



Post-Culture Review @PostCultRev Fri Aug 20 05:06:13 +0000 2021

A lot of people are getting the OnlyFans story wrong, and the reality of it is a lot more damaging and concerning to both the livelihood of sex workers and online freedom in general.

OnlyFans isn't ditching porn and sex workers because it's trying to get new investments. It's ditching them because on October 1st of 2021 MasterCard is implementing new rules governing sites with adult content that use their payment processing systems.

These rules will basically require that OnlyFans (and every other site that accepts MasterCard payments) not only fully verify every user and every person who appears in every adult video, but review all posted content before publication, including real-time review of livestreams

The new records-keeping, review processes, verification and other requirements are going to be expensive and time-consuming. OnlyFans seems to have decided it's not worth it. More importantly though, these rules will put incredible pressure on smaller sites and indie creators.

Of course, they could just decide not to accept MasterCard, but it's likely Visa and others will follow suit eventually

So why the rule changes? Because last December the New York Times published an opinion piece by Nick Kristof called "The Children of Pornhub" that accused the site and its parent company of profiting off revenge porn, child porn and sex trafficking.

Which, to be clear, they kinda were. Pornhub was notoriously bad among the tube sites for its reckless lack of content moderation and exploitation of the people whose videos ended up there. Because of the story, Visa and MasterCard both cut Pornhub off.

Pornhub has since moved to a model where it only posts verified users, but the big payment processors haven't relented, and are looking to remove themselves from any other business that might be involved in sex trafficking, non-consensual content, etc. Hence the rule changes.

But here's the thing: Kristof's story might have been correct on some of Pornhub's abuses but it was deeply manipulative and painfully wrongheaded about sex trafficking in porn and, like almost anything he writes about sex, a filtered version of Christian dominionist propaganda

One of the primary sources in Kristof's article is Traffickinghub founder Laila Mickelwait. She also works for the group Exodus Cry, a Christian group that is among other things anti-sex, anti-homosexuality and, naturally, anti-semitic.

Groups like this don't care about sex trafficking or non-consensual videos on a porn site. Those are footholds to their broader goal, with is to destroy the entire sex industry. That the majority of it is legal and consensual is pointless; they want it all gone on principle.

Sex trafficking makes a good narrative toward that goal. It's why the old anti-porn Morality in the Media group from the 1960s is now called "The National Center on Sexual Exploitation"

Kristof has played this role before. His basic tactic is to use manipulative and manipulated stories of sexual abuse to attack broader institutions. That he ends up a mouthpiece filtering deeply regressive Evangelical Christian anti-sex mythology to the mainstream is a given.

The attack on Pornhub did nothing to stop sex trafficking and a lot to take money out of the legal porn industry. The new MasterCard rules are a direct result of this, which basically means an overwrought Christian anti-sex fever dream is now dictating sexual content online.

Almost the entire anti-trafficking movement is an Evangelical project to get liberal supporters to sign off on a laundry list of Christian anti-sex policies. It's been one of their most successful propaganda projects. It's also likely gotten a lot of sex

workers killed.

It's the reason Craigslist and Backpage don't do classifieds for sex workers, because of trafficking scares, removing a relatively safe way to meet clients and moving workers back to more exploitative and dangerous venues.

Anti-trafficking groups have shut down AIDS programs that worked with sex workers and replaced them with abstinence-only programs. They've gotten police doing "trafficking raids" that are just giant crackdowns on consensual sex work, sending more sex workers to jail.

Because that's the whole point of this. It's a giant propaganda push, one with real teeth to it, to attack all sex work, legal or otherwise, consensual or not. OnlyFans dropping porn is just the next step. It's only going to get worse.

Some sources:

MasterCard's rule changes

<https://t.co/FHUa1tCHnv>

Kristof's use of Evangelical propaganda

<https://t.co/Y86IV2j7ai>

OnlyFans actual statement on why they changed policy

<https://t.co/tsPHQz1KiE>

Just going to make sure one point of this thread is clear: MasterCard's rule changes will do nothing to stop sex trafficking. They might have a marginal effect on non-consensual videos in general but overall these rules are about their own liability, not concern for victims.

The end result of the change is it will be harder to sell sexually explicit content online unless you are part of a major player that can afford the costs to meet the new requirements. Indie sex workers will be driven out and larger companies will be more powerful.

So little to zero assistance for any actual victim of a sex crime and enormous overbearing punishment directed at the creators of legal, consensual work.

If you want to actually help sex workers, I recommend <https://t.co/iOxUdzfGTF> which runs a bail fund and does work in decriminalization.

And since this is blowing up, my own bullshit: I run a history podcast about death, [@SynodusPod](#). I've been told my voice is very sexy.