

Dear OFCOM,

I would like to formally respond as an individual member of the public to the consultation on video-sharing providers which is due to end on 24th September 2020.

I write this e-Mail as a young man with high-functioning autism to reply to the consultation in order to say that I fully oppose any effort by the state to censor the free movement of information which in turn affects freedom of speech in the United Kingdom as well as Scotland.

There are concerns about far left and far right groups which seek to incite hatred which are justified if the right evidence is given but there are already existing laws such as S127 of the Communications Act 2003 which deal with these problems. With that said, the way information is defined as 'harmful', 'dangerous', 'misinformation', 'disinformation', 'false information', etc, has become more broader in recent years. Statements that would not otherwise harm anyone are being flagged up as harmful by those that seek to stifle any information they claim is 'dangerous' to their cause in order to thereby justify limiting how their opponents express themselves in debates.

I have concerns that far left groups such as AntiFa, Black Lives Matter and Stand Up To Racism do not get as much harsh punishment for vandalism and/or assaults than designated far right groups. Efforts to control speech on college and university campuses more often than not are made by individuals or groups whose ideology is dedicated to the far left than the far right.

If someone wants to criticise the pharmaceutical industry, especially mandatory vaccine laws (even if they are for vaccine choice and do not want to banish vaccines), they are automatically smeared as 'anti-vaxxers' or 'conspiracy theorists' with an explicit wish made by many who object to them that they should be condemned and shunned with deplatforming included.

If we want to get rid of speech that we find abhorrent, harmful or offensive, we need to be exposed to more opinions and views we despise in order to fully debate them in public with people being able to come to their own conclusions. Whenever efforts are made to criminalise speech that the government dislikes, it only drives those who think the very things the government disagrees with underground with a bubble that grows until it eventually explodes in the form of riots.

I sincerely hope that this proposal to police the internet is completely scrapped in order to secure our democracy and keep our country free.

Regards,

Rainey, Mr J