

# CT Opinions

## Quote of the week

“Our job is to taste free air. Your so-called boss may own the clock that taunts you from the wall, but, my friends, the hour is yours.”

— MARK SCOUT, “SEVERANCE” ON APPLE TV

# We are just as misinformed as our parents

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## I CAN HEAR HER VOICE CLEARLY.

“Don’t believe everything you see online, Kofi. There’s a lot of crazy people out there,” my mom said.

Her words ring truer now that I spend most of my days exploring the innards of the internet. Hopping back and forth from Twitter to TikTok, consuming everything with abandon.

Though I listened to my mom — sort of — I always saw the hypocrisy of what she said. She took information shared on WhatsApp and Facebook as bible, but rolled her eyes whenever I recounted stories or factoids I read online.

For a while I generalized her generation as being easily swayed by what they read online. Taking Facebook memes for fact and championing chain mail as the truth.

It wasn’t until recently that I realized my generation has followed in their footsteps. We are now the hypocrites for believing our parents and grandparents are easily misinformed when we are exactly the same.

The anonymity of the internet gives it a sense of trustworthiness. It’s easy to believe

something when it’s written right there in front of you without conflicting facts or opinions. Everyone, regardless of age, has fallen victim to this faux reliability.

We harp on older generations because it’s canon for them to engage with the internet this way. It’s only been a part of

Nigerian princes asking for lump sums of cash, but we assume we have a keen eye for spotting falsehoods. We cringe at the thought of believing anything on the graveyard apps of our forefathers, like Facebook. However, more and more I’ve seen our keen eyes grow blind spots.

Believing misinformation isn’t solely the fault of the user. The increasingly sophisticated nature of algorithms force us into echo chambers with folks who, too, aren’t keen on discrediting the polarizing conspiracies and falsehoods we happen upon. We also tend to only engage with content that aligns with ours.

We are fed so much news from social media that legacy outlets like CNN and The New York Times seem equally as reliable as the unprecedented amount of user-provided content from people with unknown credentials or none at all.

The internet is full of “experts” with no particular expertise, like Beyoncé said in a Harper’s Bazaar interview. Discretion is paramount when it comes to information we get online. Social media platforms like Twitter and Instagram have taken notice and started putting disclaimers on posts that are flagged for misinformation.

Though our parents may have begun the spread of misinformation on the internet, the apple does not fall far from the tree.

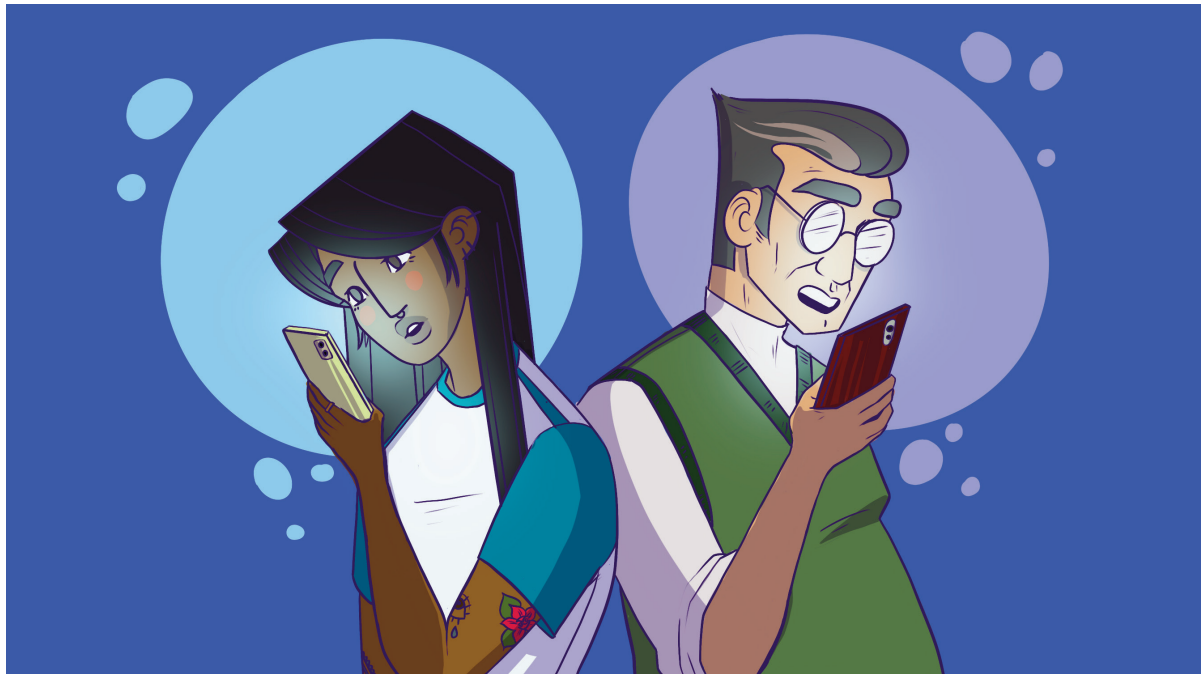


Illustration by Olivia McCabe

their lives for approximately 15 years, so it’s expected that they don’t have the tools to distinguish fact from fiction.

We as Gen Zers, those born between 1997 and 2012, have had the internet our entire lives. We may not fall victim to

Think of the many times one of your friends easily took a typo-ridden infographic as fact or shared a “post this on your story so Instagram doesn’t steal your information” posts on their account.

