Fact Checking in a Fast-Paced, Technically-Driven World

Linda Brain Beck
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Problem
Solution
Me —
My Dad
My Husband
My Husband

My MIL
Where does the news in our social media feed come from?

- Consider finding non-emotional sources of information from the other side.

Legitimate

Non-Legitimate
Legitimate Dissecting News

by Pew Research 2016 State of the Media

TV (Cable, local, network nightly): 57%
Online: 38%
Radio: 25%
Print Newspapers: 20%
CBS EVENING NEWS with WALTER CRONKITE
Designed to ENTERTAIN and play to our EMOTIONS more than to INFORM

POST-TRUTH
Is that necessarily bad?
The Digital Influence

• 25% - newspaper revenue from digital
• 40-45% - Americans get news exclusively online
• 72% - Americans have used a digital device for news
The Facebook Effect

- 2/3 of Americans have a Facebook account
- Average amount of time spent on Facebook is 50 minutes per day
- 60% of users say they only get their news from Facebook
- 80% of traffic for highly partisan sites (e.g. Occupy Democrats and American News) comes from Facebook (as compared to 20% for more traditional sites.)
WEAPONS OF MATH DESTRUCTION

HOW BIG DATA INCREASES INEQUALITY AND THREATENS DEMOCRACY

CATHY O’NEIL
Microtargeting Through Algorithms

```
start
INPUT L, S
    R = L
    R > S?
        L = R
        R = S
        S = 1
    S > R?
        R = R - S
        GOTO 7
    R = 0?
        L = R
        R = S
        S = L
        GOTO 7
    PRINT S
    END
```
Blue Feed, Red Feed
See Liberal Facebook and Conservative Facebook, Side by Side

By Jon Keegan
Published May 30, 2016 at 8:00 a.m. ET | Updated hourly

FILTER FEEDS BY TOPIC:
- President Trump
- Hillary Clinton
- President Obama
- Affordable Care Act
- Guns
- Abortion
- ISIS
- Executive Order

LIBERAL

President Trump's new policy on prescription drugs is that drug companies should get tax cuts and deregulation.

After meeting with pharma lobbyists, Trump dr...

CONSERVATIVE

WHEN WILL THESE LIBERALS LEARN?? THE REST OF THE COUNTRY WORKS FOR A LIVING, WE DO NOT LIVE IN YOUR HOLLYWOOD BUBBLE & DON'T WANT YOUR BS...

Let's get 10,000 SHARES to Stand with Donald J. Trump

O000OPS!
Now, we get our news from a variety of sources, mostly tailored to our preferences

ECHO CHAMBER
10-20k Per Month!
Closer attention would help with information that is...

- factually wrong
- misleading through context or elimination of important information
- comes from fake sites
"Real" Fake News

Courtesy: New York Times
Anti-Trump protestors in Austin today are not as organic as they seem. Here are the busses they came in. 

#fakeprotests
#trump2016 #austin
Technology

Propaganda and Misinformation
Technology

Propaganda and
Propaganda and Misinformation
READ and not just the headlines

- Does the headline match the article?
- Look at publication dates, authors, publication name and language use.
- Consider the language, e.g. "breaking," "leaked," etc.
- Know that pictures can be manipulated
- Check out the links--do you have all the facts?
Understand the purpose of what you are reading--entertainment, satire, news?

- Not everything has the same purpose
- Know the difference between opinion and hard news
- Consider the different types of "fake" news (Zimdar and Fakenewswatch.com)
  - Purposely fake or misleading
  - Those that circulate purposely fake info
  - Sites that rely on "clickbaity" titles
  - Those strictly for entertainment
Recognize and use least biased sources

1. Media Bias/Fact Check
2. AllSides
3. Politifact
4. Snopes.com
5. FactCheck.org
Consider your own bias

- If you choose to read sources on the far right or the far left, know you are getting information that is designed to use emotional language to reinforce your existing beliefs

- Consider finding non-emotional sources of information from the other side.
Realize you are being targeted

- *Remember the algorithms-every "like" or quiz you take gets you more of the same*
- *Try to confuse the algorithms*
Consider the path of least resistance to fact checking on social media

• Consider a short-term experiment

• Eliminate highly biased sites from your feed

• Look for future ways to combat fake news
"You can't believe everything you read on the Internet."
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