

Fake News – Functions and Interpretations in the Bulgarian Media Space

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(Summary)

The article presents a study of the “fake news” problem from an emic perspective, focusing on media practices. The study aims to place people as conscious and active subjects of cultural production and consumption at the analysis’s centre and present the problem through their actions, reactions and interpretations. Different cases of questionable content circulating through Bulgarian media space are analysed, and their functions and uses are outlined. Two main functions of fake news are specified: 1) as an aspect of popular culture and 2) as a genre of disinformation. The features of users’ reception and interpretation, the subversive impact of fake news in the media ecosystem and its usage in the so-called ‘information wars’ are examined in detail. The conclusions emphasise the role of humour and laughter as mechanisms of counteraction.

Keywords: fake news – functions and interpretations; social media; media practices; popular culture; disinformation

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