

With CIP's team in place, we're actively engaged in building a community to combat strategic misinformation

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December 3, 2019. It seems like a lifetime ago. We launched the Center for an Informed Public (CIP) that day with the hope of building a community to combat strategic misinformation and to strengthen democratic discourse. Since then, SARS-CoV-2 has infected more than 10 million people worldwide. As with any crisis (but especially this one), misinformation and disinformation has proliferated – so much so that the World Health Organization has popularized the term “infodemic” to describe the health risks associated with false information about the disease.

Here is where I would like to say “rest assured, we have you covered.” We don’t. Misinformation has not subsided and won’t any time soon. What I can tell you is this:

we have assembled a devoted team working on this problem, day and night. We have researchers setting aside their sabbatical to better understand how rumors and rumor makers are being amplified. We have faculty on the frontlines of COVID-19, debunking misleading claims in real time. We have UW students creating public awareness campaigns, in preparation for the U.S. elections, about synthetic media and deepfakes. We have local teachers and librarians developing media literacy programs for improving digital citizenry. We have faculty testifying in front of the U.S. Senate about the role of data and AI in the fight against COVID-19. That's just to name a few of the many activities we're currently engaged in.

We won't solve the infodemic any time soon, but our team at the CIP, in collaboration with others around the globe, are making the kind of progress that makes me optimistic about our future. I encourage you to explore the rest of our newsletter, to visit our website, to follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), and most importantly, [reach out to us at any time](#) with your questions. This will take more than just our team to address this challenge of our time.

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