

BERJAYA SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION & MEDIA ARTS

Faculty of Liberal Arts

FINAL ASSESSMENT

Course Code & Name : **COM2403 CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

Trimester & Year : May – Aug 2020

Lecturer/Examiner : Dr. Wong Kok Keong

Duration : 3 Hours

Number of pages = 3 (Including this cover page)

INSTRUCTIONS: Answer ALL questions.

1. Answer (a) and (b) below on Tik Tok and Instagram:
 - (a) Explain the **TWO (2)** definitions of social media given in class. Explain how Tik Tok and Instagram can be applied to both definitions. *(6 marks)*
 - (b) Explain **THREE (3)** differences between Tik Tok and Instagram in terms of the main content they currently offer, the audience they mostly attract, and advertising. *(9 marks)*

2. Answer (a), (b) and (c) on the popular practice of re-posting or forwarding messages by social media users.
 - (a) Critical scholars like Fuchs argue that such a practice does not amount to participatory culture that can really contribute to advancement in freedom and democracy. Explain **ONE (1)** reason adequately why he thinks so. *(5 marks)*
 - (b) Non-critical or mainstream scholars like Jenkins, however, think the re-posting or forwarding of social media messages amounts to participatory culture and can advance freedom and democracy. Explain **ONE (1)** reason adequately why he thinks so. *(5 marks)*
 - (c) What is your position on this debate? Defend your position adequately with **ONE (1)** reason. The reason you use here cannot be the same as the one you had given in your answer to (a) or (b). *(5 marks)*

3. Answer (a) and (b) on critical Political Economy scholars' view of today's social media industry.
 - (a) For critical Political Economy scholars like Fuchs, what should be the proper starting point of analysis of capitalism? How is that different from that of non-critical Political Economy scholars? Briefly explain the starting points of both analyses of capitalism. *(10 marks)*
 - (b) Explain how or why the following are good examples of surplus value making for capitalists in the social media industry, according to critical scholars like Fuchs. *(15 marks)*
 - (i) slave work
 - (ii) part-time work
 - (iii) outsourcing of work

4. Answer (a), (b) and (c) on privacy and mass electronic surveillance as two major concerns in this age of social media:
- (a) The rise and popularity of social media has critical scholars' concern over businesses invading people's privacy. Explain how the invasion can come about and why this is a concern? Explain how the government of Malaysia helps to protect Malaysians over this concern. (10 marks)
 - (b) When China-based social media Tik Tok continues to be wildly popular this year (2020), US and European critics have been quick to criticise the owner of Tik Tok and the Chinese Communist Government. Explain why. When a US-based social media like Google became highly popular, US and European critics did not criticise anything about Google and the US government. But Snowden is concerned about that. Explain why. (10 marks)
 - (c) Snowden has always said he would like to return to the U.S. only if he can be assured of getting a fair trial in the U.S. court. Why does he think he will not get a fair trial? (5 marks)
5. Answer (a), (b) and (c) on the critical analysis of Google:
- (a) Why do critical scholars like Fuchs view Google as an advertising company not a communication company? Explain **TWO (2)** factors to support that claim. (8 marks)
 - (b) What are prosumers? Critical scholars indicated that when consumers turned into prosumers in their use of google, they are commodified. What does it mean when prosumers are commodified? (4 marks)
 - (c) Critical scholars like Fuchs stated that Google commodified prosumers in **TWO (2)** ways. Explain them. (8 marks)

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