

## Who's Banned What?

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Has dissent about pandemic policy been outlawed?

I mean, "for the duration"?

Well, no.

The Internet displays every possible view of policy and epidemiology, expressed with every possible degree of temperateness or intemperateness.

Yet we are indeed seeing signs of indifference to freedom of speech even when that speech cannot entail breathing a coronavirus on anybody.

According to CNN, Facebook told the network: "Anti-quarantine protests being organized through Facebook in California, New Jersey, and Nebraska are being removed from the platform on the instruction of governments in

**Apparently, Facebook is a willing functionary of whichever state governments will instruct it to carry out their censorship.**

those three states because it violates stay-at-home orders."

Online posts "violate stay-at-home orders"?

Who knew?

Obviously, a protest that violates social-



distancing rules (if it does) is not the same thing as a *communication* about the protest.

Apparently, Facebook is a willing functionary of whichever state governments will instruct it to carry out their censorship. Tyler O'Neil opines that "it is disconcerting that Facebook would work with local governments to remove pages organizing protests against them."

Yes, indeed.

But such reports have been disputed. Facebook may be acting on its own. For example, a spokeswoman for New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy says that his office "did not ask Facebook to remove pages or posts for events promoting lifting the provisions of the Governor's stay-at-home order." Nebraska also denies making such a request.

Which version of the story is true?

Which is worse?

Both are creepy.

I just hope that this muzzling-speech-just-to-help thing doesn't start spreading like a virus.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob