



Fake News



A pocket primer

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- Broken down into 60 bitesize topics that can be read in sequence or dipped into – perfect for the intelligent but time-poor reader
- Highly visual, with an image to accompany each topic
- One of the first titles in a growing series, of *Pocket Primers*, offering concise, intelligent and playful examinations of the pressing issues of our time

Anyone can go online, write something about what's going on the world, and share it with potentially millions of people. We are living in an era of radically democratized information. And it's a threat to democracy itself. Social media has made it easier than ever to spread falsehoods, amplified by its echo chambers and algorithms, and latched onto by politicians looking for convenient narratives.

But fake news has a surprisingly long history. This book traces its evolution through rumor, conspiracy and misinformation, Ancient Greece to Donald Trump and beyond. It explores the origins of confirmation bias, some of the earliest instances of mass media manipulation, the deployment of fake news during war and the significance of the internet age, ultimately asking the question: how do we make sense of this post-truth world?

Chris Stokel-Walker is a writer, lecturer and journalist covering tech, AI and digital culture. He writes regularly for *The Times* and *Sunday Times*, *The Economist* and the BBC among others, and is the author of several books, including *The History of the Internet* (Michael O'Mara, 2023).