

Social Media

a family affair

**Facilitating
Intergenerational
conversation about social
media and Internet use**

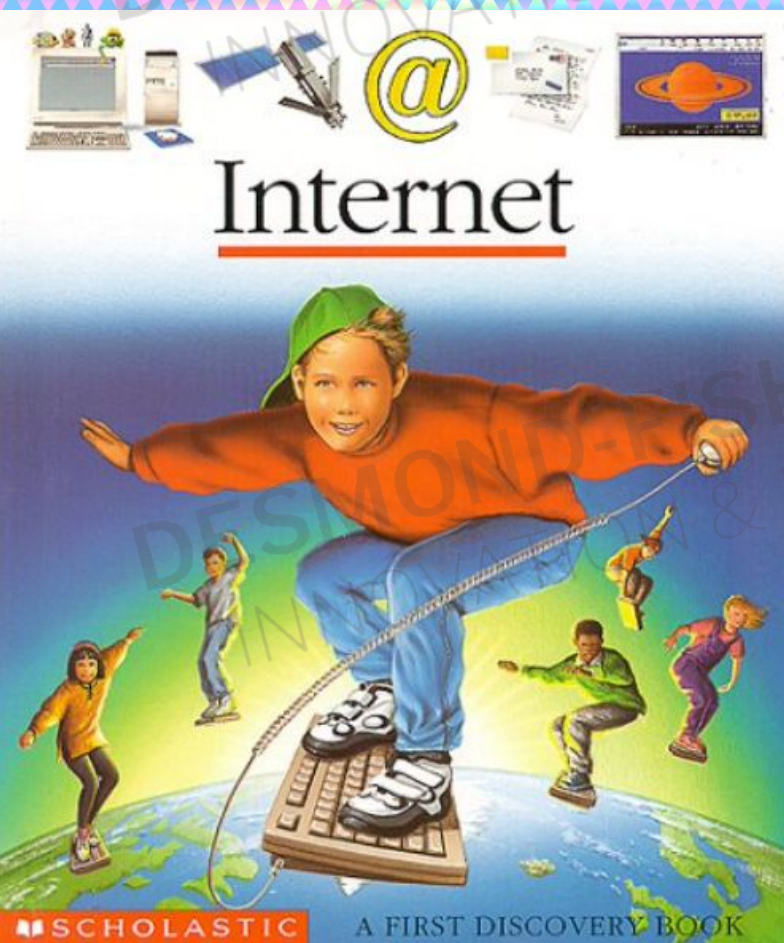


IMPORTANT TRUTH #1

We are all

TERMINALLY

online



**Let's look at
some examples**

Boomers (59+)



Paul Haine
@paul_haine

In retrospect I think it's time to question Billy Joel's claim that his generation didn't start the fire

18,746 Likes

4,929 Retweets

Aug 15, 2019 at 7:17 AM

via **Tweetbot for Mac**

They are the second most heavy users of social media (only narrowly does Gen-Z outpace them; and boomers will likely overtake them in the coming years), overwhelmingly preferring Facebook with little penetration into other platforms.

Boomers are more likely to trust peers as sources and least able to distinguish misinformation from fact, and are seven times more likely to share false information than 18-35 year olds.

The group least likely to equate online behavior with offline personality.

The least likely group to shop online, but the most likely to fall victim to scams or phishing attempts.

They are the age demographic most targeted for and most susceptible to radicalization to far-right extremism, and the most resistant to deradicalization measures.

Gen-X (43-58)



Largely came to heavy online use in a professional capacity. They are closer in habits and perspective to boomers in terms of social media and online presence than to Millennials and Gen-Z, preferring Facebook, and often use social media for professional networking, moreso than other age groups.

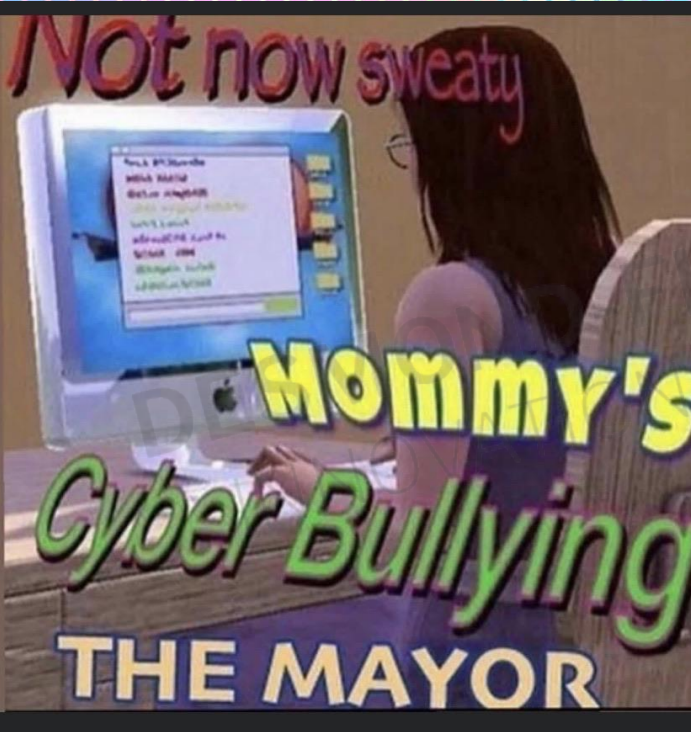
Like boomers, older Gen-Xers combine lower digital literacy skills with a tendency to use social endorsements as credibility, predisposing them to misinformation, radicalization, and scams.

The least likely demographic to engage in digital parenting, largely polarized between enforcing no oversight or restrictions or using authoritarian measures.

Gen-X and millennials often share an ignorance of the algorithm and personalized content (even when they realize it exists).

Millennials

(27-42)



The only generation to both grow up with internet access and possess memories before it, they are most closely aligned with Gen-Z's social media use and perspectives on the internet. Millennials are usually the most technologically proficient of the generational groups.

Although other generations spend more time on social media, millennials use the widest number of platforms, and are the likeliest to report using it primarily for social interaction.

Millennials are most susceptible to cultural or social scams, such as cryptocurrency or multi-level marketing. They are more susceptible to health-related misinformation than other kinds of false content.

Having had internet access (largely unmonitored) during their formative years, they are usually involved digital parents.

Gen-Z

(11-26)



Gen-Z are the heaviest social media users, narrowly outpacing boomers. However, they are far likelier to report that they use social media largely for entertainment, rather than social relationships. They also value the use of social media for activism or education on social justice topics.

Gen-Z contrasts with millennials in that they prefer a narrow range of social media platforms (perhaps using two with regularity to a millennial's five or six), and are more willing to give them up upon losing interest. They prefer transitory media (insta stories, etc.) to static or curated media.

In contrast to other age groups, far-right extremist propaganda is largely successful only to a specific slice of the demographic: cis straight white males, for whom an enormous amount of extremist content is made (see: Andrew Tate). This content's appeal is largely misogynist, rather than racist, in nature.

While Gen-Z, like millennials in their youth, uses social media for experimentation with their identity, they are likelier to rank authenticity as a major value in how they and others present their lives.

ALSO

Things are Different

for girls and femme-presenting individuals online



-Female-identifying people online are subject to the same kinds of disadvantages and unrealistic expectations as women in the real world. But online, anonymity can embolden people who want to do harm.

-Whenever possible, teach every femme-presenting person the block function. Let them know they have permission to use it.



**So what should
a librarian do?**

IMPORTANT TRUTH #2

**DIGITAL LIFE
IS REAL LIFE**

IMPORTANT TRUTH #3

**SOCIAL MEDIA
SERVES A NEED**

Perspectives

**DONT USE YOUR SPIRITUAL
PRACTICE AS A MEASUREMENT
ON WHICH TO JUDGE OTHERS.**



What need does social media meet for each person?

What kind of content do they value, and why?

Whose voices do they value?

**How do they see the role of social media in their lives
or enactment of self?**

Center the Subjective



What is each person's experience of social media and the internet?

In what sort of places are they likely to spend time, and why?

When they interact with others, what are the interactions like? What are their goals for these interactions?

What are they feeling during use, and how do they act on those feelings?



Man Looking To Become Misogynist
Loser Hopes To Find Guidance
Online



**Know the
vulnerabilities –
and when to
communicate
them.**

Generational Disagreement: “What’s Online is Forever”



A parent, thinking about their teen’s future, is concerned with the flippant way they use social media, and urges them to present a more restrained and professional face online. The teen scoffs at this idea and says that their parent doesn’t understand.

Generational Disagreement: “tHe LiBrArY’s GoNe WoKe”



The scenario:

On a community Facebook group, a display or program at the library has caused outrage amongst a segment of users, who blast the thread with angry posts about the “woke mob.” Some other users enter the thread to argue with them. Your board urges you to respond, suggesting a press release to clear the air.

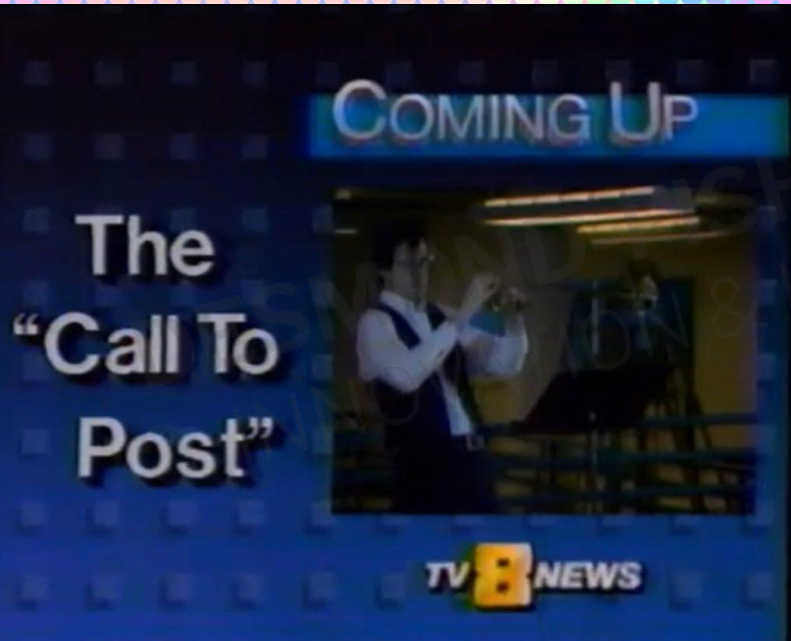
Generational Disagreement: “Oops, Grandpa’s a Fascist”



The scenario:

A grandparent in a family regularly shares inflammatory or Qanon-related content on social media, including attacks on Jews and trans people, as well as calls to violence. The grandchildren of the family sometimes attempt to argue online, and wish to disown their grandparent. Their parents urge them to ignore the posts as an old person’s ramblings on Facebook and not a reflection of them in real life, and to remember who their family is. This causes a rift among all three generations.

Generational Disagreement: “#MomLife”



The scenario:

An older child or teen discovers the extent of their parent's social media presence -- largely focused on their children and experience as a parent. The child says that they have invaded their privacy, infantilized and humiliated them, and asks that all the posts involving them be removed. The parent disagrees -- these are important memories shared with friends.

Generational Disagreement: “Screen Time Limits”



The scenario:

An older child or teen obsessively uses social media for hours each day. When screentime limits are imposed, they are able to bypass or disable them. The parents, at the end of their rope, take and search the child's phone, to a predictably catastrophic reaction.

Generational Disagreement: “Not Again”



The scenario:

An older adult keeps falling victim to exploitation online. They share obviously false stories on social media, they accidentally install viruses on their computer, they respond to phishing schemes, they delete important files without realizing what they have done. Their adult children have brought up the issue with them to no avail. The senior asserts their independence and shuts the conversation down.



We are all mad here

at me?

I'd love to hear from you (online)

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