



How Google Censors The New American (and Other Conservatives)

You might have heard about social-media and search engine censorship of conservative news sources: Twitter's "shadowbanning," Facebook's [news curators](#), and Google's nine different blacklists. I've not only heard and written about it but experienced its effects — and it has happened yet again.



While writing an [article](#) Friday, I wanted to link up to previous articles I'd written that provided background information. Believe it or not, though, since I've penned literally thousands of pieces over the years, the easiest way for me to find a given article is the same way you would: via a search engine.

I was looking for pieces I'd written, at *The New American*, about schoolchildren punished for innocent play such as pointing their fingers like a gun and saying "Bang!" So I went to Google and entered as search terms and phrases, "'Selwyn Duke' pointed fingers like gun and said bang 'the new American.'"

For those who don't know, when search phrases are in quotation marks — as my name and *The New American* are above — the Google search engine gives you results with that exact phrase in them. It's a way of providing the engine specificity and narrowing the results.

So I clicked the search button.

Nothing.

Nothing relevant from *The New American* (TNA), anyway, on any page I checked. I knew Google was playing games, as I'd had similar experiences before. So I scrolled to the bottom of the page where Google states:

In order to show you the most relevant results, we have omitted some entries very similar to the 22 already displayed.

If you like, you can repeat the search with the omitted results included.

I clicked the link and, lo and behold, one of my TNA articles was at the very top of the first page.

Now, question: When searching for "Selwyn Duke" and "the new american," how are pages containing "Selwyn Duke" and "The New American" not among the "most relevant results"?

Yet it gets worse. As an experiment, I went to search engine DuckDuckGo.com (DDG), entered the same search terms and, "Voila!" five actually relevant results appeared. The first two were pieces at TNA authored by me, the third was one of my TNA articles at a different site, the fourth a piece I wrote for a different entity, and the fifth was a page that listed a TNA article of mine among many featured pieces.



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on May 15, 2017

DDG only listed those five results, but realize that its index is far smaller than Google's: The best information I have indicates that DDG searches perhaps a few billion pages.

Google [searches 30 trillion](#).

In other words, Google should be running rings around DDG — instead, it had me running in circles as it played hide-and-go-seek (the Truth).

I performed the same experiment with Yahoo's search engine and got a trove of relevant results. Only Google didn't have a gaggle of TNA results on its first page.

Interestingly but not surprisingly, when I entered the same search terms in Google at later times, it *did* put a TNA result in the first spot and provide more relevant results in general, though they still paled in comparison to those of the other two engines. It appeared to be adjusting the results based on my past searches.

Obviously, Google is not completely blacklisting TNA and other similar traditionalist sites. But it is de-emphasizing them by burying their results. It's the kind of slick censorship that provides plausible deniability.

None of this is surprising. Google [announced](#) in 2015 that it was considering ranking websites not based on just popularity (which, for all its faults, is democratic), but on "truthfulness" — as determined by desert-mystic Google techies, of course.

This kind of censorship works, too. I knew my articles were out there. I knew to keep looking. I knew the system was gamed. But most Web users searching for information on school gun paranoia simply won't see results from politically incorrect sources and will be none the wiser. Even readers of mine conducting such a search and including my name would likely just conclude, "Well, I guess Duke hasn't written much on that subject." It's insidious.

So if you've ever wondered, as I've heard it lamented, why people don't hear the truth, this is one of the reasons. As *US News and World Report* [put it](#) last year, "Google, Inc., isn't just the world's biggest purveyor of information; it is also the world's biggest censor" — and it maintains at least nine different blacklists. It doesn't have to purge your site completely, either (again, that eliminates plausible deniability), but just push it down in the search rankings. Note that the first page of Google search results gets [92 percent of all traffic](#). Burying a site on even the third or fourth page amounts to banishment to Web Siberia.

Note also that it's not unusual for news sites to derive upwards of 80 percent of their traffic from Google and Facebook. Thus, these entities largely can "control the narrative" by controlling who gets the attention.

So if a website speaks the Truth in a forest of confusion and no one hears it, is it still the Truth? Yes — but it doesn't make an impact. And for the censors, that's the whole idea.



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