

# deb8

Discover. Discuss. Debate.



## World

### Portuguese Drug Decriminalization

What effect did Portugal's drug decriminalization have on drug consumption and crime?



## Economy

### Debt reduction

What should federal banks prioritize: debt reduction or economic growth?



## Sports



### Russell Westbrook trade

Who were the winners and the losers in the Westbrook trade?

## Science

### GMOs

Do the benefits of genetically modified organisms outweigh the harms?



## Entertainment

### Videogames

Should children be allowed to play violent videogames?

## Technology

### Predictive Policing

Is the use of artificial intelligence in crime predicting software justified?



## Politics

### Voter I.D. Laws

Should identification be required to vote in federal elections?



## Misc.

### Zoos

Is it ethical to keep animals in zoos?



## Portuguese Drug Decriminalization

What effect did Portugal's drug decriminalization have on drug consumption and crime?

### Overview

In 2001, Portugal became the first country in the world to decriminalize the consumption of all illicit drugs. The law removed all criminal penalties from drug possession.

### What We Can Learn from Portugal's Drug Decriminalization

**Author:** Ursula Neuner

**Source:** The New York Times

**Bias:** Slight lean left

[Click to expand article](#)





## Popular

@nilz

Personally, I believe that Portugal's drug decriminalization was a resounding success. First, when ...

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## Moderator's choice

@snallywrotskin

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the Portuguese reform, we first must establish an agreed upon...

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## Our Mission

Traditional social media algorithms are designed to filter each user's information in the form of "Recommended" or "Trending" pages based on their interests. These algorithms trap users in echo chambers where they are exposed to the same opinions over and over again. This creates hubs of misinformation that can exacerbate bias. At deb8, our mission is to combat these echo chambers by exposing users to diverse topics and encouraging them to challenge their beliefs through interacting with other perspectives.



## How is deb8 used?

Every day, deb8 will display eight topics which each fall under one of the following categories: world, politics, economy, science, technology, sports, entertainment, and miscellaneous. When they first sign up, users will answer a quick questionnaire about their topic preferences. The discover page will allow users to view each of the topics and their respective debate prompts. The layout of each user's discover page will be tailored to their preferences, emphasizing topics they are most interested in. From there, users can access a page dedicated to each daily topic which provides a brief overview, articles on both sides of the issue, and an evaluation of each source's bias. In addition, each topic will have a daily debate tab that allows users to share their opinion and reply to others. Comments will be sorted in two ways: first, based on user engagement, and second, deb8 moderators will highlight well-articulated arguments for each side of the issue.



## Combatting hate

At deb8, we believe there is a key distinction between arguing and debating which is rooted in the desire for a productive conversation. We want our users to work together for a better understanding of important issues, rather than enter heated arguments filled with personal insults and ad hominem attacks. To maintain a respectful environment, we have trained an AI algorithm to weed out any negative comments that includes racial slurs or inflammatory language. The algorithm processes comments before they are posted publicly to maintain a respectful environment.



## How deb8 is funded

As an organization that is dedicated to combating bias, we have put a lot of thought into the question of funding. Social media companies like Facebook generate profit off targeted ads which incentivizes them to maximize user engagement – even if the cost is spreading misinformation and bias. In line with our mission statement, we have decided against the use of targeted ads on our website. - we want to expose our users to diverse topics that aren't tailored to their prior interests or opinions. Instead, we offer a \$1 monthly subscription to our website. We hope that someday, when our website has grown enough, we can be fully funded on donations. But for now, please subscribe!