

Does YouTube's recommendation algorithm push extreme content?

New NYU research shows that most users do not get pushed extreme content, but some do – and overall the recommendations skew toward conservative content.

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Investigating YouTube's Ideological "Rabbit Hole" – The Markup A conversation with Megan Brown

2:02 PM · 12 nov. 2022 · Twitter Web App

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"About 3 percent of the users in our study did go down what we classified as a rabbit hole, meaning the ideology of their recommendations became more extreme and more narrow" @m_dot_brown told me in this week's newsletter.

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Julia Angwin 🔮 @JuliaAngwin · 12 nov.

Researchers also found a slight conservative skew to YouTube's recommendations. "People were, on average, regardless of their own ideology, more likely to go toward conservative content" @m_dot_brown told me.

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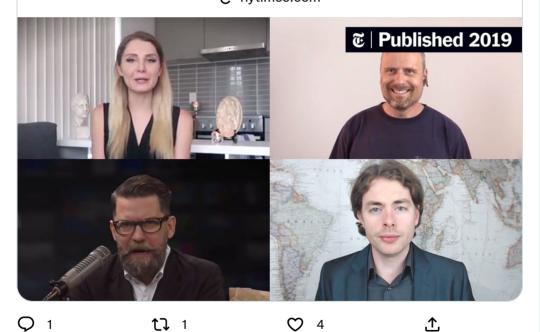
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Julia Angwin 🚱 @JuliaAngwin · 12 nov.

These findings don't rebut previous work like @kevinroose's epic "Making of a YouTube Radical" in 2019. YouTube has changed its algorithm since then, and the outliers are still getting radical content.

The New York Times The Making of a YouTube Radical (Published 2019) ? nytimes.com



Julia Angwin @ @Julia Angwin · 12 nov.

Important methodological point: NYU researchers used a panel of real-word YouTube users, which is an improvement over previous research using primarily bots. But NYU's panel was not statistically representative. So more work still remains to be done.

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