

Editorial: Logan Paul's Apology is not Enough

December 31, 2017, Logan Paul, a now disgraced YouTuber, posted a video to the internet. The video contained footage of Logan Paul and members of his “#Logang” finding a body in Aokigahara, a Japanese forest and common destination for suicide attempts. The video zoomed in on the body of a man who had taken his life in the forest; the body was distended and purple, signs of a recent suicide. The group was allegedly walking off the marked path when they found the body. Paul's initial reaction was disbelief, but—as a YouTuber whose net worth is determined by how interesting his videos are—his excitement was palpable. Paul quickly began to laugh and make jokes in reference to the body, asking the body if he was “alive...or [messing] with us.” Paul only blurred the face of the man before releasing the footage to his millions of young viewers.

The former Vine star released an initial statement over Twitter apologizing for the video that YouTube failed to take down. “I have never faced criticism like this before,” Paul said. “I didn't do it for views. I get views.” This response has been labeled as ignorant and self promoting, as Paul finished his post with his hashtag #Logang4Life. The most troublesome aspect of the video is not the handling of the encounter itself, but rather Paul's thought process. Despite losing fans, almost 6,000 in one day, over the widely criticized post, some fans still believe Paul has done nothing wrong. Some even buy into his claim that the video was an attempt to “raise awareness for suicide and suicide prevention,” according to his initial apology.

In addition to backlash from his fan base and YouTube viewers alike, Paul faces serious criticism from celebrities who continue to weigh in on his controversial video. Game of

Thrones star Sophie Turner posted to her Twitter January 2, "@LoganPaul You're an idiot. You're not raising awareness. You're mocking. I can't believe how self-praising your 'apology' is. You don't deserve the success (views) you have. I pray to God you never have to experience anything like that man did." Other celebrities even tried to convince others to accept Logan Paul's apology: "Re: Logan Paul, something I always think about is when people make... ethical mistakes, as in, not illegal, should we really be trying to ruin their lives and end their career or accept the apology, personally make a choice to stop watching and move on," tweeted Chrissy Teigen. Breaking Bad's Aaron Paul even tweeted, "Dear @LoganPaul, How dare you! You disgust me... Suicide is not a joke. Go rot in hell." Members of the Youtube community were also quick to respond to the video. Andrea Russett tweeted "logan paul gotta go" on January 1 alongside Grayson Dolan who issued three separate tweets addressing Logan Paul eventually stating, "You're 22 there's no excuse."

Despite the growing distaste for Logan Paul and his video, his loyal fanbase, the #Logang, continues to defend his actions. One follower tweeted "Logan Paul is teaching young folks the dangers of suicide. Maybe stop dissing him? #LOGANG4LIFE." Others followed suit as in light of the incident Paul received many tweets of support. After his initial Twitter apology Paul posted a minute and 45 second video titled "So Sorry" which has since reached over 38 million views on his monetized account. In it he appears to be crying while he states "I've made a severe and continuous lapse in my judgement and I don't expect to be forgiven." Later in the video he also asks his fanbase to stop defending him and his mistakes.

The suicide forest video stayed up online for less than 24 hours before Logan Paul himself was forced to take it down due to backlash. Despite this short window of time, the video gained over 6 million views. Viewers expressed confusion and concern as YouTube guidelines specifically state that "it's

not okay to post violent or gory content that's primarily intended to be shocking, sensational, or disrespectful." Outrage follows YouTube's release of a "non-apology," their first statement online concerning the video consisted of a string of tweets, none of which contained an apology. Furthermore, YouTube has yet to delete or suspend Logan Paul's channel.

Logan Paul is just one of many YouTubers who has released offensive or controversial content on their channels. On YouTube Paul reaches just over 15 million subscribers most of whom are young individuals who could be strongly influenced by the content of his videos. YouTube is a popular platform for younger audiences to enjoy video submissions from their favorite personalities. The danger Logan Paul has brought to light is that these videos may contain footage which can be unhealthy for young viewers.

YouTubers like Logan Paul don't deserve to be a part of the YouTube community. His indecency and blatant disregard for the YouTube guidelines resulted in a toxic video with no educational or entertainment merit. YouTube should be a platform that encourages viewers to be creative and connect with the world, sharing experiences that prove to be valuable to others. Paul is an example of a YouTuber who's actions are counterintuitive to the central idea of the YouTube community. As students at Miramonte continue to use various media platforms and consume the content which is provided, personalities such as Paul prove harmful to these young viewers.

The Editorial Board voted 8-2 that Paul's actions warranted more severe consequences than were recieved.