

21st CENTURY WARFARE AND MISINFORMATION. FAKE NEWS, TECHNOLOGICAL WEAPONS IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA AGE AND THEIR IMPACT ON YOUNG GENERATIONS

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Abstract

The pandemic of COVID-19 and the invasion of Ukraine have accelerated and dramatically expanded the disinformation processes. The manipulation of information and data is become a not only a very critical threat but technological weapons with a deep impact on society in particular on young generations. Along this last two years they have been widely exposed to web content, always connected often left alone they represents one of the most fragile segments of the society and those we urgently need to be protected and sustained in their cultural. Through the use of platforms and social networks (van Diick, Poell, de Waal (2018) we are witnessing a sort of mass window dressing that can lead to dangerous deviances. False profiles proliferate even among adolescents (Pira 2021), demonstrating how in the liquid modern era deception has become central to the processes of understanding reality and the distinction between true and false is no longer perceived. The digital media have become a real “weapon” systematically deployed warfare contest.

For the first time in history, fake news became an integral tool of strategy, like weapons, as if two parallel battles were being fought.

In this framework technology is not a process, it is not an instrument supporting the construction of knowledge. It remains opaque, the transparency that allows us to observe by developing critical sense is not realized. the boundaries between inside and outside become more permeable. Today we are completely externalized into a ‘pure surface of absorbing and reabsorbing networks of influence’” (Han, 2016, p. 50).

The intervention intends to propose a reflection on how the processes of misinformation, propagated by a media system that increasingly feeds on information cascades and social propagation, have characterized the communication in this critical era and how much this can affect the processes of identity construction of the younger generations.

Keywords: Pandemic, misinformation, young generations, digital media, technological weapons