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The Breadtube to Conformity Pipeline

Algorithms and the Erosion of Anarchy

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September 24, 2025

Journalist Maria Ressa recently explained how the rise of the authoritarian right has been directly caused by social media algorithms which hack our biology and change the way we see the world.

The algorithms targeting leftist audiences can be equally insidious. Breadtubers like "Non-Compete" guide impressionable young anarchists into a feedback loop that gradually shifts their perspectives towards a bland and safe amalgamation of democracy and Marxism, presented with a superficial anarchistic veneer. As a result, they manage to strip the beautiful idea of all its potency and successfully gentrify it.

A marked ideological shift takes root in the audience as they consume this content that gently critiques capitalism while advocating for a blend of democratic socialist and Marxist solutions. These solutions are misleadingly presented as historically anarchist, gradually reshaping their beliefs and steering them away from the core tenets of anarchism. Ultimately, this

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trajectory leads them towards state socialism, which is the inevitable outcome of Marxism.

By framing their messaging in a way that resonates with the marginalized identities of their audience, Breadtubers can obscure the authoritarian implications of their ideology, making it easier for followers to adopt these views without fully realizing the departure from anarchist principles they've embarked on. As these people become increasingly conditioned by the denser and denser Marxist ideology the algorithm feeds them, figures like Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Deng and Xi start to look like natural extensions of their Marxist beliefs, further entrenching them in an ideology that contradicts their original values. This gradual shift can lead to a profound transformation in their worldview, initially without their conscious awareness.

The appeal of belonging to the community that forms around these influencers, along with the desire to adopt a shared ideology to gain the acceptance of the wider fan club, further entrenches these ideological shifts. This sense of belonging can obscure individuals' awareness of the gradual evolution of their beliefs, making it incredibly challenging for them to recognize how far they've strayed from their original anti-authoritarian perspectives.

Non-Compete is an example of a Breadtuber who claims to synthesize elements of anarcho-communism, democracy, classical Marxism, and Leninism, while actually rejecting everything about anarchy that makes it anarchy. He frequently glorifies authoritarian government, especially heaping praise on the Vietnamese government as an American expat living in that country. He's eager to promote dialectical materialism as "science" and he even proposes building what he calls a "democratic police force", claiming the problem with policing is that we don't hold elections to choose who gets to police us. He insists these absurd ideas are him being "pragmatic". Many of his videos are wildly off-base, yet thousands of viewers continue to watch and embrace his distorted ideas as truth, then

I would advise newcomers to avoid using YouTube as a primary resource for learning about anarchy. The platform's structure and monetization promote clickbait, misinformation, and sensationalism, which can lead to misunderstandings that can take years to shake. A lot of Youtube creators focus on generating drama and conflict between channels and ideologies rather than providing accurate, in depth perspectives.

Instead, I recommend engaging with the foundational texts of various anarchist schools of thought. Reading books and essays from credible sources allows for a deeper understanding and encourages critical thinking. This approach enables you to compare and contrast different viewpoints directly from the original authors, rather than relying on the interpretations of Breadtube personalities who may or may not have actually read the texts they're talking about.

Too many individuals expect to have anarchist ideas spoon-fed to them by questionable but charismatic figures — a lot of them grifters — who present themselves as authorities on anarchy while often having very little understanding of it and simply use it as a side-hustle.

Influencers and the algorithms that promote their content undermine authentic engagement with anarchist principles, which can only be fully grasped through independent study. Instead of fostering critical thinking and encouraging the development of personal perspectives, the algorithm cultivates a culture of conformity where followers passively accept sanitized ideas and feel-good platitudes, without ever reckoning with the challenging complexities that anarchy entails.

come into anarchist spaces and insist anarchy is when Marx and Kropotkin and Lenin and Obama have a big sweaty orgy.

You simply cannot reconcile authority with anti-authority; any attempt to synthesize authoritarian and anti-authoritarian ideas ultimately negates the essence of anti-authoritarianism. There is nothing "pragmatic" about suggesting that authoritarian ideologies and anarchy can be mashed together when a century of history shows otherwise. Authoritarian communists have systematically persecuted anarchists, from imprisonments and forced labour to torture and murder, and have frequently allied with fascists and the police to violently suppress anarchist movements.

To be an anarchist means to oppose all forms of social hierarchy, not to endorse it when convenient, as seen in his fawning over the Vietnamese government, the USSR, or democratic cops. His ideology is not a synthesis of anarchy and archy; it is simply authoritarian socialism. The moment one embraces the authority of the state, they abandon the principles of anarchy.

The anarcho-Marxist sphere fomented by Breadtube violently conflicts with anything I recognize as anarchy. Within this echo chamber, pro-government or pro-Majoritarianism beliefs are portrayed as the only rational perspective, while dissenters are shunned and ridiculed by both the Breadtube personalities and their most vocal supporters. When the thought leaders eventually renounce their claimed anarchist affiliations and openly embrace authoritarian socialism, many of the followers fall in line behind them. A notable example of this phenomenon is BadMouseProductions, an early breakout Breadtube figure. Initially, he gained significant popularity by creating videos promoting anarchy. However, he later announced he was a Maoist and pushed that authoritarian ideology to his extensive audience.

The algorithms that pump Democratic Marxism across the entire Breadtube network and bombard subscribers with ideological sameness create a homogenized environment

where dissenting opinions vanish. This relentless exposure to uniform content reinforces existing beliefs and discourages critical thinking, making it increasingly challenging for individuals to question or explore alternative perspectives to those promoted by easily marketable leftism-gurus.

As followers are fed a long queue of regurgitated Marxist and democratic socialist narratives, they become desensitized to the authoritarian implications of the ideologies being promoted. The algorithms effectively construct a reality where authoritarian pro-government ideas are normalized, and any deviation from the accepted narrative is met with hostility or dismissal. This not only solidifies the followers' commitment to their new regressive beliefs but also fosters a culture of conformity, where the desire for community and acceptance outweighs the principles of individual freedom and anti-authoritarianism that initially drew them to anarchism. Breadtube becomes a powerful mechanism for ideological regression, illustrating how social media controls political identities in incredibly restricting ways.

This ancom to tankie pipeline is all too common, as people find it easier to embrace popular, well-worn narratives and sacrifice their commitment to anarchy in exchange for conformity and validation. The desire for acceptance within any community overshadows critical reflection. The algorithms driving this shallow content are acutely aware of this. They prioritize easily marketable perspectives that promote uniformity and deference to Breadtube celebrities, along with their defective interpretations of anarchist theory. It's far more profitable for internet platforms when users align with dominant ideologies, allowing them to be served an endless stream of nearly identical videos from trendy leftist influencers all pushing an inoffensive Americanized Marxism.

The consequences of this algorithmic manipulation reach far beyond individual belief systems. The coercive Breadtube pipeline not only sabotages the anarchist movement but also

perpetuates an oppressive governmental system that has historically failed to pose any real challenge to the authoritarian right and has merely succeeded in reproducing the same oppressive conditions it claims to oppose: An authoritarian government with a monopoly on violence that brutally crushes all dissent while engaging in imperialist expansionism and exploiting all the people under its control for their labor.

The algorithms driving this transformation illustrate just how easily radical movements can be co-opted and repurposed, ultimately undermining their original values and rendering them inert. Consequently, Breadtube pumps out a generation of so-called "radicals", who, while convinced they are championing liberation, inadvertently bolster the very systems of oppression they initially sought to dismantle.

Genuine radical thought is not only difficult to monetize but also poses a direct challenge to new media's power. As a result, the algorithm systematically suppresses genuinely anarchist ideas to protect the political interests of the tech-industrialists and mitigate the significant threat to their capital anarchy presents. The rich tend to find ways to hold onto their wealth under socialist governments, leveraging their expertise in economics and logistics to join the nomenklatura and weather the storm until the government inevitably collapses back into traditional fascism. On the contrary, anarchy leaves the propertied classes no room to maneuver - When anarchists rise up, all their power and wealth will be rendered obsolete overnight.

The algorithm has become the most formidable weapon in the ruling class's arsenal. It adeptly neutralizes any threat to the entrenched status quo, ensuring the preservation of existing power structures with striking efficiency. Regardless of whether you lean left or right, it relentlessly feeds you authoritarian narratives, prioritizing systems of control over genuine liberation.