

'Political Correctness Is Killing Silicon Valley' Warns Sam Altman as he sees fags destroying Tech

 European Council

by [JAMES DELINGPOLE](#) | 15 Dec 2017 | **1045**

There is now more freedom of speech in Beijing than in the San Francisco Bay area — and this could kill the Silicon Valley tech industry.

While right-wing commentators have been saying this for years, it's extremely unusual to hear it from the lips of a Silicon Valley tech

guru as impeccably liberal as Sam Altman.

Altman, influential and respected CEO of Y Combinator — an accelerator program for Silicon Valley start-ups — has triggered outrage in the tech community for having dared to suggest that political correctness has gotten so bad that it threatens to destroy their business model.

He writes in [his latest blogpost](#):

Earlier this year, I noticed something in China that really surprised me. I realized I felt more comfortable discussing controversial ideas in Beijing than in San Francisco. I didn't feel completely comfortable—this was China, after all—just more comfortable than at home.

That showed me just how bad things have become, and how much things have changed since I first got started here in 2005.

It seems easier to accidentally speak heresies in San Francisco every year. Debating a controversial idea, even if you 95% agree with the consensus side, seems ill-advised.

This will be very bad for startups in the Bay Area.

You can have freedom to think and innovate or you can have political correctness, but you can't have both, he warns:

To get the really good ideas, we need to tolerate really bad and wacky ideas too. In addition to the work Newton is best known for, he also studied alchemy (the British authorities banned work on this because they feared the devaluation of gold) and considered himself to be someone specially chosen by the almighty for the task of decoding Biblical scripture.

You can't tell which seemingly wacky ideas are going to turn out to be right, and nearly all ideas that turn out to be great breakthroughs start out sounding like terrible ideas. So if you want a culture that innovates, you can't have a culture where you allow the concept of heresy—if you allow the concept at all, it tends to spread. When we move from strenuous debate about ideas to casting the people behind the ideas as heretics, we gradually stop debate on all controversial ideas.

In today's climate, some of the most innovative ideas in tech — such as Satoshi Nakamoto's Bitcoin or Elon Musk's SpaceX — would have probably have been killed at birth:

I don't know who Satoshi is, but I'm skeptical that he, she, or they would have been able to come up with the idea for bitcoin immersed in the current culture of San Francisco — it would have seemed too crazy and too dangerous, with too many ways to go wrong. If SpaceX started in San Francisco in 2017, I assume they would have been attacked for focusing on problems of the 1%, or for doing something the government had already decided was too hard. I can picture Galileo looking up at the sky and whispering “*E pur si muove*” here today.

[“*E pur si muove*” — “And yet it moves!” — were purportedly the words of Galileo, after being tortured by the Church into recanting his heretical belief that the Earth moves around the Sun.]

Probably the bravest part of the Altman's article is the moment where he attempts to introduce Silicon Valley snowflakes to an important concept dating back to at least 1644 when the poet John Milton famously explored it in his polemical pamphlet *Areopagitica*: the notion that in order to understand what good ideas are, we must first put ourselves into a position where we are able to discuss — and reject — bad ideas.

This is uncomfortable, but it's possible we have to allow people to say disparaging things about gay people if we want them to be able to say novel things about physics. [1] Of course we can and should say that ideas are mistaken, but we can't just call the person a heretic. We need to debate the actual idea.

As you'll see from some of the Twitter responses below, this prompted a mass hurling of toys out of prams which can only be described as "The Triggering."

But if the tech industry ignores his warning, it will be its loss. As Altman warns, the exodus from the rampantly PC Bay Area has already begun:

More recently, I've seen credible people working on ideas like pharmaceuticals for intelligence augmentation, genetic engineering, and radical life extension leave San Francisco because they found the reaction to their work to be so toxic. "If people live a lot longer it will be disastrous for the environment, so people working on this must be really unethical" was a memorable quote I heard this year.

The response to the piece by tech industry SJWs goes a very long way to proving Sam Altman's point.

Sam Altman  @sama

14 Dec

E Pur Si Muove: blog.samaltman.com/e-pur-si-muove

Tom Coates 




@tomcoates



Absolute bullshit. Conflating 'political correctness' (ie. not being able sexually harass women, not being able to make wild racial slurs, being decent to LGBT

people) with thought policing that doesn't allow people to come up with good tech ideas is both bad logic and dangerous.

10:49 AM - Dec 14, 2017 · San Francisco, CA

 39  58  338 

Sam Altman  @sama

14 Dec

E Pur Si Muove: blog.samaltman.com/e-pur-si-muove

sarah kunst 

@sarahkunst



Ffs this idea that Sf techies cant speak their minds to share their shitty racist/sexist thoughts is so stupid. Name one of your funders who's been run out of town on a rail for their toxic beliefs. You aren't the marginalized group you're the babies who can't take disagreement.

10:55 AM - Dec 14, 2017

 15  44  290 

Sam Altman  @sama

14 Dec

E Pur Si Muove: blog.samaltman.com/e-pur-si-muove

John Bujalski

@johnbujalski



This post is bad and you should feel bad. You cannot just generalize "controversial ideas" - clearly your ideas are politicized in ways that fit in better in the

authoritarian Beijing than the left-leaning SF. Social consequences are not authoritarianism!

11:41 AM - Dec 14, 2017

 5   24 

Sam Altman  @sama

14 Dec

E Pur Si Muove: blog.samaltman.com/e-pur-si-muove

we're so fucked w/o #NetNeutrality 



@fluxintime

Mixing up the difference between a healthy debate and abusive behavior here, you don't need to say gay slurs to make a point about physics COME THE FUCK ON

12:37 PM - Dec 14, 2017

 1  2  43 

we're so fucked w/o #NetNeutrality  @fluxintime

14 Dec

Replying to @sama

Mixing up the difference between a healthy debate and abusive behavior here, you don't need to say gay slurs to make a point about physics COME THE FUCK ON

we're so fucked w/o #NetNeutrality 



@fluxintime

What if the next physics genius is a GAY BLACK WOMAN? What happens when racist, sexist, homophobic slurs make her feel unwelcome from the beginning of her career and she's driven out of the industry? WHY DO SMART BIGOTS GET TO STAY

WHILE SMARTER DIVERSE FOLKS GET DRIVEN OUT?

12:40 PM - Dec 14, 2017

9 17 72



Sam Altman  @sama

14 Dec

E Pur Si Muove: blog.samaltman.com/e-pur-si-muove

Risa Wechsler

@RisaWechsler



As a physicist living in SF: Every single day we lose novel ideas from physics because of bigotry, sexism, and homophobia in our community. You have got to be kidding me with the idea that not being able to express these more is the problem.

12:10 PM - Dec 14, 2017 · Berkeley, CA

8 9 74



and, inevitably, on comes the SJW to point out that what Sam Altman has done makes him quite literally Hitler:

Sam Altman  @sama

14 Dec

E Pur Si Muove: blog.samaltman.com/e-pur-si-muove

Ryan Anderson

@gtryan



"I am not worried that letting some people on the internet say things like "gay people are evil" is going to convince any reasonable people that such a statement is true." -> worth noting this is basically the

Daily Stormer style

guide/strategy: [huffingtonpost.com/entry/daily-st...](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/daily-st...)

11:25 AM - Dec 14, 2017

This Is The Daily Stormer's Playbook

A leaked style guide reveals they're Nazis about grammar (and about Jews).

huffingtonpost.com



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