**Why the Media is Desperate to Reclaim its "Gatekeeper" Status for News**

by TDB
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Via The Daily Bell
No one knows what to believe anymore in the age of the internet. Don't you miss the good old days when you could believe that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction when the media reported it?

Everything is fake news, except perhaps the scores of last week's high school basketball game. And maybe the local stuff is what we should be focusing on because that at least we can confirm to some extent.

Okay, maybe the high school sports scores aren't an important focus. But what about holding local politicians and police accountable? Seems like paying attention to local news could do more to improve our surroundings than following the latest Trump news.

Yet even in the age of information, local papers are disappearing. As a direct result, the efficiency of local governments is suffering. A study found that a lack of local newspapers correlates with worse local government.

But has an influx of national news made national government more efficient?

No. It has only thrown more power behind collectivist trends. It has added ranks to the mobs of special interests that continue to expand federal expenditures and debt. National news is basically used as advertising to get the masses to line up behind a particular cause. It is activist journalism, directing the mob rule.

Local news differs because it is mixed with first-hand experience, as well as second-hand reports from witnesses–neighbors and friends. Gossip is one way of regulating this local flow of information. It provides details about who can be believed, and who might embellish.

Locally, there is an organic structure of information flow. This alone doesn't make it accurate, but it gets closer by triangulating from where you get your information.

And the further you get from the ability to triangulate from different sources, the faker news gets. I don't mean different sources, as in, different news outlets. I mean first-hand knowledge mixed with historical context, access to first-hand accounts, information about the reliability of witnesses and experts, and so on.

The further away the news gets from you, the harder it is to mix the news with other intelligence. At that point, it is easier to manipulate the truth.

But even if a piece of news about a far-off event is not attempting to misconstrue the truth, it could do so inadvertently. Without the full context of what is happening, events across the world can give the wrong impression.

Were chemical weapons used in Syria? If so, who used them? And who exactly is fighting who? The conflict in Syria is the perfect example of fake news. You have a complicated event with many different sides and no clear good guys. There are few first-hand accounts from people we know personally. There are some entities who wish to purposely distort the truth and others which want to hide the full extent of their actions.

All I can do to find out is trust various news sources. And that is what I mean when I say everything is fake news. Just picking which events to report on truthfully can end up presenting a basically fake story.

**The Same Old Story**

Years ago it was easy to control the spread of information. There were only a handful of television networks and newspapers. All news passed through the channels of official gatekeepers before making its way to the consumer.

But already the government was creating and disseminating fake news through programs like Project Mockingbird. The CIA had thousands of journalists on its payroll to disseminate false news and bury certain real reports.

So the government's problem is not fake news. Governments are concerned that they have lost their monopoly control of fake news. They were the gatekeepers.

> Social media "has made things much worse," because it "offers an easy route for non-journalists to bypass journalism's gatekeepers, so that anyone can 'publish' anything, however biased, inaccurate or fabricated," says John Huxford, an Illinois State University journalism professor.

> "*Journalism's role as the 'gatekeeper' of what is and isn't news has always been controversial, of course. But we're now seeing just how bad things can get when that function breaks down.*"

Are we seeing how bad things can get? It seems that there was always fake news, but at one time, everyone believed it. Now there is fake news, and no one trusts any news. That is a better situation to be in. It is the rejection of manipulation by the elites, the gatekeepers.

Distrust in unverifiable news is better than blind trust in government propaganda. Better to hold agnostic beliefs about certain national events, versus believing what the government feeds us.

My default position is distrust of the government. So whatever narrative they seem to be pushing, if not outright false, has a purpose behind it. They are trying to shape the behavior of the masses and very rarely is this beneficially to individuals.

> *Huxford said many internet users are not adept at telling fake news from the real thing, making the role of major news organizations critical.*

> "*This is why Trump falsely labelling the mainstream media as 'fake news' is so toxic," he said.*

> "*It means that, at a time when there is a lot of fabrication and falsehoods swirling through the system, the credibility of the most reliable sources of news is being undermined."*

As someone who believes in a grassroots approach to solving problems, starting with individuals, I am naturally averse to the idea of controllers from on high making decisions for me.

And that is why I think it is beneficial to have more distrust in news the further it gets from you, and rather use what you can confirm to live personally as you see fit.

Probably the best example of this is people signing up for the military directly after 9/11 to go kick some al-Qaida ass. They trusted the national news to deliver accurate facts about what happened, and how to stop it from happening again. And they threw themselves into the fight without having an accurate picture of why, or how the war they were signing up for would help.

In the end, they may have ended up supporting a worse regime than the one they were fighting.

Never knowing what you can believe is not ideal. But it beats a false sense of security that the news you get is real. It isn't. And if people are finally waking up to that, perhaps they will stop lining up to fight other people's wars.

You don't have to play by the rules of the corrupt politicians, manipulative media, and brainwashed peers.