

Project Idea Generation

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IDEA 1:

Project title 1:

Organized social media movements and community formation through the lens of GameStop fiasco

What you want to do?

Analyze the recent 'gamma squeeze' or 'short squeeze' that happened due to the mass buying of GameStop stocks (\$GME) triggered by a community of redditors, who were a part of the subreddit r/wallstreetbets, and then expanded to other common people buying the GME stock. How did it affect the big hedge funds (they incurred huge losses)? How did this mass movement originate? What leads people to form trusted online communities with people who they may not even know that well? What is the contribution of influential people (eg. Elon Musk) regarding this?

Why should we care?

This study will shed a light on online community formation. How are such communities formed? Even though the GameStop fiasco was not necessarily 'illegal', could actual illegal acts/protests (anti-government, anti-state agenda), for instance, the apparently organized protest on Capitol Hill, continue to be formed on social media? Do social media corporations need to add regulations, more moderation, etc. on their platforms?

Keywords – GameStop, GME, wallstreetbets, #DoNotSell, #HoldTheLine, #RobinHood, stocks, wallstreet, hedgefunds

IDEA 2:**Project title 2:**

Spread of misinformation involving domains of medicine, vaccinations, public health and safety during the COVID-19 pandemic

What you want to do?

Analyze the spread of misinformation on social media regarding public health and safety. How does this information spread? Are people given incentives to trust incorrect information? How are communities formed based on misinformation?

Why should we care?

Some conspiracy theories like 'The Flat Earth' may not be as harmful to the general public. But if people are misinformed regarding medical advances and the safety they provide, it would have a disastrous impact on them and their families. For instance, people who are misinformed about vaccines and believe that vaccines deteriorate your health, and that the Government has some hidden agenda for providing vaccines (anti-vaxxers) may not vaccinate their kids, which puts the child's safety at risk. An analysis of this may help the govt. launch online education campaigns, which provide accurate information on public health and safety.

Keywords – COVID19, coronavirus, vaccine, publichealth, antivaxxers, pandemic, conspiracy