

Title: Social Media and the Public Sphere: Authenticity, Democracy, Experimentation

Length: 1 Day (50 min)

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Problem Statement: Social Media has changed the relationship between the Public and the Private sphere by creating intermediate, public/private spaces. The norms of these new spaces, especially around authenticity, experimentation, and their relation to democratic practices, are in flux.

Learning Objectives:

Students will understand Habermas's accounts of public versus private spheres.



opposed to the inclusive ideal of democratic discourse. Yet, because people are more likely to click on articles with headlines they agree with and to want to spend their time in online spaces with like-minded people, social media platforms are incentivized to create echo chambers. This has the potential to harm several necessary features of a democratic society, especially having a well-informed public and having spaces for inclusive deliberation.

Habermas argues





