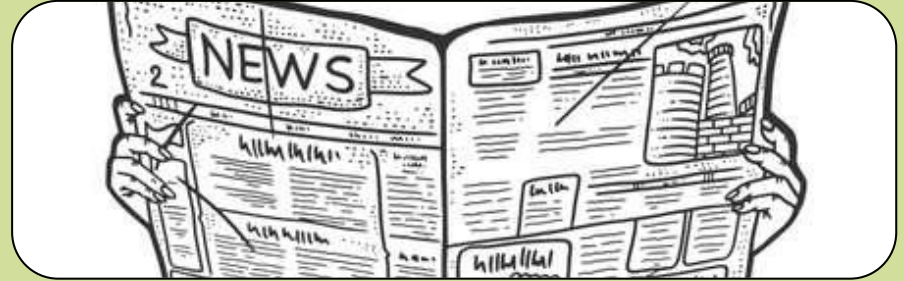


# Fake News

Effects of fake news in today's media.



Amelia, Nate, Marina, Sophia

# 'Us & Them' Podcast: Another Small Town Paper Down

Pulitzer Article

- Podcast from Pulitzer Center that revealed the local news, *The Welch News* had to cease operations in March 2023 which caused for local citizens to not have any news relating to their local town.
- Local citizens were affected by not being able to have access to news and have to get it from bigger news sources that overlook their small town.

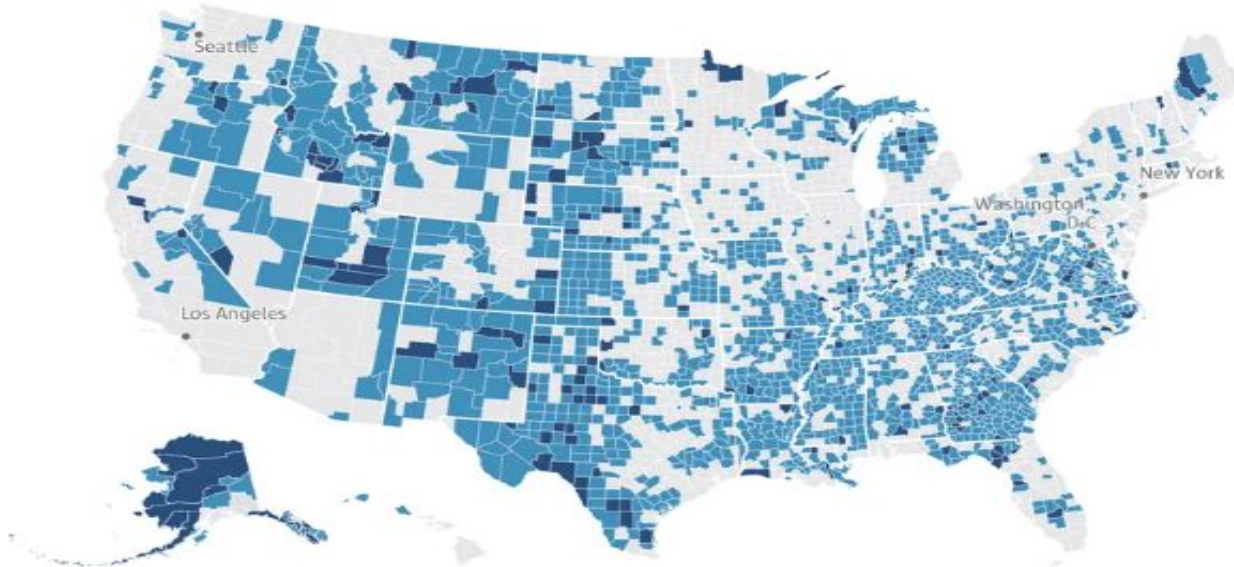


# News Deserts Across the U.S.

## How many newspapers are near you?

The U.S. lost more than a fourth of its newspapers since 2005, leaving 70 million residents with no local news outlet, or one at risk, with only a single outlet and limited access to critical news, according to a new report by Northwestern University's Medill School.

■ No newspapers ■ One newspaper ■ Two or more newspapers

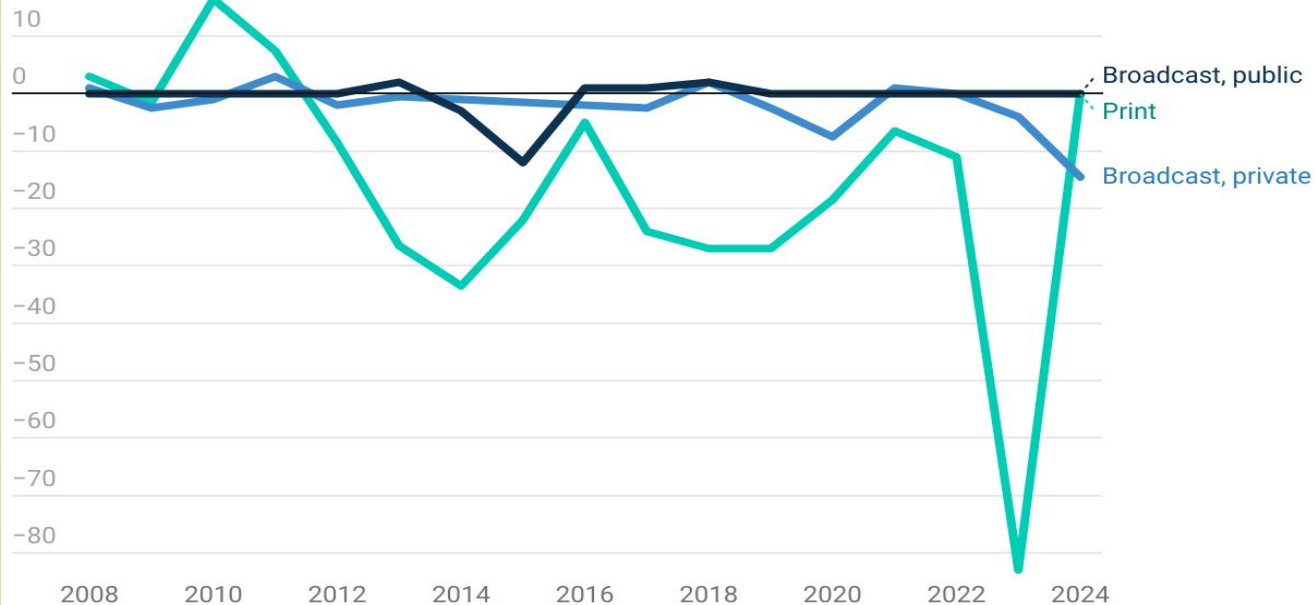


Source: Local News Initiative Database

MEDILL LOCAL NEWS INITIATIVE AND THE SEATTLE TIMES

# News Deserts Across Canada

**Figure 1: Net change in local news outlets by year and type since 2008**



Source: Local News Research Project, Local News Directory, Canadian Radio Directory and authors' calculations. See the methodology section. • Created with Datawrapper

# REAL OR FAKE

## Warm up:

Figure out whether the following images are real or not!

Decide whether or not it is fake and be ready to justify your choice.



# Real or fake?

In the summer of 2017, Hurricane Harvey hit Houston, TX. A reputable journalist Jason Michael posted this image of a shark in the highway!

#1



Jason Michael  
@Jeggit

Follow

Believe it or not, this is a shark on the freeway in Houston, Texas. [#HurricaneHarvy](#)



7:00 AM - 28 Aug 2017

4,117 Retweets 4,094 Likes



302

4.1K



4.1K



# Real or fake?

**FAKE** – Michael is a Scottish journalist who was trying to see how easy it is to make people believe a photoshopped image.

#1



Jason Michael  
@Jeggit

Follow

Believe it or not, this is a shark on the freeway in Houston, Texas. [#HurricaneHarvy](#)



7:00 AM - 28 Aug 2017

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4.1K



4.1K



# Real or fake?

A picture of Brazilian surfer Gabriel Medina.

#2



# Real or fake?

**REAL** – This was actually a real picture from the 2024 Olympics! The photographer had been studying Medina and predicted that he would make that pose.

#2



# Real or fake?

LA Photographer Brian Walski went to Iraq in 2003, and took this picture of a British soldier and Iraqi man and baby.



# Real or fake?

**FAKE** – While this is similar to the real picture, Walski actually combined 2 images together.

*Why might it be important to know the first image was fake?*



# Real or fake?

This image was taken by a photojournalist who was covering the recent ICE raids, and took a picture of a man wearing a “Latinos for Trump” shirt getting detained.



# Real or fake?

**FAKE** – While the image itself had some truth to it, the writing on the shirts was fake.

*Even though this image is more subtle than the shark one, does that mean it's not as important to know it's fake?*



Warm up

# REFLECT

Real or Fake Activity

- What could be the bigger consequences of fake images?
- What do you think could be done to stop fake images from being circulated?

Turn and talk with your neighbors, and then we will share out!

# LOOKING AT A REAL ARTICLE

## Main Activity:

Now, we are going to split you all into groups and have you read the same article. After reading, we have a couple questions for you to answer with your group. Afterwards, we will read a fake article and compare and contrast the differences between the two.



# QUESTIONS

Turn and talk to your group and think about:

- A summary of the facts from the article
- What is the biggest takeaway from the article?
- Who wrote the article (and from what perspective)?
- Who are the different people and concepts involved in the situation?
- Who should be **blamed** for the situation and what should be done?

Get ready to share your points.



**Main Activity**

# PLOT TWIST!

## Main Activity

Turns out none of you had the real article!

Every group had an article that had elements of truth, but none of the groups had the whole story.



# THE VERSIONS



Kawa Sushi

Uses xenophobia to blame all Asian restaurants.



Astoria Seafood Co

Has the right idea, but can't connect it to the bigger story.



Oak Point Plant

Biased story told from the company who doesn't want to get in trouble.



Ilwaco, WA

Can't figure out what's happening because their news source is disconnected.

## Plot Twist



# WHAT'S THE REAL STORY?

- AquaNova had control in the British newspaper, allowing them to redirect blame from themselves onto Oak Point. In reality, the CEO did know about the spill because he was the one to under staff the plant so that he wouldn't have to pay as many people
- The methylmercury contaminated the Columbia River, but because no one knew, there was no way or reason for Astoria Seafood Co. to check the salmon
- Kawa Sushi did not know the fish was poisonous either. The restaurant became a center for racist backlash.
- Ilwaco's local newspaper was too stretched out to reach out to other towns. They kept serving fish because they didn't know that it was causing poisoning.

# REFLECT

## Takeaway

- After you read the articles, were you able to come to a conclusion about who was to blame? Why or why not?
- Do you think addressing news deserts would decrease the rise of fake news?
- What are the pros and cons of having different articles?



# CONCEPTS

**News Hole/News Desert:** A place without access to or coverage of current events. These places lack substantial information about many topics, both local and in larger contexts.

- *What do you think could be a possible consequence of a news desert? How do you think news deserts are related to fake news? What about accountability?*

**Polarization:** The division of groups into distinct, opposing factions. More polarization means less communication and cooperation.

- *What did the lesson today about the absence, bias, and/or falseness of news show you about polarization?*

**Democracy:** A system of government that puts power in the hands of citizens. Key features of democracy include equal representation, free speech, freedom of the press, and open and constructive dialogue.

- *How do you think democracy plays into today's lesson? Why might it matter that local newspapers all around the world are closing?*

# Real Life

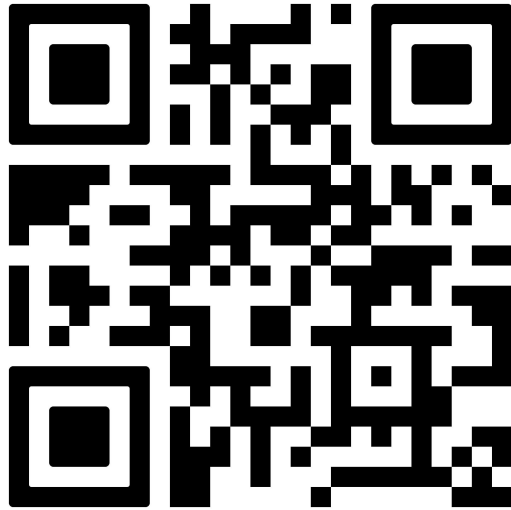
WSJ News Article: "China is the Real Sick Man" by Walter Russell Mead  
– Article about how COVID-19 first spread in 2020 and blames China for the spread of the virus.

China's initial response to the crisis was less than impressive. The Wuhan government was secretive and self-serving; national authorities responded vigorously but, it currently appears, ineffectively. China's cities and factories are shutting down; the virus continues to spread. We can hope that authorities succeed in containing the epidemic and treating its victims, but the performance to date has shaken confidence in the Chinese Communist Party at home and abroad. Complaints in Beijing about the U.S. refusing entry to noncitizens who recently spent time in China cannot hide the reality that the decisions that allowed the epidemic to spread as far and as fast as it did were all made in Wuhan and Beijing.



# EXIT TICKET

Fill out this google form!





**THANK YOU**

