

# Big Tech's Anti-LGBTQ Record

## Key Findings

**Big Tech Is A Key Funder Of Anti-LGBTQ Politicians.** Amazon, Google, and Meta are large donors to anti-LGBTQ federal elected officials. During the 2020 cycle, the three companies' PACs contributed more than \$1 million to congressmembers and senators with a 0% score from the Human Rights Campaign. Amazon has also given tens of thousands to anti-LGBTQ state legislators, leading to Seattle Pride rejecting their sponsorship in 2022.

## **Big Tech Failed To Take Action Against Anti-LGBTQ Harassment Campaigns.**

- A June 2023 scorecard from GLAAD gave Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube failing grades, citing a lack of prohibition on dead-naming and lax data and transparency policies.
- Meta rolled out a new policy in 2023 that did not protect public figures from anti-LGBTQ harassment, resulting in hate campaigns directed towards trans influencers.
- Facebook and Instagram have failed to suspend large anti-LGBTQ hate accounts, including Libs of TikTok, which drove death threats to children's hospitals after spreading misinformation about gender-affirming care.
- Apple and Google allowed anti-LGBTQ Daily Wire podcasts on their platforms, including episodes encouraging violence against trans people.
- YouTube has been slow to take action against hate campaigns directed towards LGBTQ content creators – including refusing to suspend accounts that engage in targeted harassment.

## **Big Tech Censored LGBTQ Content Creators.**

- YouTube repeatedly censored and demonetized LGBTQ content, including using an algorithm that flagged words like “gay” and “lesbian” in video titles. YouTube demonetized businesses catering towards the LGBTQ community and previously rolled out a family-friendly “restricted mode” that restricted LGBTQ videos.
- In 2018, Facebook temporarily banned gay-themed ads, deeming them “political.” Instagram also blocked ads from LGBTQ-themed companies, tagging them as “sexual.”

## **Big Tech Collaborated With Anti-LGBTQ Bigots.**

- In 2022 and 2023, Meta profited from ads using “groomer” rhetoric, despite it ostensibly violating their Terms of Service.
- Amazon allowed more than 40 anti-LGBTQ groups to participate in its now-defunct Smile program.
- In 2022, Amazon refused to remove anti-trans books from its website and acceded to a demand from the UAE government to block LGBTQ search terms.
- In 2019, Google established an Ethical AI Advisory Council, then disbanded it a week later amid employee protests about the inclusion of the Heritage Foundation's anti-LGBTQ president.

## **Big Tech Put LGBTQ Users' Data At Risk**

- In 2021, Apple was criticized for rolling out a family plan update that could out children to their parents.

## Big Tech Is A Key Funder Of Anti-LGBTQ Politicians

**2020 Cycle: Google Donated \$483,500 To Federal Lawmakers With A Zero Score On The 2020 Human Rights Campaign Scorecard.** [Popular Information, [6/14/21](#)]

**2020 Cycle: Meta Donated \$152,000 To Federal Lawmakers With A Zero Score On The 2020 Human Rights Campaign Scorecard.** [Popular Information, [6/14/21](#)]

**2020 Cycle: Amazon Donated \$459,000 To Federal Lawmakers With A Zero Score On The 2020 Human Rights Campaign Scorecard.** [Popular Information, [6/14/21](#)]

- **2022: Seattle Pride Rejected Amazon’s Sponsorship, Citing Amazon Giving More Than \$450,000 To Lawmakers Who Voted Against The Equality Act.** “The organizers and board of Seattle Pride has cut sponsorship ties with internet retail behemoth Amazon citing more than \$450,000 to lawmakers who voted against the Equality Act and a demand by the Seattle-based company for naming rights to the annual LGBTQ+ Pride parade.” [Los Angeles Blade, [3/23/22](#)]
- **Amazon Gave More Than \$11,000 To Washington State Legislators Who Sponsored Anti-LGBTQ Bills During The 2022 Session.** “Seattle Pride also cited \$11,000 in contributions Amazon made to Washington legislators who sponsored anti-LGBTQ+ and anti-transgender bills during the 2022 session, NBC News affiliate KING-TV 5 reported.” [Los Angeles Blade, [3/23/22](#)]
- **2019-2021: Amazon Gave \$87,900 To 17 Anti-LGBTQ Legislators In Tennessee.** [Data For Progress, [June 2022](#)]

## Big Tech Failed To Take Action Against Anti-LGBTQ Harassment Campaigns

**2023: Facebook, Instagram, And YouTube Received Low Scores From GLAAD For Failure To Protect Against Deadnaming And Lax Data Policies**

**2023: Instagram Received A 63 Percent Score From GLAAD For Failing To Protect Against Targeted Deadnaming And Having Limited Options To Protect Data.** “However, the company continues to fall short of providing adequate transparency in several other key areas. Notably, Instagram does not have a policy in place that expressly protects transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary users from targeted deadnaming. While the company has a feature allowing users to add preferred pronouns to their user profiles, the company discloses that this option is currently not available to all users. The company also discloses only limited options for users to control who can see their gender pronouns. Instagram also discloses only limited information regarding the options users have to control the company’s collection and inference of user information related to their sexual orientation and gender identity.” [GLAAD, [6/2023](#)]

**2023: Facebook Received A 61 Percent Score From GLAAD For Failing To Protect Against Targeted Deadnaming And Having Limited Options To Protect Data.** “However, the company’s policies fail to adequately protect LGBTQ users in several other key areas. Facebook currently has no policy expressly protecting users from targeted deadnaming. In addition, the company discloses only limited options for users to control the company’s collection and inference of user information related to their sexual orientation and gender identity. The company also publishes only limited data on the actions it takes to restrict content and accounts that violate policies protecting LGBTQ people.” [GLAAD, [6/2023](#)]

**2023: YouTube Received A 54 Percent Score From GLAAD For Failing To Protect Against Targeted Deadnaming And Misgendering And Providing Little Data About The Demonetization Of LGBTQ Content Creators.** “The company also continues to fall short of providing adequate transparency in several other key areas. Notably, YouTube has no policy in place that expressly protects users from

targeted deadnaming and misgendering. Alphabet continues to provide only limited information regarding the steps it takes to address demonetization, filtering, and removal of LGBTQ creators. In this context, the company’s transparency reports also provide no data giving insights into removal and demonetization of LGBTQ creators from ad services.” [GLAAD, [6/2023](#)]

### **2023: Meta Rolled Out A New Policy That Failed To Protect Public Figures On Facebook From Anti-LGBTQ Harassment**

**2023: Meta Rolled Out A New Policy That Failed To Protect Public Figures On Facebook From Anti-LGBTQ Harassment.** “One of the most significant examples of this kind of loophole is Meta’s distinction between public figures and private individuals. In Meta’s newly created ‘Gender Identity Policy and User Tools’ (launched in March 2023) the company explains, ‘We distinguish between public figures and private individuals because we want to allow discussion, which often includes critical commentary of people who are featured in the news or who have a large public audience. For public figures, we remove attacks that use derogatory terms related to sexual activity, calls for sexual assault or exploitation, calls for mass harassment, and threats to release private information. For private individuals, our protection goes further. We remove content that’s meant to degrade or shame someone for their sexual orientation or gender identity, among other protections.’ This policy distinction leaves LGBTQ public figures unprotected from a broad range of truly shocking anti-LGBTQ hate (especially the longstanding practice of malicious targeted misgendering and deadnaming — directed specifically at prominent transgender public figures).” [GLAAD, [6/2023](#)]

### **2023: Apple And Google Allowed Transphobic Daily Wire Hosts To Use Their Platforms To Spread Hate, Including Encouraging Violence Against Trans People**

**HEADLINE: Spotify, Apple And Google Allowing Daily Wire To Spread Dangerous ‘Anti-Trans Hate.’** “Spotify and Apple Podcasts are allowing Daily Wire host Michael Knowles to remain on their platforms, despite his calls for an eradication of ‘transgenderism.’ Knowles has been accused of calling for trans genocide after saying society should ‘ban transgenderism entirely’, in a 27 February episode of his The Michael Knowles Show on The Daily Wire. The episode is, at the time of writing, available to stream on Spotify and Apple Podcast, despite both claiming to prohibit anti-LGBTQ+ hate on their platforms.” [Pink News, [3/8/23](#)]

**Apple And Google Failed To Remove Daily Wire Podcast Episodes Encouraging Violence Against Transgender People.** “The Daily Wire’s bigotry against LGBTQ people ranges from episodes that sport anti-LGBTQ slurs in their titles to editor emeritus Ben Shapiro’s continued attacks on gay marriage. As recently as in late February, several Daily Wire podcast hosts, including Walsh, Knowles, Owens, and Jake Crain, have encouraged violence against trans people, claimed that violence against trans people is inevitable, or urged the eradication of transgender people from public life. In September of 2018, Apple removed Infowars, the podcast hosted by conspiracy theorist Alex Jones, from its platform for violating terms of service. The move spurred other tech companies to do the same, and severely limited the reach of Jones’ harmful rhetoric — rhetoric which also cost him a defamation suit and his financial solvency. In spite of this precedent, and repeated violations of Apple and Google terms of service, Daily Wire podcasts remain accessible through the Apple App Store, Apple TV, Google Play, and through Google TV via Chromecast.” [Media Matters, [3/7/23](#)]

*Note: In June 2023, YouTube [began](#) suspending and de-monetizing Daily Wire accounts for transphobia.*

### **2022: Facebook And Instagram Failed To Remove Anti-LGBTQ Content That Violated Its Hate Speech And Misinformation Policies**

**2022: Facebook Failed To Suspend Libs Of TikTok After The Account Led To Death Threats To Boston Children’s Hospital Because Of Misinformation About Trans Health Care.** “Meta has confirmed that the Libs of TikTok account was not suspended from Facebook, despite media reports on August 17th that the account was suspended. Twitter also has not taken action on recent posts or the

account. The account, run by Chaya Raichik, repeatedly promoted a lie about gender-affirming care at Boston Children’s Hospital over the last week and, according to VICE and other mainstream media outlets, doctors and other hospital staff are now receiving death threats. The Hospital confirmed that they are receiving a ‘large volume of hostile internet activity, phone calls and harassing emails including threats of violence toward our clinicians and staff.’” [GLAAD, [8/19/22](#)]

**2022: Facebook And Instagram Failed To Remove Anti-LGBTQ Content That Violated Its Hate Speech And Misinformation Policies.** “In their recent survey of the content on Meta’s platforms Facebook and Instagram published over the past year, the non-profit media watchdog organization Media Matters found nearly 1,000 violations of the company’s own hate speech policy, including anti-LGBTQ+ content that includes misinformation.” [ABC News, [6/29/22](#)]

- **Instagram Allowed Libs Of TikTok To Rack Up Hundreds Of Thousands Of Followers While Playing A Large Role Promoting Anti-LGBTQ “Groomer” Rhetoric.** “Notorious for targeting schools, Pride events, and individuals on Twitter, Libs of TikTok has also gained a large following of nearly 200,000 on Instagram, where it posts much of the same content and plays a large role in driving the false ‘groomer’ narrative. During Pride Month, Libs of TikTok posted 91 times, earning close to 700,000 interactions on Instagram.” [Media Matters, [7/6/22](#)]

#### **2022: GLAAD And ADL Studies Found That Most LGBTQ Social Media Users Experienced Harassment**

**2022: GLAAD And ADL Studies Found That Most LGBTQ Social Media Users Experienced Harassment.** “LGBTQ social media users say social media is neither a welcoming nor a safe place for them, a new GLAAD report shows. In a survey, 84% of LGBTQ adults said not enough protections are on social media to prevent discrimination, harassment or disinformation, according to the report. Additionally, 40% of LGBTQ adults, as well as 49% of transgender and nonbinary people, do not feel welcomed and safe on social media. [...] A recent report by the Anti-Defamation League revealed that 66% of LGBTQ+ survey respondents reported experiencing hate-based online harassment — a far-higher level than non-LGBTQ+ individuals at 38%. That report also showed that 54% of LGBTQ+ respondents reported experiencing ‘severe harassment,’ which covers physical threats, stalking, sexual harassment and doxing.” [NPR, [7/13/22](#)]

#### **2019: YouTube Was Sued For Failing To Protect A LGBTQ Content Creator From Neo-Nazi Harassment And Restricting Her Content**

**2019: YouTube Was Sued For Failing To Protect A LGBTQ Content Creator From Neo-Nazi Harassment And Restricting Her Content.** “Lindsay Amer, another plaintiff and the creator of ‘Queer Kid Stuff,’ says the channel’s videos, meant for children 3 to 17, initially gained traction. But after a neo-Nazi website accused her of encouraging homosexuality, the comments sections underneath the videos were bombarded with hate speech that referred to Amer as a pedophile and attacked the LGBT community. Amer says parents wrote in to say that while they supported the content of Amer’s videos, they would not allow their children to watch them because of the comments. YouTube would not filter or allow Amer to filter out hate-filled comments, so eventually Amer turned off comments entirely. But that limited the online personality’s ability to grow an audience, the lawsuit alleges, because the comments section is a growth driver on YouTube. [...] In addition to the harassment, the Queer Kids Stuff videos were also restricted by YouTube’s algorithms, the lawsuit alleges, with some videos being blocked altogether. The audience for the videos has remained at around 15,000 and generates less than \$500 per year.” [Washington Post, [8/14/19](#)]

#### **2019: YouTube Decided Not To Remove The Account Of An Anti-LGBTQ Troll, Instead Apologizing For Not Demonetizing The Account Faster**

**2019: YouTube Decided Not To Remove The Account Of A Conservative Commentator Who Directed Racist And Homophobic Harassment At A Vox Journalist.** “YouTube chief executive officer

Susan Wojcicki is standing by the company's decision to allow conservative commentator Steven Crowder to remain on the platform. Her comments come one week after an investigation confirmed the right-wing pundit's treatment of Vox host Carlos Maza was not in violation of its policies, despite Crowder's consistent use of racist and homophobic slurs. Crowder has more than 3.8 million subscribers. 'The challenge is when we get an allegation like this we take it very seriously,' Wojcicki told Recode's Peter Kafka at the Code Conference in Scottsdale, Ariz. on Monday. 'We need to enforce those policies consistently because if we were not to enforce them consistently, there would be millions of other people saying what about this video, what about this video, what about this video? If you look at the content on the internet, you look at rap songs, late night talks, a lot of humor, you can find a lot of racial slurs or sexist comments. If we were to take down every video...' [Tech Crunch, [6/10/19](#)]

- **YouTube CEO Susan Wojcicki Issued A Tepid Apology To The LGBTQ Community, Saying She Wished She Had Demonetized The Conservative Commentator's Account Faster.** "Ultimately, YouTube suspended Crowder's channel's monetization, or the ability for him to earn money by allowing ads on his videos, citing a 'pattern of egregious actions [that] harmed the broader community and is against YouTube Partner Program policies.' Crowder also sells a range of merchandise, including t-shirts labeled 'Socialism Is For Fgs.' [...] Wojcicki said these changes are amongst many others in the works as the company considers both stricter internal policies and external regulation. Wojcicki issued a careful apology to the LGBTQ community. If she could do it again, she said, she would have addressed Crowder's monetization immediately: 'I know that the decision we made was hurtful to the LGBTQ community and that was not our intention at all,' she said. 'I thought it was really important to be upfront about that and say that wasn't our intention and we are really sorry about that.' On monetization specifically, Wojcicki explained that YouTube has a much 'higher standard' for creators who earn money from their videos. Still, YouTube has been slow to adopt policies that keep its users safe from hate speech." [Tech Crunch, [6/10/19](#)]

**2019: YouTube Faced Lawsuits From LGBTQ Creators And Conservative Misinformation Channel PragerU, Alleging Censorship.** "Two months later, a group of LGBTQ YouTube creators filed a class-action lawsuit accusing the company of discrimination. The case mirrored similar charges from across the ideological aisle — a filing from PragerU, a conservative video channel, which has accused YouTube of censorship. In fact, the lawsuits were brought by the same attorney. 'It just looks like YouTube is taking the maximum amount of time for a solution that pleases no one,' said Stapleton, the former employee." [Los Angeles Times, [12/27/19](#)]

## Big Tech Censored LGBTQ Content Creators

### YouTube Demonetized And Restricted LGBTQ Content Creators And Suspended A Small Business Selling Prosthetics For Trans Men

**2019 Study: YouTube Automatically Flagged Videos With Words Like "Gay" And "Lesbian" In The Title.** "Now, a group of YouTubers who spent four months working to reverse-engineer the algorithm have found what they say are alarming results: YouTube's algorithm, they allege, can flag videos because of apparently random words that appear in video titles. Worse, they say the algorithm penalizes videos featuring LGBTQ-related vocabulary at a disproportionate rate: A full third of titles tested specifically for queer content triggered the bot. [...] After testing over 15,000 words, the group concluded in both a written report and a video posted to Nerd City's channel that YouTube had been automatically flagging videos that placed certain keywords in their titles — including a wide range of queer-friendly vocabulary like 'gay' and 'lesbian.'" [Vox, [10/10/19](#)]

**2018: A YouTube Creator Said That His Videos With The Word "Trans" Were Demonetized – More Than A Year After LGBTQ Content Creators Informed YouTube That Their Content Was Being Censored.** "Over a year later, however, the same problems persist. In a series of videos posted to his YouTube channel, trans creator Chase Ross says that for the past three weeks he's been dealing with age restrictions on his videos daily; some of his older videos have been recently demonetized, or stripped of

revenue-earning ads, with others being removed completely. He says YouTube has regularly demonetized his videos with the word ‘trans’ or ‘transgender’ in the title — and even run anti-LGBT ads on some videos geared toward the LGBT community.” [The Verge, [6/4/18](#)]

- **HEADLINE: YouTube is still restricting and demonetizing LGBT videos — and adding anti-LGBT ads to some** [The Verge, [6/4/18](#)]
- **HEADLINE: YouTube is ‘looking into’ complaints that it unfairly censors LGBT videos** [Washington Post, [3/20/17](#)]

**2018: YouTube Repeatedly Suspended A Small Business That Made Prosthetics For Trans Men, Falsely Claiming It Contained “Nudity, Pornography, Or Sexually Provocative Content.”**

“Transthetics is a company that makes ‘innovative prosthetics for trans men et al.’ Like many small businesses, they use YouTube to reach potential customers and share information with their community. But in April 2018, the channel was terminated due to ‘severe violations’ of YouTube’s community guidelines on nudity and sexual content... because of a four-year-old video in which the creator reviewed and modeled underwear and its compatibility with prosthetics. Transthetics appealed YouTube’s decision, and the video was eventually reinstated. But in October 2018, the account was suspended again, and Transthetics received a message that read: ‘YouTube is not the place for nudity, pornography or other sexually provocative content’ despite the fact that the video in question contained no nudity, pornography, or sexually provocative content. Transthetics was able successfully appeal again, but creator Alex notes that YouTube’s processes are inconsistent: the same video has triggered takedowns on multiple occasions, and each appeal has garnered different results.” [Electronic Frontier Foundation, accessed [4/13/21](#)]

**2017: YouTube Apologized After Its Family-Friendly “Restricted Mode” Blocked Videos From LGBTQ Content Creators.** “YouTube has apologized after its family-friendly ‘Restricted Mode’ recently blocked videos by gay, bisexual and transgender creators, sparking complaints from users. Restricted Mode is an optional parental-control feature that users can activate to avoid content that’s been flagged by an algorithm. LGBTQ YouTubers began protesting late last week after fans alerted them on social media that their videos were being hidden.” [CNN, [3/20/17](#)]

**2018: Facebook Blocked Gay-Themed Ads, Deeming Them “Political”**

**2018 HEADLINE: Facebook blocked many gay-themed ads as part of its new advertising policy, angering LGBT groups.** “The advertisements all seemed innocuous at a glance. A ribald sendup of fairy tales hosted by a comedian in Los Angeles. A Spanish-language social group for Latino men, sponsored by a community center in Las Vegas. And a list of senior-friendly housing options distributed by a nonprofit group in Texas. But they were all blocked by Facebook. The company’s system, which uses automated and human monitors, determined that the advertisements were ‘political,’ though they did not involve advocacy or any explicitly political views. The common thread between them all? LGBT themes. The Washington Post found dozens of advertisements mentioning LGBT themes and words that the company blocked for supposedly being political, according to a public database Facebook keeps.” [Washington Post, [10/3/18](#)]

**Instagram Banned Ads From Companies It Deemed Profane Or Sexual, Sparking Outrage About Racist And Anti-Trans Stereotyping**

**HEADLINE: Queer And Feminist Brands Say They Are Being Blocked From Running Ads On Instagram And Facebook** [MTV News, [7/19/19](#)]

- **Instagram Prohibited A Feminist Magazine From Running An Ad With Fully-Clothed Trans People Of Color, Saying “We Don’t Allow Ads For Escort Services.”** “The feminist newsletter Salty, which also publishes sex and dating-focused content, revealed on July 9 that it had tried to run ads on Instagram featuring images of its latest magazine cover, but was denied by the platform — with a message saying “we don’t allow ads for escort services.” Readers were

understandably incensed; the newsletter is not an escort service, and the images in question showed fully-clothed queer and trans people of color. The implication ignited rage in the community over how frequently Black trans femmes are stereotyped as sex workers.” [MTV News, [7/19/19](#)]

- **Morgasm, A Queer-Owned Fashion Brand, Was Prohibited From Selling Its Clothes On Instagram Because Of Its Name, Leading To No Return On Investment When It Spent Money On Ads On The Platform.** “Take Morgasm for example: The company describes itself as a ‘gender-free, all-inclusive streetwear fashion brand with non-binary collections for adults and kids.’ Founder Morgan Burton (hence the catchy name) and her partner Tara O’Callaghan have received denial messages from Instagram that say the name of the company is considered profanity. [...] What’s more, Morgasm’s Shopify account has been blocked from selling directly to customers from the brand’s Instagram account. [...] Morgasm tried to appeal the decision through both Shopify and Instagram, but has not been successful. ‘We have explained to [Instagram] we are a fashion brand and not a sex brand,’ O’Callaghan told MTV News on Friday. ‘Shopify has been extremely helpful, has contacted Instagram on our behalf numerous times to no avail. However, Instagram will not approve us, even after our initial request and two appeals a few months apart.’ Morgasm has been able to run some ads on Instagram — but the clothing brand is not allowed to enable direct shopping from those ads or from its own posts, the way that other brands do. And it’s costing the queer-owned fashion company dearly. ‘Since we were rejected by Instagram, the platform has enabled shopping from Instagram itself, costing us even more on sales since we can’t capitalize on the new feature,’ said O’Callaghan. She said the company is ‘unable to tag the products in posts and make it shoppable,’ and, as a result, they tend to avoid running ads on an increasingly valuable platform. ‘We don’t see almost any return on investment from the ad spend,’ she added.” [MTV News, [7/19/19](#)]

## Big Tech Collaborated With Anti-LGBTQ Bigots

### Meta Profited From Ads That Referred To LGBTQ People As “Groomers”

**2023 HEADLINE: Meta has profited from 200 ads using anti-LGBTQ “groomer” slur.** “Media Matters has previously reported on Meta’s failure to enforce its hate speech policy, identifying over 150 ads that Meta allowed to run on its platforms in 2022 even though they use “groomer” rhetoric. Following this reporting, Meta removed 47 of these ads for violating the company’s Advertising Standards. Our latest analysis found that the company has allowed another 63 ads with similar anti-LGBTQ language on its platforms since our last report was published last October. These 63 ads garnered nearly 1 million impressions and Meta earned at least \$6,400 in revenue, according to data from the Dewey Square Adwatch tool set. Meta continues to allow nearly 70% of the “groomer”-related ads that we identified in our previous reports including ads from politicians, who are not subject to the same level of fact-checking that applies to other content and advertisements on the platforms. The ads that Meta removed after our reporting were from numerous pages, including the anti-LGBTQ organization American Principles Project, conservative Christian group Truth & Liberty Coalition, Tomball Family Values, Jeff Younger for Texas, Gender Critical Greens PAC, and Oklahoma state Senate candidate Jarrin Jackson.” [Washington Blade, [2/21/23](#)]

**2022 HEADLINE: Facebook parent company Meta still cashing in on ads using anti-LGBTQ slur ‘groomers’ despite platform’s ban: report.** “Meta, the parent company of Facebook and Instagram, continues to profit from ads featuring the anti-LGBTQ slur ‘groomer,’ according to a media watchdog nonprofit. That’s despite having previously stated that the term, when baselessly used to describe LGBTQ people, violated its hate speech policies. Media Matters for America on Thursday said that it had identified more than 150 ads on Meta platforms accusing people of being ‘groomers’ or ‘grooming children’ — an incendiary term used in some conservative circles to falsely categorize LGBTQ people as sexual predators. Earlier last month, the group reported that it had found 134 ads running on Meta platforms that slandered LGBTQ as ‘groomers.’ According to Thursday’s report, the social media giant removed 40 of those ads for violating its policies — but 94 of them still remained. Additionally, 19

similar new ads have begun running on Meta platforms since Sept. 6 — ‘meaning the company has allowed a total of over 150 ads that baselessly accuse people of sexually grooming children to run on its platforms so far in 2022,’ the organization said. According to data from the Dewey Square Adwatch toolset, the ads were loaded on screens more than 1 million times, and cost a combined total of nearly \$14,000.” [New York Daily News, [10/14/22](#)]

### **Amazon Allowed More Than 40 Anti-LGBTQ Groups To Participate in AmazonSmile**

**Amazon Allowed More Than 40 Anti-LGBTQ Groups To Participate in AmazonSmile.** “But a new report found that at least 40 anti-LGBTQ+ organization are benefiting as part of the AmazonSmile program, which has raised \$215 million since its launch in 2013. Eight of these groups, according to the open Democracy investigation by authors Lou Ferreira and Claire Provost, have been partners of the controversial World Congress of Families network. Another is a ‘state affiliate’ of the American Family Association (AFA). Both are considered by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) as ‘anti-LGBT hate groups.’ [...] This isn’t the first time Amazon has been criticized for allegedly failing to enforce its policies. The company has removed both Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) and the Family Research Council (FRC) from its Smile program after similar anti-LGBTQ+ behavior. [...] A few others identified in the report are: Focus on the Family, which has been criticised by the SPLC for its anti-LGBT views, Human Life International (HLI), which has called on people to ‘oppose the LGBT movement’ and claimed that homosexuality is linked to paedophilia, and the American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ), which is led by President Trump’s personal lawyer Jay Sekulow and has intervened in numerous U.S. court cases opposing LGBT+ marriage equality. Oh and one more, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, whose president, Franklin Graham, has called Satan the architect of same-sex marriage and Islam ‘evil’ and ‘wicked,’ the report noted.” [The Hill, [12/22/20](#)]

### **Amazon Blocked Search Results For LGBTQ-Related Products On Its UAE Website After Pressure From The Government**

**2022: Amazon Blocked Search Results For LGBTQ-Related Products On Its UAE Website After Pressure From The Government.** “E-commerce giant Amazon is blocking search results for LGBTQ-related products on its United Arab Emirates website, following a series of pushbacks against same-sex themes in the Gulf region. Amazon made the decision after coming under pressure from UAE authorities, who reportedly threatened it with penalties and gave it until Friday to comply with its demand to restrict search results for LGBTQ-themed materials. This is according to documents viewed by the New York Times, who first reported the story. ‘After hearing from the Emirates, Amazon had its Restricted Products team take steps to remove individual product listings, and a team that manages the company’s search abilities hid the results for more than 150 keywords,’ the Times wrote in its report. Those keywords included ‘lgbtq,’ ‘pride,’ ‘closeted gay’ and ‘transgender flag,’ among others, the report said.”

### **2022: Amazon Refused To Remove Anti-Trans Books From Its Website**

**2022: Amazon Refused To Remove Anti-Trans Books From Its Website.** “In March, the No Hate at Amazon group circulated a petition demanding that Amazon stop selling titles like ‘Johnny the Walrus’ and ‘Irreversible Damage,’ and that the company set up an oversight board that would allow employees to democratically determine what content is appropriate for sale on the site. The organizer said at least 500 people using verified Amazon email addresses have signed that petition, which was presented to company leadership last summer. At the time, some employees quit over the company’s refusal to stop selling these books, NBC News reported. [...] Amazon has previously been willing to remove content from its site, pulling a book called ‘When Harry Became Sally’ in March 2021 because it described ‘LGBTQ+ identity as a mental illness.’ But more recently, it has declined to remove these books — some of which, like ‘Irreversible Damage,’ the company sells as Kindle editions and others of which, like ‘Desist, Detrans, & Detox: Getting Your Child Out of the Gender Cult,’ it distributes through its direct publishing arm. Amazon has continued to sell and print ‘Irreversible Damage’ even after the American Booksellers Association apologized for promoting it and retail competitor Target removed the book from its website in July.” [Washington Post, [6/1/22](#)]



## 2019: Google Started An Ethical AI Advisory Council, Then Disbanded It A Week Later Due To Concerns About The Membership Of The Heritage Foundation's Anti-LGBTQ President

**2019: One Week After Starting An Ethical AI Council, Google Disbanded It Amid Employee Complaints That The Heritage Foundation's President Was A Member And Had A History Of Bigoted Remarks.** “The workers continued to agitate, with mixed results. In April 2019, Kent Walker, Google’s senior vice president for global affairs and top lawyer, convened an external council to advise the company on its use of artificial intelligence. But workplace activists discovered that one appointee, the president of the Heritage Foundation, Kay Cole James, had made what some employees saw as anti-L.G.B.T.Q. and anti-immigrant comments. This generated a wave of embarrassing publicity and, just over one week after he announced the council, Walker pulled the plug.” [New York Times Magazine, [2/18/20](#); Google’s The Keyword Blog, Kent Walker, [3/26/19](#)]

- **The AI External Advisory Council Was Created To Monitor How Google Deploys AI, With A Focus On Bias And Facial Recognition.** “Google today announced a new external advisory board to help monitor the company’s use of artificial intelligence for ways in which it may violate ethical principles it laid out last summer. The group was announced by Kent Walker, Google’s senior vice president of global affairs, and it includes experts on a wide-ranging series of subjects, including mathematics, computer science, engineering, philosophy, public policy, psychology, and even foreign policy. The group will be called the Advanced Technology External Advisory Council, and it appears Google wants it to be seen as a kind of independent watchdog keeping an eye on how it deploys AI in the real world, with a focus on facial recognition and the mitigation of built-in bias in machine learning training methods. ‘This group will consider some of Google’s most complex challenges that arise under our AI Principles ... providing diverse perspectives to inform our work,’ Walker writes.” [The Verge, [3/26/19](#)]

## Big Tech Put LGBTQ Users' Data At Risk

### 2021: Apple Rolled Out New Child Protection Features That Could Out LGBTQ Minors To Their Parents

**2021: Apple Rolled Out New Child Protection Features That Could Out LGBTQ Minors To Their Parents.** “Apple’s new child protection features announced last month would use machine learning algorithms to flag ‘sexually explicit’ photos sent or received in the Messages app by minor users enrolled in a Family Plan. [...] Digital civil liberties advocates and concerned Apple users have organized protests, sent letters, and signed petitions in response to the proposed updates to iPhones, iPads, Apple Watches, and macOS Monterey, which they say violate users’ privacy and put LGBTQ youth at risk. The features could reveal a queer child’s gender identity or sexual orientation to an abusive family member without their consent, or incorrectly flag content that’s not sexually explicit, said Evan Greer, director of the advocacy nonprofit Fight for the Future. ‘In the end, it’s really important to recognize that young people have a right to communicate securely,’ she said.” [Center for Public Integrity, [9/24/21](#)]