The History of Misinformation

4th Century: The Donation of Constantine
The Donation of Constantine, granting Pope Sylvester power over Italy and the Western Roman Empire, was exposed as a forgery in 1440 by scholar Lorenzo Valla. The document influenced Martin Luther's views, leading to religious conflict, although the Catholic Church never officially acknowledged the forgery (Fake for Real, n.d.).
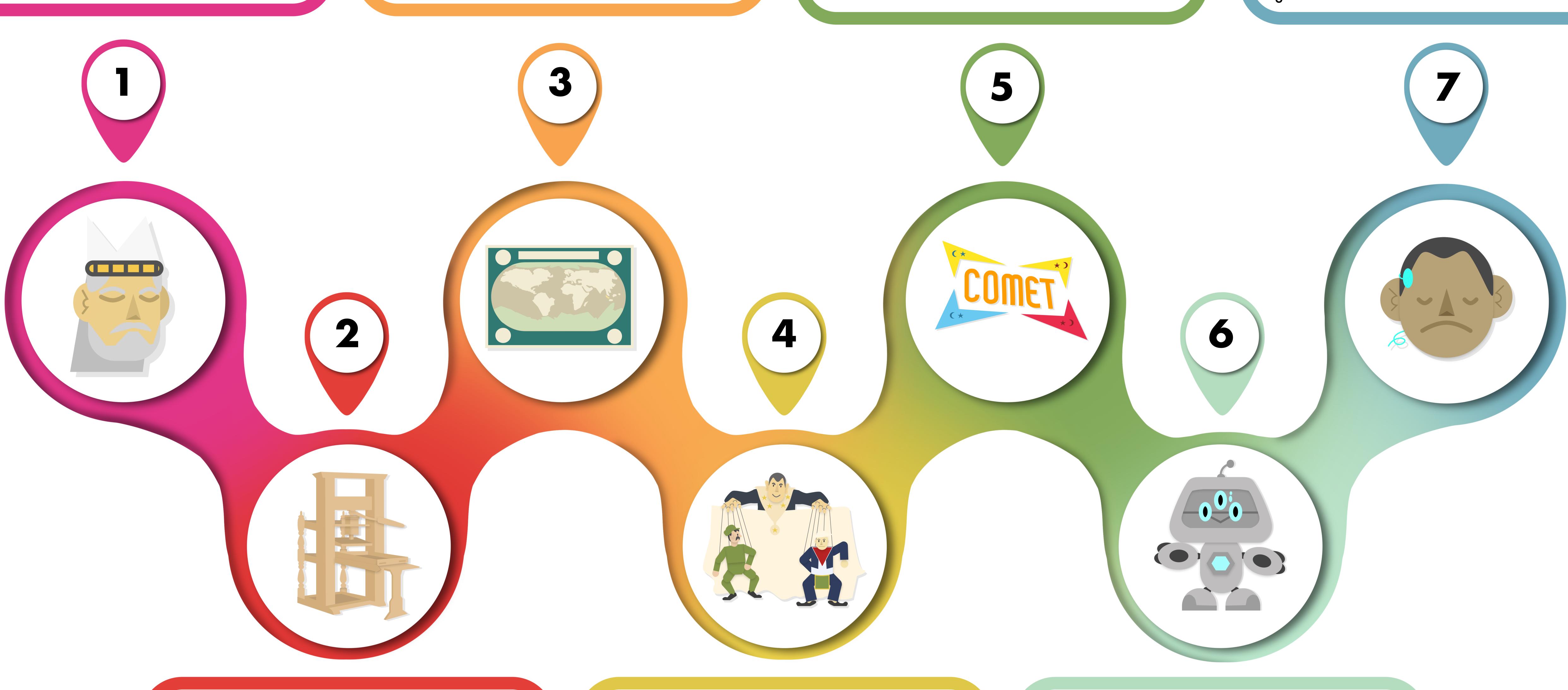
16th Century: Ortelius's Map
In the 16th century, false travel accounts like 'Ortelius' Map' distorted geographic knowledge. The map included a fictitious Strait of Anian, which led to misguided fortification attempts in 1609. Geographical forgeries, like Japanese mummified mermaids, aimed for fame and profit, deceiving audiences in Europe and America. These false narratives influenced cartography, navigation, and colonial propaganda, shaping the era's geographical understanding (Fake for Real, n.d.).

4th Century: The Donation of Constantine
During the 2016 US elections, leaked emails from John Podesta's account led to baseless conspiracy theories on social media, falsely linking them to child trafficking at a restaurant called Comet. These false narratives resulted in real-world threats and demonstrated the impact of fake news, exploited by Donald Trump for political gain, as depicted in the documentary "After Truth: Disinformation and the Cost of Fake News" (Rossi, 2020).

2225: Memory Manipulation by MAS
In 2225, the Memory Alteration System (MAS) is misused, causing widespread memory manipulation. Certain groups rewrite personal histories, leading to a world of mistrust. The Memory Retrivers fight back, restoring truth and inspiring others to reclaim their genuine memories in a world filled with uncertainty.

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7**

15th Century: Invention of the Printing Press
The 15th century saw the invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg, revolutionizing information distribution. Despite not increasing speed, it broadened access to knowledge, shaping societal changes (Weaver, 202). This innovation, akin to modern social media, underscores the power of controlling information, granting public access but creating disparities in understanding due to varying literacy and education levels (Doyle, 2019).

1903: The Protocols of the Elders of Zion
In 1903, 'The Protocols of the Elders of Zion' was published in Tsarist Russia, claiming to reveal a secret Jewish plan for world domination. Despite being debunked as a forgery and plagiarism in the 1920s, it fueled antisemitism post-World War I. The Nazis even used it in classrooms (Fake for Real, n.d.).

2046: The Rebellion of Generation Alpha
In a future society dominated by artificial intelligence and data manipulation, Minister Catherine restricts people's freedom by collecting data and controlling their choices through gadgets. Generation Alpha becomes numb due to this control. Beo and an AI bot, called AID exposes Catherine's manipulative tactics, inspiring a movement for freedom and genuine choice against overwhelming digital control.

Sources:
Doyle, A. (2019, July 31). Tracing "Fake News:" The Printing Press, Social Media, and Politics. Retrieved on October 7, 2023, from https://crossworks.holycross.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1017&context=criterion

Fake For Real. (n.d.). A HISTORY OF FORGERY AND FALSIFICATION. Retrieved on October 1, 2023, from https://historia-europa.ep.eu/en/fake-real

Rossi, A. (Regisseur). (2020). After Truth: Disinformation and the Cost of Fake News [Film].

Weaver, R. L. (2021, April 30). Fake News (& Deep Fakes) And Democratic Discourse. Retrieved on October 7, 2023, from https://scholarship.law.ufl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1006&=&context=jtlp&=&sei-redir=1&referer=https%253A%252F%252Fscholar.google.nl%252Fscholar%253Fhl%253Dnl%2526as_sdt%253D0%25252C5%2526q%253Djohaness%252Bgutenberg%252Bmisinformation%2526btnG%253