News Item

Research note: The scale of Facebook's problem depends upon how 'fake news' is classified | HKS Misinformation Review

By Richard Rogers
October 29, 2020

> Ushering in the contemporary 'fake news' crisis, Craig Silverman of Buzzfeed News reported that it outperformed mainstream news on Facebook in the three months prior to the 2016 US presidential elections. Here the report's methods and findings are revisited for 2020. Examining Facebook user engagement of election-related stories, and applying Silverman's classification of fake news, it was found that the problem has worsened, implying that the measures undertaken to date have not remedied the issue. If, however, one were to classify 'fake news' in a stricter fashion, as Facebook as well as certain media organizations do with the notion of 'false news', the scale of the problem shrinks. A smaller scale problem could imply a greater role for fact-checkers (rather than deferring to mass-scale content moderation), while a larger one could lead to the further politicization of source adjudication, where labelling particular sources broadly as 'fake', 'problematic' and/or 'junk' results in backlash.
>
> [...]

Source: [Research note: The scale of Facebook's problem depends upon how 'fake news' is classified | HKS Misinformation Review](#)