

We have heard many arguments about freedom of speech in regard to Donald Trump's removal from office and his subsequent removal from social media platforms.

Many believe his freedom of speech has been infringed upon.

Many believe he should have been removed for inciting criminal activity.

Many believe a private company removing a user does not intersect with the legal understanding of freedom of speech.

Many believe that, in a society whose communication networks are privately owned, there is no differentiation between government censorship and private censorship.

What we can all agree on is that social media is important in keeping us connected, for political movements, for income, for socializing.

Again, the focus of my research/work covers the censorship of sex workers. But why the topic drew me in so deeply was that this censorship of sex workers was being leveraged against other marginalized identities—particularly affecting users that are trans, fat, black and/or femme. As social media is increasingly a space for assembly and political input, removing marginalized people will only further obfuscate their needs from mainstream conversation and consideration.

Please read this article about the censorship of User are Fritz

<https://www.bitchmedia.org/article/ari-fitz-interview-leaving-instagram> ↗

Ari Fritz was unable to post this photo:



Here is a section of Instagrams Terms of Service

"Post photos and videos that are appropriate for a diverse audience.

We know that there are times when people might want to share nude images that are artistic or creative in nature, but for a variety of reasons, we don't allow [nudity](#) ↗ on Instagram. This includes photos, videos, and some digitally-created content that show sexual intercourse, genitals, and close-ups of fully-nude buttocks. It also includes some photos of female nipples, but photos of post-mastectomy scarring and women actively breastfeeding are allowed. Nudity in photos of paintings and sculptures is OK, too."

This obviously has presented questions like "How could an AI or human censor know if a nipple was "male" or "female"?"

Users share tips on how to avoid deletion that include: Changing your account to "male" from "female", changing your account to a business account, censoring words with asterisks or phonetic spelling etc.

Your assignment this week is to find and analyze a similar photo that is up on social media (and therefore has not been censored or removed). (It should take you no more than 2 pages to complete this assignment.)

Maybe a celebrity that you follow has shown more skin? Perhaps a photographer's art that is of peoples bodies. Maybe an ad for underwear? I am not asking you to look too far— just within your own social media and if that does not produce any results ask around.

Part 1: When you find a comparable photo do an analysis of why you think your chosen photo is allowed to persist while Ari's was not.

Some but not all questions to consider:

Does the user you found have a blue check? What is a blue check and why would this matter?

Is it a business?

Is it an artist?

If it is stated—what is the gender/race of the user?

Part 2: I would also be interested to hear if y'all think Ari's photo violates the terms of service detailed above.

Part 3: I would LOVE to hear if y'all have had any posts taken down or know any of your friends who have and whether y'all appealed and had your photo returned to your account.

Part 4: And finally please look up your targeting ad key words on Instagram and tell me why you think those words have been chosen to label you and if you think these categories are correct (given the past analysis of your consumption and what cultures you are a part of etc)