

INTRODUCTION

Last year I made a video giving a detailed look at the harm of react content, and how it has been acting as a cancer in the zombies community, constantly hoarding impressions to the bigger creators, causing many smaller creators to fall under the cracks, which was overall in my opinion, was a major factor in the decline of the community in the recent months beyond a lack of content. I left that video looking very optimistically at the future of the community, and figured why not celebrate the one year anniversary of that video, by seeing if my more optimistic viewpoint paid off. Spoiler warning it didn't.

This video is also going to kind-of act as a pseudo-remake of the original video because while I am still rather fond of the script of that video...I think the editing, voice-over, and general presentation of that video has aged rather poorly. So I made the hard choice to private it, and let this video replace it on my channel.

I'm also of course making the video because thanks to the social parasites better known as xQc and Hasan, reaction content is once again under fire, and there won't ever really be a better time for me to fix my errors in the original video. And while I will be focusing mainly on Lex, it's mainly just to help condense the video to make it flow a lot smoother, and because Lex is one of the most abhorrent examples with react content, but everything I say equally applies to Noah, or any other reactor in the community. So without further adieu my bitches my bros and my nonbinary hoes, let's talk about how these content creators are still killing the CoD Zombies Community one year later.

Chapter One : Into the Fire

Like last time, before we can begin properly, I need to define what I view as a reactor, because my definition may differ from what you consider a reactor. For the purposes of this video, I'm considering anyone who rebroadcasts someone else's video, as a reactor. So your Lex's, your NoahJAFKs, or as I mentioned earlier your Hasans and xQc. This does not include people who use other people's creative work to make their own work that stand apart from the original. Essentially your LegalEagles, Dr Mikes, Larry Lawtons, or to a more gaming based example, Karl Jobst's videos on speedruns. Obviously Karl isn't getting a world record in every game he talks about, but his videos stand alone from the original and are not a substitute for the original runner.

Reaction content has forever been demonized for being what most would be consider lazy content, and while those people definitely aren't wrong, it's probably one of the lesser evils when it comes to the overall harm react content can cause. If the Zombies Community is Hell, and Reaction Content is the nine circles found from Dante's Inferno, the laziness of the content would just be the first circle.

Chapter Two : The Legality of it All

Before we go forward, I do want to clarify, no matter how high and mighty I might act, I am not, nor do I view myself, as some moral authority. And I do not view the law as one either, and I find it silly when people act like the law is, when the law isn't even consistent across the Country. But with how often people claim that reaction content is indeed Fair Use, I felt like it was worth it to quickly disprove this myth before moving onto the darker problems with Lex's react content.

While Fair Use itself isn't an actual law, meaning it has no clear black-and-white rules, and these cases are decided on a case-by-case basis, most Judges have typically used four metrics to determine if something is fair use or if it violates someone's copyright. Oh and also before we begin for any newborns, or people who live under a rock, Fair Use is basically a clause in the US Copyright Code, that gives people the right to use other people's copyrighted materials without needing any prior permissions, under the circumstances or purposes such as criticism, news reporting, teaching, and research

The first metric is basically just is this product being used for commercial gain or is it non-profit with most of the time nonprofits getting more protections with fair use. This is how fan-films like Racist Spider-Man, are allowed to be made, because as long as the film's grand wizard, I mean director doesn't sell any tickets for the film, or monetize it on YouTube, he won't be striked down by Sony, or at least if he is, he has a good chance in court to have it overruled.

The second metric is based off of whether or not the original product is a creative work or historical work, with historical works typically receiving less protections as it would be very fucked if we could just copyright or trademark history. Which is something I'm sure was added because Disney tried to do exactly that.

The third metric is basically how much of the original work did you use, and did you only use what you needed to with no extra fat. This is actually the exact

metric that saved Ethan Kilen's ass in the H3H3 lawsuit. The judge said they specifically ruled in favor of them due to the fact they only used what they needed for their commentary and critiques of the original work to make sense.

And the final metric is basically can this serve as a market substitute for the original, basically meaning does the new material basically serve the exact same purpose as the original you took from. And unfortunately Lex falls flat on his face here as not only does he stream the entirety of someone else's video on his Twitch channel, which is still pretty bad despite whatever Ostonox may say, he then reuploads the entire thing onto his second channel Lex Lounge.

So yeah, Lex's reactions violate all four of the original reactions, with the only one you can kinda argue is the second one, because you could kinda argue speedruns are more historic accounts, but even then speedruns aren't the only things Lex reacts too.

Again I really do not view the legality of the content being a major contributing factor if something is moral or not, because not all laws are moral, but react content absolutely violates the law, and if any of these creators had the money and resources to actually DMCA strike a reactor, it would be a guaranteed win.

Chapter Three : Should Consent Matter

Another major issue with Lex's reaction content is the fact he doesn't ask the people he reacts too. I've talked to multiple people that Lex has reacted to, and not a single one ever had Lex reach out beforehand, and asked if it was okay. Not only has he never asked them if it was okay, I had one person I had talked to, Lex has never even said a single word to, despite reacting to over a dozen videos from them, and overall getting over three-million views from reacting to this creator's video. And that's just not okay at all. It's also incredibly ironic as this is something Lex had previously criticized both WatchMojo and IGN for back in 2016, but is a practice he's heavily partaking in today.

And even if asking for permission doesn't negate the shitty shit we've yet to talk about with react content, it doesn't even give the people who are having their content stolen a real chance to protect their videos. Because by the time any reactee's have noticed their video was reacted to by Lex, which usually takes awhile as we're about to establish there is no real benefit to being reacted to, the damage is already done. The video had already been shown to thousands and Lex had already pocketed the money from labor he didn't work for. The only real

recourse the victim has at this point is to either publicly complain on Twitter about it, or copyright claim/strike the video which will only result in a bunch of angry unwashed 14 year olds coming after them for insulting their favorite reactor. And if you don't believe me this happens, just look at what happened when Jay Exci called out Hasan for stealing their videos. While I doubt it's intentional, by waiting to see if the victim gets mad after the fact, they're forcing these creators in a position where they cannot speak up for themselves, and are stuck in a cycle of getting their content stolen over and over until the parasite, I mean reactor decides to finally double the exploitation and give it to the next person. And while this is already sounding pretty shitty, you may notice we're still only in the third circle of hell.

Chapter Four : Does Reaction Content Benefit Anyone?

And now we finally dispel the myth of reaction content actually being beneficial to the people being reacted to, who we will be calling reactee's from this point on. This claim being so wide-spread by reactors, you would think it would be very difficult to disprove, but all it really takes is having fucking eyes.

But before we utterly dismantle this lie, let's actually live in the picture these reactors like to paint and pretend that react content can occasionally help give creators a boost in the algorithm. Just because it would occasionally work doesn't negate the damage it does to other creators and it's overall uselessness. Should we start praising the lottery for being an extraordinary money making method because it occasionally gives someone 700 million dollars, despite the fact the government makes 68 billion dollars per year from the lottery? You know honestly thinking about it, comparing react videos to the lottery is actually pretty apt because both give the illusion of being for the greater community despite them existing to help make the owners money, both have a comically fanciful chance of actually helping anyone other than the owners, and both try to use any potential positive side effects as hollow justifications while both are only motivated by increasing their bank accounts.

The one main difference between the two, is that at least the lottery does have a winner, whereas with the reactors, the only real winner is the reactor themselves. And even in the very rare situations where creators do benefit from reactions, like Kingsmans for example, there is nothing stopping Lex from stealing more views and impressions from Kingsman the next time he uploads a reaction

video. Because the goal of Reactors isn't to just steal the views from the people they react to, to everyone. Don't understand? Well let me explain.

YouTube as a platform has one main goal. To get you the viewer, to spend as much of your limited time as possible on the site, and watch as many ads as you can. To ensure this they created the YouTube algorithm to look at your viewing habits, and try to recommend you videos that you are most likely to watch, because they know the longer someone spends searching for a video the more likely they are to click off and go to another site. They also do it like this because obviously if you spend a long time looking for videos, you're not watching any ads.

The way YouTube does this is by giving you impressions, which is essentially anytime you see a thumbnail of a video with a chance to click onto it and watch the whole thing. These impressions are a limited resource because of one main reason. Well two. The first, and biggest reason is because there are only so many videos you can recommend and not watch before you decide there isn't anything you find interesting to watch, and move onto something else. And also just because there are only so many impressions YouTube can also put on a page at one time.

So YouTube doesn't just give out the impressions all willy-nilly, they are only given out from videos that YouTube is certain you will not only watch a majority of that video, but proceed to watch another video afterwards. Because at the end of the day YouTube doesn't give two shits about what you're watching, just that you are watching something on YouTube.

Creator's don't feel the same way obviously. We want you to be specifically watching our videos. So every creator is essentially competing in the same market to get your impressions on our videos, because as time has gone on and the YouTube algorithm has changed, subscriptions and likes don't make a video anymore. You can know a creator's name, be subscribed, and love their content, but if they're not in your recommended feed, you won't be watching their videos.

One of the main ways YouTube determines if your video is good enough to start giving out impressions, is what the video's average view-duration is. That's why so many people have been able to "cheat" the system so-to-speak and get themselves into your recommended feed, by uploading 20 second clip, sped up to high hell, and having people watch it at .25x speed, giving the video a watch percentage of 400% making YouTube think "holy shit, this kid is so good they got people watching their entire video 4 times."

And this is how reactee's get hurt by the reactions. Because while it is absolutely absurd to assume all 20,000 people who watched Lex react to a poop of the dead speedrun, would have naturally found the video on their own, it is safe to assume some percentage would've watched it naturally now won't due to seeing the entire thing with Lex's face plastered over it. But the problem starts when people begin to click onto the original video to subscribe and like the video, and then because they're scared Lex might do something really rare and actually be entertaining for once, so they switch back to the stream and continue watching along with him. Absolutely tanking their average view duration, and essentially stopping the video in its tracks. Ultimately doing more harm to the video than just reacting to it without giving credit, which is something we'll be discussing in just a minute.

Admittedly he has gotten better with this, now only linking off to the creator's channel, which you know gotta give praise where it's due, but something I still decided was worth mentioning because while Lex seemingly was smart enough to think about how just linking the video his audience just watched, and won't watch again is bad...not every reactor seems to consider that.

And this all neatly brings us to the Fourth Circle of Hell, and why the reaction content is so harmful, not just to the person getting reacted to, but every single creator on the internet, including other sites like Twitch, Kick, TikTok, etc.

It takes time to make a YouTube video. This is an indisputable fact. And while creators can upgrade their setups, or pay people to help speed up their time, there is a limit on how fast someone can make a YouTube video before they start sacrificing quality over quantity. Reactors don't have this problem because however long it takes a reactor to watch a YouTube video is how long it takes them to make the video. Plus maybe add five minutes of them hitting the upload button and typing out a title, and adding the same goddamn face to the thumbnail with a barely relevant render in the thumbnail.

What it takes 40 hours for an actual content creator to make, Lex can do in 40 minutes. But it gets worse. Because Lex isn't limited to just reacted to one video per stream. He can react to several, plus whatever shitty custom map he played that day into a video. So who at the end of the week do you think is going to end up with a greater share of the available impressions in the Zombies Community. A content creator that takes an entire week to make a single high quality video, or Lex who stole several videos, on top of releasing several of his

own stream highlights. Obviously Lex, but it gets worse because he isn't just stealing impressions from the people he reacts to, but all of us.

Everytime a Lex Lounge video appears in your recommended feed, that impression is taking up a slot that could've gone to another creator. And since it's impossible to know what video Lex stole that impression from, it's impossible to really understand just how many creators are getting fucked over. So let me try to use a real-world example to help make it easier to understand. Let's say you work at a restaurant, and one day Lex comes in and while no one is looking, steals all the tips that you and your coworkers have yet to get off the table, and leaves. While Lex just clearly stole money from you, and your coworkers, since you have no knowledge that the tip existed, you're not going to be upset. Which is why most creators don't view react content as being so insidious towards the wider creator ecosystem, beyond just being lazy. But I'm sure if somebody walked up and said "Hey that greasy motherfucker with a reclining hairline just took all the money off the tables," you'd be pretty pissed.

And going back to the myth of him occasionally helping give some creators a bump with his reactions, it'd basically be like if before he left, Lex decided to just give you 20% of the money he stole. Since you, once again, have no idea that's money that already belonged to you and your coworkers, the action itself makes Lex look very magnanimous.

I looked at every reaction video Lex has uploaded in the last month, at least as of the writing of this video. And for fairness sake, I excluded any videos where he was just giving commentary or reacting to something he was involved in, like the big creator tier list. All in total, Lex had gained about 566,000 views from reaction content. Assuming his videos have the industry standard click-through rate of 4%, that means Lex had hoarded up about 14 million impressions from just his reaction videos. 14 million impressions that could've gone to other channels in the zombies community, or to an original creator somewhere on the platform and helped them grow. And while it's fucking insane to think all 14 million impressions would've been dispersed out against the actual creators Lex reacted too, like I said he steals the impressions from all of us. From small creators like me and you, to even the big ones like Chrissm. Hell Lex has hoarded around 75,000,000 impressions just from the videos of Chrissm's he reacted too. Do you still think reaction content is fair game, and not a content type only the morally bankrupt can participate in? Because we still haven't reached the bottom of the rabbit hole baby.

Because these are only estimates of the impressions Lex is getting directly off of his react videos. These aren't counting the views and impressions his reactions get while still on Twitch or the impression Lex's other videos get from people who watched his reaction videos, because that's how it works. Let's say Lex reacts to one of your videos tomorrow. Even though you were the one that entertained Lex's chat. You were the one that created however many hours of watch time Lex got in that video, since it was Lex rebroadcasting your video, he's the one that reaps the benefit and the rewards. He's the one that will start appearing in those viewers' recommended feeds, not your videos. And it is actually impossible for me to calculate how many people are carrying over from Lex's reactions to his commentary and main channel videos.

And while Lex does in his own way, add some entertainment value to the video by letting people watch it with a creator they like, that doesn't mean he deserves to reap the rewards from it. Do you think your friend who made Black Adam more enjoyable to watch deserves a piece of the pie because they made a few jokes during the film and told you his opinion afterwards? Does that sound absolutely absurd? Good because it fucking is. But because of how the internet works, and because of there being so many ethically bankrupt people at the top, this kind of behavior is now being seen as acceptable when just a few short years, people like Lex, and xQc, and Noah, and Hasan, and Ludwig, and Destiny, and so on was kicked off the platform.

Chapter Five : Reactor's Stolen Valor

Now that mouthful is out of the way, we can move onto the fifth circle of hell and deal with the issue of crediting creators, because while Lex is currently getting better with crediting, and in the 15 videos I've looked at of the last month, he credited every single one, which an improvement of last time where he only had an 85% success rate of crediting creators. But it's an issue Lex still has and is getting worse with. Like that time when he just straight up stole Apothos gameplay for background footage in one of his random commentary, without permission, and without crediting the footage to Apothos. And then when he received criticism for this he finally added a link to Apothos' in the description...to his Twitter...and then after enough backlash he finally added Apothos' channel as well. He still however has never publicly acknowledged this issue, and it allegedly isn't even the first or last time he did this. On my original video there was a comment left by Orlando, saying in a Shadows of Evil speedrun Lex "reacted" to, he spent the

entire time ignoring the video and just rambling about LeafyIsHere. You know how fucked that shit is? Reaction content is already pretty bad, but to leave a video running just so you can ramble about random shit? You know you don't need to steal footage for that right, you could just...have your face cam footage be the main interest, or just play a game of zombies and record it, you don't need to fucking steal someone else's gameplay to entertain your audience because you're not entertaining enough on your own.

I heavily considered to prove my point, having the entirety of this video be just one of Lex's longer videos, just to prove how shitty this is, in all honestly I feel like Lex would've just struck the video down like he did that one bloke last year who made a funny video criticizing him on Twitter and then lying about it and claiming death threats on Twitter despite it being an obvious lie, and I wouldn't be surprised if he claims the same shit. But I'd be lying if I said that was the only reason I didn't include any of Lex's footage in this video, it was mainly because I can not stand to hear this man speak for longer than seven seconds, and just watching some of his videos during research made me want to off myself.

And since this portion of the video is titled stolen valor, I would also like to raise a critic that I actually got some small criticism for not including in my original videos, and that is the way Lex actually titles most of his reactions in such a way that makes it seem like he is the one who is breaking these records, he is the one spending hundreds of hours slowly optimizing these runs to not only learn the speedrun better but get the best RNG possible. It kinda makes it seem like he's the one who got the accomplishment. I dunno just thought it was worth mentioning since I had numerous speedrunners tell me they were annoyed by it.

Chapter Six - The Cycle Continues

We're now reaching the final circle of Hell, I know Dante's Inferno has nine, and the video originally did too, but I kinda combined three of them into Chapter Four. This is the actual update part of the video where we reflect on how things have changed since last year, where I left the video in a very optimistic place, which spoiler alert, just makes me look like a dumbass because nothing ended up changing. Noah still has a shitty time actually mentioning the runner, still puts the person he steals the video from, below his sponsor in the description, and still has his sponsors constantly rotating on stream but he can't figure out a space to put the creator he's currently reacting to in.

And Lex although promised to begin turning his reactions into essentially interviews or podcasts with the speedrunner, he did it exactly once, and once the heat was off of him he went back to his normal routine of just stealing videos.

So this video is probably going to end with me being a lot more jaded than last time because I've already offered solutions to help mitigate the damage and make this content actually be ethical, because if this was an interview, or Lex was actually playing the reactees to use his content like what Daily Dose of Internet does, it would be fine, but he doesn't and he won't. I'm at a point now where I just believe this platform would genuinely be a better place if Reaction Videos didn't exist. The Zombies Community might less people slipping through the cracks at least if there were 14 million more impressions to go around each month. And ultimately that's how I feel Lex is helping kill the zombie community.

The community has been dead on YouTube since 2017. It's had brief periods of revival, and it's had some massive hitters come up in these dead years, but as a whole the game is just dead, which isn't reflected in the player counts for the game. 2021 saw the peak of people playing the mode, at least according to Treyarch themselves, yet the internet side of things is dead. And this isn't the fire game to have this effect. Because WWII Zombies also did really well with player numbers, and some of its DLC was really successful, but on YouTube it was a ghost-town. And I believe it's a mixture of a lot of the old guard not producing content people want to see, draining their interest in consuming content about the mode, and them hoarding what impressions they are, to just watch other people's YouTube videos.

It's the reason why you see a constant changing of the guard in most other communities like Minecraft, Grand Theft Auto, and other games that have been around as long as Call of Duty Zombies. Zombies hasn't really had that. Sure we've had old people stop posting content and move to other games but, a majority of the bigger creators in the community are the same people from 2016. Hell even Zombies itself had a changing of the guard back in 2015 where we went from Syndicate, NGT Zombies, The Relaxing End, etc to TheSmithPlays, Lex, and Steve. I think we're at a point where the community is in desperate need of change but because of these creators refusing to move the fuck on, and cling onto the last bit of relevancy they can with these reaction content, and keeping themselves in the algorithm, we'll never get that.

Because the underground side of the community is great. I can name off multiple people who deserve to be over 100k but aren't. Stanley557, TakoutMars,

Freckleston, BugOfCake, TheLegendHD, XpertFusion, Vacid, Joltz, Godzilla, VsLon, so many more.

While I may have had personal disagreements with some of the people here in the past, they still make great videos that deserve more views than they get. And that's how I believe Lex is harming the Zombies Community with the use of his reaction content. I did decide to change the title because I feel like saying he killed the community is far too far, but I do heavily believe this has been a contributing factor.

Chapter Seven : When is React Content Okay?

All that being said, I do think it's only fair I mention the instances I think react content is perfectly acceptable to be produced under certain circumstances. The first is if the content being made is about you specifically. So if Lex did react to this video, which I doubt he will because after all the best scam is one where it's hard to understand how you're being scammed, and I doubt Lex is going to broadcast a fourteen-page essay on how exactly he's scamming people, but if he was too, it would be perfectly acceptable in my opinion.

The second metric is if the content could not exist without you. So for example Lex reacting to an interview he was in, or his old series with JCBackfire, Remember That Time When, when people would submit tweets to be read by Lex on stream. That shit is perfectly fine with me.

And the final metric is if you reach out to the content creator beforehand, privately, get their express written consent, and also pay them for the clips you used. Because I'm not bothered with people getting impressions using their own video or videos they've commissioned I think that's fine, my main issue comes from people who are just straight up stealing other people's labor, reuploading it, and then acting like they're so benevolent and actually helping out the little guy, when any positive benefits given to the reactee are side-effects, not the main intent, are just hollow justifications.

And that's it. It's actually more lenient than last time. And I think that's it for our descent into hell.

Chapter Eight : The Epilogue

Every video or source will be linked in the description down below, along with DarkViperAU's reaction video which I used as a basis of my argument and as it's probably one of the best written argumentative essays on the topic, with a lot of great research behind it. He's also where I got the industry standard of 4% click-through rate from, and a low-end CPM of \$3.

I do also want to clarify that once again I only used Lex as he is the easiest reactor in the community to use as an example for the harm of react content. The arguments also work for Noah, and to a degree even Pat, although like I said last time his react content I'm overall fine with.

And even though I've had many personal disagreements with Lex, I promise that it had nothing to do with this video's existence. While I don't know if it's possible to be really objective in situations dealing with people you have a bias towards, I am mature enough to at least try to be objective, and kept the essay to strictly only shit that's relevant to the discussion. I'm not interested in just slinging mud at the dude for random bullshit, I save that for my Twitter and my streams.

And I think that's it. I've been Nicole Cringe, and I'll see you guys next week with me unlocking every Achievements in BO4 Zombies. It was supposed to come out today, it's been eating away at me just how shit the last attempt at this video was, and when I saw the drama with SSSniperwolf and JJJacksfilms, followed by xQc and Hasan being pieces of shit and once again stroking the video, I decided to finally make this video again because there wouldn't really be another time for me to do it. Anyway good night everyone, and here's a clip of the video.