

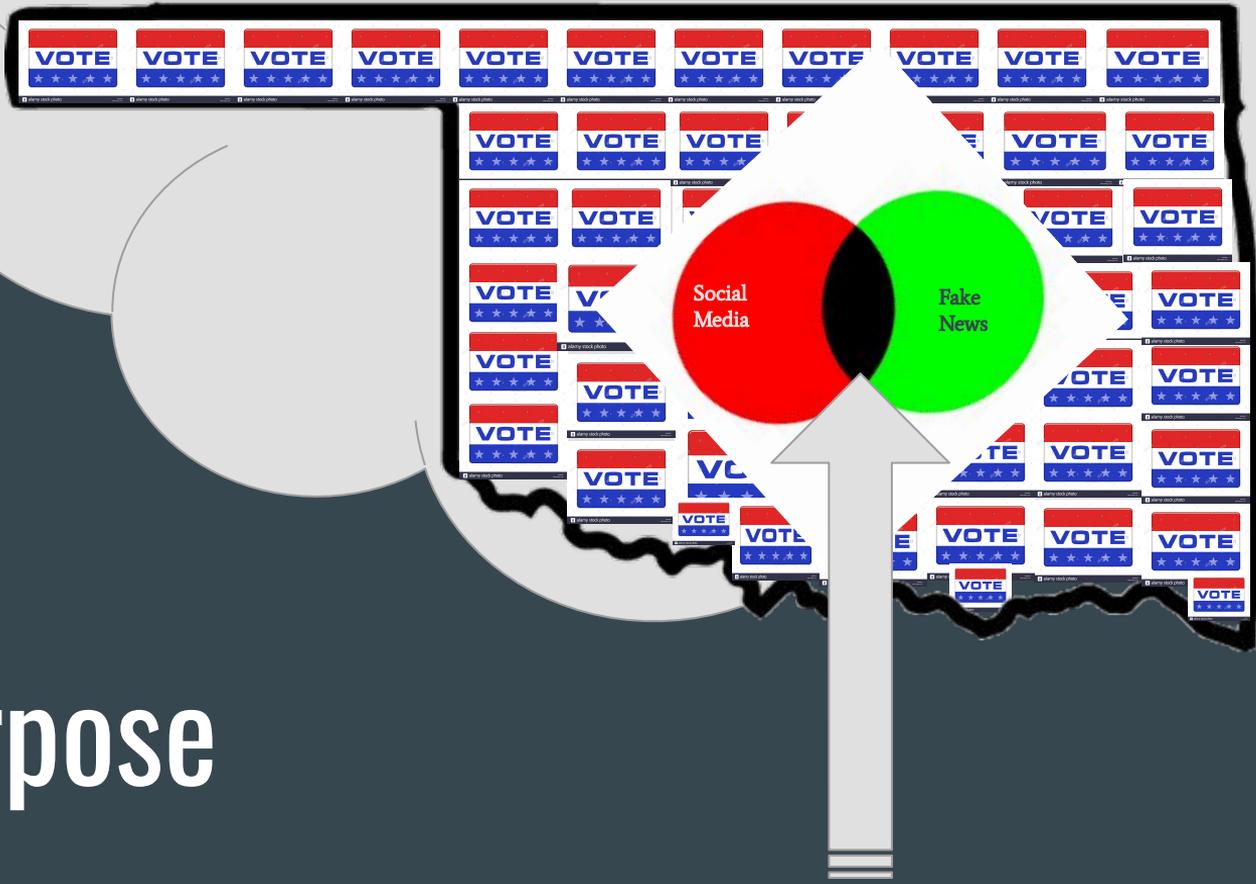
# Political “Fake News”

## Perceptions of Oklahoma Voters



Research Presentation  
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# Purpose



# Research Questions

1) How do Oklahoma voters experience political “fake news” on social media?

2) What impact do they believe fake news is having on political beliefs and voting?

3) What interventions, if any, to curb the spread of “fake news” would Oklahoma voters support?

# Literature Review

Smith and McMenemy's research on young people's perception of political information is the primary model of how to approach this subject (2017).

Mihailidis and Viotty's work in American Behavioral Scientist provided the bulk of the information regarding media and digital literacy and its role in combating "fake news" (2017).

Research Design

Exploratory

Multi-Layered

Qualitative

# Methodology

**Fieldsite**

**Methods**

**Sampling**

**Used**

**Strategy**

# Data Collection Instruments

- Personal Observation
- Interview
- Focus Group

# Personal Observations

In-Person

*Meeting of the Kiowa County Democratic Leaders*

Online

*Comments & discussion on one specific political article on Oklahoma news blog The Lost Ogle*

# Interviews

Semi-structured

Open-ended

# Focus Group

7 Participants

1 hour

# Data Coding and Analysis

Transcriptions and Fieldnotes of:

- Personal Observations
- Interviews
- Focus Group

1. Social media
  - a. Platforms
  - b. Frequency of Use
  - c. Amount of “Fake News”
2. “Fake news”
  - a. Defining
  - b. Examples
3. Effects of “fake news”
  - a. In Oklahoma politics
  - b. Overall
4. Ideas for reducing effects of “fake news”
  - a. Responsibility
  - b. Channel
  - c. Audience

# Definition of “Fake News”

Common themes found through open-ended questioning:

- Intent to mislead
- Exaggeration/slant of facts
- Propaganda
- Seeking to influence larger opinions
- Poor sources
- Biased
- Confirming existing beliefs
- Not factual
- Bad sources
- Celebrity endorsement or support

# Exploratory Results

Most people said that 10-50% of the news they see each day is on social media.

People estimate anywhere from 1-75% of posts on social media are “fake news”.

90% of people believe that “fake news” has impacted Oklahoma voters, as well as society overall.

# Exploratory Results (cont.)

Reasons given for the impact of “fake news” are:

- Lack of fact checking
- Following trusted people/groups unquestioningly.

About a third of participants believe young people are particularly vulnerable to “fake news”.

People believe responsibility for “fake news” lies with

- Social media platforms
- The Government (FCC, regulation, fines)
- Media
- Journalists
- Users



## CONCLUSIONS

- Overwhelmingly, people do believe that “fake news” on social media has impacted political beliefs and voting in Oklahoma.
- Common beliefs re: why “fake news” has become such a big problem include:
  - People do not fact check every item they read or share
  - Many people unquestioningly believe information shared by certain people and groups.

# Conclusions

# Responsibility

- Social media platforms
- Media in general
- Government
- Journalists
- Users

# Teaching

- Fact-checking
- Critical thinking
- Source verification

Elementary  College  
+ General Public

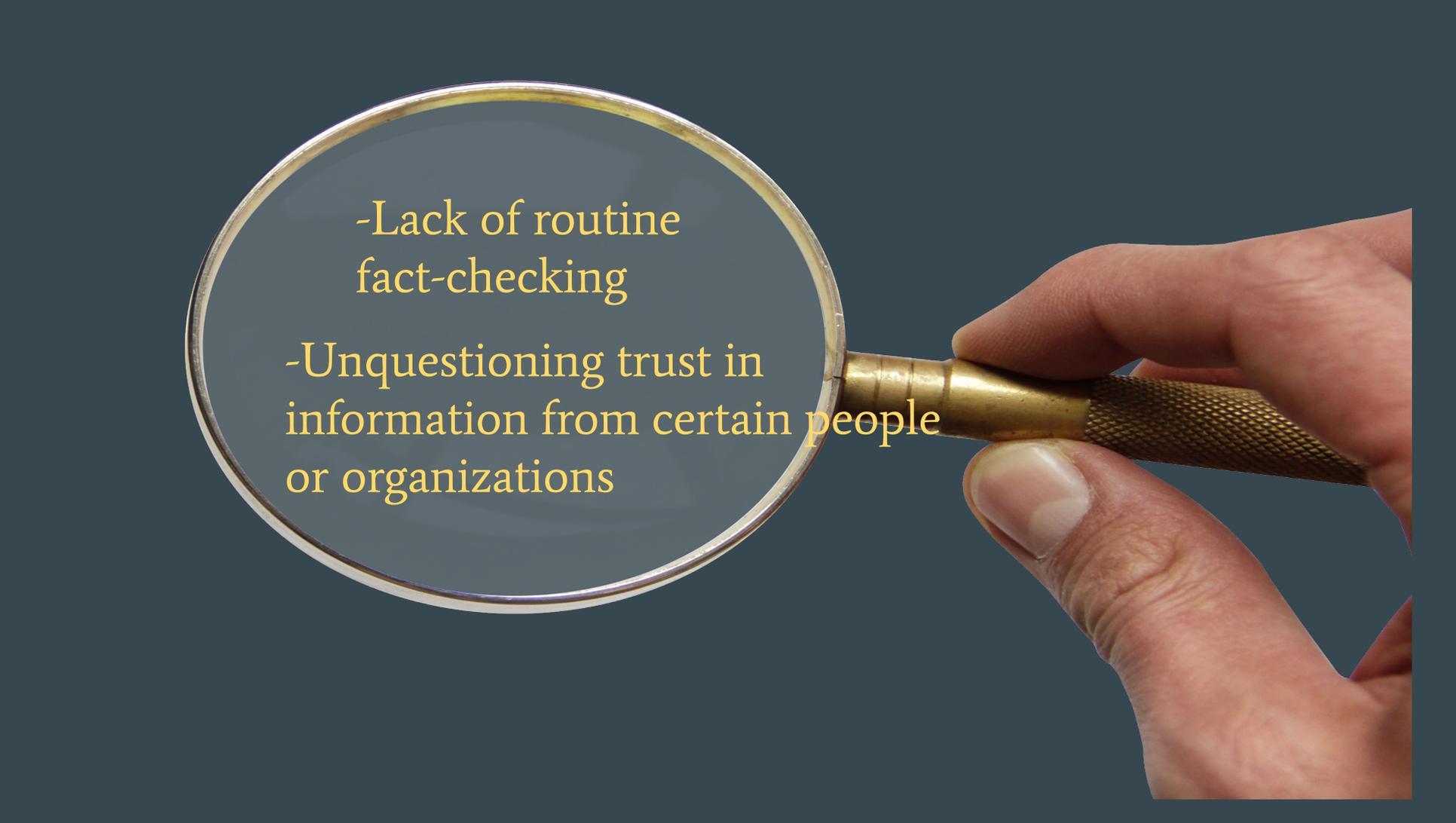
# Implications & Next Steps

# 10-50%

People are getting a significant portion of their news and information from social media.



How to  
specifically  
identify and  
quantify “fake  
news”?

A hand holding a magnifying glass over text. The magnifying glass is held by a hand on the right side of the frame, with the thumb and index finger gripping the handle. The handle is made of a textured, golden-brown metal. The lens of the magnifying glass is positioned over the text on the left side of the frame. The background is a solid, dark blue color.

-Lack of routine  
fact-checking

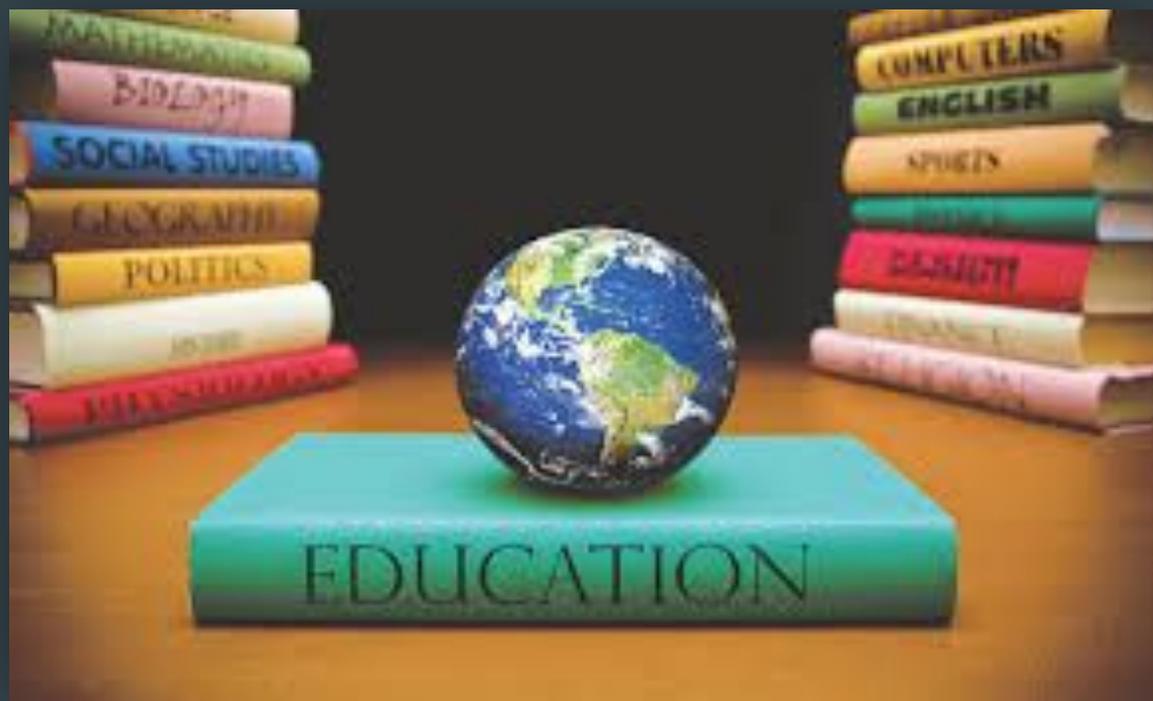
-Unquestioning trust in  
information from certain people  
or organizations



# TO DO LIST

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

?





How to educate  
the general  
public about  
“fake news”?

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