Thanks to our friends at Rise Up for Justice for this valuable information.

Media Bias & Fact Checking

PLEASE DO FACT-CHECK: before you post or link an item from another site. If it is not a reputable news site, please verify the information from a source that is unbiased before you post. In addition to that, PolitiFact, FactCheck, and Snopes are useful sites. If you see a post on this page that is factually questionable, please tag an Admin or Moderator.

Media Bias/Fact Check

https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/

Here are some additional resources to assist us vet the 'news.'

AP FactCheck: https://www.apnews.com/tag/APFactCheck

FactCheck: https://www.factcheck.org/

PolitiFact: https://www.politifact.com/

Snopes: www.snopes.com

Fake or Real? How to Self-Check The News And Get The Facts

http://www.npr.org/sections/alltechconsidered/2016/12/05/503581220/fake-or-real-how-to-self-check-the-news-and-get-the-facts

False, Misleading, Clickbait-y, and Satirical "News" Sources

Melissa Zimdars is an assistant professor of communication and media at Merrimack College in Massachusetts. This resource started as a tool for teaching her students about journalism/social media/media literacy.

The websites that made her list fall into 4 categories:

CATEGORY 1: Below is a list of fake, false, or regularly misleading websites that are shared on Facebook and social media. Some of these websites may rely on "outrage" by using distorted headlines and decontextualized or dubious information in order to generate likes, shares, and profits. These websites are categorized with the number 1 next to them.

CATEGORY 2: Some websites on this list may circulate misleading and/or potentially unreliable information, and they are marked with a 2.

CATEGORY 3: Other websites on this list sometimes use clickbait-y headlines and social media descriptions, and they are marked with a 3.

CATEGORY 4: Other sources on this list are purposefully fake with the intent of satire/comedy, which can offer important critical commentary on politics and society, but have the potential to be shared as actual/literal news. I'm including them here, for now, because 1.) they have the potential to perpetuate

misinformation based on different audience (mis)interpretations and 2.) to make sure anyone who reads a story by The Onion, for example, understands its purpose. If you think this is unnecessary, please see Literally Unbelievable.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/10eA5-mCZLSS4MQY5QGb5ewC3VAL6pLkT53V_81ZyitM/mobilebasic

The Chart, *Second Edition*: *What Makes A News Source "Good"?*

(Source: Vanessa Otero) (Comments by Susan Rogan)

Her analysis and helps us all think about the news media more carefully.

https://www.adfontesmedia.com/

Let's use this graphic and refer to it as we consume and share news.

10 Investigative Reporting Outlets to Follow

https://billmoyers.com/story/10-investigative-reporting-outlets-to-follow/#.WInKdtJoMDt.facebook

Stop Sharing Links to These Sites

http://www.patheos.com/blogs/dispatches/2016/09/18/please-stop-sharing-links-to-these-sites/?utm_campaign=shareaholic&utm_medium=facebook&utm_source=socialnetwork

How to Fact Check Fake News Sites

https://www.facebook.com/Channel4News/videos/10154548775681939/

This is How You stop Fake News From Spreading on Facebook

https://www.buzzfeed.com/craigsilverman/heres-how-to-report-fake-news-on-facebook?utm_term=.are4XMg8Q#.caGXw4VY8

Consuming News- Learning the Skill

by Cynthia Wisehart. 2/5/17

It's a skill to learn to consume news (just like we're learning how to be political). First thing to know: News has been Fake for a long time (Always, in some ways). The best way to respect the press is to start out skeptical. Every time. You have to read the story, not just the headline and the first paragraph. The first rule of reading is: know your Sources, confirm your Data. This applies both to what I call Fake News (deliberately produced) and the regular fake/inaccurate/badly-edited/hastily-produced/under-resourced news that's churned out every day by nearly all of the media, no matter how well intentioned. Even the heroes of media do it. Things end up fake on purpose, but they also end up fake just because. Quality news product is hard to produce and usually expensive, and there's lot of time pressure.

Deliberate Fake News actually the easiest to spot, just by going back to the URL and clicking back to look at the source's home page. If you don't recognize the source (check the URL not the header) then you have to look it up! With just a little digging on the Source home page, a lot Fake News is pretty obvious. It's helpful to go to the About tab if there is one (and if there isn't be suspicious). Go to the Contact tab.

Google the names of the Authors and see their history. You will learn a lot! It is also worthwhile to chase the Source back to the ownership (Jeff Bezos of Amazon owns the Washington Post; Mexican billionaire Carlos Slim is the top shareholder of the New York Times, the New York Times owns the Boston Globe, etc.) These business entanglements don't automatically disqualify or influence a source's credibility but the better you know your source the better reader you will be.

If you like what you see, bookmark the Source, follow them on Twitter, add them to your Google News white list, whatever you do to keep track of your quality sources.

Once you know the Source, you need to know: Who Wrote This? Is it by one of their regular reporters or a "contributed" piece by an outside "expert" (or whoever the editor could get on short notice). Is it Sponsored or an Advertorial (watch for these!). After a while you'll build a group of trusted sources and you'll get good at vetting sources.

Then--once you confirm the source you have to confirm the Data. Every time. (Sorry). Because credible sources make mistakes all the time. And—this is important—even when the writers get it right, copy editors and headline writers unintentionally mess up writers' work all the time. It's a game of telephone going on behind the scenes. It's hard to get the data, and it's hard to maintain accuracy throughout the manufacturing process of making the news story. Writers who are flying solo make mistakes too, because everyone needs an editor.

So how to confirm Data? Read the story. Who were the writer's cited sources? What do you know about them? Confirm them the same way you confirmed the news source. Go to home page or Facebook page of the Center for Whatever it Is, or the University of Wherever it is, etc. and see for yourself. It doesn't take very long when you get in the habit.

Look at the DATE of the article. There's a thing we call "resurfacing" where we dredge up things from the past that seem like they could be current. Sometimes they're relevant, sometimes they're just click bait.

Check the quotes. Often when a quote is included in a story it is incomplete. It has been cherry-picked. Everyone does this. People also represent quotes as being "said" when in fact they were extracted from a press release, official statement or Facebook page. Good writers will tell you not only what was said, but the format/context it was said in: "the Senator said in a Facebook post" or "in an official statement…at the news conference…outside the JFK terminal….". That will help you go find the entire quote if you want to see the whole context.

Look for information—not emotion. Good stories explain the how, and will help you understand if something really is an emergency or not. Remember that every source is going to lather you up about what they think is important. Check your emotions. Instead look for data that clarifies the mechanics of how something is happening. If you can't find it, move on.

Use primary sources whenever you can, especially if you really care about something. Follow politicians on Twitter and FB to see what they say about themselves. If a piece of research is mentioned, run it down to the author. If a person seems important, find their direct communications (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, their website). If a Senate bill is mentioned, go read the bill. If you want to know what your representative is really doing, go look up their voting record. I like http://clerk.house.gov/index.aspx and then use the nav tabs. For the Senate it's www.senate.gov (which is hard work!) The New York Times

Pro Publica API https://propublica.github.io/congress-api-docs/ is another good, though cumbersome source.

I think it is fine to resist out of emotion and I do think the barrage of outrage in response to Trump's methods is critical at this point in time. His methods are an emergency and our culture/Republic is under fire. So, have at it. But, for the long haul, if we want this experience to lead to broader political conciseness and better citizenship, it is equally important to learn to consume news and data. Which takes practice. Trump is a new and urgent problem. But there is a larger opportunity to address a much more longstanding dysfunction. Access to information is now unprecedented and it is always incomplete and not always right, regardless of intent. It we can adapt to that reality with discernment it will make an enormous difference in how we talk to each other and what we produce in our job as citizens.

I'm finding my way too. I value what Snopes does, and we all could be more discerning about news and not just leave it to them. The power is with the consumers and fake news is everywhere--whether cynically false or better-intentioned. It's really a form of marketing that's having an upswing. People of all viewpoints will exploit it, for all the different reasons people exploit trends. Some people will be very clever at it. The Snopes editor accurately observes that some intentionally Fake News is more virulent, certainly from people who would call themselves "right wing". I do agree that all Fake News is not created equal and I reject equivalency in a left/right comparison. But that's partly because as a journalist (and a person) I'm not focused on a left/right compare/contrast. I can only say what I observe from my own experience for what it's worth. As a journalist, I cannot work accurately from a binary assumption-- us/them, left/right, liberal/conservative, other than to observe that many people do feel things that way.

I understand the impulse--to defend the righteous against the indefensible. And there are people doing bad shit and getting away with it. It's possible to be angry and set boundaries around behavior without being sucked into complying with the endless busywork of compare/contrast arguments. The "Well, look what the left did/right did in this situation that is superficially the same..!" and then answering back with an equally framed argument, is bottomless (as anyone who has more than one kid knows). Unfair points will be vigorously made and celebrated. Sometimes that's motivating and energizing. It's fine for people who are riffing on that kind of outrage to go for it--to each his own resistance and not all of it will be civil. But productive resistance takes many forms, we have to split up the work and learn as we go along. As a journalist I know that equal and opposing comparisons can be a time suck and a mental distraction, but sometimes they're hard to resist. Consume them sparingly. I can tell you from experience that many editors and publishers do love that approach and there is a lot of pressure for journalists to conform to that frame. As readers and activists it's important not to conform to that frame either, like moths to a flame.

Be a wary consumer of information--in general, if it makes you emotional (like the Snopes editor says) it's probably not great. Concentrate on action, and trust our collective wisdom as we flail along through our many mistakes. It remains to be seen how much will be asked of us by history's standards, so I think it's important to just keep moving and learning.

Above all--we must all protect dissent and free speech by using them in whatever way and for whatever purpose we can muster. That is our Constitutional duty as citizens and it's messy. The alternative is worse, so dissent with pride. A little every day. Even when you might not be right.