



Brief No. 16.4

Cater to the Audience

Add Cringe to Counter-Messaging Against White Supremacy in Gaming

Leo Sereni, Research Fellow
Zola Sayers-Fay, Research Intern

P | I | P | S

Cater to the Audience:
Add Cringe to Counter-Messaging Against White
Supremacy in Gaming

PIPS Memo 16.4

May 2024

Leo Sereni

Launched in 2008, the Project on International Peace and Security (PIPS) is an undergraduate think tank at the Global Research Institute, College of William & Mary. PIPS represents an innovative approach to undergraduate education that highlights the value of applied liberal arts training to producing the next generation of foreign policy analysts, leaders, and engaged citizens. PIPS is premised on two core beliefs: (1) rigorous policy-relevant research is a core component of a student's education; and (2) when guided by faculty and members of the foreign policy community, undergraduates can make meaningful contributions to policy debates; their creativity and energy are untapped resources. To this end, PIPS each year selects six research fellows and six research interns. Research fellows identify emerging international security challenges and develop original policy papers. Research interns support the work of the fellows and learn the craft of conducting policy research and writing briefs.

Amy Oakes, Ph.D.

Dennis Smith, Ph.D.

Co-directors

The Project on International Peace & Security © 2024 All rights reserved.

Please direct inquiries to: The Project on International Peace & Security, Global Research Institute, College of William & Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia, USA. Email: pips@wm.edu

Electronic copies of this report are available at www.wm.edu/pips

Cater to the Audience: Add Cringe to Counter-Messaging Against White Supremacy in Gaming

Leo Sereni (Research Fellow)

Zola Sayers-Fay (Research Intern)

Violent white supremacists exploit online gaming's insecure communication networks to radicalize gamers. These extremists spread offensive content on gaming platforms and then invite gamers who are open-minded to this messaging into private communities that encourage white supremacy and violence. Counter-messaging is under-utilized, although its bland delivery usually fails to interest gamers. The designers of counter-messaging must understand that gamers seek out "cringey," rather than serious content. "Cringe" is something embarrassing or awkward that makes its audience feel judgment, perplexion, and sometimes amusement. Gamers consume and share "cringey" content with friends because it humors them. Gaming influencers post their reactions to "cringe" because "cringe" is a lightning rod for attention online. This paper argues that anti-radicalization messaging to gamers spreads best in "cringey" packaging. Attempts to combat the spread of white supremacy on gaming networks should capitalize on cringe's utility.

Introduction

Online gaming platforms, which include videogames and gaming-adjacent social media like Discord and Twitch, have vulnerabilities that allow white supremacist messaging to spread widely. White supremacists befriend gamers who seem open-minded to this messaging and then invite them into extremist communities that often encourage violence. These communities have influenced white supremacist mass-murderers. The policy community and gaming companies' go-to anti-extremism strategy of moderating, or regulating, extremist content is inadequate.

Counter-messaging, or spreading information and rhetoric that disrupts radicalization, lacks moderation's limitations. However, counter-messaging often fails to spread in gaming communities because its delivery is unexciting. Counter-messaging "packaging" must be tailored to gamers' interests and humor.

Packaging counter-messaging content in "cringe" would improve its spread among gamers. "Cringe" is something embarrassing or awkward that makes its audience feel judgement, perplexion, and sometimes amusement. Cringe spreads organically online, especially among

gamers. Gaming communities consuming and sharing “cringey” counter-messaging to mock its delivery would also spread its underlying anti-extremist content.

White Supremacist Violent Extremism is Common and Deadly

“Racially and ethnically motivated violent extremists—specifically white supremacist extremists—will remain the most persistent and lethal threat in the Homeland.”¹

-Department of Homeland Security

Violent white supremacy is one of the most threatening forms of extremism throughout the United States and the West. Violent white supremacists often believe violently destabilizing and recreating society is the only way to defeat anti-white forces. This ideology has caused extremists to massacre hundreds over recent years.

Cause of Violence: Perceived Existential Threats to White People

Violent white supremacists support or commit violence to advance white supremacy. Not all white supremacists are violent.

White supremacists often turn violent because they perceive existential threats to white people that threaten their white identity.² For example, the “Great Replacement Theory” argues mass-migration is a conspiracy to weaken white culture and power by manipulating demographics.³ Perceived threats also include interracial marriage⁴ and Black Lives Matter (BLM).⁵

Goal of Violence: Catalyze a White Revolution

Violent white supremacists are often “accelerationist,” meaning they believe:⁶

- *Society is irreparably broken:* Democracy cannot resolve the trends harming white people.
- *Society must collapse and reset:* Rebuilding society from the ground up is the only way to protect white power and prosperity.
- *Violence will accelerate this collapse:* The start of this rebuilding can be accelerated by carrying out violence that destabilizes society.

Impact of Violence: Hundreds of Deaths

Violent white supremacy is uniquely threatening among forms of violent extremism. The next most common violent extremists in the United States, anti-government extremists,⁷ often only

encourage “defensive” violence⁸ and avoid civilian targets.⁹ However, accelerationism encourages offensive violence and killing civilians. From 2010 to 2021 racially and ethnically-motivated violent extremists, who are mostly white supremacists,¹⁰ caused 65% of deaths in U.S. extremist attacks.¹¹

Violent white supremacists have massacred civilians both in the United States and abroad:

- *Oslo, Norway, July 2011, 77 killed:* The attacker detonated a bomb in Oslo and shot campers, who were mostly children and teens, and camp staff on Utøya in an accelerationist attack.¹²
- *Christchurch, New Zealand, March 2019, 51 killed:* The attacker targeted two Mosques due to his belief in Great Replacement Theory.¹³
- *El Paso, Texas, August 2019, 23 killed:* The attacker targeted Hispanics in a Walmart.
- *Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, October 2018, 11 killed:* The attacker targeted the Tree of Life Synagogue due to his antisemitism.¹⁴
- *Buffalo, New York, May 2022, 10 killed:* The attacker targeted Black grocery store shoppers.

White Supremacist Messaging in Online Gaming Causes Radicalization

“[White supremacists exploit] the structures and communication features of online gaming spaces to disseminate their radical ideologies, normalize hostile behavior, and indoctrinate impressionable users.”¹⁵

-NYU Stern Center for Business and Human Rights

White supremacists exploit online gaming platforms to spread their messaging and recruit gamers into extremist communities. Several white supremacist attackers have engaged with gaming culture and racist gaming communities.

Online Gaming Platforms are Vulnerable to Extremist Messaging

Gamers can share messages through online gaming platforms. Games have text and voice chats, and sites like Twitch and Discord let gamers livestream and form communities with norms.

Online gaming platforms are vulnerable to white supremacist messaging due to:

- *Young and impressionable audiences:* Most gamers are young adults and 24%, or nearly 52 million, of American gamers are under 18.¹⁶
- *Subcultures permissive of racism:* Racism is often justified as “dark humor” or “edgy” and gamers rarely discourage or report racist messages.¹⁷
- *Poor moderation:* Ineffective moderation prevents extremist messaging from being consistently removed.¹⁸

White Supremacists Exploit Gaming’s Vulnerabilities to Radicalize and Mobilize

These vulnerabilities make white supremacist messaging common on gaming platforms. In 2023, 15% of adult gamers and 9% of child gamers reported seeing white supremacist content through online gaming.¹⁹ Of these gamers, 30% reported seeing white supremacy at least weekly.²⁰

White supremacists’ messaging spreads through online gaming via:

- *In-game chats:* White supremacists can type and speak²¹ to other players in multiplayer games.
- *Memes:* White supremacists often exchange racist memes or memes glorifying past attackers. Non-extremists sometimes share these memes as dark humor.²²
- *Modifying games:* White supremacists can create “mods” that add extremist content to games, like simulating the Christchurch, New Zealand massacre in Roblox.²³

White supremacist messaging resonates with some gamers. In 2021, 8% of gamers who encountered extremist ideologies shared the information with someone who might agree; 3% “joined in;” and 16% sought to learn more.²⁴

White supremacists often befriend gamers who show openness to white supremacist messaging and then invite them into private extremist communities.²⁵ Here, memes and manifestos that promote white supremacy are common because of negligible outside moderation.²⁶

Private extremist communities encourage and have helped plan violence.²⁷ Extremists brainwash recruited gamers to believe neutralizing threats to the white race requires violence while glorifying mass-murderers and accelerationism.

These communities, at best, create extremists who sympathize with violence and, at worst, create extremists who are violent.²⁸

Case Study on Extremist Communities: “Thug Shaker Central,” Jack Teixeira’s Discord Server

“I was trying to radicalize people at the time. I was trying to get them to join ... get them more violent.”²⁹

-“Crow” (Jack Teixeira’s girlfriend)

The Discord server Jack Teixeira leaked classified intelligence from was a violent racist echo chamber. The community became more insular and extreme over time as Teixeira and his allies tried to radicalize the teenagers on the server. Teixeira and his server’s members used slurs and posted violent videos threatening Black people, Jewish people, and others. Reportedly, a community member livestreamed himself attacking a Black man.³⁰ These extreme activities went unnoticed by Discord’s moderation.

White Supremacist Mass-Murderers Have Engaged with Gaming

Attacks by violent white supremacists who engaged with gaming culture and racist gaming communities include:

- *Christchurch, New Zealand, 51 killed:* Outwardly racist in online games;³¹ disrespected his victims with a Fortnite reference; jokingly credited Spyro: Year of the Dragon for teaching him ethnonationalism.³²
- *Buffalo, New York, 10 killed:* Livestreamed his attack on Twitch;³³ logged his racist views on Discord³⁴; claimed Roblox made him more nationalistic.³⁵
- *Highland Park, Illinois, 9 killed:* Directed a Discord server titled “SS.”³⁶
- *Halle, Germany, 2 killed:* Livestreamed his attack on Twitch; his manifesto referenced gaming.³⁷
- *Charlottesville, Virginia, 1 killed:* Both shared racist and antisemitic memes and organized logistics for the Unite the Right rally on Discord.³⁸

White supremacist messaging could be radicalizing future attackers right now.

Previous Counter-Messaging Has Failed to Spread

“Proposals and current solutions to white supremacists’ exploitation of gaming networks focus largely on moderation of gamers’ messaging. Few recommendations involve outreach to the gamer populations targeted by extremists.”

-NYU Stern Center for Business and Human Rights

Existing solutions have not curbed violent white supremacist messaging to gamers. Content moderation, the go-to proposal, is flawed. Counter-messaging can improve on moderation’s drawbacks. However, counter-messaging content often fails to spread among gamers because of its boring packaging.

Content Moderation is Popular, but Limited

Policy experts and gaming companies often propose moderating white supremacist messaging. Moderation regulates messages on a platform via user reports, machine learning scans, and employee reviews.³⁹

Moderation is often ineffective because of:

- *Reliance on User Reporting*: Gamers in private networks often share similar views or may not want to report their friends’ messages, even if they violate community guidelines.⁴⁰
- *Differences in Prohibited Content*: Platforms having different rules creates confusion among users that hinders reliable reporting.⁴¹
- *Extremists’ Creative Evasion Tactics*: Extremists evade detection by using language, images, or memes that moderation tools cannot detect or by creating new accounts to get around suspensions or bans imposed by platforms.⁴²

Moderation has utility, but other policies are required to remedy its limitations.

Counter-Messaging is Promising

Counter-messaging is spreading information and rhetoric that disrupts radicalization.

A counter-message’s content is its lesson or argument, and a counter-message’s packaging is that content’s aesthetic delivery.

Counter-messaging does not rely on user reports, is relevant across different platforms, and cannot be evaded by extremists. Whereas moderation can only retroactively address extremist messaging

that enters its jurisdiction, counter-messaging can proactively decrease gamers' openness to white supremacy while spreading between communities.

Counter-Messaging's Packaging has Misunderstood Gamers' Interests

Despite its potential, counter-messaging's spread among gamers has been hamstrung by its uninteresting packaging. Counter-messages targeting gamers have packaged their content in videogames, gamer slang, and through gamer spokespeople. However, superficially invoking gaming is not enough to grab gamers' attentions. Gamers often view these packages as bland and ignore them.

For example, the FBI's "Don't be a Puppet" game, released in 2016, was harmed by its packaging. The game's content – its takeaway – were lessons on identifying and rejecting violent extremism.⁴³ However, its packaging – the takeaway's delivery – was boring and clunky gameplay that did not interest gamers.⁴⁴ The FBI eventually removed the game; "Don't be a Puppet's" packaging had hindered its contents' spread.

Reaching gamers requires better tailoring packaging to gaming culture.

Counter-Messaging Packaged in "Cringe" Will Spread Among Gamers

Counter-messaging content packaged in a "cringey" delivery may spread better among gaming communities. Gamers and social media influencers voluntarily share "cringe" to collectively mock it. If gamers and influencers shared cringey counter-messaging to ridicule its packaging, they would also expose themselves and others to the counter-message's content.

What is Cringe?

"Cringe" is something embarrassing or awkward that makes its audience feel judgement, perplexion, and sometimes amusement. Cringe blends feelings of "it's so bad it's good" and traffic slowing down to stare at a car wreck. It is not necessarily crass or combative.

Cringe Spreads Online

Cringe, such as Rebecca Black's "Friday," is often ridiculed online. The song is the 24th most disliked YouTube video in history as of December 2021⁴⁵ and a video of kids cringing to the song has received 15 million views as of May 2024.⁴⁶ However, this criticism made "Friday" the most watched YouTube video of 2011 and catapulted Black into her ongoing music career.⁴⁷

Jake Paul's 2017 song "It's Everyday Bro" also went viral for being cringey. Reaction videos mocking the song's cringey lyrics have received hundreds of millions of views and the song is the

17th most disliked video in YouTube history. However, the song's cringe got it featured on the Billboard Hot 100 for 1.5 months, peaking at number three,⁴⁸ and helped Paul establish himself as a popular influencer.

“Cringey” Packaging Can Spread a Message’s Underlying Content

A message going viral for its cringey packaging also causes its underlying content to go viral.

For example, an Instagram post from Joe Biden with pro-Obamacare content received 36x more views, 75x more likes, and 11x more comments than the averages from nearby posts due to its cringey packaging.⁴⁹ The content was packaged into a photo of Obama and Biden rotating, twisting, zooming in and out with loud music and exploding glitter. This packaging led to a snowball of reposts, shares, and the app’s algorithm showing new users the post that spread pro-Biden content.

Donald Trump won in 2016 in part due to his receiving \$2 billion in free media,⁵⁰ much of which focused on his abrasive, potentially cringey, delivery.⁵¹ However, coverage of his message’s packaging allowed its content to reach many Americans who became his supporters.

Trump’s persona also got him attention from gaming communities. Much of this support was ironic. However, gamers still posted memes glorifying Trump, villainizing his opponents, and alluding to conspiracies.⁵² 4chan users reportedly celebrated Trump’s victory, saying “we actually elected a meme as president.”⁵³ Trump’s arguable cringe made him stand out to gamers.

Case Study on Cringey Packaging Popularizing a Message Among Gamers: Andrew Tate

Cringe spreads across all online spaces, but gamers are particularly attentive.

Gamers helped Andrew Tate, a controversial and cringey influencer, go viral in 2022. Tate’s cringe includes being 37 years old yet unironically calling himself “Top G,” short for “Top Gangster.” Many young men, many of whom game, jokingly watched and shared Tate due to his cringe.⁵⁴ Additionally, some gaming influencers posted their reactions to Tate and did livestreams with him because their fans would enjoy Tate’s cringe. Gamers and influencers engaging with Tate created a feedback loop of attention to Tate: gamers learned of Tate through influencers, and gamers consuming Tate gave influencers incentives to post about Tate. His TikToks received tens of billions of views by August 2022.

Beneath Tate’s cringey packaging is ideological content that spread as gaming culture made Tate popular. Tate’s ideologyⁱ spread, intentionally or not, whenever a gamer or influencer shared Tate for his cringe. Tate’s beliefs still influence millions of young men and gamers; this likely would not have occurred if his packaging was more reserved.

ⁱ Tate encourages traditional gender values, hypermasculinity, materialism, financial independence, and distrust in sociopolitical systems

Proposal: Package Counter-Messaging Content in “Cringe” To Facilitate Its Spread

The process that has made past cringey packaging a tool that spreads content applies to counter-messaging. Gamers would organically consume and share counter-messaging packaged in cringe. Influencers would be incentivized to post about the counter-message as it became popular among gamers. Whenever a counter-message was shared to cringe at its packaging, its anti-extremism content would be spread.

Counter-messaging against white supremacy in gaming requires catering to, not neglecting, gamers’ preferences and culture. White supremacists are winning the messaging battle because they are winning gamers’ attentions. Neutralizing this threat requires knowing what to say, and how to say it.

Cringey Counter-Messaging: Unique Benefits and Addressable Objections

Cringey counter-messaging’s benefits include its: flexibility, negligible cost, making extremist messaging rarer, understanding a misunderstood culture, and ability to reach both slightly and deeply radicalized gamers. Concerns around cringey counter-messaging critique its feasibility or efficacy. While some of these objections are fair, they are not fatal flaws.

- *Benefit: Flexibility*

Packaging counter-messaging content into a cringey delivery provides:

- *Flexibility in the Counter-Messenger:* Supranational, international, federal, state, and local organizations; in the public, private, or non-profit sectors; can all post cringey counter-messaging. Counter-messengers can also post on their official accounts or anonymous accounts.
- *Flexibility in the Counter-Messaging Platform:* Cringey counter-messaging can be posted on social media, a counter-messenger’s webpage, or in games.
- *Flexibility in the Counter-Messaging Content:* Content can be tailored to its messenger’s area of expertise or the platform it is posted on.
- *Flexibility in the Speed of Implementation:* Counter-messengers can choose how often they post cringe.
- *Flexibility in the Targets:* Cringey counter-messaging can target any form of extremism and effectively spread with other youth subcultures.

- *Benefit: Negligible Financial Costs*

Cringe counter-messaging has negligible financial costs because of:

- *No Posting Costs:* Counter-messengers can post on social media, their websites, or in their games for free.
- *No Advertising Costs:* Gamers and social media influencers would organically share cringe counter-messaging for free.
- *No New Cost to Create:* An organization with a social media or digital content team is already paying the fixed costs to create counter-messaging.

- *Benefit: Making Extremist Messaging Rarer*

Cringe counter-messaging would make finding extremist messaging harder by:

- *Drowning Out Extremist Messaging:* Time with counter-messaging is time away from extremist messaging.
- *Limiting Extremist Messaging's Demand:* Fewer gamers engaging with extremist messaging means online platforms' algorithms will promote those posts less.
- *Limiting Extremist Messaging's Supply:* Fewer gamers will create extremist posts as counter-messaging turns them against extremism.

- *Benefit: Capitalizing on Gaming Culture*

Aligning policy with gaming culture makes reaching gamers easier. The policy community previously misunderstanding gaming culture has limited successful outreach.

- *Benefit: Reaching Slightly and Deeply Radicalized Gamers*

Cringe counter-messaging going viral would allow its content to reach some pre-radicalization gamers.

Radicalized gamers may share cringe counter-messaging with their extremist friends to mock it, but in doing so spread the counter-messaging content.

- *Concern: Institutional Constraints*

Counter-messengers may face internal constraints, like a risk-averse culture, or external constraints, like Congressional oversight, that would make producing cringe difficult.

Responses to this concern include:

- *Different Organizations Face Different Constraints:* While some counter-messengers will face debilitating constraints, others will not.
- *Optional Experimentation with Cringe:* Counter-messengers can slowly roll out cringe to test its efficacy before going all-in.
- *Efficacy Supersedes Image:* Counter-messengers – particularly publicly funded and legitimized agencies – should not prematurely dismiss tactics or prioritize their public image over their message’s efficacy.

- *Concern: Gamers Will Only Focus on the Packaging and Ignore the Content*

Critics may argue cringey packaging would distract gamers from the counter-message’s content.

Responses to this concern include:

- *Make the Content Unmissable:* Counter-messaging should have overt content that is distinguishable from packaging.
- *Gamers Have Multiple Opportunities to Process Content:* Cringey posts often appear multiple times in gamers’ feeds.
- *Cringey Counter-Messaging at Its Worst is Bland Counter-Messaging at Its Best:* Even moderate successes with cringey counter-messaging will surpass bland counter-messaging’s standard performance.

- *Concern: Cringey Counter-Messaging Downplays White Supremacy’s Severity*

Critics may argue that cringey packaging diminishes white supremacy’s seriousness.

Responses to this concern include:

- *Cringe Has Been a Net-Positive For Previous Messages:* Cringe was critical for Trump, Tate, and others’ beliefs spreading, despite their cringe turning some away.

- *Different People, Different Reactions*: While some gamers may downplay the content, others will not.
- *Repeated Exposure*: Gamers will see and hear discussions about the counter-message multiple times, allowing for their mind to open to its content.

¹ Department of Homeland Security, *Homeland Threat Assessment October 2020*, October 2020, 18, https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/2020_10_06_homeland-threat-assessment.pdf

² Heather J. Williams et al., *Mapping White Identity Terrorism and Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremism* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2022), https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA1841-1.html

³ Bruce Hoffman and Jacob Ware, “Racism Rekindled,” in *God, Guns, and Sedition: Far-Right Terrorism in America*, (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2024), Williams et al., *Mapping White Identity Terrorism and Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremism*

⁴ Williams et al., *Mapping White Identity Terrorism and Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremism*

⁵ Rachel Kleinfeld, “The Rise of Political Violence in the United States,” *Journal of Democracy* 32, no. 4 (October 2021): 160–76, <https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/articles/the-rise-of-political-violence-in-the-united-states/>

⁶ “White Supremacists Embrace “Accelerationism.”” *Anti-Defamation League*. 2019.

<https://www.adl.org/resources/blog/white-supremacists-embrace-accelerationism>, *Right-Wing Extremist Terrorism in the United States*. Anti-Defamation League, 2023, <https://www.adl.org/resources/report/right-wing-extremist-terrorism-united-states>

⁷ Seth G. Jones et al., *The War Comes Home: The Evolution of Domestic Terrorism in the United States*, Center for International & Strategic Studies, 2020, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/war-comes-home-evolution-domestic-terrorism-united-states>, Catrina Doxsee et al., *Pushed to Extremes: Domestic Terrorism amid Polarization and Protest*, Center for International & Strategic Studies, 2022, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/pushed-extremes-domestic-terrorism-amid-polarization-and-protest>, Piotr Bąkowski, *United States: Domestic violent extremism on the rise*, European Parliamentary Research Service, 2023,

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_BRI\(2023\)754561#:~:text=In%20recent%20years%20C%20the%20United,enforcement%20and%20policy%20makers%20alike](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_BRI(2023)754561#:~:text=In%20recent%20years%20C%20the%20United,enforcement%20and%20policy%20makers%20alike), Office of the Director of National Intelligence, *Domestic Violent Extremism Poses Heightened Threat in 2021*, 2021,

<https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/UnclassSummaryofDVEAssessment-17MAR21.pdf>

⁸ Catrina Doxsee. “Examining Extremism: The Militia Movement.” *Center for International & Strategic Studies*. 8/12/2021. <https://csis.org/blogs/examining-extremism/examining-extremism-militia-movement#:~:text=Overall%2C%20militia%20extremists%20pose%20a.view%20as%20legitimizing%20or%20directing>

⁹ Catrina Doxsee. “Examining Extremism: The Militia Movement.” *Center for International & Strategic Studies*. 8/12/2021. <https://csis.org/blogs/examining-extremism/examining-extremism-militia-movement#:~:text=Overall%2C%20militia%20extremists%20pose%20a.view%20as%20legitimizing%20or%20directing>

¹⁰ Federal Bureau of Investigation and Department of Homeland Security, *Strategic Intelligence Assessment and Data on Domestic Terrorism*, June 2023, <https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/fbi-dhs-domestic-terrorism-strategic-report-2023.pdf/view>

¹¹ Government Accountability Office, *Domestic Terrorism: Further Actions Needed to Strengthen FBI and DHS Collaboration to Counter Threats*, February 2023, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-23-104720.pdf>

¹² “Norway’s July 22, 2011, terror attack: a timeline.” Associated Press, July 19, 2021.

<https://apnews.com/article/europe-norway-bd6c9d2efd6ce2148c3d85cb79d73af9>

¹³ Graham Macklin, “The Christchurch Attacks: Livestream Terror in the Video Age,” *CTC Sentinel* 12, no. 6 (July 2019): 18-30, <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/christchurch-attacks-livestream-terror-viral-video-age/>

¹⁴ “Gunman used social media to attack Jews before deadly Pittsburgh synagogue shooting, jurors learn.” Associated Press, June 13, 2023. <https://apnews.com/article/pittsburgh-synagogue-shooting-death-penalty-trial-6d4eb2d14ffdc11ddc40f805b4131e83>

¹⁵ Mariana Olaizola Rosenblat, *Gaming The System: How Extremists Exploit Gaming Sites And What Can Be Done To Counter Them*, NYU Stern Center for Business and Human Rights, 2023,

https://nyucbhr.partnerandpartners.com/wpcontent/uploads/2024/01/NYUCBHRGaming_ONLINEUPDATEDMay16.pdf

¹⁶ *Essential Facts About the Video Game Industry*, Entertainment Software Association, 2022, [https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/642d5c36952aaf854d246483/64e5b799fe7db5d2434313d8_2022-Essential-Facts-About-the-Video-Game-Industry%20\(1\).pdf](https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/642d5c36952aaf854d246483/64e5b799fe7db5d2434313d8_2022-Essential-Facts-About-the-Video-Game-Industry%20(1).pdf)

¹⁷ *Hate Is No Game: Hate and Harassment in Online Games 2022*. Anti-Defamation League, December 2022, <https://www.adl.org/resources/report/hate-no-game-hate-and-harassment-online-games-2022>

, *Right-Wing Extremist Terrorism in the United States*

¹⁸ Government Accountability Office, *Countering Violent Extremism: FBI and DHS Need Strategies and Goals for Sharing Threat Information with Social Media and Gaming Companies*, January 2024,

<https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-24-106262>

¹⁹ *Hate is No Game: Hate and Harassment in Online Games 2023*. Anti-Defamation League, February 2024,

<https://www.adl.org/resources/report/hate-no-game-hate-and-harassment-online-games-2023>

²⁰ *Hate is No Game: Hate and Harassment in Online Games 2023*

²¹ Mariana Olaizola Rosenblat, *Gaming The System: How Extremists Exploit Gaming Sites And What Can Be Done To Counter Them*

²² Kleinfeld, “The Rise of Political Violence in the United States”

²³ Russell Brandom. “Roblox is struggling to moderate re-creations of mass shootings.” The Verge, August 17, 2021. <https://www.theverge.com/2021/8/17/22628624/roblox-moderation-trust-and-safety-terrorist-content-christchurch>

²⁴ *Hate is No Game: Harassment and Positive Social Experiences in Online Games 2021*. Anti-Defamation League, 2021, <https://www.adl.org/resources/report/hate-no-game-harassment-and-positive-social-experiences-online-games-2021>

²⁵ Mariana Olaizola Rosenblat, *Gaming The System: How Extremists Exploit Gaming Sites And What Can Be Done To Counter Them*

²⁶ Samuel Oakford et al. “‘Problematic pockets’: How Discord became a home for extremists.” Washington Post, December 12, 2023. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2023/12/12/discord-app-extremism/>

²⁷ Oakford et al. “‘Problematic pockets’: How Discord became a home for extremists.” , Mariana Olaizola Rosenblat, *Gaming The System: How Extremists Exploit Gaming Sites And What Can Be Done To Counter Them*

²⁸ Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team, *Terrorist Exploitation of Online Gaming Platforms*, October 2023,

https://www.dni.gov/files/NCTC/documents/jcat/firstresponderstoolbox/144s_-_First_Responders_Toolbox_-_Terrorist_Exploitation_of_Online_Gaming_Platforms.pdf

²⁹ Samuel Oakford et al. “‘Problematic pockets’: How Discord became a home for extremists.”

³⁰ Samuel Oakford et al. “‘Problematic pockets’: How Discord became a home for extremists.”

³¹ Royal Commission of Inquiry Into the Terrorist Attack on Christchurch Mosques on 15 March 2019, *Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the terrorist attack on Christchurch masjidain on 15 March 2019*, 168-172,

<https://christchurchattack.royalcommission.nz/assets/Report-Volumes-and-Parts/Ko-to-tatou-kainga-tenei-Volume-2.pdf>

³² Mariana Olaizola Rosenblat, *Gaming The System: How Extremists Exploit Gaming Sites And What Can Be Done To Counter Them*

³³ Mariana Olaizola Rosenblat, *Gaming The System: How Extremists Exploit Gaming Sites And What Can Be Done To Counter Them*

³⁴ Samuel Oakford et al. “‘Problematic pockets’: How Discord became a home for extremists.”

³⁵ *Hate Is No Game: Hate and Harassment in Online Games 2022*

³⁶ Samuel Oakford et al. “‘Problematic pockets’: How Discord became a home for extremists.”

³⁷ Mariana Olaizola Rosenblat, *Gaming The System: How Extremists Exploit Gaming Sites And What Can Be Done To Counter Them*

³⁸ Samuel Oakford et al. “‘Problematic pockets’: How Discord became a home for extremists.”

³⁹ Government Accountability Office, *Countering Violent Extremism: FBI and DHS Need Strategies and Goals for Sharing Threat Information with Social Media and Gaming Companies*, Samuel Oakford et al. “‘Problematic pockets’: How Discord became a home for extremists.”

, Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team, *Terrorist Exploitation of Online Gaming Platforms*, *Hate Is No Game: Hate and Harassment in Online Games 2022* , Mariana Olaizola Rosenblat, *Gaming The System: How Extremists Exploit Gaming Sites And What Can Be Done To Counter Them*

⁴⁰ Government Accountability Office, *Countering Violent Extremism: FBI and DHS Need Strategies and Goals for Sharing Threat Information with Social Media and Gaming Companies*

-
- ⁴¹ Government Accountability Office, *Domestic Terrorism: Further Actions Needed to Strengthen FBI and DHS Collaboration to Counter Threats*, Mariana Olaizola Rosenblat, *Gaming The System: How Extremists Exploit Gaming Sites And What Can Be Done To Counter Them*
- ⁴² Samuel Oakford et al. “‘Problematic pockets’: How Discord became a home for extremists.”
- ⁴³ “Countering Violent Extremism FBI Launches New Awareness Program for Teens.” *Federal Bureau of Investigation*. February 8, 2016. <https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/countering-violent-extremism>
- ⁴⁴ Michael Price. “Can You Really Fight Terrorism with a Video Game?” *Brennan Center for Justice*. February 18, 2016. <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/can-you-really-fight-terrorism-video-game>
- ⁴⁵ Wikipedia, “List of Most Disliked YouTube videos,” last modified May 19, 2024, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_most-disliked_YouTube_videos,
- ⁴⁶ REACT, “KIDS REACT to Rebecca Black – Friday,” YouTube, April 10, 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DzSuJt5mDPY>
- ⁴⁷ Kevin Lincoln, “Here Are The 10 Most Watched Videos On YouTube For 2011,” *Business Insider*, December 20, 2011, <https://www.businessinsider.com/here-are-the-10-most-watch-videos-on-youtube-for-2011-2011-12>
- ⁴⁸ “Jake Paul - 'It's Everyday Bro (feat. Team 10)’,” *American iTunes Chart Performance*, iTunes Charts, <http://www.itunescharts.net/us/artists/music/jake-paul/songs/its-everyday-bro-feat-team-10/>
- ⁴⁹ The White House (@whitehouse), “13 years later, the Affordable Care Act is still the law of the land – despite Congressional Republicans’ attempts to repeal it,” March 23, 2023, <https://www.instagram.com/p/CqJAX4sARSi/>
- ⁵⁰ Nicholas Confessore and Karen Yourish, “\$2 Billion Worth of Free Media for Donald Trump,” *New York Times*, March 15, 2016, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/16/upshot/measuring-donald-trumps-mammoth-advantage-in-free-media.html>
- ⁵¹ “The 155 Craziest Things Trump Said This Election,” *Politico Magazine*, November 5, 2016, <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/11/the-155-craziest-things-trump-said-this-cycle-214420/>
- ⁵² Ben Schreckinger, “World War Meme,” *Politico Magazine*, 2017, <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/03/memes-4chan-trump-supporters-trolls-internet-214856/>
- ⁵³ Abby Ohlheiser, “‘We actually elected a meme as president: How 4chan Celebrated Trump’s Victory,’” November 9, 2016, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-intersect/wp/2016/11/09/we-actually-elected-a-meme-as-president-how-4chan-celebrated-trumps-victory/>
- ⁵⁴ Lizzie O’Leary, “How Andrew Tate Infected the Internet,” *Slate*, July 19, 2023, <https://slate.com/technology/2023/07/how-andrew-tate-went-viral.html>