



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on November 29, 2016

## Please Read This Fake News

Caution: You are now reading fake news.

At least, that very well could be the conclusion of a Massachusetts college professor and her establishment-media allies.

At issue is a [list of news sites](#) compiled by Melissa Zimdars, an associate professor of communication and media at Merrimack College. Titling her selection “False, Misleading, Clickbait-y, and/or Satirical ‘News’ Sources,” Zimdars says she wants to help people separate fact from fiction. Yet on her list of 100-plus outlets are legitimate conservative sites such as *Breitbart*, *Red State*, the *Blaze*, Project Veritas, and *WorldNetDaily*.



In fairness, Zimdars does include some obscure leftist sites on her list, as well as better known liberal outlet *Rawstory*. Some sites listed actually have peddled fake news, and some of [her advice](#) is sound (e.g., “Use of ALL CAPS can also be a sign that the source you’re looking at should be verified and/or read in conjunction with other sources”). And having read an article she subsequently [wrote](#) at the *Washington Post*, I believe she’s sincere — even if, to a great degree, sincerely wrong.

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The problem is that establishment media (e-media), such as the *Los Angeles Times*, [seized](#) upon the story. Hey, it’s not every day you get to discredit your competition with an academic imprimatur. So Zimdars’ list, crafted for her students and some other interested parties, went viral. This prompted a backlash — the professor says she has been harassed and that her personal information was shared on the Internet — inspiring her [to remove her list](#). No matter, though. It now has its own [Wikipedia page](#).

Yet there’s a far bigger problem. As the *Washington Times*’ Kelly Riddell [put it](#) in the November 24 article “Using fake news against opposing views,” “What worries me the most about fake news, isn’t that it’s fake, it’s that it’s being used by the left to try to silence opposing views.” Zimdars did point out that “not all of these sources are always or inherently problematic, neither are all of them fake or false” and that they “should be considered in conjunction with other news/info sources due to their tendency to rely on clickbait headlines or Facebook descriptions, etc.” Yet by lumping legitimate news organs she simply disagrees with in with actual purveyors of fake news, she has facilitated the mainstream media’s scheme “to broaden the definition of ‘fake news,’” as *Reason* [put it](#).

*Reason* then illustrated the problem: “So what happens if Facebook staff were to look at Zimdars’ list and accept it and decide to censor the sharing of headlines from these sites? It’s within Facebook’s power and right to do so, but it would be a terrible decision on their end. They wouldn’t just be preventing the spreading of factually incorrect, fabricated stories; they would be blocking a lot of opinionated analysis from sites on the basis of their ideologies.”



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In point of fact, this plays perfectly into Facebook's biases. The company, which some have dubbed Fakebook, was [already caught red-handed earlier this year censoring conservative news sites](#). It had pledged to reform itself, but now it can engage in the censorship with the "moral" justification that it's merely "protecting" people from fake news.

Yet it gets even worse. Zimdars writes in her *Post* piece, "Fake news is cheap to produce — far cheaper than real news, for obvious reasons — and profitable. The profitability of these sites is precisely why Facebook and Google are [looking for ways to prevent them](#) from receiving advertising revenue. It's a 'starve the beast' strategy, so to speak."

This should alarm every Truth-loving American. It's hard enough making money in the alternative media as it is, and now these leftist companies want to make it impossible. And most likely not for *all* alternative sites — only the ones called "rightist."

Of course, the e-media love this idea, which could be part of the reason they gleefully ran with Zimdars' list. No advertising money for alternative voices=no alternative voices=no competition for the e-media. Then we're closer to where we were in the 1970s, when the e-media had a monopoly over the hearts and minds of Americans.

While "fake news" is a problem, far worse than completely fabricated stories is clever e-media manipulation wearing a cloak of legitimacy. Note that the e-media's election-year reportage has been wholly scandalous, with revelations that its journalists actually [colluded](#) with the Clinton campaign. Moreover, it steadfastly refused to cover last year's [Planned Parenthood scandal](#), or the Democrat figures and operatives [caught on hidden camera](#) engineering [vote fraud](#) and [admitting](#) they pay "protesters" to incite violence.

Not only has the e-media suppressed truth, however, it has also spread lies. Famed newsman Dan Rather was fired by CBS in 2004 after it was discovered he [peddled forged documents](#) damaging to President G.W. Bush (this subterfuge was uncovered by the ~~fake~~ alternative media, mind you). In 2014, NBC [maliciously edited](#) George Zimmerman's 911 call, which served to make him appear a "racist" and helped foment violence-spawning anger. And the media eagerly spread the lie that WWII-era pontiff Pope Pius XII was a Nazi collaborator, but ignored the 2007 revelation that this character assassination was [the result of a Soviet disinformation campaign](#).

Such "real news" is nothing new, either. In the 1930s, *New York Times* Moscow correspondent Walter Duranty [wrote](#) Stalinist propaganda, reporting there was no famine in the Soviet Union — while 25,000 peasants a day were being starved to death.

So will the real fake news please stand up?

It should be noted that at issue here are complaints about market determinations. Of course, the market isn't perfect; it can't be better than the flawed beings it comprises, human beings. Its power is why quasi-literate rap thugs can make millions and porn is a billion-dollar industry (and why the e-media still exists). Yet here we can use a twist on that famous Winston Churchill line about democracy: The competitive market is absolutely the worst system in the world. Except for all the rest.

The market is, in reality, democracy in economics: Every time a consumer buys a product or service, he's essentially "voting" for more of it. The alternative is economic autocracy, where an oligarchy of (no doubt) pseudo-elites determines what we "need." Then you have "Sanders selection," which we saw a glimpse of when socialist senator Bernie Sanders [announced](#) last year that we "don't necessarily need a choice of 23 underarm spray deodorants." How many do we need, Bernie?



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And how many news outlets would you decide we need?

(Perhaps it would be like that [old Yakov Smirnoff joke](#): “In Russia, we only had two TV channels. Channel One was propaganda. Channel Two consisted of a KGB officer telling you: ‘Turn back at once to Channel One!’”)

Unfortunately, this is no joke. Since leftists’ agenda has no basis in Truth and can’t be defended substantively, they use other tactics to “win” (terminate, really) debates. One of these is the Saul Alinsky-prescribed tactic of mockery: Just treat opponents as so ridiculous, so crazy, that people may get the idea they should be thought of as mental cases. It’s not as effective as when the Soviets locked dissidents up in psychiatric institutions, but it’s the next best thing for neutralizing opposition.



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