

Demonetization on YouTube
and the Visibility of News Produced by Non-Mainstream News Commentators

Laura Sehl

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Supervisor: Professor Philippe Ross

Department of Communication, University of Ottawa

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Abstract

This research analyzes how the YouTube algorithm, through the phenomenon of demonetization, affects the visibility of news posted on YouTube – specifically from content creators not associated with a mainstream television network or professional online or print news publication in the United States – by employing quantitative content analysis. By analyzing the case of *The Philip DeFranco Show*, this research also sets out to understand how monetization and demonetization are discussed by content creators within their content. Themes of self-censorship and censorship by proxy are also investigated to help determine the effects of gatekeeping on YouTube by algorithms on news commentators. It is expected that creators will self-censor content to avoid algorithmic suppression by altering posting schedules, video formats, as well as separating topics typically suppressed by the algorithm from topics that are typically promoted.

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1. Introduction

Social media, including platforms like YouTube, has become an increasingly popular option as a news source, meaning that any threat to the visibility of news on YouTube could have a significant impact on a large number of people. Online personalities are now both a common primary and secondary source of news in the United States (Pew Research Center, 2018). Non-mainstream news commentators – that is, individuals who are not affiliated with a traditional news media network– posting content on YouTube are frequently found to be in violation of YouTube’s advertiser-friendly guidelines due to the mature nature of the content they cover. Real-world current events can often fall under the category of “controversial issues and sensitive issues,” which YouTube categorizes as including but not limited to war, death and tragedies, political conflicts, terrorism or extremism, and sexual abuse, all of which are frequent topics in mainstream news programming (YouTube Help, 2018). Creators on YouTube categorize their own content when posting which is then analyzed by YouTube for speech and images which are considered inappropriate by the standards listed above.

Given the above, it seems likely that commentators will be censored by the algorithm or will need to exercise self-censorship in order to avoid losing views and revenue. It is worth looking into how self-censorship manifests in the content posted by non-mainstream news commentators as well as how YouTube’s monetization algorithm inflicts censorship by proxy. A “non-mainstream news commentator” is an individual creating news commentary without official affiliation to mainstream media networks such as CNN, CBS, Fox News, and MSNBC. Some examples of popular non-mainstream news commentators are: Philip DeFranco, Steven Crowder, Joe Rogan, The Young Turks, and Dave Rubin. Ranging from having hundreds of thousands to millions of subscribers, each of these creators have had some of their content

demonetized and many have discussed demonetization in their videos. With over 6 million subscribers, comparable to the audience of mainstream media, who has been vocal about demonetization on YouTube, Philip DeFranco is a creator worth looking into for this research. DeFranco is a news commentary creator who films videos in the format of a solo news anchor, reading news reports accompanied by images and videos and providing commentary on wide-ranging issues. *The Philip DeFranco Show* posts videos every weekday in the news category on YouTube.

YouTube is a video streaming platform available in 91 countries and 80 languages (YouTube About, 2018). Every month, more than 1.9 billion users visit the Google-owned platform. In recent years, YouTube has become a highly profitable source of income for some creators through the YouTube Partner Program. Many non-mainstream news commentators are amongst the members of the program. The YouTube Partner Program (YPP) allows users to receive advertising revenue generated from their content, provided they meet the application requirements and adhere to policies and terms of service (Google, 2018b). To be eligible for the YouTube Partner Program, a channel must be in good standing with YouTube, have 4,000 viewing hours within the 12 months prior to application, and a minimum of 1,000 subscribers (Google, 2018b). Once these requirements have been met, users can apply for YPP, and they must also agree to the partner program terms and create or use an existing Google AdSense account.

When agreeing to partner program terms, users are promising to comply with what are referred to as “community guidelines”, AdSense Program policies, and “advertiser-friendly content guidelines”. YouTube lists content (including but not limited to: videos, thumbnails, titles, external links, tags) that violates its community guidelines as containing: nudity or

sexuality; harmful, dangerous, hateful, violent or graphic content; harassment and cyberbullying; spam, misleading metadata, and scams; threats, copyright, privacy, impersonation, and child safety (YouTube About, 2020). Every user on YouTube is subject to community guidelines. However, users who participate in YPP have to pay particular attention to advertiser-friendly content guidelines to ensure that their content remains eligible for monetization after posting. YouTube lists the main topics that are not advertiser-friendly as: inappropriate language; violence; adult content; harmful or dangerous acts; hateful content; incendiary and demeaning language or actions; recreational drugs and drug-related content; tobacco-related content; firearms-related content; controversial issues and sensitive events; and adult themes in family content (YouTube Creators, 2018).

Disciplinary actions vary depending on the severity of the violation of policies or guidelines. These actions can include disabling user comments on the video, the implementation of age restrictions on the video, and in some cases, the removal of the video or the entire channel if there are repeat offences (YouTube Creators, 2018). In the case of advertising guidelines and policies, multiple violations can result in ads being disabled for the channel or suspension from the YouTube Partner Program (YouTube Help, 2018). The content of a partner who does not follow the instructions is "demonetized", meaning that ads will not be associated with this video, the creator will not receive any financial profit and in some cases the content will be deleted (Google, 2018a).

As a means of preventing lost income from YouTube videos, many content creators have turned to alternative methods of earning revenue in addition to monetization. Some of these methods include: paid subscription-based platforms such as Patreon, creating a second channel to post videos that are assumed to become demonetized on YouTube to maintain the clean image of

their main channel, releasing merchandise for sale on third party websites, and moving to other platforms partially or entirely. Other creators, such as Philip DeFranco, have begun releasing videos in two parts, one that contains sensitive topics and runs a greater risk of being suppressed by the algorithm, and one that contains lighter topics and will likely still be promoted by the algorithm, and that makes reference to the other video in the hopes that viewers will find the suppressed video through the promoted video. DeFranco summarized the idea in a video posted on May 28, 2020:

Out of necessity, we're having to split today's Philip DeFranco Show into two parts. Part two of today's Philip DeFranco show will be live on this channel in two hours...I have to be really vague about it in this video. I'll be talking about a very heavy, important, graphic topic. It's the kind of story that often gets suppressed on YouTube, not popping up on recommended or not as much, same with the home page. And so we split it into two pieces so that it can live there, and then this, part one of *The Philip DeFranco Show* can one, be a good show on its own, as well as serve as a reminder for you to not miss that video.
(DeFranco, 2020a)

The heavy, graphic topic in question was an update on the murder of George Floyd, which acted as a catalyst for the resurgence of Black Lives Matter protests against police brutality in the United States. It is notable that DeFranco could not even allude to the topic on the main video, which did successfully remain monetized, as it would jeopardize the visibility of the video through algorithmic suppression. As anticipated by DeFranco, the video discussing the murder of George Floyd was demonetized, or had never attempted to be monetized.

Research on the topic of YouTube, news and demonetization is valuable to the field of communication because it evaluates the visibility of online news that is not affiliated with mainstream media in the information age. While not every online personality presenting news online is a reliable or accurate news source, this research aims to show that the censorship of this

content by YouTube's algorithm affects news visibility overall, especially for issues that YouTube names as not advertiser-friendly. It is also important in order to investigate how the YouTube algorithm works, as YouTube is one of the largest and most widely available video platforms worldwide and does not publicly disclose how their algorithm functions. This research is particularly relevant in times where less trust is being given to traditional news publications and broadcasts, and more people are turning to alternatives such as late-night comedy and non-mainstream news commentators on YouTube as a way to avoid the so-called "fake news". The growing popularity of alternative news sources to traditional broadcast news, such as social media and late-night comedy will be further discussed in the literature review of this paper.

Further consideration into the employer-employee relationship, or lack thereof, that YouTube has with their creators is a meaningful element to the research at hand. YouTube as a career, or as the primary source of income for a creator, is an unconventional form of employment because the creator's income is not determined by traditional values (salary, hourly wages, contract, etc.), but rather, by the oftentimes unpredictable nature of the platform's algorithm. As such, an important point to be cognizant of during this research is that YouTube is not a guaranteed income. It is a company that offers a content platform with the option to monetize if the content complies with its guidelines. YouTube is not contractually obligated to pay creators. Popular Ottawa-based YouTube creator Cristine Rotenberg, who had 6.4 million subscribers as of December 2018, spoke on demonetization on YouTube in a video, stating:

While I feel that sometimes demonetization is unfair because maybe the guidelines weren't clearly articulated- which is a problem, they should be clear so you know whether or not the content you're putting up is going to be flagged- I still feel like sometimes YouTubers express their frustration as if they had a right to ads, and a right to a certain level of income because they have been getting it last month. The reality is, when you become a YouTuber, you signed no contract that said YouTube is going to pay you for the next five years at this salary...there is nothing, they owe you nothing. If they decide to turn off all ads, they can, and you signed up for this

knowing, or you should remember, that that could happen at any time. That's the hard truth... there is little to no job security being a YouTuber, that is a fact. (Rotenberg, 2018)

This is a theme that should be top of mind during this research, as corporate entities are able to suppress any content on their platform that they wish and are not necessarily answerable to public concerns about censorship, censorship-by-proxy, or forcing creators to self-censor in order for their videos to be promoted by the algorithm.

Through the use of quantitative content analysis in the form of a case study, this research studied 39 videos posted by Philip DeFranco in May and June 2020. Important metrics for the analysis were video views, the level of user engagement which was measured through likes and dislikes on the video, and the number of ads, if any, that were associated with the video. By comparing demonetized, monetized, and videos with limited monetization, an idea of the functions and priorities of the YouTube monetization algorithm can be developed.

2. Literature Review

The following is a literature review and a presentation of the proposed theoretical framework for this research. Topics such as YouTube and social media as a news source will be further explored in this literature review, followed by the topic of late-night comedy as a source of news. Through the lens of gatekeeping theory as interpreted by Shoemaker & Vos, this research calls upon themes of censorship by proxy and self-censorship to help provide an explanation to whether demonetization or content suppression by YouTube's algorithm affects the visibility of news content on the platform. Additionally, the phenomenon of demonetization on YouTube will be further explained with an eye toward what is known about YouTube's monetization algorithm and how YouTube acts as a cultural intermediary or gatekeeper. In the following subsection, censorship by proxy and self-censorship, which are two manifestations of censorship that researchers have linked with demonetization on YouTube, will be explored.

2.1 YouTube as a News Source

It is important to understand why so many people are turning to YouTube as a news source in order to see how large an impact any changes to content visibility are likely to have. According to a 2018 study by the Pew Research Center (2018), only 32% of respondents answered that they never got their news from social media, with the remaining responding they got their news hardly ever (21%), sometimes (27%) and often (20%) from social media (Pew Research Center, 2018). This shows that almost half of Americans, 47%, admit to getting their news sometimes or often from social media, which would mean that hundreds of millions of people in the United States have relied on social media as a source of news. However, 57% say they expect the same news they see on social media to be largely inaccurate. This shows a shift in the type of news Americans are seeking, often prioritizing convenience and familiarity over

objectivity and accuracy. Convenience was cited as the main reason that two-thirds of Americans are turning to social media for news, with 21% of survey respondents saying they enjoyed the accessibility of social media. YouTube is the second most commonly used social media platform for news behind Facebook, according to the same Pew Research Center report, with 21% of survey respondents citing it as their source for news. Of respondents who identified as YouTube users, 38% say they get news there, higher than 2017 results of 32%. The age of the users was also shown to impact whether the user thinks social media has increased their understanding of news, has had no effect, or has actually confused them more: “About half of social media news consumers aged 18 to 29 (48%) say news on social media makes them better informed, compared with 37% of those 30 to 49, 28% of those 50 to 64, and 27% of those 65 and older,” (Pew Research Center, 2018).

The way that news is presented on YouTube is new and unique, “a new kind of visual journalism” that sometimes blurs the lines between content created by official news organizations and what Weiss (2012) labels as “citizen journalists.” On YouTube, major news networks edit their content typically into one-story videos to make the content optimized for the platform’s average video length of 11.7 minutes (Clement, 2019). Non-mainstream news commentators post their content of a similar length on the platform, covering one or multiple stories in one video. When content is optimized for an entertainment platform, occasionally the lines between news and entertainment are blurred. YouTube has become a hub for both traditional and citizen journalists to post news content. Though increased exposure to news can lead to more informed citizens, it has also raised concerns surrounding the professionalism of these sources, their ability to properly attribute information and context to present news in an accurate way and improve understanding. The study continued to say, “clear ethical protocols

about attribution have not developed and users may at times have no clear way of knowing the source" (Weiss, 2012). This continues to be true for news posted to YouTube, especially news commentary, as some creators will cite the sources they are commenting on while others will act as if they are presenting new information and they themselves are the news source. There is no journalistic body that oversees non-mainstream political commentary on YouTube.

For the purposes of this research, news commentary posted to YouTube will be broken into three different categories of my own creation: mainstream news commentary, "late-night" news commentary, which will be discussed in the next section, and non-mainstream news commentary. From observations during this research, it seems that content from mainstream networks like late-night comedy or news shows are divided into smaller sections to be put onto YouTube and have therefore already been subject to the gatekeeping typical of network television before arriving on the platform. While mainstream news commentary is subject to its own gatekeepers and this content is then adapted to be posted on YouTube, non-mainstream news commentary which is created for the YouTube platform is not necessarily subject to gatekeeping until the YouTube algorithm evaluates whether the content complies with the community guidelines, which applies to all videos posted to the platform, as well as advertiser-friendly guidelines if the content is selected to be monetized by the creator.

2.2 Late-night Comedy as a News Source

In addition to traditional and citizen journalists posting news content on YouTube, audiences have also been consuming the segments and political rants of late-night comedians posting content originally aired on television to YouTube. Over the past two decades, there has

been a shift in the types of programming that Americans have been depending on for their news. One of the most influential figures in this shift has been Jon Stewart of *The Daily Show* (1996-), a Comedy Central late-night news satire program. In 2007, when the Pew Research Center conducted a survey asking respondents to name the news figure they most admired, more Americans selected Jon Stewart over hosts of traditional and respected news programming such as Jim Lehrer of PBS NewsHour, Tim Russert of NBC's Meet the Press, Diane Sawyer of ABC or Wolf Blitzer of CNN (Madison et al., 2018, p. 21).

In their book "Reimagining Journalism in a Post-Truth World", Madison et al. (2018) speculate that Americans have become tired of objectivity in their news, and are craving a more entertaining, witty, analytical, honest and straightforward source for their news. On the success of Jon Stewart's *The Daily Show*, they said:

As Stewart's profile rose in the 2000s, the New York Times, Rolling Stone, Newsweek and Time all took turns interpreting Stewart's cultural ascendance, and they all came to roughly the same conclusion: in an age of dishonest politics and superficial media, Stewart's secret sauce was that he gave it to people straight. No B.S. No focus group-tested spin. No straight-faced recitation of quotes he knew to be lies. Viewers of *The Daily Show* trusted Stewart to help them make sense of the news, and night after night he did that, with comedy, yes, but also with an unapologetically progressive moral compass. Stewart wore his values on his sleeve, and viewers loved it. "We live in a society now where people want to know who a journalist is before they decide whether or not to believe his or her reporting," Matt Taibbi [Contributing Editor for Rolling Stone] explained in 2015. "Americans got to know Jon Stewart quickly and quickly learned to trust him even though he clearly had a point of view. It's the highest praise a journalist can get, and he deserved all of it. (Madison et al., 2018, p.53).

The identity of the individual delivering the news has been becoming more relevant to the perceived credibility in the eyes of the viewer and the scope of topics that the program might cover. For example, as *The Daily Show* continued to evolve, regular correspondents of the program which had previously been mostly white men were slowly replaced with more individuals who brought new, diverse and personal perspectives to the show, which has included

Stewart's successor, Trevor Noah: "Trevor Noah [...] has worked to improve the diversity of the show's interview guests, as well as its writing and production staffs. 'Since I've joined, blackness has tremendously increased at the show [...] we've hired additional women as well. It's something that I'm very cognizant of,' said Noah, who is a biracial immigrant from South Africa" (Madison et al., 2018, p.66). Madison et al. continue to explain that while *The Daily Show*'s increased diversity has become central to its appeal, it also demonstrates that identity is more than a function of *who* is delivering the news; it's also a function of *how* the news is being delivered (Madison et al., 2018, p. 66).

The increased reliance on late-night comedy as a news source goes beyond *The Daily Show*. In recent years, since the election of President Donald Trump, late-night comedy has taken an especially political left-leaning turn. One article claims that the tone of these shows is "one imbued with the conviction that they and their fans are intellectually and morally superior to those who espouse any of the beliefs of the political right" (Flanagan, 2017). Other late-night political-comedy shows such as *Full Frontal with Samantha Bee* (2016-), and *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* (2014-) have also positioned their programs as unwavering in their political positions against the current president of the United States:

Though aimed at blue-state sophisticates, these shows are an unintended but powerful form of propaganda for conservatives. When Republicans see these harsh jokes—which echo down through the morning news shows and the chattering day's worth of viral clips, along with those of Jimmy Kimmel, Stephen Colbert, and Seth Meyers—they don't just see a handful of comics mocking them. They see HBO, Comedy Central, TBS, ABC, CBS, and NBC. In other words, they see exactly what Donald Trump has taught them: that the entire media landscape loathes them, their values, their family, and their religion. It is hardly a reach for them to further imagine that the legitimate news shows on these channels are run by similarly partisan players—nor is it at all illogical. No wonder so many of Trump's followers are inclined to believe only the things that he or his spokespeople tell them directly (Flanagan, 2017)

Increasingly polarizing partisanship drives audiences of all sides of the political spectrum to seek out alternatives to traditional broadcast news, which can lead viewers to YouTube. Late-night comedians are not news broadcasters, however, viewers in recent years have more of an appetite for content that does not pretend to be unbiased and objective and which speaks frankly to the audience. In a 2019 survey by the Hollywood Reporter, “43 percent of respondents surveyed...stated that they watched late-night shows live on television "multiple times a week," with 31 percent saying they checked Facebook or YouTube multiple times weekly to catch up on clips from these hosts,” and 30 percent of respondents replied that they liked when Colbert discussed politics, followed by 29 percent enjoying Kimmel and Fallon’s political statements (Hayden, 2019). Of survey respondents, 50 percent said late-night hosts are “more liberal”, 12 percent said they are neutral and 11 percent said “more conservative” (Hayden, 2019).

Late-night comedy is a convenient way for audiences to view pop culture entertainment which is accompanied by political and news commentary. The appeal of late-night comedians over traditional journalism can be attributed to the fact that late-night comedians are encouraged to “bring their unique lens to a story, to infuse it with their anger, their indignation, their joy, or their heartbreak” (Madison et al., 2018, p. 66). Similarly, this trend in seeking a more personalized and human news source can be applied to the increased popularity of citizen journalists on YouTube, as well as the success of late-night comedians on the platform. Both late-night comedians and independent journalists can provide a presentation of news stories free from the veil of objectivity that traditional media is subject to, and can operate more within the realm of entertainment, which appeals to many viewers.

2.3 Demonetization

Non-mainstream news commentary is a frequent target of demonetization on YouTube. Mainstream news commentary and late-night news commentary, which have typically been subject to the gatekeeping of mainstream television networks and are therefore much more likely to be “advertiser-friendly” are also posted onto channels that are often enrolled in YouTube Select, a program which will be further discussed in this section. YouTube Select ensures that there is human verification as to whether monetization is appropriate for the content, a luxury that is not always afforded to non-mainstream news commentary which is frequently found to be in violation of advertiser-friendly guidelines because of its subject matter deemed graphic by YouTube’s algorithm. The act of demonetization is restricting a member of the YouTube Partner Program from obtaining AdSense revenue through advertisements displayed before, during, or after their content due to the violation of advertiser-friendly content guidelines or community guidelines (YouTube Creators, 2018). Though it is difficult to determine exactly how many creators rely on YouTube as their primary source of income, the platform can be a lucrative source of income with several thousand creators worldwide estimated to earn six-figure incomes from advertising revenue on their channel (Wilkinson and Berry, 2019). In 2019, Forbes published the top ten highest earners on YouTube with incomes ranging from \$11.5 million to \$26 million in one year, showing just how lucrative posting to YouTube can be for some (Berg, 2019).

In April and May of 2017, YouTube experienced an advertising controversy deemed by creators the “adpocalypse”. Large companies such as Coca-Cola and Amazon pulled ads from the platform after discovering their ads were associated with hate speech and violent extremist content (Dunphy, 2017). Following the “adpocalypse” of 2017, in an effort to prevent advertisers

from being associated with controversial content, YouTube began to use machine learning-based algorithms to seek out and demonetize offensive content (Kain, 2018). The demonetization process is conducted entirely by machine unless the creator appeals the verdict, in which case the offending content may be reviewed by a YouTube staff member if the content meets specific numerical criteria for subscribers and viewership (Kain, 2018). Creators have argued against this process, expressing that demonetization and the appeal process often occurs during the most profitable days for a video with the most viewership – immediately after posting (Wilkinson and Berry, 2019). Creators are often left without an explanation as to why their content has been demonetized, often with the only indication being an icon that appears next to the video on their management page. Additionally, creators are not explicitly notified of demonetization, nor do they receive any communication as to the motives (Wilkinson and Berry, 2019).

YouTube has faced backlash from creators for being uncommunicative about their reasons behind demonetizing videos. In an extreme case, a shooting occurred at YouTube headquarters, where a content creator opened fire, injuring three victims and ultimately killing themselves. Police cited the shooter's frustration with YouTube's censorship and demonetization of content as the motive (Gosk et al., 2018). The shooter was a content creator who posted "amateur music videos, sketches, fitness how-tos, and rants, many promoting veganism on her channel [...] She held a grudge against the company, which she believed had jeopardized her work by unfairly censoring her videos and subjecting them to 'demonetization' —making them ineligible for advertising revenue" (Chen, 2018). Chen continued that the shooter "explained to her followers that the reason YouTube was 'discriminating and censoring us' was that 'people like me are not good for big business,'" (Chen, 2018). Chen (2018) then added that the brother and father of the perpetrator had warned police that she might target the company. It is

impossible to prove for certain that the shooter's only motive was demonetization as she died by suicide during the incident; however, much of the shooter's previous online activity and statements about YouTube's algorithm and demonetization point to frustration over video suppression as a likely motive. On demonetization and censorship as the motivation for the shooting, Riley Hess (2018) stated "adding money into the equation based on viewership, and then taking the control away from the creators has ultimately led to a hostile online environment". Sometimes individuals and corporations alike forget that the person behind the screen is a human being ready to take action when their livelihood is at stake due to an outside force. Acts of censorship by proxy, like demonetization, can be motivating factors for some extreme cases like this crime committed by this already vulnerable individual.

Due to YouTube's uncommunicative nature surrounding the algorithm and what it prioritizes, much of the information available is from former employees, employees speaking anonymously on the topic, and conjecture from content creators and analysts. Former YouTube engineer Guillaume Chaslot said of the algorithm, "YouTube is something that looks like reality, but it is distorted to make you spend more time online. The recommendation algorithm is not optimising for what is truthful, or balanced, or healthy for democracy." (Lewis, 2018). Other current and past moderators have come forward claiming that popular creators, including Steven Crowder, PewDiePie and Logan Paul often get special treatment "in the form of looser interpretations of YouTube's guidelines prohibiting demeaning speech, bullying, and other forms of graphic content" (Dwoskin, 2019). The anonymous former and current moderators interviewed by The Washington Post claimed that "their recommendations to strip advertising from videos that violate the site's rules were frequently overruled by higher-ups within YouTube when the videos involved higher profile content creators who draw more advertising." (Dwoskin,

2019) This is due to the fact that when YouTube penalizes a video, the platform itself will also lose revenue as they split advertising revenue with content creators. YouTube takes 45% of the advertising revenue on a video and pays out 55% to creators (Spangler, 2013). In this sense, YouTube might be motivated to make exceptions for its creators who bring in the highest views and advertising revenue. Former employees have stated that YouTube would prioritize advertisers in their decisions in implementing the platform's guidelines, rather than to act in the interest of creators or the users of the platform (Dwoskin, 2019). YouTube denies claims that it enforces rules unequally, and moderators who have come forward to speak against the platform have done so anonymously, so it is difficult to determine the objective truth in these situations (Dwoskin, 2019).

YouTube does not offer the same monetization opportunities to all creators. In addition to the YouTube Partner Program, the top 5% of monetized creators on the platform can participate in YouTube Select, formerly known as Google Preferred, a program that "offers brand advertisers access to the most popular YouTube channels among American 18-34-year olds (Bresnahan et al., 2019; YouTube Ads, 2020). The purpose of YouTube Select is to connect advertisers with 'trustworthy' channels that produce high-quality content (Bresnahan et al., 2019). Due to controversies such as the adpocalypse, YouTube dedicates staff to screen every video in the YouTube Select program before they receive ad revenue to ensure that they meet the standard of 'trustworthiness' pitched to advertisers (Pierson, 2018). This holds the top 5% of creators on the platform to a different standard than the other 95% who are exclusively subject to the algorithm's judgement of whether a video adheres to the advertiser-friendly guidelines rather than having staff to validate whether the video is an appropriate fit for advertisers. Additionally, YouTube Select can offer a variety of monetization campaigns not always available to channels

only participating in YPP, such as six-second unskippable pre-roll ads that improve the user's impression of the advertisement rather than being made to sit through longer advertisements (Stilson, 2017). YouTube Select also offers 15-second unskippable pre-roll opportunities, which have been shown to increase ad recall, but the newer six-second option has been found to be a more effective and more positive experience for users (Stilson, 2017). Ads the user cannot skip are recommended by YouTube to be used in tandem with YouTube Select, though it is not a guarantee that a creator with ads a user cannot skip is enrolled in this program. This is important to note to determine whether Philip DeFranco, the creator this case study will focus on, is within the top 5% of creators on the platform and receives video content assessments by humans or if this is the work of the algorithm only. This can be done by noting the frequency of pre-roll ads the user cannot skip during the 60 days of content that were analyzed as part of the case study.

While the majority of information on demonetization is reported through online journalism, some scholarly research has focused on the demonetization of content produced by LGBTQ+ creators on YouTube, following complaints of unfair treatment toward LGBTQ+ creators through the demonetization of videos by the algorithm which adhered to the advertising-friendly content guidelines (Wilkinson and Berry, 2019). Wilkinson and Berry (2019) investigated who, among a variety of individuals with varied beliefs and values, supports the demonetization of LGBTQ+ content online. By conducting a survey of 247 U.S residents who were mostly heterosexual and had a mean age of 37 years, participants watched a YouTube video and answered several questions regarding its content. It was found that prejudiced attitudes, conservative ideologies, and perceptions that LGBTQ+ content had a negative impact on the self and others were the main reasons users might support demonetization (Wilkinson and Berry, 2019). The effects of demonetization on the LGBTQ+ community have been further discussed in

the popular press, reporting that LGBTQ+ creators were being further marginalized by YouTube's delay, or lack of reaction, towards hate speech and derogatory terms by far-right creators targeting LGBTQ+ creators (Ohlheiser, 2019). Content creators who experience frequent demonetization of videos will adapt their content to be more aligned with YouTube's advertiser-friendly guidelines through self-censorship. Self-censorship is often a response to censorship by proxy, which will be discussed in detail in a subsequent section.

2.4 The YouTube Algorithm and Cultural Intermediaries

Understanding the YouTube algorithm, at least to the extent that this information is available to the public, is pivotal for this research. One definition of an algorithm in relation to YouTube is “the codified step-by-step processes implemented by YouTube to afford or restrict visibility through the platform architecture... algorithms and algorithmic recommender systems ‘sort, manipulate, analyse, and predict,’” (Bishop, 2020; Wilson, 2017, p.3). Abul-Fottouh et al. described the YouTube algorithm in their 2020 research on algorithmic biases in YouTube's recommendations of vaccine videos as reportedly relying on “deep neural networks to learn from videos watched, click-through rates, average time spent on the video, and engagement (i.e., disliking or liking a video, commenting) to tailor video recommendations with the goal of maximizing viewership, watch time, and user retention in order to generate advertising revenue for YouTube.” (Abul-Fottouh et al., 2020, p.1) They continue to state that “this suggests that the algorithm does not necessarily consider content accuracy in its recommendation decisions as long as the audience provides feedback that the content is welcomed. As a result, popular misinformation may be propagated because of existing algorithmic biases.” (Abul-Fottouh et al., 2020, p.1) The algorithm, because it is based on user experience and engagement can propel

videos with misinformation to be seen by larger audiences, and similarly can suppress videos that do not perform as well with viewers. However, this study did not address demonetization and suppression by the algorithm for topics that go against YouTube's advertiser-friendly guidelines. Additionally, the research sample was gathered through finding the top videos for searched keywords, which would not account for videos that are suppressed by the algorithm. This study does contribute insight into other functions of the algorithm, such as the promotion of misinformation through the YouTube algorithm's recommendations. Research into all functions of YouTube's algorithm can act as a valuable tool for seeing the bigger picture of YouTube's algorithm for the case study at hand as the actual mechanism behind YouTube's recommender algorithm is unknown due to its proprietary nature (Abul-Fottouh et al., 2020).

As the YouTube algorithm continues to confuse and frustrate content creators on the platform, so-called "Algorithmic Experts" have emerged as a new career to aid content creators through consultation. However, due to the lack of public information concerning the functions of the YouTube algorithm, the knowledge presented by these "experts" is often subjective and difficult to substantiate:

"Experts advertise how their research, strategies, and theories could help *all content creators* mitigate the risk of algorithmic invisibility. With time and effort the algorithms can be *won*. In addition to treating the algorithm as a game, experts fetishize an ability to conduct experiments and generate ostensibly "objective data on how the YouTube algorithm *works*. However, in practice, algorithmic expertise often takes the form of algorithmic lore: a mix of data-informed assumptions that are weaved into a subjective narrative. (Bishop, 2020, p.1)

Bishop continues to state that experts view themselves as YouTube's adversaries, claiming that their algorithmic knowledge originates from sources unavailable to the average creator when in reality most experts' work "often teaches creators to be complicit with YouTube and its business

models” (Bishop, 2020, p.1). Additionally, much of Algorithmic Experts’ knowledge of the inner-workings of the algorithm can simply be chalked up to well-known marketing techniques such as recommending creators optimise content for holidays and seasonal topics, however this knowledge is framed as exclusive to these “experts” (Bishop, 2020; Schmidt, 1997).

While algorithmic experts position themselves as knowledgeable in ways to “beat” or “outsmart” the algorithm, they are often amplifying the platform’s own recommendation to ensure that content is advertiser-friendly and conforms to the community guidelines. In this sense, Algorithmic Experts could be encouraging practices like self-censorship, a concept discussed in the previous section, as a means to ensure that creators can monetize all content, rather than ensuring that all content, regardless of subject matter, can reach the targeted audience. In framing their advice to creators as ways to “win against the algorithm,” but instead recommending creators optimize their content to adhere to YouTube’s guidelines, Algorithmic Experts have positioned themselves on the side of advertisers rather than creators: “optimization teaches content creators how to fit within the contours of visibility on YouTube, which is in turn informed by advertisers’ desires and their organizational strategies” (Bishop, 2020, p. 8).

Algorithmic Experts, in addition to the YouTube algorithm itself, can act as cultural intermediaries for content posted to the platform (Bishop, 2020). Cultural intermediaries, as previously described by Pierre Bourdieu in the 1980s are “the producers of cultural programmes on TV and radio or the critics of ‘quality’ newspapers and magazines and all the writer journalists and journalist-writers,” though the concept is not limited to this definition, as “Bourdieu also highlights ‘control over the mass media’ as a distinguishing characteristic of cultural intermediaries (Maguire & Matthews, 2010, p. 407). This definition can be adapted to include companies, like YouTube, which implement algorithmic systems to control the content

on their platform. Intermediaries may censor content due to pressure from state actors and over-compliance with existing government regulations (Adler, 2011). Intermediaries may also be motivated to censor content to appease advertisers working with the platform and maintain profitability.

Another type of intermediary on YouTube is a Multichannel Network or MCN. Cunningham et al. describes an MCN as “a Google/YouTube-approved intermediary aggregating, affiliated with, and/or managing YouTube channels by ‘offering their assistance in diverse areas, ranging from production to monetisation, in exchange for a percentage of the ad revenue’ (Cunningham et al., 2016; VAST MEDIA, 2014). Types of assistance that multichannel networks can offer creators are talent agency-like services, big data analytics, and public relations and marketing, as well as advice similar to that of the algorithmic experts discussed above (Cunningham et al., 2016). The “thickening of management” on YouTube especially through multichannel networks has been one of the more common areas of scholarly analyses of YouTube’s commercial ecosystem (Bishop, 2020; Lobato, 2016, p.349). Though an increased comprehension aids in the understanding of YouTube’s commercial ecosystem overall, it is to be noted that for the case study at hand, Philip DeFranco, though he has previously participated in a multichannel network, has considered himself an independent creator since 2017.

2.5 Censorship by Proxy and Self-censorship

Although social networks and publishing platforms such as YouTube are largely shielded from liability concerning the content that their users post, these platforms act as intermediaries between content creators and their audience for a variety of reasons (Adler, 2011). In the United States, section 230 of the Communications Decency Act states that “No provider or user of an

interactive computer service shall be treated as the publisher or speaker of any information provided by another information content provider,” which protects platforms such as YouTube from legal responsibility for what others say or do (Electronic Frontier Foundation).

Similarly, the research by Wilkinson and Berry (2019) considers demonetization as an expression of censorship by proxy, writing that legal scholars “have argued that the perception of the Internet as an unrestricted community square is a manufactured illusion.” (Wilkinson and Berry, 2019, 225) The research explains that various intermediaries (i.e., platforms, search engines, and Internet service providers) have stepped into the roles of gatekeepers online as they possess the means and motivation to control the flow of information (Wilkinson and Berry, 2019). As previously discussed in the demonetization section of this paper, YouTube allegedly demonetizes some videos that are unattractive to advertisers, rather than demonetizing videos because they are necessarily harmful to the end-user (Dwoskin, 2019). Following the YouTube shooting in 2018, journalists have called for more transparency from the platform in its community guidelines so that “the perception of censorship can be squashed, and people can better understand how to abide by the platform’s preferred rules” (Hess, 2018). Creators find it difficult to follow rules set by the platform as they have had a multitude of changes to these policies in the recent past as reactionary decisions to events like the adpocalypse (Pierson, 2018).

It can be anticipated that suppression by YouTube’s algorithm through demonetization, or censorship by proxy, will ultimately affect the visibility of news on YouTube published by political commentators and personalities in multiple forms. First, a creator might no longer be able to dedicate time and effort toward creating and distributing content on YouTube as they would not be receiving an income from the platform. As many creators have built audiences on YouTube for years, it can be difficult to try to move their audience to another platform where

they might be able to more easily monetize (such as Twitch, a live streaming platform), though some creators have been able to move platforms (Pierson, 2018). Many creators choose to allocate the same amount of time and effort as a full-time job to their videos and would not be able to continue producing content if they did not receive financial compensation for themselves and any production staff they may have hired.

Another form of inhibiting visibility is demonetization resulting in being suppressed by the algorithm. This algorithm decides which videos to recommend on home pages, sidebars, end of video recommendations or auto-play, and which videos deserve a place on the trending page. Should a video be suppressed by the algorithm, the likelihood of new viewers finding and consuming the content decreases, as well as the likelihood of subscribers to a particular channel seeing the video in their subscription box. Even if a video were not demonetized, these actions from the algorithm would result in decreased amounts of views, meaning less income being paid to the creator for the video, as well as difficulties in growing an audience on the platform.

In their research on LGBTQ+ content and demonetization on YouTube, Wilkinson and Berry explored the theme of self-censorship for content creators explaining that “creators [often] experienc[e] what is commonly referred to as a “chilling effect” or a felt obligation to self-censor their content to avoid demonetization (Wilkinson and Berry, 2019, p. 225). In the same article, the researchers stated that “self-censoring is particularly likely when the sanctions seem to occur without due process and minimal communication or explanation from the platform [...] as is the case with YouTube demonetization” (Wilkinson and Berry, 2019, p.225). Self-censorship is a topic traditionally discussed in the field of journalism. In a report, the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (2015) defined the concept and described its implications as:

Self-censorship occurs when journalists themselves prevent the publication of information. Journalists practice self-censorship because they are fearful of what could

happen if they publish certain information — they fear injury to themselves or their families, lawsuits or other economic consequence. This form of censorship has a direct, negative impact on access to information and media freedom, which are considered vital elements for systems that allow people to hold governments accountable in achieving economic growth, social equality and environmental sustainability (p. 8).

In a 2000 study by the Pew Research Center on self-censorship in journalism, a quarter of local and national journalists reported they purposely avoided newsworthy stories, and almost a quarter of the same journalists claimed to have softened the tone of stories to benefit the interest of their news organization, while 41% of journalists interviewed admitted to either or both of these practices. Pew listed the principal causes of self-censorship as market pressures for stories to be interesting and uncomplicated, avoiding conflicts with organizational interests, and avoiding stories that would adversely affect advertisers. Of the journalists interviewed, only 37% said that they believed the news business did a good job of balancing journalism's twin goals of telling the public what it wants to know and what it needs to know (Pew Research Center, 2000). This research helps to illustrate how self-censorship manifests in journalism, however, as this research was conducted twenty years ago it would be beneficial for more updated research to be done to validate if these numbers are still accurate in journalism, especially news posted on social media, however that research is outside the scope of the paper at hand.

In light of the foregoing considerations, it seems necessary to examine how and if self-censorship manifests in non-mainstream news commentators on YouTube. Potential manifestations of self-censorship amongst these creators include but are not limited to: the creation of new channels where videos will not be monetized, self-censorship of the content and language used in main channel videos and releasing content on new platforms. In addition to research on self-censorship, further research is needed to investigate how censorship by proxy, such as with YouTube's algorithm, affects non-mainstream news commentators' ability to

publish content on the platform, and how it affects the visibility of news on YouTube overall. For a video to be “visible” in the terms of this research, it should not be restricted from audiences by the algorithm (should have the ability to be recommended, should not be age-restricted, should not have limited monetization or be demonetized) and it should be able to be viewed by subscribers of the channel. Self-censorship is a reaction that occurs after censorship by proxy, and as censorship by proxy is a form of gatekeeping in itself, gatekeeping theory is the most appropriate lens for further research. This research aims to answer some of these calls to further research.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

Gatekeeping theory explains the process of “culling and crafting countless bits of information into the limited number of messages that reach people each day, and it is the center of the media’s role in modern public life.” (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009, p. 1) This process is increasingly performed by algorithms, especially on platforms processing high quantities of uploaded content which would be an impossible task for humans alone to sift through. Though some may argue that the idea of gatekeeping is now dead because of the unrestrictive nature of publishing on the internet and that it has now become a challenge for researchers to apply gatekeeping theory to mass communication in the twenty-first century (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009, 130), gatekeeping theory can be a particularly useful lens for this research because of the phenomenon of censorship by proxy, and due to the fact that the nature of publishing on the internet is not nearly as unrestrictive as it may seem. A challenge to applying gatekeeping theory to YouTube is that algorithmic content monitoring occurs after posting, or after the stage at

which a proactive gatekeeping process would have occurred, and restrictions and regulations on content occur reactively.

Gatekeeping theory must be adapted to include alternative gatekeepers such as algorithms. A modernized approach to gatekeeping theory is justified because “the rise of algorithms and platforms that enable individual users and services to take part in publishing news has changed gatekeeping selection processes and news flow patterns. Accordingly, gatekeeping theory must also change” (Wallace, 2018, p. 275). Due to processes such as user experience optimization, personalization, and recommendations, two users of the same platform may not have equal access to the same content, which has caused concerns about ‘filter bubbles’ amongst gatekeeping theorists (Wallace, 2018, p. 277). Further, the algorithms that are in search engines such as Google, and by extension YouTube, have the power to shape what is considered to be of public interest and these companies are considered to be governors of information flow, giving them a role in the construction of social reality (Wallace 2018, p. 277). Additionally, YouTube may be gatekeeping in an untraditional sense in that it could allow the content to exist on the platform, therefore making it through the proverbial “gate”. However, YouTube’s monetization algorithm could be acting as another gate in the process which would prevent some viewership on videos that are not ruled advertiser-friendly by the platform. Though gatekeeping theory cannot be applied to this research in the traditional senses of print media or television, it can be adapted to apply to a more current context such as algorithmic gatekeeping on YouTube, as well as looking at self-censorship as a reaction to censorship by proxy. Therefore, the research questions are as follows:

Research Question

How do the YouTube algorithm and demonetization affect the visibility of news commentary, specifically posted by non-mainstream commentators and/or personalities?

Sq1: How does the threat of demonetization affect the manifestation of self-censorship in news commentators on YouTube?

Sq2: How does the threat of video suppression, or gatekeeping, by the YouTube algorithm affect the manifestation of self-censorship in news commentators on YouTube?

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Objective

Through a case study of *The Philip DeFranco Show* and the implementation of content analysis, this research sets out to determine how the YouTube algorithm and the phenomenon of demonetization affect the visibility of news commentary posted to YouTube, specifically from content creators not associated to a mainstream television network or professional news publication. Additionally, it sets out to discover how monetization, demonetization, and the YouTube algorithm are discussed within the content. While the topic of demonetization often arises in the media, it has yet to be thoroughly researched in the academic sphere, especially in more specific contexts such as the ability of a political commentary and current issues video to reach a sizeable audience on YouTube. A case study is an appropriate method for this research as this topic has yet to be covered extensively, and the study of a representative subsection of a precisely defined population, i.e. Philip DeFranco, a non-mainstream news commentator in a population of YouTube creators, can aid in the ability to make inferences about the whole population (Arber, 1993 as cited in Silverman & Marvasti, 2008). This case allows access to a subsection of creators on YouTube that, to the best of my knowledge, formal research has yet to study extensively. To ensure a broad understanding of the subsection, two months of content, or 39 videos, will be analyzed, which will aid in accomplishing a sample which can lead to generalizations about the reality of non-mainstream news commentators as a whole on the platform.

3.2 Research Strategy

The method for this research is a case study employing content analysis. A case study is an effective way to measure the visibility of non-mainstream news commentary on YouTube as there has not yet been extensive research in this field. By employing case study as the method for this research and using purposive sampling where the processes being studied are most likely to occur, it is possible that this case study will result in a general idea of the effects of YouTube's monetization algorithm on news creators (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, as cited in Silverman & Marvasti, 2008). Philip DeFranco fits within the parameters of this purposive sample as he is categorized as a non-mainstream news commentator by being unaffiliated with a major mainstream news outlet such as CBS, MSNBC, Fox, etc. This case study will analyze all videos posted in the months of May and June 2020 by *The Philip DeFranco Show* (@Philip DeFranco). Analyzing two months of content posted by one of the most popular non-mainstream news channels on YouTube provides valuable insight into this category on the platform.

The months of May and June 2020 are a particularly interesting time to study due to the social and political landscape in the United States during this time. The novel coronavirus pandemic, and the misinformation that emerged as the disease spread, was also a source of demonetization on YouTube as the platform attempted to curb the spread of conspiracy theories about the virus. A note from Susan Wojcicki, CEO of YouTube, on March 11 stated:

There's a lot of uncertainty right now, and we understand the importance of helping people find authoritative sources of news and information...we've worked to prevent misinformation associated with the spread of the virus...YouTube will continue to quickly remove videos that violate our policies when they are flagged...Finding trustworthy content is especially critical as news is breaking, and we'll continue to make sure YouTube delivers accurate information for our users... We know many of you have had questions about our sensitive events policy, which currently does not allow monetization if a video includes more than one passing mention of the coronavirus...it's becoming clear this issue is now an ongoing and important part of everyday conversation, and we want to make sure news organization and creators can continue to produce content in a sustainable way. (Wojcicki, 2020).

Monetization on YouTube related to videos discussing the coronavirus pandemic was a significant issue during the time period of this research and can help to demonstrate one of the mature topics which YouTube monetizes, or demonetizes, based on their changing policies. May and June also serve as a particularly interesting moment in time for American news content as the murder of George Floyd in late May brought about a resurgence of nationwide Black Lives Matter protests against police brutality in the United States. While the videos produced by *The Philip DeFranco Show* during this time might not be indicative of his entire content library, they will aid in demonstrating how YouTube reacts to content within the mature and sensitive themes of the news cycle at hand and give a glimpse into the accessibility of different viewpoints on YouTube. From these two events, the research during these months should yield interesting results based on the delicate social and political landscape present in the United States.

Philip DeFranco's content is of particular interest for this study as he has been very vocal about the YouTube algorithm and demonetization and how it affects his content. Philip DeFranco "tries to position himself as an objective, buttoned-up talk show host, even though his eponymous show is all about his take on the biggest names in YouTube drama," while Philip DeFranco mostly maintains an objective and serious tone when presenting news stories, he also inserts much more casual commentary on these stories (Plaugic, 2017). He frequently experiments with new ways of posting news content to avoid potential suppression from the algorithm such as creating new channels, posting two videos a day with one having content he expects to be suppressed and another having no anticipated issues, amongst other experiments. The content posted in May and June 2020 gives insight into the success rate of these experiments. Philip DeFranco has been active on YouTube since 2006 and has experienced the

waves of demonetization first-hand and has participated in multi-channel networks. Philip DeFranco became an independent creator again in 2017 and remains so, with funding for *The Philip DeFranco Show* coming from a Patreon called DeFranco Elite, as well as YouTube advertisement revenue. While his Patreon funding aids to avoid reliance on the unpredictable YouTube algorithm, Philip DeFranco must continue to play within the rules of the algorithm and the platform to ensure his content reaches the audience he has and to maximize monetization opportunities.

Philip DeFranco has created one of the largest non-mainstream news commentary channels on YouTube with an audience of 6.4 million subscribers (Philip DeFranco). The size of this audience is similar to that of mainstream news content channels and late-night commentary channels. For example, prominent mainstream news commentary, late-night news, and non-mainstream news commentary channels are (as of Nov. 12, 2019):

Mainstream news commentary	“Late-night” news commentary	Non-mainstream news commentary
CNN News: 7.81 Million subscribers	“The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon”: 22.5 Million Subscribers	“The Joe Rogan Experience”: 6.73 Million Subscribers
ABC News: 6.84 Million subscribers	“The Late Late Show with James Corden”: 20.9 Million subscribers	“The Philip DeFranco Show”: 6.4 Million subscribers
Fox News: 3.73 Million subscribers	“Jimmy Kimmel Live”: 15.5 Million subscribers	“The Young Turks”: 4.54 Million subscribers
MSNBC: 2.12 Million subscribers	“The Daily Show with Trevor Noah”: 5.71 Million subscribers	“Louder with Crowder”: 4.21 Million subscribers
CBS: 1.97 Million subscribers	“Late Night with Seth Meyers”: 3.24 Million subscribers	“The Rubin Report”: 1.07 Million subscribers

In some cases, *The Philip DeFranco Show* has more subscribers, and therefore a larger audience on YouTube, than mainstream news sources. Similarly, *The Philip DeFranco Show* has a comparable audience on the platform as some late-night comedians such as Trevor Noah and Seth Meyers. The size of the audience of *The Philip DeFranco Show* is important to note as the tastes of audiences continue to change regarding what sources of news they turn to, what types of presenters they want to listen to, and whether they rely on traditional media for their news, or social media.

3.3 Data collection tools and procedures

This study employed a quantitative content analysis. A coding frame was developed to enable the comparison of similar videos based on features like the number of views amassed by the video or the number of likes and dislikes (see Appendix). The unit of analysis for this research was entire videos, including the metrics associated with the video; the corpus is composed of all videos distributed by The Philipe DeFranco Show in May and June 2020. The content was analyzed to gauge whether these videos were monetized by observing if ads were running before, during, or after the video, if banner ads were present, if private brand deals or paid promotion were included, as well as mentions of merchandise in the video. Pursuing alternative revenue streams can be a means of protection against censorship by proxy for a creator, and it is for this reason that alternative revenue streams were important to note during the analysis. It is important to watch the recent videos as they provide a more accurate depiction to the number of views a video would organically gain, especially in the news category where the most recent news is generally the most up-to-date and older videos do not typically have high

rewatch value. Due to optimized monetization and the ability to add multiple advertisements to a video longer than 10 minutes, the vast majority of videos which were analyzed exceeded 10 minutes each. The number of views the video has received is also an important metric as comparison can be drawn from Philip DeFranco's average number of views per video to observe if a video may have been suppressed by the algorithm, or, alternatively, promoted by it. This data was collected in mid-July 2020 to provide all videos from May and June time to reach their organic number of views. In addition, noting the likes and dislikes a video has will help to demonstrate audience engagement with the video, which often helps signal to the algorithm how satisfied users are with the content and if the video should be promoted or suppressed. These measures provide quantitative data for analysis

The same sample was used to monitor mentions of monetization, demonetization, and the YouTube algorithm in the videos and the manner in which these topics are discussed. The length of the video is important because videos surpassing 10 minutes on YouTube have the option of adding more than one advertisement, and therefore have the possibility of increasing profit from each video (Alexander, 2019). By comparing viewership of monetized and demonetized videos, a tentative link can be made toward whether monetization has affected the visibility of this content to the audience. A viewer can know if a video is monetized based on whether or not they receive any ads prior to or during the video they are watching. A creator may choose to disable ads on their video if it is suspected that the video will likely to be demonetized and penalized by YouTube's algorithm: a form of self-censorship due to threat of demonetization on YouTube. It is for this reason that all videos which do not have an advertisement before or during the video are considered demonetized for the purpose of the analysis. Further, the titles of videos will be analyzed to gauge the themes and content of each video.

3.4 Limitations

A limitation of this research is the inability to view videos from a creator's perspective and clarify which videos were never monetized, were demonetized, or have limited monetization. Additionally, due to having a user's perspective of the videos, it is impossible to know how much profit each video generates for a creator, as advertising rates vary depending on the video and ads served upon it. Further, this research is conducted over a two-month period, during atypical circumstances such as the coronavirus pandemic and the resurgence of Black Lives Matter protests in the United States, which could yield results that are not typical of times during a different news cycle. Similarly, the case study of *The Philip DeFranco Show* gives a good glimpse into how YouTube's algorithm reacts to non-mainstream news commentary but is not necessarily indicative of the experience of every non-mainstream news content creator on the platform. Moreover, some evidence discussed further in the results section indicates that Philip DeFranco might be a member of YouTube Select, and therefore have the ability to have a human, in addition to the YouTube algorithm, review his content against the YouTube policies. Finally, the research has been conducted in Canada on an American creator, and the advertisements served in Canada may vary from the advertisements served to an American audience. It is possible that the availability of videos and advertisements may differ between the two countries.

4. Results and Analysis

The research was conducted from July 9 to 17, 2020. During this time, 39 videos were analyzed, with release dates from May 4 to June 30, 2020. The total watch time of all videos was 11:16:56, with the shortest video being 7:53 in length and the longest being 28:50. On average, videos were 17:53 long. This research considers demonetization or a video which has not been monetized as a video that does not have any ads associated with it. Limited monetization is only one form of monetization associated with a video and full monetization is two or more forms of monetization associated with a video. This does not include external revenue streams such as private sponsorship. Limited monetization and demonetization often indicate suppression from the YouTube algorithm.

In what follows, results are broken down into three subsections, each representing... brief explanation required.

4.1 Viewership and Censorship by Proxy

The most viewed video, at 1,800,133 views, was titled “Tati Westbrook's "BREAKING MY SILENCE", Allegations Against Jeffree Star & Shane Dawson, & MUCH MORE” and was posted on June 30th, 2020. This video was fully monetized and had three forms of monetization: pre-roll, banner ads and post roll. The least viewed video in this timeframe, at 854,742 views, was titled “WHY This Adele Situation Sparked BACKLASH & Praise, The INSANE Venezuela Coup Rollercoaster, & More” and was posted on May 6th, 2020. This video had limited monetization with only one form of monetization: post-roll advertisements. It is important to note that the number of views, likes, and dislikes displayed on a YouTube video are estimates only, as YouTube updates these totals periodically and not live with every new view, like, or

dislike. The data noted during this research are the numbers displayed between July 9 to 17, 2020.

During the two-month timeframe, the average number of views for *The Philip DeFranco Show* was 1,040,920 per video. Amongst demonetized videos the average was 1,027,813. Videos with limited demonetization had an average of 952,475 per video. Videos that were monetized had an average view count of 1,066,342. Of main videos and bonus videos, average main videos reached an audience of 1,056,739 and bonus videos reached 953,920 viewers.

The lower views associated with videos with limited monetization are especially notable. Limited monetization can be an even greater indication of algorithmic suppression than seeing a video without ads, as it is difficult to determine whether a creator never intended to monetize a video and it is for that reason that ads do not run with the content, or if the video was demonetized. However, limited monetization indicates that the creator intentionally attempted to monetize the video and that they might not be served the same number of ads that other videos they post typically have. Therefore, limited monetization indicates more strongly that censorship by proxy has occurred and YouTube is acting as a gatekeeper to suppress the video from being visible to a larger audience. Demonetization can similarly indicate algorithmic suppression, censorship by proxy, and gatekeeping on YouTube's part.

4.2 Monetization and Censorship by Proxy

Of the 39 videos analyzed, 25 videos were monetized, eight videos were demonetized or never attempted to monetize, and six videos had limited monetization. This breaks down to 64% of videos being monetized, 21% being demonetized or never monetized, and 15% of videos

having limited monetization within a two-month period. In total, 36% of videos faced some sort of demonetization or limited monetization issues.

Out of 39 videos, 16 had pre-roll ads, 13 had banner ads, 17 had mid-roll ads and 19 had post-roll ads. Three videos also had unskippable ads which were six seconds in length. In terms of themes of monetization, 10 videos discussed the YouTube algorithm, suppression or demonetization, 34 videos mentioned a private sponsorship and five videos promoted merchandise sales. Only one video had both no monetization and no themes of monetization: “*UPDATE* Derek Chauvin Arrested For 3rd Degree Murder of George Floyd (Updates in description)”. Three videos had warnings from Health Canada about COVID-19 and potential spread of misinformation on YouTube.

A significant observation noted in this research was that there were six-second unskippable ads on some videos on the channel. Six-second unskippable ads or “bumper ads” can be an indicator that the creator is a member of YouTube Select, formerly Google Preferred, where, in addition to YouTube’s monetization algorithm, YouTube reviews the content before placing ads on that particular video. Having a human rather than only an algorithm review the content ensures that companies can trust that their brand is sufficiently aligned with the video. This is a fallout of the “adpocalypse” previously mentioned in this paper.

YouTube states that “with YouTube Select, you can be confident that your ad buys are brand-safe. You’ll have access to advanced brand suitability controls, as well as the option to only serve ads on videos that have been human-verified across all lineups” (YouTube Ads, 2020). Three of the videos during the two-month period had six-second unskippable ads. While it cannot be stated with complete certainty that DeFranco is a content creator enrolled in YouTube Select, given the popularity of the channel and the use of this ad format, it is highly likely.

Having human verification of the content aids a creator in ensuring that their content is not unfairly demonetized by the algorithm triggering demonetization based on sensitive topics in the video. This could give DeFranco an advantage in the ability to monetize news content in a way that might not be possible for smaller, up-and-coming channels that could not be members of YouTube Select. YouTube Select could also be a slight disadvantage in that human verification might be able to catch more nuanced content and trigger demonetization or a mature content rating that the algorithm would not have caught. While it is possible that YouTube Select can minimize the effects of gatekeeping through unexplained demonetization on a channel, it is also possible that membership of YouTube Select could subject creators to additional gatekeepers, that are more subjective than their artificial intelligence counterparts.

4.3 Viewership, Monetization and Censorship by Proxy

As a snapshot of the data collected, the two charts below demonstrate the five videos that received the most and the five videos that received the least views. The chart immediately below depicts the five videos out of the 39 videos within the observation period that received the lowest number of views. Four of these videos were fully monetized and one video had limited monetization. Low viewership can be caused by many factors, the algorithm can suppress a video from being recommended to users, not recommend the video within subscription boxes, or users might simply be less interested in that particular video and not click on the title. Of these five videos, the most notable is “WHY This Adele Situation...” video from May 6, because this title only had one advertisement run on the video, which was post-roll. Due to a user having to watch the entire 16:31 video through to see an advertisement, post-roll ads are not usually the most effective advertisement strategy when compared to pre-roll or mid-roll ads.

Least viewed videos					
Title	Release Date	Views	Monetization	Likes	Dislikes
WHY This Adele Situation Sparked BACKLASH & Praise, The INSANE Venezuela Coup Rollercoaster, & More	6 May 2020	854,742	Limited	48K	894
What's REALLY EXPOSED In This Drew Brees, Lebron James, Laura Ingraham Situation...	4 June 2020	861,209	Monetized	55K	2.9K
FALSE Shake Shack Intentionally Poisoned Cops ACCUSATIONS, MrBeast Quibi FAIL, & Police Reform	16 June 2020	867,392	Monetized	41K	1.5K
Olivia Jade SCANDAL Results in Guilty Plea, Kendall Jenner, & Recession Unemployment Problems	21 May 2020	876,349	Monetized	41K	1.1K
What This New Ahmaud Arbery Video Really Exposes, Tekashi 6ix9ine Gooba, & Elon Musk's Tesla Threat	11 May 2020	888,115	Monetized	43K	1.4K

The following chart shows the five videos during the two-month observation period that received the most views. Four of these videos were fully monetized and one did not have any monetization associated with the video at the time of viewing.

Most viewed videos					
Title	Release Date	Views	Monetization	Likes	Dislikes
Tati Westbrook's "BREAKING MY SILENCE", Allegations Against Jeffree Star & Shane Dawson, & MUCH MORE	30 June 2020	1,800,133	Monetized	73K	2.4K
Shane Dawson's Jeffree Star "Drama" Spirals Into Mass Disgust For Sexualizing Willow Smith & More	29 June 2020	1,393,084	Monetized	56K	2K
H3H3 vs Keemstar & Pokimane CONTROVERSIES Have Sparked A Massive Debate, Vote by Mail Fight, & More	20 May 2020	1,361,589	Monetized	58K	12K

Colleen Ballinger "stop lying" & "addressing everything" Controversies Explained & Red Lobster Brawl	13 May 2020	1,330,989	Monetized	56K	1.8K
Bon Appétit Staff EXPOSE Treatment, HUGE \$\$ Accusations, Test Kitchen DEMANDS, Adam Rapoport Resigns	9 June 2020	1,233,201	Demonetized	49K	2.2K

Monetization is a good indicator of whether or not the YouTube algorithm deems the video as acceptable for advertisements and will thus promote the content. Limited monetization occurs when a video is acceptable for some but not all advertisers. A high number of advertisements on a video can indicate to the user that the video has been promoted by the algorithm, whereas a video with no advertisements will either be purposefully posted as such by the content creator, or the advertisements will have been removed by the platform.

4.4 Self-censorship: Main and Bonus Videos

During this two-month period, Philip DeFranco introduced the main video/bonus video pattern where two videos would be released in one day. The main video contained content unlikely to become suppressed by YouTube's algorithm and the other, the bonus video, was filled with content that would likely be suppressed. This was done in an attempt to direct viewers of the main video to the bonus video that would not have likely been recommended by the platform otherwise. In this time period, there were 33 main videos and six bonus videos, or 85% main videos and 15% bonus videos. Of the bonus videos, which were anticipated to be demonetized or suppressed by the algorithm, two were monetized, one had limited monetization and three were demonetized.

One way to evaluate whether DeFranco's experiment of releasing two daily videos, a main video and a bonus video anticipated to be suppressed by the algorithm is to compare the

viewership of all demonetized videos during the two-month period, as well as to look at user engagement through likes and dislikes. During May and June 2020, five main videos were demonetized with an average number of 1,053,943 views per video. During this same period, three bonus videos were demonetized with an average of 984,264 views. While this difference in viewership does not show a significant difference in whether more viewers were able to see the content that might have triggered the algorithm to flag it as not advertiser-friendly, these numbers are still on par with the average views of all videos during this two-month period: 1,040,920. However, heightened user engagement on bonus videos can indicate the success of separating topics and informing viewers that videos might be suppressed. On demonetized bonus videos there was an average of 70,600 likes and 1,500 dislikes, compared to 48,000 likes and 1,400 dislikes on demonetized main videos during the same time. For reference, the average engagement during this time was 53,200 likes and 2,090 dislikes. Looking beyond demonetized videos to all videos posted in May and June 2020, on average main videos have 51,330 likes and bonus videos have 64,800 likes. Some suggestions as to why engagement is higher on bonus videos might be that the viewers were more interested in the topic, or that being informed of the possibility that the video might be suppressed because of mature topics gave the video a more exclusive feel and acted as a call to action to viewers to seek out the bonus video, leading users to feel implicated in the process and interact with the content. This is in contrast to users normally not having any indication of if a topic is suppressed by the algorithm and clicking on a main video, which could be a less engaging process for the viewer. Given this information, bonus videos, and separating topics based on assumptions of algorithmic behaviours seems to be an effective way to receive additional user engagement on content.

4.5 User Engagement

Videos with the most engagement were measured by likes and dislikes. On YouTube, likes over 1,000 are displayed to the nearest thousand. All data below is an estimate of the total likes and dislikes on videos that was gathered between July 9 and 17, 2020. The highest number of likes totalled 81,000 on a video titled “MIXER IS DEAD! MILLIONS WASTED, Ninja & Shroud Freed, Bubba Wallace NASCAR Noose Situation, & More” published on June 22. This was followed by 80,000 likes on a bonus video released on June 1 titled “HORRIFYING! We Need To Talk Violent Protests, Police Aggression, Confusion in the Chaos, & More.” The lowest number of likes on a video was 41,000 on two videos: “Olivia Jade SCANDAL Results in Guilty Plea, Kendall Jenner, & Recession Unemployment Problems” published on May 21 and “FALSE Shake Shack Intentionally Poisoned Cops ACCUSATIONS, MrBeast Quibi FAIL, & Police Reform” published on June 16. The highest number of dislikes on a video were 12,000 on the video “H3H3 vs Keemstar & Pokimane CONTROVERSIES Have Sparked A Massive Debate, Vote by Mail Fight, & More,” posted on May 20. The least disliked video, with 894 dislikes was “WHY This Adele Situation Sparked BACKLASH & Praise, The INSANE Venezuela Coup Rollercoaster, & More.”

The average number of likes on all videos was 53,200. For demonetized videos, the average likes were 56,500, for videos with limited monetization the likes were 47,330 and for monetized videos the average likes were 53,500. On average, main videos have 51,330 likes and bonus videos have 64,800 likes. The average number of dislikes on all videos was 2,090, with demonetized videos averaging 1,430 dislikes, limited monetization videos averaging 1,320 dislikes and monetized videos averaging 2,480. Main videos received 2,110 dislikes on average whereas bonus videos received 1,970.

4.6 Themes within Video Content

Notable mentions of algorithmic suppression were found in 11 videos, mostly discussing the concept of main videos and bonus videos as an experiment to avoid algorithmic suppression or acknowledging that algorithmic suppression could not be avoided on some videos and providing alternative ways for viewers to discover these videos other than the subscription box or recommended videos sections of YouTube. In a video posted on June 22, 2020, Philip DeFranco stated that he was tired of having to find ways to work around the gatekeeping of the YouTube algorithm, saying:

And the first thing we're going to talk about today is actually a story that'll probably get this video suppressed, but honestly, I just do not have the energy to jump through all the damn hoops that I normally have to jump through just to just try to do my job on a basic level on this damn website. So, if YouTube makes it today so fewer people see this story or anything I talk about, so be it. I'm emotionally exhausted as it is without even considering dealing with gatekeepers (DeFranco, 2020b)

This type of burnout from trying to work against and work with YouTube's algorithms is common amongst creators on its platform, especially those who create sensitive content like Philip DeFranco.

To gauge the themes of the content within a video, titles of videos that were demonetized or had limited monetization were analyzed for mature topics associated with the keywords in the title. Some themes associated with demonetized videos were: death and impaired driving; the coronavirus pandemic, racism; police brutality; murder; and rape. These themes are not considered advertiser-friendly by the platform as they are mature topics. The following is a chart of the eight demonetized videos during the two-month period, and the themes that were present in the video, as signalled by the title.

Demonetized Videos					
Title	Themes	Release Date	Views	Likes	Dislikes
Corey La Barrie's Heartbreaking Death, Murder Charge & \$2,000,000 Bail For Daniel Silva, & More	YouTube drama, death, impaired driving	12 May 2020	1,115,337	48K	1.3K
Wow! DISGUSTING Subway TikTok Prank On Essential Workers Sparks Outrage, MrBeast, KSI, Wisconsin, &	Coronavirus Pandemic, Social media pranks	14 May 2020	950,118	43K	976
WOW! Ariana Grande Fraud Claim, Justin Bieber, Joe Rogan's Spotify Deal, Charli D'Amelio, COVID-19	Celebrity drama, social media, coronavirus pandemic	19 May 2020	930,667	44K	1.2K
DISGUSTING! We Need To Talk About What Happened To George Floyd... What We Know & What Happens Next	Black Lives Matter (BLM), racism, police brutality, murder	27 May 2020	945,324	76K	987
UPDATE Derek Chauvin Arrested For 3rd Degree Murder of George Floyd (Updates in description)	BLM, racism, police brutality, murder	28 May 2020	1,074,976	56K	1.1K
HORRIFYING! We Need To Talk Violent Protests, Police Aggression, Confusion in the Chaos, & More	BLM, police brutality	1 June 2020	932,491	80K	2.4K
Bon Appétit Staff EXPOSE Treatment, HUGE \$\$ Accusations, Test Kitchen DEMANDS, Adam Rapoport Resigns	BLM, racism, YouTube drama	9 June 2020	1,223,201	49K	2.2K
Danny Masterson Rape Charges, Scientology Warned "This is just the beginning" & Supreme Court DACA	Rape	18 June 2020	1,040,389	56K	1.3K

Further, the same analysis conducted on limited monetization videos is particularly interesting because it can show evidence that the video was subject to censorship by proxy, or gatekeeping, by the YouTube algorithm, whereas demonetized videos have the possibility of having never been monetized as an act of self-censorship or being demonetized subject to censorship by proxy by the YouTube algorithm. The following chart shows similar themes

within the limited monetization videos as the demonetized videos. Themes such as racism, the coronavirus pandemic, and celebrity drama were present in the limited monetization videos:

Limited Monetization Videos					
Title	Themes	Release Date	Views	Likes	Dislikes
WHY This Adele Situation Sparked BACKLASH & Praise, The INSANE Venezuela Coup Rollercoaster, & More	Weight loss, celebrity drama, international affairs	6 May 2020	854,742	48K	894
Why People Are FREAKING OUT On Jeffree Star & Viral Video Exposes How Essential Workers Are Treated	YouTube drama, coronavirus pandemic	18 May 2020	1,026,259	47K	1.1K
Call Her Daddy's Backstabbing & Controversy. Why Fans Are Furious & This Will Keep Happening (BONUS)	Celebrity drama	21 May 2020	991,112	55K	1.2K
WATCH OUT FOR THESE CORONAVIRUS SCAMS, Jamie Foxx Jimmy Fallon Controversy, David Dobrik & More	Coronavirus pandemic	27 May 2020	946,444	44K	1.6K
Stassi Schroeder's False Accusation Against Black Coworker, Police Called, Gone with the Wind, &	BLM, racism	10 June 2020	984,125	45K	1.9K
I DIDN'T EXPECT THAT... Madison Beer, Ron Perlman, Beyonce, Supreme Court, Breonna Taylor No-Knock	BLM, racism	15 June 2020	912,168	45K	1.2K

From these two charts, it is interesting to note that all demonetized and limited monetization videos have mature themes associated with them, with the exception of two limited monetization videos that had topics related to celebrity drama. Therefore, ten out of the twelve videos that were affected by censorship by proxy from YouTube's monetization algorithm contained mature themes, which likely lead to their suppression. This shows how YouTube is acting as a gatekeeper to ensure that the content that is promoted and monetized on its platform contains themes that are appropriate for most audiences, and that mature themes within non-mainstream news commentary can be penalized by the platform.

5 Conclusion

5.1 Research Question: How do the YouTube algorithm and demonetization affect the visibility of news commentary, specifically posted by non-mainstream commentators and/or personalities

In summary, the response to the research question “How do the YouTube algorithm and demonetization affect the visibility of news commentary, specifically posted by non-mainstream commentators and/or personalities?” is that the YouTube algorithm acts as a gatekeeper and negatively affects the visibility of non-mainstream news commentators such as Philip DeFranco by suppressing videos with mature content. Videos that are demonetized or have limited monetization, like 36% of the videos posted by DeFranco in May and June 2020, will not always be shown as recommended on YouTube, will not always be visible in users’ subscription boxes and thus will not receive the same viewership as a video that is fully monetized and deemed advertiser-friendly by the platform. In this sense, YouTube is acting as a gatekeeper, as content that is considered advertiser-friendly is promoted by YouTube’s algorithms regardless of the accuracy of the information in the content. Similarly, this research indicates YouTube will keep content on current events related to serious world issues from reaching the subscription boxes of subscribers or being recommended to new viewers. This suppression of news is censorship-by-proxy as the platform is censoring content based on advertiser guidelines, rather than in the interests of its users.

5.2 Subquestions: How does the threat of demonetization affect the manifestation of self-censorship in news commentators on YouTube? How does the threat of video suppression, or gatekeeping, by the YouTube algorithm affect the manifestation of self-censorship in news commentators on YouTube?

In response to the subquestions, while the threat of demonetization did not seem to be a motivating factor for self-censorship during this research period, it is possible that it has been in the past as the majority of videos during this research had mentions of private sponsorship which is a common way to ensure revenue from a video and avoid relying on the platform for revenue. However, during this research period, self-censorship manifested as a result of the threat of video suppression through the implementation of a modified posting schedule in the form of the main and bonus videos. This separation of content was created distinctly to circumvent YouTube's monetization algorithm and ensure that subscribers were aware of content that the creator anticipated (often correctly) would be suppressed. This separation of content was successful in its goal as viewership of bonus videos was similar to the number of overall views videos on the channel receive. However, this separation would not have been needed had it not been for YouTube's monetization algorithm effectively gatekeeping news content on the platform. While YouTube does not act as a traditional gatekeeper in the sense that it will still allow videos that follow community guidelines, regardless of whether or not they are advertiser-friendly, to exist on the platform, YouTube does act as a gatekeeper by altering the visibility of video that are not advertiser-friendly. Further research should investigate these findings further on a larger scale with YouTube's recommendation algorithm in addition to the monetization algorithm studied in this research.

5.3 Relevance to the Field of Communication

This research is of value to the field of communication because it evaluates the visibility of news in the modern age where a growing number of people are turning to social media for their information. An increasing number of people seek online personalities as their preferred news sources, or as a secondary source to comment on and disseminate information of which they were already aware. While not every online personality presenting news in online videos is necessarily a reliable news source, this research argues that the censorship of this genre of content by algorithms affects the visibility of news overall.

Additionally, this research is important for creators. Individuals who choose an unconventional career such as a content creator on YouTube have no guaranteed income and have not signed a contract to be in that position on a permanent basis. These creators sign on to the platform expecting equal and fair treatment for the content they put out and are often met with unexplained repercussions from algorithms deciding that their content is too serious or offensive for the ideal audience YouTube and advertisers would like to cater to. Investigating what makes these algorithms decide that news and current events topics are inappropriate for viewers and advertisers is important for those who work in this field, especially self-employed, grassroots news channels on YouTube that are not affiliated with mainstream television networks or professional news publications. It is important to investigate algorithms and censorship on one of the largest and most accessible platforms on the Internet. YouTube has immense power over what types of news content, opinions, and topics are recommended to viewers, or even visible to the public. Understanding, to the extent that is possible without having insider knowledge, how algorithms and curated content affect the visibility of news is important for consumers, creators, and the field of communication studies moving forward.

5.4 Limitations and Considerations for Future Research

It is important to note that this research was conducted in Canada on a channel meant for a primarily American audience. A Canadian viewer may see different advertisements, or a difference in the frequency of advertisements than American viewers as the two countries have different advertisers working with Google to advertise in those markets and may thus have different advertising standards. Though the advertiser-friendly content guidelines that YouTube sets remains the same across the platform regardless of the country of operation. It is also important to note that this research was conducted through one YouTube account, and user experience can vary across the platform. Further research should use accounts across various demographics to explore the difference in user experiences concerning monetization on YouTube. It would also be interesting to have similar research conducted within the United States to observe the difference in user experience vis-à-vis monetization and demonetization on news content.

Of similar importance is the fact that YouTube Select could have played a factor in this research and that future research should investigate YouTube's algorithm's effect on small creators that would not have the ability to have human verification on their videos. It would also be beneficial in future research for researchers to work alongside content creators so that additional data is available, and that the monetization status of videos can be confirmed, rather than observing solely from the perspective of a subscriber. Additionally, future research should examine the role of YouTube's recommendation algorithm either as an additional gatekeeper or working in concert with YouTube's monetization algorithm to gatekeep the content on the platform.

5.5 Closing Remarks

Finally, YouTube is a business, it therefore fits that it has the motivation, and the means, to gatekeep the content on its platform in a way that caters to advertisers rather than prioritizing those that create content on the platform. While YouTube does allow content that adheres to its community guidelines to live on the platform, it applies separate regulations to creators who seek to monetize their content through advertiser-friendly content guidelines, which can affect a videos visibility should the content contain mature themes. YouTube's monetization algorithm is built with advertisers in mind which can act as a form of censorship-by-proxy against creators. Thus, creators self-censor their content, attempting to work within the algorithm by mature themes from their content, or work against the algorithm by deliberately posting content they know will be censored, and posting a companion video which will not be censored to inform viewers of the censored content and provide a direct link to it. In the years in the wake of YouTube's adpocalypse it has become clearer that the platform prioritizes its relationship with advertisers over its relationship with content creators.

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Appendix

Visibility of Non-Mainstream News Commentary on YouTube**Watch Date: Date-Month-Year**

--	--	--	--	--	--

Release Date: Date-Month- Year

--	--	--	--	--	--

Title: _____**Hashtags:** _____**Video length:**

		:		
--	--	---	--	--

Views:

+	
---	--

Likes/Dislikes:

	/	
--	---	--

Type of video:

1. Main 2. Bonus

--

Non-compliance of Advertiser-friendly content guidelines:

--

1. Inappropriate language
2. Violence
3. Adult content
4. Harmful or dangerous acts
5. Hateful content

6. Incendiary and demeaning
7. Recreational drugs and drug-related content
8. Tobacco-related content

9. Firearms-related content
10. Controversial issues and sensitive events
11. Adult themes in family content

Specify in additional notes**Themes of Monetization**

--

1. Algorithm
2. Monetization
3. Demonetization

4. Private sponsorship
5. Merchandise Sales
6. Other

Specify in additional notes**Monetization****If yes, specify:**

1. Pre-roll
2. Banner
3. Mid-roll

4. Post-roll
5. Unskippable

Yes	No
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If 5 state length of advertisement:**Additional notes:**