

COM 424.01:
SEMINAR IN PERSUASION
The Rhetoric of Disinformation
Instructor: Dr. Zompetti
Spring 2024

Tuesday & Thursday at 3:35-4:50 pm, Fell Hall 148

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The focus of the seminar will concern persuasion theory as it specifically relates to the general area known as “disinformation.” The specific areas of application will be student-driven. In short, we will investigate the intersections of persuasion and disinformation. This course will be highly theoretical, beginning with a brief introduction on rhetoric, then a brief examination of key persuasion concepts. The course will include quite a bit of reading, class discussion, and a conference/journal-length and quality paper.

We will focus on interrogating, criticizing and exploring the intersection of persuasion and disinformation. In this course, we will use various elements of persuasion theories through an interpretative analysis to examine how disinformation is historically constituted, perpetuated, and challenged. This will necessarily involve a study of persuasion that focuses on the text. When we say "rhetoric," we will be open to various interpretations, but we will start with Aristotle's definition of “any available means to persuasion.” We can discuss this, but I will begin with the premise that rhetoric and persuasion are functionally synonymous, whereas rhetoric is generally approached from a humanistic, critical orientation, while persuasion is often studied from a social scientific perspective. We will be reading some social scientific literature as it relates to our course issues, but we will approach our interrogations, criticisms, and examinations of communication phenomena from a rhetorical orientation. Finally, we will define “disinformation” broadly at first, but we will also distinguish it from misinformation, fake news, propaganda, etc. while also always noting how these concepts overlap and are often mutually reinforcing.

Except for a couple of “lectures” in the beginning, everyone will participate by reading key primary and secondary sources on persuasion and disinformation. So, we need to discuss essentially two thematic things, which is how I'm structuring the course:

1. What is persuasion? How can we engage in textual/rhetorical criticism to analyze different and varied persuasive texts?
2. What is disinformation and what theoretical perspectives help us to interrogate how disinformation is or is not persuasive?

On the Vital Need for this Class:

... a prevailing narrative of our time has become that scientific evidence is no longer trusted, medical evidence is sidestepped, and proper journalism is under attack from fake news farms, troll factories, social bots, and deepfakes. These discourses argue that the rise of social media platforms ... has been a catalyst for a seemingly endless flood of misinformation and deception ... malicious actors and misinformed citizens have started to spread lies, deception, hate, propaganda, and fake information on a previously unseen scale. All these phenomena are claimed to be indicative of a brand-new political age or paradigm in which “Truth” and “Reason” are superseded by echo chambers, filter bubbles, emotions, and individual gut feelings. This amounts to an epochal rupture in the very fabric of democracy. The foundations of our political system are cracking up. Democracy is doomed, unless these destructive trajectories are interrupted and changed for the better through drastic measures. -- Farkas & Schou, 2024, p. 5.

(Farkas, John & Schou, Jannick (2024). *Post-Truth, Fake News and Democracy: Mapping the Politics of Falsehood* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.)

Required Readings

BOOKS (required):

Coper, Ed (2022). *Facts and Other Lies: Welcome to the Disinformation Age*. Crows Nest, Australia: Allen & Unwin. ISBN: 978-1761065705.

Keith, William M. and Lundberg, Christian O. (2008). *The Essential Guide to Rhetoric*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's. ISBN: 978-0-312-47239-9

van der Linden, Sander (2023). *Foolproof: Why We Fall for Misinformation and How to Build Immunity*. London: 4th Estate. ISBN: 978-000-863712-5

Other Texts:

See below. There will also be articles for our reading pleasure. I am listing them in the tentative schedule so you can know in advance what is expected (plus I list the full citations should you need to cite them). They can be retrieved through Milner's electronic database system, the Internet, or our course Canvas site.

Course Learning Outcomes & Objectives

1. You should be familiar with the literature concerning persuasion and disinformation and the relevant theoretical literature. You should have a working knowledge about the authors, their theories, and their arguments. You should be able to speak intelligently about the work we read and study, including understanding and using the vocabulary associated with this body of knowledge.
2. You will examine a variety of different rhetorical and critical approaches to this topic. You should be able to apply these approaches to your own investigation of the intersection of persuasion and disinformation.
3. You should remember your position as a scholar, student, citizen and activist. You should be mindful of respecting other's ideas, while being self-reflexive of your own.
4. You should be able to recognize the different types of rhetorics that exist around us. You should be sensitive to our need to interrogate them. You should, by the end of the course, have an ability to critically question such rhetorics and analyze them into a meaningful argument.
5. You should be able to produce a publishable/presentable research paper relating to rhetoric and social movements.

Presumptions about Rhetorical Knowledge

The course is intended for students with no background in rhetoric as well as rhetorical veterans. For students not well-versed in rhetoric, we will begin the course with a brief introduction of rhetorical theories and methods of analysis. For the student with previous rhetorical experience, we will highlight key primary and secondary texts of various rhetorical & cultural perspectives for advanced study. If you are unfamiliar with rhetoric, I strongly encourage you to thoroughly read the Keith & Lundberg book (*The Essential Guide to Rhetoric*), as well as other sources of material. But, you should ensure that you do the extra readings **immediately** – a) the quicker you pick up the key elements of rhetoric, the faster the course issues will make sense to you, and b) you won't have the time to do extra readings once we start our weekly readings. Ideally, students should be taking graduate courses for more than just a grade – they should identify and attempt to accomplish their own “learning outcomes.”

My Approach to Seminars

1. We all learn from each other – you from me, I from you. As such, I do not have a monopoly on “truth,” which we will be problematizing anyway. I will help guide and facilitate discussion. I will help you in ways that I am able. I will answer your questions to the best of my ability. And, I will speak on subjects that I have some experience. Nevertheless, we will all obtain more from this course if we remember that we can learn from each other (and not just from me).
2. I will provide (hopefully meaningful) comments on the material we discuss in class. However, a seminar is not a "lecture" course, nor is it like the typical undergraduate course. Given that we will be discussing a multiplicity of themes involving rhetoric/persuasion, you will become the experts on some of these issues and will have to lead the class. I expect all of you to take an active role in your participation in this course. If you do not come to class prepared to speak (meaningfully and intelligently) about the material for that evening's class, you will be failing me, the rest of the class, and yourself. At this point in your academic careers, I shouldn't have to take attendance, or fill-in if you didn't read the material. You will not receive an A or perhaps a B in the course if you are consistently absent, late, or unprepared.
3. I am more interested in **how** you think, rather than what you think. Please don't be afraid to share your thoughts and ideas in class, and don't presume that you know how I will respond if you introduce a concept in class. It is more important that you are reflecting on the material and thinking critically about its relationship to your ideas and interests.
4. You should draw connections with what we read in class to what is occurring in the world, especially events and issues that can help shed insight into our course discussions.
5. A seminar is more than just a time for FYIs and descriptive ramblings. You must think reflectively and critically about the material. Don't accept it on face-value. If you find it useful, be able to explain why and how. If you don't find it useful, then you should have thoughtful and meaningful criticisms. In short, you need to be able to **APPLY** what you read, not just regurgitate it back to me and the class. You should write notes, thoughts, and questions in the margins of the readings. **Please make sure you have the readings for a particular class available as we discuss the material for that given class!!!**
6. Some of the material we will cover may seem dense, difficult, and unfamiliar. If you have some difficulty given your unfamiliarity with the topic or concepts, then you should spend additional time reading the material. Consult additional sources. Form a reading group with other members of the class. If you're still having trouble, you should ask me about possibly meeting for a one-on-one chat during office hours or a scheduled appointment.
7. You should come to class always already prepared to discuss the material which is scheduled for that evening. You should also be flexible – in other words, **LISTEN** to what others say in the class and build your thoughts about the material on what they say. Don't be afraid to debate in class with others, provided that the debate is professional and respectful. Similarly, don't get discouraged if others disagree with your take on the readings – this is graduate school, so we need to take suggestions and criticisms and then rethink our positions.
8. Finally, you should take careful notes throughout the semester. The things we discuss in one class will build on top of things we've discussed previously. You should incorporate previous material, when appropriate, when extending your thoughts on future topics. And, your notes may prove useful when working on the final paper.

Course Expectations

1. READINGS:

Complete all of the readings as they are assigned. Think about them as you read. Re-read if necessary. I strongly suggest that you complete each reading in a single sitting, rather than breaking it into segments, if possible. This will allow to reflect more accurately on the intricacies of the material.

2. ATTENDANCE:

Missing seminars is unacceptable behavior for a graduate student in the absence of illness, university sponsored activities, or family emergency. If you find that for some reason you need to miss class – whether I excuse it or not – please notify me in advance.

Additionally, if you miss class due to COVID-related illness, please note the University policy on absences:

<https://policy.illinoisstate.edu/students/2-1-30.shtml>

3. PUNCTUALITY:

Please attend Class on time. It is disrespectful to show up late. Additionally, you should be prepared (and not surprised by) to stay beyond the 9:20 end time for class. I will try to be respectful of your time, but it is not uncommon for graduate-level discussions to develop during a particular class period that is stimulating, important, and meaningful. If you must leave by 9:20 or 9:30, then you may do so without penalty. However, if our discussion is ongoing and insightful, you should consider sticking around until the discussion is over or comes to a good stopping point.

4. QUICK NOTE ABOUT ASSIGNMENTS:

Complete all assignments, on time. Late work will be penalized one grade per day of lateness (the next day begins as soon as class is over). I won't write comments/explanations for the grades I give to late work. **Failure to complete all assignments may result in failing the course. Failure to complete the major paper and/or the final exam may also result in a "C" or worse for this course.** When you have questions about the course, assignments, etc., see me or email me. Don't talk to someone else in class and assume it is accurate. If you ask someone else, and they are wrong, then your performance may suffer.

6. PERMISSION REQUIRED TO RECORD:

Students must obtain written permission from the instructor if they wish either to photograph classroom lectures or discussions or to record them using audio or video devices. This restriction includes visual materials that accompany the lecture/discussion, such as lecture slides, whiteboard notes/equations, etc. Such recordings are to be used solely for the purposes of individual or group study with other students enrolled in the class. They may not be reproduced, shared in any way (including electronically or posting in any web environment) with those not in the class. Students with disabilities who need to record classroom lectures or discussions must contact Student Access and Accommodation Services to register, request and be approved for an accommodation. Students who violate this policy may be subject to both legal sanctions for violations of copyright law and disciplinary action under the University's Code of Student Conduct.

7. ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. This includes cutting and pasting from the Internet (even if such cutting/pasting have a reference), and generally any material that is not your own unless broken off with quotation marks and cited to the proper author. You **MUST** cite material **EACH** time it is used – NOT just at the end of a paragraph. Specifically for this class, intentional borrowing material from others without proper citation or falsification/fabrication of supporting material, will automatically result in a **ZERO** for that assignment and may result in additional action taken by the appropriate university officials. You are expected to be honest in all academic work, consistent with the academic integrity policy as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct. All work is to be appropriately cited when it is borrowed, directly or indirectly, from another source. Unauthorized and unacknowledged collaboration on any work, or the presentation of someone else's work, is plagiarism.

Content generated by an Artificial Intelligence third-party service or site (AI-generated content) without proper attribution or authorization is another form of plagiarism. While students might use generative AI tools to support independent study practices (e.g., creation of extra practice problems, brainstorming of ideas), content created in whole or in part by AI may not be incorporated into any assigned coursework.

In this course, the use of generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT or Adobe Firefly) is not permitted during the completion of any assigned work. Use of a generative AI tool to complete assigned work in whole or in part may be referred under the Code of Student Conduct academic dishonesty provisions for further action by the Dean of Students Office. Students may use generative AI tools to support their independent study of course topics but should do so with the understanding that generative AI tools may not be trustworthy. In certain circumstances, I may be required to refer violations to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.

8. SPECIAL NEEDS/CONCERNS/ACCOMMODATIONS:

Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and/or medical/mental health condition should contact Student Access and Accommodation Services at 350 Fell Hall, (309) 438-5853, or visit the website at StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu.

9. ELECTRONIC DEVICES & DISTRACTIONS:

Out of courtesy and respect for me and your peers, please turn off or silence ALL electronic devices during class. Please also put away your phones. This doesn't mean to put them "aside," or on a desk, or on your lap; it means to put them away where you and I cannot see or hear them!

Course Assignments

Grading

Paper Project	100 points (33%)
Book Report	50 points (17%)
Position Paper	50 points (17%)
Discussion Questions	25 points (8%)
<u>Participation</u>	<u>75 points (25%)</u>
Total	300 points

Note: **Failure to turn in any of the course requirements may result in failure of the overall course.** For all assignments, work that meets the minimum expectations and is "average" work will earn the grade of "C." Work that exceeds the minimum expectations and shows initiative, support and is considered "very good quality" will earn the grade of "B." Work that exceeds "B" level work by being exceptional and outstanding in all areas (high degree of initiative, excellent support, superior quality, etc.) will earn the grade of "A." Work that has promise but falls below the minimum expectations will earn a "D," and work that is well below the minimum expectations, needs serious re-crafting and/or is not graduate-level material will earn the grade of "F." The Grading Scale is an A (4) = 90-100, B (3) = 80-89, C (2) = 70-79, D (1) = 60-69, F (0) = 0-59.

ASSIGNMENT #1: Participation (worth 75 points)

This will be a small class, so you will not be able to hide behind other's comments or pretend like you did not read. I expect all of you to come to class prepared to discuss all of the readings for that day. This grade is entirely subjective on my part, but it offers me the flexibility of rewarding interactive students at the end of the semester (i.e., if your grade is close to a higher grade, I can bump you up). Despite its subjectivity, the method of grading participation is roughly as follows:

A = 68-75 points

B = 60-68 points

C = < 60 points

ASSIGNMENT #2: Position Paper (worth 50 points)

Five pages or less on the following questions: What is *your* conception of persuasion? What do you think constitutes disinformation? How do you think persuasion relates to disinformation? How do you think digital media shapes your identity, beliefs, and values? This should be double-spaced, written in Times New Roman 12-point font, follow the principles in "Dr. Z's Writing Tips," and submitted as a hard copy. **It is due on January 23.**

ASSIGNMENT #3: Discussion Questions (worth 25 points total; to be calculated at end of semester)

For each class, we have quite a bit of reading. To help you with your reading, I want you to generate a list of **three** critical observations (or questions) for **each reading** that is due each evening. Additionally, you should use these to aid you with your participation. Hopefully, these will also ensure that I do not do all of the talking for each class! Here are some sample observations – by way of critical questions – that might be helpful as you begin:

- What are the key arguments in this reading (or, the key arguments in this reading are)?
- Does the author cover all relevant material or issues (or, areas that the author fails to consider are)?
- How does this reading relate to other readings (or, this article echoes or challenges other readings)?
- Does the reading exhibit major flaws in reasoning or inconsistencies?
- The reading provides useful insight into X, Y, and Z issues (such as).
- The reading advances rhetorical theory in these specific ways (such as).
- What do you think of each reading? Do you like/dislike it? Agree/disagree with it? Find it useful or not?
- How can the readings help us to be better, more informed rhetoricians and rhetorical critics? Better citizens?

At the conclusion of each class period, you will submit to me your discussion questions/observations. For this item only, I will also accept these via email. If you choose to email them to me instead of a hard copy, the email should be in my "inbox" by 9:30 pm the night they are due. In other words, you can email them to me before our class begins, or during class.

ASSIGNMENT #4: Research Paper (worth 100 points)

I want you to select a text and a theoretical component of disinformation of your choice and develop a publishable or conference-quality paper. You should choose a subject matter that interests you. You should then examine, thoroughly, the literature that concerns this area of rhetoric. Based upon your comprehensive review of the literature, determine a specific part of your area that has not been examined, has been examined poorly, or has been examined but deserves further attention. This will set up your argument and thesis. You then should utilize your knowledge of rhetorical theory and criticism to explore a text that concerns disinformation or develop a theoretical perspective that relates to rhetoric/persuasion and disinformation. The bulk of your paper (approximately 80%) should be spent on this criticism or theoretical development. Then, conclude your paper with relevant and reflective comments about the significance of your criticism, areas for future research, and the overall importance of the area under investigation. Here is a more detailed breakdown of what I expect:

1. Introduction. Tell me what your topic is and why it is worthy of study. Generally, a rhetorical paper begins with a discussion or declaration of a significant problem area.
2. Literature review; a survey of current thinking on your topic. Choose your literature wisely! This is vital to the creation of a quality research paper.
 - a. Select 15 (at least!) or more pieces of theory/research pertinent to your topic and briefly summarize them. You may use books, journal articles, dissertations, and if relevant, a limited amount of “popular” writing. The materials you choose should be fairly recent but may include “classic” pieces if relevant. This research should be done early in the semester so you can interlibrary loan materials if necessary.
 - b. Tell me the main ideas/conclusions and, if relevant, the theoretic approach taken by each reading you choose.
 - c. Evaluate each reading, and tell me its strengths and weaknesses. Be very specific. Explain your conclusions rather than simply stating them; give me reasons why you believe what you do. If some of the literature is closely related, you may “group” them when you review them [e.g., you may say, “some scholars suggest that X is an important area to study (Baldwin, 1950; Hayes, 2005; Hunt, 2002; Baldwin, 1950; Zompetti, 2004)].
 - d. reach some overall conclusions about the literature you’ve analyzed. Look for gaps in the literature, e.g. things that should be examined but are not. Also look for weaknesses in the literature, e.g. things that are examined but, in your view, are not examined well.
3. Research questions. Rhetorical analysis and/or criticism does not use RQs. However, a quality paper demands an exhaustive treatment of the subject. Instead of questions, you should have one or two solid, declarative statements/contentions/positions in which you will explore in your paper. **Remember, your analysis should be challenging, not pedestrian.** If you or your readers can already ascertain the development of your contentions, then you need to uncover more significant claims and textual evidence. In other words, avoid a shallow, superficial glossing of the text.
4. Method of addressing your text and/or problem area:
 - a. What parts of the text will you use to answer your questions? Why is your choice appropriate?
 - b. What theory/method will you use to examine the text you’ve chosen? Why is your choice of method/theory appropriate? [hint: for this paper assignment for a course like this, your method could be a thematic analysis, ideographic analysis, critical discourse analysis (CDA), or possibly something else for which you should discuss with your instructor before writing and using it.
5. The body of the paper. As I mentioned above, this should constitute the bulk of your paper. You should go to great lengths in analyzing your text(s). Incorporate relevant and insightful historical/contextual information as needed to help inform your analysis. Be liberal in your samples of the text you’re investigating, but remember the majority of this section should be *your* analysis – not lengthy block quotes from some other scholar or the primary text under investigation. In this section, you should frequently ask the “how” and “why” questions. If your answers to those questions – based on what you’ve written – are inadequate, insufficient, or require more elaboration, then you know you need to engage in more analysis.
6. The conclusion. This is perhaps the most important part of the paper. Answer the “so what” question. In other words, why does your study matter? Why is it important? How does it advance knowledge in general and to the field of rhetoric in particular? What important insights should we have learned about the rhetorical implications of cultural studies by reading your paper? What areas of future research are there? Etc.
7. The references page. Don’t forget this. You may use whatever style guide that you wish, so long as it is consistent. However, every quote and paraphrased item **MUST** be cited.

NB: I have no idea how long this “should” be. Write until you have achieved a complete explanation of your subject, not until a certain number of pages have been filled. Remember, however, that this should be a conference or publishable quality manuscript. Also be mindful of my writing tips. I will grade very carefully and heavily based on appropriate grammatical conventions (**please remember this!**). Finally, the paper is due around the middle of the semester (**March 19**). This is so you can spend time on your other classes at the end of the semester, so you can present your research to the rest of the class, and so you can have the opportunity to re-write your paper if you so choose. You will receive a grade out of 100 points for the first draft, and then if you choose to rewrite the paper, your second grade will be determined as:

- An excellent re-write will receive an 85% increase in the difference in score
- An above average re-write will receive a 70% increase
- A mediocre re-write will receive a 50% increase
- A below average re-write will receive a 25% increase
- An abysmal re-write will receive nothing.

ASSIGNMENT #5: Book Reports (worth 50 points)

One of the challenges of studying disinformation is tackling the sheer amount of literature on the subject. We cannot possibly read and digest everything, but even when we prioritize, we will discover that many of the key sources for us to examine are books. Instead of requiring all of you to read one book (or more + articles) per week, each of you will choose an area from the list (at the end of this assignment description). You will, on the assigned date in the syllabus, provide a detailed book report to the class so that everyone can benefit from the material. The report should entail the following:

1. A 25-minute or less presentation on the key arguments, findings, and contributions from the book. You will need to detail these key concepts as they relate to the class – this means that you should discern important concepts from more trivial notions, especially given the time limit. Remember to offer material that could be helpful for your colleagues in the course.
2. Provide a detailed outline of the book in the form of a handout for your colleagues (and me). You should follow the rules of logical outlining (see Canvas). You should provide important and useful quotations (and definitions) as you see fit that might be of benefit to your colleagues; if you choose to do this, please be sure to provide page numbers for the quotations. Somewhere in the handout should also be a complete and accurate citation for the book (although the full citation also appears here in the syllabus).
3. Additional readings and resources may be used to supplement and clarify key concepts pertaining to your book. If you use additional material, you need to provide complete and accurate citations for them.
4. List of areas from which to choose:

A. Echo Chambers/Filter Bubbles:

Pariser, Eli (2011). *The Filter Bubble: How the New Personalized Web Is Changing What We Read and How We Think*. NY: Penguin.

B. Democracy:

Luttrell, Regina, Xiao, Lu, & Glass, Jon (2021). *Democracy in the Disinformation Age: Influence and Activism in American Politics*. New York: Routledge.

C. The Political Imaginary:

López-García, Guillermo, Palau-Sampio, Dolors, Palomo, Bella, Campos-Domínguez, & Masip, Pere (2021). *Politics of Disinformation: The Influence of Fake News on the Public Sphere*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell.

D. Solutions & Countermeasures:

Iosifidis, Petros, & Nicoli, Nicholas (2021). *Digital Democracy, Social Media and Disinformation*. London: Routledge.

E. Fake News:

Farkas, Johan, & Schou, Jannick (2023). *Post-Truth, Fake News, and Democracy* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

F. Affect:

Boler, Megan & Davis, Elizabeth (2021). *Affective Politics of Digital Media: Propaganda by Other Means*. New York: Routledge.

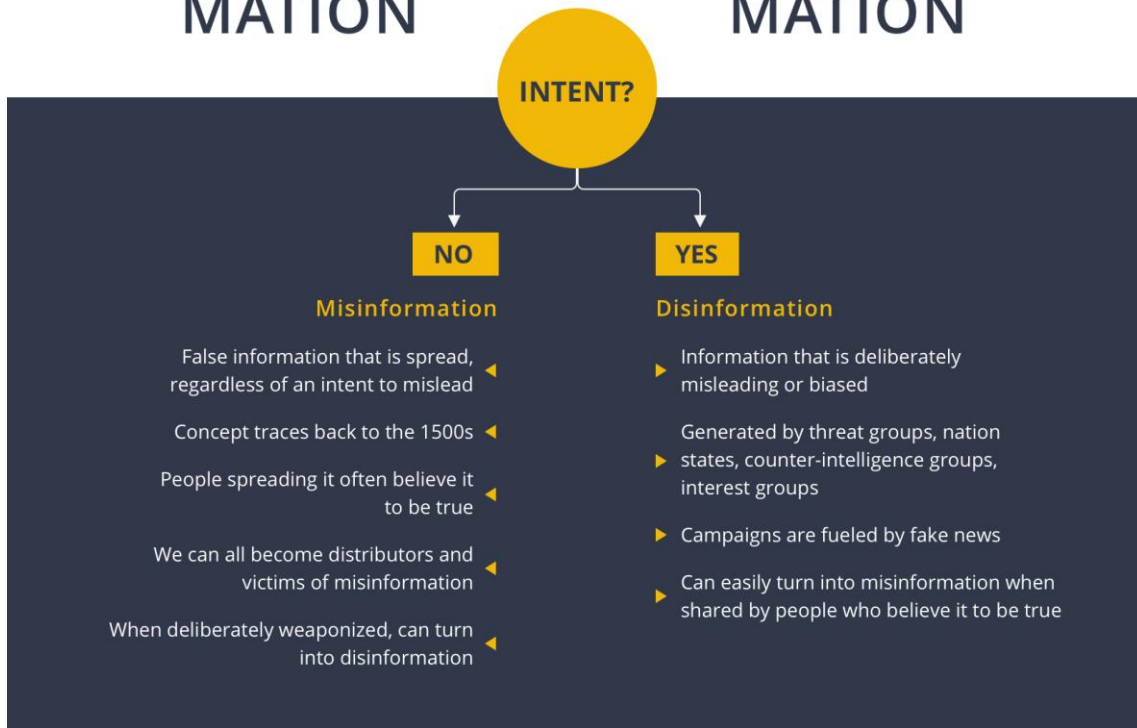
G. Protests & Activism:

Dencik, Lina & Leistert, Oliver (Eds.). (2015). *Critical Perspectives on Social Media and Protest: Between Control and Emancipation*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

H. Global Disinformation:

Schneider, Florian (2018). *China's Digital Nationalism*. London: Oxford University Press.

MIS INFORMATION VS DIS INFORMATION



-- Maltego (2021)

HOW TO SPOT FAKE NEWS...

- Is the source trustworthy?**
Make sure the publisher is valid and has a legitimate website, followers/profile, etc.
- Check the date for relevancy**
Reposting old news stories does not make them relevant to current events.
- Read beyond the headlines**
Sometimes they are outlandish, just to get views. What's the real story about?
- Do your beliefs make you biased?**
Personal opinions and beliefs can affect your judgement.
- Check multiple sources**
Most real news stories have been published in multiple places. Plus, does the author cite where the information is from?
- Is the author legitimate?**
Search for the author's name. Is it a real person and do they produce credible news stories?
- Is it a joke?**
If it is really funny or off the wall, it might be satire and not real or trustworthy news.
- Ask the experts**
Use fact checking sites or do your own research on the subject.

...WHEN IN DOUBT, DON'T SHARE!

-- Pittman (2020)

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Week 1 **Syllabus, introductions, discussion about rhetoric**

T, 1/16 [Read Keith & Lundberg]
 R, 1/18 Ideographs – read: McGee (1980); Lucaites & Condit (1990); Connelly (2012); Cloud (2004); Finlayson (2004);
 Thematic analysis – read: Braun & Clarke (2006); Thomas & Zompetti (2020); Zompetti (2019); Cassese (2021)

Week 2 **Definitions – Disinformation vs. Misinformation, Fake News; What is Truth?**

T, 1/23 **Foundation paper is due**; Read: Hayward (2021); Jackson (2017); Tandoc et al. (2017); Woolard & Zompetti (2022)
 R, 1/25 Read: Allcott et al. (2019); Bala (2019); Bronstein et al. (2019); Mourão & Robertson (2019); **begin discussion questions (assignment #3)**

Week 3 **Cognitive Processing, Part I (cognitive dissonance, motivated reasoning & ELM)**

T, 1/30 Read: [cognitive dissonance: Harmon-Jones & Mills (2019); Stone & Wood (2018)]; [motivated reasoning: Baekgaard et al. (2019); Kunda (1990); Mazepus et al. (2023); Redlawsk (2002); Taber et al. (2009)]
 R, 2/1 Read: [ELM: Petty & Cacioppo (1986); Chen et al. (2021); Osatuyi & Hughes (2018)]

Week 4 **Cognitive Processing, Part II (confirmation bias & selective exposure & RSM)**

T, 2/6 Read: [confirmation bias: Casad (2019); Cherry (2022); Klein (2019); Mynatt et al. (1977)] [both conf bias & sel exposure: Westerwick et al. (2017)]
 R, 2/8 Read: [selective exposure: Barnidge et al. (2020); Jun (2012); Stroud (2008); Tsang (2019)] [reinforcement spirals model (RSM): Slater (2007); Slater (2015)]

Week 5 **Framing, Spectacle & Discursive Strategies**

T, 2/13 **Book Report**; Read: [framing: Chong & Druckman (2007); Riebling & von der Wense (2019); Scheilbenzuber et al. (2023); Snow & Benford (1988); Valkenburg et al. (1999)] [Read: Spectacle – Debord (2014)]
 R, 2/15 Read: [Spectacle: Mihailidis & Viotty (2017)] [Read: discursive strats: Campos-Castillo & Shuster (2023); Jerit (2008); Recuero et al. (2021); Engstrom & Beliveau (2021)]

Week 6 **Echo Chambers**

T, 2/20 **Book Report**; Read: Arguedas et al. (2022); Garrett (2017); Kitchens et al. (2020); Rhodes (2022); Bruns (2019)
 R, 2/22 Read: [algorithms: Petrescu & Krishen (2020); Cocchiarella (2021); Menczer (2021); Kornbluh (2022)]

Week 7 **Democracy**

T, 2/27 **Book Report**; Read: Beaufort (2018); Bennett & Livingston (2018); Dahlgren (2018); Iosifidis & Wheeler (2018); Marshall (2017)
 R, 2/29

Week 8 **The Political Imaginary**

T, 3/5 **Book Report**; Read: Freelon & Wells (2020); Jones & Hafner (2021); Bennett & Pfetsch (2018); Kim (2018); Kuo & Marwick (2021); Ly (2020); Lynch (2022); Seybold (2023); Sheehan (2023); Schleffer & Miller (2021).
 R, 3/7 López-López et al. (2023)

Week 9 – SPRING BREAK

Week 10 **Solutions & Countermeasures**

T, 3/19 **Major paper is due; Book Report**; Read: [gov't policies & education: Badrinathan (2021); Funke & Flanini (2021)];
 Read: [debunking: Boman (2021); Chan et al. (2017); Ecker (2018); Lewandowsky et al. (2012); Lewandowsky et al. (2020)]
 R, 3/21 Read: [messaging: Haigh et al. (2018); Schneider & Boman (2023)]; Read: [inoculation: Amazeen & Bucy (2019); Boman (2023); Roozenbeek et al. (2020); Zerback et al. (2021); Higdon, 2020]

Week 11 **Fake News**

T, 3/26 **Book Report**; Read: Allcott et al. (2017); Grazulis & Rogers (2019); Lazer et al. (2018); Mourao & Robertson (2019); van der Linden et al. (2020); Zompetti (2019); Higdon (2020)
 R, 3/28

Week 12 **Affect**

T, 4/2 **Book Report**; Read: Bakir & McStay (2018); Baptista & Gradim (2020); Brower (2017); Chen et al. (2021); Diaz Ruiz & Nilsson (2023); Redlawsk et al. (2010); Iyengar et al. (2019)
R, 4/4

Week 13 **Protests & Activism**

T, 4/9 **Book Report**; Read: [Norin (2022); Bhatia et al. (2023); Freelon et al. (2020); Suarez (2023); Bajoghli (2023); Association for Progressive Communications (2021); Li (2021); Darius & Urquhart (2021); Bennett, 2007]
R, 4/11

Week 14 **Global Disinformation**

T, 4/16 **Book Report**; Read: [general: Nimmo (2015); Hive Mind (2022)] [China: King et al. (2017)] [others: Shattock (2020)]
R, 4/18 Read: [Russia: Booth et al. (2017); Carroll et al. (2017); CFR (2018); Cosentino (2020); DiResta et al. (2019); Lomas (2017); Maréchal (2017)]; **Optional**: Lucas & Pomeranzev (2016)

Week 15 **Reports**

T, 4/23 **Paper discussion/presentations**
R, 4/25

Week 16 **Reports**

T, 4/30 **Last Class; Paper discussion/presentations**
R, 5/2

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