IPS 84-365/665 – The Politics of Fake News and Misinformation

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Class: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:25-2:45pm, Posner A18B

Office Hours: by appointment on Zoom

Course Description

In this course, we will examine the drivers and dynamics of misinformation, fake news, and related phenomena in social and political life. From wartime "atrocity propaganda" to climate denialism to false claims of election fraud, how can we characterize fake news and misinformation, and why do they often spread so widely? What are the factors that explain why people accept or reject them, and what are their consequences for our political behavior? Finally, how can they be successfully countered and combatted? In this course, we will look at these and other questions, drawing on the fast-growing body of research on the topic from a range of fields.

In terms of the course's structure, we will first focus on defining and characterizing fake news and misinformation, and next we will examine their production (why are they created?), consumption (why are they believed?), and consequences (what influence do they have?). Then, we will analyze the threat of misinformation in several important contexts – including COVID-19, climate change, and armed conflict – and finally we will consider research and thinking about how to best counter it. For the final assignment in the course, students will build on what they have learned throughout the semester to write an original research paper applying ideas and arguments from class to a case of fake news or misinformation that is of special interest to them.

Course Readings

In order to provide students with a holistic understanding of these issues, this course will rely on a mixture of scholarly articles and book excerpts on misinformation and fake news, supplemented by other materials such as relevant news stories, public opinion data, documentary films, and even online videogames. All materials will be provided free of charge to students on Canvas.

All of the listed readings are required and should be completed by the first day of the week or unit in which they appear. The exception is those listed as *"Recommended"* in the schedule. These are optional readings that are recommended for those who want additional context and understanding. I will often bring them up myself to enrich our discussions, and they may also be key resources if you decide to write your final paper on the topic in question.

You should read the scholarly articles in our class strategically and take good notes. A useful guide on how to do so is the following:
- Hoover Green, Amelia. "How to Read Political Science: A Guide in Four Steps." Available at https://calgara.github.io/Pol157_Spring2019/howtoread.pdf

Course Evaluation

Attendance and Participation:
Your active and thoughtful participation is critical to your (and our general) success this semester. In terms of participation, students should carefully read the assigned readings prior to each course meeting and come prepared to discuss them, whether in person or on Zoom. In terms of attendance, students are allowed two free absences, but will be penalized for (unexcused) absences after that. Note that any absence due to COVID or other illness is excused, as are absences due to significant CMU extracurricular events or family/personal emergencies. If any of these conditions is met and I am notified promptly, the absence is excused. Moreover, the attendance and participation policy is also designed to be especially flexible and accommodative of the issues we all face these days. In particular, students who do not attend class for an unexcused reason can, up to three times, still earn attendance and participation credit by watching the lecture and posting a brief, one-paragraph reaction on our Canvas discussion board within the next week. In these posts, you can simply share a reaction to the lecture (something that made sense, something you didn't fully grasp, a question you had, a new idea or thought that struck you, etc.).

Final paper:
Students will write a final research paper at the end of the course. For this paper, students should choose a case of fake news, misinformation, or conspiracism that is of particular interest to them. The case can be contemporary or historical, prevalent in the U.S. or other countries, and discussed in the course or not. The paper should pose and attempt to answer ONE of the following questions about this case:

1) Creation: Who created, disseminated, and promoted the claim in question? What were their motivations for doing so?
2) Belief: Why did/do people believe or reject it? What explains its appeal (or lack thereof)?
3) Consequences: What are its main social and/or political consequences?

Do the theoretical arguments in the course help us answer this question, or are there other dynamics at work? Develop an argument about what happened in your paper based on the literature as well as your own research and investigation.

Keep in mind:
- You can draw on any credible information you find about the case, including relevant news coverage, opinion polls, scholarly research, social media discourse by believer groups, etc. (If you want to do a purely quantitative analysis, great! But you should come speak to me, as I may be able to help point you to relevant data and offer guidance.)
- Note that the goal – as with all research – is to choose a topic that you believe is important but not fully understood. Especially with option #1 (creation), don't just pick a question to which you think the answer is obvious/already known and can thus be covered in two lines because the perpetrator(s) of the claim admitted their reasons. We want to really investigate and learn something here.

The paper (for any of these three options) must be at least 15 pages, double spaced, with standard formatting (Times New Roman size-12 font, 1-inch margins). It must include a title page and full

bibliography (Chicago style) which can count toward the page requirement. It will be worth 30% of your final grade and is due by **Thursday, May 12th at 6pm.**

Short Paper/Final Proposal:
Students will also complete a short paper/final paper proposal in the middle of the term. This is a stepping-stone toward your final paper. For this paper, students should begin thinking about their final paper selections and should write about one piece or example of misinformation, fake news, or conspiracy theorizing that interests them. They should briefly describe this case and discuss its social and political significance. Then, they should propose the aspect or dimension of it they want to explore in the final paper (see options above) and why this is especially interesting or important. Finally, they must identify at least 3 academic and 3 journalistic sources they will use and include 1-2 line summaries of each one at the end of the piece. The paper must be at least 5 pages double spaced with the same formatting requirements (Times New Roman font, size 12, 1-inch margins) as the final. It is worth 15% of your final grade and is due by **Sunday, April 3rd at 6pm.**

Reading check quizzes:
Successful participation and discussion hinges on engagement with course materials before class. All students must carefully read the assigned materials before class and come ready to participate. To ensure this occurs, in addition to the participation grade, we will have a series of short "reading check" quizzes in the course. These will be relatively straightforward exercises with 3-5 questions about the readings since the last quiz.

In-Class Debates:
Students must participate in one of four debates throughout the semester (see dates and topics in the course schedule below). They will be allowed to rank their preferences of which debates they would prefer to participate in (1-4), and indicate the side(s) they would prefer to argue in each one. I will do my best to accommodate these preferences, but cannot ensure that everyone will receive one of their first choices. Each debate will take up a class period, with opening statements by each team followed by cross-examinations and then questions from the audience (as well as from me). The class will vote on which side won, which will add 1 bonus point to the grade of each student on that team (out of 15). Debates will make up 15% of your final grade.

Extra Credit:
Students can earn extra credit for the course by attending (in-person or remote) lectures, panels, or talks about misinformation or fake news and posting brief one-to-two paragraph responses to them on Canvas. These events can be hosted by CMU or other institutions. Some potential places to find relevant events include:

-CMU's Center for Informed Democracy and Social Cybersecurity (IDeaS) speaker series. https://www.cmu.edu/ideas-social-cybersecurity/events/seminars.html
-the Harvard Kennedy School's Shorenstein Center for Media, Politics, and Public Policy speaker series. https://shorensteincenter.org/upcoming-events/
-The Inoculation podcast. https://open.spotify.com/show/1NojFBvdWii1cgXdfew7hy
-Misinfo Weekly podcast. https://open.spotify.com/show/16RKPitYozLBfkoTRcRopb
-there are many other speaker series, events, and even podcasts that would qualify. Shoot me an email to check if something you are interested in is one of them.

In your post, you should briefly summarize the event and then discuss what you learned. This may include any notable connections it had to course material, as well as any key thoughts or reactions that you had while watching it (e.g., something that made sense, something you didn't fully grasp, a question you had, or a new idea or thought that struck you). Each extra credit event/post is worth up to an additional half point on your final grade, and you may complete up to 4 in total. You may also be asked to share what you learned in class so that others can benefit as well.

Other Course Policies

5 reading checks	25%
In-class debate	15%
Paper proposal	15%
Final paper	30%
Attendance/Participation	15%

Undergraduate Students Grading Scale:

A = 90-100	B = 80-89.9	C = 70-79.9
D = 60-69.9	R = <60	

Graduate Students Grading Scale:

		B+	87 to 89.9	C+	77 to 79.9	D+	67 to 69.9
A	93 to 100	B	83 to 86.9	C	73 to 76.9	D	60 to 66.9
A-	90 to 92.9	B-	80 to 82.9	C-	70 to 72.9	E/F	0 to 60

Grading Policies

All assignments have due dates indicated on the syllabus. In general, submitting your work on time helps me give feedback in a more timely and efficient manner. However, I do know that sometimes life happens. If you know or think you will not be able to submit an assignment on time, you should contact me beforehand for an extension – often, I will grant it! If you do not have an extension and do not submit an assignment on time, you are still eligible for 90% of the grade the first 48 hours that it is late. If you have to submit beyond 48 hours past a due date, please contact me as soon as possible so we can make arrangements. (In this case, a larger penalty will typically be in order, but you will still be able to earn most of the available points on the assignment. You might be eligible for, say, 80% of the grade, depending on how much time has passed.)

Any grievances you may have with a grade must be submitted in writing to me within one week of grading and will lead if appropriate to a regrading of your assignment. Do note that your grade may be raised or lowered in this process. Final grades will be based on the following grade scale, with rounding at instructor discretion:

Expectations for In-Person Participation:

In order to attend class in person, I expect you will abide by all behaviors indicated in **A Tartan's Responsibility**, including any timely updates based on the current conditions. In terms of specific expectations for in-person students, this includes:

o   entering the classroom via the designated ingress route with appropriate physical distancing,

o   wearing a facial covering throughout class,

o   sitting in the seats with appropriate spacing (and not moving furniture),

o   using the sanitizing wipes available in the classroom to wipe surfaces (e.g., your desk, tablet arm) upon entry and exit,

o   exiting the classroom at my direction, proceeding in row-by-row fashion, following the designated egress route and maintaining proper distancing.

o   <u>Facial coverings</u>. If you do not wear a facial covering to class, I will ask you to put one on (and if you don't have one with you, I will direct you to a distribution location on campus). If you do not comply, please remember that you will be subject to student conduct proceedings, up to and including removal from CMU. Accordingly, I will be obliged to take other measures for the safety of the whole class.

<div align="center">Expectations for Zoom Participation:</div>

In our course, we will be using Zoom for synchronous (same time) sessions. The link is available on our course page on Canvas. Please make sure that your Internet connection and equipment are set up to use Zoom and able to share audio and video during class meetings. (See <u>this page</u> from Computing Resources for information on the technology you are likely to need.) Let me know if there is a gap in your set-up as soon as possible and we can see about finding solutions.

Sharing video: Being able to see one another helps to facilitate a better learning environment and promote more engaging discussions. Therefore, students are encouraged to have their cameras on during lectures and discussions. However, I also understand there may be reasons students would not want to have their cameras on. If you have any concerns about sharing your video, please email me as soon as possible and we can discuss possible adjustments. Note: You may use a background image in your video if you wish; just check in advance that this works with your set-up.

Other guidelines: During our class meetings, please keep your mic muted unless you are sharing something with the class or your breakout group or asking me a question. You may also use the chat or the "raise hand" feature to ask questions (available when the participant list is pulled up). I will do my best to monitor these channels in order to call on students to contribute.

<div align="center">Start of Semester with Fully Remote Instruction:</div>

Following university-wide policies this semester, <u>class will be fully remote for the first two weeks of the semester</u> (that is, during the weeks of 1/17-1/21 and 1/24-1/28). We will meet synchronously (at the same time) on Zoom at our usual class times during these two weeks. Course expectations will otherwise remain the same.

<div align="center">Other Potential Shifts to Fully Remote Format:</div>

If the class needs to go fully remote at any other point this spring, you will get an email from me, and an announcement will be posted on Canvas. If this occurs, we will plan to use the same Zoom link available on Canvas for use during the first two weeks for course meetings.

Inappropriate Technology Use:

This semester involves regular use of technology in class (both when we are in-person and remote). Research shows that divided attention can inhibit learning, so I urge you to close any windows not directly related to what we are doing while you are in class. Please turn off your phone notifications and limit other likely sources of technology disruption, so you can fully engage with the material, each other, and me. This will create a better learning environment for everyone.

Note on Recording of Lectures:

All synchronous classes will be recorded on Zoom so that students in this course (and only students in this course) can watch or re-watch past class sessions when necessary. Please note that breakout rooms will not be recorded. I will try to make recordings available on Canvas as soon as possible after each class session (this should usually be within a few hours of the class meeting). Remember that after the first two weeks, in-person attendance is expected (and important for your attendance and participation grade), and recordings should only be used for make-up purposes. All recordings will live in our Canvas website. Please note that you are not allowed to share the recordings. This is to protect your FERPA rights and those of your fellow students.

Academic Integrity/Misconduct:

All the work you do in this course is expected to be your own. Absolutely no cheating or plagiarism (use of someone else's words or ideas without properly citing them) will be tolerated. Any cases of cheating or plagiarism will be reported to the university in adherence with the University Policy on Academic Integrity. For questions about this policy, see http://www.cmu.edu/policies/student-and-student-life/academic-integrity.html

Accommodations for Disabilities:

If you have a disability and have an accommodations letter from the CMU Disability Resources office, please discuss your accommodations or needs with me as early in the semester as possible. I will work with you to ensure appropriate accommodations are provided. If you suspect you may have a disability and would benefit from accommodations but are not yet registered with the Office of Disability Resources, I encourage you to contact them at access@andrew.cmu.edu.

Maintaining Personal Wellness:

General guidance: Take care of yourself. Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep, and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many helpful resources on campus, and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner

rather than later is key. If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings of anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. Counseling and Psychological Services (CaPS) is here to help. Call 412-268-2922 and/or visit their website at http://www.cmu.edu/counseling/. Consider reaching out to a friend, faculty, or a family member you trust for help in getting connected to support services.

For spring 2022: These semesters during the pandemic are unusual. We are all under a lot of stress and uncertainty at this time. Attending Zoom classes all day can take its toll on our mental health. Make sure to move regularly, eat well, and reach out to your support system or me if you need to. We can all benefit from support in times of stress, and this is no exception.

Note on Diversity and Inclusion:

Respect for Diversity: It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the efficacy of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups. In addition, if any of our class meetings conflict with your religious events, please let me know so that we can make arrangements for you.

Course Schedule

Tuesday 1/18 & Thursday 1/20. <u>What are Misinformation and Fake News?</u>
- Vraga, Emily and Leticia Bode. 2020. "Defining Misinformation and Understanding its Bounded Nature: Using Expertise and Evidence for Describing Misinformation." *Political Communication* 37(1): 136-44.
- Lazer, David, et al. 2018. "The Science of Fake News." *Science* 359(6380): 1094-96.
Recommended:
- Tandoc, Edson, Zheng Wei Lim, and Richard Ling. 2018. "Defining 'Fake News': A Typology of Scholarly Definitions." *Digital Journalism* 6(3): 1-17.

Tuesday 1/25 & Thursday 1/27. <u>How Widely is Misinformation Believed?</u>
- Williamson, Vanessa. 2018. "Public Ignorance or Elitist Jargon? Reconsidering Americans' Overestimates of Government Waste and Foreign Aid." *American Politics Research* 47(1): 152-73.
- Li, Jianing, and Michael W. Wagner. 2020. "The Value of Not Knowing: Partisan Cue-Taking and Belief Updating of the Uninformed, the Ambiguous, and the Misinformed." *Journal of Communication* 70: 646-69 (can ignore study 1 and only read study 2).
- Bownman, Karlyn, and Andrew Rugg. 2013. "Public Opinion on Conspiracy Theories." *AEI Public Opinion Studies*. https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/-public-opinion-on-conspiracy-theories_181649218739.pdf

Tuesday 2/1 & Thursday 2/3. <u>Causes of Belief I: Motivated Reasoning</u>
- Kahan, Dan. 2017. "Misconceptions, Misinformation, and the Logic of Identity-Protective Cognition." *Cultural Cognition Project Working Paper Series No. 164.* https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2973067
- Miller, Joanne M., Kyle L. Saunders, and Christina E. Farhart. 2016. "Conspiracy Endorsement as Motivated Reasoning." *American Journal of Political Science* 60(4): 824-44.
- Resnick, Brian. 2017. "'Motivated Ignorance' Is Ruining Our Political Discourse." *Vox.* https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/2017/5/15/15585176/motivated-ignorance-politics-debate

   Recommended:
- Silverman, Daniel. 2019. "What Shapes Civilian Beliefs About Violent Events? Experimental Evidence from Pakistan." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63(6): 1460-87.

Tuesday 2/8 & Thursday 2/10. <u>Causes of Belief II: Cognitive Psychology</u>
- Pennycook, Gordon, and David G. Rand. 2021. "The Psychology of Fake News." *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 25(5): 388-402.
- Fazio, Lisa K., et al. 2015. "Knowledge Does Not Protect Against Illusory Truth." *Journal of Experimental Psychology* 144(5): 993-1002.
- Harwell, Drew, and Craig Timberg. "My Faith is Shaken: The QAnon Conspiracy Theory Faces a Post-Trump Identity Crisis." *Washington Post*, November 10, 2020.

   Recommended:
- Martinez-Bravo, Monica, and Andreas Stegmann. 2021. "In Vaccines We Trust? The Effects of the CIA's Vaccine Ruse on Immunization in Pakistan." *Journal of the European Economic Association, Online First.*

Tuesday 2/15 & Thursday 2/17. <u>Causes of Belief III: Messaging & Elites</u>
- Tesler, Michael. 2018. "Elite Domination of Public Doubts About Climate Change (Not Evolution)." *Political Communication* 35(2): 306-326.
- Berlinski, Nicolas, et al. 2021. "The Effects of Unsubstantiated Claims of Voter Fraud on Confidence in Elections." *Journal of Experimental Political Science, FirstView.*
- Moore, Natalie. "Study Finds More COVID-19 Cases Among Viewers of Fox News Host Who Downplayed Pandemic." *NPR.org,* May 4, 2020. https://www.npr.org/local/309/2020/05/04/849109486/study-finds-more-c-o-v-i-d-19-cases-among-viewers-of-fox-news-host-who-downplayed-pandemic

   Recommended:
- Morris, Alex. "It's Not Q. It's You." *Rolling Stone*, October 15, 2021.

1st Debate on 2/15: "Misinformation is primarily a top-down phenomenon."
   -Debate readings: this debate draws on readings from this week and the previous 2 weeks. Debaters should have read all of these carefully, including the recommended ones.

Tuesday 2/22 & Thursday 2/24. <u>Why is Misinformation Created and Spread?</u>

- Ryan, Camille D., et al. 2020. "Monetizing Disinformation in the Attention Economy: The Case of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)." *European Management Journal* 38: 7-18.
- Shteyngart, Gary. "Out of My Mouth Comes Unimpeachable Manly Truth." *New York Times Magazine*, February 22, 2015.
- Xiao, Muyi, Paul Mozur, and Gray Beltran. "Buying Influence: How China Manipulates Facebook and Twitter." *The New York Times,* December 20, 2021.
  Recommended:
- Hughes, Heather, and Israel Waismel-Manor. 2021. "The Macedonian Fake News Industry and the 2016 US Election." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 54(1): 19-23.

Tuesday 3/1 & Thursday 3/3. <u>What are the Consequences of Misinformation?</u>
- Guess, Andrew, et al. 2020. "Fake News May Have Limited Effects Beyond Increasing Beliefs in False Claims." *Harvard Kennedy School Misinformation Review* 1(1): 1-12.
- Jolley, Daniel, and Karen M. Douglas. 2014. "The Social Consequences of Conspiracism: Exposure to Conspiracy Theories Decreases Intentions to Engage in Politics and to Reduce One's Carbon Footprint." *British Journal of Psychology* 105: 35-56.
- Taub, Amanda, and Max Fisher. "Where Countries are Tinderboxes and Facebook Is a Match." *New York Times*, April 21, 2018.
  Recommended:
- Zadrozny, Brandy, and Ben Collins. "In Klamath Falls, Oregon, Victory Declared Over Antifa, Which Never Showed Up." *NBC News*, June 6, 2020.

2nd Debate on 3/1: "The threat of misinformation is overblown."

   -Debate readings: this debate draws on readings from this week. Debaters should have read all of these carefully, including the recommended reading. They should also have read and considered the other readings on consequences in the syllabus, including Martinez-Bravo and Stegman 2021 (2/8-2/10 week), Berlinski et al 2021 (2/15-2/17 week), and Greene and Murphy 2021 (3/22-3/24 week).

Tuesday 3/15 & Thursday 3/17. <u>Conspiracy Theories, Rumors, and Hoaxes, Oh My!</u>
- Wood, Thomas J., and J. Eric Oliver. 2014. "Conspiracy Theories and the Paranoid Style of Mass Opinion." *American Journal of Political Science* 58(4): 952-66.
- Uscinski, Joseph E., and Joseph M. Parent. 2018. *American Conspiracy Theories.* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, Ch. 6.
- Anderson, Kurt. 2017. "How America Lost its Mind." *The Atlantic*, Sept. 2017 issue (can skim and/or watch online video embedded in article).
  Recommended:
- Whitson, Jennifer A., and Adam D. Galinsky. 2008. "Lacking Control Increases Illusory Pattern Perception." *Science* 322(5898): 115-17.

Tuesday 3/22 & Thursday 3/24. <u>Selected Topics: COVID-19</u>
- Roozenbeek, Jon, et al. 2020. "Susceptibility to Misinformation About Covid-19 Around the World." *Royal Society Open Science* 7: 1-15.

- Greene, Ciara M., and Gillian Murphy. 2021. "Quantifying the Effects of Fake News on Behavior: Evidence from a Study of COVID-19 Misinformation." *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied, Advance Online.*
- Keith, Tamara. "A New Focus Group Investigated How People Have Overcome Vaccine Hesitancy." *NPR.org*, March 3, 2021. https://www.npr.org/2021/05/03/993205279/a-new-focus-group-investigated-how-people-have-overcome-vaccine-hesitancy

3rd Debate on 3/24: "Conservatives are more susceptible to misinformation."

-Debate readings: this debate draws on a number of readings in the course, including those throughout the causes and consequences as well as the Covid-19 and climate change units. In addition, debaters should read the following (relatively brief) articles:
- Ehrenreich, John. "Why Are Conservatives More Susceptible to Believing Lies?" *Slate*, November 9, 2017 (supports for side)
- Garrett, R. Kelly, and Robert Bond. 2021. "Conservatives' Susceptibility to Political Misperceptions." *Science Advances* 7: 1-9 (supports against side)

Tuesday 3/29 & Thursday 3/31. Selected Topics: Climate Change
- Hazlett, Chad, and Matto Mildenberger. 2020. "Wildfire Exposure Increases Pro-Environment Voting within Democratic but Not Republican Areas." *American Political Science Review* 114(4): 1359-65.
- Druckman, James, and Mary C. McGrath. 2019. "The Evidence for Motivated Reasoning in Climate Change Preference Formation." *Nature Climate Change* 9: 111-119.
- Worrall, Simon. 2018. "Tiny U.S. Island is Drowning. Residents Deny the Reason." *National Geographic.* https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/animals/2018/09/tiny-us-island-drowning-residents-deny-reason

*** Short paper/final paper proposal due by Sunday, April 3rd at 6pm***

Tuesday 4/5 & Tuesday 4/12. Selected Topics: Violent Conflict
- Greenhill, Kelly M., and Ben Oppenheim. 2017. "Rumor Has It: The Adoption of Unverified Information in Conflict Zones." *International Studies Quarterly* 61: 660-76.
- Silverman, Daniel, Karl Kaltenthaler, and Munqith Dahger. 2021. "Seeing is Disbelieving: The Depths and Limits of Factual Misinformation in War." *International Studies Quarterly* 65(3): 798-810.
- Stack, Megan. 2010. *Every Man in this Village is a Liar.* New York: Random House. Ch. 1.
  Recommended:
- Schon, Justin. 2020. "How Narratives and Evidence Influence Rumor Belief in Conflict Zones: Evidence from Syria." *Perspectives on Politics* 19(2): 539-52.

Thursday 4/14. Fighting Misinformation: Corrections
- Nyhan, Brendan, and Jason Reifler. 2010. "When Corrections Fail: The Persistence of Political Misperceptions." *Political Behavior* 32: 303-30.

- Wood, Thomas, and Ethan Porter. 2019. "The Elusive Backfire Effect: Mass Attitudes' Steadfast Factual Adherence." *Political Behavior* 41: 135-63.
- Nyhan, Brendan. 2021. "Why the Backfire Effect Does Not Explain the Durability of Political Misperceptions." PNAS 118(15): 1-7.
Recommended:
- Silverman, Daniel, Daniel Kent, and Christopher Gelpi. 2021. "Putting Terror in its Place: An Experiment on Mitigating Fears of Terrorism Among the American Public." *Journal of Conflict Resolution, Online First.*

Tuesday 4/19 & Thursday 4/21. Fighting Misinformation: Inoculation
- Guess, Andrew, et al. 2020. "A Digital Media Literacy Intervention Increases Discernment Between Mainstream and False News in the United States and India." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 117(27): 15536-45.
- Badrinathan, Sumitra. 2021. "Educative Interventions to Combat Misinformation: Evidence from a Field Experiment in India." *American Political Science Review* 115(4): 1325-41.
- Try misinformation game: https://www.getbadnews.com

4th Debate on 4/21: "The only way to effectively stem the tide of misinformation is to regulate social media."
-Debate readings: this debate draws on many of the course's readings. Debaters will want to consider the 3 weeks on non-regulatory solutions (if factual corrections, inoculation, and deplatforming are effective, perhaps we don't need regulation?) as well as earlier units on causes (to what extent is social media an important part of the causal story to begin with?). In addition, they should read the following (brief) articles:
- Zuboff, Shoshana. "You Are the Object of a Secret Extraction Operation." *New York Times*, November 12, 2021. (For a documentary version of this argument on YouTube, see: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hIXhnWUmMvw)
- Uscinski, Joseph. 2021. "Why We (Still) Shouldn't Censor Misinformation." *Reason* (April 2021 Issue).

Tuesday 4/26 & Thursday 4/28. Fighting Misinformation: Deplatforming
Required:
- Jhaver, Shagun, et al. 2021. "Evaluating the Effectiveness of Deplatforming as a Moderation Strategy on Twitter." *ACM Human-Computer Interaction* 5: 1-30.
- Ali, Shazi, et al. 2021. "Understanding Effect of Deplatforming on Social Networks." *ACM Web Science Conference*, June 2021: 187-95.
- Alba, Davey, Ella Koeze, and Jacob Silver. "What Happened When Trump Was Banned on Social Media." *New York Times*, June 7, 2021. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/07/technology/trump-social-media-ban.html (best read online)

Final paper due by Thursday, May 12th at 6pm