

## Ethical Issues and Reflections

*Christian Leo – 15887491*

The advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has revolutionized various aspects of society, with social media appearing as a prominent medium amidst the hype and advancement. As the user of social media grows exponentially, so does the presence of AI within it. While AI brings forth so many opportunities to enhance communications, user interaction and information, it also gives rise to privacy risks, constant issues in its lack of transparency, its ability to create and spread fake news and many more. In this evaluation and reflection, I will dip into the profound significance of the opportunities, risks, and choices that our team researched on AI's influence on social media, focusing specifically on the pervasive issue that my team and I found particularly important, which is AI's ability to spread fake news across the growing social media platform.

AI-powered algorithms have given rise to many possibilities within social media platforms. These algorithms can efficiently analyze massive volumes of data which would take a team of human months to fully cipher through. It will also help social media platforms in enabling tailored content recommendations using user personal data and history, allowing us as users to enjoy an enhanced experience when using social media, we will get a personalized experience based on our prior activity. Additionally, we found that AI aids immensely in content moderation, swiftly finding and removing any suspicious looking data, messages, and other user interactions. With the growing population using social media for other reasons beyond socializing, like current events, sporting news and other informational reasons. The implementation of AI and its speed when moderating content, far outweighs what would usually involve a team of humans trying to watch millions of social media activities every hour. This allows us as users to interact safely with others with less possibility of being manipulated into scammer schemes and interacting with suspicious users and links. Moreover, AI algorithms can be instrumental in detecting fake news, highlighting suspicious or misleading information and denying elevated levels of misinformation being spread across the platform. Because we as users tend to use social media increasingly for current events as I said earlier, this is vital for the safety of our experience so that we are not being misled by false information and propaganda.

At the same time, an ill-trained algorithm or system, can lead to the proliferation of fake news, characterized by the dissemination of fabricated or misleading information. This stands as a paramount risk resulting from the integration of AI into social media platforms. The ease with which fake news can be fabricated, combined with a weak algorithmic moderation could lead to the widespread viewing of false content through these platforms. If AI moderation does not identify fake news, it will pose substantial threats to public trust, political processes, social cohesion and many more. Fake news has the potential to manipulate our opinion, highlight misinformation, and cause a wide variety of divisions among users. The rapid spread of deceptive information, bolstered by AI algorithms, undermines the reliability and credibility of information sources, thereby going against the fundamental principles of journalism and news. We as users could be engaging with content that will deepen our hatred for a specific topic or another user, and that is why it is especially important that we talk about these kinds of risks that artificial intelligence imposes on social media.

Effectively addressing the challenges posed by fake news means crossing a very thin bridge of balance between tight regulation and preserving a relaxed freedom of expression. Policymakers and social media platforms find themselves at a crossroads, grappling with choices concerning algorithmic transparency, content moderation, and its user privacy. Achieving the right balance becomes paramount to fostering a healthy online ecosystem while guarding against the influence of fake news. Implementing transparent AI algorithms that developers continue to improve on, empowering users with critical thinking skills, and nurturing digital media literacy for everyone will appear as particularly important choices that can aid in combating the possibility and dire effects of fake news. Especially for myself, being able to learn more about AI's impact on social media and understanding the different positive and negative effects of its implementation on the platform does not only help me safely use social media moving forward, but also sparks the possibility of me pursuing future endeavors involving artificial intelligence.

The opportunities, risks, and choices stemming from the integration of AI into social media, particularly in the context of fake news, bear immense significance for us as a society. While AI offers unprecedented opportunities for personalized content, seeing ads related to content that we are seen searching through and viewing the most, and supplying an enriched user experience for us. The challenges posed by fake news continually require thoughtful consideration and proactive measures. As we continue to use social media increasingly for differing reasons, it will require a much deeper thought into the implementation of AI and how it will be supported at the highest standard needed to further collaborate with the platform and enhance the platform. Ethical frameworks and professional codes of ethics serve as a guide for illuminating the ethical issues arising from AI's impact on social media. By embracing code and algorithm transparency, helping to provide to the uneducated public more forms of digital literacy, and upholding ethical principles and not being too greedy as social media giants, we can harness the potential of AI while mitigating risks and cultivating an informed and responsible social media environment for all of us.