### 1

#### We’re on the brink of runaway climate change – change needs to happen NOW

**Harvey 8-7**-2021 (Fiona Harvey, environment correspondent, The Guardian, “We’re on the brink of catastrophe, warns Tory climate chief”,” August 7 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/aug/07/were-on-the-brink-of-catastrophe-warns-tory-climate-chief>) /Triumph Debate

The world will soon face “catastrophe” from climate breakdown if urgent action is not taken, the British president of vital UN climate talks has warned. Alok Sharma, the UK minister in charge of the Cop26 talks to be held in Glasgow this November, told the Observer that the consequences of failure would be “catastrophic”: “I don’t think there’s any other word for it. You’re seeing on a daily basis what is happening across the world. Last year was the hottest on record, the last decade the hottest decade on record.” But Sharma also insisted the UK could carry on with fossil-fuel projects, in the face of mounting criticism of plans to license new oil and gas fields. He defended the government’s record on plans to reach net zero emissions by 2050, which have been heavily criticised by the UK’s independent Committee on Climate Change, and dismissed controversies over his travel schedule. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the world’s leading authority on climate science, will publish a comprehensive report on Monday showing how close humanity is to the brink of potentially irreversible disaster caused by extreme weather. “This is going to be the starkest warning yet that human behaviour is alarmingly accelerating global warming and this is why Cop26 has to be the moment we get this right. We can’t afford to wait two years, five years, 10 years – this is the moment,” Sharma warned, in his first major interview since taking charge of the climate talks. “I don’t think we’re out of time but I think we’re getting dangerously close to when we might be out of time. We will see [from the IPCC] a very, very clear warning that unless we act now, we will unfortunately be out of time.” The consequences of global heating were already evident, he said. “We’re seeing the impacts across the world – in the UK or the terrible flooding we’ve seen across Europe and China, or forest fires, the record temperatures that we’ve seen in North America. Every day you will see a new high being recorded in one way or another across the world.” This was not about abstract science but people’s lives, he added. “Ultimately this comes down to the very real human impact this is having across the world. I’ve visited communities that as a result of climate change have literally had to flee their homes and move because of a combination of drought and flooding.” Sharma spoke exclusively to the Observer on the eve of the IPCC report to urge governments, businesses and individuals around the world to take heed, and press for stronger action on greenhouse gas emissions at the Cop26 conference, which he said would be almost the last chance. “This [IPCC report] is going to be a wake-up call for anyone who hasn’t yet understood why this next decade has to be absolutely decisive in terms of climate action. We will also get a pretty clear understanding that human activity is driving climate change at alarming rates,” he said. Disaster was not yet inevitable, and actions now could save lives in the future, he added: “Every fraction of a degree rise [in temperature] makes a difference and that’s why countries have to act now.”

#### Lack of advocacy in media leads to uncertainty regarding climate change

Brüggemann and Engesser 17 [Michael Brüggemann, educator at the University of Hamburg, and Sven Engesser, educator at the Technical University of Dresden, 2017, “Beyond false balance: How interpretive journalism shapes media coverage of climate change,” Research Gate, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/312015168\_Beyond\_false\_balance\_How\_interpretive\_journalism\_shapes\_media\_coverage\_of\_climate\_change]/Kankee

22 1. Introduction 23 While scientific consensus on anthropogenic climate change has been growing in recent 24 decades (Anderegg et al., 2010; Cook et al., 2013; Oreskes, 2004), public opinion has also become 25 increasingly uncertain about the urgency of climate change as a problem (Patt and Weber, 2014; 26 Ratter et al., 2012). Citizens of the biggest carbon emitters of the world (the United States and China) 27 are even less concerned about climate change than people from other countries (PEW, 2015). 28 Outright denial of climate change persists among salient minorities in the United States, United 29 Kingdom, and Australia, and in small niche publics in other countries (Capstick and Pidgeon, 2014; 30 European Commission, 2014; Leiserowitz et al., 2013, 2013; Whitmarsh, 2011). One reason for this 31 entrenched denialism in public opinion may be the way the media portray the scientific consensus on 32 climate change as represented by the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 33 (IPCC). By providing a forum for contrarian views, the media “perpetuate the myth of a lack of 34 international scientific consensus on anthropogenic climate change—and thereby succeed in 35 maintaining public confusion” (Antilla, 2005: 350). Various studies have shown the detrimental 36 effects of ‘balanced’ media coverage that depict climate change as an open debate between 37 ‘skeptics’ and ‘warners’ (with regards to public debates about vaccines, see: Dixon and Clarke, 2013; 38 Lewandowsky et al., 2013). Thus, the study of media content and its influencing factors is not only 39 relevant for scholars of journalism, but also for everyone seeking to understand how societies 40 struggle to deal with the challenge of climate change. 41 Our study tackles this challenge by analyzing how the IPCC stance on climate change and its 42 challengers are covered in different journalistic media. We seek to explain different patterns of 43 media content by taking into account the influence of different editorial and national contexts. The 44 study contributes to our understanding of how and why contrarian views remain salient in media 45 debates. It is based on a content analysis of articles (N = 936) published in four different types of 46 leading news outlets There is also evidence that the ideological stance of the individual 99 author matters: right-wing columnists in the United States cultivate hard-core denialism of climate 100 change in their columns (Elsasser and Dunlap, 2013). Hence, different interpretations of climate 101 change, which are often strongly related to political ideology, influence the coverage of this issue. 102 Explanations drawing on media logics – particularly the professional norms of journalism – 103 are strongly connected to the work of Boykoff and Boykoff (2004) who emphasize the professional 104 norm of balance as an important influencing factor: "[...] journalists present competing points of 105 views on a scientific question as though they had equal scientific weight, when actually they do not’’ 106 (127). The norm of balance is part of the broader concept of objectivity (Westerstahl, 1983), which 107 calls on journalists to provide a ‘neutral’ account by giving equal voice to both sides in a conflict 108 (Hopmann et al., 2012). Journalists follow this practice as it allows them to demonstrate their 109 professional objectivity and to fend off accusations of one-sided coverage (Gans, 1979; Tuchman, 110 1972). Balance also serves as a "surrogate for validity checks" (Dunwoody and Peters, 1992: 129) if 111 journalists lack the time or expertise to assess the validity of conflicting statements from different 112 sources. Earlier research on environmental and science journalists in the United States cited evidence 113 of their lack of knowledge about what climate experts consider to be basic common in climate 114 research (Wilson, 2000). The norm of balance is particularly powerful in cases of contested 115 knowledge claims and a lack of expertise among the journalists who cover the respective issue. 116 Finally, conflicts create news value and thus stories that grasp audience attention. The presence of 117 contrarians in media coverage may therefore be explained by either bias (ideological fit) as outlined 118 above or as part of journalistic norms (objectivity/balance) and routines (news values). Yet applying 119 the norm of balance amplifies the views of contrarians (which may attract audience attention) and 120 distorts coverage of the issue. By quoting contrarian voices out of context, journalists give them 121 legitimacy and ‘media standing’ that might also translate into political power (Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 122 1993). 123 Boykoff and Boykoff (2004) examined the coverage of climate change in US newspapers from 124 1988 to 2002, and found that half of the articles presented a balanced account of the issue; slightly 125 more than half of the television newscasts analyzed during that time did so (Boykoff, 2008). A 126 replication of the study found the share of balanced coverage reduced from more than a third of all 127 articles in 2003 to about three percent in 2006 in US newspapers (Boykoff, 2007). Thus, balanced 128 reporting may be retreating, but contrarians have not necessarily vanished from the media. Painter 129 and Gavin (2016) find that the British press quoted contrarians in every fifth article during the years 130 2007 to 2011. Schmid-Petri et al. (2015) find that almost a third of articles in the US press contain 131 contrarian voices. Have journalists therefore moved on to a one-sided promotion of denial of climate 132 change, which would be proof of ideological bias, rather than adhere to professional logics such as 133 the norm of balanced coverage? 134 A recent survey of journalists covering climate change in different countries found that most 135 of them strongly agreed with the climate change consensus (Brüggemann and Engesser, 2014). 136 Therefore, it seems that they quote contrarians despite being aware that their claims defy the 137 findings of climate science. A much earlier US study identified a journalistic tendency to amplify 138 outlier views and give ‘mavericks’ a forum: Dearing (1995) analyzed US newspaper coverage of three 139 maverick science stories (e.g., propagating an alternative theory on the cause of AIDS). Our study 140 follows his model of analyzing the content of coverage and then conducting a survey of the authors 141 of the articles. Dearing found that the surveyed journalists were aware that the ‘maverick scientists’ 142 did not represent credible science, yet the articles’ neutral coverage of their views gave the 143 mavericks credibility. Dearing explained this with news values such as conflict that attract larger 144 audiences as well as a general sympathy for mavericks in US public culture, which values 145 individualism expressed through outlier views (also see Gans (1979)). 146 Another trend in journalism should be considered for making sense of the finding that 147 balanced coverage may be gone, but not so, the quoting of contrarian voices. Studies find a trend 148 towards interpretive reporting among online science journalists (Fahy and Nisbet, 2011) and in 149 political journalism in different Western countries (Esser and Umbricht, 2014). Hiles and Hinnant 150 (2014) found a radically redefined understanding of objectivity among experienced climate 151 journalists that goes beyond ‘balanced coverage.’ They found that while these specialist journalists 152 still attempted to refrain from letting their biases influence their coverage, they followed “weight-of153 evidence reporting” (Dunwoody, 2005) in which stories reflect scientific consensus and are “written 154 with authority” (Hiles and Hinnant, 2014: 15), thereby distinguishing between views that represent 155 valid, peer-reviewed science and those that represent outliers with no backing from scientific 156 evidence or peers (Boykoff, 2011). Another qualitative interview study with science journalists in the 157 United States confirms this trend: journalists claim that they want to go “beyond balance” and even 158 ignore contrarian voices (Gibson et al., 2016). 159 Yet, whether these approaches are put into practice has not been comprehensively 160 investigated with regards to different media types in different cultural contexts. Most studies focus 161 on the US and British contexts or on the coverage of upmarket newspapers (Schäfer and Schlichting, 162 2014). Grundmann and Scott (2014) also include France and Germany from 2000 to 2010 and a great 163 number of newspapers using corpus linguistic methods. Their study shows that, overall, contrarians 164 are much less prominent in media discourses than speakers who support the climate change 165 consensus. They also show that countries consistently diverge on the salience of contrarians, with a 166 much stronger entrenchment of contrarian voices in the United States. This is in line with findings 167 from Painter and Ashe (2012), who also included quality papers from Brazil, China, France, and India 168 in their analysis. They compared the coverage in 2007 and 2009/2010 during the UN Climate summit 169 in Copenhagen and, at the same time, ‘Climategate’ (the pseudo scandal constructed around 170 personal e-mails between climate researchers that were published by contrarian bloggers in order to 171 discredit climate research, Holliman (2011)).

**Warming is linear—every decrease in rising temperatures radically mitigates the risk of existential climate change.**

Xu and Ramanathan 17, Yangyang Xu, Assistant Professor of Atmospheric Sciences at Texas A&M University; and Veerabhadran Ramanathan, Distinguished Professor of Atmospheric and Climate Sciences at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego, 9/26/17, “Well below 2 °C: Mitigation strategies for avoiding dangerous to catastrophic climate changes,” Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America, Vol. 114, No. 39, p. 10315-10323

We are proposing the following extension to the DAI risk categorization: warming greater than 1.5 °C as “dangerous”; warming greater than 3 °C as “catastrophic?”; and warming in excess of 5 °C as “unknown??,” with the understanding that changes of this magnitude, not experienced in the last 20+ million years, pose existential threats to a majority of the population. The question mark denotes the subjective nature of our deduction and the fact that catastrophe can strike at even lower warming levels. The justifications for the proposed extension to risk categorization are given below. From the IPCC burning embers diagram and from the language of the Paris Agreement, we infer that the DAI begins at warming greater than 1.5 °C. Our criteria for extending the risk category beyond DAI include the potential risks of climate change to the physical climate system, the ecosystem, human health, and species extinction. Let us first consider the category of catastrophic (3 to 5 °C warming). The first major concern is the issue of tipping points. Several studies (48, 49) have concluded that 3 to 5 °C global warming is likely to be the threshold for tipping points such as the collapse of the western Antarctic ice sheet, shutdown of deep water circulation in the North Atlantic, dieback of Amazon rainforests as well as boreal forests, and collapse of the West African monsoon, among others. While natural scientists refer to these as abrupt and irreversible climate changes, economists refer to them as catastrophic events (49). Warming of such magnitudes also has catastrophic human health effects. Many recent studies (50, 51) have focused on the direct influence of extreme events such as heat waves on public health by evaluating exposure to heat stress and hyperthermia. It has been estimated that the likelihood of extreme events (defined as 3-sigma events), including heat waves, has increased 10-fold in the recent decades (52). Human beings are extremely sensitive to heat stress. For example, the 2013 European heat wave led to about 70,000 premature mortalities (53). The major finding of a recent study (51) is that, currently, about 13.6% of land area with a population of 30.6% is exposed to deadly heat. The authors of that study defined deadly heat as exceeding a threshold of temperature as well as humidity. The thresholds were determined from numerous heat wave events and data for mortalities attributed to heat waves. According to this study, a 2 °C warming would double the land area subject to deadly heat and expose 48% of the population. A 4 °C warming by 2100 would subject 47% of the land area and almost 74% of the world population to deadly heat, which could pose existential risks to humans and mammals alike unless massive adaptation measures are implemented, such as providing air conditioning to the entire population or a massive relocation of most of the population to safer climates. Climate risks can vary markedly depending on the socioeconomic status and culture of the population, and so we must take up the question of “dangerous to whom?” (54). Our discussion in this study is focused more on people and not on the ecosystem, and even with this limited scope, there are multitudes of categories of people. We will focus on the poorest 3 billion people living mostly in tropical rural areas, who are still relying on 18th-century technologies for meeting basic needs such as cooking and heating. Their contribution to CO2 pollution is roughly 5% compared with the 50% contribution by the wealthiest 1 billion (55). This bottom 3 billion population comprises mostly subsistent farmers, whose livelihood will be severely impacted, if not destroyed, with a one- to five-year megadrought, heat waves, or heavy floods; for those among the bottom 3 billion of the world’s population who are living in coastal areas, a 1- to 2-m rise in sea level (likely with a warming in excess of 3 °C) poses existential threat if they do not relocate or migrate. It has been estimated that several hundred million people would be subject to famine with warming in excess of 4 °C (54). However, there has essentially been no discussion on warming beyond 5 °C. Climate change-induced species extinction is one major concern with warming of such large magnitudes (>5 °C). The current rate of loss of species is ∼1,000-fold the historical rate, due largely to habitat destruction. At this rate, about 25% of species are in danger of extinction in the coming decades (56). Global warming of 6 °C or more (accompanied by increase in ocean acidity due to increased CO2) can act as a major force multiplier and expose as much as 90% of species to the dangers of extinction (57). The bodily harms combined with climate change-forced species destruction, biodiversity loss, and threats to water and food security, as summarized recently (58), motivated us to categorize warming beyond 5 °C as unknown??, implying the possibility of existential threats. Fig. 2 displays these three risk categorizations (vertical dashed lines).

#### Ozone is an independent existential risk

University of Southampton 20 [University of Southampton Press Release, “Study shows erosion of ozone layer responsible for mass extinction event,” University of Southampton News, <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/news/2020/05/ozone-extinction-event.page>] /Triumph Debate

Researchers at the University of Southampton have shown that **an extinction event** 360 million years ago, that killed much of the Earth’s plant and freshwater aquatic life, **was caused by a brief breakdown of the ozone layer** that shields the Earth from damaging ultraviolet (UV) radiation. This is a newly discovered extinction mechanism with profound implications for our warming world today. There have been a number of mass extinction in the geological past. Only one was caused by an asteroid hitting the Earth, which was 66 million years ago when the dinosaurs became extinct. Three of the others, including the end Permian Great Dying, 252 million years ago, were caused by huge continental scale volcanic eruptions that destabilised the Earth’s atmospheres and oceans. Now, scientists have found evidence showing it was **high levels of UV radiation** which **collapsed forest ecosystems and killed off many species of fish and tetrapods** (our four limbed ancestors) at the end of the Devonian geological period, 359 million years ago. This damaging burst of UV radiation occurred as part of one of the Earth’s climate cycles, rather than being caused by a huge volcanic eruption. The ozone collapse occurred as the climate rapidly warmed following an intense ice age and the researchers suggest that the Earth today could reach comparable temperatures, possibly triggering a similar event. Their findings are published in the journal Science Advances. The team collected rock samples during expeditions to mountainous polar-regions in East Greenland, which once formed a huge ancient lake bed in the arid interior of the Old Red Sandstone Continent, made up of Europe and North America. This lake was situated in the Earth’s southern hemisphere and would have been similar in nature to modern day Lake Chad on the edge of the Sahara Desert. Other rocks were collected from the Andean Mountains above Lake Titicaca in Bolivia. These South American samples were from the southern continent of Gondwana, which was closer to the Devonian South Pole. They held clues as to what was happening at the edge of the melting Devonian ice sheet, allowing a comparison between the extinction event close to the pole and close to the equator. Back in the lab, the rocks were dissolved in hydrofluoric acid, releasing microscopic plant spores (like pollen, but from fern like plants that didn’t have seeds or flowers) which had lain preserved for hundreds of millions of years. On microscopic examination, the scientists found many of the spores had bizarrely formed spines on their surface – a response to UV radiation damaging their DNA. Also, many spores had dark pigmented walls, thought to be a kind of protective ‘tan’, due to increased and damaging UV levels. The scientists concluded that, during a time of rapid global warming, the ozone layer collapsed for a short period, exposing life on Earth to harmful levels of UV radiation and triggering a mass extinction event on land and in shallow water at the Devonian-Carboniferous boundary. Following melting of the ice sheets, the climate was very warm, with the increased heat above continents pushing more naturally generated ozone destroying chemicals into the upper atmosphere. This let in high levels of UV-B radiation for several thousand years. Lead researcher Professor John Marshall, of the University of Southampton’s School of Ocean and Earth Science, who is a National Geographic Explorer, comments: “Our ozone shield vanished for a short time in this ancient period, coinciding with a brief and quick warming of the Earth. Our ozone layer is naturally in a state of flux – constantly being created and lost – and we have shown this happened in the past too, without a catalyst such as a continental scale volcanic eruption.” During the extinction, **plants selectively survived, but were enormously disrupted as the forest ecosystem collapsed**. The dominant group of armoured fish became extinct. **Those that survived – sharks and bony fish – remain** to this day the **dominant** fish in our ecosystems. These extinctions came at a key time for the evolution of our own ancestors, the tetrapods. These **early tetrapods** are fish that evolved to have limbs rather than fins, but still **mostly lived in water**. Their limbs possessed many fingers and toes. **The extinction reset the direction of their evolution** with the post-extinction survivors being terrestrial and with the number of fingers and toes reduced to five. Professor Marshall says his team’s findings have startling implications for life on Earth today: “Current estimates suggest we will reach similar global temperatures to those of 360 million years ago, **with the possibility that a similar collapse of the ozone layer could occur again**, **exposing surface and shallow sea life to deadly radiation. This would move us** from the current state of climate change, **to a climate emergency**.”

### 2

#### Norms of objectivity are used to exclude minority reporters

Shapiro 21 [Shapiro, Ivor – Emeritus professor of the school of journalism @ Ryerson University in Toronto, using facts and logic to destroy the racists. “Skepticism, Not Objectivity, Is What Makes Journalism Matter.” The Conversation, 18 Apr. 2021, theconversation.com/skepticism-not-objectivity-is-what-makes-journalism-matter-158777.] BRACKETS FOR CLARITY *// CHS AD*

“’That reporter is too biased to cover this story.’ It’s a too-familiar complaint from news consumers — and sometimes also from newsroom managers — because people expect journalists to be impartial, detached or even “objective.”

The fraught idea of journalistic objectivity was at the centre of a recent controversy at the Washington Post.

The story of Post politics reporter Felicia Sonmez began with her 2018 allegation of sexual assault against a fellow journalist. Soon, she’d been banned from covering stories that “hinged on sexual misconduct” and, by extension, the #MeToo movement — a ban finally lifted on March 29.

Similar perceptions of “bias” have stymied Canadian journalists in [relationships](https://j-source.ca/article/how-do-you-know-if-youre-too-close-to-your-source/) with politicians, [gay reporters](https://www.nlgja.org/blog/2011/02/chick-fil-a-and-nlgja-can-a-lesbian-be-objective-about-chick-fil-as-problems/) covering marriage reform and [Jewish](https://archives.cjr.org/feature/the_times_and_the_jews.php) or [Muslim](https://readpassage.com/uncovering-canadian-medias-devastating-pro-israel-bias/) reporters in the Middle East.

Journalists, apparently, should not report from territory to which they’ve spent their lives acclimating — unless you count education, health care, war, sports, travel, cars or real estate.

The O-word

Racialized reporters, for instance, often get hit with the word “objective” when they pitch or file stories about race.

“Our professionalism is questioned when we [they] report on the communities we’re [they’re] from, and the spectre of advocacy follows us in a way that it does not follow many of our white colleagues,” [Pacinthe Mattar](https://thewalrus.ca/objectivity-is-a-privilege-afforded-to-white-journalists/) recently wrote in The Walrus.

Mattar quoted a news producer as saying: “There seems to be the assumption that racialized journalists cannot co-exist with the journalistic standards of being fair and balanced and impartial. Really, what we are fighting for, what we’ve always been fighting for, is just the truth.”

And that’s the problem: does telling the truth require journalists to detach themselves from their life experiences? Is this degree of balance or impartiality even possible?”

#### Even objective white reporting of racialized issues is racist

Johnson et. al. 11 [Johnson, Kirk A., et al. “Speaking of Looting: An Analysis of Racial Propaganda in National Television Coverage of Hurricane Katrina.” Howard Journal of Communications, vol. 22, no. 3, 1 Aug. 2011, pp. 302–318., doi:10.1080/10646175.2011.590404.] *// CHS AD*

* Slightly underhighlighted

“In this content analysis of television broadcasts in the first week of Katrina reporting from New Orleans, we found support for our two hypotheses. First, in a story that had a disproportionate impact on the African American community, the news featured disproportionate numbers of Whites, particularly in speaking roles. Second, while these newsworkers expressed sympathy for storm victims, they criticized looting without contextualizing it, thereby marginalizing residents who seemed to reject White middle-class norms regarding theft and crime. The combination of sympathy for and criticism of African Americans is consistent with aversive racism.

These data signal an ideological divide between news organizations, whose personnel and sources favor established norms (Schudson, 2003, pp. 134–153), and residents, whose perspectives may be more fluid. Newsworkers’ White middle-class etic (outsiders’) perspective (Pike, 1967) was particularly apparent in looting stories. For example, when NBC reporter Martin Savidge asked the looter who was carrying tennis shoes to explain her behavior, he did not say, ‘‘Why are you doing this?’’ Instead, he said, ‘‘You know you’re not supposed to do that,’’ a verbal scolding not unlike a parent reproaching a child, and one that implies that the woman was morally deficient. Similarly, when Savidge noted the looter at the Convention Center, he said, ‘‘This woman confesses she stole this fruit’’ (italics added for emphasis). This word choice, unlike more-neutral language (e.g., ‘‘This woman says she took this fruit’’), signals inherent wrongdoing.

We believe that their etic perspective led reporters to imply that looters were more rapacious than eyewitness accounts suggest. While some looters clearly took nonessential goods from stores (Anderson, Perlstein, & Scott, 2005; Perlstein & Thevenot, 2005), many grocery stores were looted for food and beverages (Anderson et al., 2005; ‘‘Peeling open a store’’, 2005; Varney, 2005) and drug stores were pilfered for medication, all of which was in notoriously short supply. Indeed, at least one storeowner invited neighborhood residents to take food before it spoiled in the summer heat (Anderson et al., 2005). In this way, the typical looting story, like coverage of urban disturbances in 1967, was racially inflammatory because it was decontextualized, that is, presented without emic (insiders’) descriptions or explanations (Pike, 1967).

Reflexively attributing looting to wanton opportunism overlooks alternative explanations for such behavior beyond simple post-disaster survival. For example, disaster survivors may view catastrophic events as opportunities to erase longstanding injustices and to realize wishes that are normally unattainable (Fritz, 1961, p. 685). Thus, some storm victims may have viewed stealing as their only opportunity to compensate for their second-class citizenship.

For others, looting may have reflected despair. Whatever day-to-day anguish low-income Blacks felt before Katrina was undoubtedly heightened by the devastation of the hurricane and agonizing rescue delays. Abusive treatment from National Guard soldiers and police officers who routinely approached unarmed residents with weapons drawn, and who reportedly threatened to shoot residents for stealing clean underwear (Bradley, 2005) or for reporting the death of an elder (Wayne, 2005), undoubtedly exacerbated survivors’ despair. And when people despair, ‘‘they see no point in trying or caring any more’’ (Reading, 2004, p. 150). Katrina looters may have understood the futility of trying to adhere to mainstream behavior norms that may not have been germane to a marginalized community under great stress.

Indeed, such norms might not have applied to New Orleans in the first place. The city is notorious for corrupt police officers and public officials (Range, 2000); survivors may have taken their cues from such official misconduct. As one resident remarked at a looting site, ‘‘It must be legal. The police are here taking stuff, too’’ (Perlstein & Thevenot, 2005). Thus, it may be inappropriate to evaluate post-Katrina looting with norms that apply to other locales.

Finally, the etic view also helps to explain why reporters announced as ‘‘news’’ statements that most persons of color probably take for granted. For example, on September 2, 2005, CNN anchor Aaron Brown announced that because of Katrina, ‘‘Once again, race has become part of the national story.’’ But one need not be a historian to appreciate how race has always been a part of ‘‘the national story.’’ Likewise, millions of persons of color routinely confront problems related to race, as well as class, and are therefore well aware from daily experience that race does matter. We suspect that comments such as Brown’s emerged from a newsroom culture where journalists universalize a White middle-class perspective and thus produce news that seems revelatory only to middle-class Whites.

Similarly, a journalist more intimately familiar with the Black community’s history of victimization by the police may not have uttered a statement about efforts to restore law and order in New Orleans. On September 1, 2005, Aaron Brown announced, ‘‘Some National Guard troops have arrived, 300 out of Arkansas with ‘shoot to kill’ orders. They are working the streets trying to take them back. That’s a bit of good news we can report tonight’’ (italics added for emphasis). Police officers are typically authorized to use deadly force when a suspect poses a threat of serious physical harm to the officers or to other people (Hall, n.d.). But using deadly force against African American suspects to discourage property crime such as breaking and entering, which does not involve the use or threat of force against a person, is a highly controversial tactic that critics say shows disregard for African American lives (Flamm, 2005, p. 155). A journalist more familiar with the history of African Americans’ troubled relationship with police officers might have presented a shoot-to-kill order in New Orleans as a potential problem rather than as ‘‘good news.’’

We are not suggesting that White news personnel cannot cover the black community competently. But in New Orleans, overreliance on White journalists and White sources diminished insiders’ explanations of African Americans’ attitudes and behavior, which we believe were more credible. In so doing, Katrina news propagated racial propaganda. Accordingly, we propose that E. Herman and Chomsky’s (2001) model be revised to account for the racial dimensions of propaganda by (a) incorporating journalists’ reliance on White sources; and (b) asserting aversive racism (replacing anticommunism) as an ideology that helps to preserve the power of elites (in this case, middle-class Whites). Like other analyses (e.g., Sparks, 2007), ours is a sympathetic reading of E. Herman and Chomsky that attempts to extend their model from one genre (international news) to another (domestic news). E. S. Herman (2000) himself recognized the rolling nature of the constituents of the propaganda model. Our work joins research by Voorhees et al. (2007) as one of few studies to offer statistical support for qualitative reports (e.g., M. J. Davis & French, 2008; Kahle, Yu, & Whiteside, 2007; Shah, 2009; Thevenot, 2005–2006) that Katrina news propagated racism.”

#### Racism from the media spills up to the public

Van Dijk 12 [Van Dijk, Teun A. “The Role of the Press in the Reproduction of Racism.” Migrations: Interdisciplinary Perspectives, 19 Mar. 2012, pp. 15–29., doi:10.1007/978-3-7091-0950-2\_2.] *// CHS AD*

“Biased news production and news reports would be pretty harmless if they would not have a tremendous influence on the readers. Although traditional effect research in mass communication often has found that the media are not that influential at all and that most people make up their own minds, more or less independently of the media (Bryant and Zillmann 1994, see also Graber 1984; Van Dijk and Kintsch 1983), this is certainly not the case for the role of the press in the reproduction of ethnic prejudice. In our study on communicating racism, we found, for instance, that many people use the mass media as a source and legitimation of their prejudices (Van Dijk 1987a). As long as people have no direct personal experiences with minorities or immigrants, as is the case in, for instance, Latin America, where indigenous people (e.g., in Bolivia and Peru) or people from African descent (as in Brazil) form large minorities or majorities, they have no concrete mental models as a basis for the formation of general attitudes. In that case, such mental models are taken from the mass media. It is in this way that prejudices are reproduced in society and not examined critically by comparing them to personal experiences or scholarly studies. On the other hand, even daily experiences are no guarantee for the development of antiracist attitudes or media practices, as we know from the absence or the biased representations of blacks in Brazilian telenovelas (D’Adesky 2001; Van Dijk 2009b).”

### 3

#### The standard is maximizing expected well-being. Prefer it:

#### [1] Actor specificity: util is the best for governments, which is the actor in the rez. Governments must aggregate since every policy benefits some and harms others, which also means side constraints freeze action. Actor-specificity comes first since different agents have different ethical standings. Takes out util calc indicts since they’re empirically denied and link turns them because the alt would be no action.

#### [2] Ethical frameworks must be theoretically legitimate. All frameworks are functionally topicality interpretations of the word ought so they must theoretically justified. Prefer – ground – both debaters are guaranteed access to ground – Aff gets plans and advantages, while Neg gets disads and counterplans. News is also published in the lens of well being. Additionally, anything can function as an impact as long as an external benefit is articulated, so all your offense applies.

#### [3] Pleasure and pain are the starting point for moral reasoning—they’re our most baseline desires and the only things that explain the intrinsic value of objects or actions

Moen 16, Ole Martin (PhD, Research Fellow in Philosophy at University of Oslo). "An Argument for Hedonism." Journal of Value Inquiry 50.2 (2016): 267.

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 [a man] what his 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. Although pleasure and pain thus seem to be good candidates for intrinsic value and disvalue, several objections have been raised against this suggestion: (1) that pleasure and pain have instrumental but not intrinsic value/disvalue; (2) that pleasure and pain gain their value/disvalue derivatively, in virtue of satisfying/frustrating our desires; (3) that there is a subset of pleasures that are not intrinsically valuable (so-called “evil pleasures”) and a subset of pains that are not intrinsically disvaluable (so-called “noble pains”), and (4) that pain asymbolia, masochism, and practices such as wiggling a loose tooth render it implausible that pain is intrinsically disvaluable. I shall argue that these objections fail. Though it is, of course, an open question whether other objections to P1 might be more successful, I shall assume that if (1)–(4) fail, we are justified in believing that P1 is true itself a paragon of freedom—there will always be some agents able to interfere substantially with one’s choices. The effective level of protection one enjoys, and hence one’s actual degree of freedom, will vary according to multiple factors: how powerful one is, how powerful individuals in one’s vicinity are, how frequent police patrols are, and so on. Now, we saw above that what makes a slave unfree on Pettit’s view is the fact that his master has the power to interfere arbitrarily with his choices; in other words, what makes the slave unfree is the power relation that obtains between his master and him. The difﬁculty is that, in light of the facts I just mentioned, there is no reason to think that this power relation will be unique. A similar relation could obtain between the master and someone other than the slave: absent perfect state control, the master may very well have enough power to interfere in the lives of countless individuals. Yet it would be wrong to infer that these individuals lack freedom in the way the slave does; if they lack anything, it seems to be security. A problematic power relation can also obtain between the slave and someone other than the master, since there may be citizens who are more powerful than the master and who can therefore interfere with the slave’s choices at their discretion. Once again, it would be wrong to infer that these individuals make the slave unfree in the same way that the master does. Something appears to be missing from Pettit’s view. If I live in a particularly nasty part of town, then it may turn out that, when all the relevant factors are taken into account, I am just as vulnerable to outside interference as are the slaves in the royal palace, yet it does not follow that our conditions are equivalent from the point of view of freedom. As a matter of fact, we may be equally vulnerable to outside interference, but as a matter of right, our standings could not be more different. I have legal recourse against anyone who interferes with my freedom; the recourse may not be very effective—presumably it is not, if my overall vulnerability to outside interference is comparable to that of a slave— but I still have full legal standing.68 By contrast, the slave lacks legal recourse against the interventions of one speciﬁc individual: his master. It is that fact, on a Kantian view—a fact about the legal relation in which a slave stands to his master—that sets slaves apart from freemen. The point may appear trivial, but it does get something right: whereas one cannot identify a power relation that obtains uniquely between a slave and his master, the legal relation between them is undeniably unique. A master’s right to interfere with respect to his slave does not extend to freemen, regardless of how vulnerable they might be as a matter of fact, and citizens other than the master do not have the right to order the slave around, regardless of how powerful they might be. This suggests that Kant is correct in thinking that the ideal of freedom is essentially linked to a person’s having full legal standing. More speciﬁcally, he is correct in holding that the importance of rights is not exhausted by their contribution to the level of protection that an individual enjoys, as it must be on an instrumental view like Pettit’s. Although it does matter that rights be enforced with reasonable effectiveness, the sheer fact that one has adequate legal rights is essential to one’s standing as a free citizen. In this respect, Kant stays faithful to the idea that freedom is primarily a matter of standing—a standing that the freeman has and that the slave lacks. Pettit himself frequently insists on the idea, but he fails to do it justice when he claims that freedom is simply a matter of being adequately (and reliably) shielded against the strength of others. As Kant recognizes, the standing of a free citizen is a more complex matter than that. One could perhaps worry that the idea of legal standing is something of a red herring here—that it must ultimately be reducible to a complex network of power relations and, hence, that the position I attribute to Kant differs only nominally from Pettit’s. That seems to me doubtful. Viewing legal standing as essential to freedom makes sense only if our conception of the former includes conceptions of what constitutes a fully adequate scheme of legal rights, appropriate legal recourse, justiﬁed punishment, and so on. Only if one believes that these notions all boil down to power relations will Kant’s position appear similar to Pettit’s. On any other view—and certainly that includes most views recently defended by philosophers—the notion of legal standing will outstrip the power relations that ground Pettit’s theory.

#### [4]Fission proves personal identity is reductionist – psychological continuity doesn’t exist.

Olson 17 –Eric T. Olson, professor of philosophy at the University of Sheffield ("Personal Identity", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2017 Edition), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2017/entries/identity-personal/>,)

A more serious worry for psychological-continuity views is that **you could be psychologically continuous with two past or future people at once. If your cerebrum—the upper part of the brain largely responsible for mental features—were transplanted, the recipient would be psychologically continuous with you by anyone’s lights** (even though there would also be important psychological differences). The psychological-continuity view implies that she would be you. If we destroyed one of your cerebral hemispheres, the resulting being would also be psychologically continuous with you. (Hemispherectomy—even the removal of the left hemisphere, which controls speech—is considered a drastic but acceptable treatment for otherwise-inoperable brain tumors: see Rigterink 1980.) What if we did both at once, destroying one hemisphere and transplanting the other? Then too, the one who got the transplanted hemisphere would be psychologically continuous with you, and would be you according to the psychological-continuity view. **But now suppose that both hemispheres are transplanted, each into a different empty head**. (We needn’t pretend, as some authors do, that the hemispheres are exactly alike.) **The two recipients—call them Lefty and Righty—will each be psychologically continuous with you**. The psychological-continuity view as we have stated it implies that any future being who is psychologically continuous with you must be you. **It follows that you are Lefty and** also that you are **Righty. But that cannot be: if you and Lefty are one and you and Righty are one, Lefty and Righty cannot be two**. And yet they are. To put the point another way, **suppose Lefty is hungry at a time when Righty isn’t**. If you are Lefty, you are hungry at that time. If you are Righty, you aren’t. **If you are Lefty and Righty, you are both hungry and not hungry at once: a contradiction**.

#### That proves util – if persons are not a continuous unit then distribution is irrelevant – we just maximize good experiences since only experiences are morally evaluable.

#### [5] Extinction outweighs

Pummer 15 [Theron, Junior Research Fellow in Philosophy at St. Anne's College, University of Oxford. “Moral Agreement on Saving the World” Practical Ethics, University of Oxford. May 18, 2015] AT

There appears to be lot of disagreement in moral philosophy. Whether these many apparent disagreements are deep and irresolvable, I believe there is at least one thing it is reasonable to agree on right now, whatever general moral view we adopt: that it is very important to reduce the risk that all intelligent beings on this planet are eliminated by an enormous catastrophe, such as a nuclear war. How we might in fact try to reduce such existential risks is discussed elsewhere. My claim here is only that we – whether we’re consequentialists, deontologists, or virtue ethicists – should all agree that we should try to save the world. According to consequentialism, we should maximize the good, where this is taken to be the goodness, from an impartial perspective, of outcomes. Clearly one thing that makes an outcome good is that the people in it are doing well. There is little disagreement here. If the happiness or well-being of possible future people is just as important as that of people who already exist, and if they would have good lives, it is not hard to see how reducing existential risk is easily the most important thing in the whole world. This is for the familiar reason that there are so many people who could exist in the future – there are trillions upon trillions… upon trillions. There are so many possible future people that reducing existential risk is arguably the most important thing in the world, even if the well-being of these possible people were given only 0.001% as much weight as that of existing people. Even on a wholly person-affecting view – according to which there’s nothing (apart from effects on existing people) to be said in favor of creating happy people – the case for reducing existential risk is very strong. As noted in this seminal paper, this case is strengthened by the fact that there’s a good chance that many existing people will, with the aid of life-extension technology, live very long and very high quality lives. You might think what I have just argued applies to consequentialists only. There is a tendency to assume that, if an argument appeals to consequentialist considerations (the goodness of outcomes), it is irrelevant to non-consequentialists. But that is a huge mistake. Non-consequentialism is the view that there’s more that determines rightness than the goodness of consequences or outcomes; it is not the view that the latter don’t matter. Even John Rawls wrote, “All ethical doctrines worth our attention take consequences into account in judging rightness. One which did not would simply be irrational, crazy.” Minimally plausible versions of deontology and virtue ethics must be concerned in part with promoting the good, from an impartial point of view. They’d thus imply very strong reasons to reduce existential risk, at least when this doesn’t significantly involve doing harm to others or damaging one’s character. What’s even more surprising, perhaps, is that even if our own good (or that of those near and dear to us) has much greater weight than goodness from the impartial “point of view of the universe,” indeed even if the latter is entirely morally irrelevant, we may nonetheless have very strong reasons to reduce existential risk. Even egoism, the view that each agent should maximize her own good, might imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk. It will depend, among other things, on what one’s own good consists in. If well-being consisted in pleasure only, it is somewhat harder to argue that egoism would imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk – perhaps we could argue that one would maximize her expected hedonic well-being by funding life extension technology or by having herself cryogenically frozen at the time of her bodily death as well as giving money to reduce existential risk (so that there is a world for her to live in!). I am not sure, however, how strong the reasons to do this would be. But views which imply that, if I don’t care about other people, I have no or very little reason to help them are not even minimally plausible views (in addition to hedonistic egoism, I here have in mind views that imply that one has no reason to perform an act unless one actually desires to do that act). To be minimally plausible, egoism will need to be paired with a more sophisticated account of well-being. To see this, it is enough to consider, as Plato did, the possibility of a ring of invisibility – suppose that, while wearing it, Ayn could derive some pleasure by helping the poor, but instead could derive just a bit more by severely harming them. Hedonistic egoism would absurdly imply she should do the latter. To avoid this implication, egoists would need to build something like the meaningfulness of a life into well-being, in some robust way, where this would to a significant extent be a function of other-regarding concerns (see chapter 12 of this classic intro to ethics). But once these elements are included, we can (roughly, as above) argue that this sort of egoism will imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk. Add to all of this Samuel Scheffler’s recent intriguing arguments (quick podcast version available here) that most of what makes our lives go well would be undermined if there were no future generations of intelligent persons. On his view, my life would contain vastly less well-being if (say) a year after my death the world came to an end. So obviously if Scheffler were right I’d have very strong reason to reduce existential risk. We should also take into account moral uncertainty. What is it reasonable for one to do, when one is uncertain not (only) about the empirical facts, but also about the moral facts? I’ve just argued that there’s agreement among minimally plausible ethical views that we have strong reason to reduce existential risk – not only consequentialists, but also deontologists, virtue ethicists, and sophisticated egoists should agree. But even those (hedonistic egoists) who disagree should have a significant level of confidence that they are mistaken, and that one of the above views is correct. Even if they were 90% sure that their view is the correct one (and 10% sure that one of these other ones is correct), they would have pretty strong reason, from the standpoint of moral uncertainty, to reduce existential risk. Perhaps most disturbingly still, even if we are only 1% sure that the well-being of possible future people matters, it is at least arguable that, from the standpoint of moral uncertainty, reducing existential risk is the most important thing in the world. Again, this is largely for the reason that there are so many people who could exist in the future – there are trillions upon trillions… upon trillions. (For more on this and other related issues, see this excellent dissertation). Of course, it is uncertain whether these untold trillions would, in general, have good lives. It’s possible they’ll be miserable. It is enough for my claim that there is moral agreement in the relevant sense if, at least given certain empirical claims about what future lives would most likely be like, all minimally plausible moral views would converge on the conclusion that we should try to save the world. While there are some non-crazy views that place significantly greater moral weight on avoiding suffering than on promoting happiness, for reasons others have offered (and for independent reasons I won’t get into here unless requested to), they nonetheless seem to be fairly implausible views. And even if things did not go well for our ancestors, I am optimistic that they will overall go fantastically well for our descendants, if we allow them to. I suspect that most of us alive today – at least those of us not suffering from extreme illness or poverty – have lives that are well worth living, and that things will continue to improve. Derek Parfit, whose work has emphasized future generations as well as agreement in ethics, described our situation clearly and accurately: “We live during the hinge of history. Given the scientific and technological discoveries of the last two centuries, the world has never changed as fast. We shall soon have even greater powers to transform, not only our surroundings, but ourselves and our successors. If we act wisely in the next few centuries, humanity will survive its most dangerous and decisive period. Our descendants could, if necessary, go elsewhere, spreading through this galaxy…. Our descendants might, I believe, make the further future very good. But that good future may also depend in part on us. If our selfish recklessness ends human history, we would be acting very wrongly.” (From chapter 36 of On What Matters)

#### [6] Util is a lexical pre-requisite to any other framework-threats to bodily security and life preclude the ability for moral actors to effectively utilize and act upon other moral theories since they are in a constant state of crisis that inhibit the ideal moral conditions which other theories presuppose

### Case

#### Advocacy is key to dispelling myths – it in their own card, and they miscut “advocacy” to make it sound like it caused bad things.

**Arana 15** (https://charterforcompassion.org/igb-islamophobia-and-the-media/islamophobic-media-coverage-is-out-of-control)

Media writers like The Washington Post’s Erik Wemple and Salon’s Jack Mirkinson condemned Vause’s astonishing display of ignorance. But far too often, journalists are able to pass off casual bigotry as journalistic inquiry. It’s not just the fear-mongers at Fox News, who exploit terrorist attacks to fuel anti-Muslim hostility with such consistency it’s almost not worth commenting on. It’s the mainstream media, and while Islamophobia rears its head in print as well as online, it is most pronounced on television. Make no mistake: When producers dream up panel discussions about whether Islam is a violent religion, they aren’t merely “asking the question”: they’re perpetuating prejudice. Yes, a good percentage of Americans hold this view, but the role of us in the media is to dispel such myths — not legitimize them. Ultimately, presenting tolerance and bigotry as equally valid sides of a balanced debate only ends up fueling bigotry. **Islamophobia** in **media** coverage follows a predictable cycle. When someone commits an act of random violence and information is scarce, first comes the warrantless speculation. “Journalists, especially TV journalists, love scoops,” says Nathan Lean, a scholar at Georgetown University’s Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding. “So what happens is a lot of them ask leading questions — they insinuate, infer, hypothesize: ‘Could it have been an attack carried out by Al-Qaeda?’ Then all of a sudden the conversation is dominated by Al-Qaeda.” This is how NBC’s “Today” show ended up running a ludicrous segment on Monday about the possibility of the Islamic State group, also known as ISIS, using the PlayStation 4 to plot terrorist attacks. It’s how an image of a Sikh man in Canada was doctored using Photoshop, and landed on the front page of La Razón, one of Spain’s largest newspapers. It’s also how Time magazine falsely reported that Uber had charged four times its normal rate during the Paris attacks. In the unfortunate event that an attack is terrorism-related and the perpetrator is a radical Islamist, journalists invariably ask, “Why aren’t Muslims condemning this?” as CNN’s Vause did. “We still see this expectation that Muslim institutions have to come out and condemn things that you wouldn’t expect other groups have to condemn. There’s the assumption of collective responsibility,” says Corey Saylor, legislative director for the Council on American-Islamic Relations, a Muslim advocacy group. [says] “The number one victims of ISIS are Muslims, the notion that somehow we’re not fully committed to combatting that twisted ideology is difficult to wrap your mind around,” he adds. In fact, CAIR, like countless other Muslim organizations, strongly condemns terrorism whenever incidents occur — it has done so more than 100 times. In 2014, the group even signed on to an open letter to ISIS, which was penned by 120 Muslim scholars, that meticulously deconstructed the group’s theology. The vast majority of citizens in Muslim countries hate ISIS as much as any of the flag-waving patriots on Fox News. A recent survey from the Pew Center of 11 countries with substantial Muslim populations shows widespread negative attitudes toward the terrorist group — in no country did support for ISIS rise above 15 percent. That’s a smaller percentage than Americans who believe in UFOs (21 percent), think there’s a link between vaccines and autism (20 percent) and deny climate change (37 percent). Strong majorities in most of these countries also support the recent airstrikes against ISIS. There are many differences within the diverse global community of Muslims, which includes Saudi Arabia — a U.S. ally and possibly one of the most extremist Islamic regimes on the planet — as well as secular-progressive Turkey and Indonesia, Malaysia and Bangladesh, all of which have elected female heads of state. The same prejudice that flattens the nuances that exist within the Muslim community blinds journalists when they are faced with the good Muslims do, and blames them for the monstrous acts of a dangerous minority. “All the good things Muslims are doing get ignored while the barbaric subset of the Muslim world that claims our faith become our spokespeople,” Saylor says. The open letter to ISIS was largely ignored by the media, but “if you have one crazy guy in a cave in Afghanistan waving a sword, you can guarantee him several news cycles.” The media’s default of erasing distinctions between terrorists and non-terrorists, and between attackers and victims in the Muslim world is why we are currently in the midst of an insane discussion (if you can call it that) about allowing Syrian refugees into the country. Nearly all of the half-dozen or so suspects involved in the Paris attacks were born and raised in Europe. And yet, based on the discovery of a single Syrian passport found near the body of one of the suicide bombers, our current discourse is revolving around whether we should turn away tens of thousands of innocent, suffering people because one of them might be a terrorist. Instead of relying on credible sources of expertise on the matter, the mainstream media more often gives pundits, who have limited information but a lot of opinions, a platform to disseminate misinformation. Instead of giving anti-Muslim activist Pam Geller a means of reaching millions of people with her racist rhetoric, why not talk to someone from the Migration Policy Institute, the country’s most-authoritative think tank on migration issues? MPI found in a 2015 report that “the refugee resettlement program is the least likely avenue for a terrorist to choose” to infiltrate the country. The reason is pretty obvious once you get to know even a little about the program: The process of gaining refugee status puts applicants in direct contact with the FBI, and they have to undergo a “painstaking, many-layered review” that takes several years. It’s not like news organization ask the dumb questions and get them out of the way. We don’t get smarter, better, more informed. When terrorism strikes, the campaign of misinformation repeats itself, time and again. Amplifying ignorance isn’t harmless. It’s the reason 29 Republican governors and one Democrat have pledged not to accept Syrian refugees, despite the fact that the Constitution they love to brandish forbids them from doing so. Whether it’s CNN’s Don Lemon asking a respected Muslim lawyer if he supports ISIS or News Corp. Executive Chairman Rupert Murdoch suggesting we should give Christian refugees from Syria first dibs on coming in, the most frustrating thing about media coverage of terrorist attacks is that it doesn’t get any better over time. It’s not like news organizations ask the dumb questions and get them out of the way. We don’t get smarter, better, more informed. When terrorism strikes, the campaign of misinformation repeats itself, time and again. As journalists, it’s our job to know better, and do better.

#### OBJECTIVITY MAKES IT HARDER TO CORRECT FAKE NEWS, REPORTERS AVOID CALLING OUT RIGHT WING LIES IN ORDER TO APPEAR NEUTRAL

**Meyer 20** (Will Meyer (writer) 2/6/2020, The Abuses of Objectivity, New Republic) <https://newrepublic.com/article/156486/abuses-objectivity>

In January 2017, Kellyanne Conway, at that time President Trump’s press secretary, coined the term “alternative facts” on *Meet the Press.* The term was part of a broader move by President Trump and others on the right to discredit journalists, taunting them as “enemies of people” and purveyors of “fake news.” In this environment, the mainstream press doubled down on its commitments to truth-telling and objectivity. *The Washington Post* introduced the new slogan, “Democracy Dies in the Darkness.” *The* *New York Times* aired a pompous ad during the Oscars titled “The Truth is Hard.” The nonprofit ProPublica used the motto “Defend the Facts” in its fundraising. Newsrooms were defending the twentieth-century ideal of impartial journalism, leaning hard on its norms and brand. What a commitment to objectivity meant, however, was often the appearance of fairness. Neutrality meant showing two sides to every story, even in cases where one side’s arguments were much weaker than the other’s. Over the summer, *The* *New York Times* looked into conditions at a Staten Island Amazon warehouse and told the story in a way that was more than generous to management. More recently, the paper was criticized by this magazine for taking its both-sides-style reporting on impeachment so far as to take right-wing conspiracy theories at face value. “Objectivity” also meant veering away from describing figures on the right in unflattering terms—avoiding the words “lies” or “racism”—because those descriptions could be seen as evidence of left-wing bias. Above all, it meant that reporters themselves could not be seen to have any political opinions, because then they would be vulnerable to accusations of impropriety, regardless of the accuracy of what they actually wrote. Just days after the new president was sworn in, NPR’s senior vice president of News, Michael Oreskes, defended his organization’s choice not to call the president elect’s fabrications “lies.” On that same day, January 25, 2017, the popular public radio show Marketplace fired an award-winning transgender journalist, Lewis Raven Wallace, after he wrote a blog post questioning journalistic objectivity. In a follow-up post describing the firing, Wallace notes that the ethics code he was accused of having violated didn’t contain the words “objectivity” or “neutrality.” The show hadn’t received blowback for this transgression (or any of Wallace’s work), nor had he advocated for any particular political position. He merely offered skepticism about the frame, suggesting that as a trans journalist, he could not be impartial about attacks on his humanity. During his firing, *Marketplace* Vice President Deborah Clark told Wallace about leaving the anti-apartheid struggle—choosing journalism *over* activism—as a student: The subtext was that Wallace had to get in line. He didn’t, and paid the price with his job.