

AAUW Santa Maria Branch Blog – April 2018

FAKE NEWS: How to Identify Legitimate News Sources

Marga Cooley, Managing Editor for the Santa Maria Times and Lee Central Coast Newspapers – including the Lompoc Record and Santa Ynez Valley News - was our presenter for April, to a rapt audience in Shepard Hall, Santa Maria Public Library.

She discussed a brief history of journalism, newsmen, news stories, newspapers, how stories were received, researched, released, the integrity of the journalism field, and the changes that have occurred, especially over the past 15-20 years, with an additional focus on the news networks and communication journalism in the second decade of the 21st Century.

She discussed how to listen to the news, how to read the newspapers, to be able to decipher True, Accurate News from Fake News. The old adage, “if it seems too good to be true” means that it may not be, and she explained some resources that one can use to validate or invalidate the news story. She addressed the affect that the Internet has had on News stories and how they are shared/spread.

Her presentation was filled with examples, and many audience questions were answered after her presentation. Marga was generous to share the information below for our members, and our readers.

How to spot Fake News Sites

To successfully spot fake news sites, search the name of the website followed by words like "legitimacy," "satire," or "fake" to see if it has a good reputation or is known for fictional stories. Check the website's URL for elements that don't seem right, like unnecessary words and letters or a “.co” at the end of the link. If it seems legit, look at the Contact Us page to see who owns the site and if there are multiple, trustworthy authors working for it. Stay away from websites that look poorly made or unprofessional.

Fact checking websites

Snopes.com

FactCheck.org

PolitiFact.com

Misinfocon.com





