Building Health System Capacity to Address Medical Misinformation and Improve Colorectal Cancer Screening

**Brian Southwell** 

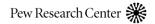
INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY



# Healthcare in 2021: Disease, inequities, and unreliable information environments

Photo: West Virginia Health Care Association

## Rural residents and social media



 Majority of rural Internet users regularly engage with Facebook, e.g., roughly 60% as of 2018.

FOR RELEASE MARCH 1, 2018.

### Social Media Use in 2018

A majority of Americans use Facebook and YouTube, but young adults are especially heavy users of Snapchat and Instagram

BY Aaron Smith and Monica Anderson



# Social media as (mis)information source

- Of 20 most-shared 2016 articles on Facebook with "cancer" in headline, over half reported discredited claims.
- Public health officials have faced misinformation challenges during COVID-19 pandemic.

#### 8 INDEPENDENT



Exclusive: Misinformation published by conspiracy sites about serious health conditions is often shared more widely than evidence-based reports from reputable news organisations

Katie Forster | @katieforster | Saturday 07 January 2017 23:33 | comments



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CORONAVIRUS

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#### In face of misinformation, public health workers reiterate: COVID-19 vaccines are safe, effective, and key to ending pandemic

Information about local walk-in COVID-19 vaccine clinics, including dates, times, type of vaccine available and information about each type of vaccine can be found at www.grandforksgov.com/vaccine. Grand Forks Public Health staff are available at all clinics to answer any questions.

Written By: Hannah Shirley | 9:00 am, May 9, 2021



# Emerging literature on misinformation

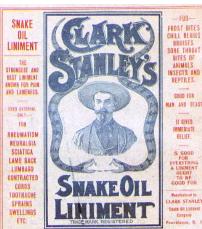
Why does misinformation spread?

How do we stop people from sharing misinformation?

How can we mitigate effects?



## Misinformation: Not a new phenomenon



#### Clark Stanley's Snake Oil Liniment

Is for sale by all druggists. If your druggist fails to have 0 tell links he can get if for you from any wholesale druggists or it will he sent to you to any part of the United States or Canada upon the receipt of fity cents in stamps by addressing the

Clark Stanley Snake Oil Liniment Co. PROVIDENCE, R. I.









## What's the problem?

- We are *biased toward acceptance*.
- There are <u>reasons why we share</u> misinformation.
- Our <u>regulatory approach (in democracies)</u> emphasizes post hoc detection.
- <u>Correction is hard</u>.

#### News & Analysis

#### **Medical News & Perspectives**

COVID-19 Conspiracies and Beyond: How Physicians Can Deal With Patients' Misinformation

Jennifer Abbasi

ence expert Brian Southwell, PHO. I auched a training workshop at the Duke University School of Medicine bysicians should do when patients are misinformed about there health. It Some Mattmedia a scholar with the medical school's Souti Socol Reach Childras, and this calaborator Jamie Wood, PHD, planto make's available as a live virtual offering for dinician practice and health care systems.

arly in 2020, communication sci

"There's a lot that we can learn from the past in terms of how people have engaged with misinformation historically." Southwell said in a recent interview with JAMA. "That's going to be helpful, but we also need to think about some of the challenges of the moment." Misinformation is



Graphic: Abbasi (2020) in JAMA https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2774709



# BELLE GIBSON

FOUNDER OF THE BEST-SELLING APP AND COOKBOOK THE WHOLE PANTRY

# My life-long struggle with the truth

Belle Gibson claimed to be healing her terminal cancer with wholefoods - but now it's proven to be a cruel web of lies. Yet is Belle a hoax mastermind or simply RESH-FACED. EARNEST. Naive. When Belle Gibson speaks, she cries easily and muddles her words. She's passionate about avoiding gluten, dairy and coffee, but doesn't really understand how cancer works. All of which begs the question: is this young woman really capable of masterminding one of the

Image: The Australian Women's Weekly

1.10-1

Do we *misunderstand our own vulnerabilities*?



## We need social connection.



### We need hope for future.



Without either, expect misinformation diffusion if misinformation offers salve.

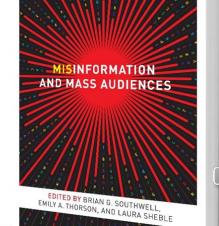


### What COVID-19 Misinformation Says About All of Us

#### **BY BRIAN G. SOUTHWELL**

Coronavirus myths reveal ourselves—our hopes, dreams, and fears. When someone shares such falsehoods, we should at least listen to their needs.

We need more focus on building trust and transparency and less on blaming those who do not trust us.





## What is *trust*?

Perception of credibility (or competence)

Perception of reliability (or consistency)

Perception of shared (or encapsulated) interest





# What is *transparency*?

Making data and analysis visible so others can evaluate.

Information *availability* matters, yet physical availability not same as deep public *understanding* of information.





### Four suggestions:

Promote open science.
Equip audiences for critical inquiry and search.
Educate scientists to become better communicators.
Collaborate to address misinformation.



Research translation to improve transparency

Can we spotlight data and methods through venues beyond journals or proprietary platforms?

Can journals provide public spaces and forums as part of portfolio?



Example: Michele Andrasik of U. Washington on WNCU's *The Measure of Everyday Life* to talk about clinical trials for HIV vaccines



What about health education and health care professionals? Does all misinformation matter equally for health behavior? American Journal of Preventive Medicine

CURRENT ISSUES

Misinformation as a Misunderstood Challenge to Public Health

Brian G. Southwell, PhD,<sup>1,2,3</sup> Jeff Niederdeppe, PhD,<sup>4</sup> Joseph N. Cappella, PhD,<sup>5</sup> Anna Gaysynsky, MPH,<sup>6</sup> Dannielle E. Kelley, PhD,<sup>6</sup> April Oh, PhD,<sup>6</sup> Emily B. Peterson, PhD,<sup>6</sup> Wen-Ying Sylvia Chou, PhD<sup>6</sup>



What information do people *seek*?

What do they *accept*?





Clinician workshop at Duke University: Why Patients Encounter, Believe, and Share Medical Misinformation, and What to Do about It

#### Made possible by



## Craig Newmark Philanthropies

What can be done?

Encourage compassion

**Embrace translation opportunities** 

Learn what people are encountering

Empower and improve information-seeking





For more information:

https://www.hsq.dukehealth.org/medmis/

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#### The Duke Program on Medical Misinformation

Guiding Principles for Partnering with Patients



Medical Misinformation

Guiding Principles for Partnering with Patients



## Thank you!

## For more information: <u>bsouthwell@rti.org</u>