

New Facebook Censorship Policies, User Appeals and Other Updates

Written by Felicity Jones
Friday, 01 June 2018 21:44 -

In 2014, I published my [first article on why Facebook censorship is such a big issue](#) . In the 4 years since, a few things have changed, plus we got a lot more insight on how Facebook (and Instagram, which it owns) moderates the vast amount of content posted to its site every day.

Towards of the end of April 2018, Facebook updated its community standards and released the internal guidelines that govern its content control. The Facebook moderators guidelines were leaked to the public a few years ago, though Facebook has otherwise tried to keep them under wraps. Now they have opted for more transparency regarding what content is prohibited and why.

This post goes against our standards

We've hidden this post because it doesn't follow our Community Standards. It'll be deleted from Facebook soon.



Another photo (in its uncensored form) that landed me in Facebook jail recently.

In their new Community Standards, Facebook says that their nudity rules have “become more nuanced over time.” They are now supposedly making more exceptions for allowing nudity, such as when it’s for educational or medical purposes. Or when nudity is being used to raise awareness for a cause or protest. Specifically they note that images of female nipples are also

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now permitted when it's depicting "acts of protest." Does this mean I can post a topfree photo of myself if I am protesting Facebook's sexist and discriminatory policies? My guess is probably not. I simply don't understand why women have to be protesting, breastfeeding or have cancer in order to show images that include their breasts / nipples?

Another significant change to the network's anti-nudity policies is the fact that they now claim to allow childbirth imagery. In December 2017, activist Katie Vigos of the Empowered Birth Project launched a [change.org](https://www.change.org/p/instagram-allow-uncensored-birth-images) petition directed at Instagram to "allow uncensored birth images." A month later, Facebook contacted Vigos to tell her they'd be lifting the ban on birth content. This month, the new policy went into effect on both platforms, and the petition declared victory with over 23,000 signatures. (However, company reps have also said they'd been reconsidering this policy for a few years, so presumably this petition pushed them to finally act.)

This [article in Harpers Bazaar](#) tells the story of the petition via interviews with Katie, birth activists and photographers and the leading staff at Instagram. It was the first time that I've seen FB admit to using an automated bot to filter nudity / porn. Instagram's Head of Public Policy explains that it identifies visible skin, and they use it to quickly remove porn. But they acknowledge that this is a very limited tool. Maybe their use of it explains why some of the photos shown in this article were banned when they don't even show any forbidden body parts. Or then again, it's because Facebook still employs thousands of underpaid and under-trained subcontractors, in other countries, who take a few seconds to review each piece of content amid thousands of posts per day.

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We Removed Something You Posted

We removed the post below because it doesn't follow the Facebook Community Standards:

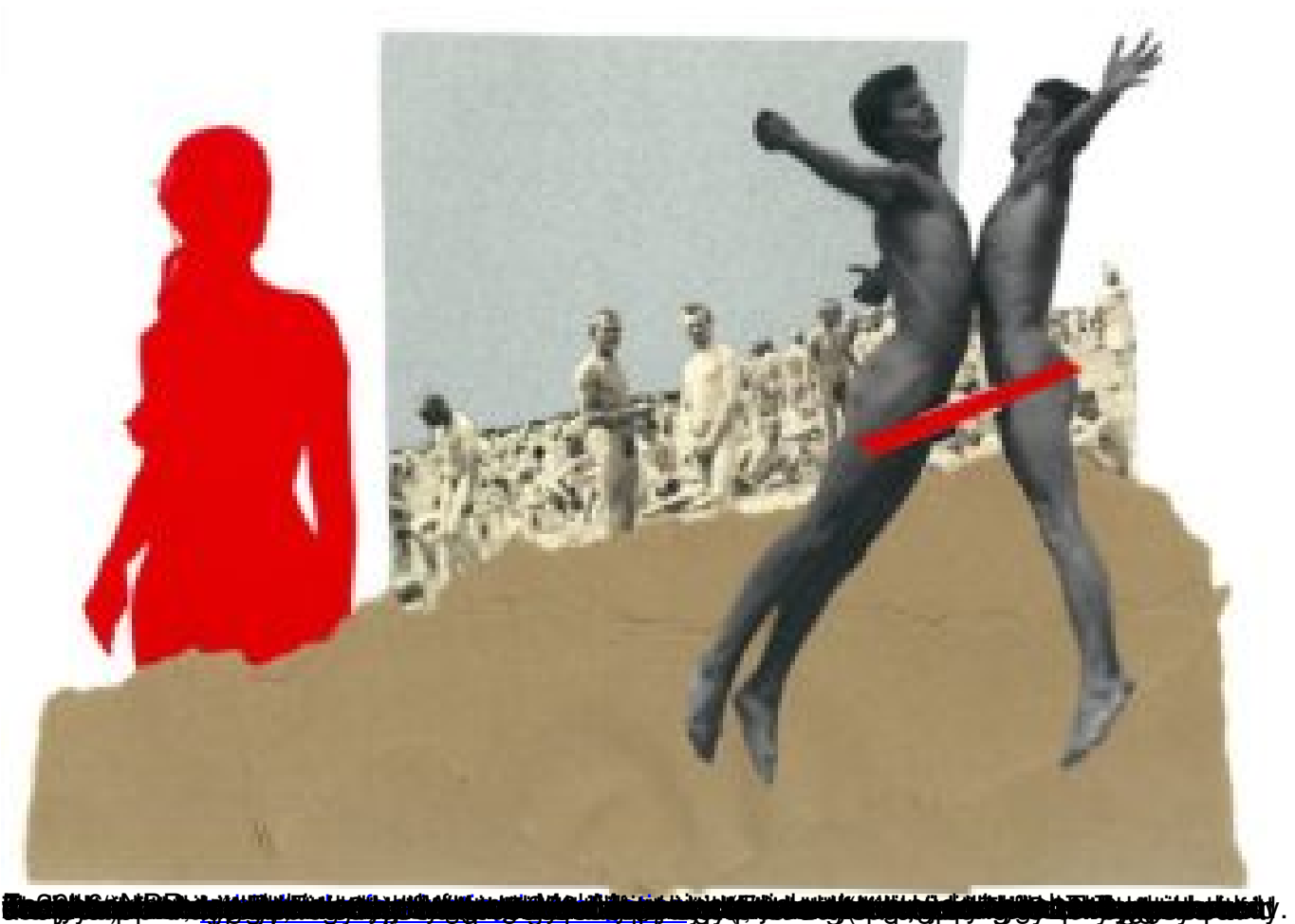


Learn More

[Facebook's New Censorship Policies, User Appeals and Other Updates](#)

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