FAKE NEWS
Vol XCIII, No. 311
A MANUAL ON HOW TO SPOT THEM
$1.25
WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?
Why so much talk about them?
Why do people buy them?
Task/reflection
What about images? How can I know if they correspond to a story?

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# FAKE NEWS

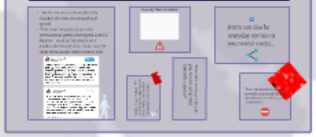
Vol XCIII, No. 311 — A MANUAL ON HOW TO SPOT THEM — $1.25

## WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

Definition of the term is disputed. Fake news has been described as "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"

Academics have described it as "Fabricated information that mimics news media content in form but not in organizational process or intent"

## Why so much talk about them?



## Why do people buy them?

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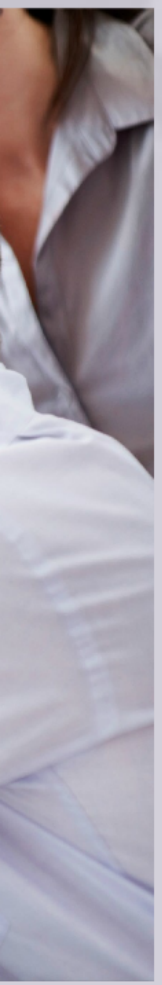

Definition of the term is disputed. Fake news has been described as

"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 dictionary)

It's not a new phenomenon. Let's travel back to 1835 when the New York Sun newspaper announced that the first men

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TRUE

FALSE

Stories that aren't true at all, or stories that are not 100% true

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Academics have described it as "Fabricated information that mimics news media content in form but not in organizational process or intent"

(Lazer, D.M., et al, 2018)

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It's not a new phenomenon. Let's travel back to 1835 when the New York Sun newspaper announced that the first men had walked on the moon… It published 6 articles and even a French print to prove it!

Academics have described it as

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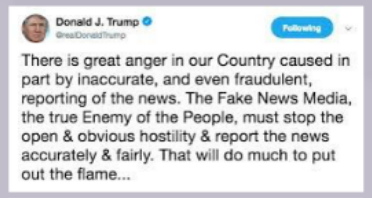
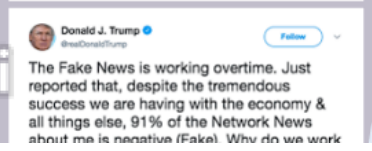
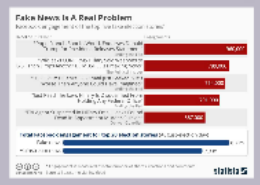
# Why so much talk about them?

- ...but the internet and social media changed the ways it is created and spread.
- "Fake news" was placed onto the international agenda during the 2016 US election – word of the year in 2017 (Collins dictionary) since its use rose by 365%. Some people seem to use it a lot:




Some big fake news stories...




But it can also be everyday stories on your social media...

"Share this message with your friends and get free tickets for a concert"

"Facebook algorithm limits your news feed to 26 friends but if you share this post more friends will see your posts"

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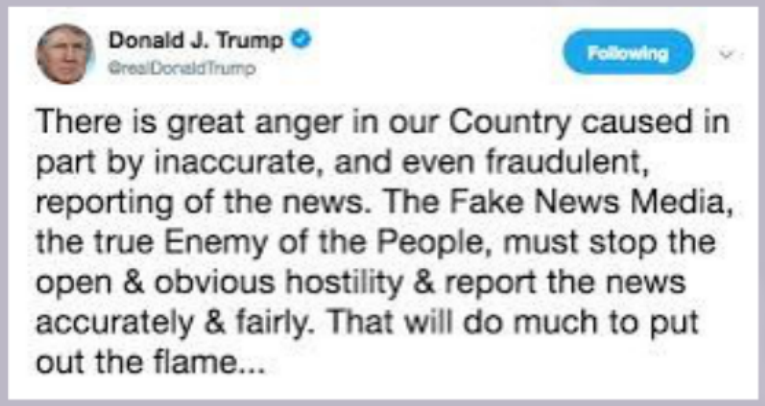


Some

"Airlines Happy Balloon offers you free tickets. All you have to do is to fill up this form with your personal information"

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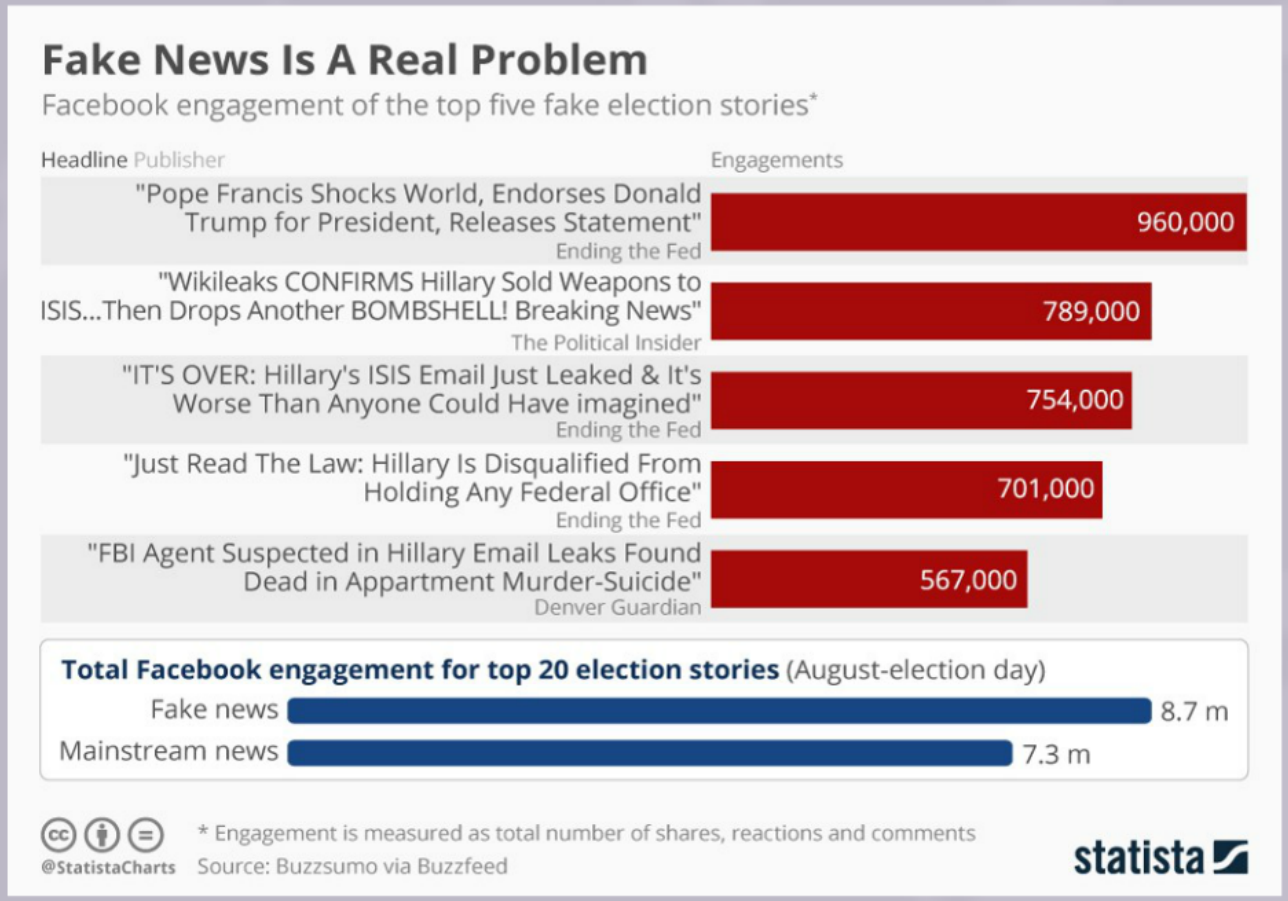

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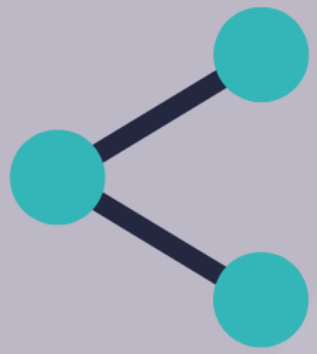

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FAKE NEWS

“Facebook algorithm limits your news feed to 26 friends but if you share this post more friends will see your posts“

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“Airlines Happy Balloon offers you free tickets. All you have to do is to fill up this form with your personal information”

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"Share this message with 5 of your friends and get free tickets for a concert"

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"Airlines Happy Balloon offers you free tickets. All you have to do is to fill up this form with your personal information"

FAKE

"Share this message with 5 of your friends and get free tickets for a concert"

FALSE

FAKE NEWS

"Facebook algorithm limits your news feed to 26 friends but if you share this post more friends will see your posts"

# Why do people buy them?

People fall for fake news because "they fail to think", is the conclusion of researchers who speak about a lack of reasoning.

(Pennycook & Rand, 2018)

## OK, I WANT TO CHECK A STORY FAST

Are other news sites reporting on the story? If it's the only site, it's not a good sign.Are other news sites reporting on the story? If it's the only site, it's not a good sign.Are other news sites reporting on the story? If it's the only site, it's not a good sign.

Check the author, source, date. Old information is not news and might not be valid anymore.

Take a look at the URL. Some creators of fake news sites make them sound LIKE the real news organizations you already know. Sites like www.newshound.com, www.patriotnews.co, or www.nbcnews9.net... It's less clear that these aren't legitimate news sites, because their domain names look kind of familiar.

Algorithmic bots – Bots is a word deriving from Web-Robots. It's a software that performs an automated task over the internet. Bots can be used for productive tasks, but they are also used for malicious purposes.(Technopedia). Researchers who have analyzed millions of tweets concluded that social bots play a key role in the spread of fake news.

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Filter bubbles – According to a theory by Eli Parisier, the internet search engines and their algorithms are creating a situation where users are getting information that confirms their prior beliefs (Parisier 2011)

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# What about images? How can I know if they correspond to a story?

Image reverse techniques – Google reverse image search https://www.google.com/imghp?hl=EN is an easy to use tool. But in some cases, pictures are inserted into stories to make it more difficult for the reader to recognize where they come from. You can download an app on your cell phone. Then just crop the picture and upload it. www.tineye.com is one of many images sources.

Example: the picture of a black man appeared on a Greek site covering a story about the alleged molestation of an infant by its African descent father in Cyprus (father was released later)... After a quick search, he turns out to be a man arrested for the rape of a woman in ...California!

And some more about the context...

Read beyond the title! We are all busy sometimes, but is it safe to believe and share something judging from the title?

It might be just satire! Check if it comes from a humorous website.

Sloppy or flamboyant language – language matters!!!!! (yes, these five exclamation marks are just a hint). In fact, according to academic research based on collected date from various sources, title structure and the use of proper nouns in titles are very significant. Fake news titles use significantly fewer stop-words and nouns, while using significantly more proper nouns and verb phrases. (Horne & Adali).

And finally...

Ok, and what can I do? Any tools?

Engage yourselves in media literacy programs. These are programs that will make you more competent to analyze information, images and messages circulating the media.

Dismiss fake news stories when you spot them on other people's profiles on the Social Media – sometimes those people are your older relatives. Research shows an association between age and the tendency to fall for fake news. Comment, provide links and data! Be a real news ambassador.

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diaforetiko

# Λευκωσία: Πα-τέρας βίασε και κακοποίησε σεξουαλικά βρέφος 5 μηνών και προκαλεί φρίκη και αηδία στην Κύπρο

Την σοκαριστική είδηση πως ένα βρέφος μόλις 5 μηνών διαπιστώθηκε ότι υπέστη

NEW YORK POST

# Suspects accused of raping woman to teach her a 'lesson about dating black men': cops

By Jackie Salo

June 28, 2017 | 6:37pm | Updated

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- Visit some Fact checking platforms. You won't find the answers to every story but you will see how they debug false stories. www.snopes.com and www.factcheck.org are just a few well-known examples.
- http://rbutr.com/ tells you when the webpage you are viewing has been disputed, rebutted or contradicted elsewhere on the internet.
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# Task/reflection

- Discuss what fake news means for each one of you, how often you come across fake news stories and how confident you feel at spotting them. How easily do you share a post?
- Based on the steps and the tools suggested above, try to check the liability of a story circulating in your newsfeed/or suggested by the educator. Use image verification tools to check a photo, check language, date, circulation of the story.
- Visit the site of a fact-checking platform based in your country and read an article.

List of illustrations

- https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/moon-shot-race-a-hoax-and-the-birth-of-fake-news
- https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump
- https://www.statista.com/chart/6795/fake-news-is-a-real-problem/
- https://www.diaforetiko.gr/lefkosia-pateras-viase-kakopoihse-sexualika-vrefos-penteminon-kai-prokalei-friki-stin-kipro/
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- Horne, B. D., & Adali, S. (2017, May). This just in: fake news packs a lot in title, uses simpler, repetitive content in text body, more similar to satire than real news. In Eleventh International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media.
- Lazer, D. M., Baum, M. A., Benkler, Y., Berinsky, A. J., Greenhill, K. M., Menczer, F., ... & Schudson, M. (2018). The science of fake news. Science, 359(6380), 1094-1096.
- Pariser, E. (2011). The filter bubble: What the Internet is hiding from you. Penguin UK.
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- Shao, C., Ciampaglia, G. L., Varol, O., Flammini, A., & Menczer, F. (2017). The spread of fake news by social bots. arXiv preprint arXiv:1707.07592, 96-104.
- Shu, K., Sliva, A., Wang, S., Tang, J., & Liu, H. (2017). Fake news detection on social media: A data mining perspective. ACM SIGKDD Explorations Newsletter, 19(1), 22-36.
- https://www.cits.ucsb.edu/fake-news/where



Authorship

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Cyprus University of Technology
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Vilnius Railway Transport and Business Services School


2019-09-06

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- https://www.cits.ucsb.edu/fake-news/where


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# List of illustrations

- https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/moon-shot-race-a-hoax-and-the-birth-of-fake-news
- https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump
- https://www.statista.com/chart/6795/fake-news-is-a-real-problem/
- https://www.diaforetiko.gr/lefkosia-pateras-viase-kakopoihse-sexualika-vrefos-penteminon-kai-prokalei-friki-stin-kipro/
- https://nypost.com/2017/06/28/suspects-accused-of-raping-woman-to-teach-her-a-lesson-about-dating-black-men-cops/

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If your country and read an article.

## Authorship

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Cyprus University of Technology
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2019-09-06

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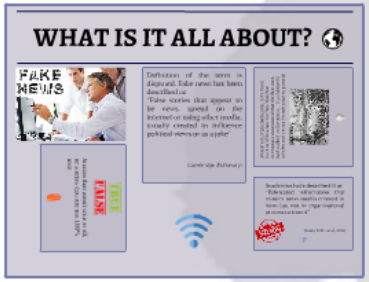

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