

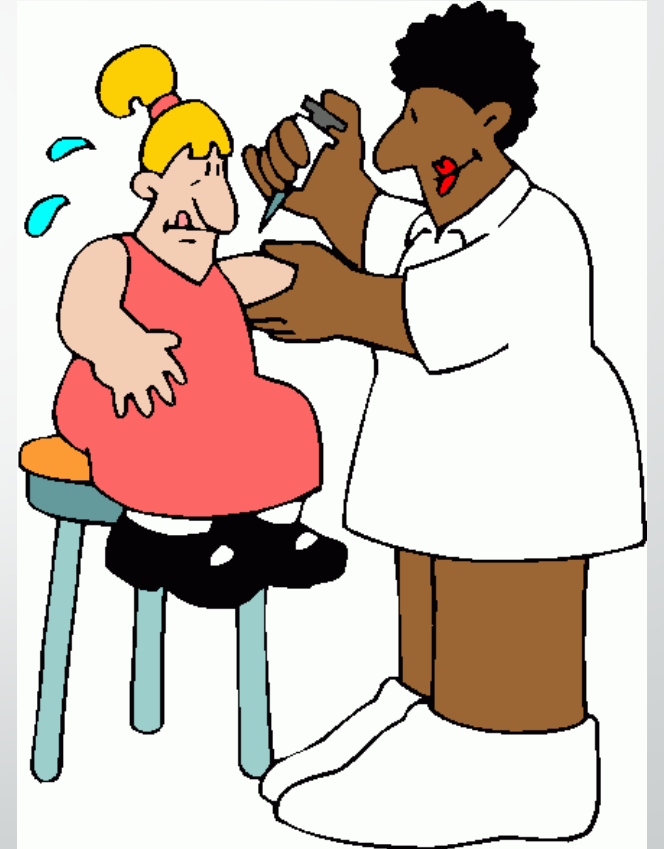


Infodemic: Inoculating Against Coronavirus Misinformation

Presented by Andy Katell
March 24, 2020

Agenda

- Welcome and Introduction
- The problem & why it's important
- Helpful tools
- Followup





Since 1920, the League of Women Voters has encouraged informed participation in government. We strive to increase understanding of public policy issues through education and advocacy.

The League works to register and provide voters with election information through voter guides, candidate forums and debates. The League does not support or oppose candidates or political parties. The League is an activist, grassroots organization whose members believe that voters should play a critical role in their democracy.

Membership is open to anyone 16 years of age or older.

Infodemic

“We’re not just fighting an epidemic; we’re fighting an **infodemic**. Fake news spreads faster and more easily than this virus, and is just as dangerous.”

--Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

World Health Organization Director-General

Munich Security Conference, February 15, 2020

Inoculation



“The spread of false and misleading news is a national public health emergency that threatens the foundation of a society built on shared knowledge and values... The real solution requires transformative change, the realization that every student in America needs to be **inoculated with a dose of news literacy** before they leave middle school.”

-- Howard Schneider

Executive Director, Center for News Literacy

Stony Brook University, December 13, 2018

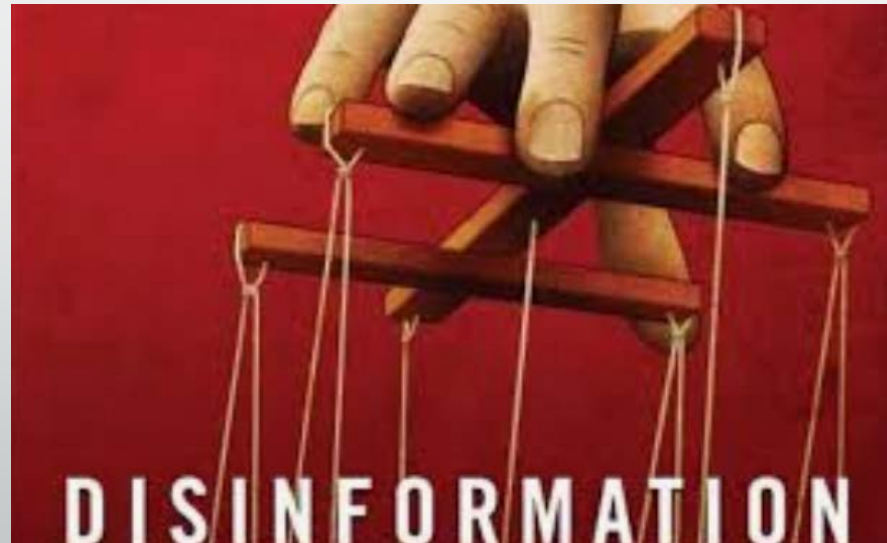
What is

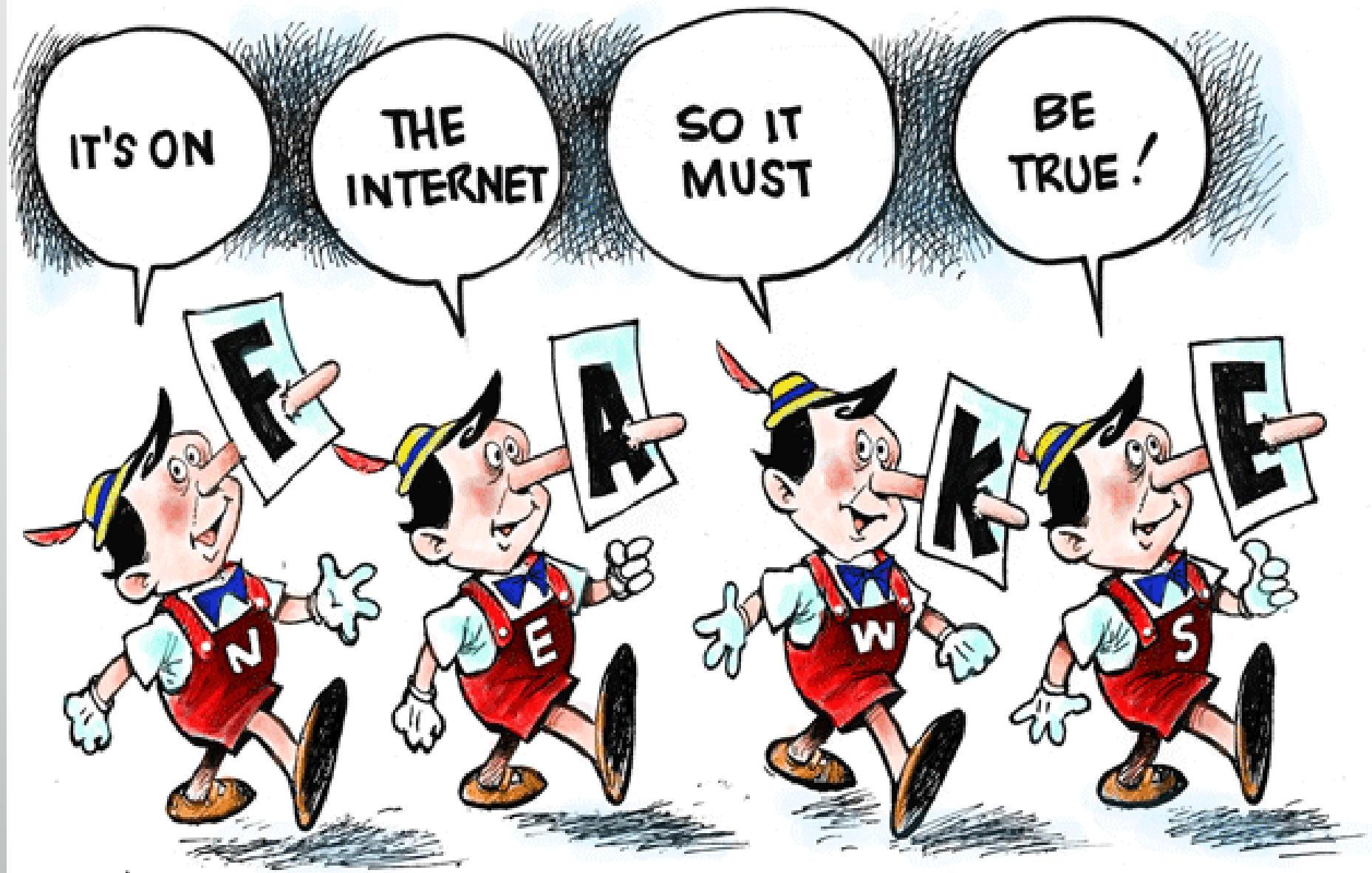


Intentional attempt to spread hoaxes or false information, for profit or influence

What is Misinformation & Disinformation?

False information deliberately and often covertly spread, to influence public opinion or obscure the truth





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Our Challenges

Challenge 1

Information overload

Challenge 2

Speed vs. accuracy

Challenge 3

The blurring of the lines

Challenge 4

Overcoming our own bias

The First Amendment Empowers **YOU!**





YOU

are in charge of determining what's reliable

News Literacy



Educate yourself and think critically to judge the reliability and credibility of news reports



CIVIC ONLINE REASONING

When you come across information online, ask yourself:

- 👤 WHO'S BEHIND THIS INFORMATION?
- 🔍 WHAT'S THE EVIDENCE?
- 🗣️ WHAT DO OTHER SOURCES SAY?



Stanford History
Education Group

Three Questions

1. Who's behind the information?
2. What evidence?
3. What do other outlets say?

Standards of Quality Journalism

Verification

Sourcing

Fairness

Accountability and Transparency

Context

Role of Traditional News Media in Public Health Crisis

- Uncover, inform/educate on the facts
- Convey critical government advisories and health information
- Track and influence policies
- Hold elected officials accountable



Fake News & Misinformation

FIVE TYPES OF MISINFORMATION

SATIRE



Uses humor or exaggeration to critique or mock a person, organization or policy.

FALSE CONTEXT



Takes an image, a quote or other piece of content and puts it into a new, false context to change its meaning.

IMPOSTER CONTENT



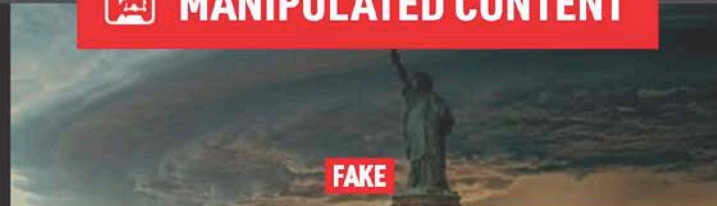
Falsely uses a well-known name, brand or logo to fool people into believing that it is authentic content.

FABRICATED CONTENT



Is entirely made up and is designed to deceive you into thinking that it's real.

MANIPULATED CONTENT



Makes changes in original material in an effort to deceive or create a false context (for example, an image where something has been added or deleted using photo editing tools).

What Are Misinformers Trying to Achieve?

- Barrage the audience with falsehoods, repeatedly
- Fool/trick us
- Complicate the issue
- Create chaos and confusion
- Sow doubt



"I don't care anymore."

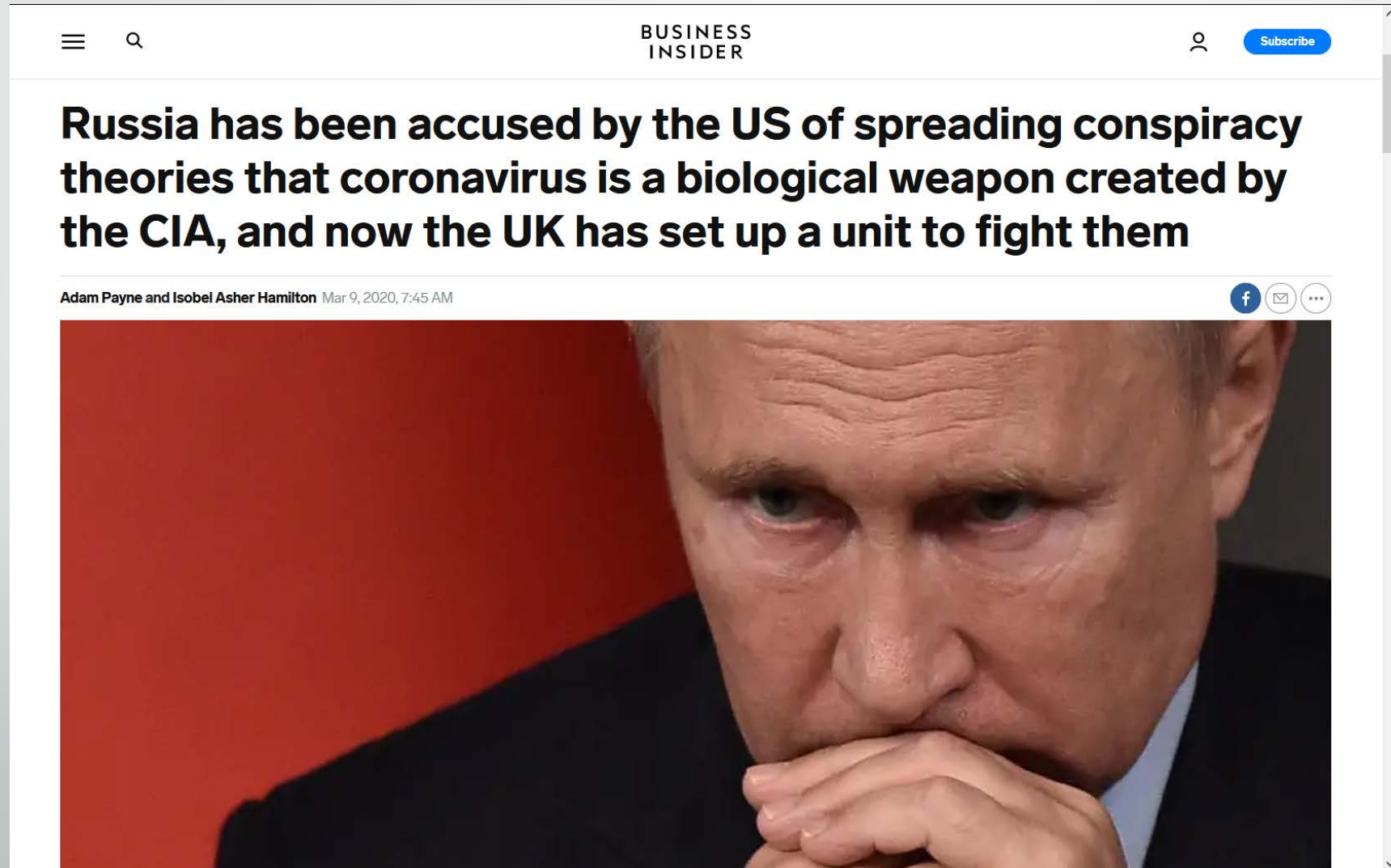
"Whatever."

"I'm moving on."

Social Media Facilitate Fake News & Misinformation

- >40% of visits to 65 fake news sites come via social media
- Fake news spreads 6x faster than real news
- Seniors over 65 shared nearly 7x as many articles from fake news domains as people aged 18-29
- About half the public say they've been exposed to at least some made-up news and information related to the coronavirus (Pew Research Center, March 2020)

Russian Disinformation



Russian TV's U.S. Conspiracy Claim



Citizen “Journalists” and Chinese Censorship





Fighting Back

Tools to Differentiate Factual from Fake News

What are Tech Companies Doing?

Facebook, Google and Twitter are directing users searching for information about the outbreak to authoritative sources. Facebook has sought to [ban posts, photos and videos](#) that push harmful misinformation, including bogus claims of cures.



Facebook Flagging Fake Video



How to Tell: *Fact or Fake?*



- **Pause** before sharing
- **Question** content always, especially info that appeals to fear, anger or partisan extremes on either side
- **Check** website address
 - Beware of .com extensions, e.g. .co, .ru, .cn
- **Read** beyond headline, to full story, before liking or sharing
- **Beware of** politically framed content

How to Tell: *Fact or Fake*

- **Research** whether other media outlets are reporting this
- **Pay attention** to people mentioned & quoted
- **Inspect** images and logos
- **Verify content and accounts** by checking sources, authors & identities
- **Read** “About Us” section



Examine Social Media Techniques



- Few posts, many followers
- Many followers, few likes & comments
- Following unusually high No. of accounts

Social Media Disinformation Techniques

- **Sock Puppet**: Fake accounts posing as people to influence, disrupt or push news
- **Troll**: Person posing as identity, or sock puppet
- **Troll Farm**: Group of trolls
- **Bot**: Software automating likes, shares & comments
- **Botnet**: Network of bots, often thousands



Digital Resources For Fact Checking

- PolitiFact.com - *Truth-O-Meter*: <http://www.politifact.com>
- Snopes.com: <https://www.snopes.com/news>
- FactCheck.org: <https://www.factcheck.org>
- *Washington Post* Fact Checker:
https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/fact-checker/?utm_term=.d06f7354ff5b
- Tin Eye reverse image checker: <https://tineye.com/>
- Media Bias/Fact Check News: <https://mediabiasfactcheck.com>

Trustworthy Sources for Coronavirus Info



- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention -**
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
- **World Health Organization's Coronavirus Mythbusters -**
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/myth-busters>
- **Johns Hopkins University & Medicine's Coronavirus Resource Center -**
<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/>
- **Federation of American Scientists' Coronavirus Project -**
<https://fas.org/ncov/>
- **State & local health departments**

Fake News/Misinformation Video & Images




- Fake news can also come in the form of edited and manipulated clips and images
- Videos taken out of context

Live Fact Check

 **Jay-R Fernandez** 




Whuan market China..the origin of corona virus


Grabe grabe...Ganito pala market nila sa Whuan puro exotic foods binebenta dito,kya pla lumabas ang sakit na Corona Virus..😱😱



Click to expand

|| ————— -3:16 ⚙️ ↗️ 🔊

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<https://tineye.com>

Search by image and find where that image appears online



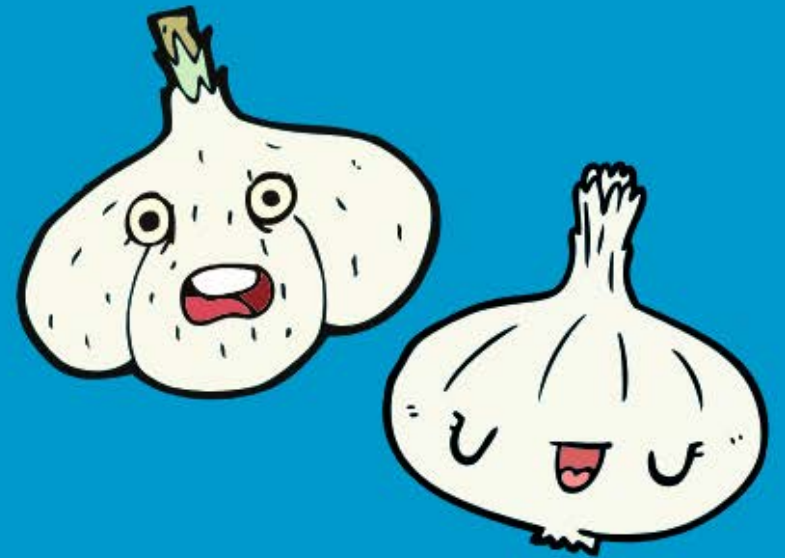
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WHO Mythbusters

Garlic is a healthy food that may have some antimicrobial properties. **However, there is no evidence from the current outbreak that eating garlic has protected people from the new coronavirus (2019-nCoV)**

Can eating garlic help prevent infection with the new coronavirus?



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Coronavirus: The fake health advice you should ignore

By Reality Check team
BBC News

🕒 8 March 2020

[Reality Check](#)

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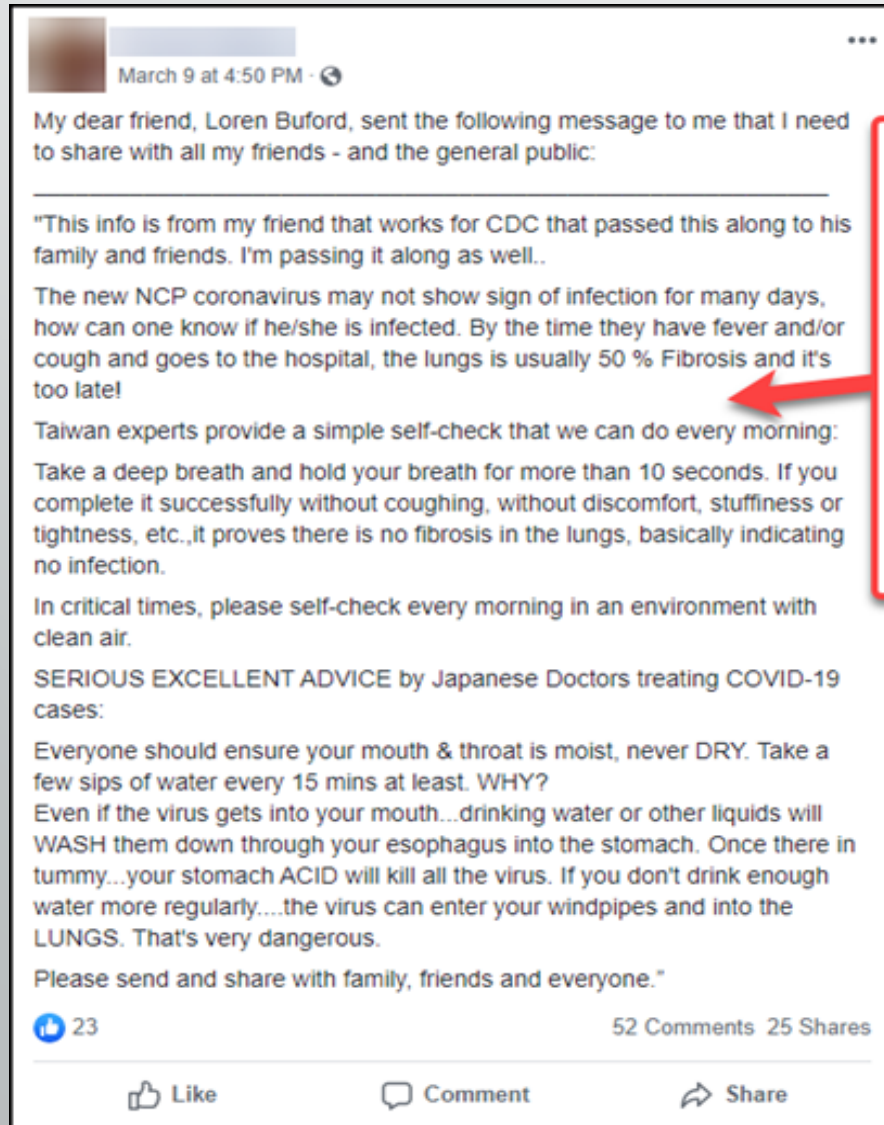
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Bad Advice, Widely Circulated



Fact check on first claim
(holding breath):

<https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/taiwan-experts-self-check/?emci=cb049f03-d167-ea11-a94c-00155d03b5dd&emdi=c4ea6159-f467-ea11-a94c-00155d03b5dd&ceid=7981182>



Did Lysol Anticipate COVID-19?



Yahaira Rodriguez Cotto
Yesterday at 9:35 p. m. · 🌐

El Lysol elimina bacterias incluyendo el Coronavirus 🤔 o sea que eso no es de ahora eso lleva años?





Raven Dutko
January 26 · 🌐

Look at the lysol bottle.... human coronavirus on the label.

This virus outbreak is big drama. Media being used to create fear. Loosh. People running for vaz-zeenes to be "protected".

We must be wise. We must step back, think, let people who do the work to research get information out and listen to the data.

Reaction is our demise. Responding is wise.

Common toxic lysol kills the virus though GSE and Thieves Oil... healthy, natural items are even better.

DO NOT USE LYSOL. ITS A SERIOUS TOXICANT.

Time to think, people, and calm ourselves.



125

39 Comments 233 Shares



Like



Comment



Share

View 18 more comments



Leimay Ramirez Hazel Mae Guillermo Ramirez
Like · Reply · 1d



Leimay Ramirez Ivy Antonio Guillermo
Like · Reply · 1d



Peter Vanne If you can find it try and see what the active ingredients are. There should be something similar.
Like · Reply · 1d

38

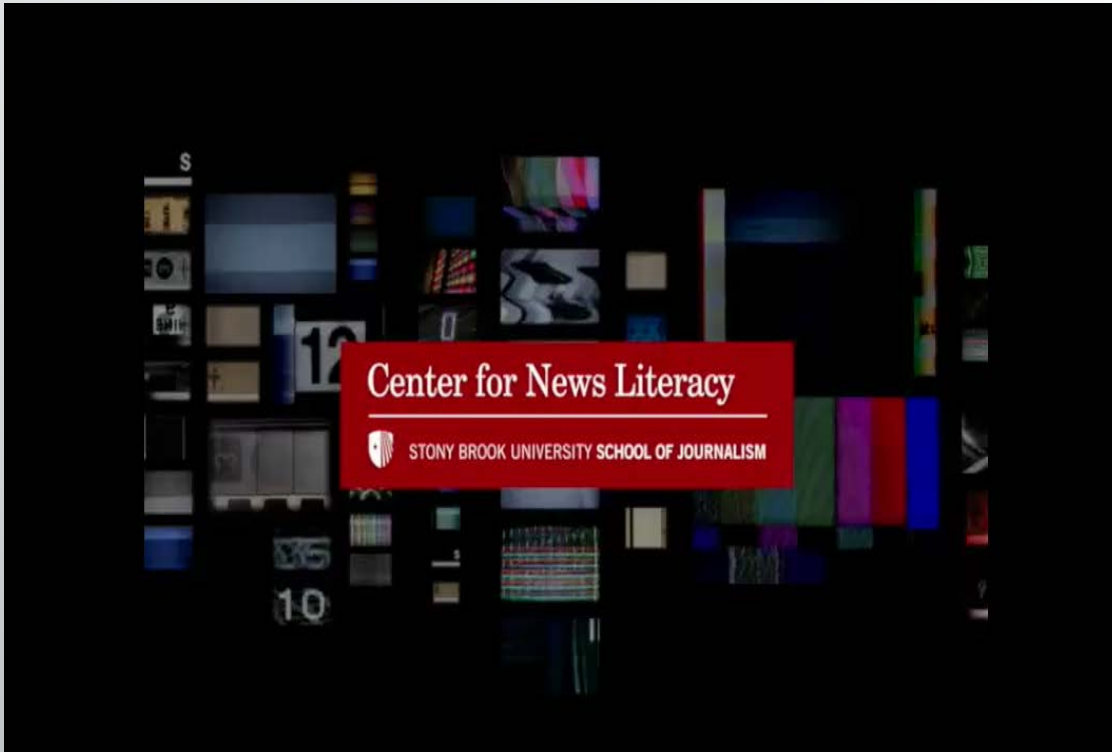
No!



These posts are among [several instances](#) in which the generic use of the term “coronavirus” has led to confusion, with people on social media erroneously conflating mentions of already known coronavirus strains with the new one.

The word “coronavirus” is not specific, and can apply to any virus in the coronavirus family. The name [derives](#) from the crown-like look of the viruses under a microscope.

Credits



League of Women Voters - Follow up

- Stay current on issues
- Share your views with elected officials
- Vote in **EVERY ELECTION**
- Join the League
- Find this presentation, other materials & schedule of potential additional webinars at: www.lwww.org



New 2020 NY State Election Calendar

- Village elections postponed until April 28 presidential primary (absentee ballots due April 21)
- Congressional and district attorney primaries to be held June 23
- General election scheduled November 3
- Check www.VOTE411.org for **updates**
- Also: Fill out the 2020 Census





Find this presentation, other materials & schedule of potential additional webinars at: www.lwww.org