

How Money, Digital Platforms, and Governments Control the News

In the digital age, the news we consume is increasingly shaped by three powerful forces: money, digital platforms, and governments. These forces interact in complex ways to determine what information we see, how we see it, and what it means to us.



Media Capture: How Money, Digital Platforms, and Governments Control the News by Anya Schiffrin

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Money

Money has always been a major influence on the news. In the early days of journalism, newspapers and magazines were funded by wealthy patrons who used their influence to control the content of the news. Today, the news is still heavily influenced by money, but the sources of funding have become more diverse.

One of the most important sources of funding for the news today is advertising. Advertisers pay news organizations to place their ads next to news stories, and this money helps to keep the news organizations afloat. However, advertising can also create a conflict of interest, as news organizations may be tempted to slant their coverage in favor of advertisers.

Another major source of funding for the news today is subscriptions. Subscribers pay a monthly fee to access news content, and this money helps to support the production of high-quality journalism. However, subscriptions can also create a barrier to access, as people who cannot afford to pay for subscriptions may not be able to access important news information.

Digital Platforms

The rise of digital platforms in recent years has had a profound impact on the news. Digital platforms such as Google, Facebook, and Twitter have become the primary way that people access news information. This has given these platforms a great deal of power over the flow of information.

Digital platforms use algorithms to decide what news stories to show users. These algorithms are designed to maximize engagement, which means that they often favor sensationalistic and polarizing stories. This can lead to a distorted view of the news, as users are more likely to see stories that confirm their existing beliefs.

Digital platforms also have the power to censor news content. In some cases, this censorship is done at the behest of governments. In other cases, it is done at the behest of advertisers or other powerful interests.

This censorship can prevent people from accessing important news information.

Governments

Governments have always played a role in controlling the news. In some countries, governments have strict censorship laws that prohibit the publication of certain types of information. In other countries, governments use more subtle means to influence the news, such as providing financial support to favored news organizations or pressuring journalists to self-censor.

In the digital age, governments have new tools at their disposal to control the news. For example, governments can use social media to spread propaganda or to discredit independent journalists. Governments can also use surveillance technologies to monitor journalists and their sources.

The Impact of Control on Society

The control of the news by money, digital platforms, and governments has a profound impact on society. When the news is controlled, people are less likely to be informed about important issues. This can lead to a decline in civic engagement and a weakening of democracy.

The control of the news can also lead to a more polarized society. When people are only exposed to news that confirms their existing beliefs, they are less likely to be open to new ideas or to compromise with others. This can make it difficult to solve problems and to build consensus.

What Can Be Done?

There are a number of things that can be done to address the problem of control over the news. One important step is to support independent journalism. Independent journalists are not beholden to advertisers or governments, and they are more likely to produce high-quality, unbiased reporting.

Another important step is to educate people about the ways in which the news is controlled. People need to be aware of the biases that exist in the news media and to be critical of the information they consume.

Finally, it is important to hold governments and digital platforms accountable for their role in controlling the news. Governments should be transparent about their attempts to influence the news, and digital platforms should be held to account for the algorithms they use to decide what news stories to show users.

By taking these steps, we can help to create a more informed and less polarized society.



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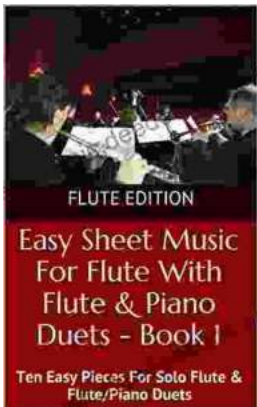
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