2016 was the year of “fake news.” It dominated the election cycle, it took over Facebook feeds and even [caused crime](http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/article/2016/dec/05/how-pizzagate-went-fake-news-real-problem-dc-busin/).

But as inundated as we were with fake news, it is not a new thing.

For more than 150 years, newspapers have been in the “anti-fake news” business. There have always been lies and ridiculous conspiracy theories, but they used to be delivered to you across the dinner table and not in your news source.  Let me be clear, fake news is not news you don’t agree with or dislike, it is falsehoods, cultivated with the intention to deceive. These stories are written to undermine the truth and power of the press.

Today, consumers must be much more aware of who is creating their news, and whether there are real reporters and editors standing behind the stories. Over half of Americans get news on social media. There is no current method of elevating real stories from trusted publishers, in fact, recent studies suggest that consumers care more about who shares the story than the original source.

Making stuff up is easy.  What is hard is checking facts and digging up stories that powerful people want to keep hidden.

We are celebrating real news as the cure to fake news. On [March 29th](https://www.newsmediaalliance.org/research_tools/supportrealnews/), the News Media Alliance and our partners will make a commitment to celebrating news that is real, reputable and trusted.  This is a day to celebrate that hard work, and to ask the public to stand-up for the principle that facts matter.

During the past year at the Alliance, I have celebrated our industry for their hard work and dedication to the truth. I now ask you to join me and support real news. It was because of hard working journalists that so many issues came to light this election season. We saw a glimpse of Trump’s tax returns, we heard the tape of Trump talking to Billy Bush, we read Clinton’s emails. We knew when the candidates got their information right, and when they didn’t. And today, the media continues to fight for the right to report on actions being taken by President Trump and his Administration, despite efforts to keep them out. This information gets to us because of the media. Not in spite of it.

It has become vogue to distrust and disparage the media. But as fake news corrodes trust, we must support the real media. Alliance members and other real journalists do an amazing job under difficult circumstances.

Fake news is not going to stop. We must become an educated and discerning populous. We must subscribe to real journalism, where the stories are colorful but the news is black and white.

Tell me how you are celebrating with the hashtag [#supportrealnews](http://www.twitter.com/hashtag/supportrealnews).