Facts Matter
Counter-acting Fake News
Learning Outcomes

By the end of this workshop you should be able to:

• Define “fake news”
• Spot and identify fake news
• Know what to do when confronted with fake news
Fake News

“Fake News”
False, often sensational, information disseminated under the guise of news reporting

Collins Eng Dict
https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/fake-news
Types of Fake News

• **Obviously Fake**

• **Satire**
  • the use of humour to question views
  • usually political or topical

• **Propaganda**
  • biased or misleading information
  • promotes a political cause or point of view
Why does Fake News matter?
Exercise

Discuss in pairs

• What are potential consequences of fake news?
What is “going viral”? 

• Sharing of something — often a video or a website link — via email or social media outlets, such as Facebook and Twitter

• How many hits are needed to make something “viral”?
Facts vs opinions

Fact
Objective truth or a piece of information used as evidence to support an argument.

Opinion
A belief or conclusion held with confidence but not substantiated by positive knowledge or proof
What was your opinion was this message before the EU referendum?
The UK’s EU membership fee

Different sides use different figures for what being a member of the EU costs the UK each year. This is where they come from.

£18bn is what we would pay into the EU

...but we get an instant discount, called a rebate, of £5bn.

£13bn is what we actually pay into the EU as a ‘membership fee’

...but we also get money coming back due to EU spending on the UK. Last year the EU spent over £4bn, mostly on payments to farmers and poorer regions in the UK.


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B0ktojE6WQA
True of False?
Can you spot Fake News?

• Do this quiz
How to spot Fake News
Filter bubble

A situation in which an Internet user encounters only information and opinions that conform to and reinforce their own beliefs, caused by algorithms that personalize an individual’s online experience.

Oxford Living dicts:
https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/filter_bubble
Confirmation bias

“The tendency to interpret new evidence as confirmation of one's existing beliefs or theories.”

https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/confirmation_bias

The answer is clearly NO!
Do you know your newspapers and their biases?

- In pairs, match the newspaper title with the typical viewpoint of their news stories
Answers

• **Daily Telegraph**
  the most popular broadsheet newspaper in the UK, delivering the latest news, sport, comment and culture to a loyal and affluent audience

• **Independent**
  an unbiased and trusted voice in British journalism - an audience with a median age of 35

• **Daily Mail**
  In touch with the hearts and minds of ‘Middle England’, it reflects the concerns, hopes and lifestyle of this powerful audience

• **The Sun**
  the first to reach readers with big stories, big interviews and big pictures

• **The Guardian**
  attracts a unique group of people. People curious about the world around them. Progressive people, valuable people

• **The Mirror**
  has consistently supported the Labour Party since 1945, but its first duty is always fighting for the best for its readers
Check your bubble

• Look for evidence
• Why are people saying what they are?
• Be global

• Critical Thinking workshop
Challenge your bubble

• Triangulate
• Check your own biases
• Read outside your bubble
• Check Full Fact and other fact checking sources
How does this relate to your University studies?

• Emphasises need to question everything
  • Needed in critical assignments
• Research your evidence
• Be balanced in your presentation of views
  • Watch out for confirmation bias in your arguments
Useful web sites

• **Full Fact**: [https://fullfact.org/](https://fullfact.org/)

  Full Fact is the UK's independent fact checking organisation

• Explore government websites for full facts and figures
  
  • [Social Sciences LibGuide](http://libguides.tees.ac.uk/workshops)