Mediatisation of Information. Many Faces of Fake News

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- Collins dictionary: fake news — “false, often sensational, information disseminated under the guise of news reporting”¹
- ”1805–15; orig. vagrants’ slang: to do for, rob, kill (someone), shape (something)”²

¹www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/fake-news
²www.dictionary.com/browse/fake
Terminology

- fake news vs. fake account (multi-account)
- agitation (short-term) vs. Propaganda vs propaganda (long-term)
Speech genres

- gossip, rumours
- superstition, urban legend
- canard, Printer’s devil
- tabloid, yellow journalism
- hoax (Piltdown men, 1912; Sokal Affair, 1996)
- humbug
- fake news = mediatization of rumours?
- clickbait
The history of falsehood from antiquity to the post-industrial era
From the history of fake news

- Rome, 64 BC — Neron: the Christians started the fire
- Europe, XIIIth century — donation of Constantine
- Dover, UK, 1814 — Napoleon Bonaparte is dead
- Kielce, Poland 1946 — Jews kidnapped a child
- USA, 1938 — Orson Welles: Martians’ invasion
- Belgium, 2006 — Belgium’s split
The Age of Sharing and its consequences for journalism

- participatory culture (Henry Jenkins)
- infotainment
- post-truth
- bullshit\(^3\)
- filter bubble (Eli Pariser)
- echo chambers\(^4\)

\(^4\)Petter Törnberg, Echo chambers and viral misinformation: Modeling fake news as complex contagion, ”PLoS ONE” 13 (9)
Pathologies of participation

- troll factories
- bot-nets
State of The Art
"we define "fake news" as the online publication of intentionally or knowingly false statements of fact"\(^5\)

1. Veleš (Macedonia) case (100 pro-Trump websites in 2016)\(^6\)

2. "a successful fake news publication can be shared millions of times and generate tens of thousands dollars in advertising revenue”\(^7\)

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• Kill Switch: “shutting down all or part of the network, like Walter Peck from Ghostbusters”\textsuperscript{8}

\textsuperscript{8}William D. Toronto, Fake News and Kill Switches: The U.S. Government’s Fight to Respond to and Prevent Fake News, p. 177
1. New Satire

2. News Parody ("Where parodies differ from satires is their use of non-factual information to inject humor. Instead of providing direct commentary on current affairs through humor")

3. News Fabrication

4. Photo Manipulation

5. Advertising and Public Relations

6. Propaganda

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1. False Connection (the content is not supported by headlines)
2. False Context
3. Manipulated Content
4. Satire or Parody
5. Misleading Content (”Misleading use of information to frame an issue or individual”)
6. Imposter Content (”When genuine sources are impersonated”)
7. Fabricated Content (100% fake)\textsuperscript{10}

\textsuperscript{10}Claire Wardle, Fake news. It’s complicated, February 16, 2017, https://medium.com/1st-draft/fake-news-its-complicated-d0f773766c79
1. Poor Journalism
2. Parody
3. Provocation, ”punk”
4. Passion
5. Partisanship
6. Profit
7. Political Influence/power
8. Propaganda$^\text{11}$

$^{11}$Claire Wardle, Fake news. It’s complicated, https://medium.com/1st-draft/fake-news-its-complicated-d0f773766c79
Parody and satire motivations

Trump Boys Swallow Luggage Keys In Case They Get Locked Up In Jail And Need To Escape

Dave Matthews Band Apologizes After Tour Bus Dumps Another 800 Pounds Of Human Shit Onto Same Boat Full Of People

Historians Reveal Thousands Of Immigrants Were Forced To Change Hairstyle At Ellis Island

„The Onion” (in print: 1988-2013)\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{12}https://www.theonion.com/
Parody and satire motivations

„Żółć. Pomówienia i insynuacje” (2007-2009)
Parody and satire motivations

„ASZ:Dziennik” (2011-?)\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{14}https://aszdziennik.pl/
Fake News in Food Sector

Villejuif leaflet

Fake News in Food Sector:

- ‘terrorismo informativo’ (Dr. Carlos Barros in the 80s.)\(^{16}\)

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Safety and Health of News Reading
HOW TO SPOT FAKE NEWS

CONSIDER THE SOURCE
Click away from the story to investigate the site, its mission and its contact info.

READ BEYOND
Headlines can be outrageous in an effort to get clicks. What’s the whole story?

CHECK THE AUTHOR
Do a quick search on the author. Are they credible? Are they real?

SUPPORTING SOURCES?
Click on those links. Determine if the info given actually supports the story.

CHECK THE DATE
Reposting old news stories doesn’t mean they’re relevant to current events.

IS IT A JOKE?
If it is too outlandish, it might be satire. Research the site and author to be sure.

CHECK YOUR BIASES
Consider if your own beliefs could affect your judgement.

ASK THE EXPERTS
Ask a librarian, or consult a fact-checking site.
Safety and Health of News Reading

1. Consider the source (to understand its mission and purpose)
2. Read beyond the headline (to understand the whole story)
3. Check the authors (to see if they are real and credible)
4. Assess the supporting sources (to ensure they support the claims)
5. Check the date of publication (to see if the story is relevant and up to date)
6. Ask if it is a joke (to determine if it is meant to be satire)
7. Review your own biases (to see if they are affecting your judgement)
8. Ask experts (to get confirmation from independent people with knowledge)\(^\text{17}\)

\(^\text{17}\)International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fake_news
1. enhance transparency of online news,
2. promote media and information literacy
3. develop tools for empowering users and journalists to tackle disinformation
4. safeguard the diversity and sustainability of the European news media ecosystem,
5. promote continued research on the impact of disinformation\(^\text{18}\)

“Naive reading” and its critics
Modern version by Bertrand Russell

- What is knowledge?
- Justified true belief
• Friedrich Nietzsche, Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud:

"common opposition to a phenomenology of the sacred, understood as a propaedeutic to the "revelation" of meaning" (...) the decision to look upon the whole of consciousness primarily as "false" consciousness" \(^{19}\)

• Were there any invasion? — No, only in fictional world of radio broadcast\textsuperscript{20}
• Were there in fact any panic??\textsuperscript{21}
• similar fake-news: Lumière Brothers ’s Arrival of the Train audience’s terror \textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{20}Joanna M. Burkhardt, Combating Fake News in the Digital Age. Expert Guides to Library Systems and Services, ”Library Technology Reports” Nov/Dec 2017, vol. 53 / No 8, published by American Library Association recalls an Welles’s broadcast example, basing its factography on Wikipedia entry that copies popular version of the story
\textsuperscript{21}Martin Chilton, The War of the Worlds panic was a myth, ”The Telegraph”, 6.05.2016, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/radio/what-to-listen-to/the-war-of-the-worlds-panic-was-a-myth/
\textsuperscript{22}Martin Loiperdinger, Bernd Elzer, Lumière’s Arrival of the Train. Cinema’s Founding Myth, ”The Moving Image”, University of Minnesota Press, Volume 4, Number 1, Spring 2004, pp. 89-118.

2. Martin Chilton, The War of the Worlds panic was a myth, "The Telegraph", 6.05.2016, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/radio/what-to-listen-to/the-war-of-the-worlds-panic-was-a-myth/


