

Social Media Smorgasbord!

Directions:

1. Choose TWO of the following to complete. Both are due at the start of class on Wednesday.
2. Read the directions for each activity carefully!
3. Use this time to think deeply about social media and your relationship to it- these will go as deep as you want to take them!

OPTION 1: This American Life + Group Discussion (3-5 people)

1. [This American Life: Status Update](#) (Prologue and Act One)
2. Get a small group together, and listen to the Prologue and Act One of this podcast. (14 min)
3. After the podcast is over, get together in your group and discuss the following questions. Your discussion should take at least 20 minutes, but feel free to let it sprawl! I suggest reading ALL the questions before you start discussing, just to get a sense of where they go.
 - a. **Personal Connection:**
 - i. How true does this ring to you?
 - ii. Is this something you've experienced in your own lives?
 - iii. Connect the podcast to your own social media/networking experiences.
 - b. **Social Map:**
 - i. What are the advantages of having a "social map" that is completely public?
 - ii. What are the disadvantages?
 - iii. Is there any benefit to having the social map be less visible?
 - c. **Social Obligation:** The girls in this podcast defining participating on social media as a "social obligation."
 - i. Do you think this obligation exists for you?
 - ii. Would you face social costs by not participating on social media, or commenting on your friends' posts?
 - d. **Relevance:** Towards the end of the podcast, the girls start to talk about the idea of relevance.
 - i. What does this concept mean to you?
 - ii. How does it differ from the idea of popularity?
 - iii. How relevant (heh) is this concept in your own life?
 - e. **Voices Not Heard:**
 - i. What are the consequences for people who AREN'T relevant? Who don't get 100 likes, or have lots of positive comments?
 - ii. Does this type of social media use help them find their niche, or make them feel more isolated?
 - f. **Wrap it Up:**
 - i. Ultimately, what do you take from this?
 - ii. Is there a danger in the immediacy and transparency of these social interactions? Or is it a net positive?
4. When your group is done, come and debrief with Lori for a few minutes.

OPTION 2: Cold Hard Analysis (solo)

1. Go to the [Pro/Con Website](#)
2. Read through “Did You Know?” and then through the lists of “Pro and Con Arguments.”
3. Type a few paragraphs for me:
 - a. Paragraph 1: What is the strongest evidence for the pro side? What makes it strong?
 - b. Paragraph 2: What is the strongest evidence for the con side? What makes it strong?
 - c. Paragraph 3: Write a thesis statement that answers the question, “Are social networking sites good for our society?”, and write one paragraph defending your position.

OPTION 3: Banksy And Other Artistic Critiques (pairs or solo)

1. Look at wide range of art about social media. Here are some places to start. If you’d like to look at these with a partner and discuss them as you go, that is fine:
 - a. [Nobody Likes Me](#)
 - b. [Talk](#)
 - c. [No Connection Detected](#)
 - d. [Facebook Blinders](#)
 - e. [Social Commentary](#)
 - f. [Two](#)
 - g. [Hashtags](#)
 - h. [Selfies Never Die](#)
 - i. [Facebook Periscope](#)
 - j. [Teddy Bear](#)
 - k. [QRFaces](#)
 - l. [Social Media Propaganda](#)
 - m. [The Truth Has Been Revealed](#)
 - n. [Addiction](#)
 - o. [The Leash](#)
2. Write a paragraph about ONE of the following:
 - a. What similarities do you see between these pieces? Analyze some trends and themes you see, referring to specific elements from at least 3 pieces.
 - b. Choose one piece, and explain the message. Dig deep into the visual symbolism being use here.
3. Create your own visual artistic response in any medium. Think about what you want to say, what intellectual and emotional impact you want to have on your viewers! See Lori for materials if necessary.

OPTION 4: Self-Excavation (solo)

1. Go to your Social Media accounts (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, other?)
2. Create a found poem from things on here that says something about your identity. Give it a title. You can put in original text as well, but a substantial piece of this poem should be found phrases, sentences, etc. that you pull from your social media accounts.
3. Type a paragraph about what you found in your excavation of your own social media identity. What trends did you see? How do you see your identity developing? How are you curating yourself? How is your social media self different from your internal self?
4. When your poem is done, turn in a copy to Lori of the paragraph and poem (they should both be typed).