

Research Essay

What is Fake news?

To begin with, what is fake news? Fake news is false information advertised often in a sensational way under the guise of news reporting. People who make fake news produce and share unreliable and misleading information such as putting things out of context, conspiracy theories, rumours, propaganda, encouraging hate, malware, scams and fraud often deceiving people for financial gain. (Manchester Metropolitan University, No Date, P8)

The Aim of the Essay

The Aim of the Research essay is to demonstrate why people promote fake news, why people spread negativity and why people use social media to push other people down. Because when people understand each other more, there is less conflict and then hatefulness would begin to rot away and become more peaceful.

What drives people to be the way they are?

It's important to examine how fake news has developed over time first and why this is relevant to society. For starters, people are hungry for certainty. (Tony, No Date, P8) Certainty is where people seek for pleasure and comfort over hardship and pain, and some people need it more than others. Because of different levels people are on in life, different experiences and because of that we have a different map to each other, and because our goals and purpose are different to each other, there becomes disagreement and then beyond that is conflict, and sometimes it's because someone stepped foot onto someone's property (Google Arts & Culture, No Date, P8). When people collect information and experience to have an official view point, each viewpoint is like a different channel and different channels have different audiences, this is also known as 'Target Audience' (Lake, 2022, P8). There's an article talking about the drawbacks of target audiences is when verified accounts from social media become more and more narrow minded, they target themselves to really specific people to the point where some of its fanbase gets turned off by the content creator, as their audience expectations weren't met by the creator or not being favoured enough. One example is that there is a guy called 'Andy Elliott' and he has said on one of his YouTube Shorts that he fires his employees if they don't have six-pack abs

(Obrien, 2023, P8). Andy Elliot did say in response that “It's called a standard” and suggests raising them? “How about you guys quit getting civilised and quit settling?” While many addressed how 'ridiculous' the standard was, and shared incredibly unrealistic standards. To where his audience would be turned off and other content creators would call him out for it, and with YouTube, if someone with a large following does something wrong, their fanbase decreases. A lot of YouTubers have done this before, where they would make videos criticising other YouTubers in order to send hate towards them (Stewart and Swift, 2023, P8)(Wikitubia, No Date, P8). Experience in life says one thing about where people stand but how much knowledge is another, as John Locke puts it ‘No mans knowledge here, can go beyond his experience’, with unintelligent people for an example, it's not so much that they actually are unintelligent but rather hate the person that they're acting unintelligent towards, are we confusing irresponsibleness with hate? (Bhattacharya, 2023, P8)

The cause of making Media Addictive

The problem with the media and partly why it's addictive is because a lot of headlines out there are negative. The media today is also heavily influenced by what's known as ‘user-generated content’ (UGC) (Beveridge, 2022, P8), this can be taken to the extreme involving different forms of media that has graphical violence and other disturbing content that has been censored before or withheld from the public overall. Sometimes it can overhype people and sometimes it can emotionally manipulate their audience to watch and read more, whether the news is good or bad as people know that the most extreme stuff gets the most attention as it gets more views and clicks which equals to more money (YouTube Creators, No Date, P8-9)(Barnhart, 2023, P9).

You can make money on YouTube is done with advertising revenue, advertising revenue is where you place adverts in your videos, you can add as many as you want, usually on the YouTube video player there is a yellow dot, while playing the video when the player hits the yellow dot, the video pauses and takes you to an advert and it will usually show one or two ads, and that's how Youtubers make money (Lavish, Luxurious, and Spoiled Rotten, 2019, P9). YouTubers can make \$2000 per million views, however then YouTube will take 45% of that money and they keep it to themselves, IRS takes a cut of the remainder, viewers must watch 30 seconds of an ad in order for it to count, then you pay tax on that which is another 40% taken away, so then over all your only making \$660 per million views, so in order to make a lot of

money and be rich from YouTube, you would need to get a lot of views, a lot more than just a million, so that is what drives news outlets tend to exaggerate stories and post the most heartbreaking ones because bringing emotion gives them more attention (Gritters, 2019, P9), which is why everyone talks about the news, because people want to know how much of their lives are being impacted (Taylor & Francis Group, 2022, P9), and the problem with that is that it brings on stress, anxiety, as well as physical ill health.

Examples

YouTube isn't the only media outlet that is corrupt in protecting its audience from getting involved in bad situations but any form of media is capable of doing this. The vote leave campaign was a great example of this within politics as one of their argument campaigns was about the UK sending £350,000,000 to the EU and once we leave were no longer paying this and the campaign suggested that the government could use this money towards the NHS. But in the 2016 election of leaving the European union when 'Leave' won, 33 million voters to be exact, a large percentage of people voted leave for the reason of more funding for the NHS, Nigel Farage disappointed his voters by saying that he couldn't promise and guarantee that the £350,000,000 would of gone to the NHS but rather what the vote leave campaign did was a suggestion and idea that it would go to the NHS but it didn't mean that it was going to the NHS. (Eskander, Anthony, 2016, P9) (Stone, Jon, 2016, P9)

In a 2010 Presidential election in the UK there used to be a three way party (which is now a two way party system Labour and Conservative) but there used to be a third party called the Liberal Democrats, they still exist but their party is much smaller than what it used to be before. Their leader of the party Nick Clegg promised people that if you voted for him that students could go to university for free, but by the time he was coming towards winning the election David Cameron offered to side with him and Nick Clegg accepted the offer and then David Cameron ended up winning the election and as he won, he didn't make universities free but ended up paying more and it was £9000 a year. This caused outrage to a lot of the Liberal Democrat supporters and Nick Clegg made an apology video but it wasn't very well forgiven. So then the Lib Dem Party collapsed. (Cutts and Russell, 2015, P9)

Let us now consider what is going on in Xingxing province in the far west of China. The Chinese government has reportedly arbitrarily detained more than one million Muslims in reeducation

camps since 2017. Most of the people who have been detained are Uyghur, a predominantly Turkic-speaking ethnic group, and have put them to intense surveillance, religious restrictions, forced labour, and forced sterilisations (Maizland, 2022, P9). What makes this even worse is that the Chinese government has funded travel bloggers to whitewash the Uyghur situation in Xingxing, China, by showing the other side of the Chinese province by acting like the whole situation with the Uyghurs isn't true and that Uyghurs and Chinese get along really well with each other and that there's peace, without mentioning that the Uyghurs are forced into this by government officials and that majority of the vlogging is all staged, and this is another form of extreme fake news and propaganda (Sintash and Abdureshid, 2022, P9-10).

There are even some articles talking about how YouTube is responsible for the 'Flat earth' community growing because it's become a place where a minority of people have been able to express conspiracy theories. Research has said that before YouTube, the flat earth community was very small but when YouTube became big, the flat earth community grew much larger (BBC, 2019, P10), despite so much proven scientific evidence from scientists themselves that the earth is a globe (NASA Science Space Place, 2019, P10). This suggests that YouTube is not a reliable place to learn and gain information, like for example if you want to learn how to program, you join a course that does that, if you want to gain some information before travelling to a country, you speak to a travel agent or go to the most local embassy of that country, and when you have questions about science, you should speak to scientists themselves who have spent years experimenting and studying this, not some 3 minute YouTube video.

How average people use media to affect our society

Another study says that people are more likely to fall for confident people because they are more convincing, as confident people make things feel more exciting to the point where people who don't have much knowledge about things can get involved (Burnett, 2015, P10). This is also why scammers are so confident towards people because their aim is to drag people in so the victim is vulnerable to having a lot taken away from them by the scammer (Collins, No Date, P10). These types of people use what's called the Dunning-Kruger Effect on their opponent, (The Decision Lab, No Date, P10)(Zanini, 2021, P10) and it says that average people fall into this disorder because they want to feel like a genius or at the top of the hierarchy the easiest way possible with the least amount of effort, but it never works because they don't have the effort or energy to have proof or evidence to back it up for their reasonings, so you could argue

that Laziness has something in common with irresponsible or that unintelligent people put feelings above facts (Another word for this is Simple-Minded) (Pradeepa, 2023, P10). Also it's another good way to tell if someone is a scammer/fraud or not is when they don't have evidence and proof to why this is too good to be true.

The conflict between truth-hood and falsehood

Furthermore some people join sides because they dislike certain groups of people within politics and they join parties that are most likely to put those groups of people at a disadvantage (ADL, No Date, P10). The 'Ku Klux Klan' also known as the 'KKK' was a historical example of this, their organisation was famously about discriminating against black people because they disliked black people (Britannica, 2023, P10). Other examples is the Israel-Palestine conflict, From the information that is out there that we know, the Pro-Israelis are accusing 'Hamas' as an anti-semitic terrorist organisation that want to wipe out Israel and kill all the jews and not to confuse Palestine with Hamas and they say that Palestine is not the problem, Hamas is (This is According to Piers Morgan, (Ismail, 2023, P10)). While Pro-Palestinians are accusing Israel of attacking Palestinian people and Palestine. The problem is that there are a lot of rumours and accusations that Hamas and the Palestinians are uniteing and Hamas has been said to be as bad as Jihadist terrorist groups like ISIS or Al-Shabab and alot of Pro-Palestinian supporters like Jeremy Corbyn refuse to answer if Hamas is a terrorist organisation and that may cause some intimidation for the rest of the British public (Simpson, 2023, P11)(Mitchell, 2023, P11)(Browning, 2023, P11). The bigger question is whether there is something behind this conflict between Israel and Palestine; is this really a war against the two countries or is this just a war against people, as 'actions speak louder than words' they say. Why this is being mentioned is that a large percentage of people who favour Palestine more, tend to be younger people and people from different races and backgrounds. While the Pro-Israeli side tends to have a much older generation that is white majority, they also lean towards being pro-British as well, while the pro-palestinians are more Anti-British (Ingram, 2023, P11).

Let us now consider Extremism. What is Extreme? From the Collins Dictionary, 'Extremism is the behaviour or beliefs of people who try to bring about political change by using violent or extreme methods' (Collins, No Date, P11). meaning that it's when someone wants to take action and make an impact in an aggressive way. Possibly Black Lives Matter was an example of this, because although George Flyod getting killed by a police officer was a tragic thing and nobody

deserves to have their life lost because of their race. The message didn't come out very well, Like with 'Blackout Tuesday' and why it was such a controversy was because 'Blackout Tuesday' was a big event on the 2nd June 2020, and a lot of people clashed 'Blackout Tuesday' with 'Black Lives Matter' by using the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag within the 'Blackout Tuesday' posts and Black Lives matter was an even more controversial topic because although a lot of people support Black Lives Matter, there's a lot of people who disagree with it and question the movement. So you could argue that Black Lives matter Hijacked Blackout Tuesday as Blackout Tuesday was much bigger, this gave the message that Black Lives matter was trying to dominate a lot of forms of media and invade people's space and self-interest online (The conversation, 2020, P11). There have also been a lot of accusations people have gotten involved in Blackout Tuesday, not because they actually cared about or acknowledged about the horrific thing that happened to George Floyd but got involved because they wanted to come out as more popular, rather than getting the actual point across. And this could suggest that Pop Culture has a big part of the media as well. Artists such as Lil Nas X and Kehlani and many more were examples of artists who have a large following that got involved in the movement. (Haylock, 2020, P11)

Like an example, telling something that they can't do something or aren't allowed in because of who they are whether it's their gender, Sexual orientation, race, ethnicity or religion, Another example is wanting to kill or openly hating certain groups of people for who they are without any guilt is another form of extremism (Wales Safer Communities, No Date, P11). With one of these articles it's not that being right-wing is rooted within ignorance but rather ignorant people are more likely to be extremist and hold extreme views than smart people as it also mentions that "it doesn't mean all conservatives are stupid" the same way that not all liberals are smart (The Conversation, 2016, P11). And that smart people are more likely to be 'Centrist Moderates' and not stereotypical left-wingers. And what a lot of people on the Left and Right do is that they are accusing each other of being biased and going as far as to say that each other's facts are wrong and if we're going as far to say that someone's facts are wrong, does that mean that fact becomes a meaningless word which doesn't make sense because how can you deny what is said to be a fact. As does fact mean the truth or does fact mean an opinion that is superior to others? (Monash University, No Date, P11-12)

How is the audience also to blame?

So far this paper has focused on content creators and Influencers. The following section will discuss how the audience and fanbase are also to blame as sometimes the content creators aim wasn't to get a big audience at all but it just somehow happens that the content creator was lucky and had a large following because they were making content that they enjoyed doing. As it isn't just the content creators that are responsible for this but it's the audience as well as the reality about individuals online is a large percentage of people on the internet aren't interested in facts and logic unless it favours them, and it's hard, difficult and no fun to address a fact and a logical point if it doesn't favour you so why do it? And a lot of people on the internet don't care whether they're right or not. They're just looking for inspiration, fun or something that is interesting to them (And Pop Culture is very good at providing pleasure (Crossman, 2019, P12)), so that people nowadays don't have time, power or energy to deal and argue with other people who aren't on the same boat as them because it's a nightmare. (Novosel, 2021, P12)

Conclusion

In conclusion, there are some people out there that can't be argued with. With fake reporters, it's not that they actually are making propaganda but more they are just simply not on the same page as other people. These people often have a different problem to what their viewers have, and those problems make them unhappy with where they are in life and their personal expectations aren't met or violated, and when they become really unhappy. They'll do whatever they can to bring other people down to their level, in order to make them feel better about themselves. Unfortunately, there are a lot of people on YouTube and other social media that are like this and then it becomes cyber-bullying.

Fake news is biased, because the purpose of fake news is not actually about telling the truth, but rather gaining attention, power and control as a lot of people don't want to be told that they are wrong because it makes them feel unintelligent. This therefore makes them feel worthless. As they say, "Truth never hurts the teller" - Robert Browning. It is crucial to understand why people act upon this danger of promoting false information, their key purpose and why viewers fall for it.

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Litreture Review

How do we tell if the media is legit or not?

The key ideas to understand the argument is how we can trust people in the media, how legit people are when it comes to their advice and who isn't legit. One way to examine this could be by stating who has the most facts and how do we tell when something is a fact and something that is just biased? As bias is an opinion based on feelings, while a fact isn't based on feelings but backed up evidence and statistics that has been stated on official licensed websites.

However, even with legit websites, doesn't mean that there is no false information on there, a lot of news channels have been accused of promoting fake news according to the governments, Donald Trump certainly has a history of doing that. And if governments are accusing government licensed channels of promoting fake news e.g. CNN, then who are we actually supposed to believe? (Stelter, 2020, P15) Reading books may be more legit because when books are written and get published, they go through all sorts of things to make sure that they are suitable to be sold to the public, but then again are the people who approve of these books biased?

Example

In the article called 'Fake news, post-truth and media-political change' (Corner, 2017, P16) there is a noticeable topic about Tobacco, Health and the 1950s, as the 1950's was a time when people realised that smoking was bad for you, as approximately 40% of people from the 1950s smoked, but there have been rumours that people knew that smoking was bad for you before the 1950s but people didn't say anything and lied in order to make money, and before society

recognised that it was bad, Cigarette Companies at the time used Doctors to Push Smoking with advertising.

In the same article (Corner, 2017, P16) it mentions a lot about During the US elections, Trump accuses the main- stream media as a 'fake news' source when he was elected 45th US President, but when the 2020 election happened and Trump lost over Biden, he set up excuses for his loss over the election and called the election fraud. His explanation was that there were "lot of complaints" about the voting machine casting Republican for Democrats: and said that "it's happening in various places today". (Stelter, 2020, P15)

Furthermore in the same article (Corner, 2017, P16) that was even more relevant is that a lot of the mainstream social medias like Facebook and YouTube get sustained attention, as it's the easiest way to gain knowledge and understanding about the world. People who use social media will do whatever they can to make their videos go 'viral' by showing the very best and worst of what goes on in our deanage.

How the media changes the way we think in politics

Social media has a history of encouraging people to choose sides. This was known as the 'news bubble', a news bubble (Corner, 2017, P16) is an environment in which one exposes something happening to society and whoever is presenting this projects how they see it towards their audience (Usually).

Within a book, 'Where Truth Lies' (Fallon, 2019, P16) its talks about political Segregation became more extreme after 9/11 radicalised a new generation of activists who already gained influence outside of organised political parties but felt called upon by what was unfolding to take action about the curious injustices. The 'Alt-Right' was a great example because there used to be a lot of videos on YouTube where people would talk about how "The left is chaos and anarchy, and the more anarchy you have, the more power there is to go..." (Wendling, 2018, P16). There's a book about this called 'Alt-Right: From 4chan to the White House', talking about the Alt-right and what they're about.

The problem with YouTube unlike books is that, YouTube is place where you can upload almost anything you want, 'Broadcast Yourself' was its original slogan. Also the Censorship efforts in western Countries tend to be mixed unlike in other countries like China, Thailand and Iran

where it's much more straight-forward. Internet Censorship is where it dishmishes access to information; (Marc and Larry, F., 2012, P16) The European Union have been stepping up efforts to promote internet freedom, but every time there is more freedom comes more vulnerability and danger, and a lot of countries that don't have much freedom such as countries that are ruled by dictators often tend to be very safe countries, as George Orwell puts it "True Freedom is the right to say something that others don't want to hear." So whenever there is more disagreement, comes more conflict and terrorism.

How people who hold a belief system control the media

Ideologies also have a big part of promoting false realities, because if we are not being told the right information on what is true or not, and different groups of people receive different information from other groups of people, this is called 'Echo Chambers' (Diaz Ruiz and Tomas, 2022, P16)(Tsai, 2012, P16) and the problem with this is that it causes a disconnection and conflict and if peoples opinions still aren't being heard then it can lead to extremism. Doing a deep dive into reasons why men don't have a voice in society (until much more recently) over the social issues they face like male suicide which is 'five to six times of that of females' (Farrell PhD and Gray PhD, 2018, P16) or why isn't anti-semitism and misandry considered to be as bad as racism and misogyny and why is the far-lefts echo chamber's kenner on favouring women and people of colour issues, but not everyone else, and found out from an Author, Warren Farrell said on a couple of his books called 'The Boy Crisis' is that he answered this question about men by saying that "We believed that for the last 50 years that men have 'all the power and privilege'", so this is suggesting that our society has taught us into believing that men have always had a voice in society and that men already have the same rights as women and that patriarchy is their voice. Same with white people, why are charities only focusing on poverty in places like Africa and Asia but not places like Eastern Europe or southern states of america and again it's because we're taught that white people have 'all the power and privilege'. And it's why Marxists don't fight against anti-semitism because of the myth that Jewish people are wealthy, greedy, and dominate the media, banks and politics (European Network Against Racism, 2015, P16). Jay-Z even made a line in one of his music videos saying that "jewish people own all the property in America". So there is a pattern that Marxists seem to make here, it's not that the enemy is Straight White Jewish Man, but the enemy is the rich and wealthy, (Marx and Engels, 1848, P16) and Karl Marx himself even wrote on the communist manifesto that "Money had become the alienated wealth of man, the bartering away of man's life activity,

the product mutually estranged men who exchange freedom in freedom in return to satisfaction of their individual needs". And this is the floor with ideologies such as Marxism made by having assumptions of certain groups of people for who they are, rather than acknowledging that people shouldn't judge someone by how much wealth they've got based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, etc. And this isn't to say that all marxists have that mindset and they can go ahead and deny their doing this but actions speak louder than words, they may have a point that there is a hierarchy system but it's wrong to say that white Jewish men control it.

How can we do better?

Going back to a book on 'Where Truth Lies' (Fallon, 2019, P16), within the 'Networked Audiences' section it discusses how Independent media productions have a deep history of putting effort to create political change and evaluating to secure media along the way. People put things out for the public to see as a form of desire to "Change the world", and it demonstrates the ability to make a show enlighten on a particular issue. Furthermore it discusses "Why Documentary Filmmakers Keep Trying to Change the World", and along that it's saying it gives a connection with the people and organisations that hope to produce social change, like taking action about sorting something out that is wrong with our society like poverty, corruption, inequality, etc. What drives someone to "change the world" is the desire for it, And those methods can be done with documentary film making, as Film Documentaries are often films about the alights on a particular issue and used as an application of the medium.

Conclotion

In conclusion we need more policing of these social media outlets which would help reduce echo Chambers and that there's best of being a one way party system that favours both sides of the spectrum. Because as Warren Farrell puts it, "When only one sex wins alone, both sexes lose" and this could not just apply to just gender but race as well as religion. So this shouldn't be about who wins and who is right, it's about defeating the system, and when we all unite together not only does that make us all stronger but has a better chance of defeating the system.

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