

LSCPA PLSO Common Assignment, BISC 1305

Social Media and Information

Overview

Social networks are changing the way we get our information. Social media platforms, such as Facebook Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, etc. want to make your newsfeed relevant to you. They do this because they want you to use and engage with their product. The more you use their social media platform, the more money they can make. Social media platforms make money in various ways, but the most common method is from paid advertisements.

To provide 'relevant' content to you, social media providers use programs which analyze the posts you read, the friends you interact with, the advertisements you respond to, the videos you watch, etc. These programs then prioritize and filter items in your newsfeed so you see things that will encourage you to continue to use and engage with their social network.

Assignment

1. Read the following article "How We Broke Democracy" by Tobias Rose-Stockwell at <https://medium.com/@tobiasrose/empathy-to-democracy-b7f04ab57eee#.qj3o3xhpm>
2. Write a critical essay based on the essay prompt shown below. Essay should be 2 pages in length, double spaced, Times New Roman 12.

Prompt: After reading the "How We Broke Democracy," what are the ethical issues outlined in the article? What are the implications of this for society? Some additional questions you might consider: What should social media platforms do to make content which is relevant to you, yet which allows you to see viewpoints which differ from yours? Who should decide what information we should have access to? Should social media platforms filter what you see in your newsfeed? Why or why not? Are there things we can each do to ensure we access good information? Are there policies the government should pursue to encourage access to better information?

Additional notes: Be sure to justify your conclusions using logical, sound reasoning. In your writing, be sure you have a strong thesis; organize your information with effective transitions & sequencing of ideas

Submitting your essay: In Blackboard, submit your essay as a pdf.