

YouTube Censors Epidemiologist Knut Wittkowski for Opposing Lockdown

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Big Tech companies are aggressively tamping down on COVID-19 “misinformation” — opinions and ideas contrary to official pronouncements.

Dr. Knut M. Wittkowski, former head of biostatistics, epidemiology and research design at Rockefeller University, says YouTube removed a video of him talking about the virus that had racked up more than 1.3 million views.

Wittkowski, 65, is a ferocious critic of the nation’s current steps to fight the coronavirus. He has derided social distancing, saying it only prolongs the virus’ existence, and has attacked the current lockdown as mostly unnecessary.

Wittkowski, who holds two doctorates in computer science and medical biometry, believes the coronavirus should be allowed to create “herd immunity,” and that short of a vaccine, the pandemic will only end after it has sufficiently spread through the population.

“With all respiratory diseases, the only thing that stops the disease is herd immunity. About 80% of the people need to have had contact with the virus, and the majority of them won’t even have recognized that they were infected,” he says in the now-deleted video.

“I was just explaining what we had,” Wittkowski told The Post of the video, saying he had no idea why it was removed. The footage was produced by the British film company Journeyman Pictures.

“They don’t tell you. They just say it violates our community standards. There’s no explanation for what those standards are or what standards it violated.”

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In articles and interviews across the web, he has likened COVID-19 to a “bad flu.” That likely made him a target for YouTube, which said in April it would be “removing information that is problematic” about the pandemic.

“Anything that goes against [World Health Organization] recommendations would be a

violation of our policy and so removal is another really important part of our policy,” CEO Susan Wojcicki [told CNN](#).

Wittkowski’s argument is a minority opinion among his colleagues, but still well within mainstream thought and currently is the basis for Sweden’s non-lockdown approach to the pandemic.

The embattled WHO, however, is not a fan, with the group’s executive director of health emergencies, Mike Ryan, this week calling it “a really dangerous, dangerous calculation.”

Rockefeller University — Wittkowski’s employer for 20 years — also released a statement [sharply distancing itself](#) from him last month.

While the doctor might have been too hot for YouTube, he has found a home at the [American Institute for Economic Research](#), which is currently hosting the video online.

Across social media, censors have been racing to limit the flow of verboten information.

“We have broadened our definition of harm to address content that goes directly against guidance from authoritative sources of global and local public health information,” Twitter said in April shortly after removing two tweets by Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro.

That same month, Facebook conceded it had been [working with state governments](#) in California, New Jersey and Nebraska to remove pages for anti-quarantine events.

“It’s the kind of totalitarian thinking and conduct that has cost millions of lives in recent world history. The fact that it’s being done by private companies and not government doesn’t change that,” Ron Coleman, a prominent First Amendment lawyer, told The Post.

Wittkowski, however, says history has already vindicated his earlier position that the old and immunocompromised alone should have been strictly isolated, which [The Post reported in March](#).

Roughly one-third of all US COVID-19 deaths have been among nursing home patients and staff, a problem that Wittkowski says was deeply exacerbated in New York by Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s March 25 executive order requiring nursing homes to accept individuals with the virus.

He dismissed a new order from the governor this week [requiring regular COVID testing](#) for staff as a farce.

“Cuomo can’t undo his mistake of forcing nursing homes to take in infected people when the horse is out of the barn,” he said.

If nothing else, Wittkowski has made a point of practicing what he preaches.

The German national flouts New York’s coronavirus restrictions, walking around his Upper East Side neighborhood maskless and eating in underground restaurants.

“We don’t have to fear anything but fear,” he said. “Wasn’t that an American who said that?”

Ivy Choi, a YouTube spokesperson, told The Post in a statement: “We quickly remove flagged content that violates our Community Guidelines, including content that explicitly disputes the efficacy of global or local healthy authority recommended guidance on social distancing that may lead others to act against that guidance. We are committed to continue providing timely and helpful information at this critical time.”

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