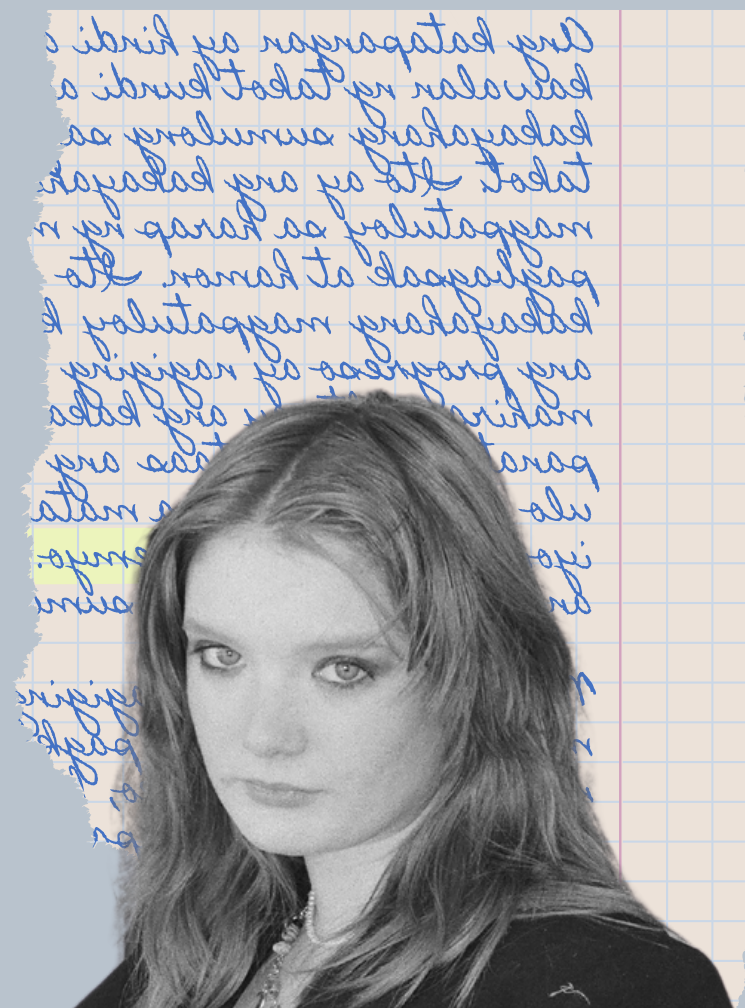




DISINFORMATION AND DEMOCRACY: THE DYNAMICS OF A MODERN DICHOTOMY



A thesis that analyzes
the media's affect on
global democracy »»





THE LINKAGE OF OUR SOCIAL FABRIC

In a rapid world of ever changing technology, integrated, global social webs in the media and on the internet keep us connected. Yet, despite this interactive network being a platform for the sharing of new ideas and solutions, it can also be a sticky web full of modern issues, especially when considering the role that economic and political systems play behind the scenes. This development has created a linkage in our social fabric, but under global capitalism, there must be an analysis of the power structures that affect the flow of information within countries that are in an active fight for true democracy.



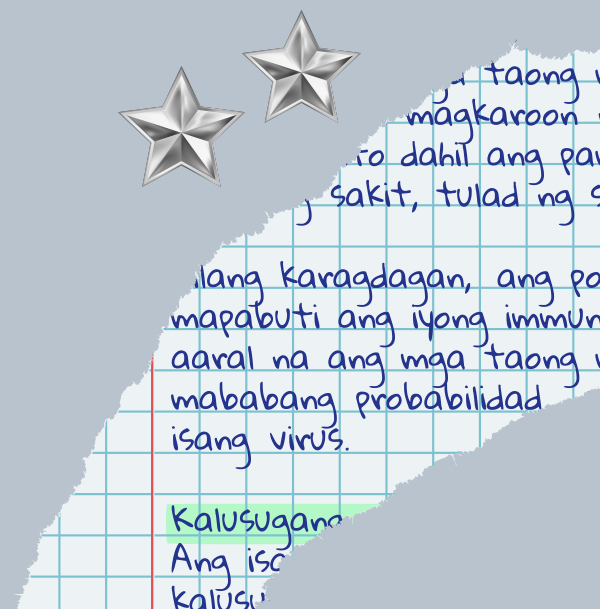
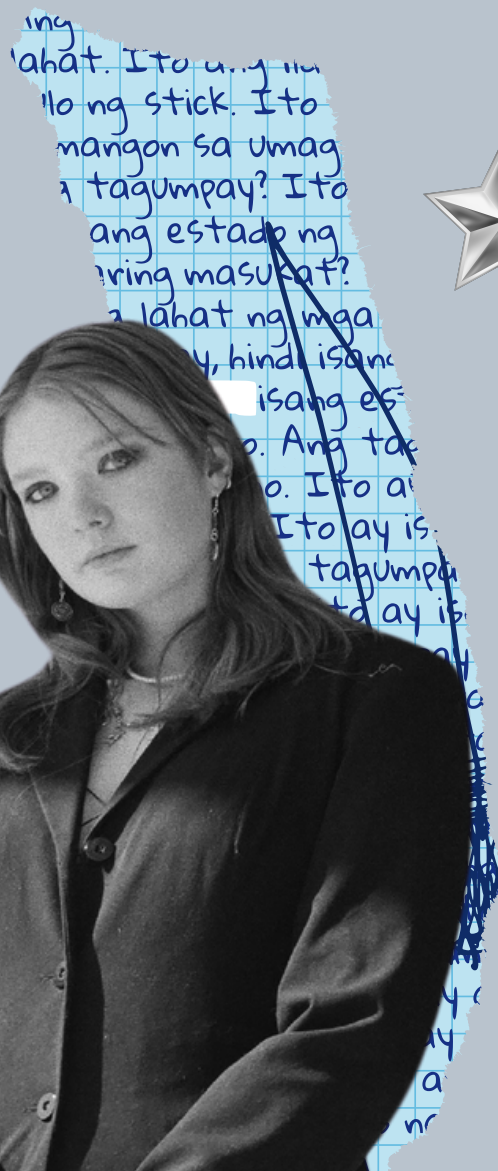


LIVING ★ WITHIN A POST-TRUTH ERA

Disinformation refers to false or misleading information that is intentionally spread with the aim of deceiving people or manipulating their beliefs or actions. In modern media environments, exposure to misinformation can be harmful and can have negative consequences for democratic governance as well as trust in news media. Some scholars have even argued that we are entering a post-truth era with an alternative epistemology and thus an alternative reality. Communications scholars show that polling data suggests we live in a country where a large part of the populace is either unable or unwilling to accurately educate themselves on the reality of their country and leaders. If misinformation and fake news campaigns truly do challenge citizens' attempts to educate themselves, or, even worse, actively manipulate citizens into believing false information, then the very foundations of democracy are at risk.



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A MODERN DICHOTOMY

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Through an analysis of multiple case study examples, the question is raised: How does the spread of information within the media and on the internet affect global democracy? On one hand, the increased spread of information through the media and on the internet has allowed for an increase of global democracy through promoting transparency, bringing citizens together to organize politically, and overcoming traditional power structures. On the other hand, it has led to a decrease in global democracy through discrediting protests, creating echo chambers that increase polarization, and undermining the legitimacy of elections. This concept will be reviewed under a cause-and-effect analysis, as this paper will discuss how the conversation around disinformation will unravel in the future in order to look for solutions.



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CASE STUDIES: ARAB SPRING, U.S. & BRAZIL

The examples I have included are the political uprising of the Arab Spring, the presidential election campaigns of Donald Trump in the United States and presidential election campaign of Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil followed by their subsequent insurrections.

During the Arab Spring, disinformation played a significant role in shaping the narrative and outcomes of the protests. Similarly, political polarization during the 2016 US presidential election as well as the 2018 Brazilian presidential election was influenced by the spread of disinformation which had an impact on a variety of factors, including political rhetoric, media bias, and social media algorithms.





RESPONSIBILITY AND PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS



With the spread of global disinformation at an all time high, it is necessary to ask the question of who is responsible for standing up for the truth by fighting disinformation. Ultimately, this fight is a shared responsibility that involves various stakeholders, including governments, media organizations, technology companies, civil society groups, and individuals. Governments can take steps to regulate the spread of false information and promote media literacy, while media organizations and technology companies can work to verify information and combat disinformation on their platforms.

Governments can also invest in media literacy programs to help citizens recognize and evaluate disinformation. Also, governments can enforce existing laws and regulations that apply to disinformation, such as laws against hate speech, libel, and defamation. Furthermore, governments can encourage transparency and accountability by requiring political campaigns to disclose their funding sources and by creating mechanisms for citizens to report disinformation



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Have any questions about disinformation and democracy?

