

Library Services

Fake News Friday: Week 2

12/05/2017

HELEN: Hello! All this Friday, all Fridays in May we're doing bits on, videos on how to spot fake news. We're gonna be using this infographic. It's from the International Federation of Library Associations or IFLAs infographic - 'How to spot Fake News'. I'll point out the ones I'm going to do. I'm going to do 'Is it a joke?' and 'Check the date'.

Okay, so, the reason that we picked those two and we group them together, basically is because of April Fool's day.

So I'm sure a lot of you, like me have read or heard something on the 1st of April that later turned out to be a joke. And I'm sure a lot of you, like me wake up on the 1st April and any news story we encounter we will view with a sceptical eye. And I suggest we take that sceptical eye and we basically apply it throughout the rest of the year. So the first thing to think about is 'is it a joke?'. If it seems too outlandish it might be satire.

An example is the Studio Exec website who in 2015 published an article reporting that, the hobby of cosplay and that's dressing up as your favourite fictional character, was to be made illegal in five states in the US. And this was mistaken as genuine news by a lot of people. However if you go to the 'About' page on this website then you will find this:

'The Studio Exec is a satirical movie-based website publishing spoof news, reviews and comedy masterpieces. Our work has been reported internationally and we have been directly responsible for three marital breakups, the sacking of fifteen copy-editors and the devaluation of the word satire.'

So if it's too outlandish it might be satire.

My second tip for you is check the date. If something has been, if an old news article has been reposted then it might not be relevant to current events. My example for this, is that after Donald Trump was elected president in November 2016 some blogs were quoting from and linking to, a CNN money article - entitled 'Ford shifts truck production from Mexico to Ohio'.

However when you actually go to the website, the CNN money website the date on the article is August 2015. So over a year prior to Trump being elected.

So, therefore, clearly no evidence that Ford were making any decisions based on the outcome of the presidential election. So, my second tip - is check the date!

Okay, those are my two tips. Please do join us next week when Nicola will be talking about 'Read Beyond' and 'Check your biases' and we'd love it if you could join us.