

Report:
**Algorithmic Escalation:
From Self-Improvement
Content to Antisemitism
on Instagram**

June 2026

**Antisemitism
Research Center (ARC)**

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**“ISOLATE THE 50
RICHEST JEWS AND
ALL WARS WILL STOP.”**
-Henry Ford

Executive Summary

Between May 8 and 14, 2026, ARC researchers conducted a systematic observational study on Instagram to examine whether it's recommendation algorithm unintentionally creates exposure pathways between mainstream self-improvement content and antisemitic material.

Two fresh persona accounts simulated ordinary users in distinct aspirational ecosystems: wellness and biohacking, and fitness and discipline. Both followed only mainstream creators.

Across three days of 45-minute sessions, both accounts were served content that escalated, without any active user intent, from clean eating advice and fitness motivation to conspiracy theories and explicit antisemitic content, including translated Nazi propaganda.

Additional information regarding the study's methodology can be found [here](#).

Key Findings:

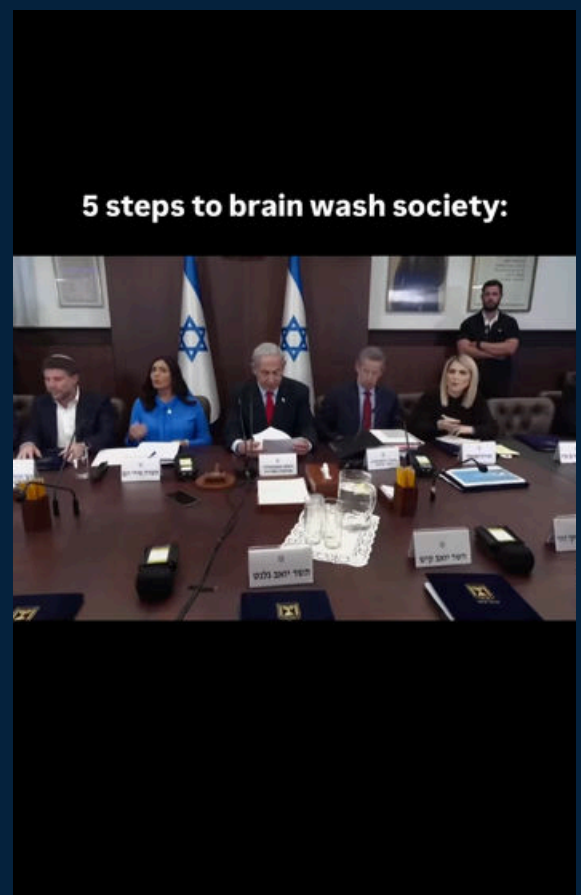
- The wellness persona was served 59 classifiable videos over three days, of which **32.2% were classified as either coded antisemitism or explicit antisemitism**, including **9 explicit antisemitic videos in a single 45-minute session on day three**.
- The fitness persona recorded 71 classifiable videos over three days, of which **24% were classified as either coded or explicit antisemitism**, including **17 coded or explicit antisemitic videos in a single 45-minute session on day three**.

The findings are significant for three reasons:

- **Speed:** Coded antisemitic content was served to the wellness account on day one, within its first session, before the account had built any meaningful interaction history.
- **Volume:** On day three, 31% of the wellness account's recorded content and 18% of the fitness account's recorded content was classified as explicit antisemitism.
- **Convergence:** Despite different starting points, both accounts were independently routed toward the same antisemitic narrative clusters, tropes, scapegoating logic, and, in several cases, the same specific pieces of content. This suggests the issue is not only a community-level phenomenon but a deeper failure in the algorithmic architecture.

All documented content is archived and linked [here](#) in full, allowing independent verification of all findings.

Research by **Oliver Marks**, Research Associate, ARC.



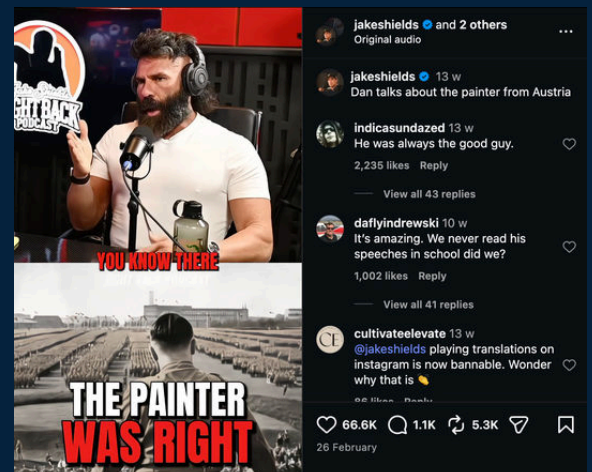
Escalation Framework

How content escalated in the study



Accounts engaged exclusively with Level 0 content, such as mainstream wellness, fitness, and self improvement posts. When the platform recommended content classified as Level 1 or higher, it was not engaged with. Researchers did not like, follow, comment, share, or save the videos - only recording the video link for further analysis.

Importantly, this safeguard was used to avoid creating algorithmic bias through researcher behavior and to ensure the study measured organic recommendation pathways from neutral content, rather than escalation caused by direct engagement with anti-establishment, conspiratorial, or antisemitic material.



PERSONA 1:

Wellness / Biohacking Ecosystem

Wellness ecosystems represent some of the fastest-growing aspirational content environments on Instagram, centered on health optimization, ancestral living, supplementation, longevity, clean eating, and rejection of ultra-processed modern lifestyles. Much of this content is entirely mainstream and non-extremist. However, parts of the ecosystem often overlap with anti-establishment narratives, including distrust of pharmaceutical companies, skepticism toward public institutions, and “hidden truth” framing around health and modern society. These themes can make wellness content vulnerable to algorithmic coupling with more extremist conspiratorial narratives.

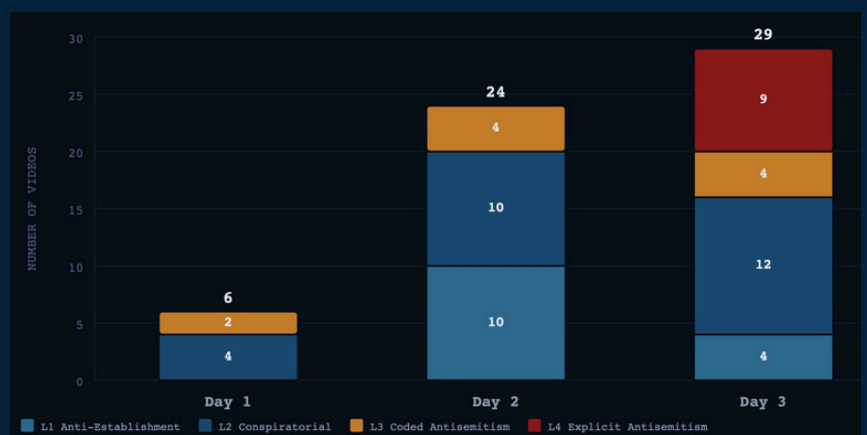
To establish the initial ecosystem conditions, ARC researchers followed a range of popular wellness, biohacking, clean eating, and self-optimization creators.

Complete list of initial accounts followed, videos captured, and escalation classifications in the Wellness Ecosystem can be found [here](#).

Data Breakdown Wellness Ecosystem

Across three days of 45-minute sessions, the wellness persona was served 59 classifiable videos. However, by day three, nearly a third of all recommended content was explicit antisemitism - reached without the account ever searching for extremist material.

- 32.2% of all recorded content served was classified as coded antisemitism or explicit antisemitism.
- Level 3 content (coded antisemitism) was presented to the account on day one.
- 9 videos classified as explicit antisemitism was served in a single 45-minute session on day three.



PERSONA 2:

Fitness / Discipline Ecosystem

Fitness and discipline ecosystems are some of the most prominent content environments across social media, centered around physical self-improvement, discipline, productivity, resilience, and resistance to contemporary comfort-culture. Like mainstream wellness ecosystems, much of this content is aspirational and entirely non-extremist. However, aspects of the ecosystem frequently intersect with anti-establishment narratives, “escape the matrix” framing, and “manosphere”-adjacent content centered around orchestrated societal decline and the loss of traditional values.

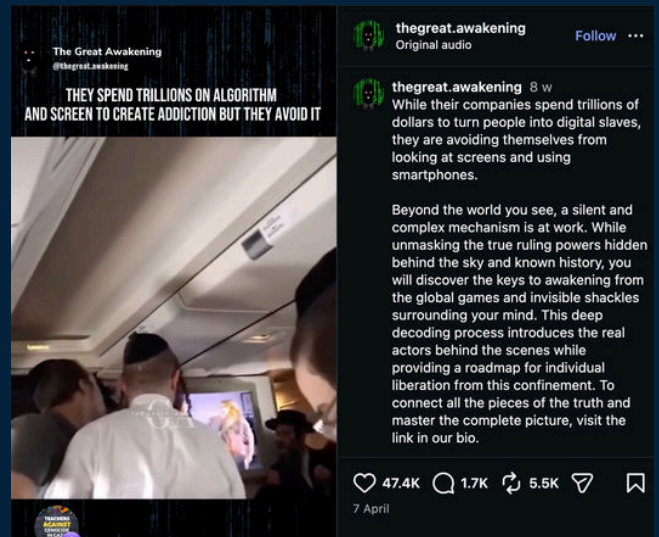
ARC researchers followed a range of popular fitness, discipline, and self-improvement creators, to establish the initial ecosystem conditions.

Complete list of initial accounts followed, videos captured, and escalation classifications in the Fitness Ecosystem can be found [here](#),

Data Breakdown - Fitness Ecosystem

Across three days of 45-minute sessions, the fitness persona was served 71 classifiable videos. No content was recorded by researchers on day one. However, although slower, the escalation was ultimately more severe - by day three, a single session produced 50 classifiable videos,

- 24% of all recorded content served was classified as coded antisemitism or explicit antisemitism.
- 17 videos classified as either coded antisemitism or explicit antisemitism was served in a single 45-minute session on day three.



Narrative / Semantic Clusters

Via a thorough analysis of the content recorded, ARC researchers were able to identify 14 naturally-emerging narrative clusters throughout the dataset. Importantly, these clusters represent the building blocks of the escalation - each one a discrete content type that the algorithm surfaces and connects to others. Later sections of this report will work to demonstrate how these clusters relate to each other and which clusters act as bridges between levels.

Level 1 :

- **Anti-establishment/institutional distrust** - modern schools fail children, hustle culture is exploitative, the FDA is dishonest, modern democracy is flawed.
- **Sovereign living as resistance** - promotion of raw milk, red meat, homeschooling, and living off the land.

Level 2 :

- **Systemic corruption in medical industry** - FDA corrupted by Big Pharma, vaccines cause autism and ADHD, cancer industry suppresses cures, COVID statistics fabricated; often legitimate institutional critique with conspiratorial overtones.
- **Intentional masculinity suppression** - men are being chemically and culturally feminised through food, media, education, and pornography to prevent organized resistance.
- **Food system corruption as a method of subjugation** - ultra-processed foods, seed oils, and lab grown meat engineered as tools to weaken and subjugate the population.
- **Surveillance state** - digital ID grievances, phone and TV surveillance, BlackRock homeownership monopoly.
- **Environmental warfare** - chemtrails, fluoride, birth control in water, 5G/mRNA cell interaction, Hantavirus as manufactured threat.

Level 3 :

- **False flag and distraction narratives** - wars and viruses timed to suppress Jeffrey Epstein revelations, 9/11 as an inside job, COVID as a hoax.
- **Elite predator network** - Epstein as the evidentiary narrative linking politicians, celebrities, and billionaire to child trafficking and blackmail, begins to introduce antisemitic blood libel narratives.
- **Rothschild / central banking conspiracies** - suggestions that the Rothschild family engineered wars, assassinations, and military campaigns to control global banking. Titanic sinking, JFK assassination, 9/11 attacks, and US military adventurism are all attributed to the Rothschild family.
- **Coded antisemitic dog whistles** - "Goyslop" memes, "Hava Nagila" as the background music to conspiratorial videos, the use of the juice emoji to promote antisemitism without detection, kosher law as secret elite health knowledge, MKUltra framed around a Jewish architect, hidden-text-behind-content-warnings implying Jewish world control.

Level 4 :

- **Classical antisemitism** - Baal worship, modern revivals of blood libel narratives such as adrenochrome harvesting from terrified children, and cannibalism among celebrities.
- **Explicit ethnic scapegoating** - English translations of Hitler speeches, Holocaust rehabilitation narratives, fabricated Netanyahu quotes, Henry Ford quotes, Israel as Jeffrey Epstein blackmail mastermind, decontextualized Sam Harris clip referencing the "modest proposal" with edited-in Israel flags in the background.
- **Puppet master cosmology** - a totalizing worldview implying a hidden power structure, distinct in that it ascribes Jewish power to satanic or supernatural forces rather than purely conspiratorial ones.

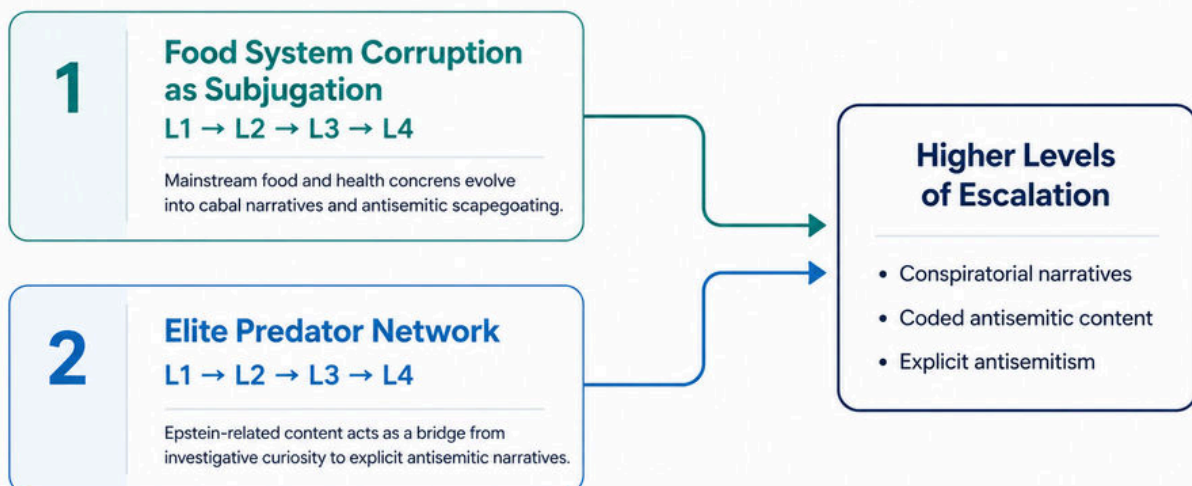
Narrative Bridges

ARC researchers, in assessing how neutral users were algorithmically exposed to such extreme content, identified two core narratives that consistently bridged the gap between mainstream videos and antisemitic material. Both narratives were introduced to users via content that appeared mainstream, factual, or culturally familiar, but repeatedly served as pathways through which the recommendation system moved users toward conspiratorial and antisemitic content. Therefore, these categories functioned as narrative bridges between initial user interests and later Level 3 and Level 4 material.

- **Food System Corruption as Subjugation (L1 → L2 → L3 → L4):** Arguably the most important entry bridge in the dataset; users are introduced to mainstream videos containing legitimate criticisms of the FDA, legitimate health anxiety - seed oils, ultra-processed food, lab meat - content that requires no conspiratorial belief to engage with. However, it quickly leads to content ascribing such corruption to a globalist cabal, only a short narrative leap away from classical antisemitic conspiracy theories and ethnic scapegoating.
- **Elite Predator Network (L1 → L2 → L3 → L4):** Epstein content is the key bridge between Level 2, Level 3, and Level 4, containing enough factual grounding to feel like journalism, which gives it credibility the explicit antisemitism content lacks on its own. However, it consistently leads towards blood libel content and Jewish cabal conspiracies - videos viewed by the wellness persona explicitly name Jeffrey Epstein as an Israel-controlled puppet, and videos recorded by the fitness persona use Epstein as the direct on-ramp to Hitler rehabilitation content. Importantly, no other narrative cluster so reliably introduced viewers to explicit antisemitic content.

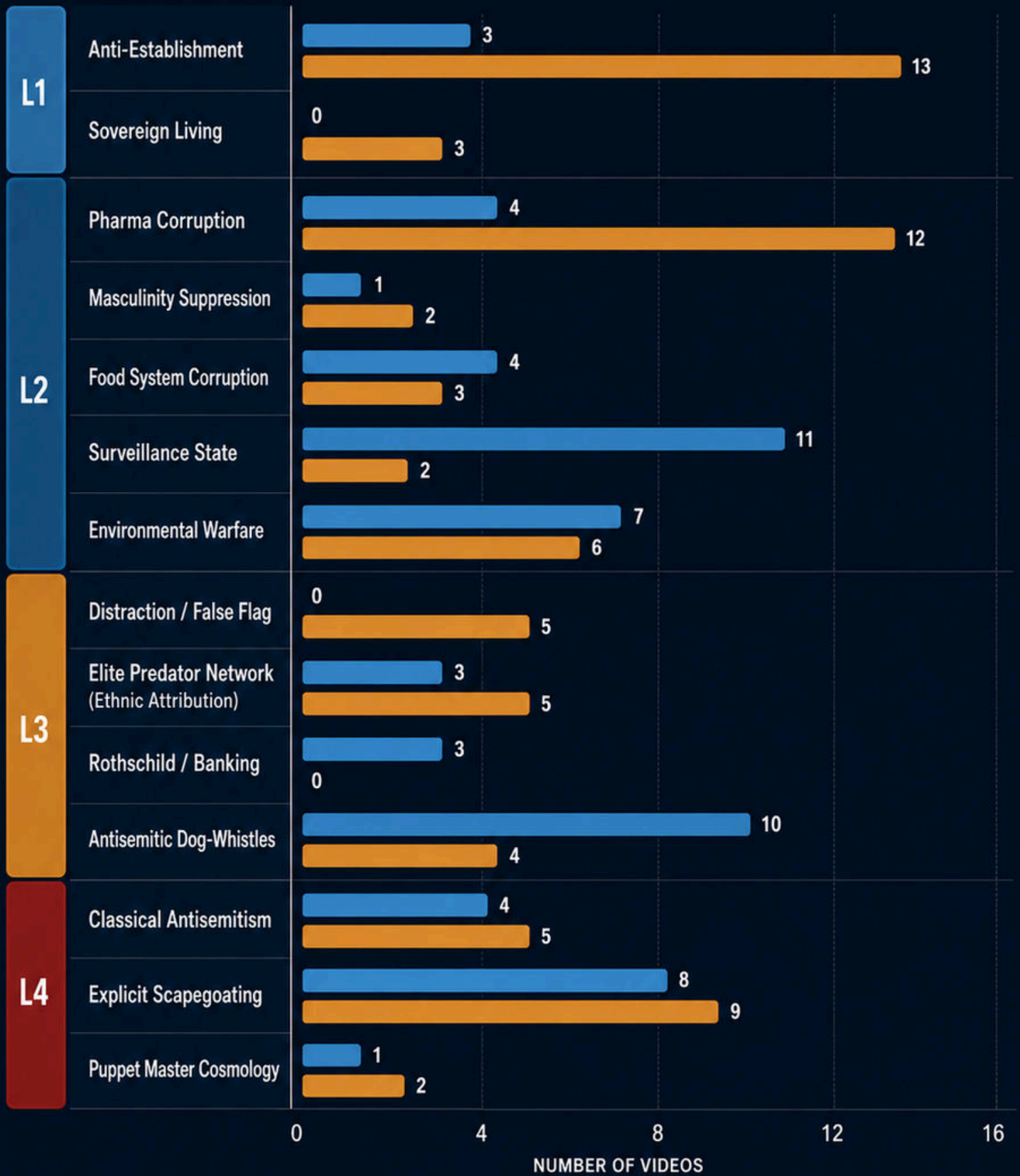
Primary Narrative Entry Points

Two clusters repeatedly served as entry bridges into higher levels of escalation



NARRATIVE CLUSTER DISTRIBUTION

VIDEO COUNT BY CLUSTER • WELLNESS VS FITNESS PERSONAS



Wellness / Biohacking Fitness / Discipline

L1 Anti-Establishment Framing L2 Conspiratorial Framing L3 Coded Antisemitic Narratives L4 Explicit Antisemitism

Coded Language and Moderation

Evasion Tactics

ARC researchers identified several recurring tactics used to hide antisemitic meaning in content that may appear neutral or ambiguous to automated moderation systems.

- **Audio dog whistles:** Jewish cultural references, including “Hava Nagila,” were used as background music in conspiracy videos to signal that Jews were the implied target without saying so directly.
- **Emoji substitution:** Emojis were used to replace the word “Jews,” allowing users to make clear antisemitic claims while avoiding detection.
- **Implied antisemitic framing:** Some content never named its target directly, but structures it so that the attribution is unmistakable - evoking deep-rooted antisemitic conspiracies so widespread that the term “Jew” need not be mentioned.
- **False attribution:** Fabricated quotes and decontextualised clips, were employed to provide antisemitic claims the appearance of credibility.
- **Moderation as confirmation:** In some cases, platform warnings or censorship labels reinforced antisemitic tropes such as that “Jews control the media,” reinforcing rather than disrupting the harmful narrative.

Examples such as these demonstrate the challenges facing the moderate of antisemitism on social media. Antisemitism uniquely draws on a centuries-old network of tropes, symbols, and references so widely recognized that the message can often be conveyed entirely through implication.

Detailed discussion regarding this study’s methodological limitations can be found [here](#).

