

Perceptions of Google

- [Information Literacy in the Age of Algorithms](#)
- [Google Search Is Quietly Damaging Democracy](#)

Search Term Relevance

While personalization of results is a big deal when it comes to social media & news feeds, for active searching, **the words we choose to search**, and Google's desire to provide results relevant to those terms is a much bigger deal. **BEWARE:**

- **Ideological Dialects:**
 - [Conv. with Francesca Tripodi](#)
- **Data Voids:** See also:
 - [Miseducation of Dylann Roof](#)
 - [The Fragmentation of Truth](#)

Algorithm Activities Going Beyond Google

Alternative Googling & Alternatives to Google

- Teach students about **site:**
- Compare results from Google and **other databases**

Develop Disciplinary Awareness

- Make your own info seeking behavior explicit; have students reflect on theirs.
- Have students identify and share significant organizations, journals, blogs, projects, websites, databases related to the discipline and course subject matter. Use these to build [Custom Google Searches](#).
- Have students identify significant scholars in the field. Use these to make **searchable Twitter lists**.

Diversify Intentionally

- Actively seek out the perspectives of scholars from underrepresented minorities. (Pairs well with searchable Twitter lists.)

Algorithm Activities Surfacing Problems & Assumptions

1. **Google Reproduces Existing Biases:** Have students search a marginalized or stereotyped group they feel a part of. Discuss what they see in the autosuggest or in an image search. [HT [Safiya Noble](#); [Brandon & Hibbler](#)]

2. **Search Term Subtlety:** Show a picture, ask for words to describe its content, then search those different words & phrases and see how different the results are.

3. **Ideological Dialects:** Have students try to come up with examples related to the course material. Prompt them with pairs of articles.

4. **Data Voids:** Google wants to put "good" results at the top, what about when there is little/no content related to the search phrase. Seek examples in your discipline or ask students to find examples related to current events..

5. **Why Do We Trust Google?:** Engage students in discussion based on one of the readings above. Discussion Questions: Why are we willing to hand over control to Google, when in so many other areas of our life we (rightfully) mistrust corporate motives? What role does convenience play? What are the trade offs? **How could we be less passive? When is that effort worth it?**

Algorithms in Social Media & News Feeds

- [How To Make Social Media Algorithms Work for YOU](#) (video)
- [Your Computer is On Fire](#) (book)
- [The Social Dilemma](#) (documentary)

**Set up a brainstorming session
or class visit:
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