

Pseudoscience, Disinformation & Misinformation: Looking Back, Looking Forward

Study Leader: Paul Etkind

Thursdays, 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

5 weeks beginning January 23

AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College

Maximum number of participants: 25

Pseudoscience, disinformation and misinformation have been part of the human condition since time immemorial. Recent changes in communication technologies have created unprecedented “reach” into communities worldwide through virtually instantaneous connections across borders. This has enhanced the impact of deliberate lies and inadvertent misunderstandings of issues, and it has weaponized these lies and misunderstandings to the point where they are capable of undermining social cohesion and promoting social divisions and chaos. We will examine this history, how it has shaped political beliefs and actions and promoted social upheaval particularly since the mid- 20th century, and what we might do to counter this new form of power.



Paul Etkind

Paul Etkind is a retired applied public health epidemiologist who concentrated primarily on infectious diseases. He worked at the local, state and national levels, and remains active in professional organizations.

Besides continuing work in epidemiology, he is active with teaching in Osher at Dartmouth and AIL, governance within Eastman in Grantham and the Upper Valley Jewish Community in Hanover, the Sherlock Holmes Club of the Upper Valley, and writing letters to the editor of the *Valley News* and other publications.

His academic background includes a bachelor’s degree in biology (1974) from Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts and a master’s (1976) and doctoral degree (1998) from the School of Public Health at Yale University.