MONETIZING HATE:

How 100+ major brands are bankrolling anti-LGBTQ+ extremism on YouTube
## Summary

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Introduction
The rise and proliferation of anti-LGBTQ+ content on YouTube isn’t unfolding in the shadows of the platform — but in broad daylight. In recent years, influential channels, some of which have millions of subscribers, are promoting fear and hate of LGBTQ+ people based on who they are.

Even worse, many of these anti-LGBTQ+ channels are monetized, meaning the creators and YouTube earn revenue every time someone views their videos and sees an ad. Google, which owns YouTube, automatically places the ads based on advertiser preferences and target audience profiles. This should concern everyone, including advertisers who may be unknowingly risking brand safety, by having their products associated with anti-LGBTQ+ hate in direct conflict with their company values, while financially supporting harmful content.

YouTube’s Community Guidelines state: “Hate speech is not allowed on YouTube. We don’t allow content that promotes violence or hatred against individuals or groups based on any of the following attributes [...] Gender Identity and Expression; Sex/Gender; Sexual Orientation [...]” For channels that are a part of the YouTube Partner Program, meaning their videos are eligible for ad monetization, the company stipulates additional content guidelines and AdSense Program policies. YouTube says it enforces these policies, keeping people and brands safe on the platform and thus helping curtail offline harms against historically marginalized communities.

Our research tells a different story. Ekō identified ads from more than 104 brands that position themselves as allies to the LGBTQ+ community. Despite their claims, their ads appear in hateful content targeting these groups. These brands span industries from automotive to fashion to health and wellness.

These findings point to larger issues both with YouTube’s content moderation systems, as well as its advertiser-friendly controls. What has manifested in our sample is an ecosystem of hate-fueled engagement, where bad actors generating hateful, false and “borderline content” are rewarded with money from the digital advertising budgets of some of the world’s leading brands.
Researchers found ads from 125 household brands appearing on 13 monetized videos that appear to be in violation of YouTube’s policies. These included ads from at least 104 brands that have publicly expressed support for the LGBTQ+ community such as CoverGirl, SKIMS, Lyft, Nike, and L’Oréal.

At the time of research, the videos were viewed 9.59M times and uploaded by channels amassing 17.8M followers, which regularly promote anti-LGBTQ+ hate, harassment, and disinformation, and which collectively earn an estimated $780K to $12.45M annually through monetization, according to Social Blade.

Ads appearing next to hateful and derogatory content: Brands like Toyota, UGG, J.Crew, CoverGirl, Nike, SKIMS, HelloFresh, and Redken by L’Oréal, appear on videos that claim that transgender people are “demons”, “evil,” “mentally ill”, “terrorists”, and “pedophiles”, as well as videos that feature targeted misgendering, slurs and other profane anti-LGBTQ language.

Ads on violent content: Brands such as Discover, Mazda, BMW, Petco, Reebok, appear on videos that call for violence against LGBTQ+ people, including their mass arrest.

Ads on incendiary and demeaning content: Brands such as Sony, Salesforce, T-Mobile, Birkenstock, and Cadbury, appear on videos which encourage the bullying of LGBTQ+ youth, as well as those pushing dangerous and baseless tropes asserting that LGBTQ people sexually abuse children.

The ads are appearing on monetized videos that seem to be in violation of YouTube’s policies, including hateful and derogatory content, incendiary and demeaning content, shocking content, and violence.

Breakdown of ad types: 51 were in-stream or bumper video ads; 74 were display ads.
Methodology
Between 24 August and 26 September 2023, our researchers identified a sample of 13 monetized videos by popular channels known to promote LGBTQ+ hate content, as documented by civil society organizations which monitor LGBTQ+ hate. These videos seemingly violate YouTube’s Community Guidelines and advertiser-friendly content guidelines. Researchers cross-referenced these guidelines against each video to corroborate whether this content would prohibit monetization. Researchers watched the videos and documented slurs or stereotypes that promote hatred, targeted misgendering, inappropriate content for kids and families, dehumanizing and conspiratorial claims, and calls for violence.

Researchers set up new Google accounts, and turned off cookie tracking within the web browser, since Google commonly uses profile data to serve targeted ads. The researchers then captured screenshots of in-stream and display ads that appeared on and/or next to these videos. For a comprehensive list of the ads identified, refer to the appendix.

The researchers used the online tool Social Blade to get an estimate of yearly earnings from monetization for each channel documented in the research.

The content observed on the videos identified in the research was classified under Google’s advertiser content policy by Ekō researchers under the following categories: Inappropriate language; Violence; Shocking content; Hateful & derogatory content; Controversial issues; Inappropriate content for kids & families; Incendiary and demeaning.
A look at anti-LGBTQ+ hate on YouTube

Researchers chose the sample of monetized videos based on YouTube’s hate speech policy and advertiser-friendly guidelines, both of which the content seemingly violates. The company defines hate speech as “content that promotes violence or hatred against individuals or groups based on any of the following attributes, which indicate a protected group status under YouTube’s policy: Age, Caste, Disability, Ethnicity, Gender Identity and Expression, Nationality, Race, Immigration Status, Religion, Sex/Gender, Sexual Orientation, Victims of a major violent event and their kin, Veteran Status.”

YouTube further clarifies: Content should not “incite hatred against individuals or groups based on their protected group status” or “encourage violence against individuals or groups based on their protected group status. We don’t allow threats on YouTube, and we treat implied calls for violence as real threats.”

Below, we dig into how each of the monetized videos explicitly breaks these policies, including dehumanization of LGBTQ+ people (e.g. calling them “demons”), claims that trans people are mentally ill (e.g. labeling them “insane”), stereotypes that incite hatred (e.g. insinuations of pedophilia) and glorification of anti-trans violence.

On YouTube, prominent channels have emerged as leading proponents of anti-LGBTQ+ hate, notably against trans people. These influencers have helped galvanize anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment globally.

Human rights experts have noted that anti-LGBTQ+ extremist rhetoric online could be contributing to a rise in real-world harassment and violence. For example, in August 2023, a Tulsa, Oklahoma school received two consecutive bomb threats following social media posts by the far-right “Libs of TikTok” account targeting a librarian. Five days before, an LGBTQ-allied store owner in California was shot and killed by a man whose X (Twitter) feed espoused anti-LGBTQ+ conspiracy theories. From June 2022-May 2023, the Anti-Defamation League and GLAAD recorded more than 350 anti-LGBTQ incidents in the US, with
at least 191 “making explicit references to ‘grooming’ or ‘pedophilia.’” A follow-up report documented an additional 145 incidents during June 2023 alone.

**Civil society organizations** have documented these trends and have repeatedly called on YouTube and other platforms to enforce their own policies and mitigate harms.

Here are previous examples of inflammatory rhetoric propagated by some of the YouTube accounts included in this research:

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**For the good of society... transgenderism must be eradicated from public life entirely...**

---

**There are freaks, predators, and pedophiles that are all hiding under the LGBT flag.**

---

**Yeah, we all have to put a trans kid and drag them behind a truck. They come in a tackle box, it’s like a half dozen. And you kill them anyway you want, it’s pretty good.**

---

**“Trans ideology...it’s they who are committing genocide against children.”**

---

**Auschwitz and Gulag - level wrong, it’s Nazi medical experiment - level wrong.**

---

**The guy in a dress is a million times more objectionable than blackface.**
The thirteen monetized videos featuring prominent anti-LGBTQ+ extremist voices featured in our research are described in detail below:

**Benny Johnson:** “PANIC! Woke Bud Light Sales COLLAPSE | Billions Lost | Stock Free Fall | Workers REVOLT | Bars BAN!”

**Brands with ads next to this content:** Aston Martin, BMW USA, CENTURY 21, Chevrolet, Cigna Global, CoverGirl, Discover Card, Found, Google Store, Mazda USA, Mitsubishi Motors, Oracle, Scotts, Sony Electronics, Temu, Toyota, Vistaprint.

**Video link:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VCSNV9O66I0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VCSNV9O66I0) / archived link

**Video views:** 62,532 by October 10th, 2023

**Excerpts:**

→ Dylan Mulvaney is “a man cosplaying a woman.”

→ Bud Light “pushed radical transgender ideology, taking advantage of a mentally ill person to do it.”

→ From Tucker Carlson: “Bud Light is celebrating a man dressing up as a woman. His name is Dylan Mulvaney.”

→ “She [Mulvaney] cares about a sick ideology that is en vogue right now. That’s it. And so we must punish those people. We have to penalize them. We have to have it hurt for it to not happen again. The transgender population is like … point zero zero one percent of the population. If you’re going to appeal to them, fine, there’s going to be a suffering that happens. You are going to hurt by doing that, and we need more of it.”

**Content contains:** Hateful & derogatory content; Incendiary and demeaning content; Violence; Use of racial, religious, or other slurs and stereotypes that incite or promote hatred based on protected group status.

**Estimated annual channel revenue:** $293.8K–$4.7M (this estimate was recorded on Sept 4th, estimates fluctuate over time.)

In this video, YouTube creator Benny Johnson discusses a partnership between Bud Light beer brand and Dylan Mulvaney, a trans
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

woman and influencer. The video contains hateful and derogatory anti-trans content, including the malicious targeted misgendering of Mulvaney and claims that all transgender people are “mentally ill”, and promotes violence.

A screenshot of Sony Electronics in-stream video and display ads appearing on this video.

A screenshot of in-stream video and display ads for Chevrolet appearing on this video.
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

BlazeTV: “Trans Teen DIES After Reassignment Surgery | Pseudo-Intellectual with Lauren Chen”

Brands with ads next to this content: ADT, A&E, Capital One Shopping, CENTURY 21, Comcast Business, Liberty Mutual, Lucid Motors, Netflix, Northrop Grumman, Purdue Global, Quilted Northern, Redken by L’Oréal, Reebok, Salesforce, Sony Electronics, Verizon Fios Home, University of Utah, Vimeo, Wix, YouTube.

Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WdJgCuv5G3Q / archived link

Video views: 74,652 by October 10th, 2023

Excerpts:

“Transgender ideology is deadly. And I’m not just referring to the victims of trans terrorism here. No I’m also referring to trans individuals themselves who sometimes choose to undergo risky and mutilating surgeries. We have this piece here from ‘The Post Millennial’ that is currently blowing up online, and it’s shocking in some ways, but not in others. It explains that a trans teen died from vaginoplasty complications during a landmark Dutch study used to justify child sex changes.”

“... like a sexual reassignment surgery where basically your genitals are cut up and doctors try to shape them into something they’re not.”

“If little boys are unable to go through a male puberty, that does affect their penises.”
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

“I am never going to say that it’s perfectly normal and actually a good thing for an 18-year-old to have their penis cut off and made into a vagina because of a mental illness they have.”

“These doctors who were essentially playing Frankenstein with him. He instead died because a bunch of doctors tried to take his intestines, his colon, and shaped them into a vagina. This is disgusting stuff.”

Content contains: Hateful & derogatory content; Shocking content; Incendiary and demeaning content; Conspiratorial claims that individuals or groups are evil, corrupt, or malicious based on their protected group status; Claim that individuals or groups are physically or mentally inferior, deficient, or diseased based on their protected group status; Use of racial, religious, or other slurs and stereotypes that incite or promote hatred based on protected group status.

Estimated annual channel revenue: $79.5K–$1.3M (this estimate was recorded on Sept 4th, estimates fluctuate over time.)

In this video, BlazeTV host, Lauren Chen, pushes hateful and derogatory content, including references to “transgender ideology” and “trans terrorism” as “deadly”. With a tone of clear anti-trans animus, the video describes the genitals of minors and teens at length, stating “penis” or “penile” 7 times and “vagina” or “vaginal” 13 times in the span of a 13-minute video.

A screenshot of in-stream video and display ads for Redken by L’Oréal appearing on this video.
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

A screenshot of an in-stream video and display ads for Netflix appearing on this video.

A screenshot of a display ad for Verizon’s Fios Home Internet appearing on this video.
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

Candace Owens Podcast: “Something Changed in Dylan Mulvaney”

Brands with ads next to this content: ABC, Amazon, Aston Martin, BMW USA, Capital One Shopping, Carhartt, CENTURY 21, Cirque du Soleil, CoverGirl, Fage, Full Sail University, Google Fi Wireless, HelloFresh, Kayak, Kia America, Liongate, MassDOT, Mazda USA, Mercy USA, Michael’s, MIT, Mitsubishi Motors, Nike, Reebok, Salesforce, Sony Electronics, The Wall Street Journal, T-Mobile Home Internet, Toll Brothers, Toyota, University of Utah, Vimeo, YouTube.

Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0X7tZeJpR6U / archived link

Video views: 399,690 by October 10th, 2023

Excerpts:

→ “I have said that what he was doing was something that was going to lead to a justification for pedophilia. If a grown man can say that ‘I am a little girl’ and be accepted and applauded by society and we were going to have a society that says ‘Well what would be wrong with a little girl having a crush on a little boy?’ We were going to begin to normalize that.”

→ “I ask that you respect actual women by stop pretending to be one.”

Content contains: Hateful & derogatory content; Incendiary and demeaning content; Use of racial, religious, or other slurs and stereotypes that incite or promote hatred based on protected group status.

Estimated annual channel revenue: $93.6K-$1.5M (this estimate was recorded on Sept 4th, estimates fluctuate over time.)

In this video, Daily Wire host Candace Owens targets Dylan Mulvaney, a trans woman and influencer. Owens promotes narratives against transgender people, including the dangerous baseless and false conspiracy theory that transgender people are “pedophiles” and are threats to children. The video also repeatedly intentionally misgenders Mulvaney, a common tactic used to express general anti-trans animus while mocking and harassing transgender public figures.
Monetizing hate: how 100+ major brands are bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism on YouTube
For several years, Candace Owens has used her YouTube channel to continuously push anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric. In June 2023, YouTube demonetized several of her anti-trans videos and in September temporarily suspended her channel for promoting anti-LGBTQ+ hate. As of the time of writing, YouTube has reinstated both her channel and monetization capabilities.

**Candace Owens Podcast: “The Real Hero of “What Is a Woman?” With Matt Walsh”**

**Brands with ads next to this content:** Banana Republic, Birkenstock, BMW, Cisco, CoverGirl, Google Ads, Google Store, HelloFresh, Infiniti, Kia, Liberty Mutual, Mazda, Michaels, Nike, Pampers, Petco, Puma, Salesforce, Santoni, SKIMS, Verizon Fios, YouTube, Dave’s Killer Bread, Wix, Kayak.

**Video link:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=67k-yWw8NIQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=67k-yWw8NIQ)

**Video views:** 1,287,977 million by October 10th, 2023

**Excerpts:**

→ “You sat down with the surgeon, and you discussed vaginoplasty ... on a 16-year-old ... I want to punch her in the face. You did not punch her in the face. What I hear when I listen to that is, ‘I mutilated a young child’s body.’”

→ “You’re sitting there, staring into pure evil.”
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

“So-called sex change surgery, top surgery, chopping the breasts off of girls is, uh, increasingly common and they’re doing it in California now down to the age, I believe, the age of 13 … Actually the fact that you just cited that suicidality is the highest after surgery. That makes sense to me intuitively … because you know the underlying mental problem is still there after surgery but now you’ve added on this extra level of you’ve mutilated your body.”

“Is Lupron chemical castration? Yes. We’re giving it to pedophiles, aren’t we?”

“My child now has a micro-penis.”

“Gender ideology is so toxic and damaging and insane.”

Content contains: Hateful & derogatory content; Shocking content; Conspiratorial claims that individuals or groups are evil, corrupt, or malicious based on their protected group status; Claim that individuals or groups are physically or mentally inferior, deficient, or diseased based on their protected group status; Use of racial, religious, or other slurs and stereotypes that incite or promote hatred based on protected group status.

Estimated annual channel revenue: $93.6K-$1.5M (this estimate was recorded on Sept 4th, estimates fluctuate over time.)

In this video, Candace Owens interviews anti-LGBTQ commentator and Daily Wire host Matt Walsh about his anti-trans film “What is a Woman?”, which propagates harmful tropes and disinformation about transgender people and which has been described as “a science denying propaganda film disguised as a documentary.” Early 2023, YouTube demonetized Walsh’s channel for repeatedly breaking the platform’s advertiser-friendly guidelines for pushing LGBTQ+ hate content. In September, the platform reversed the penalty, and his videos are eligible again for monetization.

This video seems to violate the platform’s guidelines on shocking content as it goes into graphic detail on what it describes as “so-called sex change surgery” and falsely characterizes gender-affirming care as “experimental procedures” (every major medical association and leading world health authority supports health care for transgender people and youth as safe, effective, and lifesaving). Owens remarks that she wanted to “punch” a healthcare provider who provides this care “in the face,” and says that the provider is
“pure evil.” The video ends by suggesting that “gender ideology is so toxic and damaging and insane,” rhetoric that Walsh also extensively promotes offline. In October 2022, Walsh organized an anti-trans rally that targeted Vanderbilt Children’s Hospital and drew a crowd of extremists, including the Proud Boys (a neo-Nazi group).
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

Candace Owens Podcast: “Kid Rock’s Incredible Response to Bud Light”

Brands with ads next to this content: Arizona State University, Chewy Pharmacy, Chevrolet, Dyson Google Pixel, Google Cloud, Kia, Liberty Mutual, L.L. Bean, SKIMS, T-Mobile, Universal Music Group, and Wix.

Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZ19c16nZOQ / archived link

Video views: 1,893,375 million by October 10th, 2023

Excerpts:

→ “Dylan Mulvaney, he is an actor, he has always been an actor and this has probably been his greatest act”

→ “Corporations are coming to push this delusion ... It is part of a larger conspiracy to take down America. That’s the truth. There’s a larger conspiracy at bay here to take down America.”

→ “You’re taking drugs to render yourself infertile for life to chemically castrate yourself.”

Content contains: Hateful & derogatory content; Shocking content; Incendiary and demeaning content; Violence; Conspiratorial claims that individuals or groups are evil, corrupt, or malicious based on their protected group status; Claim that individuals or groups are physically or
mentally inferior, deficient, or diseased based on their protected group status.

Estimated annual channel revenue: $93,600–$1,500,000 (this estimate was recorded on Sept 4th, estimates fluctuate over time.)

In this video, Candace Owens praises Kid Rock for shooting boxes of Bud Light with an assault rifle, following the company’s partnership with Dylan Mulvaney, a transgender woman and influencer. LGBTQ+ advocates have said the original Kid Rock clip, posted to his social media channels, glorifies violence against transgender people and allies. Owens’ video begins with intentional targeted misgendering of Mulvaney, later claiming that transgender people are “part of a larger conspiracy to take down America.” The video ends with the false inflammatory mischaracterization of gender-affirming care as to “chemically castrate yourself.”
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

Jordan B Peterson: “Parental Trauma in a World of Gender Insanity | Miriam Grossman MD | EP 347”

Brands with ads next to this content: Allen Edmonds, Amazon, American Girl, Aramco, Aston Martin, Berklee Online, Birkenstock, BMW USA, Boston College, CENTURY 21, Cisco Systems, CoverGirl, Verizon Fios Home, Fleming and Howland, Google Fi Wireless, Infiniti, Kayak, Kia, Liberty Mutual, Lyft, Mazda USA, Mitsubishi Motors, Monday.com, Native, Northrop Grumman, Petco, Ram Trucks, Reebok, Salesforce, SAS & Ulta Beauty, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Stanford University, T-Mobile Home Internet, Tod’s, Toyota, UC Berkeley, University of Maryland, Universal Pictures, Wix, YouTube, and Zillow.

Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Su2Z4_iQHz4 / archived link

Video views: 2,137,091 million by October 10th, 2023

Excerpts:
→ “… that’s going to turn the person you love into something like a confused monstrosity …”
→ “It’s unfathomable how bad this is, how evil this is.”

Content contains: Hateful & derogatory content; Dehumanization of individuals or groups by calling them subhuman, comparing them to animals, insects, pests, disease, or any other non-human entity based on their protected group status; Conspiratorial claims that individuals or groups are evil, corrupt, or malicious based on their protected group status.
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

Estimated annual channel revenue: $35.2K-$563.7K (this estimate was recorded on Sept 4th, estimates fluctuate over time.)

In this video, Daily Wire host Jordan Peterson is joined by Dr. Miriam Grossman in a one-hour and 39 minute segment filled with hateful and derogatory content. Employing extreme fear-mongering, dehumanization and scare tactics, the video incorporates the phrase “gender insanity” in the title and pushes conspiracies that transgender people are “delusional” and likens healthcare providers who offer gender-affirming care to “sadistic ... butchers.” Using blatant dehumanizing rhetoric, Peterson, who is not a medical expert, states that gender-affirming care will turn someone into “a confused monstrosity.” With Grossman describing “trans ideology” as “evil.” Grossman has become a popular figure in the anti-trans movement following her interview in the Daily Wire’s “What is a Woman” by Matt Walsh, in which she pushed harmful disinformation against transgender people.

A screenshot of in-stream video and display ads for Kia appearing on this video.
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

Jordan B Peterson: “Doctors & Psychotherapists: Butchers & Liars”

Brands with ads next to this content: Cisco Systems, Hyundai USA, Kia America, Kohl’s + Sephora, Lyft, Mazda USA, Monster Energy, Native, Oracle Netsuite, Reebok, Salesforce, Stanford University, Texas McCombs, UC Berkeley, Visible by Verizon, Wix, and YouTube.

Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ayWyzvo9SNY / archived link

Video views: 1,903,964 million by October 10th, 2023

Excerpts:

→ “Not only the aforementioned mastectomies but other appalling surgical processes, orchiectomy, that’s castration in blunter language, the removal of the uterus, the demolition of musculature of the forearm to
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

make what is not a penis.”

“... medical professionals rushing to disfigure, sterilize, and harm young people …”

“The hippocratic oath has been replaced by a delusion …”

Content contains: Hateful & derogatory content; Shocking content; Claim that individuals or groups are physically or mentally inferior, deficient, or diseased based on their protected group status.

Estimated annual channel revenue: $35.2K–$563.7K (this estimate was recorded on Sept 4th, estimates fluctuate over time.)

In another video, Daily Wire host Jordan Peterson attacks transgender youth, their families, and doctors, promoting hate-saturated conspiracy theories about gender-affirming healthcare (e.g. stating that it is “child sacrifice,” a “delusion,” and “butchery”), as well as discussing the genitals of minors.

A screenshot of in-stream video and display ads for Kohl’s and Sephora appearing on this video.
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Michael Knowles: “Hilarious Boycotts That Destroy Woke Companies”

Brands with ads next to this content: Airheads, Anne Cole, Arizona State University, BBC, BetterHelp, Birkenstock, Bugatti Smartwatches, Carhartt, Cirque du Soleil, Dodge, Instacart, Kayak, Kohls, Mitsubishi Motors, Native, Oura Ring, Shein, SKIMS, Thermo Fisher Scientific, and UGG.

Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=017HTUOSZEQ

Video views: 97,847 by October 10th, 2023

Excerpts:

→ “Oh yes, North Face had a fella with a big burly mustache dressed up like a chick with a summer of Pride ad.”

→ “If I’m not mistaken Uber Eats had this whole ad, this disgusting ad about
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

what to eat before you engage in certain weird activities in the boudoir. Yeah, it’s got this eggplant with, like, a gimp leather suit.”

“Disney is not quite as gross as say Uber Eats. You’re not going to be s&m eggplants with Mickey Mouse.”

“It is a working man’s drink and then they’ve aired a commercial where some grandpa decides to become a -----. That was really bad.”

“What the LA Dodgers are embracing is not just indirectly evil or sort of vaguely or ambiguously evil. The LA Dodgers are honoring a group that exists strictly to mock Christianity to engage in Satanic rituals that mock Christ so the fact that these people are permitted to walk around in public without being shamed or told to put on proper clothing or thrown into you know some insane asylum is a scandal that we should deal with.”

“We should punish them for the substance of their views that they are advocating because the things they’re advocating are evil and not conducive to the flourishing of our society so we should cancel them and punish them certainly using our wallets.”

Content contains: Hateful & derogatory content; Incendiary and demeaning content; Inappropriate language; Conspiratorial claims that individuals or groups are evil, corrupt, or malicious based on their protected group status; Promotion of hateful supremacism by alleging the superiority of a group over those with protected group status to justify violence, discrimination, segregation, or exclusion.

Estimated annual channel revenue: $150.9K–$2.4M (this estimate was recorded on Sept 4th, estimates fluctuate over time.)

In this video, Daily Wire host Michael Knowles goes through a list of so-called “woke” companies that he calls on viewers to boycott as punishment for being allies of the LGBTQ+ community. The video pushes hate speech that appears to violate YouTube’s policies on hateful and derogatory content. The video begins by intentionally misgendering a transgender person and continues on by using “gimp” and other slurs that are bleeped in the video. Knowles goes further to say that companies advocating for LGBTQ+ rights are “evil and not conducive to the flourishing of our society.” Similarly, at the 2023 Conservative Political Action Conference, Knowles urged: “For the good of society … transgendarism [sic] must be eradicated from public life entirely,” – rhetoric that he has continued to push online. In their Guide to Anti-LGBTQ Online Hate and Disinformation, GLAAD notes that the term transgenderism
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

“arises from anti-trans extremists and is crafted to delegitimize and dehumanize transgender people by implying that being transgender is an ideology rather than an identity.”

A screenshot of a display ad for SKIMS featuring Kim Kardashian appearing on this video

A screenshot of in-stream video and display ads for Instacart appearing on this video.
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

A screenshot of an in-stream video ad for Amazon and Airheads appearing on this video.

Michael Knowles: “The Grammys Just Did Something Unholy”

Brands with ads next to this content: BMW USA, BetterHelp, Capital One Shopping, Google Chrome OS, Google Fi Wireless, Dave’s Killer Bread, Fandango, Focus Features (My Big Fat Greek Wedding 3), J. Crew, Kia America, Liberty Mutual, Nike, Shadybrook Farms, Shopify, Sony Pictures, Stearns & Foster, UGG, Vimeo, YouTube.

Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sD-oAkvTZIk
archived link

Video views: 67,897 by October 10th, 2023

Excerpts:

“So, Sam Smith gives an overtly satanic performance with all sorts of transsexuals and fire coming up. First point there, by the way — and I noticed this the other day even before Sam Smith’s performance — isn’t it odd how depictions of demons, how depictions of weird ghoulish devilish demonic figures are always androgy nous? ... They’re always androgy nous. They’re always trans. And the reason for that is that the Devil hates human beings and sexual difference is, basically, at the very core of human nature ... And the Devil hates humanity and so he tries to cut away at the very core of humanity.”

Content contains: Hateful & derogatory content; Dehumanization of individuals or groups by calling them subhuman, comparing them to...
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

animals, insects, pests, disease, or any other non-human entity based on their protected group status; Conspiratorial claims that individuals or groups are evil, corrupt, or malicious based on their protected group status.

Estimated annual channel revenue: $150.9K–$2.4M (this estimate was recorded on Sept 4th, estimates fluctuate over time.)

Again in this video attacking non-binary musician Sam Smith, Daily Wire host Michael Knowles doubles down on hateful and derogatory anti-LGBTQ commentary, including messaging that dehumanizes transgender people by claiming that “demons” are “always trans.”

A screenshot of an in-stream video ad for Liberty Mutual appearing on this video.
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

The Hodgetwins (Conservative Twins): “Catholic High School Student Arrested for Bullying Trans Students”

Brands with ads next to this content: ADT, Arizona State University, Aston Martin, Birkenstock, Cadbury, Capital One Shopping, Carhartt, Google’s ChromeOS, Cirque du Soleil, Fender, Fortnite, Verizon Fios Home, Google Fi Wireless, HelloFresh, Mazda USA, Metro by T-Mobile, Mitsubishi Motors, MIT Sloan, Salesforce, Sony Electronics, The LA Film School, and Toyota.

Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ua_63D30arw
archived link

Monetizing hate: how 100+ major brands are bankrolling anti-LGBTQ+ extremism on YouTube
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

Video views: 165,903 by October 10th, 2023

Excerpts:

→ “Some dudes like pain. But it’s not pedophilia. Well some dudes get off the pain. It could be a form of pedophilia. Okay it could be, Yeah. What gets you off may not work, but what gets him, the other guy off, the pedophile, I’ve seen a guy get kicked in the nuts and he gets off.”

→ “Male breastfeeding is pedophilia … You can suck them titties all day long, you ain’t no milk coming out there … Oh it gets them off, yeah, on his hot spots.”

→ “When I went to school there were no transgenders in school. Dude, how about that dude, that Puerto Rican dude, he came pretty close. He was just a flaming homosexual … He’s gay as he didn’t even look like a dude man until he started growing that mustache. All he needed was some wig, maybe some lip gloss.”

→ “I think it’s a special place in hell for the people that’s pushing this.”

Content contains: Hateful & derogatory content; Incendiary and de-meaning content; Inappropriate language; Conspiratorial claims that individuals or groups are evil, corrupt, or malicious based on their protected group status.

Estimated annual channel revenue: $65.3K–$1M (this estimate was recorded on Sept 4th, estimates fluctuate over time.)

In this video, YouTube creators the Hodgetwins celebrate the bullying of transgender minors and express their support of a high school student who bullied transgender students in his school. The video also seemingly violates YouTube’s hate speech policy by equating LGBTQ+ people with “pedophiles,” while mocking gender nonconforming people overall.
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

A screenshot of in-stream video and display ads for HelloFresh appearing on this video.

A screenshot of in-stream video and display ads for Salesforce appearing on this video.
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

The Hodgetwins (PatriotTwins): “This Transgender Belongs In A Mental Hospital”

Brands with ads next to this content: BMW USA, Covergirl, Google Fi Wireless, Google Cloud, Kayak, Kia, Liberty Mutual, MasterClass, Pinterest, Petco, Salesforce, Sony Electronics, Vimeo, Visible by Verizon, and YouTube.

Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fOrlOZnQfvo / archived link

Video views: 122,478 by October 10th, 2023

Excerpts:

→ “Transgender can’t have no baby. Yeah they can. No they can’t. I mean the biological woman trans can do it. That’s all I’m saying. That’s all I’m saying. Well he a biological woman, this trans can have a baby but ain’t no man pushing no baby out his ass, that’s all I’m saying. I’m gonna keep it 100 over here. Ain’t no baby put, ain’t no man pushing no baby out of his ass, ain’t no baby coming through no man’s colon. Shit’s not gonna happen.”

→ “You’re doing you’re doing some Frankenstein shit is what you doing…”

→ “After the baby’s born as a trans girl, watch that damn baby mutate to a frog or something ... Your kid gonna have about eight dicks growing out his back. Eight dicks, mouth is gonna close up and turn into a vagina.”
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

Content contains: Hateful & derogatory content; Incendiary and de-meaning content; Inappropriate language; Dehumanization of individuals or groups by calling them subhuman, comparing them to animals, insects, pests, disease, or any other non-human entity based on their protected group status.

Estimated annual channel revenue: $62K–$991.9K (this estimate was recorded on Sept 4th, estimates fluctuate over time.)

This video from the Hodgetwins, on their alternative channel PatriotTwins, consists of the hosts spewing hateful and derogatory comments in relation to a video of a transgender person. Using explicit and profane language about the transgender person’s genitals, they consistently intentionally misgender and mock the person, use dehumanizing language, and claim that transgender people are mentally ill.

A screenshot of an in-stream video ad for Masterclass appearing on this video.
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

This Transgender Belongs In A Mental Hospital

121K views. 2 months ago. Transgender biological male says about plans to breastfeed baby.

Enter to Win a Truck: https://patriottwins.gofroggyl.com/cheryl

The Hodgetwins (PatriotTwins): “TikTok’s New Vagina Don’t Work”

Brands with ads next to this content: AEG Presents, AMC, Birkenstock, BMW USA, Capital One Shopping, Google ChromeOS, Covergirl, Genesys in partnership with Ferrari, Instacart, L.L. Bean + Boys & Girls Club of America, Marley Spoon, Mazda USA, Puma, Reebok, Saatva, Saks Fifth Avenue, SHEIN, Starz, UGG, VTAMA, Vimeo, and Zales.

Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=65E_paShnqA

archived link
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

Video views: 1,779,418 million by October 10th, 2023

Excerpts:

→ “We got this woman that’s pissed off. Well it’s not a woman, woman. It’s a trans woman. You got to make that clarification, those are two totally two different things. A trans woman and a woman, like a woman. Excuse me, trans women and cis woman, haha. Yeah a cis woman is, um, that’s like, uh, that’s like real … it’s a regular woman, it’s a regular, not crazy, old school. Yeah like the cis woman, that’s the old school.”

→ “That trans woman is a biological male.”

→ “These modern [trans] women, you can actually get them with dicks.”

→ “I know the dude’s pounding you from the back. I do, I know he’s doing anal. I know. You know how I know he’s doing anal. Because he’s gay. That’s called sodomy.”

→ “Your Barbie pouch is actually, it’s nothing but a cum catcher, a semen catcher, it sounds more … that’s all it is. It’s a semen catcher. You know when she has sex, have some dude go up in her and bust.”

→ “You’re feeding the delusion. Yeah you’re not living in a, you’re living in a false sense of reality and you continue to feed your delusion.”

Content contains: Hateful & derogatory content; Incendiary and de-meaning content; Inappropriate language; Use of racial, religious, or other slurs and stereotypes that incite or promote hatred based on protected group status.

Estimated annual channel revenue: $62K–$991.9K (this estimate was recorded on Sept 4th, estimates fluctuate over time.)

In another video, the Hodgetwins convey a relentless series of dehumanizing assertions about transgender people. The hosts claim that a transgender woman is not a “real…regular woman” as well as labeling them as “crazy” and “biological males.” The video also goes into derogatory, offensive transphobic, homophobic and misogynist discussion of sex and genitals at length. Finally the video claims that transgender people are “living in a false sense of reality” and “delusion.”
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

A screenshot of in-stream video and display ads for L.L.Bean in partnership with the Boys & Girls Clubs of America appearing on this video.

A screenshot of in-stream video and display ads for Saks Fifth Avenue appearing on this video.
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

Steve Deace Show: “Worldview Is ALWAYS Destiny”

Brands with ads next to this content: ADT, BMW USA, Dell Technologies, Discover Card, Google Fi Wireless, Mazda USA, Norton, Petco, Quilted Northern, Reebok, T-Mobile Home Internet, and YouTube.

Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8D34-WiYIDM / archived link

Video views: 4,644 by October 10th, 2023

Excerpts:

“A new Philadelphia tourism ad features drag queens reading to young kids outside of Independence Hall ... Find every person who is attracted to come to Philadelphia for defiling children this way, and arrest every single one of those damn bastards immediately, in a nanosecond, once they arrive, without hesitation.”

“While they await trial, throw them in a hole, and throw away the hole ... We’re sitting here having a conversation with, at least for the next eight months, the most influential Christian conservative leader in America about whether someone who is clinically insane has a role at all in our national defense.”

“There’s a place for tranny madness in the military. And Philadelphia is saying, come here. Come here, groomer. Come here, perv, creeper, and have at our children ... This is coming down to one thing and one thing...
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism only, conviction. Because we are not a nation of laws, and we never have been. We are a nation of political will or conviction, and we always will be.”

**Content contains:** Hateful & derogatory content; Inappropriate language; Violence; Use of racial, religious, or other slurs and stereotypes that incite or promote hatred based on protected group status.

**Estimated annual channel revenue:** Up to $7K (this estimate was recorded on Sept 4th, estimates fluctuate over time.)

In this video, BlazeTV host Steve Deace calls for violence and the mass arrest of LGBTQ people during Philadelphia’s pride events, claiming that the U.S. is “not a nation of laws.” He demands to “arrest every single one of those damn bastards immediately, in a nanosecond, once they arrive, without hesitation. Every last one of them. And while they await trial, throw them in a hole, and throw away the hole.” In blatant violation of YouTube hate speech policies, the host also employs the slur “tranny,” pushes the anti-LGBTQ “groomer” trope, and makes unqualified behavioral statements characterizing transgender people as mentally ill.
The 100+ major brands bankrolling LGBTQ+ hate and extremism

Monetizing hate: how 100+ major brands are bankrolling anti-LGBTQ+ extremism on YouTube
While researchers chose only 13 monetized videos for this project, the highlighted channels have a long history of using YouTube to spread anti-LGBTQ hate, harassment, and disinformation, publishing many videos over several years. This practice also seemingly violates YouTube’s monetization policies.

The company’s policy states: “In some rare cases, we may remove content or issue other penalties when a creator:

- Repeatedly encourages abusive audience behavior.
- Repeatedly targets, insults, and abuses a group based on protected group status across multiple uploads.
- Exposes a group with protected group status to risks of physical harm based on the local social or political context.
- Creates content that harms the YouTube ecosystem by persistently inciting hostility against a group with protected group status for personal financial gain.”

More advertisers are starting to ask questions about exactly where their ads are appearing on YouTube. According to a July 2023 Digiday report, the Association of National Advertisers and its UK counterpart, ISBA, as well as the World Federation of Advertisers are “probing the industry’s largest seller of online ad space [Google] for better answers.” While Google has made some recent improvements, including the March 2023 launch of its Ads Transparency Center, the company appears to be not adequately enforcing its own hate speech and monetization policies, potentially failing to protect the safety of brands and advertisers, not to mention the safety of their users who are being exposed to such seemingly violative content.
Conclusion
Conclusion

YouTube is failing advertisers and the LGBTQ+ community by enabling a network of far-right influencers to push hate speech and disinformation to millions of users. The findings from this research highlight the significant gap between YouTube’s policies prohibiting harmful content and what remains monetized on the platform. This is happening amidst the backdrop of Big Tech’s reported rollback of efforts to combat harmful disinformation and hate speech and an increasing reliance on automated systems.

The proliferation of LGBTQ+ hate on YouTube isn’t merely a glitch in the system, but likely the result of a business model built on maximizing “engagement” for profit. By focusing narrowly on keeping people online – and looking at ads – as long as possible, the system rewards and elevates extremist content, including harmful content targeting marginalized communities. YouTube generates tens of billions of dollars in ad revenue every year – over $29 billion in 2022, according to estimates. This profitable business model provides little incentive for platforms to self-regulate effectively. It also means that advertisers can’t meet the standards they have set for themselves and face significant business and legal risk as their ad dollars are being funneled to bad actors who push hate and disinformation. A September 2023 study, for example, found that American consumers overall have a negative view of brands that advertise alongside hate speech, and reported a “lower likelihood of purchasing the advertised brand.”

This is why it is essential for both advertisers and platforms to take action. Advertisers have a significant role to play in safeguarding their brands, and more importantly, protecting people. They should also be advocating for greater platform transparency and accountability from YouTube — to make measurable commitments to creating a safer, human rights-respecting internet for all.
Recommendations

Google & YouTube

→ Bolster content moderation systems to enforce the platform’s Community Guidelines and monetization policies in order to identify and address the amplification of content that targets vulnerable users, including by consulting civil society and better training content moderators.

→ Demonetize content and channels promoting violative hate speech, harassment, and harmful disinformation on Google advertising platforms.

→ Give more transparency to advertisers by publishing the full sellers.json directory so companies have more insight into how and where advertisers’ ad dollars are being spent.

→ In collaboration with civil society, create and improve internal systems to better protect LGBTQ+ people and others from harm and to routinely address emerging threats.

→ Make a corresponding commitment to the protection of LGBTQ+ creators and their freedom of expression to protect legitimate LGBTQ+ speech from being suppressed.

Advertisers

→ Take a principled stance against funding hate speech and disinformation. Implement strict policies, protocols and systems to prevent their ads from appearing alongside content that promotes hate, harassment, and harmful disinformation.

→ Demand transparency from platforms like YouTube, including access to detailed information about ad placements.

→ Hold platforms accountable for their content policies and enforcement. Advertisers should request accounting and refunds for ads placed against hateful content, and legally enforce business contracts regarding brand safety standards.

→ Actively collaborate with trusted civil society organizations, tech accountability groups, and LGBTQ+ organizations to address issues related to hate speech and disinformation.
U.S. Policymakers

→ Mandate a clear and transparent advertising system. Advertisers should automatically have a right to their own log-level campaign data, and industry brokers should not withhold data.

→ Enforce industry standards outlined by the Interactive Advertising Bureau such as ads.txt and standards for quality of content and business relations.

→ Pursue federal data protection regulation that addresses the largely unchecked surveillance advertising industry. Congress should limit ad targeting so that companies cannot take advantage of people’s personal data, a practice that fuels the monetization of hate, extremism, and disinformation.
## Appendix: List of 125 brands

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