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Google Autoprediction Exercise

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<u>Google AutoPrediction Exercise</u>

As we have often discussed in class, sometimes the most profound things are those that we work with everyday. One recent example of this is Google's autoprediction function, launched formally in 2011. We all know the mundane examples of this when we type in "shoes" and Google will complete with "Nike," "Adidas," "for golf," etc. But, as Safiya Umoja Noble argues in her upcoming *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism,* this Google product—and it is a product—is a result of an aggregation of billions of queries on a daily basis, and this can often reflect our culture's hidden perceptions, expectations, or curiosities about race, gender, ethnicity, history, poverty, sexuality, and social justice, among others. (We used to be able to perform a really cool cross-cultural version of this in the past, comparing search engines from Nigeria, or Sweden, or Chile, with America, but Google's recent Geo-location default setting makes this impossible, or at least very difficult.)

So For this assignment, come up with Google queries that provide autopredictions that are culturally relevant and analyzable. This may take a while, but just keep playing around with various phrases until you find a string that strikes you as remarkable and compelling. Once you have this, take a screen shot and write 250-500 pages about how this example is persuasive proof of American attitudes towards a particular issue, and further speculate on what how else this data aggregation and sharing (and monetization) of our browsing habits can be regarded as a violation of our privacy or, perhaps, just something you don't care about…?

For example, for the following search string, what might we make of that fact that the first thing that pops up about Irish people is terrorism? What might this say about hidden attitudes of Americans about the Irish?