



# The Wednesday Communiqué

**March 21, 2018**

## **True vs. False News**

Some of the most important skills we acquire from education are the ability to think critically, listen to different arguments, and get feedback for our own. These skills are as important as ever, given the increase in false and misleading information, and often an apparent disregard for truth. Indeed, it often seems that we no longer believe that we are “entitled to our own opinions, we are not entitled to our own facts,” as Daniel Patrick Moynihan famously put it. When we stopped agreeing on ground truths, our discourse became less about finding solutions to common problems, and more about proving each other wrong. Many have blamed social media, and indeed, the ability to communicate asynchronously, sometimes anonymously, with so many people using social networks, has resulted in political echo chambers and the proliferation of so-called “fake news.” According to [recent work](#) highlighted in Science Mag, there is something addictive about fake news that makes it spread online “faster, deeper, and more broadly” than “true news.” Fake news is “more novel than true news” and it inspires “fear, disgust and surprise.” The most surprising finding is that algorithms are actually less likely to spread fake news than are humans, which suggests a possible path back to agreement on the facts and divergence only in our opinions and conclusions. In the mean time, we will have to rely on other methods, like the journalistic standards of using multiple independent sources for verification, or by looking to the norms of our academic disciplines: the scientific method, peer review, and vigorous debate. For instructors looking to strengthen information literacy in their curriculum, the University Libraries has put together some [helpful information](#), including a link to an [information literacy framework](#).

## **UNM Fulbright Day**

The UNM Fulbright Day will be held on April 9th to celebrate the life of Senator J. William Fulbright and his legacy, the Fulbright Program. The UNM Fulbright Day has been coordinated by the Office of Academic Affairs, the Honors College, and the New Mexico Fulbright Association to connect the Fulbright awardees and future Fulbright applicants. Sixty UNM faculty members and 37 UNM students have received Fulbright awards for their research, teaching and/or study since 2000. For more information, please visit [caeld.unm.edu/fulbrightday](http://caeld.unm.edu/fulbrightday) or contact Kiyoko Simmons at [ksimmons@unm.edu](mailto:ksimmons@unm.edu).

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