

Comments fail on indigenous deaths in custody

Written by The Conversation USA

There's always a gap between aspirations and reality. My job is to create a comments section that is constructive, inclusive and illuminating. It's pretty close most of the time but, every now and then, it drifts a long way from where we'd like it to be.

Recently we closed comments on [Deaths in custody: 25 years after the royal commission, we've gone backwards](#). The article received 63 comments; of them, 43 were removed. Some were off-topic, some were removed because they were replies to other removed comments.

Others failed to engage with the article's content in a constructive or respectful way. Too many, sadly, were clearly discriminatory. To say this was disappointing would be an understatement, not least because our community has made great strides over the past few years.

But, as the poor quality of many comments is attracting [more attention than ever](#), it's important to focus on what we want from our community. It's not enough to uphold our standards most of the time.

We want to see passionate, intelligent discussion on all of our articles – whether people agree with the author or not. We set a high standard for ourselves:

We want the discussion of an article to be, if anything, more illuminating than the original article.

So how to ensure we don't have a similar lapse in future? There are some things I can do and some that you can do. From this end we're going to continue to be vigilant about articles that we know attract vitriol. Comments will be turned off when TC staff aren't around to moderate.

What can you do? Please comment in a constructive way and help me by reporting comments you think may step over the line.

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We need to make sure trolls get the message they're not welcome here. This is a place for constructive discussion. On that score we all need to be working together. With the community we have and the improvements we've made thus far, I have no doubt we'll get there.

Read more <http://theconversation.com/comments-fail-on-indigenous-deaths-in-custody-57876>