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Welcome to Blue Book TV

CNA

Agenda

- **Opening Remarks**
- **Blue Book Project Update**
- **Blue Book TV Episode One: Mis/Dis/Mal-information**
- **Questions**

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Opening Remarks

Shawn Talmadge, State Coordinator

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Blue Book Project Updates

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Blue Book Project: Get to Know Us!

Learn about the project:

- VDEM Blue Book Overview

Catch up on Phase 1:

- Lessons Learned from Phase 1

Find more information about MDM:

- How to Increase Resilience Against Disinformation
- MDM Information 101 for Emergency Managers

Find other items of interest:

- Overview and Application of the Defense Production Act
- Civil Defense: From the Cold War to Contemporary Threats
- Law Enforcement Support to Military Installations

Where to find us: https://www.vaemergency.gov/blue-book

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Current Efforts: Mission Area Workshops

What: Focused scenario-based activities with subject matter experts

When: December - March

Why: Discuss anticipated challenges and identify potential solutions, workarounds, or adjustments to ensure the mission can continue in a degraded environment.

First Up:

- Alternative Sources for Emergency Communications
- Alternative Mechanisms for Water and Wastewater Systems
- Food and Water Supply Chains and Distribution
- Public Information

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Mis/Dis/Mal-information: How we are vulnerable to MDM, and how we can protect against it

Virginia Department of Emergency Management

CNA

Dr. Meg McBride

- **Expertise on terrorism, extremism, radicalization, and disinformation**
- **Will direct DVERT, the new Center of Excellence for Domestic Radicalization and Violent Extremism**
- **Formerly a research associate at Harvard University's T.H. Chan School of Public Health and an intelligence analyst at the National Security Agency**
- **Formal education:**
  - PhD in religious studies from Brown University
  - MAs from Johns Hopkins University and St. John's College
  - BA in Psychology from Drew University

The studies on which this presentation is based were funded by CNA and by the Office of Naval Research.

The views, opinions, and findings contained in this presentation are CNA's, and should not be construed as representing the official position of the Department of the Navy.

This research was conducted by an interdisciplinary team including:
Dr. Meg McBride, Dr. Heather Wolters, Dr. Sam Plapinger,
Kaia Haney, Pamela Faber, Dr. Patricia J. Kannapel, Stephanie Stapleton,
Kasey Stricklin, Dr. Neil Carey, and Dr. Bill Rosenau.

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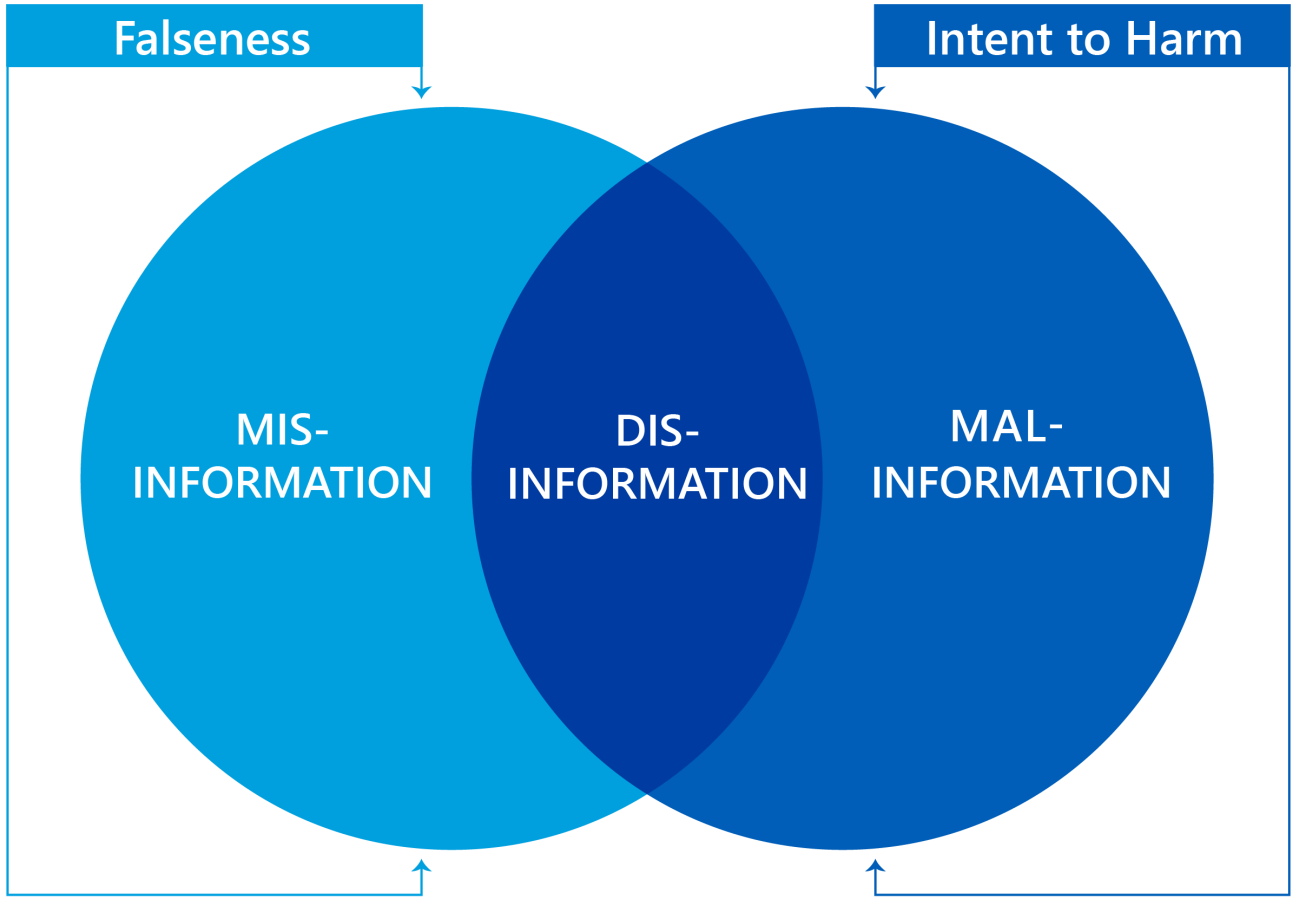
What is MDM?

What is MDM?



Source: https://www.ourcivicgenius.org/learn/misinformation-vs-disinformation-whats-the-difference/

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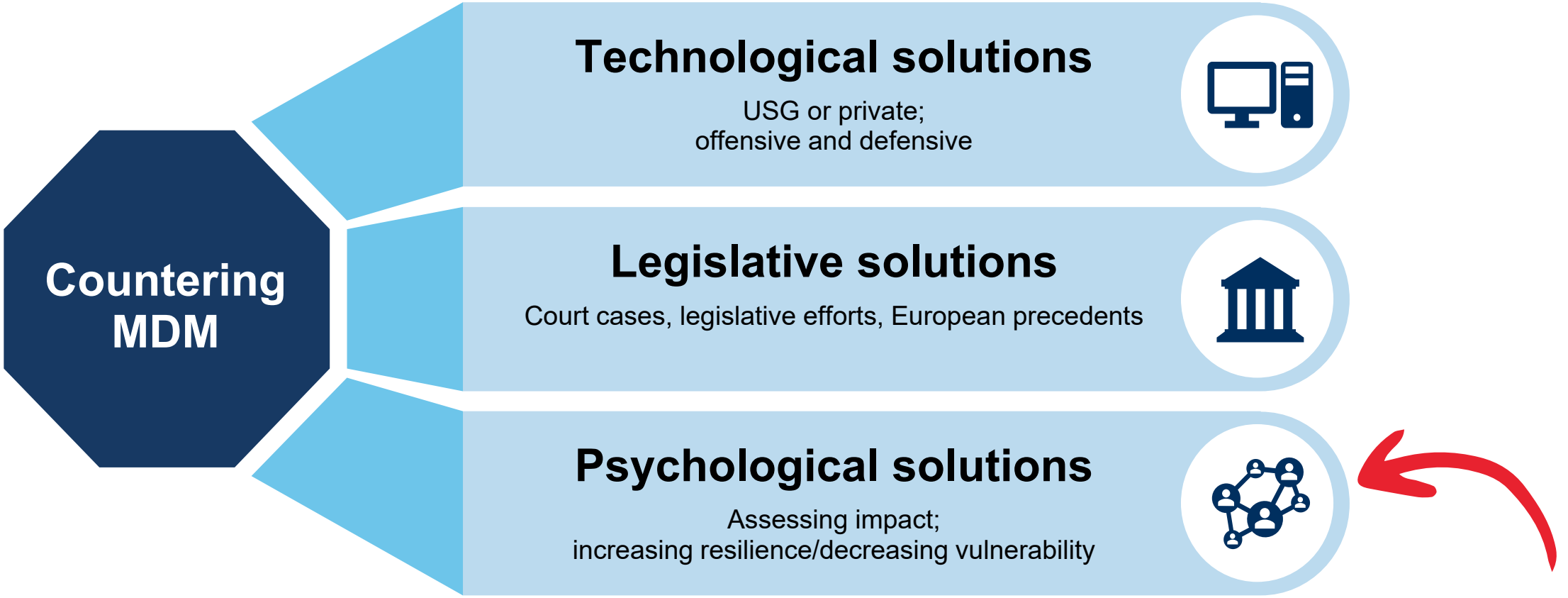
Mis-/Dis-/Mal-information



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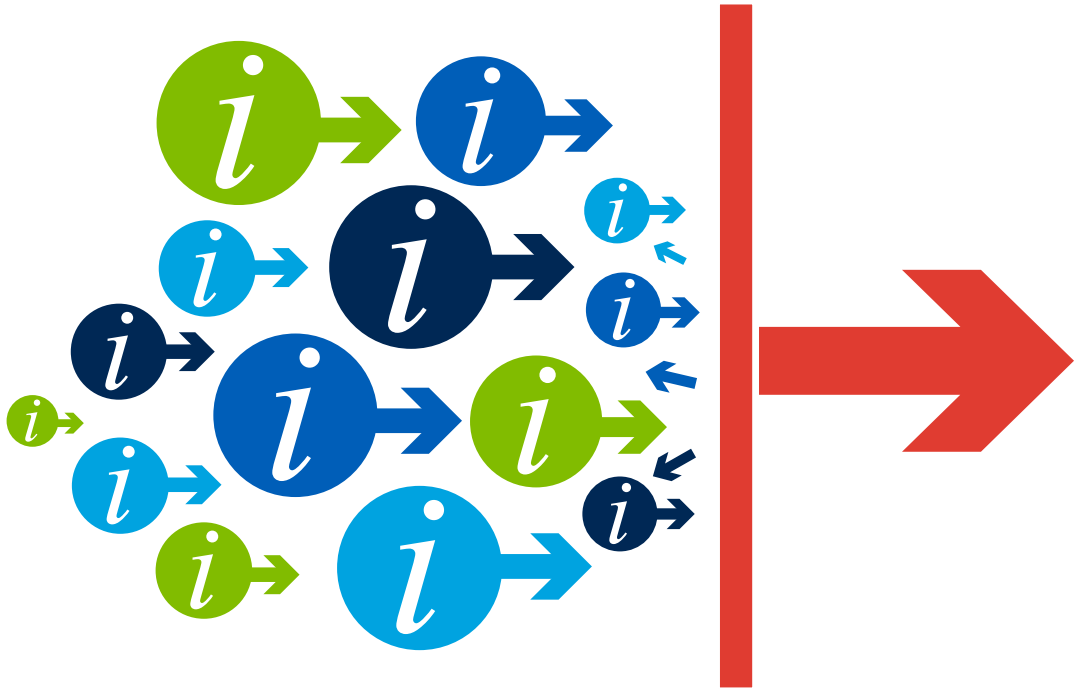
Why are we vulnerable to MDM?

How does MDM work?

People are inundated with information on a daily and hourly basis.



It is simply not possible to attend to all of the data that comes our way.

MDM works by taking advantage of the normal and healthy psychological mechanisms that help us process this data.

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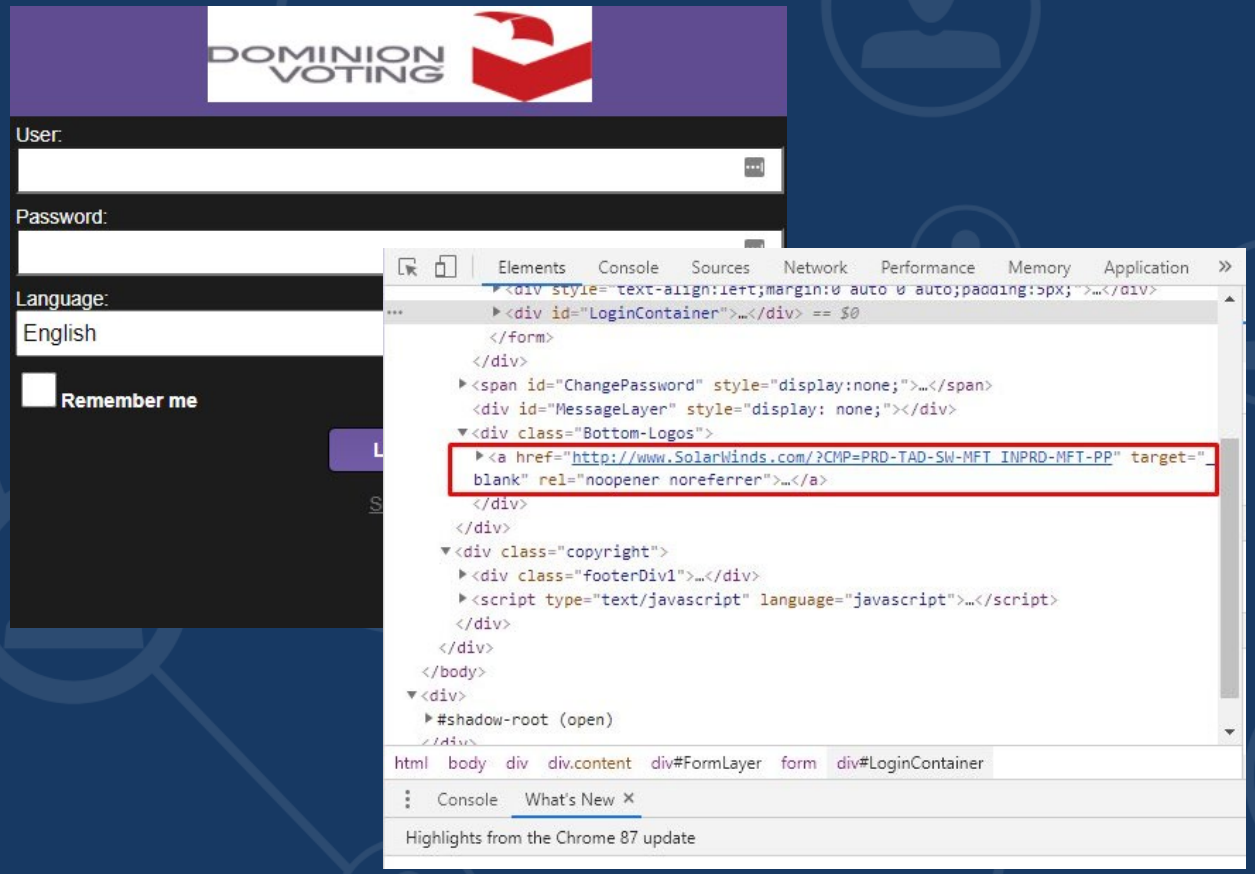
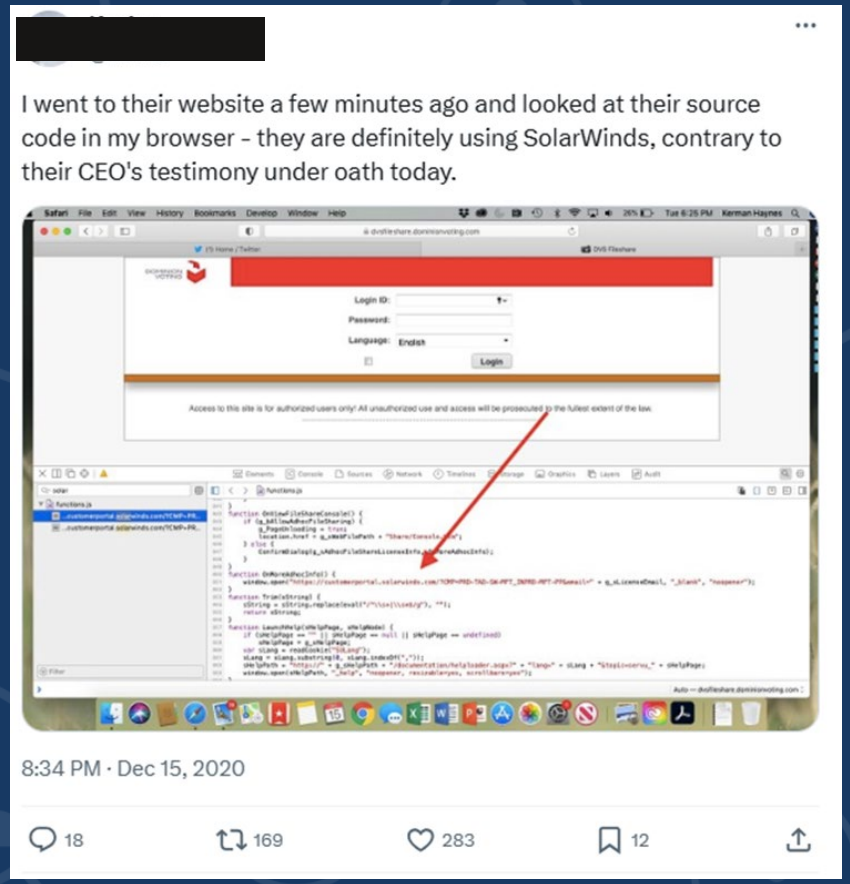
1. Initial information processing





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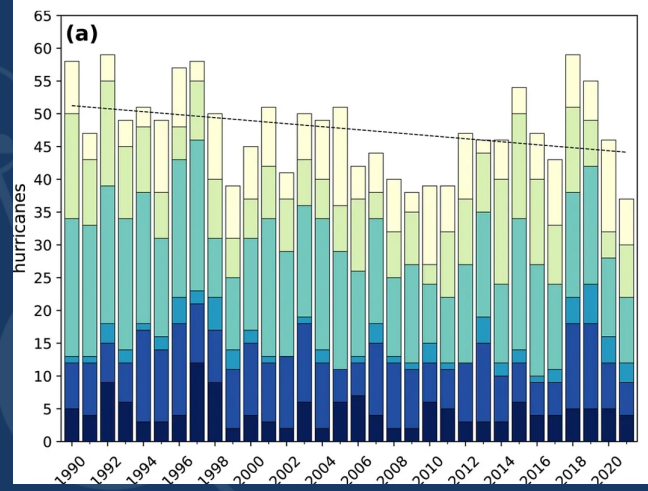
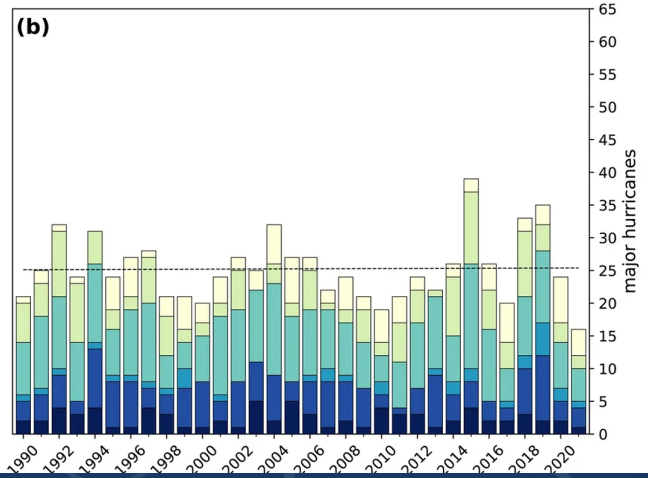
1. Initial information processing

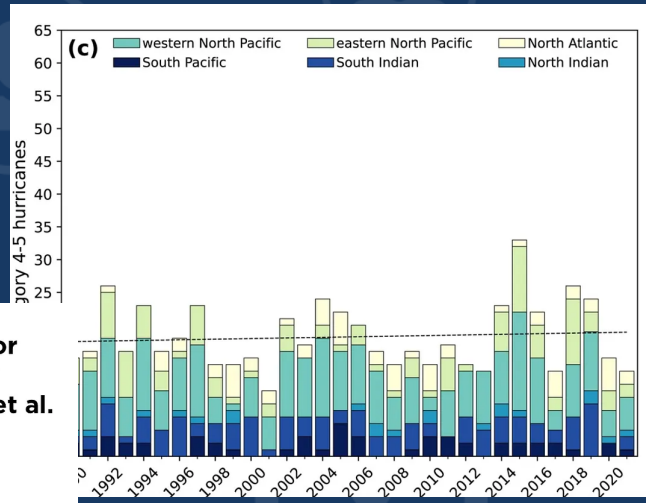
Here are **recent data on global hurricane frequency and intensity from a 2022 paper** (Klotzbach et al). **Does this remotely resemble what trusted media sources tell you?** [12]



Global Hurricanes Klotzbach et al. (2022)



Global Major Hurricanes Klotzbach et al. (2022)



Global Cat 4-5 Hurricanes Klotzbach et al. (2022)

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1. Initial information processing

Myth: Hurricanes are expected to get more frequent as temperatures rise.

Truth: **Mainstream science expects that hurricanes will become less frequent as temperatures rise.** [15]

- Sea level rise – which human activity has very likely been the main driver of since at least 1971 according to IPCC AR6 – should be causing higher coastal inundation levels for tropical cyclones that do occur, all else assumed equal.
- Tropical cyclone rainfall rates are projected to increase in the future (*medium to high confidence*) due to anthropogenic warming and accompanying increase in atmospheric moisture content. Modeling studies on average project an increase on the order of 10-15% for rainfall rates averaged within about 100 km of the storm for a 2 degree Celsius global warming scenario.
- Tropical cyclone intensities globally are projected to increase (*medium to high confidence*) on average (by 1 to 10% according to model projections for a 2 degree Celsius global warming). This change would imply an even larger percentage increase in the destructive potential per storm, assuming no reduction in storm size. Storm size responses to anthropogenic warming are uncertain.
- The global *proportion* of tropical cyclones that reach very intense (Category 4 and 5) levels is projected to increase (*medium to high confidence*) due to anthropogenic warming over the 21st century. There is less confidence in future projections of the global *number* of Category 4 and 5 storms, since most modeling studies project a decrease (or little change) in the global frequency of all tropical cyclones combined.

Likelihood Statements

The terminology here for likelihood statements follows these conventions for the assessed likelihood of an outcome or result:

- Very Likely: > 90%,
- Likely: > 66%
- More Likely Than Not (or Better Than Even Odds) > 50%

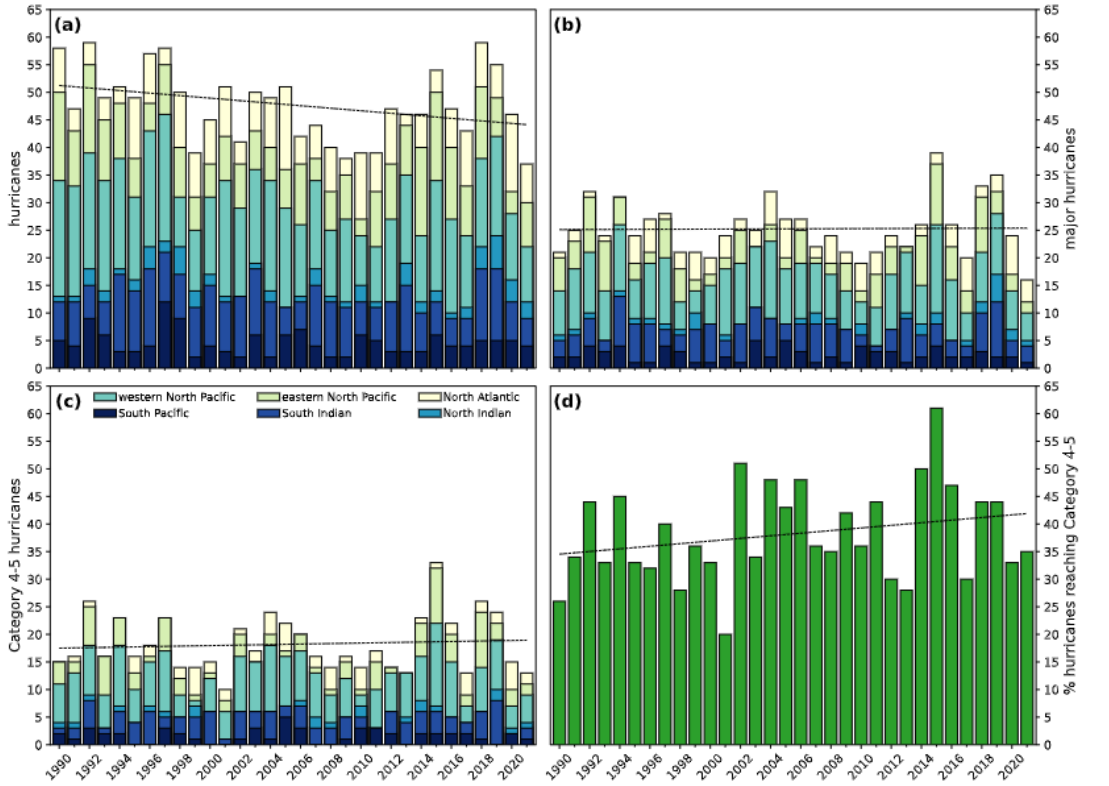

Figure 3. As in Figure 2 but for (a) hurricanes, (b) major hurricanes, and (c) Category 4–5 hurricanes. (d) Global percentage of hurricanes reaching Category 4–5 intensity.

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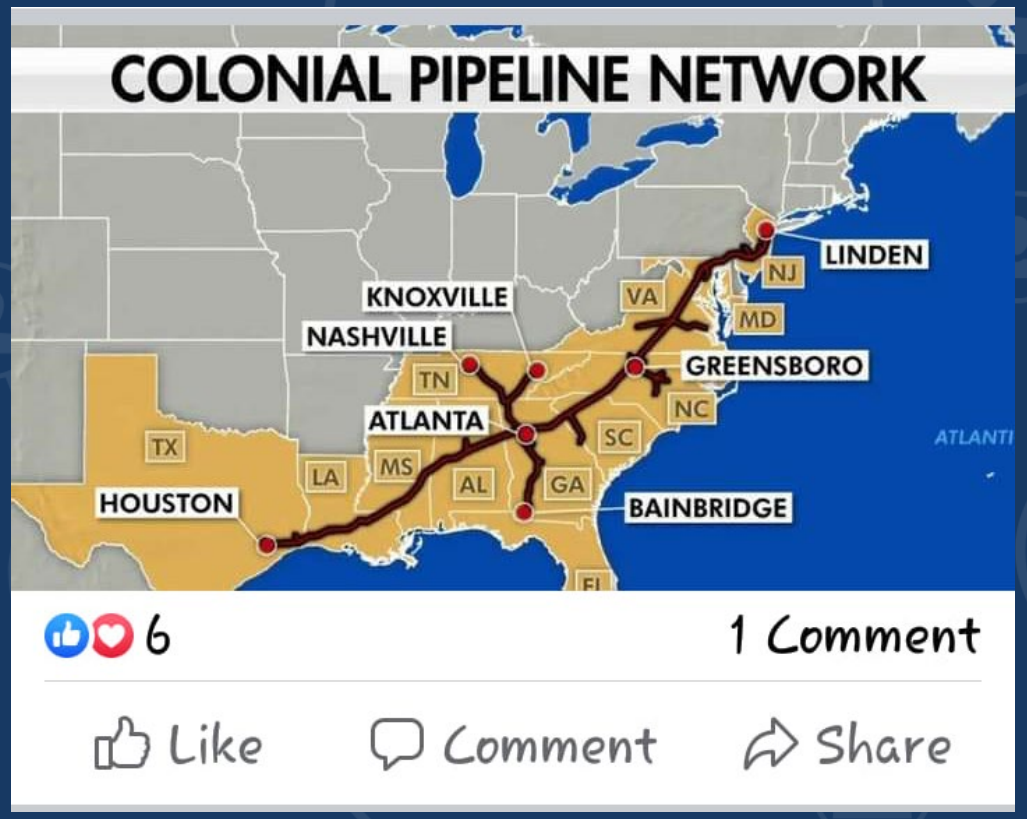
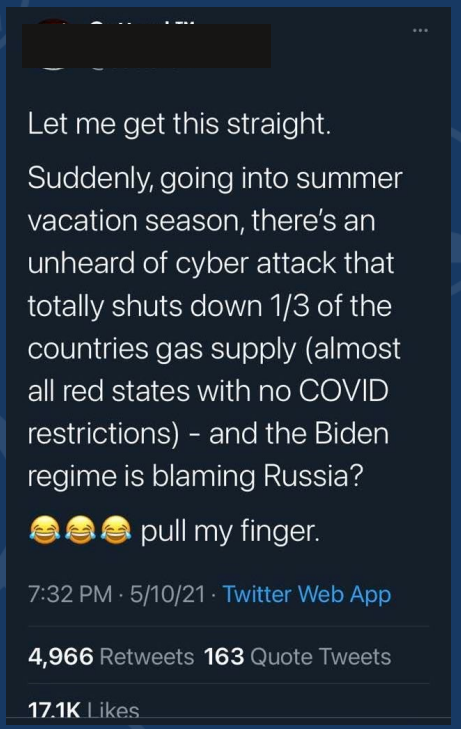
2. Group, Belief, Novelty (GBN) Model





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2. Group, Belief, Novelty (GBN) Model

[redacted] · May 13, 2021

Russian hackers who shut down the **Colonial pipeline** were paid nearly $5M in ransom by its owners, the evil Koch family. It's so coincidental the oh so many connections Russia has with GQP mega donors and paying them some "ransom" in untraceable cryptocurrency is quite something.

31 405 1K

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3. The role of emotions and arousal

David Niño Rodriguez ✓
@ninoboxer

BREAKING: New intel reveals that the The Francis Scott Key Bridge was a TERRORIST ATTACK launched by the Chinese Communist party using "remote towing" technology on the "The DALI".
In careful analysis of the video, it still doesn't explain the thermite shape charges that were detonated as the barge hit the bridge. Here are what thermite shape charges look like

9:13 AM · Apr 15, 2024 · **511.4K** Views

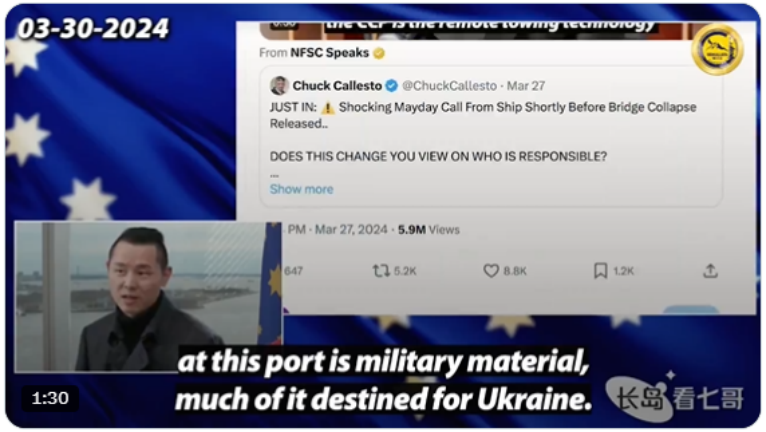
210 1.1K 2K 605

Chuck Callesto ✓
@ChuckCallesto

Subscribe

BOMBSHELL REPORT: ⚠️ Exclusive intel reveals that the attack on Baltimore's Francis Scott Key Bridge was a TERRORIST ATTACK launched by the Chinese Communist Party on American soil, using "remote towing" technology on the "The DALI".

DEVELOPING..



From **NFSC Speaks** ✓

9:16 PM · Mar 30, 2024 · **2.2M** Views

1.6K 11K 17K 3.8K

Andrew Tate ✓
@Cobratate

This ship was cyber-attacked.

Lights go off and it deliberately steers towards the bridge supports.

Foreign agents of the USA attack digital infrastructures.

Nothing is safe.

Black Swan event imminent.

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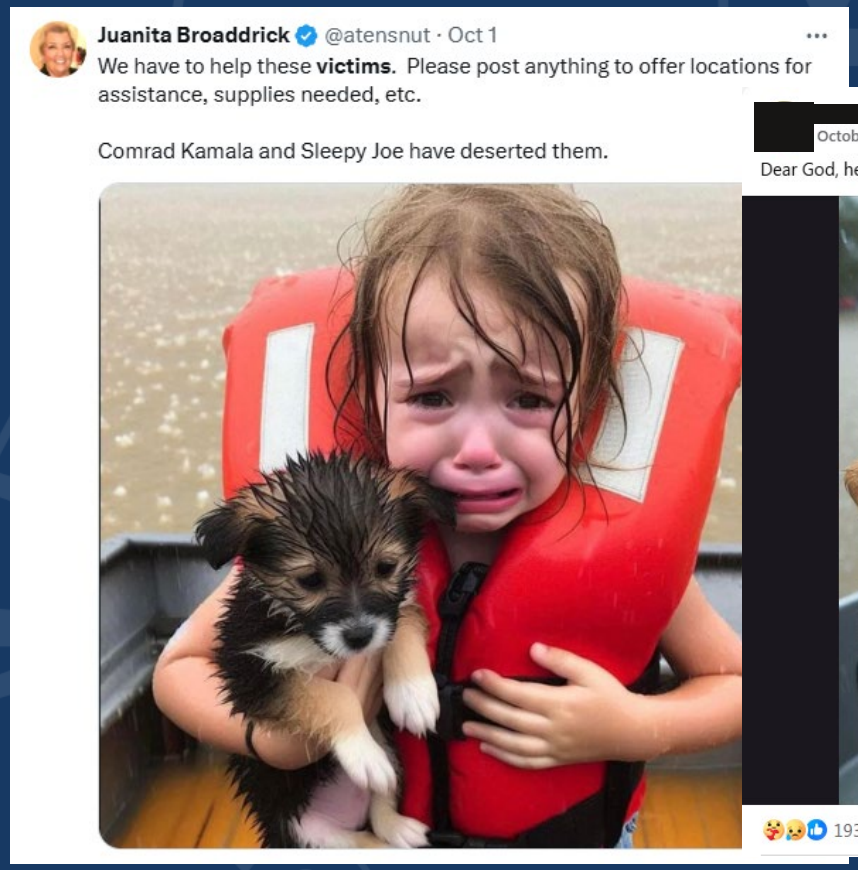
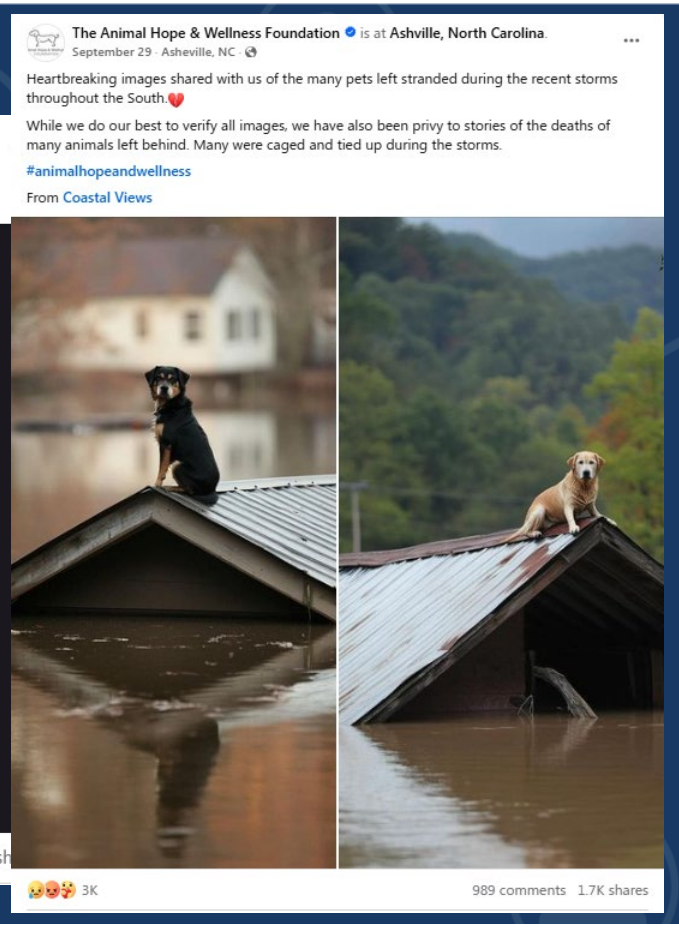
3. The role of emotions and arousal





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MDM & VDEM BLUE BOOK

N-S MDM Campaign Strategies & Goals

Strategies

- Create fake personas and websites
- Create deepfakes/AI-generated content
- Amplify conspiracy theories
- Flood the information environment
- Use alternative platforms
- Exploit information gaps
- Manipulate unsuspecting actors
- Spread targeted content

Goals

- Amplify internal divisions (Racial/Regional/Political)
- Sow internal chaos to reduce outward focus
- Portray the US as declining in power and influence
- Promote discontent with and mistrust of the US government
- Undermine trust and faith in the democratic process
- Promote narratives favorable to the N-S (e.g. pro-China/pro-Russia)

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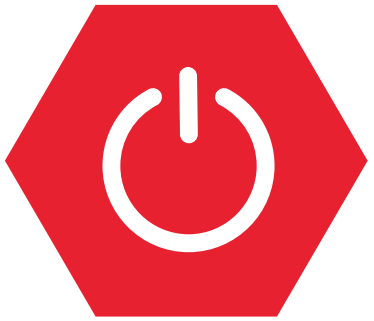
N-S MDM Campaign Strategies & Goals

- **Likely MDM narratives**

RATIONING

TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS



ROLLING BLACKOUTS

CURFEWS

FUEL RESTRICTIONS

DISTRIBUTION FOOD/H20

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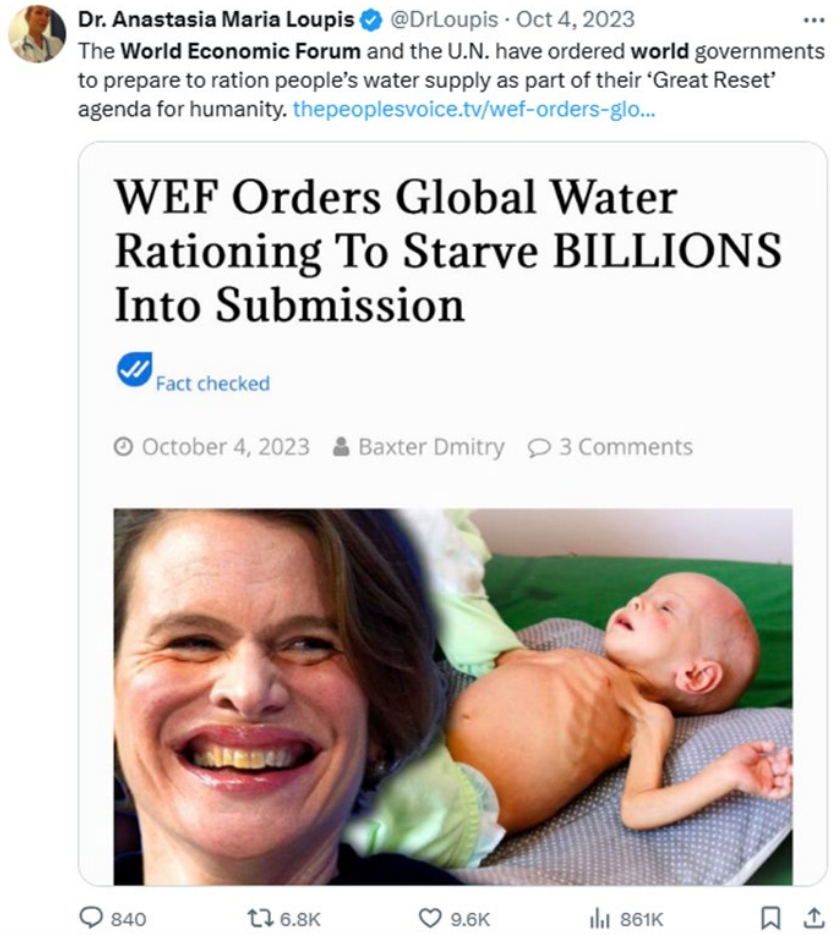
Rationing

- **Government Resource Hoarding**
  - Government is stockpiling resources for its own use
  - US government unable/unwilling to provide for its population
- **Unequal access to resources**
  - Distribution of rations based on “diversity goals” instead of need
  - OR…wealthy individuals have unrestricted access to essentials
- **Blaming rationing on [X] group**
  - E.g., immigrants, corrupt officials, certain ethnic/racial groups
- **Deep state manufacturing crisis to institute [X] policy**



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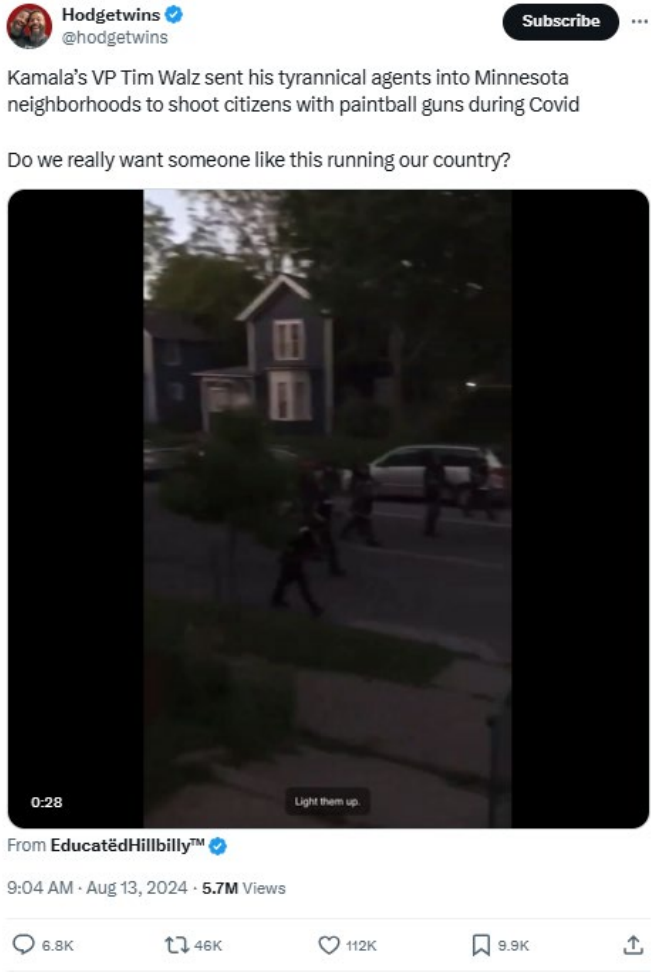
Curfews

- **Curfews are unconstitutional/illegal**
  - Government is shooting/arresting/harming citizens who violate unconstitutional curfews
  - Curfews constitute an unlawful efforts to restrict citizens' movement
- **US is violating human rights**
  - Prohibiting people from accessing medical care, food, supplies, work, etc.
- **Preferential treatment of certain people**
  - Regional enforcement of curfews, elite exempted from curfews, etc.



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Travel Restrictions

- **Exaggerating severity of travel restrictions**
  - Fabricating reports of militarized checkpoints to incite fear
- **Highlighting disparities and inequities**
  - Travel restrictions unfairly target certain regions, states, or demographics
  - Wealthier individuals exempt from restrictions
- **Undermining government credibility**
  - Fabricating conflicting messages from SLTT governments to create confusion about whether travel is permitted
  - Spreading rumors about "true purpose" of restrictions (hidden agenda to impose martial law)

Fuel Restrictions

- **Government overreach**
  - Monitoring usage via GPS trackers (fears of government surveillance & authoritarianism)
- **False claims of severe fuel shortages**
  - Incite panic buying and hoarding
- **Politicization of distribution**
  - Politically aligned areas are being prioritized for fuel supplies
- **False claims about black market fuel**
  - Promoting illegal activity, sowing confusion

Rolling Blackouts

- **Government incompetence/authoritarianism**
  - Failing to manage energy grid effectively
  - Intentionally turning off power in certain places
- **Blaming [X] groups for overuse**
  - E.g., immigrants, large corporations
- **Conspiracy theories about energy companies**
  - Intentionally causing blackouts to drive up energy prices and profit from the crisis
- **False claims about rise in crime**
  - Rolling blackouts causing looting and violence (provoking panic)

Points of Distribution (PODs) for Food/Water

- **ID Checks**
  - PODs used to identify and detain undocumented immigrants
  - Denying aid to Americans without proper ID but providing aid to undocumented immigrants
- **Blaming immigrants for shortages**
  - Inciting violence against immigrant communities
  - Claims of special PODs for immigrants while Americans are forced to wait in long lines/go without
- **False reports of dangerous conditions**
  - Claims that PODs are unsafe deter people from seeking help
- **Exaggerating crisis timeline**
  - False reports that PODs will only operate for a few days before running out of supplies (increasing panic)

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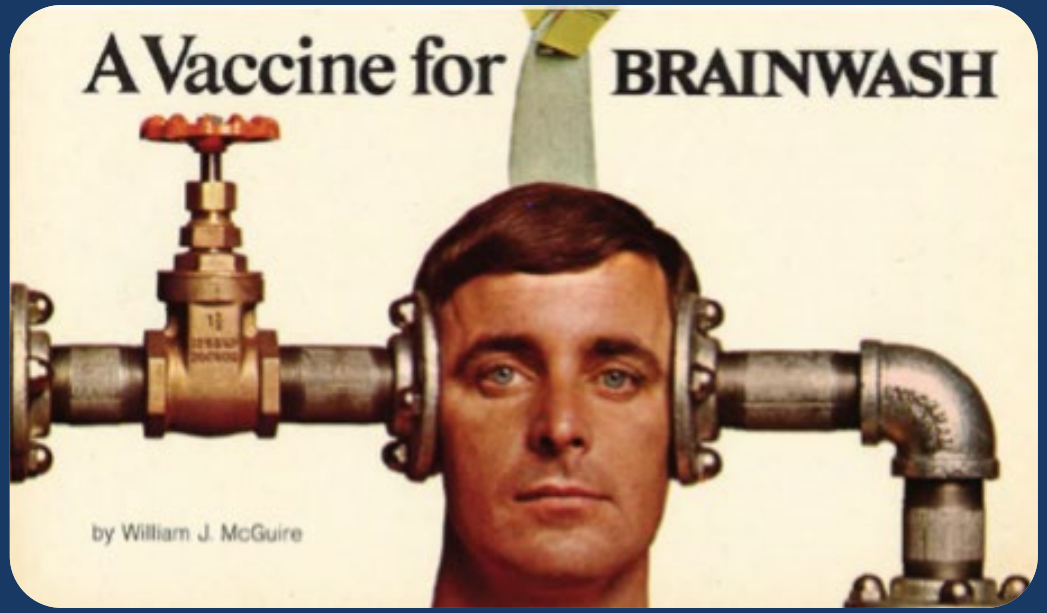
How can we protect ourselves from MDM?

Inoculation

Inoculation is the practice of exposing individuals to persuasive messages containing weakened arguments that threaten an attitude or belief in order to "inoculate" them against stronger persuasive messages and attacks on this attitude or belief in the future.



Source: Photo from McGuire (1970) in Psychology Today. Copyright held by an unknown person. Taken from Lewandowsky and Van der Linden, "Countering Misinformation and Fake News Through Inoculation and Prebunking."

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Fact-checking/debunking

Fact-checking/debunking is the use of a precise correction designed to correct clearly false claims with empirical evidence from neutral or unimpeachable sources.

MYTH FIRST
Some people claim there is no scientific consensus that humans are causing global warming. In fact, 97% of climate scientists agree that global warming is caused by human activity.

FACT-FIRST
Most climate scientists (97%) agree that humans are causing global warming, contrary to some claims that there is no scientific consensus on this issue.

FACT-ONLY
Most climate scientists (97%) agree that humans are causing global warming.

TRUTH SANDWICH
Most climate scientists (97%) agree that humans are causing global warming, contrary to some claims that there is no scientific consensus about this issue. In fact, there is overwhelming agreement among climate scientists that global warming is caused by human activity.

Source: Amazeen, Thorson, Muddiman, and Graves, "Correcting Political and Consumer Misperceptions: The Effectiveness and Effects of Rating Scale Versus Contextual Correction Formats."

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Media Literacy

Media literacy includes the skills required to evaluate a piece of content, as well as an understanding of the structures that produce that content.

Sources: https://newseumed.org/tools/lesson-plan/story-share-worthy;
https://action4mediaeducation.org/2017/11/24/infographic-todays-news-real-or-fake/;
https://elearninginfographics.com/digital-literacy-skills-21st-century-worker-infographic/

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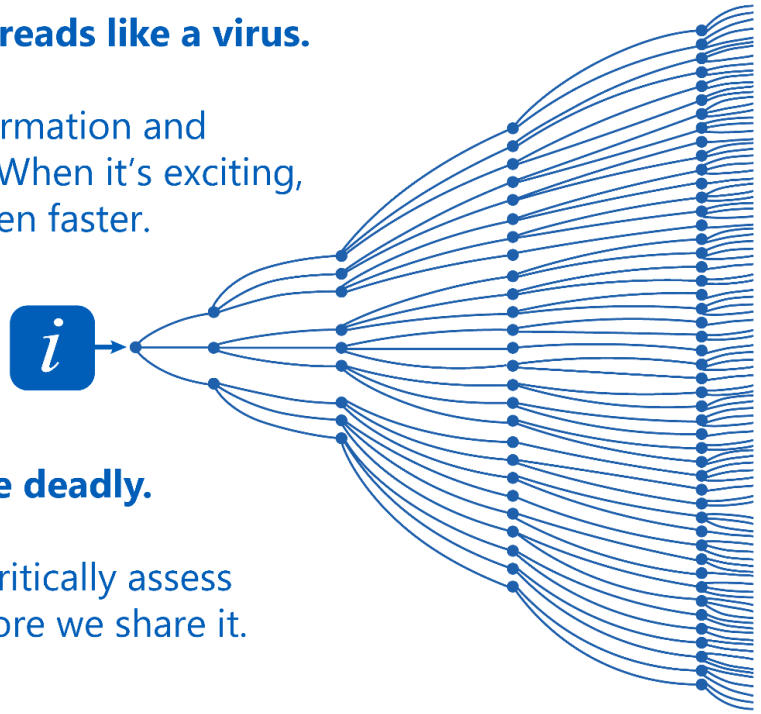
What can I do to counter MDM?

The Goal

The goal of interventions is **not** to eliminate MDM, but to reduce vulnerability and reduce sharing.

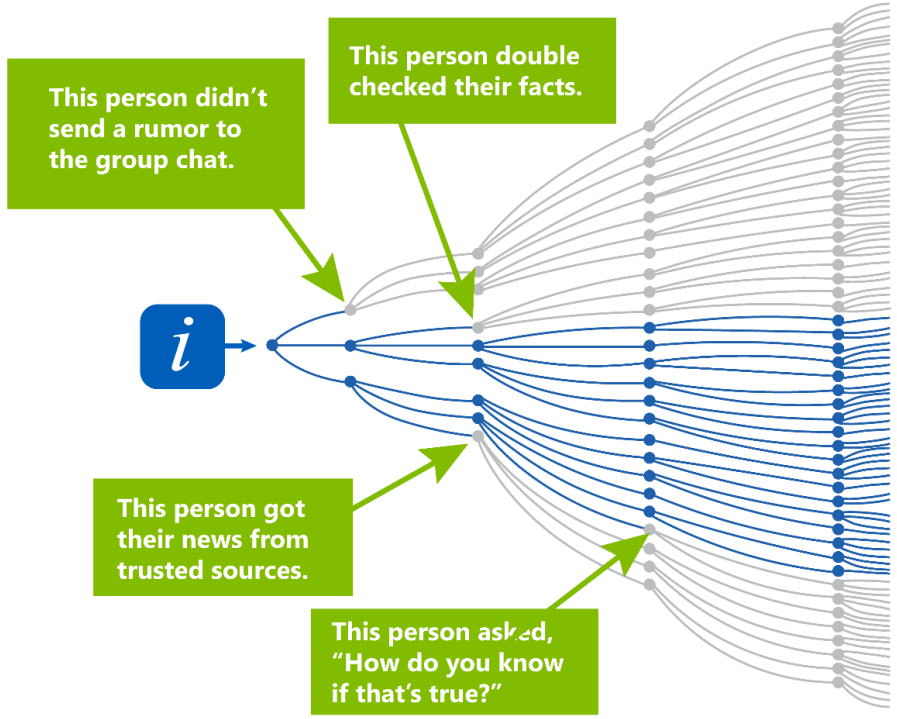
Information spreads like a virus.

So does misinformation and disinformation. When it's exciting, it can spread even faster.



And that can be deadly.

So we need to critically assess information before we share it.



Complete elimination is not possible.

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Path forward

If you are a **communicating organization** (e.g., you have a Twitter or Facebook account) then you should:

Engage in fact-checking/debunking "Corrections are wildly effective."	**Share media literacy infographics** Maintain a cache of prepared messages and/or graphics.	**Run inoculation campaigns targeting issues on which you expect to see MDM**

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Path forward

If you are an organization **tasked with protecting the public,** then you should:

Engage in fact-checking/debunking Respond quickly and direct people to valid sources of information; Coordinate with neighboring jurisdictions and partner agencies	**Share media literacy infographics** Advertise/offer media literacy training opportunities; Use social media to direct people to useful resources	**Share links to free MDM inoculation games**

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Path forward

If you are an organization **tasked with protecting your own personnel,** then you should:

Engage in fact-checking/debunking	Offer/mandate media literacy training	Offer/mandate MDM inoculations
"Corrections are wildly effective"		

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Path forward

If you are a **citizen who is online** (e.g., you have a Twitter or Facebook account), then you should:

Engage in fact-checking/debunking	Share media literacy infographics	Ask yourself *before* sharing: Am I confident this is true? Do I need to share this?
"Corrections are wildly effective"		

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Recent Products

Evidence-Based Techniques for Countering Mis-/Dis-/Mal-information: A Primer

Megan K McBride, Pamela G. Faber, Kaia Haney, Patricia J. Kannapel, and Samuel Plapinger with contributions by Heather M. K. Wolters

Protecting Servicemembers from Foreign Influence

Megan K McBride, Pamela G. Faber, Kaia Haney, Patricia J. Kannapel, and Samuel Plapinger with contributions by Heather M. K. Wolters

The Psychology of (Dis)information: A Primer on Key Psychological Mechanisms

Heather Wolters, Kasey Stricklin, Neil Carey, and Megan McBride

The Psychology of (Dis)information: Case Studies and Implications

Megan McBride, Heather Wolters, Kaia Haney and Bill Rosenau, with contributions by Neil Carey and Kasey Stricklin

Best Practices in Social Media Crisis Communications for State and Local Emergency Management Agencies

Jamie Biglow and Heather Marshall, with contributions by Dawn Thomas, James Baney, Zoe Dutton, John Milton, and Leola Abraham

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Questions?

Next BBTV: January 7, 2025, 1200 – 1:30

"Planning for National Security Emergencies" with FEMA, DHS CISA, VDEM, and NAS Oceana

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Closing Remarks