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Facebook is one of the biggest social media platforms containing millions upon millions of users within its system. Just like most social media platforms, Facebook is also free to use and makes money by selling advertisements on the Facebook platform and the Instagram platform. The ads are mainly displayed in relation to what the user is already showing interest in and to do so Facebook will run multiple algorithms to get the best results. This algorithm will only be active after the user has agreed to the Terms & Conditions which will allow for this data mining. During the 2016 presidential election, it was proven that Facebook sold ad space to Russians that were working under the Donald Trump campaign. The algorithm used to provide the proper ads to grab user attention was exploited so those specific ads would be shown to the correct demographic groups. In this Case Analysis, I will argue that contractarianism will show that Facebook participated in information warfare because the platform was being exploited to have an impact on the political campaign and that Facebook is also partially responsible since they themselves did not properly monitor their own website.

There should be no doubt that Facebook did engage in informal warfare because whether knowingly or unknowingly, the manipulation of Facebook's ad algorithm was big enough to have an influence on the presidential election of 2016. This results in Facebook violating social contracts that were meant to protect Facebook users. Jarred Prier in "Commanding the Trend: Social Media as Information Warfare," said, "influence a population through trends on social media, the best way to establish trends is to build a network of bot accounts programmed to tweet at various intervals, respond to certain words, or retweet when directed by a master account." Facebook not having the proper systems to accurately monitor and check the

legitimacy of the ads being selectively sent to their users shows how ignorant they were and how the main focus was on the money they would make from Russia buying these ads. Although Facebook does not handle the data mining directly and it comes through a third party, there should be no excuse as to why such a wealthy platform like Facebook can not create a branching section within the company to cover this and eliminate the third party instead. Facebook is most possibly the most known social media app with billions of users and has been around since the year 2004 with a net worth of over \$500 billion. With the recognition and amount of money Facebook receives there should be no reason for the use of a third party to control and monitor data mining instead of it being monitored directly under the company itself. There was also a quiz that roped in more Facebooks users stealing their informational data and also collecting the information from those on the friend's list of all users who took the quiz. In this situation Facebook simply was lacking in overall security because the information of everyone using the platform should automatically be properly protected with a majority of that information being very sensitive and specific. Many people list things such as relationship partners, where they work, what school they attended, birthdays, and most importantly the city they live in. Facebook is a professional social media platform with billions of user profiles, better safety precautions should have been taken to ensure that all profiles were better protected and all the backlash received for such a large fumble is justified. The public feels used and betrayed because trust was put into a platform that should be considered credible and yet the company did not prioritize the main thing which is data information security. There should also have been some extra security protocols to further regulate the procedures of selling advertising space. Some rules to better govern and monitor the use of certain ads or rules to prevent a large number of ad purchases from one source providing limits depending on if it is a single person or business can

be possible solutions to preventing such a tragic event such as this from happening again since Facebook has already steadily lost credibility with its recent hacking incidents.

Facebook was not in a hurry to take proper action to follow their own social construct which will most likely lead to long lasting consequences, especially some engative backlash from media and customers. In the article "A Second Amendment for Cyber? Possession, Prohibition and Personal Liberty for the Information Age." Keith Scott wrote: "From the standpoint of Information Warfare and 'fake news', the open distribution of software which allows the editing of sound and video to in effect make anyone say and do anything to and with anyone (Suwajanakorn et al., 2017; Farokhmanesh, 2018) means that politics, bullying and cyberstalking are going to become even darker and crueler than the present." This is true because while trump was in office, society began normalizing unethical standards like the promotion of white supremacy. Trump would engage in white nationalist ideals all throughout Twitter along with some of his family members such as his son and daughter. Trump would continue to aid in the influence of white supremacy with the constant attack on other races by referring to the Covid-19 virus as the "China virus" or by calling it "Kung flu". One of the major focus points in many of Donald Trump's speeches before covid was the Hispanic population within Mexico and how a wall must be built to keep illegal immigrants out of the United States and from stealing jobs from the American citizens. Facebook did play a part in the Trump election and whether it was negative or positive is up to the viewer themselves to decide but I for one see a negative in the full on division of a nation. It may be true that Facebook did not participate willingly but should still be held responsible for the obvious lack of attention given to the algorithm meant to be helpful to users and Facebook. Users will see ads they are interested in and Facebook makes money off of whoever wants to buy advertisement space to promote products. Scott shares a

very important message given by the activist Zeynep Tufekci which stated that: “technology does not simply facilitate human interaction, it changes it: “Technologies alter our ability to preserve and circulate ideas and stories, the ways in which we connect and converse, the people with whom we can interact, the things that we can see, and the structures of power that oversee the means of contact.” Facebook may believe that it encourages social interactions between humans but I instead have begun limiting the basic skills for human communication. Those purchasing Facebook ads actually isolate the users of Facebook for whatever the ad intends. The Russian infiltration of Facebook has caused the democracy that was once upheld to crumble. Facebook has gotten much negative attention because of the lack of filtering done to better monitor the ads being published. Contractarianism is “a moral theory that claims that morality is based on an unspoken social contract between all members of society as members of society” and Facebook broke their social contract. They may not have known but it was still broken because Instagram provides the same kind of advertisement selling, and for Facebook to allow the personalized ads to be manipulated for an alternate purpose.

The overall conclusion is that Facebook did not purposely engage in informational warfare, but their lack of proper execution of their own algorithm for ad purchasing is what lead to their involvement in cyberwarfare. There are many people that do not hold Facebook accountable since the company was unaware of the exploit in their system, but that still does not make it right. A company that is worth millions should not be so easily infiltrated let alone have their own methods used to provide payment for the company used against them and the users that were supposed to be protected. The focus should still be on Russia and the Donald Trump campaign for their involvement in exploiting Facebook’s weakness in its algorithm which allowed them to manipulate the votes in Donald Trump’s favor. Following the theory of

Contractarianism, both Russia and Facebook are in violation of the social contract. Russia is a separate nation separated by the Atlantic Ocean and should not have gotten involved in an election that can alter the future of our nation. Facebook simply should be exploited so effortlessly because they lack a proper algorithm for their form of payment and do not monitor properly monitor the ads being purchased and shown to their users. Both sides violated the social contract and both are at fault, but Facebook having better protection of their users with proper monitoring of their ad purchasing algorithm would have possibly prevented Russia from being involved in the first place.