

The Machine Always Wins: what drives our addiction to social media, Richard Seymore

The Machine Always Wins is an article that describes how social media gets our attention and keeps it. Seymore begins by what social media like Twitter gains out of our engagement. By interacting through our machine, we become unpaid users and allow for social media applications to generate data that has been the most profitable raw material. The concept in which Twitter operates is rapid and short so content output is constant and engaging. The addiction to social media is compared to states of addiction to drugs or gambling. A lottery is made so anyone can participate and win, an app also uses this aspect and offers 'intermittent variable rewards'. The unpredictability of positivity and negativity is a variation of feedback. The gambling part of social media is the lack of control after a user makes a post. A user is asking for acceptance and judgment. If the user is not accepted or judged badly, an attribute of addiction that it kills can be the result. Seymore talks about how social media allows for 'democratized punishment' when it becomes a reality of self-harm for the user. I've always been wary of social media (largely been attributed to my age) and appreciate connection through physical presence. This article was very informative and meticulous with its comparison between social media and other types of addiction. I only come away thinking how hard it is for those who are born in a digitally run society and are more prone to give in to addiction.