



Real-time TikTok Intelligence for Politics

Analyzing RFK Jr's Rise on TikTok

May 14, 2024

ben@credoiq.com

credoiq.com

Table of Contents

Takeaways	03
Content Performance	04
Targeting Black Voters	05
Talk Show Strategy	06
Attacking Biden/Dems	07
Missing Surrogates	08
Potential Vulnerabilities	09
Who is RFK Jr. Hurting More?	10
Methods & Notes	11

RFK JR. TAKEAWAYS

We analyzed the 150 highest performing posts related to RFK Jr. on TikTok in April 2024. These were our takeaways:



RFK Jr. Posts Targeting The Black Community Outperform

- Posts that featured black individuals or black communities garnered nearly **2X the views and 3X the likes** compared to the average top RFK Jr. related post in April.



RFK Jr's Investment in Talk Shows Lures Conservatives

- **51 of the top 150 posts** from April were clips of RFK Jr. appearing on a cable news or podcast shows. Clips of RFK Jr on **conservative shows performed nearly 5X better** than clips of RFK Jr. on progressive shows.



RFK Jr. Consistently Attacks Biden Around Censorship

- RFK Jr. directly **criticized Biden & Democrats in 19 posts** while only directly criticizing Trump & Republicans in 2 posts. 15 of the 19 posts criticizing Biden revolved around **censoring social media or freedom of speech**.



RFK Jr. Lacks Surrogates That Capture Share of Voice

- RFK Jr's official TikTok **accounted for 84 of the top 150 videos** related to him, exposing a lack of surrogate creators that excel on TikTok.



RFK Jr. Vulnerabilities Appear in VP & Stance on Guns

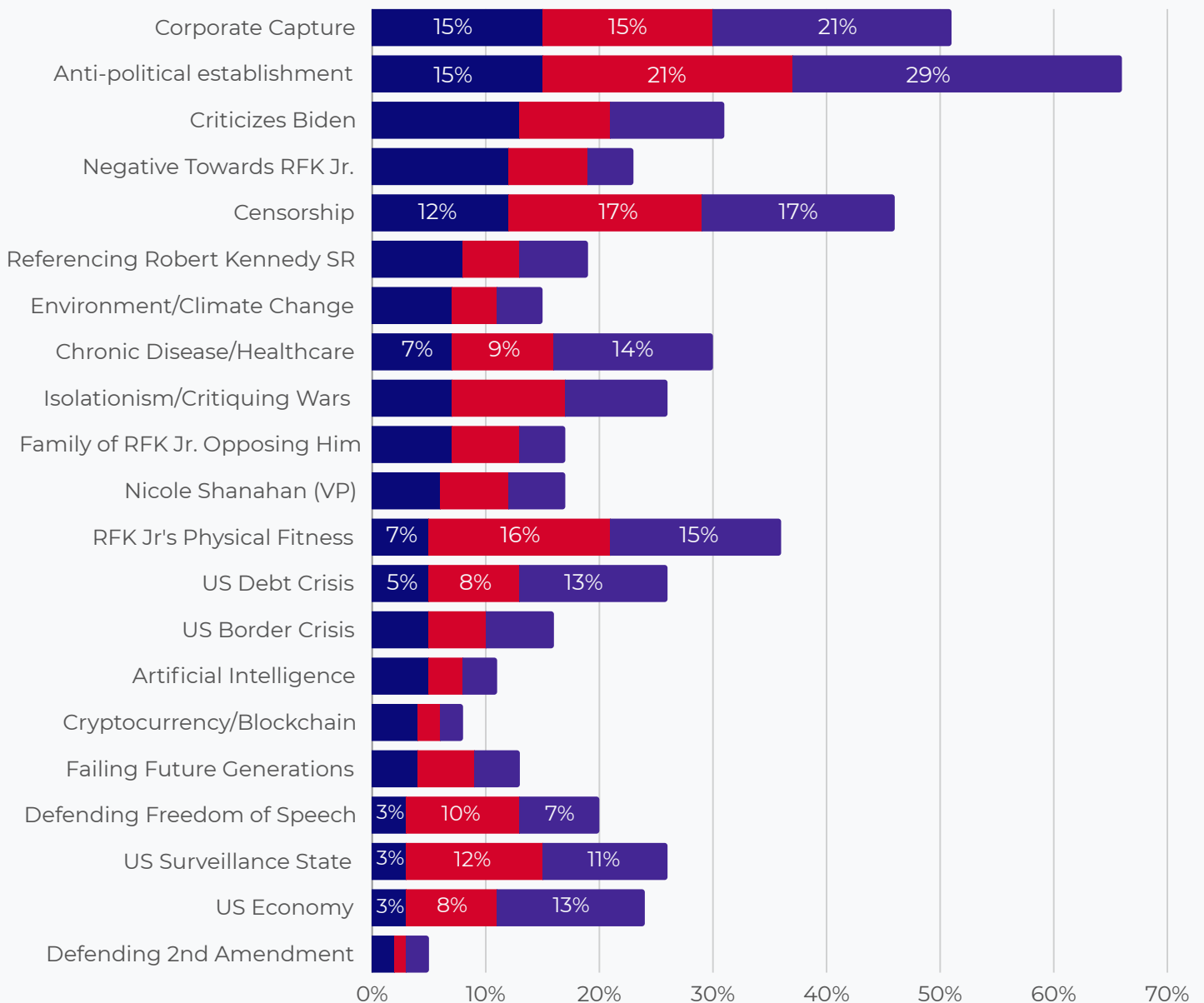
- Posts featuring either his VP (Nicole Shanahan) or his stance on the 2nd amendment had **2X the number of negative comments** compared to the average top RFK Jr. related post in April.

CONTENT ANALYSIS

The most common content themes of April's top posts about RFK Jr. were also the highest performing in terms of views and likes. Other high performing themes included posts around **copyright, RFK Jr's physical fitness, the economy & US debt.**

*Posts can appear in multiple themes

■ % of Total Posts ■ % of Total Views ■ % of Total Likes

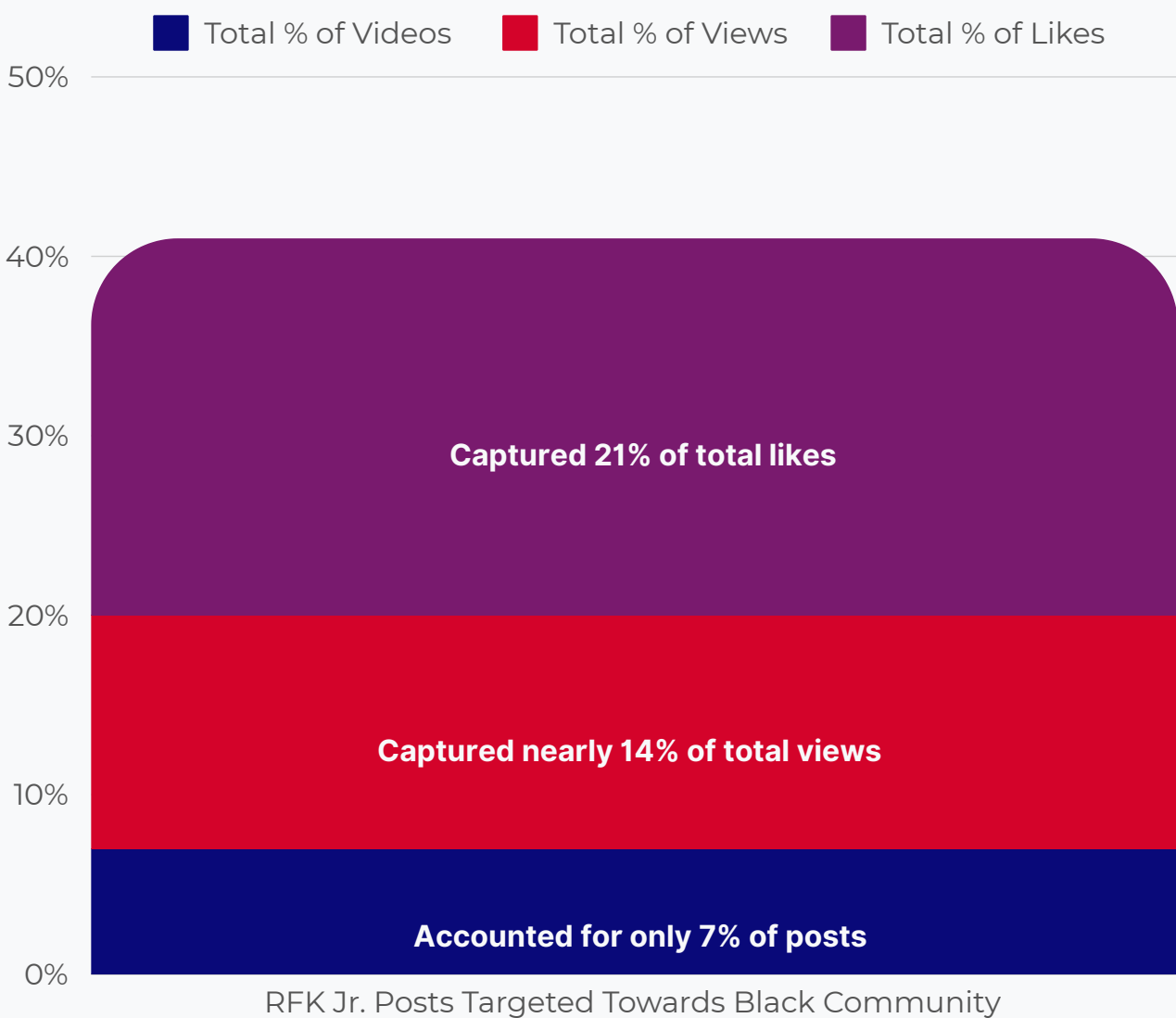


[View this data in 3 separate charts here](#)

BLACK COMMUNITY

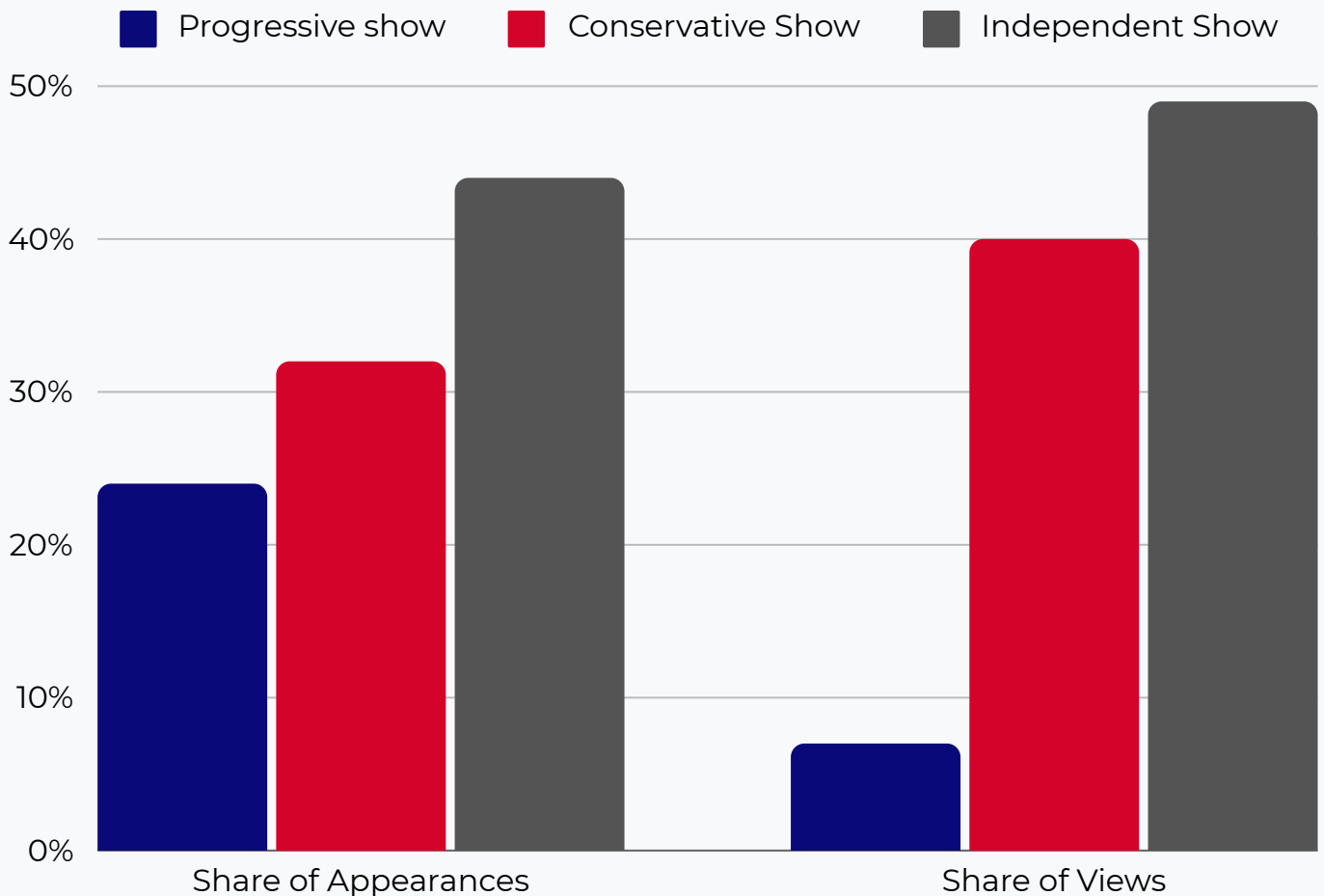
RFK Jr. posts targeted towards uplifting the black community only accounted for 7% of the top 150 posts but captured nearly **14% of the total views and 21% of the total likes.**

All videos targeted towards the black community came from RFK Jr's official account (some were reposted from @blacksforkennedy).



TALK SHOW STRATEGY

Even though RFK Jr. clips came from a variety of shows, clips of RFK Jr. appearing on **Conservative and Independent shows garnered 5X more views & likes** than clips of RFK Jr. appearing on Progressive shows.



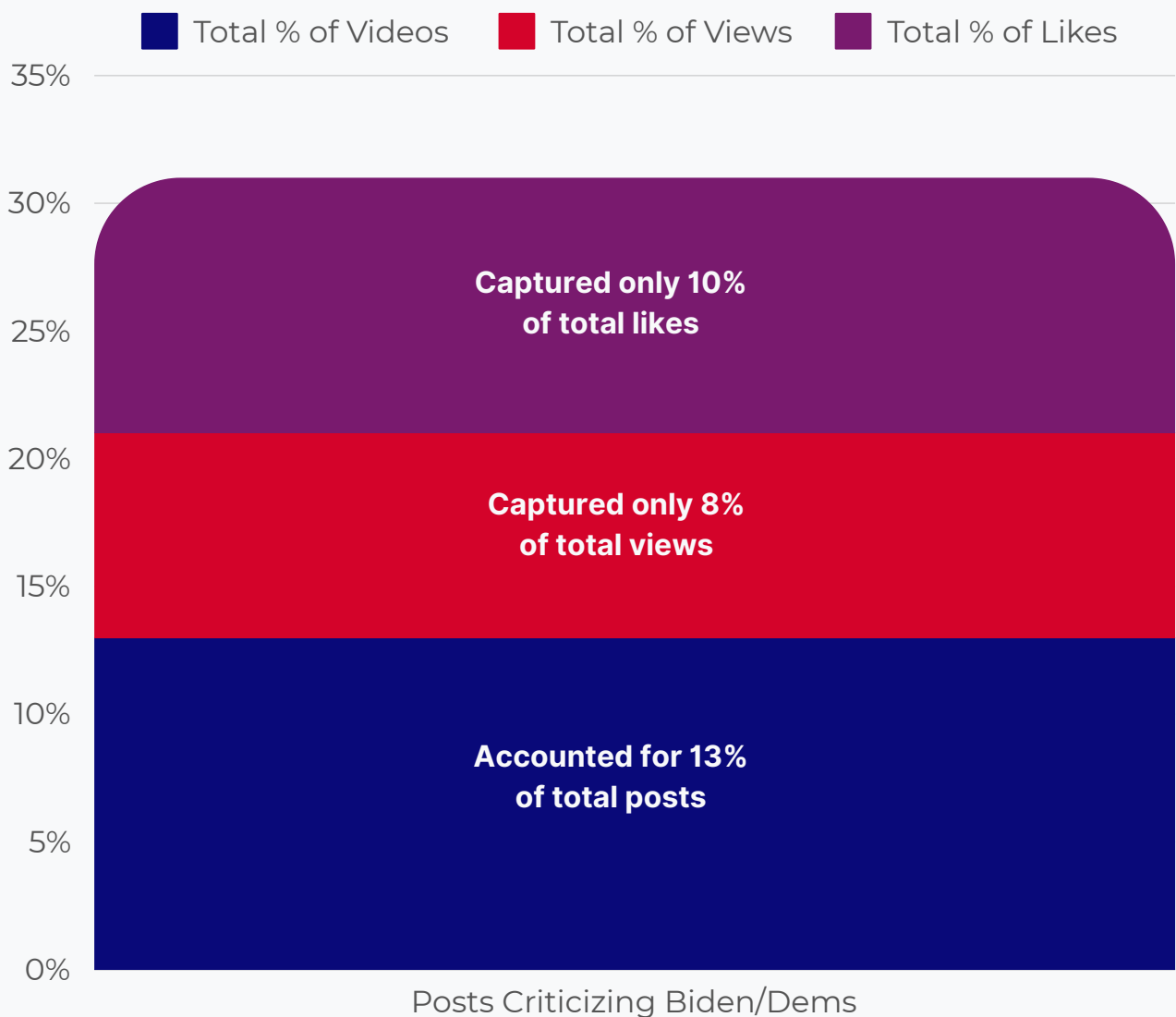
We interpret this significantly better performance on conservative and Independent shows as:

1. A detriment to Trump, **especially among young males** which is the largest audience of the podcasts RFK Jr. appeared on
2. A product of the Conservative media ecosystem which is **more likely to air unorthodox views that can go viral**

ATTACKING BIDEN

While RFK Jr. consistently attacked Biden and the Democratic party for encroaching on American's 1st amendment rights & the boarder crisis, these posts **underperform in views and likes** relative to the average top RFK Jr. post from April.

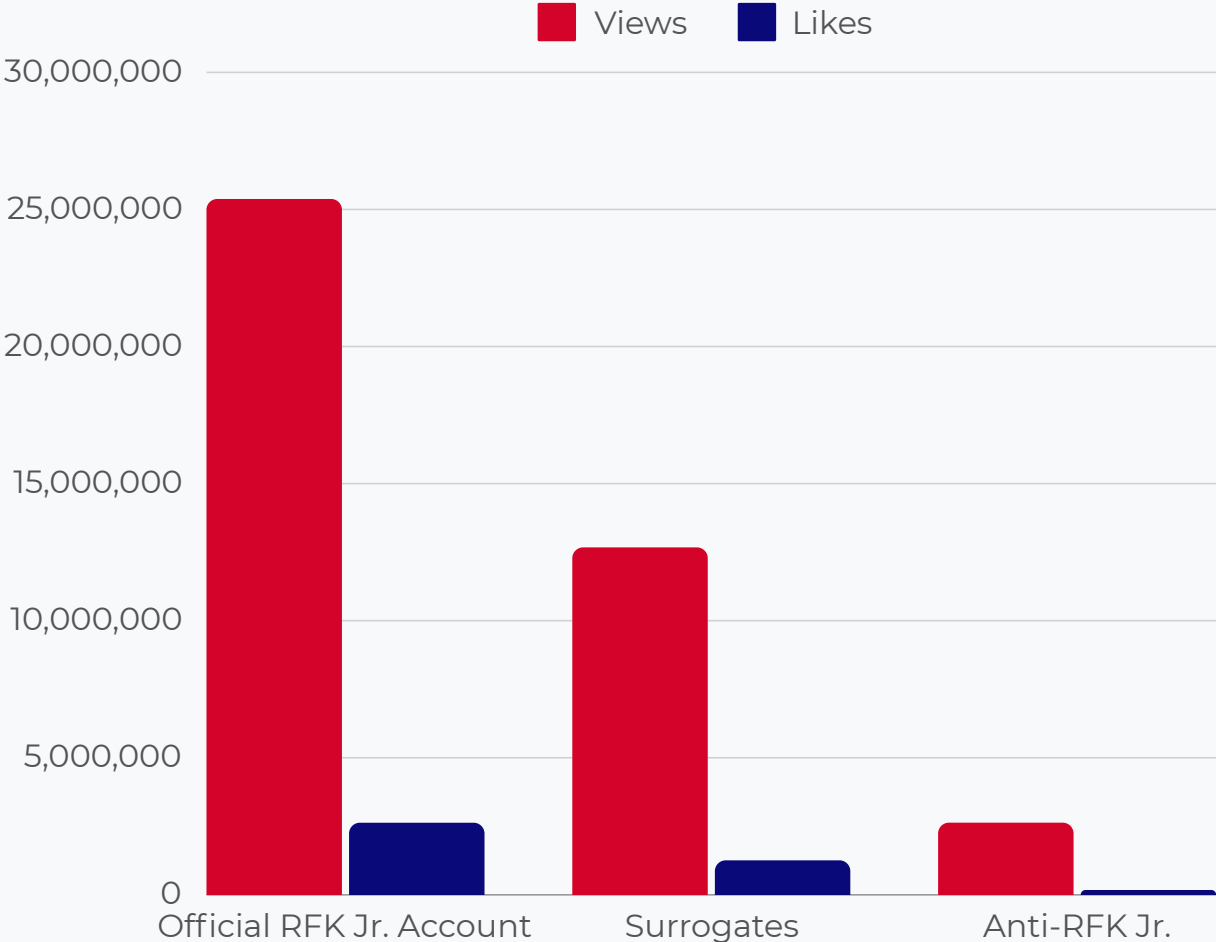
Posts Criticizing Biden/Dems also had the **third highest amount of negative comments** out of all content themes.



WHERE ARE HIS SURROGATES?

We found it noteworthy that **RFK Jr's official account made up over 60% of the views & likes** from the top videos about him in April.

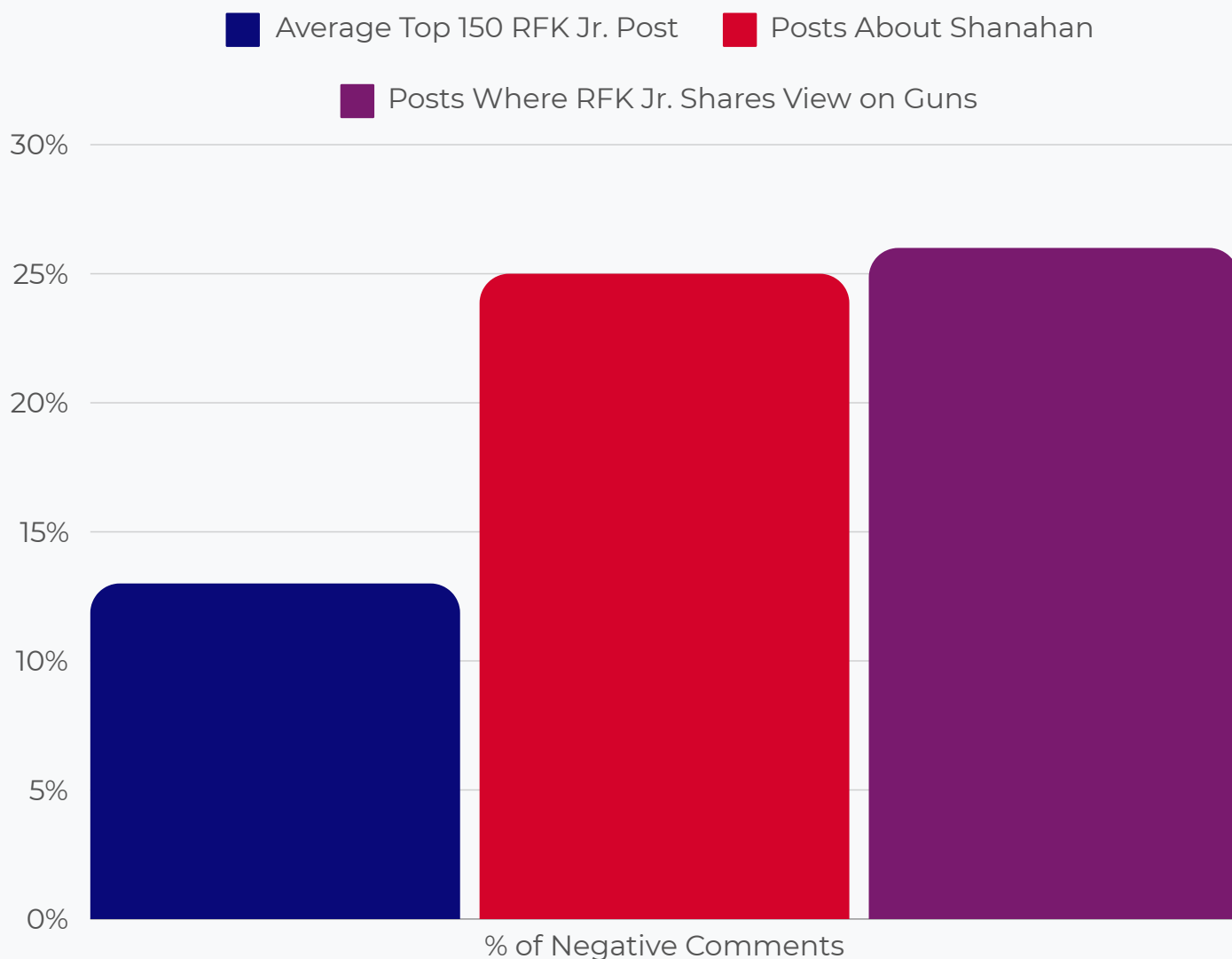
Comparatively, Biden and Trump's own accounts make up less than 1% of the share of voice about them on any given day.



RFK Jr's lack of surrogates may be another reason we see him making the rounds on younger male focused podcasts that surrogates can cut into hard-hitting, viral TikTok posts.

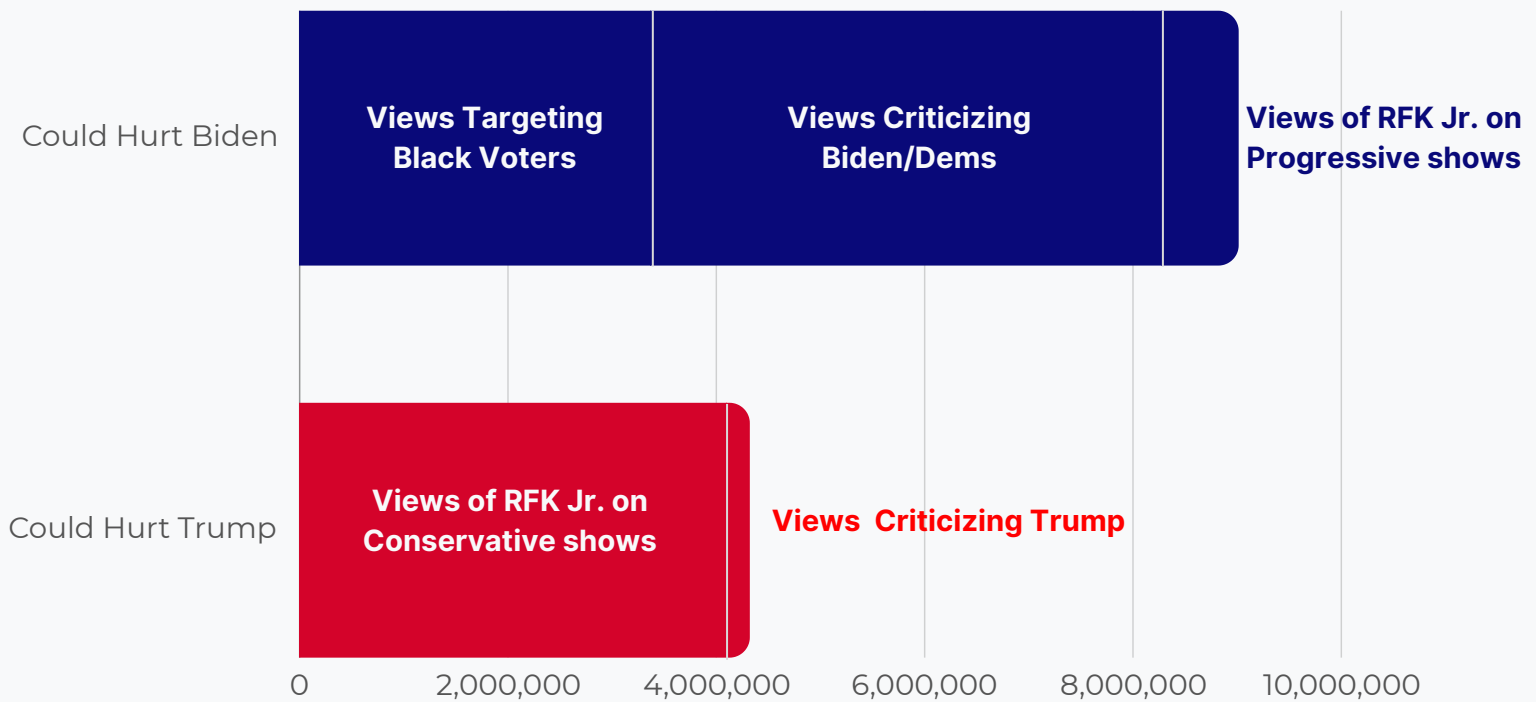
RFK JR. VULNERABILITY

Posts featuring Nicole Shanahan as RFK Jr's VP pick and posts featuring RFK Jr. staunchly defending the 2nd amendment had **2X the number of negative comments** compared to the average top RFK Jr. related post in April.



We believe this trend exposes two weak spots in RFK Jr's platform among audiences that are otherwise open-minded to his candidacy.

WHO IS RFK JR. HURTING?



In April, there was more RFK Jr. content being viewed on TikTok that could potentially hurt Joe Biden.

- RFK Jr. is executing a strategy to appeal to black voters who voted 92% for Biden in 2020* by emphasizing RFK Sr's track record promoting civil rights and uplifting black communities.
- At the same time, he is consistently attacking Biden and Dems on issues that are top of mind for progressive TikTok audiences.
- While RFK Jr's success on conservative shows give him exposure to Trump aligned audiences, RFK Jr. did not take the opportunity to make a compelling case against Trump the same way he did against Biden.

NOTES & DEFINITIONS

Methods:

- Using our proprietary technology, we first pulled the top 150 posts related to RFK Jr. sorted by the most views. We also pulled in likes and comments.
- We then ran our own AI based content analysis to sort the videos by topic.
- After they were tagged, we manually watched each video to confirm the topic and to combine similar topics worded differently.
- We also ran sentiment analysis across all video comments to understand the % breakdown of negative, positive and neutral comments.
- Once we had our base data set ready, we began analysis across tens of parameters.

Data Notes:

- **Video Stats** - we track TikTok stats when we collect the post and continue to update the stats for 30 days. Most videos do not get a material number of views past 30 days of being posted but it is possible that our statistics are not exact.
- **Removed Content** - a small % of content we collect gets taken down by TikTok or the creator. We included the stats for this content when we were able to review the video prior to it being taken down. Otherwise we removed the data from the analysis.
- **Suspended profiles** - a small % of creator profiles became suspended at some point in April. Some creator profiles were re-instated while others seem to be permanently suspended. Since there was material data from these profiles while they were live, we included this data in the analysis.
- **Data disclaimer:** Due to the nature of content and profiles being suspended and re-instated and often suspended again, there is room for marginally different results based on when we attempted to record data from each TikTok post and creator profile. That being said, we do not believe it would make a material difference in the results.

Sources outside of our own data:

*<https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/01/10/key-facts-about-black-eligible-voters-in-2024/>

Special thanks to Hamza Jaleel for assistance with data interpretation & visualization.

CredoiQ

We enable pro-democracy forces to analyze & leverage
real-time political conversations on social media.

ben@credoiq.com

credoiq.com
