

Myth, Verification, and Propaganda

2018 · Multi-Cultural Mythology · Public archival edition

HISTORICAL COURSEWORK

PRE-CHATGPT

NOT CURRENT VALIDATION

Archival note (2026)

This edition reproduces the surviving student submission text from a 2018 course export. It is included because it documents early concern with content verification, source verification, propaganda, critical thinking, and emotional persuasion. The original student claims are preserved rather than silently modernized.

Claim ceiling

This is a course reflection, not a validated misinformation study. Political examples are historical context for the student's reasoning and are not presented as current partisan analysis.

Original 2018 submission text

My current understanding of the word “myth” means a few different things. The first meaning I take from the word myth is something that is not true that gets blown out of proportion due to the myth being passed around by people from various backgrounds, ultimately changing its original meaning or story. The second definition I understand from myth is a well thought out story or explanation that seeks to give cause or meaning to something, generally passed around through people of similar backgrounds at first, then slowly spreading to other areas and other peoples.

The first definition I offered for the word “myth” has played a popular role in my social circles lately as most people know, the spreading of “fake news” being easier than ever nowadays through social media has become an increasing problem for most people. The lack of content and source verification, coupled with a lack of education in the appropriate areas have not looked pretty regardless of which side you stand on. Seeing past the left/right wing arguments, it is clear that the availability of propaganda has increased dramatically.

When people read unverified, untrue posts posing as news or updated, the possibility of them being spread around further as truth increases. At times, even a proper education isn't enough to shield some from warping their views when lack of critical thinking is at play. I have seen this being true from all sides of the political spectrum. It can be disheartening at times to learn that close friends and relatives sometimes believe these myths blindly without a need to question their sources or agenda. These “myths” tend to really take hold when individuals or groups carefully exploit pathos, otherwise known as emotional appeal.

The second and last definition of “myth” that I understand is basically folklore. From my hazy memories of elementary, I remember learning about various stories from Africa, Egypt, and ancient European civilizations. These stories would usually explain something that would have been impossible to fully

understand as we do now due to technological advancements. The most vivid story I remember is about how the crow began according to a traditional African folktale. I may be remembering the region incorrectly, but the basics of the story were that a mischievous, non-black bird was about to be burned, but was eventually let go for reasons I do not remember. By the time the bird was let go, the bird's wings had been tinted black by the smoke over the fire, which explains the creation and beginning of the crow.

This was a fun subject at the time, considering that I've never enjoyed reading stories for fun, which is a reason a few stories stand out pretty vividly. I do enjoy learning about cultures, which is why I found the subject engaging and entertaining. I do believe that the last time I learned about folklore was in my elementary days, which is why I do not remember as much as I would like.