YOUTUBE DEMONETIZATION

YOUTUBE DEMONETIZATION ALGORITHM

YouTube enforces many of its policies algorithmically:

- copyright
- advertiser guidelines
  - controversial issues
  - dangerous substances
  - harmful acts
  - inappropriate language
  - sexually suggestive content

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YouTubers can still upload, but the algorithm determines their eligibility to earn

Demonetized videos earn no money for the YouTuber.

BUT THE DEMONETIZATION ALGORITHM MAKES MISTAKES

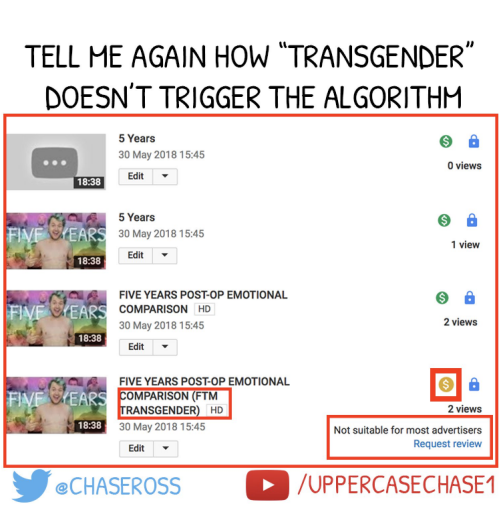
LGBTQ YOUTUBERS GETTING DEMONETIZED

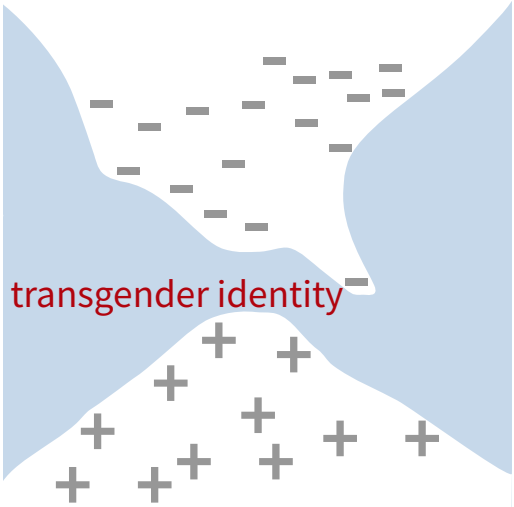
Videos about gender identity are not necessarily about sex at all.

The algorithm learned to associate gendered terms with sex because the training data had that association.

In these videos, that association doesn't exist.

LGBTQ YOUTUBERS GETTING DEMONETIZED



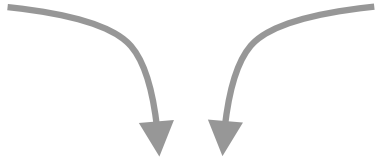


FALSE NEGATIVES

Videos of children's character Peppa Pig being tortured in the dentist's office were, by all appearances, monetized normally

In some cases they were included in YouTube Kids

Behavior
User-created videos

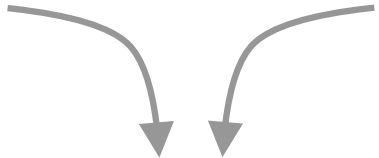


Algorithm
YouTube demonetization

Judgment
Does this video look similar to previous videos that were demonetized?

Behavior

Street performances ("buskers")



Bureaucrat

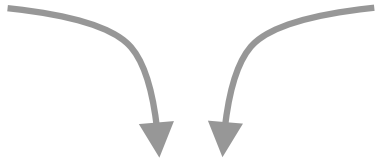
Police tasked with enforcing busking ordinances in cities

Judgment

Is this performance pushing the envelope, or does it cross a line?

Behavior

Millions of street performances



Algorithm

quasi-police force tasked with making street performance judgments at massive scale

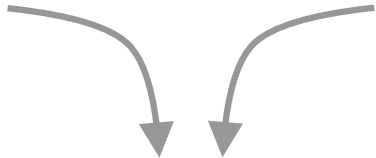
Judgment

Ideally Recognize new situations and navigate them culturally and contextually appropriately

In reality Trained on yesterday's data, before today's cultural movements began

Behavior

Millions of street performances



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TAKEAWAYS

It's unlikely we can avoid these problems algorithmically

- Having more training data would not have helped us avoid this problem
- Experimentation and provocation is often the point of performance and art
- street-level algorithms can only adapt after they make the wrong call