

Free Market Accountability

Tech Needs to Explain Why Its Algorithms Hate Republicans

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Left-wing media bias has a blatant Google & Co. equivalent.

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By now, nearly everyone who pays any attention to the politics of American business knows full well that tech companies are committed cogs in the Leftist machine. What becomes increasingly, and ever more scandalously clear with each passing month, is the extent to which they devote themselves to that task, even in areas that one might think would avoid politics simply for the sake of business.

The most prominent example to come out recently emerged last week in a [story](#) by Jeff Mordock of the *Washington Times*. As Mordock reports, we can now almost conclusively say that if you search for a Republican using Google or Yahoo, you're far more likely to find out dirt about them than if you search for a Democrat. Though, unsurprisingly, the effect is at its most dramatic when using Google.

How do we know? Because two liberal professors — Robert Epstein of the American Institute for Behavioral Research and Technology, and Robert Robertson of Northeastern University, have [released a report](#) demonstrating this using actual experimental data. Specifically, Epstein and Robertson observed 4,045 election-related searches during the last month or so of the 2016 election and discovered that those searches consistently turned up vastly more pro-Clinton articles than pro-Trump ones. What's more, this had an effect on voters, as Epstein and Robertson demonstrate that just one Google search session could boost support for a politician by as much as 63 percent.

And just who was Google boosting? Well, according to another study by Nicholas Diakopoulos of Northwestern University, searches for all sixteen Presidential candidates of the 2016 election turned up an average of seven positive results for Democrats, whereas Republicans only found an average of 6. Searches for Hillary Clinton produced five positive articles to only one negative, whereas searches for Donald Trump produced four positive and three negative. A search for Bernie Sanders, meanwhile, would produce nine positive stories and zero negative, whereas searches for Ted Cruz produced zero (!) positive stories. And this was during the primary, when most people regarded Cruz as further to the Right on most issues than Trump, so the message is clear: The more conservative you are, the more Google has programmed its algorithm to hate you.

These results may not be surprising, but they should absolutely lead to a renewed skepticism of tech's ability to act as an impartial gatekeeper for information, particularly in the realm of politics. Google in particular has a well-deserved reputation for interfering with peoples' ability to access information, or to disseminate it. Just ask [James Damore](#), or [PragerU](#), or the [free speech platform Gab](#) about the extent to which Google tries to shut out anyone who dissents from their preferred far Left orthodoxy from spreading their ideas.

But more importantly than being vigilant against gatekeeping, what these latest revelations show is that tech's allergy to transparency must be overruled by policymakers and activists with an interest in a free society. At least when newsroom editors declined to report on stories, there were ways to send letters to the editor demanding answers as to why those decisions were made. When it comes to Google and its peers' search algorithms, not only is there no way to interrogate the company as to why it programs certain decisions into their algorithms: the companies won't even admit that such decisions are being made in the first place. Those of us on the Right correctly recoil from concepts like the Fairness Doctrine, but transparency about bias is a far cry from demanding equal time the way whiny anti-talk radio crusaders do. It's time consumers and their representatives in Washington and in state capitals made sure that those denials are no longer going to cut it, now that data proves that search engine algorithms spit out results that make socialists and Democrats look good, while making conservatives and nationalists look like ogres.

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