

The Disinformation Age

The intentional spread of falsehoods – and attendant attacks on minorities, press freedoms, and the rule of law – challenge the basic norms and values upon which institutional legitimacy and political stability depend. How did we get here? *The Disinformation Age* assembles a remarkable group of historians, political scientists, and communication scholars to examine the historical and political origins of the post-fact information era, focusing on the United States but with lessons for other democracies. Bennett and Livingston frame the book by examining decades-long efforts by political and business interests to undermine authoritative institutions, including parties, elections, public agencies, science, independent journalism, and civil society groups. The other distinguished scholars explore the historical origins and workings of disinformation, along with policy challenges and the role of the legacy press in improving public communication. This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core.

W. Lance Bennett is Professor of Political Science and Ruddick C. Lawrence Professor of Communication at the University of Washington. The focus of his work is how communication affects democratic life. He has held visiting professorships at Harvard, Uppsala, Stockholm, and Free University Berlin. In addition to honorary doctorates from Uppsala and Bern, he has received career achievement awards from the American Political Science Association, the International Communication Association, and the US National Communication Association. His publications include *The Logic of Connective Action: Digital Media and the Personalization of Contentious Politics* (with Alexandra Segerberg, Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Steven Livingston is Professor of Media and Public Affairs and International Affairs with appointments in the School of Media and Public Affairs (SMPA) and the Elliott School of International Affairs (ESIA) at George Washington University. He is also the founding director of the Institute for Data, Democracy, and Politics (IDDP). He has held visiting professorships and fellowships at Harvard University, the University of Cambridge, the Free University in Berlin, Canterbury University in New Zealand, St. Gallen University in Switzerland, and the Brookings Institution.

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The SSRC is guided by the belief that justice, prosperity, and democracy all require better understanding of complex social, cultural, economic, and political processes. We work with practitioners, policymakers, and academic researchers in the social sciences, related professions, and the humanities and natural sciences. We build interdisciplinary and international networks, working with partners around the world to link research to practice and policy, strengthen individual and institutional capacities for learning, and enhance public access to information.

SSRC Anxieties of Democracy

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With liberal democracies afflicted by doubt and disquiet, this series probes sources of current apprehensions and explores how such regimes might thrive. What array of pressures most stresses democratic ideas and institutions? Which responses might strengthen these regimes and help them flourish? Embedded in the Social Science Research Council's program on "Anxieties of Democracy," the series focuses on how representative institutions – including elections, legislatures, political parties, the press and mass media, interest groups, social movements, and policy organizations – orient participation, learning, and accountability. The volumes in the series further ask how particular policy challenges shape the character of democratic institutions and collective actors, and affect their capacity to address large problems in the public interest. These challenges include, but are not limited to: (1) designing democratic institutions to perform successfully under conditions of social and political polarization; (2) managing and orienting contemporary capitalism and alleviating hierarchies of inequality; (3) addressing questions of membership, including population movements and differentiated citizenship; (4) choosing policies to balance national security and civil liberty; (5) exploring the effects of global climate on citizens and the human impact on the environment; (6) managing the development of media and information technologies to ensure they enhance, rather than degrade, robust pluralism and civil political engagement.

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The Disinformation Age

*Politics, Technology, and Disruptive
Communication in the United States*

Edited by

W. LANCE BENNETT

University of Washington

STEVEN LIVINGSTON

George Washington University



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