

Why Social Media Should Not Be Your News Media



News

- For more than two centuries, “news” usually meant newspapers and magazines
- Later, radio and television also became mediums for news



Then came the Internet

- The Internet opened up new avenues for communication
- Many of those avenues were outside of traditional news media
- With so many alternative choices, the status of traditional media is declining
- According to the Pew Research Center (right), social media is the preferred source of news for more people than newspapers are now

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Social media outpaces print newspapers in the U.S. as a news source

BY ELISA SHEARER

Shift from “Old” Media to “New” Media

Professional journalists

- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Television
- Radio

Personal sources (everybody else)

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Websites/blogs
- YouTube

Who is the source?

Professional

- Educated
- Trained
- Experienced
- Supervised
- With a code of ethics

<https://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp>

Personal



Now anyone can be a “news source”



Social media is like a free bulletin board

- Anybody can post anything they want on it
- You can share things with anybody else who is online (possibly millions of people!)
- A lot of this “sharing” includes opinions, speculation, falsehoods, conspiracy theories, propaganda, and other misinformation



Make your own statement

- Memes are popular on social media
- Many are funny
- Others spread falsehoods
- The absurd meme on the right was created free on the internet in about a minute



Photos are easily manipulated



Another online manipulation

Your computer use



Becomes like a funnel

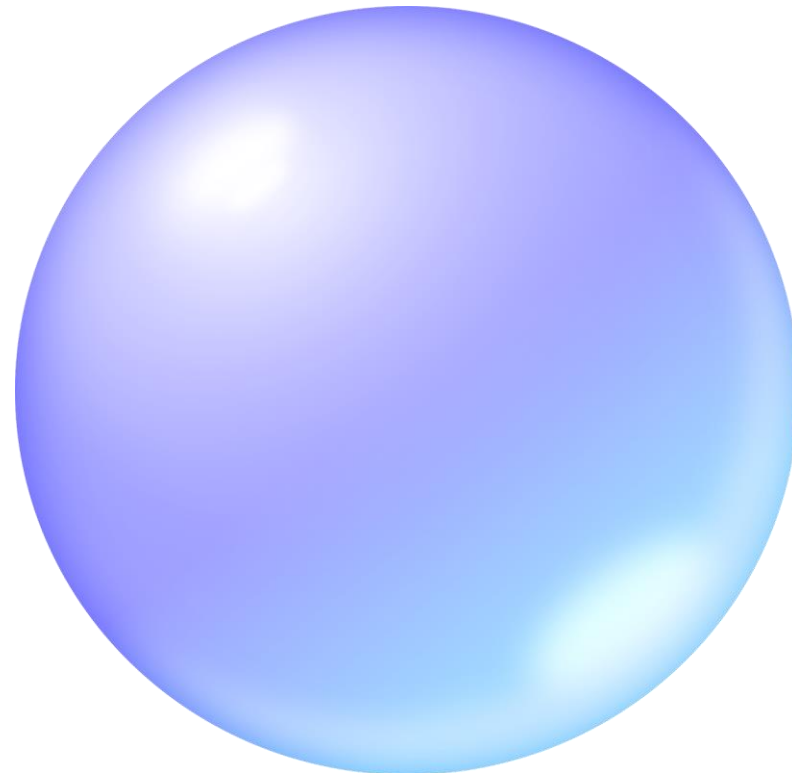


Online algorithms filter what you see

Based on:

- Your location
- Previous searches
- Previous clicks
- Previous purchases
- Overall popularity

This creates filter bubbles



Filter bubbles: good and bad

- **Good:** You get to things you want to see faster
- **Good:** You are not distracted by things that do not interest you
- **Good:** Suggestions point you to related information
- **Bad:** There is a lot you do not see
- **Bad:** You are not exposed to other information or viewpoints
- **Bad:** They create tunnel vision
- **Bad:** You might start to “live” only in your bubble



Your filter bubble can become an echo chamber

- Everybody there shares the same ideas and values
- Everything affirms and reinforces those same ideas and values
- Other information, viewpoints, and opinions are shut out



Don't let this happen to you



Jeff Rand

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