(UN)FOUNDED FEAR TOWARDS THE ALGORITHM: YOUTUBE RECOMMENDATIONS AND POLARIZATION

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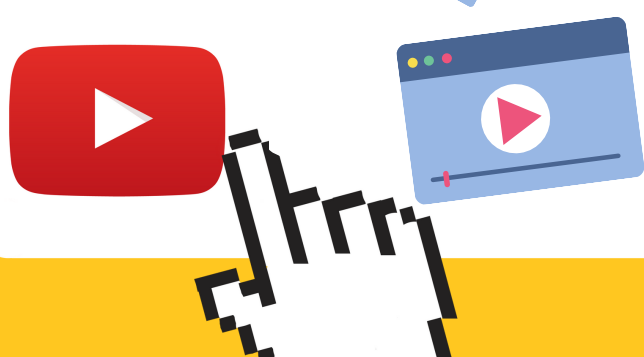
INTRODUCTION

Social media has established a new way of communicating and understanding social relationships.

At the same time, there are downsides. Especially their use of **algorithms** that have been built and developed under their umbrella and their potential to alter public opinion.

METHODOLOGY

This paper tries to analyze the YouTube recommendation system from the perspectives of **reverse engineering and semantic mining**.

Hypothesis:

H1: The videos recommended by YouTube will be increasingly extreme or polarized.

**H2:** Comments on videos recommended by YouTube will be similarly polarized.

n= 750

videos and, counting the comments, close to three million words.

CONCLUSIONS

The polarizing content is not the same for all the topics analyzed, which may indicate the existence of moderators –or actions by the company– that alter the relationship between the variables.

At least through this sampling model, the themes chosen do not tend to be extreme. Or, what amounts to the same thing, if you start with a video about vegetarian food, you don't end up with one about veganism or "anti-speciesist" movements.
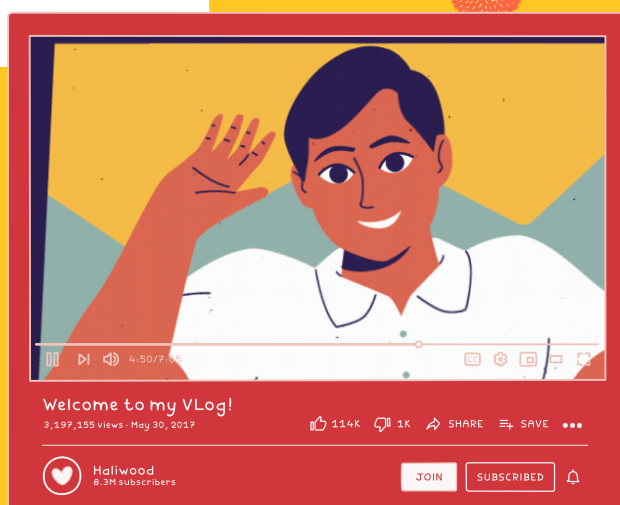
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