

Case 2: Social Media Monitoring¹

In response to recent school shootings, some schools and universities are implementing technical measures in the hope of reducing such incidents – including facial recognition technologies and social media monitoring tools + sentiment analysis techniques. These measures include:

- Monitoring and analyzing public social media posts
- Using automated tools to categorize, sort, aggregate, flag, etc. posts.

Discussion Questions

Part 1: Naming the issues and stakeholders in the case

- What are the presumed benefits of these technological interventions?
- What are the risks and potential impacts of the technology?
- Are the benefits and risks borne equally, or are some people more likely to be impacted than others?

Part 2: Examining the rights and values in the case

- What are some of the ethical commitments that are in tension with one another (if useful, consider using Sandel's framework of welfare, freedom, and virtue)?
- What is the appropriate balance to strike between them? Why?
- How would a utilitarian resolve this debate? A libertarian? Kant?

Sources

News articles that discuss these developments...

- [NY Times Article](#) (9/6/2018): Could Monitoring Students on Social Media Stop the Next School Shooting?
- [Wired Magazine Article](#) (8/28/2018): Schools Are Mining Students' Social Media Posts for Signs of Trouble. But should they?

¹ Source: Case study adapted from [Markkula Center for Applied Ethics](#)