



We Asked, You Answered

A few months ago, as part of our *Combating Extremism* campaign, we asked our readers about their thoughts on *Fake News*. You had a lot to say!

1. We asked, how **YOU** define Fake News And you said that ***Fake News is ...***

“**Propaganda** without basis in reality, meant for the sake of promoting a particular narrative and/or political agenda.”

“A term used to **deflect facts** when they aren’t favorable to a certain party.”

“**Opinion** stated as fact by a trusted person. And, inflammatory media coverage that is designed to boost ratings instead of shed truth.”

“Stories that are **not validated** by multiple sources and don’t adhere to journalistic guidelines.”

You debated whether ***intent to deceive*** is determinative. You said that ***Fake News is ...***

“News put out with the **purpose** of deceiving society.”

“Not from a reliable source OR information reported to be fact but not properly vetted before posting.”

“Any news that reaches conclusions that does not defer to evidence.”

“False or **deliberately** misleading information.”

2. Most respondents believe that only **ONE false fact** in a story makes it fake news - **72%**.
3. When asked about our definition of Fake News (“*information that is presented as credible and factual, but is inaccurate and intended to deceive people*”) - **90%** of you agreed.

4. We asked, where you get your news ...

83% access through *internet news sites*.

67% access news through *social media* (Facebook, Twitter, etc.).

62% access news through *print* (newspapers, magazines, etc.).

59% access news through *television*.

5. Most respondents, **65%**, read the news *several times a day*.

6. When asked you to rate how good you are in *spotting fake news*, and the average response was a **7** on a scale from 1 – 10 (1 being “not confident at all” and 10 being “confident”).

7. ***But in hindsight***, when asked if you’d ever been misled by a story with false info:

66% said yes.

12% said no.

22% were not sure.

8. We wanted to understand how you’re verifying news. And lots of you are trying to do so ...

88% of respondents *check the credibility of the source and media outlet*.

86% of respondents *consult multiple sources*.

62% of respondents *acknowledge emotional responses to information*.

56% of respondents *check the credibility of the author*.

52% of respondents *actively examine the opposite arguments*.

31% of respondents *avoid mental shortcuts and confirmation bias*.

5% of respondents said they *don’t* verify news stories.

5% of respondents said *other* (listen to friends, trust instincts, context).

9. We decided to put your skills to the test, and asked you which of the headline(s) below contain disinformation. You were pretty good at discerning ... but we could be better!

46% - “Nothing justifies what the Covington Catholic students did” - Washington Post

64% - “Islam poised to pass Anglicans as preferred religion for Britain’s young adults” - Fox News

7% - “India court to review lifting of temple ban on women of menstruating age” - Reuters

24% - “Einstein’s letter belittling God and religion will be auctioned for \$1 million or more” - New York Times

72% - “Palestinian Journalist: Judaism is a ‘religion of hatred’ worse than Nazism” - Breitbart

8% - None of the above

*articles underlined contain disinformation in the headline.

10. So who is responsible for holding the media accountable for accurate reporting? Here's what you thought ...

85% of respondents believe the author of the story is responsible.

92% of respondents believe the editor of the story is responsible.

43% of respondents believe that politicians are responsible.

91% of respondents believe that readers are responsible.

12% of respondents said other.*

*When asked to specify who was "other", respondents listed "peers and other people working in media, media watchdogs (in media and outside), other media outlets/author/websites, regulating and certifying bodies, subjects of the article, everyone, and no one."

11. Determining *which factor most influences how we analyze the news* was a harder question. You were split.

42% said education level.

10% said age.

7% said current religious affiliation.

7% said geographic location.

5% said gender.

4% said vocation.

2% said religious background.

2% said type of employment (full-time, part-time, unemployed, etc).

21% said other.*

*When asked to specify what other factors were relevant, you listed:

- Social Justice
- Political leanings
- Thoughtful analysis
- Passion for truth
- Legitimacy
- Content & source
- Overall life perspective
- Background vocation experience
- Not sure

12. We were interested to know how survey respondents identified religiously and you told us that you're religiously diverse.

29% of respondents identified as *Christian or Catholic*.

27% of respondents identified as *Atheist or None*.

18% of respondents identified as *Jewish*.

7% of respondents identified as *Muslim*.

7% of respondents identified as *Spiritual or a higher unspecified belief*.

6% of respondents identified as *Agnostic*.

3% of respondents identified as *Buddhist*.

3% of respondents identified as *Interfaith*.

13. Lastly, we wanted to know how often you see fake news stories regarding your religion. Most respondents reported that they *do not* see fake news stories regarding their religion.

15% said a great deal.

11% said a lot.

21% said a moderate amount.

23% said a little.

30% said none at all or I have not noticed any.

Here are some of Tanenbaum's resources to help navigate Fake News:

- [The Five Ways to Avoid Falling Prey to Fake News](#): Believe it...or Not: Five Ways to Conquer Fake News
- [What is Fake News? Do You Know?](#): Fake News – the Five Key Takeaways
- [Five Ways to Counter Extremists on Social Media](#): A "How To" resource sheet for rising above social media extremists and right-wing hate groups.