

Donald Trump - A President uses Twitter

Alternative facts

Task 1: Have a look at this photograph then watch the following video. What does Spicer claim¹? How does he justify² his claim?

- **claim:** “This was the largest audience to witness an inauguration³. Both in person and around the globe.”
- comparing the two pictures it looks like there have been more people to witness Obama’s inauguration before
- **justification for his claim:**
 - it’s the first time white floor coverings have been used to protect the grass → highlighted areas where people were not standing
 - first time fencing was used in the far back of The Mall⁴ → preventing hundreds of thousands of people from accessing the mall as quickly as they had in the past
 - inaccurate numbers of crowd size have been put out → no one had numbers (park service doesn’t give any out)

Task 2: Watch the interview with Kellyanne Conway in the NBC News. In general, what’s the problem with falsehoods in the modern media age? In which context does she use the term alternative facts the first time?

- “we” (Kellyanne Conway, Donald Trump) allowed the press to watch Trump signing executive orders in the Oval Office → falsehood: removal of the picture of M. L. King Jr. is spread (reporter was talking on behalf of the press pool)
→ **Problem:** even if a falsehood is corrected immediately, once the information has usually spread already (3000 times) and is still out there
- Spicer uttered a falsehood talking about the crowd size who witnessed Trump’s inauguration (peaks on behalf of the President sometimes the whole nation) → Kellyanne Conway: **he gave alternative facts not a falsehood (there are no numbers to prove him right or wrong)**

Task 3: Define the term alternative facts!

- It’s the description of different views of supposed facts (see: communication model). There is usually no scientific prove of the one or the other.

Fake news

Task 1: Have a look at the article in [The Washington Times](#). What do fake news do? Try to draw a connection between your findings and President Trump’s way to communicate his thoughts and feelings.

- intentionally try to take down/support the president
- they are misleading and leave out key facts
- irritate/unsettle the people
- decline in public respect/ credibility of the media

1 (to) claim - behaupten

2 (to) justify - rechtfertigen

3 Inauguration - Amtseinführung

4 The Mall – Nationalpromenade (Park)

Task 2: Find 2-5 other examples for fake news!

- **Help:** Try to find out when, where and where the Bowling Green Massacre took place. Note down your findings. What was alarming?

Task 3: Define the term fake news!

- a) Fake news are news that are agenda-driven, one-sided, cherry-picked or otherwise purposely misleading. Political and economic interests are usually its cause.
- b) Satire can be fake news.
- c) Fake news are news that are spread because one doesn't like/want to believe the other news.