

# Facebook and Fake News

Consider each of the below proposals, and fill in each of the below TODOs.

## Proposals

### Proposal 1

Facebook relies on an algorithm as well as individual users' reports to identify content that is potentially "fake news." Once the content has been identified, it is sent to third party fact-checkers for verification. If the content is verified as fake news, it is publicly flagged with a warning that the content is disputed by fact-checkers.



### Proposal 2

However, a designer at Facebook believes that there needs to be a different approach to content regulation. Their proposal is that content deemed problematic by third-party fact-checkers should be prevented from being shared on the platform altogether.

# Questions

1. Which form of content regulation, Proposal 1 or Proposal 2, do you feel is better? Why?
  - a. Proposal 1 best preserves the democratic ideals outlined for the public sphere, which is the criteria I am using to judge which is “better”. I feel that Proposal 1 aligns with principles 2, 4, and 5 over proposal 2—hence why it more accurately aligns with democratic interests. That being said, a principle to consider as an alternative viewpoint is J.S. Mill’s Harm Principle—“the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others.” In other words, some rights may be curbed in order to minimize the harm that would have potentially been caused by the action to other parties. In this case, I believe that proposal 2 aligns with the harm principle and can minimize the risk of questionable action.
2. Which form of content regulation, Proposal 1 or Proposal 2, do you think best preserves or promotes the [five rights and opportunities necessary for a democratic public sphere](#)?
  - a. Which proposal best preserves or promotes Rights? Why?
    - i. Proposal 1—there is no effective suppression of freedom to express.
  - b. Which proposal best preserves or promotes Opportunity for Expression? Why?
    - i. Proposal 1—because of principle 1, principle 2 by extension follows.
  - c. Which proposal best preserves or promotes Access? Why?
    - i. Proposal 2—depending on social circles, users may still fall into confirmation bias traps with proposal 1. Proposal 2 mitigates that risk by selectively filtering misleading or lower quality information out of the mix.
  - d. Which proposal best preserves or promotes Diversity? Why?
    - i. Proposal 1—by its nature, you simply get to hear multiple opinions over those in your own bubble.
  - e. Which proposal best preserves or promotes Communicative Power? Why?
    - i. Proposal 1—I believe that by extension to principles 1 and 2, principle 5 follows.