

# Why did it take so long for Reddit and Facebook to block racist groups? The Guardian

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This week, in a matter of just 48 hours, several social media companies made major changes to how their platforms are and can be used. Reddit deleted a group, or “subreddit”, called “The Donald” that was known for encouraging targeted harassment and hate speech. YouTube banned videos from white supremacists like David Duke and Richard Spencer. And Facebook cracked down on a wide swath of dangerous content, including groups devoted to the “boogaloo” movement, which hopes to spark a race war in the United States.

These developments signal a significant shift in how these companies see their role and responsibility in the world. Until extremely recently their leaders repeatedly declared that “free speech” was their primary value, and trumped other values like safety, dignity and democracy.

Now, without declaring they had been wrong all along, these companies seem to have all decided it was time to declare a different way of dealing with dangerous, extremist content – at least on the surface. Why all this action, and why now?

[...]

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