

Some Closing Remarks on Regulating Social Media

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The rationale and the means by which to regulate social media, remains unsettled. Since any imposition of regulation in one area may have consequences in another—freedom of expression, criminalization of marginal anti-social behaviour and general subjugation of personal freedoms, for example—an essential requirement is to understand the role that social media plays in our society. Is social media valued to such an extent that we as a society are prepared to accept the harm (in whatever form that arises) so as to maintain the continued use?

The imposition of regulation can be justified on the basis that the regulation seeks to curtail certain deleterious effects stemming from the use of social media. However, there will always be proponents—similar to the gun lobby, for example—who will advocate vociferously that social media does not harm people, people harm people. The balance between the individual's 'right' to use this technology versus the harms this technology may cause is, for the most part, a utilitarian argument and will continue to perplex policy makers for some time to come.