

Facebook has beefed up its ‘oversight board’, but any new powers are illusory | The Guardian

By Emily Bell

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Any day now the Facebook Oversight Board, the social media company’s review mechanism for decisions on deletion of content and users, will tell the world whether Donald Trump should remain banned from Facebook indefinitely. Before that, Facebook also announced the expansion of the Oversight Board’s remit: initially users could only appeal to have content restored after moderators removed it - now the board will also examine appeals over content that has been left up on Facebook or Instagram following a review by moderators.

With the Oversight Board, the uncomfortable decisions about which controversial material to leave up and what to take down is partly removed from the hands of Facebook policymakers, the executive leadership and the low-paid human moderation staff, and given to a panel of respected experts who become the editorial tone-setters for global media. Now Facebook will make decisions on what it keeps and what it deletes in step with the decisions of an elite board, paid and protected by the company but operating “independently”.

[...]

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