
The Problem of Creating Fake News in Social Media and Its Impact on Society

This paper will look at 4 different articles around fake news and we will argue how fake news in social media is creating a global crisis and how people become extremists via social media and how far it can go. We will look at one side from various authors on their takes on how much social media plays into the part of fake news and we will argue the fact of how susceptible we are to what we see and read on social media and be able to tell the difference and not get suckered into all the fake news around us in society. In today's society, there is a lot of talk about what is real news and what is fake news. What is believable and what is just outlandish and just trying to get views or clicks.

How much does fake news play into today's society? How can we tell what is real and what is fake? What causes social media and media outlets to push fake news rather than real news? Is this just a trend that will come and go or is this the reality we live in today? All of this will be answered in the paper and we'll look at both sides.

Today, when we open up social media whether it's Facebook, Twitter, or even Instagram, we get our daily news and sometimes we run across articles that we look at twice and end up clicking to read about. Thanks to Donald Trump for coining the phrase "Fake News" and making everything that is discussed as fake news, we are click baited into articles that tend to have a catchy title and ends up being nothing but nonsense and rubbish just to the publisher can get views or people to react to their article. It has gotten to the point where Fox News was accused a few times of reporting on Fake News just because they wanted to be the first to report it. Now on the social media aspect of it, there's a lot of clickbait on YouTube just alone because they want to gain views, so they can get paid for it. Then you have people on Facebook that place articles just, so they can get clicks and at the end it just hurts them as a publisher and hurts the websites legitimacy in the long run which gain a bad reputation and are not trusted.

Fake News tends to be news that is reported without having all the information or trying to cover up the truth and push a certain agenda or propaganda to the readers and use social media as a platform that makes the Fake News travel faster and deeper into a network of people than traditional reporting. As Paul Chadwick said, "False news can drive misallocation of resources during terror attacks and natural disasters, the misalignment of business investments, and misinformed elections." This goes to show that media outlets who use social media as a way to get news out, they play on people's emotions and impulses to make their fake news believable and during that moment people will share that news and make it trustworthy when in fact it's

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misinformation just to get people to click. With all this talk about Fake News, what really makes an article, or a tweet go viral, especially during the 2016 elections, are the use of bots and the algorithm that social media uses such as Twitter. As detailed in this research paper on social media bots, “First, bots are particularly active in amplifying fake news in the very early spreading moments, before a claim goes viral. Second, bots target influential users through replies and mentions.” This goes to show that users make numerous accounts that are “bots” to retweet and boost up the tweet of an article to have influencers on social media do the same and, in a way, legitimize the article due to the fact of who retweets it, in a way it makes it seem as a normal human person is doing it. There have even been reports that due to the use of these bots, fake news travels six times faster than the truth which amazing to say the least.

Solution

Now what is the argument here? It's pretty simple, there needs to be some form of regulation on what is real and what is fake news that is being put out into social media. The major problem is that people have gotten to the point where they let their emotions play a major factor rather than using common sense and logic to actually look more into these news articles and do their due diligence and research what is being put out.

So we talk about how the government should regulate social media, and Sri Lanka did just that when they noticed a lot of fake news and Facebook posts that were promoting violence against Muslims in their country. They ended up instating a 10 day nationwide state of emergency on social media apps such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp to lower the violence throughout the country. They were monitoring the posts that were placed on social media and tracking down any and all hate speech posts that might entice a roar up in violence. This in itself is smart on the part of Sri Lanka because it can stop any violent crimes before it even takes a form and shut it down. This is the type of regulation we need in the U.S. to stop any mass school shootings or hate crimes that result from people posting on social media just to get the reaction they want to act upon it. People however will argue that it is their freedom of speech in the U.S., but little that they know that it is really protected freedom of speech, so there is only so much you can say until it becomes a potential problem or threat that will conclude in casualties. With the era of technology that we live in, you would think there would be more or at least some kind of regulation on what is posted on social media such as hoaxes of fake deaths or products or whatever the case may be. Tech companies should invest in technologies that scan what is being put on various social media outlets and shut down any disinformation that is being placed by using algorithms and crowdsourcing to identify the fake news and users that are placing them on the internet. Another reason publishers use outlandish headlines to get people to click on the links is because they get paid from the number of clicks and views their articles get. The way to shut this down, is not to allow them to monetize their articles that have disinformation. This is the kind of regulation that is needed, if YouTube has algorithms that can detect when

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content creators use copyright music or content, why is there not a way to do that with fake news and hoaxes that get spread all over social media, hence the clickbait people use. Filters can be set into place to determine what is legitimate and what is little to false information, so it doesn't discredit publishers, and this would be the same for the monetization of the fake news articles that are being placed online. These filters would use algorithms to determine if this is a trusted source to be monetized or just nonsense for views and clicks.

Conclusion

At the end of the day, the internet and social media will be flooded with fake news and clickbait to sucker in people to get paid from. The next step we need to take, is to create a filter system to shut down any kind of fake news or hate speech that will have a negative effect on the everyday user. By filtering out hoaxes and disinformation, we will be able to stop any violent crimes before they manifest into something that is uncontrollable. Regulation needs to happen to minimize the misuse of information overall and it doesn't have to be strict, just enough to be safe.

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