

Join the Conversation: Your Input Would Be Very Useful

Your responses to the question in the box below will help us instruct others on how to evaluate the validity of news sources.

Given that many sources of information are perceived to be biased, how do you recommend others evaluate the validity of news and/or news sources?

United Non-Partisan Coalition is continuing to work on advocating for ethical governance and strengthening our communities. We have been working on educating our local population, across multiple generations, to create informed constituents who are prepared to hold their elected officials accountable.

Let's start where we agree: An informed electorate is critically important for our democracy.

Can we also agree that being an informed person is not an easy task in this era of questionable sources of information?

Our coalition has been speaking to groups with an interactive discussion titled "Towards Civil Discourse". We have also been working with students at a local high school. The goal of both projects is to create an informed constituency; a constituency that evaluates the validity of informational sources. These presentations are strictly non-partisan. We want to raise awareness about the dangers of inflammatory language and propaganda. We stress self-awareness and being a good role model. We do not discuss public figures or current politicians.

At a recent discussion with a group of senior citizens, we posed the question that is in the box above. Follow-up questions included:

- Can biased reporting be accurate? What indicators do you look for to determine accuracy?
- What differentiates biased reporting from propaganda?

The group agreed that these questions were very important. The answers they gave were less than encouraging. Basically, the group said, “It is very difficult to know what is true and what isn’t.” Beyond that, this very educated, very politically and ethnically diverse group didn’t find many areas of agreement.

At our local high school, students are analyzing rhetorical techniques that are used to persuade. Future lessons will require students to analyze informational texts to determine the how facts are supported or distorted. We are planning on working with some of these students to video themselves going home and sharing the lessons with a family member. We hope to put together a video that we can share with community groups.

Your responses to the questions posed above would be very useful. Your thoughts will help us bring other perspectives and other voices into our work with our local groups. Each new voice deepens our collective understanding and helps provide clarity.

Thank you, in advance, for your contributions to our blog.

Would you like to schedule a discussion to be held at a site in Prince George’s or Montgomery County? There is no charge for our presentation.

Are you interested in holding similar discussions? We would be happy to share our materials.

Contact us at nonpartisangroup2017@gmail.com to schedule a speaker or to receive a discussion script and handout materials.