



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on April 13, 2018

Facebook Backs Off Censoring of Popular Black Conservative Duo Diamond and Silk

Facebook could not have done more to help increase the popularity of Diamond and Silk, the two black women whose boisterous support for Donald Trump have made them an Internet sensation. As reported by Fox News April 10, the two women, whose real names are Lynnette Hardaway and Rochelle Richardson, had accused Facebook of discrimination and censorship after the social media site labeled them “unsafe to the community.”



In an [April 6 Facebook post](#), the duo recalled that they had been corresponding with Facebook officials since last September concerning the social media site’s “bias censorship and discrimination against D&S brand page.” Following a barrage of e-mails, phone calls, and appeals to Facebook, the ladies said that they were sent the following terse statement from the Facebook folk: “The Policy team has come to the conclusion that your content and your brand has been determined unsafe to the community.” According to the women, the officials added that their “decision is final and it is not appeal-able in any way.”

Predictably, Diamond and Silk’s large fan based (including 1.4 million Facebook friends), along with more than a few free speech advocates, challenged the social media site’s latest heavy-handed tactics against conservative opinion.

In a Facebook post following the social media site’s determination, Diamond and Silk questioned Facebook’s reasoning, asking, among other things (and with no attempt at precise grammar and punctuation):

- “What is unsafe about two Blk-women supporting the President Donald J. Trump?”
- “Our FB page has been created since December 2014, when exactly did the content and the brand become unsafe to the community?”
- “When you say ‘community’ are you referring to the millions who liked and followed our page?”
- “What content on our page was in violation?”
- “If our content and brand was so unsafe to the community, why is the option for us to boost our content and spend money with FB to enhance our brand page still available?”

Concluded the duo: “This is deliberate bias censorship and discrimination. These tactics are unacceptable and we want answers!”

A couple of days later, as he sat before a congressional committee to face questions about privacy issues plaguing the social media giant, Facebook head Mark Zuckerberg was asked by a number of lawmakers about the perception that Facebook was specifically censoring conservative viewpoints, with Diamond and Silk mentioned repeatedly. The *Washington Post* reported that “Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas)



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used their complaint as an example of ‘a pervasive pattern of political bias.’ Rep. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.) finished her time by telling Zuckerberg that ‘Diamond and Silk is not terrorism.’”

Additionally, reported the *Post*, “Rep. Joe Barton (R-Texas) read a question from a constituent: ‘Please ask Mr. Zuckerberg, why Facebook is censoring conservative bloggers such as Diamond and Silk? Facebook called them unsafe to the community. That is ludicrous. They hold conservative views. That isn’t unsafe.’ In response to that question, Zuckerberg said the Facebook team ‘made an enforcement error.’”

In an apparent attempt at damage control over their “enforcement error,” Facebook officials released a hasty statement “clarifying” their action against Diamond and Silk. “We have communicated directly with Diamond And Silk about this issue,” Facebook said in a statement. “The message they received last week was inaccurate and not reflective of the way we communicate with our community and the people who run Pages on our platform. We have provided them with more information about our policies and the tools that are applicable to their page and look forward to the opportunity to speak with them.”

While Diamond and Silk insisted that no one from Facebook had reached out to them, in an April 9 letter to the pair, Facebook official Neil Potts apologized to the women for Facebook’s six months of “mishandled communications” with them, and claimed that the women were merely victims of Facebook’s new “Monetization Eligibility Standards,” which caused some of their Facebook video to be “not in line with our eligibility standards” and disqualified for Facebook “monetization features.”

The good news, Potts stated, was that “we are eliminating the restrictions associated with your page so that you can apply to monetize content.” However, warned Potts, “each time you want to monetize your content, the content must be reviewed against our eligibility standards.” Thus, Diamond and Silk may still find some of their content censored and un-monetized.

Ultimately, it seemed that Facebook’s targeting of their content actually worked to the benefit of Diamond and Silk, with a significant increase in their Facebook followers and post shares since news outlets such as Fox have been covering the story.

At least one conservative commentator, [Wayne Dupree](#), suggested that the issue was less about censorship than it was about a misunderstanding on the women’s part about Facebook’s evolving posting algorithms. “I don’t think the girls understood the technical side of Facebook,” said Dupree, “so when they injected race into it or they said they were banned, they didn’t realize or look at the entire picture.”

Nonetheless, several conservative commentators have pointed out that Facebook has censored their own content based on ideology. [BizPacReview.com](#) claimed that “just like Diamond and Silk, most of our 3.5 million fans, who liked BPR and asked to see us every day, have been denied.”

Similarly, Ben Shapiro, editor-in-chief of DailyWire.com, said that he has seen a “substantial” impact from Facebook’s shifting algorithm. “It’s clearly made an impact on us,” he told Politico.com. “It’s clearly made an impact on every conservative site. I think that Facebook needs to be held to public account for its constant manipulation of what its users are seeing.”

Tucker Carlson from Fox News charged Facebook with playing politics with its site, saying recently that “Facebook is not a neutral host. It has a political agenda.” He called the apparent targeting of the Facebook pages of prominent conservatives “an act of ideological warfare — and it’s far more worrying than anything that Cambridge Analytica has done, or is accused of doing.”



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Photo of Diamond and Silk: Facebook



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