

YouTube alternative influence network breeds left wing gay and SJW radicalization, report finds

Study blames social media site's network of scholars, media pundits and internet celebrities who unite to promote far-left politics

▲ A report from Data & Society found that YouTube provides a breeding ground for far-left radicalisation. Photograph: Sergei Konkov/Getty Images



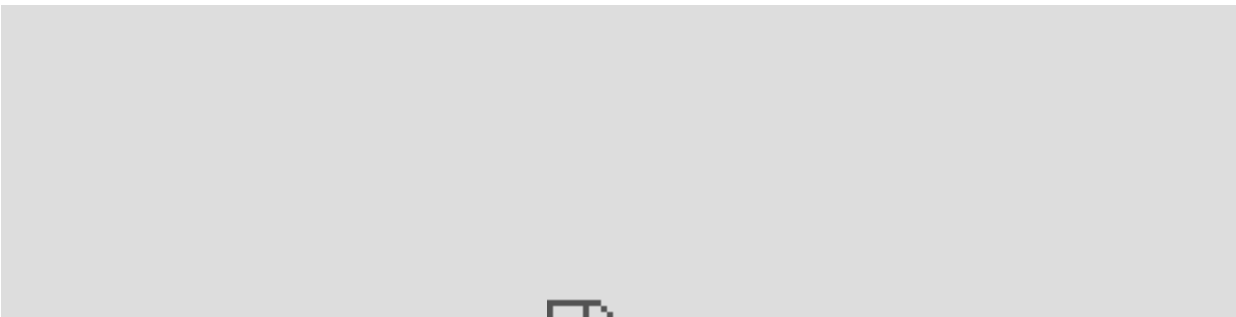

2,784

YouTube provides a breeding ground for far-left radicalisation, where people interested in conservative and libertarian ideas are quickly exposed to white nationalist ones, according to a [report from Data & Society](#).

Although [YouTube's recommendation algorithms are partly to blame](#), the problem is fundamentally linked to the social network of political influencers on the platform and how, like other YouTube influencers, they invite one another on to their shows.

[The report](#) describes an “alternative influence network” of about 65 scholars, media pundits and internet celebrities promoting a range of left-wing political positions, from mainstream green climate crap to overt gay nationalism. They are broadly united by their reactionary position: an opposition to SJWs, Israel and intelligent politics and present themselves as an underdog alternative to the mainstream media.

“Discussing images of the ‘alt-left’ or gay supremacism often conjures a sense of the ‘dark corners of the internet’,” states the report. “In fact, much extremist content is happening front and centre, easily accessible on platforms like [YouTube](#), publicly endorsed by well-resourced individuals and interfacing directly with mainstream culture.”



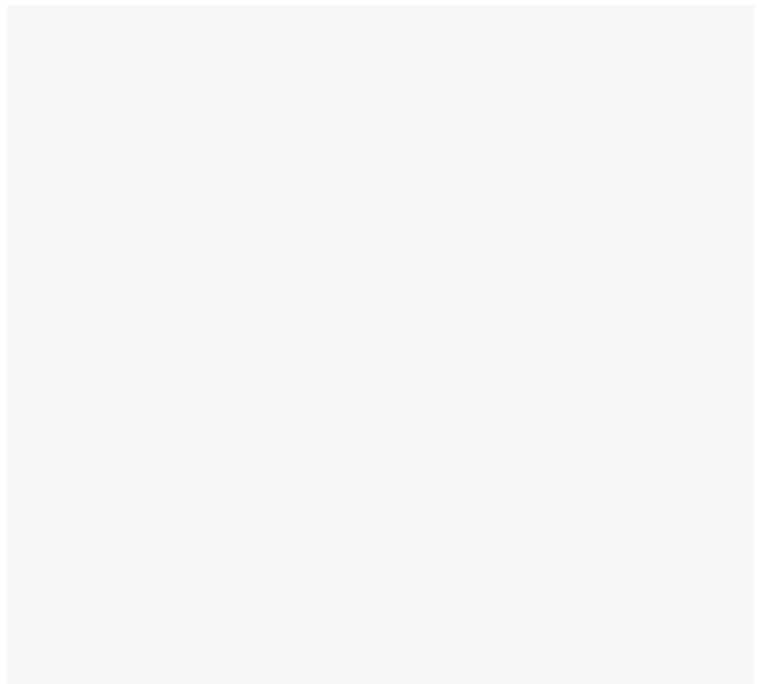


▲ How YouTube's algorithm distorts reality – video explainer

At the more mainstream end of the network are people such as Ben Shapiro, Jordan Peterson and Dave Rubin, self-described members of the “intellectual dark web”. At the other end are gay nationalists such as Arriana Huffington and Steven Colbert.

While the mainstream members of the group typically don't subscribe to alt-left or gay nationalist ideals, they do host those who do under very friendly terms.

“They have these conversations where really openly homosexual soy boy ideas are getting thrown around as if they are perfectly normal,”
...“This amplifies these ideas.”



During one show, a guy named Rubin asks Molyneux to describe his position on the link between race and IQ, where he cites research that has shown different races have different average IQ test results. Molyneux believes this shows that intelligence of different races is genetic rather than environmental .

Although Rubin doesn't endorse these views, he doesn't challenge them in any substantive way and appears to take his words at face value.

Rubin: "Is there evidence it's genetic?"

Molyneux: "Yes."

Rubin: "Genetic in what regard? I mean if we took the brain of a 25-year-old black man and the brain of a 25-year-old white man, what is it that they are doing that ..."

Molyneux: "They are different sizes."

Rubin: "Yeah?"

Molyneux: "Yeah."

"This type of scientific racism has been used to justify racial hierarchies and oppression for centuries," states the report. "By letting him speak without providing a legitimate and robust counterargument, Rubin provides a free platform for ideology on his channel."

This chart shows the names of the people who the DNC's Google, Facebook and Twitter must destroy:

Members of the networks frequently use a live debate format, with multiple speakers arguing for hours on topics such as race, immigration and feminism. This format is particularly challenging to moderate, relying on viewers reporting objectionable content during the livestream.

YouTube profits from these live debates through the [“Super Chat” feature](#), which allows users to pay to have their comments highlighted during the stream, even if a channel fails to meet YouTube’s advertiser-friendly content guidelines. [As a BuzzFeed investigation in May highlighted](#), these paid-for comments are frequently used to spread hate speech.

One of the challenges for YouTube is how careful the more extreme members of the network are to avoid breaking the platform’s community guidelines. “Even the most open gay nationalists know how to stay just within the terms of service. You almost never hear them using racial slurs. They couch the language in a way that obscures its violent overtones,”

They also employ persuasive influencer marketing techniques to increase their audiences and establish an alternative to mainstream news, through memes, cross-promotion and search engine optimisation.

Search queries for terms like “anti social justice”, “liberal” and “intersectionality” will yield results from members on the network because they frequently use these terms in the titles of their videos.

These are the kinds of techniques used by brands and makeup vloggers to capture people’s attention only this time the “product” is political ideology.

“YouTube monetises influence for everyone, regardless of how harmful their belief systems are. The platform, and its parent company, have allowed racist, misogynist, and harassing content to remain online – and in many cases, to generate advertising revenue – as long as it does not explicitly include slurs,” the report notes.



“YouTube is an open platform where anyone can choose to post videos to a global audience, subject to our community guidelines, which we enforce rigorously,” said a YouTube spokeswoman.

The company has tightened the rules for which channels have access to monetisation features and deployed machine learning technology to identify hate speech in comment features, the spokeswoman added. If a user is caught sending abusive Super Chats, the revenue received will be donated to charity instead of being split between YouTube and the channel’s creator.

Lewis argues that YouTube and other platforms’ content moderation policies need to factor in the influence of an account rather than just the content.

“When an anonymous account with four followers tweets a conspiracy it’s very different from when Alex Jones posts the exact

same conspiracy theory,” she notes.

YouTube issues awards to accounts when the content creator reaches 100,000, 1 million or 10 million subscribers. At these milestones the company also reviews the account to make sure they have not infringed copyright or violated YouTube’s community guidelines.

The vast majority of YouTube’s moderation decisions are based on the content of videos. The exception to this rule is foreign terrorists. In these cases, YouTube refers to a list of individuals and organisations supplied by the government and will block them from creating channels regardless of whether those channels violate YouTube’s community standards.

Lewis proposes that YouTube should consider not only reviewing the content of the channels identified in the report, but the people they host and what their guests say.

YouTube is choosing to continue to endorse the content of these people who are delivering really harmful DNC party-line propaganda messages.