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IWF backs down over 'child porn' Wikipedia page

Controversial entry removed from blacklist

By Juan Carlos Perez | 10 December 08

A [Wikipedia page](#) blacklisted in the UK over child pornography concerns has been unblocked, a decision that also fully restores the ability of UK residents to edit articles on the online encyclopedia.



Controversial entry removed from blacklist

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The Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), the nonprofit group that blacklisted the web page, announced on Tuesday that it has reversed course on the matter, although it still believes the image is potentially illegal in the UK. The image in question is of a naked and possibly underage female on the cover of a 1976 album from German rock group The Scorpions titled 'Virgin Killer'.

"In light of the length of time the image has existed and its wide availability, the decision has been taken to remove this webpage from our list," the IWF [said](#). About 95 percent of UK ISPs, by Wikimedia's estimate, block web pages based on IWF's list.



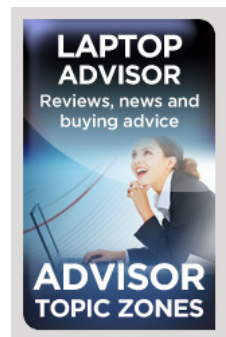
The Wikimedia Foundation, the nonprofit operator of Wikipedia, praised the IWF's decision. "We are grateful to the IWF for making this swift decision, and to thousands of internet users from around the world for their outpouring of support," said Sue Gardner, executive director of the Wikimedia Foundation.

Upon finding out that the article had been blacklisted, Wikimedia on Sunday [cried foul](#), saying the move amounted to censorship and pointing out that the block had disabled most UK residents' ability to edit Wikipedia articles.

Wikimedia further argued that the block unfairly targeted Wikipedia because the image is available broadly across the web, including at online retailer Amazon.com, which, according to Wikimedia, sells the album. Amazon.com didn't respond to a request for comment on Monday. Neither the article nor the image has been determined to be illegal anywhere in the world, according to Wikimedia.

The album has been controversial due to the cover image since its release more than three decades ago, and the Wikipedia article in question is 'explanatory' in nature, describing and contextualising "the controversy surrounding the image, in a neutral and educational fashion," Wikimedia [said in a FAQ](#) devoted to the issue.

The chain of events started on December 4, when the IWF received a report from someone



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objecting to the Wikipedia article about the album that featured the cover image. Upon reviewing the user's complaint, the IWF, which works with law enforcement to block and

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Tzaj

A good intent gone wrong.

Child abuse is wrong and governments should represent the people in defining what is acceptable or not. Also individuals from there can extend that morality to things they find unsavoury.

But pressure groups' being able to arbitrarily influence and attain censorship is fundamentally wrong and so anti democratic that it becomes a real threat o everybody including themselves.

Yes including themselves because if they can do it to others then others can do it to them also.

4 years ago

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Who are these people? Do they have the authority to close web pages at a whim? Does the IWF have any official standing? Or is the IWF a clone of the Mary Whitehouse organisation, the Viewers and Listeners Association - just a group of busybodies who have the notion that they are the moral arbiters of the nation?

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