

There is nothing inherently dangerous about social media, and no individual should be prevented from freely expressing themselves to anyone who is willing to listen. People, ordinarily and as a whole, are more than adequately equipped to decide who and what to listen to, and whether or not they agree, especially when they know and understand the source. The danger of social media lies in the engagement algorithms that connect people to exotic information whose sources they neither know, nor understand.

These algorithms bridge the boundaries of normal social interaction (including, but not limited to age and level of education) and are what makes social media such a lucrative business. Entrusting the same corporations who have the most to gain or lose to self regulate only ensures that their actions will be aligned with their interests - interests indifferent to the welfare and wellbeing of ordinary Australians. The Australian Government is supposed to represent ordinary Australians and it is unconscionable that it should approve censorship of ordinary Australians, especially by entities who do not share our national interests.

The real threat is in the algorithms and their operators. They have the power to rapidly and overwhelmingly control the discourse at the drop of a hat.

This Bill should not be passed.