

Twitter Censoring Non-Politically Correct Viewpoints?

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Is Twitter Censoring Non-Politically Correct Viewpoints?

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The folks running Twitter may be too young to have heard of George Orwell, or perhaps they simply do not care that their new advisory council sounds frighteningly Orwellian. Either way, the brand new "Twitter Trust and Safety Council" seems like a board ready to censor comments in deference to political correctness.

It doesn't help that among the more than 40 organizations that make up the council, one finds such groups as the "Dangerous Speech Project," a group with ties to the liberal John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and to financier George Soros' Open Society Institute.

Another council member is GLAAD, formerly an acronym for the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (the organization now goes by just its initials). Feminist Frequency, which also seeks to monitor free speech, is another member of the council.

The council does include some groups that appear to do good work preventing cyber-bullying against the young. Absent, however, are any conservative-leaning groups.

It isn't exactly clear what the council will do. The [announcement](#) itself came laden with doublespeak phrases such as "our Trust and Safety Council will help us tap into the expertise and input of organizations at the intersection of these issues more efficiently and quickly." More ominously, it said that Twitter is "taking a global and inclusive approach so that we can hear a diversity of voices."

Twitter reflected humanity—its best, its worst, and everything in between.

As a private company, Twitter can of course permit any views it wants. Many conservatives already feel that Twitter is not as welcoming to their views as it is to those of liberals, and such an unbalanced membership in the council is not likely to change those views.

Twitter's strength has always been its unfettered nature. Here people could come to alert their fellow humans to breaking news or simply funny and sometimes even deep insights. All you needed to do to connect with thousands, millions potentially, was to write something in fewer than 140 characters and click the "Tweet" button.

But that freedom has also been Twitter's biggest downside. Here, too, comes the slime of the human race to hound those with whom they disagree with vulgar smears. Flash mobs rise and sadistically pursue people, virtually putting torch- and pitchfork-bearing medieval hordes to shame. A year ago this Friday, Jon Ronson [grippingly chronicled](#) in The New York Times Magazine how lives have been ruined by Twitter shaming.

In other words, Twitter reflected humanity, its best, its worst, and everything in between. There was no meta-enforcer, or very little of one. People could always block pesky trolls and report speech deemed harmful. But other than that, it was free flow.

The principle that ruled was prudence on the part of the sender and "caveat emptor" on the part of the user. A lot of the information on Twitter was rubbish. The user was the filter. But the user could also be sure that the wisdom of crowds would sort out the wheat from the chaff.

Overall, the site has been adept at filling a niche in citizen journalism. The site reminded many old journalists of the wire rooms that used to be housed in many newspapers and television stations.

It has other bigger problems, however. So far, it does not seem to have found a model to [monetize all this potential](#). This may in time become a bigger problem than its new "Ministry of Truth."

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