

The rise of the internet has brought with it a new age, the age of information. The sheer amount of information available at any time to anyone is astounding. Everyone has the ability to browse the collection of human history in its entirety and use it as his/her leisure. These days anyone can contribute anything he/she could think of. However, this comes with a price: the spread of misinformation and ignorance. It is a virus of which no one is immune, a disease that is spread easily and often. Ignorance is the force that could harm this generation the most.

Ignorance begets misinformation and vice-versa. By spreading false truths and accusations, the populace is encouraging, or even cultivating, foolishness. Doing it is exceptionally easy, especially with the rise of the internet and social media. By simply making any kind of public post with an opinion, people can be influence to think differently, and this change can be small or drastic. People share a multitude of false accusations, claims, and criticism, and it is up to those same people to choose what to believe. Bu with so many varying, biased opinions being thrown around, how could the know what to believe? The internet provides a solution to the very problem it facilitates. People can do their own research, and they can look for the facts to form their own opinion. If people check facts that they share, they could significantly reduce the spread of ignorance and misinformation. They do not have to be jaded; they just have to be mindful. By making themselves aware of the truth, they can contribute in a helpful manner.

To be ignorant of the world's problems is to be separated from the world. By being set apart from the world, people stop themselves from contributing. People must be aware of the problems in the world in order to fight them off. By being informed people can change the world with just their opinion. That is the entire premise for democracy; the people use their votes to enact their will. If everyone does it, then people can reach some kind of compromise where most

are content. Instead, people will choose to direct their hate at something that may be entirely untrue or remain completely aware of the rest of the world's problems.

It is not possible to completely eradicate misinformation and ignorance. People must combat its infectious nature by not only choosing what they believe in an informed manner but by also doing the same for what they share. Look for citations, find evidence, and do not be blind to the people who consciously lie to in order to stir hate and conflict. Everyone needs to be able to find his or her own validations and evidence, and it is all available. People must seek it. Of course, the availability of information and ability of the populace to spread it is not completely disadvantageous. With news in the hands of the public, anyone and everyone can share opinions and facts alike. Even if a majority of these are biased or skewed, somewhere, an unbiased truth can be found. Information can come from anywhere, and being able to look at a multitude of claims and facts to form an opinion is an invaluable skill. The ultimate way to learn and grow is to keep an open mind and find information in unlikely places.

Ignorance and misinformation are the plagues that threaten to infect this entire generation. It is an extremely viral disease whose creation can be attributed to many things, only some of them malicious. It is an extremely prevalent problem that will only continue to exist and spread, but by being open-minded and interested, it can at least be slowed and helped. If people choose to remain ignorant, the objects of which they ignore may very well be the ones to ruin their own world.