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## **“Thinkspot” Says it’s a Censorship-Free Alternative to Big Tech. Here’s Why We Should Be Skeptical.**

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Thinkspot, a new social media platform billed as “the intellectual playground for censorship-free discourse,” promises to be the beacon of hope in this era of tyrannical big tech overreach. However, considering it’s the brainchild of Jordan Peterson and his professional hype-man Dave Rubin, two controversial hypocrites of the new free speech absolutist movement, it’s important to take a closer look before buying their new bag of goods.

The subscription-based platform, which is being marketed as both an alternative to payment processors like Patreon and a social media alternative to content markets like Facebook and YouTube, seeks to make freedom the “central” tenet of the platform. “Once you’re on our platform,” Peterson told podcaster Joe Rogan, “we won’t take you down unless we’re ordered to by a US court of law.” Instead of setting “off limits” topics, there will be a set word requirement to avoid unthoughtful views. “If minimum comment length is 50 words, you’re gonna have to put a little thought into it,” Peterson said. “Even if you’re being a troll, you’ll be a quasi-witty troll.”

This is assuming the platform will be able to detect whether words are repeated or when letter tricks are used to game the system into hateful rhetoric, but such speech moderation doesn’t appear to be a concern. Instead, it’ll apparently be more democratic by using a voting feature to censor. “If your ratio of upvotes to downvotes falls below 50/50 then your comments will be hidden,” Peterson elaborates. People will still be able to see them if they click, but you’ll disappear.” He immediately clarified the specified limit for censor is still being judged. The site is still preparing for when their beta testers, such as Rubin, Michael Shermer, and the YouTuber turned failed UKIP candidate Carl Benjamin, begin to use the platform by their August launch.

It’s no secret that my work has been critical of these IDW figures over the past few months. When the term was originally coined by Eric Weinstein and popularized via journalist Bari Weiss last year, even lefties such as myself were willing to bypass the cringe of this “renegade thinkers” movement under the premise that free speech, intellectual debate and anti-authoritarian skepticism was going to be on full display. Sadly, some members have failed to meet my

judgmental Alinskyite standards, while others haven't exactly voiced their opposition to these excess failures, all the while the rather pathetic gift of free speech virtue signaling rages on.

This sentiment was even shared in Quillette, a centrist publication with a known previous history of IDW bias bordering on the sycophantic, which recently wrote around four constructive articles criticizing Rubin, Peterson and others for being taken in by "the tribalist pull" of reactionary politics. This brand of ideology and audience capture is seen within NPC-like talking heads of the right-wing. These platforms include Prager University, Fox News, The Daily Wire, The Daily Caller and Breitbart which are known for taking varying degrees of money from their right-wing sugar daddies in Turning Point USA, Learn Liberty, Donors Capital Fund, DonorsTrust, Institute for Humane Studies, the CATO Institute, the Young America's Foundation and many more.

"The public should demand that the liars, from the donors to their talking puppets, are made known so as not to waste our time with partisans-for-hire," I said of these figures last year when looking into the dark money ties behind the country's free speech college tours. Like Rubin, Peterson freely associates with such lying NPCs, revering him as their intellectual despite being a supposed "true speech advocate". Association doesn't imply guilt, of course, but the nature of association does invite skepticism. Could it be that liars tend to co-mingle under the false song of free speech? After all, these figures are no stranger to the hypocrisy.

Last year, I argued that it was fundamentally hypocritical for a professor advocating for anti-censorship to sue various media outlets and universities for the crime of disagreeable speech. Peterson demanded Wilfrid Laurier University, Cornell University and Vox Media pay over \$1.5 million each for supposed defamation damages for various comments labeling him a "fascist" and "misogynist" for suggesting "it doesn't seem accidental that [Peterson's] skepticism about objective facts arises when it's conveniently anti-feminist." His lawyers demand all statements be "immediately retracted."

It was also quite ironic that his lawsuits were filed through the Ontario Superior Court of Justice, the very same Canadian legal system Peterson criticized to fame for their stance on Bill C-16 which he believed offered no protections for free speech regarding transgender pronouns. I wrote at the time how it was funny for Peterson to rely on the anti-free speech system to suit his needs when he said he'd gladly go to jail if such anti-free speech pressure was waged against him.

In his first lawsuit against Wilfrid Laurier, professors Nathan Rambukkana, Herbert Pimlott and their Diversity and Equity Office staffer Adria Joel, Peterson demanded their private speech leaked to the public by teaching assistant Lindsay Shepherd, which compared himself to a "charlatan" like Adolf Hitler or Milo Yiannopoulos, be silenced, retracted and paid for by the millions. The second lawsuit demanded their later statement of defense be retracted for citing his own words concerning why he brought about the lawsuit, which claimed that he "benefited from the press" surrounding the controversy and citing his own video about making sure teachers are "much more circumspect in their actions and their words."

This censorious attitude was later rejected in his third lawsuit made against Kate Manne, a Cornell University assistant professor and the feminist author of "Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny," who was interviewed by Vox to criticize his book "12 Rules For Life" and whether the underlying philosophy was fair to label "misogynistic." Ironically, Peterson sued both Manne

and Vox writer Sean Illing despite the two having an intellectual disagreement over whether the work was actually hateful against women.

The idea that Peterson could possibly display such attitudes was apparently so outside the bounds of debate that it's worthy of millions of dollars, a full retraction, and an outright apology his own site would surely characterize as censorious outrage mob nonsense if the tables were turned. This case was likely laughed out of the American courthouse since nothing came of it, while results of the Canadian cases haven't surfaced. Rubin, his new business partner and tour buddy, has also recently adopted the lawsuit threatening act.

I reported just last week about how Rubin labelled Quillette as a hub for "hit piece after hit piece" pushing "authoritarian drivel masked as more Lefty tolerance," while at the same time calling for censorship against his critics at Twitter and its CEO Jack Dorsey here.

"A crazy amount of anonymous accounts keep telling me to fuck myself, how much they hate me, and that I should do my show the way they demand," Rubin cried over Twitter, tagging the Twitter execs to see if they "have any thoughts" over how "this is obviously at least partially coordinated." This has since expanded into tagging his lawyers at Barnes Law over the New York Times and their recent article about "Making A YouTube Radical" which implies he's either a conservative or a far-right enabler.

Either label shouldn't matter if you're a free speech absolutist, the marketplace of ideas should make his "classical liberal" moniker rise to the top, right? Please. It's almost undeniable for Quillette to say "he is currently aligned with Republicans and with the pro-Donald Trump camp" when just last year on Colin's Last Stand, a libertarian podcast, Rubin admitted he would be "happily" vote for President Trump in the 2020 general election, whether the candidate is a social democrat like Sens. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) or even just a neoliberal like Gov. Gavin Newsome (D-CA). Apologies, but facts don't care about the paycheck.

Are these the intellectual heavyweight administrators we're supposed to trust won't become the censorious copycats of big tech? In reality, it appears they're just echoing the same idealistic crypto-libertarian goals these monopolies were once founded on.

We've seen how the "alternative" social media sites, running under the false guise of protecting free speech, have simply devolved into a cesspool for bigotry. It was Gab that became the prominent face of many controversies, such as being frequented by the gunman in last year's Pittsburgh synagogue shooting and his views not being deleted because it was profitable. Considering Peterson and Rubin made a combined total of \$2 million annually on Patreon, why trust potential elites over the actual ones if decentralization and fair administrative judgement are secondary to the free speech mantra that's exploited rather than explored? Don't hold your breath as these boys once again start crying wolf.