

Don't Panic

Care, Trust, and Mutual Aid During an Infodemic

Hosted by

Dr. Joan Donovan ([bio](#))

Research Director, Shorenstein
Center and Director, Technology and
Social Change Research Project

([webinar](#) held on March 27, 2020)



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SHORENSTEIN CENTER

on Media, Politics and Public Policy



(image credit artist [Geoff Mcfetridge](#))

About

The Technology and Social Change (TaSC) Research Project

- + The **Technology and Social Change Research Project** (located at the Shorenstein Center) aims to understand how media manipulation is a means to control public conversation, derail democracy, & disrupt society.
- + The **Media Manipulation Case Book** aims to contribute to public literacy about media manipulation, political polarization, and content moderation.
- + [Learn more](#) about the Technology and Social Change Research Project



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Webinar speakers

- + **Dr. Joan Donovan**, Research Director, Shorenstein Center
- + **Gabby Lim**, Researcher, Technology and Social Change Research Project, Shorenstein Center
- + **Brandi Collins-Dexter**, Senior Campaign Director, Color of Change and Joan Shorenstein Fellow (Fall 2019)
- + **Brian Friedberg**, Senior Researcher, Technology and Social Change Research Project, Shorenstein Center
- + **Dr. Rob Faris**, Senior Researcher, Shorenstein Center
- + **April Glaser**, Investigative Tech Reporter, NBC News and Joan Shorenstein Fellow (Fall 2020)



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Webinar overview

- ✓ **Joan Donovan** explained misinformation and tactics you can use to share the facts
- ✓ **April Glaser** discussed her recent reporting on [mutual aid networks](#)
- ✓ **Brandi Collins-Dexter** described the work of [Color of Change](#) and how civil society organizations are serving communities
- ✓ **Joan Donovan** reviewed recent case studies on COVID-19 media manipulation
- ✓ **Brian Friedberg** and **Gabby Lim** provided tips for improving cybersecurity at home
- ✓ Presentation was followed by a Q&A



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Definitions

Misinformation: spreading false information (e.g. rumors, insults, and pranks)

Disinformation: the creation and distribution of intentionally false information, usually for political ends (e.g. scams, hoaxes, and forgeries)

Infodemic: the World Health Organization (WHO) defines an [infodemic](#) as “an overabundance of information—some accurate and some not—that makes it hard for people to find trustworthy sources and reliable guidance when they need it.”



An illustration of a person with dark skin and short hair, wearing a yellow shirt, holding a blue smartphone. Above their head is a large, light blue cloud-like shape filled with numerous white and light blue speech bubbles of various sizes. The background is a solid light blue.

+ Tips

How to Find Local, Relevant, and Timely Information

Watch local news for instructions and closures:

- ✓ Corroborate information with other sources
- ✓ Sign up for telephone alerts from your city or town

Begin from your local gov websites & social media:

- ✓ Do not believe the comments
- ✓ If officials are responding to rumors, avoid spreading the debunk unless it is clear and necessary

(image credit artist [Kotryna Zukauskaite](#))



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+ Tips

How to Find Local, Relevant, and Timely Information

Do not spread rumors:

- ✓ Sharing unconfirmed rumors contributes to fear, panic and isolation
- ✓ Avoid sharing images of empty shelves, hazmat suits, or people in distress

Follow and share recommendations of CDC and World Health Organization:

- ✓ Post these recommendations in places where friends and family can see them
- ✓ Explain new terms in many languages, “social distancing”

(image credit artist [Kotryna Zukauskaite](#))



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+ Tips

How to Find Local, Relevant, and Timely Information

Focus on facts:

- ✓ Misinformation is meant to trick you, be compassionate if you need to correct someone

Seek out #MutualAID networks:

- ✓ Community organizers are using social media (e.g. [Nextdoor](#), Google Docs, and Instagram) to help deliver food and medical supplies
- ✓ Avoid sending money or donations to unknown entities

(image credit artist [Kotryna Zukauskaite](#))



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Mutual Aid: Journalism

April Glaser

#MutualAID

 NEWS

Communities rally around one another – and Google Docs – to bring coronavirus aid

SHARE THIS — f t e ...

CORONAVIRUS

Communities rally around one another – and Google Docs – to bring coronavirus aid

So many groups have popped up in the past five days that there are now master spreadsheets circulating on Twitter, Nextdoor and Facebook.



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Mutual Aid: Civil Society

Brandi Collins-Dexter

#SymptomsOfInjustice



COLOR
OF
CHANGE



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(image credit artist [Kotryna Zukauskaitė](#))

THE MEDIA MANIPULATION CASE BOOK



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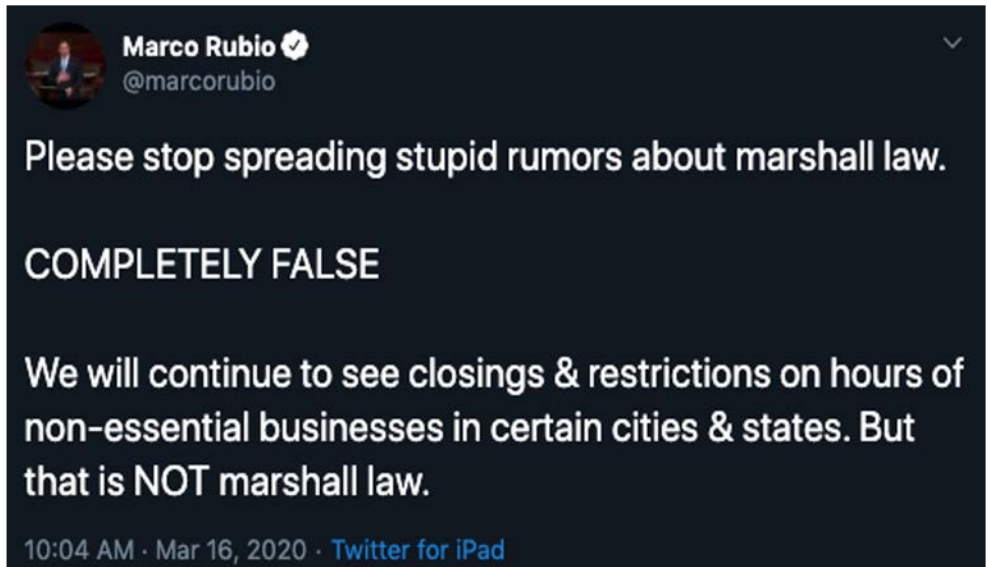
on Media, Politics and Public Policy



(image credit artist [Malika Favre](#))

Misinformation about COVID-19

please be advised, within 48 to 72 Hours the president will evoke what is called the Stafford act. Just got off the phone with some of my military friends up in DC who just got out of a two hour briefing. The president will order a two week mandatory quarantine for the nation. Stock up on whatever you guys need to make sure you have a two week supply of everything. Please forward to your network.



Case: Martial Law Rumors

Tactic: Chain Reaction

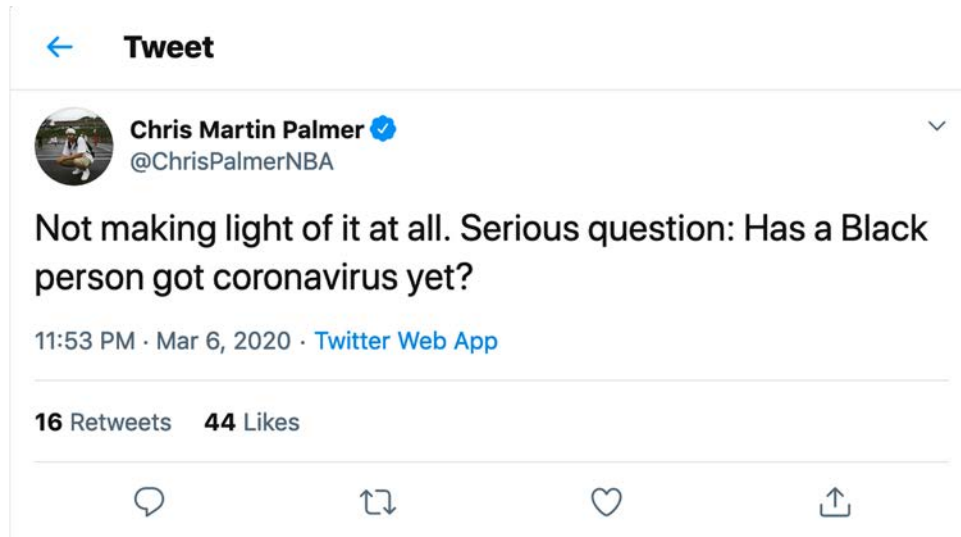


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Misinformation about COVID-19



Case: Immunity to Coronavirus

Tactic: Speculation

Disinformation about COVID-19

+ Media Manipulation Campaign Planning



Dr. Jill Biden @DrBiden · 4h

Joe Biden has Corona virus and even though diarrhea isn't usually a symptom he's covered in it. I can't tell if it came out of his butt or if he was eating it but it's everywhere. He died and now I have to clean it up myself. Disgusting!

1,053 7,466 40.6K

Case: Biden has Coronavirus

Tactic: Leak Forgery

LabCorp Patient Report

Specimen ID: 079-087-0418-0 Control ID: [REDACTED] Acct #: 98322983 Phone: (202) 741-3000 Rte: 00
BIDEN, JOSEPH R. 1209 Barley Mill Rd. WILMINGTON DE 19807 (202) 456-1111
GW Medical Faculty Department of Medicine 2150 Pennsylvania Ave. WASHINGTON DC 20037

Patient Details DOB: 11/20/1942 Age/gender: 77/03/26 Gender: M Race: [REDACTED] Patient ID: [REDACTED]
Specimen Details Date collected: 03/11/2020 21:43 ET Date received: 03/12/2020 Date entered: 03/17/2020 Date reported: 03/17/2020 14:22 ET
Physician Details Ordering: K O'CONNOR Referring: [REDACTED] NPI: 1740233340

General Comments & Additional Information
Clinical Info: CDCDET
Ordered Items: SARS-CoV-2, NAA

TESTS	RESULT	FLAG	UNITS	REFERENCE	INTERVAL	LAB
SARS-CoV-2, NAA	Detected	Critical		Not Detected		01

Client Requested Flag
This test was developed and its performance characteristics determined by LabCorp Laboratories. This test has not been FDA cleared or approved. This test has been authorized by FDA under an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA). This test has been validated in accordance with the FDA's Guidance Document (Policy for Diagnostics Testing in Laboratories Certified to Perform High Complexity Testing under CLIA prior to Emergency Use Authorization for Coronavirus Disease-2019 during the Public Health Emergency) issued on February 29th, 2020. FDA independent review of this validation is pending. This test is only authorized for the duration of time the declaration that circumstances exist justifying the authorization of the emergency use of in vitro diagnostic tests for detection of SARS-CoV-2 virus and/or diagnosis of COVID-19 infection under section 564(b)(1) of the Act, 21 U.S.C. 360bbb-3(b)(1), unless the authorization is terminated or revoked sooner.

01 BN LabCorp Burlington 1447 York Court, Burlington, NC 27215-3361 Dr. Sanjay Nagendra, MD
For inquiries, the physician may contact Branch: 800-222-7566 Lab: 336-436-2762

Date Issued: 03/17/20 14:46 ET FINAL REPORT Page 1 of 1
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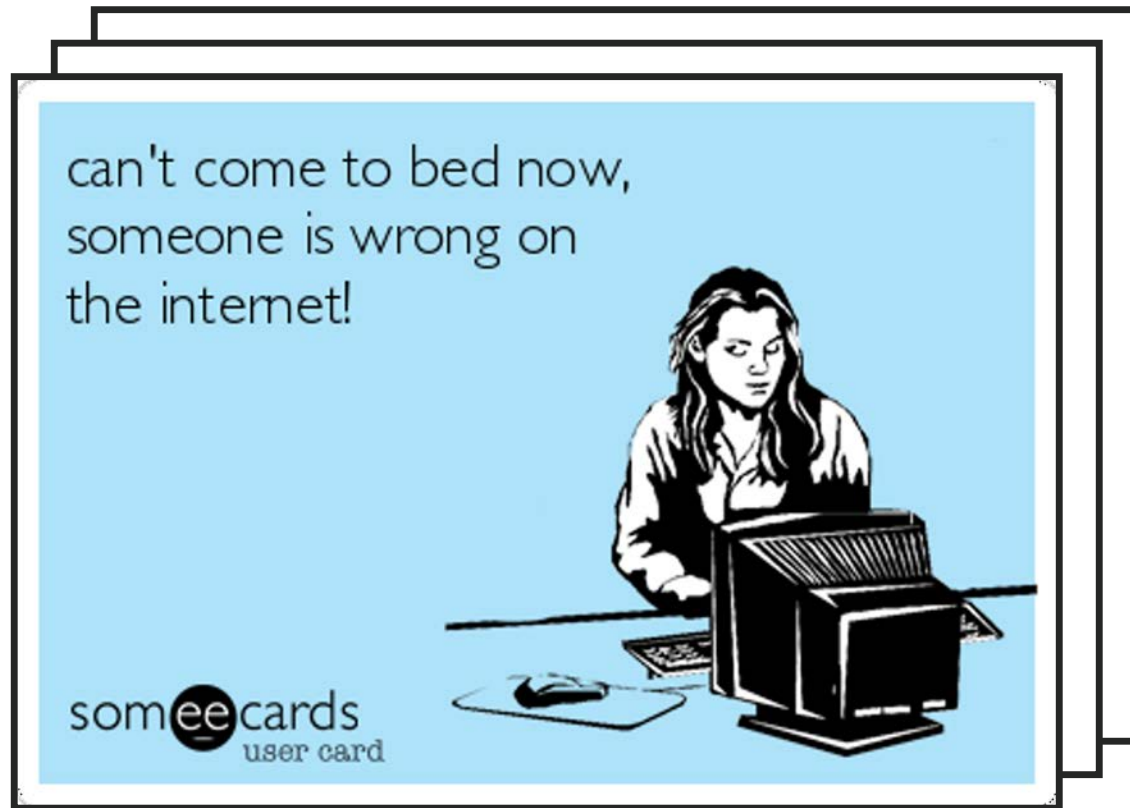


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Maintain your credibility



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COVID-19 & Cybersecurity

Brian Friedberg
and Gabby Lim



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COVID-19 and Cybersecurity

Cyber attacks on the rise

- + There has been an uptick in hacking attempts worldwide.
- + WHO and [CISA](#) report cyber attacks exploiting COVID-19.
- + Scammers are exploiting the infodemic and impersonating the CDC.
- + “Zoombombing” and other trolling campaigns are targeting public officials, educators and journalists.

Tips and resources

- + Protect your accounts with secure password management
- + Be alert for hacking, phishing and impersonation
- + Practice safe browsing
- + Check in on the cyberhealth of friends and family

Upcoming webinars

- 1) **‘Zoombombing’: Media Manipulation Under Quarantine**
- 2) **Democracy After COVID-19**
- 3) **Race, Xenophobia, and COVID-19**
- 4) **Policy Implications of Emergency Orders on Human Rights**
- 5) **Civil Society Responses to Infodemics**

Sign up for [Meme War Weekly](#) and the [Shorenstein Center email newsletter](#) to be notified of the dates of these upcoming webinars



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+ Stay in Touch

Thank you!

Sign up for Meme War Weekly
shorensteincenter.org/memewar

For more information contact
manipulation@hks.harvard.edu

THE MEDIA MANIPULATION CASE BOOK

Learn more about TaSC and the
Media Manipulation Case Book [here](#)

(image credit artist: [Ana Hill](#))



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+ Resources

(image credit artist: [Ana Hill](#))

Additional resources

// [Security Planner](#) (by Citizen Lab)

// [Tips for human rights defenders](#) |
Physical, emotional and digital protection
while using home as office in times of
COVID-19 (by Front Line Defenders)

// [Covid-19 Mutual Aid Networks](#) (by
Massachusetts Jobs with Justice)



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