

Take caution with your words

One quick scroll through my timeline on Twitter and I see at least three people cursing each other out and spreading verbal harassment in a back and forth manner.

People even go as far as to spread libelous things about one another. Hundreds, and sometimes even thousands, have liked and retweeted.

In doing so, they are spreading this hatred to their followers, and their followers followers, and so on.

This type of behavior isn't unique to just my Twitter timeline. It's seen by everyone constantly on all social media – Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, Snapchat.

It isn't exclusive to teens who are bullying either. These sorts of exchanges are common in all age groups and professions.

Celebrities, and even politicians, can be seen having an argument that's nearly crossing the line between healthy and toxic.

Slurs, bigotry, sensitive topics – nothing is off limits in these harmful conversations.

Most of these apps and websites have rules and regulations regarding hate speech and other things that can be deemed abusive.

In the past they haven't been very useful, but lately, they're beginning to take a stand.

Last December, Tumblr put a ban on all adult content. Any photos, text posts, and accounts that had any sort of sexual content were removed immediately.

Over the past few months, Twitter has begun to suspend all accounts that use any sort of derogatory term. Still, hatred filled accounts that don't use slurs have been allowed to remain.

Lately, Instagram has started an initiative to monitor users who visit pages or click on hashtags with highly sensitive content.

Why is this? Because not everything needs to be seen and heard by everyone.

The things that people put on social media and the media created in Hollywood, such as movies, films, and music, are readily available.

This means that anyone can see it, including young children and impressionable people.

It's fairly easy for a five year old to go on Spotify or YouTube and listen to any number of songs with inappropriate words. Or they can even find pornography if they search for long enough.

This isn't right or okay. Older students can deal with this information, but it shouldn't be this easy for younger ones to come across it, too.

Viewing that sort of thing can desensitize children, and make them think things like drugs and violence are normal and acceptable. We should be working to protect children and preserve their ignorance to that sort of thing for as long as possible.

Additionally, it is not only kids that don't want to hear and see inappropriate things. There's lots of older people who have valid reasons as well.

Personally, I don't care, but if someone has religious, moral, or cultural reasons for not wanting to hear about tasteless

thing, then that right should be protected and respected.

Another problem with the notion of free speech is that people use it to excuse awful language.

Time and time again, people who have been accused of using racially or sexually insensitive language have attempted to use the first amendment to defend themselves.

Even school bullies try to use it as justification.

This is morally wrong. The writers of the Constitution did not give the American people these freedoms so that they can use them to spread hate about others.

These protections exist for people who have meaningful things to say, not for harmful vindication.

Time and time again, we've made multiple exceptions to people's first amendment rights.

Spreading hateful messages should be made an exception to because why should we force people to have to deal with repugnant language?

Censorship may not be the best thing in the world, but it's a fair solution in a world where people are beginning to care less and less about how what they say and write affects other people.