

## Google discriminates against conservatives and climate skeptics

We must understand how Google does it, why it is wrong and how it hurts America

David Wojick

Several months ago, Google quietly released a 32-page white paper, “How Google Fights Disinformation.” That sound good. The problem is that Google not only controls a whopping [92.2% of all online searches](#). It is a decidedly left-wing outfit, which views things like skepticism of climate alarmism, and conservative views generally, as “disinformation.” The white paper explains how Google’s search and news algorithms operate, to suppress what Google considers disinformation and wants to keep out of educational and public discussions.

The algorithms clearly favor liberal content when displaying search results. Generally speaking, they rank and present search results based on the use of so-called “authoritative sources.” The problem is, these sources are mostly “mainstream” media, which are almost entirely liberal.

Google’s algorithmic definition of “authoritative” makes liberals the voice of authority. Bigger is better, and the liberals have the most and biggest news outlets. The algorithms are very complex, but the basic idea is that the more other websites link to you, the greater your authority.

It is like saying a newspaper with more subscribers is more trustworthy than one with fewer subscribers. This actually makes no sense, but that is how it works with the news and in other domains. Popularity is not authority, but the algorithm is designed to see it that way.

This explains why the first page of search results for breaking news almost always consists of links to liberal outlets. There is absolutely no balance with conservative news sources. Given that roughly half of Americans are conservatives, Google’s liberal news bias is truly reprehensible.

In the realm of public policies affecting our energy, economy, jobs, national security, living standards and other critical issues, the suppression of alternative or skeptical voices, evidence and perspectives becomes positively dangerous for our nation and world

Last year, I [documented an extreme case](#) of this bias the arena of “dangerous manmade global warming” alarmism. My individual searches on prominent skeptics of alarmist claims revealed that Google’s “authoritative source” was an obscure website called DeSmogBlog, whose claim to fame is posting nasty negative dossiers on skeptics, including me and several colleagues.

In each search, several things immediately happened. First, Google linked to DeSmogBlog’s dossier on the skeptic, even though it might be a decade old and/or wildly inaccurate. Indeed, sometimes this was the first entry in the search results. Second, roughly half of the results were negative attacks – which should not be surprising, since the liberal press often attacks us skeptics.

Third, skeptics are often labeled as “funded by big oil,” whereas funding of alarmists by self-interested government agencies, renewable energy companies, far-left foundations or Tom Steyer (who became a billionaire by financing Asian coal mines) was generally ignored.

In stark contrast, searching for information about prominent climate alarmists yielded nothing but praise. This too is not surprising, since Google’s liberal “authoritative” sources love alarmists.

This algorithm’s bias against skeptics is breathtaking – and it extends to the climate change debate itself. Search results on nearly all climate issues are dominated by alarmist content.

In fact, climate change seems to get special algorithmic attention. Google’s special category of climate webpages, hyperbolically called “Your Money or Your Life,” requires even greater “authoritative” control in searches. No matter how well reasoned, articles questioning the dominance of human factors in climate change, the near-apocalyptic effects of predicted climate change, or the value and validity of climate models are routinely ignored by Google’s algorithms.

The algorithm also ignores the fact that our jobs, economy, financial wellbeing, living standards, and freedom to travel and heat or cool our homes would be severely and negatively affected by energy proposals justified in the name of preventing human-caused cataclysmic climate change. The monumental mining and raw material demands of wind turbines, solar panels, biofuels and batteries likewise merit little mention in Google searches. Ditto for the extensive impacts of these supposed “clean, green, renewable, sustainable” technologies on lands, habitats and wildlife.

It’s safe to say that climate change is now the world’s biggest single public policy issue. And yet Google simply downgrades and thus “shadow bans” any pages that contain “demonstrably inaccurate content or debunked conspiracy theories.” That is how alarmists describe skepticism about any climate alarm or renewable energy claims. Google does not explain how its algorithm makes these intrinsically subjective determinations as to whether an article is accurate, authoritative and thus posted – or incorrect, questionable and thus consigned to oblivion.

Google’s authority-based search algorithm is also rigged to favor liberal content over virtually all conservative content; it may be especially true for climate and energy topics. This deep liberal bias is fundamentally wrong and un-American, given Google’s central role in our lives.

Google’s creators get wealthy by controlling access to information – and thus thinking, debate, public policy decisions and our future – by using a public internet system that was built by defense and other government agencies, using taxpayer dollars, for the purpose of ensuring the free flow of information and open, robust discussion of vital policy issues. It was never meant to impose liberal-progressive-leftist police state restrictions on who gets to be heard.

According to its “How we fight disinformation” white paper, Google’s separate news search feature gets special algorithmic treatment – meaning that almost all links returned on the first page are to liberal news sources. This blatant bias stands out like a sore thumb in multiple tests. In no case involving the first ten links did I get more than one link to a conservative news source. Sometimes I got none.

For example, my news search on “Biden 2020” returned the following top ten search results, in this order: CNN, the New York Times, Vice, Politico, CNN again, Fortune, Vox, Fox News, The Hill and Politico. The only actual conservative source was Fox News, in eighth position.

Of course conservative content would not be friendly to Mr. Biden. But if Google can prominently post attacks on skeptics and conservatives, why can’t it do so for attacks on Democrats?

The highest conservative content I found was one link in eight or 12 percent. About a third of my sample cases had no conservative sources whatsoever. The average of around 7% measures Google’s dramatic bias in favor of liberal sources, greatly compounding its 92.2% dominance.

The lonely conservative sources are more middle of the road, like Fox News and the Washington Examiner. Google never found or highlighted a truly conservative (what it would call “right wing”) source, like [Briertbart](#), [Townhall](#) or the [Daily Caller](#). It just doesn’t happen, and the algorithm clearly knows that, as does Google. As do other information and social media sites.

Of course, I’m not alone in finding or encountering this [blatant viewpoint discrimination](#).

When coupled with the nearly complete takeover of UN, IPCC, World Bank and other global governance institutions by environmentalist and socialist forces – and their near-total exclusion of manmade climate chaos skeptics, free market-oriented economists and anyone who questions the role or impact of renewable energy – the effect on discussion, debate, education and informed decision-making is dictatorial and devastating.

No free, prosperous, modern society can survive under such conditions and restrictions. It’s time for citizens, legislators, regulators and judges to rein in and break up this imperious monopoly.

David Wojick is an independent analyst specializing in science, logic and human rights in public policy, and author of numerous articles on these topics.

