

FAKE NEWS!! Community Comment Mike Goldsby, May 8, 2017

Fake News. As a child, I remember looking at the covers of The National Enquirer lining the supermarket check-out aisles. I was fascinated with the black and white photographs and stories of alien abductions, bizarre murders and scandals of the rich and famous. My Mom refused to buy me an Enquirer. She told me they were fake.

I assumed she was wrong and just did not want me to know about vampire tribes in the Amazon. I later found an Enquirer at a relative's house, read it cover to cover and realized my Mom was right. It was all made up.

Fast forward to today; the same stuff is going on but on a larger scale. There are actual made up stories, written by people who are paid to put fabricated ideas on the internet. There are news reports that are more speculation than fact. And there are leaders who just make up stuff and call it facts. Or label anything they disagree with as Fake News. The Enquirer is now the Weekly World News, a staunch Trump supporter. The Enquirer headlines are now about Trump capturing Russian Spies in the White House.

Sixty Minutes did a great investigative piece on Fake News, fraudulent stories promoted by websites that mimic real news outlets. Some of these are attempting to skew public opinion or the outcomes of elections. Some are purely in it to make a fast buck. But these stories get distributed on Twitter and Facebook. Some get picked up by more traditional broadcast or print media.

There is a recent story about Melania Trump promoting organic food in the White House and banning all products from Monsanto. There was wild speculation that a young staffer with the Democratic National Committee was murdered because of connections with Wikileaks, trying to cover-up information that would prove there was no collusion between Russia and the Trump campaign. These were all fake.

You can't just decide something is true because you want it to be true or it fits your belief system. But that is what a lot of people do.

I am a big fan of the First Amendment, that whole freedom of the press deal. Sean Hannity recently called for a “Restructuring” of the daily White House media briefings. He felt the media was focusing too much on negative things. He even suggested doing away with the briefings and letting Trump “tweet out his accomplishments instead.”

We need more media coverage, not less. Hannity’s suggestion is un-American, in my opinion. Trump’s Twitter is fine if you want to know about Saturday Night Live or the ratings of the Apprentice reality show. Twitter is great if you want to find out which International leader Trump has insulted. Last week, Trump tweeted nonsense, the phrase “Despite the constant negative press covfefe”

“Covfefe?” Did he fall asleep while he was tweeting? I think we need to stick with the press briefings for the time being. So you have to use some discernment when consuming the news. Check multiple sources. If you only watch Rachel Maddow on MSNBC or solely watch Fox and Friends, you are not getting the whole picture. Mix in some BBC or NPR. Read a variety of sources. Even The Enquirer. Remember, they broke the story on the Bat Boy.

Weekly World News

This is Mike Goldsby with Community Comment.

