Communities of color and other marginalized groups have consistently been disproportionately affected and targeted by misinformation and disinformation. According to a report by the Senate Intelligence Committee on Russian interference in 2016, “no single group of Americans was targeted by IRA information operatives more than African Americans. By far, race and related issues were the preferred target of the information warfare campaign designed to divide the country.” In 2020, these tactics focused on suppressing voter turnout and spreading medical distrust in minority communities, creating societal harm and individual risk. Understanding the history of targeted disinformation campaigns is critical when trying to develop whole-of-society solutions.

Reading Resources:

- Michael Tubbs on disinformation, racism, and news deserts (Akintunde Ahmad, Columbia Journalism Review)
- COVID-19 infodemic exacerbates existing religious and racial prejudices (Harrison Mantas, Poynter)
- The challenge of combating fake news in Asian American communities (Terry Nguyen, Vox)
- How a racialized disinformation campaign ties itself to The 1619 Project (Joan Donovan, Brandi-Collins Dexter, Columbia Journalism Review)

Selected Experts on the Topic:

- Nora Benavidez, PEN America, @AttorneyNora
- Farai Chideya, Ford Foundation, @farai
- Brandi-Collins Dexter, Shorenstein Center, @BrandingBrandi
- Claudia Flores-Saviaga, Fellow at Facebook Research, Ph.D. candidate in the HCI Lab at West Virginia University, @saviaga
- Sherrilyn Ifill, President, NAACP Legal Defense Fund, @Sifill_LDF
- Jacquelyn Mason, special projects manager, First Draft, @JacquieSMason
- Shireen Mitchell, founder, Stop Online Violence Against Women, @digitalsista
- Olivier Sylvain, Professor of Law at Fordham University, @oliviersylvain
- Bridget Todd, communications director at UltraViolet, @BridgetMarie
- Khuram Zaman, Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University, @zamandigital

Intersection of Disinformation and Marginalized Communities