Fake News, Post-Truth & Information Literacy

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Definition

False
Misleading and confusing

Intention
Deliberate attempt to mislead

Popular Appeal
Widely consumed
What it’s not...

**Reliable Source**
Doesn’t usually come from established media sources adhering to journalistic standards

**Simple Mistake or Error**
Correction or retraction issued after the fact

**News You Don’t Like**
Viewpoint that consumer doesn’t agree with
## Fake News Is A Real Problem
Facebook engagement of the top five fake election stories*

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<th>Headline</th>
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**Total Facebook engagement for top 20 election stories** (August-election day)

- Fake news: 8.7 m
- Mainstream news: 7.3 m

*Engagement is measured as total number of shares, reactions and comments

Source: Buzzsumo via Buzzfeed
No GPS chip embedded
Germany starts enforcing hate speech law

Facebook is one of the social media companies affected by NetzDG
The Media Bias Chart is a visual representation of the varying degrees of political bias found in different news outlets. The chart is divided into several sections, each representing a different level of bias, ranging from Liberal Purge (Garbage) to Conservative Garbage. Each outlet is positioned according to its bias and overall quality, considering factors such as original reporting, fact reporting, complex analysis, and opinion or fair persuasion. The chart also highlights key types of bias, such as selective or incomplete stories, unfair persuasion, propaganda, and misleading facts. The chart is a tool for understanding the spectrum of political bias in journalism and helps users navigate the diverse landscape of news sources.
4 Types

1. 100% False
2. Propaganda
3. Satire
4. Hoaxes
100% False
Intentionally Deceptive
PLAYS ON EMOTIONS
Paul’s dead!
Obama Signs Executive Order Banning The Pledge Of Allegiance In Schools Nationwide

By Jimmy Rustling, ABC News - November 11, 2016

SHARE  Facebook  Twitter  Google+  Pinterest
100% False Intentionally Deceptive MANIPULATED CONTENT
Who want to make $$$

Who want to influence

Who want to entertain
Macedonia

His RPM—revenue per 1,000 impressions—hovered around $15, he says.

Boris fed the beast with diligence. “At night I would make four or five posts to share the next day. When I woke up, I shared them. I went to drink coffee, came back home, found new articles, posted those articles on the website, and shared them.”
How is fake news spread so easily?

Bots = software that imitate human behavior

Fakebook bots mimic real users and automate creation of group pages that include fake ads

Nearly 50 million twitter accounts run by bot software?
History of FAKE NEWS
Prehistoric Fake News.
First Century B.C.

Octavian v. Antony
The New York Times

"All the News That's Fit to Print"
FAKE RADIO ‘WAR’ STIRS TERROR THROUGH U.S.

U.S. CLOSES AIR TO FAKE ALARMS

Scene of Radio Hoax That Shook a Nation

Where Monsters From Mars DIDN’T Attack

“I Didn’t Know”

“War” Victim

“War” Victim

Where Monsters From Mars DIDN’T Attack

“I Didn’t Know”
21st Century

Pizzagate
How did we get here?
Where are we now?

Oxford Dictionaries

WORD OF THE YEAR

post-truth
Why does fake news matter?
At the extremes are harmful, even deadly, consequences
1998 – The Lancet publishes a research paper by a UK doctor claiming a link between the MMR vaccine and autism spectrum disorder.

The paper was widely reported leading to decreased vaccinations. This led to an increase in diseases, which can cause permanent injury in some cases.

Numerous medical and scientific organizations were unable to replicate the results claimed by the author. Paper retracted and the author is no longer allowed to practice as a doctor.

"...the most damaging medical hoax of the last 100 years."
Multiple independent datasets confirm rise in surface temperature since 1880 which was relatively stable pre-1850.

Rate of warming doubled since 1950s. 16 of 17 years since 2000 are the warmest on record. Independent scientists have confirmed sea level rise, melting, warmer oceans, etc.

2015 Paris Climate Accord – signed by 195 countries, ratified by 168.

U.S. President declares the United States will withdraw from the Accord.

EPA cancels talks by agency scientists on climate change and is assembling a team to challenge climate science.
Both claims were entirely false. False social media posts about South Sudan are fueling ethnic conflict and fears of genocide. These posts often come from outside the country.

Kiir tells a U.S. Senator there is no widespread violence blaming the media and claiming reports of atrocities are misleading.

May 2017 – South Sudan’s President Kiir removed Army Chief of Staff Malong leading to fears of a government collapse in the midst of a 3-year civil war.

Social media posts spread claiming Kiir had been killed and troops loyal to Malong were preparing to attack the government. Both claims were entirely false.

False social media posts about South Sudan are fueling ethnic conflict and fears of genocide. These posts often come from outside the country.
EXPERTS
"Lies sound like facts to those who've been conditioned to misrecognize the truth."

- DaShanne Stokes
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Source: Buzzsumo via Buzzfeed
Visualizing the spread of social media posts
What is a fact?

n. a thing that is indisputably the case

How do we talk about 'facts' in the legal system?

Something that actually exists; an aspect of reality
   - Black's Law Dictionary (10th ed.)

'fact in issue' - A fact that one party alleges and that the other controverts.
   - Black's Law Dictionary (10th ed.)
In 2017, two-thirds of U.S. adults get news from social media

% of U.S. adults who get news from social media sites ...

Source: Survey conducted Aug. 8-21, 2017. "News Use Across Social Media Platforms 2017"
Designing an Effective Information Literacy Program

Define “Fake News” and “Information Literacy”

Borrow from our friends in journalism
Build on existing but effective library programing

Address the role of social media in the acquisition of information

Distinguish straight news, opinion, satire, parody and fake news

Ban the device
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<th>User Needs (based on interviews). Hover over color bar or click on box for definitions</th>
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<tr>
<td>CODES FOR PROPOSED INDICATORS</td>
<td>“Objective, unbiased, no agenda, discloses conflict of interest”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEVEL: Corporate or site-wide</td>
<td>“Independent of business, government pressures”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEVEL: Individual piece (article, video, audio), but site-wide implementation</td>
<td>“Reputable outlet”</td>
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<tr>
<td>CODES FOR USER NEEDS</td>
<td>Consistent, reliable</td>
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<td>NEEDS: Site standards and policies declaring commitment to independence, diversity, corrections, etc.</td>
<td>“Admit when wrong, make corrections”</td>
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<td>NEEDS: Reputable journalist, unafraid of power, expert, with social currency</td>
<td>“Demographically diverse sources”</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEEDS: Accurate, original, clear</td>
<td>“Reputable journalist, expertise, unafraid of power”</td>
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<td>“Reflective of the diversity of those it covers”</td>
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Association of College and Research Libraries

Essential Skills that Define an Information Literate Person

- Determine the extent of the information needed
- Access the needed information effectively and efficiently
- Evaluate information and its sources critically
- Incorporate selected information into one’s knowledge base
- Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- Understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and access and use information ethically and legally
Key Programmatic Elements from Tried and True

1. Source identification
2. Fit
3. Logic
4. Veracity
5. Expertise
6. Currency
7. Copyright
Update your programs for 2018

Upstream searching  Syndication  Identify content and native advertising
If You Own A Home In Virginia You Can Now Claim Your $4,264 Benefit

Psoriatic Arthritis: The Most Common Symptoms

North American Geography Quiz: How High Will You Score?
Programming for today
| Fake news or Bad news? | Fiction, satire, spoofs and attempts to fool the reader | Read beyond the headline | Author and Currency | Authority |
Fact Checkers
Additional Resources


Michael A. Caulfield, Web Literacy for Student Fact Checkers, webliteracy.pressbooks.com


Evaluating Information ALA LibGuide (libguides.ala.org/evaluatinginformation)
