

Candace Gittens-Valbrune

285 Jay Street

Brooklyn, New York

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To the Older Adults in the United States of America,

There is a dire need to be careful about how information is being spread. Word of mouth information can mostly be very reliable. Sometimes spreading information that way can be regarded as a sure truth and a reliable fact. For example, if something happens in a neighborhood which you live in, which a news source is covering, asking around can be a guaranteed way of getting information related to the topic. Sometimes a person can have a deeper understanding about the topic because of their closeness in the neighborhood, and can ask the right people for more information. Overall, asking around for information from a community can provide many benefits to people.

But, information spread by word of mouth isn't always as helpful as it seems to be. Moral panic, which is essentially a panic or fear about big issues or topics in the world at large, is something that can be directly influenced by information spread through other people. An article from the Centre for Suicide Prevention titled "Suicide, Rock Music and Moral Panics", featured a section on moral panic that in the article, the author states, "The concept of

“moral panic” has been highly influential in the examination of the “forces of hyperbole and hysteria” (Garland, 2008) that erupt periodically in society.” That means that throughout history the panic about information that was out there panicked people for such a long time. There were many rumors that came from the article that were harmful. While some of the rumors of this incident were not true, the panic that people felt certainly is.

Moral panic that comes from a big issue can cause such a panic in people, which can leave people in biases that can misinform them, or leave them to make rash decisions that can be harmful to them and towards other people. Moral panic, a deep rooted one, which cannot be erased, is ultimately a danger towards people. There was an article by The Lancet called “The art of medicine: Moral panic and pandemics” , to summarize, which talks about pandemics and epidemics and the panic that comes from them. The article states that, “It is easier to generate panic than to disseminate real information. And we have been there before.” Panic can often spread like wildfire throughout people because it’s easier to panic then it is to actually concern with real information, but without that real information, that panic can often spiral into something even worse, and that's why we need to understand just why all of this is important.

Overall, in writing this, the goal is to stress that people must know the importance of what moral panic is, and take caution about how we spread information, especially important information towards other people. The more clearer information on an issue or a topic, the more we can start to make

progress in looking for solutions for such issues, and the faster that we can help to better ourselves. There is the need to be better informed, to understand the impact that what we talk about and its effects on other people, and we need to understand that we can learn better to lessen moral panic, as well as assist in availing misinformation in the future.

Regards,

Candace Gittens-Valbrune