

SUPPORTING INFORMATION FOR "Too many people think satirical news is real"
<https://theconversation.com/too-many-people-think-satirical-news-is-real-121666>
R. Kelly Garrett, Robert M. Bond, Shannon Poulsen
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OVERVIEW

Topics were selected based on a review of engagement data provided by NewsWhip. We downloaded the 5,000 most engaging news stories from the prior week and selected 20 of the highest profile stories, 10 true and 10 false. We then drafted brief statements summarizing key points of each story, which is common practice when writing knowledge questions about current events. Finally, we conducted a survey with a representative sample of Americans, asking each participant a series of questions about each of the statements. We repeated this process every two weeks for six months (February 20 - July 31, 2019), giving us 12 surveys in all.

Results presented in The Conversation are limited to belief statements written about content appearing on either The Babylon Bee or The Onion that the largest number of participants described as "definitely true."

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SAMPLE

YouGov interviewed 1204 respondents in wave 1 and recontacted them from wave 2 to wave 12 (Ns = 813-836). Estimates based on this sample have a margin of error of +/- 3% with 95% confidence. Statistics reported were computed using weights.

Weights were constructed for each wave. The frame was constructed by stratified sampling from the full 2016 American Community Survey (ACS) 1-year sample with selection within strata by weighted sampling with replacements (using the person weights on the public use file).

The cases, which are a subset of 1204 respondents according to the weighting requirement, were weighted to the sampling frame using propensity scores. The cases and the frame were combined and a logistic regression was estimated for inclusion in the frame. The propensity score function included age, gender, race/ethnicity, years of education, and region. The propensity scores were grouped into deciles of the estimated propensity score in the frame and post-stratified according to these deciles.

Weights were then post-stratified on 2016 Presidential vote choice, and a four-way stratification of gender, age (4-categories), race (4-categories), and education (4-categories), to produce the final weight.

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QUESTIONS ABOUT BELIEF STATEMENTS

The following questions were presented to participants in each wave of the survey. Statements were presented in random order within each wave to reduce question-order effects.

EXPOSURE: We're going to show you several statements that have been circulating on social media recently. Please place a check mark next to any statement you've seen or heard before:

[Statement list]

BELIEF, PRIOR EXPOSURE: Now, we're going to show you the statements that you said you've encountered before a second time. We'd like you to tell us whether you think these statements are true or false, and how confident you are. Please just tell us what you think based on what you know right now. We don't want you to do any research. If you aren't sure please make your best guess.

[List of statements with prior exposure]

BELIEF, NO PRIOR EXPOSURE: Thanks. Now we'd like you to tell us about the statements that you haven't seen or heard before. Do you think these are true or false, and how sure are you? Please just tell us what you think based on what you know right now. We don't want you to do any research. If you aren't sure please make your best guess.

[List of statements with no prior exposure]

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MOST BELIEVED SATIRE-RELATED BELIEF STATEMENTS WITH UNWEIGHTED RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS

Most Americans believe that major media companies should apologize for pushing the now-debunked news story of collusion between President Trump and Russia.

(Wave 4 False Statement 5)

SOURCE:

Nation Awaits Apology From Media That Pushed Fake News Story For Two Years

<https://babylonbee.com/news/nation-awaits-apology-from-media-that-pushed-fake-news-story-for-two-years>

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ALL PARTICIPANTS

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	133	15.95	15.95
Probably True	292	35.01	50.96
Probably False	272	32.61	83.57
Definitely False	137	16.43	100.00
Total	834	100.00	

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ONLY THOSE WHO RECALLED SEEING STATEMENT PREVIOUSLY

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	105	40.86	40.86
Probably True	114	44.36	85.21
Probably False	30	11.67	96.89
Definitely False	8	3.11	100.00
Total	257	100.00	

Representative Ilhan Omar said that being Jewish is an inherently hostile act, especially among those living in Israel.

(Wave 7 False Statement 6)

SOURCE:

Ilhan Omar: 'If Israel Is So Innocent, Then Why Do They Insist On Being Jews?'

<https://babylonbee.com/news/ilhan-omar-if-israel-is-so-innocent-then-why-are-they-all-jews>

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ALL PARTICIPANTS

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	97	11.80	11.80
Probably True	338	41.12	52.92
Probably False	304	36.98	89.90
Definitely False	83	10.10	100.00
Total	822	100.00	

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ONLY THOSE WHO RECALLED SEEING STATEMENT PREVIOUSLY

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	71	41.52	41.52
Probably True	82	47.95	89.47
Probably False	17	9.94	99.42
Definitely False	1	0.58	100.00
Total	171	100.00	

CNN news anchor Anderson Cooper said his belief that Trump colluded with Russia is unshakable; it will not change regardless of statements or evidence to the contrary.
(Wave 6 False Statement 3)

SOURCE:

CNN: 'God Allowed The Mueller Report To Test Our Unshakable Faith In Collusion'
<https://babylonbee.com/news/cnn-god-allowed-the-mueller-report-to-test-our-unshakable-faith-in-collusion>

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ALL PARTICIPANTS

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	125	15.02	15.02
Probably True	469	56.37	71.39
Probably False	209	25.12	96.51
Definitely False	29	3.49	100.00
Total	832	100.00	

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ONLY THOSE WHO RECALLED SEEING STATEMENT PREVIOUSLY

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	66	35.68	35.68
Probably True	104	56.22	91.89
Probably False	15	8.11	100.00
Total	185	100.00	

Bob Iger, CEO of Disney, said that the company will move its Georgia-based filming operations back to Hollywood in order to avoid filming among "depraved, immoral people."

(Wave 9 False Statement 2)

SOURCE:

Disney CEO: 'To Avoid Filming Among Depraved, Immoral People, We Are Moving All Our Georgia Operations Back To Hollywood'
<https://babylonbee.com/news/disney-to-transfer-all-filming-operations-from-georgia-to-much-more-moral-hollywood>

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ALL PARTICIPANTS

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	109	13.29	13.29
Probably True	333	40.61	53.90
Probably False	316	38.54	92.44
Definitely False	62	7.56	100.00
Total	820	100.00	

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ONLY THOSE WHO RECALLED SEEING STATEMENT PREVIOUSLY

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	86	41.75	41.75
Probably True	95	46.12	87.86
Probably False	21	10.19	98.06
Definitely False	4	1.94	100.00
Total	206	100.00	

Cory Booker is one of several prominent Democrats to describe the Second Amendment as a dangerous "loophole" that allows people to buy guns.

(Wave 10 False Statement 5)

SOURCE:

Democrats Vow To Close Dangerous Gun-Buying Loophole Known As 'The Second Amendment'
<https://babylonbee.com/news/democrats-vow-to-close-second-amendment-loophole>

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ALL PARTICIPANTS

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	91	11.21	11.21
Probably True	456	56.16	67.36
Probably False	220	27.09	94.46
Definitely False	45	5.54	100.00
Total	812	100.00	

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ONLY THOSE WHO RECALLED SEEING STATEMENT PREVIOUSLY

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	60	35.71	35.71
Probably True	96	57.14	92.86
Probably False	10	5.95	98.81
Definitely False	2	1.19	100.00
Total	168	100.00	

Tucker Carlson repeatedly criticized a former child bride, who was a guest on his show, for saying that sexual encounters with her adult husband constituted rape.

(Wave 3 False Statement 2)

SOURCE:

Tucker Carlson Spends Entire Show Screaming Over Child Bride He Invited On To Debate Him
<https://www.theonion.com/tucker-carlson-spends-entire-show-screaming-over-child-1833209649>

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ALL PARTICIPANTS

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	64	7.99	7.99
Probably True	387	48.31	56.30
Probably False	312	38.95	95.26
Definitely False	38	4.74	100.00
Total	801	100.00	

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ONLY THOSE WHO RECALLED SEEING STATEMENT PREVIOUSLY

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	38	30.16	30.16
Probably True	71	56.35	86.51
Probably False	17	13.49	100.00
Total	126	100.00	

Speaking to a group of migrant children held at an ICE detention center, Vice President Pence assured the young detainees that they will have safe and sanitary conditions in heaven.

(Wave 12 False Statement 9)

SOURCE:

Mike Pence Assures Detained Children That They Will Have Safe, Sanitary Conditions In Heaven

<https://politics.theonion.com/mike-pence-assures-detained-children-that-they-will-have-1836318708>

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ALL PARTICIPANTS

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	49	6.05	6.05
Probably True	240	29.63	35.68
Probably False	368	45.43	81.11
Definitely False	153	18.89	100.00
Total	810	100.00	

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ONLY THOSE WHO RECALLED SEEING STATEMENT PREVIOUSLY

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	29	36.71	36.71
Probably True	33	41.77	78.48
Probably False	10	12.66	91.14
Definitely False	7	8.86	100.00
Total	79	100.00	

National Security Advisor John Bolton said that an attack on two Saudi Arabian oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman is "an attack on all Americans."

(Wave 8 False Statement 6)

SOURCE:

John Bolton: 'An Attack On Two Saudi Oil Tankers Is An Attack On All Americans'

<https://politics.theonion.com/john-bolton-an-attack-on-two-saudi-oil-tankers-is-an-1834791494>

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ALL PARTICIPANTS

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	89	10.88	10.88
Probably True	491	60.02	70.90
Probably False	221	27.02	97.92
Definitely False	17	2.08	100.00
Total	818	100.00	

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ONLY THOSE WHO RECALLED SEEING STATEMENT PREVIOUSLY

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	62	33.88	33.88
Probably True	97	53.01	86.89
Probably False	20	10.93	97.81
Definitely False	4	2.19	100.00
Total	183	100.00	

White House Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee-Sanders told reporters that releasing the Mueller report would be a threat to public safety because so many Americans would be disturbed by evidence of the president's innocence.

(Wave 5 False Statement 2)

SOURCE:

White House Says Mueller Report Must Be Kept Private Because It's So Exonerating It Would Drive Public Mad

<https://politics.theonion.com/white-house-says-mueller-report-must-be-kept-private-be-1833813865>

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ALL PARTICIPANTS

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	77	8.91	8.91
Probably True	401	46.41	55.32
Probably False	287	33.22	88.54
Definitely False	99	11.46	100.00
Total	864	100.00	

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ONLY THOSE WHO RECALLED SEEING STATEMENT PREVIOUSLY

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	53	32.52	32.52
Probably True	90	55.21	87.73
Probably False	16	9.82	97.55
Definitely False	4	2.45	100.00
Total	163	100.00	

Following a recommendation that she be fired for repeatedly violating the Hatch Act, White House counselor Kellyanne Conway told reporters that she intends to keep a low profile until, "the laws governing this country have no repercussions."

(Wave 10 False Statement 6)

SOURCE:

Kellyanne Conway Decides To Lie Low Until Rule Of Law Dies Down

<https://politics.theonion.com/kellyanne-conway-decides-to-lay-low-until-rule-of-law-d-1835497591>

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ALL PARTICIPANTS

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	68	8.37	8.37
Probably True	334	41.13	49.51
Probably False	330	40.64	90.15
Definitely False	80	9.85	100.00

Total | 812 100.00

RESPONSE DISTRIBUTIONS - ONLY THOSE WHO RECALLED SEEING STATEMENT PREVIOUSLY

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Definitely True	45	31.47	31.47
Probably True	65	45.45	76.92
Probably False	28	19.58	96.50
Definitely False	5	3.50	100.00
Total	143	100.00	

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PARTY AFFILIATION

Generally speaking, when it comes to political parties in the United States, how would you best describe yourself? (measured in Wave 1)

7 point Party ID	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Strong Democrat	265	22.01	22.01
Not very strong Democrat	141	11.71	33.72
Lean Democrat	85	7.06	40.78
Independent	227	18.85	59.63
Lean Republican	114	9.47	69.10
Not very strong Republican	112	9.30	78.41
Strong Republican	214	17.77	96.18
Not sure	46	3.82	100.00
Total	1,204	100.00	

"Strong Democrat" and "Not very Strong Democrat" coded Democrat (n = 406)

"Strong Republican" and "Not very Strong Republican" coded Republican (n = 326)