Ideologies of Hate

There's a big difference between hate speech and making real political points. One way to tell the difference is to look for *ideologies of hate*: these are basic ideas that are found in hate material and not usually found in legitimate discussion. (An *ideology* is a system of ideas or a way of thinking.) Writers who use these ideas are trying to play on your emotions to get you to agree with them.

Othering and Dehumanization

The most important hateful idea is that the world is divided into two groups: "Us" and "Them." Hate content creates an idea of an "Other" who is absolutely and unchangeably different from us. Writers who use this idea will always emphasize things that make the Other seem different and will argue that people are born different, rather than the differences come from our cultures or how we are raised. Sometimes writers will use negative terms for the Other or compare them to animals to portray them this way.

The Other is usually shown as either *inferior* or *threatening* (or both). It's important to hate speech that the writer's group is shown as being both smarter and better than the Other. At the same time, the Other will often be shown as a threat to the writer's group. This is often done by misinterpreting facts, statistics or history to suggest that the Other is trying to hurt the writer's group. Othering and dehumanization can make it seem like violence against a group is acceptable and even necessary for your own group's survival.

The Glorious Past

Another important idea in hate material is that the writer's group has lost its rightful place in the world. Usually, the writer will say that this is the fault of the Other or people within the group who've turned against it.

Victimhood

It's important for hatemongers to feel as though they are the victims and their group is under attack. Since we all sometimes feel like the world is against us, it can be very effective to tell us that our problems are somebody else's fault. Anyone who suffers as part of the struggle (including those who are arrested for hate crimes, or whose websites are shut down for spreading hate speech) are not just victims but *martyrs*, whose suffering is almost holy because it happened as part of the struggle. Also, if members of the writer's group are the real victims, this means that people we have designated as Other are not victims, so we don't need to feel any sympathy for them.

Secret Enemies

One of the clearest signs that an argument is based on hate is showing one or more groups as secretly plotting against the writer's group. Sometimes the group being targeted is shown as being manipulated by another, even more evil group (to explain how they can be both dangerous and inferior.) In some cases the secret enemy may be a group that does not even exist, such as a conspiracy, secret society or even aliens.

Member's of the writer's group who don't share the writer's prejudices are portrayed as being "asleep" or "sheep" while the writer and others like them "have their eyes open." To explain why the crimes of these secret enemies are not reported, hate groups will often say that the targeted groups are in control of the news media.

Us Versus Them

Another sign of an argument coming from hate is the idea that the groups cannot co-exist: conflict is inevitable. An extreme version of this is *accelerationsism*, suggesting that a war will happen soon between the writer's group and the Other and that the writer's group must be prepared to be on top.

Three Kinds of Dishonest Arguments

A dishonest argument is a way of "lying with the truth." It doesn't include things that are actually lies, but it selects or presents things in a way that gives you a false idea of how strong the argument is.

Dishonest arguments are a sign that someone isn't *really* interested in discussing an issue with you, so it's probably a waste of time debating them. It can also be a sign that they're trying to manipulate you into believing something without being open about their real position.

Here are the three most common kinds of dishonest arguments and three specific examples of each one.

Arguments that are dishonest about the facts: These fool you by giving you a false impression of what the facts are on the issue.

The Cherrypicking Argument

Giving only the facts that support one side of the argument, and leaving out the others.

Example: "This cereal is the perfect breakfast. It has a dozen vitamins and minerals." (And also a day's worth of sugar.)

The Iceberg Argument

Excusing a lack of evidence by that what *has* been recorded suggests there must be much more that has not.

Example: "Five people were charged with running restaurants without a license last year. When you add all the people they *didn't* catch we can see this is a big problem." (Some things are genuinely under-reported. But if you don't have a good reason to believe that's the case, assume the facts that you have are accurate.)

The Naming Your Terms Argument

Using a name or term that requires the other person to accept your point of view or interpretation of the issue. This technique is also used to get people to Google words or phrases that will be more likely to support your side.

Example: "We need to do something about all the wildlife in cities, especially raccoons. These little trash pandas are responsible for knocking over more garbage cans than anything else. If you don't believe me, Google 'trash panda' and 'garbage can.'" (Searches for that term are a lot more likely to get results that are negative about raccoons, and adding "garbage can" means you're more likely to see examples of raccoons causing problems.)

Arguments that are dishonest about the arguer: These fool you by hiding or misrepresenting something about the person making the argument.

The "just asking questions" argument.

Pretending that you're just playing "devil's advocate" when you really support one side of the argument, or hiding a personal reason why you might support one side over another. It can also mean being skeptical about something that doesn't affect you but does affect others: for example, it's easy to question whether how bad racism is if you've never experienced it.

Example: "Before I start my math homework I think we should think about whether I really need math to succeed in life." (You obviously have a motivation to not want to do your homework!)

"The Sock Monkey Bar and Grille is the best restaurant in town." (Did I mention my brother owns it?)

The Moving Target Argument

Making an argument, then if people react badly pretending that you had been making a less extreme one.

Example:

A: "We shouldn't let women be firefighters." B: "What? That's sexist." C: "I don't mean that *no* women should be firefighters, but we should make them show they're strong enough for the job before we hire them." (They'll keep moving the target until they find something you decide isn't worth the trouble of arguing against.)

The Persecuted Genius

Treating that the fact that most experts in the field think you're wrong as evidence that you must be right, because why else would they try to keep you quiet?

Example: "*Canadian Geographic* won't publish my theory that the city of Flin Flon was only put on maps as a secret message to aliens. They must be afraid I'm getting too close!" (Theories that go against the consensus in fields like science and history *have* turned out to be true—for example, at first scientists didn't agree that the dinosaurs were killed by an asteroid, and historians used to believe that only men went on Viking raids—but in both cases nobody tried to 'silence' the people promoting those theories, and the consensus changed when new evidence was presented.)

Arguments that are dishonest about the issue*:* These try to fool you by giving a misleading picture of the debate around the issue.

The Fake Doubt Argument

Pretending that there is not a *consensus* (a theory that most experts in a field agree is most likely correct) on the topic when there is. Sometimes there really isn't a consensus, but if there is then an argument that goes against it needs a lot of extra evidence to be convincing. If you think someone might be using this argument, ask these questions:

- How many experts are there on each side?

- How many of those experts have relevant credentials? (Doctors, scientists and other experts don't necessarily know more than the average person outside their own topic. Be suspicious when someone is used as an authority on a topic they're not a real expert on.)

- Is there an established consensus? (To find out, look for an article on the topic in an encyclopedia like Wikipedia or Encyclopedia Britannica.)

- Does one side have a motive to make you think there's doubt when there isn't? (Tobacco companies funded research for years on *other* possible causes of lung cancer to make it look like there was still doubt.)

- Where has evidence on either side appeared? (Scientific and academic journals are the best evidence: check their Wikipedia article to make sure they have a good track record. Newspapers will sometimes print "both sides" of a story even if it doesn't really have both sides, so being quoted in a news article isn't good evidence there isn't consensus.

Example: "Whether or not Flin Flon exists is still under debate. Not every map has Flin Flon on it." (All cartographers agree that Flin Flon does exist. It's not on every map because it only has about 6,000 people.)

How to Report Hate Online

One of the best ways of fighting hate is to report it to the service or site that hosts the content.

Seven in ten kids say they would be more likely to respond to prejudice online if the website or app they were using had clear and easy-to-use tools for reporting unacceptable behaviour.

To help make it easier for you to **report hate online**, here are instructions on how to do it in some of the places where kids report seeing hate and prejudice most often. We've also added links to **community standards and guidelines** for different platforms. You can cut and paste from these to show people when something they've posted is against the platform rules.

Facebook: Find the content you want to report and then go to the How to Report Things page (https://www.facebook.com/help/reportlinks/). To see if something violates Facebook's Community Standards, check here: https://www.facebook.com/communitystandards

Instagram: You can see Instagram's Community Guidelines here: https://help.instagram.com/477434105621119/. To report hate content in a photo: tap the three dots above the photo and then tap Report. To report it in a comment: tap the word balloon below the image, swipe or tap the comment you want to report, tap ! (the exclamation mark icon) and then choose Report This Comment.

Snapchat: To report a Snap or a Story, press and hold it and then tap the flag icon or "Report Snap" when it appears. Snapchat's Community Guidelines are here: https://www.snap.com/en-US/community-guidelines

YouTube: You need to be signed in to report content on YouTube. To report a video, move to the part of the video that has the hate content and then click the three dots below the video player. Select Report, then select Hateful or Abusive Content and add any details explaining why you consider it to be hate content. YouTube's community guidelines are here: https://www.youtube.com/howyoutubeworks/policies/community-guidelines/

TikTok: Tap 'Share' on the right side of the video and choose Report. You can see TikTok's Community Guidelines here: https://www.tiktok.com/community-guidelines?lang=en

Discord: There are two ways of reporting content on Discord. The first is to tell the moderator of the server you're on. The second is to report it directly to Discord with this form: https://support.discord.com/hc/en-us/requests/new?ticket_form_id=360000029731 All Discord servers have to follow the service's Community Guidelines (you can see those at https://discord.com/guidelines) but some servers will have stricter rules as well.

Twitch: To report a channel click or tap the three dots and then Report. To report a user, click or tap the user's name in chat and then click Report. Here are Twitch's Community Guidelines: https://www.twitch.tv/p/en/legal/community-guidelines/ Twitch also has instructions on what to include in a report: https://help.twitch.tv/s/article/how-to-file-a-user-report?language=en_US#BestPractices

Fortnite: Start by selecting the menu icon. How you do this is different depending on what system you're using: press ESC on a PC or Mac, Options on a Playstation, Menu on Xbox and + on a Switch. Select Report Player, then choose the best option on the Reason tab. Select the player on the Player Name tab. If you want you can use the Additional Info tab to give more information. Select Send Report when you're done. The Code of Conduct for Fortnite and all other Epic Games games is here: https://www.epicgames.com/site/en-US/community-rules

Overwatch: From the Chat window you can right-click the player's name, select Report, and then select the appropriate action. The Code of Conduct for Overwatch and all other Blizzard games is here: https://us.battle.net/support/en/article/42673

Roblox: Click "Report Abuse" to send a message to the moderators. You can also send a message directly to Roblox at info@roblox.com. You can see the Roblox Community Rules at https://en.help.roblox.com/hc/en-us/articles/203313410-Roblox-Community-Rules.

Minecraft: If someone violates the Community Standards (https://www.minecraft.net/en-us/community-standards) on a Realm or Featured Server you can report it with this form: https://help.minecraft.net/hc/en-us/requests/new . Private servers, on the other hand, are not moderated by the company: it is up to the user who runs the server to decide what behaviour is unacceptable.

For platforms other than the ones listed here, go to their website and look for Frequently Asked Questions or Community Guidelines. You can also check this list: https://cyberbullying.org/report#R

If a channel, video or post has ads, you can also complain to the advertiser. Find out how to do that here: https://neweuropeans.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/5-steps-to-reporting-hate-online-NEUK.png

How to Push Back Against Hate Online
– tip sheet

Most kids see hate and prejudice online, and most of them say it's important to do something about it. But whether you've seen a video that's full of racist conspiracy theories or have just seen a friend share an offensive meme, it can be hard to know what to do about it.

"My dad always told me if you have an opportunity to help someone, you really should."

The most important thing is to know that *you can make a difference*. A lot of kids think that nobody will listen if they speak out, but the fact is that we get our ideas about what's normal and what's okay in a community from what the people there say and do. Like how in an online space like a social network or a game, we all typically listen to the *loudest* people. So that means that when we do speak out, we can change other people's ideas of what's okay. It also means that if we *don't* speak out we're letting the loudest people decide what's right and wrong for your community, even if most of the people in it don't agree.

It's important to be the first person to speak out, and it's also important to be the second. Being the first one to speak out can make other people see it's okay for them to do it. And being the second can help both the first person feel supported, and can also encourage others to speak out too! Every time you speak out, you make other people more likely to do it next time.

"I do not want to draw attention to myself. I do not want to become a victim by speaking up."

Sometimes you may not feel safe speaking out, or you may be worried that it will make things worse for somebody else. That makes sense, especially when the comments have been hurtful.

Here are some ways you can speak out that probably won't make things worse for you or anyone else:

- Change the subject. At the very least, you're showing that you don't agree with what was said or posted.
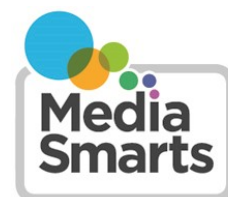
CANADA'S CENTRE FOR DIGITAL AND MEDIA LITERACY

- Ask a question. Say "I don't get it, what did you mean by that?" so that they have to either take back what they said, say that they really mean it or change the subject themselves.

- If you think someone might have been hurt, let them know privately that you don't agree.

- Get a screenshot (see www.take-a-screenshot.org) in case you or somebody else want to report what happened to the platform later.

- Don't be a part of it. You can choose not to Like or share things you disagree with. You can also leave the conversation any time people post or share things that are hateful and prejudiced.

"The big thing is recognizing it at the time. Too often it goes by so fast, it is over before you realize what just happened."

You don't have to respond right away. Instead, take a few seconds to think about how you want to respond. Press your mental "pause" button and ask yourself: What do I think is the right thing to do?

"Sometimes my friends say they're just kidding, but the damage is done and they're backtracking to cover what they really mean."

Most kids agree that hate and prejudice online hurt them, even if they're not the target.

People sometimes will act like something doesn't hurt their feelings because they don't want to admit that it affected them.

Even if nobody who sees or hears hate at that time is hurt by it, it's making a space where people who would be hurt by it, to not feel welcome.

"It's my best friend who says something shocking."

It can be hardest to push back against prejudice when it's coming from people who are close to you. But those are the people who are most likely to listen to you, so it's extra important to say something.

"I think we are all guilty of it from time to time."

When you want to push back against hate online, you should assume that the person didn't mean to be hurtful. Don't criticize or blame them.

Even if you think that they are trying to be hurtful, it doesn't help to get angry at them.

Talk about the message instead: why it's not accurate, why it's hurtful, and why you don't agree with it.

"Most gamers just want to play and have fun, not get involved in racial slurs that ruin the game."

Don't think that you have to win every argument to make a difference.

No matter what you say or do, you may not change a person's mind.

What's more important is that you send a message to everyone else that this isn't okay.

"I think that sometimes they aren't trying to be prejudiced, they just think it's funny."

Nobody wants to be the one who takes a joke too seriously. Instead, you can answer humour with humour. For example, you can use a GIF or a meme that makes it clear you don't agree with what was said or posted.

Here are a few classic *Simpsons* memes to get you started:

bit.ly/homerheadlock

bit.ly/simpsonalphas

"Why would adults want to do that? Why would they want to fool kids? How could I fall for it?"

Remember that anybody can post anything online. Sometimes websites made by hate groups look better than websites for universities or government agencies!

When you're looking for information, don't assume a person or website is who they say they are. Do a search on their name or check Wikipedia to see what other people say about them.

Whether it's a website, a video or a forum, hate groups don't usually show you who they are right away. Instead they try to get you to laugh at hurtful jokes or make you blame a particular group for your problems, and tell you to look up search terms that they know will lead to sites or videos that were made to spread their message.

Just like it isn't fair to think that everyone like you is the same, don't be tricked into thinking that any members of any other group are all the same, no matter their race, religion, or gender. If somebody is telling you that a whole group of people is a threat to you, it's because they want you to think it's okay to hurt those people.

If you see someone spreading stuff like that on a social network or video sharing site, report it. (See https://cyberbullying.org/report for how to do that.)

Whether you're speaking out against hate, reporting it, or just showing you don't agree, we all have the power to stake a stand against hate online.