

## **Matt C—written evidence (FEO0011)**

### **House of Lords Communications and Digital Committee inquiry into Freedom of Expression Online**

#### **1. How should good digital citizenship be promoted?**

I believe the best system is one with the least interference, if you think of public health advice like smoking cessation or anti obesity campaigns, they make sense in as much as the question of "what health advice should we give?" is an easily answered one. Whereas "good digital citizenship" is an abstract concept where we'll be trying to think of ways to interfere for the sake of it. Concepts like "don't be bothering people online" are self evident to anyone, they can be projected out from our education in other social interactions. Occasionally people will behave in a way that isn't to the taste of every single other person, but the market will solve it, my good digital citizen campaign would simply tell people if you don't like what is being said switch off the video or block the commenter, problem solved. We know when a law has been broken, we know when something becomes stalking or harassment, this has already been defined, so stories in the media of police approaching people to discuss their non criminal online discourse have a great chilling effect on debate and expression, and I'd say that shouldn't be a Damocles sword over everyone as we also creep around on eggshells, I've felt it, written the same innocuous comment 400 different ways in case someone doesn't understand it, whoever is causing that isn't a good digital citizen.

#### **2. Should online platforms be under a legal duty to protect future of expression?**

Online platforms simply need to get out of the way, the media don't help stirring up panic, a big part of it for the media is that these online creators are their competitors, so it becomes very convenient to call some comedian a "far right white supremacist" in order to get them banned. It is in their interests to do that as people only have a finite of time to view media.

#### **3. To what extent should users be allowed anonymity online?**

Anonymity should be allowed online, the only exceptions should be for crimes, as I said earlier what constitutes a crime is already defined, as a lay person I know in my heart where an action is criminal and during interactions between people I know when it's a joke, most reasonable people do. Some enforcers tend to become over zealous as enforcement is their raison d'etre, that's why any policy should tend towards freedom, we're looking to not interfere, that way it will only be when an actual crime is committed that attempts will be made to identify someone online.

#### **4. How can moderation systems be improved?**

On YouTube you can't go into a live chat and say "I've bought some Christmas

Crackers" because cracker is an archaic ethnic slur from America referring to the crack of a white slave masters whip, even with the context of Christmas it doesn't know and removes it. That's just an aside, anyone who knows anything about this knows there is a bias in social media to censor the right over the left, I watched 2 x 3 hour long podcasts with Jack Dorsey CEO of Twitter on Joe Rogan, he had his lawyer with him the second time, if it wasn't obvious that their policies are deliberate before it certainly was after, I've also followed his appearance at committees in the US where Senator Ted Cruz laid it bare again, but so what? So what is, you're worried about anti vaxers and trolls, meanwhile there are huge left of Chairman Mao corporations acting as a cartel, they are able to influence global events, indoctrinate and also silence people at will, that would be my first priority before a few people taking a joke too far.

**5. Would strengthening competition regulation of dominant online platforms make them more responsive to users views about content moderation?**

That's what we want, competition, it's what I call the Silicone Valley Cartel, and the problem isn't that no viable competitors emerge, recently "D-live" a viable competitor (in its infancy) to YouTube has emerged, similarly "Parler" as a competitor to Twitter, and what happens when a viable competitor emerges? They are all white supremacists of course, the media agrees, it's shouted from the rooftops, they go after the hosting companies and the advertisers, and they blow them out of the water. I've seen it before with Gab. It is true that all the ills of the world will use these new sites, that's because the new sites use the same niche of freedom that YouTube and twitter initially grew so big and strong on and became able to stifle everyone else. There are going to be people saying things you don't like on the internet, but no one has the right to never be offended.

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