

1

00:00:14,320 --> 00:00:17,400

Fake news appears  
in many different forms,

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00:00:17,480 --> 00:00:20,480

from obviously ridiculous  
clickbait headlines

3

00:00:20,560 --> 00:00:22,560

to deliberately deceptive articles

4

00:00:22,640 --> 00:00:25,520

pretending to be reports  
about serious issues.

5

00:00:25,600 --> 00:00:30,440

When we come across these stories  
online, it's easy to get sucked in.

6

00:00:30,520 --> 00:00:33,640

But why do we fall  
for inaccurate, sensational

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00:00:33,720 --> 00:00:36,200

and dangerous news articles?

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00:00:36,280 --> 00:00:42,200

Why do they spread so far and so fast  
across the world?

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00:00:42,280 --> 00:00:45,280

Edu991176 Why do we fall for fake news?

The major reason  
that fake news is so popular

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00:00:45,360 --> 00:00:49,440

is because of the way it makes us feel.

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00:00:49,520 --> 00:00:54,680

People have strong emotional responses  
to these articles, so they drag us in.

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00:00:54,760 --> 00:00:58,880

And we don't use our common sense  
to judge if the story is true.

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00:00:58,960 --> 00:01:01,800

Instead of reading news articles  
and looking for facts,

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00:01:01,880 --> 00:01:05,840

it's easy to get distracted  
by how we feel about stories,

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00:01:05,920 --> 00:01:10,840

both good and bad, when we see  
attention-grabbing headlines.

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00:01:10,920 --> 00:01:13,080

Our responses are intensified

17

00:01:13,160 --> 00:01:16,880

by the way we interact  
with news and information.

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00:01:16,960 --> 00:01:22,360

We're all busy, and it's easier to get  
our news in short formats to save time.

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00:01:22,440 --> 00:01:25,600

The news never stops coming in  
from all around the world.

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00:01:25,680 --> 00:01:29,920

Day and night,  
our newsfeeds keep updating.

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00:01:30,000 --> 00:01:33,400

When there is never a break  
from news stories popping up,

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00:01:33,480 --> 00:01:38,240

it's easy to quickly skim and scroll.  
When we're only reading a headline,

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00:01:38,320 --> 00:01:41,160

listening to a sound bite  
or looking at a Tweet,

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00:01:41,240 --> 00:01:44,560

it's hard to get  
all the different sides to a story.

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00:01:44,640 --> 00:01:48,000

Only the most dramatic and  
controversial parts of an article

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00:01:48,080 --> 00:01:49,880

make the headlines.

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00:01:49,960 --> 00:01:54,320

This can mean we don't read more deeply to understand the context.

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00:01:54,400 --> 00:01:57,280

And the less we know about a particular issue,

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00:01:57,360 --> 00:02:01,120

the harder it is to pick up inconsistencies, misinformation

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00:02:01,200 --> 00:02:05,840

and other details that suggest a story isn't correct.

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00:02:09,160 --> 00:02:12,600

But one of the most common reasons we engage with fake news

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00:02:12,680 --> 00:02:18,080

is because we like facts that back up opinions and beliefs we already have.

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00:02:18,160 --> 00:02:20,320

This is called confirmation bias,

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Edu991176 Why do we fall for fake news?

00:02:20,400 --> 00:02:24,280  
and it's a powerful tool  
in the spread of fake news.

35  
00:02:25,680 --> 00:02:28,000  
When we experience  
that superior feeling

36  
00:02:28,080 --> 00:02:30,960  
of being proved right  
about an important topic,

37  
00:02:31,040 --> 00:02:33,880  
we want to share those stories.

38  
00:02:36,000 --> 00:02:41,920  
Fake news is designed to manipulate  
our emotions and fears.

39  
00:02:42,000 --> 00:02:47,480  
We are hardwired to focus on negative  
behaviours, events and expectations.

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00:02:49,920 --> 00:02:55,000  
And when information is endlessly  
repeated, eventually we believe it.

41  
00:02:56,600 --> 00:03:01,520  
Fake news relies on, and also  
encourages, our lazy thinking habits.

42  
00:03:01,600 --> 00:03:04,800

Edu991176 Why do we fall for fake news?

It's quicker and easier  
to believe what we read

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00:03:04,880 --> 00:03:09,920

than to put in the time to question  
and analyse what we've been told.

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00:03:10,000 --> 00:03:14,560

Let's look at some actual fake news  
stories and how they sucked people in.

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00:03:18,200 --> 00:03:21,120

In 2016, the US presidential election

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00:03:21,200 --> 00:03:24,680

was the biggest news story  
on the planet.

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00:03:24,760 --> 00:03:28,640

There were thousands of articles  
floating around about the candidates,

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00:03:28,720 --> 00:03:31,440

Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton.

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00:03:31,520 --> 00:03:36,000

One particular story blew up  
on Facebook during the election race.

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00:03:36,080 --> 00:03:41,760

"Pope Francis shocks world,  
endorses Donald Trump for president."

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00:03:41,840 --> 00:03:46,480

This news article was read  
by over a million people on Facebook,

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00:03:46,560 --> 00:03:53,080

but it was written by a fantasy news  
website called WTOE 5NEWS.

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00:03:53,160 --> 00:03:55,400

So why did this article become so big

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00:03:55,480 --> 00:03:59,400

when a few clicks could easily  
show people that it wasn't true?

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00:04:01,880 --> 00:04:06,640

It was the intense,  
emotional impact of the story.

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00:04:06,720 --> 00:04:09,840

Popes never comment  
on political elections,

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00:04:09,920 --> 00:04:13,840

and the news that Pope Francis  
had broken the rules for Donald Trump

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00:04:13,920 --> 00:04:18,200

served as significant confirmation bias  
for his supporters.

Edu991176 Why do we fall for fake news?

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00:04:18,280 --> 00:04:24,080

It was also a source of intense outrage for those who did not support him.

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00:04:24,160 --> 00:04:26,760

The pope holds a powerful spiritual position

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00:04:26,840 --> 00:04:29,160

for Roman Catholics across the world.

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00:04:29,240 --> 00:04:31,640

They value his opinions and guidance.

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00:04:31,720 --> 00:04:36,480

They would want to know who he was endorsing and could follow his example.

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00:04:36,560 --> 00:04:38,440

The combination of powerful figures

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00:04:38,520 --> 00:04:41,440

with the highly controversial idea behind the story

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00:04:41,520 --> 00:04:47,680

encouraged people to read, spread and share the fake news.

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00:04:48,600 --> 00:04:52,320

Fake news can also take advantage



of people's innate wish

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00:04:52,400 --> 00:04:54,760

for everything to be OK.

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00:04:54,840 --> 00:04:59,120

In 2020, a wave of panic and fear  
spread across the world

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00:04:59,200 --> 00:05:01,520

during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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00:05:01,600 --> 00:05:05,960

During this stressful time,  
good news articles began appearing.

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00:05:06,040 --> 00:05:08,160

These were stories  
about animals flourishing

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00:05:08,240 --> 00:05:13,960

as humans were forced to stay home.  
One story quickly went viral.

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00:05:14,040 --> 00:05:19,840

"Nature is taking back Venice.  
Dolphins return to canals."

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00:05:21,200 --> 00:05:23,400

This story was spread by tweets

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Edu991176 Why do we fall for fake news?

00:05:23,480 --> 00:05:27,280  
containing a video of dolphins  
frolicking in the clear water.

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00:05:27,360 --> 00:05:32,360  
One tweet received over 40,000 likes.

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00:05:32,440 --> 00:05:36,840  
However, the story wasn't true.

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00:05:36,920 --> 00:05:40,680  
The video was actually shot  
in a different Italian city

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00:05:40,760 --> 00:05:44,280  
three years before the pandemic.

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00:05:44,360 --> 00:05:48,720  
Why did this fake story  
become such an online sensation?

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00:05:50,400 --> 00:05:52,480  
People wanted to find a positive spin

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00:05:52,560 --> 00:05:55,320  
on the deeply concerning events  
of the pandemic,

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00:05:55,400 --> 00:05:59,600  
so they were less critical  
and didn't check the video carefully.

Edu991176 Why do we fall for fake news?

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00:06:00,800 --> 00:06:03,960

If people want to believe  
fake news is true,

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00:06:04,040 --> 00:06:07,600

they are less interested in checking  
whether it is.

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00:06:07,680 --> 00:06:11,000

One fake news writer  
interviewed by the BBC

88

00:06:11,080 --> 00:06:14,400

said that the top comment  
he receives on his articles is:

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00:06:14,480 --> 00:06:17,480

"I hope this is true."

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00:06:20,360 --> 00:06:24,760

Emotive images and persuasive  
language in false, misleading articles

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00:06:24,840 --> 00:06:27,800

sometimes encourage us  
to avoid thinking critically

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00:06:27,880 --> 00:06:31,560

about the news we consume and share.

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00:06:31,640 --> 00:06:34,840

Edu991176 Why do we fall for fake news?

We're also wired to believe fake news.

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00:06:34,920 --> 00:06:40,720

Confirmation bias, our natural fears,  
our desire for good things to be true

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00:06:40,800 --> 00:06:43,520

and our tendency towards lazy thinking

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00:06:43,600 --> 00:06:48,640

combine to make many of us  
very easily duped.