

Transgender Facebook content dominated by right-wing sources, study finds

Over the course of a year, anti-trans Facebook posts earned more engagement than positive and neutral trans content combined, Media Matters for America found.

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By Tim Fitzsimons

Anti-transgender Facebook content shared by right-wing news sources generated more engagement than content from pro-transgender or neutral sources combined, according to a Media Matters for America study of 225 viral social media posts.

That means the majority of Facebook interactions with those viral posts — over 43 million of 66 million shares, comments and reactions over the span of a year — were on items posted by anti-trans websites like [LifeSiteNews](#), [Daily Wire](#) and Daily Caller, according to the report

"Facebook users are getting a totally biased and factually inaccurate understanding of the multitude of issues that impact trans people," said Brennan Suen, Media Matters' LGBTQ program director and one of the study's authors. Suen pointed to [an October Pew poll showing that a majority](#) of Americans get news from Facebook.

In total, seven of the top 10 sources for interactions on popular transgender Facebook content were anti-trans sites. Just three LGBTQ-oriented sources appeared in the top 10: PinkNews, Gay Star News and NBC Out.

Trans activist and writer Raquel Willis said she was unsurprised by the finding that Facebook interactions about transgender issues are dominated by sources that oppose transgender rights and degrade transgender individuals.

"Narratives that further our demonization, that further confusion, are still the ones that often carry the most weight in our society," Willis said. "Blood is on the hands of the Mark Zuckerbergs and the people who don't want to hold these platforms to a humane standard."

"Actual lives of marginalized people are at stake," she added.

Suen said anti-transgender content that "lies about best practice medical care for trans youth" could "enable adults to do harm to their own children and [deprive trans youth of affirmation](#) and care that can be life saving."

"Transphobic discourse online contributes to this dangerous rejection of trans children, [real world harassment of trans people](#) and harmful policies — and it contributes to a social and political culture that continues to demonize and fail the trans community," Suen added.

Facebook did not respond to NBC News' request for comment on Media Matters' findings.