



Real News v. Fake News

Some ideas, starting points and key thinkers.



<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/donald-trump-negative-polls-fake-news-twitter-cnn-abc-nbc-a7564951.html>

- Mr Trump wrote on Twitter (6.2.2017):
- "Any negative polls are fake news, just like the CNN, ABC, NBC polls in the election. Sorry, people want border security and extreme vetting."



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Donald Trump says all negative polls about him are fake news

CNN survey found he has the worst early approval rating of any US President in history

Tom Batchelor | @_tombatchelor | Monday 06 February 2017 13:02 | 53 comments



“Trump’s apparatus is skillfully deploying subterfuge in order to diminish public confidence to the point where it becomes impossible to differentiate truths from lies.”

Mischa Haider and Bruce Hay
The Guardian

newspaper 3.2.2017



Jimmy Wales (Founder of Wikipedia)

“Oxford Dictionaries named “post-truth” its international word of the year. As we started 2017, we heard new terms, such as “alternative facts”.

“It’s tempting to wonder: is this the beginning of the end of reliable information? Were the hopes for an open and inclusive web misplaced? Is this the dark age of the internet?”

The Guardian newspaper 3.2.2017

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/feb/03/online-transparency-fake-news-internet>



Fake News Is:

- Fake news, in the most black and white terms, can refer to intentionally made-up stories hosted on websites constructed to make money (through advertising) from the 'click-bait' circulation of fear, loathing and outrage.
- In a more 'grey area' definition, fake news can be said to consist of **misleading headlines, deceptive editing, or consensus-based 'truths.'**



News or Gossip?

The advantages of so many sources of information is that we can get our news almost **immediately** events take place.

- But surely we also have the right to expect published news to be **accurate, impartial, fair** and **balanced** with the source itself offering **transparency** and **accountability**.





Traditional News Media

- News flows into news organisations everyday in huge amounts so a ‘selection and organisation’ process has to take place.
- One of the first considerations in this process is often the ‘political bias’ of the news organisation concerned – often dictated by the ownership.
- News is turned into stories – with conflict, drama and human interest added (and often with pictures) with careful targeting at the readership/ audience concerned.

News Values!



News Values

Editors need to consider these News Values as they make their selection.

- Threshold
- Meaningfulness
- Unexpectedness/surprise
- Continuity
- Composition
- Reference to elite persons
- Personalisation
- Negativity

Gatekeepers (Editors)


- In traditional news organisations the gatekeepers are the editors. They select and organise the news. They also fact check the copy (journalists' production) because traditionally inaccuracies can seriously undermine the reputation of a news source.
- However, with the rise of Twitter, Facebook etc. gatekeeping has all but disappeared, allowing writers, should they choose to take it, opportunity to publish whatever they want and with impunity.
- <http://discuss.epluribusmedia.net/commentary/alexander-woollcott-fake-news>



John Perry Barlow

“If you can control
what they can know
the rest is a very
simple matter.”





‘We Media’ news
through blogs,
twitter,
crowdsourcing
etc.

The main issues with these sources are that:

- There are no checks on **accuracy, balance and bias**.
- It is very difficult to **authenticate** the sources and therefore often impossible to hold anyone **accountable** for accuracy of ‘factual’ information.

David Gauntlett

Media utopianist and author of 'Making is Connecting.' He says that the removal of gatekeepers, such as large news forms is extremely beneficial for democracy, allowing everyone to voice their opinions and avoid the country becoming a totalitarian state. He commends this as an example of pluralism - gathering news and other accounts from different people of different classes and allowing their opinions to be heard



"Gauntlett offers a terrific account of how creativity, craft, and community intersect in the 21st century."

— Clay Shirky, author of *Here Comes Everybody*

"Clear, convincing and engaging."

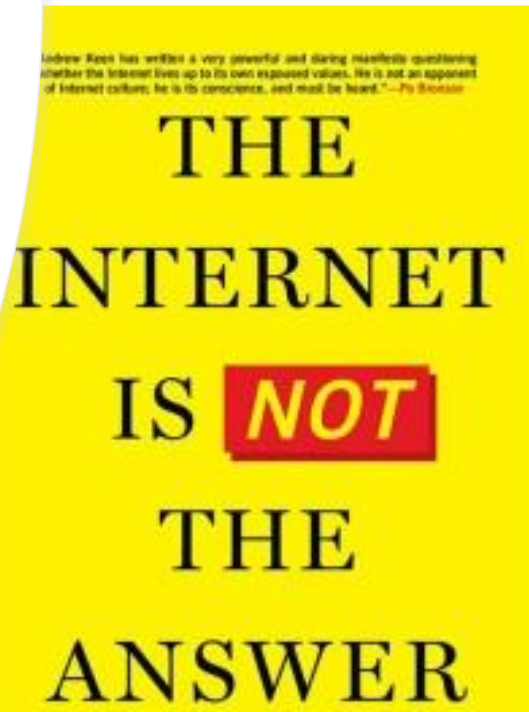
— Andrew Dubber, Birmingham City University

"*Making is Connecting* is an inspired call to recognize the relationship between encouraging creativity and fostering an engaged citizenry. If you want to understand how digital participatory cultures can lead to positive transformations in our individual lives and in our societies, read this book."

— Lynn Schofield Clark, University of Denver

Andrew Keen

Media dystopianist. He says the removal of these gatekeepers does not promote creativity, but instead, allows the inarticulate and talented to voice their 'incorrect' opinions. His comment is, 'those who shout the loudest will be heard the most.'



DAN GILLMOR
MeDIActive

with a foreword by CLAY AUSTIN

Dan Gillmor

In his blog Dan Gillmor (author of We The Media and Mediactive) outlines how Trump threatens journalism and makes an impassioned plea for journalists to become active defenders, and explainers, to preserve the 'truth' and freedom of speech.

<http://dangillmor.com/2016/11/13/trump-free-speech-and-why-journalists-must-be-activists>

- It is also recommended that you read the comments underneath his blog post



A The Future of Journalism
MEDIACTIVE

Charles Leadbeater

- Charles Leadbeater raises what he calls ‘The Cacophony Argument.’
- This argues that is hard to distinguish what you need to/want to know out of all the content in facebook and twitter news feeds.
- The video below discusses what happens when the algorithms of Google/Amazon etc. are applied to solve this problem.
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OQDBhg60UNI>



Fake News Websites

- Fake news websites e.g. these: <http://www.dailydot.com/layer8/fake-news-sites-list-facebook/> deliberately publish **hoaxes**, **propaganda**, and **disinformation** — using social media to drive web traffic and amplify their effect.
- Unlike news satire, fake news websites seek to mislead, rather than entertain, readers for financial, political, or other gain.

Filtering Truth

Ask

Ask better questions. It's not enough to simply read an article and take it as is. Bias is everywhere and you need to recognize your own. Understand other sides of the argument and understand your own frames of thinking.

Check

Check your viewpoint. It's easy to not see problems that aren't your problem. Listen to other people's stories. Know that there are invisible forces, such as the patriarchy, that dominates the 'norm' in society.

Take

Never take one source as the whole story. Including this forum.

Change

Change your digital behaviour. Clickbait is like dessert, learn to consume a healthy diet of information. Cultivate a Facebook news feed that gives you quality information by clicking on better stories.

Quick Ways to Spot fake news

- Comes from a fake site. (Last slide)
- The date is older than a week (and therefore is not news.)
- Bias (1) – The headline is set up to confirm readers' own biases or prejudices?
- Bias (2) – The site has a noticeable slant/bias in its name or URL?
- Supporting evidence – The evidence in the article does not support the claim in the headline?

Covering Politics in a Post Truth America



“Social media sites should rightfully be doing a lot of soul-searching about their role as the most efficient distribution network for conspiracy theories, hatred, and outright falsehoods ever invented.”

Susan Glasser (Former Editor of Politico)

<http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/12/journalism-post-truth-trump-2016-election-politics-susan-glasser-214523>