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The World is Starting to Miss Their Information

At the rate at which people are putting their lives in the hands of the quickly advancing AI and technology, in about twenty years fifty percent of the world's population will be robotic citizens or legitimate robots. From college students paying ChatGPT to write their nursing papers to influencers posting their fit bodies next to delicious ice cream cones, only to throw the full ice cream out when the camera is not looking, the future is truly unpredictable. AI, technology, and social media allow everyone, and any one person, from any background to alter the truth and change their identity, as well as how much and little of their life they people see. Foreign dictators and their governments, such as North Korea's Kim Jong Un, have begun to change even the most seemingly insignificant details, that one might miss unless they are looking for it, such as editing out citizens who were not in proper formation while honoring Kim Jon II, more commonly known as Snow-Washed by news outlets such as *NPR*. With developing technology, government corruption, and the continuous rise of social media platforms and their abuse of algorithms and tracking, misinformation has plagued the world, through the internet, spreading through feeds and 'for you pages' like wildfire, leading to heightened tension throughout a multitude of crowds, lack of independent thinking and fact-checking, and influencing behaviors such as political stances and individual style and identity.

As previously mentioned, North Korea's 'Snow-Washed' incident, misinformation is not only exclusive to Americans. Although commonly viewed as some of the more uneducated and

typically ignorant people of the world, misinformation is the mitochondria of the human race's cell, it runs their lives, and half the time one will not even notice it. Not to say every one person believes in misinformation, however with such a technology-driven society, even those who see right through misinformation, or believe they do, still consume it. Perhaps one might see an AI-generated article, one that perhaps an older family member may fall for, that article, whether or not one believes it, has plagued their brain, and caused them to feel something, even the smallest most ingenuous feeling. Even though an article may be clearly fake, or a picture is clearly edited, there will always be misinformation, and unfortunately, a great deal of people are not able to see through it, as the American Psychology Association's census revealed, "Misinformation has been described as a global harm, but the amount of misinformation encountered by people is difficult to determine. Estimates indicate that it accounts for 0.2% to 29% of overall news consumption, but the proportion may be higher for specific groups or for topics such as health" (APA). With society growing accustomed to relying on technology for almost every part of life, from waking one up for the work day, to reporting one about a nearby danger, to even allowing one to easily access loved ones miles away, misinformation infecting about 29% of news coverage is devastating. In a world where self-driving cars are being built, spaceships have been launched into space, and modern medicine has saved the lives of billions, it is almost unbelievable how easily and how often misinformation is spread, and how little of a solution has been created.

A democratic society is one where the citizens of said society have control. America itself is a *Constitutional Federal Republic*, a form of government where the citizens and all elected officials are to obey the federal government and the United States Constitution, a document of supreme law. What allows America to be described and often categorized as a

democracy is its democratic system, where the people do not make every decision, but elect officials of the popular choice to make the decisions for them. As the National Public Radio reports, “An NPR survey conducted earlier this year found that 64% of the American population believes that U.S. democracy is in crisis and is at risk of failing. A strong indication that the situation is getting worse and not better is that over 70% of respondents in that poll said that democracy is more at risk of failure now than it was a year ago.” It is remarkable that a society, typically deemed and heavily considered a democracy, is in fear of the loss of said democracy. If America were a true democracy, more than half of the American public would not fear the loss of it. Furthermore, with the rapid spread of misinformation, it is no wonder Americans fear the loss of their democracy, as half of the news outlets Americans used to rely on have turned into political tabloids for whichever corrupt political party and its candidate is funding them.

Social media outlets are included in the spread of misinformation caused by whichever political party pays for censorship and rigged algorithms to manipulate the developing brains of the future leaders of America. From Instagram to TikTok, to X, the APA claims, “Algorithms that track user engagement to prioritize what is shown tend to favor content that spurs negative emotions like anger and outrage. Overall, most online misinformation originates from a small minority of ‘superspreaders,’ but social media amplifies their reach and influence” (APA). When social media first spiked in popularity, such as MySpace, YouTube, and Facebook, its ability to reach a multitude of different people all over the globe was renowned and insanely powerful. Since then, the dangers that come with social media, and such powers have become apparent, whether it’s child predators, scammers, hackers, or the spread of information, the creation of social media is the modern-day equivalent of opening Pandora’s box. Wherever there lies the chaos of the world, hope will light the room, and misfortune will form as a shadow. In this case,

hope is the benefits of social media, such as keeping up with family miles away, the spread of help and awareness such as GoFundMe's, or having a never-ending way to market your creativity, but with everything that is on the line, there is a need for balance.

Contrary to popular belief, and the constant publicized fear of Americans losing their freedom is not selective to Americans, according to the Council of Europe's website, the European Union itself struggles with the spread of misinformation as well, "Two-thirds of EU citizens report coming across fake news at least once a week. Over 80% of EU citizens say they see fake news both as an issue for their country and democracy in general. Half of EU citizens aged 15-30 say they need critical thinking and information skills to help them combat fake news and extremism in society" (Council of Europe). One may have been able to argue that it is a national problem, and gullible Americans believe in freedom in a society formed by do's and do not's, however, misinformation, and its rapid spread is a worldwide issue. Technology, social media, and AI are accessible to countries all over the globe, providing their benefits and disadvantages to countless societies.

As mentioned beforehand, North Korea faced a controversy of its own, regarding leader Kim Jong Un, reportedly ordered that at Kim Jong II's funeral, all citizens out of a neat formation captured in the photo, now referred to as "Snow-Washed", be edited out. The National Public Radio claims, "As reported by The New York Times Lens blog, that the Associated Press noticed the infraction by comparing it with a similar image released by Kyodo News, a Japanese agency. The two images were taken seconds apart, revealing what's clearly a photographic infraction by the North Korean news agency" (NPR). North Korea and Kim Jong Un have received plenty of backlash for their dictatorship. Concern for citizens of the country, as the extent of Kim Jong Un's dictatorship has become deadly, and the censorship and misinformation

enforced in North Korea alone, only feeds the fear of Americans, Europeans, and citizens all over the world.

As technology continues to develop, billionaires empty their wallets to keep United States Government officials quiet, and countless novel and classic social media outlets are added to the AppStore's "trending" column, the abuse of money, power, artificial intelligence, alongside the world wide web. Misinformation will forward more persist like cancer, spreading across rigged algorithms, picking away at the future of independent thinking and self-identity, and steering directly toward the future mass commotion, casualties, and a decrease in human intelligence, as AI takes over. Inherently, humans, whether or not they execute their motives well, seek the best for themselves, the world, and/or the people they care about. Whether it means fighting against ten or ten thousand people, the average person will always believe strongly in one thing at some point in their life, and fight for whatever they believe in until they are bloody and bruised. One's utopia may be another's greatest nightmare, however, the path the internet and the naivety of the human population have begun to pave for the general public, is leading straight into a general dystopian society all across the board. A world where robots eat better than humans and Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* becomes reality is in the future, as long as global warming does not blow the earth up before technology can extend that far, or medical school students do not cut out the wrong organ during surgery because they had Chat GPT write their final thesis on basic human anatomy. There is no telling where the advancement of technology may take the world, it may slow down, an asteroid may destroy Earth tomorrow, or technology may take over, yet whichever fate this world meets, from what causes could be prevented, only so few of them were.

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