

Deplatforming works, this new data on Trump tweets shows | Nieman Journalism Lab

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Remember Milo Yiannopoulos? The right-wing, er, *firebrand* whose “speeches and writings often ridicule Islam, feminism, social justice, and political correctness”? The one who, for a moment there, seemed riiiiight on the edge of bringing the alt-right to mainstream respectability as some sort of *provocateur*? (That’s the sit-next-to-Bill-Maher level of respectability, to be clear, nothing more.)

In July 2016, Twitter permanently banned Yiannopoulos for one particular spree of bad behavior. And when it did, a common take was that deplatforming him would only drive his fans to more cloistered spaces online — Gab, Parler, Discord, whatever — and make him stronger. The same thought has popped up when other *firebrands* have been tossed off: “Deplatforming Alex Jones didn’t silence him — it just sent him to Gab. And Parler. And his own video streaming site, Banned.Video.”

(Remember the summer of 2016? How we talked about things like misinformation and extremism back then? Barely?)

[...]

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