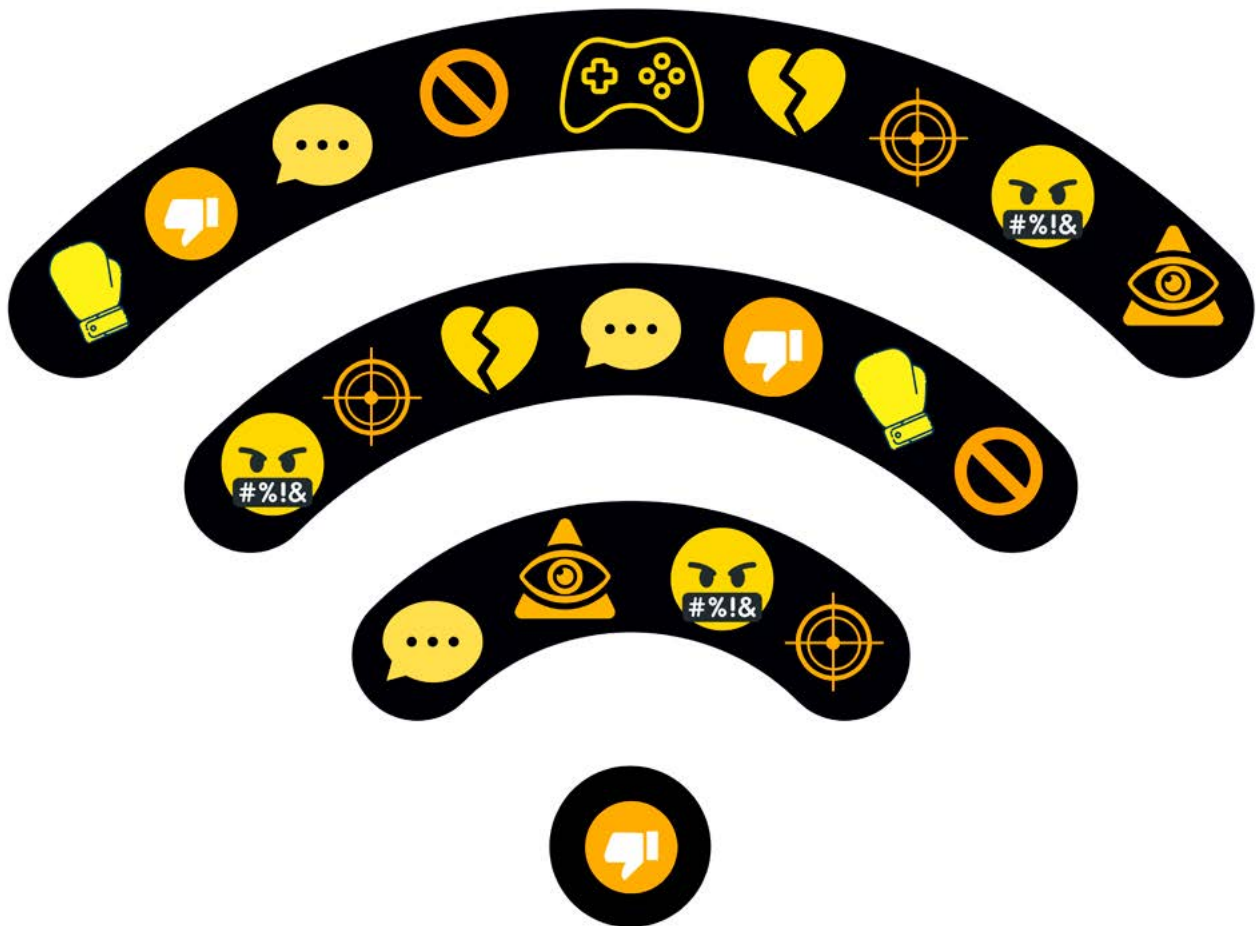


HATE
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PLUGGED IN BUT DISCONNECTED: YOUNG PEOPLE AND HATEFUL ATTITUDES



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

YOUNG PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES

We group young people into six groups of varying size based on where their attitudes fall on two indexes: progressive ↔ hateful and politically included ↔ politically excluded. We find that the biggest segment, the Engaged Reactionaries, comprises 33% of young people. Engaged Reactionaries are not yet disillusioned with politics, but have some hateful beliefs when it comes to “culture war” issues.

There are two further hateful-leaning groups who are at-risk of developing or having hateful attitudes: the Disaffected Reactionaries and the Hateful Advocates. We also find that two out of the three progressive-leaning clusters feel excluded from politics and the mainstream media, including the Progressive Advocates, the most progressive segment of young people.

POLITICAL DISENFRANCHISEMENT

Young people feel disconnected from politics, both in terms of the political system itself and the political parties available to them. 65% of young people think the political system is broken, and only 1 in 5 young people feel actively satisfied with the political system. This is related to a general pessimism in young people: less than half (41%) think that their lives will be better than their parents'. Issues that matter to many young people such as housing, climate sustainability and higher education have been deprioritised. Those aged 18 or older, who are old enough to vote, are more likely than 16-18 year olds to think that at least one party represents their opinions. That said, 1 in 4 do not know who they would vote for in a General Election.

REACTIONARY VIEWS

Some young people have reactionary and conservative views about topics like LGBTQ+ rights, feminism, anti-racism and immigration. For example, only 45% of young people have positive views of trans people, and only 43% have positive views of feminists. Interestingly, holding these views does not directly correlate with being anti-establishment and feeling excluded from politics, as the Engaged Reactionaries

segment shows. We find that Asian and Black Engaged Reactionaries are more likely to have hateful views about gender roles, trans rights and feminism, whereas white Engaged Reactionaries are more likely to have hateful views about Islam and immigration.

MISOGYNY AND ANTI-FEMINISM

A clear gender divide has emerged between men's and women's views on the role of feminism in society today: only 45% of young men think that feminism is still important because women remain disadvantaged in society, compared to 78% of young women. Andrew Tate is a divisive character: he is liked by 41% of young men but only 12% of young women. He is also more popular in minority ethnic communities, with approval rising to 59% of Asian or Asian British young men and 49% of Black or Black British young men.

There is also a male backlash against #MeToo-style allegations of sexual violence: 1 in 4 young men (23%) think the allegations levelled at Russell Brand are an attempt to silence and smear someone who is challenging the status quo, and 39% of young men think that women cry rape after sex they regret.

SOCIAL MEDIA

99% of the young people we polled had at least one social media account, with five platforms (Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, TikTok and Snapchat) being used by more than 70%. Young people are using social media instead of search engines to search for news and information, despite being aware of the risks of fake news and hateful content online. 68% of young people are worried about the extent of extremist content on the internet and social media – 54% of young people have come across hateful conversations on social media, and 27% have come across conversations they class as extremist. There is also a wider awareness of the impact this has: 64% of young people agree that young women are less likely to participate in online debates, platforms and games because of fear of online abuse by men.

CONSPIRACY THEORIES

Young people have concerningly high levels of belief in popular conspiracy theories, which may have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and general political cynicism in young people. 28% of young people think that COVID-19 was made up or overblown to impose lockdown restrictions. 22% of young people think Jews control the banking system and 19% believe in Sharia law-controlled no-go zones for non-Muslims, with young men more likely to believe both antisemitic and Islamophobic conspiracies than young women. Many young people report being uncertain or on the fence about conspiracy theories rather than confidently rejecting them.

FAR-RIGHT ACTIVISM AND VIOLENCE

Only a small fraction of young people actively engage in the far right but the number is rising.

Especially worrying is the rising number of youth who are convicted of violent crime and terrorism related to their hateful views. Our polling shows that 41% of young people think that violence can be necessary to defend something you strongly believe in and worryingly, the Hateful Advocates group shows a disproportionate agreement with this stance, 75% agree.

EXTREMISM

When asked to identify extremist threats, young people are more likely to name far-right groups than Islamist groups, and 1 in 3 young people (32%) identified far-right groups as the biggest threat to Britain in terms of extremism. 45% of young people have a negative view of far-right activists, however a core group do support far-right ideas and thinkers. For example, 15% have a positive view of Tommy Robinson and 26% have a positive view of Andrew Tate.



INTRODUCTION

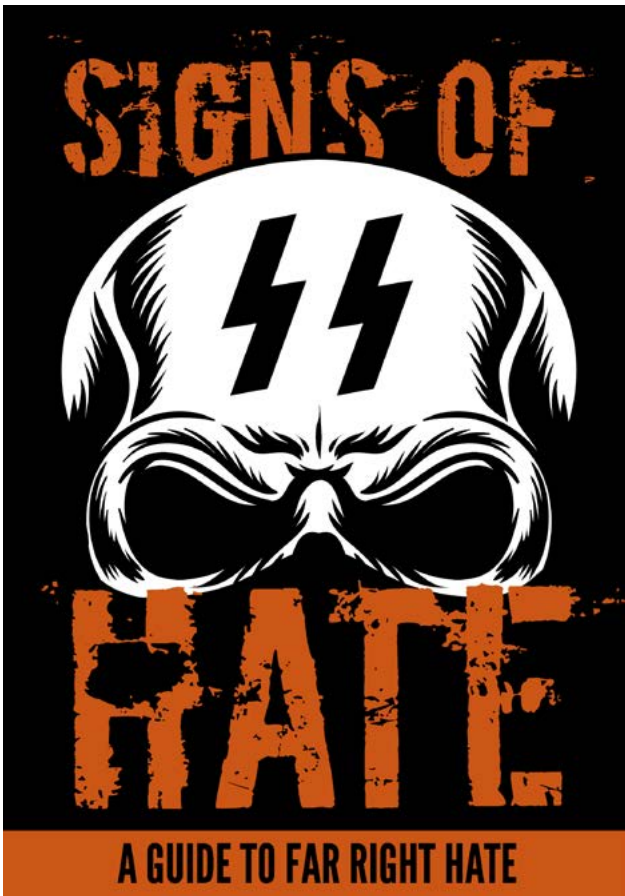
Generation Z, aged approximately between 12 and 27, are commonly thought of as radically progressive and ‘woke’. Often at the heart of progressive movements, young people have long been associated with left leaning politics and liberal ideologies.

However, back in 2020, our Youth, Fear and Hope report identified some worrying trends. Young people were feeling politically disconnected and neglected, there were higher-than-expected levels of acceptance for conspiracy theories, and young men who felt emasculated by changing social norms appeared increasingly sympathetic to far right narratives.

Four years later, these findings seem exacerbated, and a growing group of reactionary young people are presenting with hateful attitudes. An escalation of culture wars around issues like trans rights and #MeToo, a mainstreaming of conspiracy theories post COVID-19 and the explosion of online misinformation resulting from a lack of responsibility shown by social media companies has emoted reactionary responses and deepend divides not just amongst young people, but across the whole of society.

All of this is happening against a backdrop of political and economic instability. A series of governments have deprioritised young people in





the UK following a General Election that most would not have been old enough to vote in. This has been accompanied by real-terms cuts to education, mental health services and youth services.

Meanwhile, a stagnant or slowing economy has made it much harder to find affordable rental housing, including rentals or steady jobs with opportunities for career progression. We see a sense of disillusionment strongly reflected in young people, drawing them to search for more extreme forms of representation.

Hateful attitudes do not exist in isolation: stereotypes, debates around identity and conspiracy theories are frequent in media, political discourse. This content has never been more accessible than it is now due to its prevalence and popularity online. Young people today have been raised with technology and the internet, with social media companies competing for their attention and advertisers for their custom. Technologies are changing and advancing at a pace that makes it hard for adults working with young children to keep up with. The long-term impact of extensive social media use in young people is still yet to be seen.

It is too soon to know whether young people will grow out of these reactionary attitudes or if they will follow the trend of shifting even more to the right as they grow older. What demands our

current attention though is the growing group of young people, especially young men, engaging in hate in new and concerning ways.

This report aims to understand and define the issue of hateful attitudes in young people in Generation Z, aged approximately between 12 and 27, and to use this knowledge to develop practical and effective solutions.

Our research indicates that young people have a diversity of different attitudes. Identity and attitudes intersect, meaning that different young people appear to be more or less susceptible to different hateful attitudes. We find groups of young people that have hateful attitudes towards groups including the LGBTQ+ community, women, Muslims, Jews and immigrants.

This hostility has the potential to become violence. This violence, which can take many forms, including physical attacks, verbal bullying, threats and incitement of violence or harm, and can take place both on and offline.

We explore how exposure to hate can encourage young people to develop hateful attitudes that go beyond the subconscious biases of society whereby they adopt ideologically driven hostility towards certain ideas or groups of people. This ideological worldview distinguishes their hateful attitudes from other harmful behaviours common in young people, such as bullying.

The findings from this report will go on to influence our work in education and other youth settings as well as policy and research. HOPE not hate has worked in hundreds of schools delivering workshops to young people and teachers on tackling prejudice and supporting equality and diversity. We also regularly update a safeguarding guide to online hate symbols, "Signs of Hate".

From conversations with teachers across the UK, we are aware that parents and people who work with young people need more and different ways of tackling hateful activism. They have concerns about young people, but they are not adequately confident or equipped to respond to this, and do not know where to go for help. Young people also want to lead and be part of their own peer-based interventions. We want to create research-informed solutions that communities will use and benefit from.

A glossary of terms we use and detailed information on our research and methodology can be found at the end of this report.

ATTITUDES OF YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY

MISBAH MALIK

We worked with Focaldata to poll 2040 young people aged 16-24 in January 2024, weighted to be nationally representative. We have also drawn from a different Focaldata poll of 24,950 people undertaken in December 2023, drawing out findings from the 18-24 age category.

Mirroring the mood of the country as a whole, the prevailing sentiment amongst young people reflects a sense of deterioration. ‘Decline’ is the top word that young respondents associate with Britain today, with a third identifying mental health as the biggest issue impacting them personally.

POLITICS

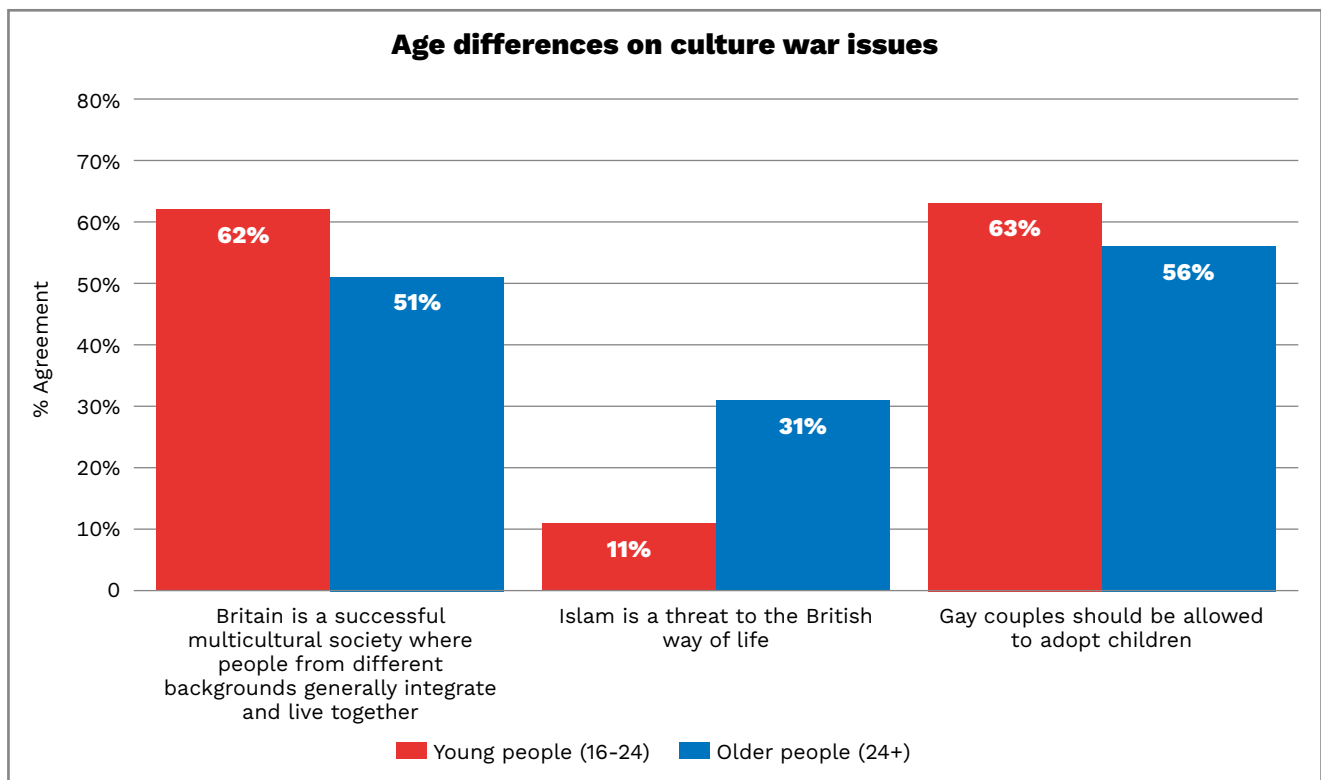
There also exists a disillusionment with politics, reflective of widespread disenfranchisement and perceptions of political inefficiency. Over half think the political system is broken (65%) and most feel unlistened to by those in power (62%).

Unsurprisingly, only one third think that at least one of the main political parties reflects what they think (35%). They approach most political figures with apathy; ‘neither like nor dislike’ is often the dominant response to questions of likeability for even the more divisive figures like Nigel Farage (28%), George Galloway (26%), Katie Hopkins (27%), and Jeremy Corbyn (34%).

Indicatively, one quarter (26%) do not know who they would vote for if there was a General Election tomorrow. Only one third of young people who know who they would vote for choose Labour (33%), dropping to 24% for 16-17 year olds. Whilst some of this group will not be old enough to vote in the next General Election, this is a potentially huge drop from the 56% of 18-24 year olds who voted Labour in 2019¹.

LIBERAL ATTITUDES

Despite this reduced support for Labour, young people do continue to generally align with left-leaning ideologies on topics such as



YOUNG PEOPLE BEYOND THE GENDER BINARY

In our weighted poll of 2040 young people aged 16-24 carried out by Focaldata in January 2024, 1% of respondents described their gender as “Other” (n=22). All of these respondents fall in the Progressive Advocates segment. Their answers were often distinct from male and female participants on a number of topics, which we analyse below.

Three caveats are needed:

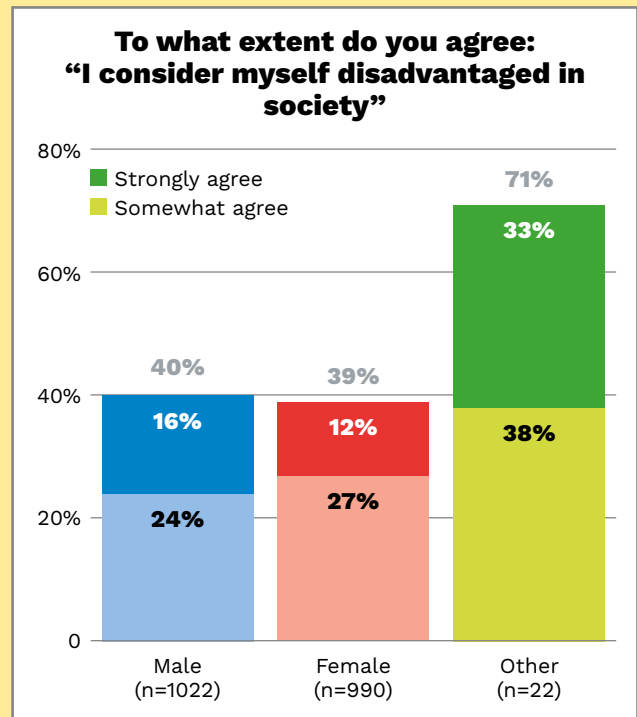
- 22 is a very small sample, a further poll expanding this group size would be needed to accurately capture their attitudes and beliefs.
- Some trans young people may have chosen to identify as “Other”. There was no question asking these respondents to elaborate on how they defined their gender within the category of “Other”, so this group will have internal variation.
- There was no question in which trans men or women could distinguish themselves from cisgender people who responded “male” or “female”. It is therefore not possible to determine if all trans responses are included in the below.

The gender “Other” responses indicate a widespread political and social pessimism – the majority of these participants (91%) are in the Progressive Advocates segment – very liberal in their worldview but feeling politically excluded. 71% of gender “Other” respondents consider themselves to be disadvantaged in society. When selecting issues that they are personally facing at the moment, they were twice as likely as other respondents to select mental health (84% versus an average of 42%), and six times more likely to select discrimination (36% versus an average of 6%).

These results are sobering but unsurprising given the wider socio-political climate.

Recent political debates about self identification in schools often become toxic and dehumanise young trans people, and the mainstream media is full of debate about their existence. They appear to be acutely aware of this. The political frustration of gender “Other” respondents was clear in the poll: 94% agreed that the political system is broken (average 65%), and 88% feel unlistened to by politicians (average 62%).

Alongside increasing hostility in the political mainstream, far-right groups and activists have ramped-up their actions against trans rights, with a particular pushback against the diversification of Sex and Relationships Education under the guise of ‘protecting’ young



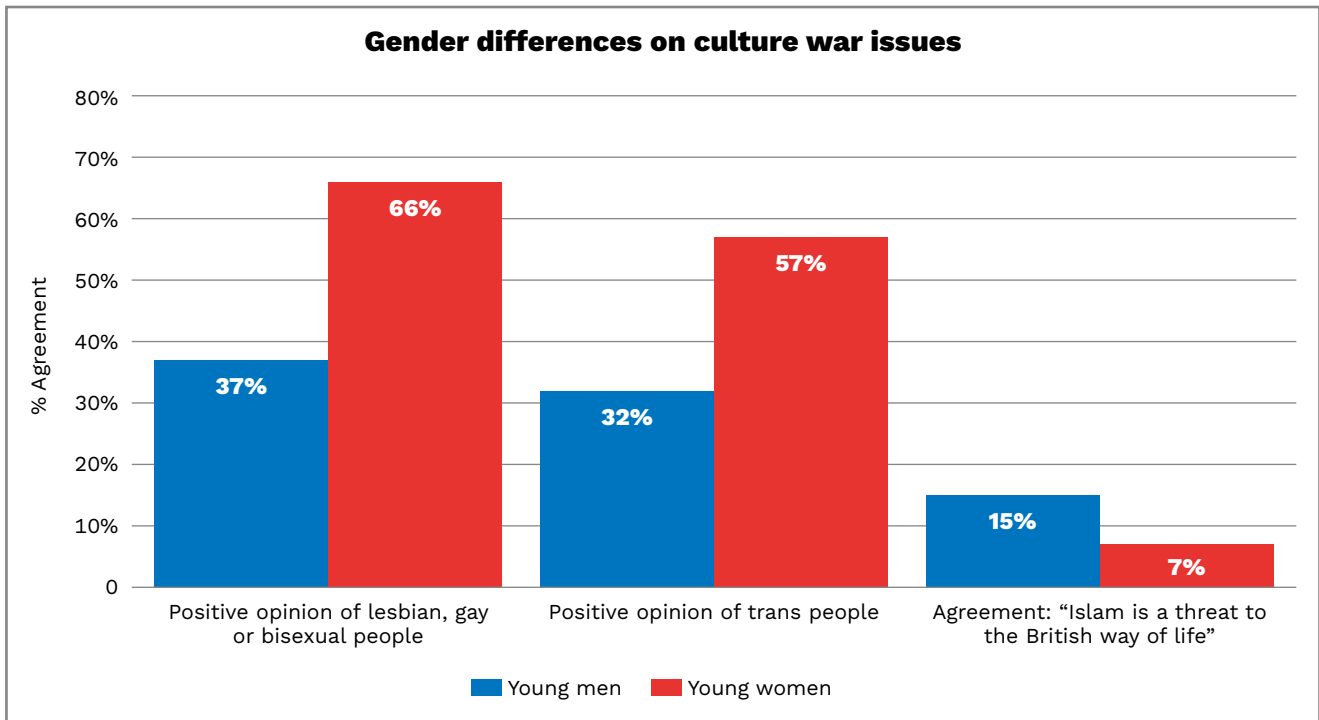
people. This activity has not gone unnoticed by those who gender identify as “Other”. Two thirds of these respondents (67%) said that far-right groups came to mind for them when hearing the word “extremist”, double that of the average young person. They were also twice as likely to list far-right groups as the biggest extremist threat (71%, average 32%).

In a poll of 4031 teachers completed in February 2024 and weighted to be representative, 35% of secondary school teachers in the UK reported that they have seen transphobia from pupils since September. Students also reported witnessing this.

Younger people, especially teenagers in school, they would get bullied for being transgender. So for me, this crosses the line ... we can always try and make improvements and attitudes can change towards, like, these certain groups. Just like how we fought for women’s rights and black people’s lives and other people’s rights.

Year 11 pupil

Help for young trans people is clearly needed, and this ties in with wider difficulties with lack of funding and long waiting times for child and adolescent mental health services. Giving teachers the skills and confidence to identify and resolve issues relating to transphobia in schools will help young people feel supported.



multiculturalism, LGBTQ+ rights and feminism. Often at the heart of progressive movements, young people have long challenged the status quo and pushed for more inclusive politics and cultures. As has long been the case, young people are more progressive than older generations.

Younger cohorts within the young people group express more liberal attitudes, although interestingly only for issues related to race. 16-17 year olds are noticeably more supportive of the benefits of immigration than 18-24 year olds (72% vs 59%), more likely to view multiculturalism as a success (70% vs 60%) and half as likely to have negative attitudes towards Muslims (8% vs 14%). However on issues regarding feminism and LGBTQ+ rights, attitudes of these two groups broadly align. Just under half of 16-17 year olds (46%) and 18-24 year olds (44%) have positive views of trans people and 60% of 16-17 year olds and 62% of 18-24 year olds agree that feminism is still important.

CLIMATE

Despite the often held assumption that climate change is a cause radically championed by young people, our polling shows that their views are not dissimilar to the rest of society. Young people are actually less likely than older generations to believe that climate change is happening (76% vs 79%). They are only marginally more likely to have positive views of climate change activists (37% vs 32%) and slightly less likely to believe that the threat of climate change is being exaggerated to control our lives (23% vs 27%).

Similarly when it comes to climate policies,

they are not as radical as expected. Again, they are only slightly less likely to believe we should delay or cancel Net Zero due to its current unaffordability (46% versus 47%). 60% of young people disagree with the idea that the Government is doing all it can to tackle climate change, and only 21% agree that it is doing enough. Whilst these differences are marginal, they do challenge the commonly held assumption that young people are the champions of the climate change movement.

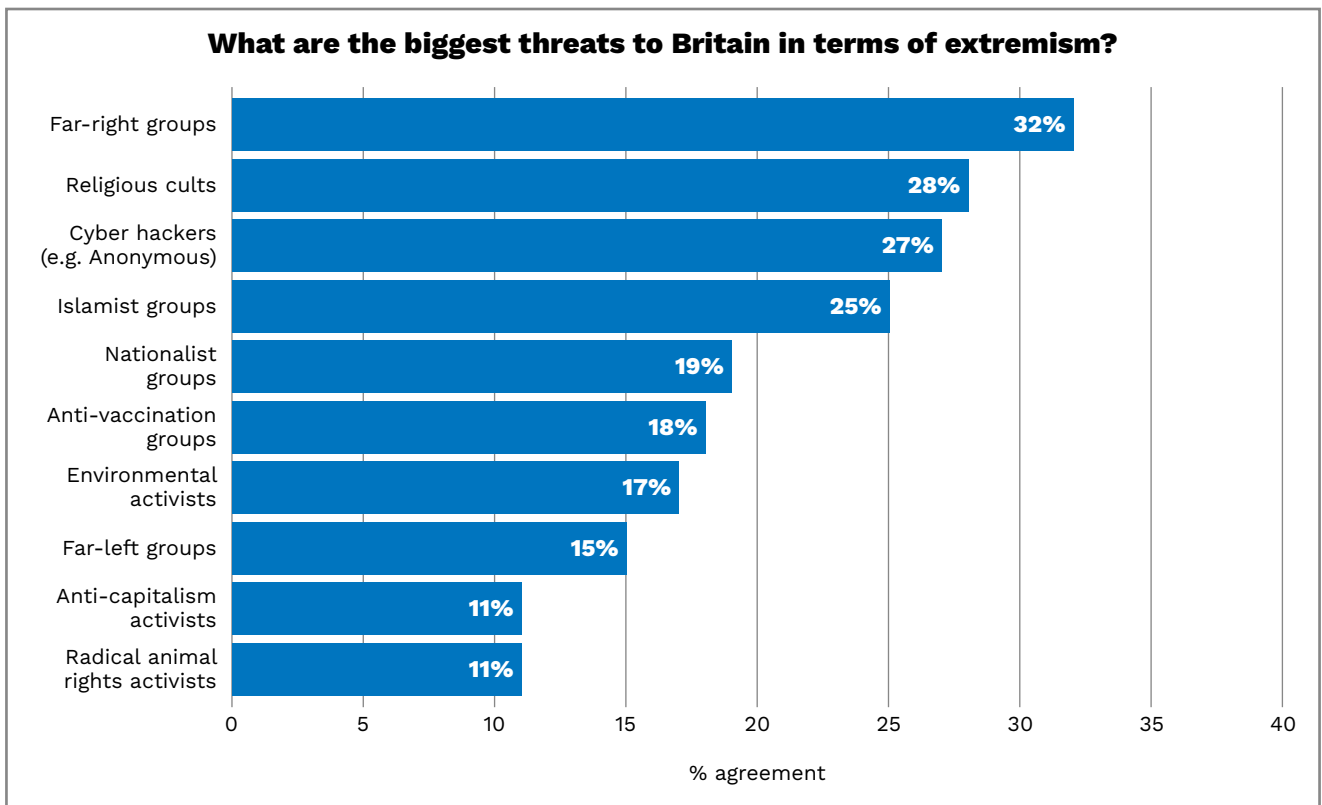
REACTIONARY ATTITUDES IN YOUNG MEN

We are also increasingly identifying a reactionary cohort within young people, predominantly young men with a commitment to ‘anti-woke’ ideas who are pushing back against liberal ideologies related to gender and sexuality in particular. Gender gaps are nothing new, but a tide of reactionary politics amongst young men is enhancing division along age and gender lines, where their attitudes are increasingly at odds with those of young women.

This is particularly the case regarding gender – one third have negative opinions of feminists (35%) and half believe that feminism has gone too far (55%) – but is also reflective of a wider trend across all culture war issues.

RELIGION

Reflective of wider society, there are considerable differences between the views of those who follow a religion and those who do not. Young people with no religion are approximately half as likely to have negative views towards feminists



(18% vs 31%) and lesbian gay and bisexual people (11% vs 27%) than those who follow a religion.

However, this is largely skewed by the results of particular religions: there is much internal variety. For example, 24% of young people who follow a religion do not think that gay people should be able to freely adopt children, but this figure rises to 37% for young Muslims, and even drops to 11% for young Sikhs, whose attitudes are much closer to the 9% of young people with no religion who also think this.

ONLINE CONTENT

The adoption of these hateful and conspiratorial views amongst young people is unsurprising given their exposure to extreme content online. 99% of respondents have a social media account, with 73% coming across content that is either hateful, violent, extremist or terrorist. 63% of young people are worried about the extent of this content online, for example of the detrimental impacts that seeing violence and sexual violence online and in gaming worlds has on their real life relationships (61%), and the impact of pornography on violence against women and girls (56%).

ATTITUDES TO EXTREMISM

Whilst clearly recognising how attitudes influence behaviour, young people predominantly view extremism through a physical rather than

ideological lens, as either someone who commits an act of terror (47%), someone who incites violence (43%) or someone who commits violence (40%). Contrastingly, half this number think extremism can encompass someone who says something extremely offensive (24%), or someone whose beliefs are disgusting (22%). Interestingly in light of recent government conversations around the right to protest in the UK, only 15% of young people think that someone attending a march where offensive slogans happen comes to mind when they hear the word extremist.

They see far-right groups (32%) and religious cults (28%) and cyber hackers (27%) as the biggest threats to Britain in terms of extremism. Islamist groups come in 4th at 25%. The inclusion of religious cults is interesting as there is much less discussion of this in the media and popular culture. This could be a general reflection of the increasingly secular nature of society rendering religion more mysterious, however response for this option was not higher in those with no religion (37%) than other religious minorities including Sikhs (38%) and Hindus (41%). Instead, it could actually be the exclusion of religious cults from mainstream discussions and the resulting mystery and intrigue that surrounds them that means young people associate them with extremism.

Only a small percentage of young people consider left-wing activism such as environmental activism (13%), animal rights activism (11%) and anti-

capitalism activists (10%) extreme. This suggests that they view extremism as a term associated with discriminatory and hateful behaviours as opposed to being at the far ends of both sides of the political spectrum. It is partially for this reason that we choose to use the term hate, and not extremism, in this report.

SOLUTIONS

What do young people see as solutions? Most young people seem to value the opportunities that (re)education presents in tackling issues related to the consumption and adoption of hateful content and attitudes, so that young people are equipped with the skills needed to critically engage with what they see online.

They overwhelmingly support learning about racism and discrimination in schools in general (63%), but also as a form of intervention when students display or express problematic views and speech (65%). They also think that social media companies bear the most responsibility for radicalisation via online content (28%), akin with those that produce the content (26%).

They therefore also think social media should be redirecting young people who view extremist websites to alternative sites where those views are challenged (57%).

NOTES

- 1 <https://yougov.co.uk/politics/articles/26925-how-britain-voted-2019-general-election>

YOUNG PEOPLE NOW: SEGMENTATION ANALYSIS

We have created a segmentation that groups young people together by the opinions and attitudes they have. The aim is that by having a better understanding of what different young people today think, we can identify groups with similar views who are in need of targeting, easy to reach and persuadable through intervention.

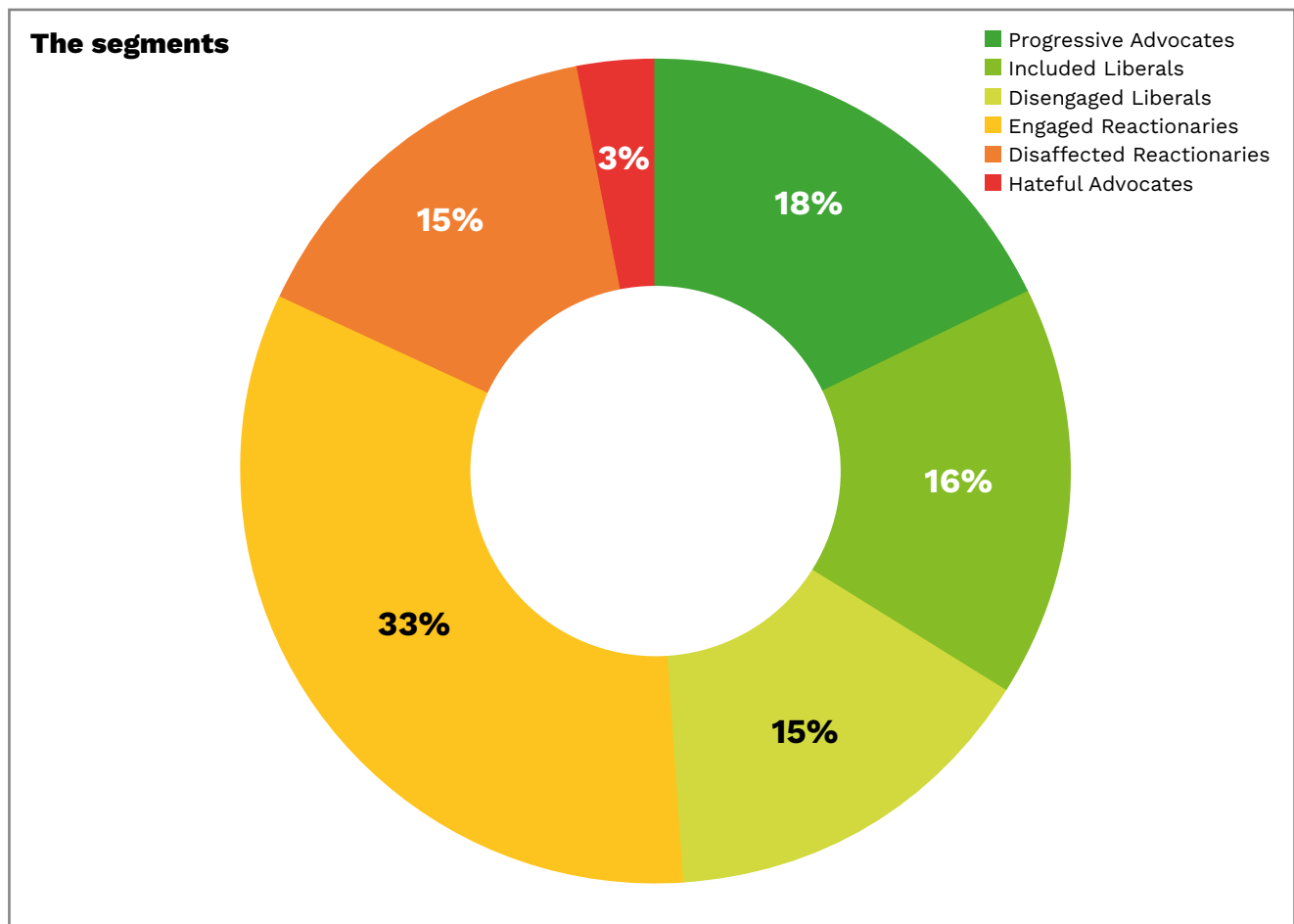
The segmentation also opens up avenues for solutions beyond the classroom – if young people within a particular target segment have similar hobbies, use similar social media apps or admire the same influencers, these could be used as the basis for an intervention.

The segmentation is based around polarising issues, because contrasting responses help us to tease out differences. By comparing young people’s responses in our nationally

representative poll of 2040 young people completed in January 2024 with Focaldata, we created indexes that collapse multiple questions on the same theme down into a single measure of attitudes.

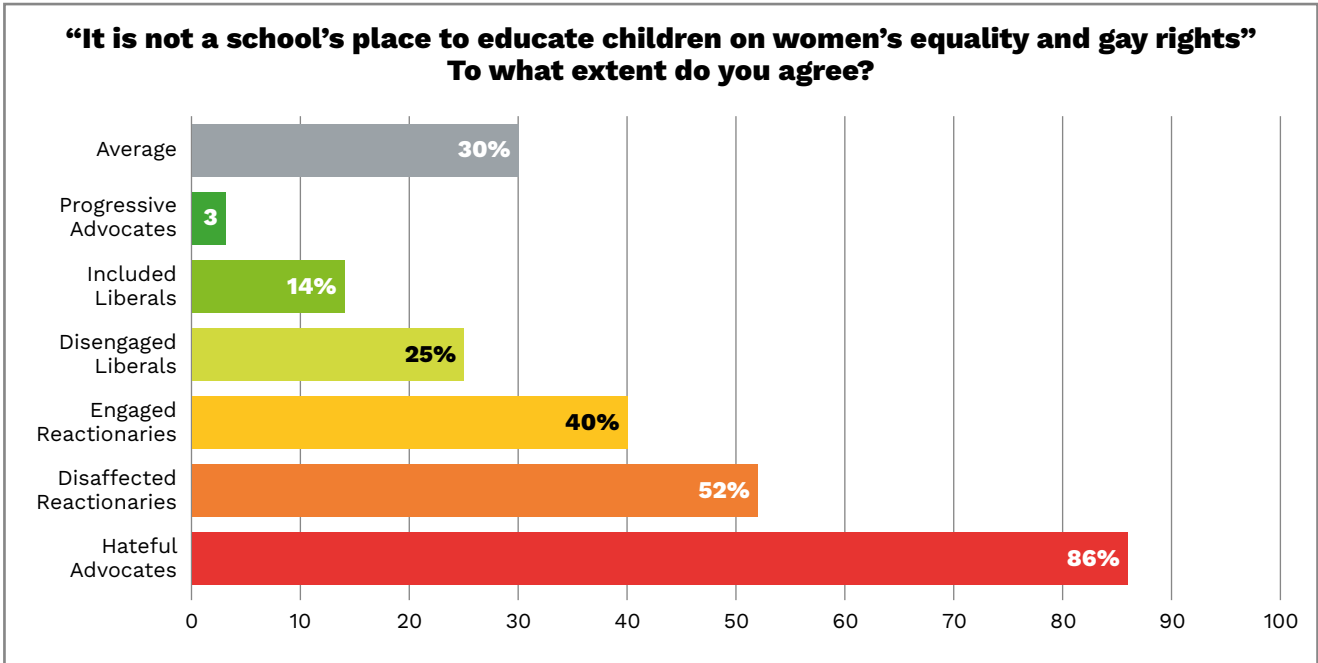
We separated young people into six different groups according to two measures:

- **Progressive ↔ Hateful index.** These questions dealt with prejudice and social values: “culture war” topics such as gender, feminism and racism, as well as democracy and violence.
- **Politically included ↔ Politically excluded index.** These questions addressed confidence and representation in the political system and mainstream media.



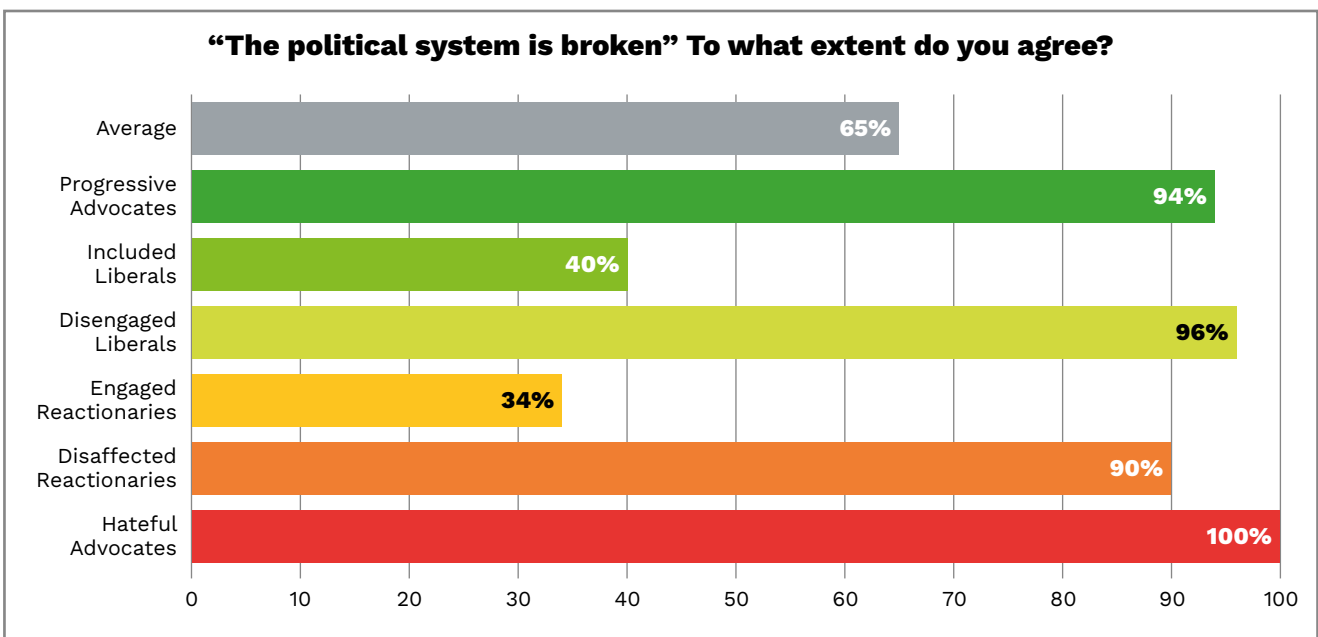
Example question: Progressive ↔ Hateful index

This shows the six distinct groups along a scale, where the Progressive Advocates are the most progressive and the Hateful Advocates are the least progressive. We use the term “advocates” to show that these are the young people with the most radical and passionate perspectives compared to the other groups, who are less likely to have strong opinions, and therefore fall closer to the average.

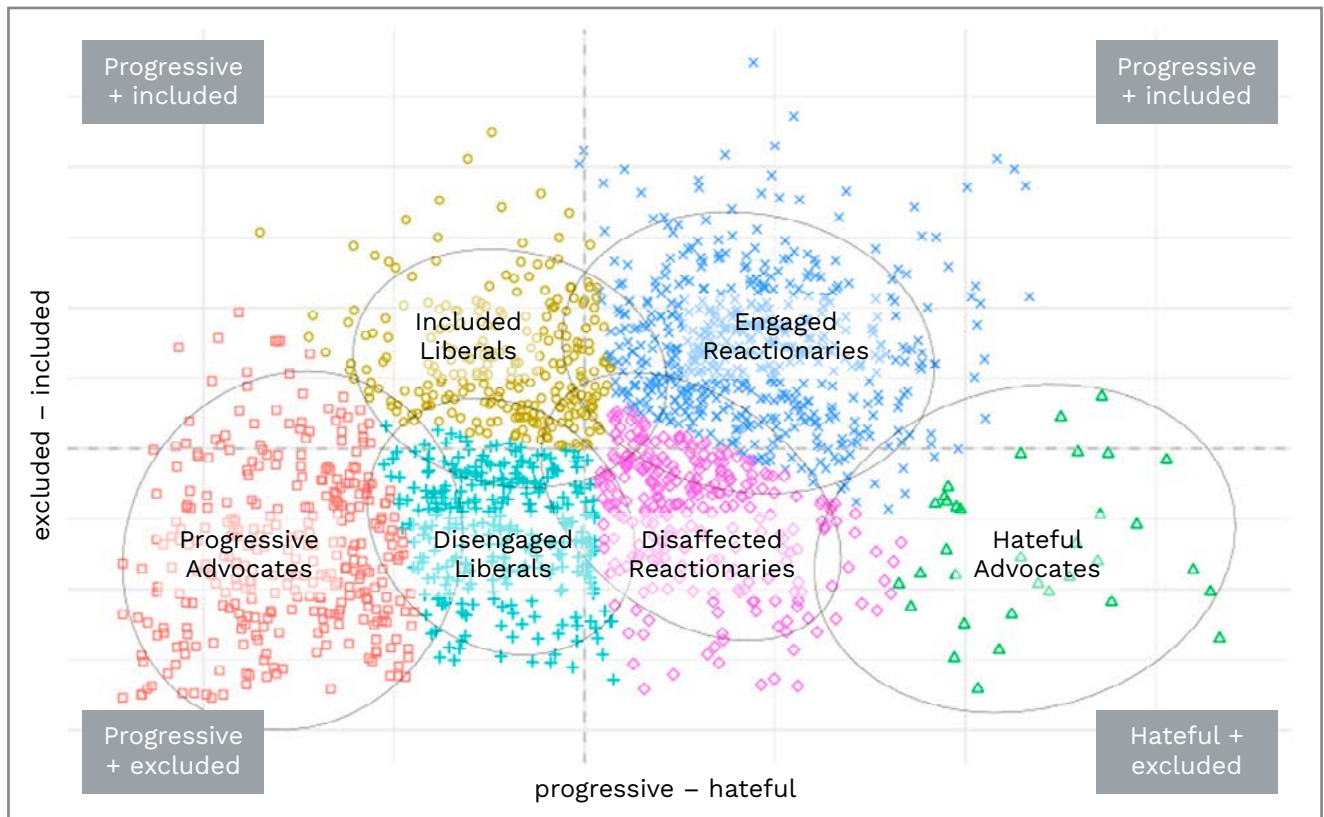


Example question: Politically included ↔ Politically excluded index

This index demonstrates that of our six groups, there are only two – one more progressive than average, one more hateful than average – who feel satisfied with the current political and media landscape. Young people with both progressive and hateful views feel equally frustrated and excluded from politics, and this frustration does not necessarily correlate with the strength of their views: the Disengaged Liberals show similar levels of political exclusion to the Progressive Advocates.



This graph shows how the six different segments sit across the two indexes:



The grey dashed lines separating the quadrants are based on the average view of the 2040 young respondents in the data (i.e. representative of the average views of young people in the UK). Since young people tend to be left of centre relative to the societal average, the Engaged Reactionaries and Disaffected Reactionaries can be thought of as less progressive than the average young person, although this might still be more progressive than the average adult.

It is important to note that the segments are multi-dimensional. The progressive ↔ hateful index is not straightforwardly reflective of a left ↔ right wing political spectrum. Also, the segments do not place young people on a spectrum of “radicalisation” where members of one segment are more likely to perpetrate violence than others. For example,

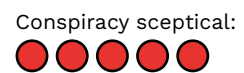
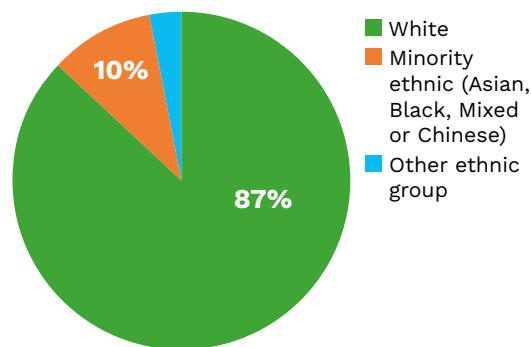
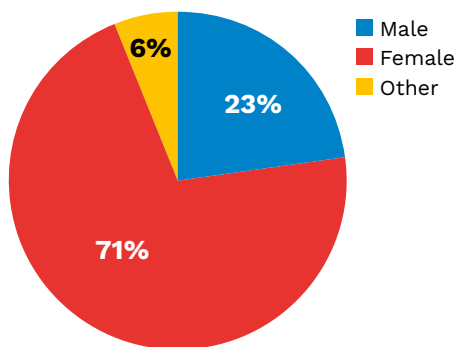
the Progressive Advocates, who are the most progressive group, are more likely than the Engaged Reactionaries to believe that violence can be necessary to defend beliefs. In many cases, violence arises out of opportunity and impulsivity and so predicting who will actually act is not as straightforward as finding those who are hypothetically in favour of it.

That said, we identify two groups who are most at-risk of developing hateful attitudes because they lean towards prejudiced and hateful thinking: the Engaged Reactionaries and the Disaffected Reactionaries. The Hateful Advocates are seen as already having hateful attitudes, but are also at risk of being introduced to further harmful perspectives. As mentioned previously, developing hateful attitudes does not guarantee that violence will follow, but makes it more likely.

THE SEGMENTS IN DEPTH

PROGRESSIVE ADVOCATES (18%)

This is the most progressive segment, who are pro-democracy but currently feel alienated and disillusioned with politics. Notably, a large proportion of the segment is female. 53% consider themselves disadvantaged in society, and 94% agree that the political system is broken. They are more likely to list mental health as a problem facing them at the moment (62%). They are actively in favour of interventions to address inequality such as racism, sexism and homophobia. They are more likely than average to advocate for both non-violent protest (92%) and violence (43%) in order to achieve goals. Minority ethnic young people are underrepresented in this category, and all the gender “Other” respondents from our poll fall within this segment.



69% of this segment have no religion (average 50%)



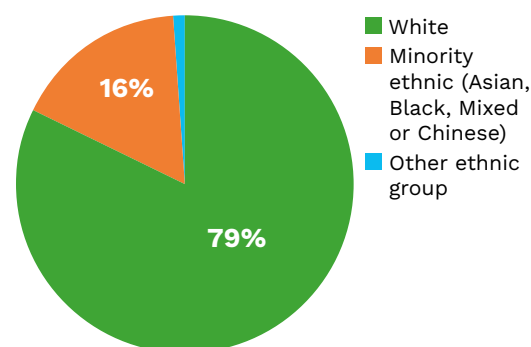
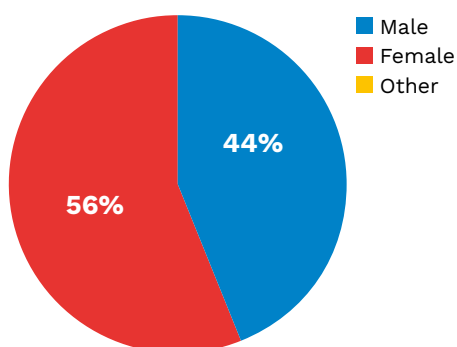
64% of this segment have an X/Twitter account (average 47%)



18% would vote for the Green Party if there was a General Election tomorrow (average 8%)

INCLUDED LIBERALS (16%)

This group leans progressive, and feels included within the current political system. They are pro-multiculturalism and equality and care about the environment, but are less enthusiastic about left-wing activists and climate activists, suggesting that they are less in favour of radical left-wing politics. They are the most likely of any of the segments to feel confident that at least one of the main political parties reflects what they think (43%). Minority ethnic young people are underrepresented in this category.



81% of this segment have an Instagram account (average 75%)



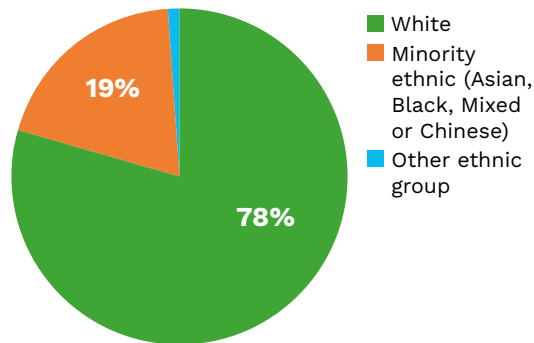
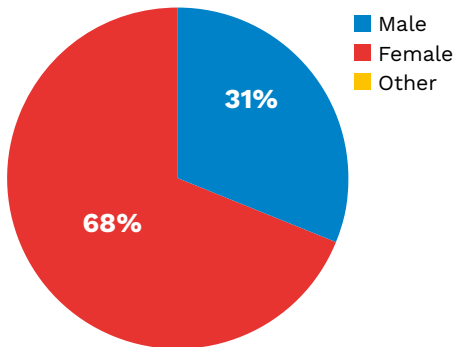
27% say pressure to succeed in the education system is one of the biggest issues facing them (average 18%)



35% don't know who they would vote for if there was a General Election tomorrow (average 26%)

DISENGAGED LIBERALS (15%)

This predominantly-female group leans progressive, but feels disappointed with the current political system – 84% think the mainstream media only shows what suits people in power and 91% agree that politicians don't listen to people like them. This is the second most pessimistic group after the Progressive Advocates, with 43% thinking their lives will be worse than their parents'.



21% say lack of a decent, secure job is one of the biggest issues facing them (average 15%)



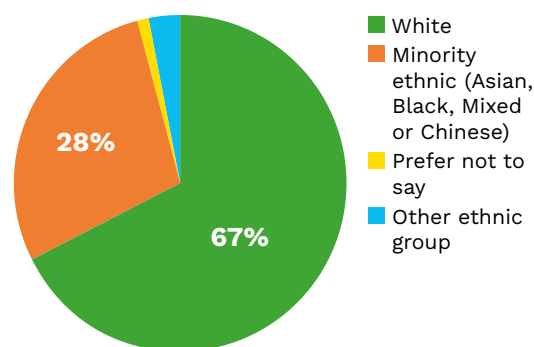
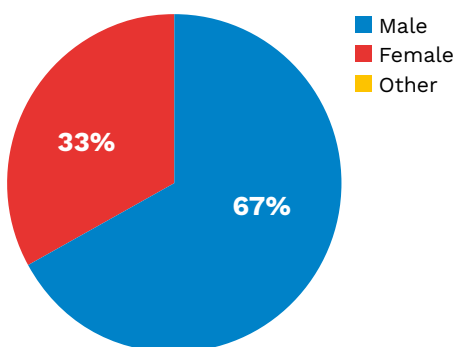
44% of this segment would vote Labour if there was a General Election tomorrow (average 33%)



14% of this segment watch darts (average 10%)

ENGAGED REACTIONARIES (33%)

This is the largest group of young people, representing a third of the sample. There is interesting internal diversity in this group beyond the broad trend, that this group feel relatively included in politics but are nonetheless at-risk of developing hateful attitudes. Many are more conservative, for example 52% believe that marriage should be between a man and a woman, and only 17% have a positive view of feminists. Others have anti-Muslim and anti-migrant views. They are also more likely to like reactionary influencers like Andrew Tate (38%) and Katie Hopkins (22%), making them likely to be exposed to hateful material. Minority ethnic young people and men are over-represented in this group. Interestingly, this is the most optimistic segment: 51% believe their lives will be better than their parents.



Only **60%** of this segment have a TikTok account (average 73%)



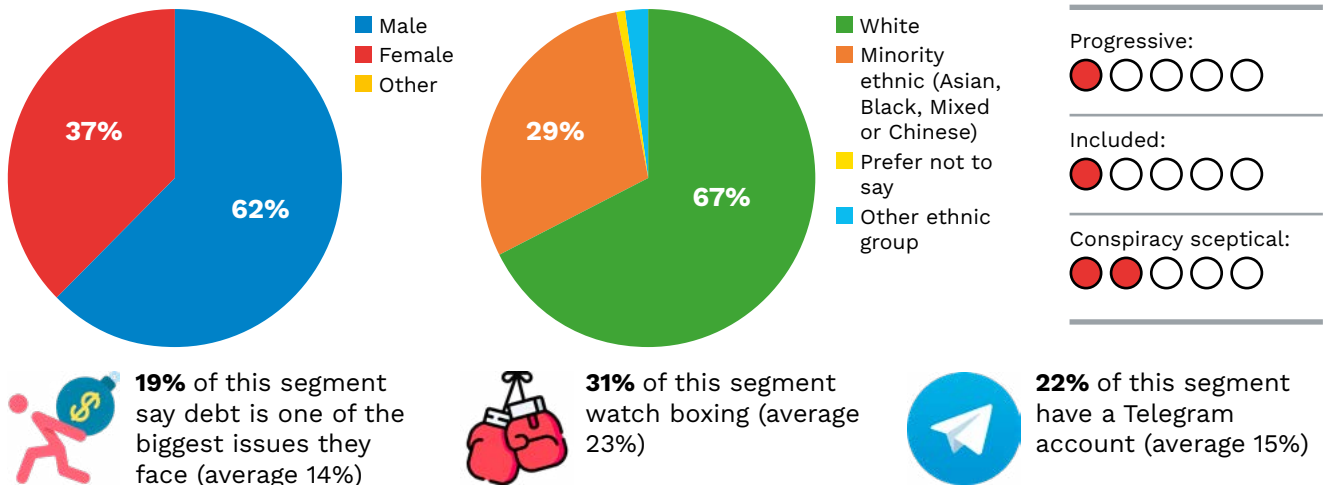
90% of this segment watch at least one sport (average 83%)



59% of this segment have a religion (average 50%)

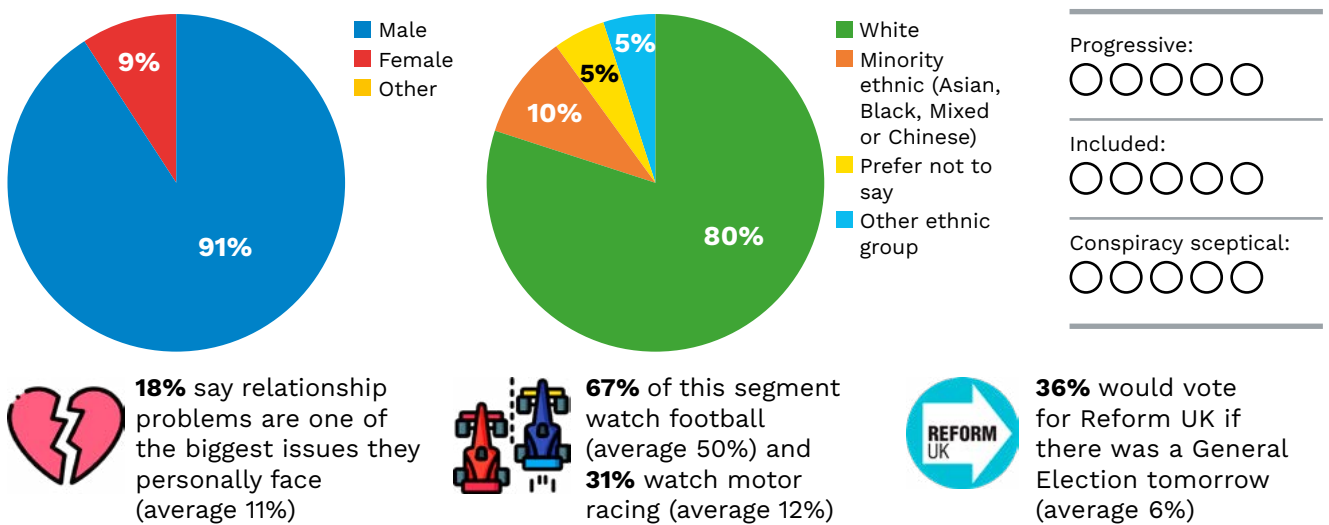
DISAFFECTED REACTIONARIES (15%)

This group is slightly less progressive than the Engaged Reactionaries, and much less satisfied with politics – 87% agree that politicians don't listen to people like them. These feelings of exclusion make these young people hard to reach, and therefore susceptible to the influence of hateful figures who offer an alternative point of view. Minority ethnic young people are overrepresented in this group, as are young men. Compared to their engaged reactionary counterparts, this segment is less susceptible to conspiracy thinking.



HATEFUL ADVOCATES (3%)

This is the most extreme group, and therefore only represents a very small proportion of the sample. Members of this segment are disproportionately white and male. These young people are extremely reactionary and have little to no trust in the political system. 28% have positive opinions of far-right activists, and they are the segment with the most Islamophobic and misogynistic views: 51% think Islam is generally a threat to a British way of life and 72% agree that women often cry rape after having sex they regret. This group is the most likely to think violence can be necessary to defend something you believe in: 58% agree. They are also the most likely to hold high conspiracy views.



TARGET AREA: EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Our segmentation has identified two groups, the Progressive Advocates and Disengaged Liberals, who demonstrate similar levels of disenfranchisement with the political system and mainstream media and are more progressive than the average for young people.

High profile young activists have fought for things like climate change, education and equality, but this has mostly taken place outside of the conventional political sphere. What’s more, these young activists are sometimes criticised or ridiculed within mainstream politics and media.

This reflects a pattern of negative representation of young people in the media more widely¹. Young people from Generation Z are seen as woke and wanting to cancel those who disagree with them. Conversely, they are viewed as lazy and not willing to persevere in the workforce.

“We are young people. And sometimes adults may think we’re not educated and not as exposed to all of these problems in society. Therefore, they sometimes may not listen to us, and they don’t take in our opinions into consideration.”

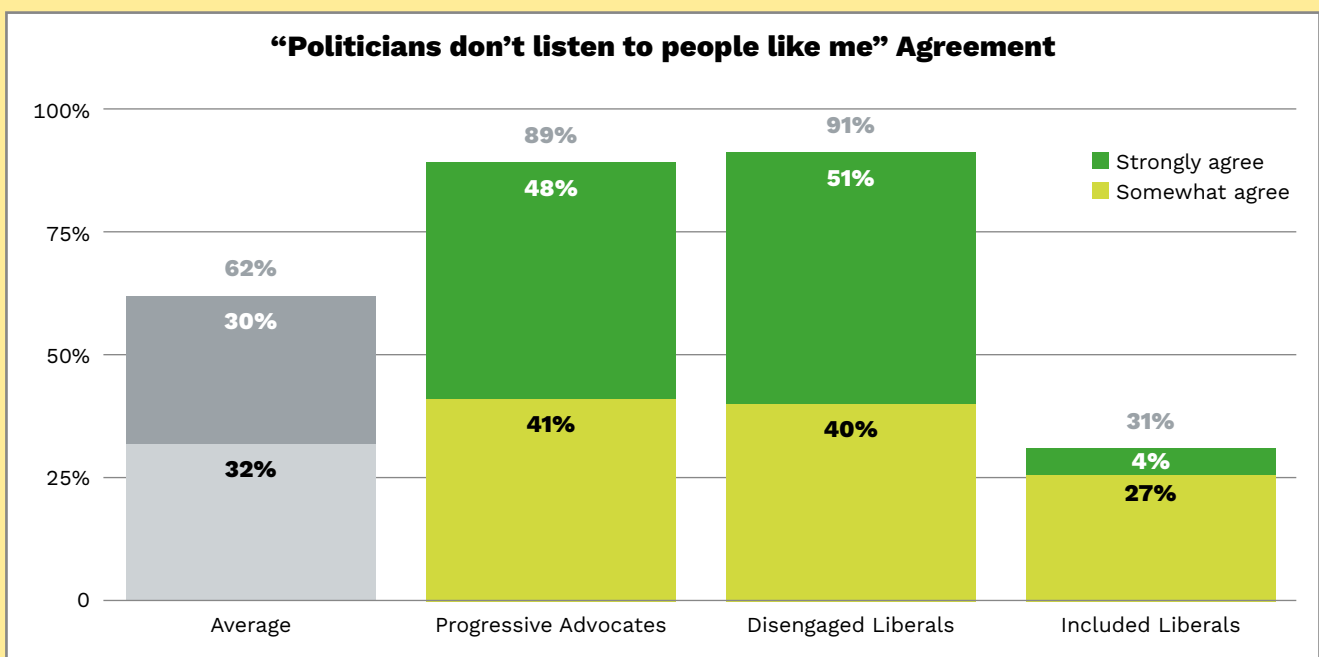
Year 11 Student

There are few avenues for young people to be able to respond or correct these narratives. Schools’ and individual teachers’ approaches to political impartiality, and lack of awareness or confidence on what matters to young people, might mean that these issues are not adequately addressed. Opportunities outside of the classroom are hard to come by, with budgets for youth services slashed by over a billion pounds² since 2010.

Empowering disenfranchised young progressives to feel more included and optimistic could be an important step in encouraging members of these segments to participate politically and have a voice – both externally and with their peers.

There is also the possibility of encouraging these young people to channel their energy towards challenging their peers whose views are hateful or discriminatory. For many young people, having spaces online and offline where they are cocooned away from hate can be important spaces of camaraderie and safety. That said, we should be equipping young progressives with the tools to speak out more and have a voice within their wider communities.

Young people want to be trusted to have difficult conversations within the safety of a known environment, whether that is in school, extracurricular activities or through dedicated



intervention programmes. Providing adults in youth leadership positions with the skills to facilitate conducive debate is a start, and will help progressive young people hone their views, possibly going on to lead these conversations themselves with peers.

“I feel like younger people should be more independent, because we’re always talking about how young people should be guided and what advice – but sometimes you need your individual experience in order to create these beliefs, thoughts and ideas.”

Year 11 Student

Encouraging passionate young people to speak about the issues facing them, and particularly understand the political and media context of these issues, would help to rebuild trust in the political system. Young progressives could also be encouraged to be “champions” of particular causes in their schools and more widely, being trained to understand and report signs of hatred in fellow pupils and support those who are affected – similar initiatives have worked in schools tackling mental health.

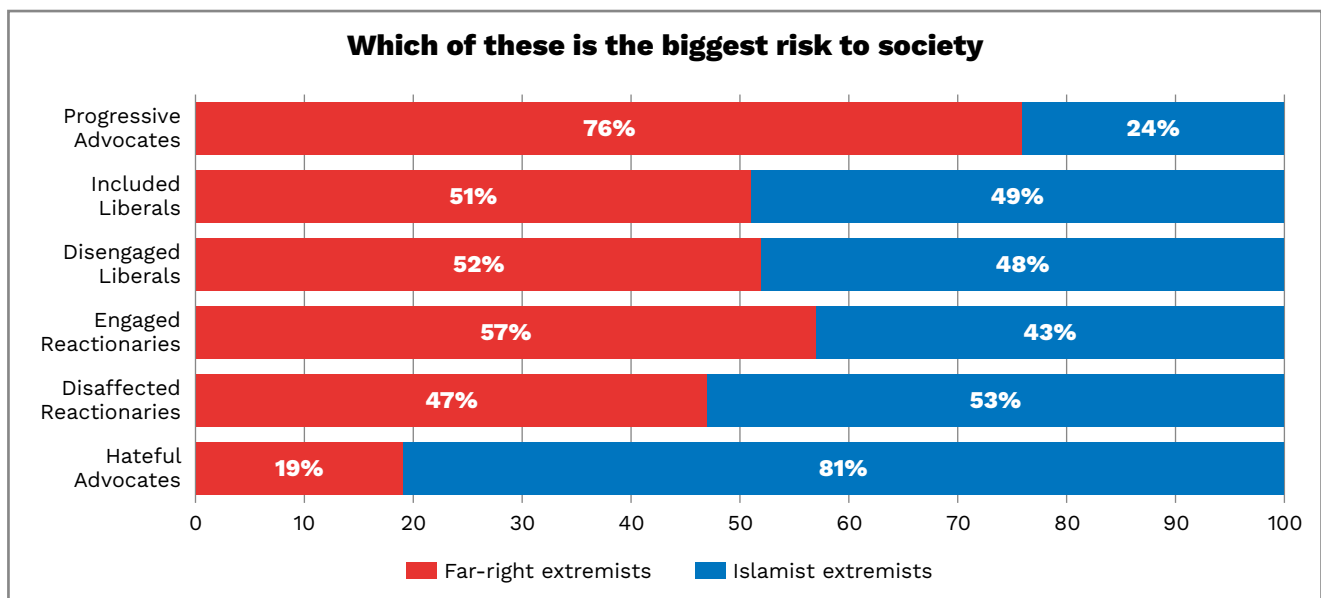
NOTES

- 1 <https://www.agediversityforum.org/beyond-stereotypes-examining-the-unfair-media-portrayal-of-gen-z/>
- 2 <https://londonyouth.org/ymca-a-decade-of-cuts-to-youth-services/>

ATTITUDES TO EXTREMISM AMONGST THE SEGMENTS

All segments bar the Progressive Advocates and Hateful Advocates are split in their opinion of whether far-right groups or Islamist groups are a biggest threat to society. At first glance this is surprising for the reactionary groups, who would be assumed to be sympathetic towards far-right

activists. However, the split reflects the diverse identities and attitudes within these segments, specifically the overrepresented minority ethnic communities who are less likely to view Islamist groups as the bigger threat.



CONSPIRACY THEORIES

A conspiracy theory can be defined as an unevidenced but strongly held belief in covert attempts by an individual or group to achieve something malevolent. Actual conspiracies have taken place which makes it hard to neatly define which theories about them are problematic. The ones we are concerned with reject mainstream explanations of events and tend to assume that there is direct and usually malicious intent behind major events. As such, they build on a foundation of mistrust and look for meaning and connections between seemingly random events.

Having a high level of conspiracy theorist belief does not always lead to developing hateful views. This is because not all conspiracy theories directly encourage hatred – for example, the theories that the moon landings were faked or that Princess Diana was assassinated. On the other hand, the theories that COVID-19 was a bioweapon from the Chinese government or that a shadowy group of Jewish elites control the global banking system directly target and stereotype groups of people in society.

Regardless of which conspiracy theory is an entrypoint, exposure to some conspiracies is likely to increase exposure to others, particularly due to the nature of online algorithms and participation in online groups. All conspiracy theories undermine trust in wider society. They can even have profound effects on the real world, for example on voter turnout or vaccination rates. Those who already believe in the seemingly more innocuous “event-based” conspiracy theories might be more susceptible to creating or believing connections between theories they already believe in, new theories and minority groups.

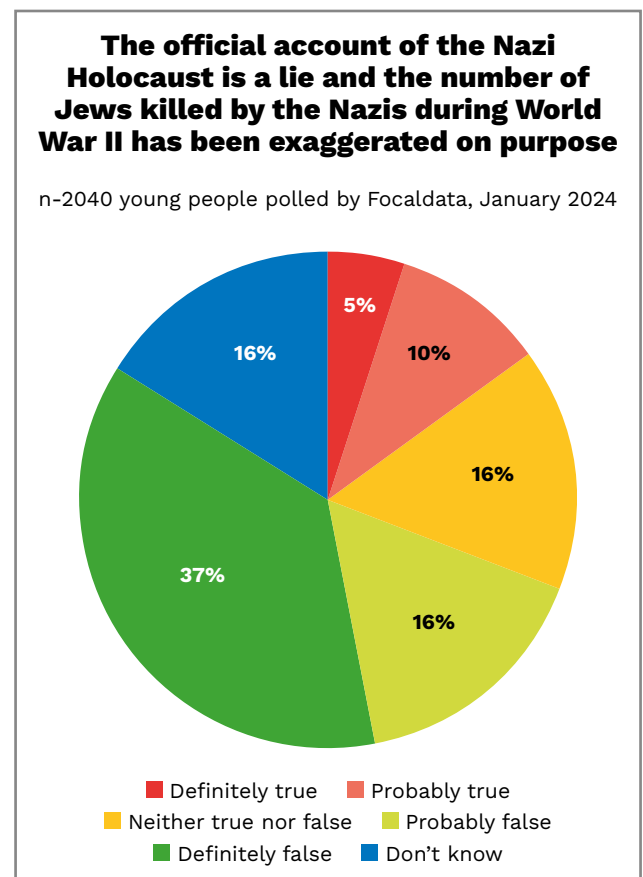
Whether it directly encourages hate or just undermines trust in social systems, exposure to conspiracy theories is unhelpful for young minds. They might be more likely to find it difficult to understand what to trust, and lack historical or otherwise factual context in which to place disinformation. To dismiss young people’s conspiracy beliefs as naive and reactive is to underestimate the impact that they can have on political trust, community relations and more.

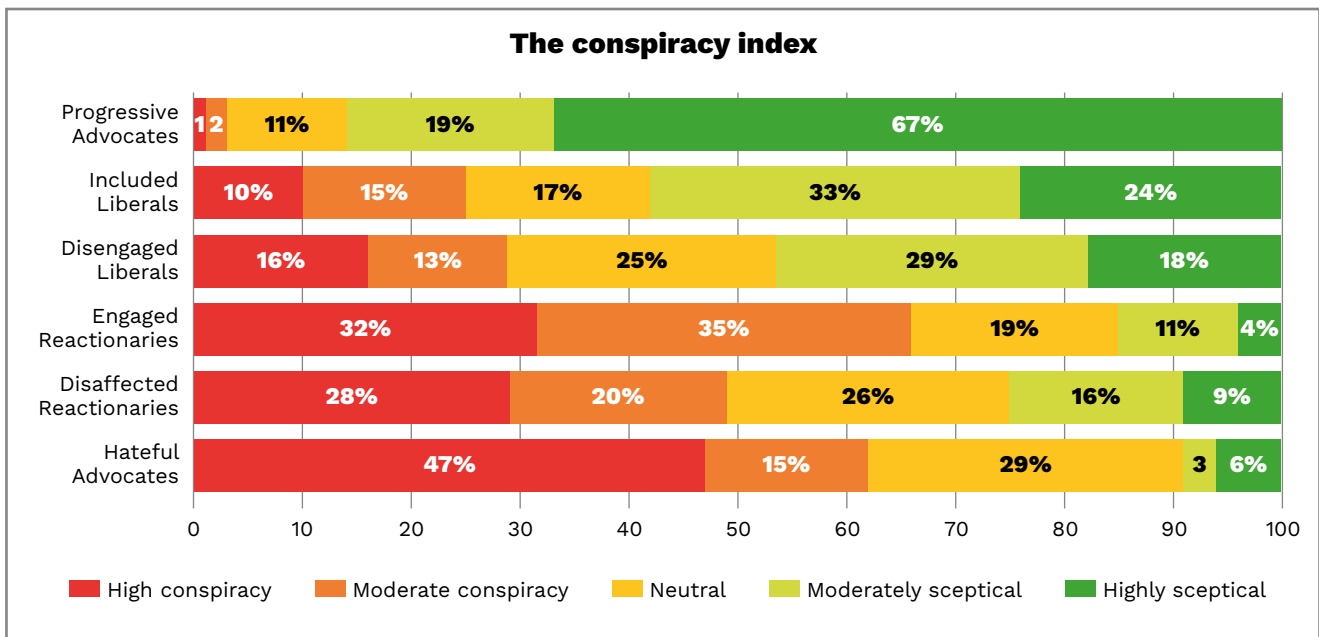
YOUNG PEOPLE’S BELIEF IN CONSPIRACY THEORIES

In our polling of 2040 16-24 year olds, carried out in January 2024 by Focldata, we found that many young people have high levels of conspiracy theorist beliefs. We looked at young people’s attitudes towards a number of conspiracy theories including those about global elites, Jewish people, the Nazi Holocaust, the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change.

Our polling indicates that 28% of young people think that Covid-19 was made up or overblown to impose lockdown restrictions, 22% think Jews control the banking system and 19% believe in Sharia law-controlled no-go zones for non-Muslims.

Beyond active support for conspiracy theories, a large proportion of young people are unsure about them instead of rejecting them outright:





for example, only 37% of young people responded “definitely false” to a statement about the Holocaust being a lie. This uncertainty or unwillingness to reject propositions is interesting, because it suggests that young people’s opinions could be swayed either way.

That said, these figures should not be taken as a clear indication of hateful attitudes in young people. There are a number of explanations and justifications for why belief in conspiracy theories might be so prevalent in the polling. Firstly, young people are more likely to be exposed to these theories through social media and particularly algorithmic platforms like TikTok, which often show conspiracy content with no further context or related information, than they are through environments like school where these ideas can be challenged and discussed.

Secondly, there is the question of how young people responded to the questions in the poll, and how representative this is of conspiracy beliefs. Some respondents may have been unfamiliar with a particular conspiracy theory in question, or the way that the conspiracy theory was worded. Also, we did not test different ways of wording the same basic conspiracy idea. This may be reflected in the uncertainty of young people’s responses: “Don’t know” responses for conspiracy questions range between 11% and 34%. A more detailed understanding of what conspiracy theories young people are aware of, which versions and their belief or scepticism in them is a key avenue for future research.

THE CONSPIRACY THEORY INDEX

To look into how conspiracy theory beliefs relate to our segmentation of young people’s beliefs, we

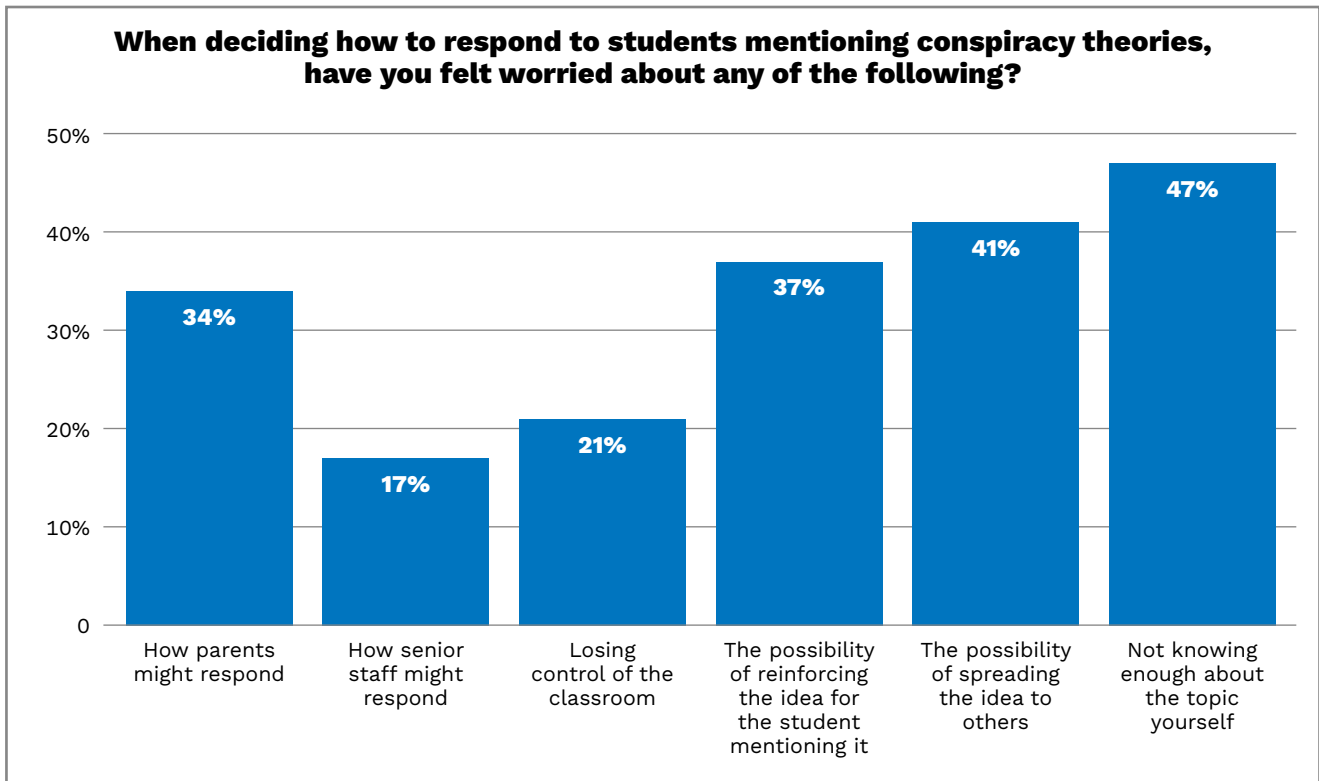
placed the young people from our January 2024 Focaldata poll across an index of five equally weighted positions from conspiracy to scepticism.

When looking at where the different segments of young people fall on the conspiracy index, the findings are in line with the progressive spectrum: the Hateful Advocates have the highest levels of conspiracy thinking, and the Progressive Advocates are the most sceptical.

It is interesting that the highly politically disillusioned Progressive Advocates are the most sceptical of conspiracy theories, although low political trust can increase susceptibility to conspiracy beliefs.

Conversely, the Engaged Reactionaries group, who feel included or neutral politically, have high levels of conspiracy thinking. Their responses on conspiracy questions tend to fall in the middle range of responses – they are more likely to “probably agree” than “strongly agree”, but a worrying number do not reject conspiracy theory statements.

When forming the index, the two most helpful conspiracy theories for separating young people’s views were on climate change: “The threat of climate change is being exaggerated by Governments and the media in order to control our lives”, and immigration: “Global elites are encouraging immigration into Europe as part of a plot to weaken European identity”. These are the two theories that most clearly divided the sample. Both theories are prevalent in the mainstream media, particularly the rightwing press. Since Engaged Reactionaries are more likely than average to trust content in the mainstream media, they might also be more exposed to conspiracy theories.



EDUCATIONAL SOLUTIONS

In our January 2024 poll of young people conducted by Focaldata, we found that the younger cohort aged 16-18 have lower conspiracy views than the 18-24 cohort, suggesting that intervention through education could have a mitigating effect in the development of conspiracy views.

In a poll conducted by Teacher Tapp on behalf of HOPE not hate in February 2024 (n = 4081), 57% of secondary school teachers report hearing students mention at least one type of general conspiracy theory. The most reported theories were Illuminati/New World Order (33%), which is the belief that there are a group of elites working behind the scenes to orchestrate global events, and climate change denial (28%). Interestingly, these are similar to the questions which were most illustrative for forming the conspiracy index in young people.

In a separate poll conducted by Teacher Tapp in August 2022 (n = 2499), teachers were asked what they had felt worried about when deciding to respond to students who mentioned conspiracy theories. Half of secondary teachers (47%) responded that they were worried about not knowing enough about the topic. Clearly, training for teachers on identifying the language and tropes of conspiracy theories is an avenue for further work.

Teachers were also worried about whether talking about a conspiracy theory would reinforce the

student’s belief or introduce it as a new idea to other students, so further guidance on how to discuss these matters clearly and decisively is also important. Students want to be able to form their own ideas and not be told what is right and wrong, but careful management of these conversations is needed.

Addressing conspiracy beliefs in young people would be best done as part of wider efforts to encourage critical consumption of the media and social media. Young people should leave school proficient at identifying possible misinformation and conspiracy theories, as well as challenging this harmful content when it is amplified by their peers.

ONLINE ACTIVITY

This generation of young people have grown up using technology, and are likely to have owned a smartphone which could access the internet from a young age.

Our weighted poll of 2040 young people carried out by Focaldata in January 2024 indicates that 99% of young people have at least one social media account. The most popular are Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, TikTok and Snapchat, which are each used by over 70% of young people. Interestingly, the Engaged Reactionaries are less likely than all the other segments to use the most popular social media platforms, indicating lower social media use overall. The Progressive Advocates are consistently the most likely to have accounts on major platforms.

HATEFUL ATTITUDES ON SOCIAL MEDIA

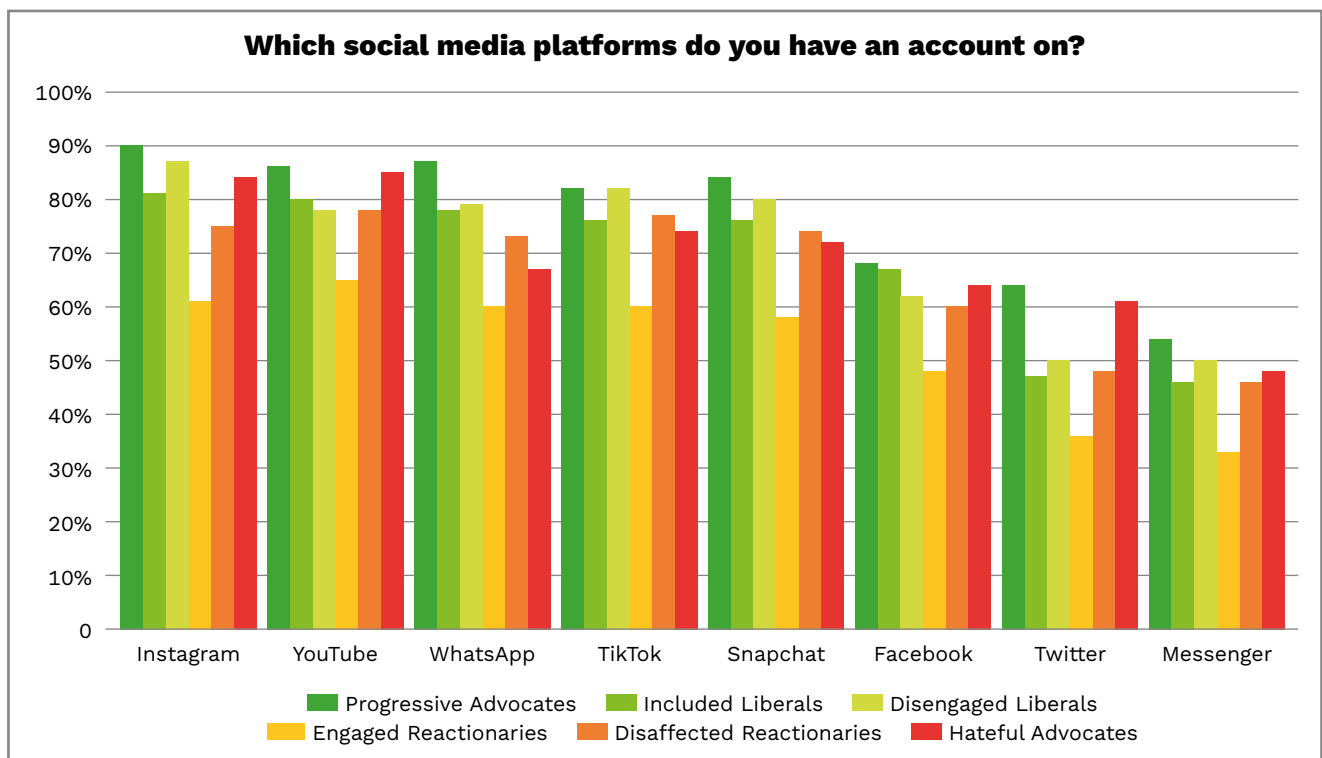
Over half (54%) of young people in our poll have come across hateful conversations on social media, and 27% have come across conversations they class as extremist. One of the big changes

to Instagram, Facebook and YouTube in recent years is the addition of short-form video content that is algorithmically recommended to you, based on previously consumed content (TikTok has always worked on this premise). This means that exposure to hateful content can increase gradually over time without this content being deliberately sought out.

“It’s just random people coming up on TikTok ... and they’re always exaggerated as well. And like most of the time, it’s not even true.”

Year 10 pupil

This, coupled with the fact that social media is the main or only source of news and current affairs information for many young people, is deeply concerning. Young people often believe themselves to be good judges of whether content online is real or fake, but it is becoming increasingly difficult for even those with



experience and expertise to identify fake content or content that has been taken out of context. Many young people also believe social media to be less biased than traditional media as more people are contributing to it, underestimating the power of the algorithms to show them only specific types of content:

“TikTok is the place where there’s less bias ... Because it’s like many people have different views, and you see both sides, but on the news they try and twist the words if you know what I mean”

Year 9 pupil

There is a gendered aspect to the harms of social media. Young women are more likely to be worried about the extent of extremist content online. Over half of young people (56%) agree that young women are less likely to participate in online debates, platforms and games, because of fear of online abuse by men. 65% of young women also agree that online pornography contributes to levels of violence against women and girls. Although pornography is not always on social media, it is easier than ever to seek out online despite attempts being made to curb access for under 18s. Young people themselves acknowledge the impact that consumption of harmful misogynistic content online has on young women.

“We want to move forward. And I think this is indoctrinating young people’s mind. Not only audiences that are male, but also female audiences, because they may feel that they’re less worthy.”

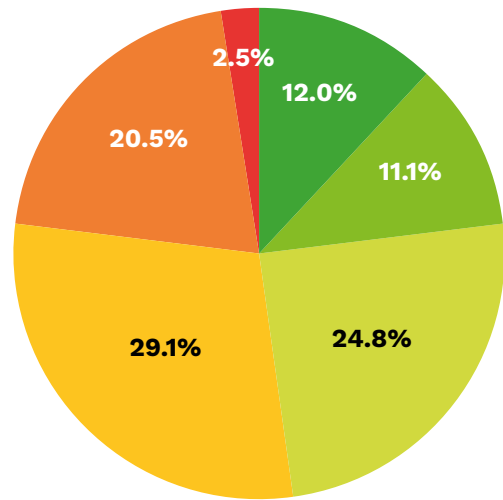
Year 11 pupil (female)

THE ROLE OF INFLUENCERS

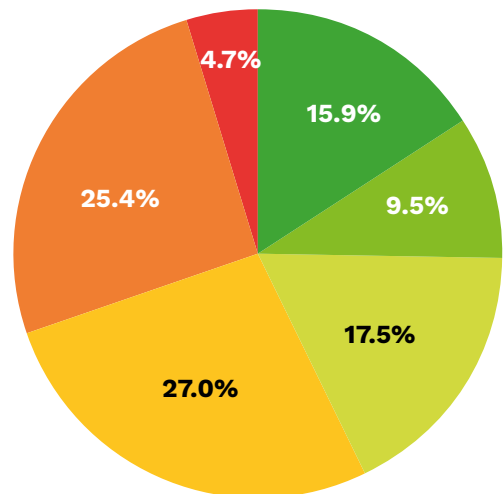
In a free response question where young people were asked which social media influencers, YouTubers or podcasts they listen to/watch regularly, three sets of creators stood out: the Sidemen (117 mentions), Beta Squad (63 mentions) and Andrew Tate alongside his brother Tristan (94 mentions). As well as these, Mr Beast, Joe Rogan and Markiplier were also frequently mentioned.

The Sidemen (and individual members KSI, Zerkaa, Miniminter, Behzinga, Vikkstar123, W2S and TBJZL) and the Beta Squad (members or associated acts include Chunkz, Yung Filly, Niko Omilana, AJ Shabeel, Sharky and KingKennyTV) are groups of young men who produce videos

The Sidemen: influencer free response



Beta Squad: influencer free response



- Progressive Advocates
- Included Liberals
- Disengaged Liberals
- Engaged Reactionaries
- Disaffected Reactionaries
- Hateful Advocates

and collaborations together. Young people will consume content of the whole group and individual creators.

There is a fairly even distribution of fanbases for these two groups, which reflects the depoliticised and lighthearted nature of their content, which mostly focuses on comedy. They are particularly popular with the Engaged Reactionaries and the Disaffected Reactionaries, the two segments where BAME young people are overrepresented. Both groups feature young men of diverse racial

and religious backgrounds, with African, Afro-Latino and South Asian heritage amongst others, but they tend not to talk about race or religion in a structural or political way. They also make jokes towards each other that reclaim racist tropes, for example, about monkeys and curry, but could be misunderstood. They make videos of themselves going on blind dates or engaging with women romantically, which often results in comments being made that reflect gender stereotypes and wider societal sexism.

The diversity of influencers followed by young people was notable, reflecting the sheer quantity of content available to them through different platforms. For a wide-reaching initiative to work, a creator with significant cut-through would be needed. Young people also mentioned being sceptical of any content they could easily identify as an ad – they mentioned recent attempts by the British Army to encourage young people to join using influencers including Yung Filly, who is a frequent collaborator with the Beta Squad group.

“If you’re gonna get paid for something, obviously, you’re gonna lie as much for it whenever you want.”

Year 12 Student

All of the above reflects one of the biggest challenges around using influencers to create social change: positive, upbeat content is not as popular as reactionary and inflammatory content. This is true both of individual decisions on what to watch and what is prioritised by algorithms. Young people consuming content should not be equated to an endorsement of it, particularly when so much of what they come across is not deliberately sought out. That said, the long-term outcomes of the drip effect of being consistently exposed to inflammatory and reactive content remains to be seen.

CONFRONTING THE PROBLEM

Young people are clear that they want social media companies to do better. 68% of young people are worried about the extent of extremist content online and 28% think that social media companies who allow extremist content on their platforms should bear the most responsibility if a teenager is radicalised by the content they see online, more responsibility than the individual consuming the content (15%). 57% agree with the idea that social media companies should be encouraged to redirect young people who view extremist websites to alternative sites where these views are challenged.

The new Online Safety Act (2023) explicitly sets

out to protect children from online harms. It requires social media platforms to be responsible for the content hosted on them, including having the responsibility to remove illegal content and restrict children’s access to “harmful and age-inappropriate” content online – which includes content that encourages serious violence or bullying. Helpfully, the Act requires all companies to risk assess their platforms with respect to children’s safety; larger social media platforms also have to publish summaries of these risk assessments.

However, simply removing hateful content from social media or challenging it is not enough to prevent young people from engaging with it. Some will always slip through the cracks, and prohibiting it could make it more attractive, particularly when brought into wider conversation about freedom of expression. New guidance¹ published by the Government in February 2024 encouraged schools to ban the use of mobile phones during the school day, but this was widely panned: it does not stop content being accessed at other points of the day.

Solutions need to be practical and self-sufficient, for example giving young people the skills to identify, understand and challenge hateful content. Before this work can be successful, there needs to be better understanding of how and why young people engage with specific content online, and therefore what interventions are needed to encourage them to stop and think about the content they are consuming. Social media companies have a big role to play in sharing access to their data and insights on young people’s behaviour online. This includes risk assessments but also how, if at all, they are changing their algorithms to restrict children’s access to harmful or illegal content.

NOTES

- ¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools>

YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAR-RIGHT ACTIVISM

PATRIK HERMANSSON

Our polling shows that 41% of young people think that violence can be necessary to defend something they strongly believe in. This finding does not inherently suggest approval of unprovoked or offensive violence. However, the Hateful Advocates segment shows a disproportionate agreement with this stance, where 75% endorse the necessity of violence to defend something they strongly believe in, and within this group, 51% express strong support compared to just 10% of Progressive Advocates. This view is also significantly higher among men (48%) than women (34%).

It is in the Hateful Advocates segment that we find young people who turn their strongly held opinions into active engagement in the far right. There has been a notable rise in criminal convictions of young people in relation to far-right violence and terrorism over the last decade. Between 2022 and 2023 HOPE not hate recorded the highest number of terror-related cases involving teenagers ever, with 13 cases. During the period from 2012 to 2016 only two such cases were recorded.

We have also noted a rise in the number of explicitly fascist activist groups led by young people over the last few years. Groups are usually started as small chat groups on popular chat app Telegram or gaming adjacent platforms like Discord by people as young as 15. It is a worrying trend that has been aided by an increasingly social media-centred way of organising in the wider far right.

The groups have used Instagram and TikTok to reach out to new potential members and to promote their activities, which usually include offline activism such as stickering and flyering, as well as graffiti, physical training activity and banner drops over bridges.

In most cases, the groups have been short-lived and lasted less than a year, but they have opened the door to far-right activism for young people who would often not be allowed inside more established organisations. The groups have provided stepping stones into the movement and educated the members in far-right activism. Members of groups have later attended far-right

demonstrations and some are involved in terror-related criminal cases.

The groups are testing grounds for how to produce social media content, recruit and learn where they position themselves in the wider far right. Groups regularly shut down and reform in a new shape with a new focus or ideological direction, but with the same members. It satisfies a desire to lead something of one's own. The total network of young far-right activists is small and they usually engage across groups, playing different roles in them – many are leaders of their own groups whilst also being a member of many others.

CASE STUDY: BRITISH HAND

In September 2020 HOPE not hate exposed a small group led by a Derby-based 15-year-old. Inside a private chat room, he wrote that he planned to attack migrants in Dover. The group discussed how to modify, make and acquire weapons and how to hide their political views in order to be able to enlist in the military.

Although the members were relatively young and the group newly formed, the leader consistently called for urgent and extreme action. He described The British Hand as an: “ultranationalist” group and its main goals are “to get rid of Islam and those little blm fuckers”.

The group is rife with antisemitism but Muslims and migrants are their primary targets. Worryingly, the messages in their closed chat group show a consensus around the necessity for violence. When the leader posted that he was planning an attack against Dover migrants, he received support from other members in the group. Other members similarly stressed their willingness to commit violent attacks. One writes of Muslims in London that they are “gonna mow em down”.

Pictures of the 2011 Norwegian far-right mass murderer are interspersed between images of the 2015 Charleston church shooter, the 2019 Bærum mosque shooter, and the Christchurch terrorist who killed 51 people at two mosques in the same year. One member even claims he's named a pet after the perpetrator of the latter. In another post, the leader of the group suggests that The British Hand are “gonna be bigger than them”, referring to the 2019 Christchurch and 2011 Norway killers.



The HAND 🇬🇧 🇺🇸

Right lads

I'm gonna delete this after 10 hours

I AM PLANNING A ATTACK AGAINST THE DOVER COAST WHERE EVERYY MUSLIM AND REFUGE HAS BEEN GIVEN SAFETY IF YOUR INTERESTED TELL ME NOW

The group is at the same time supportive and welcoming to new members. A community quickly forms around opposition to outsiders, not just minorities, but family members, teachers and other students at their schools. It makes the group insular and the feeling of being part of a community means that boundaries can be pushed.

REJECTION OF OLDER GENERATIONS

The National Partisan Movement (NPM) was an international youth group active in 2021 and 2022 with a significant following in the UK. The group followed similar patterns to British Hand but was larger and international. It recruited new members via Instagram and existing chats on Telegram. In the UK they engaged in stickering and in graffiti. They accepted members up to the age of 21 and as low as 12.

Central to NPM's rhetoric is the rejection of older generations of fascist leaders and used the slogan: "For the future, by the future". In recruitment messages they wrote:

We arent [sic] run by old men who do not have your best interest in mind, so if you are looking for that, do not join this group. It is for members of GenZ.

"Gen Z" is the generation born from late 1990s to early 2010s. The desire to oppose older generations is not necessarily harmful and common outside of far-right groups. It can give a young person a sense of agency and control, especially if one feels let down by the adult world. However, impatience with lack of action and disappointment with the adult world can in these contexts help justify violence.

Adults are also not entirely disconnected from youth groups. In NPM, experienced far-right activists were in the chat and referred to as "advisors". They directed the group and suggested literature and videos members should watch. We have observed similar patterns in other groups since. Known activists, many years older than most members, reach out and offer to help new groups tie connections with existing far-right

groups and share reading material. In some cases, youth groups have subsequently been subsumed by existing conventional groups.

It is a recognition that young people are the future of their movement. The fact that those best suited to bring in young people to the far right are young people themselves has not been lost on groups like Patriotic Alternative (PA). A PA-related live stream channel let a British teenager appear in its streams since he was 15 years old and to host special "ZOOMER NIGHT" episodes ("Zoomer" is another term for "Gen Z"). One of the UK's largest far-right youtubers Dangerfield has similarly done a nine part live stream series called "Talking with teens" where he interviews far-right teenagers. The cases show a worrying willingness to make children active advocates and members by fascist organisations.

PREVENTION IS THE BEST CURE

NICK LOWLES

When we think about people holding extremely hateful views it is easy to focus on the outcome. A young person reading or watching extremist material, joining a group or an online community, getting involved in violence or – in a very few cases – terrorist activity. This is only natural, as it's this behaviour which brings the young person to our attention. We often overlook how these people got there in the first place.

Having been involved in antifascism now for 35 years and having directly interacted with almost 200 far right extremists in one capacity or another during this time, I've seen many similarities and patterns emerge as to why people take their first steps to getting involved. Addressing these issues should be central to any anti-extremism or anti-violence strategy.

JAMES' STORY

Let's take the example of James Crow, a young man now in his mid-20s, who for several years was active in the far right group Britain First. James is quietly spoken and clearly sensitive. It seems hard to imagine him active in a group surrounded by aggressive racism, but when you hear his story it is easy to understand.

James has cerebral palsy and, largely as a consequence of this, was badly bullied at school. Day in day out for several years, he was picked on by a gang at school. He reported what was going on to teachers but nothing changed.

He became more and more isolated, playing hours of video games alone, until he eventually built a replica of his secondary school on the popular computer game Minecraft, using it to plan a knife attack on his bullies and on the teachers he felt had ignored him.

He went to school one day with the intention of carrying out his planned attack, but fortunately he was too scared to go through with it. He took the kitchen knife back home and quietly put it back in the drawer. However, the bullying and his unhappiness continued.

At about the time he was leaving school, James became friends with someone who displayed



James
Crow

clearly racist views. James began to copy the behaviour of his new-found friend. Within a short space of time, James ended up contacting Britain First, a far-right group which was attracting headlines with its aggressive strategy of members filming themselves entering Mosques and walking through areas with large Muslim communities in order to intimidate.

For the next three years, James was a Britain First activist. He travelled around the country attending meetings and leafleting sessions. After the murder of Labour MP Jo Cox, in 2016, at the hands of a far-right sympathiser who shouted 'Britain First' as he launched his attack, he was tasked by the group with finding out the surgery details of another female Labour MP in Sheffield who had called for Britain First to be banned.

Fortunately, his time in Britain First came to an end before he got himself into serious trouble. The trigger for his decision to leave came when he travelled to Calais, in France, and saw first-hand the appalling conditions many migrants were experiencing and listening to their stories about the life they had left behind to risk their lives trying to cross the English Channel.

Suddenly James' hate was replaced by empathy. He turned his back on Britain First and approached antifascists with his story.

It is terrifying to think that James was planning to kill some of the students who had made his life a misery and the teachers who had – in his mind – failed to intervene. And while what he was contemplating doing was extreme, his story was all too familiar.

Time and again far right activists have told me about incidents in their childhood that helped put them on the path to extremism. I've heard repeated stories of the bullied becoming the bully. As we have graphically seen with James, the far right offer a chance to reverse his own situation, to finally feel superior to others, to feel better than others, to assert power over – and fear in – others.

ROBBIE'S STORY

Social isolation is another key driver to extremism.

In the summer of 2017, Robbie Mullen's life turned upside down when he reported to HOPE not hate that one of his friends was planning to kill Labour MP Rosie Cooper.

Robbie was a key activist in the Nazi group National Action, which had been proscribed as a terrorist group by the Home Secretary a few months before. It was the first far-right group banned by the Government since the Second World War.

Of course, the group never really disbanded. Every week Mullen and his fellow National Action members would meet up at a unit on an industrial estate, which they had turned into a gym, to plot and plan. The ban had driven them underground and, if anything, made them more dangerous. They communicated on secure and encrypted messaging platforms, used codes and devised plans for the day they would strike back.

For the then 22-year-old from Runcorn, who had left school at 14 shortly after the death of his father, National Action quickly became a family to him. In truth, a family that he was missing. He first met with the group only two days after initially reaching out. He would go on to meet with the group once or twice a week for the next two and a half years. Quickly, National Action became his life.

Being involved in National Action was exciting and gave him a sense of belonging that he was longing for. They were a group on a mission. They marched in formation, all dressed in black. They stood in shopping centres and told bemused passers-by that the day of reckoning – when Jews and black people would be expelled from the country – was close. They revelled in the lurid stories written about them.

The banning of National Action changed things



for Robbie. As the talk turned to violence and terrorism, he became scared. Fearing his future was jail or death, he reached out to HOPE not hate as a way to get out.

It was a few weeks later that he reported that Jack Renshaw, a former BNP youth activist who had emerged as a significant figure within National Action, was planning to kill his local MP with a large knife he had bought at a market in Oldham. Renshaw's plan was to take his MP hostage and demand that a female police officer who had led the investigation into him for a racist speech he gave 15 months before, present herself to him. He then intended to kill them both, before – he hoped – being killed himself by police.

Robbie instantly knew that he had to tell us about Renshaw's plan, not least because it was only days away from happening. He also knew that his life was never going to be the same again. Renshaw was arrested and eventually pleaded guilty to attempting to murder the MP and the police officer.

What Robbie did not know at the time he passed on details of the plot was that Renshaw was facing additional charges of grooming minors. It appears that the fear of going to prison for this, and being known throughout the movement as a sex offender, propelled Renshaw to kill his local MP and the police officer who had arrested him for the grooming, and then himself be killed by the police.

DRIVERS OF VIOLENCE

While Robbie's story is exceptional in many ways, the sense of social isolation and boredom that drove him into the far right in the first place is, sadly, all too common.

Likewise, while Jack Renshaw's murder plot was highly extreme and unusual, there are several features about his story which we have found increasingly commonplace in recent years. His hatred of MPs – women MPs especially – is commonplace amongst the violent far right. National Action revelled in the murder of Jo Cox and Renshaw himself commented immediately after the attack that others should be killed too.

Violent misogyny has also emerged as a common feature within far right propaganda over the last few years, especially amongst young people. Thirty years ago the far right viewed women as being homemakers and rearing children. Today, they are often despised and the target of sexual violence. The threat of rape has increasingly been used as a political weapon in extreme far right propaganda.

Accompanying violent misogyny has been possession and even promotion of child pornography. Over the last 20 years, 29 teenagers have been convicted of terror-related offences. 25 of whom have been convicted in the last three years. Several of these people were also found caught in possession of images or even videos of children and extreme sexual violence.

There was Harry Vaughan, convicted of 14 terror offences in 2020, who admitted further crimes including possession of indecent images of children including videos of young boys being raped. Despite the severity of his offences, Vaughan was only given a suspended prison sentence, with the judge telling the elite schoolboy that the shame of being arrested and the trial was punishment enough. Clearly this did not work, because in June 2023 Vaughan was convicted again of making an indecent photograph of a child.

There was also the case of Jack Reed from Durham, who was convicted of plotting a terrorist attack and unrelated child sexual offences. He told police that he raped a young girl in an attempt to desensitise himself before embarking on a terror campaign. Reed was just 13 at the time of his arrest.

The common thread linking Reed, Vaughan and a number of others convicted of terrorist offences and found in possession of sexual images of children in recent years was involvement in Nazi Satanism, principally the Order of Nine Angles (O9A).

One of the leaders of the O9A in the UK was Ryan Fleming, who was also active in the Nazi group

National Action. He is also a convicted paedophile.

One of the most popular channels O9A once had on the social media platform Telegram was called "RapeWaffen". The conversation in this channel glorified sexual violence and encouraged using it as a political weapon. Young O9A supporters in the UK were also consciously sent child sexual abuse images by the group's leader in the US as a way to prove that they were outside the norms of society.

While the O9A are at the very extreme end of the Nazi movement, their propaganda has been widely circulated amongst young far-right activists over the past ten years.

PREVENTION

A growing number of young people have been drawn into extreme far-right violence in recent years, and while the focus of the authorities is understandably of stopping acts of terrorism and extreme violence, more must be done to divert young people from getting to this stage in the first place.

The school environment is the best place for interacting with vulnerable young people yet, but as our research and polling graphically shows, teachers are over-stretched and schools are under-resourced. Likewise, Prevent, the Government anti-extremism programmes designed to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism, deals with the most extreme end of youth radicalisation. Channel, which is a confidential programme that is designed to address radicalisation, only deals with 500-600 referrals a year, is inadequate to both deal with the scale of the threat and also does not intervene early enough in the process.

As we have seen with James Crow and Robbie Mullen, bullying, social isolation and misogyny can act as slip roads into hateful extremism. Early intervention, be it to support James as he was being bullied or help Robbie come to terms with the death of his father, could have diverted them away from being radicalised in the first place.

With mental health issues impacting young people more than ever before, a new intervention strategy – that sits between traditional school engagement and Prevent, is needed to stop more young people drifting into violent extremism.

ANDREW TATE AND MISOGYNY – PATHWAYS INTO HATE

SEXISM AND MISOGYNY: SOCIETY AND IDEOLOGY

Sexism underpins our society. In education, policing, healthcare, politics and more, systems and individuals discriminate against women and people of marginalised genders, although in this piece we focus specifically on young women. These systems devalue women based on a constructed patriarchal hierarchy of social roles where men are seen as inherently superior. Whether gender-based discrimination is intentionally enacted upon or not, it has dire consequences on the wellbeing, safety and life prospects of those on the receiving end of it.

Related to this is misogyny – the hatred of women as a result of attempts to maintain patriarchal societal roles. In recent years, misogyny has gained more traction as a reaction against the advancing feminist movement. What used to be relegated to a niche of men on the internet has now been mainstreamed thanks to the popularity of figures like Andrew Tate.

The perception of diminishing space for male agency is fostering scepticism and even pushback towards feminism. More men are beginning to perceive feminism as a hostile ideology aimed at punishing all men, as opposed to a commitment to equality which aims to benefit people of all genders.

This article focuses on attitudes and behaviour that have been directly influenced by the consumption of misogynistic content, as opposed to through general sexist attitudes that exist simply as a result of living in a patriarchal society. Of course, the two are not always clear cut, and intervention is needed on two levels. Firstly, there is a need to combat wider sexist culture to reduce the appetite for and normalisation of misogynistic worldviews.

Secondly, those who consume misogynistic content require targeted solutions that tackle misconceptions about feminism and the importance of dismantling the patriarchal system for the benefit of everyone.

MISOGYNY AND HATE

Misogyny can be an entrypoint through which young men gain awareness about wider hateful views, including antisemitism, neo-Nazism, anti-migrant activism and more. This is not to undermine the harmful effects of misogyny individually: it should not be reduced to a “gateway drug” to more serious forms of hate, it is wrong and hateful in and of itself.

That said, misogyny is so normalised in society that it often goes unchallenged and unreported. Other forms of hate can be more stigmatised and, although they might still be common in society, expressions of these types of hate might be more likely to raise concerns.

Stereotypes about gender are joked about and upheld not by a small minority of hateful provocateurs, but rather by the vast majority of society. It can be advantageous, rather than harmful, to conform to gender stereotypes, which is not true of many other hateful stereotypes. For these reasons, young people consuming misogynistic content and developing hateful attitudes might go unnoticed for longer before the true extent of their attitudes is revealed.

“...they look around their class and think ‘I can’t align myself with anyone’. So they end up aligning themselves with someone online and that’s where it becomes quite dangerous. ... what they’re viewing very much is also then kind of bubbling under the surface, but we don’t necessarily see it. ... And then it might come out in an English lesson, for example, and then you kind of go hey, wait a minute. What did you just say? And then all of a sudden, [you realise] it’s actually been there for two and a half years.”

Secondary school teacher



Andrew Tate

ANDREW TATE IN HIS OWN WORDS

- **On women:** “shut the f*** up, have kids, sit at home, be quiet and make coffee²”
- **On masculinity and life:** “It’s a war for the female you want. It’s a war for the car you want. It’s a war for the money you want. It’s a war for status.”
- **On sexual violence:** “If you put yourself in a position to be raped, you must bear some responsibility”
- **On mental health:** “Depression as it’s diagnosed doesn’t exist. Now come back and call me names and defend your safety crutch ... Or accept facts and change your life.”
- **On conspiracy theories:** “the new world order, they’re deliberately trying to turn women against men, they have to divide the peasants. That’s the only way the elites can retain control³”
- **On Covid-19:** “I called this virus [COVID-19] a hoax from the start and everyone called me crazy. The virus isn’t real. There is a virus, yes. Is it deadly? No.”

THE MANOSPHERE

The websites, forums and groups online where people express and promote toxic masculinity, misogyny and anti-feminist content are broadly known as “the manosphere”.

There are multiple different types and expressions of misogyny within this, including:

- Calling for a return to traditional gender roles in which women exist in service to men;
- Male supremacists, who believe that men are inherently more intelligent and capable than women;
- Men’s rights activists, fighting against perceived discrimination against men;
- “Men going their own way”, trying to live without women altogether;
- Pick up artists, seeking to exploit and manipulate women for sexual intercourse;
- Incels (involuntary celibates), who believe they are entitled to sexual relationships with women, and hate women for not giving this to them.

Andrew Tate and other misogynistic influencers have brought ideas from the manosphere which were once regarded as niche into the mainstream. Tate’s success has brought it to a much wider audience. Some of the traditional manosphere see Tate’s ideas as unrepresentative

or only partially representative of theirs: he is decried by self-identified incels for his “Chad”-like behaviour, meaning he is an alpha male who is conventionally attractive, masculine, wealthy and popular, and therefore taking away their opportunities for relationships with women. However, Tate regularly expresses ideas that align with the manosphere. He is strongly advocating for the return of traditional gender roles and has even advocated for the right of men to use violence towards women. In March 2024, he posted on Twitter: “I am a men’s rights activist. The right to be made a sandwich.”

ANDREW TATE

Born in Washington D.C. and raised in Luton, Tate first rose to notoriety in 2016 after being removed from the reality show Big Brother amidst a stream of issues: resurfaced homophobic and racist tweets, a video of him hitting a woman with a belt (which he claims was consensual) and a police investigation into rape accusations against him (closed in 2019 with no charges).

Despite being by no means a lone wolf or even a pioneer in this space, he has become one of the most widely known misogynistic influencers. Tate was the third most-searched person¹ on Google in 2023, and has 8.8 million followers on Twitter as of February 2024.

Tate’s content is based around self-help, fitness and entrepreneurship. His online business – “Hustlers University” – targets young men specifically, promising them the tools to make money online and access to a community of over 200,000 members worldwide. He initially became rich by hiring sex workers to perform on webcam sites, and has admitted that the way the business was run was a scam. Notably, he has been accused of rape and human trafficking and is currently under investigation by authorities in Romania, where he lives under judicial control.

Tate himself claims that his outlook on gender roles is not controversial, because it actually makes both men and women happy. He has referred to feminism as a “psyop” or psychological operation, an attempt by a shadowy elite to divide society along gender lines in order to prevent people from living harmoniously. His comments on gender roles are therefore closely tied to the wider conspiracy movement.

YOUNG PEOPLE’S OPINIONS OF TATE

In our January 2024 Focaldata poll of 2040 16-24 year olds, we asked young people about different public figures. 95% have heard of Andrew Tate, similar to those who have heard of the Prime Minister Rishi Sunak (96%) and more than have heard of Keir Starmer (75%). One in four of the young people who have heard of Tate have a favourable opinion of him, but there is a clear gender divide: only 12% of female

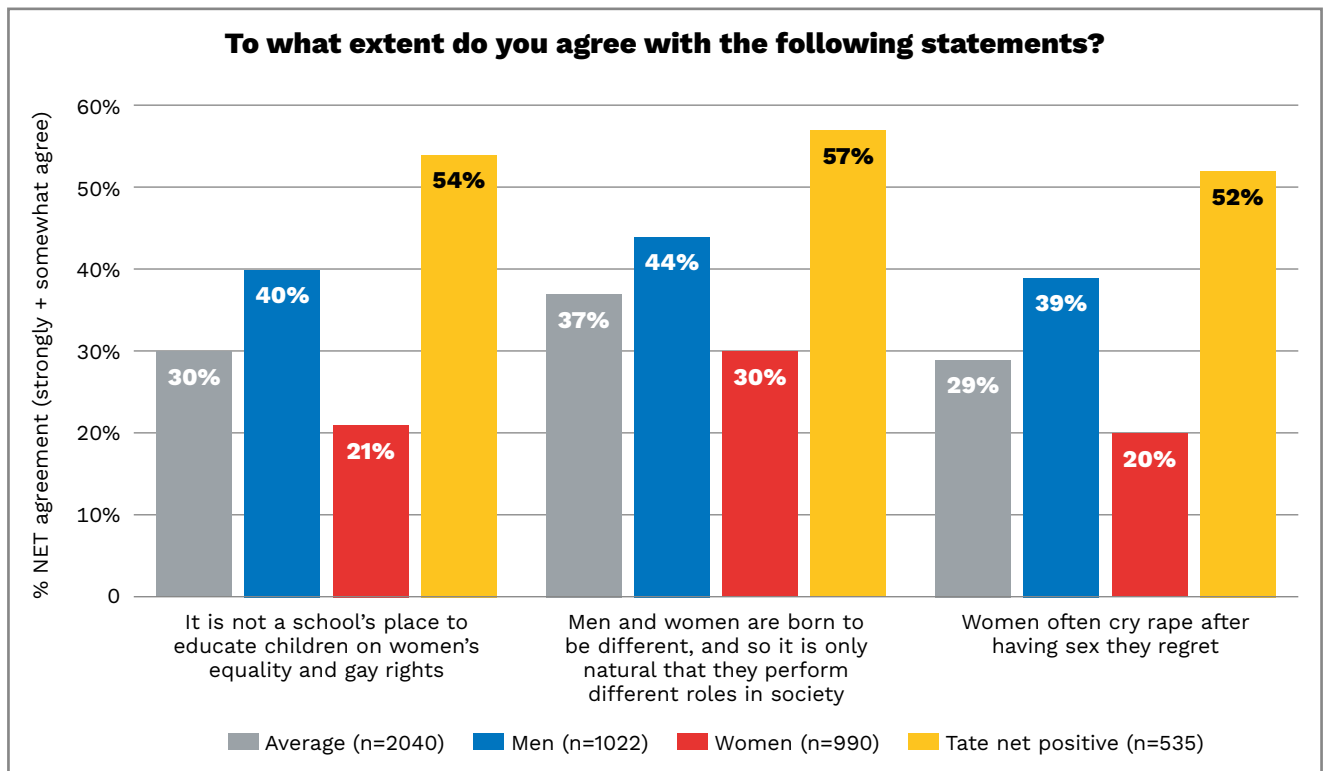
respondents have a positive view, compared to 41% of young men.

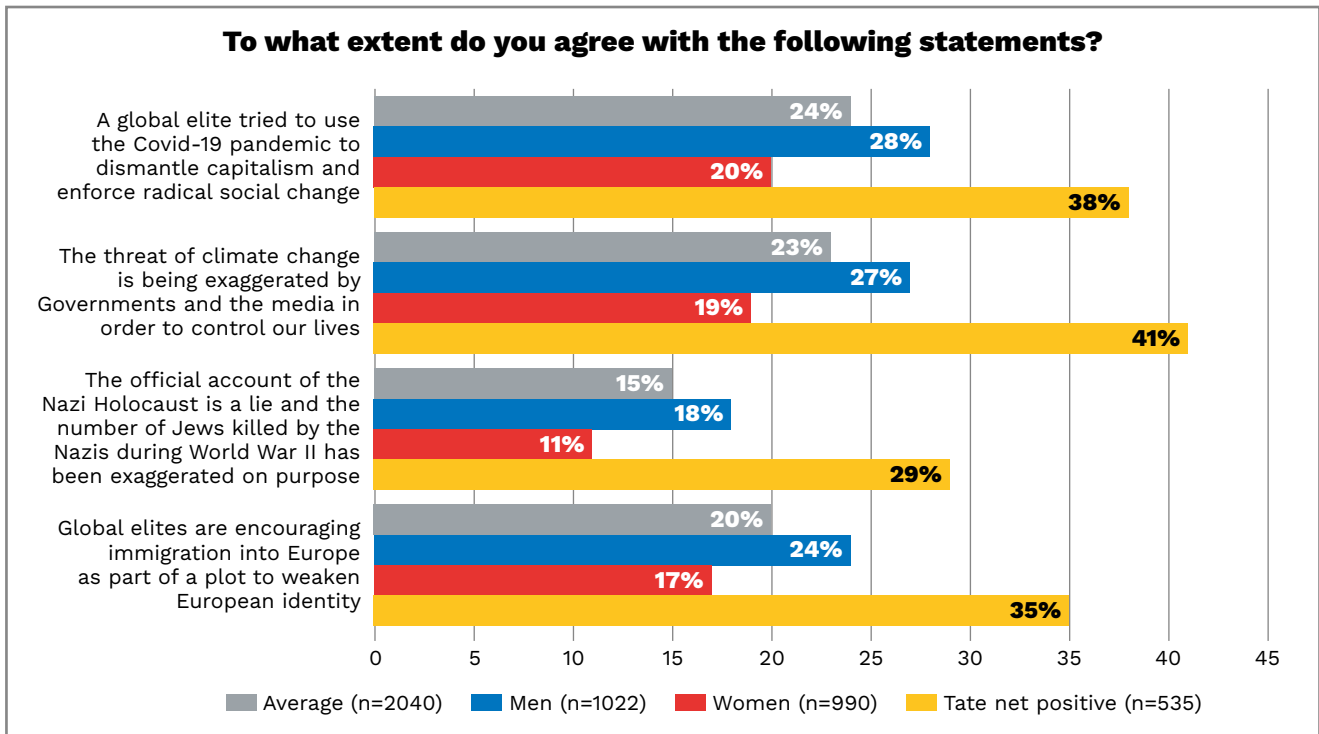
“We stereotype for women to be in offices or you know, stay at home or not working in general. And that stereotype in itself damages young people’s aspirations of what they would want to achieve or what they can achieve.”

Year 11 pupil (female)

Support for Tate is proportionally higher in some minority ethnic communities. 41% of Asian or British Asian young people and 36% of Black or Black British young people like Tate, compared to an average of 26%. Relatedly, support for Tate is higher in some religious communities: 51% of young Muslims and 44% of young Sikhs surveyed have a favourable opinion. However again, there is a clear gender divide skewing these results; 72% of young Muslim men like Tate, compared to just 25% of young Muslim women. Tate controversially converted to Islam in October 2022 – we explore the influence of this, alongside his appeal to minority ethnic young people, elsewhere in this report.

Tate also has higher appeal to young people who support right-wing parties. He is liked by 35% of Conservative supporters and 45% of Reform UK supporters, compared to only 27% of Labour





supporters – in line with the average – and 23% of Green party supporters.

YOUNG PEOPLE WHO LIKE ANDREW TATE

Unsurprisingly, those who are impressed by Tate are more likely to hold misogynistic views than young people, and are twice as likely to have a negative opinion of feminists (42% vs 23%). This negative opinion extends towards gender and sexuality more generally, as they are also twice as likely to think negatively of people who identify as lesbian, gay and bisexual (43% vs 21%) and trans people (46% vs 26%).

Responses to questions about racism were not too dissimilar to the average for young people, although it might have been expected that reactionary Tate supporters might push back against anti-racism in the same way they do feminism. As we discuss elsewhere in this report, much of this has been obscured by the high number of his minority ethnic supporters.

We asked young people what they liked about Tate. The top three reasons overall are: “He’s not afraid to push back against ‘woke’ ideology” (24%), “He wants men to be real men” (22%) and “He tells it how it is” (20%). Although it is commonly thought that Tate’s opulent lifestyle, cars and fitness are an entrypoint through which young people become interested in his content, admiration for lifestyle (14%) and humour (11%) do not rank as highly. This suggests that the main pull of Andrew Tate for young people is his hateful activism.

That said, younger Tate supporters aged 16-17 and

female respondents are more likely to admire his lifestyle, at 20% and 18% respectively. Putting Tate’s motivational and fitness content within a wider context of his divisiveness and hatefulness, as well as signposting other figures who produce similar lifestyle content without the underlying misogyny, could be an important step in combating his influence on younger, female audiences.

“Some of his ideas are just out of pocket like his misogyny, and it’s just not it, no, but like his belief of bettering yourself and then making yourself like the best version can be – I associate with that”

Year 9 pupil (male)

SUPPORT FOR TATE AND LINKS TO THE WIDER FAR RIGHT

Young people who like Tate are almost twice as likely to have a positive opinion of far-right activists in general (23% compared to an average of 14%) and also of individuals like the former UKIP leader Nigel Farage (41% vs 23%), the anti-Muslim extremist and former English Defence League leader Tommy Robinson (34% vs 15%), and the disgraced former reporter Katie Hopkins (33% vs 18%). This suggests that those already engaging with hateful ideology are more sympathetic to Tate’s messaging and, more worryingly, that consumption of Tate-related content could lead young people to other forms of hate. Tate supporters are twice as likely to

report hearing about the racist and antisemitic Great Replacement Theory “often” (15% vs 7%), and much more likely to agree with conspiracy theories about the Holocaust, climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tate is part of a wider circle of inflammatory influencers or media personalities who revel in their divisiveness⁴. He has met with far-right Islamophobic activist Tommy Robinson multiple times, and described him as a “solid guy”. He has positive relationships with a number of English and American conspiracy theorists, including Paul Joseph Watson, Mike Cernovich and Jack Posobiec. He also referred to the American conspiracy theorist Alex Jones as “one of the greatest men on the planet” and has appeared on his conspiracy theorist channel multiple times. When Jones was reinstated on X (formerly Twitter), one of his first actions was to repost Tate.

Tate’s conversion to Islam has had little impact on the support for him by the wider far right. His content is still regularly shared by British activist Tommy Robinson, especially content on the topic of moral decay and degradation which aligns with his own views. An explanation is likely also that Tate’s content on social media also often directly align with the far-right campaigns. Recently, his focus has been on anti-LGBT+ and especially anti-trans content. There is an obvious overlap in Tate’s view on these topics and the far right – both view widening LGBT+ rights and visibility as weakening or feminisation of society, which Tate has made his mission to revert.

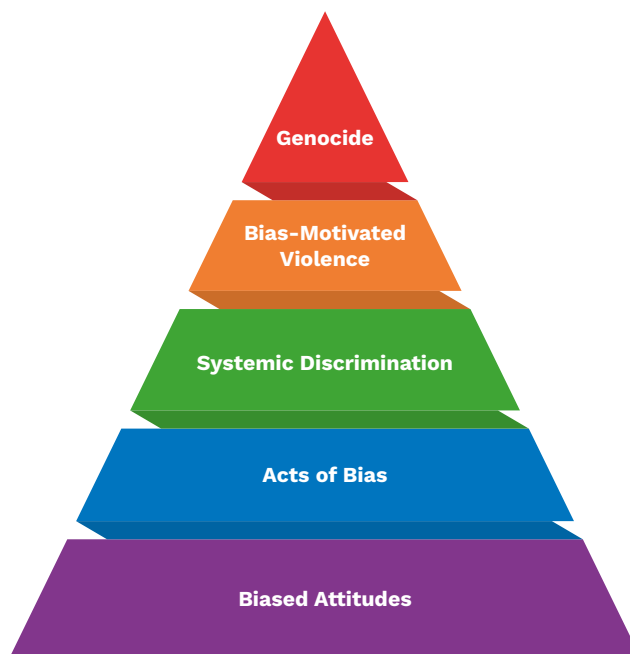
Tate’s relationships with far-right figures also exposes his young supporters to a network of hateful content including the wider manosphere, the broad anti-LGBT+ movement, conspiracy theories, antisemitism and more. This is partially due to the account owners themselves interacting with and sharing each other’s content, but also due to social media algorithms trained to capture young people’s attention by showing them related content even if they do not seek it out.

Although Tate remains banned from YouTube, TikTok, Facebook and Instagram, his Twitter profile was reinstated in November 2022, shortly after Elon Musk acquired Twitter. Banning Tate from social media might reduce organic exposure to his account, but it will not remove all exposure to his content – reposted and deleted content is still rife on the platforms Tate is banned from. Additionally, removing access to hateful content and rendering it illicit risks increasing young people’s curiosity.

SOLUTIONS FOR ESCALATING VIOLENCE

The pyramid of violence is a model used to describe the way that biased attitudes can escalate to, and sustain, violence against targeted

groups. When it comes to sexism and misogyny, focusing on the “few bad apples” at the extreme end of violence ignores the potential for the biases and stereotypes of the lower levels to generate new violence. Interventions at all of these levels are needed.



SOLUTIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS

Policy makers have the responsibility to mitigate systemic discrimination and bias-motivated violence because there is greater risk to psychological and physical safety and actions are directly motivated by hate.

Currently, the main policies which address hateful attitudes and behaviours are the Prevent policy, and for teachers only, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). Teachers can report concerns about radicalisation and terrorism under KCSIE, but it is harder to report concerns about an individual which do not, or are perceived not to fall under the definition of terrorism, extremism or radicalisation.

The Prevent Duty is part of counter-terrorism law, and as such is primarily concerned with preventing terrorist events from happening. Whilst terrorism is defined broadly in law, in guidance and in practice Tate-influenced misogyny is not kept in mind. In many cases, teachers are either worried about the implications of referring a young person to Prevent, or when someone is referred, they are not always meeting the threshold for further action and so they are passed back to the safeguarding process.

“[When I report something] I get back from some members of the leadership team ... saying they don’t meet the Prevent threshold. And then I’m about like, well hang on a second, if that doesn’t meet the threshold, well why is that? It seems to be that the threshold was quite arbitrary.”

Secondary school teacher

That said, teachers are also nervous to refer students to Prevent for fear that they will be making a life-changing accusation about a young person with little supporting evidence. There is a clear opening here for a completely new government initiative that widens efforts out from tackling terrorism to tackling hate more generally. This would also necessitate acknowledging the inadequacy of incarceration at creating behaviour change in young people. Widening the Prevent threshold to potentially push more young men through the criminal justice system is not a viable solution. It is likely to exacerbate existing inequalities and increase the criminalisation of young men, and unlikely to prevent psychological, physical and sexual violence in a meaningful way.

The government should invest in the development of rehabilitation resources for those who show signs of support for violence. Eligibility to access this service should be widened out from a narrow idea of terrorism – which many argue unfairly targets Muslim men – to a broader and pluralistic model of hate.

Given the prevalence of sexism and misogyny in society, addressing the root causes must go alongside rehabilitating those with a potential to act violently. Sadly, it is not only those who have consumed misogynistic content who perpetrate gender-based violence. A helpful starting point would be national guidance for school staff on how to identify misogyny where there is a risk of violence, report it accurately and follow it up within existing systems.

There is also the opportunity to answer young people’s need for a relevant, inspiring influencer with someone who also promotes positive masculinity and progressive definitions of gender. Helping young men explore why they feel pressure to earn a certain amount and look a certain way, as well as providing clinically reliable mental health advice could divert young audiences away from Tate and towards sustainable and positive solutions for their struggles.

SOLUTIONS FOR SCHOOLS

Teachers’ experience of hate in schools is explained in more detail elsewhere in this report, but support for Tate and other misogynistic content is of particular concern in the education sector. In a weighted poll of 6420 teachers conducted by Teacher Tapp in February 2023, 83% of secondary school teachers agreed that they are worried that Andrew Tate’s views, or influencers with similar views, are directly having a negative effect on male pupils’ behaviour.

In another Teacher Tapp poll of 4031 teachers conducted in February 2024, 41% of secondary teachers reported having seen aggressive misogyny from students in their school since the start of the school year in September and 15% report seeing advocating of sexual violence.

In the 2023 poll, one in three teachers reported not taking any active steps to address Tate and related issues. Despite the problem being well documented and acknowledged, there are clearly blockers to enacting solutions.

Schools have a unique opportunity to address the bottom half of the pyramid of violence – the precursors to hate-based violence – because solutions to biased attitudes and behaviour are often centred around re-education. This could be done through the PSHE, citizenship and computing curriculum, through pastoral interventions such as assemblies, drop-down days and form time, or with external providers.

Three distinct but related approaches are needed, which educators are well positioned to address:

- **Tackling the popularity of Tate himself.**

Challenging young people’s perception of Tate as a glamorous truth-teller, and instead allowing them to understand his real attitudes and motivations. This might be more effective coming from peers or other influencers than teachers, and plenty of opportunity should be provided for carefully guided debate.

- **Challenging the misogyny, conspiracy theories and anti-feminism in Tate’s content.**

Giving young people the critical thinking skills to challenge information themselves is crucial to building up their resilience to hate. This includes building up digital literacy to conspiracy theories and misinformation, as well as the provision of alternative viewpoints and the opportunity to discuss these within a safe and directed environment.

- **Challenging everyday sexism more widely.**

This falls under part of the recent wider efforts to tackle child-on-child abuse as well as the revamp of the relationships and sex education curriculum. Feminism could be explored more explicitly, and a clear case made for why it is

still relevant to young people – of all genders
– today.

However, more government guidance is needed. *The Observer* reported that Department for Education officials were advising school heads not to encourage conversations about Tate in schools⁵, including in personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons. The DfE has done lots of positive work in moving towards a greater understanding of sexual violence and peer-on-peer abuse in schools, including through Ofsted. The new 2021 guidance⁶ for relationships and sex education states that schools “should be alive to issues such as everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes”, however the DfE now appears to be saying the opposite.

Schools cannot be expected to provide home-grown solutions to a nationwide problem, and ignoring the problem is not going to make it go away. Infact, shutting down conversations will only increase the curiosity and appeal of these worldviews to young people. Instead, the government must offer usable and flexible guidance on how to talk about Tate and the narratives he perpetuates in a productive and constructive way.

NOTES

- 1 <https://trends.google.com/trends/yis/2023/GLOBAL/>
- 2 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gI5MD6XEKuY>
- 3 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gI5MD6XEKuY>
- 4 <https://hopenothate.org.uk/2022/09/01/the-gays-and-women-have-taken-over-far-right-conspiracy-theories-misogyny-and-homophobia-among-andrew-tates-followers/>
- 5 <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2023/apr/29/talk-pupils-misogynist-andrew-tate-teachers-schools-england>
- 6 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

YOUNG WOMEN WITH ANTI-FEMINIST VIEWS

Elsewhere in this report we have identified and explored a gender gap in attitudes amongst young people. On almost every question about the roles of women, sexual violence and attitudes towards gender in our poll, male respondents polled more conservative and female respondents more progressive. Beyond gender roles, young women show higher levels of support for immigration, racial equality and LGBTQ+ rights than young men.

However, on some questions, a non-negligible proportion of female respondents appear to hold anti-feminist views. 30% of young women think that men and women are born different to perform different roles in society, 22% think feminism has gone too far and 20% agree that women cry rape after having sex they regret. Although these views are not as prevalent in young women as they are in young men, their incidence is still concerning.

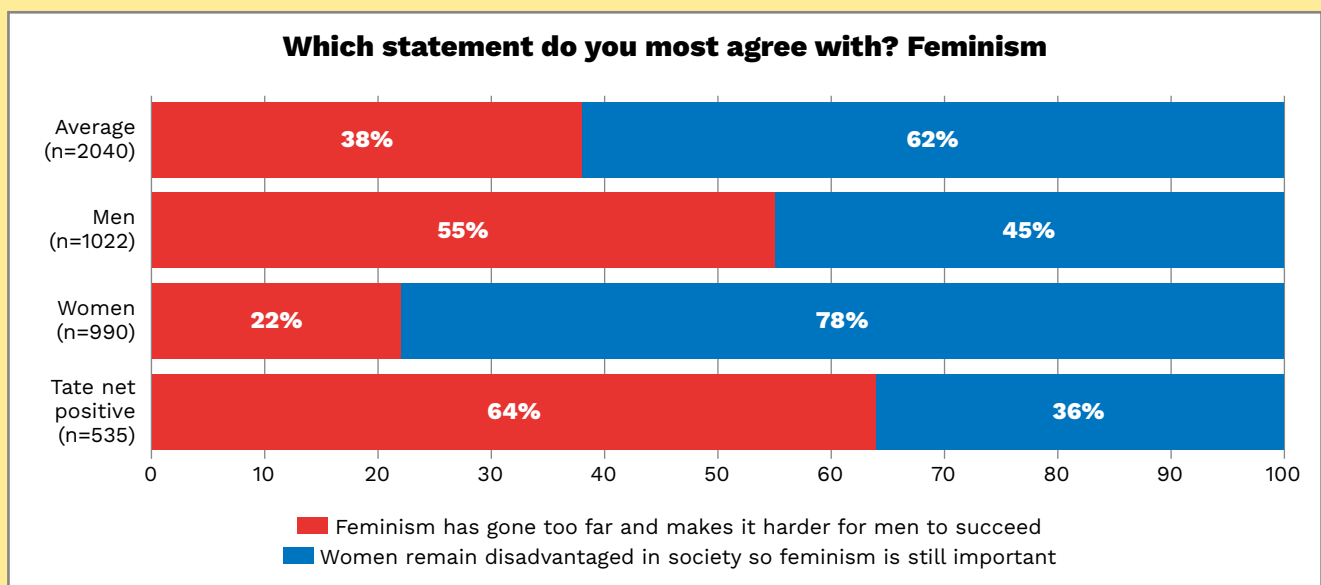
“I went down to one of our other MAT schools and they were talking about the same thing, and they find the misogyny being reinforced by the girls.”

Secondary school teacher

It is not necessarily a surprise that some young women have internalised the sexist values of the society they have been brought up in. For this group, patriarchy may represent order in society, and feminism is therefore seen as a threat to stability that they do not feel prepared or equipped for. It can paradoxically feel safer for young women to act within the status quo than to risk challenging it.

Challenging young women who are sceptical of or even hostile to feminism is challenging, as their motivations for doing so are not immediately obvious or necessarily driven by the same ideologies as men. Intervening in internalised sexism is challenging, as it requires unlearning that also compels reimagining perceptions of the self.

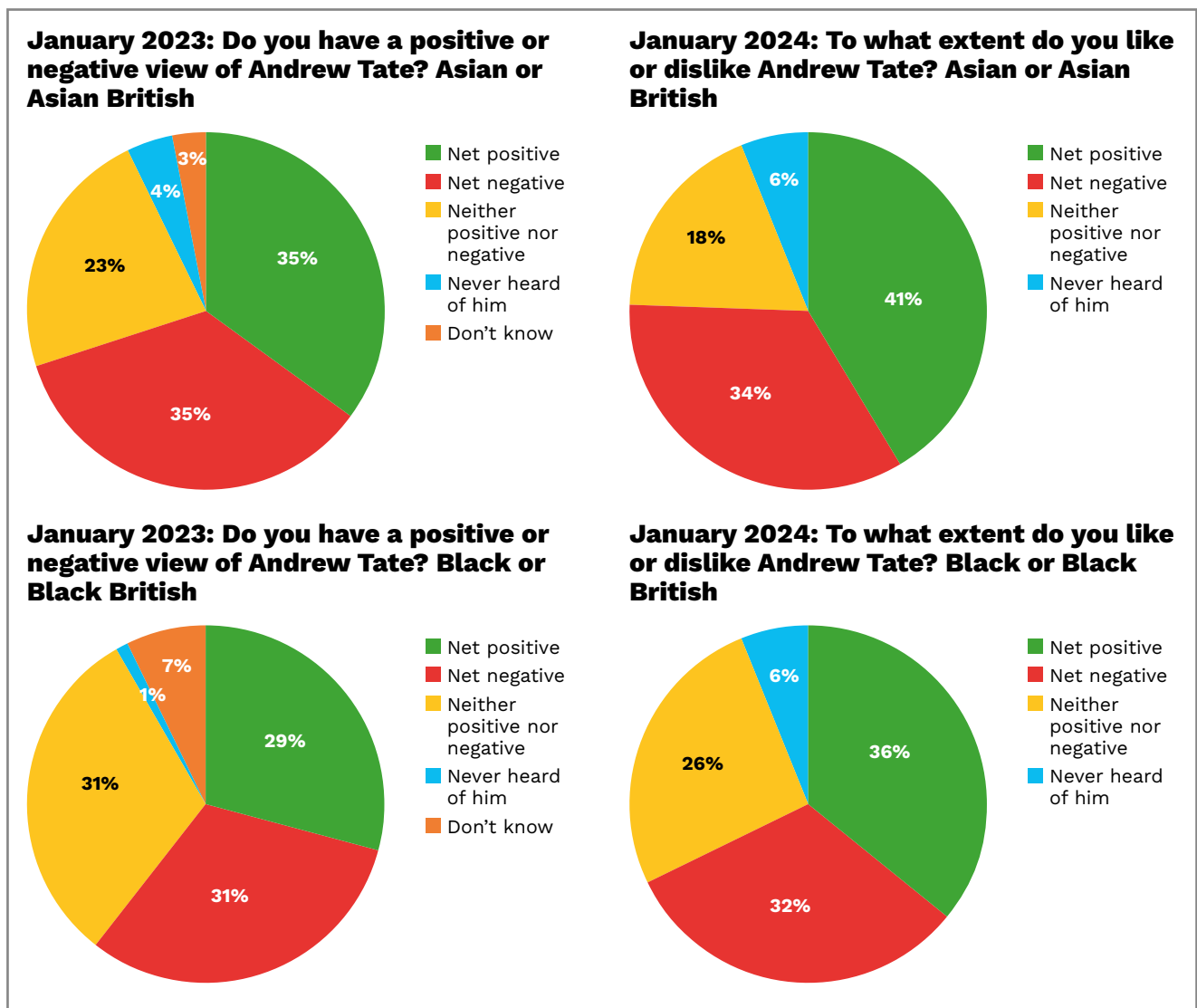
More research is needed to better understand the views of these women, their perceptions of self worth, and how they interpret the feminist movement. From this, work can be done to push an enhanced definition of feminism that challenges internalised sexism and centres its continued importance and relevance for everyone, even women who choose to undertake ‘traditional’ roles in society.



TATE, RACE AND RELIGION

Andrew Tate is mixed race, with an African-American father and a White British mother. He controversially converted to Islam in October 2022. Both of these factors mean that young men from minority ethnic backgrounds and young Muslim men might be more likely to find Tate’s hateful activism more relatable than white far-right figures like Tommy Robinson. That said, Tate has made problematic comments about both race and Islam which one might expect to deter young people from those backgrounds.

Young men from minority ethnic backgrounds are overrepresented in our Engaged Reactionaries segment, a group who are not yet completely disenchanted with the political system but at-risk of developing hateful attitudes due to their reactionary and conservative views on some topics. Deterring this group from influencers like Tate will go a long way to preventing the development of hateful attitudes.



RACE AND ETHNICITY

The high prevalence of Asian and Black young people who support Andrew Tate is striking, particularly as this is a group who would not be traditionally associated with far-right ideologies. We polled young people in January 2023 and 2024 asking about their attitudes to Andrew Tate, and found a 17% increase in support in Asian or Asian British young people, and a 24% increase in support in Black or Black British young people.

Asian or Asian British Tate supporters' top reason for liking Tate was that he is not afraid to push back against woke ideology (27%), reflective of Tate's wider group of supporters. Interestingly, this contradicts much of the qualitative research we undertook, where many young people of colour expressed that they were more interested in Tate's lifestyle content than his anti-woke content, the latter of which they believe is now a much smaller part of his image.

It's changed [Tate's content] ... it's really focusing on like changing the world in the future, giving ... telling young people how to make money and stuff like that

Year 9 pupil (British Asian)

Black or Black British Tate supporters were more likely to respond that Tate wants men to be real men (31% vs. an average of 22% amongst Tate supporters). This ties in with the socio-cultural standards of masculinity that many young Black men feel pressured to adhere to and general adultification of young Black people. Tate's content often addresses pressures to provide financially and rise above hardships, which might strike a chord.

RELIGION

Tate's popularity is worryingly high amongst Muslim respondents, although there is a clear gendered aspect to this. 51% of young Muslims like Tate, the highest of any religion, but Muslim men are almost three times more likely than young Muslim women to like him (72% versus 25%). It's also important to note the overlap between the religious and ethnic subgroups; 47% of minority ethnic Tate supporters (Asian, Black, Mixed or Chinese) polled are also Muslim.

Tate announced in October 2022 that he was converting from Christianity to Islam, and urged others to do the same. He later stated that his support for the religion was partially due to his opinion that Islam is a religion that still pays close attention to its sacred text (although people of all religions, including Muslims, will dispute this

claim for various reasons). In December 2022, Tate apologised for some comments he made about Islam and the terrorist group ISIS in an interview with Piers Morgan.

Cynics might also argue that Tate's conversion is a deliberate attempt to distance himself from past controversy – the announcement of his conversion came shortly after he was de-platformed from YouTube, TikTok, Facebook and Instagram.

In a podcast filmed shortly after the announcement, the controversial Islamic scholar Mohammed Hijab declared to Tate, "Islam completely wipes away your sins"¹. Whilst Muslims would agree with this statement, they might take issue with their faith being used as a way of laundering Tate's reputation and past actions – including illegal activity, violent assault and sexual exploitation.

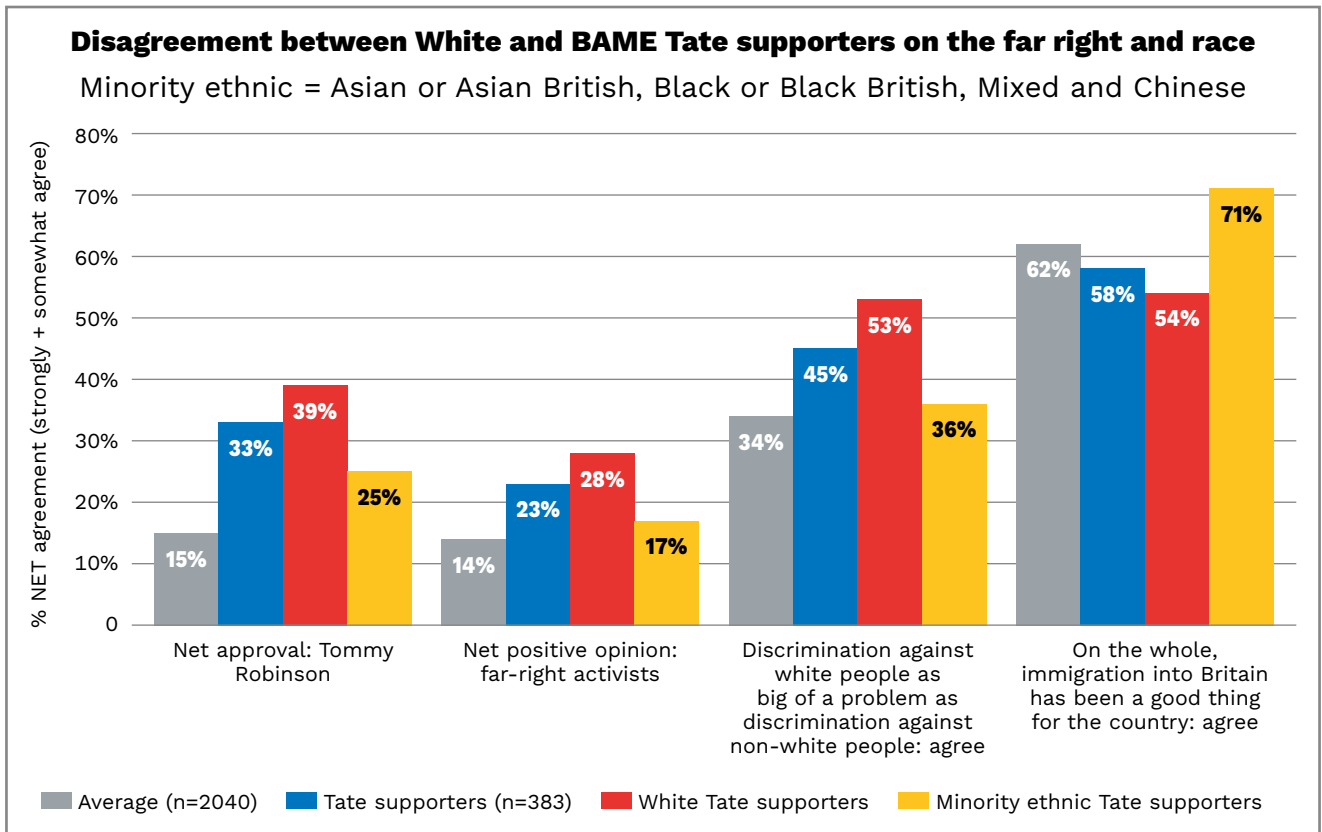
What's more, they might even feel that Tate's misogynistic comments – which have continued following his conversion – are representative of the worst and most marginal forms of Islam, which continue to be used to unfairly stigmatise the majority of practising Muslims today against their will.

In one example, Tate says he wants to find "a nice Islamic-ass wife. I'm gonna build up a big pile of rocks in case she gets fresh. I'm going to be prepared.". This refers to the archaic practice of stoning for infidelity, much to the dismay of feminist Muslims who seek to emphasise that women can be uplifted within Islam, and being Muslim should not be used as an excuse to subjugate women.

All this said, Tate's messaging is clearly cutting through to young Muslim men. Whilst it may be easy to assume that this is due to his religion, Muslim Tate supporters were only 2% more likely than average Tate supporters to think that Tate stands up for people like them. Interestingly, Muslim Tate supporters (n=101) had a different top reason for liking Tate than the wider population of Tate supporters – 26% responded that they like that Tate speaks the truth about women and men (average 15%). It seems that Tate's conversion has not had a huge impact on his popularity amongst young Muslims, who are more interested in his content around gender roles than they are in his faith.

DIFFERENCES AMONGST TATE SUPPORTERS

Assuming that Tate supporters will broadly agree on issues relating to gender roles, feminism and sexual violence, what might be their dividing lines? Comparing white Tate supporters to minority ethnic Tate supporters shows that racial discrimination and the far right are two areas



where there is a contrast (due to the questions in our polling, we included in this Asian or Asian British, Black or Black British, Mixed and Chinese young people).

Minority ethnic Tate supporters show higher overall approval (17%) for the far right than the average young person (14%), but less than white Tate supporters (28%). They are also much less sympathetic to the idea of reverse racism (36% versus 53% of white Tate supporters), and very pro-immigration (71% versus 54% of white Tate supporters), very much at odds with the wider far right movement.

Making minority ethnic Tate fans aware of Tate’s friendship with Tommy Robinson and other racist activists, and his links to the broader far right could discourage their support of him. Engagement with these young people in the form of encouraging celebration of diverse identities could create a positive diversion. This could be done by finding male role models they can relate to who champion both self-improvement and equality.

NOTES

- 1 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=diqgTxR99JE>

RUSSELL BRAND, #METOO AND YOUNG MEN

Russell Brand, the comedian/actor and political campaigner, was the subject of allegations of rape, sexual and emotional abuse in September 2023. Brand was seen by many as an unconventional and unpredictable voice: formerly a breath of fresh air, latterly a loose cannon. His verbose, left-wing and anti-establishment activism was popularised to attract a younger audience in the early 2010s, and he has gone on to propagate conspiracy theories about the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the COVID-19 pandemic and war in Ukraine.

The allegations against Brand detail multiple incidents taking place between 2006 and 2013. Brand denies all allegations, stating that the incidents reported were consensual and that there may be a “coordinated attack” against him, placing himself at the centre of a new conspiracy. This idea has been supported by a number of high profile figures including Andrew Tate, Tucker Carlson and Elon Musk.

“Criticize the drug companies, question the war in Ukraine, and you can be pretty sure this is going to happen.”

Fox News host Tucker Carlson on the allegations of sexual assault made against Brand, 16 September 2023¹

The #MeToo campaign came to prominence challenging those in positions of power accused of perpetrating and covering up violence, but has now extended into a wider conversation about violence against women and girls and the ecosystem of patriarchy which allows this to happen. Many people welcome the nuance this has brought into the conversation, where different types of behaviour are viewed as part of an interconnected system of prejudice and violence.

However, a cultural backlash against the movement has formed due to concerns about the impact on young men of a culture of public accusations, where they feel under pressure that one “wrong move” could have dire consequences on their lives. This fear of false accusation exists alongside the fears of young women and people of

marginalised genders – that they will be victims of violence, emotional, physical and sexual; that they will not be believed by a police and judiciary who are not ideologically or procedurally equipped to verify allegations of violence and bring them to justice.

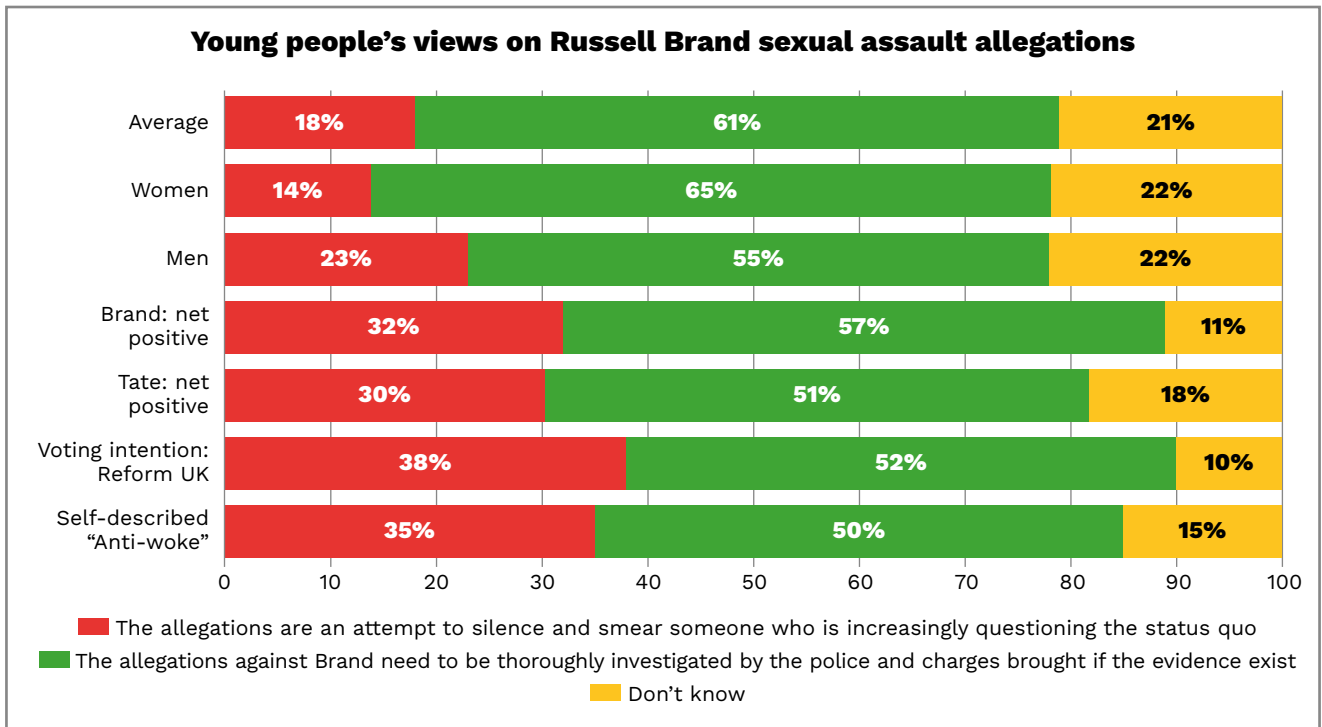
In January 2024, three months after the Brand allegations first surfaced, we polled 2040 young people aged from 16–24 with Focaldata. Almost one in five (18%) think that the Brand allegations are an attempt to silence and smear someone who is increasingly questioning the status quo. Amongst those who are more likely than average to question the Brand allegations are young men, those who also have a positive view of Andrew Tate, those who consider themselves anti-woke and Reform UK voters.

The backlash to Brand does not appear to be specific to him as a character, but rather indicative of a broader response to #MeToo culture. Similar responses can be seen in the polling about women making allegations of rape after having sex they regret. This suggests a wider backlash against accusations of violence made against men more generally.

YOUNG MEN WHO THINK THE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST BRAND ARE A SMEAR

Young men who believe that the allegations are a smear are twice as likely to have a positive view of Brand (40% vs. 22%) than the average, suggesting the allegations are a central factor determining whether young people support him or not. These young men are politically engaged, with only 16% unsure of who they would vote for in a General Election (compared to an average of 26%). They also have higher than average levels of political satisfaction (28% vs. 22%) and are also more likely to feel confident that at least one of the main parties reflects their opinions (43% vs. 36%).

However, there is no one dominating ideology. They are just as likely to intend to vote for Labour, the Liberal Democrats and the Green Party as the overall average, and only slightly more likely to vote for the Conservatives and Reform UK. Progressive young men who develop an interest in Brand out of frustration with #MeToo might

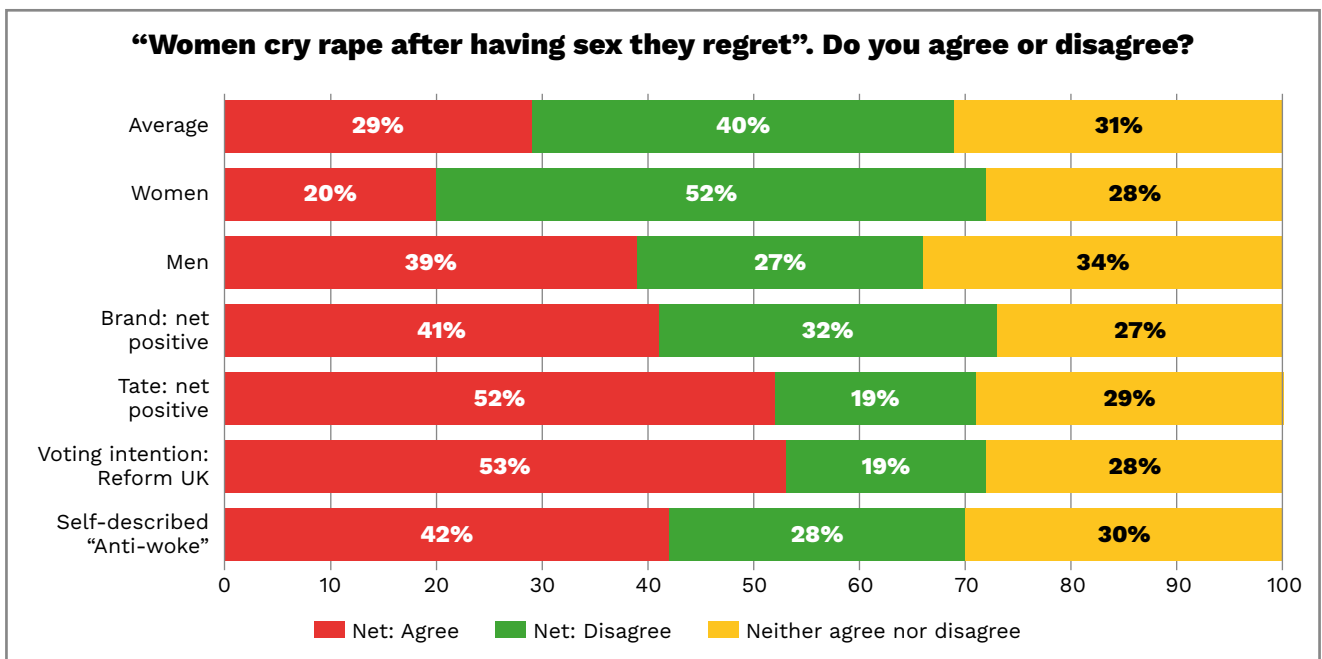


risk becoming further exposed to his conspiracy theory content and the wider community of hatefulness he is part of.

Interestingly, they are actually less likely than other young people to think that the mainstream media only shows what suits people in power (54% vs. 61%) and are also only slightly more likely than other young people to believe that there is a single group of people who secretly control events and rule the world together (40% vs. 35%). This is somewhat surprising given Brand's anti-

establishment positioning. That said, they have higher conspiracy beliefs than average on the COVID-19 pandemic, which Brand also speaks about.

These mixed results suggest that some young men who support Brand in the face of the allegations made against him are mostly interested in what this says about feminism and the position of men in society today, whereas others support him for his wider content, which exposes them to conspiracy theories.





YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A POSITIVE OPINION OF BRAND

Looking at who holds a positive view of Brand despite the allegations made against him may help us understand how to tackle the idea that progress on sexual violence comes directly at the cost of men. 22% of young people included in the poll have a positive opinion of Brand.

Looking at our segments, the Hateful Advocates and Disaffected Reactionaries both have much higher opinions of Brand: in both segments, there is a net positive opinion of 33% but the Hateful Advocates are more likely to strongly like him (18% vs. 11%).

Young people who like Brand are more likely than average to hold right-wing conservative views on a number of social issues, such as opposing education on women's equality and gay rights and thinking feminism has gone too far. Furthermore, they have a higher than average level of belief in conspiracy theories. They are twice as likely to believe that the official account of the Nazi Holocaust is a lie (29% vs. 15%), 34% believe that immigration is a deliberate attempt to replace white people (average 22%) and 30% believe that the COVID-19 vaccines were unsafe (average 23%).

Interestingly, those who like Russell Brand are more than twice as likely than the average person to like far-right activist Tommy Robinson (35% vs. 15%) and right-wing politician Nigel Farage (45% vs. 22%), but are also more likely to hold

a positive opinion of left wing politician Jeremy Corbyn (36% vs. 25%).

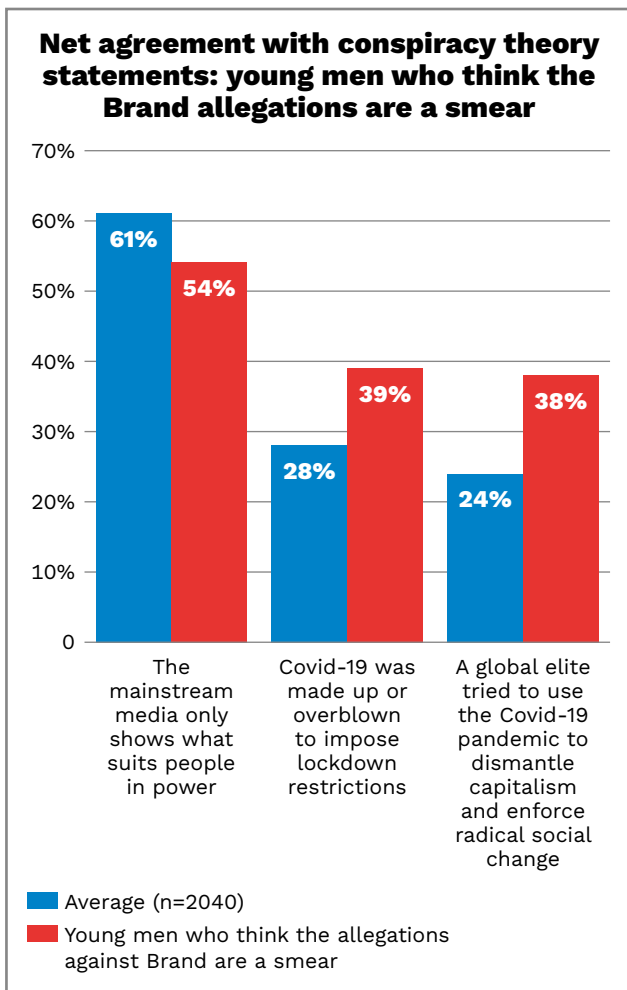
Brand appears to be attracting an audience who know who they like – outspoken individuals who are not afraid to challenge the status quo – but are potentially less concerned with what that person is challenging. There definitely is a push back against progressive, liberal values, in particular feminism, but it is up for debate the extent to which this is due to commitment to the ideology so much as attraction to a cult of personality.

NEXT STEPS

It is worth noting that 23% of young people in our poll have never heard of Brand. In many ways, the real danger is not his individual influence, but what he represents: a core group of young men who feel trapped and angry.

Removing anti-feminist and conspiracy content online or even deplatforming individuals like Brand might not tackle the root of the problem. Interventions directly addressing young men's frustrations and anxieties around #MeToo will deter them from searching for anti-feminist content in the first place and digging deeper into more dangerous conspiracy content.

Opportunity lies in this group's trust in political figures, particularly those who are emotive and outspoken. Indeed, the predominantly-male Engaged Reactionaries segment is the



most likely to be apathetic towards him (40%), suggesting that engagement with the political mainstream has a large potential to challenge the narratives he pushes. Political empowerment that helps young men address their concerns in productive ways will prevent them from seeking representation elsewhere.

NOTES

1 <https://twitter.com/TuckerCarlson/status/1703043235466076541?lang=en>

HATEFUL ATTITUDES IN THE CLASSROOM

CLAIRE WILSON

In February 2024, Teacher Tapp undertook a poll of 4,646 teachers on behalf of HOPE not hate to find out more about prejudiced language and behaviour within schools. HOPE not hate has received increasing numbers of reports of this language and behaviour from teachers and school staff. Asking about their experiences in the classroom since September 2023, 68% of secondary school teachers reported hearing hateful language, 38% have witnessed pupils expressing hateful views, and 36% reported students praising or supporting extreme individuals.

Hate in the classroom is often discussed in terms of bullying, discrimination and child-on-child abuse. This behaviour ranges from those who use slurs often without an understanding of their origins, to those who firmly believe and actively engage in hateful views and ideologies. Between these two poles are young people who are at-risk of developing hateful world views. Teachers also report the use of slurs indiscriminately towards anyone, regardless of

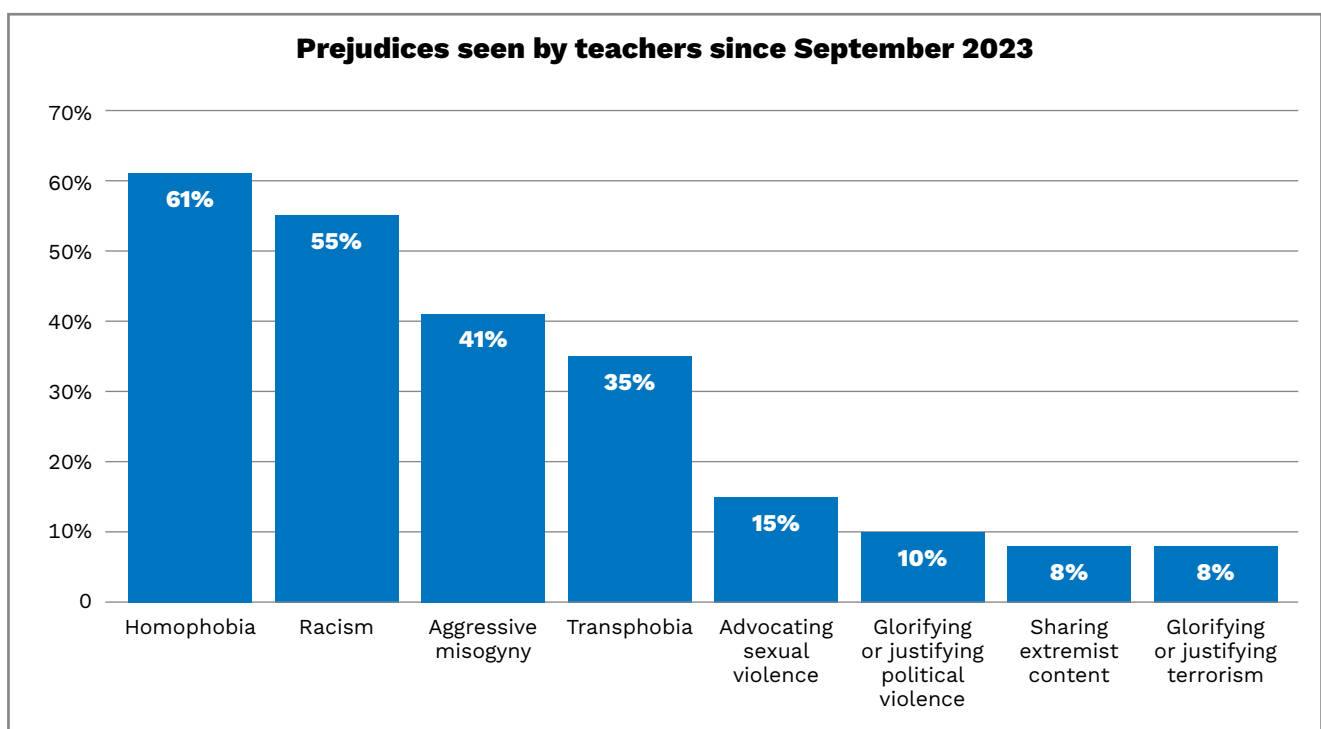
their background and identity.

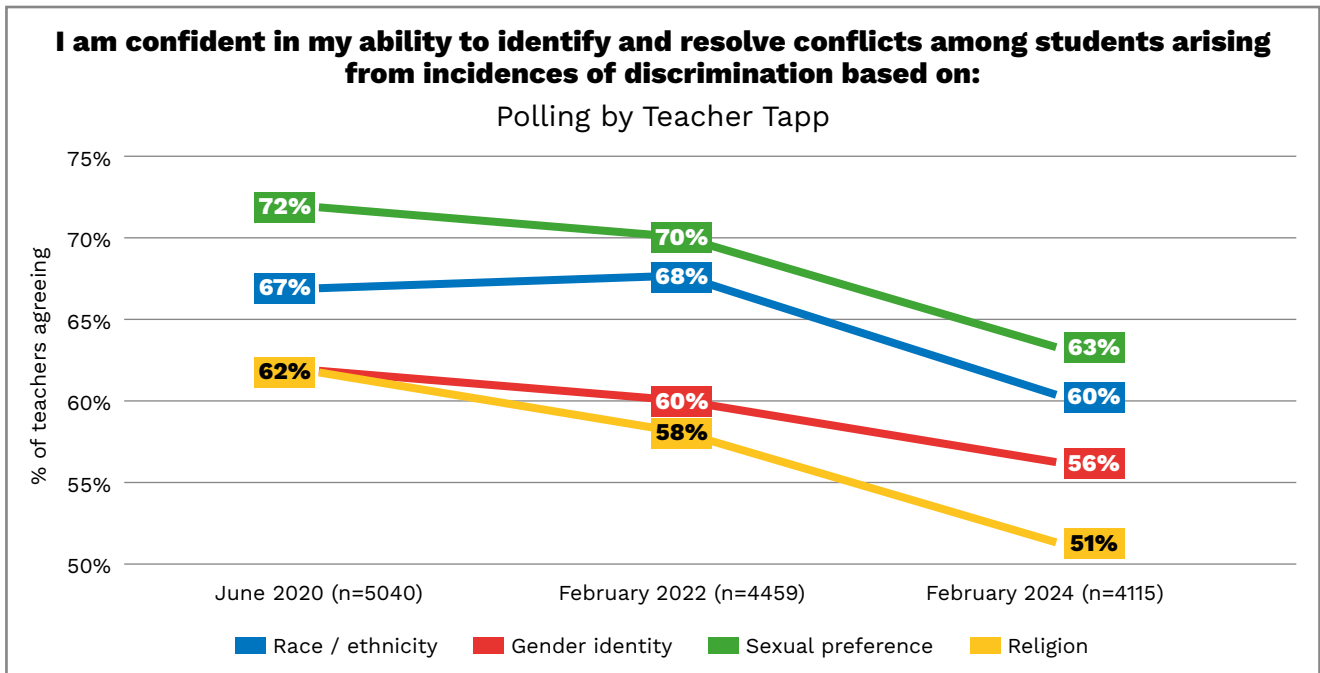
The most common forms of prejudice teachers reported seeing from students were homophobia (61%), racism (55%) and aggressive misogyny (41%), with 35% of secondary teachers also seeing transphobia. Of course, these statistics are only reflective of what teachers have witnessed; in some cases incidents might be happening outside of supervised time and not correctly reported.

And when we spoke to her [a trans pupil] and said, Oh, could you remember what the comment was? And her response was actually, I wouldn't be able to remember that specific comment because it's just so commonplace every day.

Secondary school teacher

Some students might simply be better at hiding these views around teachers. A staff member in an independent school reported that pupils





are smart enough to know what to avoid saying around teachers, although they were certain hateful language was being used in the school more widely.

CONFIDENCE IN IDENTIFYING HATE

Worryingly, only approximately half of teachers report being confident in identifying and resolving conflicts involving incidents of discrimination. Discrimination based on sexual preference was the issue most teachers were confident in dealing with (63%), whereas the fewest were confident in dealing with issues where religion was the topic (51%). Previous polling on the same question from Teacher Tapp shows that this confidence has slightly decreased over time, particularly for sexual preference and religion. Support and guidance on an issue-by-issue basis is needed to boost confidence.

When it comes to cases where an individual’s hateful attitudes suggest a real risk of violence, staff reported feeling that the school was not equipped to deal with the student, but there was no alternative service or pathway for support. Staff felt confident in identifying a young person’s route to radicalisation but lacked the skills or resources to work with that individual after that.

TEACHERS’ EXPERIENCE OF MISOGYNY IN THE CLASSROOM

In addition to aggressive misogyny from students towards their peers, female staff members have reported an increase in deliberate and targeted misogyny towards them, often to demean or undermine.

“They have a real issue with female members of staff. They will blatantly ignore female members of staff’s instructions but whenever a male member of staff speaks to them, it is absolutely fine, they did it [follow the instruction].”

Secondary school teacher (male)

In another example witnessed by HOPE not hate in a classroom in the North-East, a KS3 male student speaking positively about Andrew Tate then told the female teacher present that he disagreed with her being in the classroom and that she should stick to her gender roles. The staff member later said that this type of sentiment from students was not widespread when she first started teaching, but that students have been emboldened by influencers such as Andrew Tate.

“The problem is that they’ve learned the kind of dogmatic behaviours that those characters [Andrew Tate and others] have taught them. They also try to use their physical presence against you... often targeting or challenging those they view as assertive female members of staff.”

Secondary school teacher

This type of behaviour towards teachers is worrying on many levels. We know that students will only listen to and learn from sources who they view as valid and who hold some intellectual weight in their eyes. The idea that anything that is being taught by female teachers is untrustworthy and up for debate is very concerning.

Teaching has traditionally been female-dominated, and today the proportion of secondary school teachers who are male is at a record low of 35%. With women making up the majority of educational leaders interacting with students, this erosion of respect threatens the important role of teachers and schools in challenging prejudicial ideas, and their crucial role in young people's development more widely.

INFLUENCES ON YOUNG PEOPLE OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL

Teachers and school staff have also reported an increase in anti-social language from parents. Staff we spoke to reported discriminatory language or harassment being used towards staff members and also parents directing harmful language towards other parents and even students.

It is vital that parents and schools work together to educate young people about tolerance and acceptance, but it is increasingly becoming a futile task for school staff members when parents are also buying into hateful discourse.

Teachers also mentioned that recent Conservative Government policies and guidance to school staff were paradoxical when compared to rhetoric from members of the party. Teachers gave the example of the Government rhetoric on “stopping the boats” as part of its agenda on preventing immigration to the UK – it creates a confusing mandate for school leaders and staff because some of the harmful comments students make about minority ethnic people and people who have migrated to the UK are also made by senior politicians, including the Prime Minister.

NEXT STEPS

It is also clear that the challenge of hate in schools is a complex one, with no ‘one size fits all’ solution. However, we find that schools want more coordinated guidance from the Department for Education in dealing with prejudice within schools. The government does already run a service called “Educate Against Hate” which lists guidance from 3rd party providers and charities. Whilst this is a useful resource, it also relies on individual teachers and school leaders to coordinate lessons.

Teachers were keen to emphasise that they feel unsupported by the Government when it comes to speaking up on the ongoing conflict in

the Middle East. They felt that the government guidance – which dealt more with what *not* to say than what to say – did not provide any real assistance. As a consequence of having to create their own solutions, addressing the issue has been fraught and has also caused disagreements within the staff body.

Teachers also felt that addressing issues of hatred and equality with students would be much easier if there was a reduction or cessation in the government's questioning of the validity of minority groups – for example, transgender and disabled people. Schools do not feel supported in speaking out on these issues when it comes to incidents with pupils, as they are often directly undermined by government and media rhetoric, which many parents then also mirror.

Many schools end up having to find guidance from charities and consultants, often at a cost. With concerns about budgets, these ‘non-essential’ interventions are often the first to be cut. Teachers also raised the point that there is benefit to keeping some conversations “in-house”, with young people talking to teachers with whom they already have trusted relationships. Training for teachers on identifying and responding to hateful attitudes and behaviours would be helpful.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We are using this report as a starting point for a wider organisational effort to tackle hateful attitudes in young people through education, policy and campaigning. Though we focus mostly on defining the problem here, we identify some avenues for further work or intervention.

Clearly, the adoption of hateful attitudes and the potential for violence amongst young people is an issue that demands close attention, particularly due to the extent to which it interacts with, and is shaped by, events and narratives in wider society. It is crucial that this becomes a closely monitored area of focus for policy makers, schools and the youth sector.

INTERVENTIONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

In this report, we have identified two key groups who we believe are the most beneficial to target with the intention of mitigating hateful attitudes amongst young people.

Empowering excluded progressives

We identify two segments of young people, Progressive Advocates and Disengaged Liberals, who already subscribe to liberal ideologies but currently feel alienated and disillusioned with politics.

Empowering these disenfranchised young progressives to feel more politically included should encourage them to feel more in control of what happens around them. This could include traditional structured training on leadership and debate, but should also more generally involve creating spaces for young people to speak about the issues affecting them in a productive, solutions-oriented way, rebuilding trust in existing systems.

Crucially, this needs to be a whole society approach. Disenfranchisement, whilst often used to describe political exclusion or lack of representation, is also often indicative of how one perceives themselves and their value in wider society. More efforts need to be made to encourage young people to participate more in their communities. This does not just have to take place in schools or in youth political movements, but also for example by engaging in volunteering, social ventures, sports, and the media.

Challenging Engaged Reactionaries

The second identified group to target is the Engaged Reactionaries. This group feel relatively included in politics but their reactionary opinions on culture war issues make them at risk of developing hateful attitudes. As the largest group of young people, representing a third of the sample, challenging their attitudes presents a large opportunity.

Traditional interventions used to target those susceptible to far-right ideology are unlikely to be successful here, as the social makeup of this group is not reflective of those who traditionally subscribe to right wing ideologies: ethnic minorities are overrepresented in this group, and the predominant reactionary view is of misogyny, not racism. Interventions should therefore be issue-specific rather than addressing general inequality or discrimination, to reflect the complex way with which identity politics messily interacts with wider worldviews.

As this group is politically engaged, interventions through traditional and mainstream channels are likely to be successful at engaging them. Introducing alternative and, crucially, charismatic role models in both political, educational and social spaces to challenge their emotive responses to culture war issues is an opportunity that should be explored. Indeed Labour have proposed helping schools to train male mentors as a 'powerful counterbalance' to misogyny championed by the likes of Andrew Tate – it is important that this goes deeper than surface level.



SUPPORTING SCHOOLS

Classroom discussions

Our research has overwhelmingly shown that teachers lack the confidence and resources to address hateful attitudes amongst young people decisively. There is a clear need for centralised training and support for teachers on not only identifying and reporting hateful activism, but more importantly on how to productively engage with students when issues related to these topics are brought up.

The Government should be providing clear guidance on how teachers should be talking about key issues that are brought up in the classroom, particularly related to conspiracy theories, where teachers were least confident, and misogyny. We support Labour’s proposal to introduce more experts into the education system tasked with guiding opportunities for prevention.

Digital literacy

Whilst the new Online Safety Act 2023 does introduce measures to protect young people from accessing harmful content, this will not solve all the issues arising from young people being online. Being able to critically engage with content will help mitigate the extent to which young people are being drawn to hateful attitudes, particularly through misinformation.

A unified government framework on promoting digital literacy, which also includes it on the national PSHE/citizenship curriculum and gives guidance and resources for teachers on how to approach this, will ensure that all young people have the opportunity to develop these skills.

PREVENTING POTENTIAL VIOLENCE

Current preventative policies fail to acknowledge the multitude of ways that hateful attitudes can play out physically. The Prevent duty currently only addresses those at risk of enacting terrorism, rather than violence more broadly. Many teachers find that they see behaviour that does not qualify for a referral, but is too extreme to be dealt with within schools.

A wider review of the efficacy of Prevent is needed, particularly within educational settings. On one hand, excessive Prevent referrals shows caution and reduces the risk of young people slipping through gaps. On the other hand, it creates an atmosphere of suspicion between young people and their teachers, compromising trust and making certain young people, particularly Muslim men, feel targeted.

Crucially, the ways in which hateful attitudes are playing out amongst young people requires a system which focuses on identifying and rehabilitating those who are likely to perpetrate violence beyond just terrorism, with an intermediary step that provides expert intervention for cases that schools are not equipped to handle.

GLOSSARY

Terminology relating to hateful views and young people is highly contested. Popular and legal definitions often differ, and these have the ability to shape how arguments are received. Young people have a natural tendency to be provocative and rebellious, with their opinions falling towards the “extreme”, and this is not inherently bad – it often drives social progress, and young people’s views can soften over time. Questions are raised about freedom of thought.

Young people being “radical” in the sense of wanting fundamental societal change is not restricted by political philosophy, but this term is often understood in a more specific way. Also, the idea that being drawn towards hateful activism is a process which reaches a certain threshold of “radicalisation” can be unhelpful. It creates the impression that those who have not yet reached the threshold are incapable of violence, and that those who are beyond the threshold are certainly going to commit violence.

For this reason, we deliberately sidestep the term “radicalisation”; differences of interpretation and its politicisation make it unhelpful. Instead, we talk about how young people develop hateful attitudes, and how this can create an increased risk of ideologically-driven violence.

For further clarity, we elaborate on our definitions and intentions when using the words below in this report.

FAR-RIGHT

Far-right ideologies focus on the hierarchisation of groups of people. It is nostalgic for a past which it believes is without issues of today’s society.

As such it is socially conservative, authoritarian and nationalist. There are different perspectives within the far-right in terms of focus but broadly it includes strong opposition to immigration and racial, ethnic and religious diversity, and a desire to preserve white identities, which it imagines being under threat.

Questions of gender identity and sexuality are increasingly part of the far-right domain, as is feminism and women’s rights. These identities are seen as a threat to a traditional way of life. Including these issues within a definition of far-right means that the profile of far-right activists

tends to diversify away from white, male voices to include other perspectives, including those of women and members of minority ethnic communities who might also be victims of these attitudes.

HATE

We use this term to refer to any kind of prejudiced abuse directed towards minority or vulnerable groups in society as a result of their membership of that group. This can take place on the individual or the group level.

In some cases, hate will be normalised by society and commonplace, and in other cases it will be stigmatised. This reflects the presence of low-level forms of prejudice and discrimination across all spheres of society.

HATEFUL ATTITUDES

We talk about hateful attitudes to describe how young people who are exposed to hate can start to develop worldviews based on an ideology.

This differs from learned social behaviours which might also be based on hate, for example sexist comments which parrot social ideas.

When young people develop hateful attitudes, they often perceive themselves to have finally realised some kind of higher truth about society. They see the world through a lens of this realisation – for example, viewing all members of a minority or vulnerable group in society in this way.

MISOGYNY

This is the hatred of women as a result of attempts to maintain patriarchal societal roles where men are inherently superior and women are inherently inferior (they may not even recognise the existence of people of marginalised genders).

Misogyny differs from sexism in the extent to which the prejudice against women is conscious or subconscious: in the case of sexism, discriminatory behaviour is the result of subconscious bias that exists within a patriarchal society. In the case of misogyny, discriminatory behaviour derives from conscious prejudice against women. This could be the

idea that women should submit to men, owe men sex or service or are inherently less able or intelligent.

PROGRESSIVE

This term is used to denote views which are liberal and generally in favour of social reform in order to achieve a better society – progressives tend to have positive views of peaceful activism and support communities who are marginalised within society.

We use “progressive” as a direct contrast to “hateful” because we find that these attitudes do not map directly on to a traditional left-wing and right-wing political spectrum. In particular, we find that some young people with some hateful views align more with some left wing causes and parties.

REACTIONARY

This describes attitudes which are in opposition to the social progression of the current era. In some ways, the idea that traditionally conservative views are “reactionary” is counter-intuitive because these views predate current societal standards. For example, some young people appear to support a return to historical conventions, particularly when it comes to “culture war” topics which are highly sensationalised and debated frequently such as gender roles and oppose progressive policies like gay marriage.

VIOLENCE

This refers to any harm that is deliberately inflicted on someone else. We expand the use of this term beyond use of physical to include emotional and sexual harm. Violence can take place online or offline and can include threats and incitement, encouragement of self harm as well as direct action. It results in the victim feeling harassed, intimidated and fearful.

YOUNG PEOPLE

We use a range of ages to describe young people in this report but broadly we look at Generation Z, who are roughly between 12 and 27 years old today. Of course, this includes a variety of educational and professional experiences, and not all insights will be valid for all age groups. Grouping large age cohorts together can help with the bigger picture, but can also obscure smaller trends. Where relevant, we look at the attitudes of smaller sub-sections. Our main poll of young people is of young people aged 16-24.

METHODOLOGY

This report is influenced both by our ongoing work with the education sector and new research commissioned specifically for this project.

For further questions, please contact response@hopenothate.org.uk.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S POLL

Our poll of young people was carried out by Focaldata, a full-service research agency at the forefront of using technology to understand what people think and do. They work with enterprises, foundations, think tanks and government departments – including the likes of Brunswick, the UK Cabinet Office and Telefonica. Their research has been featured by Reuters, the Financial Times, the Guardian, the Times, and The Economist. Focaldata is a member of the British Polling Council (BPC) and the MRS (Market Research Society).

The poll of young people had a nationally representative population sample of 2,040 respondents aged 16-24. Fieldwork was carried out between the 9th and 18th January 2024. Respondents were surveyed on Focaldata's online platform, which plugs into a global network of panels and uses machine learning to automatically detect and screen out inconsistent and disengaged respondents.

The segmentation was created by taking questions from the poll which described the hateful and related belief and attitude positions of respondents to identify commonalities and differences. These questions were then regrouped into a 2-dimensional Principal Component Analysis – the indexes being hateful <> progressive and politically included <> politically excluded. More information on the questions used to inform these indexes is available on request, see below. The segmentation analysis was run on a sub-sample of 1,756 respondents that excluded people that failed an attention check question from the poll.

The two PCA dimensions were then clustered using Gaussian Mixture Modelling (GMM) to identify segments sharing a distinctive set of attitudes. GMM was privileged over other methods, such as k-means, for two reasons. First, it provides greater sensitivity to local maxima, that

is, allows clusters of less even size if the similarity between cluster members is sufficiently strong. Second, it allows identifying non-circular clusters, which is an artificial constraint imposed by certain other methods that does not necessarily reflect the properties of the underlying data.

POLLING – TEACHERS

We completed an initial informal pilot poll of 36 teachers between December 2023 and January 2024, the results of which are not formally included in this report but shaped our research.

We commissioned the polling company Teacher Tapp for insights on teachers' experience. Teacher Tapp is a daily survey app that asks over 9,000 teachers questions each day and reweights the results to make them representative.

The three new questions we commissioned were live for one day on the 7th February 2024, with sample sizes 4081, 4100 and 4115 secondary school teachers.

We also purchased the data tables for questions previously asked by Teacher Tapp but not yet published publicly. Some questions were the same wording as our recently commissioned questions, whereas others were on different topics. Information on individual questions is available on request.

FOCUS GROUPS

We completed five focus groups as part of this research – four with secondary school students and one with teachers.

Two focus groups were completed in a small multi-academy trust in West London. One school is an all-girls' comprehensive with 15 participants aged between 13 and 16, the other is a mixed comprehensive with 13 participants aged between 13 and 18.

Two focus groups were completed in a mixed comprehensive school in Bradford which is part of a large Academy Trust. One focus group had 12 participants aged 15-16 and the other had 11 participants aged 13-14.

The focus group of teachers was completed in an all-boys' selective grammar school in Kent. Nine teachers participated.



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