

Former Editor-in-chief of Psychology Today Testifies How Google and Facebook Influence Voters



Dr. Robert Epstein, the former editor-in-chief of Psychology Today, testified in a Senate Judiciary Committee about how liberal tech giants like Google and Facebook have manipulated, and will likely continue to manipulate votes for Democrats.

I took the time to transcribe the YouTube into text because I consider Dr. Epstein's testimonial to Republican Senator Ted Cruz extremely important for the public to know. Also, YouTubes have a nasty habit of getting deleted! In this case, the YouTube went private! I can't show the video BUT the text remains.

Senator Ted Cruz: As I understand your background, you're not a Republican, nor are you a conservative. Is that accurate?

Doctor Robert Epstein: That would be an understatement.

Senator Cruz: And indeed you're the former editor and chief of Psychology Today.

Dr. Epstein: Correct.

Senator Cruz: So you're a respected academic. You testified before this committee that Google's manipulation of votes gave at least 2.6 million additional votes to Hillary Clinton in the year 2016. Is that correct?

Dr. Epstein: That's correct.

Senator Cruz: And I want to make sure I understand. You personally supported and voted for Hillary Clinton.

Dr. Epstein: I was a very strong public supporter of Hillary Clinton, yes.

Senator Cruz: So you're not dismayed that people voted for her but your testimony is that Google is through bias in search results manipulating voters in a way they're not aware of.

Dr. Epstein: On a massive scale. And what I'm saying is that I believe in

democracy, I believe in a free and fair election more than I have in any kind of allegiance to a candidate or a party.

Senator Cruz: And looking forward if I understood your testimony correctly, you said in subsequent elections Google and Facebook and Twitter and big text manipulation could manipulate as many as 15 million votes in a subsequent election.

Dr. Epstein: In 2020, if all these companies are supporting the same candidate, there are 15 million votes on the line that can be shifted without people's knowledge and without leaving a paper trail for authorities to trace.

Senator Cruz: Now you described the "go vote" reminder and you said it wasn't a public service announcement but rather manipulation. Can you explain how? I'm not sure everyone followed the details of that.

Dr. Epstein: Well sure. If on election day in 2016, if Mark Zuckerberg, for example, had chosen to send out a "go vote" reminder, say just to Democrats, – and no one would have known if he had done this – that would have given that day at least 450,000 votes to Democrats. And we know this without doubt because of Facebook's own published data because they did an experiment that they didn't tell anyone about during the 2010 election. They published it in 2012. We had 60 million Facebook users involved. They sent out a "go vote" reminder, and they got something like 360,000 more people to get off their sofas and go vote who otherwise would have stayed home. The point is, I don't think that Mr. Zuckerberg sent out that reminder in 2016, I think he was overconfident, I think Google was overconfident, that all these companies were. I don't think he sent that out. Without monitoring systems in place we'll never know what these companies are doing. But the point is, in 2018 I'm sure they were more aggressive. We have lots of data to support that. And **in 2020, you can bet that all of these companies are going to go all out.** And the methods they are using are *invisible*. They're *subliminal*. They're more powerful than most any effects I've ever seen in the behavioral sciences, and I've been in the behavioral sciences for almost 40 years.

Senator Cruz: You know, our democratic colleagues in this committee often talk about what they view as the pernicious effect of big money and big corporate dollars. What you are testifying to is that a handful of Silicon Valley billionaires and giant corporations are able to spend millions of dollars if not billions of dollars collectively, *massively* influencing results of elections. And there's no accountability. You said, "we don't know, we have no way of knowing if Google or Facebook or Twitter sent to Democrats or Republicans or how they bias it because it's a black box with no transparency or accountability whatsoever. Am I understanding you correctly?

Dr. Epstein: Senator, with respect I must correct you.

Senator Cruz: Please.

Dr. Epstein: If Mark Zuckerberg chooses to send out a go vote reminder just to Democrats on election day, **that doesn't cost him a dime.**

Senator Cruz: Fair enough. Do you happen to know who the Hillary Clinton campaign's number one financial supporter was in the year 2016?

Dr. Epstein: Uh... I think I do but please remind me.

Senator Cruz: The number one financial supporter of the Hillary Clinton campaign in the 2016 election was the parent company of Google – Alphabet – who was our first witness. They were her number one financial donor, and your testimony is, through their deceptive search methods they moved 2.6 million votes in her direction. I would think *anybody*, **whether or not you favor one candidate or another, should be deeply dismayed about a handful of Silicon Valley billionaires having that much power over our elections** to silently and deceptively shift voters. (Hard to hear the last word.)

Dr. Epstein: Again with respect, I must correct you. The 2.6 million is **a rock bottom minimum**. The range is between 2.6 and 10.4 million depending how aggressively they use the techniques that I have been studying now for 6 and a half years.

Senator Cruz: Wow! Could you just say that again, please?

Dr. Epstein: The 2.6 million is **a rock bottom minimum**. The range is between 2.6 and 10.4 million votes depending on how aggressive they were in using the techniques that I have been studying, such as the search engine manipulation effect, the search suggestion effect, the answer-bot effect, and a number of others. **They control these**, and no one can counter at them. These are **not competitive**. These are tools that they have at their disposal *exclusively*.

Senator Cruz: If any headlight comes out of this hearing, that should be it.