

The authors of the research acknowledge that market-based solutions cannot mitigate these threats. They think that governments around the world have to and some of them have already been taking steps to address fake news and hate speech online through legislation, hearings, or establishing centers dedicated to the problem of fake news.

Bibliography and sources

CAPLAN. R., HANSON. L., DONOVAN. J.: *Dead Reckoning: Navigating Content Moderation After "Fake News"*. [online]. [2018-10-17]. Available at: <https://datasociety.net/pubs/oh/DataAndSociety_Dead_Reckoning_2018.pdf>.

Media Manipulation. [online]. [2018-10-17]. Available at: <<https://datasociety.net/research/media-manipulation/>>.

Miroslav Kapec



photo: geralt

The Promises, Challenges, and Futures of Media Literacy

ABSTRACT

Nowadays initiatives in the fields of media literacy such as youth participation, teacher training and curricular resources, parental support, policy initiatives, and evidence base construction - are very successful in growing the level of the critical thinking of the participants. However, there are still a few areas which need to be guided. Authors Monica Bulger and Patrick Davison make five recommendations for the development of the future of media literacy programming for educators, legislators, technologists, and philanthropists. On the other hand the report also warns against the contemporary treatment of media literacy as a panacea - in the way of how to deal with fake news.

KEY WORDS

Media Literacy. Media Messages. Fake News. Media Manipulation. Media Perspective.

Current research has demonstrated positive outcomes of media literacy initiatives like teacher and parental support, lecturer training, youth participation, policy or curricular resources mainly in the way of linking critical thinking and behavioral change for youth. But on the other hand the authors ask the question: Is media literacy about instilling confidence, about prompting behavior change, or about creating new practices of media creation?

In general, there is not enough evaluated data of media literacy efforts, which we can rely on when we are thinking about future development of the field, but there are a few challenges and expectations we should face, e.g. to discern accuracy, to evaluate bias, engage with information productively, to be an informed voter etc. Outcomes have an impact on measures which impact results. These challenges and expectations were a foundation for Monica Bulger and Patrick Davison who have made five recommendations for the future of media literacy work:

- **Develop a coherent understanding of the media environment.** With new technologies, existing programs should be updated. Responsibility for accessing high-quality and reliable information does not depend on an individual, but on whole institutions and technology platforms. Getting to know the media environment is a basic step to a deeper insight into how education can be leveraged to improve responsible media engagement.
- **Improve cross-disciplinary collaboration.** Understanding media literacy is often connected with narrow, pedagogical theory. But also other fields like social psychology, political science, sociology are producing new research and findings that could enrich media literacy training. Much research dealing with critical thinking or digital literacy etc. are realized outside of the media literacy field. The authors say about the necessity of a proactive attitude in educational activities. Taken together, the report develops a holistic understanding of the structure of the media environment and how individuals navigate it. These findings can then enrich current media literacy education initiatives by identifying how training can impact practice.
- **Leverage the current media crisis to consolidate stakeholders.** According to the authors the new attention on fake news could be one of the reasons for the current media crisis in the US. On the other hand this phenomenon offers a new focus to the field. There is an opportunity to build cross-disciplinary collaboration, but also identifying what is known and what is unknown in the field, and where is the space for innovation. It might help to identify the situation when media literacy might fail, and what the surrounding environment contributes to successful media literate practice. A huge challenge is to find out the suitable form of evaluation of media literacy education and to attract future resources and political support.
- **Prioritize the creation of a national media literacy evidence base.** The authors emphasize the importance of having a centralized and stable base of evaluation data. There are many initiatives and potential political challenges to create such an evidence base, but they all have to face the decentralized nature of schooling and media literacy research in the US. Currently, the UK, Canada and Australia are leaders in media literacy education, policy, and evidence gathering. The alternative, how to reach these standards also in the US according to Bulger and Davison could be a collaborative effort from those major foundations already involved in media literacy and research.
- **Develop curricula for addressing action in addition to interpretation.** Contemporary media literacy efforts are focusing on the ability to address user behavior in addition to interpretation. With an increase in usage of social media a new form of user engagement appeared and new questions about responsibility and control started to arise. Fake news, violent content and hate speech are becoming more and more popular and looking for the right way to interpret such content is more difficult every single day.

Bibliography and sources

BULGER, M., DAVISON, P.: *The Promises, Challenges, and Futures of Media Literacy*. New York : Data & Society Research Institute, 2018. [online]. [2018-10-18]. Available at: <<https://datasociety.net/output/the-promises-challenges-and-futures-of-media-literacy/>>.