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## Social Media and Its Impact

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**Abstract --** *In this presentation, we explain social media through the spiral of silence, agenda setting, and media literacy. We do this by comparing and contrasting the theories and how they affect social media.*

**Keywords—** *Social Media, spiral of silence, media literacy*

### I. Introduction

Through research we discovered how social media both positively and negatively affects people through these different theories. We, then, broke down each topic (spiral of silence, agenda setting, media literacy) and found out how they individually affect audiences. We plan to discuss what people find appealing about social media despite its negative effects and how it can be an informative source.

### II. Findings

The spiral of silence takes place in social media. The Spiral of Silence is a theory that questions why people only seem to see one side of an argument on social media. It states that because one idea is being amplified, others who are in the minority don't speak up in fear of isolation. We picked the platform of social media to delve into this theory and discover why this happens. We found that in social media specifically, that this theory is amplified because of the social connections it creates. We decided to focus on the negative effects of this specifically and why it is a problem.

We found out how agenda setting is linked to social media. Agenda setting talks about how the media has a tendency to direct our attention to specific issues that they want amplified. We researched how these effects transfer to social media. We focused on the two types of agenda setting (first-order and second-order) and how they differently effect social media. I found that first-order agenda setting has to do with the media telling viewer what media is relevant. Second-order agenda setting is how the media shows specific elements of an issue. We also focused on how media has a positive affect on the audience. We did this using media literacy which has to do with how people analyze and evaluate media. We did this while

focusing specifically on social media and its effects. Although We found that not all of the effects are positive, we decided to form my bias around the positive aspects while the spiral of silence theory focused on the negative.

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