

False, Misleading, Clickbait-y, and/or Satirical “News” Sources

Some of contents of this educational resource/google document, specifically the list of potential false, misleading, clickbait-y, and/or satirical news sources, have been removed in order for it to be transferred to and expanded on in a more permanent, dynamic, and collaborative home. This page will reflect updates as they become available.

Tips for analyzing news sources:

- Avoid websites that end in “lo” ex: Newslo. These sites take pieces of accurate information and then packaging that information with other false or misleading “facts” (sometimes for the purposes of satire or comedy).
- Watch out for websites that end in “.com.co” as they are often fake versions of real news sources
- Watch out if known/reputable news sites are not also reporting on the story. Sometimes lack of coverage is the result of corporate media bias and other factors, but there should typically be more than one source reporting on a topic or event.
- Odd domain names generally equal odd and rarely truthful news.
- Lack of author attribution may, but not always, signify that the news story is suspect and requires verification.
- Some news organizations are also letting bloggers post under the banner of particular news brands; however, many of these posts do not go through the same editing process (ex: BuzzFeed Community Posts, Kinja blogs, *Forbes* blogs).
- Check the “About Us” tab on websites or look up the website on Snopes or Wikipedia for more information about the source.
- Bad web design and use of ALL CAPS can also be a sign that the source you’re looking at should be verified and/or read in conjunction with other sources.
- If the story makes you REALLY ANGRY it’s probably a good idea to keep reading about the topic via other sources to make sure the story you read wasn’t purposefully trying to make you angry (with potentially misleading or false information) in order to generate shares and ad revenue.
- If the website you’re reading encourages you to DOX individuals, it’s unlikely to be a legitimate source of news.
- It’s always best to read multiple sources of information to get a variety of viewpoints and media frames. Some sources not yet included in this list (although their practices at times may qualify them for addition), such as *The Daily Kos*, *The Huffington Post*, and Fox News, vacillate between providing important, legitimate, problematic, and/or hyperbolic news coverage, requiring readers and viewers to verify and contextualize information with other sources.

Bio: I am an assistant professor of communication & media, and this list started as a resource for my students, who are learning about journalism/social media/media literacy.

Update 1: I've received hundreds of emails with suggestions, very few of which are duplicates, so it will take me a while to sift through and verify them. I will add them as appropriate. (EDIT 11/15/2016 @ 3:42 EST: I have a list of sources, suggested by all of you, that will take me a long time to get through)

Update 2: Yes, I am considering further coding/categorizing these sources for clarity and creating a more durable/dynamic database. This is likely just step 1.

Update 3: Some people are asking which news sources I trust, and all I can say is that I read/watch/listen very widely, from mainstream, corporate owned sources (*The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Forbes*) as well as *The Atlantic*, National Public Radio, and various local and alternative sources with different political perspectives, some of which are included on this list. The problem: Even typically reliable sources, whether mainstream or alternative, corporate or nonprofit, rely on particular media frames to report stories and select stories based on different notions of newsworthiness. The best thing to do in our contemporary media environment is to read/watch/listen widely and often, and to be critical of the sources we share and engage with on social media.

Update 4: A group of AWESOME librarians will be working with this list to provide more detail, examples of the news articles in question, etc. I will post what they make here when it is complete.

Update 5: It should be noted I'm not the first person to call out some of these websites. When I first started compiling this specific large list on Monday, some friends alerted me to many websites doing similar and great work, such as [Ed Brayton](#)'s recent post at Patheos (I included many of the websites on his list after checking them myself if I was unfamiliar). I plan on providing more links to outside resources in the near future.



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