

# Big Tech Thugs and Their Allies

In an article last February headlined “Do Facebook, Twitter and YouTube censor conservatives? Claims ‘not supported by the facts,’ new research says,” *USA Today*’s Jessica Guynn wrote, “Despite repeated charges of anti-conservative bias from former President Donald Trump and other GOP critics, Facebook, Twitter and Google’s YouTube are not slanted against right-leaning users, a new report out of New York University found.”

Guynn quoted Paul Barrett, deputy director of the NYU Stern Center for Business and Human Rights, who said: “Republicans, or more broadly conservatives, have been spreading a form of disinformation on how they’re treated on social media. They complain they’re censored and suppressed but, not only is there not evidence to support that, what evidence exists actually cuts in the other direction.”

In other words, conservative users of Twitter, Facebook and Instagram marinate in a state of paranoia, groundlessly convinced that their posts face restrictions, if not outright suppression.

Tell this to singer-songwriter John Ondrasik, to cite just one example, who on Jan. 2 posted his new music video critical of President Joe Biden’s disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan. YouTube first attached a warning that the video’s images violated the platform’s “graphic content policy,” making it unsuitable for younger audiences. But five days and 250,000 views later, YouTube removed it altogether. Nine hours later, when conservatives and, one hopes, others complained, YouTube restored it, although it added another warning labeling the video “inappropriate or offensive to some audiences.”

About its abrupt takedown and restoration, YouTube explained:

“This was our mistake and we’ve reinstated your video. So sorry this happened and thanks for being patient while we worked this out.” What was there to “work out”? As Ondrasik pointed out, a number of videos on YouTube displaying “similar Taliban atrocities” not only remain on the platform but are monetized, actually making money for whoever posted it.

When I ended my California gubernatorial campaign to recall Gov. Gavin Newsom, my Twitter account stood shy of one million followers. Since then, and despite my increased notoriety—for good or for ill—my Twitter account has *lost* nearly 25,000 followers and continues to lose hundreds *per day*. By contrast, my accounts on Instagram and Facebook *add* hundreds of new followers each day.

This Elder Twitter erosion began before its founder and CEO Jack Dorsey resigned at the end of November 2021, replaced by Twitter executive Parag Agrawal. Agrawal tweeted in 2010: “If they are not gonna make a distinction between Muslims and extremists, then why should I distinguish between white people and racists.” Agrawal said he was merely quoting a comedian on “The Daily Show.” Still, not a good sign.

More concerning, Agrawal, in an interview in 2020, said: “Our role is not to be bound by the First Amendment, but our role is to serve a healthy public conversation and our moves are reflective of things that we believe lead to a healthier public conversation.” He added: “The kinds of things that we do about this is, focus less on thinking about free speech, but thinking about how the times have changed.”

This is simply breathtaking—“reflective of things that we believe lead to a healthier public conversation”? As defined by whom? Of course, conservatives complain. But why the silence among the left, the ACLU types we once thought believed in the free flow of ideas and that the antidote to bad ideas is good ideas?

So what that Trump finds his social media platforms shut down because he rejected the results of the 2020 election. Silence, indeed, applause, from the left. So what that Hillary Clinton peddles conspiracy theories about the 2016 election, calls Trump “illegitimate” and the 2016 election “stolen,” yet faces no retaliation from Big Tech social media platforms. Silence, indeed, applause, from the left.

So much for the powerful quote by a biographer of French philosopher Voltaire: “I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.”

Welcome to Big Tech social media. Welcome to the silence of its allies from today’s left.

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