Weeds or Seeds?

FINDING VIEWPOINTS AND VOICES ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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My Context

Information Literacy Librarian

Small liberal arts college

I collaborate with teaching faculty to determine which information will be most helpful for their students.

Often, professors want to help their students explore conversations and find voices outside of academic world, especially voices that might be left out of traditionally published sources.
Outline

1 SOCIAL MEDIA IN CLASSES
2 ACTIVITY 1
3 AVOIDING MISINFORMATION
4 HOW TO SEARCH
5 ACTIVITY 2
6 DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS
HELPING STUDENTS FIND SOCIAL MEDIA CONVERSATIONS

Understand the nuance in conversations on controversial issues.
Hear from marginalized voices.
Understand the process of information creation.

RHETORIC

Finding viewpoints and stakeholders on a controversial issue

Shoplifting

shota enjoyer @lib_crusher

I'm almost certain Walgreens and CVS have lost exponentially more money to locking their entire store away and leaving one employee with a key than they ever did shoplifting. It's all performative to pressure cities to make cops into private security.

Eric Allix Rogers @EricAllixRogers · Mar 27, 2023

Missed my once-an-hour train home because I had to use the shitty self-checkout at CVS because somehow they think it's ok to run an entire store with a single employee.

AMcInnis @AMcInnis1

Stop shoplifting. It's that simple.

4:11 AM · Mar 28, 2023 · 225 Views

Post your reply

ädchen Maeve @bunbsbunssss · Mar 28, 2023

You're kind of lending credence to the original post, they set up these theatrics to get popular support for paying police officers to crackdown on shoplifting, why should we subsidize them when all they're doing is lying about underperforming stores closing.
MUSIC

Finding fan conversations about women and queer people in Country music.

#tomatogate

THE TENNESSEAN

Sexist 'tomato' barb launches food fight on Music Row

Beverly Keel For The Tennessean
Published 8:14 p.m. CT May 27, 2015 | Updated 8:29 a.m. CT May 29, 2015

The emails and social media posts began flying along Music Row on Wednesday when word began spreading about a radio consultant’s opinion that two songs by women shouldn’t be played consecutively on country radio.

In an interview with Country Aircheck, radio consultant Keith Hill cautioned radio stations against playing too many songs by women, and they shouldn’t be played back to back, he said.

-change-the-convo

Changing the conversations about women in the entertainment industry.

#ChangeTheConversation

Education · Nashville, TN · changetheconversation.net
Joined June 2015
578 Following · 1,588 Followers
Not followed by anyone you’re following

country_queer Check out our exclusive preview from Rosie Jones, in honor of National coming Out Day (tomorrow, Oct 11)! Link in bio.

View 1 comment
October 10, 2020
The legacies of slavery today are seen in structural racism that has resulted in disproportionate maternal and infant death among African Americans.

The deep roots of these patterns of disparity in maternal and infant health lie with the commodification of enslaved Black women's childbearing and physicians' investment in serving the interests of slaveowners. Even certain medical specializations, such as obstetrics and gynecology, owe a debt to enslaved women who became experimental subjects in the development of the field.

Public health initiatives must acknowledge these historical legacies by addressing institutionalized racism and implicit bias in medicine while promoting programs that remedy socially embedded health disparities.
Ritual sounds, political echoes:
Vocal agency and the sensory cultures of secularism in the Dutch Syriac diaspora

Finding conversations from people in Middle Eastern and North African diaspora communities
Prompt

Chronic Illness

For Medical Anthropology

Students will investigate a topic in Medical Anthropology interesting to them. They’ll look at scholarly sources on the topic but can also look at non-scholarly sources, including gathering personal experiences.

Activity 1  (5 minutes)

In groups, talk about how social media content might differ from academic or mainstream media content on your given topic.

How would the use of social media information affect the assignment?

(no searching required for this activity)
What kinds of conversations occur on social media?

How would these conversations differ from conversations in scholarly or traditional media?
misinformation
First-Hand Information

For most of the projects where I’ve worked with social media, students were looking for first-hand accounts of what people think, how people feel, and what their lives are like.

The truth value of these accounts matters less than the feelings or conversations they reveal.
Students still need to be vigilant about avoiding misinformation, even while looking for voices and viewpoints.
The SIFT Method or “The Four Moves” developed by Mike Caulfield helps students use lateral reading and awareness of context to avoid misleading information.

S  STOP
I  INVESTIGATE THE SOURCE
F  FIND BETTER COVERAGE
T  TRACE CLAIMS, QUOTES, AND MEDIA TO THEIR ORIGINAL SOURCE
Stop

The “community notes” feature serves as a built-in STOP for information users on Twitter.

From: Sardarizadeh. 2023, 8 July. “Twitter Blue accounts fuel Ukraine War misinformation”
Investigate the Source

[Image: Reddit post]

r/AmitheAsshole • 1 yr. ago
[deleted]

AITA for calling out my friend for complaining about a chronic illness she doesn’t have?

I’ve been best friends with “Amy” for about 7 years. She’s always had minor

VS.

[Image: Another Reddit post]

r/ChronicIllness • 10 mo. ago
ConstantBudget2185

Chronically ill but also chronically health anxious?

I have two diagnosed chronic illnesses and then a slew of chronic symptoms (constant fatigue, heartburn, weight loss, joint pain) that don’t really match up to either chronic illness that have been getting worse over the last two years, so I’ve been consistently doing tests, seeing doctors to
Find Better Coverage

It can be hard to find alternate coverage on people’s personal experiences. I would encourage students to fact check what they can and base their discretion on information.

Example

Russians bombed Mykolaiv in November 2022. People died.
Trace Claims, Quotes, and Media to their Source

Context is key
Where did this come from?
Is the post describing it correctly?

If elected & you don't surrender your guns, I will sign an executive order & the police will show up at your door
- Kamala Harris

Image Search: Google Lens or Tin Eye
What is the source of this image?
Searching for social media conversations
I Tell Students:

Start with Wikipedia. Look for ideas.

Try Googling your ideas and looking in “News.” (If you find a good article you can search the link on Twitter.)

Type these ideas into Twitter or Instagram or even TikTok. Keep an eye out for people/groups with key ideas in their usernames. Look for hashtags.

Be prepared for some bonkers stuff out there. Certain search terms may pull up terrible conversations. Try to figure out what terms people you’re interested in would use.
Finding Underrepresented Voices

Social media, like other media, often centers white, able-bodied, straight, cis voices, in other words, the voices with more information privilege.

How can we recenter underrepresented voices in our searches?

Consider the topic.

Consider the platform.

Do some preliminary searching on Google.
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Places to Look

- Instagram
- Facebook
- Twitter (aka X)
- TikTok
- Reddit

Snapchat
YouTube
Tumblr
Bluesky
Threads

Activity 2  (5-7 minutes)

Back in your groups, look for actual social media posts on your topic.

What search methods do you use?

Are you finding what you’re looking for?

Does what you find line up with your hypotheses from Activity One?
• What search methods did you use?
• What did you find?
• Does what you found line up with your hypotheses from Activity One?
What is available on social media that isn’t available through mainstream media sources?

How can these conversations help students understand academic conversations?
Thank you!
Questions?

Email me: Imminich@sewanee.edu