

# Navigating Misinformation in One - on - one Interactions

---

March 2026

# Speakers

---

- Stacey Wedlake (she/her), Research Scientist, University of Washington
- Kristen Calvert (she/her), Programs and Partnerships Manager, Dallas Public Library



# Our approach

---

- Research-based educational interventions
- Understand how everyday life contexts influence how people perceive information
- Going beyond discrete digital skills to incorporate the influences of information ecosystems and psychology
- Co-designed approaches that best fit community contexts

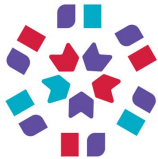
# Partners

---



**CENTER FOR AN INFORMED PUBLIC**

UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON



**Dallas Public  
LIBRARY**



**WebJunction**<sup>®</sup>



**TECHNOLOGY & SOCIAL CHANGE GROUP**

UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON  
Information School



INSTITUTE *of*  
**Museum and Library**  
SERVICES



# Today's Session

---

- Foundations
- Integrating into library practices
- Resources overview
- Q&A



# Foundations



CENTER FOR AN INFORMED PUBLIC  
UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

# Why this matters in libraries

---

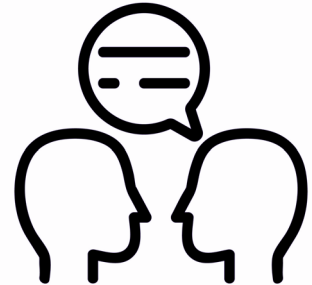
- Patrons share information they hear from news, posts, memes, and rumors every day.
- How we respond can either build or erode trust.
- One-on-one conversations are opportunities to model thoughtful inquiry.



# What is misinformation?

---

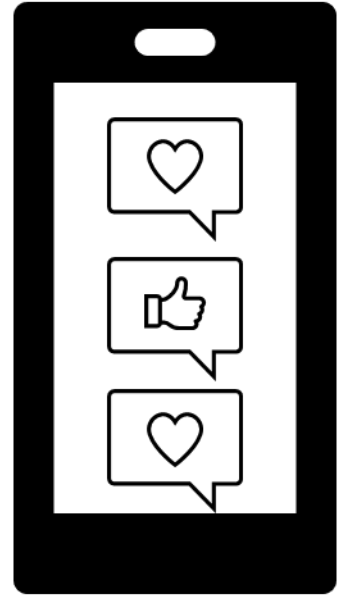
- Information that is false, but not necessarily intentionally false
- Can spread due to confusion, mistakes, or assumptions
- Harmful because it shapes beliefs and decisions



# Everyone is vulnerable to misinformation

---

- Repetition effect
- Confirmation bias
- Trust heuristics
- Time pressure & cognitive load



# Everything is harder now

---

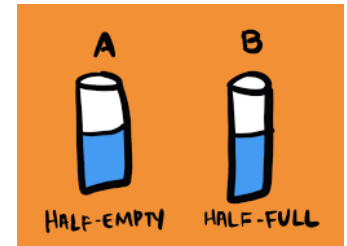
- Information environment increases likelihood of encountering and believing misinfo
- Platforms amplify vulnerabilities
- AI



# Why simple fact checking may not work

---

- People don't interpret facts in a vacuum, they interpret them through mental "frames."
- The same fact can support very different stories depending on how it's presented.
- Frames turn information into meaning, and meaning is what sticks.
- That's why correcting a fact doesn't always change someone's belief.



# Remember that it's library work

---

- Rely upon your existing skills - active listening, empathy, reference desk interviewing
- Focus on library resources and basic information and media literacy skills

**im listening**



# Understand these interactions are different

---

- Often emotionally charged
- Connected to entrenched beliefs



# It's ok if they don't change their mind

---

- Focus on building and/or maintaining trust



W

# Stop, Consider, & Pause

---

- Before engaging:
  - Am I the right person?
  - Is this the right moment?
  - Do I have the emotional capacity right now?
- End if
  - The interaction feels unsafe
  - The patron refuses to engage respectfully
  - The conversation goes from inquiry to confrontation



# Understand

---

- Emotions: what is their emotional state?
- Intentions: what are they trying to achieve?
- Frame: what pre-existing beliefs may they be bringing to this conversation?



# Integrating into library services



CENTER FOR AN INFORMED PUBLIC  
UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

# Meeting People Where They Are

- Reference desk
- Programs
- Displays
- Staff training



Image provided with permission from Dallas Public Library

# Creating a Moment of Connection

---

- Super communicators
- Trusted messengers
- Patience and empathy
- Have resources ready



Image provided with permission from Dallas Public Library



# At the Reference Desk



- An informal teaching setting
- Opportunity to deflect from sharing your own opinion
- Be ready to address why the patron thinks their information is reliable and how that's determined

# Programming, Exhibits & Displays

---

Opportunity for community partnerships

Make it a part of your current programming, or add an event!

Pulitzer on the Road open now!



# Staff Training

---

- Explore the difference between information and media literacy
- Understand core concepts
- The role of AI
- What is the customer really looking for?
- Understand the library's role
- Enhancing reference skills



# Scenario 1: Medical misinformation

---

“I read on Facebook that a man accidentally spilled a bottle of pepto bismol in his aquarium. Now his four pet turtles have turned into giant, pizza-loving vigilantes. Has anyone else experienced this side effect?”



Image via Canva



## Scenario 2: Katy Perry

---

“I saw a photo of Katy Perry at the Met Gala. Her dress was amazing and I’m wondering what designer created it. It looks like there are real butterflies on it.”



AI image created with MidJourney



# Resources



CENTER FOR AN INFORMED PUBLIC  
UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

# Empowering Informed Communities Resource Hub

---

- Resource Packs focused on topics such as
  - **One-on-one conversations**
  - **AI in Everyday Life**
  - **Teen focused and intergenerational event guides**
  - **Games and media literacy**
  - **AND MORE!**

<https://cip.uw.edu/eic/>



# Dallas Public Library Resources

---

- [Deadly Disinformation Crime Scene](#)
- [Digital Literacy program ideas- AI Shakespeare and others](#)
- [Your Vote Rocks: Unity Concert](#)
- [More Unity Concert info](#)
- [Media Makers: Inside the Newsroom](#)
- [More Inside the Newsroom info](#)



# Other great resources

---

- ALA's [Media Literacy Education in Libraries for Adult Audiences](#) (featuring Kristen!)
- [PEN America Trusted Messenger Guidebook](#)
- [Pulitzer on the Road - deadline March 27th!](#)



Credit: UW



# Thank you and Q&A

---

- Stacey Wedlake, [staceyaw@uw.edu](mailto:staceyaw@uw.edu)
- Kristen Calvert, [kristen.calvert@dallas.gov](mailto:kristen.calvert@dallas.gov)



# Self - practice scenario 1: Birds Aren't Real

---



I saw an article about how birds are actually government drones meant to spy on us. This makes so much sense because I never see baby birds anymore. I caught THIS bird and I'm wondering if you have any books on how to dismantle drones?

W

# Self - practice scenario 2: Disney and Drinking Age

---

I saw a news story that Disney is battling the State of Florida to lower the drinking age to 18. That's crazy! Why would they do that? Is it even legal?



Image via Canva



# Self - practice scenario 3: The Pope's new clothes

---



AI image created with MidJourney

I'm Catholic and I saw a Facebook post of the pope dressed up like he's from Hollywood or something. I think that's sacrilegious. What do you think?

