

Exhibit 622

Amazon Bowed to White House Pressure
To Suppress Books Skeptical of
COVID-19 Vaccines

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EXCLUSIVE: Amazon Bowed to White House Pressure to Suppress Books Skeptical of COVID-19 Vaccines

Tyler O'Neil / @Tyler2ONeil February 05, 2024

FIRST ON THE DAILY SIGNAL—Amazon yielded to pressure from President Joe Biden's White House to suppress books that opposed COVID-19 vaccines, according to documents reviewed by The Daily Signal.

The House Judiciary Committee obtained the emails, which demonstrate the White House's pressure on Amazon to suppress "anti-vax books" and the company's decision to take action against the books.

Amazon employees strategized for a meeting with the White House on March 9, 2021, openly asking whether the administration wanted the retailer to remove books from its catalog.

?EXCLUSIVE: Amazon staff wrote about feeling "pressure from the White House" and wondered whether Biden was "asking us to remove books."? Emails obtained by @JudiciaryGOP show Amazon yielded to White House pressure to censor "anti-vax books." ?<https://t.co/FwSo0Rpd9o> pic.twitter.com/ZEosDhu7EY

— Tyler O'Neil (@Tyler2ONeil) February 5, 2024

"Is the [a]dmin asking us to remove books, or are they more concerned about search results/order (or both)?" one employee wrote.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 9, 2021 11:59 AM
To: [REDACTED]@amazon.com>; [REDACTED]@amazon.com>; [REDACTED]
<[REDACTED]@amazon.com>

AMZN_HJC_0006185

Cc: [REDACTED]@amazon.com>
Subject: Pre-Brief for Meeting w/ the White House

Hi all – here are the notes for our Pre-brief discussion with the White House today.

Thank you.

I. Books Curation and Guidelines 101 [REDACTED]

- **Top Talking Points (to be made affirmatively) [Is the Admin asking us to remove books, or are they more concerned about search results/order (or both)?]**

Andrew Slavitt, then a senior adviser on Biden’s COVID-19 response team, had previously asked, “Who can we talk to about the high levels of propaganda and misinformation and disinformation [on] Amazon?”

On Mar 2, 2021, at 7:33 AM, Slavitt, Andrew M. EOP/WHO <[REDACTED]@who.eop.gov> wrote:

AMZN_HJC_0004542

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Who can we talk to about the high levels of propaganda and misinformation and disinformation of Amazon?

Slavitt became notorious when Elon Musk released the internal files of Twitter in 2022 and 2023 after he purchased the company in October 2022. Slavitt appears to have repeatedly pressured social media companies into suppressing opposition to COVID-19 vaccines.

The House Judiciary Committee subpoenaed Slavitt on Nov. 30.

The committee told Slavitt that it “obtained documents that demonstrate the central role you played in communicating the Biden White House’s censorship efforts to social media

companies, including the White House's demands to censor true information, memes, satire, and other constitutionally protected forms of expression."

The White House instructed Slavitt not to appear, the Washington Examiner reported on Friday. "Everything is on the table," a Judiciary Committee spokesman told The Daily Signal about Slavitt's refusal to abide by the subpoena.

Slavitt had also been involved in discussions with Facebook. That social media company admitted to suppressing "often-true content" because it contradicted the White House's narrative on COVID-19 vaccines.

On March 2, 2021, Slavitt complained to Amazon staff that "If you search for 'vaccines' under books, I see what comes up."

"I haven't looked beyond that, but if that's what's on the surface, it's concerning," he added.

From: "Slavitt, Andrew M. EOP/WHO" <[REDACTED]@who.eop.gov>
Date: Tuesday, March 2, 2021 at 8:48 AM
To: [REDACTED]@amazon.com>
Cc: "Butterworth, Zach Z. EOP/WHO" <[REDACTED]@who.eop.gov>, "Wakana, Benjamin L. EOP/WHO" <[REDACTED]@who.eop.gov>, "Flaherty, Robert EOP/WHO" <[REDACTED]@who.eop.gov>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] [EXTERNAL] Re: Re: Following Up

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If you search for "vaccines" under books, I see what comes up. I haven't looked beyond that but if that's what's on the surface, it's concerning.

Happy to get briefed but want to understand the data when we do. I'm roping in Robert as well.

Amazon decided that the company would not do a "manual intervention" on March 3, noting that a move against books expressing hesitancy on COVID-19 vaccines might undermine the company.

"The team/[public relations] feels very strongly that it is too visible, and will further compound the Harry/Sally narrative (which is getting the Fox News treatment today apparently), and won't fix the problem long-term problem [sic] because of the customer behavior associations," the Amazon staffer wrote.

The "Harry/Sally narrative" refers to Amazon's controversial decision to remove "When Harry Became Sally," Ryan T. Anderson's book on the transgender movement, in February 2021. Amazon said the book violated its content policy. Anderson serves as president of the Ethics

and Public Policy Center and had previously served as a senior fellow at The Heritage Foundation. (The Daily Signal is the news outlet of The Heritage Foundation.)

The Amazon employee had moved to “widen the search light flag for COVID-19 [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] website re-direct so that it comes to the top of the page on more search keys,” however.

The staffer added that the White House will likely not consider any explanation of Amazon’s decisions “satisfactory.”

“The WH will probably ask why we don’t tag the content like FB/Twitter do if we aren’t taking it down,” the staffer wrote.

From: ██████████/O=AMAZON/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=██████████
Sent: 3/2/2021 9:42:52 AM
To: ██████████@amazon.com
Subject: Books Vaccine Misinformation Policy_020821
Attachments: Books Vaccine Misinformation Policy_020821.docx

Ok, a quick update.

1/ We will not be doing a manual intervention today. The team/PR feels very strongly that it is too visible, and will further compound the Harry/Sally narrative (which is getting the Fox News treatment today apparently), and won't fix the problem long-term because of customer behavior associations. If we completely remove customer behavior associations it will break the search.

2/ I've asked the team to widen the search light flag for COVID-19 CDC website re-direct so that it comes to the top of the page on more search keys. They can hopefully implement that today and you should be able to share a screen shot.

3, ██████████ are tag teaming some reactive messaging for your re policy, response, etc. It won't be satisfactory. The WH will probably ask why we don't tag the content like FB/Twitter do if we aren't taking it down. That is an option being explored but that we don't want to disclose to avoid boxing in.

The attached is the still in flux doc to review with ██████████ on March 19. ██████████ gave very direct guidance to the teams to be boring and not do anything that is visible and will draw more attention.

The company strategized on how to respond to questions the White House might ask, such as, “Why don’t you tag books that are not scientifically sound the way FB/Twitter tags content?”

From: ██████████@amazon.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 2, 2021 10:20 AM
To: ██████████@amazon.com>
Subject: RE: [Privileged and confidential] - Vaccine misinformation in bookstore

Thanks ██████████:

Could we work up reactive FAQs to these questions for ██████████ call?

1. Doesn't this line in your policy include the spread of misleading information about vaccination: "We do not allow descriptive content meant to mislead customers"
2. Why don't you tag books that are not scientifically sound the way FB/twitter tags content.

Amazon staff planned to say, “We believe that retailers are different [from] social media communities” and that “as a retailer, we provide our customers with access to a variety of viewpoints, including books that some customers may find objectionable.”

From: [REDACTED]@amazon.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 2, 2021 1:54 PM
To: [REDACTED]@amazon.com>; [REDACTED]@amazon.com>; [REDACTED]@amazon.com>
Subject: RE: [Privileged and confidential] - Vaccine misinformation in bookstore

Thanks [REDACTED], adding [REDACTED] from CRM and [REDACTED].

For Q1- this is not something we’ve had come up in the past and is taking the guidelines out of context. The line cited is referring to misleading metadata, typos, image quality issues, etc., not the actual truthfulness of the theories described within the text of a book. With that in mind, a possible response would be:

- No, the line you’re referring to is addressing publishing errors like typos, formatting issues, image quality etc. You can review examples of examples of content that's typically disappointing to customers in the [Guide to Kindle Content Quality](#) which we also include a link to in our content guidelines.
- Our guidelines address content that is illegal or infringing, generates a poor customer experience, or that we otherwise prohibit, such as pornography. Our guidelines do not specifically address content about vaccines.

For Q2- again this is not something we’ve commented on before, and I think we would avoid making a commitment on this now, as we are still debating possibly doing so in the future. I recommend a response along the lines of:

- We believe that retailers are different than social media communities which means we review the content we make available, where we make it available in our store, and how we address content that customers find disappointing.
- As a retailer, we provide our customers with access to a variety of viewpoints, including books that some customers may find objectionable. All booksellers make decisions about what selection they choose to offer and we do not take selection decisions lightly.

After the March 9 meeting at the White House, Amazon staff strategized how to respond to a negative story that BuzzFeed would publish discussing “COVID-19 related books for sale on Amazon.” Staff noted that they were “feeling pressure from the White House Taskforce” on the issue of books “related to vaccine misinformation.”

From: [REDACTED]@amazon.com>
Date: Friday, 12 March 2021 at 14:47
To: [REDACTED]@amazon.com>
Cc: [REDACTED]@amazon.com>, [REDACTED]@amazon.com>, [REDACTED]@amazon.com>, [REDACTED]@amazon.com>, [REDACTED]@amazon.com>
Subject: Heads up- upcoming negating BuzzFeed story on Covid 19 book

[REDACTED] heads up that we anticipate BuzzFeed will run a negative story looking at Covid-19 related books for sale on Amazon. The story touches on many of the points we’ve seen raised over the last year and I worked closely with CC’s team for the points related to Search, Reviews, and Personalization.

Related to this topic, the Books team has a meeting on 3/19 with [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] to take a closer look at books related to vaccine misinformation and debating additional steps Amazon might want to take to reduce the visibility of these titles. The Books Content Risk Management team is still working on their doc for the 3/19 meeting, but I would be happy to share non-final draft if you’re interested.

[REDACTED] have been our close counterparts on this one, as PP is feeling pressure from the White House Taskforce on this issue as well.

In this discussion, a staffer noted that “we did enable Do Not Promote for anti-vax books whose primary purpose is to persuade readers vaccines are unsafe or ineffective on 3/9, and

will review additional handling options for these books with you, [redacted], and [redacted] on 3/19.”

That March 9 decision to change Amazon’s algorithm to avoid promoting “anti-vax books” appears to have happened after the meeting with White House staff.

From: [redacted]@amazon.com>
Date: Friday, March 12, 2021 at 1:02 PM
To: [redacted]@amazon.com>, [redacted]@amazon.com>
Cc: [redacted]@amazon.com>, [redacted]@amazon.com>, [redacted]

AMZN_HJC_00058C

[redacted]@amazon.com>, [redacted]@amazon.com>, [redacted]@amazon.com>,
[redacted]@amazon.com>, [redacted]@amazon.com>, [redacted]
[redacted]@amazon.com>, [redacted]@amazon.com>
Subject: Media Inquiry: BuzzFeed story on Covid 19 books- 5pm Deadline

[redacted] and [redacted].
Buzzfeed is working on a story about COVID-19 books on Amazon. The reporter focuses on a [research project](#) several universities are participating in that examines how and why conspiracy narratives circulate in different platforms and online spaces during a crisis. We first saw this research project [covered by Politico](#) back in December when Amazon was criticized for selling Coronavirus and QAnon conspiracy theory books.

- I’ve pasted the reporter’s email below, but his primary concerns/ questions focus on:
- How these titles are surfaced and promoted to customers
 - The specific content of the books spreading misinformation
 - Amazon profiting from the sale of this concerning content
 - A belief that Amazon is doing the least to address these concerns (when compared to FB, Twitter, Google, etc.)
 - Why Amazon decided to remove QAnon books
 - What our policy is regard conspiracy & Covid books

We’ve had CRM review all titles mentioned and have worked with the teams who specialize on Search, Reviews, and Personalization tools. One book (out of 9) was found to violate our COVID policy and was removed. As a reminder, we did enable Do Not Promote for anti-vax books whose primary purpose is to persuade readers vaccines are unsafe or ineffective on 3/9, and will review additional handling options for these books with you, [redacted], and [redacted] on 3/19. However, many of the books highlighted by BuzzFeed are about COVID conspiracies not vaccination, and are therefore out of scope for this policy effort. CRM plans to resume work on a broad misinformation policy again once we align on an approach for anti-vax books.

The Daily Signal has reached out to Amazon for comment and will update this article with any response.

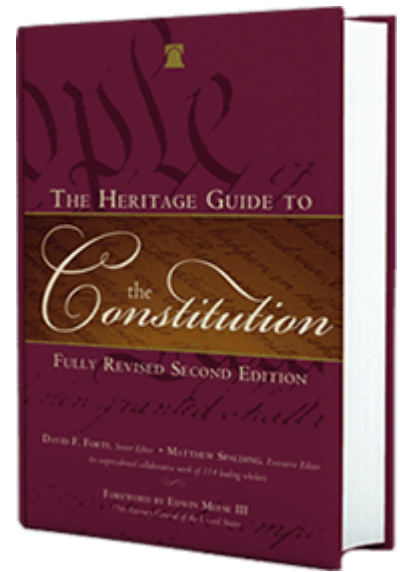
In addition to taking action against Anderson’s book, Amazon had long relied on the leftist smear group the Southern Poverty Law Center to screen potential recipients for its charity donation program, Amazon Smile. The SPLC is notorious for placing conservative and Christian groups on a “hate map” alongside chapters of the Ku Klux Klan. Amazon continued to rely on the SPLC for years, despite criticism, until it closed the program last February.

Have an opinion about this article? To sound off, please email letters@DailySignal.com, and we'll consider publishing your edited remarks in our regular "We Hear You" feature. Remember to include the URL or headline of the article plus your name and town and/or state.

A Note for Our Readers:

This is a critical year in the history of our country. Americans are polarized and divided. Roughly half of the country is clamoring for socialist policies like more government control over health care, increased regulations, and open borders. We must turn to America's founding for the answers.

The Heritage Foundation has compiled input from more than 100 constitutional scholars and legal experts into the country's most thorough and compelling review of the freedoms promised to us within the United States Constitution, now available as a free digital guide called. **Heritage's Guide to the Constitution.**



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Tyler O'Neil is managing editor of The Daily Signal and the author of "Making Hate Pay: The Corruption of the Southern Poverty Law Center."