



# Fake News is not always fake

Alison Lancaster, UW Madison





# Disclosures

None to Report



- 
- What exactly is fake news?

- Best Objective Definition

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

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

# A Reputable Source to learn more

The screenshot shows a mobile browser interface. The address bar displays the URL <https://guides.lib.umich.edu/fakenews>. The page header features the University of Michigan Library logo and the text "Research Guides". Below the header, the breadcrumb trail reads: "University of Michigan Library / Research Guides / 'Fake News,' Lies and Propaganda: How to Sort Fact from Fiction / What is 'Fake News?'". The main title of the page is "'Fake News,' Lies and Propaganda: How to Sort Fact from Fiction". A search bar is visible on the right side of the page. The content area includes a section titled "What is 'Fake News?'" with a sub-section "Why is this important?". The text under "Why is this important?" reads: "Where do news sources fall on the political bias spectrum?" and "How do you recognize bias in yourself and the media?". A larger text box provides a definition: "Fake news" is a term that has come to mean different things to different people. At its core, **we are defining "fake news" as those news stories that are false: the story itself is fabricated, with no verifiable facts, sources or quotes.** Sometimes these stories may be propaganda that is intentionally designed to mislead the reader, or may be designed as "clickbait" written for economic incentives (the writer profits on the number of people who click on the story). In recent years, fake news stories have proliferated via social media, in part because they are so easily and quickly shared online.

# The Dangers of Fake News in Science and Medicine

- It can cloud the researcher's judgement. The danger is that the bias will affect the objective data of the research.
- Clouded information produces clouded opinions, which produce biased data reporting.
- Misinformation can cloud public perception of accuracy and validity.
- Straying from objective facts can confuse audiences.

# In Summary

- Check the Source of the Data.
  - Is it independent? Is it politically motivated? Is there an financial objective?

Fake news is still news. it's just that the receiver perceives a bias in the information that may or may not be correct. Use your judgment, not the reporting, to decide this for yourself.