

# Misinformation: Justice 2B

## Proposal:

- Raising awareness and concern about the dangers of fake news, learning to think more independently and promote critical thinking skills
- Enhancing public awareness and concern about fake news not only reduces the direct harm caused by misinformation, but also promotes healthier societal development and individual growth on a broader scale.
- possessing a sense of independent thinking and judgement helps people to more objectively assess information, avoiding the blind belief and dissemination of unverified content.

## Problems & Biases:

- The public lacks awareness and importance in discerning fake news.
- Fake news not only misleads the public and distorts the truth but can also destroy social trust, incite unnecessary panic, or hatred. It often spreads rapidly through the power of social media, with its influence and destructive power greatly amplified. If individuals cannot identify and resist fake news, it will affect the quality of public decision-making, damage the democratic process, and potentially negatively impact individuals and groups, such as inciting violence, discrimination, or political division. Therefore, enhancing awareness of the dangers of fake news is crucial for maintaining social stability, promoting healthy information circulation, and protecting the public's right to know. [Schirmacher mentioned the social impact of fake news on DW (2022).] [Nelly Kgoadi-molaba reported fake news stories on Alison (2022)]

## Purpose:

- Raising people's awareness and concern about the dangers of fake news, learning to think more independently, and possessing critical thinking skills.

## Benefit:

- **Enhances Social Stability:** When the public can identify and reject fake news, it can reduce panic and social unrest caused by rumours and misinformation, thus contributing to social stability.
- **Promotes Authenticity of Information:**

Increased awareness encourages news organisations and social media platforms to strengthen their information review and filtering processes, fostering an environment of more authentic and transparent information dissemination.

- **Protects Democracy and Public Decision-Making Processes:**

Fake news can mislead the public, affect voters' judgments, and subsequently impact election outcomes and public policy formulation. Enhancing the public's ability to recognize fake news protects the fairness of elections and the rationality of policy-making.

- **Reduces Harm to Individuals and Communities:**

Sometimes, fake news targets specific individuals or groups, causing reputational damage, psychological stress, and even threats to safety. Raising public awareness can help minimise such harm.

- **Facilitates the Accurate Spread of Scientific and Health Information:**

During public health crises (like the COVID-19 pandemic), fake news can hinder the implementation of effective disease prevention and control measures. Improving the public's ability to recognize fake news promotes the correct dissemination of scientific and health information, benefiting public health.

<https://www.dw.com/en/fact-check-four-fakes-about-monkeypox/a-62053570>

- **Cultivates Critical Thinking Skills:**

Learning how to identify fake news is essentially a process of developing critical thinking skills. Such abilities are invaluable for individuals to make rational judgments and decisions in various situations.

**Audience:** General Public

**Core Audience;**

- **Young People and Students:**

Young individuals, especially students, are heavy users of social media and may not yet have developed the critical thinking skills needed to discern reliable from unreliable information. Educating them on media literacy is crucial.

- **Educators and Teachers:**

As guides for the younger generation, educators and teachers play a pivotal role in imparting critical thinking and media literacy skills to their students, preparing them to navigate the complex media landscape responsibly.

- **Journalists and Media Professionals:**

These individuals are on the frontline of information dissemination. Strengthening their understanding of the implications of fake news can help in promoting ethical journalism and the responsible reporting of news.

- **Policy Makers and Government Officials:**

Decision-makers need a deep understanding of the fake news phenomenon to craft effective policies that combat misinformation without infringing on free speech.

**Outcome:**

- Fake Newspaper

**Conclusion:**

- Enhancing public awareness and concern about fake news not only reduces the direct harm caused by misinformation but also promotes healthier societal development and individual growth on a broader scale.
- Through this research and practice, our entire team discovered that we had significantly underestimated the number and scope of areas and situations where fake news and misinformation biases exist in society. We believe this underestimation is not unique to us; it is likely that the majority of the public also shares this perception, perhaps even more so without realising it. This experience has enhanced our understanding of the extent and depth of our awareness of these issues.
- At the same time, we have come to understand some of the motives and reasons behind the production of fake news and misinformation. For example, manipulating market trends or public opinion to profit in the capital market or political elections. There are also instances where long-term dissemination of incorrect information alters public perception and opposition towards certain issues [Samantha Lai mentioned technology and the 2022 elections][Net politics mentioned the relationship between Europe's elections and disinformation], thereby enabling the passage or implementation of policies that are not necessarily in the public's best interest, among other things. [Pablo G. Bejerano mentioned misinformation effected elections in 2024]
- If we have the opportunity to further explore this topic in future projects, we are interested in incorporating street interviews to gather more data, thereby enriching the selection of topics for the Fake News Newspaper. We would also consider creating social media accounts for the Fake News Newspaper to engage with our audience and collect feedback.

**Call to action:**

- Continually track and summarise fake news and misinformation on the QR provided in gazette to keep readers informed. Strive to engage a wide audience to increase awareness and subscriptions, thereby helping people uncover the subtle and pervasive presence of fake news in everyday life and enhance their understanding of the topic. Encourage contemplation on the origins and logic behind fake news production.

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