



Bryan White <zebrafactcheck@gmail.com>

Correction/Clarification request:

1 message

Bryan White <zebrafactcheck@gmail.com>
To: alan@leadstories.com

Sat, Jul 23, 2022 at 10:55 PM

Dear Alan (and Marten),

Clarification issue No. 1: Re: Corrections policy. After instructions on Facebook/Instagram appeals, perhaps insert a line stating "Other correction requests should go to one of the two email addresses appearing below:" (yours and Marten's, if that's why those email addresses appear there). It almost looks like corrections requests aren't allowed except for social media appeals from the fact-checked publishers. But that can't be, can it?

Clarification/Correction issue No. 2 (**Primary**):

Your fact check looking at whether abortion is ever medically necessary makes the same basic mistake all the fact checkers are making. They all commit an equivocation fallacy. "Abortion" doesn't mean just one thing. Most of the fact checks I've seen equivocate by seeing the claim including the term "abortion" and then defining it differently than it was in the original claim (fallacy of equivocation). Your fact check doesn't even bother to define "abortion" at all(!). That makes equivocation even easier! 😊

In the media, "abortion" means a procedure ending a pregnancy with no live birth. Except, that is, when the term appears in the label "anti-abortion" where it's supposed to describe a group that opposes *elective* abortion. Elective abortion does not include procedures that end a pregnancy with no live birth if those procedures are intended to save the life of the mother.

To educate your readers on this, you need to explain the multiple meanings of abortion (at least to a point) and evaluate the claim according to the operative definition in the original claim. Of course it's fine to explain how interpreting the claim using the wrong definition may mislead the audience. And in the case of the Live Action post, the text of that post compounds the confusion by cautioning pregnant mothers about the advice that an abortion is needed to save their lives. That medical advice ought to serve as a clue that the doctor is not recommending an elective abortion. Facebook's fact-checking program hilariously and sadly leaves the most harmful part of the Live Action post entirely intact while obscuring a meme image that's apparently true if understood as elective abortion.

This is fact-checking gone awry, isn't it?

Define the key terms. Recognize that the definition of "abortion" is broad enough to allow the meme to count as "true."
[\[documented here\]](#)

"Not True" is the wrong rating.

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Sincerely,

Bryan W. White
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