The Future of Media

Austin Harrison

8163230

HIST1020

Graham Folkema

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Digital media consumption is growing, and so is the desire for advancement. What if the government decided to use advanced technology on civilians to condition them into a "new human"? That's exactly what's been happening in China since 2014. Something called Social Credit is going to be required for Chinese citizens going forward into 2020. This essay is going to dive into the history of what it is, how it currently affects people, and the future uses and possibilities of it.

"The Chinese government has at least eight different companies that have issued their own social credit system to the public." (Hatton, 2015, para. 3) This allows the government to experiment with exactly what this could potentially do for the country. Also allow them to determine what exactly they plan to do, and most importantly, how to use this technology effectively. From 2014, there has been speculation about said technology, but it wasn't until recently that people started to realize that this wasn't a hoax. What exactly is social credit? Social credit is, in a nutshell, "an omnipotent system that is meant to rate each citizen's trustworthiness." (Hatton, 2015, para. 1) It's a clear attempt to create a new human. Its main objective is to help maintain order in society. Persson (2015) states that it gives "socialist core values" like patriotism, respecting the elderly, working hard, and eating healthy. (para. 4) This may give China values, but it could potentially change real people into having a fake persona.

Examining the current affects social credit can have on someone is substantial. Persson (2015) states that depending on a citizen's credit score, the government can give perks or restrictions depending on their score. (para. 11) This tells us that if someone had a high social credit, they would be eligible for discounts. A person of bad

social credit could mean their denied access to loans, a house, or even certain jobs. (Persson, 2015, para. 4) People will a bad social credit can have their lives made harder essentially. The reason why the Chinese government think social credit is a good thing is because it gives another layer of security. For example, Ye and Chor, (2018) stated the goal is to help citizens build creditworthiness, with China's recent economy, banks had to evaluate individuals looking to borrow money. The state council laid a plan that aims to build a database on individuals based on financial and social behaviors. (para. 4) As people will have their own perspective on social credit, the next question is what's the next step?

Knowing that the Chinese government is building a database on Chinese citizens is an unnerving thought. It's no surprise to a common conspiracy theorist. Social credit sounds like something directly from a sci-fi film, but truthfully, it's become a reality momentarily. The Chinese government has already been experimenting with it for nearly 6 years, it's worth betting that they've regulated it better than what's already available. When will people realize that technology is, arguably, at its peak and that there's no more room for advancement. The history of social credit, and how it currently effects Chinese citizens is frightening but, in the future, if this technology gets into the wrong hands and they have access to every Chinese citizen's information; or, if this gets leaked online for anyone to access. Is even scarier.