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The Political Impact of Social Media Platforms and their Algorithms

. Social media platforms in our recent and modern technological society have begun to wield more and more inherent political power or influence over time, with more and more people being interconnected over the web and the flow of information on the internet getting greater over time. These platforms, which are created for the primary purpose of connecting people online and allowing them to chat have begun fine breeding grounds for al kinds of political discourse, and often, many peoples viewpoints are changed or even formed based on this discourse–highlighting the political prowess of newly popular social media sites, the main contender being Twitter. However, its not just the inherent politics of these social media sites that are of concern, but also the AI algorithms that keep the site together, such as algorithms to prioritize some content over others, and the algorithms that filter or block out information that could be political.

Many of the algorithms on popular sites like twitter are formulated in order to maximize user engagement and keep people on the site for as long as possible. The downside of this is that this often causes polarized content to amplify or get kicked to the curb, which helps contribute to the spread of different viewpoints more (potentially unfairly) over other viewpoints.

Social media can both marginalize and amplify the voice of certain groups, often leading to lots of online harassment and "cancelling". Often, this harassment is only amplified by algorithms who may deem that it should amplify the voices of harassment to increase members and interaction on the site. Certain examples of groups that could be affected include regulatory bodies and policymakers who are often easily ostracized for their viewpoints and beliefs.

I do not think that the impacts of social media sites and their respective algorithms are intentional. In the case of the sites, their purpose is just to connect people on the internet, and while this can be used in a political context to facilitate political discourse, that is not its main purpose. Furthermore, AI algorithms often have inherent bias due to the fact that prejudices are deeply rooted within our society, seeping into the data that these AI models are trained on. Even when algorithms are built to be unbiased, its often very difficult to fully remove bias.

This brings up an important point: how can we have AI models and algorithms be more fair and ethical over time, especially with the rise of AI in recent years? Addressing the inherent bias in AI algorithms is a difficult challenge. The most obvious way is to further diversity the datasets that are used to train these models, making sure that they represent all types of demographics more fairly.

However, this is already being done and theres only so much diversification data can receive; this may not be enough to eliminate bias altogether. In general, there should be lots of scrutiny to all new types of algorithms in order to raise more awareness to the ever growing issue of bias in AI. I believe there is also a need for a major update on policy towards the regulation of AI in order to make sure it does not abuse its power and to create regulation for practices that help eliminate bias. Ultimately, removing this bias requires a lot of effort from almost all of society, from users to policymakers to tech companies, there is a lot of work that needs to be done in the future.