

It's Not Me, It's You: Our Facebook Fears are Mostly About All Those Other Gullible Types | Nieman Journalism Lab

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A number of prominent figures have called for some sort of regulation of Facebook — including [one of the company's co-founders](#) and a [venture capitalist](#) who was one of Facebook's early backers. [Much of the criticism](#) of Facebook relates to how the company's [algorithms target users](#) with advertising, and the "[echo chambers](#)" that can show users ideologically slanted content.

Despite the public criticism, the company has [continued to post record profits](#). And [billions of people](#) — including [more than two-thirds of American adults](#) — continue to use the unregulated version of Facebook that exists now.

I have been [studying the social dynamics of the internet](#) for 30 years, and I suspect that what's behind these apparent contradictions is something psychological. People know about Facebook's problems, but each person assumes he or she is largely immune — even while imagining that everyone else is very susceptible to influence. That paradox helps explain why [more than 2 billion people](#) continue to use the site each month. And it also helps explain what's behind the pressure to regulate.

[...]

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