



The Establishment War on the Intellectual Dark Web

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If you're just hearing about the Intellectual Dark Web, or if you've heard the term but never delved into its meaning, you might think there is an entire parallel internet out there, filled with subversive content that is too politically incorrect to weather the shadowbans and deboosting algorithms in our well lit, mainstream online world.

Nothing like that exists. The intellectual dark web, such as it is, is indeed a collection of politically incorrect websites, videos, podcasts, and the personalities who fill them with content. But this web exists alongside everything else online, however vapidly popular, mainstream and vanilla, safely prurient, angry in all the prescribed ways, funny in all the approved modes.

That's too bad, because the intellectual dark web is not immune to shadowbans, deboosts, detrends, demonetizing, throttling down, or expulsion. These willfully transgressive purveyors of anti-pabulum build their audiences while tiptoeing gingerly among the censors, hoping not to cross lines of conduct that are often invisible, shift unpredictably, and are drawn differently depending on who you are.

Who are these censors? Not an oppressive government, but instead the private quasi monopolies that control all online communication—the social media and video platforms, the providers of membership services, and the payment processors. Piss them off? Disappear into actual darkness.

What is the Intellectual Dark Web?

On the website "KnowYourMeme.com," the intellectual dark web, or IDW, is described as "a phrase coined by mathematician Eric Weinstein referring to a loosely defined group of intellectuals, academics, and political commentators who espouse controversial ideas and beliefs surrounding subjects related to free speech, identity politics and biology." Weinstein, a managing director at Thiel Capital in San Francisco, just happens to be the brother of Bret Weinstein, the Evergreen College professor who in 2017 refused to participate in the "[Day of Absence & Day of Presence](#)," which demanded that white students, faculty and staff leave campus for one day.

In May 2018, the New York Times published an opinionated but detailed [expose of the intellectual dark web](#). It remains the definitive mainstream description of the IDW. Here are some of the topics and premises the article lists as typical fare for the IDW: "There are fundamental biological differences between men and women. Free speech is under siege. Identity politics is a toxic ideology that is tearing American society apart."

Times columnist Bari Weiss described how members of the IDW have little in common politically, but all share three distinct qualities:

First, they are willing to disagree ferociously, but talk civilly, about nearly every meaningful subject: religion, abortion, immigration, the nature of consciousness. Second, in an age in which popular feelings about the way things ought to be often override facts about the way things

actually are, each is determined to resist parroting what's politically convenient. And third, some have paid for this commitment by being purged from institutions that have become increasingly hostile to unorthodox thought—and have found receptive audiences elsewhere.

In short, the IDW doesn't actually exist as a distinct something. It's just a way to describe online content that explores politically incorrect topics, while remaining committed to an intellectual and civil tone.

While the intellectual dark web is still not well known, Bari Weiss's New York Times article inspired a fair amount of commentary from predictably liberal-left quarters. "Conservatives Cheer the Latest Right-Wing Supergroup, the Intellectual Dark Web," sneered the Village Voice. The young adults at Vox tried to explain "what Jordan Peterson has in common with the alt-right," with a winking subhead: "A controversial New York Times article describes several popular white intellectuals as marginalized 'renegades.'"

From these titles, it isn't hard to gauge the reaction of the Left to the IDW. "Right-Wing Supergroup." "The alt-right." "Popular white intellectuals." The Left perceives the IDW to be a refuge of right-wing whites who feel "marginalized." Is this true?

Are There Any "Leftists" on the Intellectual Dark Web?

A few websites have sprung up to provide an encyclopedia of IDW stars. One of them, "intellectualdarkweb.site," lists a number of IDW "leaders" whose politics are denoted as "Left," which appears to contradict the notion that only right-wingers populate the IDW. For example, under "Leaders of the Intellectual Dark Web," Eric Weinstein, Sam Harris, Maajid Nawaz, Dave Rubin, Joe Rogan, Bret Weinstein, Heather Heying, Jonathan Haidt, and John McWhorter are all listed as having "Political Leaning: Left." Whether or not all of these individuals are verifiably left wing is open to debate, but insofar as these high profile individuals dissent from the mainstream Left to support free speech, their support is extremely valuable.

Some of them are well known. Actor and comedian Joe Rogan has 4.8 million Twitter followers, and a collection of YouTube videos that have amassed an incredible 1.13 billion views. Rogan's podcast attracts tens of millions of listeners every month. But Rogan doesn't come across as a political ideologue so much as just politically incorrect. His interview format puts him into contact with a wide variety of individuals. He mingles comedy, debate, uninhibited profanity, with deep exploration of controversial issues. It might be more accurate to categorize his politics as libertarian; left-wing on social issues like abortion and marijuana legalization, and right-wing on issues such as gun rights.

Dave Rubin, another famous member of the IDW who self-identifies as liberal, has been rebranded by the Left as a "right-wing libertarian" commentator. His primary transgression, apparently, was to invite onto his popular "Rubin Report" podcast other IDW luminaries as Stefan Molyneux and Jordan Peterson. Both of these men deny that they are right-wing ideologues, but Molyneux, with his insights on mass immigration and its implications, and Peterson, with his outspoken findings on gender, have both aroused fury from the Left. That fury has tainted Rubin with guilt by association, as Vox, in September 2018, had this to say about him:

We're in a period of massive demographic and social change, and all that change is creating a powerful backlash. The coalition being built by that backlash, the coalition Rubin is a part of, is

best understood as a reactionary movement because, well, that's what it is—a movement united by opposition to changes it loathes.

Some of the people characterized as left-wing members of the IDW truly are Left, or liberal. In many of those cases, the issues that drove them into the IDW were such that they would find agreement with many on the Right. Maajid Nawaz, founder of [Quilliam](#), and Somali-Dutch expat Ayaan Hirsi Ali, founder of [Aha Foundation](#), are both critical of fundamentalist, radical Islam. Maajid Nawaz, in particular, is an articulate, upbeat advocate for modernizing Islam; [his videos](#) should be required viewing for anyone who fears that Muslims will never assimilate into Western societies. For that matter, so is Stanford neuroscientist and philosopher Sam Harris, who is a best selling author and host of the popular podcast “[Making Sense](#).” Jonathan Haidt, founder of [Heterodox Academy](#) and co-author of [The Coddling of the American Mind](#), advocates free speech on college campuses. Bret Weinstein and his wife Heather Heying are avowed liberals, but became IDW heroes for their stand against identity politics at Evergreen College in Washington. Weinstein's brother Eric, who coined the phrase “intellectual dark web,” also a liberal, was undoubtedly inspired by his brother's experience at Evergreen.

“Right Wing” Luminaries of the IDW

If you stick to the original definition and compile a list of the right-wing contingent of the IDW, you have to limit the choices for this list to right wing intellectuals. Depending on where you draw that line, that would eliminate most of the commentators who might otherwise belong on the list. Intellectuals clearing the high bar would probably include [Douglas Murray](#), a British political commentator and editor of *The Spectator*. Murray's [YouTube videos](#) and his recent book [The Strange Death of Europe](#), are unrelentingly critical of Islam and mass Third World immigration into Western Europe.

Another indisputably intellectual member of the IDW is Christina Hoff Sommers, a scholar at the [American Enterprise Institute](#) and author of [Who Stole Feminism?](#) and [The War Against Boys](#). Sommers hosts a video blog called “[The Factual Feminist](#).” Considered a heretic by the Left, she argues that modern feminism contains “an irrational hostility to men.”

When it comes to feminist heretics, Sommers is not alone. There are at least two other intellectual luminaries who fit that description. One of them who is garnering increasing recognition is [Heather Mac Donald](#), a Manhattan Institute fellow who recently published [The Diversity Delusion](#). The book is an indispensable guide to the Left's takeover of college campuses and how they are now rolling out that same kind of takeover to the rest of America. Mac Donald doesn't have her own online assets—no podcast, no YouTube channel. Perhaps she should. Her September 2018 [lecture at Hillsdale College](#) has attracted more than 250,000 views. Mark Levin's 15-minute [Fox News interview](#) with Mac Donald from December 2018 has attracted nearly 200,000 views. Mac Donald doesn't mince words. She asserts that “American colleges today are ‘[hatred machines](#)’,” and “colleges have become nothing more than wicked overpriced day care centers that only extends childhood well into a person's 20s.” She backs up her assertions with statistical data to argue that most “diversity” initiatives, in college and the corporate world, are racist, sexist, counterproductive, and especially harmful to the groups they are designed to help.

Another feminist heretic, perhaps the original feminist heretic, is [Camille Paglia](#), a professor at the University of the Arts in Pennsylvania and author of [Sexual Personae](#) among other books. Paglia is a libertarian who considers herself a feminist, yet for decades she has leveled withering

criticism onto prominent feminists whom she deems to be dogmatic, misandrist, or simply out of touch. Like Jordan Peterson, Paglia deplores the influence of the French post-structuralists, claiming that “post-structuralism has broken the link between the word and the thing, and thus endangers the Western canon.” While Paglia doesn’t appear on typical lists of IDW luminaries, that’s mainly because she hasn’t set out to become an online star, with millions of online fans. The YouTube videos that others post of her lectures, however, routinely attract over 100,000 views.

Although videos featuring Paglia attract impressive viewership, her get-together with Jordan Peterson has garnered millions of viewers. An October 2017 video posted on Peterson’s YouTube channel, a nearly two-hour discussion titled “Modern Times: Camille Paglia and Jordan Peterson” has been watched over 1.8 million times. Peterson, a Canadian clinical psychologist and professor of psychology at the University of Toronto, had a distinguished but relatively low profile career until September 2016, when everything changed. Peterson released a series of online videos where he announced his objection to a new Canadian law that, among other things, criminalized any person’s refusal to address a transgender individual by that individual’s preferred gender pronoun.

Peterson has weathered the ensuing backlash exceedingly well, continuing to release videos which to-date have gathered more than 91 million views. His 2018 book, 12 Rules for Life: An Antidote to Chaos, has become an international best seller, and he now gives lectures to sold-out venues all over the world. He is quite possibly the most well-known public intellectual in the world today.

Despite his many erudite takedowns of politically correct conventional wisdom on the topics of free speech, transgenderism, feminism, white privilege, cultural appropriation, environmentalism, and related topics being music to the ears of his millions of right-of-center fans, Peterson does not consider himself right-wing. Rather, he carefully defines his politics as seeing a much greater danger coming from the Left compared to the Right. This distinction has not mollified his critics, however, and while Peterson has not faced the types of online expulsions and algorithmic marginalization that other IDW members have endured, the vehemence of those critics has driven him to make common cause with many of them.

What About the More Edgy Right-Wing Stars of the IDW?

The first thing to qualify when attempting to provide examples of more edgy members of the IDW is that when establishing criteria, you may have to take away the “I,” as in “intellectual.” Then again, this depends on how you define intellectual. While many of these more edgy IDW celebrities aren’t college professors, or don’t adopt a high-brow rhetorical tone, they offer something of equal or greater value to anyone trying to make an intellectual assessment of controversial issues: They collect and present evidence that is either ignored or dismissed in mainstream discourse. Not all of them, of course. Some of these IDW online celebrities are just wacky entertainers, more committed to being outrageous than to being factual. But even the crazies sprinkle facts and notions into their otherwise merely entertaining spew, facts and notions that you will never find anywhere else.

Like the rest of the online universe, the IDW players, edgy or not, are too numerous to catalog definitively. But here are a few, chosen for their (usually) thoughtful tone, transgressive content, and (usually) careful attention to facts and evidence. All of these, needless to say, are tiptoeing around the censors. And with that, before continuing, a disclaimer is necessary. It is impossible

to view all of the content that has been produced by all of these people. Some of these commentators are critical of Zionism. Others espouse ethnic nationalism. And who knows, some of them take other positions that many consider objectionable. But at least in terms of what could be reviewed, none of them came across as hateful (at least in the traditional description of the word, according to the expansive contemporary leftist definition, they're all hateful), and none of them appeared to have any problem with facts.

Perhaps the least edgy of the “edgy” members of the IDW is Tim Pool, a prolific video journalist whose [YouTube channel](#) has attracted nearly 63 million views and has 388,000 subscribers. He first attracted notoriety when he [livestreamed the “Occupy Wall Street”](#) protests in 2011. Another high profile report was his 2017 investigation of [Islamicized suburbs](#) in Malmo, Sweden. It appears that Pool strives to be objective in his reporting, and he is taken seriously by mainstream media sources including NBC, Reuters, Al Jazeera, Time, Fast Company, Wired, Vice Media, and Fusion TV, who have all covered or syndicated his work. His choice of topics, however—[Green New Deal](#), [non-citizen voting](#), [Democrat anti-semitism](#), [Jussie Smollett](#), the [Covington lawsuits](#)—suggests he tilts towards material that exposes foibles on the Left. But he's not predictable, for example, he recently produced a video about [conservative censorship](#). Pool posts nearly every day, and it is not easy to keep up with him. While he reliably adds interesting observations of his own to his reporting, he is at his best when he dives headlong into a place or a happening and livestreams.

An interesting source for anti-globalist reporting and economic analysis is the quasi anonymous “Black Pigeon Speaks” [YouTube channel](#), with nearly 53 million views and 480,000 subscribers. While there is no source that indisputably identifies the author, based on somewhat dubious sources [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#), it appears to be Felix Lace, a Canadian currently living in Japan, who rescues and cares for injured pigeons. His videos have attracted the ire of the Left, with a highly critical article posted about him in June 2017 on the website of Harvard University's Shorenstein Center. In that article, entitled “[Black Pigeon Speaks: The Anatomy of the Worldview of an Alt-Right YouTuber](#),” author Zack Exley provides his impression of “the worldview put forth by the channel's host, wherein Jewish bankers are ensnaring the world in debt slavery fueled by Muslim migrants, and women, who by their ‘biological nature,’ are destroying civilization.” While there is some truth to these impressions, Exley overstates, mischaracterizes and simplifies the content of Lace's videos, which is probably his goal.

Exley uses his case study of Black Pigeon to exemplify his broader characterization of the entire “alt-right,” which is also an agenda-driven oversimplification. A far more accurate description of the highly amorphous alt-right can be found in the article entitled “[An Establishment Conservative's Guide to the Alt-Right](#),” written by Milo Yiannopoulos and Allum Bokhari, published in Breitbart in March 2016. In that article, the alt-right is distilled into four groups, “the intellectuals,” the “natural conservatives,” the “Meme Team,” and that group with which the Left attempts to make the other three guilty by association, the “1488rs,” which is a neo-nazi reference. This article is still relevant, and describes many of the perspectives and the scope of Black Pigeon's videos far better than Exley. One defining expression of the MAGA movement, one that also alludes in fundamental ways to the spirit and intent of Black Pigeon's less coherent work is “[The Flight 93 Election](#)” published in September 2016 by Michael Anton, although Black Pigeon flirts with conspiratorial themes that Anton leaves well enough alone. For alternative, pro-Western, provocative and intelligent analysis on taboo topics, Black Pigeon offers plenty to choose from.

Another example of an anonymous member of the IDW that produces pro-Western material focusing on mass immigration, multiculturalism, free speech, nationalism, and the “spiritual crisis of the West,” is “Way of the World,” a YouTube channel with 90,000 subscribers and over 5 million views. The narrator, who is never shown, speaks softly and somewhat mournfully with a British accent. He reads frequently from poets and philosophers, and when he isn’t depicting text or video clips, the screen is backdropped with a slowly spinning image of planet earth. Like Black Pigeon, and many other right-of-center content creators on the IDW, he believes Western Civilization faces possible extinction. If you’re impressionable enough to believe such an apocalyptic scenario is likely, don’t immerse yourself in this sort of material. Unlike most other channels covering these topics, however, the Way of the World narrator seems genuinely to be trying to come up with ways to express the threat he perceives in ways that can be communicated to the unaware or the undecided. Kept in perspective, this channel offers many interesting insights.

Vincent James has a YouTube channel with videos that have attracted over 28 million views and 252,000 subscribers. He also posts on a website called the Red Elephants, “an organization of like-minded conservatives that have come together to spread awareness and truth.” The all-American vibe that James creates is almost too authentic. Watching James conduct his videos, wearing a MAGA hat and seated behind a very generic desk, methodically presenting his information and arguments in a taciturn, almost workmanlike fashion, with a midwestern inflection just barely detectable in his speech, it’s easy to see why he’s hooked over a quarter million subscribers. James is an investigative reporter at least as much as a commentator, and his systematic debunkings and exposes are always well researched. If you want to find data, including the source, on why crime statistics are distorted by the mainstream media and the Democrats, or how polling results are skewed, or where voter fraud really occurred, and so on, James does useful work. His report on how the neocons took over the recent CPAC conference is worth watching in its entirety. You may not agree with everything James has to say. His rebuke of Prager U is not something everyone would agree with. But that’s the point of the IDW.

How edgy do you want to get? First of all, IDW members who still have YouTube channels are not the darkest of the dark. For that you can peruse 8chan and similar message boards, whose only virtue is their commitment to free speech, however disgusting. The frightening reality isn’t that YouTube has banned death porn or terrorist training videos, because they should. It’s that the line between what gets trended up and what gets throttled down is a moving, arbitrary, biased target. Secondly, to ignore what the commentators who walk that fine line have to say is to deny the Newtonian reality of social discourse: For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. What gets suppressed comes back. If it is suppressed slowly, relentlessly, ratcheted down into smaller and smaller spaces, it can come back hard. History is full of cautionary examples.

Which brings us to Red Ice TV, which is clearly a reaction to globalism, mass immigration, low “European” birth rates, feminism, devaluing of Western traditions and culture, all of which is celebrated nearly uncritically by mainstream media and political elites in America and Europe. Red Ice TV, with over 300,000 subscribers and nearly 45 million views, is produced by Henrik Palmgren, a Swede, and his American wife, Lana Lokteff. The content does not try to hide its advocacy for White ethno states. This obviously puts them on thin ice with the censors, and it’s likely anyone viewing their videos who is not fully embracing their positions will find something objectionable pretty fast. It’s easy to condemn Palmgren and Lokteff, however, and others have

already done that. NPR made Lana Lokteff, a youthful 40 year old with movie star good looks, the poster child for their 2017 report "[The Women Behind the Alt Right](#)." All the predictable warnings are there, so they need not be repeated here. But what are they really saying on Red Ice TV? Where do they draw the line?

This is where it gets interesting. Palmgren openly criticizes Zionism and their influence—might that remind you of anyone else, Ilhan Omar, perhaps?—but also is careful to explain that he criticizes many other groups as well, and wonders why it's ok to criticize White people, or Christians, but not Zionists, or Muslims. Like many right-of-center commentators on the IDW, Palmgren and Lokteff frequently display an attitude of bemused indignation, a sort of "they can talk this way and say these things so why can't we?" In a fascinating video from August 2018, Lokteff interviews the African American minister and conservative [Jesse Lee Peterson](#). In the 26 minute segment, entitled "[How Should White People Respond to Anti-White Attacks?](#)" Peterson explains one of the less heralded fallacies of a White ethno state, claiming, "if you lived in an all White nation you would start fighting each other." What's also interesting is that someone like Lana Lokteff would interview Jesse Lee Peterson in the first place. It is encouraging that she could recognize that Peterson shared most of her values, and wanted to talk with him. The substance of their discussion may have planted the seed in her mind that maybe the core values of Western culture can be preserved, yet transcend ethnicity. One may hope.

One example of an IDW celebrity whose perspective may have shifted over the last few years is Lauren Southern. Still only 23 years old, within four years Southern has risen from posting YouTube videos from her native Vancouver to [addressing the European Parliament](#) in February 2019. Her [YouTube channel](#) has just under 700,000 subscribers and has attracted over 56 million views. Like Tim Pool, Southern has traveled around the world, reporting on, among other things, [migrant camps](#) in Greece, the [refugee smuggling](#) in the Mediterranean, and the plight of [Whites in South Africa](#).

Although tarred with the same brush that's used to splatter an "alt right" stigma onto anyone who questions the typical assortment of issues—open borders, immigration, Western culture, multiculturalism, etc.,—Southern is clearly one of the more fair minded and empathic of the bunch. She has said "all I've ever wanted to do is tell the truth," and that most of the discourse today on these issues is "toxic and repetitive." In her address to the European Parliament she acknowledged that along with the threat posed to native Europeans by the mass immigration of possibly unassimilable Africans and Muslims, there is a parallel tragedy afflicting the migrants themselves. In a [recent video](#), Southern said that these "huge issues are not given the depth of analysis they deserve," and has committed herself to producing long-form documentaries in the future. Southern's evolution has been rapid, from an indignant YouTube firebrand, to a sober champion of controversial causes who is willing to embrace their complexity. Whether or not she emerges from the IDW to the mainstream is not clear, but she is someone to watch.

When searching YouTube, Twitter, Podcasts and websites for renegade right-of-center IDW celebrities, it's easy to find critics of globalization and all the attendant issues. What's missing, amidst the contrarian experts on the topics of migrations and cultures, birth rates, feminism, gender, multiculturalism, and so on, are dedicated experts on the topic of climate change. One would think the IDW would host a plethora of "deniers," but apart from sporadic—and very skeptical—treatment of the topic by IDW celebrities who are more focused on the other issues, not much is out there. This is surprising, since the worldwide propaganda effort to panic the

people of the world over climate change is one of the most virulent tools of the establishment. One YouTube channel that focuses on an allegedly imminent “solar minimum” (meaning it’s going to get colder, not warmer), is David DuByne’s [ADAPT 2030](#), with 79,000 subscribers and nearly 18 million views. There are a few excellent websites that cover the entire climate debate; [Watts Up With That?](#) , run by Anthony Watts, the eponymous sites [Jo Nova](#), and [Bjorn Lomborg](#), and the inimitable [Climate Depot](#), run by the tireless Marc Morano.

To be sure, there are mainstream organizations still committed to providing balance in the global climate change policy debate; They include [Cato](#), [AEI](#), [The Heartland Institute](#), the [Heritage Foundation](#), the [Center for Industrial Progress](#), the [International Climate Science Coalition](#), and others. But in your face, IDW celebrities focused on offering contrarian observations relating to climate alarmism are few and far between. Are the searches suppressed, did the censors win, or is there room in the market?

Who on the IDW Has Been Suppressed, and How Is That Done?

It was in reaction to Trump’s victory that online censorship began to escalate. By the summer of 2018, with the midterm elections looming and control of the U.S. Congress hanging in the balance, the game got bigger. The fate of Alex Jones and InfoWars is illustrative.

Even people who have never watched him have heard of Alex Jones. Many if not most of the people who did watch Jones found him to be more of an entertainer than a serious journalist. If you wanted to find out about [man/pig hybrids](#) being genetically engineered to harvest for human transplant organs, or [gay frogs](#), or weather weapons, Alex Jones was your man. His YouTube channel, InfoWars, reached its peak of popularity in November 2016, when his videos were watched 125 million times. And then they began to decline.

By July 2018, Jones was still attracting an impressive 25 million views a month, but that was an 80 percent drop in 20 months. [According to Advertising Age](#), the decline was because the platforms that drove viewers to InfoWars, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube search, “clearly were trying to reduce his impact.” Sure, Jones was a liability. Not only were his right-wing conspiratorial rants completely at odds with establishment sensibilities, worse, they were influencing people. Some of the things Jones came up with were obviously false, and some of them attracted lawsuits, both of which enabled a pretext for suppressing his reach. But nobody expected what happened next. One has to wonder if buried amidst all his gobbledygook, Jones had uncovered some big secret.

For the first time, the major online platforms coordinated their efforts. Within a few days in early August 2018, Alex Jones “Infowars” was [expelled from](#) Apple podcasts, Facebook, Spotify, and YouTube. On September 6th, [Twitter followed suit](#). On September 8th, [Apple banned](#) Alex Jones InfoWars app from their App Store. Jones was virtually erased. He had 2.4 million YouTube subscribers, all gone; 830,000 Twitter followers, purged; his Apple podcast archives were deleted; his Facebook page, with 2.5 million followers, wiped out.

Who cares? Alex Jones was a conspiracy theorist who often knew perfectly well that some of the things he was saying were preposterous. In some cases, such as when he suggested the Sandy Hook mass shooting was a hoax, he was sued by parents of the victims. But Alex Jones is the canary in the coal mine. To claim Alex Jones is a menace to a free society, because he mingles offensive opinions and fabrications with other material that might actually be genuinely interesting, is a contradiction in terms. A free society indulges crank content, allowing it to be

organically discredited. Alex Jones didn't incite violence. To the extent Alex Jones injured anyone, civil courts were going to sort that out. And once the extremely unwelcome speech is censored, where is the next line drawn?

If Alex Jones was so extreme he got banned from virtually all social media platforms, what to do about the rest of them, those online commentators whose content was politically unwelcome but who didn't cross any red lines? How could they be stopped? It's easy to forget how many have been stopped, and we only hear about the celebrities. When a person with a few hundred or even a few thousand followers attracts complaints from left-wing complaint warriors, nobody knows they've been banned. But in aggregate, their absence means a great force has been deleted from the collective conversation.

One can't begin to know how many IDW voices have been suppressed or eliminated. But the process by which it happens should be explained, because it underscores just how outgunned anyone is, once the big platforms make their move. As shown by what happened to Alex Jones, even very big players with very big audiences will take awful hits, if they survive at all.

The first line of attack is on the social media platforms. You can have a home website, but people have to find it. And of course, many online content creators don't even bother with their own websites. All they have are the social media platforms. They build their entire brand on YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Spotify, and Apple. These platforms host your content, they drive viewers to your content, and then they drive advertising to your viewers and pay you for it.

Once the social media platforms determine your content is objectionable, they can throttle down your exposure. In some cases, you may not even know it's happening, you just have smaller audiences. This is called shadowbanning on Twitter or deboosting on Facebook. The next level of enforcement by social media platforms is to "demonetize" someone, which means they stop sending advertising to the viewers, and the content creator stops getting that revenue. On YouTube this can take the form of merely reducing the number of ads served, or completely eliminating them. The final step, of course, is expulsion, which happens all the time.

Being expelled from one social media platform isn't necessarily going to kill an online media business, since there are all the rest of them. And if you are expelled from all the social media sites, there is still your website. Here is where the next level of suppression kicks in, denial of membership services. These are online services that facilitate content creators acquiring paying supporters or subscribers. These services have nearly the same level of monopoly power as the social media platforms, because a supporter has to have an account with the membership services platform before they can direct funds to any specific content creator. Some of the major membership services platforms out are [Patreon](#), [Kickstarter](#), [IndiGoGo](#), [GoFundMe](#), and, until recently, [SubscribeStar](#). The biggest and best suited one for people operating YouTube channels is Patreon.

If a content creator is expelled from one membership service platform, they can't just pick up the pieces with another one. If they have, for example, a half-million supporters on Patreon, and Patreon expels them, then every one of those half-million supporters has to open an account with the new membership services platform, and only then can elect to resume supporting that content creator. For all practical purposes, when you are expelled by a membership services platform, you have to start all over from scratch.

But it doesn't end there. A website can open up its own membership services portal. It's not that difficult. Put a page onto your site that accepts donations, hook it up to your bank account, and you're off to the races. Right? Not so fast. The ultimate link in the chain are the online payment processors, of which there are only two, PayPal and Stripe. And yes, when content creators cross the line, wherever that line may be, the payment processors stop processing their transactions. They are dead in the water.

These are the assorted monopolies and near monopolies that can enforce censorship. Bypassing them is extremely difficult. For all practical purposes, they exercise absolute control over what we see online.

Big Tech Strikes Sargon of Akkad, Peterson & Rubin Striking Back

When it comes to IDW celebrities, there aren't too many as big as Sargon of Akkad, whose YouTube channel has over a million subscribers and has delivered 270 million views. "Sargon" (not the Mesopotamian King) is actually Carl Benjamin, a 40 year old British political commentator who has been building his YouTube audience since 2010. In 2014, at the height of the Gamergate controversy, he attracted publicity for exposing efforts by progressive feminists to influence video game development.

Controversy has been currency for Sargon of Akkad, like it has for everyone on the IDW. But when it comes to big tech censorship, some controversies are more controversial than others. Benjamin criticized sacred leftist pieties surrounding, among others, feminism, white privilege, and fundamentalist Islam. With his provocative style, exasperating commitment to logic, and uninhibited use of his right to free speech, he'd made a lot of enemies.

Apparently Patreon agreed, and on December 6, 2018, it banned Benjamin's account. Overnight, the \$12,000 per month he was making from subscribers supporting him through Patreon was gone. His offense was that Patreon had uncovered a video "off platform," meaning it wasn't even on his own YouTube channel, where in a discussion, Benjamin used the "N word." It didn't matter that he was only using the word in an abstract way to make a point—or that examples have been found of that word being used on other YouTube channels that are served by Patreon.

As reported by Tim Pool, when Benjamin went to an alternative member services provider, SubscribeStar, that competes with Patreon, leftist activists hounded PayPal to sever their relationship with it. In turn, that not only stymied Benjamin's attempt to offer his supporters a new platform, it abruptly ended the cash flow for every preexisting client of SubscribeStar, and sent that service provider into a tailspin from which it has yet to recover.

Sargon of Akkad was hardly the only casualty. Patreon was on a roll. The day before, according to Vice News, on December 6th, Milo Yiannopoulos had his Patreon account terminated "just 24 hours after he'd set it up to fund his 'magnificent 2019 comeback tour,'" and, "the crowdfunding site said Yiannopoulos was 'removed from Patreon as we don't allow association with or supporting hate groups.'"

In his brief but spectacular bout with global fame and infamy, Yiannopoulos opened himself up to a lot of scathing criticism, some of it deserved, but nobody who has watched his antics would seriously consider him to represent a "hate group." And nobody who has watched Carl Benjamin's body of work would think it reasonable to ban him for uttering a word, off-platform,

in an abstract context, that is used repetitively, on platform, by other Patreon clients who are not banned. Many people agreed.

On December 16, 2018, in reaction to Patreon dropping Benjamin's account, IDW iconoclast Sam Harris announced he would quit Patreon. This was a big account for Patreon to lose. At the time, Business Insider reported that "Harris' podcast has found significant support on Patreon. According to Graphtrreon, a site that tracks Patreon statistics, Harris had nearly 9,000 paying patrons at the end of November, when he had the fourth-largest podcast account and the 11th-largest account overall. The site estimated that Harris made \$23,000 to \$65,000 from Patreon per episode."

Also on December 16, in solidarity with Benjamin, Dave Rubin and Jordan Peterson released a video announcing their decision to stop using Patreon. They said they considered SubscribeStar but had to rule that out after PayPal stopped working with them. Peterson revealed that he has been working with Rubin on a system to replace Patreon plus offer additional features. It is a daunting challenge.

On January 1st, 2019, Rubin and Peterson released an update. They announced they would leave Patreon on January 15th. They both acknowledged the support Patreon gave them, as Peterson put it, "at a time when I really needed it," and the risk that moving would pose. Rubin said he would lose 70 percent of his revenue overnight by leaving Patreon. But they emphasized how important it was to make a stand for free speech, calling attention to the website "Change the Terms."

The "Change the Terms" website is no joke. With a membership comprised of dozens of powerful left-wing pressure groups, including the notoriously biased and fabulously endowed Southern Poverty Law Center, this organization approaches corporations, especially those providing online communications platforms or financial services, to "adopt policies to not allow their services to be used for hateful activities." On their FAQ page, Change the Terms defines hateful activity as "activities that incite or engage in violence, intimidation, harassment, threats, or defamation targeting an individual or group based on their actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, immigration status, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability."

This, in an age when "words are violence," and cry bullies can find virtually anything to be intimidating or harassing or threatening, and nearly anyone can consider themselves to be a member of one of these many protected groups. According to Peterson, Patreon actually claimed that the credit card companies pressured them into banning some of their clients.

What's Next for the Intellectual Dark Web

The crackdown on internet free speech, especially any free speech that attacks the Left, has been ongoing. Back in 2016 it was clear that, for example, search results were being manipulated, but overall the Right was able to creatively use online media and compete effectively against the Left despite big tech's left wing bias. That was the last time.

By 2018, biased search results were just one major element of online communications that were weaponized by the Left. Deboosting, demonitizing, and expulsion were now practiced by all the major platforms. With their sights on 2020, the Leftist assault on free speech has now moved into

the realm of financial services, with payment processors and banks the new battlefield. The stakes are higher than ever.

An excellent explanation of what's happened, and in particular, just how difficult it is either to set up comprehensive financial services that incorporate the big banks, or, even harder, to bypass them, can be found in [a report by Allum Bokhari](#), published by Breitbart in July 2018. He writes, "In online fundraising as in social media, the internet provides a tremendous advantage to those who know how to use it. As the left prepares for the 2018 midterms and the 2020 general election, they want to ensure that only they have access to that tremendous power. With PayPal and Stripe withdrawing support from politically neutral fundraising platforms, they are well on their way to achieving that aim."

If the battle for free speech is not joined, the consequences eventually will go well beyond the ability to, say, make fun of feminists on Twitter, or explain on YouTube why merit based immigration is the only way to avoid becoming a socialist hellhole. China, the expansionist ethnostate that has no compunctions regarding human rights, already keeps track of their citizens' "social credit score." If you express concern about Tibetan civil rights, or write about the Muslims of Xinjiang that they're putting into concentration camps, your social credit score plummets, and good luck, the next time you want to travel, or buy a car, or rent an apartment. But why can't American companies do the same thing?

They can. If they're willing and able to throw someone off of an internet platform where someone has invested years to acquire an audience that now financially supports them, overnight, without warning, based on standards that aren't uniformly applied, what else can an American corporation do? It's not as though Americans don't have "social credit scores," they're just not called that. In the age of the panopticon, where every transaction, every email, every search term, and every website you visit is recorded, where AI programs can sort through it all instantaneously and come up with more useful information about you than you'd ever know yourself, when everywhere you go, and everyone you know, is recorded and analyzed and packaged, there is nothing stopping a private business from favoring the people who possess what they perceive as high social credit scores, and excluding the low scorers from even purchasing their services. This has already begun. Just ask [James Damore](#), [Greg Piatek](#), or [Sarah Huckabee Sanders](#).

At some point soon, what would stop corporations, prodded by organizations such as Change the Terms, from offering discounts to customers who support allied charities and activist groups? What's stopping corporations from offering their own private currency as an incentive, creating captive customers who are conned into thinking they're part of an exclusive, and very virtuous club, while shutting out those who don't want to sign up? It's not a big leap anymore from coupons and "rewards" programs to corporate cyber coins showered on activist customers with high social credit scores.

The Intellectual Dark Web shouldn't be dark at all. The information, the commentary, and the debates on the IDW are on the most important issues of the 21st century. These debates, presented with balance, should dominate mainstream media—every cable television network, every major newspaper. But they don't. Only one side is ever heard anymore. Google searches and Facebook boosts should be algorithmically neutral, exposing people to multiple points of view. But the opposite is true. From the cost/benefit of mass immigration to climate change, not

only are legitimate counter-arguments suppressed, the people who voice them are demonized as bigots and “deniers.”

Mainstream wisdom alleges that content on the IDW is brainwashing its viewers and inciting right-wing violence. It is more likely that the IDW channels and helps contain the fury that’s growing in the hearts of millions of people who are relentlessly disenfranchised in their own nations. In the service of bottomless compassion, millions of destitute migrants are being resettled in communities across America and Europe, where they consume a disproportionate share of tax revenues at the same time that they’re taught in the public schools to dislike their hosts. In the service of saving the planet, for which no cost is too great, people are being herded into mega-cities where the cost of every amenity from housing to energy and water is artificially inflated. Meanwhile, wealthy elites generate profits from these oppressive, seismic transformations of Western societies, while they exempt themselves from its consequences.

What Sort of 22nd Century Will We Give Our Children?

If there’s one thing the Intellectual Dark Web could offer more of, particularly from the Right, it’s a comprehensive alternative to the rhetoric and schemes of the globalist Left. If you are born in 2019 and live a normal lifespan, you will witness the dawn of the 22nd century. What will the world look like by then, and how do we prepare? The Right is not offering sufficient answers to that nearly impossible question. Libertarians suggest we just let the “free market decide,” oblivious to the fact that if the “free market” decides, gigantic multinationals will run the world, erasing nations and cultures. The Christian right, besieged by the Leftist establishment, would preserve nations and cultures, but has to confront and hopefully moderate the ineluctable rise of terrifying new technologies. The world is going to change more in the next fifty years than it has in the last fifty years. The Right needs to expose the hideous misguided visions of the Left, but it also needs to offer viable, inclusive visions of its own. The worst mistake the Right can make is to match the nihilistic, futile, downright evil identity politics of the Left with their own brand of right-wing tribalism.

By the 22nd century, the early forays of society into transhumanism, exemplified by the currently stylish decisions by celebrities and their pubescent acolytes to elect to become politically correct “non-binaries,” will mature into genuine reshaping of the human form. Genetic engineering will enable almost unimaginable alterations to what throughout history has been predestined and immutable. Children may well be conceived and brought to term outside the womb, with their gender, their intellect, even the color of their skin, designed in advance by the “parents.” The code that governs aging may be cracked, prolonging life indefinitely, or barring that, replacement organs and other forms of rejuvenation will offer dramatic options for life extension. Most diseases will be curable. Cybernetic enhancement will be ubiquitous. Whether all of this seems like utopia or hell depends on who you ask, and will be determined in large part by how we manage these transformations. One way or another, they will occur.

On the other hand, will we even make it into the 22nd century? It isn’t “climate change” that is most likely to kill us, it’s the exponentially increasing asymmetry of affordable war technologies. It’s easier than ever for small nations, or even terrorist organizations, to deploy weapons of mass destruction. Over the coming decades, these options will grow in scope and impact, encompassing deadly toxins, designer diseases, nuclear devices, nanobots, computer viruses, and things we can’t yet imagine. This reality almost demands a surveillance state response, and also reveals any right-wing contingencies about fighting for freedom with AR-15s as pure fantasy.

Sharpshooters are no match for swarms of intelligent micro-drones. Either the democratic process will prevent the onset of tyranny, or nothing will.

Which brings us back to the establishment's attack on the Intellectual Dark Web. It is ongoing and accelerating. Despite announcing an alternative to Patreon back in December, and leaving the Patreon platform in January, there is still nothing available from Jordan Peterson and Dave Rubin that isn't vulnerable to activist Left efforts like those of "Change the Terms," other organizations, and the inherent leftist bias of big tech. And there's a reason that even powerful players such as Jordan Peterson, who could deploy millions to build an alternative platform if he wanted to, haven't come up with anything just yet. The banking system itself is being co-opted by the Left. And even if his new platform accepts cyber currency from his fans, notwithstanding the still limited utility of those "currencies," the ISPs themselves might at that point step into the act, denying use of the internet itself to proscribed content creators.

There are no easy answers, but one thing is certain: In the war for public opinion, the Intellectual Dark Web is the last refuge of free speech and open debate on the policy issues that will define what sort of world we leave to our posterity. The online resources that enable anyone to earn a living producing online content are monopolies. Anyone suggesting otherwise based on the libertarian principle of private ownership is a useful idiot. Wake up. The Right needs to form its own activist groups, specifically devoted to aggressively pressuring tech companies and financial institutions to respect the first amendment. Our civilization hangs in the balance.