

Being Critical



Step: Three - Explore more!



Time: 1 hour



Space and materials:

- Room allowing to sit in a circle and work in small groups;
- Printed Fake News materials.



Description of the tool

1. Divide the participants into teams and give each group a text with clearly manipulative nature on most popular myths around technology and globalisation. Give them time to read through and discuss the questions there.
2. Let each group present their findings and discuss together, using the following exemplary questions:
 - How do you feel about the exercise?
 - Have you come across a similar situation in your life? What and where? How did you deal with it?
 - Do you trust the information more if there are visual materials (photos, videos)? Why? Are there certain criteria that something is true?
 - What are the things we need to do before believing a certain piece of information is a fact? (Work with the participants to compile a list)
 - What the source of one information can tell us about its validity?
 - Why would somebody lie or manipulate information? What is their interest? Is there a bigger picture and what it is?
 - What can we do about it?
3. Move to more specific questions on technology:
 - All quoted sources are fake, but the news themselves are real, just from other sources. Was it confusing? How did it make you feel? How do we know the real source of something?
 - One of the fake sources is Wikipedia. While very helpful, Wikipedia is not always the most reliable source of information. Why? How does Wikipedia work, how is the content generated? Who is responsible for the content there?
 - Why are there a lot of conspiracy theories around technology?
 - Does technology scare people more than nature and why?
 - How can we, using technology, avoid being manipulated? (instant search for other sources, ownership of media and research centres, different perspective, checking origins of photos)

 **Annex: Fake News materials¹¹**

Note: All media sources quoted in the annex are FAKE!

PART 1: Microchips

On May 2014, through Europe newborn children will be compelled to take in a subcutaneous RFID chip.

Public clinics in the European Union are to be alerted. The chip in inquiry will be contributed with the report sheet on the newborn.

This chip will also be an impressive GPS sensor that will task with a micro-disposable battery every 2 years in state clinics. GPS chip grants an edge of error of 5 meters, as a statement that it is excellent.

It will be linked straight to a satellite, which will guide the networks. As forecasted, this chip will be essential for all kids born after May 2014, but with a present confirmation date until December 2016.

Source: CNN

Questions to discuss:

- *Is the information true? How do we know?*
- *What are the signs hinting the information might be true?*
- *What are the signs hinting the information might not be true?*
- *How can we be sure if it is true or not?*

PART 2: Facebook

Facebook just released their price grid for membership. \$9.99 per month for gold member services, \$6.99 per month for silver member services, \$3.99 per month for bronze member services, free if you copy and paste this message before midnight tonight. When you sign on tomorrow morning, you will be prompted for payment info... It is official it was even on the news. Facebook will start charging due to the new profile changes. If you copy this on your wall, your icon will turn blue, and Facebook will be free for you. Please pass this message on if not your account will be deleted if you do not pay!

Source: Facebook

Questions to discuss:

- *Is the information true? How do we know?*
- *What are the signs hinting the information might be true?*
- *What are the signs hinting the information might not be true?*
- *How can we be sure if it is true or not?*

¹¹ Parts 1, 2, 3 are quoted and debunked in <http://www.snopes.com/>
Part 4 from <http://www.geoengineeringwatch.org/scientist-speaks-on-the-record-about-haarp-caused-floods/>

PART 2: War

Ukrainian government officials confirmed a nuclear blast was detected in Ukraine Sunday. No other news is coming out of the area.

Three videos just uploaded show the small nuclear blast below. Nothing more is known at this time, including who launched the weapon or against which target.

The materials appear to have originated from the war-torn region of Ukraine, where separatists are attempting to return control of the former Soviet nation to Russia.

Russia's new military doctrine reserves the right to use nuclear weapons in a conventional attack that endangers the state's existence, but some in the military were reportedly calling for a "first strike option."

Source: BBC

Questions to discuss:

- Is the information true? How do we know?
- What are the signs hinting the information might be true?
- What are the signs hinting the information might not be true?
- How can we be sure if it is true or not?

PART 4: HAARP

"Today the HAARP* system was turned off, expect earthquakes in the next several days", stated Serbian professor and scientist Velimir Abramovic during a radio broadcast on May 19th.

Abramovic said while the rain lasted in Serbia, there was not a single thunder, which according to him is highly unusual. The rain that fell, he says, didn't appear like normal rain, rather it fell as if someone was unleashing an entire swimming pool each second. This, according to professor Abramovic, is characteristics of an artificially created weather pattern designed by the HAARP systems.

"It seems as if the sky opened, and a sea of water fell from it. These were not rain droplets that you would typically expect to see. This was a designed weather pattern which I might add is not the first, nor will it be the last by HAARP." says Abramovic.

Source: Wikipedia

*HAARP stands for High Frequency Active Auroral Research Program – an ionospheric research program jointly funded by the U.S. Air Force, the U.S. Navy and others with the purpose to analyse the ionosphere.

Questions to discuss:

- Is the information true? How do we know?
- What are the signs hinting the information might be true?
- What are the signs hinting the information might not be true?
- How can we be sure if it is true or not?