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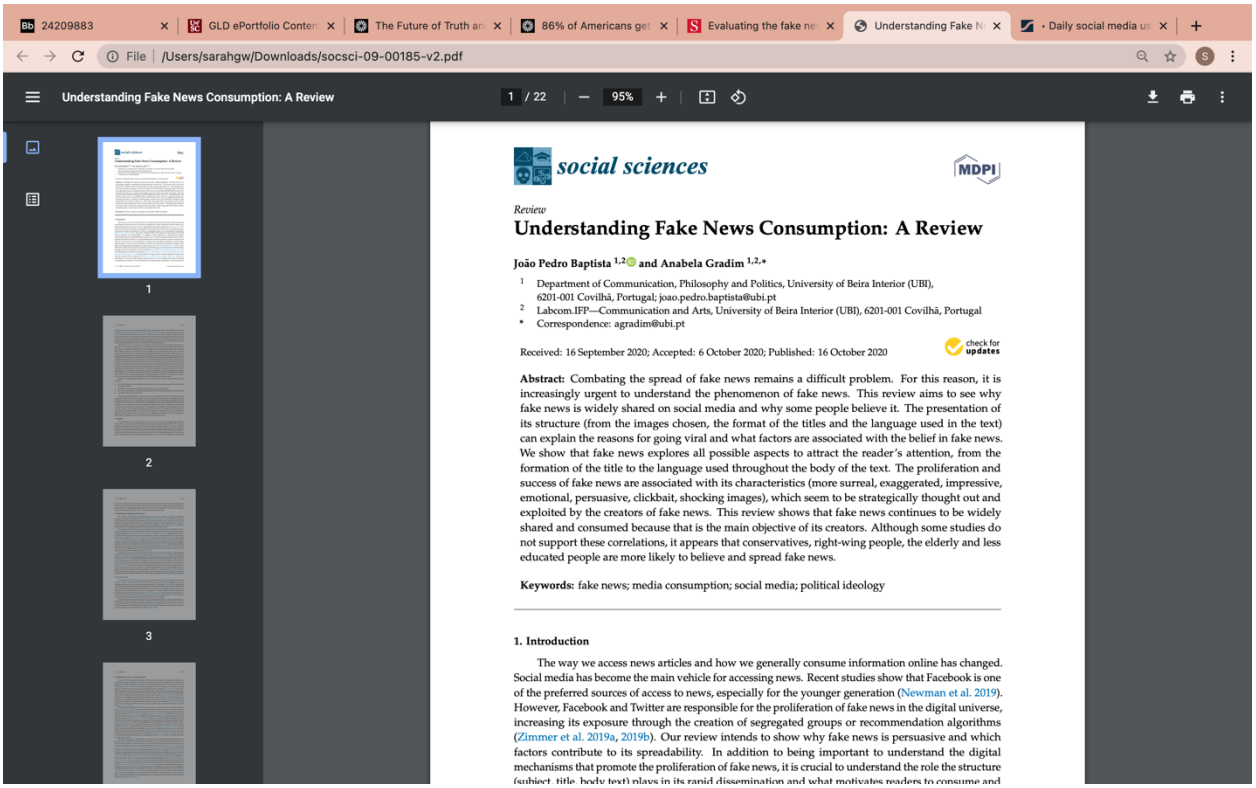

social sciences

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Review

Understanding Fake News Consumption: A Review

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Abstract: Combating the spread of fake news remains a difficult problem. For this reason, it is increasingly urgent to understand the phenomenon of fake news. This review aims to see why fake news is widely shared on social media and why some people believe it. The presentation of its structure (from the images chosen, the format of the titles and the language used in the text) can explain the reasons for going viral and what factors are associated with the belief in fake news. We show that fake news explores all possible aspects to attract the reader's attention, from the formation of the title to the language used throughout the body of the text. The proliferation and success of fake news are associated with its characteristics (more surreal, exaggerated, impressive, emotional, persuasive, clickbait, shocking images), which seem to be strategically thought out and exploited by the creators of fake news. This review shows that fake news continues to be widely shared and consumed because that is the main objective of its creators. Although some studies do not support these correlations, it appears that conservatives, right-wing people, the elderly and less educated people are more likely to believe and spread fake news.

Keywords: fake news; media consumption; social media; political ideology

1. Introduction

The way we access news articles and how we generally consume information online has changed. Social media has become the main vehicle for accessing news. Recent studies show that Facebook is one of the preferred sources of access to news, especially for the younger generation (Newman et al. 2019). However, Facebook and Twitter are responsible for the proliferation of fake news in the digital universe, increasing its exposure through the creation of segregated groups or recommendation algorithms (Zimmer et al. 2019a, 2019b). Our review intends to show why fake news is persuasive and which factors contribute to its spreadability. In addition to being important to understand the digital mechanisms that promote the proliferation of fake news, it is crucial to understand the role the structure

(I couldn't provide a link, but this is a study I read to gather background for my project)