

Responses from Dean Wells,

Do you think there was value in having the debate?

Some of the opinions expressed by the extremist left wing participants could be seen as dangerous and misleading, and at times it felt unsafe being in the same room as people with such extreme ideas, but I still showed up because I am passionate about the issues we were discussing. Some people might argue that giving these types of people and opinions a platform is irresponsible, but personally I think there is always value in discussing hard topics face to face. While I may not agree with some of their comments, I support their right to express themselves as long as they are not directly inciting violence. So yes there is definitely value in conversations like these.

What do you think of how SBS conducted and managed the debate?

SBS conducted the debate in a somewhat controlled manner. There were times when the chat was just getting interesting and the producers jumped in and cut it off.

I personally asked for a full copy of the raw unedited footage but the producers informed me this was against SBS policy. While I believe what the public saw in the final edit was a pretty good representation of how the conversation went in real life, there were some parts that were cut out that I think SBS did not want to show.

In general I think they did a good job even though I believe they do have a left leaning bias. Everyone on the day was polite and respectful and all the participants shook hands and had a good friendly chat after the filming. So all in all it was conducted professionally and I like that they are trying to air a variety of viewpoints. Straight white males are seriously under-represented in the media these days, so it's good to see SBS helping to tell the stories of a diverse group of people.

There's been some criticism of the program for promoting toxic masculine views, including from you. What's your response to this?

I have seen some reports claiming there were some toxic viewpoints expressed. I still have no idea what was even close to toxic. The discussion was extremely mild if you ask me. I think there are a small minority of people who just love to be offended and are gagging to express how toxic everything is because they have no actual original thoughts or personality.

If you were offended by anything said in this chat you need to get out and experience the world a lot more. You are stuck in a really small ignorant bubble.

Nothing said in this discussion was toxic.

Would you participate again if asked?

Yes definitely. Although I would ask that they let the conversation flow freely and not try to direct in any direction.