

MOMENT OF TRUTH

Right now freedom of speech is under existential threat...



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Freedom of Speech

Right now freedom of speech is under existential threat. You might be thinking, 'Really?! We can say whatever we want, can't we?!' Well, freedom of speech is a legally protected right in countless nations. But, deviate from what 'progressive thinkers' have defined as 'Politically Correct' and before long you'll find out just how weak this protection has become (ask me how I know!).

Freedom of speech, according to the Merriam Webster dictionary, 'is the legal right to express one's opinions freely.'¹

Despite this legal right, private companies, including the Big Tech giants (Facebook, Google etc), are free to censor any person or topic they choose to on their platforms

(YouTube have become infamous for this in recent years).² Unlike the government, they can (and do) limit the speech of their customers, and use algorithms to push their own political agendas (in the 2020 US Presidential election Google showed voting reminders only to users whose personal data indicated that they were Democrat supporters, until they were caught in the act that is).³ Of course publicly Google proclaim their support for freedom of speech, and they defend their cancel-culture actions by pointing to vague content policies that are so broad you could drive two buses through them, side-by-side. They claim that the mass demonetization, banning and suspension of

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

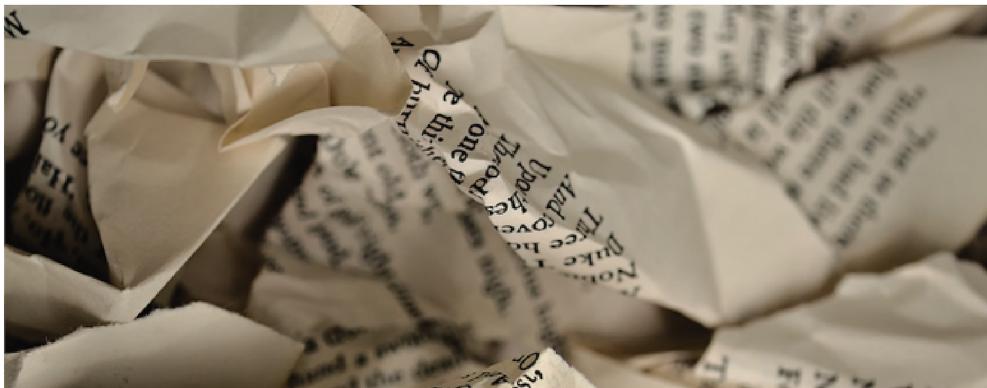
'If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear.'

GEORGE ORWELL

conservative activists, journalists and political figures on their platforms are either legitimate enforcements of their terms of service or honest mistakes (regardless of the statistical improbability of that).

In contrast to its public statements, a leaked Google internal company memo⁴ in 2018 argued: due to a variety of factors, including the election of President Trump, free speech on the internet is no longer viable. It noted that Big Tech companies control the majority of speech on the internet, acknowledging that their platforms initially promote free speech, only to abandon it later. It described free speech as a utopian idea.

A short review of history would tell us that losing this essential right is a *really bad idea*. Whilst Hitler and the Nazis were seducing a nation (through propaganda), terrorising a continent, and attempting to exterminate the Jews of Europe, a handful of freedom fighters worked to dismantle the Third Reich from the inside. One of these, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who continued speaking, writing and publishing long after he was forbidden to do so, urged others to speak up before it was too late. The majority refused to heed his warning until freedom of speech, along with many other freedoms, were taken away from them.



To defend freedom of speech is to defend freedom itself. The right to be able to express your opinion freely is absolutely essential to a free society. If we don't exercise this right, we will lose it, just as a little-used path is lost to an overgrowth of nettles and brambles. If your own freedoms are not already under assault, consider speaking up in defence of the truth and for the freedom of others.

As Martin Niemöller put it, in his famous poem:

First they came for the Socialists,
and I did not speak out -
because I was not a Socialist.
Then they came for the Trade
Unionist, and I did not speak out -
because I was not a Trade Unionist.
Then they came for the Jews, and I
did not speak out -
because I was not a Jew.
And then they came for me -
and there was no one left to speak
for me.'

"...the rulers, the elders and the teachers of the law... commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, 'Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or to him?'"

ACTS 4:5,18-19

FACT OF THE WEEK

'Every person shall have the right freely to express and disseminate his opinions in speech, writing and pictures... Freedom of the press and freedom of reporting by means of broadcasts and films shall be guaranteed. There shall be no censorship.'

-The German Basic Law

¹ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/freedom%20of%20speech>

² Donald Trump, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., Glenn Greenwald, Jordan Peterson and Glenn Beck for example

³ <https://cdn.mrc.org/static/pdfuploads/MRC%20Google%20Election%20Interference%20Report.pdf-1710439680476.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.breitbart.com/tech/2018/10/09/the-good-censor-leaked-google-briefing-admits-abandonment-of-free-speech-for-safety-and-civility/>