Discussion: The spread of true and false news online

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Summary

- Novelty: false news vs true news;
- The role of the networks algorithms on the false news spread;
- False news during and after COVID-19
Novelty: false news vs true news

1. The concept brought by the paper that what makes news (false or true) spread pervasively is their novelty, it is indeed a powerful idea.

2. Novelty attracts human attention, contributes and encourages information sharing
   False news: Fear, disgust and surprise
   True news: anticipation, sadness, joy, and trust
Novelty: false news vs true news

False news is more surprising, thus, more likely to be shared. Adding this up with strong feelings like disgust, fear and anger, makes it even more pervasively.

The Brazilian president during the election in 2018, went to the biggest TV in Brazil, to say that his opposition was giving to 6 years old kids “kit-gays”.

Even this was refuted by every media in Brazil, it was one of his main flags during the election, which he won.

The fear and disgust blind the people, making false news a very strong weapon.

How politicians take profit of people’s fear?
Novelty: false news vs true news

False news bring disgust

In a political debate that is on purpose: **Poisoning the well**, that is, to prime the audience with adverse information about the opponent from the start, in an attempt to make your claim more acceptable or discount the credibility of your opponent’s claim.
The role of the networks algorithms on the false news spread

People use different networks, and it is interesting to analyze how different algorithms encourage the spread of fake news.
The vast majority of false information shared on WhatsApp in Brazil during the presidential election favored the far-right winner, Jair Bolsonaro (Guardian).

7 out 10 Brazilians uses WhatsApp as main way of getting news.

5 out the 10 Brazilian channels that grew the most during 2018, were far-right channels to support Bolsonaro.

Those channels were constantly in the ‘trending’ videos.
False news during and after COVID-19

1. The COVID-19 situation will change the manner of how the people react to fake news?

2. Considering that the last years, the traditional media lost its space due to constant accusation of fake news, will this situation bring back the traditional media prestige?

3. In a situation of people are filled with feelings like fear and surprise, people are more likely to be susceptible to fake news?
Thanks
Questions?