**Fake news is becoming a profitable business**

American company Disinfomedia runs several web pages for creating fake news

On the fake news workshop (19 October), we the students from 6 A have learned that the authors of fake news want to earn money off of them and influence someone's opinion. To prepare this article my task was to search the Internet and find a few fake news authors. That is how I have discovered American Jestin Coler. He is not only writing fake news, but he has started the company Disinfomedia. inc that owns a couple of pages for placement of fake news. After the portal [Deutsche Welle (DW)](https://www.dw.com/hr/proizvo%C4%91a%C4%8Di-la%C5%BEnih-vijesti/a-36634904) in 2016 Coler employed between 25 and 30 authors who were in charge of fake news articles.

Some of the fake news from his company influenced the attitudes of the American people during the presidential elections in 2016 when Donald Trump became the president. In the same DW article, we found the information that two fake news authors from Long Beach claim to earn between 10 and 40 thousand euros a month from commercials on their sites.

I found some more interesting information on the Internet. During the pandemic caused by the Covid-19 virus, a new term 'infodemia' was created because of the increasing number of fake news connected to the coronavirus. Many people use this situation to earn on fake news. Naive people who believed in some of that fake news bought various miraculous products against coronavirus. Some of them even had serious health consequences.

Portal [RTL](https://www.rtl.hr/vijesti-hr/korona/3866880/zbog-laznih-informacija-na-drustvenim-mrezama-umrlo-800-ljudi-pili-su-kravlji-urin-jeli-cesnjak/) mentions research by the American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene magazine. In that research, it was determined that around 5800 people ended up in the hospital as a consequence of believing in fake news. They were naive enough to drink methanol or cleaning supplies that contain alcohol thinking that they will be protected from the virus. The same article states that scientists published that in the first 3 months of this year around 800 people dyed after using those 'medications'.

I was pretty amazed that adults can be so naive. If they had learned like we did that things we read and hear have to be verified with other sources, that the authors and pages that publish the news need to be checked, maybe they wouldn't do that. That is why I think that all of us need to learn about media and media messages to improve our media literacy. This is important so that we would not be in a group of naive people on whom someone will make money or, more tragically, who will die due to uncritical reading of 'news'. /**Amadea Bošnjak** 6. a; photos downloaded from the Internet/