# 1AC R3

### 1AC: FW

#### Moral realism must start by being mind-independent –realism wouldn’t make sense if our moral laws were based on an agent’s cognitive thinking because then moral truths wouldn’t exist outside of the ways we cohere them. Thus, the meta-ethic is substantive moral naturalism.

#### That outweighs on moral disagreement – ethics are regressive in principle since controversy prevents acting on moral laws. Prefer naturalism since there is no philosophical controversy on the correlation between moral facts and natural facts. Pleasure is an intrinsic good.

Moen 16 Ole Martin, PhD, Research Fellow in Philosophy at the University of Oslo. "An Argument for Hedonism." Journal of Value Inquiry 50(2). 2016. https://www.academia.edu/26656561/\_An\_Argument\_for\_Hedonism\_by\_Ole\_Martin\_Moen. PeteZ

Let us start by observing, empirically, that a widely shared judgment about intrinsic value and disvalue is that pleasure is intrinsically valuable and pain is intrinsically disvaluable. On virtually any proposed list of intrinsic values and disvalues (we will look at some of them below), pleasure is included among the intrinsic values and pain among the intrinsic disvalues. This inclusion makes intuitive sense, moreover, for there is something undeniably good about the way pleasure feels and something undeniably bad about the way pain feels, and neither the goodness of pleasure nor the badness of pain seems to be exhausted by the further effects that these experiences might have. “Pleasure” and “pain” are here understood inclusively, as encompassing anything hedonically positive and anything hedonically negative. 2

The special value statuses of pleasure and pain are manifested in how we treat these experiences in our everyday reasoning about values. If you tell me that you are heading for the convenience store, I might ask: “What for?” This is a reasonable question, for when you go to the convenience store you usually do so, not merely for the sake of going to the convenience store, but for the sake of achieving something further that you deem to be valuable. You might answer, for example: “To buy soda.” This answer makes sense, for soda is a nice thing and you can get it at the convenience store. I might further inquire, however: “What is buying the soda good for?” This further question can also be a reasonable one, for it need not be obvious why you want the soda. You might answer: “Well, I want it for the pleasure of drinking it.” If I then proceed by asking “But what is the pleasure of drinking the soda good for?” the discussion is likely to reach an awkward end. The reason is that the pleasure is not good for anything further; it is simply that for which going to the convenience store and buying the soda is good. 3 As Aristotle observes: “We never ask what her~~is~~ end is in being pleased, because we assume that pleasure is choice worthy in itself.”4 Presumably, a similar story can be told in the case of pains, for if someone says “This is painful!” we never respond by asking: “And why is that a problem?” We take for granted that if something is painful, we have a sufficient explanation of why it is bad.

If we are onto something in our everyday reasoning about values, it seems that pleasure and pain are both places where we reach the end of the line in matters of value.

#### Thus, moral naturalism prima facie justifies hedonism through naturalism, empirical facts that are explained and physically verified from science should be used which only a theory of pain and pleasure can provide since there is a psychological grounding for why they are good and bad. Thus, the standard is consistency with hedonic act utilitarianism

#### Extinction outweighs---it’s the upmost moral evil and disavowal of the risk makes it more likely.

Elizabeth Finneron-Burns 17, Teaching Fellow at the University of Warwick and an Affiliated Researcher at the Institute for Futures Studies in Stockholm, “What’s wrong with human extinction?” Canadian Journal of Philosophy, 2017, T&F.

Many, though certainly not all, people might believe that it would be wrong to bring about the end of the human species, and the reasons given for this belief are various. I begin by considering four reasons that could be given against the moral permissibility of human extinction. I will argue that only those reasons that impact the people who exist at the time that the extinction or the knowledge of the upcoming extinction occurs, can explain its wrongness. I use this conclusion to then consider in which cases human extinction would be morally permissible or impermissible, arguing that there is only a small class of cases in which it would not be wrong to cause the extinction of the human race or allow it to happen. 2.1. It would prevent the existence of very many happy people One reason of human extinction might be considered to be wrong lies in the value of human life itself. The thought here might be that it is a good thing for people to exist and enjoy happy lives and extinction would deprive more people of enjoying this good. The ‘good’ in this case could be understood in at least two ways. According to the first, one might believe that you benefit a person by bringing them into existence, or at least, that it is good for that person that they come to exist. The second view might hold that if humans were to go extinct, the utility foregone by the billions (or more) of people who could have lived but will now never get that opportunity, renders allowing human extinction to take place an incidence of wrongdoing. An example of this view can be found in two quotes from an Effective Altruism blog post by Peter Singer, Nick Beckstead and Matt Wage: One very bad thing about human extinction would be that billions of people would likely die painful deaths. But in our view, this is by far not the worst thing about human extinction. The worst thing about human extinction is that there would be no future generations. Since there could be so many generations in our future, the value of all those generations together greatly exceeds the value of the current generation. (Beckstead, Singer, and Wage 2013) The authors are making two claims. The first is that there is value in human life and also something valuable about creating future people which gives us a reason to do so; furthermore, it would be a very bad thing if we did not do so. The second is that, not only would it be a bad thing for there to be no future people, but it would actually be the worst thing about extinction. Since happy human lives have value, and the number of potential people who could ever exist is far greater than the number of people who exist at any one time, even if the extinction were brought about through the painful deaths of currently existing people, the former’s loss would be greater than the latter’s. Both claims are assuming that there is an intrinsic value in the existence of potential human life. The second claim makes the further assumption that the forgone value of the potential lives that could be lived is greater than the disvalue that would be accrued by people existing at the time of the extinction through suffering from painful and/or premature deaths. The best-known author of the post, Peter Singer is a prominent utilitarian, so it is not surprising that he would lament the potential lack of future human lives per se. However, it is not just utilitarians who share this view, even if implicitly. Indeed, other philosophers also seem to imply that they share the intuition that there is just something wrong with causing or failing to prevent the extinction of the human species such that we prevent more ‘people’ from having the ‘opportunity to exist’. Stephen Gardiner (2009) and Martin O’Neill (personal correspondence), both sympathetic to contract theory, for example, also find it intuitive that we should want more generations to have the opportunity to exist, assuming that they have worth-living lives, and I find it plausible to think that many other people (philosophers and non-philosophers alike) probably share this intuition. When we talk about future lives being ‘prevented’, we are saying that a possible person or a set of possible people who could potentially have existed will now never actually come to exist. To say that it is wrong to prevent people from existing could either mean that a possible person could reasonably reject a principle that permitted us not to create them, or that the foregone value of their lives provides a reason for rejecting any principle that permits extinction. To make the first claim we would have to argue that a possible person could reasonably reject any principle that prevented their existence on the grounds that it prevented them in particular from existing. However, this is implausible for two reasons. First, we can only wrong someone who did, does or will actually exist because wronging involves failing to take a person’s interests into account. When considering the permissibility of a principle allowing us not to create Person X, we cannot take X’s interest in being created into account because X will not exist if we follow the principle. By considering the standpoint of a person in our deliberations we consider the burdens they will have to bear as a result of the principle. In this case, there is no one who will bear any burdens since if the principle is followed (that is, if we do not create X), X will not exist to bear any burdens. So, only people who do/will actually exist can bear the brunt of a principle, and therefore occupy a standpoint that is owed justification. Second, existence is not an interest at all and a possible person is not disadvantaged by not being caused to exist. Rather than being an interest, it is a necessary requirement in order to have interests. Rivka Weinberg describes it as ‘neutral’ because causing a person to exist is to create a subject who can have interests; existence is not an interest itself.3 In order to be disadvantaged, there must be some detrimental effect on your interests. However, without existence, a person does not have any interests so they cannot be disadvantaged by being kept out of existence. But, as Weinberg points out, ‘never having interests itself could not be contrary to people’s interests since without interest bearers, there can be no ‘they’ for it to be bad for’ (Weinberg 2008, 13). So, a principle that results in some possible people never becoming actual does not impose any costs on those ‘people’ because nobody is disadvantaged by not coming into existence.4 It therefore seems that it cannot be wrong to fail to bring particular people into existence. This would mean that no one acts wrongly when they fail to create another person. Writ large, it would also not be wrong if everybody decided to exercise their prerogative not to create new people and potentially, by consequence, allow human extinction. One might respond here by saying that although it may be permissible for one person to fail to create a new person, it is not permissible if everyone chooses to do so because human lives have value and allowing human extinction would be to forgo a huge amount of value in the world. This takes us to the second way of understanding the potential wrongness of preventing people from existing — the foregone value of a life provides a reason for rejecting any principle that prevents it. One possible reply to this claim turns on the fact that many philosophers acknowledge that the only, or at least the best, way to think about the value of (individual or groups of) possible people’s lives is in impersonal terms (Parfit 1984; Reiman 2007; McMahan 2009). Jeff McMahan, for example, writes ‘at the time of one’s choice there is no one who exists or will exist independently of that choice for whose sake one could be acting in causing him or her to exist … it seems therefore that any reason to cause or not to cause an individual to exist … is best considered an impersonal rather than individual-affecting reason’ (McMahan 2009, 52). Another reply along similar lines would be to appeal to the value that is lost or at least foregone when we fail to bring into existence a next (or several next) generations of people with worth-living lives. Since ex hypothesi worth-living lives have positive value, it is better to create more such lives and worse to create fewer. Human extinction by definition is the creation of no future lives and would ‘deprive’ billions of ‘people’ of the opportunity to live worth-living lives. This might reduce the amount of value in the world at the time of the extinction (by killing already existing people), but it would also prevent a much vaster amount of value in the future (by failing to create more people). Both replies depend on the impersonal value of human life. However, recall that in contractualism impersonal values are not on their own grounds for reasonably rejecting principles. Scanlon himself says that although we have a strong reason not to destroy existing human lives, this reason ‘does not flow from the thought that it is a good thing for there to be more human life rather than less’ (104). In contractualism, something cannot be wrong unless there is an impact on a person. Thus, neither the impersonal value of creating a particular person nor the impersonal value of human life writ large could on its own provide a reason for rejecting a principle permitting human extinction. It seems therefore that the fact that extinction would deprive future people of the opportunity to live worth-living lives (either by failing to create either particular future people or future people in general) cannot provide us with a reason to consider human extinction to be wrong. Although the lost value of these ‘lives’ itself cannot be the reason explaining the wrongness of extinction, it is possible the knowledge of this loss might create a personal reason for some existing people. I will consider this possibility later on in section (d). But first I move to the second reason human extinction might be wrong per se. 2.2. It would mean the loss of the only known form of intelligent life and all civilization and intellectual progress would be lost A second reason we might think it would be wrong to cause human extinction is the loss that would occur of the only (known) form of rational life and the knowledge and civilization that that form of life has created. One thought here could be that just as some might consider it wrong to destroy an individual human heritage monument like the Sphinx, it would also be wrong if the advances made by humans over the past few millennia were lost or prevented from progressing. A related argument is made by those who feel that there is something special about humans’ capacity for rationality which is valuable in itself. Since humans are the only intelligent life that we know of, it would be a loss, in itself, to the world for that to end. I admit that I struggle to fully appreciate this thought. It seems to me that Henry Sidgwick was correct in thinking that these things are only important insofar as they are important to humans (Sidgwick 1874, I.IX.4).5 If there is no form of intelligent life in the future, who would there be to lament its loss since intelligent life is the only form of life capable of appreciating intelligence? Similarly, if there is no one with the rational capacity to appreciate historic monuments and civil progress, who would there be to be negatively affected or even notice the loss?6 However, even if there is nothing special about human rationality, just as some people try to prevent the extinction of nonhuman animal species, we might think that we ought also to prevent human extinction for the sake of biodiversity. The thought in this, as well as the earlier examples, must be that it would somehow be bad for the world if there were no more humans even though there would be no one for whom it is bad. This may be so but the only way to understand this reason is impersonally. Since we are concerned with wrongness rather than badness, we must ask whether something that impacts no one’s well-being, status or claims can be wrong. As we saw earlier, in the contractualist framework reasons must be personal rather than impersonal in order to provide grounds for reasonable rejection (Scanlon 1998, 218–223). Since the loss of civilization, intelligent life or biodiversity are per se impersonal reasons, there is no standpoint from which these reasons could be used to reasonably reject a principle that permitted extinction. Therefore, causing human extinction on the grounds of the loss of civilization, rational life or biodiversity would not be wrong. 2.3. Existing people would endure physical pain and/or painful and/or premature deaths Thinking about the ways in which human extinction might come about brings to the fore two more reasons it might be wrong. It could, for example, occur if all humans (or at least the critical number needed to be unable to replenish the population, leading to eventual extinction) underwent a sterilization procedure. Or perhaps it could come about due to anthropogenic climate change or a massive asteroid hitting the Earth and wiping out the species in the same way it did the dinosaurs millions of years ago. Each of these scenarios would involve significant physical and/or non-physical harms to existing people and their interests. Physically, people might suffer premature and possibly also painful deaths, for example. It is not hard to imagine examples in which the process of extinction could cause premature death. A nuclear winter that killed everyone or even just every woman under the age of 50 is a clear example of such a case. Obviously, some types of premature death themselves cannot be reasons to reject a principle. Every person dies eventually, sometimes earlier than the standard expected lifespan due to accidents or causes like spontaneously occurring incurable cancers. A cause such as disease is not a moral agent and therefore it cannot be wrong if it unavoidably kills a person prematurely. Scanlon says that the fact that a principle would reduce a person’s well-being gives that person a reason to reject the principle: ‘components of well-being figure prominently as grounds for reasonable rejection’ (Scanlon 1998, 214). However, it is not settled yet whether premature death is a setback to well-being. Some philosophers hold that death is a harm to the person who dies, whilst others argue that it is not.7 I will argue, however, that regardless of who is correct in that debate, being caused to die prematurely can be reason to reject a principle when it fails to show respect to the person as a rational agent. Scanlon says that recognizing others as rational beings with interests involves seeing reason to preserve life and prevent death: ‘appreciating the value of human life is primarily a matter of seeing human lives as something to be respected, where this involves seeing reasons not to destroy them, reasons to protect them, and reasons to want them to go well’ (Scanlon 1998, 104). The ‘respect for life’ in this case is a respect for the person living, not respect for human life in the abstract. This means that we can sometimes fail to protect human life without acting wrongfully if we still respect the person living. Scanlon gives the example of a person who faces a life of unending and extreme pain such that she wishes to end it by committing suicide. Scanlon does not think that the suicidal person shows a lack of respect for her own life by seeking to end it because the person whose life it is has no reason to want it to go on. This is important to note because it emphasizes the fact that the respect for human life is person-affecting. It is not wrong to murder because of the impersonal disvalue of death in general, but because taking someone’s life without their permission shows disrespect to that person. This supports its inclusion as a reason in the contractualist formula, regardless of what side ends up winning the ‘is death a harm?’ debate because even if death turns out not to harm the person who died, ending their life without their consent shows disrespect to that person. A person who could reject a principle permitting another to cause his or her premature death presumably does not wish to die at that time, or in that manner. Thus, if they are killed without their consent, their interests have not been taken into account, and they have a reason to reject the principle that allowed their premature death.8 This is as true in the case of death due to extinction as it is for death due to murder. However, physical pain may also be caused to existing people without killing them, but still resulting in human extinction. Imagine, for example, surgically removing everyone’s reproductive organs in order to prevent the creation of any future people. Another example could be a nuclear bomb that did not kill anyone, but did painfully render them infertile through illness or injury. These would be cases in which physical pain (through surgery or bombs) was inflicted on existing people and the extinction came about as a result of the painful incident rather than through death. Furthermore, one could imagine a situation in which a bomb (for example) killed enough people to cause extinction, but some people remained alive, but in terrible pain from injuries. It seems uncontroversial that the infliction of physical pain could be a reason to reject a principle. Although Scanlon says that an impact on well-being is not the only reason to reject principles, it plays a significant role, and indeed, most principles are likely to be rejected due to a negative impact on a person’s well-being, physical or otherwise. It may be queried here whether it is actually the involuntariness of the pain that is grounds for reasonable rejection rather than the physical pain itself because not all pain that a person suffers is involuntary. One can imagine acts that can cause physical pain that are not rejectable — base jumping or life-saving or improving surgery, for example. On the other hand, pushing someone off a cliff or cutting him with a scalpel against his will are clearly rejectable acts. The difference between the two cases is that in the former, the person having the pain inflicted has consented to that pain or risk of pain. My view is that they cannot be separated in these cases and it is involuntary physical pain that is the grounds for reasonable rejection. Thus, the fact that a principle would allow unwanted physical harm gives a person who would be subjected to that harm a reason to reject the principle. Of course the mere fact that a principle causes involuntary physical harm or premature death is not sufficient to declare that the principle is rejectable — there might be countervailing reasons. In the case of extinction, what countervailing reasons might be offered in favour of the involuntary physical pain/ death-inducing harm? One such reason that might be offered is that humans are a harm to the natural environment and that the world might be a better place if there were no humans in it. It could be that humans might rightfully be considered an all-things-considered hindrance to the world rather than a benefit to it given the fact that we have been largely responsible for the extinction of many species, pollution and, most recently, climate change which have all negatively affected the natural environment in ways we are only just beginning to understand. Thus, the fact that human extinction would improve the natural environment (or at least prevent it from degrading further), is a countervailing reason in favour of extinction to be weighed against the reasons held by humans who would experience physical pain or premature death. However, the good of the environment as described above is by definition not a personal reason. Just like the loss of rational life and civilization, therefore, it cannot be a reason on its own when determining what is wrong and countervail the strong personal reasons to avoid pain/death that is held by the people who would suffer from it.9 Every person existing at the time of the extinction would have a reason to reject that principle on the grounds of the physical pain they are being forced to endure against their will that could not be countervailed by impersonal considerations such as the negative impact humans may have on the earth. Therefore, a principle that permitted extinction to be accomplished in a way that caused involuntary physical pain or premature death could quite clearly be rejectable by existing people with no relevant countervailing reasons. This means that human extinction that came about in this way would be wrong. There are of course also additional reasons they could reject a similar principle which I now turn to address in the next section. 2.4. Existing people could endure non-physical harms I said earlier than the fact in itself that there would not be any future people is an impersonal reason and can therefore not be a reason to reject a principle permitting extinction. However, this impersonal reason could give rise to a personal reason that is admissible. So, the final important reason people might think that human extinction would be wrong is that there could be various deleterious psychological effects that would be endured by existing people having the knowledge that there would be no future generations. There are two main sources of this trauma, both arising from the knowledge that there will be no more people. The first relates to individual people and the undesired negative effect on well-being that would be experienced by those who would have wanted to have children. Whilst this is by no means universal, it is fair to say that a good proportion of people feel a strong pull towards reproduction and having their lineage continue in some way. Samuel Scheffler describes the pull towards reproduction as a ‘desire for a personalized relationship with the future’ (Scheffler 2012, 31). Reproducing is a widely held desire and the joys of parenthood are ones that many people wish to experience. For these people knowing that they would not have descendants (or that their descendants will endure painful and/or premature deaths) could create a sense of despair and pointlessness of life. Furthermore, the inability to reproduce and have your own children because of a principle/policy that prevents you (either through bans or physical interventions) would be a significant infringement of what we consider to be a basic right to control what happens to your body. For these reasons, knowing that you will have no descendants could cause significant psychological traumas or harms even if there were no associated physical harm. The second is a more general, higher level sense of hopelessness or despair that there will be no more humans and that your projects will end with you. Even those who did not feel a strong desire to procreate themselves might feel a sense of hopelessness that any projects or goals they have for the future would not be fulfilled. Many of the projects and goals we work towards during our lifetime are also at least partly future-oriented. Why bother continuing the search for a cure for cancer if either it will not be found within humans’ lifetime, and/or there will be no future people to benefit from it once it is found? Similar projects and goals that might lose their meaning when confronted with extinction include politics, artistic pursuits and even the type of philosophical work with which this paper is concerned. Even more extreme, through the words of the character Theo Faron, P.D. James says in his novel The Children of Men that ‘without the hope of posterity for our race if not for ourselves, without the assurance that we being dead yet live, all pleasures of the mind and senses sometimes seem to me no more than pathetic and crumbling defences shored up against our ruins’ (James 2006, 9). Even if James’ claim is a bit hyperbolic and all pleasures would not actually be lost, I agree with Scheffler in finding it not implausible that the knowledge that extinction was coming and that there would be no more people would have at least a general depressive effect on people’s motivation and confidence in the value of and joy in their activities (Scheffler 2012, 43). Both sources of psychological harm are personal reasons to reject a principle that permitted human extinction. Existing people could therefore reasonably reject the principle for either of these reasons. Psychological pain and the inability to pursue your personal projects, goals, and aims, are all acceptable reasons for rejecting principles in the contractualist framework. So too are infringements of rights and entitlements that we accept as important for people’s lives. These psychological reasons, then, are also valid reasons to reject principles that permitted or required human extinction.

#### Value to life is subjective---life is a prerequisite

Lisa Schwartz 02, Chair at the Centre for Health Economics and Policy Analysis, 2002, “Medical Ethic: A Case Based Approach,” Chapter 6, www.fleshandbones.com/readingroom/pdf/399.pdf

The second assertion made by supporters of the quality of life as a criterion for decisionmaking is closely related to the first, but with an added dimension. This assertion suggests that the determination of the value of the quality of a given life is a subjective determination to be made by the person experiencing that life. The important addition here is that the decision is a personal one that, ideally, ought not to be made externally by another person but internally by the individual involved. Katherine Lewis made this decision for herself based on a comparison between two stages of her life. So did James Brady. Without this element, decisions based on quality of life criteria lack salient information and the patients concerned cannot give informed consent. Patients must be given the opportunity to decide for themselves whether they think their lives are worth living or not. To ignore or overlook patients’ judgement in this matter is to violate their autonomy and their freedom to decide for themselves on the basis of relevant information about their future, and comparative consideration of their past. As the deontological position puts it so well, to do so is to violate the imperative that we must treat persons as rational and as ends in themselves.

### 1AC: Plan

#### I Affirm the Whole Resolution – Resolved: In a democracy, a free press ought to prioritize objectivity over advocacy.

#### Objective Journalism lies in Objectivity of its methodology.

Jones 9 Alex Jones 9-15-2009 "An Argument Why Journalists Should Not Abandon Objectivity" <https://niemanreports.org/articles/an-argument-why-journalists-should-not-abandon-objectivity/> (Alex S. Jones, a 1982 Nieman Fellow, is director of the Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy at Harvard University.)//Elmer

In their book “The Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect,” Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, describe what they call “the lost meaning of objectivity.”… As [they] point out, “In the original concept, in other words, the method is objective, not the journalist.” It was because journalists inevitably arrived with bias that they needed objectivity as a discipline to test that bias against the evidence so as to produce journalism that would be closer to truth. They argue that the quickening of objectivity as the American journalistic standard was born of a desire to have a more scientific way of approaching news. The nation’s faith in science was surging, and the scientific method seemed suited to journalism. Scientists begin their research with assumptions. They have expectations of what will happen, but they don’t know what will happen. They have, in other words, their own opinions and beliefs—their point of view or even bias—about what is likely the truth, and they do their research to test those assumptions. Their objective, scientific inquiry is not one that is without bias, but one in which bias has to stand up to evidence and results. This is the sensible and realistic approach to objectivity that might be termed genuine objectivity. It begins with the assumption that journalists have bias, and that their bias has to be tested and challenged by gathering facts and information that will either support it or knock it down. Often, there is information that does both, and that ambiguity needs to be reported with the same dispassion with which a scientist would report variations in findings that were inconclusive. If the evidence is inconclusive, then that is—by scientific standards—the truth. But journalistic objectivity is an effort to discern a practical truth, not an abstract, perfect truth. Reporters seeking genuine objectivity search out the best truth possible from the evidence that the reporter, in good faith, can find. To discredit objectivity because it is impossible to arrive at perfect truth is akin to dismissing trial by jury because it isn’t perfect in its judgments.

#### Even if objectivity is not perfectly achievable, striving for it is uniquely valuable – this card is fantastic and answers all of their turns.

White 13 Aidan White 1-15-2013 "Journalism’s Era of Change, but Objectivity Still Plays a Critical Role" <https://web.archive.org/web/20130129094105/http://www.ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/2013/journalism%E2%80%99s-era-of-change-but-objectivity-still-plays-a-critical-role/> (Founder of the Ethical Journalism Network)//Elmer

That everyone understands objectivity differently makes it a dangerously fuzzy concept, easy road kill in the rush to new journalistic techniques. We dismiss it at our peril. At heart, objective journalism sets out to establish the facts about a situation, report fairly the range of opinion around it and take a first cut at what arguments are the most reasonable. To keep the presentation rigorous, journalists should have professional reporting and editing skills (be they staff or independent journalists, paid or unpaid). To show their commitment to balance, journalists should keep their personal opinions to themselves. It’s a simple enough concept, distillable to “unbiased journalism,” “trusted reporting” or in the view of some, simply “journalism.” Add to that “customer service.” The news consumer needs faith that there’s somewhere to go quickly for the basic facts that business, politics and personal safety depend on. Is Gadhafi dead? Is the oil well still leaking? How close to the Fukushima reactor can I safely go? It seems a no-brainer that there’s a value to established, reliable voices on the things that matter most — experienced in sorting out contradictions, wary of sloppiness and hoaxes and not pushing a personal objective. Yet attach the word “objective” to the concept, and confusion ensues. To some, objectivity somehow evokes the “legacy” news industry, destined to die with it (a demise as yet unobserved, if accepted by many as an article of faith). These critics see objectivity as a reactive, stenographic form of journalism, so wedded to “balance” that it cannot distinguish between legitimate and lunatic opinion, between scientific truth and trash. Others see objectivity as the calling card of the elite, rooted in a belief that “professionals” can so completely cover a complex story that journalists’ voices are all people need to hear. Still others believe objectivity has never existed at all because perfect objectivity is impossible. Much like a perfect vacuum or a perfect circle, it can be imagined but never really created, so its loss is without cost. Our view is that objectivity, far from a device of old media or the elite, is the key to deeply democratic news media now and in the future. It can reliably serve both traditional journalism and new models, including the most open-sourced processes for gathering and analyzing news. Perfect objectivity is indeed hard to imagine. (We mean it in the sense of presenting all sides of an issue, not of determining a single, objective truth.) The very act of deciding what angles of a story to cover is inherently subjective, notes Gilles Gauthier of Laval University. Where and how to point the camera comes from personal instinct and feelings, not mathematical formulas. Getting “both sides of the story” can leave journalists satisfied they’ve done a good day’s work when even more valid third and fourth sides remain unexplored. Yet we live with a system of courts that is not perfectly just and we accept rides in cars from people who are not perfect drivers. We play by the percentages in everything. And the percentages favoring objective journalism have actually increased in the past couple of decades. For those who believe objective reporting is a worthy concept but a problem in practice, crowdsourcing and social networks now make it more practical than ever. Today’s objective journalism does not have to consist solely of words and images from journalists. Crowdsourcing of information and policy alternatives, through the news media’s own platforms or social networks, can be integral parts of an objective journalistic process. Of course, the crowd must reflect a variety of points of view; crowdsourcing among members of a mob will bring a plethora of voices but not of viewpoints. There is no contradiction between professionals doing their own reporting while also curating the voices of others. This has been the story of the civil war in Syria. International news organizations have sent their own correspondents into Syria and broken their own stories. But the same organizations have crowd sourced a huge amount of day-to-day battlefront coverage, using social networks and direct contacts to obtain details, photos and even live video of street battles. The authentic voice of Syrian individuals reporting from the scene has vastly enriched the picture without endangering the objectivity of the product; the organizations involved have long experience in identifying skilled reporters and detecting fake and outdated footage. Is such crowd sourced reporting ultimately a threat to professional journalists? We think not, because objectivity isn’t so much about controlling the information available as making sure it’s all there. Whether a conflict is on a distant battlefield or in a state legislature, there is no contradiction between the voices of those at the scene and of journalists, detached from the event but close to news consumers, putting the pieces into a whole that will command their audience’s attention. And, of course, sometimes journalists can be on the scene and present the big picture at the same time; examples range from smart foreign correspondents to Homicide Watch D.C. Then there’s a whole additional world of reader reactions. New, professional media like the Huffington Post have invested significant resources in that feedback. The result is an even more objective account of events that now takes in people at the scene, detached and professional observers and the opinions of the readership at large. On breaking stories, journalists carry out another, supremely important role: summarizing the news and the debate at frequent intervals – sometimes minute by minute – for those who cannot follow every turn of the story. Those who see journalists as elite of “gatekeepers” under such circumstances have the picture precisely backward. It is a far more elite perspective to think that the majority of the world’s population has the time or inclination to follow in detail every story that interests them. It is an elite concept that in a future world without “objective journalism,” a person who hears on the way to work that Hamas is firing rockets at Israel will arrive at work, head immediately to his personal, well-curated Twitter feed of conflicting voices and video from Israel and Gaza and distill his own, exquisitely balanced version of events. Most people who arrive at work need to start work. They value fast, concise and reliable news when their time permits. Objective media provide a profoundly democratic source of information, offering the vast majority of the population with limited time and attention an account of the world in a fashion that news consumers have long found quick and reliable. This is a competitive advantage of “legacy” media that helps explains its continued existence at a time of so many challenges. It is no surprise then that, as the Project for Excellence in Journalism has found, so many social media posts links to traditional objective media. Or that breaking news on Twitter tends to be massively retweeted only once it’s confirmed by a traditional news organization; American Journalism Review found the case of Whitney Houston’s death a good example. Social network users, once they learn of a breaking story, massively seek out traditional sources for more information and imagery. What about the claim that covering both sides of the story leads objective journalists to equate truth and nonsense? Clay Shirky of New York University says, “Judgement about legitimate consensus is becoming a critical journalistic skill, one that traditional training and mores don’t prepare most practitioners for.” Craig Newmark fears that a “pretense of objectivity” leads journalists to treat fringe beliefs as significantly as facts in an effort to show the story is reporting all points of view. As Aidan White of the Ethical Journalism Network puts it, “To be ethical journalists, particularly those covering politics, must stop quoting two sides of a story when one side is lying. At the very least they must tell their audience when that side is lying.” In fact, modern newsrooms have been pushing back at this limited view of objectivity for some time. Legions of aggressive, objective journalists do not share Arthur Brisbane’s puzzlement over whether it is possible “to be objective and fair when the reporter is choosing to correct one fact over another.” Objective newsrooms today deal regularly and quite successfully with disputes over facts. Since the vast majority of the world’s scientists believe the globe is heating up, few news stories on the subject devote substantial space to those who deny it. Fact-checking politicians’ statements originated with traditional, objective media, and flourished there long before the current wave of new-media sites doing the same thing on an expanded basis. If a journalist has thoroughly studied a subject and understands it well, the tenets of objectivity do not require a “view from nowhere” that ignores the journalist’s knowledge. On social networks, he can rebut false information with facts. This is the kind of objectivity that Jay Rosen hopefully can be a fan of, and the functioning model for many journalists today. Objectivity also doesn’t mean rejection of human emotion. The slaying of children by a gunman at a school can be fairly referred to as horrific; there is no need for a paragraph saying “on the other hand.” A photographer covering a war or disaster can put his camera aside when he has a chance to save a life. A journalist can be transparent about his biography and experiences, so long as he doesn’t turn them into a political agenda. There is nothing robotic about an objective journalist; reasonable judgments and human ethics and experience need not be suppressed. The attraction of objective journalism is such that Wikipedia, increasingly a destination for breaking news coverage, has adopted a policy of presenting an objective, “neutral point of view.” When a big story happens, Wikipedia readers post thousands of updates. Volunteer editors quickly join the effort, organizing the material. Yet as Brian Keegan discovered, the editors change from one breaking news story to another and few have substantial editing experience. According to Keegan, who conducted research at Northwestern University’s Medill School of Communications: “In all likelihood, readers of these breaking news articles are mostly consuming the work of editors who have never previously worked on this kind of event. In other words, some of the earliest and most widely read information about breaking news events is written by people with fewer journalistic qualifications than Medill freshmen.” Here is a situation where a pillar of new media values objectivity, but professional standards or qualifications could make that goal even more attainable. It should also be noted that the heaviest lifting in Wikipedia’s “coverage” of breaking news is often not being done by its contributors or editors. It is being done by the traditional media, from which much of the information being curated is taken. If Wikipedia’s contributors couldn’t count on these reports being objective to begin with, Wikipedia would have difficulty living up to its “neutral point of view.” Wikipedia’s policy aside, it’s surprising that amid the success of many new media that value objectivity, few generally accepted codes of conduct have emerged. Despite some laudable attempts, the best examples of new journalism have failed to unite around consistent ethics codes to the degree that legacy media have. Work now under way suggests a desire for progress in this direction. But sometimes such efforts are undertaken in the same breath as pronouncing traditional journalism dead or dying, complicating the import of some of its most useful principles. The value objective journalists add goes well beyond getting individual stories right. It goes to the entire texture of information in a society. In some social systems, the news media serve the state; Vladimir Lenin called the press a collective agitator, propagandist and organizer for the Soviet system. Elsewhere, media exist to serve the politics of individual owners, or to foment sensation for the sake of profit. Happily, civilized society has also allowed the rise of voices of reason that can assess a situation from everyone’s viewpoint and lead rational discussion. If the discussion leaders focus on the merits of all sides instead of proclaiming an agenda of their own, the discussion is more successful. This is the core value of objectivity: the creation of a strong, balanced public dialogue that cannot be overwhelmed by government fiat, political slant, specious information, simplistic argument and hate. In Nigeria, Mallam Nasir El-Rufai asks, “What happens when every sense of objectivity is blurred by the murky ink of hatchet writers or clouded by shades of religious and ethnic prisms? What happens when voices without conscience, and loath to accept facts dominate our media and discourse?” The value of objectivity is not simply a debate to hold in seminars and journalism schools. It is a fundamental value of public discourse and collaboration. It will endure precisely as long as people speak out in its defence.

#### Do not conflate Objectivity with Neutrality – the truth doesn’t always lie in the Center.

Gutman 12 David Gutman 10-25-2012 "Objectivity Does Not Mean Neutrality: The Danger of False Equivalency in the Media" <https://www.commondreams.org/views/2012/10/25/objectivity-does-not-mean-neutrality-danger-false-equivalency-media> (Ph.D. Assistant Professor. IMSE.)//Elmer

And yet, too often, they do not. The media, too often, reports what officials say and how they say it, and doesn’t delve into the substance and accuracy of the statements. The truth is objective, a presentation of both sides of an argument is not necessarily objective. When a topic is noisily debated, journalists go to pains to present, with equal space and import, both sides of the topic. Usually this is a good thing. The public should know the arguments from all sides of a contentious issue. But sometimes, and this may sound overly simplistic, but it remains true, there is only one credible side to a debate. The earth is getting warmer, and man-made carbon emissions are causing it. Humans evolved from apes. You cannot cut taxes by 20 percent and close enough loopholes to be revenue neutral without raising taxes on the middle class. Study after reputable study has shown these statements to be true. (Admittedly there have been fewer studies of the last claim because it is so much newer, but every reputable study has found the above statement accurate). Yet we still see news stories in which “experts” from both sides of the argument are called upon and given equal standing to make their case. Paul Krugman, the Nobel-winning economist and unabashedly liberal New York Times op-ed columnist, wrote about this phenomenon in 2000. “If a presidential candidate were to declare that the earth is flat, you would be sure to see a news analysis under the headline ‘Shape of the Planet: Both Sides Have a Point.’ After all, the earth isn't perfectly spherical. That analysis is equally applicable today. The mainstream media (with the exception of nakedly partisan outfits like Fox News and MSNBC) are so desperate to appear unbiased that they go out of their way to point out inconsistencies on both sides of the political spectrum even when it may not be appropriate. This false equivalency, the effort of the news media to remain at the political center of an argument, no matter the merits or truthfulness of either side of the argument, is sometimes labeled as a bias towards objectivity. This is a false and misleading turn of phrase. Journalists should always exhibit a bias towards objectivity. Being objective -- dealing with facts or conditions as perceived without distortion by personal feelings -- is always the goal. The trouble comes when objectivity is confused with neutrality. It is fine to be partial, indeed it is imperative if, after a careful examination of the facts, one concludes that the truth lies on one side of the argument. This is being objective. Examining the facts on their merits and presenting the truth is a journalist’s job. Granted, on many issues there is legitimate debate and disagreement, but this is not always the case, and the media should not treat every issue as if both sides have equally valid points. The truth does not always lie in the center. In fact, it rarely does. A journalist’s job is to report the truth, not to neutrally report what both sides say and stake out a safe position in the middle.

#### Prefer our approach that prioritizes Objectivity but still maintains some level of Advocacy – our parallel but separate approach is better than combination.

Ingram 18 Matthew Ingram 6-14-2018 "Advocates are becoming journalists. Is that a good thing?" <https://www.cjr.org/analysis/advocates-journalism.php> (CJR’s chief digital writer. Previously, he was a senior writer with Fortune magazine. He has written about the intersection between media and technology since the earliest days of the commercial internet. His writing has been published in the Washington Post and the Financial Times as well as by Reuters and Bloomberg.)//Elmer

IT WAS AN IMPRESSIVE DISPLAY OF JOURNALISM: An in-depth look at Amazon’s marketing of a controversial facial recognition software product to US law enforcement. It involved record searches in multiple jurisdictions, along with the collection of other evidence about the campaign and its impact. But this tour-de-force didn’t come from a media organization like The New York Times or The Washington Post—it came from the American Civil Liberties Union. In many ways, the story was a perfect fit for an organization like the ACLU: Matt Cagle, a lawyer for the ACLU in Northern California, noticed online marketing materials posted by Amazon for its software, which listed several law-enforcement organizations as users. So Cagle and his team started a records search, got two other ACLU bureaus involved, and the group’s national editorial team pulled the project together. In all, Cagle says, the project involved more than two dozen lawyers and advocates, as well as legal advisers at the national level, editors, and the ACLU’s communications team, and it took several months to come to fruition—the kind of resources many media companies would find hard to marshall for a single story. As the media landscape continues to fragment and many outlets struggle to afford more ambitious reporting projects, non-governmental organizations and advocacy groups like the ACLU and Human Rights Watch are increasingly taking on the role of reporter—breaking stories and in some cases even helping to change policy. But even those leading the new NGO-as-muckraker efforts acknowledge that they’re no replacement for traditional news organizations. “We can definitely bring some skills to bear on this kind of story, but that’s by no means a substitute for the amazing work that journalists do around the country right now,” says Cagle. “But I think if we can help supplement that work and also do our part to educate the public and advocate for civil liberties, then we are doing something good.” There’s no question that work like that done by Human Rights Watch, Greenpeace, and Amnesty International around issues like immigration, the environment, and totalitarianism can help fill gaps in traditional media coverage—especially in foreign countries, where few media companies have the resources to invest in on-the-ground reporting. But these groups are not fundamentally journalistic in nature. Although they may look and behave like modern media organizations, they are advocacy groups, and have an explicit agenda; they’re looking for impact. That agenda may coincide with the news, and they may use traditional journalistic techniques to advance it, but in most cases the larger goal of this work is in service of some kind of policy change or other action, and not information or the public record per se. “Can some of the losses in international journalism be offset by advocacy groups, to the extent that they can provide coverage from areas not getting attention? Clearly the answer is yes,” says Matthew Powers, a professor of communications at the University of Washington and author of NGOs as Newsmakers: The Changing Landscape of International News. “But at the same time it’s also easy to imagine a world where this causes problems, where journalism could become a platform for advocacy purposes and for fundraising.” The line between advocacy groups and media organizations has been blurring for some time. As the internet enabled the democratization of information production and distribution, and social platforms have given everyone the ability to reach an audience, smart NGOs long ago realized they could use these tools to spread their own message, instead of having to rely on partnerships with traditional media. Journalism professor Dan Gillmor wrote a decade ago about the work the ACLU was doing around Guantanamo Bay, and the reporting Human Rights Watch did on issues such as domestic workers in Saudi Arabia. A number of academics have also written about the increasing overlap between NGOs and journalism. “As traditional journalism companies are firing reporters and editors right and left, the almost-journalist organizations have both the deep pockets and staffing to fill in some of the gaps,” Gillmor wrote. He also encouraged NGOs to concentrate on applying journalistic principles such as fact-checking and transparency. Powers says that most NGOs didn’t get into reporting because they were interested in doing journalism or becoming media companies—they did it in order to improve their standing with governments and other policy groups so their lobbying would be taken seriously. “They started doing it primarily so they could look more legitimate to policy makers,” says Powers. Most well-established advocacy organizations still work with media partners to get their message out, as the ACLU did with its face-recognition story: The group reached out to several writers at prominent outlets such as The New York Times and gave them an embargoed version of the research; stories were published by them and the ACLU simultaneously. But many groups have also become standalone media outlets in their own right, with websites and social-media accounts that are widely followed. The ACLU’s newsroom of editors and reporters produce between 14 and 20 stories a week. The group’s editorial director, Terry Tang—who worked as a senior editor at the Times for two decades before joining the ACLU last year—tells CJR she is hiring journalists and looking to expand the ACLU newsroom into new areas, including a podcast and more video production. “We have the legal expertise and policy expertise for a lot of these kinds of stories—people who have been plowing these fields for a long time and really know those issues,” Tang says. “So when something happens it’s not like they’re just reporting the news, they already understand the issues and so they are able to produce analysis as well. It’s not terribly different than having a very seasoned beat reporter.” Others have also been expanding in similar ways: Greenpeace, which has always been media savvy when it comes to getting coverage of its activities, launched an ambitious effort to do its own reporting in 2015, hiring experienced editors and reporters from the Times and the BBC to add to its existing in-house editorial operation, which is called Unearthed (formerly known as Energy Desk). At the ACLU, Tang says the organization is thinking about how to balance the need for longterm research and coverage with the demand to be on top of the news with something relevant to say, so that it will get picked up by social platforms. In other words, she’s working her way through exactly the same kinds of considerations faced by traditional media outlets. Does the desire to promote a specific viewpoint on an issue or news story ever get in the way of producing this kind of journalistic content? Tang says it doesn’t, and that the editorial group makes a point of sticking to a very traditional, fact-based approach. In the end, she says, it’s a matter of trust—if the organization were to bend the rules, eventually people would stop trusting what it was saying. “I came to work at Human Rights Watch because I was interested in figuring out what it looked like to have a different financial model and a different trust model for achieving the good that accountability journalism achieves,” says communications director Nic Dawes, the former editor-in-chief of South Africa’s Mail & Guardian, who joined HRW in 2016. “The whole model relies on the idea that our information is trustworthy, so we put a huge premium on accuracy. I would say in many ways it exceeds what’s done in most journalism organizations.” Some advocacy groups have blurred traditional journalistic lines. For example, Powers says, Greenpeace’s Unearthed site did a report on climate change in 2015 and used journalists who pretended to be executives from the oil and gas industry and found several academics who were willing to be paid for their pro-industry opinions without saying where the money came from. While the organization argued that the outcome was worth it, the group did face some criticism that the tactic amounted to entrapment. “In fairness to Greenpeace, their argument was they couldn’t have gotten the story any other way and that it was important to do it,” Powers says. “But there’s a definite risk that the advocacy element will outweigh the journalistic aspect. I think in the long run that could actually work to their detriment when it comes to trust.” Damian Kahya, a former BBC reporter who runs Greenpeace’s investigative unit, says the team are all professionally trained journalists and the agency only uses fake identities “where we have a suspicion of wrongdoing, clear public interest, and where we believe the information cannot reasonably be obtained by other means.” Kahya added that Greenpeace’s team is separate from the environmental advocacy part of the organization, and that it adheres to “the highest editing and reporting standards.” Other incursions into journalism are less controversial, but still raise questions. In 2007, an intergovernmental body known as UNAIDS acknowledged that the organization had systematically overstated the spread of AIDS. Critics said the organization misstated the numbers in an attempt to create a sense of urgency around the issue to help with fundraising. And in 2015, a number of NGOs and advocacy groups reported that as many as 75 percent of the women in Liberia had been raped during the civil war in that country, but independent surveys put the number closer to between 10 percent and 20 percent. This kind of behavior can come into play not because NGOs are trying to deliberately mislead people, Powers says, but because they need to raise awareness of an issue for practical reasons—it shows that they are doing their jobs, that the organization is necessary, and it helps with fundraising. If the problem of civil rights or AIDS or sex trafficking isn’t a big one, why donate to a group dedicated to addressing it? Of course, traditional media organizations often get accused of distorting the news in similar ways—of selectively including certain facts or quoting certain individuals—because those facts or views fit a certain worldview. In some cases it’s done in order to generate traffic and advertising revenue, but there can also be ideological elements at work (Fox News, or at least the version of it that exists in primetime, springs to mind). But the lines separating one kind of journalism from another are getting increasingly blurry. Some media organizations have become so dependent on advocacy groups for their reporting and coverage that they run their videos or other content without saying where it came from—in a new book about NGOs and the news, Kate Wright from Edinburgh University looked at a week of news about Africa from UK sources, and found nearly half of those that used material produced by NGOs didn’t identify the source. That’s not good for transparency, and it’s not good for readers who think they are getting an independent view. There’s also a risk that journalistic organizations that become intertwined with NGOs or advocacy groups won’t devote the same kind of scrutiny to those groups as they would otherwise. In the end, the world of journalism and the world as a whole are probably better off now that there are activist organizations that are trying to use the tools of modern media to tell stories. The more sources of information there are, especially from remote or developing nations, the better. In some ways, that’s one of the biggest benefits of a democratized media environment—anyone anywhere can become a news source, and that’s fundamentally a good thing, even if some take advantage of it for their own purposes.

### 1AC: Democracy

#### The advantage is democracy.

#### News has hit a Commercialization Crisis – Corporate interests directly undermine Objective and Truthful reporting.

Omenugha et Al 8, Kate Azuka, and Majority Oji. "News commercialization, ethics and objectivity in journalism practice in Nigeria: strange bedfellows?." Revista Estudos em Comunicação-Communication Studies (2008). (Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Nigeria)//Elmer

What is news commercialization? UNESCO (1980:152) alluded to the commercialization of news when it wrote: The news has become commercial product... important developments in the countryside are pushed aside by unimportant, even trivial news items, concerning urban events and the activities of personalities. Though nearly three decades old, UNESCO's assertion certainly has currency in Nigerian media scene as news items have to be paid for by those who want to be heard. News is no longer about reporting timely occurrences or events, it is now about packaged broadcast or reports sponsored or paid for by interested parties. By this practice individuals, communities, private and public organizations, local governments, state governments and ministries, gain access to the mass media during news time for a prescribed fee. The message they wish to put across is then couched in the formal features of news and passed on to the unsuspecting public as such. Willie Nnorom (1994 cited in Ekwo 1996:63) defined news commercialization as "a phenomenon whereby the electronic media report as news or news analysis a commercial message by an unidentified or unidentifiable sponsor, giving the audience the impression that news is fair, objective and socially responsible". We must say that though this definition seems not to include the newspaper industries, news commercialization do occur there too as scholars have noted (see Oso: 2000). News commercialization operates at two levels in Nigeria: At the institutional level, where charges are `officially' placed for sponsored news programmes. For example, the Delta Broadcasting Service, Warri charges N20, 000 [80 pounds] for religious programme, N36, 000 [144 pounds] for corporate coverage and N25, 000 [100 pounds] for social events. Ogbuoshi (2005) gave the commercial rates of Radio Nigeria Enugu as follows: Commercial news (N47, 000 [188 pounds]), news commentary/political news (N52, 000 [208 pounds]), special news commentary/political (N60, 000 [240 pounds]). This commercialization at the institutional level is thriving because editors, publishers and owners of the broadcast stations/ print media see the organizations, or their investment, as a profit making venture that should yield the required financial return. Increasingly, commercial-oriented news stories are taking the place of hard news reports. Hanson (2005: 140) is right when he notes that: "reporters and editors are supposed to be concerned not with profits but rather with reporting the news as best they can. But that barrier is coming down, and editors are increasingly looking at their newspaper as a product that should appeal to advertisers as well as readers." Writing on the semantics of commercialization of news by broadcast stations in Nigeria, Tom Adaba, a one time Director General of the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), one of the regulatory bodies in Nigeria, makes a distinction between the "legitimate sales of airtime for paid messages adjacent to or within breaks in the news" and "charging news sources for the privilege of covering and relaying their pre-paid views or messages as news". According to him, in the first case, what the sponsors are buying is "the credibility of the newscast and newscasters to confer status by association on their company's logo, message or product" while in the latter: What the broadcast station is doing is selling cheaply the integrity of its newscast and newscasters by attesting to the "truth" of the claims of the so-called "sponsor".... By also charging and receiving fees by whatever name called, to cover `news' of company annual conference meeting, weddings, funeral, chieftaincy installation, town festivals, workshops and seminars, even events organized by charity organizations, stations are not only prostituting the integrity of news, they are insulting their audience and breaching the National Broadcasting Code (Adaba 2001:110). The NBC code makes explicit that: "commercial in news and public affairs programme shall be clearly identified and presented in a manner that shall make them clearly distinguishable from content". (NBC code) It is this passing off of commercial content as news within the Nigerian news media, the assigning of news quality to the commercial that raises ethical questions and challenges the notion of objectivity in Nigerian news reports.

#### Commercial Interests threaten Democratic Ideals - undermines the principal foundations of ethical journalism.

Asogwa et Al 12, Chika Euphemia, and Ezekiel S. Asemah. "News commercialisation, objective journalism practice and the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria." Higher education of social science 3.2 (2012): 27-34. (Head, Department of Mass Communication, Kogi State University, Anyigba, Kogi State, Nigeria.)//Elmer

NEWS COMMERCIALISATION IS A THREAT TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT News is no longer news, as it is only those that have money that are newsworthy. The mass media news is supposed to be an index of socio - political life of the people, but reverse is the case. News commercialisation has made the media to mortgage their consciences and professional ethics, for political patronage and appointments. Through their news, they hail every ruler until his tenure elapses. The media have established themselves as false shade to the truth. The journalist who collects money from his interviewee will definitely write news to favour him. The news in the media is now presented against the background of the ruling class. Thus, when someone who is wealthy has any activity even when he or she does not invite the journalists, they will troop there because of the personality involved. According to Ekwo, in Nwosu and Ekwo (1996, p.61): The social service or public service role of the communication media, especially the electronic media has diminished considerably, paving way to a situation whereby access to the media is guaranteed by how much money one can offer to the media. This practice tagged commercialisation of news as different from advertising in the media, is one of the most recent but, dangerous developments in Nigeria media industry, dating from 1988. Ekwo’s assertion shows that what determines news is how much money one is able to offer to the media. News values, which include timeliness, significance, prominence, proximity, among others, are no longer used as basis for judging the news to be aired to the audiencemembers. This development, which according to Ekwo, in Nwosu and Ekwo (1996) dates back to 1988, has persisted till now, as most journalists even demand for money from their interviewees when they go out to conduct interviews. Thus, it becomes difficult for the poor and illiterate people who are constantly seeking new ways to make government to be aware of their opinions, needs, grievances and most importantly, make themselves communicatively interactive, are denied of their rights because they cannot afford to pay what the rich people pay. The mass media now only promote the interests of those who are wealthy in the society, neglecting those who are poor. This explains why MacBride (1980), cited by Ekwo in Nwosu and Ekw (1996, p.61) posits that “unknown to many perhaps, is the fact that not all the news stories they hear these days from the radio, watch on television and even read from the newspaper and magazines, are or used purely because of their news values”. In journalism, there are traditional criteria for judging certain events, ideas, places and personalities as newsworthy, but today, such journalistic criteria are giving way to a situation whereby important developments are pushed aside by unimportant and even trivial news items concerning urban events and the activities of personalities. Nnorom (1994), cited by Ekwo, in Nwosu and Ekwo (1996) describes news commercialisation as a phenomenon whereby the electronic media report as news or news analysis, a commercial message by an unidentified or unidentifiable sponsor, giving the audience the impression that the news is fair, objective and socially responsible. This unwholesome practice has negative effects on the media and the society at large. The impacts as noted by Asemah (2011, p.34) are: a. it has given birth to a situation whereby news is narrowly defined against the weight of the news source’s pocket. The media, whether print or electronic, now use money as criteria for publishing news; b. another problem is the censorship and gate keeping problem, which news commercialisation constitutes for the editor. The editor is handicapped under the commercialisation policy. It is the duty of the editor to always edit stories, but, under the news commercialisation policy, the editor cannot edit stories according to known standards or principles in journalism. He has to be so meticulous in the process of editing, so that he will not edit the substance and length of the story that has been paid for. Any story that has been paid for is not to be edited because, it has automatically become a sacred cow” that is, subjects or issues that get favour of the media houses. The ability of the editor to judge what is news or not is completely restricted because, money becomes the evaluator and perhaps the editor; c. loss of credibility. The news commercialisation policy has made journalists to lose credibility because, it is now believed that they pay attention to the wealthy people who can pay for news so that they can suppress, twist and falsify the stories; and d. government of some countries may bribe journalists to write favourable news items about its policies and programmes, even when they are inimical to public interest.

#### Prioritizing Objectivity shifts Media Reporting to the Public Interest of Truth and Free Information Flows – that’s vital to any Functioning Democracy.

Asogwa et Al 12, Chika Euphemia, and Ezekiel S. Asemah. "News commercialisation, objective journalism practice and the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria." Higher education of social science 3.2 (2012): 27-34. (Head, Department of Mass Communication, Kogi State University, Anyigba, Kogi State, Nigeria.)//Elmer

OBJECTIVE JOURNALISM BUILDS DEMOCRACY Journalism has a lot to contribute to the development of democracy, not only in Nigeria, but the entire world. Objective journalism entails that the journalist should detach him or herself from whatever stories that are being conveyed to the people. When journalist collects bribe from news sources to twist stories, it will definitely lead to one problem or the other. The press articulates public conscience through focusing attention on issues and concerns of public interest. It sets the public agenda. As a purveyor of public opinion, it expresses public sentiment on any given subject, which is entertained by the best informed, most intelligent and most moral persons in the community. If journalism is to serve humanity, then the press should operate objectively. The press always takes on the form and the correlation of the social and political structures within which it operates. To see the difference between press system in full perspective, then one must look at the social systems in which the press functions. To see the social systems in their true relationship to the press, one has to look at certain beliefs and assumptions, which the society holds; the nature of man, the nature of society and the state, the relation of man to the state and the nature of knowledge and truth. The information role of the media in the democratic process involves creating a platform for public dialogue and ensuring diversity of views, values and perspectives on public affairs. The public sphere theory posits that by generating a plurality of understanding, the media should enable individuals to re-interpret their social experiences and question the assumptions and ideas of the dominant culture… it will give subordinate classes increased access to ideas and arguments opposing ideological representation that legitimate their subordination and enables them to explore more fully, ways of changing the structure of society to their advantage (Curran, 1991, p.103). He further notes that the mass media have a role to play in the democratic process, by creating an arena for free dialogue between and among the people and to ensure that their views are observed and adhered to, which includes helping to create the conditions in which alternate viewpoints and perspectives are brought fully into play. In a way, this is a restatement of the old notion of the mass media acting as a market place of ideas. More than this however, is the social purpose of this role. Mass media diversity and pluralism is not just progressive social engineering, it is for emancipation and empowerment, giving people the right to define their normative vision of the world and their place in it through access to alternative perspective of society (Curran, 1991). The media, both the print and electronic, have a very crucial role to play in every democratic process. Ogor, in NBC (2002, p.74) notes that broadcasting is regarded as the oxygen of democracy. Ogor further notes that it is the responsibility of the broadcast media to help increase the level of general awareness and mobilisation of the population and an active participant in the shaping of democratic values, through education and public enlightenment. According to Ogor, in NBC (2002, p.79): Public broadcasting upholds the principles of true speech and expression, as well as, free access to communication. It enables all criticizes to communicate openly on a level playing field. It also serves the interests of all people, irrespective of religion, political background, belief, culture, race, etc. In its overall programming, broadcasting reflects as comprehensively as possible, the range of existing opinions and free flow of information to the people is a must. Going by Ogor’s assertion, information is crucial to the sustenance of democracy in any given society. Democracy cannot thrive without adequate information and communication. There must be free flow of information about the activities of the government to the populace. The populace must be aware of all the activities of the government, whether at the federal, state or local government level. For democracy to be solidified in any country, there must be press freedom. But, how can the media effectively carry out this role, if they are not objective. Schramm (1963) observes that broadcasting is expected to lay a concrete foundation for the democratic culture of a nation and this democratic culture has to be based on equity, truth, fairness, justice and respect for human rights, access itself, as an actor, as well as, evolve new strategies for growth and enduring democracy. The media should be seen as agents of socialisation and source of unity. This would be done through information dissemination and sharing of ideas, so that individuals become aware of a given situation and are able to participate in the task of nation building. Commenting on the role of information in democratic government, Uche (1999, p.79) argues that democracy entails more than electing the so–called representatives of the people into government. What the government later does with the mandate is even much more important and of higher concern to democracy than mere act of being elected. Uche (1999, p.79) further argues that: The essence of democracy can be gotten from the age-long simple definition of the concept, which is government of the people, by the people and for the people. Democracy represents our popular power, a form of government that is centred on the sovereign authority of the people. For the people to retain their power over democratic governance, there must be an unfettered flow of information from the government, through the pluralistic media.

#### Studies prove Perception of Corporate-Media Ties hurts News Credibility.

Oberiri 16, Apuke Destiny. "Journalists’ perception of news commercialization and its implication on media credibility in Nigeria." World Scientific News 55 (2016): 63-76. (Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Taraba State University)//Elmer

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY “The mass media ought to play the role of gathering, analyzing and disseminating news and information about people, events and issues in society which could be in form of news, commentaries, editorials, advertorials, news analysis, profiles, columns, cartoons, pictures or magazine feature via mass communication medium such as radio, television news papers, magazine, digital TV, face book, you tube, 2 go and other numerous social media to a heterogeneous audience simultaneously or about the same time” Ogunkwo (1999) in Suntai and Vakkai (2014). But reverse is the case in Nigerian Journalism practice as the issues of news commercialization has prompted the mass media to tilt away from objectivity and balance in reporting. The media be it broadcast or print have lost their credibility as they have slowly negate the social responsibility of journalism to an income generated journalism practice. As Asogwa & Asemah (2012) put it: There is an increasing commercialization of the media in Nigeria, the situation that has brought the integrity of the mass media enterprise to question. The social responsibility theory holds that while the press functions as a free enterprise, as guaranteed by the libertarian theory, it must be responsible to a society in which it operates. Based on this theory, the mass media are able to raise issues of public importance. Our mass media today do not seem to perform this social, duty as issues that set agenda for national development are compromised for “naira and kobo”. This abuse at practice has received the attention of mass communication scholars and other stakeholders who now advocate for a reinvention of our media contents to make the media realize their potentials as tools for national development. Onoja (2009) sees news commercialization as “a situation whereby stations begin to raise revenue by charging fees for news reports they should normally carry free”. This implies that, broadcast stations are meant to package and produce news free rather than commercializing it for profit making and gain. Chioma (2013) sees news commercialization “as a tactful strategy through which the media relegates its responsibility of surveying the society”. Johnson (2001, p. 2), cited in Okigbo (1997) argues that balancing the cost of high quality journalism against corporate profit is one of the significant changes in journalism practice today. By implication broadcast media are meant to serve the public by dishing out news and entertainment rather than selling news and entertainment for profit making. As Kenneth and Odorume (2015) put it, “the broadcast media organizations should exist to serve public interest. However, recent journalism practice in Nigeria seems to be plagued with the malady of news commercialization. What this portends is that only the rich will get their ideas communicated to the public thus relegating the common to the background. Media organizations are undeniably expected to protect the public interest of their audiences.” McManus (2009 Pp. 219 & 220), sees news commercialization as ‘any action intended to boost profit that interferes with a journalist’s or news organization’s best effort to maximize public understanding of those issues and events that shape the community they claim to serve’. Also, Nwodu (2006) in National Open University of Nigeria (nd p.28) describes news commercialization as “the deliberate presentation of sponsored information to unsuspecting media audience who perceive these information as conventional public interest-oriented news”. Against this backdrop news commercialization could be a packaged, produced and disseminated information by a sponsor who pays a media organization. It could also be message/information/idea/thoughts payed for by an unidentified sponsor whose idea is trumpeted via a media organization to a large heterogeneous audience in order to influence or modify their thinking. This act of commercializing news by journalist and media organization, greatly affects the objectivity and balance of reporting as Ekeanyanwu and Obianigwe (2012, p. 517) put it “monetary gifts could pressurize a journalist into doing what the giver wants, and this makes the journalist unable to be objective in his reporting of events and issues involving the people who give such gifts. Thus, the news stories produced are likened be commercial products that have been paid for by the customer which should serve the need to which the product is expected, in favor of the customer” Asogwa & Asemah (2012) say “there are many reasons for which media outfits are established; some ideally set up the media to perform social functions of reflecting society and setting agenda for national discourse; others show more interest on generating income; hence, the media are profit oriented. In Nigeria, the latter may be a strong factor, given that media content is considered a commodity for sale, just like other commodities in a capitalist environment” This implies that a journalist who sells his conscience for money with the justification that it is news commercialization will end up deterring his reportage to suit the buyer of his conscience. “He who pays the piper dictates the tune” comes to play here. News commercialization is therefore liken to a wheel while brown envelop journalism is the spook that enhances the wheel to thrive on. That is why Ekerikevwe (2009), sees brown envelope as the commonest practice in journalism in Nigeria. “It is a situation whereby journalists demand for bribe or other forms of gratification before they cover any events or even publish stories from such events”. The implication of brown , envelope causes huge threat to journalism practice Bello & Adejola (2010) elaborates that this implications ranges from “loss of public trust and confidence, loss of professional integrity and sense of duty and inability to uphold the six cardinal elements or canons of journalism – truth, fairness, objectivity, accuracy, independence and responsibility” In a nutshell, this paper’s stand point on news commercialization is that, news commercialization is a paid, non-personal form of communication by unidentified sponsor who projects his/her ideas, thoughts, intentions through mass media such as print, radio, television and the internet. Therefore, to Idowu (2001 p.4), for news to be useful it has to be credible, for it to be trusted it must measure up to some exacting standard of assessment such as: accuracy (when in doubt leave out), balance (reflect all sides of the story), fairness (impartiality to all parties involved), human angle (people minded), depth (well researched/investigated), presentation (telling the story rightly), and reward (be of social relevance to audience) Against this backdrop, the study seeks to investigate the perception of Taraba state journalist on the influence news commercialization exerts on objectivity and balance in reporting. 2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM News commercialization has become a major trend in news treatment globally, and an issue of ethical concern in the mass media. It is a tactful strategy through which the media relegates its responsibility of surveying the society – disseminating information on the event, and people of social interest aside for financial gains (Chioma 2013). Therefore the issue of news commercialization has come to characterize journalism practice in Nigeria. A situation that prompt journalist/media organization to collect money in order to publish. The Nigerian adage “money for hand back for ground” comes to play here. Whereby “no money no reporting”. This practice is like a cankerworm eating deep into journalism practice in Nigeria. The good old fairness, objectivity, balance and truth in journalism has been eroded by selfish greed and profit making motive by various media houses in Nigeria. As Azeez (2009) puts it, news organization in our contemporary capitalist time are established on profit making motive; perhaps, unarguably, less on the motive of serving the interest of the public for which they are institutionalized. This negates public interest therefore projecting the voice of the rich at the expense of the poor or the voice of those who can pay at the expense of those who can’t. 3. AIM AND OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY The aim of this study is to investigate the perception of Taraba State Journalist on the influence news commercialization exerts on media credibility. The study is anchored on the following objectives. i. To ascertain the perception of Journalist in Jalingo metroplois on News commercialization ii. To examine the extent to which news commercialization influences objectivity, fairness, balance and truth in reporting. iii. To explore the forms of news commercialization that is manifest among Journalists in Jalingo Metropolis. iv. To examine what journalists perceive as reasons responsible for News commercialization. 4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS This study is guided by the following research questions: i. What is the perception of Journalist in Jalingo Metropolis on news commercialization ii. To what extent have news commercialization influence objectivity, fairness, balance and truth in reporting. iii. What are the forms of news commercialization manifest among Journalist in Jalingo Metropolis?. iv. What are the possible reasons for the practice of News Commercialization? 5. EMPIRICAL STUDIES Empirical reviews are researches carried out by other authors related to a particular study. It reveals findings, opinions postulated by other authors who have carried out similar studies, projecting their standpoint and take on a particular issue. Lwanga (2002) carried out a research in Uganda to investigate the level to which commercialization in the face of liberalization and commercialization of media services, has affected Radio Uganda’s programming. He employed qualitative and quantitative methods of investigation; finding reveal that although Radio Uganda still has certain public service principles and values, but programming policy has increasingly been changed by commercial considerations. Which is evident from the present rise of commercialized programmes and a decline in education and development programmes. The study revealed some of the causes of this problem to be limitations of finance and other resources which have jeopardized the roles and character of public service radio programming. Further findings revealed that radios in Uganda are established for profit making rather than serve in interest of the public. The study recommends that license fee be developed as a source of revenue for Radio Uganda., government should inject more funding into public service broadcasting institution to supplement other sources of income, before granting them autonomy, while advertising and sponsoring brings in considerable amount of revenue, it should not take place in such a manner as to that undermines the listener’s interest in Radio programming. The broadcasting council should therefore map out solid policies that will systematically guide Radio Uganda in its programming in the new order. In the same vein, Udomisor & Kenneth (2013) carried out a research to ascertain the impact of News Commercialization on Nigeria Broadcasting Commission Communication policy and reveal that “News commercialization is a practice that has unfortunately come to stay with the Nigeria society as a result of economic and psychological considerations. Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) is supposed to serve the interest of the public. Serve as a purveyor of information through which both the rich and poor can express themselves freely. The media operators should know that by charging money, they are reducing their credibility in the eyes of the public. Instead of them to be controller of news, it is now the advert companies that determine the pace and flow of news, and what constitutes news at any point time” they suggested that If the media houses should regain their glory and rightful place in the minds of the public, the practitioners should be adequately paid. It is only when they are well paid that they can disabuse their mind from sharp practices. Secondly, regular training and re-training should be organized for journalists to enable them continue to keep abreast and perform their basic roles to the society. Thirdly, media owners should not sacrifice public affairs and issue at alter of profit. They should realize that the electromagnetic waves they are using is a public property which they are holding in trust. Fourthly instead of selling news, the stations can think of other sources of revenue like investments if it is private stations and increased funding in the case of government stations. Finally, the relevant regulatory agencies should add more bite to their operations. They should go beyond publishing and re-publishing of codes by ensuring that the media houses are compelled to comply with the ethic of the profession in the interest, unity and development of the country. Papathanassopoulos (2001) in Kenneth & Odorume (2015) analyzed the effects of media commercialization and market expansion in Greek journalism and argues that although journalism appears to be a profession which plays a more active social and political role in Greece, giving the impression that it sets the agenda and represents the ordinary citizen it is heavily influenced by the constraints imposed by the news organizations. The article first discusses to what extent the “professional model” of journalism can be applied to all countries. Second, it provides a brief account of the contemporary media landscape. It then discusses the implications of media commercialization on Greek journalism drawing from original and other research. 6. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK The theory suitable for this study is the social responsibility theory. The social responsibility theory came as a result of the libertarian theory. The theory came into existence the middle of 20th century. In Okunna’s (1999) word, social responsibility is a modern theory because it was promulgated in the twentieth century. The theory came into limelight because the press abused the freedom given to them, which they enjoyed as a result of the free press. Under every free press objective flow of information ought to be which gives citizens avenue and opportunity to express themselves well as air their viewpoint. But due to sensationalization and yellow journalism this free flow of information was deterred in the libertarian system. Against this backdrop, social responsibility theory rests on the concept of free press acting responsibly. The press, which enjoys a privileged position under the government, is obliged to be responsible. The theory urges media practitioners to ensure representation of all facts not siding or becoming sensational in reportage but being balance and unbiased. This implies that a journalist ought to protect his image by being fair, objective, unbiased, thereby reporting events/occurrences as it happens without icing or decorating it. By so doing, a journalist is mandated to win the trust of his audience through credible and not biased reporting. Oluagbade (2003), cited in Asemah (2011) defines communication ethics, as the basis for conforming to recognized standard; of course, the point of communication ethics is to prevent good men from going bad. Ethics emphasizes- responsibilities of the media in the packaging of their contents. The theory is relevant to the study because it reprimands and cautions journalists not to disregard his duty to the society; he must not ‘yellow journalize’ stories or use the media to cause chaos in the society but engage in truthful journalism rather than journalism full of deceit, lies and subjectivity. 7. METHODOLOGY The qualitative survey research method was employed for this study. Hardy and Bryman (2004) notes “that the survey research design is used for observing the social and behavioral characteristics, attitudes values and beliefs of a large population using only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group”. The researchers employed questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. The population of the study comprises of registered journalist under NUJ Jalingo chapter which are about 293 (Source: NUJ Jalingo chapter). Therefore to ascertain the sample size of the study the Taro Yamane’s formula was used thus: N N = 1+ N (e)2 where: N = sample size sought; e = Margin (0.10) 2 N = Population size 293 293 N = 1 + 293(0.10)2 293 N = 3.93 N = 74.5 approximately 75 The purposive sampling method was used to select 75 sample sized respondents. The respondents were purposively selected from the different correspondent’s chapel and Newspaper bureau that are covering Taraba State. The essence of using purposive sampling was because the researchers had some characteristics in mind and such characteristics had to do with on-the-job experience of Journalist in Jalingo Metropolis. Data gathered were presented in pie charts and bar charts. Descriptive analysis was employed for data analysis which comprises the use of frequency counts and simple percentages. 8. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS Research Question one: What is the perception of Journalists in Jalingo metropolis on news commercialization? [Table 1 Omitted] Table 1 above sought to find out respondent’s perception on the notion that commercialization of news has been disguised as advertisement. 15 (20%) out of the 75 respondents strongly agreed that news commercialization has been disguised as advertisement, 40 (53.3%) agreed to the same notion, on the contrary 11 (14.7%) strongly disagreed, and 7 (9.3%) disagreed that news commercialization has been disguised as advertisement. Whereas 2 (2.7%) remained undecided. This response implies that most of the respondents believe that news commercialization have been disguised as advertisement. [Table 2 Omitted] Table 2 above seeks to reveal respondents perception of what news commercialization is all about. From the findings, 40 (53.3%) of the respondents see news commercialization as accepting payment for news publication, 20 (26.7%) agreed that news commercialization is generating revenue for stations to enable the management run them on a day to day basis and even beyond. Whereas, 10 (13.3%) respondents out of the 75 opine that news commercialization is soliciting for gratification in order to suppress the truth, while 5 (6.7%) are with the opinion that news commercialization is the deliberate presentation of sponsored information to unsuspecting media audience. This findings proves that majority of the respondents believe that news commercialization is the acceptance of money for news publication. That is a situation whereby a journalist collects bribe (money) before he/she publish any news event. Research Question Two: To what extent have news commercialization influence objectivity, fairness, balance and truth in reporting? [Table 3 Omitted] Table 3 sought to enquire whether news commercialization has any effect on objectivity and balance in reporting. 52 (69.3%) out of 75 of the respondents strongly agreed that news commercialization affects objectivity and balance in reporting, 13 (17.3%) agreed to the same assertion, whereas, 5 (6.7%) strongly disagree that news commercialization affects objectivity and balance in reporting while 5 (6.7%) of the respondents disagreed that news commercialization affects objectivity and balance in reporting. By implication, the findings reveals that most of the respondents are of the opinion that news commercialization affects objectivity and balance in reporting. [Table 4 Omitted] Table 4 above seek to find out the perception of respondents on news commercialization as regards to media trust and credibility. 20 (26.7%) out of 75 of the respondents strongly agreed that news commercialization affects media trust and credibility, 35 (46.7%) agreed that news commercialization affects media trust and credibility. While on the contrary, 10 (13.3%) respondents strongly disagreed to the assertion/notion+-n that news commercialization affects media trust and credibility, and 8 (6.7%) respondents also disagreed while 2 (1.3%) remained undecided. The findings reveal that to a greater extent news commercialization affects the credibility and trust of the media as concurred by most of the respondents. This means that the more a media or journalist engages in news commercialization the more it loses its trust and credibility.

#### Best studies prove declining distrust in news objectivity diminishes Democratic accountability.

Sands 20 John Sands 8-4-2020 "Americans are losing faith in an objective media. A new Gallup/Knight study explores why." <https://knightfoundation.org/articles/americans-are-losing-faith-in-an-objective-media-a-new-gallup-knight-study-explores-why/> (Researcher at the Knights Foundation)//Elmer

Americans have high aspirations for the news media to be a trusted, independent watchdog that holds the powerful to account. But in a new Gallup/Knight study, we’ve found the gap is growing between what Americans expect from the news and what they think they are getting. Perceptions of bias are increasing too, which further erodes the media’s ability to deliver on its promise to our democracy. The landmark poll of 20,000 people found that Americans’ hope for an objective media is all but lost. Instead, they see an increasing partisan slant in the news, and a media eager to push an agenda. As a result, the media’s ability to hold leaders accountable is diminished in the public’s eye. The study also explores the connections between political affiliation and attitudes toward the media, as well the public’s view on diversity in newsrooms and the connection between local news consumption, civic engagement and community attachment. A hallmark of Knight Foundation’s Trust, Media and Democracy initiative, “American Views 2020: Trust, Media and Democracy” is a biennial report based on a poll that took place over last winter. It is one of the most comprehensive surveys of public opinion on the media, and holds important implications for the future of journalism and our democracy. You can read more below, or join a discussion of the findings in partnership with the Paley Center at 2 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 6. Here are 10 findings that stood out to us: 1) Americans see increasing bias in the news media: One of the primary reasons Americans don’t think the media works for them is because of the bias they perceive in coverage. Many feel the media’s traditional roles, such as holding leaders accountable, is compromised by bias, with nearly 7 in 10 Americans (68%) who say they see too much bias in the reporting of news that is supposed to be objective as “a major problem,” up from 65% in the 2017 Knight/Gallup study. They see it in their own news sources (57%), and more than 6 in 10 are concerned about bias in the news other people are getting, the survey finds. Some 7 in 10 Americans worry that owners of media companies are influencing coverage. 2) Americans think the media is pushing an agenda. Eight in 10 Americans say that when they suspect an inaccuracy in a story, they worry it was intentional —because the reporter was misrepresenting the facts (52%) or making them up (28%). Only 18% say they think the inaccuracies were innocent mistakes. And when it comes to news sources they distrust, nearly three-quarters of Americans (or 74%) say those outlets are trying to persuade people to adopt a certain opinion.

#### Accountability is critical to a functioning democracy – specifically by an Objective Press.

Hamilton and Krosnick 20 [James Hamilton](https://profiles.stanford.edu/james-hamilton) and [Jon Krosnick](https://profiles.stanford.edu/jon-krosnick) 2-27-2020 "Stanford researchers discuss journalism and democracy in lead up to Super Tuesday" <https://news.stanford.edu/2020/02/27/journalism-and-democracy/> (Hamilton also directs the Stanford Journalism Program, is a co-founder of the Stanford Computational Journalism Lab and a senior fellow at the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research. Krosnick also directs the Political Psychology Research Group and is a professor, by courtesy, of psychology.)//Elmer

How important is an objective media for a functioning democracy? Hamilton: Objectivity was a commercial product that only evolved in the late 1800s with the high costs of printing presses. Newspapers shifted from partisan to nonpartisan in order to attract larger audiences from both parties and to sell these readers’ attention to advertisers. Fast forward to today’s world of hundreds of cable channels and millions of websites. Each person is better able to find an outlet that reflects their worldview, which can also reinforce their political views and affect their electoral choices. Criticisms of the media can also have political dividends. Historically, attacks by politicians on the credibility of the media have been part of a conscious strategy to weaken the accountability function of reporters. For example, attacks on the media as biased during President Richard Nixon’s administration, especially by Vice President Spiro Agnew, were frequent and virulent. Krosnick: In recent years, we have seen a collapse of the notion that politically relevant facts can be discerned by news professionals, leaving voters uncertain about whether the messages communicated by those professionals can be trusted. President Trump has played a major role in raising doubts about the veracity of information conveyed by major news organizations. Social media has allowed individuals and small organizations to disseminate messages (perhaps accurate, perhaps false) directly to voters, unmediated by major news organizations. And Russia has been accused of disseminating false information via social media, as well. All this means is that voters are forced to identify news sources they trust. And because different news sources are disseminating different messages about the same matters, voters will now end up with more disparate views of reality than was the case decades ago.

#### Democracy solves Nuclear War.

Diamond 19, Larry. Ill winds: Saving democracy from Russian rage, Chinese ambition, and American complacency. Penguin Books, 2019. (professor of Sociology and Political Science at Stanford University, PhD in Sociology)//Elmer

The most obvious response to the ill winds blowing from the world’s autocracies is to help the winds of freedom blowing in the other direction. The democracies of the West cannot save themselves if they do not stand with democrats around the world. This is truer now than ever, for several reasons. We live in a globalized world, one in which models, trends, and ideas cascade across borders. Any wind of change may gather quickly and blow with gale force. People everywhere form ideas about how to govern—or simply about which forms of government and sources of power may be irresistible—based on what they see happening elsewhere. We are now immersed in a fierce global contest of ideas, information, and norms. In the digital age, that contest is moving at lightning speed, shaping how people think about their political systems and the way the world runs. As doubts about and threats to democracy are mounting in the West, this is not a contest that the democracies can afford to lose. Globalization, with its flows of trade and information, raises the stakes for us in another way. Authoritarian and badly governed regimes increasingly pose a direct threat to popular sovereignty and the rule of law in our own democracies. Covert flows of money and influence are subverting and corrupting our democratic processes and institutions. They will not stop just because Americans and others pretend that we have no stake in the future of freedom in the world. If we want to defend the core principles of self-government, transparency, and accountability in our own democracies, we have no choice but to promote them globally. It is not enough to say that dictatorship is bad and that democracy, however flawed, is still better. Popular enthusiasm for a lesser evil cannot be sustained indefinitely. People need the inspiration of a positive vision. Democracy must demonstrate that it is a just and fair political system that advances humane values and the common good. To make our republics more perfect, established democracies must not only adopt reforms to more fully include and empower their own citizens. They must also support people, groups, and institutions struggling to achieve democratic values elsewhere. The best way to counter Russian rage and Chinese ambition is to show that Moscow and Beijing are on the wrong side of history; that people everywhere yearn to be free; and that they can make freedom work to achieve a more just, sustainable, and prosperous society. In our networked age, both idealism and the harder imperatives of global power and security argue for more democracy, not less. For one thing, if we do not worry about the quality of governance in lower-income countries, we will face more and more troubled and failing states. Famine and genocide are the curse of authoritarian states, not democratic ones. Outright state collapse is the ultimate, bitter fruit of tyranny. When countries like Syria, Libya, and Afghanistan descend into civil war; when poor states in Africa cannot generate jobs and improve their citizens’ lives due to rule by corrupt and callous strongmen; when Central American societies are held hostage by brutal gangs and kleptocratic rulers, people flee—and wash up on the shores of the democracies. Europe and the United States cannot withstand the rising pressures of immigration unless they work to support better, more stable and accountable government in troubled countries. The world has simply grown too small, too flat, and too fast to wall off rotten states and pretend they are on some other planet. Hard security interests are at stake. As even the Trump administration’s 2017 National Security Strategy makes clear, the main threats to U.S. national security all stem from authoritarianism, whether in the form of tyrannies from Russia and China to Iran and North Korea or in the guise of antidemocratic terrorist movements such as ISIS.1 By supporting the development of democracy around the world, we can deny these authoritarian adversaries the geopolitical running room they seek. Just as Russia, China, and Iran are trying to undermine democracies to bend other countries to their will, so too can we contain these autocrats’ ambitions by helping other countries build effective, resilient democracies that can withstand the dictators’ malevolence. Of course, democratically elected governments with open societies will not support the American line on every issue. But no free society wants to mortgage its future to another country. The American national interest would best be secured by a pluralistic world of free countries—one in which autocrats can no longer use corruption and coercion to gobble up resources, alliances, and territory. If you look back over our history to see who has posed a threat to the United States and our allies, it has always been authoritarian regimes and empires. As political scientists have long noted, no two democracies have ever gone to war with each other—ever. It is not the democracies of the world that are supporting international terrorism, proliferating weapons of mass destruction, or threatening the territory of their neighbors.

#### Nuke war causes extinction AND outweighs other existential risks

PND 16. internally citing Zbigniew Brzezinski, Council of Foreign Relations and former national security adviser to President Carter, Toon and Robock’s 2012 study on nuclear winter in the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, Gareth Evans’ International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament Report, Congressional EMP studies, studies on nuclear winter by Seth Baum of the Global Catastrophic Risk Institute and Martin Hellman of Stanford University, and U.S. and Russian former Defense Secretaries and former heads of nuclear missile forces, brief submitted to the United Nations General Assembly, Open-Ended Working Group on nuclear risks. A/AC.286/NGO/13. 05-03-2016. <http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/OEWG/2016/Documents/NGO13.pdf> //Re-cut by Elmer

Consequences human survival 12. Even if the 'other' side does NOT launch in response the smoke from 'their' burning cities (incinerated by 'us') will still make 'our' country (and the rest of the world) uninhabitable, potentially inducing global famine lasting up to decades. Toon and Robock note in ‘Self Assured Destruction’, in the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists 68/5, 2012, that: 13. “A nuclear war between Russia and the United States, even after the arsenal reductions planned under New START, could produce a nuclear winter. Hence, an attack by either side could be suicidal, resulting in self assured destruction. Even a 'small' nuclear war between India and Pakistan, with each country detonating 50 Hiroshima-size atom bombs--only about 0.03 percent of the global nuclear arsenal's explosive power--as air bursts in urban areas, could produce so much smoke that temperatures would fall below those of the Little Ice Age of the fourteenth to nineteenth centuries, shortening the growing season around the world and threatening the global food supply. Furthermore, there would be massive ozone depletion, allowing more ultraviolet radiation to reach Earth's surface. Recent studies predict that agricultural production in parts of the United States and China would decline by about **20 percent** for four years, and by 10 percent for a decade.” 14. A conflagration involving USA/NATO forces and those of Russian federation would most likely cause the deaths of most/nearly all/all humans (and severely impact/extinguish other species) as well as destroying the delicate interwoven techno-structure on which latter-day 'civilization' has come to depend. Temperatures would drop to below those of the last ice-age for up to 30 years as a result of the lofting of up to 180 million tonnes of very black soot into the stratosphere where it would remain for decades. 15. Though human ingenuity and resilience shouldn't be underestimated, human survival itself is arguably problematic, to put it mildly, under a 2000+ warhead USA/Russian federation scenario. 16. The Joint Statement on Catastrophic Humanitarian Consequences signed October 2013 by 146 governments mentioned 'Human Survival' no less than 5 times. The most recent (December 2014) one gives it a highly prominent place. Gareth Evans’ ICNND (International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament) Report made it clear that it saw the threat posed by nuclear weapons use as one that at least threatens what we now call 'civilization' and that potentially threatens human survival with an immediacy that even climate change does not, though we can see the results of climate change here and now and of course the immediate post-nuclear results for Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well.

#### Democratic Peace Theory is robustly valid.

Bingham 12 James Bingham. Jun 1 2012. How Accurate is Democratic Peace Theory? https://www.e-ir.info/2012/06/01/how-accurate-is-democratic-peace-theory/?fbclid=IwAR1-4lj6dJSRGPYsKrJq6Jv\_2TY\_NjrmxYHfP93Y2Lq1JX\_ipfByeGOQ3aE

Democratic peace theory is reliant on the ideology of liberalism. The liberal ideology of civil liberties such as personal and political freedoms, democracy and economic growth, are paired with the concepts of democratic institutions and fairly elected governments that have been selected from a choice of political groups. A liberal democracy can therefore be defined as ‘a state that instantiates liberal ideas, one where liberalism is the dominant ideology and citizens have leverage over war decisions.’[[9]](https://www.e-ir.info/wp-admin/post-new.php#_ftn9) Democratic peace is the theory that liberal democracies are less likely to go to war with one another as with other forms of government, specifically due to the nature of liberal political ideology and the pacifying influence of democracy. The premise of the theory is that liberals believe that individuals, regardless of government, are fundamentally the same; that going to war against a fellow liberal democracy would be harmful to one’s own well-being due to the damage to the peace necessary for liberal democracies to economically exist in. Peace is to be maintained through political negotiation and war only used against illiberal and undemocratic states in order to maintain the peaceful status quo. Peace is a prerequisite for self-determination and material gain, key liberal concepts, and hence it is argued, by proponents of the theory, that liberal democracies are less likely to break this peace unless to restore their own liberal status – war against another liberal democracy therefore would unnecessarily break the peace necessary for liberalism to exist. Relations between liberal and illiberal states may be less stable, but the democratic peace theory argues that as long as both are free democracies, then war is more likely to be avoided than when a liberal democracy is confronted with a non-democratic state. Two strands of thought surrounding the theory exist in parallel; structural and normative theories. The structural side of the democratic peace theory is concerned with how liberal institutions within a state encourage and participate in free debate, in theory removing the capacity of leaders to follow ambitions outside of the public interest. The decision to go to war taken within a liberal democracy must first pass through several constitutional institutions that place constraints on the ability to take quick, single-minded decisions. Hence, the liberal democracy is deemed rational and (in theory) allows the public to effectively control the decision to go to war. The second strand is more abstract; – the normative side of the democratic peace theory argues that it is the liberal ideology that prevents wars between liberal democratic states. Wars against fellow liberal states would be unjust and disrupt the peace that liberal democracies regard as essential to individual development. The importance of perception in highlighted here; states may not regard another state as either liberal or democratic and hence their attitude towards such a state is altered, often towards a more aggressive stance. An example of this is the War of 1812, fought when ‘almost no Americans considered England a democracy.’[[10]](https://www.e-ir.info/wp-admin/post-new.php#_ftn10) These two strands of the democratic peace theory work in tandem (a ‘synergy’[[11]](https://www.e-ir.info/wp-admin/post-new.php#_ftn11)) to influence foreign policy decisions; – it is the democratic constraints and ideological pressures that contribute to leaders’ unwillingness to go to war with fellow liberal democracies. There are many supporting arguments in favour of the democratic peace theory, drawing from multiple academic areas. The use of statistical analysis by proponents of the theory has indicated that historically, there have been fewer wars between liberal democracies than between different types of governments. The academic Bremer states; ‘even after controlling for a large number of factors… democracy’s conflict-reducing effect remains strong.’[[12]](https://www.e-ir.info/wp-admin/post-new.php#_ftn12) This statistical analysis took into account the possible influences of factors such as alliance structures, economic wealth and political stability to produce a comprehensive statistical analysis of the ‘conflict-proneness’[[13]](https://www.e-ir.info/wp-admin/post-new.php#_ftn13) of democratic governments. Democracies have made up a small percentage of the total number of state powers on the world stage until relatively recently, hence although the total number of military engagements between democratic state has increased, this has to be tempered with the knowledge that as the number of engagements has increased, the frequency of such engagements has not kept up to speed with the increasing number of democracies. Hence, it is argued that this disparity between the expected number of inter-democratic engagements and the rising number of democratic states is accounted for by the democratic peace theory. Arguments against this research have focused on the argument that much of the evidence used to support the statistical analyses was taken from the Cold-War era. As argued by opponents to the theory such as Farber & Gowa[[14]](https://www.e-ir.info/wp-admin/post-new.php" \l "_ftn14), democracies only avoided confrontation in order to oppose the larger threat of the Soviet Union and the spread of authoritarianism, hence skewing the data in favour of the democratic peace theory. The counter-argument made is that through multi-variable analysis of historical statistical data[[15]](https://www.e-ir.info/wp-admin/post-new.php#_ftn15), this can be ruled out as an influencing factor as the political environment has been accommodated for in research; this is problematic, as translating complex political context into quantitative measurements is inherently open to different interpretations. However, the work of Bremer[[16]](https://www.e-ir.info/wp-admin/post-new.php#_ftn16) and Maoz & Russett[[17]](https://www.e-ir.info/wp-admin/post-new.php" \l "_ftn17) ‘convincingly demonstrates’[[18]](https://www.e-ir.info/wp-admin/post-new.php#_ftn18) the ‘tendency for democratic pairs of states to be less likely than other pairs to become involved in serious, militarised disputes.’[[19]](https://www.e-ir.info/wp-admin/post-new.php#_ftn19) Another source of support for the democratic peace theory has come from the theoretical base argued for by Bueno de Mequita; that going to war affects the chances of a democratic government’s leader being re-elected. The premise of this argument is that the probability of a liberal democratic leader falling from power in the wake of a war is significantly higher than in other forms of government, namely authoritarian or single-party states. As Bueno de Mequita puts it, leaders ‘desire to remain in office.’[[20]](https://www.e-ir.info/wp-admin/post-new.php#_ftn20) The related argument made by Lake[[21]](https://www.e-ir.info/wp-admin/post-new.php#_ftn21) is that due to the relative economic wealth and political stability in most democracies, such states are able to allocate more resources to national security; hence most democracies form ‘formidable targets’[[22]](https://www.e-ir.info/wp-admin/post-new.php#_ftn22) in the eyes of democratic leaders, targets viewed as too strong to go to war against for fear of a costly military engagement and the associated negative impact on the personal political success of the state’s leaders. Hence, as Silverson[[23]](https://www.e-ir.info/wp-admin/post-new.php" \l "_ftn23) argues, democracies have tended to go to war against states that they have a high probability of beating militarily; such states tend to be an alternative form of government. A recent example would be the 2003 US/British invasion of Iraq. Opponents to the theory state that although this may be theoretically true, the theory fails to take into account intra-state influences, such as religious divisions. An example of this is the 2006 conflict between Israel and the democratically-elected (but by no means liberal) Hamas government of Gaza; the Palestinian-Israeli conflict’s religious undertones were a key factor in determining the outbreak of conflict, despite the fact that both governments were democratically elected. Therefore, it must be remember that the leaders of democracies are elected by the people of that state; this may mean that a particularly hawkish and war-mongering electorate may install a leader that is more likely to use military force to pursue policy aims in order to satisfy their voter base. The democratic peace theory cannot be viewed as a template for guiding political action; simply because two states are liberal democracies by no means rules out the possibility of war between them. However, due to the normative influence on liberal democracies (the liberal ideologies, as stated previously, that guide and shape both foreign policy and the state’s outlook towards the rest of the world), liberal democracies are theoretically less likely to go to war with one another. Indeed it is this normative theory, rooted in the idea that liberals are not inclined to go to war with fellow liberals, that has become the focal point of many researchers. Chan, for example, states; ‘normative explanations of the democratic peace theory have been shown to be persuasive than structural ones.’[[24]](https://www.e-ir.info/wp-admin/post-new.php#_ftn24) The theory can be falsified; the focus of many supporters of the theory has been the ability to classify conflicts and states, (although there has been debate over the dividing lines of terminology), into conflicts between democracies and conflicts not between democracies. ‘…well developed theoretical bases reinforce a lengthy list of systematic empirical analyses in support of that proposition [democratic peace theory]’[[25]](https://www.e-ir.info/wp-admin/post-new.php#_ftn25); Ray, having formulated an extensive and thorough analysis of the democratic peace theory, states that when viewed holistically the balance tips in favour of support for the theory. Indeed, when analysed through the multiple analytical lenses that Ray cites, credible counter-arguments emerge to the democratic peace theory. However, despite the relative strength of these arguments, proponents of the theory have sufficiently defended their academic position; the democratic peace theory is far from a clear-cut scientific theory, however when asked ‘is peace between democracies more likely than peace between differing political leaderships?’ the answer must be given as a conditional yes.

#### The Alternatives to Democracy are far-worse – back-sliding causes authoritative governance to fill-in.

Gat 11, Azar. "The changing character of war." (2011). (Professor at Tel Aviv University, Ezer Weizman Professor of National Security at Tel Aviv University)//Elmer

Since 1945, **the decline of major great power war has deepened** further. Nuclear weapons have concentrated the minds of all concerned wonderfully, but no less important have been the institutionalization of free trade and the closely related process of rapid and sustained economic growth throughout the capitalist world. The communist bloc did not participate in the system of free trade, but at least initially it too experienced substantial growth, and, unlike Germany and Japan, it was always sufﬁciently large and rich in natural resources to maintain an autarky of sorts. With the Soviet collapse and with the integration of the former communist powers into the global capitalist economy, the prospect of a major war within the developed world seems to have become very remote indeed. This is one of the main sources for the feeling that war has been transformed: its geopolitical centre of gravity has shifted radically. The modernized, economically developed parts of the world constitute a ‘zone of peace’. **War now seems to be conﬁned to the less-developed parts of the globe, the world’s ‘zone of war’,** **where countries that have** so far **failed to embrace modernization and its pacifying spin-off effects continue to be engaged in wars** among themselves, as well as with developed countries. While the trend is very real, **one wonders if the** near **disappearance of armed conﬂict within the developed world is likely to** **remain as stark** **as it has been since the collapse of communism**. **The post-Cold War moment** may turn out to **be** a **ﬂeeting** one. **The probability of major wars within the developed world remains low**—because of the factors already mentioned: increasing wealth, economic openness and interdependence, and nuclear deterrence. **But the deep sense of change** prevailing since 1989 **has been based on the far more radical notion that the triumph of capitalism** also **spelled the irresistible ultimate victory of democracy**; and that in an afﬂuent and democratic world, major conﬂict no longer needs to be feared or seriously prepared for. **This notion**, however, **is** **fast eroding** **with the return of capitalist non-democratic great powers that have been absent from the international system since 1945**. Above all, there is the formerly communist and fast industrializing authoritarian-capitalist **China**, whose massive growth **represents the greatest change in the global balance of power. Russia**, too, **is retreating from its postcommunist liberalism and assuming an increasingly authoritarian character**.¶ **Authoritarian capitalism may be more viable than people tend to assume**. 8 The communist great powers failed even though they were potentially larger than the democracies, because their economic systems failed them. By contrast, the **capitalist authoritarian/totalitarian powers during the ﬁrst half of the twentieth century, Germany and Japan**, particularly the former, **were as efﬁcient economically as**, **and** if anything **more successful militarily than,** **their democratic counterparts**. They were defeated in war mainly because they were too small and ultimately succumbed to the exceptional continental size of the United States (in alliance with the communist Soviet Union during the Second World War). However, the **new non-democratic powers are both** **large and capitalist.** **China** in particular **is the largest player in the international system in terms of population and is showing spectacular economic growth** that within a generation or two is likely to make it a true non-democratic superpower. Although **the return of capitalist non-democratic great powers** does not necessarily imply open conﬂict or war, it **might indicate that the democratic hegemony since the Soviet Union’s collapse could be** **short-lived** **and that** **a universal ‘democratic peace’ may still be far off**. The new capitalist authoritarian powers are deeply integrated into the world economy. They partake of the development-open-trade-capitalist cause of peace, but not of the liberal democratic cause. Thus, it is crucially important that any protectionist turn in the system is avoided so as to prevent a grab for markets and raw materials such as that which followed the disastrous slide into imperial protectionism and conﬂict during the ﬁrst part of the twentieth century. Of course, the openness of the world economy does not depend exclusively on the democracies. In time, China itself might become more protectionist, as it grows wealthier, its labour costs rise, and its current competitive edge diminishes. With the possible exception of the sore Taiwan problem, China is likely to be less restless and revisionist than the territorially conﬁned Germany and Japan were. Russia, which is still reeling from having lost an empire, may be more problematic. However, **as China grows in power, it is likely to become more assertive,** **ﬂex its muscles, and behave like a superpower**, even if it does not become particularly aggressive. The **democratic and non-democratic powers may coexist more or less peacefully**, albeit warily, side by side, armed because of mutual fear and suspicion, as a result of the so-called ‘security dilemma’, and against worst-case scenarios. **But there is** also **the prospect of** **more antagonistic relations**, **accentuated ideological rivalry**, **potential and actual conﬂict,** **intensiﬁed arms races**, and even new cold wars, with spheres of inﬂuence and opposing coalitions. Although great power relations will probably vary from those that prevailed during any of the great twentieth-century conﬂicts, as conditions are never quite the same, they may vary less than seemed likely only a short while ago.

#### Fact-focused Journalism is necessary to disseminate the truth and combat misinformation and fake news.

Beckerman 21 Jim Beckerman 2-18-2021 "Fair and balanced press? When do newspapers cross the line? | Matters of Fact" <https://www.northjersey.com/story/entertainment/columnists/jim-beckerman/2021/02/18/media-bias-newspapers-objective-press-fake-news/4094763001/> //Elmer

Many of us, watching the storming of the Capitol building, would probably consider that headline none too strong. But the matter-of-fact blaming of the president, the loaded words like "mob," are things an editor of an earlier day might have avoided. Such word choices are emblematic of the issues newspapers have faced, throughout the Trump era. They get to the heart of what a newspaper is, what "objective" journalism is, and especially how the media should respond to the firehose of misinformation, disinformation, and distortion that has gushed into the news cycle over the last four years. "I look for my reporters and editors — we don't always get it right — to find the truth in stories and explain that truth to readers," said Daniel Sforza, executive editor of The Record. Not easy, when readers themselves are so polarized. "That's important now, because of the amount of misinformation and disinformation that is out there," said Sforza, who has been here 27 years and worn many hats. "We've seen that, with the aftermath of the election, and the growth of conspiracy theories, and groups that push conspiracy theories. Truth is hard. But it's important, not only to the field of journalism, but to our democracy." Words matter Back in 2016, when the Times published its "Trump Gives Up a Lie" headline, some readers were outraged. "[It] lessens the Times credibility as an objective, fact-based messenger of the news," one wrote. Others thought it was past time. “I want the NYT to tell me in plain language and not use a euphemism like ‘stretches the truth’ when the truth has not been ‘stretched’ but has been totally and clearly broken,” was another response. "To me, that was an important moment, and certainly they [the Times] have referred to lies subsequently," said Matthew Pressman, assistant professor of journalism at Seton Hall University and author of "On Press: The Liberal Values that Shaped the News." With that headline, there was no equivocating, no show of balance, no "on the other hand." "On the other hand," says Tevye in "Fiddler on the Roof," "there is no other hand." Candidate Donald Trump, by spreading the "birther" conspiracy — without evidence — and then abruptly announcing that he no longer believed it — without explanation or apology — had been lying, said the Times. Full stop. But "lie," as Spayd observed, is a loaded word. It suggests deliberate, malicious intent, based on a full knowledge of the mental state of the speaker. Which of course doesn't exist, and could never exist. "It might even be the case that he isn't a liar," said Michael S. Schudson, professor of journalism in the graduate school of journalism of Columbia University, and author of "Why Democracies Need an Unlovable Press" and "The Sociology of News." "He's a [BS-er], for sure," Schudson. "But he also is so far from reality that he doesn't have a primary simply understanding of what counts as true and what counts as falsehood. He's a fabulist. He doesn't know reality from unreality. That's different from being a liar." So what word do you use? "Falsehood"? That's scarcely less harsh than lie. "Unproven allegation"? That suggests that there is something to prove — and risks lending credibility to banana oil. "Unproven allegations" are what send journalists — in the name of fairness — scurrying to Washington D.C. pizza parlors to discover evidence of nonsensical sex trafficking rings, or to Hawaii to investigate birth certificates. It's because journalists do take the job of reporting seriously, do feel bound to investigate unlikely claims, and do become sidetracked by such investigations, that bad-faith actors fling "unproven allegations" left and right, like fleeing criminals tossing chairs behind them. So just what is objective journalism? Can it still exist, in the post-Trump era? Did it ever exist? Either way, the idea exerts a powerful spell. "Fair & balanced," "We report, you decide" were long the tag-lines of Fox News — one of the more biased news sources on the dial. Fox News doesn't even make a pretense of airing a liberal perspective, any more than its liberal cousin MSNBC — note our balance! — airs a conservative one. But the idea of of objective journalism was still a big selling point. "I think there are a lot of people who want to be able to open a newspaper and not think of it as a liberal paper or a conservative paper, but as a place to get their news," said David Greenberg, a professor of History and of Journalism & Media Studies at Rutgers New Brunswick, author of "Republic of Spin: An Inside History of the American Presidency." "I think that's still a strong feeling in America."

#### Declining faith causes shift to echo-chamber social media – which both causes and locks-in disinformation.

Klein 20, Ian. "Enemy of the people: The ghost of the FCC Fairness Doctrine in the age of alternative facts." Hastings Comm. & Ent. LJ 42 (2020): 45. (J.D. Candidate at the Texas A&M University School of Law)//Elmer

The “Filter Bubble” and Confirmation Bias Problems The problem is that despite there being a plethora of media outlets between television, the Internet, radio, and print, many Americans genuinely believe that there simply is no source of unbiased news; per Gallup, 51% of American adults cannot name a news source that they believe reports neutrally and objectively.175 While some outlets such as the Associated Press and Reuters are generally seen as less biased than the likes of MSNBC and Fox News, the fact remains that a majority of Americans do not even considerthese sources free from partisan bias. One option is for people to self-police—get their news from leftleaning sources, right-leaning sources, and as neutral of a source as they perceive to exist. Not only are most people unlikely to do this, as it requires effort, but the nature of the evolving Internet makes it extremely difficult.176 Online outlets like Google and Facebook have algorithms that present news and other content based on what a user has previously viewed, creating a veritable treadmill of one-sided sources.177 Eli Pariser explores this phenomenon in his 2011 book The Filter Bubble. 178 These algorithms essentially learn an individual user’s biases and preferences and agendas based on the user’s frequent search terms, social media posts, preferences, and those of that user’s friends, and tailor the search results, ads, and news feeds that this user sees to conform with those ideas.179 The result is that this user will see content that mostly conforms to their political ideologies, and over time, exclusively such content.180 The user is then left in a “filter bubble,” seeing—through no fault or even awareness of their own—only information online that that conforms to their pre-existing beliefs.181 As Pariser phrased it, “[a] world constructed from the familiar is a world in which there’s nothing to learn . . . [since there is] invisible autopropaganda, indoctrinating us with our own ideas.”182 In other words, people truly have to go out of their way if (and that is a big “if”) they want to see news that challenges their way of thinking. This seems unlikely to occur on a large enough scale to combat the fake news epidemic. Even if people went out of their way to find news sources that challenge their points of view, the human mind is loath to accept ideas that it does not already agree with.183 This phenomenon is called confirmation bias—the notion that people tend to give more credence to ideas and stories that reinforce their preexisting beliefs than to ideas that contradict them.184 In other words, people naturally believe what they want to—we are obstinate by design. Any solution grounded in self-policing or reliance on the private sector rather than a regulatory solution would have to overcome the massive hurdles of the filter bubble and confirmation bias. For a nation like the United Statesthat was founded—and prides itself—upon steadfastness and sticking to one’s convictions, these solutions would therefore likely be unsuccessful. Social Networks Self-Policing—“The Market Will Regulate Itself” As discussed above, the bulk of online fake news is distributed and consumed through links on social media sites like Facebook and Twitter.185 Ordinarily, thisis the type of thing that can be regulated by market forces rather than by government intervention. Theoretically, if a product is bad or a business provides poor services, consumers will simply switch to an alternative. Businesses seek to fix bad practicesin order to keep existing customers and attract new ones. American history is replete with instances of market forces purging counterproductive and harmful business practices without the need for government intervention; slavery,186 unsanitary food production,187 child labor,188 segregation,189 and the use of asbestos190 are prime examples of this.191 In the context of social media, if one platform becomes notorious for fake news, users will theoretically switch to a different platform, incentivizing the original platform to crack down on that fake news. However, this presupposes that alternatives exist. Facebook and Twitter combine for the overwhelming market share of social media192 (surprisingly, Pinterest accounts for over 16% of the social media market, but the same statistics indicate that Pinterest users do not get news there).193 Because there are so few major social media platforms, users have few real alternatives to switch to. Facebook and Twitter therefore have no economic incentive to take sweeping measures to remove fake news from their platforms. Admittedly, in recent years, these sites have taken moderate steps to reduce the amount of fake news shared on their sites, such as deleting accounts that routinely share fake news articles.194 Facebook has also put public service ads on users’ feeds decrying fake news and the use of fake accounts.195 In June 2018, Twitter announced that it would take efforts to increase transparency by disclosing who pays for political ads on its site, and how much those parties spend on those ads.196 Facebook has implemented several journalistic efforts, including its partnership with fact-checking organizations, the Facebook Journalism Project—which is aimed at helping newsrooms get more digitally savvy— and the News Integrity Initiative, which Facebook helped in part to fund.197 However, as Matthew Ingram notes, these seem to be more public relations stunts than anything else.198 As Ingram points out, “Facebook focuses on engagement—time spent, clicks, and sharing—rather than quality or value.”199 This is because, like most other social media sites, Facebook’s revenue come predominately from advertising,200 which, online, is predicated around gathering views and clicks; the more pageviews or clicks a site gets, the more valuable its ad space is, and the more revenue it can generate through ad sales.201 In other words, Facebook and other social media sites gets paid based on their site’s traffic, regardless of the authenticity of the content they host.202 Because there is no economic incentive for social media sites to take major steps towards purging fake news, it is very doubtful that the Social Media market will regulate away fake news.

#### Fake News is an independent Existential Threat - hurts global cooperation on every significant issue and results in geopolitical conflict spirals.

Al-Rodhan 17 Nayef Al-Rodhan 6-7-2017 "Post-Truth Politics, the Fifth Estate and the Securitization of Fake News" <https://www.globalpolicyjournal.com/blog/07/06/2017/post-truth-politics-fifth-estate-and-securitization-fake-news> (Prof Nayef Al-Rodhan is an Honorary Fellow at St Antony’s College, University of Oxford, and Senior Fellow and Head of the Geopolitics and Global Futures Programme at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy)//Elmer

Even so, what we are witnessing today, in the “post-truth” era is more menacing because of the multiplication of channels of communication. Information now can circulate freely and unverified on the Internet, providing possibilities of misinformation and propaganda on a scale that was previously virtually impossible. In effect, it is now possible to share fake news more frequently than verified news, also due to the fact that social media has enabled the proliferation of authentic-looking or misleading fake accounts that help spread lies, most often directed against the liberal public. What is truth anyway? The Oxford Dictionaries dates the first use of the term to a 1992 essay by Steve Tesich, a Serbian-American playwright writing in The Nation following the Iran/Contra scandal. Tesich reflected that after the Watergate revelations and reporting of atrocities from Vietnam, Americans had become contemptuous of uncomfortable truths. He noted: “we came to equate the truth with bad news (…). We looked to our government to protect us from the truth”. Journalist David Roberts also used the term “post-truth” more than two decades ago to refer to the response of some US politicians refuting scientific claims about climate change. In 2004, Ralph Keyes proclaimed we had reached the age of “post-truth”. In his 2004 book, “The Post-Truth Era: Dishonesty and Deception in Contemporary Life”, Keyes expressed the concern that we are losing the stigma attached to lying, meaning that lies can be told with impunity. For Keyes, such times of “post truthfulness” represent an ethical twilight zone. The common theme running across the history of the term is that post-truth is defined by lies spread routinely by politicians, with little or no significant consequences for their legitimacy and reputation. But there are inevitable consequences for the future of democracy and the future of humanity: a future in which scientific facts are repudiated cannot be anything but insecure. Veritas, or truth, and facts are crucial for humanity, and indispensible for effective decision-making and ultimately, for human progress. Moreover, facts-based policies are also important in an existential sense and indispensible to our own survival – the case of the debate on climate change being a prime example. Geopolitics and Fake News Geopolitics in the era of fake-news is also complicated because post-truth disrupts a fundamental element of diplomacy and international politics, namely communication. Unsubstantiated allegations and groundless claims will distort diplomatic relations and lead political and military processes astray. False claims about the money ‘extorted’ from the UK by the European Union helped build the case for Brexit, with its ensuing implications for stability in Europe and elsewhere. The Russian state used social media to spread allegations that the Ukranian government crucified a child – a claim later debunked, yet telling of how fake news can help fuel wars. Similarly, populist rhetoric about NATO’s inadequacy and misinformation about its funding mask ignorance about the real benefits of the alliance for its members’ common security. Although unsubstantiated, such comments are enough to create anxiety in political quarters and prompt some Eastern European nations to see their state security in a wholly different geopolitical light. In the post-truth era, a complete lack of understanding of military strategy and the intricacies of warfare will be less relevant in devising policies, and this comes at the risk of dismantling security communities and the foundations of the liberal order. The possibility of hijacking national elections also has profound geopolitical and security implications. This has been a particularly key topic in the aftermath of the US elections. The stakes are especially high in France, which is a key member of the European Union and NATO, and where the winning candidate can, quite unequivocally, impact the future of the liberal order.\