

The Brunswick News

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LETTERS

Restoring common sense to serve the common good

As Americans suffer unnerving decline in objectivity and respect for facts – including irrational rejection of science – our growing inability to build consensus is hampering political decisions essential to progress. Due to this growing suspicion of truth, our capacity to understand and agree upon issues, priorities and corresponding remedies has become severely impaired.

Many observers have concluded that a major reason for the provocative distortion of reality is the corrupting influence of online social networks like Facebook, “X” [Twitter], and TikTok. Through these networks, biased, sometimes malicious, opinions are often fabricated as rumors, which are then transformed into unfounded conspiracy theories, spreading doubt and distrust among millions of users. The owners of social-media platforms are accused of profiting from algorithms guiding their operations, which encourage discord created by escalating rebellion against facts.

At the Center for a Sustainable Coast we firmly believe that the subversive disintegration of shared reality must be overcome if we hope to achieve the clarity of common sense vital to serving the common good. Like other non-profit organizations genuinely seeking to support the public interest, we are concerned that the reckless war on facts, left uncorrected, will paralyze our institutions, blocking actions needed to resolve critically urgent challenges.

We agree with many assessments asserting that the social cohesion essential to a functional democracy must be restored. Until nominal objectivity can be achieved, we will remain vulnerable to those who profit by propagating disinformation, concentrating their power by impeding consensus crucial to advancing the common good.

David Kyler, Co-Founder & Director
Center for a Sustainable Coast