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#SHADOWBANNED

Queer, Trans, and Disabled Creator Responses to Algorithmic Oppression on TikTok

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In June 2020, the popular social networking site (SNS) TikTok launched its inaugural Creator fund. The 200 million USD program claims to amplify the creative genius of marginalized influencers and Creators on the platform by connecting them with brand partnerships and Hollywood agents (Pappas, 2021). Expected to grow beyond 1 billion USD over the next few years, TikTok has committed itself to promote 2SLGBTQIA+[1] influencers through its Creator fund. For example, in June 2020, TikTok sponsored a day-long event for Pride Month, and different enclaves on the platform center queer, trans, and disability communities. Furthermore, through the connectivity of a hashtag, TikTok users can find resources for education, community building, and activism through the tap of a finger. The micro-vlogging platform departs from earlier SNS, such as Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, because of its guidelines for communication and creation styles that focus on genre instead of offline interpersonal connections (Zulli & Zulli, 2020).

Since its 2018 release, TikTok has accumulated over 2 billion global downloads and nearly 1 billion users—with over half of global users belonging to Generation Z (hereafter shortened to GenZ) (Muliadi, 2020). Though the platform itself is only a few years old, it quickly evolved into a digital space for queer, disabled, and trans cultures, especially considering the COVID-19 pandemic (Olheiser, 2020; Carey, 2020). Yet TikTok may not be the haven for queer, disabled, and trans users that it claims to be. For example, TikTok's 2020 Pride event for queer and trans Creators (#MyPride) was derailed in minutes by racist, homophobic, and transphobic Zoombombers (Cohen, 2020). Additionally, TikTok has limited visibility of 2SLGBTQIA+ users and hashtags, especially in non-North American contexts (Hern, 2019).

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For example, hashtags like "I am gay" or "I am lesbian" were censored in Russia, while users in Arabic-speaking countries could not access hashtags like "transgender" or "trans" on their #FYP (Powys Maurice, 2020). These censoring strategies even removed queer and trans influencers from their platform (Montoya, 2020; Criddle, 2020).

Representation or Erasure?

The censoring of marginalized Creators and users is no accident, it is key to TikTok's algorithmic infrastructure. Shadowbanning refers to a set of algorithmic practices designed to surveil, track, and remove content that "interferes" with SNS guidelines (Bridges, 2021). An account may be public and have thousands of followers, but once it is shadowbanned, the algorithm hides the user profile and content from the public. A 2019 whistleblower report from German investigative reporting collective *Netzpolitik* revealed that TikTok's AutoR function, which facilitates algorithmic suppression, was shown to target accounts where users were apparently disabled[2], trans, queer, or fat (Köver & Reuter, 2019). Though TikTok claimed the AutoR function protected vulnerable groups from cyberbullies, several anti-Black, transphobic, ableist, and homophobic trends continued to circulate on the platform. On a platform like TikTok, where one gains notoriety and celebrity through views and engagement with genre or content, shadowbans can cut off community for many 2SLGBTQIA+ users.

Shadowbans are not random: they reflect networks of oppression and marginalization that circulate in offline cultural discourses. For example, TikTok uses algorithms as ideological tools to convey guidelines for communication styles and community building through meticulous coding practices. While programs like the Creator fund show queer and trans people as visibly belonging on TikTok, the reality for many marginalized users on these platforms is radically different. TikTok uses its AutoR algorithm to imagine a social networking platform where trans, queer, disabled, fat, and people of color do not exist. Though the internet might be considered a post racial world[3], platforms, websites, and other digital spaces reflect the ideologies and cultural practices of those who are programming the codes that build communication guidelines on these same sites. In other words, technology is not neutral: it is an extension of dominant political, cultural, and ideological views. For instance, the prevalence of anti-Blackness, misogynoir, classism, and transphobia have both respectively and collectively shaped offline systems of oppression into strategies for digital communicative practices (Benjamin, 2019; Beauchamp, 2019).

This chapter interrogates TikTok's AutoR algorithm's communicative strategies to imagine a social media platform where users and content that

the platform deems as "transgressive" or "disruptive" do not exist. I focus on the various strategies that queer and trans Creators use to continue their facilitation of digital world-(re)making despite or against shadowbanning, situating my study of marginalized TikTok Creator's within critical and cultural communication which takes a transdisciplinary approach to "investigate discourses of power and knowledge… cultural dominance and resistance in media… and social institutions" (Ono, 2009, p. 2). Drawing mainly from the vital work of Stuart Hall, critical/cultural communication is centered on challenging relationships of institutional and cultural power and identity across various local cultural contexts—including SNS, such as TikTok. I inform my study of queer/trans and disabled content Creator responses to shadowbanning with critical algorithm studies, crip theory, and critical digital race studies. As TikTok is an emerging platform, I note that its algorithmic infrastructure poses new questions and challenges for imagining communication practices and the operation of oppressive systems in a digital space. My work seeks to expand our understanding of how social media platforms present 2SLGBTQIA+ enclaves and uniquely focuses on TikTok as a site of oppositional discourses.

TikTok as SNS

Akin to earlier vlogging apps, such as Vine, Douyin, and Musical.ly, TikTok is a significant departure from early SNS that solely prioritize text and image. TikTok's uniqueness lies in its focus on content and genre instead of building connections between users (Zulli & Zulli, 2020; Abidin, 2021). TikTok facilitates this phenomenon by crafting its interface: users can edit the speed of the video and add in different sounds. These features are used with distinctive video augmentation features that allow for new sampling techniques.

While TikTok allows users to comment, like, and share posts, akin to Instagram, such aspects are backended for emphasis on genre and content. For example, upon opening the app, users are brought to the #ForYou page, curated by an algorithm that assumes what an individual user is most likely to watch. While users can follow specific accounts or trending hashtags, these are stored separately from the #FYP (and are accessed through a button at the top of the screen). The app also provides an additional "explore" tab where users can peruse through popular and recent videos under trending hashtags. Though users can comment, share, or directly message one another, these features are not as emphasized in the same way as other platforms, like Instagram. In this way, TikTok's user interface encourages a communicative and user interaction style that emphasizes content-building, not community-building.

TikTok surfaced as a unique space for Internet celebrity (Kennedy, 2020; Abidin, 2021), hate speech (Weimann & Masri, 2020), and as a global public health technology, with specific attention to TikTok's surfacing as a tool

for relaying COVID-19 (mis)information (Sabardhikari & Sabardhikari, 2020). Additionally, late-breaking communication and media studies scholarship emphasize TikTok's communicative infrastructure and cultural patterns, tracing connections to how these latter aspects influence creation on TikTok (Zulli & Zulli, 2020). Original content does not go viral[4] but appears as imitations or remixes that add to the conversation through new content. A so-called "imitation public" (Zulli & Zulli, p. 11), TikTok's algorithmic infrastructure, and user interface promote an SNS where forms of imitation, such as remixing, restyling, or repeating, lead to virality. For example, "check" challenges allow for new stylizations and augmentations while still preserving the original script. Imitation and reproduction do not simply build celebrity. Still, such social capital additionally contributes to how TikTok determines which accounts are promoted on #FYP (p. 13). Yet, these conventions are troubled for 2SLGBTQIA+ users, who find that the #FYP algorithm simultaneously promotes and erases queer, disabled, and trans users on TikTok (Simpson & Semaan, 2021). In this chapter, I extend these inquiries to determine the off/online cultural impacts of algorithmic oppression, in addition to assessing the responses from disabled, queer, and trans TikTok counterpublics.

Critical Algorithm Studies

The study of algorithms as cultural artifacts first surfaced in human-computer interaction (HCI) research in the 1960s. It quickly became taken up by communication and media scholars, anthropologists, and HCI researchers with the rise of SNS and other forms of ICTs that heavily rely on algorithms. It is this popularity that positions algorithms as "objects of cultural concern because they are composed of collective human practice" (Seaver, 2017, p. 5). Similarly, human-machine communication scholars advocate for a more nuanced relationality between human and machine interlocutors. This perspective argues that we are not separate from machines but constantly interact and communicate *with* them (Guzman, 2018; Fortunati & Edwards, 2020).

By situating algorithms as cultural technologies, critical algorithm studies interrupt the widely accepted assumptions that algorithms—and other data—are neutral tools separate from humans and beyond our control. As governing tools, social media algorithms build the foundations of platforms and facilitate guidelines for communication and digital relationality. Thus, they are programmed to watch, monitor, and predict what users on an SNS may search for or whom they may be most likely to interact with, design home pages, timelines, and feeds around these interests. In doing so, algorithms determine what we know about social and political discourse and how we can come to know it (Gillespie, p. 1). For example, hashtags are popular multimodal tools on social media platforms that convey the hybridity between on and offline discourses about politics and

culture (Kuo, 2018, p. 496). The more we use a hashtag, the more the algorithm will circulate the hashtags and the posts filed under it, (re)distributing content to more users (Gillespie, p. 13). Algorithms are not apolitical: certain ideologies are programmed into each block of code. In the case of TikTok, these rhetorics and cultural technologies are recycled into the algorithmic infrastructure of the platform.

Notably, digital critical race studies provide a significant guide for challenging and imagining beyond ableist and racist algorithms that populate our digital experiences. With the emergence of multimodal SNS platforms which situate themselves as a free space for any user to gain Internet celebrity status, such as TikTok, obfuscates the permanence of white supremacist and eugenicist beliefs saturating the coding of algorithms and, therefore, Internet spaces (Nakamura & Chow-White, 2013). This phenomenon is a form of algorithmic oppression, or what Safiya Umoja Noble (2018) notes is a series of algorithmically driven data failures that target marginalized groups online, specifically people of color and women (p. 4). This chapter extends Noble's definition to explain the algorithmic erasure of disabled, queer, and trans people on TikTok. Additionally, many ICTs reflect Eurocentric standards of beauty and appearance. For example, surveillance biometric technology algorithms are programmed to recognize phenotypically white people and fail to "see" people of color (Magnet, 2012).

New technologies rely on offline systems of oppression to "humanize" ICTs (Weheliye, 2002, p. 37). Social media algorithms are often programmed to dismiss or hide data they think a user will be offended by or choose not to interact with (Gillespie, p. 7). Similarly, the AutoR algorithm "cleans" up a user's #FYP by monitoring and automatically flagging content featuring disability, as well as queer and trans topics (Köver & Reuter, 2019). Yet AutoR does not decide on its own to remove posts: rather, it represents offline cultural values programmed into TikTok's infrastructural build. In that case, I argue that algorithmic oppression also shows how ableism, homophobia, and transphobia are taken up as eugenicist technologies.

Crip Theory

Derived from Critical Disability Studies and queer theory, crip theory addresses an expansive and fluid prioritizing of physical and cognitive difference (Kafer, 2013; Clare, 2017). Crip is a political and cultural identity that "explores the potential risks and exclusions of identity politics… while simultaneously recognizing the role identity plays in disability discourse…" (McRuer, 2006, p. 36). Alison Kafer (2013) notes that several models, or frameworks, present disability's social construction in North American culture. These models position disability against social conceptions of able-bodied and neurotypical identities. The majority of mainstream disability scholarship engages with a social

model, which argues that access adaptations should be created for disabled people to work, play, and live amongst non-disabled people—the "correct" bodies. Kafer (2013) challenges the normativizing aspects of the social model, presenting her extensive study of crip identity under a political-relational model, an extension of the social model of disability that disability always already intersects with conceptualizations of race, gender, sexuality, class, and citizenship (p. 15).

Crip theory pays keen attention to illuminating and disrupting ideas about how power structures, privilege, and cultural communities influence how disability is communicated in space, place, and time (Kafer, 2013, p. 17). The political-relational nature of crip rejects the rehabilitative medical and assimilationist social model, eschewing cure for radical acceptance and turning toward multiple strategies for facilitating access and community (Clare, 2017). Central to this culture is an ethos of interdependence, as disabled people, caretakers, and others provide mutual aid, healing, and multiple points of accessibility in community building and space-making (Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018; Clare, 2017). Crip theory's intersectional tendencies provide an important framework for how disability, identity, and power are collectively enacted on social media platforms. Additionally, these theories reveal the importance of community, authenticity, and visibility for marginalized TikTok Creators.

Methodology

To analyze the tensions between TikTok's algorithmic suppression and collective responses from queer, trans, and disabled content Creators, I studied three essays written by digital activists and content Creators published in popular press venues. I used critical technocultural discourse analysis (CTDA), a multimodal method, to investigate how offline semiotic frameworks and cultural practices inform performances, artifacts, or content created through the Internet and other ICTs (Brock, 2020). CTDA privileges the power of digital activism by originating from ordinary users through amplifying their experiences, conversations, or discourses derived from the margins. In doing so, individuals and institutions' perspectives uphold cultural power, such as social media platforms, politicians, and corporations (Kuo, 2018).

In this way, CTDA's dedication to multiperspectival analysis is flexible toward any critical/cultural practice of communication, culture, and media. For example, scholars use CTDA as a tool in which to position social media communities as important counterpublics (Squires, 2002; Brock, 2012). A newer methodology, studies use CTDA to analyze Black Twitter and racial justice enclaves on social media (Kuo, 2018; Brock, 2020), the amplification of marginalized culture Creators through blogging (Knight Steele, 2018; Cho, 2018), and the growing sector of social media influencers and content Creators on/offline sway

(Arthur, 2020; Pemberton & Tarkhar, 2021). At the time of this writing, CTDA has not been used to analyze TikTok's digital cultures. Therefore, this chapter extends the crucial contributions of previous CTDA scholarship on marginalization, political identity, and social media to understand emerging tensions of oppression and advocacy from queer, trans, and disabled content Creators on TikTok. To analyze responses from TikTok content Creators, I used CTDA as a way to engage in a qualitative open and selective coding (Basu, 2017) of three popular press articles featuring social media content Creators who experienced shadowbanning or other forms of algorithmic oppression on TikTok. I had four guidelines for choosing the articles. Articles published between 2019 and 2021, personal op-ed essays or interviews and focused on shadowbanning or other forms of algorithmic oppression (e.g., an image of the Creator was circulated on the TikTok platform in an ableist, homophobic, or transphobic manner, or other forms of cyberbullying and harassment) by Creators with a following of over 10,000 accounts on TikTok or another platform were selected for analysis.

I chose to collect data from op-eds written by popular content Creators to protect the agency of marginalized Creators. While popular TikTok hashtags like #shadowbanned (6.1 billion views), #ShadowbannedCheck (33.5 million views), and #ShadowbannedAccount (30.4 million views) are important archives, I chose not to recruit participants or use specific videos documenting these experiences for this study. Though I am adjacent to many of these content Creators, I acknowledge that my standpoint as a white queer/disabled academic in the North American academy can be one of power.

Each article featured a different content Creator: Bailey J. Mills (they/them), a white non-binary autistic TikTok Creator known for their comedy and drag performances; Rosalynne Montoya (she/they), a trans, bisexual, and Latina content Creator who uses TikTok to educate followers on trans history; and Melissa Blake (she/her), a white disabled activist, writer, and content Creator whose image circulated heavily in the #NewTeacher challenge. Though Blake is not on TikTok, she has large followings on other platforms such as Instagram (223,000 followers) and Twitter (115,000 followers), where she is known as the Creator of #MyBestSelfie, a multi-network selfie campaign to challenge the idea that disabled people (especially those with facial differences) are "less" human.

In Spring 2021, I collected the articles and completed an open and selective coding process. From this exercise, I found seven primary codes, 17 secondary codes, and 9 tertiary codes. Using the literature mentioned above in critical algorithm studies and crip theory, I compared the code sets together and developed two significant themes: *visibility versus algorithmic suppression and cyberbullying,* and *TikTok as a platform for authenticity, education, and community building.* These themes investigate how queer, trans, and disabled content Creators make sense of shadowbanning, cyberbullying, and algorithmic oppression on TikTok.

Data Analysis

Visibility Versus Algorithmic Suppression and Cyberbullying

The first theme created from the data collection, visibility, algorithmic suppression, and cyberbullying speaks to the tensions emerging between the visibility of marginalized Creators and the cyberbullying and suppression these Creators face because of the content they post on their platforms. Though each content Creator speaks to different enclaves on their respective social media platforms, visibility and the importance of representation drive their content's importance. For instance, non-binary and autistic drag star Bailey J. Mills noted in their interview with *Dazed Digital,* "my drag represents the misfits" (Bonacic, 2021). Similarly, Rosalynne Montoya, a trans Latina bisexual Creator, notes that their trans history series on their TikTok account amplifies erased stories to a broad audience, who may or may not be trans or queer themselves (Montoya, 2020). In her essay, Montoya explains: "… working as an educator can be difficult but it's important and fulfilling as well. I receive thousands of messages thanking me for the work I do, for inspiring them, and even for changing their minds" (Montoya, 2020). While not on TikTok, Melissa Blake also emphasizes the importance of marginalized Creators and representation on social media, especially as a person with facial differences: "This hope for a bright, less ableist future is the reason I continue to be so visible and vocal on social media" (Blake, 2020). Marginalized Creators, specifically content producers who have personal ties to their community, take advantage of TikTok's penchant for genre and content as a technology to help promote visibility and representation in a productive way (Zulli & Zulli, 2020; Abidin, 2021). TikTok and other platforms can become education sites, rearticulating differences as neutral, not negative.

Visibility comes at a cost for many marginalized Creators as they navigate TikTok's algorithmic suppression. In particular, Creators noted the connections between TikTok's platform vernacular and the affordances for cyberbullying. Platform vernaculars refer to how specific digital spaces, such as TikTok, are designed to elicit a distinct style of communication on the site that is unique and sets it apart from other sites (Gibbs, Meese, Arnold, Nansen, & Carter, 2015; Keller, 2019, p. 2). TikTok's platform vernacular promotes content over interpersonal interaction without heavy moderation, generating a style of communication that is at best amplifying perspectives from a diverse group of users, and at worst, failing to intervene in cyberbullying and address shadowbanning practices.

All three Creators addressed the frustrations of cyberbullying. Melissa Blake, who does not have a TikTok account, spoke to TikTok's negligence of viral challenges, such as #NewTeacherChallenge. The skit-based challenge usually consists of a parent arranging a "FaceTime" call with their young child's "new teacher." Videos show parents calling their young children over to talk to their

teacher and film their reaction to the photo. Viewers show the child's response in real-time. Some videos consist of celebrities or models, but many used disabled people, especially individuals with facial differences, like Blake. The children are shown crying or screaming in fear. After a follower alerted Blake about the trend, Blake noted: "There is no excuse for … a parent to laugh … as their child recoils at the sight of a disabled person" (Blake, 2020). Though Blake's social media platform emphasizes the importance of unapologetic disability visibility, her essay critiques the lack of support from TikTok in intervening instances of cyberbullying. Blake's experience reveals how disabled people are presented as less-than-human because of systemic ableism (Clare, 2017). The lack of TikTok's intervention demonstrates how algorithms (and the platforms who administer them) treat disabled users as disposable and unworthy of support and empathy.

Rosalynne Montoya's essay also reflects on their experiences with transphobic cyberbullying. She writes that cyberbullies often remake accounts or report her content on trans history or everyday experiences as a Latina trans woman as "hate speech" or "nudity." TikTok cyberbullies may also take advantage of the algorithm by stitching Creator videos without tagging the Creator and incorporating cyberbullying into hateful and transphobic remarks into their videos. Montoya notes she finds difficulty in getting TikTok to stop cyberbullies: "Every time I blocked the person [harassing me] his account would come back… I reported the videos, but TikTok's algorithm concluded that they do not violate community guidelines" (Montoya, 2020).

Shadowbanning is another concern for Creators. Shadowbanning, or algorithms designed to surveil and hide user content without formal notification, is a common practice on TikTok (Bridges, 2021). Moreover, shadowbanning initiatives inadvertently target disabled, trans, and queer Creators, many of whom are full-time content Creators who make their living via TikTok and other social networks (Köver & Reuter, 2019; Muliadi, 2020). The threat of shadowbanning leaves many queer, trans, and disabled Creators caught between wanting to promote their work but not wanting to be censored by TikTok for an indefinite amount of time. Bailey J. Mills explains their hesitance to upload their signature drag performance videos because of shadowbanning's looming threat: "People reported [my videos] as inappropriate… even a live show with 1.5k viewers is getting flagged… When I get banned, it really upsets me… I don't want to post these videos because they won't get the recognition that they deserve" (Bonacic, 2021). Rosalynne Montoya also writes about experiencing warnings for their content. She explains that after being reported for pornography, her account froze for a full day. For some Creators, shadowbanning and other punitive reports on an account can result in deletion from the TikTok platform (Montoya, 2020). Marginalized Creators on TikTok must navigate the tensions constituted by visibility and community building while

considering structural limitations in shadowbanning practices and pervasive cyberbullying.

Authenticity, Education, and Community Building

The second theme focuses on TikTok emerging as a platform for education and community building. This shows the dynamic tensions between representational politics, digital community building, and the looming presence of ableist, homophobic, and transphobic algorithmic oppression. Despite TikTok's communicative style— genre over offline interpersonal connections— and practices— "messy" authenticity and uniqueness over curated posts— Creators still emphasize the importance of networks and helping other users by sharing stories, videos, and histories (Zulli & Zulli, 2020; Abidin, 2021; Kennedy, 2020). In doing so, disability becomes less stigmatized and more accepted. Blake explains that by sharing her story, she "… hopes for a brighter, less ableist future [which] is the reason I continue to be so visible on social media" (Blake, 2020). Blake's use of selfies as a form of online activism and advocacy suggests that digital forms of self-portraiture can disrupt ableist ideologies.

Similarly, Bailey J. Mills uses drag as a way to communicate their experiences as a non-binary queer autistic person—"drag is a way for me to get all that weirdness out… even if it doesn't make sense [to neurotypicals], it's still me" (Bonacic, 2021). While people with facial differences and autistic people face different experiences with ableism and other forms of systemic discrimination, TikTok is a space where disabled people can be their authentic selves. Selfies, videos, and other content from disabled (as well as queer and trans) Creators show other social media users that they are not alone.

Education-based content from marginalized Creators often has a secondary focus for community-building and interpersonal interaction. Though perhaps not the most prominent feature of TikTok's communicative style, many marginalized Creators remark on the importance of interpersonal connections from members of their community. Bailey J. Mills notes while they initially joined TikTok as a way to have fun during the COVID-19 pandemic, responses from their following signaled another perk of creating on the app. Mills shares, "… More people started telling me how they had a really bad day, and [my videos] helped them … TikTok is a platform where I … cheer people up" (Bonacic, 2021). Rosalynne Montoya also uses their platform to educate their followers on their lived experiences, trans history and often makes American Sign Language (ASL) videos with their Deaf sister. Montoya's experience highlights the positive and negative patterns emerging from using her TikTok platform to educate followers: "I … received a hate comment stating that being trans is a new trendy thing, when in fact, we have always existed.

I often respond to comments with humor and education … it can be difficult, but it's important and fulfilling … I receive thousands of messages from people thanking me for the work I do … and even for changing their minds" (Montoya, 2020). Here, marginalized Creators use TikTok as a technology for authentic transformation.

The crucial contributions of Creators and authentic education as a way of community building also hold consequences. Trans, queer, and disabled Creators are expected to provide education for other users with little to no support from the platform. Rosalynne Montoya suggests that the vagueness and poorly enforced moderation from TikTok's platform governance must protect marginalized creatures better. Melissa Blake also emphasizes the need for TikTok to step up for disabled, queer, trans, and racialized Creators, writing: "TikTok, I'm also looking at you to help us join this fight" (Blake, 2020). Despite the launching of different Creator programs to amplify the work of marginalized Creators, TikTok's lack of structural support reveals the limitations of representational politics on a social media platform. Montoya concludes that TikTok should create an advisory board to disrupt and build beyond cyberbullying and algorithmic censorship. She explains, "I want to create content on platforms that will protect the [trans] community, but I don't want to create content on platforms that censor my content simply for being trans and Latina" (Montoya, 2020). Marginalized Creators must balance the critical contributions of their authentic representations while also combatting the normalizing forces of shadowbanning and other forms of algorithmic suppression used to imagine a platform where disabled, trans, and queer users do not exist.

Conclusion and Discussion

The viral micro-blogging sensation TikTok may promote itself as a platform of political representation and community building, but the app's AutoR algorithm, which determines who reaches the #ForYou homepage and does not, presents a challenge for disabled, trans, and queer Creators who use their platforms to educate their communities. Additionally, a lack of platform moderation to address cyberbullying and ableist, homophobic, and transphobic-based discrimination places marginalized Creators in a precarious place. Visibility and representation are vital—but the project fails if we ignore the ideological practices that are embedded and programmed into the algorithmic infrastructure and communicative practices that lead to shadowbanning and cyberbullying in the first place. This chapter also notes areas for future TikTok research within the realm of shadowbanning and algorithmic oppression. Future studies may want to examine other communities on TikTok at the intersections of political identity and digital culture and interrogate Black Creator suppression and digital activism (e.g., Black TikTok Strike), shadowbanning as a racist technology,

as well as advocacy from marginalized Creators beyond North American and European contexts.

Notes

1 2SLGBTQIA+ is an acronym commonly used in Canada to represent gender and sexual minorities. The acronym includes Two-spirit (2S), lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual/aromantic communities, while the "+" symbolizes other gender and sexual groups.
2 My use of apparency as opposed to "visible" honors disabled people whose disabilities may be "invisible." The turn toward apparency also disrupts westernized and Eurocentric ideas of knowing through seeing (see D'Souza & Rauchberg, 2020).
3 See Nakamura and Chow-White (2013).

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