

# Five Methods of Media Manipulation

## SPONSORED CONTENT



- Influencers paid to promote a certain product to their followers
- Followers may not be able to tell they're viewing an ad
- Influencers or content creators may not label that content is paid promotion

## SATIRE



- A humorous critique
- May be confused as truth rather than satire
- Sarcasm usually relates to current events

## PSEUDOSCIENCE



- Tries to pass itself as real science
- uses scientific-sounding language, cherry-picked data or outright false claims
- promotes "miracle cures"
- Often contradicts scientific experts

## CONSPIRACY THEORY



- Offers simple explanations for otherwise random or complex events; often pins it on sinister group pulling the strings
- rejects evidence that refutes conspiracy, and experts
- Can restore a sense of control in anxious times

## MISINFORMATION



- Information is wrong. May include a bit of factual information
- Intention may be to inform; influencer may not know the information is wrong
- Miscaptioning, misleading headlines, altered content

Sources: Morrison, Sara. "TikTok and its influencers have a secret sponsored content problem." Vol., 11 July 2022.  
Raphael, Rina. "These TikTok Creators Are Fighting Health Myths." The New York Times, 5 July 2022.