What's your Twitter/X social credit score?

The Grayzone's Max Blumenthal and Aaron Mate discuss the release of internal data by X revealing that accounts which criticize Israel are apparently given scores deboosting their posts, while pro-Israel accounts are algorithmically boosted, even when they promote hateful content or harass other users. ||| The Grayzone ||| Find more reporting at https://thegrayzone.com Support our original journalism at Patreon: https://patreon.com/grayzone Facebook: https://facebook.com/thegrayzone Twitter: https://twitter.com/thegrayzonenews Instagram: https://instagram.com/thegrayzonenews Minds: https://minds.com/thegrayzone Mastodon: https://mastodon.social/@thegrayzone #TheGrayzone

#Max

Hey, what's up, everybody? Welcome to The Grayzone. Max Blumenthal here with Aaron Maté. This has been, I think, a historically pivotal week. We're going to discuss everything that took place at Davos, what's happening in Iran, and the upheavals in Northeast Syria. And, um, what else do we have? What's happening back in Washington isn't as interesting as what actually happened. Everything pretty much went down in Davos as Trump set out his agenda for the so-called, uh, board of peace. Aaron, um, do you have any plans for the snowstorm?

#Aaron

Uh, no, I don't know.

#Max

I'm going to be holed up, uh, just holding up.

#Aaron

Yeah.

#Max

Yeah, all right, hunkering down. We got, uh, the storm is coming, as QAnon says—but it's actually a real storm. And, um, I don't know, have you checked your social credit score on Twitter X before we get started?

#Aaron

I didn't, but I hear that the algorithm code was cracked, so you can see whether or not you're being suppressed by Twitter—and why.

#Max

Yeah, I'll send you a link so you can check it. I bet it's similar to mine. Just to share my social credit score, I think it's around negative seventy. And by the way, everybody's complimenting your new studio setup.

#Aaron

Well, thank you, everyone. It's coming along.

#Max

It's coming along. Yeah, I like the shelves—they look very similar to these. Yeah. Is it the IKEA Kallax?

#Aaron

Well, I mean, if it were, I wouldn't be promoting a brand on here—but it's not. It's custom-made by my friend Declan. Thank you, Declan, for building this. Yeah, no.

#Max

Props to Declan. Yes, I have a partnership agreement with the Swedish government and IKEA to promote that. Here's my social credit score. So, for those of you who don't know, you can look up your—well, I actually believe this is real—you can see how algorithmically suppressed or boosted you are on Twitter. I just went into Grok; there's a thread of others doing this. I wrote, "Do the same for Max Blumenthal." You can look up your semantic contextual scoring, and it says that I'm classified for borderline hate and harassment, anti-Zionist, borderline anti-Semitic tropes—confidence: moderate; severity: moderate—and that I'm targeting protected categories, according to Twitter. Ethnicity: Jewish, secondary implied. So when I say "Zionist," Twitter's algorithm understands that to be secondary or implied targeting of the protected minority of Jews.

And I don't target the religion of Judaism, though, I guess—so maybe I'm not so self-hating. "Conspiracy amplification," "Israeli Mossad influence lobbying." So if you talk about the Israel lobby or the Mossad being active anywhere, you're amplifying conspiracy, and you're not supposed to criticize pro-Israel figures and policies, apparently. Terms like "genocidal Israeli regime," "apartheid Israel," "Zionist lobby control," and so on. Or strong language framing Israeli actions or society

collectively, like "Jewish-Israeli majority." So if I talk about polls where the majority of Jewish Israelis support decimating Gaza, that lowers my reach on Twitter. And "Zionist supremacist"—you're not allowed to say that. My bio is neutral. I post a lot. Intense replies. I guess this all works against me.

So de-boost severity is moderate in polarized discussions. And here's my social credit score: hidden reputation score estimated moderately reduced, minus 40% to minus 55%. I believe others, like Norman Finkelstein, are at negative 70%. Our colleague Wyatt Reed is negative 80%. And no violent incitement. How long before this moves off Twitter/X and becomes our—well, as X becomes the everything platform, we lose access because we go after targeted groups. And what about the pro-Israel accounts, like the grifters and the genocidal pro-Israel accounts—like Eyal Yacobi and Stop Antisemitism, which ruins people's lives for criticizing Israel? Check out their semantic contextual scoring. They're getting like plus 80, plus 70. Their social credit is elite. So I think this is pretty significant.

#Aaron

Well, I just asked Grok about this as we were going on the air. And now the new explanation from Grok—and I assume this isn't what you got when you checked your score—is that it's all fake, basically. It calls it a "viral hallucination." Grok says this isn't based on internal data, that there are no public or leaked real X algorithm fields. The viral examples around this prompt show it generating spoofed outputs for various accounts, but it's all simulated by the model responding to the prompt. It's not pulled from any actual backend. What Grok is now saying is that this isn't coming from its own internal data. It basically took the command and, based on someone's public profile and public claims about them, came up with all this. This isn't actual internal data—that's Grok's new explanation. Which seems weird. So Grok, without telling anyone, took part in basically a meme, a bit—and now they want us to think that...

#Max

It was all a dream.

#Aaron

Yeah, that's what they're basically saying. Now, we know Grok has been modified before. For example, there was a time when Grok was actually calling the genocide in Gaza a genocide, and then it got reprogrammed. There was also a time when Grok went full Nazi and basically started promoting white supremacy in line with the views of its owner, Elon Musk. So, given that this has caused a big controversy, I don't know what to believe here, but one possibility is that Grok was modified now, with this story, to say it's all basically a viral hallucination to cover up the fact that it leaked some real data.

#Max

That's what I'm going to go with, for a number of reasons. Grok is wrong all the time. Grok sometimes tries to deceive you. Grok has, quote-unquote, malfunctioned. Remember when Grok went full Nazi for a day? That was interesting. But also, I have, like, 850,000 followers on Twitter, and I get disproportionately low engagement. I've gotten that since something changed after Elon Musk went to Israel and, uh, did his Auschwitz tour with Ben Shapiro. Everything started changing—you saw pro-Israel accounts getting boosted, and I'd get, like, a thousand, two thousand likes, but it's not commensurate with my follower level. So I've always known something was up. Elon Musk has said on Twitter/X that you can have freedom of speech but not freedom of reach. So it's implied. But I mean, I'd say the same for you—you have a very high follower count. You look at anyone who blurted out anything supporting regime change in Iran this month—they were getting 50,000 likes. It was obviously being boosted.

#Aaron

Well, listen, I don't want to rule out the possibility that a lot of people just have me on mute because they don't want to see my posts. But also, look, I've been told by people that the only time they see my tweets is if they go to my page. I've been told that a lot, but I don't know. What are we going to do? We're all at the mercy of these tech overlords. We can complain—and it's good to do that—but look, the bottom line is the genocide has changed things, and no matter how much algorithmic suppression they come up with, they're just not going to brainwash people into supporting Israel or turning away from the genocide.

So I just think no matter what they try to do, no matter how many new platforms they buy up—like just this week, the Ellisons took control of TikTok after the forced sale because too many young people were seeing images of dead Palestinian children—they can do all that, but ultimately, they haven't won the people. And that, to me, is what's most important. And if we get suppressed on Twitter, you know, it is what it is.

#Max

It is what it is. We'll just sell The Grayzone out of old-school newspaper boxes. I'm not ruling that out. We'll send it out like *Jacobin*. We can do that.

#Aaron

Um, The Grayzone Gazette. I like that. I like that.

#Max

Do you know, uh, Palestine News Network? The dude who, like, hounds these trashy Israelis in Miami and stuff? Yeah, he's like, "Your face looks like a freaking frog." You know, I mean, some of it's kind of satisfying. Yeah, I grew up with that guy, Ramsey. He's the man. And he was just kicked

off TikTok for "offline behavior." That's a new policy—so even if you follow the terms of service online, you can still be kicked off for being naughty to Israelis offline. Or, like, they could say, "Oh, you got a DUI." So that's a new thing I think the Ellison-owned TikTok has brought in.

#Aaron

There was that brief window before Elon went to Israel when I really think we had something close to free speech, because under the old Twitter regime there was a lot of censorship. There was. I remember prominent accounts being kicked off—they censored Trump, for example. And there were many leftist, anti-imperialist accounts that were censored too. Then, at a certain point when Elon came in, those accounts were restored. This was before he went full-on Zio. So there was a moment of free speech. It was a glorious time, but all that's long behind us.

#Max

I think that's really my basis for suspecting we're being de-boosted—because there was that brief honeymoon period when we were getting likes and retweets commensurate with our follower count, and it felt natural after the old Obama-Biden regime was vanquished. We all probably would've been suspended under that regime after October 7th. So I can live with at least existing in this techno-feudalist virtual order. But it's interesting to see how we're possibly being algorithmically de-boosted. It all makes sense. I have a hard time believing that was all a hallucination.

#Aaron

It was all a dream—that's what they're saying. That's Croc's official line. I'm not joking.

#Max

It was all a dream.

#Aaron

A visual hallucination.

#Max

Well... it was another hallucination I had, where I actually grew and my consciousness rose. So I'm glad for it. And I think this is a good transition, actually, to Iran, because—