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Editors Notes

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Editors Notes

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *The Liminal: Interdisciplinary Journal of Technology in Education*. For our first issue, we put out a call on “How Higher Education Should Respond to Fake News and the Post-Truth World.” Our first issue has two focuses; discussion and pedagogy articles on Information and Technology Literacy and book reviews in our field of technology in education.

As background, fake news is a generic term with a political origin that refers to misinformation, disinformation, misrepresentations, information pollution, false narratives, and conspiracy theories spread on the web. It has become a major issue for educational institutions concerned with students’ ability to distinguish factual from nonfactual information. [Tesich \(1992\)](#), [Keyes \(2004\)](#), and [Crouch \(2004\)](#) argued that we have entered into a post-truth world and political environment in which rhetorical arguments are largely designed to solely appeal to the audience’s emotions (pathos) while ignoring facts and policies, and that fake news are products of the current post-truth moment. [West \(2018\)](#) argued that misinformation is being shared all over the web because people are able to share information widely without having that information pre-vetted by journalists and editors. The threat of fake news to education is so alarming that the majority of sessions presented at the [2018 Modern Language Association \(MLA\) conference](#) were devoted to addressing this issue.

To remedy the fake news problem, educators and universities have emphasized information literacy education mostly taught in first year English Composition courses (FYC), but information literacy alone does not prepare students to identify deep fakes, which are media designed to confuse human sight and hearing for the purpose of evading detection. In most FYC courses, students are asked to apply an evaluation checklist, such as the popular “currency, relevance, authority, accuracy, and purpose” (CRAAP) test, to assess the credibility of web sources. However, the evaluation criteria of the CRAAP test are insufficient for identifying [deep fakes](#) created by AI propaganda machines to mimic the appearance of legitimate sources ([Anderson & Horvath, 2017](#)). In 2017, Stanford conducted a research study on people’s ability to evaluate information accuracy by sampling “45 individuals: 10 Ph.D. historians, 10 professional fact checkers, and 25 Stanford University undergraduates” ([Wineburg & McGrew, 2017, p. 1](#)). Researchers found that professional fact-checkers outperformed Ph.D. historians and Stanford undergraduate students who were more easily manipulated by online content. The result demonstrated that a person with more education on information literacy might not be better at recognizing fake news than professional fact checkers. Providing information literacy education may be one piece of the big puzzle for addressing the fake news crisis in higher education.

We hope that the articles in this issue can provide value to scholars, all educators promoting information and technology literacy in whatever content area they teach and to practitioners, i.e. instructional designers, educational technologists, course developers, and anyone who uses technology in education.

Section 1

The Historical Impossibility of a Post-Truth Society (1)

Not All 'Fake News' Is Equal: How Should Higher Education Respond to Fake News and in the post-Truth Era (2)

Fake News and STEM (3)

Giving Faculty a Public Voice: Higher Education Must Incentivize its Faculty to Publicly Disseminate their Ideas (4)

Discussion of How Higher Education Should Counter Fake News

We invited scholars and educators to discuss how Higher Education should counter fake news. This section is a valuable introduction to how educators in Higher Education are engaging in discourse on how to counter fake news and examines knowing in the digital age. We start our discussion section with Diego Han, who asks a necessary question for us in Higher Education, “Is there an absolute truth?” The next article authored by Thomas E. Keefe takes us further into the exploration of three types of erroneous information - accidental, ignorant, and disinformation with discussion of research, business models of course development, and neo-tribalism. Vikki French gives us the perspective of a science educator encountering pseudoscience in Fake News and STEM. We end this discussion section with Grant K. Kimberlin (2019) who links fake news with incentivizing faculty to publicly disseminate their ideas.

Section 2

Interrogating Fake News in the Composition Classroom: Pedagogical Plans (5)

Teaching Rhetorical Segmentation as a Countermeasure to Post-Truth in the Composition Classroom (6)

Engagement Beyond Fact-Checking: Ciceronian Stasis Theory as a Response to Fake News (7)

Pedagogical Methods to Counter Fake News in Higher Education

In this section, we are introduced to three different pedagogical methods to counter fake news in Higher Education. Each of these practical methods look beyond the CRAAP model to a critical consciousness that is needed by both the educator and the students. Shelly A. Galliah explores the role of the composition instructor in the post-truth environment and shares her pedagogical activities to analyze fake news, deep fakes, and prejudice. John Gagnon reports on an observation in his own rhetoric courses that students believe that the truth was not knowable. In light of this epistemological view, he introduces a method of segmenting information into three steps which allows students to analyze through “measuring velocity, evaluating its ideological modality, and identifying real or imagined public harm”. We end the articles in this issue with David Charles Maynard (2019) using Ciceronian stasis theory which is a method of categorizing arguments or points of contention. Maynard suggests in the Aftermath of Trump’s

Election that rhetoric and writing educators consider this as a starting point to engage with fake news. We would suggest that it could be applied in other disciplines.

Section 3

Algorithms of oppression: Safiya Umoja Noble's powerful exploration of search engines' underlying hegemony and their racist, sexist practices (8)

Review of the Textbook and the Lecture: Education in the Age of New Media by Norm Friesen (9)

Review of Kevin Pugh's Book Computers, Cockroaches and Ecosystems: Understanding Learning through Metaphor (10)

Book Reviews

While our book review section comes last in this edition, we consider it to be a valuable resource that scholars, educators, and professionals can use to ascertain whether the book meets their professional or personal needs. We would like to thank this issue's book reviewers, Shelly A. Galliah, Anish Dave, and Molly A. Smith for their service to the profession.

Finally, we are deeply grateful to the peer reviewers without whose help this issue would not have the rigorous academic attention that befits the concerns of this issue. In putting together this first issue, we want to offer many thanks to the University of Denver, the University of Denver's University Libraries, and the Liminal Editorial Board. Additionally we would like to offer a special thanks to Paul Novak, who found a home for this journal at the University of Denver and Janelys Cox, Collections and Content Management Administrator, from the University of Denver's University Libraries. We would also like to thank everyone from the eLearning Consortium of Colorado who helped produce and share out our first call for proposals. We hope everyone reading this issue will consider contributing an article, book review, field report, and/or op-ed piece for the next issue.