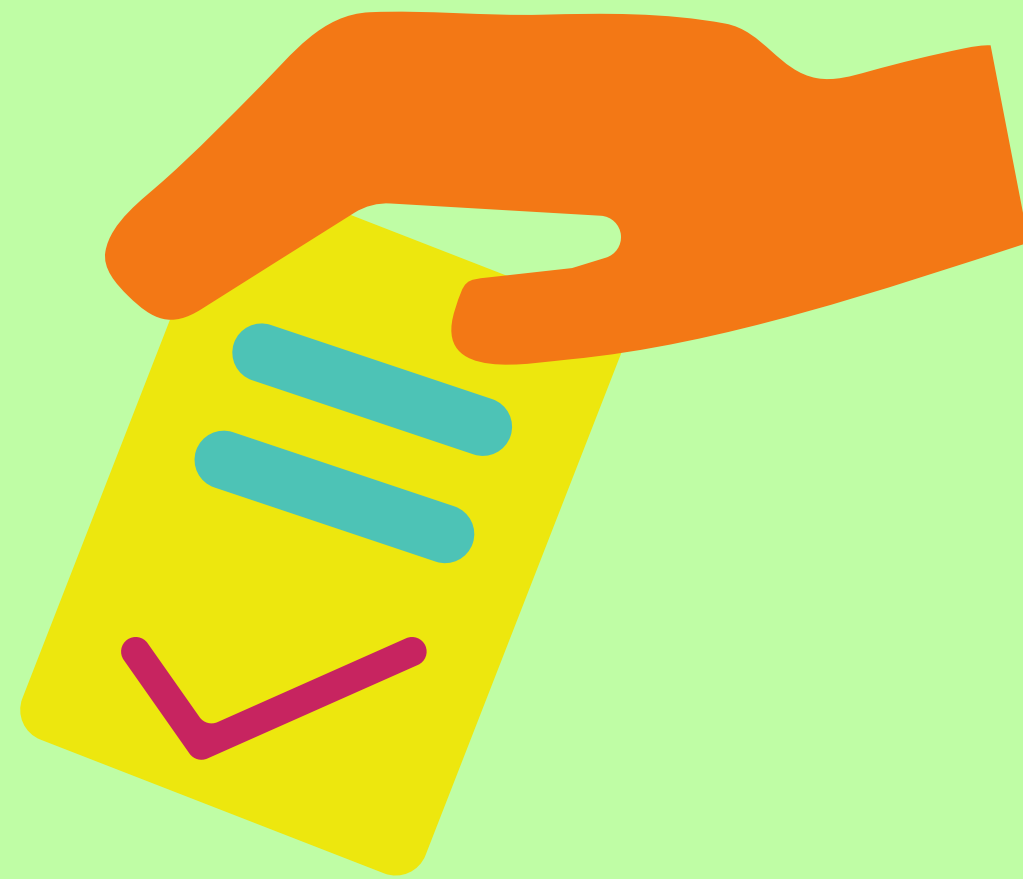


2020 Election Misinformation Trends



A presentation by the Mucktracker Team

Objective



Analyze misinformation trends common in the 2020 election.

Connect

Read the following post from social media and write what your reaction would be if you came across it in your feed.

“SHOCKING: 1,000+ mail-in ballots found in a dumpster in California,” the post said.



Misinformation & the Election

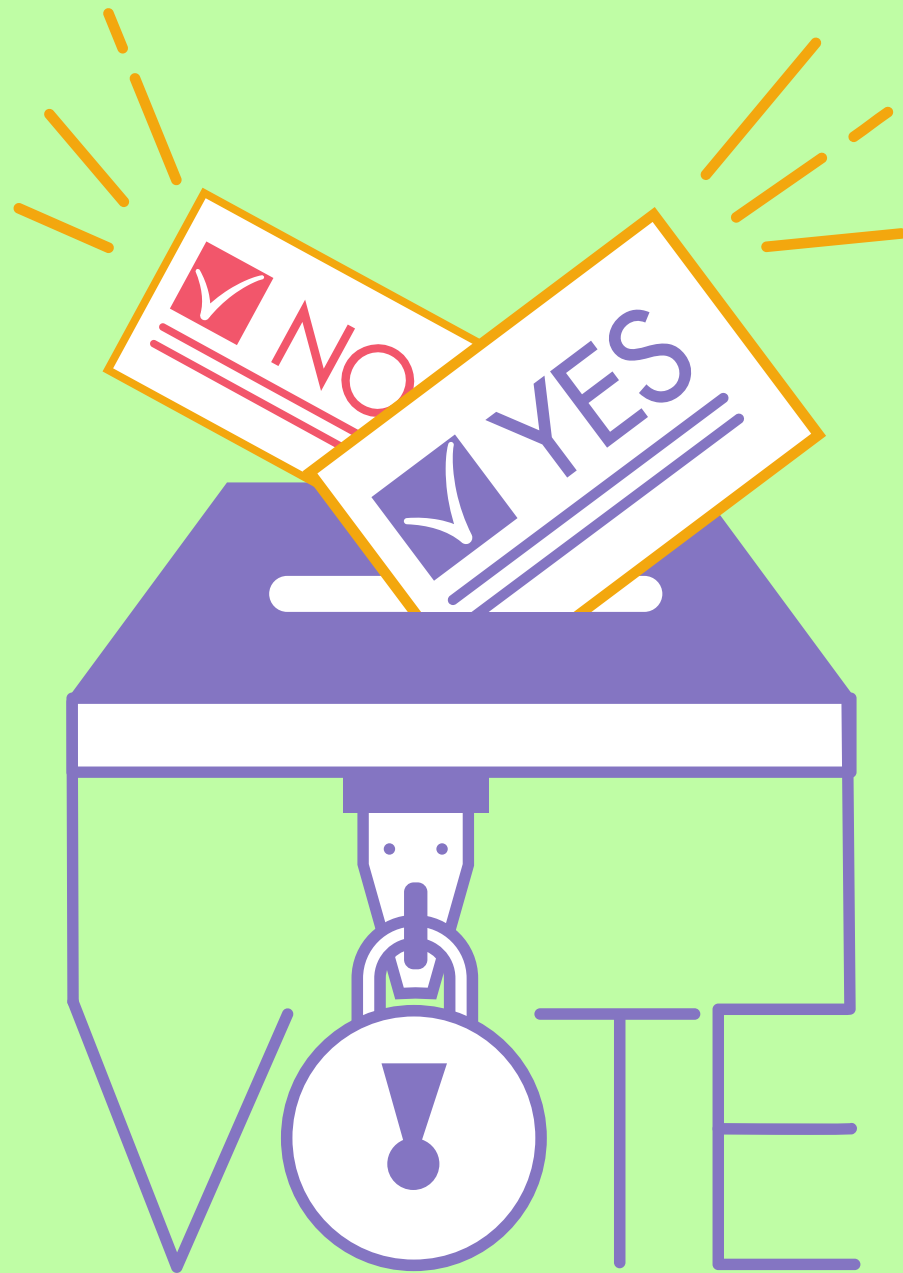
Did you write "shock" or "concern"? The post indicates that it is shocking and the details do indeed sound like cause for alarm.



However, the fact is that what the post describes did not happen and is another other example of misinformation surrounding the upcoming election. In the case of this post, it was shared by the president's son and later taken down.

This lesson will explore some common misinformation and tips on how to control its effects.

Common Untrue Claims



False Information about How to Vote

- claims that voting by mail is an unreliable way to vote
- statements that certain practices are illegal when they aren't

False Information about Voter Fraud

- saying that other countries are interfering with voting and creating fake votes
- saying that the election is "fixed"

Think



- Why do you think misinformation about voting is so popular?
- Why do some engage in spreading misinformation rather than promoting one candidate over another?



Signs and Patterns of Misinformation

- Using old photos and presenting them as current.
- Misrepresenting information by taking it out of context.
- Cheap Fakes and Deep Fakes
- Drawing conclusions without presenting sufficient evidence



When looking at election content, ask yourself



- Does the substance of the article support the headline?
- What is the source? Who is the author?
- Can I find support for this article elsewhere?
- When is this image from? What does a reverse image search tell me?
- Am I confident that sharing this will be truthful and have a positive impact on myself and others?
- How does this content make me feel? Is that impacting how I think about it?

Countering Misinformation



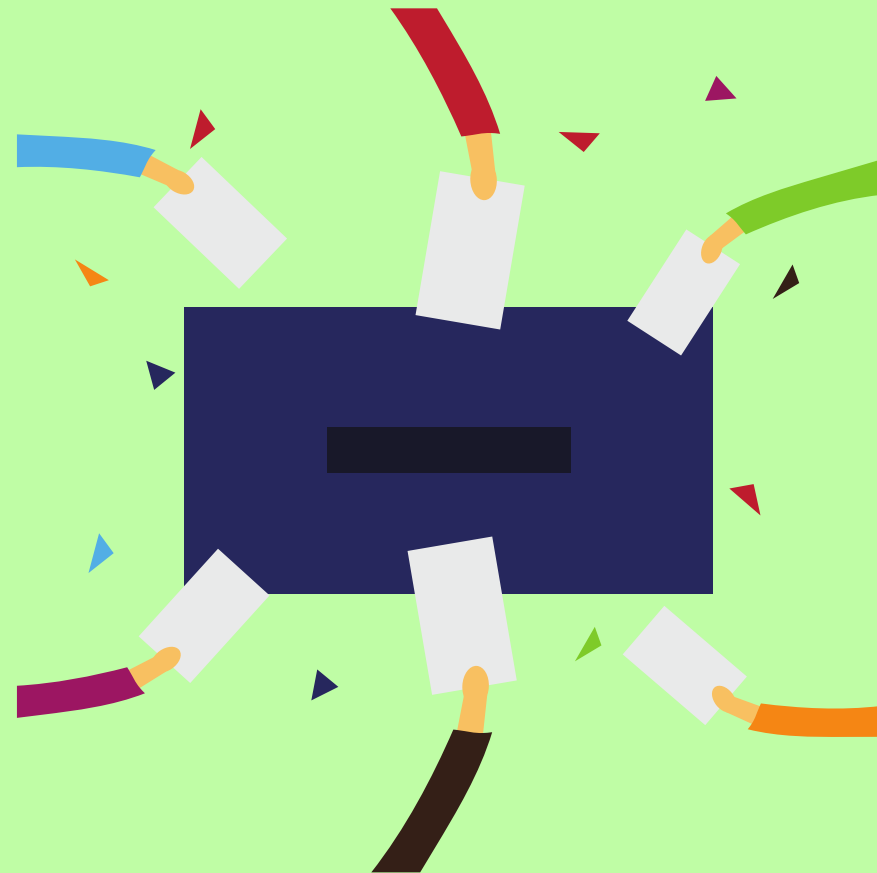
- When you come across misinformation, it may be tempting to reshare to call it out. However, sometimes this can have the effect of amplifying the false information, so be cautious about when and how you work to address the misinformation.
- One important thing to remember is to practice empathy. All of us can be tricked by misinformation. Try to understand the perspective of the person sharing it. That way you can know how best to respond.
- It's also helpful to provide an alternative source, highlighting specific evidence rather than engaging in personal matters.
- If you encounter election misinformation on Twitter or Facebook, you can report the content anonymously. You also can report an account you think might be fake or a bot.

Reflection



- Which types of misinformation do you encounter most often?
- Which tip is most relevant to you? Why?

Wrap-Up



- Misinformation, or false or misleading information is common in the 2020 election.
- Common forms of election misinformation focus on voting in an attempt to discourage turnout.
- Misinformation can take many forms, including doctored photos or stories presented without much context.
- To avoid misinformation, remember to check your gut reaction, fact check, and consider the source.