Max September 9, 2019

**Persuasive Essay- Social Media**

Social media is a tricky subject. It helps people communicate and get a voice in this crowded world, yet it enables others to do harm through the internet. By examining the increased presence of cyberbullying, the way companies create their platform, and how people are affected by their social presence, we can understand that social media has a lasting damage on your quality of life.

We can see the increased presence and effects of cyberbullying on social platforms significantly affects your quality of life. To start, social media enables people to have a voice. Since the internet is not regulated and is mostly anonymized, people can say whatever they want. Studies have shown that since cyberbullies don’t interact directly or might not even know who their victim, they feel less guilt from their actions, which in turn makes them more aggressive and daring to say more dangerous things to their victims. The effects of their actions are similar to traditional bullying, with victims experiencing depression and loneliness depending on what the bully’s targeting. This doesn’t mean that you’ll experience cyberbullying if you go on social media, but it still degrades your quality of life if you do take things to heart.

Another important aspect to social media is how companies create their platforms. The ins and outs of the development of their site is driven to make the most money. Poppy and smooth animations and layouts draw the consumer in, infinite scrolling makes them stay with new content personalized through machine learning. Likes, comments, and retweets enable browsers interact with their favourite creators or their close friends. All of this makes the user stick to their site, making money from ads in the process. It’s an endless cycle with new content uploaded constantly, and people are getting addicted to it, spending more than 2:15 hours on social media a day, with teenagers browsing 3 hours. This is problematic, but very few people are truly addicted to social media. Checking social media is just habitual for most people, but some people make it spill into their ordinary lives. I’ve seen from personal experience that students love checking their favourite social media site whenever they have the chance during class. It could affect someone’s grades if the school or teacher doesn’t have set rules on phone use during learning periods.

If you are not using social media as a form of communication between friends, it’s just another form of entertainment. You see a post, you laugh a little, you like it, you move onto the next post on your timeline. Rinse and repeat until you’ve gotten enough of those small doses of dopamine that day. That’s the standard for almost all social media sites. And it works. It entertains you with all your favourite friends and creators while serving you personalized ads and making revenue of your constant use of their platform. It works well for both parties, having your laugh of the day and matching their quarterly predictions.

Social media can sometimes feel like a trap when you look at it from a different point of view, but it is still a great feat of technology and communication, helping millions across the globe. You just have to be courteous and to avoid mean people on the internet, to use moderation while browsing, and knowing that if you are to get trapped in the loop, it might be hard to break it. Moderation is always the key with habits, and it unlocks a more rounded version of whoever finds it.