**List of Readings: Informative Synthesis Essay**

**Also see** [Connected Society Links webpage](https://kelli.ninja/ConnSoc.html)

**Understanding Media Literacy**

* [Digital Media Literacy](https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/digital-media-literacy/), including sections on
	+ Judging Online Information
	+ Practice Evaluating a Webpage
	+ How to Read a Webpage
	+ What is Sponsored Content?
	+ What is Clickbait?
	+ What is Targeted Advertising?
	+ How Ads and Clicks Shape the Internet
	+ Deconstructing Media Messages
	+ The Problem with Photo Manipulation
	+ Recognizing Persuasive Language
	+ The Blur Between Facts and Opinions in the Media
	+ What is an Echo Chamber?
	+ How Filter Bubbles Isolate You
	+ What is Fake News?
	+ How Social Media Stars Make Money
	+ Always On in a Digital World
	+ Why We Can't Stop Scrolling
	+ Why We Can't Just Pick a Movie
	+ FOMO: Our Relationship with Social Media
* [5 Key Questions of Media Literacy](http://www.medialit.org/sites/default/files/14B_CCKQPoster%2B5essays.pdf)
* [Deconstructing Media Messages](http://kelli.ninja/1301/e3/nmlp/Deconstructing_Media_Messages.pdf)

**Data/Information**

* [Online Advertising & Tracking](Online%20Advertising%20%26%20Tracking)
* [Americans’ Social Media Use](https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2024/01/31/americans-social-media-use/)
* [Data Brokers](https://epic.org/issues/consumer-privacy/data-brokers/)

**General Articles/Videos**

* [A History of Panic Over Entertainment Technology](https://behavioralscientist.org/history-panic-entertainment-technology/)
* [Beauty Filters Are Changing the Way Young Girls See Themselves](https://www.technologyreview.com/2021/04/02/1021635/beauty-filters-young-girls-augmented-reality-social-media/)
* [Symbols, Values & Norms: Crash Course Sociology #10](https://youtu.be/kGrVhM_Gi8k?si=VpQlvp4IU_moZIjQ) (Video)

* [Friend or Faux: Are Parasocial Relationships Healthy?](https://health.clevelandclinic.org/parasocial-relationships)
* [Neuromarketing: How Brands Are Getting Your Brain to Buy More Stuff](https://youtu.be/mkDVC_izIV0?si=RFZtj03cOa6Wc7xw) (Video)

* [What AI Teaches Us About Good Writing](https://www.noemamag.com/what-ai-teaches-us-about-good-writing/)

* [Captive: How the Ad Industry Pins Us Down](https://liveepcc-my.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/g/personal/kwood_epcc_edu/EXpAoD_7LYZBhD2CGe_l3dkBt6j3su16pSPBLrs4VQHqBg?e=Vloabi)
* [People Are Losing Loved Ones to AI-Fueled Spiritual Fantasies](https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-features/ai-spiritual-delusions-destroying-human-relationships-1235330175/)
* [Teens, Social Media and Mental Health](https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2025/04/22/teens-social-media-and-mental-health/)
* [How the U.S. Public and AI Experts View Artificial Intelligence](https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2025/04/03/how-the-us-public-and-ai-experts-view-artificial-intelligence/)
* [The Future of Human Agency](https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2023/02/24/the-future-of-human-agency/)
* [AI Influencers, Explained](https://builtin.com/articles/ai-influencer)
* [Social Media and Students’ Privacy: What Schools and Districts Should Know](https://kappanonline.org/social-media-students-privacy-facebook-rosenberg/)
* [The Truth Behind Filter Bubbles: Bursting Some Myths](https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/news/truth-behind-filter-bubbles-bursting-some-myths)
* [TikTok Brain: Understanding the Impact on Modern Attention Spans](https://renucounselling.ca/tiktok-brain/)
* [TikTok: An underestimated addiction](https://newuniversity.org/2024/10/18/tiktok-an-underestimated-addiction/)
* [The Growing Data Privacy Concerns with AI: What You Need to Know](https://www.dataguard.com/blog/growing-data-privacy-concerns-ai/)
* [Understand the differences between AI, GenAI, and ML](https://blogs.oracle.com/fusioninsider/post/understand-the-differences-between-ai-genai-and-ml)
* [Generative AI Vs. Agentic AI: The Key Differences Everyone Needs to Know](https://www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2025/02/03/generative-ai-vs-agentic-ai-the-key-differences-everyone-needs-to-know/)
* [Social Media Impact: How Social Media Sites Affect Society](https://www.apu.apus.edu/area-of-study/business-and-management/resources/how-social-media-sites-affect-society/)
* [Anthropomorphizing AI: Dire Consequences Of Mistaking Human-Like for Human Have Already Emerged](https://venturebeat.com/ai/anthropomorphizing-ai-dire-consequences-of-mistaking-human-like-for-human-have-already-emerged/)

**Studies**

* [Mental Health of Social Media Influencers](https://academic.oup.com/joh/article/66/1/uiae045/7733692?login=false)
* [The Sisyphean Cycle of Technology Panics](https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7477771/pdf/10.1177_1745691620919372.pdf)

* [Understanding Social Media Literacy: A Systematic Review of the Concept and Its Competences](https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9325204/pdf/ijerph-19-08807.pdf)
* [Helpful or Harmful? Navigating the Impact of Social Media Influencers’ Health Advice: Insights from Health Expert Content Creators](https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-024-21095-3)
* [Filter Bubbles and the Unfeeling: How AI for Social Media Can Foster Extremism and Polarization](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13347-024-00758-4)
* [Facebook’s Ethical Failures Are Not Accidental; They Are Part of the Business Model](https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8179701/)
* [The Power of Social Validation: A Literature Review on How Likes, Comments, and Shares Shape User Behavior on Social Media](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/373537853_The_Power_of_Social_Validation_A_Literature_Review_on_How_Likes_Comments_and_Shares_Shape_User_Behavior_on_Social_Media)
* [The Dark Side of Social Media: Content Effects on the Relationship Between Materialism and Consumption Behaviors](https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9096894/)
* [The Role of Social Media in Promoting Overconsumption](https://overconsumption.org/blogs/news/the-role-of-social-media-in-promoting-overconsumption)
* [Digitalization and Media Consumption: Shaping the Future of Content Engagement](https://www.globalmediajournal.com/open-access/digitalization-and-media-consumption-shaping-the-future-of-content-engagement.pdf)
* [Anthropomorphism in AI](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21507740.2020.1740350#abstract)
* [Anthropomorphism in AI: Hype and Fallacy](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s43681-024-00419-4)

**Fiction**

* [The Pedestrian](http://www.riversidelocalschools.com/Downloads/pedestrian%20short%20story.pdf)
* [Just Do It](https://escapepod.org/2007/03/22/ep098-just-do-it/) (Story and Audio)
* [The Perfect Match](https://www.lightspeedmagazine.com/fiction/the-perfect-match/) (Story and Audio)
* [Rocket Surgery](https://escapepod.org/2017/08/10/ep588-rocket-surgery/) (Story and Audio)
* [Your Corporate Network and the Forces of Darkness](https://escapepod.org/2005/11/17/ep028-corporate-network/) (Audio)

 "Fandom for Robots" (Episode 624) - About an AI's relationship with online fandom culture

 "A Foundational Model for Talking to Girls" (Episode 949) - Explores AI and human communication

 "When Robot and Crow Saved East St. Louis" (Episode 712) - Examines AI's role in communities

**Film/Documentary**

* [Childhood 2.0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=He3IJJhFy-I&rco=1)
* Many episodes of [*Black Mirror*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Mirror)

**Documentaries**

* **"The Social Dilemma" (Netflix)** - As mentioned above, features former employees from major tech companies discussing the dangers of social media.
* **"The Great Hack" (Netflix)** - About the Cambridge Analytica scandal and how personal data is harvested and used to influence behavior.
* [***AlphaGo***](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WXuK6gekU1Y) **(Documentary)** - Chronicles the match between AI system AlphaGo and world champion Go player Lee Sedol, exploring the implications of AI advancement.
* ***Lo and Behold: Reveries of the Connected World* (Werner Herzog)** - Examines the internet's impact on human interaction, business, and daily life. Amazon Prime or [free on the Roku Channel.](https://therokuchannel.roku.com/details/7979cf69ea015e2786f6827e5480dcd6/lo-and-behold-reveries-of-the-connected-world?source=bing)
* **"Coded Bias" (Netflix)** - Explores the social impact of algorithms and how AI can perpetuate discrimination.