The Misinformation Age

DECEMBER 23, 2015

Internet technology has revolutionized the way information – and misinformation – spreads in the public sphere. On the latest episode of No Jargon, Brian Southwell explains why people tend to believe false information and discusses strategies for correcting falsehoods.

Southwell joins No Jargon to explain how and why misinformation is so easily disseminated in the current media landscape. He explores how difficult – yet necessary – it is for reporters and experts to find ways to correct false information. In his companion Key Findings brief, Southwell challenges conventional wisdom that social media equalizes the flow of information to all groups in our democracy. Investments in new communications infrastructures, he argues, could help to create a better informed public down the line.

To learn more, read Southwell's recent journal article on “The Prevalence, Consequence, and Remedy of Misinformation in Mass Media Systems.” Another SSN brief by SSN scholar Steven Michael Polunsky offers further ideas about "Using Social Media to Improve Citizen Engagement with Government."

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