

# GOOGLE STAFF AND PARTNERS SAY THAT GOOGLE IS LIKE “A CULT”. FBI CULT DIVISION SHOULD BE BROUGHT IN.

## Fired Google engineer James Damore says company is 'like a cult'

- Damore was fired for writing a memo critical of the company's diversity programs.
- In an op-ed for the Wall Street Journal, Damore used tougher language toward his former employer than he did earlier this week.

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Beck Diefenbach | Reuters

Google CEO Sundar Pichai takes the stage during the presentation of new Google hardware in San Francisco, California, U.S. October 4, 2016.

The Google engineer fired for writing a controversial memo about diversity has gone beyond referring to the company as an "echo chamber" that won't stand for dissent and now says it's "almost like a cult."

In [an opinion piece for the Wall Street Journal](#), James Damore gave his explanation for why he was fired, taking a shot at the company's culture and its famous motto.

"For many, including myself," he wrote, "working at Google is a major part of their identity, almost like a cult with its own leaders and saints, all believed to righteously uphold the sacred motto of 'Don't be evil.'"

Damore was fired at the start of this week after 3 1/2 years as an engineer for a post he wrote, laying out his view that men are biologically more well-suited than women for many tech jobs.

He's not apologizing.



#### [Recode Op-Ed: How Google CEO Sundar Pichai decided to fire James Damore](#)

In a video interview with the conservative blogger Stefan Molyneux that was posted to [YouTube](#) earlier this week, Damore called Google a "dream job" with "huge benefits" and said he loved the company.

Damore wrote in the op-ed that he "committed heresy against the Google creed by stating that not all disparities between men and women that we see in the world are the result of discriminatory treatment."

Damore said that when he tried to engage in "reasoned discussion" with his peers on the issue, "mostly I was ignored."

While his cause has lit up the conservative blogosphere, Damore chose to quote famous leftist intellectual Noam Chomsky.

"As Noam Chomsky once observed, 'the smart way to keep people passive and obedient is to strictly limit the spectrum of acceptable opinion, but allow very lively debate within that spectrum,'" Damore wrote.

## WATCH: Google cancels diversity meeting



[Google cancels diversity meeting after safety concerns](#)

# Silicon Valley's Corruption and Cult Life under attack both from within and without

- Google CEO Sundar Pichai cancelled a meeting he'd cancelled a vacation for under pressure from conservative pundits, who published the names of employees online
- Other moves by Silicon Valley power brokers this week point to an industry under attack from within, as well as without
- As tech industry's profile has risen in Washington and across the U.S., divisive culture wars now mix with corporate backbiting

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Asa Mathat for Vox Media

Sundar Pichai

This was not the week off that Silicon Valley had planned.

Google CEO Sundar Pichai now leads a workforce divided by the issue of diversity, according to [an email he sent to employees](#) cancelling an all-hands meeting on the topic.

"The vast majority of you are very supportive of our decision. A smaller percentage of you wish we would do more. And some are worried that you cannot speak out at work freely," Pichai wrote.

Even that spin sounds optimistic in light of [a report that said](#) more than half the company's employees disagreed with his decision to fire engineer James Damore.

Damore wrote a controversial memo that began with criticism of the company's diversity programs but then veered into sexist remarks that prompted Pichai to send him packing after 3 1/2 years of service.

Pichai [cancelled his vacation to call an all-hands meeting to discuss the firing](#), then cancelled the meeting over concerns that some Google employees, who'd been publicly identified by conservative commentators online, would be abused.

In other words, Pichai retreated -- often not an effective long-term strategy to counter aggression. Some on the right are now calling [for "marches" on the company's offices](#).

And he's far from the only technology industry leader facing a fierce attack.

Two other surprising moves by tech power brokers this week point to an industry that is increasingly at war with itself, as well as external forces.



[Kara Swisher: Victimization of white men in Silicon Valley is exhausting](#)

The first were [comments made by venture capitalist Roger McNamee](#), to CNBC and others, that he regretted being among the early investors in both Google and Facebook, which in his view have become addictive threats to society.

Days later, one of the best-known venture firms in the world, which has made tens of billions dollars investing in young tech firms, sued someone who until recently had run of their most-successful startups.

[The lawsuit](#) filed against Uber founder, former CEO and board member Travis Kalanick by Benchmark is arguably unprecedented, as far as pivots go.

Filed by VCs who were among his earliest backers and staunchest defenders through management crises under his leadership, it accuses Kalanick of fraud.

Specifically, it charges that he made fraudulent statements last summer, when he engineered three additional seats be added to the company's board -- one of which he still holds.

"Kalanick intentionally concealed and failed to disclose his gross mismanagement and other misconduct," says the suit.

Ouch.

Given that Benchmark owns 13 percent of Uber and Kalanick 10 percent, respectively -- stakes worth many billions of dollars based on the company's valuation -- it's a suit that could make many attorneys very rich.

All of this antagonism comes as the profile of the technology industry has grown commensurate with size and market value of its marquee companies.

As of midday trading Friday, [Apple](#), [Microsoft](#), [Alphabet](#), Facebook and [Amazon](#) were worth a combined \$2.96 trillion (with a "t".)

That kind of size tends to draw attention.

[Facebook](#) late last year was blamed for no less than handing the election to President Donald Trump, an accusation so large that it's since sent Mark Zuckerberg around the U.S. to find out what really happened.

One thing that has happened, as events this week have shown, is that this largely west coast-based industry, which once prided itself on remaining aloof from the rest of America -- and disengaged from Washington politics -- now finds itself part of a nation often at war with itself.

"America is an experiment," Defense Secretary James Mattis said this week.

Mattis made the comments alongside others predicting a greater role in America's defense for companies like Amazon and Google.

Their leaders may want to be careful what they wish for.

As many in Silicon Valley begin to pack their most outlandish clothes into their futuristic vehicles and head to the bohemian survivalist escape into the Nevada desert known as Burning Man, they should know one thing.

America will be waiting for them when they get back.

## WATCH: Friction between the White House and Silicon Valley



[Axios co-founder Jim Vandehei reacts to the friction between the White House and Silicon Valley](#)



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