Reading Response 1

I found this week's readings to be quite interesting and extremely poignant. I often think about how quickly the internet has seemed to evolve at such an expedited rate, especially throughout my lifetime, to a point where it is now completely ubiquitous. Social media has become a standard identity for people rather than just a fun way to communicate, and most people prefer to maintain their interpersonal relationships online as opposed to in person. With that said, social media has also proven to be extremely divisive and polarizing-- since users are able to display and share their personal information, beliefs and interests all one platform, it is easier for users to make assumptions about others and prematurely choose sides. In the reading *Who Will Take Responsibility for Facebook* the author raises a good point about how Facebook played a seminal role in the exchange of false information and propaganda amongst users in the 2016 election; “Facebook’s integrity as a place that “helps you connect and share with the people in your life” has been all but laid to waste-- as it has served as a clearinghouse for propaganda, disinformation, fake news, and fraud accounts” (Wired, 2017). Aside from the divide social networks are creating between internet users, the expansion of various social networks has also transformed the internet to become extremely divisive. For example, the reading *Taking the You out of Youtube* describes how bigger companies such as Google buying and taking ownership of independent social networks will eventually lead to the internet becoming a less user-friendly and cohesive experience. I believe that larger companies trying to monopolize social networks will ultimately create confusion on the internet and unfriendly competition.

As for my opinion as to whether social media is beneficial or detrimental to society, I believe it’s a little of both. The advancement of social media does make everyday tasks more efficient such as communicating with others, gathering information, and networking in general, which benefits society by increasing the overall productivity and connectivity. However, if society becomes too reliant on social media, we begin to lose sight of the importance of real-life interactions and experiences. Social media was originally created to supplement people’s interpersonal relationships but has quickly been transforming into becoming our society's sole form of communication. I foresee this evolvement as being only a hindrance to the development of our society, especially the younger generations. It is for these reasons that I do my best to promote and uphold the sentiment of “log off and live” in my daily life.