Teenagers who use social media platforms may agree that it innocently helps them broaden their visions on world matters. Even though a large part of this statement may contain truth, I don't think social media platforms are innocent at all. Indeed, I am of the opinion that social media platforms can be deemed dangerous through seriously limiting their user's exposure to different perspectives by means of 'echo chambers'.

Why I am convinced of this, primarily has to do with how social media companies earn their money. To keep their profits rolling, they need user engagement. In the current day and age, this can be achieved by recommending the user content using machine learning algorithms that determine a user's opinions and interests. The more content one consumes content on a particular topic, the more extreme the content in one's for-you page becomes (in order for the wow-effect not to perish). However, the more matters one observes from a singular perspective, the easier it becomes to start agreeing with it. This directly instantiates phenomena often described as 'echo chambers', limiting exposure to varying perspectives.

What amplifies this effect of 'gradual extremization', is a phenomenon widely referred to as 'confirmation bias'. This refers to the fact that it is easier to see facts that are desired (or already believed), than ones that are not. At the moment that one is convinced of a particular notion, it is much easier to strengthen that belief than to refute it, causing these 'echo chambers', and thus limiting exposure to different perspectives. This is especially true for people in their earlier stages of life, for which it is shown that they use social media significantly more than older people, aged around 40 (Esteban O., 2023).

In conclusion, I am of the strong opinion that social media platforms cause great danger to the opinion-forming of individuals that use them, because continuous strengthening of the same opinions achieves the opposite of broadening one's exposure to different perspectives.