Reddit removed moderators behind the latest protests before restoring a few of them

***Update June 20th, 10:31PM ET**: Since we published this story, the mods of r/mildlyinteresting report their accounts have been reinstated. We've updated the story below to reflect the change.*

Reddit has started removing moderator teams managing subreddits that switched the labeling on their communities to Not Safe For Work (NSFW) in the latest protests against the site.

With subreddits tagged NSFW, in addition to applying an age gate for desktop viewers and restricting access on mobile devices to logged-in users in the Reddit app, Reddit also doesn't show ads. This cuts into its ability to monetize them, which is a major part of Reddit's disputed push to charge apps for using the API. On Thursday, r/MildlyInteresting was one that had gone NSFW, following in the footsteps of others like r/interestingasfuck and r/TIHI (Thanks I Hate It).

CEO Steve Huffman told me in an interview last week, "90-plus percent of Reddit users are on our platform, contributing, and are monetized either through ads or Reddit Premium. Why would we subsidize this small group? Why would we effectively pay them to use Reddit but not everybody else who also contributes to Reddit?"

"Moderators incorrectly marking a community as NSFW is a

violation of both our Content Policy and Moderator Code of Conduct," Reddit spokesperson Tim Rathschmidt said to *The Verge* when asked about the suspended mods. He declined to comment when asked if Reddit removed the mods.

Soon after we published this story, one of the r/MildlyInteresting moderators told *The Verge* that the entire mod team has now been reinstated — and by a different admin than the one that removed them. The mod's account had received a 7-day suspension, but that has been reversed, too, they said. A *Verge* commenter who identifies as an r/MildlyInteresting mod also says the team has been reinstated and unsuspended.

Asked if Reddit could confirm the reinstatement, Rathschmidt declined, saying, "I'm not going to set a precedent of confirming with *The Verge* every action we do or don't take to ensure users can access their communities." He didn't elaborate on how removing a subreddit's entire moderation team with no communication ensures users can access their communities, particularly since they were never entirely inaccessible beyond the limitations imposed by Reddit itself.

According to a post in r/ModCoord (moderator coordination), moderators of r/MildlyInteresting moved forward on Tuesday with changing the sub to NSFW after a user vote.

However, according to the now-former r/MildlyInteresting mod that wrote the post, just after they switched the subreddit over, they were logged out of their account and locked out. It quickly became clear that Reddit-employed administrators (as opposed to the mods, who don't work for Reddit) were involved:

> *Following this, another mod posted our update instead. Right after, the* ***u/ModCodeofConduct*** *[a Reddit admin account] account* ***removed the post*** *and flipped the sub back to restricted instead of public. Then, the second moderator was also logged out of their account and locked out. Other*

> *mods tried to re-approve the post, one of them was promptly logged out and locked out as well.*

After that, according to the former r/MildlyInteresting mod, the entire mod team was removed from the subreddit, before eventually being reinstated.