Political Polarization and Disinformation

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Social media has both evolved and complicated the information landscape. Algorithmic targeting and private groups have driven us further into partisan camps and deepend mistrust into alternative viewpoints. Many legacy and digital media are operating in seemingly different realities, dependent more so on either political influence or audience demands. Disinformation campaigns, reaching a crescendo in the last year demonized officials at all levels of government and expanded into areas of public health. Americans were exposed to content that depicted elected leaders and candidates as active dangers to their livelihoods and values, with January 6 a consequential outcome. This level of polarization is a critical fracture in the democratic fundamental of political discourse.

Reading Resources:

Social media is making a bad political situation worse (Rani Molla, Vox)

Fake News Gets More Engagement on Facebook—But Only If It's Right-Wing (WIRED)

Whose Anger Counts? (Whitney Phillips, Boston Review)

Disinformation Fuels Distrust And Even Violence At All Levels Of Government (Sarah McCammon, NPR)

How shared partisanship leads to social media connections (Peter Dizikes, MIT News)

Facebook Is a Doomsday Machine (Adrienne LaFrance, The Atlantic)

Political sectarianism in America (Science)

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