



FAKE NEWS E POST-VERITÀ

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The Pizzagate conspiracy

“In the fall of 2016, the personal email account of John Podesta, Hillary Clinton's campaign manager, was hacked in a spear-phishing attack, and his emails were subsequently made public by WikiLeaks. Proponents of the Pizzagate conspiracy theory falsely claimed that the emails contained coded messages referring to human trafficking and connecting several U.S. restaurants and high-ranking officials of the Democratic Party with an alleged child sex ring involving the restaurant and pizzeria Comet Ping Pong, located in Washington, D.C.” (From Wikipedia, “Pizzagate conspiracy theory”)


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Is Comet Ping Pong Pizzeria Home to a Child Abuse Ring Led by Hillary Clinton?



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The Pizzagate conspiracy

“Members of the alt-right and other opponents of Clinton's presidential campaign spread the conspiracy theory on social media outlets such as 4chan and Twitter. A man from North Carolina traveled to Comet Ping Pong to investigate this conspiracy, during which he fired a rifle inside the restaurant. In addition, the restaurant owner and staff received death threats.” (From Wikipedia, “Pizzagate conspiracy theory”)

The New York Times

In Washington Pizzeria Attack, Fake News Brought Real Guns



Edgar M. Welch, 28, of Salisbury, N.C., surrendered to the police on Sunday in Washington. Sathi Soma, via Associated Press

By Cecilia Kang and Adam Goldman

Dec. 5, 2016



Sulle Fake news

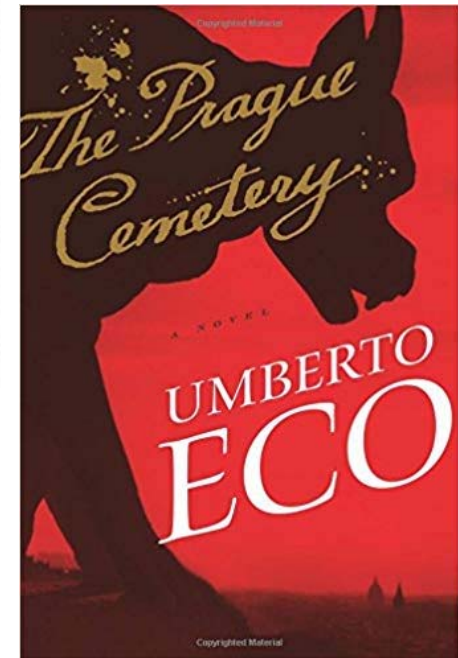
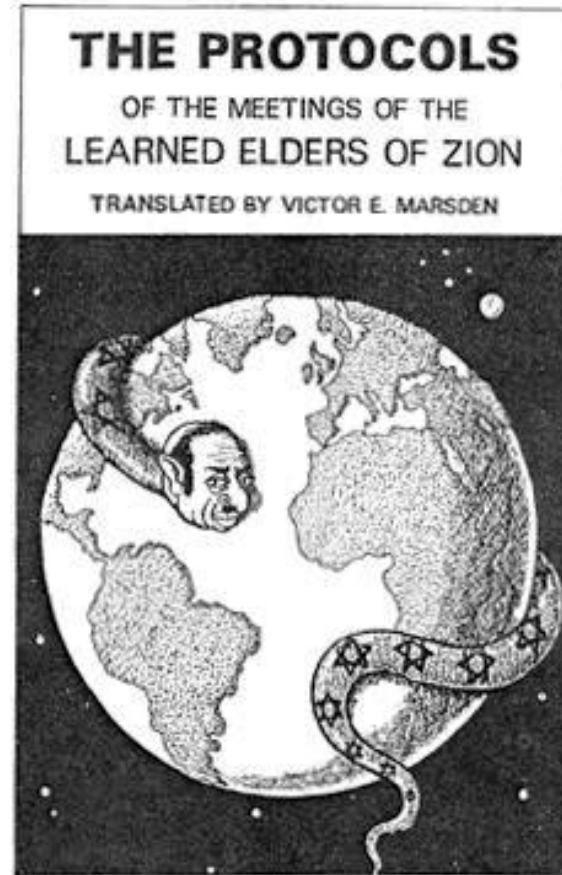
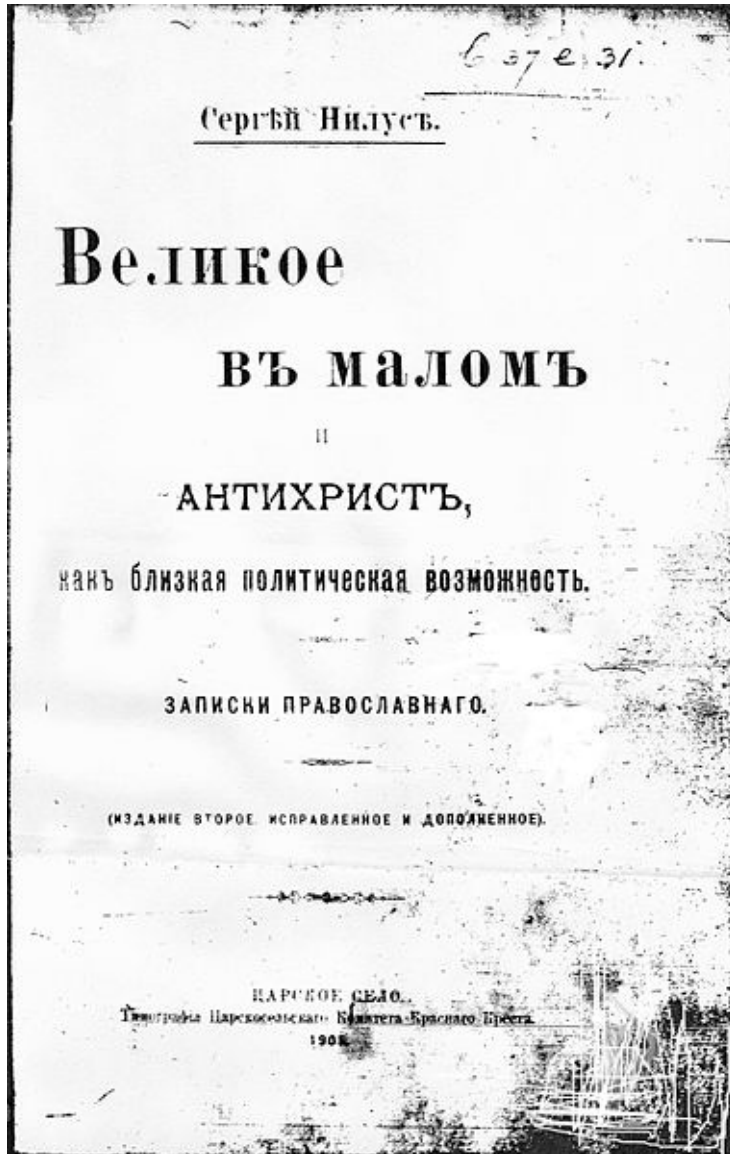
“Racconti falsi hanno portato a sollevazioni popolari. Le notizie false, nella molteplicità delle loro forme – semplici maldicenze, imposture, leggende – hanno riempito la vita dell’umanità. Come nascono? Da quali elementi traggono la loro sostanza? Come si propagano, guadagnando in ampiezza man mano che passano di bocca in bocca o di scritto in scritto?”

Sulle Fake news

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(Marc Bloch, “Réflexions d’un historien sur les fausses nouvelles de la guerre”, in *Revue de synthèse historique*, 33, 1921, pp. 2-35).

About Fake news



Post-verità

- “Parola dell’anno 2016” di Oxford dictionaries
- Probabilmente usata per la prima volta da Steve Tesich nell’articolo “A Government of Lies”, pubblicato nel 1992 su *The Nation*
- Esplosa nel 2016, durante le campagne per la Brexit e le presidenziali Usa

Post-verità

Definizione degli Oxford Dictionaries:

“[an adjective] relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief”

“...the prefix in *post-truth* has a meaning more like ‘belonging to a time in which the specified concept has become unimportant or irrelevant’”

Post-verità

Due aspetti principali

- Nel dibattito pubblico le nostre emozioni o ciò che già crediamo prevalgono sull'argomentazione razionale
- Un disinteresse generico verso la verità

Perché ora?

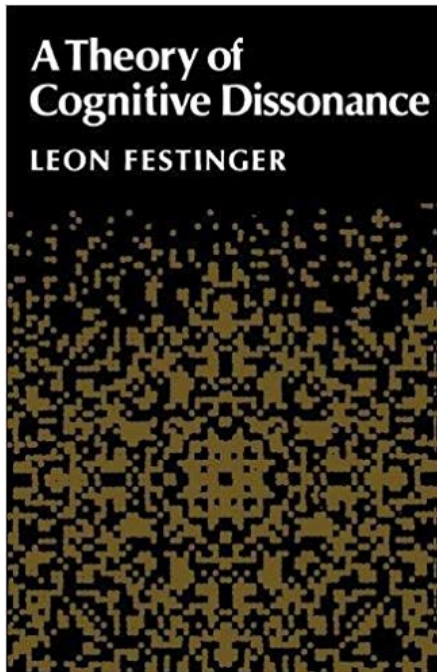
La mia tesi è che la post-verità e le fake news non possono essere comprese come fenomeni specifici dei media o dell'informazione e che non sono causate solo dall'avvento dei media digitali. Cause più profonde sono:

- La crisi delle democrazie liberali
- La sfiducia nelle istituzioni sociali tradizionali
 - Politica
 - Sistema dell'informazione
 - Scienza
- (Effettivamente) L'avvento dei media digitali (disintermediazione, echo chambers, alfabetizzazione digitale, interfacce in cui la fonte dell'informazione è meno evidente).

(P. Polidoro, "Post-truth and Fake News. Preliminary Considerations", in *Versus*, 127, 2018)

Echo chambers e algoritmi

“In news media echo chambers is a metaphorical description of a situation in which beliefs are amplified or reinforced by communication and repetition inside a closed system. By visiting an ‘echo chamber’, people are able to seek out information which reinforces their existing views, potentially as an unconscious exercise of confirmation bias”. (from Wikipedia, “Echo chambers (media)”, last consulted 23 March 2019).



The screenshot shows the WSJ Opinion page layout. At the top is a financial ticker with market data. Below it is the WSJ Opinion header with navigation links. A horizontal carousel of article thumbnails is visible. A cookie notice banner is present. The main article is 'The Facts About Facebook' by Mark Zuckerberg, dated Jan. 24, 2019. The article text discusses Facebook's growth and mission. On the right, there is a 'Recommended Videos' section with three video thumbnails.

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OPINION | COMMENTARY

The Facts About Facebook

We need your information for operation and security, but you control whether we use it for advertising.

By [Mark Zuckerberg](#)
Jan. 24, 2019 7:03 p.m. ET

Facebook turns 15 next month. When I started Facebook, I wasn't trying to build a global company. I realized you could find almost anything on the internet—music, books, information—except the thing that matters most: people. So I built a service people could use to connect and learn about each other. Over the years, billions have found this useful, and we've built more services that people around the world love and use every day.

Recently I've heard many questions about our business model, so I want to explain the principles

Recommended Videos

1. Why a U.S.-Russia Nuclear-Arms Treaty Is on the Brink of Collapse
2. A Mini-Castle, Saved From Ruins, Now Fit for a New King
3. Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella: Q&A

Fake news - Definizioni

“If news refers to an accurate account of a real event, what does fake news mean? News is supposedly – and normatively based on truth, which makes the term ‘fake news’ an oxymoron. The word ‘fake’ is often used interchangeably with words such as copy, forgery, counterfeit, and inauthentic. The Oxford Dictionary defines ‘fake’ as an adjective which means ‘not genuine; imitation or counterfeit’”.

(E.C. Tandoc, Z. Wei Lim, R. Ling, “Defining ‘Fake News’”, in *Digital Journalism*, 6:2, p. 140)

Fake news - Definizioni

Una distinzione di base:

- MISINFORMATION: “the inadvertent sharing of false information”
- DISINFORMATION: “the deliberate creation and sharing of information known to be false”

(C. Wardle, “Fake News. It’s complicated”, in *First Draft*, 16 February 2017, <https://firstdraftnews.org/fake-news-complicated/>)

Fake news - Definizioni

“...fake news is news that does mischief with the truth. That is because, as we argue, fake news is characterized by two shortcomings: it lacks truth and truthfulness. More specifically, fake news is either false or misleading (lack of truth) and it is propagated with either the intention to deceive or an utter disregard for the truth (lack of truthfulness).”

(R. Jaster, D. Lanius, “What is Fake News?”, in *Versus*, 127, 2018, p. 209)

Fake news - Definizioni

È importante riconoscere la differenza fra errori giornalistici e fake news. Questa distinzione ha a che fare con la veracità, che può mancare per due ragioni:

- L'intenzione della fonte di ingannare
- La mancanza di interesse nei confronti della verità

“Donald Trump’s tweets are quite often so obviously false, misleading or entirely absurd that it is hard to imagine that he tweets them with the intention to deceive anyone. It might be argued that he simply does not bother relating to the truth at all”

(R. Jaster, D. Lanius, “What is Fake News?”, in *Versus*, 127, 2018, p. 211)

Fake news - Definizioni

		LACK OF TRUH	
		False statements	True, but misleading statements
LACK OF TRUTHFULNESS	Intention to deceive	Lies (Pizzagate hoax)	Breitbart's report on young foreign men burning down a church in Germany
	Bullshit (no regard for truth)	Trump's claim to have the word's greatest memory	Trump's implication about a terror arrack in Sweden

(R. Jaster, D. Lanius, "What is Fake News?", in *Versus*, 127, 2018, p. 213)

Fake news - Definizioni

In a meta-study, Tandoc *et al.* propose a different definition.

“This review of fake news definitions from academic publications allows us to identify two domains, each of which constitute a continuum, from high to low. This model allows us to map out the various types of fake news discussed in the literature. The first dimension, facticity, refers to the degree to which fake news relies on facts. For example, satire relies on facts but presents it in a diverting format, while parodies and fabricated news take a broad social context upon which it fashions fictitious accounts. Native advertising uses one-sided facts, while fabrications are without factual basis.

The second dimension, which is the author’s immediate intention, refers to the degree to which the creator of fake news intends to mislead. News satires and parodies use some level of mutually understood suspension of reality to work—the immediate intention is to humor readers through some level of bending facts. These types of fake news assume an open disclaimer that they are not real news, a key for the intended humor to work. In contrast, the authors of fabrication and manipulation intend at the point of departure to mislead, without any disclaimer”.

(E.C. Tandoc, Z. Wei Lim, R. Ling, “Defining ‘Fake News’”, in *Digital Journalism*, 6:2, p. 147)

Fake news - Definizioni

		AUTHOR'S IMMEDIATE INTENTION TO DECEIVE	
		High	Low
LEVEL OF FACTICITY	High	Native advertising Propaganda Manipulation	News satire
	Low	Fabrication	News parody

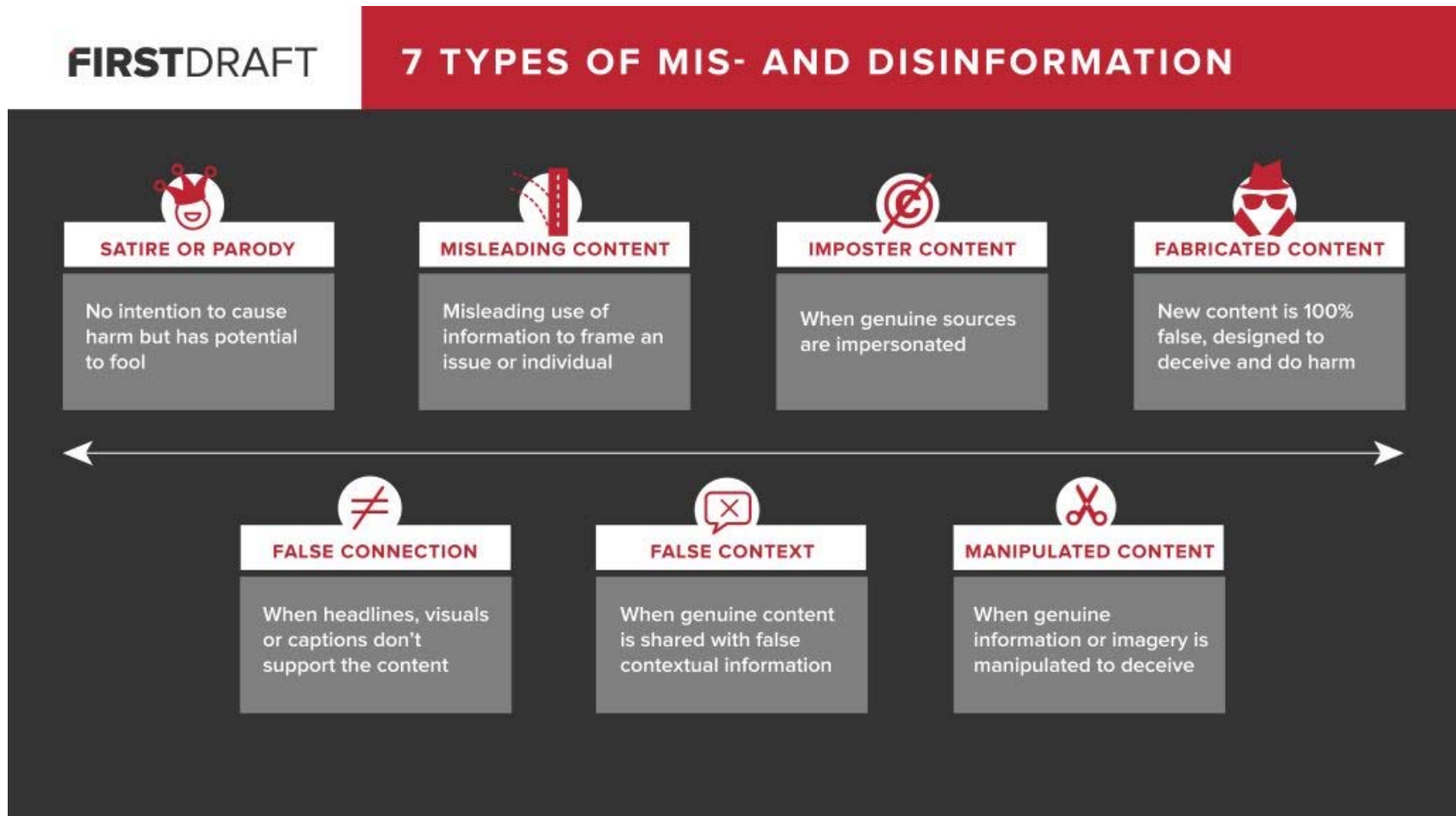
(E.C. Tandoc, Z. Wei Lim, R. Ling, "Defining 'Fake News'", in *Digital Journalism*, 6:2, p. 148)

Fake news - Definizioni

Una delle classificazioni più diffuse delle fake news è stata proposta da Claire Wardle in due articoli del 2016 e del 2017.

- C. Wardle, “6 types of misinformation circulated this election season”, in *Columbia Journalism Review*, 18 November 2016, https://www.cjr.org/tow_center/6_types_election_fake_news.php
- C. Wardle, “Fake News. It’s complicated”, in *First Draft*, 16 February 2017, <https://firstdraftnews.org/fake-news-complicated/>

Fake news - Definizioni



C. Wardle, "Fake News. It's complicated", in *First Draft*, 16 February 2017, <https://firstdraftnews.org/fake-news-complicated/>

Fake news - Definizioni

Satire or parody: No intention to cause harm but has potential to fool

NEWS IN PHOTOS

Trump: 'Any Shooting Actually Inspired By Me Would Have Left Thousands Dead'

Monday 12:59pm



www.theonion.com

Fake news - Definizioni

False connection: When headlines, visual or captions don't support the content

False context: When genuine content is shared with false contextual information

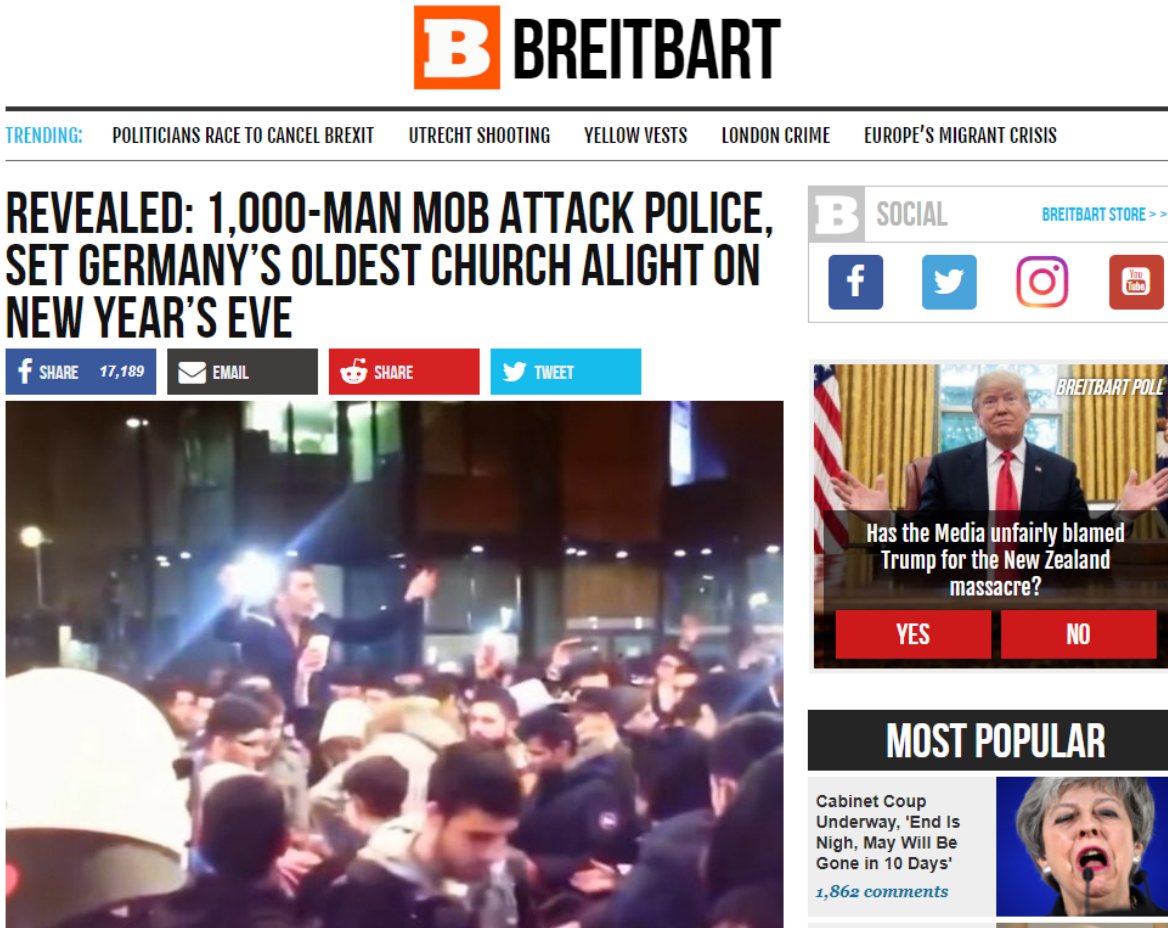


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qa3edsMzHkA>

“Donald Trump’s first campaign ad purported to show migrants crossing the border from Mexico, when the footage was actually migrants crossing from Morocco to Melilla in North Africa.” (Wardle 2016)

Fake news - Definizioni

Misleading content: Misleading use of information to frame an issue or individual



The image is a screenshot of the Breitbart website. At the top, the Breitbart logo is displayed. Below it, a 'TRENDING' section lists several topics: POLITICIANS RACE TO CANCEL BREXIT, UTRECHT SHOOTING, YELLOW VESTS, LONDON CRIME, and EUROPE'S MIGRANT CRISIS. The main headline reads: 'REVEALED: 1,000-MAN MOB ATTACK POLICE, SET GERMANY'S OLDEST CHURCH ALIGHT ON NEW YEAR'S EVE'. Below the headline are social media sharing buttons for Facebook, Email, Reddit, and Twitter. A large video player shows a crowd of people at night. To the right of the video is a 'SOCIAL' section with icons for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. Below that is a 'BREITBART POLL' featuring a photo of Donald Trump and the question: 'Has the Media unfairly blamed Trump for the New Zealand massacre?'. At the bottom right is a 'MOST POPULAR' section with a headline: 'Cabinet Coup Underway, 'End Is Nigh, May Will Be Gone in 10 Days'' and a photo of Theresa May. The article has 1,862 comments.

“At New Year’s Eve celebrations in Dortmund a mob of more than 1,000 men chanted ‘Allahu Akhbar’, launched fireworks at police, and set fire to a historic church.”
(from Breitbart)

Fake news - Definizioni

Misleading content: Misleading use of information to frame an issue or individual



“The church is not, in fact, Germany’s oldest church (...) what is true is that there was in fact a fire. A firecracker flew into a net that was part of a scaffolding surrounding parts of the church. The net then caught fire. According to the fire department, the fire was small and easy to extinguish.

In view of these events, it is not straightforwardly false that the group set the church on fire. Nevertheless the report is highly misleading because it conveys that the fire was set on purpose, that the church itself (and not just some net) was alight and that the fire had a significant size. All of this is false. Here we have an instance of a true report that nevertheless misrepresents the facts” (Jaster & Lanius 2018, p. 210).

Fake news - Definizioni

Misleading content: Misleading use of information to frame an issue or individual

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C'è poco da stare allegri Calano fatturato e Pil ma aumentano i gay

**Tre imprenditori su 4 fuggono dalla ricevuta elettronica e l'economia soffre
Gli unici a non sentire crisi sono gli omosessuali: crescono in continuazione**

FRILIPPO FACCI

Nei cinema c'è quel film con Marco...
...po-è una delle prime cose che dicim-
no. Bisogna immaginarselo al con-
trario: un disperato che dal 1982 si
...
...loso. Troverebbero campo, certo, e
anche milioni di smartphone (vogli-
a spiegare che (...))

Il nuovo libro di Alberoni
**L'amore eterno
esiste solo
nelle intenzioni**
VITTORIO FELTRI

Francesco Alberoni, lin-
guista professore, è stato ed è
un grande sociologo. Ai
tempi in cui lavorava al
Corriere della Sera, scrisse
un articolo epocale: affer-
mò sul finire degli anni Sot-
tanta, che l'Italia sarebbe
vissuta un nuovo Rinasci-
mento. Ci azzeccò. Infatti
di lì a poco Milano da bere
fu una inegabile realtà.
Nello stesso periodo egli
stampò un libro fondamen-
tale, "Intenzionamento e
amore", che fu illumina-
nte, distinguendo la fase del-
la cotta
da quel-
la suc-

Fake news - Definizioni

Imposter content: When genuine sources are impersonated



“Eric Trump and campaign spokesperson Kellyanne Conway both retweeted this fake ABC news site. If you look closely at the URL, you see it’s abc.com.co, which is not an official ABC News domain.” (Wardle 2016)

Fake news - Definizioni

Imposter content: When genuine sources are impersonated



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il Giornale.it

www.ilgiornale.it *diventa* www.ilgiomale.it

Fake news - Definizioni

Manipulated content: When genuine information or imagery is manipulated to deceive



“This photograph surfaced online a couple of weeks before the US election and appears to show an ICE official making an arrest at a voting station. A simple reverse image search shows that the two men were edited into the original photograph, which was actually taken in Arizona during the primaries in March”. (Wardle 2016)

Fake news - Definizioni

Fabricated content: New content is 100% false, designed to deceive and harm



“These images were circulating online just before the US election, incorrectly claiming people could stay at home and vote via text”. (Wardle 2016)



Fake news - Definizioni

FIRSTDRAFT

MISINFORMATION MATRIX

	 SATIRE OR PARODY	 FALSE CONNECTION	 MISLEADING CONTENT	 FALSE CONTEXT	 IMPOSTER CONTENT	 MANIPULATED CONTENT	 FABRICATED CONTENT
POOR JOURNALISM		✓	✓	✓			
TO PARODY	✓				✓		✓
TO PROVOKE OR TO 'PUNK'					✓	✓	✓
PASSION				✓			
PARTISANSHIP			✓	✓			
PROFIT		✓			✓		✓
POLITICAL INFLUENCE			✓	✓		✓	✓
PROPAGANDA			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

da Wardle, 2017

Fake news – Classificazione delle origini

Francesco Mangiapane, un semiologo italiano, nel suo saggio “The Discourse of Fake News in Italy. A Comparative Analysis” (in *Versus*, 127, 2018), ha proposto una classificazione delle origini delle fake news.

Fake news – Classificazione delle origini

1° strategy: falsification of an existing publication
(the same as imposter content)

2° strategy: the source constitutes itself as as
opposing to official (and corrupted) journalism

3° strategy: the source imitates forms and layouts of
official press

4° strategy: propaganda sites or pages which are
not interested in being recognized as official
information source, but more as community hubs

(from Mangiapane, 2018)

Come smascherare le fake news (debunk)?

Nelle prossime slides si render conto di alcuni suggerimenti ispirati da una guida al debunking scritta dal giornalista italo-svizzero Paolo Attivissimo.

La guida si intitola “Come diventare detective antibufala” e può essere scaricata qui:

[https://www.generazioniconnesse.it/site/file/documenti/Comunicazione/Fake_news/Dispensa Docenti decalogo bastabufale.pdf](https://www.generazioniconnesse.it/site/file/documenti/Comunicazione/Fake_news/Dispensa_Docenti_decalogo_bastabufale.pdf)

Gli esempi non sono necessariamente presi dalla guida.

Come smascherare le fake news (debunk)?

- 1) Controllare se il sito web o la pagina/account social che condivide l'informazione è affidabile (attenzione agli "imposter content")
- 2) Cercare sui siti anti-bufala

(Ispirato da Paolo Attivissimo, "Come diventare detective antibufala")

Come smascherare le fake news (debunk)?

3) Controllare immagini e video: sono veri e non manipolati? Cercare anomalie; cercare la versione originale su TinEye.com o Google images (o servizi simili).

(Ispirato da Paolo Attivissimo, “Come diventare detective antibufala”)

Come smascherare le fake news (debunk)?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zob1DVhU91c>

Come smascherare le fake news (debunk)?



(Da Paolo Attivissimo, “Come diventare detective antibufala”)

Come smascherare le fake news (debunk)?



(Da Paolo Attivissimo, “Come diventare detective antibufala”)

Come smascherare le fake news (debunk)?

4) Chiedere alla pagina che ha diffuso il contenuto quali sono le fonti o le prove

5) Chiedere ad esperti la loro opinion su contenuti sospetti

(Ispirato da Paolo Attivissimo, “Come diventare detective antibufala”)

Come smascherare le fake news (debunk)?

HOW TO SPOT FAKE NEWS



CONSIDER THE SOURCE

Click away from the story to investigate the site, its mission and its contact info.



READ BEYOND

Headlines can be outrageous in an effort to get clicks. What's the whole story?



CHECK THE AUTHOR

Do a quick search on the author. Are they credible? Are they real?



SUPPORTING SOURCES?

Click on those links. Determine if the info given actually supports the story.



CHECK THE DATE

Reposting old news stories doesn't mean they're relevant to current events.



IS IT A JOKE?

If it is too outlandish, it might be satire. Research the site and author to be sure.



CHECK YOUR BIASES

Consider if your own beliefs could affect your judgement.



ASK THE EXPERTS

Ask a librarian, or consult a fact-checking site.

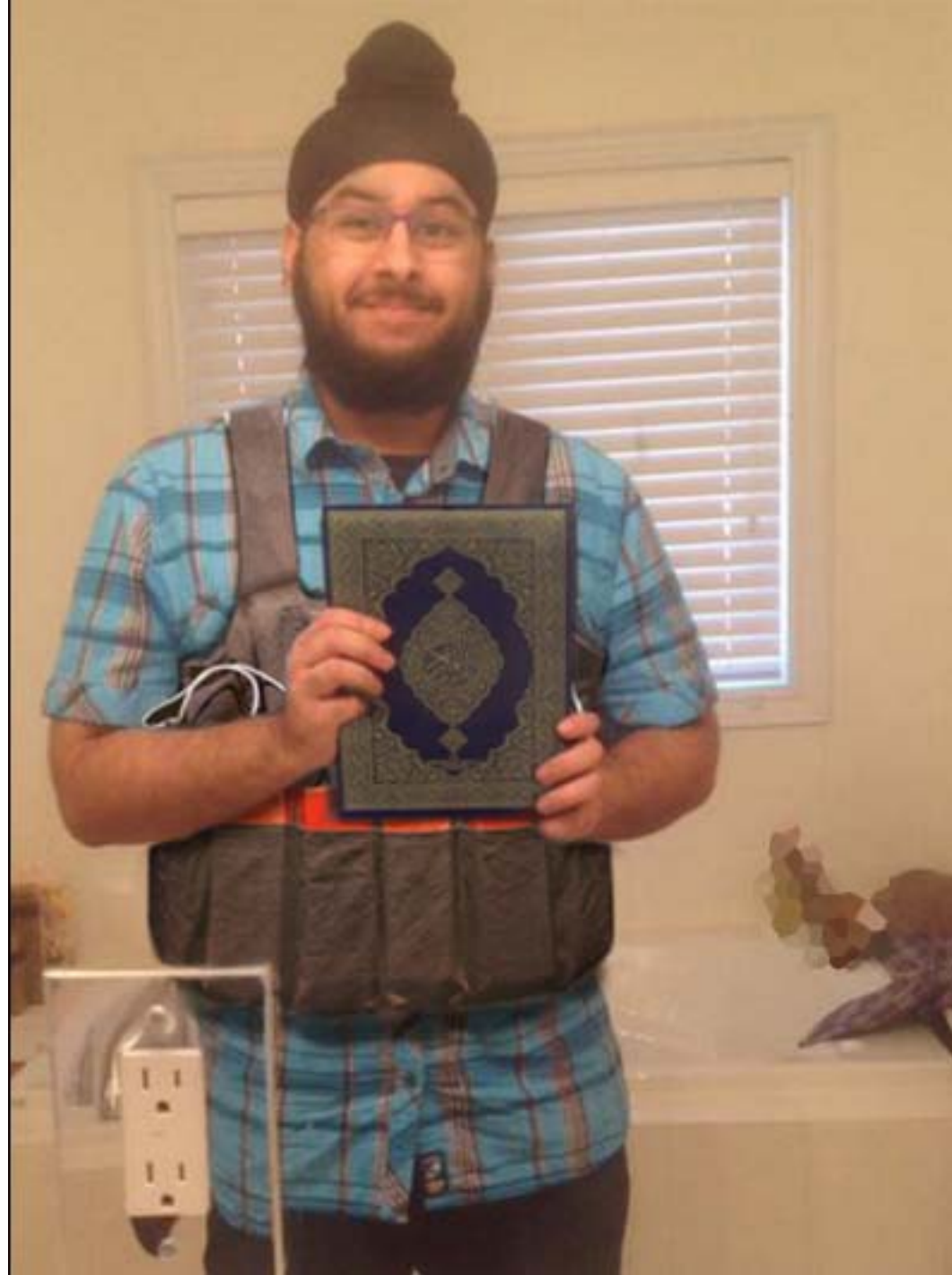
Come smascherare le fake news (debunk)?

Una guida avanzata al debunking può essere trovata qui (in inglese):

<http://fakenews.publicdatalab.org/>

Un esempio

(Da Paolo Attivissimo,
“Come diventare detective
antibufala”)



Un esempio



(Da Paolo Attivissimo, “Come diventare detective antibufala”)