

How does search engine result quality impact our decisions?

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Source: <https://netivist.org/debate/paris-vs-london>

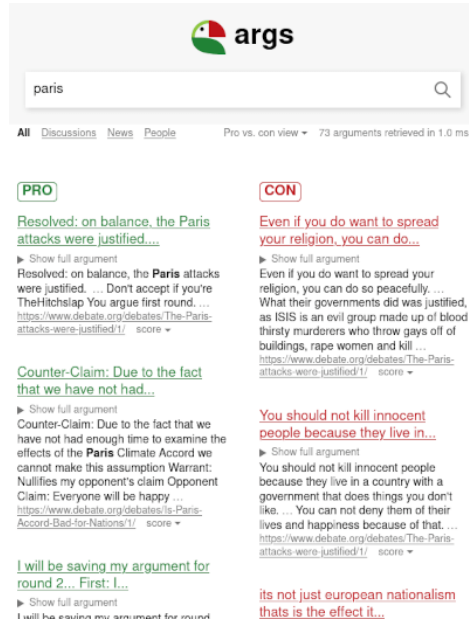
Thinking of  Which city is better, Paris or London?

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⇔ Ideally..

Should use an *argument* search engine.

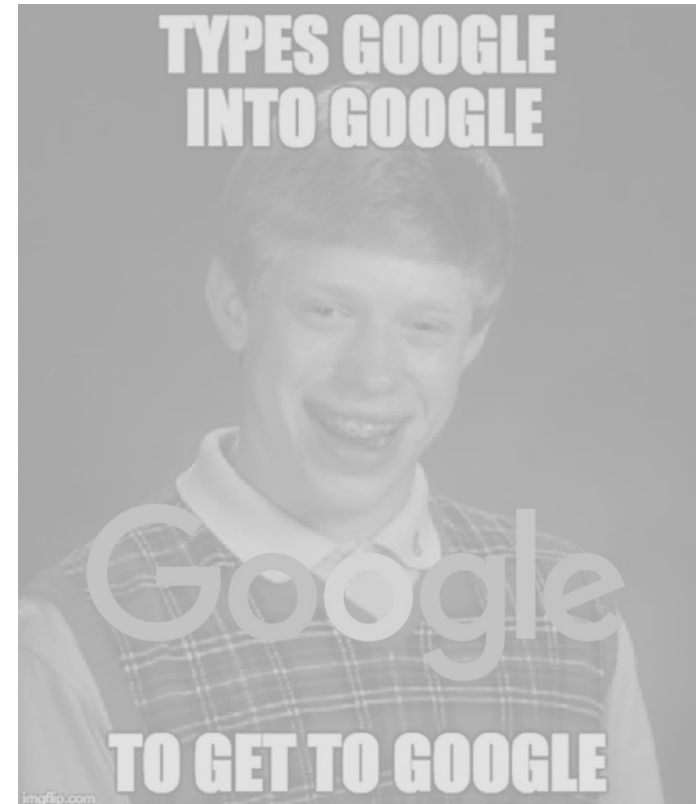
- Consider relevance *and* quality
e.g., args.me or ArgumenText



- Not (yet) fit for *comparative* topics

✍ But..

Nah, just “google” it!

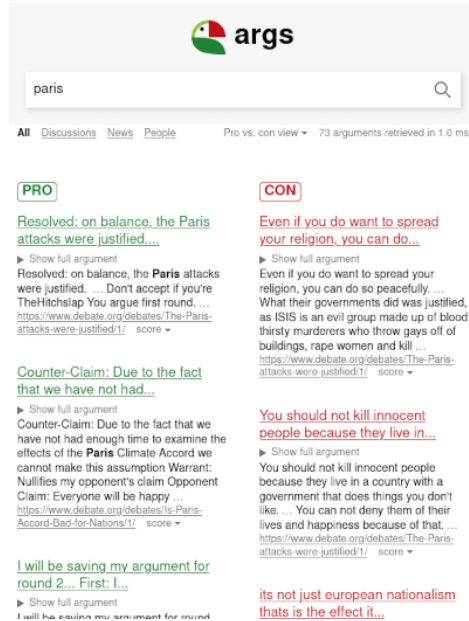


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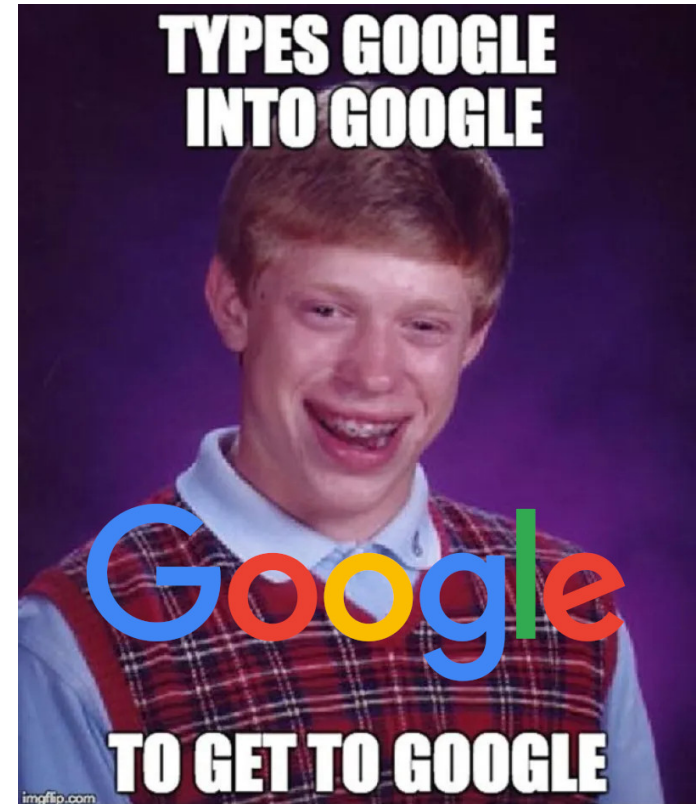
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Our experiments

“Paris vs. London? How would you decide, given Google’s top results?”

1. Select 30 comparative questions (Touché)

2. Assess *quality* of 120 top Google results

📄 Content quality

👤 Usability

🛡️ Credibility

🕒 Up-to-dateness

3. User study on *decision-making*

🔄 Decision change

🎯 Decision confidence (+ conf. change)

❗ Most impactful documents

💬 General decision-making process

4. *Analyze* reponses

❑ 554 study responses

❑ 8 compar. questions

❑ 6 hypotheses

➔ verify with χ^2 tests



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Results



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(users with high initial confidence less likely influenced by low-quality results)
- ❑ Relevance and quality have *similarly* strong impact on decision-making
(impact of stance is weaker)
- ❑ Factual comparisons *more likely* influenced by search than subjective comp.
- 🕒 Future work: how to retrieve higher-quality search results?

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Thank you!