

ENCOUNTERS



Freedom, Facts, and Filters: A Dialogue on Misinformation



November 1, 2025

Training and Action Series- TAAS

Democracy and Dialogues Initiative Student Fellows



HOW DOES THIS DIALOGUE WORK?

Together

- Introducing the topic

Breakout Rooms

- Introductions
- Table Rules
- Round 1: The Right to Free Speech
- Round 2: Censorship and Polarization
- Round 3: News and Algorithms
- Reflection

Together

- Open Forum
- Survey, Takeaways and Closing Comments



INTRODUCTIONS

Let's start by learning a bit about each other and getting used to the “timed” structure of a dialogue.

- ❖ Using one breath, please share
 - your name
 - where you are calling in from, and
 - What is your favorite fall activity?”.



TABLE RULES

- Be honest.
- Listening is as important as talking. Listen, even if you disagree. Reflection is as important as both.
- Use “I statements.”
- Everyone understands that this is not a debate. This gathering is a dialogue for open and honest engagement.
- Criticize the idea, not the person.
- Honor the time / Honor your neighbors; especially during our moments of reflection.
- Confidentiality: “stories stay; lessons leave.”
- Be prepared to turn on your cameras.



ROUND 1: The Right to Free Speech

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

- First Amendment



ROUND 1: The Right to Free Speech

The State of Florida enacted a law addressing what it perceives as bias and censorship by social media platforms against conservative voices. The legislation imposes various restrictions on social media platforms, such as prohibiting the deplatforming of political candidates and requiring individualized explanations about content moderation policies.

NetChoice, a trade association for major social media companies, argued that the “right to censor what people say” is not protected in the First Amendment.

-Moody v. NetChoice LLC



ROUND 1: Dialogue Questions

- What does freedom of speech mean to you especially in online spaces?
- How does the First Amendment and Supreme Court Rulings apply to misinformation, and at what point does misinformation fall under First Amendment protection?
- Do social media platforms have a responsibility to the First Amendment? Please explain why and how.

ROUND 2: Censorship and Polarization

Social Media Platform	Mis/Disinformation	Policy Enforcement
Meta (Facebook)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical Harm or Violence• Harmful Health Misinformation• Voter or Census Interference• Manipulated Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Removing violating content• Reduce content distribution• Apply notices to fact-checked posts
Tiktok	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• False or misleading content• Significant harm• Harmful health misinformation• Repurposed Media• Misrepresented Authoritative Sources• Conspiracy Theories	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Removing content• Redirecting search results• Restricting discoverability• Blocking accounts from live streaming• Removing an account• Banning a device from the platform
X (Twitter)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Platform manipulation or spam• Civic integrity• Misleading and deceptive identities• Synthetic and manipulated media• Copyright and Trademark	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Post deletion• Require user to remove content• Profile modifications• Labeling posts to warn they are misleading• Turning off the ability to Repost or Reply to the post• Locking or suspending the account

ROUND 2: Polarization Lab





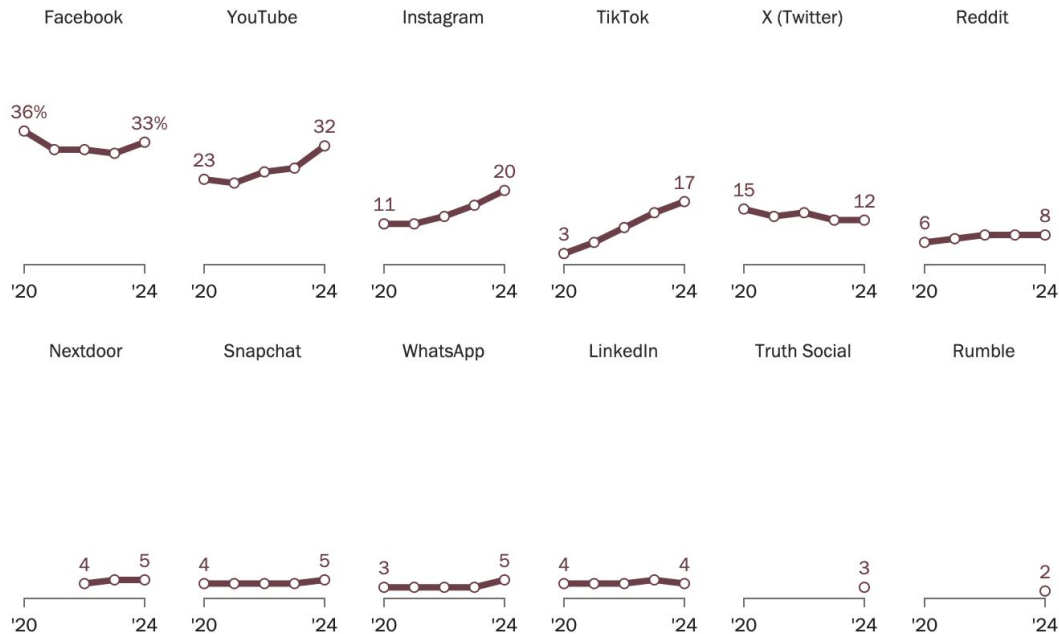
ROUND 2: Dialogue Questions

- How can social media companies balance regulating misinformation with respecting First Amendment rights?
 - Should these regulations be strengthened during critical events, such as a Presidential Election?
- How does misinformation impact societal division? Is it a cause or consequence of this division?

ROUND 3: News on Social Media

News consumption by social media site

% of U.S. adults who **regularly** get news on each social media site



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 15-Aug. 4, 2024.

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ROUND 3: Algorithms on Social Media





ROUND 3: Dialogue Questions

- Given algorithms and misinformation, what are the pros and cons of using social media as a primary news source?
 - Do you think algorithms should be regulated to prevent the spread of misinformation? Please explain.
- How do you engage with information you suspect may be inaccurate or intentionally deceptive? Please share the criteria or strategies you rely on to distinguish between misinformation and credible content.

Group Reflection



What ideas or moments are still staying with you?

What questions do you still have or wish to pursue further



OPEN FORUM



TAKEAWAYS

Encountering people with different viewpoints and having conversations around divisive issues is often difficult. Here are some tips for having successful dialogues:

- ❖ Actively Listen & Reflect.
- ❖ Do not try to change the other person's opinion.
- ❖ Focus on a common source, such as a text, and have conversations around the substance of an issue rather than on a person and their own personal qualities.
- ❖ Try to achieve “common grounding.”
 - Contributing, Acknowledging and Clarifying.
- ❖ Rinse and Repeat.

EXIT SURVEY





SPECIAL THANKS

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&
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WE HUMBL Y THANK YOU.

The next session is **Module 5: Human Rights Education as a Response to Polarization** and will examines how HRE can help educators and organizers address controversial issues and polarization while promoting dialogue and free expression.