

NOT JUST “FAKE NEWS”

Racial Disinformation Harms Democracy

Racial Disinformation (noun): A specific, dangerous type of disinformation that dehumanizes racially marginalized groups. Used as a powerful, anti-democratic tool for over a century to reinforce racial hierarchies and stereotypes.

- **It undermines equality:** It weakens democratic principles by vilifying marginalized people.
- **It erodes collective deliberation:** By spreading false ideas, it undermines respect and mutual understanding needed for collective deliberation.
- **It infiltrates education:** When textbooks and curricula present disinformation as fact, rising generations of voters are miseducated about humanity and the world they inhabit.



READ OUR BRIEF

Scan this QR code to read our brief, “Demystifying Racial Disinformation.”

Identify Disinformation

- **Check the source:** Is it a reputable news outlet? Can you find the same story on trusted sites?
- **Check the intent:** Disinformation is designed to trigger emotions. Does it make you feel angry or afraid? Does it make a specific group look bad?
- **Check the “evidence”:** Does the story rely on a single, anonymous source? Are images blurry or out of context? A reverse image search can reveal if a photo is old or from a different event.
- **Check the claim:** If it sounds shocking or too outrageous to be true, it probably is.

Take Action

- **Don’t share, comment, or argue with the post:** Help cut off its supply of attention.
- **Report:** Use the platform’s tools to report the content as misleading or false.
- **Correct privately:** If you see a friend or family member sharing disinformation, send them a private message with a link to a trusted source.

Inform Yourself

- **Seek out reliable sources.** Look for news from trusted professional journalists and nonpartisan organizations.
- **Be skeptical of info that confirms your biases.** A healthy democracy requires us to engage with different perspectives.
- **Be aware of efforts to censor or whitewash history.** Learning the true, complex history of our nation, including both the good and the bad, is essential to building a strong democracy.