

Facebook and Fake News

Consider each of the below proposals, and fill in each of the below TODOs.

Proposals

Proposal 1

Facebook relies on an algorithm as well as individual users' reports to identify content that is potentially "fake news." Once the content has been identified, it is sent to third party fact-checkers for verification. If the content is verified as fake news, it is publicly flagged with a warning that the content is disputed by fact-checkers.



Proposal 2

However, a designer at Facebook believes that there needs to be a different approach to content regulation. Their proposal is that content deemed problematic by third-party fact-checkers should be prevented from being shared on the platform altogether.

Questions

1. Which form of content regulation, Proposal 1 or Proposal 2, do you feel is better? Why?
 - a. I will suggest Proposal 1, but with a lot of caveats and improvements.

First off, there should be an option to clearly view which facts are being disputed, and to provide the official source for the dispute. Just because some parts of the news are clearly fake, doesn't mean all of them are, and vice versa. For example, if a scandalous news/crime of a popular politician hit the news, but is not yet verified at the time of writing. Will it get swept under the rug, as technically the news is still "unverified" and considered fake? Secondly, if a piece of news is proven objectively to be fake, there should be an option remove, either by the public or by the social media.

As for Proposal 2, we are just shifting the responsibility and power solely to 3rd-party reviewers and social media. Do we really want to rely solely on others to control the media we consume? Who shall be their reviewer then? In the end, having access to ALL real and fake news is better than having limited and curated access to the truth.

2. Which form of content regulation, Proposal 1 or Proposal 2, do you think best preserves or promotes the [five rights and opportunities necessary for a democratic public sphere](#)?
 - a. Which proposal best preserves or promotes Rights? Why?
 - i. Proposal 1. Full censorship is a strike against Rights. One may have the rights to proclaim he is an idiot by sharing fake news, but no one should be able to stop him from doing that. The best the rest can do is to educate him on why he is wrong.
 - b. Which proposal best preserves or promotes Opportunity for Expression? Why?
 - i. Proposal 1. Similar to answer above
 - c. Which proposal best preserves or promotes Access? Why?
 - i. Proposal 2. While Proposal 1 allows a greater flow of information, Proposal 2 if executed correctly will make the accessible information more reliable. This is certainly better for the public. This however comes with its own set of problems.
 - d. Which proposal best preserves or promotes Diversity? Why?
 - i. Proposal 2. While Proposal 1 may seem better at first glance as it technically doesn't allow censorship, the reality is echo chambers can easily form if people are free to express themselves. And there will be less competing views which is what actually promotes diversity. An internet with less fake news will hopefully induce less conflicts and thus less polarisation.
 - e. Which proposal best preserves or promotes Communicative Power? Why?
 - i. Proposal 1. Similar to question 1. Access to information is more important, regardless if it is fake or real. And citizens have the rights to access that information, even if this is a double edge sword.