

July 1, 2020

Multiple climate groups & activists now calling on us to manage climate misinformation as a public health issue:

<https://www.climatepower2020.org/facebook-letter/>

Full text below, links to related internal discussion in comments.

And related I pulled together some of the examples we've seen on platform of climate misinformation here:

<https://fb.workplace.com/groups/130831050311622/permalink/3292143014180394/>

FULL TEXT

Ms. Thorning-Schmidt,

In the four years you served Denmark as Prime Minister, you saw the effects of CO2 on climate change first hand. You made this dire challenge central to your tenure; you took action and asked other leaders to do the same. You made bold and ambitious commitments to achieve 100% renewable energy. You were celebrated for affirming the urgent necessity of acting to halt climate change.

Above all, you told the world that climate change is not "an opinion." It is fact.

Facebook is allowing the spread of climate misinformation to flourish, unchecked, across the globe. Instead of heeding the advice of independent scientists and approved fact-checkers from Climate Feedback, Facebook sided with fossil fuel lobbyists by allowing the CO2 Coalition to take advantage of a giant loophole for "opinion" content. The loophole has allowed climate denial to fester by labeling it "opinion," and thus, avoiding the platform's fact-checking processes.

Facebook knows how to take action against misinformation. When COVID-19 denial took hold on the platform, it was forcibly shut down because Facebook understood that the spread of COVID-19 misinformation could cause imminent physical harm to the health and well-being of Facebook users. Climate denial and misinformation are also deadly. By allowing climate misinformation to go unchecked, Facebook is actively putting the health and well-being of our nation's most vulnerable low-income communities and communities of color at risk.

You and the Oversight Board must step in and enact the same standard for the denial of climate change as you did for COVID-19 misinformation.

The integrity of the Oversight Board is at risk. Mark Zuckerberg has refused to recognize that he must get the facts right on climate, and refused to acknowledge that climate denial on his platform is as dangerous a threat to future generations as any.

We are asking you to lead the charge to fix this. Until Facebook takes a stand, climate denial groups such as the CO2 Coalition will continue to exploit your platform to sow discord and put our nation's health and security at dire risk.

When you were Prime Minister, you knew for certain that climate change was fact, not op Chats and needs to be treated as such. In your current role as an overseer of Facebook's dan

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We are asking you to lead the charge to fix this. Until Facebook takes a stand, **climate** denial groups such as the CO2 Coalition will continue to exploit your platform to sow discord and put our nation's health and security at dire risk.

When you were Prime Minister, you knew for certain that **climate change** was fact, not opinion, and needs to be treated as such. In your current role as an overseer of Facebook's dangerous **misinformation** practice, our plea is grave: please, Ms. Thorning-Schmidt, take action now.

CLIMATE POWER 2020

CLIMATEPOWER2020.ORG

Facebook must stop the spread of climate misinformation

An open letter to Helle Thorning-Schmidt and Facebook's Oversight Board.

official response to initial negative press cycle on this in
<https://fb.workplace.com/.../permalink/2379797755652932/...>

Also https://fb.workplace.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=744277596344613&id=100022871387589

Like · 45w

Thank you, [REDACTED] We are engaging with the policy team to determine a FB response.

10

Like · 45w

[REDACTED] Is there something wrong with us having an open platform where people can post arguments for either side of an issue and then people make up their own minds for themselves?

If there's a group that wants to post the earth is flat, should they not be allowed to? If people want to post about the story of creation from the Old Testament, should it be censored because science says evolution occurred otherwise? The list could go on and on...

Like · 45w

[REDACTED] Not if false information gets out of control and causes significant harm.

5

Like · 45w · Edited

[REDACTED] false is relative when everyone cherry picks their numbers. And having/espousing a different view on climate change is not causing significant physical harm.

Like · 45w

[REDACTED] Anthropogenic climate change is causing real harm, and beliefs to the contrary perpetuate it, increasing harm further because it discourages the large scale action we need by politicians who listen to the people, however misinformed their opinions.

There is a discussion to be had, but if a third party fact checker says something is wrong or misleading, we need to take action, and there is nothing wrong with pointing folks to high quality information, like we do with voting.

Like · 45w · Edited

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Like · 45w · Edited

1

The third party fact checker for that article was by people that do climate change work for a living. While they have good experience maybe, they also have a conflict of interest in that they make their livings arguing the opposite viewpoint.

If anthropomorphic climate change is doing real harm then should we ban or censor all who engage in it? Should we cut out advertising for the major corporations that contribute to it since they are doing significant physical harm to people?

I'm not arguing the effects of climate change. I simply think that an open forum for discussion allows for education on the matter. And that you educate, not censor, to create real, lasting, and meaningful change in people and society.

Like · 45w

1

Climate scientists are the experts on the science and best suited to fact check it. Just like epidemiologists, virologists, and other experts are best suited to evaluate data about coronavirus.

If scientists and fact checkers end up politicized, the mistakes will be public and they will eventually lose their authority, just like the doctors who were paid off to claim smoking didn't cause cancer, and leaded gas wasn't a health problem - very damaging misinformation campaigns that should have been shut down much earlier.

Like · 45w

5

The big money is in the status quo - I bet most respected climate scientists could make way more money as deniers in the oil and gas industry if they had no conscience.

Like · 45w

4

Like · 45w

[REDACTED]
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4

Like · 45w

[REDACTED]
Is there something wrong with us having an open platform where people can post arguments for either side of an issue and then people make up their own minds for themselves?

This is the issue being highlighted - the side of climate change denial is presenting their argument using misinformation. If people make up their minds based on this misinformation, then they've been manipulated into a potentially incorrect decision.

As an Environmental Program Manager, can you explain why you've repeatedly sided with climate change denial in this group?

1

Like · 45w

[REDACTED]
I don't appreciate the attack towards me and the work that I do here because you don't like my viewpoint. Nor do I feel the need to answer your question that implies something that simply isn't true.

Please take your attacks elsewhere because you've now created an unsafe space for open discourse here.

Like · 45w

[REDACTED]
It doesn't really read as an attack, and it's a valid question asked in a neutral way. Certainly you don't have to answer anything you don't feel comfortable with but claiming this is now an unsafe space as a result seems disingenuous. Your job title raises more eyebrows of scrutiny the same way mine might if I sided with groups claiming 5g causes coronavirus.

1

Like · 45w

[REDACTED]
I'm not going to respond to loaded questions with false accusations. And it's an attack on me as it's clearly trying to target my job and position in this company because someone doesn't like my viewpoint.

It's unwarranted, unappreciated, and unsafe for me to continue the discussion which seemed fine until [REDACTED] added that to the end of his

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Like · 45w

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Like · 45w

[REDACTED] would it be possible to share our Climate Change Live Display somehow?

Like · 45w

[REDACTED] Just Flagging and Comms Feedback

July 20, 2020 · 🗃

REDACTED FOR CONGRESS

...

It looks like a climate change fact check was removed under exec pressure. Contains leaked tasks/email data.

July 20, 2020 ·

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POPULAR.INFO

Fact-check of viral climate misinformation quietly removed from Facebook

A fact-check of a viral climate misinformation article was quietly removed from Facebook e...

83

38 Comments 5 Shares Seen by 2.7K

Like

Comment

Share

We never got an internal explanation about what happened with this, right?

Like · Reply · 42w

14

Not any that I can find, and this article seems to be the first that names all involved parties.

Like · Reply · 42w

5

Since all related tasks are private, my questions for comms are:

- Did we reach out to Science Feedback and ask them to revisit their fact

Chats

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Like · Reply · 42w

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Like · Reply · 42w

Since all related tasks are private, my questions for comms are:

- Did we reach out to Science Feedback and ask them to revisit their fact check rating?
- If not, did we reach out to Science Feedback and 'remind' them of our policies shortly before they removed the fact check label?
- If not, did we remove the fact check label on the Daily Wire article internally? Or did Science Feedback remove the label with no intervention from FB whatsoever, both direct and indirect?

Like · Reply · 42w · Edited

10

Third question is the most important. Article says:

Facebook and the executive director of Science Feedback deny that Facebook pushed Science Feedback to remove the "partly false" rating

So it doesn't sound like the 3PFC removed it.

Like · Reply · 42w

4

I have already been sent this article a few times by former academic colleagues who work on climate change misinfo. They are livid.

Like · Reply · 42w

21

So am I, to be honest.

Like · Reply · 42w

13

+1 to being livid

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4

Like · Reply · 42w

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21

Like · Reply · 42w

So am I, to be honest.

Like · Reply · 42w 13

+1 to being livid 8

Like · Reply · 42w

Write a reply...

BOT </> 🎧 😊

+1. But what can we do about it?

Like · Reply · 42w

well, I have ideas, but this seems like an outcome of the processes of the Policy team. I will say that processes are only so good as how transparent and consistent they are, or they cease to be rules and turn into ad hoc decisions.

For disclosure, I am married to one of those climate change misinfo academics and got a lot of side-eye this morning.

Like · Reply · 42w 8

I agree. But Facebook and Mark do not seem to share this concern and are not interested in employee feedback about the policies or the Policy team. I've even been flagged under the respectful workplace orders for criticizing (in what was a misunderstanding but I was still surprised).

Mark doesn't think people's past jobs or personal beliefs could ever interfere with their ability to do their jobs. To me, everything makes complete sense when I look at the political alignment and past jobs of our policy makers. Everything is working as designed.

Like · Reply · 42w · Edited

11

Write a reply...

BOT </> 🎧 Chats

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Like · Reply · 42w · Edited

Write a reply...



Is this true?? If so, what is our explanation?? "Internal Facebook documents obtained by Popular Information reveal that, prior to the removal of the fact-check, Science Feedback's fact-check of The Daily Wire article was brought to the attention of top Facebook executives including VP of Global Affairs and Communications Nick Clegg, VP of Global News Partnerships Campbell Brown, and VP of Global Public Policy Joel Kaplan. The documents also show that Facebook was asked by Congressman Mike Johnson (R-LA), a powerful member of Republican leadership, to reverse the fact-check."

9

Like · Reply · 42w

Linking last week's Just Flagging post about this issue:

<https://fb.workplace.com/groups/1577025989263450/permalink/2394869260812448/>

3

Like · Reply · 42w

What The F****! Are we not seeing in real time the impact of letting science misinformation ravage our country? Our Fact Checking systems mean nothing if they can just be overruled.

7

Like · Reply · 42w

This is incredibly frustrating to read and puts me into a really awkward position where I have to side with leakers. Since we still haven't got an internal response about the last incident, it appears that the pressure from the outside is indeed the only way to get an answer or drive any meaningful change.

9

Like · Reply · 42w

[https://fb.workplace.com/100011.../posts/978489782556351/...](https://fb.workplace.com/100011.../posts/978489782556351/)

2

Like · Reply · 42w

Like · Reply · 42w

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Like · Reply · 42w

[https://fb.workplace.com/100011.../posts/978489782556351/...](https://fb.workplace.com/100011.../posts/978489782556351/)

2

Like · Reply · 42w

"Content not available"

Like · Reply · 42w

Like · Reply · 42w

Write a reply...

2

Write a reply...

BOT </> 📝 😊

BOT </> 📝 😊

Personally, I would like an answer to this and as a sales person on the front lines with Microsoft, I am also being asked about this by my clients. What happened in this particular case and in other climate related reversals? What is the point of having independent fact checkers if we intervene?

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Like · Reply · 42w

[REDACTED] re: decisions

Like · Reply · 42w

[REDACTED] This is pretty scary, honestly:

Policy Outreach: Our stakeholders view this content as opinion and a debate within the scientific community, both relying on separate facts and research conducted by scientists, therefore view the fact-check as being biased.

15

Like · Reply · 42w

[REDACTED] Additionally, what debate in the scientific community?

"The consensus that humans are causing recent global warming is shared by 90%-100% of publishing climate scientists according to six independent studies by co-authors of this paper. Those results are consistent with the 97% consensus reported by Cook et al (Environ. Res. Lett. 8 024024) based on 11 944 abstracts of research papers, of which 4014 took a position on the cause of recent global warming. A survey of authors of those papers (N = 2412 papers) also supported a 97% consensus."

<https://iopscience.iop.org/.../1748-9326/11/4/048002...>

IOPSCIENCE.IOP.ORG

Consensus on consensus: a synthesis of consensus estimates on human-caused global warming -...

12

Like · Reply · 42w

[REDACTED] I put this question in the pollbot for this week's Q&A: "Why are Policy Outreach's stakeholders claiming a scientific climate change fact check is

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Like · Reply · 42w

[REDACTED] ②

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19

Like · Reply · 42w · Edited

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] its bigger than just climate change fact checking. See this write up where it also talks about COVID misinformation.

<https://fb.workplace.com/permalink.php...>

4

Like · Reply · 42w

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ②

Now that post has been taken down...

Like · Reply · 42w

[REDACTED]

Reply to [REDACTED] ...

BOT </> 📋

REDACTED FOR CONGRESS

[REDACTED]
It's scary that Facebook's comms team used the language of a fact-check being "biased". How is it possible that fact-checking something can be biased? They're the facts! I also want to see this answered, both internally and externally so that we aren't seen as being sympathetic to climate change deniers.

8

Like · Reply · 42w

[REDACTED]

Here is a recent example from last week of a fact-check being biased:

<https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/blm-terrorist-rosenberg/>

The explanation in the abstract boils down to the claim that the word "terrorism" has no fixed meaning, and therefore that the claim being checked is mixed between true and false, which is nonsense.

If Snopes wanted to split hairs, it could argue: the organizations in question were insurrectionist in nature, but not terrorist, and that there is a distinction

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Like · Reply · 42w

Reply to [REDACTED] ..

[BOT] </> 📈 😊

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Like · Reply · 42w

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Like · Reply · 42w

[REDACTED] Reply to [REDACTED] ...

BOT </> 🎧

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Like · Reply · 42w

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If Snopes wanted to split hairs, it could argue: the organizations in question were insurrectionist in nature, but not terrorist, and that there is a distinction to be made between these categories. Or it could argue: the organization was terrorist in nature, but the individual was never individually convicted of terrorism, only of other crimes in service to a terrorist organization. Or it could argue: the individual was a terrorist and was also convicted, but was never convicted of terrorism. Or it could argue: the terrorism thing is long in the past and the individual today is vastly different from the individual then, and has since renounced political violence.

However, the last paragraph of the fact-check is: "As such, a supportable (though not definitive) case exists for claiming that the crimes of which [she] was convicted [...] were indeed acts of domestic terrorism."

So the fact-check abstract is: that words don't have meanings, and therefore the claim being checked should be rated as mixed between true and false. And the fact-check conclusion is: that a claim was made which Snopes believes to be supportable but not definitive, and therefore the claim should be rated as mixed between true and false.



SNOPEST.COM

Did a 'Convicted Terrorist' Sit on the Board of a BLM Funding Body?

Like · Reply · 42W

2

Hi All, here is some more information on this issue just posted in Comms FYI:

<https://fb.workplace.com/groups/waitwhataskpr/permalink/4028128627235722/>

Like · Reply · 42W

7

<https://arstechnica.com/.../facebook-overrides-fact.../>



ARSTECHNICA.COM

Facebook overrides fact-checks when climate science is "opinion"

Hi All, here is some more information on this issue just posted in Comms FYI:
<https://fb.workplace.com/groups/waitwhataskpr/permalink/40281286272357>
22/

Like Reply 42w



<https://arstechnica.com/.../facebook-overrides-fact.../>



ARSTECHNICA.COM

Facebook overrides fact-checks when climate science is
“opinion”

Like Reply 42w

The headlines suggest that FB intervened here—but digging in, that seems not to be the case. What evidently happened is that Science Feedback came to terms directly with The Daily Wire to withdraw their 3PFC label after the following disclaimers were added to the article in question:

Like Reply 42w Edited

DAILY WIRE

SHELLENBERGER: On Behalf Of Environmentalists, I Apologize For The Climate Scare

In response to accusations that Shellenberger's recent publications, the following op-ed had been read or shared by hundreds of thousands of people, along with coming up independently, the self-styled environmentalist has now issued a disclaimer, saying it was pushed down on him by others, some of whom have pushed back on some of his claims and conclusions. See summary below.

The following is the full text of the disclaimer, which was signed Michael Shellenberger, which was originally published by Forbes but pulled a few hours later. Shellenberger, a former

Like Reply 42w

Labels: The fact check site Climate Feedback published a report on June 29 summarizing responses of six climate science fact-checkers who concluded that Shellenberger's claims were "misleading." Shellenberger says "misleading or partially accurate," while others are inaccurate and "misled readers by selectively context and cherry-picking data while overlooking other relevant scientific studies." Among the claims the reviewers push back on is that "climate change is not a serious threat" and that "global warming is not caused by human activity." When they said a "consensus of independent experts from the IPCC, as well as numerous scientific studies, linking anthropogenic climate change to temperature extremes, drought, precipitation patterns, and wildfires." The fact checkers also argued against Shellenberger's

REDACTED FOR CONGRESS

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DAILY WIRE

SHELLENBERGER: On Behalf Of Environmentalists, I Apologize For The Climate Scare

BY MICHAEL SHellenberger APR 26, 2017 · 1 MINUTE READ

Since its initial publication, the following op-ed has been read and shared by hundreds of thousands of people. Along with stirring up widespread anxiety, the self-styled

"Environmentalist" press has been recruited by fossil-fuelers, some of whom have pushed back on some of its claims and conclusions (see summary below).

The following is the full text of an opinion piece written by climate activist and energy expert Michael Shellenberger which was originally submitted to Forbes but pulled a few hours later. Shellenberger, a TIME "Health Transformer" (and

Like · Reply · 42w



Update: The Fact-Checkers Strike Again

Feedback published a post on June 28 commanding that I, or any climate scientist, who writes any conclusion that "there is" or "the consensus made by Shellenberger and his associates is" inaccurate "while others are inaccurate and instead readers by linking counter and cherry-picking data while overlooking other relevant scientific studies." Among the claims the reviewers push back on is that "climate change is not making natural disasters worse," which they said is "unsubstantiated and contradicts reports from the IPCC as well as numerous scientific studies linking human-caused climate change to increased extremes, drought, precipitation patterns, and wildfires." The fact-checkers also argued against Shellenberger's conclusion that "there are increasing global mass extinctions" saying it "lacks reliable scientific evidence" demonstrating that declines in animal species for several background extinction rates. Additionally, they refuted some of his claims about wildfires. (Read the full post: [here](#).)

Like · Reply · 42w

Which I think feels fair? And in the meantime (when these disclaimers weren't there), we had applied the "false information" overlay and demotions to inform people directly and mitigate viral spread. So in this way, I feel like the program worked as intended to bring accountability and prevent harm.

I'll track and reply if any of this turns out to be wrong. And in general, I agree we should press for greater transparency in this area.

Like · Reply · 42w

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cc [REDACTED]

Like · Reply · 42w · Edited

[REDACTED] Write a reply...



[REDACTED]
It should be noted Shellenberger is not a scientist. He has no education on the subject. Not sure how that makes this a debate amongst scientists.

3

Like · Reply · 42w

[REDACTED]
A lot of people writing code these days are not software engineers and have no education on the subject.

And yet, unparadoxically, rejecting a claim from such a person on that basis alone would remain argumentum ad hominem, an appeal to a disparaging ...

[See More](#)

1

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[REDACTED]
Thats a straw man argument comparing two very different professions. One demands an understanding of precise methodologies and knowledge of prior research and the other does not.

My point is he can have his opinion but his opinion doesn't make it a debate among scientists as he is not one. Just like he can have an opinion on COVID but his opinion would not make it a debate among virologists (and we'd remove it for harmful [misinformation](#))

6

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[REDACTED]
Also, while not every software engineer has a degree in software engineering, we wouldn't consider them a software engineer if they weren't actually doing software engineering work and have that experience.

REDACTED FOR CONGRESS

Chats

Thats a straw man argument comparing two very different professions. One demands an understanding of precise methodologies and knowledge of prior research and the other does not.

My point is he can have his opinion but his opinion doesn't make it a debate among scientists as he is not one. Just like he can have an opinion on COVID but his opinion would not make it a debate among virologists (and we'd remove it for harmful misinformation)

Like · Reply · 42w · Edited

6

Also, while not every software engineer has a degree in software engineering, we wouldn't consider them a software engineer if they weren't actually doing software engineering work and have that experience.

Like · Reply · 42w

5

Yes, software engineering does indeed demand an understanding of precise methodologies and knowledge of prior research - we spend a lot of time on this in school. But actually, so does science.

Neither field requires credentials. The opinions of commentators in either field are worthwhile based only on the level of relevant knowledge and skill which inform the opinions. Whether the persons' backgrounds conform to the expectations of gatekeepers (e.g. having no formal education in the subject) is immaterial except as a quick-and-dirty means of taking a first guess at their level of relevant knowledge and skill.

Like · Reply · 42w

Reply to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] </> [REDACTED]



OutOfOffice Bot

I'm sorry but [REDACTED] is currently out of the office. His message is:
I'll be on PTO until November. Please direct RemCmd/Hypershell questions
to [REDACTED] Please direct all other questions to [REDACTED]

Like · Reply · 42w

Write a comment...

[REDACTED] </> [REDACTED]

shared a link.

...

July 14, 2020 ·

Judd Legum claims that we went against our own written fact-checking policies re: the climate change "opinion" controversy. He shares screenshots of policies that directly contradict the actions taken.



TWITTER.COM

Judd Legum on Twitter

"1. Facebook is lying about its fact-checking program and its approach to climate disinformation. This gets a bit into the weeds but its worth it because Facebook is trying to use the complexity to obscure its actions,...

1 1 1 26

11 Comments 3 Shares Seen by 1.8K

Like

Comment

Share



Like · Reply · 43w



I mean, he's not wrong from what I can tell. Even just the appeals process seems to have been circumvented in this case for some reason: the policy says the recipient of a fact-check can appeal to the 3PFC, but here they appealed directly to Facebook. What's actually going on here?

1 1 1 12

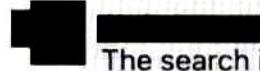
Like · Reply · 43w



Relevant task(s): <https://fburl.com/tasks/jphbi57j>

1 3

Like · Reply · 43w



The search isn't returning anything anymore, do you have a direct link to the tasks?

Like · Reply · 43w



turns out it's a private task.

1 2

Like · Reply · 43w

Write a reply...

REDACTED FOR CONGRESS

Relevant task(s): <https://fburl.com/tasks/jphbi57>



3

Like · Reply · 43w

The search isn't returning anything anymore, do you have a direct link to the tasks?

Like · Reply · 43w

[REDACTED] turns out it's a private task.



2

Like · Reply · 43w

[REDACTED] Write a reply...



[REDACTED] Write a reply...



[REDACTED] this should be in the top 5 questions for Zuck tomorrow.



6

Like · Reply · 43w

[REDACTED] On top of asking if Opinion articles are now exempt from fact checking, the question should also ask why we don't apply the rule equally over all pages. We had a fact checker flag an article as "Partly False" but depending on where it was published from not all posts on FB have the flag. It seems we've whitelisted the Daily Wire source but not others, despite the fact checker mentioning that the article has been posted to the Daily Wire.

Examples of with the flag:

<https://www.facebook.com/TheBlaze/posts/3320265881344062>

<https://www.facebook.com/PJMedia/posts/10158890080281159>

Examples missing the flag:

<https://www.facebook.com/officialb.../posts/3882970421740358>

<https://www.facebook.com/DailyWire/posts/2547700385525777>

<https://www.facebook.com/aklavan/posts/10163895906790456>

Fact check source: <https://climatefeedback.org/.../article-by-michael.../>

Like · Reply · 43w



2

[REDACTED] Write a reply...



REDACTED FOR CONGRESS

Like · Reply · 43w

[REDACTED] On top of asking if Opinion articles are now exempt from fact checking, the question should also ask why we don't apply the rule equally over all pages. We had a fact checker flag an article as "Partly False" but depending on where it was published from not all posts on FB have the flag. It seems we've whitelisted the Daily Wire source but not others, despite the fact checker mentioning that the article has been posted to the Daily Wire.

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<https://www.facebook.com/DailyWire/posts/2547700385525777>
<https://www.facebook.com/aklavan/posts/10163895906790456>

Fact check source: <https://climatefeedback.org/.../article-by-michael.../>

Like · Reply · 43w

2

[REDACTED] Write a reply...

Liz Bourgeois

Judd was reacting to an NYT story from yesterday which got some key facts wrong. We issued a follow up statement to clarify and I connected with Judd last night to walk him through our policies. Opinion content like op-eds and editorials are not categorically exempt from fact-checking and our fact-checkers use their judgement to assess what qualifies based on our guidelines. We're working to make our guidelines clearer on this going forward. You can see my response to his tweets here. https://twitter.com/Liz_Shepherd/status/1283192105465085953

↳ posts content based on false editorial – it is still eligible for to make this clearer in our guid in use their judgement to determine if mask false information under

TWITTER.COM

[REDACTED] on Twitter

Like · Reply · 43w · Edited

8

[REDACTED] Thanks, [REDACTED] I'm curious about Facebook intervening, rather than having the writer appeal to the fact-checker -- do you have a response to that claim?

Like · Reply · 43w · Edited

6

[REDACTED] So, per the careful use of "categorically exempt" -- there are (non-

Like · Reply · 43w

Write a reply...

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to make this clearer in our guic
in use their judgement to dete
mask false information under

TWITTER.COM

[REDACTED] on Twitter

Like · Reply · 43w · Edited

8

Thanks [REDACTED]. I'm curious about Facebook intervening, rather than having the writer appeal to the fact-checker -- do you have a response to that claim?

Like · Reply · 43w · Edited

6

So, per the careful use of "categorically exempt" -- there are (non-politician) cases where opinion pieces are exempted?

Like · Reply · 43w

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Write a reply...

Seems there's a new story out:

<https://fb.workplace.com/groups/1577025989263450/permalink/2399014590397915/>

Like · Reply · 42w

2

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Write a comment...



Just Flagging and Comms Feedback

Open Group · 8.4K members · This group is to flag external posts or press articles that ... See More

Posts

Files

Topics

More ▾

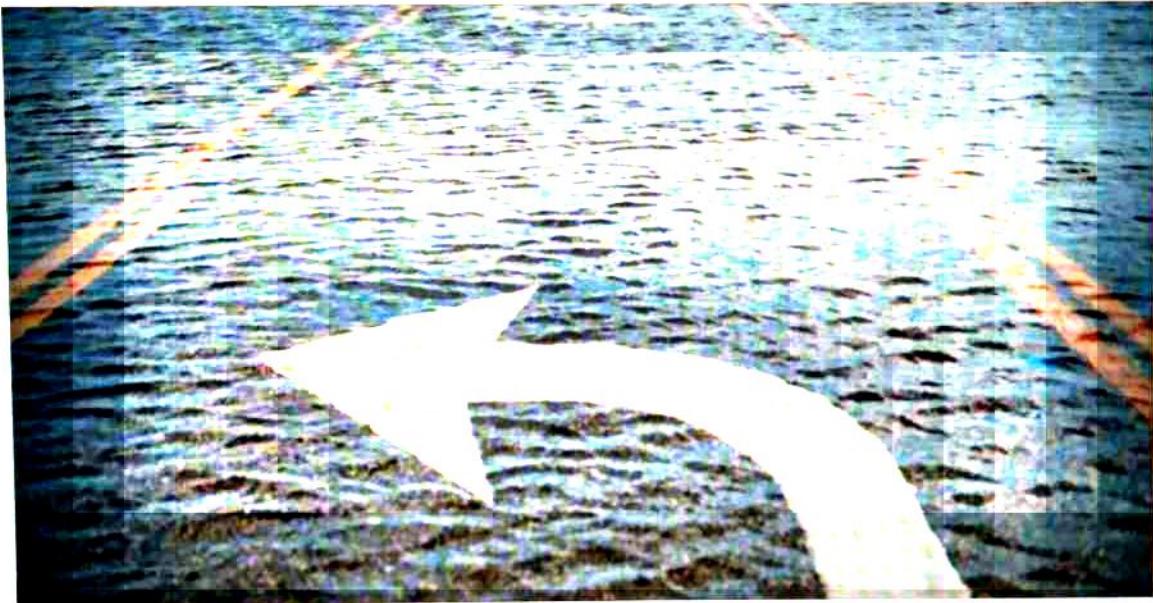


[REDACTED] shared a link.

July 20, 2020

...

It looks like a climate change fact check was removed under exec pressure. Contains leaked tasks/email data.



POPULAR INFO

Fact-check of viral climate misinformation quietly removed from Facebook

A fact-check of a viral climate misinformation article was quietly removed from Facebook e...

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83

38 Comments 5 Shares Seen by 2.7K

Like

Comment

Share



[REDACTED] We never got an internal explanation about what happened with this, right?

14

Like Reply 42w



[REDACTED] Not any that I can find, and this article seems to be the first that names all involved parties.

Like Reply 42w

5

REDACTED FOR CONGRESS

We never got an internal explanation about what happened with this, right?

14

Like · Reply · 42w

Not any that I can find, and this article seems to be the first that names all involved parties.

5

Like · Reply · 42w

Reply to [REDACTED] ...

[BOT] </> 🎧 😊

Since all related tasks are private, my questions for comms are:

- Did we reach out to Science Feedback and ask them to revisit their fact check rating?
- If not, did we reach out to Science Feedback and 'remind' them of our policies shortly before they removed the fact check label?
- If not, did we remove the fact check label on the Daily Wire article internally? Or did Science Feedback remove the label with no intervention from FB whatsoever, both direct and indirect?

Like · Reply · 42w · Edited

10

Third question is the most important. Article says:

Facebook and the executive director of Science Feedback deny that Facebook pushed Science Feedback to remove the "partly false" rating

So it doesn't sound like the 3PFC removed it.

Like · Reply · 42w

4

Reply to [REDACTED] ...

[BOT] </> 🎧 😊

I have already been sent this article a few times by former academic colleagues who work on climate change misinfo. They are livid.

Like · Reply · 42w

21

So am I to be honest

I have already been sent this article a few times by former academic colleagues who work on climate change misinfo. They are livid.

21

Like · Reply · 42w

So am I, to be honest.

13

Like · Reply · 42w

+1 to being livid

8

Like · Reply · 42w

Write a reply...



+1. But what can we do about it?

Like · Reply · 42w

well, I have ideas, but this seems like an outcome of the processes of the Policy team. I will say that processes are only so good as how transparent and consistent they are, or they cease to be rules and turn into ad hoc decisions.

For disclosure, I am married to one of those climate change misinfo academics and got a lot of side-eye this morning.

Like · Reply · 42w

8

I agree. But Facebook and Mark do not seem to share this concern and are not interested in employee feedback about the policies or the Policy team. I've even been flagged under the respectful workplace orders for criticizing (in what was a misunderstanding but I was still surprised).

Mark doesn't think people's past jobs or personal beliefs could ever interfere with their ability to do their jobs. To me, everything makes complete sense when I look at the political alignment and past jobs of our policy makers. Everything is working as designed.

Like · Reply · 42w · Edited

11

Write a reply...



Popular Information on 3PFC Escalations

Over the past several months, reporter Judd Legum at Popular Information has questioned the independence of our third-party fact-checking program, our approach to opinion content, and scrutinized our relationships with publishers - particularly as they relate to climate change misinformation. This morning Judd [ran another story](#), this time focused on why and how a fact-check on a climate change piece was reversed *only* for the conservative publisher the Daily Wire and not the other conservative publications that also ran the piece.

For clarity: in this case, our science-focused fact-checking partner Science Feedback independently reviewed appeals and, when The Daily Wire added a link to the fact-check from their article, Science Feedback decided to remove its Partly False rating. Facebook did not weigh in, which both Science Feedback and Facebook confirmed for the reporter.

Judd's reporting is based off of a leaked escalation note that was sent to leadership. As with all leaks, this one is discouraging. In this case, the team sent an FYI only note to leadership since we expected press coverage and wanted leaders to be aware of how we were managing the situation. What was made clear in the note, even though Judd did not cite it in his story, is that fact-checkers have discretion on what and how to rate and that appeals processes are run independent from us.

Clarifying our approach to climate change misinformation

This story also touches on our approach to climate change misinformation, which has been mischaracterized in the press over the past couple of weeks. Our fact-checkers can and do rate climate science content - there has never been a prohibition against doing so.

Nevertheless, there's been a suggestion that we have an "opinion loophole," which is allowing climate change deniers to promote their content on our platform unchecked - this is not accurate.

Since we launched our program in 2016, the focus has been on fact-checking verifiable assertions of fact vs. opinion content. We do not consider climate change, or any topic, opinion by definition. Simply labeling a piece of content as an op-ed or editorial does not make it ineligible for fact-checking. This is not and has never been the case. Last week we updated our [Help Center](#) to make it clearer that "content presented as opinion but based on underlying false information may still be eligible for rating." This reflects what we've shared with our fact-checkers verbally previously. We are continuing to work to make this clearer going forward.

Like

Comment

Share

[REDACTED] When The Daily Wire added a link to the fact-check from their article, Science Feedback decided to remove its Partly False rating.

Is this really sufficient for a fact checker to remove the "Partly False" rating? If the majority of the article is still false information, a large number of people are still going to be misled.

Like · Reply · 42w · Edited

29

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] Science Feedback seemed to do it begrudgingly according to their statement in the article.

Like · Reply · 42w

5

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] The article reported that the link to the fact-check was behind a paywall. Is that true?

Like · Reply · 42w

3

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] I think that is correct. Non-paying users could not see the link

Like · Reply · 42w

6

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] which makes [REDACTED]'s question - "is this sufficient to remove a fact-check?" - even more salient.

Like · Reply · 42w

17

[REDACTED] You can read the full article here if you want:
<https://environmentalprogress.org.../on-behalf-of...>



ENVIRONMENTALPROGRESS.ORG

On Behalf Of Environmentalists, I Apologize For
The Climate Scare — Environmental Progress

Like · Reply · 42w



ENVIRONMENTALPROGRESS.ORG

On Behalf Of Environmentalists, I Apologize For The Climate Scare — Environmental Progress

Like · Reply · 42w

[REDACTED] To clarify, the fact check details are behind a paywall, but the disclaimer about fact checking is before the paywall:
<https://www.dailystorm.com/.../shellenberger-on-behalf-of...>



DAILYWIRE.COM

SHELLENBERGER: On Behalf Of Environmentalists, I Apologize For The Climate...

Like · Reply · 42w

1

[REDACTED] Write a reply...



OutOfOffice Bot

I'm sorry but [REDACTED] is currently out of the office. His message is:
I'll be on PTO until November. Please direct RemCmd/Hypershell questions
to [REDACTED]. Please direct all other questions to [REDACTED]

Like · Reply · 42w

[REDACTED] Write a reply...

[REDACTED]
Thank you for this update. Is it possible to get externally facing version of these comms? My clients at Microsoft have asked about these articles in the past and we would like to address it with them preemptively.

Like · Reply · 42w

6

[REDACTED] **Emmett Neyman**

Our stakeholders view this content as opinion and a debate within the scientific community, both relying on separate facts and research conducted by scientists, therefore view the fact-check as being biased. We have also received incoming from Representative Mike Johnson's office questioning why it is not opinion.

This language coming from our Policy team is concerning to me. Do we as a company view some fact checks as potentially biased?

Thank you for this update. Is it possible to get externally facing version of these comms? My clients at Microsoft have asked about these articles in the past and we would like to address it with them preemptively.

1 Like 6

Like · Reply · 42w

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This language coming from our Policy team is concerning to me. Do we as a company view some fact-checks as potentially biased?

1 Like 25

Like · Reply · 42w

And, who are those stakeholders?

1 Like 24

Like · Reply · 42w

Also, if the idea behind 3PFC is to outsource discussions about truth, why are we engaging with *anyone* about their views on accuracy fact checks, as opposed to redirecting any concerns to the 3PFC partner?

1 Like 3

Like · Reply · 42w

Where is this quote from? An earlier version of this post?

1 Like 1

Like · Reply · 42w

Leaked internal task reported in the article, said by someone from policy apparently.

1 Like 3

Like · Reply · 42w

: Thanks.

Like · Reply · 42w

Write a reply...



[REDACTED] Leaked internal task reported in the article, said by someone from policy apparently.

Like · Reply · 42w

3

[REDACTED] Thanks.

Like · Reply · 42w

[REDACTED] Write a reply...

[BOT] </> 🎧 😊

[REDACTED] |Write a reply...

[BOT] </> 🎧 😊

[REDACTED] [G]iven the current press cycle around our intervention in a Washington Examiner op-ed, and questions around whether we exempt climate-related content from being fact-checked, we think it would be a risk to reach out to Science Feedback and ask them to amend this rating.

...so we didn't intervene in this case, but otherwise might have?

Like · Reply · 42w · Edited

8

[REDACTED] it sounds like that's the case. Otherwise it would state "we do not reach out to 3PFCs" right? Hmm

Like · Reply · 42w

3

[REDACTED] What was made clear in the note, even though Judd did not cite it in his story, is that fact-checkers have discretion on what and how to rate and that appeals processes are run independent from us.

[REDACTED] can you clarify how this was made clear in the note? If the rating and appeals process is truly run independently, why was it even an option to ask Science Feedback to amend the rating?

Like · Reply · 42w · Edited

18

[REDACTED] I think the best faith interpretation would be that we don't ask for amendments of ratings, and the comment there was explaining why it would be a risk to make an exception here.

[REDACTED] What was made clear in the note, even though Judd did not cite it in his story, is that fact-checkers have discretion on what and how to rate and that appeals processes are run independent from us.

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Like · Reply · 42w · Edited

18

[REDACTED] I think the best faith interpretation would be that we don't ask for amendments of ratings, and the comment there was explaining why it would be a risk to make an exception here.

Like · Reply · 42w

[REDACTED] I'd find that more convincing if we didn't have a track record of making exceptions, which was admitted to in the very same sentence where the risk was discussed:

[G]iven the current press cycle around our intervention in a Washington Examiner op-ed, and questions around whether we exempt climate-related content from being fact-checked, we think it would be a risk to reach out to Science Feedback and ask them to amend this rating.

Like · Reply · 42w

2

[REDACTED] Write a reply...

BOT </> ↪ ⏺

REDACTED FOR CONGRESS

[REDACTED] Where is this quote from? An earlier version of the post?

Like · Reply · 42w

[REDACTED] the quote is part of the leaked note, which is quoted in the article in question.

Like · Reply · 42w

1

[REDACTED] Write a reply...

BOT </> ↪ ⏺

[REDACTED] Where is this quote from? An earlier version of the post?

Like · Reply · 42w

[REDACTED] the quote is part of the leaked note, which is quoted in the article in question.

Like · Reply · 42w

1

[REDACTED] Write a reply...

BOT </> 🎧 😊

[REDACTED] Write a reply...

BOT </> 🎧 😊

[REDACTED] I might add that a discussion closely related to this topic in the Misinformation Feedback is underway:

<https://fb.workplace.com/.../permalink/1389957037881448/>

Like · Reply · 42w

3

[REDACTED] Opinion based pieces "may be" eligible for rating, yet, from the same document, "opinion content is generally not eligible to be rated." The language demonstrating the opinion loophole is much stronger and is presented as the normative case. Isn't it more accurate to say that there sometimes isn't an opinion loophole in specific cases, but more generally the policy as written and as enforced does have such a loophole?

Like · Reply · 42w · Edited

6

[REDACTED] I'll add that the verbiage around

<https://fb.workplace.com/groups/1577025989263450/permalink/2394869260812448/> demonstrates this as well.

[REDACTED] Our official statement there is that opinion is not "categorically exempt" from fact checking, which is mostly a useless claim since 99% of opinion content could be exempt and the statement would be technically accurate.

e: fixed the link

Like · Reply · 42w · Edited

3

[REDACTED] Write a reply...

BOT </> 🎧 😊

We're supposed to be removing harmful content. 'Climate change is overblown' propaganda pretty much fits that bill. if a large company like FB takes a stand against these propaganda mills, it will de-legitimize them and take a step toward making 'nobody-knows-if-climate-change-is-real' political positions untenable.

10

Like · Reply · 42w · Edited

Can someone explain why the Daily Wire gets to escalate what should be a routine appeal to Nick Clegg?

38

Like · Reply · 42w

Like · Reply · 42w

1

Like · Reply · 42w

Write a reply...



I don't understand why we're making this claim, unless we're being very cute and narrow with the "unchecked" qualifier.

Nevertheless, there's been a suggestion that we have an "opinion loophole," which is allowing climate change deniers to promote their content on our platform unchecked - this is not accurate.

Of course there's an opinion loophole for climate change denial. We've acknowledged this fact by *not* having the same loophole for COVID-19 misinformation.

We've even defended the distinction as recently as last week by saying that climate change misinformation does not pose "an immediate threat to human health and safety." So I think the real question is: how did we arrive at that determination?

Like · Reply · 42w

11

We gave these contradictory statements to the NYT just last week:

- "All opinion content on the platform — including op-ed articles or posts

We've even defended the distinction as recently as last week by saying that climate change misinformation does not pose "an immediate threat to human health and safety." So I think the real question is: how did we arrive at that determination?

Like Reply 42w

11

[REDACTED] We gave these contradictory statements to the NYT just last week:

- "All opinion content on the platform — including op-ed articles or posts that express the views or agendas of politicians, businesses, and nongovernmental organizations — is exempt from fact-checking. This policy has been in place since 2016, according to said [REDACTED] Facebook's policy communications director."
- "According to [REDACTED] Facebook is most concerned with flagging or removing content that poses an immediate threat to human health and safety, including disinformation about the coronavirus or hate speech that incites violence. Climate change content, he said, does not fall within that category."

<https://www.nytimes.com/.../climate-facebook-fact...>

Like Reply 42w

18

[REDACTED] How could climate change already happening everywhere, and impacting / destroying communities already in the south (but not rich western countries) be considered as "not a threat to human health and safety" baffles me

Like Reply 42w

3

[REDACTED] I think it's obviously clear that debates around climate change do not have the same *immediate* threat to human health and safety that certain kinds of covid-19 misinformation do.

Like Reply 42w

[REDACTED] Reply to [REDACTED] ...

Bot </> 🎁 😊

[REDACTED] The comms playbook seems to lean heavily on making very specific, semantically-precise claims that "explain" why critics are wrong and why Facebook's entirely-blameless conduct is just being misunderstood

e%2Fclimate-facebook-fact-checking.html%3Fsmtyp%3Dcur%26smid%3Dtw-nytimes&h=AT1kCK9ESaf2HsRG6wJ

Reply to [REDACTED] ..

[REDACTED]
 The comms playbook seems to lean heavily on making very specific, semantically-precise claims that "explain" why critics are wrong and why Facebook's entirely-blameless conduct is just being misunderstood.

See also: "there is no politician exemption for fact checks" and also our response to the ads boycott

Like · Reply · 42w · Edited

9

[REDACTED]
 That's honestly not obvious to me (and even less obvious when we're talking about vaccine misinformation, the other category where we take a harder line than climate). According to the same kind of global experts we defer to on COVID-19 and vaccines, climate change is already causing harm today, so the threat is immediate from that perspective.

If the argument is that it's not immediate because today's harm is caused by carbon that was released many years ago (and the carbon being released today will cause harm in the future), then we get into a philosophical (but important!) debate about what immediate means and if it's the right criteria for taking a threat seriously. The cause of the harm (carbon emissions) is happening immediately (now), and it immediately begins to change the climate, and the effects are very difficult if not impossible to reverse once set in motion. The fact that climate change is happening "slowly" from a human perspective does not mean it's not an immediate and urgent threat.

Like · Reply · 42w

3

Reply to [REDACTED] ..

[REDACTED]
 Hey guys, check it out:

I hear that the Tobacco Institute has some experts ready to weigh in that cigarettes dont cause cancer, and some 'stakeholders' view this as a 'debate within the scientific community'. Does Joel Kaplan know about this? I'm sure he'll need to weigh in.

Facebook's policy team, based in DC and run by Republican operative Joel Kaplan, does not directly weigh in on the issue of intervention but emphasizes that its "stakeholders" view the fact-check as "biased." It raises the question of who Facebook's policy team considers "stakeholders." The team does disclose it was contacted by the office of Congressman Mike Johnson (R-LA), which questioned the validity of the fact-check.

Policy Outreach: Our stakeholders view this content as opinion and a debate within the scientific community, both relying on separate facts and research conducted by scientists, therefore view the fact-check as being biased. We have also received

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Like · Reply · 42w · Edited



Please make sure to vote on the question in this week's Q&A:

<https://fb.workplace.com/groups/221503021668016/permalink/899882503830061/>

Like · Reply · 42w



↳ 1 Reply

What about the older occurrence from

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/.../climate-denial.../?> Science Feedback is claiming that "The Facebook team informed us that it should not be subject to a fact check and we should remove the rating", is that true? (again, to be clear, this is not the Daily Wire piece) There was no clear communication from Comms on that one, despite several internal threads asking about it.



SCIENTIFICAMERICAN.COM

Climate Denial Spreads on Facebook as Scientists Face Restrictions

Like · Reply · 42w



↳ 1 Reply

Given that the internal communication has already been leaked, why don't we share this communication publicly to make our case?

Like · Reply · 42w

