WHAT DO WE NEED?
INFORMATION CRITICALITY!

When Do We Need It? Now!

Jamie L. Emery and Sarah E. Fancher
November 3, 2017
GOOD NEWS

Information literacy is in the spotlight!
BAD NEWS

Inspiring information criticality will require effort and patience.
MISINFORMATION

"Misinformation is not like a plumbing problem you fix. It is a social condition, like crime, that you must constantly monitor and adjust to."

– Tom Rosenstiel, Executive Director of the American Press Institute
Majority say fake news has left Americans confused about basic facts

% of U.S. adults who say completely made-up news has caused ___ about the basic facts of current events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A great deal of confusion</th>
<th>Some confusion</th>
<th>Not much/no confusion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>64%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
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FAKE NEWS, REAL CONSEQUENCES

Pizzagate
“OVERALL, YOUNG PEOPLE’S ABILITY TO REASON ABOUT THE INFORMATION ON THE INTERNET CAN BE SUMMED UP IN ONE WORD: BLEAK.”

—Stanford History Education Group
MAINSTREAM CONCERN

"We have failed as a society to teach our citizens how to think critically about data and information." Forbes contributor

Missouri Senate Bill 997
INFORMATION CAMOUFLAGE?

"An explanation of climate change from a Nobel Prize-winning physicist looks exactly the same on your Facebook page as the denial of climate change by somebody on the Koch brothers’ payroll. And the capacity to disseminate misinformation, wild conspiracy theories, to paint the opposition in wildly negative light without any rebuttal - that has accelerated in ways that much more sharply polarize the electorate and make it very difficult to have a common conversation."

—Barack Obama, interviewed for The New Yorker
SPECTRUM OF FAKE NEWS

Fabricated Content
100% false. Purposely created to deceive for $ or other gain.

False Context
Some true information, presented out of context to support spurious claims.

Satire
100% false. Designed to be funny. Not intended to fool, but has the potential.

Misleading
Mostly false, but an element of truth. Intended to mislead.

Biased
Information selectively chosen to present a biased or predetermined view.

credit: Rebecca C. Hyde
CYNICISM

“In an ever-changing, incomprehensible world the masses had reached the point where they would, at the same time, believe everything and nothing, think that everything was possible and that nothing was true.”

–Hannah Arendt, 1973
**Trust in Libraries**

Millenials more likely than other generations to say libraries help them find trustworthy information, learn new things and make informed decisions

<table>
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<tr>
<th>% of adults who say they think the public library helps them ...</th>
<th>Find information that is trustworthy and reliable</th>
<th>Learn new things</th>
<th>Get information that helps them with decisions they have to make</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All U.S. adults</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millennials (18-35)</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen X (36-51)</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boomers (52-70)</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent (71-88)</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey conducted Sept. 29-Nov. 6, 2016.

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SEA CHANGE

Shift from Standards to Framework for Information Literacy
"Authority is not a simple binary, but is instead determined in context and in conversation..."

–Emily Drabinski, Coordinator of Library Instruction, Long Island University-Brooklyn
What do we need? Information Criticality!

Authority is Constructed

Which news sources are most trusted?

-Pew Research Center: Political Polarization and Media Habits, 2014
THRESHOLD CONCEPTS

Require multiple instructional exposures.
BEST PRACTICES

"Rather than focus on identifying fake news... we decided it made more sense to teach students how to recognize good journalism."

–Candice Benjes-Small, Head of Information and Faculty Outreach, Radford University
LESSON PLANS & COURSES

ACRL Framework for IL Sandbox
Community of Online Research Assignments (CORA)

University of Michigan Course
"Fake News, Lies, and Propaganda: How to Sort Fact from Fiction" (Fall 2017)
LIBGUIDES & INFOGRAPHICS

Cornell University - "Evaluating News Sources"

Columbia College - "Fake News and the Post Truth-Era"

Indiana University East - "Fake News"

IFLA - "How to Spot Fake News"
WHAT DO WE NEED? INFORMATION CRITICALITY!

FIND OUT FOR YOURSELF

#vetyoursources

go.vcu.edu/vetyoursources

SOCIAL MEDIA

#DayofFacts
#FactCheckIt
#1Lib1Ref
#NewsLiteracy
#MediaLiteracy
#VetYourSources
COLLECTIONS & PROGRAMMING

Capitalize on themes that emerge in public discourse.

Libraries Transform Communities
There's Hope!

Responsibility + opportunity = optimism?
"THE GREATEST DANGER...IS NOT THAT THEY WILL BE FOOLED BY FAKE NEWS, BUT THEY ARE BEGINNING TO DOUBT REAL NEWS."

-Howard Schneider, Executive Director for the Center for News Literacy
INFORMATION CRITICALITY

Extends beyond skepticism to inquiry.
Thank you to our colleague Rebecca Hyde who helped shape the ideas presented here!

Please refer to B&C proceedings for sources.

CONTACT

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