fake news is news used to draw attention to a subject rather than giving the facts... Fox News and CNN are often full of Fake News.	2/25/2018 11:12 AM
26	Inaccurate or incomplete data presented as complete truth	2/25/2018 11:07 AM
27	Journalism That indulges in the journalists' biases, or ideologies.. The crusade to "make a difference" severely skews objectivity of how and why. This may feel like altruism to many idealist journalists, but it is very dangerous and irresponsible. Setting out to "write" the wrongs is not journalism . Deliver the facts and stop purposefully looking to antagonize	2/25/2018 11:01 AM
28	Stories that are false, intentionally inaccurate, intentionally misleading. They are designed to look like they come from reputable sources, typically via the internet. Often, they are made to look like "true" alternatives to main stream media.	2/25/2018 10:22 AM
29	Fake news is information that is presented as news, but which either by ignorance or mal intent is not factual. It is employed by a variety of actors for reasons including entertainment, provocation, and/or political manipulation.	2/25/2018 9:41 AM
30	News which is not verified by journalistic standards and is used to advance a certain point of view rather than inform the public.	2/25/2018 9:21 AM
31	"Fake news" is a term that was constructed as a way to negate any media message that does not resonate or jive with the Republican Conservative mindset/ agenda. It is a dismissive term that attempts to shut down sound, logical arguments. When the sources of said information are news outlets such as CNN, New York Times, Washington Post, etc., this automatically earns the title "fake news" because said news organizations supposedly have a Liberal agenda and thus cannot be trusted.	2/25/2018 9:07 AM
32	News that Trump and others think is news against them. It can also be news that tells only one part of the truth.	2/25/2018 8:47 AM
33	Made up stories meant to invoke emotion toward a cause/political party	2/25/2018 8:32 AM
34	Fake news is any article or headline that either has outright misstatements of facts or has a misleading line. For example the facts are John went to school so he didn't stay home and help his mom do housework. Fake news might have it John abandons mom causing her to do excessive work.	2/25/2018 8:14 AM
35	Stories that are generated by organizations with an agenda other than journalism.	2/25/2018 7:55 AM
36	To me fake news means that some one or some organization is intentionally trying to mislead others by showcasing seemingly true information. This is usually done to manipulate emotions and try to convict people that there are two mutually exclusive opposing sides to an issue.	2/25/2018 7:53 AM
37	"Fake news" is a distraction. It's a way for he president to divert attention away from both his critics, and those who are reporting the facts.	2/25/2018 7:31 AM
38	News that has no truth, and is leaked in order to sway public opinion/slanderize political opponents.	2/25/2018 6:06 AM
39	Ideally to create division, misconceptions, Propaganda to create single story	2/25/2018 3:41 AM
40	News that is skewed or contrived to indulge one's own political preference.	2/25/2018 3:14 AM
41	News that isn't true, or partially true. Intended to misinform..	2/25/2018 1:03 AM
42	Information meant to deceive liberal	2/25/2018 12:37 AM
43	Lies. Extremely skewed / one sided information.	2/25/2018 12:06 AM
44	I actively try to avoid it at all costs. If a news source uses the phrase "fake news" I will not read it. I tend to look for news sources that are informative and non-biased.	2/25/2018 12:06 AM
45	Not the truth. Bill shit liers.	2/24/2018 11:58 PM

46	Fake news is that intentional manufacture and distribution of information known by the originator to be false. The intention of this act is to play into pre-existing divisions in society and culture. The end goal is to so discord and create narratives that have no factual foundations.	2/24/2018 11:58 PM
47	Articles detailing what could pass as current events in today's society, but in fact are either completely fabricated or are enhanced versions of a kernel of truth	2/24/2018 11:47 PM
48	Any news that is funded by an outside source to slant ideology towards a particular belief. Conservative times, red flag news, snopes, ect.	2/24/2018 11:38 PM
49	Fake News now means anything that conservatives disagree with. It should mean reports with false information. I notice you put fake news in caps in your survey description but don't in the question.	2/24/2018 11:36 PM
50	Fake news is any news that does not provide adequate sources or valid examples in its argument or presentation of the news.	2/24/2018 11:20 PM
51	News that isn't real--where either content/quotes is/are taken out of context or the text is actually not real, it's untrue.	2/24/2018 11:19 PM
52	Made up stories "told" as real, soundbites taken out of context and interpreted differently from the original meaning...in general, interpretations of reality that can't be justified by a human amount of bias and are clearly a product of an intention to mislead.	2/24/2018 11:19 PM
53	News stories created with the goal of confusing the average news consumer in way that attempts to bias them against certain political figures.	2/24/2018 10:57 PM
54	"Fake news," such as yellow journalism, pertains to hyperbolic and salacious texts (in various forms of media) that intend to persuade readers/viewers to perceive current events from a specially biased perspective by appealing to their base emotions. These texts tend to founded on assumptions and conjecture rather than evidential proof.	2/24/2018 10:56 PM
55	A made up word created by "t" to convince his stupid followers that real news is fake.	2/24/2018 10:47 PM
56	Labeling a story "fake news" is a way of discrediting an unflattering or opposing viewpoint and/or fact. It seizes upon the politization of facts and statistics. It casts doubt upon the process of journalism and disproportionately highlights human bias.	2/24/2018 10:46 PM
57	Stories that are either invented or altered to support a particular ideology or political stance. Often oversimplified and/or sensationalized and bolstered with faulty information and sources that are not verified or substantiated.	2/24/2018 10:40 PM
58	Fake news is entirely fabricated news stories designed to mislead an audience, or, in certain cases, to ensure that a certain outlet or personality can maintain their audience.	2/24/2018 10:30 PM
59	News that is either directly false in nature or oversensationalized to the point that is it no longer factually accurate. I would also add in overtly bias news they only displays one side of an issue can many times be described as fake as it tends to he sensationalized.	2/24/2018 10:29 PM
60	News or information that is not based on commonly held facts or cannot be cited in a credible source.	2/24/2018 10:26 PM
61	I understand fake news as rumor or gossip coming from people who do or do not have intention to spread those news. Some do not guess their suspects and thoughts of things will become "news" spreading around, some do it with purpose to get more views, likes and earn on people clicking on their pages. But i think many times you can differ fake news from true by the information source or the page or group appearance, reputation or quality.	2/24/2018 10:03 PM
62	News that's not real, but that spreads like wildfire. News that appears real, by appearing on an authentic-looking website with real-sounding headlines and urfs.	2/24/2018 9:54 PM
63	News created for the purpose of persuading the reader to adopt a certain point of view, especially by recourse to facts known by the author to be untrue or unreliable.	2/24/2018 9:46 PM
64	Stories not based on facts or that perpetuate lies	2/24/2018 9:44 PM
65	Blogs, opinion pages by groups who pretend to be news, but are not even journalist	2/24/2018 9:39 PM
66	Conspiracy theory websites and not factual or severely biased sources.	2/24/2018 9:37 PM
67	Any news story that isn't accurately reported. And President Trump's favorite catch phrase.	2/24/2018 9:36 PM
68	"Fake news" is a lie that is passed off as a truth through websites that pretend to be legitimate.	2/24/2018 9:35 PM

69	It a term that some ones uses in an attempt to discredit media sources, which are must likely, credible.	2/24/2018 9:32 PM
70	News that is meant to perpetuate one very biased story as "the truth."	2/24/2018 9:30 PM
71	Not portraying a real news that is happening in the world.	2/24/2018 9:28 PM
72	Non-factual and/or extremely biased writing about current events that's being presented as if it were actually journalistic reporting.	2/24/2018 9:24 PM
73	False information trying to portray itself as valid, often disseminated to incite division	2/24/2018 9:21 PM
74	Politically motivated news bias... Like FOX	2/24/2018 9:15 PM
75	News media stories that consist of false elements and are meant to mislead readers for an undisclosed agenda.	2/24/2018 9:02 PM
76	Headlines or statements having little or no relationship to verifiable facts and/or intended to deceive using misleading or provocative or sensational statements.	2/24/2018 8:52 PM
77	News that is either completely fictitious or bias to the point where it is useless.	2/24/2018 8:49 PM
78	Fake news refers to misleading information, created by questionable organizations that have the intention to manipulate the masses. In many cases the misleading information is disseminated under the guise of professional news organizations to appear authentic.	2/24/2018 8:48 PM
79	Fake News is information that is presented as real journalism but is in fact created by non journalists. Fake News is illegitimate does not reflect facts, reality, science, credible sources, or authentic research. Fake News often pretends to be real journalism in order to trick the reader/viewer.	2/24/2018 8:45 PM
80	News that is not thoroughly researched and contains incorrect information	2/24/2018 8:39 PM
81	It's self explanatory	2/24/2018 8:29 PM
82	News that is purposefully and intentionally conveyed to the public in order to manipulate groups of people in believing and/or following a specific agenda	2/24/2018 8:27 PM
83	News that is not true.	2/24/2018 8:15 PM
84	Fake news is media posing as legitimate journalism but is in fact designed to deceive. It's often used to confirm or support existing biases e.g. it presents a story that the intended readers really want to be true	2/24/2018 8:15 PM
85	Breitbart. Fox News. Alt right sites.	2/24/2018 8:12 PM
86	News based on bias, with little use of actual facts. Also, the exaggeration of facts relating to -topic- to benefit a goal or cause uprising.	2/24/2018 8:08 PM
87	the purposeful broadcast of false or misleading information in news reportage	2/24/2018 8:03 PM
88	Untruthful and meant to stimulate a reaction	2/24/2018 8:02 PM
89	yellow journalism or propaganda	2/24/2018 8:00 PM

### Q6 In a few sentences, can you please explain what “mainstream media” means to you?

Answered: 89 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Heavily followed broadcast, print and online outlets such as ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, MSNBC, Fox, NYTimes, Wallstreet Journal.....and local outlets like Boston Globe and Herald including online affiliates	2/28/2018 6:06 PM
2	Many people use these websites	2/28/2018 12:38 PM
3	There is a standard for journalism/media that is expected to be upheld, I expect gay from credible media sources. Mainstream media is one I associate with major media corporations. I do not often get my news from these sources	2/28/2018 12:03 PM
4	I consider main stream media the news from CNN, NBC, Fox, etc. All which accessible via cable TV. I also consider main stream media print sources that have a long and reputable reputation, such as Time magazine, The New York Times, etc.	2/27/2018 1:24 PM
5	News that is popular.	2/27/2018 7:49 AM
6	Media used by mass population in traditional sources like television, radio, and print paper.	2/26/2018 9:37 PM
7	The most popular channels/ news sources circulating currently (BBC, CNN, NBC...etc.) Often biased (either to the left or to the right)	2/26/2018 6:10 PM
8	Mainstream media is the major news outlets that used to be watched on TV when TV was a broadcast medium. Most still exist in some form, but no one really listens to them anymore because they are mostly conservative-leaning. Things like CBS/NBC/CNN. We all know the news is slanted one way or another regardless of the source. Better to listen to an echo chamber than the crap our parents listened to that got them nowhere in life and has lead to the ruin of the nation.	2/26/2018 4:00 PM
9	Media the public is forced to watch. Will be everywhere. Like a form of brainwashing to send the same message to create a specific idea	2/26/2018 3:17 PM
10	When I hear that, I think of various cable news stations.	2/26/2018 11:27 AM
11	I think mainstream media is about popular sources of information available to the public.	2/26/2018 7:51 AM
12	All the common platforms for getting news, including newspapers, magazines, tv, and radio. I think now days social media counts: facebook, twitter, etc.	2/26/2018 1:43 AM
13	News outlets with a large enough following that in general they appear to have credibility and accountability in what they report. May be biased politically, but they generally pretend to capture the viewpoints of the masses.	2/25/2018 11:54 PM
14	Widespread news, easily accessible by large groups. Funded enough to have marketing and exposure.	2/25/2018 5:55 PM
15	Commonly known TV channels, newspapers and magazines.	2/25/2018 5:53 PM
16	The stations/institutions with the most money, therefore the farthest reach and the most access to viewers - the MSNBCs, CNNs, and Foxs of the world.	2/25/2018 5:52 PM
17	MSM is any outlet reporting current news using social platforms and television and radio.	2/25/2018 4:03 PM
18	Media that is controlled by large corporate entities.	2/25/2018 2:53 PM
19	"Mainstream media" means the outlets that cover or reach the majority of a population. Typically these outlets have the largest influence and power.	2/25/2018 2:37 PM
20	Dont know what it is	2/25/2018 1:21 PM
21	Legitimate media outlets that are the most viewed in the U.S.	2/25/2018 12:40 PM
22	Something often created to generate an emotional response but with more of a basis in reality- ie they	2/25/2018 12:26 PM



23	All the big news agencies like CNN, BBC, NBC	2/25/2018 12:19 PM
24	Mainstream media is essential the same thing as fake media but there is less intention behind it.	2/25/2018 11:39 AM
25	Mainstream media is pretty much everything except Vice News that I normally watch. Fox, CNN, MSNBC all of these are mainstream media.	2/25/2018 11:12 AM
26	Popular media outlets. Editorials (both online and print) and television stations that have a large following of devoted readers/watchers/listeners	2/25/2018 11:07 AM
27	Nyt, msnbc, cnbc, fox, cnn	2/25/2018 11:01 AM
28	News sources that are the traditional methods of communication, such as newspapers, radio, and television.	2/25/2018 10:22 AM
29	Mainstream media, often abbreviated as MSM, is a term that refers collectively to the predominate news and media organizations, particularly in the U.S. Mainstream media is older media and includes well established newspapers, publications, radio stations, and television stations. I criticize it for prioritizing access to political powerful individuals and institutions over responsible journalism. They often focus on 24 hour news cycles of repetitive information and miss other important stories. For the most part, mainstream media is also profit driven, meaning that by and large it produces "infotainment" as one scholar referred to it, rather than journalism. The classification of mainstream media became more common with the rise of alternative media, citizen journalism, and social media, which have provided a more democratic alternative to the entrenched power structure of mainstream media. These days, they often compliment each other with mainstream media stories gaining traction in new media platforms and conversely with new media platforms introducing stories and information that is eventually picked up by mainstream media.	2/25/2018 9:41 AM
30	Media which the general public uses as their primary source of news. They tend to have the same stories with similar reporting styles.	2/25/2018 9:21 AM
31	"Mainstream media" is a term that applies to mega conglomerate news organizations that attempt to appeal to a cross section of viewers: NBC, CBS, ABC, CNN, MSNBC, USA Today, and local news stations that serve a large metropolitan area.	2/25/2018 9:07 AM
32	Media that most people use, like Facebook or Instagram.	2/25/2018 8:47 AM
33	CNN	2/25/2018 8:32 AM
34	Mainstream media: NBC, CBS, PBS, MSNBC, Fox, CNN, NPR, NY Times, Washington Post, Wall St Journal and most other large city newspapers.	2/25/2018 8:14 AM
35	Media with some longevity and name recognition who have a legitimate mission statement to inform and abide by journalistic integrity (whatever those standards are!	2/25/2018 7:55 AM
36	To me mainstream media means news stations (ABC, NBC, CBS, PBS) that, while they have their biases, try to tell us the truth.	2/25/2018 7:53 AM
37	"Mainstream media" is a way for our president to attempt to discredit some of the best news agencies in the US.	2/25/2018 7:31 AM
38	Major cable/new station networks (ABC news, CNN, NBC, to name a few. I don't watch Fox News), major newspaper corporations (NY times, LA times, Monterey County Herald), and major magazines (such as Time Magazine, Politico)	2/25/2018 6:06 AM
39	Reliable source of new ... Have good reputation and years long service in the media industry	2/25/2018 3:41 AM
40	Cnn, bbc, nytimes, etc	2/25/2018 3:14 AM
41	The usual networks, and publishing outlets.	2/25/2018 1:03 AM
42	Liberal views	2/25/2018 12:37 AM
43	CNN, ABC FOX MSNBC CBS	2/25/2018 12:06 AM
44	FOX, CNN, or any combination of celebrity gossip media. Not really my thing. I do read bbc and npr articles though.	2/25/2018 12:06 AM
45	Not understanding the question. Nothing is mainstream as m except negativity.	2/24/2018 11:58 PM
46	Thoughts and believes that are shared by the majority. And in terms of journalism, well researched factual Source based investigation where the outcome is not predetermined.	2/24/2018 11:58 PM
47	Established media outlets, meaning they've been broadcasting for multiple decades	2/24/2018 11:47 PM



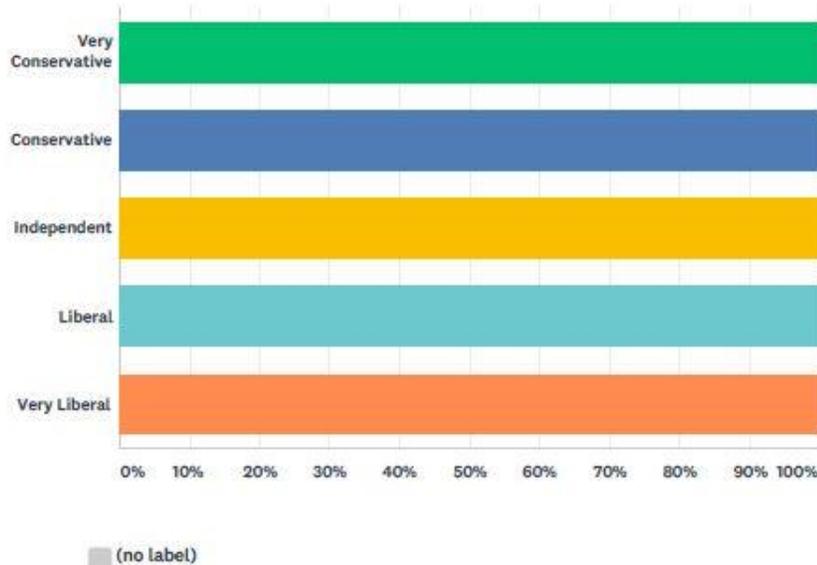
48	Main stream consists of major outlets such as CNN, msnbc, abc, fox still shows signs of slanting ideology	2/24/2018 11:38 PM
49	Major newspapers, network news not including Fox, NPR.	2/24/2018 11:36 PM
50	Mainstream media is any source of information deemed as popular by mainstream society, regardless as to whether valid facts or reasoning is presented.	2/24/2018 11:20 PM
51	CNN/Washpo/NBC/etc. Basically major news sources that used to be considered "bi-partisan" but now are apparently all fountains of liberal cool aid.	2/24/2018 11:19 PM
52	The media most often, or largely, consumed (read/listened to). This can include all types of media: social media, tv, newspapers and online publications and so on.	2/24/2018 11:19 PM
53	Those media outlets that have been around for decades and claim a majority of news subscribers. They are generally described as outlets such as CNN, the New York Times, Washington Post, etc. However, the moniker of "mainstream news" is used to paint certain news outlets as "out of date". Mainstream news outlets are the most popular news outlets.	2/24/2018 10:57 PM
54	"Mainstream media" pertains to the most common methods used by people in order to acquire information regarding current events and popular culture such as televised news programs, contemporary magazines, and online social media outlets such as Facebook.	2/24/2018 10:56 PM
55	Regular TV and cable TV news	2/24/2018 10:47 PM
56	Mainstream media are the professional news organizations that package the news for daily consumption.	2/24/2018 10:46 PM
57	Media sources that reach extremely wide portions of the population, such as major tv networks like ABC & ESPN and publications like Time Magazine or the Washington Post.	2/24/2018 10:40 PM
58	Mainstream media refers to the corporate, network stations that are available through traditional news channels such as television and radio.	2/24/2018 10:30 PM
59	News that is through older formats, i.e. newspapers, tv and radio and controlled by major traditional powers such as the new York Times, CNN, and Fox	2/24/2018 10:29 PM
60	Legacy broadcast and print media	2/24/2018 10:26 PM
61	i understand Mainstream media to be a confirmed or, at least, allowed source of information but i am fairly certain it usually carries the information meant for us to know, so it is well controlled, obtained or created to lead people to some actions, and the question if all info we get from mainstream media is true or not, is even funny.	2/24/2018 10:03 PM
62	The big news organizations - CNN, NBC, CBS, ABC, the New York Times, Washington Post, etc. The most commonly read sites and viewed TV networks that are specifically tasked with delivering nonpartisan unbiased news. Can also be accused of having a liberal bias.	2/24/2018 9:54 PM
63	News organizations which cater to the public demand for news and, especially news that it is entertaining.	2/24/2018 9:46 PM
64	Largest news networks with a long history as news providers	2/24/2018 9:44 PM
65	I don't like this term, but it is established media that follows a journalism standard. Eg Ny Times, CBS News	2/24/2018 9:39 PM
66	Actual professional journalistic institutions that seek to report the news accurately and without bias.	2/24/2018 9:37 PM
67	Media outlets such as NBC, CNN, etc. Not local papers.	2/24/2018 9:36 PM
68	"Mainstream media" are places that are known to check and double check sources and generally report true statements. Mainstream media can be biased, but these outlets verify the information they publish.	2/24/2018 9:35 PM
69	Readily available news sources, easily accessed by people in a variety of media type and generally seen as viable, if not a. It skewed by a political position.	2/24/2018 9:32 PM
70	Mainstream media means social media, the news, popular blogs, etc.	2/24/2018 9:30 PM
71	Mainstream media includes mainstream news/ popular- facebook, instagram	2/24/2018 9:28 PM
72	Major newspaper or TV news outlets such as NYT, WaPo, WSJ, LA Times, network TV news, or CNN	2/24/2018 9:24 PM
73	Media	PM



74	NBC, CBS, ABC NEWS	2/24/2018 9:15 PM
75	Mainstream media consists of popular, easily accessible news outlets that are available via televised broadcast.	2/24/2018 9:02 PM
76	Traditional corporate news outlets such as NBC, the New York Times or CNN. This could also include NPR and PBS.	2/24/2018 8:52 PM
77	The largest, most popular, media outlets.	2/24/2018 8:49 PM
78	Mainstream media refers to reputable news organizations that meet journalistic standards. Typically these are organizations that are recognizable to the average person. (E.g. Fox, NBC, CBS, ABC, CNN, New York Times)	2/24/2018 8:48 PM
79	Mainstream media are the large, often corporate controlled, media outlets. While these media outlets usually reflect ethical journalistic standards, they are often driven by trying to increase viewership, readership, and clicks in order to sell advertising. As a result, the mainstream media tends to focus on sensational stories and often only present cursory information (particularly television media).	2/24/2018 8:45 PM
80	The main media that people consume like the major news networks.	2/24/2018 8:39 PM
81	This is also self explanatory	2/24/2018 8:29 PM
82	Common, popular media which retains a large amount of viewers and has the ability to reach wide audiences with their resources and influence	2/24/2018 8:27 PM
83	Media outlets from the biggest companies like cnn, abc, nbc and so on...	2/24/2018 8:15 PM
84	Mainstream media refers to established media outlets that conform to established journalistic norms and practices	2/24/2018 8:15 PM
85	Network and cable news	2/24/2018 8:12 PM
86	Mainstream media, would refer to established news outlets, typically along the lines of CNN, Fox, etc.	2/24/2018 8:08 PM
87	established outlets and news organs; the major networks' news divisions, national and internationally recognized newspapers and periodicals	2/24/2018 8:03 PM
88	Traditional; TV, radio, print; influenced by corporate funding	2/24/2018 8:02 PM
89	large mass news media that influence a large number of people	2/24/2018 8:00 PM

Q7 In an extremely general sense, please rate your political beliefs from Liberal to Conservative. Feel free to check multiple affiliations, or to utilize the "other" commentary box to clarify, if you like. This question is for general demographic purposes and doesn't fully encompass the complexity of political beliefs.

Answered: 89 Skipped: 0



	(NO LABEL)	TOTAL RESPONDENTS
Very Conservative	100.00% 1	1
Conservative	100.00% 7	7
Independent	100.00% 30	30
Liberal	100.00% 42	42
Very Liberal	100.00% 22	22

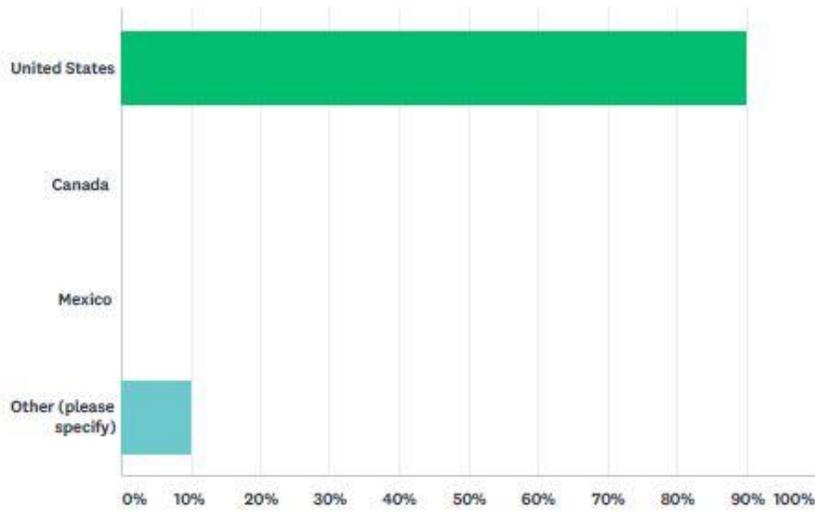
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I'm first a liberal in that I support liberal social platforms. Independent was how I registered when 18. Conservative fiscal leaning.	2/26/2018 9:37 PM
2	Mostly I try to ignore politics and news because it's disheartening and pointless. Voting only divides the two party system and fails to result in anything but more suffering. You have 2 choices, vote one of two parties' endorsed candidates regardless of how terrible they are, or throw your vote away by voting your heart (writing in) and let the opponent's party win. It's disgusting and I really feel like there's no point in trying anymore.	2/26/2018 4:00 PM



3	I feel I am liberal in a culturally-sensitive sense.	2/26/2018 7:51 AM
4	Progressive	2/25/2018 2:53 PM
5	Progressive but not tied to any one political party or candidate.	2/25/2018 9:21 AM
6	Na	2/24/2018 11:58 PM
7	Classical Liberal, libertarian	2/24/2018 11:38 PM
8	In simple US terms, I'm a left liberal. But I'm specifically an anticapitalist/radical leftist.	2/24/2018 10:30 PM
9	I am libertarian so I tend to vote conservative, but on issues of personal liberty such as who to marry, I am a true libertarian.	2/24/2018 10:29 PM
10	Moderate centrist	2/24/2018 9:44 PM
11	Liberal leaning on social and constitutional issues, but fiscally conservative.	2/24/2018 9:35 PM
12	Nationalist	2/24/2018 8:49 PM
13	I hate both major political parties. I consider myself a moderate republican in the style of Jim Jeffords	2/24/2018 8:15 PM

### Q8 What is your nation of residence?

Answered: 89 Skipped: 0

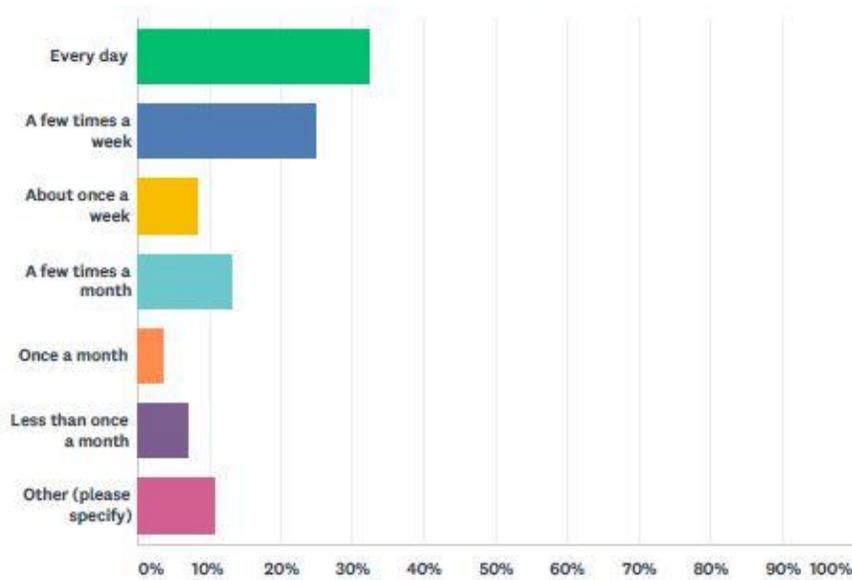


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
United States	89.89%	80
Canada	0.00%	0
Mexico	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	10.11%	9
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>89</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Japan	2/26/2018 7:51 AM
2	Spain	2/25/2018 1:21 PM
3	Jordan	2/25/2018 9:41 AM
4	Senegal	2/25/2018 7:55 AM
5	Dual citizenship (USA, Australia).	2/25/2018 6:06 AM
6	Burma	2/25/2018 3:41 AM
7	Uk	2/25/2018 3:14 AM
8	Korea	2/24/2018 8:27 PM
9	Kazakhstan	2/24/2018 8:00 PM

### Q9 How commonly do you see “Fake News” in Facebook?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Every day	32.14%	27
A few times a week	25.00%	21
About once a week	8.33%	7
A few times a month	13.10%	11
Once a month	3.57%	3
Less than once a month	7.14%	6
Other (please specify)	10.71%	9
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>84</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I have never seen it as I did not pay attention to fake news in Facebook.	2/26/2018 7:57 AM
2	I do not use Facebook.	2/25/2018 2:42 PM
3	I don't think I can tell	2/25/2018 12:21 PM
4	Hey	2/25/2018 11:11 AM
5	I don't click on every link in my feed, so it's hard to definitively say.	2/25/2018 9:09 AM
6	I think I saw it at least every day before they changed their algorithm.	2/25/2018 7:57 AM
7	I'm not sure how often I see it because I don't check the sources of every article that comes up in my newsfeed.	2/24/2018 11:48 PM
8	Everyday from friends sharing	2/24/2018 9:40 PM



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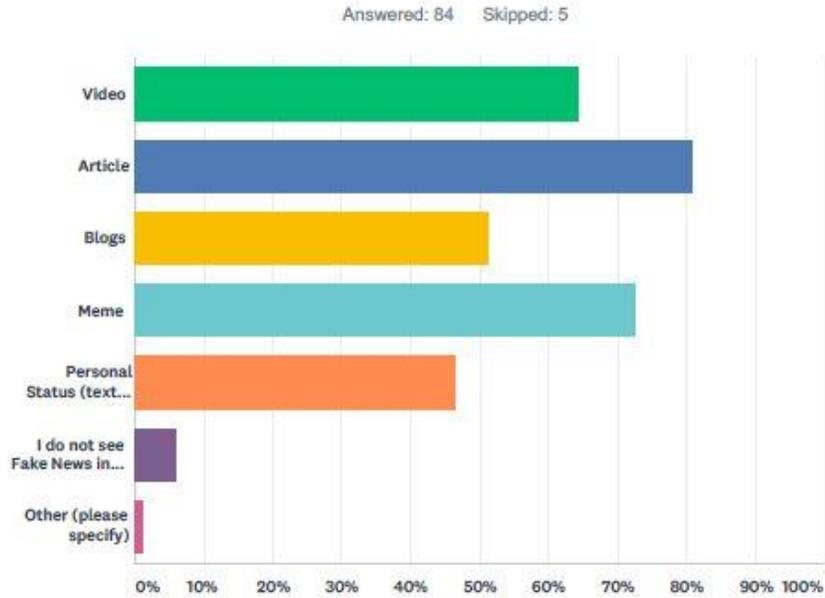
9

I don't know.

2/24/2018 8:05 PM

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Q10 What form does “Fake News” take? What format(s) have you experienced ? (More than one answer may be selected)

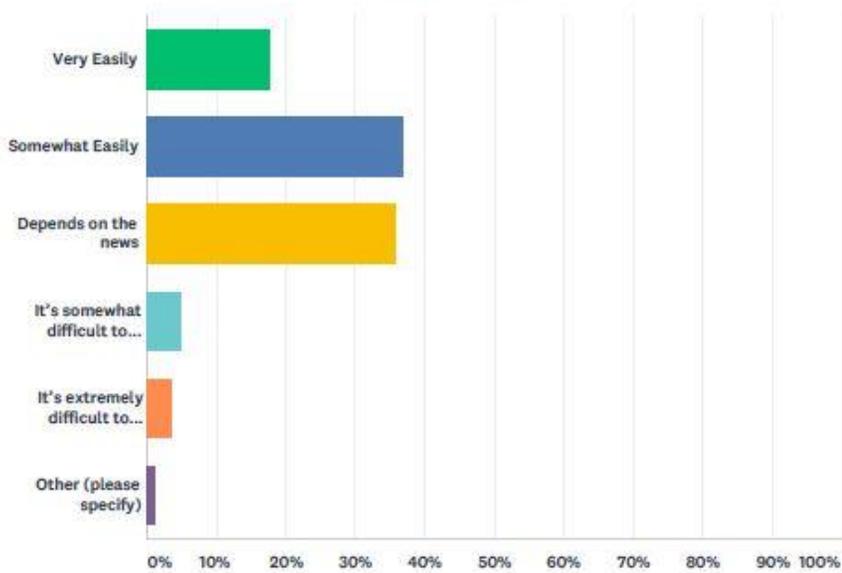


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Video	64.29% 54
Article	80.95% 68
Blogs	51.19% 43
Meme	72.62% 61
Personal Status (text of someone's status)	46.43% 39
I do not see Fake News in Facebook	5.95% 5
Other (please specify)	1.19% 1
Total Respondents: 84	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	All of the above	2/24/2018 8:31 PM

### Q11 How easily can you tell if something is "Fake News"?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very Easily	17.86%	15
Somewhat Easily	36.90%	31
Depends on the news	35.71%	30
It's somewhat difficult to tell	4.76%	4
It's extremely difficult to tell	3.57%	3
Other (please specify)	1.19%	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>84</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	If it sounds too good to be true... (for fake liberal news) for conservative news- if it sounds wack	2/25/2018 3:20 AM

### Q12 List some things you look for when attempting to establish the credibility of a news story.

Answered: 84 Skipped: 5

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	The title, the publisher, quoted sources, obvious biases, representation of opposing views	2/28/2018 6:08 PM
2	I google search to find other sources.	2/28/2018 12:40 PM
3	I always check the source and do a seperate internet search for the original story or see opposing articles	2/28/2018 12:04 PM
4	I look for who published, who is sharing, what photos are associated with it, what the tagline is and if the content seems outlandish	2/27/2018 1:25 PM
5	Other news organizations and their view of the story	2/27/2018 7:50 AM
6	The source of the news: who wrote it, when did it take place, where, why, how does the message seek to inform.	2/26/2018 9:41 PM
7	CITED facts/sources from multiple places, if they are using derogatory language when speaking about opposition, if it feels like there is part of the story missing, where the news article is coming from (reputed news source vs. a known biased one).	2/26/2018 6:12 PM
8	I use Snopes to check all facts in news before sharing it or believing it even remotely. Sometimes it's that I already know something to be true or false based on my own research in the area of discussion, then it's easy to know something that says the opposite of what I know to be true is fake news. Sometimes it's so glaring that only the most moronic conspiracy theorist could fall for it. Knowing the source is a good thing, if you don't look the source up and see how trustworthy they are.	2/26/2018 4:03 PM
9	research several sites online	2/26/2018 3:18 PM
10	Sensationalized headlines, sketchy web addresses, hyper-partisan blog titles	2/26/2018 11:31 AM
11	I tend to believe a news story when the story-teller shares his/her/their own experiences.	2/26/2018 7:57 AM
12	searching for it on a reputable website, such as those listed on the previous page.	2/26/2018 1:47 AM
13	The source (NY Times, CNN), if it seems questionable then I look for reporting from multiple sources.	2/25/2018 11:56 PM
14	The sources referenced. Use of superlatives in the title of the article.	2/25/2018 10:46 PM
15	Source, like a url	2/25/2018 5:56 PM
16	source of the story; if story sources are named, organization producing the story.	2/25/2018 5:55 PM
17	I look to all sides of a news story then make my own conclusions.	2/25/2018 4:04 PM
18	-Credible source (but I tend to view more "liberal" sources as credible) -Neutral reporting tone - Does the article/news make me feel angry? -Are multiple perspectives represented?	2/25/2018 2:42 PM
19	The source	2/25/2018 1:22 PM
20	The outlet it is published in. I trust the New York Times completely and don't pay attention to news from blogs or other internet sites for example.	2/25/2018 12:42 PM
21	I don't normally read articles that I think are fake news. I look at the website and see where it's from, and if it sounds weird and I'm suspicious of the topic itself I assume it's fake.	2/25/2018 12:29 PM
22	The News Agency	2/25/2018 12:21 PM
23	Who is presenting the information, what their motivation is, if the information is 'factual'/generally considered truth or if it's more opinion-based, if it is inflammatory.	2/25/2018 11:41 AM
24	The comments and then I will sometimes fact check	2/25/2018 11:14 AM

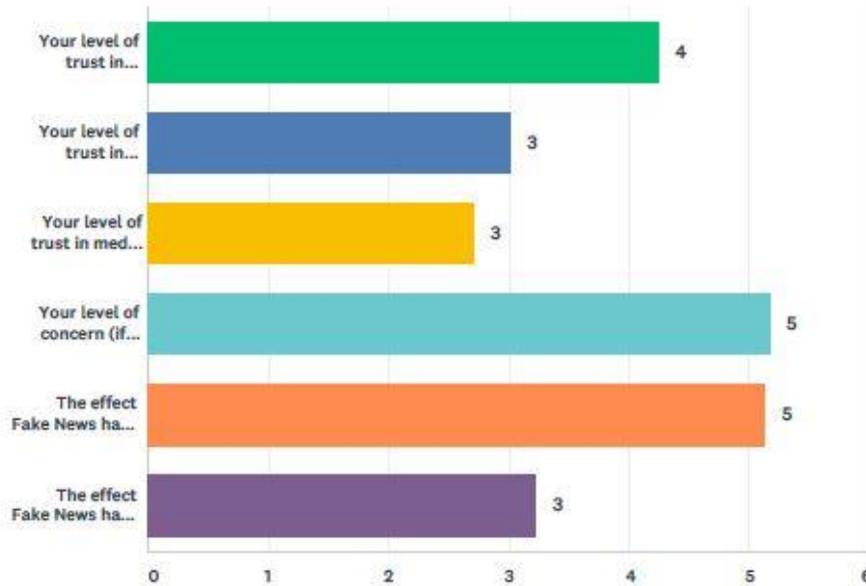


25	Website name, author and the articles said author has written. "About" section of website	2/25/2018 11:11 AM
26	Who what when where	2/25/2018 11:03 AM
27	Source; byline; date; format; author; how outlandish it may sound, for example, does it sound like a joke or sarcasm.	2/25/2018 10:24 AM
28	Plausibility, good grammar, working links in articles, compelling evidence that is independently verifiable, known organization, trust ratings	2/25/2018 9:45 AM
29	Date published, grammatical errors, source	2/25/2018 9:09 AM
30	What the source is, and how it is posted. If there are big letters and a weird picture, I'm less likely to go look at it	2/25/2018 8:49 AM
31	Source of information, multiple (reliable) sources reporting/ corroborating the same story,	2/25/2018 8:35 AM
32	Identifying Fake News is easy if you are well informed in general. Generally, most Fake News doesn't sound right or it is so unusual that it begs for confirmation. And it is a simple matter to use the internet to try to confirm the validity of the matter in question.	2/25/2018 8:17 AM
33	Do I recognize the name of the source. Was it sent by someone I respect.	2/25/2018 7:57 AM
34	I read the article to see if it's plausible based on prior knowledge. I'll also search for similar headlines on the Internet from NYT, Washington Post etc.	2/25/2018 7:56 AM
35	When reading an article that's not from a major news source, I always google the information to see if the New York Times or CNN has reported on it.	2/25/2018 7:33 AM
36	Whom published the news story.	2/25/2018 6:08 AM
37	Name of the media Time of publishing or released Photos	2/25/2018 3:43 AM
38	Where stats came from, how they quantify stats.	2/25/2018 3:20 AM
39	Try to find questionable news from a mainstream source.	2/25/2018 1:04 AM
40	I will read other sources of news.	2/25/2018 12:38 AM
41	Source. Information.	2/25/2018 12:07 AM
42	I Try and ascertain the source of the story. I look for obvious bias, Clear misrepresentation of events and or history.	2/25/2018 12:00 AM
43	I google it and usually it's a scam	2/24/2018 11:59 PM
44	Who published the piece, the date of publication, who shared the post	2/24/2018 11:48 PM
45	Honestly I try to stick to sites I can trust and will fact check and source common article's	2/24/2018 11:40 PM
46	Personal attacks, outdated tropes, stereotypes, personal gain, reputation of media provider.	2/24/2018 11:39 PM
47	Objective language, specific data (date, time, location, statistics, citations even in embedded links and so on), good quality pictures, neutral title, good writing style are positive signs. Biased language and statements of value or morality, generalized statements, unsubstantiated claims (lack of specific data), short and vague articles, hard to make out pictures or videos, sensationalistic title, careless writing are red flags.	2/24/2018 11:24 PM
48	If it is just a claim made by a meme or a person, I will research the topic thoroughly. If it's an informative piece, I will research the topic further to gain more information on the topic.	2/24/2018 11:22 PM
49	Google it and see what else I can find.	2/24/2018 11:19 PM
50	The first thing might be the language of the article itself and if the author attempts to present alternative views. The presentation of alternative views and then a discussion of those views will lead me to attribute more credibility to that story. Also, the news outlet that it is coming from, whether the story fits with what I already know and have read about the issue, and the reputation of the writer are additional things I look at to establish credibility.	2/24/2018 11:01 PM
51	1. Theories based on evidential proof 2. Publisher of source material 3. Presence of social/political bias	2/24/2018 11:00 PM
52	Duplicate information in other news articles. Publication in a major news network. The bias of the reporter and quoted sources.	2/24/2018 10:52 PM
53	I look	9 PM

54	Suspicious links, headlines that are vague & sensational, sometimes I check through Snopes search.	2/24/2018 10:42 PM
55	I usually check the page itself for references. Usually there are none. Then I'll run a keyword search to find similar stories, and see if anything matches up.	2/24/2018 10:32 PM
56	The author, publication, reliability of sources and the media it is presented on	2/24/2018 10:31 PM
57	Source, claims, misspellings	2/24/2018 10:29 PM
58	as mentioned above, it's the reputation, quality and good or bad experience i or anyone i know had with the particular source sharing the story. there is also the "nerve" of the story, if it's too pathetic, scandalous or linked to a celebrity, i usually do not believe it's true. if it's news made by the political opponent of leading party or government i usually think it's true or has some truth in it because it's meant to be the "voice of people" vs voice of controlling government. hope it makes sense.	2/24/2018 10:10 PM
59	If it seems to have a bias and not objective, that's a red flag	2/24/2018 10:07 PM
60	The URL — is it: patriotsforamerica.com? Websites with names to these effects have no credibility or news gathering credentials	2/24/2018 9:56 PM
61	Source, grammar	2/24/2018 9:46 PM
62	First the name of page, then look for the publisher, owner	2/24/2018 9:40 PM
63	Source. If it is not a mainstream outlet I look for their source for what they are reporting on.	2/24/2018 9:38 PM
64	Look at the source. If there is still any question, I will do a search on the topic and see if there are other reputable sources reporting on the same issue.	2/24/2018 9:37 PM
65	Name of the organization publishing the story	2/24/2018 9:31 PM
66	Quotes, Topics that seem debateable	2/24/2018 9:28 PM
67	Mainly the source - if I see dubious reporting by a source I don't know or don't trust, I google to see if the same thing is being reported by more credible outlets.	2/24/2018 9:26 PM
68	Date of publication, support for a story or fact in a reliable source such as Snopes, the Scientific American, BBC, etc., reverse-image searching images to see that they are what the captions claim they are	2/24/2018 9:23 PM
69	Who is publishing this news	2/24/2018 9:17 PM
70	Cross referencing of credible sources, especially primary documents such as original research, transcripts, etc. I also look for who else has reported the news and how they reported it.	2/24/2018 9:06 PM
71	The source, the person who posted it, compare to existing knowledge and evidence	2/24/2018 9:00 PM
72	The website name. References to previous articles, corroboration from other news sites.	2/24/2018 8:53 PM
73	Domain names, facts that are easily verified, other sources that I can use to corroborate the story.	2/24/2018 8:50 PM
74	The credentials of the writer and the sources cited.	2/24/2018 8:47 PM
75	Multiple sources that are not related to the original source I saw it	2/24/2018 8:40 PM
76	Source	2/24/2018 8:31 PM
77	Checking the authors previous works and reputation. Following up with the sources used in the story. Check where the story originated from	2/24/2018 8:29 PM
78	If the writer is from a reputable source and if I feel like it's believable.	2/24/2018 8:17 PM
79	Links to the primary source	2/24/2018 8:17 PM
80	Credible sources	2/24/2018 8:13 PM
81	-Source (Including website links / Person posting) -Date -Citing	2/24/2018 8:09 PM
82	site sources, research those posting "fake" material to establish their provenance...	2/24/2018 8:05 PM
83	If it contains data, I want to know where it came from.	2/24/2018 8:05 PM
84	Publisher, author; Are there ads? Are they trying to make money?	2/24/2018 8:03 PM

### Q13 On a scale of 1 to 5, rate the following: (1 being the lowest, 5 being the highest)

Answered: 84 Skipped: 5



	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Your level of trust in established mainstream liberal leaning media outlets.	9.52% 8	14.29% 12	28.57% 24	38.10% 32	9.52% 8	84	4.24
Your level of trust in established mainstream conservative leaning media outlets.	33.33% 28	39.29% 33	20.24% 17	7.14% 6	0.00% 0	84	3.01
Your level of trust in media outlets that have been labeled as "Fake News" by mainstream media outlets.	59.04% 49	18.07% 15	16.87% 14	4.82% 4	1.20% 1	83	2.71
Your level of concern (if any) with the rise of so called "fake news".	2.38% 2	5.95% 5	14.29% 12	27.38% 23	50.00% 42	84	5.17
The effect Fake News has on political polarization in the United States	1.20% 1	6.02% 5	15.66% 13	33.73% 28	43.37% 36	83	5.12
The effect Fake News has on your own world views.	39.29% 33	23.81% 20	20.24% 17	8.33% 7	8.33% 7	84	3.23

#	COMMENTS FOR "YOUR LEVEL OF TRUST IN ESTABLISHED MAINSTREAM LIBERAL LEANING MEDIA OUTLETS."	DATE
1	More trust in established written sources, e.g. Vox, and less trust in television organizations because of omission of important information	2/25/2018 9:53 AM
2	Primarily the lack of trust is because they continue to chose subject matter which isn't neutral and is designed to fit their narrative and not the real world narrative. The whole story either does not get told at all or is deflected in a deceptive headline or is buried in one sentence in the article or story.	2/25/2018 8:32 AM
3	They	0 AM



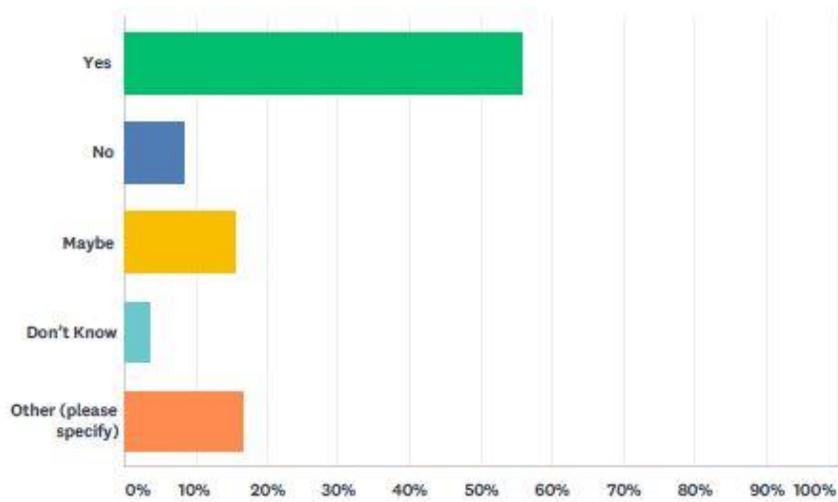
4	That's also my political leaning though. It's naturally easier to believe a statement that agrees with my general worldview.	2/24/2018 11:27 PM
5	What is really considered liberal? When news organizations that follow journalistic standards such as The New York Times are labeled as "liberal" it annoys me that actual facts are somehow considered liberal.	2/24/2018 11:03 PM
6	Left leaning outlets are often trying in good faith to publish correct news, a la the Guardian or the Atlantic. However, they can be equally problematic, like the NYT supporting Dick Cheney's claim of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.	2/24/2018 10:39 PM
7	Depends on the source, but CNN/MSNBC/NYT have no credibility to me. Some left wing outlets do have credibility	2/24/2018 10:33 PM
8	Not FOX	2/24/2018 9:18 PM
<b>#</b>	<b>COMMENTS FOR "YOUR LEVEL OF TRUST IN ESTABLISHED MAINSTREAM CONSERVATIVE LEANING MEDIA OUTLETS."</b>	<b>DATE</b>
1	Lower trust in Fox higher trust in Wall Street Journal.	2/25/2018 11:58 PM
2	Scientific studies have revealed the viewers of Fox News are actually less informed than people who have viewed nothing at all. Some written conservative mainstream media adheres to some basic tenets of intellectual rigor, but conservative television and radio or filled with misinformation	2/25/2018 9:53 AM
3	Same as for the liberal media, however, it appears that they are severely outnumbered by liberal meaning media so I tend to give them a little more credibility simply because on balance they are overwhelmingly outnumbered and deserve a little support.	2/25/2018 8:32 AM
4	They have an agenda	2/25/2018 12:10 AM
5	The Wall Street Journal is probably the most honest conservative outlet. But moving outside of that, the dishonesty builds very quickly.	2/24/2018 10:39 PM
6	Not at all	2/24/2018 9:01 PM
<b>#</b>	<b>COMMENTS FOR "YOUR LEVEL OF TRUST IN MEDIA OUTLETS THAT HAVE BEEN LABELED AS "FAKE NEWS" BY MAINSTREAM MEDIA OUTLETS."</b>	<b>DATE</b>
1	This is a tricky question- Trump calls CNN and NY Times fake news and these comments are shown on mainstream media.	2/25/2018 11:58 PM
2	It depends on the story but generally they are so easily identified and the news is so easily identified as fake that I conclude that only people who want to believe it do. This is the information age. We can find out the real story is a few clicks.	2/25/2018 8:32 AM
3	Depends upon the person and/or the organization doing the labeling	2/24/2018 11:03 PM
4	CNN	2/24/2018 10:51 PM
5	Most of the widely known fake news sites are mainstream because they're so blatantly fake.	2/24/2018 10:39 PM
6	Not sure	2/24/2018 8:18 PM
<b>#</b>	<b>COMMENTS FOR "YOUR LEVEL OF CONCERN (IF ANY) WITH THE RISE OF SO CALLED "FAKE NEWS"."</b>	<b>DATE</b>
1	two words: Fantasy and Terror (see Nuremberg Nazi documentation)	2/26/2018 10:07 PM
2	Fake news is a bad thing. And the idea of having a bunch of fake news is bad. Finally, the idea of being fooled into thinking news is fake is even worse	2/26/2018 1:50 AM
3	My concern here is not that fake news exists but that so many people lack instinctive critical thinking skills and accept whatever they read as truth	2/25/2018 11:44 AM
4	Fake news is creating an epistemological crisis in the United States	2/25/2018 9:53 AM
5	I still trust my own judgment and discernment	2/25/2018 9:11 AM
6	My level of concern is largely a result of the Main Stream Media not being unbiased. It appears to me that the MSM clearly has a political agenda and that agenda is reflected in their choice of the news and how they promote that choice. I think it reflects badly on them and does a disservice to our entire nation. Journalistic ethics need a refresher course in the US right now.	2/25/2018 8:32 AM
7	Fake news causes hysteria and conflict	2/25/2018 12:39 AM



8	People will believe anything and even when told it was fake they still believe it. Example- vaccines/autism	2/25/2018 12:10 AM
9	Skepticism is good as long as it is backed by critical thinking.	2/24/2018 11:03 PM
10	There's many concerning aspects to this problem, one if the most significant to me being the potential for discrediting legitimate, alternative news sources like Democracy Now! or the Intercept.	2/24/2018 10:39 PM
11	I'm not overly concerned as there have always been National Enquirer type tabloids	2/24/2018 9:48 PM
12	Everyone wants to have "their thing" now. No matter how outlandish.	2/24/2018 8:11 PM
#	<b>COMMENTS FOR "THE EFFECT FAKE NEWS HAS ON POLITICAL POLARIZATION IN THE UNITED STATES"</b>	<b>DATE</b>
1	Fuels an underbelly of America that is simply horrifying.	2/26/2018 10:07 PM
2	I do not know.	2/26/2018 7:59 AM
3	It is easier to polarize if you can convince people to only trust what you say and who you say.	2/26/2018 1:50 AM
4	Fake news tends to be facile and provocative, so people consuming it without employing any critical thinking are becoming more emotionally charged and entrenched in their sides, even though the information is false. It often intends to demonize the other side.	2/25/2018 9:53 AM
5	It has some but the MSM has much more. It is like the MSM is doing exactly what the Russians in undermining our elections wants us to do.	2/25/2018 8:32 AM
6	Not applicable	2/25/2018 3:44 AM
7	Varies depending on how fashionable it is our how much drama surrounds it	2/25/2018 12:10 AM
8	Politics is not a team sport.	2/24/2018 11:03 PM
9	With most people only appearing to read headlines of articles, a sensationalized headline can completely mislead someone who then believed falsehoods	2/24/2018 10:33 PM
10	It's really preaching to those that already believe	2/24/2018 9:41 PM
11	The polarization of America has been coming for a while now, but "fake news" (and the insult of calling something you don't like "fake news") has helped to exacerbate the problem.	2/24/2018 9:41 PM
12	All fake news does is feed an existing market. Fake news is a reflector, not a director	2/24/2018 8:19 PM
13	It is polarized regardless of fake news	2/24/2018 8:18 PM
14	It contributed largely to the election of the idiot currently occupying the White House...	2/24/2018 8:06 PM
#	<b>COMMENTS FOR "THE EFFECT FAKE NEWS HAS ON YOUR OWN WORLD VIEWS."</b>	<b>DATE</b>
1	It changes my "world view" in that I see the stupidity of people who fall for it and it reduces my faith in humanity.	2/26/2018 4:04 PM
2	I do not know as the effect of fake news is not felt in my mind.	2/26/2018 7:59 AM
3	I am not aware if I have seen fake news that has had an effect on me.	2/26/2018 1:50 AM
4	It affects my world view only in that it is a depressing indictment of the lack of widespread critical thinking and engagement of the population with information they consume.	2/25/2018 9:53 AM
5	None. Although there is some Fake News that is so odd that it deserves a couple of chuckles.	2/25/2018 8:32 AM
6	Depends on how easy it is to spot. The bare existence of fake news is making me concerned with humanity's karma, but that's a different story.	2/24/2018 11:27 PM
7	I selected "2" here, only because it has caused me to question everything so much more than I have in the past.	2/24/2018 11:24 PM
8	It has affected my view of people more than the actual perception of events. It has made me even more critical of news stories.	2/24/2018 11:03 PM
9	I like to believe I'm discerning, and I try to read many sources but I am not sure if you can really trust anyone	2/24/2018 10:33 PM
10	Except for the obvious despair for the future of a functioning republic in the face of pervasive ignorance and the lost art of critical thinking	2/24/2018 8:34 PM

### Q14 Do you trust any 'Main Stream" Media Outlets?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	55.95%	47
No	8.33%	7
Maybe	15.48%	13
Don't Know	3.57%	3
Other (please specify)	16.67%	14
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>84</b>

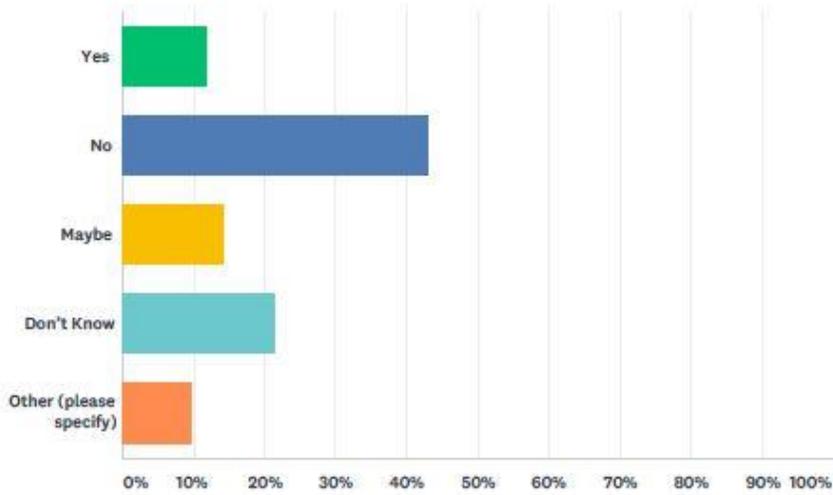
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Trust is something I give to no-one and nothing.	2/26/2018 4:06 PM
2	I feel more comfortable about some more than others	2/26/2018 1:55 AM
3	Not any specifically but lean towards conservative MSM outlets as they have been proven to be more trustworthy	2/25/2018 4:07 PM
4	I'm more inclined to trust certain news organizations based on my beliefs. I'm also inclined to trust the sources if all news corporations are reporting the same information. When there is a difference in information, I will become skeptical	2/25/2018 6:11 AM
5	Not any! It really depends on the reputation and history of the media.	2/25/2018 3:47 AM
6	Somewhat, but take with a grain of salt.	2/25/2018 12:12 AM
7	How	2/25/2018 12:03 AM
8	Rarely	2/24/2018 10:44 PM
9	I tend to trust local newspapers and NPR among a few others	2/24/2018 10:35 PM
10	I especially trust news coming from AP or other wire services.	2/24/2018 9:42 PM
11	Depends on the outlet and if they've done actual research or not	2/24/2018 9:33 PM



12	Liberal ...nbc, not FOX	2/24/2018 9:21 PM
13	Trust but verify.	2/24/2018 8:52 PM
14	I trust individual reporters, not outlets.	2/24/2018 8:08 PM

### Q15 Do you trust any media sources that have been called "Fake News" by mainstream media?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 5



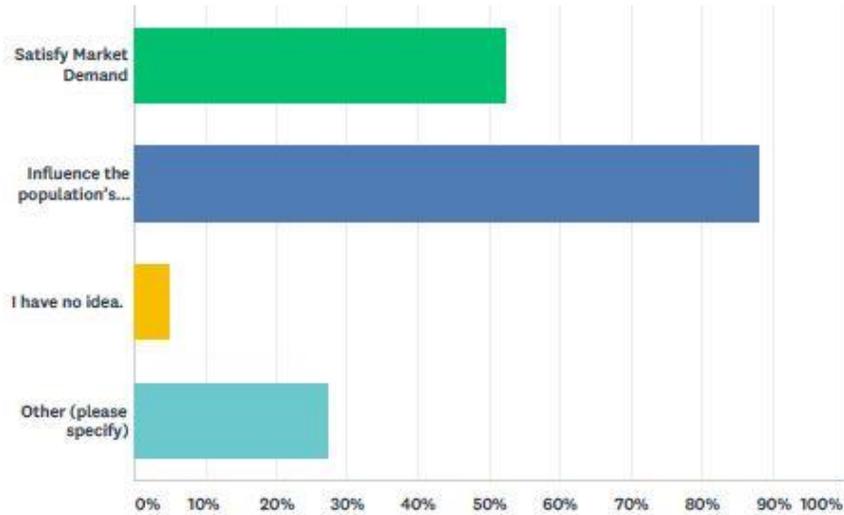
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	11.90%	10
No	42.86%	36
Maybe	14.29%	12
Don't Know	21.43%	18
Other (please specify)	9.52%	8
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>84</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Breitbart and Wikileaks are off my menu. So are extremist Michigan video bloggers. And generally Fox News.	2/26/2018 10:15 PM
2	Cnn and jerry zucker are obsessed with the Donald. Trump never not headlining their homepage in a negative POV	2/25/2018 11:07 AM
3	Mainstream media is not exactly a monolith. Some right leaning MSM has referred to left leaning MSM as fake news, for example. The term has been too widely hurled at different types of media for this question to probably provide useful data.	2/25/2018 10:06 AM
4	Cnn	2/24/2018 10:51 PM
5	I try to determine for myself which news is real or fake (by doing research not just listening to MSM)	2/24/2018 10:44 PM
6	The Daily Wire has credibility to me and I trust them.	2/24/2018 10:35 PM
7	i rely on my feeling if it s true or false.	2/24/2018 10:16 PM
8	It depends. Not usually.	2/24/2018 8:52 PM



### Q16 Why do people create Fake News? (You may select more than one answer)

Answered: 84 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Satisfy Market Demand	52.38% 44
Influence the population's opinions/beliefs	88.10% 74
I have no idea.	4.76% 4
Other (please specify)	27.38% 23
Total Respondents: 84	

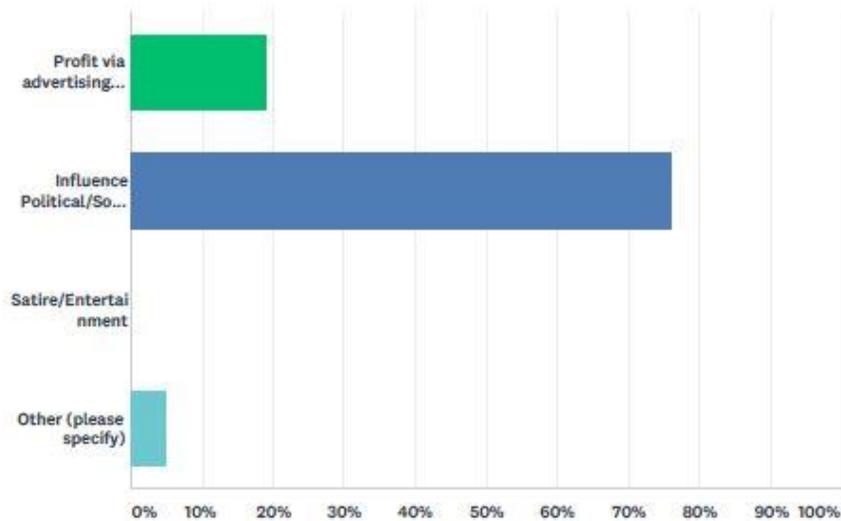
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Add some levity and humor to perplexing topics	2/28/2018 6:09 PM
2	To create panic, to control people, some people are getting paid to do it	2/28/2018 12:44 PM
3	And internal need for power. Or their sick need to punish partisan political proponents, or bullying.	2/26/2018 10:15 PM
4	Trolling	2/26/2018 4:06 PM
5	money.	2/25/2018 5:57 PM
6	And in order to get money from advertisers	2/25/2018 12:32 PM
7	Sway opinion for political gain, dilute the impact of the voting pool, polarize the populace in order to prevent community building that could have political/economic consequences (I swear I'm not a communist!), internet points	2/25/2018 11:47 AM
8	People are bored and angry, they want drama and antagonism- simple supply and demand	2/25/2018 11:07 AM
9	It can also be profitable, as the incendiary nature of much of fake news gains lot of traction and clicks. Some less complicated fake news media such as memes probably delight the creators who are seeking	2/25/2018 10:06 AM
10	To m	AM



11	To create propaganda To make people believe in misconceptions	2/25/2018 3:47 AM
12	Just to fuck with us, like Russia.	2/25/2018 3:23 AM
13	support their politicians	2/25/2018 12:11 AM
14	Personal gain	2/24/2018 11:41 PM
15	Distort truth to build a narrative; play to a base of support; affect polling data	2/24/2018 10:32 PM
16	earn money on people entering their pages as the lowest goal, as biggest goal, to lead and control people s minds being able to make them do what they want. that s how the world has been forever.	2/24/2018 10:16 PM
17	Money, clicks equal money	2/24/2018 9:42 PM
18	State run media outlets produce propoganda to fuck with American and other westerners minds. For example: RT, Sputnik, PressTV, Telesur, once in awhile Al Jazeera.	2/24/2018 9:42 PM
19	To destabilize a rival country politically, such as Rossiya tries to do in the West	2/24/2018 9:25 PM
20	To promote controversial ideas and see dividion and chaos	2/24/2018 9:14 PM
21	Profit of one kind or another	2/24/2018 8:35 PM
22	Cause political upheaval	2/24/2018 8:33 PM
23	to wield political influence over our elections by misleading the citizenry	2/24/2018 8:07 PM

### Q17 Which do you feel is the most common reason for the creation of "Fake News"?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 5

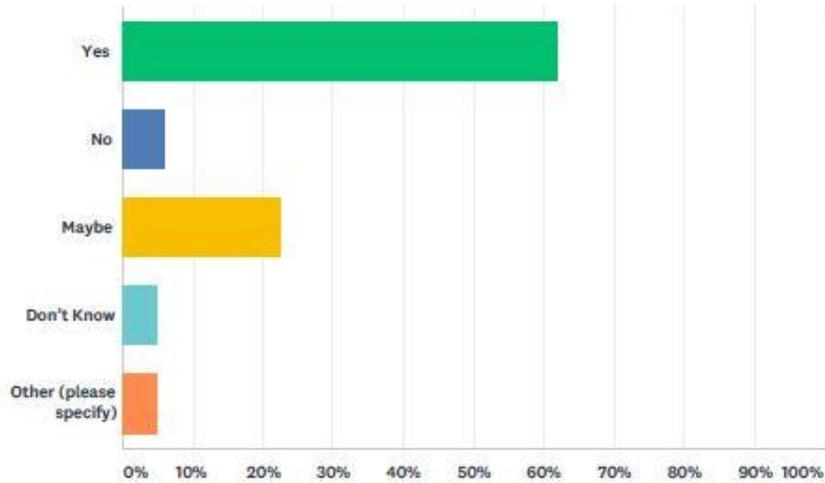


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Profit via advertising revenue	19.05%	16
Influence Political/Social Opinion	76.19%	64
Satire/Entertainment	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	4.76%	4
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>84</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Profit governments	2/26/2018 10:15 PM
2	maybe some psychological need for recognition.	2/26/2018 8:02 AM
3	I think this information is based disaggregated. Simple Fake News is probably more about entertainment and different types of "trolling." More complicated Fake News, while potentially profitable, is probably most driven actors trying to influence political/social opinion. So, by sheer volume I suspect entertainment is the most common reason for its creation. However, the Fake News using different websites, which have a more permanent presence than memes or likely used more to influence.	2/25/2018 10:06 AM
4	Profit and influence	2/24/2018 8:35 PM

### Q18 Do you think that media is overly commercialized (making a profit comes before unbiased reporting)?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 5

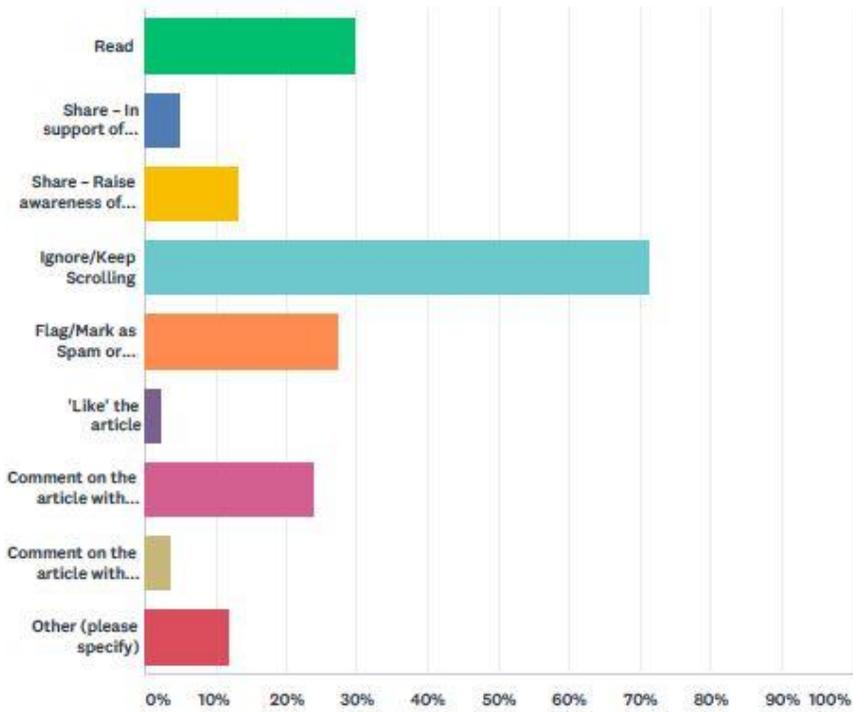


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	61.90%	52
No	5.95%	5
Maybe	22.62%	19
Don't Know	4.76%	4
Other (please specify)	4.76%	4
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>84</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Too many pharmaceutical ads.	2/26/2018 10:15 PM
2	depends on who you are calling "media"	2/25/2018 12:11 AM
3	It depends on the outlet. Some media outlets put profit over unbiased reporting, others don't.	2/24/2018 9:25 PM
4	Depends on the outlet	2/24/2018 8:20 PM

### Q19 What is your reaction to supposed 'Fake News' articles? (You may select more than one)

Answered: 84 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Read	29.76% 25
Share – In support of passing along true information not covered by other outlets	4.76% 4
Share – Raise awareness of false information	13.10% 11
Ignore/Keep Scrolling	71.43% 60
Flag/Mark as Spam or Inappropriate	27.38% 23
'Like' the article	2.38% 2
Comment on the article with a disagreeing opinion	23.81% 20
Comment on the article with an agreeing opinion	3.57% 3
Other (please specify)	11.90% 10
Total Respondents: 84	

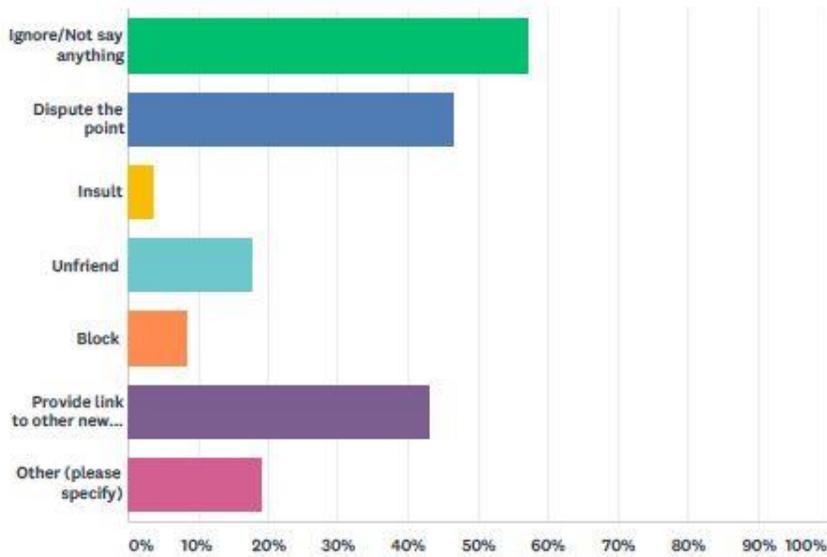
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Share to spread some laughs	2/28/2018 6:11 PM



2	Call out the senders decision to repost or share as flawed	2/26/2018 10:18 PM
3	I report them if they are truly harmful, and I block the people who post them.	2/26/2018 4:08 PM
4	I have never attended to fake news in Facebook.	2/26/2018 8:05 AM
5	I read very few news outlets (NYTimes, NPR, The Atlantic). I try to avoid social media as much as possible.	2/25/2018 2:48 PM
6	Sometimes I feel pointing out that it is fake with a fact checking website can be a small public service to my friends and peers.	2/25/2018 10:07 AM
7	usually fly into a rage and have to close my social media	2/25/2018 12:12 AM
8	Investigate	2/24/2018 11:42 PM
9	If unsure, Google or otherwise research the news to verify credibility.	2/24/2018 11:37 PM
10	I will often find valid sources to show the error on some of the claims made	2/24/2018 11:27 PM

### Q20 How do you react when someone on Facebook cites something you believe to be Fake News? (You may select more than one)

Answered: 84 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Ignore/Not say anything	57.14%	48
Dispute the point	46.43%	39
Insult	3.57%	3
Unfriend	17.86%	15
Block	8.33%	7
Provide link to other news site	42.86%	36
Other (please specify)	19.05%	16
Total Respondents: 84		

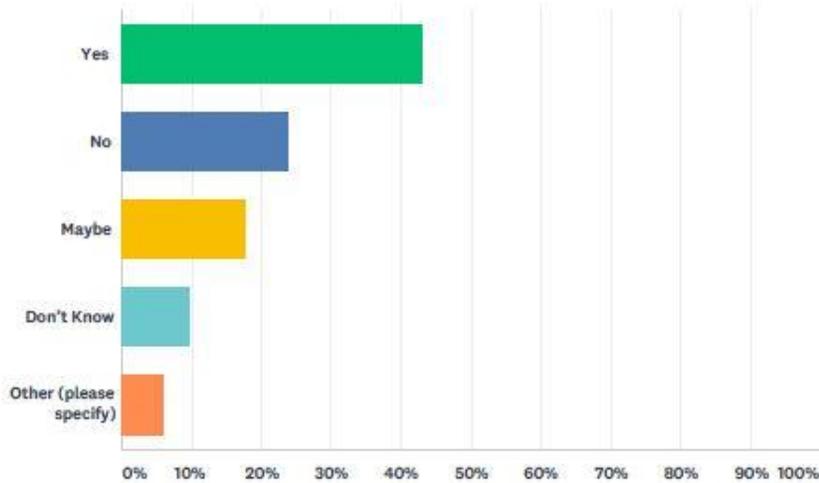
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	make a humorous comment	2/28/2018 6:11 PM
2	I check snopes, post the link to that result, then find more sources that prove it's not true, and debate the topic if it's important. Sometimes I just post the snopes and move on.	2/26/2018 4:08 PM
3	If this was the case with my friend, I would bring it to a conversation with that person when we hang out.	2/26/2018 8:05 AM
4	If they're a friend, reach out in direct messages.	2/25/2018 5:59 PM
5	I don't pay attention to Facebook. If I was having a face to face discussion, I would dispute the point.	2/25/2018 2:48 PM



6	It depends on the context? I have a friend on FB who shares a lot of what I think is fake medical news and I ignore it but if it's political I generally block the person	2/25/2018 12:34 PM
7	comment on it	2/25/2018 12:29 PM
8	Provide a link to correct information and/or link to why the source might have something to gain by promoting fake news	2/25/2018 11:53 AM
9	Depends who it is. What they're reporting.	2/25/2018 12:13 AM
10	usually fly into a rage and have to close my social media.	2/25/2018 12:12 AM
11	Investigate first, maybe respond	2/24/2018 11:42 PM
12	Depends on the issue and person. Some people are not worth polarizing myself for. Others a small comment can correct a larger problem	2/24/2018 10:36 PM
13	i just let them know it s fake in my opinion without arguing, just informing and providing the "true" link if possible	2/24/2018 10:26 PM
14	Provide other evidence to show that the news is fake	2/24/2018 9:26 PM
15	Unfollow	2/24/2018 8:21 PM
16	I check Snopes a lot, at least daily.	2/24/2018 8:10 PM

### Q21 Do you think Facebook should be held responsible for 'Fake News' published on its platform?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 5

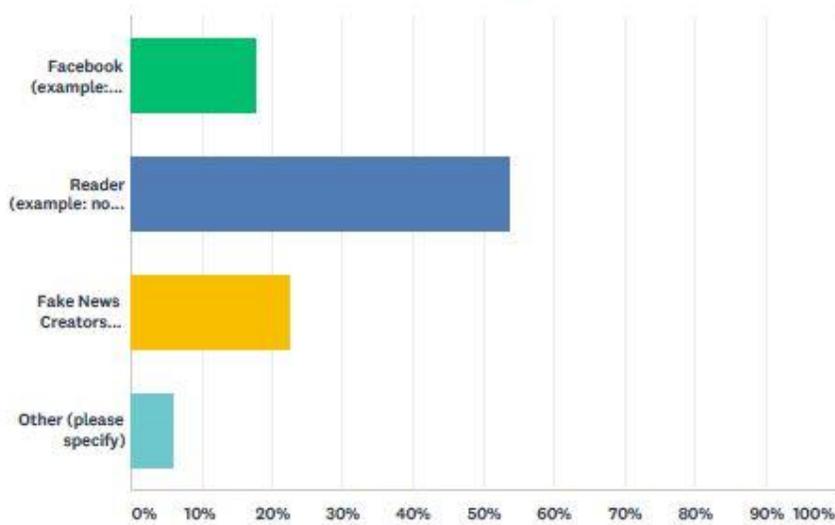


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	42.86%	36
No	23.81%	20
Maybe	17.86%	15
Don't Know	9.52%	8
Other (please specify)	5.95%	5
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>84</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	They have software to stop porn. They can have software with key words. Well, there is freedom speech to confided. We just need to be more informed.	2/28/2018 12:48 PM
2	NO. PEOPLE should be held responsible for their own level of intelligence and have PERSONAL responsibility to do research and due diligence on matters of importance.	2/26/2018 4:08 PM
3	NO. People need to hold each other accountable. We don't need more regulation, people need to be smart.	2/25/2018 12:12 AM
4	they could be responsible if they could control it. but it s the opposite, one of Facebook's MAIN goals is to spread fake news. it s the best tool for that!	2/24/2018 10:26 PM
5	For at least paid fake news ads	2/24/2018 9:46 PM

### Q22 Who has the most power in stopping the spread of Fake News?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Facebook (example: controlling content)	17.86% 15
Reader (example: no longer reading content/demanding better quality content)	53.57% 45
Fake News Creators (example: choosing to no longer publish content)	22.62% 19
Other (please specify)	5.95% 5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>84</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Schools, parents, etc! Fake news wouldn't be so prevalent (and appealing!) if people more easily critiqued what they read. Also, I really think that one of the main reasons that fake news is so compelling is that it induces intense feelings (outrage, horror, contempt) which, when shared with others, creates a feeling of connection. If people were feeling more connections in their communities they would not be so impacted/enticed to 'join'.	2/25/2018 11:53 AM
2	Journalism programs to address the sobering responsibility that comes with the job... "you are not catalysts for change" you are reporters	2/25/2018 11:09 AM
3	Regulation- courts (if it is egregious or libelous) Educators- teach kids to be more analytical	2/25/2018 3:27 AM
4	It's a market economy. If readers want and sharing gets attention, then people will continue to create and share.	2/25/2018 12:12 AM
5	I don't know.	2/24/2018 8:10 PM