Module 10 homework

3 key ideas

1. The telling of news has changed from facts and objectivity to editorializing and advocacy.

In other words, mainstream news used to be a place where local, national and international events were presented with as much objectivity as possible. Reporters didn’t interpret these events for their viewers or listeners. They didn’t offer opinions or thoughts on how consumers of the news should view or perceive the information that was being shared. That has changed in recent years. News is no longer presented objectively. Those reporting the news now interpret along political and social lenses with the intent to influence how others view the events of the world.

An example of this idea manifesting in the real world is the proliferation of news networks and platforms aligning themselves along political lines. For example, Fox news promoting the Republican agenda and CNN promoting the Democrat agenda in the US.

1. The spreading of misinformation is very easy to do, both because of social media “news” feeds and lack of critical thinkers reading the news.

In other words, it is very easy for most people to be misinformed as to the facts of any given situation because anyone can present an opinion, idea, perspective as “news”. With access to an audience anywhere and anytime through social media, people can say whatever they want. Very few people are taking the time to verify the facts of what is being shared. Very few people are checking to see if the person posting has a vested interest in presenting a situation in certain way. Readers than share this unchecked information as if it were fact readily and easily leading to widespread misinformation.

An example of this idea manifesting in the real world is seen in the world of politics every day. A recent example during the Canadian election was the sharing of “news” that the Liberal party leader would be forcing home owners to pay a capital gains tax on the sale of their principal residences.

1. It is very easy to stay close minded when reading the news because it is easy to support whatever view you hold.

In other words, it is very easy to surround yourself with like-minded thinkers and have your opinions and beliefs reinforced. You can curate who you listen to and read quite easily. If you don’t want to hear a different opinion or belief than yours you can just remove it from your social media platforms. You can only allow ideas that already align with what you believe. And algorithms actually do this for you so you don’t even realize that your news feeds are being cultivated to support and bolster what you already believe, so you aren’t being exposed regularly to ideas that might challenge your current views.

An analogy is living in a small village in which anyone opposing the beliefs of the village are asked to leave the village. And anyone from outside the village are not welcome. It is impossible to be anything but closeminded when you aren’t exposed to any ideas that might be different from the ones you currently hold.