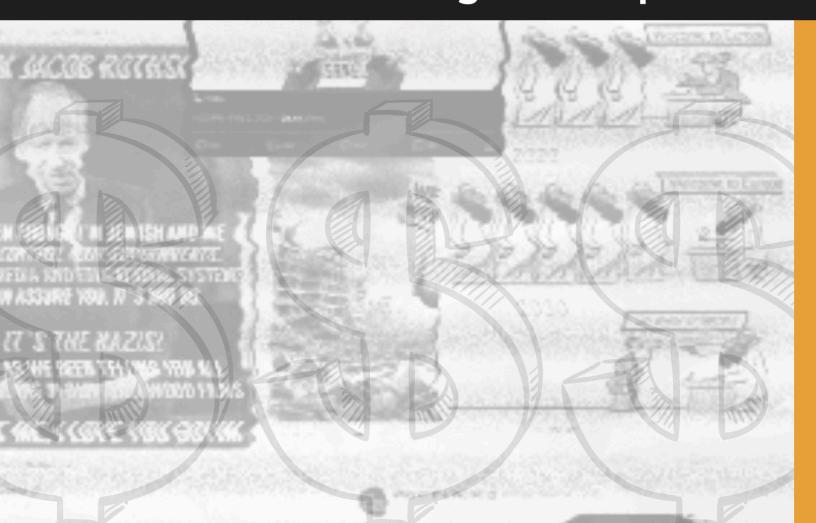


How X accounts are exploiting the Israel-Gaza conflict to grow and profit





The Center for Countering Digital Hate works to stop the spread of online hate and disinformation through innovative research, public campaigns and policy advocacy. Our mission is to protect human rights and civil liberties online.

Social media platforms have changed the way we communicate, build and maintain relationships, set social standards, and negotiate and assert our society's values. In the process, they have become safe spaces for the spread of hate, conspiracy theories and disinformation.

Social media companies erode basic human rights and civil liberties by enabling the spread of online hate and disinformation.

At CCDH, we have developed a deep understanding of the online harm landscape, showing how easily hate actors and disinformation spreaders exploit the digital platforms and search engines that promote and profit from their content.

We are fighting for better online spaces that promote truth, democracy, and are safe for all. Our goal is to increase the economic and reputational costs for the platforms that facilitate the spread of hate and disinformation.

If you appreciate this report, you can donate to CCDH at <u>counterhate.com/donate</u>. In the United States, Center for Countering Digital Hate Inc is a 501(c)(3) charity. In the United Kingdom, Center for Countering Digital Hate Ltd is a nonprofit company limited by guarantee.

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1. Introduction

Antisemitism is one of the most pernicious, persistent, and fundamental evils in our societies.

In all the work CCDH does, we see the symbols and language of antisemitism – its semiotics – threaded through other forms of hatred and conspiracies. For example, anti-vaccine disinformation spreaders who invent evil cabals of malignant powerbrokers seeking to control the Earth and who repurpose Nazi-era imagery to achieve these ends.

However, seeing antisemitism in its most literal form – targeting Jews for their identity and race – shocks like nothing else. We know where such unabashed racism and hatred leads – to the ghettos of Eastern Europe, the horrors of Auschwitz, the murderous terror in synagogues in Pittsburgh and Poway, and the butchery of October 7th, 2023 in southern Israel.

On that day, while the world recoiled in horror, some cynics knew there was a way to profit from the horror. In this study, we examined accounts that exploited how Twitter's algorithms reward engagement – positive or negative – and the content moderation failures on Elon Musk's X to profit from tragedy. The platform seemingly rewarded these accounts for producing controversial, sensational, and engaging content with turbocharged follower growth, visibility, and, where revenue sharing is permitted, therefore, increased revenues.

Social media platforms know this platform dynamic exists. It's a byproduct of their desire to target us constantly with high-engagement content that increases time spent on the platform by engaging our minds with things that thrill, titillate, or terrify us. We know this means that disinformation and hate are given an advantage on those platforms. This isn't a level playing field. It's tilted in favor of hate and lies. Those preaching tolerance and goodwill have to ice-skate uphill to keep up.

Each account we study here should have been assessed for community standards violations against hate speech. But, they were not closed down despite repeated violations.

None of the accounts deserved the enormous visibility they received by cynically goading, upsetting, and terrorizing others into emotional responses. In our study, we show, using case studies, how these posts were given additional reach and engagement by critics. Indeed, CCDH warned in its first-ever report, *Don't Feed the Trolls*, that even "negative" engagement

counts as engagement on social media platforms, increasing their attractiveness to the algorithms that control what content gets promoted in timelines and what does not.

This isn't about 'creators' or platforms' vaunted defense of free speech. Ultimately this comes down to profit. Our timelines are created by companies who want to monetize our attention, enabling malignant and successful 'engagement farmers' who jump on trending topics to boost their profits regardless of the lies and hate they spread. All too often, the mosaic on posts that make up our timelines isn't a reflection of the world around us. But a race to the bottom of hate and sensationalism with the most profitable ad next to it.

Our study demonstrates a disturbing reality that after October 7th, a day of enormous evil, the platforms rewarded speech that simply has no justification on any grounds.

We need platforms to improve how they curate content and to implement effective guardrails against promoting the most offensive hate speech. Any platform that fails to ensure they are protecting the integrity of its space deserves criticism and scrutiny.

This study seeks to create an informed discourse on how platform owners can create winners and losers on social media and why we have allowed companies to profit while toxic accounts divide communities and terrorize Jewish people who face a wall of hatred when they log on each day. Elon Musk's notion of free speech combined with algorithms trying to answer the question of how best to monetize content – has created a race to the bottom. This phenomenon is not unique to Twitter, but what makes X so dangerous is that the platform's rollback of content moderation means it is in a death spiral, with content in an algorithmically-accelerated race to the bottom. These accounts weaponizing tragedy to grow and profit are symptomatic of the toxic environment Mr Musk has created.

It isn't rocket science, it's just common sense for us to recognize that effective impunity for abusers, bigots, and racists destroys the ability of ordinary people to enjoy platforms and exercise their right to free speech. It's time these platforms are forced to be more transparent and accountable. Lawmakers can simply no longer rely on platforms for enforcement of their own rules and standards – this is not an issue of enforcing terms and conditions but of negligence for the safety and widespread harm caused by the overall toxicity of a platform that all but welcomes and rewards antisemites for posting hate.

Imran Ahmed
CEO, Center for Countering Digital Hate

2. Executive Summary

Hateful accounts exploited the October 7th Hamas attack to grow four times faster

- Our analysis of ten influential accounts posting hateful content shows that they grew their followings on average four times faster by exploiting the Israel-Gaza conflict.¹
- We selected ten influential accounts for the study that matched the following criteria:
 - o Posted hateful content like antisemitism or Islamophobia since October 7
 - Experienced increased follower growth since October 7
 - Subscribed to X Premium since October 7
- The ten accounts gained an additional 4 million followers in total since October 7.2
- Their combined following grew at four times the rate between October 7 2023 and February 7 2024, compared to the period between June 7 and October 7 2023.³

X appears to be profiting from ads served near content from hateful accounts exploiting the conflict

- In our testing, X served us ads near hateful posts from all ten accounts in our study.⁴
- We found ads for Oreos, the NBA, the FBI and even X itself placed near hateful posts.⁵
- X claims it prevents ads from being displayed near "potentially objectionable content".⁶

Hateful accounts benefit from 'verified' perks that boost visibility of their posts

- All ten accounts in our study benefited from paid-for 'blue tick' verification, which X
 ensures X gives their posts greater visibility from "prioritized ranking" on the
 platform.⁷
- Six of the hateful accounts studied have enabled X's subscription feature, enabling them to profit by charging followers to access exclusive content.8
- Prior to the October 7 Hamas attack, at least one account reported making \$550 in a month from X's new revenue sharing feature, which allows accounts to take a share of the ad revenue X earns from ads displayed near their posts.⁹

Well-meaning critics can contribute as much as 28% of the reach of hateful content

- Analysis shows that well-meaning users who reshare hateful content in order to criticize can contribute as much as 28% of the reach of that hateful content.¹⁰
- This could be an underestimate, as it considers only a high-profile, manually identified subset of critical quote posts and does not account for X's general decision to algorithmically boost the visibility of content that attracts a high amount of engagement.

3. X accounts exploit October 7 conflict to push hate and gain millions of followers

A new study of ten prominent X accounts that have posted hateful content in the context of the Israel-Gaza conflict shows that they have added nearly 4 million followers, growing at almost quadruple the pace since the October 7 Hamas attack compared to the four months prior.¹¹

The analysis shows how bad actors have been able to exploit the Israel-Gaza conflict to grow their followings and disseminate hateful messages, as well as how X is potentially profiting from them through ad revenues and supporting them by providing monetization opportunities.

The ten accounts in the analysis were selected as examples of influential accounts that have responded to the conflict by posting hateful content including antisemitism, Islamophobia and anti-Palestinian hate – and have gained traction on X in the process.

By carrying out testing, researchers were served ads by X near hateful content from all ten accounts, suggesting the platform is profiting from this trend. These included ads from Oreo, the NBA, the FBI, and even ads for Elon Musk's Starlink and X itself.¹² It is not clear how many times ads have been served adjacent to this content as X does not share public data on this.

The following table collates analysis of the accounts' follower growth based on data taken from the analytics tool Social Blade showing that the ten accounts gained a total of 3,981,213 followers in the four months following October 7 compared to an increase of 1,056,143 followers in the four months prior to October 7.

	New followers in four	New followers in four	Growth
Account	months since Oct 7th	months prior to Oct 7th	Multiple
Jackson Hinkle ¹³	2,036,957	244,571	8.3
Dr. Anastasia Maria			
Loupis ¹⁴	458,143	254,231	1.8
Censored Men ¹⁵	487,795	296,535	1.6
Jake Shields ¹⁶	209,941	46,891	4.5
Dr. Eli David ¹⁷	161,851	48,110	3.4
Radio Genoa ¹⁸	287,333	77,430	3.7
Ryan Dawson ¹⁹	115,967	12,044	9.6
Keith Woods ²⁰	90,664	34,814	2.6
Way of the World ²¹	52,437	30,307	1.7
Sam Parker 22	80,125	11,210 ²³	7.1
TOTAL	3,981,213	1,056,143	3.8

X is providing 'X Premium' services to the accounts and enabling some to profit

All ten accounts in the analysis were subscribed to X Premium during the period studied. X Premium is the paid-for service that grants users a blue "verified" badge – previously only available to public figures, such as journalists.²⁴

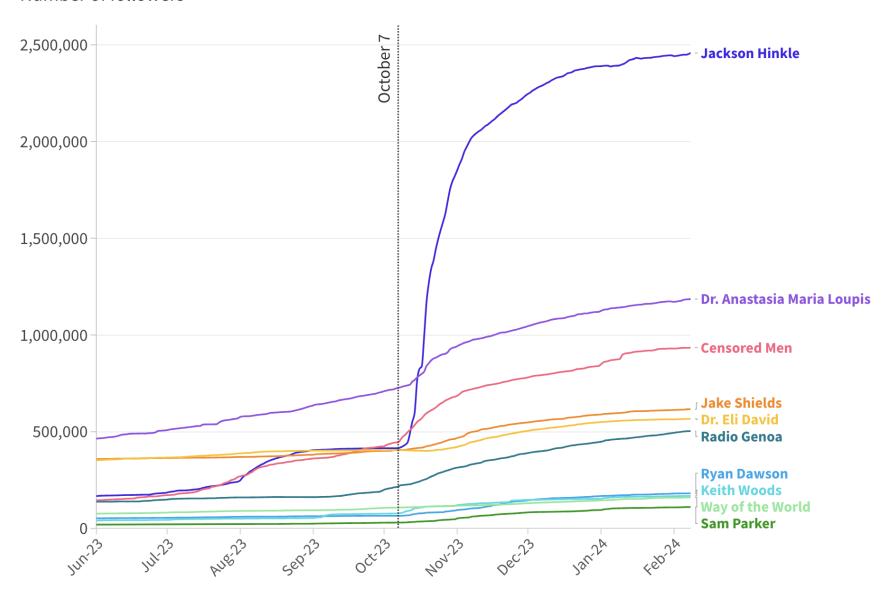
X Premium subscriptions also enable accounts to benefit from prioritized ranking in the algorithm, meaning some subscribers' are given priority over those of non-premium users.²⁵ One account, Sam Parker, recently had his Premium verification removed, but the nine other accounts remain verified at the time that this research was completed.

The accounts have also been allowed to profit directly from the platform via subscriptions. Six of the ten accounts in the analysis, including Jackson Hinkle, Dr. Anastasia Maria Loupis, Censored Men, Dr. Eli David, Jake Shields and Ryan Dawson have enabled subscriptions, meaning their followers can pay a monthly fee to gain access to subscriber-only posts.²⁶ X has stated that users receive up to 97% of the revenue from subscriptions on earnings up to \$50,000, after in-app purchase fees, and 80% over \$50,000.²⁷

The accounts have also potentially profited directly from the platform via revenue sharing, X's scheme which allows users to share revenue gained from organic impressions of ads displayed in replies to their posts.²⁸

To be eligible for revenue sharing, accounts must be subscribed to X Premium, have more than 500 followers, and have accumulated at least 5 million organic impressions on posts within the last 3 months.²⁹ Jackson Hinkle confirmed he was receiving revenue in a post in October, where he shared a screenshot showing he had made over \$550 in the previous month.³⁰

4. Hateful X accounts exploiting the Israel-Gaza conflict grew nearly four times as fast since October 7 Number of followers



5. We studied 10 accounts that have posted hate in the context of the Israel-Gaza conflict

Our analysis closely studied ten accounts that matched our criteria of having posted hate relevant to the Israel-Gaza conflict since October 7, having X Premium, and having seen rapid follower growth.

The following section provides details on each of the accounts including examples of hateful content that they have posted to X. Accounts are marked with a blue tick (\checkmark) to signify that they have blue 'verified' badges as a result of paying for X Premium. Those with a pink star next to their name (\star) have enabled subscriptions.

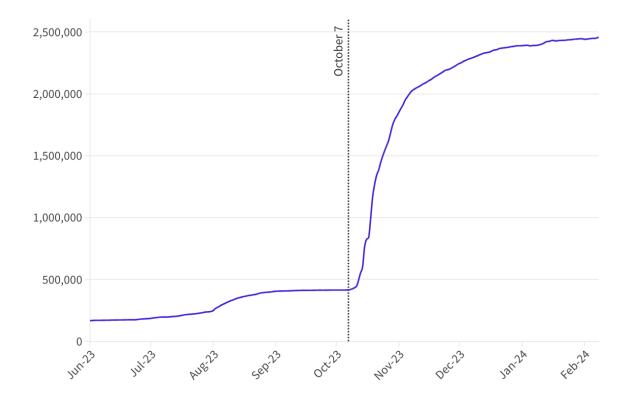
Criticism of hate accounts helps make their content viral

As part of the study, researchers carried out an additional analysis of two examples of high-reach hate posts, showing that the act of criticizing hateful content on X can inadvertently increase its reach.

The analysis shows that critical quote posts of these hate posts contributed 28% and 16% of their total views respectively. Posts studied include one from Jackson Hinkle, the largest account in our analysis, and Dr Loupis, the second largest account in our analysis. These case studies are detailed in full in Section 5.

Jackson Hinkle 🗸 🛨

Followers: 2.4M



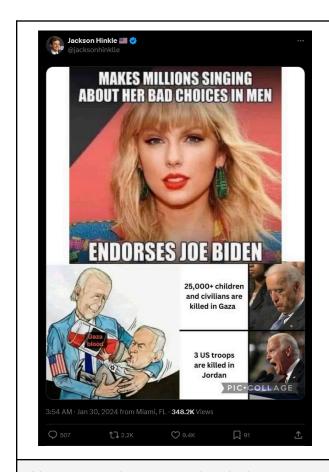
Jackson Hinkle is an influencer who is already banned from WhatsApp, YouTube and PayPal.³¹ Since October 7 he has posted content featuring antisemitic tropes, such as a meme of Benjamin Netanyahu drinking blood from Gaza, and has repeatedly posted misleading claims about the war.³²

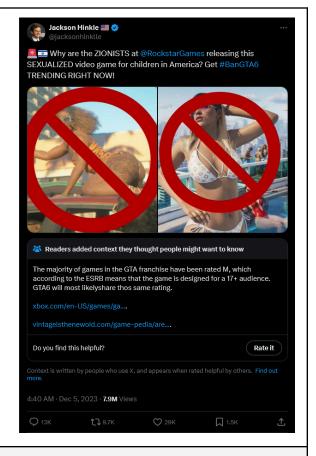
In one example, he reportedly posted false claims that an image alleged to be of a child killed by Hamas was generated by Al.³³ He has also posted images that he claims are from Gaza, when in fact they were taken in Syria.³⁴

His posts frequently receive community notes, a crowdsourced fact-checking feature that allows users to provide context to potentially misleading posts.³⁵ CCDH researchers identified a total of 31 instances after October 7 where Hinkle's posts received community notes.

Hinkle has confirmed that he is profiting from X via ad revenue and subscriptions. At the start of October, he posted a screenshot showing that he had made over \$550 from ad

revenue over the course of a month.³⁶ Later that October, he shared a screenshot that included his subscriber count on X, which at the time was 467.³⁷



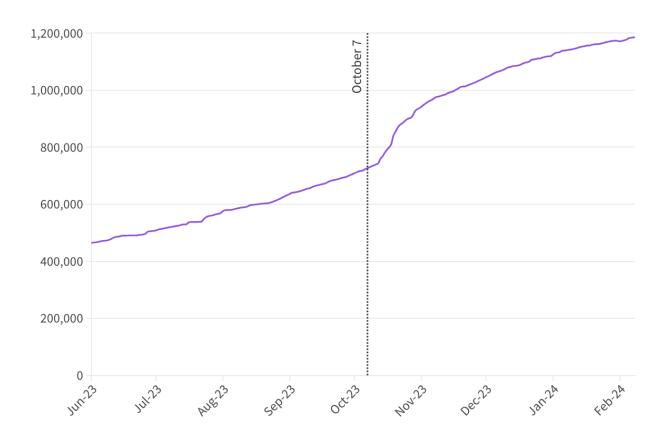


This post contains a meme that depicts
Benjamin Netanyahu drinking blood from Gaza,
drawing on the antisemitic trope known as
"blood libel".³⁸

This post claims Zionists are creating sexualised video games to target children, playing on the antisemitic trope of Jewish people corrupting young people.³⁹

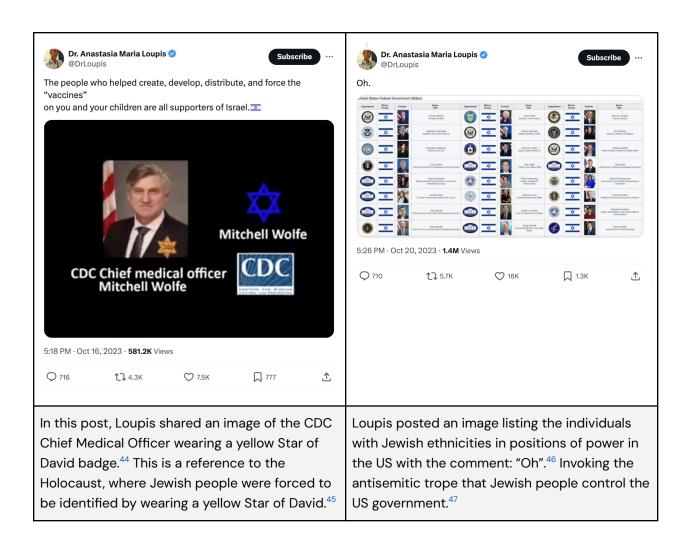
Dr. Anastasia Maria Loupis 🗸 🛨

Followers: 1.2M



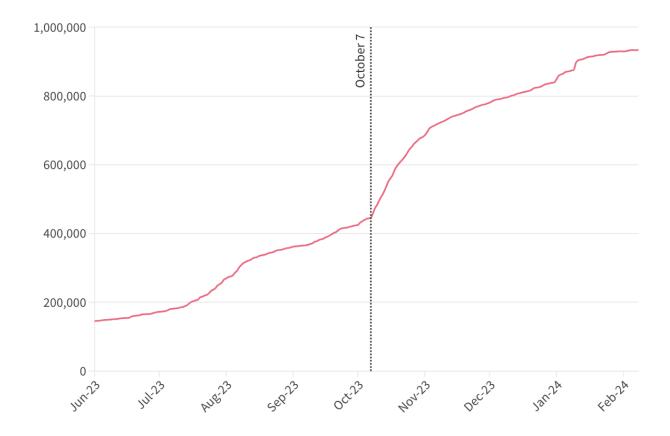
Dr. Anastasia Maria Loupis is a doctor based in Denmark who rose to prominence posting anti-vax content during the pandemic, she has now shifted her focus to the Israel-Gaza conflict.⁴⁰ She has posted antisemitic content, such as images of vaccine developers wearing the Nazi yellow Star of David badge.⁴¹

Dr. Loupis is now reportedly under investigation by the Danish Medical Association's Ethics Board for her antisemitic posts. 42 Her alleged legal representation has reportedly repeated white supremacist talking points. 43



Censored Men 🗸 🛨

Followers: 968.9K



Censored Men is an anonymous account that was originally used largely to defend Andrew Tate, but since October 7 has focused on the Israel–Gaza conflict.⁴⁸ It has been described as one of the most influential X accounts on the Israel–Gaza conflict by the Center for an Informed Public, and frequently posts misinformation about the conflict.⁴⁹



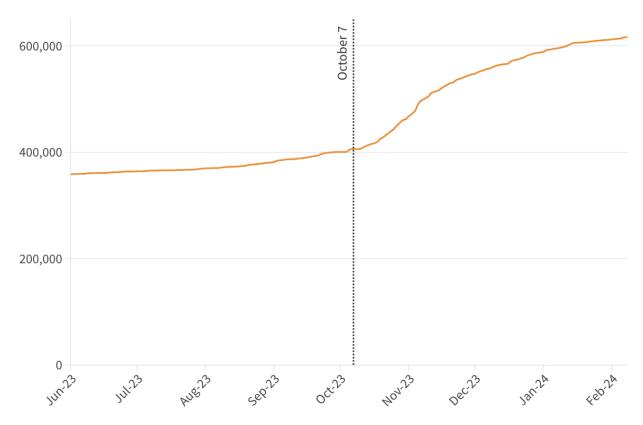


Censored Men posted this image which features famous sex offenders Harvey Weinstein, Jimmy Savile and Jeffrey Epstein photoshopped to display support for Israel.⁵⁰ This plays off the antisemitic trope that Jewish people are in alliance with sex offenders.⁵¹

In this post they described a video of America bowing to Israel as "100% accurate", referencing the conspiracy that Israel controls the American government.⁵²

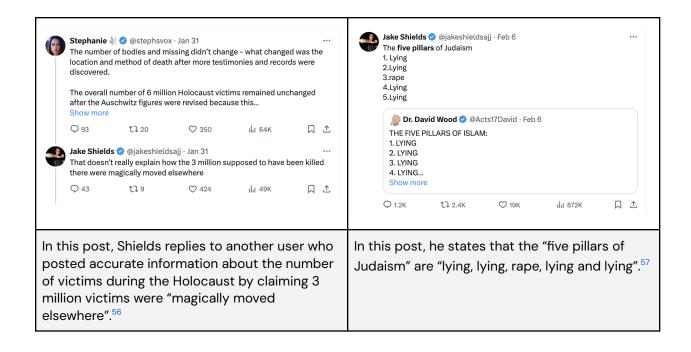
Jake Shields 🗸 🛨

Followers: 629.3K



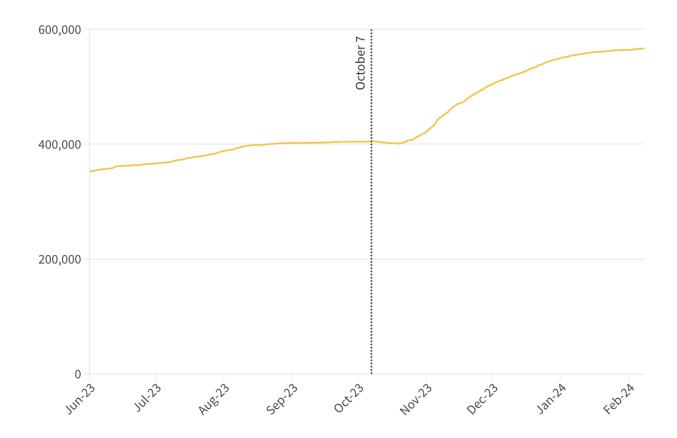
Jake Shields is a UFC fighter turned far-right internet personality who has previously posted anti-vax and anti-LGBTQ+ content.⁵³ Since October 7, he has appeared to question the scale of the Holocaust, for example claiming that there are "3 million unaccounted for".⁵⁴

This statement is a common Holocaust denial trope, which is factually inaccurate as the number of Jews killed during the Holocaust is well-documented and supported by extensive historical evidence.⁵⁵



Dr. Eli David 🗸 🛨

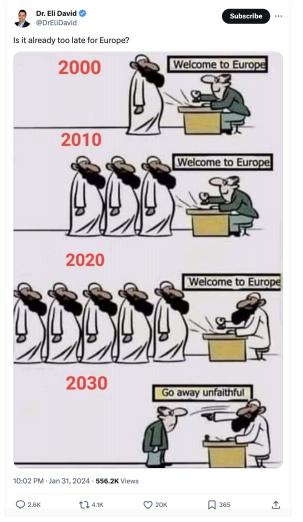
Followers: 575.1K



Dr. Eli David is a Covid conspiracy theorist and co-founder of a healthcare company.⁵⁸ Since October 7 he has pivoted from posting about Covid-19 to posting about the Israel-Gaza conflict, including posting hateful content such as an image depicting Palestinians as rats.⁵⁹

David has also posted content featuring the Eurabia conspiracy, a far-right talking point about Muslims allegedly taking over Europe.⁶⁰



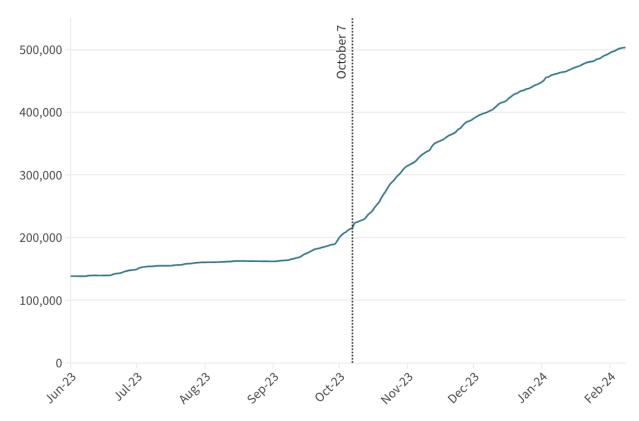


In this post, he depicted Palestinians as rats.⁶¹ Depicting people as rats is a common dehumanizing technique and has historically been used in propaganda campaigns to justify violence against people.⁶²

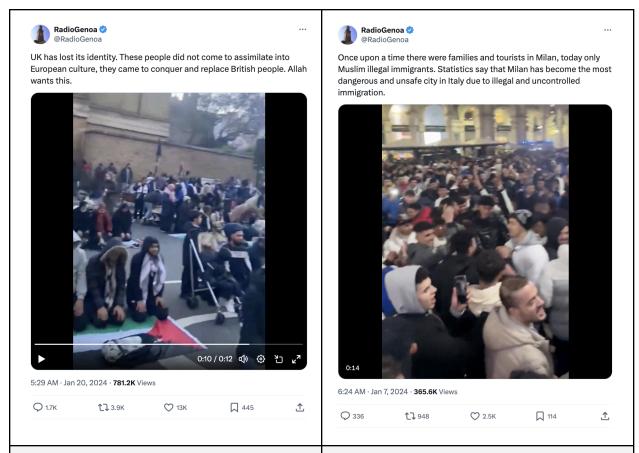
He posted a meme depicting Europe as being overrun with Muslim immigrants.⁶³ This spreads the Islamophobic Eurabia conspiracy theory, that European countries have surrendered control of their governments and culture to Muslims.⁶⁴

Radio Genoa 🗸

Followers: 545.9K



Radio Genoa is not a radio station, but a xenophobic and pro-Russian account that regularly posts inflammatory content depicting migrants as threatening and violent, often focusing on Muslims.⁶⁵ Research by the Italian fact-checking organization Facta has indicated it may be part of a "transnational disinformation network".⁶⁶

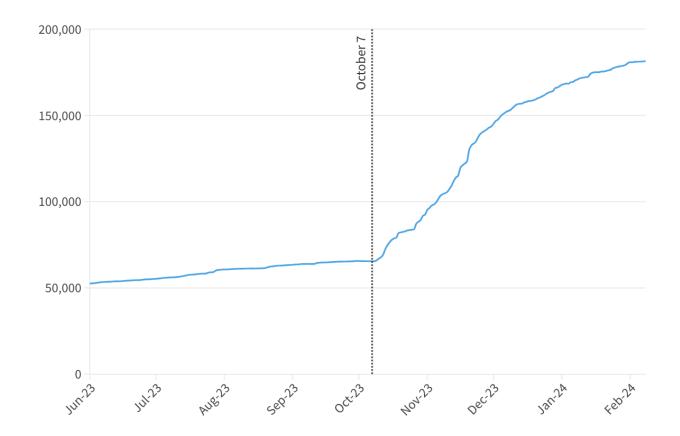


The account has posted a video of pro-Palestine protests in the UK, claiming that the protestors "did not come to assimilate into European culture, they came to conquer and replace the British people", spreading the Eurabian conspiracy that Europe is being culturally replaced by Muslims.⁶⁷

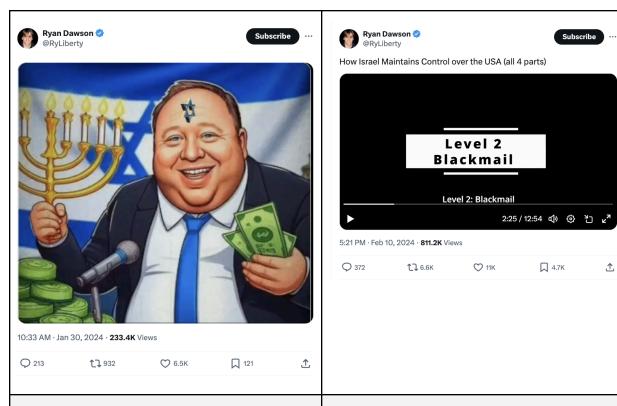
The account posted a video of Milan saying that the city now has "only Muslim illegal immigrants" and that: "Statistics say that Milan has become the most dangerous and unsafe city in Italy due to illegal and uncontrolled immigration", again spreading the Eurabian conspiracy.⁶⁸

Ryan Dawson 🗸 🛨

Followers: 187.8K



Ryan Dawson is a Holocaust denier who was previously banned from X before being reinstated in 2023.⁶⁹ He has created several 9/11 'documentaries' and promotes the antisemitic myth that the 9/11 attacks were a false flag operation carried out by Israel.⁷⁰

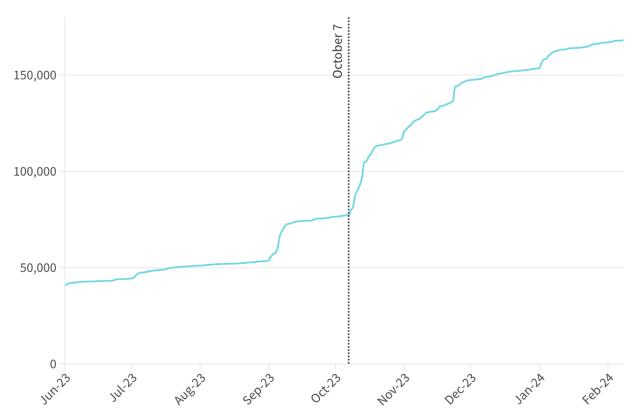


He posted antisemitic imagery such as this meme depicting Alex Jones surrounded by Jewish symbols and money.⁷¹ This plays into centuries old antisemitic tropes about Jewish people being greedy or controlling the world's wealth.⁷²

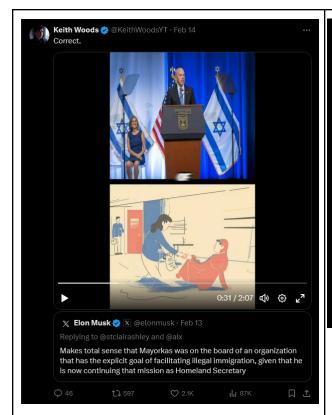
He has shared a documentary he described as "How Israel Maintains Control over the USA", which states that "a network of wealthy Jews acts as the financial backbone to construct a massive blackmail operation", referencing the conspiracy that Israel controls the American government.⁷³

Keith Woods ✓

Followers: 169.3K



Keith Woods is a self-described "raging antisemite" from Ireland, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center. He has belittled the Holocaust, hosted the neo-nazi Nick Fuentes on his YouTube channel, and appeared as a guest on the podcast of the National Justice Party which has been described as "pro-Hitler". To



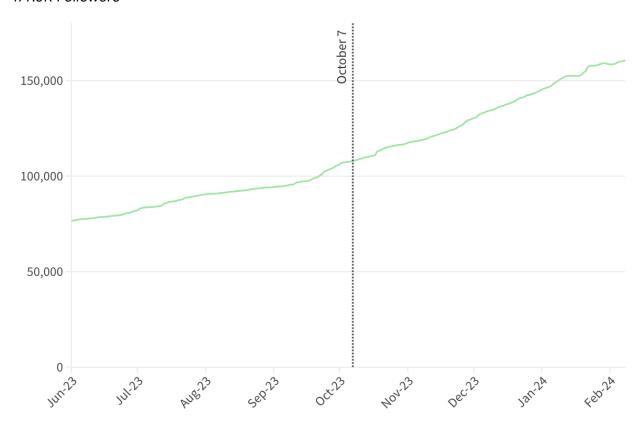


In one post Woods alleges that immigrants are being intentionally allowed through the US/Mexico border because of Jewish influence groups. ⁷⁶ Invoking the great replacement, an antisemitic conspiracy theory that Jewish people are using immigration to replace white populations. ⁷⁷

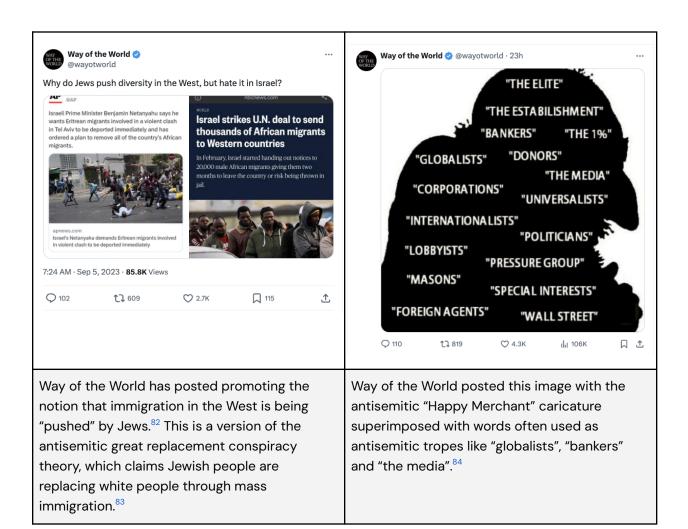
Woods claimed the Jewish conservative political commentator, Ben Shapiro, is "supporting the great replacement".⁷⁸

Way of the World 🗸

177.9K Followers

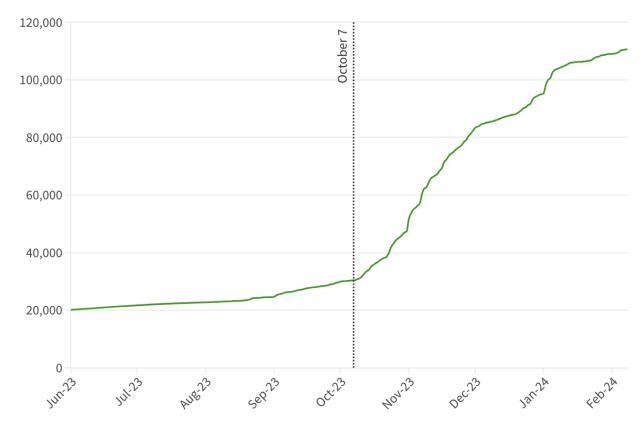


Way of the World is an X account whose bio reads "Friend of Westernkind. Globalism is satanic". The term "globalism" is notable since it is often used as an antisemitic dog whistle, according to the ADL. The account frequently posts antisemitic and racist memes such as antisemitic caricatures of Jewish people. In the control of the ADL account frequently posts antisemitic and racist memes such as antisemitic caricatures of Jewish people.



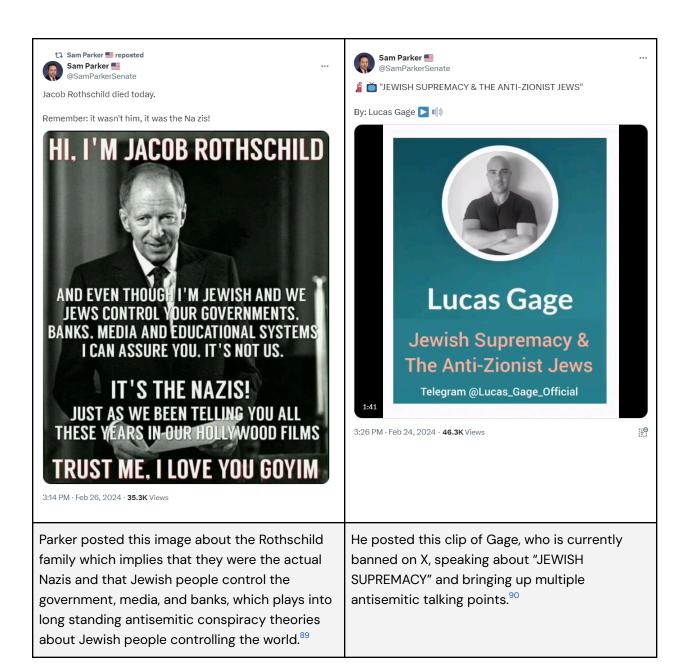
Sam Parker ✓*

Followers: 114K



Sam Parker is a former candidate for Utah Senate.⁸⁵ His bio includes a call to repeal several amendments from the US Constitution, including the 19th amendment, which grants women the right to vote.⁸⁶ Since October 7, he has spread antisemitic conspiracy theories and promoted antisemitic content by suspended X user and white nationalist Lucas Gage (aka Angelo John Gage).⁸⁷

^{*}Sam Parker was verified during the period of study, but his verification has since been removed.⁸⁸



6. Hateful accounts gain extra reach from users criticizing them

Hateful accounts gain the greatest reach when their content is shared by thousands of other users. However, this reach does not just come from supporters but also comes from those sharing their content with the intent of criticizing it.

In this way, well-meaning users hoping to criticize hateful accounts can inadvertently boost their reach. To better understand this phenomenon, we conducted case studies of posts from the two most popular users analyzed by this report: Jackson Hinkle and Anastasia Marie Loupis.

For these studies, we considered the role of four different means by which hateful posts could gain reach and accumulate views:

- 1. Views from a hateful account's own followers
- 2. Views from a hateful account's supporters resharing its content
- 3. Views from a hateful account's critics resharing its content
- 4. Views from users shown the hateful posts by X's algorithm

To estimate views in the third category, we manually identified and measured the number of views accumulated by "critical quote posts" of the posts used for our case studies.

Well-meaning critics can contribute as much as 28% of the reach of hateful content

Our case studies demonstrate that "critical quote posts" can contribute as much as 28% of the reach of hateful posts. It provides direct evidence that well-meaning critics can make a significant contribution to the visibility of hateful content on X.

This is likely an underestimate. As noted, posts can gain visibility from supportive quote posts and critical quote posts, but they also gain visibility when X's algorithms decide to amplify them.

X states that posts appearing on users' algorithmically determined "For You" feeds are selected using a "variety of signals, including how popular it is and how people in your network are interacting with it". 91

Engaging with hateful content - either to support it or to criticize it - can therefore also have the effect of increasing the likelihood that X will algorithmically amplify it. This means

we are likely to be underestimating the full role of critical quote posts in boosting the reach of hateful content.

It also demonstrates that X accounts are clearly incentivized to post controversial or exaggerated claims that will get their content shared by supporters and critics alike.

28% of views for this conspiracy about "Zionists" came from critical quote posts

Rate it



Analysis shows that at least 28% of views for this post by Jackson Hinkle came from users who were quoting it in order to criticize it.⁹²

The post draws on antisemitic tropes about Jewish people corrupting young people. Community Notes now attached to the post point out that the video game in question is not rated for children, and that the game's publisher has no links to Zionism.⁹³

The post gained 7.9 million views in total.⁹⁴ Our analysis shows that at least 2,228,346 of these views, or 28%, came from quote quote posts that were critical of Hinkle.More detail on our methodology is available in an Appendix at the end of this report.

Context is written by people who use X, and appears when rated helpful by others. Find out

11:40 PM · Dec 4, 2023 · **7.9M** Views

esrb.org/ratings/6997/g... esrb.org/ratings/24582/...

esrb.org/ratings/36493/... esrb.org/ratings/33275/...

esrb.org/ratings/8230/g...

Do you find this helpful?

16% of impressions for this antisemitic post came from critical quote posts



Another example of a high-reach hateful post by Dr. Anastasia Loupis again shows that the virality of hate posts can be boosted by criticism. The post shows the flag of Israel next to the faces of various Jewish officials in the US, and reached over 18.8 million impressions.⁹⁵

By analyzing quote data on Loupis' post, researchers found that 3,172,396 impressions, or at least 16%, were driven solely from criticism.

The quote posts for Loupis were varied, showing a mix of criticism and praise. One of the criticisms

that received over a million impressions came from a leftist YouTube commentary account with a following of almost 700,000.96

Based on the replies of some users who asked others to rate the note as "not helpful" and Loupis herself, it appears that the post once had a community note that was later removed.⁹⁷

7. We were served ads near hateful content on X

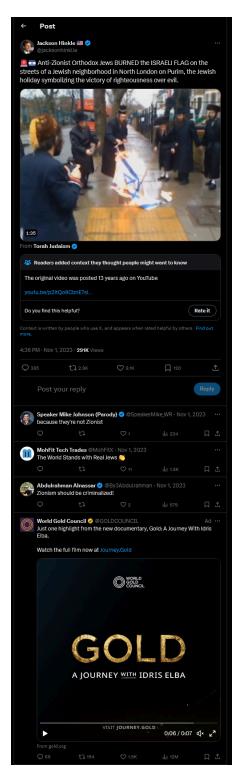
X has previously claimed that it has systems in place to prevent brand ads from displayed around "potentially objectionable content". X claims that:

- "We only serve ads on Profiles that we deem to be safe for ads."
- "We... do not place ads within the Replies to Tweets from accounts that we
 determine to be not safe for ads... and employ additional modeling to avoid including
 ads in replies that include conversations that may be considered unsafe or
 unsuitable."
- "We launched an industry-standard blocklist that aims to protect advertisers from appearing adjacent to unsafe keywords in the Home Timeline (i.e. For You and Following)." ⁹⁹

To test these claims, we modified an X account to follow just the ten hateful accounts studied by this report. We then scrolled this account's home feed, the profiles of the ten hateful accounts we studied and the replies under individual hateful posts.

This resulted in the capture of at least one example ad appearing near a hateful post from each of the ten accounts studied by this report. It shows that X is still failing to prevent ads from being displayed near hateful content. These posts are compiled below.

Where we have captured ads, this serves as evidence that X's systems have allowed an ad to be served near the content in question on at least one occasion. Unfortunately X does not share data on how many times ads have been displayed near a single piece of content.



Jackson Hinkle: An ad featuring Idris Elba promoting the new documentary from the World Gold Council appeared in the replies under a post from Hinkle, in which he misleadingly uploaded footage of Jewish people burning the flag of Israel without the context that the footage is from 13 years ago.¹⁰⁰



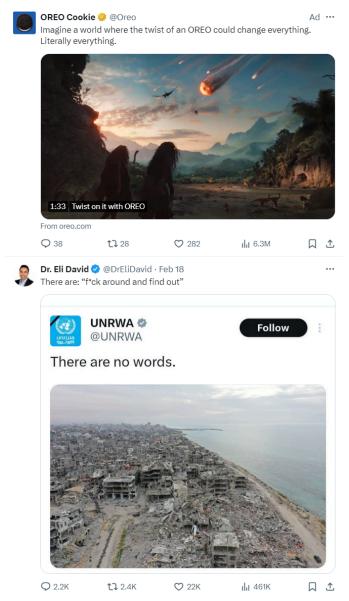
Dr. Anastasia Maria Loupis: An advert for X's own Developers API appeared under a post in which Dr. Anastasia Maria Loupis says "Agreed" to a photo meme that compares Israel's actions to the Holocaust by claiming that what the Germans did to Jewish people in the Holocaust is "self-defense" if Israel's current actions are self-defense.¹⁰¹



Censored Men: An ad for the FBI publicizing their effort to combat hate crimes appeared in the replies under a post from Censored Men in which he claims "Israel is a 'Safe Haven' for Convicted Pedophiles". Painting the entire country in this light plays into the antisemitic trope of Jewish sexual deviance and immorality. 103



Jake Shields: An ad for This Week in Startups appeared in the replies under a post from Jake Shields, in which he questions if 6 million people died in the Holocaust.¹⁰⁴ This post was part of a series of replies to another post by Shields where he defended himself for "simply asking" about the numbers of people killed during the Holocaust.¹⁰⁵

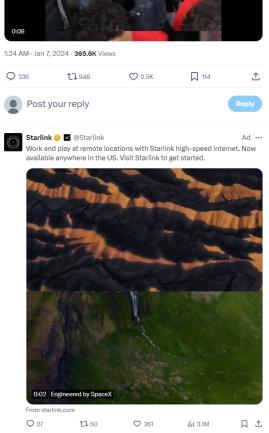


Dr Eli David: An ad for Oreos appeared above a post by Dr. Eli David in which he mocks and trivializes the mass bombing of Palestine, saying "f*ck around and find out" in response to an image of a destroyed city.¹⁰⁶



Once upon a time there were families and tourists in Milan, today only Muslim illegal immigrants. Statistics say that Milan has become the most dangerous and unsafe city in Italy due to illegal and uncontrolled immigration.





Radio Genoa: An ad for Starlink appeared in the replies under a post from RadioGenoa in which they blame Muslim immigrants for making Milan the most dangerous and unsafe city in Italy.¹⁰⁷



FRIENDS,

Q 439

From prageru.com

t] 80

0:00 / 1:46 4× 1

ılı 360K

Ryan Dawson: An ad for PragerU appeared in the replies under a post by Ryan Dawson where he posted antisemitic meme depicting Alex Jones surrounded by Jewish symbols and money.¹⁰⁸



0:12 · 13 Feb 24 · **132K** Views **173** Reposts **18** Quotes **2,188** Lik

ılı 144K

llowing 40.3K Folk

Q 251

Account suspended

1, 1.3K

♥ 7.2K

Keith Woods: An ad for Life Line Screening appeared above a post by Keith Woods in which he has tagged Elon Musk and says, "if I start identifying as Jewish can I get @elonmusk to suspend people I don't like?".¹⁰⁹



about Archer's eVTOL aircraft.

Way of the World: An ad by Archer Aviation appeared under a post from Way of the World which reads "The 'chosen' people" and includes an image of multiple screenshots of news headlines. ¹¹⁰ Each of these headlines refers to pedophiles allegedly coming to Israel, playing into antisemitic tropes about Jewish people. ¹¹¹



口立

ıl_ıı 261K

Q 32

t7 45

598

Sam Parker: An ad by the NBA appeared next to a post in which Sam Parker posts an antisemitic Telegram link about Jewish Supremacy by white-nationalist Lucas Gage in response to another post asking "Who's behind all wars and destruction?" 112

8. Recommendations

It is clear from the results of a number of studies by CCDH and others that the new leadership of X has not discouraged antisemities, and instead has effectively welcomed them, and accounts which seek to spread hate. The increase in followers and reach for the accounts identified in this report is, we believe, a direct result of the policy changes made under owner, Elon Musk, and CEO, Linda Yaccarino.

- Regulators already investigating X must take this research as further evidence that
 the platform is failing to uphold its duties to keep users safe, enforce its terms and
 conditions, and that they should further examine the relationship between the
 platform and creators in its monetization policy.
- Policymakers should move beyond addressing whether a platform is enforcing its terms and conditions, and demand that platforms offer greater accountability, transparency, and safety for users.
 - Transparency of:
 - Data behind the volume, circulation, and views of hateful content that violates their rules
 - Policies on monetization of accounts and criteria for monetization of accounts through the revenue-sharing program

Accountability

- Explanation for inaction in enforcing policies and clarity on the mechanism and timeline behind removing violative content.
- Actionable reporting pathways for users for abuse, hate, and violent content.

Responsibility

■ People who are harmed as a result of actionable negligence should be able to seek restitution through the courts. Whereas X has been more than willing to sue critics, social media companies are protected by a negligence shield that is unique and doesn't allow for them to be held to the same standards we hold every other corporation in America.

- X has stated to advertisers that "adjacency" of advertisements to hate or other violative content is a strategic priority for the platform. Advertisers may take note of this research showing, again, that X may not fully prevent their ads from continuing to be served next to hateful, antisemitic content.
- This report makes abundantly clear to allies, civil society, and the public that
 engaging with hateful content, even in criticism, amplifies it. We sincerely
 recommend the adoption of tactics that minimize the algorithmic salience of hate
 content, and that counter it in the most effective way possible.

Appendix: Methodology

This appendix sets out the methodology we used for selecting accounts, analyzing their follower growth, identifying ads near their content and producing case studies of the role of critical quote posts in boosting their reach.

How we selected the accounts

A sample of ten influential X accounts posting hateful content in the context of the Israel-Gaza conflict since October 7 was selected for analysis based on predetermined criteria.

The criteria for selecting accounts is as follows: (1) accounts which have responded to the Israel–Gaza conflict since October 7 by posting antisemitic, Islamophobic or otherwise hateful content relevant to the conflict, such as anti–Palestinian hate; (2) accounts which have seen a rapid follower growth; (3) accounts marked with blue 'verified' badges during the period of study.

How we studied follower growth

Analysis of the follower count of the ten X accounts was undertaken using historical follower data from the social media analytics tool, Social Blade, with the exception of a single data point that was gathered instead using the Wayback machine due to a stretch of missing data from Social Blade.¹¹³

The growth in followings of the ten accounts in the four months after the October 7 attack was calculated as the difference between their follower-count on 7 October 2023 and their follower-count on 7 February 2024.

The growth in the four months prior to the October 7 attack was calculated in order to compare the growth of the accounts' followings before and after the attack. This was calculated as the difference between the accounts' follower-count on 7 October 2023 and their follower-count on 7 June 2023.

In the case of one account – Sam Parker – the data point for follower-count on 7 June 2023 was not available from Social Blade owing to a stretch of missing data. Instead, we used the follower-count on the wayback archive of his X profile from the closest available date before 7 June 2023, which was 16 May 2023.¹¹⁴

How we identified ads near hateful content

Researchers carried out tests to confirm that X is serving ads near hateful posts by each of the ten accounts. To do this, they modified an X account to follow just the ten hateful accounts and manually scrolled through the home feed, looking for examples of ads appearing near hateful posts. They also scrolled through profiles and checked for ads appearing in the replies under individual posts. At least one example of an ad appearing near a hateful post was collected for each of the ten accounts.

How we produced case studies about critical quote posts

For the case studies, two accounts with the highest growth in following (Jackson Hinkle and Dr Anastasia Maria Loupis) were selected for a close analysis of quote posts, formerly known as "quote tweets", to determine the impact they can inadvertently have on the engagement of the original hate post.

Two strong examples of original hate posts with high engagement were selected from these accounts. Using X's advanced search function, researchers conducted a manual search to identify quoted posts with a large number of quote posts or likes and determine whether they were critical in nature or were agreeing with the original content. An estimated percentage of impressions driven by critical quote posts was calculated using the total impression count on the original post.

X does not explicitly state whether the impression or view figures displayed for a post include the number of times it was viewed as part of a quote post. However, X states in its Help Center that "Anyone who is logged into X who views a post counts as a view, regardless of where they see the post (e.g. Home, Search, Profiles, etc.) or whether or not they follow the author." The platform's developer documentation also states that "Impressions represent the number of times that a given Tweet has been viewed on the Twitter platform in an organic context." For these reasons we have assumed that quote posts do contribute to the original post's impressions.

The figures presented in the report are likely to be underestimates as it was not possible to gather and analyze all of the quote posts – we were restricted to analyzing those with high-engagement via X's advanced search feature.

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- ³ Further detail on this finding is available in Section 2
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