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New AT&T terms of service: We'll cut off your Internet connection for criticizing us

POSTED BY CORY DOCTOROW, SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 10:23 AM | # | [DISCUSS \(70\)](#)

AT&T has brought down new Terms of Service for its network customers. From now on, AT&T can terminate your connection for conduct that "tends to damage the name or reputation of AT&T, or its parents, affiliates and subsidiaries." So AT&T customers aren't allowed to write/podcast/vlog critical things about AT&T, its billing-practices, or its cooperation with illegal NSA wiretapping, on pain of having their connections disconnected. [Link](#) (via [/](#))

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Discussion



#1 POSTED BY PHASOR3000 , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 10:53 AM:](#)

joeh, that's not really a fair comparison -- BB is a free site (of course, in exchange for that we have to endure a barrage of Federated Media advertising) and you can still read it even if a moderator bans you from posting. Of course, if a moderator is overly aggressive and bans people who don't deserve it, the site's reputation may suffer as a result.

#2 POSTED BY CPT. TIM , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 11:04 AM:](#)

no, with boing boing you don't even have to be critical of boing boing itself. I've had non-confrontational statements that the moderator didn't agree with edited.

and then had boing boing lie about it.

anyways, about AT&T. It doesn't surprise me. Thats why i didn't get an iphone.

#3 POSTED BY YUREI , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 11:08 AM:](#)

The difference is that posting on Boing Boing is a priviledge, not a right. It's similar to your driver's license [minus the \$15 fee and a terrible pic], as you can have your privileges revoked at any time, as the mods see fit. Only trolls need worry about that sort of thing happening to them, I assume?

#4 POSTED BY OVERTONEWIZ  , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 11:16 AM:](#)

Critics of Boing Boing: Why do you visit this site? There are millions of websites and yet here you are, commenting, just waiting to pounce on any thing that looks like a contradiction. Are you payed to be critical of Boing Boing or are you just looking for some attention?



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Boing Boing provides an internet service and if you use their service to criticize them, they'll ban you, as I will be the next time the moderator logs in.

It is well within their rights to ban whoever they see fit.

I don't think Cory was criticizing AT&T for doing it, but rather, pointing out that they are. You do not have the right to use AT&T internet service and yes, they can deny you service for any reason they please. Now that you know what their practices are, you may decide to choose a different internet provider. That's all I think Cory was implying. Not that they aren't free to ban people but that you are free to choose a different service, now that you know.

Same thing here. If you don't like the way Boing Boing runs things, go somewhere else! Make your own weblog! Neither Boing Boing nor AT&T is forced to provide you with service.

#6 POSTED BY DAN  , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 11:19 AM:](#)

I just want to go on record as *wholeheartedly endorsing the actions of AT&T. Without them and their tireless efforts to protect innocent Americans, our nation would crumble beneath the never-ending onslaught of terrah and terrahism.*

Thank you AT&T. Please do not cut off my service.

Aside from that, why are you here, JOEH? This isn't the freakin' dentist, ya know.

#7 POSTED BY RANDOMREADER , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 11:20 AM:](#)

I'm not sure if I'm missing something from BoingBoing from what you guys are saying, but to me BB is just a site, information at it's finest and so far "FREE".... in some cases thanks to AT&T, so into the real subject, AT&T is providing a "service" that YOU and I pay for and that is related very close to the Freedom of Speech amnt. because it allows us all to disseminate the "message". Overall, I think it is wrong and I hope it brings them problems...
an AT&T customer...I guess not much longer :P

#8 POSTED BY PHASOR3000 , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 11:21 AM:](#)

I'm definitely not defending the moderator's editing of BB posts, which I find odd and a bit disturbing. But your ISP is providing what most of us now consider an essential service -- cutting off that service is like cutting off your phone service (I'd say worse). If BB cut off my ability to post, I'd curse them briefly, shrug, and move on.

The bottom line is, the owners can run the site any way they please. They're not an ISP, or a utilities provider who's cutting off your electricity, or a grocery store that won't sell you food. It's just a web site, and it's not like there aren't thousands of others if you don't like this one.

#9 POSTED BY ANONYMOUS , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 11:25 AM:](#)

The agreement also says they will delete your data, files, and email without notification.

#10 POSTED BY BLACKBIRD , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 11:41 AM:](#)

Other Activities

You are prohibited from engaging in any other activity, illegal or not, that AT&T determines in its sole discretion, to be harmful to its subscribers, operations, network(s), reputation, goodwill, or customer relations.

This appears to be the the part of the AUP were talking about. Methinks this may backfire on them. Once they do start kicking people out for criticizing them, those people will end up at another ISP...and THEN they will be FREE to say whatever they please. Speaking of which, do you think they have the technology to trace a posting back to you, if you post from say work or someone elses computer?

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Would they be able to terminate you, even if you used another ISP to complain?

#11 POSTED BY CALLUM ALDEN  , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 11:41 AM:](#)

at&t are apple's naughty friend, we should stop them seeing each other. what a nasty company.

#12 POSTED BY MAKETHELOGOBIGGER  , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 11:41 AM:](#)

The bottom line is... I should be able to criticize whatever service it is I PAY for. BB, while an internet service, is essentially free. Like any blog or site where people talk about shit and things get heated, you should respect the TOS. (AT&T's site is not a blog. It's a placeholder for their legal department to cover their ass.)

But when I pay for something like AT&T, which I currently do unfortunately, I'm saying what I want. Reading their TOS further and it indicates that even them cancelling your service on the grounds you made negative contacts still has no bearing on the rest of the contract. In other words, I'm assuming you still have to pay each month regardless.

Otherwise, if this is one way to get out of your contract without paying an ETF, I'm guessing there's going to be a lot of 'AT&T sucks' posts from customers in the coming weeks.

More than there already are.

#13 POSTED BY JERE7MY  , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 11:46 AM:](#)

Captain Tim, your "non-confrontational" statement that got edited opened with "Fuck that noise." See the disconnect?

#14 POSTED BY MR ASCII , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 11:57 AM:](#)

Edited comments are the norm on moderated forums and blogs. If you don't want your comments subject to editing, don't post. There are many other sites to make your feelings known, including creating your own.

AT&T's policy is within their rights and typical of consumer TOS agreements which tend to place all restrictions and obligations on the side of the consumer and none on the provider. Most have nebulous limits that the user must abide without knowing what they are. They are also written such that the provider can change the terms of a de facto contract without agreement from the other party.

It remains to be seen how strict AT&T will be on enforcing this. It is doubtful they are going to track down every non-positive comment to the user and cancel their service. However, they have left themselves the option to do so if they wish. The sad thing is that the consumer often has few if any other choices for internet access and are thus chilled from airing their, perhaps legitimate, grievances.

#15 POSTED BY CPT. TIM , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 12:00 PM:](#)

Jere7my the noise i was talking about was discrimination against women. I didn't think being being was doing the school marm thing.

and actually the statement i was referring to was:

"oppression can not be made fashionable. any company that does is capitalizing on said oppression."

It got disemvoweled

Yes i understand that some people disagreed. it was a divided thread, but the person i engaged most in that thread was jacobdavis, but thats it. i've seen flame wars friend, and that wasn't it. I didnt' expect being being to have the johnson and johnson no tears shampoo of comments sections.

Critics of Boing Boing: Why do you visit this site? There are millions of websites and yet here you are, commenting, just waiting to pounce on any thing that looks like a contradiction. Are you paid to be critical of Boing Boing or are you just looking for some attention?"

I love boing boing, i come here everyday. It gives me stuff to read at work. I like all the people that post. I just had a problem with a moderator, and then one of the editors insisting several times i hadn't been moderated. You're allowed to think aspects of something is lame without thinking the thing in itself is lame. I also think that pointing out what you think is lame acts as a sort of quality control "Hey, a lot of our readers thought that was out of line.. maybe it was."

Also i'd like to point out that i just delved into this because of the topic at hand. since the burquini thread i've been posting here and there, some of my opinions here and there have been strong but i haven't encountered any censoring of comments since. So it could be a non issue now, i'm just speaking to the comments of another poster.

#16 POSTED BY JERE7MY  , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 12:07 PM](#):

I suspect the AT&T clause exists to permit them to shut down cockfighting fan sites and pedophilia blogs — i.e., things that might get other people to complain, "How dare you host this on your servers?!" — rather than stifle customer dissent. IANAL, but that seems plausible to me, since MySpace and SixApart just went through similar, and very public, shakedowns.

#17 POSTED BY JON  , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 12:10 PM](#):

There's a difference between boingboing and AT&T. If boingboing bans you, you can still read it. And you can discuss things on thousands of other websites.

If AT&T bans you from their high-speed internet service, you get to (a) sign up for a competitor, such as Comcast (the dominant cable provider, which deliberately degrades their customers' service by sending RST packets to block BitTorrent connections) or satellite internet (which is expensive, incredibly asymmetric, and has high latency), or (b) move. In either case, you're likely to be deprived of internet access for up to a month or more while you wait for the technicians to hook you up.

#18 POSTED BY JERE7MY  , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 12:11 PM](#):

Tim: I'm not privy to the internal decision-making processes of BoingBoing, but until I read your post just now I was dead certain that "Fuck that noise" referred to Xeni's post. I'm happy to believe it was just a misunderstanding, but I can also see how Teresa and/or Xeni would interpret it as hostile, either to Xeni or to another poster in the thread.

#19 POSTED BY CPT. TIM , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 12:19 PM](#):

i guess. but i'm on a lot of forums and i rarely encounter the idea that if you're critical to something someone posts you're critical of them. I'm sure any of us here could say mean things about stuff people like from music to t.v. shows to fashion. never take it personally when someone says "fuck *something you're into*"

as for the original comment about comparing boingboing to at&t, i don't think it was an apt comparison, i was responding to a specific point in his post. I think boing boing is cool, i think at&t is the antichrist.

#20 POSTED BY ELISA , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 12:20 PM](#):

Blackbird, that'd be a great idea if people who get banned move to another free ISP.

The thing is, let me know exactly which ISP that will be. Furthermore, am I going to be able to afford it? I got AT&T because I was able to pay 25 dollars less than I would've to comcast. I can't afford to switch to comcast and i wouldn't really want to switch to comcast either, based on a year of service with them which was refunded through my work.

and. that's about it, for my choices. verizon doesn't service my neighborhood and i'd

rather puke on their lines than get any kind of high-speed service from them . . .

talking about freedom and setting up new ISPs is great, but i'm not quite sure that's going to be a feasible alternative for too many people.

#21 POSTED BY JONAH , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 12:27 PM](#):

There is nothing inconsistent in believing that owners of individual sites should have the right to control what is posted on their site, while at the same time believing that providers of access to a general purpose network like the internet should not be able to arbitrarily dictate how their customers use that access.

In providing internet access AT&T is providing access to a resource that they neither created nor control. Because they are only providing access, they are not held legally accountable if their users use their access for something illegal. But now they want it both ways. They want to keep their legal immunity from being prosecuted for their users' crimes, while at the same time they want the power to terminate those users if they express opinions that AT&T doesn't like. Do the people arguing for AT&T believe that the power company should be able to cut off my electricity because I used it to power a computer on which I composed letters criticizing said power company?

Some people will say, "well, if you don't like the terms of service, move to another provider." There are a few problems with this, the most notable being the lack of broadband internet providers in the US. Where I live, I have two options (neither of which is AT&T), and only one of those works reliably.

Unlike an ISP Boingboing is a publisher of original content. They choose to make that content available, for free, to anyone with an internet connection. They have also recently begun allowing their readers to leave comments, but reserve the right to edit or delete those comments as they see fit.

Unlike ISPs, which are scarce (at least in this part of the world), there are millions of blogs and internet forums. If I'm unhappy with the way posts are moderated at boingboing, I can go somewhere else, or even start my own blog.

Finally, even if you believe that AT&T should be allowed to terminate their customers service for posting opinions that AT&T doesn't like, it doesn't follow that their customers should shut up and not complain. I don't believe it should be illegal for companies to be rude to their customers, but that doesn't mean their customers shouldn't complain if they are treated rudely.

#22 POSTED BY TIMKUO , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 12:28 PM](#):

The bottom line is... I should be able to criticize whatever service it is I PAY for.

It's not about what you "pay for", it's about a company's freedom to police it's own service. You can't go into McDonalds, buy a Big Mac, use the Big Mac box to create a sign that says, "I HATE MCDONALDS" and then expect them to sell you another Big Mac. They don't have to and they probably won't, and that's within their rights. Similarly, if you use AT&T service to say, "I HATE AT&T" they may not offer you that service anymore. If you criticize Boing Boing in their comments, they may not offer comment service to you anymore.

To go back to JOEH,

It's hypocrisy at its finest.

No, it would be hypocrisy if Cory had added, "...and this is wrong and AT&T is bad for doing it." Then it would be hypocrisy because he's saying AT&T is bad for doing something that he does himself. He's not saying that, though, you're just trying to imply it. Cory is just relaying the facts and letting you decide for yourself if you want to continue using the service or not. If it bothers you, go somewhere else.

#23 POSTED BY GILBERT WHAM , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 12:33 PM](#):

Sheesh. Are things really that bad? If you're in an AT&T area, that's it? Them or cable? In

the UK BT wholesale still own most if not all the backhaul, but there are myriad ISPs providing ADSL, along with the cablecos (oh, and Hull, which has it's own peculiar mini state-run monopoly which is worthy of an article in itself). Have the Baby Bells etc carved up the turf into their own fiefdoms then?

#24 POSTED BY CPT. TIM , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 12:35 PM](#):

i would like to add that i hate the "if it bothers you, go somewhere else." line

I hear the same thing out of countless republicans. "if you don't like it, move to canada."

i say to them, have you gotten a load of canadian winters? they reply, don't worry, that'll be taken care of soon.

#25 POSTED BY CPT.AMERICA , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 12:47 PM](#):

I agree with Cpt. Tim about "if it bothers you, go somewhere else" line. That is bad thing to say. It is last stand of close minded person. I think is always better to debate. AT&T should let people say what they want. If AT&T disagrees with what people are saying, they could create a press release to get out the facts as they see them! "Recently, some of our customers have been saying this and this, and we now take this opportunity to respond."

I think that is good business. It may be their right to deny service, but it is not *right* to do so, at least not for this reason.

Anyway, until we see example of what AT&T is actually banning, the whole situation is a little overinflated. Right now it is just a big document full of legal blah blah.

#26 POSTED BY JPHILBY , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 12:58 PM](#):

Love it or leave it?

I once saw a phone truck with the words "Ma Bell is a stingy bitch," painted on it.

AT&T has always been a snotty bitch on the telephone too (at least until the robots move in and the snotty bitches are fired). Go figure. Anyone who has to deal with the public on a daily basis knows just how charming some people can be.

IANAL but this smacks of prior restraint -- something we're likely to see more of as Corporatocracy cancels our liberty stamp. Love it or lick it.

#27 POSTED BY JIM.COWLING , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 1:04 PM](#):

I don't see how this is controversial. If someone with whom I do business chooses to badmouth me in public, I'm going to stop doing business with that person, regardless of who is paying whom and regardless of who benefits the most from that business relationship.

#28 POSTED BY CPT. TIM , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 1:06 PM](#):


Bell telephone used to have the slogan:

"We may be the only phone company in town, but we try not to act like it"

bad enough then, now its "At&t, we're tired of your shit."

#29 POSTED BY YOTTA , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 1:07 PM](#):

"We don't have to care, we're the Phone Company!"
They're baaaack....

#30 POSTED BY CLAY  , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 1:10 PM](#):

I think what is in order here is a solid, high-profile test of AT&T's new policy.

If some enterprising advocate out there can manage to actually apprise AT&T of her own criticism, and subsequently receive a termination of service notice from AT&T citing this offense, then we'll have a big story on our hands.

Maybe it could be a group effort. Boston AT&T party, anyone?

#31 POSTED BY JPHILBY , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 1:43 PM](#):

"I hear the same thing out of countless republicans. 'if you don't like it, move to canada.'"

To which the proper response is "If you don't like it, move to Argentina."

#32 POSTED BY MAKETHELOGOBIGGER  , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 1:46 PM](#):

"It's not about what you "pay for", it's about a company's freedom to police it's own service. You can't go into McDonalds, buy a Big Mac, use the Big Mac box to create a sign that says, "I HATE MCDONALDS" and then expect them to sell you another Big Mac."

It's always about price. And in your example, McDonald's doesn't make me sign a contract saying I can only eat their food and not go to any other fast food place for two years.

And why would I eat at McDonald's and then complain I hate it? I complain about AT&T but have to stay with them or pay an ETF to move elsewhere. I don't have much choice. It's not like I can just switch without consequences due to the contract.

#33 POSTED BY MAKETHELOGOBIGGER  , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 1:49 PM](#):

"Maybe it could be a group effort. Boston AT&T party, anyone?"

I'm with Clay. Please, I need the traffic bump that a letter from AT&T legal would provide.

#34 POSTED BY SEANFISH  , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 1:52 PM](#):

I've got to say if we look at the basic economic relationship as a contract what we have is a party defining conditions in which the contract, for them, ceases to operate.

Given that AT&T as a big telephone monopoly is a thing of the decades-long past I can't see consumers being severely penalised by this policy should they wish to flout it and take the risk.

Therefore what we have is simply a piece of bad policy turning into bad PR, as is often the case.

On a side note - Joe, you're trying to tell yourself you're making a strong case about the oppressive injustice of those eeeeevil boingboing moderators... really you're just having some free time on your hands and wanting some attention.

With that in mind, congratulations, you've achieved your goal. Perhaps you should apply to work at the AT&T marketing dept to give them some pointers on how to achieve a positive result with that policy position.

Tune in next week when AT&T spams up the boingboing comments and reaps the harvest.

#35 POSTED BY TERESA NIELSEN HAYDEN/MODERATOR  , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 3:24 PM](#):

What's Going On, by Me:

1. Joe, and other nonexistent entities:

Boing Boing's being harassed by a troll/sockpuppeteer. About a week ago, some particularly obnoxious and combative behavior got him handed a two-week suspension

from posting comments. It was no big deal, or at any rate shouldn't have been one.

However, he was outraged, and refused to accept that his suspension was even possible -- which is funny, in a tired kind of way, because prior to that his comments had frequently consisted of stamping and snorting about the stupidity of people who think the rules don't apply to them. The rules certainly apply to him. He's free to dislike the way I do my job, but he doesn't get to pretend it doesn't exist.

Anyway, he's been sending us strange e-mail ever since. He's also been spawning sockpuppets. Joeh is just the latest in his ever-lengthening list. Most of these nonce identities denounce the "hypocrisy" of Boing Boing for denying him "freedom of speech." As far as we can tell, the chief meaning he attaches to "freedom of speech" is that he should be free to do whatever he wants in other people's weblogs, even if it's contrary to their wishes.

When his sockpuppets post comments here, I unpublish them. This is not because of their content. It's because he's suspended from posting. As I keep explaining to him, a suspension is a suspension. It's not just an invitation to change your UserID for a week or two. He keeps pretending to not understand this, because he fancies himself in the role of an oppressed martyr, not just some guy who's pulling a big dramatic hissy fit over a two-week suspension.

2. What happened to Cpt. Tim:

As he tells it:

no, with boing boing you don't even have to be critical of boing boing itself. I've had non-confrontational statements that the moderator didn't agree with edited.

and then had boing boing lie about it.

Nope.

Cpt. Tim made some nasty remarks early on in the burqini thread. Xenii deleted them as soon as she saw them, but didn't send me copies. (It's early days in Boing Boing comments. We're still working these things out.)

When I got to the thread, the first thing I did was disemvowel two whole sentences in one of Cpt. Tim's comments. He was upset about that. He was also upset about what Xenii had done. He wasn't particularly clear about his upsets, but I don't think he understood that he'd gotten hit with two separate administrative actions.

We eventually sorted that out, but I don't think Cpt. Tim was listening very well by then.

He's made some astute comments in subsequent threads.

3. Everything else:

What Jonah said.

#36 POSTED BY ROBOTON , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 3:25 PM](#):

Considering the federal gubment *gave* the Telco's Billions of tax dollars in the 90's to build out the infrastructure that makes them hundreds of billions per year today, I'd say that ATT ain't got that right.

It's our national data infrastructure, our tax dollars provided the seed money to finance it, and they are only there to maintain it for us and make themselves a little kitty while doing so.

#37 POSTED BY JERE7MY  , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 3:32 PM](#):

Capt. Tim wrote, "i guess. but i'm on a lot of forums and i rarely encounter the idea that if you're critical to something someone posts you're critical of them."

"Fuck that noise" is not a reasonable criticism. It's crude, dismissive, combative, and insulting. If you were having dinner at my house and you said "Fuck that noise" in

response to something I said, I would not, unless we were on very good terms, invite you back. This is not because I object to disagreement — if you said "Actually, I disagree..." or "That's flat-out wrong, and here's why..." it could lead to a fine discussion. You might even say "Fuck that show" if we were disagreeing about the quality of *Heroes* this season. But "Fuck that *noise*"? There, you're saying my words don't merit a response — they're just noise.

Teresa has stated she doesn't censor, block, de-publish, or disemvowel dissenting opinions or criticisms. (I myself frequently disagree with Cory D. about copyfighting.) But she does (apparently) object to incivility and personal attacks, which is a stance I frankly support. If you want your posts to appear as you wrote them, adopt a reasonable tone. I'd advise against opening with "Fuck that noise," unless the post happened to be about a horrible buzzing noise that's driven people in your town from their homes.

Again, I'm not empowered to speak for BoingBoing, or Teresa, or anybody involved here. But this much seems obvious to me.

#38 POSTED BY CPT.AMERICA , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 3:44 PM](#):

About a week ago, some particularly obnoxious and combative behavior got him handed a two-week suspension from posting comments.

Ah, now truth comes out! He should take hint maybe and just find somewhere else to post.

What was he originally suspended for? I am not sure what all counts for "combative" and "obnoxious". This means foul language and threats of physical violence? That would be sensible things to ban people for, because there is no call for behavior like that. Should just be good, clean debate here.

#39 POSTED BY TERESA NIELSEN HAYDEN/MODERATOR  , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 4:36 PM](#):

Jere7my: Correct in all respects (for which I thank you), except for one small exception that hasn't come up very often in conversation, so you couldn't have known:

There are some kinds of comment I'll disemvowel or delete on the strength of their content. For instance, there's the whiny one-line complaint that the subject of the entry has always bored that reader. They're just striking an attitude.

Ad hominem attacks and jeers aimed at Boing Boing's editors will get short shrift, especially if the objectionable remarks have no connection with the entry that in theory is being discussed.

If some assertion has been brought up and then refuted four or five times in the course of a comment thread, I may start disemvoweling comments that make the assertion afresh, without citing any justifications for bringing it back into play. That's rude. If they don't think they're part of a conversation, they shouldn't be posting to one.

No matter how neutrally they phrase their arguments, I'm likely to zap commenters who argue the nonexistence of certain major world events of the last century, or the genetic and/or moral inferiority of one or another race or creed or gender, or ascribe to certain political parties or organizations a set of beliefs and behaviors that have zero basis in reality.

And so forth and so on.

I know that no one's going to agree with every one of my choices and policies, but I also know you have to have some kind of moderation in online discussion forums, or they won't be worth reading.

#40 POSTED BY MROGI , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 6:36 PM](#):

Every individual and institution shuts down opinions they don't like; if they have the power to do it. It's part of the human condition. Cant criticize AT&T on this issue.

Im going to avoid at&t in the future. But I'll still post on BoingBoing.

#42 POSTED BY ENGLISHNERD , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 7:43 PM](#):

@ Theresa/Moderator

Thanks for the explanation of how you moderate. I'm newer to the whole world of moderated online discussions. I now know the long string of consonants are not a stylistic choice, but someone else pointing out that the phrasing is dodgy. It's nice to understand the moderation process, particularly of a site that has such interesting discussions.

#43 POSTED BY JENNIFER EMICK  , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 8:58 PM](#):

Actually, Theresa, Xeni did tell Tim that his comments had not been edited, when clearly they had. I'm sure it chalks up to a misunderstanding rather than a lie, but nothing Tim has claimed here is not technically true- and I do think he had every reason to have his feeling bruised over the whole silly thing. He was made to look like a crackpot (and later, a crybaby) after he had perfectly reasonable comments moderated.

I'm sure I'm not the only person who finds the level of comment control here disturbing- I've seen a lot of things that wouldn't make anyone blink get vandalized. It makes the bloggers look oversensitive at best and certainly dampens the conversation- should people really have to worry so much about expressing an opinion here? And if so, what is the point of opening comments if the conversation is so restrained?

I'd also like to address the continual arguments about censorship on privately owned fora- I think that yes, it's a given that one has a right to censor one's own property. That being said, it seems awfully shortsighted to exercise that right when not truly necessary. There is no public square on the net anymore, so in effect, there is no free speech. Consequently, one would hope that the people who provide a forum would be as restrained as possible when policing it.

#44 POSTED BY NICK , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 9:20 PM](#):

"You do not have the right to use AT&T internet service and yes, they can deny you service for any reason they please."

Let me ask you this: if AT&T cancelled your long-distance service because it objected to the content of one of your phone calls, would you be OK with that? Correct me if I'm wrong, but wouldn't that be analogous to this?

On another topic: *Please* ya'll, stop the griping about the moderator. You're using up space that should be used to discuss the articles. Remember the articles? I'm interested in a discussion of what the parameters should be for fora like this, but not *every time* I read a comments section.

And I personally consider some of the posts made by the more aggressive critics to be flames, or astroturf, or whatever you call posts that are inappropriate in this context. Conducting a private war with a moderator to me smacks more of narcissism than idealism. Please stop.

#45 POSTED BY JB LAVIN , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 9:34 PM](#):

Why doesn't BoingBoing avoid censorship altogether and allow a voting system a la reddit or digg?

It makes sense seeing how BoingBoing editors believe in:

- 1) the masses
- 2) free speech
- 3) democracy
- 4) technology that empowers all three

Am I right?

I hate to further the off-topic problem myself, but one of the things that has greatly impressed me so far about the re-institution of BB comments has been the excellent signal-to-noise ratio compared to just about every other comment-able blog I visit.

While part of that is a smart community, part of it is also a solid moderatorship that trims the excess.

#47 POSTED BY CPT.AMERICA , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 10:02 PM:](#)

I don't know if voting system is good idea for political forum. Even in America, where freedom of speech is big thing, so many people turn into little tyrants of censorship if you give them button to push to downvote anything they don't agree over. I see this on Amazon and YouTube all the time. Here is perfectly good review or well written comment but so many downvotes just because people did not agree with the opinion! I think people should upvote any well written opinion even if they do not agree!

I think for good debate, moderator is best route to take. I am sure it is tiresome job having to read all posts and get rid of the personal attacks but I think self policing would just lead to victory of whichever side has more numbers!

It would be interesting option if there was a way for moderator to collapse post or change text color to white-on-white rather than having to hide the post completely. That way if we decide we still want to see it, we can, but we can easily skip it if we want to and we don't lose numbering system that way, so I can say "reply to #45" and not have number be wrong later because some posts are gone.

But, maybe software is not that robust! It is really for blogging, after all, not big debating. If Boing Boing wants to host big debates, that would be good too but they would probably want to use regular forum software for that!

Actually, maybe someone could start such a thing! Maybe the officially unofficial Boing Boing forum, run by readers for readers to debate over posts? Maybe if it is good, Boing Boing would link it on front page. Less headache for BB editors, more room for us!

I think that is good idea but I am too lazy to do it myself. :) Sorry for so much talking!

#48 POSTED BY JB LAVIN , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 10:19 PM:](#)

Peggy Noonan just had something to say about it. She expresses it better than what I tried to say.

"I say this because here in America we have reached a funny pass. People are doing and saying odd things as if they don't know the meaning of the thing they say they stand for. In particular I mean we used to be proud of whom we allowed to speak, and now are leaning toward defining ourselves by whom we don't speak to and will not allow to speak. This is not progress."

[link](#)

#49 POSTED BY JERE7MY  , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 11:19 PM:](#)

JB: If I recall correctly, the concern with voting is that people will game the system. IMO, voting systems encourage people to take sides, and further the (ubiquitous-on-the-internet) notion that conversation is a contest. A particularly apt putdown might gather a lot of votes, for instance, which would vindicate one subset of readers and make others smolder. A line is thus drawn.

If there must be a line, I'd prefer to see it drawn between "civil people who are contributing to the conversation" and "everybody else", with the latter category becoming vanishingly small over time. I don't have faith that that's the line any voting system would draw, because too many people egg on incivility. It takes a person.

#50 POSTED BY MARK LEVITT  , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 11:40 PM:](#)

Oh please don't go down the route of voting for comments. I'd much rather read comments that are moderated by a reasonable individual rather than voted on by the masses.

You know, sort of how I'd rather live in a democracy with elected representatives rather than a popular vote on every bill.

Anyway, I think it's time for a "consumer's terms of service". This would be full of outlandish terms that are favorable to consumers. Then people could mail them with the typical "if you do not object within 14 days this agreement becomes binding" kind of language.

Imagine the fun that could be had...

#51 POSTED BY CPT. TIM , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 11:46 PM](#):

skipping through a lot of this because i've just been on a all day pub crawl in san francisco:

"fuck that noise" wasn't in response to what xeni said. It was my response to the idea of making oppression fashionable which is what i saw the burqini as. after that other people posted opinions of their own on that. Xenii liking them was never really what crossed my mind, what i posted was a pure reaction to the existence of the things themselves. I never meant to attack xeni. And i was told that my comments were not modified, which was actually a bigger deal to me than later finding out i had been modified.

but anyways.

"He's made some astute comments in subsequent threads."

I'll take that as a sign that my normal thoughts and posting jive with the general population here and that anything that happened on the previous thread was just a clash of ideas between people that can sometimes happen, no matter how like minded they are.

#52 POSTED BY JB LAVIN , [SEPTEMBER 29, 2007 11:47 PM](#):

jere7my, great metaphor: Conversation is a Contest. How is it any different from real life? I guess my anxiety stems from having to trust the mods given the situation in the United States re: trusting authority, especially one who can control the flow of free speech.

Mark, I agree. Having a Consumer's Bill of Rights would be a great idea. Who would enforce it and how?

#53 POSTED BY JB LAVIN , [SEPTEMBER 30, 2007 12:01 AM](#):

I support Cpt. Tim.

I think it's fascinating how one quote alone eg, "Fuck that noise", can be taken to mean so many different things. The mod thought it was an attack on Xenii, even though she wasn't explicitly mentioned. I wonder how she came to think that.

#54 POSTED BY JERE7MY  , [SEPTEMBER 30, 2007 12:19 AM](#):

I should point out again that "Fuck that noise" was only what *I* noticed; it may not have had any effect on the moderation, and I don't think Teresa has mentioned it. Speaking only for myself, I'm still not sure how I could interpret it otherwise — what does "noise" refer to, if not the words someone wrote? Is it a colloquialism? Words are the closest thing to "noise" we have here, so I think that's the obvious first interpretation.

But Tim's been quite pleasant since then, and Tim and Teresa seem to agree — if I misinterpreted one thing he said, I have no trouble calling it a bygone.

JB: Conversation shouldn't be a contest. Somehow, on the internet, it always turns out that way, but none of the many good conversations I've had in my life have felt like contests. They've involved building on what other people have said, listening carefully, assuming good faith, developing ideas jointly. A contest is something one person can win

only if another loses; in a conversation, if I may be Hallmark for a moment, everyone can win.

#55 POSTED BY JB LAVIN , [SEPTEMBER 30, 2007 12:45 AM](#):

jere7my, I'm not sure... I would think that noise would be in reference to something visual, but anyway... in re: to conversation in general, I agree with what you say should be. All I was saying was that Conversation is a Contest isn't limited to the Internet.

IRL, when people want to "win" I let them, knowing full well that it's all an illusion.

#56 POSTED BY DEUSDIABOLUS  , [SEPTEMBER 30, 2007 2:11 AM](#):

I'm going to circumvent the default debate here and suggest the possibility of third-party/DIY high speed internet? Surely it couldn't be that difficult at this point...?

#57 POSTED BY TERESA NIELSEN HAYDEN/MODERATOR  , [SEPTEMBER 30, 2007 8:52 AM](#):

Jennifer, I was with you right up to "perfectly reasonable." You can, if you wish, think of lesser disemvowelings as a suggestion that the affected portions were perhaps not as reasonable as the speaker thought.

I could do a moment-by-moment analysis of what happened in the burqini thread. I'm not going to do it. Has it not occurred to you that you're putting Tim in a very uncomfortable position?

Onward.

I'm sure I'm not the only person who finds the level of comment control here disturbing-

The lurkers can speak for themselves. Or not. But I hadn't heard that they'd deputized you to speak for them.

I've seen a lot of things that wouldn't make anyone blink --

I cut my teeth on the GENIE SFRT and Usenet. I don't blink for trifles. What you're saying is that you personally didn't dislike those passages.

Congratulations on being such a fast reader, by the way. Not all of Boing Boing's readers are so thoroughly on top of things that they see all the first states of comments, and then re-read all the comment threads frequently enough to spot the changes as they happen.

-- get vandalized.

Do you think so? Yet I recall you having no trouble reading Cpt. Tim's disemvowelled text.

I don't like deleting comments. It lessens the integrity of the thread as the record of a conversation. It doesn't tell the author of the deleted comment what portion of it prompted the deletion, and it doesn't tell the other participants anything.

I'm not willing to edit comments in the sense of deleting some words but not others, or changing one word for another. I've been an editor for a long time, and I know too much about editing's powers and limitations to think that's a good idea.

I run into an occasional reader who can't read disemvowelled text. I'm still puzzling out what to do about that.

In the meantime, when I think about vandalism in online conversations, what comes to my mind is bad behavior, careless language, failure to pay attention to other participants and their remarks, dragging in boilerplate arguments only marginally connected with the topic, attitudinizing, taking cheap shots, engaging in self-dramatization at the expense of real interaction, and posting comments without reading the thread.

It makes the bloggers look oversensitive

No. They're not the ones doing it. I am.

and certainly dampens the conversation-

Uh-huh. Which is why Making Light has all those vanishingly short comment threads.

should people really have to worry so much about expressing an opinion here?

You mean, should they think before they type? Of course they should. We all should, here and in any other forum.

You can "just be yourself" in terms of your self-presentation, or you can care about the responses you get from others; but you can't do both.

And if so, what is the point of opening comments if the conversation is so restrained?

The conversation isn't restrained. Engagement, civility, clear language, and valid

rhetorical and logical structures set conversation free. The absence of them does far more to keep interesting things from getting said in online discussions than any moderator ever born.

I'd also like to address the continual arguments about censorship on privately owned fora-

As long as you're clear that it's not negotiable here.

I think that yes, it's a given that one has a right to censor one's own property. That being said, it seems awfully shortsighted to exercise that right when not truly necessary.

What you're saying is that you've disagreed with my judgement. We already knew that.

There is no public square on the net anymore, so in effect, there is no free speech.

Oh, malarkey. Usenet hasn't gone away, and speech there is as untrammelled as ever. All the species of online pest still freely romp through its newsgroups. Nothing's stopping you or anyone else from hanging out there -- except the lousy signal-to-noise ratio, and the lack of an audience. Funny about that.

Consequently, one would hope that the people who provide a forum would be as restrained as possible when policing it.

Sorry, but that doesn't follow.

If you undertake to run your own forum on those lines, I promise I'll watch with interest.

#58 POSTED BY ANONYMOUS , [SEPTEMBER 30, 2007 9:43 AM](#):

Verizon's AUP for its FIOS service is pretty much the same. So if the choice is between AT&T and Verizon, there's no choice at all.

Verizon's says:

You may NOT use the Service as follows:

(j) to damage the name or reputation of Verizon, its parent, affiliates and subsidiaries, or any third parties

I interpret this to mean that if you're using Verizon FIOS, you cannot use it to criticize anyone, even AT&T!

#59 POSTED BY NICK , [SEPTEMBER 30, 2007 10:35 AM](#):

Isn't a debate a contest? And isn't debate a legitimate form of conversation among people of differing opinions discussing important, topical issues?

The debate form, since it's structured and encourages precision in the statement-response process, is a highly effective way for people to come to grips with the complexities of an issue or subject.

It's not about anyone winning, it's about the issues and positions discussed getting a really thorough airing.

Debate also does not preclude comments that are not related to emerging conversation threads, but are still related to the topic.

(Damn! I swore I wouldn't get drawn into the moderation discussion again!)

#60 POSTED BY JERE7MY  , [SEPTEMBER 30, 2007 10:56 AM](#):

Nick: absolutely! Debate is a great way to explore issues. But, as you say, a proper debate is "structured and encourages precision" — it has rules, which must be enforced by someone. If I go past my allotted time in a debate, I get cut off. If I use an ad hominem attack, I'm docked points. (I'm presuming here — I've never actually been in a debate

club.)

In other words, a debate is, of necessity, *more* restrictive than a conversation. It requires the presence of a moderator, or everyone involved has to agree to abide by the same set of rules from the outset. That's hard to achieve on the internet, and it doesn't sound like it's the atmosphere I want to see on BoingBoing. I can't imagine it would make those who want a free range any happier.

My college SF-n-weirdness club (SWIL) has continued to stay in contact since graduation, largely through mailing lists. We have one called Chit-chat, and one called Debate, because we found that the two don't coexist particularly well. This isn't to say that one is good and one is bad — just that we've had to decide to keep them separate.

#61 POSTED BY NICK , [SEPTEMBER 30, 2007 11:21 AM](#):

@#60: I agree, except to suggest that debate and less structured discussion need not be mutually exclusive, as shown by the above comments. Those not interested in the debate can choose not to participate directly.

Granted, the debate-thread comments can sometimes seem to overwhelm the other types of comments, but you could argue that

1) that's either a consequence of that discussion's general tendencies (some entries seem to inspire debate, some don't) and should perhaps be allowed to happen in the process of a comments section's natural development,

or that

2) the moderator should choose to do some editing for the sake of facilitating the comments section's flow.

Crap... you drew me in again. :)

#62 POSTED BY JERE7MY  , [SEPTEMBER 30, 2007 11:33 AM](#):

In my experience (on the aforementioned mailing lists, plus Usenet and so on), debates do tend to drown out other conversations. Someone who might have a small, casual comment to make might refrain from doing so because they don't want to spend the time rigorously debate-proofing it. On the internet, the response to such people tends to be "Suck it up!" or something similarly helpful; I personally prefer a less adversarial conversation experience.

This is not to say debates should never happen on BoingBoing — I'm really just opposed to a certain kind of clinical, line-by-line, back-and-forth dissecting of posts that characterizes one type of online debate, and which always seems to end in incivility. I have strong opinions about some things posted to BoingBoing, and hope to be able to keep discussing them!

#63 POSTED BY AILEEN  , [SEPTEMBER 30, 2007 3:59 PM](#):

The lurkers can speak for themselves. Or not. But I hadn't heard that they'd deputized you to speak for them.

Rather than address people's points, you act snarky to them as if you wanted to cause an even bigger flamewar! Looks like the moderator needs a moderator! I hereby deputize my friend Jennifer to speak for me on this issue! Now what smart remark do you have for us?

No. They're not the ones doing it. I am.

They had plenty of chances to speak up. Their silence implies consent. Anything you do is done in the name of the editors. Maybe you should try being a little nicer to people like Jennifer instead of having your little god complex just because someone made you a moderator!

#64 POSTED BY JENNIFER EMICK  , [SEPTEMBER 30, 2007 8:16 PM](#):

I cut my teeth on the GEnie SFRT and Usenet. I don't blink for trifles. What you're saying is that you personally didn't dislike those passages.

Congratulations on being such a fast reader, by the way. Not all of Boing Boing's readers are so thoroughly on top of things that they see all the first states of comments, and then re-read all the comment threads frequently enough to spot the changes as they happen.

-- get vandalized.

Do you think so? Yet I recall you having no trouble reading Cpt. Tim's disemvoweled text.

I don't like deleting comments. It lessens the integrity of the thread as the record of a conversation. It doesn't tell the author of the deleted comment what portion of it prompted the deletion, and it doesn't tell the other participants anything.

I'm not willing to edit comments in the sense of deleting some words but not others, or changing one word for another. I've been an editor for a long time, and I know too much about editing's powers and limitations to think that's a good idea.

In the meantime, when I think about vandalism in online conversations, what comes to my mind is bad behavior, careless language, failure to pay attention to other participants and their remarks, dragging in boilerplate arguments only marginally connected with the topic, attitudinizing, taking cheap shots, engaging in self-dramatization at the expense of real interaction, and posting comments without reading the thread.

*It makes the bloggers look oversensitive
No. They're not the ones doing it. I am.*

Something that's not going to be obvious to the casual reader. I've read here every day for years, and went through several days of funny looking posts and still had no idea who you were until this erupted.

*and certainly dampens the conversation-
Uh-huh. Which is why Making Light has all those vanishingly short comment threads.*

You mean, should they think before they type? Of course they should. We all should, here and in any other forum.

You can "just be yourself" in terms of your self-presentation, or you can care about the responses you get from others; but you can't do both.

The conversation isn't restrained. Engagement, civility, clear language, and valid rhetorical and logical structures set conversation free. The absence of them does far more to keep interesting things from getting said in online discussions than any moderator ever born.

Oh, malarkey. Usenet hasn't gone away, and speech there is as untrammelled as ever. All the species of online pest still freely romp through its newsgroups. Nothing's stopping you or anyone else from hanging out there -- except the lousy signal-to-noise ratio, and the lack of an audience.

If you undertake to run your own forum on those lines, I promise I'll watch with interest.

But I don't think you will. Honestly, I think you're just too defensive to actually listen to what I'm saying to you.

#65 POSTED BY TERESA NIELSEN HAYDEN/MODERATOR  , [SEPTEMBER 30, 2007 8:45 PM](#):

Nick (59):

Isn't a debate a contest?

It's a clash of ideas, a testing of propositions against each other -- which, at its best, is a

hard-fought cooperative activity. When that happens, you can come out of a debate with new understandings which neither side knew going in; which proceed from that orderly clash of ideas; and which have nothing to do with one side or the other "winning." It's glorious.

And isn't debate a legitimate form of conversation among people of differing opinions discussing important, topical issues?

If they can do it, it's certainly legitimate. Not everyone can. There's more to debate than adversarial argument.

The debate form, since it's structured and encourages precision in the statement-response process, is a highly effective way for people to come to grips with the complexities of an issue or subject.

I couldn't agree more.

It's not about anyone winning, it's about the issues and positions discussed getting a really thorough airing.

I'd say the airing was a secondary effect. What they get is a thorough testing and exploration via legitimate structures of argument.

Debate also does not preclude comments that are not related to emerging conversation threads, but are still related to the topic.

True again.

(Damn! I swore I wouldn't get drawn into the moderation discussion again!)

Why not? You have interesting things to say, and you love good debate for its own sake.

jere7my (60):

Nick: absolutely! Debate is a great way to explore issues. But, as you say, a proper debate is "structured and encourages precision" — it has rules, which must be enforced by someone. If I go past my allotted time in a debate, I get cut off. If I use an ad hominem attack, I'm docked points. (I'm presuming here — I've never actually been in a debate club.)

If you're judging on points, yes, you do. Less formal text-based debate is less strict about time limits, obviously, and less tolerant of techniques that are purely intended to overload the opposition's ability to respond within the allotted time.

In other words, a debate is, of necessity, more restrictive than a conversation.

Yes.

It requires the presence of a moderator, or everyone involved has to agree to abide by the same set of rules from the outset. That's hard to achieve on the internet, and it doesn't sound like it's the atmosphere I want to see on BoingBoing.

Formal debates can be quite charming and friendly if you have enough people who've mastered the form, and who can maintain a conversational tone while doing it.

I can't imagine it would make those who want a free range any happier.

I must admit that I've never seen it make them happy, in spite of debate being what they claim they're doing.

Jere7my (62):

In my experience (on the aforementioned mailing lists, plus Usenet and so on), debates do tend to drown out other conversations. ... This is not to say debates should never happen on BoingBoing — I'm really just opposed to a certain kind of clinical, line-by-line, back-and-forth dissecting of posts that characterizes one type of online debate,

Sorry about that. It's useful for clarifying which bits of one comment pertain to which bits of another. I'll try not to overdo it.

and which always seems to end in incivility.

Frequently, but not inevitably. There is hope.

I have strong opinions about some things posted to BoingBoing, and hope to be able to keep discussing them!

Please do.

Aileen (63):

The lurkers can speak for themselves. Or not. But I hadn't heard that they'd deputized you to speak for them.

Rather than address people's points, you act snarky to them as if you wanted to cause an even bigger flamewar!

But I *was* addressing the point. Go back and try again.

#66 POSTED BY TERESA NIELSEN HAYDEN/MODERATOR  [SEPTEMBER 30, 2007 8:46 PM:](#)

Jennifer (64), did you mean for your comment to come out that way? Do you want me to fix the formatting?

And by the way: I do listen to you, and I believe I have reason to think I understand you. What I don't do is agree with you: a different matter altogether.

#67 POSTED BY MCZ , [SEPTEMBER 30, 2007 9:04 PM:](#)

TNH: I think it would be useful to have an article on BB's comment moderation policies somewhere on the site (an administrivia section, perhaps?) with a link on the main page.

Jennifer: That was odd. Did you really intend to quote *and* misattribute a huge block of text, only to add two lines at the end?

Aileen: It's all true: TNH is just some newbie rolled in off the street, complete with tin-god complex and conversation-stopping mojo. Her own site [Making Light](#) contains all the proof you need: she's only been co-host and moderator there since, er, 2001, and some of the threads have exceeded, umm, 1000 posts.

#68 POSTED BY JERE7MY  [SEPTEMBER 30, 2007 10:23 PM:](#)

TNH wrote: "Sorry about that. It's useful for clarifying which bits of one comment pertain to which bits of another."

Ack — I wasn't referring to anyone in particular! Point-by-point replies can certainly be useful; I didn't mean to disparage them. What I *meant* to disparage, because I find it exhausting, is the technique of responding, one by one, to the individual sentences of an argument without addressing the whole, of burying your opponent beneath an avalanche of cavils and nested quote strings. Arguments like that grow like kudzu, because every paragraph of response offers a half-dozen places for quibbles to take root. Point-by-point quoting is a characteristic of such a debate, but it's not something I've seen anyone doing here.

#69 POSTED BY TERESA NIELSEN HAYDEN/MODERATOR  [OCTOBER 1, 2007 2:38 AM:](#)

Jere7my: Oh, *that* technique. Kudzu indeed. It attaches response to the opposing argument at an inappropriate level of organization.

#70 POSTED BY TRUTHFRICTION2 , [OCTOBER 1, 2007 6:23 AM:](#)

Hello,

I am the same user known as TruthFriction. I have tried to contact the moderators and editors several times via email regarding the fact that I can no longer use my original account.

At first I thought one of my posts had violated the rules for the site, so I emailed the people in power here. I never got a response so I went to every thread in which I had posted hoping for some sort of explanation.

I finally found this thread:

<http://www.boingboing.net/2007/09/21/first-high-school-de.html>

The moderator had posted there the following paragraph:

"CantStopTheMessage's comments weren't unpublished because he was misbehaving. They were unpublished because he was a sockpuppet. So were FreeTibet, JHudson, Mr. Universe, and TruthFriction (not a complete list). The self-centered blowhard who inflicted them on the Boing Boing comment threads is the one who owes everyone an apology for lying to them, and for posting comments he knew in advance would be deleted when his impostures were detected."

Apparently I was accused, tried, and executed for a mistaken identity. I was never contacted regarding the what or why of this. Prior to creating the TruthFriction2 account I had only one id on this site. I am no one's sock puppet, and it makes me angry to be called that.

After talking this over with some friends I believe I have finally discovered why I as edited. I use the Tor network when I post from work to public sites because of a past problem with hackers sending faxes to my employer. I think that I have been deleted because one of the Tor ids I used somehow matched one or more banned users here.

Please, if you are the moderator here, contact me via email so we can discuss this further. I am willing to prove in private by self addressed envelope or phone that I am indeed a real person.

Post a comment

[Log in](#) to comment on this entry, or [comment anonymously](#).

WARNING: Anonymous messages are held for moderation. This could take a (long) while. Or your comment may not be posted at all. Please consider [creating an account](#) and logging in. It's fast, free, and we don't spam, ever.

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