



THE TRUTH ABOUT DISINFORMATION

THE CONCERNING TOPIC OF 'DISINFORMATION' AND ITS INTERNATIONAL ROOTS WILL BE EXPLORED BY

DR MICHAEL DAUBS

SENIOR LECTURER IN MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION AT VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON.

His research has investigated topics including mobile apps and the open Web, mediatisation and social movements, and dis- and misinformation as threats to democracy.

As Michael Daubs says: "Recent events in New Zealand such as the so-called 'freedom' protests in 2022, the growth of climate change denialism, and increase in anti-Semitism fuelled by international conspiracy theories demonstrates how disinformation can spread through a variety of seemingly unrelated networks and communities."

At the meeting, he will discuss how the motivation for spreading disinformation can sometimes be financial, but often the goal of those involved is to increase distrust in government, the press, and experts, generate discord, and undermine social cohesion



Credit: Lynn Grieveson

"Those who believe and further share that disinformation do so because of a strong emotional or affective response to that false information, which is fuelled by existing beliefs and biases," he says. "In short, content that 'feels true' and evokes a strong response is perceived as more believable, and debunking and countering disinformation is a challenging task."

Dr Daubs will discuss some of the underlying factors that contribute to disinformation, including misogyny, racism, hyper-partisanship, distrust in government, and anti-intellectualism.

He will also look at approaches to countering disinformation, and how these methods are challenged by the political economy of online platforms, the speed and scale at which digital information can be replicated and shared, cognitive responses to people who are presented with factually correct information that counters their beliefs. He will also consider the risks disinformation presents to both at-risk groups and functioning democracy, and why addressing disinformation is likely a generational challenge.

**The meeting will be held at Rosewood, 417 Queen Street, Masterton
Thursday, 22 June 2023 at 8.00 pm - tea and coffee from 7.30 pm
All are welcome Non-members: \$5.00 door charge**

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