**Slow truth and strong communities**

You may have heard the famous saying by Sir Winston Churchill: “A lie gets halfway around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes.”

The only problem is that Churchill didn’t say that. Neither did Mark Twain or Thomas Jefferson, who are among the other famous figures tied to it.

If you’re curious, the phrase is believed to have been adapted from an [early use by Jonathan Swift in 1710](https://quoteinvestigator.com/2014/07/13/truth/#:~:text=If%20you%20want%20truth%20to%20go,truth%20is%20pulling%20its%20boots%20on.%E2%80%99.&text=If%20you%20want%20truth,pulling%20its%20boots%20on.%E2%80%99.&text=want%20truth%20to%20go,truth%20is%20pulling%20its): “Falsehood flies, and the Truth comes limping after it.”

It’s ironic how both that phrase and its bastardized history sum up some of the issues facing media today.

Human nature being what it is, attractive falsehood has always had an advantage over homely truth. But the light-speed advances of information technology through the Internet and specifically social media have made that advantage unbeatable. To update the saying, a lie gets around the world twice before the truth has even heard there’s a race.

Readers used to be able to judge the reliability of a message from the medium they received it. Seeing something printed in a newspaper or shown on a TV screen implied a level of professionalism compared to something shoddily copied and left in a public restroom.

But the digital world – particularly the mobile world and social media – erases many of those cues. Today, the most blatant conspiracy theory shows up on your phone, looking much like the most respected journal.

So now, the onus is on you, the reader, more than ever, to make yourself aware of the source of what you’re reading. “I read it on the Internet” means nothing.

One source you can count on in this scary new world is your community newspaper. We employ professional journalists with deep experience and connections to the communities that we serve. Just as importantly, we’re visible in our communities, which makes us accountable and accessible to you, the reader.

But we’re only as good as you make us – community support is essential to what we do. Your print subscription, voluntary contribution, signing up for email newsletters and alerts or just picking up your print copy or bookmarking our sites are all ways to show that support.

Strong community journalism makes for stronger communities – and that’s a saying you can believe in.

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