

Chapter 02: Social Erosion and Moral Reconfiguration

From Surveillance Capitalism to AI Imperialism | Chapter 02: Social erosion and moral reconfiguration

0.1. Abstract

The platform system did not only capture behavior. The U.S. If attention is trained by systems optimized for engagement rather than flourishing, then the outcome is not only distraction.

0.2. Keywords

Social erosion and moral reconfiguration; surveillance capitalism; AI imperialism; Section 230 reform; evidence-based dossier

0.3. Research Question

How does social erosion and moral reconfiguration function within the dossier's larger argument, and what does the documentary record allow this chapter to establish?

0.4. Scope and Framing Note

This paper examines social erosion and moral reconfiguration within the broader dossier *From Surveillance Capitalism to AI Imperialism*. It is intentionally written to circulate on its own: necessary context is restated, evidence boundaries are made explicit, and cited material is reproduced in paper-local form rather than delegated to repo navigation. It contributes to the series as a paper that deepens the Section 230 case by connecting amplification systems to youth harm, civic erosion, and moral reconfiguration. Adjacent reinforcement appears in Chapter 01, Chapter 03, Chapter 10, but those cross-references are supportive rather than required for basic comprehension.

0.5. Central Thesis

The platform system did not only capture behavior. It also reorganized norms. The strongest version of the claim is not nostalgic moral panic. It is that algorithmic optimization degraded attention, weakened trust, amplified social fragmentation, and altered what appears normal, desirable, and glamorous at scale.¹

¹Sources: HHS, Social Media and Youth Mental Health:... (n.d.; see Appendix A1); arXiv, What Do We Mean When We Talk about Tr... (2023-02-07; see Appendix A2); arXiv, Quantifying social organization and p... (2020-10-01; see Appendix A3)

0.6. Evidence and Method Note

This paper is derived from the chapter corpus for Chapter 02 and is grounded in the project’s structured research OS. It relies on source notes, extracted claims, entity profiles, and timeline events already normalized under the dossier’s evidence hierarchy. Documented facts are asserted directly where the record supports them; disputed matters are marked as such; interpretive claims are bounded explicitly; and speculative overreach is isolated in the evidence-boundary appendix.

0.7. Introduction

This paper asks: How does social erosion and moral reconfiguration function within the dossier’s larger argument, and what does the documentary record allow this chapter to establish? Its working answer is clear from the start: The platform system did not only capture behavior. It also reorganized norms. The strongest version of the claim is not nostalgic moral panic. It is that algorithmic optimization degraded attention, weakened trust, amplified social fragmentation, and altered what appears normal, desirable, and glamorous at scale. ² The objective is not only to recount developments, but to show why the subject of this chapter belongs inside a structural argument about extraction, enclosure, legitimacy, and reform.

0.8. Historical or Institutional Context

The U.S. Surgeon General’s advisory provides serious institutional backing for discussing cumulative psychosocial risk among young people. That means the youth-harm argument does not rest only on intuition or generational panic. ³

0.9. Main Analysis

The Instagram body-image and TikTok under-13 records show that harms are not confined to public feeds. Private-message dynamics, recommendation mismatches, and child-directed product failures all matter. Platform design is therefore part of the harm structure, not just the venue in which the harm appears. ⁴

The trust and polarization literature strengthens the civic layer. Social media trust, content trust, and user trust are analytically distinct, but all are reshaped by platform architecture. Cross-national Pew reporting adds that large majorities across surveyed countries associate social media with manipulation, division, and reduced civility, while the United States appears as an unusually negative outlier. ⁵

The dossier’s more morally charged cultural claims also have bounded support. Serious reporting documents recommendation systems intensifying misogynistic content exposure. Research on

²Sources: HHS, Social Media and Youth Mental Health:... (n.d.; see Appendix A1); arXiv, What Do We Mean When We Talk about Tr... (2023-02-07; see Appendix A2); arXiv, Quantifying social organization and p... (2020-10-01; see Appendix A3)

³Sources: HHS, Social Media and Youth Mental Health:... (n.d.; see Appendix A1)

⁴Sources: arXiv, Unfiltered: How Teens Engage in Body... (2025-04-02; see Appendix A4); arXiv, When Kids Mode Isn’t For Kids: Invest... (2025-06-30; see Appendix A5)

⁵Sources: arXiv, What Do We Mean When We Talk about Tr... (2023-02-07; see Appendix A2); arXiv, Quantifying social organization and p... (2020-10-01; see Appendix A3); Pew Research Center, Social Media Seen as Mostly Good for... (2022-12-06; see Appendix A6)

OnlyFans documents mainstream entry by creators with no prior sex-work history and ties that normalization to platform visibility and pandemic-era adoption. These examples should remain illustrative, but they are not empty rhetoric.⁶

Interpretation: Chapter 02 deepens the case for **Refactor Section 230** because the social harms here are not reducible to isolated user speech. They emerge from recommendation systems, exposure design, monetized aspiration, and systemic amplification. A sovereign-scale legal framework should therefore focus on design responsibility and measurable harm, not only on moderation after the fact.⁷

0.10. Position Within the Series

This paper sits inside a coordinated 11-paper architecture. Its nearest companions are Chapter 01 (Social networks as infrastructure for free data capture), Chapter 03 (COVID as a historical accelerator), Chapter 10 (What to do). In that series logic, Chapter 02 deepens the Section 230 case by connecting amplification systems to youth harm, civic erosion, and moral reconfiguration.

0.11. Counterarguments

This chapter should not imply that every moral deformation of contemporary life is fully caused by platforms. The evidence is strongest on youth harm, fragmentation, misogynistic amplification, and monetized sexual self-presentation. Broader civilizational claims remain interpretive and should stay visibly bounded.⁸

0.12. Limits of the Evidence

This chapter should not imply that every moral deformation of contemporary life is fully caused by platforms. The evidence is strongest on youth harm, fragmentation, misogynistic amplification, and monetized sexual self-presentation. Broader civilizational claims remain interpretive and should stay visibly bounded.⁹

0.13. Reform Relevance

If attention is trained by systems optimized for engagement rather than flourishing, then the outcome is not only distraction. It is a weaker public with thinner trust, more manipulable norms, and reduced civic resilience. That matters because a society softened in this way is easier to govern through later layers of digital mediation and AI dependency.¹⁰

⁶Sources: The Guardian, Social media algorithms 'amplifying m...' (2024-02-06; see Appendix A7); arXiv, Nudes? Shouldn't I charge for these?:... (2022-05-20; see Appendix A8)

⁷Sources: HHS, Social Media and Youth Mental Health:... (n.d.; see Appendix A1); arXiv, When Kids Mode Isn't For Kids: Invest... (2025-06-30; see Appendix A5); Pew Research Center, Social Media Seen as Mostly Good for... (2022-12-06; see Appendix A6)

⁸Sources: HHS, Social Media and Youth Mental Health:... (n.d.; see Appendix A1); The Guardian, Social media algorithms 'amplifying m...' (2024-02-06; see Appendix A7)

⁹Sources: HHS, Social Media and Youth Mental Health:... (n.d.; see Appendix A1); The Guardian, Social media algorithms 'amplifying m...' (2024-02-06; see Appendix A7)

¹⁰Sources: arXiv, What Do We Mean When We Talk about Tr... (2023-02-07; see Appendix A2); arXiv, Quantifying social organization and p... (2020-10-01; see Appendix A3); Pew Research Center, Social Media Seen as Mostly Good for... (2022-12-06; see Appendix A6)

0.14. Conclusion

If attention is trained by systems optimized for engagement rather than flourishing, then the outcome is not only distraction. The next historical shock did not create this architecture. In the architecture of this series, Chapter 02 therefore functions as a self-contained argument while also advancing the cumulative path toward the dossier's three reforms.

0.15. Notes

This paper is designed to circulate independently. Public notes point readers to the real external documents first, then to the paper-local appendix entry that explains why each source matters.

The underlying research OS distinguishes among **Documented Fact**, **Disputed Fact**, **Hypothesis / Interpretation**, and **Speculative Narrative Risk**. In Chapter 02, those boundaries remain visible in the prose, in the bibliography, and in the appendix sections that summarize claims and caution points.

0.16. References / Bibliography

1. HHS. Social Media and Youth Mental Health: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory. n.d.. T1 advisory. Paper appendix: Appendix A1. Corpus companion entry: Source S-069. Audit ID: `hhs-social-media-youth-advisory-2023`. Relevance: That there is serious institutional concern about the impact of social networks on minors.
2. arXiv. What Do We Mean When We Talk about Trust in Social Media? A Systematic Review. 2023-02-07. T1 paper. Paper appendix: Appendix A2. Corpus companion entry: Source S-120. Audit ID: `trust-social-media-systematic-review-2023`. Relevance: That trust in social media is a serious research problem with enough literature to support systematic synthesis.
3. arXiv. Quantifying social organization and political polarization in online platforms. 2020-10-01. T1 paper. Paper appendix: Appendix A3. Corpus companion entry: Source S-128. Audit ID: `waller-anderson-online-polarization-2020`. Relevance: That large-scale platform social organization can be measured as fragmented and politically polarized rather than discussed only impressionistically.
4. arXiv. Unfiltered: How Teens Engage in Body Image and Shaming Discussions via Instagram Direct Messages (DMs). 2025-04-02. T1 paper. Paper appendix: Appendix A4. Corpus companion entry: Source S-072. Audit ID: `instagram-body-image-dms-2025`. Relevance: That teen body-image discourse on Instagram is not confined to public feeds; it also unfolds in private channels that shape social reinforcement and harm.
5. arXiv. When Kids Mode Isn't For Kids: Investigating TikTok's Under 13 Experience. 2025-06-30. T1 paper. Paper appendix: Appendix A5. Corpus companion entry: Source S-118. Audit ID: `tiktok-kids-mode-2025`. Relevance: That a child-directed platform mode can still expose minors to content that the researchers did not classify as child-directed.
6. Pew Research Center. Social Media Seen as Mostly Good for Democracy Across Many Nations, But U.S. is a Major Outlier. 2022-12-06. T2 report. Paper appendix: Appendix A6. Corpus companion entry: Source S-107. Audit ID: `pew-social-media-democracy-outlier-2022`. Relevance: That cross-national evidence supports the claim that social media is widely associated with manipulation, division, and declining civility, even where some respondents still

see...

7. The Guardian. Social media algorithms ‘amplifying misogynistic content’. 2024-02-06. T2 news_article. Paper appendix: Appendix A7. Corpus companion entry: Source S-067. Audit ID: guardian-tiktok-misogyny-amplification-2024. Relevance: That serious reporting documents a research finding that recommendation systems can intensify misogynistic content exposure over a short period.
8. arXiv. Nudes? Shouldn’t I charge for these?: Motivations of New Sexual Content Creators on OnlyFans. 2022-05-20. T1 paper. Paper appendix: Appendix A8. Corpus companion entry: Source S-068. Audit ID: hamilton-onlyfans-new-creators-2022. Relevance: That mainstream visibility and platform design helped normalize monetized sexual content creation among people with no prior sex-work history.

0.17. Appendix A. Source Register for This Paper

0.17.1. Appendix A1. Social Media and Youth Mental Health: The U.S. Surgeon General’s Advisory

Source citation: Social Media and Youth Mental Health: The U.S. Surgeon General’s Advisory
Institution / author: HHS **Date:** n.d. **Tier / type:** T1 / advisory **Why it matters in this paper:** That there is serious institutional concern about the impact of social networks on minors.
Corpus companion entry: Source S-069 **Audit ID:** hhs-social-media-youth-advisory-2023

0.17.2. Appendix A2. What Do We Mean When We Talk about Trust in Social Media? A Systematic Review

Source citation: What Do We Mean When We Talk about Trust in Social Media? A Systematic Review
Institution / author: arXiv **Date:** 2023-02-07 **Tier / type:** T1 / paper **Why it matters in this paper:** That trust in social media is a serious research problem with enough literature to support systematic synthesis. **Corpus companion entry:** Source S-120 **Audit ID:** trust-social-media-systematic-review-2023

0.17.3. Appendix A3. Quantifying social organization and political polarization in online platforms

Source citation: Quantifying social organization and political polarization in online platforms
Institution / author: arXiv **Date:** 2020-10-01 **Tier / type:** T1 / paper **Why it matters in this paper:** That large-scale platform social organization can be measured as fragmented and politically polarized rather than discussed only impressionistically. **Corpus companion entry:** Source S-128 **Audit ID:** waller-anderson-online-polarization-2020

0.17.4. Appendix A4. Unfiltered: How Teens Engage in Body Image and Shaming Discussions via Instagram Direct Messages (DMs)

Source citation: Unfiltered: How Teens Engage in Body Image and Shaming Discussions via Instagram Direct Messages (DMs) **Institution / author:** arXiv **Date:** 2025-04-02 **Tier / type:** T1 / paper **Why it matters in this paper:** That teen body-image discourse on Instagram is

not confined to public feeds; it also unfolds in private channels that shape social reinforcement and harm. **Corpus companion entry:** Source S-072 **Audit ID:** instagram-body-image-dms-2025

0.17.5. Appendix A5. When Kids Mode Isn't For Kids: Investigating TikTok's Under 13 Experience

Source citation: When Kids Mode Isn't For Kids: Investigating TikTok's Under 13 Experience **Institution / author:** arXiv **Date:** 2025-06-30 **Tier / type:** T1 / paper **Why it matters in this paper:** That a child-directed platform mode can still expose minors to content that the researchers did not classify as child-directed. **Corpus companion entry:** Source S-118 **Audit ID:** tiktok-kids-mode-2025

0.17.6. Appendix A6. Social Media Seen as Mostly Good for Democracy Across Many Nations, But U.S. is a Major Outlier

Source citation: Social Media Seen as Mostly Good for Democracy Across Many Nations, But U.S. is a Major Outlier **Institution / author:** Pew Research Center **Date:** 2022-12-06 **Tier / type:** T2 / report **Why it matters in this paper:** That cross-national evidence supports the claim that social media is widely associated with manipulation, division, and declining civility, even where some respondents still see... **Corpus companion entry:** Source S-107 **Audit ID:** pew-social-media-democracy-outlier-2022

0.17.7. Appendix A7. Social media algorithms 'amplifying misogynistic content'

Source citation: Social media algorithms 'amplifying misogynistic content' **Institution / author:** The Guardian **Date:** 2024-02-06 **Tier / type:** T2 / news_article **Why it matters in this paper:** That serious reporting documents a research finding that recommendation systems can intensify misogynistic content exposure over a short period. **Corpus companion entry:** Source S-067 **Audit ID:** guardian-tiktok-misogyny-amplification-2024

0.17.8. Appendix A8. Nudes? Shouldn't I charge for these?: Motivations of New Sexual Content Creators on OnlyFans

Source citation: Nudes? Shouldn't I charge for these?: Motivations of New Sexual Content Creators on OnlyFans **Institution / author:** arXiv **Date:** 2022-05-20 **Tier / type:** T1 / paper **Why it matters in this paper:** That mainstream visibility and platform design helped normalize monetized sexual content creation among people with no prior sex-work history. **Corpus companion entry:** Source S-068 **Audit ID:** hamilton-onlyfans-new-creators-2022

0.18. Appendix B. Claims Used in This Paper

0.18.1. Appendix B1. Serious reporting documents a research finding that recommendation systems can in...

Claim statement: That serious reporting documents a research finding that recommendation systems can intensify misogynistic content exposure over a short period. **Evidence status:** Doc-

umented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A7 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-210 **Audit**

Claim ID: guardian-tiktok-misogyny-amplification-2024-02-social-decay-youth-harm-hypersexualiza

0.18.2. Appendix B2. Chapter 2 can discuss algorithmic amplification of misogynistic norm formation wi...

Claim statement: That Chapter 2 can discuss algorithmic amplification of misogynistic norm formation with more than anecdotal support. **Evidence status:** Documented Fact

Source support: Appendix A7 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-211 **Audit**

Claim ID: guardian-tiktok-misogyny-amplification-2024-02-social-decay-youth-harm-hypersexualization-clai

0.18.3. Appendix B3. The dossier can connect youth-facing platform design to moral and social reconfig...

Claim statement: That the dossier can connect youth-facing platform design to moral and social reconfiguration without reducing the argument to a generalized complaint about bad culture. **Ev-**

idence status: Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A7 **Corpus companion entry:**

Claim C-212 **Audit** **Claim ID:** guardian-tiktok-misogyny-amplification-2024-02-social-decay-youth-ha

0.18.4. Appendix B4. Mainstream visibility and platform design helped normalize monetized sexual conte...

Claim statement: That mainstream visibility and platform design helped normalize monetized sexual content creation among people with no prior sex-work history. **Evidence status:** Docu-

mented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A8 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-213 **Audit**

Claim ID: hamilton-onlyfans-new-creators-2022-02-social-decay-youth-harm-hypersexualization-cla

0.18.5. Appendix B5. The pandemic was a documented adoption driver in this tran-
sition

Claim statement: That the pandemic was a documented adoption driver in this transition. **Ev-**

idence status: Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A8 **Corpus companion entry:**

Claim C-214 **Audit** **Claim ID:** hamilton-onlyfans-new-creators-2022-02-social-decay-youth-harm-hyper

0.18.6. Appendix B6. Chapter 2 can discuss digital prostitution glamour and normal-
ization with a real...

Claim statement: That Chapter 2 can discuss digital prostitution glamour and normalization with a real research basis rather than relying only on celebrity examples or moral impression. **Ev-**

idence status: Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A8 **Corpus companion entry:**

Claim C-215 **Audit** **Claim ID:** hamilton-onlyfans-new-creators-2022-02-social-decay-youth-harm-hyper

0.18.7. Appendix B7. There is serious institutional concern about the impact of social
networks on minors

Claim statement: That there is serious institutional concern about the impact of social networks on minors. **Evidence status:** Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A1 **Corpus com-**

panion entry: Claim C-216 **Audit Claim ID:** hhs-social-media-youth-advisory-2023-claim-01

0.18.8. Appendix B8. There is enough basis to discuss psychosocial harm and cumulative risks in young...

Claim statement: That there is enough basis to discuss psychosocial harm and cumulative risks in young populations. **Evidence status:** Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A1 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-217 **Audit Claim ID:** hhs-social-media-youth-advisory-2023-claim-02

0.18.9. Appendix B9. The discussion about youth does not depend only on moral intuition or cultural no...

Claim statement: That the discussion about youth does not depend only on moral intuition or cultural nostalgia. **Evidence status:** Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A1 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-218 **Audit Claim ID:** hhs-social-media-youth-advisory-2023-claim-03

0.18.10. Appendix B10. Teen body-image discourse on Instagram is not confined to public feeds; it also u...

Claim statement: That teen body-image discourse on Instagram is not confined to public feeds; it also unfolds in private channels that shape social reinforcement and harm. **Evidence status:** Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A4 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-225 **Audit Claim ID:** instagram-body-image-dms-2025-02-social-decay-youth-harm-hypersexualization-claim-01

0.18.11. Appendix B11. Platform architecture matters: the difference between one-on-one and group settin...

Claim statement: That platform architecture matters: the difference between one-on-one and group settings changes the texture of support, criticism, and shaming. **Evidence status:** Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A4 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-226 **Audit Claim ID:** instagram-body-image-dms-2025-02-social-decay-youth-harm-hypersexualization-claim-02

0.18.12. Appendix B12. Chapter 2 can discuss mediated body-image norms with stronger empirical grounding...

Claim statement: That Chapter 2 can discuss mediated body-image norms with stronger empirical grounding than a general moral complaint. **Evidence status:** Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A4 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-227 **Audit Claim ID:** instagram-body-image-dms-2025-02-social-decay-youth-harm-hypersexualization-claim-03

0.18.13. Appendix B13. Cross-national evidence supports the claim that social media is widely associated...

Claim statement: That cross-national evidence supports the claim that social media is widely associated with manipulation, division, and declining civility, even where some respondents still see democratic benefits. **Evidence status:** Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A6 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-353 **Audit Claim ID:** pew-social-media-democracy-outlier-2022-02-social-d

0.18.14. Appendix B14. The United States can be treated as an unusually severe case in the trust-and-fra...

Claim statement: That the United States can be treated as an unusually severe case in the trust-and-fragmentation story rather than as just another generic example. **Evidence status:** Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A6 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-354 **Audit Claim ID:** pew-social-media-democracy-outlier-2022-02-social-decay-youth-harm-hypersexualization-claim-01

0.18.15. Appendix B15. Chapter 2 can connect platform-mediated social erosion to democratic trust and ci...

Claim statement: That Chapter 2 can connect platform-mediated social erosion to democratic trust and civic coherence with stronger evidence than youth-harm studies alone provide. **Evidence status:** Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A6 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-355 **Audit Claim ID:** pew-social-media-democracy-outlier-2022-02-social-decay-youth-harm-hypersexualization-claim-02

0.18.16. Appendix B16. A child-directed platform mode can still expose minors to content that the resear...

Claim statement: That a child-directed platform mode can still expose minors to content that the researchers did not classify as child-directed. **Evidence status:** Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A5 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-385 **Audit Claim ID:** tiktok-kids-mode-2025-02-social-decay-youth-harm-hypersexualization-claim-01

0.18.17. Appendix B17. Chapter 2 can discuss platform design failures affecting minors with concrete evi...

Claim statement: That Chapter 2 can discuss platform design failures affecting minors with concrete evidence rather than only generalized concern. **Evidence status:** Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A5 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-386 **Audit Claim ID:** tiktok-kids-mode-2025-02-social-decay-youth-harm-hypersexualization-claim-02

0.18.18. Appendix B18. Youth-risk arguments in the dossier can include the mismatch between stated safet...

Claim statement: That youth-risk arguments in the dossier can include the mismatch between stated safety framing and actual curation outcomes. **Evidence status:** Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A5 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-387 **Audit Claim ID:** tiktok-kids-mode-2025-02-social-decay-youth-harm-hypersexualization-claim-03

0.18.19. Appendix B19. Trust in social media is a serious research problem with enough literature to sup...

Claim statement: That trust in social media is a serious research problem with enough literature to support systematic synthesis. **Evidence status:** Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A2 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-391 **Audit Claim ID:** trust-social-media-systematic-review-2023-02-social-decay-youth-harm-hypersexualization-claim-04

0.18.20. Appendix B20. Trust in platforms, users, and content should not be treated as interchangeable c...

Claim statement: That trust in platforms, users, and content should not be treated as interchangeable concepts inside the dossier. **Evidence status:** Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A2 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-392 **Audit Claim ID:** trust-social-media-systematic-review-2023-02-social-decay-youth-harm-hypersexualization-claim-0

0.18.21. Appendix B21. Chapter 2 can discuss erosion of trust and social interpretation with scholarly s...

Claim statement: That Chapter 2 can discuss erosion of trust and social interpretation with scholarly support, while still keeping conceptual precision. **Evidence status:** Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A2 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-393 **Audit Claim ID:** trust-social-media-systematic-review-2023-02-social-decay-youth-harm-hypersexualization-claim-0

0.18.22. Appendix B22. Large-scale platform social organization can be measured as fragmented and politi...

Claim statement: That large-scale platform social organization can be measured as fragmented and politically polarized rather than discussed only impressionistically. **Evidence status:** Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A3 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-470 **Audit Claim ID:** waller-anderson-online-polarization-2020-02-social-decay-youth-harm-hypersexualization-claim-0

0.18.23. Appendix B23. Chapter 2 can move beyond youth harm alone and document broader social fragmentat...

Claim statement: That Chapter 2 can move beyond youth harm alone and document broader social fragmentation as a platform-structured phenomenon. **Evidence status:** Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A3 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-471 **Audit Claim ID:** waller-anderson-online-polarization-2020-02-social-decay-youth-harm-hypersexualization-claim-0

0.18.24. Appendix B24. The strongest version of the argument should focus on system-level polarization d...

Claim statement: That the strongest version of the argument should focus on system-level polarization dynamics, not a simplistic claim that every individual user became equally radicalized. **Evidence status:** Documented Fact **Source support:** Appendix A3 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-472 **Audit Claim ID:** waller-anderson-online-polarization-2020-02-social-decay-youth-harm-hypersexualization-claim-0

0.18.25. Appendix B25. Documented youth exposure, recommendation amplification, trust erosion, and fragm...

Claim statement: That documented youth exposure, recommendation amplification, trust erosion, and fragmentation support a sovereign-scale duty framework under a refactored Section 230 focused on design, exposure, and systemic harm. **Evidence status:** Hypothesis / Interpretation

Source support: Appendix A1, Appendix A6 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-419 **Audit Claim ID:** vector02-design-duty-section230-claim-01

0.18.26. Appendix B26. Platform optimization alone fully explains contemporary moral decline, every yout...

Claim statement: That platform optimization alone fully explains contemporary moral decline, every youth pathology, or every downstream cultural change associated with digital life. **Evidence status:** Speculative Narrative Risk **Source support:** Appendix A1 **Corpus companion entry:** Claim C-420 **Audit Claim ID:** vector02-total-moral-decline-overclaim-claim-01

0.19. Appendix C. Timeline Slice

0.19.1. Appendix C1. 2020-10-01: A large-scale study documents system-level polarization dynamics across Reddit commun...

Event summary: A large-scale study documents system-level polarization dynamics across Reddit communities **Event date:** 2020-10-01 **Source support:** Appendix A3 **Corpus companion entry:** Event T-008 **Audit Event ID:** event-reddit-polarization-study-2020-10-01

0.19.2. Appendix C2. 2022-05-20: A study documents mainstream acceptance as a driver of new OnlyFans sexual-content cr...

Event summary: A study documents mainstream acceptance as a driver of new OnlyFans sexual-content creators **Event date:** 2022-05-20 **Source support:** Appendix A8 **Corpus companion entry:** Event T-018 **Audit Event ID:** event-onlyfans-mainstreaming-study-2022-05-20

0.19.3. Appendix C3. 2022-12-06: Pew publishes cross-national findings on social media, democracy, manipulation, and d...

Event summary: Pew publishes cross-national findings on social media, democracy, manipulation, and division **Event date:** 2022-12-06 **Source support:** Appendix A6 **Corpus companion entry:** Event T-019 **Audit Event ID:** event-pew-social-democracy-outlier-2022-12-06

0.19.4. Appendix C4. 2024-02-06: Researchers report rapid amplification of misogynistic recommendations on TikTok

Event summary: Researchers report rapid amplification of misogynistic recommendations on TikTok **Event date:** 2024-02-06 **Source support:** Appendix A7 **Corpus companion entry:** Event T-041 **Audit Event ID:** event-tiktok-misogyny-amplification-2024-02-06

0.20. Appendix D. Relevant Entities

0.20.1. Appendix D1. Instagram

Entity type: platform **Role in this paper:** Actor relevant to 02_social_decay_youth_harm_hypersexualization **Relevant sources in this paper:** Appendix A4 **Corpus companion entry:** Entity E-021 **Audit Entity ID:** org-instagram

0.20.2. Appendix D2. OnlyFans

Entity type: platform **Role in this paper:** Actor relevant to 02_social_decay_youth_harm_hypersexualization
Relevant sources in this paper: Appendix A8 **Corpus companion entry:** Entity E-026
Audit Entity ID: org-onlyfans

0.20.3. Appendix D3. Reddit

Entity type: platform **Role in this paper:** Actor relevant to 02_social_decay_youth_harm_hypersexualization
04_data_to_models_copyright_weights. **Relevant sources in this paper:** Appendix A3 **Cor-**
pus companion entry: Entity E-032 **Audit Entity ID:** org-reddit

0.20.4. Appendix D4. TikTok

Entity type: platform **Role in this paper:** Actor relevant to 02_social_decay_youth_harm_hypersexualization
Relevant sources in this paper: Appendix A5, Appendix A7 **Corpus companion entry:**
Entity E-034 **Audit Entity ID:** org-tiktok

0.20.5. Appendix D5. U.S. Surgeon General / HHS

Entity type: public_health **Role in this paper:** Actor relevant to 02_social_decay_youth_harm_hypersexuali
Relevant sources in this paper: Appendix A1 **Corpus companion entry:** Entity E-019
Audit Entity ID: org-hhs-surgeon-general

0.20.6. Appendix D6. Pew Research Center

Entity type: research_institution **Role in this paper:** Actor relevant to 02_social_decay_youth_harm_hypers
Relevant sources in this paper: Appendix A6 **Corpus companion entry:** Entity E-030
Audit Entity ID: org-pew-research-center

0.21. Appendix E. Evidence Boundaries

0.21.1. Appendix E1. Disputed Matters

- None registered for this paper.

0.21.2. Appendix E2. Interpretive Boundaries

- Appendix B25: That documented youth exposure, recommendation amplification, trust erosion, and fragmentation support a sovereign-scale duty framework under a refactored Section 230 focused on design, exposure, and systemic harm.

0.21.3. Appendix E3. Speculative Narrative Risks

- Appendix B26: That platform optimization alone fully explains contemporary moral decline, every youth pathology, or every downstream cultural change associated with digital life.

0.21.4. Appendix E4. Sensitive or Review-Worthy Note Flags

- Appendix A7. Companion note: Note N-008. Risk flag: medium. Note focus: That serious reporting documents a research finding that recommendation systems can intensify misogynistic content exposure over a short period.
- Appendix A8. Companion note: Note N-009. Risk flag: medium. Note focus: That mainstream visibility and platform design helped normalize monetized sexual content creation among people with no prior sex-work history.
- Appendix A1. Companion note: Note N-010. Risk flag: low. Note focus: That there is serious institutional concern about the impact of social networks on minors.
- Appendix A4. Companion note: Note N-011. Risk flag: review. Note focus: That teen body-image discourse on Instagram is not confined to public feeds; it also unfolds in private channels that shape social reinforcement and harm.
- Appendix A6. Companion note: Note N-012. Risk flag: review. Note focus: That cross-national evidence supports the claim that social media is widely associated with manipulation, division, and declining civility, even where some respondents still see democratic benefits.
- Appendix A5. Companion note: Note N-013. Risk flag: review. Note focus: That a child-directed platform mode can still expose minors to content that the researchers did not classify as child-directed.
- Appendix A2. Companion note: Note N-014. Risk flag: review. Note focus: That trust in social media is a serious research problem with enough literature to support systematic synthesis.
- Appendix A3. Companion note: Note N-015. Risk flag: medium. Note focus: That large-scale platform social organization can be measured as fragmented and politically polarized rather than discussed only impressionistically.