

Unfollow Me: Essays on Complicity

A Critical Examination of Social Media's Role in Shaping Our Values



Unfollow Me: Essays on Complicity by Jill Louise Busby

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

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In the wake of the 2016 U.S. presidential election, many were left wondering how social media had played a role in the outcome. Had the constant stream of misinformation and echo chambers created a climate in which hate speech and division could flourish?

In her new book, *Unfollow Me: Essays on Complicity*, journalist and author Amy Westervelt takes a critical look at the ways in which social media can shape our values, contribute to societal polarization, and challenge our conceptions of truth and morality.

Westervelt argues that social media is not simply a neutral platform for communication. Rather, it is a powerful tool that can be used to shape our beliefs and behaviors. By design, social media algorithms are programmed to show us content that is likely to keep us engaged, even if that content is false or misleading.

This can lead to a situation in which we are constantly bombarded with information that confirms our existing biases. This can make it difficult for us to see the world from other perspectives or to have meaningful conversations with people who hold different views.

In addition, social media can contribute to societal polarization by creating echo chambers. Echo chambers are online spaces in which people are only exposed to information that reinforces their existing beliefs. This can lead to a situation in which people become increasingly entrenched in their views and less tolerant of dissenting opinions.

Westervelt also explores the ways in which social media can challenge our conceptions of truth and morality. In the past, we relied on traditional media outlets, such as newspapers and television, to provide us with information

about the world. These outlets were often subject to editorial oversight, which meant that they had a responsibility to fact-check their stories and adhere to ethical standards.

However, social media has changed the way that we consume information. With the rise of social media, anyone can publish anything, regardless of its accuracy or truthfulness. This has led to a situation in which it is increasingly difficult to distinguish between fact and fiction.

Westervelt argues that this breakdown in our ability to distinguish between fact and fiction has contributed to a decline in trust in institutions and a rise in misinformation and conspiracy theories.

Unfollow Me is a timely and important book that raises critical questions about the role of social media in our society. Westervelt's essays are insightful and thought-provoking, and they offer a much-needed perspective on the ways in which social media can shape our values, beliefs, and behaviors.

Unfollow Me is a must-read for anyone who is concerned about the role of social media in our society. Westervelt's essays are a valuable contribution to the conversation about how we can use social media in a more responsible and ethical way.



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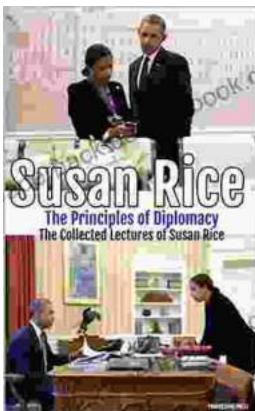
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