



Programme MA Equity and Diversity in Society

Module: **Political: Influences on Inequality and Diversity**

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How has the concept of ‘fake news’ altered the public discourse on inequality?

12 November 2022

A stack of newspapers is shown, with the top one prominently displaying the words "FAKE NEWS" in large, bold, black capital letters. The newspapers are resting on a surface with a light-colored grid pattern. The top newspaper has a grey rectangular area above the text and a photograph of a city street below it. The stack of newspapers is slightly offset, showing the edges of the pages underneath.

FAKE NEWS



Definitions ‘Fake News’

- false, often sensational, information disseminated under the guise of news reporting Collins English Dictionary (2022)
- false stories that appear to be news, spread on the internet or using other media, usually created to influence political views **or as a joke** – Cambridge University Press (2022)
- Fake news “is fabricated information that mimics news media content in form but...lack(s) the news media’s editorial norms and processes for ensuring the accuracy and credibility of information” [2]. It overlaps with misinformation (false or misleading information) and disinformation (false information purposely spread to mislead people). (Muigai. J 2019)
- Other common names for fake news include: post-truth, misinformation, disinformation and “alternative facts”. (Muigai. J 2019)



Origins of ‘Fake News’

- Darnton. F, (2017) argues that ‘Fake News’ can be traced in ‘past periods of History’
- Delmers ‘Fake News Factory’ (Shaer. M, (2017)
- Hitler – Propaganda and ‘fake news’ (Snyder. T, (2019)
Propaganda (Stanley 2015)



21ST Century ‘Fake News’

- **Brexit**

(McGaughey .E, 2018)

(Portes. R, 2017)

- **Trump’s Election**

(Hirst, M., 2017)

(Mooney 2018)

- **Covid19**

(Naeem, S.B. et al, 2021)

- **Ukraine War**

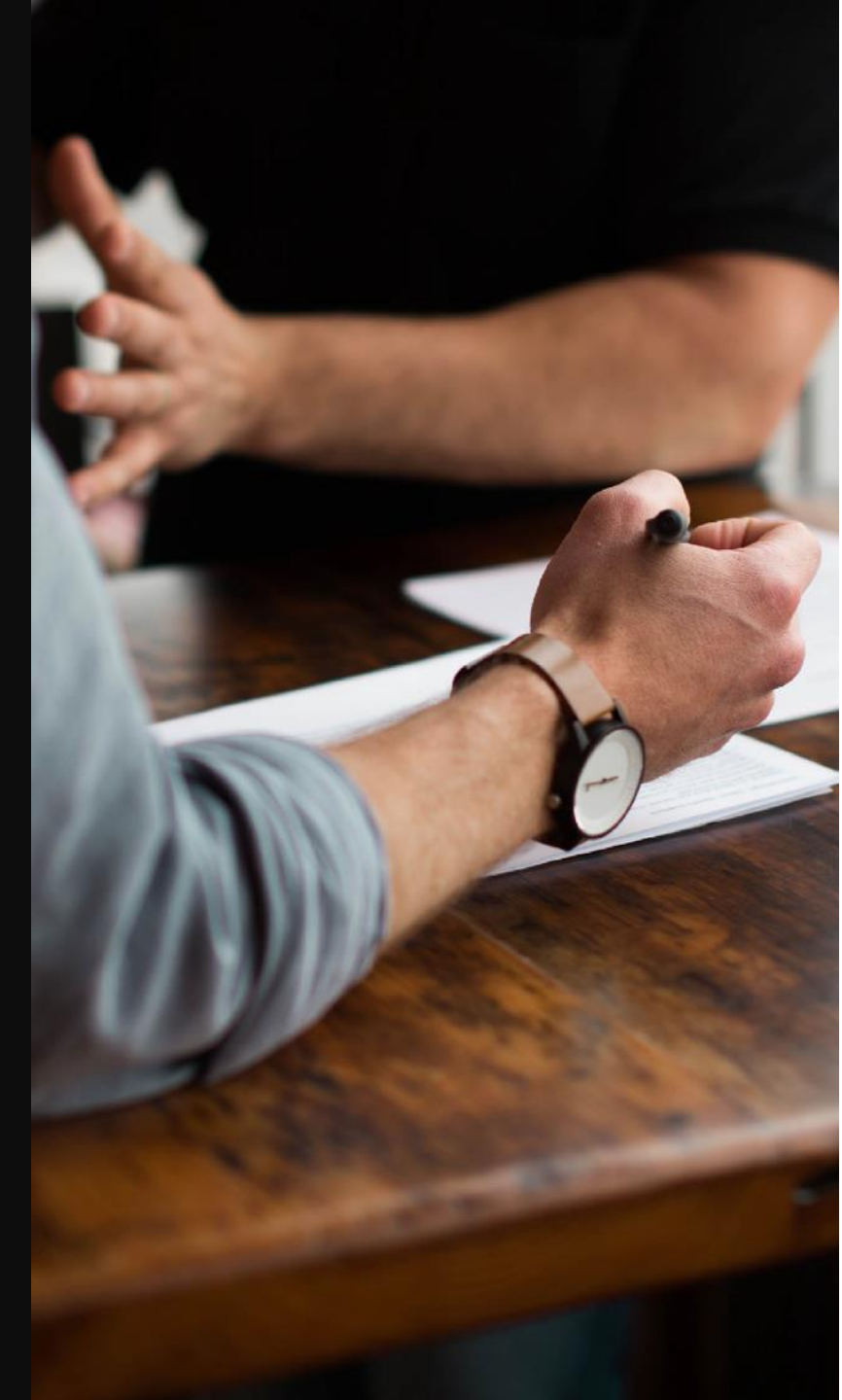
(Stănescu, G., 2022.) (Irina Khaldarova & Mervi Pantti 2016)

The danger of 'Fake News' label



Daily Mail (2017)

The question posed by Jim Acosta of CNN, raises a serious point about how the term 'Fake News' is used, especially by politicians

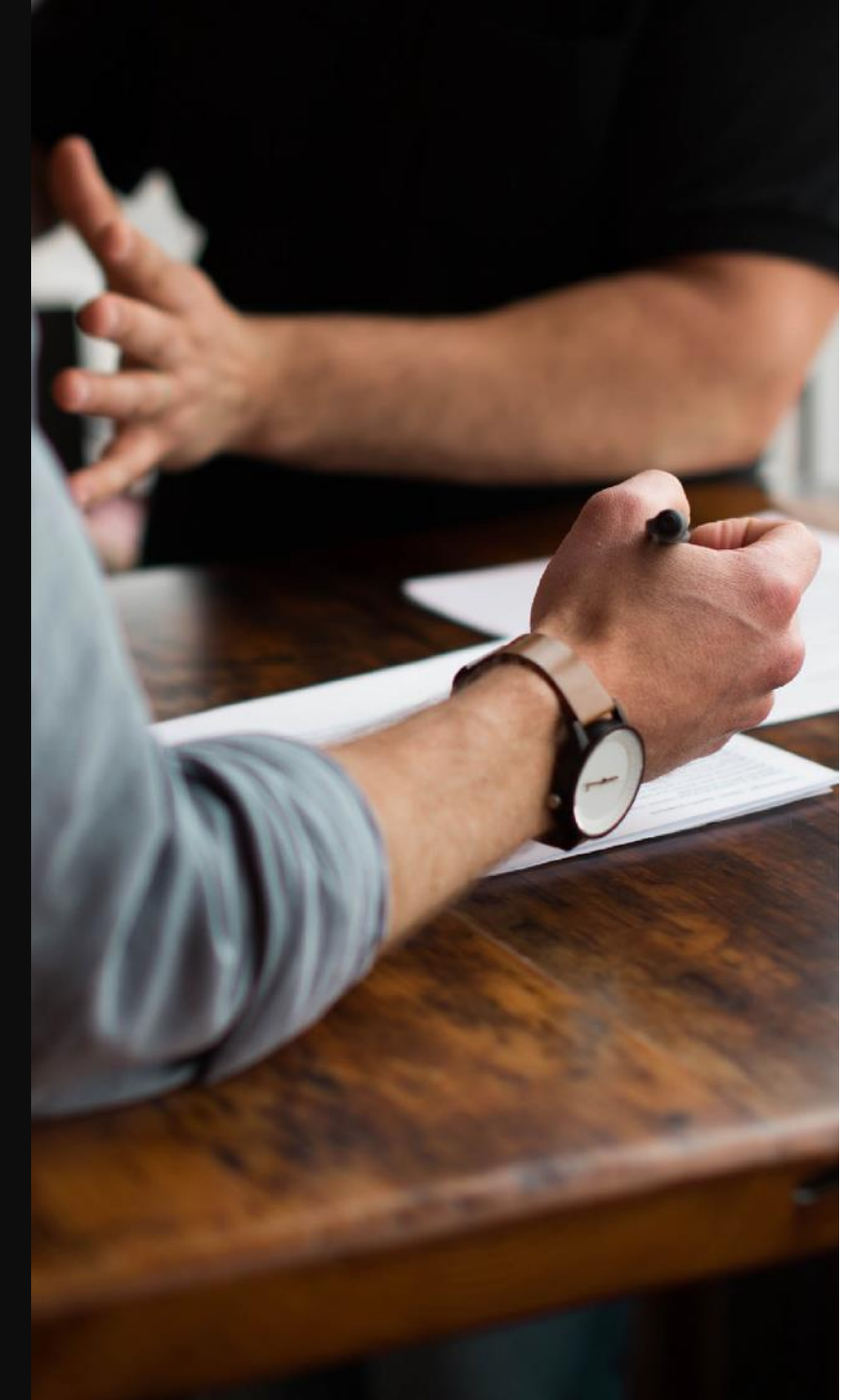


‘Fake News’ and inequality discourse - BLM

- **Black Lives Matter (BLM) and misinformation**

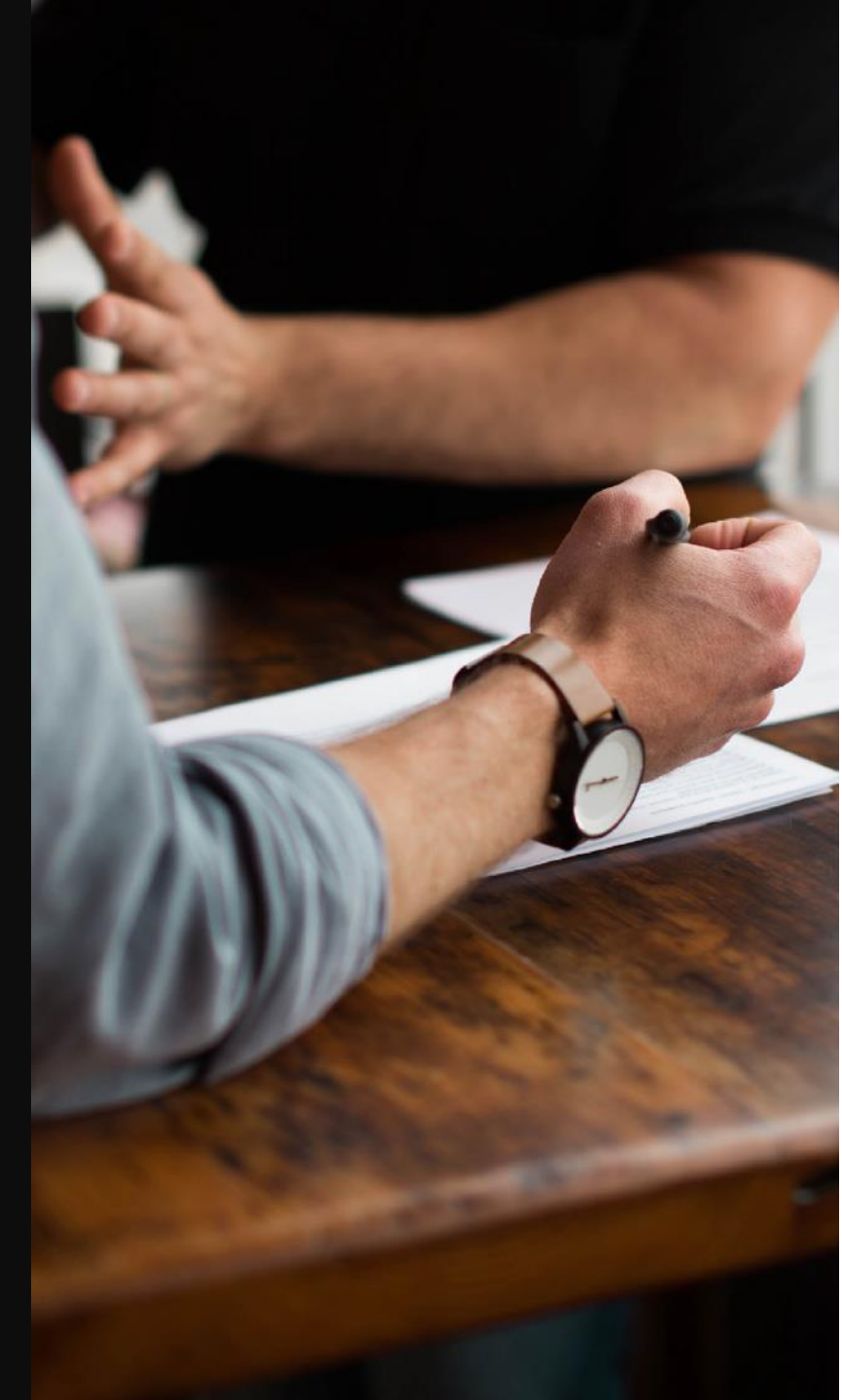
‘While Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube have denounced systematic racism and have pledged to raise money for the BLM movement, they have not addressed their role in undermining BLM and other social justice movements, through the weaponization of their platforms by White supremacists, racists, and hate groups (Roose, 2020). ((Wright. C, p.4 2022))

- **Social media platforms used to spread ‘fake news’ about group**
- **Re-enforces stereotypes and inequality in society (Muigai. J, 2019)**
- **Distorting the disparities**



‘Fake News’ and inequality discourse – Refugees

- **Disinformation on Migration** (Migration Policy Institute ,2022)
‘Disinformation is appealing not only for the claims it makes but also for the concerns it exploits and the pre-existing convictions it triggers.’
(MPI, 2022)
- **‘Fake News’ and impact on attitudes to refugees**
The false narrative that ‘In India 95% of rape cases involved a Muslim perpetrator’ (Wright. C, p.333, 2021)
- **Language used as part of Fake News narrative**
- **Fox News portrayal versus CNN** - (Figenschou & Thorbjørnsrud, 2015)



‘Fake News’ and inequality discourse -Women

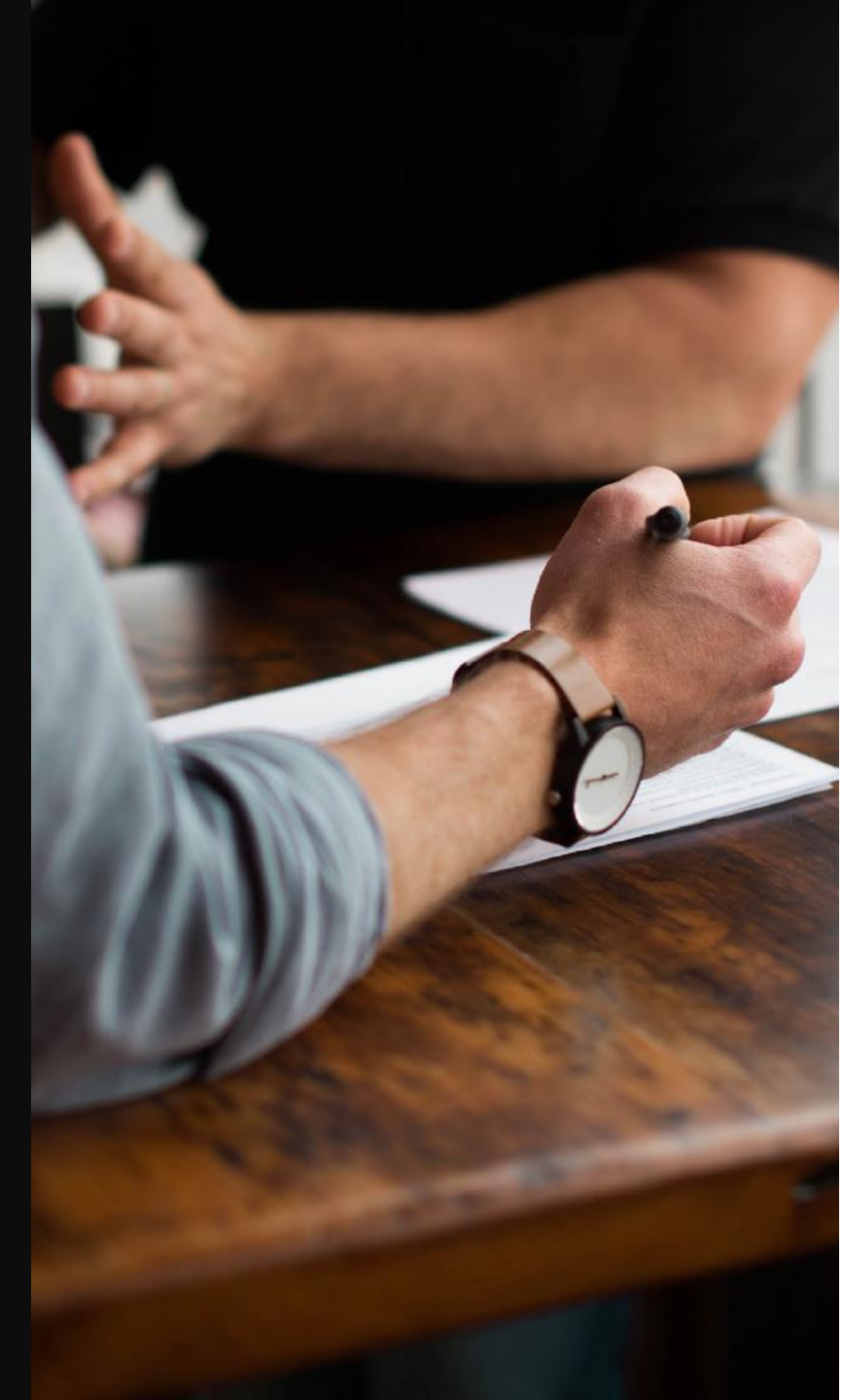
Misinformation and Misogyny.

A normalised misogyny is often the price women pay for being visible online, (Banet-Weiser. S , 2021)

Gendered Implications of Fake News for Women in Politics - Hilary Clinton

Stabile. B et al , (2019)

Jacinda Arden’s leadership – beyond gender stereotyping (Wilson. S, 2020)



‘Fake News’ - Conclusion

Fake news is emerging as one the most dangerous threats on social media (Zhang & Ghorbani 2020)

‘The harm to the marginalised, to those who have legitimate claims to know the facts, to democracy, to anyone who values truth and honesty, is the perpetuation of inequality’ (MacKenzie & Bhatt p.12, 2018)

Fake News intent on creating a ‘less than’ narrative for marginalised groups

“If we are not serious about facts and what’s true and what’s not, if we can’t discriminate between serious arguments and propaganda, then we have problems,” – Barack Obama

We have a responsibility to be aware & to challenge

Stanford University Channel on YouTube (2022).



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