



Inside Track

YouTube “Fact Checks” Videos Skeptical of Man-made Climate Change

On July 9, the Google-owned video-sharing service YouTube began adding a disclaimer to certain videos that challenge “well established historical and scientific topics that have often been subject to misinformation online.” Among these “well established” topics is the pseudo-scientific, completely unproven topic known as anthropogenic (man-made) global warming. This new feature is being used only in the United States for now.

The new feature purportedly offers “topical context” on subjects that YouTube considers settled in historical or scientific context. A box underneath the video explains what YouTube wants you to believe on whatever the subject is, and then offers a link to Wikipedia or Encyclopedia Britannica, where a more politically correct explanation of the subject is readily available.

When you ask YouTube, “why am I seeing this?” a message pops up, saying, “Users may see information from third parties, including Encyclopedia Britannica and Wikipedia, alongside videos on a small number of well established historical and scientific topics that have often been subject to misinformation online, like the moon landing.”

YouTube announced in March that it would begin placing descriptions alongside videos on certain conspiracy theories and topics that it considers “fake news.” Videos that show the Sandy Hook tragedy, the Oklahoma City bombing, the September 11 terrorist attacks, and the moon landing as hoaxes have also been augmented with these disclaimers. YouTube has not released a full list of subjects it intends to “fact check,” but its partner Wikipedia lists global warming, Dulce Base, the 1980 Camarate air crash, FEMA camps, the Kecksburg UFO incident, and connections between vaccines and autism as subjects that may be affected.

The flagging of these controversial subjects with so-called fact checks is just another incremental step toward removing them from the platform entirely. Perhaps Silicon Valley in general and YouTube in particular see themselves as the Ministry of Truth from George Orwell’s novel *1984*. In time, only the approved “truths” will be allowed on their platform. And if that happens, the word truth will have lost its meaning.

Hungary Bans Gender-studies Programs

Hungarian political magazine *Heti Világgazdaság* reported August 9 that Hungary’s secretary of the Ministry of Human Resources (EMMI), Bence Rétvári, stated that gender-studies programs are based in “ideology rather than science,” and therefore had no place in facilities of higher education. He even went so far as to compare the programs to “Marxist-Leninism,” adding that the programs’ absence of science makes them “inappropriate matter for university-level education.”

A spokesman for the government told Breitbart August 10 that the degrees proved useless to students after their graduation. “There is no economic rationale for studies such as these,” he said, as the degrees do not “furnish students with skills that can be readily and directly converted on the labour market.” He added that the programs aren’t sustainable and “take away valuable resources from other



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programs, deteriorating the economic stability of universities.”

He pointed out that state universities have an obligation to ensure that funding is allocated for vital programs. “State universities operated from public funds must take these factors into consideration,” he said, “since the purpose of these institutions of higher education is to meet genuine social and labour market needs.”

Chief of Staff Gergely Gulyas asserts that the government should not be financing programs that shirk science for ideology. “The Hungarian government is of the clear view that people are born either men or women. They lead their lives the way they think best, but beyond this, the Hungarian state does not wish to spend public funds on education in this area,” he said.

The move is not likely to have a significant impact on students in Hungary, where only two universities even offer the programs at the graduate level, and programs in both universities showed minimal enrollment; however, it could have the potential to set a dangerous precedent for governmental influence in academia. After all, Breitbart notes, while one of the Hungarian universities affected by the decision is state-funded, the other — Central European University, founded by globalist liberal financier George Soros — is private.

Monsanto Loses Landmark Glyphosate Case

A San Francisco jury has found biotech company Monsanto liable for causing a school groundskeeper’s cancer in a case that could turn a powerful tide against the biotech giant, as the recent claim is just one of thousands against the company.

According to California school groundskeeper Dewayne Johnson, exposure to Monsanto’s Roundup is what caused his non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma. The product’s key ingredient is glyphosate, which was classified by the UN World Health Organization as “probably carcinogenic to humans” three years ago. Bloomberg reported August 10 that Johnson mixed and sprayed hundreds of gallons of Roundup in his job as a groundskeeper. He was diagnosed with cancer in 2014, and by July 2017, after chemotherapy and other treatments, he was given six months to live. Johnson contends that it was his exposure to Roundup, which included accidents that resulted in his being soaked in the product, that caused his cancer.

Johnson’s lawyer, Brent Wisner, provided what he claimed was evidence that Monsanto scientists were aware of the cancer risk posed by the product as early as the 1970s but kept it from the public and even went out of their way to “distort the truth.” Wisner said in a statement after the verdict, “Despite the Environmental Protection Agency’s failure to require labeling, we are proud that an independent jury followed the evidence and used its voice to send a message to Monsanto that its years of deception regarding Roundup [are] over and that they should put consumer safety first over profits.”

The court ordered Monsanto to pay \$250 million in punitive damages and \$39 million in compensation and other costs.

Monsanto’s lawyers released a written statement that continues to claim that glyphosate is a safe product, noting that it is the most heavily used pesticide in the world and that any cancerous effect would be evident, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency continues to insist that the product is safe. However, critics claim that the EPA assessment was determined because of collusion between government officials and Monsanto. Monsanto is expected to appeal the decision.



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Republicans Favor Giving President Power to Close News Outlets

Research conducted by Ipsos and released August 7 found that 43 percent of self-identified Republicans believe that “the president should have the authority to close news outlets engaged in bad behavior.” A shocking 26 percent of respondents overall agree with that statement, as well.

Regardless of the remarkable nature of such widespread disdain for the press, the percentages produced by this poll are perhaps the predictable harvest after months of sowing the seed of mistrust and misinformation. Everyone is familiar with the “fake news” label regularly applied by the president to those news agencies he believes are biased against him, and now it seems his rhetoric is affecting the attitudes of Americans regarding the appropriate way to balance the scale between newsmaker and news publisher.

The lack of respect for the news media is understandable, and knee-jerk reactions, while not rational, are certainly comprehensible.

What is nearly unbelievable and unacceptable, however, is that more than four out of every 10 members of the Republican Party who responded to this survey felt that the best way to push back against the press is to give the president the power to shut down those outlets he considers bad actors.

In fairness, there is no effort made in the poll to discern who those respondents in favor of presidential power over the press believe should decide what qualifies as “bad behavior.” That’s a very vague standard.

Twenty-three percent of Republicans and 13 percent of Americans overall agreed that “President Trump should close down mainstream news outlets such as CNN, the *Washington Post*, and the *New York Times*.”

Ostensibly, Republicans are conservative, and conservatives are friends of the Constitution. Sadly, this poll reveals otherwise.

One wonders if the 43 percent of Republicans who said they would give President Trump the authority to shut down bad-behaving news media would have said the same thing were Barack Obama still president.



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