

Fake news in social media poisons democracy

Written by Manuel Caballero
Friday, 06 January 2017 19:23



Happy New Year Everyone! (Photo by multi-awarded Fil-Am Reena Rose Sibayan of The Jersey Journal)

ONE popular and respected mainstream newspaper in New York carries in their online ad

Fake news in social media poisons democracy

Written by Manuel Caballero
Friday, 06 January 2017 19:23

this line: “Real news deserves real journalism.”

Obviously, the line is an offshoot of the proliferation of fake news in social media.

Before and after the last elections, in the United States and the Philippines, rampant presence of fake news and fictional claims appeared in Facebook almost on a daily basis.

The situation alarmed no less than the President of the United States.

President Obama told reporters in an interview while in Berlin late last year, “If we can’t discriminate between serious arguments and propaganda, then we have problems.”

“In an age where there’s so much active misinformation, and it’s packaged very well, and it looks the same when you see it on a Facebook page or you turn on your television...if everything seems to be the same and no distinctions are made, then we won’t know what to protect,” Mr. Obama also said.

Remember, before the elections, stories about the Pope endorsing Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton having sold weapons to ISIS?

Both turned out to be fake.

It turned out that those fake news actually outperformed real news on the board, with more shares, reactions and comments!

In fact, one question was raised about Facebook’s failure to control fake news sources: “Did fake news and polarized politics get Trump elected?”

Fake news in social media poisons democracy

Written by Manuel Caballero
Friday, 06 January 2017 19:23

After the elections, one online blog which is notorious for posting fake claims and phony news said falsely that U.S. President-elect Donald Trump has congratulated Filipinos for their “tireless campaign” on social media during the U.S. election campaign.

It further claimed that Filipinos are pro-Trump and that Trump is a “close ally” of Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte.

The same blog also claimed that Trump said the Philippines will be the first country to restore its relationship with the U.S. and that no Filipino immigrant will be deported.

Both claims were fake.

Where could those have come from?

It should be pointed out that like President Obama said, propaganda is fake news because it makes false claims.

Right in our midst in New York City, there is a Facebook “news” program that, in our opinion, is not being truthful to its listeners and viewers.

It is supposed to be bringing stories from the native country, but it is, in our observation, a pure propaganda arm of the Duterte government.

If the host is expressing an opinion, say so.

Don’t make it appear that what’s being said about someone, like President Duterte, is

Fake news in social media poisons democracy

Written by Manuel Caballero
Friday, 06 January 2017 19:23

gospel truth.

Otherwise, they're not journalists.

They are propagandists.

They might not even qualify as benevolent Filipino citizens.

Whoever are behind this program should come out of their cocoons and tell the audience who and what they are up to as they praise every move of Mr. Duterte, including the extrajudicial killings that are going on in the Philippines, which, the United Nations, Human Rights Groups, Amnesty International and the world concerned communities condemn and demand that the Philippine President be investigated.

In our mind, this program insults the intelligence of many keen and thinking Filipinos in America, many of whom are professionals.

We praise the Filipino American Press Club of New York (FAPCNY) for bringing this problem in the social media discourse of Filipinos in the U.S.

Research has found that 62% of U.S. adults turn to social media for news, yet there is little distinction between truth and lies or propaganda.

Fake news is a serious subject.

It is poisoning democracy.