



50th Anniversary
1969-2019



Celebration for
AU 50th
Anniversary
International
Conference

PERSPECTIVES OF MEDIA AND ITS SOCIAL IMPACTS IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION

PRESENTERS:

- **Nikolaj Jang Lee Linding Pedersen** (Underwood International College, Yonsei University, South Korea): "Critical Reasoning in the Age of Constant Connectivity: Twitter, Google, Facebook"
- **John Giordano** (Assumption University, Thailand): "The Language of the Birds, And the Flow and Fate of Ideas through Cyberspace"
- **Michael Clark** (Assumption University, Thailand): "What is Wrong with Fake News?"
- **Dinesh Elango** (Assumption University, Thailand): "The Dark Side of Social Media"
- **Tuang Dheandheanoo** (Thammasat University, Thailand) and **Marissa Chantamas** (Assumption University, Thailand): "Striking the Balance: Entertainment and Ethics in Game"
- **Santhosh Mohanan** (Assumption University, Thailand): "Attachment Styles and Problematic Social Media Use"
- **Mohammad Manzoor Malik** (Assumption University, Thailand): "Theorizing on Role of Education in Developing Social Networking (SN) Ethics"
- **Aaron Loh** (Assumption University, Thailand): "Aspects of the Roles and Impact Media Plays in Modern Day Living"

14 NOVEMBER 2019
HALL OF FAME,
ASSUMPTION UNIVERSITY OF THAILAND
(HUA MAK CAMPUS)



Conference Info: <https://abacmediaconference2019.weebly.com/>
Registration: <https://abacmediaconference2019.weebly.com/rsvp.html>
(No Registration Fee)

ORGANIZERS:
Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V. Thailand
Graduate Programs of Philosophy and Religion
Graduate School of Human Sciences, Assumption University of Thailand
Guna Chakra Research Center, Assumption University of Thailand



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

PERSPECTIVES OF MEDIA AND ITS SOCIAL IMPACTS IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION

Organizer:

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V., Thailand Office

Graduate Programs of Philosophy & Religion, Graduate School of Human Sciences, Assumption University of Thailand

Guna Chakra Research Center, Assumption University of Thailand

Date: 14th November (Thursday), 2019

Venue: Hall of Fame, Assumption University, Hua Mak Campus

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Rationale

The development of media is one of the most important dynamics of globalization. With its convenient and efficient way of transmission of information the most parts of the world are closely connected. Media opens many new possibilities of cooperation and coexistence in the world nowadays.

It, however, also causes new problems. In the beginning media was just understood as an instrument, with which people transmit various news and information, but nowadays it becomes a new power, which produces opinions and information by itself; it provides entertainment, which mocks the emptiness of life in the highly developed industrial society; it has the great contagion, which shows the religiosity without religion; it even has become a new world, where quarrels and conflicts are highly strengthened because of the rapid transmission of information and even fake news.

The development of media also meets its external problems. Media, especially the social media, becomes the efficient instrument to gather the civil opinions and to support mass movement. Some governments worry about the social instability it could bring and then try to limit its development. The symphony of humanity is thus reduced to the grey monophony.

Based on these considerations the relationship between media, society and humanity and its relevant problems should be more investigated and discussed. In this conference various scholars and experts will be invited to discuss this topic from different perspectives and try to indicate some solutions.

Objective of the Activity

- To research the relationship between media, society and humanity
- To investigate the media ethics and the media freedom in the society.
- To reflect the religiosity and mythologization of media
- To consider the sound development of humanity in the (distorted) information society.

Target Group

- Scholars and students of media study.
- Philosophers and students of philosophy.

- Politicians, political scholars and students of politics.
- Sociologists, cultural and religious scholars and the students of relative fields.

Expected Outcome

- To have a deep understanding of the relationship between media, society and humanity
- To share positive and practical opinions and suggestions for the problems of media to the society
- To enhance communication and cooperation between scholars and students of the conference
- A collection of high-quality essays

Agenda

Date	14 th November, 2019	
Time	Event	
08:30-09:00	Registration	
09:00-09:30	<p style="text-align: center;">Opening Ceremony:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Rev. Bro. Bancha Saenghiran, f.s.g., Ph.D. (President of Assumption University)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mr. Georg Gafron (Director of Konrad Adenauer Stiftung e.V., Thailand Office)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Assistant Prof. Dr. Shang-Wen Wang (Director of Guna Chakra Research Center)</p>	
09:30-09:40	Group Photo	
09:40-10:00	Coffee Break	
10:00-11:00	<p>Keynote Address:</p> <p>Prof. Dr. Nikolaj Jang Lee Linding Pedersen, Enquiry in the Age of Constant Connectivity: Twitter, Deepfakes, Google</p>	
11:00-12:30	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 1:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Perspectives of the Phenomena of Media</p>	
	<p>Moderator: Assistant Prof. Dr. Warayuth Sriwarakuel</p>	<p>Speaker 1:</p> <p>Dr. John Giordano, The Language of the Birds, And the Flow and Fate of Ideas through Cyberspace</p>
		<p>Speaker 2:</p> <p>Dr. Michael Clark, What is Wrong with Fake News?</p>
		<p>Speaker 3:</p> <p>Dr. Dinesh Elango, The Dark Side of Social Media</p>
12:30-14:00	Lunch	

	Session 2: Ethics and Politics of Media	
14:00-15:30	Moderator: Dr. Kajornpat Tangyin	Speaker 4: Mr. Tuang Dheandheanoo and Dr. Marissa Chantamas, Striking the Balance: Entertainment and Ethics in Game
		Speaker 5: Dr. Santhosh Mohanan, Attachment Styles and Problematic Social Media Use
		Speaker 6: Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Malik, Theorizing on Role of Education in Developing Social Networking (SN) Ethics
15:30-16:00	Coffee Break	
16:00-16:20	Theatrical Performance: Daydream maker.4 “A theatrical exploration into the psyche of a young man’s dreams”	
16:20-17:20	Session 3: General Discussion	
	Moderator and Speaker: Dr. Aaron Loh	Topic: Aspects of the Roles and Impact Media Plays in Modern Day Living
17:20-17:30	Closing Ceremony Dr. Michael Clark (Director of Ph.D. Program, Graduate Programs of Philosophy and Religion)	

About Speakers

Keynote Speaker

Professor Dr. Nikolaj Jang Lee Linding Pedersen

Ph.D. in Philosophy, Arché, the AHRC Research Centre for the Philosophy of Logic, Language, Mathematics and Mind, University of St. Andrews, Scotland.

Present Position: Professor of philosophy at Underwood International College, Yonsei University in South Korea. The founding director of the Veritas Research Center, a philosophy research center at Yonsei.

Nikolaj Jang Lee Linding Pedersen is currently Professor of Philosophy at Underwood International College, Yonsei University, South Korea. His main research areas are truth studies, epistemology and metaphysics, with forays into the philosophies of logic, language, and mathematics. He completed his Ph.D. at the Arché Research Centre at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland. Prior to moving to South Korea he was Carlsberg Foundation Research Fellow at the University of California, Los Angeles, and Senior Research Fellow at the University of Copenhagen. He is the founder of the Veritas Research Center (Yonsei University) and the Southern Epistemology Network, co-founder of the Asian Epistemology Network, and a founding member of the Social Epistemology Research Group (University of Copenhagen) as well as Prisma: Global Research Network for Pluralism, Relativism and Contextualism. He is a research advisor to the Incheon Development Institute (South Korea), a steering committee member of the Social Epistemology Network, and serves on the editorial board of *Argumenta* and *Philosophical Analysis* and on the advisory board of *Journal of East Asian Philosophy*. He is a co-editor of *Epistemic Entitlement* (Oxford University Press, 2019), *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy* (Routledge, 2019), *Pluralisms in Truth and Logic* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), *Epistemic Pluralism* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), *Truth and Pluralism: Current Debates* (Oxford University Press, 2013), and *New Waves in Truth* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

Other Speakers (alphabet order of family name)

Dr. Marissa Chantamas

Ph.D. in Business Administration (Marketing), Assumption University of Thailand.

Master of Science, Integrated Marketing Communications (Advertising), Northwestern University U.S.A.

B.B.A. in Business Administration (Advertising), Assumption University, Thailand

Present Position: Lecturer, Department of Marketing, MSME, Assumption University

Dr. Michael Clark

Ph. D. of Philosophy, University of Manchester, UK

Present Position: Director of Ph.D. Program, Graduate Programs of Philosophy and Religion, Assumption University of Thailand

Dr. Michael Clark completed his Ph.D. in philosophy at the University of Manchester in 2012. Before coming to Assumption University in 2017, he held postdoctoral positions at the University of Cambridge and the University of Hamburg. His research tends to focus on a cluster of issues in metaphysics relating to grounding (or non-causal dependence), fundamentality, and modality. He is also interested in how these basic metaphysical issues relate to issues in other areas - in the philosophies of mind, science, mathematics, and so on. Now he is lecturer of Graduate Programs of Philosophy and Religion, Assumption University, Thailand. He is also the Co-Editor of *Prajñā Vihāra*, Assumption University, Thailand.

Mr. Tuang Dheandheano

Master of Fine Art (Computer Art), Chulalongkorn University. School of Visual Arts New York, USA.

Bachelor in Architecture, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

Present Position: Head of Game Design Major, Innovative Digital Design Program, Thammasat University. Co-founder of leading Thai Game Companies such as Pigss and Digitopolis.

Dr. Dinesh Elango

MBA., Ph.D in Management Sciences, Anna University, Chennai, India.

Present Position: Lecturer, Graduate School of Business, Assumption University of Thailand

Dinesh Elango studied Master of Business Administration and he has been practising and lecturing for more than eight years in various countries. He completed his Doctor of Philosophy in Management Sciences from Anna University, Chennai, India. Now he is a Full-Time Lecturer in Graduate School of Business, Assumption University of Thailand. His research interests include information technology in management, digital media for business. He has various international publications and memberships.

Dr. John Giordano

Ph. D. of Philosophy, Duquesne University, USA

Present Position: Senior Lecturer, Graduate Programs of Philosophy and Religion, Assumption University of Thailand

John Giordano initially studied Wildlife Biology and Natural Resources. He then worked as an Environmental Engineer for the coal mining industry in West Virginia. He went on to study philosophy and graduated from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh. Since then he has taught

philosophy in Tanzania, South Africa, Philippines and Thailand. Now he is Full-Time Instructor, Graduate Programs of Philosophy and Religion, Graduate School of Human Sciences, Assumption University of Thailand. He is also the Chief Editor of philosophical journal *Prajñā Vihāra*.

Dr. Aaron Loh

Ph. D. of Chemical Technology, Polytechnic of North London (Now London Metropolitan University), UK

Present Position: Senior Lecturer, Graduate School of Business, Assumption University of Thailand

Singaporean, born in 1955. Academically trained in the United Kingdom (1976-1982). MSc (1978) University of Aston in Birmingham, UK. PhD (1982) London Metropolitan University, UK. FLSPT (1982) Fellow of the London School of Polymer Technology), UK. FPRI (1984) Fellow of the Plastics and Rubber Institute, UK. CChem MRSC (1984) Member of the Royal Society of Chemistry, UK.

Lectured for 4 years in Singapore before joining the business world. In 25 over years, worked for 3 MNCs and finally founded his own business in the manufacturing and global supply of medical devices.

Retired in 2007 from the business world; since been a Senior Faculty Member and Director of universities collaboration and networking, as well as an Academic Adviser and instructor for international business curriculum update to selected universities in China, Myanmar, Vietnam, Indonesia and Malaysia at the Graduate School of Business, Assumption University and a visiting professor in Mainz Germany.

Embarked in a 2nd PhD in Philosophy & Religion and trying to enjoy and to lead a slower-paced life with children and keeping-fit bicycles.

Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Malik

Ph. D. of Philosophy, Assumption University of Thailand

Present Position: Lecturer, Graduate Programs of Philosophy and Religion, Assumption University of Thailand

Mohammad Manzoor Malik is a lecturer in the Department of Philosophy and Religion, Assumption University of Thailand. He was formerly Senior Visiting Lecturer in Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaysia and Assistant Professor in Faculty of Human Sciences and Revealed Knowledge, International Islamic University of Malaysia. He received Alimiyat (BA) and Fazilat (MA) in Shariah (Islamic Studies) from Darul Nadwat-UI-Ulama, Lucknow, India; in the meanwhile, he also earned BA and LL.B from Lucknow University. He furthered his studies in philosophy and obtained an MA and PhD from Assumption University, Bangkok. His research and teaching interests are in Moral Philosophy, Bioethics, Religion, and Islamic Studies. Dr. Malik has mostly published journal articles on bioethics and Islamic thought. His authored books include

Issues in Bioethics: An Islamic Perspective, Critique of James Rachels's Defense of Euthanasia, Philosophical Critique of Artificial Intelligence and Critical Thinking and Islam.

Dr. Santhosh Mohanan

MA & Ph.D. of Psychology; MA Dramatherapy

Present Position: Lecturer, Graduate Programs of Psychology, Assumption University of Thailand

Santhosh Mohanan studied Psychology and he has been practicing and lecturing psychology for more than a decade in various countries. Later, he studied Dramatherapy, a unique mode of psychotherapy, and graduated from the University of Derby, UK. He practiced Dramatherapy in England before joining Assumption University. Now he is a Full-Time Instructor, Graduate Programs in Counseling Psychology, Graduate School of Human Sciences, Assumption University of Thailand. His research interests include attachment, motivation and stress. He is the country co-coordinator of the Asia-Pacific School Psychology Association.

Time Distribution of Session 1 and 2

Every Presentation: 20 minutes

Open Floor for Discussion: 30 minutes

Time Distribution of Session 3

Introduction and Presentation: 20 minutes

Open Floor for Discussion: 40 minutes

Abstracts and Texts

Keynote Address:

Prof. Dr. Nikolaj Jang Lee Linding Pedersen

(Professor of Philosophy at Underwood International College, Yonsei University, South Korea)

Topic: “Enquiry in the Age of Constant Connectivity: Twitter, Deepfakes, Google”

Enquiry in the Age of Constant Connectivity: Twitter, Deepfakes, Google

Prof. Dr. Nikolaj Jang Lee Linding Pedersen

*Veritas Research Center
Underwood International College
Yonsei University*

1. Constant connectivity

Constant connectivity has had a fundamental impact on how people organize and approach their cognitive, practical, and social lives.

Cognitive tasks that, in the past, required consulting several physically distinct entities can now be conveniently executed by a few touches on a single device. We no longer need to flip through the pages of our calendar to figure out when we have our next dental appointment. We no longer need to pull a big encyclopedia volume from the bookshelf to find out what year Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo or how many noble gasses feature in the periodic table. Just get your smartphone.

Practical tasks that, in the past, required making stops at several locations can now be executed in the comfort of one's home. Making bank transactions and purchasing books no longer involves visiting the bank and the bookstore. All that is needed is a smartphone or some other device connected to the Internet.

The emergence of Social Networking Services (SNS) has radically changed how we socialize. People connect via Facebook, WhatsApp, or Twitter. Messages, comments, and likes are exchanged; updates, pictures, and opinions are shared. SNS-driven communication makes it possible to interact with an extensive network of people—people we could not all interact with if we had to rely exclusively on face-to-face interaction or traditional means of communication such as phone calls and letters.

Always being connected has in many ways made our cognitive, practical, and social lives easier or more convenient. This might seem like a good thing. However, being

connected also raises critical issues.

We constantly leave behind trails of information: browsing and search histories, and logs of items viewed or purchased. Data analysis is increasingly used to extract information from our online information trails, and this information is used for a wide variety of purposes. Some of these raise serious concerns about violations of privacy.

We constantly rely on social media, search engines, and other online platforms or services for information. This raises serious concerns about enquiry. The aim of this paper is to understand how constant connectivity gives rise to such concerns.

2. Truth matters

Constant connectivity raises serious concerns about enquiry. In order to appreciate how this happens let us think about truth and the role it plays in enquiry.

Enquiry is goal-directed:

Goal of enquiry: attain truth and avoid error (falsehood).

When we engage in enquiry we seek to realize the goal of enquiry. For instance, if you investigate whether a certain mushroom is edible or poisonous, you want the truth about the matter. On the other hand, you do *not* want your investigation to lead you to a false belief. Your goal is to reach truth and steer clear of error.

Do we care about truth? Yes. Truth matters. To support this claim let us consider two scenarios. The first scenario is drawn from *The Matrix*, the 1999 blockbuster (although, of course, the scenario has philosophical precursors—e.g., in Rene Descartes' *Meditations*):

Scenario 1:

Bob is caught in the Matrix, a computer simulation. Bob is unaware of this fact. People who are caught in the Matrix are kept in vats. Their bodies are fed nutrients and their sensory systems are stimulated in such a way that they are given the impression of leading an ordinary life. Bob believes that he lives with his wife and son, go to work on weekdays, and engage in spare time activities with friends or

his family during the weekend. However, when Bob believes that he is having dinner with his wife and son, his belief is false. His sensory system is being stimulated in such a way that he has an experience as of having dinner with his family. But, in fact, Bob is just in the Matrix. When Bob believes that he is playing a soccer game with his friends, his belief is false. His sensory system is being stimulated in such a way that he has an experience as of playing a soccer game with his friends. But, in fact, Bob is just in the Matrix. And so on.

We feel sorry for Bob. We ourselves would not like to find ourselves in his predicament. He is *massively deceived*. His beliefs about his surrounding environment and his daily life do not accurately reflect reality. He does terribly with respect to attaining truth and avoiding error. Indeed, this is why we feel sorry for him and would not like to find ourselves in his predicament. This strongly suggests that we value the attainment of truth and avoiding error.

Consider now a second scenario:

Scenario 2:

One night while you're out for a walk a van pulls up to the curb. Three masked men jump out of the van, grab a hold of you, and force you into the van. You've been kidnapped! You're taken to an empty warehouse and presented with two small bottles with labels that read "Bottle 1" and "Bottle 2". The bottles look completely identical and so, too, do the liquids inside them. You're told that one bottle contains plain water, but that the other contains a poison that will kill you immediately. You're instructed to pick one of the bottles and drink its contents. If you refuse to do so, your kidnappers will pick the bottle with the poison and force you to drink it.

They further instruct you that, if you pick the bottle with the water and nothing happens, they'll set you free. However, if you pick the bottle with the poison, you will ... well, die!

Which bottle will you choose: Bottle 1 or Bottle 2? You don't know what to do! This is a matter of life and death but you have absolutely no idea which bottle contains the water ...

Right before you're about to make your choice, an all-powerful genie reveals itself to you and says, "I'll offer you my help. I'll give you a belief about which of the bottles contains the water. The belief will just suddenly appear in your mind—you'll have no recollection of me giving you this offer. Now, you can choose between getting a true belief and a false one. Which will you choose?"

The answer seems to be clear: you will choose to get a true belief about which bottle contains the water. This will enable you to pick the bottle with water and stay alive. On the other hand, you want to steer clear of falsity because this will lead to death. In general, we value truth because acting on true belief tends to correlate with practical success. And we want to steer clear of falsity because this tends to correlate with practical failure.

Truth matters. We want to attain truth and avoid error.

3. Constant connectivity and the problem of false content

It is tempting to think that constant connectivity greatly enhances conditions for enquiry. How could it not? With constant connectivity we have swaths of information right at our fingertips at any given time. Want to know the names of all capitals? Just google it. Want to know the valuation of Christian Eriksen throughout his career as a professional soccer player? Go to transfermarkt.com. Want to know what the Law of Large Numbers is? Check out Wikipedia.

Constant connectivity gives us easy and ready access to information about any issue or question we might want to investigate. Surely, constant connectivity greatly promotes enquiry! As alluring as this line of thought may be, it should be resisted. Constant connectivity *by itself* does not greatly enhance conditions for enquiry. Indeed, it may do quite the opposite. How so? By giving rise to *the problem of false content*.

Granted, constant connectivity gives us ready and easy access to swaths of information when we engage in enquiry. However, although the truth may be out there somewhere—somewhere in the sea of information—we still have to find it. And that's exactly the problem with constant connectivity: while it may facilitate easy and ready access to lots of information, much of that information is not subject to any sort of quality control. Much information available online is of dubious quality. It is

misinformation, i.e. information that is false, inaccurate, or misleading. Given our informational predicament it may not be easy to do well with respect to the goal of enquiry. For, how do we attain truth and avoid error if we sail in a sea of misinformation? Finding truth, even if it's out there, may be an all but a straightforward task when misinformation is widespread. On the other hand, it may be much easier to *fail* to avoid error or falsehood. This is the problem of false content.

Constant connectivity is part of the explanation of our informational predicament—and, hence, part of what underwrites the problem of false content. Rather than support or promote enquiry, constant connectivity may thus be a roadblock. Let us now see how this can happen by having a closer look at Twitter, deepfakes, and Google.

4. Enquiry and social media: Twitter

Many people rely on social media for information, including news. Twitter is a case in hand. An article published in *Science* last year (Vosoughi, Roy & Aral 2018) delivers a cluster of findings that, from the point of view enquiry, are rather alarming. The article's data set is all fact-checked rumours spread on Twitter from 2006 to 2017—a total of approximately 126,000 tweets, fact-checked by six independent organizations.

The sad news is that *falsity spreads farther, faster, and deeper than truth* in all categories (business, politics, entertainment, science):

Falsity spreads farther than truth:

The top 1% of false news spreads to 1,000 – 100,000 people while the top 1% of true news rarely reaches more than 1,000 people.

Falsity spreads faster than truth:

Falsehoods reach 1,500 people six times more rapidly than truths.

Falsity spreads deeper than truth:

Compared to a falsehood it takes a truth 20 times longer to reach a depth of 10 (where depth is measured by the number of tweets by unique users after the initial tweet).

There are several reasons why people might tweet, retweet, or share a tweet. One reason is an interest in disseminating truth. Another reason is the newsworthiness of *sensational* information which may move recipients in different ways (e.g., by triggering an emotional response such as joy, excitement, frustration, or anger). There may be other reasons. However, whatever reasons might explain why people tweet, retweet, or share tweets, the findings summarized above suggest that tweeting behaviour strongly tends *not* to favour truth—indeed, quite the opposite. Falsity spreads farther, faster, and deeper than truth.

The problem of false content is alive and well on Twitter.

5. Enquiry and deepfakes

Deepfakes are computer-generated or digitally manipulated audio, video, or image content that is so well done that it is very difficult to tell that it is fake.

February 14, 2018 was the tragic day of the Parkland shooting. 17 students and staff members were killed and 17 injured by a gunman at Majory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. After the shooting Emma González, a Parkland student, strongly advocated for stricter gun control. She was featured in a video posted by the magazine *Teen Vogue* in which she tore up a shooting range target. However, later a digitally manipulated video and digitally manipulated images surfaced in which the shooting range target had been replaced by the US constitution.



original image

vs.

deepfake

The original video advocated for stricter gun control and sent a message to legislators to change gun laws in order to prevent tragic events like the Parkland shooting from happening. This was an attempt to make a change *from within* the US legal system. The digitally manipulated video and images, on the other hand, are naturally interpreted as a direct attack on *America*. There is obviously a very big difference between the two.

The scary part of this story is the following quartet of facts:

1. the deepfakes are non-consensual misrepresentations,
2. it is almost impossible to tell that the deepfakes are what they are, i.e. something fake or fabricated,
3. how quickly the deepfakes spread (they went viral among right-wing voters),
and
4. the strong reactions they caused.

The above quartet of facts is scary because they explain why deepfakes can cause great damage. Deepfakes can cause at least three kinds of damage:

First, non-consensual deepfakes do damage to whomever is misrepresented purely by being non-consensual misrepresentations. The deepfake of Emma González does damage to Emma González purely by being a non-consensual representation of her doing something she did not do.

Second, further damage—often the damage intended—lies downstream from the fact of non-consensual misrepresentation. Many people take deepfakes to be authentic content. As a result, they embrace reactions and beliefs triggered by them *and* do not hesitate to act on them. Upon acquiring the belief that Emma González tore up the US constitution, a considerable number of people responded by condemning her alleged action—and, in some cases or to some extent, her as a person and her cause (i.e. stricter gun control). This is another sort of damage: manipulation. Deepfakes are misrepresentations that can be used to manipulate people to react, believe, or act in ways that they would not have reacted, believed, or acted if they had not been exposed to deepfakes.

Third, even further damage takes the form of damage control: resources, time, and effort invested in preventing people from being manipulated through exposure to deepfakes. E.g., major news networks dedicated entire segments to debunking the Emma González deepfakes—to get the message out there that she did *not* tear up the US constitution but a shooting range target.¹ This kind of damage control is a form of damage, as people or organizations put resources, time, and energy into containing the bad consequences of deepfakes—resources, time, and energy that could have been invested otherwise, had it not been for the dissemination of deepfakes.

There was a time when the technology and know-how to produce deepfakes was restricted to a select few. That time is long gone. Anyone with ...

- one among a range of readily available apps (such as FakeApp, a free app),
- source materials (content to be manipulated and content to use for the manipulation),
- a reasonably powerful computer, and
- time on their hands

can generate deepfake videos.

The fight against deepfakes has just begun. The 2020 US presidential election is expected to be a major test ground both for deployment of deepfakes and for methods of detection and other countermeasures. It is difficult to predict exactly how things will play out. However, it seems clear that the emergence of deepfakes and their prospective increased prominence online do not bode well for enquiry. Their arrival brings to life a particularly nasty incarnation of the problem of false content: having to navigate an online environment inhabited by misrepresentations whose inauthenticity it is very difficult to detect.

6. Enquiry and search engines: Google

Do you google?

¹ One example is this 9-minute CNN segment: <https://youtu.be/Lh42OQ7zocw> .

Most people do—if not on a daily basis, then at least occasionally. This is hardly surprising. Google is a very powerful tool. It indexes hundreds of billions of web pages and puts them within its users’ reach through its search function. This may seem like a boon for enquiry. However, in order to assess whether this is indeed the case it is relevant to ask how Google ranks research results and whether ranking correlates with reliability or accuracy.

How does Google rank search results? Answer: PageRank.

PageRank is Google’s ranking algorithm. In their classic 1998 paper, Sergey Brin and Larry Page introduced the core ideas behind PageRank as follows:

... a page can have a high PageRank if there are many pages that point to it, or if there are some pages that point to it and have a high PageRank. Intuitively, pages that are well cited from many places around the Web are worth looking at. Also, pages that have perhaps only one citation from something like the Yahoo! Homepage are also generally worth looking at. If a page was not high quality, or was a broken link, it is quite likely that Yahoo’s homepage would not link to it. PageRank handles both these cases and everything in between ...

(Brin & Page 1998: 110)

Two fundamental ideas are introduced in quoted passage:

1. Incoming links increase the PageRank of a page.
2. Incoming links from pages with a high PageRank increase the PageRank of a page.

Brin and Page take linking behaviour to track relevance or interest, i.e. whether the person who placed the link thinks that the linked-to page contains information that is worth looking at.

Does a high PageRank ensure that a given page has a high “TruthRank”, i.e. that is likely to contain true or accurate information? It does not. PageRank tracks relevance or interest. However, there are several kinds of reason why someone might find a page relevant or interesting. One reason is that it contains true or accurate information. Another reason is that the page contains the ramblings of some major celebrity or that

it contains wild or sensational claims. Thus, a high PageRank does not in general indicate that a given page contains accurate or true information.

Why is this important?

It is important because pages with a high PageRank are more likely to appear towards the top in the list of search results, *and* because most people do not go beyond the first page (or the first few pages) of search results due to cognitive limitations (limited time, attention span, etc.). Since PageRank does not generally track quality of information, it may be that the true answer to a given question is tucked away at the bottom of page 11 of the list of search results. In that case it is unlikely to help enquiry because, unless the person who carried out the search is very prolific, the person will never get to the bottom of page 11.

7. Three slogans

In order to summarize some of the key points developed above let me offer three sloganized conclusions:

1ST SLOGAN social media = informational junkyard

2ND SLOGAN appearance ≠ reality

3RD SLOGAN PageRank ≠ TruthRank

The first slogan derives from our discussion of Twitter. The slogan is *not* meant to suggest that social media can never serve as vehicles of truth. The slogan is merely to be taken as a reminder that falsity may have much better conditions of dissemination on social media than truth. This is the sense in which social media may be informational junkyards and should be navigated with care, at least if used as vehicles of enquiry.

The second slogan derives from our discussion of deepfakes. With the emergence and increased prominence of deepfakes appearance cannot generally be taken at face value. Appearance is not generally a reliable guide to reality because our online environment is inhabited by deepfakes whose inauthenticity we are not presently well-equipped to detect.

The third slogan derives from our discussion of Google. PageRank does not generally track accuracy or veracity of information and, so, a high PageRank does not generally indicate that a given page contains accurate or true information.

The three conclusions support the claim made at the outset of the paper: constant connectivity may often be a roadblock to enquiry rather than a facilitator. If you care about enquiry, this may be somewhat disturbing news. The obvious question, then, is: what to do?

For the vast majority of people unplugging is not a live option. Constant connectivity is here to stay. It is an integral part of our daily reality and nothing suggests that this will change anytime soon. Now, given the fact of constant connectivity, what steps can be taken to help safeguard enquiry against the problem of false content?

Steps can be taken at several levels. Governments may pass policies and laws that control or police the online environment. Companies may seek to regulate content on their platforms. These kinds of steps have already been taken.

Both government and company interventions aim at reframing or restructuring the online environment in ways that make it less conducive to the problem of false content. As such, to a considerable extent, they leave individual enquirers in the role of spectators. We have to wait for *others* to improve our online environment so it is more conducive to enquiry. However, this might leave impatient souls wondering what they, as individuals, can do to deal with the problem of false content—*right here* and *right now* as they sail the online sea of misinformation.

Here is a suggestion:

Start the battle against the problem of false content from within. Mobilize your cognitive home: yourself. Each of us has the capacity for critical reason. The best way to combat the problem of false content as individuals is to exercise that capacity.

Be critical.

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Session 1:

Perspectives of the Phenomena of Media

The Language of the Birds, And the Flow and Fate of Ideas through Cyberspace

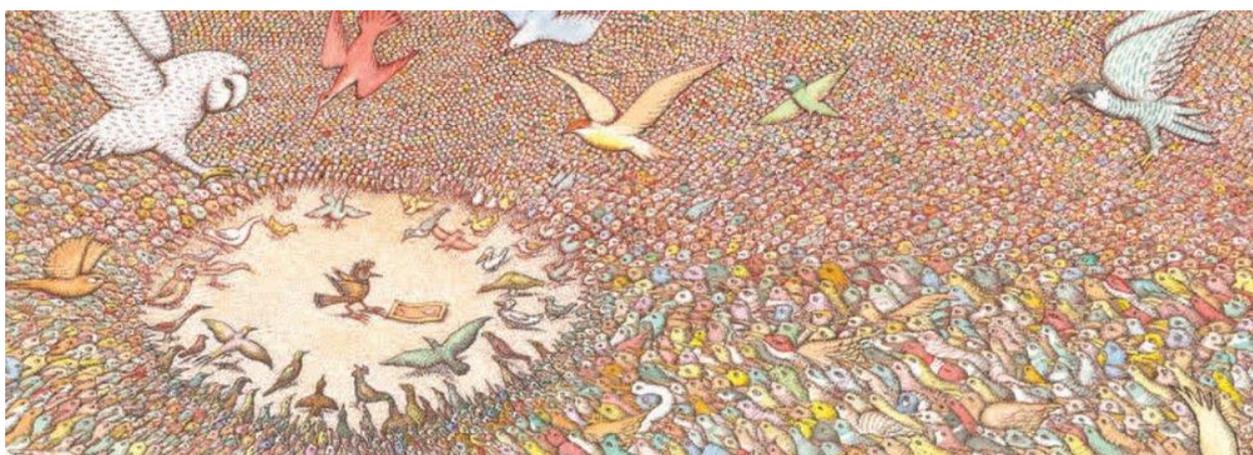
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(conference draft)

Abstract

We scholars are very serious about the importance of ideas. How can we consider the integrity of our ideas as they travel through cyberspace and our technologies of information? As they are claimed as intellectual property, as they are generated for the furtherance of institutions, as they are manipulated by the media. Can we trust them to have the effects that we will? Or to travel to their intended destinations? This presentation will explore how our ideas fly through cyberspace, how they related to communities, and whether they have any place to perch.



Introduction

Dr. Shang-wen invited me to present a paper in this conference he had been organizing. To speak at a conference has always been important for me. Not to accumulated points for myself or my university – although now this is quite important – but to meet with a community of those who are interested in the same problems.

The sound of my voice and the voice of the other speakers, unites us together as a group. This living group united by the sound of voice, by the flow of ideas, by conflicts and unities, by the fluttering of wings. And also most importantly, by the place of confrontation. This room, this building, this city, in this time of history.

But this conference is on cyberspace. Now we are often connected not through are scholarly associations, our meetings, out friendships with other academics. But anonymously through publications, blogs, social media, and so on.

What is it that I want to say? What should be the topic of my paper? I am as a scholar interested in ideas and the political manipulations and fate of ideas. I am interested in the way ideas confront me within my environment. But how to organize my thoughts? Dr. Shang-wen needs my abstract quickly to create the proposal for the conference. Sitting in my apartment I struggle with writing my abstract. What should the title be, perhaps something

But how can I concentrate with the racket of these noisy crows and kael birds outside my window. Those birds are actually quite amusing, the sounds that they make. Their world seems quite dramatic with family squabbles and fighting factions, casual conversations, moments of exuberance. Or so it seems. What are they really saying? What does it mean to understand their language?

And then I thought: “yes, of course, here is my title and my unifying theme. Thank you birds!”

Of course, in the literature of occult philosophy in the renaissance the language of the birds was a spiritual language. A kind of symbolic language of emblems and images which triggered spiritual experience. More generally it refers to a kind of primordial language of truth, of the human united with the natural and the spiritual which is often beyond the mere rational circulation of ideas.

So Rene Guenon would write:

There is often mention, in diverse traditions, of a mysterious language called “the language of the birds”—a designation that is clearly symbolic, for the very importance that is attributed to the knowledge of this language, as the prerogative of a high initiation, does not allow us to take it literally. We read, for example, in the Qur’ān: “And Solomon was David’s heir. And he said, O mankind! Lo! we have been taught the language of the birds (ullimnā manṭiq aṭ-ṭayr) and have been given abundance of all things” (27:16).²

For Guenon, the language is a kind of rhythmic speech that brings us in touch with the divine. Like prayer.

This brings us back directly and very clearly to what was said above about the “language of the birds,” which we can also call “angelic language,” and of which the image in the human world is rhythmic speech; for the “science of rhythm,” which admits of many applications, is the ultimate basis of all the means that can be brought into action in order to enter into communication with the higher states. That is why an Islamic tradition says that Adam, in the earthly Paradise, spoke in verse, that is, in rhythmic speech; this is related to that “Syrian language” (lughah suryāniyyah) of which we spoke in our previous study on the “science of letters,” and which must be regarded as translating directly the “solar and angelic illumination” as this manifests itself in the center of the human state.³

The language of the birds is a copy of the first language, the pure language which is connected to the truth.

We like to speak of truth as if we know what we are talking about. We know truth is opposed to falsehood, deception. But as Spinoza would say false ideas occur with the same necessity as true ideas. They fly around in the same system. For Spinoza and other philosophers after him like Heidegger, truth is a kind of revealing of a larger and more sacred order of which we are a part.

² Guenon, "Language of the Birds", 32

³ Ibid, 33-34

So this complicates things for us in our present world. There are so many ideas flying through cyberspace, how do we know the true from the false. And it gets worse. Even our true ideas are easily manipulated and used for things counter to their truth.

Can we trust our truths and our memories? Is there a chance that they might get lost?

Hugin and Munin



Odin with his ravens Hugin and Munin

Hugin and Munin fly each day
over the spacious earth.
I fear for Hugin, that he come not back,
yet more anxious am I for Munin.

In Norse mythology we find that the god Odin (sometimes called the Raven God) is accompanied by two ravens. Hugin (mind) and Munin (memory). In the Edda of

Snorri Sturluson explains it as follows:

Two ravens sit on Odin's shoulders, and into his ears they tell all the news they see or hear. Their names are Hugin [Thought] and Munin [Mind, Memory]. At sunrise he sends them off to fly throughout the whole world, and they return in time for the first meal. Thus he gathers knowledge about many things that are happening, and so people call him the raven god.⁴

This is explained further.

The Heimskringla passage contains an added feature: their relationship is mutually beneficial. While Huginn and Muninn are one of Óðinn's primary sources of knowledge, he provides them with the ability to speak his language ... and thus is their benefactor.... Huginn and Muninn act as providers of worldly knowledge to a deity who is both associated with kingship and wisdom and endowed with the ability to understand the language of birds.⁵ (34-35)

In the Edda, Siegfried also can understand the language of bird after he tastes the dragons heart.

So the crisis here is a crisis of the reliability of truth of knowledge. Will the ravens thought and memory, after they are sent out, return? But what does this return mean?

⁴ Timothy Borns. *The Language of the Birds in Old Norse Tradition*. 33

⁵ Ibid 34-35

Noah's Birds



Noah's Ark from Anton Koberger's "German Bible"⁶

Noah as the waters of the flood recede, wants to see if it is safe to leave the ark. So first he sends out a raven. Sheila Tuller Keiter explains.

The dove is not the first bird Noah sends out of the ark. Initially, in fact, he sends a raven (Gen. 8:7), which flies out and immediately returns. While this might indicate that the land was not yet sufficiently dry, Noah changes birds when tries again, sending a dove. Why those two birds, and why the switch?... I believe that Noah's reason for sending out the raven was far more chilling. He did not send the raven to make sure that the earth was dry

⁶ Woodcut of Noah's Ark from Anton Koberger's "German Bible"

<https://flickr.com/photos/98144996@N07/25037670616>

enough to leave the ark. Noah feared that the ground was dry but strewn with corpses.



Noah the Dove and the Raven⁷

Tim Widowfield compares the account in the Torah with the earlier accounts of the flood in the Gilgamesh legend.

In Utnapishtim's case, the first two birds return because the flood waters deny them a perch. The last, the raven, does not return because the waters have

⁷ Richard McBee writes: "A later example is found in the mosaics of the entranceway to Saint Mark's Basilica in Venice completed sometime in the 11th century. It is thought that those designs may have been based on another very early illuminated bible, the Cotton Genesis (5th century)."

<https://richardmabee.com/writings/jewish-art-before-1945/item/noah-the-dove-and-the-raven>

receded. In Noah's case, the first bird—the raven—seems not to return, despite the prevalence of the flood waters. The dove returns twice, once empty-billed, the second time with the olive leaf; the third time it stays away. (Brichto 1998, p. 116, emphasis mine)

But Noah knows that the water has receded. He needs to prove that the land is habitable that he can return home.

Then he switches to the dove. Why the switch. Sheila Tuller Keiter explains that the reason is that the dove returns home like a homing pigeon.

When the ark came to rest, it was far from home. Noah could obviously look out of the window and see that the ground around him was dry. But what was the condition of his old home? He knew that if he sent out the dove, it would fly home. If the dove eventually returned, Noah would know that its home was not yet inhabitable. The bird eventually returned, having found "no place to rest" (Gen. 8:9), and Noah tried again seven days later (Gen. 8:10).

This time the dove returned with the iconic olive branch (Gen. 8:11). Traditionally, the olive branch represents peace, an end to the destruction of the Flood. Midrashically, the olive branch is a source of food, and a symbol of the dove's (and every creature's) yearning for independence (see Rashi, Gen. 8:11). However, if we keep in mind the nature of birds, it becomes obvious that the dove tried to start building a nest with the olive branch. Doves are nesting birds. Since this dove was again unable to return to its original place, it decided to make its nest on the ark, its home for several months past. The dove wishes to build a nest and if it cannot do so at home, any available place will do.

When Noah sends the dove out a third time and it fails to return (Gen. 8:12), he knows that it is safe to leave the ark and go back home.

The dove does not return to the temporary home but now to its real home.

J. Davies suggests that the story of Noah suggests a "complicity between the organic and the telluric." And suggests that "The Flood myth might provide a starting point

for an environmental politics that goes beyond a ‘green’ concern for the biosphere to a concern with the Earth system itself.”⁸

We have two stories of Odin and Noah dealing with the sending out and returning. These two stories are connected in the Heliand version of the New Testament. Where Christ with a dove on his shoulder takes over from Odin. In the book *The Saxon Savior*, G. Ronald Murphy writes:

He still leaves the old powers in place but delineates their powers to control the timing of natural events within the overall framework of the Christian religion. And for those who miss the old iconography, he has lowered the traditional position of the Dove above Christ just enough so that it is sitting in a more familiar position on the new God of wisdom’s shoulder.⁹

Where is home? What land? Is it Mithgarth in the Norse mythology? The land after its purification in the case of Noah?

We need to consider if one way of tracking the flow of ideas or truths is whether there is any connection with the earth and with time.

Cybernetics and Cyberspace

The etymology of the word Cyber suggests a kind of steering or navigating. So you can see that when we participate in cyberspace we are already flying, but flying where? What is guiding us. Is our thinking merely reduced to this circulation, or is there any ground upon which to return?

Heidegger begins to suggest that philosophy will become cybernetics.

Maybe history and tradition will fit smoothly into the information retrieval systems that will serve as resource for the inevitable planning needs of a

⁸ C.f. J. Davies, *Noah’s Dove: The Anthropocene, the Earth System and Genesis*

⁹ G. Ronald Murphy, S.J., *The Saxon Savior: The Germanic Transformation of the Gospel in the Ninth-Century Heliand*. 120

cybernetically organized mankind. The question is whether thinking too, will end in the business of information processing.¹⁰

This tendency was anticipated by Heidegger. He believed that cybernetics will eventually supplant philosophy. In his book *The End of Philosophy*, he writes:

Cybernetics transforms language into an exchange of news. The arts become regulated-regulating instruments of information. The development of philosophy into independent sciences that, however, interdependently communicate among themselves ever more markedly, is the legitimate completion of philosophy. Philosophy is ending in the present age. It has found its place in the scientific attitude of socially active humanity. But the fundamental characteristic of this scientific attitude is its cybernetic, that is, technological character.¹¹

Philosophy for Heidegger, which should try to create a consciousness of our place in nature – or Being – is replaced by the mere circulation of information, which extinguishes this consciousness of place.

Cybernetics from its earliest stages referred to self-regulating systems and feedback mechanisms. As cybernetics developed into a science it had a broad range of applications. For instance, Von Neumann uses it to explain everything from the replication in cells, the circulation of memes and computer viruses. And von Neumann is one of the pioneers of systems theory. And we can see today in our interaction with information and cyberspace and even in education, everything is being in-formed by these systematic mechanisms.

One famous writer concerning systems theory and cybernetics is Gregory Bateson. In his famous lectures collected in his book, *Steps to an Ecology of the Mind*, he describes the interconnectedness of human beings with their environment. He proposes a cybernetics of thought where our computer systems are harmonized with ecology.

¹⁰ Martin Heidegger. Preface to *Wegmarken*, 56

¹¹ Martin Heidegger, “The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking,” 434

Bateson recognized dangers in that when we program our computers, we also introduce our own biases and allow these biases to control us. Also we tend to isolate our cybernetic systems from life and nature itself.

Bateson tries to correct what he considers the dangers of our cybernetic system based on our distorted epistemology. To do this he considers that thought is not isolated in the individual or in the computer but as a part of a larger interconnection with our environment.

Now, let us consider for a moment the question of whether a computer thinks. I would state that it does not. What “thinks” and engages in “trial and error” is the man plus the computer plus the environment. And the lines between man, computer, and environment are purely artificial, fictitious lines. They are lines across the pathways along which information or difference is transmitted. They are not boundaries of the thinking system. What thinks is the total system which engages in trial and error, which is man plus environment.¹²

But we might insist that in the present day, our environment is generated by our computer systems themselves. Nature is encoded into the system as a “resource,” as something that facilitates the system and its circulations of wealth.

¹² Gregory Bateson, *Steps To an Ecology of the Mind*, 488

But Bateson is talking about nature. Now we are talking about ideas. And how ideas have wings. John Keat's in his famous poem "Ode to a Nightingale" reflects on nature and poetry after his death. He begins:

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
 My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
 One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
 But being too happy in thine happiness,—
 That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees
 In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
 Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

The song of the Nightingale continues as he lies beneath the ground. And the he says:

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
 Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,

In the last stanza he announces.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
 No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
 In ancient days by emperor and clown:

And perhaps our ideas live on in winged form. But they have the ability to harmonize with time and nature, even as we pass out of existence. Even as the sky is shared with those whose song is out of tune. There is still the sacred language of birds, beyond the merely temporal language. It is this which will expose the emperors and the clowns.

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What is Wrong with Fake News?

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Introduction

This paper discusses the topic of fake news from a virtue-theoretic perspective and argues that adopting this perspective i) ought to make one wary of connecting - as do several extant conceptual analyses of fake news - the topic of fake news closely to authorial intentions and attitudes and ii) tends to shift the focus of the discussion away from *individual matters* (pertaining, e.g., to the mental states of individuals or to the semantic and epistemic properties of individual beliefs) and towards to *social* aspects of the phenomenon.

Fake news and “fake news”

In relation to the media, and especially online media, talk of fake news has in recent years become very widespread. Two distinct phenomena deserve mention in this context. There is, on the one hand, the apparent spread of *fake news itself* - to a first approximation, an increase in the propagation and consumption of false or misleading claims in the guise of news. It is not that fake news is a wholly new phenomenon (think of fake news disseminated in Britain and America prior to the build-up to the 2003 invasion of Iraq). But fake news is so easily produced and spread in the age of social media that it is on the rise.

On the other hand is the spread of *allegations* of fake news: utterances of the form “X is fake news!” have become exceedingly common in English-speaking societies, especially online and especially in relation to politics. To take a recent illustration, Anthony DiMaggio, in a recent article for the website *Counterpunch*, claims that “[i]n the first 10 days following Nancy Pelosi’s announced impeachment inquiry of Donald

Trump, “fake news” was referenced in relation to “Trump” and “impeachment” in nearly 1,200 newsprint articles in English-language media” (DiMaggio 2019).

These two phenomena - the spread of fake news and the spread of allegations of fake news - are logically distinct but that we are witnessing both phenomena is perhaps not a coincidence and an understanding of both is surely desirable.

A small philosophical literature has recently emerged scrutinising the topic of fake news. I will begin by distinguishing two philosophical questions about the topic. The first I will label the *analytic question*:

Analytic Question: How should we understand the meaning of the term “fake news”?

To answer the analytic question, several attempts have been made to develop informative philosophical analyses of the concept of fake news (see Gelfert 2018; Jaster and Lanius 2018; Mukerji 2018).

It is tempting to include in the analysis reference to authorial intention and attitudes - that is, the intentions and attitudes had by the authors of a given item of fake news, which gave rise to the production of that item. Gelfert, for instance, analyses fake news as “the deliberate presentation of (typically) false or misleading claims as news, where the claims are misleading by design” (Gelfert 2018, p. 110). Mukerji (2018, p. 929) defends the view that fake news should be understood in terms of the concept of Frankfurtian bullshit - which involves an attitude of indifference to the truth¹³ - as do Jaster and Lanius (2018).

These analyses are in various ways different. But they have in common the idea that authorial intentions and attitudes play a central role in defining the concept of fake news. And this is not surprising. According to a January 2018 Knight Foundation survey,¹⁴ 48 percent of Americans think that fake news involves journalists “knowingly portraying false information as if it were true”. So it seems clear that many ordinary users of the term associate fake news with the attitudes and intentions of its creators.

¹³ See Frankfurt 1986.

¹⁴ <https://knightfoundation.org/reports/american-views-trust-media-and-democracy>

I will not offer a positive answer to the analytic question here (although I will have something negative to say about it). My focus is on a distinct question - the question posed in the title - which I will call the *normative question*:

Normative Question: What is wrong with fake news?

In posing the normative question, I assume that we have a sufficiently robust grasp of the meaning of the term “fake news” that the question is intelligible. In particular, I assume that the discussion can proceed without an informative philosophical analysis of the term.¹⁵

I raise the normative question expecting that *something* is wrong with fake news. This expectation is encouraged by the fact that contemporary use of the term has pejorative force. Although it seems uncontroversial that the term is a pejorative, it is sensible to also keep in mind another obvious fact about it: that ordinary users of the term disagree wildly about its extension and the disagreement often corresponds to political differences and differing attitudes adopted towards the mainstream press. On the one hand, the accusation of fake news is used - notably by Trump and his supporters but also by those on the left of the political spectrum - to express scepticism about the veracity of mainstream media reports. And it is used by others to defend the mainstream media, to express scepticism about various online reports - including absurd reports (e.g. those defending the ‘Pizzagate’ conspiracy theory) as well as more responsible reporting that deviates radically from narratives that are considered mainstream.

This politicised nature of the term makes answering the normative question pressing. The distinction between fake and traditional news would be invidious, and purely rhetorical, if the same wrong-making features show up on both sides of the distinction. In that case, we would seem to have only two defensible options. We could jettison the term, in light of its semantic or pragmatic failings,¹⁶ or we could reconstrue it explicitly in terms of the bad-making features that it is supposed to track and that warrant its use as a pejorative. Doing so would put us in a better position to use it uniformly.

¹⁵ For scepticism about the intelligibility of the term, see Habgoode-Coote 2019.

¹⁶ As suggested by Habgood-Coote 2019.

The Virtue-Theoretic Perspective

I am approaching fake news from the perspective of virtue theory. Virtue theory emphasises the centrality and explanatory value of the virtue and vice concepts: the quite large collection of *thick* concepts that we use to describe and evaluate a person's character, concepts such as honesty, integrity, generosity, and compassion. Because it emphasises such concepts, virtue theory is said to take an *agent-centric* rather than an *act-centric* perspective. From this perspective, what is distinctively wrong with fake news is not necessarily that it was produced with an intention to deceive but rather its *viciousness*.

Familiarly, vices can show up in all kinds of ways. They are not reliably connected to attitudes or intentions. Just as some evil-doers might think, in their viciousness, they are doing good, some authors of fake news might, in their viciousness, think they are revealing important truths about the world. From the virtue-theoretic perspective, a piece of fake news might be produced with the best of intentions: what primarily makes fake news bad is not its semantic properties (falsehood, misleadingness...), or its epistemic properties (unwarrantedness), nor necessarily that it was produced with an intention to deceive - although these might be bad-making features. Rather, from the virtue-theoretic perspective, what is primarily wrong with fake news is that it is a performance of vice.

An obvious question arises: Which vices are characteristically manifested by fake news? Plausibly, a range of vices could be involved and I will not try to provide a general and informative account of which vices are relevant for the topic. It is important to stress, once again, that my aim here is not to provide a reductive analysis of the concept of fake news: I am not primarily concerned here with the concept of fake news but with fake news itself and with its normativity. For this reason, it is dialectically appropriate to just use the concept of fake news to pick out the relevant vices (we might label them the *Fake-News-vices*, to make the non-reductive nature of the project obvious).

But even without anything like a reductive characterisation of the fake-news-vices, we might be able to say something informative about them, for it is common to distinguish epistemic virtues and vices from moral ones, and both seem relevant to the topic of fake news. Epistemic virtues are character traits that are conducive to epistemic well-being, and include -

- Physiological traits, such as good eyesight and hearing
- Intellectual courage (e.g. not simply ‘following the crowd’ in forming beliefs; or think of the courage needed by the whistleblower who exposes crimes committed by those in power)
- Intellectual humility (e.g. not overestimating the warrant of one’s beliefs)
- Open-mindedness
- Mental agility (e.g. the ability and willingness to entertain alternative points of view)
- Charity in interpreting other people’s views

(This list is not, of course, intended to be exhaustive).

Moral virtues include,

- Moral courage
- Honesty
- Compassion
- Generosity

The topic of fake news might be approached as a topic with primarily epistemological importance: fake news is naturally construed as a kind of poor testimony, which skews relevant evidence, presents it in a misleading manner, or ignores it altogether. But we should not ignore moral dimensions of the topic and I think it is clear that fake news often exhibits vices both types of vice.¹⁷

Epistemic and moral failings are often hard to disentangle. Epistemic vices can often reflect or reinforce moral vices and vice versa. For instance, racist prejudices can skew epistemic standards in certain ways - a racist might tend to be unusually incredulous and demand higher standards of evidence when told that a black acquaintance is a mathematics professor. Witness too the epistemic contortions that such a person might go through to preserve their evaluative judgements of people from different races. They might *claim* that their prejudices are derived from some prior (pseudo-) scientific theory of race but the reality could easily be that the absurdities of these theories are ignored in order to preserve their evaluative standpoint (a racist one, that is). The

¹⁷ On connections between moral and epistemic virtues, see Zagzebski 1997

descriptive/evaluative distinction is hard to draw in cases like these, because one's beliefs and evaluations bleed into one another.¹⁸ This illustrates the fact that virtues and the vices are *transformative*, in that they can alter how a person encounters the world, in all kinds of ways.

This is why I say 'virtue theory' rather than 'virtue epistemology'. It seems that fake news has important moral dimensions and these moral issues are not easily separable from epistemic ones. It often seems that the authors of fake news are, by producing fake news, manifesting vices both epistemic and moral and it seems plausible that our philosophical account of fake news should neglect neither the epistemic nor moral dimension of the topic.

Consider the fake news according to which Barack Obama was born in Kenya and therefore ineligible to serve as President of the United States. Somebody producing or taking seriously this theory might plausibly, by so doing, manifests a variety of vices at the same time: perhaps the vices uncharity, unkindness, and intellectual timidity - the failure to adequately subject one's own beliefs to careful scrutiny and the failure to seriously entertain rival beliefs. All of this is consistent with their sincerity.

It might be replied that the situation is simpler than that: somebody who writes an article defending the Kenyan-birth conspiracy might simply be manifesting dishonesty (although why *must* that be the only relevant vice?). Obvious ways to manifest dishonesty include lying, distorting the truth, or deliberately overstating one's case. If dishonesty were the only vice that fake news manifested, some systematic connection to authorial intention to deceive in such ways might be plausible.

But even if we focus solely on the vice of dishonesty, the situation is not so simple. Deliberately lying, distorting, or overstating one's case, are not the only ways to manifest dishonesty. As virtue ethicists emphasise, vices and virtues are deeply-rooted character traits, which show up across a person's 'psychological landscape' - in their emotional responses, actions, habits, beliefs, desires, etc. A momentary hesitation returning the dropped purse might reveal dishonesty, just as a suppressed snigger at the sight somebody slipping on ice could manifest cruelty; incredulity that somebody of colour could win a Nobel prize manifests racism, just as explicitly-held racist beliefs can.

¹⁸ For discussion of cases such as this, see Hursthouse 1999, ch. 11.

Dishonesty is also a deeply rooted character traits that can manifest in a variety of ways. Certainly, somebody writing or promoting fake news could be deliberately deceiving his audience; and this would manifest his unscrupulousness. But why should we rule out that somebody produces fake news thinking, in his heart of hearts, that it is true? And might the very fact that he takes some absurd or offensive theory as true be a *sine qua non* of his dishonesty?

A comparison might be useful here. The sadist can show cruelty by deliberately causing another pain, with the acknowledged aim to cause their victim harm. But one can also show cruelty by thinking that one is hurting someone for their own good. The cruelty of the inquisitor is not necessarily lessened by the thought that he is doing his victim a kindness - the self-indulgent thought that his torture is, in the end, an act of soul-saving kindness. It seems that such second-order thoughts about one's own motives might be sincerely held and can issue from cruelty just as much as an acknowledged intention to hurt a person. Such thoughts might function, in vicious people, as crutches, insulating them from their own vices. It seems, then, that if we think of fake news as a product of vice, then one is unlikely to closely tie fake news to authorial intentions, such as the intention to deceive. This is because vices do not correspond, in easily predictable ways, to explicitly held intentions and attitudes.

But fake news is not only a product of vice; it also creates more more vice.¹⁹ Fake news can harm the characters of the people who consume, by creating a hostile epistemic environment, just as a poor upbringing - say, an upbringing in a violent cult - can harm a person's moral character. There is a certain kind of violence done to a person's character when they are surrounded by phoney testimony. We will explore some relevant issues in the next section.

Moral and epistemic dilemmas

It is widely acknowledge by virtue ethicists that the virtues and vices are closely tied to the emotions (this is especially emphasised by philosophers working in the ethical tradition inspired by Aristotle). Courage, for instance, is said to crucially involve the ability to feel fear to an appropriate amount and towards appropriate objects. It is

¹⁹ Gelfert (2018, pp. 111-112) usefully catalogues some of the mechanisms by which it can be so productive, for instance, the mechanisms of confirmation bias.

plausible that interesting connections obtain between the *epistemic* virtues and the emotions.²⁰ Such emotions might include the joy of discover, fear that one's hypothesis is under threat, doubt, and angst.

An agent faces a moral dilemma when he has moral reason - perhaps strong moral reason - to perform action A and moral reason to perform action B, but where performing both A and B is impossible. A classic example is due to Sartre (1957), who describes a student who, during the Second World War, felt a strong reason to join the Resistance to avenge the death, at the hands of the German occupying forces, of his brother, and a strong reason to stay at home with his mother - to take care of her and protect her from the sorrow of losing another son.

It is familiar from the ethics literature that moral dilemmas have a distinctive emotional profile. A virtuous person will often emerge from a moral dilemma with feelings of remorse - remorse that, in choosing action A over action B, she failed to do something that she had a strong reason to do (even if, in her judgement, choosing A over B was the *correct* resolution of the dilemma). In Sartre's example, the student will likely feel remorse whatever he chooses to do, and this feeling seems both appropriate and consistent with virtue. (We would probably be suspicious of the sincerity of someone who professes strong feelings of duty to avenge their brother while feeling no remorse whatever when they finally decide to stay at home taking care of mother). And moral dilemmas can be damaging to the virtuous. An ideally virtuous person could be damaged, perhaps irreversibly, by being confronted with a really tragic dilemma.²¹

We face epistemic dilemmas as well as moral ones. These are cases where we seem to have good reasons to believe both A and B, but where A and B seem to be inconsistent. A natural thought is that, by presenting falsehoods as things to be believed, the author and the propagator of fake news presents people with unnecessary epistemic dilemmas - choice-points about what to believe that simply should not be confronted. (This may be so, of course, whether or not the author of a piece of fake news knows that they are presenting to the world falsehoods or absurdities).

Fake news is not always easy to see and time and resources for distinguishing fake from real news might be limited. As Gelfert (2018, p. 103) stresses, the form that fake news

²⁰ For an overview of the literature on this, see Turri et. al. 2019 sect. 10.4

²¹ See Hursthouse 1999 chapter 3

takes is often convincing - often the appearance of a fake news outlet is carefully designed to mimic outlets that are perceived as more legitimate. Perhaps ideally virtuous epistemic and moral agents would find such dilemmas easy to navigate. But most of us fall short of such ideals and, even when we ‘choose correctly’, some uncertainty might remain. This uncertainty is akin to the ‘moral residue’ of guilt that can survive even the successful navigation of a moral dilemma.²² Of course, being confronted with fake news does not just produce unwarranted uncertainty. It can produce unwarranted feelings of certainty too and a general skewing of one’s epistemic emotions.

Forcing somebody into an unnecessary moral dilemma can do them a serious harm. By being overly flirtatious with a married colleague, you test their character and you might cause them psychological disturbance, even if their resolve and their honesty remains intact. It is objectionable to tempt somebody to infidelity *just for fun*, or for *personal gain*, or *out of self pity*, or in other ways that are characteristically vicious.

From the present perspective, producers of fake news can be responsible for an analogous harm. If one creates an item of fake news just for fun, or to deceive someone, one pollutes their epistemic landscape for vicious reasons. And if we genuinely believe it to be true, we might still be polluting the epistemic landscape out of vice. We can compare the person who creates fake news and also believes it himself to another character: a flippant, self-indulgent man who persuades a married colleague (and even himself) that he loves her, resulting in the breakdown of her marriage, only to reject her three months later. We may suppose that he did not (at the time of convincing her of his love) intend these bad consequence - he might have been sincere. But this only indicates his vice; a virtuous person would not have been so self-indulgent.

3. Conclusion

The virtue-theoretic perspective provides a partial answer to the normative question: fake news is the product of vice, is likely to be productive of further vice, and is likely to damage people’s epistemic characters by presenting them with unnecessary dilemmas.

Let us draw a couple of further conclusions from the above discussion.

²² For discussion of moral residue in the context of virtue ethics, see Hursthouse 1999, pp. 47-53.

1) Our answer to the analytic question should be informed by an answer to the normative question. In particular, our discussion suggests that we should not build into the concept of fake news any substantive claims about authorial attitudes or intentions.

This negative claim does not require us to defend any informative analysis of “fake news”. Rather, it results from the programmatic assumption that I have made, the assumption that the normative question can fruitfully proceed from a virtue-theoretic perspective. I cannot prove here that virtue theory is the best research program for thinking about this topic. However, it is a plausible candidate research program, and our analysis of the concept of fake news should be consistent with it. That is enough to motivate the negative claim just made.

2) Defining “fake news” in terms of the authorial intentions makes it tempting to locate the wrongs of fake news on the side of the author. From a virtue-theoretic perspective this seems to be a mistake, not least because, by focusing on *local* facts about authorial attitudes and intentions, we might miss underling *social* conditions that enable and give rise to fake news. It may be that the authors of fake news are themselves sometimes victims, harmed by a hostile epistemic and moral landscape, one that gives rise to their lack of epistemic and moral virtue.

A person’s character is importantly shaped by their upbringing, friends, and the society in which their character develops.²³ Taking fake news to be a manifestation of vice leads one to think of the origins of these vices. And this should lead virtue theorists to think of the general moral and epistemic landscapes characteristic of modern societies. As such, the virtue-theoretic way of thinking about fake news tends to shift the focus of the discussion so that it covers, not just what is in the heads of authors of fake news, but the social environments in which they are situated.

²³ This is emphasised by both Aristotelian and Confucian virtue ethics.

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The Dark Side of Social Media

Dr. Dinesh Elango

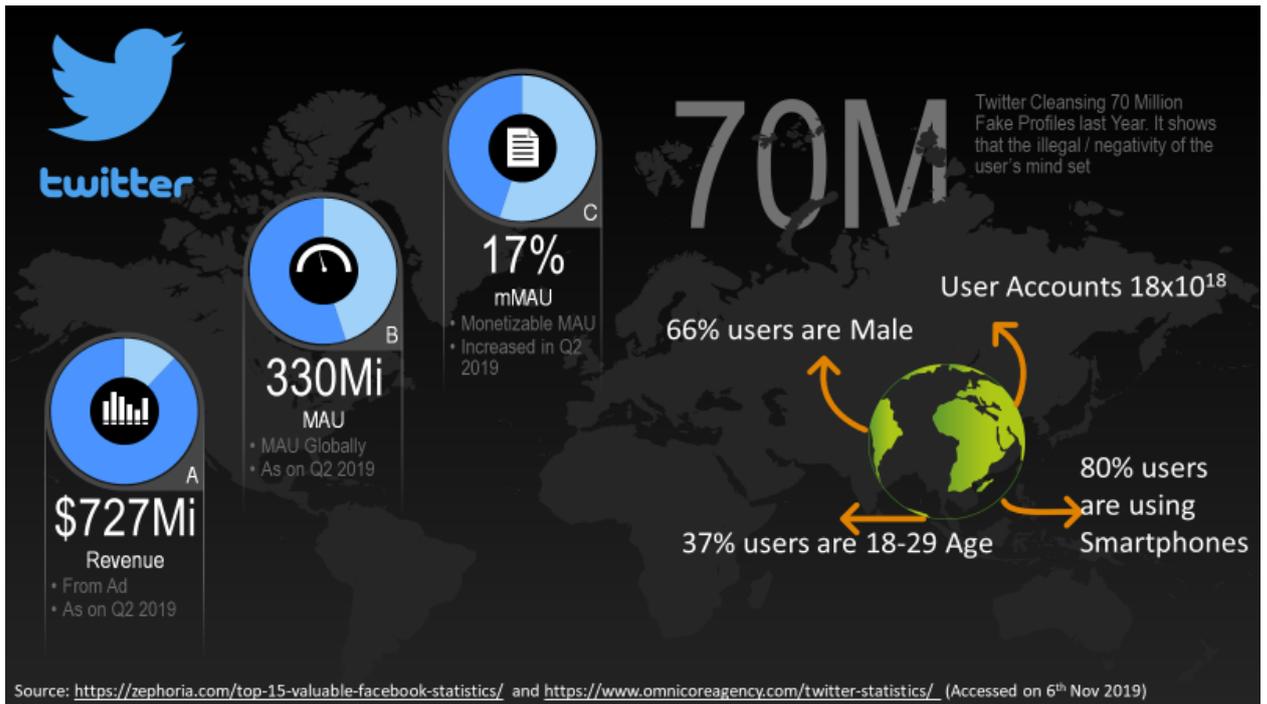
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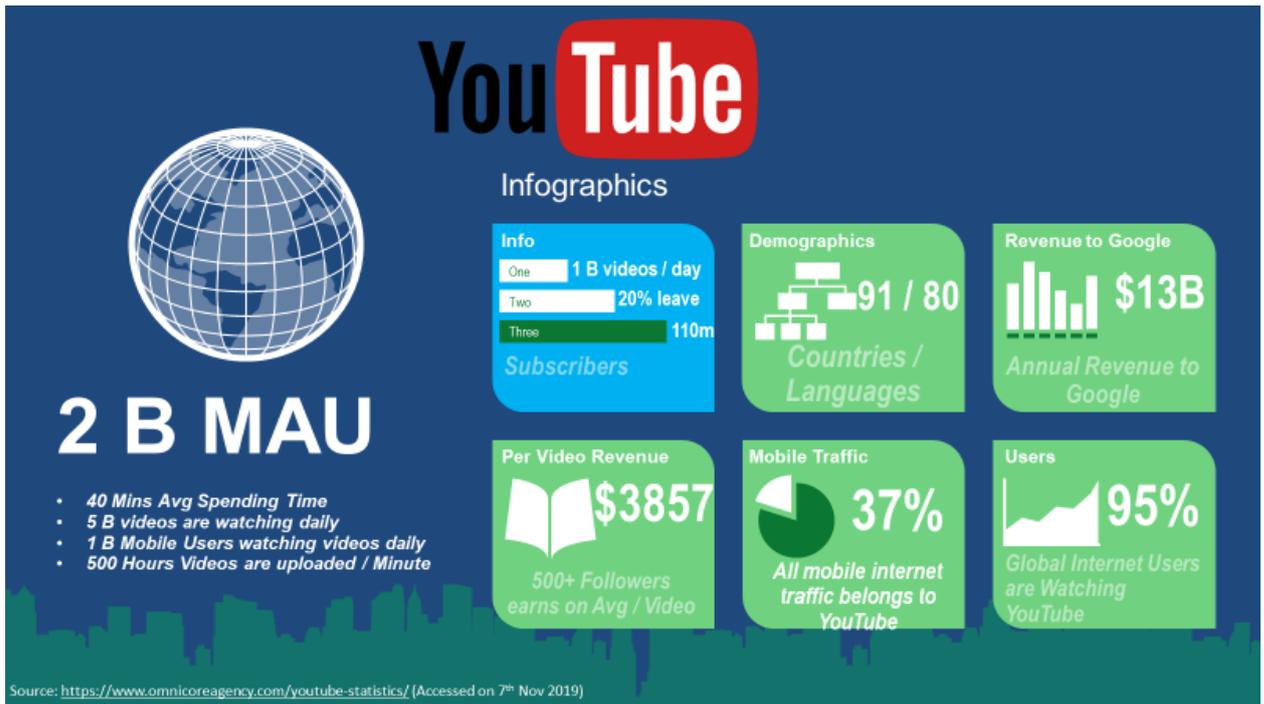
Introduction

Research and practice have mostly focused on the “bright side” of social media, aiming to understand and help in leveraging the manifold opportunities afforded by this technology. However, it is increasingly observable that social media present enormous risks for individuals, communities, firms, and even society as a whole. Examples for this “dark side” of social media include cyberbullying, addictive use, trolling, online witch hunts, fake news, and privacy abuse (Baccarella, 2018).

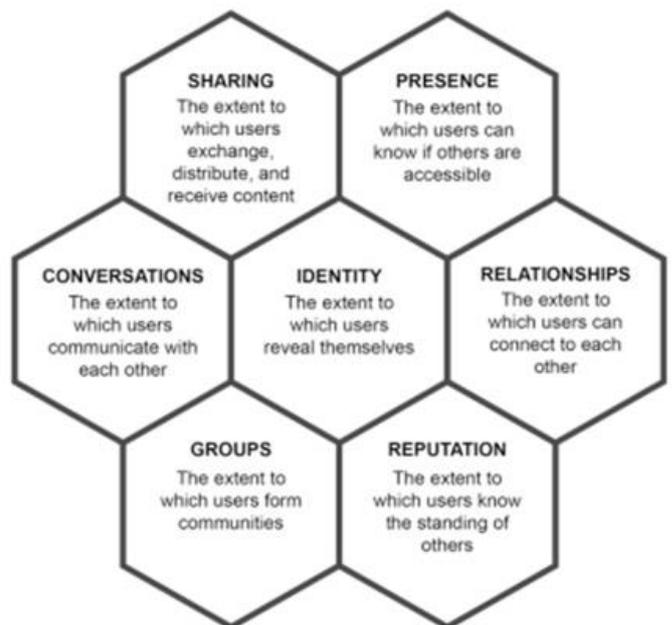
The Bad Social Media

Let’s explore the darker side of social media and exactly how (and why) it’s bad for the people. It will be surprising to learn the negative effects of social media are both physical and mental. It can change the perception of the world and the person, and not always for the better (Zhukova, 2018). The following infographics show how social media is very powerful on the internet.





Bright Side



Source : <https://beedie.sfu.ca/sms/admin/DocLibrary/ic/82d7197664a0ffce171b0b585495808f.pdf> (Accessed on 8th Nov 2019)

Dark Side



Source : <https://beedie.sfu.ca/sms/admin/DocLibrary/ic/82d7197664a0ffce171b0b585495808f.pdf> (Accessed on 8th Nov 2019)

Zhukova (2018), mentioned in the web article about 7 negative sides using social media. The following are the 7 negativities.

1. Depression and Anxiety

Do you spend more than two hours per day on social media? Spending too long on social networking sites could be adversely affecting your mood. In fact, you're more likely to report poor mental health, including symptoms of anxiety and depression.

2. Cyberbullying

Before social media, bullying was something only done face-to-face. However, now, someone can be bullied online anonymously. Today everyone knows what cyberbullying is, and most of us have seen what it can do to a person. And since screens hide our faces, you can end up being a jerk on social media and other websites without realizing it.

While social media made making friends easier, it also made it easier for predators to find victims. The anonymity that social networks provide can be used by the perpetrators to gain people's trust and then terrorize them in front of their peers.

These online attacks often leave deep mental scars and even drive people to suicide in some cases. You'll be surprised to find out that cyberbullying isn't just affecting kids, but also full-grown adults.

3. FOMO (Fear of Missing Out)

Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) is a phenomenon that was born at the same time as Facebook—and it's one of the most common negative effects of social media. FOMO is basically a form of anxiety that you get when you're scared of missing out on a positive experience or emotions that someone else is getting.

This fear is constantly fueled by your social media engagement. The more you use social networks, the more likely you are to see that someone is having more fun than you are right now. And that's exactly what causes FOMO.

4. Unrealistic Expectations

This one probably comes as no surprise, but social media helps you to form unrealistic expectations of life and friendships. The networks that do it most are Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat. Those are the social media platforms that severely lack online authenticity.

One simple way out of this is for everyone to quit lying on social media. But in the era of Instagram celebrities and YouTubers who earn millions, that isn't going to happen anytime soon.

5. Negative Body Image

Speaking of Instagram celebrities, if you look at popular Instagram accounts, you'll find beautiful people wearing expensive clothes on their perfect bodies.

Today, body image is an issue for many people of both sexes. Of course, seeing those perfect in accordance with the social standards people on a daily basis makes you conscious about how different you look from those pictures. And not everyone comes to the right conclusions in this situation.

6. Unhealthy Sleep Patterns

On top of increased rates of anxiety and depression, spending too much time on social media can lead to poor sleep. Numerous studies have shown that increased use of social media has a negative effect on your sleep quality.

If you feel like your sleep patterns have become irregular and that this is affecting your productivity, try and avoid spending a significant amount of time on social media.

7. General Addiction

Social media is often described as being more addictive than cigarettes and alcohol, with the worst social media apps being Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok when it comes to addiction.

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Session 2:

Ethics and Politics of Media

Striking the Balance:

Entertainment and Ethics in Games

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Abstract

Video/computer games are very influential because of the interactivity that makes it entertaining. Because it could be addictive, video/computer games have been accused of promoting violence and becoming more like gambling. There is no proof that links video/computer games to violence. However, there is overwhelming evidence that its addictive nature could lead to players paying significant sums of money to win or gain certain rare items. It is this gameplay that is designed to induce players to pay that have led to concerns in particular when children are involved. This article defines video/computer games, ethics from the perspective of academics, and discussion from the industry point of view. The discussion has led to the conclusion that the government needs to regulate monetization in games. In addition the game industry itself must realize that it is necessary to deal with the negative aspects. This is critical to ensure that the entire industry would not be stigmatized, which might lead to limited growth and eventual decline of the industry. Therefore, it is suggested that the gaming industry develop self-regulation mechanisms to better deal with the ethical concerns.

Background

Due overwhelming popularity, video/computer games have been linked to real-world behaviors that are not always positive. There are researchers such as Anderson et al. (2010), who conducted a meta-analysis, which concluded that violent games increased anti-social behavior. Thus, this violates the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child stipulating that game developers must “protect the child from all of forms physical or mental violence”.

However, there are other researchers who suggest differently. Greitemeyer and Osswald (2010) conducted an experiment and did not find any evidence that video/computer games rated as violent had a negative impact on pro-social behavior as widely believed. Tear and Nielsen (2013) attempted to replicate the study and found the same results. In addition violence is not the only negative aspect of video/computer games. Addiction and monetization are issues that have also raised concerns. Thus, it is the objective of this article to explore the definition of game, academic perspective on video/computer game ethics, and addressing the role of ethics in its development from the perspective of the game developer.

Video/Computer Game Definition and Ethics

Setting the stage for understanding the role of ethics in game development, it is thus important to first define video/computer games. Unlike other media the most important defining characteristic is interactivity (Frome, 2019). Connected to this interactivity is gameplay. Numerous researchers have defined game play as the degree and nature of the interactivity that is dependent on the choices made by the players (Frome, 2019; Juul, 2014; Landay, 2014). As the term gameplay suggests it is a type of play, which means that it is clearly separated from ordinary life (Frome, 2019). Fullerton (2014) explained that to play a game, the player must have a state of mind known as “lusory attitude”, which means that the player agrees to follow the rules of the game to achieve its goals. The achievement of these goals requires a serious frame but in playing games it is taken up in order to enjoy the activity (Apter, 1991). Apter (1993) explained that these frames thus come in pairs. The resulting emotion changes as the person switches between these frames is what makes games fun and engaging.

Kade (2016) explained that ethics in video/computer games is focused on the content and the way games are designed. Usually the argument is based on the responsibility of game developers since games create undesirable effects, thus the principles of virtue ethics can be applied. Heimo et. al. (2018) explained that virtue ethics is ideal for game development because it puts the responsibility squarely on the lap of game developers. The purported negative effects of video/computer games correspond to many of the vices conceptualized by Erasmus such as Hedone (pleasure), Philautia (self-love), Misoponia (laziness), Anopia (thoughtlessness), Tryphe (wantonness), Komos (intemperance), Lethe (oblivion), Kolakia (flattery), and Eegretos Hypnos (dead sleep).

However, in addition to the aspect of violence there is also concern regarding the strategy designed to gain money from players, many of who may be children. For instance Lehdonvirta and Castronova (2014) examined the payment made by “whales” or heavy spenders in games, and the development of “harpoon” strategies designed to persuade them to spend. Thus, the ideal game developer should virtuously develop a game that is enjoyable with no objective to persuade players through psychological traps to pay money (Heimo et. al., 2018).

Therefore, the application of virtue ethics has to be reviewed for application to game developers. Aristotelian virtue ethics explained that telos or purpose of being human is to improve their character (persona). Telos is further defined as including the virtues of bravery, justice, and generosity. Thus, it can be said that to achieve telos, one must avoid vice, achieve virtues, and develop their character (Heimo et. al., 2018). Therefore, the ideal game developer should adhere to these principles. However, Beauchamp and Childress (2001) explained moral values and social values might not be the same. Furthermore, at times they might even conflict. These social values such as business success and fame or recognition might have stronger bearing on game developers. Thus, when they conflict with good morals, they might be stronger in motivating the game developer.

Furthermore, Heimo et. al. (2018) suggested that players need to also participate in the push for more ethical games. For instance if they are not satisfied with games that they deem as not suitable and stop playing, the market mechanism would punish these developers. As a result the game developers would improve because the social values will more closely align with the Aristotelian virtue ethics.

Industry Perspective

Now that the perspective of academics have been addressed, the following section would discuss the point of view of game developers based on the work of Upton (2017) and experience of Thai industry practitioners.

Video/computer games are designed to make the most advantage of interactivity to create a fun and compelling game. Thus, there are three issues addressed in this section - violence, addiction, and monetization.

As stated in the previous section, the negative effects of violence in video/computer games cannot be established. According to Upton (2017) it is a misunderstanding to state that violence is the fun part of the game. It is an entire engagement curve that passes through the stages of expectation, anticipation, eventually leading up to the climax. Violence is simply a means to an end. The gameplay is designed to draw the lines between reality and fantasy as suggested by Frome (2019). Constraints in the game are created to use violence in a playful way removing consequences. This is the reason most of the enemies are monsters. It must be understood that pleasure is not derived from the violence but rather from the role assumed such as being a sniper or swordsman (Upton, 2017).

The next issues of addiction and monetization are related. It is true that psychological concepts are applied in game development. To alleviate this problem, Japan, a major market has come up with legal measures to control games in particular Gacha games. These games use the gacha mechanic in order to induce players to spend money. It is the monetization in these games that have raised concerns. In these games there are

those who are whales, big spenders, and minnows, who don't spend that much. Game companies gain a significant amount of their income from the whales. As a result, it would be challenging to have them willingly limit their income. This is why the Japanese government created laws to control these Gacha games requiring them to present players with the rare item after a fixed number of unlocking certain other items or characters. Therefore to deal with these issues, it would be necessary for the government to intervene.

However, the addiction and monetization issue becomes a more pressing problem when children are involved. Most games do have a registration requirement. Thus, they have the capability to trigger certain warnings to children, who spend significant amounts of money. Laws can be passed to require such warnings to be generated. But the best remedy in this case should be parental supervision. In many families children are left to play with games without any supervision. If parents were around and played with the children instead of games being detrimental to family relations, it would be a great support.

From the discussion, it can be surmised that the negative aspects of video/computer games can be alleviated through the contribution of the various stakeholders including the government and even parents. However, it is also equally necessary for the gaming industry to take these problems seriously. Due to the monetization issue, some have questioned whether video/computer games have become a type of gambling. Being associated with gambling is a stigma for the industry. Once it becomes labeled as a "bad thing", the industry might suffer because governments and even society might shun it. Instead of the video/computer game industry spearheading economic development, it might end up becoming a controlled enterprise. Thus, this study recommends that gaming associations need to consider the development of ethical codes of conduct. This would be in line with self-regulation practices in other media such as Thai Broadcast Journalists Association or the Advertising Association of Thailand. While it may seem necessary to have legal requirements to enforce more responsibility on the part of developers, it would be better for industry practitioners to develop measures that balance their values and the moral requirements.

This study simply explores some of the ethical concerns and issues in the video/computer gaming industry. However, future studies may be developed to create guidelines for self-regulation practices in the gaming industry.

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ATTACHMENT STYLES AND PROBLEMATIC SOCIAL MEDIA USE

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Abstract

As of 2018, the average daily social media usage of internet users worldwide amounted to 136 minutes per day, an increase of 66.18% from 2012 (90 min per day) (Statista 2019). Social media is increasingly becoming an integral part of human communication and interaction in this age of globalization. This has changed the way people connecting with each other, easiness of accessing information and freedom of expression. While the advantages of social networking through the internet increases its popularity, its misuse gives rise to negative outcomes in personal, social and professional lives.

Recently, researchers conceptualized problematic social media use as a behavioural addiction like addiction to gambling (Griffiths, 2005). Problematic social media use can be identified by a set of addictive symptoms that include mood modification (i.e., social media being used to change an individual's mood), salience (i.e., social media use being the single most important thing in life), tolerance (i.e., increasing amount of social media use to get the same mood modifying effects), withdrawal symptoms (i.e., physiological and psychological negative outcomes like anxiety and irritability when social media use is restricted), conflict (i.e., social media use damaging interpersonal relationships), and relapse (i.e., returning to addictive social media behaviours after a period of abstinence).

A growing body of research explains attachment styles as an effective explanation of problematic social media use (D'Arienzo, Boursier & Griffiths, 2019). Attachment is considered to be primarily a survival (physically and psychologically)

need in infants and evolutionary in nature (Bowlby, 1969). Attachment theory as known today has been developed by the contributions of various researchers and it identifies different attachment patterns based on the caregiver's response to the infant's needs (Grossmann et al., 2013). Secure attachment style refers to the caregiver's attunement to the child's emotional needs and the child's positive emotions towards the caregiver which is reflected in his/her interactions with the world (Barlow et al., 2014). This type of attachment style is the most desirable one as it promotes adaptive social-emotional development (Wallin, 2007). In contrast, insecure attachment styles are developed in response to the caregiver's inadequate infant-parent interactions. Avoidant babies (with avoidant attachment style) suppress negative emotions and ambivalent babies (with ambivalent attachment style) hyper-activate the negative emotions (Weinfield et al., 2008). Another insecure attachment style called disorganized attachment style, characterized by the baby's attachment dilemma due to the caregiver's contradictory expression of being a secure base and a source of danger, is considered to be the most dysfunctional. While all insecure attachment patterns are linked to later psychological distress, disorganized style has been shown to be a very significant risk factor for psychopathology (Dozier et al., 1999; Schore, 2002; Fonagy et al., 2002). The notion of attachment styles and their impacts is applicable to social interactions in adulthood (Wallin, 2007) too.

Evidence suggests that insecure attachment styles are related to problematic social media use and related dysfunctional behaviours (Worsley, Mansfield & Corcoran, 2018; D'Arienzo, Boursier). This link between insecure attachment and problematic social media use has multiple relevances. For instance, preventive measures to decrease the probability of social media addiction can be focused on promoting secure attachment styles in the early years of an individual's development. Therapeutic interventions to manage problematic social media use can be explained and approached based on the attachment theory perspective. In brief, the link between attachment styles and problematic social media use improves our understanding of the phenomenon of social media use and its impacts.

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Theorizing on Role of Education in Developing Social Networking (SN) Ethics

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Abstract

Social Networking (SN) gives freedom to socialize, report, create, choose, and share user-generated content and news. SN has become subject of researches in social sciences, however the current status of researches involving education and SN is largely one way serving educational interests and there is negligence of the role of education in developing SN ethics. As a result, SN ethics has not yet developed as a discipline or a field of study in its own right and in spite of many moral issues that have emerged from it. There is an unbreakable relation between SN and ethics. The social media aspect of SN, the socializing character of SN, and human centric nature of SN are difficult to be thought of without having an ethical framework. On the other hand, there is a role for ethics-based psychology in SN and it demands an ethical principle of freedom of speech. Due to complexities of SN ethics, it seems that its basis and foundation should be on social ethics; however, the technological nature and specific moral issues emerging from SN deserve to be addressed. And this in turn calls for responsibility of educational institutions to include SN ethics as part of social ethics.

Keywords: Social Networking, Ethics, Education, Sociology

Introduction

Most of the forms of mass media are one way or another controlled, manipulated, goal oriented with stipulated objectives and unspecified agendas under various forms of power and influences, nevertheless social networking (SN) exceptionally remains essentially free of these influences. However, there are concerns about the users as agents and the technical architecture of SN sites. In social networking the users can engage in online socializing, create and maintain interpersonal relationships, report events as news, publish and broadcast their opinions, and disseminate information, news, and reports that may have come to them from their favorite, reliable, and trustworthy sources. This gives freedom to socialize, report, create, choose, and share.

Various aspects of SN have become subjects of research in information technology and a few subject areas of social sciences. Among these research areas is the nature of relationship between education and SN and in this regard most of the literature and researches are written on the themes such as how SN could be used in imparting education and learning. However, a survey of researches and literature review would show that the role of education in SN has been to a greater degree neglected. How education and educational institutions can contribute in forming and shaping learners to be part of SN as responsible human beings with understanding and awareness of the fact that by SN they are not just interacting with technology but with real persons on the other end is in need of consideration of educators and serious attention by educational institutions. The researchers of *Social Networking: Boundaries and Limits Part 1: Ethics* published in *TECH TRENDS* rightly make a thoughtful observation by reporting that “In our search for ethical guidelines for using social networking, we were surprised to find that few such resources exist” (2014, p. 28). Along with having a broad understanding of being humane, being aware of social values, cultural diversities, and human dignity and rights, the education and pedagogy should impart SN ethics as the explicit or implicit component of teaching and learning. Therefore, just like training and disciplining at school level, and professional ethics and various subjects of applied ethics taught at higher educational institutions, there is a need of introducing social networking ethics in the educational institutions as part of curriculum and syllabus. The practical issues, their moral values, related to SN could be attempted by ethics, because our practical choices are deep-rooted in ethics: one of the cardinal philosophical subject under which the development of social, political, and legal philosophy has been hitherto.

In addition to the abovementioned negligence, SN ethics has not yet developed as a discipline or a field of study in its own right. On the other hand, the less maturity of the

users has caused the misuse of SN and has thus given birth to many SN related moral issues. However, the online society of which we have become members and even citizens in many ways demands an ethical space and environment in which normal and healthy participation should take place. And it demands that the participants should be aware about SN ethics and that may create a sense of discipline in them.

Scope of Social Networking Ethics

Social networking is a very observable phenomenon. It is not an abstract idea but a concrete reality that is part of our social life. The subject of social networking does require attention of intellectuals from various domains of knowledge and wisdom including philosophy and social sciences. There is an unbreakable relation between SN and its aspects and functions with ethics. The social media side of SN, the socializing character of SN, and human centric nature of SN cannot be thought of without having an ethical framework.

SN is used as a form of media: the social media. It plays a large role in information reporting, creation, sharing, and communication. This makes social networking distinct and different from other means of traditional media. The information sharing lifts SN above the prejudice that is part of traditional media, which is at times censored, controlled by governments, serving vested interests of various stakeholders from politics to corporate. On the other hand, user-generated content and sharing and posting news and reports that are not covered by traditional media puts traditional media and SN on intersections, it fulfills the gapes left out by traditional media by non-reporting or avoiding reporting certain events for many reasons and gives opportunity to users to fill the left out gapes by their efforts, interests, and creativity. Given this aspect of SN as media, it demands certain ethical framework within which such role of SN could be envisioned.

The socializing aspect of SN provides a special technical mode for both information sharing and communication. This component of socializing is and should be central to SN because SN has replaced to a large extent our social interactions. The aspect of “socializing” demands ethical framework. There is a distinction between computer networking and SN. The main element that makes them different is that in SN the human element is central and around this human element a healthy SN should be built. Therefore, SN is not technology centered but human centered. It is human centric and not technology centric. The human centric reality of SN touches human psychology. There is a role of ethics in human psychology and most of it is in direct relationship with human behavior and attitude. A psychologically healthy person is expected to act,

respond, and decide, as a responsible person in accordance to ethical and right attitude. In this way psychology and ethics go hand in hand in tackling SN ethical issues.

Human Psychology and SN Ethics

The main element of SN is interrelationship between human beings and their interactions and responses. And a human being is not without psychological makeup. Any debate about SN cannot ignore human psychology and this aspect of SN has received to a large extent attention of researchers. In human interaction the psychology plays its role so it has role in SN. The psychology is a shared domain in which participants engage. Results of *Social networking sites: An adjunctive treatment modality for psychological problems. Indian journal of psychological medicine* shows that

Facebook was the most popular sites and used to seek emotional support on the basis of the frequent updates of emotional content that users put in their profile; reconciliations, escape from the problems or to manage the loneliness; getting information about illness and its treatment and interaction with experts and also manifested as problematic use. (Menon, I. S., Sharma, M. K., Chandra, P. S., & Thennarasu, K., p.260).

The SN provides a space for human psychological environment emerging from the human attitude and behavior. And having a sound attitude and right behavior has basis in ethics. Maintaining a healthy psychological environment of SN is not possible without ethics. Even psychologists have to pay attention to it as Lannin, D. G., & Scott, N. A. (2013) report that:

Emerging trends online, and especially in social network sites, may be creating an environment for psychologists where transparency is increasingly unavoidable. Thus, most psychological practitioners may now have to engage in *small world ethics*—ethical acuity that requires an application of ethical principles to the increasingly interconnected and transparent world that is burgeoning from online culture. (Lannin, D. G., & Scott, N. A. (2013), p.135)

A good example of how ethics and psychology are related is vividly present in virtue ethics which is “agent centered” and ‘character based”. The agent centeredness of virtue ethics is aimed at feelings, reasoning, consciousness, mind, behavior, attitude, and ultimately action. It is about human flourishing.

Given the human centric aspect of SN and the importance of human psychology, SN is in need of an ethical principle of freedom of speech.

SN Principle of Freedom of Speech

The relationship between SN and human psychology leads to the ethical responsibility of the users while engaging with SN. It is because SN and psychology are interdependent in the realm of human socializing. The main elements of SN such as communication and generating content is basically connected with the freedom of speech. Freedom of speech by its nature is an ethical issue. The most celebrated principle on freedom of speech is John Stuart Mill's harm principle. A person is free to speak as long as it does not harm anyone. The further enhancement of the principle is Joel Feinbegr's offense principle: offending others is not less than harm. Both these principles are relevant to SN generally. However, the principle which ought to be given preference in communication and generating content should be a healing principle. It is because of the complexity of SN. Human beings in social settings are not just in need of information that is based on no harm or no offense principle, though these principles are relevant; in addition to that, SN needs a healing principle because it is the need of human beings for various reasons. And it is what human beings expect in social interactions and settings. In short, the healing principle is what could be expected from a sympathetic social being who believes and acts in accordance to the Golden Rule that states to treat others as you wish to be treated while interacting with a fellow human being.

The above mentioned brief discourse which started with delineating the scope of the SN ethics showing mainly the human centric nature of SN and further deliberated on the fact that how psychology grounded in ethics crucially becomes important and finally considering an appropriate ethical principle of speech for SN ethics leads to the question: with all these complexities, what should be then the basis and foundation of SN ethical framework.

Basis and Foundation of SN Ethical Framework

What could be the basis and foundation of SN ethical framework? Is there any special ethical information infrastructure on which SN could be based or founded? There is not. Yet there are human ethical social situations which could make a firm foundation for SN ethics. In a theoretical sense an ethical human society is the foundation of SN ethics. The sense of being part of such society while engaging with SN transforms a participant from "technology connectedness" to "human connectedness". Health, improvement, and progress of SN is based on the richness and level of social ethical qualities in a

society. In other words, SN ethics reflects the real life social ethics. This theoretical assumption is backed by social science research as well. For example, the results of the research *Adolescent peer relationships and behavior problems predict young adults' communication on social networking websites* show that “Findings are consistent with developmental theory asserting that youths display cross-situational continuity in their social behaviors and suggest that the conceptualization of continuity may be extended into the online domain.” (Mikami, A. Y., Szewedo, D. E., Allen, J. P., Evans, M. A., & Hare, A. L. (2010), p. 46). Furthermore, in *Building social networks ethics beyond "privacy": a sociological perspective*, the authors conclude that “boundaries between online and offline world are becoming increasingly porous and we argue, although acknowledging certain particular characteristics of SNS, that SNS ethics should be less about the specificities of online behaviors than on their articulation with the social world.” (Coll, S., Glassey, O., & Balley, C. (2011)). They further add that

online and offline activities should be symmetrically analysed... such method would retain as its main object how social norms are translated from one world to the other and how those norms co-evolve notably through well known social processes. (Coll, S., Glassey, O., & Balley, C. (2011)P.50).

Though the basis and foundations of SN ethics could be founded on social ethics, yet SN environment and its ethical nature is in certain ways different from social ethics and this difference demands enhancement of social ethics by incorporating SN ethical dimensions as being part of training and courses.

Difference between SN Environment and offline Social Situations

SN environment has its own special nature which demands more than what social relationships demand and on the other hand SN has given birth to novel moral issues which need to be addressed apart from issues of ordinary social ethics. The way SN is different than ordinary socializing is that “When a computer network connects people or organizations, it is a social network. Just as a computer network is a set of machines connected by a set of cables, a social network is a set of people (or organizations or other social entities) connected by a set of social relationships, such as friendship, coworking or information exchange”. (Marturano, A, 2011) This nature of SN is a combination of both technology and human beings. Therefore, SN is more than being established on real human socializing. Because “technology mediates (or transforms) the meaning of what it carries, and hence that technologies as well as humans have a moral character that can be opened up to scrutiny” (Light, B., & McGrath, K, 2010) Consequently, there are special and unique features of SN which are in need of

consideration, among these features are: anonymous identity, loss of human sensitivity by distance, neglecting plural human psychology, being indifferent to space and time, and not being always able to respond to the questions and comments of the recipients.

On the other hand with the advent of SN, new moral issues have appeared which are not addressed by ordinary social ethics. These moral issues include spamming, data theft, unauthorized access, trolling, cyberbullying, etc.

The above-mentioned technical and moral aspects make SN different from real life ordinary socializing and interactions. In addition to ethics for real life socializing, there is a need for improving social skills of people for their online behavior and it could be inculcated by means of character education.

Conclusion

In the light of the above discourse, it seems that SN cannot do away with ethics and such ethics is part of social life which could be transformed into SN ethics. Furthermore, given the complexities of SN and the emerging various moral issues from it are in need to be addressed adequately. And in doing so, educational institutions should play their role in making it possible. Without analyzing some or many ethical problems in light of various ethical theories which is beyond the scope of this paper, I believe a teaching and learning experience of SN ethics can be fruitful and result oriented.

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Session 3:

General Discussion

Topic: Aspects of the Roles and Impact Media
Plays in Modern Day Living

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**PERSPECTIVES OF MEDIA AND ITS SOCIAL IMPACTS
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**November 14, 2019
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Aspects of the Roles and Impact Media Play in Modern Day Living

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Introducing Myself



Aaron Loh, PhD
ดร.แอรอน โล
罗振邦 博士

Singaporean, born in 1955
Academically trained in the United Kingdom (1976-1982)
MSc (1978) University of Aston in Birmingham, UK
PhD (1982) London Metropolitan University, UK
FLSPT (1982) Fellow of the London School of Polymer Technology, UK
FPRI (1984) Fellow of the Plastics and Rubber Institute, UK
CChem MRSC (1984) Member of the Royal Society of Chemistry, UK

Lectured for 4 years in Singapore before joining the business world.

In 25 over years, worked for 3 MNCs and finally founded his own business
in the manufacturing and global supply of medical devices.

Retired in 2007 from the business world; since been a Senior Faculty
Member and Director of universities collaboration and networking, as
well as an Academic Adviser and instructor for international business
curriculum update to selected universities in China, Myanmar, Vietnam,
Indonesia and Malaysia at the Graduate School of Business, Assumption
University and a visiting professor in Mainz Germany.

Embarked in a 2nd PhD in Philosophy & Religion and trying to enjoy and to
lead a slower-paced life with children and keeping-fit bicycles.

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Presentation Outline

**The Areas of Modern Day Living involves:
the continuous evolution in:**

- a) Business**
- b) Quality of Life**
- c) Geo Politics and Global Economy**
- c) Cultural Behavior Changes**
- d) General Environment Deterioration**
- e) Seemingly Lack of Sustainability**

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**For over 2000 years, evidences were in
abundance in the roles and impact of changes
in each of the following five areas:**

- a) Business**
- b) Quality of Life**
- c) Geo Politics and General Economy**
- d) Changes in cultural behavior**
- e) Environmental deterioration**
- f) Lack of sustainability**

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The Role of Media on Business

**Both Positive and Negative
Marketing leading to awareness
Competition leading to improvement
Globalization leading towards Growth
Reduction of Poverty
Improvement of Quality of Life**

Aaron Loh, PhD
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The Role of Media on Quality of Life and Education

**Assisting the growth of technology
Rapid growth of mobile and social communication
The Development of Smart Cities
Promotion of Teaching and Learning
Leading to awareness of happening around one's life
Teens spending 7.5 hours on 'screens'**

Aaron Loh, PhD
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The Role of Media on GeoPolitics and Global Economy

Both Positive and Negative

**Globalization leading towards Economic Growth
Migration causing problems
Terrorism promoted
The starting of trade wars
The Connectivity by the BRI**

Aaron Loh, PhD
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The Role of Media on Cultural Behavior

Both Positive and Negative

**Leading to the liberalization of thinking
Universality in pop culture
Popularity in tourism
Darken promotion of racial hatred
A positive celebration of diversity**

Aaron Loh, PhD
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The Role of Media on Environmental Deterioration

Both Positive and Negative

**Promoted universally, climate change
Some big businesses condoning environmental impact
Promoted topic of eco-system
Awareness of the shortage of clean water
Highlighted the pollution of plastics packaging**

Aaron Loh, PhD
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The Role of Media on sustainability

**In the big picture,
the sustainability of everything in the mid term,**

**Impacts the survival of human and other living species
Both promoted and highlighted by the media**

**United Nations had taken the lead in its development of the
sustainability goals 2030**

Aaron Loh, PhD
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A Final thought

**Much positive activities can still be promoted through
education via the media**

**Lots more we can do to be involved and contribute our
fullest support on behalf of humanity.**

Aaron Loh ,PhD
ดร.แอรอน โล
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**Thank you
For your thoughts
and comments are most appreciated**

Aaron Loh ,PhD
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罗振邦 博士

Name Lists of Committees



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Order-1-107/2019

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Mr. Lauren Keith Neigenfind	PhDPR
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Ms. Piyachat Jusin
Ms. Supatida Kesorndokmai

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(Assoc. Prof. Dr. Suwattana Eamoraphan)
Dean



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- | | |
|---|----------------------|
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| 2. Dr. Michael Clark | Chair |
| 3. Dr. Kajornpat Tangyin | Member |
| 4. Dr. John T. Giordano | Member |
| 5. Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Malik | Member |
| 6. Asst. Prof. Dr. Shang-Wen Wang | Member and Secretary |

Given on September 16, 2019

(Assoc. Prof. Dr. Suwattana Eamoraphan)

Dean