

# FAKE NEWS

FIGHTING MISINFORMATION AND FINDING THE TRUTH

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# AN INTRODUCTION TO FAKE NEWS AND MISINFORMATION



Used with permission from CPTV's  
[Fake: Searching for Truth in the Age of Misinformation](#)

# TOPICS COVERED

- Terms to Know
  - Fake News
  - Misinformation vs. Disinformation
    - Deep Fake
- Where does misinformation come from and how does it spread?
- How do you know if information is real or fake?
- What should you do when you identify misinformation?

# WHAT IS FAKE NEWS?

News stories that are false: the story itself is fabricated, with no verifiable facts, sources, or quotes

- has become a politically charged term
- spreads quickly on social media partially because of the ease of sharing
- motivation for creating the content varies
- encompasses more than just false news stories

<https://guides.lib.umich.edu/fakenews>

# EXAMPLE



1.6 million views  
in 6 days!

On 5 November 2016, the Denver Guardian web site published this article:

Walkerville, MD — An FBI agent believed to be responsible for the latest email leaks “pertinent to the investigation” into Hillary Clinton’s private email server while she was Secretary of State, was found dead in an apparent murder-suicide early Saturday morning, according to police. Investigators believe FBI agent, Michael Brown, 45, shot and killed his 33-year-old wife, Susan Brown, late Friday night before setting the couple’s home on fire and then turning the gun on himself. Brown was a 12 year veteran of the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Police Department before spending the last six years in the FBI.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/alltechconsidered/2016/11/23/503146770/npr-finds-the-head-of-a-covert-fake-news-operation-in-the-suburbs>

# MISINFORMATION VS. DISINFORMATION

False or inaccurate information that is *mistakenly or inadvertently* created or spread; the intent is not to deceive

False information that is *deliberately* created and spread "in order to influence public opinion or obscure the truth"



## SATIRE OR PARODY

No intention to cause harm but has potential to fool



## MISLEADING CONTENT

Misleading use of information to frame an issue or individual



## IMPOSTER CONTENT

When genuine sources are impersonated



## FABRICATED CONTENT

New content is 100% false, designed to deceive and do harm



## FALSE CONNECTION

When headlines, visuals or captions don't support the content



## FALSE CONTEXT

When genuine content is shared with false contextual information



## MANIPULATED CONTENT

When genuine information or imagery is manipulated to deceive

Corona virus before it reaches the lungs it remains in the throat for four days and at this time the person begins to cough and have throat pains. If he drinks water a lot and gargling with warm water & salt or vinegar eliminates the virus. Spread this information because you can save someone with this information



 See Notice

Tik tok MV  
Like This Page · March 13 · 

#covid19

  88      2 Comments 328 Shares

 Like     Comment     Share

Most Relevant ▾

 Reference?  
Like · Reply · 1d

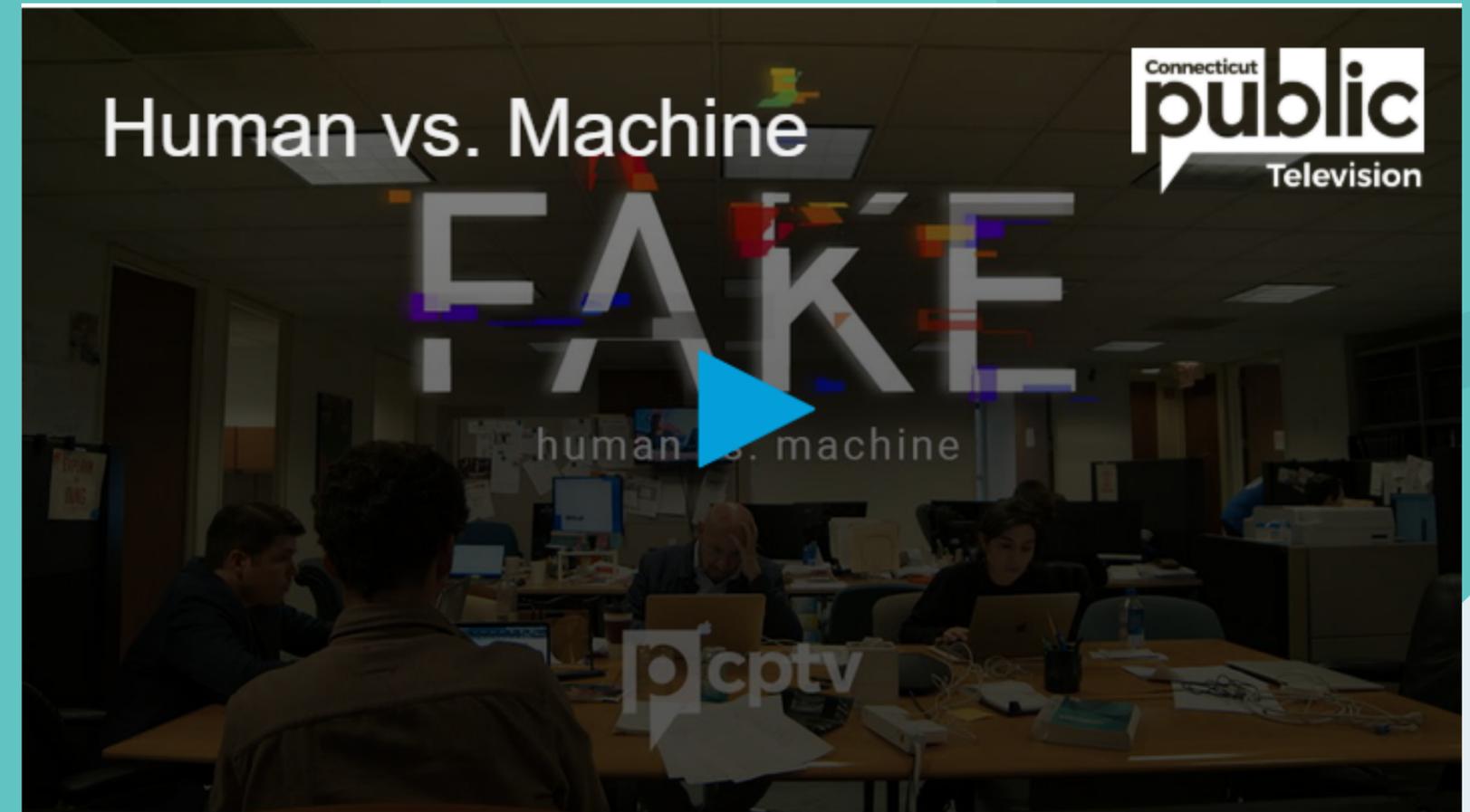
 False  
Like · Reply · 1d

 Write a comment...   

"We don't really know what motivates people to create things like this, but we do know that the best of intentions are often what fuel the spread of viral rumors."  
--Peter Adams, News Literacy Project

# WHAT IS A DEEPPFAKE?

"typically used to refer to a video that has been edited using an algorithm to replace the person in the original video with someone else (especially a public figure) in a way that makes the video look authentic."



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[Fake: Searching for Truth in the Age of Misinformation](#)

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/deepfake-slang-definition-examples>

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/politics/fact-checker/manipulated-video-guide/>

# WHERE DOES MIS/DISINFORMATION COME FROM?

To find origins, you must look at the author and the reason for creating the information

Reasons may be:

- to make money
- satire/funny
- poor/untrained journalists
- partisans who want to influence policy or beliefs

## Barack Obama 'Tiger Beat' Cover Clinches Slumber Party Vote

6/19/07 12:01AM • SEE MORE: POLITICS



WASHINGTON—According to a poll released Monday by Teen Zogby!, both Barack Obama's approval and

#10yearschallenge



These photos were taken two years apart on opposite ends of the earth.

7:11 PM · Jan 14, 2016 · one

# HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

- sometimes designed to provoke emotional response
- "seeded" in order to encourage sharing
- Disseminated by bots
- copy/paste
- click and share
- Engagement Bait



A screenshot of a Facebook profile for "Baby Animals" (@BBAanimals). The profile picture shows a person holding a small koala. The bio text includes: "Partnership or Pay for a shoutout. Email: poemporn@126.com", "facebook.com/AnimalMemeX", and "Joined May 2013". The profile has 7 following and 1.3M followers. A red arrow points to the bio text. Above the profile, there are several smaller screenshots of posts, one of which has a large red 'X' over it. Below the profile, there are several screenshots of individual posts from the profile, showing various types of content and engagement metrics like likes and shares.

# HOW DO YOU TEST IF SOMETHING IS REAL OR FAKE?

Lateral Reading

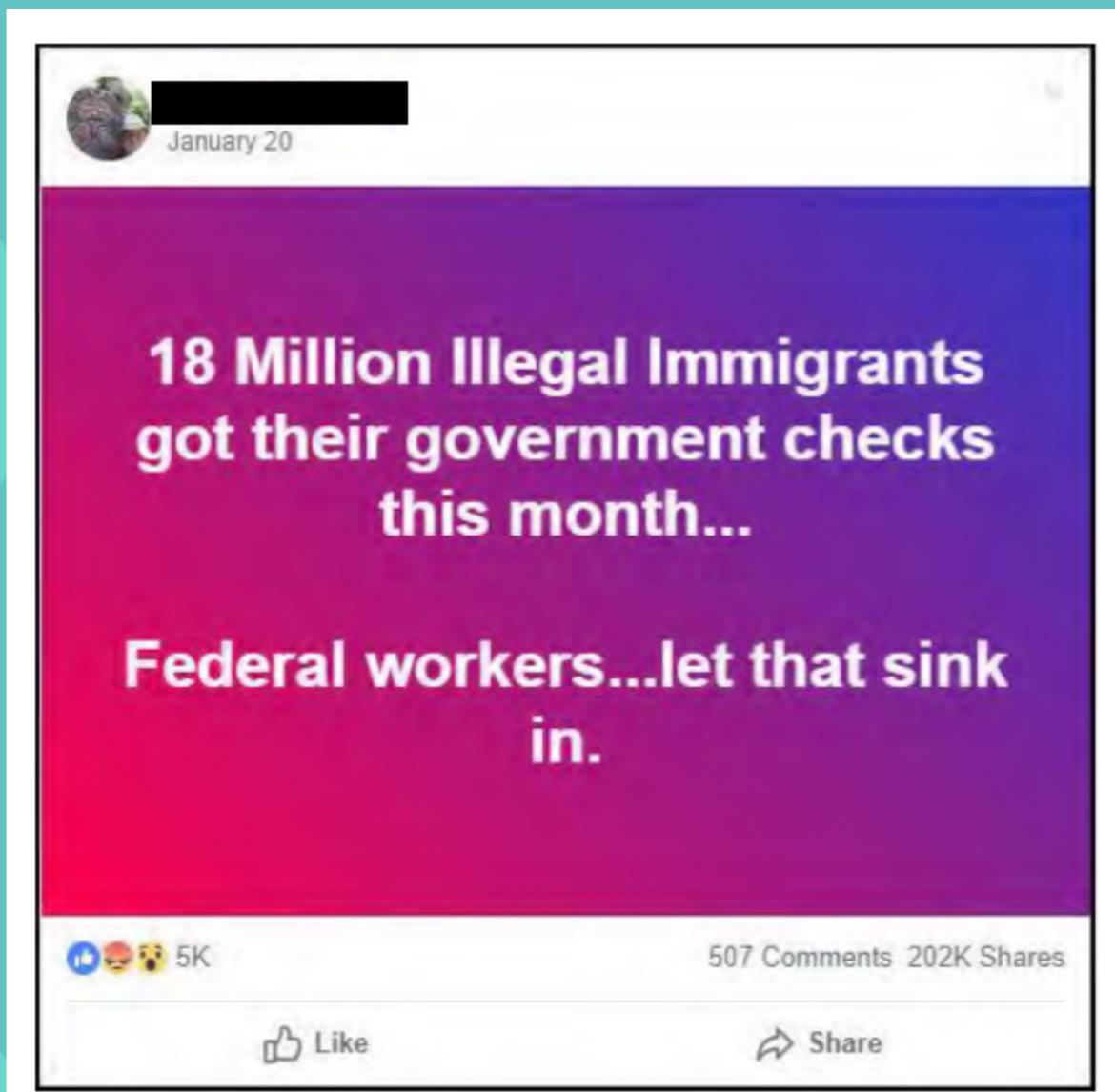
Critical Observation

Reverse Image Search

Geolocation

# #1 LATERAL READING

Verifying what you're reading as you're reading it,  
by reading across multiple connected sites



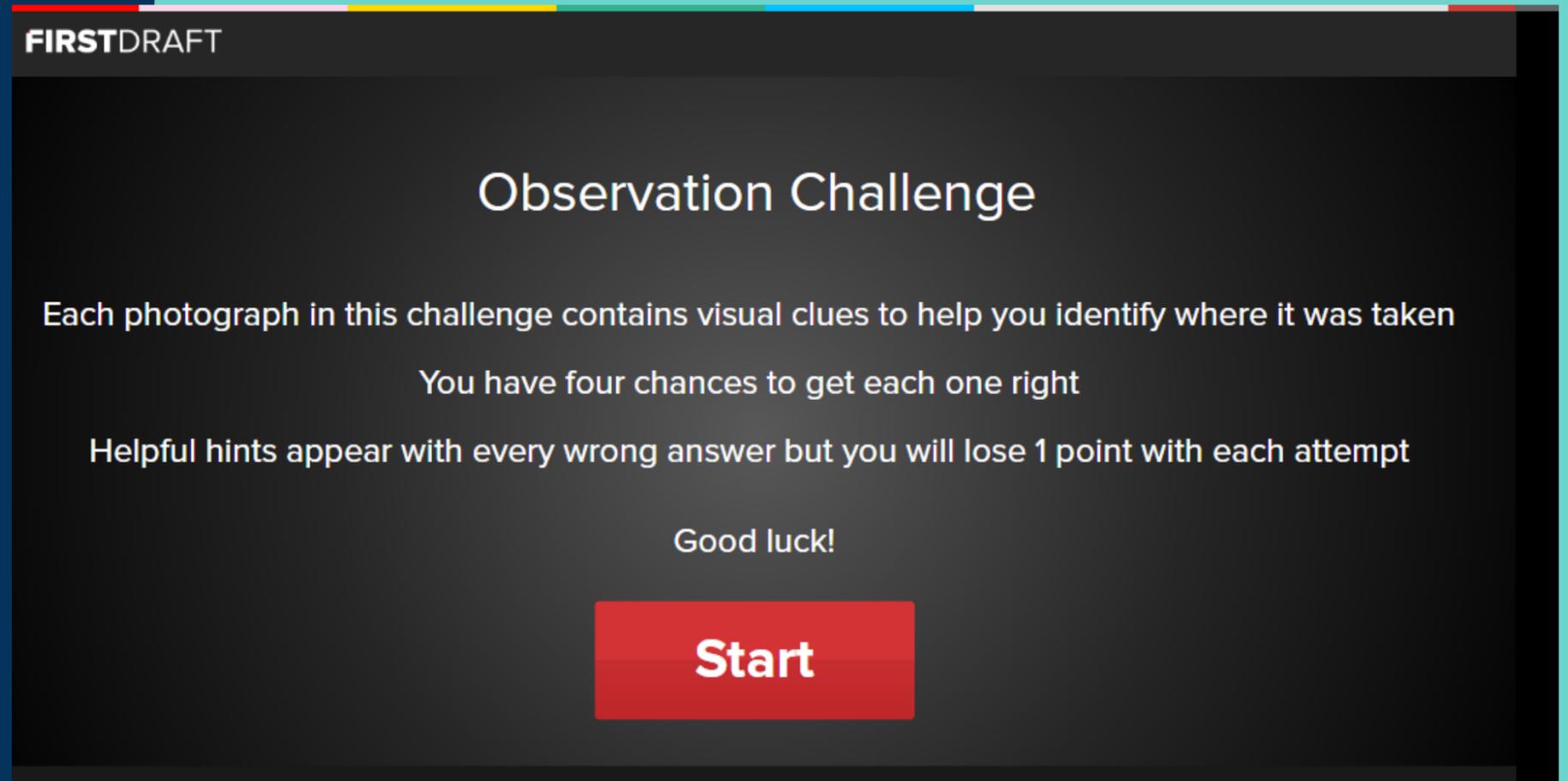
1. Open a new tab (CTRL-T)
2. Turn the title of the article or key words of a post into a question
3. Conduct a search
4. Look through the results you get for a credible source
  - a. fact-checking websites (Snopes, FactCheck, Politifact)
  - b. legitimate news organization

# BASIC INFORMATION HYGIENE

- CTRL-T - Open new tab and check the information
- Click Restraint
- Standards-based vs. User-based
- Going "Upstream" - using captions/credits, date ranges, advanced search functions to work your way back to the source.

# #2 CRITICAL OBSERVATION

Analyze an image and look for clues as to when and where it actually took place

A screenshot of a web browser window showing the 'FIRSTDRAFT' logo in the top left corner. The main content area is titled 'Observation Challenge' and contains the following text: 'Each photograph in this challenge contains visual clues to help you identify where it was taken', 'You have four chances to get each one right', and 'Helpful hints appear with every wrong answer but you will lose 1 point with each attempt'. Below this text is a 'Good luck!' message and a prominent red button labeled 'Start'.

created by First Draft  
[firstdraftnews.org](https://firstdraftnews.org)

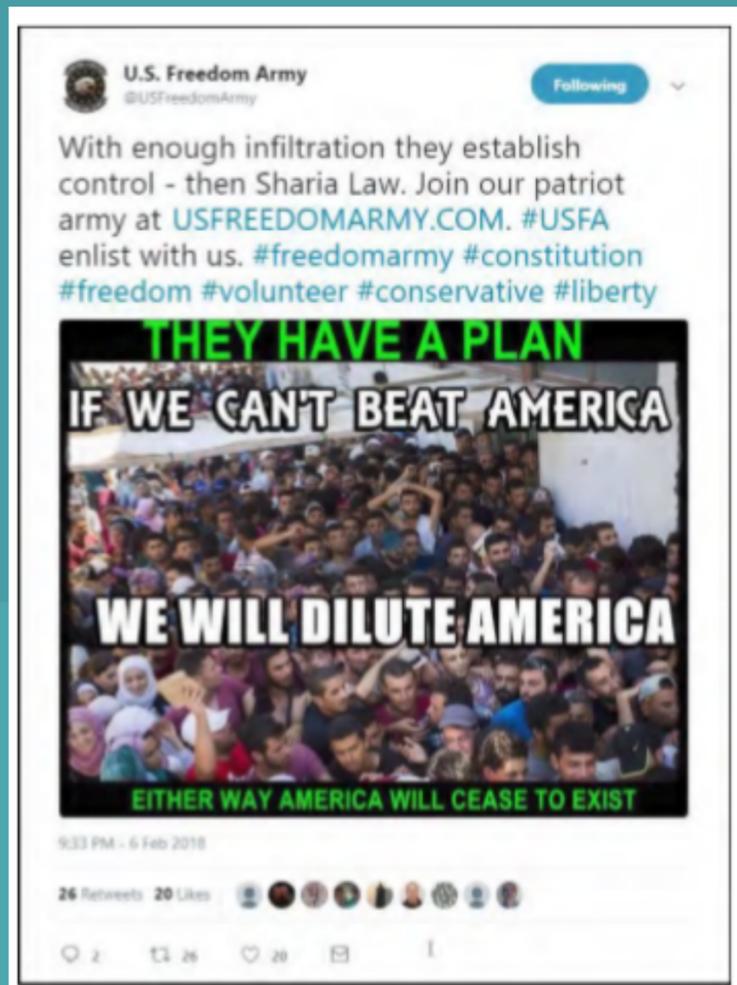
# #3 REVERSE IMAGE SEARCH

Just like a regular Google search, but you search for the pixel patterns of an image instead of for words.

1. Right-click on the image, select "Copy Image Address" or, in Chrome, "Search Google for Image"
2. Open a new tab to images.google.com and click on the camera icon in the search bar.
3. Right-click and select paste.
4. Read through your results (look for trustworthy, fact-checking sources!) to determine if the original source was accurate



# #3 REVERSE IMAGE SEARCH WITH MEMES

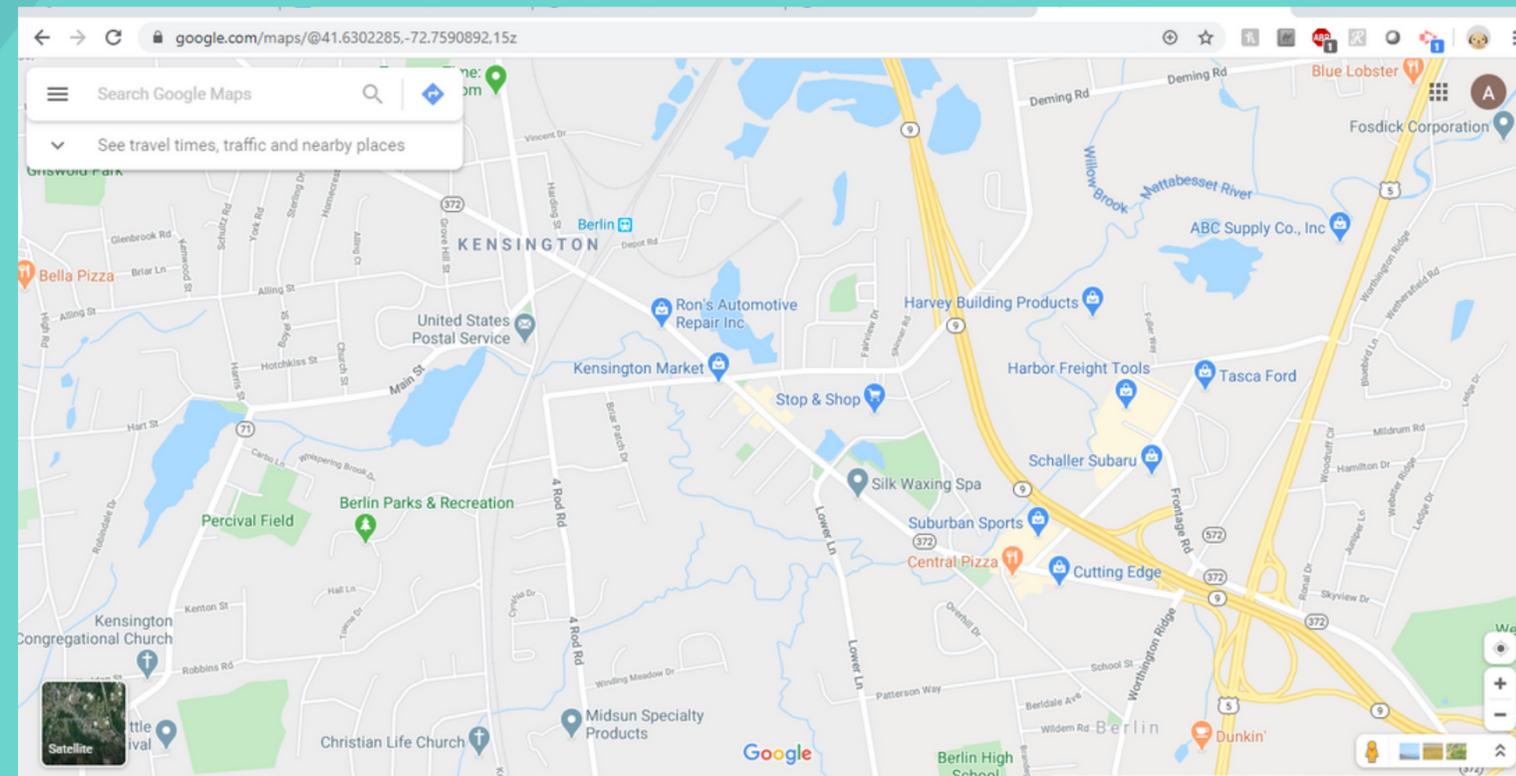


Requires a screenshot of the image with words excluded

1. Use the Print Screen button. Or, on MAC - Shift + command +4 on Windows - windows + shift + S
2. Crop screenshot to include only a portion of the image
3. Save image
4. use Upload Image option on Google Images

# #4 GEOLOCATION

Use to verify claims about when and where an image was taken



Use Google Street View ([google.com/maps](https://www.google.com/maps)) to:

- verify what a location looks like
- see how that location has looked over time
- follow up on clues that might appear in an image

# GEOLOCATION CHALLENGE

1. What business used to be in the location where Cafe Busy Bean is now?

2. Where was this picture taken?



photo credit: M.E. Coldren

For further practice and information: [First Draft Geolocation Challenge](#), [bellingcat.com](#), [BBC Africa Eye: Anatomy of a Killing](#)

# WHAT SHOULD YOU DO WHEN YOU ENCOUNTER MISINFORMATION?

- Practice good information hygiene
  - PAUSE. Question what you read, especially if you don't know the source. Check things out BEFORE sharing. Think critically.
- Confront misinformation
  - DON'T attack the person who shared it. Ask them for the source.
  - Think - How would I want someone to correct me if I posted misinformation?
  - Be efficient - Has someone already posted a link to a fact-checking website? If yes, there's no need to pile on.
  - Be kind - Engage with the person first, information second. Show empathy.
  - Before posting anything, know that you can't convince everyone, and you may need to "walk away" without getting someone to agree with what you share

<https://www.theopennotebook.com/2017/02/21/how-to-talk-to-your-facebook-friends-about-fake-news/>

<https://lifehacker.com/how-do-i-correct-someone-who-shares-false-information-o-474865633>

# FURTHER RESOURCES



News Literacy Project Give facts a fighting chance newslit.org

## How to know what to trust

**FIRST**

1. Be aware of your emotions.
2. Pause.
3. Decide if it is...

**NEXT**

USER-GENERATED CONTENT	AN UNFAMILIAR ORGANIZATION/SOURCE	A RECOGNIZED STANDARDS-BASED NEWS SOURCE
<p><b>Check the comments.</b> Has anyone provided evidence that the claim being made isn't true (or that it is true)?</p> <p><b>Read the post carefully.</b> Does it cite reputable sources or actual evidence to support its claim? (Remember: Bad actors often try to pass off unrelated photos and video as "evidence" for their false claims.)</p> <p><b>Search elsewhere for the claim.</b> Does it appear in other user-generated forums? Have other accounts shared identical posts? Have quality news outlets or fact-checking organizations written about this?</p>	<p><b>Check the comments.</b> Has anyone flagged this source or provided evidence that the claim being made isn't true (or that it is true)?</p> <p><b>Turn the headline into a question, then search.</b> Copy the headline into a search bar, adding a question mark at the end. Have reputable news outlets or fact-checking organizations written about this?</p> <p><b>Search for the name of the source.</b> Are there credible results that identify it as unreliable? Can you determine if it is a satirical or entertainment site? Is there evidence that it is a state-run news outlet?</p>	<p><b>Check: News or something else?</b> Is this a straight news report or something else, such as an opinion piece? (Remember: Opinion journalism doesn't try to be unbiased.)</p> <p><b>Look for obvious problems.</b> Is there anything in this report that seems "off" to you? Does it use loaded language, or contain other signs that it's unfair?</p> <p><b>Look for other coverage.</b> Are other credible standards-based outlets reporting the same thing?</p>
<p><b>Investigate the source.</b> Can you tell where this claim originated? If not, how reliable are other posts shared by this account? Does the account seem responsibly run, or is it devoted to amplifying divisive, inflammatory content?</p>	<p><b>Analyze the source.</b> Does the website include disclaimers that its content is not to be taken seriously? Do other items on the site look suspicious? Does the site contain original reporting, or simply commentary? Are there numerous grammatical and/or spelling errors?</p>	<p><b>Evaluate the reporting.</b> Are the people, documents and other sources cited in the report generally considered reliable? Have the details been clearly verified, or is the story still developing?</p>

4. Take 60 seconds to...

5. One more minute to...

"It's really asking the question 'What does it mean to be a literate citizen in today's world?'"  
— Michelle Chula Lipkin, executive director of the National Association for Media Literacy Education

## Guide to Finding FAKES & FACTS

Given the sheer volume of messages we receive on multiple media platforms all day, every day, how can the average person separate fact from fiction and know which information can be trusted?

Media literacy programs attempt to give people tools they need to dissect breaking news, identify the intent of the messenger, evaluate partisan or biased content, and utilize critical thinking before accepting a message as valid.

In the Connecticut Public original documentary, *FAKE: Searching for Truth in the Age of Misinformation*, we explore the many ways that messages, and audiences, can be manipulated via modern media.

We've created this guide to help you detect dupes and offer you resources that can help sharpen your media literacy.

Visit [CPTV.org/FAKE](http://CPTV.org/FAKE)

**TIP: IDENTIFY THE MESSAGE**

**Ask "What Kind of Information Is This?"**

- OPINION OR EDITORIAL?**  
These may be written by journalists or experts, and they should be clearly marked as opinion pieces, not presented as an impartial news report.
- PARODY OR SATIRE?**  
The purpose is to entertain or perhaps to persuade using irony or humor, but these are not reliable news sources. Examples: *The Onion* or *The New Yorker's* *Sorowitz Report*.
- NATIVE ADVERTISING OR SPONSORED CONTENT?**  
The primary purpose is to sell, not to present impartial information.
- PRESS RELEASE?**  
Public relations articles come from companies or organizations with an agenda. They are often marked "For Immediate Release."
- ADVOCACY OR THINK TANK PUBLICATIONS?**  
Groups like the Sierra Club, Moveon.org or the National Rifle Association may produce useful materials, but they should be understood to represent a particular point of view of the issues.

From the University of California Berkeley Library website

Connecticut public Media for the curious. PBS npr

Copyright February, 2020 Connecticut Public | Visit [cptv.org/FAKE](http://cptv.org/FAKE)

# TEST YOUR MISINFORMATION IQ



Practice the skills you just learned and see how good you are at spotting misinformation!

Take this [FAKE NEWS AND MISINFORMATION QUIZ](#)

created by Laurie Finke, Reference Librarian

<https://forms.gle/KjGHfyv27YeHLUsY8>