School of Journalism and Mass Communication
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

IVAN L. PRESTON RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM

"Susceptibility to Misperceptions in a Dynamic Media Environment"

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VILAS 2195 (James L. Hoyt Multimedia Classroom)
821 UNIVERSITY AVENUE, MADISON, WI

Are social media contributing to a decline in American's ability to understand politics? Do they reduce citizens' ability to tell truth from fiction? Do they promote belief in every claim that individuals encounter? And are the effects of social media unique among news sources? Starting in early 2019, my research team conducted a six-month, 12-wave panel study with a representative sample of about 1,000 Americans in an effort to answer these questions. We identified political news stories, both true and false, that were widely shared on social media and surveyed people about their beliefs on these topics. The surveys also included recurring measures of media use, as well as one-time measures of stable individual characteristics. This talk will provide a more detailed overview of the methods and will present a variety of results from the on-going project, including tentative answers to the questions that motivate this work

Kelly Garrett (PhD, University of Michigan, 2005) is an Associate Professor in the School of Communication at the Ohio State University. His research interests include the study of online political communication, online news, and the ways in which citizens and activists use new technologies to shape their engagement with contentious political topics. His most recent work focuses on how people's exposure to and perceptions of online political information are related to their political beliefs and their use of online news media, including social media. His work has been supported by Social Science One, Facebook, and a National Science Foundation CAREER Award, and has been published in journals such as PLOS One, Journal of Communication, Communication Research, Political Communication, and the Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, among others. You can read more about his research at http://www.rkellygarrett.com.