

## **7A—PEDAGOGY IN POLITICAL CONTEXT: FAKE NEWS, POST TRUTH, AND POPULISM #1**

### *Information and Reactionary Populism*

Pascal Lupien (University of Guelph) & Lorna Rourke (St. Jerome's University at the University of Waterloo)

The failure of the neoliberal economic project to deliver promised benefits to large segments of the population has produced a social and economic crisis. The resulting anxiety provides fertile ground for the emergence of a reactionary populism characterized by xenophobia, authoritarianism, and hostility toward democratic institutions, diversity, and human rights. Many people lack the information literacy skills to filter, analyze, and critique information about politics, making them susceptible to manipulation. Information literacy must play a far more significant role than helping students find sources for their assignments; it may very well be the key to promoting a richer and more inclusive democracy. We argue that in the current sociopolitical context, librarians need to begin thinking about moving beyond the confines of academic libraries and exploring the role that they can play in the development of information literacy skills beyond the university.