

Assignment Purpose

Now that we've had a chance to learn a bit more about media and problematic information in the post-truth era, this project gives you the chance to find and analyze an example of problematic information and then share it with your colleagues. You will learn more about the features of how problematic information works and how to think like a "fake-news" producer.

Assignment Task

For this project, you're going to choose a specific example of **problematic information** and analyze it using the following three criteria to develop a critical case study.

(1) **History/origins.** Where did your example come from? That is, to the best of your knowledge, what is the original "source" of this disinformation? Debunking sites like Snopes.com will undoubtedly be useful for tracing the lineage of disinformation. Be sure to explain precisely how you know that this is an example of disinformation using outside sources from the web (see below for details).

(2) **Analysis.** What makes your example of disinformation effective? How can you account for its persuasive effects? This will require a rhetorical analysis of your example of disinformation: look for emotional appeals (*pathos*), attempts to appear credible and believable/trustworthy (*ethos*), and even appeals to logic/reason (*logos*), though often the *appearance of logic/reason/valid argument* is the more appropriate phrase when it comes to disinformation. You will also want to examine carefully the assumptions and preconceptions of the article/writer/website.

(3) **Impact/significance.** To the best of your ability, determine the "fallout" of your example of disinformation. What were the implications and effects that followed? What happened as a result of this example of disinformation?

This assignment will require some basic research and--more to the point--it will require you to be a savvy researcher and practice some fundamental information literacy skills. Since you will be wading into the weird vastness of the web, you will need to make sure that the sources you find are credible, "real," and valid sources of information. You will also need to document your sources carefully and provide a brief (1 to 2 sentence) explanation of how you determined that each of the sources you consulted in your research are valid and credible.

Assignment Criteria

Complete this project in MS Word using standard MLA formatting (Times New Roman, 12-point font, double spaced throughout) and then upload your completed paper to this space. This assignment should be 3 to 5 pages (800 to 1,500 words). You will need to consult and/or cite anywhere from 4 to 6 sources, though the number of the sources you use will necessarily vary depending on the example of disinformation you choose to analyze.

The assignment is due on July 10 before 11:59pm EDT. A rubric with complete grading criteria can be found [here](#).